



## Teacher's Guide: Critical Concerns Bingo for Elementary Schools

### Critical Concerns Overview

The Sisters of Mercy were founded out of a deep concern for the needs of person who are poor. Today, their ministry is focused on addressing unmet needs through five “Critical Concerns” – anti-racism, Earth, immigration, nonviolence and women. These Critical Concerns are embraced not only by the Sisters of Mercy but also by their sponsored ministries, including schools that are part of the Mercy Education System of the Americas (MESA).

- ✚ **Earth:** strive to act in harmony and interdependence with all of creation.
- ✚ **Immigration:** work to ensure the dignity of immigrants, refugees and victims of human trafficking and stand in solidarity with all who suffer oppression.
- ✚ **Nonviolence:** promote peace in families, in communities, in business and among nations.
- ✚ **Anti-Racism:** oppose racism in all its forms and face and address it among themselves and in the communities where they live and work.
- ✚ **Women:** work for equality of women, celebrating their contributions, advocating for their rights and speaking out against gender discrimination in the Church and society.

Each of the Critical Concerns is represented by an icon – the five icons are pictured below. It will be important to familiarize your students with the icons, if they are not already, for the Critical Concerns Bingo activity.








If you are interested in more information and activities around the Critical Concerns:

- ✚ [MESA educational resources on the Critical Concerns](#)
- ✚ [Critical Concerns poster and flyer for your classroom](#)

We recognize that the Critical Concerns are built into many areas of your school curriculum and that adequate scaffolding is necessary for an activity to truly make an impact in a student's mind and heart. For the Critical Concerns Bingo activity, older students may wish to commit to completing five squares in a row within a designated timeframe – perhaps during Mercy Week – or filling their entire card before the end of the year. Younger students may work together to fill five squares together as a class, with teachers choosing appropriate activities. Educators may also choose to customize the editable and/or blank versions of the cards for their students.

## Critical Concerns Bingo

Critical Concern	Bingo Activity	Additional Resources, if needed
Anti-Racism 	Make a "Me" collage with pictures to describe who you are and what you like. Share with classmates to learn about the uniqueness of each person.	
	Pray with classmates or family: <a href="#">"We Are All in God's Image."</a>	This prayer from the USCCB is one of their many K-8 educational resources on anti-racism. <a href="#">View more here.</a>
	Visit your school or local library. Choose a book to read about people who are different from you.	
	Enjoy a snack or meal from a cultural that is different from your own.	For recipe ideas: <a href="#">International Recipes for Kids</a>
	Make a sign or sidewalk chalk art in support of anti-racism.	Possible slogans: "Black Lives Matter," "Love One Another," "Diversity is Beautiful" and "Stand Against Racism."
Earth 	<a href="#">Make a bird feeder using recycled materials.</a>	
	Try one new Earth-friendly practice.	For ideas, visit: <a href="#">Simple Earth-friendly practices for kids.</a>
	Watch and reflect on this <a href="#">animated version of Laudato Si'</a> .	
	Plant and nurture a seed as a way to appreciate the wonder of God's creation.	
	Create a piece of art using recycled products.	
Immigration 	Does your family celebrate any traditions from another country? Write a reflection or create an illustration to describe it.	
	Watch a video about <a href="#">Juan Diego and Our Lady of Guadalupe.</a>	
	<a href="#">Take an interactive tour of Ellis Island.</a>	There is also a <a href="#">lesson plan</a> to accompany the tour of Ellis Island.
	<a href="#">Read stories about young immigrants from Ukraine, South Korea, Sierra Leone, India and Mexico.</a>	
	Read the book <i>My Diary from Here to There</i> .	If this book is not already in your classroom, it is available on <a href="#">Amazon</a> and <a href="#">you can listen to it being read here.</a>

<p>Nonviolence</p> 	<p>Listen to and sing along with the song “Let There Be Peace on Earth.”</p>	<p>To listen to the song online: <a href="#">Children’s choir singing at the Ground Zero Memorial in New York City in the presence of Pope Francis.</a></p> <p>We encourage the use of gender-inclusive language in the song: <i>“With God our Creator / Family all are we, / Let us walk with each other / In perfect harmony.”</i></p>
	<p>Write a list of three things you can do to help yourself feel calmer when you are upset.</p>	
	<p>Ask a classmate (someone who you do not usually talk/play with) to be your partner for work in school or to play at recess.</p>	
	<p>Meditate for a few minutes.</p>	<p>Two meditations for children: <a href="#">Friendly Wishes</a> and <a href="#">God Loves You So Much</a></p>
	<p>Do any shows you watch or games you play have violence? Try to give them up for a day.</p>	
<p>Women</p> 	<p>Watch <a href="#">In God Alone</a> and complete the <a href="#">accompanying worksheet</a>.</p>	
	<p>Write a letter to a woman who inspires you.</p>	
	<p>Collect items to donate to a local women’s shelter.</p>	
	<p><a href="#">Read about the life of Malala Yousafzai.</a></p>	<p>For younger students, you might consider the book <a href="#">Malala’s Magic Pencil</a>, by Malala Yousafzai.</p>
	<p>Draw a picture of your favorite female character from a book or movie. Why do you admire her?</p>	