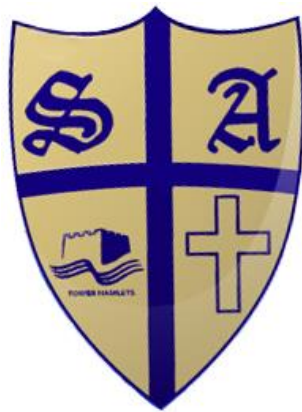


ST AGNES

Catholic Primary School

With Jesus beside us, we do our best



Catholic Life and Mission Policy 2024

Created on:	September 2024	Author: C Manning
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Our Vision and Values

At St. Agnes we believe that although we are all very different we have a way of living, behaving and doing things that allow us to serve as a witness to the Catholic Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our school motto is: **With Jesus Beside Us We Do Our Best to:**



Believe

We are all valued in God's family and the school family. We **believe** in ourselves and in our abilities.

Persevere

When things get difficult, we will **persevere** so that we will grow stronger, realising we can turn to each other and God.

Contribute

We will **contribute** to the life of the school, the parish, the local community and the wider world to which we all belong.

By doing these we will:

Achieve By being the best we can be, we will **achieve** in making a difference to others and living as God would want us to.

Catholic Life and Mission

'When Jesus is asked which is the greatest commandment, the answer is the same in all three of the Gospels in which the question is asked: to love God with all your mind, heart, soul and strength, and to love your neighbour as yourself. This call to love is at the heart of the educational mission of every Catholic school. It is a mission that is clearly echoed in the Second Vatican Council which teaches that the purpose of an education that is distinctively Christian is threefold (*Gravissimum Educationis* 2). Its first purpose is to ensure that all pupils understand the faith that gives the school its identity as a Catholic school. The second, is to ensure that all are invited to learn how to worship God in spirit and truth through the prayer and liturgy of the Church. The third, is the formation of all to live in conformity with the pattern of human goodness, truth and justice that we find in Jesus Christ.'¹

This threefold mission is reflected in the three perspectives of the Catholic School Inspection process. Through religious education, pupils are invited to love God with all their mind, through collective worship with all their heart, soul and strength and through the Catholic life and mission of the school to love their neighbour as themselves.

This policy on Catholic life and mission complements the Religious Education policy, the Prayer and Liturgy policy and the Relationships, Sex and Health Education policy.

The aim of this policy is to show how faithfully St Agnes School responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church's educational mission.

Mission Statement

***With Jesus beside us we do our best to
Believe, persevere and contribute so we can
achieve***

The mission statement of St. Agnes Primary School is highly visible throughout the school environment. It clearly reflects the school's role in the educational mission of the Church, promoting Gospel values and the teachings of the Catholic Church.

Our mission statement is a touch stone of school life so that:

- Pupils have a clear understanding of its meaning and can articulate this at an age-appropriate level
- All staff embrace and implement the statement across daily school life through a range of opportunities *e.g. class prayers, whole school liturgical prayers, displays etc.*
- It is shared with parents and the wider community *through school signage, our newsletters, email footers, school policy documents, website and parents meetings*

School Environment

Visitors to St Agnes School are aware of the distinctive Catholic nature of the school through the physical environment, the presence of images and symbols and the recognition of a learning environment that respects the human dignity of all persons as made in God's image and likeness. At St Agnes School every effort is made to provide a spiritually uplifting, stimulating and aesthetically pleasing environment:

- All rooms have a crucifix
- All rooms have a cared for, attractive prayer area

¹ CSI Inspection Handbook

- Each class has a ‘prayer’ box and there is a central box for whole school intentions near the school entrance.
- There are displays in the corridors with reflection on our Mission Statement and information relating to the current liturgical season
- Focal points for liturgical prayers reflect the theme and season
- Displays in the hall document the liturgical year and the focus of charitable activities e.g. Harvest display
- Displays within each classroom reflect the ‘RED’ branch being taught, the liturgical season, work produced by the pupils, key prayers and scripture
- The school grounds have peaceful prayer areas.

Catholic Curriculum

‘The Catholic vision of education is distinctive and the beliefs it holds, the values and aspirations it has must inspire the whole of the curriculum.’²

Our school is a community of learning with a distinctive educational philosophy which is based on the Gospels. Whilst Religious Education is at the core of the core curriculum, this philosophy permeates all our curriculum and activities as we recognise the needs of each individual member of the community.

Catholic Social Teaching (CST) is embedded in Scripture, formed by the wisdom of Church leaders and influenced by grassroots movement. It is our moral compass, guiding us on how to live out our faith in the world. St Agnes School uses Rooted in Love education resources, developed in partnership with the Diocese of Westminster Education Service. It addresses the objectives relating to Catholic Social Teaching from the new Religious Education Directory using 6 half termly themes.

The 6 CST themes are

Care for Creation	Autumn 1
Preferential Option for the Poor	Autumn 2
Solidarity and Peace	Spring 1
Community and Participation	Spring 2
Dignity	Summer 1
Dignity of workers	Summer 2

The nine strands from CAFOD support children to understand these principles (Appendix 2)

- Human Dignity
- Common Good
- Participation
- Subsidiarity
- Stewardship
- Option for the Poor
- Solidarity
- Distributive Justice
- Promoting Peace

We use child friendly resources to explore the writings of Pope Francis, such as Laudato Si’ . <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KOfF2Kgel6k> In this way we are building their moral compass and enabling them to respond to social, moral and ethical issues in the world. Our Catholic curriculum leads our charitable outreach and work for social justice.

² NBRIA The Distinctive Curriculum of the Catholic School

Relationships, Sex and Health Education is taught in a Catholic context recognising we are all made in God's image and likeness. (See our RSHE Policy).

Other faiths are taught as part of the RE curriculum. (See our RE policy). Learning about the religion and cultures of those who do not share the Catholic faith is one of the ways in which Catholic schools embody the call to love one's neighbour. It prepares our children for life in modern Britain, giving them an understanding of the beliefs of others.

Charitable outreach

We aim to foster and develop an awareness of the needs of others: locally, nationally and globally, and promote a spirit of generosity and compassion as taught by Jesus Christ. Through timetabled work on Catholic Social Teaching and Fratelli Tutti pupils are taught to stand in solidarity with the poor and vulnerable. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bWpolo3mlgk>

There are various fundraising events and charitable outreach activities throughout the year co-ordinated by the Chaplaincy Team such as : The Bow Food bank, Canning Town Soup Kitchen, Crisis at Christmas, Shelter, CAFOD. The Catholic Children's Society.

- Harvest – parents are encouraged to make donations to the local foodbank so that they can buy what they need to serve the community better. We also share excess fruit, vegetables and bread with parents throughout the year from the playground.
- In Advent, a charity of the pupils' choosing is supported from one of the above
- At the end of KS2 Christmas carol Service and EYFS and KS1 nativity plays, money is collected for Crises at Christmas
- During Lent we raise funds for different Charities with input from the children.
- We also raise funds for a variety of causes through the year such as MacMillan through cake and biscuit sales and other initiatives.

Pupils are always encouraged to help each other as well as their parents, teachers and other people in the community. It is our aim that our whole school ethos is one that will foster and nurture a generous giving of self, and an appreciation and respect for others.

Working for Social Justice

Pupils are also taught the importance of standing up for social justice as an important aspect of Christian life. There are planned opportunities for pupils to engage in campaigns for social justice:

- Writing to our MP regarding inequalities in the local area
- Celebrating International Day – St Agnes Day 21st January
- Climate change activities e.g. Switch off lights
- Supporting understanding of Fairtrade through curriculum and assemblies
- Reduce, reuse, recycle awareness using support from the Tower Hamlets Team

Chaplaincy

The spirituality and prayer life of the school are an evident part of its Catholic life and mission. The Prayer and Liturgy policy details the school provision. Chaplaincy provision at St Agnes School plays an important role in the spiritual and moral development of the whole community.

Our Chaplaincy Team consists of the senior leadership team working with pupils from Year 6.

Their role is to support each member of the school community to grow in their faith and to be part of the pastoral care system in school. They do this by:

- Maintaining and developing class prayer areas
- Maintaining and developing communal prayer areas
- Writing and leading prayers during whole school acts of worship
- Offering opportunities for informal pupil led prayer during break or lunch times
- Undertaking large projects such as developing a prayer garden
- Contributing ideas regarding fundraising and fundraising beneficiaries.
- Being a role model to others by modelling reverence and joy where applicable
- Writing and leading whole school acts of worship weekly

- Accompanying members of the school community, especially in times of need

School Community

St Agnes is a welcoming place for children, families and members of staff from all faiths and none. Recognising that Christ is at the centre of our school we strive to support and value each member, especially the most vulnerable.

Our behaviour policy is driven by our belief that all are unique and made in God's image and likeness.

St Agnes recognises that it is part of a family of Catholic schools and works collaboratively with local Catholic schools in the LA and across the diocese. Through our work in RE children learn about the Universal Church and how we belong to a global family.

At St Agnes School all are encouraged to live life to the full and reach their full potential. Members of staff have opportunities to take part in the diocesan continuing professional development. New teachers are enrolled on Diocesan RE training as part of their induction to teaching in a Catholic school.

Parents

Parents are the first teachers of their children and we work in partnership with them. They are encouraged to support Religious Education lessons by helping their children complete homework tasks and discuss with their children work being completed when preparing to receive the Sacraments.

Parents are invited to attend a variety of school events throughout the year, which include: class assemblies, curriculum meetings, whole school Masses and liturgical prayers which take place throughout the year both in school and at Our Lady and St Catherine of Siena Parish Church and events such as the Christmas Celebration.

They are encouraged to participate with their children during Advent when Christmas Projects are sent home, encouraging a time of sharing and reflection and also during Lent when the requests are made for Easter Gardens. Parents are encouraged to join the PTA to help organise and host a range of events for our school community. All funds raised support and enhance the provision we offer for our pupils and families.

Parents are encouraged to share their views through questionnaires, as well as at parent curriculum meetings and parents' evenings. St Agnes School operates an open-door policy.

Parish Links

Links with the local parish are a vital part of Catholic life in school. The parish which serves our school is Our Lady and St Catherine of Siena. Our parish priest is Fr Howard James.

Children visit the church to look at the different aspects and features of a church. Fr Howard also supports the teaching of curriculum RE in school by visiting to talk about various topics such as baptism, reconciliation and vocation. Links with the priest are strengthened as he celebrates various services in the school with the children and staff, including Mass and the commissioning of the Chaplaincy Team. We share communications from the parish priest with our school community to encourage attendance at church and involvement in church events.

The Coordinator for Catholic Life and Mission

The Coordinator for Catholic life and mission is Mrs Ciara Manning. *(See Appendix 1 for JD.)*

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the Catholic life and mission Coordinator and the headteacher and is evaluated and reviewed by the whole school staff and governors every two years. The Governor for RE plays a central role in monitoring and reviewing all aspects of RE policies.

Appendix 1

The Role of the Coordinator for Catholic Life and Mission

- Formulating a written policy for Catholic life and mission
- Ensuring that there is a development plan for Catholic life and mission included in the school development plan
- Ensuring that pupils are able to explain the Catholic life and mission of the school, appropriate to their age, aptitudes and faith backgrounds
- Organising themes for outreach, timetable of charitable support, involvement in campaigns
- Developing staff confidence and expertise and enabling them to articulate the mission of the school and its impact on life

Planning, recording, monitoring and evaluating

- Maintaining and developing effective procedures and documentation
- Planning school involvement in national and local projects e.g. the environment
- Use a global planner to ensure relevant days are marked in school e.g. Remembrance Day,
- Making judgements on outcomes, provision and leadership of Catholic life and mission to inform the ongoing work on the school Catholic Self Evaluation Document

Communication

- Communicating to members of the school community the significance of Catholic life and mission in the life of a Catholic school
- Reporting to and consulting with the governors and headteacher regarding matters of concern and development
- Acting as consultant to colleagues
- Encouraging positive attitudes towards Catholic life and mission
- Informing newly appointed colleagues of school policy regarding Catholic life and mission
- Communicating with parents, governors and the parish community
- Liaison with the school chaplain/Chaplaincy team
- Liaison with the Diocesan Department for Education

Professional development/Ongoing formation

- Leading and organising inservice training and ongoing formation on the Catholic life and mission of the school
- Attending appropriate in-service courses e.g. updating Rainbows training, CAFOD CPD, reporting back and leading staff training
- Keeping up to date by personal reading

Resources

- Evaluating existing resources and contacts
- Ensuring resources are available to promote the Catholic life and mission of the school e.g. resources for Rainbows, Mini Vinnies, Catholic Social Teaching, Faith in Action
- Budgeting efficiently

Appendix 2



Luc the Deer

Everyone is special

(Human Dignity)



Chikondi the Giraffe

Thinking of everyone

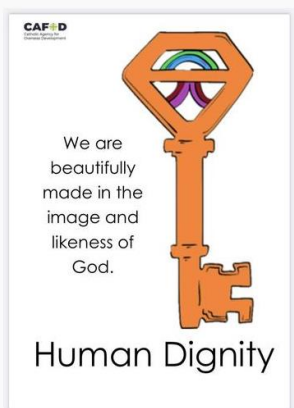
(The Common Good)



Everyone is Special

We all work together, regardless of gender, disability, age, race, ethnicity, nationality, culture, sexual orientation, political or religious belief. We celebrate diversity, and the strength it gives us, as we come together and seek justice for all. Since we believe each person is made in the image and likeness of God and has inherent dignity, we work with those living in poverty to have access to food, water, housing and other basic amenities which many of us can often take for granted. We have many different charity collections throughout the year, including for CAFOD, BCCS and Young Carers which helps others in need.

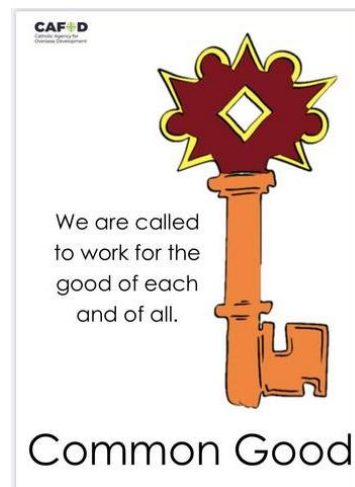
God said, 'Let us make human-kind in our image, according our likeness.' Genesis 1:26



The Common Good

We follow Jesus' example of ensuring that all have a voice and are heard, so that a better world is achieved together. Ultimately, no one can truly flourish if another person is hungry, lost or abandoned, nor can humankind flourish while our common home is degraded and exploited. We have Eco-Champions who lead the way and discuss new ideas so that we can look after our common home.

All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would... distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need.' Acts 2:44-45

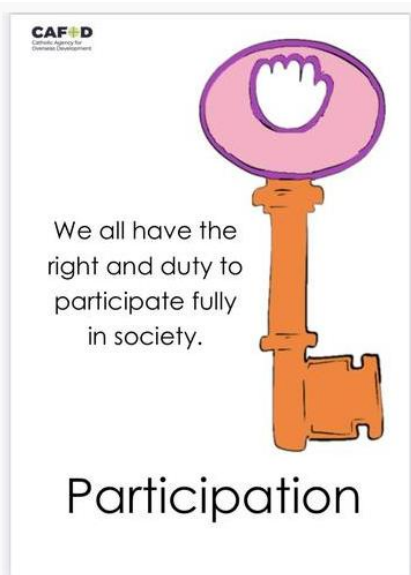




Participation

We can confront problems that we encounter by standing together to make a change. We listen to others, we help them to participate and speak-out boldly on their behalf when it is right to do so. Our Race and Social Justice Group helps us to address issues and make change.

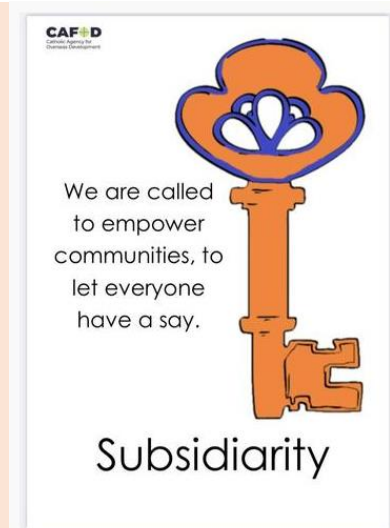
“When each separate part works as it should, the whole body grows and builds itself up through love” Ephesians 4:16



Subsidiarity

We believe that individuals can influence changes to our school community’s policies and practices so that they benefit all. We follow Jesus’ example of ensuring that the perspectives of all are heard. Our School Council allows ideas to be shared with each other and with people who make decisions in school.

“Jethro said to Moses: Let them bring every important case to you, but decide every minor case themselves” Exodus 18:22





Sofia
the Sloth

Caring for God's gifts

(Stewardship)



Poppy
the
Pōpokotea

Putting people in
most need first

(Option for the Poor)



Stewardship

Stewardship is all about caring for the gifts God has given to us. All living things are connected so we must use God's gifts responsibly to meet the needs of everyone, now and in the future. We aim to live sustainably so we are caring for the earth. Our Eco-Champions work towards promoting reducing, reusing and recycling.

'The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it.' Genesis 2:15

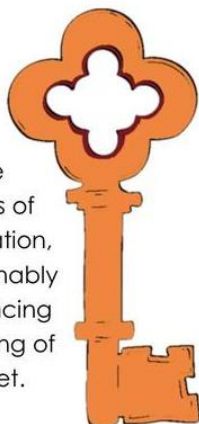
Option for the Poor

By coming together as individuals, families and communities, we can achieve change for the common good. When we unite and make a stand for what we believe in, we can achieve remarkable things. At St. Joseph's we have collected for food banks and now work with Holy Family Church to provide for their food bank. We are also working with Citizens UK to provide support and drive change for families in our community.

'... all of you are one in Christ Jesus.' Galatians 3:28



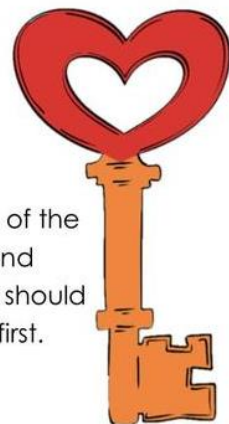
We are
guardians of
God's creation,
living sustainably
and enhancing
the wellbeing of
our planet.



Stewardship



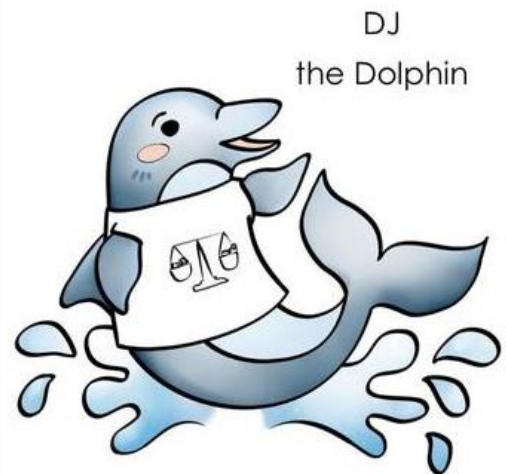
The needs of the
poor and
vulnerable should
be put first.



Option for the
Poor



(Solidarity)



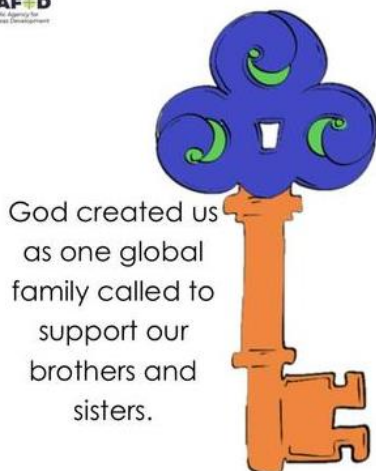
(Distributive Justice)



Solidarity

We work together to address issues that are affecting the people in our community and our global neighbours. We work with Citizens UK to drive change for our families and support CAFOD to address wherever the need is greatest. We refuse to accept the suffering of our brothers and sisters.

‘Learn to do good; seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan, plead for the widow.’ Isaiah 1:17



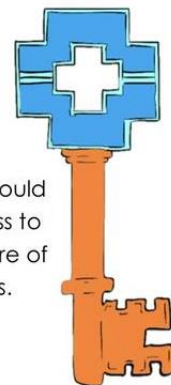
God created us as one global family called to support our brothers and sisters.

Solidarity

Distributive Justice

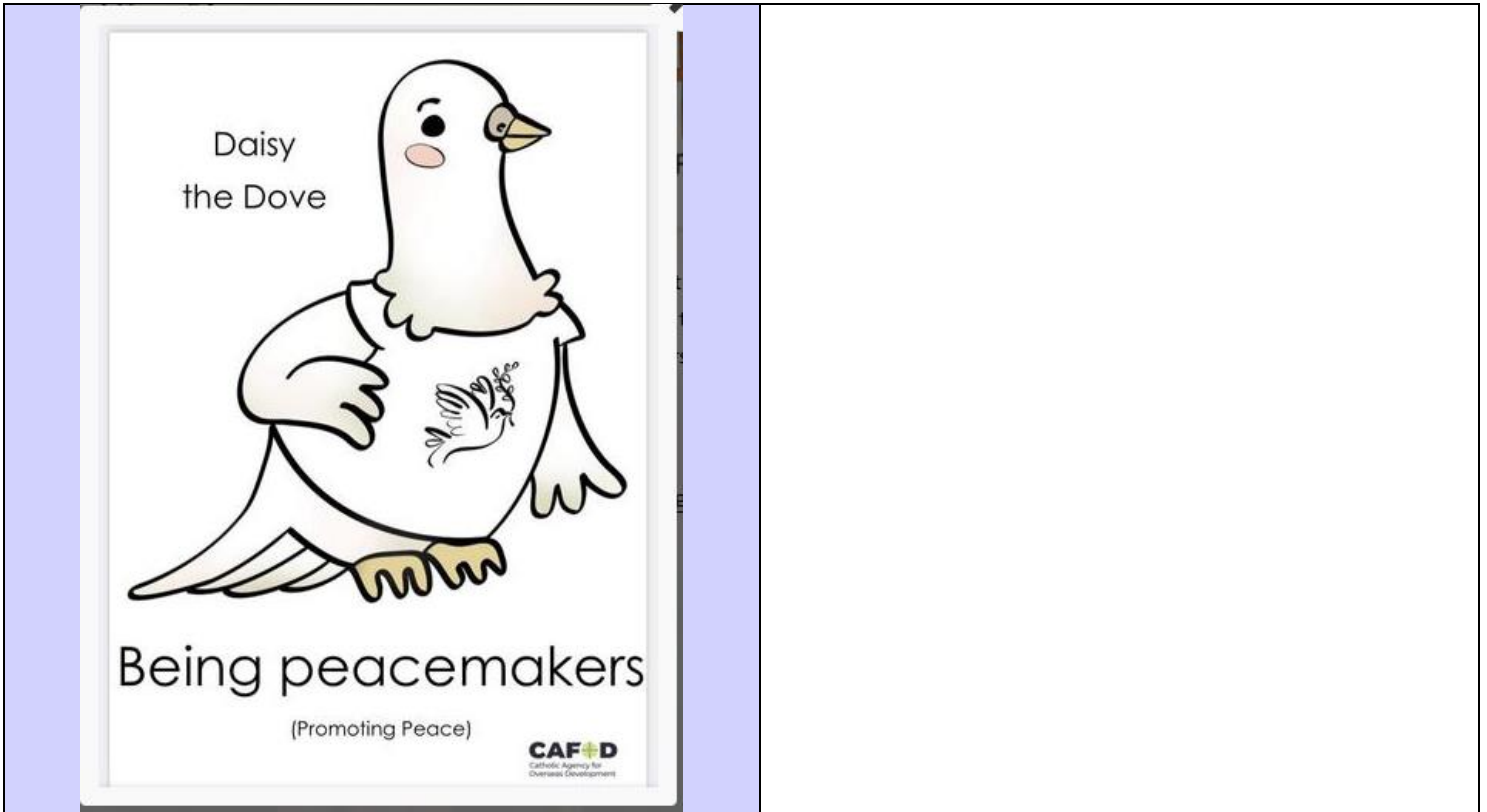
We believe that it is our duty to live out God’s plan to share the goods of this world. This means that we do not want anyone to struggle to have the basic necessities of life, such as food, shelter or clothing. We regularly donate to our local food bank, to support others in our community and we collect pre-worn clothes and donate to charity. We also donate pre-loved uniform so others in our school community can benefit.

“All who believed were together and had all things in common.” Acts 2:44-45



Everyone should have access to their fair share of resources.

Distributive Justice



Promoting Peace

We believe that peace is part of God’s nature and is a value that we all seek to live out in our daily lives. We obtain peace from justice for others and love of all. Our support of CAFOD helps us to live out this value. Our Behaviour Policy promotes the need for us to go ‘above and beyond’ to help others in our community.

‘...those who promote peace have joy.’ Proverbs 12:20



CAFOD on Catholic Social Teaching <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XNcBCPVbYDU>