



A Culture of Encounter: Be the Church

He Ahurea Tūtaki ki Ētahi atu:
Me Noho ko Koutou te Hāhi

DISCUSSION GUIDE TO POPE FRANCIS' LETTER
Fratelli Tutti



Waiho i te toipoto, kua i te toiroa
Let us keep close together, not wide apart



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How to use this discussion guide

Pope Francis wrote his encyclical *Fratelli Tutti* in 2020, during the global pandemic, and in the worldwide context of increasing racism and fear of people seen as different. He asked us to deepen our understanding of ourselves as brothers and sisters, through developing a “culture of encounter” in which we get to know each other and listen to each other.

This discussion guide provides an opportunity to deepen our understanding of the messages from *Fratelli Tutti*, in the light of wider Catholic social teaching, prayer and discussion.

Please feel free to adapt the guide to suit your or your group’s needs.

Preparation

Fratelli Tutti is central to this discussion guide and although quite a substantial document, this guide has been designed to help you and your small group read through it without getting too overwhelmed.

Before each session, we suggest that you start preparing a week prior by reading the relevant chapter/s of *Fratelli Tutti* for that session. You can find the full encyclical on the Vatican’s website: www.vatican.va/. You can also download a copy from Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand’s website: <https://caritas.org.nz/parishes/social-justice-week>.

Each week’s session provides a brief summary and some selected quotes for your group to use as a starting point for reflection and discussion. However, please feel free to bring insights from your pre-reading and quotes that you found inspiring from your reading of the relevant chapter/s.

Quotes from *Fratelli Tutti* in this booklet are described using the initials of the encyclical FT followed by a paragraph number. For example, FT 12 means *Fratelli Tutti* paragraph 12.

Prayers

The discussion guide offers suggestions for opening and closing prayers. If your group has other prayers you wish to use or a preferred style of praying, please feel free to substitute these prayers. For examples, you may wish to use formal prayers of the Church or forms of intercessory prayer. What is important is taking time to sit, pray and reflect together.

A prayer focus – a lit candle, a Bible, crucifix, flowers, other symbols – and appropriate music as a background can all be very helpful.

Reflection and Discussion

All members of your small group have their own life experiences and faith journeys, as well as different gifts and insights. Each person has a significant contribution to make for each session.

The role of the facilitator is to assist the group by providing focus, some structure to the session, keep track of time, as well as encourage members to share and listen.

Faith in Action

Through the discussion, sharing and the Faith in Action sections we are invited to respond with love to our neighbours. Each session ends with an invitation and an opportunity to make a commitment to put our faith into action and invites participants the following week to share what they have been able to do.

We note that this is a reflection and discussion guide, where the focus is on faith development and sharing, rather than an academic study programme. Some participants have used similar programmes as a starting point for further Scriptural and Theological study, for example, through courses offered by Te Kupenga (www.tekupenga.ac.nz). Others have brought their insights and study to share with their group.

Session Outline

A session is generally expected to last approximately 60–90 minutes. Each group can determine its own timeframe, but a suggested timeframe could be as follows:

- Welcome and opening prayer (10 minutes)
- Reading relevant *Fratelli Tutti* excerpts and chapter summaries (15–20 minutes)
- Reflection and group discussion questions (30 minutes)
- Faith in Action questions (5–10 minutes)
- Closing prayer (5 minutes).

Relevance to Aotearoa New Zealand

Within Aotearoa New Zealand, there are a number of issues in our political process and before us in the media that are related to the themes and concerns that Pope Francis raises. Reflection on *Fratelli Tutti* can help form our consciences in these areas, including:

- Closing enduring economic inequalities in Aotearoa New Zealand.
- Healing historic injustices in the history of Aotearoa New Zealand.
- Continuing to offer a welcome to refugees and migrants.
- Combatting hatred and deadly violence used against faith communities.
- Overcoming misinformation and disinformation in digital and online communications.
- Celebrating the increased ethnic diversity seen in Catholic communities, and the increased religious diversity of New Zealand society.

Overview

Tirowhānui

Fratelli Tutti

Pope Francis' third encyclical *Fratelli Tutti – Brothers and Sisters* all, is based on the theme of fraternity and social friendship. In this encyclical, Pope Francis calls us to build a better world based on fraternal love. He warns all people that “the sense of belonging to a single human family is fading” (*Fratelli Tutti*, #30).

This builds on messages in his earlier writings. In his 2015 encyclical, *Laudato Si'*, he observed that social cohesion is being threatened in today's world and spoke of the importance of cultivating meaningful relationships with each other.

When we look back at Pope Francis' Apostolic Exhortion *Evangelii Gaudium* (2013) and encyclical *Laudato Si'* (2015), we see him building on from his messages of love and charity. In *Evangelii Gaudium* he stresses a need for love to be more present in our world and with *Laudato Si'*, integral ecology and healing our relationship with the rest of creation. Following these, *Fratelli Tutti* uses the same themes of love and care but reveals these themes in a new light with a different emphasis – on the vision of the human family, a call of transformation of our relationships with one another.

Pope Francis challenges us all to restore a sense of closeness, which he calls a “culture of encounter” and create paths of renewed encounter. He redirects us to the life of St Francis of Assisi in calling for “a love that transcends the barriers of geography and distance”. (*Fratelli Tutti*, #1.)

“Each one of us is called to be an artisan of peace, by uniting and not dividing, by extinguishing hatred and not holding on to it, by opening paths of dialogue and not by constructing new walls.”

Fratelli Tutti, #284

To read *Fratelli Tutti*, visit the Vatican's website: www.vatican.va.

Catholic Social Teaching

Ngā Akoranga Pāpori Katorika

It is important to understand the context and have a good idea of our tradition of Catholic social teaching. Consider familiarising yourself with other social encyclicals from our popes over the last 130 years:

Rerum Novarum: *On the Condition of Labour* (1891), Pope Leo XIII. Written against the backdrop of the industrial revolution and social unrest. It speaks on the rights and responsibilities of workers and employers.

Quadragesimo Anno: *On the Reconstruction of the Social order* (1931), Pope Pius XI. Written to commemorate the 40th anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*. The beginnings of socialism in Europe were taking place. It reaffirms the right to private property and develops the principle of subsidiarity.

Mater et Magistra: *Christianity and Social Progress* (1961), St. John XXIII. Written about the mission of the Church as “Mother and Teacher” and celebrates the 70th anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*. The document discusses the need for co-operation that transcends national boundaries.

Pacem in Terris: *Peace on Earth* (1963), St. John XXIII. This encyclical coincided with historical occurrences such as the erection of the Berlin Wall and is set in a world where the division between East and West is increasing.

Populorum Progressio: *On the Development of Peoples* (1967), St. Paul VI. Promotes the idea of international co-operation in the work of development and discusses integral human ecology.

Laborem Exercens: *On Human Work* (1981), St. John Paul II. Written to emphasise the dignity of work and the rights of workers and the priority of labour over capital.

Deus Caritas Est: *God is Love* (2005), Pope Benedict XVI. Emphasised the relationship between love of God and love of neighbour.

This list and summaries do not capture the breadth of wisdom of Catholic social teaching. To read these and other social encyclicals, you can find them at: www.vatican.va.

SESSION 1: A Call for a Culture of Encounter

Before the session, please read the Introduction (paragraphs 1–8) and **Chapter 1: Dark Clouds Over a Closed World** (paragraphs 9–55) of *Fratelli Tutti*.

Introductions

If meeting as a group for the first time, invite each person to briefly introduce themselves and why they have joined the small group.

Opening Prayer

E te Kaiwhakarato Ngākau Aroha, all loving provider, You call us to encounter You in each other today. Give us open hearts, wisdom and grace to create new paths of hope for all of creation. Āmene.

Excerpts and Chapter Summary

In this first chapter of *Fratelli Tutti*, Pope Francis reflects on the “dark clouds” hovering over our world. He speaks of the trends and issues which he observes is hindering the development of universal fraternity: selfishness, division and polarisation; a loss in our sense of history; a distortion of democracy, freedom and justice; our “throwaway” culture; conflict, fear and poverty; migration and trafficking; and the pandemic. Despite what might feel like a bleak start to this encyclical, Francis invites us to a renewed hope that is only possible by authentic encounters with hearts that are open, listen attentively, seek truth together in dialogue and penetrate right to the heart of matters.

“We are more alone than ever in an increasingly massified world that promotes individual interests and weakens the communitarian dimension of life” (FT 12).

“In this world that races ahead, yet lacks a shared roadmap, we increasingly sense that ‘the gap between concern for one’s personal well-being and the prosperity of the larger human family seems to be stretching to the point of complete division between individuals and human community.’” (FT 31).

“True, a worldwide tragedy like the Covid-19 pandemic momentarily revived the sense that we are a global community, all in the same boat, where one person’s problems are the problems of all. Once more we realized that no one is saved alone; we can only be saved together” (FT 32).

“The process of building fraternity, be it local or universal, can only be undertaken by spirits that are free and open to authentic encounters” (FT 50).

Group Discussion

- Share anything you found interesting or confronting in this chapter.
- Which trends or issues laid out in Fratelli Tutti resonate with you? How can you or your community bring hope to the difficult circumstances that Pope Francis outlines in Chapter 1?
- Pope Francis describes in paragraphs 47-50 how we can choose to become part of closed “virtual networks” in which we only hear what we want to hear. How can we avoid building these echo chambers around ourselves?
- Authentic listening is a two-way street. Learning about each other and our various perspectives requires perseverance – “moments of silence and suffering” (FT 50). When have you struggled to listen to another? What practical ways are there towards growing in our understanding of each other?
- Pope Francis describes human fraternity and social friendship as foundational in overcoming all these issues. What can be done to create communities of welcome and open to authentic encounters?

Faith in Action

- ✓ Choose an issue discussed in this chapter and learn more about what is happening in Aotearoa New Zealand, and how the Catholic Church is responding.
- ✓ Rather than relying on social media to keep in touch with friends or whānau, try to meet face to face allowing for interaction and the little details of human communication.
- ✓ What’s one commitment we can make to each other for an action we will undertake in the coming week?

Closing Prayer

A Prayer to the Creator from Fratelli Tutti

Lord, Father of our human family,
you created all human beings equal in dignity:
pour forth into our hearts a fraternal spirit
and inspire in us a dream of renewed encounter,
dialogue, justice and peace.

Move us to create healthier societies
and a more dignified world,
a world without hunger, poverty, violence and war.

May our hearts be open
to all the peoples and nations of the earth.
May we recognize the goodness and beauty
that you have sown in each of us,
and thus forge bonds of unity, common projects,
and shared dreams. Amen.



Photo by Josh Sorenson from Pexels

SESSION 2: Who is My Neighbour?

Before the session, please read **Chapter 2: A Stranger on the Road** (paragraphs 56–86) of *Fratelli Tutti*.

Opening Prayer

E te Atua o te aroha, God of love. Open our eyes to recognise the stranger on the road and give us the courage to welcome them as our neighbour. Help us to see people and places as you see them. Āmēne.

Touching Base

Before moving onto the next session, you may wish to share how the last week went from last week's Faith in Action section.

Excerpts and Chapter Summary

Following on from the challenges laid out in the first chapter, the second chapter uses the parable of the Good Samaritan to set the scene. Pope Francis asks us how we would see ourselves in this story and emphasises the “stranger on the road”. He speaks how our world has become afraid to come close to those we do not know, or situations that make us uncomfortable. The call to love, build bridges and recognise the face of Christ in every brother and sister may be challenging but when we can do this we uphold the dignity of all.

“Globalized society often has an elegant way of shifting its gaze.

Under the guise of being politically correct or ideologically fashionable, we look at those who suffer without touching them.

We televise live pictures of them, even speaking about them with euphemisms and with apparent tolerance” (FT 76).

“Caught up as we are with our own needs, the sight of a person who is suffering disturbs us. It makes us uneasy, since we have no time to waste on other people’s problems.

These are symptoms of an unhealthy society” (FT 65).

“We have the space we need for co-responsibility in creating and putting into place new processes and changes. Let us take an active

part in renewing and supporting our troubled societies. Today we have a great opportunity to express our innate sense of fraternity, to be Good Samaritans who bear the pain of other people's troubles rather than fomenting greater hatred and resentment" (FT 77).

Group Discussion

- Share anything you found interesting or confronting in this chapter.
- Who do you consider as your neighbours? Is your circle of neighbours growing or shrinking, and why?
- Different passages from the New Testament are listed as the basis of the call to fraternal love (FT 61). In 1 John 4:20 it reads: "*Those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen,*" alluding to the passiveness of the characters of the Priest and the Levite in the parable. How might you relate to these two characters? Who may be the "brothers or sisters", or "the others" in your community?
- Pope Francis challenges us "to put aside all differences and, in the face of suffering, to draw near to others with no questions asked" (FT 81). What challenges might you face in drawing near to others?

Faith in Action

- ✓ Read the parable of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10:25-37. Reflect and pray with it and see where God is speaking to you/guiding you.
- ✓ Initiate a conversation with someone in your community who you do not know well.
- ✓ Find out what the needs of your community are and seek an opportunity to support local initiatives.
- ✓ What's one commitment we can make to each other for an action we will undertake in the coming week?

Closing Prayer

Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Spirit of wisdom and understanding, enlighten our minds to perceive the mysteries of the universe in relation to eternity.

Spirit of right judgment and courage, guide us and make us firm in our baptismal decision to follow Jesus' way of love.

Spirit of knowledge and reverence, help us to see the lasting value of justice and mercy in our everyday dealings with one another. May we respect life as we work to solve problems of family and nation, economy and ecology.

Spirit of God, spark our faith, hope and love into new action each day. Fill our lives with wonder and awe in your presence which penetrates all creation.

Amen.



Sharing a meal together at St. Joseph's, Mt. Victoria, Wellington in 2018.

SESSION 3: Moving Beyond Ourselves

Before the session, please read **Chapter 3: Envisaging and Engendering an Open World** (paragraphs 87–127) and **Chapter 4: A Heart Open to the Whole World** (paragraphs 128–153) of *Fratelli Tutti*.

Opening Prayer

E te Ariki, You ask us to love one another. Remind us to look beyond ourselves and to serve our brothers and sisters on the margins and peripheries. We ask for your spirit of love to dwell in us. Āmene.

Touching Base

Before moving onto the next session, you may wish to share how the last week went from last week's Faith in Action section.

Excerpts and Chapter Summaries

Chapter 3

Pope Francis reminds us that as humans we are created to love and to be a “sincere gift of self to others” (FT 87). He states that love “is more than just a series of benevolent actions,” but rather “our love for others, for who they are, moves us to seek the best for their lives” (FT 94). Only by reclaiming this understanding of love or *caritas*, can we bring about universal communion.

In parallel, he also reminds us of the deeper meaning solidarity, which is a word not well understood by some. “Solidarity means much more than engaging in sporadic acts of generosity,” but rather we should be “thinking and acting in terms of community” (FT 116).

“In the first Christian centuries, a number of thinkers developed a universal vision in their reflections on the common destination of created goods. This led them to realize that if one person lacks what is necessary to live with dignity, it is because another person is detaining it. Saint John Chrysostom summarizes it in this way: ‘Not to share our wealth with the poor is to rob them and take away their livelihood. The riches we possess are not our own, but theirs as well.’” In the words of

Saint Gregory the Great, ‘When we provide the needy with their basic needs, we are giving them what belongs to them, not to us.’ (FT 119).

Chapter 4

Migrants and refugees have always been close to Pope Francis’ heart and he discusses migration within this chapter. He speaks of our obligation “to respect the right of all individuals to find a place that meets their basic needs and those of their families” (FT 129). He asks us to recognise that migrants are a rich gift to the communities and countries. He asks us to “open our hearts” to people who are different to us (FT 134), allowing migrants to continue being themselves while enabling the wider community to flourish and discover the gifts of each person. Being rooted in our own culture allows us to bring out the best in each other.

“I can welcome others who are different, and value the unique contribution they have to make, only if I am firmly rooted in my own people and culture” (FT 143).

“For a healthy relationship between love for one’s native land and a sound sense of belonging to our larger human family, it is helpful to keep in mind that global society is not the sum total of different countries, but rather the communion that exists among them” (FT 149).

Group Discussion

- Share anything you found interesting or confronting in these chapters.
- “All of us, as believers, need to recognise that love takes first place: love must never be put at risk, and the greatest danger lies in failing to love” (FT 92). Are there times we have failed to love? Are there times when we have found the strength to love in difficult circumstances?
- In what ways can you live more simply as an act of solidarity for our brothers and sisters?
- How firmly are you and your family rooted in your own culture and identity? How could you go about identifying your cultural roots and strengthening them?

Faith in Action

- ✓ Seek 3 ways to stand in solidarity or show charity to another person. Take a look at Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand's website for ideas: <https://caritas.org.nz/>.
- ✓ During his papacy, Pope Francis has set up an office in the Vatican dedicated to responding to migrant and refugee issues. Have a look at the Migrant & Refugees Section's website to see how you can respond: <https://migrants-refugees.va/>.
- ✓ What's one commitment we can make to each other for an action we will undertake in the coming week?

Closing Prayer

Prayer for Migrants, Refugees and Asylum Seekers from Nouwen Network

God, no one is stranger to you
And no one is ever far from your loving care.

In your kindness watch over migrants, refugees and asylum seekers,
Those separated from their loved ones,
Those who are lost
And those who have been exiled from their homes.

Bring them safely to the place where they long to be,
And help us always to show your kindness to strangers
And those in need.

We ask this through Christ our Lord,
Who too was a refugee and migrant
Who travelled to another land
Searching for a home.

Amen.



Students from St. Catherine's College, Wellington at their Caritas Challenge event in 2021.

SESSION 4: Dialogue and Charity That Seeks the Good of All

Before the session, please read **Chapter 5: A Better Kind of Politics** (paragraphs 154–197) and **Chapter 6: Dialogue and Friendship in Society** (paragraphs 198–224) of *Fratelli Tutti*.

Opening Prayer

E Hēhu Karaiti, Jesus Christ, you drew yourself close and sat with all people regardless of any differences. We ask for your spirit of gentleness and openness to seek the good in all things and all people. Āmene.

Touching Base

Before moving onto the next session, you may wish to share how the last week went from last week's Faith in Action section.

Excerpts and Chapter Summaries

Chapter 5

In this chapter, Pope Francis reflects on the political and social climate and asks us to shift toward charity and a shared pursuit of the common good. He explains how words like, “popular”, “populist”, “liberal” and “people” have lost their true meaning and become weapons that divide and exclude – creating barriers for dialogue, which may be a slow process but pursues the common good.

“The word ‘people’ has a deeper meaning that cannot be set forth in purely logical terms. To be part of a people is to be part of a shared identity arising from social and cultural bonds. And that is not something automatic, but rather a slow, difficult process... of advancing towards a common project” (FT 158).

The fixation on market economics has shrouded the attention to ensuring that every person has enough to live a thriving life. *Fratelli Tutti* #168 reads, “The marketplace, by itself, cannot resolve every problem... [Neoliberalism] does not resolve the inequality

that gives rise to new forms of violence threatening the fabric of society... we must put human dignity back at the centre and on that pillar build the alternative social structures we need.”

Pope Francis asks for a “better kind of politics” which works for “a social and political order whose soul is social charity” (FT 180).

“Only a gaze transformed by charity can enable the dignity of others to be recognized and, as a consequence, the poor to be acknowledged and valued in their dignity, respected in their identity and culture, and thus truly integrated into society. That gaze is at the heart of the authentic spirit of politics” (FT 187).

“If someone helps an elderly person cross a river, that is a fine act of charity. The politician, on the other hand, builds a bridge, and that too is an act of charity” (FT 186).

Chapter 6

“If we want to encounter and help one another, we have to dialogue” (FT 198).

Throughout this encyclical, Pope Francis keeps reiterating the need to recover the lost arts of communicating directly with each other. This means breaking past the individualism and isolation that thrives in the digital world. Even from the first chapter, we are challenged to encounter one another in honest and respectful dialogue and seek the strengths in who we might see in ‘opposition’ to us – especially in our increasingly digital world. Despite an emphasis on being open to different perspectives, Francis does remind us that “the solution is not relativism” (FT 206), but that “we need to learn how to unmask the various ways that the truth is manipulated, distorted and concealed in public and private discourse” (FT 208).

“The dignity of others is to be respected in all circumstances, not because that dignity is something we have invented or imagined, but because human beings possess an intrinsic worth superior to that of material objects and contingent situations” (FT 213).

“To speak of a “culture of encounter” means that we, as a people, should be passionate about meeting others, seeking points of contact, building bridges, planning a project that includes everyone” (FT 216).

“Kindness frees us from the cruelty that at times infects human relationships, from the anxiety that prevents us from thinking of others, from the frantic flurry of activity that forgets that others also have a right to be happy” (FT 224).

Group Discussion

- Share anything you found interesting or confronting in this chapter.
- Pope Francis asks for a love that “draws near and becomes real”. What does this mean to you? How have you pursued this type of social charity in your own interactions?
- When have you felt closed off by someone who had a differing opinion to your own? Or have you perhaps rejected someone else’s opinion before listening to them? How could these types of interactions be handled differently?

Faith in Action

- ✓ Next time you have a conversation with someone you may not agree with, practice patience and gentleness and make an active effort to listen before being tempted to disagree straight away.
- ✓ Pope Francis notes how easy it is for us to forget to be kind to one another. In the next week, make it a point to stop and be kind to another person – “give the gift of a smile,” or “speak a word of encouragement” (FT 224).
- ✓ What’s one commitment we can make to each other for an action we will undertake in the coming week?

Closing Prayer

Spirit & Verse: A Prayer for Living “Fratelli Tutti” **by Cameron Bellm**

When our lofty words of love have been emptied of their meaning,
When our borders and computer screens have erected impenetrable walls,
When our minds are so quick to conflate “other” with “enemy,”
How will we find our common humanity?

It’s never too late to make an earnest and tender start.

May we remove from our pockets the stones we intended to throw.
And cement them together to build a home that welcomes all.

May we repent of our indifference and move into genuine encounter.
Instead of drawing battle lines,

May we draw our chairs up to a communal table,
Where we can feast in the knowledge of our shared dignity.
May God grant us the holy vision.

To see every human being a sacred mystery,
And may we love each mystery not abstractly, but concretely.

Just as Thomas touched the wounds of Jesus,
May we be unafraid to touch the wounds of our suffering neighbour.

May we lay down our arms and offer our outstretched hands,
Until there is no “them,” but only “us,”
Until we are at last, sisters and brothers, all.

Amen.



Bringing the message of *Laudato Si'*, hearing the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor, to Parliament.

SESSION 5: Being Architects of Peace

Before the session, please read **Chapter 7: Paths of Renewed Encounter** (paragraphs 225–270) of *Fratelli Tutti*.

Opening Prayer

God of all peoples, E te Atua o ngā iwi katoa, we pray for the power to be gentle, the strength to be forgiving and the patience to be understanding. Help us to devote our thoughts and energy to the task of making peace with those who we might be indifferent with. Āmene.

Touching Base

Before moving onto the next session, you may wish to share how the last week went from last week's Faith in Action section.

Excerpts and Chapter Summary

In this chapter Pope Francis invites us to foster a culture of encounter by way of peace. He speaks of peace as a vital part to a renewed global social friendship but urges us to learn from the past rather than to look away from it. He encourages us to develop a penitential memory based on understanding the historical truth of events as “pain and conflict transform us” (FT 226) and is crucial to healing the past through a view of hope that will bring about true justice.

“Nowadays, it is easy to be tempted to turn the page, to say that all these things happened long ago and we should look to the future. For God’s sake, no! We can never move forward without remembering the past; we do not progress without an honest and unclouded memory” (FT 249).

Forgiveness and reconciliation are central to Jesus’ teachings and to our search for renewed encounter. Paragraph 50 of *Fratelli Tutti* expresses that “forgiving does not mean forgetting”. It does not mean that we do not hold people accountable for the harm they have caused but invites people to overcome anger and revenge and choose instead to reflect “God’s own infinite ability to forgive”.

“Justice is properly sought solely out of love of justice itself... Forgiveness is precisely what enables us to pursue justice without falling into a spiral of revenge or the injustice of forgetting” (FT 252).

“If I do not deny that dignity to the worst of criminals, I will not deny it to anyone. I will give everyone the possibility of sharing this planet with me, despite all our differences” (FT 269).

Group Discussion

- Share anything you found interesting or confronting in this chapter.
- Pope Francis reminds us of the importance of remembering, even the difficult or painful memories. What is a personal or a historic memory which has moved you to work for justice? Who is a historical figure who inspires you to act justly?
- Forgiveness and reconciliation are central in this chapter. Where have you experienced forgiveness and reconciliation? How can you foster these in your community?

Faith in Action

- ✓ Practice being an architect of peace and practice forgiveness by reaching out to someone who you may have hurt or who has hurt you.
- ✓ Pray for peace in places around the world where there is conflict, especially in the Holy Land.
- ✓ Learn more about Pope John XXIII’s encyclical *Pacem in Terris* (1963) on establishing universal peace in truth, justice, charity and liberty. If you’re unable to read the entire encyclical, Catholic News Service has a great video: <https://youtu.be/kjllK-TzVA8>.
- ✓ What’s one commitment we can make to each other for an action we will undertake in the coming week?

Closing Prayer

Prayer of St Francis of Assisi

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.

O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.
Amen.



Caritas Director Julianne Hickey welcoming Te Po Hohua, our Kaihāpai Māori.

SESSION 6: Bringing the Music of the Gospel to Our Public Squares

Before the session, please read **Chapter 8: Religions at the Service of Fraternity in Our World** (paragraphs 271–287) of *Fratelli Tutti*.

Opening Prayer

E te Atua, Lord God, we thank you for the time we have spent sitting, praying, listening and sharing. May you bring us a renewed sense of hope for the world and its healing. Āmene.

Touching Base

Before moving onto the next session, you may wish to share how the last week went from last week's Faith in Action section.

Excerpts and Chapter Summary

In this final chapter of *Fratelli Tutti*, Pope Francis talks about the contribution our religious traditions can make to social cohesion. He invites Catholics, Christians and all religious groups to foster social friendship with each other in order to build back our sense of one human family. He reminds us that true religion is at the service of fraternity because we find our roots in finding the dignity of the human person as “the visible image of the invisible God” (FT 273).

People of faith – all religious traditions – are called to an essential task which Pope Francis has set in this encyclical. We are called to concentrate on what is essential, love of God and love for our neighbour. He appeals for all religions to work toward peace, justice and fraternity.

“It should be acknowledged that “among the most important causes of the crises of the modern world are a desensitized human conscience, a distancing from religious values and the prevailing individualism accompanied by materialistic philosophies that deify the human person and introduce worldly and material values in place of supreme and transcendental principles... Room needs to be made

for reflections born of religious traditions that are the repository of centuries of experience and wisdom” (FT 275).

“The Church, while respecting the autonomy of political life, does not restrict her mission to the private sphere. On the contrary, ‘she cannot and must not remain on the sidelines’ in the building of a better world.” (FT 276).

“If the music of the Gospel ceases to sound in our homes, our public squares, our workplaces, our political and financial life, then we will no longer hear the strains that challenge us to defend the dignity of every man and woman”. Others drink from other sources. For us the wellspring of human dignity and fraternity is in the Gospel of Jesus Christ” (FT 277).

Group Discussion

- Pope Francis lists those who have inspired him in his reflection on universal fraternity – Catholic and non-Catholics. Who has inspired you to work for justice and peace? What aspects of their life can you bring into yours?
- As a group, read through the paragraph 285 below. Which statements of Pope Francis and the Grand Imam Ahmad Al-Tayyeb strike you most?

“In the name of God, who has created all human beings equal in rights, duties and dignity, and who has called them to live together as brothers and sisters, to fill the earth and make known the values of goodness, love and peace;

“In the name of innocent human life that God has forbidden to kill, affirming that whoever kills a person is like one who kills the whole of humanity, and that whoever saves a person is like one who saves the whole of humanity;

“In the name of the poor, the destitute, the marginalized and those most in need, whom God has commanded us to help as a duty required of all persons, especially the wealthy and those of means;

“In the name of orphans, widows, refugees and those exiled from their homes and their countries; in the name of all victims of wars, persecution and injustice; in the name of the weak, those who live in fear, prisoners of war and those tortured in any part of the world, without distinction;

“In the name of peoples who have lost their security, peace and the possibility of living together, becoming victims of destruction, calamity and war;

“In the name of human fraternity, that embraces all human beings, unites them and renders them equal;

“In the name of this fraternity torn apart by policies of extremism and division, by systems of unrestrained profit or by hateful ideological tendencies that manipulate the actions and the future of men and women;

“In the name of freedom, that God has given to all human beings, creating them free and setting them apart by this gift;

“In the name of justice and mercy, the foundations of prosperity and the cornerstone of faith;

“In the name of all persons of goodwill present in every part of the world;

“In the name of God and of everything stated thus far, [we] declare the adoption of a culture of dialogue as the path; mutual cooperation as the code of conduct; reciprocal understanding as the method and standard”.

Faith in Action

- ✓ Look for opportunities in your community for working towards a common goal with people from other religious traditions.
- ✓ Make a commitment to touch base with your small group even after your sessions using this discussion guide. In order for there to be a culture of encounter, we must begin with the people around us.
- ✓ What’s one commitment we can make to each other for an action we will undertake in the coming week?

Closing Prayer

An Ecumenical Christian Prayer from Fratelli Tutti

O God, Trinity of love,
from the profound communion of your divine life,
pour out upon us a torrent of fraternal love.
Grant us the love reflected in the actions of Jesus,
in his family of Nazareth,
and in the early Christian community.

Grant that we Christians may live the Gospel,
discovering Christ in each human being,
recognizing him crucified
in the sufferings of the abandoned
and forgotten of our world,
and risen in each brother or sister
who makes a new start.

Come, Holy Spirit, show us your beauty,
reflected in all the peoples of the earth,
so that we may discover anew
that all are important and all are necessary,
different faces of the one humanity
that God so loves.

Amen.



Members of Otari Catholic Parish performing *He Waiata mo Laudato Si'* for Laudato Si' Week 2020.

**“To restore
hope and bring
about renewal...it
is closeness; it is the
culture of encounter.”**

Fratelli Tutti,
p.30, 2020