

# NJPN North West Justice & Peace E-Bulletin June 2019

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](mailto:anneoc980@hotmail.com)

## NJPN: A THRIVING LAY-LED CHURCH ORGANISATION FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE

**Paul Gourdon and Ellen Teague** 13 May 2019: Justice and Peace fieldworkers and activists from dioceses including Arundel and Brighton, Birmingham, Clifton, Hallam, Liverpool, Lancaster, Nottingham, Southwark and Westminster gathered in London on Saturday for the AGM of the National Justice and Peace Network of England and Wales (NJPN). They were joined by religious, such as the Columbans, and organisations including the Archbishop Romero Trust, Pax Christi and Green Christian.

They heard a report from Chair Anne Peacey, whose term as NJPN chair has come to an end. She was warmly thanked for her support of the work of NJPN and her activism in Hallam Diocese, including a recent diocesan day there on *Laudato Si'*. This year's national conference at Swanwick in July, *'Forgotten People, Forgotten Places'* is expected to be the latest in this successful annual gathering. Support of the Eucharistic Congress in Liverpool last Autumn and a number of diocesan days pushing Environmental Policies were highlighted. The regular NJPN newsletter, *Universe* column and good links with the Independent Catholic News website were mentioned, and the work of NJPN's working groups. Ann Kelly, who retired this year as NJPN administrator was thanked, and all funding partners who support NJPN, including religious orders and individuals who have signed up as members, paying an annual fee.

Barbara Kentish, who is stepping down as the fieldworker for Westminster Justice and Peace after 12 years, provided a gripping account of her work over this time. A dynamic working relationship with the Chair of the J&P Commission, Fr Joe Ryan, and their shared vision of what Justice and Peace embodies, raised the profile of J&P in the diocese. She lamented that Fr Joe has often "ploughed a lone furrow among the clergy" but fondly remembered the late Bishop James O'Brien who publicly urged every parish to have a J&P group.

Over the years, Westminster J&P's 'annual days' have become a mainstay and, recently, these have included a focus on climate change, fair trade and migration among others. Eco-theologian Sean McDonagh has led several days on themes in *Laudato Si'*. The Commission supports Pax Christi, particularly the annual Ash Wednesday Service of Repentance at the Ministry of Defence, and the Advent Carol Service. Just last week the Commission supported peace campaigners at Westminster Abbey holding a peaceful protest outside a service celebrating Britain's nuclear weapons. There is a hope to have an annual day on the eradication of nuclear weapons at some point in the future.

Barbara fondly recounted the Cycle Ride to Paris in the lead up to the United Nations Climate talks in Paris in 2015. The group were most inspiring people to pilgrim with, and a crescendo being taking part in the ceremony at Notre Dame Cathedral to lobby the international delegates to come up with a Climate Agreement, which they did, and speak to delegates directly. There is a forthcoming day at Dover on 20 June to express solidarity with migrants, particularly those living in squalid camps in the Calais area. Barbara has been a keen supporter of CAFOD's Live simply campaign and is delighted that the Westminster Diocese has six Live simply parishes.

Barbara introduced her successor as Westminster J&P worker, Martha Behan. She has been working with Caritas and the Communications office in the diocese and is looking forward to taking up the appointment and is very enthusiastic about the challenge. She was warmly welcomed by all. Barbara hoped more J&P groups would be formed in parishes and that Fairtrade would be embraced by all parishes.

Other issues raised and discussed included NJPN's relationship with Caritas, which is perceived as being well resourced and supported by the bishops, and clericalism which hinders support for lay-led initiatives such as NJPN. Peace campaigner Bruce Kent lamented the silence from bishops regarding huge government spending on nuclear weapons. Paul Bodenham of Green Christian felt energy should go towards nourishing J&P opportunities that are apparent everywhere and to work ecumenically where possible, perhaps with Together for the Common Good on formation work. Flagged up were Pax Christi's AGM in London next Saturday, the 26 June political lobby at Westminster on the Climate Crisis, and November's visit to El Salvador, organised by the Archbishop Romero Trust.

[www.justice-and-peace.org.uk/](http://www.justice-and-peace.org.uk/) and [www.justice-and-peace.org.uk/conference/](http://www.justice-and-peace.org.uk/conference/)  
<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/37096>

### 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/](http://www.justice-and-peace.org.uk/) and via Facebook and Twitter: @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.

**Catholic Communications Network** [www.catholicnews.org.uk](http://www.catholicnews.org.uk)

**Latest Zenit headlines** ("the world seen from Rome") <https://zenith.org/>

**Vatican Radio homepage** <http://en.radiovaticana.va/>

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

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

## JEAN VANIER HAS DIED

**7 May 2019: Jean Vanier died this morning.**

**L'Arche announced on their website:** It is with great sadness that we announce the death of Jean Vanier, our founder. Jean died on 7 May in the Maison Médicale Jeanne Garnier in Paris. "Jean has left an extraordinary legacy," said L'Arche International Leader Stephan Posner. "His Community of Trosly, the Communities of L'Arche, Faith and Light, many other movements, and countless thousands of people have cherished his words and benefited from his vision."

Vanier founded L'Arche in 1964 in response to the treatment that people with learning disabilities faced in institutions. There are now more than 150 L'Arche communities in 38 countries around the world, where more than ten thousand people with and without learning disabilities create places of welcome and celebration, sharing in life together. There are 12 L'Arche Communities in the UK. John Sargent, National Leader of L'Arche UK, said: "Jean's death is a great sadness. His vision was one of radical welcome, inclusion and joy, where each person is valued and celebrated. He will be greatly missed by people from all walks of life who have been influenced and changed by the witness of his life and his teachings, which remain as relevant today as ever. We are committed to continue to live out his vision in our L'Arche and Faith & Light communities."

In recent decades, after he retired from his role at L'Arche, Vanier focused on his work sharing a message of unity, dignity and diversity. Jean entrusted the organisation's legacy to the people who define what L'Arche is today: its members and Communities. In addition to his work with L'Arche, Vanier co-founded Faith and Light, and inspired the creation of many other organisations. He influenced thousands of people around the world and published some forty books on how people with learning disabilities make essential contributions to building a more humane society.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, tweeted: "Jean Vanier lived the Gospel in such a beautiful way that few who met him could fail to be caught up in it. I join countless people around the world in deep sorrow at his death, and great gratitude for his life."

Cardinal Vincent Nichols president of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, who is currently at the English College in Valladolid said in a statement: "At our gathering in Valladolid, we heard with deep emotion of the death of Jean Vanier. For over half a century he has inspired an entirely new appreciation of the gift of people with learning disabilities and revealed the most profound heart of human community. We pray for him and his beloved L'Arche communities at this moment of loss. May he rest in peace."

<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/37051>

**L'Arche UK:** [www.larche.org.uk/pages/category/announcing-the-death-of-jean-vanier](http://www.larche.org.uk/pages/category/announcing-the-death-of-jean-vanier)

**Belonging in an age of loneliness:** [www.larche.org.uk/interview-with-jean-vanier-belonging-in-an-age-of-loneliness](http://www.larche.org.uk/interview-with-jean-vanier-belonging-in-an-age-of-loneliness)

Jean Vanier was scheduled to speak at the Flame youth festival in March this year. He was unable to come in person but he gave this video interview which was seen by 10,000 young people: <https://vimeo.com/325416156>

**Watch Jean Vanier's funeral, kept simple at his request:** [www.youtube.com/watch?v=hUM3P61neXU&feature=youtu.be](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hUM3P61neXU&feature=youtu.be)

### Words and Wisdom from Jean Vanier

"Before being Christian Or Jews or Muslims, before being Americans or Russians or Africans, before being Generals or Priests, Rabbis or Imams, before having visible or invisible disabilities, we are all human beings with hearts capable of loving."

"We are not called by God to do extraordinary things, but to do ordinary things with extraordinary love."

"Every child, every person needs to know that they are a source of joy; every child, every person, needs to be celebrated. Only when all of our weaknesses are accepted as part of our humanity can our negative, broken self-images be transformed."

"All of us have a secret desire to be seen as saints, heroes, martyrs. We are afraid to be children, to be ourselves."

"A society which discards those who are weak and non-productive risks exaggerating the development of reason, organisation, aggression and the desire to dominate. It becomes a society without a heart, without kindness – a rational and sad society, lacking celebration, divided within itself and given to competition, rivalry and, finally, violence."

"I am struck by how sharing our weakness and difficulties is more nourishing to others than sharing our qualities and successes."

"From this acceptance of ourselves, we can accept others as they are and we can see our common humanity."

"I'm just somebody who was born ninety years ago and will die in a few years time and then everybody will have forgotten me. This is reality. We're all here, but we are just local people, passengers in a journey. We get into the train, we get out of the train, the train goes on."

• **Extracts from *The Tablet*** 7 May 2019: <https://www.thetablet.co.uk/news/11661/words-and-wisdom-from-jean-vanier>

## NEW LAUREATE SIMON ARMITAGE BACKS CLEAN AIR CAMPAIGN WITH POWER OF HIS POETRY

10 May 2019: The new Poet Laureate has given his support to *The Times' Clean Air For All* campaign, offering a poem from his first collection as laureate. Simon Armitage, who was appointed to the ten-year post yesterday, said that the need for clean air was an "unignorable subject" because it "has now shaded into every aspect of our lives." He has pledged to use his annual honorarium of just over £5,000 to draw attention to environmental issues. "I want to do something with the money around climate change, initiate an event, a prize or publication of some kind which will be an acknowledgement of poetry's response to the situation," he said. "It will absolutely be directed towards the idea of clean air in our streets."

In 2014 Armitage's poem *In Praise of Air* became the world's first air-cleansing poem, printed on a 20-metre high billboard using specially treated material developed by scientists at the University of Sheffield. The poem, on display from 2014-2017 at the University's Alfred Denny Building, was capable of purifying its surrounding through catalytic oxidation. The project team has estimated that it has removed over two tons of nitrogen oxide from the surrounding environment. It is hoped that the poem and its air-cleansing technology can be repeated on billboards and artwork in towns and cities across the world to help tackle pollution. <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/news/nr/catalytic-poem-air-cleansing-pollution-sheffield-1.673043>

**See also:** <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/science/giant-poem-scrubs-the-air-clean-of-pollutants-9409181.html?amp>  
**Clean Air Day is 20 June 2019** <https://www.cleanairday.org.uk> **More info:** <https://friendsoftheearth.uk/clean-air>

## BISHOP ARNOLD WELCOMES CLIMATE CHANGE 'NET ZERO' REPORT

5 May 2019: Bishop John Arnold, the lead bishop on environmental issues for the Catholic Church in England and Wales, has welcomed the publication of the Committee on Climate Change 'net zero' report. The report advises the government to phase out greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, ending the UK's contribution to global warming. It is confident that this is manageable with existing technology, the existing budget, and serious public engagement. However, it acknowledges this will require a major ramping up of ambition in policy. The report states that current pledges from countries across the world are predicted to lead to warming of 3°C by the end of the century, substantially short of the Paris Agreement's goal to limit the rise to 1.5°C. If adopted, the committee state that their recommendations would fulfil the UK's commitments under the Paris agreement, and encourage increases in ambition internationally.

Bishop John said: "This is an ambitious target which will be welcomed by the thousands of Catholics in this country who have responded to Pope Francis's call for us to protect our common home. In achieving this target, we must all play our part, and I'm proud that the Catholic community has taken a leading role in showing what can be achieved. Thousands of our churches are running on renewable energy and schools and parishes in dioceses around the country have committed to living simply and sustainably. We look forward to seeing the government embracing its role in delivering this agenda urgently and enthusiastically. Pope Francis has asked why any leader would want 'to be remembered for their inability to take action when it was urgent and necessary to do so'. Those who think that this is an issue which can be left for another day should ask themselves this question.

"The report represents a welcome recognition that as a country we must be a good 'global' neighbour and must think about the millions of our brothers and sisters around the world who already face danger and suffering, and the millions more who will increasingly be affected by climate change. I would echo the words of my brother Archbishop Peter Loy Chong, from Fiji who has said: 'For those of us suffering the consequences of climate change I welcome the international leadership shown by the Committee on Climate Change with these recommendations. With its historic emissions and size of its economy this is a hugely important global step by the UK and one I hope similar countries will replicate.'"

<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/37043>

## BISHOPS ISSUE RESOLUTION ON WORLD'S 'UNPRECEDENTED ECOLOGICAL CRISIS'

15 May 2019: The Bishops of England and Wales, at their plenary meeting in Valladolid, issued the following resolution on Monday: ***The Stewardship of God's Creation***

"In the light of Pope Francis' teaching in *Laudato Si* and reaffirming our commitment to the principles outlined in our 2002 document *The Call of Creation*, the Bishops' Conference recognises that humanity is in an unprecedented ecological crisis. There is a moral duty to act with urgency and enable the faithful to make informed decisions that care for creation and will assist in repairing the damage. We therefore urge the Church at all levels to continue to develop initiatives that care for our common home, and to identify individuals and groups to be advocates for this journey. To this end, a position paper has been prepared and further development in its themes is now being undertaken with a view to its approval by the summer 2019."

<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/37108>

### **Read also: Anglican Consultative Council passes environmental resolution**

6 May 2019: The 17th Anglican Consultative Council, convened last week in Hong Kong, passed an environmental resolution recognising the global climate emergency and requesting that churches develop action plans and resources for sustainable living.

**Full text:** <http://www.greenanglicans.org/anglican-consultative-council-passes-environmental-resolution-at-acc17/>

**Learn more about the WCC's work for Care for Creation and Climate Justice:** <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/what-we-do/climate-change>

**Read also: URC votes to divest from fossil fuel companies** <https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/37106>

## LIVERPOOL J&P COMMISSION NEWS

Please pray for our Fieldworker, Steve Atherton, during his recovery from his recent operation, and all the wonderful staff of the NHS, throughout the country!

### **Liverpool Justice and Peace Commission Annual Assembly: *Apocalypse Now? – Climate Change: What we must do***

"I urgently appeal, then, for a new dialogue about how we are shaping the future of our planet. We need a conversation which includes everyone, since the environmental challenge we are undergoing, and its human roots, concern and affect us all. ..." ***Laudato Si 14***

In 2015 Pope Francis called on us all to work together to tackle climate change, then in October 2018 the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released a report stating that we have just 12 years for global warming to be kept to a maximum of 1.5C, after which even just half a degree extra would significantly increase the risks of drought, floods, extreme heat and poverty for hundreds of millions of people.

Just two months later in December 2018, Greta Thunberg, at the age of 15, addressing the United Nations' Katowice Climate Summit stated "You say you love your children above all else, and yet you are stealing their future in front of their very eyes", and in February 2019, at the age of 16, speaking at Davos, she added, "Our house is on fire. I am here to say, our house is on fire".

"Until you start focusing on what needs to be done, rather than what is politically possible, there is no hope. We cannot solve a crisis without treating it as a crisis."

It is obvious that we must act immediately if we want to prevent the destruction of the planet, and life, as we know it today. We must all change, we need to change our own lives; we need to help our families and households to change; we need to encourage our friends to change; we need to change our workplaces, and schools. We cannot rely on other people to solve this crisis; scientists alone will not be able to solve this, neither can politicians: we must all act to prevent the destruction of the planet!

This year, the Liverpool Justice and Peace Commission's Annual Assembly will be focused on climate change, and what we must do. The programme includes:

**Dr Paul Rooney, from Liverpool Hope University**, who will talk about ***The Reality and Urgency of Climate Change action: the social and ecological imperatives.***

**Bishop John Arnold, Bishop of Salford**, who will talk about ***Addressing the theological imperatives of Climate Change.***

**Jo Musker-Sherwood Director, Hope for the Future** – an organisation working to equip communities, campaigners and groups across the country to communicate the urgency of climate change. Jo will address our need for ***Action: from the personal to the collective.***

The assembly will take place on Saturday, 6 July 2019 from 10am until 4pm, at LACE, Croxteth Drive, Liverpool, L17 1AA. Everyone is welcome to attend, lunch is included in the day, and a donation of £10 is suggested.

"The earth is a gift, not a possession; it was given to us to administer, not to destroy. Hence, we must respect the laws of nature, as all of creation has its own goodness..." ***Laudato Si 75***

### **MORE CATHOLIC INSTITUTIONS DIVEST FROM FOSSIL FUELS, URGING SHIPPING INDUSTRY TO FOLLOW**

8 May 2019: Against the backdrop of a United Nations summit to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the shipping industry, Catholic institutions that are connected to the oceans are announcing their divestment from fossil fuels. These include institutions in Panama, the world's largest shipping registry, the Philippines, home to the largest group of seafarers, Greece, the world's largest ship owning nation, and port cities across Europe. The announcements were made at a Vatican-convened conference, ***The Common Good and Our Common Seas***, which explored Catholic teaching on protection of the marine environment.

The Catholic conference coincides with a highly anticipated meeting of the International Maritime Organization, or IMO, the UN agency charged with coordinating security and environmental protection for the world's shipping industry. Discussions at the IMO will focus on short-term urgent actions to cut CO2, such as global speed limits or tougher efficiency standards for all ships. Delegates will also start work designing measures to transition the industry away from fossil fuels entirely over the medium to long term, to contribute to the stabilisation of global warming. Divestment from Catholic institutions signals a high standard of ambition for the IMO meeting, which begins 13 May.

**Read the article in full** <https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/37064>

**Read Pope Francis' statement:** <http://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/it/bollettino/pubblico/2019/05/05/0373/00783.html>

## FAITH COMMUNITIES DELIVER PUBLIC STATEMENT ON NUCLEAR WEAPONS

On 1 May, faith communities delivered a public statement to the Third Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. They called attention to the pressing need to work productively for a world free from the most destructive weapons ever created.

"Our respective faith traditions and our lived experience as people of faith compel us to speak together, regardless of our differences, to denounce this threat to our shared humanity," the statement reads. "We recognise the fearfulness that has driven nations to take up arms against threats to their security but we collectively choose to face that fear not with additional posturing or intimidation but with continued action for a world based on trust, compassion and equality."

Peace-building requires courage, resilience and imagination, the statement notes. "Our faith-based traditions have given us both the imperative to continue this humanitarian disarmament work, even, perhaps especially, when there are so many voices of despair and pessimism. We share and value the basic human right to live in a world free from the fear of total destruction, in an environment free from contamination." The faith leaders expressed joy over the growing support for the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. "Our faith traditions demand that we care for and accompany those who are suffering," the statement reads. "We continue to mourn the devastating impacts of nuclear testing and nuclear detonations on human bodies, human communities and the planet."

Turning to our role as stewards of creation, the statement says, "Christians are called to share in the responsibility to safeguard God's creation and protect the sanctity of life. Responsible and inclusive stewardship of energy today must take greater account of the common good, the integrity of creation and humanity's future. Energy sources must be safe, efficient and renewable. Energy conservation must be an integral part of energy use. Present uses must not create serious problems for the future. Today's energy must be suitable to serve as tomorrow's energy as well. Despite decades of scrutiny, nuclear energy has not met such requirements. It is not renewable and not based on a sustainable resource. Carbon is emitted throughout the nuclear fuel chain – from mining, processing, transportation, construction and operations to decommissioning and the perpetual management of toxic nuclear waste. Claims that nuclear energy is clean and environmentally-friendly appear to ignore its overall impact, its consequences and its alternatives."

**Read the full statement from the World Council of Churches here:**

<https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/central-committee/geneva-2014/statement-towards-a-nuclear-free-world>

## PROTESTS AND PRAYERS OUTSIDE WESTMINSTER ABBEY 'THANKSGIVING SERVICE' FOR NUCLEAR WEAPONS

**Jo Siedlecka** 4 May 2019: There were protests and prayers outside Westminster Abbey on Friday, as the controversial 'National Service of Thanksgiving' for Britain's seaborne nuclear weapons organised under the auspices Gavin Williamson, who was sacked as Defence Minister on Wednesday, went ahead - in spite of hundreds of appeals from faith leaders and peace campaigners for it to be cancelled. The service in the Abbey was attended by new Defence Secretary Penny Mordaunt, the Duke of Cambridge Prince William, and a 2,000 strong congregation, made up largely of naval personnel and their families.

The Dean of Westminster Abbey Rev John Hall told them he had received many calls for the service to be cancelled. "Clearly we have not done so and are proud to be holding it here in the Abbey. The only legitimate aim for any country's military capability is securing peace," he said. "We can't celebrate weapons of mass destruction but we do owe a debt of gratitude ... to all those men and women .. who in the past 50 years have provided a deterrent..."

Outside the Abbey, around 500 campaigners including members of Pax Christi, Christian CND, Quakers, Methodists, and Buddhists held a vigil, a 'die-in' and an alternative peace service. Led by Bruce Kent, there were prayers and readings from Fr Joe Ryan, head of Westminster Justice and Peace, and Chris Collins. Rev Arariah France-Williams read this greeting from Canon Paul Oestreicher who is currently in New Zealand: "My prayer today is with the submariners carrying the burdens of our nation's sin." Fr Joe Ryan commented later on Facebook: "A most interesting series of services today. Westminster Abbey holding a service of Thanksgiving for Trident submarines, the Navy, nuclear weapons and the 'peace' that has emerged from the possession of nuclear weapons over the last 50 years. Outside the Cathedral we were holding a Vigil praying for the abolition of nuclear weapons. What a contradiction? Yes, we are certainly divided...we believe that our safety is not secured by weapons of mass destruction. We need to dialogue with our so-called enemies. There are ways to peace and security by non-violent methods. This is what all of humanity needs to accept."

Martin Tiller, Co-Chair of Christian CND said: "We did not want to have to organise this service, our preference was that the Dean of Westminster saw the inappropriateness of this service and cancelled it. Nuclear weapons have the potential to change our planet beyond all recognition. We do not believe they are part of God's plan for us and certainly do not share the view of the Royal Navy that they are to be 'celebrated'. "What is worth celebrating is the very positive and moving event outside the Abbey in which Christians and other peace groups came together with one voice earlier today. It has been incredibly encouraging to see the unity among Christians on this issue. The breadth of traditions represented this morning shows that mainstream Christian opinion wants to see the back of nuclear weapons and a world based on peace and friendship in the future."

<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/37034>

**See also:** <http://christiancnd.org.uk/clergy-statement-on-westminster-abbey-service/>

and **Peace Groups to hold vigil outside Westminster Abbey during 'Thanksgiving Service' for nuclear weapons:**

<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/37013>

## TEXT: BRUCE KENT AT WESTMINSTER ABBEY PEACE PRAYERS

4 May, 2019: **Bruce Kent, Vice President of CND, gave the following address during the peace service outside Westminster Abbey on Friday, during the official 'Thanksgiving Service' for seaborne nuclear weapons.**

Today we have come together for a ceremony of repentance. Whose repentance? We have all been and mostly still are, members of institutions – churches, political parties, trade unions, which for the most part, after 70 years, still trot out the same arguments and the same nice words for being willing to commit mass murder.

But I am not here to point a finger at individuals. I know who alone is entitled to throw the first stone 'Those without sin' said Jesus and that is certainly not me. When I was in the army 70 years ago I learnt absolute obedience. If I was ordered to shoot someone I would have obeyed and perhaps asked questions afterwards. I remember so well instructions on how to clear rioting crowds. Give them a warning and then shoot individuals one at a time at regular intervals. That will move the crowd we were, I'm sure correctly, told. So I am not here to pass judgement on the Dean of the Abbey or on the sailors whose submarine service is being commemorated today.

My repentance nevertheless is real and is for not doing more to persuade the members of my church and other churches and institutions social and political that nuclear deterrence depends on the present willingness of some people to commit mass murder.

One does not have to be a pacifist to know that war – if ever it was justified as a last resort in the past – now no longer is. There are so many ways of solving international problems peacefully. That is why the Charter of the United Nations was signed in May 1945. The United Nations was formed, according to its Charter, to put an end 'to the scourge of war'. Charter of the United Nations?? How few have even seen that inspiring document? It is unknown in most schools. I have never seen a copy in a church porch.

We also have so called 'charity' laws which make it possible for some major charities to bewail the loss of life in the Yemen but never to mention who sells the bombs to Saudi Arabia: this country as a matter of fact. All I am saying is that repentance is for all not some. Too often we have been glad to make clear how sensitive our consciences are but how rarely we wonder why our message is not getting through.

The submarines we are thinking about today are nuclear weapon submarines. Their crews, trained to obey orders, are ready to fire missiles whose warheads will bring destruction to faraway places and people far beyond the scale of Hiroshima or Nagasaki. It is opposition to potential war crimes of this magnitude that I motivates me to vigil outside the Abbey. I do not blame the sailors. The history of nuclear weaponry has been from the beginning one of deceit and bogus history.

We were, and are, told that the bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki were the only way to end World War Two. Not true. The Japanese leadership, ready to surrender, were looking for one guarantee – that the position of the Emperor would not be challenged in any surrender settlement and that he would not be prosecuted. That was just what was given to them by General McArthur but only after the bombs were dropped. We were never told about the few scientists, like Professor Joseph Rotblat, then in Los Alamos, who refused to continue to work on the Bomb once he knew how it was to be used. He was sent back to Britain in 1944 in disgrace.

Not many church voices in this country were raised in opposition at the use of these bombs. One was that of Cuthbert Thickness, the Dean of St Albans Abbey. When he was supposed to ring the bells in thanksgiving, he said in August 1945 ' – I cannot honestly give thanks to God for an event brought about by the wrong use of force, by an act of wholesale indiscriminate massacre, different in kind over all other acts of open warfare hitherto, however brutal and hideous'. It was a Jesuit Archbishop Thomas Roberts, who later on, changed my mind. But his was a lonely road isolated amongst his fellow Bishops.

There were however strong military voices also in opposition, to which little attention has been paid. General Eisenhower for instance had this to say: 'Japan was at that very moment seeking some way to surrender with minimum loss of face. It was not necessary to hit them with that awful thing'.

We are told now frequently that nuclear weapons and deterrence have kept the peace. What peace? The list of post 1945 wars runs to several pages and the global military budget is nearly two trillion dollars. If this claim means we have not had a nuclear war then I think we should listen to Robert McNamara, United States Secretary of Defence, who said, late in life, that we were saved not by our good judgement but by 'good luck'. He had in mind the many accidents and dangerous confusions which have dogged our nuclear weapon world for the last 70 years.

In 1968 we signed up to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and promised in 'good faith' to work for the elimination of all nuclear weapons. Yet more than 50 years later we are now in this country spending over £200 billion on yet another nuclear weapon system (entirely dependent on a regular loan of US missiles) to replace our current Trident one. Good Faith? What hypocrisy. Surely it is time to start spending our billions, not on weapons of mass murder but on our NHS, pensions, welfare and real peace making initiatives, here and abroad.

There is now a UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons just waiting for more signatory states to give it the force of law. Britain should sign that now and lead the world towards a nuclear-free future. Today's vigil is a spur to action. We all have a responsibility to help our fellow citizens to understand what a dangerous road we are on and to work in so many ways to build the just and lawful framework of our common humanity - a future in which nuclear deterrence has no place.

<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/37035>

## BOMBS BRING PEACE, ARMS DEALER TELLS SHAREHOLDERS

**Phil Miller** *The Morning Star* 10 May 2019

A top arms dealer has been heavily criticised by investors for making the bizarre claim that British bombs bring peace to Yemen, as part of a desperate bid to justify his firm's arming of Saudi Arabia. Speaking at the BAE Systems annual general meeting on Thursday, Chairman Sir Roger Carr said his firm's role was to "provide defence equipment that ultimately encourages peace." And speaking about the war in Yemen specifically, he said: "Saudi are not the aggressors, they are the defenders." He faced a barrage of questions from activist shareholders, who repeatedly accused the company of profiting from the war in Yemen, which is world's worst humanitarian catastrophe. The arms dealer was quizzed by a British-Yemeni lawyer, 26-year-old Rehab Jaffer, whose family have been directly affected by the war. Ms Jaffer told the BAE boss: "Your weapons are being used to slaughter children in Yemen. Saudi Arabia has targeted schools ... it has targeted funerals, it has targeted weddings." She accused the arms dealer of "blindly" selling bombs to Saudi Arabia and failing to do any due diligence. Sir Roger responded by saying he respected her "heritage and the fact that this is very real to you." But he went on to say: "It is a fact of life and a fact of war, that in warfare innocent people are hurt." He said civilian casualties were an "inevitability" and that the company's "solution is to stop wars at the earliest opportunity. Our belief is that if you provide first-class equipment, you are the encouragement, particularly when used in defence, for people to stop fighting," Sir Roger claimed. He continued to heap praise on Riyadh, saying: "The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is a stabiliser in a very uncertain world."

Speaking to *The Morning Star* after the event, Ms Jaffer said: "It's so difficult to find a way to get a voice. There are so few Yemenis advocating. People tend to get targeted after speaking out. Their SIM cards are traced, so it can endanger your family there." Ms Jaffer wrote her Master's thesis on the arms trade and studied how states can be held accountable, because she was horrified by the bombing of Yemen. "My family have seen their neighbours houses completely demolished, and children kidnapped by rebels to use as soldiers," she said. "We have to wonder what Saudi Arabia has to gain from bombing Yemen, a country which has strategic ports for exports and access to oil. Sir Roger himself specified the economic gain of trading with Saudi Arabia and said they are only able to do it because the British government contracts them to. But he failed to mention that his company has been involved in lobbying politicians with lavish dinners where meals cost up £450 per plate."

The arms dealer fielded questions from shareholders for around an hour, many of them highly critical of the company's ethics. Each time Sir Roger shot back and doubled down on the company's right to sell bombs for the war in Yemen. He argued it was better that Britain supported Saudi Arabia instead of somebody else "who may not seek to influence outcomes that we in this room collectively want to see." But Ms Jaffer told the *Star*: "It seems that Sir Roger is suggesting that they have holier than though intentions, when he's made it quite clear his thoughts are on the economic benefit of these arms sales. The only gap that he's concerned about filling is in fact a financial one."

British judges are currently reviewing whether the government can license arms sales to Saudi Arabia in light of a growing catalogue of civilian casualties. The Court of Appeal's judgment is expected later this year.

<https://morningstaronline.co.uk/article/b/bombs-bring-peace-arms-dealer-tells-shareholders>

## COVENTRY: PAX CHRISTI PROTEST OVER CITY INVESTMENTS IN ARMS TRADE

**Paschal Somer**: This morning, 16 May, for the seventh year running, members of Coventry Justice and Peace Group, Pax Christi, Passionists and Coventry Quakers stood outside Coventry Cathedral before the Annual Council Meeting and Mayor Making. They were asking the Council, as part of the West Midlands Consortium, to stop investing their money in the Arms Trade and contributing to war, death and destruction. A spokesman told ICN: "All council tax payers in the West Midlands contribute to the arms trade and the consequent death and destruction it brings. The West Midlands Pension Fund invests in leading arms manufacturers: Lockheed Martin, BAE Systems, Raytheon, Boeing and many more. Yet, less than 1% of this money is with arms dealers. We are asking the question, 'Why not get rid of it once and for all?'"

Ann Farr said: "For seven years we have been raising awareness about the City Council's investments. Every year we have given out leaflets to all the guests going into the gathering and then stood, with our banners, facing the procession of Councillors and the outgoing and incoming Lord Mayors of Coventry as they entered the Cathedral. The initial response to our demands was not encouraging! It took five years of leafleting, banner holding, meetings, letters and petitions to get them to divest from cluster bombs, which are internationally illegal! The encounters with guests are always interesting. Some studiously ignore us but most take a leaflet and a few engage in conversation, remembering us from previous years." She said: "We get comments like, '...ah but, all those pensions involved ...' and have answers at the ready about ethical investments etc, if they wait long enough. The response that beat all, from all the years, was this morning from a man who took the leaflet and then laughingly said to his friends, 'The trouble is I supply most of that lot.' That is indeed the trouble! Ann continued: "This morning there were still some Councillors who carefully ignored us but we detected quite a lot more nods, smiles and supportive comments.

"Coventry calls itself the 'City of Peace and Reconciliation' but invests in firms that make deadly weapons that kill and injure people and destroy the infrastructure of their countries. Coventry is a City of Sanctuary and does wonderful work in welcoming and supporting refugees and asylum seekers. How can it continue to invest our money in the very weapons that force people to flee from their homes and countries and become those refugees? Coventry is preparing to be a City of Culture but the weaponry it invests in destroys the cultural heritage of an ever growing number of countries. We now call on Coventry, and all the Councils that are part of the West Midlands, to divest from ALL Arms Traders and put our money into ethical investments.

"We are preparing for our next round of letter writing, meetings, petitioning and campaigning. If anyone in the areas of the West Midlands Consortium would like to join us in petitioning your Councils, please get in touch. We really need your help. We would be delighted if we did not have to stand outside, with our leaflets and banners, for Mayor Making next year!

**Contact: Coventry Justice and Peace Group** [bpmcgowan@hotmail.com](mailto:bpmcgowan@hotmail.com) <https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/37114>

## LONDON: CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS' DAY 2019

**Jo Siedlecka:** Conscientious Objectors' Day on 15 May, was marked around the world with prayers, vigils and ceremonies. In London, about 200 people, including some descendants of First World War COs, gathered at the Conscientious Objectors' stone in Tavistock Square for the annual commemoration ceremony. Among those attending were Theresa Alessandro, new director of Pax Christi UK, Pat Gaffney, Bruce Kent from CND and Ellen Teague from the Columbans.

Co-hosted by the First World War Peace Forum and Movement for the Abolition of War, after a welcome by Suhdya Darr from Quaker Peace and Social Witness, Professor Lois Bibbings from the University of Bristol gave a short address in which she outlined the different ways COs expressed their resistance to military service – from simply refusing to serve in the army – but accepting work as medical orderly orderlies or farm labourers – to those who went to prison and even went on hunger strikes or were executed.

A choir sang anthems by Sue Gilmurray. Jay Sutherland, founding member of Scotland Against Militarism, gave a heartfelt address in which he said militarism was, and always has been, an issue of special concern to young people. He described how BAE - the world's largest arms company, made special effort to recruit students at the Glasgow Arms Fair recently. "Our best and brightest minds that could help with some many of society's problems are employed by the people destroying the world and killing many" he said.

**Read the whole speech here: Jay Sutherland: 'militarism is a youth issue'** [www.indcatholicnews.com/news/37109](http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/37109)

Single flowers were laid on the stone as the names of Conscientious Objectors from 85 different countries were read out.

The earliest one mentioned was St Maximilian of Tebesa - beheaded in the year 295 for refusing to serve in the military because of his Christian faith. He is a patron saint of Conscientious Objectors. Many of those names were executed, others served prison terms - and many are prison today. Elsewhere, ceremonies were held in Edinburgh, Leicester, Manchester, Bradford and cities around the world.

<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/37110>

## HOSTILITIES IN GAZA 'MORALLY AND ETHICALLY UNTENABLE,' RELIGIOUS LEADERS STATE

On 8 May, the World Council of Churches (WCC), Middle East Council of Churches, and ACT Alliance released a message expressing deep concern over the latest hostilities in the Gaza Strip, describing the present situation as "morally and ethnically untenable." Last weekend, the region near the Israel-Gaza border saw the most intense escalation of violence since the 2014 war. The three organizations also expressed sympathy to those killed and injured, and their families. "All parties to the conflict must face up to their responsibilities and their moral and legal accountability," reads the message. "It is imperative that they seek ways to protect the civilian population, especially women and children, from recurring military confrontations that can only exacerbate an already tense situation and ongoing humanitarian crisis."

The WCC, ACT Alliance and Middle East Council of Churches also noted that the almost two million inhabitants of the Gaza Strip live under a state of permanent siege, denying them their basic human, economic, social and political rights. "The communities around the Gaza border experience the recurring hostilities with serious repercussions to the peaceful conduct of their daily lives," the message reads. "We affirm that all people are created in the image of God."

The message also urges respecting and protecting the human dignity and rights of all. "We believe that the military option will never be conducive to a lasting and just resolution of the longstanding conflict," the message reads. "We call on all parties to work for an end to the recurring confrontations, and for a just peace that will ensure that all may live in peaceful coexistence."

**Read the statement from the WCC, ACT Alliance and MECC, 8 May 2019 in full:**

<https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/general-secretary/statements/wcc-act-alliance-and-mecc-statement-on-gaza/>

## THE NAKBA AT HOME

'I think he would weep. What more than that could he do?' my mother says when I ask her how she thinks her father would respond to the situation in Palestine following his death.

My grandfather, Farhan Aranki, died when my mother was a toddler in 1947. He could not have known of the catastrophe that was about to destroy his country and his family. He ran a small electrical shop in Jaffa with his brother and he would not have known that less than a year after his death, nearly all the Palestinians were to be forcefully displaced from Jaffa and their homes and businesses given to others based on ethnicity and religion. He could not have known that every single one of his five children would be displaced in 1967 and that they would all lose their right to be called Palestinians. He could not have ever imagined that not a single one of his 19 grandchildren or 24 great grandchildren would live in Palestine or have any Palestinian documentation. 'We have memories, not papers', my mother always used to say to me growing up, a desperate way to help us feel Palestinian even if we – legally – were not.

None of us inherited my grandfather's business in Jaffa, none of us tend his olives in Birzeit, none of us live in his house in Jerusalem. We no longer exist. We are not a Palestinian family. 'Hek il Haya' my mother sighs in Arabic. Such is life.

The Nakba and the chain of events it began has a million stories for individuals and families and also on a global political scale. And it's a story that keeps re-telling itself in the terrifying bombardment of Gaza we have seen in the last few weeks, years, and decades, where so many have lost their lives and their homes.



What is the Nakba? As a Palestinian I feel a bit numb writing that. I wonder how there can still be people in the world who don't know about this awful catastrophe that has ruined and changed the lives of so many millions of people, my family included. How can people still not know about the awful 71 years of suffering of my people? And how can so many of those people live in Israel, the nation that perpetuated those crimes?

In 1948, Zionist armies and militias swept through Palestine and violently killed thousands of Palestinians and chased approximately 700,000 out of their homes, villages and country; they and their descendants now in the millions, and many still without rights, protection or a state. And with this first large scale act of ethnic cleansing – which still continues today with the eviction of families from Jerusalem and the Negev – the state of Israel was created and the long and hard campaign to replace one ethnic and religious group with another began. Since 1998, Palestinians have commemorated this day on 15th May, Nakba Day.

This removal of Palestinians from their homes and from their land is heart-breaking. Especially when you visit Palestine and you come to understand the real significance of this land – the giver of food and fuel. All Palestinians, especially those who lost their homes and land in the 1948 Nakba and the 1967 occupation, have images in their minds of their parents and grandparents tilling the land to grow wheat, resting in shade under olive trees and picnicking in the spring blooms that cover our beautiful hills. Our cultural identity is so acutely linked to the land, its beautiful views and the food and treasures it has produced for us for generations, from our olive wood nativity sets, to our olive oil and maftool.

That the land and its resources have been stolen from us and our freedoms upon it severely restricted is a constant pain to all Palestinians. As Munther Isaac wrote in 2017, "It is evident that the land is a place of hostility, strife, and division. The reality in the land is one of injustice. There are oppressors and there are the oppressed. Not all the people of the land are equal. There are laws that differentiate between ethnicities and religion – against the biblical vision of equality. The resources of the land are not shared equally. Theology has been used in Palestine to justify the occupation and injustice." (*Palestinian Christians and the Promised Land*, Rev. Dr, Munther Isaac, Dec 2017). This is the current status quo that Palestinians are trying to resist daily. We see it in Gaza. The dedication to that resistance even when it results in death, destruction and chaos because the ideals of justice, peace and equality are worth asking for even from the most vicious of oppressors.

Some of us are lucky enough to have set up homes in other countries where we have citizenship and rights, but what about those refugees in Gaza, West Bank, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria? With the keys to the homes they were forced out of in 1948 firmly in their hands, they are still waiting for their international human rights to be recognised so that they can finally go home. And in the meantime, their lives are a limbo of conflict, poverty and heartache.

One of the reasons we must not stop commemorating the Nakba is because we cannot run the risk of forgetting it. Because we can't run the risk of forgetting these people. We can't run the risk of not seeking justice for them. And we can't run the risk of letting it continue to happen. Surely our Christian faith and our passion for justice and peace won't allow us to? For those Palestinians who have a new land to provide and protect them and for those who are not Palestinians and who seek the same justice by standing in solidarity, our duty to speak up for those still suffering the daily inequality of occupation, theft, violence and humiliation is a clear one. We must do all that we can to apply pressure on governments and institutions to bring about a just peace and see our vision of equality and flourishing lives in the Holy Land.

My grandfather may not have known what terrible things were to come for his people and his family so soon after he died, but I am certain that he would be eternally grateful and in awe of the hundreds of thousands of people around the world like you who give so much of your support and energy to helping Palestinians. He would be in disbelief that so many people knew so much about the small patch of earth that he was born and grew up on. The thought of so much support from so many strangers would surely make him weep too, I suggest to my mother. She agrees, 'I think it would. It always moved me'. We invite you to be a part of this solidarity and resistance, and join us in the fight for equality and freedom for all.

**Sabeel-Kairos** <http://www.sabeel-kairos.org.uk>

**SABEEL-KAIROS** WAS FORMED IN 2017 AS A RESULT OF THE MERGER OF FRIENDS OF SABEEL UK AND KAIROS BRITAIN:

- **Kairos Britain** – a network of individuals, organisations and faith communities seeking a just and lasting peace in the region based on the realisation of full human and political rights for all.

- **Friends of Sabeel UK** – supports the Sabeel Theology Centre in Jerusalem in its work for the promotion of religion for the benefit of the community; supports and encourages the Christian community in the Holy Land (Israel and the Palestinian areas of Gaza, the West Bank and East Jerusalem) in their life and witness; raises awareness in the United Kingdom concerning Christians in the Holy Land and promotes links with them.

**Attend our conference** <http://www.sabeel-kairos.org.uk/sabeel-kairos-2019-conference-faith-into-action/>

**Sign the Kairos Nakba Day Petition** <https://www.gopetition.com/petitions/global-kairos-signature-campaign-2.html>

**See also Pax Christi International acknowledges 71 years of Nakba** <https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/37098>

**Read Pax Christi International's statement on 71 years of Nakba:** <https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/37098>

- **To mark the Nakba** on 15 May, staff and volunteers at Pax Christi's Hendon office held a 'silent circle' at 11 o'clock, to stand in prayerful solidarity with Palestinian people. In Coventry, there was a reflective event organised by Pax Christi members Ann Farr and Paul McGowan: ***A Circle of Silence - a Silent Vigil*** on the steps of Coventry Cathedral Ruins from 11.50am-1pm.

## SRI LANKAN PRIEST: 'WE ARE FAR AWAY FROM PEACE'

**Citra Abbott and John Newton** 1 May 2019

A Sri Lankan priest who lost close friends during the Easter Sunday terror attacks has spoken out about the impact of the terrorist atrocities. Fr Malaka Leonard, a Franciscan priest who lost friends in the bombing of St Sebastian's Catholic Church, Katuwapitiya, said: "We Sri Lankans suffered enough from 30 years of war against terrorists. We thought that Sri Lanka was becoming a peaceful environment. But with these blasts, all our hope has gone. We are far away from peace."

More than 250 people, including 47 children, were killed and more than 500 people injured in the devastating bomb attacks targeting churches and hotels across Sri Lanka on Easter Sunday (21 April).

Fr Leonard said: "A considerable number of children have become victims of the blasts. Children are innocent. They are unable to understand what is happening. Most of the children are in fear. Schools are closed for a few days." But, Fr Leonard stressed that the response of the Church will always be one of peace and reconciliation. He said: "There is no road to peace, peace is the road. The way of peace is the path of love. Let us take every possible step to avoid violence and live peacefully."

Dr Thomas Heine-Geldern, executive president of Aid to the Church in Need (International) said: "The atrocities in Sri Lanka mark the bloody climax of a trend that has endured for some years now – the persecution of Christians knows no bounds. It knows no let-up, especially on the holiest days of the Christian calendar. It knows no mercy on innocent people, who are often made scapegoats for global developments." He added: "2019 is already one of the bloodiest years for Christians."

The first four months of 2019 saw deadly attacks and the mass slaughter of Christians in:

- Central African Republic, where attacks by Islamist Séléka militia on a Catholic mission station in Bangassou in January killed dozens of people and caused around 20,000 people to flee the violence;
- Southern Philippines, where again in January the Islamist attack on the cathedral of Jolo killed 20 people and injured around 90 people;
- Kaduna State, Nigeria, where attacks by Islamist Fulani extremists on Christian villagers in mid-March that left more than 130 dead;
- and in March in Tamil Nadu State, India, where religious sisters from a local Catholic school were hunted down by a 200-strong mob of extremist Hindu nationalists who attempted to lynch them with their rosary beads.

Aid to the Church in Need's 2018 *Religious Freedom in the World* report showed evidence of the targeted persecution of Christians by extremist groups. But, despite the overwhelming evidence, these increasing attacks on Christians throughout the world remain largely ignored.

Dr Heine-Geldern said: "To say that Daesh (ISIS) has been beaten militarily and therefore no longer exists is a fallacy – the ideology lives on, as do its supporters... Extremist Islamism, excessive nationalism and authoritarian ideologies are still the main drivers of persecution against Christians and other religious minorities. People are becoming more and more frightened." He added: "It is the duty of governments and the UN to bring about peace, to guarantee freedom of religion and to repel anti-religious attacks," while the role of the Church is to "stand by persecuted Christians, to give them a voice and a face." Dr Heine-Geldern concluded: "ACN has been campaigning for this for more than 70 years. In view of the growing violence against Christians, it is a cause worthy of every support and every effort."

[www.acnuk.org](http://www.acnuk.org) <https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/37014>

- **Update:** Churches in the Archdiocese of Colombo, Sri Lanka, resumed Sunday Masses on 12 May, three weeks after a series of bomb blasts killed hundreds. Cardinal Malcolm Ranjith repeatedly reasserted that the church does not consider Muslims as enemies of Christians.

<https://www.ncronline.org/news/world/sunday-masses-resume-sri-lanka-catholic-communities-attempt-healing>

## 'CHURCH SHOULD BE THE PEACE MOVEMENT PAR EXCELLENCE'

30 April 2019 **Archbishop Malcolm McMahon writes:** The recent retirement of Pat Gaffney as the general secretary of the British section of Pax Christi, the international Catholic peace movement, has made me think about my own commitment to realising Christ's peace in our world.

Pat worked for Pax Christi for 29 years and, at times almost single-handedly, built it up into an effective organisation to increase awareness and educate our community in the art of peace-building. Among many other qualities needed to be a person of peace Pat showed the virtue of courage at its best.

To have the courage of our convictions is what is needed to be a follower of Jesus. We often forget this and withdraw into a kind of personal religion where we set the boundaries and don't step outside them. The harsh reality is that at times Christianity demands us to be prophets as well as priests; leaders as well as disciples. To be faithful to this takes guts. We cannot always retreat into prayer; sometimes prayer and reflection mean that we are compelled to act. But we must always be rooted in prayer, otherwise we may lose our way, and then we will be following our own ambitions and not those of our Master, the Prince of Peace.

Pat's courageous service will be missed by many in the peace movement both inside the church and beyond, but the work of peace-making will continue. In truth, the Church should be the peace movement par excellence: if only we had the courage to be just that. Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called children of God!

<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/37012>

## PEACEMAKERS GATHER FOR VIBRANT PAX CHRISTI AGM 2019

**Ellen Teague** 19 May 2019 (Updated 20 May 2019)

A buzzing room of around 80 Pax Christi UK members and supporters gathered in London on Saturday for the Annual General Meeting of the Catholic peace movement in Britain. They included people from the dioceses of Birmingham, Liverpool, Leeds, Nottingham, Portsmouth, Salford, Shrewsbury, Southampton and Westminster, and two from Pax Christi in Scotland. Peace activists Bruce Kent and Valerie Flessati, Anne Peacey (National J&P Network), Chris Cole (Drone Wars) and Patricia and Michael Pulham (Christian CND) also attended.

They heard Chair Holly Ball welcome the new Director Theresa Alessandro, who said she was "really enjoying" her new job. Theresa highlighted that Pax Christi's networks are Catholic, ecumenical and inter-faith, and in the near future she will be taking forward the issue of morally responsible investment in Israel and Palestine, and Pax Christi International statements on the European Elections 'The Europe We Want', and on nuclear disarmament. Pax Christi has representation at the United Nations and the European Union. Valerie Flessati and Pat Gaffney are taking forward the international Catholic Nonviolence Initiative and met last month in Rome with the Vatican's Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development and with Pope Francis himself. Valerie said, "it would be wonderful if Pope Francis one day produces an Encyclical on Nonviolence".

Holly also welcomed new Executive members Joan Sharples and Henrietta Cullinan. Joan has a three-decade involvement in justice and peace outreach, including 19 years as a J&P fieldworker in Shrewsbury Diocese before redundancy in 2012. "It's now time to get involved in joining with those who are working to bring about a peaceful world for our young people, including my grandchildren". Henrietta has been involved with the London Catholic Worker in challenging nuclear weapons, British military involvement in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the arms trade. She writes on peace and nonviolence and has visited Afghanistan and Pakistan in recent years.

Archbishop Malcolm McMahon, President of Pax Christi, reflected that the Catholic peace movement has helped the world seek the Truth in conflict situations, and to value God's Grace in providing the gifts of the natural world – which human society is too ready to commodify and destroy. He highlighted that militarism is a big contributor to the climate crisis through its greenhouse gas emissions. He felt that God's word Sets Us free, prompts us "as peacemakers to build community".

After this, Pax Christi presented peace awards to four people who have been prominent supporters of peace: Fr Joe Ryan, who has been a staunch supporter of Justice and Peace in Westminster Diocese, Peter van den Dungen, who has worked to set up peace trails and peace museums, and teenagers Anna and Eleanor Marshall from Hallam Diocese, who have organised school initiatives to promote justice, peace and ecological awareness.

Fr Joe was cheered on by Bishop Nicholas Hudson, auxiliary in Westminster, and a large group of his parishioners from St John Vianney in North London. He highlighted his work on Migrants and the Climate Crisis and thanked Westminster for investing time and money in the diocesan J&P Commission.

Peter said: "nothing is more important than peace education but we have war and military museums!" He was very proud of helping to set up a peace museum in the Iranian capital of Tehran.

Anna and Eleanor said that their commitment comes from their faith – particularly Catholic Social Teaching – their parents Sheena and Andrew, and regular engagement with J&P activists. "Working for justice and peace is the right thing to do" they said to rousing applause.

Every two years Pax Christi honours the work of unsung and unknown peacemakers as a way of acknowledging the essential daily work of peacemaking. The first awards were given in 2001 and since then 31 women and men have been recognised in this way. The 2019 award is a peace medal created by the artist Natasha Ratcliffe with the title P(lease) E(ngage) A(II) C(ommunities on) E(arth).

Pax Christi UK is in a stable financial position, although members were asked to push January 2020's Peace Sunday in their parishes. Peace Sunday donations declined this year, actually halving in Northampton, Nottingham and Portsmouth dioceses. However, on-line sales of Pax Christi resources have doubled over the past year and some other statistics: 2,600 twitter followers, 11,500 'No More War' distributed for Remembrance, 1,800 visited to Pax Christi's Facebook posting for Palestine/Israel Peace Week.

Planning towards 2020 will include a commitment to develop a theology and practice of active nonviolence; the strengthening of peacemaking communities around the country and a deepening of Pax Christi's work with teachers, chaplains and schools. 2,130 students attended workshops in 10 dioceses over the past year and youth worker Aisling Griffin reported work on conscientious objection, Christian peacemakers, and the story of Franz Jägerstätter. She has worked with teachers at inset days, alongside Columban and Salesian education workers. Packs are available for schools who want to become Pax Christi members and Aisling is building up a network of volunteers to go into schools on behalf of Pax Christi. If you would be interested, please contact Aisling: [education@paxchristi.org.uk](mailto:education@paxchristi.org.uk)

An enjoyable day included a Mass celebrated by Archbishop Malcolm, a fabulous shared lunch, and musical interludes from King Toadfish and the All-Weather Riders!

### Links:

<http://paxchristi.org.uk/> [www.paxchristi.net/](http://www.paxchristi.net/)  
<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/37130>

## CHRISTIAN AID REPORT SAYS UK MUST ACT TO STOP SPIRALLING DEBT OF WORLD'S POOREST COUNTRIES

**Christian Aid 19 May 2019:** The UK must step up and meet its moral responsibility to avert debt crises in developing countries that are often struggling to recover in the wake of humanitarian emergencies, a new report by Christian Aid has said.

The early 2000s saw a major round of debt relief for countries caught in a trap of debt repayments, in response to the Jubilee 2000 campaigns. Since the western financial crisis of 2008, there has been another boom in irresponsible lending to countries of the global south. Global debt rose to record levels in 2016 and this lending boom is threatening to set a new debt trap for people in poverty around the world.

Launched today as part of **Christian Aid Week** the report *The New Global Debt Crisis* – published in collaboration with the Jubilee Debt Campaign – is urging the UK Government to end its complicity in exacerbating the already desperate situations faced by some of the world's poorest countries.

One such example is Sierra Leone, which had little choice but to accept loans from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to help it cope with the Ebola crisis which struck in 2014, killing nearly 4,000 people by January 2016, and 10% of the country's health workers. These large repayments inhibit the government of Sierra Leone from being able to look after the basic needs of its own citizens. The West African country lacks funds for proper health clinics, health training and enough ambulances, making it the most dangerous place in the world to become a mum.

Christian Aid is appealing to the whole international community to find urgent solutions, but particularly to the UK Government which has a disproportionate role in the debt crisis. Almost half of international loans are owed under English law for which the UK parliament has responsibility.

Laura Taylor, Christian Aid's director of policy and public affairs, said: "It is shocking that developing countries find themselves yet again on the brink of a global debt crisis, 15 years after the last major round of debt relief. Countries like Sierra Leone, the most dangerous place in the world to become a mum, face huge debt repayments which deprive them of resources to protect their own citizens. It is unacceptable for the UK Government to be complicit in this new debt crisis, which sees some of the poorest countries in the world struggling and unable to get back on their feet following major humanitarian emergencies.

"The UK has a strong history of helping these countries when they are most in need; but too often the lack of transparency in the loans means we are giving with one hand and taking away with the other. It's time we played our part in ending this new debt crisis rather than exacerbating it. It is already having a serious impact on the lives of some of the world's most vulnerable, which is why in this report, we are calling for urgent action to be taken."

Campaigners in churches across the country are joining Christian Aid in calling on the UK to use its influence with the IMF to ensure all Sierra Leone's debts on the loans the country received for fighting the Ebola outbreak are written off. The UK has direct responsibility for many loans which are given under English law, putting the solution stately in the hands of UK lawmakers. Therefore, Christian Aid is urging that:

- UK law is urgently changed to ensure that loans given under UK law, or by British-based banks, are transparent.
- Vulture funds are banned from profiting via the new debt crisis through UK courts.

**The full report can be downloaded here:** [www.christianaid.org.uk/resources/about-us/new-global-debt-crisis](http://www.christianaid.org.uk/resources/about-us/new-global-debt-crisis)  
<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/37126>

## PRIEST SHOT DEAD IN EL SALVADOR

**Linda Bordoni, Vatican News** 19 May 2019

38-year-old father Cecilio Perez was reportedly shot dead by a presumed gang member while he slept on Saturday night in his parish in El Salvador. Father Perez was the parish priest of San José la Majada, in Sosonate Diocese near the Guatemala border. His body, with three bullet wounds, was found in his room by a group of faithful who had agreed to meet him at 5am for morning prayers. Besides his body was a hand-written note signed by the Mara Salvatrucha gang saying "he did not pay the rent." Fr Cecilio had apparently refused to pay 'protection fees'.

The Bishop of Sonsonate, Constantino Barrera, who has asked for prayers for Father Perez, expressed his grief and praised the work the priest was doing with his parishioners saying he was close to the people.

The Government of El Salvador condemned the murder and expressed its condolences to the priest's family and to the Catholic community. In a statement it also said new orders have been issued to security forces to make sure the priest's killers are brought to justice.

El Salvador is one of the most violent countries in the world. The murder rate last year in the Central American country was 50.3 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants, or 9.2 murders a day.

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/church/news/2019-05/priest-murder-el-salvador-criminal-gang.html>

## A CATHOLIC RESPONSE TO DOMESTIC ABUSE – DAY FOR LIFE 16 JUNE 2019

One in four women and about one in six men suffer from domestic abuse in their lifetime. Two women are killed every week in England by a partner or ex-partner. Men, women and children suffer domestic abuse at the hands of husbands, wives, parents and other family members. Violence of this kind should never be tolerated or justified. It is an offence against the dignity of the human person.

Pope Francis writes: 'Unacceptable customs still need to be eliminated. I think particularly of the shameful ill-treatment to which women are sometimes subjected, domestic violence and various forms of enslavement which, rather than a show of masculine power, are craven acts of cowardice. The verbal, physical, and sexual violence that women endure in some marriages contradicts the very nature of the conjugal union.' (*Amoris Laetitia* 54)

Greater awareness of the scourge of domestic abuse is the first step towards addressing a serious moral and social problem. In particular we wish to highlight the need for public education and action regarding domestic violence, especially against women. Such violence includes many forms of non-physical intimidation such as persistent verbal abuse, emotional blackmail and enforced social or financial deprivation. It may occur in any type of close adult relationship. For those who are experiencing domestic abuse, the home is far from being a place of security and self-fulfilment. Too often it is a place of pain, fear, degradation and isolation.

The most effective way to help men, women and children who are victims of domestic violence is by giving their support to existing groups and projects and by assisting in the spread of awareness and information. Within our parishes it is very important for all of us, priests and parishioners, to be alert, to be sensitive, and from time to time to use the opportunities we have in preaching for example to speak of the dignity of human beings and to emphasise the equal dignity of women and men; particularly within marriage. We also have a culture of safeguarding which is part of the life of the Catholic Church in this country.

Domestic abuse is often a hidden problem, and our aim is for anyone experiencing domestic abuse to have the confidence to seek help within the Church setting. <http://www.dayforlife.org/article/a-catholic-response-to-domestic-abuse/>

### HELPLINES

National Domestic Violence Helpline Freephone 24 Hour (run in partnership between Women's Aid and Refuge) 0808 2000 247  
A list of helplines can be found on the CEDAR website, click here for more information: <http://www.cedar.uk.net/helplines>

#### Links and information

**CEDAR – Catholics Experiencing Domestic Abuse** [www.cedar.uk.net](http://www.cedar.uk.net)

**Catholics for Family Peace** [www.catholicsforfamilypeace.org](http://www.catholicsforfamilypeace.org)

**Restored Relationships** [www.restoredrelationships.org](http://www.restoredrelationships.org)

**Marriage Care** [www.marriagecare.org.uk](http://www.marriagecare.org.uk)

**Women At The Well** [www.watw.org.uk](http://www.watw.org.uk)

**Catholic Safeguarding Advisory Service** [www.csas.uk.net](http://www.csas.uk.net)

**Catholic Children's Society** [www.cathchild.org.uk](http://www.cathchild.org.uk)

### MENTAL HEALTH TEXT SUPPORT SERVICE: # SHOUT

**Ahead of Mental Health Awareness Week 13-19 May an innovative scheme to assist those in crisis has been launched in the UK.** #Shout is a new text support service, powered by #volunteers.

**Robert Booth *The Guardian*** 10 May 2019 writes: A new text service for people who are feeling suicidal or facing a mental health crisis has been launched by the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge who are calling for 3,000 members of the public to train as online counsellors. Speaking at Kensington Palace, Prince William said a low-key trial of Shout had already seen 60,000 people "who were feeling scared, frightened and alone" contact the service with the most common issue being suicidal thoughts. So far, 85% of the users are under 25.

The service is separate from the Samaritans which already operates a phone line and an email service using 20,000 volunteers who answer more than 5 million calls a year, the equivalent of one every six seconds.

Shout will allow people to open up a text chat with a volunteer working remotely, most likely at home, who has been trained to listen, reassure and guide people. All the text conversations are anonymous, unless the client wants to give their name, and are reviewed in real time by a panel of qualified psychotherapists who can take control if they feel there is a problem in the direction of the discussion. Artificial intelligence determines the priority for handling each case based on what is written in each initial text. When words like suicide, forced marriage and slavery crop up, the case is prioritised.

"[Volunteering] is not for everyone," said Prince William, who has previously told how his first assignment when he worked for East Anglian air ambulance was to a male suicide. "There are some very difficult conversations. You need to be able to listen without judgment on a range of issues from suicidal thoughts to bullying, abuse, sexuality, self-harm and relationships." Each volunteer will be asked to commit to the training and 200 hours of volunteering a year. One of the current volunteers, Jo Owen, said the service worked for those who find face-to-face discussions about difficult issues daunting and was for "people like me who can only find the words with their thumbs".

A similar system in the US has been operating for five years and has handled 100 million texts, with spikes around moments such as the suicide of the comedian Robin Williams and the broadcast of the Netflix series, *13 Reasons Why*, about a young woman who takes her own life.

Shout will be funded with money from the Royal Foundation, the primary philanthropic and charitable vehicle for the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and the Duke and Duchess of Sussex. Information about the service and volunteering can be found at <https://www.giveusashout.org> or text **Shout** to 85258  
<https://amp.theguardian.com/uk-news/2019/may/10/mental-health-text-support-service-shout-launched-by-duke-duchess-of-cambridge>

- In the UK, **Samaritans** can be contacted on 116 123 or email [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org).
- **Papyrus** is the UK charity for the prevention of young suicide. Suicide is the biggest killer of young people in the UK. For **PAPYRUS HOPELINE UK** call 0800 068 4141 or text 0778 620 9697 or email: [pat@papyrus-uk.org](mailto:pat@papyrus-uk.org)

### **See also: A Royal Team Talk: Tackling Mental Health**

The Duke of Cambridge, footballers Peter Crouch, Thierry Henry, Danny Rose, England Manager Gareth Southgate, and pundit Jermaine Jenas gather together with TV presenter Dan Walker for a frank and revealing conversation about men's mental health in an attempt to break the stigma surrounding mental health issues, especially for men who can find it hard to open up – a 40 min discussion broadcast on BBC 1 Sunday 19 May, available now on BBC iplayer.

### **IF IT DOESN'T CHALLENGE YOU, IT DOESN'T CHANGE YOU' – RETHINKING KINDNESS**

**Jon Kuhrt** 28 April 2019: I saw these words on a wall of a centre for homeless people I visited this week. I think they display a realism and wisdom which is helpful for everyone seeking to help people in need. The centre helps people with some of the most complex issues imaginable. But I was struck by the perseverance and lack of cynicism in the staff I met.

Change is hard and does not come easily. This is true in everyone's life. Often we need challenge from people we respect and trust to help get us out of a rut, or face up to a reality that we are ignoring or dismissing. This is often what the best forms of people management involve. Genuine change rarely comes from a one-way exchange, a 'benefactor' giving help to a passive recipient. The best forms of help are mutual, relational and empower the strengths in others. It involves people being challenged about what they can do, fostering their sense of agency and helping them face truth.

This is especially true for people affected by homelessness who have so often experienced trauma and whose lives can be scarred by addiction or serious mental health issues. The work of recovery always involves facing the truth: both about what has been done to us, and also what we have done to others. Of course, this is a sensitive business. It calls for respect, experience and wisdom. It can easily be done badly. But truth and challenge will always be an essential ingredient of change.

If our work is high in kindness and support but low in challenge and truthfulness, then it will be in danger of being naive. This is a tendency within some faith and community responses to poverty and homelessness when the emphasis is too much on giving things away, such as food or clothing. It's understandable that when people see a need they want to respond. As with the issues of people begging, the trouble is when this help is detached from the truth about someone's situation and the real impact of the help we are giving. But at the other end of the spectrum, when some are too focused on challenge and truthfulness, the approach can become too harsh. Homeless people are often treated badly and some simply want homeless people to disappear out of sight. Often it is this harshness that motivates faith and community groups to go to other end of the spectrum.

Thus a polarisation can easily break out in conflict, often now super-charged by social media, between those who view each other as either 'naive do-gooders' on one hand or 'harsh enforcers' on the other. Rather than polarise, we need to work hard to keep these factors together. This means different groups – local authorities, faith groups and charities – working together. We need to focus on the homeless people themselves, not just the perspective of our position.

Efforts to help people are most effective when they bring together support and kindness and challenge and truthfulness. This is where transformation happens. Of course, all of this is easy to write in a blog post. But combining kindness and truthfulness is hard. It's a tension I grapple with everyday in the encounters I have in my job and my local community. It's also very relevant to the challenge of parenting. It's a tension captured neatly in my favourite verse in the Bible in 1 John 3:18: *'Let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth'*.

Authentic faith cannot just exist in words. A constant theme throughout the Bible is that beliefs must be expressed in action. The Bible is clear and unequivocal – we need to act to help those in need. But these actions must be rooted in truth. This is both the truth of each particular situation and the wider truth of the gospel of God's love. Divine grace and acceptance provides the resources for us to be honest and truthful, both with ourselves and with others. We can know with confidence that this is the path to transformation and wholeness. It really is the truth that sets people free.

<https://gracetruth.blog/2019/04/28/if-it-doesnt-challenge-you-it-doesnt-change-you-rethinking-kindness-1/>

- **Jon Kuhrt** works as a Rough Sleeping Adviser to the government specialising in how faith and community groups respond to homelessness. Follow Jon on twitter [@jonkuhrt](https://twitter.com/jonkuhrt) or sign up for regular blogs at <https://gracetruth.blog>

## WHY DOES FRANCIS' PASSION FOR JUSTICE AND UNITY STOP SHORT OF WOMEN?

**Jamie Manson** 13 May 2019: In June 2016, just after Pope Francis announced he would create a commission for the study of the history of women deacons in the Catholic Church, he joked to journalists, "When you want something not to be resolved, make a commission." On May 7, while aboard the papal flight from Macedonia to Rome, Francis announced that, after 3 years of study, the papal commission was unable to find consensus and give a "definitive response" on the role of women deacons in the first centuries of Christianity. He claimed that what remained unclear was whether women deacons received a sacramental ordination. "It is fundamental that there is not certainty that it was an ordination with the same formula and the same finality of men's ordination," he said. Anyone who has ever listened to Francis speak about women knows why this would be such a crucial distinction for him. Like popes before him, Francis believes strongly that women are not entitled to sacramental power or authority and that it is God's intended purpose that men and women have different roles in the church.

In follow up comments to the Union of Superiors General (UISG) – the women religious whose dialogue with the pope prompted him to call the study commission on the women's diaconate – in Rome on May 10, the pope said that the individual members of the commission will pursue studies on their own but remained ambiguous about whether he would call the commission back together. "I am not afraid of studies," Francis said aboard the plane. That may be true, but what is also becoming clearer and clearer is that the pope is afraid of women in his church having even the modicum of sacramental participation that the diaconate would give them. Why else would he question what decades of scholarship has made abundantly clear? There is ample historical evidence that women did serve as deacons. It's even in the Bible: Paul mentions the deacon Phoebe in the letter to the Romans. Splitting historical hairs is not what Francis' papacy is known for. Back in 2015, the pope told the bishops at the synod on the Family "that the Church should not be a stuffy 'museum of memories,' but have the courage to change if that was what God wanted." During World Youth Day in 2013 he acknowledged that many people see the Church as a "relic of the past," and a "prisoner of its own rigid formulas." But rather than showing the courage and openness to which he constantly calls everyone else in the church, Francis blames his commission for having different interpretations of history, making desperately-needed progress on the status of women wholly dependent on an elusive ancient precedent.

The pope even appears to blame God for not revealing to us whether women could have a sacramental ordination: "We need to look back to the beginning of revelation, if there wasn't such a thing, if the Lord did not want a sacramental ministry for women, it doesn't go." And then the pope who so often preaches openness and inclusion warns that, if we don't like it, we are welcome to leave the church. "We cannot go beyond revelation and dogmatic expressions," Francis told the UISG. "We are Catholics. If someone wants to make another church, they are free to do so." That line is particularly glaring when you read it in the context of the countries Francis has travelled to and the people he has encountered and demonstrated openness to in the past few months. This is a man who has visited eight Muslim-majority countries meeting with countless imams, including a February trip to the United Arab Emirates where he signed, with the grand imam of Egypt's al-Azhar Mosque, a first-of-its-kind declaration calling for Muslims and Christians to build together "a society that is open, fraternal and respectful of differences." In April he literally kissed the feet of leaders from South Sudan in an attempt to plead with them to remain in peace. And this most recent trip to Bulgaria and North Macedonia was one of many attempts to reach out to leaders in the Eastern Orthodox churches in his ongoing quest to achieve full communion between the Catholic and Orthodox churches.

Francis' boundless energy and dedication to peace and justice stands in stark contrast to the dithering way he is handling question of women deacons in his own church. His passionate cause for unity among churches and with people of other faiths, it seems, stops short of the women of his own church who are asking simply for more inclusive ways to serve. This latest episode is yet another example of the Catholic Church's perpetuating and justifying notions of gender inequality that are the root of women's suffering globally. And that is a tragedy because Francis' power over the consciences of world leaders could have incalculable influence on raising up women to equal status, including in the countries he visits, many of which still have overtly restrictive, patriarchal cultures. But, sadly, patriarchs still seem to dominate Francis' religious imagination. It is interesting to note that in the same press conference aboard the plane where Francis made his comments on women deacons, the pope also reflected on the richness of his meeting with Bulgarian Orthodox Patriarch Neophyte, according to NCR's Joshua McElwee: "In the patriarchs, I have found brothers," mentioning Constantinople's Bartholomew and Moscow's Kirill by name. "I do not want to exaggerate, but I want to say the word 'holy'— men of God."

"We are brothers," said Francis. "We cannot adore the Holy Trinity without having the united hands of brothers." But what about the 850 sisters who stood before him in Rome asking for most basic steps of restoring women to some semblance of equality with men? Francis, it seems, would much sooner invite these Orthodox "holy men" into deeper sacramental union and participation in the Catholic Church than he would the women religious in his own church — many of whom have laboured in "the field hospital" for more than 50 years.

Last year, the final document of the Synod on Youth called the inclusion of women in the church's decision-making structures a "duty of justice" that requires a "courageous cultural conversion." But rather than treat the issue of women deacons with the same urgency that he treats so many matters of justice, Francis has communicated — like so many popes before him — that women's legacy of leadership requires further questioning, and their participation in ministry alongside men could be a dangerous step and, therefore, must be indefinitely stalled. In the six years of his papacy, Francis has been celebrated for his constant calls for courage, encounter, dialogue and risk-taking. How long must we wait until he offers the same to the women of his own church?

● **Jamie L. Manson** is an award-winning columnist at the *National Catholic Reporter*. Follow her on Twitter @jamielmanson. <https://www.ncronline.org/news/opinion/why-does-francis-passion-justice-and-unity-stop-short-women>

## MANCHESTER: SCHOOL PROJECT RESTORING HISTORIC WOODLANDS

2 May 2019: Pupils from Saint Paul's Catholic High School in Wythenshawe, Greater Manchester recently took part in the Woodland Futures Project. The group of Year 7 students enjoyed working on the project which aims to restore the heritage of historic woodlands in Wythenshawe.

The project explores the unique heritage of the woodlands which are relics of the major rural estates, Tatton and Massey, which dominated the landscape from the 13th to the 19th century. "The trees in The Brundritt are all of a similar age," explained Miss Helen Jones, Teaching Assistant at Saint Paul's. "The students were able to learn not only about the woods but also about planting new trees to help ensure the woods have replacement stock as older trees die over time. The students really enjoyed working on the project and will take part in a further four sessions where they will plant wild flowers, create wildlife corridors and make wood-chipped paths amongst other things," added Helen.

"This is a fantastic project for our pupils to become involved with," commented Mr Alex Hren, Head Teacher at Saint Paul's. "The project celebrates our natural heritage, the biodiversity, the flora and fauna of the woodlands, as well as the social heritage, exploring links to the garden city movement. I think their involvement will be very beneficial to them as well as to the local community."

**More information about Saint Paul's Catholic High School can be found at:** [www.st-paulshigh.net](http://www.st-paulshigh.net)  
<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/37025>

## MANCHESTER INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL TO MARK 200TH ANNIVERSARY OF PETERLOO MASSACRE

Mancunians will mark the 200th anniversary of one of the darkest days in British political history when artists from more than 20 countries gather for this year's Manchester International Festival. The city will host the world premier of a two-part commission to honour the bicentenary of Peterloo – the 1819 massacre that saw 18 people killed when government troops charged into a crowd of pro-democracy protesters.

*The Anvil: An Elegy for Peterloo* will see a new work by composer Emily Howard and poet Michael Symmons Roberts, performed by 40 musicians the BBC Philharmonic, the BBC Singers and three Hallé choirs. Emily Howard said it has been "such a privilege" to create a work of art to remember Peterloo. "Many people in Manchester know about Peterloo, but most people here and beyond don't know what happened. This was such a landmark in history and to create a work of art that can raise awareness of it is wonderful."

ANU, one of Europe's most daring theatre companies, will also take to the streets for a day-long series of immersive performances inspired by the stories of those who died in the massacre at St Peter's Field.

Other works at the festival include *Tree*, which will take audiences on a thrilling journey in search of the soul and spirit of contemporary South Africa. Created by Idris Elba, whose album *Mi Mandela* provides the soundtrack, and Kwame Kwei-Armah, the new Artistic Director of London's Young Vic, this major world-premiere production takes place in the round within Upper Campfield Market Hall, one of Manchester's most atmospheric spaces.

The full line-up for the 18-day biennial festival includes the filmmaker David Lynch, with his largest UK exhibition of visual art to date, and Maxine Peake. Artists previously announced include Yoko Ono, who will open the festival with a message of peace to the world, Idris Elba and Kwame Kwei-Armah, and Skepta. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the bed protests Ono and John Lennon made in the name of peace.

<https://inews.co.uk/culture/manchester-international-festival-peterloo-yoko-ono-idris-elba-david-lynch-arts-culture/amp/>

- The **Manchester International Festival** runs from Thursday 4 July to Sunday 21 July – more info: <https://mif.co.uk>

## POWERFUL AND PERSONAL PETERLOO NOVEL TO COINCIDE WITH THE 200 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

Legend Press are delighted to announce the acquisition of World rights for *The Song of Peterloo* by Carolyn O'Brien.

The novel will be published on 1st August 2019, to coincide with the 200 year anniversary of the Peterloo Massacre on 16 August 2019.

Manchester 1819: Prices are high and wages are low, but as the poor become poorer, the rich are alarmed by their calls for reform. Mill-worker Nancy Kay struggles to support her ailing mother and sensitive son. Desperate to provide for them, she is inspired to join the growing agitation. But, as she risks everything to attend a great assembly on St Peter's Field, Nancy is unaware the day will go down in history, not as a triumph but as tragedy; the Peterloo massacre.

This is one woman's story of belief in change, pieced together by her family and friends and the two men who share her momentous summer. A story of hope, and sacrifice, and above all, courage.

Lauren Parsons, Commissioning Editor of Legend Press comments: 'We are thrilled to acquire this intensely emotive and powerful novel by Carolyn O'Brien. The novel shines a light on this now infamous massacre, which is now alarmingly politically relevant today.'

Carolyn O'Brien was born in South Manchester, and lives in the nearby market town of Altrincham with her husband and two children. Carolyn works part-time as a consultant lawyer, as well as writing. Follow Carolyn on Twitter [@CarolynManc](https://twitter.com/CarolynManc)



## DIARY DATES

### JUNE

- 1 Walk Together for CAFOD** Good Shepherd Parish Madeley are repeating last year's walk from the church to Ironbridge starting with a short service at St Mary's at 10am, then walking down the Silkin Way to the Village Hall in Jackfield, Ironbridge. We are not collecting money; merely an awareness raising walk. All welcome, please bring sandwiches to eat in the village hall.
- 1 Towards Equality: a Quaker Land Value Tax Event** 10am-4pm at Mount Street Meeting House in Manchester. Speakers include Peter Bowman (Coalition for Economic Justice) and Peter Reilly (Labour Land Campaign). Quaker MEP Molly Scott Cato has also provisionally accepted an invitation to speak. All are welcome to join in exploring ways to work together to share ideas on LVT and land reform. For further information, please contact [jocelyngaskell@hotmail.com](mailto:jocelyngaskell@hotmail.com)
- 5 World Environment Day** hosted by China on theme of Air Pollution [www.worldenvironmentday.global/](http://www.worldenvironmentday.global/)
- 6 Liverpool Friends of the Earth Gary Mahoney Memorial Debate: *Climate Change and the Media*** 7.30- 9.15 pm Adelphi Hotel, Ranelagh St/Brownlow Hill, Liverpool, L3 5UL. Contact Info: Liverpool Friends of the Earth 07786 7467048. An informal evening, largely based around questions from the floor. Panellists: Helen Pidd, North of England Editor *The Guardian* [Chair], Kevin Gopal, Editor, *Big Issue North*, Dr Neil Gavin, Senior lecturer in Politics, University of Liverpool. This event is co-hosted by Merseyside Environmental Trust and supported by Faiths4Change and Philosophy in Pubs.
- 8 Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) Retreat Day** 10am-4pm Sandymount House of Prayer, Liverpool. Please bring packed lunch, drinks and biscuits provided. Cost £15 per person. Spaces limited, book ACN NW: 01524 388739 [nw.office@acnuk.org](mailto:nw.office@acnuk.org)
- 11 Quiet Day** 10am-4 pm 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: [winniecenacle@mail.com](mailto:winniecenacle@mail.com)
- 12 There is no Planet B: A Handbook for the Make or Break Years** 7.30pm St John's Church, Church St, Settle BD24 9JH. Speaker Mike Berners-Lee, Professor at Lancaster University and Director of Small World Consulting. Organised by the Justice & Peace Group of Churches Together in Settle and District. All welcome.
- 13 Sabeel-Kairos event *Building Peace in the Holy Land*** St Luke's Church, Crosby, Liverpool Rd L23 5SE 7.30pm. Guest Speakers Samina Ali and Bea Foster, members of *Building Bridges in Burnley*. Further info: Kathleen Zimak 0151 286 2117
- 15 CAFOD Event** St Catherine of Sienna Community Centre, School Lane, Didsbury, Manchester M20 6HS. Meet **CAFOD's new director, Christine Allen** and some of CAFOD's Trustees and Central Leadership Team, as together we explore our mission for the future. Book: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/national-volunteering-conference-manchester-tickets-56481395374>
- 15 Sustainable Chester Spring Fair** Grosvenor Park, Grosvenor Park Road. Chester Friends of the Earth would like this to be an event that links all the Sustainable groups in the region and welcome joining up with anyone else. Get in touch to help organise, arrange for a stall or speaker slot ASAP. Info: Helen Tandy, Chester & District FoE [Helenchesterfoe@hotmail.com](mailto:Helenchesterfoe@hotmail.com)
- 15 Shrewsbury : Green Christian On the Road Together** [www.greenchristian.org.uk](http://www.greenchristian.org.uk)
- 16 Day for Life: A Catholic response to Domestic Abuse** resources: <http://www.dayforlife.org/category/resources/>
- 17-23 Refugee Week: *Different Pasts, Shared Futures*** resources: <http://refugeeweek.org.uk/>
- 20 Clean Air Day** [www.cleanairstay.org.uk/news](http://www.cleanairstay.org.uk/news)
- 21-23 The Great Get Together** inspired by Jo Cox – communities getting together to celebrate kindness, respect and all we have in common. Sign up here: <http://www.greatgettogether.org/>
- 22 Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) Retreat Day** 10am-4pm Our Lady & St Michael's, Workington. Please bring packed lunch, drinks and biscuits provided. Cost £15 per person. Spaces limited, book ACN NW: 01524 388739 [nw.office@acnuk.org](mailto:nw.office@acnuk.org)
- 22 Quiet Day** 10am-4 pm at The Convent of Our Lady of the Cenacle – see 11 June
- 25 International Day of Prayer** – Prayer Vigils to mark UN Day of Support for Victims of Tortures -see [www.acatuk.org.uk](http://www.acatuk.org.uk)
- 26 Climate Change Lobby: "The Time Is Now"**. Gathering at Westminster to connect the poor to the powerful by sharing our concerns on climate change with leaders who can make a difference. Lobby your MP. [www.theclimatecoalition.org/thetimeisnow](http://www.theclimatecoalition.org/thetimeisnow) <https://caford.org.uk/Campaign/Climate/Climate-lobby> [www.christianaid.org.uk/campaigns/climate-change/join-climate-lobby](http://www.christianaid.org.uk/campaigns/climate-change/join-climate-lobby)
- 26 International Day of Support for Victims of Torture** <https://www.un.org/en/events/torturevictimsday/resources.html>
- 29 Sabeel-Kairos 2019 Conference: *Faith into Action*** Carrs Lane Church Centre, Carrs Lane, Birmingham B4 7SX. Key speakers: Rifat Kassis, from Kairos Palestine, David Cronin, author and blogger on Israel/Palestine, and Professor Adam Sutcliffe, from Independent Jewish Voices. We will also be hearing about Sabeel-Kairos's Investing for Peace campaign alongside campaign partner War on Want, and engaging in a panel debate and plenty of discussion! Palestinian crafts and food, view exhibitions and information stalls. Tickets £30 which includes a buffet lunch, and tea/coffee/biscuits on arrival. Book at: <http://www.sabeel-kairos.org.uk/sabeel-kairos-2019-conference-faith-into-action/>

### JULY

- 4-21 Manchester International Festival** <https://mif.co.uk>
- 6 Liverpool Annual Assembly "Apocalypse Now? Climate Change: What We Must Do."** 10am until 4pm, at LACE, Croxteth Drive, Liverpool, L17 1AA. All welcome, lunch included, suggested donation £10. Any questions: [j-p@rcaolp.co.uk](mailto:j-p@rcaolp.co.uk)
- 9 CWDF Forum: *Climate Change Apathy?*** 6.45– 9pm The Unity Centre, Cuppin Street, Chester, CH1 2BN. Our final Forum meeting before the summer break. Talk by Linda & Stewart Shuttleworth on the theme 'The psychology of apathy about climate change...and what to do about it!'
- 13 Emerging Church: the challenge of the Gospel and new responses** – prayer, reflection and discussion with Simon Stewart, Chaplain at The Cornerstone, a community hub, part of the Lancaster Methodist Circuit. 10am-3pm Xaverian Missionaries Spirituality Centre, 169 Sharoe Green Lane, Preston PR2 8HE. Please bring packed lunch, tea and coffee provided. To book please email [anne.foley@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:anne.foley@blueyonder.co.uk) or phone 01722 555483
- 20 World Refugee Day** <https://www.unhcr.org>
- 22 Campaign Against ArmsTrade #StopDSEI skills day** to stop the biennial DSEI arms fair scheduled for this September in London. 11am-5pm Bridge 5 Mill, 22a Beswick St, Manchester, M4 7HR. Register for your free place on Eventbrite now! <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/stop-dsei-skills-day-manchester-tickets-62040407529>
- 26-28 NJPN Conference 'Forgotten People, Forgotten Places: Being Church At The Margins'** \*\*\* **BOOK NOW!** \*\*\* Booking forms from NJPN, 39 Eccleston Square, London SW1V 1BX 020 7901 4864 [admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk](mailto:admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk)

## AUGUST

**3 Summer Concert for Palestine** St Bride's Church, Percy St, Liverpool L8 7LT in aid of St Bride's Church building fund and Medical Aid for Palestinians – including supporting neo-natal projects in Gaza. 6pm onwards featuring Amy Winehouse tribute band, *Addicted to Amy*, and the Greenwich harpist, Glenda Alloway. Tickets £7 waged / £5 unwaged – pay on the door. Finger buffet and alcohol included – hopefully donations will more than cover the cost. Contact [jamesfleming1973@gmail.com](mailto:jamesfleming1973@gmail.com)  
**23-26 Green Christian Stall at Greenbelt** [www.greenchristian.org.uk](http://www.greenchristian.org.uk)

## NJPN ANNUAL CONFERENCE: FORGOTTEN PEOPLE, FORGOTTEN PLACES

Pope Francis calls us to be 'a Church which is poor and for the poor'. For NJPN this means to be with those on the margins as equal partners, enabling them to find their own solutions to the issues they face.

Conference 2019 will work with Church Action on Poverty who are undertaking a three-year project to challenge the Churches about where they put their resources. It will hear from 'communities of praxis' who are already involved on the margins, and engage in social analysis and theological reflection from their perspective.

Join us in 2019 to explore mission, theological reflection and social action with people who have been pushed to the margins of society by poverty.

We will explore building Churches that:  
are interested in building the kingdom, not just growing the Church;  
listen to voices from the margins  
expect to be challenged and changed by our neighbours,  
put an emphasis on sharing food and hospitality;  
are hungry and thirsty for justice.

### Speakers:

**Revd Deirdre Brower Latz:** has worked as a pastor in urban/marginalised communities in Bristol and Manchester and lectures at the Nazarene Theological College in Manchester.

**Professor Anthony Reddie:** the leading scholar in the practice of Black Theology in grassroots communities of faithful practice.

We will also hear inspiring and challenging stories from Churches and groups that are living out the vision of a 'church of the poor' – being Church on the margins of our society.

### Conference Chair:

John Battle, former Labour MP, Chair of Leeds Justice & Peace Commission

### Workshops:

There will be workshops from a range of organisations and speakers, all looking creatively at how our churches can be more open to people on the margins.

### Children and young people:

Children and young people are a vital part of the NJPN conference. There will be a crèche for children under 5 and a programme of activities for 5-11-year-olds. 12-18-year-olds will explore the conference theme in an active and thought-provoking weekend. NJPN is committed to the protection of children, young people and vulnerable people. People of all ages and backgrounds are welcome and encouraged to attend conference. Discount for families. Our rates for children and people on low incomes are subsidised. We count on the generous donations of those who can afford a little extra to make that possible.

### Booking Form:

[www.justice-and-peace.org.uk/cms/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Forgotten-People-Forgotten-Places-booking-form.pdf](http://www.justice-and-peace.org.uk/cms/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Forgotten-People-Forgotten-Places-booking-form.pdf)

**National Justice & Peace Network, Tel:** 020 7901 4864 **Email:** [admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk](mailto:admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk)

[www.justice-and-peace.org.uk](http://www.justice-and-peace.org.uk) <https://justice-and-peace.org.uk/conference>

If your organisation is interested in running a stall at the conference, please contact the Just Fair Manager, Ann Kelly at [annkellynjpn@btinternet.com](mailto:annkellynjpn@btinternet.com)

- Many items taken from the daily e-bulletin Independent Catholic News [www.indcatholicnews.com](http://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](http://www.justice-and-peace.org.uk) or contact [admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk](mailto:admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk) 020 7901 4864

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