

LOVE IN ACTION



CALL TO COMMUNITY AND PARTICIPATION



“ True faith in the incarnate Son of God is inseparable from self-giving, from membership in the community, from service, from reconciliation with others.”

Pope Francis, *Joy of the Gospel*, 72



“No man is an island” as John Donne’s poem begins. As human beings, we are called to live in community, with others, growing together and flourishing as a result. We are also called to get involved. At World Youth Day in 2013, Pope Francis challenged us:

We are called to be active members of society, our local and global community.

Observing the reality of the world, remembering that first guideline of the dignity of all people, we’re called to support one another. What are my gifts and talents which could be used to the advantage of the wider community?

We can’t just sit back and bemoan what’s happening, whether in our own parish and community, society, or the world. We are called to get our hands dirty, to get involved, to help build a better world. We’re all called to put love into action.



Pope Francis,
World Youth Day 2013

Don’t be observers, but immerse yourself in the reality of life, as Jesus did.

Derek is a volunteer ship visitor with the Apostleship of the Sea. Visiting seafarers in port who are a long way from home, he offers friendship, listens to their stories and looks at their family photos, and helps with practical things like getting Skype to work to call home, and providing toiletries. They also gather for Mass with the priest chaplain. “Being a ship visitor is rewarding, furthermore, anyone who has a few hours a week and is sociable can do it. I have been amazed that this small gift of my time is so appreciated by those I meet.”



Matthew 25:40

Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.

“ God’s world is a world where everyone feels responsible for the other, for the good of the other. . .

In reflection, fasting and prayer, each of us deep down should ask ourselves:

Is this really the world that I desire?

Is this really the world that we all carry in our hearts?

Is the world that we want really a world of harmony and peace,

in ourselves,

in our relations with others,

in families,

in cities,

in and between nations?

Pope Francis, *Vigil of Prayer for Peace*

REFLECTION



Using the model from Cardinal Cardijn, reflect on how community and participation are not being upheld locally and globally, what our faith calls us to do about it, and what actions we may be able to take to enable all people to flourish.



What in our local community do we want to change for the better?

SEE

What needs to be done? What is our faith calling us to do?

JUDGE

What are you going to do, alone or with others, to bring about this positive change?

ACT



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Pope Francis, Joy of the Gospel, 88



The principle of community and participation comes from the idea that we're not created to be in isolation, but as relational beings. We're born to interact with others, learning about ourselves and others through this relationship. Participation is about not remaining on the sidelines, but getting involved – supporting one another, helping build a better world for all.

For more background visit : catholicsocialteaching.org.uk



Look at your weekly calendar. Is there time for you to give to volunteering? Could you make time? Is there something you're always moaning about which you could help improve?



Keep your eyes peeled on the church newsletter, in the newsagents, in the local paper for organisations appealing for help. Is there something you could offer?



GET INVOLVED!

CARJ (Catholic Association for Racial Justice) works to support people from diverse backgrounds in the struggle for a more just and cohesive society

www.carj.org.uk

JRS (Jesuit Refugee Service) accompanies refugees and forced migrants, helps improve their conditions, and advocates for their cause

www.jrsuk.net

Many Catholic parishes are involved with community organising. A great way to participate in your local community which takes inspiration from Catholic social teaching

Citizens UK brings together 300 organisations that represent the diversity and interest of civil society citizensuk.org

PARISH PLAN

Think about gathering a few times to look together at how we can respond to the needs of our local community in the light of what we're learning in Love in Action.

Resources and ideas are available to help identify the needs of the community and plan how to respond.

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