

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

Ellen Teague writes: I am spending the morning with my Columban JPIC colleagues here in Washington. One of them - Scott Wright - shared the following this morning. (11/11/16)

A REFLECTION ON THE ELECTION

***A Citizen's Guide to Hope in a Time of Fear* by Howard Zinn**

"To be hopeful in bad times is not just foolishly romantic. It is based on the fact that human history is a history not only of cruelty but also of compassion, sacrifice, courage, kindness. What we choose to emphasise in this complex history will determine our lives."

In this awful world where the efforts of caring people often pale in comparison to what is done by those who have power, how do I manage to stay involved and seemingly happy?

I am totally confident, not that the world will get better, but that we should not give up the game before all the cards have been played. The metaphor is deliberate; life is a gamble. Not to play is to foreclose any chance of winning. To play, to act, is to create at least a possibility of changing the world.

There is a tendency to think that what we see in the present moment will continue. We forget how often we have been astonished by the sudden crumbling of institutions, by extraordinary changes in people's thoughts, by unexpected eruptions of rebellion against tyrannies, by the quick collapse of systems of power that seemed invincible....

Looking at this catalogue of huge surprises, it's clear that the struggle for justice should never be abandoned because of the apparent overwhelming power of those who have the guns and the money and who seem invincible in their determination to hold on to it. That apparent power has, again and again, proved vulnerable to human qualities less measurable than bombs and dollars: moral fervour, determination, unity, organization, sacrifice, wit, ingenuity, courage, patience—whether by blacks in Alabama and South Africa, peasants in El Salvador, Nicaragua and Vietnam, or workers and intellectuals in Poland, Hungary and the Soviet Union itself. No cold calculation of the balance of power need deter people who are persuaded that their cause is just.

I have tried hard to match my friends in their pessimism about the world (is it just my friends?), but I keep encountering people who, in spite of all the evidence of terrible things happening everywhere, give me hope. Especially young people, in whom the future rests. Wherever I go, I find such people. And beyond the handful of activists there seem to be hundreds, thousands, more who are open to unorthodox ideas. But they tend not to know of one another's existence, and so, while they persist, they do so with the desperate patience of Sisyphus endlessly pushing that boulder up the mountain. I try to tell each group that it is not alone, and that the very people who are disheartened by the absence of a national movement are themselves proof of the potential for such a movement.

Revolutionary change does not come as one cataclysmic moment (beware of such moments!) but as an endless succession of surprises, moving zigzag toward a more decent society. We don't have to engage in grand, heroic actions to participate in the process of change. Small acts, when multiplied by millions of people, can transform the world. Even when we don't "win," there is fun and fulfilment in the fact that we have been involved, with other good people, in something worthwhile. We need hope.

An optimist isn't necessarily a blithe, slightly sappy whistler in the dark of our time. To be hopeful in bad times is not just foolishly romantic. It is based on the fact that human history is a history not only of cruelty but also of compassion, sacrifice, courage, kindness. What we choose to emphasize in this complex history will determine our lives. If we see only the worst, it destroys our capacity to do something. If we remember those times and places—and there are so many—where people have behaved magnificently, this gives us the energy to act, and at least the possibility of sending this spinning top of a world in a different direction. And if we do act, in however small a way, we don't have to wait for some grand utopian future. The future is an infinite succession of presents, and to live now as we think human beings should live, in defiance of all that is bad around us, is itself a marvellous victory.

Angela Merkel's response to the US election result

Chancellor Merkel issued a congratulatory statement with firm undertones: "Germany and America are bound by common values: democracy, freedom, as well as respect for the rule of law and the dignity of each and every person regardless of their origin, skin colour, creed, gender, sexual orientation or political views," she said. Cooperation with the United States, she said, must be "based on these values."

See also: <http://www.rawstory.com/2016/11/irish-senator-rips-his-government-for-cozying-up-to-trump-america-has-just-elected-a-fascist/> Irish Senator Aodhán O'Riordáin lambasts his government for 'cosying' up to President-elect Trump.

THIS IS WHY I'M CRYING

Joseph Mizener, Washington, DC, United States: I am a crier. Anyone who knows me well (and many people who don't know me well or are complete strangers ...) has probably seen me cry. I have spent a lot of time crying the past two days. Last night, on my way home from work, I packed myself onto the 6pm metro. I was a little emotional and struggling to keep it together. A young, black woman squashed next to me asked me if I was alright. Cue waterworks, I just said "the election." Then she started crying too. She said to me, "I feel like I've been rejected." We cried together in those last few moments before the next stop and I said, "I'm sorry. You're not rejected by me." And she said, "And you not by me."

Let me explain that I am not crying because of the outcome of the election, although of course I am disappointed, but that 81% of white evangelicals in America voted for a candidate who built his campaign on racist, misogynistic, fearful language that is rooted in manmade systems built to uphold white, western, patriarchal power structures.

I am crying because church leaders, many of whom I have deep respect for, refused to use their prophetic voice to call out love and beauty in the midst of hate and ignorance. I am crying because dear friends of mine, people of colour, had to spend the day listening to white Christians praising Jesus for putting Trump in power, not acknowledging why that sentiment could be so hurtful to them. I am crying for my friends who are victims of sexual assault. They now have to spend the next four years watching someone who bragged on air about being able to sexually assault women — to grab their pxxxxs — govern our country because he is famous. I am crying because he brushed it off as "locker-room talk" as if the trauma that millions of women (and men) experience is something to joke about or make light of, and that just by default as president he will be a role model to young boys in our country. I am crying because friends who are immigrants are experiencing hate speech and violence, and are terrified of the possibility of being targeted for deportation.

To my friends of colour, LGBTQ+ friends, friends with disabilities, Muslim friends, women friends, and others who feel targeted, both emotionally and physically, and marginalized, I am sorry. I lament and ask God's and your forgiveness for the part I have played in the systems in play, both in society and in the church that I dearly love. I promise to do whatever I can to stand with you. And please know that I see you, and as I told my new friend on the metro, I do not reject you. I grieve with you. I pray for prophetic voices to arise from the dust.

— from our **Reader Stories:** <http://bit.ly/2eDPwSc> **Sojourners** www.sojournal.net

NICOLA STURGEON 'WILL NOT BE SILENT' OVER DONALD TRUMP

10 November 2016: Scotland's first minister has vowed not to maintain a "diplomatic silence" in the face of any racism, misogyny or intolerance from Donald Trump. Nicola Sturgeon released a statement congratulating Mr Trump after his surprise victory in the US election. But speaking at First Minister's Questions the following day, she made clear that she stood by her previous criticisms of his campaign. Ms Sturgeon had backed Hillary Clinton ahead of the presidential election. The first minister told MSPs she had faced criticism for breaking the convention that political leaders do not comment on election campaigns in other countries. But she said many of Mr Trump's comments during the campaign had been "deeply abhorrent".

She said: "I never want to be, I am not prepared to be, a politician that maintains a diplomatic silence in the face of attitudes of racism, sexism, misogyny or intolerance of any kind. I hope that president-elect Trump turns out to be a president very different to the kind of candidate he was and reaches out to those who felt vilified by his campaign. But people of progressive opinion the world over, I think, do have to stand up for the values of tolerance and respect for diversity and difference." Ms Sturgeon added that she wanted to "engage positively and constructively with the American administration", but would "never shy away from standing up for these important principles."

Scottish Labour leader Kezia Dugdale said Mr Trump's behaviour towards women had sent a "dangerous signal across the world." She added: "In January we will have a misogynist in the White House who has boasted about assaulting women and has used the most degrading language possible. And, of course, Donald Trump's intolerance is not just aimed at women - we all remember the sickening sight of him mocking a disabled journalist. We can't forget his plans to build a wall or ban people of one faith from entering America." Mr Trump, whose mother was Scottish, has had an uneasy relationship with the country in recent years. Ms Sturgeon stripped him of his role as a business ambassador for the Scottish government in the wake of his call for Muslims not to be allowed into the US. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-37940485>

OVER 1500 FAITH LEADERS URGE REPUBLICAN LAW-MAKERS TO REJECT TRUMP'S 'CABINET OF BIGOTRY'

28 November 2016: More than 1,500 interfaith leaders are calling on Republican members of Congress to reject President-elect Donald Trump's 'Cabinet of Bigotry' that includes Senator Jeff Sessions, Alt-Right leader Steve Bannon, and Lt Gen Michael T. Flynn, and to appoint advisers who understand that forging a more tolerant, united and inclusive America is the best way forward. Prominent Catholic, Protestant, Sikh, Muslim and Jewish faith leaders have endorsed a national petition stating that white supremacy has no place in the West Wing or any other rung of leadership. "All of our faith traditions teach us to love our neighbours as we love ourselves," the letter states. "After a painful and contentious election, the future of our nation rests in our ability to unite and work collaboratively for the common good of all people. But we cannot coalesce around these ambassadors of hatred, bigotry and intimidation," the letter continues. "Republican leaders must reject President-elect Trump's cabinet of bigotry and demand advisers who embody the values that make our nation great -- liberty, justice and freedom for all," said Rev Jennifer Butler, CEO of Faith in Public Life and the petition's primary author. "I stand firmly with those who feel left out of Trump's vision of our nation. Americans of every race, colour, sexual orientation and religious background should feel included and valued in this nation we call home." **Source: Episcopalian News Service**

To read the letter and list of signatories see: http://media.wix.com/ugd/03e723_7e427ad0094a4538863d1f5b0b46b105.pdf
Read this report in full: <http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=31439>

FR AUGUSTO ZAMPINI-DAVIES REFLECTS ON THE MEANING OF KINGSHIP

Homily given on Sunday 20 November 2016, the Feast of Christ the King, at Holy Apostles, Pimlico, London:

This week a bishop showed me a letter where a faithful Catholic was complaining about something happening in his diocese. The letter ended with a motto: 'long live Christ our King'. But given the tone of the letter, I doubt this person in particular (and we Catholics in general) actually understands: what does it mean that Christ is a king? A King or a Queen is somebody who has power to rule over a certain kingdom, territory and people. Today, these rulers are not necessarily Kings or Queens, but also presidents or prime ministers, sometimes elected by people. Arguably the most powerful neo-King on the planet is Mr Donald Trump, recently elected president of the United States, voted by many white Catholics of that country. Trump epitomises what a modern king is all about: power, wealth and popularity. But is this the sort of feast we are celebrating today? Is this the way Christ reigns?

Jesus' kingdom is a total reversal of the roles usually assigned to royalty. Instead of being served, he is a King who serves the other. Rather than being a wealthy King with a comfort life, he was born poor, worked in a simple job, and died as a beggar and a criminal. Instead of having media advisors on how to increase his popularity, he was continuously asking his disciples not to tell anybody the marvellous things (miracles) he was able to do. Rather than telling his supporters anything they wanted to hear, Jesus used to challenge them, inviting them to live the values of his kingdom, values that he himself live. But what are these values?

Regarding power, Christ's kingdom is not about increasing domination over others, making alliances with other powerful people, and expelling from the kingdom those who are powerless, like the migrants. On the contrary, serving everyone, especially the powerless, manifests Christ's power. For example, rather than preventing the disadvantaged of society people from having access to healthcare, Jesus used to heal and cure all those who were sick; and did it gratuitously.

In terms of wealth, Christ's kingdom is not about increasing the power of money, but the power of mercy. His wealth is not represented by a tower where just a few already wealthy people can enter and visit; but by a cross with which everyone who can feel identified with, particularly those who suffer from injustices.

Money, as the Holy Fathers of the Church and Pope Francis say, is "the devil's dung". Money could be the source of all evil if it does not serve. Indeed, money is just a technical instrument of mediation, useful to compare values and rights, to save and to fulfil obligations. But as any technical instrument, it is not neutral or value-free. It acquires value according to the means and circumstances for which it is used. When we affirm the neutrality of money, we are already falling into its power. Enterprises and businesses do not exist merely to gain money, as we hear every day in the media or at work. Their main purpose is (or should be) to serve, and of course to have a reward for that. That's why it is urgent to recover the social meaning of business and financial activities, using the intelligence and creativity of entrepreneurs.

To counter a misleading understanding and practice of wealth, Christ's kingdom proposes the power of mercy. This weekend we are concluding the year of mercy, which is not just about reconciliation with friends and parents, but also with the harm I cause by the use of my money or wealth to poor brothers and sisters and to Mother Earth. God's name is mercy, and Jesus' practices reflect this. Mercy is the overarching principle of Jesus' life-mission. He is moved by compassion when he sees people suffering. Christ the King is here to heal, save and liberate, not to harm, condemn and oppress. Likewise, the Church exists to heal, save and liberate. Mercy is therefore the ethos and pathos of the Church, its criterion of authenticity. We, as living stones of the Church, are going to be judged according to the mercy we have had during our lives. When we are moved by compassion due to the suffering of people and of the earth, we are following Christ, the King of mercy.

A third characteristic of Christ's kingdom is also related to popularity. Mercy is not merely about acts of mercy, which are good and necessary. Mercy, in God's kingdom, goes deeper. Reacting to the suffering is one side of the coin. The other is tackling the causes of suffering. When we deploy acts of mercy (e.g. visiting an elderly person in a nursing home, or giving money or food to a beggar, or planting a tree) everybody applauds. But when we start questioning the roots of poverty or ecological degradation (e.g. why are so many people begging for food in England, a rich country; or why are so many natural forests destroyed worldwide), then some people react differently, either with indifference or with rejection. Jesus was not crucified because he was doing good and healing people. He was crucified because he was questioning the reasons that caused people's suffering, sometimes those reasons being religious ones (e.g. healing on a Sabbath, and putting every person before this religious institution). This is not popular. In fact, before dying Jesus was scorned and mocked not only by the religious, political and military authorities, but also by other vulgar convicted people.

Dying on his cross-throne, Jesus is thrice taunted for the fact that he does not save himself. "You a saviour?" they jeer. "Then save yourself." His reign subverts our notion of kingship. He is not here to reign and save himself, but to serve with mercy and include others in his kingdom (save them). Let Christ the King grant us the power of mercy so as to serve others - especially with those who suffer the most, and not just to serve our own interests. I hope that when we say 'long live Christ the King', we can have this in mind.

<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=31380>

NJPN WELCOMES PARIS CLIMATE AGREEMENT COMING INTO FORCE

Ellen Teague writes, 3 November 2016: The National Justice and Peace Network of England and Wales (NJPN) has welcomed the historic Paris Agreement on Climate Change formally coming into force on 4 November 2016. This will legally bind countries that have ratified the deal to act on the pledges made last year in Paris. This includes a commitment by every country to prepare increasingly ambitious pledges to tackle greenhouse gas emissions, and to provide financial and technical support to developing countries, where poor communities have felt the worst impacts of Climate Change.

A raft of countries ratified the deal on 22 April, which was the first possible opportunity to do so. These mainly included small island states, whose emissions are negligible in the context of global emissions. Since then, the US and China jointly ratified the agreement, together being responsible for 38% of global emissions. India and the European Union ratified last month. The unprecedented speed of the entry into force of the Paris Agreement demonstrates that world leaders understand the urgency of the issue. According to the NJPN, galvanizing action to implement the Paris Agreement must now begin in earnest by leaving the era of fossil fuels behind and embracing an energy future based on renewable and clean energy sources. Ashley Ralston, chair of the NJPN's Environment Working Group, says: "We are proud that the NJPN has for at least decade given serious attention to environmental justice, including climate action. Some of our member groups were in Paris, alongside a Vatican delegation, CAFOD, and members of the Global Catholic Climate Movement, where the papal encyclical *Laudato Si'* was influential in inspiring the agreement. The NJPN urges Prime Minister Theresa May to keep her promise for the UK to ratify the agreement by the end of this year. We would like to see her do so before the next major UN climate summit in Marrakesh later this month and for the UK to speedily transition to a low-carbon economy." <http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=31270>

CAFOD WELCOMES UK RATIFICATION OF PARIS AGREEMENT AS A 'CRITICAL STEP'

23 November 23 2016: CAFOD has welcomed the ratification of the Paris Agreement by the UK government as a "critical step" in the fight against climate change. Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson signed the Agreement into domestic law on Thursday 17 November. The UK became the 112th country to ratify the Accord, which was reached at the Paris climate conference last December.

The Catholic Church was seen as a major voice in the process that led to the Paris Agreement, with several world leaders citing Pope Francis's encyclical *Laudato Si'* in opening speeches at the 2015 conference. Neil Thorns, CAFOD's Director of Advocacy, said: "Ratification is a critical step in the battle to prevent climate change from pushing people deeper into poverty. It's another example of the momentum behind the Agreement and a testament to the global leadership role the UK and others have taken on the issue. Paris was an unprecedented achievement, with 197 countries overcoming vested interests to provide an unambiguous direction for the future of the world economy. This is reflected by a swathe of records broken in the last year, including in the UK where renewable energy is now generating more electricity than coal. The Church has been at the forefront of the momentum behind the Paris Agreement. Millions of people have responded to Pope Francis's clarion call in *Laudato Si'* and thousands of churches in England and Wales have already switched to renewable energy."

Thorns acknowledged that while the US election results have raised questions about America's future position on the Paris Agreement, "tectonic economic shifts" and "unequivocal" declarations by countries at this month's UN climate conference mean the US will be under intense pressure to maintain its commitments. Thorns said: "In the US alone, the cost of solar and wind power has plummeted 80% and 60% respectively since 2009 and the renewable energy sector already employs more people than the coal industry. This collapse in cost also makes renewable energy the cheapest, safest, cleanest and most reliable way of ending energy poverty. It's essential now that we maintain the momentum generated by the Paris Agreement by speaking up to our MPs to support action nationally and internationally. We can also think about what changes we can make in our own lives, such as by switching to renewable energy in our own homes in order to care for our common home."

<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=31402>

UNDER TRUMP, US IN DANGER OF BEING LEFT BEHIND BY CLEAN ENERGY REVOLUTION

10 November 2016: Christian Aid has warned that any attempts by new US President Donald Trump to bury his head in the sand over climate change will harm American interests and be an act of economic self-sabotage. The agency's International Climate Lead, Mohamed Adow, said the global transition to a zero carbon economy would not be held up by one man. He said: "Last year's Paris Agreement showed the world was united in its concern about climate change and its commitment to decarbonising the global economy. The rest of the world will not risk a global climate catastrophe because of one man's opposition. The economics of energy are already changing rapidly, home grown wind and solar are increasingly becoming the cheapest forms of energy and falling costs in technology continue to show us the direction of travel. The benefits are already being recognised by a number of US states which are harnessing their abundant clean energy resources. It's also popular with the American public. A recent Pew Research Centre study showed that 83 per cent of American adults support expanding wind farms, while 89 per cent support solar expansion. On a practical point, now that the Paris Agreement has come into force no country can easily withdraw for at least three years. Even if the US wanted to do so at that point it would suffer considerably, both a political and diplomatic cost as well as putting itself at the back of the pack on the benefits of clean tech. Although the US will certainly suffer from any obstruction of efforts to stop climate change, it also risks the lives of millions of the world's poorest people who have done nothing to cause the problem yet are the most vulnerable to its effects."

<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=31314>

Read Christian Aid's COP 22 Briefing Paper: *Moving Forward from Paris* here:

<http://www.christianaid.org.uk/Images/time-for-climate-justice-briefing-nov-2016.pdf>

GLOBAL FAITH LEADERS URGES GOVERNMENTS TO DIVEST FROM FOSSIL FUELS

10 November 2016: Leaders from global faith groups, financial institutions and foundations meeting at COP22 in Marrakesh, handed over the Global Interfaith Statement, challenging all sovereign wealth funds and state pension funds - collectively worth more than \$19 trillion - to divest from fossil fuels and invest in the green economy and in accordance with the Paris Agreement. More than 30 faith groups globally collaborated in drafting the statement, which was introduced, along with thousands of supporting signatures, at the side event **'Building the Divest-Invest Movement with Faiths, Foundations and Finance'**. It is a powerful reminder to governments of the moral obligation to stop funding the toxic fossil fuel industry and instead direct those resources to fund climate solutions, noting that "global society's continued use of fossil fuels and other extractive industries, while knowing the damage they cause, is ethically untenable." Solutions for a just transition must revolve around developing renewable energy sources and increasing the support to community-led initiatives so the world, especially those who have done less to contribute to global warming, can adapt and tackle climate change impacts.

<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=31315>

Read the full statement here: <http://www.interfaithstatement2016.org/>

FAITH GROUPS CALL FOR 'CLEAN ENERGY NOT COAL' AT CLIMATE SUMMIT

11 November 2016: As nations meet in Marrakesh, Morocco to plot the global response to climate change, more than 120 organisations, including faith groups, southern movements and anti-poverty charities, have called for an end for all forms of public support for coal expansion and the world's wealthiest economies to renounce coal totally. Organisations including CAFOD, the Overseas Development Institute, WWF and Christian Aid have said that as the number one source of fossil fuel emissions, more coal burning will only fuel poverty around the world. Instead, the group has said if nations are serious about alleviating poverty and improving the prosperity of the world's poor then expanding renewable energy is vital.

Dr Alison Doig, Christian Aid's Principal Climate Advisor, said: "The coal industry likes to claim it is 'God's gift' to the poor, when actually the opposite is true. Extreme poverty will only be eradicated if we effectively address climate change, the two are inseparable. But thankfully their solutions also converge. Expanding clean, home grown renewable energy to the world's poorest and most remote people will have a transformative effect and deliver sustainable poverty eradication - something coal cannot do." The statement, based on findings set out in a report ***Beyond Coal: Scaling up Clean Energy to Fight Global Poverty***, will be discussed at a side event at the COP 22 climate summit in Marrakesh today. The panel will feature Benson Ileri from Christian Aid in Africa, Alejandro Aleman Treminio, Centro Humboldt, Nicaragua and Wanun Permpibul, Director, Climate Watch Thailand and will be chaired by Leo Hickman, editor of Carbon Brief. Dr Doig added: "Countries need to deliver the Paris Agreement's long term goal for the world to achieve zero carbon economies by mid-century. To achieve this, countries must ramp up action before 2020, something which will be discussed next week in Marrakesh by ministers." The statement also calls for all forms of fossil fuel subsidies to be scrapped by G20 Governments and for development institutions to ensure the majority of their energy investments directly deliver energy to poor communities currently off the electricity grid.

Source: Christian Aid <http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=31323>

CAFOD: PREPARING FOR WINTER IS A MAJOR PRIORITY AS IRAQIS FLEE MOSUL

14 November 2016: There are warnings that there could be more than a million Iraqi refugees as the battle for Mosul, Iraq's second-largest city, intensifies. Winter in northern Iraq means sub-zero temperatures. Last year several babies living in tents in refugee camps died of hypothermia. In the next few weeks as more refugees arrive aid agencies are extremely concerned that more will die of cold unless they are better equipped. CAFOD's partner Hani El Mahdi, Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Iraq Country Representative said: "We are very worried. These large numbers of displaced people are expected just before the cold weather sets in. The arrival of winter could pose an unmanageable challenge. Lower oil prices have led the Kurdish and central government to provide less humanitarian aid than in previous winters. With temperatures dropping to dangerous levels, our preparation work is vital as there will not be time to build camps for everyone forced from their home, so we must scale up our work to deal with the emergency needs of people."

CRS and local partner Caritas Iraq, supported by UK aid agency CAFOD, and other members of the Caritas confederation, are prepared to respond to the needs of those fleeing the fighting in Mosul. They have staff and volunteers ready to deploy across Northern Iraq and Kirkuk putting in place an emergency response programme that will focus on providing shelter, water and sanitation, and cash assistance, giving priority to the care and protection of women, children, the elderly and the disabled. "We've been getting ready for Mosul for months by training additional staff and volunteers," says Hani El-Mahdi. "We're confident that we'll be able to respond quickly as the situation evolves." CRS and Caritas Iraq have helped more than 150,000 displaced Iraqis by providing shelter, water and sanitation, as well as daily living supplies - such as soap, blankets and hygiene kits. They have also been able to provide and support education, psychosocial support, and child friendly spaces for children. According to the UN, almost 34,000, men, women and children have fled their homes since the start of the offensive for Mosul on 17 October. People leaving Mosul join the approximately 3.3 million Iraqis who have been internally displaced since ISIS began taking over parts of Iraq in 2014. Since 2014, the violence in northern and central Iraq has caused devastation and mass displacement. More than 80 per cent of the displaced people are living outside of the organised camps, with host families, or in makeshift or unfinished buildings. In all, nearly 10 million people in Iraq are in need of vital humanitarian assistance.

CRS and Caritas Iraq have a presence across Iraq, with offices in Dohuk, Erbil, Kirkuk and Baghdad. Most recently, CRS and Caritas Iraq have responded to the needs of those who fled the Iraqi cities of Fallujah and Hawija. CRS and CAFOD are members of Caritas Internationalis, a confederation of over 160 Catholic aid agencies - reaching out to the poor, vulnerable and excluded, regardless of race or religion. **To donate to CAFOD's Emergency Fund see:** <http://cafod.org.uk/Give/Donate-to-Emergencies>

PEACE GROUPS VOICE CONCERN AS BRITISH ARMY INCREASES RECRUITMENT OF UNDER-AGE SOLDIERS

27 November 2016: New figures out this week show that 24 percent of British Army recruits are child soldiers. This is despite public opposition from the Quakers and other Christian and lay organisations campaigning to raise the age of enlistment. The Ministry of Defence released the UK armed forces biannual diversity statistics 2016. They show that the proportion of the Army's intake aged under 18 increased from 22.5 percent to 24.1 percent. The armed forces as a whole recruited 1,140 16 year olds and 1,250 17 year olds, from a total of 12,300 new recruits.

Child Soldiers International say Army recruitment policies place the minors in the riskiest roles in the infantry and forces them to serve longer minimum service periods. Recruits aged 16 have a total minimum service period of six years, while 17 year olds must serve for five. Adults can be discharged after four years' service. The UK is the only permanent member of the UN Security Council that still recruits 16 year olds.

Meanwhile, this week Scottish Parliament's Public Petitions Committee agreed to discuss further a proposal to increase regulation of armed forces' visits to schools. The Committee received evidence from public bodies on the joint petition from Forces Watch and Quakers in Scotland. The Committee has now agreed to consult with a range of other organisations, including from young people's organisations, children's rights groups, veterans organisations and those responsible for careers provision.

Quakers in Scotland and Forces Watch made a joint submission to the Scottish Parliament's Public Petitions Committee. They referred to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), 2016 which recently reviewed the UK's position on implementing the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The UNCRC expressed concern that the armed forces carry out pre-recruitment activities at a young age in schools, with emphasis on areas of disadvantage and marketing practices that fail to give a balanced view of life in the armed forces.

The UNCRC recommended that:

- Recruitment is 'genuinely voluntary and based on fully informed consent' and 'does not have a discriminatory impact on children of ethnic minorities and low income families'.
- 'Recruitment practice does not actively target persons under the age of 18 and ensure that military recruiters' access to school be strictly limited'.

Pat Gaffney, General Secretary of Pax Christi, told ICN: "Forces Watch and the Quakers in Scotland are to be congratulated on this work which will help to protect under-18s who are recruited into the military and more importantly move the UK towards a policy that will stop the recruitment of under-18s. Pax Christi is disturbed by the access to schools that the military enjoy, an often unquestioned access, particularly in areas of deprivation. It is a sign of our impoverished imagination and will if the only work or training opportunity we give young people from deprived areas is within the military - an experience which, from the report, may actually damage them. If the same resources were invested in other forms of education and training for the needs of communities these young people would be better served."

Read more: <http://www.medact.org/news/recruitment-children-uk-armed-forces-critique-health-professionals/>

Watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OgJ83yYIR1g>

Source: Quakers/Pax Christi <http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=31428>

NONVIOLENCE AND JUST PEACE: WATCH THE PRESENTATION FROM NJPN NETWORKING DAY

Around 40 people attended our Open Networking Day on 19 November 2016 and heard Pat Gaffney of Pax Christi speak about the **Rome Conference** on *Nonviolence and Just Peace* in which she had participated. You can watch the talk and the question and answer session on the links below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-0nqIMqpi2U&feature=youtu.be&a>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JIISqHiMDoI&feature=youtu.be&a>

CARJ WELCOMES REPORT HIGHLIGHTING IMPACT OF BREXIT ON ROMA COMMUNITY

28 October 2016: The Catholic Association for Racial Justice (CARJ) is currently engaged in an effort to identify and support specific groups who have become newly vulnerable since Brexit. Long involved in supporting Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, CARJ has welcomed the recent Institute of Public Policy report: *Roma Communities and Brexit* - which traces the migration of Roma communities from Central and Eastern Europe to the UK and warns that once EU funding for the integration of this group is withdrawn following Brexit, the Government may not make up the shortfall.

"These communities, already among the most disadvantaged in our society, now find themselves newly vulnerable in a number of ways. There is uncertainty over their future right of residency; they will feel insecure given the recent rise in hate crime; and EU funding to support Roma integration may cease." CSAN and CARJ are encouraging the Catholic community to make themselves aware of the issues raised in this report and to become actively involved in public discussion about how Brexit will affect Roma communities.

Source: [CSAN www.csan.org.uk](http://www.csan.org.uk)

<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=31228>

ARBITRARY RESTRICTIONS ON PROCESSING ASYLUM CLAIMS FROM UNACCOMPANIED MINORS

20 November 2016 **Phil Kerton writes:** *I outlined this sad state of affairs at yesterday's NJPN meeting in London, asking people to write to MPs and Ministers for the reasons explained in the briefing linked below. Please try to do this and to share this request with others who may be concerned about what is happening. Thank you for your help.*

Having promised to process claims to come to the UK from young people in the Calais camp, it emerged on 16 November that our government has retrospectively changed the criteria for processing their claims. More than half of them will not even see a start to consideration of their situations.

A briefing on this sorry state of affairs, based upon statements made by support agencies and politicians is available at http://seekingsanctuary.weebly.com/uploads/5/1/3/5/51352511/briefing_2.pdf Please read this. If, after reading, you are as angry as we are at **Seeking Sanctuary**, PLEASE WRITE to Amber Rudd demanding that the Home Office immediately amend its guidance on Section 67 of the Immigration Act 2016 so that it does not discriminate by age or nationality. Also, write to your MPs, asking them to draw the Minister's attention to your concerns and to let you know about her response.

Seeking Sanctuary says that:

- The government should face up to its obligations and be a leader in accepting those who are young, vulnerable, traumatised and in danger. The Home Office must amend this guidance and meet its responsibility to all unaccompanied child refugees, regardless of their nationality.
- We do not object to certain children being prioritised, but the strict eligibility criteria totally rule out bringing many of the youngsters who had been living in the Calais camp before it was cleared in October. Hundreds of children now face an uncertain future. We strongly urge the government not to use the new criteria retrospectively, or at least to reconsider them and show compassion in this ongoing crisis.
- In order to stay true to Section 67 of the Act, each child's unique vulnerabilities should be taken into account, rather than applying arbitrary criteria. The government must ensure that a full and proper best-interests assessment is carried out for each individual, respecting the needs of children who have already been pushed from pillar to post in search of safety.
- Officials should understand that it is important to avoid assessing children according to arbitrary criteria – especially to these, which leave any child subject to a medium or moderate risk of sexual exploitation on their own!
- We call upon the government to accept a maximum of the Calais children of all ages and nationalities by Christmas. During the camp demolition parliament was told that it would be a good outcome if Britain took in half of the total number of children. We agree. It is now clear that there were over 1600 unaccompanied children in Calais at the time of demolition. Compared to the 95,000 unaccompanied children who arrived in Europe last year in the refugee crisis, this is not too big an ask.

You can find out about contacting your MP at both these websites:

www.theyworkforyou.com

www.parliament.uk/get-involved/contact-your-mp/

About Seeking Sanctuary. Almost all of the 8,000+ migrants still encamped in Calais in October 2016 have been moved away, hopefully to better accommodation. 1616 unaccompanied minors have also moved, along with hundreds of vulnerable women and children, to secure temporary accommodation throughout France for their cases to be processed. But around 1000 people remain in the camp near Dunkirk and more are hidden in the nearby countryside. **Seeking Sanctuary** aims to raise awareness about their situation and is organising basic humanitarian assistance through Faith Communities and Community Organisations in partnership with experienced aid workers. Food and clothes are still needed by most of them, not least the scores of new arrivals who turn up weekly.

For further information on how you or your organisation can help, contact Ben Bano on 07887 651117 or Phil Kerton on 01474 873802.

To check the latest news, visit our website on www.seekingsanctuary.weebly.com.

SUPPORT FOR REFUGEES

Churches Together in Cumbria Resources for Supporting Refugees:

<http://www.churchestogethercumbria.co.uk/home/709-ctic-refugee-support-html>

Welcoming the Stranger – A Guide

A handbook for churches and other groups to help them find a way to respond positively to the refugee crisis. With easy to read sections and important factual information, the guide busts myths that have grown up to describe this national and global crisis. From Liverpool Justice & Peace Commission in conjunction with other church leaders:

http://www.liverpoolcatholic.org.uk/userfiles/files/Justice_and_Peace/aguide-welcomethestranger.pdf

THE HARROWING REALITY OF UK POVERTY: '*I, DANIEL BLAKE*' [REVIEW]

Posted on 27 October 2016 by **Jon Kuhrt**.

In 1967, Ken Loach's film ***Cathy Come Home*** was a seminal moment in the national consciousness about homelessness. The film led directly to the formation of the national housing charity Shelter. ***I, Daniel Blake*** is a ***Cathy Come Home*** for our times. Loach has once again shone an unflinching spotlight on poverty in the UK today. It's a film for the zero hours contract, austerity, food bank, benefit-sanction era we are currently living in. ***Daniel Blake*** has the jagged edges of all Ken Loach films, with abrupt fade-outs between scenes and extras who act like they have been plucked raw from the community. Thus gritty reality is embedded in the very texture of the film.

Many films rely on the extraordinary. Poverty and hardship is often just a backdrop, a context from which incredible individuals escape, move on and find their dreams. These Hollywood narratives can be inspiring and powerful. But they rarely reflect reality. In contrast ***Daniel Blake*** is a deeply ordinary story. It lays bare the monotony, anger and frustration created by poverty and dealing with welfare bureaucracy. And from my experience of the council estates I have lived in, and the homeless hostels and community centres I have worked at, the characters are convincing and their situations ring true. Daniel is a middle-aged carpenter who has lost his wife to illness and has had a recent heart attack which has meant he has had to stop working. At the Job Centre Plus, he bumps into Katie, a single mum who has just moved into the area.

I lived in a block of flats in Kings Cross very similar to where Daniel Blake lives. My neighbours were people quite similar to the characters depicted – by and large decent people struggling in different ways to bring up their kids right, make ends meet and to look out for each other.

The situations conveyed in the film also resonate with conversations I have with homeless people coming into the West London Mission. Michael, a rough sleeper staying at our winter shelter, told me about how his computer-phobia and mental health problems caused him to walk out of a government course that he had been told to complete. This in turn led to his housing benefit being cut, being evicted from his flat and becoming homeless on the street. Ken Loach is not making this stuff up. ***I, Daniel Blake*** may be a fictional story but it's one that reflects reality. The film reinforced my view that deprivation in the UK is complex fusion of different forms of poverty.

Primarily, Daniel and Katie both face serious material poverty due to their circumstances. These challenges are compounded by the chronic bureaucracy of the welfare system. Katie's failed relationships with her two children's fathers are intrinsic to the challenges she faces. And her homelessness has meant being relocated 300 miles from her wider family. Relational poverty deepens and compounds her vulnerability. And both forms of poverty are continually undermining both Daniel's and Katie's dignity, self-worth and sense of identity. Daniel comes out fighting, vowing right to the last never to give in. Katie confesses that she is 'going under' and feels she has no option but to turn to activities which further undermine her self-esteem.

We live in a time when welfare reform and the numbers using food banks is front page news. The compassion showed by many churches and community groups in setting up food banks is building up into a concern for justice. This is right. We should not just be pulling people out of the river; we should also go upstream and prevent them from being pushed in in the first place.

I firmly believe that the Church has resources to combat all three of these forms of poverty: to fight material poverty through practical help such as food banks and by advocating for social justice; to fight relational poverty by being a diverse, welcoming community supporting families and especially those who are vulnerable and lonely; and most deeply, to fight a poverty of identity by sharing a gospel message of God's love, forgiveness and affirmation which is available to everybody.

I would recommend that every church should organise a trip to go and see the film and then discuss how they can respond to the Daniel Blakes and Katies who live in our communities. Why not organise this in your church and announce it this Sunday? One action to start the ball rolling could be to sign up to Church Action on Poverty's ***End Hunger in the UK*** campaign. This would be a fitting response to this powerful film.

<https://resistanceandrenewal.net/2016/10/27/the-harrowing-reality-of-uk-poverty-i-daniel-blake-review/>

Jon Kuhrt is Executive Director of Social Work at the West London Mission, leading its work with people affected by homelessness, offending and chronic addictions. He writes in a personal capacity on *Resistance & Renewal*. You can follow Jon on twitter @jonkuhrt. Sign up for regular blogs on the 'About' page of R&R. <http://resistanceandrenewal.net/about/>

TOGETHER, WE CAN END HUNGER IN THE UK

Church Action on Poverty is working alongside many other organisations as part of the ***End Hunger UK*** coalition www.endhungeruk.org Until the end of 2018, we will campaign for a UK where everybody has access to good food and nobody has to go to bed hungry. The campaign starts with a **Big Conversation**, going on across the UK until March 2017.

Individuals, churches, food banks and other projects are all invited to join in the Conversation and ask the question: What does our government need to do to End Hunger in the UK?

Find out more at: http://www.church-poverty.org.uk/endlunger_runs_until_end_2018

WINTER WARMTH APPEAL

Cumbria Community Foundation is encouraging people to donate to the Winter Warmth Appeal, which last year helped more than 1,000 older Cumbrians out of fuel poverty. Those in receipt of the Winter Fuel Payment who do not need it can donate it to help those who cannot afford to heat their homes.

More information about the appeal: <http://www.cumbriafoundation.org/archives/9548>

Donate online: <http://www.cumbriafoundation.org/winter-warmth-fund/give-to-the-winter-warmth-fund> 01900 825760

HOUSING JUSTICE: NEW STAFF APPOINTMENTS

New Deputy Director - Jacob Quagliozi

I'm delighted to have joined the excellent team at Housing Justice this month as Deputy Director. For much of my working life my Catholic faith has been a driver for pursuing social action causes, though politics, working for a political party and, prior to taking up this role, working for another housing charity. I became interested in housing and homelessness after a brief period of sofa surfing in my late teens. While we had had little income when I had been growing up, we had always had secure accommodation. When this was no longer available I was shocked at how easy it was to fall into homelessness. Later when elected a councillor, the overwhelming majority of my casework would be housing related, families at risk of homelessness, single people with no realistic prospect of finding a secure, affordable tenancy and often people with complex needs not always receiving the support that needed.

Housing presents itself as one of the great challenges of our times. And wherever there is challenge, there should be Christians. The work that Housing Justice does; the network of night shelters, the pioneering work on migrant hosting and the Faith in Affordable Housing project show churches at their best, activist based organisations demonstrating God's love in practical ways. Making real those words of Cardinal Hume "*we have a duty to look frankly at the social conditions around us, and as Christians of all denominations to work together and with others to do what we can to address the specific needs which we find*". I'm looking forward to being part of the team helping to meet those challenges over the next few years.

Housing Policy Intern - Chris Francis

Chris has recently joined Housing Justice in a role that is funded by Britain Yearly Meeting (Quakers). The role will allow Housing Justice to increase its capability in responding to Housing and Homelessness policies, assisting the work of colleagues with analysis of reports, policy developments and statistics. The major piece of work Chris will be involved with is the production of a guide to the planning system for Churches and Faith Groups which is scheduled for mid-2017. Chris comes from a homelessness background having worked previously as a frontline worker at The Simon Community and as part of the management team at Emmaus Medway.

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

16 DAYS OF ACTION AGAINST VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN 25 November to 10 December 2016

This year marks the 25th year of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence Campaign, initiated in 1991 and coordinated by the Centre for Women's Global Leadership. Given such insecurity and lack of safety in relation to education, and informed by the results of a global survey, the theme of the 16 Days Campaign is ***From Peace in the Home to Peace in the World: Make Education Safe for All***. This theme recognizes that structural discrimination and inequality is perpetuated in a cycle of violence that does not end even when girls and young women are in the act of gaining an education. Gender-based violence with respect to the right to education is a consistent threat in public spaces, schools, and homes and is a detriment to the universal human right to education and it is our obligation to focus on the precarious situation of education for girls and boys, young women and men this year through the 16 Days Campaign.

For calendar of events visit 16 Days blog @ womensgrid <http://www.womensgrid.org.uk/16days>

CARDINAL NICHOLS CALLS FOR PRISON REFORM

2 November 2016: The Catholic Church today launched its latest document on prison reform as Justice Minister Liz Truss is set to unveil her strategy for improving prisons, including an additional £14million for more than 400 extra staff.

Cardinal Nichols launched ***The Right Road*** at a Caritas Social Action Network reception in Parliament attended by Catholic charities, chaplains and experts working in the field as well as both MPs and Peers. It comes 12 years after the Catholic Bishops' Conference published ***A Place of Redemption***, which set out the Church's vision for a prison system that rehabilitates offenders, supports victims and works for society as a whole.

Cardinal Nichols said: "Our society is failing prisoners and prisons are failing our society. Even more than before a bold and serious program of prison reform is needed. Many of our prisons are more overcrowded and dangerous than at any point in recent history. Every time a prisoner or an officer comes to harm this represents both a human cost and a failure of the system. It is clear that far too often prisons are places of despair rather than places of redemption. However better prisons are possible and now is the time for courageous improvements to sentencing, education, staffing, health services, family contact, and pastoral care. This will require resources and determination, but we have a duty to fix our broken system for the Common Good of all our society. The Church has a great deal to contribute in this endeavour and we have recently set out our vision for prison reform in ***The Right Road***. I look sincerely forward to discussing this with the Government and engaging with the Secretary of State's reform agenda."

For *The Right Road* and *A Place of Redemption* go to: <http://www.catholicnews.org.uk/Home/News/The-Right-Road>
<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=31258>

VMM INTERNATIONAL: 2016/17 SHORT-TERM VOLUNTEERING PROGRAMME LAUNCHED

VMM International has launched its short-term volunteering programme for 2016/17, offering the chance of a three-to-six-week placement in Africa tailored to the individual applicant. Opportunities range from teaching and community development work to construction in countries such as Uganda, Malawi and Ghana – all within the framework of an unforgettable experience of international development.

VMM was formed as the Volunteer Missionary Movement in 1969, a way for lay people to participate in the mission of the Church. It continues to operate as an international lay Christian organisation, with around 70% of its partners in Africa being faith-based or diocesan bodies. VMM has offices in Liverpool, Glasgow and Dublin. Bishop John Arnold, chair of CAFOD's board of trustees, says: "The work of VMM goes much further than just giving money to the needy – it is about fulfilling the potential of people." John Denny, VMM CEO, adds: "This is not just about VMM; it is our service contribution to the wider mission family in responding positively to real need and, in so doing, reinforcing and developing the role of lay mission in international development."

'Don't think about it, do it.' That is the tagline used to promote VMM International's 2016/17 programme for short-term volunteering in Africa, and three people who did just that last summer are still enthusing about their inspirational "life-changing" experiences of travel and work on a different continent.

Louise Dobinson, Joanne Mulligan and Phoebe Pennington all spent four weeks as short-term VMM volunteers in Uganda between July and August. If these three women initially had different motivations for applying to the programme, the trio emerged from their African adventures affirmed on a personal as well as a professional level – with Joanne today committed to pursuing opportunities in international development, Louise in education and Phoebe in both.

For Joanne, her month as an assistant teacher in two VMM partner primary schools in Nansana, central Uganda – St Joseph's and St Noa's – compelled her to work full-time in the development field, while also increasing her sense of wanderlust. "This first trip definitely stirred a desire within me to travel and explore more of Africa while working in development," said the 26-year-old Dubliner. "I jumped at the chance when the short-term volunteering opportunity arose as I had been eager to experience development in Africa first hand. Uganda is only the beginning!" Joanne had just completed a three-month internship at the VMM head office in Dublin before flying out to Kampala, Uganda's capital, but insisted there was nothing like the real thing. "Although the internship had given me valuable knowledge and skills on the topic, I truly believe you need to experience development in the field in order to get a true insight into how it works." Appropriately, she is now back at VMM HQ imparting that know-how.

Louise's stint as classroom assistant and PE teacher at the same two schools as Joanne has convinced her that her true vocation lies in education. "It's helped me decide what career path I'd like to go down" said the 19-year-old from Darlington, who is studying at Liverpool Hope University (where VMM has its UK office). "I'd always wanted to travel and this seemed a perfect opportunity to learn about a new culture as well as changing the way children learn. I had never been to Africa but everyone was just so friendly and welcoming – the staff at the school, the children, the locals, our hosts. I couldn't have asked to meet better people."

Phoebe, meanwhile, regards her Nansana summer – again at St Joseph's and St Noa's – as the perfect springboard for studying education and international development at university. "In one school we facilitated outdoor PE sessions and in the other helped with informal English sessions to boost the children's English," said the Liverpool student, also 19. "Education is key, but it's easy to take for granted. Yet these children, with the most basic education available, appreciated it so much. Education was taken super seriously."

The VMM methodology is to place volunteers in capacity-building development work in order to offer skills that are unavailable locally and, ideally, train up a local counterpart. To date, upwards of 3,000 volunteers have contributed their time and energies while embarking on their own remarkable learning curve. Joanne witnessed first-hand how giving of oneself and one's talents that can make a difference – so it is not necessarily all about giving money. "I believe that, in the long term, sharing our skills with these communities and providing them with the ability to continue the work themselves can help so much more than merely throwing money and resources at them," she said. Such exposure to new ideas can be pivotal. "Uganda, along with other developing countries, has such potential for growth and we have a responsibility to help make this happen," she added. To this end, VMM – together with over 80 local partner organisations – strives to supply services to the poorest while encouraging sustainable community development. However, what Louise, Joanne and Phoebe also discovered through volunteering last summer was that their commitment and contribution had significantly inspired their own personal growth. To paraphrase the prayer of St Francis, it really was in giving that they received.

"The experience was incredible and I'm actually annoyed with myself that I hadn't done something like this sooner," said Joanne. "I'd thought about it a few times in college but I'd backed out because I was nervous or scared. Yes, there were some tough times but the whole experience was great. I had visions of not being able to eat, yet the food was amazing. I would honestly say to anybody who's thinking about doing it, 'definitely do it!'. It honestly was a life-changing experience – and I hope this experience will influence the rest of my life."

For more information contact: Patrick Harte, UK media assistant, VMM England & Wales, Liverpool Hope University, Hope Park, Liverpool L16 9JD t: +44 0151 291 3438 www.vmminternational.org

RESOURCES

Reflections for Advent 2016 for individual or group use based on the scripture readings for each Sunday in Advent with prayers, reflections and action ideas, produced by Anne O'Connor. Click on the links below to download the pdfs (A4 format):

Week 1: Prepare for the Coming of the Lord's Kingdom

<https://jpshebrewbury.files.wordpress.com/2010/12/advent-reflection-2016-week-1.pdf>

Week 2: Repentance <https://jpshebrewbury.files.wordpress.com/2010/12/advent-reflection-2016-week-2.pdf>

Week 3: Joyful expectation <https://jpshebrewbury.files.wordpress.com/2010/12/advent-reflection-2016-week-3.pdf>

Week 4: Saying "Yes" to God's Plan <https://jpshebrewbury.files.wordpress.com/2010/12/advent-reflection-2016-week-4.pdf>

CLIMATE CHANGE

An excellent new website from parishioners of St. Charles Borromeo in Birmingham Archdiocese to raise awareness of climate change in support of *Laudato Si'* www.sp4climate.net

The talks at the *Caring for Creation* conference held in Lancaster 22/10/16 were streamed live and are now available on <https://www.facebook.com/jpliverpooljp/videos/>

The speakers' presentations from the *Caring for Creation* conference are available now at <http://www.lancasterfaithandjustice.co.uk/download/events/caring-for-creation-presentations/>

PEACE SUNDAY 15 JANUARY 2017 *NONVIOLENCE: A STYLE OF POLITICS FOR PEACE* RESOURCES FOR PARISHES AND GROUPS

Pax Christi has produced a range of prayer, reflection and action resources to help parishes and communities celebrate the World Peace Day message. Resources include a prayer card; Peace Sunday Booklet (pdf format) including homily notes from Fr Rob Esdaile; Peace Sunday Booklet (Word format); Letter promoting Peace Sunday from Archbishop Malcolm McMahon, President of Pax Christi; Series of worksheets on the theme Exploring Gospel Nonviolence; The courageous nonviolence of Jesus; Stories of nonviolence in action; Promoting nonviolence in the parish; The two hands of nonviolence.

SUPPORT RESOURCES

Catholic Nonviolence Initiative: read more about the outcomes of the ground-breaking Rome gathering on Nonviolence.

Nonviolence in Action: take a look at Pax Christi page with stories of nonviolence, support resources and more.

PowerPoint Presentation on the Nonviolence of Jesus based on Matt 5: 38-41 interpreted by Walter Wink. A simple 9 slide presentation illustrated by David Rumsey

<http://paxchristi.org.uk/news-and-events/peace-sunday/>

PEACE SUNDAY IN SCHOOLS

We have produced two prayer resources for celebrating peace in schools around that time.

Classroom Prayers for Peace: This reflective prayer invites students to consider what it means to be a peacemaker and how they can work for peace in their day-to-day lives. Available with pdf script and also pptx slideshow.

Prayers for Staff Briefing: A prayer for peace to start the day at a staff meeting – in pdf format.

<http://paxchristi.org.uk/2016/11/28/peace-sunday-in-schools-2//>

ALTERNATIVE CHRISTMAS GIFTS

If Christmas shopping is getting your goat, here's a gift to lift your spirits. Give a goat this Christmas! Goats are great. They provide gallons of nutritious milk and their manure improves soil quality. Baby goats can be sold to other families so they benefit too.

Chikhulupilro has five children, three of her own and two orphans she adopted. The family struggled financially and Chikhulupilro couldn't afford to send her children to school. She was upset she couldn't provide for her loved ones. But all that changed when Chikhulupilro received two goats from Concern. The goats have made a huge difference to Chikhulupilro's family. She enriches the soil with their manure and harvests more from her crops now. She has bred the goats and sold the kids to pay her children's school fees. With this income she has also been able to buy seeds and the manure from the goats has improved her vegetable harvest. She says "the gift Concern supporters send to Malawi is having a great impact." Goats have made a great impact in Chikhulupilro's village. When you buy a gift from Concern you make this possible. Give a goat this Christmas! **Concern**

Worldwide: Tackling Hunger, Transforming Lives

Browse all gifts: http://www.concerngifts.org/browse-all/?dm_i=4NI,4MFNK,BSPJJ0,H7HOI,1

See also:

CAFOD World Gifts <https://www.worldgifts.cafod.org.uk> 0808 14 000 14

OXFAM Unwrapped Charity Gifts <http://www.oxfam.org.uk/shop/christmas-cards-and-gifts/> 0300 200 1252

GOOD GIFTS (an initiative of the Charities Advisory Trust) <https://www.googgifts.org/> 020 7794 8000

Living Wage Gift Guide <http://www.livingwage.org.uk> 020 7043 9882

Amnesty Shop <https://www.amnestystore.org.uk> 01709 888 33

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS CAMPAIGN 2016

The list for 2016 is now available from ACAT (UK) – Action by Christians Against Torture. For this campaign we suggest that you write a simple card or greeting to the individual saying, for instance, that you are thinking of him/her and/or perhaps urging them not to lose hope (or words to that effect). A picture postcard is always welcome and cheapest to send. You can include your name and address but do not mention ACAT (unless otherwise advised below) as this can endanger the prisoner. Cards should be posted by the senders and not sent to the ACAT office for posting on. Small donations to cover the costs of producing the List would be welcome from anyone who is not an ACAT member or in an ACAT group.

ACAT has campaigned for the tortured, those under threat of torture, the disappeared, those subjected to death threats and to extrajudicial execution since 1984. It is a small ecumenical registered charity with no paid staff. It produces a Newsletter and takes part in the International Prayer Vigil for the Tortured at the end of June.

For more information: ACAT UK Office, c/o 6 Coleridge Road Ottery St Mary, East Devon EX11 1TD Email: uk.acat@gmail.com
http://www.acatuk.org.uk/Christmas_Greetings_Card_List_2016.pdf

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

DECEMBER

3 Service of hope and dedication to mark the end of the Year of Mercy and the beginning of Advent organised jointly by Caritas Salford, Revive, CAFOD, CSAN and JRS with Bishop John Arnold. 2-4pm Spiritan Centre, Northallerton Road, Lower Kersal, Salford M7 3TP. Register on Eventbrite. <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/welcome-the-stranger-a-service-of-hope-and-dedication-tickets-28522052226> You are invited to stay afterwards, meet others and share your stories. Contact: Libby Abbott labbott@cafod.org.uk

4 Churches Partnership *From Bethlehem at Christmas* – a chance to sample Palestinian food, buy Christmas gifts from Bethlehem, and hear from two local young women, Emma and Elizabeth Atherton (St. John's, RC) about their visit with the Amos Trust to Palestine. **Taste and See** at Wigan Baptist Church at 6pm. Talk at 7pm. Suggested donation to cover food costs: £4 on the night. To help estimate numbers please phone or text 07525 750191 or email logan-j@btconnect.com if you plan to join us. Palestinian Craft Stall: olive wood carving, needlework, ceramics and glass, and Zaytoun Palestinian Fairtrade olive oil and foods.

4 Advent Reflection *I was a stranger and you welcomed me.* (Mt 25:35) for the Shrewsbury Diocese Commission for the Promotion of Justice, Peace and Social Responsibility led by Mary Kilcoyne of Catholic Children's Society. Our diocesan response to the current migration situation and the challenges it presents. Wistaston Hall, 89 Broughton Lane, Wistaston, Crewe CW2 8JS. 4.30 –6.30 pm. Shared buffet (please bring a plate of food to share) – drinks provided. All welcome.

5 Amnesty International *Write for Rights 2016* Members and friends of the Chester & Wrexham Group of Amnesty International are meeting at 7pm for a card signing session to write messages of support to people around the world who are suffering injustice or imprisonment, showing that their causes are not forgotten. For local details contact Peter Hobson 01244 341906. For the wider background to *Write for Rights* go to www.amnesty.org.uk/write-rights-2016

8 Service of worship, witness and solidarity for victims and survivors of domestic abuse St Andrew's Church, Penrith 2pm - part of CTIC's project to raise awareness of domestic abuse and support those who suffer from it. All welcome.

9 Vigil for the Dispossessed 6.30- 7.30pm Ecumenical witness in Liverpool city centre to show solidarity with the 6,000,000+ refugees worldwide. Assemble at Metropolitan Cathedral to walk with lighted candles to Clayton Square to meet with other Christians for carols accompanied by the Salvation Army band. Please let us know if you will be attending. 0151 522 1080 or s.atherton@rcaol.co.uk

10 Human Rights Day www.un.org/events/humanrightsday

13 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

15 CAFOD Christmas Carols St Teresa's, College Road Upholland WN8 0PY 7.30– 9pm (It's advisable to be early if you want a seat) Refreshments and stalls in parish centre afterwards.

27 - FUN RUNS FOR CAFOD

Bollington 11am start. Registration from 9.30am Details including advance registration from: www.tinyurl.com/BollyFunRun
Chris Pimblott, 01625-266552 chris.pimblott@ntlbusiness.com

Liverpool 12:00 registration; 13.00 start Wavertree Athletics Centre Liverpool L15 4LE liverpool@cafod.org.uk 0151 228 4028

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JANUARY 2017

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13 Ellesmere Port LPA Justice & Peace Group CAFOD Quiz Night 7.30 pm Our Lady's Parish Centre, Ellesmere Port Town Centre. Entrance fee: £3.00 (children £1). Quizmaster Mr. Mike Ives. All money raised will go to CAFOD's Connect2 Ethiopia fund raising project. Fair Trade stall and Fair Trade refreshments provided at the interval. Details: Tony Walsh on 0151 355 6419

15 Peace Sunday Nonviolence: A Style of Politics for Peace <http://paxchristi.org.uk/nws-and-events/peace-sunday/>

15 World Day for Migrants and Refugees www.w2.vatican.va/

15 Liverpool J&P Annual Memorial Lecture 2-3.30pm (Refreshments from 1.30) Rev Raj Patta. LACE Conference Centre, Croxteth Drive, Sefton Park, Liverpool. L17 1AA. Raj is a Lutheran theologian currently studying on a doctoral programme at Manchester University. Raj brings a Dalit perspective to a theology of power.

17 CWDF Forum 6.45- 9pm The Unity Centre, Cuppin Street Chester, CH1 2BN. Our regular bi-monthly meeting at The Unity Centre, the first of the New Year. Speaker TBC. Please note: this date is a departure from our usual pattern of Forum dates - this is the 3rd Tuesday of the month rather than the 2nd. Contact 01244 350323

18 Climate Change—Lessons from the Past and Options for the Future Dr Colin Fenwick Langley Methodist Church 7.45 pm. For more details contact Keith Taylor SKeithTAYL@aol.com

18-25 Crossing Barriers Week of prayer for Christian Unity <https://ctbi.org.uk/week-of-prayer-for-christian-unity-2017/>

19 Can you do development without faith? 7.30- 9pm Best Building, University of Chester, Parkgate Road, Chester, CH1 4BJ A talk by Dr Nick Henwood, who works for Community Health Global networks and is seconded to Tearfund. He will look at the effectiveness of various aid agencies / aid delivery and draw from his working at a Community Health and Development programme and then an HIV / TB project in Nepal. He also has experience of a network charity and Slum health work in Kampala and partnering with various agencies engaged in health and social work in rural Kenya.

22 Homeless Sunday www.housingjustice.org.uk/pages/homeless_sunday.html

FEBRUARY

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

17 Ellesmere Port LPA Justice & Peace Group CAFOD Quiz Night 7.30 pm Our Lady's Parish Centre, Ellesmere Port Town Centre. Entrance fee: £3.00 (children £1). Quizmaster Mr. Mike Ives. All money raised will go to CAFOD's Connect2 Ethiopia fund raising project. Fair Trade stall and Fair Trade refreshments provided at the interval. Details: Tony Walsh on 0151 355 6419

26 Church Action on Poverty Sunday Poor Church, Transfigured Church. This date is marked as Transfiguration Sunday in many churches. We're asking churches to join us on that day and reflect on Pope Francis' challenge to Christians everywhere: to build a "poor church, that is for the poor". If our churches are truly to be communities that put the poorest first, how do we need to change? What must we let go of? What are the sacrifices that we are called to make?

On the mountain top at the Transfiguration, Jesus and his disciples were transformed. But they were not called to stay on the mountain top, separate from the world. They were sent on a mission back *into* the world – a mission that led Jesus to surrender all his power and be killed on the cross. Resource materials available soon: www.church-poverty.org.uk

27—12 March Fairtrade Fortnight - the annual nation-wide celebration of the various facets and achievements of the Fairtrade movement. This year's theme is *It's time to put Fairtrade in your break*. Watch out for details of local events.

MARCH

3 Women's World Day of Prayer prepared by the women of the Philippines www.wwdp.org.uk/

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30 Pax Christi Liverpool will host a public meeting with a returned Ecumenical Accompanier serving in The West Bank. Venue Central Liverpool, to be confirmed Contact janharper1@yahoo.co.uk 07746919915

- Many items taken from the daily e-bulletin Independent Catholic News www.indcatholicnews.com or from Ekklesia www.ekklesia.co.uk both invaluable free resources for up-to-date J&P news, events and in-depth articles. 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