



JCFJ

**JESUIT CENTRE
FOR FAITH & JUSTICE**

Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice

Strategic Plan: 2019-2023

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Abbreviations used:

SJ	Member of the Society of Jesus
JCFJ	Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice
HEST	Higher Education for Social Transformation (Jesuits Europe)
JESC	Jesuit European Social Centre (Brussels)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisations
SJES	Social Justice and Ecology Secretariat (Jesuit Curia, Rome)

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Foreword from Fr Leonard Moloney SJ, Provincial

I warmly welcome this new strategic plan for the Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice, which will guide its work for the next four years.

The Centre's role in developing the apostolic mission of the Society in Ireland through the promotion of justice and reconciliation with creation is as important today as it was over 40 years ago when the decree *Our Mission Today: The Service of Faith and Promotion of Justice* issued from our 32nd General Congregation. This expressed how our living of Gospel values is complemented by speaking about justice.

The Society's Universal Apostolic Preferences continue to guide us as we go to where we are needed out of Ignatian discernment – to walk with the poor in a mission of reconciliation and justice, to accompany young people in the creation of a hope-filled future, and to collaborate in the care of our common home. We will accompany people as they discern complex choices in the social, economic, cultural, and political spheres. The Preferences offer a renewed mandate to the Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice to deepen its engagement with, and discernment of, the economic and social problems that continue to afflict society.

I am particularly encouraged to see the continued focus on prison reform, with especial regard to young adults in prison; on socio-economic inequality and exclusion; on ecological justice, and the rich vein of social theology practice and reflection which underpins this work.



In his sonnet *As Kingfishers Catch Fire*, the Jesuit poet Gerard Manley Hopkins articulates how the act of doing justice, manifests our faith:

*'I say more: the just man justices;
Keeps grace: that keeps all his goings graces;
Acts in God's eye what in God's eye he is-
Christ. For Christ plays in ten thousand places,
Lovely in limbs, and lovely in eyes not his
To the Father through the feature of mens' faces.'*

I extend my best wishes and support to the Director and Team of the Centre as they “justice and keep grace” in their commitment and solidarity with those who suffer injustice and exclusion.

Leonard Moloney SJ

Introduction from Fr John Guiney SJ, Director

The Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice is based in Dublin, Ireland and is one of the social apostolates of the Society of Jesus in the Irish Province.

Informed by the tradition of Christian social justice, and the Jesuit belief that our faith must do justice, our Centre has a long history of solidarity with those who experience poverty, discrimination, and exclusion.

We express this solidarity through engagement with the structural causes of injustice and exclusion – undertaking social analysis, theological reflection, and advocacy.

Our work finds strong resonance in the Society's recently published Universal Apostolic Preferences, which are the fruit of a two-year period of discernment, and will shape the Society's mission for the next ten years. We also find complementarity with the Global Sustainable Development Agenda for 2030, particularly in relation to breaking cycles of deprivation and advocating ecological justice and care of creation.

In response to these and also to the ongoing evolution of the Irish Jesuit Province, we decided that the time was right to review our progress to date, and discern our focus and way forward for the next period. This facilitated and consultative strategic planning process gives expression to our new Strategic Plan which will guide our work from 2019-2023.



I thank all of those who contributed to this process for their engagement and support, and look forward to a further four years of faith and justice in impactful action.

John Guiney SJ

To be just, it is not enough to refrain from injustice. One must go further and refuse to play its game, substituting love for self-interest as the driving force of society.

Pedro Arrupe SJ, Men for Others

About the Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice



The Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice (JCFJ) promotes justice through social analysis, theological reflection, action, education, and advocacy.

The Centre's work has been marked over the last 40 years by its reading of the signs of the times in Irish society and beyond. These readings are expressed, in part, through JCFJ's signature publication *Working Notes*, which issues twice a year, and invites analytical and opinion pieces on a wide range of social justice matters. The Centre seeks to engage on questions of policy reform and theological reflection in a range of other venues, regularly contributing to academic journals, Oireachtas committee hearings, newspaper reports, interviews, web articles and social media. It is always open to engagement with grassroots activist organisations or to collaborate with ecclesial groups.

The Centre was founded in 1980, when Ireland was experiencing serious economic recession, unemployment, and emigration. During that time, the Centre engaged heavily with the issues of poverty and inequality, economic justice, and unemployment, drawing on the work of Jesuits living in communities experiencing exclusion and economic deprivation. The focus on economic justice has persisted to the present day, providing an oeuvre of analysis of economic inequality, ethics, and anti-poverty strategies across the changing contexts of the Irish economy.

The long-standing work of Jesuits such as Peter McVerry SJ deeply informs the Centre's work in the area of housing policy. As one of the only NGO analysts on the housing and homelessness crisis which is not involved in service provision, the Centre has a unique voice arguing for a holistic reformation of housing policy which takes heed of the environmental crisis and seeks to provide a home – not just a house – for every person in Ireland.

The Centre has also advocated for penal policy reform, focussing on a wide range of issues including juvenile crime and treatment of young adults in prison, overcrowding, women in prison, prison healthcare, rehabilitation, and the impact on prisoner families.

As global awareness of the threats of climate breakdown has heightened, the Centre commenced advocacy during the last decade on climate change and biodiversity, tackling themes of population displacement, ecological economics, and politics, and continuously reflecting on Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si'*.

Perhaps underlying all these problems lies the economic question. Inspired by the extensive Scriptural witness to the importance of economic justice, and the rich tradition of Christian thinking on the area, the Centre is committed to considering alternative approaches to economic questions that seek to address the problems of inequality and poverty more directly.

Theological reflection has always been at the heart of the Centre's work. Considering social issues from this Christian perspective is one of the most unique aspects of our approach through the years.

The Centre's team recently moved to new offices in Gardiner St, part of the inner-city parish in North Dublin and works there together with Jesuit Refugee Services, the Irish Jesuit Mission Office, the Jesuit Community, and the Jesuit inner city parish.

Our Strategy

With the expert assistance of Lucy Franks Consulting, the JCFJ team engaged in an extensive process of organisational assessment over the Winter and Spring of 2018 and 2019. Dozens of stakeholders were engaged in face-to-face interviews, digital surveys, and telephone interviews to gauge the strengths and weaknesses of the Centre. With input led by the staff, in close communication with the Board and other key figures, a renewed strategy expressed in terms of vision, mission, values, and goals has been established.

Our Vision

A society in which faith promotes justice for all, with a special focus on care of creation, and those who experience poverty, discrimination, and exclusion

Our Mission

To promote justice for all through social analysis, theological reflection, action, education, and advocacy.

Our Values & Guiding principles

Rootedness	Our mission is underpinned by the rich tradition of Catholic Social Teaching.
Humility	We recognise that engaging the structural causes of injustice and exclusion demands an openness to learning and a willingness to consult outside of our native traditions. Humility is not just a practice we commit to in our relationships but a way of proceeding in thinking critically.
Collaboration	In solidarity with people on the margins, we work together with colleagues, partners, peers, educational institutions, political organisations, faith communities and people of goodwill to deploy our knowledge, skills, and resources in responding to the signs of the times.
Courage	We foster change by challenging economic, social, and political structures that perpetuate injustice and exclusion in what we say and do.
Ignatian Inspiration	We draw upon characteristic Ignatian practices, to seek right relationships directed towards contemplative activism.

Our World and Response: The Universal Apostolic Preferences

In March 2019, the Society of Jesus announced its Universal Apostolic Preferences (UAPs), a point of reference and orientation to the whole Society, uniting us in our service of mission for the next ten years to 2029.

The Preferences are the outcome of a two-year discernment process involving all Jesuits and mission partners. They are four areas which are vital for today's world:



Discernment and the “Spiritual Exercises”

Helping people find Jesus Christ and follow Him



Walking with the Excluded

Walk alongside the poor, vulnerable, the excluded and those whom society considers worthless, in a mission of reconciliation and justice



Caring for our Common Home

Work, with gospel depth, for the protection and renewal of God's Creation



Journeying with Youth

Accompany young people in the creation of a hopeful future



www.jesuits.global/en/about-us/universal-apostolic-preferences

The Universal Apostolic Preferences offer a renewed mandate to the JCFJ to deepen our engagement and study of the economic and social problems that continue to afflict society.

The Preferences are remarkably forthright in how they describe the problems facing the world. While Pope Francis is clear that the first preference – to show the way to God through the Spiritual Exercises and discernment – has to be the primary preference, the second preference and fourth preferences are the ones which most directly affect our work in the Centre.

The Centre focuses on two of the most excluded groups in society, people in prison and people who are homeless. The Preferences are not just an encouragement to us to continue; they also challenge us to be closer to people experiencing exclusion and marginalisation and to go deeper in understanding the root causes of social injustice.

The task of “walking with the poor, the outcasts of the world, those whose dignity has been violated, in a mission of reconciliation and justice” bears directly on the Centre’s work around theological ethics. The Preferences make the economic angle of this explicit: “We want to help counteract the pernicious consequences of the diverse forms of ‘neo-liberalism’.” As Irish society seems to be moving again into an unsustainable bubble based on the misguided and harmful neoliberal ideology, we feel it is timely that we are so clearly licenced to explore how alternatives can be conceived.



If this bankrupt political system is set to bankrupt the nation again, the only question is whether we can wean ourselves off the myth of the *homo-oeconomicus* before the ravages of climate breakdown are felt more fully (and invariably by the poorest and most vulnerable in our society).

In that light, the third Preference – “collaborating in the care of our Common Home” – becomes the place where much of the Centre’s work finds cohesion. The environmental crisis is not just the biggest crisis facing the future generation (young people are a consistent focus in this document), it is



the biggest crisis faced by any generation. Building on *Laudato Si’* by seeking to develop “alternative models of life that are based on respect for creation and on a sustainable development capable of producing goods that, when justly distributed, ensure a decent life for all human beings on our planet” is the form that social justice will take in this century.

The signs of the times and the scale of the challenge demand an urgent commitment and strong moral conviction to transform how we live. Because of their rich tradition and involvement in education and social justice, and guided by *Laudato Si’*, the Jesuits are in a unique position to bring about positive, transformative change around the world. The JCFJ actively collaborates with other NGOs in Ireland to advocate for climate justice. The Centre engages with Social Centres elsewhere in Europe and Jesuit universities to explore the meaning of an integral ecology, and what this means for higher education, and there are also initiatives aimed at greening the local Jesuit parish. Considering the urgency and scale of the problem, there is more to be done – for example, in developing a Province-wide practical vision for integral ecology.

The foundation from which the JCFJ works remains our Ignatian identity. Over the coming years we will intensify our commitment to exploring how the work of theological reflection and social policy development can be informed and transformed by the Ignatian Spiritual Practices, in line with the first Preference.



The final Preference – *journeying with youth* – is a necessary consequence of the areas where we focus our attention. Young people are disproportionately affected by the economic changes wrought in the last generation, they are at greater risk of housing precarity and homelessness, their plight is particularly acute if imprisoned, and most fundamentally, they will suffer the consequences of the careless exploitation of our common home.



The Preferences as a whole represent an inspiring and expansive vision for the next ten years of Jesuit work. What possible response could better the words the document itself offers: “We want to be actively present in this process.”

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development



Founded on international human rights standards, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) call for urgent and challenging action to achieve a sustainable future for our world by 2030. The goals articulate the ending of poverty, protection of our environment and promotion of a just livelihood for all.

Each of the SDGs has resonance for the work of the Centre, but in particular we highlight:

Goal 1 – No Poverty: breaking the cycles of deprivation that lead to homelessness, economic hardship, crime, and imprisonment and limiting choices to respect our environment.

Goal 3 – Good Health and Well-Being: recognising that housing is a social determinant of health and homelessness is associated with ill-health leading to lower-than-average life expectancy.

Goal 4 – Quality Education: crucial in supporting a means of earning a livelihood.

Goal 10 – Reduced Inequalities: working to narrow disparities of opportunity, income and power within Irish society.

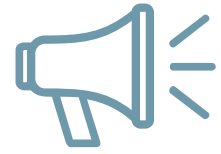
Goals 2, 6, 7, 11-15 – The interrelationships between creation and community are of special relevance to the Centre’s work on ecological justice and care of creation; and providing safe and adequate housing for all.

Over the next four years, the Centre’s objectives and expected outcomes will enable us to report against these internationally recognised goals.

Our Strategic Objectives

GOAL 1 	Develop and implement a Social Justice Programme To implement a social justice programme which focuses on those who experience poverty, discrimination, and exclusion, and on care of creation, through analysis, advocacy, and action
GOAL 2 	Develop and implement a Social Theology Programme To implement a programme of social theology which provides theological reflection on social justice matters, and supports Ignatian formation and, discernment
GOAL 3 	Deploy an enhanced Communications Strategy To develop and deploy a robust communications strategy to amplify and disseminate the Centre's work to a wider audience
GOAL 4 	Support and develop our people through an organisational development programme To support and develop our people in ways which maximise the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of our work

GOAL 1: Develop and implement a Social Justice Programme



To implement a social justice programme which focuses on those who experience poverty, discrimination, and exclusion, and on the care of creation, through analysis, advocacy, and action.

Our social justice programme is shaped by the pressing social concerns of Irish society today: economic injustice and inequality and its manifestations in the pernicious social problems of homelessness and housing deficiency; crime and the approach to imprisonment and the imprisoned; our response to the climate and eco-system emergency.

Goal 1.1: A Humane Prison System

Advocate for a **just and humane prison system**, which upholds the human rights and dignity of people especially young adults, and provides the supports necessary for social integration post-release.

Why this goal?

People in prison are amongst the most marginalised and vulnerable in our society. It is for this reason that the Centre has worked with this group from its inception. Most of the prison population are early school-leavers who have difficulties with learning and literacy and a history of unemployment. Mental illness is common among them, as are addiction issues. A significant number of prisoners have experienced homelessness at some point in their lives. Of particular focus for the JCFJ is the promotion of safe and humane custody, a reduction in imprisonment, and appropriate support services for people leaving prison.

The second Universal Apostolic Preference – Walking with the Excluded, and those whom society considers worthless in a mission of reconciliation and justice – and the fourth – Journeying with Youth – have particular resonance for prisoners.

In support of achieving this objective we will:

- Influence for reform of national penal policy through our analysis, writing, public and political engagement, and policy submissions;
- Advocate for conditions in prison that respect human dignity with a special focus on the care and the needs of young adults in prison;
- Advocate for an emphasis on care and support in prison, and appropriate support services and community integration supports upon release;
- Maintain dialogue with statutory and non-statutory groups involved in prison issues in Ireland, and within the EU;
- Ensure lived-experience informs our advocacy and policy through regular focus-groups with former prisoners, prisoner families and prison chaplains;
- Support the Province's development education co-ordinator in producing material that highlights the issues for vulnerable prisoners for use in our schools;
- Build and maintain links with other Jesuit agencies working in the penal reform/prisons space.

Intended Outcomes

- Inclusion of JCFJ recommendations in government policy and legislative frameworks;
- A well-developed canon of research, writing and commentary on penal policy reform, and specific issues relating to young adults, and social integration post-release;
- Strong network links with civil society organisations and statutory bodies to facilitate two-way dialogue and enable ease of access for advocacy, event participation, and input to reform submissions;

- Increased awareness of issues for prisoners and their families informing JCFJ’s analysis, writing, parliamentary questions, and policy submissions;
- Increased networking and collaboration between Jesuit agencies.

Goal 1.2: Integral Ecological Justice

Advocate for **integral ecological justice** through promotion of dialogue on climate breakdown and action for a just transformation in our care of our environment, resources, and community.

Why this goal?

Ecological protection and climate justice have emerged as key elements of social justice debates in recent decades. This has occurred in parallel to growing awareness of the negative impact of our relationship with the natural environment, and of environmental degradation on vulnerable populations, and future generations. In the face of increasing environmental crises, the fundamental web of creation in which humanity finds itself requires a new respect, a new justice.

Historically, the most significant Jesuit to reflect on humankind’s part in creation was Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. Since de Chardin’s insights, the Jesuit voice on environmental matters has been strengthened significantly with the publication of Pope Francis’ encyclical *Laudato Si’* – On Care for Our Common Home. The encyclical invites us to embrace an integral ecology approach to tackling the interconnected social and environmental problems currently facing global society.

At national level, the government policy framework has historically been insufficient. While positions are improving, there is legitimate scepticism about whether we can even meet our commitments made in the Paris Agreement. In response to the growing demand for environmental justice, the JCFJ seeks to inform and activate critical reflection and sustainable action aimed at reconciling our relationship with each other and with creation.

The third Universal Apostolic Preference – Caring for our Common Home – drawing on the depth of the Gospel for the protection and renewal of God’s creation, will guide the work of this objective

We will:

- Influence an ambitious, co-ordinated national climate policy framework which addresses mitigation, adaptation, and the associated challenges in line with scientific context and social and ecological principles, and that builds on the public mandate and political consensus that now exists for Government action;
- Take the lead in the discernment process for the third Universal Apostolic Preference – *Caring for our Common Home* – for the Irish Jesuit province, developing an ecology policy and engaging a range of grassroots initiative participants and province advocates in its implementation;
- Collaborate with the Irish Jesuit apostolates to highlight the ecological justice aspects to their work and encourage peer-to-peer learning;
- Represent JCFJ on the Irish Bishops’ Council for Justice and Peace as the Council ecology advocate, promoting *Laudato Si’* and supporting parish ecological renewal initiatives through speaking engagements and Council publications;
- Inform and engage the public on environmental justice matters and the core messages of *Laudato Si’*, with specific focus in providing support to the eco-congregation initiative in Gardiner St parish so that action is underpinned by interior conversion;
- Continue to build the profile of the environmental focus of JCFJ through strategic collaboration on ecological justice issues with other faith and development organisations working in this area through the Stop Climate Chaos coalition;
- Strengthen links with Jesuit partners working on ecology and social justice in Europe.

Intended Outcomes

- Inclusion of JCFJ recommendations in the national climate policy framework arising from individual advocacy and collective advocacy as part of Coalition 2030 and Stop Climate Chaos;
- Well-promoted Province ecology policy supported by well-coordinated implementation;
- Provincial forum for information and dialogue on ecological justice matters;
- A canon of ecological justice material developed in support of social justice issues;
- Regular speaking engagements and production of materials;
- Greater awareness within Gardiner St parish of ecological issues and ongoing initiatives involving the local community;
- Application of *Laudato Si'* to Irish ecological situation through joint submissions and advocacy;
- Regular dialogue, and collaboration with HEST, Eco-Jesuit, JESC and SJES.

Goal 1.3: An Equal Economy

Advocate for **economic justice and reduction of economic inequality**.

Why this goal?

Economic justice is perhaps the fulcrum around which all social justice debates in contemporary society rotate. In our political discourse, every question of human flourishing seems to be reduced to bottom-line thinking. This focus on riches impoverishes our shared discourse and has serious negative consequences for society, as evidenced in the rise of populist political movements which often source their discontent in the economic stagnation that affects many sectors of society.

In such a setting, there is a great need for alternative approaches to economic justice and distinctive visions for how prosperity can encourage human flourishing for all, not just those at the top. This has been one of the major challenges that Pope Francis has levied to the faithful through his papacy, most notably in his apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* and the *Laudato Si'* encyclical.

Francis is clear that our personal wealth implicates us: “The culture of prosperity deadens us; we are thrilled if the market offers us something new to purchase; and in the meantime all those lives stunted for lack of opportunity seem a mere spectacle; they fail to move us” (*Evangelii Gaudium*, Ch. 2 §54). The JCFJ seeks to be moved to action by this scandal, and to address the collective impoverishment involved in our current economic framework.

The second Universal Apostolic Preference – ‘Walking with the Excluded’ – has particular resonance for this goal.

We will:

- Articulate through our writing and speaking that the person, not profit, should be at the centre of economic models;
- Promote an understanding of the distinctive Christian ideas about wealth and economy in society, leveraging *Theological Ethics for a Neoliberal Age* which offers a theoretical foundation for much of the Centre’s work from a theological perspective;
- Produce analyses and critiques of specific economic aspects that contribute to economic inequality;
- Contribute to the Economy, Poverty, and Ethics cluster within the Jesuit Higher Education for Social Transformation (HEST) network, with a specific focus on the labour crisis of social vulnerability to employment precarity;
- Research and publish a largescale theological treatment of the concept of earning and its implications within the Irish economy to date;
- Regular dialogue and collaboration with theologians and social justice actors working in the economic justice area;
- Continue to advocate for a shift in housing policy from neoliberal market-based solutions to those which treat housing as a social good, meeting essential human needs.

Intended Outcomes:

- Increased awareness of alternatives to the neoliberal economic model amongst opinion-formers;

- Ongoing publication of materials linked to *Theological Ethics for a Neoliberal Age*;
- Growing JCFJ canon of writing and commentary on economic justice issues, including contributions to academic and theological journals;
- Continuing collaboration with other Jesuit agencies on economic issues;
- New theological treatments of the concepts of work and earning;
- Strengthened links with theologians and other actors in the economic justice space;
- Greater awareness within the church, the wider public, and the State that the current social crises – many of which are the focus of the Centre – are not inevitable or merely tragic, but are out-workings of a prior, distorted commitment to economic growth.

Goal 1.4: Housing and Homelessness Justice

Advocate for the provision of **appropriate and affordable housing for all** to meet essential human needs

Why this goal?

The right to a safe and secure place to live is one of the most basic human rights; it is fundamental to enable people to live a dignified life. Without the security provided by having somewhere to live, people can quickly become isolated and excluded from society. The impacts of homelessness or inadequate housing on physical and mental health can be extreme, leading to lower-than-average life expectancy. Accessing and maintaining employment is also extremely difficult when someone has nowhere to live. The JCFJ has written a comprehensive policy paper, *The Irish Housing System: Vision, Values, Reality*, which provides the evidence and background to our work.

JCFJ will continue to highlight the need for a radical revision of housing policy in Ireland to ensure that no-one is denied access to an affordable home. We will continue to examine how the persisting neoliberal market-led approach to provision of housing is perpetuating the current housing crisis in Ireland, while advocating for a people-centred

approach as an alternative. We will also examine the strategic implications that the growing crisis in relation to affordability of housing may have for future generations. The second Universal Apostolic Preference – ‘Walking with the Excluded’ – has resonance for this goal.

We will:

- Continue to advocate for a shift in housing policy from neoliberal market-based solutions to those which treat housing as a social good which meets essential human rights – every person has a right to secure and affordable accommodation;
- Highlight the growing crisis in regard to affordability of appropriate housing in Ireland, alongside encouraging an increase in supply and reduction in housing prices;
- Engage in regular dialogue and collaboration with social justice actors working in the housing justice area;
- Incorporate lived experience of those experiencing housing difficulties and homelessness into our advocacy;
- Explore how the reality of climate breakdown can be engaged constructively as an opportunity to transform how we approach housing and the task of building communities.

Intended Outcomes:

- Greater awareness that the current housing crisis is the result of housing and fiscal policies influenced by neoliberal politics, with a recognition that a radical shift in approach is required to provide adequate policy responses;
- Better understanding of the longer-term strategic impacts of the current crisis for Ireland’s future generations;
- Growing JCFJ’s canon of writing and commentary on housing and homelessness issues, including contributions to academic and popular journals;
- Strengthened links with other actors in the housing and homelessness justice space;
- Better understanding and focus on the interconnectivity between ecological justice and principles informing a more just and sustainable housing policy.

GOAL 2: Develop and implement a Social Theology Programme



Social theology addresses the questions of faith as they relate to the public square.¹ Matters such as economic injustice and inequality, which are clearly displayed in the housing and homelessness crisis, the imbalanced penal response of the State to certain kinds of crime, and the unfolding crisis of environmental degradation, all demand a coherent theological response, which inevitably has a public perspective. Inspired by Ignatian Spirituality, drawing deeply from the Scriptures, and carefully interpreting Catholic Social Teaching, developing such a response is a foundational element of the JCFJ agenda.

Goal 2.1: Theological Reflection on Social Justice

Implement a programme of social theology which provides theological reflection on social justice matters, and supports Ignatian formation and discernment.

Why this goal?

Our faith and gospel values motivate us. Promotion of gospel values must be accompanied by speaking about justice. As Pedro Arrupe argued, “we cannot separate action for justice from the proclamation of the Word of God” (*Men for Others*, 1973). The Centre draws on a rich tradition of Christian social justice, especially from within Catholic Social teaching and the Jesuit insistence that our faith must do justice. Social justice refers to the Christian compulsion to learn how to do good, to seek justice, to correct oppression, representing especially for those who are excluded (Isaiah 1:17).

Additionally, as a Jesuit Centre, our faith is distinguished by Ignatian spirituality. Ignatian spirituality is grounded in the conviction that God

is active in our world and can be found in all things. It is gospel-centred spirituality, caring of and open to others, passionate about justice, reflective and discerning, encouraging of excellence and it promotes an underlying sense of community within a global context.

If it is true that, in the terms that the Jesuit poet Gerard Manley Hopkins offered, “Christ plays in ten thousand places,” then it follows that it is necessary to reflect on issues in society from a theological perspective. This is the task of social theology, and in the JCFJ it serves as the foundation for our deliberation around policy and reform. This reflection is not abstracted from social reality; it is intended to stand in solidarity with and bear witness to those who suffer exclusion, poverty, and inequality.

The role of social theology in the Centre in the coming period, will focus on contextualising the social issues engaged with by the Centre, through the lens of faith. It is our intention to maintain connection with Ignatian practices and inspiration as a Jesuit Centre and in-so-doing, meet the challenge of reflecting theologically in a culture that is becoming increasingly secular.

Each of the four Universal Apostolic Preferences has resonance with this goal.

¹ The JCFJ has been considering responsible and fruitful approaches to this work since its founding, perhaps most notably in the work of Gerry O’Hanlon SJ. For example: Gerry O’Hanlon SJ, “Religion and Society,” in *Theology in the Irish Public Square* (Dublin: Columba, 2010), 152–64.

We will:

- Enhance the understanding and relevance of social theology in Ireland through our analysis, writing, public lectures, and talks;
- Ensure that the experiences of people on the margins of Irish society are included in the discourse of social theology, social justice, and spirituality through ongoing linkage with Provincial social apostolates and front-line social justice implementers;
- Develop a sustainable approach to Ignatian formation for the JCFJ, which leverages and complements the ongoing lay formation work of the Peter Kenney Project and Manresa Centre for Spirituality, which can be scalable throughout all Jesuit social apostolates;
- Lead the JCFJ through the Provincial discernment process for the first Universal Apostolic Preference – *Promoting Discernment and the Spiritual Exercises*;
- Link the themes analysed in *Working Notes* to parishes by developing popular outreach resources.

Intended Outcomes:

- Increased public awareness of social theology in Ireland;
- Develop original theological resources informed by social reality;
- Structured and flexible approach to Ignatian formation in the Centre;
- Contributing to a rich and engaging discernment process underway at Province level;
- An evolving JCFJ canon of accessible theological reflections.

GOAL 3: Deploy an Integrated Communications Strategy



The communications strategy for the Centre will build on its existing network of peers, policy-makers and other stakeholders, while extending its reach to new target audiences, to inform and advocate for our Strategic Goals.

Goal 3.1: An Enhanced Communications Strategy

To develop and implement **our communications strategy** in order to amplify and disseminate the Centre's work to a wider audience.

Why this goal?

A strong communications strategy is an essential part of the overall Strategic Plan, facilitating effective engagement with stakeholders, enabling us to show the value of our analysis, advocacy, and reflection. It is integral to promoting an understanding of the work of the JCFJ. Successful communication is based on building on the identity of the Centre and maintaining its reputation, which is rooted in our vision, mission, values, as well as our guiding principles and operational plans.

The Centre operates as one of a number of Jesuit social apostolates in Ireland and forms part of a wider group of social justice works for the Society at international level, ultimately headed by the Society's Social Justice and Ecology Secretariat in Rome. There is a strong desire to achieve greater collaboration within the Society between Provinces and Jesuit ministries in Europe, as working in partnership can deliver greater impact and influence.

During this cycle we will make fuller use of available media, including digital media, in an effort to widen our audiences. We will also increase the level of networking and collaboration in order to share experiences and enhance our learning.

We will:

- Develop an overarching communications strategy as an integral part of the Centre's Strategic Plan, to increase Jesuit, public, and political interest in its work in a planned and timely way, based on coherent messaging reflecting the Centre's operational plan;
- Develop a suite of operational policies and procedures to guide the strategic implementation of our communications across all channels and platforms;
- Clearly define our target audiences and engage with them using appropriate media;
- Develop a network of media and other stakeholder contacts, both internally and externally, to promote JCFJ's advocacy activities;
- Co-ordinate publication and distribution of *Working Notes*;
- Produce an annual report on JCFJ's activities;
- Refresh and update www.jcfj.ie ensuring branding consistency and appropriate links to other key Jesuit websites;
- Create and maintain an annual schedule of networking opportunities to provide greater collaboration between Provinces and Jesuit social justice networks in Ireland and Europe, enabling us to share information, plans, and learn from colleagues.

Intended Outcomes:

- A well-structured, planned, and delivered communications strategy that ensures JCFJ's work is consistently in the public eye, and where success can be measured;
- Effective implementation guided by robust procedures accessible to all;
- Better segmentation of stakeholders leading to more effective engagement with the Centre's work;
- Increasing positive exposure to audiences, both current and new;
- A more strategic approach to networking which adds value to the Centre and enables more effective contribution and collaboration.

GOAL 4: Support and develop our people through an Organisational Development programme



The success of our core activities relies on the consistent and creative performance of our team. Strengthening the organisation's capacities and valuing individual team members is thus central to our endeavours.

Goal 4.1: Supporting and Developing our People

To **support and develop our people** in ways which maximise the effectiveness and sustainability of our work.

Why this goal?

JCFJ supports and encourages a collaborative, engaging, and intellectually robust culture in achieving its vision for a society in which faith promotes justice for all, with a special focus on care of creation, and those who experience poverty, discrimination, and exclusion.

As the Centre enters its 40th year, it remains as important as ever that our analysis, reflection, and advocacy remain firmly rooted in the experiences of those facing social injustice, and animated by Ignatian spirituality.

The Society in Ireland is in a period of transition and adaptation. New ways of working, inclusive of many more lay collaborators, has prompted exploration of how and in what form Ignatian charism can be preserved and endure in Jesuit ministries. The Universal Apostolic Preferences validate and amplify the urgency of the Centre's work, and demand a strong response from us.

As a small team, flexibility in how we work, as well as availing of development and resource supports to enhance our capacity and impact, will be important during this next cycle.

We will:

- Maximise our resource capacity through the introduction of advance operational planning linked to the strategic plan;
- Explore opportunities to commission grant-funded research;
- Explore opportunities to provide guest secondments at the Centre;
- Ensure that lived experience of those experiencing social injustice constantly informs our work;
- Develop an understanding of the Jesuit Workplace ethos and practice;
- Undertake ongoing professional development opportunities;
- Twin with the Irish Jesuit Missions Office for peer-to-peer learning and best practice sharing.

Intended Outcomes:

- Strong operational planning leading to better and more regular flow of output, and accounting for peak periods;
- Additional income for the Centre linked to core activities;
- Good management of resourcing aligned to the Centre's needs;
- Well-developed sense of the grassroots challenges and considerations informing the Centre's work;
- Embedding Jesuit Workplace ethos and practice in our culture;
- All team members supported in their professional development through training and development opportunities;
- Greater learning and improved practice through peer engagement.

Strategic Execution and Success

The Director and team of the JCFJ are accountable for delivery of this Strategic Plan.

Each strategic objective is supported in its execution by a detailed operational plan. The operational plan will facilitate annual reporting to both internal and external audiences. It is a living document, and following review, may be revised accordingly.

The plan's implementation will be monitored by the Board and the JCFJ team annually, and a mid-term review of the Strategy and progress to date will be undertaken in 2021.

Working Notes



Working Notes, the journal of the Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice is published twice a year and has been in print for nearly four decades. In that time it has evolved from a simple pamphlet which highlighted the country's unemployment crisis into a widely respected journal, focusing on the social, economic and theological analysis of society in Ireland and abroad.

If you haven't already signed up to Working Notes do so today at jcfj.ie to ensure that you never miss an issue. Subscription is free, and you choose whether you would prefer to receive a hard copy of the journal or become a digital subscriber who will receive it by email.

Call us on 01 855 6814 or email info@jcfj.ie for more details.

To submit an article email Kevin Hargaden at khargaden@jcfj.ie

The Ethics Age *podcast*



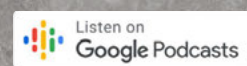
The Ethics Age podcast is a production of the Irish Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice, which deals with the ethical complexities of living in a prosperous but profoundly unequal society. The first four episodes are an accompaniment to the book 'Theological Ethics in a Neoliberal Age' by the social theologian of the centre, Kevin Hargaden.

In each episode, host Martina Madden talks to Kevin about a theme in the book, to unpack it for readers and for anyone interested in the challenges that Christians face living in a time of neoliberalism, the political and economic doctrine that aims to maximise profit for a few at the expense of the many.

You can listen to The Ethics Age podcast on iTunes/Spotify/Google Play.

Find the link on our website www.jcfj.ie/category/the-ethics-age-podcast/

Theological Ethics in a Neoliberal Age is available at <https://wipfandstock.com/theological-ethics-in-a-neoliberal-age.html> and at all good bookshops.





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