



Justice & Peace

News from the National Justice & Peace Network

Spring 2003

**National
Justice & Peace
Network**
(NJPN)

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

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

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THE WAR PRAYER by Mark Twain

(abridged)

It was a time of great and exalting excitement.

The country was up in arms, the war was on, the drums were beating, the bands playing, the bunched firecrackers hissing and spluttering.

Daily the young volunteers marched down the wide avenue gay and fine in their new uniforms. Nightly the packed mass meetings listened to patriot oratory, in the churches the pastors preached devotion to flag and country and invoked the God of Battles, beseeching His aid in our good cause.

It was indeed a glad and gracious time, and the half-dozen rash spirits that ventured to disapprove of the war and cast a doubt upon its righteousness straightway got such a stern and angry warning they quickly shrank out of sight and offended no more in that way.

Sunday morning came - the church was filled; the volunteers were there, with their dear ones. The service proceeded; a war chapter from the Old Testament was read; it was followed by an organ burst that shook the building, and with one impulse the house rose, and poured out that tremendous invocation:

God the all-terrible! Thou who ordainest,
Thunder thy clarion and lightning thy sword!

Then came the "long" prayer. None could remember the like of it for passionate pleading. The burden of its supplication was that an ever-merciful Father of us all would watch over our noble young soldiers and aid, comfort, and encourage them in their patriotic work.

An aged stranger entered and moved with slow and noiseless step up the main aisle, his eyes fixed upon the minister, his seamy face pale even to ghastliness. With all eyes following him he made his silent way; without pausing, he ascended to the preacher's side and stood there, waiting.

With shut lids the preacher, continued his moving prayer, and at last finished it with the words fervent appeal, "Bless our arms, grant us the victory, O Lord our God, Father and Protector of our land and flag!"

The stranger touched his arm, motioned him to step aside and took his place. During some moments he surveyed the spellbound audience with solemn eyes, then in a deep voice he said:

"I come from the Throne - bearing a message from Almighty God!"

The words smote the house with a shock; if the stranger perceived it he gave no attention.

"He has heard the prayer of His servant your shepherd, and will grant it if such shall be your desire after I, His messenger, shall have explained to you its import - that is to say, its full import. For it is like many of the prayers of men, in that it asks for more than he who utters it is aware of - except he pause and think.

"God's servant and yours has prayed his prayer. Has he paused and taken thought? Is it one prayer? No, it is two - one uttered, the other not. Both have reached

the ear of Him Who heareth all supplications, the spoken and the unspoken. Ponder this - keep it in mind. If you would beseech a blessing upon yourself, beware! lest without intent you invoke a curse upon a neighbour at the same time. If you pray for the blessing of rain upon your crop which needs it, by that act you are possibly praying for a curse upon some neighbor's crop which may not need rain and can be injured by it. "You have heard your servant's prayer - the uttered part of it. I am commissioned of God to put into words the other part of it - that part which the pastor, and also you in your hearts, fervently prayed silently. And ignorantly and unthinkingly? God grant that it was so! You heard these words: 'Grant us the victory, O Lord our God!'

That is sufficient. The whole of the uttered prayer is compact into those pregnant words. Elaborations were not necessary. When you have prayed for victory you have prayed for many unmentioned results which follow victory - must follow it, cannot help but follow it. Upon the listening spirit of God the Father fell also the unspoken part of the prayer. He commandeth me to put it into words. Listen!

"O Lord our Father, our young patriots, idols of our hearts, go forth to battle - be Thou near them! With them, in spirit, we also go forth from the sweet peace of our beloved firesides to smite the foe.

"O Lord our God, help us to tear their soldiers to bloody shreds with our shells;

Help us to cover their smiling fields with the pale forms of their patriot dead;

Help us to drown the thunder of the guns with the shrieks of their wounded, writhing in pain;

Help us to lay waste their humble homes with a hurricane of fire;

Help us to wring the hearts of their unoffending widows with unavailing grief;

Help us to turn them out roofless with their little children to wander unfriended the wastes of their desolated land in rags and hunger and thirst, sports of the sun flames of summer and the icy winds of winter, broken in spirit, worn with travail, imploring Thee for the refuge of the grave and denied it -

"For our sakes who adore Thee, Lord, blast their hopes, blight their lives, protract their bitter pilgrimage, make heavy their steps, water their way with their tears, stain the white snow with the blood of their wounded feet!

"We ask it, in the spirit of love, of Him Who is the Source of Love, and Who is the ever-faithful refuge and friend of all that are sore beset and seek His aid with humble and contrite hearts. Amen."

After a pause: "Ye have prayed it; if ye still desire it, speak! The messenger of the Most High waits!"

It was believed afterward that the man was a lunatic, because there was no sense in what he said.

Grassroots Catholics pray for peace in Iraq and the Middle East

The "Prayer for Peace in Iraq and the Middle East" was prepared in October 2002 by the National Justice and Peace Network, Pax Christi and CAFOD. Due to popular demand there were several reprints and a total of 170,000 produced. The following feedback on distribution and use of the cards over the past two months is a sample of that received from the Catholic dioceses of England and Wales.

In every diocese in England & Wales the prayer cards have been distributed. In most cases the bishops highlighted the prayer in their Ad Clerum and the orders came flooding in. All dioceses have received several hundred cards and some dioceses have requested many thousands. Justice & Peace Commissions and groups have taken responsibility for distributing the prayer, for organising its use and encouraging parishes to hold peace vigils.

In Cardiff each Saturday morning there is an hour long Silent Vigil for Peace outside Penarth library. Hallam diocesan J&P Commission holds a "Time of Prayer for Peace in the Middle East" every Friday in St Marie's Cathedral. In Liverpool the Pax Christi group hold a weekly prayer vigil outside a city church and in Salford the J&P commission do the same outside the cathedral during 'rush-hour'.

'Wrexham Against War' have held candle-lit vigils for peace in the town centre and in Middlesbrough an ecumenical group gave witness in the Market Place at Pickering—a few yards from one of the many directional signs to Fylingdales. Other vigils have been held in York, in Plymouth, Poole and St Austell, in and around the diocese of Nottingham, in Newcastle and

We come to you, God Creator.
You are the source of life and beauty and power.
Your son Jesus is the way of faith and hope and love.
Your Spirit is the fire of love, the fount of wisdom, the bond of unity.
You call us at all times to be people of the beatitudes,
Witnesses to the Gospel of peace and love and forgiveness.
You call us at this time, when war and rumours of war, weigh heavily on the peoples of Iraq and the Middle East.
Their lives are already broken by suffering and violence.
We renew our acceptance of your call.
We promise to work:
To bring the light of the Gospel to those living in darkness,
To bring the hope of the Gospel to those living in despair,
To bring the healing of the Gospel to the lonely, the disadvantaged, the marginalized,
And to bring the peace of the Gospel to a divided world.
Amen

Durham. Most of the vigils organised have had an ecumenical dimension.

In Lancaster Bishop Patrick O'Donoghue wrote to all parishes on the issues. He also wrote a letter to The Times (26 December) which attracted huge attention from newspapers, radio and television.

In Portsmouth Bishop Hollis spoke against war at a Civic mass and in Abingdon a parishioner wrote a special setting of a Mass for Peace. In Guernsey an open air vigil was held and the bishop spoke against war on Radio Guernsey.

In Southwark, where cards were supplied to all members of the diocese the Catholic Chaplaincy at HMP Wandsworth placed cards in the chapel for prisoners to take back to their cells. At the Universities of Brighton & Sussex the Catholic Chaplaincy Association have organised the annual "Howard Lecture" with Bruce Kent speaking on "The Abolition of War".

As well as all the cards issued and being used in England and Wales the prayer has now been translated and is being used in several countries in Europe and is being distributed further through the European Justice & Peace Commission.

Whatever action is being taken in your area? Let us know.



Rosa Shea (NJPN Chair) handing in the Iraq prayer at 10 Downing Street with Giovanni Scudiro & Sr Maureen Lynch

DESTITUTION OF ASYLUM SEEKERS

Up to 250 asylum seekers in Calais, most of them young men in their twenties, are sleeping rough in Calais in near freezing conditions. There has been a steady stream of young refugees from Iraq arriving in Calais – many of them fleeing persecution from Saddam Hussein's military police. There are also a significant number from Afghanistan. Determined to come to England at all costs, they are living in precarious conditions, attempting to hide from French police in fear of being deported if caught. In the current cold weather many of them are suffering from serious physical and psychological illnesses but are too afraid to seek help.

Voluntary groups continue to try their best to provide what assistance they can. From a portakabin near the centre of Calais, volunteers serve soup and snacks to hundreds of young people. In a minibus parked nearby two volunteer nurses attempt to provide a minimum of basic care. Some temporary showers have been installed in the garden of the local presbytery, but otherwise there are no sanitary facilities.

The voluntary groups involved lack the funding to maintain even this basic minimum of help and supplies for each day currently cost £150. Kent Refugee Action Network (KRAN) is co-ordinating an appeal to Churches and other groups to assist 'La Belle Etoile' – the group which is co-ordinating the efforts of the other voluntary groups in Calais.

Ben Bano, KRAN spokesperson, said: 'It is clear that the closure of Sangatte has not prevented hundreds of desperate young men from taking their chances in getting to England. Furthermore, the changes to legislation from 8th January in the UK could lead to similar scenes to those in Calais in the streets of Dover since those people who claim asylum other than at the port of entry could be left destitute.

KRAN calls on both the UK and French governments to work together to ensure that the scenes in Calais do not happen on either side of the Channel and that a basic minimum of shelter is provided for all who require it.'

Cheques made payable to : Kent Refugee Action Network and marked 'Calais Appeal' should be sent to KRAN, PO Box 294, Dover, CT17 9GY

RECOMMENDED

The Social Agenda of the Catholic Church.

Published by the Vatican, this book brings together key statements made by popes on social justice. £14.99 + £2.99 from CTS. 020 7834 1363

C.E.L.

CHRISTIAN ECOLOGY LINK

Paul Bodenham, Corner Cottage, Main Street, Langar, Nottingham NG13 9HE Telephone 01949 861516; E-mail cornercottage@fish.co.uk

To find out more, visit our website at www.christian-ecology.org.uk, or send for a copy of the special edition of Green Christians.

NJPN FORMATION

For information, bookings and further details contact Rosemary Read, National J&P Fieldworker (01332 293336) or rosemary@read2804freeserve.co.uk who also continues to offer support to local groups and dioceses.

WORKSHOPS

- Each day will start at 9.30 or 10am and will finish by 4 or 4.30pm depending on the venue.
- It is important that people register their intention to attend.

19 June will be a "Reproduce it Yourself" day. All dioceses are invited to send people to observe the day which will involve all the staff of this Catholic Comprehensive School. We intend to ensure that all observers will leave feeling that they can reproduce the day in their own diocese/area again with observers so that the day can go on being repeated.

This is the second edition of this newsletter to focus on one of the agencies whose work we promote and support.

In our day the human race is rediscovering its dependence on Creation. We now know that our dysfunctional relationship with nature is causing human poverty and dispossession. We are learning that 'love for neighbour' has to encompass future generations, as well as our own. We are realising, slowly and painfully, that our notion of progress can be an abuse of God-given power.

Since 1981 Christian Ecology Link has been bearing witness to what Pope John Paul II has recently called an 'ecological conversion'. Our activities include: producing several different newsletters for groups; staging conferences and workshops on topical issues; developing links with denominations at national level and ensuring a Christian analysis is heard in public debate and campaigning.

We work extensively with others who share our concerns such as: the Eco congregation programme which helps churches review the way they promote care for creation; denomination initiatives, such as NJPN, the Columbans, Anglican diocesan Environmental officer, Quaker Green Action and CEL and other Christian environment groups.

Whilst CEL is concerned about the whole

range of environmental and other justice and peace issues, we have identified two topics on which a distinctive Christian voice needs to be heard: climate change and food and farming.

'**LOAF**' encourages reflection on what we eat by advocating food that is Locally grown, Organically produced, Animal friendly and Fairly traded

'**Operation Noah**', due to be launched this Spring, is an ambitious programme to enable the churches to lead public debate about climate change. Resources are provided to help churches and community groups to 'build the Ark' in society at large. Individuals and organisations sign a 'Climate Covenant' in a framework known internationally as 'contraction and convergence'. In addition, participants agree to take action personally to cut greenhouse gas emissions, for instance by converting to less-polluting electricity for their home or church. The programme is supported by a wide range of off-the-peg resources, such as magazine articles, a bible study, drama sketch, talks and press releases.

But CEL is not just another pressure group. Our activity is underpinned by the awareness that everything gives praise to its Creator, and deserves to be protected for that reason.

JUSTICE AND PEACE WORKSHOPS Spring – Summer 2003

FEB Sat 15th

Call to Conversion (Weapons etc)

Our Lady and St. Edward, Marlborough, Fulwood, Preston
Facilitated by Pat Gaffney (Pax Christi) & Rosemary Read

FEB Sat 22nd

Theology & Spirituality of Justice & Peace

Lee House, Thornley, Longridge, Preston
Facilitated by P. Purnell S.J. & Rosemary Read

MARCH Sat 1st

Trade Justice

St. Michael's Convent, Marlowe Park, Swindon.
Facilitated by Jo Kitterick (CAFOD) Brian Davies formerly of CAFOD) & Rosemary Read

MARCH Sat 8th

Refugees & Asylum Seekers

Room 12 Friends House, Euston London
Facilitated by Louise Zanre (Jesuit Refugee Service) & Naomi Cheesman (National Catholic Refugee Forum) & Rosemary Read

MARCH Sat 22nd

Justice & the Environment

St. Bernadette's, Whitefield, Manchester
Facilitated by Mike Monaghan (Christian Ecology Link) & Rosemary Read

APRIL Sat 26th

Justice & the Environment

Holy Trinity Parish Centre, Culliford Rd, North Dorchester.
Facilitated by Edward Echlin (Christian Ecology Link) & Rosemary Read

MAY Sat 10th

Theology & Spirituality of Justice & Peace

St. John the Evangelist, Horsham.
Facilitated by Patrick Purnell S.J. and Rosemary Read

MAY Sat 17th

Refugees & Asylum Seekers

Plymouth Cathedral Parish Centre, Cecil St, Plymouth
Facilitated by Louise Zanre (JRS); Naomi Cheesman (NCRF) & Rosemary Read

JUNE Sat 14th

Justice & the Environment

Room 12 Friends House Euston London
Facilitated by Edward Echlin (Christian Ecology Link) & Rosemary Read

JUNE Thu 19th

INSET for Schools

Christ the King Arnold Nottingham
Facilitated by Brian Davies, Dave Wells (Religious Education Plymouth Service) and Rosemary Read

2003 - International Year of Freshwater

(Please check all details with organisers before using this information)

- Feb 15 National Demonstration in Central London, organised by the Stop the War Coalition - Trafalgar Square
- Feb 21-23 *Wealth - the blessing of God or the root of all evil?* J&P Weekend Retreat led by Fr Paul Fleetwood and Nuala Wood at Worth Abbey. £80/£75 - Worth Abbey, Paddockhurst Road, Turners Hill, Crawley, West Sussex RH10 4SB, 01342 710318 or spirituality@worth.org.uk or visit www.worth.org.uk.
- Feb 22-23 *Integrating life and faith: working for the common good - discovering the Word of God through scripture, life and community.* Ushaw College with Craighead Institute. 0191 373 8517 or tracy.maratty@ushaw.ac.uk
- Feb 22 Amnesty International "Americas Conference", London Voluntary Sector Resource Centre, 356 Holloway Rd. Contact Mary Martin (01355 224194 or MartinIKEK@aol.com)
- Feb 22 UNA-UK London & SE Regional Council, Christchurch URC, Petts Wood, Kent. Lunch from 12h00 with stalls and entertainment; 14h00 John Horam, MP speaks on the way ahead from the Johannesburg Summit; 15h00 tea and business meeting, concludes 17h00.
- Mar 1 Landmine Action Day. (David Hillman, UK Working Group on Landmines, 020 7272 4431 or UKWGLM@msn.com or www.landmines.org.uk).
- Mar 1 *Spirituality and Justice* - one of the sessions for "Turning your parish inside-out", with Pastoral Department of the Liverpool Archdiocese. £5. 0151 522 1040.
- Mar 2 Unemployment Sunday, "Give us this day our daily bread". Resources for the day and for Lent (ideas for worship, shared lunch, postcards to MPs and others, ...) from CAP, Central Buildings, Oldham St, Manchester M1 1JT (0161 236 9321 or visit www.church-poverty.org.uk)
- Mar 3-16 Fairtrade Fortnight 020 7405 5942 (Fairtrade Foundation - www.fairtrade.org.uk)
- Mar 4 Launch of *Caritas Social Action*, new Agency of Bishops' Conference. 020 7901 4875
- Mar 5 Ash Wednesday, start of Lent. Events at various places, including Ministry of Defence: *No To Nuclear Terrorism*, meeting at Embankment Gardens at 15h00. (Info. through Pax Christi 020 8203 4884, and others).
- Lent CAP's "Lent Challenge" to reduce your disposable income to the equivalent of the Minimum Wage over the six weeks of Lent - contact CAP, Central Buildings, Oldham St, Manchester M1 1JT or visit www.church-poverty.org.uk
- Mar 7 Women's World Day of Prayer Contact Lynda Lynam 01892 541411.
- Mar 12 UNA Annual Lobby of Parliament, with Public Meeting 15h00-17h30 at the House of Commons. Main themes include respect for international law when acting upon Iraq, meeting the 0.7% GNP target for development aid, meeting the UN objectives on Freshwater and better arms control brokering. Contact Peter Dyson, UNA-UK, 3 Whitehall Court, London SW1A 2EL for registration and briefing pack or email pdyson@una-uk.org.
- Mar 14 CAFOD Lent Fast Day 020 7733 7900
- Mar 14-16 Spirituality in the Work Place: Taking responsibility for ourselves and others. Fr Dermot Tredget at Douai Abbey (0118 971 5325 or fr.dermot@douayabbey.org.uk or visit www.douaiabbey.org.uk)
- Mar 15 *Pacem in Terris - Unfinished Business for the Church Today.* 40th Anniversary Conference, 10h30-17h00, Maria Assumpta Centre, 23 Kensington Square, London W8. Speakers and workshop leaders include Roger Rushton, Tina Beattie, Ian Linden, Mildred Nevile, Louise Zanré, Bruce Kent, Chris Cole. Price £10/£5, booking via Pax Christi, St Joseph's, Watford Way, London NW4 4TY. 020 8203 4884
- Mar 22 World Day for Water (UN; info from Water Aid - 0113 231 2928 or www.wateraid.org.uk or contact Tear Fund for their booklet *Water in Tomorrow's World* at £1, on 0845 355 8355 or enquiry@tearfun.org). More information on water from Water Observatory (www.waterobservatory.org) and Water Matters (www.watermatters.org.uk)
- Mar 29 Shrewsbury J&P Conference at Crewe, 10h30-16h30 -£7/£0 (01270 620584 or sdjp@fish.co.uk). *Making All Things New.* Christine Allen will be the keynote speaker. Crèche available; comprehensive range of seminars and workshops.
- Mar 29 *March to the End of the World.* From Esso HQ in Leatherhead to US Embassy, London. Rally at Imperial War Museum (Geraldine Harmsworth Park), 15h30, before final leg of march to Embassy in Grosvenor Square, where there will be an End of the World Party at 17h30. "Are Bush and Exxon leading us to the End of the World after Kyoto?"
- Apr 25-27 UNA Annual Conference, Univ. of East Anglia: £120. (UNA, 3 Whitehall Court, London SW1A 2EL, 020 7930 5893, info@una-uk.org or www.una-uk.org)
- Apr 29 Friends of Sabeel 3rd AGM at their Liverpool office in Friends Meeting House, Liverpool (0151 707 9500 or fosuk@fish.co.uk). [Sabeel is a Christian centre for Liberation Theology in the Holy Land]
- May 1 Church-based "Just Share" events on May Day 2002 - www.justshare.org.uk
- May British Aerospace AGM in London - annual protest and shareholder action info. from CAAT (020 7281 0297)
- May 9 Europe Day (annual date) - resource material from Bishops' Conference office, 020 79014865 or European Anti Poverty Network on 0121 678 8833.
- May 11-17 Christian Aid Week. (Details from David Watt 020 7523 2315/2225). *International Aid, where's the catch?* Launch of new campaign, *Trade for Life.*
- Jul 11-13 **25th NJPN Annual Conference, Swanwick, *Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after justice - A theology of protest in a globalised world.* More at: www.justice-and-peace.org.uk or 020 7901 4864**