

The 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

CAFOD WELCOMES FORTHCOMING CANONISATION OF OSCAR ROMERO

7 March 2018: Catholic aid agency, CAFOD, has welcomed the news today that Pope Francis has approved a miracle attributed to Blessed Oscar Romero, the murdered Archbishop of San Salvador, ensuring he will now be canonised as a Saint of the universal Church.

CAFOD has a long history of working with Archbishop Romero and promoting his legacy. In the 1970s, CAFOD supported Romero's famous radio broadcasts, which - at a time when the press was heavily censored - were often the only means by which people in El Salvador knew the truth about the atrocities occurring in their country. When Romero's radio station was blown up, CAFOD provided funding to rebuild it.

Clare Dixon, CAFOD's Head of Region for Latin America, said: "Pope Francis' decision to canonise Oscar Romero will give Romero the wider recognition he so richly deserves. During three tumultuous years as Archbishop of San Salvador, Romero braved death threats time and again to denounce violence and speak out on behalf of the victims of his country's civil war. He was a remarkable man, who was inspired by his faith to fight not just poverty but injustice, and to give a voice to the voiceless.

"CAFOD staff and supporters, like millions of people around the world, hold him in such high regard. He didn't simply talk about the need to love your neighbour, but courageously denounced the violence and named the injustices that plagued his country. Here at CAFOD and throughout Latin America he has been regarded as a Saint for years, and we are delighted that the Church has now officially proclaimed him as one.

"El Salvador remains a country in the grip of inequality, and the legacy of the civil war continues to cause division and polarisation. All around the world hundreds of millions of people live in poverty or under oppressive regimes. The world as a whole desperately needs more figures like Romero - leaders with the courage and faith to stand up for the poor and against injustice."

Oscar Romero was the Archbishop of San Salvador from 1977 until he was assassinated in 1980. He was initially regarded as a conservative choice, but he became increasingly outspoken about human rights violations in El Salvador - particularly after the murder of his close friend Father Rutilio Grande. After repeatedly condemning poverty and injustice, he was shot dead while celebrating Mass on 24 March 1980.

After Romero was martyred, CAFOD's staff successfully petitioned Lambeth Council to rename the Brixton street where their office was located 'Romero Close'. And when CAFOD moved to a new office in 2009, it was named 'Romero House'. 35 years later, Archbishop Romero was beatified - or declared "Blessed" - on 23 May 2015 as a prelude to being made a Saint.

Today, CAFOD continues to work in El Salvador, helping farmers to improve their crops, assisting communities in reducing the risk of disasters, supporting people living with HIV, building peace, defending human rights and trying to create a more just society.

For more information, videos, quotations and schools materials about Romero, go to www.cafod.org.uk/romero <https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/34475>

STEPHEN HAWKING WAS MORE THAN A GLOBAL CITIZEN — HE WAS A CITIZEN OF THE UNIVERSE

Stephen Hawking has died aged 76. The world-famous scientist and physicist was not only one of the greatest minds of our time — he was also renowned for his very human perspectives on the beauty of the world we live in. Hawking rose to prominence with "*A Brief History Of Time*", a bestselling book that examined the origins of space, time, and the universe and sold millions of copies. When he was just 21, Hawking was diagnosed with a rare form of motor neurone disease — amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) — and told by doctors that he had just two or three years to live. But he survived and lived with the condition for over five decades. The world renowned scientist spent his life in a wheelchair, speaking through a voice synthesiser immortalised in pop culture with appearances in "*The Simpsons*," "*The Big Bang Theory*," and the music of Pink Floyd.

Stephen Hawking was a man who re-imagined an entire universe — but these are his most profound comments on the tiny, gorgeous planet he was proud to call home, and the bold persistence of the incredible human beings that shared it with him.

"My goal is simple. It is a complete understanding of the universe, why it is as it is and why it exists at all."

"Remember to look up at the stars and not down at your feet. Try to make sense of what you see and wonder about what makes the universe exist. Be curious. And however difficult life may seem, there is always something you can do and succeed at. It matters that you don't just give up."

"We are all different — but we share the same human spirit."

"For millions of years, mankind lived just like the animals. Then something happened which unleashed the power of our imagination. We learned to talk and we learned to listen. Speech has allowed the communication of ideas, enabling human beings to work together to build the impossible. Mankind's greatest achievements have come about by talking, and its greatest failures by not talking. It doesn't have to be like this. Our greatest hopes could become reality in the future. With the technology at our disposal, the possibilities are unbounded. All we need to do is make sure we keep talking."

"I have lived with the prospect of an early death for the last 49 years. I'm not afraid of death, but I'm in no hurry to die. I have so much I want to do first."

BISHOPS CONFERENCE CUTS FUNDING FOR RACIAL JUSTICE

Paul Donovan 8 March 2018: The former chair of the Catholic Association for Racial Justice (CARJ) has questioned why the Church is turning its back on racial justice at such a crucial time. Margaret Ann Fiskin reacted angrily to the news that the Bishops Conference of England and Wales are now cutting the funding, having taken agency status away from CARJ last autumn.

"Racism is still a fundamental issue in public life. It is alive and well and in direct conflict with Catholic Social Teaching. To me, and I'm sure to many others, CARJ's loss of agency status is a disturbing development. Who will now be the official voice of the Church on these issues?" said Mrs Fiskin. "The sin of racism is something that the Church must not only continue to speak out against, it must also seek to set an example by engaging with the issues in practical ways."

The comments came after it was revealed that CARJ has now been reduced from the main recipient of the proceeds from the annual Racial Justice Sunday collection to being one of a number of "external organisations," which can apply for funds from a grant drawn from the proceeds of that collection.

To read on see: <http://paulfdonovan.blogspot.co.uk/2018/03/former-catholic-association-for-racial.html>
<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/34477>

FORMER MIGRANT AND MUSLIM WINS COLUMBAN COMPETITION

Ellen Teague 15 March 2018

A former migrant and Muslim has won the Columban Young Journalists Competition (print) in Britain with her article *'I was a stranger and you made me welcome'*. Sixteen-year-old Ahlaam Moledina of Bishop Challoner Catholic College in Birmingham paid tribute to the welcome and values provided in her Catholic education. When she and her siblings came to Britain in 2010 from the United Arab Emirates, "we took consolation in the kindness of our Catholic Primary School". She reflected that "in the confusion of being young and uneducated and foreign, we were comforted by the repeated mantra of 'migrants are our neighbours' that seeped out of every RE lesson".

Now in a Catholic secondary school, she quoted the words of Pope Francis that, "for us Christians, hospitality offered to the weary traveller is offered to Jesus Christ himself". She described St Chad's Sanctuary in Birmingham, which she experienced on a school visit, as "one of the most important places for migrants and asylum seekers in Birmingham and a place of community and comfort".

Judge John Vidal of *The Guardian* described her piece as "a gripping personal story which successfully wove together religious and political awareness". Judge Josephine Siedlecka of *Independent Catholic News* felt the writer's description of her family and St Chad's Sanctuary, "show an understanding of the issues that comes from life experience". Judge Nick Benson of *The Universe* liked the conclusion to this article where the author described the current migrant crisis as a "crisis of connectivity" but pointed out that "we celebrate our differences and rejoice in our similarities".

The second place print winner was Esther Watson (17) from Sandbach High School and Sixth Form College, Sandbach, Cheshire. Nick Benson of *The Universe* said, "all of us should take heed of Esther's words and next time we fail to stand up and support the world's most vulnerable, we should remember that we are all neighbours and children of migrants".

Third place had joint winners: Hilda Kagaba (16) from St Paul's Catholic Secondary School, Milton Keynes and Eleanor Pape (16) of Holy Cross Catholic High School, Chorley, Lancashire. All were commended by the judges.

The winners of the video competition for Britain are also pupils of Bishop Challoner Catholic College in Birmingham. Francesca Bruno (18) and Mary Gurdin (17) filmed at St Chad's Sanctuary. "The interviewees did well in reminding us of the terrible plight of refugees and asking us to compare our privileged lives in the UK with their lives of extreme and enforced hardship" said Judge Columban Father Tom O'Reilly. He added that, "most of the visuals in the video reinforced the main message, especially the picture of the Holy Family with the caption, 'We too were asylum seekers'."

The competition *'Migrants are our Neighbours'* has been part of the Centenary celebrations of the Columban Missionary Society and open to young people 15-18 years old. The subject matter recognised the Columbans' long established solidarity with and ministry to migrants in Britain, Ireland and worldwide. Entries were received from around Britain and Ireland to two parallel competitions. The print winner in Ireland, Albina Haliti, is also a migrant and wrote about how her family had to flee Kosovo during the war and settled in Ireland.

The British entries were assembled and sifted for presentation to judges by a Columban team of James Trewby (Education), Ellen Teague (Media), Stephen Awre (Mission Office), Julia Corcoran (Advocacy) and Jack Edwards (Faith in Action Volunteer).

James Trewby says: "Young people are amazing. In the face of the many challenges of the world, the seemingly endless negativity, those that entered this competition present us with signs of hope, a belief that things can and should be better - that we can be better. Many thanks to all the students and schools for their hard work."

www.indcatholicnews.com/news/34524

See the full list of winners at: www.columbancompetition.com/

NEW REPORT JUST PUBLISHED: *Don't Bank on the Bomb Report* ... see which financial institutions profit from nuclear weapon production – good campaigning tool: <https://www.dontbankonthebomb.com/2018-report/> and UK section here: http://uk.icanw.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/2018_United-Kingdom2.pdf

I WAS A STRANGER AND YOU MADE ME WELCOME - AHLAAM MOLEDINA'S WINNING ESSAY:

We are living in an age of mobility. To some degree, we always have - anthropological studies have shown that for at least 90% of our history, modern humans have lived as nomads. (*The Independent*, 2014.) In today's West, we view a society that is quick to defend the value of mobility, with the resurgence of populist politics across Europe seemingly holding up the banner of the "little man", and advocating for the promise of the capitalist dream for ordinary people. And yet, the same politics that attempts to endorse social movement is working overtime to keep people in place.

The Home Office has been criticised for its countless layers of bureaucracy and evaluation as part of the immigration process. In 2016, the UNHCR reported that there are 23.5 million refugees and asylum-seekers globally. By this point in 2018, these statistics have only increased.

The refugee crisis and the influx of migration into Europe is no longer the problem solely of politicians. It is, as former Foreign Secretary David Miliband so pertinently put, a "crisis of humanity". Today, an increasing number of ordinary people do more for the crisis than those in positions of influence. In the face of this humanitarian dilemma, we see the true reaches of human empathy, taught to us by religion, upbringing, everyday life. The 65.5 million displaced people around the world show us that we are not simply witnessing a breakdown of peace, but a breakdown of connectivity.

In July 2010, a mere few months before civil war broke out in the Arab Spring, my parents, five siblings and myself migrated to Birmingham, UK from the United Arab Emirates. As the anti-immigration and anti-Muslim sentiment grew, spurred on by right-wing groups such as Britain First and UKIP, we saw ourselves in the face of the fire. I was nine, my younger brothers seven and three, with limited academic ability in a country unlike any we had ever seen. Amidst the sense of antipathy that seemed to surround us, we took consolation in the kindness of our Catholic primary school.

A fifteen-minute walk away from home in one of Birmingham's most multiethnic areas, classes saw a balanced mix of Catholic, Muslim, Sikh and Hindu children, as well as children from other religious backgrounds (or none at all), put their hands together and recite the Hail Mary in perfect synchronisation. The Catholic ethos that permeated that very building, the teachings to "love thy neighbour as thyself" and the message to follow the example of the Good Samaritan imprinted onto every child that came through the green gates. In the whirlwind of political disillusionment and cultural isolation, and in the confusion of being young and uneducated and foreign, we were comforted by the repeated mantra of "migrants are our neighbours" that seeped out of every RE lesson.

Seven years and a Catholic secondary education later, I am now a passionate activist fighting for the rights of refugees and migrants in whatever way I can. Not least because I am a migrant, but because during a period where I believed my presence in this country to be invalid, I received every opportunity that my British-born peers were offered alongside me. After every class service and whole school Mass, Pope Francis' words echo through my mind: "for us Christians, hospitality offered to the weary traveller is offered to Jesus Christ himself."

I am not a Christian, but I was welcomed into the Church as though my headscarf strengthened our connections rather than weakened them.

In 2016, as a member of my school's Chaplaincy Team, I visited St. Chad's Sanctuary, a centre that welcomes and hosts asylum-seekers and refugees during their respective journeys. An average of 150 people per week come to the centre to receive food, clothing and hygiene products, as well as Beginner English lessons to aid their transition into British society.

In their effort to live as the Papal Message instructs them to, and to welcome strangers and comfort travellers, St Chad's has become one of the most important places for migrants and asylum-seekers in Birmingham. It is a place of community and comfort. Volunteers at St Chad's are now well acquainted with the Arabic word "inshallah" - meaning "if God wills." In an increasingly divisive world where religion, language and even postcode causes strained relationships, St Chad's Sanctuary remains an example of uniting in humanity, in compassion, and in God.

Britain is often viewed by the world as being the epitome of societal tolerance, but in a refugee crisis that bears a chilling resemblance to one which plagues our past, we must examine a history which shows the hidden truth behind the British response to the Holocaust. We see, as *The Guardian* states, that "current bigotry against asylum-seekers... closely mimics pre-war anti-Jewish sentiments, and in both instances has been legitimised by British immigration policy." The British government rejected ten times as many applications for asylum during the Second World War than they accepted.

Hebrews 13:2 tells us to "remember always to welcome strangers, for by doing this, some people have entertained angels without knowing it." We have been here before. We must not repeat our mistakes. We must not push away these angels seeking the aid they are wholly deserving of.

In this crisis of connectivity, we celebrate our differences and rejoice in our similarities. It is not one's religion, race or nationality that makes them who they are, but the strength of their character and their benevolence for their fellow human. Whether granted by Church, Mosque, parent or life experience, we have a duty to use this intrinsic concern for good to ensure that we make strangers welcome, no matter who they may be.

www.indcatholicnews.com/news/34530

CATHOLIC CHURCH RESPONDS TO IICSA REPORT ON CHILD MIGRATION

1 March 2018 **Source:** CCN

"The Catholic Church in England and Wales notes the findings of the report of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse into the child migration programmes and looks forward to continuing to work with and assist the Inquiry in its deliberations. As stated at the opening of this part of the Inquiry, the Catholic Council, and the organisations it represents, stand wholeheartedly by the expressions of regret and the apologies that have already been made on behalf the Catholic Church in England and Wales.

All sexual abuse of children and vulnerable people is both criminal and harmful and the Church condemns without reservation any such action or behaviour. The Church is fully committed to the safeguarding of all children and vulnerable adults and, following the Nolan and Cumberlege Reports, Dioceses and Religious Orders are committed to following nationally agreed guidelines and robust policies to promote safeguarding."

Bishop Marcus Stock, vice chair of the National Catholic Safeguarding Commission, who gave evidence before the Inquiry, apologised to all of those who were involved in the British Government's migration programmes as children, and expressed his sincere regret for their suffering, including in many cases as a result of child sexual abuse, and the deep wounds which that abuse has left on them as adults.

Bishop Stock said: "If any former child migrant, not only those who have testified before this Inquiry, would wish to meet with me privately I would welcome the opportunity to do so. I appreciate that some may feel that these apologies and regrets are too little, too late, and for others they may not wish to have anything further to do with the Catholic Church. I would fully respect those views, but I remain open to listening and learning from them.

So far as the Inquiry is concerned, and as the Catholic Council has made clear on a number of occasions, the Catholic Council and the organisations it represents are committed to learning from the past and taking all appropriate steps in the future to protect children from sexual abuse and exploitation. This will include, of course, learning from the Inquiry's conclusions on the issues identified."

The Inquiry has found that:

- Catholic institutions in England & Wales have provided numerous support services to former child migrants from 1989 onwards;
- The Catholic Church responses have been considerably better than those of some other organisations.
- The recommendation that HMG sets up a Redress Scheme for surviving former child migrants is noted.
- The Catholic Church looks forward to continuing its assistance to the Inquiry.

A number of individuals provided witness statements to the Inquiry concerning the role of various Catholic organisations in the child migration schemes to Canada and Australia. Many of the organisations involved at the time no longer exist, and none of these individuals have first-hand knowledge of their operation at the time. Nevertheless, they have sought to assist the Inquiry by setting out their understanding of the involvement of their respective Catholic organisations, based on the records currently held by them, as well as their personal involvement, where relevant, in more recent activities such as the process of family reunification, support of various kinds, and the provision of information to various inquiries and commissions.

In responding to the needs of former child migrants and reflecting the presenting issues of the former child migrants, the priority for organisations such as the Catholic Child Welfare Council, the Catholic Children's Society (Westminster), Father Hudson's Care and the Southwark Catholic Children's Society, and for the various religious orders involved, has been family reunification and tracing projects, together with associated and necessary support such as counselling, therapy, assistance with travel, accommodation and general support.

<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/34433>

GOVERNMENT CUTS TO SUPPORT FOR SURVIVORS OF MODERN SLAVERY 'DEEPLY DISAPPOINTING'

6 March 2018 **Source:** CCN

Bishop Patrick Lynch, Chair of the Office for Migration Policy, has expressed his deep disappointment at the Government's decision to cut the weekly subsistence payments for survivors of modern slavery by more than 40% - from £65 to £37.75.

"It is deeply disappointing that despite the Prime Minister's pledge to go further on protecting victims of modern slavery, the government has chosen to reduce the financial support given to survivors. The care of survivors should be at the heart of all work against human trafficking, as a core part of recognising and restoring their God-given human dignity."

The 40% cut places the subsistence payments in line with support given to asylum seekers. Survivors receive this support for 45 days following confirmation that they are victims of modern slavery.

For more information visit the official website of the Santa Marta Group: www.santamartagroup.com

<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/34466>

JOY IN ENOUGH

The Joy in Enough website is the new home for Green Christian's campaign for a fair and sustainable economy. You'll find it at www.joyinEnough.org, where you can read the latest news from the campaign, download the Joy in Enough vision paper, and join in discussion.

JRS CALLS FOR END TO CRUEL DETENTION OF TORTURE VICTIMS AT HARMONDSWORTH

Source: JRS UK 13 March 2018

Jesuit Refugee Services UK has called on the government to end indefinite detention, in response to the latest damning inspection of Harmondsworth Immigration Removal Centre, which highlighted the continuing detention of highly vulnerable men, sometimes for long periods of time. JRS UK described the report's findings as "deeply troubling, but sadly not surprising".

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons published their report today of an unannounced inspection into Harmondsworth IRC. The report highlights "considerable failings" in safety and respect for detainees. Inspectors raised concerns that vulnerable detainees are not being adequately safeguarded, with mental health needs remaining largely unmet in the prison-like conditions. Worryingly, in nearly all cases examined, detention was maintained despite clear evidence that detainees had been tortured.

Nearly one third of the population was identified as being at risk under the Home Office policy, yet was not released. Potential trafficking victims were not referred to the appropriate channels and unable to receive necessary assistance, as many staff members were unfamiliar with the referral mechanism.

The report recommended the introduction of a time limit on the length of detention. The continuing absence of a time limit on immigration detention led to several individuals being detained for excessively long periods of time: 23 men had been detained for over a year and one man had been held for over 4.5 years. The UK is the only country in Europe which detains migrants indefinitely without a time limit and practices routine detention of migrants for administrative reasons.

JRS UK is one of a number of organisations providing regular pastoral support to men held in Harmondsworth IRC. Such services provided by voluntary groups were one of the few areas highlighted for praise in the inspection report. The availability of advice surgeries and social visits carried out by these groups, including JRS UK, was deeply appreciated by detainees and contributed to easing some of the negative effects of detention.

Commenting on the outcome of this inspection, JRS UK Director Sarah Teather said: "This report once again reveals the cruelty of the detention system, a system which incarcerates many already acknowledged to be vulnerable. The widespread detention of torture victims is unacceptable, and it is only the tip of the iceberg.

"People displaying mental health needs, victims of human trafficking and individuals suffering from severe physical conditions and disabilities are all routinely detained despite evidence that this detention is damaging to their health.

"What makes this situation even more outrageous is the fact that detention can last for an indefinite period of time. 23 men in Harmondsworth have been detained for over a year: that is a year of someone's life lived in limbo, in prison-like conditions without having committed any crime.

"Our experience of supporting detainees corroborates the report's findings that detention has a crippling effect on individual well-being. Our volunteers routinely come across extremely vulnerable individuals whose conditions are made significantly worse by the uncertainty and despair that surround them.

"In light of this report, we can only renew our commitment to stand in solidarity with those held in immigration detention and to continue to accompany them through this dark time in their lives. Once more, we call on the government to recognise the devastating effects of detention. It is life-destroying. It is time to end indefinite detention."

Harmondsworth IRC, which has an operational capacity of 676 male detainees, is built to Category B prison standards and is currently Europe's largest detention facility. It is one of the eight long-term residential immigration detention centres in the UK. In 2017, a total of 27,331 people entered detention. 53% of people leaving detention were released back into the community.

The Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) is an international Catholic organisation, at work in 51 countries around the world with a shared mission to accompany, serve and advocate on behalf of refugees and other forcibly displaced persons. In the UK, our work currently focuses on those who find themselves destitute as a consequence of government policies and those detained for the administration of immigration procedures.

2JRS UK has an outreach service to the Heathrow Immigration Removal Centres where it undertakes pastoral and befriending work with all those held in detention, including asylum seekers, and others struggling to regularise their immigration status. It has previously expressed concern that many of those seeking its help appear to be victims of trafficking, and reacted with alarm at the rising numbers of EU citizens in detention also seeking its help. JRS UK is joining others in arguing for an end to indefinite detention.

<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/34513>

See also: Bishop Paul McAleenan: UK Detention Centres "Shameful" <https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/34518>

LINKS: Report from HM Chief Inspector of Prisons: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk

Find out more about the campaign and add your voice to the debate: www.libertyhumanrights.org.uk

DEVELOPING COUNTRY DEBT PAYMENTS INCREASE BY 60% IN THREE YEARS

19 March 2018: Figures released yesterday by the Jubilee Debt Campaign, based on IMF and World Bank databases, show that developing country debt payments increased by 60% between 2014 and 2017. They are now at the highest level since 2004.

The new analysis from Jubilee Debt Campaign shows that average government external debt payments across the 126 developing countries for which data is available have increased from 6.7% of government revenue in 2014 to 10.7% of government revenue in 2017, an increase of 60%. This is the highest level since 2004, when such payments were 12.6% of government revenue. This rapid increase comes after a lending boom due to global interest rates being low. External loans to developing country governments almost doubled from \$200 billion per year in 2008 to \$390 billion in 2014. They have since fallen back to between \$300-350 billion per year from 2015-2017, but this is still well above levels seen prior to the global financial crisis.

The fall in global commodity prices in mid-2014 has reduced the income of many governments which are reliant on commodity exports for earnings. They also caused exchange rates to fall against the US dollar, which increases the relative size of debt payments as external debts tend to be owed in dollars.

Tim Jones, economist at the Jubilee Debt Campaign, said: "Debt payments for many countries have risen rapidly as a result of a lending boom and fall in commodity prices. The situation may worsen further as US dollar interest rates rise, and as other central banks reduce monetary stimulus. Debt payments are reducing government budgets when more spending is needed to meet the Sustainable Development Goals. Where there are debt crises, the risk is that the IMF will bail out reckless lenders, and the debt will remain with the country concerned. Instead, reckless lenders need to be made to bear some of the costs of economic shocks through lower debt payments, allowing governments to maintain spending on essential services."

Countries with the highest debt payments in 2017 include:

- Commodity producers which have been hit by price falls, including Ghana, Mozambique, Angola, Chad, Gabon and Laos
- Countries which are paying debts contracted by previous dictators, including Gambia and Tunisia
- Countries which have had high debts for many years, sometimes decades, but have never been allowed into debt relief schemes, including Lebanon, Jamaica, Grenada and Sri Lanka

Developing country external debt payments fell between 2000 and 2010 because of rising prices of commodity exports and the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative, which cancelled almost \$130 billion of debts owed to governments and multilateral institutions for 36 low and lower middle-income countries. The IMF say that of 67 impoverished countries they assess, 30 are now in debt distress or at high risk of being so. This has doubled from 15 in 2013.

- **The Jubilee Debt Campaign** is a UK charity working to end poverty caused by unjust debt through education, research and campaigning: www.jubileedebt.org.uk
<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/34543>

TEXT: INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY ADDRESS BY MARY MCALEESE

8 March 2018: **Mary McAleese, former President of Ireland, gave the following address today at the Voices of Faith International Women's Day Conference, on the theme 'Why women matter' - held at the Jesuit Curia in Rome.**

"Historical oppression of women has deprived the human race of untold resources. True progress for women cannot fail to liberate enormous reserves of intelligence and energy, sorely needed in a world that is groaning for peace and justice". (extract from presentation by Professor Maryann Glendon, member of Holy See Delegation to the UN Conference on Women, Beijing 1995)

The Israelites under Joshua's command circled Jericho's walls for seven days, blew trumpets and shouted to make the walls fall down. (cf. Joshua 6:1-20). We don't have trumpets but we have voices, voices of faith and we are here to shout, to bring down our Church's walls of misogyny. We have been circling these walls for 55 years since John XXIII's encyclical *Pacem in Terris* first pointed to the advancement of women as one of the most important "signs of the times". "... they are demanding both in domestic and in public life the rights and duties which belong to them as human persons". The longstanding inferiority complex of certain classes because of their economic and social status, sex, or position in the State, and the corresponding superiority complex of other classes, is rapidly becoming a thing of the past.

At the Second Vatican Council Archbishop Paul Hallinan of Atlanta, warned the bishops to stop perpetuating "the secondary place accorded to women in the Church of the 20th century" and to avoid the Church being a "late-comer in their social, political and economic development". The Council's decree *Apostolicam Actuositatem* said it was important that women "participate more widely ... in the various sectors of the Church's apostolate". The Council's pastoral constitution *Gaudium et Spes* said the elimination of discrimination based on gender was a priority. Paul VI even commissioned a study on women in Church and Society. Surely we thought then, the post-Conciliar Church was on the way to full equality for its 600 million female members. And yes - it is true that since the Council new roles and jobs, have opened up to the laity including women but these have simply marginally increased the visibility of women in subordinate roles, including in the Curia, but they have added nothing to their decision-making power or their voice.

Remarkably since the Council, roles which were specifically designated as suitable for the laity have been deliberately closed to women. The stable roles of acolyte and lector and the permanent diaconate have been opened only to lay men. Why? Both laymen and women can be temporary altar servers but bishops are allowed to ban females and where they permit them in their dioceses individual pastors can ban them in their parishes. Why?

Back in 1976 we were told that the Church does not consider herself authorized to admit women to priestly ordination. This has locked women out of any significant role in the Church's leadership, doctrinal development and authority structure since these have historically been reserved to or filtered through ordained men. Yet in divine justice the very fact of the permanent exclusion of women from priesthood and all its consequential exclusions, should have provoked the Church hierarchy to find innovative and transparent ways of including women's voices as of right and not in trickles of tokenism by tapping, in the divinely instituted College of Bishops and in the man-made entities such as the College of Cardinals, the Synod of Bishops and Episcopal conferences, in all the places where the faith is shaped by decision and dogma and doctrine.

Just imagine this normative scenario - Pope Francis calls a Synod on the role of Women in the Church and 350 male celibates advise the Pope on what women really want! That is how ludicrous our Church has become. How long can the hierarchy sustain the credibility of a God who wants things this way, who wants a Church where women are invisible and voiceless in Church leadership, legal and doctrinal discernment and decision-making?

It was here in this very hall in 1995 that Irish Jesuit theologian, Fr. Gerry O'Hanlon put his finger on the underpinning systemic problem when he steered Decree 14 through the Jesuits 34th General Congregation. It is a forgotten document but today we will dust it down and use it to challenge a Jesuit Pope, a reforming Pope, to real, practical action on behalf of women in the Catholic Church. Decree 14 says: We have been part of a civil and ecclesial tradition that has offended against women. And, like many men, we have a tendency to convince ourselves that there is no problem. However unwittingly, we have often contributed to a form of clericalism which has reinforced male domination with an ostensibly divine sanction. By making this declaration we wish to react personally and collectively, and do what we can to change this regrettable situation. "The regrettable situation" arises because the Catholic Church has long since been a primary global carrier of the virus of misogyny.. It has never sought a cure though a cure is freely available. Its name is "equality"

Down the 2000 year highway of Christian history came the ethereal divine beauty of the Nativity, the cruel sacrifice of the Crucifixion, the Hallelujah of the Resurrection and the rallying cry of the great commandment to love one another. But down that same highway came man-made toxins such as misogyny and homophobia to say nothing of anti-semitism with their legacy of damaged and wasted lives and deeply embedded institutional dysfunction..

The laws and cultures of many nations and faith systems were also historically deeply patriarchal and excluding of women; some still are, but today the Catholic Church lags noticeably behind the world's advanced nations in the elimination of discrimination against women. Worse still, because it is the "pulpit of the world" to quote Ban Ki Moon its overt clerical patriarchalism acts as a powerful brake on dismantling the architecture of misogyny wherever it is found. There is an irony here, for education has been crucial to the advancement of women and for many of us, the education which liberated us was provided by the Church's frontline workers clerical and lay, who have done so much to lift men and women out of poverty and powerlessness and give them access to opportunity.

Yet paradoxically it is the questioning voices of educated Catholic women and the courageous men who support them, which the Church hierarchy simply cannot cope with and scorns rather than engaging in dialogue. The Church which regularly criticizes the secular world for its failure to deliver on human rights has almost no culture of critiquing itself. It has a hostility to internal criticism which fosters blinkered servility and which borders on institutional idolatry.

Today we challenge Pope Francis to develop a credible strategy for the inclusion of women as equals throughout the Church's root and branch infrastructure, including its decision-making. A strategy with targets, pathways and outcomes regularly and independently audited failure to include women as equals has deprived the Church of fresh and innovative discernment; it has consigned it to recycled thinking among a hermetically sealed cosy male clerical elite flattered and rarely challenged by those tapped for jobs in secret and closed processes. It has kept Christ out and bigotry in. It has left the Church flapping about awkwardly on one wing when God gave it two. We are entitled to hold our Church leaders to account for this and other egregious abuses of institutional power and we will insist on our right to do so no matter how many official doors are closed to us.

At the start of his papacy Pope Francis said "We need to create still broader opportunities for a more incisive female presence in the Church" words a Church scholar described as evidence of Francis' "magnanimity". Let us be clear, women's right to equality in the Church arises organically from divine justice. It should not depend on *ad hoc* papal benevolence.

Pope Francis described female theologians as the "strawberries on the cake". He was wrong. Women are the leaven in the cake. They are the primary handers on of the faith to their children. In the Western world the Church's cake is not rising, the baton of faith is dropping. Women are walking away from the Catholic Church in droves, for those who are expected to be key influencers in their children's faith formation have no opportunity to be key influencers in the formation of the Catholic faith. That is no longer acceptable. Just four months ago the Archbishop of Dublin Diarmuid Martin felt compelled to remark that "the low standing of women in the Catholic Church is the most significant reason for the feeling of alienation towards it in Ireland today".

Yet Pope Francis has said that "women are more important than men because the Church is a woman". Holy Father, why not ask women if they feel more important than men? I suspect many will answer that they experience the Church as a male bastion of patronizing platitudes to which Pope Francis has added his quota.

John Paul II has written of the 'mystery of women'. Talk to us as equals and we will not be a mystery! Francis has said a "deeper theology of women" is needed. God knows it would be hard to find a more shallow theology of women than the misogyny dressed up as theology which the magisterium currently hides behind.

And all the time a deeper theology is staring us in the face. It does not require much digging to find it. Just look to Christ. John Paul II pointed out that: 'we are heirs to a history which has conditioned us to a remarkable extent. In every time and place, this conditioning has been an obstacle to the progress of women..... Transcending the established norms of his own culture, Jesus treated women with openness, respect, acceptance and tenderness....As we look to Christ.... it is natural to ask ourselves: how much of his message has been heard and acted upon?'

Women are best qualified to answer that question but we are left to talk among ourselves. No Church leader bothers to turn up not just because we do not matter to them but because their priestly formation prepares them to resist treating us as true equals.

Back in this hall in 1995 the Jesuit Congregation asked God for the grace of conversion from a patriarchal Church to a Church of equals; a Church where women truly matter, not on terms designed by men for a patriarchal Church, but on terms which make Christ matter. Only such a Church of equals is worthy of Christ. Only such a Church can credibly make Christ matter. The time for that Church is now, Pope Francis. The time for change is now.

<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/34479>

NATIONAL CATHOLIC REPORTER (US) ONLINE: YOUNG PEOPLE ARE NOT THE PROBLEM

16 March 2018: If the recent conference at the (US) University of Notre Dame — where speakers postulated reasons for young people's disassociation from the Catholic Church — represents the approach going into the upcoming Synod of Bishops on young people, we would beg church officials to postpone the gathering.

What we heard was a familiar litany, placing blame for missing young people on: Technology — specifically youths' obsession with smartphones — which supposedly robs them of the contemplative mind and makes them "suckers for irrelevancy;" an aversion to "orthodoxy," a term the user brandished with the certainty that his strain of orthodoxy is the immutable version of the truth; the "dumbing down of our faith;" the pervasiveness of pornography and relativism, (of course); and a new danger — the "bland toleration" of diversity, (a curious addition). According to this analysis, it is the young people, not the church, who are in crisis. By this analysis, the very institution that young people find so wanting that they have nothing to do with it nonetheless knows all of the questions and has all of the answers. This analysis imagines a "kairos moment" when scales fall from young eyes that no longer gaze at screens nor at pervasive porn as they become aware of their deficiencies and their state of crisis.

What a self-satisfying assessment. And what a relief. It isn't that healthy young people might be repulsed by the way that church leaders mishandled the sex abuse crisis for decades. Nor is it the money scandals or callousness toward gay and lesbian Catholics or the bishop-driven one-issue politics that has reduced religion and faith to a bumper sticker in the culture wars. No, they say, the problem lies with young people who have acquired culturally influenced defects.

The cultural critique has value, of course, and the disaffection of young people from all manner of institutional involvement — from the local symphony orchestra to the Rotary Club — needs continued examination to figure out how institutions can be relevant to young people. While dwindling numbers of Catholics are no doubt due to some extent to these social forces, there is much more to consider in the case of the church. Before becoming too convinced that the reason for the disaffection lies with everything and everyone else, church leaders need to seriously examine how their own shortcomings and failures have contributed to young people leaving the church.

It is reasonable to understand that teens and young adults, living in a civil culture that increasingly accepts their LGBT friends and family members, find unacceptable the intolerance and outright discrimination of some Catholic officials and organisations. It is understandable that a young person would rather not be part of an institution that preaches God's mercy but shows little mercy toward divorced and remarried parents.

Young people, especially young women, who know how their mothers and grandmothers struggled to gain equality in the wider culture, don't care to become involved in an institution where women are marginalised. What can they think of an institution that bars women from its most important deliberative bodies while women hold the vast majority of ministry positions in parishes and dioceses? Is it surprising that young women might avoid an institution where only men are ordained to preside over the community's most profound moments? Isn't it also reasonable, speaking of vocations to the priesthood, that parents might hesitate to encourage their sons to join a clerical culture that has been depleted not only in numbers, but also in credibility and moral standing? Could it be that only the tiniest representation of young people will be attracted to parishes and dioceses dominated by legalists and doctrinal "rigorists"?

Fear no longer works to fill the pews or keep people compliant. The people of God are looking for inspiration. The young — all of us really — are looking for authenticity. Examples of people who walk the faith and live the heart of the Gospel are more convincing than hours of apologetics and glitzy presentations on up-to-date delivery platforms.

Unless church leaders at the highest levels thoroughly examine how our community became so distorted — corrupt like a white sepulchre — a synod about attracting younger members will ultimately prove a waste of time and effort. Perhaps the breathless pursuit of young people in its embarrassing obviousness should be set aside to give church leaders time for deep reflection on what it means to be authentically humble. Replace fanciful answers to questions few are asking with a simple sign, containing one line, in each bishop's office: "You may be the problem." ***This story appeared in the March 23-April 5, 2018 print issue.***
<https://www.ncronline.org/news/opinion/editorial-young-people-are-not-problem>

US VIEWPOINT: CHURCHES MUST FOLLOW STUDENTS' LEAD ON #THOUGHTSPRAYERSACTION

1 March 2018 **Source: *Sojourners***

Rev Jim Wallis writes in *Sojourners* today: I often send a note offering "thoughts and prayers" to people in the wake of personal loss or tragedies. And I mean it. It was natural and sincere for many to offer their "thoughts and prayers" to the high school students at Marjory Stoneman Douglas after they lost 17 friends, teachers, and coaches in a tragic mass shooting with an AR-15. And I was immediately struck by the response by many of those students, even those of deep faith, who said thoughts and prayers were no longer enough. I believe in the power of prayer, but as the apostle James tells us, "Faith without works is dead." Therefore, it is time to think about the connections between thoughts, prayers, and actions in relationship to gun violence.

The students who survived the now-dubbed "Valentine's Day Massacre" were all born after the 1999 Columbine High School shooting, which marked the beginning of the modern era of mass shootings in schools. A recent Washington Post analysis estimates that since then more than 150,000 students attending at least 170 primary or secondary schools in the United States have experienced a school shooting on campus. Therefore, these horrific, heartbreaking, and family-destroying moments have become normal for this generation of young people. Some of their first memories at 4 and 5 years old were participating in active shooter drills, akin to the nuclear drills of my generation. As they got older, at 9, 10, and 11, it was not unusual for many of these students to fearfully ask their parents if they might get shot in school.

To read on see: <https://sojo.net/articles/churches-must-follow-students-lead-thoughtsprayersaction>
<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/344736>

MARCH FOR OUR LIVES: 24 March 2018

Coachloads of teenagers staged *March For Our Lives* demonstrations across the US calling for tighter gun laws following the mass shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, Florida. 18-year-old D'Angelo McDade gave an impassioned speech. He said: "Dr King once said: "Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that. Which now leads me to say that violence cannot drive out violence; only peace can do that. Poverty cannot drive out poverty; only resources can do that. Death cannot drive out death; only proactive life can do that.

As I stand before you, I stand as D'Angelo McDade, an 18-year-old from the West Side of Chicago. I, too, am a victim, a survivor, and a victor of gun violence. I come from a place where minorities are controlled by both violence and poverty, leading us to be deterred by success. But today, we say, "No more." I stand before you representing the body of those who have experienced and lost their lives to gun violence. For we are survivors, I am a survivor. For we are survivors not only of gun violence but of silence. For we are survivors of the erratic productions of poverty. But not only that, we are the survivors of unjust policies and practices upheld by our Senate. We are survivors of lack of resources within our schools. We are survivors of social, emotional and physical harm.

Dr King had a dream, a dream that we as youth must now make our reality. Ephesians 4,2-3 says, "Be completely humble and gentle. Be patient, bearing with love. Make every count keep as unity of the spirit through peace and love." For First Peter says in Chapter 4, verse 8, "Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers all wrongdoing." And for we, as youth, must now be the change that we see. My mother has this phrase that she uses all the time and she told me before I left home to come deal with this. She says, "If you don't stand for something, you'll fall for anything. And I stand for peace."

Watch D'Angelo's speech here:

https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=10155300315505493&id=729655492&refsrc=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.co.uk%2F&_rdr

THE LAST WORDS OF STEVE JOBS

I have come to the pinnacle of success in business. In the eyes of others, my life has been the symbol of success. However, apart from work, I have little joy. Finally, my wealth is simply a fact to which I am accustomed.

At this time, lying on the hospital bed and remembering all my life, I realise that all the accolades and riches of which I was once so proud, have become insignificant with my imminent death. In the dark, when I look at green lights, of the equipment for artificial respiration and feel the buzz of their mechanical sounds, I can feel the breath of my approaching death looming over me.

Only now do I understand that once you accumulate enough money for the rest of your life, you have to pursue objectives that are not related to wealth. It should be something more important: for example, stories of love, art, dreams of my childhood. No, stop pursuing wealth, it can only make a person into a twisted being, just like me.

God has made us one way, we can feel the love in the heart of each of us, and not illusions built by fame or money, like I made in my life, I cannot take them with me. I can only take with me the memories that were strengthened by love. This is the true wealth that will follow you; will accompany you, he will give strength and light to go ahead. Love can travel thousands of miles and so life has no limits. Move to where you want to go. Strive to reach the goals you want to achieve. Everything is in your heart and in your hands.

What is the world's most expensive bed? The hospital bed. You, if you have money, you can hire someone to drive your car, but you cannot hire someone to take your illness that is killing you. Material things lost can be found. But one thing you can never find when you lose: life. Whatever stage of life where we are right now, at the end we will have to face the day when the curtain falls. Please treasure your family love, love for your spouse, love for your friends... Treat everyone well and stay friendly with your neighbours.

RETHINKING SECURITY

Young people across the UK are sharing their ideas about how to make our world more secure. Join in by entering our competition! If you are aged 10–18, you can enter the competition with a: poem or recorded spoken-word performance; picture, painting or other piece of art; essay of maximum 750 words; animation or film; or a poster.

All entries received before 1 June 2018 will also be entered for the Inspire Peace Award, which will be celebrated on BBC Radio 2 in October. In October we will judge the best entries and runners up, in two categories: ages 10–14 and ages 15–18. Winners will receive two tickets to attend a prestigious Peace Direct event in late 2018 in London. They will be able to meet and talk with Peace Direct's international partners, who work to build peace in communities affected by violence, in places such as Colombia, Israel-Palestine and Papua New Guinea. Peace Direct is an international peacebuilding charity working in conflict zones around the world supporting local people to build long-term peace. A selection of entries will also be chosen for an exhibition at Friends House in London.

How to enter: Send your entry by 1 October 2018: By email to competition@rethinkingsecurity.org.uk

Or by post to Peace Education, QPSW, Friends House, 173 Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ. Include your name, age and contact details. If you are a teacher submitting entries from students, include their names and ages, with your contact details and name of school. We will share inspiring entries on social media throughout the competition.

What is security?

Security means freedom from harm and fear. When there is a lot of harm and fear, there is insecurity.

To feel secure, we all need to be able to meet our basic needs: for food, water, housing, health and personal safety. And our sense of security is also affected by what happens in our neighbourhoods, our country, and in other parts of the world.

Many people in the UK and across the world face insecurity, and experience it in different ways. In some places, people are unable to meet their basic needs, while elsewhere, they face war or climate change.

There are lots of ideas about what we need to do to reduce insecurity and build a more secure world. And because security matters so much to all of us, our opinions are really important.

This competition encourages us to think about these questions. What makes us feel secure? What causes insecurity? And what can we do as individuals to make the world a more secure place?

And as young people, what do we want our political leaders to do to create a safer future for everyone?

What makes our world insecure?

Here are some ideas about the major causes of insecurity in our world. Can you think of any others?

• POVERTY AND INEQUALITY

Two billion people across the world subsist on the equivalent of \$2 or less a day, and find it very difficult to meet their basic needs. At the same time, the richest 1% of the global population now have more wealth than the rest of the world combined. This inequality is one of the things that can lead to violence and war.

• CLIMATE CHANGE AND SCARCITY

Many of the earth's resources are over-used or destroyed. Climate change is resulting in extreme weather and changes to the environment, which are forcing people to move from their land and adding to conflict.

• VIOLENT CONFLICT

Individuals, groups or countries might want different things, or have beliefs that don't seem to work together. Conflict is a normal part of life and it can help us to understand each other and work together. But if conflict is not dealt with well it can become violent, which leads to suffering and insecurity. When conflict is not handled well on a large scale, there is war.

• MILITARISM

Some countries spend a lot of money on weapons and armies because they believe it will keep them secure, or because they want to threaten other countries. When countries spend heavily on the military, this can lead to distrust between countries, as well as causing death and destruction.

What could make our world more secure now and in the future?

Here are some suggestions about how we can build a more secure world. Which ones do you think are most important? What else do you think is necessary?

• MEETING EVERYONE'S BASIC NEEDS

Everyone needs food and water, somewhere decent to live, education and a healthy environment. We also need to be able to live our lives without fear of violence, and to participate in decisions that affect our future. How can we meet everyone's basic needs in ways that doesn't over-use resources or pollute the planet?

• ADDRESSING LONG-TERM PROBLEMS

Efforts to address global problems such as climate change, poverty and inequality, violent conflict and militarism will make all of us safer. What can each of us do to help with this?

• WORKING WITH OTHERS

Because our world is inter-connected, we need to work with others to find solutions to insecurity. How can we find ways of understanding other people's needs and opinions, and create solutions that are fair to everyone?

The competition is organised by Rethinking Security, ForcesWatch, and Quakers in Britain. Together we want to open these important questions about security to young people.

Rethinking Security is a network of organisations and individuals with expertise in peace and conflict.

ForcesWatch is an ethics-focused organisation that monitors and challenges militarism.

Quakers in Britain are a faith group working to promote education for peace and social justice.

Questions? Just ask: competition@rethinkingsecurity.org.uk
<https://rethinkingsecurity.org.uk/portfolio/our-security-competition/>

BOOK: *HIRED - SIX MONTHS UNDERCOVER IN LOW-WAGE BRITAIN* by JAMES BLOODWORTH

Review: **Rebecca Tinsley** 19 March 2018

Could you survive working in an Amazon warehouse, or at a call centre, or driving an Uber? Journalist **James Bloodworth** spent six months trying to make ends meet on zero-hour contracts. In the process he gained insights into why the UK voted for Brexit, what feeds anti-immigrant sentiments, how people become trapped in hopelessness, how easy it is to end up homeless, and how hard-working, hard-pressed people surrender to an unhealthy lifestyle.

This is a shattering book, and absolutely essential reading for anyone wishing to understand modern Britain. Working as a £7 an hour "picker" at the Amazon warehouse in Rugeley, Bloodworth walked 10 miles a day, constantly prompted to work harder by ever-present Orwellian messaging, and regimented like a prisoner, with totalitarian rules it was impossible not to violate. His employment agency repeatedly short-changed him, while tribunal fees introduced in 2013 meant any legal remedy was unrealistic. Most staff were Eastern Europeans who were desperate for work and afraid of the bosses. "Few English locals I spoke to were willing to put up with the conditions," Bloodworth reports, and there was a massive drop-out rate.

More depressing still is Blackpool, heaving with the homeless, the addicted, the suicidal and the working poor. Bloodworth works as a care assistant, unable to spend more than a few moments with each old person he visits on his hectic daily rounds. The generation that fought in Korea and against the Nazis deserve better than the outsourced "service" they receive, he comments. Half a million care visits between 2010 and 2013 lasted five minutes or less, as carers paid minimum wage rushed to meet their quota. He describes a level of "fearful compliance" among Eastern European workers, some of whom could not read instructions or medicine bottles. Moreover, the "clients" were denied their one daily interlude of human contact, such was the pressure on carers to move on rapidly. "I would see the disappointment etched on their faces as we dashed out of their front door: the realisation that even a brief chat was too much to ask for." No wonder 47% of care workers leave their posts within a year.

Bloodworth concludes that the fortunate among us ignore the hardship endured by the working poor "just as our grandparents turned contentedly away from what went on 4,000 miles away in an Indian sweatshop." He laments the decline of the unions, which educated workers about their rights, and built solidarity. He also paints a dismal picture of Britain's grim and violent little towns where "dull and identikit chain stores offering the same sensory experience," have replaced individual high street shops. No wonder people feel British culture has been overwhelmed. "Ronald McDonald should take more of the blame than Eastern European fruit-pickers," he concludes.

HIRED - Six months undercover in low-wage Britain by James Bloodworth, Atlantic books, £12.99

For more information see: <https://atlantic-books.co.uk/book/hired/> <https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/34549>

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

APRIL

5 and 8 - Until Sunday 8 'UPROOTED' a moving photo exhibition produced by Christian Aid will be showing in Chester Cathedral Cloisters. The exhibition tells the stories of displaced people in Nigeria, Kenya and Iraq and invites us to discover more about the global crisis of displacement and how we can respond. In connection with the exhibition, Christian Aid volunteer, John Griffith, will be giving a talk in the Cathedral Refectory on **Thursday 5 April** at 7pm. All welcome. For background to the CA campaign see: www.christianaid.org.uk/campaigns/uprooted-overlooked

10 Aiming High CAMCC Celebratory Event 6.30-9pm Riverside Innovation Centre, Riverside Campus, Castle St, Chester CH1 5SL. A celebratory event to acknowledge Chester's first BME Lord Mayor, Razia Daniels, and to encourage people from BME communities to pursue public and political roles and focus on community participation in all its forms. Speakers to be followed by refreshments, food and networking opportunities. RSVP Abdun Noor 07900 193783 or noor.chester@gmail.com

11 Time for Tea? Fairtrade Event 2-4pm Quaker Meeting House, Union Walk, Frodsham St, Chester CH1 3LF. Chester Fairtrading tea and cakes to help raise money in support of Traidcraft Exchange's "Hidden Entrepreneur" Appeal to help people, especially women, in some of the world's poorest countries develop skills to build businesses, make a profit, feed their families and educate their children. The cause will benefit from the UK Government's Matched Funding Scheme. Further info: 01244 679270

13 Time Out on Tuesdays Input and silent prayer time at The Convent of Our Lady of the Cenacle, Lance Lane, Wavertree, L15 6TW 10am-4pm. Cost £10. Tea and coffee, bring your own lunch. 0151 722 2271, email: winniecenacle@gmail.com

16-22 Global Campaign on Military Spending demilitarize.org.uk/paxchristi.org.uk

19 Water scarcity and War talk and discussion by Catherine Lindley Stockport Quaker Meeting House, Cooper St corner with Higher Hillgate SK1 3DW. Refreshments from 7pm, talk 7.30pm. Arranged by Stockport for Peace – all welcome

21 Ek Aurat One Woman celebrating Pandita Ramabai 10am-4pm St Paul's Church, Hamstead, 840 Walsall Rd, Great Barr, Birmingham B42 1ES Organised by the Asian Women's Theology Forum. £10 incl lunch. Speakers, bookstall, cards and fairly traded products to purchase. 0121 357 8941 church@stpaulshamstead.org.uk

23-27 No Faith in Fracking Interfaith Week Events at the gates of Cuadrilla's fracking site in Preston New Road, Lancashire. www.greenchristian.org.uk

25 Chester Friends of Palestine AGM 7.15-9pm Riverside Building, University of Chester, Castle Drive, Chester CH1 1SL. Further information: chesterfriendsofpalestine@hotmail.com

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

28 Coffee Morning for Fashion Revolution Week 10am – 12pm Hoole URC, Hoole Road, Chester CH2 3NT. **Fashion Revolution** is a non-profit global movement which campaigns for systemic reform of the fashion industry with a focus on the need for greater transparency in the fashion supply chain. Chanasa products from Malawi, plus cakes and preserves on sale. Proceeds will be used to empower girls and women in Malawi through the creation of sustainable fair-trade textile products and by funding their education. Chifundo UK 01244 381490

MAY

1 Working for a Better Future the Mechanics' Institute, Manchester. Marking the 150th Anniversary of the founding of the Trade Union Congress a meeting to gain insights from Catholic Social Teaching into the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Automation, Brexit, workers' rights, discrimination, the gig economy - the world of work is rapidly changing. How do we face the threats and opportunities presented by this new world, so that no one is left behind and all are respected and valued? Speakers: Dr Mary Bousted, Joint General Secretary of the NEU, 2017 President of the TUC; Bishop William Kenney, Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Birmingham; Rob Fello, Political consultant, former Labour MP and shadow Justice Minister. Panel discussion with: Dr Anna Rowlands, Associate Professor of Catholic Social Thought and Practice; Clifford Longley, author, broadcaster and journalist; Kevin Flanagan, National President GMB Commercial Services Section. The meeting is for people of all faiths and none who are interested in the world of work and in promoting the wellbeing of the workforce. Starting with a buffet lunch at 1pm and meeting from 2-4.30pm. For the full agenda and to book a free ticket, please visit www.csan.org.uk/events/workingbetterfuture/ Organised by Caritas Social Action Network and The Centre for Catholic Social Thought and Practice.

8 Time Out on Tuesdays (see 13 April)

8 CWDF Forum Meeting and AGM 6.45-9pm The Unity Centre, Cuppin St, Chester CH1 2BN.

Church Action on Poverty is proud to be a partner in the Centre for Theology and Justice alongside Christian Aid, Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, and Luther King House in Manchester.

9 Theology for a Learning Church: Christian Education, Lay Formation and the Language of 'Discipleship' annual David Goodbourn Lecture 3.45pm Metropolitan Cathedral, Liverpool to be given by Professor Elaine Graham, Grosvenor Research Professor of Practical Theology at the University of Chester. Recent work on 'lay leadership' and 'discipleship' notes the challenge of 'setting God's people free' from clericalism, to exercise a wider ministry as the church in the world. The lecture will examine the tension between Christian education for the 'gathered' and 'scattered' church, and consider what patterns of learning and formation are best suited for the challenges facing the church in the world today. This is an open event so there is no need to apply for a ticket. Please share the invitation in your own networks if you can.

12 NJPN AGM and 40th Anniversary Celebration at CAFOD, Romero House, 55 Westminster Bridge Rd, London SW1V 1BX 10.30am-4pm. Come and celebrate 40 years of people working together for justice and peace in England and Wales.

justice-and-peace.org.uk/njpn/meetings/ Follow the link: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/njpn-agm-and-anniversary-celebration-tickets-4487896496>

13-19 Christian Aid Week christianaid.org.uk/christian-aid-week

15 Conscientious Objectors' Day paxchristi.org.uk

25 Interfaith Meditation for Peace Manchester Cathedral, Victoria St, M3 1SX 10am-4pm. Join people of different faiths or none in a silent meditation of unity. Keynote speaker Laurence Freeman OSB. Enquiries or to book, contact Pat Higgins 0161 962 8661 patricia_higgins@hotmail.com All welcome

26 Ecumenical Quiet Day (see 28 April)

JUNE

12 Time Out on Tuesdays (see 13 April)

22 CWDF 25-Year Celebratory Event 7-9pm Hoole Community Centre, Westminster Rd, Hoole CH2 3AU Info: 01244 350323

23 Ecumenical Quiet Day (see 28 April)

23 Liverpool J&P Annual Assembly, LACE 10am-4pm. More info: 0151 522 1080 s.atherton@rcaol.co.uk

30 Friends of Sabeel & Kairos Britain Conference 10am-5pm Oxford. Main speaker : Revd Naim Ateek, prominent Palestinian Theologian, Father of Palestinian Liberation Theology, the founder of Sabeel Theological Center Jerusalem, a co-author of the Palestinian Kairos Document, and the author of several important books such as Justice and Only Justice and A Palestinian Christian Cry for Reconciliation. More details: www.friendsofsabeel.org.uk/events/251/friends-of-sabeel-uk-kairos-britain-conference-2018-oxford/

- Many items taken from the daily e-bulletin Independent Catholic News www.indcatholicnews.com an 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 (plus copies of this newsletter and back issues) and resources at www.justice-and-peace.org.uk or contact admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk 0207 901 4864

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

ACN IS WALKING FOR IRAQ!

This year the North West Office for Aid to the Church in Need is raising awareness and funds to support Iraqi Christians as they return to the Nineveh Plain. Throughout 2018, Caroline and Bridget will be walking a route that takes in all five NW Cathedrals. So far we've scheduled walks for 18-21 May (Lancaster Cathedral - Salford Cathedral), 15-16 June (Salford Cathedral - Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral), 6-7 July (Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral - Wrexham Cathedral) and 14-15 September (Wrexham Cathedral - Shrewsbury Cathedral).

Why not get your parish or school walking to provide a brighter future for Iraq's Christian community? You can donate over the phone or take part by contacting ACN NW on 01524 388739 or NW.office@acnuk.org. Or sponsor them at www.justgiving.com/fundraising/walks4iraq

2018 ANNUAL JUSTICE & PEACE CONFERENCE: 'In the Shelter of Each Other the People Live'

Friday 20 – Sunday 22 July 2018 The Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, Derbyshire SEE Page 13 below

2018 ANNUAL JUSTICE & PEACE CONFERENCE: *'In the Shelter of Each Other the People Live'*

Friday 20 – Sunday 22 July 2018
The Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, Derbyshire

How do we build a church and a society with the marginalised, the excluded and the most vulnerable at its heart?

What does 'home' mean for those who are homeless or struggling to keep a roof over their heads, for those who have fled their homes, for those who are rejected or don't 'fit in'?

And for the comfortable and secure, is it a space to defend or to open in welcome?

Can we recognise that it is only in relationship with each other and with the earth that we share that we can all be truly 'at home'?

SPEAKERS

Rev Al Barrett is Rector of Hodge Hill Church, a Church of England-URC ecumenical partnership in east Birmingham. He lives on a diverse outer estate on the edge of the city, and has been involved in a journey of community-building there, with friends and neighbours, for the last 7 years. He writes and teaches a bit, blogs irregularly at www.thisestate.blogspot.com, and recently finished a PhD, seeking to develop 'a radically receptive political theology in the urban margins'.

David McLoughlin teaches at Newman University. He is a theological resource person for Caritas Europe, CAFOD, Pax Christi, the J&P network and various groups of Religious. He is a founder member of the Movement of Christian Workers and an active member of their Birmingham revue of life group for 30 years. He explores the relationship between theology and everyday life and offers radical readings of the Bible for Christian activists.

Sarah Teather has been Director of Jesuit Refugee Service UK since January 2016. She served for 12 years as MP in North West London. She stood down in 2015 and worked with JRS International, visiting refugee projects around the world, before taking up her present post.

John Grogan MP, a Catholic, was elected in 2017 as Labour MP for Keighley and Ilkley, having previously been MP for Selby before boundary changes abolished the seat. He is committed to issues of social justice and peace, voting against Trident renewal.

The Conference will be chaired by Housing Justice

CELEBRANT: Fr Colum Kelly, Apostleship of the Sea port chaplain for Immingham.

PLUS *Just Fair Market Place* *Workshops* *Festival* Programmes for Children and Young People

Information and booking forms available at: www.justice-and-peace.org.uk/conference/
or for more information contact: The Administrator, NJPN, 39 Eccleston Square, London SW1V 1BX,
Tel: 020 7901 4864; Email: admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk