

Justice and Peace Calendar for the Year of Faith

11 October 2012 - 24 November 2013

To celebrate the 50th anniversary of **Vatican II** and the 20th anniversary of the publication of the **Catechism of the Catholic Church** Benedict XVI has proclaimed a **Year of Faith** to run from 11 October 2012 to 24 November 2013.

As our contribution to the Year of Faith Shrewsbury Diocese Commission for Justice, Peace and Social Responsibility has produced a J&P Calendar to help groups and individuals renew their commitment to the gospel message. Special days or weeks of prayer and/or action are listed, covering a wide range of topics with links for further information. Each date is supported by a scripture verse or a quote from Catholic Social Teaching or other source plus prayer or action ideas.

This is an opportunity for groups and individuals to raise the profile of J&P in their parishes and communities and to attract new people, through highlighting campaigns and issues, in response to the Year of Faith and to the New Evangelisation initiative of the Catholic Church. It is our way of showing our care and concern for building and nurturing good relationships with all people, with the natural world and with our Creator God and by so doing deepening and nourishing our faith.

The calendar will be regularly updated – please check the website for any changes www.jp-shrewsburydiocese.org.uk
To suggest a new date please contact Anne O'Connor anneoc980@hotmail.com with details.

For ease of use the dates are displayed starting from the present time. Dates that are now past are shown greyed-out, in the lower part of the list.

12-18 May Christian Aid Week

Christian Aid Week is a fundraising drive by the charity Christian Aid that sees millions of red collection envelopes posted through letter boxes across the UK. The aim is to raise money for the charity's work in developing countries with a focus on tackling poverty. Other areas of the charity's work include helping communities affected by natural disaster, political upheaval and HIV. Held every year since 1957, Christian Aid Week is Britain's longest-running fundraising week.

www.caweek.org

Christian Aid has a major role to play in this with its fight against the systems and structures that force people to live in poverty. It is essential that the organisation retains its radical agenda for bringing about change. We are in Christian Aid because we're not prepared to sit down quietly under a system that seems unjust, that seems radically to push people out of the way for the sake of profit.

Rowan Williams, newly appointed Chair Christian Aid

15 May Conscientious Objectors Day

21 May Feast of Blessed Franz Jägerstätter

Austrian farmer Franz Jägerstätter refused to fight for the German Army because of his opposition to the Nazi regime. He cited St. Thomas More as a key influence. Executed on 9 August 1943, he was declared a martyr and beatified in 2007.

I am convinced that it is still best that I speak the truth, even if it costs me my life ... Since the death of Christ, almost every century has seen the persecution of Christians; there have always been heroes and martyrs who gave their lives—often in horrible ways—for Christ and their faith. If we hope to reach our goal some day, then we, too, must become heroes of the faith.

Franz Jägerstätter

www.paxchristi.org.uk

24 May World Day of Prayer for the Church in China

In May 2007, Pope Benedict XVI released a Letter to Chinese Catholics, in which he asked that May 24 each year be dedicated a World Day of Prayer for the Church in China. He chose May 24 because it is the Feast of Our Lady Help of Christians, who is venerated at the Shrine of Sheshan in Shanghai. In honour of the first celebration of the World Day of Prayer for China, in 2008, Pope Benedict composed a prayer to Our Lady of Sheshan and asked that Christians throughout the world recite it on May 24.

Virgin Most Holy, Mother of the Incarnate Word and our Mother, venerated in the Shrine of Sheshan under the title "Help of Christians,"

*the entire Church in China looks to you with devout affection.
We come before you today to implore your protection.
Look upon the People of God and, with a mother's care, guide them
along the paths of truth and love, so that they may always be
a leaven of harmonious coexistence among all citizens.*

*When you obediently said "yes" in the house of Nazareth,
you allowed God's eternal Son to take flesh in your virginal womb
and thus to begin in history the work of our redemption.
You willingly and generously co-operated in that work,
allowing the sword of pain to pierce your soul,
until the supreme hour of the Cross, when you kept watch on Calvary,
standing beside your Son, Who died that we might live.*

*From that moment, you became, in a new way,
the Mother of all those who receive your Son Jesus in faith
and choose to follow in His footsteps by taking up His Cross.
Mother of hope, in the darkness of Holy Saturday you journeyed
with unflinching trust towards the dawn of Easter.
Grant that your children may discern at all times,
even those that are darkest, the signs of God's loving presence.*

*Our Lady of Sheshan, sustain all those in China,
who, amid their daily trials, continue to believe, to hope, to love.
May they never be afraid to speak of Jesus to the world,
and of the world to Jesus.
In the statue overlooking the Shrine you lift your Son on high,
offering him to the world with open arms in a gesture of love.
Help Catholics always to be credible witnesses to this love,
ever clinging to the rock of Peter on which the Church is built.
Mother of China and all Asia, pray for us, now and for ever. Amen!*

4 June International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression

The purpose of the day is to acknowledge the pain suffered by children throughout the world who are the victims of physical, mental and emotional abuse. This day affirms the UN's commitment to protect the rights of children.

www.un.org/en/events/childvictimday

Nine out of ten deaths due to modern warfare are civilians, half of them children - UNICEF

5 June World Environment Day

To the Lord belongs the earth and all it contains, the world and all who live there.

Psalm 24 (23): 1

*The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands.
Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge.
There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard;
their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world.*

Psalm 19: 1-4

www.greenchristian.org.uk

Let's Travel Together and Green Up the Planet

As many of us experience every morning, current transport models are not sustainable. If we stay on track with current trends, vehicle traffic will increase by 60% between 2005 and 2025 – and that means choosing between gridlock and fewer public urban spaces. Moving towards greener societies isn't just environmentally friendly but also economically and socially sound. In partnership with UNEP's GreenUp initiative, bus, train, metro and carpooling companies will show how sustainable transport is a first-class entry point to greener economies through the **Let's Travel Together** campaign. Supported by 22 transport companies across Europe, **Let's Travel Together** is about promoting sustainable transport and triggering new habits.

(Source **United Nations Environment Programme** www.unep.org.uk)

17-23 June Refugee Week

www.refugeeweek.org.uk

Human interdependence is increasing and gradually spreading throughout the world. The unity of the human family, embracing people who enjoy equal natural dignity, implies a universal common good. The common good calls for an organisation of the community of nations able to provide for the different needs of men and women. This will involve the sphere of social life to which questions of food, hygiene, education ... and ... alleviating the miseries of refugees dispersed throughout the world and assisting migrants and their families to belong.

Catechism of the Catholic Church n. 1911

Asylum detention in the UK

The UK has 7 immigration detention centres with a capacity to hold 2,650. Expansion plans, that are already agreed, will increase this space to 3000. Asylum detention continues to rise. In May 2007 there were 2060 detainees: 1435 had sought asylum and 120 were held in criminal prisons. A significant percentage of asylum detainees are bereaved, tortured, traumatised - even suicidal. Legal Aid for asylum has been severely curtailed and so many detainees now get perfunctory legal representation, with neither time nor resources to prepare evidence or expert reports for the courts.

(Source www.ctbi.org.uk Churches Together in Britain and Ireland)

22 June Feast of St Thomas More

This feast day is an opportunity to remember in prayer the many people worldwide who suffer in prison for their beliefs.

Amnesty International www.amnesty.org.uk

Christians Against Torture www.acatuk.org.uk

I was in prison and you visited me

Matthew 25: 43

26 June UN Day for Victims of Torture

Action by Christians Against Torture acat(uk) was formed in 1984 by the then British Council of Churches, with the active support of Amnesty International and Society of Friends. acat(uk) is affiliated to the International Federation of Action by Christians for the Abolition of Torture (FIACAT) in Paris, and is a Body in Association with Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI). acat(uk)'s aim is to work, as Christians, for the abolition of torture worldwide. We seek to increase awareness in the Churches and among Christians of the widespread and evil use of torture and the need, for reasons of Christian faith, to campaign for its abolition. Torture is totally banned in international law under ALL circumstances, including war, civil war, internal conflict and terrorist attack (Article 2 of the UN Convention Against Torture.)

Our Aims:

- to work as Christians, for the abolition of torture worldwide
- to increase awareness of the widespread and evil use of torture
- to campaign for its total abolition
- to be a powerhouse of Prayer

Our Work:

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

www.acatuk.org.uk

www.freedomfromtorture.org

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

You were plotted against, betrayed by a friend, and arrested under cover of darkness

by men who came with clubs and swords.

You were tortured, beaten and humiliated,

and sentenced to an agonizing death though you had done no wrong.

Be now with prisoners throughout the world.

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

Be with them in their fear of what may come to them, in the agony of their torture

and in the face of execution and death.

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

Acat prayer

Whoever tortures a human being, whoever abuses a human being, whoever outrages a human being abuses God's image, and the church takes as its own that cross, that martyrdom.

Oscar Romero

8 July Sea Sunday

Seafarers are commonly recruited from poorer countries where wages are lower. Seafarers work in difficult and often dangerous conditions suffering from loneliness, spiritual deprivation and even exploitation as they transport the goods we use and consume every day.

The Apostleship of the Sea (AoS), the official maritime welfare agency of the Catholic Church in Great Britain, reaches out to seafarers that visit our ports each year, offering pastoral and practical support and care.

www.apostleshipofthesea.org.uk

19-21 July Annual J&P Conference *Breaking Open the Word: A Call to Faith in Action*

Annual National Justice and Peace Conference at the Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, Derbyshire with keynote speaker renowned storyteller Megan McKenna plus workshops.

Aims

- To renew our understanding of the Gospel message as a call to engagement in the world.
- To recommit ourselves to witnessing to the Gospel through action for justice, peace and the care of creation.

Objectives

- Input from an expert in communicating the Gospel message (Megan McKenna);
- Exploration of ways of integrating action and faith through prayer, art, liturgy, lifestyle;
- Critique of current social/economic/political realities from the perspective of the poor, in the light of the Gospel and Catholic Social Teaching;
- Provision of opportunities for concrete action as an outcome of the conference.

The theme *Breaking Open the Word: A Call to Faith in Action* fits well with the Year of Faith.

www.justice-and-peace.org.uk

23-28 July World Youth Day 2013 *Go and make disciples of all peoples*

In 1984 the International Jubilee for the Young was celebrated by John Paul II in St. Peter's Square in a celebration that also marked the close of the Holy Year of Redemption. At this gathering the Holy Father entrusted youth with what is now known as the World Youth Day (WYD) Cross - one of the most important symbols of WYD.

The UN declared 1985 the first "International Youth Year" and to celebrate it the Holy Father welcomed youth from all over the world in Rome on Palm Sunday. In December of the same year he announced the institution of World Youth Day. It is celebrated annually at the diocesan level on Palm Sunday in Rome and at a week-long event internationally every two to three years. This year's World Youth Day, to be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, takes the theme ***Go and make disciples of all peoples*** (Matthew 28:19)

www.rio2013.com/en/

Official Prayer for World Youth Day

O, Father, You sent Your Eternal Son to save the world and chose men and women, through Him, with Him and in Him, to proclaim the Good News to all nations. Grant us the graces necessary so that joy may shine in the faces of all young people, the joy of being, by the power of the Holy Spirit, the evangelists the Church needs in the Third Millennium.

O Christ, Redeemer of humanity, the image of Your open arms on the top of Corcovado welcomes all people. In Your paschal offering, You brought us by the Holy Spirit to an encounter of sonship with the Father. Young people, who are fed by Eucharist, hear You in Your Word and meet You as their brother, need your infinite mercy to run the paths of the world missionary-disciples of the New Evangelization.

O Holy Spirit, Love of the Father and the Son, with the splendour of Your Truth and the fire of Your Love, send Your Light to all young people so that, driven by their experience of World Youth Day, they may bring to the four corners of the world faith, hope and charity, becoming great builders of a culture of life and peace and catalysts of a new world. Amen.

28 July Day for Life

Day for Life is the day in the Church's year dedicated to celebrating and upholding the dignity of human life. The Church

teaches that life should be protected and nurtured from conception to natural death.

www.dayforlife.org

We need to build 'an ethos of life that protects persons from womb to tomb - especially the most vulnerable.'

Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor

A society cannot live in peace with itself unless every human person is treated with dignity and all human life is revered as sacred.

The Challenge of Peace, par. 285

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

www.paxchristi.org.uk

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

John Paul II, Hiroshima 25 February 1981

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

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

1 September – 4 October Climate Time

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

www.greenchristian.org.uk

Today the great gift of God's Creation is exposed to serious dangers and lifestyles which can degrade it. Environmental pollution is making particularly unsustainable the lives of the poor of the world ... we must pledge ourselves to take care of creation and to share its resources in solidarity.

Pope Benedict XVI, 27 August, 2006

We are called to reflect on our individual roles and purposes in life and ask ourselves what we need to develop our human qualities, to grow in love of God and neighbour. In a context of environmental justice, this reflection will allow us to make serious choices – including the choice not to consume what we do not need and, above all, what is likely to harm others.

The Call of Creation, Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 2002

(Source www.cbcew.org.uk/page.aspx?pid=328 Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales)

3 September Home Mission Sunday

On Home Mission Sunday we pray for the work of evangelisation in our countries and reflect on our response to the Lord's invitation to share our faith.

www.cbcew.org.uk/document.doc?id=86

How deep a thirst there is among the British people for the Good News of Jesus Christ.

You have been chosen by God to offer them the living water of the Gospel.

Benedict XVI, Oscott, 19 Sept 2010

8 September Racial Justice Sunday

Christ taught us that our neighbour is universal, so loving our neighbour has global dimensions ... Solidarity with our neighbour is ... about the promotion of equality of rights and equality of opportunities; hence we must oppose all forms of discrimination and racism.

The Common Good and Catholic Social Teaching (1997)

The Churches' Racial Justice Network www.ctbi.org.uk works for racial justice across Britain and Ireland. It aims to make a real difference in the Christian community and far beyond by raising awareness, encouraging effective working together and facilitating imaginative local initiatives. **Racial Justice Sunday** is an opportunity for all Christians in Britain and Ireland to focus their worship, prayer and action on racial justice by:

- Celebrating human diversity
- Rejoicing in how far God's people have travelled together
- Recognising that there is much further to go both in the Church and in the world
- Raising awareness and deepen understanding of the diversity of culture and experience both in society and in the church
- Becoming more inclusive, outward-looking and welcoming
- Encouraging all Christians to tackle injustice, not ignore it

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

8 September Campaign Against Arms Trade Christian Network Day of Prayer

The UK is consistently one of the top five global armaments exporters and continues to sell weapons to countries with dismal human rights records and those where the massive expenditure on arms would have been much better spent on education, health and social welfare. Although not one of the eight Millennium Development Goals, an end to the arms trade would be a key factor in making poverty history.

The CAAT Christian Network (CN) was formed in 1989 to bring to the attention of national Churches and Christian organisations, the immorality of the arms trade. The CN provides resources, both written materials and speakers, which will help you to challenge others in your Church to think more about these issues. The CN is a member of the Network of Christian Peace Organisations representing denominational pacifist groups, the Historic Peace Churches and interdenominational organisations. In preparation for the DSEi Arms Fair (10-13 September – see below) CAAT Christian Network is holding a Day of Prayer on 8 September. Resources from www.caat.org.uk/getinvolved/christian

*They will beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into sickles.
Nation will not lift sword against nation, no longer will they learn how to make war.*
Isaiah 2:4

10-13 Sept 2013 - The DSEi Arms Fair is due to return to London's Docklands

DSEi (Defence and Security Equipment International) is – according to its organisers, Clarion Events – the biggest arms fair in the world. The four-day arms bazaar takes place every two years at the ExCel Centre in London's Docklands. The next one is due to take place from 10-13 September, 2013.

Stop the Arms Fair, formed in January 2011, is a coalition of groups and individuals campaigning to end government support for DSEi 2011 and all future arms fairs, and to put a stop to them.

The army and police rely on tear gas, bullets and weapons from abroad. No doubt their stock has been replenished by US and other governments over the last nine months. Stock will run low again. We ask you to take action ... Shut down the arms dealers. Do not let them make it, ship it.
from Tahrir Square, November 2011

www.stopthearmsfair.org.uk

www.caat.org.uk Campaign Against Arms Trade

21 September Peace One Day - An annual day of global ceasefire and non-violence

www.peaceoneday.org

The annual **International Day of Peace (21 September)** is organised by **Peace One Day**, a non-profit organisation that raises awareness of peace issues. Peace One Day was founded in 1999 by British documentary filmmaker and actor Jeremy Gilley, whose dedication and persistence resulted in a UN Resolution 55/282 nominating one day a year for peace and inviting organisations and individuals to commemorate the International Day of Peace through education and public awareness, and to co-operate with the United Nations in the establishment of the global ceasefire.

*If you build a house, you start with one brick.
If we want to build peace, why not start with one day
... and maybe that day has arrived."*
Jeremy Gilley, Founder, Peace One Day

2012 was a fantastic year for **Peace One Day**: approximately 280 million people were aware of Peace Day, that's 4% of the world's population. In 2013, we plan to double the number of people aware of Peace Day to 600 million people. We also plan to get more people to act, raising the percentage of those who behave more peacefully to 4% – that's 24 million people.

Our theme for 2013 is **'Who Will You Make Peace With?'** Please start thinking about who YOU will make peace with, who you will bring together on 21 September 2013, in your home, your workplace and in your local community. 21 September 2013 is also a Saturday, which we hope will mean increased participation around the world.

The Schools' Network now stands at 735 schools, youth groups and education organisations across 95 countries. This is a solid foundation on which to build and if your school, club or institution is not yet a member of the Schools' Network, we warmly invite you to join us by using the online membership form below. Please also share this link with your contacts and help us grow the network further. Schools' Network online sign-up form: <http://peaceoneday.org/schools-network-membership-form/>

In addition, two new coalitions are being launched for 2013:

- **The Peace One Day Corporate Coalition**, bringing together some of the world's leading businesses committed to helping institutionalise Peace Day. Click on the following link to watch a short film from Unilever's CEO, Paul Polman, and find out more about the Corporate Coalition <http://peaceoneday.org/corporate-coalition>
- **The Peace One Day Faith Coalition**, bringing together leading groups from the world's religions, spiritual philosophies and practices.

27 September World Tourism Day

Tourism has experienced continued growth and deeper diversification to become one of the fastest growing economic sectors in the world. Modern tourism is closely linked to development and includes more new destinations for tourists. These dynamics turned tourism into a key driver for socio-economic progress. Tourism has become one of the major players in international commerce, and represents at the same time one of the main income sources for many developing countries. The United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) has selected the Maldives as the venue for the 2013 World Tourism Day celebrations under the theme **Tourism and Water – Protecting our Common Future**.

www.wtd.unwto.org/

4 October CAFOD Harvest Fast Day

On this mountain, for all peoples, the Lord is preparing a rich banquet of food.

Isaiah 25:6

The cause of hunger is not the lack of material resources, rather the absence of conditions for justice ... Poverty is a scandal, and hunger is an avoidable tragedy that must be tackled by fighting its structural causes in the long term ... A future without hunger can become a reality if the only things we are hungry for are the hunger for sharing, solidarity and justice.

Cardinal Rodriguez Maradiaga, 2012

God our Father, we give you thanks for the abundance of your creation and the generosity of your gifts. We are sorry that amongst us are so many people who are excluded from the feast prepared by you for us all. May your Spirit inspire us and lead us as we seek change, so that hunger and poverty are no longer a scar and a scandal in our world. May you Spirit guide us as we seek change, so that everybody has enough food to flourish and a place at the table you spread for all.

CAFOD Prayer Card

www.cafod.org.uk/worship

4 October Feast of St Francis of Assisi

www.ctbi.org.uk

St Francis offered a way for everyone to share his radical life of simplicity and loving service of God and neighbour. Pope Francis explained his choice of name, saying: 'For me, he is the man of poverty, the man of peace, the man who loves and protects creation ... How I would like a Church which is poor and for the poor'. So, in the name of Francis, we too are encouraged in a radical commitment to the Gospel.

*Praisèd be my Lord God for all his creatures,
and especially our brother the sun,
who brings us the day and brings us the light;*

*fair is he and shines with a great splendour;
O Lord, he signifies us to thee.*

*Praisèd be my Lord for our sister the moon,
and for the stars, which he has set clear and lovely in the heaven.*

*Praisèd be my Lord for our brother the wind,
and for air and cloud, calms and all the weather,
by which thou upholdest life in all the creatures.*

*Praisèd be my Lord for our sister water,
Praisèd be my Lord for our brother fire,
through him thou givest light in the darkness;
and his is bright and pleasant and very mighty and strong.*

*Praisèd be my Lord for our mother the earth, who doth sustain and keep us,
and bringest forth divers fruits and flowers of many colours, and grass.*

*Praise ye and bless ye the Lord, and give thanks unto him,
and serve him with great humility.*

St Francis of Assisi: *Canticle of the Sun*

Prayer of Franciscan conservation

*Living God,
where there is waste, let us bring recycling;
where there is recycling, let us bring reuse;
where there is reuse, let us bring sustainability;
where there is sustainability, let us bring justice;
where there is justice, let us bring love.*

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www.ionabooks.com/1968-PL10105-Lent-Discipline-Weeks-1-6.html

*Human beings are created in the image of God, and have the special gift and challenge of sharing
in God's creative activity. We use, and by using we transform, the natural world.*

As 'co-creators', then, our acts should reflect God's own love for creation.

*We ourselves are part of creation, formed out of the earth,
and dependent on the rest of creation for our continued existence.*

The Call of Creation, Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 2002

10 October World Homeless Day

On 10 October each year millions of people around the world mark **World Homeless Day** to draw attention to homeless people's needs locally and to present opportunities for the community to get involved in responding to homelessness, while taking advantage of the stage that an 'international day' provides.

www.worldhomelessday.org/

Housing Justice is the national voice of Christian action to prevent homelessness and bad housing.

www.housingjustice.org.uk

*A united Christian response will highlight the importance of the home as a basic necessity for all human beings.
To have somewhere we call home is a fundamental part of our human dignity. To be deprived of such a basic
necessity is to feel less than human.*

Cardinal Cormac Murphy O'Connor, first president of Housing Justice

10 October World Mental Health Day

World Mental Health Day, which is supported by the United Nations, is held annually on October 10 to raise public awareness about mental health issues worldwide. This event promotes open discussions on illnesses, as well as investments in prevention and treatment services.

Mental disorders affect nearly 12 percent of the world's population – about 450 million or one out of every four people around the world – will experience a mental illness that would benefit from diagnosis and treatment. World Health Organisation (WHO) statistics for 2002 showed that 154 million people globally suffered from depression, which is a form of mental illness.

According to WHO, mental health is defined as a state of well-being in which people realize their own potential, can cope with normal life stresses, can work productively, and can contribute to their community.

http://www.who.int/mediacentre/events/annual/world_mental_health_day/en/index.html

24 November 2013 Youth Day [Feast of Christ the King] End of Year of Faith

11 October 2012 Start of Year of Faith

The Year of Faith celebrates the 50th anniversary of opening of **Vatican II** and the 20th anniversary of the publication of the **Catechism of the Catholic Church**.

The Year of Faith [is] a good opportunity to intensify the witness of charity. ... Faith and charity each require the other, in such a way that each allows the other to set out along its respective path. Indeed, many Christians dedicate their lives with love to those who are lonely, marginalised or excluded, as to those who are the first with a claim on our attention and the most important for us to support, because it is in them that the reflection of Christ's own face is seen. Through faith, we can recognise the face of the risen Lord in those who ask for our love.

Porta fidei, the Apostolic Letter with which Benedict XVI proclaims a Year of Faith

6 – 13 October Drones Week of Action

The Drones Campaign Network (DCN) is a UK-based network of organisations, academics and individuals working together to share information and coordinate collective action in relation to military drones. The Drones Campaign Network in the UK is organising a week of action to protest against the growing use of armed drones from 6-13 October 2012. The week coincides with the **International Keep Space for Peace Week** which focuses on the militarization of space.

Over the past year Libya has been added to the list of countries subjected to drone strikes by US and British forces, joining Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen and Somalia. Gaza, too, has regularly faced drone strikes by Israeli forces. Unfortunately, the list of countries facing these type of remote attacks is only likely to grow as the US and the UK are working on doubling the number of armed drones in their arsenals.

www.dronecampaignnetwork.wordpress.com/

... We are saying that good ends cannot justify immoral means. For example, defending one's country or protecting freedom does not justify the use of weapons which kill indiscriminately and threaten whole societies. We fear that our nation and world are headed in the wrong direction.

The Challenge of Peace, par. 332

6 - 13 October International Week of Protest to Stop the Militarization of Space

Satellites are fundamentally the eyes, ears, and even the brains of modern warfare. Satellites capture the visual images of the targets (including individual people) that war makers wish to destroy. Signals satellites pick up voices and other sounds that further identify a target, while the GPS system provides the gunsight or bombsight that directs the bullet or bomb to its destination. The addition of drones and other new age weapons bring us closer to having no human being in the loop at all. The satellites that manage spying, navigation, targeting, and military communications are launched by agencies such as the National Reconnaissance Office and the Defence Information Systems Agency. Their budgets are larger than ever. While the satellites orbiting miles above our heads may be out of our sight, the ground stations they depend upon, such as Menwith Hill, UK; Pine Gap, Australia; and Buckley Air Force Base, Colorado, are vast bases with worldwide impact.

www.cnduk.org/get-involved/events/item/1410-keep-space-for-peace-week-6-13-october

14 – 20 October National Ethical Investment Week

With public interest in ethical finance at an all-time high, churches and faith groups are being urged to use this autumn's National Ethical Investment Week (NEIW) to spread the word about green and ethical savings, investments and other

financial products. Now in its fifth year, NEIW's 2012 Churches' Action Guide offers practical information to help raise awareness and worship materials. The guide is sponsored by CCLA (www.ccla.co.uk) the specialist investment manager for charities, churches and local authorities, and produced by the UK Sustainable Investment and Finance Association (UKSIF www.uksif.org), in association with the Ecumenical Council for Corporate Responsibility (ECCR www.eccr.org.uk)

www.neiw.org/church-guide

In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven **Matthew 5:16**

16 October World Food Day *Agricultural Co-operatives – Key to Feeding the World*

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations celebrates World Food Day each year on 16 October, the day on which the Organization was founded in 1945.

Agricultural co-operatives – key to feeding the world is the theme for 2012 which has been chosen to highlight the role of co-operatives in improving food security and contributing to the eradication of hunger. Interest in cooperatives and rural organisations is also reflected in the decision of the UN General Assembly to designate 2012 'International Year of Co-operatives.'

www.fao.org/getinvolved/worldfoodday/en/
www.greenchristian.org.uk/archives/2518 (for Harvest Festival Liturgy)

While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease.
Genesis 8:22

The feast for a few is the labour of many. The crumb from the dining table is feast for the many. **(Anon)**

18 October Anti-Slavery Day

Anti-Slavery Day was established in 2010 to provide a focal point for raising awareness about the many people in the UK and around the world who continue to be trapped in modern slavery, and to promote the need for many individuals and organisations across society to play a part in ending it. It is championed by Anti-Slavery International which, founded in 1839, is the world's oldest international human rights organisation and the only charity in the UK to work exclusively against slavery.

Slavery exists today despite the fact that it is banned in most of the countries where it is practised. Although this exploitation of millions of people, including children, is often not called slavery, the conditions are the same. People are sold like objects, forced to work for little or no pay and are at the mercy of their 'employers'.

www.antislavery.org

Our goal must be, for every man and woman, a life set free from all oppression.

Populorum Progressio n. 47

21 October World Mission Day

Benedict XVI has called all Catholics, from bishops to the laity, toward a new mission similar to the one of early Christians who 'spread the Gospel throughout the then-known world.'

This year's World Mission Day will be special because it coincides with the 50th anniversary of the decree **Ad Gentes** of Vatican II, as well as the Year of Faith and the Synod of Bishops on the New Evangelization.

The pilgrim Church is missionary by her very nature, since it is from the mission of the Son and the mission of the Holy Spirit that she draws her origin, in accordance with the decree of God the Father.

Ad Gentes, par. 2

21-28 October One World Week *Sharing Destiny – Moving Towards One World*

One World Week is a development education charity that works to raise awareness and understanding about global issues so that positive action can be taken. One World Week is an annual opportunity for people from diverse backgrounds to

come together to learn about global justice, to spread that learning and to use it to take action for justice locally and globally, by:

- Working together in caring for the earth and its resources
- Taking action for justice, equality, peace and fullness of life for all
- Building relationships of mutual respect that cross boundaries
- Running local events that celebrate the diversity of cultures in our communities

www.oneworldweek.org

We stand at a critical moment in Earth's history, a time when humanity must choose its future ...to move forward we must recognise that in the midst of a magnificent diversity of cultures and life forms we are one human family and one earth community with a common destiny ... towards this end, it is imperative that we, the peoples of Earth, declare our responsibility to one another, to the greater community of life, and to future generations.

The Earth Charter

21-28 October Week of Prayer for World Peace

Prayer for Peace

*Lead me from death to life
from lies to truth
Lead me from despair to hope
from fear to trust
Lead me from hatred to love
from war to peace
Let peace fill our heart,
our world, our universe ...
peace, peace, peace.*

Mother Teresa

www.weekofprayerforworldpeace.com

1 November All Saints' Day

The intercession of the saints:

Being more closely united to Christ, those who dwell in heaven fix the whole Church more firmly in holiness . . . They do not cease to intercede with the Father for us, as they proffer the merits which they acquired on earth through the one mediator between God and men, Christ Jesus . . . So by their fraternal concern is our weakness greatly helped.

Catechism of the Catholic Church n. 956

Communion with the saints:

It is not merely by the title of example that we cherish the memory of those in heaven; we seek, rather, that by this devotion to the exercise of fraternal charity the union of the whole Church in the Spirit may be strengthened. Exactly as Christian communion among our fellow pilgrims brings us closer to Christ, so our communion with the saints joins us to Christ, from whom as from its fountain and head issues all grace, and the life of the People of God itself.

Catechism of the Catholic Church n. 957

11 November Remembrance Sunday

Resource materials from: Pax Christi www.paxchristi.org.uk Peace Pledge Union www.ppu.org.uk

Movement for the Abolition of War www.abolishwar.org.uk

The Movement for the Abolition of War aims to spread the belief that the abolition of war is both desirable and possible; raise awareness of the alternatives to war for resolving national and international disputes and develop materials and strategies to educate us all from school children to those in government.

*I had a paint box
but it didn't have the colour red for the blood of the wounded,
nor white for the hearts and faces of the dead.
It didn't have yellow either for the burning sands of the desert.*

*Instead it orange had for the dawn and the sunset
and blue for new skies
and pink for the dreams of young people.*

I sat down and painted peace.
by a Latin American child of 10

18 - 24 November Prisons Week

18 November Day of Prayer for Prisoners and their Dependents

On the 18th November, the Church will mark Prisoners' Sunday, a day of prayer, reflection and action for prisoners, ex-offenders, their children and families. It marks the start of Prisons Week which this year runs until 24th November. The theme for this year is **'Taking the Path to Life'** – a hope rooted in the Christian belief that the divine spark is in all people, that no-one is beyond redemption, and that change can and does take place.

There are now over 87,000 people in prison in the UK, meaning that prisoners and their families need our help more than ever. Tragically, more children are now affected by the imprisonment of a parent than by divorce. Prisoners need the support of parishes to move away from a life of crime and take the path to life – they need our hope, faith, love and support in order to do this. We can in surprising ways disarm even the most hardened offender.

During the Church's forthcoming Year of Faith, it is particularly fitting that we keep faith with those whom our society typically overlooks or ignores. Please encourage your parish to keep prisoners and their families in their thoughts and prayers, by speaking to your parish priest about remembering Prisoners' Sunday at your church.

www.prisonadvice.org.uk/prisonerssunday

For resources for prayer and worship see: www.prisonweek.org/2012/

18-25 November Inter-Faith Week

In Britain today, people of many different backgrounds live side by side as part of a shared society. Inter Faith Week is an opportunity to discuss and debate how we 'live well together' and to celebrate the distinctive contributions that faith communities bring to the wellbeing of our shared society, both in Britain and globally.

The aims of the Week are:

- Strengthening good inter faith relations at all levels
- Increasing awareness of the different and distinct faith communities in the UK
- Celebrating and building on the contribution which their members make to their neighbourhoods and to wider society
- Increasing understanding between people

www.interfaithweek.org

19-23 November Anti – Bullying Week

The Anti-Bullying Alliance has coordinated Anti-Bullying Week each year since 2006.

This year's theme— *We're better without bullying*— shines a light on bullying and its effect on achievement. It aims to send a clear message that bullying will not be accepted in schools, clubs and teams and seeks to create environments where all children can develop their skills and talents to achieve their full potential. Bullying can lead to children missing school, failing exams, dropping out of sport, staying away from extra-curricular activities, and limiting their life choices.

www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/anti-bullying-week.aspx

20 November Universal Children's Day

Universal Children's Day was established by the United Nations in 1954 to encourage understanding between children and promote children's welfare around the world. It is held on 20 November, the same day the UN General Assembly adopted the Declaration of the Rights of the Child in 1959 and signed the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1989.

www.un.org/en/events/childrenday/

24 November Buy Nothing Day

Everything we buy has an impact on the environment. Buy Nothing Day highlights the environmental and ethical consequences of consumerism. The developed countries - only 20% of the world population are consuming over 80% of the earth's natural resources, causing a disproportionate level of environmental damage, and an unfair distribution of wealth.

www.buynothingday.co.uk

In the last century a tourist from America paid a visit to a renowned Polish rabbi, Hofetz Chaim. He was astonished to see that the rabbi's home was only a simple room filled with books, plus a table and a bench. 'Rabbi,' asked the tourist, 'where is your furniture?' 'Where is yours?' replied Hofetz Chaim. 'Mine?' asked the puzzled American. 'But I am only passing through.' 'So am I' replied the rabbi.

25 November Youth Day Feast of Christ the King

As part of the Cycle of Prayer, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales invite Catholics to mark the feast of Christ the King (the last Sunday of the liturgical year) as Youth Day.

25 November International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women

Violence against women and girls is one of the most widespread violations of human rights. It can include physical, sexual, psychological and economic abuse, and it cuts across boundaries of age, race, culture, wealth and geography. It takes place in the home, on the streets, in schools, the workplace, in farm fields, refugee camps, during conflicts and crises. It has many manifestations — from the most universally prevalent forms of domestic and sexual violence, to harmful practices, abuse during pregnancy, so-called honour killings and other types of femicide.

Based on country data available, up to 70 per cent of women experience physical or sexual violence from men in their lifetime. A World Health Organization study of 24,000 women in ten countries found that the prevalence of physical and/or sexual violence by a partner varied from 15 percent in urban Japan to 71 percent in rural Ethiopia, with most areas being in the 30–60 percent range.

Violence against women and girls has far-reaching consequences, harming families and communities. Gender-based violence not only violates human rights, but also hampers productivity, reduces human capital and undermines economic growth. In 2008, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon launched his campaign *UNITE to End Violence against Women* to draw international attention at the highest level to the issue. **Say NO – UNITE** is designed to support social mobilization to drive actions and accountability, in contribution to the *UNITE* campaign.

www.saynotoviolence.org

www.acnuk.org Aid to the Church in Need (UK)

29 November Day of International Solidarity with the Palestinian People

The International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People is observed by the United Nations on or around 29 November each year. The date of 29 November was chosen because of its meaning and significance to the Palestinian people. On that day in 1947, the General Assembly adopted [resolution 181 \(II\)](#), which came to be known as the Partition Resolution. That resolution provided for the establishment in Palestine of a “Jewish State” and an “Arab State”, with Jerusalem as a corpus separatum under a special international regime. Of the two States to be created under this resolution, only one, Israel, has so far come into being.

The Palestinian people, who now number more than eight million, live primarily in the Palestinian territory occupied by Israel since 1967, including East Jerusalem; in Israel; in neighbouring Arab States; and in refugee camps in the region.

The International Day of Solidarity has traditionally provided an opportunity for the international community to focus its attention on the fact that the question of Palestine remained unresolved and that the Palestinian people are yet to attain their inalienable rights as defined by the General Assembly, namely, the right to self-determination without external interference, the right to national independence and sovereignty, and the right to return to their homes and property from which they had been displaced.

In response to the call of the United Nations, various activities are undertaken annually by Governments and civil society in observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. These activities include, among other things, the issuance of special messages of solidarity with the Palestinian people, the organization of meetings, the dissemination of publications and other information material, and the screening of films.

www.un.org/en/events/palestinianday/background.shtml

1 December World Aids Day

www.worldaidsday.org

World Aids Day was the first ever global health day and has continued to be marked since 1988. It is an opportunity to join people worldwide in the fight against HIV, showing support for people living with HIV and commemorating those who have died.

Positive Catholics is a peer support network of women and men living with HIV, many of whom have experienced the difficulties of being unable to find sympathetic or understanding people in their faith communities or families.

www.positivecatholics.com

Catholics for Aids Prevention and Support (CAPS) is a network of Catholics in Britain and Ireland promoting HIV prevention and support. CAPS aims to be a voice in the church for people living with HIV/AIDS and a Catholic voice in the world of HIV/AIDS

www.caps-uk.org

In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus tells the 'church': don't just invite your family and friends to a fantastic party — invite the poor, the disabled, the lame, the blind' (Lk 14:12-14) because, by doing this we extend the bonds of human love. In holding out a hand of welcome to people living with HIV and Aids, the community of faith shares something of their story. By sharing in vulnerability, the Church is made vulnerable too; and by becoming vulnerable the Church becomes a friend. By becoming friends we, the Church, bring love into being. This is what the incarnation means.

John Thornhill - CAPS Trustee

2 December 1ST Week of Advent

- *Am I prepared and ready to celebrate Advent well?*
- *Should I re-examine my priorities and give more quality time to friends and family?*
- *How might I be a better neighbour?*
- *Do I speak out for the vulnerable and the defenceless, those who are considered unimportant in our throw-away society?*
- *How might I change my lifestyle to shift the focus from my own needs to the needs of others?*
- *Do I really need so many possessions?*
- *Do I care properly for creation and use its resources wisely?*

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2 December International Day for the Abolition of Slavery

Every day millions of men, women, and children of all ages face forced labour and sexual exploitation, as well as brutal violence. Consider, on this day, the effects of modern slavery, what can be done to help those affected and how to bring the traffickers to justice.

www.un.org/en/events/slaveryabolitionday/

No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights - Article 4

3 December International Day of Persons with Disabilities

3 December is the 20th International Day of Persons with Disabilities. The main theme of IDPD 2012 is **Removing barriers to create an inclusive and accessible society for all**. UN Enable, which sponsors and resources the Day, notes that over one billion people, or approximately 15 per cent of the world's population, live with some form of disability. They daily face discrimination and marginalisation in society.

www.un.org/disabilities

9 December 2nd Week of Advent

*Lord, I see injustice all around yet feel powerless to help:
the problems seem too big to overcome and my voice feels too small to make a difference.*

*For the times I have failed to act to help build a fairer society and thought only of myself,
I ask your forgiveness.*

*For the times that my greed and selfishness may have caused the gap between rich and poor to widen,
I ask your forgiveness.*

*For the times I have mistaken superiority and self-righteousness for loving charity,
I ask your forgiveness.*

Open my eyes, Lord to see how my actions may adversely affect those around me.

Open my ears, Lord, to hear the cries of the poor and needy.

Open my heart, Lord, that I may act in love and solidarity with my brothers and sisters throughout the world.

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10 December United Nations Human Rights Day

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) was adopted on 10 December 1948. The date has since served to mark Human Rights Day worldwide. The Declaration was drafted by representatives of all regions and legal traditions. Over time it has been accepted as a contract between governments and their peoples. The Declaration has also served as the foundation for an expanding system of human rights protection that today focuses also on vulnerable groups such as disabled persons, indigenous peoples and migrant workers.

www.un.org/en/events/humanrightsday

*Whoever tortures a human being, whoever abuses a human being,
whoever outrages a human being abuses God's image.*

Oscar Romero

16 December 3rd Week of Advent

*Lord, there is so much bad news in our world: famine; war; natural disasters; cruelty; prejudice; self-interest.
And yet there is also much good: love; concern; solidarity; small, unseen, unselfish acts of kindness.*

*For the times I have focused only on the bad and failed to see the good,
I ask your forgiveness.*

*For the times I have looked the other way because I was embarrassed and didn't know what to do,
I ask your forgiveness.*

*For the times I meant to do something, got distracted and then forgot my good intentions,
I ask your forgiveness.*

Open my mouth, Lord, to speak out boldly against injustice.

May I be a willing advocate for those who live in despair and bring them words of comfort and hope.

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18 December International Migrants Day

International Migrants Day was established by the United Nations in 2000 in response to the increasing number of migrants in the world. Held annually on 18 December, the day aims to recognise the efforts, contributions and rights of migrants.

www.un.org/en/events/migrantsday/

Protection for those fleeing persecution is a benchmark of a civilised society.

Cardinal Basil Hume, November 1990

Christian communities are to pay special attention to migrant workers and their families by accompanying them with prayer, solidarity and Christian charity, by enhancing what is reciprocally enriching, as well as by fostering new political, economic and social planning that promotes respect for the dignity of every human person, the safeguarding of the family, access to dignified housing, to work and to welfare.

Benedict XVI, 21 September 2011

Although 1 in every 35 people are now said to be international migrants, the issue of migration deeply divides public opinion between those who see it as 'a blessing to the ageing populations and workforces of the advanced economies' and others who see it as 'a gateway for criminality and social disintegration.'

(source www.ctbi.org.uk **Churches Together in Britain and Ireland**)

20 December International Human Solidarity Day

Solidarity is vital to overcoming the problems humankind faces in an interdependent world, says United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon in a message to mark International Human Solidarity Day, which takes place on 20 December each year.

He declared: "This year's observance of International Human Solidarity Day comes during a period of dramatic transition. People across the world are demanding greater political freedom, accountability and equality. Global interdependence is deepening along economic, social, and environmental dimensions. In light of these realities, how can we best shape solutions for a more secure, sustainable and prosperous future?"

"Solidarity is crucial to solving problems in our interconnected world. We witnessed an important act of solidarity at this year's United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20). Governments, civil society and private sector leaders came together and agreed to promote an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable future.

"We can reach our shared goals if people are able to participate in the formulation and implementation of plans, policies and programmes to shape our common future. Commitments without empowerment are words without meaning.

"Despite progress in achieving the Millennium Development Goals, we must intensify our efforts before the target date of 2015. We are also laying the groundwork for the post-2015 agenda. The process aims to be participatory, seeking the views of development experts and ordinary citizens around the world.

"On International Human Solidarity Day I call on all citizens of the world to help us advance solidarity as a global family – and reach our shared goals," concluded the UN Secretary-General.

www.un.org/en/events/humansolidarityday/

23 December 4th Week of Advent

<i>Mary, humble and lowly, we raise up to you: the lonely, the frightened, the stigmatised, the scarred</i>	
<i>Mary, homeless and vulnerable, we raise up to you: the stranger, the rough sleeper, the rejected, the outcast</i>	
<i>Mary, scared and helpless, we raise up to you: the persecuted, the refugee, the asylum seeker, the detainee</i>	
<i>Mary, grief-stricken and desolate, we raise up to you: the degraded, the tormented, the desperate, the powerless</i>	
<i>Mary, poor and uneducated</i>	<i>Pray for us</i>
<i>Mary, teenage single parent</i>	<i>Pray for us</i>
<i>Mary, mother of the neglected and the unloved, the lost and the disappeared</i>	<i>Pray for us</i>
<i>Mary, mother of the unwanted, the abandoned, the friendless, the motherless</i>	<i>Pray for us</i>
<i>Mary, raised high above the wealthy and the mighty</i>	<i>Pray for us</i>
<i>Mary, hope for the hope-less and voice for the voiceless</i>	<i>Pray for us</i>
<i>Mary, advocate for those who are vulnerable, neglected, despised, cast out</i>	<i>Hear our prayer</i>
<i>Mary, advocate for the economically deprived, socially excluded, politically oppressed</i>	<i>Hear our prayer</i>
<i>Mary, advocate for those who are undervalued or disregarded by society</i>	<i>Hear our prayer</i>
<i>Mary, advocate for those who are marginalised and disadvantaged</i>	<i>Hear our prayer</i>
<i>Mary, advocate for those who suffer prejudice because of colour, race or creed</i>	<i>Hear our prayer</i>
<i>Mary, advocate for those who are displaced, dispossessed, forced to flee, living in fear</i>	<i>Hear our prayer</i>
<i>Mary, advocate for those who do not know where the next meal is coming from</i>	<i>Hear our prayer</i>
<i>Mary, advocate for those who lack clean water and proper shelter</i>	<i>Hear our prayer</i>
<i>Mary, advocate for those who sleep in shop doorways</i>	<i>Hear our prayer</i>
<i>Mary, advocate for those who do not know whether they will wake tomorrow</i>	<i>Hear our prayer</i>
<i>Mary, advocate for those who are in debt to loan sharks</i>	<i>Hear our prayer</i>
<i>Mary, advocate for those who only know poverty and despair</i>	<i>Hear our prayer</i>
<i>Mary, advocate for those who are ground down, isolated, depressed</i>	<i>Hear our prayer</i>
<i>Mary, advocate for those who find each day an unbearable burden</i>	<i>Hear our prayer</i>
<i>Mary's Magnificat – a joyful song of praise to God – announces a better way</i>	<i>Blessed be God</i>
<i>Mary's Magnificat reveals the Kingdom right here and now on earth as God planned it</i>	<i>Blessed be God</i>
<i>Mary sings praise to God whose mercy is boundless</i>	<i>Blessed be God</i>
<i>Mary sings praise to God who is constant in his love from generation to generation</i>	<i>Blessed be God</i>
<i>Mary sings praise to God who has a special love for the poor and lowly</i>	<i>Blessed be God</i>
<i>Mary sings praise to God who fills the hungry and sends the rich away empty</i>	<i>Blessed be God</i>
<i>Mary sings praise to God who has promised to love and care for his people</i>	<i>Blessed be God</i>
<i>Mary sings praise to God for whom nothing is impossible</i>	<i>Blessed be God</i>

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25 December Christmas Day

No one can celebrate a genuine Christmas without being truly poor.

The self-sufficient, the proud, those who, because they have everything, look down on others, those who have no need even of God – for them there will be no Christmas. Only the poor, the hungry, those who need someone to come on their behalf, will have that someone. That someone is God, Emmanuel, God-with-us. Without poverty of spirit there can be no abundance of God.
Oscar Romero, 24 December 1978

20 January Peace Sunday

The theme for the 46th World Peace Day is **Blessed are the Peacemakers**.
www.paxchristi.org.uk

Peacemaking is not an optional commitment. It is a requirement of our faith. We are called to be peacemakers, not by some movement of the moment, but by Christ Jesus.
The Challenge of Peace, par. 333

Christ's peace must reign in your hearts, since as members of the one body you have been called to that peace.
Colossians 3:15

Prayer for Peace

*To the Creator of nature and man, of truth and beauty I pray:
Hear my voice, for it is the voice of the victims of all wars and violence among individuals and nations;
Hear my voice, for it is the voice of all children who suffer and will suffer when people put their faith in weapons and war;
Hear my voice when I beg you to instil into the hearts of all human beings the wisdom of peace, the strength of justice and the joy of fellowship;
Hear my voice, for I speak for the multitudes in every country and in every period in history who do not want war and are ready to walk the road of peace;
Hear my voice and grant insight and strength so that we may always respond to hatred with love, to injustice with total dedication to justice, to need with the sharing of self, to war with peace.
O God, hear my voice and grant unto the world your everlasting peace.*
John Paul II, 25 February 1981

20 World Religion Day

World Religion Day is held on Third Sunday in January each year in several hundred locations around the globe. This annual Day was initiated by the Bahá'ís in 1949 as a means of fostering interfaith understanding and harmony.
www.worldreligionday.org

20-26 January Christian Unity Week *What does God require of us?*

The British and Irish resources for 2013 are based on the international material compiled this year by the Student Christian Movement of India (SCMI), along with the All India Catholic University Federation and the National Council of Churches in India. The Theme for 2013: **What does God require of us?** (Micah 6:6-8)

In reflecting on the significance of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity they decided that in a context of great injustice to Dalits in India and in the Church, the search for visible unity cannot be disassociated from the dismantling of casteism and the contribution to unity by the poorest of the poor. Casteism results in the Dalits being socially marginalized, politically under-represented, economically exploited and culturally subjugated. Nearly 80% of Indian Christians have a Dalit background.

During the Week of Prayer, Christians all over the world will explore in ecumenical fellowship what it means to do justice, to love kindness and to walk humbly with God. This theme is developed over the eight days by the metaphor of walking. For Dalit communities, the walk towards liberation is inseparable from the walk towards unity. So our walk with Dalits this week, and with all who yearn for justice, is an integral part of the prayer for Christian unity. Christians in India should reject caste divisions, just as Christians worldwide should not accept the divisions among them: 'Is Christ divided?' (1 Corinthians 1:13).

As we gather to pray for the unity which Christ wills for his Church, we are called to break down such walls of divisions among and between us.

Resource material for the week can be found with Churches Together in Britain and Ireland www.ctbi.org.uk/607

This is what God asks of you, only this: to act justly, to love tenderly and to walk humbly with your God.
Micah 6:8

27 January Holocaust Memorial Day 2013 *Communities Together: Build a Bridge*

Imagine waking up to find that the neighbours you have known all your life and even sat next to at school, now walk past you without stopping, now forbid their children from playing with yours, now spit at you and even attack you. Imagine having nowhere to turn, that the walls are closing in and that there is no escape. Imagine that you have done nothing wrong, yet you are to be punished nonetheless and no one will stand by you.

On Holocaust Memorial Day – 27 January 2013, you are asked to remember and stand by those who were forced to live through these experiences and to honour those communities which were destroyed in the Holocaust, under Nazi Persecution and in subsequent genocides in Cambodia, Bosnia, Rwanda and Darfur, as well as the atrocities in Armenia.

www.hmd.org.uk/resources/theme-papers/hmd-2013-communities-together-build-a-bridge

26 Jan – 4 Feb Poverty & Homelessness Action Week *Can you cast the first stone?*

29 January Homelessness Sunday

4 February Poverty Action Sunday

Are people to blame for being poor or homeless? Media stereotypes make huge assumptions – benefit claimants don't want to work; homeless people are addicts or alcoholics; they have big families to milk the state. Politicians – who should know better – repeat these distortions as if they were the whole truth. The public swallows them; it seems we need an 'us against them' world. But we're fed up. We want to show the other side of the picture.

Poverty & Homelessness Action Week 2013 tells stories that don't suit the press agenda. The people who don't work because there are no jobs in their area. The people turned away by landlords because of benefit changes. The communities that are building strength through organising.

The theme for 2013 is *Can you cast the first stone?* (John 8:7) It's time for churches to speak out against the 'blame game'. Everyone deserves a place to live and enough money to make ends meet. We believe in the unique value and dignity of each individual, created in the image of God. Christians are called to stand alongside those who are excluded, not to judge them.

www.actionweek.org.uk

Church Action on Poverty www.church-poverty.org.uk

Housing Justice www.housingjustice.org.uk

Jesus said, "Let anyone of you who is without sin be the first to cast a stone at her."

John 8:7

8 February Day of Prayer for victims of human trafficking

Catholics in England and Wales are being invited to pray for all victims of human trafficking on the Feast Day of St Josephine Bakhita, 8 February 2013.

Prayer for Victims of Human Trafficking

O God, who led Saint Josephine Bakhita from abject slavery to the dignity of being your daughter and a bride of Christ, grant, we pray, that by her example we may show constant love for the Lord Jesus crucified, remaining steadfast in charity and prompt to show compassion.

Through Christ our Lord.

Taken from the Missal as the Collect for 8 February

"The Day of Prayer for the Victims of Trafficking is an opportunity to remember and pray for the thousands and thousands of victims of trafficking throughout the world," said the Lead Bishop for Migration, Bishop Patrick Lynch. "It is especially appropriate that the day itself coincides with the feast day of St Josephine Bakhita who despite the suffering she experienced as a slave was a wonderful witness of how to live a life rooted in faith, inspired by hope and characterized by love. I would, therefore, encourage all people - young and old - to make a special effort to join in this Day of Prayer."

St Josephine Bakhita is the Sudanese Saint who at the age of nine was kidnapped and sold into slavery. She suffered terribly at the hands of her kidnappers so much so that she forgot her birth name. Her kidnappers gave her the name 'Bakhita' which means 'Fortunate'. Sold and resold in the markets of El Obeid and of Khartoum, she experienced the humiliations and

sufferings of slavery, both physical and moral. At the age of 35 she was bought by the Italian Consul and was eventually brought to Italy where she was entrusted to the care of the Canossian Sisters in Venice. It was there that she came to know and experience God's love. She became a Catholic in 1890 and made her final profession as a Canossian Sister in 1896. For the next fifty years she led a life of simplicity, prayer and service (especially as the doorkeeper in the convent) always showing kindness to everyone especially the children in the street. In her final years she suffered from sickness and the haunting memories of the beatings and floggings she received whilst in slavery. She died in 1947 and was canonized in October 2000.

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. OMP is also liaising with The Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace and the Pontifical Council for Migrants and Itinerant People to develop closer collaboration with the Episcopal Conferences of countries of origin as well as transit and destination countries so that prevention, pastoral care and reintegration of trafficked people can be improved.

10 February Autism Sunday

Churches across Britain will mark Autism Sunday on 10 February 2013. The 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

11 February World Day for the Sick

Since 1992, the Catholic Church has celebrated World Day of the Sick on 11 February — the day on which the church commemorates the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes — under the sponsorship of the Pontifical Council for Health Pastoral Care. The World Day of the Sick has three consistent themes. First, it reminds the faithful to pray intensely and sincerely for those who are sick. Second, the celebration invites Christians to reflect on and respond to human suffering. And third, this day recognizes and honours all persons who work in health care and serve as caregivers. This Year's World Day for the Sick will focus on the story of the Good Samaritan (*Lk 10:29-37*)

Resources from: National Association of Catholic Chaplains www.nacc.org/resources/wds/default.asp

13 February Ash Wednesday

For the past 30 years peace activists have gathered on Ash Wednesday at the Ministry of Defence in Whitehall in an act of non-violent resistance and repentance to nuclear war preparations. The UK alone has 225 nuclear weapons and the Royal Navy boasts a proud record of over 40 years of uninterrupted nuclear deterrence, as at least one of the four Vanguard-class submarines is on patrol at any time.

www.paxchristi.org.uk

In his address to the Diplomatic Corps in February 2010, Pope Benedict said: "One of the most serious challenges is increased military spending and the cost of maintaining and developing nuclear arsenals. Enormous resources are being consumed for these purposes, when they could be spent on the development of peoples, especially those who are poorest. For this reason I firmly hope that, during the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference to be held this May in New York, concrete decisions will be made towards progressive disarmament, with a view to freeing our planet from nuclear arms."

When Peace comes, they will plant flowers instead of mines.

Afghan Student

Faith group urge government to change direction on energy policy

On Ash Wednesday, the ecumenical charity **Operation Noah** will ask the Government to change the direction of its Energy Bill, currently going through parliament. On this day, when Christians traditionally repent of their sins, the group believes the Government should show true repentance – metanoia – involving a change of mind and purpose in its energy policy.

It is one year since Operation Noah published the **Ash Wednesday Declaration – *Climate change and the purposes of God***: a call to the Church. One practical outworking of this declaration is the call for a decarbonised economy in the UK by 2030. In the last year, the Government has issued an Energy Bill that fails to set adequate targets for reduction in carbon emissions and gives a green light for the building of more gas-fired power stations, locking us in to fossil fuels several decades into the future. However, it is clear that urgent action is needed to completely turn the world's energy infrastructure around from fossil fuels to renewables. Reports from organisations such as PriceWaterhouseCoopers, the World Bank and the

International Energy Agency have issued urgent calls for action to reduce carbon emissions yet the UK Government is not heeding the warnings.

Isabel Carter, Chair of Operation Noah said: "The UK Government, like many others, assumes that short-term economic policy takes priority over the laws of nature and the laws of physics! Our fragile earth has alarm bells ringing all around. How much longer will we continue to ignore them?" Operation Noah calls again for the Churches to make care for God's creation a primary factor in the Church's mission, and to join them in calling for the Government to take a lead in working for a sustainable world.

For more information on Operation Noah see: www.operationnoah.org

To read the Ash Wednesday Declaration go to: www.operationnoah.org/ash-wednesday-declaration

20 February UN World Day of Social Justice

Social Justice generally means that people should have equal rights and opportunities; everyone deserves equal justice in all aspects of society. There has been a need to promote efforts to tackle issues such as poverty, exclusion and unemployment all over the world.

Therefore the United Nations General Assembly decided to observe a day to address this issue in the form of World Day of Social Justice. It is one of the most recent observed days which started in February 2009. The United Nations' (UN) World Day of Social Justice is observed annually on February 20 to encourage people to look at how social justice affects poverty eradication. It also focuses on the goal of achieving full employment and support for social integration.

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

22 February CAFOD Lent Fast Day

CAFOD's campaign from now until October 2013 is **Hungry for Change** - highlighting the fact that we produce enough food to feed the world – but a billion people don't have enough to eat. The way that food is grown, sold and shared out is not working for the world's people. We have the power to change this. We believe sharing is part of our faith. Our hunger for change, in solidarity with our neighbours and through the grace of God, can begin to transform our world.

CAFOD action cards invite us to take action ourselves and then to pass the second part of the card to someone else asking them to take action i.e. sharing it. As this campaign will run until next October it will be active throughout the Year of Faith so individuals, parishes, groups can pick up with it at times to suit themselves. The Shrewsbury Diocesan CAFOD office will be supporting this actively in the new Year through to the summer when a major event involving number of agencies is being planned ahead of the G8 meeting in June (David Cameron will hold the presidency for this).

www.cafod.org.uk/uk/shrewsbury

Action Cards and a **Food for Thought** guide can be ordered by emailing campaigns@cafod.org.uk or phoning 0300 011 5680

*Jesus took the five loaves and the two fish, raised his eyes to heaven and said the blessing
... they all ate as much as they wanted.*

Matthew 14:19-20

25 February – 10 March Fair Trade Fortnight

Fairtrade Fortnight brings together consumers, retailers, licensees, businesses, producers and campaigners nationwide to promote awareness and sales of Fairtrade products and to campaign on issues of trade justice. Every year, thousands of events and activities take place up and down the country in celebration of Fairtrade Fortnight.

Fairtrade Foundation www.fairtrade.org.uk

Traidcraft www.traidcraft.co.uk

It is not wrong to want to live better; what is wrong is a style of life which is presumed to be better when it is directed towards 'having' rather than 'being'.

Centesimus Annus n. 36

2 March Women's World Day of Prayer *I was a stranger and you welcomed me*

The annual Women's World Day of Prayer speaks with the voices of women from all parts of the globe. Each year a different country takes a turn to present the material. The theme for 2013: ***I was a stranger and you welcomed me*** is prepared by the women of France. In common with other European countries, France receives many asylum requests. In 2011, 51,900 people applied for asylum there. The presence of these newcomers both enriches the culture and can cause social difficulties. Behind each request is the story of a life. Some of these stories will be shared in the service for 2013.

www.wwdp-natcomm.org/WWDP_resources.asp

4-10 March Climate Week

Culminating in a week of activities and events, Climate Week showcases the practical solutions to climate change being developed in every sector of society. By highlighting real examples, the campaign aims to inspire thousands more, renewing the ambition to create together a more sustainable, low-carbon future.

www.climateweek.com

The Be-attitudes

*Blessed are those who use low-energy light bulbs
for theirs is the light of God's wisdom.*

*Blessed are those who travel by train
for their lives are on God's track.*

*Blessed are those who choose a car with low fuel consumption
for they are in God's fast lane.*

*Blessed are those who insulate their homes
for theirs is the warmth of God's love.*

*Blessed are you when you put yourselves out
to use energy from renewable sources,
for you have kindled the flame of the future.*

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The Church has a responsibility towards creation ... she must defend not only earth, water and air as gifts of creation that belong to everyone. She must above all protect mankind from self-destruction.

Caritas in Veritate, 51

8 March International Women's Day

Women make up half of the world's population and 70% of the world's one billion poorest people. Women work two-thirds of the world's working hours, produce half of the world's food, but earn only 10% of the world's income. Of the 500,000 women who die in childbirth every year, 99% live in developing countries. In other words, in developing countries, a girl or a woman dies every minute giving birth. Currently, 50 million of the 72 million children not enrolled in primary school are girls. Two thirds of the 800 million adults who lack basic literacy skills are women.

(Source: www.globalpovertyproject.com/infobank/women)

www.internationalwomensday.com

17-24 March Romero Week

Before he was appointed Archbishop of El Salvador in 1977 there were few signs that the conservative Bishop Romero would challenge the status quo and speak out on behalf of the poor. But seeing his friends and colleagues murdered and their killers protected transformed his views. Romero became a prophetic 'voice for the voiceless,' ceaselessly calling for an end to the repression. On 24 March 1980 he was shot dead whilst saying Mass. More than 30 years on, Romero's voice continues to be strong – an inspiration not just to the people of El Salvador but to all those who seek justice.

Many would like the poor to keep on saying that it is God's will for them to live that way.

But it is not God's will for some to have everything and others to have nothing. That cannot be of God.

I do not believe in death without resurrection. If they kill me I will rise again in the people of El Salvador.

Oscar Romero

www.romerotrue.org.uk

In the coming days we will remember two powerful stories about death and resurrection – the story of Jesus from first century Palestine and the twentieth century story of Archbishop Oscar Romero from El Salvador. In many ways, they are the same story – one that helps us in 2013 know who we are, what we believe and how we are called to live. Both are stories about torture and execution, painful subjects about which we know all too much in our own times -- but they are also stories about hope and good news, especially good news for impoverished, marginalized and brutalized people.

Luke's account of Jesus' inaugural address: He sent me to bring the good news to the poor ... points directly toward that hope. Jesus' way of life and mission had direction from the start. His was Good News about inclusive communities; just social structures; right relationships; and peace. And so he was killed.

Archbishop Romero's mission was also one of hope, of Good News. He had encountered the Gospel in living colour as he accompanied communities who were impoverished and brutally violated and he was evangelized by those experiences. In a reflection on Luke's Gospel, Romero, two months before he was killed said, In the most sublime homily ever proclaimed, Christ closes the book and says: 'Today these things have been fulfilled.' This is the homily: the Word of God is not a reading of the past but a living Word, a Spirit that is being accomplished here and now.

... Romero repeatedly challenged the culture of death, that in which he was immediately immersed, but also its roots and expressions beyond El Salvador. His holding of life sacred was not rhetorical, but a daily creative task. What Romero resisted was death, the death of children ill from curable diseases, the death of hope in young people, the death of those who stood up to the gods of death – death from war, torture, poverty, cynicism or despair. In this way, Romero demonstrated his unequivocal belief in Resurrection. We are invited again – by the life and witness of this great saint of our times - to do the same.

**Marie Dennis, Co-President Pax Christi International
at a service in London 24/3/13 to commemorate Archbishop Romero**

22 March World Water Day

Water is a basic requirement for all life, yet water resources are facing increasing demands from, and competition among, users. In 1992, the UN General Assembly designated 22 March of each year as the World Day for Water.

www.unwater.org/worldwaterday

www.wateraid.org.uk

Your people yearn for clean water but their chances are crushed by poverty.

God of life, let waters flow and wash away injustice.

CAFOD prayer card

Living water

We are connected in creation

by water which gives us life.

Tides move in our blood,

and on distant shores

our kindred lift their heads

in the salt air

and scan the horizon

for a trace of our mark on the earth.

Let our marks be gentle.

Let us respect the sacredness of water

which moves between us

as a blessing from the hand of God.

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www.ionabooks.com/1968-PL10105-Lent-Discipline-Weeks-1-6.html

29 March Good Friday

To choose the road to discipleship is to dispose oneself for a share in the cross.

It is not enough to believe with one's mind; a Christian must also be a doer of the word,

a wayfarer with and a witness to Jesus.

This means we never expect complete success within history.

It also means that we must regard as normal the path of persecution and the possibility of martyrdom.

The Challenge of Peace, par. 276

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. The day aims to raise awareness about landmines and progress toward their eradication. The term 'mine action' refers to a range of efforts to clear landmines and explosive remnants of war and to mark and fence off dangerous areas. It also includes assisting victims, teaching people how to remain safe in a mine-affected environment, advocating for universal participation in international treaties related to landmines, explosive remnants of war and their victims, and destroying landmines stockpiled by governments and non-state armed groups.

On 8 December 2005, the United Nations (UN) General Assembly declared that April 4 of each year would be officially proclaimed and observed as International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action. It was first observed on April 4, 2006. According to the *Landmine Monitor Report 2005*, 84 countries were affected by landmines and unexploded ordnance, which together kill or maim between 15,000 and 20,000 adults and children annually. The UN works together with countries to find and destroy these devices.

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

On this International Day, I call for universal adherence to these important treaties and for increased support for mine awareness and mine action. Landmines and explosive remnants of war hamper development and endanger lives. Let's eliminate them together for a safe sustainable world.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon

Message for the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action, 4 April 2012

1 May Feast of St Joseph the Worker

The Feast of St Joseph the Worker is also the anniversary of the founding of the Catholic Worker Movement by Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin in 1933 in the US. Funded entirely by donations and run by workers who accept no pay but choose to live in a spirit of voluntary poverty, the Catholic Worker Movement in the UK offers hospitality, advocacy and friendship to destitute men and women (some with children), many of whom are refugees.

www.londoncatholicworker.org

What we would like to do is change the world – make it a little simpler for people to feed, clothe, and shelter themselves as God intended them to do. And, by fighting for better conditions, by crying out unceasingly for the rights of the workers, the poor, of the destitute – the rights of the worthy and the unworthy poor, in other words – we can, to a certain extent, change the world; we can work for the oasis, the little cell of joy and peace in a harried world. We can throw our pebble in the pond and be confident that its ever widening circle will reach around the world. We repeat, there is nothing we can do but love, and, dear God, please enlarge our hearts to love each other, to love our neighbour, to love our enemy as our friend.

Dorothy Day

A society that “does not pay a just wage”, that “does not give work” to people; a society that “that only looks to its balance books, that only seeks profit” is unjust and goes against God. It is work - not power, not money, not culture – that gives men and women a sense of dignity. By stripping them of work, society strips them of their God given dignity.

Pope Francis

11 May World Fair Trade Day

This day is an initiative of the **World Fair Trade Organisation (WFTO)** and is a worldwide festival of events celebrating Fair Trade as a tangible contribution to the fight against poverty, climate change and the economic crisis that has the greatest impact on the world's most vulnerable populations. A third of the world's population lives on less than two dollars a day. The global crisis confirms the need for a fair and sustainable economy locally and globally. Trade must benefit the most vulnerable and deliver sustainable livelihoods by developing opportunities for small and disadvantaged producers. Millions of producers and traders, business and policy makers, supporting organisations and volunteers have contributed to the substantial growth of Fair Trade.

Fair Trade makes a difference. Fair Trade Organisations are pioneers and change makers.

http://www.wfto.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=909&Itemid=330