

Lancaster Faith & Justice Commission Parish News Bulletin May 2020

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St Bernadette's Parish House, Bowerham Road, Lancaster LA1 4HT

Urgent Appeal Care4Calais

Right now, refugees in Calais are more afraid of starving than they are of COVID-19. NGOs have pulled out and state food provision has reduced by 50%.

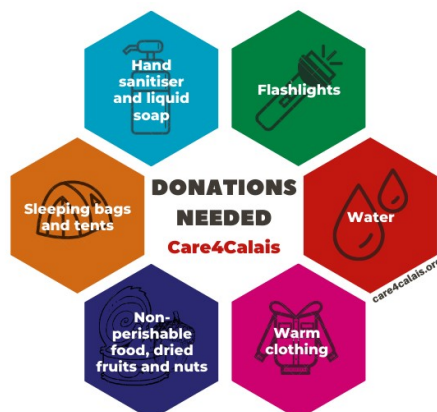
Our amazing volunteers are still working to help people but we need your support urgently to buy more food supplies.

<https://care4calais.org/donate-now/>

An [update from Seeking Sanctuary](#) explains the difficulties the refugees and volunteers are having to tackle and prayers at:

<https://prayersformigrants.weebly.com/>

<https://seekingsanctuary.weebly.com/>



Several UK groups who collect clothes, tents and bedding to take to France have stopped accepting any donations that require sorting because the health of previous handlers is not known. This affects all the Calais operations and monetary donations are the most useful for the time being

<https://care4calais.org/donate-now/>

This issues includes:

P.2 World of Street Newspapers

P.3 JRS Responses to COVID –19

Laudato Si'Week

P4. CARJ and CAFOD responses

5. Make treatments available to all

6. Defence diversification is possible

Call for Global Ceasefire

7. Debt suspension agreed

8. Resources and events

Just Finance Foundation

have put together a very helpful

[Coronavirus Help Hub](#)

to help people navigate this difficult time. It covers key issues and questions such as mortgage payments, budgeting and Universal Credit and it is updated regularly. <https://www.justfinancefoundation.org.uk/coronavirus-help-hub>

Covid-19 Toolkit courtesy of CSAN/SVP

Caritas Social Action Network and the St Vincent de Paul Society (England and Wales) have released a toolkit to help Catholic parishes and groups develop safe, local responses to people in need during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The toolkit addresses the Christian call to step out in love to those excluded and at risk, throughout a time when the Government has asked people to stay at home as far as possible. It includes examples of how parishes can offer support, advice and guidance on safeguarding, communication, dealing with health and other risks, referring people on as needed and to volunteer with other initiatives. Help could include keeping in touch with a friendly chat on the phone, shopping for food and other essential items, dog walking, help with prayer and advice on how to get involved with other initiatives locally. It can be adapted to local circumstances.



To download the toolkit, [click here](#)

<https://www.csan.org.uk/guidance/covid-19/>

We hope you were able to engage in some of the wonderful live stream resources for Mass, prayer and support services that have been made available to us online. Please give a thought to those who do not have access to the internet, nor the use of a mobile phone as they can feel quite cut off from society and perhaps unaware of the help that is on offer to them. See <https://www.svp.org.uk/>

URGENT APPEAL TO SUPPORT THE BIG ISSUE

During this coronavirus crisis street vendors need you more than ever. Their income comes from selling the magazine and with the streets in lock down, vendors cannot make a living. With your help today, The Big Issue can continue to support them now and in the future. Details how to help on the Big Issue website: <https://www.bigissue.com/>



Greeting of the Holy Father Francis to the world of street newspapers

The life of millions of people, in our world that is already gripped by many difficult challenges to face and oppressed by the pandemic, has changed and has been put to a harsh test. Those who are most fragile, the invisible, those without fixed abode, risk paying the heaviest price.

I would therefore like to greet the world of street newspapers and especially their vendors, who are for the most part homeless; people who are gravely marginalised, unemployed: thousands of people who throughout the world earn a living and have a job thanks to the sales of these extraordinary newspapers.

In Italy, I think of the good experience of *Scarp de' tenis*, the Caritas project that enables more than 130 people in difficulty to have an income and as a result, access to fundamental citizens' rights. And not only this. I think of the experience of more than 100 street newspapers throughout the world, published in 35 different countries and in 25 different languages, and which guarantee employment and an income to more than 20,500 homeless people worldwide. For many weeks street newspapers have not been sold, and their vendors are unable to work. I therefore wish to express my closeness to the journalists, to the volunteers, and to those who earn a living thanks to these projects and who in these times are hard at work with many innovative ideas. The pandemic has made your work difficult but I am sure that the large global network of street newspapers will come back stronger than before. Looking at the poorest, in these days, can help us all to be aware of what is truly happening to us, and of our true condition. I send you all my message of encouragement and fraternal friendship. Thank you for the work you do, for the information you give, and for the stories of hope you tell



Cover Big Issue
November 2015

Pope Francis prays for 'extraordinary' street papers hit by Covid-19 crisis

By [Liam Geraghty](#) [@Lazergun](#) [Nun](#)

The pontiff has been generous with his time for street papers in the past and offered his "message of encouragement and fraternal friendship" in these difficult times. Pope Francis has told The Big Issue and its sister titles all around the world that they will "come back stronger than before" as they fight for survival during the Covid-19 lockdown.

The pontiff's message of solidarity was included in his daily bulletin today as he recognised that vendors are no longer able to sell the magazine on the streets.

As The Big Issue has reported in recent weeks, that impact has been felt globally by street papers, not least at *Scarp de' tenis* – the Italian street paper was singled out for special attention by Pope Francis. "I am sure that the large global network of street newspapers will come back stronger than before" He also praised street papers for the "stories of hope [they] tell" in a much-needed rallying cry.



The Global Catholic
Climate Movement

Fifty years ago millions of people around the world came together to kick off a new era in the protection of our common home. In 1970, the very first Earth Day galvanized a movement that transformed how we see our place on this planet. Today, the world faces newer and bigger challenges than we did half a century ago. In his [weekly address](#), Pope Francis honoured the **Earth Day** movement. He said, “As the tragic coronavirus pandemic has taught us, we can overcome global challenges only by showing solidarity with one another and embracing the most vulnerable in our midst.”

[Pope Francis invites your community](#) to join Laudato Si’ Week by taking the next step in your journey toward protecting creation. *In the five years since the encyclical was published, thousands of parishes, schools, universities, and religious communities have been illuminated by prayerful action for our common home.* While we celebrate the actions of the past five years, it’s also important to **accelerate our actions** for the years ahead. Seas are rising, lands are burning, and the next generation looks to us for hope.

**Laudato Si’ teaches us how to build
a better world—together.**

The world faces history-defining crises.

We’re praying and planning to build a better world together
during [Laudato Si’ Week](#).

Pope Francis has [invited](#) Catholics everywhere to participate –
we’re uniting as a Catholic family to reflect, pray, and prepare
for a more just and sustainable tomorrow.



**LAUDATO SI’
WEEK 2020**

16th –24th May

www.catholicclimatemovement.global

JRS UK is calling for better access to local authority emergency accommodation

Still striving to ensure all homeless people are housed during COVID-19

<http://jrsuk.net>



On 27th March 2020, the government conceded that everyone street homeless should be urgently housed in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Over two weeks on, we are still seeing vulnerable refugees and asylum seekers unable to access housing and struggling with the insecurity of street homelessness, and increased risk of infection that brings.

Read more at:

<https://www.jrsuk.net/news/still-striving-to-ensure-all-homeless-people-are-housed-during-covid-19/>

**JRS UK joins 60 organisations in letter to Home Secretary & Chancellor of Exchequer
calling for increased asylum support rates in response to COVID-19 crisis**

JRS UK has joined with 60 leading charities to write to the Home Secretary and the Chancellor of the Exchequer asking that they increase asylum support rates in line with Universal Credit.

In a [joint letter](#) drafted by charity Freedom from Torture, dozens of leading refugee and migrant charities, including Refugee Council, Amnesty International & Migrant Voice, have joined together calling upon Priti Patel and Rishi Sunak to immediately increase the support available to those in the asylum system, who are in desperate need of the same financial uplift in order to meet their essential living needs and those of their families.

Read more at: <https://www.jrsuk.net/news/joint-letter-freedom-from-torture/>



Churches Together in Cumbria Virus Update 6th April 2020

This update is lengthy but has a lot of useful information in it.



[Download here](#)

Please pass it on to your groups and colleagues as appropriate.

From Revd Nicola Reynolds Churches Together in Cumbria Emergency Response Coordinator

Email: nicola.reynolds2@talktalk.net

Ethnic Minorities and Covid-19

On 23 April 2020, Mrs Yogi Sutton, Chair of CARJ, received an email from Rev Dr Alfred Banya, Head of Chaplaincy at Kings College Hospital in London. Rev Banya said he had been seeing first hand the devastating effect of the virus on patients and relatives. He went on to say: *'We noticed being called to much younger Black and Ethnic Minorities after the first two weeks of the outbreak. Now we hear from the press disproportionate numbers of BAME people are dying from the virus but there seems to be no urgent action to address this. Can CARJ raise questions about this with its contacts in the House of Commons and House of Lords?'.....*

Read on: <https://www.carj.org.uk/2020/04/24/ethnic-minorities-and-covid-19/>



Catholic Association
for Racial Justice
<https://www.carj.org.uk/>

CARJ sends in OFCOM Complaint about Dispatches Programme on Travellers and Crime

The Complaint was sent in about the Channel 4 Dispatches programme 'The Truth about Traveller Crime' that aired on 16th April 2020. Please see the text of the complaint at the link below.

Read on: <https://www.carj.org.uk/2020/04/21/carj-sends-in-ofcom-complaint-about-dispatch-programme-on-travellers-and-crime/>

Unite against coronavirus



Just as the impacts of coronavirus are being felt on unprecedented levels here in the UK, in developing countries with healthcare systems much more fragile than our own the effects are likely to be devastating. In some countries, there are almost no intensive care hospital beds or ventilators.

We must never forget that we are one global family, united in this struggle.

Now is not the time to build barriers, but for the world to unite in love and compassion.

Out of love for our brothers and sisters overseas, sign our petition asking the Prime Minister to ensure that the most vulnerable and marginalised people are the priority in the UK's international efforts as well as at home.

[Sign our petition](#) to the Prime Minister

Our sisters and brothers overseas do not have access to a healthcare system as brilliant as the NHS.

I urge you to work together with other world leaders to:

- Share knowledge and technology across boundaries. The UK can set an example by making sure any vaccine developed with UK public money is accessible to all.
- Provide urgent financial and technical support to help developing countries cope with this crisis.
- Cancel all debt payments by developing countries due in 2020 as the first step towards a global debt moratorium.

Look to rebuild a fairer, more just society after the crisis and support solutions that help protect the most vulnerable people and restore our planet for future generations.

<https://cafod.org.uk/News/International-news/Coronavirus-response>

In order to continue protecting and improving the lives of those in poor communities, your prayers and gifts are needed now more than ever.

[Donate to support our coronavirus response](#)

[Sign our petition to unite against coronavirus](#)

[Pray for all those affected by coronavirus](#)

Make Covid-19 treatments available to all!



Coronavirus doesn't discriminate -- we're all at risk.

Costa Rica's President and the Health Minister have submitted a proposal to the World Health Organisation (WHO) to create a **'patent pool' of Covid-19 treatments that all countries would be able to access**. That would mean governments or generic drugmakers could manufacture and sell the products at much lower prices.

Dr Philippa Whitford, Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Vaccinations for All, has written a cross-party letter calling for [Westminster](#) to guarantee equitable global access to any Covid-19 vaccine. The letter has been signed by MPs and peers from all political parties in Westminster, and calls on the UK Government to ensure any publicly funded vaccine is available on an open-access basis, so developing countries can afford access to the vaccine at "a reasonable cost"

It claims it must make sure that it does not allow "pharmaceutical monopoly" that could see developing countries left behind while any patent rights to the vaccine are held by the World [Health](#) Organisation.

Whitford said: "When Scottish pharmacist Alexander Fleming discovered penicillin, he recognised it was an incredible health breakthrough that should be widely available. He gave up the opportunity to amass personal wealth and instead transferred the patent to the UK and US governments."

"In that same spirit, the UK Government must work cooperatively with the rest of the world and ensure that any Covid-19 vaccine will not be patented, to create a monopoly, but allow equitable access across the world."

The APPC was supported in its call by many health and developmental advocacy charities, she claimed. Whitford, who worked as a breast cancer surgeon before becoming an MP, added: "Just as coronavirus does not see borders, it is absolutely crucial that the fight against the virus is a worldwide effort.

"The UK Government should follow the lead of Costa Rica in supporting a global sharing or open access mechanism so that any patent rights are held by the World Health Organisation. While this a humanitarian approach, it also makes sense from a public health perspective.

"We have seen the speed with which Covid-19 has crossed the world, so failure to control or eliminate it in developing countries would just see the virus returning to cause further epidemics in the future.

"A vaccine will only be globally effective if it's affordable, accessible and available for everyone who needs it – now is the time to act to make that possible."

The pharmaceutical corporations have joined similar schemes before, such as in the fight against HIV/AIDS

The WHO has backed the proposal, along with 130 UK MPs from across the political spectrum.

We can help by asking the UK Government to support the Costa Rica proposal for **pharmaceutical corporations to voluntarily pool their intellectual property for all medical interventions** — including treatment, vaccines and diagnostics. It would create a **giant repository of knowledge in the fight against Covid-19 that would be freely accessible to all countries** of the WHO -- and keep lifesaving treatment affordable to all.

<https://actions.sumofus.org/a/coronavirus-treatment-uk>

[Coronavirus: All-party plea to ensure all can access vaccine](#) The National. 12 April 2020.

[WHO director-general endorses a voluntary intellectual property pool to develop Covid-19 products](#) STAT. 6 April 2020.

[Big drugmakers under pressure to share patents against coronavirus](#) Financial Times (paywall). 31 March 2020.

The Babcock response to COVID 19 shows that defence diversification is possible after all .

It was announced on 6th April that the Defence firm Babcock will begin manufacturing 10,000 ventilators. In a statement Babcock said it had “responded quickly to the UK Prime Minister’s UK Ventilator Challenge” and that the manufacturing of 10,000 Zephyr Plus ventilators would begin subject to regulatory approval. Although Babcock has not said where the ventilators will be manufactured, the firm has factories in Scotland and south-west England, and it is expected that staff who routinely work on defence contracts have been re-deployed to work on the ventilator project. (*Uncertain if the design has yet got approval*)

Babcock’s team at Scandinavian Air Ambulance has already refitted one of their Beech 200 aircraft into a dedicated COVID-19 air ambulance to help relieve intensive care departments in Sweden.

Defence diversification

Babcock is also refurbishing parts of Britain’s Trident nuclear weapons system at Devonport Dock, and is part of an alliance which manages The Royal Naval Armament Depot (RNAD) at Coulport and Faslane.

One of the objections to scrapping Trident is that highly-skilled employees would be left without jobs. CND’s answer to this point over many decades has been that workers can and must be redeployed to socially useful parts of the economy. However, whenever we have proposed this ‘defence diversification’, the usual retort is ‘that’s impossible!’

The UN Secretary General has called for an historic global ceasefire.



Our world faces a common enemy: COVID-19. The virus does not care about nationality or ethnicity, faction or faith. It attacks all, relentlessly. Meanwhile, armed conflict rages on around the world.

The most vulnerable — women and children, people with disabilities, the marginalized and the displaced — pay the highest price. They are also at the highest risk of suffering devastating losses from COVID-19. Let’s not forget that in war-ravaged countries, health systems have collapsed.

Health professionals, already few in number, have often been targeted. Refugees and others displaced by violent conflict are doubly vulnerable. The fury of the virus illustrates the folly of war.

That is why today, I am calling for an immediate global ceasefire in all corners of the world.

- UN Secretary General, António Guterres

A global ceasefire would allow war-torn countries the chance to focus on the threat of COVID-19. It would provide access for humanitarian aid, allow health workers the chance to prepare for the crisis, and offer a crucial window to build lasting political solutions.

UK Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab has backed the call for a global ceasefire, ask him to turn his words into action and take a lead at the UN Security Council in building a unified backing for a global ceasefire.

[Ask](#) Dominic Raab to support the UN Secretary General in UN Security Council to call for a global ceasefire

<https://www.caat.org.uk/get-involved/act-now/global-ceasefire>

The COVID-19 pandemic affects us all, but communities facing conflict and repression are even less able to prepare for and cope with the virus. Yet the UK continues to prioritise arms company profits over human life. The UK continues weapons sales to Saudi Arabia for use in attacks on Yemen. Five years of bombing has already destroyed Yemen's healthcare system; now COVID-19 has been found in the country too.

The UK continues to license weapons sales to India, in spite of government-backed murder and oppression of its Muslim population, when that money could be spent on vital healthcare in the fight against COVID-19. It continues to sell arms to the Philippines, where President Duterte has ordered police to shoot dead anyone causing ‘trouble’ during the lockdown.

Meanwhile the UK continues to waste billions of pounds on aircraft carriers, fighter jets and nuclear weapons, money which could be spent on life-saving protective equipment and ventilators.

<https://www.caat.org.uk/get-involved/act-now/global-ceasefire>

It's been a huge week for debt campaigning.

Following calls from over 200 organisations and 750,000 people around the world for debt cancellation to help lower-income countries cope with coronavirus, this week we had announcements from the G20 and the IMF. Over \$12billion in debt payment suspension has been announced for this year, but there's still a long way to go.

What just happened?

Debts can be either bilateral, lent from one country to another, multilateral, lent by a big international body like the IMF or the World Bank, or from private lenders – usually banks or hedge funds. This week we saw debt suspension or cancellation from both international lenders and individual countries as well as some announcements from private lenders.

On Monday 13th April we heard that the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the body that lends to countries in temporary crisis will cancel \$215 million of debt payments for 25 countries over the next six months due to the coronavirus pandemic. This is a group of some of the poorest countries and includes Sierra Leone and Liberia.

This is good news. However, it's a drop in the ocean compared to the total amounts of debt cancellation that's needed. Jubilee Debt Campaign estimates that debt cancellation of up to \$300 billion is needed by middle- and low-income countries to help fight coronavirus over the next year.

Later in the week, the G20 finance ministers announced they will suspend debt payments for the rest of the year for 77 countries, which is estimated to save \$12 billion. They also called on private lenders to do the same, which would save \$8 billion.

These are all positive steps forward and help to keep vital resources in countries where it is needed now, but we know much more needs to be done.

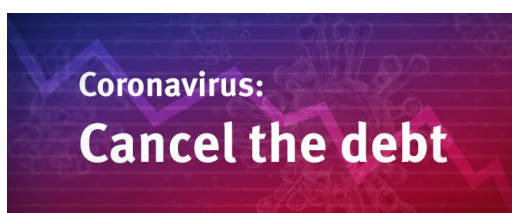
What comes next?

Although a lot has happened this week, we have to keep up the pressure and make sure there are real structural changes made so debt crises don't continue. Coronavirus has exposed the economic fragility of countries that carry high levels of unfair debts.

We need to see real debt cancellation, not just suspension – which just lays the ground for an even bigger debt crisis in the future – and for a permanent debt work-out mechanism at the UN to be introduced. We also need to make sure debts to private lenders are properly regulated. Right now, if countries don't pay up there's nothing to stop private lenders suing poor country governments in UK or New York courts.

We need legislation to make sure this doesn't happen.

Countries shouldn't have to choose between paying debts and funding healthcare. These are positive steps forward, but much more needs to be done.



<https://jubileedebt.org.uk/actions/stop-coronavirus-debt-disaster>

**Boarbank Hall Grange over Sands
Laudato Si': Theory and Practice
7th to 9th July 2020**

A short break for anyone interested in sharing ideas about caring for the planet in the light of our faith. The major themes explored in the document include:
A moral and spiritual challenge.

The ecological crisis, Pope Francis writes, is a summons to profound interior conversion, to renew our relationships with God, one another, and the created world.
Talks, walks, conversations and practical activities.
Bring muddy shoes!

Led by Sr Margaret Atkins of Boarbank Hall and **Steve Burrowes** of CAFOD and the Wardley Hall Laudato Si' Centre. Please contact **SR MARGARET** for further information
This course will be repeated in October



42nd ANNUAL CONFERENCE of NJPN
17th—19th July 2020



2020 Vision: Action for Life on Earth

Five years on from Laudato Si' we are learning that ecological conversion is a matter of life and death.

A keynote speaker is climate campaigner and author **Lorna Gold**. Liturgy will be led by **Marty Haugen**, liturgical composer and pastoral musician. **Bishop John Arnold of Salford**, will be the conference Mass celebrant.

Christine Allen, Director of CAFOD, will chair. More than 20 stalls will be available in the Just Fair.

<https://www.justice-and-peace.org.uk/conference/>

At the Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, Derbyshire

**Please check next month
that both these events are still taking place**

Resources

Global Caring -The second film-based programme for parishes and groups, after Global Healing. Offers film clips, posters, leader's guide - all available as free downloads. <https://www.ourcommonhome.co.uk/>

CAFOD Prayer Resources at: <https://cafod.org.uk/Pray/Prayer-resources/Coronavirus-prayers>

CAFOD Education Resources: <https://cafod.org.uk/Education/Education-resources>

CAFOD News <https://cafod.org.uk/News/International-news/Coronavirus-response>

Missed one of CAFOD online events -Recordings are available of past online meetings, including [An inspirational interview with Maria Gonzalez](#) Head of International Development. Find out what motivates Maria in the fight against poverty and hear the latest news from our international fight against COVID-19.

[Eucharistic celebration](#) with Fr Liam Hayes and CAFOD friends

[Stories from Cambodia](#), shared by our wonderful Gap Year volunteers who visited the country recently.

Fascinating update from Kayode Akintola from our Sierra Leone office, just visit www.cafod.org.uk/onlinetalks and click 'Watch recordings'.

Dorothy Day: Anarchist Grandma, Patron Saint of the Resistance

When Pope Francis addressed Congress during his 2015 visit to the U.S., he named four great men and women whose legacies helped shape the fundamental values of the American people: Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King Jr., Thomas Merton, and Dorothy Day, the Catholic social activist and pacifist.

It was among his most audacious statements during the trip, and he got away with it because—outside of churches and the peace movement—Dorothy Day, the woman who could become America's next saint, is largely unknown.

Revolution of the Heart: The Dorothy Day Story, a new documentary film by Martin Doblmeier, wants to put that right. It has been released in the US, but there is no release date for it here at present.

If you want to read more about Dorothy Day, her Granddaughter, Kate Hennessy, has published a book about her **'The World Will Be Saved By Beauty.'** Copies available to purchase from Pax Christi at:

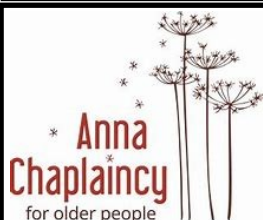
<http://paxchristi.org.uk/product/dorothy-day-the-world-will-be-saved-by-beauty/>

To hear a talk given by Kate Hennessy, download the audio click here:

<https://soundcloud.com/user-310689299/evening-with-kate-hennessy>.

For Sama is a documentary film made by a woman living in Syria is powerful, troubling, moving and I would thoroughly recommend it. It is the story of Waad al-Kateab's life through five years of the uprising in Aleppo, Syria as she falls in love, gets married and gives birth to Sama, all while conflict rises around her. can watch it free at

<https://www.channel4.com/programmes/for-sama/on-demand/66428-001>



Anna Chaplaincy' is the name for an important initiative which Churches Together in Cumbria are launching in the county in 2020. Anna Chaplaincy is a ministry to older people. Find out more in full article at: <https://www.churchestogethercumbria.co.uk/Publisher/File.aspx?ID=248268>

