

The e-bulletin for the North West, linked to the National Justice and Peace Network (NJPN), is produced jointly within the dioceses of Lancaster, Liverpool, Salford, Shrewsbury and Wrexham. Please send diary dates to [anneoc980@hotmail.com](mailto:anneoc980@hotmail.com)

### MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES ARE HUMAN BEINGS NOT JUST STATISTICS, SAYS BISHOP AS BISHOPS' CONFERENCE RELEASES NEW PUBLICATION

14 March 2023: In 2023, people making dangerous journeys across the Channel to reach the UK are called by various names: 'refugees', 'asylum seekers', 'migrants', and often by more derogatory terms.

*Love the Stranger* is a new publication by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales' Department for International Affairs that articulates our Christian duty to look beyond such labels and see the person who has left their homeland in search of a better life. **You can download the document here:** <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2023/03/CBCEW-Love-the-Stranger-A4.pdf>

**Bishop Paul McAleenan, Lead Bishop for Migrants and Refugees for the Bishops' Conference,** emphasises the need to uphold their innate human dignity:

"Our starting point as a society must be to recognise migrants and refugees as people. We need to understand their stories, their reasons for leaving their homelands and hopes for building a future here. We should never view people arriving from elsewhere as a political problem to be solved, but rather as brothers and sisters who we have a responsibility towards, and who greatly enrich our communities. People are driven to leave their countries, sometimes making dangerous journeys or risking exploitation, because of conflict, poverty, oppression, or lack of opportunities. Looking beyond our own borders, we have a duty to help people flourish in their homelands, as well as welcoming those who leave in search of a better life."

**Cardinal Vincent Nichols, President of the Bishops' Conference,** welcomed the publication:

"*Love the Stranger* draws together more than one hundred years of Catholic teaching to guide our response to migration in England and Wales today. While it does not propose detailed solutions to complex problems, it clearly calls for procedures which permit safe and controlled access and a fair hearing to those seeking asylum. Present arrangements in this country are dramatically lacking in both of these requirements."

#### Vatican endorsement

**Father Fabio Baggio CS, the Undersecretary of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development,** praised *Love the Stranger's* rich review of, and reflection on, Catholic social teaching:

"The text promotes an authentic culture of encounter at all levels and among all the actors involved. As we live in times in which the defence of the dignity of each human person may seem under threat, *Love the Stranger* invites us to not give up on the opportunity to live our catholicity ever more fully, to build more just and equal societies for the benefit of each and every person, and to be open to the contribution that strangers can offer as we care for their integral human development and ours."

#### Protection of migrants and refugees a shared goal

**Fr Manuel Barrios Prieto, the Secretary General of COMECE (Commission of Catholic Episcopal Conferences of the European Union)** welcomes the publication as an important step forward towards the promotion and protection of migrants:

"This advocacy document on the Catholic response to migrants and refugees is a timely reference and guidance in our polarised European societies. It offers sound orientations on migration and asylum not only for Catholics, but for any person of good who considers human dignity as the basis for a harmonious social coexistence. It is not a mere compilation of principles of the Social Doctrine of the Church on the matter, but a reflection on how these principles should be applied to the current challenges faced by our states and societies."

**Christine Allen, Director of CAFOD,** the official aid agency of the Catholic Church in England and Wales, stresses that people have a right to flourish in their homelands:

"People around the world continue to be tormented by conflict, which drives them from their homes as they seek safety. Communities are also losing their homes and their livelihoods to a climate crisis they did not cause. Working toward peace and tackling the climate crisis are the defining challenges of our time and we must show solidarity to those in need. The UK government can rise to these shared global challenges by reversing the counter-productive cuts to the aid budget, and prioritising countries impacted by conflict and climate change. Failure to act will mean people around the world continue to see their lives turned upside down and their homes destroyed by conflict and climate change."

<https://www.cbcew.org.uk/love-the-stranger-publication/>

## CARITAS, DIOCESE OF SHREWSBURY LOVE THE STRANGER

**Anne O'Connor reports:** Ben Gilchrist, CEO for Caritas, Shrewsbury Diocese gave a stimulating and informative presentation on *Love the Stranger* at St Vincent's Altrincham on 19 June.

There was great enthusiasm to 'get involved' and plenty of ideas to tap into and take forward. It was interesting to hear about what people are already doing – informal conversation sessions to help newcomers pick up basic English, volunteering at foodbanks, befriending refugees in the local area, providing clothing, equipment and furniture for new arrivals – some things are quite easy to do and not too big a commitment but they make a huge difference. It's all about personal contact and valuing the human dignity of each individual.

I think it would be fair to say most people present and probably most parishioners hadn't heard about *Love the Stranger*. This excellent document needs to be highlighted - the first step would be to get the clergy on board and invite them to preach on it. Linking with other groups would be useful – other Christian churches in the area as well as the Altrincham Interfaith group. Ben told us that as far as he knows there is currently little support for asylum seekers being held at the Manchester Airport Detention Centre – this is something we could look into.

**Link to Caritas:** [www.caritasshrewsbury.org.uk](http://www.caritasshrewsbury.org.uk)

**Link to Jesuit Refugee Service:** <https://www.jrsuk.net/what-can-i-do/>

Some excellent articles here from ICN

**Gospel in Art:** 'Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you' Fr Patrick van der Vorst 19 June 2023  
<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/47411>

**Irish Bishops:** 'Leaving people to sleep in tents or on the streets is cruelty ... We can do so much better'  
19 June 2023 <https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/47406>

**'Love the Stranger' - World Refugee Day 2023** Sister Gillian Price FC 19 June 2023  
<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/47403>

**And a thought-provoking poem from Brian Bilston:**

### REFUGEES

They have no need of our help  
So do not tell me  
These haggard faces could belong to you or me  
Should life have dealt a different hand  
We need to see them for who they really are  
Chancers and scroungers  
Layabouts and loungers  
With bombs up their sleeves  
Cut-throats and thieves  
They are not  
Welcome here  
We should make them  
Go back to where they came from  
They cannot  
Share our food  
Share our homes  
Share our countries  
Instead let us  
Build a wall to keep them out  
It is not okay to say  
These are people just like us  
A place should only belong to those who are born there  
Do not be so stupid to think that  
The world can be looked at another way

(now read from bottom to top)

<https://brianbilston.com/2016/03/23/refugees/>

**Heather Kiernan writes:** This long and strikingly horrid poem about the sufferings of refugees is by Warsan Shire, a writer born in Kenya to Somali parents. In *"Home"* Shire gives voice to the lives of undocumented refugees across Europe, and has been shared widely across the media. In this video clip, Sir Jonathan Pryce performs a haunting reading of the poem at a pop-up welcome festival at St Martin in the Fields, Trafalgar Square. The event was organised by Sanctuary Foundation as a welcome to refugees and asylum seekers in the UK as part of World Refugee Day 2022. I'm certain that you will be as moved by it as I was... <https://youtu.be/wYPozKLU3hU>

## Home

no one leaves home unless  
home is the mouth of a shark  
you only run for the border  
when you see the whole city running as well  
your neighbors running faster than you  
breath bloody in their throats  
the boy you went to school with  
who kissed you dizzy behind the old tin factory  
is holding a gun bigger than his body  
you only leave home  
when home won't let you stay.

no one leaves home unless home chases you  
fire under feet  
hot blood in your belly  
it's not something you ever thought of doing  
until the blade burnt threats into your neck  
and even then you carried the anthem under  
your breath  
only tearing up your passport in an airport toilet  
sobbing as each mouthful of paper  
made it clear that you wouldn't be going back.

you have to understand,  
that no one puts their children in a boat  
unless the water is safer than the land  
no one burns their palms  
under trains  
beneath carriages  
no one spends days and nights in the stomach of a truck  
feeding on newspaper unless the miles travelled  
means something more than journey.  
no one crawls under fences  
no one wants to be beaten  
pitied

no one chooses refugee camps  
or strip searches where your  
body is left aching  
or prison,  
because prison is safer  
than a city of fire  
and one prison guard  
in the night  
is better than a truckload  
of men who look like your father  
no one could take it  
no one could stomach it  
no one skin would be tough enough

the  
go home blacks  
refugees  
dirty immigrants  
asylum seekers  
sucking our country dry  
niggers with their hands out  
they smell strange  
savagely  
messed up their country and now they want  
to mess ours up  
how do the words  
the dirty looks  
roll off your backs  
maybe because the blow is softer  
than a limb torn off

or the words are more tender  
than fourteen men between  
your legs  
or the insults are easier  
to swallow  
than rubble  
than bone  
than your child body  
in pieces.  
i want to go home,  
but home is the mouth of a shark  
home is the barrel of the gun  
and no one would leave home  
unless home chased you to the shore  
unless home told you  
to quicken your legs  
leave your clothes behind  
crawl through the desert  
wade through the oceans  
drown  
save  
be hunger  
beg  
forget pride  
your survival is more important

no one leaves home until home is a sweaty voice in your ear  
saying-  
leave,  
run away from me now  
i dont know what i've become  
but i know that anywhere  
is safer than here

In an interview after she won the Brunel University African Poetry Prize, Warsan Shire was asked to talk about her sense of commitment to substance and urgent subject matter in her work. In response, Shire said: "I'm from Somalia where there has been a war going on for my entire life. I grew up with a lot of horror in the backdrop – a lot of terrible things that have happened to people who are really close to me, and to my country, and to my parents; so it's in the home and it's even in you, it's on your skin and it's in your memories and your childhood.

And my relatives and my friends and my mother's friends have experienced things that you can't imagine, and they've put on this jacket of resiliency and a dark humour. But you don't know what they've been victims of, or what they've done to other people. Them being able to tell me, and then me writing it, it's cathartic, being able to share their stories, even if it is something really terrible, something really tragic. Sometimes I'm telling other people's stories to remove stigma and taboo, so that they don't have to feel ashamed; sometimes you use yourself as an example."

<https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/home-warsan-shire>

## THOMAS MERTON'S LETTER TO A YOUNG ACTIVIST

**Jim Forest** 18 October 2014

Early in 1966 I was hard hit by all sorts of troubles. I was also discouraged about the work I was doing. Despite the fact that opposition to the Vietnam war was steadily growing, week by week the war was getting worse — troop numbers rising, more and more bombs falling, and ever more casualties, the great majority of which were civilian. "Napalm" — a bomb-delivered jelly-like substance that clung to bodies like glue while it burned — was a new word in many people's vocabularies. Pictures were being shown on TV of American soldiers using cigarette lighters to burn peasant homes. An Air Force general, Curtis LeMay, had recommended "bombing Vietnam back to the Stone Age." There was even talk of taking "decisive action," that is using nuclear weapons.

It was against this background that, on the 15th of February, I wrote an anguished letter to [Thomas] Merton. I shared Merton's reply with Tom Cornell and a few other close friends. From time to time, when the sky was turning starless black, I reread it.

Twelve years later, a decade after Merton's death, I included much of it in an essay I wrote on Merton's struggles with peacemaking for a chapter in *Thomas Merton: Prophet in the Belly of a Paradox*, a book edited by Gerald Twomey. There it caught the eye of Robert Ellsberg, then managing editor of *The Catholic Worker*, who skilfully trimmed it in such a way that it became "*Letter to a Young Activist*," the title the abbreviated version has ever since retained. In the years following, "*Letter to a Young Activist*" has often been reprinted and translated, even made into posters, bookmarks and greeting cards.

"*Letter to a Young Activist*" captures the heart of Merton's advice to anyone in a similar burned-out state while eliminating portions that were more directed at me personally and the work of the Catholic Peace Fellowship as it entered its second year. Here in italics is "*Letter to a Young Activist*" as published in *The Catholic Worker* interspersed with my own commentary:

*Do not depend on the hope of results.*

What a challenge that is. Any action one embarks on is undertaken with the hope of positive, tangible results. One *must* have hope that what you do will have an impact. But to the extent you *depend* on success, your capacity to persevere is undermined.

*When you are doing the sort of work you have taken on, essentially an apostolic work, you may have to face the fact that your work will be apparently worthless and even achieve no result at all, if not perhaps results opposite to what you expect.*

Before receiving Merton's letter it had never occurred to me that peace work is of its nature an apostolic work — quite a dignity but also quite a responsibility. It was not an altogether comforting linkage. Few if any of Christ's Apostles died of old age. All of them experienced a great deal of failure and ridicule.

*As you get used to this idea, you start more and more to concentrate not on the results but on the value, the rightness, the truth of the work itself.*

It's not easy getting used to the idea that what you are doing is probably going to crash against a stone wall. The shift from focusing not on quickly measurable results but rather on the value, rightness and truth of the work one is doing requires a major shift of perception.

*And there too a great deal has to be gone through, as gradually you struggle less and less for an idea and more and more for specific people. The range tends to narrow down, but it gets much more real. In the end, it is the reality of personal relationships that saves everything.*

That last sentence became for me one of the most important insights that I ever received from Merton: “In the end, it is the reality of personal relationships that saves everything.” I know it by heart and recite it often. It sums up incarnational theology. Words and slogans and theories are not nearly as important as how we see and relate to each other — the relationships we build — and not only with friends but with adversaries. In the context of peace work, it suggests getting to know, as best we can, the people and cultures being targeted by our weapons.

*You are fed up with words, and I don't blame you. I am nauseated by them sometimes. I am also, to tell the truth, nauseated by ideals and with causes. This sounds like heresy, but I think you will understand what I mean. It is so easy to get engrossed with ideas and slogans and myths that in the end one is left holding the bag, empty, with no trace of meaning left in it. And then the temptation is to yell louder than ever in order to make the meaning be there again by magic. Going through this kind of reaction helps you to guard against this. Your system is complaining of too much verbalizing, and it is right.*

Social movements require words and often use slogans to sum up goals. These have their place but it's secondary. In a talk to his novices, Merton — best known for his words — once said, “He who follows words is destroyed.” Like arrows, words point but they are not the target. One of Merton's main contributions to many people who were involved in peace efforts was the witness given by his contemplative monastic life in which prayer and meditation were integral elements of every activity, each day having a liturgical and sacramental foundation. What he had to say helped reveal what couldn't be said.

*The big results are not in your hands or mine, but they suddenly happen, and we can share in them; but there is no point in building our lives on this personal satisfaction, which may be denied us and which after all is not that important.*

I found these few words — “after all [personal satisfaction] is not that important” — especially helpful. It's not important that we personally get to see the results of our efforts, however worthy our goals may be. Here Merton suggests what I have come to think of as a cathedral builder's mentality, a metaphor that easily comes to mind as I live just a minute's walk from a cathedral whose construction began in 1470 and which wasn't completed until 50 years later. By cathedral building standards, half-a-century was fast work — Notre Dame in Paris took nearly two centuries. But even in cases in which construction took less than a century, those who helped lay the foundations of a great cathedral knew they had slight chance of living to see their building roofed. Perhaps they imagined their grandchildren or great-grandchildren having that satisfaction.

*The next step in the process is for you to see that your own thinking about what you are doing is crucially important. You are probably striving to build yourself an identity in your work, out of your work and your witness. You are using it, so to speak, to protect yourself against nothingness, annihilation. That is not the right use of your work. All the good that you will do will come not from you but from the fact that you have allowed yourself, in the obedience of faith, to be used by God's love. Think of this more, and gradually you will be free from the need to prove yourself, and you can be more open to the power that will work through you without your knowing it.*

Building an identity in one's work is so basic an element for all of us living in a career-driven, results-oriented, fear-wired society that it's hard to imagine another way of identifying ourselves. Asked who we are, we tend to respond with information about what we do. It's not easy to think in other terms, and indeed any more basic answer (what would that be?) might be embarrassing. But if what you do is rooted in attempting to follow Christ, in trying to live a life in which hospitality and love of neighbour is a major element, a life nourished by the eucharist, that foundation may not only keep you going in dark times but actually, ironically, make your work more effective.

*The great thing after all is to live, not to pour out your life in the service of a myth: and we turn the best things into myths.*

Merton meant myth in the sense of a purely fictitious narrative. In my own case the problem was not so much making myself the servant of a myth (truth often comes wrapped in myth) but the servant of an ideology. Even Christianity can be flattened into an ideology — a loveless closed system of ideas, theories and concepts, every spark of paschal fire smothered in ashes.

*If you can get free from the domination of causes and just serve Christ's truth, you will be able to do more and will be less crushed by the inevitable disappointments. Because I see nothing whatever in sight but much disappointment, frustration and confusion....*

It is after all Christ's truth that matters, a truth we experience from time to time but which can never be adequately expressed in words or be obtained by movements and causes. Trying to live within Christ's truth certainly doesn't mean we will live an undented life, a life free of disappointments — there is a reason that Christianity's main symbol is the cross — but it may help prevent frustration and disappointment from becoming despair.

*The real hope, then, is not in something we think we can do but in God who is making something good out of it in some way we cannot see. If we can do His will, we will be helping in this process. But we will not necessarily know all about it beforehand.*

Thank you, Thomas Merton.

<https://iimandnancyforest.com/2014/10/mertons-letter-to-a-young-activist/>

## CAFOD'S CLARE DIXON AWARDED 'CITIZEN OF SAO PAULO'

**Patrick Kinsella** 30 June 2023 **Source: CAFOD**

Clare Dixon, CAFOD's Head of Latin America & Caribbean team, has been awarded 'Citizen of Sao Paulo' in recognition of her lifetime of service to the rights of the most excluded people in the Brazilian city. For over 40 years, Clare worked closely with and alongside organisations, churches, and the people of Sao Paulo in their fight for human rights, better healthcare and housing.

Clare attended the ceremony at the Sao Paulo City Hall on the 16th June, where she received the award from City Councillor Manoel del Rio who has worked with homeless people and fought for the housing rights for the poor for many years.

On receiving the award, Clare Dixon said: "It's an incredible honour to receive this award. I've been working with the people of Sao Paul, for decades, side by side with them in their fight for their rights and against injustice. To be made a citizen of this amazing city means the world to me."

Luiz Basseggio, a friend of Clare Dixon from São Paulo, who works for "Grito dos Excluidos" (The Cry of the Excluded) which works to support the homeless, said: "I have known Clare since 1978 and she has always supported the movements for justice in Sao Paulo, from rights for migrants to workers' rights. She has helped to make Brazil a more just and democratic country."

Clare's work in Brazil includes supporting workers' struggles in rural areas, as well as the cities to overcome injustice, poverty and oppression. As well as with communities to defend their land and secure their rights to secure housing and livelihood.

This is not the first honour of Clare's career, her exceptional service for CAFOD and the people of Latin America saw her receive an OBE in 2003. In 2008 the Chilean Church awarded her the Cardinal Silva Human Rights medal and in 2017 she was awarded the Jose Simeon Canas medal by the Central America University - UCA - in El Salvador

Christine Allen, Director of CAFOD said: "I am delighted for Clare, no one deserves this award more than her. Clare has been a tireless campaigner, advocate and a ferocious force of nature in fighting for the rights of people in São Paulo and across Latin America. CAFOD has been very lucky to have someone has dedicated and effective as Clare in post."

Clare also worked with Saint Oscar Romero, the Salvadorean Archbishop who was murdered for his defence of the poor and marginalised communities. His work is of such significance to CAFOD that their head office in London is named after him.

Clare is CAFOD's longest serving employee, having worked there for over 40 years. Clare currently heads up the Latin American team, overseeing CAFOD's various projects in the region that includes work in Bolivia, Colombia, Peru and Central America. She will be retiring later this year.

<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/47475>

**LINK: CAFOD:** <https://cafod.org.uk/>

## CAFOD NEWS AND EVENTS FROM LANCASTER DIOCESE

**Patrick Gardner Community Participation Coordinators – Lancaster Diocese writes:**

Dear friends,

We're delighted to invite you to an online event with Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle on Friday 14 July 7-8:30pm. Cardinal Tagle has responsibilities for evangelisation in the Vatican and has served as International President of the Catholic Church's social action network, Caritas, of which we are a member. Cardinal Tagle is a fantastic speaker who inspired thousands of young Catholics at Flame during the Spring and will speak to us at our online event Mission Unleashed: embracing the social dimension of evangelisation.

**You can register here to attend:** [https://www.bigmarker.com/cafod/evangelisation?utm\\_bmc\\_source=CPC](https://www.bigmarker.com/cafod/evangelisation?utm_bmc_source=CPC)

Please share with others who might be interested such as those involved in outreach in your parish. If you can't make it on the night, do register and we'll send a link to the recording after it has finished. We think this talk will be of particular interest to those from The Philippines, so if you would like an invitation in Tagalog to pass on, then please do get in touch. We have asked parishes to include a notice of this webinar in their Parish Bulletin, do look out for it.

### **Please sign Salina's letter in your parish**

For generations, small-scale farmers have freely swapped and shared a wide variety of seeds. But new laws supported by the World Bank are being introduced that limit what small farmers can do with their seeds. Salina, a small-scale farmer in Bangladesh, has written a letter to the World Bank calling for the rights of small-scale farmers to be protected.

Could your parish support Salina by co-signing her letter? We've made things as simple as possible for you and your parish to support Salina in her efforts. So far six Bishops have signed - could your parishioners add their names too?

If you've held a signing of Salina's giant letter in your parish, or are planning one, a big thank you! We've received completed letters from almost 100 parishes so far which is amazing. The deadline to return to us is 18 September. **You can order the resources here:** <https://shop.cafod.org.uk/collections/fix-the-food-system>

### **Over 200 parishioners at St Anthony's sign CAFOD petition**

Over 20 parishes in Lancaster Diocese have already taken part in our Fix the Food System campaign and 10 or so more parishes have a signing planned for July and August. That would be over one third of the total parishes in the Diocese. It is a truly fantastic response by our wonderful Catholic community in Lancaster Diocese and we look forward to even more parishes joining our campaign before the end of the summer. We really do appreciate your solidarity, support and prayers on this vital issue. **Please contact us for more details on this campaign – email:** [lancaster@cafod.org.uk](mailto:lancaster@cafod.org.uk)

### **New email to MPs: 'Build bridges, not walls'**

Pope Francis has called on world leaders to "build bridges, not walls" and show compassion for those fleeing their homes, whether it's because of war, persecution or poverty.

Instead, the government has introduced a new Bill that would effectively shut the door on people needing protection and deport them to countries such as Rwanda - a policy the Court of Appeal has just ruled is unlawful. We have a new action for supporters to email their MP about this: <https://action.cafod.org.uk/page/130969/action/1>

## **Talks and events**

### **Online Welcome sessions for Parish Volunteers**

There is a choice of two informal sessions for Parish Volunteers new and old covering how our fundraising and campaigning work go together. You'll meet staff from Campaign and Fundraising team who prepare our resources and get to ask whatever questions you might have. All volunteers are welcome.

Please register by clicking the links:

**Mon 10 July 12pm–1pm** <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/extra-welcome-session-for-cafod-parish-volunteers-tickets-665289096597>

**Weds 12 July 7pm–8pm** <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/extra-welcome-session-for-cafod-parish-volunteers-tickets-665299156687>

Patrick Gardner & Emma Nolan Community Participation Coordinators – Lancaster Diocese Tel: 07920 565454 (Patrick) or 07769 931373 (Emma) Email: [lancaster@cafod.org.uk](mailto:lancaster@cafod.org.uk)

## GOVERNMENT MAY WANT TO MOVE ON TO SORTING OUT THE NHS, BUT THEIR 'SMALL BOATS' PROBLEM HAS JUST GOT A WHOLE LOT WORSE, SAYS JOSEPH KELLY

30 June 2023

With his appalling and unethical plan to sell asylum seekers to Rwanda for cash thrown into complete disarray yesterday, it's no surprise the Prime Minister Rishi Sunak is suddenly very keen to move on to other things.

Sensing that his 'stop the boats' narrative is falling apart, Sunak is heading off today in pursuit what he has described as the most "radical and ambitious" reform in the history of the NHS, which will somehow not only plug the 360,000 staff shortfall, but will save the taxpayer around £10bn in the process. The plan also promises more than 60,000 new doctors through new government funded training and apprenticeship schemes, though all of this is not going to be fully achieved until 2036-37 and the project is only going to get government funding for the next five years.

Whilst the figures are bold and the rhetoric ebullient, what's being promised is fooling no-one, and really only starts to reinstate the resources that previous Conservative governments have stripped out of our Health Service over the past decade. But at least it's a distraction from yesterday's extremely damaging news for the government on the small boats front.

Whilst it came as a surprise to no-one, the Court of Appeal ruling that it's unlawful to send asylum seekers to Rwanda to have their claims processed has undoubtedly dealt a hammer blow to government policy. On the one hand the court has confirmed what we all knew, that deficiencies in the Rwandan asylum system meant there was a real risk that people sent there could end up being returned to face persecution in their home country, even though they might have a perfectly good claim for asylum. The court's conclusion was therefore that Rwanda was not a "safe third country", even though assurances provided by the Rwandan government were given in good faith.

Both Mr Sunak and Home Secretary Suella Braverman were quick to criticise the decision, and blustered that they will now bring the matter before the Supreme Court in an effort to get a decision in their favour.

"The policy of this government is very simple: it is this country – and your government – who should decide who comes here, not criminal gangs. And I will do whatever is necessary to make that happen," said Mr Sunak.

Mrs Braverman was equally reticent: "The British people want to stop the boats, and so does this government. That's what I am determined to deliver and I won't take a backward step from that."

Whether or not 'the British people' do want to 'stop the boats' or not is one of the most vexing and challenging questions at the centre of this whole issue. When the topic was raised on last night's BBC Question Time programme (where the audience had been pre-canvassed as being predominantly Tory) presenter Fiona Bruce asked directly: "does anyone in tonight's audience believe asylum seekers should be sent to Rwanda?" not one hand went up.

Of course it could be that even the most anti-immigration person didn't want to raise their hand on primetime TV, be marked out as uncaring and have to defend their position – such is the hammer down on any form of free speech these days. Or it could just be that the public isn't behind this policy at all. The whole difficulty with 'cancel culture' is that people no longer feel able to say what they believe, and thus we have no idea what lurks beneath the public silence.

As someone who believes fundamentally in the implicit goodness of the human person, I suspect that the whole immigration issue for most people is a patchwork of conflicting concerns – fear of the stranger vs welcoming the stranger, the economic benefits of migration vs the threats from migration, the desire to protect borders and fear of influx vs the need for safe and controlled mechanisms to provide sanctuary for those in need. These are all understandable reactions, and as members of one human family we really ought to be able to discuss such concerns openly and with resolutions in mind.

Unfortunately the decisions that matter rest in the hands of those with economics uppermost in their minds, where incomers of all types are assessed entirely in terms of their economic potential. For years we've been openly filtering asylum applications in favour of those with urgently required employment skills and qualifications, rather than those most in need of refuge and support, and few have questioned the rationale of splitting the queue into those of benefit and those seen as a burden. In many respects the Rwanda scheme is just an extension of that discriminatory and inhumane thinking, so it probably never occurred to anyone that it might hit the buffers. After all, the plan would help stop the desperate small boat crossings, shift thousands of people away from the UK, benefit Rwanda and give the UK a cash return. Who could argue with that?



Well quite a few of us it seems. The remarkable irony of the 'stop the boats' strategy is that it offended the decent instincts of even the most reticent of people across the UK. In appealing to the most dubious tenets of nationalism the Rwanda scheme stepped over a crucial red line – it made its supporters look morally and ethically bad. However deeply an individual might have wanted to stop immigration and protect UK borders, trafficking desperate human beings onwards to an uncertain future for hard cash just didn't sit right with the need to resolve this matter in a caring and humanitarian way. At a deeper level the plan also threatened to undermine British law and the cherished perception (whether or not it's actually true) that the UK is a welcoming and caring place, driving another nail into the coffin of the UK's reputation as a champion of the international rule of law.

The scheme was condemned by the Archbishop of Canterbury as being against "the judgement of God"; King Charles III called it "appalling" and the UN described it as "almost neo-colonial."

It was perhaps no coincidence that the theme of last week's annual Refugee Week was COMPASSION and, in case you did miss it, I'd encourage you to read the excellent recent document *Love the Stranger*, published by the Department of International Affairs at the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales (CBCEW), which enumerates 24 principles outlining the Catholic response to migrants and refugees.

During Refugee Week our Catholic bishops also asked us to write to our local MPs to express our profound concern about the Illegal Immigration Bill, and I know many parishes across England and Wales took up this plea which hopefully served to convey to legislators the depth of concern that exists about this inhumane and ill-considered strategy. That said, appeals to government and the courts are but the last resort in what has become one of the most testing and telling of global human rights issues of recent decades. Many other countries, and especially our close European neighbours, are watching the UK closely – any success here in unravelling the already fragile international protection system for refugees will not only embolden other nations but could place countless thousands of desperate refugees in even greater danger.

There's no doubt that the level of public reaction to the UK's Rwanda plan has helped to derail this pernicious piece of legislation, but sadly the matter's far from over. This morning some Conservative MPs have already begun calling for a 'plan B' to be formulated, with options ranging from withdrawing or derogating from the ECHR, to rewriting the whole Rwanda plan to circumvent the Court of Appeal's judgement.

No doubt today Mr Sunak is going to be desperate to swing our attention onto his ambitious NHS plans, but the small boats problem can't be dropped that easily. In fact, the failure of this government to come up with a morally and ethically acceptable plan is only going to push even more desperate people into the hands of the criminal gangs who organise these dangerous Channel crossings. We all know that establishing safe routes and welcoming policies is the way forward and the only viable solution, so now its surely time for the government to accept and engage with that?

<https://www.thecatholicnetwork.co.uk/7487-2/>

• **Joseph Kelly** is a Catholic writer and theologian

*'To encounter the vulnerable, and to find oneself in a vulnerable place and becoming vulnerable to others, is to be purged of one's own prejudices, preoccupations, and priorities—stripped down to face God and God's own aim for the world. It is a transformative journey, a conversion to the needs of others and the vision of God.'*

from *'An invitation to the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace'* (World Council of Churches 2016, page 7):  
[https://www.oikoumene.org/sites/default/files/Document/Pilgrimage2016\\_v2.pdf](https://www.oikoumene.org/sites/default/files/Document/Pilgrimage2016_v2.pdf)

### **CARJ WEBINARS: The Struggle for Racial Justice: Recalling the past and discerning the future.**

As a preparation for CARJ's 40th Anniversary in 2024 there will be a series of 90-minute free webinars on Thursday evenings and Saturday mornings from May to August 2023 to reflect on the history of the past 75 years and attempt to discern the best ways forward for society and for the Church in the effort to bring about a more just, more equal and more cooperative society. There will be two speakers and ample time for discussion, chaired by Yogi Sutton. To register for one or more webinars or for further information, please contact the CARJ Administrator at [info@carj.org.uk](mailto:info@carj.org.uk) A link will be sent to all who register. The Webinars will be recorded and will be available on the CARJ website until the end of August 2023.

**6 July Webinar 'The Churches role in combatting racism over the past 75 years'** 7-8.30pm

**29 July Webinar 'Combatting racism – An Agenda for the Future for Britain'** 10-11.30am

**3 August Webinar 'The Church's role in the struggle for Racial Justice in the future'** 7-8.30pm

## 302,158 CHILDREN LIVING IN POVERTY IN DIOCESE OF SALFORD

**Claire Briscoe** 21 June 2023

A charity is today calling for urgent action to support children experiencing poverty, as latest figures show a 24% rise in child poverty in the Diocese of Salford compared with the same time last year. Caritas Salford, which works alongside people across Greater Manchester and Lancashire, is launching its summer appeal and demanding immediate action from Government, as need for its services supporting families experiencing poverty in the area rises significantly.

The new figures, taken from research by Loughborough University on behalf of the End Child Poverty Coalition and published earlier this month, show that a staggering 302,158 children in the Diocese of Salford (which covers Greater Manchester and parts of Lancashire) are living in poverty. This figure is up by 73,303 when compared with the same time last year - a shocking increase of 24%.

Patrick O'Dowd, director of Caritas Salford, said: "We're urging local and national government and other key decision makers to act immediately to try and reverse this near catastrophic situation many people are finding themselves in. There's so much talk and rhetoric, but that isn't going to help people on the ground - the hardworking people we see every day struggling to feed their family three meals a day or keep a safe, secure roof over their heads. Sadly, we also fear these figures are probably only the tip of a very large iceberg, showing only part of the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on communities in the area. The reality, sadly is probably much, much worse.

"It's almost as if people are now so used to hearing the words 'cost-of-living-crisis' that it has lost any tangible meaning when repeated in the press or in parliament. But the crisis is certainly real and it's only going to get worse if things don't change. We've seen that in the appalling increase in the number of children experiencing poverty in the last twelve months and this terrible spiral will continue if action isn't taken right now.

"This should include changes to policies that support real families who need help immediately, for example by ending the two-child limit on benefits, increasing the number of children with access to free school meals, encouraging employers to pay the real living wage, and addressing other issues at the root cause of poverty experienced by so many. In 2023 this shouldn't need to be said, but we'll keep saying it until real change happens. We have to, before it's too late for many hard-working parents and their children."

The charity, which has a mission to end poverty, runs a range of services for people experiencing homelessness, disadvantage and isolation in the area, and this latest appeal is asking for support to help them reach even more of the families locally that need their help.

Patrick added: "Tragically, these appalling figures don't come as a surprise as our staff and volunteers are seeing first-hand every day the impact of poverty on the lives of people we work alongside. Every day, families come to us who are struggling and having to make heart-breaking decisions on what they can and can't afford to provide for their children. Often, people who work one or two jobs are having to come to us to use our showers, for example, as they aren't able to afford the utility bills to wash at home. Those who can't afford shampoo for their young children, or those going without a meal to enable their youngest family members to eat instead.

"While we're always here for people in Greater Manchester and Lancashire who need our help, it shouldn't be down to charities to ensure people are able to have basic human rights and the dignity we all deserve. Please join us in shouting loudly for immediate tangible change and get in touch if you're able to help support our charity as we work alongside families locally too."

The charity has shared a breakdown of the shocking extent of child poverty in each of the local authority areas in Greater Manchester and Lancashire covered by the geography of the Diocese of Salford.

Find out more and see figures for your community here: [www.caritassalford.org.uk/poverty](http://www.caritassalford.org.uk/poverty)

The information will also be promoted via a postcard mailer and social media campaign to raise awareness and encourage support.

Bishop John Arnold, said: "Sustaining and ensuring the human dignity of every person, whether young or old, is upheld, respected and honoured should be fundamental in all of our lives. That so many children are experiencing such poverty, suffering and hardship in 2023 is absolutely unacceptable and every one of us, whether we're a decision maker, employer, neighbour or friend should be doing everything we can to urgently right this terrible situation.

"These latest statistics from our diocese are truly heart-breaking and, while Caritas is working hard on the ground to support people in our communities who need help at this extremely challenging time in our history, true change will only happen by everyone coming together for the greater good and driving forward immediate change. It's imperative that happens now to ensure that hard-working families across Greater Manchester, Lancashire and beyond can live in a way that is dignified - a way that every adult and child deserves."

Since its launch in 2020, the Caritas Bishop's Fund has been awarding small one-off emergency grants to families and individuals in crisis. Access to these grants is promoted via Caritas frontline workers and partnership organisations, as well as the diocesan network of schools and parishes. The fund has helped people in many different ways, ranging from supermarket shopping vouchers through to replacement white goods and children's beds, supporting people experiencing difficulty and poverty.

As well as providing accommodation to support young parents and their infant children experiencing homelessness, Caritas Salford provides tailored support services to school children and their families as they experience difficulties. This work has included working with bereaved children, supporting families where there is young offending and providing counselling services. The charity also runs a range of other services across the area, including community pantries to support those experiencing food poverty.

Caritas Salford is a member of the End Child Poverty Coalition alongside other charities, child welfare organisations, social justice groups, faith groups, trade unions and others - all united in a vision of a UK free of child poverty.

To donate to the Caritas Salford appeal, or find out more about the figures in each local authority area, please visit [www.caritassalford.org.uk/poverty](http://www.caritassalford.org.uk/poverty)  
<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/47419>

## IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE: WOMEN AND CHILDREN BEARING THE BRUNT

**Source: WCC 3 July 2023**

From 2020 to 2021, more than 50 million people were displaced due to weather events and faced risks of trafficking and even death as well as discrimination based on race and gender. This finding emerged from the report of Ian Fry, special rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of climate change, to the 53rd session of the United Nations (UN) Human Rights Council meeting in Geneva from 19 June-14 July.

Speaking at a side event convened by faith groups on the human rights implications of climate-induced displacement and the urgent need for responses, Fry said that climate change events "may deprive people of their right to food, water, sanitation, housing, health, education, and, for some, the right to life." More than 50,000 people lost their lives while migrating between 2014 and 2022. Fry called for "an optional protocol under the Convention on the Status of Refugees to address displacement and legal protection for people all over the world affected by the climate crisis."

The side event lifted up the voices of affected communities, in particular those who come from the small island states, Indigenous Peoples, women, and youth.

Fr Rene Arturo Flores Medina from La Red Franciscana para Migrantes (Franciscans Network for Migrants) shared that in Central America, the combined and intersecting impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, and socio-economic inequality have forced thousands of people from this region to resort to migration. Medina said that the two main manifestations of climate change in the region are so-called "dry corridors and hurricanes" and both adversely affect food sovereignty.

When hurricanes Eta and Iota hit Panama in 2021, "the response to the displaced was to place them in provisional shelters such as schools and churches...All this in the context of the public health crisis," Medina added. Two years after the climate disaster, only five out of the planned 116 houses have been built for climate-displaced families.

Iemaima Vaai, representing the Methodist Church in Samoa and youth advisor to the World Council of Churches, concurred with the report of the special rapporteur and underlined that women and children bear the brunt of the human rights impacts of climate-induced displacement. Vaai shared that in the Pacific, displacement due to extreme weather events and rising sea levels entails "loss of Indigenous knowledge" as well as affects livelihoods, particularly fishing which women traditionally do. Displacement also causes deep emotional and mental pain especially for women, mothers, and grandmothers, who traditionally bury the umbilical cords of their children in the land, Vaai said.

Nonetheless, Pacific women and communities derive resilience and healing from cultural and spiritual beliefs and practices that emphasise sacred relationships and the interconnectedness of people, land, and sea, Vaai added.

Rev. James Bhagwan, general secretary of the Pacific Conference of Churches, affirmed that mitigating the trauma of forced relocation and ensuring dignity in the process of migration are key issues for the region.

"The impact of climate change is being experienced now...driving many Pacific islanders to circular migration to Australia and New Zealand and the US for work...It is important that the legal processes also protect and support pastoral care and cultural protocols of leaving, arriving, and receiving. These protocols are important for the dignity of migrants," Bhagwan said.

Held on 28 June, the side event was organised by the Geneva Interfaith Forum on Climate Change, Environment, and Human Rights composed of ACT Alliance, Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University, Dominicans for Justice and Peace, Franciscans International, Lutheran World Federation, and the World Council of Churches.

In a statement to the 53rd session of the Human Rights Council, the Geneva Interfaith Forum called for "meaningful and effective participation of affected communities" as well as people-centred, human rights-based, gender-responsive, and holistic approaches to policies around human mobility in the context of the accelerating climate emergency.

<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/47502>

## IAN LINDEN - JOE BIDEN AND OLD AGE: EXPERIENCE OR INFIRMITY?

**Professor Ian Linden** 3 July 2023

I don't want to be a killjoy but the mirth with which signs of Jo Biden's age are greeted strikes me as mindless. Good for a few laughs on *Have I got News for You*. Look, ha, ha, ha, he's just tumbled over a sandbag. Trump at his rallies will be laughing along too.

"If the measure of a man is his gait, speech and memory for trivialities, then we are lost", declared a letter-writer to the New York Times on 7 June summing up the dilemma facing uncertain voters in next year's US Presidential elections. Will Jo Biden at 81 with some of the frailties of old-age be up to the job?

The criminal investigations besetting Trump have only reinforced his cult status with his core vote. Can he count on Biden's support eroding under withering scrutiny in the hostile media? Will the Republican campaign gain traction with each stumble, fall and wrong word?

Biden is often compared on the geriatric scale to the elderly - a decade younger actually - President Ronald Reagan. Reagan, aged 72, touched an approval low of 35% in early 1983 but in 1984 went on to win a second term in a landslide victory against the lacklustre Walter Mondale. Like the actor he was, Reagan played the folksy grandfather and the American public, used to TV stereotypes, responded positively. President Biden's performance is less assured. His approval ratings have been bumping along at around 41% for many months. Recently there has been a small tick upwards.

For Biden a better comparison than Reagan would be with President Lyndon Baines Johnson (1963-1969) whose knowledge of politics 'on the Hill' and around State governors was legendary. Biden too has brought stellar negotiating and deal-making skills as well as long experience to the Presidency. He has a talented and loyal team around him, with an outstanding Secretary of State, Antony Blinken, though Kamala Harris as Vice-President is unpopular. Already the list of Biden's executive orders and bills is impressive.

US Congressional Acts are complex composites and US congressional representatives are far more independent of any Party discipline than their British counterparts. Biden's skills operating within this difficult terrain, made even more difficult by a politicised Supreme Court, are demonstrated by his handling of his portmanteau Build Back Better plan, a 'blue-collar blueprint' to win back poorer workers. When key parts were blocked in the Senate (as was his proposed George Floyd Justice in Policing Act) Biden made acceptable amendments and changed the bill's name to the Inflation Reduction Act finally signed off on 16 August 2022. The prices of prescription drugs were lowered, offering \$800 annual savings on health insurance for 13 million citizens, and providing investment of \$369 billion over ten years for climate change mitigation and clean energy use. Taxation was tightened and steps approved to reduce national debt. The Act built on the eye-watering, job-creating, \$1.2 trillion Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill signed on 15 November 2021.

Also in 2022, Biden's Safer Communities Act included, amongst other minor provisions, enhanced background checks on under 21s buying guns. A tiny step forward but the first successful - bipartisan - attempt at gun control legislation in thirty years. And a bipartisan agreement concluded this year's ritual 'debt-ceiling crisis' - it stood at an epic \$31.4 trillion - enabling Biden to sign the Fiscal Responsibility Act on 3 June. But none of this stream of legislation seems to have impressed an American public; the perception is that the US economy is faring badly with the blame falling on Biden.

Aware that his approval rating for his overall handling of the economy was only 34%, Biden delivered a much-prepared speech in the Old Chicago Post Office on 28 June. He sounded distinctly Keynesian presenting what amounted to aggregate demand as the most important driving force in the economy and promising government intervention to increase output. There are all echoes of Roosevelt's New Deal. Contrasting Democrat economic policy with Republican trickle down, he rejected, "the belief we should cut taxes for the wealthy and big corporations...that we should shrink public investment in infrastructure and public education", thus summarising 'Reaganomics'. Instead the economy should be built "from the middle out and the bottom up". In a room festooned with 'Bidenomics' banners, an attack term used by the Republicans, the speech was a bold counter-branding exercise, not without risk.

Biden's core electoral support lies amongst more educated and Black voters as well as to a lesser degree Latinos. US Catholics comprise a little over a quarter of the national vote. You might think the large Catholic community would support a fellow Catholic, and he did attract more support than Hillary Clinton, but about half voted for Trump in the 2020 Presidential elections. Despite an impressive record harmonising with official Catholic positions on climate change and social justice, Biden's support for abortion provision will be an obstacle to deriving any significant electoral advantage from Catholic voters.

Americans largely agree with the Supreme Court's Roe v Wade decision of 1973 which divided pregnancy into three phases. Opinion polls suggest 69% of Americans think abortion should be legal in the first three months of pregnancy, 37% in the next three and 22% in the final. The respected Pew Foundation finds that 76% of US Catholics think abortion should be legal in some cases/contexts but amongst Catholics who attend mass regularly there is a significantly higher level of pro-life conviction.

[www.ianlinden.com/latest-blogs/jo-biden-old-age-experience-or-infirmary](http://www.ianlinden.com/latest-blogs/jo-biden-old-age-experience-or-infirmary)

• **Professor Ian Linden** is Visiting Professor at St Mary's University, Strawberry Hill, London. A past director of the Catholic Institute for International Relations, he was awarded a CMG for his work for human rights in 2000. He has also been an adviser on Europe and Justice and Peace issues to the Department of International Affairs of the Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales. Ian chairs a new charity for After-school schooling in Beirut for Syrian refugees and Lebanese kids in danger of dropping out partnering with CARITAS Lebanon and work on board of Las Casas Institute in Oxford with Richard Finn OP. His latest book was Global Catholicism published by Hurst in 2009.

## LAUNCH OF THE SCHOOL FOR SYNODALITY: RISING TO POPE FRANCIS' CHALLENGE TO BECOME A SYNODAL CHURCH

27 June 2023: This week the School for Synodality launches, a project that exists to help support the synodal conversion of the Church in England and Wales in our day to day practice. Through conversations, the development of resources, our webinars and our parish and innovation programmes we hope to enable an openness to the Holy Spirit in our Church through listening, sharing and discernment.

During the pandemic, Pope Francis presented us with a new image of church: that, no matter who we were, we were together in the same boat. The worldwide synod process taking place at the moment came out of that desire to engage with our changing world and with those on the margins to regain a renewed sense of purpose and mission. However, putting this into practice is not so simple.

The School for Synodality, founded by Avril Baigent and Chris Knowles as a partnership between the Diocese of Northampton and Synod Fruits, is a project which aims to help the Church regain this sense of purpose and mission, and build on the ways that parishes and diocese have engaged in experiences of encounter through Synod process so far.

This week the School for Synodality launch our first and foundational resources to support the Church embedding new synodal habits and practices, especially how we approach decisions, spiritual conversations, and prayerful discernment in meetings. The project is also launching our two 15 month programmes, one for parishes wanting to take the next steps in responding to their synodal listening, the other for those leaders creating new pastoral ventures that will support our Churches synodal conversion.

In addition to this, details are online about their webinar series which will take place through October and November that looks at developing synodal practice at the local level. It will include speakers such as Professor Anna Rowlands, Dr Jessie Rogers, Maurizio Lopez, Fr Matthew Nunes and Fr Philip Inch, with another webinar that's organised in partnership with CAFOD.

Over the coming 18 months the school will focus on 5 areas of work:

- Practical and high-quality resources to embed synodality in the everyday life of the Church
- Two programmes of support and formation for innovators in the Church and those parishes wanting to develop synodally
- The development and strengthening of networks of practitioners across England and Wales engaged in work on synodality
- A communication programme to help share our resources and the vision of Synodality as far and wide as possible
- Engaging with our academic group made up of those from different disciplines to ensure our work is grounded in church teaching, and also deepening the relationship between practitioners and academics

Sr Nathalie, Undersecretary of the Synod Office, recommended the project, saying that “growing as a synodal Church means constantly learning and being formed as we walk together, and the School for Synodality is an exciting opportunity to do precisely that on the path ahead to serve the synodal conversion of the Church in England and Wales.”

Avril Baigent believes that the project can do this by “(1) actively responding to our changing world – reading the signs of the times; (2) learning how to hold prayerful, truthful and safe conversations which value gracious listening and courageous speaking; (3) consciously seeking the Holy Spirit’s inspiration and (4) being compelled to action by the stories we’ve heard. Although this may sound a little complicated, it is a part of our community life that we are recovering now, but which has been part of the Church since the Council of Jerusalem (Acts 15). We have in our tradition tools like lectio divina and spiritual conversation which can be transformative”.

Chris Knowles added that “synodality has been used to resolve contentious issues in parishes; to look for creative solutions to diocesan finances; and even to create safe listening spaces in response to clergy sex abuse. The result of becoming synodal, of truly encountering one another, heart-to-heart, is a new sense of purpose. This purpose brings people together, helps prioritise finances and resources, allows people’s gifts to flourish and enables us to take risks for the Kingdom”.

<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/47458>

**You can find out more about the project at [SchoolforSynodality.org.uk](https://SchoolforSynodality.org.uk)**

Address: Diocese of Northampton, Marriott Street Northampton Northamptonshire NN2 6AW

Phone Number: 01604 715635

<https://northamptondiocese.org/>

## SEE NEXT PAGE FOR DIARY DATES

● Many items taken from the daily e-bulletin Independent Catholic News [www.indcatholicnews.com](http://www.indcatholicnews.com) an invaluable free resources for up-to-date J&P news, events and in-depth articles.

● **Sign up** for regular news and information from NJPN including **a new fortnightly e-bulletin with a comprehensive round-up of current events, campaigns, e-petitions and resources** (plus copies of this newsletter & back issues for NJPN North West) at [www.justice-and-peace.org.uk](http://www.justice-and-peace.org.uk) or contact [ebulletin@justice-and-peace.org](mailto:ebulletin@justice-and-peace.org) or [admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk](mailto:admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk) 020 7901 4864

● **Read the SUMMER issue of MOUTHPEACE the quarterly online newsletter for Shrewsbury, Liverpool and Lancaster dioceses** <https://jpshrewsbury.files.wordpress.com/2023/05/mouthpeace-summer-2023.pdf>

*The views expressed in this bulletin are not necessarily those of NJPN*

## DIARY

### JULY

**6 Social Action Network: *Shape the Change*** Croxteth Drive Liverpool L17 1AA. This partnership event between Nugent, Justice and Peace Commission and Liverpool Archdiocese brings together policy makers, workers and volunteers involved in social action, to interlink themes, make partnerships, and advocate for change. The purpose of this event is to bring together policy makers, workers and volunteers involved in social action, to interlink themes, make partnerships, and advocate for change. There will be a high level of demand for this FREE day event, so book early, and limit 1 ticket per parish: <https://SocialActionNetworkingEvent.eventbrite.com>

**6 CARJ Webinar ‘The Churches role in combatting racism over the past 75 years’** 7-8.30pm [info@carj.org.uk](mailto:info@carj.org.uk)

**8 COME and SEE Day ‘Called to be an Inclusive Church’** with Keynote Speaker **Gemma Simmonds** at the Irenaeus Centre, 32 Great Georges Road LL22 1RD 10am -4pm. Bring a packed lunch. Suggested donation £10. Booking: [jenny@irenaeus.co.uk](mailto:jenny@irenaeus.co.uk) or tel: 0151 949 1199

**11 An opportunity to see an upbeat ECO FILM 2040 in Macclesfield.** ECO FILM NIGHT – 2040. Following our showing of the film *The Oil Machine* a couple of months ago we are showing another eco film, 2040. This is an uplifting film by Award-winning director Damon Gameau who embarks on a journey to explore what the future could look like by the year 2040 if we simply embraced the best solutions already available to us to improve our planet and shifted them rapidly into the mainstream. We have had to pay a licence for this film so are asking for a minimum donation of £5 per ticket but please do speak to us if this will be prohibitive. Matt will host an optional discussion afterwards. We hope you can join us to allow us to continue to show eco films at Cinemac. Please reserve tickets at <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/.../2040-eco-film-showing...> Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p-rTQ443akE> Please support our local cinema, they are struggling to keep their audiences and showing varied films on their quieter nights is essential.

**11 Just Working? Why the dignity of work is at the heart of the new politics of the common good.** With Jon Cruddas MP. Join us online at 6.30pm. This lecture is part of Together for the Common Good’s 2022-2023 series in partnership with Lincoln Cathedral. We are featuring speakers from different traditions who draw on Catholic Social Teaching to help us all play our part in spiritual and civic renewal - in terms of the economy, work, nature, human freedom, social peace, politics and civic life. The event is online and will include a Q & A. Reserve a place at <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/common-good-lecture-6-just-working-tickets-637907106327>

**11 Bishop Paul McAleenan** will be hosting a webinar to build upon the work that has taken place around **Racial Justice Sunday** in recent years. **Time:** 2-3.30pm online via Zoom. **Register here:**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/register/tZlvdO2hpzgvHNKXWmsO9BqG36EiaJ-q0Dwf#/registration>

**13 CWDF July Forum Meeting**, 7pm at The Unity Centre. We are very much looking forward to meeting our new City of Chester MP Samantha (Sam) Dixon. We’ve invited her to talk to us about her impressions of Parliament, her role and goals, and aspects of the Labour policies on development issues – like the 0.7% of GDP for overseas aid. [Note the day is Thursday, not our regular Tuesday.] [www.chesterwdf.org.uk/events/](http://www.chesterwdf.org.uk/events/)

**21 -23 NJPN ANNUAL SWANWICK CONFERENCE**

**26 UN Day in Support for Victims of Torture** <https://www.un.org/en/observances/torture-victims-day>

**29 CARJ Webinar ‘Combatting racism – An Agenda for the Future for Britain’** 10-11.30am [info@carj.org.uk](mailto:info@carj.org.uk)

### AUGUST

**3 CARJ Webinar ‘The Church’s role in the struggle for Racial Justice in the future’** 7-8.30pm [info@carj.org.uk](mailto:info@carj.org.uk)

**6 Hiroshima Day** <https://nationaltoday.com/hiroshima-day/>

### SEPTEMBER

**12 The Mistake** An urgent new play about Hiroshima and the first atomic bomb by Michael Mears at the Wesley Church Centre St John Street, Chester, CH1 1DA at 7.30 pm. AVAILABLE FOR PERFORMANCE in 2023 and beyond, the play is suitable for audiences of 15+ years. It will appeal to anyone interested in history, politics, science, ethics, morality and peace studies. We also want to perform to school and college students. Contact: Michael Mears [thehalfitalian@aol.com](mailto:thehalfitalian@aol.com) 07960 981857 <https://michaelmears.org/>

**19 CWDF Forum meeting**, 7pm at The Unity Centre. This will take place a week later than usual to avoid clashing with the play *The Mistake*. Gill Miller will be giving us a talk on “*Dealing with Disease; the role of global institutions and local players*”. [www.chesterwdf.org.uk/events/](http://www.chesterwdf.org.uk/events/)