

The monthly 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

WHAT IS THE CATHOLIC RESPONSE TO THE RISE OF NATIONALISM IN THE US?

Robert W. McElroy 24 January 2017

A powerful nationalism surges through our country. It points to the feelings of dispossession that have been abroad in our land. It hints of past betrayal. It calls forth sentiments of heartfelt patriotism rooted in the historic legacy of the American experiment in freedom and democracy. It signals a nostalgia for the past and searches for renewed greatness in our nation. As a new administration and Congress begin, the merger of populism and nationalism at work in the cultural and political currents of the United States compels us to explore deeply the nature of both nationalism and patriotism and to evaluate them in the light of our identity as disciples of Jesus Christ.

In Catholic social teaching, the love of country is a virtue. *The Compendium of the Social Teaching of the Church* states clearly that "the principle of solidarity requires that men and women of our day cultivate a greater awareness that they are debtors of the society of which they have become a part." And in his moving message to the people of Poland entitled "*My Beloved Countrymen*," Pope John Paul II spoke of true patriotism amid the cauldron of oppression and upheaval: "Love of our motherland unites us and must unite us above all the differences. It has nothing in common with narrow nationalism or chauvinism. It is the right of the human heart. It is the measure of human nobility."

But if love of country is a virtue and a moral obligation, the nationalistic impulse itself has no moral identity. It can signal the most virtuous patriotism that integrates the love of country into the spectrum of moral obligations that accrue to our humanity, or it can be rooted in pride, isolationism and discrimination.

There are three questions the United States must wrestle with in the coming months in order to ensure that the nationalist impulse so prominent in our society today produces a substantive patriotism that is morally sound and unitive for our country. But if love of country is a virtue and a moral obligation, the nationalistic impulse itself has no moral identity.

The first of these questions is: Who are "the people" in the United States? Populist movements in American history, and in this most recent election cycle, have raised important and substantial claims of injustice against oppression by elites in economic, political, juridical and cultural life. They have brought to the fore the need for democratic reforms that have empowered the citizenry of the United States in enormously beneficial ways. But frequently populist nationalism has targeted specific marginalised groups in American society—the Irish, blacks, Southern Europeans, Jews, immigrants and the poor. As a consequence, populist nationalism has often been exclusionary and nativist, carrying with it claims that "the people" are really only some of the people who live within the United States.

The recent election campaign was deeply marred by exclusionary rhetoric and proposals that have driven deep wedges into our culture and raised the spectre of imposing exclusionary government policies that target specific groups on the margins of our society. It is essential that this nativist element of the nationalist current in our culture, that does not represent a majority of Americans in either political party, be purged from the national debate in the coming months. In its place, the church teaches, must be the principle of solidarity, which "highlights in a particular way the intrinsic social nature of the human person, the equality of all in dignity and rights and the common path of individuals and peoples toward an ever more committed unity." The well-being of our nation cannot be advanced by a search for unity rooted in exclusion. Rather we must seek to heal the cultural divide that is so detrimental to our country's future by fostering a deep spirit of inclusion and put behind us the ideological and partisan tribalism that has brought us to this continuing national impasse on the most basic issues facing our nation. The Catholic sense of solidarity has been so absent in our nation during the past decade that we have lost our way. The first step to recovery is to rediscover the bonds that tie us all together as a people and to accentuate them in our society, culture and politics.

"Who are the people" in the United States? All of us.

The second question that America must confront is: What does greatness mean for the United States? Does this greatness revolve principally around questions of power, wealth and success? Or is the greatness we seek founded in the order of justice, freedom, truth and solidarity? In short, is it a material greatness or a greatness of the soul?

The question of American exceptionalism has long been a source of contention in historical and political debate. And this exceptionalism has been characterised in many different ways. But at this moment in our nation's history the most important idea of exceptionalism that we might claim flows from the reality that we as a nation of immigrants are not tied together by connections of blood, but rather by the set of aspirations our founders set forth in 1776 and that they both succeeded in attaining and failed to attain. Thus patriotism for us as Americans is an aspiration renewed in every age by understanding the noble elements of our nation's birth and the defects of its original vision. Our patriotism is not a foundation for pride but an ever-deepening challenge to ennoble our culture, society and government. As Pope Francis reminded us in his address to Congress, America's greatness lies in the freedom proclaimed by Abraham Lincoln, the justice lived out by Dorothy Day, the poignant dream of racial equality articulated by Martin Luther King Jr. and the spiritual richness of Thomas Merton.

Such a greatness seeks to challenge every injustice in our midst — the reality that young black men fear for their security when facing law enforcement, the sense of dispossession felt by young white men without a college education; the spectre of deportation for mothers and fathers and Dreamers and children in the millions, the fear that police face every day trying to protect society; discrimination against Muslims; the economic devastation of family life in the coal country of our nation.

In the coming months there will be efforts from every part of the political spectrum to curtail this expansive vision of American greatness, to reduce it to something parochial, materialistic, divisive or superficial. But fidelity to the dreams and the failures of our founders, and, even more important, to the dignity of the human person and the common good demanded by our Catholic faith, must not allow us to ignore the fundamental reality that greatness for our nation is not a possession or power but an ever-challenging aspiration of the heart and soul.

The final question our country must answer in relation to the nationalism coursing through our culture is whether that nationalism conceives itself as rooted in the interests of the United States alone, or whether it is connected on a fundamental level with our obligations to the whole of humanity. In surveying the effects of globalisation on the world, Pope Benedict lamented, “as society becomes ever more globalized, it makes us neighbours but does not make us brothers.” What are the central bonds of brotherhood and sisterhood that the empirical reality of globalisation thrusts upon the people of every nation as members of the human family?

The starting point for identifying the demands of the international common good lies in the pivotal affirmations of our faith that God is the father of the entire human family, that creation is a gift to every man and woman, that the stewardship of our planet belongs by right to all and that war is a massive failure of the entire human family. These teachings point to the obligation of every nation to integrate its policies and the pursuit of its national interests with the good of humanity as a whole, becoming, in the words of Pope Francis, “a community that sacrifices particular interests in order to share in justice and peace, its goods, its interests, its social life.” Parochial nationalism utterly rejects such an integration. Thus a central question for our nation, and especially for the Catholic community, is whether our nation’s actions in three key issue areas of foreign policy will be dictated by American self-interest alone or by American interest seen in the context of the international common good.

The first of these issue areas is the global economy. Speaking to the United Nations, Pope Francis was clear in describing the current economic realities of our world that all nations must sacrifice to change: “In effect, a selfish and boundless thirst for power and material prosperity leads both to the misuse of available natural resources and to the exclusion of the weak and the disadvantaged. Economic and social exclusion is a complete denial of human fraternity and a grave offense against human rights...” In the vision of economic life that the pope has so powerfully presented to the world, grotesque levels of inequality, unemployment, dire poverty and malnutrition constitute the wholesale violation of core elements of an authentic substantive global common good. They are compounded by the instrumentalisation of the human person through globalized markets in human trafficking, the sexual exploitation of children, slave labour and the drug and weapons trades.

The second area of challenge between nationalism and Catholic social teaching centres on the global environment. In *Laudato Si'* Pope Francis sounds a fire bell to the world about the environmental crisis looming for our world in climate change, the deterioration of biodiversity and the loss of farmlands and water for the poorest peoples of the world. The pope is clear that the only pathway forward lies in international cooperation designed to confront the destructive trajectories that have been inflicted upon our common home by human choice. “An interdependent world not only makes us more conscious of the negative effects of certain lifestyles and models of production and consumption that affect us all; more important, it motivates us to ensure that solutions are proposed from a global perspective, and not simply to defend the interests of a few countries. Interdependence obliges us to think of one world with a common plan.”

The third major area of Catholic social teaching that conflicts with nationalism concerns the responsibility of all peoples for the refugees in the world. It was this responsibility that brought Pope Francis to the island of Lampedusa in the earliest days of his pontificate to remember in prayer those hundreds of refugees who had drowned seeking freedom from oppression and suffering. Recalling the story of Cain and Abel in the Book of Genesis, Francis declared: “God asks each one of us: Where is the blood of your brother that cries out to me? Today no one in the world feels responsible for this; we have lost the sense of fraternal responsibility.” In a world that is confronting the largest refugee crisis in more than six decades, the nationalism surging through the United States categorically denies just that sense of responsibility for refugees that Francis underscores. This is what passes for nationalism in a country that has historically distinguished itself as being a haven for refugees.

The Catholic vote was pivotal in the 2016 election. Now the Catholic community must be pivotal in bringing the vision of the church’s social teaching into the dialogue that will unfold in the coming months. That dialogue is immensely enriched by the new acceptance within the presidency and the Congress of the right to life for the unborn. It must also be enriched by a re-articulation of what patriotism means for the citizens of our nation: a patriotism that recognises that every member of our society constitutes equally “the people,” a patriotism that sees greatness not in power or wealth but as a moral and spiritual aspiration founded in justice, freedom and solidarity; and a patriotism that advances America’s aims in the world in a manner that enhances the dignity and integral human development of all peoples.

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This article also appeared in print, under the headline “*The Soul of Our Nation: Will the United States be defined by unity or exclusion?*” in the February 6, 2017 issue of ***America: The Jesuit Review***

CHICAGO CARDINAL CUPICH: 'WE KNOW THE REFUGEES, THEY ARE US'

31 January 2017: In a tweet today, Cardinal Blase J Cupich, Archbishop of Chicago, said: 'We know the refugees. They are us.'

In an official statement on the Executive Order on Refugees and Migrants issued on Sunday, January 29, 2017, the Cardinal said: "This weekend proved to be a dark moment in US history. The executive order to turn away refugees and to close our nation to those, particularly Muslims, fleeing violence, oppression and persecution is contrary to both Catholic and American values. Have we not repeated the disastrous decisions of those in the past who turned away other people fleeing violence, leaving certain ethnicities and religions marginalized and excluded? We Catholics know that history well, for, like others, we have been on the other side of such decisions.

These actions impose a sweeping and immediate halt on migrants and refugees from several countries, people who are suffering, fleeing for their lives. Their design and implementation have been rushed, chaotic, cruel and oblivious to the realities that will produce enduring security for the United States. They have left people holding valid visas and other proper documents detained in our airports, sent back to the places some were fleeing or not allowed to board planes headed here. Only at the eleventh hour did a federal judge intervene to suspend this unjust action.

We are told this is not the "Muslim ban" that had been proposed during the presidential campaign, but these actions focus on Muslim-majority countries. They make an exception for Christians and non-Muslim minorities, but not for Muslims refugees fleeing for their lives. Ironically, this ban does not include the home country of 15 of the 19 September 11 hijackers. Yet, people from Iraq, even those who assisted our military in a destructive war, are excluded.

The United States has a long history of welcoming refugees who are fleeing for their lives and Catholic organizations have helped to resettle many families, men, women, and children, from around the globe. Many of our priests, religious and laypeople have accompanied newcomers precisely to assist them in this process. Because of our history of aiding in refugee and migrant settlement for decades, we know the very lengthy and thorough vetting process they must face before they are admitted to our country. We have seen initial fear turn into a generous willingness of local communities to accept and integrate refugees. Here in Chicago generations of migrants have found a new home. We are better for it.

The world is watching as we abandon our commitments to American values. These actions give aid and comfort to those who would destroy our way of life. They lower our estimation in the eyes of the many peoples who want to know America as a defender of human rights and religious liberty, not a nation that targets religious populations and then shuts its doors on them.

It is time to put aside fear and join together to recover who we are and what we represent to a world badly in need of hope and solidarity. "If we want security, let us give security; if we want life, let us give life; if we want opportunities, let us provide opportunities." Pope Francis issued these challenging words to Congress in 2015, and followed with a warning that should haunt us as we come to terms with the events of the weekend: "The yardstick we use for others will be the yardstick which time will use for us." **Source:** Archdiocese of Chicago

<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=31830>

CARDINAL NICHOLS ENCOURAGES SUPPORT FOR REFUGEES AMID TRUMP TRAVEL BAN

6 February 2017: On Sunday, 5 February, Cardinal Vincent spoke on the BBC Radio 4 Westminster Hour about the executive order issued by President Trump which suspends the refugee acceptance programme for 120 days, prioritises refugee claims of religious-based persecution and imposes a travel ban on nations from a countries of 'particular concern' (seven, predominantly Muslim, countries have been named).

In the interview, the Cardinal explained that safety "is not secured by fear, it is secured by improving relationships...by opening up things not shutting them down." He also expressed concern that the executive order "increases the risk faced by Christian communities in the Middle East because it implicitly backs a false notion that this conflict is between Christians and Muslims. It increases the image of Christianity as a Western phenomenon."

Reflecting on political leaders' duty of care, Cardinal Vincent emphasised that this is "a question of how you exercise that duty". The Cardinal expressed his concern that the executive order would not help. "Safety can never be the overall and ultimate aim, because if we try and live safely by simplifying, identifying others as our enemies, then we live in an increasingly enclosed mentality and an enclosed environment and that is not the best way for people to live."

He went on to praise and encourage the work of the government Community Sponsorship Scheme to assist local communities welcome refugees. "The challenge is not only to the government, but to the communities in this country who often speak about their generosity, to really take up this opportunity. Then, I would hope, that programme can be speeded up and expanded."

Cardinal Vincent acknowledged the difficulty in making decisions regarding acceptance of more refugees, but emphasised that "the intention that we play a concerted effort to solve this dramatic crisis of our time is very important because otherwise it is the extreme voices that win, whether they're the extreme terrorist voices or the populist voices. I don't believe that any form of leadership is best exercised by using fear."

Listen to the full interview here: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p04rzvx2>
<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=31873>

CATHOLIC UNION STATEMENT ON GOVERNMENT'S DECISION TO REJECT CHILD REFUGEES

15 February 2017: *The Catholic Union has issued the following response to the UK government's decision not to implement the Dubs Amendment and take in 3,000 child refugees:* 'The Catholic Union regards the government's change in policy on child refugees with dismay. The argument that the policy should be dropped because it is a 'draw' for refugees is profoundly disheartening. If that argument were to be taken to its logical conclusion we would never assist anyone in trouble. If you offer help, it is unsurprising that those who need it will accept your offer. It is also the argument most often used to justify unjust refugee policies. The Catholic Union notes that most expert opinion on the issue recognises that the current refugee crisis is manageable and could be solved if appropriate legal and institutional mechanisms were to be put in place to deal with it. We call on the government to take the lead and assist in a multilateral process finally to solve this issue which is a stain on the conscience of Europe.' **Read more about the Catholic Union here:** <http://catholicunion.org.uk/www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=31897>

See also: ICN 9 February 2017 - Campaigners urge Theresa May not to abandon lone child refugees + PETITION <http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=31897>

SALFORD: PARISHIONERS FUND FULL-TIME REFUGEE SPONSORSHIP OFFICER

14 February 2017: The generosity of parishioners in the Diocese of Salford now means the lead in the Community Sponsorship of Refugees pilot by St Monica's parish has been offered a full-time position to expand the scheme to other parishes. Sean Ryan, a parishioner at St Monica's Flixton, led a 25-strong team in November to welcome the second ever Syrian family to be resettled in the UK under the Government's Community Sponsorship scheme, which allows parishes to host refugee families. He has since been working hard to roll-out the scheme to other parishes in the North-West, as Caritas Salford was able to employ him for one day per week. Heeding the Pope's call for each parish in Europe to take a refugee family, parishioners throughout the Diocese gave enough to a special collection in aid of the scheme last Sunday to employ Mr Ryan full-time for a year.

Mark Wiggin, CEO of Caritas Salford, said. "Sean is a passionate advocate on how Community Sponsorship can change the lives of vulnerable refugees and the lives of local people who come forward to help. With Sean, I am confident we will increase significantly the number of parishes that come forward to be sponsors".

Caritas Salford is the official charity of the Diocese of Salford, with projects for those suffering from poverty, disadvantage and discrimination including homeless people and refugees. **More information can be found at:** <http://www.caritassalford.org.uk> <http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=31928>

"WELCOME! OPENING OUR HEARTS TO CHESHIRE'S REFUGEES"

Chester Cathedral in association with Chester Voluntary Action held a public workshop on Sunday 12 February to explore how best to provide a welcoming response and practical support to help them settle into our communities. Joanne Stanton, Development Worker Chester Voluntary Action said: "There is a huge humanitarian crisis affecting many countries across the world today, none more so than Syria. Many Syrians have had to flee their country and seek sanctuary with their families in Europe. The UK government has agreed to accept a number of these families and some of them will be coming to Cheshire West and Chester." **To find out more about the work of CVA go to:** <http://www.chesterva.org.uk/>

Catherine Green reports from the meeting: Cheshire West and Chester Council has agreed to resettle 20 Syrian families through the Government's resettlement scheme over the next 2 years. They are some of the 20,000 Syrians whom the government has promised to resettle in the life of this parliament.

The first 3 families arrived in Ellesmere Port in December 2016 and have been housed in the community by a housing association. Prior to coming to the UK the families had fled to Egypt and had been there for up to 3 years. The children started attending school immediately and the parents are taking English lessons and in receipt of Job Seekers Allowance. The charity P3 has been commissioned by the Council to provide initial day to day support and offers of community help are also being sought by the local voluntary services councils although at this stage the only real unmet need is for people who can speak Arabic as well as English. Caritas Shrewsbury and local SVP groups are also in the loop.

The Government is also running a Refugee Community Sponsorship scheme which "empowers and enables community groups to take on the challenging but rewarding role of welcoming and supporting a resettled family in the UK". In this case the community group has to be in a position to provide housing and financial support to the family for a period of two years. Is this something we could be doing as a Catholic community?

WHAT CAN WE DO? SOME PRACTICAL RESPONSES TO THE REFUGEE CRISIS

A free conference arranged by the J and P Group at St Agnes, West Kirby, Wirral, CH48 SDU on 25 March 2017 10.30am -2pm. The main focus is on the model approved by the Home Office and the Catholic Bishops' Conference as part of David Cameron's resettlement programme for Syrian refugees, but other responses will also be described. Speakers will include Sean Ryan, Caritas, Salford and refugee co-ordinator for Salford diocese, and Mary Kilcoyne, CEO, Caritas, Shrewsbury and diocesan refugee co-ordinator. Tea and coffee provided but please bring your own sandwiches for lunch. Spaces limited.

For more information and to register: email mqmacook@aol.com 0151 6256512

JESUIT REFUGEE SERVICE COMMENTS ON REPORT EXPOSING UK'S 'TOXIC' RIGHT TO RENT RULES

14 February 2017: The Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants (JCWI) has today issued a report into the Government's **'Right to Rent'** scheme. The scheme requires private landlords and their agents to ensure prospective tenants have the right to rent in the UK, effectively asking them to be border guards, or face a fine, and since 1st December 2016, risk imprisonment.

The report found that the most vulnerable individuals, including asylum seekers, stateless persons, and victims of modern day slavery, who require landlords to do an online check with the Home Office to confirm they have been granted permission to rent, face the greatest barrier of all. The report details that the Home Office does not inform those granted permission to rent that they have it unless they make direct enquiries. It also refuses to provide them with any documentary proof that would satisfy a Right to Rent check. These individuals must rely on the willingness of landlords to navigate the Home Office's online checking service. 85% of inquiries from the most vulnerable individuals, who require landlords to do an online check with the Home Office to confirm they have been granted permission to rent, received no response at all from landlords in the mystery shopping exercise, the report found, and only three responses stated the landlord was willing to conduct an online check.

Sarah Teather, Director of JRS UK said: "It was inevitable that the right to rent rules would result in a hostile environment for everyone. Legislating with deliberate intent to make those without immigration status street homeless is the kind of toxic act that infects everything with its unsavoury flavour. It is worth pausing to consider who many of the intended targets of the right to rent rules are: asylum seekers struggling to regularise their status, struggling to get a fair hearing from a system whose decision making process is notoriously arbitrary, and who after years of destitution are often finally accepted to be refugees after all. During their years of destitution, they are forced to rely on the kindness of friends and family who may offer a sofa or spare bed. The purpose of the right to rent rules is to stop informal arrangements like these. To deliberately cast the most vulnerable onto the streets and legislate to prevent kindness within a community is certain to have far reaching impacts on a society beyond the targets it is intended for."

The full report can be read at the JCWI website: <http://www.jcwi.org.uk>

Read more about JRS here: <http://www.jrsuk.net/>
<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=31930>

FORMER NORWAY PM HELD AT WASHINGTON AIRPORT OVER 2014 VISIT TO IRAN

Nadia Khomami 3 February 2017

A former prime minister of Norway has spoken of his shock after he was held and questioned at Washington Dulles airport because of a visit to Iran three years ago. Kjell Magne Bondevik, who served as prime minister of Norway from 1997-2000 and 2001-05, flew into the US from Europe on Tuesday afternoon to attend this week's National Prayer Breakfast. He was held for an hour after customs agents saw in his diplomatic passport that he had been to Iran in 2014. Bondevik said his passport also clearly indicated that he was the former PM of Norway.

"Of course I fully understand the fear of letting terrorists come into this country," he told ABC7. "It should be enough when they found that I have a diplomatic passport, [that I'm a] former prime minister. That should be enough for them to understand that I don't represent any problem or threat to this country and [to] let me go immediately, but they didn't."

Bondevik, who is the president the Oslo Centre, a human rights organisation, said he was placed in a room with travellers from the Middle East and Africa who were also facing extra scrutiny. He said he was ordered to wait for 40 minutes, before being questioned for another 20 minutes about his trip to Iran, which he had taken to speak at a human rights conference. "I was surprised, and I was provoked," he said. "What will the reputation of the US be if this happens not only to me, but also to other international leaders?"

An executive order signed by Donald Trump last week temporarily bans all travellers from seven Muslim-majority countries – Iran, Iraq, Libya, Yemen, Syria, Sudan and Somalia – from entering the US. It also suspends the US refugee resettlement programme for 120 days and puts an indefinite stop to the acceptance of Syrian refugees. The order caused chaos at airports across the US and sparked protests and worldwide condemnation. Many people who were en route to the US when the order was hastily signed, including those with green cards, were detained on arrival at US airports, denied boarding on to US-bound flights, or taken off planes by security officials before takeoff.

Bondevik said Dulles officials told him he had been detained because of a 2015 law signed by Barack Obama that placed restrictions on travellers from those seven countries, or travellers from elsewhere who had recently visited those countries. But he said he had never had a problem visiting the US before, and that his office was told by the US embassy in Oslo before his trip that his passport and a separate electronic travel authorisation were all he needed. Speaking to the TV2 channel, Bondevik expressed further concern about the Trump administration's tactics. "I understand the fear of terror, but one should not treat entire ethnic groups in such a way," he said. "I must admit that I fear the future. There has been a lot of progress over the last 10 years, but this gives great cause for concern, in line with the authoritarian leaders we see controlling other major countries."

A spokesperson for US Customs and Border Protection said it was prohibited by law from discussing specifics of any individual's admissibility review.

<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/feb/03/former-norway-pm-bondevik-held-washington-dulles-airport-2014-visit-iran>

NJPN COMMENT FOR THE *CATHOLIC UNIVERSE*, 3 JANUARY 2017

NJPN finds the suggestion that Donald Trump would not be concerned by the use of waterboarding as a means of interrogation completely unacceptable. It is further disturbed by the view expressed by Tory MP Bob Stewart that, whilst not condoning waterboarding, suggested that sometimes other forms of torture might be justified as methods of interrogation.

In the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, we read that: "No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment" (Article 5) and further "Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law" (Article 6)

The Catechism of the Catholic Church states that "torture which uses physical or moral violence to extract confessions, punish the guilty, frighten opponents, or satisfy hatred is contrary to respect for the person and for human dignity"(para: 2297)

Anne Peacey, NJPN 30 January 2017

<http://www.justice-and-peace.org.uk/njpn-statements/comment-from-njpn-on-the-possible-use-of-torture-by-donald-trump/>

JESUIT GROUPS IN WHITEHALL RALLY AGAINST TRUMP MUSLIM BAN

30 January 2017: A large group of volunteers and supporters of Jesuit Refugee Service UK together with members of the Mount Street Community and the Hurtado Jesuit Centre, (including eight priests and ten nuns) joined the demonstration in front of Downing Street on Monday evening, to protest against against President Donald Trump's decision to bar refugees from entering the USA and to close the country's borders to people from seven Muslim-majority nations.

Speaking before the vigil, Sarah Teather, Director of JRS UK said: "We can't pretend that what is happening in the US is not our concern," It threatens to destabilise refugee protection mechanisms elsewhere, both resettlement and asylum, let alone the possibility that this marks the beginning of even more serious descent into state sponsored discrimination. Now seems like an important time to join with others to speak up for refugees, and for Christians to stand with their Muslim brothers and sisters in solidarity."

Fr Damian Howard SJ, the Superior at the Hurtado Jesuit Centre, who teaches inter-religious dialogue at Heythrop College, believes that Donald Trump's orders on asylum unfairly punish all Muslims for the actions of a few. "They single out countries whose citizens have never carried out terrorist attacks on the US, meanwhile ignoring others, such as Saudi Arabia, whose records are rather less innocent," he said. "Helping Christian refugees from the Middle East is a good thing; abandoning others who desperately need our protection, simply because they are not Christian, feeds sectarian resentment. The most dangerous thing is that this unjust and needless step will at a stroke give credence to the claim that the West is at war with Muslims. This narrative, which always stokes the fires of radicalism, must not be allowed to prevail."

Also taking part was Fr Dominic Robinson SJ, Superior of the Mount Street Jesuit Community in central London, who said he was attending because he believes the decision of the US administration to be contrary to Christian and Catholic values of human dignity, care for the weakest in society and of religious freedom.

"In particular, the appeal to Christians by prioritising Christian refugees and refusing entry to those from Muslim countries is in fact a paradoxically pernicious way of promoting what is sheer contrary to Gospel values," he said. "The tragedy of Islamic extremism is real and, rather than punish those fleeing terror by sending them back to terror simply because they were born into the Islamic religion, we need to support work for reconciliation in the Middle East."

Fr Robinson believes that Christianity is a unique and vital bridge in this work and so, in addition to offering welcome to those of all religions or none who have to flee, we need also to help the Christian community to stay in their historic homelands.

"Instead of this, the appeal to Christian prioritisation and blanket refusal of refugees from Muslim-majority countries distorts the Gospel and hampers the work for reconciliation by spreading a gospel of isolationism and fear. And it flies in the face of religious freedom."

Demonstrations also took place in Manchester, where about 3,000 people attended. There were also protests in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Cardiff, Newcastle, Sheffield, Oxford, Cambridge, Brighton, Gloucester, Leeds, York, Liverpool, Leicester and several other towns and cities.

<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=31828>

THE SACRED BEAUTY OF NATURE

I woke up this morning and felt like I felt the morning after the Brexit referendum - "Welcome to the world of nasty". Then I took my coffee onto the deck and watched the first flush of sunrise through misty breath as a crescent moon rested above the trees in a midnight blue sky - impossible to capture the cold clean air and the morning light in a photograph. Oblivious to my presence, a little fox came crunching through the frosted shrubs on the opposite bank and barked at the dawn, and a pair of grebes came gliding past, diving and surfacing as they went. I thanked God that human power is limited in the face of nature, and then I saw that Trump has removed all references to climate change from the White House website, and I realized that even this is not sacred. My students often make typos and put "scared" instead of "sacred". I am scared for the sacred beauty of nature.

Tina Beattie 21 January 2017, Inauguration Day

CAFOD URGES GOVERNMENT TO ENSURE BREXIT TRADE DEALS FIGHT POVERTY

1 February 2017: CAFOD is leading calls for the government to negotiate trade deals in the interests of both the UK and the world's poorest communities. The aid agency is launching a letter-writing campaign for Catholics to remind their MPs that International Trade Secretary Liam Fox must consider the impact on the world's most vulnerable people of any new trade deals negotiated after the UK's withdrawal from the European Union. The call comes in a paper, *International Trade for the Common Good*, which was published this week. Ruth Stanley, CAFOD's Political Adviser, said: "We know that being able to trade is a critical tool for people to pull themselves out of poverty - whether flower sellers in Kenya, or coffee producers in Guatemala. This means we must enable businesses both here and abroad to trade in a way that benefits everyone. The UK is now in a position where we can adopt policies that benefit even more poor communities by making it easier for them to export valuable products to us, and which create a 'race for the top' by encouraging responsible business. As Pope Francis says, the poorest and most vulnerable people must not be an 'afterthought' in political and economic discussions. This means that we need to think of the impact on both people and our common home when we negotiate our trade deals. Put simply, no one should ever find themselves in poverty as a result of UK trade policy decisions."

CAFOD says in the paper that the International Trade Secretary should ensure trade deals negotiated after Brexit strengthen democracy, support small business, take into account benefits and costs for all affected groups, uphold the dignity of work, and care for Creation. Ruth Stanley said: "The Prime Minister has stated her intention to start the process of leaving the EU in March, following a vote in Parliament. This means that now is the time to remind MPs that they should have a role in scrutinising trade deals, and to ask them to ensure that the global Britain the government has pledged is one that creates opportunity, rather than poverty." **Read *International Trade for the Common Good* here:**

<http://cafod.org.uk/content/download/33446/413243/version/1/file/International%20Trade%20for%20the%20Common%20Good%20-%20CAFOD%20-%20January%202017.pdf>

Write to your MP at www.cafod.org.uk/trade

<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=31837>

CAMPAIGNERS PLEDGE TO CONTINUE FIGHTING 'TOXIC' CETA TRADE DEAL

15 February 2017: Church, civil society groups and environmentalists in Europe and Canada pledged to continue to protest, after the European Parliament approved a landmark free trade deal with Canada on Wednesday. EU lawmakers backed the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (Ceta) by 408-254 votes. Critics argue that CETA will erode labour laws and environmental standards and allow multinational companies to dictate public policy.

The Columbans said in a statement: "The Columbans have supported the campaigns to tackle CETA and the TTIP, on the basis that both agreements lacked transparency in the negotiating process and serve corporate interests while ignoring the needs and voices of ordinary people and all of Creation. Global Justice Now has undertaken important campaigning work and been very sharp about the implications of CETA. Like them, we lament that the 'toxic' trade deal CETA has been passed by the European parliament.

"Columban missionaries live and serve in many countries that have free trade agreements which include investment policies. We see how these agreements serve to disproportionately benefit a small number of individuals, governments, and corporations while leaving the majority of people struggling to live. We believe that the current economic model does not reflect the Gospel values of solidarity, justice, dignity and respect for all of Creation. Trade and investment agreements, that often lack transparency in the negotiation process, have human consequences, and must be evaluated with regard to the effects that they have on the poor and all of God's Creation. We see that such agreements favour the interests of transnational corporations and make it more difficult for governments to defend labour rights and protect the environment. As a result, these agreements and policies drive migration and exacerbate poverty by making it difficult to access dignified employment and essential services, such as clean water, adequate housing, education and basic health care.

"We would like to share the following quote from *Laudato Si'*, Para 56: Economic powers continue to justify the current global system where priority tends to be given to speculation and the pursuit of financial gain, which fail to take the context into account, let alone the effects on human dignity and the natural environment. Here we see how environmental deterioration and human and ethical degradation are closely linked.

Nick Dearden, director of Global Justice Now said: "Over three million people across Europe signed a petition calling for CETA to be scrapped, while hundreds of thousands of people took to the streets of cities like Berlin saying they wanted no part of this toxic trade deal. So it's shameful that so many MEPs in voting for CETA have come down in favour of the army of corporate lobbyists that have been howling for this deal rather than the voices of the ordinary people that they are supposed to represent. This trade deal will have terrible impacts on our public services, labour rights and consumer standards, so it is crucial that Fox stops thwarting democratic process and that proper scrutiny and debate of CETA takes places for UK MPs. MEPs may have voted in favour of CETA today, but that doesn't mean it's the end of the story. The strength of public opposition to the deal meant that the commission conceded that national parliaments must agree before it comes into full effect, and there's every chance that that won't happen in countries like Austria and Belgium. In the UK Liam Fox has proven to be very cunning in ensuring that a full parliamentary debate hasn't happened on CETA. We will continue to fight to stop CETA being ratified in Westminster - something that will require MPs to take their role seriously." **For more about CETA see:** <http://www.globaljustice.org.uk/what-ceta>
<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=31941>

CORRUPTION IS A PROBLEM IN UK'S OWN BACK YARD, WARNS CHRISTIAN AID

25 January 2017: As new corruption data are released today, Christian Aid is asking why the UK has still not taken important actions that would make it harder for corruption to happen.

"Transparency International's latest Index is a much-needed reminder of the outrage of corruption, which sees criminals stealing billions supposed to pay for sick children's medicine, for families' clean water, for better roads and policing for all," said Tom Viita, Head of Advocacy at Christian Aid. Corruption is a sickening injustice committed by powerful people, against everyone else. But many forms of damaging corruption rely on a global system that allows money to be secretly moved around - and UK tax havens are a cornerstone of this system. The UK has the power to ensure that its Overseas Territories, such as the British Virgin Islands and the Cayman Islands, are fully transparent about the true owners of the many companies they host. Theresa May has said she wants to fight corruption but so far she seems reluctant to challenge the secrecy services provided by the UK's own tax havens to clients all over the world. The UK itself has taken important steps towards tackling global financial secrecy but the Prime Minister must ensure that the places we govern are not helping to facilitate corruption by continuing to sell secrecy. The buck stops with her."

Source: Christian Aid

<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=31794>

ERADICATING POVERTY REQUIRES FAR MORE THAN AID

1 February 2017: Commenting on the Department for International Development's new strategy for economic development, Christian Aid welcomed its focus on beyond-aid issues such as tax and transparency and its attention to the whole economy, and called on the rest of the government to work together to support genuinely sustainable development.

"Economic development is vital for ending poverty but outdated economic models have driven the world to greater inequality and risky climate change and left many people behind," said Toby Quantrill, the charity's Head of Economic Development. "The UK has an opportunity to support genuinely sustainable, transformational economic development and this strategy proposes some strong steps towards it. For success, we must play a role in the global economy as a trusted partner, with global agreements such as the Paris climate deal and the Sustainable Development Goals guiding our relationship with poor countries."

Mr Quantrill added: "We welcome this first 'economic development strategy' and share DFID's belief that the key to development is supporting poor countries to mobilize their own resources. We also welcome DFID's focus on decent work and especially on engaging with the informal sector and tackling barriers to women and girls' participation in the economy. DFID has outlined its plan to support poor countries' economic development and it is absolutely right to look far beyond aid. But unless every government department gets behind it - perhaps especially the Treasury and Department of Business - these ambitions won't be realised. Unless the entire British government does all in its power to stop multinationals and corrupt elites siphoning billions out of those countries using tax havens, we are unlikely to see much change. To really boost poor nations' economic development, the UK should take a leading role in plugging the leaky bucket of the International tax system."

Mr Quantrill argued that DFID is right to say economic growth can greatly help to eradicate poverty. But growth doesn't automatically reach the poorest people - especially women and children, he warned. "For that to happen, you need fair and effective tax systems, which reduce inequality and enable developing countries to raise funds for essential services like health and education and to reduce their dependence on aid," he said.

The UK and its Overseas Territories are cornerstones of the international system that allows corrupt elites and multinationals to avoid paying the taxes they owe to developing countries. If the government wants the City of London to be the leading hub of development finance, then it should address the secretive practices in the UK's back yard. In other comments on the new strategy, Mr Quantrill said its failure to even mention economic inequality was a 'glaring omission'. The document is also short on concrete detail about what DFID plans to do differently and how will progress be measured, he added.

Source: Christian Aid

<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=31839>

CAMPAIGN TO CUT FOOD WASTE

Every year, 88 million tonnes of food is wasted across EU countries. For people and planet, this has to stop. To date 60,000 people have signed a petition calling on the EU to halve food waste. At a vote in the Environment Committee of European Parliament on 24 January, MEPs agreed to support EU wide targets to reduce food waste by 50% by 2030. However, we've not won yet. Before the vote, the proposal was watered down so the target isn't legally binding, which means that countries could easily shrink from their responsibilities. It also ignores some food waste from farms. But we still have a chance to change this. Between 13-16 March, European Parliament as a whole will vote on these targets. We need them to not only vote in favour of the targets already supported by the Environment Committee, but also push for these to be written into law, and include all forms of food waste. The more noise we can make, the more likely it is this will happen.

Click here to call on key MEPs to vote to halve EU food waste from farm-to-fork - and make this legally binding:

https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/action/set/call-on-meps-to-halve-food-waste/?utm_source=iterable&utm_campaign=UK_1_Feb_2017_foodandhunger_eufoodwaste_reportback_thisisrubbish_email_activ es_signedpetition&utm_medium=email

CHRISTIAN AID WELCOMES PM MAY'S STANCE AGAINST ISRAEL'S ILLEGAL SETTLEMENTS

6 February 2017: Christian Aid has welcomed Theresa May's willingness to discuss spiralling settlement activity with Benjamin Netanyahu, and highlight its role in undermining the faltering Israeli-Palestinian peace process. Mr Netanyahu is meeting the Prime Minister in Downing Street today (Monday) for talks that will include trade and the peace process.

The UK government has condemned the "growing trend" for further settlement units in the West Bank and supports UN resolutions declaring Israeli settlements "illegal". William Bell, Christian Aid's Advocacy Officer for the Middle East said: "Growth in illegal settlements is at record levels so these talks are timely and of utmost importance. In the last two weeks, Israel has announced plans to build over 6,000 settler homes across the occupied West Bank and 2016 saw a record number of demolitions of Palestinian property. If the current trend continues, with its increasingly coercive environment against the Palestinian population, then the two-state solution will become nothing more than a political slogan rather than reality. Our experience, as an agency working closely with both Palestinians and Israelis, suggests that point is worryingly close. Together with the imminent Regularization Bill this is effectively annexing Palestinian land to Israel, Mrs May must strongly oppose such moves which will further hinder the peace. Settlements are only one aspect of this conflict, but they are indicative of an increasingly tense situation on the ground. If this goes unchallenged, it will continue to obstruct any hope of a peace process. Theresa May must seize this opportunity to press Prime Minister Netanyahu to heed international concern over increased settlement activity, to ensure accountability in working towards a just peace for both Israelis and Palestinians."

<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=31872>

PAX CHRISTI CALLS EU TO SUSPEND ECONOMIC RELATIONS UNTIL ISRAEL RESPECTS INTERNATIONAL LAW + PETITION

16 February 2017: In the wake of Israel's approval of the settlement expansion bill which legalises 4000 homes in illegal settlements, the EU Foreign Affairs Council stated that these settlements are contrary to international law and an obstacle to a negotiated peace agreement between Israel and Palestine. Furthermore the proposed meeting of the EU-Israel Association Council has been postponed. Pax Christi International calls upon the EU to take a much stronger stance towards the Israeli government in condemning policies incompatible with the human rights clause of the EU-Israel Association Agreement. The EU should consider suspending economic relations until Israel respects International law.

Read the full letter to Mrs Federica Mogherini, EU Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy here:

http://www.paxchristi.net/sites/default/files/170207_letter_eu_high_representative_-_pdf_version.pdf

Sign the petition here: https://www.change.org/p/federica-mogherini-eu-should-suspend-economic-relations-until-israel-respects-international-law?source_location=minibar

'NO FAITH IN TRIDENT' PROTESTERS FOUND GUILTY

January 28, 2017: Five members of Christian activist group *Put Down The Sword*: Nina Carter-Brown, Nick Cooper, Angela Ditchfield, Joanna Frew and Alison Parker, were found guilty by District Judge Khan at Reading Magistrates Court on Friday. The MoD said work on that day had been disrupted due to the blockade by the protesters. Earlier in the week Prime Minister Theresa May spoke about having "faith in Trident" in spite of safety concerns, after it was revealed that an unarmed Trident missile had been accidentally fired in the wrong direction during tests last June. The defendants on Friday were tried for their actions at a "No Faith in Trident" day in June 2016 with Trident Ploughshares.

Expert witness Father Peter Hunter gave evidence that neither the use or threat of nuclear weapons can be considered compatible with Christian faith. During their three day trial, the defendants presented evidence of the importance within Christian Faith of action for peace and justice. The defence asked the judge to consider their Rights under articles 9, 10 and 11 of the ECHR - freedom of religion, expression and assembly respectively. Even the prosecuting barrister, Tom Bushnell had conceded that "the court is bound to take into consideration the rights of the defendants, including the right to religious expression under ECHR and under common law."

However DJ Khan said he had considered this, and noted the "compelling evidence" from Father Peter Hunter, but that he did not agree "that the actions of the defendants were a manifestation of a religious belief" and in any case that "these rights have to yield to the primary right of passing and re-passing the highway." There was also much debate over whether defendants were actually obstructing a public highway, or only the private entrance to the base they agreed they wanted to disrupt. DJ Khan found all of the Defendants guilty of wilful obstruction of the highway. He sentenced them each to a conditional discharge of six months, with costs of £100 and surcharge of £20 (£120 total). In his sentencing remarks, he said that he admired them and what they had done but found they had crossed the line of culpability.

This is the first time any of the defendants have received a criminal conviction, however they remain determined that this will not hinder them from future actions. "We don't resist militarism for validation from the powers and principalities, rather to challenge the systems that hold them in place." explained one of the group. A joint statement from the defendants stated: "We stand by what we said in court: Trident is an illegal and immoral waste of money, a crime against humanity and God. The prosecution said we could just have joined in a prayer vigil to the side of the road, instead of lying in it; we said our consciences wouldn't allow that. We believe prayer is important but sometimes our faith compels us to put our whole bodies in the way of injustice and violence. The Bible says religious acts are meaningless unless we also stand up for the poor and needy; we are called to bring a just peace with hope for all. We will continue to seek peace, and to take the consequences of doing so. It's a small price to pay for the chance to challenge an evil like nuclear weapons."

<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=31814#.WI0INNVGdCY.facebook>

CSAN WELCOMES LAUNCH OF JO COX COMMISSION ON LONELINESS

1 February 2017: Yesterday saw the launch of the cross-party Jo Cox Commission on Loneliness, which will look for practical solutions to reduce the effects of loneliness on families and individuals. The Labour MP for Batley and Spen had taken the first steps towards setting up a Loneliness Commission before her death last June.

Phil McCarthy, CEO of Caritas Social Action network (CSAN) said: "This is a positive step towards reaching out to those who put themselves in the fifth of the British population who are 'always or often lonely.' We welcome the Commission's aim to promote community cohesion and raise awareness of the impact of loneliness on people from all walks of life by encouraging people to do simple things like visit an old friend or strike up a conversation with their neighbour. We can all play a role; noticing and including in our parish lives those who might feel isolated in our churches."

A study commissioned by the British Red Cross in partnership with Co-op, found that over nine million people in the UK privately admit they are "always or often lonely."

http://www.redcross.org.uk/%7E/media/BritishRedCross/Documents/What%20we%20do/UK%20services/Co_Op_Trapped_in_a_bubble_report_AW.pdf

Caritas Social Action Network (CSAN) is the social action arm of the Catholic Church in England and Wales. CSAN is a network of 42 charities that work across the field of social action including families and children, prisoners, elderly people and homeless people. **More information can be found at:** www.csan.org.uk
<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=31836>

SOPHIE LANCASTER FOUNDATION RECEIVES £50,000 IN HATE CRIME CRACKDOWN

26 January 2017: Rossendale Valley charity the Sophie Lancaster Foundation has been awarded £50,000 funding to support and develop their work challenging prejudices that lead to hate crime. The money from the Department for Communities is part of a £375,000 package of funding to encourage the reporting and prevention of hate crime, ahead of Holocaust Memorial Day. The funding also comes in the 10th anniversary year of Haslingden student Sophie's death, following a horrific attack by a gang on her and her partner Robert Maltby in Stubbylee Park, Bacup in 2007.

The Foundation, headed by Sophie's mum Sylvia, campaigns for creating respect for and understanding of subcultures in our communities. In a statement they said: "The Department of Communities and Local Government recognises the work we have been doing in schools, colleges and with young offenders and for the first time are funding the foundation to enable them to further their reach."

Sylvia, whose work with the charity creating Sophie's legacy, received an OBE for "Community Cohesion and Reduction of Hate Crime" in 2014, has been a member of the Cross Party Hate Crime Independent Advisory Group since 2010.

She said: "For this funding to be granted in Sophie's 10th anniversary year is validation of our work in my daughter's memory. Sophie was murdered in a hate-motivated attack and I have spent my time since the day she died trying to ensure no one else suffers because they are expressing their individuality."

<http://www.rossendalefreepress.co.uk/news/sophie-lancaster-foundation-receives-50000-12510910>

- *The following is taken from an article published in August 2015 in the regular weekly NJPN column in **The Universe**:*

Perhaps, like me, you are unfamiliar with the names Sophie and Sylvia Lancaster *Anne O'Connor writes.*

Sylvia was guest speaker at an open meeting on 20 August in Manchester's John Rylands Library. In August 2007, her 20 year-old daughter Sophie and boyfriend, both Goths, were assaulted by a gang of teenagers in a Lancashire park. They were kicked, stamped on and left unconscious for nothing more than looking different. Sophie later died from her injuries. Sylvia has set up an educational charity inspired by the initials of Sophie's name to: '**Stamp Out Prejudice, Hatred and Intolerance Everywhere.**' Working in conjunction with politicians and the police, it promotes respect for and understanding of subcultures in our communities.www.sophielancasterfoundation.com

Sophie's story has touched many: responses include a music festival; songs dedicated to her memory; an award for experimental film-making; a novel; and two plays broadcast on Radio 4 - *Porcelain: the Trial for the Killing of Sophie Lancaster* by Ian Kershaw and *Black Roses*, by Simon Armitage which subsequently transferred to the stage with acclaimed performances in Manchester and London's South Bank. The title *Black Roses* refers to Sophie's gothic tastes and the violet bruises on her face following the attack. The play unfolds using Sylvia's words and poems written by Armitage in Sophie's voice. Alan Gibbons, author of *Hate*, a work of fiction inspired by the attack, says: "That someone could be murdered purely for expressing their personality is so upsetting, harsh and bleak ... We have to celebrate difference."

ROMERO CENTENARY EVENTS

2017 marks the 100th anniversary of the birth of Blessed Oscar Romero. In El Salvador it has been declared the Year of Romero. A series of events, including services and lectures, are planned across England, Wales and Scotland. Find out more at

<http://www.romerotrue.org.uk/news/romero-centenary-events>

- **Blessed Oscar Romero – Modern Martyr** a new play by RISE Theatre looking at the life and legacy of a man who chose to challenge those in power and stand up for social justice will be performed at All Saint's Church, Ashton-on-Mersey, M33 5WL on Friday 24 March at 7pm. All welcome. Refreshments Served. Donations - £5 or more on the door.

CREATION NEWS

Thanks to Ellen Teague for this comprehensive round-up:

The NJPN Environment Group's latest minutes report that interest is building on the **Season of Creation**, due to the support of Pope Francis and the excellent work of the Global Catholic Climate Coalition. The global picture is available at: <http://seasonofcreation.com/> and see CTBI <https://ctbi.org.uk/creation-time-2016/>

The NJPN Conference 21-23 July 2017 in Derbyshire will be on ***Laudato Si'*** and the economic issues it has raised, as well as the environmental. Columban Fr Peter Hughes, the general secretary of the Latin American bishops' conference – CELAM - is a keynote speaker and Sean McDonagh will be involved. Other speakers include Ruth Valerio and Kathy Galloway. Conference title: ***Sabbath for the Earth and the Poor, The Challenge of Pope Francis***. Booking forms: <http://www.justice-andpeace.org.uk/conference/>

Live Simply Award Update: 24 parishes have now achieved the award. **Report of latest parish award in Walthamstow at:** <http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=31913> 10 schools are signed up to work for the award. **Find out more at:** <http://cafod.org.uk/Campaign/How-tocampaign/Livesimply-award>

CAFOD Campaigning: There will be an emphasis on Energy in April with a new Energy Action targeted at the World Bank, as part of CAFOD's climate campaign. **See:** <http://cafod.org.uk/Campaign/Latest-campaigns> The group was delighted to hear that 18 dioceses are now on a renewable energy tariff. A new ***Laudato Si'*** guide will be out June/July, and CAFOD is currently looking for parish groups to trial the material. From 1-9 July 2017, CAFOD has organised a week of action – arranging or attending a local event with your MP to help build a fairer, cleaner world. <http://cafod.org.uk/Campaign/One-Climate-One-World/Week-of-Action> A Trade Justice action is also being planned – trade deals must support the poorest.

Other Campaigns Global Catholic Climate Movement at <https://catholicclimatemovement.global/> including a petition urging President Donald Trump to "*Accept Climate Science, Protect our Planet*".

Operation Noah has launched a new campaign that will reach across political and denominational borders to show that climate change is something every Christian must respond to. <http://operationnoah.org/news-events/why-now-is-the-time-for-the-wholechurch-to-speak-out-for-creation/>

Green Christians campaigns: *Joy in Enough* – another conference planned for Autumn 2017. Green Christian is continuing to progress the proposals from their ***Xistence*** project. See the website for more information: <http://www.greenchristian.org.uk/>

Resources/Links

On Care for Our Common Home *Laudato Si': The Encyclical of Pope Francis on the Environment with Commentary by Sean McDonagh.* The eco-theologian and Columban offers a commentary on the Encyclical, the full text of which appears in this volume. Orbis books ISBN-10: 1626981736

Option for the Poor and for the Earth: *From Leo XIII to Pope Francis* by Donal Dorr. This classic on Catholic Social Teaching, with an emphasis on the option for the poor and economic inequality, has been expanded to include Catholic teaching on care for the environment. Orbis Books ISBN -9781626981621

Green Christian Resources Page: <http://www.greenchristian.org.uk/resources>

***Laudato Si'* Resources and Links for Parishes and Schools:** <http://www.columbans.co.uk/news/laudato-si-resources-and-links-for-parishes-andschools/>

CTS Pamphlet '*Catholics and our Common Home*', by Sr Margaret Atkins. <http://www.ctsbooks.org/catholics-and-our-common-home/>

Fracking links: The Church of Scotland has confirmed that it will not be following the same theological approach to shale gas and fracking in the UK as the Church of England. <http://www.scottishenergynews.com/unlike-church-of-england-kirk-of-scotland-sits-on-thefracking-fence-over-scottish-shale-gas/>

Operation Noah told Premier News Hour that they were very disappointed at what they described as the CofE's decision "to back fracking". The Revd Alex Mabbs said that it was unlikely to lead to a low carbon economy, especially when there is existing technology which should attract more investment. <https://www.premier.org.uk/News/UK/Church-of-England-gives-cautious-support-tofracking>

The Joint Public Issues Team has produced a briefing for their churches to help facilitate conversations and thinking about fracking. It argues that a policy that seeks to incentivise investment in fracking could divert attention from the need to accelerate investment in clean affordable alternatives to fossil fuels. <http://www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/frackingbriefing/>

Quakers have called for a ban on fracking: <http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=31914>

Read more about climate change, theology, ethics, spirituality and advocacy on the website of **ECEN, the European Christian Environmental Network:** <http://www.ecen.org/content/climate-change-and-climate-justice-ecumenical-ethicalapproach>

Catholic Bishops' website Environmental section: <http://www.cbcew.org.uk/environment.html>

The Forum on Religion and Ecology at Yale: <http://fore.research.yale.edu/> Sign up for their excellent monthly newsletters.

Mining links: Catholic Church leaders and organisations in Africa, Europe and the United States say it would be disastrous if US President Donald Trump issued an executive order telling companies they no longer had to disclose whether their firms use 'conflict minerals' from Congo. <http://www.thecatholicuniverse.com/church-leaders-hope-trump-not-repeal-conflictminerals-provisions-12370>

Pope Francis has said that development projects involving indigenous communities must be planned in consultation with them and must respect their traditional relationship to the land. Having the "prior and informed consent" of native communities is essential for "peaceful cooperation between governing authorities and indigenous peoples, overcoming confrontation and conflict" <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/andes-to-the-amazon/2017/feb/20/popeindigenous-people-final-say-land>

London Mining Network newsletter:

<http://londonminingnetwork.us3.listmanage.com/subscribe?u=c24fb513fdd6c17178d7b384c&id=0445293c07>

Water links: The World Council of Churches Ecumenical Water Network (EWN) is inviting churches to use the season of Lent to reflect on water. It says that while water has a strong spiritual significance in the Christian tradition as a gift of God, this scarce resource is threatened and denied to millions around the world. <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/press-centre/events/seven-weeks-for-water>

Anglican cathedrals and churches on four continents have come together to raise awareness and activism about water by launching the **JustWater** website. It's an international initiative organised by St George's Cathedral (Cape Town); St Paul's Cathedral (London); St Paul's Cathedral (Melbourne); and Trinity Church Wall Street (New York). The project aims to draw attention to the issues around water - whether these challenges are flooding, drought, rising tides or access to fresh water and sanitation. <http://www.anglicannews.org/news/2017/02/anglican-churches-around-the-globe-launchjustwater.aspx>

A LOVE SONG – ELBOW IN COLLABORATION WITH THE CLIMATE COALITION

In the run up to this year's Valentine's Day, people across the UK were invited to make, wear and share green hearts to show their love for all that might be lost to climate change. This is a love song like you've never heard before. Watch, share, [#ShowTheLove](#). Together we can protect the life we love from climate change. A unique collaboration with Ridley Scott Associates, this powerful short film features a specially written poem by award winning writer Anthony Anaxagorou and is brought to life by actors Charles Dance, Miranda Richardson, David Gyasi and Jason Isaacs. Soundtrack produced by Elbow, including choral arrangement by Phil Mitchell and vocals from the Lewisham & Greenwich NHS Choir. The short film was shown in 23 Picturehouse cinemas nationwide between 10-17 February. **Watch:** <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=zD3YxrZdyzo>

For information on the campaign, and to read the Climate Coalition's latest report, visit fortheLoveof.org.uk

Read an interview with poet Anthony Anaxagorou: <https://www.hackneycitizen.co.uk/2017/02/09/hackney-poet-anthony-anaxagorou-penned-words-star-studded-climate-film-love-song/>

CLIMATE CHANGE POEM (I've Heard Talk) by Anthony Anaxagorou

I've heard talk of a quiet violence
waiting at the water's edge
where children learn the earth by golden shores
and gulls decorate shadows with all their height.

I've heard the mountains speak of their agony
a gripping smog hurting their stone -
the sparrow and the wren salvage hope from the wind
casting their song over the ears of morning,

I've seen the mountaineer conquer
the obstinacy of rock with the smallest
of hands, breath leaving his mouth
like an eruption of amperands.

I've heard the forest's thin call
as it's left to shudder under its heavy load,
I remember a time it would climb
to paint the world with its green

where now will the lovers go to know each other's palms?
How will kisses announce themselves to lips
if the path we've walked for so long
becomes lost to the noise we share?

I've seen how the willow holds its perennial lean
while cliffs frail as deceit drop to the sea.
A rainbow bought and sold for its skin
is worn like victory by another skyscraper.

Lakes still embrace shoals of fish,
while icebergs melt like snow on lips.
Seasons start to run from each other
while love's left to shiver on the edge of a leaf.

But there's still time to rescue the tranquillity
the fragile space between parks, pitches and sea -
the cosmos in all its wonderment and us,
a blink in its starry eye.

I've heard of this kind of dying before
slow, white and expansive. I've followed
the groan and made my lungs from the trail.

We are building new rain,
We are harbouring less sight

an infant tilts his head skywards
and asks his mother what's beyond
she takes him by the hand and says

we will shape the brilliant and new
I very much like you have been saved so many times by a view
yesterday the sun whispered into the moon's ear
and the moon trembled, turning white with fear.

FILM: LOVING

Jo Siedlecka writes: *Loving*, the new film from acclaimed writer/director Jeff Nichols, released in the UK on 3 February, tells the true story of the interracial couple, Richard and Mildred Loving, played by Joel Edgerton and Ruth Negga, from a small town in Virginia, who fell in love and got married in 1958, but then spent the next nine years struggling to live together as a family. It's hard to believe, but back in the Sixties, in parts of the United States, it was illegal for white and non-white men and women to touch - let alone marry. Couples were criminalised and risked a prison sentence if they broke the 'anti-miscegenation' law. "God put people of different colours on different continents for a reason" one judge explained.

Richard and Mildred got married legally in Washington DC, but were arrested in the middle of the night soon after they returned home, by armed policemen who tell them their marriage certificate - which Richard has nailed to the wall - does not count. While he is given bail, Mildred, who is several months pregnant, is locked up in the town jail for days, and then sent back in disgrace to live with her parents.

Richard comes to get her and they escape to live with relatives in inner city Washington. Faced with such a situation, thousands of couples simply moved away to another state where the laws were more tolerant, but after a while, the Lovings miss their families and the fresh air and peace and quiet of their home town so much, they decide to try to move back. Mildred writes to the Attorney General Robert Kennedy, and lawyers from the American Civil Liberties Union eventually take up their case.

This is a quiet, very moving film, beautifully observed, with fine performances. Joel Edgerton's Richard Loving is a plain, reserved man who works as a bricklayer on building sites. He's often shown quietly milling over the design for the house he plans to build, or coming home with his spirit level and tin lunch box. "Tell the judge I love my wife " he says simply.

Irish-Ethiopian actress Ruth Negga, gives a beautiful, dignified performance as Mildred, (who was herself part African part Native American). While Richard seems to grow quieter as the story unfolds, Mildred becomes more and more articulate in the defence of her young family. The smaller characters in the film have all been beautifully scripted and cast - especially Nick Kroll who plays the inexperienced slightly bungling young lawyer Bernie Cohen and his sardonic older colleague played by John Bass. There are no Hollywood plastic faces here.

Loving looks set to be one of the best films of the year and has already been shortlisted for a number of awards - among them Ruth Negga - nominated for an Oscar as Best Actress. The Hollywood Foreign Press Association has put forward Ruth Negga and Joel Edgerton for their roles in the film and Jeff Nichols has been shortlisted by the Writers Guild of America for Best Original Screenplay.

With the new administration in America promising a return to the great days of the past - this film could not have come at a better time as a reminder that things weren't all so wonderful back then - and to recollect and pay tribute to the struggles people went through to gain the human rights that are taken for granted now. It's also a beautiful love story.

Note: In 2000 Alabama was the last state to lift the ban on inter-racial marriage. 40% voted against.

See a trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6fOMc5PoR4M>

Visit the official website of the film here: <http://www.lovingfilm.co.uk>

Damaris Media have published discussion resources on *Loving*. **See:** <http://filmblog.damaris.org/a-closer-look-at-loving/>
<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=31847>

BOOK: THE END OF LIEUTENANT BORUVKA BY JOSEF SKVORECKY

Maurice Billingsley writes: We are told that we are living in a 'post-truth age'. The President of the United States has his staff put out alternative facts - or lies - when the verifiable truth is uncomfortable. Climate change is a conspiracy theory. The Muslims (en masse) are out to get us. A referendum is held, lies are told, 37% of people vote to leave the EU - but the people have spoken, although those living overseas could not vote, any more than Scots living in England were able to vote in the Scottish Independence Referendum.

1968, Czechoslovakia. The half-million strong, Russian-led Warsaw pact armies invaded to put down the Prague Spring. Eventually came the Velvet Revolution before 1968 was forgotten, bringing freedom to millions. 1968 - 1989 was an era of post-truth in Czechoslovakia following the "Entry of the Fraternal Armies Rendering Brotherly Help to the Czechs and Slovaks". Jews are Zionists who want to turn the clock back and have no regard for the historical role of the working class. It is a crime to leave the country: if you do so, your family will suffer. A professor may find himself swinging a pickaxe for revisionist crimes. Others might be executed as political criminals. A policeman almost imperceptibly sinks into the grey, sad world of a class warfare he has never really believed in. Crimes his team have solved go unpunished because they are committed by people with connections.

I had never read any of Josef Skvorecky's books till I picked up *The End of Lieutenant Boruvka* in a charity shop. I will be seeking more of them. The short stories flow gently on, leading us into ever greater collusion with evil, crises of conscience sliding past as dear ones are protected, blackmail is applied.

Is there redemption? It often looks bleak for Lieutenant Boruvka, who is often hemmed in, with little choice over what to do with the results of his investigations. Find this book and read it, and pray for perseverance in seeking out and telling the truth, and in forming and following your conscience.

<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=31846>

RESOURCES FOR DEMENTIA PRAYER WEEK 12-19 MARCH

The Pastoral Care Project, led by Bishop David McGough Auxiliary Bishop of Birmingham, offers prayer resources and is co-ordinating events around the country for Dementia Prayer Week which takes place on 12-19 March.

"Jesus invited us to pray to God as 'Our Father.' In so doing he defined God as the one who is full of tenderness and compassion. During this week we remember especially the often forgotten pain of those suffering with dementia, and those who care for them." said Bishop McGough.

Each day during Dementia Prayer Week, is linked to the Walk with Me Lent book and the following prayer 'Loving Father' is printed inside the back cover.

Loving Father, you are close to the broken hearted. Look with compassion on those whose lost memories have robbed them of home and belonging. Comfort and strengthen those who care for them. May they make their home in you. This we ask through Christ Our Lord.

Frances Molloy, Project Manager, says: "The Pastoral Care Project has been on the Dementia Prayer Week journey for eight years and we are delighted that many schools, care homes and parishes have journeyed with us. This year several schools and parishes have worked more closely with us to create new resources: School Mass Liturgy in response to clergy who linked school and parish weekday mass to raise awareness and pray. There is also a four part Lesson Plan, and a Psalm/song 'The Father's Love' sung by a Primary School.

This year we have a new prayer 'Loving Father' (see above) written by Bishop David McGough all available after 20 February. "Many parishes inform us that each year they recite the prayer each day after Holy Communion, some include a bidding prayer at weekend Mass, and a few have emailed us already with dates for Mass and Holy Hour. One religious order is holding a prayer day with talks and discussion in their care home. Should you wish to devote a specific Mass or Holy Hour, School Mass or Stations of the Cross which would link beautifully with the Psalm 'The Father's Love' or use it with a print of the painting of the same name. Should wish to get involved in some other way please let me know the date and time francesmolloy@pastoralcareproject.org.uk and we will add the information on our website, which can be comforting for visitors to the website, browsing for resources and videos and then find an invitation to attend a church in their area."

For more information see: www.pastoralcareproject.org.uk

• The Pastoral Care Project is supported by a grant from the Catholic Bishops' Conference Day for Life Fund 2016-17, along with a few parish collections and school almsgiving in 2016.

INVITATION TO EXPLORE BECOMING A DEMENTIA ENABLER

We were delighted with the growth of Churches Together in Cumbria's dementia-friendly churches project in its first full year of operation in 2016. The first 65 Dementia Enablers are now active in making their churches dementia-friendly. Our first Cumbria Churches Dementia Conference in November attracted 75 participants. CTiC seeks to recruit Dementia Enablers in those churches that do not yet have one. With that in mind, our Dementia Reference Group has organised a programme of Saturday morning half-day events around the county in March, to be followed by a one-day workshop in Penrith in June.

The March events will run from 9.30am to 1pm at the following venues:

- 4 March Kendal Parish Church;
- 11 March Sands Methodist Church, Appleby and Barrow St Aidans
- 18 March Carlisle Border Kirk
- 25 March Crosthwaite Parish Room, Keswick.

The programme will include a Dementia Friends session and information on the role of a Dementia Enabler. More information online or from Dementia Coordinator David Richardson: dardesk@aol.com; 07917 668235.

If you would like to come and learn more about being a Dementia Enabler, please book with Margaret Irving dfc43@btinternet.com

T: 07540 920829, specifying the name of the church and which event you plan to attend.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

MARCH

3 Women's World Day of Prayer prepared by the women of the Philippines www.wwdp.org.uk/

4 Lord, teach us to pray with **Stephen Hoyland** Friends Meeting House, Lancaster, LA1 1TX 10am-4pm. Tea and coffee provided – please bring a packed lunch. Parking at the Railway Station £4/day. Facilitated by ACTA Lancaster. To book email anne.foley@blueyonder.co.uk or phone 01772 555483

4 "Celebration of Cheshire's Fairtrade Visitors since 2002" Activity Zone, Grosvenor Park, Chester, CH1 1QG. CDEC Developing Global Learning are planning a day of displays and activities, part of the "Fairtrade Stories Project" to highlight the stories of the 7 Fairtrade Producers who have visited Chester since 2002 - people whose communities have benefitted in a variety of ways from Fairtrade initiatives. 01244 347880.

4 Christian Aid Annual Coffee Morning 10.30am-12.30pm, Hoole URC, Hoole Road, Hoole, Chester CH2 3NT. Homemade cakes, gifts, Traidcraft. Bacon butties available after 11.30am. £1.00 donation includes coffee and biscuits. 01244 320562.

7 Free filmshow *Age of Consequences* which sheds new light on the impact of climate change, exploring migration, conflict and global stability through the lens of US national security. Beswick 017, Chester University's Parkgate Campus. All welcome.

7 Waitrose Chester Fairtrade tasting stations throughout the store. The tastings will continue until about 3pm

8 International Women's Day internationalwomensday.com Postcards from paxchristi.org.uk 020 8203 4884

10-12 The Things That Make for Peace Fellowship of Reconciliation/Methodist Peace Fellowship Conference in Manchester anglicanpeacemaker.org.uk 0794 272 595 (Tilly)

10 CAFOD Lent Fast Day on Zambia cafod.org.uk

11 Listening to Refugees Rochdale christiansaware.co.uk 0116 254 0770

12 Chester Cathedral Public Workshop 6.30-8pm to celebrate **International Women's Day**. **#BeBoldForChange** is the theme of this year's International Women's Day. Speakers from Chester Women's Aid, Chester Sexual Abuse Support Service, the Soroptomists, and Chester Labour Women's Forum plus small group sessions and discussion. www.chestercathedral.com

12 Fairtrade Fortnight event All Saints Parish Centre, Carrington Lane, Ashton-on-Mersey, M33 5WL 2-5pm. Traidcraft Big Brew with tea, coffee, cakes and savouries for sale. Displays, videos & children's activities. **Speakers** from India and from Palestine at 3pm who will explain the importance of fairtrade and how much our support means to them. Traidcraft and Zaytoun products on sale.

12-19 Dementia Prayer Week (see p14) www.pastoralcareproject.org.uk

14 Chester World Development Forum 6.45-9pm The Unity Centre, Cuppin Street Chester, CH1 2BN. Our regular bi-monthly meeting at The Unity Centre. It will include an illustrated talk by Ann McCarthy on a recent visit to Vietnam

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

18 Romero Week 2017 Wrexham, St Mary's Cathedral 12.00 Sr Martha Zechmeister CJ **The Secret of Romero: Passion for God and Compassion for the Poor**. romerotrust@gmail.com romerotrust.org.uk

19 Romero Service Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral 11am to include blessing of a new Romero statue. Celebrant: Archbishop Malcolm McMahon OP s.atherton@rcaol.co.uk 0151 953 9811

20-21 Africa-Europe Faith & Justice Network Networking Meeting Wistaston, Crewe afjnuk@yahoo.co.uk

21 Fly Kites not Drones. Join people around the world on Persian New Year as an act of solidarity with the people of Afghanistan and explore the ethics of drone warfare. www.flykitesnotdrones.org

22 World Water Day unwater.org/

24 Blessed Oscar Romero – Modern Martyr a new play by RISE Theatre looking at the life and legacy of a man who chose to challenge those in power and stand up for social justice will be performed at All Saint's Church, Ashton-on-Mersey, M33 5WL on Friday 24 March at 7pm. All welcome. Refreshments Served. Donations - £5 or more on the door.

24 CAFOD Northern MP Correspondents Training Manchester marana@cafod.org.uk 020 7095 5417

24 Ellesmere Port LPA Justice & Peace Group CAFOD Quiz Night 7.30 pm Our Lady's Parish Centre, Ellesmere Port Town Centre. Entrance fee: £3.00 (children £1). Quizmaster Mr. Mike Ives. All money raised will go to CAFOD's Connect2 Ethiopia fund raising project. Fair Trade stall and Fair Trade refreshments provided at the interval. Details: Tony Walsh on 0151 355 6419

25 Blessed Oscar Romero Commemoration Sacred Heart, Queen Street, Colne, Lancs, BB8 9NB. There will be a talk by Fr Jim O'Keefe starting at 2pm. Tea/coffee from 1.30pm. Mass at 3pm. All welcome. faithandjustice@ymail.com

25 What can we do? Some Practical Responses to the Refugee Crisis. A free conference arranged by the J&P Group at St Agnes, West Kirby, Wirral, CH48 SDU on 25 March 2017 from 10 30 am to 2 pm. Speakers will include Sean Ryan, Caritas, Salford, and Mary Kilcoyne, CEO, Caritas, Shrewsbury. For more info and to register: email mgmcook@aol.com 01516256512

30 Pax Christi Liverpool will host a public meeting with a returned Ecumenical Accompanier serving in The West Bank. Venue Central Liverpool, to be confirmed Contact janharper1@yahoo.co.uk 07746919915

APRIL

8 Friends of Sabeel UK NW group Conference on the theme of **The Balfour Declaration** at the Triangle Methodist Church, Bolton, New Church Road, BL1 5SH. Guest speakers Professor Mary Grey, Ecotheologian, feminist writer and member of the Balfour Project and Dr Aimee Shalan, Director of Fobza – Promoting Palestinian access to education. To book/more info contact Deborah: darnes@talktalk.net Palestinian craft stall with Zaytoun Fairtrade products for sale.

20-23 Global Days of Action on Military Spending demilitarize.org.uk paxchristi.org.uk 020 8203 4884

MAY

6 Revitalising the Tools of Active Nonviolence Liverpool. Booking essential: janharper1@yahoo.co.uk paxchristi.org.uk

13 NJPN AGM & Open Networking Day 10.30am-4pm CAFOD, Romero House, 55 Westminster Bridge Road, London SE1 7JB. Looking at resources for Creation Day with NJPN Environment Group (see pp 11-12). Email: admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk Tel: 0207 901 4864 www.justice-and-peace.org.uk

JULY

21–23 NJPN Annual Justice & Peace Conference The Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, Derbyshire. **'A Sabbath for the Earth and the Poor: The Challenge of Pope Francis**. Email: admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk; Tel: 0207 901 4864 www.justice-and-peace.org.uk

- Many items taken from the daily e-bulletin Independent Catholic News www.indcatholicnews.com or from Ekklesia www.ekklesia.co.uk both invaluable free resources for up-to-date J&P news, events and in-depth articles. Sign up for comprehensive weekly e-bulletins from National J&P Network 020 7901 4864 admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk

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