

## **Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice**

### **(<https://www.activelink.ie/node/94587>)**

The Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice (JCFJ) is an agency of the Irish Jesuit Province, dedicated to undertaking social analysis and theological reflection in relation to issues of social justice, including housing and homelessness, penal policy, environmental justice, and economic ethics.

The Centre emerged from the work of a small group of Jesuits who were living and working in Ballymun, in the late 1970s, and was intended to promote social justice and critically examine issues of structural injustice and poverty. The original focus was on researching and commenting on the high level of poverty, unemployment and poor access to jobs and training in Ireland at that time. Staff within the Centre also provided support to local community groups.

## **Mission**

The mission of the Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice is to promote justice for all through social analysis, theological reflection, action, education, and advocacy.

## **History**

The Centre was founded in 1980, when Ireland was in the midst of serious economic recession, unemployment, and emigration. At that time, it engaged heavily with the issues of poverty and inequality, economic justice and unemployment, drawing on the work of Jesuits living in communities who were on the margins of society due to economic deprivation. The focus on economic justice is still at the heart of the Centre's mission; our work includes the analysis of economic inequality, ethics, and anti-poverty strategies across the decades. We have adapted to changing circumstances, from the booming economy of the Celtic Tiger era through the years of austerity following the 2008 crash, right up to our contemporary period of apparent recovery.

The long-standing work of Jesuits including Peter McVerry SJ in the area of homelessness and related issues informs the Centre's ongoing advocacy in the areas of housing policy and reform, housing inequality, and housing sector regulation.

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

As the effects of climate breakdown have intensified, the Centre during the last decade has introduced advocacy on climate change and biodiversity to its agenda, tackling themes of population displacement, ecological economics and politics, and taking inspiration from Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si'*.

Theological reflection has always been the nexus of the Centre's work. Considering social issues from a Christian perspective which is guided by the tenets of Ignatian Spirituality is one of the unique aspects of our approach.

The JCFJ is based beside St Francis Xavier church on Gardiner Street, Dublin. Our offices are adjacent to Jesuit Refugee Service Ireland (<https://www.jrs.ie/>), Irish Jesuits International (<http://www.iji.ie/>) and the and form part of Gardiner Street Parish (<https://gardinerstparish.ie/>).

## **Our Work**

The societal issues that the Centre focuses on are complex and require thorough research and well considered plans for action. Rather than offering short-term solutions, we conduct independent analysis and reflection in order to tackle structural injustice. The Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice has developed a reputation for credibility, competence and compassion in several key areas of public policy. The policy focus of our work shifts organically over time, as it is a priority of the Centre to respond in a relevant way to the changing needs of society.

Our current focus areas include:

- Economic Justice (<https://www.jcfj.ie/what-we-do/economic-justice/>)
- Environmental Justice (<https://www.jcfj.ie/what-we-do/environmental-justice/>)
- Housing Crisis (<https://www.jcfj.ie/what-we-do/housing-crisis/>)
- Penal Policy (<https://www.jcfj.ie/what-we-do/penal-policy/>)

All of our work is grounded on Theological Reflection (<https://www.jcfj.ie/what-we-do/theological-reflection/>) informed by Ignatian Spirituality and Catholic Social Teaching.

## **Contact Info**

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**General:** 54-72 Gardiner Street Upper, Dublin 1

### **Website**

<https://www.jcfj.ie/> (<https://www.jcfj.ie/>)

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