

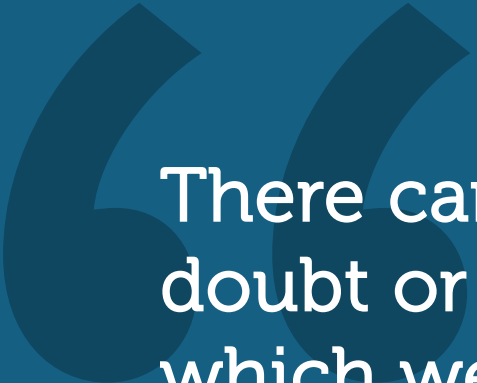


Diocese of Lancaster
Education Service
Euntes in mundum

Love for the Poor

Year of Listening 2025/26

Reflection Guide for Pupils in Secondary Schools



There can be no room for doubt or for explanations which weaken so clear a message. We have to state, without mincing words, that there is an inseparable bond between our faith and the poor.

Pope Leo, *Dilexi Te*, §36

Introduction to *Dilexi Te*

Before he died, Pope Francis began writing something to the Church about God's love for the poor, a topic that defined his papacy from the beginning, including his choice of Papal name, "Francis". Pope Leo took up Pope Francis' work and finished it, sending a letter to the whole Church to reflect on. The letter is called "*Dilexi Te*", Latin for "I Have Loved You", taken from words in the Bible, spoken by the Lord Jesus to a very poor church.

Also, at the beginning of this year Pope Leo announced that 2026 would be a special Franciscan Jubilee Year marking 800 years since the death of St Francis of Assisi. One of the themes of this jubilee year is poverty.

Year of Action

In light of Pope Leo's exhortation and the Franciscan Jubilee, Bishop Paul would like every school in the diocese to take part in shared initiatives to show God's love for the poor. He is asking for ideas for next year about how we can do that. He would like pupils' contributions because young people often have good insights and creative ideas.

In particular he would like pupils to suggest ideas for the following:

- 1) **Something each of our schools can do next year to show God's love for the poor?**
- 2) **Something all the Catholic schools, primary and secondary, can do together next year to show God's love for the poor?**
- 3) **Something all the schools in our diocese can do together next year to show God's love for the poor?**

However, before you think of ideas for those three things, Bishop Paul would like you to listen and pray about what Pope Leo has shared with us *about* God's Love for the Poor.

Year of Listening

For the rest of this Church year, from now until December, Bishop Paul is inviting pupils and staff in our schools to reflect on the words and themes of *Dilexi Te*, to listen carefully to what Pope Francis and Pope Leo have written, to take the message to heart and ask God, what can we – as a school and a diocese – do to respond?

Dilexi Te is worth reading on its own, but this booklet is designed to help explain some of the key themes so you can think and pray about them. It arranges quotes into seven key themes, with an introduction to each.

Between now and December, your school will give you a few opportunities to think and respond to these themes. Each school will do this differently: it might be during an assembly, a year-group mass, a time of prayer, a classroom activity, a special group in the Chaplaincy, or in some other way.

You might also like to use this booklet to help you think and pray on your own, at school or at home, and of course, you can read *Dilexi Te*, for yourself online for free if you want to.

Three Ideas for Next Year

Once you have had a chance to listen and pray, you will have the chance to think about the three ideas for next year. This might involve working on your own, with friends, with your form or with a group of pupils from across the school. Once you have come up with some ideas, you will be able to send them to Bishop Paul.

Your teachers will explain to you how this will work in your school.

Once the ideas are submitted from all the schools, Bishop Paul will think about which ones will work best and make a plan for after the Christmas holidays.

Dilexi Te: Seven Key Themes

To help you listen to and pray about Pope Leo's letter, we have picked out seven key themes.

The themes are:

- 1. Serving the poor is at the heart of our faith**
- 2. The Church's constant witness**
- 3. Personal encounter is key**
- 4. Serving the poor brings us close to Jesus**
- 5. The poor teach and evangelise us**
- 6. It is easy to forget the poor, but important not to.**
- 7. Love for the poor must change hearts and structures**

These are explained in more detail in the following pages, along with some related Scripture passages and artwork to help you reflect on the themes.



Theme One: Serving the Poor is at the Heart of Our Faith

The most important message in the whole letter may be this: loving the poor is at the very heart of the Christian faith. It is not just an extra, and not simply something Christians do after believing in God. The more we love and care for the poor, the more we grow into the people God made us to be, because we become more like him in the way we love.

Quotes from *Dilexi Te*

- “ There can be no room for doubt or for explanations which weaken so clear a message... We have to state, without mincing words, that there is an inseparable bond between our faith and the poor.” §36
- “ In hearing the cry of the poor, we are asked to enter into the heart of God, who is always concerned for the needs of his children, especially those in greatest need.” §8
- “ The fact that some dismiss or ridicule charitable works, as if they were an obsession on the part of a few and not the burning heart of the Church’s mission, convinces me of the need to go back and re-read the Gospel. The poor cannot be neglected if we are to remain within the great current of the Church’s life that has its source in the Gospel and bears fruit in every time and place. §15
- “ God is merciful love, and his plan of love is... above all his descent and coming among us to free us from slavery, fear, sin, and the power of death. Addressing their human condition with a merciful gaze and a heart full of love, he turned to his creatures and thus took care of their poverty.” §16
- “ God’s heart has a special place for the poor... The entire history of our redemption is marked by the presence of the poor.” §17
- “ [Jesus] presented himself to the world not only as a poor Messiah, but also as the Messiah of and for the poor. §19
- “ And the Church, if she wants to be Christ’s Church, must be a Church...that makes room for the little ones and walks poor with the poor, a place where the poor have a privileged place (cf. Jas 2:2-4). §21
- “ When the Church bends down to care for the poor, she assumes her highest posture. §79
- “ Love for the poor is an essential element of the history of God’s dealings with us; it rises up from the heart of the Church as a constant appeal to the hearts of the faithful §103
- “ In third-century Rome during the persecution under Emperor Valerian, Saint Lawrence, when ordered by the authorities to surrender the Church’s treasures, instead presented the poor, declaring them to be its true riches. (§38).

Quotes from Scripture

- “ For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God... He executes justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the sojourner, giving him food and clothing.” *Deuteronomy 10:17-18*
- “ For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich. *2 Corinthians 8:8-9*
- “ How does God’s love abide in anyone who has the world’s goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help? *1 John 3:17*
- “ If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and filled,” without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. *James 2:15-17*



Christ Teaching at Capernaum, by Maurycy Gottlieb

Theme Two: The Church's Constant Witness

Caring for the poor has always been at the heart of the Church. Pope Leo spends a large part of his letter showing this through examples from the first century up to our own time.

Examples in *Dilexi Te* from the Life of The Church



Service to the Poor in the Apostolic Church

At the very beginning of the Church, the Apostles recognised that care for the poorest could not be left to goodwill alone. They formally appointed deacons such as St Stephen to serve those in need, embedding service to the poor into the Church's earliest structures. (§37).



Early Christian Communities and Pastors

Between the second and fifth centuries, across the Roman Empire, Christian communities became known for their care for widows, orphans, prisoners, the sick, and strangers. Church leaders insisted that charity was not an optional moral addition but a defining expression of faith in Christ. (§39–45).



Care of the Sick: Saint Cyprian and the Church of Carthage

In the mid-third century, when plague struck Carthage in North Africa, Saint Cyprian exhorted Christians to remain and care for the sick while many fled. They visited the afflicted, washed wounds, and accompanied the dying. (§49).



Hospitality, Healing and Education through Monastic Life: Saints Basil and Benedict

In the fourth century, in Cappadocia, Saint Basil the Great founded a complex including lodgings, hospitals, and schools for the poor and sick. In sixth-century Italy, Saint Benedict shaped Western monasticism so that hospitality to the poor and pilgrims became a central obligation. For centuries, monasteries across Europe provided refuge, food, medicine, education, and dignity to the most vulnerable (§54–57).



Freeing Prisoners and Slaves: Trinitarians and Mercedarians

Between the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, amid widespread captivity around the Mediterranean, new religious orders arose with the explicit mission of freeing prisoners. The Trinitarians and the Mercedarians placed their possessions — and often their own lives — at the service of the imprisoned (§60–61).



Living Poverty with the Poor: Saint Francis and the Mendicant Orders

In the early thirteenth century, Saint Francis of Assisi embraced radical poverty not simply to serve the poor but to live among them as a brother. His witness reshaped the Church's presence in cities, showing that closeness to the poor was itself a path of holiness (§63–67).



Educating the Poor

From the sixteenth century onwards, particularly in parts of Europe marked by inequality saints such as Joseph Calasanz in Rome and John Baptist de La Salle in France founded schools for poor children. Education was understood not as a privilege but as a duty rooted in charity and justice. (§69–72).



Accompanying Migrants: Scalabrini and Cabrini

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, during mass migration from Europe to the Americas, figures such as Saint John Baptist Scalabrini in Italy and Saint Frances Xavier Cabrini in the United States accompanied migrants with spiritual, legal, and material support. Through schools, hospitals, and shelters, they embodied a Church that walked with the displaced and recognised Christ in the stranger (§74–75).



Serving the Poorest of the Poor: Saints Teresa of Calcutta and Dulce of the Poor

In the twentieth century, Saint Teresa of Calcutta in India and Saint Dulce of the Poor in Brazil undertook radical service to the poor. Serving those abandoned by society, they showed that care for the poorest flows from prayer and reveals the Church at her most authentic. (§77–79).

Quotes from Scripture

“³² All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of their possessions was their own, but they shared everything they had.³³ With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And God's grace was so powerfully at work in them all³⁴ that there were no needy persons among them. For from time to time those who owned land or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales³⁵ and put it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to anyone who had need. Acts 2:32-35



To Feed the Hungry, by Francisco Lopes Mendes

Theme Three: Personal Encounter is Key

Another key theme in *Dilexi Te* is the importance of personal encounter in loving the poor. Giving money and supporting charities are good things, but meeting people in need face to face matters as well. These encounters remind us of each person's dignity and of God's love for them. They draw us closer to others, help us see the reality of their needs, and change us too. This can be seen in Jesus' command to give to those who ask, and in the early Christian practice of giving directly to the poor.

Quotes from *Dilexi Te*

- “ No sign of affection, even the smallest, will ever be forgotten, especially if it is shown to those who are suffering, lonely or in need. §4
- “ Only the closeness that makes us friends enables us to appreciate deeply the values of the poor today, their legitimate desires, and their own manner of living the faith. §100
- “ We are asked to devote time to the poor, to give them loving attention, to listen to them with interest, to stand by them in difficult moments, choosing to spend hours, weeks or years of our lives with them, and striving to transform their situations, starting from them. We cannot forget that this is what Jesus himself proposed in his actions and by his words. §104
- “ Almsgiving remains...a necessary means of contact, encounter, and empathy with those less fortunate. Almsgiving at least offers us a chance to halt before the poor, to look into their eyes, to touch them and to share something of ourselves with them. §115
- “ It is always better at least to do something rather than nothing. Whatever form it may take, almsgiving will touch and soften our hardened hearts §119
- “ Our love and our deepest convictions need to be continually cultivated, and we do so through our concrete actions. §119

Quotes from Scripture

- “ For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God... He executes justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the sojourner, giving him food and clothing. *Deuteronomy 10:17-18*
- “ For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich. *2 Corinthians 8:8-9*
- “ How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help? *1 John 3:17*
- “ If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and filled,” without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? So also, faith by itself if it does not have works, is dead. *James 2:15-17*



The Good Samaritan, by Jacopo Bassano

Theme Four: Serving the Poor Brings us Close to Jesus

Another theme in *Dilexi Te* is that loving the poor brings us close to Jesus. This happens in more than one way. First, it means our lives become more like his, shaped by his will, his priorities, and his care for those in need. In this way, we show that we are children of God. Second, it can bring us into a deeper personal encounter with Jesus, renewing our experience of his love and bringing new life to everything we do.

Quotes from *Dilexi Te*

- “ Love for the Lord, then, is one with love for the poor: “Just as you did it to one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it to me” (*Mt* 25:40). This is not a matter of mere human kindness but a revelation: contact with those who are lowly and powerless is a fundamental way of encountering the Lord of history. In the poor, he continues to speak to us. §5
- “ I am convinced that the preferential choice for the poor is a source of extraordinary renewal both for the Church and for society, if we can only set ourselves free of our self-centeredness and open our ears to their cry. §7
- “ On the wounded faces of the poor, we see the suffering of the innocent and, therefore, the suffering of Christ himself. §9
- “ The word of God reminds those of us not normally prone to benevolent and disinterested gestures, that generosity to the poor actually benefits those who exercise it: God has a special love for them. In fact, the Bible is full of promises addressed to those who give generously to others: “Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the Lord, and will be repaid in full” (*Prov* 19:17). “Give, and it will be given to you... for the measure you give will be the measure you get back” (*Lk* 6:38). §33
- “ From the first centuries, the Fathers of the Church recognized in the poor a privileged way to reach God, a special way to meet him. Charity shown to those in need was not only seen as a moral virtue, but a concrete expression of faith in the incarnate Word. The community of the faithful, sustained by the strength of the Holy Spirit, was rooted in being close to the poor, whom they considered not just an “appendage,” but an essential part of Christ’s living body. §39
- “ The poor are not just people to be helped, but the sacramental presence of the Lord. §44

Quotes from Scripture

- “ And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.’” *Matthew 25:40*
- “ No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us. *1 John 4:12*
- “ Keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters. Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it. Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering. *Hebrews 13:1-3*



Christ of the Breadline, by Fritz Eichenberg

Theme Five: The Poor Teach and Evangelise Us

A further theme in *Dilexi Te* is that we should not treat the poor as if they only receive and we only give. Every person has equal dignity as someone made in God's image and loved by God. Because of this, encounter is never one-sided. When we come near to those who suffer, we may also receive from them: their faith, their courage, and their insight into what matters most. Love for the poor is not one-way, but an encounter between equals in which Christ is revealed and both are changed.

Quotes from *Dilexi Te*

- “ We are wanting to proclaim the good news to the poor that God loves them, that we love them, that they are somebody to us, that they too have been created by the same loving hand of God, to love and to be loved. Our poor people are great people, are very lovable people, they do not need our pity and sympathy, they need our understanding love. They need our respect; they need that we treat them with dignity. (Mother Theresa when awarded her Nobel Peace Prize) §77
- “ The poorest are not only objects of our compassion, but teachers of the Gospel. It is not a question of “bringing” God to them, but of encountering him among them. All of these examples teach us that serving the poor is not a gesture to be made “from above,” but an encounter between equals, where Christ is revealed and adored. §79
- “ The same questions keep coming back to us. Does this mean that the less gifted are not human beings? Or that the weak do not have the same dignity as ourselves? Are those born with fewer opportunities of lesser value as human beings? Should they limit themselves merely to surviving? The worth of our societies, and our own future, depends on the answers we give to these questions. §95
- “ Their experience of poverty gives them the ability to recognize aspects of reality that others cannot see; for this reason, society needs to listen to them. §100
- “ Only the closeness that makes us friends enables us to appreciate deeply the values of the poor today, their legitimate desires, and their own manner of living the faith... Day by day, the poor become agents of evangelization and of comprehensive human promotion: they educate their children in the faith, engage in ongoing solidarity among relatives and neighbours, constantly seek God, and give life to the Church's pilgrimage. In the light of the Gospel, we recognize their immense dignity and their sacred worth in the eyes of Christ, who was poor like them and excluded among them. §100
- “ In light of this, it is evident that all of us must “let ourselves be evangelized” by the poor and acknowledge “the mysterious wisdom which God wishes to share with us through them.” Growing up in precarious circumstances, learning to survive in the most adverse conditions, trusting in God with the assurance that no one else takes them seriously, and helping one another in the darkest moments, the poor have learned many things that they keep hidden in their hearts. Those of us who have not had similar experiences of living this way certainly have much to gain from the source of wisdom that is the experience of the poor. Only by relating our complaints to their sufferings and privations can we experience a reproof that can challenge us to simplify our lives. §103

Quotes from Scripture

“²⁶ For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards,^[b] not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. ²⁷ But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; *1 Corinthians 1:26-27*

“⁴² And a poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which make a penny.^[c] ⁴³ And he called his disciples to him and said to them, “Truly, I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the offering box. *Mark 12:42-43*

“²⁵ “Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? *Matthew 6:25*

“ A rich man is wise in his own eyes, but a poor man who has understanding will find him out. *Proverbs 28:11*



The Widow's Mite by James Tissot

Theme Six:

It is Easy to Forget the Poor, But Important Not To

A sixth theme in Pope Leo's exhortation is that people can easily forget the poor through busyness, selfishness, pride, or mistaken ways of thinking. Yet Scripture strongly warns against this, and the Church teaches that every person has dignity and that we are responsible for one another. Ignoring the poor damages both our own hearts and the life of society.

Quotes from *Dilexi Te*

- “ The illusion of happiness derived from a comfortable life pushes many people towards a vision of life centred on the accumulation of wealth and social success at all costs, even at the expense of others. Thus, in a world where the poor are increasingly numerous, we paradoxically see the growth of a wealthy elite, living in a bubble of comfort and luxury, almost in another world compared to ordinary people. This means that a culture still persists — sometimes well disguised — that discards others without even realizing it and tolerates with indifference that millions of people die of hunger or survive in conditions unfit for human beings. A few years ago, the photo of a lifeless child lying on a Mediterranean beach caused an uproar; unfortunately, apart from some momentary outcry, similar events are becoming increasingly irrelevant. §11
- “ Wealth has increased, but together with inequality. Yet if we acknowledge that all human beings have the same dignity, independent of their place of birth, the immense differences existing between countries and regions must not be ignored. §13
- “ The poor are not there by chance or by blind and cruel fate. Nor, for most of them, is poverty a choice. Yet, there are those who still presume to make this claim, thus revealing their own blindness and cruelty. Of course, among the poor there are also those who do not want to work, perhaps because their ancestors, who worked all their lives, died poor. However, there are so many others — men and women — who nonetheless work from dawn to dusk, perhaps collecting scraps or the like, even though they know that their hard work will only help them to scrape by, but never really improve their lives. Nor can it be said that most of the poor are such because they do not “deserve” otherwise, as maintained by that specious view of meritocracy that sees only the successful as “deserving.” §14
- “ I often wonder, even though the teaching of Sacred Scripture is so clear about the poor, why many people continue to think that they can safely disregard the poor. §23
- “ A new tyranny is being born, invisible and often virtual, which unilaterally and relentlessly imposes its own laws and rules.” There is no shortage of theories attempting to justify the present state of affairs or to explain that economic thinking requires us to wait for invisible market forces to resolve everything. Nevertheless, the dignity of every human person must be respected today, not tomorrow, and the extreme poverty of all those to whom this dignity is denied should constantly weigh upon our consciences. §92
- “ A society is alienated if its forms of social organization, production and consumption make it more difficult to offer the gift of self and to establish solidarity between people. §92
- “ I can only state once more that inequality “is the root of social ills.” §94
- “ Either we regain our moral and spiritual dignity or we fall into a cesspool. Unless we stop and take this matter seriously, we will continue, openly or surreptitiously, “to legitimize the present model of distribution, where a minority believes that it has the right to consume in a way which can never be universalized” §94
- “ We need to acknowledge that we are constantly tempted to ignore others, especially the weak. We have become accustomed to looking the other way, passing by, and ignoring situations until they affect us directly. §105

“ The many forms of indifference we see all around us are in fact “signs of an approach to life that is spreading in various and subtle ways. What is more, caught up as we are with our own needs, the sight of a person who is suffering disturbs us. It makes us uneasy, since we have no time to waste on other people’s problems. These are symptoms of an unhealthy society. A society that seeks prosperity but turns its back on suffering. May we not sink to such depths! §107

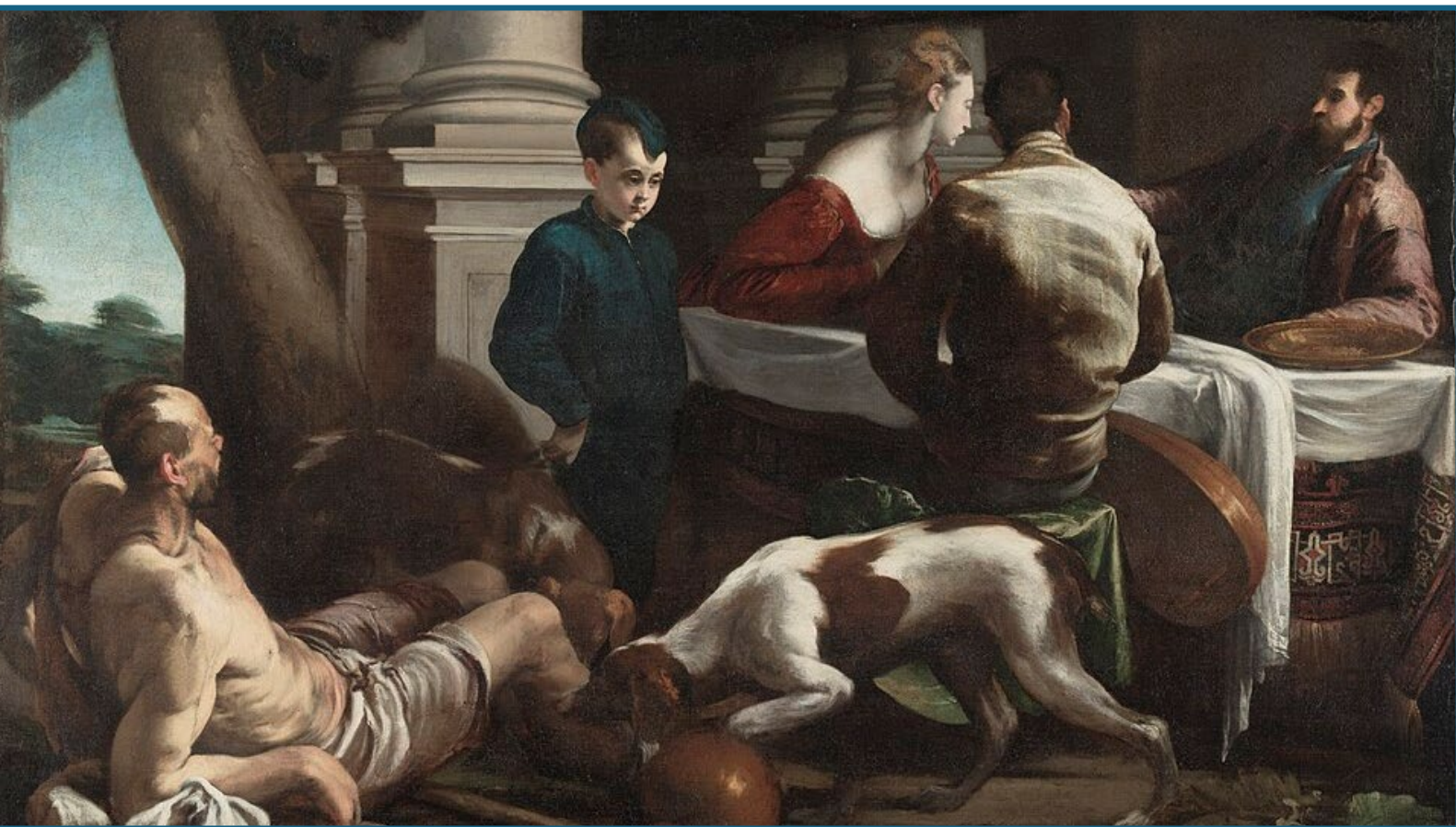
“ Not infrequently, our prosperity can make us blind to the needs of others, and even make us think that our happiness and fulfilment depend on ourselves alone, apart from others. §108

Quotes from Scripture

“ ⁴² I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, ⁴³ I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.’ ⁴⁴ “They also will answer, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?’ ⁴⁵ “He will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.’ Matthew 25:42-43

“ You have hoarded wealth in the last days. ⁴ Look! The wages you failed to pay the workers who mowed your fields are crying out against you. The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord Almighty. ⁵ You have lived on earth in luxury and self-indulgence. James 5:3b-5

“ ¹³ Whoever shuts their ears to the cry of the poor will also cry out and not be answered. *Proverbs 21:13*



The Rich Man & Lazarus by Jacopo Bassano

Theme Seven: Our Love For the Poor Must Shape Society

Love for the poor is not just about helping as individuals. In *Dilexi Te*, Pope Leo teaches that it should also change society. We can use our gifts, knowledge, and opportunities to influence others and challenge the systems that keep people poor, such as political systems, economic structures, and social attitudes.

Quotes from *Dilexi Te*

- “ There are many forms of poverty: the poverty of those who lack material means of subsistence, the poverty of those who are socially marginalized and lack the means to give voice to their dignity and abilities, moral and spiritual poverty, cultural poverty, the poverty of those who find themselves in a condition of personal or social weakness or fragility, the poverty of those who have no rights, no space, no freedom. §11
- “ Solidarity “also means fighting against the structural causes of poverty and inequality; of the lack of work, land and housing; and of the denial of social and labour rights. It means confronting the destructive effects of the empire of money §81
- “ Leo XIII addressed the labour question, pointing to the intolerable living conditions of many industrial workers and arguing for the establishment of a just social order. Saint John XXIII called for justice on a global scale: rich countries could no longer remain indifferent to countries suffering from hunger and extreme poverty; instead, they were called upon to assist them generously with all their goods. §83
- “ The poverty endured by so many of our brothers and sisters cries out for justice, solidarity, witness, commitment and efforts directed to ending it, so that the saving mission entrusted by Christ may be fully accomplished. §90
- “ We must continue, then, to denounce the “dictatorship of an economy that kills,” and to recognize that “while the earnings of a minority are growing exponentially, so too is the gap separating the majority from the prosperity enjoyed by those happy few. §92
- “ This imbalance is the result of ideologies that defend the absolute autonomy of the marketplace and financial speculation. A new tyranny is being born, invisible and often virtual, which unilaterally and relentlessly imposes its own laws and rules.” §92
- “ One structural issue that cannot realistically be resolved from above and needs to be addressed as quickly as possible has to do with the locations, neighbourhoods, homes and cities where the poor live and spend their time. §96
- “ All the members of the People of God have a duty to make their voices heard, albeit in different ways, in order to point out and denounce such structural issues, even at the cost of appearing foolish or naïve. §97

Quotes from Scripture

“²⁶ Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream. *Amos 5:24*

“¹³ You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trodden under foot by men. ¹⁴ You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. ¹⁵ Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶ Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. *Matthew 5:13-16*

“ Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? *Isaiah 58:6*

“ Behold, I have taught you statutes and ordinances, as the Lord my God commanded me, that you should do them in the land which you are entering to take possession of it. ⁶ Keep them and do them; for that will be your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples. And what great nation is there, that has statutes and ordinances so righteous as all this law which I set before you this day? *Deuteronomy 4:5-6,8*



The Preaching of St John the Baptist by Alessandro Allori

What Shall We Do?

Remember, once you have had time to hear, think and pray about Pope Leo's message time to think about what we might do in response, next year.

There are three different levels to think about:

- **something all our schools could do on their own**
- **something Catholic schools in your local area could do together**
- **something all our schools could do together**

For each one, try to think of a way of showing God's love in a practical and visible way.

You might begin by asking yourself:

Did anything in Pope Leo's letter particularly stay with me or challenge me?

To help you think, here are some things pupils in Catholic schools have done in the past:

- organising collections of food or toiletries for local foodbanks
- preparing "kindness packs" for families who need support
- collecting warm coats or good-quality shoes for people who need them
- writing cards or visiting older people who may feel lonely
- working with other Catholic schools to run a shared collection or project
- organising sponsored walks or prayer events to raise money for charity

Your ideas might be similar to these, or they might be something completely new.

What matters most is that they help us respond to Pope Leo's call to show God's love for people who are poor.



Bishop Paul Swarbrick, Bishop of Lancaster