Fertile Question: *What does it mean to be a religious citizen in a multi-faith world?*

Core Content Area 3: Religious citizenship and human rights

**TOPIC 3.3: My identity in a multi-faith world**

**Depthing Understanding: Promoting religious citizenship**

In this lesson students will investigate ways that religious citizenship can be promoted at the local level.

**LESSON**

**For students to investigate the ways that religious citizenship can be promoted at a local level, complete the following activity:**

1. Explore examples of the first action of religious citizenship according to Gallagher: *Religious citizens accept the moral imperative to contribute to the betterment of the community through acting locally but thinking globally.*
   a. Analyse the phenomenon of the mud army from the Brisbane floods of 2010.
      i. View the short clip that pays tribute to the mud army from the Brisbane floods.
      ii. Discuss the reasons why so many people helped out strangers in this way? Many people are taught by their faith traditions that helping one’s neighbour is the right thing to do, and the Golden Rule of doing to others what you would like them to do to you is a teaching of many faith traditions. Many people also are not religious and simply help because they want to. Some would call themselves religious citizens, others would simply consider themselves good citizens. Discuss the benefits for the community when people help one another.

2. Explore ways of promoting religious citizenship in your school.
   a. Choose one or more of Gallagher’s eight actions for religious citizenship and develop a way of promoting actions for religious citizenship within your school/community context.

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Charles A. Gallagher (2004) proposes eight actions that define how religious citizenship might be manifest at the local, state and global levels.

Religious citizens accept the moral imperative to contribute to the betterment of the community through acting locally but thinking globally.

Religious citizens are honest and trustworthy in their dealing with others. They see the human being before the cultural difference and actively acknowledge that diversity contributes to the rich tapestry that is human existence.

Religious citizens are fully aware of what their religious tradition asks of them. In the context of Catholic Christianity, religious citizens know what they subscribe to as a Catholic religious citizen. In short, they walk their talk, leading by example.

Religious citizens unequivocally respect the rights of others to practice their religion with integrity and authenticity and actively support that right through word and action.

Religious citizens are able to give a religious voice to everyday events. They do not blindly accept the hegemonic cultural mores of the day but become informed about the world in which they live. In short, religious citizens recognise that they are a citizen of the world.

Religious citizens respect the rights of others but hold others to account for their actions. Words matter. Actions matter.

Religious citizens take seriously their responsibility for the challenges facing the world. Gallagher writes at a practical level, “Hate violence, act thoughtfully, hate injustice, write to your local member”.

Religious citizens bring about their own ecological conversion and help others to do the same.