

## NJPN E-Bulletin Christmas 2025



*Image above from Prateek Gautam (through Unsplash)*

*When the song of the angels is stilled,  
when the star in the sky is gone,  
when the kings and the princes are home,  
when the shepherds are back with their flocks,  
the work of Christmas begins:  
to find the lost, to heal the broken, to feed the hungry, to release the  
prisoner,  
to rebuild the nations, to bring peace amongst people,  
to make music in the heart.*

*Howard Thurman*

Dear Friends,

It has been a busy Jubilee year for the NJPN. We have had successful webinars, and in-person events, all focusing around the theme of *Opening Doors*.... If you are interested in our plans for 2026, please check out our website [www.justice-and-peace.org.uk](http://www.justice-and-peace.org.uk) and see what we will be '*Shining the Light on*'...

Also, if you were unable to attend our Conference in July, themed around 'Just Peace' you may be interested in looking at some of the recordings of the speakers on our [YouTube Channel](#).

Whilst those of us in our ever-increasing network are working really hard to raise awareness of the shocking things that are going on in this world, the world leaders seem to have a different agenda. I rarely listen to the news nowadays. You are never too sure whose angle it is that you are listening to, whether it has been written by AI, or whether there has been some sort of censoring (depending on where the news has come from). Our Conference, in July 2026, is based around the theme of 'Just Talk' and we will be looking at dialogue, Artificial Intelligence, the Media - and many other things besides. More details on the Conference will be sent out in the New Year.

I have put together a selection of news and campaigns from around the network, and look forward to working with you all in 2026. If you want anything included, particularly events, please email [ebulletin@justice-and-peace.org.uk](mailto:ebulletin@justice-and-peace.org.uk)

Wishing you every blessing for Christmas and the New Year,

Sharon

P.S. As this e-bulletin was being prepared, the news came through that Bishop Richard Moth has been appointed as the new Archbishop of Westminster. We congratulate him as he becomes Leader of the Catholic Church in England and Wales, and we thank Cardinal Vincent Nichols for his sixteen years of service. May he have a long and happy retirement.

## **Index of E-Bulletin Content**

### **\*\*\*ACTION OF THE WEEK\*\*\***

#### **News and Comment**

- 1. Gaza/Palestine**
- 2. Peace**
- 3. Columban Schools Competition**
- 4. NJPN Newsletter**

#### **Actions**

- 5. Church Action on Poverty**
- 6. Arms Embargo on the UAE**
- 7. Supermarkets be Fair to Farmers**

#### **Newsletters and Reports**

- 8. NW NJPN E-Bulletin**
- 9. Just Money Highlights**
- 10. Operation Noah**
- 11. British Palestine Project**
- 12. Joint Public Issues Team**
- 13. Christian Climate Action**
- 14. Green Christian**

#### **Events**

- 15. Christians Aware Conference**
- 16 - 19 NJPN Events**
- 20. Racial Justice Sunday**

#### **The Last Word**

- 21. All Kinds of Catholic**
- 22. Reflection from Christ in the Ruins - Finding Light in Gaza's Darkness**

## \*\*\*ACTION OF THE WEEK\*\*\*

**Bring focus in on Palestine this Christmas**

**Palestine Solidarity Campaign write:**

**A beautiful Palestinian folk song, Lullaby, is being released by Nai Barghouti, Brian Eno, Leigh-Anne from Little Mix, Mabel, Dan from Bastille and others to raise money for children and families in Gaza this winter.**

**The track costs less than £2. If each of you receiving this email buys it now, we have the power to drive it to the top of the charts this Christmas.**

**Will YOU help the song reach the number one spot?**

*Each download is worth 100 streams, so every purchase counts.*

*To give **ULLABY** the strongest possible push:*

**BUY it on all platforms**

**SHARE this with your friends, family and followers**

**Imagine a Christmas Number One for the children of Palestine?  
Imagine this track being played on every radio station across the UK - including the BBC.**

*LULLABY is a new version of “Yamma Mweel El Hawa”, a Palestinian folk song that speaks to love and loss, as well as the longing for homeland and freedom from occupation. The single artwork was created by visionary Gazan artist Malak Mattar, inspired by her piece ‘Shelter’.*

*All profits will go to the Together for Palestine Fund which is held by Choose Love to support Palestinian-led organisations Taawon, Palestine Children's Relief Fund and Palestine Medical Relief Society.*

*After a year of genocide, grief and heartbreak, let's send a message of love to the children of Palestine and ensure solidarity tops this year's festive charts.*

**Buy ULLABY today**

**P.S. If you don't want to download Lullaby, why not buy some Palestinian Olive Oil or other goods. Ann Farr (contactable through the NJPN) always has crafts from Bethlehem that she is willing to post if you want to run a stall in your local church.**

**Friends of the Holy Land, and Embrace the Middle East also support craftsmen in the Holy Land, as do Bethlehem Baubles.**

**The olive oil itself is sourced by Zaytoun and stockists can be found on their website.**

**Alternatively. keep your used postage stamps and send them through to the Church of Scotland as per the details below:-**



The hospital is the only Christian hospital in the Gaza Strip and Gaza's only cancer hospital. It serves in time of calm during the occupation and despite all, and through all the bombing since Oct 2023, the hospital has continued to serve the population in whatever way they can with the small resources they have and with staff working hours under difficult conditions.

The hospital is run by our partner church, the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East.

#### **HOW TO CONTRIBUTE:**

Post your stamps to Stamp Appeal 2025, Keith Scott, Dene Hard, Garelochhead, Helensburgh, G84 0EL.  
For other options and more information visit: [www.churchofscotland.org.uk/stamps](http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/stamps)

Scottish Charity Number: SC011353

[www.churchofscotland.org.uk](http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk)

[www.facebook.com/churchofscotland](http://www.facebook.com/churchofscotland)

[@churchscotland](http://@churchscotland)

**See [www.churchofscotland.org.uk/stamps](http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/stamps)**

## News and Comment

### 1. Gaza/Palestine

If you attended our webinar on the 1st December on Gaza, you will know that the situation is even more dire than we hear through most news outlets. If you would like to listen to a recording of the webinar, please contact us and we will forward a copy to you.

**Here are a selection of articles covering the region, even despite everything, there is hope in their hearts.**

#### **From Rev. Munther Isaac on the 19th December**

*“Today I had the chance to visit Christmas Lutheran Church, where I served for more than ten years—eight of them as the main pastor. Returning to a place that shaped so much of my life and ministry is never an easy experience. It carries memory, prayer and appreciation.*

*Under the faithful and courageous leadership of my dear friend Rev. Ashraf Tannous, the church made a deliberate and meaningful decision: to keep Christ in the Rubble—but to place it under the Christmas tree. This old-new crib spoke to me again.*

*The rubble remains. The broken stones are still there. The Christ child still lies among the rubble, reminding us that God chose not safety, not power, not palaces—but vulnerability and solidarity with the crushed of the earth. And yet now, rising from that rubble, stands a tree - a living tree.*

*For me, this is a profoundly Palestinian image—and a profoundly Christian one.*

*The tree is declaration. It is the tree of life. It is defiance in the face of death. It is hope planted where despair is expected to rule.*

*The tree appears almost as if it grows out of the rubble itself. Not beside it. Not after it is cleared away. But from within it. This is our story.*

*This is the story of Palestinians—and of the Palestinian Church.*

*We live amid ruins, yet we insist on life.*

*We bury our dead, yet we plant trees.*

*We endure siege, displacement, and erasure, yet we keep saying: we want to live. And we will continue.*

*We will continue, in defiance, to preach peace.  
We will continue to proclaim life.  
We will continue to hope—stubbornly, faithfully—in the promise that comes from this child, the child of Bethlehem.*

*The Christ who was born under empire.  
The Christ who became a refugee.  
The Christ who still lies today in the rubble of Gaza, in the ruins of homes, churches, hospitals, and lives torn apart.  
Oh come, let us adore Him—as Emmanuel, God-with-us, God-with-the-wounded, God-with-the-oppressed.*

*As I stood there, I felt again what this symbol was always meant to say:  
Rubble does not have the final word.  
Death does not have the final word.  
Empire does not have the final word.*

*Life does. God does.*

*Please: Pray for Gaza, wounded and buried under relentless destruction, and today in severe weather conditions.  
Pray for Palestinians under siege in the West Bank and Jerusalem.  
Pray for the church, which faces a constant and real threat of displacement, silencing, and disappearance.  
And pray for all victims of violence, including state violence, everywhere in the world.*

*And may this child continue to disturb us, challenge us, and call us—not only to prayer, but to faithfulness.”*

### **Reflections from the Holy Land: a Different Christmas**

Independent Catholic News share this article from Sami El- Yousaf, Chief Executive of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem:

*“There was great hope when the ceasefire was declared in Gaza about two months ago that the war ended and we are on a path to a peaceful resolution.*

*As the details of the peace plan unfolded and as 58% of Gaza remained controlled by the Israeli army with new borders established, and as violent settler attacks continued unchecked, not to mention continued confiscation of land and settlement expansion on the West Bank; there is a unanimous*

*feeling amongst Palestinians that justice is not being served and what the world seems to be aiming for is conflict management rather than resolution. Thus, regrettably the current efforts - unless there is a serious change in the track - will be a continuation of what we have witnessed in previous efforts, and it will be a matter of time until the next conflict explodes."*

*He continues..."Despite the relatively bleak situation on the ground, there is room for hope if we consider the work that we are involved in. You always find pockets of success and achievements everywhere you go. "*

**To read the full article and learn more about the Holy Land, please go through this link to [ICN](#).**

### **Pope Leo condemns antisemitism**

The world has been shocked and saddened by the terror attacks last weekend, particularly the one on Bondi Beach in Sydney. What was a celebration of Hanukkah, turned into tragedy when a father and son opened fire on the crowd, and left at least 15 people dead, including a 10 year old girl...and many more were injured.

Pope Leo has spoken to Isaac Herzog, President of Israel, and condemned the attack.

[Vatican News](#) reported: *The Pope also renewed his appeal for "perseverance in the various ongoing peace processes in the region, and emphasized the urgency of intensifying and continuing efforts in the area of humanitarian aid."*

**We all continue to pray for peace in the Holy Land.**

## **2. Peace**

### **World Day of Peace**

Please see [Pope Leo XIV's message](#) for the 59th World Day of Peace on the 1st January 2026 - " Peace be with you all: towards an "unarmed and disarming" peace."

## Peace Sunday 18th January

In England and Wales we celebrate Peace Sunday on the 18th January, and you can find lots of resources on the [Pax Christi England and Wales website](#).

Please do what you can to ensure that your parish marks Peace Sunday in some way, and does a retiring collection for the work of Pax Christi if possible.

Their vision is of a world where people can live in peace, without fear of violence in any form. Pax Christi is rooted in Catholic Christianity but is open to all who share its values and work.

### 3. Columban Schools Media Competition

**“Becoming a refugee is never a choice. But how we respond is.”**

**SCHOOLS MEDIA COMPETITION 2026**

**COMPETITION LAUNCH:**  
21ST SEPTEMBER 2025 - WORLD PEACE DAY

**DEADLINE FOR ENTRIES:** 14TH FEBRUARY 2026

**WINNERS ANNOUNCED:** 9TH MARCH 2026

More details: [www.columbancompetition.com](http://www.columbancompetition.com)

**"BECOMING A REFUGEE IS NEVER A CHOICE, BUT HOW WE RESPOND IS."**

(UN Secretary-General António Guterres)

Catholic Social Teaching calls us to 'welcome the stranger'. We invite young people to explore perceptions of people seeking sanctuary, considering practical examples of welcome and solidarity.

**PRINT PRIZES**

<b>1ST £300</b>	<b>IMAGE PRIZES</b>
2 <sup>nd</sup> £150 • 3 <sup>rd</sup> £100	1 <sup>st</sup> £300
	2 <sup>nd</sup> £150 • 3 <sup>rd</sup> £100

**COLUMBAN MISSIONARIES BRITAIN**

Columban missionaries internationally have a mission priority of supporting Migrants and Refugees. This echoes Catholic Social Teaching which calls us to 'welcome the stranger'. Pope Leo told diplomats in May 2025: "My own story is that of a citizen, the descendant of immigrants, who in turn chose to emigrate..... All of us, in the course of our lives, can find

ourselves healthy or sick, employed or unemployed, living in our native land or in a foreign country, yet our dignity always remains unchanged."

The Columbans are looking for students in Britain (aged 13-18 inclusive, parental permission required) to submit an original piece of writing or an original image on the theme. They invite young people to explore perceptions of people seeking sanctuary in Britain and Ireland, considering practical examples of welcome and solidarity.

The competition aims to increase young people's compassion and understanding of journeys of displaced people seeking safety in another country. How can we respect diversity and respond with love to those seeking refuge and safety? Can we be inspired by real-life stories of resilience and hope, Scripture, or Catholic Social Teaching? How can we empathise with the experience of individuals and families being separated from the place they call home.

The competition closes on 14 February 2026 and competition winners will be announced on 9 March. Cash prizes will be awarded to the winning entrants and the first prize is an impressive £300 or €300!

**For more information, please see the Columban Competition website.**

#### **4. NJPN Newsletter**

For many years, the NJPN Newsletter (in paper format) has been posted out with the Columban 'Vocation for Justice' publication three times per year. The next edition, due out in early January, is going to be our last one sent in this way.

The newsletter itself has details on the front, but for those of you who don't receive it, and might like to in the future, this is what it says:

*NJPN would like to thank the Columbans for handling the mailing of our newsletter with Vocation for Justice for many years.*

*With the increasing cost of postage and the advances of electronic media the Columbans have taken the decision to move to an online newsletter.*

*In the future our newsletter will be handled just by the NJPN, and due to data protection rules we are unable to receive subscribers names from the Columban database.*

*We are also planning on sending out an online version of our newsletter, so*

*to ensure that you receive your copy, please email us at  
admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk*

*Please just put 'NEWSLETTER' as the title and we will add your email  
address to our list of subscribers.*

*If you receive multiple copies of Vocation for Justice from the Columbans,  
please let us know if you would also like to receive copies by post of our  
newsletter on its own, or a copy by email.*

*For those of you who do not have access to an email version of the  
newsletter, please telephone us and leave your name, address and  
postcode, and we will post you out a copy. A donation to cover  
postage/printing costs would be appreciated if you are able to do so.*

*Grateful thanks to everyone who has supported us over the years, and we  
look forward to continuing to inform you of our work and current issues in a  
more environmentally-friendly fashion in the future.*

## **Actions**

### **5. 26 in 26 - Church Action on Poverty**

Church Action on Poverty and Christian Aid have teamed up to produce a new poster that your whole church can use throughout 2026.

The poster contains 26 ideas that you and your church could try in 2026. Some are very easy, some will take a bit more planning, but all are worthwhile.

**You can find out more information and order it or download it through the [Church Action on Poverty website](#).**

### **6. Arms Embargo on the UAE**

In solidarity with Sudan, Campaign Against the Arms Trade are asking us to email our MP calling for an arms embargo on the UAE.

For more details, please see their website.

## **7. Supermarkets Be Fair to Farmers**

Regular readers will know that I am a great fan of Wicked Leeks, from Riverford. They have been asking people to back a proposal for fairer supply chains for farmers. They have so far got 80 MPs to back the proposal...but they want even more.

For more information, please look at their [#GetFairAboutFarming](#) page.

## **Newsletters/Reports**

### **8. NW NJPN E-Bulletin December 2025**

A good selection of articles from Anne O'Connor, including 'A Contemplative Guide to Reading the News'. [Well worth a read!](#)

### **9. Just Money Highlights**

[Looking back at the Just Money Team's journey in 2025.](#)

### **10. Operation Noah 2025**

[The Top Ten Moments from Operation Noah.](#)

### **11. British Palestine Project**

[Recognition Was the Beginning: BPP Review of 2025 and Preview of 2026](#)

### **12. Joint Public Issues Team**

[December 2025 Newsletter](#)

### **13. Christian Climate Action**

CCA have brought out a great newsletter for December, but it is not available through their website. However, if you have a look at

their [website](#) you will be able to see the actions and events they have coming up...and better still, please subscribe yourself so that you can get up to the minute news and events.

## 14. Green Christian

Green Christian also have lots of events coming up. Their newsletters are available to read through their [website](#).

## Events

### 15. 9th - 11th January Christians Aware Conference

More details from their website.

**16. 5th February - NJPN Webinar - Shining the Light on Racism.**

**17. 25th April - NJPN In-Person Event - Shining the Light on Food**

**18. 15th May - NJPN Online Overnight Vigil**

**19. 24th-26th July NJPN Conference - 'Just Talk'**

**More details on the above NJPN events will be published in due course. Conference Booking forms will be available from mid January onwards.**

### 20. 8th February - Racial Justice Sunday

Further details/resources available from Churches Together in Britain and Ireland

There is also Mass being said on Sunday 1st February at St. George's Cathedral Southwark. Further details from the [Archdiocese of Southwark website](#).

## The Last Word

### 21. All Kinds of Catholic

Theresa Alessandro has spent the last couple of years interviewing various people for her podcast 'All Kinds of Catholic'. In them, she speaks to all manner of Catholic people about how they live out their faith in today's world.

Those of you who have been to the NJPN Conference, or move in justice

and peace circles, may recognise some of the voices in them. Many of them are very inspiring.

Please check out Theresa's website.

## 22. Reflection from Christ in the Ruins - Finding Light in Gaza's Darkness

The below was shared by Brian O'Toole at the beginning of our recent webinar. A beautiful reflection, and very poignant words.

### Christ in the Ruins – Finding Light in Gaza's Darkness

Christ of the broken and the brave,  
Christ who walks the shattered streets where children once played,  
enter the ruins with us now.  
Hold Gaza's little ones close—  
those who sleep afraid, those who no longer sleep at all,  
those whose small hands reach for a future they can't yet see.  
Let Your gentleness be a blanket over their trembling,  
Your peace a quieting of every terror they carry.  
Christ, You who were once a refugee child,  
who knew flight, hunger, and the dust of unsafe places—  
breathe hope into every mother searching for safety,  
every father aching for strength,  
every family longing for morning after a night that seems unending.  
In the smoke, be the clear breath.  
In the rubble, be the steady ground.  
In the grief, be the arm that will not let go.

May Your light—  
soft, persistent, unquenchable—  
find its way through every broken doorway,  
every ruined home,  
every wounded heart.  
Guide all peoples, all leaders, all nations  
toward the courage of peace.

Let understanding outlast fear,  
and let the day come when no child learns the language of war.  
Christ in the ruins,  
stay with Your people.  
Christ in the darkness,  
kindle a dawn no bomb can extinguish.

Christ of hope,  
lead us to better times—  
times where playgrounds return,  
where laughter replaces sirens,  
and where every child may grow beneath an open, peaceful sky.  
**Amen.**

