

Caritas Plymouth would like to thank their partners for all their support in their first year—all the Catholic parishes, schools and charities who have worked so hard on the mapping exercise and the events.

The Caritas Office has a new, much bigger home at St Boniface House. There is space for meetings and volunteers so please pop in. Caritas Plymouth is also recruiting a full time manager.



Diocese of Plymouth



The Diocese of Plymouth is recruiting for the following permanent position:

**Caritas Manager – Diocese of Plymouth** – 35 hours per week

Salary: £40,000 per annum plus car allowance, mobile phone allowance and pension scheme (subject to eligibility).

The position will be subject to a full DBS check. Closing date: 2 December 2019, interviews: 17 December 2019. For further information please look at the diocesan website:

[www.plymouth-diocese.org.uk](http://www.plymouth-diocese.org.uk) and click on Careers.

Registered Charity Number: 213227



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**caritas**  
diocese of plymouth



*The Catenians*  
Strengthening family life  
through friendship and faith



**St Vincent de Paul Society**  
England and Wales  
Turning Concern into Action



Second edition  
October 2019

## Welcome to the second Caritas Plymouth quarterly newsletter

### POVERTY EVENT

On Saturday 12 October Caritas Plymouth hosted an event looking at the causes and impact of poverty in advance of Pope Francis' third World Day of the Poor on 17 November.

St Rita's Conference Centre in Honiton provided a hot buffet and 70 parishioners braved the rain to hear talks from speakers such as Niall Cooper, Director of Church Action on Poverty and Heather Buckingham from the Trussell Trust.

Discussion Groups in the afternoon looked at what we could do in parishes and schools. One of the key points was the importance of welcoming and developing a relationship with people in need. Other action points from the day were :

- Listening to stories
- Knowing where the need is
- Knowing where to send people for help
- Raising the profile of food bank collections



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## CITY OF SANCTUARY

The City of Sanctuary network is part of a mainstream, grass-roots movement working towards building a culture of welcome, hospitality and inclusiveness across every sphere and sector of society, so that wherever people seeking sanctuary (such as asylum seekers and refugees) go they will feel safe, find people who welcome them and understand why they are here, and have opportunities to be included in all activities:

<https://cityofsanctuary.org/about/>

Exeter and Bournemouth and Poole are already Cities of Sanctuary and Cornwall is a 'County of Sanctuary'. It is not just geographical communities that have an opportunity to sign pledges and take practical action towards becoming places of sanctuary, however. Organisations such as Universities, businesses, community associations, schools and churches can all become accredited. St Nicholas of Tolentino in the Clifton Diocese was one of the first churches of sanctuary.

*The photograph shows Councillor Sue Dann signing the pledge to make Plymouth a welcoming city on behalf of Plymouth City Council.*

## HOMELESSNESS

Caritas Plymouth has submitted a bid to the Plater Trust for more resources to support their work on homelessness.

Parishes and schools have said that they would like to do more but don't know how to help. If successful the extra money would pay for training from St Petroc's, a charity working to end street homelessness, so parishioners are aware how to support and welcome homeless people and those at risk of becoming homeless.

There will also be more resources to support destitute asylum seekers in Plymouth.



## UNITED IN LOVE WITH A COMMON PURPOSE

CAFOD and Caritas Social Action Network have developed a Joint Statement of Intent setting out how they will work together nationally and at Diocesan level.

CAFOD and CSAN are sister Caritas organisations and members of Caritas Internationalis within the Caritas Europa region. They are based together at Romero House in Central London.

Locally Caritas Plymouth was delighted to be involved with the Newton Abbot Live Simply preparations. A CAFOD volunteer has brought together parishioners, staff and parents at St Joseph's Church and School to gain the CAFOD Live Simply Award.

*'If our life in Christ means anything to you, if love can persuade at all, or the Spirit that we have in common, or any tenderness or sympathy, then be united in your convictions and united in your love, with a common purpose and common mind.' St Paul's letter to the Philippians 2:1*

## ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY

The annual festival of the Plymouth Central Council St Vincent de Paul Society was held recently and the morning session was devoted to Youth SVP. The three speakers were Moira Dawe, Head of Youth SVP England and Wales, Raymond Friel, Chief Executive of Plymouth Cast and Mike Royles, a Young Vincentian Development officer, YVDO, from Dorset. The four age categories for youth SVP are as follows, Mini Vinnies, 7 – 11 years; Youth SVP, 11 – 14; SVP B Attitude, 14 – 18 and SVP 1833, 18 – 33.

During the next 12 months emphasis is being placed on the recruitment of groups of Mini Vinnies at our Catholic Primary Schools. YVDOs are required as follows: One each for Cornwall, Plymouth, South Devon and East Devon. In Cornwall, St John's School at Camborne have commenced their Mini Vinnies; St Mary's Bodmin are setting up and there is interest at St Mary's Falmouth and St Nicholas School Exeter. There are over 650 of these groups in England and Wales but few in Devon and Cornwall. They have proved popular with the children and they provide an early education in the practical side of Christian life by carrying out good deeds whilst being closely supervised.

Other priorities during the coming year for the SVP are setting up new conferences, the homeless, refugees, visiting the sick, poor, lonely, needy, isolated and working closely with our busy clergy. Help is given to people in these categories in numerous ways. Our SVP also support conferences in India and the poor in Sudan. Anyone interested in setting up an SVP Conference can contact Geoff Provis at 01566 775820.



## 'Belonging' – A Challenge for the Church in a Diverse Society

The **Catholic Association for Racial Justice** (CARJ) held a conference in Birmingham on Wednesday, 16 October which invited Catholics from across England and Wales to share ideas and experience on how we can help new and marginalised groups feel they truly 'belong' in UK society.

Representatives from fifteen dioceses (including the Diocese of Plymouth), various CARJ networks and other Catholic organisations attended.

The day began with a brief historical summary. For the past twenty years, successive Governments have been attempting to address the question of how to promote 'integration and cohesion' in a diverse society. Most recently there was the *Casey Review* and the *Integrated Communities Strategy Green Paper*. The Conference on 'Belonging' is part of that wider discussion.

Fr Phil Sumner and Fr Richard McKay spoke of their long experiences in very diverse parishes in Oldham and Bristol. Fr Dan Mason described the particular situation of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Communities. There followed plenary and small group discussions. Some of the issues raised included:

- the post-war experience of immigration from the Caribbean, Africa and Asia;
- the particular focus on Muslim communities in recent decades;
- the intentional creation of a 'hostile environment' for those wishing to come to the UK,
- the experience of 'Windrush' communities and the concerns of EU Citizens in the face of Brexit
- the complex history of the Church's involvement with diverse communities
- ethnic chaplaincy and the involvement of diverse groups in local parishes
- the 'ministry of welcoming' and training for those involved in this important ministry, ways in which ordinary parish events and activities can be more inclusive,
- ways in which the church building itself can reflect the diversity of the parish
- the importance of having role models and saints from different cultures
- the importance of having decision makers (eg Bishops) from diverse backgrounds
- the particular relevance of a theology and spirituality of 'place'
- the ongoing process of discernment as to how the Church at different levels can best contribute to the national and local process of 'welcoming' and encourage 'integration and cohesion'

Bishop Paul McAleenan closed the Conference, stressing the importance of the issues discussed and the need to continue the discussion locally and nationally in the coming months and years.



## COMMUNITY SPONSORSHIP

**Companions Sidmouth**, "*We believe in the inalienable dignity of every human being to realise their full potential and to support and protect them, when their dignity in any way is diminished or threatened.*"



The Sidmouth parish set up their Community Sponsorship Group, Companions, after meeting Anna Roderick at the Caritas Consultation event. Anna leads ABIDE, the Community Sponsorship Group that resettled a family in Ottery St Mary over two years ago.

Seven months later, with Anna as their mentor, Companions are finalising their application to the Home Office and hope to resettle a family in Sidmouth in Spring 2020. The group was keen to involve the whole community of Sidmouth and following an Open Meeting in October 2019, 40 people 'signed up' to find out more about becoming a volunteer. Some are helping with administration, training and fundraising now and others for example will be befrienders, drivers and English language teachers, when the family arrives.

Companions say they have been overwhelmed by the support and enthusiasm they have received from the community and professionals alike, and they are happy to support and encourage other parishes in any way they can. You can contact the group at: [sidmouth-cs@prcdtr.org.uk](mailto:sidmouth-cs@prcdtr.org.uk) or take a look at their Facebook page Caritas Companions Sidmouth.



Sidmouth parish still found time to organise a Care for Creation event and Caritas Plymouth were delighted to take part as this picture shows.

**St Mary's and St Anthony's parishes in Poole** are also working hard to help refugees. Earlier this year they organised a "Welcome the Refugee" evening with speakers from the various organisations who assist refugees in the area. They also hosted an evening with a refugee who talked about his experiences and his journey to Sanctuary. This was very well attended and received with over 130 people.

With the help of many, the majority parishioners of St Mary's and St Anthony's, the council were asked to accept three refugees a year under the Safe Passage scheme for the next 10 years. Dorset Council as well as the newly amalgamated Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole Council have agreed to this—which is an incredible achievement by St Mary and St Anthony's parishes. The next part of the campaign is to secure Government funding and also to try and "grow" more foster carers for all children, not just for refugees.

The two **Exeter parishes of Sacred Heart and Blessed Sacrament** have just started their Community Sponsorship journey with their first meeting on Thursday 14 November.

We wish them all luck with their efforts and congratulate them on their achievements.



## CARITAS LEADERSHIP MEETING

Working Together for the Common Good: an antidote to individualism' a presentation given by Jenny Sinclair was a highlight of the gathering. The aim is to build bridges across divisions, in these challenging times.

By practicing principles such as : The Common Good, the Dignity of every human person, and others, this was offering an antidote to the growing fragmentation of our society.

There were practical ideas and resources for churches, schools and communities available on the website: 'Together for the Common Good', which I would recommend visiting. It is also a good way into exploring Catholic Social Teaching.

There was an excellent contribution from Christine Allen, the new Director of CAFOD, about the future direction of CAFOD and working closely with Caritas; and also from Kevin Coogan from L'Arche in Manchester on the importance of Community, Leadership and Spirituality seen through his personal stories and experiences. L'Arche community living was seen as an excellent model of the importance of encounter, building relationships and faith and was especially on our minds given the recent death of L'Arche's founder, Jean Vanier.

As always at Conferences, it was in the informal chats over coffee, or something stronger in the bar, that ideas and experiences were shared, and networking took place.

At Mass, presided over by Bishop Marcus Stock, the gospel was the calling of the Apostles by Jesus. The word 'Apostle' means 'sent'.

We too were sent to further the work of proclaiming the Good News to the poor.

**Canon John Deeny**



## WORLD DAY OF THE POOR

**17 NOVEMBER 2019**

"I ask all Christian communities, and all those who feel impelled to offer hope and consolation to the poor, to help ensure that this World Day of the Poor will encourage more and more people to cooperate effectively so that no one will feel deprived of closeness and solidarity."

Pope Francis

In his message for the third World Day of the Poor, celebrated on 17 November 2019, Pope Francis reminds us that "the poor are not numbers, but people", to be assisted, accompanied, protected, defended and saved. He recalled that this is not possible without the humility of listening, the charism of the whole, the courage of renunciation. He reminded us that to "follow the way of charity, of humility and of listening means lending an ear to the little ones", because God reveals himself through them. And he asked us not to look down on anyone from above. "You can only look down at a person from above," he insisted, "in order to help them get up".

Caritas Plymouth organised a conference on poverty on 12 October in advance of the World Day of the Poor. The Catholic Social Teaching principle of participation was at the heart of the day so there were testimonies from people with lived experience and discussion groups looking at how to put people living in poverty at the heart of the church. The conference also looked at what the diocese could learn from charities and ecumenical organisations such as the Trussell Trust and Church Action on Poverty. It is hoped that this event will lead to more imaginative ways to mark the World Day of the Poor in parishes. Some examples include:

- Making the foodbank collection part of the Offertory and engaging in a dialogue with the food bank to find out what they need;
- Listening to the stories of the poor and vulnerable;
- Talking about where the need is in the parish and how to support it;
- Talking about this year's logo – what it signifies and how the parish could respond.

