



Justice & Peace

News from National Justice and Peace Network

Summer 2004

National Justice & Peace Network (NJPN)

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NATIONAL JUSTICE AND PEACE NETWORK
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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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Maureen Matthews
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CONSULTATION - with Agencies and Religious



Discussion groups at the Consultation

On 31st March 2004 the National Justice and Peace Network welcomed twenty representatives from Agencies and Religious Orders to a Consultation to seek their views as to how they would like to see the National Justice and Peace Network develop over the next three years. This was part of a larger consultation taking place over the next few months among all NJPN members and 'stakeholders'.

Those present started by sharing the most valuable aspects of our partnership over the years. Our guests highlighted, in particular, the value of Conferences, Training Days and the

welcome, diversity and expertise found at our quarterly meetings.

Some key ideas for our development plan were identified:

- Continuation of Annual Conferences
- More interchurch and interfaith cooperation leading to a new model of community
- Education for Lay Leadership in the Church with Justice as the focus, not as a marginalised extra
- Local people working on local issues, becoming a ministry to local communities
- Education to take place alongside campaigning
- Grassroots action harnessing the energy and enthusiasm of young people and passing on knowledge and expertise.

The afternoon was skillfully facilitated by Jo Kitterick, of CAFOD, and additional feed-back from Agencies, Religious and all those with an interest in work for justice and peace, is welcomed.

- with you

Introduction

The last 10 years have seen a steady increase in NJPN business. 1997 – 2000 saw the employment of a National Jubilee Worker raising awareness of justice and peace issues across the whole Catholic church in England & Wales, leading up to the Millennium. Further funding allowed NJPN to continue with a part-time National Fieldworker, on a number of focussed activities. In 2001 NJPN published its Vision, Mission and Values Statement 'Bringing Forth the Kingdom' which presented its thinking on the way ahead.

However, two constraints impacted in 2003 that have both challenged the status quo and opened opportunities for the future.

The first was the need to set-up our own payroll and employee support for the part-time Administrator, widely known for her work on our Annual Conferences. A number of alternative arrangements were seriously considered, but eventually NJPN decided to become a Company limited by guarantee to provide the sound legal framework for future development.

The second, was our inability to raise sufficient further funding to continue with the National Fieldworker Project.

Present Situation

NJPN employs a part-time Administrator, and our membership remains as it was, representatives of the 22 Catholic dioceses of England and Wales. The previous executive has become the company's board of directors.

NJPN is now looking to secure its long-term future. An important part of that is to develop an appropriate and realistic strategic plan (to help secure funds among other things). For this it needs the help of all its members, affiliates and friends. It is clearly recognised that a strength of NJPN has been its 'grass-roots' involvement in parish and diocesan life. Consultation has already begun at a number of levels, but crucially, NJPN wishes to draw on the experience and recommendations of its core membership, the Diocesan J & P Commissions and groups.

The Questionnaire

The questionnaire overleaf invites response on a number of issues identified as vitally important. At stake could be a number of far-reaching changes to, for example, membership, core activities and funding. Please consider your responses carefully and prayerfully, if possible tapping the wisdom and insights of those of your network whose judgement you value.

The question form gives space for further observations and comments.

Please send your response by 10 June at the latest, so that it can be considered by the directors during the latter part of 2004. Should you wish to discuss any matters with members of the NJPN board, please contact the Administrator for contact addresses. Finally, thank you. In anticipation for your considered contributions to NJPN's future. Please continue to hold NJPN and all its members in your prayers.

Questionnaire - page 2

NATIONAL JUSTICE and PEACE NETWORK - QUESTIONNAIRE

You may tick more than one box per question. Thank you for your participation in our consultation.

Vision, Mission, Values

1. What roles is NJPN called to address in the life of the Church and country?

Meet Diocesan needs / Encourage prophetic voice of church / Work with all who share our aims / Other-
(give details or reasons) _ _ _ _ _

- a. Meet Diocesan needs: How can NJPN avoid being inward-looking?
- b. Encourage prophetic voice of church: How can NJPN keep true to Gospel values?
- c. Work with all who share our aims: Which groups are we not in touch with? How can we avoid fragmentation?

Core activities

2. What do you see as the main works of NJPN in the next 3 years?

Annual Conference / Regional Rallies / Training events / National voice / Extending the Network / Expanded Newsletter/
Magazine / Quarterly meetings or other one-day events / Popular resources / Develop website / Other
(give details or reasons) _ _ _ _ _

- a. Annual Conference: How should this develop? How can we capitalise on its success?
- b. Training: What topics, how and where delivered?
- c. National Voice: What form would this take?
- d. Extending Network: To which groups or individuals?
- e. Expanded Newsletter/Magazine: What frequency of publication? What features would you like to see?
- f. Quarterly meetings or other one-day events: How have you benefited from these?
- g. Popular resources: In what topics/areas would you suggest?
- h. Develop website: Have you used NJPN's website?

3. To meet the workload required for core activities should NJPN:-

Recruit volunteers for special tasks / Employ staff / Not increase the workload / Other
(give details or reasons) _ _ _ _ _

- a. Recruit volunteers: Where from? What are the pros and cons?
- b. Employ staff: What does experience of National Fieldworker Project suggest? How to fund?
- c. Not increase: Is this realistic when expectations seem to be increasing?

Membership

4. Would you like to see membership:-

Remain diocesan / Include Agencies / Include Religious / Include individuals / Have a range of different classes / Other
(give details or reasons) _ _ _ _ _

- a. Remain Diocesan: NJPN has 22 members at the moment.
- b. Include Agencies: Limited number? With same voting/membership rights as dioceses?
- c. Include Religious: Limited number? With same voting/membership rights as dioceses?
- d. Include individuals: What relationship would these have with the other types of membership?
- e. Have a range of different classes: Should one or more classes have a veto on some issues?

5. What benefits of membership do/would you value highly?

Quarterly/other meetings / Extensive/up-to-date website / Reduced cost Annual Conference / Free publications / Other
(give details or reasons) _ _ _ _ _

- a. Quarterly/other meetings: How would you change their regularity, location or agenda?
- b. Extensive/up-to-date website: What features would you like to see?
- c. Reduced cost Annual Conference: How could we link this with subscribing membership?
- d. Free publications: What NJPN publications have you found most useful?

Funding

6. To meet even present demands NJPN must increase its income. From:-

Dioceses / Agencies & Religious / Individual members / Any way possible / Other
(give details or reasons) _ _ _ _ _

- a. Dioceses: Most are seeing their income fall. Some can't pay £100 pa even now.
- b. Agencies and Religious: Some are seeing their income fall and have more calls on their funds.
- c. Individual members: 300 people paying £10 a month raises £36,000 pa to say nothing of wills and bequests.
- d. Any way possible: Employ a Fund-raiser? Become a charity? How much would this help?

**Please respond to this questionnaire or write your suggestions and send to the NJPN Administrator,
39 Eccleston Square, London, SW1V 1BX by 10 June (or Email: maureen.matthews@which.net)**

HOUSING JUSTICE



HOUSING JUSTICE

209 Old Marylebone Road
London NW1 5QT

Tel: 0207 723 7273
E: info@housingjustice.org.uk
www.housingjustice.org.uk

Date for you diary:
Homelessness Sunday 2005 –
30th January. Theme: Building
Homes. Building Lives.

EU

Rosa Shea, Chair of NJPN, joined other members of the UK contingent travelling to Compostela to mark the enlargement of the EU

The Commission of the Bishops' Conferences of the European Community's document "Solidarity is the Soul of the European Union", was released on 29 April, following their five day pilgrimage.

This is the sixth report from an agency whose work we promote and support.

Home is the place where we build our families and find the space to develop alongside friends and loved ones. To be deprived of such a basic necessity is to feel less than human. Homelessness and living in poor housing is not inevitable – something can be done.

Formed through the merger of the Catholic Housing Aid Society (CHAS) and the Churches National Housing Coalition (CNHC) in 2003, Housing Justice is the new national voice of Christian action to prevent homelessness and bad housing. We believe that human dignity is challenged by the lack of a decent home and so we aim to mobilise Christians, united in their determination to work with and for homeless and badly people. Our vision is of a society where everyone has a home that truly meets their needs.

How can we put into action this bold vision to unite all Christians in taking action to prevent homelessness? Clearly we need to link with local church communities throughout the UK. Working in partnership with local church groups and with other organisations, including the government, Housing Justice plans to develop common agendas to prevent homelessness and bad housing.

The starting point is the work in which we are already engaged. Every year **Homelessness Sunday** inspires hundreds of thousands of people throughout the country to do reflect on and pray about homelessness. It is an ideal opportunity for churches to get together to take practical action as well. The theme of the 11th annual Homelessness Sunday on 31st of January 2004 was **Building Justice – Yes we**

can! Based on Jesus' dramatic announcement at the start of his ministry that he came to restore society as well as to save individuals. In addition to holding special services and collections (of money, chocolate, socks or toiletries) churches and homelessness action groups drew attention to the issues by holding sleep-outs, dispensing free soup to passers by and creating an outdoor bedsit from donated furniture.



Soup kitchen at St Chad's school, Runcorn on Homelessness Sunday

Housing Justice provides frontline services to people in housing need and campaigns to improve housing policy. We have a network of 11 housing advice agencies and numerous community projects, and develop models for frontline services that local groups can adopt.

Our key community projects include:

- ◆ **MegaBite** – a food token scheme operating with people on the street in four areas around the country
- ◆ **Regenerate** – an initiative to enable residents to take the lead in renewing their estates. Our Regenerate worker is working with tenants on seven estates around the country. He also helps tenants who are thinking about getting involved by arranging for them to visit estates where significant change has already been brought about through residents' groups.
- ◆ **The Just Housing Account** with Triodos Bank, providing ethical funds for housing projects
- ◆ And we service the **All-Party Parliamentary Group** on Homelessness and Housing Need, which has 217 members, MPs and Peers, from all political parties.

Alison Gelder

'Solidarity between the states and peoples of the EU'

We gathered, all 263 of us, including 24 bishops, at Bishops' Conference in Madrid on 17 April, to travel on our four day ecumenical pilgrimage to the shrine of St. James the Apostle in Santiago de Compostela. We represented every country in the new European Union from Latvia to Malta. Our purpose was to celebrate a historic moment, with the accession of ten new members states to the European Union on the 1 May.

Our pilgrimage started officially at the Benedictine Monastery de Silos with Vespers and a Reception, including a welcome from a Spanish MEP and a video message from Romano Prodi, President of the European Commission.

Every day followed a similar pattern with Mass, then a coach journey escorted by the military police (described as an act of courtesy, but, perhaps, a sign of the times), more prayers, a picnic, walking like true pilgrims along the Camino, more coach travel, ecumenical Vespers.

There were so much that was special about this unique journey along the Camino.



UK group: Lord Dan Brennan, Rosa Shea, Bishop John Crowley, Bernard McDermot, Jenny Banks-Bryer, Frank Turner SJ, Nicholas Postlethwaite

A renowned French Dominican composer, Andres Gouzes, formed a four part pilgrims' choir and taught us some of his own liturgical music. The services were in Spanish, French, German and English and the bidding prayers in the 25 EU languages.

We were addressed by different European politicians each evening. Mary Hanafin, a member of the Irish Government spoke with humour, passion and profound conviction about the Christian heritage that we share, *Cont on page 4*

2004 (Please check all details with organisers before using this information)

May 9	Europe Day Bishops' Conference 020 7901 4865
May 16	World Debt Day Jubilee Debt Campaign
May 9-15	Christian Aid Week 020 7620 4444
May 26-27	Shavuot - Jewish Festival
May 30	Pentecost
June 5	World Environment Day (UN) www.unmeditation.org/
June 5-12	Stop the Arms Trade Week Day of prayer on 6 June. CAAT 0171 281 0297
June 12	Pax Christi AGM , Vaughan House, London 0208 203 4884
June 14-20	Refugee Week Refugee Week Information Line 020 7820 3055.
June 16-30	Ramallah John Keane West Bank Exhibition Khalil Sakakini Cultural Centre Derby www.sakakini.org
June 20	World Refugee Day (UN) www.unmeditation.org/
July 11	World Population Day (UN) www.unmeditation.org/
July 16-18	National Justice & Peace Conference: "Bringing Forth the Kingdom: Love and Justice in a Broken World" 020 7901 4864. www.justice-and-peace.org.uk
Aug 7-14	'Making connections: the poor and the planet' Ellen Teague & Rosemary Read SPEC Centre, London Colney 01342-311435
Aug 6 & 9	Anniversaries of first use of atomic weapons at Hiroshima & Nagasaki. Pax Christi 020 8203 4884 & CND 020 7700 2393.
Sept 12	Racial Justice Sunday CARJ 020 8802 8080 CCRJ 020 7620 4444
Sept 21	Global Ceasefire Day 0207 456 9180 www.peaceday.org
Oct 1	CAFOD Harvest Fast Day 0207 733 7900
Oct 9	CEL Conference Coventry 0208 989 7488
Oct 10-17	Interfaith Week of Prayer for World Peace 0117 942 3454
Oct 17	International Day for the Eradication of Poverty 0207 703 5400
Oct 17-24	One World Week "Your Move!" 0118 939 4933
Nov 1-7	Landmine Action Week 0207 820 0222
Nov 21	Prisoners' Sunday 0207 582 1313
Dec 1	World AIDS Day 0207 814 6726
Dec 10	Human Rights Day www.unmeditation.org/

CATHOLICS AND THE JUNE ELECTIONS

At the time of the General Election in 1996, we published *The Common Good* in which we spoke of our concern over 'a weakening of the sense of mutual responsibility and a decline in the spirit of solidarity – the crumbling of the cement that binds individuals into a society'. Since that time, the world has become more divided and more dangerous.

We encourage Catholics to keep this in mind when participating in the European and local elections taking place on 10 June this year. In deciding how to vote, they may want to consider the following:

- We live in a time when ethnic and religious tensions threaten local communities and whole regions of the wider world.
- Candidates and political parties which seek to foster these divisions should not be supported.
- We must look instead for political leadership that is committed to healing divisions, bridging differences and creating truly inclusive community.

We welcome and join our own voice with the recent statements of other Christian churches which have condemned the policies of racist political parties as incompatible with the Christian Gospel.

STATEMENT BY CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF ENGLAND & WALES - April 2004

Cont from page 3

the historic significance of the new EU and the importance of reaching out to those of other faiths who are entering Europe. Earlier in the afternoon we had battled against a wind that nearly blew us off our feet on the Camino. When Mary finished with a traditional Irish blessing 'May the road rise before you and may the wind be always at your back' she was greeted with an unexpected gale of laughter!

Alojz Peterle, a former leader from Slovenia, spoke with modesty and clarity about how he had led his country, without conflict or bloodshed, towards their new membership of the EU. He then surprised us by getting out his mouth organ and leading a crowded hall in singing the European Anthem, Beethoven's 'Ode to Joy'.

We had been warned about cold and wet weather and it was freezing at times, particularly in those big, stone cathedrals. Of course we were very high up and travelling through flat, arid regions to the more verdant areas in Galicia. As we arrived on the outskirts of Santiago the heavens opened and it did not clear up! That did not dampen our sense of achievement as we followed our banners into the Cathedral of Santiago, the shrine of Saint James the Apostle. It houses a famous thurifer, 1.1 metres high, weighing 50 kg and swung from side to side, nearly touching the roof. Its use was essential in the 12th century to purify the air! It is now described as a symbol of spiritual cleansing and was indeed an impressive and joyful sight as it was operated in honour of our pilgrimage, after our final Mass.

My overwhelming memory of the Pilgrimage is of a kaleidoscope of beautiful churches, magnificent singing, catching sight of other pilgrims walking along the Camino and, best of all, meeting with people from all over Europe. I am convinced that we enjoyed the journey as much as any of the thousands of pilgrims, over the centuries, in whose footsteps we trod.

Rosa Shea