



Justice & Peace

News from National Justice & Peace Network

Spring 2009



Amazing God of Creation
Help us to respect the Earth we walk upon and the people we walk alongside.
Give us eyes to see those who are in need, ears to hear the cry of the poor and hearts to respond in love.

Amen



Lent Fast Day Reflection

Planet, Poverty, Peace, Human Rights...

Where should J&P be today?

Last year NJPN organised the 30th Annual Justice and Peace Conference; the first took place in 1978, reflecting the growth in justice and peace groups and the establishment of diocesan J&P Commissions following Vatican II. As we move towards the end of the first decade of the 21st Century, it's worthwhile reflecting on what the issues are today and how we are responding as Church.

In an article commissioned for the website, **Frank Regan** situates our J&P work in the broad areas of the Planet, Poverty, Peace and Human Rights, arguing that the big global challenges are War and Nuclear Arms, Global Warming, Peak Oil, Systematic meltdown and Trafficking of bodies for sex and organs. He sees the overarching challenge as articulating an ethic of Life which extends from the beginning of life in the womb all the way to the moment of death. On the more local and personal level, he points to the need to engage with changes in Life-style, Living Simply, in ways which help to nurture and protect the life of the planet and the lives of the poor.

It may not, he says, be up to us to say *WHERE* J&P should be- it may be there already- but to identify some issues which merit our close attention at this time.

Read the full article on the website, www.justice-and-peace.org.uk. If you would like a hard copy, send a stamped addressed envelope to NJPN 39 Eccleston Square, London SW1V 1BX.

What about you? In the light of this reflection, why not take the opportunity (maybe as a Lenten activity) for you and/or your group to reflect about where you are and what motivates you in your work for justice and peace? You could use one or more of the following questions as starting points:

- *What do you understand by Justice and Peace Spirituality?*
- *Do you have any J&P heroines? Who and Why?*
- *What do you think J&P's greatest success has been in your parish/community or diocese? And its greatest failure?*
- *What are your hopes for a Church like ours as we get further into the 21st Century?*

If you would like to share the fruits of your reflections, do send them in to us and we will publish a selection in the newsletter and/or on the website.

Welcome to 2009 ~ Opportunities for Action this Spring

The Changing Face of Britain: CARJ (Catholic Association for Racial Justice) celebrates its 25th Anniversary with an event in each diocese. Contact your local Commission or Diocesan contact for details.

Fairtrade Fortnight: 23 February ~ 9 March. An opportunity to promote Fairtrade goods and philosophy in your church, community or workplace.

Lent: Starts 25 February ~ a good opportunity to re-commit to the *livesimply* objectives and encourage your parish to sign up to community challenges. **CAFOD Fast Day** 6 March

International Women's Day: 8 March: "If it's better for women, it's better for all" ~ a chance to see how all the issues that concern us impact on women, and how addressing their needs can be key in bringing about change, as well as celebrating women's achievements.

Archbishop Romero Anniversary: 24 March commemorates the assassination of this prophet for the poor; keep alive his memory as a commitment to human rights and social justice.

G20 Summit: 2 April: Campaign to make sure that the needs of developing countries are not forgotten in the economic recession.

Creating a Climate for Change: CAFOD launches it's campaign in March, leading up to the UN Conference on Climate Change in Copenhagen, December '09 (Contact CAFOD for launch dates, campaign@cafod.org.uk, 020 7095 5692)

"Individual actions may seem insignificant but together the small steps of many people can have an astonishing impact"

livesimply community challenge

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THE TRANQUILITY OF ORDER: BUILDING PEACE IN TROUBLED TIMES

The word "crisis" is Greek in origin and signifies a time of opportunity as well as risk. How therefore might the present crisis in global finance be a graced moment for a new vision of justice rooted in new economic order? This was a question posed by **Tina Beattie** in her talk at the Networking Day in Bristol in September 2008. She sought to show how our Christian tradition offers us the resources to live as signs of hope in a world of injustice and violence, or in the words of St Augustine, to discover 'the tranquillity of order' which peace offers.

This was put into the context of the cost and futility of war in terms of human lives, economic expenditure and the distortion of scientific endeavour in the of diversion of funding into military research,¹ rather than the more urgent issues facing the planet. In the light of all this she suggested that **"the single most revolutionary move the Catholic Church could make would be to make it as difficult for its followers to support war as it currently is for them to support abortion."** Pope John Paul II's 1995 encyclical, *Evangelium Vitae*² condemns the West's "culture of death", not only in relation to abortion and euthanasia, but to anything opposing life, e.g. torture, subhuman living conditions, arbitrary imprisonment, prostitution and trafficking. However, in 2004 the then Cardinal Ratzinger wrote to the Archbishop of Washington saying that "There may be legitimate diversity of opinion even among Catholics about waging war and applying the death penalty ...but not however with regard to abortion and euthanasia."³ But we can stop short of absolute pacifism and still mount a very effective campaign of Catholic resistance to war, putting into practice what is already there in post-conciliar church teaching:

Catholics could be forbidden to take part in the aggression of war but fulfil our duties as citizens by giving support in non-combatant roles.

We should say that no Catholic can with a clear conscience work in or invest in the arms industry; Catholic politicians should be scrutinised for their attitudes to war.

The military should not have access to Catholic schools for the purposes of recruitment; pupils should be made aware of the conflict between the Catholic faith and the politics of war;

Pressure should be brought to bear on governments to channel resources into scientific projects for poverty reduction, the environment etc.

Military budgets should be targeted at peace-keeping not war making, including work towards a more robust and effective UN peace-keeping force.

¹ Chris Langley, *Soldiers in the Laboratory: Military involvement in science and technology – and some alternatives*, edited by Stuart Parkinson and Philip Webber, published by Scientists for Global Responsibility (SGR), January 2005. Downloadable at [www.sgr.org.uk/ArmsControl/Soldiers in Lab Report.pdf](http://www.sgr.org.uk/ArmsControl/Soldiers_in_Lab_Report.pdf)

² Available on the Vatican website http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/encyclicals/

³ Cardinal Ratzinger, memorandum to Cardinal McCarrick made public in July 2004, available on the website <http://www.priestsforlife.org/>

Tina Beattie is Professor of Catholic Studies at Roehampton University and Senior Fellow in Crucible (Roehampton's Centre for Human Rights, Social Justice and Citizenship)

A GREAT step forward! Government ratifies European convention against human trafficking

On 17 December 2008 a major milestone in the fight against human trafficking was reached when the government ratified the Council of Europe Convention Against Human Trafficking. The ratification means the UK will formally become part of a Europe-wide agreement about setting minimum standards for protecting and supporting trafficking victims. It also strengthens the UK's ability to catch the criminals that exploit victims of trafficking and underlines the government's long-term commitment to tackling this horrific crime.
(From CHASTE: www.chaste.org.uk or see Home Office website)

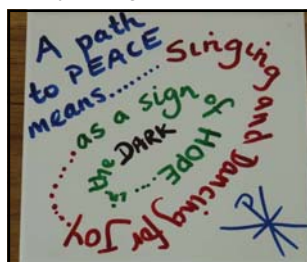
So, how can we bring about change in the world? Our means are limited, but we can do things in our own lives to "be the change I wish to see", responding to the transformative vision of the world given us by Jesus. Tina described how she had gradually discovered the LiveSimply campaign to be "one of the richest and most sustaining visionsin terms of Christian faith and its practical significance." Using public transport, for example, creates spaces when the journey can simply be enjoyed.

LiveSimply is "a form of personal spirituality which brings our innermost desires and struggles into harmony with our political visions for justice and peace..."

The theology of Thomas Aquinas was another discovery which could help us "reconnect nature and grace, the word and the world." For Aquinas, all creation is destined for eternal union and joy with God. The difference for human beings is that we are free to reject that vision. All human desires are a potential channel for grace; but when we fail to recognise God calling to us through them, they become distorted and lead to cravings which we cannot satisfy. Thus in our consumerist societies "we are experiencing the quiet despair of the human animal cut off from its source and purpose." We are also social animals and need human institutions to foster the social means for human flourishing; but these too can become distorted, corrupt and unjust.

Mary's Magnificat provides us with a manifesto in which we can see God's grace where others see only despair.

We are called to inhabit the **real** world of Mary "which is woven together out of the fabric of ordinary lives, fragile, capable of great suffering as well as joy, dependent on the earth which nourishes us and the communities which sustain



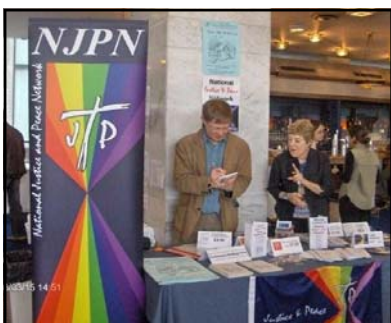
us, and always vulnerable to the **unreal** power of wealth, greed, corruption, oppression and violence". That unreal world has been overthrown by her Son, revealing the tenderness and compassion of God. "This beautiful world is the world of our vulnerable, tender and compassionate God, made for our delight and enjoyment.

We can become the change we wish to see, by enjoying the world more and consuming it less, by peacekeeping rather than warmaking, by the persistent, quiet determination to allow hope to flourish, and ultimately to overwhelm the despair of our times."

NJPN Welcomes You...

Over the past year, the Exec has been looking at ways of making the Network more accessible to those who were committed and active in justice and peace work, but who did not fit into the existing structure of Diocesan and Agency representation. Two main developments have come out of this process:

OPEN NETWORKING DAYS: We have replaced the Quarterly Meetings with Networking Days which are open to anyone with an interest or involvement in justice and peace work to take part. In response to feedback, we have reduced the "business" element of the meeting to a minimum, thus allowing more time for our speakers to give us inspirational input, and for those attending to exchange ideas and information and give



mutual encouragement in more of a market place atmosphere. Recent speakers have included the theologian Tina Beattie on *Building Peace in Troubled Times* and the Director of the Prisoners' Advice and Care Trust, Andy Keen-Downs on *First Night, Families and a Future After Prison* (Summaries available on the website). Two meetings a year are held in London, and two in different venues around the country – see the Diary section or watch the website for details.

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP: NJPN started life as a Liaison Committee for Diocesan Justice and Peace Commissions; it later expanded to include agencies and religious orders as corporate members. At the AGM in 2008 it was agreed to open membership to individuals who share our Vision, Mission and Values, allowing them to participate more fully in the Network by taking part in elections and receiving information direct from NJPN. **IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BECOME A MEMBER**, please download the form from our website or contact the office. Minimum subscription is £12 per annum, any donation above this amount will be eligible for Gift Aid.

We would also like to hear from any small groups, e.g. parish J&P groups, who would like to become members. Please contact the office if you are interested. (39 Eccleston Square, London SW1V 1BX, 020 7901 4864. admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk)

PRESS MONITORING "Rapid Response" NJPN Exec are looking for people to monitor the Catholic press and alert them to any items which merit a response from NJPN. Please get in touch if you can help.

Vouchers Exchange Update: Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) are working with the Migrants Resource Centre and Refugee Council on a campaign against the use of voucher based support. There are indications that the Government is making the system harsher, and ASDA are now issuing top-up vouchers which cannot be passed on. However, JRS are still continuing with the Vouchers Exchange Scheme for the time being. For more details contact JRS-UK, 6 Melior Street, London SE1 3QP, 020 7357 0974, www.jrsuk.net

People.....

NJPN Executive: Steve Atherton has resigned from Exec due to pressure of work. Elizabeth Rendall has been co-opted in his place. Elizabeth has been an active member of NJPN's Environment Working Party and Ethical Investment Working Party, as well as representing Christian Ecology Link in the Network; she will therefore ensure that environmental concerns are well represented at the heart of NJPN.

Hexham & Newcastle: John Marshall has stood down as Chair of the J&P Commission, but still hopes to be active in justice and peace work. The new Chair is Pat MacDonal.

Liverpool: There is also a new team at the J&P Commission in Liverpool; the Chair is Austin Kirwan, with Rosemary Turner as Vice-Chair (those who attended Conference 08 may remember Rosemary ably chairing the proceedings there), and Denise Parker as Secretary.



John Marshall

Volunteers sought..

CONFERENCE 09: If you will be attending the Annual Conference and could offer some help, volunteers are needed for:

- Registration, especially on Friday afternoon; you would need to arrive early on Friday for this;
- Stewards to help people find their way around, especially on arrival;
- Help to move chairs around in the Conference Hall at various times during the weekend
- Help on the NJPN stall at the Just Fair

AROUND THE COUNTRY: -Collectors of phones for recycling (see Phones for Justice below)
-Press Monitors—see item on this page.

AT THE LONDON OFFICE: To set up archives and other files, and organise and update literature received; about 2 hours a month.

BIRMINGHAM AREA: Help with mailings for Networking Days, and especially for the pre-Conference mailing (late May) and for collating the Conference Packs (July).

If you would like to offer help, please contact Ann at 39 Eccleston Square, London SW1V 1BX, 020 7901 4864. admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk

PHONES FOR JUSTICE

Recycle your old mobile phone and raise money for NJPN

- To claim the trade in value and donate £3 to NJPN:-
 - Or donate the total value to NJPN:-
- Log on to www.justice-and-peace.org.uk and follow the link to **envirocharities**.
- To find out about a collection point to send in your phone:-
 - Or to become a local collector:-
- Contact the Office for details:



020 7901 4864, admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk

FEBRUARY

- 21 **NJPN Networking Day** Diocesan Education Centre, 4 Southgate Drive, Crawley RH10 6RP. Speaker: Rob Esdaile: 020 7901 4864, admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk
- 23-9 **March Fairtrade Fortnight:** Fairtrade Foundation, 020 7440 7676, www.fairtrade.org
- 25 **Ash Wednesday Liturgy of Repentance and Resistance to Nuclear War Preparations**, MoD, London. Contact Pax Christi 020 8203 4884, www.paxchristi.org.uk
- 25-11 **April, York:** Series of lectures on ecology on Wednesday evenings at St John's University, includes Elaine Storkey, Mary Grey: eborlectures@yorks.ac.uk, Ebor Lectures, School of Education and Theology, York St John University College, Lord Mayor's Walk, York YO3 7EX. See also www.christian-ecology.org.uk
- 27-1 **March Soundcheck 09-Response:Ability.** The Synergy Centre, London: A weekend of exploration of how our Jesus centred spirituality leads us into radical prayer, creativity and action for justice: 020 7249 4309, www.speak.org.uk
- 28 **Building Alliance for Joint Action Against War:** Day Conference, Oxford. Network of Oxford Women for Justice and Peace: M Stanton, 01865 515195, www.nowpeace.org
- 28 **Westminster Diocese Fair Trade Event**, Holy Apostles, Pimlico: justiceandpeace@rcdow.org.uk; 020 8888 5518

MARCH

- 4, 11, 18, 25: **Surrender and Subversion.** An ecumenical Lenten course which will examine how the brutal story of Holy Week can teach us to interpret and resist violence in our world. Evenings, St Ethelburga's, London: events@stethelburgas.org, 020 7906 1610
- 6 **CAFOD Fast Day:** www.cafod.org.uk
- 6 **Women's World Day of Prayer** "In Christ there are many members yet one body", prepared by women of Papua New Guinea: 01892 541 411, www.wwdp-natcomm.org
- 7 **Peace Education Network Annual Conference** for anyone working with young people. Contact Hilary Topp at Pax Christi, 020 8203 4884
- 8 **International Women's Day:** www.internationalwomensday.com. Also Pax Christi for postcard campaign, 020 8203 4884, info@paxchristi.org.uk
- 15-15 **April Afghanistan Speaking Tour** around the UK: Voices in the Wilderness, 0845 4582564, voices@voicesuk.org
- 21 **Richard Moore, Children in Crossfire, Derry :** talks at St Mellitus Church, N4. Contact Bruce Kent, brucek@uk2.net
- 21 **No Accommodation Conference**, London: 020 7729 7985; Bethan@praxis.org.uk
- 24 **Archbishop Romero Anniversary:** Archbishop Romero Trust, 8 Dean's Mews, London W1G 9EE, romerotr@btinternet.com
- 25 **Renewing the Face of the Earth: Human Responsibility**

and the Environment. Archbishop Rowan Williams, York Minster. Details on www.christian-ecology.org.uk

- 28 **Shrewsbury Diocese Spirituality Day** Evron Centre, Stockport, led by Susie Bruard, CAFOD: Joan Sharples 01270 620 584, joansharples620@btinternet.com
- 28 **St Martin-in-the-Fields:** Ecumenical service in commemoration of Archbishop Romero. romerotr@btinternet.com
- 30-4 **April Healing the Wounds of Trauma; How the Church Can Help:** Bawtry Hall, Doncaster: Run by Enabling Christians Serving Refugees, Contact Sue, sue@ecsr.org.uk or see www.church-poverty.org.uk, tel CAP 0161 236 9321

APRIL

- 2 **G20 Summit**
- 3 **No to NATO** International demonstration, Strasbourg: CND, www.cnduk.org, enquiries@cnduk.org, 020 7700 2393
- 20-24 **Another Israel** Exhibition on Israeli peace groups working for Palestinian human rights, St Ethelburga's, Bishopsgate, London: events@stethelburgas.org, 020 7906 1610
- 23 **The Other Peace Process: The Role of Inter-religious Dialogue in the Middle East.** St Ethelburga's, Bishopsgate, London: events@stethelburgas.org, 020 7906 1610
- 24-25 **3rd Annual Peace History Conference**, Imperial War Museum, London. Movement for the Abolition of War: 01908 511948, www.abolishwar.org.uk, contact@abolishwar.org.uk

MAY

- 4 **Strangers into Citizens Rally:** London: www.strangersintocitizens.org.uk, or contact JRS 020 7357 0974
- 15 **International Conscientious Objectors Day:** www.wri-irg.org
- 15-17 **J&P LINKS Conference and AGM**
- 16 **NJPN AGM & Networking Day** CARJ, 9 Henry Road, London. Speaker: Cecilia Taylor-Camara, CARJ: 020 7901 4864, admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk
- 16 **Pax Christi AGM** London: 020 82034884
- 22-24 **Liverpool J&P Retreat: Prayer and Peace for the Holy Land** Information and booking: Loyola Hall, 0151 426 4137
- 23-30 **Visit to Israel/Palestine** led by former Ecumenical Accompanier, Martin Larmour: 020 8397 7575, mjllisnow@gmail.com
- 27 **Die in for NATO victims in Afghanistan:** Voices in the Wilderness, 0845 4582564, voices@voicesuk.org

JUNE

- 5 **World Environment Day** unep.org/wed
- 7 **Ecumenical Day of Prayer for Palestine:** Pax Christi, 020 8203 4884, info@paxchristi.org.uk
- 7 **Campaign Against Arms Trade Christian Network Day of Prayer:** 020 7281 0297, enquiries@caat.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.



NJPN-part of the livesimply network

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

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