

Collective Worship: World Day of the Poor

Gathering	Sign of the Cross	Light a candle
Introduction	As it is World Day of the Poor on Sunday, we're going to take a moment to reflect on the presence of the poor in our communities, and think about how our Catholic faith should shape our response. Whilst we might think of poverty as something that only affects people far away, it's important to remember that it comes in many forms and often affects people within our communities also. During our time at school we might not solve global hunger or bring an end to injustice but we are more than capable of being people of hope, who can make a difference within our local areas, whether that be home, school or Church.	Read script
Scripture	So let's take a moment to think about what the Bible teaches us about poverty. The best known reference to poverty comes from the Book of Matthew 25:35-40: "For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink... whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."	Pause for a moment
Reflection	This scripture reminds us of two key things: dignity and duty. First: dignity. This is the foundational principle of Catholic Social Teaching, and it reminds us that every human being, including those who live in poverty or on the margins of society, bears the image and likeness of God. To recognise this truth is to see beyond circumstances, labels, or economic status. True Christian compassion begins in seeing Christ present in every human face, especially in those the world overlooks or dismisses. Second: duty. Our faith calls us to something deeper than sympathy or good intentions. It calls us to justice, solidarity, and concrete action. Pope Leo XIV reminds us that <i>"if our prayer does not lead to concrete action, it is in vain; yet if our charity is detached from prayer, it risks becoming mere philanthropy that quickly fades."</i> Our duty, then, is to pray and to act. Prayer roots our actions in God's will, giving them meaning and endurance; action makes our prayer real in the lives of others. Together, they form the heart of a living faith that listens to the cry of the poor, works to restore dignity, and builds a society where love is not only spoken but lived.	Read script
Video	We are going to watch a short video which reflects on Pope Leo's address for World Day of the Poor. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bp4MLQ6Oyeo You'll see how Leo has continued the legacy of Pope Francis, and how he thinks we can strengthen our faith by extending acts of service and love towards the poor.	Play video
Examine	Invite you now to think about these questions and if time allows to discuss your answers with the people around you: • Who are the "poor" among us? Perhaps those who feel socially poor (excluded, lonely), emotionally poor (hurt, depressed), or financially poor (in need). • What can we do to help and make change? Perhaps speak to someone who sits alone, volunteer for a school or charity initiative, fundraise, raise awareness or treat every person as we'd like to be treated. • How do you think God is really calling us to respond when we see someone in need? • How could we make our school a place where no one feels left out or forgotten?	Pause between each question
Closing	Loving God, help us to be people who plant hope where there is struggle. Teach us to notice those who are left out or overlooked. Give us courage to stand alongside those in need and not just to offer help, but to listen, to understand, and to act. Show us how to love like Christ: with open hearts, thoughtful words, and willing hands. Strengthen us to be builders of dignity and hope in our school, our families, and our communities. Amen. Sign of the Cross.	Read script