

Churches across the diocese respond to the fuel crisis

The winter of 2022/23 saw huge increases in the cost of heating and lighting our homes. Parishes and groups across the diocese responded to the crisis in generous and imaginative ways. Here's a snapshot of how parishes responded:

In the north, St Therese of Lisieux kept its doors open and its church warm every day for people to come in.

In Redcar and Marske (Bl. Nicholas Postgate group of parishes), they worked ecumenically as part of Churches Together in providing warm spaces: in Sacred Heart Redcar on Friday mornings, together with hot soup and refreshments; and in St Bede's Marske every Wednesday, again with soup and rolls. And on most days in Redcar there was some provision among the different denominations. In Guisborough, the church hall was opened most of the day every Wednesday, working collaboratively with other churches and R & C Council.

In the south of our diocese, St John of Beverley offered a friendship group lunch weekly, as well as collaborating in local churches offering open house session in different churches. In Holy Cross Cottingham, there was a warm space event every Thursday together with refreshments – again as part of a rota of local churches working ecumenically to offer spaces on different days.

In York, Our Lady's Acomb made plans to offer a

weekly warm space, with refreshments and lunch and St Aelred's invited people to their Tuesday lunch club with a 2 course meal, with the parish community centre remaining open as a warm space with refreshments all afternoon. Again, other days of the week were covered locally.

On the coast, St Peter's Scarborough offered two warm spaces, one at St Edward's (soup and refreshments once a week) and in the local Anglican church once a week. In Filey, St Mary's offered a community lunch on alternate weeks, with support from the local council for their warm space.

In rural areas, Pocklington churches made plans for a warm space, and Ampleforth village offered a warm space in the village hall, supported by RC and CoE parishioners. And finally, St Joseph's Pickering joined in the local Churches Together project to offer a warm space in the parish hall.

This is just a brief snapshot of how parishes and groups responded – either individually or in collaboration with other churches and local councils. It's good to share how the good news was put into practice in what was a very dark and cold winter. Although fuel bills have since dropped in price, they are still much higher than they were before the invasion of Ukraine. Watch this space for future plans – or contact your local parish for information on where Warm Spaces might be available this coming winter, or to volunteer to help in one, if you are able.

Canon John Lumley

Reflecting on an audience with Pope Francis alongside women from around the world

It was a great privilege to be invited to participate and listen to Pope Francis' words and guidelines with the World Union of Catholic Women Organisation (WUCWO) in May.

In our audience the Holy Father affirmed that, "the identity of women is in danger" due to cultural policies and ideologies that "ignore the beauty with which they were created", and stressed the need for greater appreciation of their capacity for relationship and giving". He encouraged us to recover the elements that characterise their identity and their role in the family and in society: "Where there is no woman, there is loneliness... that breeds sadness and all manner of harm to humanity".

He also spoke about the urgent need to find peace in the world, a peace that "begins within the heart". He encouraged us to live like Mary, generating and protecting life, relating with others with tenderness and compassion, and combining three languages: that of the mind, that of the heart and that of the hands. He invited us to live the fullness of being women, with the

awareness of feeling chosen and protagonists in God's work in union with Jesus; a union that "must manifest in the communion with the Church, with my family or my organisation... We must 'pray' deeds and put 'prayer' to work".

To conclude, the Pope mentioned "the essence of synodality, what makes us feel co-responsible for the wellbeing of the Church, to know how to integrate differences and work in ecclesial harmony" and expressed his gratitude for our work in WUCWO, encouraging us to go forward "listening to the cries of our world and being docile to the voice of the Spirit".

Catholic Women's Hour

Invitation to all Catholic women in Middlesbrough Diocese to join in sharing, listening, speaking, conversation. Get to know each other.

The first Saturday of every month 11am-12 noon on Zoom. 7th October is contemplative with Lorraine Canning sharing on Lexio.

Face to face meetings are organised throughout the year as advertised.

Please email to join or for more information- catholicwomenmiddlesbrough@gmail.com

Margaret Clark 07710280652

NBCW Middlesbrough Diocese.



Let Justice and Peace Flow

Season of Creation 2023

Season of Creation 2023

During this Season of Creation the focus has been on the image of Justice and Peace flowing like a mighty stream to all the world. This 'never failing water' can be the catalyst to reform our hearts and lifestyles to protect our Common Home.

Pope Francis has recently announced that he will give us an update on Laudato Si in the form of a new apostolic exhortation. It will be published on the feast of St. Francis, October 4th. This is cause for renewed hope.

From the point of view of faith, the Church's Social Teaching in Laudato Si' shows us that the climate – and by extension biodiversity – is a common good, belonging to all and meant for all (cf. LS 23). On the other hand, it has shown that in the global summits on the environment, other narrow interests prevail over the common good (cf. LS 54).

Laudato Si has been a bid by Pope Francis to clarify what are the demands of the common good, strongly linked to the social conditions of each era. The encyclical reminds us that "integral ecology is inseparable from notions of the common good" (LS

156) It is a call to solidarity with all.

Eight years have passed since Laudato Si. Today the context is different, affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and wars, with widespread increases in poverty and social isolation, and more refugees. The latest IPCC Reports on Climate Change show us that the climate crisis increases, and biodiversity is under extreme pressure. Climate science demonstrates that the time window for action is this decade but still today, as in 2015, the private and economic interests of a few slow down decisions at international meetings.

Pope Francis' update is well timed and will hopefully be as influential as the initial encyclical.

Above all it will be a renewed breath of hope to continue 'betting on humanity' and our commitment to truly care for our Common Home.

This can all seem daunting and disempowering. We may ask ourselves, "What difference can I make?" or "What difference can we make in our parish?" Your actions, choices and decisions can make a difference.

Barbara Hungin.

We are inviting people to a special Diocesan event on Saturday Sept 30th at English Martyrs Church Hall, York. The aim of the day is to reflect on the issues and to learn from each other what prayerful and practical steps we can take. There are more details on the Diocesan website and in the Catholic Voice.

To register: email adultformation@rcdmidd.org.uk or call 01642 850505, extension 241.

CAUSE Foundation.

In this present economic climate and cost of living crisis there is an increased dependency on local charities in The North East, which has one of the highest rates of child poverty in the UK.

We, at CAUSE Foundation offer support to many families, who are struggling, on an almost daily basis with requests received from social workers, schools and other charities. Our fundamental belief is that all children should have access to food, clothes a bed and bedding and to that end we have a number of projects that allow us to respond in a crisis to most referrals.

From the beginnings of the Cause Christmas Hamper Campaign almost 36 years ago our main emphasis has been on food provision both at Christmas and throughout the year with our Holiday Hunger bags distributed through 26 local schools and supermarket vouchers in response to emergencies at any time.

The lack of a bed and suitable bedding has a detrimental effect on every aspect of a child's life from their well being to their education. Our 'Beds and Bedding Project has addressed that basic need for many families, especially those fleeing domestic

violence on Teesside.

In the last 3 months we have supported 68 families with beds, bedding,, cots, drawers, safety gates and other small household items -and many more with food and vouchers

We can also reach out in other ways such as recently a birthday cake and gift to a 13 year old girl whose parents simply couldn't afford to do so, and a contribution to a child to allow him to join a school trip. Often the small gestures can make such a difference to the child and family and bring joy into their lives.

We have a committed board of trustees who are most grateful to a dedicated group of volunteers and generous donors who support us throughout the year and allow us to continue our work.

Our next fundraising event is on Saturday 14th October 2023 at North Ormesby Working Men's Club. please join us if you can for an evening of music and entertainment.

Further details can be found on our website <http://www.cause-foundation.org.uk> or contact Pat McBride on crisis@cause-foundation.org.uk

Pat McBride



The Big Day Out

There's nothing better on a summer's day than having fun at the beach! This is something that many of us may take for granted but that is, sadly, something that is way out of reach for many low-income families.

In our area, which has been named as one of the most deprived in the country, up to half of our local children are increasingly unlikely to be able to enjoy this simple holiday activity in the face of the ongoing cost of living crisis. Thanks to a fantastic partnership between Together Middlesbrough & Cleveland, Brake Meals & More, and Whitby Seafoods though, children and families from across Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland were able to do just that this summer. More than 100 children, youths, and parents enjoyed the *Summer Big Day Out*. The fun took place in Saltburn

over two days and was hosted by Hope 4 East Cleveland and Caldicotes Primary Academy.

The *Big Day Out* is part of the Together Middlesbrough & Cleveland *Feast of Fun* school holiday programme but their Chief Officer, Kate Jeffels, says: *"It couldn't happen without the funding, support, and hard work, from all of our dedicated partners"*.

On each of the days, Whitby Seafoods brought along their famous Scampi Camper providing over 100 fabulous lunches. Brake Meals & More funded door to door return transport from convenient pickup locations and there was even enough left over for every child to have an ice cream treat after their fish and chips. Whitby Seafoods also brought amazing age-appropriate goody bags for every child including fun stuff like a stick of Whitby Rock, sunglasses, a beachball and a water pistol – though we think they may have regretted that last one!

Families said, *"What a fantastic treat!"* it was; the children said, *"We had a great day out, thanks so much"*; and the group leaders agreed, *"It was a great day, and the older ones enjoyed it just as much as the families."* All agreed that a brilliant time was had by all, with the Scampi Camper a firm favourite that *"went down a storm, everyone loved the fish & chips lunch."*

Most importantly for the families that took part, it meant that they could enjoy a full day at the beach with no worries about cost. For these two days at least, these families were able to put their money worries aside and just enjoy precious family time on our beautiful beaches. And the big question, what did the weather do? Well, of course, it stayed sunny and warm for both of these special days!

*Kate Jeffels, Chief Officer, and John Hinman, Volunteer,
Together Middlesbrough and Cleveland*

Email: kathryn@togethermc.org

Food Bank at St Thomas More's

In these times, when so many are seriously challenged financially, the generosity of parishioners throughout Middlesbrough and their willingness to help wherever needed, is without question. With the intention of extending this support, the Foodbank located at St Thomas More's Parish Hall was set up. Pat McBride, with her many years' experience of supporting families in need, met with Tracey Godfrey-Harrison, local Project Manager of the Trussell Trust and Father Dominique Minskip in February 2022. An invitation to volunteers went out, plans were made and by the summer, this Foodbank was up and running.

With helpers from several parishes, two teams of

volunteers now work at the Foodbank in St Thomas More's Parish Hall on Thursdays 12.30 - 2.30pm. Numbers seeking support were low at first, but a year on, we're well-established and thanks to the Trussell Trust and the generosity of donations from several parishes, we are providing 30-60 individuals with a 3-day food parcel, household goods and toiletries each week.

A warm welcome with a cup of tea is key and, with information, as well as food, we hope to signpost clients to relevant support agencies, empowering them to deal with their difficulties where possible. Working together, we hope to change lives. This is our goal.

FREE SCHOOL UNIFORM GIVEAWAY

The start of the school year is an expensive time for families. With the cost-of-living crisis coupled with the escalating cost of school uniforms, we asked our local primary schools at the end of term if we could take the left behind uniform. Little did we know that what we thought would be a couple of bags of lost property items would be a full carload of uniforms donated by parents. Following an appeal, new and preloved uniform were also dropped off at St Mary's Cathedral, Middlesbrough. The uniform was to be offered alongside the food bags which were organised by the Justice and Peace group at the Cathedral but there was so much more than we anticipated.

A pop-up shop giving away preloved uniform had closed in the Parkway Centre, Coulby Newham but after a phone call to the Centre manager, we were allowed to use the empty unit to give away this preloved clothing.

We had volunteers from the Justice and Peace group and local SVP Conferences. Volunteers also came forward following a piece on Facebook. In total 20 volunteers offered their help over 3 consecutive Tuesday mornings. They sorted, folded, and organised the clothing but most of all they were the friendly face of the store and welcomed everybody in. We kitted out children from 3 years to 16 years. They were more than willing to look through and try on the uniform. They knew how much they were helping their parents/carers by taking preloved clothing in this cost-of-living crisis, but they were acutely aware of climate change and the effect of re using and re cycling the clothing would have on the planet.

As we gave away stock, more was being kindly donated. The stock that was left got delivered to



Methodist Asylum Project in Middlesbrough and The Genesis Project which runs from St Oswald's Church, Grove Hill in Middlesbrough., The stock which couldn't be re worn was taken by the SVP shop in Middlesbrough to be weighed in for cash.

Children grow out of their clothes so quickly. Could this be something which can be repeated throughout the year perhaps in our ecoshops? This would complement the work already done in schools to recycle the school clothing which children have grown out of?

This shop was opened in a very short space of time. It is by collaboration between community and charity groups that makes initiatives like this a success.

A massive thank you to the Parkway Centre staff, every person who donated clothing or volunteered their time but mostly, thanks to the Eco Warriors who are wearing their preloved uniform with pride.

Sharon Pemberton

Support for new Refugees and Asylum Seekers moving into our Diocese

The SVP has had requests from various sources to help refugees and asylum seekers moved at short notice by the Home Office into our area. They are from various parts of the world, usually very well-educated member of their own societies and speak good English but are struggling to get used to life in a different country with all the rules and regulations regarding medical care, schooling for children etc.

They have nothing other than basic white goods and no

way to entertain their children or buy uniforms for school. One lady had been volunteering at the SVP support centre and was keen to continue similar volunteering here once she had her son settled in school.

This is something I think we can expect more of as they try to move people from hotels into 'cheaper' accommodation here. I am sure our parishes would recognise their isolation and befriend them in their community. St Paulinus Parish and St Bernadette's SVP are supporting lovely families in the area.

Frances Gilchrist

Please pass on your ideas for future Newsletters and share what is happening in your community. *We also welcome letters, requests for more information and comments.*

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tions for future Newsletters please email:

bhungin@yahoo.co.uk or teresa.lyth@outlook.com

Or write to -Barbara Hungin at 4, Butts Lane, Egglescliffe, Stockton on Tees. TS16 9BT