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# Justice and Peace

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## PRAYER FOR PEACE

*To the Creator of nature and man, of truth and beauty I pray:*

*Hear my voice, for it is the voice of the victims of all wars and violence among individuals and nations;*

*Hear my voice, for it is the voice of all children who suffer and will suffer when people put their faith in weapons and war;*

*Hear my voice when I beg you to instil into the hearts of all human beings the wisdom of peace, the strength of justice and the joy of fellowship;*

*Hear my voice, for I speak for the multitudes in every country and in every period in history who do not want war and are ready to walk the road of peace;*

*Hear my voice and grant insight and strength so that we may always respond to hatred with love, to injustice with total dedication to justice, to need with the sharing of self, to war with peace.*

*O God, hear my voice and grant unto the world your everlasting peace.*

**John Paul II, 25 February 1981**

## CHRISTMAS DAY

*No one can celebrate a genuine Christmas without being truly poor.*

*The self-sufficient, the proud, those who, because they have everything, look down on others, those who have no need even of God – for them there will be no Christmas.*

*Only the poor, the hungry, those who need someone to come on their behalf, will have that someone.*

*That someone is God, Emmanuel, God-with-us.*

*Without poverty of spirit there can be no abundance of God.*

**Oscar Romero, 24 December 1978**

*Both of these have been taken from the J & P Calendar for the Year of Faith (see Page 2)*

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Archdiocese of Liverpool Justice & Peace Commission

Diocese of Shrewsbury Commission for the Promotion of Justice, Peace & Social Responsibility

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As a contribution to the Year of Faith the Diocese of Shrewsbury Commission for the Promotion of Justice, Peace & Social Responsibility has produced a J & P Calendar to help individuals and groups respond positively to this Year and to the New Evangelisation initiative of the Catholic Church, which was top of the agenda for the Synod of Bishops meeting in Rome from 17-28 October 2012. It is our way of showing our care and concern for building and nurturing good relationships with all people, with the natural world and with our Creator God and by so doing deepening and nourishing our faith. An example from the Calendar:

**18 December INTERNATIONAL MIGRANTS DAY** was established by the United Nations in 2000 in response to the increasing number of migrants in the world. Held annually on 18 December, the day aims to recognise the efforts, contributions and rights of migrants. [www.un.org/en/events/migrantsday/](http://www.un.org/en/events/migrantsday/)

Although 1 in every 35 people are now said to be international migrants, the issue of migration deeply divides public opinion between those who see it as 'a blessing to the ageing populations and workforces of the advanced economies' and others who see it as 'a gateway for criminality and social disintegration.'

(Source [www.ctbi.org.uk](http://www.ctbi.org.uk) Churches Together in Britain and Ireland)

**Protection for those fleeing persecution is a benchmark of a civilised society.** Cardinal Basil Hume, Nov. 1990

There are more examples throughout MouthPeace especially on page 11.

The full calendar is available on [www.jp-shrewsburydiocese.org.uk](http://www.jp-shrewsburydiocese.org.uk)

### **'COME AND SEE' Pilgrim Journeys of Encounter**

*Marian Thompson writes:*

Have you thought of a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in this Year of Faith? There are several possible ways to do this. The blessings and challenges you receive will depend on where you go and whom you travel with. The most popular type of pilgrimage involves visiting some of numerous sites associated with the life and death of Jesus. Two such pilgrimages from going from this area have been brought to my attention. On May 6 –16 an ecumenical group is travelling led by Canon Chris Samuels of Chester Diocese (contact 07929 420423 email [cwjsamuels@gmail.com](mailto:cwjsamuels@gmail.com)). Later October 21 – 28 Bishop Mark Davies leads a Shrewsbury Diocesan one (contact Fr David Long St Albans, 30 Mill Lane, Wallasey, Merseyside CH44 5UD)



The sites visited on such pilgrimages are now mostly covered with churches or chapels with appropriate decorations reflecting the artistic and creative skills of those who constructed them. If you enjoy visiting churches and find them inspiring then this kind of pilgrimage could be for you. In my own experience of two such pilgrimages, I found the times I felt closest to Jesus were not in such churches but in a small fishing boat on the calm Sea of Galilee (no storm took us by surprise) and climbing the very crowded Via Dolorosa in Jerusalem on a hot day with all the accompanying smells and sounds and the crush of people.

Today as we read about and pray so much more for the Holy Land and its deep problems, some people think it is important to their faith when they visit to find out more about the present-day situation and issues in the area. On Saturday November 3<sup>rd</sup> a day meeting was held at St. Teresa's Social Club Upholland called 'Come and See'. The purpose of the day was to encourage those contemplating a visit to the Holy sites of Israel to ensure that they also meet a representative sample of the people living in the West Bank of Palestine thereby gaining an accurate picture of the life of Palestinian Arabs, and of Palestinian Christians in particular. It was suggested that so many pilgrimages are careful to avoid anything that depicts the difficulties that the policies of the Israeli government impose on the Arabs. Without seeing the effects of the six metre high 'fence', which is in fact a concrete wall, and observing the crossing points where Arabs are routinely stopped, harassed and delayed a false impression is unavoidable.

The meeting was addressed by George Shiwari, Co-ordinator of the Siraj Centre at Beit Sahour just outside Bethlehem and Father Paul Maddison a priest in the East Anglia Diocese seconded full time by the church to organise trips to the Holy Land. George described what the Siraj centre ([www.sirajcenter.org](http://www.sirajcenter.org)) can offer including fairly standard visits to all the Holy sites on both sides of the Jordan river along with guided walking and cycling tours of Palestinian trails and the chance for ecumenical discussions with local Christians and Muslims. It is a very simple matter to organise tailor-made tours to fit the requirements of any group. As a result of the day Fr. Paul and George agreed to work together whenever possible. Forty or so people came to the day and many were enthused to expand their aspirations of their visit.

Sabeel is a Christian-based peace organisation led by the Rev. Naim Atteek, a canon of St. George's Cathedral Jerusalem but based in Bethlehem. The day was organised by Friends of Sabeel UK. To find out more or if anyone might want to join a possible trip to Israel/Palestine next autumn please contact Peter Harrison at [docpeterlh@gmail.com](mailto:docpeterlh@gmail.com) or ring 0161 427 6542. Peter provided the information for the latter part of this article.

REPORT ON NATIONAL JUSTICE & PEACE NETWORK WORKERS ' MEETING  
7 November 2012 Wistaston Hall



Anne O'Connor writes:

I was delighted to have been invited by Mary Conway, worker for Plymouth diocese, to attend the recent NJPN (National Justice and Peace Network) meeting to help formulate a prayerful understanding of the relationship between Charity and Justice; to consider J & P's relation with CSAN (Caritas Social Action Network); and to look at strategies for strengthening the J & P grassroots network.

Having exchanged newsletters and e bulletins over the past months and built up email friendships it was good to put faces to names and to receive such a warm welcome. Those present were Mary Conway (convenor), Plymouth; Ann Kelly, NJPN Administrator; Steve Atherton, Liverpool; Terry Brown, Southwark; Shelagh Fawcett, Leeds; David Jenkins, Birmingham; Barbara Kentish, Westminster; Maggie McSherry, Lancaster; Maria Pizzoni, Wrexham, and Miriam McHardy, Co-ordinator for Justice & Peace, Gillis Centre, Edinburgh

We looked at the differences between Caritas and J & P and shared our concerns that J & P might be absorbed by Caritas – certainly there seems to be a higher allocation of funding in some dioceses for the Caritas model. Most present felt overtures should be made to Caritas to try to work together where possible but we all felt its remit was somewhat narrow and lacked the broad umbrella structure of J & P. Whilst Caritas' s emphasis on welfare projects in the UK is timely (for example the growth of Food Banks) it does not encompass wider issues such as peace or climate change and the environment. A purely local or UK based remit fails to take into account the interconnectedness between national and global issues. Working on an ecumenical or interfaith basis is important to J & P whereas Caritas seems to be very much centred on Catholic organisations .

At Miriam's request we discussed the proposed UK welfare cuts and our response as J & P activists. We shared our concerns about the adverse impact on the poor, especially young people and families. Miriam McHardy is currently drafting a report for the J & P Commission in Scotland which she offered to share with NJPN for comments and suggestions. The 2013 Poverty and Homelessness Action Week (26 January – 4 February) takes as its theme *Can you cast the first stone?* [www.actionweek.org.uk](http://www.actionweek.org.uk) The action pack challenges the popular notion of "benefit scroungers", addressing poverty and homelessness/poor housing in a more sympathetic way than often portrayed in the media and by politicians. We agreed to contact our Bishops to request a pastoral letter on this theme to help raise awareness and support for the week and beyond.

Mary Conway gave an excellent presentation based on a talk by US theologian Walter Brueggemann which we watched at the end of the session - the link is <http://vimeo.com/25663373> . I would thoroughly recommend this talk to groups (it lasts just under one hour). Brueggemann is a dynamic speaker with a thorough knowledge of scripture. His basic premise is that we limit our vision by looking only at what is possible and this means that we achieve nothing new. Drawing on a theory developed by Carl Barthes he urges us to look at scripture in a different light and see how God achieves what the world considers to be impossible. Brueggemann cites women in scripture who are barren (Rebecca; Rachel; Sarah; Hannah and Elizabeth), who thought child-bearing to be impossible but who, by God's power, are able to give birth; he reminds us of the new life breathed into dry bones in Ezekiel and the amazing story of the resurrection. He encourages us to embrace the impossible and not be bound by what seems merely to be possible. He says this way of thinking is very counter-culture as the world is limited by what is real and tangible. He talks of the poetry of creation, making a newness out of nothing, and explains that in times of despair the Israelites turned away from the Exodus teachings with its quid pro quo rules and regulations and went back to the creation stories of the Genesis narrative for inspiration. This is just a taste of the talk: it needs to be studied in depth to be fully appreciated, but it was tremendously inspiring, especially for those of us who feel tired or despondent in the face of difficulties.

For me, as an invited guest, an onlooker, it was a privilege to be in the company of these dedicated J & P workers who have the courage to imagine the impossible; to live the dream of a Kingdom of love and justice and peace and to try to bring this dream alive to a world that may have lost hope of this being possible. I came away inspired, enthused and refreshed.

PEACE SUNDAY JANUARY 20



The theme for the 46<sup>th</sup> World Peace Day is ***Blessed are the Peacemakers.***  
***Christ's peace must reign in your hearts, since as members of the one body you have been called to that peace.*** Colossians 3:15

***'Peacemaking is not an optional commitment. It is a requirement of our faith We are called to be peacemakers, not by some movement of the moment, but by Christ Jesus.'*** *The Challenge of Peace, par. 333*

Many parishes use Peace Sunday as an opportunity to collect for the work of Pax Christi. Does yours?

[www.paxchristi.org.uk](http://www.paxchristi.org.uk)



## SOME THOUGHTS ON CHARITY AND JUSTICE

*Steve Atherton prepared this for discussion at NJPN workers' meeting (see page 3)*

At a time like this, it is vital to get the right order among questions about our faith. I suggest that the order is: first of all we must meet Jesus, we must listen, we must proclaim him Lord, we must form community with others who believe, we must act from our beliefs, and we must take on our mission to continue his work. I know that it could be broken down into a much more detailed series of sections and sub-sections but if we agree that the basic thrust is 'Meet Jesus – Follow Jesus' then we can spend more of our time working out what we are called to do as followers-of-Jesus, as Christians. In a phrase, 'What is our mission?'

The Quaker Jill Seger reminds us *"To live with simplicity and discernment in a culture of over-consumption is essential if injustice and inequality are not to be strengthened."* She went on: *"I must exercise vigilance if I am not to slide into complicity with the exploiters and the self-serving."*

I think that some of the current unease comes from lack of clarity over what we mean by charity and what we mean by justice. There can be a danger that we equate charity with almsgiving which, although it helps people with their immediate problems, doesn't address the root causes of the problems.

When Liverpool J&P Commission marks the beginning of Lent with a public act of penitence, it joins with the peace movement throughout the world to show that it is seriously engaged with what is happening in our world. While we want the arms trade to stop (or at least not to provide dictators with weapons to turn on their own people) at the same time we don't assume our own innocence: we acknowledge that the peace we seek for the world has to begin in our own hearts, our own lives, our own families, our own communities.

Some people say that it's charity to deal with the effect but it's justice to deal with the cause. Tim Duffy, Research and Development Officer with Justice and Peace Scotland, makes a very interesting distinction between CHARITY and JUSTICE. He offers the following analysis:

**Charity provides a Social Service.** It sees a problem and responds.

**Classic example:** the Good Samaritan, who does not look for the reasons for the robbery, but deals with its immediate effects.

**Charity helps individuals meet their present needs**

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|---|--|
| 1. Concerned with present symptoms        | 2. Focus is on individual needs            |
| 3. Requires immediate, repeated solutions | 4. Employs direct service                  |
| 5. Has minister to have-nots              | 6. Intends no change in social structures. |

**In practice:** Accommodation for asylum seekers; Starter Packs for homeless; Relief convoys.

**Justice works towards Social Change.** It aims at correcting long-term problems in society.

**Classic example:** Moses confronting Pharaoh, does not ask for more humane treatment of those enslaved. He demands: 'Let my people go.'

**Justice is**

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|---|---|
| 1. Concerned with root causes of injustice    | 2. Focus is on changing social structures   |
| 3. Seek long term, once and for all solutions | 4. Indirect help aiming at permanent change |
| 5. Haves and have-nots work together          | 6. Committed to changing social structures. |

**In practice:** Advocacy for changes in law; lobbying of political or commercial organisations; parish-based community initiatives.

Catholic Social Teaching traditionally makes a different distinction between Charity and Justice. Faith, Hope and Charity are theological virtues. They are gifts that cannot be earned or deserved. They are gratuitous and call us to gratuitousness. Since the very first encyclical *Rerum Novarum* in 1891 and repeated in *Caritas in Veritate* in 2009, CST has stressed that Justice gives people what is rightfully theirs whereas Charity gives people what is rightfully ours. CST emphasises Charity as partaking in the love of God and encourages us to deal justly with our neighbour. Charity is over and above Justice. Charity is the source of our search for justice. I feel that we have to take this distinction between charity and justice very seriously.

It's an important part of our tradition and when the Catholic bishops wrote *Choosing the Common Good*, they positioned justice among the cardinal virtues along with Prudence, Courage and Temperance. They said that these virtues allow us to give the best of ourselves and to do good deeds.

**JUSTICE:** the constant and firm decision to give their due to God and to all people.

'The Lord gives justice to the oppressed.' *Ps 146:7*

(continued page 5)



## 'THE WAY FORWARD'

An open meeting of Diocese of Shrewsbury Commission for the Promotion of Justice, Peace & Social Responsibility

Anne O'Connor writes :

Forty people from J & P groups across the diocese met on 6 October to discuss ways of supporting one another and continuing our work now we no longer had a paid Co-ordinator. Facilitated by Pat Gaffney of Pax Christi, we looked at our strengths, celebrated our achievements and made plans for the future. We were delighted that Joan was able to join us for the final session when she was presented with a gift in token of our appreciation of her 19 years as Co-ordinator. A presentation was also made to Ann Gill, former J&P Worker and a previous Treasurer of the Commission in recognition of her many years' service.



The feedback from the day has been extremely positive. Groups and individuals appreciated the chance to get together, share their achievements and also their concerns, and have a say in the future of the Commission. For many it was the first joint meeting with others from around the diocese. It was clear that Joan had held diocesan J&P activity together; a familiar point of contact for all. The Commission will need to focus on effective networking to fill this gap. Everyone agreed that it would be helpful to meet on a regular basis, perhaps a couple of times a year. Listening to reports from the various groups there is clearly a wealth of experience that encompasses a wide variety of issues plus plenty of enthusiasm and commitment: the challenge now will be to harness this effectively and set a realistic agenda that will maintain a strong Justice and Peace presence in the diocese.

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### SOME THOUGHTS ON CHARITY AND JUSTICE *continued:*

Justice has so many meanings it's hard to pin it down which one is being used. In the virtue sense it refers to a condition of life when God-given Human Rights prevail and people have access to those things that are necessary to lead a good life. Other usages would include:

- 1 **Social justice:** a share in the well-being of society
- 2 **Distributive justice:** allocation of income, wealth and power
- 3 **Commutative justice:** fairness in agreements and exchanges
- 4 **Legal justice:** equal access to the law

It takes a brave heart to claim to know the mind of God but I've come to think that ultimately the justice we are working for has to be .....

5. **God's Justice** as exemplified in the story of the Labourers in the Vineyard and other bible stories where what is being taught is that God is concerned with the poor and the marginalised, the "little ones", the anawim.

We say that our beliefs make a difference to our lives. It's a sobering thought that Jesus' death plunged his disciples into despair. They thought he had failed, that his death was a terrible tragedy and a sign that God was not with him. It was after the Resurrection they understood that his Father has given him life again and they came to believe that his death on the cross was, paradoxically, the triumph of God's love in the world. His resurrection proved that he was alive and active in a strange new way. It offers salvation and hope for the future. He is the 'first born of all creation' but this is not a return to how he was before.

*The crucified one is also the resurrected one. The resurrected one is always the crucified one; he still bears the marks of crucifixion.*

Do we believe that the Lord is risen? How do we feel when we know that he is with us? What difference does it make to the way we act? Can we believe what we say we believe? The hope we have comes from the resurrection. It is the source of our joy. So the big question is: How can we become holders of hope, people who offer hope to the hopeless? We have a role not only as holders of hope but also as people who act hopefully, not just in our own lives but in the way we engage with the rest of the world. We are called to look for the risen Lord in all the same places where we find the crucified ones of this world: we will find him in all the despair and the sorrow, in the troubles and difficulties of our world.

This is our task: to taste the joy of the Resurrection and share a hope that releases human imagination and creativity once more, not just in the church, but throughout the world

When Mary Magdalene meets Jesus at the tomb she thought he was the gardener and only recognised him when he called her by her name. Do we hear him say our names?

It is very noticeable that when Jesus meets his disciples after the Resurrection he always eats with them. On the road to Emmaus and at the side of the Sea of Galilee, Jesus is found in food and fellowship. Is this how it still is today?



## SUSTAINABILITY

### AND HOW CHRISTIANS SHOULD RESPOND TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL AND FINANCIAL CRISIS

*Thank you to Maggie McSherry for this report on the talk Fr Sean McDonagh gave in October in Lancaster Diocese.*

Fr Sean demonstrated why every group in society should be focusing on climate change. He showed how most of our economic, political and even religious thinking believes that all the space on earth, in the seas and in the sky is meant only for humans. That perception must be changed if we are going to be able to stop the biocide which is happening right now across the world.

Even though, at present, there is only a small minority of environmental activists in most religions, he said religion could become a major factor in forging new cultures of sustainability. The World Council of Churches (WCC) symposium outlined four ways that the Churches or Religions could help make a global transition from a consumerist to a sustainable society.

#### **1. Churches' prophetic role to challenge the current status quo.**

Pope John Paul II : *" Modern society will find no solutions to the ecological problem unless it takes a serious look at its lifestyle. In many parts of the world, society is given instant gratification and consumerism while remaining indifferent to the damage which these cause.*

*...Simplicity, moderation and discipline, as well as a spirit of sacrifice, must become a part of everyday life, lest all suffer the negative consequences of the careless habits of a few."*

Pope Benedict XVI: *"technologically advanced societies must be prepared to encourage more sober lifestyles"*

*"...the issue of environmental degradation challenges us to examine our lifestyles and the prevailing models of consumption and production, which are often unsustainable from a social, environmental and even economic point of view. We can no longer do without real change of outlook which will result in new lifestyles, 'in which the quest for truth, beauty, goodness and communion with others for the sake of common growth' are factors which determine consumer choices, savings and investments"*

**All religions should challenge the greatest modern heresy which is that more and more consumption is the pathway to happiness.**

#### **2. Accompany people in the painful process of change from a non-sustainable to sustainable way of life.**

Churches are well positioned to do this since they are present at the local, national and international level. Religions can educate their followers about the environment through their own traditions and stories about the origins of the universe, the earth and humankind. There is a wealth of wisdom in these traditions on how to live in a sustainable way.

We are privileged to have available to us an understanding about the emergence of the universe, our solar system, the formation of planet earth, the emergence and proliferation of life, culminating with the evolution of humankind in the past few million years. This story has given us a new understanding of what it means to be human and intimately connected with the 13.7 billion years which went into shaping the universe in such a way that it could support conscious life.

Humans are part of the biosphere and we are challenged to live in a way that does not undermine the well-being of the planet. Particular religious traditions can enhance this understanding of our connectedness with all creation.

In the Judeo-Christian tradition we believe that the creative principle behind the emergence of the universe and humankind is best addressed in personal terms as a caring, loving father.

Religions ought to highlight those segments of their scriptures or holy books that enhance our appreciation of nature, challenge those elements of their traditions that appear not to respect nature or is overly homo-centric and focus on the impact of current consumerism on the poor and the planet.

Past ascetic traditions of various religions seemed to be motivated by a denial of the value of the world. Today's ascetical challenge must be based on our understanding of the finite earth and a clarity that the present consumerist way of living cannot be sustained and is only made possible by massive injustice towards the poor of the world and by robbing future generations of their fair share of the resources of the planet.

Religions must begin to highlight the moral dimension of how we relate to and treat the natural world. Very often, religions, particularly Christianity, were seen as indifferent to the deteriorating plight of local ecosystems or the biosphere as a whole. Religions and Churches upheld human rights and promoted social justice, often at the great cost to individuals and Churches, but their voice was seldom heard when it came to plundering of the planet.

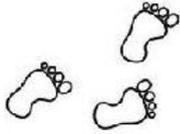
The Churches have much to learn from traditional cultures and forms of Christianity such as Celtic Christianity that have much to teach us about the intrinsic value of all creation.

#### **3. Use financial investment to promote sustainability**

Religious groups who own land and farm animals can make sure that they use sustainable methods to produce food and care for animals.

*Continued opposite*





## WALKING WITH THE DALITS

### WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY 18 -25 January

The Theme for 2013: *What does God require of us?* (Micah 6:6-8)

The British and Irish resources for 2013 are based on the international material compiled this year by the Student Christian Movement of India (SCMI), along with the All India Catholic University Federation and the National Council of Churches in India. In reflecting on the significance of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity they decided that in view of great injustice to Dalits in India, the search for visible unity is not possible without dismantling casteism and recognising the contribution to unity of the 'poorest of the poor'. Casteism results in the Dalits being socially marginalized, politically under-represented, economically exploited and culturally subjugated. Almost 80% of Indian Christians have a Dalit background.

During the Week of Prayer, Christians all over the world will explore in ecumenical fellowship what it means to do justice, to love kindness and to walk humbly with God. This theme is developed over the eight days by the metaphor of walking. For Dalit communities, the walk towards liberation is inseparable from the walk towards unity. So our walk with Dalits this week, and with all who yearn for justice, is an integral part of the prayer for Christian unity. Christians in India should reject caste divisions, just as Christians worldwide should not accept the divisions among them: 'Is Christ divided?' (1 Corinthians 1:13). As we gather to pray for the unity which Christ wills for his Church, we are called to break down such walls of divisions among and between us.

Resource material for the week can be found with Churches Together in Britain and Ireland [www.ctbi.org.uk/607](http://www.ctbi.org.uk/607)

The daily reflect the concerns of those working and praying for Justice & Peace.

***This is what God asks of you, only this: to act justly, to love tenderly and to walk humbly with your God.***

**Micah 6:8**

*from J & P Calendar for the Year of Faith*

### SUSTAINABILITY AND HOW CHRISTIANS SHOULD RESPOND TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL AND FINANCIAL CRISIS

*Continued from page 6*

#### 4. Religions must provide a space for discerning and celebrating hope.

The new ecological cosmological awareness must be brought into *our liturgies and worship* in order to integrate our work for justice and sustainability with our Christian faith.

*The Sacraments* – an extraordinary opportunity to link respect for water, food, light and healing with the depths of the Christian tradition.

*Prayer* with an ecological and cosmic dimension can help the individual and community move away from an almost narcissistic obsession with the human to become more aware of the deep bonding which is at the heart of all creation.

*Spirituality*, rather than creating and confirming dualisms, can be an integrating force bringing together all aspects of our existence.

Fr Sean suggested that a way for the Catholic Church to show leadership would be for Pope Benedict to call a Synod for Creation. Each local Church could begin to reflect on creation in its own area and see how Christians could give leadership in moving towards a more sane and sustainable world. A Synod in which everyone in the Church would be able to share their insights and wisdom. A Synod that would give new life and focus to the Catholic faith in our contemporary society.

Ideas on how we can make the first steps in our parishes were given by Dr Paul Kelly from St Joseph's parish, Ansdell. St Joseph's have just achieved the LiveSimply Parish Award, one of the first in the country



### LIVESIMPLY PARISH AWARD - START BY WALKING!

The idea of working towards the CAFOD LiveSimply Parish award can seem quite daunting, even though a parish may be meeting some of the challenges already. A group at Christ Church Heald Green, decided to organise a number of events which would encourage

new contacts and friendships to grow within the parish to consider working more formally towards the Award.

The first event was a Sunday afternoon Parish Walk in mid-September, planned to begin and end in the Parish Hall and to take in the children's playground and cafe at Bruntwood Park, Cheadle. A children's quiz was prepared and about 25 people set off with a pilgrim's prayer and walked a route of about 3 miles. At the end we enjoyed refreshments in the church hall and finished with short prayers from CAFOD's "Creation Walk". The afternoon was voted a great success – everyone enjoyed the opportunity to walk in good company, looking at our local area from a fresh perspective. We hope to repeat the walk in a different season.

Ann Taylor



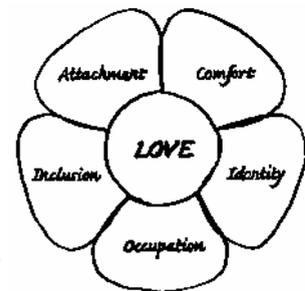
## LIVING IN A STRANGE LAND

*Marian Thompson writes:*

Have you ever arrived in an unfamiliar place, maybe a foreign country, late at night in the dark and gone more or less straight to bed? The next morning you open the curtains and a strange scene greets you. You do not recognise any landmarks and do not know the names of the streets, shops, maybe fields or mountains you are looking at. Where am I? What am I looking at? Who is that? For many people with dementia every morning starts with this unsettling feeling even though they are actually at home.

Dementia seems to be the hidden problem of our time. Most of us know at least one person with dementia amongst our family, friends, neighbours or at church. Yet it is not much discussed. Many years ago cancer was the c word that no-one liked to mention. We have now moved on to d – dementia being a medical condition that no-one likes to think about. In an attempt to overcome this Marple Churches Together Justice & Peace group held a workshop day on Dementia in October. This was ably led by Mark Perry, Training Officer from the Dementia Unit at The Meadows Community Hospital in Stockport and the Revd. Dr Albert Jewell of the Christian Council on Ageing.

We learnt how attitudes to dementia have changed in the past 30 years. Although Dr Alzheimer in the 1900s used a young lady to illustrate the condition, it was generally thought that aging produced dementia – referred to as ‘senile dementia’ - and there was little that could be done about it. People were tucked away in a back room at home or in hospitals and almost forgotten. The 1990’s was the decade of the brain when there was a massive increase in understanding about brain function. So dementia was found not just to be a result of aging but of significant changes that happened in different parts of the brain. This could start at any age. But still it seemed a medical condition that was regarded very negatively – all you could do was to offer kindness and support. In the mid 1990’s there was a breakthrough as Professor Tom Kitwood suggested the need to look at the whole person and offer person-centred care. There are many different ways of helping according to each individual need and with the right support, skills can be ‘topped up’ and people manage longer to maintain independence. Recently, because of human rights legislation, citizenship is the buzz word and we are learning to accept that people with dementia, as with people with more obvious physical difficulties, have the right to have the help they need to live as fully as possible in society.



*Kitwood's flower devised to illustrate the main psychological needs of people with dementia*

There are many ways this can be done. In Stockport Mark Perry has established Educate – a dementia awareness project in which people of all ages with dementia and those who live with them help each other. Mark was positive that life does not end with a diagnosis of dementia but it does become more difficult. Like any handicap it is necessary to learn coping strategies and three people from the group gave testimonies as to how these worked for them. One, a 51 year old woman, particularly impressed those present by her confidence and humour.

Albert Jewell speaking from a long experience of working in this field stressed that we must not distance ourselves from people with dementia as in the past but be prepared to keep in touch, to give them time, to listen rather than speak, not to ask questions that they cannot answer and cause them to panic. They may forget we have been to see them but the afterglow of a good visit continues long afterwards and often the carer very much values the break. For the future it was suggested that these caring approaches are expensive. It is important that we do not regard people with dementia as of lowly status not worthy of such expenditure but cultivate the mind of Christ which concentrates on the needs of those on the margins of society and is prepared in this time of austerity to speak up when necessary on their behalf.

Helpful websites: [www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk) [www.dementiacare.org.uk](http://www.dementiacare.org.uk) [www.ccoa.org.uk](http://www.ccoa.org.uk) (Christian Council on Ageing). Also the book ‘Dancing with Dementia: my story of living positively with dementia’ by Christine Bryden

### WORLD DAY FOR THE SICK

Since 1992, the Catholic Church has celebrated World Day of the Sick on 11 February — the day on which the church commemorates the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes — under the sponsorship of the Pontifical Council for Health Pastoral Care. The World Day of the Sick has three consistent themes. First, it reminds the faithful to pray intensely and sincerely for those who are sick. Second, the celebration invites Christians to reflect on and respond to human suffering. And third, this day recognizes and honours all persons who work in health care and serve as caregivers. This Year's World Day for the Sick will focus on the story of the Good Samaritan (Lk 10:29-37)

*from J & P Calendar for the Year of Faith*

## REDISCOVER THE VALUE OF WORKING TOGETHER

Ron Kidson (Catholic Ecumenical Officer for Shropshire and Telford and a parishioner at St Joseph's Albrighton) writes:

I count myself fortunate to have met the leaders in England of the three principal Christian Churches: Archbishops Rowan Williams and Vincent Nicholls, and, on 24<sup>th</sup> June at Much Wenlock, the President of the Methodist Conference, Revd Leo Osborne. All three are articulate, intelligent men; all three urge us to work together for the good of all, including ourselves. But on 20<sup>th</sup> June, the AGM of Telford Christian Council (TCC) took place under the heading "Rediscover the value of working together", picking up the major theme of Churches Together in England, led by those self-same church leaders. The opening hymn carried the words:

*We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord", and continued, "We will walk with each other we will walk hand in hand", Then "We will work with each other, we will work side by side. And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love".*

Yet the principal activity of TCC is all about working together for the common good, for the homeless and disadvantaged, for single mums and for young lads in trouble with the law, and even for drop-outs. It provides homes, offers advice on work prospects, restores old furniture and sells it on at low prices, it organises workplace chaplaincy to help people who are troubled in some way, and its Street Pastors help youngsters late at night who feel threatened, or are incapable of looking after themselves

because of drugs or drink. All of this is irrespective of race or creed. Their services are greatly valued by the local authority and by the police. Its headquarters, Meeting Point House in the town centre, is used routinely by a considerable number of voluntary groups who provide all kinds of services for Telford people.

The chair person of TCC, is a Baptist, the Ecumenical Dean is an Anglican, his predecessor a Methodist, and his successor could equally well be from the RC Church. In fact, the AGM took place in the brand new Catholic Church and Community Centre in Trench. Its Parish Priest prepared and led the opening service, and gave a well-received reflection. In this growing togetherness, chaplaincy (and counselling) at the Princess Royal Hospital, for staff, patients and their relatives and visitors, has always been an ecumenical activity, and it has been agreed that the Blessed Robert Johnson Catholic College in Wellington, will be replaced at Priorslee by a new Secondary School supported by both the Anglican and RC Churches.

What more could be done in Telford? Perhaps TCC could take over the rest of Shropshire! Yet Shrewsbury has an even more successful Street Pastors Group than Telford, whilst its voluntary "social services" activities are carried out by separate organisations whose membership is drawn from the whole community, a different philosophy, which has its practical strengths and weaknesses. Shrewsbury of course, has no equivalent of Meeting Point house, and is the poorer for it.

So, Albrighton? We think that our Churches Together group, CTAA, is pretty successful overall, though we have tended to concentrate more on church services than on doing things together out in the community. But, like Shrewsbury, our members are active in many of the organisations providing for the less well, or well off, in the village. Then the Methodists lead by example: their twice weekly cafe provides a venue for 70 to 120 people each week, several times each year, all the takings are given to good causes, e.g. to Macmillan Nurses; church flowers are invariably taken out to people known to Members who are sick, housebound or recently bereaved; their rooms are used by an amazing number of groups, including the "drop-in" for our young people operated by Say Yes, the evangelically-led and serviced youth organisation. St Mary's was the inspiration and principal donor to Say Yes; it has its own "tea party"; and operates a youth group for younger people. St Cuthbert's also does its bit, including running outings aimed particularly at pensioners, a play group for the very young, and hosts monthly meetings of Donington Parish Council, which, it appears, would rather cause the Church to close (I hope this is a misunderstanding) than seek to work with it to find a sensible solution. CTAA members from the other churches offer their support, along with many members of the community, to St Cuthbert's parishioners in their struggle for survival. We all hope and pray for happier times inspired by Christian generosity of spirit, working together for the common good.

### CAN YOU CAST THE FIRST STONE? (John 8:7)

26 Jan – 4 Feb Poverty and Homelessness Action Week

How will the proposed welfare cuts affect people in poverty and/or without homes.? (see discussion at NJPN Workers' meeting page 2 par.4) It important that Christians of all denominations along with other faith groups do not judge and condemn. Jesus never said the woman 'taken in adultery' was blameless. He simply showed that condemnation will not change her ways. We won't tackle the problems of poverty and homelessness by blaming those who are poor and homeless. Action Week 2013 is calling for an end to this blame game in the media and amongst politicians. Just as there are already many people working together on projects to bring practical help now we are being urged to speak out individually and in groups to challenge the excluding attitudes in society.

For material to help see [www.actionweek.org.uk](http://www.actionweek.org.uk)

Housing Justice [www.housingjustice.org.uk](http://www.housingjustice.org.uk)

Church Action on Poverty [www.church-poverty.org.uk](http://www.church-poverty.org.uk)



## GLOBAL PEACE AND SECURITY

*Thank you to Ged Cliffe who took these notes at a talk given by Prof Paul Rogers, Professor of Peace Studies, from Bradford University, at this year's AGM of the South Shropshire Interfaith Forum in Church Stretton, September 2012.*

### **Long Term Global Peace & Security**

This is a more peaceful age compared with earlier ages, strange as it may seem. If we look at the last 50 years, the least peaceful time was in the mid 90's. Are we then in a Lull?

If we take the century from 1945 to 2045, we have a century which is a key time for the future of the human race.

- We need to learn not to destroy ourselves or our environment.
- The most horrific weapons were seen back in the 1960's.
- We are possibly leaving the most dangerous phase of our history.
- The Cold War contained a serious risk of the deployment of nuclear weapons.

Although there is still a risk to peace, it seems to be lessening. There is therefore some room for guarded optimism.

Let us look further under five main headings.

#### 1. *Current Development*

- The World Economy is not delivering economic justice.
- All the wealth is going to 1/5 of the world's population.
- The gap between rich and poor is widening.
- Malnutrition of the poorest people is getting worse.

World development continues but it is an unbalanced development.

#### 2. *Education*

- The development towards education for all is a great success story.
- An increasing number of children throughout the world are getting a good grasp of the basics.
- However this makes them more aware of injustice and leads to frustration when expectations are not met.

This is a direct cause of the phenomenon referred to as the "Arab Spring".

#### 3. *Environment*

- There is an unequal distribution of fuel resources. For example, the UK has 3.5 % of the world's oil and gas reserves. The same area in the Middle East contains 62%.
- There is concern over Climate Change, which is now becoming increasingly referred to as Climate Disruption. It is accelerating in its effect. It is asymmetric – not spread evenly across the world. It is most marked close to the Arctic regions and also in the tropics.

#### 4. *Migration*

- All the above could lead to greater migration.
- Attempts to maintain the status quo are likely to be futile.

We can't stop migration and we need to adopt new thinking.

#### 5. *Future Development*

- There is an urgent need to revisit global development patterns.
- This is particularly needed following the loss of the USSR bloc.
- The current system of global economics is failing.
- The debt burden of the poorest nations is still serious.
- The world needs to move to sustainable development.
- International aid needs to be targeted at finding solutions.
- Everybody needs to be moving to a lower-carbon economy.

New thinking will have to be on a large supra-national scale, not on a purely national scale as we currently see in the UK.

*Looking ahead - there is hope.*

- There is a lot of research into different economic models currently in progress.
- There is hope when we look at the original aims and vision of the European Union.
- We have weathered great crises in the past, not least through innovation and bold public enterprises, for example the work of Bazalgette in building the London sewers in the 1850's or the Clean Air Act which banished the notorious urban smog of the 1950's.

More thinking means less knee-jerk reaction to crisis.

*Some Final Points*

- We need to get a firm grip on things global in the next 30 years.
- However, things are starting to happen and there is cause for cautious optimism.
- The future direction of Peace in the Middle East will depend on the result of this year's American Presidential Election.
- There is a good case for a "Tobin tax".
- Some elements of both the USSR and the Free Market capitalism models of economic policy are good. There is an adverse effect on commodity prices caused by market speculation.



## JUSTICE AND PEACE CALENDAR FOR THE YEAR OF FAITH

### 10 December UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS DAY

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) was adopted on 10 December 1948. The date has since served to mark Human Rights Day worldwide. The Declaration was drafted by representatives of all regions and legal traditions. Over time it has been accepted as a contract between governments and their peoples. The Declaration has also served as the foundation for an expanding system of human rights protection that today focuses also on vulnerable groups such as disabled persons, indigenous peoples and migrant workers.

[www.un.org/en/events/humanrightsday](http://www.un.org/en/events/humanrightsday)

***Whoever tortures a human being, whoever abuses a human being, whoever outrages a human being abuses God's image.***

Oscar Romero

### 27 January HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY 2013 *Communities Together: Build a Bridge*

Imagine waking up to find that the neighbours you have known all your life and even sat next to at school, now walk past you without stopping, now forbid their children from playing with yours, now spit at you and even attack you. Imagine having nowhere to turn, that the walls are closing in and that there is no escape. Imagine that you have done nothing wrong, yet you are to be punished nonetheless and no one will stand by you. On Holocaust Memorial Day you are asked to remember and stand by those who were forced to live through these experiences and to honour those communities which were destroyed in the Holocaust, under Nazi Persecution and in subsequent genocides in Cambodia, Bosnia, Rwanda and Darfur, as well as the atrocities in Armenia.

[www.hmd.org.uk/resources/theme-papers/hmd-2013-communities-together-build-a-bridge](http://www.hmd.org.uk/resources/theme-papers/hmd-2013-communities-together-build-a-bridge)

**13 February ASH WEDNESDAY** For the past 30 years peace activists have gathered on Ash Wednesday at the Ministry of Defence in Whitehall in an act of non-violent resistance and repentance to nuclear war preparations. The UK alone has 225 nuclear weapons and the Royal Navy boasts a proud record of over 40 years of uninterrupted nuclear deterrence, as at least one of the four Vanguard-class submarines is on patrol at any time.

[www.paxchristi.org.uk](http://www.paxchristi.org.uk)

***"I am firm in my belief that in making this protest you are in excellent company – following on the leadership of our own Pope Benedict XVI, as well as that of Archbishop Francis Chullikatt, the Holy See's representative at the United Nations. Like so many people of good will, I share those thoughts and words of Pope Benedict XVI when he indicated that we should be replacing Trident, not with further weapons of mass destruction, but with projects which bring life to the poor".***

Cardinal Keith O'Brien, Archbishop of St Andrews and Edinburgh

***"When Peace comes, they will plant flowers instead of mines."***

Afghan Student

### 22 February CAFOD LENT FAST DAY

CAFOD's campaign from now until October 2013 is **Hungry for Change** - highlighting is part of our faith. Our hunger for change, in solidarity with our neighbours and through the grace of God, can begin to transform our world.



CAFOD action cards invite us to take action ourselves and then to pass the second part of the card to someone else asking them to take action i.e. sharing it. As this campaign will run until next October it will be active throughout the Year of Faith so individuals, parishes, groups can pick up with it at times to suit themselves. The Shrewsbury Diocesan CAFOD office will be supporting this actively in the new Year through to the summer when a major event involving number of agencies is being planned ahead of the G8 meeting in June (David Cameron will hold the presidency for this).

[www.cafod.org.uk/uk/shrewsbury](http://www.cafod.org.uk/uk/shrewsbury)

Action Cards and a **Food for Thought** guide can be ordered by emailing [campaigns@cafod.org.uk](mailto:campaigns@cafod.org.uk) or phoning 0300 011 5680 the fact that we produce enough food to feed the world – but a billion people don't have enough to eat. The way that food is grown, sold and shared out is not working for the world's people. We have the power to change this. We believe sharing

***Jesus took the five loaves and the two fish, raised his eyes to heaven and said the blessing ... they all ate as much as they wanted.***

Matthew 14:19-20



### 25 February – 10 March FAIRTRADE FORTNIGHT

'How Far will you go for Fairtrade in 2013?' The aim this year is to take Fairtrade further.. Everyone's help is needed to reach more farmers and workers who urgently need a better deal.

Fairtrade Foundation [www.fairtrade.org.uk](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk)

Traidcraft [www.traidcraft.co.uk](http://www.traidcraft.co.uk)

*It is not wrong to want to live better; what is wrong is a style of life which is presumed to be better when it is directed towards 'having' rather than 'being'.*

**Centesimus Annus n. 36**

No list can be exhaustive and so the Calendar will be subject to regular revisions and additions – please check the website for any changes. To suggest a new date please contact Anne O'Connor [anneoc980@hotmail.com](mailto:anneoc980@hotmail.com) with details.



## DIARY DATES

### DECEMBER 2012

**9 Celebrate 50 years of CAFOD** with Clare Dixon, Head of CAFOD's Latin America & Caribbean team, Shrewsbury Diocese J & P Advent reflection, 4.30 pm Wistaston Hall, Crewe, Social afterwards. Please bring some food for a shared table

**10 United Nations Human Rights Day**  
see Calendar page 11

**14 'Carols in the City'** A Christmas service concerned for the causalities of city living. (With music, stories and speakers) Music provided by the choir of Notre Dame Catholic College for the Arts. 7 pm St John the Evangelist, Fountains Road, Kirkdale. L4 1QL

**18 International Migrants Day** see page 2

### JANUARY 2013

**9 Haiti + 3: Building back better?** Highlighting a past of deep poverty, the earthquake also showed the need for systemic change that protects the poorest. So, after 3 years and many millions of pounds pledged and spent, how's the reconstruction gone, what's left to do and have poor peoples' lives been changed for the better? Join us to celebrate the role of UK churches in the reconstruction and Progressio's special work in Haiti with Fr Francis Kawas SJ, the head of aid monitoring organisation and Progressio partner Cerfas. Talk starts at 7 pm St John's Powell St. Wigan WN1 1XD

**14 50 Years of the Baha'is in Britain** Speaker Joan Bowers 6.45 for 7 pm at St Peter's Centre, The Cross, Chester. Chester World Development Forum

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

**20 Peace Sunday** see page 3

**20 Annual Memorial Lecture 'Vatican 2 and us'**  
Sr Christine Anderson FCJ In 1987 Sr Christine

founded the Craighead Institute in Scotland. She currently heads Praxis fcj which works for faith formation in Africa. 2-4 pm LACE conference centre, Croxteth Drive, Sefton Park Liverpool L17 1AA

**20-26 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity** see page 7

**27 Holocaust Memorial Day** see Calendar, page 11

**27 Homelessness Sunday** see Calendar, page 11

**29 'From Poverty to Power'** Duncan Green Senior Adviser at OXFAM visits Chester to talk about issues raised in 2nd edition of his book. 7.30 pm, Best Building University of Chester

**6 Jan-4 Feb Poverty and Homelessness Action Week**  
see pages 3 & 9

### FEBRUARY

**4 Poverty Action Sunday** see Calendar, page 11

**11 World Day for the Sick** see page 8

**12 Ash Wednesday** see Calendar, page 11

**15 CAFOD Quiz Night** see Jan 18

**22 CAFOD Lent Fast Day** see Calendar, page 11

**25 Feb-10 March Fairtrade Fortnight**  
see Calendar, page 11

### MARCH

**2 Women's World Day of Prayer** 'I was a stranger and you welcomed me', prepared by the women of France

**4-10 Climate Week** [www.climateweek.com](http://www.climateweek.com)

**22 CAFOD Quiz Night** see Jan 18

### Integrating Life and Faith Course 2013:

20-21 April, 22-23 June, 14-15 Sept, 16-17 Nov.

At Loyola Hall, Warrington Road, Rainhill, L35 6NZ

For more information or to book a place contact:

Liverpool J & P office tel: 0151 522 1080/1

[s.atherton@rcaol.co.uk](mailto:s.atherton@rcaol.co.uk) £50 per module

Parishes are usually happy to offer financial support and there may be bursaries available.

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