

Fair Trade - According to Wikipedia, Fair trade is an organized social movement that aims to help producers in developing countries to make better trading conditions and promote sustainability. Fair trade commodities are goods that have been exchanged from where they were grown or made to where they are purchased, and have been certified by a fair trade certification organization. Sixty percent of the fair trade market revolves around food products such as coffee, tea, cocoa, honey, and bananas. Non-food commodities include crafts, textiles, and flowers.

As Catholic Women our faith calls us to live out our Gospel values on a daily basis. The following was taken from the CRS (Catholic Relief Services) web site “The Catholic social teaching principles of respecting the dignity of work and caring for the poor are key ways in which we can do this. Through fair trade, we can use our economic power to contribute to the common good and live out these values. The idea of fairness in trade is at least as old as our Christian faith. In fact, a good way to think about fair trade is to reflect on Jesus’ life as a carpenter, when he worked alongside his adoptive father, Joseph, and before he began his public ministry. At its heart, fair trade is about building respectful, enduring relationships.”

Although “Fair Trade” has been around in the United States for over 50 years, many articles appeared in magazines and on the news over ten years ago about Fair trade coffee. The Fair Trade Federation was incorporated in the 1990’s to help establish Fair Trade businesses in the United States and Canada. In the article written by Erin Gorman of the then Co-op America (now Green America) and published in the Catholic Women in 2003. It was titled “Fair Trade Raises Hope” the emphasis was on coffee. Much has improved over years because we consumers have made it a priority in our lives to request and purchase items labeled as fair trade not just coffee.

Many stores have lists of items they carry that are certified Fair Trade. You can search the internet for places where they are sold. At most NCCW conventions there is an Exhibit booth with items from CRS/SERRV International. You can also order a catalogue from them and have a sale in your parish. **SERRV's** Sales & Marketing Toll-free: 888.243.4423 Tel: 608.251.3766 or you may look at both CRS crs.org/ and SERRV's www.serrv.org/ web sites for additional information.

Pope Francis on' Jan. 1, 2014 World Day of Peace in his message, "Fraternity, the Foundation and Pathway to Peace." "In the heart of every man and woman, is the desire for a full life, including that irrepressible longing for fraternity which draws us to fellowship with others and enables us to see them not as enemies or rivals, but as brothers and sisters to be accepted and embraced. "Fraternity is an essential human quality, for we are relational beings. A lively awareness of our relatedness helps us to look upon and to treat each person as a true sister or brother; without fraternity it is impossible to build a just society and a solid and lasting peace." Pope Francis adds, "The many situations of inequality, poverty and injustice, are signs not only of a profound lack of fraternity, but also of the absence of a culture of solidarity.

By supporting Fair Trade we can do our part to help resolve “the inequality, poverty and injustice” that Pope Francis spoke of. The following are Fair Trade logos you can look for when you shop:

