



Justice & Peace

News from National Justice & Peace Network

Spring 2011

Building the New Jerusalem Amidst the Cuts



Do not use harmful words, but only helpful words, the kind that build up and provide what is needed.

No more shouting or insults, no more hateful feelings of any sort.

Instead, be kind and tender-hearted to one another, and forgive one another, as God has forgiven you through Christ.

Ephesians 4:29, 31-32

Isaiah is one of the most powerful and influential Old Testament voices for Christians. He speaks of both the birth of the Messiah (Isaiah 7:14 and 9:2,6-7) in words that have shaped Advent and Christmas, and of God's suffering servant (Isaiah 52 -53) in passages that colour our understanding of Christ's sacrifice for us through his passion and crucifixion.



But Isaiah also shares his vision, imparted by God, of what the world should be like. And this vision of the New Jerusalem, of the world as God wants it to be, is shaped by justice (rather than 'fairness'), by peace, by compassion, and by shared abundance.

This is in sharp contrast to the way we organise our affairs. Economic policies influenced by these principles would surely not major on cutting the benefits of poor people while not increasing taxes for the majority? So, given that, as a nation, we have agreed to reduce the national deficit in order to progress more strongly in future, what is the alternative?

First we need to take seriously the idea that the post WWII consensus is dead and grasp this opportunity to develop a new justice consensus. Second we need to live our beliefs; particularly concerning environmental sustainability, sensible frugality, the option for the poor, and shared abundance. Only if we Christians ourselves, as Isaiah exhorts, begin to turn to the Lord and follow his ways, can we expect to have any influence or impact on the world at large.

Alison Gelder, Housing Justice

An analysis of living standards in Britain today reveals growing material wealth alongside a persistent gap between richest and poorest. In spite of the Coalition Government's commitment to protect the poorest and most vulnerable from the effects of spending constraints, the Coalition has announced cuts of over £18 billion from the welfare budget, with the vast majority to benefits targeted at people on the lowest incomes.

Our Christian faith tells us that another world is possible. A passionate concern for the poor and the marginalised, and for naming and tackling injustice is at the heart of the Biblical story. Would the Old Testament prophets, have remained silent as the rich and powerful take from the poor and the vulnerable even the little that they have?

For this reason, Church Action on Poverty is launching a new three year campaign – with a challenge to the Churches: Will you

Pledge to Close the Gap? The campaign will mobilise people in churches to take part in specific campaign actions, which will seek to make politicians and others accountable for their actions in narrowing – or increasing – the gap between rich and poor. The aim is to build a more powerful movement in the churches to work for long-term pro-poor change within the UK.

Pledge to Close the Gap will be built around a series of specific Pledges under the themes of Give, Act and Pray, each designed to provide a tangible way in which individuals, local churches/groups, and other partners (eg church leaders) can contribute to the success of the campaign.

To find out more visit www.church-poverty.org.uk
Niall Cooper, Church Action on Poverty



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These are edited versions of articles which are available on the website, www.justice-and-peace.org.uk. Hard copies may be obtained by sending a stamped addressed envelope to: NJPN, 39 Eccleston Square, London SW1V 1BX.

Spring Action Highlights: Fairtrade Fortnight—International Women's Day -Lent Fast Day—Tearfund Carbonfast—Romero Commemorations—TUC March Against the Cuts- Global Day of Action on Military Spending—Easter **See Diary for more details, actions and events.**

For weekly campaign updates sign up for E-Bulletins at admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk

Planning your holidays? Why not look into some alternative ways of being a tourist? See Tourism Concern on how to Avoid a Guilt Trip, Traidcraft Meet the People Tours or Christians Aware Tours (links to all these websites via www.justice-and-peace.org.uk); To be welcomed to people's homes as a traveller, or host travellers to the UK, see www.servasbritain.org

Speaking Personally: Danny Curtin



Where do you think your commitment to justice and peace comes from?

I was three years old when Pope John Paul II came to the UK, but without doubt it was this visit that laid the foundations for my work for justice. In Lincoln, where the family lived at the time, the parish set up a 'Response Group' as a response to the Papal visit. I was allowed to attend this Response group from the age of about twelve. The group met in houses to reflect on life and on how faith integrates with it. We lived our response in our own daily lives, and in our group activity of raising awareness and money for the terrible situation in Ethiopia following the famines of the 1980s. Reflecting now, I can see that the Response group in Lincoln was a great example of how a church can be vibrant and welcoming, living out its faith in life and fulfilling our common mission to work for the Kingdom in the world. It is that vision I have continued to strive to work for.

What for you are the most important areas of concern today?

Ten years ago I was walking with a priest friend in Manchester talking about life, the universe and everything. We got onto the subject of the Young Christian Workers (YCW), which at that point I knew very little about. He was then the YCW diocesan chaplain in Salford and from what he had seen he had become convinced that this could potentially be the method of re-evangelising the young people of our country. I realise now that this was one of the most important conversations I have ever had and was the beginning of an incredible journey. My journey over the last ten years with YCW, including five years as the National President has led me to see the reality of our own countries in the UK. I feel called to draw attention to and respond to is the situation of the poor here at home. There are plenty of people working for the poor across the world. For me, I hope I can be a positive voice, keeping the UK poor, especially our young people, on the agenda for our Church and for our civic leaders.

What sustains you in your commitment?

There are two main reasons why I keep going in this work and cannot see myself doing anything else. First, I have a deep rooted vision of how life can and should be, obviously inspired by faith and the vision of the Kingdom in the Gospels. Secondly, I've seen glimpses of where this vision has become a reality. Knowing that our work makes a difference, that the vision can be fulfilled, is what draws me on. I have great hope for the fruits of my work. I am aware of course that at times the work will only come to fruition years later, and I may not see it. This does not dampen my enthusiasm, in fact it gives me great hope, for it gives me the great

comfort that ultimately its not in my hands but in God's.

What are your hopes for a Church like ours in the 21st Century?

The Church is amazing. We are so easily led into conversations and thinking about the Church which become negative and pessimistic. But, when we stop and think, it is just awe inspiring. The Church at home and abroad is the most unique institution doing so much good and contributing to building just and fair societies throughout the world. I was recently in South Africa, part holiday, part work, and in both my relaxation and my involvement in a Church project out there, I saw a vibrant, beautiful Church, offering hope and joy to their country. I see this wherever I go; in the people and the faith stories of those I meet. My hope is simply that more and more people, especially those lay people involved in Justice and Peace, will resist the temptation to be negative, but rather celebrate the Church we are part of, realise we are all part of the problems with it, as well as the joys, and with great gratitude to God work to be a sign of hope and joy to the world.

Danny Curtin is now 31 years of age and no longer feeling young! He is most recently remembered for being National President of the YCW. Before this he worked with the Diocese of Westminster's renewal project and was also employed in parish work. Danny is now freelance, working with dioceses and organisations to help them in their mission. Danny is co-founder of Million Minutes, launched on January 31st, which works to support projects that enable young people to transform their lives and their world, putting Catholic Social Teaching into practice. See www.millionminutes.org

New Catholic Social Teaching Website

Livesimply has launched a new website, www.catholicsocialteaching.org.uk dedicated to Catholic Social Teaching. The website will be a valuable resource for parishes, schools and people wishing to deepen their understanding of the faith and explore the link with social justice.

At the launch, US Catholic author and lecturer Megan McKenna, said that truth, light, peace and hope were among the foundations of Catholic Social Teaching. And she ended with the challenge: "If your religion doesn't make you more compassionate, truthful and just, and stop you thinking about yourself, then it is no religion at all."

Once described as the Church's best kept secret, the social teachings offer a blueprint for those working for justice both inside and outside of the Church. The site focuses on the six themed areas of human dignity, community and participation, care for creation, life and work, peace and solidarity.



CST on NJPN Website



The NJPN website also has an easily accessible Catholic Social Teaching page, with all the encyclicals, *The Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* and a selection of other documents, including *The Social Agenda—A Collection of Magisterial Texts*, published 2000.

Visit. www.justice-and-peace.org.uk

NOW BOOKING

*Annual J&P Conference, 15–17 July:
'Justice At Work': a place of security,
fulfilment and growth.'*

Young People and Justice & Peace

The J&P movement may seem to be made up largely of people who've stuck with the struggle to bring the mission of justice and peace alive in the Church over many years, but there are young people in the Church with energy and ideals to pass the flame on to. One group that NJPN is involved with that works to make the connections with justice and peace issues with young people is the **LiveSimply Youth Network**, including YCW, Jesuit Volunteer Communities, Pax Christi, Progressio, CAFOD, Church Action on Poverty, Bosco Volunteers, Missio, SVP 18-33, VIDES; they produced the 'Why Bother' website for the general election.

An important element of every J&P Conference is the Youth Programme. In 2009 this was led by **InReality**, who have contributed the item below. They will run the Youth Programme at Conference 2011.

A Recipe for Happiness



We are The InReality Team, the Catholic Youth Ministry Team for the Diocese of Hallam. We work all over our diocese and sometimes a little further afield. In November 2009 we travelled to Westminster Cathedral for the National Celebration to mark 25 years of The Catholic Association for Racial Justice where we were provided support to the organisers and input to the Liturgy. In our own diocese we attend many J&P events.

In September Pope Benedict XVI came to England. At "The Big Assembly" at St Mary's University College, Twickenham he addressed pupils from every Catholic School in England and Wales. In his address he said that he hoped that amongst them were the future saints of the 21st Century:., *"What God wants most of all for each one of you is that you should become holy. He loves you much more than you could ever begin to imagine, and he wants the very best for you. And by far the best thing for you is to grow in holiness."* By this he didn't mean that we all have to go out and try to single-handedly change the world, but to *"not be content with second best, not to pursue one limited goal, whilst ignoring all the others."*

We all want to be happy, but how do we affect the happiness of others? What can we do to enable others to find happiness?

Pope Benedict says *"true happiness is to be found in God."* This is a great expression of how we can show love for other people by doing the most ordinary tasks but doing them with uttermost care and love. From doing these ordinary tasks in an extra-ordinary way in our everyday lives is where we find true happiness within ourselves...from God.



We need to have the courage to discover this true happiness and to realise that it does not come from our possessions or the wealth that we have as a nation but simply from love; and hope that we might know how much we are loved by God as well as the loved ones that surround us daily.

We can also find this true happiness from taking a step back to look at ourselves, seeing if we are putting things into perspective, finding quality time to spend in prayer and putting God at the centre.

The most important thing to remember about happiness is that it is not a destination but a way of travel. Like all journeys there are twists and turns, where we may not recognise where the happiness is or if it even exists! But we have to remember that God is walking beside us in every move we make. Even if we turn away from Him, He never gives up on us and is right behind us ready for when we feel like we can turn back to Him.

Something we, as a Youth Ministry team, have found has really affected the way we act with each other and with the young people that we meet is a very simple type of prayer called The Apostleship of Prayer. When you wake up in a morning you offer your day to God and then everything that you do that day becomes a prayer to God. Then at night give yourself some time to reflect on your day, say sorry for anything that you have done that you could've done better or differently, and say thank you to God for all the blessing that he has given to you that day.

Young People Stand up for Dignity!



Young People Stand up for Dignity, which is the current national action campaign of Young Christian Workers is being run in collaboration with other YCW movements from across Europe, making it the first ever Europe wide YCW action campaign. It will run until May 2012.

The conclusion of the BIG SEE in March 2011 will mark the start of the BIG JUDGE in which we will reflect on all of the information we gathered in the See in relation to the Gospels of Christ and the teachings of his Church. Finally, there will be an ACT stage; the movement will decide what action to take in order to change for the better the reality of the dignity of young people. The campaign focuses around three main areas, dignity in work, dignity in a balanced life and dignity in making a difference. These areas will act as a focus throughout the duration of our action campaign. We are currently in the BIG SEE stage of our campaign, where we look into the reality of young people across the England and Wales in relation to their dignity. The BIG SEE resource is currently available for all registered YCW groups. If you have not received your copy or would like to register as a YCW group, please contact YCW HQ on 020 8203 6290 or dignity@ycwimpact.com

CYMFed National Congress 2011
Saturday 12th March, 2011
J Glenn Murray
Friends Meeting House, Euston, London
Tickets £12.50 / £14.00
10am - 5pm

Many a great feast from the UK, international leaders in the areas of energy and culture.

David Wells
Director of the Department for Formation, Progress, Discernment and Pastoral Synthesis

Michelle Moran
Member of the Pontifical Council for the Laity, Member of the Pontifical Commission for the Study of the Synodal Process

CJM Music
Pastoral musicians, serving the Church through the ministry of music and liturgy

Called to a Noble Adventure
A VISION FOR YOUTH MINISTRY

CYMFED
Forming and serving Youth Ministry in England and Wales
For more information and bookings visit: www.cymfed.org

A formation day for Catholics working with young people

www.cymfed.org

DIARY

This is a selection of dates. Find more on our rolling calendar and via links to organisations on our website, www.justice-and-peace.org.uk, where there are also links to many of the organisations listed below.

FEBRUARY

Until 28: Bristol, Pierian Centre: Exhibition: Destination Tsunami: 020 7133 3800; campaigns@tourismconcern.org.uk

24 Liverpool, Hope University: Dr Ian Speller "The Use and Abuse of Military History": 0151 291 3126; phillim@hope.ac.uk

26 Liverpool: Christ and the Earth retreat/workshop: 0117 957 4652; chris.sunderland@earthabbey.com

26 Oxford: Network for Peace AGM: 07794 036 602; mail@networkforpeace.org.uk

28 London: 'Power, Politics and Prayer' Pilgrimage through London: 020 7249 4309; speak@speak.org.uk

28-13 March: Fairtrade Fortnight: www.fairtrade.org.uk

MARCH

1 Birmingham: Launch of ECCR report on the banking sector: To book:- 07503 931172; helen.boothroyd@eccr.org.uk

4 Women's World Day of Prayer prepared by women of Chile: 01892 541411; wwdp-natcomm.org

5 London: 6 Billion Ways-Making another world possible: 020 7820 4900; wdm@wdm.org.uk; www.6billionways.org.uk

5 London: Homelessness training for volunteers: 020 7920 6600; info@housingjustice.org.uk

5 Bury St Edmunds: Celebration of 25 years of J&P: 01223 240 207; www.catholicseastanglia.org/justice/

5 Manchester: CAAT Spring Gathering: Anne-Marie, 020 7281 0297; outreach@caat.org.uk

8 International Women's Day: www.internationalwomensday.com

9 Ash Wednesday witness at the MoD: Pax Christi, 020 8203 4884; info@paxchristi.org.uk

9, -23 April Tearfund Carbonfast: 0845 355 8355; www.tearfund.org

10-12 Visit of Cardinal Turkson (Pontifical Council for J&P): Events to be confirmed: 020 7095 5417; marana@cafod.org.uk

12 Cardiff: Naom Chomsky "The Current Crisis in the Middle East" chomsky.cardiff@yahoo.com; www.networkforpeace.org

14-18 Poland: Pilgrimage for Peacemaking: 01264 357 032; www.wider-horizons.org

15-16 Welwyn Garden City: Travellers' Network National Gathering: 020 8802 8080; www.carj.org

18 Lent Fast Day: CAFOD, 020 7733 7900; www.cafod.org.uk

19 London: Lenten Day of Reflection on homelessness: 020 7920 6600; info@housingjustice.org.uk

20-27 Annual Archbishop Romero Lecture: Fr Juan Hernandez Pico SJ (El Salvador): 22: *Salford*; 23: *Edinburgh*; 24: *Hexham & Newcastle*; 26: *London*: romerotrust@btinternet.com

21-27 UK Climate Week: 020 3397 2601; www.climateweek.com

23 York Minster: Ebor Lecture: Richard Harries "Just War Against Terror?": 01904 557208; www.yorkminster.org

26 London: March Against the Cuts: 020 7636 4030; info@tuc.org.uk; www.tuc.org.uk

29 London, St Paul's: Robin Hood Tax Debate: 020 7095 5417; marana@cafod.org.uk

31 Sheffield: An Introduction to Conflict Resolution Education 0114 241 2745; admin@cresst.org.uk

APRIL

2 Reading: CAAT Spring Gathering: Anne-Marie, 020 7281 0297; outreach@caat.org.uk

6 York Minster: Ebor Lecture: Peter Taylor "What is a Terrorist?" 01904 557 208; www.yorkminster.org

9 Crewe: Enough is Enough: contact Joan Sharples 01270 620 584; www.jp-shrewsburydiocese.org.uk

12 Global Day of Action on Military Spending: 020 7700 4200 secgen@ipb.org; <http://ipb.org/ii/index.html>

16 London: Uniting for Peace AGM: 020 7377 2111; vijay@vmppeace.org

28-14 May Bath: Exhibition: Destination Tsunami: 020 7133 3800; campaigns@tourismconcern.org.uk

MAY

10-12 Ammerdown: Understanding Islam: 01761 433 709; centre@ammerdown.org

13 London, Heythrop: Vocation for Justice 25th Anniversary: vocforjus@aol.com

13-14 London: Peace History Conference: 01908 511 948; Lesley-Docksey@abolishwar.org.uk

14 NJPN AGM & Networking Day, London 'Creation Theology': 020 7901 4864; admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk

15 International Conscientious Objectors Day: www.wri-irg.org

20 Bristol: Launch of *Lives* simply Parish Award: 020 7095 5417; marana@cafod.org.uk

20-22 France: Church and Peace International Conference: +49 64 45 55 88; intloffic@church-and-peace.org

21 Birmingham: CAAT Action: Arms Show or Baby Show? 020 7281 0297; www.caat.org.uk

21 Franz Jägerstätter Feast Day: Pax Christi, 020 8203 4884; info@paxchristi.org.uk

25 York Minster: Ebor Lecture; Prof John Milbank: Geopolitical Theology: 01904 557 208; www.yorkminster.org

JUNE

9 London: Lobby for International Development, Tea Time for Change: 020 7095 5417; marana@cafod.org.uk

DONATE TO NJPN: By cheque payable to NJPN to the address below, online at www.cafonline.org/donate, put National Justice and Peace Network in the Find a Charity box. To make a regular donation by **Standing Order**, contact the Administrator or download the Membership Form at www.justice-and-peace.org.uk

The National Justice & Peace Network encourages and facilitates communication and networking between Catholic/Christian individuals, groups, and organisations (both lay and religious) who are working for justice, peace and the integrity of creation at grassroots, diocesan, national or international level.

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