NJPN E-Bulletin 12th December 2021



Dear Friends,

Apologies for the delay in sending out the e-bulletin. It has been a difficult few weeks, with one of my children having Covid (luckily we have all been jabbed), and in the same week, my fiancé's father died suddenly. That and building work at home, plus pressure of work, meant that I needed to take an extra couple of weeks.

Our Action and lead article this weekend is about the plight of refugees and migrants, obviously following on from the tragic and avoidable deaths of those poor souls in the Channel a couple of weeks ago. Please have a good read and help where you can.

Thanks to everyone that sends items to be included. Thanks also for sharing this e-bulletin with friends and family. Please encourage them to sign up if they wish to receive their own copy.

I aim to have the next edition out over the weekend of the 9th January, so it only leaves me to wish you all a very Happy and Holy Christmas, and every good wish for the year ahead. God bless Sharon (Editor)

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ACTION OF THE WEEK



Caritas Social Action Network (CSAN)

On the 8th December. CSAN issued a <u>Statement on the Nationality and</u> <u>Borders Bill</u> concerning the Bill, which is currently making its way through Parliament.

The Statement makes interesting reading, and quotes both Cardinal Nicholls and Pope Francis in talking about the plight of the dispossessed that seek sanctuary on our shores.

It also highlights the fact that we are seeking to build 'higher walls' to keep people from wanting to come here, and in fact we are treating them as if they are doing something illegal. In international law, it is *legal for anyone to seek asylum* in a country which is a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention. The UK is a signatory.

There are several links in the article, and in particular it mentions the campaign toolkit that was produced by the SVP and the JRS (and in fact we have previously included details in this e-bulletin) '8 things you should know about the Nationality and Borders Bill and actions you can take to change it.'

The toolkit suggests four ways you can advocate for refugees, and we ask that you join in with as many of them that you can:

1) Write to your MP to express your concerns about the Bill and call for a just and person-centred asylum system which respects the dignity of the person. The toolkit includes a template letter.

2) Share the toolkit with others. Pope Francis has written that solidarity is more than acts of generosity, "it means working to eliminate the structural causes of poverty and to promote the integral development of the poor"

(Evangelii Gaudium, 188). We are called to be agents of change, to develop our advocacy capacity at parish, diocesan and national level.

3) Welcome a refugee or asylum seeker. The Community Sponsorship Scheme, pioneered by Catholic parishes, has already enabled over 350 communities to resettle a refugee family. Other schemes to host refugees and asylum seekers are signposted on our guidance page.

4) Pray for refugees. In the season of Advent, the Cycle of Prayer includes Migrants and Refugees. As we prepare to celebrate the Nativity of the Lord, we remember that the Holy Family were themselves refugees, driven from their home by fear of persecution. This Advent let us pray for migrants and refugees and pray for ourselves, that our hearts will never be hardened in the face of their plea for sanctuary.

Thank you!

PS. Sophie's Blog on the <u>JRS website</u>, dated the 25th November, also mentions the toolkit, as well as reflecting on the tragedy of those who perished in the Channel.

NEWS AND COMMENT

1. Refugees/Migrants (includes Actions and Events)

Drownings in the English Channel (including an Event)

Barbara Kentish, through <u>ICN</u>, writes about the drowning of the 30 migrants off the coast of Calais on the 24th November. She recalls the Channel 4 News story that showed a distressed woman, knee-deep in sea waves, shouting to the reporter that there had been no water or milk in their camp, despite the presence of babies, and that was why she was taking to a precarious Channel crossing.

Barbara writes: 'There will be a **Prayer Vigil outside the Home Office on 13 December**, from 12.30 to 1.30, hosted by the London Catholic Worker and Westminster Justice and Peace, This has been run for several years and the practice has been to read out some of the names of the thousands who have lost their lives trying to reach the sanctuary of the UK. All are welcome to join us. The Prayer Vigil will be held next year from January at 12.30pm on the third Monday of the month, also at the Home Office.'

'A further service will be held in due course on the seafront at Dover. at the two plaques commemorating migrants who have died trying to reach the UK. For further information contact barbarakentish@talktalk.net.'

Event - Candlelit Advent Service for Refugees - Thursday 16th December 8-9pm, via Zoom

The Columbans in Britain are hosting a special candlelit service for refugee friends this Advent and are inviting Columban supporters and partners to join the event on Thursday, 16 December from 8-9pm on Zoom. It will remember all those who have lost their lives whilst trying to seek a better life.

More details are available through ICN.

Pope Francis visits Migrant Camp in Lesbos

During his visit to a Migrant Camp in Lesbos, Pope Francis decried European indifference to the plight of migrants in the Mediterranean as a *"shipwreck of civilization."* He also described the Mediterranean as a *'grim cemetery without tombstones.'* You can read the full article about his visit through <u>ACI Africa.</u>

Also, through <u>ACI Africa</u>, you can read about the two young people from Cameroon, who are among the Migrants that Pope Francis is helping to bring to Italy.

Niger Refugees safe in Italy, thanks to Humanitarian Corridor

A delegation of volunteers and aid operators have welcomed a group of refugees at Rome's international airport. The 50 vulnerable men, women and children have been able to flee danger thanks to a "Humanitarian Corridor" that guarantees safe passage and legal entry into Italy.

The refugees, including 16 children, are welcomed, not only with the warmth of open-armed volunteers with smiles on their faces, but also with adequate housing facilities and the support of a process of integration. That means school for the children, Italian language classes for all, and help in putting in applying for work.

You can read the full story through Vatican News.

On Human Rights Day: Protecting the rights of migrants and refugees

The Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace have called upon the UK and US Governments to uphold the <u>Universal Declaration of Human Rights</u> that was passed 73 years ago, on the 10th December 1948. Actions like the passing of the Nationality and Borders Bill go against the spirit of the

declaration and are cruel. You can read their full statement through ICN.

Also, in regards to Human Rights Day, <u>Vatican News</u> reports on the fact that Caritas has invited EU leaders to take action for the global south. If you read this, you will see the negative impact that Europe has on the global south - thus causing many migrants to leave home in search of a better future.

2. Climate/Environment News (includes Actions)

Kenya: Greening the desert with solar technology

Jo Siedlecka writes an article through <u>ICN</u> telling the story of how New Ways, a charity which supports the work of the St Paul's Missionary Community in the remote desert region of Turkana, northwest Kenya, wants to install a new solar powered water pump as well as drill a bore hole. The article makes interesting reading, as it will not only mean a supply of fresh drinking water, but also mean that the women and girls have more time for education. It is a win-win situation.

Supermarkets ranked on pesticide action

<u>Wicked Leeks</u> have shared this article about the supermarkets that are doing most to tackle and reduce pesticide use - Waitrose and M & S have come out top, according to the Pesticide Action Network (PAN). They have assessed ten supermarkets against eight criteria. (image courtesy of <u>PAN</u>)



As a consumer, this may not be something that you have thought about, but the information in the article goes onto say that some of the more dangerous pesticides, such as neonicotinoids, which are banned in Europe for toxicity to bees, but still used elsewhere and can therefore present in imported foods.

M&S and Co-op were recognised as the only two supermarkets who publish information around residue testing on food, which all supermarkets conduct to check pesticide levels don't exceed legal limits.

Action: - Shell: Leave the Whales alone.

Greenpeace writes: Shell is about to blast extremely loud shockwaves into the Wild Coast of South Africa, a fragile and beautiful ecosystem that is a vital whale breeding ground. Each shockwave is louder than a space shuttle launch, and local whales, dolphins, sharks and turtles will be subjected to them every 10 seconds, for five months, in whale mating season.

Scientists are clear we cannot drill for more oil and gas and meet our climate targets - and the use of seismic waves could have a devastating impact on the health of marine life. If successful, the operations would also disrupt the local communities that depend on eco-tourism and fishing for their livelihoods. If you go to the <u>Greenpeace website</u> and choose the 'Shell: leave the Whales alone' link, you can sign their petition (unfortunately, for some reason copying the link into here wasn't working)

The Greenpeace Guide to Life

Staying with Greenpeace, they have produced their <u>'Guide to Life'</u> which will help you to lead a greener life. This covers everything from simple swaps at home, through to high impact changes in your community. Yes, you will end up on their mailing list - but you can unsubscribe at any point.

Action: Exit The Energy Charter Treaty

We have covered this before, but Global Justice Now are bringing it to our attention again. They say: *Fossil fuel companies could demand over \$9 trillion from governments for passing climate laws, using corporate courts.* The stronger the actions governments take to tackle the climate crisis, the more they can expect to be sued in these secretive tribunals.

For once, this isn't coming from us. This is actually what energy insiders and specialist lawyers are saying!

The Energy Charter Treaty is a giant corporate court deal focused on the

energy sector, and many of the fossil fuel companies are using it for these cases. Together with groups all across Europe, we are calling for our governments to exit the Energy Charter Treaty. Add your name <u>here.</u>

What happened at COP26? And what next?

So COP is now a dim, distant memory, but we cannot let it lie, and there will still be a lot of stuff shared, and campaigns to join over the next few months. <u>Campaign Against Climate Change</u> have shared this article clarifying some of the issues, with some useful links in it.

3. Palestine/Holy Land (includes an Action)

Appeal for Tent of Nations

I had not heard of the <u>Tent of Nations</u> until reading the Archbishop of Canterbury's personal appeal on Facebook, and subsequently through <u>ICN</u>.

It is a Palestinian Christian farm, just south of Bethlehem, that has been working the land for decades. Over the past ten years or so it has welcomed thousands of pilgrims and volunteers to help them cultivate the land - and grow seeds of hope by building bridges between people.

The farm is now surrounded by Israeli settlements, and this Monday, the 13th December, there will be an important meeting at the Israeli Military Court that may finally decide the fate of their farm. Justine Welby writes:- please join me in offering prayers for the Nassar family, that justice may finally prevail in their longstanding court case. Please pray that they would be allowed to keep possession of their farm without further harassment - and continue their faithful witness to Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, in pursuing hope, justice and reconciliation.

State Business: Israel's misappropriation of land in the West Bank

B'Tselem, the Israeli human rights group, have issued a report concerning the violence that is being carried out against the Palestinians, much of it with the approval of the Government. You can read it <u>here.</u>

Kairos Palestine Christmas Alert

Kairos Palestine have produced their Christmas Alert, which includes Human Stories from Palestinians in all areas of Palestine; West Bank, Gaza, Jerusalem, the 1948 occupied Palestinian cities and the Diaspora. Each story gives a glimpse on Palestinians' life inside and outside Palestine and highlights the unity in struggle, resistance and hope among Palestinians. You can read it <u>here.</u>

Action: LGPS - End your Complicity

Palestine Solidarity Campaign writes: Research by the LGPS Divest campaign has found that the LGPS continues to hold over £4.4bn of investment in companies which are complicit in Israel's grave breaches of international law and Palestinian rights. This includes companies active in Israel's illegal settlement economy, and companies supplying weapons, components, and military technology to Israel, used in unlawful violence against Palestinians.

PSG are asking you to write to your local Councillors. Click <u>here</u> for more information.

4. World Peace Day 2022

The theme for World Peace Day, the 1st January 2022, has been announced as *Education, work and dialogue between generations: tools for building lasting peace.*

More information is available through the <u>Catholic Bishops Conference of</u> England and Wales.



We will be celebrating Peace Sunday on the 16th January 2022. Resources and information are available to download from the <u>Pax</u> <u>Christi</u> website.

5. Afghanistan: UNICEF appeal to save the lives of millions of children

UNICEF advise that the current situation in Afghanistan is dire. The humanitarian situation continues to deteriorate and there are alarming disruptions in health and nutrition services, a disastrous food crisis, drought, outbreaks of measles, acute watery diarrhoea, polio and other preventable diseases, as well as the crippling onset of winter. They say that millions of children are at risk of starvation and death. To read more about this and ways in which you can help, go to the UNICEF website.

6. Homeless

Olallo House have recently been given 'Highly Commended' status in the Homeless Link Awards. They are based in central London and deal with homeless men and women, in particular those with complex needs. Clients to the service include migrants, victims of modern-day slavery / trafficking, TB patients and homeless people on discharge from hospital – non-UK and UK nationals, all deemed vulnerable due to a range of factors which may also include substance misuse and poor mental and/or physical health. Their website states that they focus on holistic support services encompassing the whole person. They also offer advice, skills training and employment support.

They say: Our goal is to ensure that any person who comes into contact with our services does not return to street homelessness. We believe that this best achieved by working in partnership.

For more information on the amazing work that they do, and to read about the reality of being homeless in Britain, click <u>here.</u>

Sing it out: how choirs help address homelessness

Sam Chaplin, through Grace + Truth, has written a piece about *The Choir With No Name,* an organisation that runs choirs for people affected by homelessness. It is a very simple format that has been effective in bringing about positive changes in people's lives. He tells you more about it <u>here.</u>

7. Viva Maria Elena Arana! - CAFOD's 'missionary disciple'

Ellen Teague has written a great piece through <u>ICN</u> about the legendary Maria Elena, who has retired from CAFOD after being Campaign Coordinator for thirty years. There are some lovely tributes from various people, including Bishop John Arnold and Christine Allen.

Maria Elena jokes that her husband Robert has described himself as being 'married to CAFOD.' We therefore thank both Maria Elena, and Robert, for the work that they have put in between them! It has really been a job well done!

8. Stealing futures - in-work poverty (includes an Action)

The SVP have brought out their In-work Poverty Report. They write: - *In-work poverty occurs when the total net income of a working household, where at least one working-age adult is employed, is insufficient to meet the household's needs. Although there is no single definition of poverty, most studies agree that poverty is about not having enough material resources to meet basic needs once the cost of living is taken into account.*

A recent study from the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) on the rise of working poverty shows that the trend has been growing under successive governments since 2004. The report found that rates of poverty in working households increased to a new high of 17% in the first quarter of 2020, equivalent to more than one in five households. We also know that as of 2018/19 the number of children living in absolute low income is 3.7million, or 26% of all children.

The report does include suggestions as to how the Government could tackle this crisis, meanwhile the SVP will be on hand to help people in poverty, with kindness and dignity, as they would usually do. You can read this very informative report <u>here.</u>

Action - Give the Gift of Kindness

The SVP are asking people to 'give the gift of kindness' this Christmas. For more details please go to the <u>ICN website.</u>

9. John Marshall RIP

Liz Archibald has written this tribute, following the sad news that John Marshall had passed away: -

John Marshall, who was for many years the chair of the Hexham and Newcastle Justice and Peace Co-ordinating Council, died at around midnight last night. John had been in poor health for several years, lovingly cared for by his wife Audrey. Over the last month he had become increasingly frail.

John was a beloved husband, father, grandfather and great grandfather but to many of us, along with his wife Audrey, he was the face of Justice and Peace in the diocese.

John, along with Audrey, has been a stalwart of the Justice and Peace Network since the 1970's. Committed to Catholic Social Teaching, John lived his life advocating for the needs of the poor and marginalised. As well as being chair of our local Justice and Peace Council for many years, he also served for a period as chair of the National Justice and Peace Network.

Many of us know him as the inspiration behind the Justice and Peace Refugee Project which along with Audrey he helped set up in 2001 and which continues to support refugees and asylum seekers in the Newcastle area. John served as volunteer manager of the project until 2016, when due to ill health he had to retire.

John was a Labour councillor for many years and served a term as Lord Mayor of Newcastle. He won the respect of councillors from all parties for his integrity and commitment. He was very active in the accreditation of Newcastle as a Fairtrade city and never ceased to speak up and work for the needs of the people of Newcastle.

For his friends and colleagues, John has been an inspiration. For those who did not know him personally, we have all benefited from his work for Justice and Peace. I know people will want to pay tribute to him; perhaps the greatest tribute we can pay is to carry on his work, speaking out, serving and campaigning for the marginalised in our society. I know we will remember John, his beloved Audrey and the rest of the family in our prayers.

Rest in Peace John.

10. World Aids Day

Sant'Egidio strives to save Africa's future.

The theme for World Aids Day (1st December) is **"End inequalities. End AIDS. End Pandemics."**

Vatican News writes that the Community of Sant'Egidio is working to assure healthcare for all in Africa, and to end inequalities due to the HIV/AIDS and Covid-19 pandemics. Their "Dream" programme which began in 2002, and is now present in ten African countries, works closely with African women by teaching and sharing a new *"culture of healthcare"* To read more about the work that they are doing, click <u>here.</u>

Persistent inequalities weakening efforts in fight against HIV/AIDS

The Jesuits in Africa have reported that social, economic and structural inequalities are slowing down efforts to control the spread of HIV/AIDS. Persistent inequalities between men and women not only weaken efforts to fight the spread but also increase vulnerability. You can read more through ACI Africa.

The above report goes to show that what the Community of Sant'Egidio is doing is all the more remarkable.

How one couple opened their doors to people with AIDS

Michael J. O'Louglin has written a great article for America Magazine, telling the story of Michael DeSalvo and Nick Orth who opened their home to people dying of AIDS in 1992. They had no previous training, and just fell into this by accident, and by them realising that there was a great need in their community.

They had met while protesting war and nuclear weapons and had both been active in the Catholic Worker, the movement founded by Dorothy Day to serve the poor and fight for peace. They knew they would continue to be involved in social justice activism in Syracuse, though they were not sure what that would look like. Now they did.

They then go onto discuss the work that Dorothy Day did, and how they, and so many other L.G.B.T. Catholics drew inspiration from a woman who seemed unable to fully embrace people like them.

It is an interesting article, and is really moving to see the good work that they have done, and the strong faith that they both have, despite often facing discrimination through the church.

Click here to read it in full.

11. Asia: the scourge of Child Pornography

Union of Catholic Asian News reports the following: *Child pornography is* one of the worst forms of exploitation and continues to crush the dreams of children globally. This absolute moral degradation is now a part of the multi-billion-dollar global porn industry, with deep roots in Asia.

It operates like any business with public relations networks and lobby groups. Asia has emerged as the de facto capital of child pornography with businesses thriving in Japan, Thailand, India and the Philippines, particularly the sex-on-the-screen industry.

Pope Francis was bold enough to recently denounce the proliferation of child pornography and called on governments to act. He stressed that the world is running against time and remedial actions have to come quickly.

To read more of this article, go to the UCA News website.

12. NJPN Blog on Independent Catholic News

There are some very good articles to be read from our 'Guest Bloggers' on the ICN website.

19th November - The King who takes the lowest place (Rob Esdaile)

3rd December - Where's Mum? Children, Mothers and Prison (Celia Capstick)

9th December - Let Us Support the Agenda of Peace of Pope Francis (Bruce Kent)

You can read them through <u>ICN</u>. Thanks very much to ICN for supporting us in our work.

Newsletters

13. NJPN NW E-Bulletin mid-November 2021

Lots of interesting articles, including looking back at COP26, plus lots of social justice issues. You can read it through NJPN <u>here.</u>

14. Mouthpeace Winter 2021

Showcasing the work of the Lancaster Diocese Faith and Justice Commission, plus other justice and peace work going on around the country. Also available through <u>NJPN</u>.

15. Ecumenical Council for Corporate Responsibility November 2021

Another interesting edition, including their Ethical Buying Guide. You can read it <u>here.</u>

16. Living Fair November 2021

Another colourful edition, with all sorts of goodies being advertised, along with some good articles. Available <u>here.</u>

17. Salesians Justice and Peace November 2021

Friends of the Holy Land is their charitable organisation of the month. You can read it <u>here.</u>

EVENTS (in chronological order where applicable)

18. 15th December - 7pm - Green Christian

The Economics of Enough

19. 27. 14th - 16th January - Christians Aware Annual Conference <u>Transcending Divisions in a world of diversity</u>

20. 17th January - 7.30pm - Finding Faith in Tax Justice (via Zoom)

Church Action for Tax Justice invites you to an online presentation and workshop on why Tax matters for people of faith. Recalling the mobilisation of the church community in the run up to the Millennium we want to explore how a reformed and renewed tax system in the UK can contribute to the Common Good and build a more sustainable life for all. Hosted by Nottingham Diocesan Justice and Peace Commission this webinar is open to the wider J&P Network and all who are interested. Please contact Cat Jenkins, Programme Manager at CATJ (cat.jenkins@eccr.org.uk) for a personal invitation and the link to join.

21. 21st - 23rd January - 9.30am - 8pm - Faith Justice (ages 18-40) The Climate Emergency: What Next?

22. 14th -27th February - Church Action on Poverty Sunday

Sign up to take part

23. 8th - 10th July 2022 - Student Christian Movement

Reinventing Radical: Courageous Discipleship for a Changing World

24. Columbans Schools Media Competition

Deadline for entries - 11th February 2021



THE CHRISTMAS LAST WORDS....

A few things to finish up the year...

25. Advent Reflections

Anne O'Connor has written some lovely and thought-provoking reflections. Please have a look at them through the NJPN website <u>here</u>.

26. Advent Video Series from the Holy Land

Andy McCullough through <u>ICN</u> writes: - The Bethlehem Story is a series of daily videos following the story of the little town in Palestine from the death of Rachel to the birth of Christ. Join the shepherds and the wise men. Explore overlooked Old Testament characters and examine unexpected oracles.

We will also be joined on some days by Palestinian Christians telling their

story. You can't tell the story of Bethlehem without listening to voices from Bethlehem telling their own story. So we've partnered with Sabeel-Kairos, Bethlehem Bible College, and other Bethlehem-based friends in pulling together video footage to add colour and flavour.

27. Cut Food Waste this Christmas

If you didn't get a chance to sign up to the Injustice Advent Calendar, you wouldn't have seen this come through on Day 6. Obviously we all know that over Christmas we generally buy too much; we also know that many people go hungry around the world.

Click <u>here</u> to read six useful tips to help cut down on food waste this Christmas.

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NEWS LINKS

Independent Catholic News

Find Justice and Peace stories at: <u>http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/justice-peace-environment</u> <u>Sign up</u> to receive these regularly.

Catholic Communications Network

Find news stories at <u>www.catholicnews.org.uk</u>

Latest Zenit Headlines here

Vatican News homepage: <u>www.vaticannews.va</u>

World Council of Churches

https://www.oikoumene.org/en/

UK Parliament News

https://www.parliament.uk/business/news/

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About these E-BULLETINS

The items above are emails received from around the Network which may be of interest to those involved in working for justice and peace.

The views expressed are not necessarily those of NJPN.

To **unsubscribe** from these mailings, email <u>ebulletin@justice-and-peace.org</u> with "unsubscribe" in the subject box. We also welcome your **feedback** at the same address.

Forwarding these emails: Please feel free to forward these emails on to your contacts – *but please remember to tell them to contact YOU if they want to unsubscribe!*

Urgent Actions:

We sometimes receive emails that need immediate action and cannot wait for the weekly bulletin. To receive these items email the same address with "**urgent actions**" in the subject box.

If you appreciate these bulletins, help to keep them coming by donating to NJPN:

Send **cheques** payable to NJPN to: NJPN, 39 Eccleston Square, London SW1V 1BX. Make a regular donation by **standing order**: Download standing order/membership forms from <u>http://www.justice-and-peace.org.uk/</u>

(NJPN is a registered charity no: 1114947 Company no: 5036866)

If you shop online, you can support us at no extra cost to yourself by signing up with <u>easyfundraising.org.uk</u>, where lots of companies will make a donation to us when you shop online with them.

As a small charity NJPN relies on donations from its members and friends, as well as grants for specific work or projects, if you feel you are able to make a contribution you can either:

make a bacs payment to our account: Sort code 16-31-15 account 10089516 reference Donation with your surname or our CAF donate

page: https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/8130#!/DonationDetails