

caritas IN PRACTICE

**A Resource for Induction:
Putting Catholic Social
Teaching into Practice**



caritas
social action network

Educare**M**



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Supplementary materials for further information and study are on the CSAN website, www.csan.org.uk.



Welcome to the World of Caritas Social Action!

This charity is a member of Caritas Social Action Network which is part of a global Catholic social action initiative called Caritas Internationalis. Being part of a Caritas organisation means that we strive to live up to the key values of Catholic Social Teaching (CST) regardless of our roles.

The seven key CST values for Caritas are:

1. dignity;
2. family and community;
3. solidarity and the common good;
4. rights and responsibilities;
5. priority for the poor;
6. dignity of work; and
7. caring for all creation.

With this booklet you have the opportunity to gain a basic understanding of these values. This is important for you in your role with us because we share a sense of purpose and mission that is rooted in them, irrespective of our individual faith backgrounds. Although CST comes from the Catholic Church, it is appreciated by other Christian churches, the wider faith-based social action world and beyond. It is for anyone who wants justice in the world.

We hope that you will soon come to see that working in a Caritas organisation is different. This is because we do this work of serving the marginalised and the vulnerable in our society as a response to a profound call to hear, listen and attend to their voices.

Christians believe that this call has been ringing out through scriptures that date back thousands of years. We continue this work today through people like yourself who are willing to face with us the challenge of aiding the suffering of the less fortunate and oppressed.

But you might say, I am not Catholic/Christian. I don't even believe in 'God'. What does CST have to do with me and why do I have to spend time on this booklet?

CST is not a set of dogmatic rules; it is a tried and tested guide that encourages our work to be respectful of creation and to be values-led. We believe that CST has the potential to help all of us – whether employees or volunteers, and whether Catholic or not – to grow as reflective and thoughtful practitioners in social action.

We value and celebrate diversity in all its forms. You are welcome here in this organisation irrespective of your religious affiliation. Diversity amongst our staff and volunteers is an important asset and we would all be diminished by a lack of it in our organisation. Catholic Social Teaching unites and strengthens us as a common source for our work together, wherever we come from and whatever experiences we may bring.

This is why words such as God and Christ are used throughout this booklet. You are invited to get to know us through learning about our key values and Christian heritage.





How to Use This Booklet

Caritas in Practice has been designed to assist you - whatever your cultural or religious tradition - to become familiar with the main values of Catholic Social Teaching (CST) which underpin our work. The aim is for you to feel more part of our organisation and our vision, mission and ethos.

It is an induction resource for all new joiners, whether a new trustee, a graduate employee or a volunteer. It assumes no previous knowledge of CST on your part. For this reason, it can also be used by existing staff or volunteer members unfamiliar with CST or seeking to refresh their understanding. We hope to encourage you to be reflective in your role.

We recommend you start with the first CST value, dignity, because it is the starting place for understanding the other six (which you can read in any order you like). We suggest that you first read the definition of the value; then take note of (or draw) your responses to the questions listed either in Points for Reflections or CST in Practice (or both).

This booklet is intended for use in a group setting. Whilst much of the reading and reflecting can be done privately, the most valuable learning comes from sharing and discussing your responses to questions with others. It is not a matter of having all the answers, but of engaging with the issues.

Ideally, you should be assigned a group, a buddy, or a mentor with whom to work through this booklet in a flexible way who can support you in your thinking about how CST matters in your role.

What is Catholic Social Teaching (CST)?

CST is a set of writings rooted in scripture on ethical values put forward by the Church. It is not just a body of teaching but a call to action. It is widely regarded as a moral compass for practical action. CST offers a way to articulate our thoughts about what matters and the reasons for our actions in response to injustice. It is also flexible in that organisations could refer to many of the values described in the formal documents published by the Church or focus on a few.

The 7 Key CST Values for Social Action

Caritas organisations focus on seven values that are believed to be especially important in serving the marginalised in our societies:

- human dignity
- family and community
- solidarity and the common good
- rights and responsibilities
- priority for the poor and vulnerable
- dignity of work
- stewardship and caring for creation

You are invited to reflect on each of these values, engage with the thinking behind them and be open to the possibility that they may help you be a better member of our organisation as well as practitioner. As mentioned in the previous page, we hope you will have a supportive friend or group in this process.

Below you will find a description of each of the seven values, followed by points and questions for reflection and discussion. Each section concludes with an example of how the value is practised in real life by a Caritas organisation. There is some space throughout for you to take notes on or draw your responses.



CST Value 1: Human Dignity

The Catholic Church teaches and witnesses to the belief that God has freely chosen to create every human being. God is love and created human beings out of love and for love. God dwells in each one of us. When we see one another, we are called to recognise the dignity and beauty of the person. This basic human dignity comes not from our race, gender or social status, but from God. CST calls us to recognise that all human beings are our brothers and sisters designed to be one race - the human race - and one family - the human family.

The challenge set down by the social teaching of the Church is to ensure that in all our relationships and dealings with one another, be it at a local, national or global level, we never lose sight of the dignity and value of the human person and of life itself. The Church defines respect for human life as respect at every stage of the human person's development from conception to death. When people are reduced to any form of poverty, marginalisation or discrimination, it is a violation of their dignity. Such situations of injustice are the focus of CST.

Respect for the dignity of every person is typically the first value in CST because without it none of the other values – or any type of social action – can be meaningful or effective.

Points for Reflection and Discussion: Dignity of the Human Person

Spend some time reflecting on one or two of the writings below and where possible discuss them in your group.

- A. Whatever insults human dignity, such as subhuman living conditions, arbitrary imprisonment, deportation, slavery, prostitution, the selling of women and children; as well as disgraceful working conditions, where humans are treated as mere tools for profit, rather than as free and responsible persons; all these things and others of their like are infamies indeed. They poison human society, but they do more harm to those who practise them than those who suffer from the injury.

Gaudium et Spes (The Church in the Modern World, 1965) no. 27

- B. Love of neighbour is an absolute demand for justice because charity must manifest itself in actions and structures which respect human dignity, protect human rights, and facilitate human development. To promote justice is to transform structures which block love.

Justice in the World (World Synod of Catholic Bishops, 1971)

- C. Human persons are willed by God; they are imprinted with God's image. Their dignity does not come from the work they do, but from the persons they are.

Centesimus Annus (The Hundredth Year, 1991) no. 11



What do you agree with?

Is there anything that challenges or inspires you?

How might these quotations affect the way you carry out your role?

Notes

CST in Practice: Dignity of the Human Person

Spend a few minutes reflecting on the quote below that illustrates a real-life case of the value of dignity in the practice of social action in England and Wales.



**Caritas Charity:
women@thewell**

www.watw.org.uk

wow
women@thewell

women@thewell provides a broad range of services that are women-centred and trauma responsive for the most vulnerable women caught in the multiple cycles of abuse, and aims to support women whose lives are entangled in the sex trade to exit.

Image from the work of artist Claudia Clare's "And the door opened" Project, undertaken in partnership with women@thewell



Mind Your Language¹

Caroline Hattersley, Director of women@thewell, says: *“It is important to understand the correct use of language so as to not accidentally further stigmatise or victimise the women and girls trapped and exploited in the sex trade, or to minimise the actions of those who purchase or control the sale of women’s bodies”.*

The organisation invites us to reflect on how the words we use can impact on those around us, especially the most vulnerable. The sanitisation of language can mask abuse, exploitation and violence against women and girls. For example, the most commonly (mis)used term to describe women exploited in the sex trade is ‘sex worker’. Seen as politically correct by many, it implies the element of ‘choice’ and reduces this exploitation and abuse to that of a simple transaction. It sanitises the act of purchasing a woman’s body. This misunderstanding denies the full and complete dignity of women.

women@thewell have produced a resource for individuals and groups called Mind Your Language to promote appropriate language which upholds the dignity of all women in an often-misunderstood field.

Notes

¹ Adapted from 6 March 2020 Caritas in Action article in the Catholic Times.

CST Value 2: Family and Community

People are made as social beings, communicating and relating to one another. We are made for community and communion with one another, living and sharing our daily lives, hopes and dreams. How society is organised and structured must reflect the dignity and value of the individual person: their needs and right to life. This is not just on an individual level, but across the whole structure of society from governance and politics, to law and policy making; all must recognise that the person in all their unique worth is at the heart of society.

Key to the stability of society is the family. The Church teaches that marriage and the family are social institutions that should be recognised, respected, supported, strengthened and given their true place in society. It also believes and teaches that people have a right to participation in society and must play a full part in society, seeking together the common good and well-being of all, especially the poor and vulnerable.

Points for Reflection and Discussion: Family and Community

Spend some time reflecting on the excerpt below. Consider the questions that follow and when possible discuss them in your group.

I thank God that many families, which are far from considering themselves perfect, live in love, fulfil their calling and keep moving forward, even if they fall many times along the way. The Synod of Bishop's reflections show us that there is no stereotype of the ideal family, but rather a challenging mosaic made up of many different realities, with all their joys, hopes and problems...

The life of every family is marked by all kinds of crises, yet these are also part of its dramatic beauty. Couples should be helped to realize that surmounting a crisis need not weaken their relationship; instead, it can improve, settle and mature the wine of their union.

Amoris Laetitia (Love in the Family, 2016) no. 232



How does the above affirm or challenge your thinking on family as you experience it today on a personal level, including your experiences of family through your friends and family?

Are there aspects of this value that you find unrealistic or out of touch with the reality of life today?

Give reasons for your views.

What do you think stops people participating in their local communities?

Notes



CST in Practice: Family and Community

Now you are invited to spend a few minutes reflecting on the snapshot below of a real-life case of the value of family and community.

Caritas Charity: Pact (Prison Advice and Care Trust)

www.prisonadvice.org.uk/

Pact works in most prisons across England and Wales, supporting people affected by imprisonment. It helps prisoners and their families to make a fresh start and to minimise the harm caused by imprisonment to people who have committed offences, to families and to communities.



Prisoners • Families • Communities
A Fresh Start Together

From *'The Pact Story: 120 Years of Serving'* (p34-35):



© Christa Holka/Pact

A father and daughter enjoying Pact's *Time to Connect* prison family day, a prison-based parenting course focusing on the role of play.



© Mike Kemp/Pact

As well as working inside prisons to support prisoners to cope with a prison sentence, and to maintain family ties, Pact also provides *Through the Gate Resettlement Mentoring Service* to women and men leaving prison, as well as emergency welfare grants. Pact believes in offering people the chance of a fresh start after prison, and accompanies prison leavers during the critical first few days and weeks after release.

Notes



CST Value 3: Solidarity and the Common Good

Solidarity in CST is the belief that we are all responsible for one another because we all belong to the one human family. At the heart of the idea of solidarity is the understanding that we must take care of each other and unite to work for justice and peace for all.

The vision of the Church's teaching on solidarity is the Common Good brought about through each person working for what builds up the whole of society, and not just their own immediate needs or family. All life is connected; what happens to one happens to all. To work for solidarity is to work to eliminate marginalisation, alienation and injustice, between individuals, in workplaces, social groupings, communities and nations.

Points for Reflection and Discussion: Solidarity and the Common Good

Spend some time reflecting on the writings below. Consider some of the questions that follow and when possible discuss them in your group.

- A. The exercise of solidarity within each society is valid when its members recognize one another as persons. Those who are more influential, because they have a greater share of goods and common services, should feel responsible for the weaker and be ready to share with them all they possess. Those who are weaker, for their part, in the same spirit of solidarity, should not adopt a purely passive attitude or one that is destructive of the social fabric, but, while claiming their legitimate rights, should do what they can for the good of all.

Sollicitudo Rei Socialis (The Social Concern, 1987) no. 39

B. We are called not only to respect the natural environment, but also to show respect for, and solidarity with, all the members of our human family. These two dimensions are closely related; today we are suffering from a crisis which is not only about the just management of economic resources, but also about concern for human resources, for the needs of our brothers and sisters living in extreme poverty, and especially for the many children in our world lacking adequate education, health care and nutrition. Consumerism and a “culture of waste” have led some of us to tolerate the waste of precious resources, including food, while others are literally wasting away from hunger. I ask all of you to reflect on this grave ethical problem in a spirit of solidarity grounded in our common responsibility for the earth and for all our brothers and sisters in the human family.

Pope Francis, on combining respect for the environment with solidarity with the entire human family - 5 June 2013

Which parts of the above do you find challenging?



What signs of hope do you see in this country today that are evidence that these messages are being heard?

The Common Good is often spoken about by politicians. Can you think of a way in which CST might be a useful source for challenging politicians to do more for those in the greatest need in this country?

Would you consider the concept of the Common Good to be one that is impractical in our world today? If so why? If not, what evidence would you bring to support your view?

Notes

CST in Practice: Solidarity and the Common Good

Spend a few minutes reflecting on the following real-life story of the value of solidarity and the common good.

Caritas Charity: Father Hudson's Care

www.fatherhudsons.org.uk



Father Hudson's Care supports the elderly and those who have disabilities, asylum seekers, refugees and migrants, and those who have been homeless on the streets. It also supports children, young people and their families through its Fostering Service and Family Support Service.

Adults who spent their childhood in care or were adopted can access specialised support from its Origins department.

'Men cultivate change'²

When the 'Young at Heart' team in North Staffordshire noticed that many of their community development projects didn't include men, they decided to think differently. Guided above all by the interests and needs of the men who came along, several new groups soon formed and gathered pace. The interests include gardening, cricket, IT and social evenings. Led by the men, and in partnerships with local organisations such as GP surgeries, the mutual respect, collaboration and sustainability of the groups is growing.

² Adapted from 2 August 2019 Caritas in Action column article in the Catholic Times



Visiting one of the projects, Andy Quinn, Chief Executive of Fr Hudson's Care, reflected:

"Some might wonder how standing on a bare site, at the end of a gravel path, behind a row of houses, with nothing growing and nothing planted, and no shed, water, electricity or other facilities could be described as an inspiring experience. The vision that Mark and his partners have of what a site such as this will become as a base for the men's group with a repair shed and an allotment - and lots of other activities - is what I find inspiring."



Credits: Mark Lear, Fr Hudson's Care.

Notes

CST Value 4: Rights and Responsibilities

In Church teaching, every human being regardless of background or circumstances has equal rights as a person. These rights come not from the government but from the fact that they are created in the image and likeness of God. Many nations have gone on to recognise that human beings have basic rights as outlined in the International Declaration of Human Rights. However, the human rights that the Catholic Church speaks of go further. With human rights come responsibilities for ourselves, and for one another.

All people have the right to a fair share of the world's resources so that their basic needs can be met. The right to life and the need for food, clothing, shelter, rest, medical attention, security in case of sickness or inability to work through old age, or any other situation when, due to circumstances not of their own making, a person is not able to provide for themselves. With these natural rights come responsibilities to respect the rights of each person. Everyone should share what he or she does not need when there are people who lack the necessities to live a dignified life. In order to ensure the common good, we must protect human rights as well as meet our responsibility for the rights of others, the good of the individual, for the family and the wider community.



Points for Reflection and Discussion: Rights and Responsibilities

Spend some time reflecting on the words below.

- A. A link has often been noted between claims to a “right to excess”, and even to transgression and vice, within affluent societies, and the lack of food, drinkable water, basic instruction and elementary health care in areas of the underdeveloped world and on the outskirts of large metropolitan centres. The link consists in this: individual rights, when detached from a framework of duties which grants them their full meaning, can run wild, leading to an escalation of demands which is effectively unlimited and indiscriminate.

Caritas in Veritate (Charity in Truth, 2009) no. 43

- B. to claim one’s rights and ignore one’s duties, or only half fulfil them, is like building a house with one hand and tearing it down with the other.

Pacem in Terris (Peace on Earth, 1963) no. 30

Do they relate to your work in any way? Are they some of the reasons you decided to join this charity organisation? To what extent do you see this to be a reality for some people today? What evidence would you offer to support your point of view?

If you are interested in the issue of migration, you could explore this question with rights and responsibilities in mind:

How would you strive to change negative public opinion regarding:

- **Migrants?**
- **Refugees?**
- **Asylum Seekers?**

When you get to know some colleagues who are interested in this issue, you could discuss your responses with them.



CST in Practice: Rights and Responsibilities

Migration is an area that demonstrates the challenges of upholding the value of equal rights and the responsibilities to look after fellow human beings. Spend a few minutes reflecting on the case below that illustrates a concerted action that can be seen as the opposite to individualism or only looking out for your own people.

Caritas Charity: JRS (Jesuit Refugee Service) UK

www.jrsuk.net



JRS accompanies, serves and advocates on behalf of refugees and forced migrants. In the UK, it has a special ministry to serve those who are detained under the immigration rules or who are left destitute.

Weekly Toiletry Packs from the Day Centre

The people who come to JRS for help are often destitute – homeless and hungry. They are not permitted to work, nor have access to public funds or social benefits. This means they are entirely dependent on charity or on the good will of any number of friends or wider family they have here

in the UK. Most are in very insecure accommodation such as hostels, rely on 'sofa-surfing' or sleep on the night bus, and from time to time sleep on the streets.

A toiletry pack (of soap, shampoo, toothpaste, toothbrushes... and other basic everyday items) enables someone in this situation to take good care of themselves and maintain a little dignity.

One refugee said:

“they give us the hygiene pack, which I found helpful, which means you are able to keep any money you have to buy other things you need (like food and travel).”

They are packed up by volunteers each week and given out at the JRS Day Centre. Each week the scheme provides the chance for a nice conversation or sharing of news.

JRS purchases some items through a special charity scheme but also relies on toiletry collections in parishes and schools. These provide a good education opportunity and a chance for people to make a difference in a small way - everyone understands the need for soap and toothpaste, even if they find the politics of refugee rights and the difficulties in the asylum system overwhelming.

The scheme is about responding to the needs of individuals – fellow human beings who find themselves in a difficult situation - in a practical way. It is also about making them feel special and welcome because they are often made to feel unwanted in this country.



JRS UK/Fotosynthesis

A JRS volunteer chats with a refugee friend, as they collect their toiletry parcel.

Notes

CST Value 5: Priority for the Poor and Vulnerable³

Poverty is defined by the Catholic Church as being prevented from living a life worthy of the dignity of a human being due to the inability to provide for one's basic needs. Poverty denies people their most basic human rights. This does not mean that everyone is going to have the same, but when extreme inequality causes people to suffer then they are reduced to a state of poverty. Poverty has many expressions and differs in the ways in which it causes people to suffer. Examples include:

- A shorter lifespan
- Marginalisation and exclusion
- Constantly living in fear and stress
- Feeling trapped in a cycle of hopelessness
- Inability to develop their full potential

It is because poverty cripples so many people that the Social Teaching of the Church puts the poor and vulnerable in society as a top priority. We all need to care about the poor and the marginalised because poverty in society diminishes us all.

Points for Reflection and Discussion: Priority for the Poor and Vulnerable

Select one or two from the extracts below. Note what has struck you about them. When you can, discuss your responses in your group.

- A Still, when there is a question of defending the rights of individuals, the poor and badly off have a claim to special consideration. The richer class have many ways of shielding themselves and stand less in need of help from the State; whereas the mass of the poor has no resources of their own to fall back upon and must chiefly depend upon the assistance of the State.

Rerum Novarum (Rights and Duties of Capital and Labour, 1891) no. 37

³Priority for the Poor is often also called Preferential Option for the Poor.



- B. The prime purpose of this special commitment to the poor is to enable them to become active participants in the life of society. It is to enable all persons to share in and contribute to the common good. The “option for the poor,” therefore, is not an adversarial slogan that pits one group or class against another. Rather it states that the deprivation and powerlessness of the poor wounds the whole community. The extent of their suffering is a measure of how far we are from being a true community of persons. These wounds will be healed only by greater solidarity with the poor and among the poor themselves.

Economic Justice for All (US Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1986) no. 88

- C. The measure of the greatness of a society is found in the way it treats those most in need, those who have nothing apart from their poverty. We do not judge our progress based on how the wealthiest are doing. Instead, we evaluate our greatness by observing how the most vulnerable are faring. And then, whenever we see deficiencies, we are called to respond in faith.

Pope Francis, 30 July 2013 World Youth Day in Brazil

What has struck you most about the reading(s)? Why do you think that is?

How do you think your thoughts will impact on your work?

Notes



CST in Practice: Priority for the Poor and Vulnerable

Spend some time reflecting on the case below that illustrates priority for the poor and vulnerable in the practice of social action.

Caritas Charity: Brentwood Catholic Children's Society (bccs)

www.bccs.org.uk

Brentwood Catholic Children's Society (bccs) is a children's mental health charity making a positive difference in the emotional health and well-being of children and young people.

Whether recovering from traumatic experiences or dealing with emerging mental health difficulties, they help shape the futures of children and young people through proactive listening, one to one counselling and therapeutic practice.



bccs

a children's charity for
Essex and East London

Looking after children's mental health during the pandemic⁴

The coronavirus pandemic is an unprecedented situation and it is hard to gauge the full impact it is having on children and young people. What bccs does know is that the pandemic has brought many new and unexpected challenges to children's mental health and wellbeing.

⁴ Adapted from 8 May 2020 Caritas in Action article in the Catholic Times

Every day bccs walks alongside children and young people in crisis who need their specialist services now more than ever. They have been working tirelessly, finding creative ways to stay in touch with children and families to make sure they are able to respond quickly to the needs of the children.

Providing support to children by phone and through appropriate online platforms wherever they could, most families had weekly meetings with members of the team, whilst others needed daily check-ins by phone. Counsellors also reached out through parish priests to young people and families who had not previously used their services.

In the words of one 15-year-old:

“I miss my friends. I even miss school. Home is stressful and Dad’s always shouting. I feel like I just lost everything and everyone. When I heard that my counsellor would still be able to chat to me once a week, I felt relieved and happy. It doesn’t matter what I say to her, she always gets me and no-one else does. I am so glad I’ll be able to talk to her again soon”.



“Our session gave me hope and now I have some practical ideas of what to say and how to help my child with her anxieties at this difficult time.”



bccs.org.uk



Notes



CST Value 6: Dignity of Work

The Church is clear in its teaching on the dignity of work and of the worker. Workers are not commodities to be hired and fired at will. The economy must serve people, not the other way around. We work to live, not live to work. The rights of the worker are clearly spelt out but with these rights come responsibilities on behalf of the worker. Workers must be responsible for ensuring that they also act honestly and justly by providing an honest day's work for a fair wage and in doing so also contribute to the common good.

The employer is challenged and encouraged to treat their employees as part of a mutually creative partnership with a fair share of any increased profits. Workers, employers and unions should not only advance their own interests but work together to advance economic justice and the well-being of all.

Points for Reflection and Discussion: Dignity of Work

Here is a quote and some questions to think about and to discuss with colleagues if you like.

It argues that work, poverty and peace are intrinsically linked:

The obligation to earn one's bread by the sweat of one's brow also presumes the right to do so. A society in which this right is systematically denied, in which economic policies do not allow workers to reach satisfactory levels of employment, cannot be justified from an ethical point of view, nor can that society attain social peace. In many cases, poverty results from a violation of the dignity of human work, either because work opportunities are limited (through unemployment or underemployment), or 'because a low value is put

on work and the rights that flow from it, especially the right to a just wage and to the personal security of the worker and his or her family’.

Caritas in Veritate (Charity in Truth, 2009) no. 63

Can you relate to the quote either in your own life or through the experiences of family and friends?

To what extent do you think people are regarded as cogs in the wheel of the economy and are only as good as their ability to make money? How can we challenge such views?



How do you see your organisation to be a sign of a different view about the value of work?

With the introduction of robotics and automation, the workplace as it is today may be drastically reduced over the coming years and decades. That could mean increasing numbers of people without employment. What do you think will be the ways for creating work and jobs for the future?

CST in Practice: Dignity of Work

Here is a story from the Luton area which illustrates dignity of work. You are invited to reflect on the story and note down any questions you may wish to raise with colleagues.

Caritas Charity: NOAH Enterprise (New Opportunities and Horizons)

www.noahenterprise.org

NOAH supports people struggling against homelessness and exclusion to find permanent and individually tailored pathways out of destitution.



From their *2014 Impact Report (p21-23)*:

Without something meaningful to engage in during the day, many give up hope, assume work is out of reach for them and risk getting caught up in a drinking, drugs and anti-social behaviour culture that moves them further away from the prospect of work.

...We make sure each person [who has come through our services] is work-ready and we continue to support them so that everyone has the best possible chance of success.



© NOAH



Julian (not his real name) is 18 and from Romania. While still there, he was contacted by a friend with a job offer in Luton that was too tempting to turn down. So he left his temporary job in his own country and travelled to Luton with high hopes. When he arrived he expected to be greeted by his friend but soon found that he had been let down and had no choice but to sleep rough for the first couple of weeks.

Julian met some guys who were homeless and who mentioned the work NOAH does and how they might be able to help him. At NOAH he was able to speak to staff who gave him hope that there was something better and that things would improve. Julian began accessing the services at the Day Centre and soon offered to volunteer at the Furniture Store. Seeing the predicament he was in, a member of the team at the Furniture Store offered him a room rent free until he was able to start paying his way.

Through NOAH he has made new friends, learned new skills working as a driver's mate on one of our vans. He received very encouraging feedback from customers. He has now secured a job in a bakery and is living independently.⁵

Notes

⁵ You can read more about how 'Julian' has benefited from his time with NOAH in the 2020 Rainbow Recruitment brochure [here](#).

CST Value 7: Stewardship and Care for Creation

The Catholic Church has a long tradition of teaching about the responsibility that all people have for caring for creation. This highlights the need to recognise the interdependence of all creation. It is only through an awareness of our need for global cooperation and sharing of the world's resources that the sacredness of creation and all peoples can be protected and respected. The priority for the poor calls for a fairer and more just distribution of the world's riches, whilst recognising the need for sustainable development.

Points for Reflection and Discussion: Stewardship and Care for Creation

The current Pope, Pope Francis, has spurred people around the world to take action to tackle climate change. His 2015 letter called 'Laudato Si: On Care for Our Common Home' is respected and referred to by other Christian churches, the wider faith-based social action world and beyond. Here is an excerpt:

A scientific consensus says climate change is real and is caused at least in part by human activity. A very solid scientific consensus indicates that we are presently witnessing a disturbing warming of the climatic system. In recent decades this warming has been accompanied by a constant rise in the sea level and, it would appear, by an increase of extreme weather events, even if a scientifically determinable cause cannot be assigned to each particular phenomenon.

Humanity is called to recognize the need for changes of lifestyle, production and consumption, in order to combat this warming or at least the human causes which produce or aggravate it.



Many of the poor live in areas particularly affected by phenomena related to warming, and their means of subsistence are largely dependent on natural reserves and ecosystemic services such as agriculture, fishing and forestry. They have no other financial activities or resources which can enable them to adapt to climate change or to face natural disasters, and their access to social services and protection is very limited.

Laudato Si (On Care for Our Common Home, 2015)

What strikes you about the extract?

What might you already be doing or plan to do differently to reduce your impact on the environment, for example to reduce plastic waste?

Do you think your organisation might be open to changing its habits concerning the environment and waste?

When possible, discuss this possibility and potential obstacles in your group.

Notes



CST in Practice: Stewardship and Care for Creation

Spend a few minutes reflecting on the real-life example below where stewardship and care for the creation has been put into practice in a Caritas organisation.

Caritas Charity: St Joseph's Hospice

www.stjh.org.uk/



St Joseph's Hospice

St Joseph's Hospice supports and cares for people in North and East London affected by serious illness and lifelimiting conditions so that they can live life to the full to the very end.

Staff and volunteers raising green consciousness

Staff and volunteers at St Joseph's Hospice who were especially keen and committed to environmentally friendly practices in their personal lives came together and formed a Green Committee to encourage the Hospice to update their ways.

This group has been successful in engaging the majority of staff and volunteers to feel part of the collective effort towards a common good. This focus on creating a stronger sense of community and cohesion in the organisation at all levels has made the shift a more sustainable one. The management team has since integrated green consciousness into the organisation's policies and practices such as the cycle-to-work programme and greener procurement and sourcing decisions.

The Green Committee summarises that the bottom-up approach was crucial. This engaged the staff and volunteers on green issues and brought on board even the climate sceptics, led to their success in making care for the creation a core value for the historic Hospice.



Green Committee, St Joseph's Hospice

Michael, Hospice Volunteer and Green Committee Member, during the Hospice's Zero Waste Week

Notes



Chapter 4. Important Moments

Throughout your time with this organisation there will be moments that are important to remember, learn from and celebrate. For example:

- A ‘thank you’ card or letter from a client or colleague about the difference you made
- A client makes progress
- Something in the media about you or the organisation
- A photograph of a special moment
- A significant event at the organisation
- Visitors you will remember
- Partners coming to help/visit
- A training day and what you learnt
- Your own thoughts and reflections

All the above and others are important parts of your life and journey in your role in this organisation. Because of the busyness of everyday life it is easy to forget wonderful or important moments. It is often the things that go wrong that we remember, but the good things sometimes get forgotten. We believe important moments show how God is working in and through each one of us in our various roles in the charity.

Why not start here by recording the important moment that is your joining this charity? Here are two questions to get you started:

Why were you drawn to this opportunity to apply for this role? What attracted you to accept this role and join this organisation?

Now that you know something about CST values, what do you think would be different working in this organisation compared to another which does not have any links to the them (even though they might have their own ethical or guiding values)?



Chapter 5. Being a Reflective Practitioner

You will be familiar with the importance of reflecting on how well you are doing, what you need to improve and how to move forward. One area that often gets overlooked is the need to take care of our spiritual wellbeing.

The following is a Christian exercise called Daily Examen from a Catholic order called the Jesuits. It is offered here to help build up and nourish you spiritually – not only to reflect on your work but also your personal life, of which work is only one part. It only takes a few minutes but you can take more time.

The Examen is a way of reviewing your day in the presence of God. It is simple, effective and can be used by anyone, collectively or privately.

The Jesuits have some excellent articles and YouTube videos to help you do this exercise. This webpage also provides guidance: www.ignatianspirituality.com/ignatian-prayer/the-examen/howcan-i-pray

Daily Examen

Step 1: Asking God for light

Find a quiet place. Turn off your mobile! Go through your day from the moment you woke up. Recall each moment carefully looking at it as accurately as you can without trying to justify it or explain the event.

Step 2: Being thankful for the day.

You woke up. You are alive! The day is a gift. Be grateful for the small things as well as the big ones.

Step 3: Allow the spirit to revisit the day with you looking more closely at each moment.

Step 4: Let the difficult moments to come to the fore. Ask the spirit to guide your thoughts. What went wrong? Why? Where might you have acted differently? Face in truth and your own shortcomings.

Step 5: Recognise where you need God to help grow. Look to tomorrow in hope knowing that you are not alone. You are surrounded by God's unconditional love.

