

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

PEACE ACTIVIST FR DANIEL BERRIGAN SJ HAS DIED

Report from ICN Monday, May 2, 2016

The American Jesuit priest and poet Daniel Berrigan - famous for leading defiant protests against the Vietnam War - died on Saturday in New York aged 94. Father Berrigan emerged as a radical Catholic voice against the war in the 1960s and won fame when he and his younger brother Fr Philip Berrigan seized draft records of troops about to be deployed in Vietnam. Together with seven others they burned the files. The group were convicted of destroying government property and sentenced on 9 November 1968 to prison terms ranging from two to 3.5 years.

Through his life Fr Berrigan went on to protest against the Gulf War, the Kosovo War, the US invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, and abortion. In 1980 he founded the anti-nuclear weapons Plowshares Movement in 1980. He is reported to have taken part aged 92 in the Occupy Wall Street movement in New York's Zuccotti Park.

Fr Berrigan was born into a German-Irish Catholic family in Minnesota and joined the Jesuit order in 1939, becoming ordained in 1952. Berrigan credited Dorothy Day, founder of The Catholic Worker movement, with introducing him to pacifism and influencing his thinking about war.

He wrote more than 50 books, with his first volume of poetry, *Time Without Number*, winning the Lamont Prize in 1957. He also wrote a play: *The Trial of the Catonsville Nine*. Berrigan's writings include "Prison Poems," published in 1973; "We Die Before We Live: Talking with the Very Ill," a 1980 book based on his experiences working in a cancer ward; and his autobiography, "To Dwell in Peace," published in 1987. Asked in a magazine interview for an inscription for his gravestone, Fr Berrigan said: "It was never dull. Alleluia."

Watch Fr Daniel reading one of his own poems: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EGzQ9wEdjeE>
Read also Bruce Kent's tribute here: <http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=29980>

Fr John Dear writes:

On May 17th, 1968, along with his brother Philip and eight others, Berrigan burned three hundred A-1 draft files in Catonsville, Maryland, in a protest against the Vietnam War. "Our apologies, good friends," Dan wrote in the Catonsville Nine statement, "for the fracture of good order, the burning of paper instead of children, the angering of the orderlies in the front parlour of the charnel house. We could not, so help us God, do otherwise." Their action attracted massive national and international press, and led to hundreds of similar demonstrations. After an explosive three day trial in October, he was found guilty of destruction of property.

In his autobiography, *To Dwell in Peace*, Berrigan reflected on the effect of the Catonsville protest: The act was pitiful, a tiny flare amid the consuming fires of war. But Catonsville was like a firebreak, a small fire lit, to contain and conquer a greater. The time, the place, were weirdly right. They spoke for passion, symbol, reprisal. Catonsville seemed to light up the dark places of the heart, where courage and risk and hope were awaiting a signal, a dawn. For the remainder of our lives, the fires would burn and burn, in hearts and minds, in draft boards, in prisons and courts. A new fire, new as a Pentecost, flared up in eyes deadened and hopeless, the noble powers of soul given over to the "powers of the upper air." "Nothing can be done!" How often we had heard that gasp: the last of the human, of soul, of freedom. Indeed, something could be done, and was. And would be.

The Catonsville Nine Protest was followed extensively around the world, in large part because of the shock of two Catholic priests facing prison for a peace protest.

Dan was my greatest friend and teacher, for over thirty five years. We travelled the nation and the world together; went to jail together; and I edited five books of his writings. But all along I considered him one of the most important religious figures of the last century, right alongside with Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr., Thomas Merton, Dorothy Day and his brother Philip. Dan and Phil inspired millions of people around the world to speak out against war and work for peace, and helped turn the Catholic Church back to its Gospel roots of peace and nonviolence. I consider him not just a legendary peace activist but one of the greatest saints and prophets of modern times. For now, I celebrate his extraordinary life, and invite everyone to ponder his great witness and how we all might continue his peace work.

Thank you, Dan. May we all take heart from your astonishing peacemaking life, and carry on the work to abolish war, poverty and nuclear weapons.

Read Fr John Dear's tribute in full: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/john-dear/the-life-and-death-of-dan_b_9815148.html

THE CATHOLICISM THAT MADE POPE FRANCIS POSSIBLE

By Rose Marie Berger 05/05/2016

"Violence only exists with the help of the lie!" With these words Fr. Daniel Berrigan and I sealed our fate.

It was the summer 1995. August sixth. We'd been invited to read at the Washington National Cathedral's service commemorating the 50th year since the U.S. used atomic weapons on civilians in Japan. The Cathedral was full. Western light filled the rose window.

I was supposed to read an adaptation from Thomas Merton's scathing indictment of U.S. militarism, the poem "*Original Child Bomb*," and the Scriptures for the Feast of the Transfiguration ("*Master, it is good that we are here*"), also recognized on that day. Dan was slated to read from Soviet-resister Alexander Solzhenitsyn's Nobel Prize lecture and from Maximilian Kolbe, the Polish priest who exchanged his life for a fellow prisoner in Auschwitz.

Minutes before the liturgy began, a member of the Cathedral staff called us together to say there was a change in the readings: Thomas Merton was too controversial — I should read from Deuteronomy; Dan should also read from Scripture instead of from Solzhenitsyn and Kolbe. They handed out a new order of worship. Inserted in it was a statement that included this sentence: "*Washington National Cathedral has no official view on the history or morality of the first atom bombs or on any foreign or military policy.*"

Dan and I exchanged glances. This could not stand. The opening hymn was beginning. We were pulled into the processional line. I've rarely felt so sick to my stomach. Then it was my turn to ascend the altar steps to the pulpit. I looked at Dan again. He smiled, nodded, and wiggled his eyebrows.

Up I rose. With the microphone booming, I opened my remarks by saying that it was a travesty for "America's church" to say that it has no official view on the morality of the first atom bombs; it was a sin for a church to print such a thing. I asked forgiveness from Ms. Hisayo Yamashita, a survivor of the bomb dropped on Hiroshima, and other *hibakusha*, seated in places of honour along the front row. Instead of reading from Deuteronomy, as was listed in the new order, I would be reading from the original text: *Meditations on the Transfiguration*, with words from Thomas Merton's poem "*Original Child Bomb*" — which I did.

I sat down. Eyes closed. Heart in throat. Face aflame. Silence.

Then came the voice of Daniel Berrigan: "'Violence only exists with the help of the lie!' Today in America, this church, to our great shame has perpetuated the lie. What if Christians had taken no official view on the history or morality of slavery ...?" For the next 20 minutes, America's finest poet-prophet-priest called down a litany of condemnation and conscience on the hubris of America's religious leaders who had lost their way. The straight way had become crooked. Dan tried it in place again.

Following the service, Dan and I were both chastised, yelled at, and then banned from the Cathedral grounds by the person whose "good order" we had "fractured." Over time the ban was forgotten. But Dan's prophetic speech lives on.

It's fair to say that I grew up with Daniel Berrigan. My father kept a newspaper clipping pinned to the bulletin board over his desk of the Berrigan brothers, Dan and Phil. He taught *The Trial of the Catonsville Nine* in his high school English classes. In our house, the "Berrigan Brothers" were held up as models of Catholic faith in action.

Historian Gordon Oyer, in his book *Pursuing The Spiritual Roots of Protest*, writes, "[Dan Berrigan's] advocacy regarding issues of poverty, open clergy/laity relations, and ecumenical interaction stretched boundaries of the pre-Vatican II Catholic Church and positioned him on its cutting edge."

Following the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), the Berrigans were paradigmatic of what "new" Catholicism looked like when melded with the genius of America; a genius that was democratic, creative, culturally variegated, thirsting for freedom, liberty, and justice for all.

Sociologist and Catholic priest Andrew Greeley once wrote that the Berrigans were the dividing line between the "old" Catholic social activism and the "new" Catholic social activism. The old Catholic model came out of the immigrant labour union movements, with "worker priests" and community organising. The "new" Catholic model was born in resistance to the Vietnam War. It focused on aligning with the civil rights and peace popular movements, involving "confrontation and protest."

Greeley critiqued this new approach: "The old social actionists are largely men of action, doers, not talkers. The new social actionists are intellectuals ... They are masters at manipulating words and sometimes ideas ... They are fervent crusaders. [But] winning strikes, forming unions, organising communities are not their 'things,' they are much more concerned about creating world economic justice."

In *Pursuing the Spiritual Roots of Protest*, Oyer recovers a pivotal series of discussions that took place in 1964 that greatly influenced this watershed change in Catholic social action for peace in the U.S. Trappist monk Thomas Merton convened a retreat with 14 members of Catholic (lay and clergy), mainline Protestant, historic peace church, and Unitarian traditions to explore ecumenical collaborations for peace work. Or as Merton put it in his notes, "We are hoping to reflect together during these days on our common grounds for religious dissent."

Daniel Berrigan and Phil Berrigan were there, as well as others, including John Howard Yoder, A.J. Muste, and Jim Forest. Bayard Rustin and Martin Luther King, Jr., were scheduled to attend but King was diverted because of receiving the Nobel Peace Prize. The second day of the retreat was shaped by Daniel Berrigan's exploration of the Risen Christ and new understandings of the "role of church as protest." It was at this retreat that seeds were planted in the minds of the Berrigans about public liturgy and direct action.

The conversations with Merton and others set Dan and Phil on a particular direction. The newspaper clipping over my dad's desk was of Dan Berrigan's arrest in 1968 at a Catonsville, Md., army draft board and recruitment centre, where Dan and eight others poured their blood and homemade napalm on 378 draft files and burned them in the parking lot. Dan led the prayer over the burning draft files: "We make our prayer in the name of that God whose name is peace, and decency, and unity, and love ... We have chosen to be powerless criminals in a time of criminal power. We have chosen to be branded as peace criminals by war criminals." The Catonsville action inspired more than 100 similar acts of protest.

Years later, Dan told me that he'd once been flying on a commercial airline and the pilot overheard his name from the ticket desk. The pilot walked up to Dan and asked if he could shake his hand. "You don't know me," he said, "but I owe you my life. My draft record was one of the ones you burned that day. Because of all the mix up, I was never called up. Thank you for saving my life."

This form of Catholic direct action and religious dissent to the "culture of death" later launched the Plowshares anti-nuclear weapons movement, which began in 1980 when Dan and Phil Berrigan and six others illegally trespassed onto General Electric's nuclear missile facility in King of Prussia, Penn. They damaged nuclear warhead nose cones (Isaiah 2: "*beat swords into plowshares*") and poured their own blood on files to destroy them. As Dan said during the closing arguments of their trial, "In the name of all the eight, I would like to leave with you, friends and jurors, that great and noble word, which is our crime: 'Responsibility.'"

In 1963, this was the Catholicism I was baptised into: courageous, resistant, self-sacrificing, street-oriented, thoroughly immersed in the living public liturgy grounded in the experiences of those who suffer—especially those who suffer by the design of others. This is the 20th century Catholicism of Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin, Thomas Merton, Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta, the Berrigans, Elizabeth McAlister, Antona Ebo, and many others.

This is the Catholicism that helped make a person like Pope Francis possible.

Two weeks before Dan died, I was in Rome attending the Vatican's first global convocation on Catholics, nonviolence, and just peace. At the opening, Cardinal Turkson read a message from Pope Francis reminding us that "our thoughts on revitalising the tools of non-violence, and of active non-violence in particular," are a needed and positive contribution. "In our complex and violent world," said Pope Francis, "it is truly a formidable undertaking to work for peace by living the practice of non-violence!"

Following the conference, Fr. John Dear, Dan's friend and collaborator, flew from Rome to New York to take news back to Dan's bedside. "He was amazed to hear about our conversations on nonviolence at the Vatican," wrote John. "So glad I was able to tell him. We had a good visit ... but please keep Daniel Berrigan in your prayers, along with this Vatican initiative on nonviolence." Dan died a few days later.

In Berrigan's book on Chronicles 1 and 2, *No Gods But One*, he concludes with this: "Perhaps it is with relief, sorrowful and secret, that Moses draws a last breath? The forty-year burden, carried with such nobility, is lifted from his shoulders. He dies in good spirit ... Moses can indeed cry out, as a great descendant cried out in our lifetime, 'I have climbed the mountain; I have seen the Promise. Free, great God, free at last!'"

The mantle is now ours.

Rose Marie Berger, Senior Associate Editor for *Sojourners* magazine.

<https://sojo.net/articles/catholicism-made-pope-francis-possible#sthash.gSPwBJCW.amphLMpH.dpuf>

<https://sojo.net/articles/catholicism-made-pope-francis-possible#sthash.Pfm0N9sX.dpuf>

PROPHETIC WORDS

At a time when there is a glimmer of hope that women may be considered for the diaconate we are reminded of Berrigan's words: "*Until women are fully integrated into this church, every time I go to the altar I feel compromised.*"

CARDINAL NICHOLS WELCOMES NEW MAYOR OF LONDON

Sadiq Khan was officially sworn in as Mayor of London, at a multifaith ceremony held in Southwark Cathedral on Saturday, 7 May. The event was attended by many faith and community leaders - among them The Bishop of London, Dr Richard Chartres, Sir Ian McKellen, Ed Miliband and Doreen Lawrence and members of London Citizens. Music included the choir of St Bonaventure's Boys Catholic secondary school, Forest Gate.

There was loud applause as Mr Khan began his speech. He said: "We're here at Southwark Cathedral because I want to start as I intend to carry on. I'm determined to lead the most transparent, engaged and accessible administration London has ever seen, and to represent every single community, and every single part of our city. A Mayor for all Londoners. So I wanted to do the signing-in ceremony here. In the very heart of our city, surrounded by Londoners of all backgrounds." He added: "I'm only here today because of the opportunity and helping hand that our city gave me and my family. And my burning ambition for our city, that will guide my mayoralty, is to ensure that all Londoners get the opportunities that this city gave to me. My promise to you is this. I promise you I will always do everything I can in my power to make our city better. I will be a Mayor for Londoners."

Cardinal Nichols made this statement following the Declaration of Acceptance of the new mayor: "I welcome Sadiq Khan as the new Mayor of London. I assure him of my prayers for his time in this important office in which he will face the great challenges of London, in its richness, diversity and energy."

"Yesterday Pope Francis reflected on these challenges. Speaking of the great cities of Europe he used these words: 'Many of our cities are remarkably beautiful precisely because they have managed to preserve over time traces of different ages, nations, styles and visions...the richness and worth of a people is grounded in its ability to combine all these levels in a healthy coexistence. Forms of reductionism and attempts at uniformity, far from generating value, condemn our peoples to a cruel poverty: the poverty of exclusion. Far from bestowing grandeur, riches and beauty, exclusion leads to vulgarity, narrowness, and cruelty. Far from bestowing nobility of spirit, it brings meanness.' May this same spirit inspire the leadership of our new Mayor."

Khan received a total of 1,310,143 votes - 57% of the total, in contrast to the 994,614 votes received for Zac Goldsmith. Khan's tally gave him the largest personal mandate of any politician in the history of the United Kingdom. Various press sources note that Khan's election made him the first Muslim mayor of a major Western city.

<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=30018>

CELEBRATING DIVERSITY: Reflections from the Dean of Southwark, Very Revd Andrew Nunn

8 May 2016

Extracts: "It is quite hard to put into words the atmosphere in Southwark Cathedral yesterday when Sadiq Khan entered to begin his mayoralty. As preparations were being made and people were arriving there was a party atmosphere – but for others there was a palpable sense of anticipation and excitement. I led the new Mayor through the sacristy door and into the waiting and anticipating cathedral and it erupted. People sprang to their feet and applauded, long and hard. It was tremendously moving."

When I was asked whether I would consider hosting this legal ceremony, normally conducted in City Hall, in the Cathedral I didn't hesitate for long. Of course! Why not? It wasn't about being party political, it wasn't about taking sides, it was about London, it was about community and it was about trying to do that work of reconciliation that needed to take place after so many dirty tactics by some in the campaign and especially around the issues of race and religion.

One of the saints of the Christian Church, Lawrence, was a deacon in Rome. It was a time of terrible persecution of Christians by the state. In 258 the pope was killed and Lawrence was immediately dragged before the Roman Prefect and ordered to hand over the treasures of the church. And he did – he brought to the Prefect the poor, the crippled, the blind and the suffering, and said 'These are the true treasures of the Church.' It didn't end well for him and he followed the pope as a martyr but it's a great story and it applies to us all – whatever our faith, whatever our politics, whatever our social advantages or disadvantages.

In a city of treasures and wealth and opportunity the true treasure, the true wealth and the true source of opportunity is every single person, every neighbour we have. We can celebrate that in this moment of new beginnings, building on the past and looking to the future.

We are grateful to our new Mayor for bringing this ceremony for London out of City Hall and into this place. It is here that the victims of the Marchioness disaster are remembered, here that a bishop asked people to be honest to God, here that President Nelson Mandela and Archbishop Desmond Tutu opened and gave their blessing to our new buildings and here that day in and day out we seek to be a holy place for all people, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation or ability – a real community.

Sitting with representatives of the faith communities in a place of Christian worship used continuously since the 7th century and welcoming our first Muslim Mayor for London was a moment of history and a powerful moment. If a message can go out from Southwark and London and the UK to the rest of the world, to the USA and Paris and the Middle East and so many other places, that celebration rather than tolerance is the way forward it will have been a good day's work and witness."

Read the text of the Dean's speech in full: <https://southwarklivinggod.wordpress.com/2016/05/08/celebrating-diversity/>

THE CRISIS BLOG: No One Turned Away: changing the law to prevent and tackle homelessness

Today (10 May), we launch our report setting out how to reform the homelessness legislation. We are calling on MPs to change the law to ensure that no one is turned away when they approach their local authority for help. Our proposals would ensure that homelessness is tackled at a much earlier point, and single people receive a much more robust package of support. As the law in England stands, single homeless people who go to their councils for help can be turned away because they are not deemed to be a priority. This can be catastrophic for individuals, trapping them in homelessness for far longer, and is costly for local and national government.

It is nearly 40 years since the system of priority need was introduced. It's time to change the law so that all homeless people can get meaningful help and that where possible this happens before someone loses their home. Homelessness isn't inevitable, and we don't need to look very far to find alternative frameworks for dealing with it. Both Scotland and Wales have enacted legislation that helps to address the historic lack of entitlements for single people. Neither system is perfect, but they do represent a step-change in tackling homelessness. **Take action now:** www.crisis.org.uk/NoOneTurnedAway

Homelessness has risen significantly over the past five years. Nobody should be forced to sleep rough because they can't get the help they need. We know that Ministers are seriously considering changing the law so that councils intervene earlier to prevent and solve homelessness. We urge them to take the next step and announce firm plans for reform. But backbench MPs also have a chance to put this vital issue in front of their parliamentary colleagues. Later this month a select few who win a ballot will get the chance to put forward their own law as a "private member's bill". Because the MPs who get this opportunity are likely to be guided by what their constituents care about, as a member of the public you can help the campaign by emailing your MP to explain why they should care about reforming the homelessness legislation. **Take action: email your MP today.**

Jon Sparkes, Crisis Chief Executive @jon_sparkes

<http://blog.crisis.org.uk/no-one-turned-away-changing-the-law-to-prevent-and-tackle-homelessness/>

THE CRISIS BLOG: GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FOR JOBSEEKERS UNDER THE MICROSCOPE

The past few weeks have seen a flurry of parliamentary activity around one of the most important issues affecting homeless people— the support provided by Government to help them into work. This is the work of one cross-party parliamentary committee, the Work and Pensions Select Committee, which has issued three inquiries looking at various aspects of the support provided to help unemployed people get back on their feet. We've submitted responses to all three, including a joint response with other homelessness charities and the Employment Related Services Association (ERSA, the sector body that represents welfare-to-work providers).

Being homeless or at risk of homelessness makes it very difficult to look for work. But too often Jobcentre Plus fails to recognise that someone is homeless, giving Work Coaches unrealistic expectations as to what the individual is capable of and meaning people don't get the support they need. A new assessment should be introduced that accurately identifies people's support needs, including homelessness.

Identifying that jobseekers are homeless is only really meaningful if appropriate support is then provided. Services should be better integrated to make sure that people's housing needs are dealt with alongside their employability needs. Jobcentre Plus should collaborate and where possible integrate with housing and homelessness services and the commissioning process for the new Work and Health Programme should recognise housing as a priority area for support.

Homeless people are disproportionately affected by benefit sanctions, making it much harder for them to look for work. Conditionality requirements must be better tailored so that people are only required to undertake job-seeking activities they are capable of, and should be suspended while homeless people are trying to resolve their housing situation. Greater safeguards are needed so that sanctions don't result in people being made homeless or destitute.

Employment support for jobseekers with complex support needs must be centred around the individual, and be tailored not only to what they are capable of doing but build on their aspirations through an encouraging and motivational relationship. Jobcentre Plus Work Coaches should receive training and support that equips them to build supportive, trusting relationships with claimants. Prisoners should receive 'through the gate' one-to-one support, in order to suitably prepare them for employment on release.

Last week the committee held its first evidence session focused on the future of Jobcentre Plus. Witnesses— including Kirsty McHugh, Chief Executive of ERSA and the Social Market Foundation's Matthew Oakley— raised concerns about the capacity of Jobcentre Plus to provide effective, targeted support to jobseekers with more difficult barriers to work. This is a concern we share and that we raised in our own response to the Committee. But there was also optimism about the opportunities for change. With the Work Programme coming to an end in England and Wales next year (the following year in Scotland), and Universal Credit rolling out apace across Britain, this is a real opportunity to transform the support that homeless people get when they first walk through the doors of the Jobcentre.

Alice Ashworth, Crisis Senior Policy Officer 13 May 2016

<http://blog.crisis.org.uk/government-support-for-jobseekers-under-the-microscope/> @ashworthalice

MANCHESTER JESUITS LEADING THE WAY ON HISTORIC HOMELESS CHARTER

Fr Tim Byron SJ of the Manchester Jesuit community attended the launch of the **Manchester Homeless Charter** on Monday, 9 May. The initiative has been part-funded through donations to the Holy Name Church in Manchester.

The Manchester Homeless Charter is building on the work of local charities to develop a more effective strategy to support local homeless people. It is the fruit of numerous discussions between the homeless and the various organisations that strive to help them. The process of writing up the Charter particularly valued the input from rough sleepers themselves, and their ideas as to how homelessness can best be tackled. The Charter covers a range of areas including accommodation, health and wellbeing, education, employment, training, community safety and social activities to aid reintegration of homeless people into the community.

Each sector in Manchester has been involved in working together to focus on a solution to homelessness in the city, but the Charter is not the first step to have been taken. A campaign named 'Big Change' was launched in late 2015 encouraging people to donate to homeless charities rather than to individuals on the streets. Manchester City Council also reopened three council-run shared houses, redesigned existing houses and freed up 40 bed spaces to help provide much-needed shelter. In addition, specialist accommodation accepting dogs has been opened up to allow for rough sleepers and their pets to have somewhere to stay. The Council is also working to help homeless people to make moves towards independent living.

The Jesuits at the Holy Name are also supporting the development of an app named '**Street Support**', based on the pre-existing website service. The app will enable people to find out what practical support for homeless people is available nearby. This service will prove especially useful to members of the Manchester Universities' Catholic Chaplaincy SVP group, who venture out on homeless runs multiple times a week. **For more information**, watch this video about the Manchester Homeless Charter:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZLH4KrtvFw>

http://www.jesuit.org.uk/manchester-jesuits-leading-way-historic-homeless-charter?utm_source=Jesuits+in+Britain&utm_campaign=4b30315d5c-JIB_160510&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_22ed05a35f-4b30315d5c-87595669

HOUSING JUSTICE CYMRU - to be launched later this year!

At the Housing Justice board meeting last week, the trustees approved the creation of Housing Justice Cymru, to be launched later this year. HJ Cymru is to be the Welsh arm of Housing Justice, and its first director is to be Sharon Lee, acting coordinator for our Faith in Affordable Housing project, Wales region. Sharon is also Vice-Chair of a large Housing Association in Wales, and has worked in a senior strategic role in housing for a number of years. She has worked for Housing Justice for the last three years.

HJ Cymru will support churches in a number of different ways, including through practical and joined-up responses to homelessness and housing need. Housing Justice will continue to be an independent voice, seeking positive dialogue and relationship with national and local Government in Wales and England in addressing these issues.

A formal launch event in Wales later in the year is being planned, to be attended by Government representatives, Church Leaders and stakeholders.

See full press release: http://www.housingjustice.org.uk/data/files/press_releases/CYMRU_PRESS_RELEASE2.pdf

CHARITIES URGE PM TO END UK TAX HAVENS' ROLE IN GLOBAL CORRUPTION

Sunday, May 1, 2016

The chief executives of 17 charities and campaign groups have written to the Prime Minister, urging him to stop UK tax havens from enabling corruption and tax dodging around the world. The letter, signed by the CEOs of organisations including CAFOD, Christian Aid, Oxfam and Global Witness, comes less than two weeks before David Cameron's international Anti-Corruption Summit in London on 12 May. "The UK's reputation as a leader in the fight against corruption is on the line," the letter warns, following the latest revelations in the Panama Papers about the role played by UK Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies - especially the British Virgin Islands - in enabling corruption and secrecy around the world.

The letter urges the Prime Minister to tackle the problem by introducing public registers of the real owners of all companies in UK tax havens. It states: "In 2013 you set the UK on a path to greater transparency in these territories and have continued to make the case for public registers ever since. While we welcome your announcement that the Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies will adopt central registries of beneficial ownership available to UK law enforcement, we do not believe this is enough to achieve your own stated ambition or strike a decisive blow at the UK's role in facilitating global corruption.

As you yourself have recognised, both the authorities and the public need transparency to empower the fight against corruption worldwide; and this is particularly true in developing countries which have the most to gain from transparency, yet this announcement does nothing for them.

As such it is vital that you introduce public registers of beneficial ownership in all the major offshore jurisdictions, including the Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies. We urge you to use all the powers at your disposal to achieve this vital reform, and to ensure that the UK shows true leadership in both words and deeds."

Full text and signatories: <http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=29976#.Vye6r2MIUz4.facebook>

FEEDING LIVERPOOL: A PILOT PROJECT OF FEEDING BRITAIN

Press Release: Launch of Feeding Liverpool Friday, 20 May 2016 at LACE, Sefton Park, Liverpool

More than eighty people attended the launch of **Feeding Liverpool**, a group bringing together people who are concerned about food poverty in Liverpool.

Feeding Liverpool is one of a growing network of local projects following the Report of the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Hunger in the UK published in December 2014 and called *Feeding Britain: A strategy for zero hunger in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland*. Feeding Liverpool is an initiative of Churches Together in Merseyside and Region. This is appropriate because faith groups are so often involved in the provision of food banks and other food projects but we have no intention of going it alone.

We aim to bring together people who are concerned about food poverty:

First – to share good practice about emergency provision;

Second – to campaign for change in those policies that cause or reinforce poverty;

Third – to raise public awareness about the extent of food poverty and the damaging effects of austerity measures on welfare provision.

We also want to contribute to other efforts in the city to tackle food poverty such as the City Council's Food Poverty Strategy Group at which Feeding Liverpool is being asked to take a lead role in engaging with local communities and learning from people's lived experience. As many of our participants are those on the frontline of provision, our key strength is to provide what Bishop Paul Bayes refers to as 'a line of sight to the street and back' in order to gain an understanding of the reality of food poverty and its implications – not just for providers and policy makers, but for all of us who aspire to live in a society that is built around fairness and the wellbeing of all.

Feeding Liverpool is co-chaired by Bishop John Rawsthorne, (retired Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Hallam and former Auxiliary Bishop in Liverpool) and Professor Hilary Russell (Professor Emeritus at Liverpool John Moores University European Institute of Urban Affairs and leader of the Together For the Common Good [T4CG] research process).

Messages of support were displayed at the launch from Frank Field MP, co-chair of Feeding Britain, Mayor Joe Anderson and Bishop Paul Bayes (Anglican Bishop of Liverpool).

Speakers included Louise Ellman MP, Stephen Twigg MP, Niall Cooper (National Director of Church Action on Poverty), Councillor Jane Corbett (Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion, Fairness and Equalities), Kevin Peacock (CEO of St Andrews Community Network), Lynda Batterbee (Area Manager for the Trussell Trust), Archbishop Malcolm McMahon (Roman Catholic Archbishop of Liverpool) and Rev Phil Jump (Free Church Moderator for Merseyside).

Photos, comments and video clips are available on Twitter [@feedinglpool](#) A short film of the event will be posted online soon.

For more information contact Steve Atherton, LACE, Croxteth Drive, Sefton Park, Liverpool L17 1AA s.atherton@rcaol.co.uk 0151 522 1080

NEWS, WORSHIP MATERIALS AND IDEAS FOR ACTION - read the summer issue of *SPARK*

SPARK is Church Action on Poverty's print newsletter, circulated three times a year. The summer 2016 issue is on its way out to all our supporters in print right now. It includes exciting content from our new project **Church of the Poor?**, some challenging reflections from a Franciscan brother and the Co-Principal of the Northern Baptist College, plus worship and prayer materials for you to use and news on the upcoming campaign to End Hunger in the UK. We hope you'll find it inspiring.

Read SPARK online: <http://www.church-poverty.org.uk/about-us/about-us/spark-newsletter/summer2016/sparksummer2016pdf>

Poverty Truth Salford: Church Action on Poverty is managing and supporting Salford Poverty Truth Commission together with local charity the Broughton Trust, while engagement and training for grassroots commissioners is provided by Community Pride (a community interest company set up by specialists trained in our Schools of Participation approach). We'll share stories from the work at blog.church-poverty.org.uk and in future newsletters.

TELFORD CHRISTIANS AGAINST POVERTY DEBT CENTRE

Christians Against Poverty is an award winning, national debt counselling charity offering free help and advice through a network of debt centres based in the local church. CAP offers hope and a solution to people in debt through its top-quality, in-depth service, as well as financial education through the CAP Money Courses.

Call 0800 328 0006 to book an appointment with your local debt centre, or visit capuk.org

You can also contact the Telford centre manager Jane Preston on 07910 779345 janepreston@capuk.org

REFUGEES REVIVE FADING ITALIAN VILLAGES

Thomas Bruckner 2 May 2016

Riace, Italy - As the continuous influx of refugees is seen as a cause for concern for many European nations, which are employing strict border controls to stop the unprecedented flow of people, one community in the southern Italian region of Calabria has taken a different perspective of the matter. The village of Riace had seen its population drop from 2,500 to 400 since the 1990s, when people moved to northern Italy for better economic opportunities.

Domenico Lucano, Mayor of Riace, saw the flow of refugees in Italy as an opportunity. "We have been welcoming refugees with open arms for the past 15 years. [They have] saved our village," Lucano explained. The resourceful mayor first acted on this opportunity in 1998, when a boat with 218 Kurdish refugees on their way to Greece got stranded on a beach in Riace. This is when Lucano first proposed that the refugees should stay in the village and take over the homes and apartments that had been left vacant by the migrating former residents of the town.

The mayor helped to facilitate the integration by establishing a "refugees welcome" project, which is now spreading through neighbouring towns. Presently, people from 20 different nations live in Riace. Bakeries and workshops have re-opened. There is even a school for the children of the village.

The population of the village has bounced back to 2,500. The successes in the village have been noted in Rome, according to the mayor, and the Italian government has been promoting the settlement of refugees in other smaller, shrinking communities. The policy makes more economic sense than accommodating the refugees in reception or refugee camps.

<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/inpictures/2016/04/refugee-settlement-programs-save-dying-italian-villages-160421113908416.html>

CARDINAL WELCOMES GOVERNMENT DECISION TO TAKE SOME CHILD REFUGEES

Thursday, May 5, 2016

Cardinal Vincent Nichols, Archbishop of Westminster, has welcomed an announcement that the UK government has decided to resettle more child refugees. Only those children already in Europe before the agreement with Turkey will be eligible for asylum.

Last month the British government refused to take in 3,000 unaccompanied refugee children. The amendment to the Immigration Bill, proposed by Lord Alfred Dubs, who came to England as a child refugee himself during World War Two, was defeated by 294 to 276 votes on 26 April. But a further amendment by Lord Dubs was passed by the House of Lords on 27 April by a decisive 279 to 172 votes - and pressure has been mounting in the Commons for the UK to accept some unaccompanied children.

Cardinal Nichols said: "I am very happy that the government is extending an offer of sanctuary to a greater number of children fleeing conflict, while continuing to combat the evils of human trafficking. The UK's response to the refugee crisis is improving the lives of thousands. I encourage the Catholic community to keep on playing its part through working with local authorities; being generous with time and resources, and extending the hand of welcome to refugees arriving here."

<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=30000>

See also: ICN 26 April 2016 Catholic agencies shocked at government refusal to take in unaccompanied child refugees

<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=29939>

AIRPORT WORKERS TO LOOK OUT FOR VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING AND MODERN SLAVERY

Cardinal Vincent Nichols, who leads the *Santa Maria Project*, an international anti-slavery alliance between church leaders and the police, has told the Press Association that staff who work in coffee shops near check-in desks at Liverpool John Lennon Airport will receive training from the Catholic Church to help them look out for people who look nervous or distressed in an effort to spot potential victims of trafficking and modern slavery.

Cardinal Nichols said that 'rescuing' modern day slaves once they had gone underground was often very difficult. He said: "Often what happens is that people arrive, they come off planes, they sit down for a cup of coffee and then their passports are taken off them. It is trying to develop eyes and ears at these critical moments, because once they have gone underground they are difficult to find until somebody gets out and talks."

According to the International Labour Organisation, 21 million people are victims of forced labour, and in Britain an estimated 13,000 people work as modern slaves in fields, factories, fisheries, nail bars and in prostitution.

The Modern Slavery Act was passed last year and introduced a life sentence for those found guilty of the crime.

<http://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/news/liverpool-news/liverpool-airport-coffee-shop-workers-11331380>

FREEDOM OF LIVERPOOL FOR HILLSBOROUGH JUSTICE CAMPAIGNER

The Rt Revd James Jones, former Anglican Bishop of Liverpool, who headed the Government-appointed panel whose report quashed the original inquest verdicts into the deaths of the 96 victims, is to be awarded the Freedom of Liverpool.

LONDON: APPEAL FOR PRAYERS AS CLIMATE PROTESTERS GO ON TRIAL

Supporters of action against climate change are invited to gather in front of Hammersmith Magistrates Court at 9am on Tuesday 31 May to pray and take part in a vigil as five Christian climate activists go on trial for whitewashing the walls of a government building. Short vigils on the hour and half hour outside court will take place throughout the day.

On the first day of the Paris climate conference last November, five members of Christian Climate Action whitewashed the walls of the Department for Energy and Climate Change and rebranded it the 'Department for Extreme Climate Change' in black paint.

One of the five, Phil Kingston, 80, said: "I am looking forward to speaking on behalf of my grandchildren and their generation, and the generations who will follow them: to continue to add to this unprecedented concentration of greenhouse gases when we know that they are causing climate change is, I believe, to cause criminal damage at a worldwide level."

Westley Ingram, said: "We stand every day before a Judge who holds us to account. This day in court must be considered in this light. There are two judges, two laws and two authorities ruling on our actions and one must be subservient to the other. The conduct of this government through DECC is on trial today as well ourselves. We encourage Christians to consider whether civil disobedience may be considered holy obedience when the law of the land is in conflict with the law of love as exemplified by Jesus Christ."

Helen Whitall, said: "What we did was reasonable under the circumstance. As a Christian I feel that whilst it is essential to always act out of love for God and others, I have a responsibility to speak out against injustice to protect all that God loves, human and non-human, which may at times involve non-violent direct action in the tradition of Christ and the prophets where I feel justice and truth are being silenced."

Ruth Jarman, said: "For 20 years I have been campaigning on climate change and it is clear to me that lawful political action is not being heeded. When we look back to times when governments and their laws were wrong we revere those who broke the law to stand up for what is right. In many cases peaceful civil disobedience enabled the change to a better society. The law is here to keep order and peace but climate change is set to bring unimaginable chaos and breakdown of global civil society. Campaigning to the limit of the law and then standing by and watching the destruction of what God has made can't be right. When there is a mismatch between obeying the laws of our country and those of God, I have to go with the latter. It is Christian obedience, rather than civil disobedience. For me, being a Christian requires me to listen to my conscience and act accordingly."

The group has received support from a number of theologians. The scholar, writer and broadcaster, Professor Alastair McIntosh said: "Christian Climate Action is a howl of prophetic protest against the kings of our time, who have turned their backs on caring for the Creation, and imagine they can do so with spiritual impunity."

Professor Tim Gorrige, Emeritus Professor of Theological Studies at the University of Exeter, said: "Wendell Berry speaks of organized Christianity as a 'respector and comforter of profitable iniquities.' This includes war, in all its forms, which is blessed and hallowed in every Cathedral and in most parish churches, and support for an economic system which threatens to make human life on earth impossible. Both are in contradiction of every single line of the Messianic Writings. To be Church, which is disciples of Jesus of Nazareth, is to protest these blasphemies and to call for a politics and an economy which is answerable to the God of Life."

For more information see: www.christianclimateaction.wordpress.com

See a video of the action here: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/climate-change-activists-vandalise-government-building-ahead-of-paris-climate-talks-a6754496.html>

ONE CLIMATE ONE WORLD CAFOD CAMPAIGN EVENT

The CAFOD Campaigns Team are holding a **One Climate One World Campaign Event** called *Power to the People* at **St Anne's Ormskirk Parish Centre, 23 Prescott Rd, Ormskirk L39 4TG** on **Sunday July 10** from 1.30 – 4.15 (with an optional Sunday Mass at 4.30pm).

- **Takura Gwatinyanya: Programme Manager at Caritas Harare in Zimbabwe** will talk at the morning Masses and also about Climate Change first hand and the responses
- **Maria Elena Arana: CAFOD's Campaign Coordinator** will give the latest on how we can respond in the UK including details of Climate Week 10-16 October, encouraging local actions
- **Fr Michael Fitzsimons** will also give an input based on a reflection of the Pilgrimage to Paris and events since

It's a campaigning event for new and seasoned volunteers so a chance for people to hone campaigning skills & pick up the latest resources; meet and share with other campaigners; worship and reflect together.

Refreshments provided and it's an open event so friends and family are very welcome. People are encouraged to book places at www.cafod.org.uk/events or call 020 7095 5417 or ring us at CAFOD Liverpool 0151 228 4028.

Ged Edwards, Community Participation Co-ordinator – CAFOD, CAFOD Liverpool Volunteer Centre, 27 Crofton Road, Liverpool, L13 5UJ, T: 0151 228 4028, M: 07779 804 241, Email: gedwards@cafod.org.uk

CLIMATE CHANGE: *WHERE DO WE GO AFTER PARIS?*

Diocese of Westminster Justice and Peace Commission invites you to a weekend on Climate Change: *Where Do We Go after Paris?* Climate Change, one year on from the UN COP 21 talks Friday 28 – Sunday 30 October 2016 at Trafford Hall, nr Chester CH2 4JP

There will be a 'green' bike ride on the Friday afternoon for those who can get there in time. The weekend will consist of workshops on what WE can do, including: The Pope's letter, and keeping hopeful; Wind Turbines; Lifestyles: the LiveSimply parish award; Switching to green energy suppliers; What to do about Fracking; The Hummingbird factor (doing the best we can!); and more ...

Can YOU lead a workshop on work YOU have been doing? Renew YOUR energy for the next phase of opposing climate change. Places (£180 per person) are limited, so book early! To reserve a place or for more information contact Barbara Kentish, justice@rcdow.org.uk 0208 888 4222

See Trafford Hall's excellent environmental profile: <http://www.traffordhall.com/community-learning/the-environment/>

DEMENTIA AWARENESS

Fr Chris Thomas writes: As I am sure many of you know Liverpool archdiocese is putting a lot of energy into increasing dementia awareness in all our parishes. At the Irenaeus project we began a practical response to this initiative with '*Songs we remember.*' This is a monthly gathering for carers and people with a dementia and anyone else to gather together and sing and share with one another. If, as Ronald Rolheiser says, spirituality is about 'the fire that burns in every human heart' then trying to touch that core is of huge importance for each of us. '*Songs we remember*' is one way of trying to help people touch that fire within which never goes out but which sometimes dims or lessens because of circumstances of life. Why not come along if you're free and join us. T: 0151 949 1199 Email: chris@irenaeus.co.uk

From the Telford Christian Council Newsletter: *How to be a Dementia Friendly Church* Tue 5 July, 7.30pm, St Leonards, Malinslee, TF4 2AS. An evening with Sarah Thorpe (Diocesan Advisor).

MAKING MEMORIES: Living Well with Dementia - creative reminiscence for older people.

Gallery Oldham is one of the first museum and galleries in the country to become Dementia Friendly. All our staff are trained Dementia Friends and we welcome visits from older people and carers.

NEW for 2016 – Living Well with Dementia. Free monthly drop-in sessions for carers and their loved ones with information, advice and support delivered by a range of experts. Sessions run from 1-3pm on the last Wednesday of the month and include a range of cultural, heritage, arts and craft activities as well as free refreshments.

Gander and Gab: Pick up a copy of our new gallery trail and discover a range of interesting and inspiring objects. The trail will give you pointers and suggestions to start conversations and recall memories.

Curator Talks and Handling Sessions: These informal group sessions give both carers and the cared for the chance to handle some of our wonderful collections. Light refreshments are provided and sessions last around an hour and a half.

Reminiscence Boxes: Our fantastic Past Times Reminiscence Boxes are available for groups or individuals to hire. Items have been selected to stir memories for those who may find it difficult to recall the past. We also offer a bespoke reminiscence service for organisations. Our experienced team can consult with your older people, staff and relatives to find a common theme of interest. We will then source suitable objects and devise creative, stimulating activities relating to the objects and the theme. For course bookings/group enquiries call: 0161 770 4742, book online at Eventbrite or email: glenys.walsh@oldham.gov.uk To find out more about all our services for older people email joy.thorpe@oldham.gov.uk or call Joy Thorpe on 0161 770 4663.

JAVOO! New social media app connects past and present to revolutionise Alzheimer's care

"After my grandfather passed away from Alzheimer's, I realised there was a lack of support for everyone involved." The feeling of loss and helplessness experienced by brothers Scott and Sam Rosenberg as they cared for their grandfather is a common experience for families of patients living with Alzheimer's. It's estimated that one in three of us will have a friend or family member that is affected by dementia; with over 40 million people globally living with the disease, one of the biggest social issues of our time.

For Scott, it was clear there was a gap in the market for a modern solution to this issue. That's when inspiration struck – a vision for a social networking tool to revolutionise life for families, carers and those living with Alzheimer's. Javoo – a play on words of Déjà Vu – is a free social networking app which brings families and carers together by creating a private network in which they can capture moments and share memories from past and present. This can be used to help converse and reminisce with those living with Alzheimer's, and ensures family members feel supported and updated with their loved one's progress.

Not only does Javoo provide a framework to bring families together, it also provides the ability for users to connect with a professional carer who can offer advice and answer questions in a secure chat environment, and a curated news feed to update users on the latest scientific breakthroughs in fighting the disease. This cutting-edge functionality and unique proposition has seen Javoo quickly grow to become a global platform, earning the support of the Alzheimer's community and influential organisations including Nottingham's Institute of Mental Health and the Alzheimer's Society. Javoo is available now to download.

15-21 May is UK Dementia Awareness Week

Source: <http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/alumni/newseventsandfeatures/news/news-items/2016-news/de-javoo-new-social-media-app-connects-past-and-present-to-revolutionise-alzheimer-s-care.aspx>

RESOURCES

TOURING ART EXHIBITION "Through Young Eyes"

"Through Young Eyes" a Christian Aid Exhibition of Art by young people at The Culture and Free Thought Association in Khan Younis, Gaza, will be touring the NW during June and early July. See below for dates and venues from 1 June - 16 July.

Tour organiser John Logan says: Please look through it to see whether there are any for which you would like more details and circulate to anyone who might value having it or who can be a route to others through their own publicity systems. There will be a press release and a poster for each venue which you can get from me at logan-j@btconnect.com Some are already prepared. I have highlighted the visit of Dr Lesley Dawson who will speak at the event at QMH Liverpool on 8 July the second anniversary of the start of the last attack on Gaza by the Israeli military. It is in reaction to this that the young people's art has been done. Lesley is a **Friends of Sabeel UK** member and is also involved with **Living Stones**. She is a physiotherapist who was a tutor at Bethlehem University from 1988 - 96 and has returned regularly (almost annually) since. She worked in Gaza in the first quarter of 2015, but when she tried to get in this year, she was refused entry, so she spent her time in the West Bank instead. I have detailed biography for Lesley and further details of almost event venue with specific opening time and other details.

Carlisle Cathedral, 1-3 June Opening 1pm on 1 June

Grange Over Sands URC 4th June Opening 10.30am Palestinian crafts and FT stall

Kendal: Holy Trinity and St George RC Church 4/5 June, showing of *'The Stones Cry Out'*

6-9 vacant

Burnley and Pendle Faith Centre 10-16 June Opening on Sunday 12 @3pm

Preston, St Wilfrid's RC Church 17-20 June

Triangle Methodist, Bolton, Church 21 -23 June + speaker meeting with Dr Lesley Dawson on 8 July

Alsager, St Mary's C of E 23 - 25 June Opening event 7-8.30pm on Saturday 23

Wigan URC 26 June

27 Vacant

The Heatons URC, Manchester, 28-30 June. Evening event on 28 June linking with the end of an Arts Trail.

UpHolland, St Theresa's RC Church, 1 - 3 July possible film and FT stall

Blackburn Cathedral, 4-7 July

Liverpool Quaker Meeting House central Liverpool, 8 July - Speaker event with Dr Lesley Dawson

Hale URC, Altrincham, 9-10 July

St Michael's High School, Crosby, Liverpool 11-12 July

Desmond Tutu Peace Centre, Liverpool Hope University, 13-14 July Professional Conference with Exhibition in the open foyer of the building.

Great Sankey, Warrington, St Mary's C of E, 15-17 July

THE LAMPEDUSA CROSS BEGINS A PILGRIMAGE OF SHREWSBURY DIOCESE.

This summer, the **Lampedusa Cross** is under-going a pilgrimage across the Diocese of Shrewsbury. The iconic cross will travel each week to a different parish, giving parishioners an opportunity to see it and to write messages of hope. Bishop Mark was very interested to hear about the Lampedusa Cross and its journey across the Diocese and offered to hold a service at the Cathedral, in a few months' time, when the Cross concludes its pilgrimage. There are now two crosses in the Shrewsbury Diocese, allowing you a greater opportunity to see the Lampedusa Cross.

Pope Francis carried the Lampedusa Cross at a memorial service. As part of the **Year of Mercy**, the Pope has asked us all to complete a pilgrimage. "The practice of pilgrimage has a special place in the Holy Year, because it represents the journey each of us makes in this life... each according to his or her ability, will have to make a pilgrimage. This will be a sign that mercy is also a goal to reach and requires dedication and sacrifice." *Misericordiae Vultus* – Pope Francis.

Families and communities around the world have been separated due to war and natural disasters. Refugees make long and dangerous journeys, in hope of a better life, despite the uncertain future. During the Year of Mercy, Pope Francis reminds us that "we ourselves need to see, and then enable others to see, that migrants and refugees are brothers and sisters to be welcomed, respected and loved."

One man, Francesco Tuccio, proved an act of kindness can make a massive difference –a carpenter from the Italian island of Lampedusa, he used his compassion to craft a cross of hope. Three years ago, a boat filled with over 500 refugees caught fire, capsized and sank; 311 people perished. Inhabitants of Lampedusa helped save the lives of 155 people. Heartbroken, Mr Tuccio wanted to give them a symbol of hope. He collected the broken pieces of wood that had washed ashore and made the Lampedusa Cross, offering a handmade cross to each of the survivors as a sign of hope, solidarity and love.

The Lampedusa Cross will be accompanied by a box of resources to help you organise your own pilgrimage in your parish, school or group, or use as part of any other Year of Mercy pilgrimage. During the pilgrimage, there is an opportunity to write messages of hope for refugees. To find out more and see how you and your parish can get involved, please contact Bridget Fenwick, Community Participation Co-ordinator Shrewsbury Diocese, on bfenwick@cafod.org.uk You will be acting in solidarity, showing love and support to our global sisters and brothers.

• A new Lampedusa Cross pilgrimage liturgy and action has been produced by CAFOD, Jesuit Refugee Service and the Catholic Social Action Network. Go to: <http://cafod.org.uk/Pray/Year-of-Mercy> - you can order hard copy prayer cards there too.

BOX TALE SOUP & STONE FLOWERS – A LITTLE BITE MUSIC

Music Action International present a brand new, original piece of theatre created by the award-winning **Box Tale Soup** theatre group and refugee music collective **Stone Flowers** 1-2pm on 24 June at The Bridgewater Hall, Manchester. The piece is inspired by Persian, Tamil and West African folklore, fairytale and traditional stories from Stone Flowers' diverse cultural backgrounds, reflecting experiences faced by members of the group. An allegorical tale in a fictional world, featuring puppetry and a vivid, atmospheric, unique score composed by Stone Flowers. The performance will be followed by a short Q & A session with members of Stone Flowers and Box Tale Soup. FREE admission - Donations welcome. Suitable for over 12s only.

Book your free ticket for this event here: <https://tickets.bridgewater-hall.co.uk/single/eventDetail.aspx?p=32842>

Supported by Music Action International and Freedom from Torture <http://musicaction.org/events/box-tale-soup-stone-flowers/>

QUEENS OF SYRIA - 2016 THEATRE TOUR

First staged in Amman in 2013, and the subject of an award winning documentary, Developing Artists presents Refuge Productions' **Queens of Syria**, an adaptation of Euripides anti-war tragedy, **The Trojan Women**. Performed by an all-female cast of Syrian refugees, the production skilfully amalgamates the women's own narratives of bitter exile and ferocious war into the ancient Greek text. Footage from the documentary is fused with the stage play for the first time to create a powerful, extraordinary and unique piece of theatre. These are not the voices of political commentators or journalists, but of ordinary women whose lives have been turned upside down by the turmoil of the Syrian conflict. The stories of these women need to be heard.

Queens of Syria comes to the UK for a three week run in 2016. This will be a life-changing opportunity for the refugees themselves, and an eye-opening experience for British audiences who will hear first-hand the harsh realities of life as a refugee.

In November 2013 Refuge Productions brought sixty Syrian refugee women in Jordan from all walks of life together with the Syrian director Omar Abusaada, to adapt and perform an Arabic performance of Euripides anti-war tragedy, *The Trojan Women*. Not one of them had ever acted before. Set at the fall of Troy, and written in protest at the playwright's home city Athens' brutal suppression of the independent island of Melos, where all the men were killed and the women and children sold into slavery, the play explores the bleak future facing the Trojan women as they contemplate a life of exile and slavery. Reading the original play, the Syrian women were astonished with the parallels to their own real life experiences, and quickly identified with the female characters of the tragedy.

Over three weeks of workshops, and a further two weeks of rehearsals, Omar Abusaada and his cast went through a process of exploring the women's devastating experiences. These stories of exile, loss and suffering were worked into the play, creating an extraordinary and unique piece of verbatim theatre that made headlines around the world. If telling the story of their experiences and escapes from the Syrian war was difficult, the cast's achievement was made all the more astonishing by the fact that they had never acted before. Added to this was the social pressure from some members of their community who did not want them to go on stage, and differences of opinion within the group itself; some wishing to speak out publicly against Assad, others not, and yet others fearing the consequences of speaking freely for once in their lives.

But in spite of all the problems they faced the women formed a close knit group, helping each other to face their fears and the depression caused by the conflict, and to rebuild their shattered confidence. Above all, through their work on the play and their performance, the women discovered a new voice and freedom in bringing their previously untold stories to a global audience who, it turned out, wanted to listen. Now, three years later, Developing Artists have teamed up with Refuge Productions to remount the production in Jordan, and tour into to the UK.

UK THEATRE TOUR DATES

5-9 July 2016: Young Vic (London) On Sale Now Box Office: 020 7922 2922 Boxoffice@Youngvic.Org.Uk

11-12 July: The North Wall, In Association With The Oxford Playhouse (Oxford) Box Office: 01865 319 450

13-14 July: Attenborough Centre, Sussex University (Brighton)

15-16 July: Everyman Playhouse, As Part Of The **Liverpool Arab Arts Festival** (Liverpool)

18 July: West Yorkshire Playhouse (Leeds)

19-20 July: Assembly Roxy (Edinburgh)

21-22 July: Durham University (Durham)

Special Charity Screening Of The Documentary, *Queens Of Syria* 23 June, 10pm: Old Fire Station (Oxford) - Part Of Offbeat

Festival Tickets: Free (Donation Recommended)

24 July: West End Gala (to be announced shortly)

More info: <http://www.developingartists.org.uk/our-projects/queens-of-syria:-jordan-&-uk-theatre-tour>

Queens of Syria will be remounted in Jordan in June 2016 before touring to the UK. This project will be delivered in four stages:

1. REHEARSALS IN JORDAN From May 2016 we will re-rehearse *Queens of Syria* in Amman, Jordan, incorporating some new refugees and their stories into the narrative of the original piece; **2. UK TOUR** The refugees and creative team will then fly to the UK to premiere the piece at London's Young Vic Theatre from 5-9 July, before embarking on a tour of the UK for a further two weeks, and finishing up with a gala show in the West End; **3. JORDANIAN PRODUCTION** On their return to Jordan the refugees will once again present the play for a further three performances at the National Centre for Culture and Arts in Amman, Jordan; **4. DOCUMENTARY** We will make a new documentary about the process following the production and cast from Jordan to London and beyond. **For further information on the project** please email info@developingartists.org.uk

LIVERPOOL ARAB ARTS FESTIVAL 2016 16-24 JULY - VARIOUS LOCATIONS

The UK première of the work of one of Cairo's foremost artists, a highly acclaimed Egyptian muralist, a boundary-breaking electronic, hip hop, Dabke band and a group whose singer fled from the Iraqi war are just some of the exciting acts to have been announced for this year's Liverpool Arab Arts Festival (LAAF).

Each summer, the UK's biggest annual Arab Arts Festival attracts audiences from across the world, who flock to see the richness of Arab culture through a packed programme of visual art, music, dance, film, theatre, literature and special family-friendly events. This year's festival, which runs from 16 - 24 July, will explore the theme Undocumented, and we have now announced the first wave of nationally and internationally celebrated artists and performers coming together for LAAF this summer.

For list of events go to: http://www.thefestivalcalendar.co.uk/festivals/Liverpool_Arab_Arts_Festival_2016

Saturday 16 July 2016 1 - 4pm LAAF at the World Museum FREE EVENT

Discover and celebrate the diverse stories, dance and traditions of the Arab diaspora at Liverpool's World Museum, and witness the production of a specially commissioned large-scale artwork by Egyptian calligraphy artist Nazir Tanbouli. Suitable for all ages.

Nazir Tanbouli

Painter, muralist and illustrator Nazir Tanbouli will explore the idea of mythology and narrative with a dramatic explosion of ink, black and white marks on massive sheets of paper.

Alia Alzougbi - 1.30pm, 2.30pm and 3.30pm

Vibrant storyteller and actress Alia Alzougbi shares evocative traditional tales from the Arab region.

Nawarra - 1pm, 2pm and 3pm

A kaleidoscope of rainbow hues, gorgeous costumes and captivating Arabic Folkloric dance from Moroccan-born artist Nawarra.

Events for Saturday 16 July: <http://www.arabartsfestival.com/calendar/saturday-16-july>

FILM: LOACH FILM ON SHAME OF POVERTY IN BRITAIN MOVES CANNES TO TEARS

Director Ken Loach denounced the British government's "conscious cruelty" towards the poor after his film about the poverty and humiliation inflicted upon them by welfare cuts had critics at the 2016 Cannes film festival in tears. The left-wing director, who is known for shining a light on the downtrodden, also got lengthy applause and shouts of "Bravo!" at a press conference after "*I, Daniel Blake*" was screened.

The film tells the story of carpenter Daniel Blake's Kafkaesque journey to get benefits in Britain after suffering a heart attack and being told by doctors he can no longer work. But an invisible and oft-cited "decision-maker" rules he is too healthy for benefits. Blake befriends a young single mother of two who is sanctioned for being late to the benefits centre, leaving her with no money for food. Because Blake is denied illness benefits he is forced to apply for assistance for unemployment. That in turn forces him to spend hours hunting for jobs which he has to turn down because he is too sick to work. Some of the most excruciating scenes in the film show Blake's frustrations in trying to understand how to use a computer to appeal the decision cutting his benefit. Another has the young mother he befriends, Katie, tearing open a tin of baked beans and shovelling the contents into her mouth with her hand.

Loach said that in researching the film, those who carry out assessments of people like Daniel admitted they were "given instructions on how to deal with potential suicides." He told reporters: "The most vulnerable people are told their poverty is their own fault. If you have no work it is your fault that you haven't got a job. It is shocking. It is not an issue just for people in our country, it is throughout Europe and there is a conscious cruelty in the way we are organising our lives now," he said.

The movie's writer Paul Laverty said the research team was stunned at how people with mental health issues and disabilities were targeted by the welfare cuts. He said people interviewed within the Department for Work and Pensions told them "they were humiliated at how they were forced to treat the public. There is nothing accidental about it." The story taps into the despair over rising unemployment and austerity in Europe after the financial crisis.

The movie was warmly received by critics and *Variety* magazine called it "a work of scalding and moving relevance." Stand-up comedian and lead actor Dave Johns, who comes from Newcastle in the north east of England where the film is set, tweeted his delight at the notices: "Blown away by the reviews for our film *I Daniel Blake*. Let's hope it shames those that should be shamed into change."

Loach and both his main actors have a working-class background and the actress who plays the young single mother, Katie -- Hayley Squires -- said her mother still lives in social housing. Squires slammed anti-welfare "propaganda" that she said has turned working class people against each other. "Normal people are led to believe that this amount of people are on benefits and are therefore scroungers, and this amount of people are going to work to pay so that they can scrounge. They've left us to argue among ourselves so they can keep doing what they are doing." Loach agreed: "It's how the far right rises, isn't it? It's how the far right rises."

The film won Loach his second *Palme d'Or* – the festival's highest accolade. The director, who turns 80 next month, returned from retirement to make the film, and took to the stage at the Palais to address the audience in French. "The festival is very important for the future of cinema," he said, instructing all present to "stay strong." He continued by saying it was "very strange" to receive the award in such glamorous surroundings, considering the conditions endured by those people who inspired the film.

"When there is despair, the people from the far right take advantage," said Loach. "We must say that another world is possible and necessary."

<http://www.theguardian.com/film/2016/may/22/ken-loach-cannes-2016-palme-dor-win-i-daniel-blake>

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

JUNE

5 World Environment Day www.unep.org/wed

7 Raising Awareness of Modern Slavery - a study day organised by Churches Together in Cheshire, the (Anglican) Diocese of Chester and the Cheshire Anti-Slavery Network for Clergy and Church Leaders to introduce issues relating to the crime of modern slavery, help spot the signs of human trafficking, signpost specialist support and suggest resources to help mark Anti-Slavery Day in parishes. Also to inform the Churches of Cheshire's Anti Slavery Network and how it is possible to link in with activities already happening. At Church House, 5500 Daresbury Park, Daresbury WA4 4GE from 9.45am-1pm. Open to Clergy and Church Leaders. Book at: <https://modernslaverychester.eventbrite.co.uk>

8 ACN Prayer Vigil for the Persecuted Church 6pm St Walburge's Church, Preston PR2 2QE
<http://www.acnuk.org/events.php/422/acn-nw-prayer-vigil>

11 Laudato Si' Session 2 Led by Steve Atherton. 12.45 –2.15pm (Mass: 12.00) St Marie on the Sands, Seabank Rd, Southport PR0 0EJ. All welcome. Contact s.atherton@rcaol.co.uk 0151 522 1040

12 Wirral Coastal Walk Start at Seacombe Ferry, coastal walk to Thurstaston Country Park. Come and enjoy the sun (hopefully) and the beautiful views whilst walking from Seacombe Ferry to Thurstaston Country Park Visitor Centre and raise funds, at the same time, for CAFOD's Syria Crisis appeal. For more information contact 0151 632 5504/ 0151 647 9124. Chester World Development Forum member Sue Bownas will be walking - please contact her on 01244 679270 if you would like to sponsor her. This CAFOD venture is associated with the long-established annual Wirral Coastal Walk arranged by North Wirral Rotary Club, see: www.wirralcoastalwalk.org

14 Time out on Tuesdays - an ecumenical quiet day for everyone 10am-4pm at The Convent of Our Lady of the Cenacle, Lance Lane, Wavertree, Liverpool L15 6TW. Input and time for individual quiet prayer and reflection. Tea & coffee provided. Bring your own lunch. Cost £10. For more information or to book: tel 0151 722 2271 email: winniecenacle@mail.com

20 - 26 Refugee Week <http://refugeeweek.org.uk>

24 Box Tale Soup & Stone Flowers – A Little Bite Music. Music Action International present a brand new, original piece of theatre created by the award-winning Box Tale Soup theatre group and refugee music collective Stone Flowers 1-2pm Bridgewater Hall, Manchester. Book your free ticket for this event here: <https://tickets.bridgewater-hall.co.uk/single/eventDetail.aspx?p=32842>

25 'Welcoming the Stranger' Liverpool Justice and Peace Annual Assembly Speaker Fr Damian Howard SJ; prayer Fr Tom Cullinan; stories from refugees and asylum seekers; insights from Councillor Frank Hont and others; practical workshops and informative market place. 10am-4pm. Registration from 9.30am LACE Conference Centre Croxteth Drive, Liverpool L17 1AA. Hot lunch provided. Suggested donation £10. s.atherton@rcaol.co.uk 0151 522 1040

26 International Day in Support of Victims of Torture www.irct.org/our-work/day-against-torture-on-june-26.aspx

JULY

1 FoE Quiz Night 7pm- Upstairs at the Custom House, Watergate Street, Chester, CH1 2LB. Quiz and Raffle. Bring your friends. Tickets £3 on the night. chesterfoe@hotmail.co.uk

7 ACN Prayer Vigil for the Persecuted Church 7pm Christ the King Church, Carlisle CA1 3PE

9 Liverpool City of Sanctuary Fair 10.30am – 4pm at Quaker Meeting House, 22 School Lane, Liverpool L1 3BT. Local Community Volunteer Organisations are coming together to tell you about their work with stalls, information sharing, networking + children's activities – Why not drop in for a chat or stay all day? Refreshments provided.

10 Sea Sunday www.missiontoseafarers.org / or www.seasunday.org/about-sea-Sunday

12 CWDF Forum Meeting 6.45-9pm The Unity Centre, Cuppin Street Chester, CH1 2BN. We hope to have a speaker from Action Aid to talk about their work, particularly on the issue of tax avoidance (tbc). Contact 01244 350323 www.chesterwdf.org.uk

13 Stop Trident Mass Lobby at House of Commons www.cnduk.org/get-involved/events

13 Does poverty have a woman's face? Inclusive Church Annual Lecture and AGM. Loretta Minghella, CEO of Christian Aid will deliver the 4th Inclusive Church Lecture at Liverpool Cathedral, St James Mount, Liverpool, L1 7AZ. 5:30 pm - 8:00 pm.

15-17 Annual Justice & Peace conference 'Justice, Power and Responsibility: How Can Democracy Work for the Common Good?' at The Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, Derbyshire. **Speakers include:** Jon Cruddas MP, Jenny Sinclair (Together for the Common Good), Polly Jones (Global Justice Now), Takura Gwatinyanya (Caritas Harare). **Workshops: Church Action on Poverty** on local empowerment; **Progressio** on empowering women; **working with local councillors;** **Positive Money** – addressing the money system; **tax dodging;** **Pax Christi** – money makes the wars go round; **Love in Action programme of Catholic Social Teaching** for parishes; **Simon Barrow of Ekklesia** on the influence of the media; **CAFOD** on Redefining Progress; **Near Neighbours** – working together with different faith groups; **Power for Good** community energy projects. Plus **welcoming refugees** (to be confirmed). As well as these regular workshops, there will be an option to pick and mix a selection of **mini workshops from Housing Justice and NJPN Environment Group**, and a **'social media surgery'** to answer your questions and make the most of social media. **Plus: Panel chaired by Simon Barrow, programmes for children and young people, Just Fair market place** with goods and information from around 30 organisations. **Some bursaries** are available especially for families and young adults, as well as Low Income rate. **Download a booking form at** www.justice-and-peace.org.uk/conference/ **Contact Ann Kelly:** admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk

• Many items 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 for comprehensive weekly e-bulletins from National J&P Network 020 7901 4864 admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk

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