



# Justice & Peace

September 2023

News from the National Justice & Peace Network

## Prayer & Reflection:

Our Lady of the Visitation, you who left in haste towards the mountain to meet Elizabeth, lead us also to meet all those who await us to deliver them the living Gospel: Jesus Christ, your Son and our Lord!

We will go in a hurry, with no distraction or delay, but with readiness and joy.

We will go peacefully, because those who take Christ take peace, and wellbeing is the best wellbeing.

*Amen.*

-Taken from the World Youth Day Pilgrim Prayer, 2023

## Commitment, Concern, and the Future of the Church

### Where do you think your commitment to justice and peace comes from?

I think my commitment to Justice and Peace started with my parents, who as well as being devout Catholics, had a strong commitment to social justice. Having been born in 1909 and 1914 they experienced 2 World Wars, the Great Depression, poverty, limited access to education and healthcare and few workers' rights. Yet they also witnessed and celebrated the opportunities brought through education, the establishment of the Welfare State, the National Health Service and the rise of Trade Unionism. I was brought up to "Love my neighbour as myself" and to value community.

My earliest memory of being aware of injustice is from my schooldays. I attended the small Catholic primary school in the pit village where I grew up. Each Monday we had to write a story. Then on Tuesday afternoon the teacher would sort the stories into "good ones" and "bad ones". Every week those 9 year old children who were deemed to have produced a "bad" story would be caned (i.e. hit on the palm of a hand by a teacher wielding a stick...actually institutionalised physical abuse). My best friend, who nowadays would undoubtedly be diagnosed with dyslexia, was caned each week. I found story writing easy, so I never got the cane. She found it difficult due to a particular learning challenge, but she was never given any help to overcome it, just punished for no good reason. I saw the injustice but as a child felt I had no way of preventing it. Even telling that story reawakens the sense of anger and injustice that I felt at the time.

### What are the most important areas of concern today?

The rise of populism and neo-liberalism concerns me greatly as I feel it makes

for a world where those in government feed into people's prejudices and greed to secure their own power. This allows for things like the frightening rhetoric around migrants and refugees and encourages corporate greed which undermines any commitment to respond to the climate emergency or build a fairer society.

### What sustains your commitment?

I am sustained and inspired by people who are committed to working for the common good whether that is expressed in terms of their Faith, ethics or political beliefs. Organisations such as NJPN, Church Action on Poverty, Pax Christi lead by example and help me to find ways of putting my Faith into practice. Meeting, learning and praying with people who provide an alternative world view to that of one governed by money and power sustains me in my commitment even when I feel discouraged. The annual NJPN conference has, since I started attending it in 2006, both inspired and energised me.

### What are your hopes for our Church in the years ahead?

I hope for a church that is truly inclusive....where people from every ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation, are welcomed, valued and empowered to fulfil their potential as members of God's Family. I hope for a church where there are no barriers ....where peoples' lack of wealth and their access needs do not bar them from full participation; a church, as Pope Francis has called for, which offers a preferential option for the poor.

I have lived and worshipped in the diocese of Hexham and Newcastle most of my life. Like many people I am still feeling hurt, shocked and angry by—

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Save the Date!

'JUST POLITICS'

19 – 21 July 2024

The Hayes Conference Centre  
Swanwick, Derbyshire

[www.justice-and-peace.org.uk](http://www.justice-and-peace.org.uk)

Save the Date!

OPEN NETWORKING DAY  
18 November 2023

Online  
Keep an eye out for details!

NEXT ISSUE DATE

February 2024

Articles required by end of  
December 2023

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—what has emerged following an investigation by the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency into issues around the resignation of our previous bishop. However, I do not think this is an issue just for our diocese. Rather what has happened has demonstrated systemic failings in the church as a

whole. We desperately need a church with accountability and openness. We need a church devoid of clericalism and where people are valued and empowered to live out their commitment to the Good News of Jesus Christ.

**Liz Archibald—Hexham and Newcastle J&P**



## Celebrating the 'Divine' Generation

Poet Simon Soloman declared that the generation of people who came from the Caribbean during the 1950's and '60's should be named the 'Divine Generation' because they are made in the image of the Divine and should not be defined by the name of a merchant vessel, the Empire Windrush. (He pointed out that one of the first slave ships was named 'Jesus').

He was among a host of contributors to an event held at St Francis Parish Centre in Handsworth on 29th July as part of the celebration of the 75th anniversary of the arrival of the MV Empire Windrush bringing people from the Caribbean (then part of the British Empire) answering the call of the 'Mother Country' to help rebuild Britain after the devastation of World War II. Despite facing hostility, discrimination and hardship they and their descendants have become part of the fabric of our society and culture.

The event was organised by members of the West Indian Catholic Chaplaincy with funding from Birmingham City Council. It was hosted by the Chaplaincy's own Ita Gooden, AKA Performance Poet Miss Culture Jam.

Opening with a colourful display of Caribbean islands' flags and national dress and a song from Birmingham Settlement Choir, the audience of 150 heard the stories of several members of the Chaplaincy recounting their experiences of coming to England. A recurring phrase was being greeted by the notices for 'No Blacks, No Irish, No Dogs'.

Nurse and midwife Elsie Gayle spoke of the essential contributions of people from the Caribbean to the development of the NHS, and RAF veteran Donald Campbell highlighted the contribution of Caribbean people to the armed forces in both World Wars and to the present day, pointing to Grenadian Johnson Beharry who was awarded the Victoria Cross in 2004. A 98 year-old World War II veteran was present at the evening.

The keynote speaker was historian Dr Tony Talburt of Birmingham City University, who pointed out that there were black people in Britain before the Anglo-Saxons, in the

person of Emperor Septimus Severus and members of the Roman army, drawn from throughout the Roman Empire. In terms of migration to Britain after World War II, this was driven in part by poor living conditions and lack of work in the Caribbean; but he also said that movement between islands and to the US on a short term basis to earn money and return home was common in the Caribbean; this was the expectation of many of those coming here, but living costs and discrimination which kept them in low paid work meant that these expectations were not filled. So they ended up settling here permanently and raising families.

We heard from Chester Morrison how reggae music went from a form of entertainment among people for their own enjoyment to an international phenomenon which was eventually awarded heritage status by the United Nations. Turning points bringing it to international attention were Miss Millie's 'My Boy Lollipop' and Desmond Dekker's 'The Israelites' (which became no 1 in Israel...). Bob Marley's 'Redemption Song' was written to celebrate the independence of Zimbabwe, underlining the genre's identification with liberation.

We were treated to a delightful rendition of Mozart on the steel pan by Norman Stewart, AKA PanMaestro. Originating in Trinidad, the steel pan was the result of colonial masters outlawing the use of drums by African slaves for fear that they were being used to pass messages. People resorted to using bamboo sticks then tin lids and eventually developed the steel pan. A steel band was showcased at the Festival of Britain in 1951 where they demonstrated that all kinds of music could be played on them.

Other contributions included diabetes campaigner Tony Kelly, saxophonist Janice Price (AKA A#sharp), poets Miss P and Barrington, singers Linton Kelly, Yvonne Love and Nadiine Daniels and music from DJ Fitz.

Guests of Honour included Mgr Danny McHugh who founded the West Indian Chaplaincy in 1974 and was its first Chaplain, Rev Canon Eve Pitt, Mgr Timothy Menezes, and the current Chaplain, Fr Damian Ozokwere CSSp.

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Thanks are also due to Fr Kelly of St Francis Parish and the team at the Parish Centre for their warm

welcome and help to make the evening a success.

**Ann Kelly—West Indian Chaplaincy**

## An Invitation to Action from Hexham & Newcastle J&P

The theme of this year's NJPN Conference was based around the SDGs and how, if they were enacted as agreed by 193 countries, both humanity and our common home would greatly benefit and we could achieve a sustainable future for all.

Sir John Battle, a keynote speaker, spoke about the need for political action and the imperative to remind our own Government that, as a signatory to the SDGs, it is time they delivered on their commitments. With the General Election likely to be in 2024, each party will be considering their manifestos this Autumn—which provides an opportunity to make our voices heard.

This idea was taken up by the Conference on the final morning when it was proposed that NJPN should draft a letter to be sent to members asking them to send the letter on to their MP. The letter would include a specific request that a commitment to the UK's net zero emissions target by 2050 and a re-commitment to the

SDGs be included in party manifestos.

We recognise that urgent action is required to address the climate and ecological crisis and secure a viable future for everyone who shares our common home. Such action must involve the whole of society as Pope Francis has stated in *Laudato Si'*, but that must include political action and the next election is vital to our future. Hence, we invite you to print the letter on the NJPN website (with any amendments you may wish/need to make beforehand) and to send it to your MP, preferably by post, or via email.

### **Hexham and Newcastle Justice & Peace**

(Pictured: *Gaia* by Luke Jerram, Durham Cathedral; taken by Dr Chris Myers)



### **Brian Davies: Rest in Peace**

Very many years ago, I was invited to a meeting in Nottingham diocese, open to anyone interested in social justice. Searching for a change of direction I went along with a couple of friends, uncertain as to what it was all about. I remember there being a couple of speakers, one of whom was Brian Davies, who spoke with great passion and enthusiasm about his work with CAFOD calling for each of us to respond to the needs of our brothers and sisters in the developing world by supporting and promoting the work of CAFOD. I clearly remember the enthusiasm on our drive home and with the wonderful support and encouragement of our parish priest we set up a local justice and peace group, later becoming the North Derbyshire justice and peace group, involved in local projects and global issues, as well as speaking in other local Churches.

As we became part of Hallam diocese we continued our involvement with justice and peace. Over the past weeks we have heard many tributes to Brian's work around the dioceses and his commitment to the work of NJPN especially his key role in the appointing of a 'Jubilee' Fieldworker, later National J&P Worker, generously funded by a number of religious orders and organisations. In addition to his commitment to adult formation, it was his focus on the spirituality of justice that has been most meaningful to me. I think he was the first person I ever heard speaking about justice spirituality, and for this I will always be thankful, as it allows for the possibility of hope, something to cling on to, giving meaning and authenticity to our efforts to work towards a more equitable society, especially when we are surrounded by so much injustice and inequality. We thank God for the life and witness of Brian Davies.

**Anne Peacey**



### **Mike Clarke: Rest in Peace**

In 2005 Mike became Treasurer of NJPN and since that time we have totally relied on his skill and expertise, as he steered NJPN through some difficult and challenging times. Mike inspired confidence in our ability to continue to maintain and strengthen the network, meeting financial challenges in a clear and calm manner. He did not waste words as he presented his financial reports. His approach was direct, on the lines of 'this is what we spent, this is what we have left. Any questions?' In my mind I have a clear picture of Mike during our many meetings at CAFOD, reclining at the back of the gathering, until called upon to present his financial reports. We knew with certainty that Mike had all the information at his fingertips and that NJPN was in very safe financial hands.

In meetings Mike would listen without comment to the thrust of discussion and then quietly produce the appropriate comment or strap line, one that no one else had considered, e.g., Conference 2023: Survival or shutdown. Mike was much more than his role as NJPN Treasurer. He was wonderful company, and we were lucky to have been able to share time socially during our annual away days, relaxing with wine and nibbles, enjoying his humour and hearty laughter. Mike was in his element whenever he could engage in a good hymn singing session, his powerful voice resonating around the room.

NJPN wishes to express enormous gratitude to Mike as its long serving treasurer and for his longstanding commitment to issues of justice and peace. More importantly we wish to say thank you for so many years of friendship and support. We will certainly miss his towering presence and we offer Lauri and all his family our love and prayers.

**Anne Peacey**



# DIARY

October 2023—February 2024

<p><b>4 Oct</b> <i>Feast of St Francis of Assisi</i></p>	<p><b>7 Oct</b> <i>India Day</i> Leicester For more info: <a href="mailto:barbara@christiansaware.org.uk">barbara@christiansaware.org.uk</a></p>
<p><b>8 Oct 11am</b> <i>Mass for Prisoners Sunday</i> Northampton Cathedral <a href="http://www.northamptondiocese.org/news/">www.northamptondiocese.org/news/</a></p>	<p><b>9 Oct 12.45pm — 2pm</b> Southern Dioceses Environment Network Meeting Online via Zoom <a href="http://www.westminsterjusticeandpeace.org/">www.westminsterjusticeandpeace.org/</a></p>
<p><b>16 Oct 7pm — 8.30pm</b> <i>We need a better story</i> David McLoughlin Online <a href="http://www.leedsjp.org.uk/events">www.leedsjp.org.uk/events</a></p>	<p><b>24 Oct 7pm — 9pm</b> <i>Hospitality and Sanctuary For All: The Hook Lecture 2023</i> Dr Inderjit Bhogal Leeds Minster <a href="http://www.leedsjp.org.uk/events">www.leedsjp.org.uk/events</a></p>
<p><b>28 Oct 10.30am – 3pm</b> <i>Annual J&amp;P Assembly: Climate Action in the Archdiocese of Birmingham</i> Solihull <a href="http://www.birminghamjandp.org.uk/">www.birminghamjandp.org.uk/</a></p>	<p><b>6 Nov 7pm — 8.30pm</b> <i>Hope as Encounter: Is Gaudium et Spes burned out with its hope and joy?</i> <i>Sir John Battle</i> Online <a href="http://www.leedsjp.org.uk/events">www.leedsjp.org.uk/events</a></p>
<p><b>13 Nov 12.45pm — 2pm</b> Southern Dioceses Environment Network Meeting Online via Zoom <a href="http://www.westminsterjusticeandpeace.org/">www.westminsterjusticeandpeace.org/</a></p>	<p><b>18 Nov</b> <i>'Slavery then and Now' - a day in York with Richard Reddie</i> For more info: <a href="mailto:barbara@christiansaware.org.uk">barbara@christiansaware.org.uk</a></p>
<p><b>19 Nov</b> <i>World Day of the Poor</i></p>	<p><b>3 Dec</b> <i>Migrants' Day</i></p>
<p><b>11 Dec 12.45pm — 2pm</b> Southern Dioceses Environment Network Meeting Online via Zoom <a href="http://www.westminsterjusticeandpeace.org/">www.westminsterjusticeandpeace.org/</a></p>	<p><b>14 Jan</b> <i>Peace Sunday</i></p>
<p><b>26—28 Jan</b> <i>Christians Aware Annual Conference</i> <i>Hinsley Hall, Leeds</i> For more info: <a href="mailto:barbara@christiansaware.org.uk">barbara@christiansaware.org.uk</a></p>	<p><b>27 Jan 2024 9.30am — 1.30pm</b> Arundel &amp; Brighton Annual J&amp;P Assembly: St Philip Howard 'Hungry for Change' Centre, Crawley <a href="mailto:TessaRicketts@abdiocese.org.uk">TessaRicketts@abdiocese.org.uk</a> <a href="http://www.abdiocese.org.uk/diocese/events">www.abdiocese.org.uk/diocese/events</a></p>
<p><b>28 Jan</b> <i>Racial Justice Sunday</i></p>	<p><b>31 Jan</b> <i>Feast of St John Bosco</i></p>
<p><b>8 Feb</b> <i>Day for Victims of Trafficking</i></p>	<p><b>11 Feb</b> <i>Day for the Unemployed</i></p>

The **ROSEMARY READ BURSARY FUND** helps families & young people to attend our Conferences  
Please make a donation to help again next year—see details below—specifying that it is for the Bursary Fund.

**DONATE TO NJPN:** Online via our website. By cheque payable to NJPN. BACS to NJPN Sort Code:16-31-15 Account No: 10089516, put your name and Donation in the reference field. To make a regular donation by **Standing Order**, contact the Administrator or download the Membership Form on the website.

The **National Justice & Peace Network** welcomes all who share a vision of a world in which people live in peace and harmony, where our common humanity is respected and all are able to contribute freely to the common good. NJPN seeks to encourage work for justice and peace by promoting communication and shared action between members, supporters and partners.

*This newsletter is produced three times a year by the Network*  
*The views expressed are not necessarily those of the National Justice and Peace Network.*  
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