



Do Justice:

A Jubilee Resource for Parishes

Welcome to the **Do Justice: Jubilee 2025** campaign of Caritas Social Action Network, the agency of the Bishops' Conference which convenes and supports a network of Catholic charities to tackle poverty and injustice in England and Wales.

Do Justice: A Jubilee Resource for Parishes is an invitation to parish groups in England and Wales in the Jubilee Year 2025 to deepen their commitment to being, as Pope Francis said at the end of the synod in Rome in October 2023, “a more synodal and missionary Church, a Church that adores God and serves the women and men of our time, going forth to bring everyone the consoling joy of the Gospel” (2). The Jubilee is an invitation to reset and renew our relationship with God, our neighbour, and creation. The three sessions in this resource are designed to support that renewal. They are based around the gospel readings for the first three Sundays in Lent 2025, which would be the ideal time to meet, but groups could meet for three sessions at any time of the year.

Jubilee Pledge

The aim of the three sessions is to see as clearly as possible what's going on, to see and listen to “the joys and hopes and the sorrows and anxieties” (Gaudium et Spes, 1) of the people in your community. Then to discern what is of God and what is not of God in what you see; and finally to take a Jubilee Pledge as a community to act for a more just society, to bring hope to people, with the resources you have and in partnership with others, especially if possible your local Catholic school, which has also been invited to make a Jubilee Pledge. See Key Dates 2025 in the link here: <https://cafod.org.uk/jubilee-schools>



“...and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?”

Micah 6:8

“Happy those who hunger and thirst for what is right: they shall be satisfied.”

Matthew 5: 6

“We may have plenty of good ideas on how to reform the Church, but let us remember: to adore God and to love our brothers and sisters with his love, that is the great and perennial reform. To be a worshipping Church and a Church of service, washing the feet of wounded humanity, accompanying those who are frail, weak and cast aside, going out lovingly to encounter the poor.”

Pope Francis (1)



PREPARATION

“It is up to the Christian communities to analyse with objectivity the situation which is proper to their own country, to shed on it the light of the Gospel's unalterable words and to draw principles of reflection, norms of judgment and directives for action from the social teaching of the Church....It is up to these Christian communities, with the help of the Holy Spirit, in communion with the bishops who hold responsibility and in dialogue with other Christian brethren and all men of goodwill, to discern the options and commitments which are called for in order to bring about the social, political and economic changes seen in many cases to be urgently needed.”

Pope Paul VI (3)

We suggest that any parish group engaging with Do Justice: Jubilee 2025 should, by way of preparation, read and reflect on our 'core text' Do Justice: A Vision for Spiritual and Civic Renewal in England and Wales. You can download a copy here: www.dojustice.co.uk

It would also be helpful to reflect on the Papal Bull issued by Pope Francis for the Jubilee Year, *Spes in Confundit*, available online from www.vatican.va

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales also has a range of helpful resources on their website: www.cbcew.org.uk/jubilee-2025

YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY

The next task by way of preparation we suggest is to **'see' your local community**. Where is the 'good news' in the community, where is God at work in the gestures and projects that promote hope, solidarity, and the common good? Likewise, where are the challenges, where are people not flourishing? Poverty and injustice are often hidden in plain sight in our communities.

A parish knows the power of first-hand witness and 'immersion' in the lived experience of a community. In the gospels, Jesus sent his disciples out in twos to preach and heal in the surrounding districts. Perhaps the parish group could walk round the neighbourhood in twos - with due attention to safety - and really see what is going on around them, engaging where they could with local people. This is the culture of encounter.

There is also much to be learned from the voices of those who are not often heard, the stories of the lived experience of poverty and injustice. This is not easy to convene, especially for a group with little experience. Even if the Do Justice: Jubilee 2025 group convenes a parish gathering to hear the perspectives from the parish on poverty and injustice, it will be a helpful contribution to the preparation of 'seeing' the community as fully as possible.

GATHERING INFORMATION

Information is also important. It might be helpful for one person to scan the local press for information about poverty, isolation or possible exploitation; another might contact the local authority, or local councillors; another might look for the national data for an understanding of definitions of poverty, for example the House of Commons Library report, Poverty in the UK: statistics (2023), and more local data mapping low incomes from the Office of National Statistics: www.ons.gov.uk

The **Do Justice core text**, Do Justice: a vision for spiritual and civic renewal in England and Wales, provides a brief introduction to how poverty and injustice is treated in sacred Scripture and in the Magisterium of the Church, including an overview of the principles of Catholic Social Teaching.

The **Do Justice: Jubilee 2025** parish group (which may well be an existing parish group) will need a facilitator and a note-taker. The facilitator ideally should have training in the synodal practice of Conversation in the Spirit (see: Infographic from Synod 2021-2024), since that is the practice at the heart of the three sessions. The note-taker is not asked to produce ‘minutes’ of the meeting, but a summary of the ‘fruits’ of each conversation: “To what steps is the Holy Spirit calling us together?”

There will be a wide variety of parish groups involved in the **Do Justice: Jubilee 2025** campaign, from established groups with programmes and activities already up and running, to parish groups starting from scratch. For the former, this process may be more of a ‘top up’ or review of mission, while for others it may be the beginning of the work of social justice.



SESSION ONE

“The Christian's programme –the programme of the Good Samaritan, the programme of Jesus—is ‘a heart which sees’. This heart sees where love is needed and acts accordingly”

Pope Benedict XVI (4)

At a time which works well with local circumstances, we invite the parish Do Justice: Jubilee 2025 group to convene (either in person or online, whichever best suits local circumstances) for the first session.

In line with the guidance of Pope Francis at the end of the synod, we suggest that the focus is on two movements of the heart, to adore and to serve.

P R A Y E R

The session could begin with Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in the church, or if the gathering is in someone's home or online, then a suitable period of prayerful silence.

After the time of prayer, the group convenes, welcomed by the facilitator, who recaps briefly on the purpose of the group. Each session begins with the gospel reading, taken from the first three Sundays in Lent 2025. The first gospel reading is St Luke's account of the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness:

The Temptation of Jesus

And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness 2 for forty days, being tempted by the devil. And he ate nothing during those days. And when they were over, he was hungry. 3 The devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread.” 4 And Jesus answered him, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone.’” 5 And the devil took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, 6 and said to him, “To you I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will. 7 If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.” 8 And Jesus answered him, “It is written,

**“You shall worship the Lord your God,
and him only shall you serve.”**

9 And he took him to Jerusalem and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, 10 for it is written,

**“He will command his angels concerning you,
to guard you’,**

11 and

**“On their hands they will bear you up,
lest you strike your foot against a stone.”**

12 And Jesus answered him, “It is said, ‘You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.’” 13 And when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from him until an opportune time.

CONVERSATIONS IN THE SPIRIT

After the gospel reading, there is a time of silence. Then the group begins the Conversation in the Spirit.

The questions to consider for Session One: **What are the ‘temptations’ to worldly attitudes in our faith community? In what ways has our ‘seeing’ become distorted or complacent? Can we look with new eyes on the community around us? What do we see?**

Round One: Each person has a chance to speak without interruption in response to the questions, with a time limit (e.g., three minutes, which the facilitator will keep an eye on). There is no discussion in this round. It may help to have an object (e.g., a stone or holding cross) which is held by the person who is speaking.

A period of silence and prayer follows.

Round Two: From what has been said, each person shares what has resonated with him or her, or what has aroused most resistance, allowing themselves to be guided by the Spirit, “When, listening, did my heart burn within me?” Each person has a chance to speak without interruption. There is no discussion in this round.

A period of silence and prayer follows.

Round Three: Together we open up a dialogue on the basis of what has emerged in order to discern and gather the fruit of the conversation in the Spirit, to recognise convergences, to acknowledge discordance, obstacles and new questions, to allow prophetic voices to emerge. The note-taker tries to capture what the Holy Spirit is calling the group to ‘see’ in their community, what temptations to avoid.

The session ends with the Glory Be, or some suitable prayer.

SESSION TWO

“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God - what is good and acceptable and perfect.”

(Romans 12: 2)

PRAYER

The session could begin with Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in the church, or if the gathering is in someone’s home or online, then a suitable period of prayerful silence.

After the time of prayer, the group convenes, welcomed by the facilitator, who recaps briefly on session one and what was discerned. The session continues with the gospel reading from **St Luke 9: 28-36**

The Transfiguration of the Lord:

Now about eight days after these sayings he took with him Peter and John and James and went up on the mountain to pray. 29 And as he was praying, the appearance of his face was altered, and his clothing became dazzling white. 30 And behold, two men were talking with him, Moses and Elijah, 31 who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. 32 Now Peter and those who were with him were heavy with sleep, but when they became fully awake they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. 33 And as the men were parting from him, Peter said to Jesus, “Master, it is good that we are here. Let us make three tents, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah”—not knowing what he said. 34 As he was saying these things, a cloud came and overshadowed them, and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. 35 And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, “This is my Son, my Chosen One; listen to him!” 36 And when the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and told no one in those days anything of what they had seen.

After the Gospel reading, there is a time of silence. Then the group begins the Conversation in the Spirit.

CONVERSATIONS IN THE SPIRIT

The questions for Session Two: **What does the Gospel and Catholic Social Teaching tell us about what we have seen in our community? What is of God, what is not of God? What is humanising, what is de-humanising? Where is the light of God shining on what we see?**

Round One: Each person has a chance to speak without interruption in response to the questions, with a time limit (e.g., three minutes). There is no discussion in this round. It may help to have an object (e.g., a stone or holding cross) which is held by the person who is speaking. A period of silence and prayer follows.

Round Two: From what has been said, each person shares what has resonated with him or her, or what has aroused most resistance, allowing themselves to be guided by the Spirit, “When, listening, did my heart burn within me?” Each person has a chance to speak without interruption. There is no discussion in this round. A period of silence and prayer follows.

Round Three: Together we open up a dialogue on the basis of what has emerged in order to discern and gather the fruit of the conversation in the Spirit, to recognise convergences, to acknowledge discordance, obstacles and new questions, to allow prophetic voices to emerge. The note-taker tries to capture what the Holy Spirit is calling the group to ‘discern’ in their community. Where is the ‘gentle tug’ of the Spirit?

The session ends with the Glory Be, or some suitable prayer.

SESSION THREE

“Evangelisation always requires the transformation of an unjust social order; and one of its primary tasks is to oppose and denounce such injustices.”

Bishops of England and Wales (5)

PRAYER

The session could begin with Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in the church, or if the gathering is in someone’s home or online, then a suitable period of prayerful silence.

After the time of prayer, the group convenes, welcomed by the facilitator, who recaps briefly on session one and two and what was seen and discerned. The session continues with the gospel reading from **St Luke 13: 6.9.**

The Parable of the Barren Fig Tree

6 And he told this parable: “A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. 7 And he said to the vine dresser, ‘Look, for three years now I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and I find none. Cut it down. Why should it use up the ground?’ 8 And he answered him, ‘Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig round it and put on manure. 9 Then if it should bear fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.”

After the Gospel reading, there is a time of silence. Then the group begins the Conversation in the Spirit.

CONVERSATIONS IN THE SPIRIT

The questions for Session Three: **How is the Holy Spirit calling us to bear fruit in our community? What can we do with the resources and skills we have to build a world more in conformity with the Kingdom of God in our community, to bring hope to people in the Holy Year of Jubilee 2025?**

Round One: Each person has a chance to speak in response to the questions, with a time limit (e.g., three minutes). There is no discussion in this round. It may help to have an object (e.g., a stone or holding cross) which is held by the person who is speaking. A period of silence and prayer follows.

Round Two: From what has been said, each person shares what has resonated with him or her, or what has aroused most resistance, allowing themselves to be guided by the Spirit, “When, listening, did my heart burn within me?” Each person has a chance to speak without interruption. There is no discussion in this round. A period of silence and prayer follows.

Round Three: Together we open up a dialogue on the basis of what has emerged in order to discern and gather the fruit of the conversation in the Spirit, to recognise convergences, to acknowledge discordance, obstacles and new questions, to allow prophetic voices to emerge. The note-taker tries to capture where the Holy Spirit is calling the group to act in their community, to what steps is the Holy Spirit calling us together in the Holy Year of Jubilee 2025?

At the end of the third session, the group should have some clarity about what it intends to do to build the Kingdom of love, justice, and peace in their community. For each group and community, the discerned needs and action will be different. There may be a focus on material poverty in the community, or isolation and loneliness among the elderly, or refugees and migrants in the community, or the victims of human trafficking, or people who are homeless, or care for our common home (or an integration of more than one of these).

The session ends with the Glory Be, or some suitable prayer.

FOLLOW UP

“Solidarity means much more than engaging in sporadic acts of generosity. It means thinking and acting in terms of community. It means that the lives of all are prior to the appropriation of goods by a few. It also means combatting the structural causes of poverty, inequality, the lack of work, land and housing, the denial of social and labour rights.”

Pope Francis (6)

In the next stage, the group may well focus on the roll-out of an action plan, refining what has to be done, to what end, with whom and with what resources? What other religious groups might we work with, or community organisations, in order to pool our resources? Can you work with the local Catholic school?

For any work of social justice, it is good to have some idea in mind of **what needs to be achieved, what the intended impact is**. We should also be careful, however, to avoid an overly managerial approach, dominated by ‘key performance indicators’. It might be better to use the more scriptural language of ‘bearing fruit’. **Where are the fruits of justice, peace and love as a result of your project?**

It would also be helpful for the group to consider the difference between compassion and justice outlined in the **Do Justice** core text. The Gospel begins in compassion but does not end there. We are called to be agents of change for a more just society, challenging the root causes of injustice and peacefully advocating for more just structures and practices in our community. The Holy Year of Jubilee 2025 is rooted in the Old Testament practice every fifty years of re-setting the social and economic order to be more in line with God’s vision for humanity: debts were cancelled, the oppressed were set free, the land was allowed to rest.

THE CALL TO ACTION

“In the developing nations and in other countries lay people must consider it their task to improve the temporal order. While the hierarchy has the role of teaching and authoritatively interpreting the moral laws and precepts that apply in this matter, the laity have the duty of using their own initiative and taking action in this area—without waiting passively for directives and precepts from others. They must try to infuse a Christian spirit into people’s mental outlook and daily behaviour, into the laws and structures of the civil community. Changes must be made; present conditions must be improved. And the transformations must be permeated with the spirit of the Gospel.”

Pope Paul VI (7)

The Season of Easter, as we follow the development of the early Church in the Acts of the Apostles, would be an ideal time to see the **Do Justice: Jubilee 2025** project bearing its first fruits, although any time of the year would be suitable. An important part of the process is to reflect on how it’s going, if it’s bearing fruit in the way you had hoped, or if there is any need for mid-course correction. What can we celebrate?

We would love to celebrate and share the Jubilee Pledges from parishes and schools across the country. You might like to use the form below which the schools are using to record your pledge and make a special declaration of your pledge during a liturgy in the parish or in the local school. Please keep in touch and let us know how your work in the Year of Jubilee is bearing fruit.

Please contact Bernadette Durcan at: bernadette.durcan@csan.org.uk
With every blessing for your works of justice.

Raymond Friel
CEO, Caritas Social Action Network

References:

(1) <https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco> (2) As above (3) Pope Paul VI, Octogesima Adveniens, 4 (4) Pope Benedict XVI, Deus Caritas Est, 31 (5) Bishops of England and Wales, The Common Good, 40 (6) Pope Francis, Fratelli Tutti, 116 (7) Pope Paul VI, Populorum Progressio, 81