



Community and Social Justice Support Nights Living With Integrity

Standing in solidarity with oppressed communities, a constitutive element of the faith that does justice, requires an integrated life. Limiting consumption in a consumer society is only one step; integrity cries out both for examination of the institutions, businesses, and corporations in light of conscious choices about support/non-support of those institutions, businesses, and corporations in light of sustainable development and the just demands of the poor.

For example, Nike has been subjected to boycotts and protests because of its sweatshop labor practices; grapes were boycotted for years by the United Farm Workers and their allies in the struggle for a union and just labor practices and working conditions; some communities in urban neighborhoods have made it a point to shop with a particular grower at the Farmers' Market rather than the local corporate grocery store as a way of supporting the local economy.

Questions:

- What do you buy?
- Where do you shop?
- Who owns the stores where you shop?
- Who benefits from you shopping there (e.g. What is the difference between going out to lunch at the family-owned burrito restaurant down the street, or to McDonald's? If it's cheaper to shop at the corporate-owned locale, what effect does that have on the community/small business owner? Why might it be cheaper to shop at the corporate-owned place?)?
- Where do the people in your neighborhood shop?
- Are there any cooperatives in your neighborhood?
- Does where you shop support your commitment to solidarity with the poor?
- Do you keep your money in a bank or a credit union? What's the difference? Do you know your bank's lending policies in poor neighborhoods?
- How do you spend your free time?
- With whom do you spend your free time? How do these people's perspectives affect the way you understand the world?
- What efforts have you made to get to know your neighbors?
- What efforts have you made to get involved with local organizations (e.g. church, neighborhood groups, etc.)?
- What are some conscious decisions you have made/would like to make regarding your use of time and money that have/would help you grow in your commitment to solidarity with the poor?