

CALL CHURCH ACTION ON LABOUR AND LIFE

“NO FUTURE WITHOUT GOOD WORK!”

Planning a local Action

Invitation to action

A Church action could be:

- a. **Inviting** people of faith to meet and/or to worship on a theme of good work and precarious work
*(at any convenient date or at a special date or period in the year to be suggested by each Church:
your National Prayer Day / the 1st May as Labour Day / the 7th October as World Day of Decent Work /
or the 10th December as World Day of Human Rights).*
- b. **Condemning** publicly bad local work conditions and supporting employees in precarious jobs
(with media instruments such as flyers, post cards, posters, and with a petition to local authorities).
- c. **Helping** directly workers in precarious jobs with social services, youth or voluntary groups
(support and counselling in alliance with non-governmental organisations or trade unions).
- d. **Taking a position** on better principles and standards of good work to be fixed in the law
*(towards local and national authorities, members of parliaments and then at EU level in alliance with
social and political partners).*

It is important to **advertise** the event locally and in the national Church.

* *Material for such actions can soon be [downloaded from the CALL website!](#) * (see list below)*

Discussion and/or worship on precarious work

We suggest a local action starting with a Church coffee morning or evening, which may include worship.

Partners

An effective method to get interested people is to prepare the meeting with local people. So the first task of the preparation is to find partners.

Who in your area are the people affected by precarious work? Can I find them? Can I plan the church coffee discussion or evening meeting with them?

Do we want audience for this meeting, or can I reach so many of them that it is better to let them share their experiences?

It is not always easy to get in touch with people whose work is precarious. In that case the parish can start the discussion. The content would be just the phenomenon of bad working conditions, and the partners could be from local work places or enterprises, if the parish has contact with them.

Trade unions and other work related organisations are also good partners.

Planning process

It takes time to find partners and work out with them what is the best issue for the discussion in this area, so it is best to start the preparation six months in advance.

When the partners are found, the parish invites them to a planning meeting, where experiences and attitudes about precarious work are shared.

Then the group decides what kind of event they want to arrange, which issues will be covered, with which aims, and who should participate.

After these important decisions the planning goes on as usual. In order to have the question properly dealt with, a discussion time will be needed.

At the end of the event is the right moment to evaluate which next steps are possible.

Steps in direction of the event

Advertising is important. All the partners do it for their contacts.

It is important for the parish to take these questions as a spiritual concern. They should therefore also be present in the worship (see documentation on biblical texts and prayers).

It is valuable if the planning group itself can also be part in designing this worship and contribute to the sermon and the prayers.

Access to employers

Not only the workers or employees, but also enterprises and employers could be invited to discuss their working conditions and to move to better work or good work.

Biblical references

(two or three to be developed with reflections + one as bibliodrama)

Basic vision: God on the side of the poor and oppressed

Ex 20:2

I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.

Deut 24:14

Do not take advantage of a hired worker who is poor and needy, whether that worker is a fellow Israelite or a foreigner residing in one of your towns.

Amos 5:24

Let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!

Matt 5:6

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

Matt 18:11

For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.

Matt 25:40

Jesus: whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.

Psalms 145:15

The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food at the proper time. = The promise of fullness of life for everyone holds true – for that reason we may act faithfully and accordingly.

Some more references from the Bible

Exodus 1

The big story about precarious work.

Matt 7,12

“The golden rule” – useful also when it is about good and bad work.

Matt 11,28-30

A promise to the worker, both in good and bad work.

Matt 20,1-15

A parable that tells us that it is never too late to come to God, but maybe it also says something about working life and fair payment.

Philip. 4,10-20

The church as the good example – The Philippians’ concern about Paul

1 Tim 5,18

The worker is worthy of his wages – even in church.

Hebr 13,2

Take care of everyone.

From Torsten Mereis' speech in Brussels 2012:

“Theological Perspective: Precarisation as Deprivation of Rights”:

The political duty of Christians

Prayer and “the struggle for a body of law which prevents its equality towards all from becoming a shroud for a factual unequal preservation and limitation of strong and weak, entrepreneurs and workers, rich and poor, employers and employed.” (Karl Barth 1946)

Precarisation primarily threatens the rights of those members of society who command only little economic, cultural and social capital. As the Jewish-Christian idea of justice is directed towards the interests of the weakest members of a given society, Precarisation is, in that perspective, unjust.

In a theological-ethical perspective, the danger connected to precarisation lies in its tendency towards a deprivation of rights. This danger is heightened by crisis, threatens rights concerning formal employment and concerns social security and job-floor participation ('voice').



Action material will include (in English only – to be translated and distributed):

- Invitation letter for an action on Good Work and bad employment conditions (**available**)
- Local action planning with biblical references (**available**)
- Prayers and liturgical material (to be developed, examples available)
- Discussion plans for groups, youth and adults, on employment alternatives (to be developed, examples available)
- Policy Paper on “Good Work” and Position in short (Executive Summary)
- Stories of precarious jobs, basic information (on request)
- Pictures for post cards and flyers (on request)