

# JUBILEE REFLECTION

## Leader's notes



The Jubilee reflection guide is designed to help you, and your community celebrate the 2025 Jubilee Year – a significant moment in the life of the Church. Whether you're a seasoned group leader or new to facilitating discussions, this guide offers practical tools and inspiring reflections. And the best part? All the information you need is right here in your leader's notes.

## QUICK START GUIDE

### 1. Decide

Choose how many sessions to run. The reflection guide contains four sessions of around one hour each, exploring a different aspect of the Jubilee Year. The first session is a good starting point and can be used on its own. If you want to delve deeper, consider running all four sessions. You will know what will work best for your parish or community. Set a date, place and time for the gathering(s).

### 2. Publicise

One of the best ways of promoting the Jubilee reflection sessions will be through personal contact and invitation. You could also advertise on social media, perhaps by setting up an event page, and in Church newsletters (see box). A sign-up table at the back of Church can be useful to take registrations and answer any questions.

#### For your Church newsletter

2025 Jubilee Year reflection gathering(s)

Are you wondering what the 2025 Jubilee Year is all about? Join us as we explore the biblical background to the Jubilee Year and what the theme Pilgrims of Hope means for us today. We'll be meeting at (location) at (time) for the first of four/ a one off gathering(s). For more information/ or to register please contact (insert names and contact details)

### 3. Prepare

- Make any necessary practical arrangements for booking and preparing a suitable meeting place, providing refreshments if desired.
- Make sure you have enough participants' booklets for your group. These can be downloaded from the SCIAF website: [sciaf.org.uk/resources](http://sciaf.org.uk/resources).
- Take time to familiarise yourself with the shape of each session before it begins. Take a look at what appears in the leader's notes and how it works with the participant's guide. Check you have everything needed for that session from the list that appears at the beginning.

### 4. Don't worry

Sometimes the printer won't work, or discussion goes on longer or shorter than expected. Don't worry! Be flexible and adjust the material to suit your group and circumstances.

### 5. Be inspired

There are lots of ways your parish can journey with SCIAF during this Jubilee Year. Find out more by emailing us [getinvolved@sciaf.org.uk](mailto:getinvolved@sciaf.org.uk)

# JUBILEE REFLECTION

## Leader's notes

*Thank you for facilitating these Jubilee reflection sessions with your group. We hope you enjoy the experience of leading and participating and wish you every blessing in your Jubilee journey.*

### Music

Music can powerfully connect us to God. We would suggest the beginning and/or end of each session as a good time to sing together, if you think this will work with your group. You could also play gentle music at times of personal reflection or small group discussion.

Below are some suggestions of hymns you may wish to sing together or listen to during your Jubilee gatherings. It is not exhaustive so please do feel free to use other hymns or songs you feel will work well with the themes of the sessions.

#### General/Session 1

- He sent me to give the Good News to the poor (Go tell everyone)
- Give me joy in my heart
- Our God reigns

#### Session 2 and 3

- The Lord hears the cry of the poor
- O let all who thirst
- All who are thirsty (Brenton Brown)
- Dans nos obscurité, Taizé

#### Session 4

- How great thou art
- All creatures of our God and King
- Laudato si' o mi Signore
- What a wonderful world (Louis Armstrong)

## SESSION 1: JESUS OF THE JUBILEE

*Before this session, you will need to make sure you have enough copies of the participants' booklets for everyone who will attend and ask people to be readers, making sure they know which section is theirs to read aloud.*

*The leader's notes contain both material from the participants' guide and script/suggestions designed to guide you as the facilitator. You may find it useful to have a participants' guide on hand also.*

*You might also consider providing pens for participants to use during final section of the session.*

**Leader:** Welcome to our [first] Jubilee reflection session.

As we start our session today, I'd just like you all to introduce yourselves. Then share what comes to your mind when you hear the word Jubilee.

*You can encourage people to discuss in pairs and/or to share with the wider group. Listen to all the answers and thank people for their contributions.*

**Leader:** We are now going to watch a short video to explain a little bit more about the Biblical origins of Jubilee and what a Jubilee year is.

[sciaf.org.uk/jubilee](http://sciaf.org.uk/jubilee)

**Watch video here.**

# JUBILEE REFLECTION

## Leader's notes

*If you don't have the facilities to share the video with your group, you can read the transcript below aloud. Or ask another member of the group to do so from the participants' booklet.*

### 2025 is a Year of Jubilee!

The word 'Jubilee' comes from the Hebrew word for a ram's horn, which was blown to announce the start of a Jubilee year in the Bible.

In the Old Testament, the Jubilee year was a time of renewal and celebration. Debts were cancelled, people could rest, and because crops weren't planted, even the land was able to rest.

It was also a time of freedom: prisoners and slaves were freed, and land was given to those who didn't have any. It was known as the year of the Lord's favour.

In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus read from the prophet Isaiah.

*"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,  
because he has anointed me  
to proclaim good news to the poor.  
He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives  
and recovering of sight to the blind,  
to set at liberty those who are oppressed,  
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour."*

Jesus makes it clear that his mission is to bring the justice and freedom of the Jubilee. Inspired by his example, we can share in his mission to create a world of justice, peace and love.

Now we celebrate a Jubilee every 25 years. It's still a very special, holy, year of forgiveness and mercy, a time to reset, to renew our relationship with God, with one another, and with all of creation.

Pope Francis has called this Jubilee Year 'Pilgrims of Hope'. It is an invitation to renew our hope, a hope which comes from knowing that God loves each one of us, whoever we are. Pope Francis says: "Pilgrimage is of course a fundamental element of every Jubilee event. Setting out on a journey is traditionally associated with our human quest for meaning in life." Even if we can't travel far away, the Jubilee Year will still be a journey for all of us – a journey of hope.

Pope Francis asks us to be signs of hope for others, by putting Catholic Social Teaching into action through caring for our common home, and supporting our sisters and brothers who are experiencing war, hunger or poverty.

We know that the world is facing many of these challenges... but you are one of millions of people who are joining together in the Jubilee Year to bring the light of hope and the message of God's love to every part of the world!

We can all be Pilgrims of Hope, so let's start our journey right now! Pope Francis says: "By our actions, our words, the decisions we make each day, our patient efforts to sow seeds of beauty and kindness wherever we find ourselves, we want to sing of hope... and reawaken in every heart the joy and courage to embrace life to the full."

*Once the video is over continue:*

**Leader:** We will now listen again to the passage from Luke's Gospel, in which Jesus talks of himself as the fulfilment of the Jubilee after which we'll have a short pause for reflection.

**Reader 1:** Luke 4:16-21

Jesus came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read. And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written,

## JUBILEE REFLECTION

### Leader's notes

*"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,  
because he has anointed me  
to proclaim good news to the poor.  
He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives  
and recovering of sight to the blind,  
to set at liberty those who are oppressed,  
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour."*

And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. And he began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." Once the reading has finished, pause for a moment of quiet reflection.

**Leader:** Inspired by this piece of Scripture, SCIAF's sister agency in England and Wales, CAFOD have commissioned a Jubilee icon. Mulugeta Araya is an artist and an engineer who studied at St Mary's College, Wukro in Ethiopia. St Mary's offers vocational training in agriculture, information technology and accounting, as well as the arts. The college also takes part in social development programmes to improve food security, the supply of water and emergency response in the area.

Take some time now to look at the icon, reproduced in the booklet, while the gospel is read again. Enter into the picture. What do you notice? What draws you in? Does the icon help you to see the story of the Gospel in a different way?

*Have a member of the group read the gospel aloud again, while everyone spends five minutes looking at the icon quietly. Encourage each person to share one thing that strikes them about the icon.*

**Leader:** The invitation now is to turn to page 6 of the participants' book and read the explanation of the symbolism which the icon writer has included within this icon.

*Allow time for everyone to read and digest the information.*

Leader: Look again at the icon. Does the knowledge of the artist's intentions change anything about how you view the icon? Do you notice anything new? What thoughts or feelings does the icon bring up for you about the Jubilee?

*Invite the group to share their thoughts briefly if they feel comfortable doing so.*

*In the next section, we explore the theme of the Jubilee Year "Pilgrims of Hope."*

**Leader:** Pope Francis has declared that the theme for this Jubilee year will be "pilgrims of hope".

Read the text in the 'Pilgrims of Hope' text on page 7 of the participants' booklet aloud. Or ask another member of the group to do so.

Leader: Having reflected on the biblical origins of Jubilee, Christ's mission on earth, and about what it means for us today, let's take a few moments to discuss how we can be a pilgrim of hope in our homes, our communities and within the wider world in this Jubilee year.

*Group discussion time, after which the leader invites anyone who wishes to, to share their ideas.*

## Signs of hope

**Leader:** As we embark on this journey, we are all invited now to take a moment to consider:

How will you be a pilgrim of hope?

How will you walk alongside people experiencing poverty?

How will you take care of the earth and of each other?

## JUBILEE REFLECTION

### Leader's notes

Having reflected on these questions, add your name to the pledge below, and write what you will do to play your part in challenging inequality and injustice.

*If people are struggling you could share some examples as follows:*

- Take part in a SCIAF campaign to call for change in our world: [sciaf.org.uk/get-involved/campaign](http://sciaf.org.uk/get-involved/campaign)
- Fundraise for SCIAF and play your part in supporting some of the world's poorest people: [sciaf.org.uk/get-involved/fundraise](http://sciaf.org.uk/get-involved/fundraise)
- Make time to pray regularly for and with our brothers and sisters throughout the world: [sciaf.org.uk/get-involved/pray](http://sciaf.org.uk/get-involved/pray)
- Volunteer with SCIAF or with a local charity in your area, giving your time to share hope with others: [sciaf.org.uk/volunteer](http://sciaf.org.uk/volunteer)

**Leader:** Thank you so much for joining us in this time of reflection today, let's finish with a moment of prayer, which is in your booklet:

Christ Jesus, on whom the Spirit rests,

**All: Guide us on our journey as pilgrims of hope.**

Christ Jesus, bringer of Good News,

**All: Guide us on our journey as pilgrims of hope.**

Christ Jesus, liberator of captives and all who are oppressed,

**All: Guide us on our journey as pilgrims of hope.**

Christ Jesus, restorer of sight,

**All: Guide us on our journey as pilgrims of hope.**

Christ Jesus, proclaimer of the year of the Lord's favour,

**All: Guide us on our journey as pilgrims of hope.**

Christ Jesus, in whom the Scripture was fulfilled,

**All: Guide us on our journey as pilgrims of hope.**

**Lead us all to be signs of your hope**

## SESSION 2: JESUS OF GOOD NEWS

*Before this session you will need to make sure you have a focal point for the prayer time towards the end of the session. You could discuss with your priest, if it is possible to spend time in front of the Blessed Sacrament. Or you could set up a candle or other prayer focus.*

*You will also need to ask people to be readers, making sure they know which section is theirs to read aloud.*

**Leader:** Welcome to our second session reflecting on themes of Jubilee and what it means for us during this special Jubilee year. Take a moment to introduce yourselves.

We have come together today to reflect and pray, so let's just take a moment of quiet to open our hearts to God and to one another.

*Pause for a moment.*

As we start our session today, let's start by considering this question. What good news have you had or heard about recently?

*You can encourage people to discuss in pairs and/or to share with the wider group. Listen to all the answers and thank people for their contributions.*

**Leader:** Sharing good news is something we all like to do. As Christians, we are called to share the gospel, the good news of Christ Jesus. Maybe your faith journey began with a powerful encounter with Jesus which transformed your life. Or perhaps the Lord's presence has been a constant for you, a source of quiet strength, guidance and comfort. Either way, sharing the story of Jesus and the new life he brings is a vital part of our Christian mission.

# JUBILEE REFLECTION

## Leader's notes

Today we will be focusing on Jesus words on proclaiming the good news, which Luke tells us he spoke right at the start of his ministry at the synagogue in his hometown of Nazareth. Reading from the scroll of the prophet Isaiah, Jesus said:

**Reader 1:** "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor."

**Reader 2:** The good news that Jesus brings is good news for each of us. A chance to recognise our own poverty, need for God and dependence on his goodness. However, Jesus' teachings and actions make it clear that the good news is not simply about our spiritual relationship, but a radical call for transformation in our world so it reflects the justice, healing and peace of God's kingdom.

**Reader 3:** We know we live in an unequal world. The world's richest 1% own 43% of all global financial assets<sup>1</sup> and emit as much carbon pollution as the poorest two-thirds of humanity.<sup>2</sup> Despite there being enough food in the world to feed everyone, approximately 735 million<sup>3</sup> people worldwide face hunger daily.

**Leader:** Yet there is also good news. The Spirit is inspiring individuals and communities around the world to come together to build a world where all can flourish.

## Vincent's story

Vincent and his wife Josephine live in Rwanda.

When their small piece of land was not harvesting very much, the couple received seeds, tools and training to help them grow more food to eat.

After the training they were able to grow extra crops to sell and save some money. Vincent now teaches in demonstration plots which help other farmers in the community to learn agricultural skills. He is also the leader of the community savings and loans group, encouraging and helping other farmers to save money so that the whole community can benefit.

## Discussion questions

*Invite participants to form pairs or small groups and discuss the following questions.*

1. The word gospel means good news. Who is it that the gospel is good news for and why?
2. How is Vincent living Jesus' words in Luke 4? Can you suggest others whose lives and actions reflect the priorities of Jesus?
3. How does the good news challenge us or offer us hope?
4. How can we share the good news with others?

*Allow time for discussion. Then invite people to share their ideas if they wish.*

## Prayer

*Move to wherever you plan to hold your period of quiet prayer, taking with you the booklets so you can say the final prayer together.*

*Explain the time of prayer today will be a time of shared silence in God's presence. Reassure people that distractions are normal and encourage them to simply try to let these go and gently bring themselves back to the still centre of God's love.*

*The leader should hold the space for this time of silent prayer, leading the opening and closing prayer. Decide in advance how long the time of prayer will be. Different groups will have different capacities for silence; 5-10 minutes will likely be long enough if this prayer is new to the group*

<sup>1</sup> Oxfam (2024) Inequality Inc: <https://www.oxfam.org/en/research/inequality-inc>

<sup>2</sup> A. Khalfan et al. (2023). Climate Equality: A Planet for the 99%. <https://policy-practice.oxfam.org/resources/climate-equality-a-planet-for-the-99-621551/>

<sup>3</sup> In Brief to The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2023, UN The Food and Agriculture Organization, 5 <https://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/cc6550en>

## JUBILEE REFLECTION

### Leader's notes

#### Leader:

Loving Lord,  
May we be still and know you are God.  
Grant us the grace to rest in your presence,  
ready to receive the good news of Jesus  
and reflect on his call for our lives.  
Amen.

*Silence is held*

**Leader:** We close by praying together.

Christ Jesus, on whom the Spirit rests,

**All: Guide us on our journey as pilgrims of hope.**

Christ Jesus, bringer of Good News,

**All: Guide us on our journey as pilgrims of hope.**

Christ Jesus, liberator of captives and all who are oppressed,

**All: Guide us on our journey as pilgrims of hope.**

Christ Jesus, restorer of sight,

**All: Guide us on our journey as pilgrims of hope.**

Christ Jesus, proclaimer of the year of the Lord's favour,

**All: Guide us on our journey as pilgrims of hope.**

Christ Jesus, in whom the Scripture was fulfilled,

**All: Guide us on our journey as pilgrims of hope.**

**Lead us all to be signs of your hope in our world.**

**Amen.**

## SESSION 3: JESUS THE LIBERATOR

*Before this session, you will need to have cut out strips of paper for making paper chains, as well as having started to make a couple of chains to get the group going. You will also need to provide pens and glue sticks for the participants to use. If you prefer not to use chains as a symbol, you will need paper or sticky notes, for the group to write their ideas down on and a small candle/tealight for each person for the second half of the activity.*

*You will also need to ask people to be readers, making sure they know which section is theirs to read aloud.*

**Leader:** Welcome to our third session reflecting on themes of Jubilee and what it means for us during this special Jubilee year. Take a moment to introduce yourselves.

We have come together today to reflect and pray, so let's just take a moment of quiet to open our hearts to God and to one another.

*Pause for a moment.*

As we start our session today, let's start by considering this question. What does freedom mean to you?

You can encourage people to discuss in pairs and/or to share with the wider group. Listen to all the answers and thank people for their contributions.

**Leader:** Thank you everyone for sharing your thoughts. We are now going to turn to the words of Jesus as we remind ourselves of part of the Gospel of Luke, where Jesus talks about how he is the fulfilment of the Jubilee.

**Reader 1:** "He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed."



# JUBILEE REFLECTION

## Leader's notes

**Leader:** As we reflect on these words, let's take some time to think about who the captives and the overburdened are in our world today? While you discuss this question, write some of the examples on strips of paper and add them together to make a paper chain. These chains serve as symbols of oppression in our world.

### OR

While you discuss this question, write some of the examples on the sticky notes and add them to the large piece of paper.

*Allow time for group discussion. Distribute strips of paper or sticky notes, pens and glue sticks. Encourage the participants to write some of the examples on strips of paper while they are discussing and add to existing paper chains which have been prepared or if you are not creating chains, to stick their notes on a large sheet of paper.*

**Leader:** Thank you – we will come back to these ideas in a little while.

Debt is one way in which people can be trapped, unable to free themselves from the burden laid upon them by their lenders. But in Leviticus, it is laid out that in the Jubilee Year debts should be released and property returned to its original owner (Leviticus 25:28). This was a recognition that over time, wealth could become concentrated in the hands of a small minority, and a call for society to be rebalanced every 50 years. Debts were to be cancelled, equality restored and those who had been trapped in poverty would be freed and could have a fresh start.

Ahead of Jubilee 2025, Pope Francis has called for richer countries to cancel the debts of poorer nations who are struggling with immense debt burdens, saying: "More than a question of generosity, this is a matter of justice."

## Cancel Debt Choose hope

**A global debt crisis is stealing hope from the world's poorest people.**

**In the places SCIAF works, millions of people do not have enough food, water or adequate shelter to live dignified lives. Schools do not have enough teachers; clinics do not have enough safe equipment.**

**Yet despite this deep poverty, the poorest countries are paying back enormous debts to some of the richest groups in the world. This money should be spent on improving people's lives but is instead lining the pockets of bankers, hedge fund managers and greedy governments.**

**Debt is stealing lives, and robbing children of their futures.**

**At SCIAF, we believe the richest countries, like the UK, should be doing everything they can to support the poorest countries to develop sustainably – especially given their role in driving things that increase the debt burden, like the climate crisis.**

**We believe it's time the debt system is changed. It's time for debt justice.**

**In this Jubilee Year, you can use your voice to create real change with our sisters and brothers overseas – restoring hope in some of the poorest communities in the world.**

**Sign our petition today and call on the UK government to play its part in the global fight to cancel unsustainable and unjust debts, and lead on building a permanent and fair system that puts people and planet first. Use your voice and join organisations around the world, like our Caritas family, in making this call.**

**Cancel debt, choose hope. The time for debt justice is now.**

**"I ask that affluent nations 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." Pope Francis**



# JUBILEE REFLECTION

## Leader's notes

**Reader 3:** The number of low-income countries in debt crisis has more than doubled since 2015 to over 50. About 3.3 billion people now live in countries where debt interest payments are greater than expenditure on health or education.

**Leader:** These debts, which countries owe to wealthy banks, institutions and governments, is one form of captivity. It means people aren't free to live their lives as they wish to live them. Let's now consider the following questions.

*Don't feel you have to use all the questions if fewer works better for your group.*

1. Can you think of any other Scripture passages that mention setting people free?  
*Possible prompts if needed include the exodus of the people of Israel when they escape from slavery in Egypt (Exodus), Peter's escape from prison (Acts 12) and our freedom in Christ (see especially Galatians 5)*
2. Where do we feel trapped or see others trapped in our world? What keeps people captive?
3. What situations of injustice do we turn a blind eye to?
4. Are there any ways we can change or work so that more people can be free, especially in this Jubilee year?

*Time for group discussion.*

While you discuss the questions above, encourage participants to add any additional examples of injustice they come up with to the paper chains or their sticky notes.

## Penitential rite

**Leader:** We have listened and considered how debt can keep countries and their people trapped in poverty. We have thought about other situations of injustice in our world, which keep us, and our brothers and sisters throughout the world, captive. We have thought about the times when we might have turned a blind eye to something we knew was wrong, as well as the times when we might have been afraid to speak out for what is right. Let us now turn to God in search of forgiveness and freedom.

Lord, you were sent to bring good news to the poor.

**Lord, have mercy**

Christ, you came to bring freedom to all people.

**Christ, have mercy.**

Lord, you are our hope and salvation.

**Lord, have mercy.**

## Symbolic action

*During this moment, it would be good to have some music playing. We suggest "The Lord hears the cry of the poor" or you can choose something else that suits your group. If you do not have the facilities to play recorded music, you could encourage the group to hum or sing.*

**Leader:** We are now going to take the paper chains that we made earlier, which symbolize some of the things that trap us and others in our world in poverty and injustice.

As the music plays, I would like to invite each person to break a link of the chain as a sign of the liberation that we seek, for ourselves and for others. The liberation that we hope for and work towards as part of the Jubilee year. The liberation that Jesus promised to all.

**OR**

Remembering the examples we wrote earlier of the ways in which people are trapped, burdened and oppressed in our world, we are now going to remind ourselves of the light of hope which Christ offers us.

## JUBILEE REFLECTION

### Leader's notes

As the music plays, I would like to invite each person to light a candle as a sign of hope and liberation. The liberation that we seek for ourselves and for others. The liberation that we hope for and work towards as part of the Jubilee year. The liberation that Jesus promised to all.

*Pause now while people break the chains or light their candles. Once each person has had their turn, continue:*

**Leader:** We are called throughout the Jubilee Year to be tangible signs of hope in our world. We know that our actions can make a difference. Many people were inspired by the Jubilee in the year 2000 to come together and call for debt cancellation. As a result of the debt cancelled because of this campaign, Uganda had \$1bn (£715m) worth of debt relief and used it to double the number of children able to go to primary school.

Raising our voices to call for change can make a difference. But the same structural causes remain in place. That is why we need action again now. As we leave this reflection session today, let us commit to taking action in our own way to free others and ourselves from the oppression that so many face.

*You could encourage your group to find out more and sign the SCIAF petition*  
[sciaf.org.uk/debtjustice](http://sciaf.org.uk/debtjustice)

**Leader:** Thank you so much for joining us in this time of reflection today, let's finish with a moment of prayer:

Christ Jesus, on whom the Spirit rests,

**All: Guide us on our journey as pilgrims of hope.**

Christ Jesus, bringer of Good News,

**All: Guide us on our journey as pilgrims of hope.**

Christ Jesus, liberator of captives and all who are oppressed,

**All: Guide us on our journey as pilgrims of hope.**

Christ Jesus, restorer of sight,

**All: Guide us on our journey as pilgrims of hope.**

Christ Jesus, proclaimer of the year of the Lord's favour,

**All: Guide us on our journey as pilgrims of hope.**

Christ Jesus, in whom the Scripture was fulfilled,

**All: Guide us on our journey as pilgrims of hope.**

**Lead us all to be signs of your hope in our world.**

**Amen.**

## SESSION 4: JESUS, LORD OF CREATION

*If appropriate to your group and the weather allows, you may wish to hold all or part of this session outside.*

*If it is not practical to be outside, it would be good to bring some flowers or plants, or pictures of nature into your space, to help the participants feel connected to Creation.*

*You will need to provide pens for the participants to use during the final section of the session.*

*You will also need to ask people to be readers, making sure they know which section is theirs to read aloud.*

**Leader:** Welcome to our final session reflecting on themes of Jubilee and what it means for us during this special Jubilee year. Take a moment to introduce yourselves.

We have come together today to reflect and pray, so let's just take a moment of quiet to open our hearts to God and to one another.

*Pause for a moment.*

**Leader:** We're going to begin today by thinking about the beauty and wonder of God's creation. What brings you joy in creation? Are there places or aspects of the created world that draw you closer to God? Why/how do they draw you closer to God?

# JUBILEE REFLECTION

## Leader's notes

You can encourage people to discuss in pairs and/or to share with the wider group. Listen to all the answers and thank people for their contributions.

**Leader:** The Bible begins with a wonderful picture of abundance as God declares all creation good. Everything that follows in the scriptures is set in the context of the goodness of creation and our call to care for our common home.

**Reader 1:** So, it's no surprise that care for creation has been a feature of the Jubilee Year since its Old Testament origins. When Jesus stood up in the Synagogue in his hometown of Nazareth and proclaimed the year of the Lord's favour, his listeners would have thought at once of the Jubilee Law in the book of Leviticus, where it is written:

**Reader 2:** "And you shall consecrate the fiftieth year and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you... in it you shall neither sow nor reap what grows of itself nor gather the grapes from the undressed vines." (Leviticus 25:10-11)

**Reader 3:** This extended Sabbath not only let God's people rest from their usual labour but also allowed the land to heal and repair itself. It promotes sustainable farming practices, enhancing biodiversity and allowing soil regeneration.

**Reader 1:** Today we can see the cost of our broken relationship with creation in the environmental crisis that we face: climate change, pollution, deforestation, species extinction and biodiversity loss. People all over the planet are already experiencing the effects of the climate emergency, from more frequent and severe storms and floods to historic droughts and food crises. Communities that have contributed the least to causing the crisis are hit hardest by these changes.

## Felicien and Silvie's Story

Felicien and Silvie are part of the Batwa indigenous group, living in rural Rwanda. They live in extreme poverty, making only small amounts of money selling hand-made pottery.

"When it comes to food, or life in general, we find ourselves in a challenging situation which not only affects us, but also casts a shadow over the future of our children.

Due to heavy rain, made more common and severe due to climate change, their house has been damaged heavily too.

"Our current situation is a critical challenge. We fear that the house could collapse while one of our children is sleeping."

## Discussion questions

*Invite participants to form pairs or small groups and discuss the following questions.*

1. What does the Jubilee Year focus on rest for people and land have to teach us today?
2. What helps you to be hopeful when you think about the global issue of the environmental crisis?
3. What positive, practical steps can we take to care for our common home?

*Allow time for discussion. Then invite anyone who wishes to, to share their ideas.*

## Prayer

*If possible, this time of prayer should be held outside. If weather or other factors make this difficult you could bring some pieces of nature into your meeting space or display some pictures of the natural world.*

# JUBILEE REFLECTION

## Leader's notes

**Leader:** In our prayer today, we are going to spend some time listening for God in nature. The invitation is to be attentive to the sights and sounds around you. If something stands out, stop and take some time to notice the details of this.

Ask God to make you aware of the sacredness of all living things. Give thanks for the abundance and beauty of the world.

What might God may be saying to you, or calling you to, through his presence in creation?

*If you are outside, invite participants to slowly roam around the immediate area. You may wish to let them know how long you will be spending outside and where to gather next. If inside invite participants to find a space where they can focus and be comfortable.*

## Pledge

**Leader:** At the end of our first gathering we invited you think about how you can be a pilgrim of hope in this Jubilee Year. Over the past weeks we have thought about how we can share good news, seek liberation for all people and care of the earth and each other.

The invitation now is to revisit the signs of hope from Session 1. Is there anything you want to deepen, change or add as a result of your reflection and prayer? If so, do so now.

*Give people time to reflect then draw the session to a close with the following prayer.*

**Leader:** We close by praying together.

Christ Jesus, on whom the Spirit rests,

**All: Guide us on our journey as pilgrims of hope.**

Christ Jesus, bringer of Good News,

**All: Guide us on our journey as pilgrims of hope.**

Christ Jesus, liberator of captives and all who are oppressed,

**All: Guide us on our journey as pilgrims of hope.**

Christ Jesus, restorer of sight,

**All: Guide us on our journey as pilgrims of hope.**

Christ Jesus, proclaimer of the year of the Lord's favour,

**All: Guide us on our journey as pilgrims of hope.**

Christ Jesus, in whom the Scripture was fulfilled,

**All: Guide us on our journey as pilgrims of hope.**

**Lead us all to be signs of your hope in our world.**

**Amen.**

*Close by thanking everyone for their participation and encouraging them to put the signs of hope into action.*