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# *Shrewsbury and Liverpool Justice and Peace Commissions*

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Summer 2010      Issue 70

## *BETRAYAL*

*Face pressed roughly against the window pane,  
a solitary tear creeps down his cheek  
as he watches his brother greet his girlfriend with a kiss,  
touchingly innocent,  
achingly normal.*

*Outside the local lads are gathering for a kick around,  
brightly coloured shirts emblazoned with their team logo.*

*No carefree game for him  
He sports a different badge,  
initiated against his will into a secret club:  
its entry fee a childhood lost and debased.*

*The badge, an integral part of him now,  
conceals a gaping wound that never heals.*

*He clenches his fist over and over again  
- an action he can control,  
something of his own choosing -  
anger and hurt bound tight in that one simple motion.*

*All around, the silence of acquiescence pierces his heart.  
Mea culpa, mea maxima culpa.*

*Anne O'Connor*

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# PEACING TOGETHER ONE WORLD

## Creating a Culture of Peace for our Children

**ONE WORLD WEEK 17 – 24 October 2010**

The UN '*International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World*' ends in 2010. *One World Week* is using this as the focus for its 2010 theme: '*Peacing Together One World*' and invites everyone to get involved in their local community by putting on relevant events and publicising them on the website: [www.oneworldweek.org](http://www.oneworldweek.org)

UNESCO defined eight action areas for the Decade, recognising that each would contribute to building a culture of peace for our children. *One World Week* is concentrating on the three areas most closely related to its vision and aims:



- **Promoting sustainable economic and social development**
- **Promoting respect for all human rights**
- **Advancing understanding, tolerance and solidarity**

A culture of peace can be established at many levels:

- through personal inner peace;
- peace within the family;
- harmony within the community, between communities and across faiths;
- justice and non-violence on a global scale.

You may wish to consider:

- What is a *culture* of peace?
- What is *inner peace* and is it important?
- What can we do to help establish peace in our homes, schools, local communities?
- Is peace possible without justice?
- How can we live our own lives sustainably? What can we do to support sustainable development with economic and social justice globally?
- How can we fulfil our responsibilities to respect human rights?
- What can we do to advance understanding, to move beyond tolerance to respect, celebration of diversity, friendship and solidarity?

*One World Week* exists to provide the space for people from diverse backgrounds to come together to learn about global justice, to spread that learning and to use it to challenge inequality, discrimination and degradation, locally and globally.

Let 2010 be the year we begin to create a lasting culture of peace for future generations.

*One World Week* 2010 '*Peacing Together One World*' leaflet, image and other resources are being developed, see contact details below.

For more about UNESCO's programme for a Culture of Peace go to:  
[www3.unesco.org/iycp/uk/uk\\_sum\\_cp.htm](http://www3.unesco.org/iycp/uk/uk_sum_cp.htm)

*One World Week* aims to help you explore these aspects and provide you with a range of resources and ideas as you plan your 2010 events.

**What kind of world are we creating for our children – one filled with fear, conflict and injustice or one based on respect, caring and cooperation?**

One World Week, PO Box 2555, Reading RG1 4XW. t: 0118 939 4933, [www.oneworldweek.org](http://www.oneworldweek.org)  
e: [oww@oneworldweek.org](mailto:oww@oneworldweek.org)

Charity no: 1107762 Registered Company in England & Wales no: 4665250



## 'PROSPERITY WITHOUT GROWTH'

*Bryan Halson writes:*

This is a hugely important book. The author Tim Jackson is Economics Commissioner on the Sustainable Development Commission, the UK government's independent adviser on sustainable development. He is also Professor of Sustainable Development at the University of Surrey and Director of the ESRC Research Group on Lifestyles, Values and Environment.

Speaking at the annual conference of Church Action on Poverty he said: "I have found that it is very challenging to suggest to governments that economic growth is part of the problem we face, and that we need a different kind of economy." That is what this book is about.

He puts forward two key problems. The first is this: our present economy is based on material growth. It has been assumed that economic growth will bring prosperity both to the developed and the developing worlds. But in fact this has not happened. Growth has brought prosperity in financial terms to only a few, not to the majority of the world's population. The gap between rich and poor has widened at an alarming rate. We have an economy based on debt, and this has led only to financial collapse. The "growth economy" then has failed.

But the second key problem is even more significant. We live in a finite system - our planet earth. A finite system puts limits on exponential growth. Put simply, we cannot continue to use up the world's resources by pursuing the present kind of economic growth for ever. The argument that we can solve this problem by being more efficient or technologically inventive only delays the inevitable collapse.

Facing these two problems leads Jackson to the crucial issue - what do we mean by "prosperity"? What we have at present is a materialistic view of flourishing: money and possessions, ever greater consumption, are the ingredients of the good life. But the evidence shows the falsity of this view. Improvements (growth) in this sphere do not bring contentment, but only the desire for more at a frightening ecological price.

However, there is an alternative economy which enables us to flourish - something other than the culture of consumption. Granted the basics of sufficient housing, clothing, food for reasonable sustenance, there must be the elements which allow all to participate meaningfully in the life of society and this involves such things as love, friendship, community, and all that gives meaning and purpose to life. Moreover it must be a flourishing within ecological limits.

Two conclusions stem from this alternative view of prosperity. First - although we can act as individuals to "live simply" (and this is vital) there has to be an overall strategy whereby the whole community, whether local, national, or global, live within our planetary limits. This means there has to be governance which organises an economy that is not based on material growth. This will involve such things as establishing the limits of resource use, and fiscal reform for sustainability. Secondly we have to change the mind-set of society from the consumerist model to a willingness to appreciate that alternative "flourishing" which has been described. This will involve such moves as stronger regulation of the commercial media, and strengthening those things which make for stronger communities (the Transition Town movement is an example of the latter).

Clearly this is a book which deals with vital issues. The vision of a different way of flourishing is in harmony with major elements in Catholic Social Teaching, well expressed by the Bishops in *Choosing the Common Good*: "The common good is about how to live well together. It is the whole network of social conditions which enable individuals and groups to flourish and live a full, genuinely human life."

Tim Jackson, *Prosperity Without Growth*, Earthscan, 2009, ISBN 978-1-84407-894-3, £12.99.

*Editor: For more suggestions for Summer reading see page 7*



## THE STORY OF ANSELME

I am writing this on Anselme's birthday. We know that he is in hiding, we know that he is in extreme danger, we hope and pray he is still alive.

Anselme is from Cameroon, a country which our government has designated as 'safe', disregarding Amnesty International's evidence to the contrary. He was returned there on April 28, in spite of many, many voices raised in protest, and in spite of the near-certainty that he would be killed.

Anselme is our friend, indeed more than a friend. He stayed with us and we have frequently been in touch by phone and he calls us 'Mum and Dad'. He fled to this country some four years ago, in fear of his life. The authorities refused to believe his story even in the face of incontrovertible evidence from a Catholic newspaper and the Catholic Bishops Conference in Cameroon.

His story is certainly unusual. His father was the chief of the Bamileke tribe and after his death, Anselme was chosen from among all his brothers to be the new chief. This entailed 'marrying' his father's eleven wives. As Anselme had become a Christian he refused to accept the chieftom and as a result was captured, horribly tortured and told he would be killed unless he submitted.



He escaped to Britain and when he asked for asylum under the 1951 United Nations Refugee Convention he was refused. After examination by the Medical Foundation for the Victims of Torture where a doctor confirmed his injuries as consistent with torture, and after several appeals, his story was rejected. He was sent to the North-east to await removal. Three times he was arrested and put in detention, twice he was put on planes to be returned to Cameroon. On both occasions he struggled so much that the other passengers refused to fly unless he was removed, so the escorts took him back into detention, beating him up badly on the way.

This last time, however, the authorities were taking no chances. They took Anselme and 18 others, on a specially chartered plane early in the morning. On arrival in Cameroon he was met by a friend who took him into hiding. But Anselme's tribe is everywhere in Cameroon, in the police, the army and the government. Until he is dead his tribe is without a chief, so his position is frighteningly dangerous.

When he was living in Stockton, and reporting to the police every week, Anselme had no money at all and no roof over his head until he was taken in by the Baptist pastor and his family who looked after him for the last two years. I am in my 80<sup>th</sup> year and have never in my life met anyone who spent more time in prayer than Anselme. He has an amazing, humbling Catholic faith. He has not been allowed to do any paid work, but had cleaned both the Baptist and the Catholic churches in Stockton-on-Tees.

When we first met Anselme he was not very fluent in English – he speaks both his tribal language and French – and this is something he wrote: *"In the world we can't grown (sic) and improve in a stranger country. God supplied my need and always provide British people to help"*. He doesn't mention the British people who have been anything but helpful to him.

Anthea Dove May 9th 2010 email: [dove.whitby@phonecoop.coop](mailto:dove.whitby@phonecoop.coop)

### 'LORD, WHEN DID I SEE YOU HUNGRY?'



There are hungry, destitute people among us, 195 on the books of Asylum Link Merseyside, more than that agency is able to support. The law does not allow asylum seekers to work. Under Section 4 of the Immigration Act they are given food vouchers and extremely basic accommodation but only if they are prepared to sign an agreement to return to their own country if their bid for asylum fails. Since they have fled injustice, often in great fear, and because good legal representation at asylum hearings is hard to come by, it is unsurprising that they are reluctant to sign such an agreement. As Christians we cannot ignore their plight. Asylum Link would be glad to hear from you if you can provide any assistance (0151-709-1713).

Can we follow the example given by members of one church group in the London area who contribute the heating allowance they are given as over-60s because they are fortunate enough not to need it? Not everyone can afford to do this but it is an example of a Christian response to our neighbour's destitution.

### MOBILES, MONEY & MAYHEM - the facts and fibs about asylum

The Refugee Awareness Project has produced a useful pocket guide which aims to put information at people's finger tips so they can influence others. It can be downloaded from [www.refugee-action.org.uk](http://www.refugee-action.org.uk) or for real copies email [rap@refugee-action.org.uk](mailto:rap@refugee-action.org.uk) or phone 020 7654 0673

## HELP! THERE'S AN ASYLUM-SEEKER IN MY CHURCH

June 26<sup>th</sup> 10 am – 4 pm

**Brunswick Parish Church Brunswick Church Manchester M13 9TQ**

This day conference will draw upon a range of experience to explore different ways of engaging with and supporting refugees and asylum seekers across North West England. Organised in conjunction with refugee communities, the event will increase your understanding of the experiences faced by asylum seekers in your area and help inform, equip and inspire you with practical ways to get involved.

10.00	Registration and Coffee	10.30	Worship and Opening Prayer
10.50	Welcome and Introduction	11.10	Keynote Speaker "The Theology of the Stranger"
11.30	Workshop One	12.30	Lunch
1.30	Asylum Stories from the North West	2.00	Workshop Two
3.00	Break	3.15	Panel Q&A
3.45	Closing Prayer		

Optional time of prayer ministry

Cost for the day: £15 standard, £10 concession. Free to those with no recourse to public funds.

To book contact Mary Pole 07760 789 688, email [mary@ecsr.org.uk](mailto:mary@ecsr.org.uk)

For posters and leaflets please call The Boaz Trust on 0161 202 1056 or download a flyer from:

[www.church-poverty.org.uk/campaigns/livingghosts/NW\\_flyer.pdf](http://www.church-poverty.org.uk/campaigns/livingghosts/NW_flyer.pdf)

This event is supported by: The Boaz Trust (<http://boaztrust.org.uk>), Equip ([www.ecsr.org.uk](http://www.ecsr.org.uk)), Church Action on Poverty, SPEAK Network ([www.speak.org.uk](http://www.speak.org.uk)), Churches' Refugee Network ([www.ctbi.org.uk/96](http://www.ctbi.org.uk/96)), Jesuit Refugee Service ([www.jrs.net](http://www.jrs.net)), Manchester Refugee Support Network ([www.mrsn.org.uk](http://www.mrsn.org.uk)) and is part of Refugee Week ([www.refugeeweek.org.uk](http://www.refugeeweek.org.uk)).



### KEEP VIGIL ROUND THE WORLD FOR OUR TORTURED SISTERS AND BROTHERS

During night June 26/27th

As part of the UN International Day of support for the Victims of Torture, ACAT (Action by Christians against Torture) invites all Christians to commit themselves to pray for those who suffer at the hands of torturer.

Pray alone or in groups, at home or in church.... To be part of this chain of prayer sign your name on [www.thenightvigil.com](http://www.thenightvigil.com) or send a note of your chosen times, the location and number of your companions in prayer to: ACAT(UK) Office, 8 Southfield, Saltash, Cornwall. PL12 4LX or email [uk.acat@googlemail.com](mailto:uk.acat@googlemail.com) from whom prayer materials can be obtained free. See also [www.acat.org.uk](http://www.acat.org.uk)

### REMEMBERING OSCAR ROMERO

On a dusky late-March evening, in a church lit only by the glow of flickering candles, the parishes of All Saints' (Ashton on Mersey), Our Lady's (Partington) and St. Margaret Ward (Ashton on Mersey) celebrated the life, and death, of Oscar Romero. Wednesday normally sees an evening Mass so a number in the congregation had arrived for the "wrong" service. Those that stayed were pleasantly surprised and later told us that they enjoyed the evening.



The Justice and Peace Group has been operating for a little over two years but can still be considered as embryonic. Twelve months ago, we held a smaller service in front of a congregation of just over twenty. This year, the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the murder of Oscar Romero, we planned something a little larger.

The celebration started with an introduction of Oscar's life and the hymn "Be not afraid". A period of silence was followed by a reading from the prophet Isaiah (42: 1-8) and a subsequent reflection on the same. Further readings and bidding prayers appropriate to the occasion were heard. Throughout the service, the lights remained dimmed and a PowerPoint presentation scrolled through in the background. The most poignant moment came when we heard the recording of Oscar Romero's life culminating in the gunshot.

The climax of the event came as a new song dedicated to Oscar Romero written by Annmarie, of YWCA, was sung by the songwriter. The celebration finished as the congregation lit candles to carry their prayers to heaven and members of the Justice and Peace Group laid them on the altar. We counted almost eighty candles, a great turnout. Many in the congregation stayed behind to enjoy Fairtrade tea and coffee. Unanimously, the feedback told us how successful the evening had been.

Paul Gandy

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## **A Request to help a school for displaced children in the South East of Democratic Republic of Congo**

In 1994, when the genocide broke out in Rwanda many Hutus found refuge in the Eastern region of the Democratic Republic of Congo, the neighbouring country to Rwanda. There were already Tutsi families in this region who had fled Rwanda in the 60s when the first Hutu president was elected. In this context it was not easy for the two tribes to cohabit peacefully as both tribes have a long history of hatred which really keeps them apart.

The newcomers were straight away confronted by hostility from the Tutsi settlers in the region who were afraid of their presence knowing that some of these Hutus had committed massacres of Tutsi in Rwanda. This hostility led to violence between the two communities.

The Congolese government urged those Hutus who were responsible for genocide to return to Rwanda in order to be judged. This decision did not please to extremists Hutus who refused to return to Rwanda and opted to hide in the bush. From the bush they made sudden attacks on villages, terrorising inhabitants, stealing their belongings and raping women and girls. Notice that these extremists Hutus were all former soldiers and were armed. Congolese soldiers failed to disarm them and they carried on their incursions in destabilising the region until inhabitants started to move from this Eastern region to other parts of the country. This move has been going on for the last fifteen years now.

My family, like many others, moved to the South-East of the country at the border with Zambia which has been always peaceful. For these families life was not easy as they had to restart everything from scratch. They are at the outskirts of the town from where the nearest hospital and school are four miles away.

Two years ago, from local initiative, a primary school was built to serve the children of these displaced families. The school has three classrooms and one toilet, and is serving this year 240 children. The first three years (1, 2 & 3) attend in the morning and the last three years (4, 5 & 6) attend in the afternoon.

In April this year, after Easter, I went to visit my family and I visited the school. I was touched and moved by the initiative to help displaced children.

**But I was surprised and shocked to see:**  
**three classrooms and one toilet for 240 children and staff;**  
**classrooms non cemented;**  
**not enough desks;**  
**pupils having their meal seated on the ground.**

What worries me the most is that the Local Education Authority is threatening to close the school if it does not meet the standard required, that is to have a maximum of 40 children per classroom. The necessity to build 3 more classrooms by next year becomes imperative, otherwise the school will be closed and the future all these children who have already suffered traumatism will be jeopardised.

It is this threat and the knowledge of what this school represents for all our families that have made me to seek for help.

What the school needs in order to meet the standard required are:

3 more classrooms which value approximately	£3,900
6 more toilets which value approximately	£900
60 desks which value approximately	£1,200
6 tables	£90
Total	£6,090

This amount represents the half of the cost as the local community will make all the bricks needed, transport of sand and free labour for all the work.

The Sisters of Notre Dame, Choinesses de Saint Augustin in Brussels have accepted that their bank account may be used to transit the money to their sisters in the town where the school is built. The local sisters will be responsible for all the work. We are very much grateful to them.

Thanking you in advance for your help.

Yours sincerely,

Fr Jean Paul Ilunga

*See page opposite for contact details and background*



## SUMMER READING

### 'My Father was a Freedom Fighter: Gaza's Untold Story' by Ramzy Baroud

Pluto Press 2010 £13.99

Gilad Atzmon: "This is more than a book, it is actually a masterpiece .. Ramzy's father Mohammed, was a freedom fighter. He didn't win a single war, not even a battle, yet, against all odds, in spite of his poverty and illness, he managed to educate his children and to plant hope in their young souls"

Cindy and Craig Corrie, The Rachel Corrie Foundation: "This book should be read by all who struggle to understand the Middle East and to find passage to a just peace in the region."

### 'Climate and Christ, A Prophetic Alternative' Edward P. Echlin

The Columba Press, Dublin , 2010, £9.99. ISBN 978-1-85607-690-6



"Edward Echlin has worked with unflinching patience, love and conviction to help the church to embrace the earth. His great gift has been to dig deep into the rich soil of the incarnation. That's what makes his writing so nourishing, and so prophetic. In this book he astutely addresses the dangers of climate change to people and planet alike. Perhaps the greatest risk in this crisis is despair; in Climate and Christ we have proof of hope." Paul Bodenham, Chair, Christian Ecology Link. **see [www.christian-ecology.org.uk/echlin-climate-christ.htm](http://www.christian-ecology.org.uk/echlin-climate-christ.htm)**

*Editor: Some of us remember Ed Elchin's inspiring contribution to the Swanwick Conference July 2005. and look forward to reading this latest book.*

### Two newly-published novels :

Isabel Allende 'Island Beneath the Sea' about Haiti and Slavery £10.99

Irene Sabatini 'The Boy Next Door' about life in Zimbabwe Spectre £14.99

### Also about Zimbabwe:

'Unfeeling' (2005) Ian Holden's unsettling novel about a boy whose parents are murdered by Mugabe's war veterans

'When a Crocodile Eats the Sun' (2006) Peter Goodwin's memoir of his parents' life under Mugabe's misrule.

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### DESTINATION TSUNAMI - A new photographic exhibition heads for Liverpool

Tourism Concern's latest photographic exhibition exposes the impacts of tourism developments on tsunami-affected communities, five years on. If all goes to plan, the exhibition will be in Liverpool soon.

Visit their website on [www.tourismconcern.org.uk](http://www.tourismconcern.org.uk)

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St Mary's Presbytery, Standishgate, Wigan WN1 1XL  
Tel. (01942) 242066 Mob. 07947463798

*Fr Jean Paul continues:*

I was born in the Eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo. I did my studies for the priesthood at St Paul Seminary and the Catholic University of Kinshasa (DRC).

Due to the conflict in my region which followed the genocide in Rwanda, I had to leave Congo after being ordained a deacon.

On arrival here in Liverpool in December 2001 I met Fr Peter Morgan who guided me and helped me to settle.

Having spoken to Archbishop Patrick, I was sent to the English College Valladolid in Spain from September 2005 until June 2006 and then to Ushaw College Durham from September 2006 until April 2007 for further studies.

From May to September 2007 I was on long placement at St John Almond parish in Childwall Valley. I was ordained priest at St Anne's Church in Liverpool on 15th September 2007.

## FOOD SECURITY AND FOOD JUSTICE

*Report of talk held on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2010, at the University of Chester arranged by Chester World Development Forum in conjunction with the Department of Geography and Development Studies, compiled by Ann McCarthy, Margaret Lord and Kath Stephenson.*

**Speaker: Matthew Carter, Director of Humanitarian Aid, CAFOD**

There has never been a "food secure" period in human history. It is estimated that, at the present time, 1 billion people live in constant hunger or are undernourished. The situation is getting worse and is not necessary - we grow enough food to feed the whole world but it is unjustly shared out. The problem is one of social justice.

### **The worsening situation is due to a number of factors:**

- Climate change - changing climate patterns have brought unpredictable weather resulting in more *extreme* disasters, e.g. droughts in Australia and floods in Asia. Africa is experiencing both droughts and floods.
- Water scarcity causing declining yields
- Rises in price of maize, wheat and rice, staple foods for many of the world's poor. It is estimated that these commodities have risen by as much as 90% globally.
- Water "stress" is increasing, e.g. Australia used to export "virtual" water i.e. food grown using their water supply. This supply was halved last year due to climate change and this will drive up prices.

### **Who are the most vulnerable? Of course, it is the poor:**

- Food is a commodity and much of the best agricultural land is used to grow cotton, sugar, cocoa, coffee, tea and sisal - cash crops for the richer west. We can now add bio-fuels to the list. In addition vast tracts of land are given over to grazing cattle as expanding countries change to Western food *preferences for more meat*.
- Part of the food crisis is due to chronic underinvestment in agriculture in both developed and developing countries. There are many blocks to food security - tariffs and pressure for arable land being two of them. Vast tracts of land are being bought in Africa to grow maize for the increasing demand for bio-fuels whilst the majority of the population go to bed hungry. Small scale farmers can be seen as a hindrance and are therefore not encouraged

Food demand could increase by as much as 50% by 2030. Africa has introduced some new agricultural mechanisms but these are a quick fix and not sustainable. Globally, in the last 40 years, there has been a 100% increase in the use of fertilisers in an attempt to increase productivity. In this context, the appeal of GM foods is very seductive. The priority task is to enable small farmers to increase their own food production. GM crops in reality have only given limited help. More research is needed and it is important to keep in touch with the scientists doing the research.

There needs to be massive investment in rural development worldwide; in land use, water supply and improved infrastructure. To date there has been a consistent bias towards urban development.

A further aspect to be considered is food security during conflict situations. The major NGOs are now adopting conflict-sensitive programmes which provide assistance without putting people at increased risk. Livelihood strategies are introduced alongside humanitarian aid.

In the long term, "development thinking" must run alongside the immediate disaster operations. These methods of working are being used in Zimbabwe, Darfur, Eritrea and Haiti. Assistance must not be seen in isolation - an holistic approach is essential. There is a need to link policy, research and practice and to build strong links with scientists and academic research. There is a need to sharpen up the assessment of humanitarian movements and their effect on development (HAP - Humanitarian Assessment Process).

In conclusion, whilst growth is promoted and praised, justice and equity are more important. To achieve this will need a lifestyle change by the rich west.

**OUR DAILY BREAD: Food Security, People and Planet**      **16 - 18 July 2010**  
**32nd Annual J & P Conference**      **Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, Derbyshire**

Four main speakers plus a variety of workshops, Just Fair and a 'BIG FOOD DEBATE'  
Activities arranged for children and young people

For more information or booking forms contact: The Administrator NJPN 39 Eccleston Square, London SW1V 1BX Tel: 020 7901 4864 email: [admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk](mailto:admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk) Information and booking forms also available on the website [www.justice-and-peace.org.uk](http://www.justice-and-peace.org.uk)



On Monday 3 May 2010, eight rural communities gathered together in the village of El Rosario in the west of El Salvador to celebrate the Day of the Cross and take part in a Seed Fair. About 100 farming families, including men, women and children, brought different varieties of crops to share and exchange with each other, with the purpose of encouraging a greater diversity of crop production. The Seed Fair was based on principles of organic agriculture and environmental conservation, celebrating nature and the richness of native seeds. To create a festive atmosphere, the families also brought plates of typical Salvadoran food to share, including corn bread, cakes, tropical fruit drinks and a special type of rice pudding.

*Editor :This information including photos and the prayer below has come from Sarah- Smith Pearse, CAFOD's Communications Officer for Latin America and the Caribbean. Sarah has gone to some lengths to translate the prayer .Turn to p13 of this online version of MouthPeace to see the photos, including one of Fidel, who comes from PuenteCitos, one of the eight communities that organised the Seed Fair. Fidel is explaining to other farmers about his crops. He and his family won the prize for bringing the greatest variety of seeds and vegetation - 43 varieties in all.*

### THE FARMER'S PRAYER

Dear Lord:

Those of us who plough the land, as men and women who earn our bread with the sweat of our foreheads, those of us who believe that the seed is life and generates life...

Those of us who enrich the soil through our work, who are humble farm workers, yet have knowledge... we ask you for strength in these difficult times.

Liberate us, Lord, from those who say that we, who are peasant farmers, belong to the past. Free us, Lord, from cynical people who say that there have to be losers as well as winners. Free us from them, because we know that we are in this world to live in solidarity and justice.

We do not believe that we should disappear, either as a social class or as a rural culture. We do not want to live in city slums or emigrate to other countries. We do not want our families to become fragmented.

Oh Lord, protect us from those who are driven by insatiable greed. From those who always want more and more money. From those who make commerce out of the land, water and earth.

Save us from falling into the clutches of those who say: "I have enough economic power to spread false information, so that lies appear as truth".

Give us courage to face the struggle. Give us the strength of your peace.

May our spiritual leaders be filled with your Spirit, so that they may guide us along the path of faith and hope.

Dear Lord, let us not fall into the temptation of individualism. Give us the blessing of respectful and intelligent relationships.

Oh Lord, in you we trust. You have always been our strength. You have always been our refuge. We hold to You, You who are the way, truth and life.

Amen

*Provided by Erasmo Valiente, Jesuit Development Service Community Worker El Salvador*

### "Connect 2.."

CAFOD are inviting parishes and groups to engage with one of six communities in El Salvador, Brazil, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Bangladesh or Cambodia. Once registered, parishes will hear directly from people in the community they choose and learn about their lives, hopes and struggles and about how and why CAFOD works through the Partner in that country. We hope that parishes will also want to share something of their own community's life.

*(N.B. For those of you who met Nete at the J&P Conference in Swanwick in the summer 2008 you might like to know that the community that we have chosen to work with in Brazil is in Sao Paulo where our Partner is APOIO with whom Nete is working.)*

## RADICAL BOOKSELLERS TAKE ON AMAZON Housmans Bookshop Launches Online Shop

Fifty years ago, in the aftermath of World War Two, a group of pacifists opened Housmans radical bookshop. Ever since, Housmans has worked hard to continue its mission of promoting ideas of peace, human rights and a more equitable economy by which future wars, and all their inherent suffering, might be avoided. The biggest threat to independent bookshops has been the rise, and subsequent domination, of the online book-seller Amazon.com. But the near-monopoly wasn't achieved without the usual unethical practices that are so common to the world's biggest corporations.

**What is wrong with using Amazon?** In 2001 the Guardian first reported on the poor working conditions in Amazon's warehouses, and nothing much has changed since. In December 2008, a Sunday Times reporter went undercover to their Marston Gate warehouse near Milton Keynes and discovered that staff were required to work seven days a week and were punished for taking sick leave, even if they had a note from their doctor. According to the Unite Union, Amazon continues to see trade union representation as illegitimate. But it's not just Amazon workers who suffer at the hands of the multi-national corporation. Publishers are also squeezed for every penny, as Amazon forces them to supply them at rates so low that it leaves authors and publishers out of pocket - particularly damaging smaller publishing houses. Amazon's dominance of the market means that publishers have little choice but to comply with their demands. Aside from the ethical considerations, this affects readers in reduced output from small presses, and diminished availability of radical titles.

**Providing an ethical alternative** Housmans in conjunction with Gardners Books, has launched its own online bookshop to rival Amazon. Although still prioritising their stock of radical interest and progressive politics, the site is also able to provide around half a million general titles. "Many of our most politically conscious colleagues use Amazon, and when asked why, it's because they know of no alternative. But now, wherever they live, people will be able to support independent and progressive bookselling from the comfort of their own home. I think it's essential that we are able to provide an alternative to help dent Amazon's monopoly", explains co-manager Nik Gorecki. "It's up to sympathetic book buyers to do the right thing, and buy their books elsewhere." Website [www.housmans.com](http://www.housmans.com) Housmans Bookshop 5 Caledonian Road King's Cross London N1 9DX, Tel: 020 7837 4473.

## TACKLING THE LOAN SHARKS - TIME TO END FINANCIAL EXCLUSION

Given the current world wide financial crisis, it might not seem such a bad thing to have no dealings with the banks. The truth is, however, that those who are excluded tend pay a very high price. Save the Children Fund has shown how the poorest in our communities – by definition the financially excluded – actually pay a 'poverty premium'. (*Save the Children Fund-The Poverty Premium 2008*) In other words they pay more for a range of goods and services than those who are not financially excluded.

The following examples serve to highlight the economic impact on individuals and families. These are:

- Major household goods or fridges/cookers etc purchased through companies such as Brighthouse can cost up to three times as much and embroil people in long term costly hire purchase arrangements.
- Lack of a basic bank account can result in people paying up to 10% the value of a cheque simply to get it cashed. It can also mean the difference between being able to get a job or not – with employers generally insisting on paying wages in to an account
- Lack of access to affordable credit can result in people paying interest rates that are truly staggering. The Provident typically charges 270% APR, Shopcheck 270% APR and Log Book Loans (you sell them the equity in your car in exchange for a loan) a nifty 400% APR.

These are examples of the legalised extortion that go on daily in our communities. Fortunes are made as wealth

haemorrhages out of the local economy.

CREDIT UNIONS, for too long a well kept secret, are rising to these challenges.

Knowsley Mutual Credit Union is a financial service co-operative owned and run by its members. It offers a range of easy savings. The main one being a share account against which members can borrow and which carries free life cover and has paid a dividend of no less than 3% for the last 10 years.

Members who have saved can get loans at an interest rate of 12.6% APR. Equal to 6.5p in the £ when paid back over 1 year. (The Provident charges 80p in the £). For those who are not in a position to save but need a loan we have an 'instant access' loan repayable at 26% APR.

Working in partnership with Coop Electrical we enable people access to affordable goods such as cookers and washing machines. \*

A cheque cashing service, local trader discount scheme and basic debit card account are other services on offer.

Credit unions are part of a community solution to the problems of debt and poverty. While they cannot impact on relative poverty in that they do not increase peoples income they can dramatically reduce their out-goings. Money not being paid out to extortionate lenders and others can go on other household needs. Monies that would exit the local economy will tend to circulate locally and generate income and jobs.

Although it didn't make it onto the public agenda, the 2010 election marked a significant historical point on overseas development aid. All three main political parties made manifesto commitments not just to achieve the 0.7% of gross national income to overseas aid, but also to bring in legislation to ensure that this is legally required rather than a whim of a government. The fight against corruption took a giant leap forward as the Bribery Bill was passed in the last gasps of Parliament. On climate change, the (then) UK government made an important bridge-building announcement in an attempt to move the process on. Without getting bogged down in the attribution debate, we can be sure that CAFOD played a very important and significant part, whilst recognising ourselves within the wider group of agencies.

Bribery by multinational companies is prevalent in many developing countries: the World Bank conservatively estimates that \$1 trillion in bribes is paid each year. Our work on extractives has highlighted the problems of corruption and the Bribery Act will make it easier to prosecute UK companies for bribing foreign government officials in order to win business. Such corruption undermines transparency and effective governance; it discourages foreign investment, wastes public money and poses a risk to the delivery of essential services.

The Bribery Bill becoming an Act occurred during 'wash-up', the horse-trading between parties after the election has been called which decides which Bills will be passed. This last gasp stage involved much work including asking Andrew Mitchell (Shadow DFID at the time, now Secretary of State) to talk to his neighbour in the parliamentary offices, Jonathan Djanogly (Then Shadow Solicitor General) who was leading on the Bill for the Conservatives, on the importance of this Bill for development and so not to water it down. This had all been preceded by

coalition work on countless meetings with government and shadow ministers, MPs, obtaining pro-bono legal advice on the legislation and converting these to submissions, whilst using the media at key times and keeping campaigners up to date.

After the disappointment of climate change talks in Copenhagen, the recent announcement by the previous UK government to push for a second commitment period to the Kyoto Protocol was significant. The close links with developing country delegations had informed our position that in order for trust to be built between the Annex 1 countries (those who caused it) and the rest, commitment to a second Kyoto period was critical. It was also a matter of justice that those who caused it took responsibility. Along with Christian Aid and Friends of the Earth we maintained a strong line on this before, during and after the UNFCCC meeting in Copenhagen.

General public pressure on the government was strong through campaign actions and from The Wave demonstration. Specific campaign actions were undertaken in Copenhagen on saving Kyoto and strong quotes in high-profile media articles added to this. Direct lobbying work was undertaken with Ed Miliband, Gordon Brown's special advisers and EU delegations. In the difficult time post-Copenhagen when next steps were not clear, we maintained the public pressure through campaigns and presented good concrete recommendations to the government on aspects of the EU strategy that could be changed to move international negotiations forward, with particular emphasis on the need to change the position on Kyoto.

Congratulations to all, the battle is not over - but we've moved forward.

*Neil Thorns  
Head of Advocacy, CAFOD  
April 2010*

**TACKLING THE LOAN SHARKS—TIME TO END FINANCIAL EXCLUSION continued**

We want to start a conversation involving as many in the local community as possible. We want to question the taken for grantedness that permits and accepts wholesale extortion in our community. We will not only challenge those companies that carry on these practices but also other local businesses who promote the sub-prime sector lenders as a means of credit for selling their own their goods and services.

\*Example of how Credit Unions and Loan Sharks work:

Cost of £300 'Instant' Loan repaid over 52 weeks:

Provident Personal Finance – £546 or 272% APR    Knowsley Mutual Credit Union – £341.29 or 26% APR

Cost of Beko 50cm Electric Cooker:

Brighthouse total payable £638.04    Co-op Electrical (including cost of Credit Union Loan) £327.87

**Terry Egan. Development/Financial Inclusion Worker Knowsley Mutual Credit Union**  
Terry can be contacted on: 0151 545 3380 or: [terryegan42@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:terryegan42@yahoo.co.uk)



## DIARY DATES

### JUNE

**5 World Environment Day** [www.unep.org/wed](http://www.unep.org/wed)

#### 12 CONTACTS DAY

11 am—3 pm St Teresa's Club, College Rd, Upholland. WN8 0PY

Drinks will be provided. Please bring a contribution for a shared lunch. For more information:

Liverpool J&P Office: 0151 522 1080/81

[s.atherton@rcaol.co.uk](mailto:s.atherton@rcaol.co.uk)

NB: There will not be a special J&P gathering this autumn. If you want to meet fellow J&P activists, try to come to this day

#### 12 'EARTH-KEEPERS & STORY WEAVERS'

Green theology, spirituality, stories and action .

Speaker :Andrew Francis (green activist and broadcaster) Venue: Tabor Retreat House, Preston.

Suggested offering £12

Booking essential 01772 717 122

#### 12 PEACE VIGIL

3—4 pm St Agnes Church, Darmonds Green West Kirby, Wirral, CH48 4DU

#### 14—20 REFUGEE WEEK

[www.refugeeweek.org.uk](http://www.refugeeweek.org.uk)

#### 20 ARMS TRADE DAY OF PRAYER

Packs available for Campaign Against Arms Trade [christian@caat.org.uk](mailto:christian@caat.org.uk)

#### 25 ROMERO LECTURE

Speaker: Fr Tommy Greenan, a diocesan priest from Edinburgh who works in health education and catechetics in Guatemala. He also collaborates with the Human Rights Office with special attention to migrants from the area, who are looking for work in Mexico and the USA. An evening event organised by The Romero Trust in association with Hope University and Liverpool J&P Commission.

Venue: Hope University. Room and time to be confirmed. More details: [info@romerotrue.org.uk](mailto:info@romerotrue.org.uk) or Liverpool J&P Office: 0151 522 1080/81 [s.atherton@rcaol.co.uk](mailto:s.atherton@rcaol.co.uk)

#### 26 HELP! THERE'S AN ASYLUM SEEKER IN MY CHURCH

10 am – 4 pm Brunswick Parish Church, Manchester M13 9TQ, a conference arranged by CAP Boaz Trust et al, see page 5

**26/27 Prayer Vigil ACAT** see page 5

### JULY

#### 10 PEACE VIGIL

3—4 pm St Agnes Church, Darmonds Green West Kirby Wirral. CH48 4DU

#### 11 SEA SUNDAY

[www.apostleshipofthesea.org.uk](http://www.apostleshipofthesea.org.uk)

#### 16-18 'OUR DAILY BREAD —Food Security, People & Planet'

32nd Annual J & P Conference Swanwick see page 8

#### 26 -30 LIVING THEOLOGY

Loyola Metro's week of practical theology at Liverpool Hope University, Everton Campus, L3 8DR For more information: 0151 298 1911

Email: [d.reynolds@sfxchurchliverpool.com](mailto:d.reynolds@sfxchurchliverpool.com)

## ADVANCE NOTICE

### OCTOBER

#### 2 ALISON ADAM of the Iona Community

leads a BIG SING at Trinity Church, Newport on at 7.30pm. The event is open to all - those who sing and those who have yet to find their voice. Music will be from the Iona Community and the World Church. As anyone who has been to an Iona Big Sing knows, the sound that Alison helps us produce is inspiring. Tickets will be available nearer the time.

Contacts: Barbara Jennings

Email [bmj@thejennings.eclipse.co.uk](mailto:bmj@thejennings.eclipse.co.uk)

and Caroline Worth, [ccworth@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:ccworth@blueyonder.co.uk)

#### 17-24 ONE WORLD WEEK

see page 2 [www.oneworldweek.org](http://www.oneworldweek.org)

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#### Copy date for next issue 1 August 2010

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

N.B There are 4 issues a year (in March, June, September & December )

*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*

edited and typeset by Marian Thompson and printed by Jarvis Print Unit 5 Parkway Four Longbridge Road Trafford Park Manchester M17 1SN Tel: 0161 872 2228

**IMAGES FROM THE SEED FAIR IN EL SALVADOR (see article p 9)**



*Prize-winner Fidel explaining about his seeds and vegetation at the Seed Fair*



*Offerings to celebrate the Day of the Cross*