



Caritas at Christmas

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men! Luke 2:14

We are called to recognise the face of Jesus in the faces of our brothers and sisters, but it can be hard to know how to reach out to others. Many people are keen to show generosity, particularly at Christmas, and this note has some suggestions for how we can take action. Our Diocesan Synodal Journey “offers us the opportunity to become a Church of closeness, that does not stand aloof from life, but immerses herself in today’s problems and needs, bandaging wounds and healing broken hearts with the balm of God.” Pope Francis

HOMELESSNESS - PARISH ACTION

For the last two years Our Lady of the Portal & St Piran in Truro has involved some of the youngest children and their parents in buying dry bags and filling them with useful items for homeless people. The SVP pays for the materials and the children fill the bags after Mass one Sunday in November and take them to St Petrocs in Truro for distribution. The parish this year have ordered 20 Vinnie packs from SVP which they will augment with additional items for the homeless. The parish also support the Cornwall Christmas Box.

Why not think of some ways your parish can reach out to the many who find themselves without a home and living on the streets? Our Caritas guide offers some suggestions [Homeless-Charity-Resource-List-Nov21.pdf \(plymouth-diocese.org.uk\)](https://www.plymouth-diocese.org.uk/Homeless-Charity-Resource-List-Nov21.pdf)

God of hope,
we cling to you, for you renew
the face of the earth.
Through the gift of your Son,
our Lord Jesus,
we follow you on the path of
dawn.
Enlightened by your love and
wisdom,
help us to lead each other and all
creatures back to your open
arms.
Amen.

Rachel McCarthy/CAFOD

WHY NOT HAVE A LIVE SIMPLY CHRISTMAS?

We are all conscious of the need to protect our Common Home. Why not try the following ideas to get more out of Christmas whilst reducing the waste:

- *Ask for a “World Gift” or a donation to a charity in your name. Knowing that you have met somebody else’s need is truly in the spirit of Christmas.
- *Consider Fairtrade products. Supermarkets stock a wide range of Fairtrade goods
- *Consider a subscription to something useful that also benefits the community. For instance a year’s membership to the National Trust or similar organisation
- *Where possible, make rather buy things. A little “making” project can be very relaxing at the end of a busy day.
- *If you do buy presents: Look for things that are durable rather than being in landfill in three months. Also where, possible, things made of natural products rather than plastic, or crafted by hand rather than machine-made.
- *Make some of your Christmas cards. Deliver local ones on foot or by bike as a little outing.

Christmas is what YOU make it. It should be a time of love both for your own family and for the brothers and sisters in our worldwide family.

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REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

This year, instead of a Christmas Card appeal, Jesuit Refugee Services are inviting us all to write a “Message of Solidarity” onto an Orange Heart and show your solidarity with those who are seeking asylum and protection in the UK.

You can make your own orange heart using paper/card or download and print this template <https://www.jrsuk.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Together-With-Refugees-heart-symbol-1.png>

Once you have written your message, you can post a picture of your heart on social media to help us raise awareness and invite others to take part. Tag JRS UK and include the #TogetherWithRefugees on your posts.

You can either display your orange heart somewhere for people to see, say in the window of your home or as part of a coordinated display in your school, church or community,



THE ELDERLY AND ISOLATED

Christmas is the loneliest time of year for many people, with those who have lost a loved one struggling the most. Why not give a small amount of time to someone living alone in your street? You can support your Saint Vincent de Paul Society or other groups which offer support and befriending opportunities. Drop round a Christmas card to let someone know you are thinking of them. If you are concerned someone is feeling lonely, older people can call Silverline on 0800 4708090 for friendship and advice 24 hours a day, seven days a week.



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