

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 □

GRETA THUNBERG CONDEMNS WORLD LEADERS IN EMOTIONAL SPEECH AT UN

Oliver Milman at the United Nations 23/09/2019

Greta Thunberg has excoriated world leaders for their “betrayal” of young people through their inertia over the climate crisis at a United Nations summit that failed to deliver ambitious new commitments to address dangerous global heating. In a stinging speech on Monday, the teenage Swedish climate activist told governments that “you are still not mature enough to tell it like it is. You are failing us. But the young people are starting to understand your betrayal. “Days after millions of young people joined protests worldwide to demand emergency action on climate change, leaders gathered for the annual United Nations general assembly aiming to inject fresh momentum into efforts to curb carbon emissions.

But Thunberg predicted the summit would not deliver any new plans in line with the radical cuts in greenhouse gas emissions that scientists say are needed to avoid catastrophic climate breakdown. “You have stolen my dreams and my childhood with your empty words,” a visibly emotional Thunberg said. “The eyes of all future generations are upon you. And if you choose to fail us I say we will never forgive you. We will not let you get away with this. Right here, right now is where we draw the line.”

As the summit spooled through about 60 speeches from national representatives, it became clear that Thunberg’s forecast was prescient. Narendra Modi, the prime minister of India, told delegates that “the time for talking is over” in announcing a plan to ramp up renewable energy but didn’t announce any phase-out of coal – a key goal set by António Guterres, the UN secretary-general who convened the summit. Angela Merkel, the German chancellor, did set out the end of coalmining in her country but only by 2038 – a lengthy timeframe that disappointed environmentalists. Meanwhile, China declined to put forward any new measures to tackle the climate crisis. Emmanuel Macron, the French president, called for the European Union to deepen its emissions cuts and said that France would not make trade deals with countries not signed up for the landmark Paris climate agreement. “We cannot allow our youth to strike every Friday without action,” Macron said, in reference to Friday’s global climate strikes.

Despite Guterres’ efforts, the summit was somewhat overshadowed by its absentees – most notably the US, and Jair Bolsonaro’s Brazil, whose representatives were reportedly not selected to make a presentation there because of Brazil’s failure to outline plans to strengthen its efforts to counter climate change. Donald Trump did visit the UN on Monday but only briefly dipped into the climate summit to see Modi’s speech before attending a meeting which he had called on religious freedom. As he arrived at the UN, Trump crossed paths with Thunberg, who fixed the president with a hard stare.

The summit was designed to accelerate countries’ ambition to address the climate crisis amid increasingly urgent warnings by scientists. A new UN analysis has found that commitments to cut planet-warming gases must be at least tripled and increased by up to fivefold if the world is to meet the goals of the 2015 Paris agreement of holding the temperature rise to at least 2C above the pre-industrial era.

The world is currently on track to warm by as much as 3.4C by the end of the century, the UN warned, a situation that would escalate disastrous heatwaves, flooding, droughts and societal unrest. Major coral reefs and many other species face extinction. “There’s a big dissonance between every leader saying to Greta ‘we hear you’ and the commitments they are putting on to the table,” said Isabel Cavelier, a former climate negotiator for Colombia who is now senior adviser at the Mission 2020 climate group. “China said absolutely nothing new, India mentioned commitments made in the past, the US, Canada and Australia aren’t here. We are seeing governments showing up empty-handed. There’s a feeling that the big emitters are holding things back.”

There were a few signs of progress. A group of nearly 90 large companies promised to reach net zero emissions by 2050, while a handful of countries said they will be winding down coal use. But it became apparent that most of the ambition was coming from developing countries, rather than the major polluters. Trump has vowed to pull the US out of the Paris agreement, while other major powers are wary of making further commitments ahead of key UN climate talks in Glasgow next year.

Thunberg’s speech was “very emotional and grounded in science”, said Alden Meyer, director of strategy at the Union of Concerned Scientists. “If I were a world leader I’d feel very uncomfortable. But we’ve seen nothing from the big national leaders, the G20 players. It’s hard to say the summit moved the needle on the emissions curve.” “Other countries must follow our lead,” said Hilda Heine, president of the Marshall Islands, a country situated on coral atolls in the Pacific that is extremely vulnerable to sea level rise. “Falling short will represent the greatest failure humanity has ever seen. The summit must be the moment we choose survival over selfishness.”

But delegates at the summit warned that the international effort to stave off dangerous global heating was being undermined by a wave of nationalism. “If you look at the US and Brazil, it’s a result of populist politics that is turning its back on the climate,” said Cavelier. “That needs to be made explicit and isolated from the world.”

Amid the stunning rise of the youth climate movement, Thunberg, who arrived in the US last month on a solar-powered yacht, has directly castigated Congress and leaders at the UN, as well as spearhead the largest ever climate protest last week. On Monday she joined 14 other children to lodge a formal complaint under the UN convention on the rights of the child. The complainants, from countries including Argentina, the Marshall Islands, France, Germany and the US, claim that countries’ failure to address the climate crisis violates the international convention. “Each one of us had our rights violated and denied, our futures are being destroyed,” said Alexandria Villaseñor, a 14-year-old from New York who has taken to protesting outside the UN headquarters every Friday.

Thunberg said that world leaders were endangering children by ignoring climate breakdown. “They promised to protect the rights of the child and they have not done this,” she said at a media conference at the offices of Unicef. “The message is that we have had enough.”

<https://amp.theguardian.com/environment/2019/sep/23/greta-thunberg-speech-un-2019-address>

WE ARE GRETA THUNBERG

John Pavlovitz 21/09/2019

Greta Thunberg is one in a million. (Actually, she is one in seven point five billion.) She is infinitesimally small, statistically insignificant, numerically inconsequential. She is a brief cosmic blip. Greta is also a once-in-history, never-to-be-repeated collection of dreams, struggles, doubts, joys, fears, flaws, and passions, the likes of which the world has never seen before and will never see again. Her presence is unprecedented.

And yet, if you'd had asked her one year and one month ago as she sat alone outside Swedish parliament, silently advocating for the planet — I imagine the shy, awkward, then 15-year old with Asperger syndrome and OCD, would have probably said she is just one person. And she would have been right. She *is* just one person. And one person, it turns out — is enough to turn the world upside down. It is enough to wake up a generation. It is the stuff that starts revolutions.

This week millions of people stand in solidarity alongside Greta; a passionate, disparate army of reborn optimists and ordinary activists, propelled into movement by a singular human being who became the catalyst for their emotional resuscitation. One person. Just one infinitesimally small, statistically insignificant, numerically inconsequential person.

One year and one month ago Greta Thunberg was fully and perfectly ordinary. She looked at the world, and she did what all good and decent people do when we witness injustice and malice and waste and violence: she grieved and she got angry and she felt urgency. She worried and wept, and likely briefly asked who out there in that massive sea of seven point five billion was going to do something to save the day.

But Greta did two more things: she looked in the mirror and she moved. She decided that no one was flying in from the heavens to save the day, that she would have to do something there on the ground, with the rest of the mere mortals. She pushed through the hopelessness and the fear and the endless maze of "What can I do?" questions — and she allowed herself to change the temperature of the planet. She refused to be frozen into action by the size of the threat or the power of those in her path or the voices inside her head that surely told her there was nothing one 15-year old could do.

The ripples of one life, affecting all Life. The effect of one tiny butterfly, flapping its wings in the streets of Sweden. And Greta Thunberg, as much as she is deservedly an inspiration — is also an invitation. Her life is the irrefutable answer to the question, "What can one person do?" — and she is a mirror now, asking that question of you and of me. Because you too are one in seven point five billion. You too are infinitesimally small, statistically insignificant, and numerically inconsequential.

You too are a brief cosmic blip. You are also a once-in-history, never-to-be-repeated collection of dreams, struggles, doubts, joys, fears, flaws, and passions, the likes of which the world has never seen and will never see again.

And yes, your presence is unprecedented. How dare you feel hopeless in the suffering and resigned to the bad news and paralysed by the pain in your path, when you have the ability to alter it all.

The only thing that makes you and me different from Greta Thunberg in this moment—is motion; her choice to do more than despair and hashtag and feel terrible. Movement is the only thing required to renovate this world. The rest is simply the millions of ripples of that decision: the people it leads you to, the strengths you uncover, the voice you find, the lessons you learn, the paths you alter, the people you inspire.

So, move. Let your conscience or your faith or your humanity propel you into the world. Find whatever it is that burdens you right now, whatever it is that pierces your heart, whatever keeps you up at night, the reality that twists your insides into knots — and decide that *this* is your calling. It is the unique space that only you are capable of occupying — just like a 15-year old in Sweden whose spot in front of a towering grey building was only hers. And then, whether that calling takes you to the halls of Government or to the border or to the streets in your city or halfway across the planet — follow it. Because when you show up, even if you feel like the only one there, equality and justice and goodness will accompany you.

The revolution will be localised. They always are. When good people decide to move, they make the darkness flee.

Yes, Greta Thunberg is one person: a fierce, glorious, beautiful person.

You are one person too, equally fierce and glorious and beautiful. That's enough to make history. You just have to move.

<https://johnpavlovitz.com/2019/09/21/you-are-greta-thunberg/>

• John Pavlovitz is a writer, pastor, and activist from North Carolina. In the past four years his blog *Stuff That Needs To Be Said* has reached a diverse worldwide audience. John is committed to equality, diversity, and justice — both inside and outside faith communities.

EXTINCTION REBELLION: WHY I WAS DRAWN TO IT

Andrew Rollinson 19/09/2019

I am an ordinary man, with a wife and teenage children, a practicing Roman Catholic, who for the last ten years has worked in academia as a researcher and lecturer. I am (I hope) well-respected in my field of research, my church and my community. In May of this year I joined Extinction Rebellion. In fact I then went on to found a new local group (which is growing in numbers every week), I have participated in numerous demonstrations, I distribute their newspaper (*The Hourglass*), and I deliver outreach via their talk - "Heading for Extinction and what to do about it" to community groups throughout my region. I am spreading the movement.

Reflecting on the experience I feel that this is absolutely the most meaningful and Christian thing that I have ever done. Their meetings are like a white space in the middle of darkness. This last six months have been the best in my life. I feel that I am really living as Christ would do, being Christ's hands on earth. I have also made some wonderful new friends, learned lots about myself and developed new skills, and I feel hope for the future.

Why have I done this? Well, I have always cared about the environment for as long as I can remember. I have grieved at the destruction of rainforests, urban sprawl, agribusiness farming, and the coincident demise of wildlife such as hedgehogs, bees and birds; in more recent years I had agonised at the horrific pictures of sea creatures entangled in plastic or with their guts full of this blight on modern society. I have also become increasingly frustrated and angry about how big corporate power, with government complicity, is able to create social injustice. Working as a renewable energy academic I have known for decades that the science of climate change and the ecological catastrophe - the 6th Mass Extinction or Biological Annihilation - is terrifying. Like many scientists I have rung the alarm bells and tried to make those in power listen and take action. They have not listened to me or my colleagues. We have been ignored.

As a Roman Catholic I have for a long time felt a calling to do something about this - to protect God's earth. I was therefore very heartened to read Pope Francis' *Laudato Si'* in 2015 for it spoke to my own feelings. I thought that now at last the Catholic Church in Britain would take action, for they had been given a clear and direct mandate to do so. How could they not? Yet, I was wrong. When I saw no action I tried to be a driver of *Laudato Si'* in my diocese. As to my attempts, well they were draining and futile: I encountered at best apathy or lip service, and at worst either complete disinterest and in one case the rebuttal (from a diocesan clerk) that he didn't get paid enough money to help. As this was in contrast to my interpretation of what it meant to be a follower of Christ - the Christ who not only helped the poor but who got arrested and was ultimately crucified, and one can include the early Christians in this as well - I felt grief.

I then saw Extinction Rebellion in this April's news. I saw educated people talking about the issues which I had grappled with for years. I saw Christians getting arrested, elderly people super-glueing themselves to trains for my sake and for our children's. And I was compelled to be part of it.

At my first Extinction Rebellion meeting (in Sheffield) I was welcomed. There was a mix of people, from the under 18's to the over 80s. We were asked to chat with other newcomers about why we were there, and I found a common bond. At the end of this meeting the *Extinction Rebellion Vision for the World* was read out. It starts as follows: "Our vision is a world where love and kindness are the fabric of life". It then continues with... "It is a world where all nature and beings are seen as equal, appreciated and understood as interwoven strands. Here we have regained a sense of magic and mystery to life. Our children are safe to grow, play and explore. The future is assured for them and for generations to come. Some might say this is an idealistic vision. We don't agree. The map to it is the map of the human heart." Upon leaving the meeting, my wife, daughter and I all agreed that Christ was present in that room. Last month I gave up my job to work full time for Extinction Rebellion.

• Dr Andrew Rollinson is founder and co-ordinator of Extinction Rebellion, Pontefract
<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/37917>

UK: PEOPLE OF FAITH SUPPORT GLOBAL CLIMATE STRIKE

Ellen Teague 20/09/2019

More than a million school students internationally have taken to the streets on Fridays during term time and during the holidays to demand politicians listen to their concerns about the climate emergency. Catholic school pupils in Britain have met with their MPs, inviting them into schools and travelling down to Parliament to lobby them. They are now inviting everyone to take to the streets in hundreds of towns and cities across the UK to demand action. The initiative is unique as it is being spearheaded by school students, with a 16-year-old Swedish girl, Greta Thunberg, emerging as the symbolic voice of the movement. The youth have asked people of all ages to join them.

The next [#GlobalClimateStrike](#) starts today, Friday, September 20. In London it's happening at Millbank from 11am. At 4pm a service will be held at the Westminster Quaker Meeting House by people in the Christian, Jewish and Muslim traditions. This event is being co-organised by members of the UK Student Climate Network and the Faith for the Climate Network, and is supported by Islamic Relief, Jews for XR, CAFOD, Christian Aid, Quakers in Britain, Operation Noah, Tearfund, Ecosynagogue, Green Christian, Christian Climate Action, and more.

Columban missionaries are amongst Catholic groups expressing solidarity with the strikers. Ellen Teague of the Columban JPIC team will be at Millbank. Her colleague James Trewby is running a *Laudato Si'* themed retreat day for 12 sixth formers and some teachers from John Henry Newman Catholic College in Birmingham at St Chad's Cathedral, and will then join the climate strike in Birmingham City Centre. The Columbans at their Advocacy Office in Washington, United States, say: "Columbans around the world will participate in Friday's events. From the Philippines to Peru, Columbans accompany communities impacted by climate change every day. We encourage you to join the climate strikes this Friday to stand for those communities and your own." Columban Fr Patrick McInerney in Australia put a picture of himself up on Facebook holding a sign, "I am a Catholic priest and I support the Climate Strike". In the Philippines - one of the countries worst affected by climate change - Fr Edwin Gariguez, Director of Caritas Philippines, is "inviting and mobilising the youth and support organisations to join the climate strike".

Pope Francis recognised the frustration of young people in his encyclical *Laudato Si'*: 'Young people demand change. They wonder how anyone can claim to be building a better future without thinking of the environmental crisis and the sufferings of the excluded.'

Radical actions are taking place in the backdrop of "a warning to humanity" written by climate scientists in 2017. These scientists summarised the catastrophic consequences of human activity on the planet, in particularly our society's dangerous addiction to fossil fuels. Humans have already induced about 1C warming in global temperatures and we are headed to over 2C in the near future. Such an increase can lead to a self-perpetuating cycle of warming on the planet, with melting glaciers and rising sea levels threatening entire eco-systems. The stakes could not be higher.

Around the world, young people are frustrated about the lack of action to tackle the climate crisis. They have repeatedly asked governments to act to protect their future. But the current pace of change is too slow.

<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/37923>

The international context is here: <https://laudatosigeneration.org/rise-up/>

Video: Bishop John Arnold talks about "Addressing the Theological Imperatives of Climate Change"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s1XFTMxRvLU>

IRISH BISHOPS JOIN GLOBAL CLIMATE STRIKE

Source: Irish Catholic Bishops Conference 20/09/2019

Today, Friday 20 September, representatives of the Council for Justice and Peace of the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference will take to the streets to stand in solidarity with young people at the Global Climate Strike.

Young people across Ireland, and the world, will lead the protest demanding action on climate change. This follows similar action in March involving 1.6 million people globally. The aim of tomorrow's strike is to make it the largest climate mobilisation in history. Bishop Alan McGuckian SJ, Chair of the Bishops' Council for Justice and Peace, said: "I support this mobilisation of young people and all those with a love for the environment to actively highlight the vulnerability of our fragile ecosystem. I applaud their example of leadership in order to protect our future generations.

"In his 2015 encyclical letter *Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home*, Pope Francis pointed out that caring for this beautiful planet, which we share together, is a moral duty in its own right. The Pope affirmed that: 'Many things have to change course, but it is we human beings above all who need to change. We lack an awareness of our common origin, of our mutual belonging, and of a future to be shared with everyone. This basic awareness would enable the development of new convictions, attitudes and forms of life. A great cultural, spiritual and educational challenge stands before us, and it will demand that we set out on the long path of renewal'."

Bishop McGuckian continued: "Young people have been at the forefront of driving this renewal and the Council for Justice and Peace wish to stand with them in calling for a radical ecological conversion. We also wish to raise our voices for our sisters and brothers in the poorest parts of our world, who are already feeling the devastating effects of climate change. A grave injustice of climate degradation is that those who contributed least to the problem, will be affected most. As Pope Francis prepares for his Special Assembly of the Synod of Bishops of the Amazon Basin next month on the theme 'New Paths for the Church and for an Integral Ecology', my key message today is: wherever we call home it is incumbent on all of us to live responsibly, and in a sustainable way, always thinking of our neighbour."

<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/37922>

UNFOLD ZERO – MAKING THE LINKS BETWEEN THE ISSUES

20/09/2019: Today is the first day of the Global Week for Peace, the Climate, Sustainable Development and Nuclear Abolition.

<http://www.abolition2000.org/en/news/2019/06/05/a-global-week-for-peace-climate-protection-sdgs-and-nuclear-abolition-sep-21-26/>

The week takes in the: Global Climate Strike (Sept 20-27) <https://globalclimatestrike.net/> UN International Day for Peace (Sept 21) <https://www.un.org/en/events/peaceday/> UN Climate Summit (Sept 23) <https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/> Summit on Sustainable Development Goals (Sept 24-25) <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgs Summit> and the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons (Sept 26) <https://www.un.org/en/events/nuclearweaponelimination/>

Abolition 2000, the global network to eliminate nuclear weapons, has established a working group to encourage activists in all of these critical issues for humanity – peace, climate, sustainable development and nuclear abolition – to take action during this week, and at all times to make the connections between these issues. UN Charter (Article 26) recognises the connection between disarmament and sustainable development, requiring the UN to facilitate disarmament 'in order to promote the establishment and maintenance of international peace and security with the least diversion for armaments of the world's human and economic resources.'

More recently the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/development-agenda/> recognises that there can be no sustainable development without peace, and no peace without sustainable development. In addition, *Securing our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament*, <https://www.un.org/disarmament/sq-agenda/en/> the disarmament agenda released in 2018 by UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, outlines the links between disarmament and many of the SDGs.

There are a number of platforms listing actions during the week. List your action, or find out about actions, on these platforms: **Peace One Day** is a global platform to share, find out about or join actions for Peace Day. In addition, Peace One Day will hold a major celebration event in London on Sep 21 with civil society leaders and celebrities that will be live-streamed globally.

<https://www.peaceoneday.org/home>

Stand Together Now is a global platform for actions for sustainable development, and in particular implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. <https://standtogethernow.net/stand-together-now/>

UNFOLD ZERO is a global platform for promoting United Nations initiatives for nuclear disarmament including the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons. UNFOLD ZERO includes an online promotion of the day that includes background to the day, suggestions of actions that civil society can take and a list of actions/events including the UN High Level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament. <https://www.unfoldzero.org/>

Billion Acts for Peace is a platform for listing peace actions and events on any day of the year. <https://www.billionacts.org>

Move the Nuclear Weapons Money is a specific initiative linking nuclear disarmament with peace, climate and sustainable development. The campaign calls for cuts in nuclear weapons budgets, an end to investments in nuclear weapons corporations, and a re-allocation of these budgets and investments to support peace, the climate and sustainable development.

<https://www.nuclearweaponsmoney.org/>

The campaign will run a huge action in **UN Disarmament Week** (Oct 24-30) to **Count the Nuclear Weapons Money**.

<https://www.nuclearweaponsmoney.org/count-the-money/>

See blog and video of Roger Waters (Pink Floyd) promoting Count the Nuclear Weapons Money. In a video message <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vsM3mZFjzE> Waters holds up a mock \$1 million note and says that we have a choice: "We can either spend this million bucks on his – MAD, mutually assured destruction. Or on this: kids, our future, the planet, education, equality." <http://www.nuclearweaponsmoney.org/news/roger-waters-pink-floyd-nuclear-money-from-evil-to-good/>

MANCHESTER: 'GREEN CHRISTIAN ON THE ROAD TOGETHER' EVENT

Green Christian 16/09/2019: Last Saturday, Green Christian held its sixth regional *'Green Christian On The Road Together'* event, a day conference at the URC Dandelion Community in Wythenshawe, Manchester. Wythenshawe was designed as a garden city, and is the home of Manchester airport, but now has high numbers of vulnerable households experiencing food poverty.

Green Christian was invited by the minister of the Dandelion Community, Rev Kate Gray, and by Rev John Hughes, Diocesan Environment Officer of Manchester Anglican Diocese, to join with them in celebrating creation. They led discussions on the Green Christian Way of Life, with its four Disciplines of Prayer/Devotions, Living Gently on the Earth, Public Witness, and Encouragement; and the Green Christian Joy in Enough programme, with its emphasis on social justice. The sessions were led by Deborah Tomkins and Tony Emerson.

Other activities included the making of a magnificent - and joyous - banner, to highlight the joy there is in having enough, rather than too much, with Manchester-based artist Stephen Raw; and an interactive session on non-violent direct action and Christian Climate Action with Hannah Malcolm, the winner of the first Theology Slam earlier this year.

A more meditative session was held in which people made "prayer flags" writing on 20x20 squares of coloured material with their prayers, thoughts and feelings on the climate change / species extinction emergency. The banner will be used at the event *'Churches & the Climate Emergency'* at the Greater Manchester Churches Together Annual Assembly on 30 September 5pm at Salford Cathedral Centre, M3 6DP. Some of the flags will be displayed at the Interfaith Event in London at the Global Climate Strike on 20 September.

Lunch was provided from food that would otherwise be thrown away, a delicious vegan dhal and goulash prepared by Kate Gray and her team of helpers.

Deborah Tomkins, Co-Chair of Green Christian said: "What a wonderful day, with thoughtful and committed Christians grappling with some difficult issues. I have found that each of the days so far has been very different, depending on the local communities and churches. It's always a privilege to be involved and to offer support and resources."

<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/37896>

CONGREGATIONS 'GOING GREEN' FOR THE SAKE OF THE PLANET

Source: CoR 13/09/2019

In a concerted effort to make a tangible response to the climate crisis, the Franciscan Sisters Minoress as well as the English/Scottish Province of the Religious Sisters of Charity have made a bold commitment to go green by turning away from fossil fuel investments.

The announcement comes during the *'Season of Creation'* - a global celebration of prayer and action for the environment, and is made just days after Pope Francis said that "now is the time to abandon our dependence on fossil fuels and move, quickly and decisively, towards forms of clean energy and a sustainable and circular economy."

Faith leaders from across the world have responded to the climate crisis that is experienced by all, and most strongly by poorer nations in the global south.

Sr Patricia Jordan FSM, Mother General of the Franciscan Sisters Minoress reflected: "On his deathbed, Saint Francis said, 'I have done what was mine to do, may Christ now teach you what you are to do.....'
.....We each have our own part to play in protecting our environment, all of creation and the most vulnerable in society. Pope Francis said that St Francis shows us how inseparable the bond is between concern for nature, justice for the poor, commitment to society and interior peace. We the Franciscan Sisters Minoress, as followers of Saint Francis of Assisi and in response to the challenges of Pope Francis' encyclical *'Laudato Si'* and the needs of the times, have taken the decision to divest of our investments in fossil fuels. Our charism of minority places us in communion with God and all creatures but especially with the poor and all those in need. As 'little ones', accepting our weaknesses and limitations we put our trust in God, who alone can achieve His work through us. We have a duty to be responsible stewards of all God's gifts, namely "our common home" and to protect all of creation and our most vulnerable brothers and sisters throughout the world."

Sr Rita Dawson RSC, Provincial of the English/Scottish Province of the Religious Sisters of Charity, outlined her congregation's discernment, in terms of taking a stand on the environment: "We are proud to be part of the move to a fossil fuel free future. The sisters in our province unanimously agreed that divestment from fossil fuels was the way forward for us and an investment in the future of life on our planet. For many years now our Congregation has adopted care of the earth as a special commitment and our sisters have been encouraged and enabled to grow in their understanding of how to respond to that commitment. As we deepened our understanding of the nature of climate change and the contributing factors we have tried to respond positively by taking steps to limit the damage and we aspire to replacing our carbon footprint with a green one. In doing all this we face the same challenges as everyone else living in a consumerist and privileged society.

"We are constantly reminded by the media of the threat of climate change. We are concerned that the damage that the use of fossil fuels is doing to the temperature of the earth will endanger the poorest and most vulnerable people worst and greatly compromise future generations. Equally we value God's Creation as a whole and of which we are a part. Every creature is connected to us, plants, animals, soil, oceans. We are aware of the web of life and that everything we do, buy, every choice we make has an effect of the health of this web. A million species are endangered and many are already lost. We recognise that all species are loved by God and any action causing damage to our brothers and sisters or other creatures through our human activity is completely unacceptable to the Creator. Our decision to divest from fossil fuels is a moral one. It became evident to us that it is quite simply the right thing to do."

James Buchanan, Bright Now Campaign Manager for the Christian climate change charity Operation Noah, said: "As the scale of the climate crisis and the urgency of action required increases by the day, it is wonderful to see faith institutions at the forefront of the fossil fuel divestment movement, shifting investments out of the problem and into the solution."

<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/37877>

DEVELOPING COUNTRIES ARE PAYING THE HIGHEST PRICE FOR CLIMATE CHANGE

Tim Gee, Campaigner - Human Rights in the UK, Amnesty International UK 16/09/2019

While the effects of the climate crisis are being felt around the world already and will continue to impact everyone, research shows* that developing countries will bear an estimated 75-80% of the costs of climate change. People in poverty tend to live in areas more susceptible to climate damage. They have fewer resources to deal with the effects of damage caused by climate change, and get less social or financial support to recover from the impact of the climate crisis.

Here are just a few of the places already paying the price:

Brazil: burning forests: President Bolsonaro has opened up the Amazon rainforest for mining, ended demarcation of Indigenous lands and weakened environmental agencies and protections. Our researchers visited three Indigenous territories in Northern Brazil where illegal intruders had begun to seize land and threaten Indigenous Peoples leading to an estimated 75,000 forest fires this year. This is both an environmental catastrophe and a human rights crisis.

Kenya: forced from their land: Kenya has forcibly evicted Sengwer Indigenous Peoples living in Embobut forest from their lands under the guise of preservation of ecosystems. They have lost homes, livelihoods and access to sacred sites. Many now live outside the forest in appalling poverty. The community has been dispersed, separated from their traditional practices in the forest. Many fear they will lose their unique culture and identity.

South Asia: climate and greater poverty: Rising temperatures and changing precipitation patterns are having a severe effect on living standards and health in countries in South Asia like India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Pakistan. Research shows* that climate change will exacerbate existing poverty and inequality, with the most severe impact in poor regions, and places poorer people live and work.

Ecuador: women's lives on the line: Amazonian Women Patricia Gualinga, Nema Grefa, Salomé Aranda and Margoth Escobar are putting their lives on the line every day protecting the world's largest rainforest. In doing so, they are taking a stand against climate change, while defying huge political and economic interests linked to extractive industries in Indigenous territories.

What can we do? On top of drastically reducing carbon emissions and phasing out subsidies for fossil fuels, governments must protect the most vulnerable to the effects of the climate crisis, help people adapt to climate change and provide support to those who have lost their homes. Together we can stand with Indigenous Peoples and those most affected by the crisis, and demand a rapid and just transition to a zero-carbon economy that leaves no one behind.

*UN Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights report 2019 <https://www.amnesty.org.uk>

FAITH INSTITUTIONS ARE LARGEST GROUP IN GLOBAL DIVESTMENT MOVEMENT

Ellen Teague 17/09/2019 **Source Operation Noah:** A coalition of diverse and international faith institutions announced divestment from fossil fuels on 12 September and a new milestone was marked. Faith institutions constitute the greatest number of entities contributing to the global movement, with 150 Catholic institutions alone in the total of more than 1,100. Fossil fuel divestment now comes from institutions with \$11 trillion in assets, up from a starting point of \$50 billion just five years ago.

The recent announcement included 15 new Catholic commitments - among them the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, the Association of Member Episcopal Conferences in Eastern Africa, the English/Scottish Province of the Religious Sisters of Charity and Franciscan Sisters Minor - as well as seven Protestant institutions - among them the United Reformed Church in the UK, St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral in Edinburgh, and the United Reformed Church Synod of Wessex, UK. In addition to divestment within the Christian community, Muslim authorities in the United States and Canada have issued a fatwa, or religious ruling, on fossil fuels. The fatwa calls on Islamic investment managers to develop fossil-free investment vehicles and on individual Muslims to invest in renewable energy.

One of the institutions participating in the announcement, St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral in Edinburgh, is the first cathedral in the world to divest from fossil fuels. In June this year, the Scottish Episcopal Church General Synod asked the Church's Investment Committee to divest, recognising the "moral imperative to divest fully from fossil fuels."

The announcement comes during the *Season of Creation*, a global celebration of prayer and action for the environment, and is made just days after Pope Francis said that "now is the time to abandon our dependence on fossil fuels and move, quickly and decisively, towards forms of clean energy and a sustainable and circular economy."

Another of the divesting institutions, the Association of Member Episcopal Conferences in Eastern Africa, is located in a region that is particularly vulnerable to the climate crisis. A UN estimate suggests that Eastern Africa has already warmed by an average of 1.3 degrees Celsius over the past few decades. A hotter planet is expected to severely alter the rainfall patterns of Eastern Africa, leading to greater droughts interrupted by periods of extremely heavy rainfall. This spells catastrophe for subsistence farmers. Fr. Paul Igweta, AMECCA's Coordinator of the Promotion of Integral Human Development Department, said, "We as the Church have to advocate for alternative sources of energy . . . it is our duty to take care of the future generations to come."

James Buchanan, Bright Now Campaign Manager for the UK-based Christian climate change charity Operation Noah, said: "as the scale of the climate crisis and the urgency of action required increases by the day, it is wonderful to see faith institutions at the forefront of the fossil fuel divestment movement, shifting investments out of the problem and into the solution." Operation Noah was involved in compiling divestment information, alongside Global Catholic Climate Movement, Green Anglicans and GreenFaith.

"Millions of people are confronting the rising hunger, sickness, and conflict that comes with a warming world, and faith institutions are responding with the clarity this crisis demands. We're divesting from fossil fuels, proving that greed will never triumph over love," said Tomás Insua, Executive Director of the Global Catholic Climate Movement.

Yeb Saño, the Philippines' lead negotiator to UN climate negotiations in the immediate aftermath of Typhoon Haiyan, a storm linked to climate change that killed an estimated 10,000 people, reacted to the news of the Catholic bishops of the Philippines' divestment by saying: "Dirty energy is hurting us, here in the Philippines and all around the world. Coal and other fossil fuels pollute the air we breathe and endanger the climate we share. We deserve better. Divestment from fossil fuels and investment in renewable energy points the way to a safer, fairer future." Saño is a board member of Global Catholic Climate Movement.

<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/37906>

JOIN THE WALKING REVOLUTION

Something exciting is happening in communities up and down the country. People are getting together to reclaim their streets and improve them for walking. We're so proud of our Local Groups and the work they do. They are making a real difference in their neighbourhoods, and we'd love you to join in.

If you're fed up of speeding traffic, dirty air, dangerous crossing points or congested streets that leave little room for walking, why not join or set up a Living Streets Local Group? It's never been easier to get involved. You can now register your interest online. And you don't need to have any experience to get involved. You just need a passion for your neighbourhood. Our expert team can offer you guidance, toolkits and support. We'll be with you every step of the way.

Let's make change happen together. Find out more about our Local Groups today, and discover how you can get involved. <https://www.livingstreets.org.uk/get-involved/local-groups>

Central Manchester Living Streets Group

If you have ever walked beneath Mancunian Way on a rain-soaked night and felt unsafe and afraid, or taken a cab the short distance home, rather than cross the desolation of a ring-road that severs the city-centre from its suburbs, then Central Manchester Living Streets Group is for you.

If you have ever questioned why your public squares are half given over to carparks, or why Deansgate turns into a motor speedway the moment it passes Castlefield, then together we have an opportunity to do something about it.

Central Manchester Living Streets Group is dedicated to turning the heart of Greater Manchester into a pedestrian powerhouse by campaigning for better, safer, and more attractive streets and public spaces.

With a flat, compact geography and a young and growing population who live, work and play within its limits, Central Manchester should be a haven for pedestrians. But cars are still given top priority: they choke our narrow Victorian streets, making the city a hostile environment for those going about their daily lives and staining the first impressions of those visiting from elsewhere. Add to this, poorly designed and badly maintained public spaces (hello Piccadilly Gardens) and what should be a source of civic pride for all Mancunians is treated as a surface car park for the convenience of a few.

Today, there is a hope that the problem is beginning to be taken seriously, as shown by the appointment of a Cycling and Walking Commissioner for Greater Manchester. But there is much work still to be done and Central Manchester Living Streets Group plans to engage with and persuade the Mayor and local councils to go further, and help shape a better future for Manchester's streets.

Don't walk away in silence. Join us today and help improve Central Manchester for all pedestrians. Just so you know, below you're contacting a local volunteer, not the national charity.

<https://www.livingstreets.org.uk/get-involved/local-groups/central-manchester>

Email: centralmcrgroup@livingstreets.org.uk

Merseyside Living Streets Group

Get involved with the Merseyside Living Streets Group: **Email:** merseysidegroup@livingstreets.org.uk

NJPN COMMENT: SUMMER IN THE CITY 2019

Pat Gaffney *The Universe* 30/08/2019

I would never have imagined that so many opportunities for deep conversations and peacemaking could emerge over just a couple of weeks. Being retired helps – free to choose where I go and when.

Four students, from Portugal, Belgium and Italy, attending a course on gender and conflict, and a family from France all stopped to take leaflets at the weekly Women in Black (WiB) vigil at the Edith Cavell statue near London's Trafalgar Square.

WiB is a worldwide movement of women who oppose injustice, war, militarism and other forms of violence. The London vigils take a theme each week: challenging the arms trade, speaking up for the people of Gaza and the West Bank, promoting the Nuclear Weapon Ban Treaty.

Our visitors were impressed at the weekly commitment. They wanted to know which countries still possessed nuclear weapons and which supported the Ban Treaty. They wanted to talk Brexit – would the world become a more dangerous place, post-Brexit? Why did we gather at this spot? So many strands to follow and so much to say – and all made possible by our simple presence in the middle of London.

Of course, place matters and they were right to ask 'why this spot'. WiB gather around the statue of Edith Cavell, the nurse who treated casualties from all nations in the hospital she ran in Brussels during the First World War. She allowed the hospital to be used by soldiers who were escaping and was tried and executed by the Germans in 1915. In 1923 a postscript was added to the statue bearing the final words attributed to Cavell: "Patriotism is not enough. I must have no hatred or bitterness to anyone". A fitting and urgent challenge for this time in our history.

This statue is also a focal point of the London Peace Trail, created by Valerie Flessati. A few weeks ago we led 22 people on this walk that began at the Ghandi statue in Tavistock Square, and then took us past the Anne Frank Tree, the Edith Cavell Statue and on to the Suffragette memorial in Victoria, then to the 20th Century martyrs memorial at Westminster Abbey. Telling stories on route, exposing plaques, statues and memorials that are hidden to most, is a rewarding way of sharing peacemaking's message through the ages. It's good to talk, to listen, walk and vigil, creating space for meaningful conversations.

www.thecatholicuniverse.com

• **Pat Gaffney is former director of Pax Christi.**

Peace Trails Through London are available via www.paxchristi.org.uk

Women in Black www.womeninblack.org

PAX CHRISTI NEWS AND EVENTS

Our new video is up on our YouTube channel where Joan Sharples (former J&P Co-ordinator for Shrewsbury Diocese) discusses what nonviolence means and how we might approach a situation with this in mind. Click the link to watch: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qfb9IZkcEBU&feature=share&fbclid=IwAR2Mh9M_uPP1isjEygKZ5s6tEbvmcVVN70V_A-IQAQo94SnDtjwX709NcQ

A time for peace planning & peacemaking

October 2nd: Celebrating nonviolence at Bloomsbury Baptist Church - On International Day of Nonviolence, and Gandhi's 150 birthday, we will gather to reflect on the Catholic Nonviolence Initiative to celebrate the creativity of nonviolence.

October 6th and the 26th: Christianity and Climate Change events – Sunday 6th 2-6pm Mount St Jesuit Centre London W1K 3AH and Saturday 26th 11am-5pm The Peace Hub Birmingham B4 6AF (Faith Justice <http://www.faithjustice.org.uk/christianity-and-climate-change/>)

October 8th: A joint event with York Justice and Peace. Theresa Alessandro, Co-ordinator of Pax Christi: *Pax Christi and our struggle together to be peacemakers*, at Bar Convent 7.30

October 20th to the 27th: One World Week Event *Climate Changes Everything: Now is the time to act* <https://www.oneworldweek.org/> - This event provides the opportunity to take part and put on local events about global issues.

October 26th: Christian CND day conference and AGM - 10.15 start at Brentwood Cathedral, Ingrave Road CM15 8AT. Speakers include Theresa Alessandro.

November 2nd: 'Primed for war' - Ben Griffin of Veterans for Peace will give the Movement for the Abolition of War Remembrance lecture at 2pm in Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church, 235 Shaftesbury Ave, WC2H 8EP. All welcome

November 11th Manchester: *Banned peace for books - The Last Weapon and the Weapons Unsheathed* by Theodora Wilson Wilson. Short film with Maxine Peake, and talk by Paul Anderson. 7pm Cross St Unitarian Chapel M2 1WL. To book go to www.eventbrite.co.uk and find banned books for peace Manchester.

November 28th Edinburgh: 15th International Conference on War Tax Resistance and Peace Tax Campaign. Hosted by Conscience: Taxes For Peace Not War <http://www.conscienceonline.org.uk/>

May 18th to the 22nd: Pax Christi International World Assembly (Hiroshima 75th Anniversary)

More info: Pax Christi info@paxchristi.org.uk

A PRAYER NETWORK INVITATION FOR OUR TIME

We are living in a time of great political turmoil, with new developments seemingly taking place every day. Many of us feel paralysed by uncertainty as to what to do next: how do we adequately respond to what is happening? What is more, the dialogue taking place is very divisive - and very rarely do we hear concerns raised about making sure that, whatever happens with regard to Brexit, the needs of the poorest in our society are a priority for our decision-makers.

Leeds Diocese J&P Commission invite you to join a daily Prayer Network from now until 31 October. The aim is to encourage intercession for help from the Holy Spirit, similar to the proposal made by Dietrich Bonhoeffer during World War II. This will work by people praying individually but at the same time each day - knowing that others will also be praying. We suggest taking five minutes out to pray at either 12:00 noon or at 6pm - whichever suits you best. We ask you to pray in whatever way feels the most appropriate for you. However, we would be delighted to know and hear from people that you are joining in this prayer network, which ways of praying or prayers you find most appropriate at present when life is disturbing for so many, especially those on low income. leedsjp@dioceseofleeds.org.uk

As a starting suggestion, here is a prayer by Brother Roger from Taizé:

O Risen Christ, you breathe your Holy Spirit on us and you tell us: 'Peace be yours.'

Opening ourselves to your peace – letting it penetrate the harsh and rocky ground of our hearts – means preparing ourselves to be bearers of reconciliation wherever you may place us.

But you know that at times we are at a loss.

So come and lead us to wait in silence, to let a ray of hope shine forth in our world.

– taken from card of icon 'Christ is our Reconciliation', made for Pax Christi International

CARDINAL NICHOLS WELCOMES ANNUAL REPORT ON SAFEGUARDING

Source: CCN 19/09/2019

Cardinal Nichols, Archbishop of Westminster and president of the Bishops' Conference of England & Wales today welcomed the annual report of the work of safeguarding in the Catholic Church in England & Wales. This report has been published every year since 2002. He also thanked all those who work in safeguarding across the church, both professionals and volunteers. "The challenge of our response to sexual abuse within the Church continues to be urgent and of vital importance," he said.

Read the full statement here:

"Every year since 2002, an Annual Report of the work of Safeguarding in the Catholic Church in England and Wales has been published by NCSC or its predecessor. A glance at those Reports tells a story of progress made, difficulties encountered, effort expended and challenges that lie ahead. Today I thank the NCSC for this 2018 Annual Report, which gives a clear picture of the work done in Safeguarding in the Catholic Church today. The clarity and detail contained in the Report is testimony to the hard work of many, many people, across our parishes and dioceses, mostly dedicated and trained volunteers. This is a story that needs to be heard. At the same time the Report is totally without any sense of complacency. The challenge of our response to the presence of sexual abuse within the Church continues to be urgent and of vital importance: heeding the voice and experience of survivors and responding to them; responding promptly to the surfacing of allegations; cooperating fully with public authorities; strengthening programmes of education and awareness raising. The Report covers these and other aspects of this part of our mission and points to the challenges that lie ahead and will require our determined response. For this reason, I also welcome the steps that the NCSC has taken in establishing an independent review of the work and structure of this work.

"Again, I thank all who work hard to ensure that the Church is, today, characterised by culture of safeguarding. In particular, I thank Mr Christopher Pearson for his leadership of the National Catholic Safeguarding Commission."

Cardinal Vincent Nichols, President, Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales

<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/37915>

POPE'S MESSAGE FOR WORLD MISSION DAY 20 OCTOBER 2019

Source: Vatican Media 11/06/2019

The Vatican on Sunday released the message of Pope Francis for this year's World Mission Sunday, which falls on the penultimate Sunday of October every year. Instituted by Pope Pius XI in 1926, the annual day encourages prayers, cooperation and help for missions as well as reminding Christians about the fundamental missionary character of the Church and of every baptised person. In addition, Pope Francis has declared October 2019 to be an Extraordinary Month of Mission (EMM). This special month of prayer and action calls us all to renew our missionary commitment. We're called to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with all peoples. The theme of this year's observance is *'Baptised and Sent: The Church of Christ on Mission in the World.'*

Read the text in full here: <https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/37267>

VMM'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY - 'AN AMAZING JOURNEY'

Ellen Teague 11/09/2019

"We have not saved the world, but we have deeply loved it". Edwina Gateley was speaking at this week's gathering to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the organisation she founded in 1969, the Volunteer Missionary Movement (VMM). Lancaster-born Edwina was at Liverpool Hope University, addressing around 50 members of the movement, many of whom worked overseas with VMM while in their twenties. Since 1969, the movement has provided training, support and opportunity to more than 3,000 people to volunteer their skills and service with communities in over 30 countries. VMs had travelled to the celebration from around Britain and Ireland, and from as far afield as Malta and the United States.

There were huddles over photos of VMM groups, and stories shared about how VMM blessed and changed lives. Edwina summed it up - "we can only be grateful for this amazing journey". She herself, at the age of 21, went out to Uganda to work as a teacher for three years under the auspices of the White Sisters and returned with a vocation to set up a missionary structure for lay people called to mission. Inspired by the documents of Vatican II, she brought her "dream and vision" to the hierarchy of England and Wales but could not generate any interest. However, when back in Africa, she heard that the Missionary Societies of England and Wales would provide money and the Mill Hill Missionaries offered a house for the first training courses to start.

Finally, lay people had opportunities to be more deeply involved in the mission life of the Church. Within 10 years Cardinal Basil Hume and Bishop James O'Brien attended the opening of a bigger property at London Colney, which was given by the Westminster Diocese on a peppercorn rent for 15 years. VMM flourished here and when the base moved to the Comboni Missionaries in Sunningdale. Lay mission was now fully recognised, and VMM has long been a member of the Catholic Missionary Union. Before Edwina moved on to mission in the United States, where she is still based, she wrote the VMM Spirit and Lifestyle, which expressed the charism and vision of VMM.

But what did this mean in practice? Well my husband Gerry - who had worked with VMM in Zambia for four years in the 1970s - and I did a preparation course in November 1980 with around 25 others before moving to Northern Nigeria to work - he as an engineer and me as a teacher. There was information about the places and people with whom we would be working, medical information and briefing on our own projects. But more than that was the emphasis on the missionary element, with shared prayer and faith reflection twice a day. We were introduced to the Church's Social Teaching - learning from *Populorum Progressio* that we must listen and learn from other cultures as well as serve. Speakers included the Nobel Peace laureate Sean McBride and we had engagement with missionary societies. I was learning about such things as 'Basic Christian Communities' and cross-cultural mission for the first time, despite my Catholic education and parish activity.

I remember hearing the hymn, *'I will be with you wherever you go'* for the first time. So, the spirituality of VMM was impressive, but also the emphasis on participatory liturgy and on community. It encouraged a deep faith development, a path of service to others and openness to learning from the poor communities where we were sent. A strong and often lasting bond between participants developed.

At this week's gathering one VM said he learnt from his two years in Tanzania that "poverty doesn't equal misery, nor wealth equal happiness". Another applauded "the simple faith and the generosity of the average Ugandan". One described "feeling so alive all the time because of the unpredictability of each new day", and another how the Batooro people of Uganda "had patience and humility wired into their DNA, teaching me to move a bit slower and be more patient". But let's not sweep aside the sickening smells of mushrooming slums, brushes with tropical diseases from mosquitoes, jiggers and bilharzia, and local people we knew who died prematurely because of lack of access to adequate healthcare. I remember a young boy, Charles, who was blind because his mother drank unpasteurised goat milk in pregnancy. While he felt his way around our home, during a stay with us to visit Kaduna's eye hospital, his mother insisted on thanking us by baking bread. We came home to little bread rabbits lined up on the table because the only mould she could find was for jelly rabbits! And we learnt that Charles would be blind for life. He would be in his late 40s now. One VM in Uganda remembered the first plastic bags being used, in preference to wrapping in banana leaves.

The VMM community in Britain reflected on the hospitality learnt in Africa. Food was shared with those who dropped in unannounced and prayer times were open to everyone. Many a VM stayed at London Colney after returning from Africa, being penniless and unsure of where they could go. Most VMs found the culture shock of returning home far greater than the culture shock of spending their first night in Sudan or Papua New Guinea. Staying in contact with each other gave mutual support. It wasn't easy to be respected as a lay missionary in UK parishes. A lay missionary who greeted in Swahili a priest who had given a sermon about his work in Tanzania found him turning and walking away without response. We never found out why.

Most VMs never truly settled back to the same life we had led before Africa and elsewhere in the global south. All of us appreciated - in a way we didn't before - fresh drinking water, food security and the importance of valuing people for who they are rather than what they do. People's resilience and faith in God no matter what their circumstances will inspire me forever. I remember the day Gerry unpacked a delivery of technical equipment for his Church media project but most local workers rejoiced in sharing out the cardboard boxes - none of the packaging was wasted. One of his workers used to regularly give us bananas - and what a shock to visit his squalid home by an open sewer, and meet his children, and be ashamed that we had accepted his generosity. When we left Nigeria, the parish hosted a party and people spoke about what they would miss about us; to our surprise it wasn't the skills we shared but our choosing to attend the Hausa Mass on Sundays rather than the English Mass which was attended by the parish dignitaries with western hymns. We weren't making a statement - we simply loved the Hausa drumming.

Many of us remain committed to social justice. At one time in the 1980s CAFOD had four VMs on the staff and SCIAF two. I run into VMs regularly at climate and refugee actions and lobbies. Just this past week VMs took part in the anti-arms fair protests in London's Docklands. I believe my first interest in ecological issues started by Northern Nigeria, hearing local people talk about the Sahara moving south, a shortening rainy season and the killing of forests and wildlife for profit. The need for "ecological conversion" was right there, some three decades before *Laudato Si'* and VM formation helped me recognise it. And I went on to work for eight years for CAFOD and then the Columban Missionary Society.

During this week's gathering, Edwina presented awards to VMs active in the UK over the last decade. One was to Mark Wiggan, who worked in Uganda 1978-82 and is the current Director of Caritas Salford. He acknowledged that "VMM started my faith journey". There was laughter at the number of VM weddings and the lack of money at the time, meaning that wedding receptions saw guests bringing the food and drink - and what a wonderful sharing resulted. "VMM opened up a life of adventure and richness that I could not have dreamed of" said a VM from a remote coastal town in Ireland.

We heard about VM activity in parishes today, whether serving the new partnership scheme in Hexham and Newcastle Diocese to promoting the Season of Creation in a parish in Shrewsbury Diocese. And some have run homeless charities and refugee projects. Others have been involved in the management of the lay missionary programmes of religious congregations. Yet, it must be said that VMM's commitment to ecumenism from almost the beginning has been a trailblazer.

But what of the future in the UK? Well the need to love and heal a broken world remains and, as Edwina puts it, "the Spirit dances on in all of us". But the context of the VMM has changed. Along with other missionary orders, recruitment is harder than in the past. How do young people hear about VMM if they do not attend a church regularly? Most young people with a third level education are heavily in debt as well, and short-term mission experience seems to be more popular. The demographic for recruitment has changed with more people in early retirement making contact. Building identity, community and VM spirituality is a challenge of formation that was widely discussed at the gathering and there was a commitment to build up VMM's social media to take on board more the communications revolution and improve VM links internally and externally. Mission appeals to raise awareness and funds, and two VM shops in Liverpool, are thriving. Hope University is a solid partner, particularly offering office space for two workers and meeting rooms. Bill Chambers, the VMM Chair, is also Vice-Chancellor Emeritus of Hope University.

Edwina Gateley's unfailing commitment to reach out to vulnerable people at the peripheries and her visionary writings continue to inspire. She has been a pioneer of Christian feminism and Creation Theology and continues to assist VMM to find its path into the future. Edwina summed up best the sense of this 50th anniversary gathering: "Sharing our faith, friendship and skills, we have received much love and blessings." Her words in 'Spirit and Lifestyle' could be borne in mind during next month's Extraordinary Month of Mission: "As lay people we give a special witness to the reality that all the People of God are called to involvement in Christ's mission. All who hear God's Word are called to respond. Bishops, builders and nurses alike must work together, equally, towards the coming of the Realm of God. Mission is given to us all."

<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/37867>

LINK: www.vmminternational.org/april-17th-1969-vmm-celebrates-50-years-of-volunteering-with-mission/

NOTTING HILL CARNIVAL: CELEBRATING DIVERSITY

Leela Ramdeen 30/08/2019

"God does not reveal himself in the abstract, but by using languages, imagery and expressions that are bound to different cultures...The phenomenon of culture is, in its various aspects, an essential datum of human experience." -- Pope Benedict XVI, 2010.

Cultural diversity plays an important role in human development and in nation building. Sadly, fear of "the other"; of those whose ethnicity, race, traditions, cultural practices etc. are different from ours often prevent us from building inclusive societies. For a number of years I have been privileged to be one of the judges at Notting Hill Carnival (NHC), London. This year NHC celebrated its 53rd anniversary over the Bank Holiday Weekend - 25 and 26 August. In spite of temperatures of 32 C plus (89.6 F), the sweltering heat did not deter people from enjoying themselves. It is estimated that more than 1 million people from around the world attended the celebrations over the two-day period.

Matthew Phillip, Executive Director of the Carnival Village Trust said that NHC is Europe's biggest celebration of culture, diversity and inclusivity. He said: "The Notting Hill carnival is the ideal way to bring together a divided country and remember those who have been caught up in the Windrush scandal. Carnival was brought to us by the Windrush generation. It was that influx of people which created carnival in the first place. It was a chance for the diverse community of Notting Hill to come together and celebrate the fact that we've got a lot more in common with people than differences. That's still relevant today" (UK *Guardian*).

At 3pm on both days everyone fell silent for 72 seconds to honour the 72 people who died in the Grenfell Tower tragedy in June 2017. As the media reported: "Grenfell Tower, which is still wrapped in cladding following the fire two years ago, stands within half a mile of the carnival's parade route."

NHC contributes approximately £100 million to the economy, and supports the equivalent of approx 3,000 full-time jobs - facts that are often overlooked. As usual, the media focused mainly on the number of crimes committed, the 353 persons arrested, the amount of police resources allocated to ensure security and the Section 60 order. Phillip rightly said: "Carnival is not a public order problem, it is a celebration." In order to counteract negative press reports, he and his team embarked on a proactive PR campaign before the carnival. He said: "We've had far greater coverage of the people who make carnival - the band leaders, the sound-system leaders, the mas camps..." Commander Dave Musker, in charge of policing the NHC, said: "Carnival is one of London's best attended events, celebrating the diversity of this amazing city and everything that it stands for."

I always enjoy meeting old friends and making new ones. It was a joy to greet my friends, Trini-born UK actor, Rudolph Walker, and his wife, Evangeline. In October there will be a celebration for Rudolph's 80th birthday. Sr Monica Tywang played her role in organising the Carnival Mass on Saturday at St Mary of the Angels RC Church. The Mass adds a spiritual dimension to the social, cultural, and economic dimensions of NHC. It is worth investing time, creativity, energy and money to develop the NHC.

• **Leela Ramdeen** is Chair of the Catholic Commission for Social Justice in the Archdiocese of Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago and Director of CREDI <https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/37785>

PRISONS WEEK 2019 13-19 OCTOBER *What does freedom mean to you?* Psalm 111:9

For forty years now, Prisons Week has prepared prayer literature to enable the Christian community, through individuals and churches, to pray for the needs of all those affected by prisons: prisoners and their families, victims of crime and their communities, those working in the criminal justice system and the many people who are involved in caring for those affected by crime on the inside and outside of our prisons. Each day of the week, a new prayer brings into focus a different group affected by prison or criminal justice. Churches and individuals are also asked to reflect on what they might do or offer as part of their response, through the range of Christian agencies and charities involved in supporting Prisons Week.
<https://prisonsweek.org>

WHY DO WE EDUCATE PEOPLE IN PRISON?

Andy Keen-Downs, Pact CEO

Many years ago, I trained to be a secondary school English teacher. I have always been passionate about the joys and benefits of reading. Usually, when the Government talks about reading, the focus is on literacy. And of course, literacy is key to almost all learning and participation. But books are about so much more.

As a child, growing up in what would by any measure be described as challenging circumstances, books opened up for me a universe of imagination and possibility. And when I found things tough at home, or at school, or in the police station (where I spent more time than is ideal for a young child), it was my English teachers to whom I turned. They seemed to me to be the adults who had the most empathy and understanding for what I was going through, and the best solutions. And sometimes, their solution was to recommend a book that would change my life. So the idea of being an English teacher, and sharing that with kids was exciting.

At the time I was at University doing my teacher training, my ambition was actually to make it in the music industry. I had dreams of being a rock & roll star. But even I knew in my most self-deluding moments that the odds of landing a record contract were thin. So I thought I'd train to do something that could give me a rewarding career as a back-up plan. That's why I enrolled to do a Post Graduate Certificate in Education, whilst playing pub gigs to one man and his dog around London. But by the time I had qualified, it dawned on me that actually, to be a good teacher – to be the kind of teacher that inspired me – would take more than a certificate. I realised that before going back to school, I wanted some more experience of life. So I went and did some other things instead.

A few years later, having worked in the City and discovered just how ill-suited I was to corporate capitalism, I took a leap of faith and moved into the voluntary sector. My first charity job was for Gatehouse, a tiny adult literacy charity working in a particularly tough neighbourhood of Manchester. I trained to be a literacy tutor. I loved every minute of it. We published books by adults who were attending literacy classes who also attended our creative writing groups, and we part-funded ourselves by selling these books as learning resources.

Our biggest customer was HM Prisons. I mention this because I am passionate about books, and literacy, and the transformative power of education - for everyone, including of course, people in prison. Without some of the relationships I had as a child, and without books, I expect I would have spent many years in prison myself. I came too close for comfort on several occasions.

I imagine most people reading this will share my belief that prisons should be places for rehabilitation. Places of 'redemption' even. We deprive people of their liberty as society's punishment for transgression against our laws. That's the punishment that prisons dole out. They serve the courts. The question we then have to ask ourselves is how do we want those people to spend their time whilst they are inside?

So, most decent or rational human beings take the view that the time should be spent on activities which reduce the probability that the prisoner will offend again on release. Stands to reason, surely? And as a prisoner said to me recently, 'if they treat us like animals, we will come out like animals, if they treat us like human beings, we will come out like human beings.' So first and foremost, we need to keep prisoners safe, and we need to ensure prisons are decent places in which to live. We need to be 'human'. That means prisoners need to be active.

And most sensible people will say, quite rightly, that we need to ensure that when people leave prison, they can earn a legal income, and have the dignity that comes with work. So, one purpose of prison education has to be about preparing people for the world of work. That means people need functional skills. Maybe they also need vocational skills, to help them jump straight into the kinds of industries that will recruit people with records. They need a CV, and they need to know how to write an application and succeed in a job interview.

So, all of that is great. But is that enough? Is that what prison education is for?

Well, here's the point of why I am writing this piece. Education for employability is clearly very important. But it quite obviously isn't enough. If it were, we might expect to see lower re-offending rates than we are getting. So my argument is that we need to think again about why we educate people in prison. Because let's face it, people in prison have already been through the education system. They have had years and years of sitting in classrooms. And they have still ended up in prison. And re-offending is still very high. So why do we think that more of the same is going to do the trick?

If prisons are about rehabilitation, or – if I may use the rather loaded term - 'redemption' - then perhaps we want to look at the evidence about what actually works?

In 2017, Lord Michael Farmer published what the Ministry of Justice hailed as his 'ground-breaking report' into what works for men in prison. A few months ago, he followed this up with his new report on women in prison. These reports are a result of a huge review, which MoJ, HMPPS, Pact, Clinks, PoPs, and other charities supported. Hundreds of prisoners, family members, prison staff and voluntary sector workers were consulted. The Farmer Reports added to an already substantial and growing international evidence base on the significance of healthy stable relationships and desistance from offending. The Ministry of Justice already knew from its own research that for a prisoner who receives visits from a family member the odds of re-offending are 39% lower than for those who do not.

We also knew that when the MoJ, and HM Inspectorates of Prisons, Probation and Ofsted studied what worked for prisoners on release in terms of accommodation and employment outcomes, the single most important factor was the involvement of prisoners' own family members. And more recently, Cambridge University's 'FAIR' study shows a strong correlations between those ex-prisoners who get clean and stay clean, and family relationships.

The phrase that is now used by Michael Farmer to sum up his findings is 'the golden thread'. As he puts it, 'strong, stable families and healthy relationships must be the golden thread of prison reform'. So, where the 'golden thread' in prison education?

When I was a young literacy worker in Manchester, I was struck by how many adults with poor literacy keep it a secret. The sense of shame is acute. I was also fascinated by what drove people to disclose the issue and to seek help. You would think perhaps that it would be the desire to get a better job? Actually, no. The single biggest motivation to change was children. What drove people to our classes at Gatehouse were kids saying 'Daddy, can you read me a story?' 'Mum, can you help me with my homework?'

And in the 14 years I have been with Pact, I can't begin to tell you how many hundreds of times prisoners and ex-prisoners have told me that the thing that is motivating them to stop offending, more than anything else was their own family. That's the biggest punishment of deprivation of liberty. Not being with the people who you love, and who love you.

But let's face it. Being a parent is hard...for anyone. Holding a long term relationship together is hard...for anyone. If you have had a chaotic, offending lifestyle, and been in prison, how much harder is it, to keep a family together? To be a good father or mother, and a supportive partner?

So, what should prison education be for? Yes, of course, it should be to support people into employment. Yes of course, it should be about decency, and being active. And it should be about widening horizons and stimulating a healthy imagination. But if I were to be asked to prioritise why we should educate prisoners, it would be to live in healthy, stable relationships. Because healthy, stable relationships, and the realistic hope of having a happy family life, have been shown to have a greater impact on motivation to learn, motivate to change, on stable accommodation and on employment after prison, than any single other factor. And so my argument is that if we are not basing our prison education offer on what works to reduce re-offending, then we are missing the greatest opportunity of all. The golden thread needs to be woven into the fabric of prison education policy and commissioning. And that's before I even mention how we begin to tackle the inter-generational cycle of offending and the vital importance of positive parenting...

If you have not seen family learning, parenting, or relationship education being delivered in a prison, you may wonder what it looks like. Here's a short animation we have produced with our good friend, Professor Cathy Nutbrown, from the University of Sheffield. You'll hear what prisoners and family members say about the 'FLiP' (Family Literacy in Prisons) programme, one of the many relationship and parenting education and family learning programmes we have developed, which are available to Prison Governors. Some of the other courses we provide can be found on the same web page, or we can send you an information pack. Prison education is a golden thread opportunity. Let's get it right...

<https://www.prisonadvice.org.uk/family-literacy-in-prisons>

JRS 'DEEPLY SADDENED' BY LATEST DEATH IN DETENTION

Source: JRS 16/11/2019

The Jesuit Refugee Service UK has issued the following statement today, after learning of the death of another asylum seeker in a migrant detention centre: "The Jesuit Refugee Service UK is deeply saddened to hear the news of a death of Oscar Okwurime in Harmondsworth Detention Centre on Thursday evening. We understand the exact circumstances of his death remain unconfirmed and the Police are actively investigating."

Sarah Teather, Director of JRS UK said: "We are concerned and deeply saddened to hear the news of a further death in detention. Our thoughts and prayers are with Mr Okuremi's family and friends at this awful time, and indeed with those who knew him in detention. We know from our experience of outreach into detention that detainees often feel forgotten and left behind. The news of a death in detention, regardless of the circumstances, always causes particular levels of distress for those held in detention. At times of loss like this, we remain steadfast in our commitment to accompany and support those held in indefinite immigration detention."

Harmondsworth, together with Colnbrook, is the biggest detention centre in Europe, with bed space for 1,076 men across both sites.³ The UK has no time limit on how long people can be held in immigration detention. In Home Office figures released in August 2019, 71% of those leaving detention were held for less than 28 days. However, of those held more than 28 days, 144 were held over six months, and 45 for over a year.

Responding to the statistics released in August, Sarah continued: "Immigration detention causes anxiety and confusion, and is deeply corrosive on both mental and physical health; often compounding existing vulnerabilities. It's high time for a time limit on immigration detention. A year is far too long for people to be held for administrative convenience, to be isolated from their families and torn from their communities."

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. JRS UK provides an outreach service to Harmondsworth and Colnbrook Immigration Removal Centres. A team of staff and volunteers visit and accompany detainees offering pastoral support and help.

<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/37894>

LINKS:

Detention Action - Colnbrook: <https://detentionaction.org.uk/about-detention/colnbrook/>

Detention Action - Harmondsworth: <https://detentionaction.org.uk/about-detention/harmondsworth/>

Jesuit Refugee Service - www.jrsuk.net

MALE SLAVES IN BRITAIN STRUGGLE TO GET SUPPORT AS NUMBERS SOAR

Thomson Reuters Foundation 23/08/2019

Concerns are growing about limited support in a system largely focused on women. Forced labour has recently overtaken sexual exploitation as the main form of modern slavery in Britain — accounting for about 60% of suspected victims last year compared to around 40% in 2013 — and the vast majority of those put to work are men.

Breathe in, breathe out; Yu tried to clear his mind of the years he spent enslaved in a restaurant as the group of survivors finished meditating and turned to their plans for the future. Sitting in a community centre in Birmingham, with a handful of other male victims of human trafficking, Yu was learning to process his emotions and focus on his dream of studying medicine and becoming a doctor. He is among a fast-rising number of men to have been trapped in servitude in Britain, with more men than women now referred for post-slavery government support which has fuelled concerns about limited support in a system largely focused on women. "Sometimes I can't control my anger, but in the second session the teacher told me how to do it," said Yu, 27, who was taken to Europe from China by a relative who abandoned him, before being abducted by traffickers and forced to work. "My hope for the future is to live like a normal guy — I can go to college and work," added Yu, who declined to give his real name, during a pilot project by The Sophie Hayes Foundation, a charity aiming to make male slavery survivors more employable.

Britain uncovered a record 7,000 suspected modern slaves last year — up one-third on 2017 — and men make up an increasing proportion of their numbers with many reporting forced labour at sites from car washes to farms, as well as rape and violence. "[Slavery] was always perceived to be a female problem ... sex trafficking and domestic servitude. The labour exploitation aspect has really only come to light a little bit later," said Garry Smith, head of anti-slavery charity the Medaille Trust. "The need is swinging towards male survivors — and services need to respond to that," he said, adding that many anti-slavery groups started out working with women and were now "catching up."

Male trafficking victims are more likely than women to have been homeless and suffered drug or alcohol addiction, and tend to be less open about their exploitation, emotions, and needs, said several anti-slavery organisations that help men. Yet women are often put first in terms of access to housing and other help, according to charities who are concerned that many male victims end up left vulnerable to further abuse.

People who say they have been enslaved are supported through a government scheme which offers care including housing, health care, and legal aid for a limited amount of time. Campaigners, however, are concerned that many men end up isolated, neglected, and vulnerable once they leave the system. While interest and investment in tackling slavery has surged in recent years, most the attention has been on female-dominated sex trafficking, leaving men at risk of being overlooked, found a recent paper in the journal *Crime, Law, and Social Change*.

The Salvation Army, a charity that manages the government support programme, has developed activities for male survivors, ranging from art therapy and gardening to a fishing group. But an overall lack of community support services reflected social norms in which men tended to find it harder to talk about their emotions, said northwest regional manager Kieran Walsh. "The recognition of a need for places where men can commune and offer self-help and mutual support is growing," he told the Thomson Reuters Foundation, adding there was a lack of men's groups and clubs to give male victims additional support. "I think those services are lagging behind women's services because ... of men not wanting to admit there is a problem."

Many male slaves are trapped by huge debts they cannot pay, plied with alcohol and drugs, and beaten or even raped by traffickers seeking to exert control. "With male victims, it takes a long time for the truth to come out ... many have been raped and it takes away a lot of their identity and self-esteem," said Rachel Witkin, head of counter-trafficking at the Helen Bamber Foundation, a charity. "Young men tend to think it [rape] has only happened to them — they are surprised when they learn that it is widespread."

Scepticism that they could be recognised as victims and the prospect of going home "empty-handed" drove some men away from support services — sometimes back into slavery — activists said. "Some of the men we work with turn to alcohol or drugs to cope ... and end up exploited again ... doing illegal work," said Viktor Dúbrava, team leader at anti-slavery charity Hestia. "Many feel that they need to work — earning money often equals a sense of survival." Yet anti-slavery charities were confident that dedicated schemes for male survivors could stop them being exploited again — and offer a much-needed opportunity to build a better future.

At the men's employment pilot project in Birmingham, survivors warmly congratulated each other and spoke of their hopes as they sat down for lunch to mark the end of the project. "Now I know my future is better," Yu said after receiving his course certificate. "I never knew people could be so kind."

• Reporting by Sonia Elks and Kieran Guilbert, writing by Kieran Guilbert, editing by Belinda Goldsmith. Please credit the Thomson Reuters Foundation, the charitable arm of Thomson Reuters, that covers humanitarian news, women's and LGBT+ rights, human trafficking, property rights, and climate change. <http://news.trust.org>
<https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/men-slaves-uk-britain-support-modern-slavery/>

'SPEAKING TRUTH TO POWER' – PUTTING FAITH INTO ACTION

Put your faith into action, and be part of a powerful social movement to end poverty and hunger in the UK. Join supporters of Church Action on Poverty and others who share that vision, for reflection, inspiration and action at a regional gathering on 2 November 2019 10.15am – 2pm The Lighthouse Project, Oldham Road, Middleton M24 1AZ

Hear from people on the margins who are speaking truth to power themselves. Explore how churches and others can take action to transform the unjust systems that trap people in poverty. Get practical ideas and hear inspiring stories from local activists and projects supported by Church Action on Poverty: Poverty Truth Commissions, Your Local Pantry, Self-Reliant Groups, End Hunger UK. Pick up practical ideas and resources to engage your church in practical action, prayer and worship. Find out about how you can support the End Hunger UK campaign locally.

This event will also include Church Action on Poverty's Annual General Meeting for 2019. Hear about the impact of our work over the last year. Members can take part in the election of our Council of Management. Refreshments and lunch will be provided. The *'Speaking Truth to Power'* roadshow is supported by a generous grant from the United Reformed Church.

Book here: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/speaking-truth-to-power-putting-faith-into-action-north-west-regional-gathering-tickets-65524404257>

POPE FRANCIS: THE POOR SHOW US THE FACE OF CHRIST

14/06/2019: Pope Francis' message for the Third World Day of the Poor was released yesterday. The day will be observed on Sunday 17 November. The theme for this year's World Day of the Poor is: "*The hope of the poor shall not perish forever*", taken from the Book of Psalms. The Pope writes that these words "express a profound truth that faith impresses above all on the hearts of the poor, restoring lost hope in the face of injustice, sufferings and the uncertainties of life."

Pope Francis points out that down through the centuries there have always been rich and poor. Today too, he adds, "we must acknowledge many new forms of bondage that enslave millions of men, women, young people and children."

In the message the Pontiff says that, on a daily basis there are families forced to leave their homeland to seek a living elsewhere; orphans who have lost their parents or were violently torn from them by brutal means of exploitation; young people seeking professional fulfilment but prevented from employment by short-sighted economic policies; victims of different kinds of violence; millions of immigrants who fall victim to any number of concealed interests. "And all the homeless and ostracised persons who roam the streets of our cities."

"How many times do we see poor people rummaging through garbage bins to retrieve what others have discarded as superfluous, in the hope of finding something to live on or to wear", underlines the Pope. "They themselves become part of a human garbage bin; they are treated as refuse, without the slightest sense of guilt on the part of those who are complicit in this scandal."

Turning his attention to Scripture, Pope Francis emphasises how God is constantly acting in the interests of the poor. "We can never elude the urgent appeal that Scripture makes on behalf of the poor", he says. The Pope comments that, "the situation of the poor obliges us not to keep our distance from the body of the Lord, who suffers in them." He continues by saying that, "instead, we are called to touch his flesh and to be personally committed in offering a service that is an authentic form of evangelisation. Commitment to the promotion of the poor, including their social promotion, is not foreign to the proclamation of the Gospel. On the contrary, it manifests the realism of Christian faith and its historical validity."

In this World Day of the Poor message, the Pope mentions two people, who in their lives worked tirelessly for the disadvantaged. Quoting Italian priest Father Primo Mazzolari, he says, "the poor are a constant protest against our injustices; the poor are a powder keg. If it is set on fire, the world will explode".

He also recalls the late Jean Vanier saying that, "thanks to his enthusiasm, he gathered around himself great numbers of young people, men and women, who worked daily to give love and restore a smile to many vulnerable persons, offering them a true "ark" of salvation from marginalization and solitude."

The Pope stresses that, "the option for those who are least, those whom society discards, is a priority that Christ's followers are called to pursue, so as not to impugn the Church's credibility but to give real hope to many of our vulnerable brothers and sisters." Pope Francis notes that, "it is not easy to be witnesses of Christian hope in the context of a consumerist culture, a culture of waste concerned only for the spread of a shallow and ephemeral wellbeing. What is needed, he says, is a "change of mentality... in order to rediscover what is essential and to give substance and verve to the preaching of the kingdom of God."

The Pope remarks that, although the poor are in need of things like clothing and a warm meal, what they need most of all is love. "In the heart of the pilgrim People of God there beats that saving power which excludes no one and involves everyone in a real journey pilgrimage of conversion, to recognize the poor and to love them." "God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong", underlines Pope Francis. "The poor save us because they enable us to encounter the face of Jesus Christ."

The Pope concludes by saying that, "if the disciples of the Lord Jesus wish to be genuine evangelisers, they must sow tangible seeds of hope. He then asks all Christian communities, and all those who feel impelled to offer hope and consolation to the poor, "to help ensure that this World Day of the Poor will encourage more and more people to cooperate effectively so that no one will feel deprived of closeness and solidarity." <https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/37283>

Read the message in full: http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/poveri/documents/papa-francesco_20190613_messaggio-iii-giornatamondiale-poveri-2019.html

HOUSING JUSTICE NEWS

Housing Justice, the national Christian homelessness charity, is urging churches to take part in this year's Homeless Sunday on 13 October. Homeless Sunday has been part of the Christian calendar for more than a quarter of a century. It is an opportunity for churches of all denominations and people of all faiths to unite and show solidarity with those experiencing homelessness and to reflect and plan practical action on homelessness. The focus this year is '*The impact of volunteering on the volunteer*', apt as Christians and church communities are at the forefront of the response to the rise in homelessness including the most visible aspect, rough sleeping. There were just 65 night shelters operating across the Housing Justice network in 2013, today there are 125 across England and Wales.

Last year the event was permanently switched to October, close to World Homeless Day. This was in response to feedback from church leaders and congregations and the growing number of churches involved in hosting Church and Community Night Shelter Projects. It was felt that as most shelter projects tend to open towards the end of October the alignment allows the opening of the night shelter season to be marked in prayer. Around 500 or more churches across the country usually take part, and it is hoped to grow that number this year.

Housing Justice CEO, Kathy Mohan said: "We hope that more churches than ever before will join us this year to show solidarity with those who are experiencing life without a place to call home. As the faith community becomes more and more involved in the relief of homelessness, it is also fitting that we reflect about the impact volunteering has on the volunteer and air this subject and consider how those who work tirelessly to help can also be supported within the faith community.

All forms of homelessness have increased by 4% since 2017. There are around 320,000 families homeless in Britain. Roughly 36 households become homeless every day. The most recent government figures available (Jan - Mar 2018) are the first since the Homelessness Reduction Act changed the way data is collected from local authorities on statutory homelessness.

In Wales the picture is mixed, but showing a general upward trend year on year for both homelessness and rough sleeping. In England rough sleeping has seen a 165 per cent increase since 2010. Housing Justice carried out its own count of people bedding down in night shelters on the same night as the official count last winter. Piloted in London, we counted 509 individuals in Church and Community run night shelters. London had a rough sleeper count of 1283, 13 per cent higher than last year, meaning that without faith and community run projects, the rough sleeper count would have been 40 per cent higher."

This Homeless Sunday on 13 October we're encouraging churches to create space in their worship for experience of homelessness, and to reflect on the impact that volunteering has on the volunteer. Volunteers of all kinds have an immense impact on provision for people experiencing homelessness. It's an opportunity to highlight the value of the work of volunteers in each congregation. Most derive personal satisfaction from helping others, and a greater appreciation for others' experience.

See worship resources, prayers, insights from volunteers and background data on the Housing Justice website:
<https://www.housingjustice.org.uk/event/homeless-sunday-19> #HomelessSunday

JUSTICE & PEACE AND ENVIRONMENT GROUP IN MARPLE

For some thirty years I have been part of our local Justice & Peace group and, after a period as Chair of the local Churches Together, the group became an ecumenical. Over the time we looked into and worked on many issues both at home and abroad. We put on events covering homelessness and unemployment, modern slavery and debt. Because we represent many churches in the area we have been able to raise the issues and work on them across the various denominations. A day with the Pax Christi icon was one of the several spiritual events that were appreciated across all churches.

Our most recent achievement has been to help set up a Dementia Drop-In where I think we volunteers gain as much support as we try to give. Ten years ago our special topic was the Environment. We spent nine months planning an Eco Day. We started the day with a Thomas Berry video and had two speakers from A Rocha and Mike Monaghan, our diocesan 'expert'. Along with quizzes and questionnaires, a couple of pieces of drama, calculating our carbon footprint and question time, we kept the eighty people who attended busy all day and wanting to form an environmental group to look at the issues more fully. Thus MESS (Marple, Mellor & Marple Bridge Energy Saving Strategy) was formed.

Ten years on we are still meeting each month and whereas we started with promoting cavity wall and loft insulation, double glazing and solar panels, we are now working on issues to do with refugees and asylum seekers, about conditions in Yemen, Syria and Burma and pestering our MP about anti-fracking and care of the environment; and encouraging our banks to dis-invest in fossil fuels. We have a small Incredible Edible group who tend planters full of herbs in the town precinct. And we have planted and tend an eighty tree community orchard in the centre of the town.

After many years of trying to raise awareness of environmental issues David Attenborough and *Blue Planet 2* have finally made people wake up and realise the urgency of the situation. On Sunday 29 September we are holding our biggest event to date – an afternoon with speakers from the Tyndal Climate Research Centre at Manchester University and local environment groups plus stalls, displays and an Art Competition for local schools. Some young people will be involved in presenting the programme and the afternoon will conclude with people encouraged to make community and individual pledges to alter our lifestyles to benefit the environment. So whether it is never buying cling film or wet wipes to abandoning the tumble dryer and the car to growing our own vegetables and only eating meat once a week, our group's aim is to help people discover the changes we can all make to cut our carbon emissions to zero in the Manchester target of 2038.

Maureen Matthews

NEW CAFOD SCHOOLS PROGRAMME CHAMPIONS CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING

A new programme that is championing the teaching of global issues and exploring Catholic Social Teaching has inspired teachers around the country - and recent participants are urging other Catholic schools to get involved. Teachers from across the country have taken part in special training days, run by international development charity CAFOD, and supported by the British Council, to help better understand how to integrate global issues - like climate change and peacebuilding - into the curriculum and the Catholic life of the school. Inspired by the message of *Laudato Si'*, the training day focuses on ways to promote sustainability, compassion, and solidarity, in the classroom and throughout the school.

Stephen Whelan, a teacher at St Edwards School in Hampshire, recently took part in the course: Connecting to the world: successful school linking. He shared his experience of linking with Notre Dame School in Uganda - a partnership which has helped his pupils to better understand the global effects of climate change and inspired them to take action. "Global issues should be the beating heart of a Catholic school," said Stephen. "Understanding faith in action is what makes it worth coming to work in the morning." His pupils were so inspired by the partnership with Notre Dame, and how the pupils were affected by climate change, they have now vowed to plant 1,200 trees by March 2020. "Young people are looking for opportunities to put their faith into action," said Stephen. "And, this project has meant the young people can say they are having a direct impact on climate change in our own country."

Besides the school linking course, there are three other courses to choose from, focussing on global learning and *Laudato Si'*, the KS3 RE curriculum and running a Young Leadership programme. They were created to help schools reflect on global justice issues, like climate change and peacebuilding, through the Sustainable Development Goals. They provide practical tools and strategies to help teachers weave these into teaching practice.

CAFOD's Head of Education, Monica Conmee, said: "Children and young people are at the heart of the battle against social injustice and are central in creating positive change in our world. Offering pupils global learning opportunities is an inspiring way to reflect the OFSTED requirements for a broad curriculum with demonstrable impact. These courses help teachers and chaplains to equip young people with the skills and knowledge they need to become active global citizens, through the curriculum, school life, and young leadership."

CAFOD's new free CPD is an opportunity to inspire the Catholic life of the school and put faith into action through embedding global learning into Catholic schools in the UK.

Find out more: <https://cafod.org.uk/Education/Secondary-and-youth-resources/British-Council-pages/Connecting-to-the-world>
<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/37924>

BOOK: STATIONS OF THE RESURRECTION: FROM EASTER TO PENTECOST

Fr Denis Blackledge SJ 29/08/2019

Stations of the Resurrection: From Easter to Pentecost by Richard Q Greatrex

The author of this profoundly stimulating volume reckons that often folk are so weary after 40 days of Lent that the 50-day season of Eastertide gets too little attention. As we live in a resurrection world he wants to offer the reader Stations of the Resurrection. This he does with depth and relish, providing 16 stations or moments for prayer and reflection.

As a pastor with a penchant for liturgy and the arts, Greatrex presents what is becoming a growing contemporary devotional, spiritual and liturgical practice. He travels with the reader from the sealed tomb to the wind and fire of Pentecost. Each episode has an opening response, followed by a scripture reading. He then provides his own reflection and a prayer, ending with a closing response.

His series of reflections and prayers are rich, deep, sometimes fresh and startling as he accompanies the reader. He begins with the sealed tomb, followed by the resurrection. The stone sealing the tomb is found rolled away; the women come to the tomb and meet the risen Lord. Peter and John run to the tomb and see angels in the empty tomb. Then Mary Magdalen meets the risen Lord before the author takes the reader on the road to Emmaus and supper there. There is a special meeting with Peter, with the other disciples, and with Thomas. The meeting over breakfast by the Sea of Tiberias is capped by the ascension and Pentecost itself.

The author's choice of art works is challengingly different from what might be expected. Apart from a Duccio di Buoninsegna and a fourteenth century manuscript illustration by Lorenzo Monaco, the author introduces more modern artists, some of them perhaps new and unexpected: Ben Nicholson, Georgia O'Keeffe, Wilhelmina Barns-Graham, Paul Gauguin, Elisabeth Frink, James Tissot, Samuel Palmer, Paul Nash, Henry Moore, William Blake and Piet Mondrian.

For personal or community use, this is a superb addition to resurrection prayer literature - and not just for use during Eastertide. It will stretch and deepen whoever dares to delve into this rich quarry of spiritual delights and will present fresh insights and challenge. The author even provides extra prayers, plus pictorial representations for producing your own stations of the resurrection. This book is a real find!

The final word must go to the author, when Greatrex says in his Pentecost reflection: "The resurrection began with a great boulder of limestone sealing Jesus' body into the tomb. To all intents and purposes, it was a full stop, the end of the story. But with God there is no full stop [...], only an ellipsis [...]; there is no end, for the journey continues and we have only to pinch our own flesh to know what the body of Christ feels like today. The commands are still the same - 'Go, make disciples, baptise and teach' - yet the promise too remains as fresh as it was to that first band of followers: Christ will be with us, even until the end of time."

Stations of the Resurrection: From Easter to Pentecost is available from Redemptorist Publications, www.rpbooks.co.uk
Redemptorist Publications, pbk, 125 pages, 2019, £12.99 <https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/37775>

BOOK: SEEKING JUSTICE IN THE WORLD

Fr John Buckley 22/09/2019

Seeking Justice in the World (Summaries of Papal Justice Encyclicals) by James Patrick Hynes

"No one lights a lamp to cover it with a bowl or put it under a bed: No, he puts it on a lamp-stand so that people may see the light when they come in." Luke Ch.8v16. When it comes to social teaching we have partially, at least, failed the light test. James Patrick Hynes in this excellent publication, reminds us how 'Catholic Social Teaching' became known as the 'Church's Best Kept Secret'. I would use more pungent metaphors from the sporting world- a dropped catch or a missed penalty.

If one studies that inspired seminal encyclical of Pope Leo X111.. '*Rerum Novarum*' (Of things new), it is evident that his teaching was about the sacredness of all humanity and indeed all creation. All subsequent 'Catholic Social Teaching' is about that. One of the causes accepted for lost opportunity was the fact that such vital documents were written in Latin and remained at the level of scholars and never really reached 'the pews'.

But as James Patrick reminds us things got much better with Vatican II. He draws our attention to in particular to '*Gaudium et Spes*' (Joy and Hope). If I might quote from that document..."Therefore, the world which the Council has in mind is the whole human family seen in the context of everything which envelops it." In other words...man and his environment. We Catholics know from our faith and love that all humanity belongs to Christ. We Catholics know from our faith and love that our beautiful planet belongs to Christ. Ecology is in our veins...of course we will save the planet. Pope Francis '*Laudato Si*' is a passionate leader in this hope for the future of man and planet.

It is significant that Vatican II named it's Constitution on The Church... '*Lumen Gentium*'..(A Light to the World).The opening words of it were or are.. "Christ is he Light of humanity." James Patrick Hynes has shone much light on the 'Catholic Social Teaching'. He is scholar who has brought that teaching of faith and love to us and for that he deserves our gratitude.
<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/37935>

Climate Generation: Awakening to Our Children's Future by Lorna Gold

Lorna Gold shares her personal journey in understanding what those two words 'climate change' mean for her as a mother seeking to protect her children and, by extension, the world of which we are all a part. ISBN: 9781847308412

On Fire: The Burning Case for a Green New Deal by Naomi Klein

A compelling case for a comprehensive Green New Deal that would create the potential for improving and even alleviating most environmental and social problems. She documents the need for such a program and convincingly lays out her case for adopting a Green New Deal now. ISBN-10: 024141072X

The Overstory by Richard Powers. A great novel written about trees which will make the reader pay a lot more attention to them. ISBN-10: 1784708240

DIARY DATES

OCTOBER

4 CAFOD Harvest Fast Day www.cafod.org.uk

5 Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) Retreat Day 10am-4pm Lancaster Cathedral. Please bring packed lunch, drinks and biscuits provided. Cost £15 per person. Spaces limited, book ACN NW: 01524 388739 nw.office@acnuk.org

6-13 World Homeless Week churchhomelesstrust.org.uk/world-homeless-week

8 Time Out Quiet Day 10am-4pm at The Convent of Our Lady of the Cenacle, Tithebarn Grove, Lance Lane, Wavertree, Liverpool, L15 6TW. 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: winnieceenacle@mail.com

10 World Mental Health Day <https://wfmh.global/world-mental-health-day-2019>

11 CAFOD Quiz Night Our Lady's Parish Centre Ellesmere Port Town Centre 7.30 pm. Admission: adults £3 children £1 which includes Fairtrade refreshments at the interval. All money raised will go to the CAFOD's new *Hands on Peace* building project in Magdalena Medio, Colombia. Contact Tony Walsh on 0151 355 6419

11-18 End Hunger UK Week of Action <http://endhungeruk.org/weekofaction2019/>

12 Imagining the Church of the Future with Diarmuid O'Murchu. ACTA Conference at King's House Conference Centre, King's Church, Sidney St, Manchester M1 7HB. Registration 10.15 for 11am start. Finish 4pm. Tea and coffee provided. Cost £20, under 25s free. To book go to www.acalltoaction.org.uk

13 Homeless Sunday www.housingjustice.org.uk

13-19 Prisons Week www.prisonsworld.org www.prisonadvice.org.uk

13-20 Week of Prayer for World Peace www.weekofprayerforworldpeace.com

15 Investor State Dispute Settlements (ISDS) Join Global Justice Macclesfield for short films and discussion exploring the impact of ISDS through the stories of local communities resisting the destruction of their homes, environment and livelihoods in Armenia, Dubrovnik, Abruzzo and Rosia Montana. 7.30pm at the Park Tavern.

16 An evening of Climate Action FoE Chester & District, Quaker Meeting House, Chester. 6.45pm – Coffee & Chat. 7pm **Keep Positive** (Mark Thompson) and Kick off Climate Action Campaign chesterfoe@hotmail.co.uk

17 Far From the Home I Love – special concert in aid of Chester City of Sanctuary 7.30pm Wesley Church Centre, St John Street, Chester CH1 1DA. Acclaimed international pianist Margaret Fingerhut has devised a special concert that she is performing across the UK to raise awareness of refugee needs as well to raise funds for City of Sanctuary refugee groups. The programme will feature the music and stories of some of the many composers who were themselves refugees or migrants and includes a specially commissioned new piece by Atian, the Kurdish Syrian composer who wrote the Refugee National Anthem for the 2016 Olympics. Tickets £12 available via www.margaretfingerhut.co.uk/chester www.cityofsanctuary.org/farfromhome

19 Charity Quiz at the Severn Suite, The Valley Hotel, Ironbridge, TF8 7DW. 6.45 for 7pm start. Tickets £15 including a hot buffet supper. Proceeds to Telford CAP Debt Centre. Tickets: 01952 670033/254194or 07462 577566

20 World Mission Day Baptise and Sent: The Church of Christ on Mission in the World

<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/372867>

20-27 One World Week Climate Changes Everything: Now is the Time to Act <https://oneworldweek.org>

23 Second Climate Action Event FoE Chester & District, Quaker Meeting House, Chester. 6.45pm – Coffee & Chat. 7pm – **The psychology of apathy about climate change and climate action** (Linda and Stewart Shuttleworth) & Climate Action Ideas. chesterfoe@hotmail.co.uk

24-30 UN Disarmament Week <https://un.org/en/events/disarmamentweek>

26 Time Out Quiet Day 10am-4pm at The Convent of Our Lady of the Cenacle, Tithebarn Grove, Lance Lane, Wavertree, Liverpool, L15 6TW. 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: winnieceenacle@mail.com

• At 7pm on 28 October a speaker from Extinction Rebellion will be addressing a meeting:

'Responding to Climate Emergency and the place of Civil Disobedience' at the Assumption Sisters, Milleret House, Kensington Square. It is organised by the Assumption Sisters JPIC Team. enquiries@assumptionreligious.org

NOVEMBER

1-2 Chester Palestine Conference Palestine: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow. For further details contact:

joseph.oneill777@gmail.com or lvmailto@gmail.com

2 CAFOD Faith in Action Day: Love is Civic and Political: Our Faith and the Common Good Savio House, Ingersley Road, Bollington, Macclesfield SK10 1RW. 10-4 – Please bring vegetarian food to share. Book at cafod.org.uk/events or call 0303 303 3030 More information: <https://cafod.org.uk/News/Events/Shrewsbury-Faith-in-Action-Day>

2 'Speaking Truth to Power' – Putting Faith into Action Do you want to put your faith into action, and be part of a powerful social movement to end poverty and hunger in the UK? Church Action on Poverty regional gathering 10.15am – 2pm at The Lighthouse Project, Oldham Road, Middleton M24 **Book here:** <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/speaking-truth-to-power-putting-faith-into-action-north-west-regional-gathering-tickets-65524404257>

11 Banned books for peace: The Last Weapon and The Weapon Unsheathed by Theodora Wilson Wilson. Short film with Maxine Peake and talk by Paul Anderson. 7-9.30pm Cross St Unitarian Chapel, Manchester, M2 1WL. £6 (£4 concs). To book go to www.eventbrite.co.uk and find banned books for peace Manchester.

9 CAFOD Faith in Action Day: Love is Civic and Political: Our Faith and the Common Good Sandymount House of Prayer, 16 Burbo Bank Road, Blundellsands, Crosby, Liverpool L23 6TH. 10-4 – Soup and roll provided for lunch. Book at cafod.org.uk/events or call 0303 303 3030

12 Time Out Quiet Day 10am-4pm at The Convent of Our Lady of the Cenacle, Tithebarn Grove, Lance Lane, Wavertree, Liverpool, L15 6TW. 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: winnieceenacle@mail.com

12 CWDF Forum 6.45-9pm The Unity Centre, Cuppin St, Chester CH1 2BN. Speaker Natalia Jancewicz of Transition Chester on the theme "Degrowth" – economic development along ecological lines. More info: 01244 350323.

15 CAFOD Quiz Night Our Lady's Parish Centre Ellesmere Port Town Centre 7.30 pm. Admission: adults £3 children £1 which includes Fairtrade refreshments at the interval. All money raised will go to the CAFOD's new *Hands on Peace* building project in Magdalena Medio, Colombia. Contact Tony Walsh on 0151 355 6419

17 World Day of the Poor *The hope of the poor shall not perish forever* <https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/37283>

22 The Determinants of Food Poverty – a feeding Liverpool event chaired by Bishop John Rawsthorne and Prof Hilary Russell 9am-1pm at LACE, Croxteth Drive, Sefton Park, Liverpool L17 1AA. Details from Steve Atherton J&P Office 0151 522 1080 s.atherton@rcaol.co.uk

23 Time Out Quiet Day 10am-4pm at The Convent of Our Lady of the Cenacle, Tithebarn Grove, Lance Lane, Wavertree, Liverpool, L15 6TW. 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: winniececenacle@mail.com

23 Sustainable Chester Winter Fair 11am – 4.30pm St Mary's Creative Space, ST Mary's Hill, Chester CH1 2DW. Friends of the Earth are hosting their 2nd Winter Fair, now under their new organisation **Eco Communities**. A range of stalls, crafts and entertainment throughout the day. Stall bookings welcome via <https://helenchesterfoe.wufoo.com/forms/r11dhiwe0iv314g/> Stalls selling eco, ethical, sustainable goods welcome. Charities and causes. Interactive stalls where people can share crafts and skills to make a more eco, low carbon footprint and sustainable world.

23 Advent Reflection Day starting at 10am Burnley and Pendle Faith Centre, Barden Lane, Burnley, BB10 1JD. Details: bea_foster@hotmail.com

27 The Centre for Alternative Technology and the era of Climate Change joint meeting of CWDF with Chester University's Department of Geography and International Development. 7.30-9PM Best Building, University of Chester, off Parkgate Road, Chester CH1 4BJ. Speaker Dr Jane Fisher, local Chester resident who is a senior lecturer on the staff at CAT. An excellent opportunity for a mixed audience to gain insights into the long-established work at CAT in Machynlleth, and how their programmes may be evolving in response to climate change initiatives, global and local. Contact 01244 350323.

A MESSAGE FROM NJPN: Dear Friends, We're sorry that we haven't been able to bring you any E-Bulletins in the past few months. There are discussions taking place about a way to send a monthly bulletin, so we'll try to keep you posted about that. In the meantime we'll be sharing information on our website www.justice-and-peace.org.uk/ and via Facebook and Twitter: [@NJandPNetwork](https://twitter.com/NJandPNetwork), so do follow us there. Below are links for other news sources which you may find helpful.

NEWS LINKS

NJPN continues to have a weekly column in *The Universe*, and some of these are uploaded onto our website.

Independent Catholic News <http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/justice-peace-environment> Sign up to receive these daily.

World Council of Churches <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/>

UK Parliament News <https://www.parliament.uk/business/news/>

- 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 weekly e-bulletins from NJPN (plus copies of this newsletter & back issues) and resources at www.justice-and-peace.org.uk or contact admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk 020 7901 4864

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