

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

CAFOD STAFF IN GAZA REPORT 'NEW KIND OF HORROR' AS ISRAEL ATTACKS RAFAH

Laura Ousley May 7, 2024 **Source: CAFOD**

CAFOD partners in Gaza say that since Israel began its fresh onslaught on Gaza, the situation for families there is "horrific".

Updating on this morning's developments in Rafah, Elizabeth Funnell, Middle East representative for the aid agency CAFOD, said: "When I was speaking this morning to CAFOD's local partner in Gaza, they described the situation in Rafah as a 'cut and paste' kind of horror - families already traumatised from being moved four, even five times, are being torn apart again and forced from one shelter to another, with no safe haven in sight.

"Our partner's local Rafah office had to be dismantled and moved several miles away, draining resources and precious time that should be spent getting essential aid to people who are starving. Fuel shortages further compound this crisis, with only two days' supply remaining.

"There is nowhere left to host the people now being displaced from Rafah, and aid workers are facing impossible choices about whether to reopen damaged shelters that aren't safe to house people.

"There is no way that a ground offensive in Rafah will be anything but catastrophic for civilians. With nearly 35,000 lives lost already, CAFOD is urging the UK to wake up to their complicity through arms sales to Israel, which must end now. The UK government must exert every diplomatic effort to halt the attack on Rafah, agree an immediate, permanent ceasefire which includes the release of all hostages, ensure aid access now and restore UK funding to UNRWA." <https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/49721>

For more information about CAFOD's response to the crisis in Gaza see: <https://cafod.org.uk/news/emergencies-news/israeli-palestinian-crisis-how-you-can-help-the-people-of-gaza-today>

RAFAH STATEMENT – UK MUST STOP THE SLAUGHTER

SABEEL-KAIROS 7 May 2024: Israel's military has ordered Palestinians to move out of eastern Rafah, warning it is about to use extreme force. It has also taken control of the border with Egypt, and refused a ceasefire deal, vowing to move ahead with its invasion of Rafah.

JOINT STATEMENT RELEASED 7 May 2024

The UK Government has repeatedly asked Israel not to unleash a slaughter in Rafah, Gaza. Foreign Secretary, Lord Cameron is "very concerned about what is happening in Rafah" and knows "it is impossible to fight a war amongst all these people. There is nowhere for them to go." Deputy Foreign Secretary, Andrew Mitchell thinks that "an Israeli incursion will struggle to be compliant with international law," Middle East Minister, Lord Ahmad said that "the fighting must stop now, in order to get the hostages home." Meanwhile, the Prime Minister acknowledges that "Too many innocent civilians have died in Gaza."

David Cameron also asked Israel for a 'Plan B' for Rafah to ensure "people can achieve safety, get food, medicine and water, and that people are kept safe." They have been ignored by Israel.

Yesterday, the Israeli military issued relocation orders to people sheltering in parts of Rafah, the first step towards a full-scale invasion that will most likely kill thousands of civilians. The area people are being directed to is already overstretched and lacks the capacity and resources to accommodate the number of people seeking refuge. The relocation orders lack guarantees of safety and the right to return, which risk violating humanitarian law.

In the last 12 hours, Israel has intensely bombed Rafah, including civilian homes and areas marked as safe. This morning, Israeli tanks entered the Rafah border crossing with Egypt, blocking completely the passage for people and humanitarian aid. There are no safe spaces in Gaza. Israel has repeatedly attacked so-called 'safe zones', killing displaced people. Any claims from Israel that civilians can be safely relocated have lost credibility.

The failure of our leaders to back words with meaningful action is glaring. As the 1.4 million people in Rafah face attacks that our leaders know would be catastrophic, they must finally act to stop the slaughter.

The UK must work urgently to stop any further assault on Rafah from going ahead, demand an immediate lasting ceasefire, resume funding to UNRWA, and suspend arms sales to Israel for as long as there is a risk they may be used to violate international humanitarian law. A ceasefire is the only way to stop the death and destruction, get more aid to those who desperately need it, and safely release the hostages. There is no Plan B for the people in Rafah.

Signed by: Action for Humanity; ActionAid UK; Amos Trust; Bond; CAFOD; Care International UK; Christian Aid; Council for Arab-British Understanding; Friends of the Earth England, Wales and Northern Ireland; Gender Action for Peace and Security (GAPS); Humanity & Inclusion; Humanity First UK; International Rescue Committee UK; Interpal; Islamic Relief UK; Lawyers for Palestinian Human Rights; Link Education International; Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP); Mercy Corps Europe; Omega Research Foundation; Oxfam GB; Peace Direct; Plan International UK; Quakers in Britain; Sabeel-Kairos UK; Save the Children UK; SCIAF; SOS Children's Villages UK; Trócaire; War on Want; Welfare Association.
<https://www.sabeel-kairos.org.uk/rafah-statement-uk-must-stop-the-slaughter/>

TAKE ACTION: We urgently need the UK Government to stop selling arms to Israel, demand an immediate and lasting ceasefire now, and to resume funding to UNRWA. Today we have released a joint statement with these demands, which you can read and download using the link below. Please share this statement with your MP and call on them to act immediately to ask the Foreign Secretary and Prime Minister to put pressure on Israel.

Read in full: <https://www.sabeel-kairos.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Rafah-Statement-May-7.pdf>

RAFAH: AN ISRAELI MILITARY OFFENSIVE WILL LEAD TO MASS ATROCITIES

Jan Egeland, Secretary General of the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) Statement May 6, 2024:

"Israel's military offensive in Rafah could lead to the deadliest phase of this conflict, inflicting horrific suffering on approximately 1.4 million displaced civilians in the area.

"The relocation orders issued by Israel today to thousands of Gazans, directing them to move to Al-Mawasi, are beyond alarming. The area is already overstretched and devoid of vital services. It lacks the capacity to house the number of people currently seeking refuge in Rafah, with no assurances of safety, proper accommodation or return once hostilities end for those forced to relocate.

"The absence of these fundamental guarantees of safety and return, as required by international humanitarian law, qualifies Israel's relocation directives as forcible transfer, amounting to a serious violation of international law. Any Israeli military operation in Rafah - which has become the largest cluster of displacement camps in the world - will cause potential mass atrocities.

"Rafah had become the last refuge for hundreds of thousands of families, deprived of any semblance of safety. With nowhere else to go, they are facing the threat of prolonged displacement and death. My NRC colleagues, and many other aid organisations, are working tirelessly in crammed shelters, but we find ourselves unable to sustain these efforts. The aid system is bound to collapse, leaving those fleeing the advancing Israeli forces vulnerable to hunger and suffering.

"Israel's allies have consistently failed to restrain indiscriminate attacks in Gaza for months. Now, once more, they are failing to prevent Israel from moving forward with a reckless military offensive in densely populated Rafah. By supporting a war of debilitation and supplying arms that fuel the conflict, Israel's allies must now bear responsibility for their failure to ensure respect for the fundamental principles of international humanitarian law.

"We urgently call on Hamas and Israel to agree to a deal that can end the bloodshed and avert further hostilities. History's verdict will be harsh on the men who continued a war that kills countless women and children. The parties must do more to protect civilians and ensure the safe delivery of aid during this offensive. Both Israel and Palestinian non-state armed groups must agree to an immediate and lasting ceasefire as the only way to save lives, release hostages, and ensure sufficient aid reaches people across Gaza."

• More than 110,000 Palestinians have been killed or injured, and the numbers continue to rise. According to the UN, 1.4 million people are displaced in Rafah (UNRWA).

<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/49715>

BEAUTIFUL RESISTANCE: THEATRE FROM GAZA NOW – WEDNESDAY, 22 MAY 2024

An evening of powerful storytelling and moving theatre performances from Gaza, showcasing the beauty and resilience of the human spirit. Please note this is a hybrid event with in-person attendees at the Quaker Meeting House, 7 Victoria Terrace, Edinburgh EH1 2JL

IN-PERSON: 6.30pm Doors open/light refreshments, 7.00pm Welcome and talk by Nick Bilbrough, HUP Artistic Coordinator, 7.45pm Q&A/audience response, Close at 8.30pm.

VIA ZOOM: 7.00pm - 8.30pm BST <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83109970670> Meeting ID: 831 0997 0670

Please indicate preference when booking via <https://gaza22may.eventbrite.co.uk> and Share

Or via <https://facebook.com/events/1140129640356591/>

PROGRAMME: In this illustrated talk, Nick Bilbrough, the founder of the educational charity Hands Up Project will share the stories behind two short plays:

The first: **It will be over soon** is performed by children in a newly formed drama club in Jabalia camp, northern Gaza. The second: **I can 2024** is a remake of a winning play from the 2018 remote theatre competition, performed from their tents in Rafah.

Despite the hell on earth that every man, woman and child has experienced for the past seven months in Gaza, young people and teachers involved in the Hands Up Project are still continuing to create and perform inspirational theatre.

This talk accompanies a touring exhibition **Moon Tell Me Truth**, featuring art and poems from the children of Gaza, at the Scottish Poetry Library from Thurs 28 May - Thurs 20 June 2024 free and open to all Mon- Thurs 10am-3pm.

The event is supported by the Scottish Palestinian Forum and Peace & Justice (Scotland) as part of a series of events across Edinburgh curated by Heather Kiernan and Iliyana Nedkova to support the **Hands Up Project**, a charity trust which, through its network of volunteers, connects children around the world with young people in Palestine. By means of online interaction, drama and storytelling activities, it enables the use of creativity and self-expression to promote mutual understanding, personal growth, and the development of English language skills.

Find out more about the Moon Tell Me Truth exhibition and events across Edinburgh here:

<https://linktr.ee/moontellmetruth>

Hands Up Project: <https://www.handsupproject.org/>

Scottish Palestinian Forum: <http://scottishpalestinianforum.org.uk/>

Peace & Justice (Scotland): <https://peaceandjustice.org.uk/>

DIGITAL DOWNLOAD: Moon tell me truth (with a foreword by Alice Oswald, Professor of Poetry, Oxford University) (EPub) £4.95. All the poems in this collection were entries for the 2023 Hands Up Project international poetry competition, written and illustrated by children aged 9 to 15 from Palestine, Argentina, India and Spain.

<https://www.handsupproject.org/shop/moon-tell-me-truth>

READ ONLINE: <https://www.handsupproject.org/the-diary-of-a-young-girl-in-gaza>

ENTRY FOR MARCH 31, 2024: EVACUATING FOR THE THIRD TIME

On January 25, 2024, we endured another sleepless night. Everyone was on edge, except for the exhausted children who had succumbed to fear and weariness. I sought refuge in my hideout—a tiny storeroom beneath the stairs in the administrative building. The cramped space overflowed with people, predominantly women and children. Men stood outside, tracking the escalating actions: tank movements, relentless shelling, sniper targets, and other overwhelming incidents.

During the night, another life slipped away—a wounded soul whose moans went unanswered by the four UNRWA ambulances. These vehicles arrived after interminable hours of waiting behind the checkpoint. Critical cases piled up, some unable to find space in the ambulances. We waited, hoping for their return after coordination with war generals.

My mother brought me a cup of tea and a sandwich. I hadn't eaten since yesterday, but my energy had waned to the point where chewing and swallowing felt robotic. In the crowded hall, I joined the mass of humans, desperate for reassuring news. Yet conflicting reports swirled: some claimed the place remained safe, while others insisted evacuation was necessary. How could 60,000 IDPs evacuate? And where would they go? No place remained safe south of Gaza valley where we were directed to flee.

Around 11am, I overheard talks about soldiers arresting two people near the area where voluntary people were cooking food. Upon their release, they carried a tragic message for the management team. My heart sank. I had grown accustomed to this place—a feat not easily achieved. We'd developed coping mechanisms to navigate the challenges of displacement. But reality defied our wishes. Tears welled up, yet they remained trapped within, leaving my eyes dry. Now, I faced the daunting task of packing my cherished belongings—items that had multiplied during my three and a half months at the KYTC shelter. No, there must be a mistake. As I stood there, disbelief gnawing at my resolve, I clung to the belief that this is an UNRWA facility—a place that should be deconflicted and couldn't be evacuated in such a manner. But the double-check confirmed the grim truth. We were given 24 hours to evacuate. The directive was clear: move past the tanks, eyes fixed forward, no deviation left or right. Our hands, clutching only the essentials, had to remain free—ready to raise in surrender as we passed those monstrous machines.

How horrifying! My limbs trembled with fear, but my sisters' frantic shouts propelled me forward. We stuffed our backpacks with cherished belongings, yet the crucial question loomed: Where would we go? Tears blurred my vision, mirroring the anguish etched in the eyes of the human mass around me. Together, we moved—like the walking dead—flooded through the gate, propelled by desperation and dread.

GAZA: A STORY OF LOVE AND WAR - WITH MIKE JOSEPH AND SAMI ABU SALIM

Two journalists meet to share stories over a Zoom link. One is Welsh and unable to get into Gaza. The other is Palestinian and unable to get out. As they talk, a very personal history of the Palestinian Nakba is narrated, from the expulsions of 1948 to the killing streets and tent cities of 2024. A generation ago the journalist's mothers escaped two different catastrophes — the Holocaust in 1939-45 and the violent expulsion of Palestinians in 1948. We hear remarkable connections in the stories. Then their talk reaches a most unexpected question: Is coexistence possible? So, this meeting becomes an exchange of impossible hopes in the ashes of war and genocide.

Mike Joseph opens the film with a chilling voice-over: "First they came for my grandfather and all his family to expel them from their home and their country never to return but I was not yet born so I had no voice.

Then they came to kill my grandfather and his family but my mother had escaped so I was born free. My mother was consumed by grief but I was safe.

Then the world was ashamed that it failed to protect Europe's Jews from the Holocaust so it gave them a country called Israel with an army to be strong so I did not need to speak out.

Then Israel expelled the Palestinians from their homes and their country and denied their return but my mother assured me the Palestinians abandoned their lands while Israel made the Desert Bloom so I felt proud and did not need to speak out.

Then Israel grew stronger took more lands and expelled more Palestinians explaining that this would make Jews safer so though I was worried I still did not speak out.

Then Israel persuaded the world that it was anti-Semitic to criticize Israel so as I was Jewish I felt free to criticize but then I too was silenced.

Now for all its strength Israel failed to prevent the slaughter of 1200 Israelis and Hamas violence was countered by the destruction of Gaza and the death of 30,000 Palestinians, so I am breaking my silence.

Why now in this most divisive of times? Here's why. A listener wrote this to me after hearing my podcast about the Holocaust and the Palestinian NAKBA, *Keys: A Troubled Inheritance*:

"I found myself probably like many people in a position where I have no idea what to think about what's happening in Gaza. It's horrific but opposition to it is tangled up with anti-Semitism in the most awful way and I want nothing to do with that, so I thought I should listen to what Jewish people have to say because it's at least reasonably certain that they're not anti-Semitic."

Fear of being accused of anti-Semitism has chilled discussion and understanding of what is happening and what has been happening for the past 75 years in Israel and Palestine. So now join me Mike Joseph and Sami Abu Salim a Palestinian from Gaza exploring some of that past and searching for hope for a different future."

Watch in full here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XwT3gAO1XX4>

See also: Keys: A Troubled Inheritance Podcast: <https://balfourproject.org/keys/>

An epic journey to uncover a Holocaust inheritance leads relentlessly to discovering a Nakba inheritance: two catastrophes that are very different, but very connected. Can they both be heard and understood? With personal testimony, letters and memories by those who survived and those who did not, this challenging audio series is dramatised and narrated by broadcaster Mike Joseph with on the ground reports from Sami Abu Salim.

76TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NAKBA

Wednesday 15 May will be the 76th anniversary of the Nakba (Catastrophe) a reminder of the tragic events of 1948 when Palestinian people lost their homes, their land and their way of life. On that day, we invite you to light a candle and take time in silence, individually, in groups, communities, parishes, to pray for peace in the Holy Land. Please let us know of anything you do that day and send us photos so that we can let our friends and partners in the Holy Land know. **Pax Christi England and Wales:** paxchristi.org.uk

SPEECH FOR NAKBA 2021: 'A JEW IN SOLIDARITY WITH PALESTINE'

Robert Cohen May 14, 2021 (Updated May 15, 2023)

I gave this speech at a solidarity rally for Palestine organised by Lancaster Friends of Palestine. Around 250 gathered to hear inspiring testimonies from Muslim and Palestinian students at the university and their allies:

I stand with you tonight as a Jewish student at Lancaster University who is in solidarity with the Palestinian people. I stand here tonight because what's happening to the Palestinian people is a crime. And I stand here tonight to honour the resistance, courage and steadfastness of the Palestinian people. Despite what you may think, I am not a lone Jewish voice. There are a great many other Jews around the world who've been on the streets this week calling for justice for Palestine, justice for Palestinians. We've been calling for fairness, equality and common decency in the Holy Land. We've been calling for the end to structural and institutional discrimination across all parts of Israel/Palestine. In other words, an end to apartheid.

That does not mean that we are the wrong kind of Jews, or that we are self-hating Jews, or that we don't care about Jewish safety, whether in Israel or across the Jewish diaspora. But it does mean that we have a different understanding of what it should mean to be Jewish in the 21st century. An understanding that goes beyond borders and narrow nationalism; an understanding built on an ethical tradition that runs through the Torah, through Hebrew scripture, through the Talmud, through rabbinic teaching and is hardwired into secular Jewish thought as well. It's an understanding built on the urgent need for solidarity with those who are downtrodden and in despair, a solidarity that was formed in the furnace of our own suffering

Israel calls itself the Jewish State and its leaders claim to speak on behalf of all Jews around the world. But I stand with you tonight because I need to tell you something very important: Judaism is not settler colonialism. Judaism is not ethnic cleaning. Judaism is not occupation. Judaism is not apartheid. Judaism is not Zionism. And I must add, Palestinian solidarity is not antisemitism. Israel does not speak in my name or act in my interests; because if Judaism means anything, it means working to repair a fractured world and build a just society. That will not happen until the land, which three faiths call holy, is a place in which all are equal, not only in the eyes of God but in the eyes of Israeli lawmakers, the Israeli police, and the Israeli army. And in the eyes of the international community too.

If I am to condemn the Israeli attacks on residential areas of Gaza, I must also condemn the indiscriminate rockets that comes from Hamas. The Israelis and Hamas are both committing war crimes. I mourn for the innocent Jewish lives lost this week as well as the Palestinian lives. But that does not imply a moral equivalence. This is not a war. This is not a dispute between equals. There is no 'balance' needed in how we talk about. Only one side has dispossessed the other Only one side is occupying. Only one side is denying the other basic rights. 'Balance' is not missing from this moment we are witnessing, but the truth is.

So, I speak to you tonight with a profound belief in and concern for my Jewish ethical inheritance. And as I stand with you in this place and at this moment of Palestinian solidarity, I hold within me the pain of Jewish suffering which compels me to speak out for Gaza, for the Palestinians of East Jerusalem, for the Palestinians in Israel, for the Palestinians in the West Bank, and for the millions of Palestinians still in exile from their land. I stand here tonight to make the call for: Equal Rights for all who call the Holy Land Home! <https://www.patheos.com/blogs/writingfromtheedge/2021/05/speech-for-nakba-2021-a-jew-in-solidarity-with-palestine/>

- Robert Cohen lives in North Yorkshire and began writing on Israel-Palestine in 2011. His blog Writing from the Edge offers a commentary on Jewish-Christian interfaith issues and life as the Jewish husband of a Church of England vicar.

GENOCIDE IN GAZA

Robert Cohen 29 April 2024: Amos Goldberg is a Holocaust and genocide researcher at the Hebrew University. It will take years for the ICJ to reach a verdict, but serious scholars of genocide, like Goldberg, have already concluded that it's taking place in Gaza. "Yes, it is genocide. It is so difficult and painful to admit it, but despite all that, and despite all our efforts to think otherwise, after six months of brutal war we can no longer avoid this conclusion. Jewish history will henceforth be stained with the mark of Cain for the "most horrible of crimes," which cannot be erased from its forehead. As such, this is the way it will be viewed in history's judgment for generations to come."

CAFOD UPDATE: SUDAN CRISIS

Sudan is in a crisis. Over half the country's 25 million population urgently needs humanitarian aid. Nearly 18 million people are struggling with acute hunger. UN figures have referred to the crisis as "one of the worst humanitarian crises in recent memory, with potential to trigger the world's largest hunger emergency."

Church leaders who are working alongside those most affected have expressed their concern at the unfolding humanitarian crisis. CAFOD's local Church partner, Caritas Sudan, has described the situation as a forgotten crisis that the international community urgently needs to address. In a statement, Caritas Sudan said: "The ongoing crisis, compounded by security and administrative challenges, is preventing humanitarian aid reaching everyone who needs it. The coming rainy season between June and October-November will only make the situation worse."

Pope Francis has repeatedly appealed for a negotiated solution to the conflict, and during his address on Christmas Day he recalled the suffering of the people of Sudan and asked the international community not to forget them.

CAFOD is urgently working to address this crisis. We've allocated over £250,000 towards Sudan, providing essential sanitation and hygiene services, as well as emergency cash payments, to refugees and displaced people.

Things you can do

We at CAFOD are calling on all our supporters to **pray for the people of Sudan** and peace for their country.

Your support is also vital to continue the work of our local experts in Sudan and its surrounding countries, who are providing practical help to families affected by the conflict. A donation of £40 can provide emergency shelter for a refugee family.

Together, we can hope for long-term peace in Sudan. Please see cafod.org.uk/emergencies for more information, prayers and to support our work.

Kathryn Keenan, Community Participation Coordinator (Shrewsbury and Birmingham North)

Mobile 07920 232 936

95% OF BRITS DON'T IDENTIFY THE "WORLD'S LARGEST" HUMANITARIAN CRISIS, NEW CAFOD/YOUGOV POLL REVEALS

The Catholic Network May 2, 2024

A new poll published by CAFOD, conducted by YouGov, has found that only 5% (one in twenty) of British adults think that Sudan is currently experiencing the world's largest humanitarian crisis. This is despite more than 25 million people – half the country's population – needing urgent emergency assistance, surpassing figures from Gaza, Ukraine, and Syria.

CAFOD, the Catholic development agency, is drawing attention to the situation in Sudan, which has deteriorated rapidly since conflict broke out in April 2023, with over 8.5 million people now displaced from their homes.

The poll also revealed that eight times more people (42%) thought Gaza was the world's largest crisis than identified Sudan (5%), and nearly five times as many people (23%) chose Ukraine over Sudan. Yet Sudan has been described by the UK Ambassador to the United Nations as being "the world's worst hunger and displacement crisis."

Failed harvests and the ongoing conflict mean that up to 8 million people – almost the population of London – could face famine-like conditions by June. However, over three-quarters of the British public (77%) were not aware that the United Nations has warned of a potential famine in Sudan.

Telley Sadia, CAFOD's Country Representative for Sudan, commented: "Whilst the situation continues to be horrendous for civilians caught up in conflicts in Gaza, Ukraine, and elsewhere, these figures demonstrate how the world's attention being so firmly fixed on some global crises means the scale of the disaster affecting Sudan is largely unknown. Right now, fears of famine loom ominously across the country. Children are already succumbing to starvation as food prices continue to skyrocket and urgent food aid remains out of reach for millions of people.

As Sudan teeters on the edge of one of the biggest, yet avoidable, humanitarian crises in living memory, it is imperative that the global community unite provide assistance and support to those in need."

Speaking at a UN Security Council meeting on Sudan on 19 April, the UK Ambassador to the United Nations, Barbara Woodward, also said: "Civilians are being murdered, women and girls are being raped. Villages are being looted and burned to the ground."

At a recent funding conference for Sudan held on 15 April in Paris, only half of the \$4 billion needed was promised by richer countries. Annalena Baerbock, the German foreign minister, highlighted the severity of the crisis, stating: “What we are witnessing in Sudan is the worst child displacement crisis in the world.” And yet, she said, “in many of our countries, as the war enters in its second year, it is practically absent from our daily news. Every life counts equally, whether in Ukraine, in Gaza, or in Sudan.”

In response to these alarming developments, CAFOD is calling for immediate action from the UK and leading governments from the global north. Specifically, CAFOD urges:

- Support for an emergency appeal to help families caught up in this crisis.
- Stepped-up calls for an immediate ceasefire, civilian protection, and unimpeded humanitarian access.
- Increased funding pledges to meet the \$2 billion shortfall required for Sudan’s relief efforts, as identified by the UN, to avert this crisis turning into a catastrophic tragedy.

For more information visit [cafod.org.uk/SudanAppeal](https://www.cafod.org.uk/SudanAppeal)
<https://www.thecatholicnetwork.co.uk/10698>

The #WorldFoodCrisis is a lot to take in. Millions of families around the world are facing a food crisis that could be worse than any we’ve ever lived through.

@CAFOD have shared these five simple facts to help you understand the world food crisis:

1. Extreme hunger is on the rise. Even before the pandemic struck, in 2019, close to 750 million people were exposed to severe levels of food insecurity. Now, exacerbated by the conflict in Ukraine, as many as 811 million people around the world are facing extreme hunger – that’s an increase of roughly 60 million people in just three years.

2. Children suffer the most. In 2020, around the world, 149 million children under five were affected by stunting (being too short for their age) and 45 million children were affected by wasting (being too thin for their height) – conditions caused by malnutrition, untreated infections and inadequate mother-and-baby healthcare support.

3. Our global food system is broken. Big food companies are growing and sharing food in ways that harm the planet and make it hard for people around the world to have enough food to eat. Simply put, there’s enough food in the world to feed everyone but it isn’t shared equally. That’s why nearly 10 per cent of the world’s population go hungry.

4. Families across East Africa are preparing to face the worst drought in over 40 years. In Kenya, Ethiopia, Somalia and South Sudan, up to 20 million people are fighting for their very survival.

5. You can help put an end to the food crisis. Together, we can reach out with love to help our sisters and brothers around the world who are facing extreme hunger through no fault of their own. With your support families can build resilience in the face of extreme hunger, with tools, training and climate-resistant seeds to help with sustainable farming, emergency food, water, shelter, and so much more.

<https://cafod.org.uk/News/International-news/World-food-crisis-five-facts>

CLIMATE JUSTICE EVENT LIVERPOOL

Climate Justice Gathering Saturday 29 June 2024 St Bride's Church, Percy Str L9 7LT 9.30am to 4.30pm

Join us in Liverpool for a day of networking, talks and workshops and welcoming space for individuals and groups to engage with the Climate Crisis and enjoy opportunities to network

- Hear and interact with Local Campaigns around Climate Change and the Environmental Crisis
- Discover how we engage with the General Elections and the Climate Crisis
- Explore the importance of International Solidarity and Solidarity with Migrants
- Workshops on building our networks and tools to work together better and engage with the wider civil society: faith groups, trade unions, community groups
- A Climate Café to reflect on our feelings around the Climate Crisis and recognise the importance of preserving our Mental Health
- Explore the issues of Air and Water Pollution
- Plan the next steps for our Liverpool City Region Climate Justice Coalition

Full programme to be confirmed but you can register now:

<https://actionnetwork.org/events/climate-justice-gathering-liverpool-city-region>

INTERNATIONAL CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS' DAY - WEDNESDAY 15 MAY

Every year on 15 May, we mark International Conscientious Objectors' Day, remembering conscientious objectors, both past and present. Around the world many people are imprisoned or forced to flee their home countries for refusing to join the armed forces. On 15 May, we stand in solidarity with them and celebrate the memory of those throughout history who have resisted conscription.

A national ceremony will take place in Tavistock Square, London, where the speakers this year will be Or, an Israeli CO, and Semih Sapmaz of War Resisters International. As in previous years, the event will be livestreamed and you can find the details here on the Peace Pledge Union website: <https://www.ppu.org.uk/international-conscientious-objectors-day-may-15th>

For details of other events around the country on the day including an event in Liverpool being organised by Pax Christi Merseyside see here: www.ppu.org.uk/events/External%20Event

International Conscientious Objectors' Day - Liverpool Wednesday 15 May 2024 12:00 pm.

Gather at St George's Hall steps close to the war monument. Pax Christi will remember and share the testimonies of past and present Conscientious Objectors with an update from War Resisters International of countries that do not recognise conscientious objection. Contributions welcome of CO stories and poems.

Contact: janharper20211@outlook.com

<https://www.ppu.org.uk/civicrm/event/info%3Fid%3D406%26reset%3D1>

International Conscientious Objectors' Day - Manchester Wednesday 15 May 2024 12:00 pm.

Come along to this event to mark CO Day, organised by Greater Manchester CND. Gather at Manchester Peace Gardens, Lincoln Square, M2 5LN. **Contact:** gmdcnd@gn.apc.org

PAX CHRISTI AGM 2024

PAX CHRISTI AGM 2024 will be held on Saturday 1 June at the Quaker Meeting House, 22 School Lane, Liverpool, L1 3BT at 10.30am for an 11.00 am start as well as online on zoom. All are welcome to join us and you can find the official Notice of the AGM and all the details here on the dedicated AGM page on our website:

paxchristi.org.uk/agm/

The day will include:

- Reports on our activities and finances
- Elections to our Executive Committee
- A reflection from our President
- A discussion on how Pax Christi develops to face the challenges of the future

We hope that as many of you as possible can make it to Liverpool to meet on the day or join us online. Your views and contributions are invaluable as we look to the future of Pax Christi. We have just published our Annual Report 2023/24 and you can download and read a copy here: tinyurl.com/4kj9wavn

ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL CATHOLIC SOCIAL ACTION NETWORK CONFERENCE

4 July 2024 Liverpool

This partnership event between Housing Justice, Together Liverpool and the Archdiocese of Liverpool will bring together parishioners in a space to reflect on social action – through the lens of housing, homelessness and land.

It is the Archdiocese Catholic Social Action network, open to parishioners, but also charities and statutory organisations. This year the focus is on housing, but we are looking at all areas of social action, through a variety of workshops.

More details and booking here: <https://archdioceseofliverpool.churchsuite.com/events/1yerqfks>

LANCASTER DIOCESE FAITH AND JUSTICE COMMISSION

Save the date! Saturday, 12 October 2024

Lancaster Diocese Faith and Justice Commission will be holding an event at the Lancaster Cathedral Social Centre, Balmoral Road Lancaster, LA4 3BT. Speakers will include: **Bishop Paul Swarbrick, Sir John Battle and Clare**

Dixon from CAFOD. More details to follow but do feel free to contact me if you would like to register your interest to come: **Sue Grubic Faith & Justice Worker Diocese of Lancaster** ldfjsue@gmail.com or by text on 07791 444 417

CAFOD NEWS FROM LANCASTER DIOCESE

A YEAR OF ENCOUNTER (CAFOD parish campaign): With the general election on the horizon, CAFOD and the St Vincent de Paul Society (SVP) invite parishes and individuals to reach out to local candidates to discuss some important issues. For resources and more info go to <https://cafod.org.uk/campaign/campaign-with-us/a-year-of-encounter-call-for-action-with-your-parish-at-the-general-election>

The parish campaign resources are now all in the CAFOD shop:

<https://shop.cafod.org.uk/collections/frontpage/products/general-election-resources>

YEAR OF PRAYER WEBINARS: During this Year of Prayer, we will be offering some webinars exploring different ways of praying. We start with Imaginative Contemplation led by Stephen Hoyland of The Jesuits in Britain. Tue 28 May from 7-8pm. Click here for more info and to sign up. <https://cafod.org.uk/pray/year-of-prayer/year-of-prayer-webinars>

SIGN UP TO A PENTECOST NOVENA: 10-18 May. Join in nine days of prayer to ask God to prepare us to receive the Spirit so that our courage, hope and joy may be renewed. <https://cafod.org.uk/pray/prayer-resources/pentecost-novena>

PRAYERS IN TIMES OF EMERGENCY: Subscribe to prayer texts during future emergencies by texting PRAYER to 64059. Our texts will alert you to the situation and link to a prayer. You can unsubscribe simply by texting STOP to 64059.

<https://cafod.org.uk/pray/prayer-resources/prayers-in-a-time-of-emergency>

CATHOLIC ASSOCIATION FOR RACIAL JUSTICE, CARJ, TURNS 40: All are welcome to the 40th anniversary events of CARJ. The first on Saturday 25 May in St George's Cathedral, London and the second at St Patrick's Church, Oldham on 21 September. <https://www.carj.org.uk/2024/04/20/1253/>

CATHOLIC PARISH SUMMIT: We are very excited that CAFOD will be present at Catholic Parish Summit on June 12-14, 2024. Do let us know if you'll be going and come and say hello - look out for us in our CAFOD T-shirts. <https://catholicparishsummit.com/>

SPECIAL EVENT ABOUT GIFTS IN WILLS: On Thursday 6 June we will be holding a special event in the beautiful seaside location of St Joseph's Prayer Centre, Formby to learn more about how CAFOD uses the generous donations from people who have left a gift in their Will. Please can you encourage parishioners to come along. To find out more go to: <https://cafod.org.uk/give/leave-a-gift-in-your-will/legacy-events>

Upcoming and recorded online events <https://cafod.org.uk/volunteer/online-talks>

Our Voices of Change Podcast (latest episode with Clare Dixon) <https://cafod.org.uk/voices-of-change>

Latest news <https://cafod.org.uk/news>

And don't forget our Year of Prayer webpage <https://cafod.org.uk/pray/year-of-prayer>

Patrick Gardner Community Participation Coordinator – Lancaster Diocese pgardner@cafod.org.uk 07920 565 454

COLUMBAN 'VOCATION FOR JUSTICE' - PREPARING FOR THE ELECTION

James Trewby May 5, 2024

The Summer 2024 edition of 'Vocation for Justice' - produced by the Columban Justice, Peace and Ecology Team - focuses on 'Preparing for the Election'. It is filled with thought-provoking content that we hope will be useful to Christians as the UK moves towards a General Election.

In Fratelli Tutti (#197), Pope Francis poses questions for politicians' self-reflection: "How much love did I put into my work?" "What did I do for the progress of our people?" "What mark did I leave on the life of society?" "What real bonds did I create?" "What positive forces did I unleash?" "How much social peace did I sow?" "What good did I achieve in the position that was entrusted to me?"

In Evangelii Gaudium (#205) he says, "I beg the Lord to grant us more politicians who are genuinely disturbed by the state of society, the people, the lives of the poor!" These sentiments are powerful but might allow us to sidestep the responsibility of our own engagement. We might say to ourselves that, "it's politicians who have to act, not us". However, a General Election cycle reminds us that we are a crucial part of the political process - we have to tell candidates what we care about and how we want them to act as our representatives.

The Catholic Church teaches that "participation in political life is a moral obligation" (Evangelii Gaudium #220). This calls us to much more than voting. We need to inform our consciences, hear the cry of the Earth and of the poor, proactively make ourselves aware of injustice, reflect, pray and discern, and then respond. And there are so many calls to hear, so many actions to take - it's challenging, heart-breaking, exhausting, never-ending.

Sometimes I wrestle with the feeling that I can never do 'enough'. But, thank God, it's not all about me - we are ALL called to play our parts in God's mission for justice and peace, to make our contributions to a much bigger picture.

This edition of 'Vocation for Justice' contains articles on 'The Common Good at Election Time' by Jane Lavery and 'Catholic Social Teaching and Democracy' by Anna Blackman. Interfaith campaigning is highlighted in an article by Shanon Shah, Director of Faith for the Climate.

There are tools and reflection materials for discernment, engaging with candidates and manifestos, and, ultimately, playing our part in encouraging candidates to be disturbed by injustice and ready to respond lovingly for the common good. There are outline ideas for organising hustings. We thank CAFOD and SVP for allowing us to Draw on their election resources and illustration: 'Using the Catholic Voice in this Election' - see page 9 (top) above.

Fr Rob Esdaile's article 'Preaching the Election' might help parish priests to feel confident to offer a sermon series before the election! And a prayer for the election has been written by Columban Fr Kevin McDonagh, who has recently joined our team here in Britain, after three decades working in Peru.

<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/49707>

LINKS: Newsletter: <https://columbans.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/FINALNewsletter-May-2024-David.pdf>

Order extra copies for your parish here: <https://columbans.co.uk/justice-peace/14110/request-extra-copies-of-vocation-for-justice-election-edition/>

And don't forget this year's NJPN conference JUST POLITICS <https://www.justice-and-peace.org.uk/conference/>

A CHALLENGING NEW BOOK

Just Worship is a new book by Stef Benstead, which will explore questions of giving and justice, and challenge Christians to live lives that reflect the God they worship. The book will be published in July 2024 by Darton, Longman and Todd. We know the book will be a fascinating read for anyone interested in how we live out our faith and work for justice. We hope many supporters of Church Action on Poverty will read it.

Stef has agreed with the publisher that she will buy and distribute the first 500 copies, at a cost to her of £3,750. This is a challenge for someone currently supported by disability benefits. If you'd like to read the book, you can help now, by pledging to buy one of those copies: <https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/justworship>

Pledge your support now, and you can receive a copy of the book on publication for £10 (the recommended retail price will be £15). Or make a larger pledge, and you can receive a signed copy - or 'pay it forward', allowing someone on a low income to get a free copy of the book: <https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/checkout/justworship/start>

The book's synopsis

God loves a cheerful giver. He must, then, hate an uncheerful giver. And he must loathe taxes. Right? Or perhaps not. And what about those on the receiving end of charity; what do they prefer? They might prefer justice to charity.

Christians are called to be holy as God is holy, and perfect as God is perfect. The way we live should lead people to praise God, as our good deeds show the world what God is like.

So what is God like? How do we live lives that reflect his character? How do we make sure that every part of our lives – not just the religious parts – are lived in worship to God? And in particular – how do we work for justice and live just lives as part of our worship of God?

Just Worship explores all these questions.

About the author

When she's not asleep, Stef Benstead is an independent researcher in disability and welfare. Chronic illness means that her capacity for activity is limited, and she is dependent on social security for her main income. She is an evangelical Christian committed to working for justice for people in poverty in the UK. She is a trustee of Church Action on Poverty and a member of Manchester Poverty Truth Commission. She is currently studying for a Master's in Theology, Community Development and Social Change at the Nazarene Theological College.

This will be Stef's second published book. Her first was *Second Class Citizens: The treatment of disabled people in austerity Britain*.

LET'S ALL BE MORE FRANK

Jon Kuhrt May 4, 2024: Last week saw the passing of one of my political heroes, Frank Field, the Labour MP who represented Birkenhead for 40 years. We were both graduates of Hull University and I first came across him when studying Social Work because of his work as Director of the Low Pay Unit and the Child Poverty Action Group. Their publications were some of the best sources to understand inequality and poverty.

In the 1970s, Frank Field coined the term 'poverty trap' to explain how a recipient of benefits lost them as their earning increased and remained "trapped" in poverty. And later as an MP, his dedication and closeness to his community enabled him appreciate, with more clarity than most, the problems caused by welfare systems which were supposed to help. Like contemporary writer Darren McGarvey, Field knew that the battle against poverty must involve building personal responsibility and incentivizing work: that policy must 'go with the grain' of human nature and the reality of self-interest. It's a nuance and realism often lacking in contemporary debates.

In 1997, Field was appointed by new Prime Minister, Tony Blair, to 'think the unthinkable' about welfare reform. Sadly, it did not end well and Field's recommendations were thought 'unworkable' by Harriet Harman and Gordon Brown. This was a tragic 'sliding doors' moment for social policy in the UK where the chance was missed to re-wire the dependency culture at the heart of our benefits system. Radical reform to welfare can only be done humanely at a time of economic boom and political strength and 1997 was the perfect time. The failure to act then has had disastrous ramifications since. In response to Frank Field's death, Tony Blair said this: "He was an independent thinker never constrained by conventional wisdom, but always pushing at the frontier of new ideas. Even when we disagreed, I had the utmost respect for him." It's a sentiment echoed in all of his obituaries. Field's independence of thinking and willingness to contravene the tribal orthodoxies of his own party may have caused controversy, but ultimately this is what won him admiration and respect. In an age of polarised thinking, fuelled by the self-interest of social media, we need more Frank Fields. We need to listen less to those who win populist applause from in either right or left-wing echo chambers and more to those who challenge polarised thinking. This is why we all need to be more Frank.

There is no clearer example of Field's independent mindset than his breaking of the ultimate taboo on the left: his friendship with Margaret Thatcher. Despite their different politics, there was a mutual respect for the conviction and courage they saw in each other. It reminds me of discussions on my university course where I found the left-wing orthodoxy monochrome, self-righteous and frustrating. To even ask the question 'Why did working class people vote for Thatcher?' was to invite denunciation. And I was never convinced by the simplistic, stock answers of 'selfishness' and 'media bias'. The refusal to see just cause in elements of Thatcher's approach was a continual weakness of the left.

And it's no coincidence that Frank Field's insights, integrity and courage were rooted in his strong Christian faith. As Nick Spencer puts it in a superb article for Theos: "He once described his proposals as "about placing a Christian understanding of mankind centre stage". He reacted against the "sanitised, post-Christian view of human character" typical of the newer, more metropolitan left tradition. It was a view that wrote the "fallen side of mankind" out of the script." In our desire to make faith accessible, the church has lost the ability to talk sensibly about the reality of sin and self-interest which affects rich and poor alike. Christian hope lies in overcoming these realities, not ignoring them. Contemporary injunctions 'to be kind' are superficial and naïve mantras which produce little fruit. As Nick Spencer continues: "His issue was not that humans couldn't or didn't behave altruistically...rather, his point was that to assume that altruism was the natural or inevitable form of human motivation, the kind of view that informs so much bland humanistic thought today, was not only naïve but to court disaster. Policy needed to recognise the reality of sin and policymakers to "wrestle with the angel and the serpent in each of us".

For all these reasons, I was grateful when about 10 years ago, a mutual friend sent Frank Field a copy of my booklet *Homelessness: grace, truth and transformation*. This led to us having lunch together where he probed me with deep questions about the relationship between grace and truth, which was primary, and what this meant in practice. It can be sobering to actually meet one of your heroes. But Frank Field's generosity, humility and dissatisfaction with simplistic answers only deepened my admiration for him. Let's all be more Frank.

<https://gracetruth.blog/2024/05/04/lets-all-be-more-frank/>

• **Jon Kuhrt** has worked with people affected by homelessness for 30 years. He is a former government adviser on how faith groups address rough sleeping and is now CEO of Hope into Action.

• Buy *Homelessness: grace, truth and transformation* by Jon Kuhrt & Chris Ward

<https://grovebooks.co.uk/product/p-135-homelessness-grace-truth-and-transformation-2013/>

• Frank Field: faith and politics – by Nick Spencer, Theos

<https://www.theosthinktank.co.uk/comment/2024/04/24/frank-field-faith-and-politics>

LAUDATO SI' WEEK – SEEDS OF HOPE 19-26 May 2024

This Laudato Si' Week and Pentecost, let us gather in community to contemplate and nurture seeds of hope for our “suffering planet” (LD 2). **Laudate Deum** is a reminder about the urgency of the Laudato Si' message and the need for both personal and cultural transformation amidst our ecological and climate crises. This year's Laudato Si' Week theme is inspired by the symbol for Season of Creation 2024, “firstfruits.” Let us be seeds of hope in our lives and our world, rooted in faith and love. <https://laudatosiweek.org/>

BOARBANK HALL PROGRAMME FOR 2024

Two Wings and Some Prayers 13-18 May. Week of prayer, walks and birdwatching, learning birdsong.

Living Laudato Si' Residential week 25 May-1 June. A week to explore how to live out *Laudato Si'* fully in our personal lives and within the Church. All welcome.

Catholic Social Teaching Residential weekend 28 June-1 July. Theme: Revisiting the Basics. A long weekend to revisit the basic ideas and some key texts of Catholic Social Teaching. Would suit especially anyone involved in work in Justice & Peace, Care for Creation, or with young people. All welcome.

Thinking Faith Summer residential week 27 July-3 August 2024. Theme: What Catholics *Really* Believe
Time out for working Catholics.

Living Laudato Si' Residential week 5-12 October. A week to explore how to live out *Laudato Si'* fully in our personal lives and within the Church. All welcome.

We welcome bookings from parish, school or student groups or any other groups who may benefit from our hospitality. We also work with schools to provide INSET days to suit each school, with the option of overnight stays. All our residential events combine talks and discussions with Mass, Prayer of the Church and opportunity for personal prayer, in a context of friendship and community in our beautiful Cumbrian setting beside Morecambe Bay. Any group who would like help in arranging a programme or speakers for any kind of retreat or residential event should contact Sr Margaret Atkins on margaret@boarbankhall.org.uk or 015395-32288

Boarbank Hall, Allithwaite, Grange Over Sands, Cumbria, LA11 7NH www.boarbankhall.org.uk

THE JOY OF SIMPLICITY RICHARD ROHR OFM

When Francis said, after kissing the leper, “I left the world,” he was saying that he was giving up on the usual payoffs, constraints, and rewards of business-as-usual and was choosing to live in the largest kingdom of all. To pray and actually mean “thy kingdom come,” we must also be able to say, “my kingdoms go.” At best, most Christians split their loyalties between God and Caesar, but Francis and Clare did not. Their first citizenship was always, and in every case, elsewhere, which paradoxically allowed them to live in this world with joy, detachment, and freedom.

When we agree to live simply, we put ourselves outside of others' ability to buy us off, reward us falsely, or control us by money, status, punishment, and loss or gain. This is the most radical level of freedom, but, of course, it's not easy to come by. Francis and Clare created a life in which they had little to lose, no desire for gain, no debts to pay, and no luxuries they needed or wanted. Most of us can only envy them.

When we agree to live simply, we can understand what Francis meant when he said, “A man had not yet given up everything for God as long as he held on to the moneybag of his own opinions.” Most of us find that this purse is far more dangerous than a money purse, and we seldom let go of it.

When we agree to live simply, we don't consider people who are immigrants, refugees, or unhoused as a threat or as competition. We've chosen their marginal state for ourselves—freely and consciously becoming “visitors and pilgrims” in this world, as Francis puts it (quoting 1 Peter 2:11). A simple lifestyle is quite simply an act of solidarity with the way most people have lived since the beginnings of humanity.

When we voluntarily agree to live simply, we don't need to get into the frenzy of work for the sake of salary or the ability to buy nonessentials or raise our social standing. We enjoy the freedom of not climbing. We might climb for the sake of others, but not just for ourselves.

When we agree to live simply, we have time for spiritual and corporal works of mercy, prayer, service, and justice work, because we have renegotiated in our minds and hearts our very understanding of time and its purposes. Time is not money, despite the common aphorism. Time is life itself!

When we agree to live simply, people cease to be possessions and objects for our consumption or use. Our lust for relationships or for others to serve us, our need for admiration, our desire to use people or things as commodities for our personal pleasure, and any need to control and manipulate others, slowly—yes, very slowly—falls away. Only then are we truly free to love. <https://cac.org/daily-meditations/the-joy-of-simplicity/>

DIARY

MAY

10-18 PENTECOST NOVENA: 10-18 May. Join in nine days of prayer to ask God to prepare us to receive the Spirit so that our courage, hope and joy may be renewed. <https://cafod.org.uk/pray/prayer-resources/pentecost-novena>

11 NJPN Annual General Meeting at Romero House, London. For more info contact admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk

11 'Don't put Britain on the nuclear front line': Day of Action. Events around the country cnduk.org/dont-put-britain-on-the-nuclear-front-line-day-of-action/

12-18 Christian Aid week <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals/key-appeals/christian-aid-week>

13-18 Boarbank Hall Week of prayer, walks and birdwatching with a focus on learning birdsong. Contact Sr Margaret Atkins on margaret@boarbankhall.org.uk or 015395-32288

15 76th anniversary of the Nakba paxchristi.org.uk see page 5

15 International Conscientious Objectors' Day - Liverpool 12:00 pm Gather at St George's Hall steps close to the war monument. Contact: janharper20211@outlook.com see page 7

15 International Conscientious Objectors' Day - Manchester 12:00 pm Gather at Manchester Peace Gardens, Lincoln Square, M2 5LN. Contact: gmdcnd@gn.apc.org see page 7

19-26 Laudato Si' Week <https://laudatosiweek.org/> see page 12

21 Feast of Blessed Franz Jägerstätter Pax Christi's updated pack with biographical information and ready to use service and reflections £6 available from <https://paxchristi.org.uk/product-category/bl-franz-jagerstatter/>

22 BEAUTIFUL RESISTANCE: THEATRE FROM GAZA NOW An evening of powerful storytelling and moving theatre performances from Gaza, showcasing the beauty and resilience of the human spirit. In Edinburgh and on Zoom: 7.00pm - 8.30pm BST <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83109970670> see page 3

25 Catholic Association for Racial Justice - 40th Anniversary Year. Amigo Hall – St Georges Cathedral, Southwark. Speakers on Travellers, Caste discrimination, Migrants and Citizens of colour, Black Vocations, 'Love the Stranger' (CBCEW) and a discussion of the Racial Justice Agenda for Change. Ends with Mass in Southwark Cathedral. <https://www.carj.org.uk/>

25 May-1 June Boarbank Hall Living Laudato Si' Residential week. Explore how to live out Laudato Si' fully in our personal lives and within the Church. All welcome. Contact Sr Margaret Atkins (see May 13-18 for contact info)

28 Imaginative Contemplation Webinar: 7-8pm led by Stephen Hoyland of The Jesuits in Britain. First in a series of webinars during this Year of Prayer to explore different ways of praying. Click here for more info and to sign up: <https://cafod.org.uk/pray/year-of-prayer/year-of-prayer-webinars>

JUNE

1 Pax Christi England and Wales Annual General Meeting, Friends Meeting House, 22, School Lane, Liverpool L1 3BT. For details see page 7 paxchristi.org.uk/agm/ 020 8203 4884

13 Merseyside Pax Christi Meeting 2pm St Michael's Parish Centre, Horne St Liverpool L6 5EH contact Jan Harper 07591082195 email janharper20211@outlook.com

13 Next Frontiers conference 2024: Stewarding wealth for people & planet online 8.30am-5.30pm Joseph Rowntree Foundation. Register here: https://webapp.spotme.com/login/jrf/next-frontiers-2024?utm_source=ECC&utm_campaign=1133210_Next%20Frontiers%202024%3A%204%20%28curators%29&utm_medium=email&dm_i=7ADY,OAE2,1RPCZS,37BO7,1

17-23 June - Refugee Week <https://refugeeweek.org.uk/>

17-24 ICAN Global Week of Action on Nuclear Spending
https://www.icanw.org/global_week_of_action_on_nuclear_spending

29 Merseyside Pax Christi Retreat at The Irenaeus Project, Great Georges Rd, Liverpool L22 1RD contact Jan Harper 07591082195 email janharper20211@outlook.com

29 Liverpool Climate Justice Event St Bride's Church, Percy Str L9 7LT 9.30am to 4.30pm. Networking, talks and workshops here: <https://actionnetwork.org/events/climate-justice-gathering-liverpool-city-region> See page 8

JULY

4 Liverpool Catholic Social Action Network Conference – a partnership event between Housing Justice, Together Liverpool and the Archdiocese of Liverpool to reflect on social action – through the lens of housing, homelessness and land. Details and booking here: <https://archdioceseofliverpool.churchsuite.com/events/1yergfks> See page 8

19–21 JUST POLITICS NJPN 46th Annual conference at the Hayes Centre, Swanwick. Building on the work of the past two years' conferences this conference will seek to explore the need for truth and integrity in the public place. More details and booking form to download: <https://www.justice-and-peace.org.uk/conference/>
See also: <https://www.justice-and-peace.org.uk/conference-2024/njpn-conference-information/>

NB Bookings made after Wednesday May 15 incur a booking surcharge

NJPN are STILL looking for a new Treasurer. Please share with your parishes/organisations, and if anyone is interested, please email Sharon at admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk

COULD YOU JOIN THE LIVERPOOL J & P COMMISSION? Jennie Rowlands writes: We are still recruiting new members for the Justice and Peace Commission. This is an exciting time to join the Commission as we look to renew our way of working, centred around the see-judge-act model. We are looking for members to bring fresh perspectives and energy to our work. If you are interested, please contact j.rowlands@rcaol.org.uk

● **READ NJPN E BULLETIN ON GAZA:** <https://www.justice-and-peace.org.uk/njpn-ebulletins/njpn-e-bulletin-on-gaza/>

See other NJPN bulletins here: <https://www.justice-and-peace.org.uk/category/njpn-ebulletins/>

● **Sign up** for regular news and information from NJPN (plus copies of this newsletter & back issues for NJPN North West) at www.justice-and-peace.org.uk or contact ebulletin@justice-and-peace.org 020 7901 4864

● **Read the SPRING issue of MOUTHPEACE the quarterly online newsletter for Shrewsbury, Liverpool and Lancaster dioceses** <https://jpshrewsbury.files.wordpress.com/2024/02/mouthpeace-spring-2024.pdf>

● Many items taken from the daily e-bulletin Independent Catholic News www.indcatholicnews.com an invaluable free resource for up-to-date J&P news, events and in-depth articles.

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