

**PARISHES OF SAINT MARY'S AND OUR LADY'S  
CUMBRAE, FAIRLIE, LARGS & SKELMORLIE**



**TEN REASONS TO HOPE AND TO STIR HOPE  
IN THE WORLD TODAY**

**As given by Pope Francis in the document  
“Hope does not disappoint” (*Spes non confundit*)  
with which he convoked the Jubilee Year of 2025**

**REASON NUMBER NINE:**

**“THE GOODS OF THE EARTH ARE NOT DESTINED FOR THE  
PRIVILEGED FEW, BUT FOR EVERYONE.”  
For your prayer, reflection and action  
throughout November 2025**

THE WORDS OF POPE FRANCIS, RIP

‘Echoing the age-old message of the prophets, the Jubilee reminds us that the goods of the earth are not destined for a privileged few, but for everyone. The rich must be generous and not avert their eyes from the faces of their brothers and sisters in need. Here I think especially of those who lack water and food: hunger is a scandal, an open wound on the body of our humanity, and it summons all of us to a serious examination of conscience. I renew my appeal that “with the money spent on weapons and other military expenditures, let us establish a global fund that can

finally put an end to hunger and favour development in the most impoverished countries, so that their citizens will not resort to violent or illusory situations, or have to leave their countries in order to seek a more dignified life”. [Fratelli Tutti, n.262]

‘Another heartfelt appeal that I would make in light of the coming Jubilee is directed to the more affluent nations. I ask that they acknowledge the gravity of so many of their past decisions and determine to forgive the debts of countries that will never be able to repay them. More than a question of generosity, this is a matter of justice. It is made all the more serious today by a new form of injustice which we increasingly recognize, namely, that “a true ‘ecological debt’ exists, particularly between the global North and South, connected to commercial imbalances with effects on the environment and the disproportionate use of natural resources by certain countries over long periods of time”. [Laudato Si’, n.51] As sacred Scripture teaches, the earth is the Lord’s and all of us dwell in it as “aliens and tenants” ( Lev 25:23). If we really wish to prepare a path to peace in our world, let us commit ourselves to remedying the remote causes of injustice, settling unjust and unpayable debts, and feeding the hungry.’ (*Spes Non Confundit*, par.16).

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## REFLECTING ON THE POPE’S WORDS

St. Ambrose once said that when you give the poor what they need to survive and live in basic human dignity, you are not doing them a favour: you are giving them what in justice is theirs. While private property of all kinds is a basic human right, it is not absolute. In the face of all of the old and new forms of poverty we looked at last month, the accumulation of wealth in all its forms becomes fundamentally unjust and harmful in the face of rank poverty. The harm of injustice is not just done to those who lack what is necessary to live in dignity: more harm is done to those who cling to their wealth for it will be their condemnation on the day of judgment (cf. Mt.25). Institutionalized injustice in this context, and on a massive scale, are numerous, but one which cries out to heaven is the crushing burden of foreign debt which weighs on many poor and underdeveloped nations with *no chance* of repaying it. “I was in debt, and you relieved me of it”, Jesus himself might well have said.

## THE WORD OF GOD ON JUST DISTRIBUTION OF WEALTH

1 John 3:17: “But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him?”

Matthew 19:21: “Jesus said to him, “If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.”

1 Timothy 6:17-19: “As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life.”

## SAINTS WHO DISTRIBUTED THEIR OWN WEALTH TO THE POOR

St. Zélie Guérin Martin (1831-1877): The mother of St. Thérèse of Lisieux, Zélie Martin was a wife, craftswoman and business owner, and mother of nine children (five of whom survived early childhood). Not only did she raise a doctor of the Church, but Zélie was also a devout Catholic, a third order Franciscan, and a kind boss. She worked hard to pay her workers well, visited them when they were ill, and took seriously her responsibility as an employer. She and her husband, St. Louis Martin, were also very charitable, taking people in who needed care and giving their time and money to the poor.

St. Katharine Drexel (1858-1955): “Ours is the spirit of the Eucharist, the total gift of self.” Katharine was the daughter of a wealthy American banker and philanthropist who taught her “that wealth was meant to be shared with those in need,” according to the website of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, the order she founded. Katherine’s stepmother, Emma, opened their home three days each week to serve the poor and taught Katharine and her sisters to do the same. According to the Philanthropy Roundtable, the family “gave roughly the equivalent of \$11 million to charitable causes annually.”

## POPE FRANCIS' NINE COMMANDMENTS FOR A JUST ECONOMY

1. He asked “the great pharmaceutical laboratories to release the patents” of the Covid-19 vaccines.
2. He called on financial groups and international credit institutions “to allow poor countries to assure ‘the basic needs of their people’ and to cancel those debts that so often are contracted against the interests of those same peoples.”
3. He pleaded with “the great extractive industries—mining, oil, forestry, real estate, agribusiness—to stop destroying forests, wetlands and mountains, to stop polluting rivers and seas, to stop poisoning food and people.”
4. He called on the great food corporations “to stop imposing monopolistic systems of production and distribution that inflate prices and end up withholding bread from the hungry.”
5. He appealed to arms manufacturers and dealers “to completely stop their activity” because, he said, “it foments violence and war, it contributes to those awful geopolitical games which cost millions of lives displaced and millions dead.”
6. He pleaded with “the technology giants to stop exploiting human weakness, people’s vulnerability, for the sake of profits without caring about the spread of hate speech, grooming, fake news, conspiracy theories, and political manipulation.”
7. He asked “the telecommunications giants to ease access to educational material and connectivity for teachers via the internet so that poor children can be educated even under quarantine.”
8. He called on “the media to stop the logic of post-truth, disinformation, defamation, slander and the unhealthy attraction to dirt and scandal, and to contribute to human fraternity and empathy with those who are most deeply damaged.”
9. He appealed to powerful countries “to stop aggression, blockades and unilateral sanctions against any country anywhere on earth” and said, “No to neo-colonialism.” He called for the resolution of conflicts to be done in multilateral fora like the United Nations.

## LET US PRAY

Lord Jesus, all things come from and return to You. You give them to all for the benefit of all. May your Spirit open minds, hearts and hands to cherish the humanity of the other and to serve their needs and their dignity. May no-one die in worldly wealth but with no charity in their hearts. Amen.