



JUST NOW

DIocese OF NOTTINGHAM
Justice
+peace
COMMISSION

Catholic faith in action in the East Midlands

Autumn 2019

TO BIND UP HEARTS THAT ARE BROKEN

A people gathered

Homelessness,
hidden and revealed

Reaching out in
Leicester

Book now for our
annual Assembly

TO BRING GOOD NEWS TO THE POOR

TO PROCLAIM LIBERTY TO CAPTIVES

AND COMFORT THOSE WHO MOURN

The magazine of Nottingham Diocesan
Justice and Peace Commission



Celebrating the worldwide
**SEASON OF
CREATION**
in the Diocese of Nottingham



Untold Stories

Jesus still speaks in parables.
We just need to listen.

Facts only go so far: it's stories that change realities. That's why Jesus spoke in parables—stories which bring God's people to life. As any campaigner knows, the first rule of social change is 'tell them a story', because people are stories too.

But do we always have the ears to hear? And does the society in which we live? The epidemic of homelessness and social isolation in our neighbourhoods suggests not. Too often the stories people represent are stifled by poverty, loneliness, fear, ill-health, prejudice or ill-fortune—or simply by not 'fitting in'. Jesus calls us, his Church, to give voice back to the voiceless—to speak up with them and for them. It all starts with listening, an act which is both simple and uncommonly hard, because it goes against everything our culture would have us do.

*Loving attentiveness
is the beginning of
true concern*

Pope Francis in
Evangelii Gaudium 199

In this issue we look ahead to World Homeless Day, which Bishop Patrick plans to mark with a Pastoral Letter, and to November's World Day of the Poor—two reminders to listen to silenced voices which cry out to be heard. Jesus answered not with condescension, but with friendship. We hope you find something of that gift of his, to receive and pass on.

Do Justice

Social isolation

A report by the Campaign to End Loneliness, *The Missing Million*, has placed social isolation firmly on the political agenda. Loneliness is a compound of isolating factors, such as health, activity, home ownership, marital status and visual impairment. In combination they can deprive people of the opportunities we take for granted. That's why loneliness is a matter of justice as well as charity.



In our recent survey of parishes in Nottingham Diocese, isolation topped the list of concerns which parishes felt Catholics could help to address, alongside care for elderly people. 62% of parishes highlighted isolation as one of the main concerns to be addressed in their locality. Read on to see how St Patrick's in Leicester are doing something about it.



(Image from a film of St Patrick's in Leicester by Imran Qureshi available at www.dioceseofnottingham.uk/tacklingisolation)

I CALL YOU FRIENDS

Michael Daly reports on a practical response to loneliness in Beaumont Leys, hosted by St Patrick's parish, but open to all.



What can be done about the problem of social isolation? Over 9m people in the UK, almost a fifth of the population, say they are 'always or often lonely' (British Red Cross and Co-op, 2016). Research shows that loneliness and social isolation are harmful to our health. Older people are particularly vulnerable: as our society changes so do the things we once took for granted, like neighbours, friends and family.

Here at St Patrick's in Leicester we have a Friendship Group whose aim is to reduce the isolation of individuals within the community, regardless of age, religion, or ability. We do this by providing an atmosphere of caring, and supporting one another. We have outings, activities, and so forth, but I think the most important thing we provide is conversation, and fun, and lots of laughter! — and knowing you are welcomed as part of a group.

We are a diverse group, not just parishioners, but people from the community at large. It's surprising how word gets around! We have quizzes, Bingo, sing-songs, film afternoons, and carols and mince pies at Christmastime. We had a falconry and owl afternoon, and shared lunches. We meet at our parish centre for about two hours once a week.

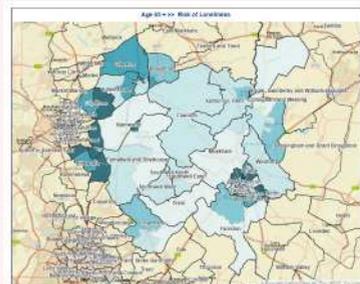
About five years ago, a few parishioners from St Patrick's had the idea to start the group, and it has developed ever since. Now it's mainly run by two ladies, known as 'The Two Alisons', who have worked tirelessly over the past few years. They sometimes provide a Pampering Day, with foots spas and manicures. Special thanks must go to Fr. Martin Hardy, our former Parish Priest for his support in setting the group up.

Of course we have our highs and lows—it's not all plain sailing. A few of our Group have passed away over the years, and that brings its own sadness. But again, we support one another through these times, and they have been few and far between. The highs outweigh the lows by a long way! Two ladies from our Group decided to become Catholics, and were received into the Church a couple of years ago amid much rejoicing. The Holy Spirit is always working!

Jesus said "Love one another as I have loved you" (John 15, 17). I think our Friendship Group helps us to do as Jesus said.

Numerous parishes in Nottingham Diocese host regular friendship groups open to all, such as **Mickleover** and **Glossop**. Some, such as at **Warsop** and **Bulwell** (featured in *Just Now* in Winter 2018), run drop-in cafés, and **Carlton** and **Spalding** are exploring setting one up. If your parish has similar plans or would like to be put in touch to share ideas, contact us.

For a map showing where people in your parish face most risk from loneliness (like the map of Newark & Sherwood, *left*) visit dioceseofnottingham.uk/tacklingisolation.



World Homeless Day

Kevin Curtis, project manager of Long Eaton's Canaan Trust, marks your diary for 10 October

The concept of **World Homeless Day** emerged from online discussions between people working to respond to homelessness from various parts of the world. The inaugural World Homeless Day was marked on the 10 October 2010. Since then, it has been observed on every continent except Antarctica, in several dozen countries.

The idea of 'World Homeless Day' is open for all to use, anywhere in the world. Its purpose is to draw attention to homeless people's needs locally, and provide opportunities for the community to get involved in responding to homelessness, while taking advantage of the stage which an 'international day' provides.

How to make a difference

- **educate** people about homeless issues
- **celebrate** and support local good works
- **highlight** local issues
- **donate** to local service providers
- **volunteer** and provide hands-on help
- **thank** volunteers with certificates and awards
- **invite** a guest speaker
- **host** a fundraiser

You could start by identifying the local service provider for homeless people for which you want to rally support, and what they need. Whether they suggest clean socks, food items, or an item they need funds for, or just general fundraising, use your local networks to rally even greater support: schools, places of worship, service clubs, local businesses and where you work.

World Homeless Day is something you can point to on the calendar each year and use to make a significant difference in your local community.

Here in Nottingham Diocese Bishop Patrick plans to write a Pastoral Letter to be read at all masses. He is calling on all Catholics to actively respond to the fact that, as recent official statistics confirm, street homelessness and rough sleeping continue to rise year on year. Shockingly in 2018, 597 individuals died homeless, isolated and alone. Yet far more people are homeless than we ever see on our streets. Many individuals and families are 'hidden homeless' often spending nights 'sofa-surfing', living in cars, sheds, squats; families are split up and forced to sleep apart in a number of different houses. Street homelessness is but the visible tip of a much greater number of individuals and families who form society's 'hidden homeless', who make 62% of all those counted as homeless.

Apart from 'natural justice' our faith calls us to respond to this dire need in our local communities. Bishop Patrick is calling on all Catholics to engage in the Diocese's ***Faith***

into Action programme. As part of it Bishop Patrick wishes to mark World Homeless Day in all our parishes and schools this October.

A special website is being launched shortly which will provide resources to enable churches, schools and other groups to access comprehensive information on services operating in each area across the Diocese.

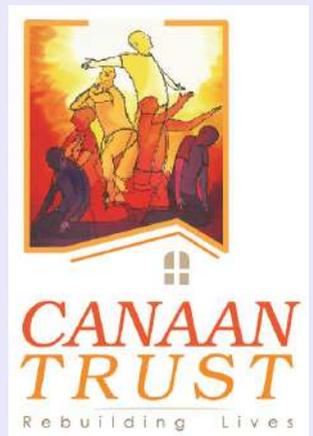
For World Homeless Day on 10 October 2019, the Diocese is teaming up with two local charities, who introduce themselves here.



YMCA Derbyshire is an independent Christian charity committed to helping people at times of need. Quite simply we show compassion and support to those who need it most, through the provision of accommodation for individuals who find themselves without a place to live. We also provide a range of accredited training courses for young people aged 16-19 and a variety of family services for children aged 4-11. Our values, from 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 of *Protect, Trust, Hope* and *Persevere*, underpin all services and our vision is enabling young people and communities to thrive. Together we create places where people flourish.

YMCA

The Canaan Trust is an independent Christian homeless charity based in Erewash, Derbyshire. Founded in 1995 we are giving thanks for almost 25 years of serving the Lord through supporting and caring for the homeless and the needy. Operating 24/7, 365 days a year, the Trust is ever available to reach out to those who are hurting and in need.



The Trust has two houses providing safe and secure long term accommodation and support for homeless males. In addition the Trust operates across the community caring for the countless 'hidden homeless'.

The Trust provides food and hygiene packs to all in need – across an average week the Trust, directly or indirectly, feeds between 200 to 300 individuals.

Uniquely the Trust provides clients with access to a fully qualified counsellor, and separately a hypnotherapist, who address a client's emotional, mental health, and substance misuse issues.

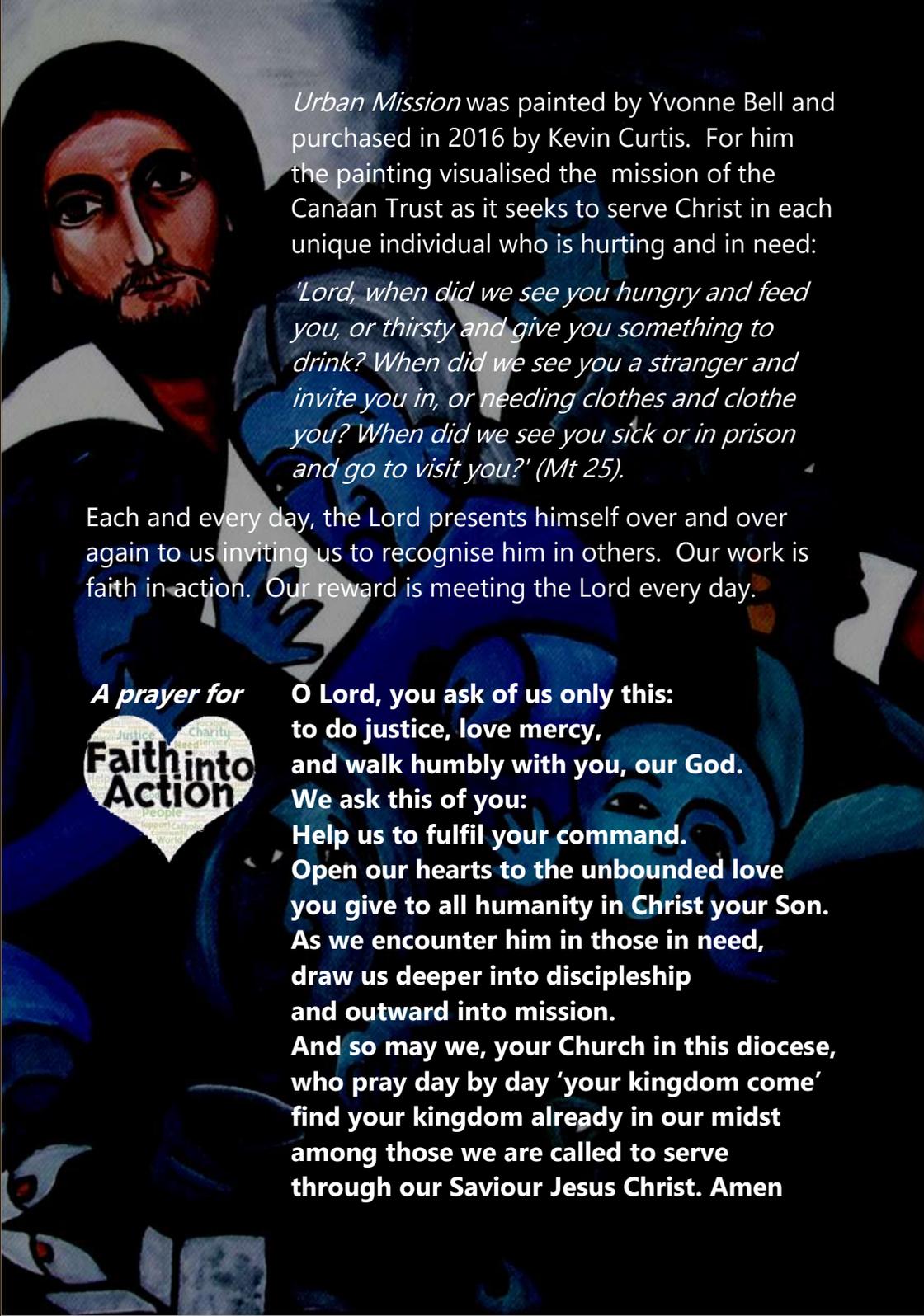
Clients have access to the Trust's education program which covers literacy, numeracy, IT and an extensive range of life skills and work related training.

Ultimately each unique client is supported in a person-centred manner to achieve independent living in their own tenancies back in the community.



For once, let us set statistics aside: the poor are not statistics to cite when boasting of our works and projects. The poor are persons to be encountered; they are lonely, young and old, to be invited to our homes to share a meal; men women and children who look for a friendly word. The poor save us because they enable us to encounter the face of Jesus Christ.

Pope Francis' Message for World Day of the Poor,
17 November 2019



Urban Mission was painted by Yvonne Bell and purchased in 2016 by Kevin Curtis. For him the painting visualised the mission of the Canaan Trust as it seeks to serve Christ in each unique individual who is hurting and in need:

'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?' (Mt 25).

Each and every day, the Lord presents himself over and over again to us inviting us to recognise him in others. Our work is faith in-action. Our reward is meeting the Lord every day.

A prayer for



O Lord, you ask of us only this:

**to do justice, love mercy,
and walk humbly with you, our God.**

We ask this of you:

Help us to fulfil your command.

**Open our hearts to the unbounded love
you give to all humanity in Christ your Son.**

**As we encounter him in those in need,
draw us deeper into discipleship
and outward into mission.**

**And so may we, your Church in this diocese,
who pray day by day 'your kingdom come'
find your kingdom already in our midst
among those we are called to serve
through our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen**

Love Let Loose

Growing as missionary disciples together

We are not 'the Church' only on Sundays. That's why Pope Benedict (below) invited parishes to the threefold ministry of word, sacrament *and* charity—and so to grow into a local ecology of love.

With funding from Caritas Social Action Network and Cafod, the Justice and Peace Commission has taken up this vision. On behalf of the diocese, we're developing a diocesan programme called **Faith into Action**, which aims to harness the faith, commitment and know-how of people in all our parishes, so that we can grow together in mission.

Next year we will be offering local workshops to help you explore how you and your parish are called to serve. We're developing a prospectus which will offer a starting point for your discernment. At the heart of it is a vision for lay people, clergy and religious, working together and with civil society, listening to God's call and seeking out a journey in the Gospel.

At the heart of the enterprise is 'formation'. That's a word which baffles as much as it enlightens. So here is one take on what 'formation' might mean for us.

The Church's deepest nature is expressed in her three-fold responsibility: of proclaiming the word of God, celebrating the sacraments and exercising the ministry of charity.

These duties presuppose each other and are inseparable

Benedict XVI, Deus caritas est



Engaging and training for social action

Catherine Brady is a parishioner at St Mary's, Loughborough and director of resource development for Together for the Common Good.

Pope Francis describes the parish as 'a community of communities, a sanctuary where the thirsty come to drink in the midst of their journey and a centre of constant missionary outreach' (*Evangelii Gaudium* 1.28). Even with declining numbers and elderly populations most parishes have some forms of outreach, usually carried out by small groups of regular and committed parishioners, who give their time willingly to causes promoted historically within their parishes: St Vincent de Paul Society, Cafod, Justice & Peace to name but three.

Imagine how much more we could do to become 'centres of constant missionary outreach' if we engaged a larger circle of parishioners, from a diversity of age groups and cultural backgrounds. with wide-ranging skills and abilities, to get involved in new areas of social action, previously untried? They could start by identifying their individual gifts and then, with a bible in one hand and a newspaper in the other, consider how they can use them to address the needs of a square mile of the parish, looking beyond the security of the Catholic boundaries.

In the same chapter Pope Francis says 'In all its activities the parish encourages and trains its members to be evangelisers'. But how do you give people confidence that they can make a difference, use their skills and experience and get together as a team to make things happen? And to do this without relying on overworked priests to take the lead?

Training represents a challenge, for, outside of sacramental preparation and academic study, not a lot happens in the field of adult pastoral formation, particularly beyond Scripture and Tradition. And what does exist tends to be theory-based, one-way, delivered by an expert, with little participation other than an occasional question and answer session. The didactic method may work for transmitting content but it doesn't work for transforming people and encouraging them to act.

In his recent book *The Universal Christ*, Franciscan priest and teacher Richard Rohr describes a teaching methodology he calls 'the tricycle'. It moves forward on three wheels: Experience, Scripture and Tradition 'which must be allowed to regulate one another'. Few of us have been given permission or training to use all three together, 'much less allowing Experience to be the front wheel'.

This calls for an open and collaborative approach to formation in which people can learn from one another and prepare for their particular vocation. The style is less controlled, more conversational. And it works. A starting point would be a discussion that focuses on 'What is my calling?' Followed by a discussion on vocational responsibility and individual gifts. What's needed above all is the courage to have a go.

OK, Catherine, we're up for it! Are you too? The Commission is looking to recruit a pool of volunteers who can help Catholics and their parishes put faith into action. And we're developing the training to equip you for the role. Intrigued? If you'd like to know more, get in touch—we'd love to hear from you.



As the Commission's *Faith into Action* project develops, there is a growing range of opportunities to get involved.

Here are just a few of them.

Be a parish contact: Is there someone in your parish who is a point of contact for the church's social outreach? If not, why not you? Take on as little or as much as you like: we have suggestions about the role you could play, and the support which the Commission and fellow contacts around the diocese can provide.

Train as a facilitator: As explained opposite, if you'd like to develop skills in helping other parishes develop their social outreach, we can let you know when training is going to start.

Shape our future: Join our teams who are developing new work on modern slavery, communications, formation for missionary discipleship, or a new diocesan environmental strategy.



To get in touch, contact Paul Bodenham, Programme Leader for Social Action:

- Email justice.peace@dioceseofnottingham.uk or call 07470 907656
- Write to Palmer House, Pelham Court, 2 Pelham Road, Nottingham NG5 1AP
- Or follow us on Twitter @SaltForTheEarth and on Facebook at /nottinghamjusticeandpeace

GATHERING FOR THE GOSPEL

An invitation to our Annual Assembly on 2 November 2019

You are warmly invited to our annual Justice and Peace Assembly, which will be held at **St Thomas More's Church, Knighton, Leicester** on Saturday 2 November. Bookings are now open—visit our website at www.dioceseofnottingham.uk/jpassembly to book your place.

The day comes at crucial moment in our nation's history, two days after we are due to leave the European Union (at least, at the time of writing!), and in a climate of growing polarisation in our nation and our world.

We'll be joined by Jenny Sinclair, founder and director of **Together for the Common Good**; by Catherine Brady whom we heard from on p13; and also by Theresa Alessandro, director of **Pax Christi**, a parishioner at Blessed Sacrament in Leicester.

Pax Christi's record in peacemaking needs no introduction. Together for the Common Good is a charity helping the churches play their part to strengthen the bonds of social trust. In this time of division and upheaval, they call and equip people to fulfil their vocational responsibilities by living out 'Common Good' principles. Drawing on Catholic social thought, the organisation is inspired by the partnership in Liverpool a generation ago between Archbishop Derek Worlock and Bishop David Sheppard, Jenny's late father.

Come and be empowered, and let's explore how the Gospel can guide our choices for the decisions ahead.

How many wounds grow deeper due to epidemic of animosity and violence, which leaves its mark on the flesh of many of the defenceless!
Pope Francis

Down the middle of the city street, on either bank of the river, were the trees of life... the leaves of which are the cure for the nations.
Revelation 22. 2

Leaves For Healing

Rebuilding the common good together

The Annual Assembly of Nottingham
Diocesan Justice and Peace Commission

Saturday 2 November 2019

St Thomas More, Knighton, Leicester

with Jenny Sinclair

Director of Together for the Common Good

and Theresa Alessandro

Director of Pax Christi

Booking now open:

dioceseofnottingham.uk/jpassembly

DIOCESE OF NOTTINGHAM
**Justice
+ peace**
COMMISSION

At this time of growing polarisation, how does our faith call us to heal wounds, risk reconciliation and build the common good, with our neighbours and the wider world? How can the Gospel and Catholic Social Teaching guide us in the decisions we now have to make as a nation and in our communities? Join us for a day building bridges for our parishes and our world.

Blessed Sacrament Justice and Peace Group

Celia Fisher convenes a lively group in Leicester.

It all started in February 2015 with three people meeting to discuss how we could help people living in poverty locally; four years on there are more than 20 active members and more who keep in touch with what we do. Our Parish Priest has been very supportive of the group, which really helps.

We raise awareness of justice and peace issues affecting those locally, nationally and globally, through events, regular updates and opportunities for reflection and action. We use as our guides and inspiration *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis's encyclical letter 'on care for our common home', and the themes of Encounter, Discipleship and Missionary Discipleship adopted and promoted by Bishop Patrick.

We work within the parish and more widely with the aim of increasing knowledge about and support for vulnerable people, promoting respect for others and their skills and strengths.

*Celia (in the middle below)
at a recent meeting of
the group*



We aim to increase understanding about the impact we have on the earth and promote ideas for change which may reduce our impact and footprint. We are lucky to have a 'corner' in our weekly bulletin which we can use to highlight key issues and suggest actions everyone can take. Over the last few months we have focused on climate change.

Human trafficking and slavery and ethical purchasing are significant areas of work for us within the group. We are working closely with the Diocese Justice & Peace Commission, as well as the Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland Modern Slavery Action Group and Santa Marta Group to address issues of slavery and trafficking. We are developing approaches to encourage people to think about ethical purchasing—which we hope can be rolled out across the diocese and perhaps more widely. This is a very interesting piece of work—we have to look at "consuming" in a different way—and how to help people think differently as well as consider financial constraints.

We have strong links into work with traveller communities in the diocese. We also do work in a few other areas: with and for asylum seekers and refugees; peace and disarmament; homelessness and gambling and Catholic Social Teaching. We link what we do to relevant themes and often provide prayers for Mass or services at special times such as Prisoner Sunday, Peace Sunday, World Water Day, Refugee Week, Stations of the Cross and St Josephine Bakhita's Day. We have strengthened our links with the Diocesan Justice and Peace commission.

We are always keen for new members to join us – and also to work with other groups. Please get in touch if you would like to know more: blessedsacramentjp@gmail.com

Dates for your diary

Saturday 21 September in Cleethorpes: Modern Slavery nationally and locally

A day of information and reflection with Bishop Alistair Redfern, former Anglican co-ordinator of anti-slavery initiatives. 10.30am -3.30pm. To book your place call 01472 692370.

Saturday 5 October in Nottingham: Let Earth be Glad

Join an ecumenical and inter-religious conversation about care of Creation, hosted by the diocese's Ecumenical and Justice and Peace Commissions. The event, running from 10 am until 3 pm in St Barnabas' Cathedral Hall will follow the feast of St Francis and close the ecumenical Season of Creation. Speakers from different perspectives and traditions will share their insights, followed by workshops. Register your interest with Fran Wickes (fran@brightshark.co.uk) or Patricia Stoa (pmstoat@gmail.com).

Saturday 2 November in Leicester: Nottingham Diocesan Justice and Peace Commission's Annual Assembly

See inside for details.

Saturday 17 November: World Day of the Poor

Described by Pope Francis as 'a small answer which the whole Church gives to the poor of every type and in every land, lest they think that their cry has gone unheard'. A great opportunity for action in your parish.

Saturday 28 March 2020 at Nottingham Cathedral

A day to link up and equip Catholics working across our diocese for charity, justice and peace—with each other and with the international network of Caritas dioceses. Details to follow!