

FOCUS :

Why are some parts of our area richer or poorer than others?

ACTIVITY**How do we feel about this?**

Look at a map or series of pictures of contrasting scenes of wealth and poverty in the UK.

In groups focus on one town or area (not your own) from a wealthy part of the country and another from a poor part of the country. See if you can discover why there is such a difference? What has gone wrong? How do you feel about this?

The list below will help you find examples

England's most deprived areas

According to The Office for National Statistics (ONS) March 2016 study, the 10 most deprived towns in England are:

1. Oldham (65.2 per cent of local areas in the most deprived 20 per cent)
2. West Bromwich (62.8 per cent)
3. Liverpool (59.4 per cent)
4. Walsall (57.5 per cent)
5. Birmingham (57.5 per cent)
6. Nottingham (57.3 per cent)
7. Middlesbrough (55.9 per cent)
8. Salford (55.6 per cent)
9. Birkenhead (54.5 per cent)
10. Rochdale (53.8 per cent)

Least deprived areas

The study also found the towns and cities with the highest proportion of least deprived local areas, many of which are in the South-east.

1. Guildford (61.4 per cent)
2. Woking (59.7 per cent)
3. St Albans (55.1 per cent)
4. Sutton Coldfield (47.8 per cent)
5. Bath (47.5 per cent)
6. Harrogate (46.0 per cent)
7. Solihull (45.6 per cent)
8. Cheltenham (44.0 per cent)
9. Reading (42.0 per cent)
10. High Wycombe (41.3 per cent)



You can type in your postcode at www.cuf.org.uk/povertyinengland to find out where your area is on the scale.

As a group compose your group statement saying how you feel about this situation. Try to include references to scripture and the teaching of the Catholic Church on poverty. Here are few thoughts from Pope Francis.

“Throwing away food is like stealing from the table of the poor and the hungry.”

“Today, and it breaks my heart to say it, finding a homeless person who has died of cold, is not news. Today, the news is scandals, that is news, but the many children who don't have food - that's not news. This is grave. We can't rest easy while things are this way.”

“We cannot become starched Christians, too polite, who speak of theology calmly over tea. We have to become courageous Christians and seek out those (who need help most)”.

FOCUS :

What are the needs of those in a poor area compared with those in a rich area?

ACTIVITY

Talk with the children about the basic needs, not wants, we all have in order to lead a happy and full life under the following headings:

- Material needs
- Emotional needs
- Spiritual needs

Having identified what the class think is essential for each heading compare the effects of poverty on each of the headings.

Examples

Material needs in short supply means.....

This leads to people feeling.....

This contributes to people becoming.....

How difficult do you think it is for people who have very little to change their circumstances for the better?

FOCUS :

Christ's voice in our area for those who need us the most.

ACTIVITY

Getting the WORD out.



Exodus 3: 7-8 God said "I have seen the humiliation of my people in Egypt and I hear their cry when they are cruelly treated by their task masters. I know their suffering. I have come down to free them..."

Christ calls each one of us to

Love One Another As I Have Loved You.

Carry out research into what Jesus Christ actually did for people who were sick, poor, marginalised and rejected.

Ask each class to create their own group or individual art work supported by poetry showing what Jesus did and how we can respond today.

Mount an exhibition in the school hall for parents and friends to come and see.

ACTIVITY HIGHER LEVEL

Using the words of St Teresa of Avila (1515 -1582) and the words of our present Pope Francis as a starting point, create a visual presentation of how Christ relies on each one of us to continue his work of caring for those in the greatest need.

Divide the class into groups and allocate different approaches to the extract for each group. You can use narration, drama, ICT, art, music or written word.

Christ Has No Body

"Christ has no body now but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which he looks
Compassion on this world,
Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good,
Yours are the hands, with which he blesses all the world.

Yours are the hands, yours are the feet,
Yours are the eyes, you are his body.

Christ has no body now but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which he looks
compassion on this world.

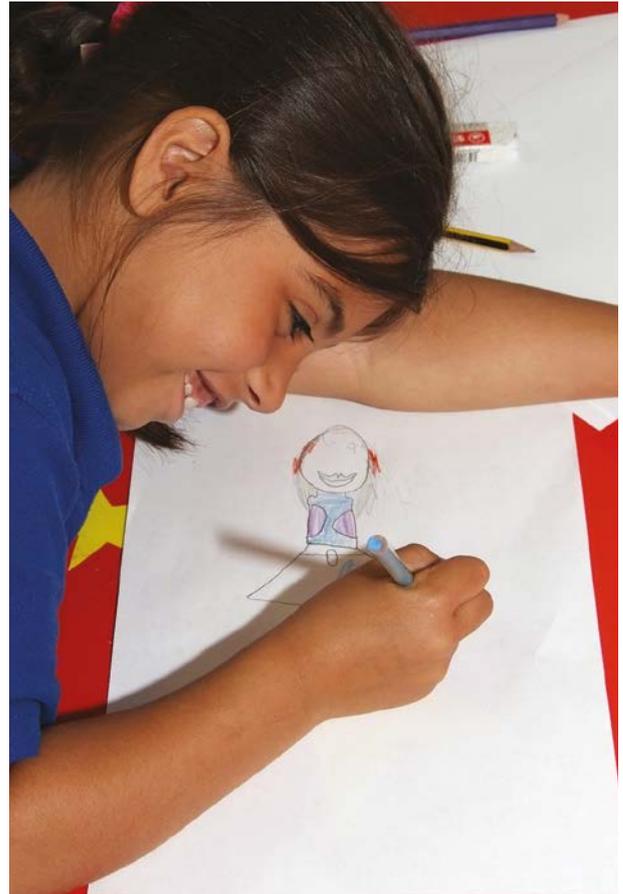
Christ has no body now on earth but yours".

Show your presentation to parents and friends at a special assembly.

Further activity. Aim high.

Write to the Prime Minister and your MP telling them about your ideas and the need to really put our words into action for those in the greatest need. Invite them to come to a special viewing and presentation of all the work you have done. Have some really concrete examples of what you think can be done to help people in your area in the greatest need. Cost it out. Inform the local TV stations and newspapers.

Ask them to come to the same presentation.



FOCUS :

Identifying those in the greatest need in our area.
Naming the causes.

**ACTIVITY**

As a class discuss the difference between needs and wants. Make a chart of all the things a person feels they really need to be able to live happily.

Discuss each suggestion asking the question,

To what extent could a person manage quite well without this?

Invite each person to prioritise their top ten needs and explain why these are essential for their happiness and well being.

ACTIVITY HIGHER LEVEL

Discuss the quote from John together and say how you feel about it.



(1 Jn 3:17).

“If someone who has the riches of this world sees his brother in need and closes his heart to him, how will the love of God remain in him?”

Some people feel that if they have a lot of wealth, then that is because they deserve it as the fruits of their hard work. So why should they share it? What do you think?

Another challenge!

Saint Ambrose said: “You are not making a gift of your possessions to the poor person. You are handing over to him what is his. For what has been given in common for the use of all, you have arrogated to yourself. The world is given to all, and not only to the rich.”

What are your views about St Ambrose’s comment?

Role play. Write your own two person dialogue between St Ambrose and a wealthy person today. The wealthy person has worked really hard and is now enjoying the benefits of a life time’s hard work. They are being challenged by St Ambrose.

FOCUS :

Who holds the power for change?

ACTIVITY

In ‘The Church in the Modern World’, the Catholic Church calls on individuals and governments to remember the saying of the Fathers: recalling St. Basil.

The Catholic Church encourages everyone according to their ability to share and dispose of their goods to help others, in such a way that they can become self sufficient. Alone we can do something, but as we raise awareness and join with others then real change can take place.

Where there is a will there is a way

As a class look at the different ways in which you think help could be given to encourage financial self sufficiency rather than dependency for people living:

- in this country
- abroad

Are governments actually creating the problems or working to alleviate them?

Do you think the people of this country really want to see change?

How far do you think you are prepared to go to bring about true justice for the poor?

ACTIVITY HIGHER LEVEL

With the help of the geography and economics departments hold a debate based on the following quote from Catholic Social Teaching. In your arguments include the role governments play in giving tied aid.

“Feed the people dying of hunger, because if you do not feed them you are killing them,”

(The Church in the Modern World).

True or false?

FOCUS : Discipleship - The Christian challenge.



<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/politics/pope-francis-tells-davos-business-leaders-ensure-humanity-is-served-by-wealth-not-ruled-by-it-9076618.html>

A report released by Oxfam found that the 85 richest people in the world have as much wealth as the poorest half of the global population, around 3.5 billion people.

Discuss how you think and feel about this?

Can anything be done about it? Should it?

Pope Francis says

“I ask you to ensure that humanity is served by wealth and not ruled by it,” Pope Francis said in the message read at the opening ceremony by Cardinal Peter Turkson, president of the Pontifical Council for Peace and Justice.

How can this request actually be put into practice so that:

- Individuals are still rewarded for their hard work?
- Rewards are enough to encourage people to strive to always do better?
- Those who are poor don't continue as dependants on the rich?

An even greater challenge!

Pope Francis says

“I believe that, yes, the times talk to us of so much poverty in the world and this is a scandal. Poverty in the world is a scandal. In a world where there is so much wealth, so many resources to feed everyone, it is unfathomable that there are so many hungry children, that there are so many children without an education, so many poor persons. Poverty today is a cry. We all have to think if we can become a little poorer, all of us have to do this. How can I become a little poorer in order to be more like Jesus, who was the poor Teacher?” (6/7/13 Jesuit Schools—Q & A)

Question

What would you be prepared to go without if it would help someone who was poor?

Pope Francis calls us to be the voice...

Among our tasks as witnesses to the love of Christ is that of giving a voice to the cry of the poor, so that they are not abandoned to the laws of an economy that seems at times to treat people as mere consumers. (6/14/13)

In groups compose your own song
‘The cry of the poor’

OR

Compose your own poetry on the same title or entitled ‘Voices’ which echo the cry of the poor.



FOCUS :

A poor Church for a poor world: go to the margins.

ACTIVITY

Pope Francis calls the whole Catholic Church to become closer to the poor. What do you think he means by the following statement?

"I prefer a church which is bruised, hurting and dirty because it has been out on the streets, rather than a church which is unhealthy from being confined and from clinging to its own security," "I do not want a church concerned with being at the center and then ends up by being caught up in a web of obsessions and procedures."

What do you think Francis is referring to when he speaks of a church which is

- Bruised?
- Hurting?
- Dirty?

Design a series of posters which illustrate the above and display them in school and or the Church.

ACTIVITY HIGHER LEVEL**Reflecting on the extract below**

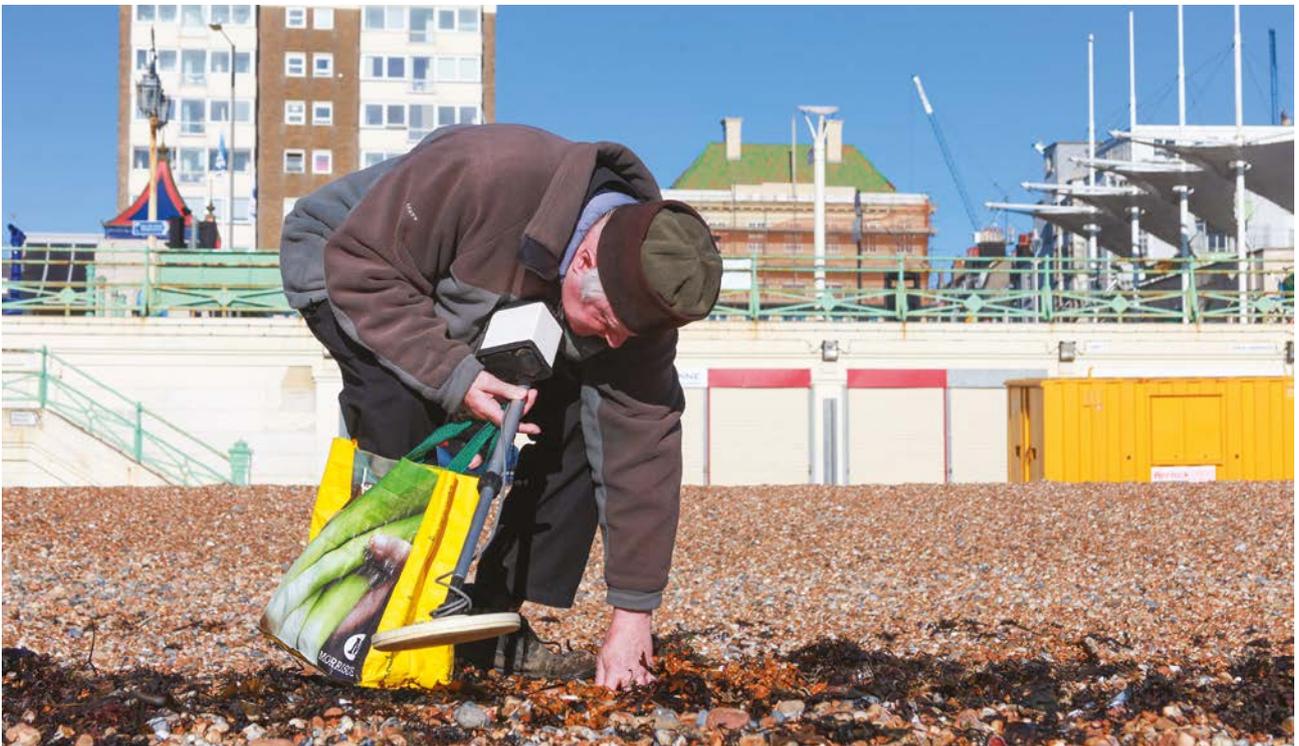
"...men and women are sacrificed to the idols of profit and consumption: it is the "culture of waste." If you break a computer it is a tragedy, but poverty, the needs, the dramas of so many people end up becoming the norm." (6/5/13, Environment)

"There is another important point: encountering the poor. If we step outside ourselves we find poverty. Today - it sickens the heart to say so - the discovery of a tramp who has died of the cold is not news. Today what counts as news is, maybe, a scandal. A scandal: ah, that is news! Today, the thought that a great many children do not have food to eat is not news. This is serious, this is serious! We cannot put up with this! Yet that is how things are. We cannot become starched Christians, those over-educated Christians who speak of theological matters as they calmly sip their tea. No! We must become courageous Christians and go in search of the people who are the very flesh of Christ, those who are the flesh of Christ! (5/18/13)"

Year group public debate

Select two teams of students and staff to debate the following:

Being part of the 'Body of Christ' demands that the Catholic Church must sell all and give it to the poor. Agree/ Disagree..



FOCUS :

The Beatitudes. A radical vision for a modern Christian.

ACTIVITY

Mathew 5: 3-12

The Beatitudes

“Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are the meek,
for they shall possess the earth.
Blessed are they who mourn,
for they shall be comforted.
Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for
justice,
for they shall be satisfied.
Blessed are the merciful,
for they shall obtain mercy.
Blessed are the clean of heart,
for they shall see God.
Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they shall be called children of God.
Blessed are they who suffer persecution for
justice’ sake,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are you when men reproach you,
and persecute you,
and speaking falsely, say all manner
of evil against you, for My sake”.

Pope Francis has offered six new Beatitudes “to confront the troubles and anxieties of our age with the spirit and love of Jesus.” He listed them as:

“Blessed are those who remain faithful while enduring evils inflicted on them by others, and forgive them from their heart.
Blessed are those who look into the eyes of the abandoned and marginalized, and show them their closeness.
Blessed are those who see God in every person, and strive to make others also discover him.
Blessed are those who protect and care for our common home.
Blessed are those who renounce their own comfort in order to help others.
Blessed are those who pray and work for full communion between Christians”.

“All these are messengers of God’s mercy and tenderness, and surely they will receive from him their merited reward,”

Discussion

Taking each of the Beatitudes identify what you

think are the main challenges for people today.

Discussion

Compare the Beatitudes from Matthew with the version from Pope Francis. Do you think either or both will help people to challenge the issues of today?

How might you use the Pope Francis version of the Beatitudes as a source of inspiration for people today?

Action

Identify a key social justice issue in this country which you think is linked to each Beatitude.

Present your ideas either through the performing arts or the expressive arts.

Share your work with the rest of the 6th Form, younger classes and in Church

If you have access to years 10 and 11, present your work as part of their GCSE revision work.

ACTIVITY HIGHER LEVEL

Read the extract from Oscar Romero Archbishop of San Salvador 1980.

Sowers of Hope

“This is what we are about.
We plant the seeds that one day will grow.
We water the seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise.
We lay foundations that will need further development.
We provide yeast that produces effects far beyond capabilities.
We cannot do everything and there is a sense of liberation in realising that.
This enables us to do something and to do it very well.
It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way,
An opportunity for the Lord’s grace to enter and do the rest.
We may never see the end results,
But that is the difference between the master builder and the worker.
We are workers, not master builders, ministers, not messiahs.
We are prophets of a future not our own”.

Points for discussion

- What do you think it teaches us for today?
- Is this an attitude that you feel is possible in this country in the 21st century ? If so why, if not why not?

FOCUS :

Cost of the prophetic voice.

ACTIVITY

Research the story of the organisation, Peace One Day - 21st September – an amazing account of the power of one person Jeremy Gilley from London who dreamt of the possibility of getting all the countries engaged in war to stop fighting for just one day in order to allow medical and humanitarian teams access to civilians trapped in the fighting. Jeremy sold everything he possessed in order to bring his dream into the public arena amidst incredible indifference and opposition. Eventually he managed to get his voice heard and his dream became a reality.

What an amazing story!

In this film, the founder of Peace One Day, Jeremy Gilley, talks about his journey creating a day of ceasefire and non-violence on a fixed calendar date, Peace Day, 21 September.



http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gU18OwUWdEc&list=UU_bQe4e0XX0fJzZQQ6b0G4A&feature=c4-overview

and

<http://www.youtube.com/user/PeaceOneDay>

As a class what are your responses to what you have just seen?

How can you spread the message in:

Your school?

Your area?

The media?



Sadik Gulec / Shutterstock.com

FOCUS :

Listening to the cry of the poor - Homelessness.

ACTIVITY

Give a small piece of paper to each student. Ask them to write down all their feelings when they see a homeless person on the streets near them.

Have a look at the video on homelessness which gives a very stark account of the many dangers that homeless people face daily, once they begin living on the street.



[Video on Homelessness in Manchester - from Mike Staniforth.](http://vimeo.com/45260069)
<http://vimeo.com/45260069>

Share your response to this video clip.

Does this alter your idea of a homeless person?

Will this alter your reaction to a homeless person?

As a school what do you think you can do to help?

FOCUS :

The Beatitudes. A call to a new revolution.

ACTIVITY

Read carefully the following extract from Pope Francis's letter for the 29th World Youth Day 2014.

1. The revolutionary power of the Beatitudes

"It is always a joyful experience for us to read and reflect on the Beatitudes! Jesus proclaimed them in his first great sermon, preached on the shore of the sea of Galilee. There was a very large crowd, so Jesus went up on the mountain to teach his disciples. That is why it is known as 'the Sermon on the Mount'. In the Bible, the mountain is regarded as a place where God reveals himself. Jesus, by preaching on the mount, reveals himself to be a divine teacher, a new Moses. What does he tell us? He shows us the way to life, the way that he himself has taken. Jesus himself is the way, and he proposes this way as the path to true happiness. Throughout his life, from his birth in the stable in Bethlehem until