

Hotel Rwanda

Opening Prayer

God,

What a terrible history you have witnessed in Rwanda.

While the rest of the world looked the other way, you must have watched the hatred, the violence, the killing, with such sadness.

We pray that we can turn to you in repentance for the neglect of our world in responding to such horror.

Forgive us and help us to be inspired by the story of the few who, empowered by your Spirit, stood up to the perpetrators of violence and saved many.

Let us be moved to be peacemakers, healers, and beacons of light in the midst of oppression. Amen.

Reflections

“In recent few months, a hotbed of tension has dramatically enveloped the entire *region of the Great Lakes in Africa*. Burundi, Rwanda and Zaire in particular have found themselves trapped in the deadly cogs of unbridled violence and ethnic rivalry, which have plunged entire nations into human tragedies which should leave no one indifferent. No solution will ever be worked out until the political and military leaders are seated around the negotiating table, with the help of the international community, in order to study together how their necessary and unavoidable relationships should take shape.

“The international community, and I include here the regional organizations of Africa, must not only find a remedy for the indifference recently shown with regard to the humanitarian tragedies which the entire world has witnessed, but also increase its political activity lest new tragic developments the carving up of territories or the displacement of populations, create situations which no one will be able to control. The security of a country or region cannot be founded on the accumulation of risks.”

Pope John Paul II, Address to the Diplomatic Corps, Jan. 13, 1997.

“I also greet with affection the entire Rwandan people, imploring God to help them emerge from the trials they have been through. . . . You recall, Mr Ambassador, that the requirement of equitable justice is certainly the only foundation on which a state can build true peace and a strong democracy at the service of the integral development of all citizens without exception. One can only appreciate the efforts made in your country to promote justice: it is to be hoped that they bear fruit. This will contribute to reinforcing the national unity and to uprooting the culture of impunity that can only create hatred, exacerbating the inequalities between persons and the ethnic communities. It is a matter of allowing Rwandans to set out firmly and confidently on the path of effective reconciliation and sharing, while sincerely striving to seek and to express with courage the truth about the circumstances that led to the genocide. In a special way this implies giving up ethnocentrism, which gives rise to the domination of some over the others. It also means looking positively at the ground remaining to be covered to reach peace together.”

Pope John Paul II, Address to the New Ambassador of Rwanda to the Holy See, December 13, 2002

“Ten years have passed since, on April 7, 1994, in Rwanda, serious confrontations broke out between Hutus and Tutsis, which culminated in genocide, in which hundreds of thousands of people were brutally killed. Let us pray to the Lord that such a tragedy will not be repeated ever again. Don't be discouraged! Be builders of the civilization of love, animated by the word of the Lord. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.”

Pope John Paul II, March 28, 2004, St. Peter's Square

Closing Prayer

God who walks with us through all tragedy,
Our hearts cry out in solidarity with your people
in Rwanda, whose lives have been torn apart by hate,
misunderstanding, and terrible memories and loss.

God of Reconciliation, do not let such a tragedy be repeated ever again. Instead, help us to build a civilization of love and peace. Amen.

How to Use the Teacher's Guide

This teacher's guide for use with the movie, *Hotel Rwanda*, is a reproduction of that created by Amnesty International USA in cooperation with United Artists. EfJ has added reflection on Catholic Social Teaching. The original guide by Amnesty International USA can be found at: <http://www.amnestyusa.org/countries/sudan/hotelrwanda.html>

The guide consists of three lessons. Two lessons examine the role of the international community and the role of the media. The third lesson addresses the issue of transition – hope, accountability and how a country recovers from such a horrific event. Each lesson seeks to give the teacher a different approach to utilize with their students. Each lesson provides a series of questions and a teacher may choose to utilize the whole lesson or just the questions. Also, a *Hotel Rwanda* companion book is available at bookstores or from the publisher, Newmarket Press, in February 2005.

Teacher Preparation

Hotel Rwanda deals with a range of issues that are very difficult for most people, let alone students, to understand. This guide provides a framework for teachers to engage students in activities and lessons that will allow them to gain a greater understanding of these issues. It is suggested that teachers discuss some key components of the film with their students prior to watching the film.

In preparation, there are a number of concepts, terms and organizations that may be new to students. There are a number of outstanding resources and organizations (links included at the end of each lesson) that can help define and clarify such topics as genocide, crimes of war, refugees, and the role of the United Nations and how it functions, to name a few.

Prior to viewing the film, the teacher should ask the students to focus on the issues highlighted in the lessons. To aid students in this process, they should be given note cards or post-its in order to record their thoughts as they relate to the different issues.

Teachers should use the worksheet on the final page of this unit to think of ideas to consider the situation in the light of Catholic Social Teaching principles. How might the situation have turned out differently if we were all in-tuned to these principles?

Film Synopsis

In 1994, almost one million people were killed in a systematic genocide in the central African country of Rwanda. *Hotel Rwanda* tells the inspiring story of real-life hero Paul Rusesabagina (Don Cheadle), a hotel manager in Rwanda who used his courage and cunning to shelter over a thousand refugees from certain death. While people and governments chose to ignore the 1994 Rwandan genocide, one individual bravely risked his life and stood up to the horror, calling upon all of his resources to first save his family, then ended up saving 1,268 helpless refugees.

Program Objectives

1. To engage students with the idea that one person can make a difference.
2. To introduce discussion and analysis of the role of the media in the film *Hotel Rwanda* and other human rights crises.
3. To examine the role of various players within the context of a humanitarian and human rights crisis. To provide teachers with a framework for addressing current human rights crises.
4. To analyze the process of transition and healing through international justice mechanisms.
5. To use the Catholic Social Teaching principles such as rights and responsibilities, solidarity, the option for the poor and vulnerable and others, to critically reflect on events such as the Rwandan genocide.

Target Audience

This program has been designed for high school age students. It can be used in social and international studies classes, history classes and as a stand-alone learning opportunity. It can also be used in both school and community settings.

Lesson One: Personal and Collective Responsibility

Learning Objectives

1. To identify the importance of personal responsibility to the group or community.
2. To examine personal motivations for actions.

Introduce:

In small groups, students will reflect upon and discuss Paul's journey. The students will then be asked to reflect upon an instance in their life when they witnessed an injustice and then examine their response.

Teach:

1. Organize the students into groups of 3-4 to discuss the following:
 - What role did Tatiana Rusesabagina play in shaping Paul's actions?
 - Who else influenced Paul's decisions?
 - How did Paul's definition of the human family expand to include the community later on in the film?
 - How and why does Paul's attitude change over the course of the movie?
 - What rights of people were being violated and why did Paul feel personally responsible to respond? How would you characterize his level of personal responsibility and investment as events unfolded?
 - How would you describe Paul's level of empowerment throughout the movie? Explain.
2. Ask students to divide into pairs and have the students discuss the following personal experiences:
 - Recall a time they witnessed an injustice. Invite each student to share a story within the pair.
 - Did you consider intervening to stop the injustice while it was happening?
 - What influenced your decision for action or inaction?
 - What did you feel as you witnessed the injustice?
 - Put yourself in the victim's place and try to feel a sense of solidarity with that person. How would you want the witnesses or bystander to respond?
 - Would you react differently in the future?

Close:

When the students have completed their discussions, as a class discuss the following:

- What can we learn about the rights of others and about personal and collective responsibility in the case of the Rwandan genocide?
- How can the Catholic Social Teaching principle of the option for the poor and and vulnerable help guide us in considering rights and responsibilities in this situation?

Further Study:

- Continue to reflect on personal motivations for our actions.
- Compare and contrast global conflicts that resulted in either violence or peaceful resolution.
- Identify what can be done on the local level to bring awareness, such as letter writing, op-eds in local newspapers or involvement in student human rights, social justice or peace groups.

Resources:

Amnesty International, www.amnestyusa.org
Oxfam, www.oxfam.org.uk

Lesson Two: Hotel Rwanda - Counting on Media, but who is Accountable?

Learning Objectives:

1. To develop an understanding of the power media has to promote hateful actions and incite violence.
2. To analyze the role media has to inform and inspire action as it relates to human rights and humanitarian crises.
3. To explore how media is utilized today to inform people about domestic and international events.

Materials:

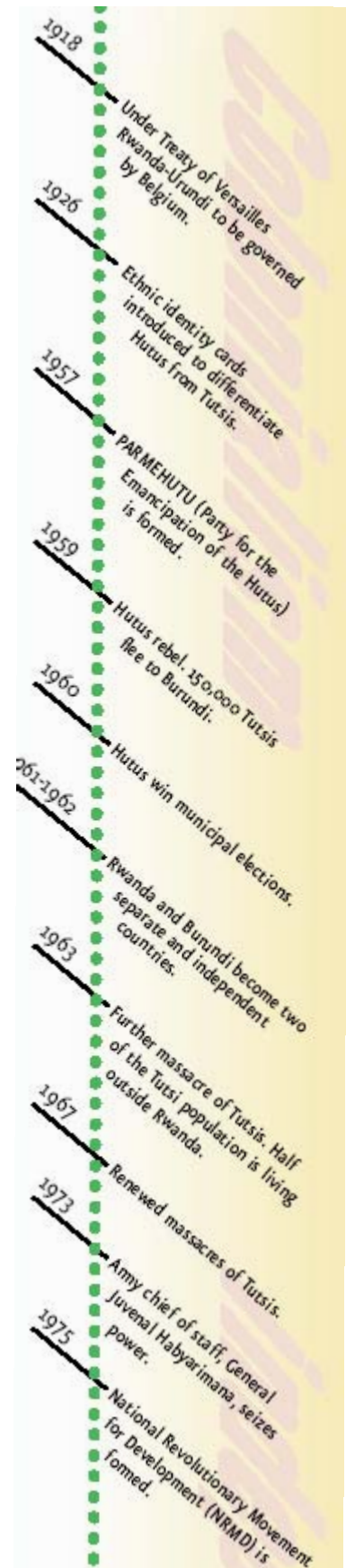
- The movie *Hotel Rwanda*
- 2 each: local newspaper, national newspaper and international newspaper
- News clips from both network and cable news
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Introduce:

1. Have each student read the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Ask them for their impressions of the declaration. Is there anything that stands out to them?
2. Have the students take out a blank sheet of paper. Prior to watching the movie, ask the students to consider the following questions: What role does the media play in their lives? Have they ever watched or read a story that made them angry or made them take action? Do they ever discuss the news or a show they watched with their parents? Friends? How far would they go to report a story? What responsibility does the media have to report situations of injustice?
3. Ask the students to think about the above questions as they watch the movie but from the perspective of the different characters in the movie.
4. View *Hotel Rwanda*.

Teach:

1. Organize the students into groups of 4-5 and ask them to discuss their responses to the questions from both their personal perspective and that of the characters in the movie.
2. Ask each group to report their responses. Note the responses on paper so all of the students can gauge the level of engagement and influence the media has on their peers as well as how their peers perceived the role of the media in the movie.
3. Give each group a newspaper and, environment permitting, a news clip to view.
4. Have each group look for local, national and international stories. Ask the students to answer the following questions: Do any of the articles pertain to human rights and human dignity? How did those articles make them feel? Do they think that the reporter did a good job in reporting the story from a human rights perspective? If yes, how; if no, why not? Did the article make them want to take action?
5. Have the class select one national and international situation. In groups, have the students research the situation and then write an article covering that story based on their research and their understanding of the situation.



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Close:

6. When the students have completed their articles, have the students share their articles and as a class discuss the following:

- What was compelling about the stories they selected to write about?
- What sources of information did they use to research the stories?
- What was the most challenging aspect of this assignment?
- The most interesting aspect?
- The most rewarding aspect?
- What was their goal in writing the story?

7. Wrap up points: A great deal of research has been done on the role of media in influencing how people respond to, engage in and take action on issues that affect them. In the case of Rwanda, the media was used to instigate and fuel the genocide. Also, because of a lack of understanding, foreign journalists initially reported on the story as a tribal conflict. In addition, the danger to the journalist of getting real footage was tremendous.

Extension Activities:

Ask the students to listen to two different news radio stations. Have them look for the same information as they did for the print and television news and report back what they found.

Critical Questions:

1. How were words and images in the media presented in the movie?
2. What was the response from different characters in the movie from the hotel staff, the people in Kigali and the rest of Rwanda, the foreign nationals, the foreign press, the UN, the international community to the following: the information coming across the radio in Rwanda; the attitude and perception of the foreign journalists in Rwanda; the reporting out of Rwanda to the international community; the news coming into Rwanda from outside of the country?
3. What was the rest of the world watching, reading and listening to during the genocide in 1994?
4. Who is accountable for the actions and inaction of the media?
5. What should we expect from the media; how can we hold them accountable?
6. What is the level of public responsibility when issues are brought to light by the media?

Further Study:

Human Rights Watch, www.hrw.org/reports/1999/rwanda/

Crimes of War, www.crimesofwar.org/onnews/news-rwanda.html

Frontline's "Ghosts of Rwanda," www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/ghosts/

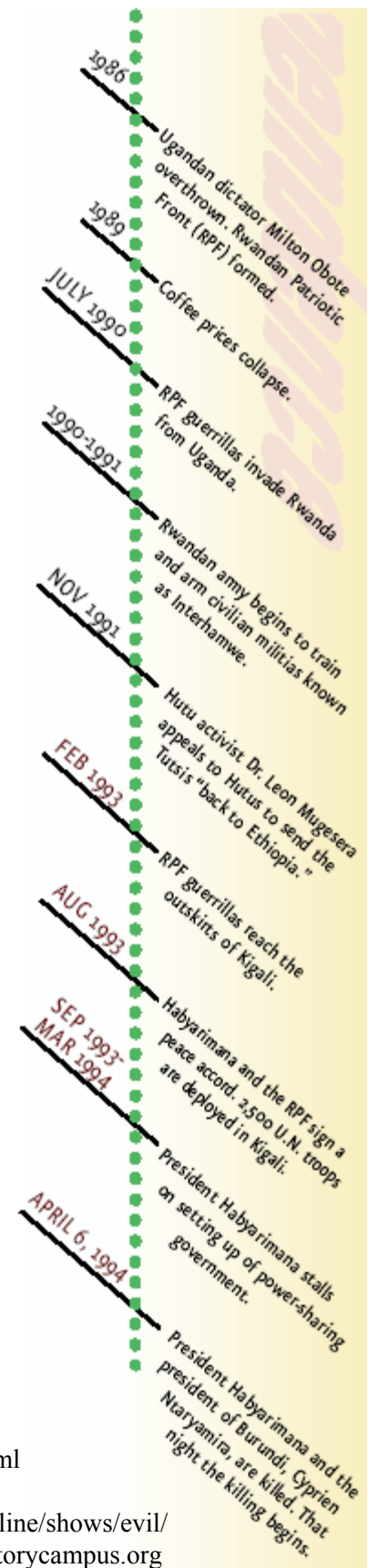
Amnesty International, www.amnestyusa.org/amnestynow/general_and_genocide.html

Global Issues, www.globalissues.org/HumanRights/Media/Propaganda/Rwanda.asp

PBS/P.O.V website, Frontline's "Triumph of Evil," www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/evil/

Facing History and Ourselves: The Case of Rwanda Hate Radio, www.facinghistorycampus.org

The American University, Washington College of Law, www.wcl.american.edu/humright/center/rwanda



Lesson Three: The International Community

Learning Objective:

To examine and analyze various groups within the international community and their responses during the genocide.

Introduce:

The Rwandan genocide could and should have been prevented, had all the components of the international community acted decisively, forcefully and in a coordinated manner.

Teach:

1. Identify the international community mentioned in the film, including the United Nations, United States, Belgium, France, humanitarian/human rights organizations (for example: The Red Cross), and the Hutus and Tutsis.
2. Divide the students into six groups, identifying themselves as a sector of the “international community” mentioned above (the United Nations, the United States, Belgium, etc.). Have the students analyze their group’s position before and during the violent conflict. Students should discuss key questions in their small groups such as:
 - List at least two examples from the film about each of the constituent groups.
 - How did your group’s interests affect your actions/inactions?
 - What influence did your group have during the conflict?
 - What is the nature and limit of responsibility of each group? Support your personal view with evidence from the film and/or from your own knowledge of current events.

Close:

3. After the groups have had 15-20 minutes to talk, reconvene the class as a whole to give students an opportunity to share their ideas and thoughts from the smaller groups.
 - Discuss each of your roles within the international community.
 - What kind of force would be needed to stop the genocide?
 - Discuss the failure of each group to respond. How was the response portrayed in the film?

- At what points could someone have intervened and possibly changed the history of the genocide?
- In the film, Colonel Oliver (Nick Nolte) displays his frustration in the bar to Paul for the international community’s decision not to intervene in Rwanda. What was his statement and do you agree? Why or why not?

Futher Study:

International organizations such as the United Nations play a crucial role in shaping opinion, devising strategies and mounting an effective response to human rights violations.

- Find out about events occurring around the world today. For example, regarding the crisis in Sudan, examine which international humanitarian/human rights organizations are engaged in the crisis.
- Answer key questions such as: What are the rights and responsibilities of those involved? What steps are being taken to intervene during the conflict? What agencies are involved in the intervention?

Resources:

International Rescue Committee, www.theirc.org
Human Rights Watch, www.hrw.org
United Nations, www.un.org
Doctors Without Borders, www.msf.org
Amnesty International, www.amnestyusa.org

Lesson Four: Hotel Rwanda - Resolution of Conflict

Learning Objectives:

1. To understand the victims' needs for resolution of conflict.
2. To reflect on each major group in the conflict and the necessary steps in the process of conflict resolution.
3. Through role-play, understand the process of conflict resolution.

Introduce:

Round-table conflict resolution: students will work in groups as part of the process of coming to terms with the genocide. After having read multiple sources on the resolution of the genocide (see Internet sites below), students will form three groups which will be the basis for the roundtable: Never Again (Rwandan genocide victims' organization), the Rwandan national government, and the UN. In their individual groups, students will create their platform based on several key issues: admission of guilt, reparations, trials, and sentences. In the roundtable, the three groups will discuss these issues and work towards consensus-building regarding how to step forward with each of these categories.

Teach:

1. Currently there are about 100,000 individuals suspected of committing acts of genocide who are imprisoned in Rwanda. This represents a huge emotional and financial burden to all parties. There needs to be a way in which Rwandan society deals with the issue of justice and reconciliation. This then is the task that we will look at. We will start with the assumption that all parties agree that a trial will need to take place, in order to assist with the sense of closure and also to bring those responsible parties to justice. Students will form three interest groups - Never Again (the Rwandan genocide victims' organization), the Rwandan national government, and the UN. In these groups they will reach decisions on the following issues:

- *Justice*: Should an admission of guilt be a required step in each trial?
- *Reparations*: Should this be considered? How much? How should they be awarded?
- *Sentences*: What should this consist of? Jail time? Is the death penalty being considered? Is that reasonable, considering the types of crimes committed and that there

are 100,000 awaiting trials? Do commanders/leaders of the genocide have a greater responsibility than individuals who carried out orders?

- *Trials*: Should they be held at the local, national, or international level, or any combination of the three? How and where is it possible to carry out fair trials? Who are to be the judges?

2. Once each group is in agreement, the roundtable will begin. The facilitator/teacher should set ground rules as to how to proceed with the roundtable, regarding selecting representatives, length of presentations and rebuttals, etc. Remember, the objective of the activity is to reach a consensus on the issues at hand.

Close:

3. As a class, what are the main ideas that came out of the roundtable? Did the group come to a consensus on any of the topics? Why/why not? What are your thoughts/feelings coming away from the activity?

Extension Activities:

Carry out a historical research project on any of the main groups involved in the Rwandan genocide.

Resources:

Amnesty International, www.amnestyusa.org

Aegis, www.aegistrust.org

Center for Human Rights & Humanitarian Law, wcl.american.edu/humright/center

International Campaign to End Genocide, www.genocidewatch.org

International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, <http://www.ictt.org>

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, country pages, <http://www.ohchr.org/english/countries>

Prevent Genocide International, www.preventgenocide.org

Survivors Fund (SURF), <http://www.survivors-fund.org.uk>

US Holocaust Museum Committee on Conscience, www.ushmm.org

Vision TV: Remember Rwanda, www.visiontv.ca/RememberRwanda/index.htm

Washington College of Law War Crimes Research Office, wcl.american.edu/warcrimes



Timeline Rwanda: A Chronology of Key Events

PRE-COLONIAL

In this period, Rwanda is a highly centralized kingdom presided over by Tutsi kings who hail from one ruling clan. The king rules through three categories of chiefs: the cattle chiefs, the land chiefs, and the military chiefs. The chiefs are predominantly, but not exclusively, Tutsi, especially the cattle and military chiefs. Although the relationship between the king and the rest of the population is unequal and parasitic, the relationship between the ordinary Hutu, Tutsi and Twa is one of mutual benefit mainly through the exchanges of their labor. The relationship between the ordinary people is symbiotic. By the time the Germans come as the first colonial conquerors, the social structures of present-day Rwanda are highly organized and pyramidal in nature. The hierarchical and organized society of Rwanda lays a foundation upon which the subsequent genocide of 1994 is constructed.

COLONIALISM

1918 Under the Treaty of Versailles the former German colony of Rwanda-Urundi is made a United Nations protectorate to be governed by Belgium. The two territories (later to become Rwanda and Burundi) are administered separately under two different Tutsi monarchs. Both Germany and Belgium turn the traditional Hutu-Tutsi relationship into a class system. The minority Tutsi (14%) are favored over the Hutus (85%) and given privileges and western-style education. The Belgians use the Tutsi minority to enforce their rule.

1926 Belgians introduce a system of ethnic identity cards differentiating Hutus from Tutsis.

1957 PARMEHUTU (Party for the Emancipation of the Hutus) is formed while Rwanda is still under Belgian rule.

1959 Hutus rebel against the Belgian colonial power and the Tutsi elite; 150,000 Tutsis flee to Burundi.

1960 Hutus win municipal elections organized by Belgian colonial rulers.

INDEPENDENCE

1961-1962 Belgium withdraws. Rwanda and Burundi become two separate and independent countries. A Hutu revolution in Rwanda installs a new president, Gregoire Kayibanda; fighting continues and thousands of Tutsis are forced to flee. In Burundi, Tutsis retain power.

1963 Further massacre of Tutsis, this time in response to military attack by exiled Tutsis in Burundi. Again more refugees leave the country. It is estimated that by the mid-1960s half of the Tutsi population is living outside Rwanda.

1967 Renewed massacres of Tutsis.

1973 Purge of Tutsis from universities. Fresh outbreak of killings, again directed at the Tutsi community. The army chief of staff, General Juvenal Habyarimana, seizes power, pledging to restore order. He sets up a one-party state. A policy of ethnic quotas is entrenched in all public service employment. Tutsis are restricted to nine percent of available jobs.

1975 Habyarimana's political party, the National Revolutionary Movement for Development (NRMD) is formed. Hutus from the president's home area of northern Rwanda are given overwhelming preference in public service and military jobs. This pattern of exclusion of the Tutsis continues throughout the 1970s and 1980s

1986 In Uganda, Rwandan exiles are among the victorious troops of Yoweri Museveni's National Resistance Army who take power, overthrowing the dictator Milton Obote. The exiles then form the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), a Tutsi dominated organization.

1989 Coffee prices collapse causing severe economic hardship in Rwanda.

July 1990 Under pressure from Western aid donors, Habyarimana concedes the principle of multi-party democracy.



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Oct 1990 RPF guerrillas invade Rwanda from Uganda. After fierce fighting in which French and Zairean troops are called in to assist the government, a cease-fire is signed on March 29, 1991.

1990-1991 The Rwandan army begins to train and arm civilian militias known as Interhamwe (“Those who stand together”). For the next three years Habyarimana stalls on the establishment of a genuine multi-party system with power-sharing. Throughout this period thousands of Tutsis are killed in separate massacres around the country. Opposition politicians and journalists are persecuted.

Nov 1991 Prominent Hutu activist Dr. Leon Mugesera appeals to Hutus to send the Tutsis “back to Ethiopia” via the rivers.

Feb 1993 RPF launches a fresh offensive and the guerrillas reach the outskirts of Kigali. French forces are again called in to help the government side. Fighting continues for several months.

Aug 1993 Following months of negotiations, Habyarimana and the RPF sign a peace accord that allows for the return of refugees and a coalition Hutu-RPF government. 2,500 U.N. troops are deployed in Kigali to oversee the implementation of the accord.

Sept 1993-Mar 1994 President Habyarimana stalls on setting up a power-sharing government. Training of militias intensifies. Extremist radio station, Radio Mille Collines, begins broadcasting exhortations to attack the Tutsis. Human rights groups warn the international community of impending calamity.

March 1994 Many Rwandan human rights activists evacuate their families from Kigali believing massacres are imminent.

April 6, 1994 President Habyarimana and the president of Burundi, Cyprien Ntaryamira, are killed when Habyarimana’s plane is shot down near Kigali Airport. Extremists, suspecting that the president is finally about to implement the Arusha Peace Accords, are believed to be behind the attack. That night the killing begins.

Assignment:

1. Divide the students into four groups, have them research and create a timeline from each group’s perspective from 1994, after the plane was shot down, to present. The four assigned groups are the United Nations, Hutus, Tutsis, and the fourth group should represent other global events.
2. Upon completion, have students place their respective timelines on the wall. Compare and analyze each one from a historical perspective. Discuss the differences in each of the timelines as a class.

Timeline taken from PBS Frontline:

www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/rwanda/etc/cron.html

Resources:

PBS Frontline

www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/ghosts/etc/crontext.html

BBC World News

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/3580247.stm>



Application of Catholic Social Teaching to the Film

Using the principles of Catholic Social Teaching listed below as your critical analysis lens, think of ideas to examine the film in a way which will not only help students better understand the film, but will also allow them to engage in a better understanding of their world as a result.

Catholic Social Teaching

Application to the Text

1. Human Life and Dignity

All human beings are sacred, from the time of conception until natural death, because we are created in God's image.

2. Call to Family, Community, and Participation

Human beings are social. We are called to live in community, and to use our gifts for our own enrichment and for the good of others.

3. Rights and Responsibilities

Human beings have rights in accordance with their dignity as children of God. Each right carries a corresponding responsibility.

4. Option for the Poor and the Vulnerable

As long as serious inequities exist in allocation of power and resources, Christians are called to particular care for those who have less.

5. Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers

Work is not simply a commodity to be exchanged for a wage. Workers share in God's creative action, and have a right to a living wage.

6. Solidarity

God's love is not limited by barriers of race, nation or geographical distance. We are all responsible for one another.

7. Care for God's Creation

The universe is created by God, and loaned to us for our prudent use. We are to be good stewards of creation, mindful of generations to follow us.

