

In James 2:14-26, the expectation that good deeds are a vital part of our faith cannot be clearer and one cannot exist without the other. It is our duty to do good things as part of our Christianity to the extent we can. It is also essential that our activity is supported by prayer, a founding principal of the new evangelisation agenda.

What we do may not be quantitatively significant to the world - a smile, a conversation with the person sitting at the side of the road. Where someone has the means, God expects them to apply their blessings to the work in the same way as the poorest.

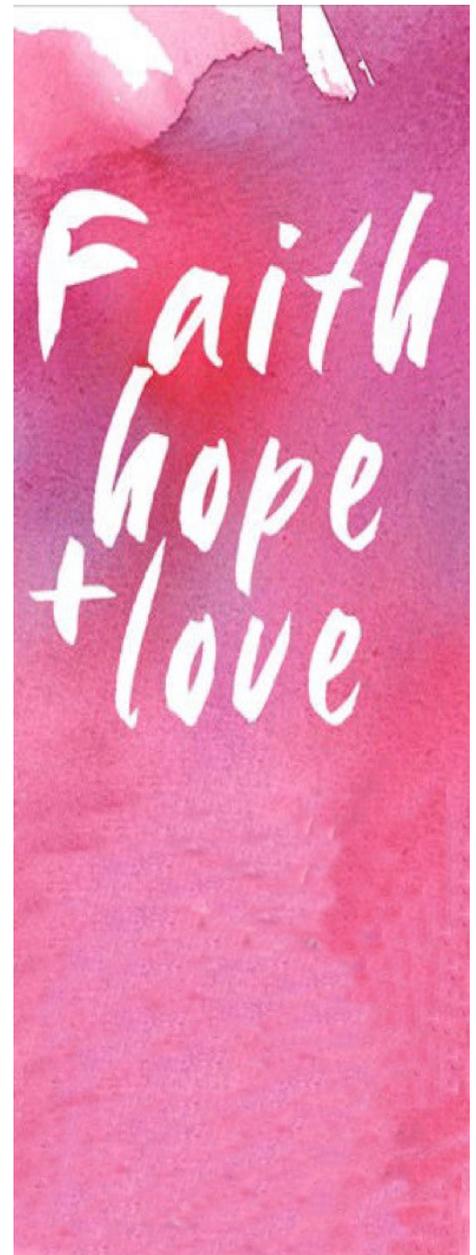
When some of us are out and about carrying out practical tasks for the good of others, it is equally necessary that we have as many people praying for success of that work, that it fulfils God's will for us and takes us nearer to building his Kingdom here on earth.

We are confident that the work is underway all over the Diocese and we should continue to share what we do, what we have tried and what we have as there may be another of us that needs to hear what God gave to us as the inspiration for their next work.

Deacon Nick Johnson



Caritas Plymouth aims to provide a network in which good practice can be shared. During the current crisis, Caritas has been working with partners to gather new ideas and inspiration. This note aims to share some of that work. If you would like to share your news please email caritas@pcdtr.org.uk or call 01364 645421.



Pastoral Care and
Proclaiming the Word of
God

Support for the Elderly and
Vulnerable

SVP in Action

Laudato Si' Week

Pastoral Care and Proclaiming the Word of God

There has been an amazing growth in the use of social media to share Mass and prayer through live streaming and youtube. Thousands of people have been supported and encouraged through these messages of hope with more people attending 'virtual' masses than might normally be able to attend Church. We are extremely grateful for the commitment of our Priests in celebrating daily mass for us all and where possible for sharing prayer and reflection online.

Many parishioners are now contributing to Sunday mass and weekly reflections. Here are just a few examples:

A really thoughtful
reflection on Laudato Si'
week from Cathy in
Launceston



A lovely children's
liturgy from Blessed
Sacrament Exeter

Some Catholic schools continue to organise food collections providing food to families struggling to make ends meet.



Reaching out to the isolated and most vulnerable

In his [pastoral message](#) ‘Let us be like Christ, the servant’, Bishop Mark shared some of the work that has been happening in our parish and school communities during the Coronavirus pandemic. He reminded us that ‘*Again and again, we hear stories of people caring for others*’ and gave examples from across the Diocese. Since that message, many parishes have continued to connect with parishioners who are isolating, linking them up with those willing to call on a regular basis, or provide shopping or other practical support for those who are self-isolating.

One parish group is knitting hearts to send with a card to all Care Homes in the parish area, thanking them for what they are doing, and letting them know we are praying for them. First communion children have been invited to make rainbows which will also be included.

A parish Sewing Group delivered 400 cotton drawstring bags to their local hospital. The bags are for staff to put their scrubs in so that they can put the whole thing in the washing machine. 400! The money has been raised by the members of the group from past events and personal donations.



Direct support is provided to vulnerable groups (including seafarers, refugees, homeless and the elderly) through key partner charities including SVP, Catholic Children’s Society (Plymouth), St Petroc’s and Stella Maris.

How we can help

Pray—We are all invited to pray and there are a [range of prayer resources](#) shared by the Catholic Bishop’s Conference of England and Wales

Act—Our partner charities—SVP, Stella Maris, St Petrocs, Catholic Children’s Society (Plymouth) and other local groups are all working to support those who are finding the current situation difficult—either financially or emotionally. All these charities have current appeals for funds to help them continue their vital work. St Petrocs and Catholic Children’s Society have both launched crowdfunding appeals. You can find the links to our partner organisations below

[SVP](#)

[Stella Maris](#)

[Catholic Children’s
Society](#)

[St Petrocs](#)

Care for Others —There are so many ways in which we are to do this: being attentive to the needs of our neighbor; contributing to our local food banks; volunteering for charitable initiatives and organisations; simply keeping in touch by all the means open to us.

SVP IN ACTION

SVP conferences across the Diocese have been doing amazing work reaching out to the most vulnerable, donating money to local foodbanks, providing funding to a hostel in Exeter to provide a meal for young people each week, supporting refugee families and many more acts of kindness.

Fr Paul Cummins has given the following account of their work in his parish:

'The SVP in Sidmouth, and various parishioners who have volunteered to help them, have been actively working to support the vulnerable in the community during the lockdown. The work has captured the imagination of those who may otherwise find themselves with time on their hands, and has given them a great way to put our faith into action in very practical ways. The SVP group started off by phoning around their 30 beneficiaries, but soon word got out and that number grew to 110 people. New volunteers then came on board, doubling their numbers. They have now expanded their services to retrieving shopping for those in isolation and even to providing emergency DIY work for those in desperate need. Without realising, their normal simple acts of love have come together to form a network of support for their local community. This week they have welcomed further helpers and now have a team 25 people making at least weekly telephone contact call to over 120 parishioners, as well as a 'shop and drop team' of 6 delivering groceries and prescriptions. They also have an emergency DIY volunteer. They have found that people really appreciate being contacted whether they need help or not. Often just knowing they are being remembered and thought about is enough. The group continues to grow from strength to strength.'

SVP nationally are actively looking for new volunteers for their [Knock and Drop service](#).



St Vincent
de Paul Society

England and Wales

Turning Concern into Action

Laudato Si' Week



The messages written to Pope Francis by our primary school children were particularly inspiring. Jesus said 'From the lips of children and infants you, Lord, have called forth your praise' Matthew 21:16

Despite being busy keeping schools open across the Diocese to care for the children of key workers and vulnerable children and getting ready for a wider opening in June, our schools still found time to share their great work for Laudato Si' week.

Dear Pope Francis,
I promise to care for our common home by not taking more than our fair share. I will make sure to turn off lights before I leave the room.
00120
Vatican City
Your sincerely



'I pledge to stop polluting—no more waste in our Ocean' - Florence
'I pledge to use less water' —Bailey

Our parishes too, are actively working to care for our common home: here is a lovely wildflower garden in the grounds of one of our parishes.

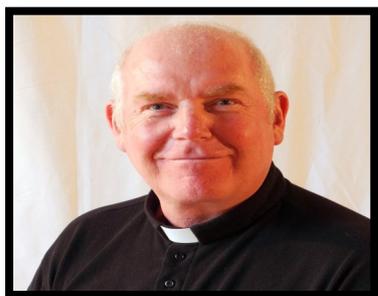
We will be working closely with CAFOD to support this great work in the run up to the [Season of Creation 2020](#)



About Us

Caritas Plymouth aims to provide fresh impetus to put the command of the Lord into practise: 'Love one another as I have loved you', (John 13:34-35). It works with partner organisations already existing to put the Church's [Social Teaching](#) into action and provide a network to share good practice in the service of the most poor and vulnerable. It also aims to encourage new initiatives to put the Gospel imperative of love and mercy into action. Our annual review is now available on the Diocese Website.

Please do get in touch to share your feedback, good practice or to seek new ideas caritas@prcdtr.org.uk 01364 645421



Canon John Deeny
Vicar General



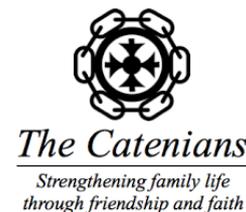
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