



Justice and Peace

ISSUE 82 SUMMER 2013

Pope Francis says:

We need to avoid the spiritual sickness of a church that is wrapped up in its own world: when a church becomes like this, it grows sick. It is true that going out on to the street implies the risk of accidents happening, as they would to any ordinary man or woman. But if the church stays wrapped up in itself, it will age. And if I had to choose between a wounded church that goes out on to the streets and a sick, withdrawn church, I would definitely choose the first one.

I would like to ask all those who have positions of responsibility in economic, political and social life, and all men and women of goodwill: Let us be protectors of creation, protectors of God's plan inscribed in nature, protectors of one another and of the environment.

Human rights are not only violated by terrorism, repression or assassination, but also by unfair economic structures that creates huge inequalities.

Easter Sunday prayer,

Peace in the whole world, still divided by greed looking for easy gain, wounded by the selfishness which threatens human life and the family, selfishness that continues in human trafficking, the most extensive form of slavery in this 21st century. Peace to the whole world, torn apart by violence linked to drug trafficking and by the iniquitous exploitation of natural resources!

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Archdiocese of Liverpool Justice & Peace Commission

Diocese of Shrewsbury Commission for the Promotion of Justice, Peace & Social Responsibility

Archdiocese of Liverpool

'THE PRIESTHOOD OF THE FAITHFUL'

Paul Philibert OP (Prior of the Dominican house of studies at St. Louis University, USA)

SATURDAY JUNE 15 10.00 – 4.00

at LACE Conference Centre, Croxteth Drive, Sefton Park, Liverpool L17 1AA Cost £10

The New Testament describes the baptized as a "holy priesthood" and "a priestly people." Vatican II clearly taught that the baptized become "a holy priesthood." Their personal fidelity and lives led in loving obedience to the Gospel become "spiritual sacrifices" offered along with the body of the Lord in the Eucharist. Fr Paul Philibert OP will be leading an Archdiocesan Day entitled 'The Priesthood of the Faithful' exploring this key doctrine of Christian faith and examining its significance for the spiritual growth and revitalization of the Church. It focuses on the prophetic, pastoral, and priestly roles of the faithful with the aim of helping people experience their own lives as the fruitful blossoming of Christ's grace in the world.

Fr Paul Philibert is a Catholic Dominican friar of the U.S. Southern Province, living in North Carolina, where he is now freelancing as a lecturer and writer after many years as a professor of theology. He earned a Doctorate in Theology from the Dominican House of Studies in Washington, D.C., after graduate studies in Lyons, France, between 1966 and 1968. Paul has taught theology at Providence College, Catholic University, the Dominican House of Philosophy and Theology in Berkeley, the University of Notre Dame, and Aquinas Institute in St. Louis. Recently, Fr Philibert spent three years as Visiting Professor of Pastoral Theology at the University of Fribourg, Switzerland. He is at present the Chair of the Board of the Congar Institute, a ministry of the Southern Dominican Province in the service of permanent formation for lay ministers in resource-poor and rural dioceses in the U.S.A



35th National J & P Annual Conference.

JULY 19 –21 "Breaking Open the Word – a call to faith in action"

An opportunity to spend a weekend with Megan McKenna opening the door of faith at the Hayes Centre, Swanwick, Derbyshire More information and booking form from Tel 020 7901 4864
Email: admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk www.justice-and-peace.org.uk

THERE CAN BE ENOUGH FOOD FOR EVERYONE IF

Are you joining the IF Rally in Hyde Park London on Saturday June 8 to protest before the G8 Summit at Lough Erne, Co Fermanagh on Mon 17 & Tues 18 June ?



you can't go to London on June 8 you can still show your solidarity:

JOIN The Big IF Fast on June 6 To ensure maximum political impact, it's really important that we register to tell the world we're fasting. Register on www.enoughfoodif.org/IFast

SEND A CARD to David Cameron such as CAFOD's 'Hungry for Change' card. You can sign cards from several different charities as they are supporting different aspects of the IF campaign.

THE J & P CALENDAR FOR THE YEAR OF FAITH

As in previous editions of MouthPeace during this Year of Faith we are continuing to include extracts from the calendar marked by the Year of Faith logo.

The full updated calendar can be found on www.jp-shrewsburydiocese.org.uk

6 & 9 August Anniversaries of first use of atomic weapons at Hiroshima & Nagasaki

'Let us embark upon the steep and difficult path of peace, the only path that befits human dignity, the only path that leads to true fulfilment of the human destiny, the only path to a future in which equity, justice and solidarity are realities and not just distant dreams.' John Paul II, Hiroshima 25 February 1981



In Catholic teaching, the task is not to make the world safer through the threat of nuclear weapons, but rather to make the world safer from nuclear weapons through mutual and verifiable nuclear disarmament.

Archbishop Francis Chullikatt, Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations, July 2011

See www.paxchristi.org.uk



PEACE ON EARTH

On April 11th 1963 Pope John XXIII issued his encyclical 'Pacem in Terris'. Significant in several ways it was :

1. The first papal encyclical to be addressed not just to Catholic Bishops or all Catholics but to "all people of goodwill"
2. Written in the months following the Cuban Missile crisis of 1962 when the world stood on the brink of nuclear war.
3. A new emphasis on human rights (previously point of reference had been to natural law)
4. The final statement to the church and the world of Pope John who knew he was dying of cancer He died 3 months later

50 YEARS LATER

The UK spends £39 billion a year on the military and arms, while vital services in health, education, welfare and renewable energy are cut or under threat.

On April 15 2013 Pax Christi joined 38 other peace and development groups at a meeting in the Houses of Parliament to challenge military spending in the UK and globally. Bruce Kent, vice-president of Pax Christi and founder of the Movement for the Abolition of War, chaired the meeting of around 80 people where speakers called for an immediate shift in government policy and spending priorities, away from military spending and towards public services and sustainable energy. The new film made by Pax Christi was launched at this meeting.

GIVE PEACE A BUDGET : Seven ways to spend \$1.7 trillion dollars'

Seven people give their ideas how we could invest in people and their needs rather than in war and conflict.

Dannie Grufferty NUS Vice President - Invest in education and youth to bring about a more tolerant society

David Lammy MP for Tottenham - Invest in our local services and neighbourhoods

Jane Gray Head of Our Lady's Convent High School London - help students be more involved in their local communities and help those who have to cope with a difficult home life to reach their full potential.

Bill Hayes General Secretary of the Communications Workers Union - Equip the whole world with internet access to help make people more conscious of fundamental human rights.

Chris Bain CAFOD Director - Help poor countries adapt to climate change and to develop a green economy with less reliance on fossil fuels.

Dr Jim Sikorski, Justice and Peace activist from South London - Improve mental health services and keep small local hospitals open, rather than closing down local services.

Vandana Shiva environmentalist and author - Heal the planet; create real living economies that work for people and the planet.

The film has both an educational and a campaigning function. There is a link to the video on the Pax Christi website. It is also available in DVD format with a simple discussion guide for use with groups, parishes or schools for £5.00 plus postage.

See www.paxchristi.org.uk



SCRAP TRIDENT

Bruce Kent, whose 'Scrap Trident' tour of Britain reaches Shrewsbury on 9th June, is urging everyone to bring concern about nuclear weapons to the attention of political and religious leaders. He has himself written an open letter to Pope Francis see page 5

'DRONES'

'The most important weapon development since the atomic bomb' says Peter Singer (an American political scientist)

On April 27 2013 over 400 peace protesters gathered outside the RAF base at Waddington Lincolnshire for the first national demonstration against Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) commonly known as drones.

See www.dronecampaignnetwork.org.uk

Many of us feel uneasy about the idea of drones but maybe lack much concrete information. In October 2012 a report was published by Medact "**Drones, the physical and psychological implications of a global theatre of war**" which highlights some of the main issues. The full report which is very thoroughly referenced gives historical background, health implications and also contains comments on the legal, moral and ethical issues. It can be downloaded from www.medact.org/content/wmd_and_conflict/medact_drones_WEB.pdf Medact is a UK charity affiliated to International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War which incorporates Medical Campaign Against Nuclear Weapons and Medical Association for Prevention of War.

For comprehensive overview see also see Professor Tina Beattie's comprehensive talk "**Christian Pacifism, Just War and Drones**" given to the AGM of Pax Christi and the National J & P Network on 11 May 2013. www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory.22533



WALKING THE BREADLINE : Tackling the scandal of food poverty in 21st century Britain



Niall Cooper from Church Action on Poverty writes:

The Enough Food For All IF campaign was launched earlier this year in response to the growing numbers of people globally who are experiencing hunger, but the shocking reality is that hundreds of thousands of people are also now reliant on food hand-outs across the UK.

Stephen Gordon has done everything he can to get his life back on track since leaving prison, but when his benefits were cut for two months due to a mix up, he had to borrow money just to eat. Stephen, 32, from North Manchester is desperate to find work and turn his life around after spending time in prison. But when his benefits were stopped due to an administrative error in January, he was left destitute and has lost almost two stone in weight.

“How am I supposed to live?” Stephen asks. “I didn’t do anything wrong. I went without food for days. One day I might borrow a couple of quid and get some pot noodles, and then not eat for a day or two. Maybe every day or two I’d get a bag of chips. I felt really low: suicidal, depressed. I just thought that no-one was helping or caring.”

Stephen’s is not an isolated experience. Everyday, increasing numbers of people are going to bed hungry across the UK. Not because we are a poor country – we’re not. Not because there is not enough food for everyone – there is. It’s unfair, it’s unjust – and it’s totally preventable. The explosion in food poverty and use of food banks is a national disgrace, and undermines the UK’s commitment to ensuring that all its citizens have access to food – one of the most basic human rights.

Well in excess of half a million people are now reliant on food aid, and this number is likely to escalate further over the coming months. The Trussell Trust alone has seen a trebling in the numbers at their food banks in the past 12 months to a staggering 350,000 people.

As Julia Unwin, Chief Executive of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation has written: “A decade of national debt risks being followed by a decade of destitution” The growth in food aid demonstrates that the welfare net is failing in its basic duty to ensure that families have sufficient income to feed themselves adequately. Food banks are worthy attempts at short term mitigation, but cannot on their own address the underlying causes of growth of food poverty.

Up to half of all the people turning to food banks are doing so as a direct result of having benefit payments delayed, reduced or withdrawn altogether. According to research by the Trussell Trust and Citizens Advice, changes to the benefit system are the most common reasons for people using food banks; these include

changes to crisis loan eligibility rules, delays in payments, Jobseeker’s Allowance sanctions and sickness benefit reassessments.

The increase in the number of people using food banks is also driven by unemployment, increasing levels of underemployment, low and falling income and rising food and fuel prices. The National Minimum Wage and benefits levels need to rise in line with inflation, in order to ensure that families retain the ability to live with dignity and to afford adequately to feed, clothe and heat themselves.

In the words of a Citizens Advice Bureau client who submitted evidence to the Greater Manchester Poverty Commission last year: “ My depression has worsened considerably, and the reduced amount I have to spend on food is affecting my diabetes and blood pressure. I also have more frequent panic attacks when thinking of our finances.”

With many people on low incomes undoubtedly struggling to make ends meet, they can ill afford to pay over the odds for basic goods and services. Yet perversely, because of the way the market is currently structured, the people on the lowest incomes end up paying the most for many goods and services, including food, fuel, finance services, funerals, furnishings and white goods.

Save the Children have estimated the cost of the ‘Poverty Premium’ for an average low income household to be up to £1,200 per annum. Assuming at least 3 million households were affected this would equate to an annual Poverty Premium of £3.6 billion. With incomes stagnant, benefit levels due to be cut in real terms by 5% over the next three years and the cost of essential goods and services (notably food and fuel) escalating, families can ill afford to pay the Poverty Premium.

Is it possible to reduce ‘excess costs’ of food, fuel, finance and a whole host of other essentials, and thereby ease pressures on family budgets at a time when household incomes are increasingly constrained?

At the moment there is a real risk that the benefit cuts and the new Universal Credit will lead to even larger numbers being forced to seek food aid – and that food banks will not have the capacity to cope with the demand.

Moreover, it is unacceptable that whilst thousands are being forced to turn to food banks to feed themselves, wealthy individuals and corporations continue to dodge their obligation to pay their fair share of taxes. As we have increasingly become aware over recent months, tax dodging is carried out by some of the biggest businesses not just in the UK but globally – with Starbucks, Google

Continued opposite on page 5

AN OPEN LETTER FROM BRUCE KENT TO HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS I sent on May 7th 2013

Dear Pope Francis,

Whether this letter will ever reach you I have no idea, but it is worth trying to contact you. As an ordinary Catholic I wish you well in the great task to which you have been called. You are in the prayers of millions who need your leadership in this, our poverty and war-torn world.

I am a Vice-President of the British Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and of Pax Christi UK which has done its best over many years to promote Papal teaching on peace. Over 50 years ago I was inspired to start on this work when I heard another member of the Society of Jesus, Archbishop Thomas Roberts SJ, make it clear that nuclear weapons involve immoral actions: the destruction of thousands of innocent people and a willingness to perform such acts in given circumstances.

For years we have heard, ever since the signing of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1968, that the political goal is the elimination of all nuclear weapons everywhere. But the actions of the major nuclear weapon states point in a very different direction. The UN representative to the Holy See said in 1997 that 'Nuclear weapons are incompatible with the peace we seek for the 21st century... They deserve condemnation. The preservation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty demands an unequivocal commitment to their abolition.' Today there is no such commitment. In various ways major nuclear weapon states are 'improving' their nuclear arsenals. While from politicians there are vague expressions of hope for a nuclear-free world, in practice all of the major nuclear weapons states - except perhaps China - are refusing to negotiate nuclear weapon abolition. This is to ignore the call from the International Court of Justice in 1996 to negotiate abolition 'in good faith'.

In Britain the Government is planning to spend £100,000,000,000 on building and maintaining another generation of nuclear weapons to replace our current Trident system. This will ensure that we British are nuclear weapon armed for at least another 50 years. This massive sum of money is, to use the phrase of President Eisenhower in 1953, 'a theft from those who hunger and are not fed'. It also makes nonsense of any British commitment to rid ourselves and the world of nuclear weapons. Meanwhile our Government tells non-nuclear countries that they cannot have the 'security' which we claim for ourselves.

So far in Britain the Methodist, Baptist, United Reformed Churches and the Society of Friends have made clear their opposition to this planned new generation of nuclear weapons. So have the Catholic Bishops of Scotland. The Church of England and the Catholic Church in England and Wales have not yet given a collective view on this replacement of Trident. Our Catholic Bishops in 2006 did urge the Government to decommission British nuclear weapons. That call was not heeded.

It would help the worldwide Church if you were to give us your own views. There is a consistent Catholic opposition to nuclear weapons of mass destruction that goes back to Pope John's *Pacem in Terris* but which now needs restating. Holy Father, please speak to the world about the elimination of war and all weapons of mass destruction. The human race can and should live in peace, free from the threat of weapons of mass destruction which, as a result of accident and misunderstanding, have several times brought us close to disaster in the recent past.

Sincerely and respectfully,

Bruce Kent

WALKING THE BREADLINE *continued from page 4*

and Amazon amongst the most high profile cases. But the truth is that 98 of the UK's top 100 companies have subsidiaries in tax havens. Every pound dodged in taxes is a pound less to spend on health, education – or directly in benefits to the poorest and most vulnerable in society

That's why, this month, Church Action on Poverty and Oxfam, with the support of the Trussell Trust, are calling for an urgent Parliamentary Inquiry by the Work and Pensions Select Committee into the relationship between benefit delay, error or sanctions; welfare reform changes and the dramatic growth in food poverty across the UK – and at the same time calling for the UK to exercise global leadership in calling for coordinated international action to

tackle tax dodging at the forthcoming G8 meeting in June.

Church leaders – Pope Francis and Archbishop Justin Welby included – have signalled an increasing willingness to speak up for the poor and the marginalized. The IF campaign – and the fight against global hunger - for sure demands our full support. But are we willing too, to challenge the callousness of domestic policy of destitution by design, which routinely deprives hundreds of thousands of their means of providing themselves with their daily bread?

You can add your voice to the call at
www.church-poverty.org.uk/foodfuelfinance



CAMEROON IN FEBRUARY

Steve Atherton writes:

While it was snowing here in UK, Joan Sharples and I had the great privilege of working for a week in Cameroon facilitating The Craighead Institute's Integrating Life and Faith programme. The visit had been months in the planning although we didn't get confirmation of the funding till a few weeks before we were due to fly out. We'd started to assume it wouldn't happen and were just getting on with life as normal, when suddenly the funding did come, visa did arrive and before we knew what had happened we were stepping off the plane into the tropical hustle and bustle of Douala. We'd been invited by the Tertiary Sisters of St Francis and stayed overnight in their convent on the top floor of the Padre Pio Maternity Hospital they run in the city. The air conditioning was stamped 'Made in the USSR' and was so noisy it sounded as though there tanks coming down the street. We left before dawn the next morning. It was National Youth Day and we hoped to travel the 300 miles to Bamenda before the streets filled up with parades of singing children. We nearly made it but just outside Bafousam we had to stop while group after group of uniformed children marched along the side of the road singing loudly as they waited their turn to cross the roads and join the throng already in place to hear the speeches. I remember Whit Walks but they were never like this. As a uniformed and armed soldier waved us through, a young man on a motorbike nipped in ahead of us, only to get whacked across the head before he sped away, looking back over his shoulder to grin at us.

Cameroon is beautiful but the roads leave a lot to be desired. We travelled north with the strange feeling of being in the Lake District but with palm trees and bananas instead of pine trees and oak. We were welcomed into Bamenda by Sr Alphonsa, a former provincial now on the TSSF's generalate in Rome, who we'd last seen before Christmas in Glasgow in the darkness of a British winter. Sr Alphonsa had had organised the finances and liaised with The Craighead Institute but the work in Cameroon had been done by Sr Priscilla. She had booked the premises, organised food and rooms, and spoken to the Cameroonian Conference of Religious to assemble an interesting group of nineteen religious sisters from four different congregations, three religious brothers from two different congregations, two lay women and two lay men. These twenty six people are all leaders in their own communities. It was a generous gift from the TSSFs who are the largest congreg-

ation in Cameroon and the only ones with the resources to coordinate our visit. The whole course was put into the context of the Year of Faith.

The group were challenged by the informal, interactive style of presentation we employed. They were expecting to be sitting in rows, listening to lectures and taking notes. As the course developed momentum, they became more and more fascinated by the invitation to explore their own faith journeys and by the assumption that the best place to look for God at work in the world was to look for where God had been at work in their own life histories. They were delighted by the concepts of 'privileged listening', 'barriers to listening' and the growth of trust as key elements to good leadership. Sr Priscilla said: 'We've met many times before but this is the first time we've looked into each other's eyes.' They produced two striking 'images of church'. One showed the 'pilgrim church' led by a woman in a wheel chair, with a disabled person next and the pope in the middle of the procession. A young person further down the parade is dancing with joy! Did they know about Pope Francis, I wonder.

The other striking picture was of the church as light to the world ... or is it a boat, with Christ in board and us all there with him? Or is it both? This picture made me think of the altar frontal in the Metropolitan Cathedral in Liverpool. These two images typify the experience of church and the almost tangible presence of God that we felt during our visit.

The issues of injustice that were raised were fascinating for the similarities and the differences that were evident between there and here. For them, human trafficking and corruption are high on the list but so are sorcery and high levels of illiteracy tolerated in many schools. Participants told that they felt empowered to learn that our church has a well developed set of social teachings that call us to become involved in the realisation of God's Kingdom here. As we said them, Moses was a man of action who led the Israelites out of the wilderness not only to prayer. One young man said that the course helped him to change his relationship with God from 'just a solemn encounter' to 'an awareness of the loving, protecting hand of God in his everyday life'. We hope our visit to Bamenda may have changed them but it certainly changed us.

Do you have a burning desire to launch into a **VOLUNTEERING Experience** in Countries and Cultures like ARGENTINA and PERU ? If so READ ON.....PIVP (Passionist International Volunteer Project)
Our Vision is to offer:..... an Opportunity to deepen understanding of Global Poverty and Justice....
journeying with the poor in a spirit of Community a Lived Experience of other Cultures
a Challenging experience that will enable Volunteers to deepen their 'Faith in Action' and help them develop as agents of Change.....

INTERESTED?

Further Details

suerix@btinternet.com

We welcome Enquiries



THE FUTURE FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE IN SHREWSBURY?



The National Justice and Peace Network is becoming increasingly concerned at the lack of priority given to justice and peace work in many quarters of the Catholic Church. On March 13th 2013 the following statement was issued:

'Members of the National Justice and Peace Network Executive very much regret that lay people employed by the Church in a number of dioceses are faced with the prospect of redundancy or have already been made redundant. This calls into question the acknowledgement of the role of lay members of the Church as well as priorities for the future. In times of social and economic difficulty for many it would seem that areas of real concern should be social justice, family relationships, pastoral formation and community building in an atmosphere of mutuality. Many lay workers have given years of dedicated service to their Church communities and possess skills and experience not necessarily available to those within ordained ministry. We are concerned that there be both justice and transparency in dealing with the issues of employment. NJPN will continue to support justice and peace activists within the dioceses.

More about these concerns can be read in the Summer 2013 News on www.justice-and-peace.org.uk

This includes a contribution from Anne O'Connor on our experiences in the Shrewsbury Diocese during the past year which is printed below.

The Way Forward without a J&P Worker

Sad, angry, stunned, undervalued, rudderless – reactions in Shrewsbury Diocese on suddenly losing our Joan Sharples, our dedicated J&P Worker, in May 2012. How would J&P continue without a worker able to traverse our sprawling diocese and co-ordinate activities? Could the Commission fill the gap left by Joan's departure? Should we even try?

The Diocese indicated that the Commission should continue its work, and the positive response from parish groups, represented at an Open Meeting in October 2012, encouraged us to carry on. Everyone agreed it was vital to maintain a strong J&P presence in the diocese and that CAFOD and CSAN, the Catholic Social Action Network, alone cannot cover the full remit of the Gospels and Catholic Social Teaching. Without J&P who would speak up for the voiceless, for human rights, for arms control, for care of the environment? So how do we go forward?

Our Focus in the last year

Discover what's happening in parish groups

Identify our priorities, recognising that we cannot do as much without a worker

Our Goals

Harness skills and resources within the Commission

Build a strong network of two-way communication between Commission and parish groups

Hold two open forums a year for people across the diocese to get together and share achievements and concerns

Maintain and develop good communication links via our quarterly magazine *MouthPeace*, monthly email bulletin and website

Produce resources for groups and schools

Continue to involve and inspire young people, promote the J&P Youth page on our website and network with the Assistant Directors for Primary and Secondary Schools

'BEING IN CHRIST' Fr. Peter Philips

Columba Press 2013 £ 9.99

Fr. Peter Philips is a priest of the Shrewsbury Diocese. He is now in a parish in north Cheshire and is a Research Fellow at the Department of Theology and Religion at Durham University. He has worked for many years in teaching at secondary and higher education as well as formation of adults.

Extract from a review of the book by Frank Regan in 'Reflect' April 2013:

'The author calls Christ the encounter which sets us free for doing the task of Christians. The task of Christology is to express in word and deed what Christ himself expressed. His phrase for everything that his Abba Father wanted for us was 'Reign of God'. It occurs more than sixty times in the discourses of Jesus. Paul refers to the reign not as food and drink but as "justice and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Romans 14:17). The Reign of God is encounter with Christ whose word heard by us finds echo in the depths of us and in doing in our world.'

'The author claims that this is an exciting moment for students of Christology. Contemporary Christology must learn to dialogue with the cultures of Asia and Africa and with our postmodern culture. We are too Euro-centric and far from life and death struggles of the world's majorities, far from the secular seeking truth, far from a planet which cries out for healing. Our Christ is a Graeco-Roman triumphalist Christ the King with Catholics his favoured children. A glance for example, at the bibliographies of Pope Benedict's books on Christ will list no books from south of the Equator.'



FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT

Pope Francis has certainly hit the ground running in the short time since taking over from Pope Benedict just before Easter. Few had heard of him and fewer still were aware of the changes his papacy might bring. And yet already the fruits are apparent: a move back to the spirit of Vatican II with a focus on a servant leader, a shepherd for his flock, humble and with a warmth that reaches out to all people.

As I write we are fast approaching the feast of Pentecost (19 May). One of the Church's readings gives a teaching by St Paul:

*'In the one Spirit we were all baptised, Jews as well as Greeks, slaves as well as citizens,
and one Spirit was given to us all to drink'.* 1 Corinthians 12:13

These are revolutionary words. To the people of Corinth they signified a radical change of beliefs and value systems. For many, Paul's teaching would have been hard to take on board. Many would have resisted changing from the old way of thinking. They are revolutionary words for us today too. They herald a world with no distinction between class, creed, race, nationality or gender; a world where everyone is given a seat at the table and a right to be heard; a world where all God's people can work together, in a spirit of harmony and collaboration, to build up the Kingdom of God, here and now.

Already we are experiencing a shift towards this vision, starting perhaps with the washing of the feet of two women by Pope Francis on Holy Thursday - a simple yet highly significant act which appalled some but heartened many women who have long felt marginalised by the Church. And a recent statement by the president of Germany's Bishops' Conference, Archbishop Robert Zollitsch, has called for the creation of a new, specific office for women deacons - maybe a step towards greater recognition for women in the life of the Church?

In a homily for the feast of St Joseph the Worker (1 May), Pope Francis speaks of the vocation of being a 'protector' 'protecting all creation, respecting each of God's creatures and respecting the environment in which we live. It means protecting people, showing loving concern for each and every person, especially children, the elderly, those in need, who are often the last we think about. It means caring for one another in our families: husbands and wives first protect one another, and then, as parents, they care for their children, and children themselves, in time, protect their parents. It means building sincere friendships in which we protect one another in trust, respect, and goodness. In the end, everything has been entrusted to our protection, and all of us are responsible for it'.

This statement goes to the heart of the Justice and Peace ethos and yet many dioceses have recently chosen to let their paid workers go or phase out the role completely. When there is so much need in our world for a prophetic voice to speak out against injustice it is hard to understand these decisions. But the work at grassroots level continues. In the past few days there has been news of successful lobbying. A Bill has finally been passed making caste discrimination illegal in the UK to protect the 480,000 Dalits ('untouchables') living in the UK. Supporters for the cause to beatify and eventually canonise Archbishop Oscar Romero have received the good news that his case has been 'unblocked' and can now proceed. Lobbying against the benefits cuts that hit the poorest in our society continues and petitions are flying around in response to the latest issues of concern, especially the horrific factory fire in Bangladesh which killed hundreds of workers employed at disgracefully low pay by leading UK clothing stores.

Whilst injustice exists and many parts of the world suffer from a lack of peace there will continue to be a need for a strong Justice and Peace presence. Rather than cutting essential services it would be good to mark the way forward with open dialogue resulting in a fruitful collaboration between curia and laity in the spirit of Pentecost, especially in dioceses that are struggling without a J&P Worker. Bryan Halson, a member of the Shrewsbury Commission for the Promotion of Justice, Peace and Social Responsibility who focuses on liturgy, has passed on a beautiful prayer from the Community of St. Aidan and St. Hilda to inspire those of us who may feel down-hearted:

*May the Christ who walks with the shoes of peace, walk with us on the road.
May the Christ who serves with healing hands, stretch out our hands to serve.
May the Christ who loves with the wounded heart, open our wounded hearts to love
May this be our heartfelt prayer as we journey towards the Kingdom.*

Anne O'Connor 11



28 July Day for Life is dedicated to celebrating and upholding the dignity of human life. The Church teaches that life should be protected and nurtured from conception to natural death. *A society cannot live in peace with itself unless every human person is treated with dignity and all human life is revered as sacred.* The Challenge of Peace, par. 285

www.dayforlife.org



PRAYER POINTERS

With thanks to Bryan Halson who prepared these .

Of course we often pray for "Justice and Peace", but sometimes it is difficult to move from this generalisation to *specifics*. It is the task of 'Prayer Pointers' to help towards this more specific prayer.

"War is an abomination. It is quite wrong that one nation or tribe should attack another in pursuit of land, power or wealth. It is doubly wrong that the victors should proclaim the glory of their battles, while their victims lie maimed and dying. The glory of war is illusory; war brings only misery."

(John Chrysostom, c.347-407)

How many thousands of conflicts has the world suffered since the good bishop preached these words! Yet the hopes and prayers for peace have never been silenced. The story is told of Vietnam protester who sat on the pavement holding a poster. When asked what he was trying to do he replied, "I am trying to stop the seventh war from now."

Pray quite simply for peace with justice. Hold in your mind just one specific example of current conflict. Pray for the perpetrators as well as the victims. Read **Isaiah 26.3-6, Matthew 5.9**

Give thanks for all who work to heal the wounds of war; organisations like the Red Cross, Red Crescent, Médecins sans Frontières. Pray too for individuals and groups who take peaceful action to eliminate nuclear weapons, and the arms trade.

In all our prayers let us remember that "peace" (Hebrew "Shalom", Arabic "Salaam") has a deeper meaning than just absence of conflict, but means "health", "well-being". This applies to society as much as to individuals. Read **Nahum 1.15, John 20.19**

A prayer on **Psalm 85.10**

God our Saviour,
walk toward us on a path of peace;
encourage us, in our loneliness and yearning,
take us in your arms and lift us up,
enable us to receive your goodness and grace,
to perceive your glory around us, here and now,
and to believe that justice and peace can indeed go
hand in hand. Amen. (Jan Sutch Pickard)

Of the many parable pictures which Jesus gives us about the Kingdom of God, the "great feast" carries a particularly powerful message for our present world. "And people will come from east and west, and from north and south, and sit at table in the Kingdom of God". In the Kingdom there is enough for everybody, all are invited, there is not 'top

table' but in fact "the last" will be "first".

A frequently quoted statistic is that more than a billion people go hungry; we hear less of another statistic, namely almost another billion suffer the effects of over-nutrition (e.g. obesity). Globally about 50% of food grown is wasted in the field or along the food-chain. Large areas of land are used to grow biofuels - feeding cars rather than people. As the CAFOD leaflet *Food for Thought* puts it, "if we want to bring an end to global hunger we need to change the way the system works."

In our prayers we can hold these two pictures together - the words of Jesus about the Kingdom and the present food situation. Notice two petitions in the Lord's Prayer - "Thy kingdom come" and "give us this day our daily bread". Pray first for all involved in current campaigns to change a dysfunctional food system. Think of the 'IF' campaign involving more than 100 NGOs; CAFOD's "Hungry for Change" campaign; campaigns on wider issues such as water usage, bees, the power of food companies. Read **Psalm 104.14-15, Luke 13.29-30**

Included among the laws in the Book of Leviticus is the law of Jubilee. Every fiftieth year Israelites were to return to their ancestral home and land. Land that had been sold during the previous 49 years had to be returned to its original owners, and debts were forgiven.

In our time debt is a major issue - both individual and national/international. It has become particularly problematic in recent years because of a spate of excessive lending without thought to the ability to repay. Individual debt can bring misery to families. At least we can be thankful that in December, 2012, the UK government agreed to introduce a cap on the cost of payday loans, but there is still some way to go in meeting the 'debt crisis'. Pray for those individuals and organisations that work to help people with debt problems. Think of Citizens' Advice Bureau, Consumer Credit Counselling Service.

International debt remains a major problem for developing nations, particularly on the continents of Africa and Central/South America. Pray that those promises of debt remission which have been made by the developed world may in fact be carried out. Read **Leviticus 25.10, Matthew 18.23-27**

To aid our prayers here is a prayer and proverb from the Jewish tradition -

Teach us, Lord, that it is not for us to complete the work, but neither may we desist from it:

Do God's will as if it were your will, so that God may do your will as if it were God's will.

3 September Home Mission Sunday We pray for the work of evangelisation in our countries and reflect on our response to the Lord's invitation to share our faith. www.cbcew.org.uk/document.doc?id=86
'How deep a thirst there is among the British people for the Good News of Jesus Christ. You have been chosen by God to offer them the living water of the Gospel.'
Benedict XVI, Oscott, 19 Sept 2010



SEEING FOR OURSELVES - TIMOR LESTE (EAST TIMOR)

*Jim & Pauline Howell who belong to Marple Churches
Together J & P Group write about their visit in 2012*

In the centre of Dili stands a statue like those found in capital cities of former colonies round the world. On a tall plinth a heroic figure in national costume, sword in hand, broken chains round ankles, mouth open wide in a cry of joy, raises a shredded standard to the sky. We duly took a picture of it but found out that it does not commemorate the freeing of East Timor, now properly called Timor Leste (TL), from Indonesia in 1999 but celebrates its **integration** into Indonesia in 1975! It seems no one has got round to removing it.

This impression of weirdness never left us during our very short visit of just a few days which was limited to Dili. We called on our way to Australia because Jim had been a member of a small Timor support group during the Indonesian occupation and wanted to see the place.

We arrived by walking across the frontier after an eight hour bus ride over the mountains of West Timor, part of Indonesia. Timor lies east of Bali and is one of the last stops before Australia. TL, which covers just under half of Timor, is about three quarters the size of Wales with a population of about a million. Neighbouring Indonesia is about twenty times the size of the UK with a population of a quarter of a billion.

The Japanese invasion of 1942 included Portuguese East Timor, as well as the western part of the island which was in the Dutch East Indies. In what is now TL a force of Australian soldiers fought for over a year with the active help of the locals of whom 70,000 out of a then population of less than half a million died. A campaign to get Australian official recognition of the help given to them by the East Timor people has so far been somewhat unsuccessful.

In 1949 West Timor became part of the Republic of Indonesia but the Timor continued as a Portuguese colony until the 1974 "Carnation Revolution". The new Portuguese government would not hold on to its colonial empire and when in the first elections the party supporting integration with Indonesia had only one seat in the assembly it became equally clear that the vast majority of the people, whatever they did want, did not want to become part of Indonesia.

The two pro independence parties proved unable to work together and by the summer there had been an attempted coup with over 2000 killed. The most popular group, Fretilin, was left wing and influenced, it was said, by Cuba. This was unwelcome to the government of General Suharto in Indonesia, which had come to power after a near civil war with local communists.

Fretilin declared East Timor independent on November 28th 1975. The Indonesians invaded on December 7th. It

has never been clear if this was at the urging of other countries or not. It took longer than expected to quell resistance but on July 17th 1976 East Timor was proclaimed the Indonesia's 27th province.

The Indonesians invested lots of money in their new territory. Roads and schools were built and something was done to improve the health of the people. They also built a number of prestige buildings including a new cathedral opened in 1989 with the blessing of the Pope and a large statue of Christ the King was raised at the top of a hill overlooking the bay of Dili.

However the Indonesians' reaction to any kind of opposition negated all their efforts. If they could not catch a member of the resistance they would find and kill a member of their family. We were told the details such incidents which happened as late as 1998. During their quarter century occupation the Indonesians killed between 150,000 and 270,000 out of a population of under a million. This is about a quarter of the population and we understand that there are no families in TL who have not had a member of their family killed during the occupation.

Some resistance continued more or less effectively from the mountains for over twenty years but the TL cause looked completely hopeless. However by the late 90s the world was changing and when two Timorese won the Nobel Peace prize the issue of East Timor began to become better known. Then Suharto resigned and the new democratic government in Jakarta was inclined to accept the results of a referendum on independence in East Timor.

This was held in September 1999 and four out of five voters opted for a fully independent TL. There followed a campaign of terror by Indonesian militias and about a quarter of the population were forced to flee their homes. By the time they returned they found that over eighty percent of the infrastructure had been destroyed. We could still see the scars on many buildings more than a decade later and the effect on roads, water and health is clear.

During our time in Dili we stayed at the presbytery in a parish just to the west of Dili centre and were able to chat to the priests. The Catholic Church is now a big power in the land as 95% of the population are at least nominally catholic and to be catholic is seen almost as a badge of nationhood in the way as it has been in Ireland and Poland in the past.

Thoughtful people worry about this sudden conversion from animism and wonder if the old beliefs are not still there and of course the potential problems of the church becoming a part of the state machine also give cause for much anxiety. *(continued on following page)*



'Seeing for ourselves' continued

Earlier this year elections were held and a change of government took place with minimal violence but the prominent politicians on both sides are former guerrilla fighters. Because of their heroism they are untouchable but many are now tired, older and corrupt. Many have suffered family breakdowns. Others have retired to the country. It may well be another ten years at least before any new generation politicians are ready to replace them.

Oil is in the sea between Timor and Australia and a treaty has been signed with giving TL 90% of the revenue. This may well be \$100 million a year and the "oil fund" balance is now over \$10 billion, which could provide a reasonable standard of development.

But the oil revenue does not appear to have yet benefited the general population. In a speech earlier this year the then president, Jose Ramos-Horta, stated that although leprosy has been brought under control, four in ten of the population still live in poverty and malnutrition levels among children are among the highest in the region. Clean water and continued power, we saw for ourselves, are not easy for many in Dili to obtain.

The new country has many problems and some are self inflicted.

First of all there is a language issue. There are about twenty local languages in TL and the country has two official languages – Portuguese and Tetum, neither of which is spoken by most of the people. The government has started a programme to teach Portuguese which is at present spoken by about 5% but has also recognised two "working languages" (English and Indonesian) as well as the official languages. It is thought that about half the population can speak Indonesian but it is tainted with the memory of the dead.

The language issue is a symptom of wider disunity between the east and west parts of the country. Twice since TL became independent there has been violence leading to the arrival of a peace keeping force and it was only in December 2012 that the last UN peace keepers left. As we entered Dili we passed thousands of white UN vehicles lined up in the compound just outside the town. At its peak the UN had many thousands of people

in East Timor and it is clear that a significant number of the population earned its living by servicing their various needs. What will happen to these people now?

TL has two important neighbours – Indonesia and Australia. Relations with both are complicated and the government is driven by an obsession not to become the "colony" of either. Indonesia is the logical economic partner and relations are now correct but it will be many years before the horrors of the past cease to affect the present. Some Australians feel a debt of shame to the Timorese and the Australians have made big efforts both in aid and in peacekeeping since 1999. Nevertheless it was perhaps because of the past actions of both these neighbours that the TL government took the decision to adopt the US dollar as its national currency. No one we spoke to can understand this. The effects appear completely negative as a "strong" currency prevents their competing effectively and inflation is at 17%.

Prices are high. We were astonished that in the very modern air conditioned Mall over the road from where we stayed the prices are more or less the same as in Stockport in a country where wages can be less than a thousand US dollars a year.

TL has beautiful beaches, spectacular scenery, an interesting heritage and hospitable people. But so does West Timor and at about a fifth of the price. This means that TL is reliant on oil and gas to survive.

Can the country survive in face of so many problems? We were only there for three days but had many chats with our hosts who of course are there for life. We also met a number of truly heroic people who are working at the lowest level to stand with the poorest.

It is tempting to be negative about TL but we must remember from where they started in 1999. Compared to the scratch start much progress has been made on the last thirteen years but Christ the King needs to keep a close eye on Dili for at least the next thirteen.

Former President Ramos Horta, one of TL's most respected figures, said to the UN in 2012

"Too often there is not much that outside forces can do to influence the course of events in a particular country. But you can always offer words of support and hope."

和平

**MEET REV SHOU HUI AND HER MANDARIN STUDENT CHOIR IN MARPLE
at the Ridge Methodist church 11- 3pm on Saturday June 22**

The students of Chinese background come from Taiwan and Malaysia as well as mainland China. The invitation was prompted on hearing that some of the choir had been mugged when out one evening in central Manchester. Some members of the Marple group who were at the Swanwick conference on China last year welcomed an opportunity to meet Chinese students while they are living here. During the day the choir will sing and Rev Shou Wei talk about her work. There will also be plenty of time to talk informally to the students over lunch and, weather permitting, during a short walk along the ridge. Everyone is welcome to this unusual event. Please bring a small contribution (English or Chinese) for the shared lunch table. Arranged by Marple Churches Together J & P group.

More information from Marian Thompson (details on back page)



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

JUNE

6 Big IF fast day

8 IF Rally in Hyde Park See page 2

<http://enoughfoodif.org>

9 Time to Scrap Trident Tour: Bruce Kent

FREE EVENT at Friends Meeting House, Corporation Lane, Shrewsbury, SY1 2NU Tel 01691 658 330 NB. 3.30

15 'The Priesthood of the Faithful' Paul Philibert OP at LACE Conference Centre, Croxteth Drive, Sefton Park, Liverpool L17 1AA 10.00 —4 .00 £10 see page 2

17-23 June Refugee Week www.refugeeweek.org.uk

22 Visit of Rev Shou Hui and her Mandarin Student Choir to Marple at the Ridge Methodist church 11-3pm arranged by Churches Together J & P group More details on page 11

22 Feast of St Thomas More is an opportunity to remember in prayer the many people worldwide who suffer in prison for their beliefs. Amnesty International www.amnesty.org.uk

Christian Solidarity Worldwide www.csw.org

"I was in prison and you visited me" Matthew 25: 43

26 UN Day for Victims of Torture Christians Against Torture www.acatuk.org.uk

JULY

8 Sea Sunday Seafarers are commonly recruited from poorer countries where wages are lower. Seafarers work in difficult and often dangerous conditions suffering from loneliness, spiritual deprivation and even exploitation as they transport the goods we use and consume every day. The Apostleship of the Sea (AoS), the official maritime welfare agency of the Catholic Church in Great Britain, reaches out to seafarers that visit our ports each year, offering pastoral and practical support and care. www.apostleshipofthesea.org.uk

19–21 "Breaking Open the Word - a call to faith in action" a weekend with Megan McKenna National J & P Annual Swanwick Conference. See page 2

Liverpool

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23-28 World Youth Day to be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, takes the theme 'Go and make disciples of all peoples (Matthew 28:19) www.rio2013.com/en/

28 Day for Life www.dayforlife.org see page 8

AUGUST

6 & 9 Anniversaries of first use of atomic weapons at Hiroshima & Nagasaki see page 2

SEPTEMBER

1 September – 4 October Climate Time As Christians we are inspired to be stewards of the earth, to conserve and protect God's creation and the earth's resources. By our actions, we can mitigate the effects of climate change stop the destruction of habitats and reverse the decline of species worldwide. The way we treat the earth today is already affecting the poorest and most vulnerable in the world and, in time, will affect us all.

www.greenchristian.org.uk

3 Home Mission Sunday see page 9

8 Racial Justice Sunday Catholic Association for Racial Justice (CARJ) www.carj.org.uk

8 Campaign Against Arms Trade Christian Network Day of Prayer Resources from www.caat.org.uk/getinvolved/christian

14 NJPN Open Networking Day at St Columba's Chester 10.30–4 All welcome. There will be an opportunity to hear about justice and peace activities from groups around the country. Representatives of Catholic/Christian Agencies will report on their work and suggest practical ways of becoming involved in campaigning for social justice. Tea and coffee will be provided, bring your own lunch. For further details contact: Ann Kelly Tel: 020 7901 4864 Email: admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk

21 Peace One Day - An annual day of global ceasefire and non-violence www.peaceoneday.org

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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Don't forget to send in reports of events and dates for the diary

www.archdiocese-of-liverpool.co.uk

www.jp-shrewsburydiocese.org.uk