

The Reformers: Martin Luther and César Chávez

Grade 7



Rate the importance of each quality or characteristic by assigning it a number from 1 to 5 (with 1 being the most important and 5 being the least important). Discuss your answers with the class.

[Answers will vary.]

_____ Compassion	_____ Selflessness	_____ Fairness
_____ Honesty	_____ Empathy	_____ Open-mindedness
_____ Respect	_____ Humility	_____ Determination

César Chávez embodied all the qualities above as he worked to improve his own life and the lives of other farm workers. Chávez also acted as a voice for animals. He adopted a vegetarian lifestyle early in life and went on to advocate for animal rights until his death. He recognized that change begins with self-sacrifice.

What does self-sacrifice mean to you?

[Answers will vary.]

Martin Luther (1483-1546), a controversial religious figure remembered for his involvement in the Protestant Reformation, challenged the accepted rules and practices of the Christian Church. Although many of his actions and words have been the source of great debate, he was motivated by his own spiritual strength. Luther was criticized and condemned for his beliefs and was eventually banned from the church as a political enemy.

What makes people willing to risk criticism, opposition, and condemnation by leading movements that challenge the *status quo*?

[Answer: Strong convictions and a firm belief that their proposed change will benefit a group or society as a whole.]

What issues have you struggled with in your life? What did you do to bring about change?

[Answers will vary.]

Chávez voiced his strongly held belief that the church should be a servant of the people and encourage social change, justice, and love of all life.

“We ask the Church to sacrifice with the people for social change, for justice, and for love of brother. We don’t ask for words. We ask for deeds. We don’t ask for paternalism. We ask for servants.”

—César Chávez

“Not to hurt our humble brethren is our first duty to them, but to stop there is not enough. We have a higher mission—to be of service to them wherever they require it.”

—St. Francis of Assisi (1181-1226), the patron saint of animals and ecology

Compare the two quotes above. Are they similar or different? Explain.

[Answers will vary. Example: They are similar in that both Chávez and St. Francis saw value in being of service to all life. They believed that treating all life with respect and empathy would help people value one another. Chávez advocated for the rights of both people and animals, and St. Francis’ words remind us that each one of us has an obligation to be a guardian of all life.]

Read the article "The Mexican American and the Church" from El Grito. According to this article, what did Chávez want from the Catholic Church?

[Answers will vary. Example: Chávez believed that the church represented the "presence of God on Earth" and had, for too long, neglected its people. The California Migrant Ministry was a model of what Chávez desired of the Catholic Church—people serving others rather than taking advantage of them.]

St. Francis is believed to have interpreted the gospel literally. He believed that "if you have men who will exclude any of God's creatures from the shelter of compassion and pity, you will have men who deal likewise with their fellow men." He did not eat animals, wear their skin or fur, or harm them in any other way.

Based on what you've read, what was St. Francis asking of people?

[Answers will vary. Example: St. Francis was asking people to extend the hand of compassion to all life. He believed that without restriction or hesitation, everyone has a duty to care for other humans, animals, and the environment and that a person who would harm animals or exclude them from the hand of compassion would surely have no hesitation in harming other humans.]

[For further discussion, explore the concept of the Golden Rule.]

Are you a person who serves others without asking for something in return? Do you exclude certain people or animals from compassion because they are different?

[Answers will vary.]

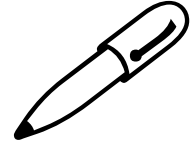
What can you do to serve your community and all the life in it?

[Answers will vary.]

Name: _____ Date: _____

The Reformers: **Martin Luther and César Chávez**

Grade 7



Rate the importance of each quality or characteristic by assigning it a number from 1 to 5 (with 1 being the most important and 5 being the least important). Discuss your answers with the class.

- | | | |
|------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| _____ Compassion | _____ Selflessness | _____ Fairness |
| _____ Honesty | _____ Empathy | _____ Open-mindedness |
| _____ Respect | _____ Humility | _____ Determination |

César Chávez embodied all the qualities above as he worked to improve his own life and the lives of other farm workers. Chávez also acted as a voice for animals. He adopted a vegetarian lifestyle early in life and went on to advocate for animal rights until his death. He recognized that change begins with self-sacrifice.

What does self-sacrifice mean to you?

Martin Luther (1483-1546), a controversial religious figure remembered for his involvement in the Protestant Reformation, challenged the accepted rules and practices of the Christian Church. Although many of his actions and words have been the source of great debate, he was motivated by his own spiritual strength. Luther was criticized and condemned for his beliefs and was eventually banned from the church as a political enemy.

What makes people willing to risk criticism, opposition, and condemnation by leading movements that challenge the *status quo*?

What issues have you struggled with in your life? What did you do to bring about change?

Chávez voiced his strongly held belief that the church should be a servant of the people and encourage social change, justice, and love of all life.

“We ask the Church to sacrifice with the people for social change, for justice, and for love of brother. We don’t ask for words. We ask for deeds. We don’t ask for paternalism. We ask for servants.”

—César Chávez

“Not to hurt our humble brethren is our first duty to them, but to stop there is not enough. We have a higher mission—to be of service to them wherever they require it.”

—St. Francis of Assisi (1181-1226), the patron saint of animals and ecology

Compare the two quotes above. Are they similar or different? Explain.

Read the article “The Mexican American and the Church” from El Grito. According to this article, what did Chávez want from the Catholic Church?

St. Francis is believed to have interpreted the gospel literally. He believed that “if you have men who will exclude any of God’s creatures from the shelter of compassion and pity, you will have men who deal likewise with their fellow men.” He did not eat animals, wear their skin or fur, or harm them in any other way.

Based on what you’ve read, what was St. Francis asking of people?

Are you a person who serves others without asking for something in return? Do you exclude certain people or animals from compassion because they are different?

What can you do to serve your community and all the life in it?
