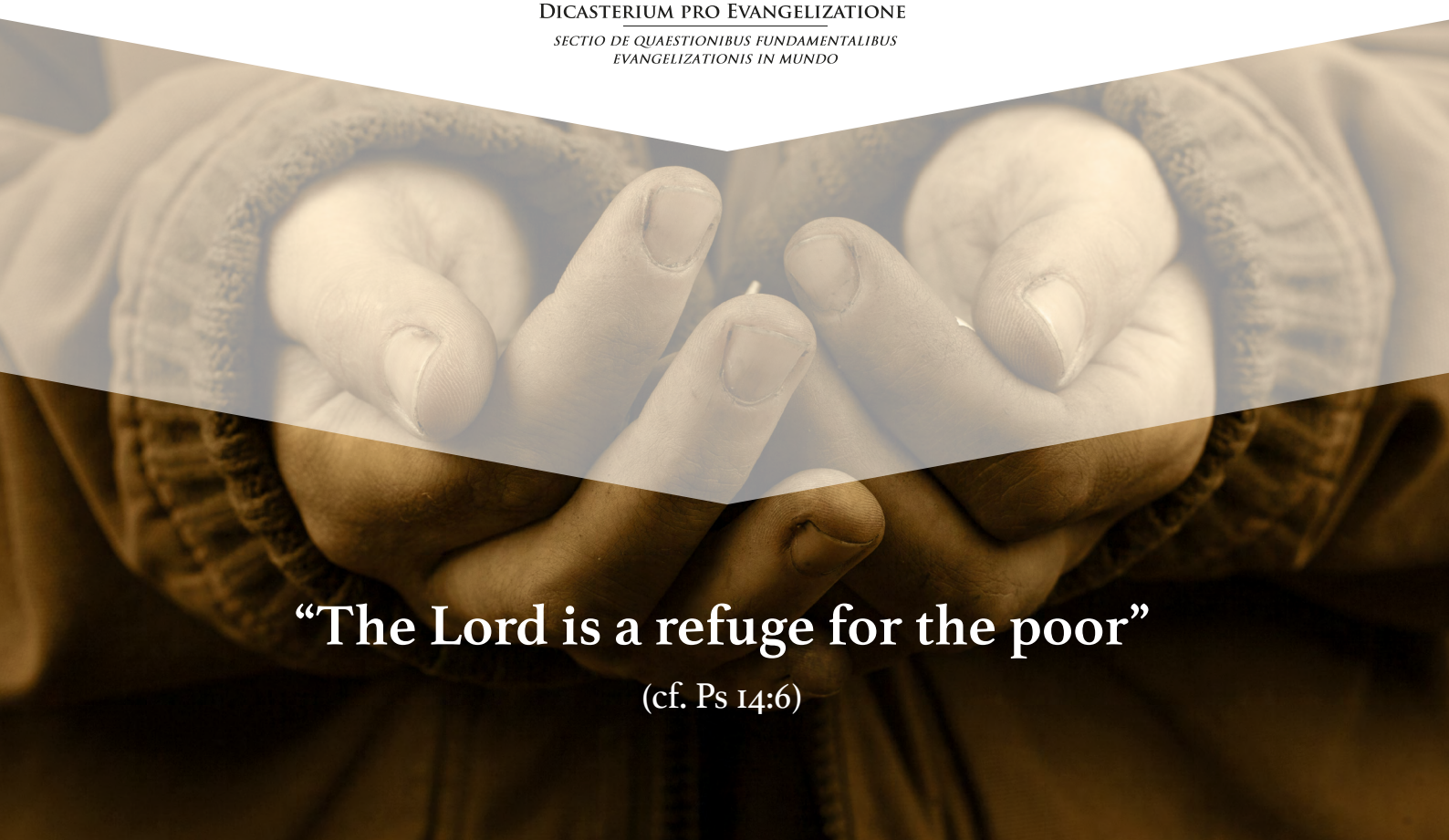
10TH WORLD DAY OF THE POOR

PASTORAL RESOURCE

DICASTERIUM PRO EVANGELIZATIONE
SECTIO DE QUAESTIONIBUS FUNDAMENTALIBUS EVANGELIZATIONIS IN MUNDO



"The Lord is a refuge for the poor"

(cf. Ps 14:6)

10TH WORLD DAY OF THE POOR

PASTORAL RESOURCE

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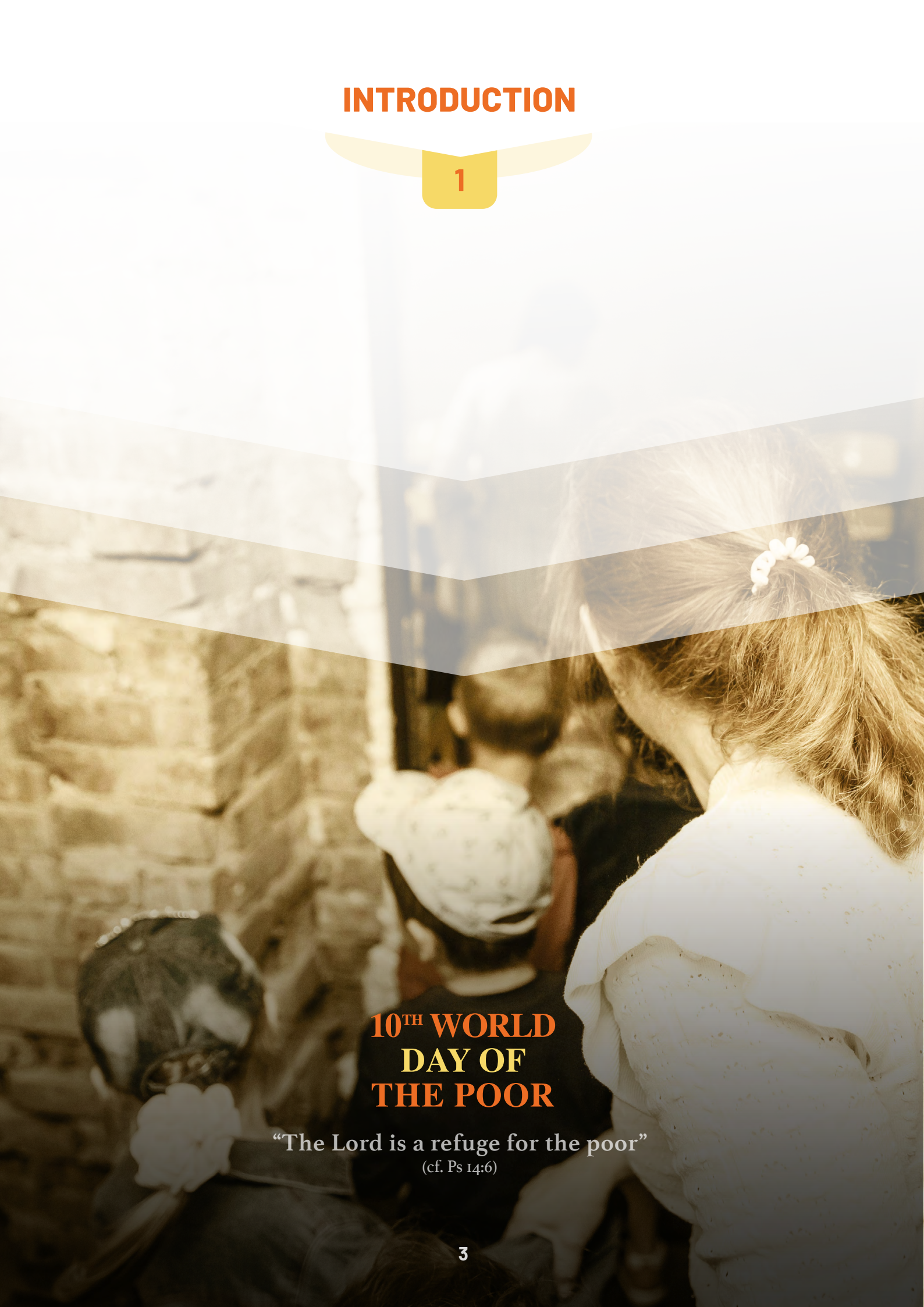
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INTRODUCTION

1



10TH WORLD DAY OF THE POOR

"The Lord is a refuge for the poor"
(cf. Ps 14:6)

"The Lord is a refuge for the poor". With this expression from Psalm 14, Pope Leo proposes the theme of the 10th World Day of the Poor. The Psalm verse offers a path to follow, not only to keep the Word of God at the centre of our lives, but also to convey a deeper teaching about the experience of poverty in our own time.

Ten years is not a long time in which to assess the enduring power of this initiative, so strongly promoted by Pope Francis. Nevertheless, it is a significant milestone, allowing us to see how firmly a tradition that seeks to keep the importance of the poor from being forgotten is taking root in the Church. The poor are present every day in our communities, as well as on the streets and in the squares of our cities. Yet the poor are not only those we see there. As Pope Leo XIV reminds us in his Message for this occasion: "The poor of our day are the forgotten and the marginalized: robbed not only of bread, but also of a voice and a face" (No. 3).

This Day thus becomes an opportunity to recognize the many forms of poverty that mark our society. Among them is another kind of poverty: the absence of God from people's lives. "The loss of a sense of the transcendent in daily life is no longer so much a theoretical denial of God's existence; rather, it is evident in the failure to take his goodness and mercy into account in the pursuit of personal and social justice" (*Message*, No. 1).

When God is removed from personal and social life, we unfortunately fall into the arrogance of those who are stronger and wealthier, leading to the oppression of the weakest. "The absence of God no longer places people side by side in mutual respect, but places one above the other in a relationship of domination and oppression" (*Message*, No. 1). Living as

though God did not exist does not improve life; it impoverishes it and makes it incapable of attaining what is essential.

This *Pastoral Resource* is offered as a simple tool for dioceses, parishes and all ecclesial communities, so that this *Day* may once again be a significant moment in which we recognize that our hope finds refuge in God, and that this security does not absolve us of the responsibility to build a trustworthy and welcoming city for everyone. Experiencing security in God necessarily leads us to recognize that, in Christ, we too are called to become poor and to be a refuge for the poor. Along this journey, as shown in the initiative's logo, the door of the Christian community must remain open, allowing those inside to go out and those outside to come in.

✠ Rino Fisichella

Pro-Prefect of the Dicastery for Evangelization

Section for Fundamental Questions Regarding Evangelization in the World

PASTORAL SUGGESTIONS

2



10TH WORLD DAY OF THE POOR

"The Lord is a refuge for the poor"
(cf. Ps 14:6)



"God shows a preference for the poor: the Lord's words of hope and liberation are addressed first of all to them. Therefore, even in their poverty or weakness, no one should feel abandoned." .

Pope Leo XIV

Ten years after its establishment, the World Day of the Poor invites us to renew our way of seeing and to let ourselves be challenged by the presence of those who still live in insecurity and destitution. This year's theme, "The Lord is a refuge for the poor," leads us to the heart of biblical faith: God is not indifferent to the suffering of his children, but draws near to those wounded by life who can find no shelter. Celebrating this Day therefore means rediscovering the face of a God who welcomes and protects, and asking whether our communities, too, know how to offer a safe place to those seeking someone to listen, support and hope.

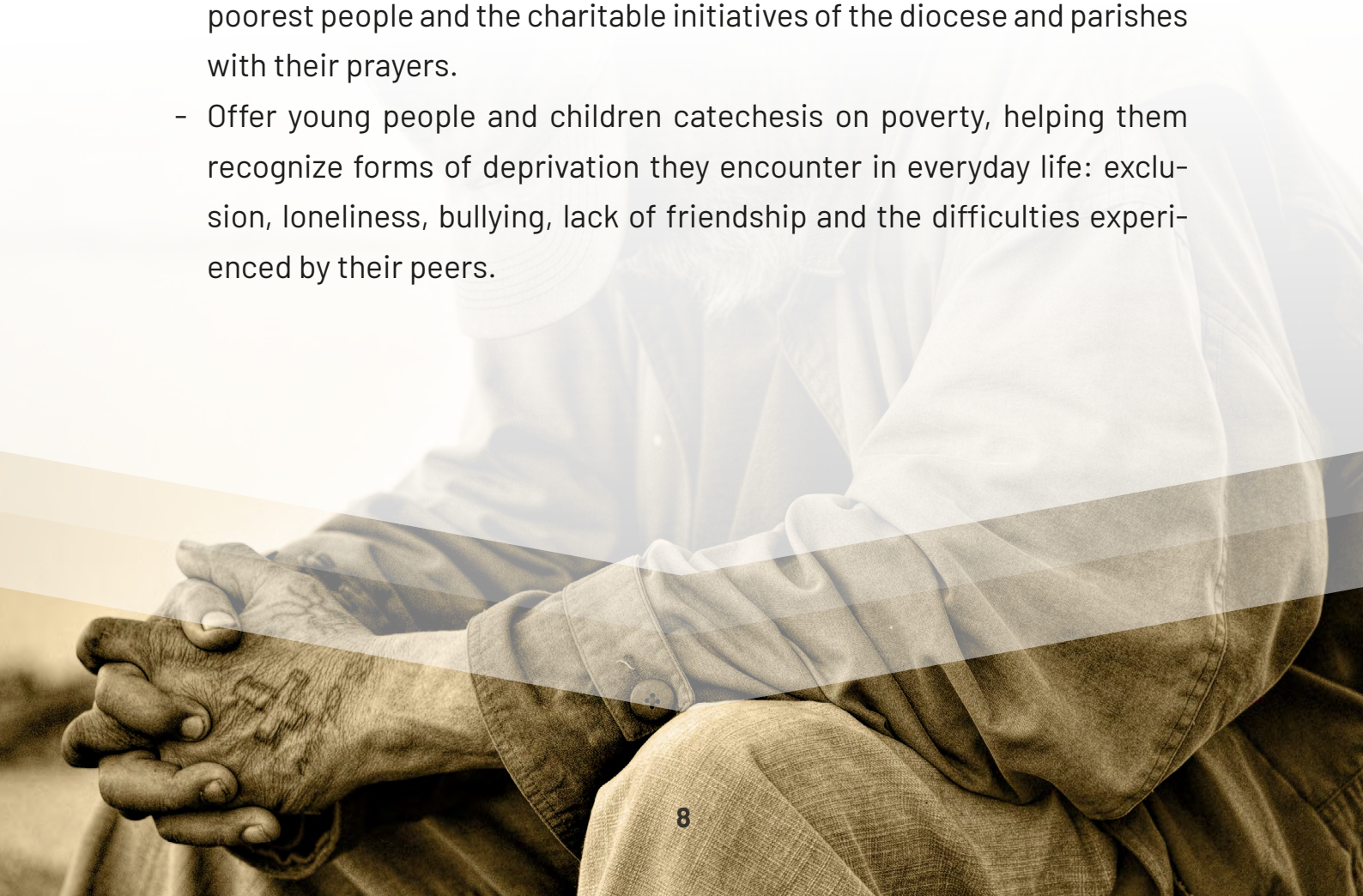
Poverty challenges not only the generosity of a few, but everyone's responsibility. It calls us to overcome indifference, recognize suffering that often remains hidden, and rediscover fraternity as an essential dimension of Christian life. The Lord becomes a refuge for the poor through the closeness of those who know how to stop, listen without judging and share what they have. Over these ten years, the Day has reminded us that encountering the poor is a calling addressed to the entire ecclesial community, whose authenticity is measured by concrete love.

The following are some actions to encourage in dioceses, parishes and

other communities. They can be adapted to the particular sensibilities and needs of each ecclesial setting, so that every Christian community may become a tangible sign of the refuge the Lord offers the poor.

Prepare through prayer:

- Make the week preceding the World Day of the Poor a special time, remembering in the intentions at weekday Masses the people and families experiencing poverty, loneliness and vulnerability.
- Organize a prayer vigil on the evening of Saturday, 14 November, involving volunteers from local charitable associations and groups, together with the people who receive their assistance.
- Arrange a communal period of Eucharistic adoration, meditating on Jesus' words: "Come to me, all you who labour and are burdened, and I will give you rest" (Mt 11:28). Entrust to the Lord all those without a home, a job, sufficient food, or family and friendship networks.
- Invite contemplative and cloistered communities to accompany the poorest people and the charitable initiatives of the diocese and parishes with their prayers.
- Offer young people and children catechesis on poverty, helping them recognize forms of deprivation they encounter in everyday life: exclusion, loneliness, bullying, lack of friendship and the difficulties experienced by their peers.



Live this out in the liturgy:

- On Sunday, 15 November, give prominence to the celebration of the 10th *World Day of the Poor* and use the homily to emphasize the invitation to recognize the Lord as the refuge of the poor and to make Christian communities welcoming places of fraternity.
- Invite people experiencing poverty to the Eucharistic celebration and, where appropriate and with respect for their sensitivities, involve them in the liturgical life of the community.
- Ask a parish charitable group to prepare the intentions for the Prayer of the Faithful, including the needs of those without a home, employment, education, food or healthcare.
- Prepare the offertory procession with signs expressing sharing and care for those most in need, possibly dedicating a special collection to the community's charitable works.
- Invite someone who has experienced poverty or been welcomed by others to share a brief testimony during the celebration or at another community gathering, so that their voice may increase awareness of the difficulties faced by our brothers and sisters.
- At the end of the celebration, give the faithful a Bible verse to keep and reflect on during the week, inviting them to turn prayer into daily acts of closeness and solidarity.

Put charity into action:

- Organize a community meal with people and families facing hardship, creating an opportunity to meet and share so that everyone can feel part of one family.
- Visit people who are lonely, older people, the sick, and those living in shelters or in their own homes without a network of relationships. Give them time, listen to them and offer friendly companionship.
- Organize a collection of food and essential goods, paying particular at-

tention to families with children, people who are ill and those who suddenly find themselves in financial difficulty.

- Together with local charitable services, identify people without safe accommodation and help connect them with shelters and the relevant support services.
- Offer practical support to people seeking work by making professional skills available, providing career guidance and helping them find training and employment opportunities.
- Pay attention to migrants, refugees and those arriving in a new city knowing no one, creating opportunities for encounter, friendship and participation in community life.
- Involve young people in volunteer initiatives that bring them into contact with people in vulnerable situations, teaching them to recognize every brother and sister as someone to welcome, listen to and respect.
- Get to know the associations and organizations working locally to support people in difficulty, and foster lasting collaboration so that identified needs can be addressed more effectively.
- Recognize the skills and gifts of people receiving assistance, involving them—according to their abilities and wishes—in community life and solidarity initiatives. Charity thus becomes an experience of fraternity in which everyone can both give and receive.
- Encourage families and parish groups to perform a concrete act of sharing during the week of the *World Day of the Poor*, such as visiting someone who is lonely, sharing a meal or accompanying a family in difficulty.



PRAYER VIGIL

3



10TH WORLD DAY OF THE POOR

"The Lord is a refuge for the poor"
(cf. Ps 14:6)

This vigil is intended as a moment of prayer in which a community offers to God all the work it undertakes throughout the year on behalf of people in need. It should not be regarded as a one-off event, a celebration held once a year simply because it has been requested. For this reason, the invitation to the vigil should be extended to all people of goodwill and to all communities that, in a parish or in society, devote themselves in various ways throughout the year to helping the poor in body and spirit.

This time of prayer is meant to show that both the beginning and the culmination of all our efforts on behalf of the poor are found in God, who inspires our hearts to care for our neighbours. We suggest a simple structure centred on listening to the Word of God. This proposal should then be adapted and inculturated according to local traditions.
The vigil may be celebrated with the Blessed Sacrament exposed.

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

If the vigil is to take place with the Blessed Sacrament exposed, the priest proceeds as usual. Once the faithful have gathered and a hymn has begun, the minister approaches the Tabernacle, takes the Blessed Sacrament and places it in the monstrance. Kneeling, the minister incenses the Blessed Sacrament. A hymn follows, then an introductory address such as the following:

C. For the tenth time, the universal Church is celebrating the *World Day Of The Poor*. This is a time to take stock, give thanks and reflect, so that we may renew our commitment to the poor with fresh strength after the efforts of recent months. We stand before the Lord, truly present in this Most Blessed Sacrament. His presence in this bread speaks to us of his poverty: though he was rich, he became poor for our sake (2 Cor 8:9). It also challenges us to recognize God's presence in every person we meet along the way, especially the littlest, the weakest and the most marginalized. Sustained by this certainty, let us live this moment of prayer—a humble prayer, like that of a beggar—with this cry in our hearts: "You, Lord, are a refuge for the poor."

R. O Sacrament most Holy, O Sacrament Divine, All praise and all thanksgiving, Be every moment Thine! (Repeat three times.)

A moment of silence

The Word of God

C. This evening, let us allow the Word of God to guide us. May it echo within us and illuminate our lives.

L. **Let us listen to the Word of the Lord from the First Letter of St John the Apostle** (1 Jn 3:16–18).

The way we came to know love was that he laid down his life for us; so we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. If someone who has worldly means sees a brother in need and refuses him compassion, how can the love of God remain in him? Children, let us love not in word or speech but in deed and truth.

From Psalm 70 (71)

R. ***You are my hope, O Lord.***

In you, Lord, I take refuge;
let me never be put to shame.
In your justice rescue and deliver me;
listen to me and save me! R.

Be my rock of refuge,
my stronghold to give me safety;
for you are my rock and fortress.
My God, rescue me from the hand of the wicked,
from the clutches of the evil and violent. R.

You are my hope, Lord;
my trust, God, from my youth.
On you I have depended since birth;
from my mother's womb you are my strength. R.

My mouth will tell of your righteousness,
of your salvation all day long.
God, you have taught me from my youth;
to this day I proclaim your wondrous deeds. R.

It would be appropriate for someone present to share a testimony about their service to the poor, emphasizing its spiritual dimension. Alternatively, one of the following passages could be used for communal reflection.

L. **From the *Message* of Pope Leo XIV for the 10th World Day of the Poor** (*No. 3*)

That God is their refuge is not merely a promise; it becomes a reality in the person of Jesus Christ. God dwells among us through the Incarnation of the Son, who makes concrete and visible the refuge for which we hope. Jesus Christ is truly God's refuge for the poor. Through his obedience to the Father, he descends to the lowest point, where the least of these are found. He reaches out to everyone and offers each a safe refuge: "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest" (*Mt* 11:28). In Jesus, God not only protects but shares in human poverty all the way to the cross.

The poor of our day are the forgotten and the marginalized: robbed not only of bread, but also of a voice and a face. May they encounter the Son of God, who draws near to everyone without neglecting anyone. May they encounter him, first and foremost, in those who call themselves Christians. In the Church, his Body, it is Jesus who offers bread and friendship; he brings light and opens a horizon of hope; he calls each person by name and

restores dignity to all. Jesus of Nazareth is God's gift to the poor. In him, all promises become reality. For those who lack a home, a job, education, food or good health, a new path opens: sharing as an expression of the Kingdom of God (cf. *Mt* 5:3). The obsession of those who accumulate wealth only for themselves is opposed by God's steadfastness which, through the witness of real people, opens hearts and welcomes all into his love.

L. **From the *Message* of Pope Leo XIV for the 10th World Day of the Poor** (*No. 4*)

Certain questions inevitably arise, and on this 10th World Day of the Poor, we urgently need to let them resonate in our minds and hearts. Are we a sign of a God who is a refuge for the poor? Are we aware of our own poverty, and do we prefer it to unjust wealth? Do we go where the poor are, experiencing their marginalization? Do we listen to their thoughts and share their hopes? Do we speak their names with divine tenderness? Does our charity reawaken and sustain in them the desire for justice and redemption? These and many other questions call for a serious examination of conscience, to assess how much more we are called to do on behalf of the poor and for their liberation. Then we will see that the poor themselves become a refuge for others. The experience of poverty makes them particularly sensitive to a renewed solidarity in the face of challenges.
Christ's love, in fact, makes us sharers in God's life of love. In this sense, Christians are called not only to seek refuge in God, but also to become a refuge for others in God, "not to distinguish between those who assist and those who are assisted, between those who seem to give and those who seem to receive, between those who appear poor and those who feel they offer time, skills and help. We are the Lord's Church, a Church of the poor, all precious, all individuals, each one a bearer of a unique Word of God. Each one is a gift for the others."

After a moment of silence for personal reflection, a hymn may be sung.

Community Prayer

C. Let us cry out to the Lord in prayer, asking for mercy and compassion because we have caused and ignored situations of poverty. Let us pray:

R. **Kyrie eleison.**

L. For faces marked by pain, we implore you. R.
L. For faces marked by marginalization, we implore you. R.
L. For faces marked by abuse, we implore you. R.
L. For faces marked by violence, we implore you. R.
L. For faces marked by torture, we implore you. R.
L. For faces marked by imprisonment, we implore you. R.
L. For faces marked by war, we implore you. R.
L. For faces marked by the deprivation of freedom, we implore you. R.
L. For faces marked by the deprivation of dignity, we implore you. R.
L. For faces marked by ignorance, we implore you. R.
L. For faces marked by illiteracy, we implore you. R.
L. For faces marked by health emergencies, we implore you. R.
L. For faces marked by unemployment, we implore you. R.
L. For faces marked by human trafficking and slavery, we implore you. R.
L. For faces marked by exile, we implore you. R.
L. For faces marked by misery, we implore you. R.
L. For faces marked by forced migration, we implore you. R.
L. For the faces of women, men and children exploited for vile interests, we implore you. R.
L. For faces trampled by the perverse logic of power, we implore you. R.
L. For faces trampled by the perverse logic of money, we implore you. R.

Invocations to Our Lady of the Poor

L. Virgin of the Poor. R. Lead us to Jesus, the source of grace.
L. Virgin of the Poor. R. Save the nations.
L. Virgin of the Poor. R. Bring relief to the sick.
L. Virgin of the Poor. R. Ease suffering.

L. Virgin of the Poor. R. Pray for each one of us.
L. Virgin of the Poor. R. We believe in you.
L. Virgin of the Poor. R. Believe in us.
L. Virgin of the Poor. R. We will pray fervently.
L. Virgin of the Poor. R. Grant us your blessing.
L. Virgin of the Poor. R. Mother of the Saviour, Mother of God, thank you!

C. Virgin of the Poor, we present our intentions to you, asking you to intercede with the Lord and obtain for us, according to his will and through your maternal intercession, every grace and blessing.
R. Amen.

Our Father

C. When the disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray, he answered with the words of the poor, who turn to the one Father in whom all recognize one another as brothers and sisters. Let us therefore pray together (singing): **Our Father...**

Eucharistic Blessing

At the end of adoration, the priest or deacon approaches the altar. The *Tantum Ergo* or another suitable hymn is sung. Meanwhile, the minister kneels and incenses the Blessed Sacrament. Then he rises and says:

Let us pray.

Lord Jesus Christ,
who in the wondrous sacrament of the Eucharist
have left us the memorial of your Passover;
grant that we may adore with living faith
the holy mystery of your Body and Blood,
that we may always feel in ourselves us the benefits of redemption.
You are God, who live and reign with God the Father,

in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
forever and ever.
R. Amen.

The presider gives the blessing with the Blessed Sacrament.

Acclamations

If desired, after the Eucharistic blessing the following acclamations may be said, according to local custom:

Blessed be God.
Blessed be his holy Name.
Blessed be Jesus Christ, true God and true man.
Blessed be the Name of Jesus.
Blessed be his most Sacred Heart.
Blessed be his most Precious Blood.
Blessed be Jesus in the most holy Sacrament of the altar.
Blessed be the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete.
Blessed be the great Mother of God, Mary most holy.
Blessed be her holy and Immaculate Conception.
Blessed be her glorious Assumption.
Blessed be the name of Mary, Virgin and Mother.
Blessed be Saint Joseph, her most chaste spouse.
Blessed be God in his Angels and in his Saints.

Reposition

After the blessing, the priest or deacon who gave it, or another priest or deacon, places the Blessed Sacrament back in the Tabernacle and genuflects. As the Blessed Sacrament is returned to the Tabernacle, a Marian antiphon such as the Salve Regina, or another suitable hymn, is sung.

TESTIMONIES

4



10TH WORLD DAY OF THE POOR

"The Lord is a refuge for the poor"
(cf. Ps 14:6)



"Dear brothers and sisters and friends who are welcomed here, may you know that the Church loves you deeply and does not abandon you, for she recognizes in each one of your faces the Face of Jesus. He chose to identify very particularly with those in conditions of poverty and wretchedness. The witness of charity, practised here in a special way, is part of the Church›s mission, together with the proclamation of the truth of the Gospel."

Benedict XVI
Address at Termini Station
14 February 2010

Being There: The Value of Presence

*A testimony inspired by the experience of **Benigno Passagrilli**, volunteer with the Society of St. Vincent de Paul*

I have been volunteering with the Society of St. Vincent de Paul for twenty-five years. Along the way, I have involved my family as well, and they have become active participants in this service. It is an experience that helps us see life with a different awareness: what we have is a free gift from God, to be shared with our less fortunate brothers and sisters. Volunteering means giving time to others, but above all learning to stand beside them, without judging or feeling superior.

I remember a man I used to see every morning outside a church near my workplace. He was always sitting on the same step, shivering, with unkempt hair, a long beard and wrinkled clothes. I would stop and talk with him, listening each day as he told me something about himself. There was no need for grand speeches. It was enough to stop, give him a few minutes

and let him know that someone noticed he was there.
One morning I found him changed: he was clean-shaven, neatly dressed and had combed his hair. I asked him what had happened. In tears, he told me that he had been offered a job and had started taking care of himself again. Then he lowered his eyes, looked at me and said, "You see, I'm a man too... a handsome man!" There was something deeply moving in those words. He had rediscovered the desire to see himself differently, recognize his own worth and begin again.
From that day on, I never saw him sitting on that step again. Whenever I pass by, his face comes back to me. I miss him a little, but I am happy for him. This experience helped me understand even more clearly how important it is not to turn away. We cannot always solve every problem, but we can listen, lend a hand and help someone regain confidence. Poverty is not overcome simply by giving something: we must restore dignity, build relationships and accompany people so that they can get back on their feet and regain their independence. Being there means precisely this: leaving no one alone and helping everyone feel that their life matters.

The Paradox of Twelve Kilometres

*Testimony by **Pavlo Paskov**, refugee and Caritas volunteer*

When I first walked through the door of the soup kitchen, I was a refugee. I was someone whose life had almost been stripped of everything. My home, my job, the friends I spent weekends with and any sense of security about tomorrow were gone. My life had split into a before and an after, leaving an emptiness that cannot be filled in a short time.
My family was the anchor that kept me from losing myself completely. When you have children, you cannot afford to collapse. We did everything we could to ensure they felt the burden of forced migration as little as possible: new routines, new places, new reasons to smile. War teaches us many things, but perhaps the hardest lesson is learning to accept help

from others. Sometimes that is even harder than helping.

The soup kitchen was a lifeline for me. It restored my sense that I could still be useful. When everything around you is new, when you have no friends and your life has been turned upside down, even a simple service can become something to lean on. You find people, responsibilities and a reason to get up in the morning. Over time I joined the team of volunteers and began to understand that human tragedies are far more numerous than I had imagined. War is only one reason why someone may find themselves on the other side of the serving counter. Some have lost their jobs, others their families or health, and some have simply lost the strength to get back up.

One day my car broke down. I could have missed my shift, but I had already missed a service a few weeks earlier. So I decided to walk: twelve kilometres. When I arrived, all I could think about was how I would get home. My legs hurt. Then the service began: the queue, the requests, the complaints, a few harsh words. For the first time in a long while, I did not feel compassion but irritation. I caught myself thinking, "How is this possible? We are doing all this for you, and this is how you respond to us?"

At that very moment, I felt ashamed. I had walked only twelve kilometres. I was tired for one day, and that evening I would still return home to my family. The next day, my life would resume its usual course. But what can we say about someone who has lived with uncertainty for months, who does not know where they will sleep tomorrow and who has spent years feeling that they are no longer useful to anyone?

From that day on, my view of volunteering changed. On the other side of the counter there is not necessarily a rude or ungrateful person. There is a person whose pain, at least for a moment, has overwhelmed them. For me, volunteering means learning to see the person beyond their behaviour, not answering irritation with more irritation, and keeping a humane outlook even when it is difficult. The hardest thing is not preparing one more meal or taking another shift. It is continuing to see the person, even when their pain speaks louder than they do.

My First Home in Italy

*Testimony by **Pauline**, a migrant from Cameroon*

When I arrived at *Centro Astalli*, what struck me first was the way I was welcomed. Outside, many men were queuing to receive a meal. They let me go ahead and explained that women did not have to wait in that line. At first I was surprised, but then I understood that the gesture was telling me something: here, I could feel safe.

I come from Cameroon and live alone in Italy. There are many difficulties, and starting life over in another country is not easy, especially when your family is not beside you. Sometimes you do not know whom to turn to, where to find information or how to deal with a problem. At times you need practical help; at other times, you simply need someone to listen.

Before long, the dining hall at *Centro Astalli* became my home. I do not come only to eat. I come when I have a problem, when I need information or when I need to know whom to ask for help. Sometimes I stop by just to greet people I know. Here I have found friends, people who help me and whom I can ask for advice. I have found a community.

For me, a home is made of more than walls. It is made of people who greet you, smile at you, shake your hand and remember you. It is a place where you are not a stranger, where someone recognizes your face and notices when you return. When you live alone and face many difficulties, these gestures become very important.

Today, I hope to find a stable job with a proper contract and to build my future with greater peace of mind. I know the road is not easy, but I also know how important it is not to feel abandoned. When someone is far from their homeland, they need more than a meal or material assistance. They need a place where they feel welcomed, respected and recognized. For me, *Centro Astalli* has become that place: my first home in Italy.

THE EXAMPLE OF ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI

5



10TH WORLD DAY OF THE POOR

"The Lord is a refuge for the poor"
(cf. Ps 14:6)

Who could adequately describe this man's compassion for the poor? He was naturally kind-hearted, but the charity bestowed on him from above made him doubly so. Francis's heart therefore melted at the sight of the poor, and when he could not give them a helping hand, he at least offered them his affection. Whatever need or hardship he saw in others, he quickly turned his thoughts to Christ entrusting them to him. Thus, in every poor person he recognized the Son of the poor Madonna, and he bore naked in his heart the One whom she had carried naked in her arms.

Although he had cast every form of envy far from himself, he could not escape the one envy he felt for poverty. If he saw someone poorer than himself, he immediately felt a kind of jealousy, fearing, in their contest of poverty, that the other might surpass him. Once, while preaching, he met a poor man on the road. Seeing his nakedness, Francis turned sorrowfully to his companion and said, "The misery of this man brings us great shame and severely reproaches our own poverty."

"Why, brother?" his companion asked. The saint replied sadly, "I have chosen poverty as my wealth and my bride, yet here it shines more brightly in this man. Do you not know that the fame has spread throughout the world that we are the poorest for love of Christ? But this poor man shows us that it is not so." O envy such as has never been seen! O emulation worthy of imitation by all his children! This is not the envy that resents another's possessions or grows gloomy in the sunlight. It is not the envy that opposes compassion and twists with bitterness. Or do you think that evangelical poverty has nothing to inspire envy? It possesses Christ, and through him possesses everything in all things.

On another day, while Francis was preaching, a poor man who was also ill was present. Moved by compassion for this double misfortune—poverty and sickness—Francis began speaking with his companion about poverty. His pity for the suffering man had already become heartfelt affection

when his companion interrupted him: "Yes, brother, he is poor, but perhaps there is no one in the whole region richer in desires." The saint immediately rebuked him and ordered the companion, who was confessing his fault, "Quickly, take off your tunic, kneel at the poor man's feet and openly confess your fault. You must not only ask his forgiveness, but also insist that he pray for you!" The friar obeyed, and when he returned after completing his penance, the saint said to him: "When you see a poor person, brother, you are being shown a mirror of the Lord and his poor Mother. Likewise, in the sick you must consider the sufferings he took upon himself for us!" Truly, Francis always carried that little bundle of myrrh close to his heart; he always gazed upon the face of his Christ and remained close to the Man of Sorrows, who knows all suffering!

(Tommaso of Celano, *Second Life*)



6

PRAYER INSPIRED BY THE MESSAGE OF POPE LEO XIV FOR THE 10TH WORLD DAY OF THE POOR

O Lord Jesus Christ, refuge of the poor and consolation of the afflicted, gathered around your Table, we give you thanks because in you God draws near to every person and shares our poverty even to the cross. You who invite all who labour and are burdened to come to you, teach us to recognize your face in our forgotten, humiliated and excluded brothers and sisters, deprived not only of bread but also of their voice and dignity.

We thank you for all those in the Church and in society who draw near to the poor, sharing bread and friendship with them, listening to their hopes and supporting their desire for justice. Make us capable of overcoming indifference and the throwaway culture, so that our communities may become welcoming homes for all, where everyone is called by name, recognized in their dignity and welcomed as a gift. May we not limit ourselves to speaking about the poor, but learn to listen to them and walk alongside them, recognizing the richness of their faith and hope.

O Holy Spirit, love of the Father and the Son, convert our hearts and free us from the selfish pursuit of wealth, arrogance and every form of domination. Teach us to recognize our own poverty and to choose the path of humility and fraternity. May we, following Christ's example, become a refuge for those seeking protection, bread, work, education and consolation, so that no one feels abandoned and all may experience the joy of being loved by God and welcomed by their brothers and sisters.

O Mary, Mother of Mercy, You who contemplated in the crucified humanity of your Son the love of God who fills the hungry with good things, accompany us on our journey of conversion and service. Teach us to keep the cry of the poor in our hearts and to recognize in them a favoured presence of the Lord. May we, following the example of St Francis of Assisi, approach them with humility and joy, sharing their lives and helping to build a more just and fraternal world. Amen.



“The Church, if she wants to be Christ’s Church, must be a Church of the Beatitudes,
one that makes room for the little ones and walks poor with the poor,
a place where the poor have a privileged place.”

Leo PP. XIV

10TH WORLD DAY OF THE POOR



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