

SUMMER 2025

Welcome to an early summer issue of the Caritas newsletter. We wanted to send this out to give time before Laudato Si week (24-31 May) as this year is the 10th anniversary of the publication of Laudato Si'. There is still much to do to answer the call of Pope Francis in the Encyclical Letter, read on to get some ideas and resources.

Much has happened in the months from our last newsletter, including the passing of Pope Francis and the election of Pope Leo XIV. It has been a time of mourning, and of gratitude for Pope Francis' teaching on key issues such as the crisis facing our common home and its link to the crises faced by so many people who live in it. It is also a time of hope, in this Jubilee year, that Pope Leo XIV will continue to stand up for the justice needed in our time.

Let us keep them in our prayers.

For more information contact  
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## Act For Creation:

Renewing our commitment to create a world in harmony with creation.

Thank you to everyone who came to the Act for Creation event on Saturday 10th May. It was great to see so many people from across the diocese, committed to creating change.

The morning started with a talk from Jo Lewry about CAFOD's LiveSimply Award, followed by the progress being made by the team at Wokingham and ideas from other parishes including Alton and Reading.

Everyone then took part in the Journey to 2030 'Let Us Dream' activity. Led by Maureen, we were encouraged to dream of our ideal parish (inserts above). Ideas included buildings based in the centre of the town/city with the opportunity to be multid denominational. Designs included lots of social spaces and a big lobby for people to meet; be close to bus stops and equipped with cycle racks; raised beds with veg growing for local people and flowers for the parish; hosting lunches and groups, catering for the needs of every age; powered by solar and warmed with heat pumps, the church would be a place of welcome, richness and diversity, lit up (by solar) as a beacon to the community.

After this was the opportunity to network, sharing ideas and resources before ending with the Prayer For Our Earth.

Thank you to Mel and Mike for looking after us at St Peter's, Winchester.





## Laudato Si' Week – 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

10 years ago, Pope Francis wrote Laudato Si', setting out a bold vision for our common home. This year we celebrate 10 years of prayer and action together and look ahead to an even brighter future.

Laudato Si week runs from 24<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> May, here are some suggestions of actions your parish can do.

1. Hold a Creation Mass or prayer service – include some of the prayers of intercession or print the Prayer for the Earth in the newsletter.
2. Form an Eco-group and/or consider signing up to complete CAFOD's LiveSimply Award.
3. Commit to using your parish grounds to help wildlife, grow veg for the community or flowers for your parish – there are some simple guides here.
4. Host an event, show the film 'The Letter', run a clothes / plant / unwanted gift swap.
5. Take the opportunity to read, re-read or have a book club to discuss Laudato Si' and the follow up Laudate Deum (links take you to free copies of the document on Vatican website).

6. Post about Laudato Si' week on your parish social media to help spread the word. You can use these templates and include the hashtags #RaisingHope and #LS10

7. Become a Parish Environmental Ambassador (email [caritas@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:caritas@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk) for details).

The next chapter of Laudato Si' begins with us.

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## Celebrating 10 years of InSight@StJohns

The InSight project was one of the first Caritas supported projects to open its doors and 10 years later it is still providing support to those in need of a hot meal, company and signposting. The team provide lunches for about 50 people every Tuesday. Before eating, people have the chance to chat, play games and receive practical support. This includes additional food to take away, signposting resources or items from the newly opened clothes bank that also runs from the Cathedral Centre in Portsmouth.

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.





## Loneliness

This week was mental health awareness week, and loneliness, which can impact mental health, was identified as one of the key needs across the diocese. Loneliness affects all age groups, particularly at those key points in a life journey including bereavement, illness, having a baby, leaving home or moving to a new country.

Research shows that:

- People are more than 5 times more likely to feel lonely if they are widowed
- Only 5% young people say they are never lonely
- 7% people in Great Britain are dealing with chronic loneliness
- Loneliness costs the UK £2.5 billion because of its impact on both physical and mental health

There are many areas within the diocese, particularly in our cities where the number of people who are feeling lonely is significantly higher than the national average.

Mother Teresa said “Loneliness and the feeling of being unwanted is the most terrible poverty.”

Being part of a community can counteract loneliness by helping make those connections and providing opportunities to both give and receive. It helps life become more meaningful and enjoyable. It improves both physical and mental health and helps us feel happier.

What can we do?

- Run free social groups for different ages, doing a variety of activities, craft, gardening, book clubs or games afternoons, advertising in places such as the library, community spaces and with agencies such as the NHS Social Prescribers. Advertise social groups in other locations in the parish such as Men’s Shed or parent and toddler groups.
- Provide volunteering opportunities to help people engage in community activity.
- Host carers sessions, Dementia or bereavement support groups.
- Run a befriending service for people who find it difficult to get out.
- Help organise transport to Mass and other events for those unable to get out.
- Host digital and other skill development sessions that support people to connect.
- Reach out to University chaplains or Cathsoc groups to see if the parish can support young people at university, for example by hosting a welcome session or attending a freshers fair.
- Pray for those who are experiencing loneliness.





## 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 from 2:30-4:30pm

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.
- Find out how Caritas can support you in your parish or school to support those in need.

Everyone welcome. There is plenty of parking at the parish and close by and it is a less than 10-minute walk from the station. There will be a number of parish projects represented as well as Christians Against Poverty (CAP) and you will have the opportunity to visit the Andover foodbank which operates from the parish and provides around 6000 food parcels a year.

For more information email [caritas@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:caritas@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

## Refugee week 17th-23rd June

In March, Pope Francis chose the theme, "Migrants, missionaries of hope" which this year instead of being in June, will be celebrated as part of the Jubilee for Migrants on 4-5th October.

World Refugee Week still runs from 16th-22nd June with the theme 'Community as a Superpower'. Find out more [here](#).

Caritas is part of Together for Refugees, a group of over 600 organisations calling for a more fair and compassionate asylum system. Find out how you can do more [here](#).

For guidance on our Catholic response to Migrants Refugees read '[Love the Stranger](#)' published by the Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales.

Read the [Exodus fanzine](#) that includes personal stories, poems and views written by refugees and people seeking asylum.

## Updates, events and opportunities from the Charity Network



The [2024 review](#) from Andover Foodbank is now available. The Foodbank at St John the Baptist Church supports people in the area through food boxes, toiletries, vouchers for the local market and for energy. In addition they are partnered with Citizens Advice who have a case worker on site every week day and Christians Against Poverty who visit monthly, helping people with some of the issues that have resulted in them needing to access the foodbank.



The latest [newsletter](#) from NJPN is available with news of their upcoming conference in July.





## Cancel Debt Choose Hope CAFOD Campaign

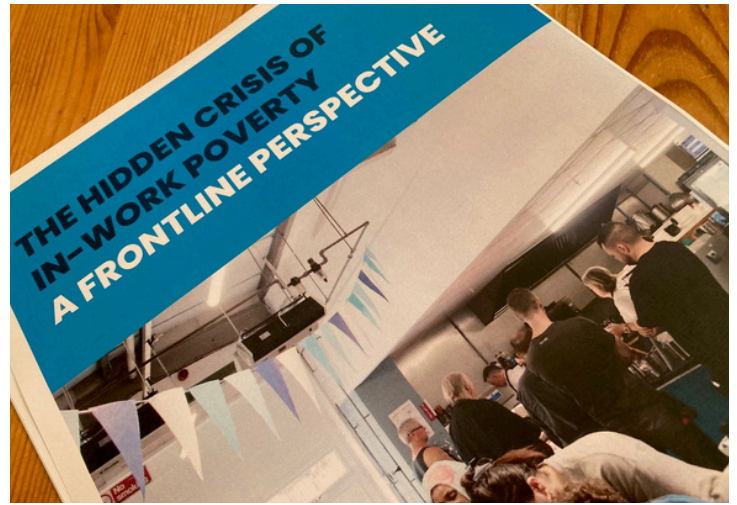
In this Jubilee Year CAFOD is working with our sister Caritas organisations around the world to call for urgent action on the global debt crisis. Many of the world's poorest countries are suffering huge debt burdens with devastating impacts on ordinary people. Pope Francis spoke about this many times, saying, "More than a question of generosity, this is a matter of justice."

Father Charlie, who is a priest based in Kenya which is one of the 54 of the world's poorest countries around the world facing a debt crisis, with devastating impacts for ordinary people, says

"Dear brothers and sisters, Greetings from the Archdiocese of Nairobi in Kenya in this Jubilee Year. 54 countries are facing a devastating debt crisis. Kenya is one of them, currently spending five times as much on repaying foreign debts as it spends on hospitals and doctors. For countries like Kenya, this is not a choice. The global financial system pushes low-income countries into borrowing money at extortionate interest rates, keeping them in a vicious cycle that make it impossible to clear the debt. The consequences of this are that families forego medical care, children lose access to quality education, and small farmers face the devastating impacts of climate change without support. We need to create better systems, cancel unfair debts, and implement fairer laws. In this Jubilee Year, in its spirit of forgiveness, I would like to encourage parishioners in England and Wales to stand with the people of Kenya and many others around the world who are suffering the impact of this global debt crisis."

CAFOD is asking parishioners to sign a petition to world leaders calling for an end to the debt crisis by cancelling unjust debt, to support a Debt justice law to make private lenders take part in debt relief and to prevent future debt crisis through a new debt framework with the UN.

You can download the petition from our website [Parish resources for Cancel Debt, Choose Hope](#) or order a campaign pack from our shop here [Cancel Debt, Choose Hope – CAFOD Shop](#).



## New report released by St Vincent de Paul Society

The SVP have just published a [new report](#) 'The hidden crisis of in-work poverty. A frontline perspective.' Their research identified 3 key findings

1. In-Work poverty can effect everyone but highest risk groups are households with children, single parents or those relying solely on part-time work.
2. There is no single cause. Low pay, high living costs, childcare and caring responsibilities, health issues, housing costs, and insecure employment all contribute to in-work poverty.
3. Affected individuals often face stark daily choices between food, heating, and rent.

The report goes on to make 4 policy recommendations, including higher wages, support with household costs, expansion of in-work support for people with additional needs and a more robust social security system.