



Justice & Peace

News from National Justice & Peace Network

Autumn 2005

National Justice & Peace Network (NJPN)

39 Eccleston Square
London SW1V 1BX
Tel: 020 7901 4864
Fax: 020 7901 4821
www.justice-and-peace.org.uk

The National Justice & Peace Network coordinates and encourages work for justice and peace within the Catholic Dioceses of England and Wales.

This newsletter is produced three times a year by the Network. The views expressed are not necessarily those of the National Justice and Peace Network.

Editor
Maureen Matthews

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JANUARY 2006

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Bishop Kieran as NJPN Liaison Bishop



Bishop Kieran Conry

An exciting development for the future of NJPN was announced at the Swanwick conference in July. After a meeting of the Standing Committee of Bishops Conference it was agreed that Bishop Kieran Conry would be happy to act as liaison Bishop between NJPN and CBCEW. The executive of NJPN see this as a very positive development and look forward to working with Bishop Kieran so that we provide an effective means of communicating information to all who are committed to working for Justice and Peace.

Anne Peacey—NJPN Chair

National Justice and Peace Network

Extracts from the NJPN Chair's report given at the AGM in May

NJPN has operated as a Company Limited by Guarantee for just over one full year. Members of the Executive have worked extremely hard over this period, which has been one of great challenge and of opportunity.

The putting together of our 3 year plan has been a major part of our work since the last AGM and working towards achieving the identified targets will require considerable commitment from each one of us if we value the work of NJPN.

Around the country, in a variety of settings, in Dioceses, within the Religious orders and in the

work of the Agencies, wonderful things are happening and when we hear of the many activities and events we can be enthused and inspired to work even harder to achieve a just and peaceful society. This is where NJPN can be effective, informing, educating and supporting all who are committed to working for the 'Common Good'

Some may say that they do not need to attend meetings as they are operating successfully as they are and would continue to do so with or without the Network. This is undoubtedly true so maybe the role of such groups is to be present in



order to support, enthuse and empower those who may feel they are working with little support.

Concerning the 3 year plan, establishing and developing the working parties to look at priorities and work towards our goals is the next step.

The coming year will be one of challenge and will require the continued and active participation of each one of us if we are to continue and effectively proclaim that we are indeed 'my brother's keeper'.

CONFERENCE 2005

By Pauline Harney

The setting was The Hayes Conference Centre, Swanick in Derbyshire; the theme – "We are Stewards of Creation – the Greening of Justice and Peace". The Speakers – Fr Sean McDonagh, Columban Father (main speaker) and a host of other well know speakers on environmental issues who

contributed and led workshops over the course of the weekend. The 400 People there – Families, Individuals, and Disabled Persons; all walks of life were represented – Lay people, Clergy and Religious Congregations.

(continued on page 2)

We are Stewards of Creation—the greening of J&P

As our late Holy Father said in 2001

“In our time, humankind have devastated wooded plains and valleys, polluted rivers, deformed the earth’s habitat, made the air un-breathable, upset the hydro-geological and atmospheric systems, blighted green spaces, implemented uncontrolled forms of industrialization thereby humiliating the earth - this flower-bed that is our dwelling..... It is necessary to stimulate and sustain an ecological conversion.”

The earth is a Biospiritual Entity and it is being destroyed at an extraordinary rate by our economic policies and our luxurious lifestyles. Between one third and a half of our species have disappeared in the last 30 to 50 years. This is the sixth largest extinction of life since the beginning of our planet - 3.5 billion years ago.

When we realise that our way of life (rich countries) is causing the enormous problems in our world today, we cannot look the other way and expect others to solve the problems. We are destroying the planet, we are killing the



Fr Sean McDonagh

air, the waters and the soil as well as burning a hole in the ozone layer. This is not only an environmental problem but it is a moral issue of grave concern because environmental issues are linked to poverty. 1.5 million people live in poverty and 1 in 5 of the world’s population go to bed hungry.

Sean McDonagh, a Columban missionary priest who writes and lectures on the relationship of faith and ecological issues was the key speaker. He explained and demonstrated the links between Third World Debt, Trade Agreements, Economic policies and Global warming, Pollution, Violent storms, the damage to Corral reefs and Tropical Forests and the spread of disease and all that impoverishes the poor.

We need to be asking ourselves - Why is all this happening? Is there something we can do?

One of the other speakers was Fr Andres Tamayo who risks his life defending the rights of his parishioners in Honduras whose very way of Life and Livelihood are being threatened by Kafta – the big logging company who is destroying the forests. There is a reward of \$40,000 on his head. If he can risk his life surely we can write a letter of support to him or a letter of protest to the Honduras Government? CIIR would have information on this.

Another speaker was Fernando Mundai – A Timuay (hereditary leader) of the Subanon Community, in the Philippines. He rejects the name Philippine as it means followers of King Phillip. He spends his life seeking recognition for the rights of the Subanon people to their ancestral land and full respect for their culture. Their area

is seriously threatened due to large scale mining projects by a Canadian mining Company TVI Pacific. He has to sleep in a different house each evening to stay alive. This is another opportunity for you to support and protest. Cafod would have details.

A home-grown Speaker! – Janet Millar A Greenpeace Activist shared how she became involved in Greenpeace. From an everyday woman who looked on Greenpeace as ‘Hippies’ etc to a fully dedicated campaigner. It started with attending a local meeting and a vague interest, then a reluctant bit of secretarial work to a growing understanding of how important an issue the environment is. Can you spare an hour of two? Janet would find some little task (or Big!) for you which would help save our world. Contact via Greenpeace.

Another UK speaker was Barbara Echlin from Christian Ecology Link who invited us to start in our own lives to make a change in the way we live – to try and live more simply. She encouraged us to remember LOAF principals when shopping which stands for Locally produced, Organically grown, Animal-friendly, Fairly Traded. Further information email: info@christian.org.uk

It is time for us to see that the environment is a moral issue and as Christians we need to raise awareness and act in defence of our planet and the poor. They are intimately linked – people are poor because there are rich people who make their money from them and their land. We need an incarnational theology which is based in the present and on the earth. A theology that doesn’t start with rocks and earth, sea and corals, is not grounded and is not relevant.

The earth is God’s gift to us, it cares for us and has done so for millions of years but we are killing it.

The Churches need to take a moral stand as does each individual.

The Late Pope John Paul’s last talk 10 Jan 2005.

“Our World was made wondrously fruitful by its creator and yet hundreds of millions of people are suffering from grave malnutrition while millions die each year. This calls for radical commitment to Justice and Peace and a more attentive and determined display of solidarity.”

There were many other inspiring speakers, Ed Echlin, Joji Carino, Mulima Kufekisa Akapelwa, Eugenio Lemos, and workshops on a broad range of environmental issues. The children and young people followed their own programmes throughout the conference and a rendition of ‘Ten Green Christians’ by the youngsters was very warmly received.

The liturgies were alive and meaningful – we started on Friday with the celebration of creation; then on Saturday we asked forgiveness for what we are doing to the earth - God’s gift to us; and finally on Sunday we acknowledged what needs to be done and made a commitment to do whatever we could.

Pauline Harney is a Holy Family Sister who now lives and works in Ireland as a Psychotherapist and Shamanic Practitioner / Trainer. She was a missionary for 24 years in South Africa and Peru.

Conference 2006
“The Desert will Bloom
- scattering seeds of hope”
21—23 July 2006

YOUTH INITIATIVE



WATER4ALL PROJECT

c/o Presbytery
75 Church Road,
Ashley
Market Drayton
Shropshire TF9 4JY

Tel: 07810 357759
Email: stephen@fawcett.co.uk

www.water4all.org.uk

NO squash

NO juice

NO pop

NO wine

NO beer

NO spirits

eat as usual

Ashley is a small parish in North Staffordshire, of about 80 regular Mass-goers, but has a thriving youth group of 18 youth, almost all of whom come to Mass every weekend. Firstly they were touched by the tsunami disaster, and took the initiative of giving up their trip out so as to give money to the appeal. Then they were moved by the G8 agenda.

They came up with a simple, but profound, way of raising awareness of these issues. Their focus was on water — first how the tsunami killed so many at Christmas, but also how lack of clean water is responsible for the deaths of so many, too. As one of the UN Millennium Targets is to half the number of people in the world who have no practical access to clean water by 2015 (presently about 1.2 billion) our youth chose to only drink water for three days leading up to the summit. They ate as normal, but the only drink they had was water. They named it the Water4all project.

With the help of our Archbishop, Vincent Nichols, we invited all the parishes and Catholic schools in the diocese to join in. Despite being short of time, and beginning for a standing start, we got nearly 100 schools to join in, including around 20 secondary schools. Including parishes we got somewhere in the region of 7,000 people to join in. We were also very successful in getting in the media, particularly with local radio including every local BBC radio station in the diocese and their Asian Network.

We sent signed certificates to every school and parish that joined in.

Spirituality

The project hits the spot in many ways: it has a catchy name and logo. It is simple, comes from the youth, comes from the 'bottom up', and is actually linked to the fundamental issue of clean, available water. Maybe even more important though is the spirituality behind it. Fasting is a lost discipline, even within the Church. It's

questionable whether the majority of Catholics even keep our Friday fast or the hour before Communion, but here the youth instinctively sensed the link between the willingness to do penance and our desire for others to be helped. Indeed, one of the most powerful results of our project was the amount of adults who said it had changed the way they felt about global poverty: from a terribly but external fact, it had become a real situation concerning real people.

This penance strengthens our prayer and our sense of solidarity with those in most need, and opens us up to feel the real pain of the situation.

The group came up with a very impressive half hour prayer service, based on the theme of water in the Scriptures, which they led for our parishes. This helped us all clarify the spirituality behind the project.

Though an important aspect, it is only secondarily a powerful way of raising awareness, both through the media, and through word of mouth — in Stoke many more people knew about water4all after it had happened, from impressed neighbours to bamboozled barmen being stunned by yet another order of a pint of water!

Water4all 2006

The Ashley Catholic Youth Group / Water4all project would like to run the project again next year, but nationally and more inclusively. Meetings have been taking place to explore the promotion of this initiative.

Is this an idea you can use for yourself, your parish, your youth group?

Visit the Water4all website for more information and ideas and make contact with the project to get involved in 2006.

Email GROUP

NEW

The National Justice and Peace Network has set up a new Email GROUP. It was launched at this year's Conference and already has more than 150 contacts.

Its purpose is to pass on, at speed, the news which reaches the NJPN Administrative desk.

All the Statements that are issued by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales; the E-newsletters from agencies;

special announcements and appeals and Urgent Actions can reach Email GROUP members within minutes of their being received.

If you want to know what our Bishops' are saying on the moral and social issues of the day, and how you can be involved in and share the work for a more just and peaceful world sign up to receive these Emails — and then pass them on.

Please add my contact details to the NJPN Email GROUP.

NAME: (BLOCK CAPITALS)

Email address:

Return this slip to: NJPN, 39 Eccleston Square, London SW1V 1BX or
Email your details to: admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk & maureen.matthews@which.net

DIARY

Prayer

Information

Reflection

Action

2005

- 17 Oct **International Day for the Eradication on Poverty** www.unmeditation.org/
- 23-30 Oct **One World Week**—Promises, Promises—Make Poverty History 0118 939 4933
- 23-30 Oct **Interfaith Week of Prayer for World Peace** 01666 825249
- 24 Oct **United Nations Day** www.unmeditation.org/
- 31 Oct **Housing Justice AGM and Conference** Mary Sumner House, 24 Tufton Street London SW1P 3RB
Speaker: Paul Goggins MP 0207 723 7273 x 235 or e.byrne@housingjustice.org.uk
- 1-7 Nov **Landmine Action Week** 0207 820 0222 www.landmineaction.org
- 4 Nov **Pope Paul VI Lecture** Speaker: Gustavo Guitierrez Church House, London CAFOD 0207 733 7790
- 5 Nov **'Making Peace in the Post Christian Era'** Day conference on Thomas Merton's prophetic thoughts on war and peace Pax Christi 0208 203 4884 paxchristi@gn.apc.org
- 5-12 Nov **Pax Christi ICON in Cambridge** Daily meditations and some events. Stewart Hemsley 01223 315585
- 13 Nov **Remembrance Day** Peace Pledge Union white poppies 0207 424 9444
- 20 Nov **Prisoners' Sunday** PACT 0207 490 3139
- 1 Dec **Prisoners for Peace Day** Amnesty 0207 814 6200
- 1 Dec **World Aids Day** WHO 0207 814 6726
- 3 Dec **World Migration Day** National Catholic Refugee Forum 07871 646224
- 10 Dec **UN Human Rights Day** www.unmeditation.org/

2006

- 18-25 Jan **Christian Unity Week** CTBI 0207 654 7254
- 15 Jan **Peace Sunday 'In Truth is Peace'** Pax Christi 0208 203 4884
- 29 Jan **Homelessness Sunday** 0207 723 7273 x 235 or e.byrne@housingjustice.org.uk

EUROPEAN JUSTICE & PEACE



The UK delegation: Nick Marra (Scotland), Bishop Raymond Field & Sr Joan Roddy (Ireland), Maureen Matthews, NJPN Administrator (England & Wales), Richard McCready (Scotland)

The annual meeting of the European Justice and Peace Commission, took place in Lisbon at the end of September.

Present were delegates from 24 countries as well as representatives from the Pontifical Council, COMECE (European Bishops' Conference) and the Portuguese High Commissioner for Immigration and Ethnic Minorities.

The theme of the study days which followed the General Assembly was Migrant Workers Searching for Work in a Globalized World and a highlight of the Conference was the opportunity to visit and talk with some of the migrant workers living in refugee camps.

Eight ways to live gently on the earth

"Today our action starts", according to Barbara Echlin in the final session of Conference. "Those of us living in the affluent world have to radically change our lifestyle.

Many global problems have to be solved by local action as well as global agreements and strategies." Quoting a Mexican conservationist, Barbara told her listeners that:

'Conservation is one person in one place changing the way people live all over the world'

Barbara then listed 8 ways to live gently on the Earth.

- 1. Don't fly!** Go on holiday locally. Visit <http://www.futureforests.com/> to offset your CO2 emissions.
- 2. Drive less.** Walk or cycle more. Take the bus or train whenever you can.
- 3. Use less electricity.** Turn lights off. install energy low energy light bulbs and don't leave TV, phone charger etc on standby. Use 'A' rated domestic appliances and condensing boiler. Dry clothes outside. Switch to Green Electricity through CEL's Operation Noah.
- 4. Use less gas or heating oil.** Make sure your house is insulated - loft and walls. Turn central heating thermostat down one or two degrees. Turn hot water thermostat to 45-50 degrees. Consider installing a solar panel for heating water. Visit <http://www.est.org.uk/> for more information.
- 5. Use your LOAF.** Buy and grow some food that follows Christian Ecology Link's LOAF principles: **L**ocally produced, **O**rganic, **A**nimal friendly, **F**airlytraded. Buy from local shops and farmers markets.
- 6. Save and cherish water.** Install water butts on downpipes. Fix dripping taps. Re-use water etc
- 7. Repair/re-use/borrow or buy second hand** rather than buy new. Recycle.
- 8. Reconnect with the natural world.** Go for a walk, get wet, dig the earth, have an allotment.

You may not be able to do all of these actions but try to do at least one.

As Archbishop Rowan Williams says: "We are not consumers of what God has made. We are in communion with it. We have a duty to celebrate and care for every part of God's creation."