

# Reflecting on SOCIAL JUSTICE



## What is Social Justice

We know that it isn't enough to only focus on our situation in life, but we are called to speak out for the needs of others, especially those who are under-served. We work together to build healthy and just communities and speak up for those who are left out. This happens when we learn more about each other and help those who are excluded be more involved in their care or society as a whole.

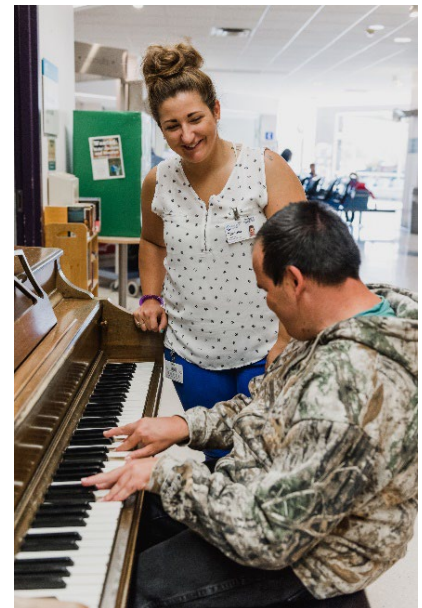
**Who is a model of social justice for you?**

Developing our social justice capacity is linked to developing greater empathy. As we better understand the lived experience of others, we are more likely to act or advocate on their behalf. Empathy is involved when we think beyond ourselves and open ourselves up to be vulnerable, to be challenged and to learn from others. Empathy motivates us to care and work to improve the lives of others. Sometimes life's challenges and the demands of our work diminish our empathy.

Empathy can be refreshed and grown through simple exercises. This article by the Greater Good Science Center of the University of California at Berkeley explores in detail six activities to practice empathy.

1. Talk with strangers.
2. Challenge prejudice and discover commonalities.
3. Try another person's life.
4. Listen hard and open up.
5. Inspire mass action and change.
6. Develop an ambitious imagination.

Read the full article here: [Six Habits of Highly Empathic People \(berkeley.edu\)](https://www.greatgood.org/2014/06/16/six-habits-of-highly-empathic-people/)



Mission Awards gives us a wonderful opportunity to tell these stories and celebrate inspiring examples of our values in action. **The 2024 Mission Awards nomination deadline is December 15, 2023**

Visit [www.covenantmissionawards.com](https://www.covenantmissionawards.com) to find the values criteria, nomination forms and sample nominations, and to read the profiles of all the [2023 Mission Awards nominees](#).



*Throughout his ministry, (Jesus) met many sick people; he took on their suffering; he tore down the walls of stigma and of marginalization that prevented so many of them from feeling respected and loved. For Jesus, disease is never an obstacle to encountering people, but rather, the contrary. He taught us that the human person is always precious, always endowed with a dignity that nothing and no one can erase, not even disease. Fragility is not an ill. And disease, which is an expression of fragility, cannot and must not make us forget that in the eyes of God our value is always priceless. - Pope Francis*

## We have so many stories to tell

[Victoria Slany, activities and volunteer coordinator—Evanston Summit](#)

[Scott Stewart, social worker—Edmonton General Continuing Care Centre](#)

[Human trafficking: the hidden pandemic](#)

[Angel Cradle provides a safe haven for infants in need](#)

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## Questions for reflection

**What does social justice mean to you?**

**How do you see social justice demonstrated where you work?**

## One way we define Social Justice is through the Mission Awards Social Justice Criteria

1. Works creatively to help marginalized individuals or groups participate more fully in their own care, teams or society as a whole.
2. Participates in activities that celebrate diversity and increase inclusion within Covenant.
3. Advocates for programs that provide services to under-served people or communities.
4. Speaks out courageously and consistently for those who cannot speak for themselves.
5. Works with others to build healthy, just communities inside and outside the Covenant family.
6. Tries to learn about diverse people or communities and shares that knowledge with others.
7. Welcomes those who may otherwise be excluded.