

Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Migrants

Later in February we aim to promote a lecture to be given by John Dalhuisen, from the Berlin-based European Stability Initiative and a leading thinker on human rights and migration policy. He was previously Europe Director at Amnesty International and Special Adviser to the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights. He has written for the New York Times, the Guardian, Politico, Time and Newsweek.



Pope Francis unveils a monument in St Peter's Square at the Vatican, dedicated to the world's migrants and refugees. The "Angels Unaware" boat by Canadian artist Timothy P. Schmalz depicts 140 migrants ranging from a Jewish man escaping Nazi Germany to a Syrian refugee fleeing the civil war. The Holy Family are depicted in the sculpture reminding us that they too had to flee persecution and violence as they escaped into Egypt.

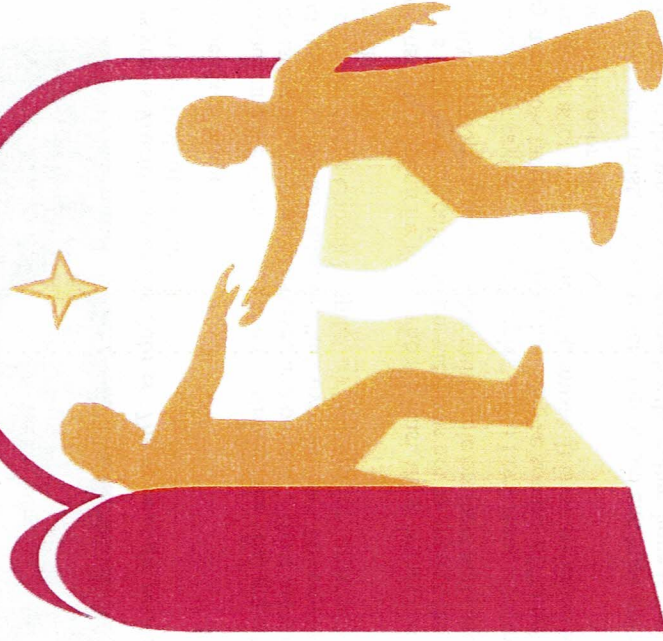
Archbishop Leo Cushley said: "I wholeheartedly support the World Day of the Poor because it starkly reminds us of our mission to help the poor and those who are so cruelly exploited. As Pope Francis says, we must 'embrace and assist' those who need our help. To this end, we have parishioners across our Archdiocese answering the call, such as the volunteer members of the Society of St Vincent de Paul. Our Caritas, Justice & Peace Commission collaborates with all manner of charities and projects to help improve the lives of those who suffer. May God bless all those involved in this vital work so we may be true disciples of Jesus."



The Caritas/Justice and Peace Commission
The Archdiocese of St Andrews and Edinburgh

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WORLD DAY
OF THE POOR

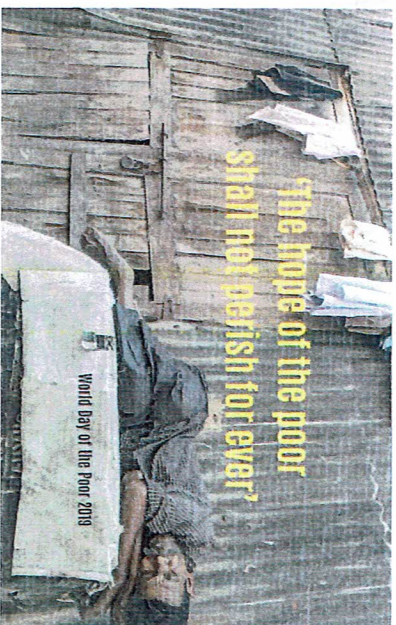


The hope of the poor
shall not perish for ever

2019

Special Collection

Sunday 17th November



The theme for this year's **World Day of the Poor** is *"The hope of the poor shall not perish forever"*, taken from the Book of Psalms.

Sowing Tangible Seeds of Hope

In his message announcing the theme, Pope Francis stressed the vital importance of "embracing and assisting the poor, the oppressed and outcast". These are the people, who in his typically vivid language, he has called the "left over people". His emphasis is on what he described in his reference to the Church hospital, as the need for "proximity", getting close to and remaining near the poor.

The Pope stresses that, "the option for those who are least, those whom society discards, is a priority that Christ's followers are called to pursue, so as not to impugn the Church's credibility but to give real hope to many of our vulnerable brothers and sisters."

Pope Francis concludes by saying "If the disciples of the Lord Jesus wish to be genuine evangelisers, they must sow tangible seeds of hope". The sowing of "tangible seeds of hope" is far from a naive exhortation to a superficial optimism. It is an invitation to engage long term with the real hopes of the poor themselves.

Hope requires the courage to trust, to love, to act. "Optimism and hope are not the same. Optimism is the belief that the world is changing for the better; hope is the belief that, together, we can make the world better" (Rabbi Jonathan Sacks). Justice is hope in action. The message is clear; get involved and become yourself a sign of hope.



In this, there is still no better organisation than The Society of St Vincent de Paul (SSVP). It offers a spirituality of service, a means by which the Church reaches out to the outcast and stranger. Serving hope in countless small ways, the SSVP needs to be a vital force in all our parishes. www.ssvpscotland.com

The 2019 World Day of the Poor Appeal

Special Collection for Refugees and Anti-Human Trafficking Charities

In 2018 we focused on homelessness and sought your support for two projects working with homeless people. This year we wish to support **refugees** who, to escape violence, have had to flee their homeland, and those who have been forced or enticed from their homelands into modern forms of slavery. Concerns pinpointed by the Pope:

'Today too, we must acknowledge many new forms of bondage that enslave millions of men, women, young people and children. Daily we encounter families forced to leave their homeland to seek a living elsewhere; orphans who have lost their parents or were violently torn from them by brutal means of exploitation; ... victims of different kinds of violence, ranging from prostitution to the narcotics trade, and profoundly demeaned. How can we overlook, too, the millions of immigrants who fall victim to any number of concealed interests, often exploited for political advantage, and are refused solidarity and equality?'

Refugees: The whole issue of refugees and asylum seekers has of course been 'exploited for political advantage' and used as a scare story to sell newspapers. The truth is always more difficult to pin down. Perhaps we should remind ourselves that the vast majority of Catholics in Scotland are themselves the children of asylum seekers, refugees or economic migrants.

Anti-Human Trafficking: Slavery in Scotland has been highlighted recently in the media, the individual stories are often harrowing. It involves intimidation and violence and is organised by criminal gangs. No surprise that the biggest group is women exploited in the so-called sex industry. However, British nationals make up the biggest percentage of those enslaved in this way. While this lucrative global crime generates billions of dollars in profits for the traffickers, those who have been trafficked are robbed of their humanity and are violated both spiritually and physically.

Tangible support for:

The Refugee Survival Trust (RST) was set up in 1996 as a reaction to the problem of refugees and people claiming asylum being made destitute in Scotland. RST is a small organisation and can only exist with the continued support and expertise of its Board of Directors, its small team of dedicated staff and the help of a committed team of volunteers. Its vision is that all refugees and asylum seekers in Scotland receive just and respectful treatment and support appropriate to their needs.

The Scottish Churches Anti Human Trafficking Group. The Caritas Commission will cooperate with this group to identify agencies working directly with people who have been caught up in this terrible crime. For example, recently it was able to help some women (supported by Caritas Westminster) get a short holiday and a chance to see Edinburgh - simple, practical support to help them develop self-esteem and greater confidence.

To help you get a better understanding of Trafficking and Refugees the Caritas Commission are planning two events:

A Training Event

For clergy, parish workers and members of SSVP
Anti-Human Trafficking - Modern Slavery
 Wednesday 5th February 2020, 7-9pm, Gillis Centre, 100 Strathearn Road, Edinburgh.
 Registration and coffee from 6.30pm.
 Trainer: Alister Bull.



HOPE & JUSTICE

Change Lives. End Slavery.