



Catholic Schools Week 2024

Catholic Schools: Communities of Service

# Catholic Schools: Communities of Service

21–27 JANUARY 2024

**THURSDAY: SERVICE IN OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY**





## Key Words: **Community, Parish, Service**

### Introduction

(The introduction may be read for reflection, or used as background information for the teacher. Worksheet 1 explores the themes in a student friendly format.)

'The Parish has a long history and from the outset, it has played a fundamental role in the life of Christians and in the development and pastoral work of the Church. ... The Parish is envisioned as a response to a precise pastoral need, namely that of bringing the Gospel to the People through the proclamation of the faith and the celebration of the Sacraments. ...

'As a living community of believers, the Parish finds itself in a context whereby the territorial affiliation is increasingly less evident, where places of association are multiplied and where interpersonal relationships risk being dissolved into a virtual world without any commitment or responsibility towards one's neighbour. ...

'The Parish is called upon to read the signs of the times, while adapting both to the needs of the faithful and to historical changes. A renewed vitality is required that favours the rediscovery of the vocation of the baptised as a disciple of Jesus Christ and a missionary of the Gospel.'

(from Congregation for the Clergy, 'The pastoral conversion of the Parish community in the service of the evangelising mission of the Church', 2020, available at: <https://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/en/bollettino/pubblico/2020/07/20/200720a.html>)

### Music

The following music may be appropriate for a concluding prayer, class listening or exploration using Worksheet 3.

'What a Wonderful World' – Playing for Change (on PowerPoint): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ddLdoQRf7Vg>

'The Maker' – Chris August: <https://youtu.be/lHo3GMmdMRI> or <https://open.spotify.com/track/7LjiiqIOFAZPc4SquVHq7mO>

'Refugee' – Paddy Casey: <https://open.spotify.com/track/3Do6dQkR5xc7UdARHCYJSK>



## PowerPoint

The accompanying PowerPoint can be used to prompt discussion – questions on each slide can be used for informal class discussion, or the questions raised can be explored by using Worksheet 2, which incorporates these questions.

## Concluding Reflection and Prayer

Pope Francis, in his encyclical letter *Laudato Si'*, said 'Each community can take from the bounty of the earth whatever it needs for subsistence, but it also has the duty to protect the earth and to ensure its fruitfulness for coming generations.'

Dear God,

Please help us to look after our environment, so that we can care for our common home responsibly and pass it on to future generations.

Help us to find creative ways to protect the earth.

Help us to be aware of, and appreciative of, the beauty of the earth.

Help us to be grateful for this wonderful creation you have given us.

In our parish communities, help us to support and promote positive change that will make the world a better place.

Amen.





## Worksheet 1

Read the following text and answer the questions that follow.

'The Parish has a long history and from the outset, it has played a fundamental role in the life of Christians and in the development and pastoral work of the Church. ... The Parish is envisioned as a response to a precise pastoral need, namely that of bringing the Gospel to the People through the proclamation of the faith and the celebration of the Sacraments. ...

'As a living community of believers, the Parish finds itself in a context whereby the territorial affiliation is increasingly less evident, where places of association are multiplied and where interpersonal relationships risk being dissolved into a virtual world without any commitment or responsibility towards one's neighbour. ...

'The Parish is called upon to read the signs of the times, while adapting both to the needs of the faithful and to historical changes. A renewed vitality is required that favours the rediscovery of the vocation of the baptised as a disciple of Jesus Christ and a missionary of the Gospel.'

(from Congregation for the Clergy, 'The pastoral conversion of the Parish community in the service of the evangelising mission of the Church', 2020, available at <https://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/en/bollettino/pubblico/2020/07/20/200720a.html>)

1. What is the name of your parish community? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Who is your parish priest? \_\_\_\_\_

3. How can the local parish community respond to modern environmental concerns?

---

---

---

4. What local pastoral needs or social justice issues should the parish community respond to?

---

---

---



5. How might the digital/virtual world create challenges for the parish based on geographical location?

---

---

---

6. The parish can be 'a living community of believers' – list three ways this can be achieved.

---

---

---

7. Suggest three ways the parish community can gain 'a renewed vitality'.

---

---

---





## Worksheet 2 – Questions from PowerPoint

1. People gather in their local communities. Why gather together?

---

---

---

2. The parish community can promote social justice. How?

---

---

---

3. The parish community can respond to current needs and issues. Give an example of how.

---

---

---





4. Parish communities can be affected by environmental issues. How might this be?

---

---

---

5. Parish communities gather for happy and sad occasions. Give some examples of this.

---

---

---

6. What is your personal reaction to the song 'What a Wonderful World'?

---

---

---





## Worksheet 3 – Songs

Listen to the song your teacher will play for you. Answer the questions thoughtfully.

1. Name of song: \_\_\_\_\_

2. What themes relating to community is this song exploring?

---

---

---

3. What, in your opinion, is the message of this song?

---

---

---

4. What is your own personal reaction to, or opinion of, this song?

---

---

---

