

SPRING 2025

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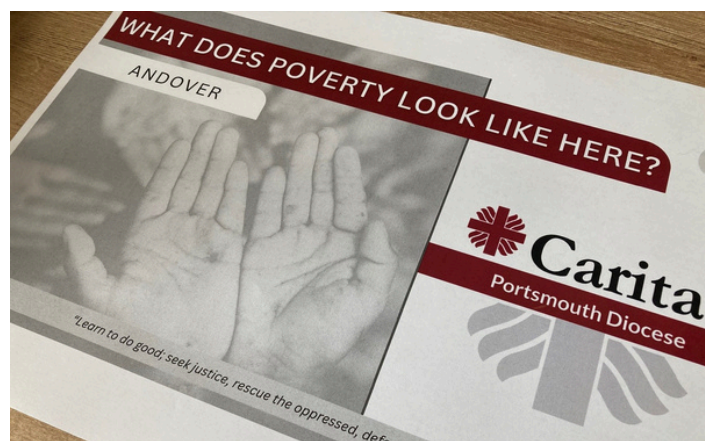
Welcome to the Spring issue of the Caritas newsletter.

*“Learn to do good; seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan, plead for the widow.” Isaiah 1:17*

This quote from Isaiah was chosen to be on the front of the Church Beyond Walls information packs that have been distributed to all parishes across the diocese. It highlights a key part of our Christian life of reaching out to those around us. As we journey through this Jubilee Year we ask that our hearts are continually transformed by the touch of Jesus so that we share His love and compassion to all those in need.

This newsletter is focused on the opportunities to learn, understand and engage with the variety of needs that exist within our diocese. This will be followed by an issue with projects that are already happening in the diocese to help meet local need.

For more information about any of content, please contact Jenny at [caritas@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:caritas@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)



## What does poverty look like here?

One of the questions to ask in order to support the development of missionary communities is, ‘what does poverty look like here?’ Knowing this enables informed actions to be taken to reach out to those in need in our wider communities. To help, Caritas has been analysing key areas of need within the diocese, including poverty and financial insecurity, housing and homelessness, ageing population, loneliness, domestic abuse, migrants and refugees and modern slavery. Each section looks at the issues at the national, diocesan and local level, and is accompanied by suggested ways to help. This information has been distributed to all parishes to help guide social action activity in the area. A [prayer leaflet](#) has also been put together to accompany the pack. For more information, a copy of your parish pack, or if you want to start a social action project in your parish, please contact Jenny at [caritas@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:caritas@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk). You can read more about poverty and financial insecurity across the diocese in a recent [E-news article](#).

## Social Action and the Jubilee Year

The Catholic Bishops of England and Wales have identified 6 social action issues that are challenging us to live the Jubilee in our parishes including Food Poverty, Debt, Modern Slavery, Care for Our Common Home, Forgiveness and Rest. They have put together a reflection guide which is ideal to use in your parish or Jubilee small group.



## Two-Child Benefit Cap

As part of their campaign to get the two-child benefit cap lifted, the Caritas Social Action Network, is conducting this survey to assess the impact of the two-child benefit cap and the broader effects of the current economic climate on Catholic families in England and Wales.

The insights gathered from this survey will play a crucial role in the advocacy efforts to address child poverty and influence policy change. We are keen to hear directly from Catholic families about their experiences. Click here to take the survey, deadline 30 April 2025. All information is kept anonymously.



## Attending the CSAN Parliamentary Reception

In February, Caritas had the opportunity to visit the House of Commons along with the other 50 members of the Caritas Social Action Network. We had been invited to attend a Parliamentary Reception hosted by MP, Mike Kane, to highlight the breadth and depth of Catholic charitable action across the country. A few MP's popped in, including from our diocese. With over £484 million being spent on supporting the common good, the Church has a huge impact across the country.

It was also an opportunity to engage with MP's on key issues including:

1. The ending of the harmful Two-Child Benefit Cap, which is pushing families into deeper poverty.
2. Opposing the Assisted Dying Bill, advocating for dignity in end-of-life care rather than legislation that undermines the value of life.

Click on the links to find out more and add your voice.

Please consider making a donation to support our work. You can DONATE online at <https://donate.giveasyoulive.com/charity/caritas-diocese-of-portsmouth>.

**Thank you** to everyone who has already done so, because of your support we are able to reach out to more people in need across the diocese.



## 10 Year Anniversary of Laudato Si'

This May is the 10-year anniversary of the publication of the Encyclical letter 'Laudato Si'' by Pope Francis. In his letter to humanity, reminding us that caring for our common home is part of our role as Christians, and that the over consumption of the rich, has on the greatest impact on the poor.

This anniversary falls as it is reported that January 2025 was the hottest on record, with an average global temperature of 13.23 degrees. This is 0.79C above the 1991-2020 average and 1.75C higher than the pre-industrial level. It is also the 18<sup>th</sup> month in the last 19, that saw the global average surface air temperature more than 1.5C above pre-industrial levels.

In this Year of Jubilee, there is still so much we can do to hope for a brighter future for generations to come. In the follow up document, 'Laudate Deum', Pope Francis recognises that change has to happen at international level, but that this is driven by cultural change from local level. This is the change we are called to make. We need to "live simply, so others might simply live".

On Saturday 10th May, CAFOD and Caritas are holding a joint event that will be packed with practical information of how we can make a difference in our lives and that of our parish. There will be an opportunity to:

- Listen to talks from parishes working towards or have completed the CAFOD's Live Simply Award.
- Take part in the Let us Dream activity from Journey to 2030.
- Talk to the Diocese Estates team about how your parish might become more energy efficient along with case studies from other churches.
- Take back lots of ideas and resources to help make changes in your life and to help your parish celebrate Laudato Si' week later in the month.

You can find a flyer [here](#). Please advertise it in your parish and Jubilee small group. To help us with numbers, we would be grateful if you can sign up [here](#). Everyone welcome.

### Laudato Si' Animators

If you are interested in joining a global community to Care for Creation and build a better world, consider completing the [Laudato Si' Animators programme](#). Deadline to sign up is Wednesday 16th April, with the first online session on Wednesday 30th April. There is a small network of animators in the diocese, it will be great to have you on board.



**LAUDATO SI'  
MOVEMENT**  
Catholics for Our Common Home

## Charity and Volunteer Networking Event



Portsmouth Diocese

**Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> June 2025**  
**2:30pm-4:30pm**

St John the Baptist RC Church Hall  
Alexandra Road, Andover SP10 3AD

### Charity and Volunteer Networking Event

On 7th June you are invited to a Charity and Volunteer Networking Event at St John the Baptist parish in Andover.

You will be able to:

- Chat to different charities such as CAFOD, SVP and Stella Maris to hear about their work and volunteering opportunities.
- Explore ideas for your own parish, by chatting to staff and volunteers about projects already running in the diocese, as well as the chance to look round the Andover foodbank.
- Find out how Caritas can support you in your parish or school to support those in need.

Everyone is welcome so please do advertise it in your parish. If you run (or know someone that does) a parish social action project and would like to have a stand, please get in touch. We would like to showcase a range of projects so people in other parishes have the chance to ask questions and take back ideas. Please contact us at [caritas@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:caritas@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk).



### Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery

#### Ambassador Programme

Human Trafficking & Modern Slavery (HTMS) is the second largest profitable crime and is steadily growing. It impacts every country and targets victims of all ages and backgrounds. HTMS is often regarded as a hidden crime as it is difficult to collect data on victims and enterprises, but we can all do our part to ensure our communities are safeguarded. Caritas Social Action Network are launching a HTMS Ambassador Programme through which we can all become more aware of the issue and how to identify it happening in our communities but also to collaborate with other charities and local agencies to help combat HTMS in our Communities. If you are interested in knowing more about the scheme, you can read more details [here](#).

#### Santa Marta Parish Awareness Sessions

The [Santa Marta](#) group also provide opportunities to learn more about about Modern Slavery and would be delighted to run a session for pastoral areas to help raise awareness.

If either of these are of interest, please contact [caritas@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:caritas@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk).



## Updates, events and opportunities from the Charity Network



On **Monday April 7th at 7:30pm** you are invited to attend the next National Justice and Peace Network Event entitled. Opening the Doors to Refugees and Asylum Seekers. Learn a little more about the sudden and forced movement of people to the UK in 2025 and how you, as a 'Pilgrim of Hope', can play your part in shining a light their hostile welcome as we "Welcome The Stranger". Please register [here](#).



CAFOD and SVP are working together to offer residential work experience for 20 young adults (10 per organisation) over 18 years old. Anyone who cares about people living in poverty, and wants to know how to make a difference in their community and overseas are invited to apply. The experience will particularly appeal to those interested in future careers in education, politics, communications, or charity work. Click [here](#) for more details and to apply - **Deadline 21st April 2025.**



Medaille Trust are looking for a Southampton based case worker to support victims of Modern Slavery. You can find more details [here](#). **Deadline 6th May 2025.**



Don't forget to send in any knitted hats for Stella Maris – details can be found [here](#) along with knitting patterns and prayers for the seafarers.