

Parish News from Caritas Westminster

Diocese of Westminster 'Love in Action' Volunteering Awards 2022

Having just celebrated the Platinum Jubilee of one who has lived a life of service, and at the same time, marked Volunteers Week, we are pleased to launch this year's Volunteering Awards!

We invite you to nominate the special volunteer(s) in your parish or community for an award.

This year's categories for nominations are:

1. School Social Outreach Award
2. Parish Social Outreach Award
3. Outstanding Service to the Parish Award
4. Young Volunteer of the Year Award
5. Charity Partner Volunteer Award
6. Lifetime Achievement Award

More information and the nomination form can be found

here: <https://www.caritasvs.org.uk/volunteering-awards-2022.php>

Anyone can nominate individual volunteers or volunteer teams. You can submit several nominations in the same or different categories.

The nominated volunteers must volunteer within the Diocese of Westminster. Nominated volunteers do not have to be Catholic. The awards are open to people of all faiths and none.

Nominations close on 20 July 2022.

Following last year's first volunteering awards - online - we are thrilled to announce that this year's Awards Ceremony will be held in person.

Save the date: RCDOW 'Love in Action' Volunteering Awards, 17th November 2022, 6.30 pm - 9 pm, Westminster Cathedral Hall.

Financial Resilience and Cost of Living

This information is also available as a separate attachment, for ease of reference

Martin Lewis, the Money Saving Expert, provides information about the recently announced cost of living support package. His website is regularly updated with this and other topical issues, and you can sign up for free weekly email round-ups

<https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/news/2022/05/rishi-sunak-martin-lewis-living-costs/>

Cost of Living Hub

Provided by the London Assembly, but relevant to those outside the capital as well, this portal helps people access information, support and advice about claiming benefits, dealing with debt, financial management and mental health support. To explore the hub, please visit <https://www.london.gov.uk/cost-living-hub>

One-stop information for people in Herts

Useful links and resources for people living in Herts

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/about-the-council/news/news-archive/help-to-manage-the-cost-of-living>

HertsHelp

Call 0300 123 4044 to speak to an adviser, email info@hertshelp.net or visit <https://www.hertshelp.net/hertshelp.aspx>

Surrey Community Helpline

For signposting to the relevant local help and support:

- Community Helpline on 0300 200 1008 which is open Monday to Friday from 9am until 5pm.
- SMS 0786 0053 465 for deaf and hearing-impaired residents only (Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm).

Grants to help pay off energy debts

People who are in debt to their energy supplier might be able to get a grant from a charitable trust to help pay it off.

More details on this link – plus links to several advice providers

<https://fuelpovertyresource.org.uk/focus-on/fuel-debt-and-trust-funds/>

National Energy Action

Their Warm and Safe Homes helpline, 0800 304 7159 is open daily, 10am-12pm, to support clients with energy advice around topics such as reducing energy consumption, Warm Home Discount and Priority Services Register, fuel debt, water rates and benefits advice.

Green Doctors London

A charity that offers free and impartial energy advice to help residents stay warm, save money and live greener <https://london.greendoctors.org.uk>

- Is this information helpful to you, your parish team and your parishioners?
- Would you prefer to receive more, different information or in another format?
- Please contact Sr Silvana to discuss this further: silvanadallanegra@rcdow.org.uk

Learning Disability Awareness Week

This takes place 20th-26th June, and is a good time to consider if your parish is doing all it can to welcome and involve those with learning disabilities, including supporting young people in sacramental preparation. We can offer support by way of training in the use of the Symbols of Faith resource – contact Gail Williams at Caritas St Joseph's: gailwilliams@rcdow.org.uk or phone: 020 8202 3999.

Community meals at schools and parishes with FoodCycle

We would like to share a potential partnership opportunity for parishes and schools with the charity [FoodCycle](#).

For those who aren't familiar with FoodCycle, they are a charity who source (surplus) food, recruit volunteers, cook, and manage free three course community meals across the UK. These meals take place once a week and many of them in church and school halls. We are delighted that a dining project exists with FoodCycle at Our Lady of Fatima Church, White City, and would love to support more. There is no cost to parishes or schools for this service, all that is needed is a kitchen and dining space. FoodCycle additionally helps with purchasing any cooking equipment that may be needed, as well as managing the community meal every week. And, don't worry – they also clear up fully after every event.

The charity has multiple dining hubs in London and is particularly interested to set up new projects in Brent, but is keen to hear from any parish or school in the diocese who may be interested. Please get in touch with Caritas Project Lead for Food, Niki Psarias nikipsarias@rcdow.org.uk

Stepping Stones – supporting people back into work

Caritas Westminster is partnering with Homelessness Charity The Upper Room to deliver a training course for those working with people who are homeless or otherwise struggling and finding it hard to get dignified, decently paid work. The course started last month, but we would still welcome more attendees if anyone in your parish community would be able to make use of this learning. The next session is on Monday 13th at 5:30pm online. Please contact Meriel Woodward merielwoodward@rcdow.org.uk

Upcoming Events

Refugee Hosting - In-Person Information Session

Tue, 28 June 2022 18:00 – 20:30 - Jesuit Refugee Service, Wapping

This information session is for anyone who is hosting, would like to host or explore further ways of providing support to those who are seeking sanctuary.

In this session you will:

- Be introduced to the Community of Support
- Meet others who are on the hosting journey or are interested in what support of people seeking sanctuary could look like.
- Learn about best practice with regards to hosting.
- Learn more about the current 'Homes for Ukraine' context.
- Discern further ways of welcoming and responding.
- Share experiences and ask questions.

Find out more and sign up on Eventbrite: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/refugee-hosting-in-person-information-session-tickets-353809833737?aff=ebdsoporgprofile>

Diocese of Westminster Caritas Food Collective – co-working and productivity session

Tuesday 12th July 2022, 11:00 - 12:30- online

An opportunity for all parishes, schools, and community groups in the diocese, who run a food project or would like to, to come together for a co-working session.

Find out more and sign up on Eventbrite: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/diocese-of-westminster-caritas-food-collective-tickets-251170817677?aff=ebdsoporgprofile>