

Shrewsbury Diocese JP&SR E-Bulletin – January 2013

www.jp-shrewsburydiocese.org.uk

Vision: *A diocese fully engaged with the call of God to be a people of justice and peace*

Contact details:

- Correspondence to Michael Crawley, Secretary, Shrewsbury Diocese Commission for the Promotion of Justice, Peace and Social Responsibility, 5 Riddings Court, Timperley, Altrincham, WA15 6BG mjcrawley@waitrose.com
- Donations or contributions for *MouthPeace* to Ged Cliffe, Treasurer SDJPSR, Fern Villa, Four Crosses, Llanymynech, SY22 6PR ged.cliffe@tiscali.co.uk
- Items for the e-bulletin, diary dates and notice of events to Anne O'Connor anneoc980@hotmail.com

- Contents:
1. **Concern over Government schemes promoting 'military ethos' in education**
 2. **Change.org petition: Keep diversity in the national curriculum**
 3. **J&P Calendar for the Year of Faith**
 4. **MBE for director of education charity in Sierra Leone**
 5. **Peace Sunday 20 January 2013 *Blessed are the Peacemakers***
 6. **Poverty & Homelessness Action Week 26 January – 3 February 2013**
 7. **World Day for the Sick 11 February**
 8. **Lent Fast Day Friday 22 February**
 9. **Forthcoming Events**

1. Concern over Government schemes promoting 'military ethos' in education

ForcesWatch press release 07/12/2012 <http://www.forceswatch.net/>

The organisation ForcesWatch (1), which monitors the way young people are recruited into the military, has expressed concern about the **announcement made by Education Secretary Michael Gove** of four projects which promote 'military ethos' in order to improve achievement among pupils who have 'disengaged with education.' The projects will receive £1.9 million of government funding. In June this year the Department of Education announced another £10.85 million to expand cadets into state education (2). The schemes are part of a wider package of measures in the DfE's 'military skills and ethos programme' which include the future development of military academies and free schools in which every pupil in the school would be educated with a 'military ethos' (3).

Emma Sangster from **ForcesWatch** said, "We question the one-sided view of 'military ethos' being promoted here and whether it is appropriate within an educational context. The development of values and life skills are of course vital but why is a military approach a necessary component?"

"Who will actually benefit from the promotion of military ethos in education. Certainly the government is keen to provide employment opportunities for ex-service personnel and they also need to increase future recruitment capacity into the armed forces, so they will definitely benefit. Where is the evidence that similarly well funded non-military schemes would not equally benefit the young people involved without the dangers of exposing them to a one-sided view of the benefits of the military.

"The military should not be seen as a simple solution to complex social problems, yet this policy is being implemented with no consultation. Do parents have a say in whether their children are put in these schemes? For more information contact: education@forceswatch.net

Notes

1. **ForcesWatch** is a UK organisation that challenges the ethics of military recruitment and questions the climate of uncritical national pride in the armed forces. <http://forceswatch.net>
2. <http://www.number10.gov.uk/news/cadet-forces-scheme/>
3. <http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenand youngpeople/youngpeople/military>

Michael Gove says: "Every child can benefit from a military ethos. Self-discipline and teamwork are at the heart of what makes our armed forces the best in the world and are exactly what all young people need to succeed."

Quakers, restorative justice workers and peace groups are among those who have expressed "**grave concern**" about the development. Quakers in the Ipswich and Diss Area Meeting say: "We are concerned to know what provision may be made for the consciences of parents who do not wish their children to attend a school where this ethos is prized. We are also troubled by a moral view which seems unable to separate the virtues of courage, comradeship, self-discipline and teamwork from the training of young people for war. We would like children to learn that war is both an ineffective and a brutal way of attempting to resolve conflict."

"Attempts to militarise education and other aspects of public life are a disturbing trend," says **Simon Barrow, Co-Director of the religion and society think tank Ekklesia**, which works with the historic peace churches and supports peacemaking initiatives and research. "The skills and aptitudes which young people need most in a changing, diverse and conflictual world are those that foster co-operation, creative nonviolence, conflict transformation, restorative justice, peacemaking, and a sense of moral community that eschews rather than glorifies violence." **Source:** <http://www.ekklesia.co.uk/node/17619>

2. Change.org petition: Keep diversity in the national curriculum

Mary Seacole was a heroine of the Crimean War who nursed and cared for thousands of British soldiers. In 2004 she was voted **number one in a poll of great black Britons** and her story is one of the few featuring black female heroines taught in schools. Moreover she is the only Black figure in the National Curriculum who is not connected to civil rights or enslavement.

The Government now plans to drop the study of Mary Seacole from the national curriculum. Her story inspires children of all backgrounds because she was an ordinary person who did her best for others in the face of adversity. By cutting out the study of a significant black woman from history, we risk sending a negative message to our children about the historical role and importance of people from ethnic minorities in our society. Mary Seacole's story was added to the curriculum in 2007 as a result of campaigning to have her contribution recognised. Having won recognition for her, we need to campaign once again to make sure she remains part of British education.

<http://www.change.org/en-GB/petitions/michael-gove-secretary-of-state-for-education-keep-mary-seacole-on-the-national-curriculum>

3. J&P Calendar for the Year of Faith 11 October 2012 – 24 November 2013

Check the calendar for updates and use in parishes, groups and schools www.jp-shrewsburydiocese.org.uk

4. MBE for director of education charity in Sierra Leone

Miriam Mason-Sesay has been awarded an MBE for her work as country director of **EducAid**, a charity which runs schools for some of the poorest children in **Sierra Leone**. Miriam has lived in the country since 2000, initially visiting in 1998 to work with the Guinea-based refugees fleeing the horrific civil war. Many of the pupils live permanently in EducAid facilities because they have lost their families. EducAid provides daily food, education and medication through their academic life at a cost of approximately £180 per student per year. Since moving to Sierra Leone, EducAid, under Miriam's close direction, has established a network of schools which are successfully challenging the national culture of under-performance. Intake is restricted to the very poorest children. EducAid schools have achieved the best exam results in the country year after year.

EducAid Chairman, Dr James Boardman, said that he was delighted for Miriam. He said: "She deserves the recognition for her unique and selfless contribution. She has both delivered EducAid's programme and personally raised the bulk of the necessary funds to do so. The personal cost to Miriam has been significant: it is terrific to see public acknowledgement of her work".

EducAid is predominantly funded from private resources in England: individual donors, schools and churches provide EducAid's ongoing funding base. In addition EducAid has, when requested, provided services through funding from a range of international bilateral donors – including the UK's Department for International Development. Miriam returns regularly to the UK and has given talks to several schools in the Shrewsbury diocese, developing close links between local pupils and EducAid students.

For more information see: www.educaid.org.uk

5. Peace Sunday - 20 January 2013 *Blessed are the Peacemakers*

Parishes around the country are preparing to celebrate **Peace Sunday** with **Pax Christi** on 20 January.

Writing to parishes, Bishop Malcolm McMahon, President of Pax Christi said: ""Pope Benedict's World Peace Day message for 2013 is Blessed are the Peacemakers. The message will affirm the Church's teaching on peace, from the great letter of Pope John XXIII, *Pacem in Terris* to the challenge offered by the Year of Faith, for us to seek out and hold up the 'credible witness of people enlightened in mind and heart by the word of the Lord.'"

http://www.paxchristi.org.uk/peace_sunday1.php

Liturgy resources can be found on the Pax Christi website and these are easily adaptable to enable schools and colleges and parish groups to celebrate peace in their liturgies in the weeks either side of this event.

Two **Thought for the Day** presentations on **Radio 4** also link with the Peace Message:

Helen Drewery, Quaker Peace & Social Witness <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0138d57>

Sr Una McCreesh, Chair of Brentwood J&P Commission <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0138chb>

6. Poverty & Homelessness Action Week 26 January – 3 February 2013 *Can you cast the first stone?*

- Worship guides, including readings, sermon ideas, prayers and hymns
- Ideas for fundraising
- Online prayer calendar with a video for each day of Action Week showing the real stories of those experiencing poverty and homelessness
- Action Week DVD
- Action Week prayer card
- Promotional posters

<http://www.actionweek.org.uk/html/home.html>

- **The Bishops of England and Wales** have added their voice to the **Living Wage Campaign**, alongside other Christian Churches.
- **The National Justice and Peace Network** has asked all J&P Commissions to contact their bishop to request a **pastoral letter on the theme of poverty in the UK** to mark the start of Poverty & Homelessness Action Week 2013.

7. World Day for the Sick 11 February

Since 1992, the Catholic Church has celebrated World Day of the Sick on 11 February — the day on which the church commemorates the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes — under the sponsorship of the Pontifical Council for Health Pastoral Care.

The World Day of the Sick has three consistent themes:

1. It reminds the faithful to pray intensely and sincerely for those who are sick
2. The celebration invites Christians to reflect on and respond to human suffering
3. This day recognizes and honours all persons who work in health care and serve as caregivers

This Year's World Day for the Sick will focus on the story of the **Good Samaritan** (*Lk 10:29-37*)

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

8. Lent Fast Day Friday 22 February

This Lent CAFOD's focus on food and hunger which was introduced at **Harvest Fast Day** continues.

Be **hungry for change** – to support people, in countries like Kenya – to provide for themselves, today and in the future. **Download the pack of Lenten activities** <http://www.cafod.org.uk/Education/Primary-schools/Lent> which has lots of ideas to help with fundraising plus food reflection cards that contain stories, quotes from scripture and Catholic Social Teaching, and prayers. The website has teacher resources, including regular new assemblies.

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

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

JANUARY 2013

18 CAFOD Quiz Night 7.30 pm Our Lady's Parish Centre Ellesmere Port Town Centre. £3 (Children half price)
All money raised to CAFOD'S '*Food for Thought*' Campaign

20 Peace Sunday *Blessed are the Peacemakers* resources: Pax Christi www.paxchristi.org.uk

20 Annual Memorial Lecture 'Vatican 2 and Us' Sr Christine Anderson FCJ, founder of the Craighead Institute in Scotland and current head for Praxis FCJ which works for faith formation in Africa. 2-4 pm LACE conference centre, Croxteth Drive, Sefton Park Liverpool L17 1AA

20 *Building Peaceful Communities* 11am to 12 noon at St Mary's Church, Dodleston, Chester CH4 9NT.
Inter-faith readings, prayer and music to mark **World Religion Day, 2013**. Helen Longmuir, 01244 660509.

20-26 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

27 Holocaust Memorial Day

27 Homelessness Sunday

29 *What's Hot and What's Not in Development?* Duncan Green, Senior Strategic Adviser at OXFAM talking about key issues in development within the context of his book *From Poverty to Power*, covering the impact of the Arab Spring, climate change, food price volatility and global financial crises as well as new thinking on the nature and location of poverty, complexity and other hot topics. 7.30pm in Best Building, University of Chester.

6 Jan-4 Feb Poverty and Homelessness Action Week

FEBRUARY

4 Poverty Action Sunday

11 World Day for the Sick

12 Ash Wednesday

15 CAFOD Quiz Night see Jan 18

20 Christian Aid Lent Lunch 12.00 – 1.30pm at the Welsh Church, St John Street Chester

22 CAFOD Lent Fast Day

25 Feb–10 March Fairtrade Fortnight *How far will you go for Fairtrade in 2013?* www.fairtrade.org.uk
Chester area - Visit of Gerardo Arias Camacho, a **coffee farmer from Costa Rica** from **1-5 March** arranged by the Cheshire West and Chester Fairtrade Group. Further information and itinerary from Ashley Jones, 01244 972435 ashley.jones@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

27 Christian Aid Lent Lunch 12.00 – 1.30pm at the Welsh Church, St John Street Chester

MARCH

1-4 *Seeds of Liberation* Student Christian Movement's annual conference in **Manchester** exploring the Gospel of peace and justice including VI Form Study Day 1 March www.movement.org.uk/seedsofliberation