

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

THE QUIET MAN SPEAKS

Anne O'Connor writes: Has Iain Duncan Smith's sudden resignation put an end to George Osborne's stronghold on the Conservative party as the Chancellor's blatant bid for the leadership has clearly taken precedence over concern for the ordinary people of the UK, especially the poor and disabled?

For those of us who remember the autocratic rule of Margaret Thatcher this brings echoes of her downfall at the hands of Geoffrey Howe in the unexpected, and uncharacteristic, "dead sheep" attack.* Like Howe before him, Duncan Smith was not seen as a threat – his soubriquet was "the quiet man."

Are we seeing the collapse of the Cameron/Osborne years? Is this the beginning of the end?

Robert Peston, in his ITV blog of 19 March, says:

Iain Duncan Smith's resignation is one of those "oh my god" moments in politics. Because he is saying, in effect, that he has been morally compromised by the Chancellor and Prime Minister. He insists that he reluctantly agreed to changes in the personal independence payment, which will reduce disability benefit payments by £1.2bn a year – and that he did so without knowing that they would fund tax cuts for the middle classes.

Here is why he is so angry: his long cherished hope of reforming the welfare system is – in his view – being corrupted by the imperative of shoring up Tory support for George Osborne and David Cameron, and of reducing the deficit as an ideological imperative.

Osborne and Cameron, via their intermediaries, are saying his hands are just as much steeped in the blood of this unpopular disability cut as theirs – and this is all about his visceral belief that they are wholly wrong in wanting Britain to stay in the EU. Politics rarely gets nastier than this.

A government source tells me the contentious "version" of cutting personal independence payments (PIP) to the disabled has been dropped. Which is big news. But let's be crystal clear, my source did not say that there would not be other disability benefit cuts. In fact he implied there would indeed be another "version" of the cuts. Why? Well, there would be a pretty big hole in George Osborne's budget if he simply loses the £1.2bn a year he was banking on from the PIP reform.

And another thing. My Downing Street source tells me Duncan Smith resigned knowing the Prime Minister was about to drop the PIP change. Duncan Smith denies this. In fact one of his officials tells me that only last night Downing Street was chastising him for not being enthusiastic enough in selling the PIP reform.

This is one almighty government mess. Most exposed right now is the Chancellor, George Osborne. When recently asked why he went for the PIP reform, in the face of unease and opposition from his own benches, I understand he pointed the finger of blame at Duncan Smith as Work and Pensions Secretary. Duncan Smith has tonight said he will not stay in government to be Osborne's human shield. Which puts the Chancellor directly in the line of fire.

Source: <http://www.itv.com/news/2016-03-18/politics-doesnt-get-much-nastier-than-ids-resignation/>

* Twenty-one years ago we witnessed the extraordinary events that led to Margaret Thatcher's fall from power. Those dramatic weeks included the PM's "No! No! No!" outburst during her statement on the Rome European Summit on 30 October 1990, which provoked Sir Geoffrey Howe's resignation two days later.

Howe had written a cautiously worded letter of resignation in which he criticised the PM's overall handling of UK relations with the European Community. After largely successful attempts by Number 10 to claim that there were differences only of style, rather than substance, in Howe's disagreement with Thatcher on Europe, Howe then chose to send a powerful message of dissent. In his devastating resignation speech he attacked Thatcher for running increasingly serious risks for the future of the country and criticised her for undermining the policies on the EMU (European Monetary Union) proposed by her own Chancellor and the Governor of the Bank of England. This crystallised the simmering discontent among Tory MPs and provided Michael Heseltine with a plausible reason for a leadership challenge. Howe offered a striking cricket simile for British negotiations on EMU in Europe: "It's rather like sending your opening batsmen to the crease, only for them to find, as the first balls are being bowled, that their bats have been broken before the game by the team captain". By the end of November Thatcher was ousted by John Major – another quiet man.

What gave Howe's speech such impact was its sheer unexpectedness. Howe was seen as the typical mild-mannered, loyal politician, summed up in Denis Healey's 1978 jibe: "... like being savaged by a dead sheep." Despite his well known disagreements with the PM, especially over Europe, his speech – made almost two weeks after he suddenly left office (as leader of the House) – was not forecast to be a pivotal political moment.

Then, as now, the party was divided in its view on the European Union. Dare we hope the parallels might have a similar outcome?

Source material: <http://www.totalpolitics.com/print/5563/the-fall-of-thatcher.thtml>

ASH WEDNESDAY REFLECTION - *CRY OF THE EARTH, CRY OF THE POOR*

by **Scott Wright**

Ash Wednesday begins the season of Lent and prepares us for Easter by calling us to a time of prayer, fasting and almsgiving. Given the dramatic state of the world today, with devastating wars and extreme weather events, a biblical exodus of refugees crossing borders and walls built higher and higher to keep them out, the answer to the question: Where is God speaking to us today is crucial, and for many, a matter of life and death.

How are we called to respond to those who cry out to us for justice and mercy?

God speaks to us from a wounded Earth and from a wounded humanity, and invites us to respond to the cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor. The season of Lent invites us to imagine these real-life Gospel scenes, and to respond with mercy and justice:

Picture the drama of Syrian families fleeing from a terrible war, setting out to sea on precarious boats with their children, not knowing if they will arrive safely to a friendly shore in Europe. Picture the mothers and children fleeing the gang violence in their poor neighborhoods in Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador, undertaking a dangerous journey and risking an uncertain future in the United States.

Does not God speak in their cries of desperation, their tears of anguish? And if so, do we hear them?

Picture the drama of climate change across the world, with extreme weather events, devastating floods, severe droughts, rising sea levels, melting glaciers.

Picture thousands of species that are disappearing, never to return again, vulnerable communities and a fragile planet that may not be welcoming to future generations of children.

Does not God speak in the cry of the Earth, yearning, like the refugees and migrants, to breathe free? And if so, do we hear it?

The readings from Ash Wednesday invite us into a posture of humility and penance, but also a posture of urgency and action, fostered by prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. These are ancient practices, but the goal is not only a clean heart, but a people with a heart of mercy and justice, which shows compassion towards those whose lives are at risk.

As we move toward the drama of Holy Week and Good Friday, we are reminded that the cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor are very much the cry of a crucified earth and a crucified people.

"Return to me with your whole heart, with fasting, and weeping, and mourning."

I think of the many faithful witnesses to the Gospel, those "first responders," those humble fisherfolk who stand on the shores of Greek islands, ready to rescue the Syrian refugees and to welcome them with open arms. I think, too, of the Kino Border Initiative and the Columban Mission Centre on the US-Mexico border and their welcome to immigrant mothers and children. I think especially of Annunciation House in El Paso, Texas (which has welcomed more than 120,000 refugees in 35 years) and the words of its founder, Ruben Garcia, who refers to the "immigrant crisis" as a "moral crisis":

"The immigrant crisis has nothing to do with the numbers of immigrants arriving at the border, for the land is vast and the space is welcoming. . . . It has nothing to do a lack of places to receive and shelter the many, for the churches are empty and in search of an identity of what it means to be church. What it does have to do with is our moral integrity as individuals and as a people, for we are in danger. We are in danger of looking inwardly and discovering only a profound emptiness. . . . This emptiness can only be filled by the God who comes to us in the distressing disguise of the poor, the immigrant poor."

Are we truly our brother's keeper? Do we truly care for our sister's need? Are we truly a society that feeds the hungry, clothes the naked, and welcomes the stranger in our midst? Are we a generation that feels a responsibility to caring for creation and to preparing a welcome for future generations.

Yes, we believe in the resurrection. But we must first stand in solidarity at the foot of the cross before we can proclaim the joy of Easter morning.

"Now is the acceptable time" to show mercy and compassion; "now is the day of salvation."

Scott Wright is Director of the Columban Center for Advocacy and Outreach in Washington DC

Link: <http://columban.org/category/columban-center-for-advocacy-and-outreach/>

Source Independent Catholic News: <http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=29382>

THOUSANDS PRAY AND PROTEST AGAINST RENEWAL OF TRIDENT

by Jo Siedlecka Sunday, February 28, 2016

An estimated 60,000 campaigners braved freezing temperatures in central London on Saturday, to take part in Britain's biggest anti-nuclear rally in a generation. From early morning, coaches began bringing groups in from Scotland, the north of England and Wales. Some protesters also came from Japan, Ireland, the Netherlands and Germany to challenge UK government plans to renew Trident.

There was standing room only at an interfaith prayer service held in Hinde Street Methodist Church, ahead of the march from Hyde Park to Trafalgar Square.

Bishop Stephen Cottrell, Anglican Bishop of Chelmsford; Bishop Thomas McMahon, Catholic Bishop of Brentwood; Rachel Lampard, Vice President Designate, of the Methodist Church; Paul Parker, Recording Clerk of Quakers in Britain; Mohammed Kozbar, Vice President of the Muslim Association of Britain and Rev Nagase, from the Nipponzan Myohoji Buddhist Community, presented a multi faith statement on nuclear weapons at the start of the rally.

It reads: "Nuclear weapons are by their nature indiscriminate in their effect. Any use of nuclear weapons would have devastating humanitarian consequences, be incompatible with International Humanitarian Law and violate the principle of dignity for every human being that is common to each of our faith traditions. Our world faces many challenges including oppressive poverty, climate change, violent extremism and emerging national rivalry. Addressing these challenges requires strong relationships across nations, founded on mutual co-operation, trust and shared prosperity. Security policies based on the threat of the use of nuclear weapons are immoral and ultimately self-defeating.

"We must move beyond the division of our world into nuclear and non-nuclear weapons states and ensure that all states make good their commitment to negotiations on the universal, legally verifiable and enforceable elimination of nuclear weapons. We call on all nuclear weapon states to join in this endeavour. We urge these states and the international community to develop a robust plan of action that will lead us to a world free of nuclear weapons."

Bruce Kent, vice president of CND said "there is no good argument for keeping Trident." He told the crowds that successive Popes have spoken out against nuclear weapons. In his historic speech before the United Nations General Assembly, on 25 September 2015, Pope Francis called for the "complete prohibition" of nuclear weapons, and condemned the doctrine of deterrence as "an affront to the entire framework of the United Nations." He encouraged the international community to work to fulfil both the letter and the spirit of the Non Proliferation Treaty, which demands complete disarmament.

The First Minister of Scotland Nicola Sturgeon, said: "Let's cut £167 billion by not renewing the Trident system. There is the moral argument, there is the practical argument, there is the financial argument and I would so much rather see those billions of pounds spent on conventional forces - on health, on education, on giving our children the best start in life."

Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn was the last of more than 20 speakers who addressed the crowds. He told them: "I think we should just consider for a moment what a nuclear weapon actually is. It is a weapon of mass destruction. If ever used it can only kill large numbers of civilians.

"They've only once been used in war and that was in Japan in 1945 and we still see the consequences, the cancers, the destruction and the horror of very old people in Hiroshima and Nagasaki."

"If a nuclear war took place there would be mass destruction on both sides of the conflict ... everyone should think about the humanitarian effects on people across this globe if they're ever used.

"We live in a world where so many things are possible. Where peace is possible in so many places. You don't achieve peace by planning for war, grabbing resources and not respecting each other's human rights. Today's demonstration is an expression of many people's opinions and views. I'm here because I believe in a nuclear-free Britain and a nuclear-free future.

"Thank you for coming to this demonstration, thank you for showing that you care and thank you showing you want a peaceful future for this country and the rest of the world."

Many participants carried placards with phrases including 'Books Not Bombs', 'Cut War Not Welfare' and 'NHS Not Trident'.

Catholic student David Marston, 19, from Exeter told ICN: " Our health service is struggling, students are getting into huge debt in order to study; more and more people are homeless, and yet they want to spend £100bn on something that can only lead to the destruction of life on Earth. It's not right."

Joanna Berkley, 73, a Quaker from north London said: "We are all praying and hoping that the Government will hear us today. It would be immoral and a tragic waste of taxpayers' money to renew Trident now. Yes some jobs might be lost but the money could be invested in other projects that would bring more employment."

Source Independent Catholic News: <http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=29521>

UK MULTI-FAITH STATEMENT ON NUCLEAR WEAPONS

The teaching of many faith traditions contradicts the idea of security through nuclear weapons. A UK multi-faith statement on nuclear weapons was read at the interfaith service before the rally against the renewal of Trident on 27 February:

"Nuclear weapons are by their nature indiscriminate in their effect. Any use of nuclear weapons would have devastating humanitarian consequences, be incompatible with International Humanitarian Law and violate the principle of dignity for every human being that is common to each of our faith traditions. Our world faces many challenges including oppressive poverty, climate changes, violent extremism and emerging national rivalry. Addressing these challenges requires strong relationships across nations, founded on mutual co-operation, trust and shared prosperity. Security policies based on the threat of the use of nuclear weapons are immoral and ultimately self-defeating.

We must move beyond the division of our world into nuclear and non-nuclear weapons states and ensure that all states make good their commitment to negotiations on the universal, legally verifiable & enforceable elimination of nuclear weapons. We call on all nuclear weapon states to join in this endeavour. We urge these states and the international community to develop a robust plan of action that will lead us to a world free of nuclear weapons."

The service and faith participation was co-ordinated by the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship, Methodist Peace Fellowship, CND, Pax Christi and Quaker Peace and Social Witness.

Read the full text of the Multi Faith statement and add your signature here:

<http://www.endnuclearweapons.org.uk/about-this-statement.htm>

LITANY FOR PEACE from *Witness for Peace* 27 February 2016

For supporting the manufacture of arms through the payment of taxes,	Forgive us
For the unrelieved suffering and hardship which money spent on arms could heal,	Forgive us
For threatening to commit genocide by holding nuclear weapons as a deterrent,	Forgive us
For half-heartedness in hearing, living and sharing the way of peace,	Forgive us
For dividing the world into good and bad, and treating human beings as enemies and objects of hatred and scorn,	Forgive us
Let us pray that we may be set free from the chains of violence and nuclear death,	Deliver us
From the desire for power	Deliver us
From the conspiracy of silence	Deliver us
From the worship of weapons	Deliver us
From the celebrations of killing,	Deliver us
From the peace that is no peace,	Deliver us
From the security that is no security,	Deliver us
From the politics of terror	Deliver us
From the spiral of armaments	Deliver us
By hunger and thirst for justice,	Give us peace
By reconciliation of enemies	Give us peace
By gentleness and nonviolence	Give us peace
By the power of love	Give us peace

FUNERAL MASS OF LOUISE ZANRÉ MARKS A LIGHT BURNING EVER BRIGHT FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

Posted by Paul Donovan Monday, 29 February 2016

The funeral of Louise Zanré brought together people from the social justice world and beyond. Louise was a social justice activist from the very root of her being. When I first knew her she was working for Pax Christi with Pat Gaffney. She then moved on to become director at the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS). We did a number of interviews, one I always remember at the Thistle Hotel, Charing Cross, discussing refugees. That was not long after the time when the late Dr David Kelly had had one of his meetings at the same venue discussing the vagaries of the so called weapons of mass destruction in Iraq with a journalist.

Louise was always good for an authentic quote or briefing about what was really going on in the world of refugees. There have been many tributes to Louise since she died at the age of 47, mostly concerning her great work for refugees and justice. Louise though was not one dimensional, she had a family. Her husband sadly died a few years ago. Her father also died quite recently. She also had a wider family as was displayed by all of those who turned up to her funeral mass at the Jesuit church in Farm Street.

The homily was delivered by Father Dermot Preston SJ, who hit exactly the right note. He told of Louise's life, her work the need for Church and society to reach out generously to refugees. The sense of mission, some may not have found it yet, some may be looking for a new direction. Louise was fixed in her mission from an early age and stuck with that to the end.

The number of those who came from across the social justice world to the mass was amazing. There were refugees who had been helped by JRS, Chris Bain, director of CAFOD, Christine Allen, former director of Progressio and now director of policy at Christian

Aid, Julian Filochowski, former director of CAFOD, Neil Jameson, chief executive of Citizens UK, Helen O'Brien, former director of Caritas Social Action Network and Ellen Teague from the Columban Peace and Justice team. The whole ambit of people from across the world that Louise had touched – some tribute. It was the world of the Church doing justice, people out there in the real world doing something to try and help others. A world, sad as it is some way from the sterile existence of the institutional church, going through rituals that continue to keep women marginalised and a bunch of men, who like dressing up, in the ascendancy.

So although another important one of the number of those actively working for social justice in the world is now gone, the light of justice continues to burn brightly. The mass was the celebration of the life of someone who has contributed so much to the cause of social justice in the world. The torch has now been passed onto others to ensure that that light continues to burn ever brighter. <http://paulfdonovan.blogspot.co.uk/>

JRS VOLUNTEER MARGUERITE SHARES A REFLECTION OF FORMER DIRECTOR OF JRS UK

I had only known Louise in the three and a half years as a volunteer at Jesuit Refugee Service but she had taught me so, so much. The best compliment I heard in my early months was someone saying, 'Louise will give a limb for a refugee!' The words from **Matthew 25:31-46** keep coming to mind and I am sure Jesus is saying now to dear Louise:

"Well done good and faithful servant. Receive the reward prepared for you since the foundation of the world ... in so far as you did this to one of the least of sisters and brothers of mine, you did it to me."

Allow me to add my tribute to Louise:

I was a refugee and you saw me as a fellow human being, refugee being only one aspect of my life at this moment.

I was confused and did not know what to do and you helped me in whatever way you can or referred me to others when you could not.

I needed someone to listen and you were always there when I knocked on your door, giving me all the time I needed.

I was in pain mentally, physically, psychologically, and you understood though I had no idea how you were also suffering from your deteriorating illness.

I was homeless and vulnerable and you offered me refuge in the spare room in your home, not only to me but to others too.

I had no family here but when your home needed new doors etc you arranged for me to stay with your blood sister.

I was in despair and you gave me courage to continue hoping against hope.

I was angry and your gentle presence calmed me down.

I was marginalised and felt sometimes no one cared anymore and you gave me back some self respect by all you did and implemented at JRS.

I was a professional person back in my own country before I fled and you understood being a lawyer yourself and yet you never flagged that.

I had no voice and no power to do anything, and you spoke to all who would listen about my plight and that of my fellow refugees.

I had self pity and days I cannot drag myself to come out, and how many were the times you still came to work despite your sickness.

I had no family here to look after and wonder how you managed to juggle with your elderly father in a nursing home and work full time and going the second and third mile.

I had no or very little idea of your life even as I shared mine.

But God knows you more than anyone can and now has called you home.

Come Louise, you whom my Father has blessed, come to me for your work on earth is done.

St Francis on his death bed said to his brothers, 'I have done what I had to do. May God teach you what is yours.'

May others be inspired by you, Louise and continue now.

Teach us to live NOW for we know not the day or hour.

Come and join your husband, your dad, your loved ones in my kingdom. And all refugees will be there to welcome you.

Pray for us now Louise as we pray for you and with you. Amen!

FIRST CAFOD REGIONAL ORGANISER VIN MCMULLEN HAS DIED

John Mulholland writes: I heard yesterday the sad news that Vin McMullen died on Palm Sunday. May he rest in peace. His death had been expected for some time and he was certainly ready to go, full of faith and ready to meet the Lord.

Vin was a remarkable man who left school at 13, served an apprenticeship to become a joiner with Swan Hunter, the Tyneside shipbuilders (where he contracted asbestosis which only manifested 60 years later and from which he died), became a Catholic primary school head teacher in Northumberland and on Merseyside and, after early retirement, became CAFOD'S first ever regional organiser.

His "region" reached from the Scottish border to south Shropshire and his appointment was as an experiment to enable CAFOD to judge whether such appointments could succeed in reaching out to the Catholic community. So successful was he that regional appointments soon covered the country to be followed later by the structure of diocesan managers which he played a part in bringing about. He was dismayed to hear last year of the redundancies of some of the diocesan staff when that structure was dismantled.

His requiem will be in his Southport parish on Thursday in Easter week and so full of the promise of the Resurrection.

BERTA CÁCERES, HONDURAN HUMAN RIGHTS AND ENVIRONMENT ACTIVIST, MURDERED

From: **Apolo Santana** <santaflaco@gmail.com>

Date: 4 March 2016

Human Rights and Environmental campaigner Berta Cáceres was murdered yesterday at her home in Honduras. She was awarded the Goldman Environmental Prize for her work opposing one of Central America's biggest hydropower projects, the Agua Zarca cascade of four giant dams in the Gualcarque river basin. Berta was a co-founder of the Council of Indigenous Peoples of Honduras (Copinh) - one of its previous leader Tomás García was shot dead by a military officer in a protest in 2013. After a Copinh march in Río Blanco on 20 February, she and other participants were threatened and intimidated. I would urge you to e-mail the Ambassador Sr. Ivan Romero Martinez in London at hondurasuk@lineone.net to express your concern about finding the perpetrators of this heinous crime as well as ensuring that no further attacks are carried out against members of COPINH.

Jonathan Watts Latin America correspondent *The Guardian* writes:

Berta Cáceres was realistic about the risks she faced, but said she felt obliged to fight on and urged others to do so. Her death prompted international outrage at the murderous treatment of campaigners in Honduras, as well as a flood of tributes to a prominent and courageous defender of the natural world.

The co-founder of the Council of Indigenous Peoples of Honduras (Copinh) was shot dead by gunmen who entered her home in La Esperanza at around 1am on Thursday. Some reports say there were two killers; others suggest 11. They escaped without being identified, after also wounding the Mexican activist Gustavo Castro Soto.

Last year, Cáceres – who is a member of the Lenca indigenous group, the largest in Honduras – was awarded the Goldman Environmental Prize for her opposition to one of Central America's biggest hydropower projects, a cascade of four dams in the Gualcarque river basin, including the Agua Zarca dam. The campaign has held up the project, which is being built by local firm DESA with the backing of international engineering and finance companies, and prompted the withdrawal of China's Sinohydro and the World Bank's private sector arm, the International Finance Corporation.

Cáceres had called for other foreign partners, including the Dutch Development Bank, the Finnish Fund for Industrial Cooperation and German companies Siemens and Voith, to pull out. She has also won plaudits from international NGOs for standing up to powerful landowners, a US-funded police force, and a mercenary army of private security guards in the most murderous country in the world for environmental campaigners.

In an interview with the Guardian at the time of her award, Cáceres was realistic about the risks she faced, but said she felt obliged to fight on and urged others to do so. "We must undertake the struggle in all parts of the world, wherever we may be, because we have no other spare or replacement planet. We have only this one, and we have to take action," she said.

The dangers appear to have increased in recent weeks. After a Copinh march in Río Blanco on 20 February, she and other participants were confronted by the army, police, local mayor and employees of the dam company. Several were detained and some threatened, the council said in a statement. It was not the first time. Cáceres previously said she had received warnings that she would be raped or murdered if she continued her campaigns. There have also been past reports that hitmen were hired to assassinate her.

Honduras is a perilous place for activism. Cáceres's fellow Copinh leader Tomás García was shot dead by a military officer in a protest in 2013. Several others have been killed this year, according to the council. Cáceres had recently moved home because she felt the new house in La Esperanza would be safer. Between 2010 and 2014, 101 campaigners were killed in Honduras, a higher death toll relative to population than anywhere else, according to the study *How Many More?* by NGO Global Witness. It said a disproportionately high number of them were from indigenous communities who resisted development projects or the encroachment of farms on their territory.

Billy Kyte, a campaigner at Global Witness, paid tribute to Cáceres for her "incredible courage" and said the government – which is behind many of the controversial projects – must reverse the alarmingly murderous trend in Honduras. "The shocking news of Berta's killing is a dramatic wake-up call for the Honduran state. Indigenous people are being killed in alarming numbers just for defending their rights. The Honduran state must act immediately to hold the killers to account and protect Berta's family and colleagues," he said.

Read in full <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/mar/03/honduras-bertha-caceres-murder-environment-activist-human-rights>

- **Update 18 March:** Less than two weeks after environmental and Indigenous rights defender Berta Cáceres was murdered in Honduras, Nelson García, one of her colleagues has also been slain. Those who stand up for the environment in the places most-affected by climate change, are literally taking their lives in their hands by doing so.

Take action with Oxfam GROW campaign on this case here: <https://act.oxfam.org/international/end-the-violence>

CRISIS CAMPAIGN: LANDLORDS AND TENANTS DEMAND MORE FOR HOMELESS PEOPLE

Homeless people are finding it harder and harder to secure a place to live as the vast majority of landlords now consider it too risky to rent to them, according to Crisis, the national homelessness charity.

With growing numbers stuck in this “homelessness trap”, Crisis has launched a major new campaign - **Home: No Less Will Do** - calling for action to help homeless people secure a home to rent. Backed by leading landlord groups, including the NLA and RLA, the campaign calls on the government to extend the kind of support now offered to first-time buyers to homeless people looking to rent.

Drawing on a survey of more than 800 private landlords across England, new research by the charity shows how landlords are increasingly reluctant to rent to homeless people and those supported by benefits. It shows how more than eight in ten are now unwilling to rent to homeless people because of concerns which included rent arrears and the need for more intensive tenancy management. The majority reported that recent welfare reforms had made them more reluctant to rent to homeless people and those supported by benefits (see key findings).

The report warns that, as a result, homeless people are finding it increasingly difficult to secure a place to rent, with many struggling to afford upfront costs such as a deposit, rent in advance and agent fees. A survey of homeless people conducted for Crisis found that nearly three quarters said these difficulties had prevented them from securing a tenancy.

Jon Sparkes, Chief Executive of Crisis, said: “If you’re homeless, private renting may be your only hope of finding a place to live. Yet homeless people are finding it harder and harder to secure a private tenancy. That’s why we’re launching our **Home: No Less Will Do** campaign to make sure renting works for both homeless people and landlords.

“In a highly competitive rental market, homeless people are increasingly left with fewer opportunities to rent, and many simply can’t afford the upfront costs. This is a desperate situation to be in: to be ready to move on and start rebuilding your life only to encounter financial barriers and closed doors. We need action to tackle this homelessness trap. We need to find ways to reassure landlords whilst supporting homeless people to find a place to live. We’ve spent years working with schemes that help homeless people access and sustain tenancies, and we know that with the right support, this can be a win-win situation for both tenants and landlords. The Government already helps first-time buyers struggling for a deposit; it’s only fair they extend this help to those who need it most.”

With private renting increasingly important for housing homeless people, Crisis is calling on the government to ensure support is made available to homeless people and their landlords. In particular, the government should:

- Create and underwrite a national rent deposit guarantee to help homeless people rent
- Fund projects that provide tenancy support to homeless people and landlords
- Introduce a quality mark for projects supporting homeless people and landlords

Chris Norris, Head of Policy, Public Affairs and Research at the National Landlords Association said: “For most landlords, the best sort of tenant is someone who will make the place their home. People treat homes with respect and they want their tenancy to work out. Many landlords will be anxious about renting to a homeless person – they worry about whether they’ll be able to pay the rent, or if they’ll need more support compared to other tenants. And unfortunately, this perceived risk can become an obstacle to that person finding a place to live.

“Schemes that help homeless people into private renting can also help reassure landlords and remove some of these more risky elements. It’s a win-win situation: a homeless person finds a stable place to live and the landlord finds a tenant who wants to stay and make the house their home. That’s why we’re backing this campaign and calling on the government to take action.”

David Smith, Policy Director, at the Residential Landlords Association said: “The vast majority of landlords and tenants want the same thing – a stable, secure tenancy they can both rely on. It is expensive and time consuming for a landlord to find a new tenant and most landlords will do all they can to keep tenants in their homes rather than face an empty property. Many landlords would be much less reluctant to rent to people who were homeless if the risks could be better managed.

“As this campaign rightly highlights, there is a pressing need for better resourced support for homeless people and their prospective landlords.”

Key findings:

- 82% of landlords are unwilling to rent to homeless people. Reasons included a perceived greater risk of rent arrears (80%) and need for more intensive management (73%)
- 55% of landlords said they were unwilling to let to tenants in receipt of housing benefit
- 84% of local authorities surveyed said that over the past five years it has become more difficult for single homeless people to access private renting
- Two thirds (65%) of landlords said that direct payments under Universal Credit had made them more reluctant to rent to homeless people and 7/10 (68%) said it made them more reluctant to rent to tenants receiving housing benefit.

- Half of landlords (51%) said the caps on Local Housing Allowance had made them more reluctant to rent to tenants receiving housing benefit
- 18% of landlords said they had increased the deposit when renting to someone who was homeless; 16% had increased the rent; 34% made more use of guarantors and 35% took up references more extensively
- Eight of ten homeless people surveyed reported difficulties raising a deposit, while nearly three quarters (73%) had difficulty raising the requisite rent in advance.

For further information call 020 7426 3853 or email thomas.phillips@crisis.org.uk.

To find out more and to back the campaign, go to the 'Home. No Less Will Do' website.

<https://community.crisis.org.uk/home---no-less-will-do/home-no-less-will-do-campaign>

EDUCATION IS KEY TO ENDING THE 'SEXTING' EPIDEMIC

Ambassador for the children's charity Barnardo's, former Girls Aloud singer Nicola Roberts, has accused the Government of failing young women by not cracking down on sexting in schools.

Writing in *The Times* on 18 March 2016, Ms Roberts said she had been told many "heartbreaking" stories of girls who are trying to rebuild their lives after falling victim to online predators. She said that "sexual exploitation can lead to drug abuse, depression, homelessness and countless other long-term issues." She warned that while children are often told not to talk to strangers online, the pressure girls face from classmates to send a naked picture to a boy, "otherwise he won't fancy you," is often ignored. If the girl feels unable to go to her parents for advice who can she turn to?

Ms Roberts also called for lessons in personal, social and health education (PSHE) to be made compulsory to help teenagers "navigate their way through society" and help them understand that being bullied within a relationship or being blackmailed into sending explicit pictures is not normal or acceptable.

She added: "It infuriates me to see the Prime Minister treat this issue with such a lack of common sense. I don't understand why the Education Secretary Nicky Morgan isn't publicly backing this change to the status of PSHE lessons. I've read lots of social media posts from Mrs Morgan in which she tries to empower women. And yet she won't fight for an education that keeps women and girls safe."

<http://www.itv.com/news/2016-03-18/victims-of-sexting-being-ignored-campaigners-claim/>

SALFORD: FAITH SCHOOLS WILL COMBAT ISLAMOPHOBIA, SAYS BISHOP ARNOLD

by Dan Bergin Wednesday, February 24, 2016

Bishop John Arnold of Salford Diocese has championed faith schools as a way to help Muslims to integrate into British society. He was speaking at the **Citizens UK** commission on *'Islam, Participation and Public Life'*, hosted at Manchester University Whitworth Hall on Monday. The event was part of a chain of similar hearings run by Citizens UK in major UK cities. It saw speakers from a range of backgrounds and faiths meeting to explore and discuss major issues and policies affecting British Muslim communities.

Citizens UK organises communities to act together for power, social justice and the common good. They hold politicians and decision makers to account on the issues that matter to its members. Some of the topics under scrutiny at the event included policing, counter-terrorism legislation and Islamophobia; the role of Faith in Public Life; and the relevance of Secular and Religious Education in interfaith community cohesion.

Bishop Arnold stressed the important role that faith schools play in promoting inter-religious dialogue and integration. "From a Catholic viewpoint, we're duty-bound by our ethos to welcome other cultures and foster understanding. As Pope Francis would say, it's about putting faith into action. Christians and Muslims share a lot with the other Abrahamic faiths, and it's important that our schools encourage children to share these beliefs."

He cited the historical precedent of Irish Catholic communities migrating to Manchester in the 19th Century. He reminded those present that it took time for Irish migrants to be accepted, but that their contribution to the community meant that they were eventually able to integrate fully. He expressed his conviction that, through the work of faith schools, a similar acceptance and greater cohesion could continue to take place. He added, "We would lose a great deal in society if we lost our faith schools."

Bishop Arnold was joined by a number of speakers including Nazir Afzal, (Former Chief Crown Prosecutor for North West England), Ivan Lewis MP (Labour Bury South), and Tony Lloyd (Mayor of Greater Manchester and Greater Manchester Police and Crime Commissioner). Each speaker brought a unique perspective to the discussions, which were followed by Q & A sessions. All those who attended the event expressed their commitment to working together to find solutions to the issues covered. Whilst not yet established in Manchester, there has been interest in forming a Manchester Citizens alliance.

To watch Bishop John Arnold's opening words at the meeting, see: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vOsQvpo28GU>

To find out more about the work of Citizens UK, visit: <http://www.citizensuk.org/>

<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=29496>

PACT LAUNCHES PROJECT FOR CHILDREN AFFECTED BY IMPRISONMENT

Thursday, February 25, 2016

PACT, the Prisoners Advice and Care Trust, has launched '*Hear Our Voice*', a project to raise awareness and improve practice for children affected when family members are in prison. The charity is working in partnership with **Place2Be** to develop and deliver training in London schools on how to better support children and young people affected by the imprisonment of a family member. PACT is also working with the police in order to raise awareness and improve practice to minimise the harm caused to children when arrests and raids are carried out in their family homes.

A key part of this project is to empower young people to share their thoughts and opinions on the criminal justice system, on how the imprisonment of a loved one has affected them and what they would like to see change. PACT is running a series of sessions and workshops led by youth workers who will offer emotional support, and provide a safe, parent-free environment where young people can talk to their peers who have experienced a similar situation.

If you would like to support their work supporting children and young people affected by imprisonment, please click here: <http://prisonadvice.org.uk/our-services/supporting-prisoners-children-and-families/campaigns-and-advocacy/our-voice-children-0> to sign the Children's Charter.

To find out more about the sessions and to get involved please email hearourvoice@prisonadvice.org.uk.

Recently Michael Palin visited PACT to get to know more about their work with prisoners' families. **Hear his comments** in this Youtube clip: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aizPQy1OUBo>

<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=29503>

THE CLINK

Anne O'Connor writes: on 17 March I went to prison. It's not what you might think - I was invited to a special lunch at The Clink at HMP Styal Women's Prison in Cheshire to learn more about Shelter's prison support work. As Shelter CEO Campbell Robb explained, in a passionate speech, prisoners who have access to housing and employment on release are far less likely to re-offend – figures put this at 10% compared to the national average of 50-60%. The partnership with The Clink provides training as chefs and waitresses with full City & Guilds NVQ accreditation plus the chance to gain employment using these skills.

The first Clink Restaurant opened at HMP High Down in Surrey, when Alberto Crisci MBE, then catering manager, identified the need for formal training, qualifications and support for prisoners in finding a job after release. In Spring 2012 the Bromley Gardens opens at HMP High Down with six poly tunnels and a glass house offering space for prisoners to train in horticulture and produce up to three quarters of the vegetables and herbs used in The Clink Restaurants. As part of High Down's commitment to sustainability, 50 tonnes of food waste is composted each year and 2,500 litres of used fryer oil is converted into bio-diesel to run the prison vehicles.

Due to the success of the first restaurant in reducing re-offending a second one was opened at HMP Cardiff in September 2012 – the first premises to be located outside prison walls. It works alongside HMP Prescoed to offer over 30 Category D prisoners from HMP Prescoed and HMP Cardiff full-time work within the kitchen, restaurant and gardens. In February 2014 the third Clink Restaurant opened at HMP Brixton. Brixton follows The Clink's Five Step Programme: *Recruit – Train – Support – Employ – Mentor* which has been successfully implemented at both of the previous Clink Restaurants, to educate prisoners and equip them with the skills and tools to secure employment upon their release.

In May 2014 the Clink entered into a women's prison for the first time, launching The Clink Gardens at HMP Send, Surrey. The project provides prisoners with the opportunity to gain experience and City & Guilds NVQs in horticulture. Prisoners grow, cultivate and harvest crops and rear chickens for their eggs. The produce is transported to The Clink Restaurants at other prisons for use in the training kitchens. In September 2014 building started at the fourth prisoner training restaurant, The Clink Restaurant at HMP Styal in Cheshire, to transform the century old, disused chapel within the prison grounds into a 100 seat restaurant with private dining spaces for up to 24 people. This was officially opened to the public on 30th April 2015 as the first Clink Restaurant in a women's prison and the first in the north of England.

The issue of re-offending has become one of the most pressing challenges facing society today. 45.2% of adults reoffend within one year of being released. For those serving sentences of less than 12 months this increases to 57.5%. It is now recognised that the record levels of inmates in prison is not helping to reduce crime. The sole aim of The Clink Charity is to reduce re-offending rates of ex-offenders by training and placing graduates, upon their release, into employment in the hospitality industry. Since launching the charity has achieved incredible results:

- Over 500 prisoners have graduated from The Clink training projects to date
- Each prisoner works and trains for 40 hours per week
- The Clink operates 4 training restaurants, 1 horticulture scheme and 1 event caterer – Clink Events
- With the opening of The Clink Restaurant at HMP Styal there will be 150 training positions available
- The Clink training projects have accumulated over 20 award wins so far
- In 2014 approximately 40 prisoners graduated from Brixton and High Down and entered employment
- The Clink holds 2 outstanding Ofsted reports – one for Cardiff and one for High Down

Find out more at: <http://thelinkcharity.org/the-charity/>

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY: TAKE OXFAM'S WOMEN AND POVERTY QUIZ

How many countries in the world have no laws protecting women against domestic violence? How many years will it take to close the gender pay gap? How many of the world's richest people are women? Take OXFAM's quiz to discover how much you know.

Q1. Gender pay gap

Globally, the gender pay gap is 24%. At the current rate of progress, how long will it take for women to be paid the same as men for the same work?

A1. The World Economic Forum believes it will take another 118 years – that's the year 2133 – until the global pay gap between men and women is finally closed. So even our daughters could be underpaid their entire working lives.

That's not good enough. The UN has set a global goal to achieve gender equality by 2030. And that means paying women properly for the work that they do. **Source: BBC; WEF; Global Goals; The Guardian**

Q2. Unpaid work

Then there's the work that is unpaid. We're talking housework, childcare, fetching water or firewood ... the list goes on. How many hours of this kind of work do you think women do on average per week?

A1. Women put in 31.5 hours of unpaid work a week on average, according to a sample of 29 nations completed by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. That's almost the equivalent of a full-time job – with no pay whatsoever.

For the poorest women and girls, a lack of services means tasks take much longer, as women in sub-Saharan Africa spend over 5 billion hours a year collecting water. And it's on top of everything else they do – from paid work to sleeping, or even, trying to fit in a bit of leisure time. It can be a hard life being a woman when your world is stacked against you. **Source: OECD**

Q3. Equal pay

How many years ago was equal pay for men and women enshrined in law in the UK?

A3. The correct answer is 46 years. In 1970, the Equal Pay Act banned less favourable treatment in pay and working conditions between men and women. So why, 46 years later, are we STILL seeing a gender pay gap?

The world over, women are having to live with less pay and poorer working conditions. In Bangladesh, 85% of textile workers are women – a notoriously underpaid and precarious job.

Q4. Politics

Worldwide, the number of women in parliament has doubled over the last 20 years. To what percentage?

A4. As of August 2015, only 22% of all national representatives were female – so even though the figure has doubled, this is from a paltry 11.3% in 1995.

Women's representation is making a huge difference. In local governments in India, the number of drinking water projects in areas with female-led councils is 62% higher than in those with male-led councils. So if we're going to end poverty on a global level, more women in national government is a must.

Q5. Education

When a girl gets an extra year of secondary education, how much more can she earn?

A5. It's 15-25%. Every year of schooling increases a girl's individual earning power by 10 to 20 per cent, while the return on secondary education is even higher, in the 15 to 25 per cent range. And evidence shows women spend more of their income on their families.

Supporting women to complete an education can make a lasting impact for generations. It's why Oxfam puts women at the heart of everything we do. When faced with equal opportunities, women have proven time and again that they won't just do everything they can to end poverty for themselves, but they'll end it for their families and communities, too

Q6. Economic inequality

Earlier this year it was announced that just 62 people – so few that they'd fit on a double decker bus – owned the same wealth as 3.6 billion people. How many of the 62 are women?

A6. There are just 9 women among the 62 richest people. Never mind a double-decker – they'd fit into a minivan. At the other end of the spectrum, women make up the majority of the world's low-paid workers and are concentrated in the most precarious jobs. It's about time we evened it up – for men and women alike. **Source: An economy for the 1% (Oxfam)**

Q7. Agriculture

If women had the same access to farming tools and equipment as men, how many people would escape hunger worldwide?

A7. It's around 150 million. If women had the same access as men to tools and equipment to help them produce food, agricultural output in 34 developing countries would rise by enough to feed a massive 150 million undernourished people. It's a mind-blowing fact – and it shows that ending poverty really is women's work. **Source: An economy for the 1% (Oxfam)**

Q8. Violence against women

How many countries in the world have NO laws protecting women against domestic violence?

A8. The correct answer is 46. Myanmar, Uzbekistan and Armenia are just a few of the 46 countries that have failed to enact any laws to protect women against domestic violence. Without protection from the law, women's potential to escape violence – and poverty – can be seriously limited.

PLEDGE If these statistics concern you please sign OXFAM's pledge to women and girls around the world:

"We believe that every girl should be able to dream as big as every boy. That every woman has the right to make a fair living for herself and her family. That nobody deserves to be held back by violence, abuse or discrimination."

To sign the pledge go to: <http://www.oxfam.org.uk/women-unlimited/pledge>

RABBI JONATHAN SACKS AWARDED 2016 TEMPLETON PRIZE

Britain's former Chief Rabbi, Lord Jonathan Sacks, has been awarded the 2016 Templeton Prize for the spiritual insights he has brought to the public arena through the media, lectures and more than two dozen books. During his time as Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth from 1991 to 2013, Sacks led what many consider to be the revitalization of Britain's Jewish community, a feat he accomplished in the face of dwindling congregations and growing secularisation across Europe. During his tenure he built up a network of organizations that introduced a Jewish focus in areas including business, women's issues and education, urging British Jews to share the ethics of their faith with the community at large.

A statement from the Templeton Foundation said on Wednesday that central to Sacks' message is the appreciation and respect of all faiths, stressing that recognizing the values of each is the only path to effectively combat the global rise of violence and terrorism. Rabbi Sacks welcomed Pope Benedict to an interfaith meeting at St Mary's University College in London in 2010 and was received by the German pontiff in the Vatican in December 2011.

The statement noted that Sacks also "boldly defends the compatibility of religion and science, and recognised the need for the "strengthening of ethics in the marketplace long before the financial crisis."

The Templeton Prize is given annually to an individual who has made exceptional contributions to affirming life's spiritual dimension, whether through insight, discovery, or practical works. Last year's winner was Jean Vanier, founder of the L'Arche movement; in 2014 the winner was Fr Tomas Halik, a Czech priest and philosopher who risked imprisonment for advancing religious and cultural freedom after the Soviet invasion of his country and has since worked to promote interfaith dialogue. The 2013 winner was Archbishop Desmond Tutu, former Archbishop of Cape Town who has dedicated his life to promoting justice and peace.

Rabbi Sacks, will receive the award at a public ceremony in London on 26 May.

<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=29559>

VIEWPOINT: WOMEN MUST PREACH

by **Fr Russell Pollitt, SJ** Wednesday, March 9, 2016

An intriguing series of articles was published in the semi-official Vatican newspaper, *L'Osservatore Romano*, recently. They urged the Church to allow women to preach from the pulpit at Mass - a role that has been reserved almost exclusively for priests for 800 years. It's interesting that the Vatican's own newspaper has dedicated so much time to this question. Could this be a sign of things to come? Pope Francis has repeatedly called for women to have a greater role in the Church - although he has reiterated the ban against women being ordained priests.

The argument for the change is not to "modernise" the Church but to return to the tradition of the Church as it was in the first thousand years of Christianity. Women, during that time, often preached - in front of priests, bishops and even the pope. Mary Magdalene was frequently referred to as "the apostle to the apostles" because the Gospels tell us that Jesus first appeared to her on Easter morning and she preached the message of his resurrection to his male followers.

It was only in the 13th century, as part of consolidating church power in the papacy and clergy, that Pope Gregory IX effectively barred lay people - men and women - from preaching. In 1973 the Vatican gave the German bishops permission to allow lay people to preach for an experimental eight-year period. Most of the preachers were women.

John Paul II ushered in a period of stricter bans. In 1993 he revised Canon Law: he said that the homily is reserved for the priest or deacon alone. In 1997 the Vatican issued another document telling bishops lay people could not preach. It was obviously a widespread practice or a document would not have been written to forbid it. Ironically, it was also during this period that the Church was encouraging more participation in the liturgy. Lay people were being encouraged to take on ministries like Lector and assistant minister of the Eucharist. Girls were also allowed to be altar servers - a practice which is now common.

The standard of preaching in the Church is, for the most part, mediocre. Many people lament that they are not fed during the Sunday homily. I have heard some well-crafted homilies. But, sadly, most homilies I hear are not prepared, ill prepared or plagiarised from the internet, delivered poorly, boring, long, irrelevant to real life, uninspiring or a moralising treatise. Young people will often say they left the Church because they are fed-up with the poor preaching. Preachers don't seem to be concerned about this or, we are told, it's the Sacrament that's important not the preaching. The Liturgy Documents tell us the two are intimately connected.

Pope Francis addressed this very issue at length two years ago in his Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*. Few preachers seem to have paid any attention to what he said. Women would bring a new perspective and new life experience to homilies. The other (more than) half of Catholic humanity are well positioned to feed our starving people because for years they have had to listen to homilies. Maybe they can teach us what we have been missing or forgotten. Women must preach not least because it might help to raise the bar.

Follow Russell Pollitt on twitter @rpollittsj

Source: Ekklesia <http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=29596>

ACTA LETTER TO POPE FRANCIS CONCERNING THE NEW LITURGICAL TRANSLATION

From the foundation of ACTA (A Call to Action) in 2012, a persistent discontent with the new translation of the liturgy kept surfacing among its members, both laity and clergy. Some local branches, notably in Leeds, engaged in intensive study of the texts. In December 2013, the then Chair of ACTA, Jean Riordan, wrote to the Archbishop of Westminster (soon to be Cardinal) Vincent Nichols, reporting this widespread dissatisfaction among ACTA members. Riordan asked if the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales would again consider the 1998 translation. Widely admired, it had been shelved by authorities in the Roman Curia despite having been passed by all the eleven bishops' conferences which were full members of ICEL (the International Commission on English in the Liturgy).

In his response, Archbishop Nichols acknowledged that parts of the translation were "indeed clumsy and difficult". But, he said, other parts were "rich and rewarding". So there were different views about it. "A great deal of work" had gone into the new texts, which had been "given to us by the Church".

Jean Riordan had written previously to 34 bishops in England and Wales, following the introduction of the new translation. Twenty-two replied. Some were supportive but most emphasised the duty to be obedient. There was no choice, they said.

Meanwhile, Pope Francis had burst upon the scene, tasked with renewal. The first thing to be changed was the Church's attitude, he said. He set himself to liberate the body of bishops to speak plainly and openly in a collegial spirit extending throughout the whole People of God. ACTA had been formed precisely for this purpose. Meanwhile, the Pope and bishops were agreed that the Roman Curia needed radical reform. The Curia should be the servant of the bishops, not their master, Francis said.

But in the matter of the English liturgical texts, the Curia had behaved as the master. Would the Pope know about the liturgical situation in the English-speaking countries? Would people have been frank with him?

It was in this context that ACTA's letter to the Pope was conceived. The letter had a twin focus, one on the liturgical texts themselves and the other on the role that the Curia had played. A Spanish translation dated 8 October 2015 was put directly into Francis's hands just before the second meeting of the Synod on the Family.

Here is the English original of the Spanish text:

Dear Pope Francis,

I am writing to you as the chair of a new 'movement from below' in Britain. We exist to open up a space for trusting dialogue between clergy, laity and bishops on questions of mutual concern. We are encouraged to do this by your own example. We began in 2012 and in our first year more than 1,500 members joined.

I hope you will allow me to address you personally. We have again and again been made aware by our representatives in every diocese of England and Wales that there is a widespread and deep concern about the present vernacular translations of the missal into English. We have approached bishops in England and Wales about these deficiencies. We discern that a number of them have considerable agreement with us, but their hands are tied. The current translation was imposed on English-speaking congregations after a decision in 2001 of the Vatican Congregation for Worship and the Sacraments. The Vatican refused to accept the texts approved by the bishops.

The Vatican intervention contravened the clear instructions of the Second Vatican Council. The Constitution on the Liturgy stated that the vernacular translations were the responsibility of the local episcopates (SC, 22.2, 36.3). We believe that this sort of usurpation of power by the Roman Curia is one of the features of the Church today that disturb you and that you want to change, in accordance with the mandate given you by the cardinal electors in the conclave.

Like Catholics everywhere, we are looking anxiously but hopefully towards the synods you have called for October. We understand from interviews you have given and from what you have written in *Evangelii Gaudium* that you are inviting the episcopate to reestablish themselves as vicars of Christ in their dioceses.

We had the idea, therefore, of writing directly to you. Please may we present our experience of the adverse effects when the bishops are overridden.

May I recall that already during the Council a number of English-speaking bishops' conferences got together to produce the vernacular translations. They set up an instrument for this purpose, ICEL, the International Commission on English in the Liturgy. The first vernacular translations appeared in 1973.

The international commission had worked under great pressure. As soon as they could, they set out to produce a revised vernacular version of the missal. After 13 years' further intensive work and consultation, it was ready in 1998 with the approval of all the bishops' conferences represented in ICEL. This version is dynamic and beautiful as well as scholarly. In the Mass, it retains key texts – such as the Gloria, the Sanctus, the Creed - which were ecumenically arrived at as a bridge with other traditions. It

uses moderately inclusive language that does not offend the sensibility of women or young people today. It flows intelligibly for both priest and people.

Yet despite the bishops, the Vatican congregation refused to recognise it. It remains on a Vatican shelf. Instead, four years later, the congregation issued an instruction which overturned all the principles of translation previously agreed and followed for some 40 years. Entitled *Liturgiam Authenticam*, it enjoined an extreme literalism extending even to punctuation and capital letters. The aim was no longer to set the Mass in English idiom. It was to transpose Latin into English words.

A group of senior bishops was then selected to oversee the implementation of *Liturgiam Authenticam*. The group was called *Vox Clara*. Even after a new translation had been produced which was considered to be finished, a further set of changes were made by the Vatican. Many of us now find the language of the English liturgy to be stilted, clumsy and difficult. The original Vatican II inspiration has been pared down. Archaic terms appear in sentences which go on and on. There is no poetry. These are not texts that can be proclaimed. They do not aid evangelisation or prayerful reflection.

A full account of this imposition of central power and how it disenfranchised national bishops' conferences has been published by Bishop Maurice Taylor, the episcopal chairman of ICEL at the time.

A swingeing review of *Liturgiam Authenticam* by the Professor of Music History at Princeton University, Peter Jeffery, appeared in 2004. He himself, he wrote, was "as conservative as one can get without rejecting Vatican II". Yet he described *Liturgiam Authenticam* as "the most ignorant statement on liturgy ever issued by a modern Vatican congregation".

A notable critic of the earlier ICEL texts was Professor Eamon Duffy of Cambridge University. His scholarship coupled with his great feel for language has made him one of the most influential voices in the liturgical debate since the first ICEL translations appeared, and a powerful force for their improvement. But the present Mass texts are "ghastly", in his opinion, and the acquiescence in them by the English-speaking bishops' conferences is "craven".

Not everyone shares such opinions, of course. But certainly in our own ACTA movement the vast majority of lay and ordained members do. They see this as an historical misuse of power by the Roman Curia, with after-effects that are still being experienced today and every day at every celebration of Mass in parishes throughout the English-speaking world.

On their behalf I have ventured to write to you in this way, as the final court of appeal. I have found the confidence to do so because as supreme pastor you speak with us on our level, instead of addressing us always from above. We hope that the synod will recast itself along these same lines, for the sake of the whole Church, and we would like to assure you of our prayers that the Church should recover a proper balance between bishops and people, with the Roman Curia as a civil service that assists, rather than dominates.

Please could we encourage you to go on striving, as we know you will. The grateful hopes of so many depend on it in so many ways. For ourselves, as I have said, one of those hopes, expressed to me so often by so many of the members of our movement from all walks of life, is that one day in our lifetimes we may have the joy of celebrating Mass in proper English.

Signed: Jean Riordan, Chair, ACTA (A Call to Action), 2012-2014; Eileen Mary Fitzpatrick, Chair, ACTA, 2014-; Gerard J. Hughes SJ, Vice-Chair, ACTA <http://www.acalltoaction.org.uk/11-news/311-acta-s-letter-to-the-pope>

Mission Statement, A Call To Action: We are a group of Catholics, some of whom are ordained, brought together by our love of Christ's church and our anxiety about its future. Still inspired by the Second Vatican Council we want to contribute fully to the life of our church so that we may be a more effective sign of the Kingdom of God. To do this, we believe that an atmosphere of openness and dialogue both with each other and with our church leadership needs developing. Accordingly we aim to supply channels of free and frank communication. We desire to help create a climate of trust and respect for all where this dialogue may be fostered.

To read the full text of the rejected 1998 Translation go to: <http://liturgy.co.nz/failed-1998-english-missal-translation>

RESOURCES

BOOK LAUNCH: 'FOXES HAVE HOLES: CHRISTIAN RESPONSES TO HOUSING NEED'

Ekklesia is proud to be launching a pioneering new book, "*Foxes Have Holes: Christian responses to housing need*" at Manchester Cathedral on 14 April 2016 at 7pm. All are very welcome to attend.

The book is a direct response to the UK's housing crisis that is seeing citizens priced out of affordable homes, the collapse of social housing and a rise in homelessness. This collection of essays provides a brief history of British housing, demonstrating why Christians should care. It considers the role of local authorities and housing associations and includes reflections on changing cityscapes and the use of open space. There are essays on the rural communities, a theology of housing, and the impact of an inflated housing market. Contributors include Bishop David Walker, Andrew Francis, Helen Woolley, Helen Roe and Paul Lusk. The book concludes with a ten point action plan that lays out positive steps to tackle the housing crisis.

<http://www.ekkleisia.co.uk/node/22799>

NEW DOCUMENTARY ON LIFE OF SR DOROTHY STANG

Amazonia: Dorothy Stang's Struggle tells the story of US-born Dorothy Stang (1931-2005), who joined the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur and then lived *Laudato Si'* long before it was written. With every breath, Sister Stang made the protection of the poor and respect for creation her life's mission - and she did it in one of the most essential, most threatened, and most coveted ecosystems on Earth.

As a result of her support for the indigenous peoples of the Amazon - and of the environment in which they lived - she was assassinated in February of 2005 by the hired gunmen of prominent landowners whose abuses Sister Stang had denounced again and again.

"We made this film in the spirit of Pope Francis's encyclical *Laudato Si'*," Fr Gabriel Roussineau, Net for God's Director, told Catholic Ecology. "We wanted to demonstrate an authentic witness to the commitment to 'integral ecology' advocated by Pope Francis. Sr Dorothy Stang's life continues to bear fruit today, inspiring many local initiatives for the protection of biodiversity."

Fr Roussineau said that he hopes the 30-minute film will increase awareness of Sister Stang's life and mission, especially in Europe, where she is less known than in the Americas. "Our hope is that others can follow her example in their own countries. We hope her life inspires Christians to further engage in the defense of the environment, ecology, justice and the most poor."

An interview with Sister Stang filmed not long before her death helps this contemporary documentary teach us with her own words, about her faith and the trials of the poor that she loved so much. To build on this footage, filmmakers traveled to Anapu, in the Brazilian state of Pará, to meet those who knew Sr Stang. This includes those in her religious congregation, the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, as well as locals who have implemented sustainable development programs that Sr Dorothy began, and have thrived doing so.

We also hear from Bishop Emeritus Erwin Kräutler, who tells of how a young Sister Stang **came** to him and asked to work with the poorest of the poor. When his warnings about the conditions she would face did not dissuade her, he sent the nun to the areas and the people of the Amazon that she would serve until her execution. Bishop Kräutler, who himself served the people of the Amazon for almost four decades, contributed two important paragraphs to *Laudato Si'*. In the documentary he offers similarly pointed lessons from Sister Stang's life--words of challenge for Catholics everywhere.

All in all, this documentary is the perfect addition to any presentation or group reading of *Laudato Si'*. In just under thirty minutes it brings to life about every issue raised by Pope Francis's eco-encyclical, all because of the work and love of one amazing woman.

Amazonia: Dorothy Stang's Struggle is available in multiple languages and can be purchased at the Chemin Neuf Community website here: <http://www.laboutique-chemin-neuf.com/en/dvd/1621-amazonia-dorothy-stangs-struggle-3700226530646.html>
To see a trailer visit: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UnNFT-UFNXU>
Source: Catholic Ecology <http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=29497>

POETRY

REMI KANAZI *BEFORE THE NEXT BOMB DROPS*

Remi Kanazi is a Palestinian-American writer, poet and organiser based in New York City. His poetry presents an unwavering look at the lives of Palestinians under the Occupation and as refugees across the world. He captures the Palestinian people's refusal to be erased, gives voice to the ongoing struggle for justice and liberation, and explores the meaning of international solidarity. His work has been featured on news outlets around the world, including the New York Times, Salon, Al Jazeera English, and BBC Radio.

... we are the boat / returning to dock / we are the footprints / on the northern trail / we are the iron / colouring the soil / we cannot / be erased ... - from "Refugee"

Remi Kanazi's poetry presents an unflinching look at the lives of Palestinians under occupation and as refugees scattered across the globe. He captures the Palestinian people's stubborn refusal to be erased, gives voice to the ongoing struggle for liberation, and explores the meaning of international solidarity. In this latest collection, Kanazi expands his focus outside the sphere of Palestine and presents pieces examining racism in America, police brutality, US militarism at home and wars abroad, conflict voyeurism, Islamophobia, and a range of other issues.

<https://www.waterstones.com/book/before-the-next-bomb-drops/remi-kanazi/9781608465248>

SARAH HOWE *LOOP OF JADE*

This title was the winner of the Sunday Times/ PFD Young Writer Award 2015. It was shortlisted for the T. S. Eliot Prize 2015 and also for the Forward Prize for the Best Collection 2015. There is a Chinese proverb that says: 'It is more profitable to raise geese than daughters.' But geese, like daughters, know the obligation to return home. In her exquisite first collection, Sarah Howe explores a dual heritage, journeying back to Hong Kong in search of her roots. With extraordinary range and power, the poems build into a meditation on hybridity, intermarriage and love - what meaning we find in the world, in art, and in each other. Crossing the bounds of time, race and language, this is an enthralling exploration of self and place, of migration and in heritage, and introduces an unmistakable new voice in British poetry.

Publisher: Vintage Publishing ISBN: 9780701188696

<https://www.waterstones.com/book/loop-of-jade/sarah-howe/9780701188696>

NEW REPORT: *FEAR AND HOPE 2016: NEW HOPES, OLD FEARS*

Five years ago **HOPE NOT HATE** launched a pioneering report investigating the new politics of identity in Britain. Much has happened since then. The far-right political party, the British National Party (BNP) has collapsed. The UK Independence Party (UKIP) has surged to prominence. Immigration to Britain has continued at record levels, despite the election of a government pledged to reducing it. The rise of ISIS and terror incidents in Woolwich, Paris and elsewhere has kept Islamic extremism in the headlines. A referendum on Scottish independence prompted new conversations about the future of the United Kingdom north and south of Hadrian's Wall. A second referendum in June of this year will once again bring a debate on Britain's role and identity, this time centred on Britain's relationship with the European Union. Rarely in British history have questions of identity been so central to political discussion. The biggest controversies in British politics today often hinge on who we are, how we are changing as a nation and where we want to go.

You might be surprised to hear, given the incessant anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim rhetoric in the media and by our politicians, that Britain is a more tolerant and confident multicultural society than five years ago. That's the key finding of the ***Fear and HOPE 2016*** survey, which gathered the views of over 4,000 people in England. It follows on from a similar study conducted in 2011. Written by Professor Robert Ford, of Manchester University, and HOPE NOT HATE'S Nick Lowles, and based on polling of 4,015 people by Populus, this report explores levels of fear, hate and hope in today's England. It investigates our attitudes and relationships with one another, and also with outsiders. It explores what pulls us apart but at the same time what brings us together. It identifies the drivers of fear and hope and the triggers that push people from one to the other.

Fear and HOPE 2016 examines how England has changed since five years ago. It explores the growing cultural divides in society. New elements of the research examine our views on British values, Islam, terrorism and the EU. This research will help guide HOPE NOT HATE'S work over the next few years, including the launch of a Middle England initiative which seeks to engage with and reshape the narrative of those voters in the centre ground of British politics in order to develop a more progressive consensus on issues such as immigration, cohesion, integration, extremism and human rights.

The report shows that almost a third of people in England today are very positive towards our multicultural society, which is up from 24% in 2011. Meanwhile, the proportion of English who are most strongly hostile to immigration and a multicultural society has declined from 13% to eight percent (8%). Immigration attitudes have become more flexible and welcoming, despite continued record net migration inflows. Even attitudes towards Muslims have improved, with 78% of respondents saying it is wrong to stigmatise all British Muslims for the actions of a few extremists. However 24% of English people strongly oppose immigration, and a far greater number share some economic anxieties over new immigration and cultural concerns about integration and assimilation. Worryingly, 43% said that Muslims were "completely different" to them. And, just as growing optimism about the state of the economy has led to more positive views, so any downturn in the economy could see the situation reverse.

The most immediate challenge is the coming referendum on Britain's membership of the European Union (EU), where identity politics divisions will play a central role. The anxious/hostile tribes, which combine strong opposition to immigration, pessimism about cultural change and assertive English nationalism, gravitate towards the "leave" campaign. Their views look set to clash with those of liberal/multicultural groups, which combine a cosmopolitan worldview with pro-migration attitudes and optimism about the future, and already line up quite strongly behind the "remain" campaign.

Much is still up for grabs in the "swing" identity segments: culturally concerned voters who oppose the EU as a source of migrants, but support it as a source of economic and social stability; and immigration ambivalent voters who have few firm views about the EU but a political outlook defined by economic anxiety. Two very different visions of England will clash in the EU referendum campaign, which may be the first of many political contests structured, in part, by the competing identity and values of voters at opposite poles of the identity politics spectrum.

The report gives us a snapshot of what the English think today, but it will also shape much of our work going forward. It will help us talk about immigration and integration and to tailor our message to different sections of society accordingly.

<http://www.fearandhope.org.uk/>

POWERFUL 360° PHOTOS OF THE DEVASTATION IN SYRIA

Amnesty International is working with a group of Syrian media activists, photographers, actors and producers to shed light on what's happening in Syria, and gather powerful 360° photos of the devastation caused by barrel bombs.

Tony al Taieb, CEO, Lamba Media Production says: "Everyone here is young and Syrian. Nearly all of us have a parent, a sibling, a cousin, dear friends or colleagues who have died in this devastating war. We have all lost a city we call home. We are all grieving but instead of choosing to pick up weapons, we choose to pick up cameras to tell our stories to the people of the world in the hope that they will do something.

Why do we risk our lives? We believe that telling stories can change things. We believe that eventually this war will end and people will talk – this will be the solution to our problems. Before we began, there was only the regime's media, only their side of the story. We want to provide the Syrian people – and the rest of the world – with the right information so they can think objectively and make up their own minds. Look at our work and share it with your friends and family.

Together with Amnesty, our footage will help to form a body of evidence of the war crimes and human rights abuses in Syria. They bring us one small step closer to holding the perpetrators of these atrocities to account.

http://webmail.amnesty.org.uk/interface/external_view_email.php?J9187476216816973086428806424018

JUSTICE AND PEACE CALENDAR

4 April United Nations' Mine Awareness Day

On 8 December 2005, the United Nations (UN) General Assembly declared 4 April of each year would be officially proclaimed and observed as International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action. www.un.org/en/events/mineawarenessday/

18 April Global Day of Action on Military Spending

World military spending is at \$1.75 trillion. The day will call for military spending to be shifted towards social and environmental needs. Huge subsidies to the arms industry should be wound down. www.demilitarize.org.uk

MAY NATIONAL WALKING MONTH #Try20

This May we're asking you to give walking a go and pledge to #Try20. We're challenging previous Walk to Work Week participants to see if they can walk an extra 20 minutes every day throughout National Walking Month. Pledge to #Try20 with Living Streets this May. We have put together 20 ways to fit 20 minutes extra walking in to your day.

<http://e-activist.com/ea-action/action?ea.client.id=1719&ea.campaign.id=48068&ea.tracking.id=e-2&ea.url.id=553887>

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

15 May International Conscientious Objectors Day

Download Pax Christi's lesson *Should Christians fight in Wars?* which explores some of the issues around faith and military service. The pack includes guidance on how to organise a Peace Studies Day together with a selection of prayers and reflections about peace.

<http://paxchristi.org.uk/peace-education/lessons-workshops/general-re/>

Download Pax Christi's Way of the Cross using the moving stories of First World War Conscientious Objectors - compiled by Valerie Flessati with prayers from Fr Derek Reeve. Save for next year if you don't have the opportunity to use this year!

<http://paxchristi.org.uk/wp/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Conscientious-Objectors-Way-of-the-Cross-1.pdf>

MPs launch new Conscience Objection Bill

March 2nd 2016 marked 100 years since the first inclusive right of conscientious objection became law in the United Kingdom. To commemorate the centenary, the NGO Conscience: Taxes for Peace not War, hosted a discussion evening featuring MPs from three different parties and Sir Richard Jolly, a former United Nations Assistant Secretary General.

It also served as the launch of the '**Taxes for Peace Bill**' legislation which would bring conscientious objection into the 21st century by allowing people who object to funding war to re-direct the military portion of their taxes to non-violent methods of sustaining our national security.

The Bill will be tabled later this year by Ruth Cadbury MP, a Quaker, members of whose family were World War I conscientious objectors. When talking about the Bill Ruth Cadbury said: "In an age where more and more people are concerned about spending their money ethically, this is an idea whose time has come." Ruth was joined by Liz Saville-Roberts MP, who spoke of the history of war resistance in Wales. Michelle Thomson MP then spoke of her opposition to war and nuclear weapons from a Scottish perspective. Kelvin Hopkins MP also gave a talk describing his four decades of peace campaigning. All of these MPs and more have pledged support of the Taxes for Peace Bill, and have also supported an Early Day Motion highlighting the issue. They were joined by Robin Brookes, a peace campaigner who has unsuccessfully attempted to prevent his taxes being spent on military activity both by withholding taxes and seeking a judicial review of the definition of CO status with respect to taxation.

Ruth Cadbury added: "I want to pay for our national security, in fact I want to strengthen it, the Taxes for Peace Bill does this by investing in the most effective form of defence – conflict prevention." <http://www.ekkleisia.co.uk/node/22845>

* **For more details see Conscience website:** Campaign@ConscienceOnline.org.uk

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.

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

15-21 May Christian Aid Week

Celebrated in May every year, this is the week we love every neighbour. Jesus calls us to love our neighbour as ourselves, and not just the ones next door or at the end of the street. Christian Aid Week unites over 20,000 churches to put this love into action.

Together we'll hold church collections, host Big Brekkie fundraising breakfasts, and collect house-to-house. Join us.

<http://www.caw.org>

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

APRIL

4 United Nations' Mine Awareness Day www.un.org/en/events/mineawarenessday/

6 'Feeding Liverpool' Launch event 9.30am-12 noon LACE Conference Centre Croxteth Drive, Sefton Park, Liverpool L17 1AA

7 'Becoming a Kairos Community' Christchurch Parish Hall Heald Green Stockport SK8 3DY 7.30 pm Joint J&P Group meeting in the Stockport area **Supporting Peace with Justice in Israel/Palestine**. Marple J&P group will share their experiences which led them recently to become a 'Kairos Community'. More details: Ann Taylor ajtaylor.home@googlemail.com

19 A Screening of 'Open Bethlehem' www.openbethlehem.org/the-film/ plus Middle East themed refreshments. Free (donations to cover costs gratefully accepted). Q&A session will follow the film, and Palestinian goods will be available for sale. Marple Methodist Church, Church Lane, Marple, Stockport, SK6 7AY 7.30pm. More details: Marian Thompson marianet@tiscali.co.uk

12 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

14 Ekklesia book launch **Foxes Have Holes: Christian responses to housing need** Manchester Cathedral 7pm. All welcome.

18 Global Day of Action on Military Spending <http://demilitarize.org.uk> & www.paxchristi.org.uk T:02082034884

27 Reflections and Discussions on the COP 21 -the 2015 Paris Climate Conference. Opening input from Dr Paul Kelly & Fr Hugh Pollock who were part of the CAFOD delegation. 7:30pm in Holy Trinity and St George Parish Centre, Blackhall Road, Kendal LA9 4BW. All Welcome. For info contact: Lancaster Diocese Faith & Justice Commission lfjc@talktalk.net 01524 383081

MAY

1 Feast of St Joseph the Worker

7 Follow-On Day for all who used the Lenten resource **'Mercy and Our Common Home'** from CAFOD and Liverpool J&P. 10am-4pm St Bartholomew's, Warrington Rd, Rainhill L35 6NY

10 Time out on Tuesdays see April 10

14 Laudato Si' Session 1 Led by Steve Atherton. 12.45 -2.15 (Mass: 12.00) St Marie on the Sands, Seabank Rd, Southport PR0 0EJ All welcome. s.atherton@rcaol.co.uk 0151 522 1040

14 Faith in the New Economics? with David Midgley and Jonathon Dawson from Schumacher College. 10am -4.30pm in Holy Trinity and St George Parish Centre, Blackhall Road, Kendal LA9 4BW. All welcome. The meeting will be chaired by Sr Margaret Atkins. Sr Margaret attended the Green Christian Conference Joy in Enough last November and was really inspired to share the ideas. Hot drinks available, please bring packed lunch. Registration from 9.30am. For info and to reserve a place contact Margaret McSherry, St Bernadette's Parish House, Bowerham Road, Lancaster LA1 4HT lfjc@talktalk.net 01524 383081

tel: **14 NJPN AGM & Open Networking Meeting** www.justice-and-peace.org.uk

15 International Conscientious Objectors Day www.paxchristi.org.uk 02082034884

15-21 Christian Aid Week www.caw.org

JUNE

5 World Environment Day www.unep.org/wed

11 Laudato Si' Session 2 see May 14

14 Time Out on Tuesdays see April 10

25 'Welcoming the Stranger' Liverpool Justice and Peace Annual Assembly Speaker Fr Damian Howard SJ 10am-4pm Registration from 9.30am LACE Conference Centre Croxteth Drive, Liverpool L17 1AA s.atherton@rcaol.co.uk 0151 522 1040

BOOKING NOW: Annual Justice & Peace Conference 15-17 July 2016

'Justice, Power and Responsibility: How Can Democracy Work for the Common Good?'

SPEAKERS

Jon Cruddas MP - Labour member for Dagenham and Rainham. From 2012 to 2015 he was in the Shadow Cabinet as Policy Co-ordinator for the Labour Party. Influenced by Catholic Social Teaching, he is developing a virtue-based model of politics.

Jenny Sinclair - daughter of the late Bishop David Sheppard, who had a celebrated working partnership in Liverpool with Archbishop Derek Worlock and Free Church leaders. Four years ago she felt moved by the Spirit and founded a project, Together for the Common Good to help establish a dialogue with all people of good will aimed at change. togetherforthecommongood.co.uk

Takura Gwatinyanya - Program Manager of Caritas Harare. His special interest is in the implementation of sustainable development projects that promote engagement of civil society through public and private partnerships.

4th speaker: to be confirmed

CONFERENCE CHAIR: Christine Allen, Director, Policy and Public Affairs at Christian Aid. Christine was Executive Director of Progressio for 10 years and was part of the LiveSimply Executive.

Plus Panel Discussion: Chair: Simon Barrow, Writer, commentator, theologian, journalist; Co-Director of the Christian think-tank, Ekklesia. There will be a programme of activities for children and young people, and a Just Fair with information and resources from many organisations.

Find booking form here: <http://justice-and-peace.org.uk/conference/>

For more information contact: 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