

# Charity and Justice

*Below is a basic chart to help clarify the distinction between works of justice and works of charity.*

<b>Charity</b> ..... Social Service	<b>Justice</b> ..... Social Change
<p><b>Scriptural Reference:</b> Good Samaritan Story</p> <p>The Gospel story does not attempt to survey the causes of highway banditry. The Samaritan provides temporary and immediate relief.</p>	<p><b>Scriptural Reference:</b> Exodus Story</p> <p>Moses does not ask for food and medicine for the Jewish slave-labor force. He challenges the institutional system. Message: "Let My People Go."</p>
<b>Private, individual acts</b>	<b>Public, collective actions</b>
<b>Responds to immediate need</b>	<b>Responds to long-term need</b>
<b>Provides direct service:</b> food, clothing, shelter	<b>Promotes social change in institutions</b>
<b>Requires repeated actions</b>	<b>Resolves structural injustice</b>
<b>Directed at the effects of injustice: symptoms</b>	<b>Directed at the root causes of social injustice</b>
<b>Examples:</b>	
Homeless shelters, food shelves, clothing drives, emergency services	Legislative advocacy, changing corporate policies or practices, congregation-based community organizing.

*"Charity will never be true charity unless it takes justice into account ... Let no one attempt with small gifts of charity to exempt themselves from the great duties imposed by justice."*

Pope Pius XI, *Divini Redemptoris*, #49