



# CARITAS LEEDS



Catholic Care  
Caritas Leeds

Let all that you do be done in love.

1 Corinthians 16:14

# Welcome from Bishop Marcus

## Thank you for your interest in Caritas in the Diocese of Leeds.

This brochure explains what Caritas is, and how it is arranged in our Diocese. I hope you will find it informative, and that you will want to support the Church's practical outreach, which gives concrete demonstration of our belief in a loving God.



In recent years, the Church has been rediscovering 'synodality', that is, ways of journeying together, listening together, acting together.

My hope and prayer is that the work of 'Caritas', love, will be enhanced by closer collaboration between the many charitable projects that exist in our part of Yorkshire.

+ Marcus Stock, Bishop of Leeds

September 2024

# What is Caritas?

## Caritas is the Latin word for love.

Jesus asked his followers to love God and their neighbours. Today Christians around the world show this love through all kinds of practical works of charity, such as: healthcare services; care of the elderly; schools; providing food for the poor; welcoming the stranger, and so on. Many such projects are carried out by parishes, religious orders, charities, and other Church organisations.



In 1897, a young priest in Germany began organising social welfare services for the poor and disadvantaged. He called his project 'Caritas', and the model soon inspired similar groups in other countries. In the twentieth century, the Church began to coordinate internationally these social welfare organisations, giving rise to Caritas Internationalis.





Today, Caritas Internationalis is one of the world's biggest confederations of charitable organisations dedicated to promoting peace, human welfare, and economic and social justice. There are more than 160 national branches of Caritas active in more than 200 countries, with a headquarters in Vatican City.

In 2012 Pope Benedict XVI asked every diocese in the world to establish a Caritas service if they did not already have one. Every country and diocese organises its Caritas service differently according to local circumstances.



# Caritas in England and Wales

**In England and Wales there are two agencies of the Catholic Church that represent Caritas at a national level:**

- CAFOD (Catholic Agency for Overseas Development) is charged with supporting charitable projects abroad;
- CSAN (Caritas Social Action Network) is charged with supporting charitable projects at home and advocating for those whose voice is not heard.

In addition to the national Caritas organisations, nearly every one of the twenty-two dioceses and archdioceses in England and Wales has its own Caritas organisation.



# Caritas Leeds

**In 2017 Bishop Marcus launched Caritas Leeds as an umbrella forum bringing together many different groups providing charitable outreach in our Diocese.**



Thanks to the good work done by the then coordinator for Caritas Leeds, Rev. Dr. Joseph Cortis (a deacon of the diocese) the service developed to the point where Bishop Marcus decided it required additional resources.

In 2023 Bishop Marcus designated the charity Catholic Care as Caritas Leeds. This means that Catholic Care, in addition to engaging in charitable works itself, also supports other diocesan groups in their social action. Catholic Care opened its first orphanage in 1863, and today has some 200 staff and volunteers running a variety of services across the Diocese of Leeds. With 160 years' experience of caring for those in need, Catholic Care has the resources to coordinate and enhance the Church's Social Action.



# The Role of Catholic Care

**As Caritas Leeds, Catholic Care will support, enhance and, when deemed appropriate, coordinate**

– not replace or take over – the various charitable projects already being done by many Catholic groups and parish projects in the Diocese, and also enable new initiatives to flourish. Working with parishes, schools, religious communities, chaplaincies, local charities, and other partners, Caritas Leeds will provide capacity building to promote the development of volunteer-led initiatives across the Diocese.

Caritas Leeds will provide a practical resource both supporting and enabling social action initiatives across the Diocese to be safe and to follow good practice.



# Caritas Leeds Coordinator



**The Caritas Coordinator will be a point of contact** at Catholic Care supporting the delivery of charity ('Caritas') through volunteer-led initiatives across the Diocese.





# Membership of Caritas Leeds

**Parishes, groups, and charities will still run their own initiatives, and have oversight and responsibility for them.**

Those that want to be part of Caritas Leeds (and we hope all of them will) will be invited to sign up to a code of mutual understanding and good practice.

Caritas Leeds will convene an annual Forum where representatives from groups, parishes, chaplaincies, and diocesan agencies come together for spiritual formation and practical planning. The Forum will identify needs, discuss collaborative projects, and grow in understanding and living-out of Catholic Social Teaching. Working together, we will be able to encourage good practices, provide guidance, and support each other's charitable initiatives.

Parish and other Catholic initiatives that have joined the Forum are encouraged to use the Caritas 'branding', which is recognised worldwide as a sign of the Church's loving care. A badge/logo will be available: 'Member of Caritas Leeds'. This will help us build a sense of identity and collaboration as a Diocese.

# Toolkit and Advice

**The Caritas Leeds Coordinator will provide resources.**

These will include an online toolkit that advises parishes/groups on topics such as safeguarding, setting up a bank account, gift aid, health and safety, and liability insurance. Where not already available through local channels, Caritas Leeds will help groups with safer recruitment (such as DBS checks) and access to banking facilities.



# Caritas Day of Reflection and Action

**On an annual basis, Caritas Leeds, working in collaboration with the Vicariate for Education, will host a Caritas Day of Reflection and Action.**

This day will be one of celebration, formation, belonging, sharing good practice, and setting our actions for the following year.



**Any questions?  
Please don't hesitate to contact us**





Whoever oppresses the poor  
shows contempt for their Maker,  
but whoever is kind to the needy  
honours God.

Proverbs 14:31