



Summer 2025

Justice & Peace

News from the National Justice & Peace Network

*Peace I leave with
you;
my peace I give to
you.
Not as the world gives
do I give to you.
Do not let your hearts
be troubled or afraid.*

John 14:27

OPENING DOORS TO A SUSTAINABLE WORLD FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

Saturday 10th May 2025
10.15am - 4pm

IN PERSON EVENT
at CAFOD, Romero House,
London

Please book your place by
email

admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk

**Concerned about
the climate
crisis?**

Join the Big Bank Switch



**Laudato Si' Movement,
JustMoney Movement,
Just Love and
Operation Noah are
inviting Christians
across the UK to
switch from banks
funding fossil fuels to a
greener, more ethical
bank.**

**Check out our website
for more details:**

www.justice-and-peace.org.uk/news

The Common Good: or 'what's in it for me?'

It is something of an understatement to say that we are living in a broken world, in desperate need of healing. We are on a roller coaster ride, with the twists and turns appearing deeper and longer each day, shattering all our certainties, and we wonder when it will become completely derailed. It could be that we are on a fantasy fairground carousel, spinning round and round searching for a 'never-never land' where all our material wishes are realised, apart from those who are unable to afford the entrance fee. In the public arena much of the language used is crass and unnecessary, taking little account of the impact on those most affected.

The essence of Catholic Social Teaching is the recognition of the innate dignity of each person, created by a loving God. The concept of the common good includes all people. Gaudium et Spes recognises the common good as being:

"The sum of those conditions of social life which allow social groups and their individual members relatively thorough and ready access to their own fulfilment." (1)

Pope Francis issues a challenge to all people of goodwill stating that:

"Every citizen is responsible for the common good. And for Christians, it is also a mission." (2)

Solidarity, dignity, integral human development, active participation, peace-making, a language of relationship and interdependence, of dialogue and respectful synodal listening. Do these words sit well within our current situation, nationally and globally? Do these words chime with the reality of the lives of many families and communities within the

UK? Where do we see common good thinking when it is deemed acceptable to reduce the international development budget in favour of an increase in defence spending? NGO's certainly understand the implications of removing support to projects which lift people out of poverty, provide life-saving medicines, address climate change and sustainable development. These are not, as frequently described by media outlets, soft options, but rather build relationships and develop communities, key aspects in conflict resolution. Do we recognise the common good in our hostile asylum and immigration policies? What about the ability to participate in the democratic process when freedom to gather in peaceful protest is questioned?

As a society have we lost a basic understanding of the philosophy of 'Ubuntu' – *I am because we are* (3).

As we journey through this year of Jubilee, as people of faith, we must believe in the possibility of a better world for the benefit of all people, sharing signs of hope amidst the sadness all around us as we work for the common good. NJPN invites you all to be part of our forthcoming events:

Opening Doors to a Sustainable World for Future Generations

Saturday 10th May: Open Networking Day in London (CAFOD)

Towards a Just Peace

25-27 July, NJPN Conference at Swanwick

Recognising that there can be no peace without justice, violence is not the answer and another way is possible.

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NEXT ISSUE DATE— **SEPTEMBER** Articles required by **23rd August 25**

National Justice and Peace Network

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1. Gaudium et Spes: Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World promulgated by his holiness, Pope Paul VI on December 7, 1965
2. Pope Francis General Audience San Damaso courtyard

Wednesday, 9 Sept 2020

3. <https://www.amnestyusa.org/blog/archbishop-desmond-tutu-on-dignity/>

Anne Peacey, Chair of Trustees, NJPN

NJPN CONFERENCE 25th - 27th July 2025 'Towards a Just Peace': Challenging the inevitability of violence

At our Annual Conference we will be exploring what we mean by Just Peace. Our keynote speaker, Dr. Rowan Williams, will begin by looking at whether war and violence is inevitable.

We explore and discuss whether you can ever find peace if you have been the victim of discrimination, either through your faith, gender, sexuality, disability, or if you have been abused. Where do you find peace if you live in a war zone?

Through a series of talks, workshops and displays by organisations and individuals active in social

justice we hope to gain better understanding of how we go about reclaiming our spirituality and praxis of Gospel nonviolence.

Contributors include Pax Christi, CAFOD, Quakers, Operation Noah, CSAN, Rethinking Security, Christian International Peace Service (CHIPS), The NJPN Environment Group, LoudFence, and George White (Trans Catholic Teacher).

In the evenings we are offering a Just Fair with Wine Reception, and a Ceilidh! Details on our website: www.justice-and-peace.org.uk/conference

Rethinking Security in an Era of Polycrisis

Joanna Frew of Rethinking Security is one of our speakers at the Conference, and she has given us an overview of their work, and what she hopes to bring to Conference...

When asked about what makes them feel secure, a majority of people say having 'enough' money. Not loads, just enough without ongoing stress about things like housing, heating, food and health. When asked about what really keeps them awake at night, people who work in security policy identify climate change as the biggest threat to us all. So why, when we hear and read about security on the news, is it usually cast as military might in response to (potential) external threats? Why is there such a disconnect between what people want and national 'security'?

Rethinking Security exists to explore these questions, offering a critique of current 'security' arrangements and suggestions for alternative approaches that would create sustainable security for people and planet. We face extremely challenging times politically, both within the UK and on the international stage. Yet it is demonstrably clear that national 'security' policies have failed not only to deal with the causes of insecurity, but even

on their own terms. We must urgently tell a new story about security, offering practicable and ethical alternatives to so-called national security discourse.

Over the last few years, Rethinking Security carried out an Alternative Security Review, using different research methods to define security and understand how policy could be done differently. Much of the research findings highlighted the above disconnect between what normal people think and feel about their security and what the UK government does. We have also discussed the impact of national 'security' upon a number of different sections of society and heard multiple stories of rights-stripping and heightened insecurity carried out in the name of security.

At the NJPN conference, I hope to take you through the UK's business as usual approach to security and why (even when the post-1945 international order is unravelling) there is such a lack of new thinking on security. As a fellow Christian, I want to explore what sustainable or true security is founded on, and how we can sustain ourselves as we resist a version of security that is based on militarism and economic dominance.

NJPN Webinar - Throwing Open the Doors to Freedom from Trafficking and Exploitation

On February 6th last, close to the feast day of St. Josephine Bakhita, the patron Saint of Sudan and the trafficked we welcomed nearly 160 people to the first NJPN webinar of this Jubilee Year. We were bowled over by the numbers who attended and by the number who made contact afterwards

to comment on the spirituality of hope that threaded its way through the webinar to the point where many felt the gentle dignified presence of St. Bakhita herself. For many who came to this webinar, this was their first introduction to this enormously difficult subject and we took some time

continued from previous page...at the beginning to outline some the salient facts as they apply to the issues faced by victims of trafficking (VoTs) and the extent to which the state moves to identify, protect, rescue, protect, empower and rehabilitate these victims. This is the responsibility of a confident state like the UK, but the reality is so different. Victims are wrongly criminalised for behaviours they were forced, tricked or even tortured into doing. Unfortunately, there is a hostile welcome in the UK for all who come, and this very unfairly includes those trafficked. There is a conflation between the issues that relate to migration or trafficking and so the state moves slowly to serve those victims who can be considered the most in need and among the furthest behind in our society. We learned of the work of Timothy

Schmalz, a sculptor who created the most beautiful installation entitled 'Let the Oppressed Go Free'. Aside from the breathtaking beauty of the sculpture, his story of learning about trafficking and St. Bakhita to the point that he could

confidently begin his work serves as an inspiration to those who feel that there is so much to learn and know about this topic, that if he, as complete beginner can get his head around some of the issues then so can we all.

We welcomed Kevin Hyland, a former police officer and the first UK Anti-Slavery Commissioner to explain where we are currently, in terms of the legislation, services, and work that promotes the safe identification of victims but importantly looks to why those who are trafficked have come to the UK. We learned of the 'push and pull' factors that when in a specific context can be quite convincing when it comes to persuading people to take that chance – the chance the destroys a life when the final unexpected result is that the promise of a job turns into forced labour or sexual exploitation. We learned of the economics of trafficking knowing that a person can be used and sold again and



A miniature of the sculpture of 'Let the Oppressed Go Free' was presented to Act to Prevent Trafficking in Ireland by Timothy Schmalz.

again but something like drugs can be sold only once – and this explains why the exploitation of people is becoming one of the most common forms of crime and that it still grows. Kevin, as part of the Santa Marta Group is urging a greater degree of awareness for all by asking that every diocese in Ireland and the UK would create a space in every parish to talk of the insidious nature of human trafficking. He was at pains to explain that this issue of Human Trafficking is 'hidden in plain sight' and that unless we consciously raise a greater degree of awareness it will continue to thrive in this dark space. We have a responsibility here. That's Kevin's key message.

Following Kevin's powerful input we moved to listen to Sr. Imelda Poole, IBVM, a Loreto Sister and founder of the Mary Ward Loreto Foundation (MWL) in Albania. MWL works in both Albania and the UK to help those most vulnerable to Human Trafficking. In addition to providing immediate shelter and care to those rescued, they run a number of programmes to

prevent future Trafficking. The numbers that they assist are staggering and indeed Albanians are among the highest numbers of victims to be identified in the UK. Whilst Albania is a major source country for VoTs in the UK, the UK is also a destination country for many Vietnamese and indeed UK citizens. The issues of Human Trafficking cannot be addressed by one person, one group or indeed one country alone. Success in tackling Human Trafficking depends on collaboration, communication and a commitment to look after the citizens of the world irrespective of what country they have arrived from.

We took some very important questions that Kevin and Imelda patiently addressed in this hugely informative, thought provoking, moving and spiritual first NJPN webinar of 2025. We shared a recording with all who attended with a call to action that it would be shared and reshared in this Jubilee Year of Hope.

Brian O'Toole

Fr. Peter Hughes SSC: Rest in Peace

Fr Peter Hughes, previously head of the Columban Justice, Peace and Ecology Team died on 30 March in Ireland. He had been an active and much valued member of the NJPN executive and during this time we appreciated his commitment to justice and peace when we gathered for our annual review and planning. For

a number of years Fr. Peter was part of the Columban team at the annual NJPN Conference. We thank God for his life and his work for justice and peace and especially his commitment to care for creation. May he rest in peace in the presence of his Lord.



Thank You, Lord by Daniel Faivre SG

Thank you, Lord, for the grace,
which has made realise
that every being is an abode of God,
worthy of respect and reverence.
Thank you for the grace,
which has given me a glimpse of the faith of others
and some degree of appreciation of what it means to
them.
Without the help of your Spirit
my admiration of that faith
might have been an exercise in comparative religion.
But it would not have become the spring and
foundation
of a relationship of spiritual communion.
And so I give thanks for what I have been given:
for the Hindu concepts of Brahman and Atman;
for the faithfulness of Sita and the virtue of Draupadi;
For the meditation skills of Theravada
and the compassionate practice of Mahayana;
for the lives of Guru Nanak and Shri Ramakrishna
for the Jain concept of ahimsa;

for the Muslim example of fasting during Ramadan
and the symbolism and liturgy of salat prayer;
for the code of holiness you gave to Moses on Mount
Sinai;
for what the Holy Qur'an says about Mary';
and for the law of love given us by your Son.
I give thanks for all the people of God,
shedding their blood for justice,
preaching and practising the gospel of peace,
sharing their material goods and spiritual riches with
others.
To the God of heaven and earth,
Father and Mother of the Universe,
I give thanks now and forever.

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Interfaith (www.rcdow.org.uk/interfaith/).
Contact them through
westminsterinterfaith@rcdow.org.uk
Taken from the book Transcendence by New City
Publishers <https://www.newcity.co.uk/books/transcendence/>.

5 May 2.30pm (Banner procession from 2pm) <i>Dioceses of Brentwood, Southwark & Westminster</i> Mass for Migrants at Westminster Cathedral. <i>This is an annual event, giving thanks for the contributions of migrants to London and the Southeast.</i>	12-17 May - Two Wings and Some Prayers (Boarbank Hall) <i>Prayer, walks and birdwatching, with a focus on learning birdsong.</i> Also at Boarbank...27th-31st May 2025 - Celebrating Creation <i>Time to explore how to live out Laudato Si' fully in our personal lives and within the Church. Talks, discussions, art, liturgy, gardening, walks. Email margaret@boarbankhall.org.uk</i>
8 May - 7pm - 9pm A Celebration of Laudato Si' – Join the Northern Dioceses Environment Group and the Southern Dioceses Environment Network online for this evening of celebration for the 10th Anniversary of Pope Francis' encyclical Laudato Si' - On the Care of Our Common Home. Register with Eventbrite.	24 - 31 May - Laudato Si' Week - 10th Anniversary - Lots of events 7 - 15 June - Great Big Green Week http://www.greatbiggreenweek.com
8 May - 7pm online - Anthony Storey Memorial Peace and Justice Lecture: "The History and Spirituality of the Option for the Poor" Speaker: Professor Ian Linden <i>More details and to register from bhungin@yahoo.co.uk</i>	9 July - Mass Lobby of Parliament for the Climate - Organised by the Climate Coalition. CAFOD, Faith for the Climate and Westminster Justice and Peace Commission will be among the communities taking part.
10 May - 10.15am - 4pm - NJPN IN PERSON event at CAFOD, Romero House, London 'Opening Doors to a Sustainable World for Future Generations'. <i>For more details and to book email admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk.</i>	20 - 25 July - Christians Aware Summer School - Travelling towards the Light: Lifestyle for the 21st Century <i>More details from eliam.christiansaware@outlook.com</i>
11—17 May Christian Aid Week www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals/key-appeals/christian-aid-week	25 - 27 July - NJPN Conference at The Hayes, Swanwick Derbyshire. 'Towards a Just Peace' : Challenging the inevitability of violence. See www.justice-and-peace.org.uk/conference for information

Become a Member:

Membership is open to local groups, families and individuals. Individual Subscription only £25 a year (but you are welcome to give more!) Low Income £15. Download a membership form from the website or contact the Membership Co-ordinator, Ann Kelly...membership@justice-and-peace.org.uk

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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