

Message from the Chair

Dear friends,

Thank you to all of you who were able to join us for the annual Assembly in October. We were given two informative presentations on Migration and the call to welcome the stranger in our own parishes and communities.

One of the earliest Justice And Peace actions I can remember in our diocese was the call to send greetings cards to Prisoners of Conscience at the Christmas season. Despite all the electronic possibilities we have for campaigning and communications it is still a simple and effective way to bring hope to those in different parts of the world confined in prison often in harsh conditions and treated unjustly. Lists can be found on the commission website.

I commend this action to you and your group as an action for the Advent season. Please respect the instructions to send non-religious cards to prisoners in non-Christian countries. It can be done at any time and does not have a Christmas deadline.

May God bless you and your work for the oppressed and the poor of the world.

With all good wishes for your work for justice and peace.

Fr Gerard Murray (Chair)

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Dates for your diary:

Annual Justice and Peace Lenten Retreat will take place at Selly Park Convent, Selly Park. Birmingham B29 7LL on **16th March 2019** 10am to 4pm
It will be led by Fr. Martin Newell

Annual Justice and Peace Assembly
Saturday 12th October 2019
St. Peter's School, Solihul (to be confirmed)

Our Justice and Peace Assembly 2018



I was a stranger and you welcomed me

Matthew 25:35

This year's Justice and Peace Assembly took place on Saturday 13th October 2018 and our theme was Migration. Our two guest speakers were Nicholas Hanrahan, Community Outreach Officer Jesuit Refugee Services UK and David Newall, Brushstrokes. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who helped make this event so friendly and interesting. Before the Assembly we emailed out a draft of our proposed Environmental Policy. Thank you to everyone who has sent us feedback on this. We will be discussing your comments at our next Commission meeting.



We thank the Head Girl and Deputy Head Boy for all their help and support during the morning.

<https://www.birminghamjandp.org.uk/annual-assemblies.html> for more photographs etc.

During this event we were also promoting bio-degradable cutlery, plates and straws. We hope that you will also be trying to encourage the reduction in the use of plastic and promote alternative packaging, etc. We were also given a brief update on what is going on with [Traidcraft](https://www.traidcraft.org.uk). For the most up to date information <https://www.traidcraft.org.uk/blog/2018/10/26/our-mission-now-is-about-three-things>



Our new popup banners were in use at the Assembly, we also took them along to the Celebration Day Mass where we promoted Justice and Peace issues and the use of bio-degradable items.



Rising Up!

In Fr Martin Newell's workshop at the Assembly, we were given a paper outlining his understanding of our faith position relating to the environment, with a focus on current crises especially climate change and the current reality of climate change and the environmental crisis.

He says: 'My understanding, in a very summarised way ... is that we are in a dire global emergency with radical change needed urgently.' He goes on to say:

“WHAT CAN WE DO?”

“It is theoretically possible, we have the ability, to make rapid changes to the economy through a 'World War 2 style' mobilisation of the economy, reducing energy use, installing renewable power, decommissioning fossil fuel power plants, retro-fitting housing and heating, replacing fossil fuel transport, changing farming practices, etc. It would require a massive political earthquake to create the will for fundamental change in our economic system as well as investments in renewable energy.

“However, we cannot just wait for this to happen. Time is very short. At current rates of emissions, the IPCC forecast that the 1.5 degree carbon budget will be used up in about 3 years. Although there have been some recent studies indicating we may have longer, averaging them out still indicates only 9 years to be safely below - that is, at 66% likelihood - the 1.5 degrees target.

“Part of the problem is that the lag effect of emissions makes it hard for us to realise the reality of the crisis now. Therefore, action is needed to create a political crisis, to bring the future into the present. This sounds impossible. However, research from the last 100 years around the world shows that only 3.5% - 4% of the population is needed to commit to civil, nonviolent resistance to create a serious and real political crisis. 'Rising Up' have a plan to try to create a mass civil resistance movement over the environmental crisis, the climate emergency and the crisis of mass species extinctions which human activity is also creating. It is based on the belief that the current economic system needs fundamental change to prevent catastrophe, which could even possibly cause human extinction.

“Therefore, I am preparing to help organise and take part in this plan of **Rising Up!***. It is likely to involve 2 weeks in prison in the autumn for taking part in relatively large scale, nonviolent, disruptive protests. This is likely to be repeated. Going to prison in a large group is judged to be necessary, due to what one of the founders of Rising Up calls the 'mysterious power of voluntary suffering'. For us, it is the redemptive power of the way of the Cross. It is not perfect, but it seems to me the best worked out approach there is to try to create the necessary political crisis and change.

“I am offering this paper to explain why I plan to be involved in such nonviolent direct action. In particular, since the planned actions may lead to considerable publicity and controversy. I would be grateful for your support and prayers, as well as your help and participation if at all possible.”

* **Rising Up!** is a new organisation aiming to be a social movement. They are calling for a fundamental change of the political and economic system to one which maximises wellbeing and minimises harm. They believe change needs to be rooted in reverence and gratitude and that confrontation through mass civil disobedience is necessary.

<https://risingup.org.uk/pledge/climate-action-pledge-%E2%80%93-changes-everything>



We thank Colin Cartwright from Aquabox for helping us to understand how they support people by giving them the means to produce fresh drinking water.



Aquabox is a charity and community project set up and managed by the Rotary Club of Wirksworth to provide safe drinking water, through the use of filtration units, and humanitarian aid to crisis zones around the world.

Since its formation in 1992, Aquabox has distributed more than 110,000 boxes to countries suffering from natural and man-made disasters, helping hundreds of thousands of people in more than 50 countries. As well as a water-filtration unit, each Aquabox contains a variety of humanitarian aid items, including cooking utensils, hygiene equipment, tools, shelter materials, baby and children's clothing and educational items.

Natural disasters happen all too often and when they do people are in desperate need of safe drinking water and humanitarian help. We rely entirely on donations and the fundraising activities of our supporters to fund our work and purchase the items which we supply in the aid boxes. Without the generosity of our supporters, we would not be able to continue this work.

In recognition of the contribution made by Aquabox to helping those in need and of the work put in by all the volunteers, we were very proud to receive the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service in June 2016. [Read more here.](#)

Aquabox is almost entirely a volunteer-led organisation, with one part-time paid administrator, so the proportion of total donations contributing directly to aid boxes is amongst the highest achievable.

<https://www.aquabox.org/>

Help Us Send More Boxes. Natural or man-made disasters happen all too often and when they do people are in desperate need of safe drinking water and humanitarian help.

We rely entirely on donations and the fundraising activities of our supporters to fund our work and to purchase the items which we supply in the aid boxes we send out in times of crisis.

Each Aquabox, packed with over 70 humanitarian aid items and an AquaFilter Family Unit costs us £150. If we send out 500 boxes (a typical container shipment) that's £75,000, plus the shipping costs.

LITERACY in a BOX

Dear Supporter,

The Trust has continued to help our children in Zambia and this month we celebrate the sending of the 1000th Literacy Box worldwide. Thank you so much for your ongoing financial support. I sincerely hope we can continue to rely on you in the future so that we can give continuity of supply of Literacy Boxes to enable childrens' education to flourish.

I have just returned from a trip to see these children in their schools in Zambia and there is so much to do, whether it is in the compounds in and around the capital Lusaka or in the bush country of the Luangwa Valley, evidence of the vital resources they need for schooling was low. It is fair to say that where Literacy Boxes have been sent, it has made a huge difference to the children, without them they would not be having an education.

I 'reported back' on my Zambian trip with daily Facebook posts of our visits to the urban and rural schools and hope you enjoyed it, but if not, this newsletter will contain a flavour of that visit. Also featured will be RotaKids, a brilliant example of how our youngsters are making a difference and helping their overseas colleagues obtain a meaningful education.

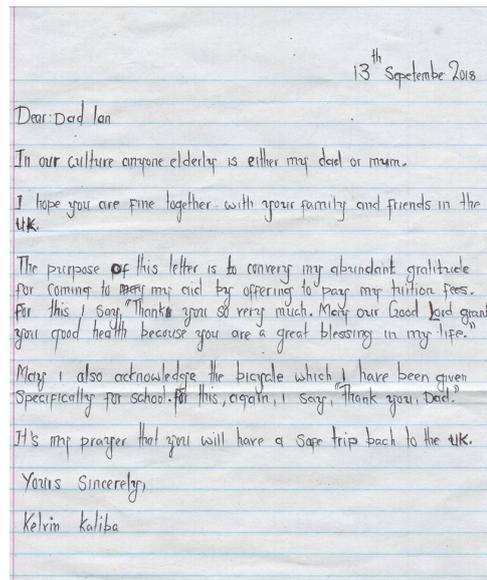
I hope you enjoy the read and please use the links to see more about our work.

In gratitude,
Ian Parker Chairman

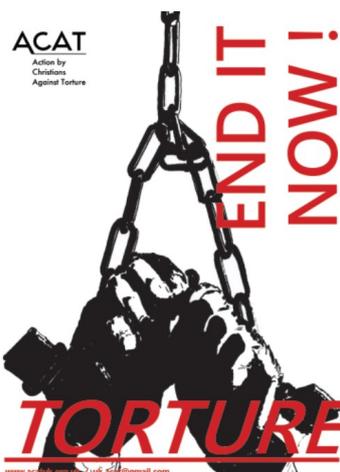


When Ian Parker was on a visit to a school in Manaca, Zambia he met Kelvin. Kelvin had moved on to secondary school supported by a bursary following a recommendation from a trust Ambassador, Grace. He also travels by bike to school each day, a trip of 10 miles, using a bike supplied by a trust partner Operation Sunshine. The trust is seeking further funds to help Kelvin with his education and a better life. He wrote to Ian and the transcript of his letter is shown below.

" The purpose of this letter is to convey my abundant gratitude for coming to my aid by offering to pay my tuition fees. For this I say thank you so very much. May our Good Lord grant you good health because you are a blessing to my life"



ACAT (Action by Christians against Torture)



Every year at this time I send you the ACAT (Action by Christians against Torture) Christmas Greeting Campaign.

Our Lady of the Wayside in Shirley – produces every year as we, and some other parishes, use it because all the cases are on 2 A4 sheets – using both sides, and are easily distributed in the

parishes for parishioners to choose who they would like to help. (A link to these lists are on our website)

I hope you will again be able to distribute them round your network.

Many thanks and blessings

Creina Hearn

Climate and the Passion of the Earth:

Summary version by Martin Newell cp

This paper very briefly outlines my understanding of our faith position relating to the environment, with a focus on current crises especially climate change, and the current reality of climate change and the environmental crisis.

THE CATHOLIC POSITION

In the Encyclical *Laudato Si*, Pope Francis called us to act to protect and renew the life of the earth, God's creation. He wrote that the earth is our neighbour which is being abused, and is also our mother that provides us with the nourishment and conditions for life that we need. At the 2015 United Nations (UN) Paris Climate Summit, the Vatican pushed for a target of a 1.5 degree temperature rise (all temperature rises stated are 'global average temperature rises above the pre-industrial average') to protect poorer and more low lying nations who are most vulnerable to the effects of climate change, like Bangladesh and Burma. At Paris a 2 degree target was agreed with 1.5 degrees an aspiration. Now, the IPCC (Inter Governmental Panel on Climate Change) have stated the increase must be kept below 1.5 degrees to avoid runaway climate change. And on Oct 26th, the Presidents of the Continental Catholic Bishops Conferences called for 'urgent, rapid and radical' change to keep temperatures down, to try to avert the mass species extinction already happening.

Nevertheless, in short, we are crucifying God's earth, creating ongoing climate change that will cause disasters that, to make a massive understatement, would completely undermine any practical good work otherwise done. As a Christian, a Catholic and a Passionist, I am called to act in solidarity with the crucified, and witness to God's sacrificial love for His people and His creation.

CLIMATE CHANGE: WHERE ARE WE? THE BAD NEWS

I have been studying what various climate scientists and others have been saying. This includes for example Kevin Anderson of Manchester University, one of the government's own climate advisors, and who Andy Burnham (Mayor of Manchester and moderate Labour Party politician) invited to speak to a Conference in Manchester. I will explain my understanding of mainstream analyses of climate change and its impacts. Things could turn out a bit better, or it could be worse.

My understanding, in a very summarised way, which I will explain briefly, is that we are in a dire global emergency with radical change needed urgently. I will explain this belief briefly.

The Paris Climate Summit target of 2 degrees has now

been acknowledged as too high. The October 2018 IPCC report states that rapid and urgent action is needed to act to keep temperature rises below 1.5 degrees. In fact, the 2 degrees target was only chosen because it was thought to be a politically achievable agreement, not for scientific reasons. But even the 2 degree target required much more rapid action than governments currently state is needed, to reduce carbon emissions. In addition, the carbon emissions that cause most of the warming are not falling, even in line with currently stated '2 degree' targets. In fact, they are not falling at all. In 2017, they rose by about 1%.

Global temperatures have already risen by over 1 degree, and are currently rising by 0.17 degree per decade. This will probably speed up since global emissions saw large rises in recent decades, and there is a lag effect between the emissions and the warming. Even if carbon emissions stopped right now, temperatures would continue rising close to the 1.5 degree target at least, by 2030 to 2050. Worse than that, the earth's climate could reach a 'tipping point' at 2 degrees rise or sooner, into 'runaway climate change', due to forest fires, melting polar ice and permafrost etc, and associated methane releases, such that further increases would be impossible to stop. But even a 2 degrees rise would be highly likely to cause massive catastrophes: droughts and famines, floods, destruction by hurricanes, massive refugee movements, wars over water, sea level rises, etc.



Even without this scenario of 'runaway climate change' starting at or below a 2 degrees rise, current economic and energy policies point to a world in the range of 3 – 5 degrees warmer by the end of the century, the consequences of which for everyone would be unimaginably catastrophic. All of these predictions are probabilities, there is a range. Outcomes over the last 30 years have been at the worst end of the range predicted 30 years ago. Many of the most expert climate scientists would say I am being very optimistic.

Often the truth has not been faced or publicised because it is such bad news that it is too much to face, or is thought to be so. There has been a fear that denial and depression would make people less likely to act. But we need to act on the truth.

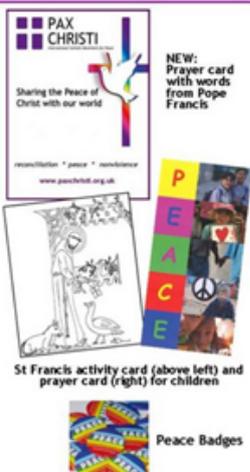
My conclusion, based on the above information, is that drastic and urgent action is needed. I am reminded of the words of the prophet Ezekiel: "Repent and live" (18:32) . It might seem like it is impossible to do anything about this. However, I believe we have to capability to 'repent and live'.



Checklist

- ⇒ Put the date in your parish diary now.
- ⇒ Speak to your parish priest, liturgist, children's liturgy team, about the opportunity, and share the Pax Christi booklet with them.
- ⇒ Offer to say a few words about Pax Christi and the Peace Message at Mass. Script on our website.
- ⇒ Order and distribute prayer cards and leaflets on Peace Sunday.
- ⇒ Arrange for a collection to be taken on Peace Sunday to support Pax Christi's work.
- ⇒ Create a simple display about Pax Christi using materials in the basic info pack.

Materials will be on our website



Every year Pax Christi enables the Catholic community in England and Wales to celebrate the World Peace Day message in prayer, reflection and action.

Will you help us to share this message on Peace Sunday?
www.paxchristi.org.uk

Peace Sunday 20th January

"Good politics serves peace" (Pope Francis)

Every year Pax Christi promotes the Holy Father's World Peace Day Message on the 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time. This is in the Liturgical Calendar cycle of prayer. Pax Christi sends resource materials to every parish in the country to help them mark and celebrate the day.

"Political responsibility belongs to every citizen, and in particular to those who have received the mandate to protect and govern. This mission consists in safeguarding the law and encouraging dialogue between the actors of society, between generations and between cultures... Political commitment – which is one of the highest expressions of charity – brings concern for the future of life and the planet, of the youngest and the weakest, in their thirst for fulfilment."
 [from Vatican Press Statement]

Archbishop Malcolm McMahon OP, National President of Pax Christi British Section, writes:

"Once again Pope Francis invites us to start a new year with a reflection on our role as peacemakers.

Drawing on the evolving teaching of our church and looking at the 'signs of the times', Pope Francis is uncompromising in his challenge to war and violence. In his 2018 message Pope Francis wrote that the "endless and horrifying sequence of wars, conflicts, genocides and ethnic cleansings" are a major cause of the migration of thousands around the globe. Pax Christi has sought to keep these issues in the forefront of its work – challenging Britain's involvement in the global arms trade, questioning the morality of new technologies such as drone warfare – both here in the UK, and internationally, through our status at the UN.

Since 1967 Pax Christi has faithfully disseminated this message to church communities in England and Wales and we do so again this year. Our Peace Sunday booklet, enclosed with this mailing, offers prayers, homily reflections, children's activities and reflection materials. All of these resources are available on Pax Christi's website and the full World Peace Day message will also be posted here when it is available.

Among other things we have

- Urged our Government to support the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, and amplified the Holy See's voice calling nuclear weapons one of the greatest moral challenges of our time.
- Supported the Eucharistic Congress parallel programme, producing a special resource on the Eucharist, Peace and Justice, running meditations with the Pax Christi ICON of Peace, and workshops on peacemaking during the Congress in Liverpool.
- Produced reflection and prayer resources to help parishes and schools commemorate the peacemaking opportunity of the centenary of the First World War Armistice with the message No more war – let's make peace happen.

- Offered teacher inset days and several Faith in Action days for Catholic schools, part of our ongoing outreach to schools. In 2018 we appointed a new Peace Education Worker.

- Created reflections on the post-Lent scripture readings, viewing them through the lens of peace and nonviolence and launched a new book, Choosing Peace: the Catholic Church returns to Gospel Nonviolence, which captures our work with the Catholic Nonviolence Initiative.

Pax Christi is in a process of transition, with changes in staffing due to retirement. Working nationally, with a team of 4 staff members and volunteers, a huge amount is achieved through the outreach work and the resources that are produced. Many parishes take special collections on or around Peace Sunday or make a donation to Pax Christi. I am thankful for this generosity and ask you to support us again this year. Pax Christi has made a deliberate choice not to be a charity in order to have the freedom and flexibility to take action which might otherwise be limited by constraints placed on charities - so your support is all the more important."

Get your Peace Sunday booklet with all the resources you need from <http://paxchristi.org.uk/news-and-events/peace-sunday/>

PURPLE COMMUNITY FUND

The Future is Purple

We passionately believe in providing sustainable opportunities so that our beneficiaries can help themselves and their families out of poverty through the acquisition of new skills, education, training and our holistic programmes. We strive to make a difference to those who are in the direst of circumstances.

Our Values

Caring

We believe everyone deserves a chance to thrive and prosper. We listen when people tell us what support they need.

Positivity

We believe in second chances and people's ability to unlock their potential at any stage of life.

Determined

Every member of our team is dedicated and committed to gaining the best possible outcomes for our beneficiaries as well as our sponsors and stakeholders.

Transparency

We believe honesty, integrity and trustworthiness are the key to running a charitable organisation effectively.



We desperately need donations for our emergency relief fund following the recent fire in Tondo.

The fire broke out on Friday 19th October, leaving 136 families without anywhere to live. A total of 273 children and 286 adults. Over 100 children's school uniforms were burnt in the fire, funds will be used to replace their uniforms and help families rebuild their homes.



PCF
PO BO 294, HEDGE END,
SOUTHAMPTON, SO30 2YD
E: info@p-c-f.org Tel: 01489 790219

<http://www.p-c-f.org/>

The Purple Community Fund was started
by Jane Walker MBE

“He dressed us up looking poor so the visitors see us, they feel pity for us, and they donate more. But they don’t really know what was going on inside the orphanage.” Sinet Chan, Cambodian Children’s Trust ambassador, describing her experience in an orphanage as a child.¹

Unscrupulous individuals are profiting from the trafficking and abuse of children under their care in orphanages across the world. Traffickers, attracted by the funding orphanages receive from donations and organizations offering ‘voluntourism’ placements, effectively turn children into commodities by ensuring there is a constant supply of children who are used to attract funding.

Volunteer placement organizations have assigned thousands of volunteers across the world to projects bringing mutual lasting benefits to both volunteers and the communities they work in. Although usually a small portion of all placements, some offer placements in orphanages. Join us in calling on those that do to take a stand against orphanage placements. Whilst we are not suggesting that they have placed, or promoted the placement of, volunteers in orphanages which exploit or traffick children, we believe their support is crucial to breaking the cycle of child trafficking and exploitation in orphanages.²

‘Voluntourism’ – the practice of combining voluntary work with travelling – has become a popular trend over the years,³ leading to a boom in the number of organizations offering holiday packages that involve some voluntary work, including at orphanages. Whilst only some might be affected, traffickers and unscrupulous children’s homes seeking to capitalize on this trend, encourage impoverished families into giving up their children to orphanages, where they may be exploited, even abused, malnourished, forced to work, and sometimes trafficked to other orphanages and forms of exploitation in order to repeat the cycle and elicit further funding.

With an estimated 8 million children living in orphanages around the world and 80% of these having at least one parent or family member that is able to look after them, with additional support where needed,⁴ it is clear that something doesn’t add up.

In Cambodia, Sinet Chan was repeatedly beaten, raped, starved and forced to work on the orphanage director’s rice paddies and farms without pay. Now, she is a strong ambassador for the Cambodian Children’s Trust, telling her story and raising awareness of the potentially terrible conditions children face in institutions.⁵

The government of Cambodia recognizes the risks facing children in orphanages and has set up a pilot program to reintegrate children into families. Last July, it finalized a decree that tasks officials with identifying vulnerable children and overseeing their reintegration into families.⁶

Families living in poverty are vulnerable to being duped into selling or giving their children to orphanages in the hope that they will receive better care⁷ – this is often not the case. Even in orphanages that are well-resourced, being placed in an orphanage and destroying lasting family-based relationships has serious detrimental effects on a child’s long-term development and psychological well-being, and should only ever be used as temporary care and as the very last resort.

In Haiti, some families had been paid 75 USD to give their children away to orphanages on false promises their children would receive an education and opportunities for the future, only for them to end up living in slave-like conditions there.⁸

Vulnerable children being separated from their families and placed in orphanages to attract funding, volunteers and donations from well-meaning tourists is replicated across Southeast Asia, and has also been reported on in Nepal and across Africa.^{9,10} In one case in Nepal, a mother searching for her two children who she believed were in school, found them in an orphanage. The orphanage director then extorted the mother and insisted she pay him 144,000 rupees (1,440 USD) before he would release her children.¹¹

It’s clear that organizations offering placements in orphanages can play a part in putting an end to the cycle of abuse perpetuated by traffickers seeking to exploit the demand for volunteer placements abroad.

These organizations can help prevent traffickers from running orphanages as potentially lucrative business models by removing the incentive to unscrupulous operators and making a strong statement against orphanage trafficking. We are asking them to:

- stop offering orphanage placements to volunteers
- publish a statement outlining their commitment to end orphanage child trafficking, and establish a sustainable and careful system of divestment and join the worldwide movement to ensure children are raised in safe families who have been empowered to care for their own children with the support of partners experienced in child protection.

For more information

<https://www.freedomunited.org/>



Adoremus Liverpool Parallel Programme September 7 – 8

Visit to the Parallel program.

Paschal and I went to Adoremus, the Eucharistic Congress in Liverpool for the day - it was a very long, tiring and wet day, BUT very a worthwhile experience.

Despite that we walked over 9 miles in the day, so scattered were the venues, we got soaked 3 or 4 times, but dried out in the end and received a warm welcome wherever we went!

I had my first visit to Paddy's Wigwam and it was a quiet one as we arrived just as the 09:00 mass was tipping out, so we got to stroll round and take a look at our leisure with next to no one there.

We walked on to the Broken venue for what we thought was an 11:00 start, however it turned out to be 13:30 for the episode and discussion so we moved on to St Anthony of Egypt for a talk on welcoming the stranger, we sat and dripped at the back of the room for half an hour, the speaker was very good and Paschal even got a good plug in for our work with WMPF as she spoke about arming the Saudis and the subsequent bombings in Yemen, one of the "forgotten" conflicts.



We went from there to making bread with Steve Atherton, a Passionist friend of ours and the J&P worker for Liverpool who had been largely instrumental in putting the Parallel Programme together. We were lucky enough to get a lift back from there to Broken, which was certainly our highlight of the day as Jimmy McGovern and his co-writer (a priest adviser) answered questions after an episode of the series.

Then we hightailed it to St Philip Neri where we finally caught up with the NJPN day enjoyed an interesting Reflections influenced by Teilhard De Chardin by Thomas Cullinan.



After another storming walk we just made Eucharist, the Bread of Life debate with Anglican Bishop Paul Beyes, Dr Sheryl Anderson the Methodist District Chair and Archbishop Malcolm who ended up being about half an hour late as he had to escape from the last Adoremus session with the Cardinal. They spoke about the 3 churches different views on Eucharist and we were moderately surprised to hear Malcolm say that there were circumstances where he could accept non-Catholics receiving communion, however, Bishop Paul still said that he would not be doing it after the procession on Sunday, though he would happily be walking with Malcolm.

By Kris Pears



Reclaiming the Common Good: Virginia Moffatt Review by Brian Austin

How can Christians help re-build our broken world?

In the run-up to the 2010 General Election, our Bishops, I think for the first time, issued some guidance to Catholics on what to consider before voting. They gave it the title "Choosing the Common Good". This may have been the first time that many of us had heard the expression "The Common Good", although a longer document "The Common Good and the Catholic Church's Social Teaching" had preceded it in 1996.

So, what is "The Common Good"? Perhaps we might think that is blindingly obvious. But, in the collection of essays collected together by Virginia Moffatt in "**Reclaiming the Common Good**", Patrick Riordan, SJ points out that The Common Good can mean different things to different people, beginning with Aristotle who labels it as 'the good life'. But this might mean a life devoted to the pursuit of enjoyment or

wealth, or the good of a group for their own self-interest, which would not be what we, as Christians, would want.

In the past, Christians have seen it as the attainment of Heaven and the most we can hope for on earth is an inferior good. But, Vatican II defined the common good as *'the sum of those conditions of social life which allow social groups and their individual members relatively thorough and ready access to their own fulfilment'* [Gaudium et Spes #26] Personally, I prefer the way it is expressed in our Bishop's 1996 document, that the idea of the common good "is to bring about a good and fair society, for the benefit of everyone."

In this book, Virginia Moffatt asks the questions: "Why, despite our best efforts, does it often feel we are losing the battle to create a world based on common good principles? What kind of society do we want to be? What kind of world do we want to live in?" The intention of the book, she says, is to provide a challenge to mainstream thinking on issues such as welfare, austerity, migration, the environment, peace and security.

The various writers in this collection of essays explore different considerations of the Common Good – what has happened to it, how welfare has been in decline, what genuine reform is possible, the effect of free trade and the liberty of the individual (neoliberalism), the historical changes that have happened over the past 70 years, private involvement in the public sector, etc.

In the third section, attention is drawn to the world stage and the issues of migration, the dominant influence of humans on the earth's climate and environment, peace and security and a vision of a world without war. Finally, Simon Woodman asks "What, in the world, are we here for? Why is there a Church in the world? Why is this church here in this corner of the world?"

A thought provoking and challenging book. I recommend you read it.

"Reclaiming the Common Good "

A collection of essays collated and edited by Virginia Moffatt

Dorton Longman Todd 2017
ISBN 978-0-232-53315-6
Obtainable from Amazon (and other booksellers) £3.52 + p&p £2.99, or Kindle edition £3.51.

Also see: Together for the Common Good (T4CG) -

www.togetherforthecommongood.co.uk



The Justice and Peace Commission would like to congratulate **Fr. Frank Daly** on his comments.

Please follow link to read more.

<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/35990>



St Elizabeth's Coventry

This year the youth groups and two primary schools worked together on CAFOD's Share the Journey Campaign. The schools organised walks around their grounds and the Youth Groups supported walks after each of the two Sunday Masses. They made banners and provided refreshments as well as marking the cards of the walkers as they completed laps of the school grounds. Around the grounds the pictures and stories provided by CAFOD were enlarged and placed on trees and walls so that they could be read while people shared the journey with them. <http://bit.ly/2yMtXhP>

On Sunday 16 September St Elizabeths Church held a Creation Day Mass as part of our Live Simply commitment and in response to Pope Francis call to care for creation and the environment we will live. <http://bit.ly/2xxqt6i>



The Situation In Yemen



Most of us derive our picture of the world from the newspapers we read and the television programmes we watch. From the picture given by the mainstream media, including the 'quality' end of it, one would think that the most important thing happening in the world at the moment is Brexit, closely followed by the latest twitterings of Donald J. Trump. Of course, people reading this outlet will, by definition, be better informed! Even we, though, will, for a variety of reasons know rather less than we might about perhaps the worst situation facing the world today, namely, the crisis in Yemen.

In fact, the humanitarian crisis in Yemen is rapidly turning into the worst famine the world has seen for 100 years. In a joint letter to Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt, CAFOD, along with eight other aid agencies, has called for 'an immediate end to the fighting', and for the UK Government to 'use its influence to urge parties to the conflict to end violations against civilians.'

The letter continues: 'The catastrophic food shortages in Yemen are entirely human-made and a direct consequence of the warring parties' severe restrictions on access to food, fuel, medical imports and humanitarian aid. The collapse of the Yemeni Rial and the non-payment of public sector workers are adding to the tragic situation. Civilian deaths have increased dramatically in recent months - with 450 civilians killed in just nine days in August. Violence against women and girls has also risen significantly since the conflict escalated.'

Giovanna Reda, CAFOD's Head of Humanitarian Programmes for the Middle East, said: 'The impact of this conflict is devastating. Hunger stalks 14 million Yemenis - 60 percent of the population. We see immense suffering in the faces of children whose young lives have been stunted by malnutrition, and the agony of their parents who can only watch their children waste away. Humanitarian access is vital to reach vulnerable families on the brink of famine. With 90 percent of all Yemen's food imports passing through Hodeida port, any disruption of the port's operation will severely affect our ability to get emergency aid to where it is needed most. A comprehensive ceasefire across the country is urgently needed now, to halt the suffering of millions of people.'

This is the very grim situation today; but how has this happened? In Yemen, there has been a three year long bloody civil war, between the Houthi ethnic group and supporters of Yemen's government led by President

Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi. At the request of the Yemeni government, an international coalition, led by Saudi Arabia, has carried out air-strikes across the country against the Houthi. For ordinary Yemenis, the consequences have been devastating. The UN now estimates that more than 10,000 people have been killed since the start of the conflict, with 6,000 people killed in 2016 alone.

Yemen, already one of the world's poorest countries is being pushed to the brink of catastrophe. A child is dying every ten minutes because of preventable diseases, and child malnutrition is at an all-time high. Severe water shortages combined with air-strikes, sniper attacks, and a fuel blockade have rapidly turned this conflict into a humanitarian crisis. Demand is rapidly increasing to get food, water, shelter, sanitation and medical care to vulnerable families in the greatest need.

According to the UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the conflict has left millions of desperate people in need of humanitarian aid and protection. Yemeni families were already dealing with dire and extreme poverty but this conflict has exacerbated their suffering. The economy and public services such as hospitals and clinics face collapse, and many Yemeni families have exhausted their savings as they struggle to earn a living; women, children, and men face a humanitarian catastrophe. Two-thirds of the population, more than 20 million people are in urgent need of some form of life-saving humanitarian assistance such as food, water, medical care, and shelter.

As ever, CAFOD is working with local partners in response to the crisis. Working in conflict affected communities in the south of Yemen before the blockade, and assault on Yemen's port city of Hodeida, our partner was able to provide nutrition services; which involves screening and identifying children under 5 and breast-feeding mothers for acute malnutrition. Their work also included training community volunteers to spot the worst cases of malnutrition in their communities and get mothers and babies treated at available health facilities or in the home. Against a challenging environment, they have been able to check thousands of children suffering from malnutrition or showing signs of the condition - providing the nutritious food supplements needed for proper treatment.

In other words, this is a very desperate situation. As supporters of justice and peace we must do all we can - by praying, by lobbying our government, and by donating to the CAFOD appeal.

For further information, go to www.cafod.org



You may have heard that Traidcraft will finish trading at the end of the year and that may have frightened you to death. How can we continue to run our Traidcraft Stall or get supplies?

Fear not!

The information we have received from Traidcraft is that, although details are not yet available, we WILL be able to continue to get supplies, although the set-up will be different. However, the new arrangements in 2019 will take time to put in place, so we think it would be wise to stock up before the end of the year.

If you want any further information, you can phone their Customer Services on **0191 491 0855** for yourself.



Remembrance Day

Fr Noel Connolly SSC writes in his "Reflections on mission" how he was reminded of his time working in a parish in Germany. "My generation was brought up on German war movies so when I would go on house-visitation in Germany I was often shocked to see photos of soldier relatives in German helmets on the wall. My instinctive reaction was that is the enemy, but to them it was their lost father or uncle. Back in Australia I heard a German-Australian industrialist comment on why he gave scholarships every year for a few young Australians to study in Germany. He explained that in every war each side has propaganda about the other, painting as bad a picture as possible because otherwise we wouldn't fight. He then made the telling point that at the end of the war the vanquished have to rethink their propaganda because the victor insists, but the victor rarely has to rethink their propaganda. He thought living and studying with German students might help a few young Australians to see through our propaganda. You can win too 'many wars' and never have to rethink your basic assumptions."

Taken from "Reflections on mission" by Fr Noel Connolly SSC

published by St Columbans Mission Society
www.columban.org.au

Lent Study Course
for Churches Together in Kings Heath 2018

'Our Common Home: Caring for God's Creation'



CAFOD have some great resources when it comes to environmental issues. Another source for useful resources is Operation Noah. Their book "Tenants of the King" is worth looking at. I have also put a link to "Our Common Home" by a group in All Saints Kingsheath a centre of righteousness in Birmingham, onto our website. If you use it they would probably appreciate a donation.

Power for Good is a Christian Inspired local co-operative installing solar panels on places of worship.
www.pfg.coop

By converting energy from the sun into electricity, we are able to continue making use of it without adding to the amount of carbon that is in the atmosphere – clearly it is a great bonus that we can carry on enjoying all the benefits that electricity brings to us with much less environmental cost.

Footsteps: Faiths for a Low Carbon Future, is a multi-faith project inspired by the Paris Climate change conference agreement in 2015, of faiths working together in Birmingham.

Season of Creation Event: North Staffs Deanery



Holy Trinity Church, Newcastle under Lyme;
18th September 2018.

Thirty-four people representing eight parishes attended this event at Holy Trinity in September. They participated in the CAFOD Vigil, led by organiser Phil Mayland as Fr Paul was ill, and then walked across to Coolock Pastoral Centre for a viewing of the new film Global Healing. This film has been commissioned by the Bishop's Conference to raise awareness of the urgency of taking actions to live more simply and sustainably in response to Pope Francis' encyclical Laudato Si'. It is produced by CaFE. A lively discussion followed the film with resolutions from some participants to show the film in their own parishes. The film is in three parts and can be used to raise awareness of the issues of climate change and as a stimulant to individuals to examine their own lifestyles and make changes.

When asked about the timing of this event Phil said he hoped every Deanery and every Parish would be observing the Season of Creation, 1st September to 4th October, each year. This idea is relatively new for the Catholic Church but it really is vitally important to reflect and pray for our planet Earth. We are all called to make changes in our lifestyles to reduce our carbon footprint. Climate Change is happening and action to combat it is urgent. One good way is for every parish to become a Live Simply parish. This requires promises to Live Simply, Sustainably and in Solidarity and then actions to carry those promises out. Most parishes are already doing some of these things but the Live Simply Award does help to bring things together and to help focus on the problem. Archbishop Bernard called for this in his Pastoral Letter last Advent. Maybe we can begin to respond.

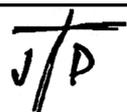
By Phil Mayland

The Birmingham Diocese Justice and Peace Commission

For information on the NJPN [J&P calendar](#) and links to J&P organisations, as well as the J&P Commission, also for downloads from the J&P Resource Pack and much more access our website:

www.birminghamjandp.org.uk

[Birmingham J&P @BhamJandP](#)



Children in Palestine Growing up under occupation



As part of Coventry's Peace Festival, Ann Farr gave a talk at Earlsdon Methodist Church. Before she started Arabian Bites (a project helping newly arrived refugees from Syria and Iraq www.proofbakery.co.uk), prepared a Palestinian buffet to give attendees a flavour of the region along with a selection of sourdough bread (www.proofbakery.co.uk/bread).

As an introduction to the topic Ann gave people a brief history of how the region has changed since 1946. She also talked about the 1989 Convention of the rights of a child. She talked about two schools close to her heart, Tyre School (because it is built out of tyres) and Yanoun School. She talked about escorting children to and from school to try and reduce intimidation by Israeli Soldiers. <https://www.eappi.org/en>



Articles for these Newsletters are always accepted with gratitude since we feel it is crucially important for Justice and Peace Groups around the diocese to publicise their activities for the benefit of us all, and to liaise with each other to share thoughts and ideas, and especially Best Practice.

If you have a contribution you would like included in the **Winter 2019** newsletter please send it by Email for consideration to:

The Administrator, J&P Commission.

Email: bham.jandp@gmail.com

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The views expressed in this newsletter are the view of the individual contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Birmingham Justice and Peace Commission or the Catholic Archdiocese of Birmingham.