**Overview**

The Church holds that we should all have a special focus on supporting, walking alongside, and sharing with people who are living in poverty. Pope Francis’s much quoted phrase about wanting ‘a poor church for the poor’ holds the Catholic social teaching principle of the preferential option for the poor at its heart. Although it includes the charitable support of the Church, both the institution and individual members, for those living in poverty locally and globally, it is also wider than this. The option for the poor includes talking with, and listening to, those who are living in poverty. It is not just thinking that we know what people want or need, but listening to people, sharing in their suffering, being the ‘voice for the voiceless’ when it is not being heard, whilst enabling the voice, the experience, the needs of people to be heard by others in our communities, society, and the world.

**RE Lessons**

One fully-planned lesson is provided, per phase. These lessons are intended to be ‘plug-and-play’ and include a PowerPoint, lesson plan, and differentiated activities. Teachers are encouraged to use the lessons as they see fit and to adapt the lessons/activities to suit their class.

Teachers are encouraged to be aware of the background of the children in their class when teaching these lessons and following the suggested cross-curricular links below.

Suggestions for cross-curricular links are provided, below:

**English**

* Write a poem about being grateful for what they have around Christmastime
* Read and discuss:
  + *Maddi’s Fridge* by Lois Brandt
  + *The Great Food Bank Heist* by Onjali Q. Rauf

**History**

* Research a UK charity working to combat poverty (Oxfam, Caritas Westminster, The Catholic Children’s Society, St Vincent de Paul’s Society etc.) and write a fact file about it.

**Art**

* Make and decorate cards to send to organisations such as local food banks, local homeless shelters, etc.
* Make posters to display around the school encouraging people to collect for a local charity, during Advent

**Catholic Life and Mission**

Display Boards are a great way to show off of the children’s learning. Consider displaying work from all year groups in a joint display board in a communal area of the school. Use the graphics and colours that Caritas use for Option for the Poor, provided in the PowerPoint.

**Pupil Leadership Groups**

The half-termly CST themes are a good opportunity to give the school’s Pupil Leadership Groups a direction in which to focus their efforts. Liturgy Leaders could be encouraged to lead the Praise and Worships sessions for the whole school or their classes. Liturgy Leaders could also be encouraged to find scripture that relates to Option for the Poor or write a thematic prayer to be used during Assemblies.

Pupil Leadership Groups could research local charities that work to combat poverty, and teach the whole school or their classes what they have learnt. Pupil Leadership Groups could also run a fundraiser for a local, related charity; write an explanatory insert for the school newsletter, or create and run a brief social action project in the local area.

**Our Symbol**

This is our symbol: The heart representing Love rooted in the Word of God for that is where we find the life that animates all we do. We hope this symbol will come to mean something for the pupils, that every time they see this they will come back to the principles of CST and remember why we do what we do. We highly encourage using this symbol as stickers, posters, on PowerPoint slides etc every time a CST theme appears either in a lesson, on a display board or an assembly.