



Pastoral Letter
Annual Appeal for Catholic Care
Sunday, 25th/26th March 2017

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ

I write to you today, both as your Bishop and as Chair of Trustees for Catholic Care, to make the Annual Appeal on behalf of our Diocesan Charity. Your generosity last year raised funds of £30,434; a sum which enables Catholic Care to reach out to the most disadvantaged, vulnerable and marginalised people living side by side with us across the Diocese. Without your donations much of this work would simply not be possible.

Catholic Care undertakes charitable and social welfare work on behalf of the Diocese. Each and every day the Charity supports and cares for some of the most vulnerable, people living in our Diocese, including:

- Children and young people who can no longer live with their families
- Children with a learning disability who can find it so hard to join in and enjoy life
- Adults whose mental health makes it difficult to cope with day to day living
- Children, young people, families and staff in our schools facing the stress and strain of everyday life.
- Mothers with new babies daunted by the responsibility of new life
- Older people who feel lonely and isolated
- Adults with a learning disability who have so many talents but struggle with daily tasks.
- Families often facing a multitude of issues.

This year Catholic Care has taken on a new challenge in meeting the needs of perhaps the most marginalised living in our society, those of refugees and asylum seekers. The Charity has answered the call to action from Pope Francis himself when he said, *“Indifference and silence lead to complicity whenever we stand by as people are dying of suffocation and starvation, violence and shipwreck”* (Message for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees 2016).

Your help today will enable Catholic Care to continue its mission and develop its services to help those most in need living all around us, our brothers and sisters in Christ. Please take a moment to remember the many people in our communities, who do not have a place to call home, or a family to be with, are struggling financially, are living alone or experiencing social isolation and those simply left behind by society. Please help Catholic Care to give these people hope.

We have so many demands on our charitable giving which is itself a reflection of our broken society resulting in so much need. Your generosity here today, especially during this season of Lent, will help in putting your faith into action.

On behalf of the Diocese of Leeds I thank the staff and volunteers of Catholic Care for the work they do among us. I hope you will be as generous as you can be in responding to this year's Annual Appeal and I thank you most sincerely for your continued support.

+ Marcus Stock

✦ Marcus Stock
Bishop of Leeds

Given at Leeds on the 27th February 2017 and appointed to be read in all Churches and Chapels of the Diocese on the Appeal Sunday for Catholic Care, 25th/26th March 2017.