

*The monthly e-bulletin for the North West, linked to the National Justice and Peace Network (NJPN), is produced jointly by the dioceses of Lancaster, Liverpool, Salford, Shrewsbury and Wrexham. Please send diary dates to anneoc980@hotmail.com
Download earlier bulletins at: <http://jpshrewsbury.wordpress.com/e-bulletins/>*

200 SUPPORTERS URGE CAFOD TO RETHINK CUTS

A letter Written by CAFOD's former head of education, Brian Davies, and signed by more than 200 supporters of CAFOD including MPs Greg Mulholland and Chris Ruane, and Fr Gerard Murray, chairman of the Archdiocese of Birmingham's Justice and Peace Commission, claims that help for the poorest people in the world would be put at risk if the charity goes ahead with plans to cut jobs and restructure. The full text of the letter is as follows:

Dear Trustees

We are writing to convey to you our deep concern over the reported intention of the senior management team at CAFOD to close all the diocesan offices and make staff redundant. We are convinced, from our considerable experience of CAFOD's operations, that this course of action would, if put into effect, be directly contrary to CAFOD's interests and have gravely damaging consequences. The number of signatories to this letter is indicative of the extent as well as the strength of feeling on this issue. In the following paragraphs we set out the principal grounds for our concerns.

1. The diocesan staff are the vital interface between CAFOD and the Catholic community in England and Wales.
2. CAFOD has achieved so much over the years because of the support of that Catholic community and it depends for its very existence on that support continuing.
3. The steady growth in CAFOD's income from the Catholic community, so that it now amounts to over £35m annually, some two thirds of the total, is the result, to a large degree, of the activities and visible presence of the staff in each diocese.
4. To close the offices and make staff redundant would put that income seriously at risk.
5. The establishment of the diocesan offices was the result of a carefully planned strategic development going back over 30 years. A pilot scheme of one regional office for the north west - extending from Carlisle to Ludlow – was deemed a success and led to the establishment of seven such regional offices. Following an in depth review in 1990/91, which concluded that those seven regions were far too large, the number was increased to twelve and then to the present diocesan structure.
6. That strategic development derived from the recognition that a close relationship between front line staff and grassroots supporters is crucially important in maintaining and increasing awareness of and support for CAFOD's work.
7. The closure of the diocesan offices, and their replacement with four regional offices covering the whole of England and Wales, would reverse that strategic development and reject the careful evaluation and planning which underpinned it for so many years.
8. The four huge regions would inevitably result in a loss of that vital contact between CAFOD as an agency and its supporters. It is quite simply impractical to envisage the present relationships being sustained over the massive distances which would be involved. In the light of our experience we believe that the expectation that volunteers could be recruited in large numbers, on which the proposed regions would depend, is most unrealistic. It is to be hoped that CAFOD's management now accepts that volunteers are increasingly difficult to find and that their training takes considerable time and resources.
9. The diocesan offices and staff are important in much else in addition to their role in fund raising. They play an essential role also in raising awareness in the Catholic community of the desperate plight of the poorest in the world through, for example, arranging meetings at which overseas partners speak to local gatherings. Coupled with that is promoting a recognition in the local communities of the moral imperative in Christ's teaching to reach out and give help to those poor. The effect has been to make CAFOD an important part of the spiritual lives of many Catholics – and indeed, for some who find difficulties with other teaching, the very thing which keeps them active members of the church.
10. CAFOD's important work in schools is similarly dependent on the involvement of the diocesan staff in promoting and organising it – and in recruiting schools volunteers to deliver it.
11. In all of these activities the diocesan staff have come to know and have developed close and fruitful relationships with numerous contacts in parishes and schools. All that would be lost if the proposed changes are put into effect.

12. The role of the diocesan staff is a challenging one involving a wide range of responsibilities. The considerable success which they have achieved reflects their commitment and professionalism. Additionally, however, CAFOD'S senior management, as well as ensuring that their workloads do not become excessive, must have an overall vision in which that role and the related one of volunteers are clearly seen and understood.

13. In addition to our great concerns about the nature of these radical changes we are equally concerned about the way in which they have been arrived at. CAFOD has issued a number of statements claiming that they followed consultation with various parties but it has notably failed to explain the nature of the consultation and to identify those consulted. The diocesan staff were not involved in any discussion of the proposals regarding staffing and the closure of the diocesan offices despite being the people who are directly affected and who possess the greatest relevant experience. The limited consultation which did take place with staff and volunteers (many volunteers were not consulted at all) gave no indication of how the range of activities could continue with a great reduction in staffing and the closure of the diocesan offices.

14. Many of the signatories to this letter, in addition to being CAFOD supporters and volunteers, are or have been members of diocesan J&P commissions. CAFOD recognised those commissions, from the time of their establishment in the 1970s, as its natural ally and provided co-financing for J&P fieldworkers. In its turn the J&P network provided the main constituency for CAFOD training which enabled a generation of Catholic activists to become well versed in a coherent programme of training which involved the witness of the poor, social analysis, theological reflection, spirituality, awareness raising, campaigning and lifestyle. Most importantly, the emphasis was always on how this training could be passed on to others. The signatories who have been involved in disseminating that programme more widely are acutely aware of the valuable role played by CAFOD'S diocesan staff in this whole invaluable process.

15. It is ironic that CAFOD is intent on these retrograde changes at a time when the Church is receiving such strong inspiration from Pope Francis with his central vision of "a Church which is poor and for the poor" (*Evangelii Gaudium 198*). This has long been CAFOD'S guiding vision too.

16. It is also ironic that, when a much greater involvement of volunteers is envisaged, CAFOD no longer has a programme of training the trainers. Pope Francis recognises that it will take time for his vision for the church to take effect. So too any changes to CAFOD'S mode of operation will take time and the full commitment of all diocesan staff is a prerequisite. To start any such process of change by getting rid of them would be misguided in the extreme.

17. We are concerned also by the way in which the very committed diocesan staff have been treated in this whole business. Not only, as we have already pointed out, were they excluded from a crucial stage of the discussions which led to the present position, but they have also been caused the great anxiety of facing the prospect of dismissal on the grounds of redundancy. Such treatment does not accord with the church'S social teaching and more resembles the behaviour of the corporate world.

18. Finally, we wish you to be aware that we have heard of people who donate significant sums by standing order and who have stated that, should these changes be put into effect, they will switch their donations to another charity. That prospect should ring loud alarm bells for all concerned. Catholics in England and Wales have been proud of CAFOD for its work in developing countries and for the partnership established between the Church here and poor communities there. It was for this reason that Cardinal Hume described CAFOD as "*one of the glories of the Church in England and Wales*" and "*a bright light shining in a dark world.*" We urge you as trustees to ensure that all that is not put at risk and to instruct CAFOD'S senior management to draw up different proposals which retain the essential and successful diocesan structure.

MUSLIM MEDICS SHOW SOLIDARITY WITH CHRISTIANS

In response to the violent attacks in Paris on 7 January a group of 20 Muslim doctors and surgeons from the North West led by Dr Manzar Ul Haq have attended midday Mass at Holy Name Church in Manchester. They were greeted by Senior Jesuit Chaplain, Fr Tim Byron SJ, and several hundred worshippers including many students from Manchester Universities. Before Mass, the group stood outside holding placards which said 'Together we unite - mourning the loss of human life' and 'Violence - not in our name' - they were spontaneously joined by some of the Catholic students.

Dr Ul Haq spoke at Mass about the majority of the Muslim Community being opposed to senseless violence and the need to live in peace and harmony. His address was greeted with a warm round of applause from the 400-strong congregation. After Mass, Fr Tim and Dr Ul Haq stood together to greet people as they left, with many coming to warmly shake Dr Ul Haq's hand and to thank him for his message. The group were welcomed in the Chaplaincy afterwards to share tea and mince pies. Dr Ul Haq said on behalf of the group that: "The group appreciated the help and support provided by the local priest in welcoming them at such a sensitive time".

Source: *Jesuit Media* 13/1/14

WRAP UP TRIDENT

Thousands of peacemakers gathered on 24 January in London to join a major campaign to put Trident on the agenda for the General Election in a creative action to 'wrap up' the Ministry of Defence and other government buildings with giant pink scarf. Before the encircling of the buildings several hundred members of Pax Christi, the Quakers, Christian CND and other Christian groups gathered for prayer in St Martin-in-the-Fields and then kept vigil outside on the steps, proclaiming to those who passed messages from the churches condemning nuclear weapons. Pax Christi member Margaret Pitt read the following from Pope Francis: "Nuclear deterrence and the threat of mutually assured destruction cannot be the basis for an ethics of fraternity and peaceful coexistence between people...Spending on nuclear weapons squanders the wealth of nations. When these resources are squandered, the poor and the weak living on the margins of society pay the price." They then joined others, carrying between them a huge pink knitted scarf that was used to encircle the Ministry of Defence and other buildings. Creative messages were on display such as 'drop stitches not bombs' and 'bombs not books' as campaigners made links between the gross spending on Trident and unmet social needs nationally and internationally.

Introducing Bishop Thomas McMahon, former Bishop of Brentwood, Jeremy Corbyn MP praised the work of Pax Christi for all it does to bring peace issues into the Catholic community and beyond. Bishop Thomas spoke at the rally, affirming Pope Francis's condemnation of nuclear weapons and challenging what he called the obscenity of the money spent on nuclear weapons. This event marked the beginning of a series of public actions that Pax Christi are involved in. On 18 February, Ash Wednesday, Pax Christi and others will lead the annual witness of resistance and repentance to nuclear weapons at the Ministry of Defence. On 2 March Pax Christi will coordinate a faith-based presence at an all-day blockade of Burghfield Atomic Weapons Establishment in Reading. In March Pax Christi will issue an election briefing produced with other Christian peace groups that will provide background and questions on nuclear issues, the arms trade, drones and Government policies in the Middle East.

<http://paxchristi.org.uk/>

NEW LETTER-WRITING GROUP TO CHALLENGE THE UK ARMS TRADE

The arms business has a devastating impact on human rights and security. The UK plays an active role in the trade. In the first six months of 2014 alone, the UK granted arms export licences to 18 of the 28 states on its official blacklist; states about which the Foreign Office has significant human rights concerns (source: The Observer, 9 November 2014). This includes states with long histories of repression, intimidation and violence. The arms trade can be challenged because Governments have to listen to ordinary people. The trade can be stopped if enough people speak out. A campaign is being organised by John Dowling from Newcastle-upon-Tyne to try to get people to write to Government asking that the UK withdraw from its role in the global arms trade. If you are interested in being part of this, please write to John at: jjthegeordie@outlook.com. John says: "this should not place an onerous commitment on anyone. The idea is that two or three times a year, I will write a draft letter on issues around the arms trade and send it to those in the group. The people in the group will be asked to personalise it and then send it to the relevant Member of Parliament responsible for the arms trade. The letter will be concerned with the major issue of the day, usually one of those brought to public attention by organisations such as Campaign Against the Arms Trade".

CAMPAIGN AGAINST ARMS TRADE: A LIFE OR DEATH DECISION

Imagine a world where instead of fuelling conflict and repression, the UK took real action to tackle the biggest threat we face: climate change. That world is possible – if we shift priorities from arms to renewable, says **Campaign Against Arms Trade**. We all know about the waste and destruction of the arms trade. We're subsidising arms companies by hundreds of millions of pounds a year to export misery and destruction around the world: from the UK weapons used in Israel's attacks on Gaza to support for repressive Saudi Arabia. But despite all the public resources poured into it, the number of jobs in the arms industry is on a long-term decline.

We have another vision. Instead of wasting public money propping up jobs in a declining and destructive industry, we could be investing in a vibrant and growing sector that will create jobs for the future – and which creates the kind of future we might want to see. Offshore wind and marine energy have amazing potential in the UK, and CAAT's research shows that they could support more jobs than the entire arms industry – using the skills of arms trade workers. But this potential won't be realised without action. It needs investment and concerted UK government effort at the level currently devoted to the arms industry. It desperately needs highly-skilled engineers – like those currently working in the arms industry. And it needs all of us: to make the government shift priorities and create better jobs and a safer world. Add your voice and share the campaign to help build a new vision and pressure for change. www.a2r.org.uk

This is the start of a major campaign for the UK to play its part in building a safer world: a world where instead of fuelling conflict and repression, we tackle the biggest security threat we face: climate change. A world where instead of wasting public money propping up jobs in a declining and destructive industry, we invest in a vibrant and growing sector that will create jobs for the future – in an industry we can be proud of. Sign up here: <http://www.caat.org.uk/get-involved/join-us/> or email training@caat.org.uk to organise a talk in your local area.

FOR THE LOVE OF ... PROGRESSIO CLIMATE ACTION CAMPAIGN

Progressio invites you to join their climate action campaign - just add something that you love that may one day be affected by the impact of climate change. <http://www.progressio.org.uk/love> In the next month Progressio will have one action where supporters can tell the Prime Minister about the changes they want to see in 2015 and one action to get supporters contacting their MPs to ask them to attend the Commission on the Status of Women in March.... Check the website for more info.

IMPORTANT DATES: 8 March marks Progressio's 75th Anniversary and the beginning of a year of celebration for us. And then 27 April – 1 May is the week of this year's **Live Below the Line** challenge, anyone can get involved and fundraise for us! This is the link: <http://www.progressio.org.uk/LBTL> and it will be updated in the next couple of months.

UK FAITH LEADERS URGE NEW SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND CLIMATE TREATY

Bishop Declan Lang is co-signatory of a letter in the Times (6 January 2015) which highlights that this year will provide a once-in-a-generation opportunity for progress on new goals for sustainable development and a new climate treaty. The text follows:

Sir, This year will provide a once-in-a-generation opportunity: in September world leaders decide on new goals for sustainable development and in December a new climate treaty. Global agreements matter. The millennium development goals helped to halve the proportion of people living on less than \$1.25 per day and enabled impressive gains in primary education and child survival. We have a long way to go: too many people are still burdened by hunger and disease, too many children do not see their 5th birthday, too many face conflict. We stand together to build a movement for change. Stand with us and urge our leaders to do all they can to make this year a year of action.

The Right Rev Declan Lang, (Roman Catholic) Bishop of Clifton; The Right Revd David Urquhart; (Anglican) Bishop of Birmingham; Ajmal Masroor, Imam and broadcaster; Rabbi Natan Levy, Environmental Liaison, Office of the Chief Rabbi; Mr Gurmel, Secretary-General, Sikh Council UK; Sanjay Jagatia, Secretary-General, Hindu Council UK.

2015: TIME FOR GLOBAL ACTION

Pope Francis has spoken many times about the need to hear the cry of the poor, most notably in *Evangelii Gaudium* #54 when he says that a 'globalisation of indifference has developed' while 'the excluded are still waiting'. Pope Francis has also made many appeals for the protection of the environment. On 15 January speaking to reporters on the plane taking him from Sri Lanka to Manila Pope Francis spoke his clearest words on climate change saying, "We have, in a sense, lorded it over nature, over Sister Earth, over Mother Earth." He expressed a hope that this year's Paris conference on the environment would take a courageous stand to protect the environment. Pope Francis' words were timely for 15 January saw the launch of Action 2015. In 2015 people from all over the world will be calling on world leaders to deliver ambitious agreements to tackle poverty, inequality and climate change. Over 1,000 organisations from 120 countries, including the Catholic NGO, Progressio, have come together in Action 2015. Action 2015 hopes to unite diverse movements and people to show the breadth of concern for the issues facing people and planet. Action 2015 says, 'We believe that all people have the power to create extraordinary change when they come together and take action'.

Action/2015 is a movement of people who believe that 2015 can be a pivotal year to change the future of our people and our planet. This year really could be the turning point in our fight for global equity, if serious and binding commitments are made by world leaders throughout the year. In the words of 2014 Nobel Peace Prize winner Malala Yousafzai: "2015 must be the year the world wakes up and delivers a safer, more just future for children and young people.

In 2015 global leaders will hold two remarkable summits for both people and planet. In September the Millennium Development Goals will be replaced by a new set of global goals – the Sustainable Development Goals – an opportunity to end all forms of poverty and inequality and tackle environmental destruction. In December leaders will meet to adopt a new global agreement on climate change – a crucial step towards a safer planet. <http://www.action2015.org/>
Act with Progressio at: <http://www.progressio.org.uk/content/welcome-2015> or RESULTS UK <http://bit.ly/1C3zyZA>

You can also follow @action2015 on Twitter and like https://www.facebook.com/UKAction2015?ref=br_tf UK action/2015 page on Facebook to follow the campaign's progress across the country and the world.

See: Time for global action <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sTIHZ-SaZkA>

The UN Secretary-General welcomes the Action 2015 Campaign with a group of 15-year olds. The campaign, by civil society, coincides with the UN's campaign, "2015:Time for Global Action." The 15-year olds are the same age as the landmark Millennium Development Goals that have helped lift millions from poverty. In 2015, the world has an opportunity to further advance action to eliminate poverty and to tackle climate change.

FORMER UK MINISTER FOR EDUCATION TO JOIN THE JESUIT REFUGEE SERVICE

Press Release: Rome, 26 January 2015

The Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) is pleased to announce that former education minister, Sarah Teather MP, will join the International Advocacy team on 1 June 2015. As advocacy adviser, Ms Teather will focus on the provision of education for refugee children the Middle East and South Sudan. Ms Teather will stand down from the British Parliament in May 2015, after 13 years in elected politics. For nearly 12 of these years she represented the London constituency of Brent Central, the most ethnically diverse in the United Kingdom.

"One of our main priorities is the delivery of education services to forcibly displaced persons in some of the most difficult circumstances imaginable: Central African Republic, South Sudan, Syria. Offering education to young refugees is our distinct contribution to a more peaceful future. But the needs are so great. We believe Sarah's knowledge and experience in the fields of education, human rights and policymaking offers us an opportunity to make a real difference in people's lives", said JRS International Director, Peter Balleis SJ.

In and outside of politics, Ms Teather has had a consistent record of working on social justice issues. Prior to her career in frontline politics, she worked as a policy analyst for the large cancer charity, Macmillan Cancer Support. As an MP, she has had a long-standing interest in issues affecting refugees in particular, as well as UK housing policy, the Middle East and wider human rights issues. "I'm delighted to have an opportunity to be able to use the skills and experience I have gained in Parliament to work directly with refugees. I have long admired JRS as a charity. In my work, both in the UK and visiting refugee projects internationally, I have been hugely impressed by the ethos of JRS and the way in which they serve people in some of the most troubled places in the world. I have seen for myself how their focus on accompanying refugees is a hugely important witness to human dignity", said the former education minister.

During her two and a half years as Minister for Children and Families, she negotiated the end of the detention of children in the immigration system; led efforts to combat sexualisation and commercialisation of childhood; led reforms to improve the support of children with special educational needs and disability; and published the first UK-wide child poverty strategy. As chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Refugees, she led an inquiry looking at the treatment of children and young people in the asylum process and is currently chairing an inquiry looking at immigration detention.

See more at: http://en.jrs.net/news_detail?TN=NEWS-20150126021737#sthash.aRO9zR3T.dpuf

ALL-WALES ANTI-SLAVERY CONFERENCE – 'REMOVING THE BLINDFOLD

Over 230 delegates from many different organisations across Wales gathered at Venue Cymru in Llandudno for this anti-slavery conference on Friday 23rd January. Titled 'Removing the Blindfold' the conference heard experts in the field highlight the dangers and the warning signs that trafficking might be going on, including a moving first-hand story by a victim of modern slavery who had been rescued and very recently granted leave to stay in the UK. Drug gangs using people as slaves to farm cannabis, agricultural slavery where people are paid a pittance to farm crops and the seedier side where sexual predators hire women out through small ads are all areas where the public need to be alert and ready to pass on information, say those fighting this modern scourge.

Holyhead port is recognized as a popular entry point as there are no Customs checks for people to pass through. A difficulty faced by prosecutors is many victims are vulnerable people who do not realise they are being exploited, or other victims are in fear of the people who trafficked them, and both groups are reluctant to take action against the exploiter/trafficker. James Coy, the North Wales Regional Anti-Human Trafficking Co-ordinator emphasized the need for intelligence sharing and partnership working to tackle the issue, a theme echoed by Kevin Hyland, the UK's recently appointed independent anti-slavery commissioner.

Report by Tony McNicholl of Wrexham Diocese who attended the conference.

EDUCATION MINISTER: CUT TEENAGE PREGNANCIES WITH ARMY CADETS

Army cadet units could help cut the rate of teenage pregnancies, an education minister has said. Lord Nash said teenage girls from single-parent families who had "never experienced the love of a man" could be deterred from forming "unsuitable relationships" if they enrolled in a cadet unit.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/defence/11349420/Minister-cut-teenage-pregnancies-with-army-cadets.html>

READY FOR ACTION: VETERANS BRING 'MILITARY ETHOS' TO SCHOOLS

A growing number of organisations employ ex-servicemen and women to work in schools helping children develop 'character'.

<http://www.theguardian.com/education/2015/jan/22/veterans-military-ethos-schools>

CHURCH CHARITIES LAUNCH MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCE FOR BLUE MONDAY

26 January is Blue Monday, said to be the most depressing day of the year. Two Christian charities: Liveability and Premier Mind and Soul, have joined forces to produce a new resource to help churches better understand and support people with mental health needs in their congregations. The pack includes information on common mental health conditions; pastoral tips for working with people with mental illnesses; and theological perspectives on mental health.

Katharine Welby-Roberts, an associate at Livability and the Archbishop of Canterbury's daughter who has spoken publicly regarding her struggles with depression, said: "As anti-stigma campaigns, such as Time to Change, begin to see attitudes towards mental health change, the Church has begun to recognise the need to better support people with mental health needs in their congregations. From my own experience and others I have spoken with, churches do want to better support people with mental health problems but don't know how to go about it. This can often lead to isolation or people leaving the church because they feel misunderstood or not catered for. I believe the church is a key untapped local resource which can support people with mental health needs; this pack is a valuable and timely resource. A person's experience of mental illness within the church can be vastly improved through increasing understanding of common disorder and debunking some of the myths that are still prevalent in the Christian community; the Mental Health Access Pack seeks to do just that." According to statistics, one in four people will experience a mental health issue each year, with 11% of British women taking anti-depressant medication daily.

See the pack here: <http://www.mentalhealthaccesspack.org>

For more information on Livability see: <http://www.livability.org.uk/>

PAPYRUS: PREVENTION OF YOUNG SUICIDE

This year Marriage & Family Life Ministry are holding a series of 4 events across England & Wales, each providing an introduction to the work of national charity, POPYRUS: Prevention of Young Suicide. Suicide is a leading cause of death among our young people. POPYRUS seeks to work with communities across the UK to tackle the stigma that surrounds suicide and to promote mental health and wellbeing among young people and those who care for and work with young people. Ged Flynn, POPYRUS Chief Executive, will help participants to:

- examine our attitudes to and beliefs about suicide
- explore what causes stigma around suicide
- increase awareness of the scale of young suicidal ideation and behaviours
- to develop knowledge, skills, and attitudes which may help prevent young
- think about developing local responses in our own dioceses, parishes, schools, communities, networks and organisations to help to **#saveyounglives**

Online booking at www.liverpoolcatholic.org.uk/Courses-Events or contact the Pastoral Formation Department 0151 522 1040. Cost £10 per person. Day starts from 10.00 until 3.30 (light lunch provided). All are welcome. We would like particularly to have attendance from: Secondary School Heads, Heads of RE/PSHCE, Chaplains, Clergy, anyone in pastoral ministry, Youth workers, Catechists, Safeguarding coordinators, all members of Familias, anyone affected by suicide. **6 March 2015** at LACE | Croxteth Drive | Sefton Park | Liverpool | L17 1AA Contact: Maureen O'Brien | T: 0151 522 1044 | E: m.obrien@rcaol.co.uk

TAKE ACTION TODAY FOR FAIR TAXES!

We've all heard tales of corporate tax dodging. Here in the UK, Amazon and Google have hit the headlines, and tax dodging costs us at least £35 billion every year. That's why over 15 other organisations, including Church Action on Poverty, Christian Aid, Action Aid, War on Want and Oxfam, have teamed up to launch a campaign calling for a new law, a Tax Dodging Bill, to help make tax fair. We've got 100 days until the general election, so make sure your voice is heard.

Fair Taxes are essential if we are to Close the Gap between rich and poor. Every pound avoided in tax is a pound less to spend on childcare, social care, health or education. At a time when spending cuts are having a real and damaging impact on the lives of some of the poorest and most vulnerable people in the country, it is morally indefensible for some of Britain's richest companies to avoid paying their fair share of UK taxes. The Tax Dodging Bill we're campaigning for will tackle the worst bits of the UK tax rules that make it easy for big companies to dodge their taxes, here and abroad. It could generate £3.6 billion for the UK and could also help raise billions in developing countries. And over the next few months we've got a real chance to get it to the top of politician's inboxes. This year there's a General Election, which means politicians will be listening to your concerns, and setting their priorities for the next five years.

We're calling on all political parties to pledge to introduce the Bill in the first 100 days after the election, and use the funds generated to fight poverty, here and in developing countries. Now's our chance – if we act together, we can achieve Fair Taxes. <http://taxdodgingbill.org.uk/#signup>

LABOUR BEHIND THE LABEL LENT SIX ITEMS CHALLENGE

The Labour behind the Label Challenge involves participants choosing 6 main items of clothing which they then wear in combinations throughout Lent, while blogging about their experiences and tracking the ways in which it is challenging and also the ways that it is changing their attitudes towards clothing and fashion.

<http://www.everydayhero.co.uk/event/sixitemschallenge2015>

DOUBLE YOUR LENTEN GIFT TO CAFOD

From 8 February to 17 May 2015 each £1 you give will be matched by the government and if you are a tax-payer you can add a further 20% to your donation by signing a gift aid declaration. www.cafod.org.uk

RESOURCES

FAIRTRADE FORTNIGHT RESOURCES NOW AVAILABLE

For Fairtrade Fortnight 2015, help us turn a spotlight on the farmers who grow the food and drinks we enjoy every day. By sharing their stories we can remind everyone about the dramatic difference Fairtrade makes and how much it is still needed. That's why we're asking schools across the UK to help us celebrate Fairtrade – by holding an assembly, event, competition or anything else you want to show everyone the other side of the story of food. If your school is a Fairtrade School you'll get a pack in the post soon – if not, there's still time to order packs now.

For Fairtrade Fortnight 2015 we're celebrating cocoa, the most important ingredient in one of our favourite treats. Use the resources in the schools pack and online to show everyone in school how cocoa is grown, harvested and turned into a drink of Fairtrade hot chocolate. The packs include everything your school needs to learn, have fun and celebrate Fairtrade Fortnight: Guide with event planner, recipes, ideas and more; Event poster; World map tablecloth; 100s of stickers; Balloons; Giant scene-setter. There's also huge poster telling the story of cocoa – all from the perspective of Tayna, a 13-year-old from Enfield, Middlesex. On the website you'll be able to find films, resources, assemblies and lessons focusing on her experiences and the stories that she heard on her travels to spend time with cocoa farmers and their families. Find them at fairtrade.org.uk/schools

'THE STONES CRY OUT' DVD AVAILABLE FOR HIRE

We have now shown the DVD of this film, about the Palestinian Christian Community, in a dozen or more venues across the NW Region, with a warm response in each case, many people finding the information, archive footage, and current comment from Church Leaders, a real eye-opener.

I am now circulating this promotion to a number of you further afield, who may be interested in seeing the film, or showing it in your own area. I am happy to send the DVD out, for the cost of p&p for individuals to view at home, and return immediately for use elsewhere. If you decide you want to show it, you can buy it for £15 + £4 p&p. Lent would be a particularly good time to show it, with the Church's focus on the Holy Land, though it is pertinent at any time! We need to ask for donations to be taken at showings, as we are asked to forward @ £3/head to Yasmine Perni the film's Italian producer/ director. We have been able to send approaching £600 so far towards the production of the film and its Arabic version. She is still 'out of pocket' (to the tune of a 5 figure sum!) on this and so we are keen to get it shown for that reason as well! Please let me know if you would like to take me up on this offer!

John Logan on behalf of Friends of Sabeel UK NW Group logan-j@btconnect.com

NEW BLOG EXPLORES FAITH AND THE ENVIRONMENT

In the run up to the publication of Pope Francis' encyclical on ecology, these are exciting times for Catholics with a passion for environmental justice. A new initiative has been set up to capture the energy of those with an interest in the connection between faith and ecology. Greenjesuit.org is a blog created by Henry Longbottom SJ, a former environmental lawyer, now studying for the priesthood with the Jesuits.

"My hope is to provide a short and snappy analysis of news and events about the Church's engagement on environmental issues. There are already a great number of really impressive faith-led projects seeking to protect communities and their environments. I want to highlight these, and also encourage more creative thinking and debate about the Church's role in this area" says Henry.

Articles on *Greenjesuit* have included: a survey of what to expect from the ecology encyclical; a summary of the Church's involvement in the Lima Climate Change talks, and a proposal for an Ignatian environmental way of proceeding.

Visit the new blog here: www.Greenjesuit.org

JUSTICE AND PEACE CALENDAR

8 February Day of Prayer for Victims of Human Trafficking

Catholics in England and Wales are invited to pray for all victims of human trafficking on the Feast Day of St Josephine Bakhita, the Sudanese Saint who was kidnapped at the age of nine and sold into slavery. Human trafficking now ranks as the second most profitable worldwide criminal enterprise after the illegal arms trade. The practical response of the Church and its charities, led in the main by Women Religious, is to raise awareness of this horrendous crime and to provide help and support for the most vulnerable victims.

The Office for Migration Policy (OMP) of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales is working in partnership with the Metropolitan Police Service to raise awareness of the impact of human trafficking in the UK and the rest of the world.

www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Calendar/2015/Ordo-2015.pdf

www.stophetraffik.org

8 February Autism Sunday

This special Sunday, also known as the International Day of Prayer for Autism and Asperger's Syndrome, is observed annually on the second Sunday of February. There are over 60 million people with autism around the world. Many suffer without proper public services especially since the credit crunch and recession. www.autismsunday.co.uk

Pope Francis has said autistic disorders are nothing to be ashamed of, as he encouraged everyone to build solidarity to ensure that autistic persons are not isolated. "Everyone should be committed to promoting acceptance, encounter and solidarity through concrete support and by encouraging renewed hope," he told participants in his November 22 audience with autistic persons and their families. Through this support, he said, "we can contribute to breaking down the isolation and, in many cases, the stigma burdening people with autism spectrum disorders, and just as often their families." The Pope stressed the importance of accompanying autistic persons and their families in a personal way by listening to their needs, which "arise from the depths of a pathology which, all too often, struggles to be properly diagnosed and accepted without shame or withdrawing into solitude."

<http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/pope-break-down-the-stigma-burdening-those-with-autism-32815/>

11 February World Day for the Sick: *Faith and Charity*

The National Association of Catholic Chaplains has developed resources to help with the planning and celebration of World Day of the Sick. The resources include suggestions and prayers that can be used by individuals as well as by dioceses, parishes, health care institutions, and other organisations. Go to <http://www.nacc.org/resources/Wds/>

15 February Church Action on Poverty Sunday

Church Action on Poverty believes in the unique value of every human being, created in the image of God. We know that if we work together, we can Close the Gap between rich and poor, and build a society which will be happier, healthier, safer and fairer. On 15 February 2015, hundreds of churches will share visions of the Good Society, and raise vital funds for our work to make those visions a reality. Worship materials and fundraising resources: <http://www.church-poverty.org.uk/sunday/resources>

We've just uploaded some extra resources to help you tell stories and share visions at your event. Use a video clip to share some visions of the Good Society from church projects across the UK. Or use our *PowerPoint* presentation or speaking notes to give a short talk: <http://www.church-poverty.org.uk/sunday/extras>

We also have a template newsletter article and other resources you can use to promote your Church Action on Poverty Sunday event locally. Click here for help with promoting your event: <http://www.church-poverty.org.uk/sunday/word>

Download our free resources to plan a worship service at www.church-poverty.org.uk/sunday

20 February UN World Day of Social Justice

Social justice is an underlying principle for peaceful and prosperous coexistence within and among nations. We uphold the principles of social justice when we promote gender equality or the rights of indigenous peoples and migrants. We advance social justice when we remove barriers that people face because of gender, age, race, ethnicity, religion, culture or disability. For the United Nations, the pursuit of social justice for all is at the core of our global mission to promote development and human dignity.

Observance of World Day of Social Justice should support efforts of the international community in poverty eradication, the promotion of full employment and decent work, gender equity and access to social well-being and justice for all.

<http://www.un.org/en/events/socialjusticeday/>

23 February - 8 March Fairtrade Fortnight

We've come so far since the first Fairtrade Fortnight in 1995, educating the public on why to choose Fairtrade and increasing sales on Fairtrade terms for marginalised producers. Over the past 20 years, together we've made the Fairtrade mark the biggest and best known ethical label in the UK. 78% of the UK public recognise the FAIRTRADE Mark. From UK sales alone, £26m of Fairtrade Premium was invested by producers in 2013. But we know there is still a long way to go to make all trade fair – just 1.2% of cocoa and less than 10% of tea globally is traded on Fairtrade terms. So for Fairtrade Fortnight 2015, we're going to celebrate the impact of Fairtrade and ask you to turn a spotlight on the producers who grow the products we love. By sharing their stories in a fresh and compelling way, we can remind the UK of the dramatic difference choosing Fairtrade makes and how much it is still needed.

We're focusing on a few core commodities – cocoa, sugar, and tea – in new materials, case studies and a brand new 15 minute film that will be available for Fairtrade Fortnight. Whether you're an individual or part of a Fairtrade group, there will be opportunities to take action – including asking businesses directly to switch to Fairtrade in a stock it challenge.

<http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/en/get-involved/current-campaigns/fairtrade-fortnight-2015/fairtrade-fortnight-2015-resources>

24 March 35th Anniversary of the Death of Archbishop Oscar Romero www.romerotrue.org.uk

4 April United Nations' Mine Awareness Day

The United Nations' International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action is observed on April 4 each year.

www.un.org/en/events/mineawarenessday/

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

FEBRUARY

8 Day of Prayer for Victims of Human Trafficking www.stophetraffik.org

8 Autism Sunday, also known as the International Day of Prayer for Autism and Asperger's Syndrome www.autismsunday.co.uk

11 February World Day for the Sick <http://www.nacc.org/resources/Wds/>

12 Oxfam workshop *Let's Make Tax Fair* 6pm - 8:30pm, Oxfam Manchester Office, 46-50 Oldham Street Manchester, M4 1LE
Workshop sessions include: *Why we need the government to take action on tax dodging - find out what the campaign is all about and how we can make sure whoever gets elected next year takes action. Make them listen: how to lobby in your constituency - from face to face lobby meetings to hustings, from online to offline actions, find out what tools we have in our campaigner tool box to build up substantial public pressure in support of our campaign.* Free registration: www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/manchester-lets-make-tax-fair-workshop-tickets-14444884037

13 CAFOD Quiz for CAFOD's Connect 2 Ethiopia projects organised by Ellesmere Port LPA J&P Group 7.30pm Our Lady's Parish Centre. Fee £3 for adults £1 for children including interval refreshments. Teams are welcome or join a team on the night.

14 NJPN OPEN NETWORKING DAY 10.30am-4pm St David's RC College, Ty Gwyn Rd, Cardiff CF23 5QD. Speaker: Alison Jackson, Chair, Church Action on Poverty *Vision for the Common Good*. Plus: opportunities to network and get updates from national agencies. For more information contact Ann at admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk, 020 7901 4864

15 Church Action on Poverty Sunday. Free resources to plan a worship service at www.church-poverty.org.uk/sunday

15 Day for the Unemployed

18 Ash Wednesday Call to Christian witness of repentance for Trident (nuclear war preparation) *'I make my own the appeal of my predecessors for the non-proliferation of arms and for disarmament of all parties, beginning with nuclear and chemical weapons disarmament.'* **Pope Francis** World Peace Message 2014. Meet at 11.45 am outside News from Nowhere, Bold St, to process down Bold St and Church St to the Queen Elizabeth Law Courts, Derby Square. Ashes will be distributed. If possible, please wear black. Organised by Liverpool Pax Christi. Enquiries: Jan Harper 0151 263 5623 janharper80@gmail.com

18 Annual Ash Wednesday Gathering at Ministry of Defence - Repentance and Resistance to Nuclear War Preparations

20 UN World Day of Social Justice <http://www.un.org/en/events/socialjusticeday/>

21 Christian Aid "BIG Coffee Morning" 10am – 12 noon, Hoole URC, Hoole Road, Hoole, Chester CH2 3NT. The annual BIG Coffee Morning, with lots of stalls and displays. Contact 01244 320562.

27 Lent Fast Day

23 February - 8 March Fairtrade Fortnight <http://www.fairtrade.org.uk>

Cheshire Development Education Centre (CDEC) are working with all the libraries in CWAC (the Local Authority of Cheshire West and Chester) who will have a display about Fairtrade during half term and Fairtrade fortnight along with a colouring competition of a Fairtrade market scene. In some libraries the story "The banana who refused to turn yellow" will be read at story time events. The project is funded by the CWAC Fairtrade Steering group and more details of events for the Fortnight will be on the CWAC website. Contact Heather at heather@cheshiredec.org with details of any events you would like included in the publicity flier they aim to produce. (Please contact her by **9 February** if possible.)

25 February – 25 March: Lenten Lunches Chester The annual series of Lenten Lunches organised by Christian Aid for each Wednesday in Lent, 12noon to 1.30pm at the Quaker Meeting House, *Union Walk, Frodsham Street, Chester CH1 3LF*. Contact 01244 320562. The dates to note are: **25/2, 4/3, 11/3, 18/3, and 25/3**

MARCH

6 Women's World Day of Prayer *Do you know what I have done to you?* prepared by the women of Egypt 01892 541411 wwdp-natcomm.org

6 One of a series of 4 events across England & Wales, each providing an introduction to the work of national charity, POPYRUS: Prevention of Young Suicide at LACE, Croxteth Drive, Sefton Park, Liverpool, L17 1AA. Cost £10 per person. 10am -3.30pm (light lunch provided). All welcome. Contact: Maureen O'Brien 0151 522 1044 m.obrien@rcaol.co.uk

8 International Women's Day Internationalwomensday.com

10 CWDF Forum Meeting 6.45 - 9pm The Unity Centre, *Cuppin Street Chester, CH1 2BN* Speaker to be confirmed – but we hope that Linda Tiongco, now retired from Christian Aid, will be able to join us to give her talk previously planned for 11/11/14.

13 CAFOD Quiz for CAFOD's Connect 2 Ethiopia projects organised by Ellesmere Port LPA J&P Group 7.30pm Our Lady's Parish Centre. Fee £3 for adults £1 for children including interval refreshments. Teams are welcome or join a team on the night.

14 Archbishop Romero Anniversary talk. Speaker Johan Bergstrom-Allen (University of York). Burnley and Pendle Faith Centre, Barden Lane, Burnley, BB10 1JD. 1.30pm for 2.00pm start (light refreshments available). Mass 3.30pm.

20 Pre-Election Hustings on World Development Issues Chester. It is planned that, as in previous General Elections, CWDF will host an open meeting with the main General Election candidates, exploring their views on development issues. The chosen date allows the meeting to be held at the University immediately before the Easter break. It will be held at 7pm in Best Building, courtesy of the Department of Geography and Development Studies. Date to be confirmed. www.chesterwdf.org.uk

22 World Water Day unwater.org/worldwaterday

21 in the Cathedral Centre Lancaster **Gospels and Government will Catholic Social Teaching effect the way you vote** With inputs from John Battle on visions for the future, Helen Boothroyd on the Cumbria Welfare Commission and Simon Stewart on Catholic Social Teaching. For more information and to book a place contact Maggie: lfjc@talktalk.net 01524 383081

24 35th Anniversary of the Death of Archbishop Oscar Romero www.romerotrue.org.uk

MAY

16 NJPN AGM & OPEN NETWORKING DAY 10.30am-4pm CAFOD 55 Westminster Bridge Road, London SE1 7JB

Many of the items featured in this and previous bulletins are taken from the daily e bulletin Independent Catholic News www.indcatholicnews.com an invaluable free resource for up-to-date J&P news and events. Sign up too for weekly bulletins from National J&P Network www.justice-and-peace.org - contact the Administrator 020 7901 4864, admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk

The views expressed in this bulletin are not necessarily those of NJPN

A Lenten Journey: a daily leaflet for Lent comprising a Scripture verse or short reflection and an action idea for each day composed by former Shrewsbury Diocese Justice and Peace Commission member Bryan Halson for the National Justice and Peace Network.

Download at: <https://jpsshrewsbury.wordpress.com/latest-news/>