

The Law of Sharing

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT

1. In this session, Sr. Joan redefines stealing as a communal violation more than a personal transgression. Why do you think she redefines the term in this way? How might our society function if we began to consider stealing as a crime against community? How might our attitudes toward the one who steals change? And how might our laws change?
2. According to Sr. Joan, stealing violates relationships—be it between individuals or between communities or between companies or organizations. How does this violation work? Given your answer, how can a relationship and its lost trust be restored? Can you imagine a society in which we concentrate on restoration?
3. Sr. Joan does not flinch in challenging our understanding of our property, our possessions or our “money.” She insists on making us look at how, as individuals, as a people or a nation, we share with those around us. In the face of increasing wealth disparity in our country and around the world, what use can we make of the ancient commandment to share? Is this commandment about religious ideal or does it now raise questions about human survival on this planet? And is the admonition to share about charity? Or is it about a call to transform our society and the way we distribute resources? As important as charitable acts are, can they actually feed the hungry and heal the sick?