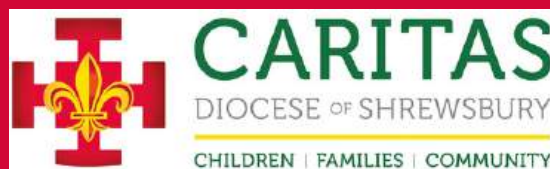




# 2025 Year of Jubilee: *Pilgrims of Hope*

**A Resource Guide from Caritas  
Diocese of Shrewsbury**





# WELCOME PILGRIMS

Welcome to this special resource for the Jubilee Year 2025! As we embark on this sacred journey together, we invite all parishes within the Diocese of Shrewsbury to embrace the theme of **Pilgrims of Hope**. This Jubilee offers us an opportunity to deepen our faith, strengthen our communities, and live out the values of renewal, forgiveness, and social justice.

This resource has been lovingly prepared by Caritas Shrewsbury as a heartfelt offering to support and inspire our parishes, schools, and individuals in celebrating the Jubilee. It is our hope that it will encourage reflection, prayer, and meaningful action, helping us all to bring Christ's message of love, mercy, and justice into the world.

May this guide serve as a companion for your parish and community as we journey together, walking in faith, hope, and solidarity.



*Ben and the Team*

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# INTRODUCTION

## PART 1

The Jubilee Year 2025, declared by Pope Francis, is a special time of grace, renewal, and hope. With the theme "Pilgrims of Hope," this Jubilee invites us to embrace our faith with renewed commitment, fostering social justice and unity within our communities.

As part of the global Catholic Church, Caritas Shrewsbury seeks to engage parishes, schools, and individuals in celebrating the Jubilee through prayer, reflection, and action. This guide provides resources and practical steps to help live out the Jubilee's call in our local context.

Throughout this guide, we will explore the historical significance of the Jubilee, its biblical roots, and the ways in which the Church today calls us to embody the values of renewal, forgiveness, and social justice. By participating in this sacred time, we contribute to a world that better reflects Christ's message of hope and love.



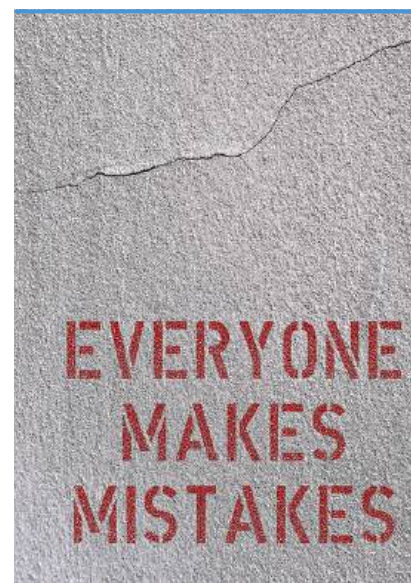
# UNDERSTANDING THE JUBILEE

The concept of Jubilee originates from biblical tradition, emphasizing forgiveness, renewal, and social justice. Pope Francis calls us to deepen our faith and reflect on our role in society, particularly in supporting those most in need.

## Historical Significance

Jubilee Years have been observed for centuries, dating back to biblical times when they were periods of rest, debt forgiveness, and renewal. The modern Catholic Jubilee follows this tradition, serving as a time for reflection and recommitment to faith and justice.

In the Old Testament, the Book of Leviticus (25:10) describes the Jubilee year as a sacred time when captives were freed, debts were forgiven, and the land was given rest. This ensured that economic disparities did not become insurmountable and that justice was regularly restored. In modern times, the Jubilee is a call to evaluate how we can bring these values into our lives and communities.



# BIBLICAL SUPPORT



- “Proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you.” (Leviticus 25:10)
- “Come to me, all you who labour and are burdened, and I will give you rest.” (Matthew 11:28)



# OFFICIAL RESOURCES

- Pope Francis' Letter: [Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales](#)
- 
- Vatican Resources: [Jubilee 2025 Official Site](#)



# THEMES FOR LIVING THE JUBILEE

PART 2

Pope Francis encourages us to focus on six key challenges in our communities:



CARE FOR  
CREATION

ADDRESSING  
FOOD  
POVERTY



COMBATING  
MODERN  
SLAVERY

MANAGING  
DEBT &  
FINANCIAL  
JUSTICE

REST  
&  
WORSHIP

FORGIVENESS  
&  
RECONCILIATION





## 1. Care for Creation

**Our Call:** Stewardship of the environment is a fundamental aspect of our faith. Caritas Shrewsbury strives to reduce our carbon footprint, protect biodiversity, and promote sustainable practices.

**Reflection:** As Pope Francis highlighted in Laudato Si', our common home is in crisis, and we are called to take immediate action. This is an opportunity to reflect on how our lifestyles impact the environment and what changes we can make.

Climate change, pollution, and the overuse of natural resources have devastating effects on communities across the world, particularly the poor. As Catholics, we must advocate for policies that protect the environment and make changes in our daily lives to reduce our impact on God's creation.

### **Biblical & Papal Support:**

- "The earth is the Lord's and all it holds, the world and those who dwell in it." (Psalm 24:1)
- Pope Francis: "We need a conversation which includes everyone, since the environmental challenge we are undergoing, and its human roots, concern and affect us all." (Laudato Si')

### **Ways to Engage:**

- Participate in eco-friendly parish initiatives. Establish eco-friendly projects such as community gardens or recycling programs.
- Support local conservation efforts.
- Organise community clean-up days and tree-planting projects.
- Read Laudato Si' and discuss in parish groups.
- Encourage sustainable living through workshops.
- Reduce waste and promote recycling in church communities.
- Support organizations that work toward environmental sustainability.



## 2. Addressing Food Poverty

**Our Call:** Despite relative affluence, many in our communities struggle to access nutritious food. Caritas Shrewsbury works to alleviate hunger through direct support and advocacy, and parishes can take an active role in alleviating hunger.

**Reflection:** Jesus emphasized the importance of feeding the hungry. Food poverty is not just about lack of resources but also about systemic issues such as fair wages and affordable living costs.

Across the Diocese of Shrewsbury, many families experience food insecurity, with some reliant on food banks and charities to meet basic nutritional needs. As a faith community, we can work together to ensure that no one in our diocese goes hungry. Jesus emphasized the importance of feeding the hungry, reminding us that service to others is service to Him.

### **Biblical & Papal Support:**

- “For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink.” (Matthew 25:35)
- Pope Benedict XVI: “The right to food is a fundamental right of individuals and nations.”

### **Ways to Engage:**

- Support local food banks and Caritas Shrewsbury initiatives.
- Organise parish-based community meals.
- Advocate for policies addressing food insecurity.
- Create food-sharing networks within the parish.
- Partner with local farmers to provide fresh produce.
- Educate communities on nutrition and healthy eating.
- Encourage parishioners to volunteer at food distribution centres.



### 3. COMBATting MODERN SLAVERY



#### Ways to Engage:

- Educate parishioners on recognising signs of modern slavery.
- Support organisations working with survivors.
- Host parish discussions and workshops on human trafficking.
- Work with local law enforcement and NGOs.
- Provide support services for survivors.
- Encourage businesses to adopt ethical sourcing and fair labour practices.
- Raise awareness about slavery in supply chains.

**Our Call:** Modern slavery is a grave violation of human dignity, human trafficking and exploitation remain significant concerns. As Catholics, we are called to stand against injustice and support victims, to work for justice and support those affected by trafficking and forced labour.

**Reflection:** Modern slavery affects vulnerable individuals globally and locally. Awareness and action are necessary to protect human dignity.

Slavery today takes many forms, from forced labour to human trafficking. Often, it affects the most vulnerable in society—migrants, refugees, and those in financial hardship. Pope Francis has repeatedly called for an end to human trafficking, urging us to be aware of those suffering in silence.

#### Biblical & Papal Support:

- “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor... to let the oppressed go free.” (Luke 4:18)
- Pope Francis: “Human trafficking is an open wound on the body of contemporary society.”



## 4. MANAGING DEBT AND FINANCIAL JUSTICE

**Our Call:** Financial hardship impacts families and individuals in our communities, trapping many in cycles of debt. The Jubilee tradition emphasizes the forgiveness of debts and economic justice.

**Reflection:** Debt forgiveness was a cornerstone of biblical Jubilees. Today, we are called to promote economic justice and ethical financial practices.

Many individuals struggle with unmanageable debt due to low wages, rising costs of living, and predatory lending practices. Financial struggles often burden individuals and nations, leading to cycles of poverty. We must advocate for ethical lending and financial support. As a community, we can work to support those in financial distress and advocate for economic systems that reflect justice and compassion.

### **Biblical & Papal Support:**

- “At the end of every seven years, you shall grant a remission of debts.” (Deuteronomy 15:1)
- Pope John Paul II: “The Jubilee tradition calls for a new beginning, including economic justice for all.”



### **Ways to Engage:**

- Offer financial literacy workshops in parishes.
- Support initiatives advocating for ethical lending practices.
- Encourage responsible consumerism.
- Support initiatives promoting fair wages and debt relief.
- Promote fair wages and employment opportunities.
- Connect struggling families with financial counselling services and support groups.
- Advocate for debt relief programmes and policies addressing economic inequality.
- Establish community funds to assist families in crisis.



## 5. FORGIVENESS AND RECONCILIATION

**Our Call:** The Jubilee is a time for deep spiritual renewal and healing. As individuals and communities, we are called to seek reconciliation and unity in both personal and societal relationships. Embracing forgiveness fosters healing and unity.

**Reflection:** Forgiveness is a core principle of Christian faith. It allows us to heal wounds and break cycles of resentment and division. Jesus calls us to forgive as we have been forgiven (Matthew 6:14-15).

Forgiveness is not merely a personal choice; it has communal and societal implications. By choosing to forgive, we foster peace in families, workplaces, and communities. The act of reconciliation is also a step towards justice, as it acknowledges wrongdoing and commits to healing.

### **Biblical & Papal Support:**

- “Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.” (Ephesians 4:32)
- St. John Paul II: “There is no peace without justice, and no justice without forgiveness.”

### **Ways to Engage:**

- Organise parish reconciliation services.
- Foster dialogue between different faith and cultural groups.
- Promote social justice initiatives that address systemic inequalities.
- Encourage communities to acknowledge past grievances and work towards reconciliation.
- Develop educational programmes on conflict resolution and forgiveness.
- Share testimonies of individuals who have experienced profound reconciliation.
- Encourage prayerful reflection on mercy and forgiveness.
- Promote dialogue and conflict resolution.
- Encourage acts of forgiveness in personal relationships.



## 6. REST AND WORSHIP



**Our Call:** A balance between work and rest is vital for personal and spiritual well-being. The Jubilee encourages us to deepen our relationship with God and our communities by dedicating time to worship and rest.

**Reflection:** The concept of Sabbath reminds us that rest is sacred. In a world that often prioritizes productivity over well-being, Catholics are called to embrace rest as an act of faith and trust in God. In modern society, many struggle to find time for rest and worship due to work pressures and obligations. Jesus himself withdrew from crowds to pray and rest, emphasising the importance of stepping back from daily demands to connect with God. The Sabbath is a gift from God, reminding us to pause and reconnect with Him. The Jubilee presents an opportunity to reevaluate priorities and dedicate time for spiritual nourishment and personal renewal.

### **Biblical & Papal Support:**

- “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.” (Exodus 20:8)
- Pope Benedict XVI: “Without Sunday, we cannot live.”

In modern society, many struggle to find time for rest and worship due to work pressures, social obligations, and digital distractions. The Jubilee presents an opportunity to reevaluate priorities and dedicate time for spiritual nourishment and personal renewal.

### **Ways to Engage:**

- Encourage parish retreats and days of reflection.
- Promote fair work practices and the dignity of labour.
- Advocate for fair work policies that respect family and community time.
- Rediscover the beauty of Sunday as a day of worship and family time.
- Offer programmes on stress reduction and holistic well-being.
- Organise silent prayer or contemplative retreats.
- Support parish initiatives that encourage a culture of work-life balance.
- Promote an appreciation of the arts, music, and literature as forms of spiritual rest.
- Participate in prayer groups and liturgical celebrations focused on rest and worship.

# PILGRIMS OF HOPE

## Closing Reflection

As we embark on this journey as Pilgrims of Hope, let us renew our commitment to faith, justice, and service. May this Jubilee Year inspire us to be agents of change in our communities, bringing Christ's message of love and compassion to all.

## Biblical Reflection:

- “For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a future filled with hope.” (Jeremiah 29:11)
- St. John Paul II: “Do not be afraid. Open wide the doors for Christ.”

Let us go forward as pilgrims, filled with hope, and ready to bring Christ's light into our communities and beyond.



PART 4

# STAY CONNECTED



## Practical Resources

For additional materials, visit:

[Caritas Shrewsbury](#)

[CBCEW Jubilee Resources](#)

[Vatican Jubilee Website](#)

[End Child Poverty Coalition](#)

[Let's End Poverty](#)

[Together with Refugees](#)

## Contact Us

For more information on how to get involved, please reach out to Caritas Shrewsbury at [info@caritasshrewsbury.org.uk](mailto:info@caritasshrewsbury.org.uk)

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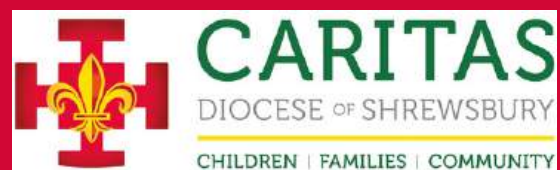
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