

Shrewsbury and Liverpool Justice and Peace Commissions

Prayer of Action of Christians against Torture

*Lord Jesus,
You experienced in prison the suffering and death of a prisoner of
conscience.*

*You were plotted against, betrayed by a friend, and arrested
under cover of darkness by men who came with clubs and swords.*

*You were tortured, beaten and humiliated, and sentenced to an
agonizing death though you had done no wrong.*

Be now with prisoners throughout the world.

*Be with them in the darkness of the dungeon, in the loneliness of
separation from those they love;*

*Be with them in their fear of what may come to them, in the
agony of their torture and in the face of execution and death.*

*Stretch out your hands in power to break their chains and open
the gates of freedom, so that your kingdom of justice may be
established now among them.*

Amen

For more details of their work see Page 11



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From the Editor

Some of you may have been wondering why this edition of *MouthPeace* has been so late in coming to you.

Some of you may be disappointed that events being held in June have not received timely publicity.

I apologise for this.

Some of you will have heard or read about the changes in the Diocese of Shrewsbury which have included the compulsory redundancy of our paid Justice and Peace Co-ordinator Joan Sharples.

Because we were waiting to hear exactly what was happening it was decided, with the agreement of Steve Atherton the Liverpool J & P worker, to delay the publication of *MouthPeace* until we had definite news.

There have already been articles appearing in various national Catholic papers about this. Some of them are more accurate than others. So we of the Shrewsbury Commission for the Promotion of Justice, Peace and Social Responsibility present below a detailed account of the facts.

Joan was of course a much loved and respected Justice and Peace worker both locally and nationally, and so I have also included some of the personal tributes already received in the few days since her redundancy was confirmed.

Personally as a member of the Justice and Peace Commission, and more recently as editor of *MouthPeace*, I have found Joan is always kind and helpful. She is always available for discussion, thoughtful and encouraging. She has a wealth of knowledge and experience which she quietly and sensitively passes on as appropriate with no suggestion of taking control. She is a very good person to work with.

If this *MouthPeace* seems rather heavy on this particular issue it reflects the sadness and dismay many of us are at present feeling.

I do not apologise for this.

Marian Thompson

5 June 2012

REORGANISATION OF THE DIOCESE OF SHREWSBURY IMPLICATIONS FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE

Bernard Payne and Marian Thompson write on behalf of the Shrewsbury J & P Commission:

In 2011 the new Bishop Mark Davies undertook a significant reorganisation of the Diocese, moving various groups and commissions into newly-formed departments. A Department of New Evangelisation was established headed by Mgr Philip Egan, Vicar General, with Barbara Davies as newly-appointed co-ordinator. The Justice and Peace Commission was placed in this new department under the new name Commission for the Promotion of Justice, Peace and Social Responsibility. Joan Sharples, our J&P co-ordinator, was informed of these changes and attended the first meeting of the new department in December 2011.

Prior to the reorganisation the Justice and Peace Commission was located in the Department for Christian Responsibility, together with CAFOD and Marriage & Family Life Ministry. Also in this grouping were the Children's Society, Child Protection Issues, the Deaf Service, Special Needs, Prison & Hospital Chaplaincy, etc. As a Justice and Peace Commission with our paid co-ordinator Joan, we were free to plan and work out our activities, with Joan reporting to Bishop Brian Noble, as required. The Commission worked closely with CAFOD – supporting each other's activities particularly in advocacy and campaigning tasks, sharing publicity where possible – and Sue Bownas the CAFOD Shrewsbury Diocesan Manager has been and remains a valued member of the Commission. Under the new organisation CAFOD has been placed in the Department of Administration under Non-Diocesan Charities.

Shrewsbury Diocese covers a large varied geographical area covering the Merseyside and Greater Manchester fringes in the north, through Cheshire and down to Shropshire – no less than 90 miles from one far boundary to the other. Commission members had been invited by Bishop Brian Noble from all these areas. Because members were unlikely to meet in the normal course of events, high priority was given to the Commission's quarterly meetings, always well attended. The work of Joan Sharples as full-time (latterly part-time) J&P Co-ordinator was crucial in ensuring that the Commission could work effectively as a team despite the geographical spread.

Reorganisation of the Diocese of Shrewsbury *continued ...*

The Commission's meeting of February 2012 sought to understand the key implications of the reorganisation and of its own new title, since no guidance had been given prior to the illustration of the new arrangements in the Diocesan Yearbook, December 2011. Mgr Egan was invited to come to the Commission's 25 April 2012 meeting to explain the changes. Then he described the rationale for the reorganisation, including the concept of "the New Evangelisation" and the Commission's role in that. Discussion followed regarding implications for our future work, and how we might contribute to the Year of Faith, starting in October. The discussion assumed that Joan would be there as our Co-ordinator.

On May 9, at the Commission's regular monthly Core Group meeting, Joan informed those present that the previous Friday she had been called to the Curial Offices to be told that a compulsory redundancy process had been initiated. This news was so upsetting to Joan that she was recommended to take a period of sick leave. Immediately following the Core Group meeting, the Commission Chair Tony Walsh requested an urgent meeting with Mgr Egan to clarify the position and discuss the implications. This request materialised in two separate meetings attended by Tony Walsh and Bernard Payne (Commission Vice-Chair): on May 22 with Fr. Philip Moor, Head of the Department of Administration, and Carol Lawrence, Financial Secretary (covering the specific redundancy issues), and on 1 June with Mgr Philip Egan (dealing with issues concerning the ongoing work of the Commission in the absence of paid support).

On May 22 Fr Moor and Carol Lawrence set out the financial background to the three proposed redundancies (Joan's, and those of the Co-ordinator for Marriage & Family Life, and Youth Ministry Co-ordinator): they said that since 2009 and the fall in interest rates (from 5% down to 0.5% with dramatic effect on investment income) the Diocese has been struggling to balance the books and had come under close scrutiny by the auditors. Particular attention has had to be given to central Curial budgets so as to limit the impact at parish level as much as possible. Over that period numerous savings had been found – including last year the removing of the post of RCIA Co-ordinator. However, according to the Diocese, substantial savings were still needed, and no real alternative had been found to seeking further savings from the central salaries budgets – i.e. the three posts now identified. The meeting also clarified the timetable: apparently we were now two weeks into a four week period of consultation, both with the post-holders and with the affected Commissions – the purpose included the receiving of any ideas regarding alternative sources of funding that might allow paid support to continue into the future and redundancy avoided. The final decision on the redundancies was to be taken by the Diocesan Board of Trustees – later set for a special meeting on 30 May.

At the 8 May meeting at the Curial Offices Joan had been unaccompanied. Joan was invited to attend a second meeting on 24 May, this time it being suggested she had someone to accompany her in accordance with UK Employment Law. This meeting dealt with a number of details and confirmed that a final decision on the proposed redundancy would be taken the following week by the Trustees, five of who had recently been notified by Bishop Mark that they were being replaced.

Collectively, Commission members were concerned at the prospect of the Board of Trustees making their decision prior to full discussion of the implications for the Commission's future work. Accordingly, on 29 May a note was emailed to Bishop Mark and other trustees to highlight the various concerns. It acknowledged the need for any organisation to face the need for redundancy, but concluded with the following points:

Aside from the very important issue of the personal consequences for Joan, the Commission feels aggrieved at its exclusion from meaningful discussions with the diocese on the Commission's work in the new era – the outlook of Bishop Mark, the financial context, etc. We ask that these past deficiencies are acknowledged, and that the necessary dialogue is opened up to allow the Commission to reshape its programme and method of working, including its relationship with partner organisations, and the prospect or otherwise of some paid support for its work.

At the 1 June meeting with Mgr Egan, it was confirmed that the Trustees had made their decision, and that Joan was being made redundant, in effect from early June. From the Diocesan standpoint the redundancy was said to be a very sad necessity, and Mgr Egan stressed that the work of justice and peace in the diocese remained an essential part of our Christian mission. The scene was set for further discussion in the next few weeks of the way in which the Commission can adapt its work to fit the new circumstances – including of course its work on *MouthPeace*.

3.6.2012

So Joan now leaves Diocesan service after 19 years unstinting and inspirational work. Her contributions will not be forgotten, and we certainly hope that she will remain active in the J&P field in other capacities. **(More on pp 6-7)**



ORANGUTANS AND SUSTAINABLE PALM OIL

Bernard Payne writes:

This article is by Cat Barton, Assistant Conservation Officer at Chester Zoo. Cat gave a talk to the Chester World Development Forum about her recent visit to Borneo, one of ten locations across the globe where the Zoo is actively involved in field conservation programmes designed to help endangered species. The "Realm of the Red Ape" programme runs in Borneo and Sumatra, and is particularly concerned with the orangutan, whose survival is threatened by ever-growing palm oil plantations.



The words 'palm oil' are often muttered in conservation circles, on wildlife documentaries and even in supermarkets. But are people really aware of how it is used, the issues surrounding it and what is being done to tackle the problem?

Palm oil comes from the fruit of the oil palm plant. Native to West Africa it was introduced to Indonesia and Malaysia in the early 1900s. It is an edible oil used in the production of food products such as cake, chocolate and margarine, and also in many cosmetics and cleaning products. Palm oil is often not labelled on food products and the generic term 'vegetable oil' is used.

Despite all the negative press which surrounds palm oil, it is the most productive type of all edible oil plants. Oil palm plants produce 5-10 times more oil per acre than other edible oils. This means that palm oil has the potential to be a more environmentally friendly oil than others if grown in the right way. Indonesia and Malaysia produce the majority of the world's palm oil, and this industry forms an important part of the economy in these countries which struggle with poverty. The problem with palm oil is that rainforests are being destroyed to accommodate oil palm plantations.

In Borneo and Sumatra, deforestation has left patches of unconnected forest in a sea of oil palm plantations. For species such as orangutans and tigers, isolated forest patches mean overcrowding, loss in genetic diversity, sensitivity to natural disasters and human-wildlife conflict. The whole ecosystem is also affected; these high-profile species represent only a fraction of the huge range of species found in these highly biodiverse tropical regions. Indigenous communities who depend on the natural resources of the forests and rivers to survive are also affected, and the clearing of forested land and burning of peat soil causes an increase in greenhouse gases, contributing to global warming.

There isn't an easy answer for the consumer. A boycott of palm oil is not necessarily the solution. Although this is a choice that many take, demand for palm oil is growing as edible oils are essential for so many products. If palm oil is not used, another crop which is potentially more harmful to biodiversity will just take its place. The more responsible choice is "sustainable palm oil".

The Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) was set up in 2004 and members include non-government organisations (NGOs) and all sectors of the palm oil industry. The RSPO have strict guidelines and criteria to ensure that the Certified Sustainable Palm Oil (CSPO) produced is done so with minimal impact on wildlife, indigenous people and the environment. (For more information on the full criteria, visit www.rspo.org) Although some believe the RSPO criteria are still too lenient, it's the best option we have at the moment—but the approach could be better.

Sustainable palm oil is gradually making its way on to our supermarket shelves. At the moment, there isn't enough sustainable palm oil being produced to cover the annual demand. But also there isn't enough demand for sustainable palm oil from consumers. Currently, there is more sustainable palm oil being produced than is being bought. This is because CSPO is more expensive to purchase - and with no demand from consumers, companies are less likely to spend the extra money.

In 2011 a change in labelling laws was passed which meant that it will become mandatory in the EU for manufacturers to label palm oil on food products. This allows us to make a fully informed choice about whether or not we want to purchase products containing palm oil. This is the first step in creating a market for sustainable palm oil.

Creating the demand for sustainable palm oil is where the power of the consumer can come into effect. Write to your local supermarkets and tell them you would like to see more products on the shelves containing sustainable palm oil. If you don't buy a product because it contains palm oil, tell the company that makes it. Many companies have already made public commitments to ensure that all of their palm oil is sourced sustainably by 2015.

The bottom line is: this is a complicated issue, and comes down to consumer choice. But whatever your choice, make it known.

Go to www.chesterzoo.org for more information about Realm of the Red Ape and Chester Zoo's other field conservation programmes.



WAR ON WAR

Keith Taylor writes:

In February Bruce Kent came to Macclesfield and addressed three audiences: All Hallows Catholic College Sixth Form, the listeners to the local community radio station Canalside Radio, and in the evening, a public meeting of some 70 Catholics and representatives of churches and lay organisations

In advance of his visit, Bruce kindly supplied us with an article about his message which we were able to place in various church magazines in Macclesfield. The title he gave it reflects his approach. He called it "War on War." It could have been "Total War on War" such is the thoroughgoing change in our attitudes and behaviour which he is calling for.

Our starting point is the unfortunate but widespread assumption that war is inevitable and military preparedness essential. Bruce pointed to his own upbringing and early life which included National Service in the army. It was nuclear weapons which caused him to question the morality of war. Until then, like so many, he had seen no reason to challenge a way of thinking which is part of our national culture.

Leadership of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) brought Bruce to national prominence. (It was interesting to see the number of people who greeted him on his visit to Macclesfield with a warmth which suggested that they were glad to have supported and in some cases marched with him.) Now many years on from those turbulent times – but, for example, still firmly opposed to the replacement of Trident – Bruce presents a series of insights and proposals which together undermine prevailing attitudes, replacing them with a culture of peace.

Fundamental to this culture are facts to be recognised:

- War is not inevitable. Despite their bloody history, the nations of Europe are now locked together and war between them is inconceivable. Cooperation is more important than violence as a determinant of human behaviour. There are other ways of dealing with conflicts of interest.
- War is too costly. Over 20 million people, mainly civilians, have died in various wars since 1945. Global military expenditure is \$1,630,000,000,000 every year on the military - enough to bring an end to hunger, illiteracy, disease and homelessness.

The counter-attack against war revolves around:

- Limiting the deleterious effect of the armaments industry, notably by ending the arms trade and by nuclear disarmament.
- Strengthening the United Nations and international courts so that in international affairs the same opportunities for peaceful resolution of disputes should be available as in domestic jurisdictions.
- An end to injustices and to the denial of human rights so that people are not obliged to assert their claims with violence.
- Education for a culture of peace which includes us all – young and old – learning about the effects of violence, the ways of mediation and conflict resolution and recognising individual peacemakers such as conscientious objectors.

Lastly Bruce invites us all to act as responsible citizens working in our own ways – in personal relationships and political action to foster a climate of reconciliation and peace. For more information: www.abolishwar.org.uk/moral.php



CUT TRIDENT NOT jobs, health, education

We are in the middle of the worst economic crisis in decades. At the same time the government is pressing ahead with spending billions of pounds* on replacing the UK's nuclear weapons system Trident – to come into service in 2028 – while inflicting debilitating cuts on public services. Many people believe this to be an appalling waste of tax payers' money. But the government still refuses to reconsider possession of nuclear weapons and to assess whether we really need them for our security or not.

* The cost of the new nuclear weapons submarines is now likely to be £25-26 billion. The total cost of the whole programme, including lifetime costs, will exceed £100 billion.

In 2010 the Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) assumed Britain has to have nuclear weapons. Lib Dem Defence Minister Nick Harvey's Alternatives to Trident Review is likely to do the same – even if it considers alternative nuclear options to Trident submarines. CND welcomes the review but doesn't want it to make the same mistake as the SDSR. The non-nuclear option has to be on the table. The review is due to be completed at the end of 2012.

Action : write to Nick Harvey asking him to include non-replacement and nuclear disarmament in his Alternatives Review.

For more information and resources for the CUT TRIDENT campaign see www.cnduk.org



THANKS JOAN!

From Tony Walsh the Commission Chair:

It was with great sadness that I received the news of Joan's redundancy. I have known Joan since the 1980's CAFOD weekends that she attended along with Mike Simpson and Ann Gill as J&P field workers. Later Joan was involved in the formation of our parish J&P group (now LPA J&P group). She led our first meeting, informing us about social justice and helping us to chose the areas of concern that we could adopt as priorities.

Since I was appointed the Chairperson of the Commission in 2000 Joan has been the full time co-ordinator (latterly near-full time) and has played a key role in the implementation of the Commission's priorities. I have had the opportunity of witnessing the great contribution that Joan has made to the promotion and development of Justice and Peace throughout our diocese. Moreover Joan's influence has not been confined to our own diocese. She has also played an important part in J&P work in many dioceses around the country. The annual National Justice & Peace Conference at Swanwick is a gathering of supporters from many different dioceses and agencies and Joan would use the conference as a valuable opportunity to make contact and exchange news with so many of her friends and colleagues.

Joan has a deep understanding of Justice and Peace issues and has made full use of her knowledge and skills gained as a teacher to present courses and lead workshops covering relevant J&P topics to parish groups and other meetings around the diocese. She was always well prepared and up to date in the material she used and her gentle suggestions and advice were much appreciated by her varied audiences.

I will miss her presence at our regular Core Group and Commission meetings, many of which were held in the friendly atmosphere of the front room of her own home. The discussion and debate at such meetings was carried out in an open friendly spirit helped by Joan's careful advice. Her contribution to such debates was so valuable.

As a very modest person she would not want any fuss made about her departure. However I am sure that all those who have known her and worked alongside her would wish to express their full appreciation for everything she has done and would hope she will continue to give support to the wider sphere of Justice and Peace to which she has been so committed.

Among the many things that will be said I would like to include the wonderful fund of imaginative ideas which Joan has brought to our plans, special events, etc.

From Anne O'Connor previous editor of MouthPeace for many years:

Now that Joan has gone I feel as though the stuffing has been knocked out of me and I think the rest of the J&P Commission echo that feeling. Until the final email arrived, announcing her redundancy, there was still a glimmer of hope, however small, that the diocese would relent, that this had all been a bad dream. When I opened Joan's email, the first communication from her since the start of this whole sorry business, I was moved to tears. How could my dear friend, who has worked so tirelessly for Justice and Peace, and not only worked but wholeheartedly lived according to those precepts, how could she be treated so unjustly by the diocese that she had served so faithfully for nineteen years?

Joan was our guide, our compass, our light. In her own quiet, understated way she drew together all the J&P activity in the diocese with consummate skill. Like the vibrant colours and intricate patterns of the beautiful Peruvian jerseys she often wears, she knitted together all the disparate threads of our endeavours. She alone possessed the skill and knowledge to see the broader picture; she alone possessed the resources and expertise to encourage and inspire us; she alone possessed the wisdom and courage to sometimes say no, this won't work, and to gently but firmly lead us another way.

In her farewell email Joan says: "During the past nineteen years my life has been enriched immeasurably by the wonderful people I have met endeavouring to respond to God's call to seek the ways of peace and justice." We, too, who have worked alongside Joan have been enriched as we have journeyed together, pilgrims seeking to build a better, fairer world for all God's creation.

Joan's sudden cruel dismissal has left us all in turmoil, but we will pick ourselves up, weakened, yes, but not defeated, fired anew with a passion to speak the truth and support one another in love and peace. Never before has the word 'solidarity' felt so real or so necessary.

CHANGE OF CONTACT DETAILS

With Joan no longer in post there need to be changes made to the many tasks she performed. From now on please:

- Direct all correspondence to: Michael Crawley, Secretary, Shrewsbury Diocese Commission for the Promotion of Justice, Peace and Social Responsibility, 5 Riddings Court, Timperley, Altrincham, WA15 6BG mjcrowley@waitrose.com
- Send donations and/or payments for MouthPeace to: Ged Cliffe, Treasurer SDJPSR, Fern Villa, Four Crosses, Llanymynech, SY22 6PR ged.cliffe@tiscali.co.uk
- Send diary dates and notice of events for the regular e-bulletin to: Anne O'Connor anneoc980@hotmail.com

Thanks Joan! *Continued ...*

From Commission members:

..... Joan is able to produce inspiring liturgies on the various issues that concern us ensuring that we pray together as well as work together. She has a store of resources to help her with this.

..... Joan has always been prepared to travel to the eastern fringes of the Diocese to support our activities and ensure we are not forgotten. For several years she arranged East Area meetings sometimes with speakers for those working in J&P in the Stockport area and this was a very good way for us to get to know and co-operate more with each other.

..... Most of all I value her wisdom and gentle presence and welcoming hospitality. We have shared many conversations whilst I have travelled to meetings with Joan, often about our families over the years, and often of more serious concerns but all with interest and often laughter.

..... Joan's lifestyle is in harmony with the Live Simply theme. Commission members have always been warmly welcomed at meetings with Joan's delicious home-baked cakes, made with Fair Trade ingredients (naturally!)

..... Now Joan is no longer working with us we realise how much she did, both upfront in her role of Co-ordinator and also behind the scenes.

..... Joan has maintained her dignity throughout this difficult period. Her quiet gentle nature is an example to us all.

From Ellen Teague, Columban J&P Team Worker and member of the National Justice and Peace Network (NJPN) Executive:

..... Joan is a very dedicated and talented worker for justice and peace. She will be a big loss to the work, particularly at these difficult times when the need to articulate the cause of justice is more pressing than ever.

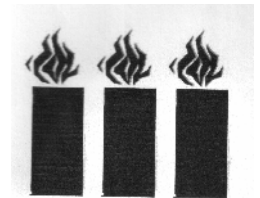
From Pat Gaffney, Pax Christi General Secretary:

..... A tragic loss Joan has brought creativity and insight to the Gospel of peace and justice powerful and sensitive communicator faithful service

KINDLE A FLAME

Partnerships of hope and transformation

This year Church Action on Poverty is 30 years old. To mark the occasion we are invited to celebrate by raising funds to support their work - and by forming lasting partnerships of hope and transformation. Building on their existing work, CAP is inviting individuals, households and organisations to partner with them as they build a sustainable base for the future.



CAP wants 'Kindle a Flame' events to take place in communities across the country throughout autumn 2012. They are planning ways for churches, individuals, households, youth groups, children and whole communities to be partners in their celebrations!

Resources to help you get involved - including DVDs, birthday pledge cards, poverty quiz, T-shirts, badges and resource packs - will be available on the website and to order from early summer, see www.church-poverty.org.uk

FORWARD THINKING

Pax Christi's AGM was held in Bristol in May. Following the formal part of the meeting Oliver McTernan gave a talk on his trip a week earlier to Gaza where he welcomed a deal signed on 14 May that ended a nearly month-long hunger strike by approximately 2000 Palestinian prisoners held in Israeli jails. After meeting some of their families in Gaza, Oliver said "a genuine dialogue in search of real solutions and aimed at promoting mutual understanding and respect is the only way forward."

Oliver Ternan is Director of 'Forward Thinking', an organisation which aims :

- To promote in the UK greater understanding and confidence between the diverse grassroots Muslim communities and the wider society and in addition works to build long term and sustainable relationships between various government departments and policy makers.
- To promote a more inclusive peace process in the Middle East through dialogue with key Israeli and Palestinian stakeholders and political/religious leaders who previously have been unengaged.

More about their ideas and work can be found on www.forwardthinking.org



GASLANDS - U.S.A AND U.K

Frank Thompson writes:

'An ocean of natural gas' lies beneath the United States of America. The only problem is the means needed to access it. Haliburton (an oilfield services company based in Houston US and in Dubai) has developed a drilling technology of hydraulic fracturing commonly known as "fracking". Fracking begins with the drilling of a well, often as deep as 3km. When shale deposits containing gas are reached, drilling turns horizontally through the shale. Once drilled, water, sand and chemical lubricants are pumped in at high pressure, fracturing the brittle shale and forcing the naturally occurring gas out of pores in the rock. The sand fills the pores and stops them collapsing; the gas is returned to the surface via the well, along with some water contaminated with fracking chemicals and naturally occurring pollutants, including low-level radiation.

When U.S.A. filmmaker Josh Fox was asked a few years ago to lease his land to Haliburton for drilling, he embarked on a cross-country odyssey to find out more. In the process he uncovered a trail of secrets, lies and contamination. This is compiled into the film 'Gasland' which is now available on DVD for private and public showing. Our local environment group in Marple by coincidence was showing this film the same week as news of 'fracking' in the north west of England hit the headlines.

In U.S.A not only does the gas come to the surface in the well pipes as planned but it can come to the surface in a random way. We saw the dramatic sight of gas being lit as it came from water taps, a phenomenon we would probably not encounter in England as most of us do not get our water from underground wells. But the film highlighted several other issues that do deserve our consideration.

Large amounts of water are needed – about 3,500,000 gallons are used when fracking a single well. This water is mixed with 596 chemicals to make the fracking fluid so that 80,000 pounds of chemicals are injected into the earth for each well. 65 of the compounds of these chemicals are thought by researchers to be hazardous to health and up to 70 % of the fluid will remain in the ground and is not biodegradable. In the film, farmers and cattle ranchers in U.S gave testimony to contamination of their land since fracking wells had come to their neighbourhoods

To transport the fracking fluid to the site of the well needs many (up to 100) large water tankers and the roads for them to travel on. In a small country like England, already showing signs of being short of water and over crowded with lorries and cars, such issues seem important. Added to this possible contamination agricultural land and it would appear that we maybe need to look more thoroughly into this means of securing gas for the future as our North sea gas supplies dwindle.

So, what is the situation about fracking in the UK? It may be worth a general look at gas supplies before we focus on fracking.

A parliamentary report, *The Future of UK Gas Supplies*, October 2004 (Number 230) presents us with some numbers. A staggering 40% of UK's primary energy comes from gas and it is estimated that UK reserves are about 600 billion cubic metres (bcm). But the annual demand is about 100 bcm and therefore, at present consumption, our supply will only last for 6 years. Indeed, the report forecasts that by 2020 more than 80% of our gas will have to be imported. Therefore, when Eric Vaughan, chief operating officer for Cuadrilla, one of the shale gas companies speaks of reserves of gas being about 5000 bcm (200 trillion cubic feet) then there is great interest in the media and government circles.

Exploratory drilling commenced near Blackpool in 2009 and Lord Browne, former BP executive, claimed that Lancashire could become the fracking capital of Europe. Things remained quiet for some time and then, in June 2011, two minor earthquakes occurred in the area. Work was put on hold and the obvious question was asked - "Was fracking responsible for the "quakes"?"

The BBC News now started using phrases like "controversial shale gas" and two groups have been set up, Residents Action on Fylde Fracking (Raff) and Ribble Estuary Against Fracking (Reaf) to fight for a detailed investigation into the dangers of fracking and possible environmental damage. To date, drilling has not been resumed though, recently, Lord Smith from the Environment Agency has given support for fracking to be continued. (Lord Smith supports fracking -- BBC News 8 May 2012.)

Presently, the jury is still out on fracking in the UK. It is obvious that the country would wish for a ready supply of gas just as North Sea gas is being depleted. It should be noted that British Geological Survey have indicated that Cuadrilla's estimates of gas are much too high and that possibly only a tenth or less of gas will be recoverable. Even so, this lesser amount of gas would give a secure source of energy for the UK for the next decade or so. Apart from the many disturbing fracking problems in USA, given above, it exacerbates global warming as this is yet more burning of a fossil fuel. Instead of the carbon being trapped deep underground it is released into the atmosphere by burning. Unless carbon capture is operational in the near future any emission targets are not likely to be met.

Another fear is that funding allocated for renewable energy schemes will undoubtedly be diverted to fracking.



GREENWASH GOLD 2012

Which company deserves the Greenwash Gold medal in 2012?
Which is responsible for the worst case of environmental destruction or human rights abuse?

Which is using the London Olympics to cover-up the biggest misdeeds?

There are so many controversial companies providing sponsorship for the London Games. Greenwash Gold has shorted listed 3 – Dow Chemical, BP and Rio Tinto – and ask us visit their website, watch the animations and vote as to who should receive the Greenwash Gold medals. www.greenwashgold.org



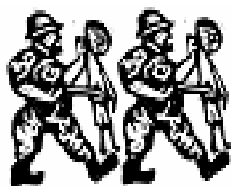
The campaign has been developed by three organisations: –
London Mining Network, Bhopal Medical Appeal and the UK Tar Sands Network.

HOW TO VISIT BURMA ETHICALLY

Now it has become acceptable to travel to Burma again we may need to think a bit before we (or our friends) jump on to this latest tourist bandwagon. **Tourism Concern held a Burma event in the House of Commons on April 16** this year to help us do just this. This well attended meeting aimed to start a dialogue about how to visit the country ethically and highlight the need for on-going awareness of the wider challenges still facing the country, and how tourism relates to this.

Although the National League for Democracy (NLD) lifted the full tourism boycott in November 2010, there is still a fear that, if not done ethically, large scale tourism, such as big organised tours and cruises, would bring few benefits to the Burmese people and continue to support the government and their cronies. But some forms of tourism can bring benefits to local people and assist their cause. The NLD states: "We welcome visitors who are keen to promote the welfare of the common people and the conservation of the environment and to acquire an insight into the cultural, political and social life of the country while enjoying a happy and fulfilling holiday in Burma".

Zoya Phan, Campaigns Manager at Burma Campaign UK and a refugee from Burma, spoke at the meeting highlighting that "the changes in Burma appear impressive in the context of how bad things were before, but there is still a very long way to go to address continuing human rights abuses and start a transition to democracy... When planning



your holiday to Burma, it is important to bear in mind that what happens beyond the tourist spots is very different from the images featured in the brochures and that the battle for democracy in the country is far from won. Tourism has the potential to be an important tool for Burma's development, and the decisions of tourists about how they travel can impact directly upon this in either a positive or negative way.'

Based on the views and concerns discussed in their Burma evening, Tourism Concern have put together a series of tips on how to maximise social and economic benefits of a visit to Burma while making the most of a holiday in this amazing country. If you are thinking of going yourself or know anyone who is please refer them to this report: www.tourismconcern.org.uk/index.php/news/19/61/Report-on-Tourism

To find out more see also www.burmacampaign.org.uk

GASLANDS - U.S.A and U.K. Continued ...

In summary, the UK are late starters to the fracking industry as we had our North Sea Gas and this lulled us into a false sense of security and, more importantly, made us heavily dependent on gas for heating, industrial use and electricity generation. Could we reduce our dependency on gas or do we have to have more and more gas over the coming decades? Do we insist on gas at any cost so that the environment would be destroyed and people's well being would be put at risk. Over the whole of the British Isles shale gas reserves are said to be present in Scotland, and many parts of England (Kent, Hampshire, and North Yorkshire as well as Lancashire) and so the interest in this fuel is not going to go away.

Sources --- What's the truth about fracking, Patrick Barkham, Guardian, 17 April 2012.
Vast gas resources in Lancashire -- BBC News 21 Sept 2011



DAMULOG* UPDATE

*On May 2nd 2012 Romy Tiongco and Linda McClintock Tiongco were at the Quaker Meeting House, Chester. Also contributing were Ed Parry and Corinne Whitham, respectively Chair and Management Board member of MuCAARD-UK, and Phil and Sue Sykes who are part of the team and live on an island off Mindanao, the Philippines. (MuCAARD = Muslim Christian Action for Advocacy Relief and Development—see below**)*

Peter Byrne, MuCAARD-UK supporter writes:

Everyone present was delighted to see that Romy looked well, still full of enthusiasm (also energetic enough to fix a greenhouse and put up an enormous shelf single-handed in his Frodsham “watering hole”!). He was delighted to have some time back in Frodsham. It gave him a different perspective on Damulog which he needs more than ever now, because an important decision has to be made: will he stand for Mayor again when his present term of office ends?

(Earlier reports on Romy and MuCAARD UK can be found in MouthPeace Spring 2007, Autumn 2007, Spring 2008, Summer 2008 Winter 2009/10. These can be found at www.jp-shrewsburydiocese.org.uk)

Peace. Romy said standing for Mayoral office in 2007, in his home municipality of Damulog, was fuelled by anger and the urge for revenge for the murder of his friend Rogelio Estudillo. Gradually this was replaced by a desire to win the peace, not defeat an enemy. There was fear too. Local supporters showed great courage in a campaign fraught with danger. There followed the visits to Muslim settlements and the abandonment of military protection. It helped that when Romy had been the Acting Mayor in 1986, he had made a peace agreement with the father of one of the current leaders. This leader remembered how much his father had respected Romy. Also the time in the seventies when Romy was the local priest, he had already established a record as a peace-maker. During the elections they had followed him just to see if he used the same peace language in every community. Later on, after his election, there was a similar concern about his promises: were they genuine commitments?

Delivery – through democracy, transparency and sustainable development. Romy set out immediately to provide services for all, rather than favours for cash. This demanded participation by the people in working out their needs, planning and delivery – whether it called for committee work or building schools and other centres, learning new skills in the process. It was the actual delivery of services long non-existent which brought credibility. Schools, health services, clean water, roads to market, tree planting in an area suffering from deforestation, improvements in food supply and employment. The honesty and practical sense of the municipality have been demonstrated so often that it keeps winning medals and awards, which leads to the granting of funding for more development. It is good that Philippine agencies and schemes such as the Mindanao Rural Development Programme recognise these merits.

One way of ensuring transparency and the authenticity of plans which needed funding was to outsource the organisation and training of the 38 groups formed in Damulog to BISAP (Bangladesh Integrated Social Advancement Project), a MuCAARD partner Member. This ensured the income-generation projects were successful and loans were repaid. As a result Damulog was awarded “best performing municipality in Region X”.

In 2012-2013 funds from the World Bank and the Department of Agriculture will be doubled to reach another 38 groups. The same painstaking preparation has kept other agencies and charities onside (including the Korean Buddhist relief agency JTS and their support of school building). Recognition of achievements has boosted the self esteem and confidence of the citizens too, poor though they are.

Love your neighbour. Recipients of new services included people in a neglected area which is not in Damulog, or even in the province of Bukidnon – it is in North Cotabato, the mainly Muslim area south of Damulog. Romy’s incursion into the mainly Muslim area south of Damulog was not welcomed by everyone. At a meeting of provincial and regional representatives Romy was asked to explain this. One question he was asked was particularly interesting: “why bother – they are not your responsibility, not your people.” He replied that it was simple. He believed that God loved him, and that to return this love he must show his love for God’s people, whoever they were. The people on his southern border needed help, he gave it. This was met by silence. He was granted official license to continue working south of the border.

The future. The final remark Romy made in the Q & A session after the talk was this: the corrupt politicians bought people’s votes with a few pesos or a bag of rice then refused to be held **accountable**, whereas Romy refused to buy peoples votes but told them if he was elected he’d change their lives - and he did. Will he stand for a third term? This may depend on how solid democracy has become. What Romy hopes for is that peace, fairness, and citizen participation will become habitual, that no-one will ever buy votes again; no person will be ignored again. What vision could keep them together and motivated. Perhaps the principle “Develop the child”, based on the Universal Rights of the Child so dear to Barbara Tonge. Those Chester Racecourse walks have a long echo!

Continued next page



Typhoon Sendong 16-17 December 2011. Linda Tiongco was in Mindanao attending the MuCAARD Philippines Annual Assembly when 48 hours of torrential rain combined with years of illegal logging, mining and high tides created a perfect storm, bringing massive destruction and loss of life, chiefly on the coast. Around 2,000 people died and the chaos of destruction hampered rescue efforts. Driving the 180 km down to Cagayan took well over five hours. On arrival in Cagayan, the team went straight into meetings with local government and the UN. Tedious but necessary to avoid duplication. Meetings with local NGOs followed to use their local knowledge and ensure that no community was overlooked. MuCAARD-UK raised £2,045 to respond to immediate needs.

Christian Aid is funding the long term recovery and working with MuCAARD on a Disaster Mitigation and Preparedness training programme with communities to prepare them and create community plans to minimise the effects and death toll of another typhoon

*The Municipality of Damulog, Bukidnon province, is on the island of Mindanao, the Philippines, at about 7.5 N latitude (hence the heat) and 125 E longitude. Pacific Ocean to the East, the Sulu Sea to the West.

** MuCAARD-UK is a registered charity, created in 2007 to help fund MuCAARD - Philippines, a registered NGO in existence since 1984. Romy and Linda were involved in its creation. The organisation has four member Partners, one of which, BISAP, mentioned above in connection with organisation and training, is based in Damulog, three others are based elsewhere. The NGO's remit is not confined to Damulog as the help given to Cagayan showed. And CoSEED, another of the partner Members, has worked on ensuring food sufficiency and coastal protection by helping communities plant mangroves, which provide fish with a natural haven. **Sustainable development** is a keyword in all plans. This is not a pious and easy phrase. They mean it. Their lives depend on it.

The aim of the Kahoy Project is to establish tree cover to improve the environment and provide an income for farmers through sustainable forestry. Every tree absorbs carbon – 1 tonne of carbon for every 2 tonnes of tree. A £1 gift plants two trees, hence the slogan “plant a tree for 50p”

Those who would like more information can request detailed profile papers or visit the website –

www.mucaard-uk.org telephone – 0151 526 2799 , email – **KALINAW@MUCAARD-UK.ORG**

Address – 113 Liverpool Road North, Maghull, Merseyside, L31 2HG. Registered Charity number – 1119065.

They can also contact Peter Linsey, Treasurer of MuCAARD-UK, 01244 320562 or **plinsey@gotadsl.co.uk**

WHY CAMPAIGN AGAINST TORTURE?

A good reason : Jesus himself was tortured

Action by Christians Against Torture, *acat(uk)*, aims to work, as a Christian body, for the abolition of torture worldwide. It seeks to increase awareness in the Churches and among Christians of the widespread and evil use of torture and the need, for reasons of Christian faith, to campaign for its abolition. It desires to be a powerhouse of Prayer

acat(uk) was formed in 1984 by the then British Council of Churches, with the active support of Amnesty International and Society of Friends. *acat(uk)* is affiliated to the International Federation of Action by Christians for the Abolition of Torture (FIACAT) in Paris, and is a body in association with Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI).

Torture is totally banned in international law under ALL circumstances, including war, civil war, internal conflict and terrorist attack (Article 2 of the UN Convention Against Torture). There is no opt-out but people still think that torture can be used in special circumstances - witness what happened after 9/11 when some argued that its use could be justified then.

***acat(uk)* works:**

- to obtain information on specific examples of torture world wide
- to write letters to governments in countries where torture is practised calling for its abolition
- to support the victims of torture and ill treatment
- to pray for the tortured and the torturers
- to keep abreast of legislation relating to torture

***acat(uk)* - A Powerhouse of Prayer**

Prayer is a vital part of the work: prayers for the tortured, those threatened with torture, their families, the torturers and for all aspects of *acat*'s work. There are prayers that may be useful for private and public use. See **www.acatuk.org.uk**

One June 24– 25 *acat* are holding overnight vigils in churches around the world, inviting people to spend time in prayer and reflection on the issues.

For Vigil in this area see Diary on page 12.



DIARY DATES

JUNE

20 – 22 “Rio +20” The UN Conference on Sustainable Development, to be held in Rio de Janeiro 20 years on from the 1992 Earth Summit that gave rise to “Agenda 21” and real hopes of moves towards a more sustainable future. www.uncsd2012.org

23 “Chester Green Day”. 10.00am to 4.00pm at Chester Town Hall. A day event to showcase the work of a range of organisations involved in activities concerned with sustainability or the environment. Organised by Chester Transition. Contact Simon Brown on simonwbrown@dsl.pipex.com or phone 01244 403960.

24 From 8 pm overnight, finishing with 10.00am Family Mass on 25th. Action by Christians Against Torture VIGIL, St Teresa’s College Rd, Upholland, WN6. This overnight vigil is held in churches all around the world. Everyone is invited to spend some time in prayer and reflection between 8pm Saturday and 10am Sunday. It is a chance to link our prayer, our J&P consciousness and our action in one event. If you can join us, please sign up on the parish website:

www.stteresas-upholland.org.uk

If you can’t join us, please send a message of support.

30 Heald Green Festival J & P stall for Church Action on Poverty 1– 4 pm in field behind public hall, Outwood Road, Heald Green.

JULY

2 “40 Years of Making Waves” Showing of a film in celebration of this milestone year in Greenpeace’s activities. 7.30pm at St Peter’s Centre, The Cross, Chester.

8 “The Spiritual Motivation for Working for Justice” Afternoon of reflection and prayer led by Fr. Bernard McDermott, The Evron Centre, 1 Adswood Lane West, Cale Green, Stockport. Organised by Our Lady’s J&P Group, contact Brian Potter, 0161 485 8312.

7 Annual J & P Walk—Shrewsbury Diocese.

5 mile morning walk around Ellesmere to be led by Fran Butler. For more details contact Tony Walsh below or phone Fran 01691 622 755.

20–22 National J & P Conference at Swanwick—

theme ‘A New World Order? - China Today and Our Response’ more information and booking see www.justice-and-peace.org.uk or ring 020 7901 4864

AUGUST

6 & 9 Anniversaries of the first use of atomic weapons

at Hiroshima & Nagasaki More information and prayer resources from www.paxchrisiti.org.uk 020 8203 4884

SEPTEMBER

4 North West venue for John Dear SJ on his speaking

tour of the UK. St John’s, Standishgate, Wigan WN1 1XD, 17.30 onwards. If you have never heard John Dear, this is a rare opportunity to be inspired. If you have heard him, you’ll want to hear him again. This is a free event and all are warmly invited to attend. (Contributions to his travel costs will be welcome.)

N: .St John’s is just over 5 mins walk from the station. The church car park will be open but drivers will need to negotiate the one way system. For further info contact Liverpool J&P office.

9 Racial Justice Sunday resource pack from www.ctbi.org.uk/588

10 CWDF Forum meeting 6.45 for 7.00pm at St Peter’s Centre, The Cross, Chester. Speaker: Forum member Susan Flynn about Merseyside URC’s ongoing work with women of Malawi.

29 Day of Prayer for Seafarers www.apostleshipof the sea.org.uk

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Copy date for next issue
1/8/2012 Don’t forget to send in reports of events and dates for the diary

The opinions expressed in MouthPeace are the views of the individual contributors or organisations concerned and do not necessarily reflect those of the Justice and Peace Commissions of the dioceses of Shrewsbury and Liverpool

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