

NJPN North West Justice & Peace E-Bulletin July 2017

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

CALLED TO BE HUMAN

Together for the Common Good: Editorial Pentecost 2017

"As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." (John 20: 21-22)

"I'm human, they're human. If I didn't help I wouldn't be able to live with myself."

"They want us to turn on our neighbours, but that's not going to happen. We support one another. I'm going to stay in town today and walk about and smile at people."

These responses from a homeless man and a bar tender at the scene in Manchester are a clear call to our common humanity. Similarly responses after the London Bridge incident included many acts of bravery, and kindness, such as London's Sikh Gurdwaras offering food and sanctuary.

The forces of division hate the 'grey zone', the space where we can be together despite our differences. Evil always aims to divide, to provoke us into demonising each other, to dehumanise our life together.

We are called to assert life and be rooted in love - in all its tenderness, brilliance and strength. The spirit of Pentecost promotes unity and prompts us to resist the forces of division. Above all it calls us to be carriers of light in the world, to be a people capable of witnessing what it means to be a human person. Relativism and political correctness have weakened our ability to speak about difficult things, so this does require courage. We should insist on freedom of expression and religion. Salafi and other jihadists are serious and their cult of death is highly organised. Those Muslims bravely countering this hijacking of their tradition need our support.

At the same time individualism and nihilism have weakened our common life. The antidote to division is building relationships: resisting political tribalism and sectarianism, bringing the mutually suspicious together to meet each other as human beings: Brexiteers and Remainers, metropolitan and traditional communities, old and young, rich and poor, educated and uneducated, shareholders and employees, socially conservative and liberal, weak and strong, management and workers, religious and secular, urban and rural, people of different faith communities or on different sides of internal church conflicts ...

When people who have been divided take the risk to work together for a good purpose, despite their differences, they create a common good. We are not meant to be the same, or think the same: but we do share a common humanity. We are all members of the same body, and our body needs healing. People of goodwill are being called to take responsibility and work together. This is way too big for any government, but a competent and good government will help.

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COMMENT:

Tina Beattie 24 May 2017

These are random thoughts. Yes, I lie awake in bed at night and imagine being the mother of one of the missing or the dead, or being the mother waiting in the foyer to collect her children, not knowing it was the last journey they or I would ever make. If I could find words to speak meaningfully into that darkness I would, but as far as I know I don't personally know any of those who have been injured or killed, and my connection to the agony of Manchester is the connection that any human being has to the suffering of any other human being. So I have also lain awake in bed and imagined being the mother of a dismembered child in Syria, or Iraq, or Afghanistan - all equally innocent, all equally remote from the decisions that are made and the vicious stupidity that is unleashed when human beings decide that their cause justifies killing other human beings, including children.

But here is what I will not keep quiet about - the obscene hypocrisy of violence. So please, let's remember that the legalised ideology of the nation state is a far more terrifying and deadly threat to us all than any rampant ideology of terror and violence outside the law, and in the end the dead child is not more or less dead because of the ideology of the bomber. I am not politicising the carnage. I am simply noting that the nation state is also complicit in the carnage:

23 May 2017: Theresa May: "All acts of terrorism are cowardly attacks on innocent people, but this attack stands out for its appalling, sickening cowardice, deliberately targeting innocent, defenceless children and young people who should have been enjoying one of the most memorable nights of their lives."

18 July 2016: The Prime Minister was asked if she would give the order to fire the Trident D5 missile knowing it would inflict mass casualties. SNP MP George Kerevan said: "Is she prepared to authorise a nuclear strike that would kill hundreds of thousands of men, women and children?"

Mrs May replied simply: "Yes."

'THIS IS FOR ALLAH': OVERCOMING DENIAL ABOUT THE DEADLY POWER OF RELIGION

Jon Kuhrt 6 June 2017

Last night I was with a group of volunteers who have been running a night shelter for homeless people over the last eight months. They come from 13 different churches and a local synagogue in central London. As well as Christians and Jews, a significant number of volunteers are also Muslims.

Now in its seventh year, this scheme has helped 100s of homeless people come off the streets. And it has all been achieved without one penny of government funding. The whole enterprise has been faith-driven.

Last night we started our meeting by reflecting on the words emblazoned on the ceiling of the church in which we met: 'Glory to God in the Highest and on Earth Peace'. In light of recent events, the relationship between seeking to bring glory to God alongside peace on earth was worth reflecting on.

Only hours earlier, in the same city, violent extremists had shouted 'This is for Allah' whilst seeking to maim and kill as many people as they could on London Bridge and in Borough Market. Religious belief was expressed through crude and barbaric violence.

It is important to acknowledge what was proclaimed by the attackers while they stabbed their victims because there is a consistent desire among many to disconnect these acts of violent extremism from Islam.

Instead, many politicians and commentators seek a political, economic and sociological rationale. As a teacher in my son's school said to his class yesterday: 'The most important thing to remember is that this has nothing to do with Islam.'

I understand the good intentions behind this perspective – to not create further division or tar a whole religion with the same brush. But increasingly these denials make little sense. Actually, they block a true understanding of the problem we face and increase the dangers of Islamophobia and division.

Behind these views is a patronising misunderstanding that religion is something simply personal and inward. It is an expression of the post-modernism which wants to consider all sincerely-held beliefs to be equally true and valid – however incompatible – as long as they don't affect anyone else.

But Islam cannot be domesticated like this. Like Christianity, it is a religion which claims its theology as public truth. It will always seek to have social and political influence.

In our post-secular age, we are re-learning the raw power of religion. Just as it has the power to inspire people to go to great lengths to help others it also has the power to induce people to randomly kill.

Of course, religion never acts alone. All faith works within a social and political context. And at this time, radical Islamism is proving to be effective at attaching itself to people with social and political grievances. The combination of political extremism and the promise of a reward beyond the grave is incredibly potent. These men have clearly found, in a form of Islam, a cause powerful enough to motivate them to give up their lives.

We should be ambivalent about religion and not be too quick to defend it. The Bible contains many warnings about its dangers – prophets like Amos, Micah, Isaiah and John the Baptist all castigate the hypocrisy of religion which fuels injustice. And Jesus had virtually all his disputes with religious leaders.

And history tells us a deeply ambivalent story about what has been done in the name of God. Just as the US civil rights movement was fuelled by the spirituality of black Christianity, it was a twisted form of theology which underpinned the racism of the southern US states. It makes no sense to say that groups like the Ku Klux Klan 'had nothing to do with Christianity' when so many of their members would be in white only Southern churches on Sundays listening to theology which supported their worldview.

Religion has provided resources for both oppressors and those fighting for peace and liberation. It is not 'good' in itself but should always be judged by its fruit – what it produces. As Jesus said 'Wisdom is proved right by her deeds.' (Matthew 11:9)

So we must accept that the fight against extreme Islamism is in part a theological one. As Sara Khan wrote in today's *London Evening Standard*:

'We fail to understand the battle taking place among Britain's Muslims between those who advocate for a pluralistic humanistic interpretation of Islam against those who subscribe to a supremacist, intolerant and anti-Western Islam.'

This is the battle that we must understand better. Rather than denying any link to Islam we should be supporting, in prayer and action, those Muslims who are fighting this theological and practical conflict. They are on the front-line in this vital struggle against destructive extremism.

<https://resistanceandrenewal.net/2017/06/06/this-is-for-allah-overcoming-denial-about-the-deadly-power-of-religion/>

COMMENT: JO COX ANNIVERSARY

Frank Regan 16 June 2017

Today is the first anniversary of the murder of Jo Cox. Her death is a clarion call to all those concerned citizens who are worried about where we are going as a people, a nation and a society. The three electoral processes in which we have participated have shown clearly the parlous state of our political society and of the Parliament which must oversee and decide what sort of society we want to continue building.

The process just completed has, however, thrown us a possibility of changing direction. That possibility, vague and feeble as it may be, is that of hope. Is there a way forward along a path which has walking room for the marginalised, the 'just barely making it', single parents, young people worried about the future and others? Hope is a word. It does not mean Pollyanna optimism. It is the strenuous effort to build something new trusting in the human spirit of decency and fairness and collaboration that together we can change the way we do things (aka our culture). In Jo's memory we owe those who will come after at least that much.

HONOURING JO COX DOESN'T JUST MEAN COMING TOGETHER - IT MEANS FIGHTING POLITICAL INJUSTICE

Emma Burnell Prospect Magazine 16 June 2017

Events such as the Grenfell fire reveal the best of us. But if we truly have 'More in Common', we must fight inequality before such tragedies take place.

Jo Cox was a politician - and our response to recent events must be political, not just communitarian. This weekend, people up and down the country will be coming together to remember Jo Cox, the Labour MP who was shot and killed by a man in the name of his extreme right wing beliefs. At ***The Great Get Together***, friends and neighbours of all politics will come together in Jo's name to celebrate what we have in common.

"[Jo] would have wanted ... that we all unite to fight against the hatred that killed her.

Hate doesn't have a creed, race or religion."

Brendan Cox

Jo was killed at a difficult time for our country. We were at the height of an extremely divisive referendum that split the country almost exactly in half. Families fell out, neighbours fought, friends stopped speaking. Since that time, particularly on the left, it has felt like this mode has been constant, with the Labour leadership contest that followed the referendum creating further splits, even between people who had campaigned side by side to remain in the EU. The recent election that followed a year later has helped bring Labour Party back together—but equally demonstrated that we remain a very divided country.

This is perhaps not surprising. We live in turbulent times and we have felt increasingly under threat. World politics have rarely been so unstable, stuck as we are with Donald Trump and Vladimir Putin playing out their macho insecurities on the world stage; the three-dimensional chess game taking countless lives in Syria and other Isis-controlled parts of the Middle East, and the ensuing refugee crisis creating political havoc across Europe. Marine Le Pen may have been soundly beaten in France this time, but the fact that she made the run off at all should frighten us all.

Britain sometimes overplays our sense of the Blitz spirit but actually, this year it has been shown in force. Terror attacks in Westminster, Manchester and London Bridge have created huge outpourings of togetherness, the kind of which would have delighted Jo. Equally, the response to the horrors we have seen in Grenfell Tower have shown a strength of community and a resilience that we can, and should, be proud of.

Jo's message - which was delivered in her maiden speech to Parliament, and which has become her legacy - is that we have more in common than that which divides us. At moments of crisis, like this week, we are good at coming together, at exemplifying this. Again and again, we donate our time, money, goods - really, anything we can - to help those who are suffering. Our humanity shines like a beacon in the darkness of such tragic events.

But while 'More in Common' is a great communitarian response to a crisis, it must also be a political choice. Jo used those words in a political speech, as a politician, in the heart of our democracy.

The residents of Grenfell are angry because they do not feel that they have a great deal in common with their wealthy neighbours in their borough of contrasts. They do not feel they are treated the same, valued the same or have parity of esteem. Quite the opposite, in fact.

I will delight in celebrating Jo this weekend and enjoy breaking bread, samosas and bagels with my neighbours. But on Monday I will return to fighting the political fight to ensure that sense of 'More in Common' is represented in our laws, our regulations, or distribution of wealth and services. I will join with everyone in holding this government to account in its promises to put people before profit to ensure they aren't allowed to get away with empty soundbites.

I know we will all continue to help where and how we can when there is a crisis like Grenfell. But we must also dedicate our energy long term to ensuring the parity of esteem for those in social housing that means corners are not cut when it comes to their safety. If we truly believe that we have 'More in Common', we have to prove it before such events—not afterwards.

<https://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/politics/honouring-jo-cox-doesnt-just-mean-coming-together-it-means-fighting-political-injustice>

COMMENT: THE IMPACT OF EXTREME TRAUMA

Chief Superintendent John Sutherland 23 May 2017

I am a police officer, and this is what I want you to know about the Manchester attacks. On a Monday night in Manchester, the unthinkable happened. A scene of horrifying, terrifying carnage, beyond the imagining of all except those who were there. Among the dead were children. They might have been my own. And into the midst of it all ran police officers – alongside their colleagues from the other emergency services. Without hesitation. Without a second thought. That precious, old fashioned thing called duty: that willingness to risk it all on behalf of complete strangers.

It seems to me that we, as a society, owe them a remarkable debt. Pause for a moment to think about what we ask of the men and women in blue – what we expect of them. Amongst the humdrum and the routine, we expect them to go where most wouldn't and to do what most couldn't: into the hurting places; into the dangerous places; into the violent places; into the broken places; into the terrifying places; into the confusing places, where nothing is quite as it seems; into the distressing places; into the thin spaces between life and death. And we expect them to deal with what they find there: trauma.

Alongside a debt of gratitude, we also owe them a far greater level of understanding about the impact that working life can have on them – about the scars that they carry, both seen and unseen. There's no other job that comes close to this one in terms of the simple wear and tear that officers and staff are subject to over the course of a policing life: the inevitable realities of shift working; extended hours worked over prolonged periods of time; endless trauma; extraordinary complexity; relentless demand. And it would be strange if police officers didn't absorb a little of the pain – a little of the strain – somewhere along the way. Over time, it takes its toll. Beyond the general wear and tear, every police officer will be able to tell you about the individual faces and places that leave a deeper mark than any other: the blood soaked murder scenes; the fatal crashes; the cot deaths; the armed and violent men; the troubled, haunted children; the sobbing mothers; the unavoidable horror of it all.

As a society, I don't think we've even begun to understand the compound impact on police officers and their colleagues of the repeated exposure to extreme trauma. Overwhelming. Whilst remembering all that has gone before, there are also the unavoidable demands of today: punishing workloads; relentless deadlines; covering for colleagues who are struggling; the complex consequences of austerity; the hostile commentary about policing offered by anyone with an armchair and an opinion; and that tension that exists for all of us between work and life.

I'm not just a police officer. I'm a husband and I'm a dad. It can't all be just about the job. Everyone has their own life story too. And, amongst all that is wonderful, there are: the demands of life; the challenges of life; the sorrows of life; the flat out pace of life, and the natural, normal, human thing is to feel, to grieve, to hurt sometimes. That last observation is true of all of us of course. But not all of us are police officers. Not all of us have been in the places they've been. Not all of us have seen the things that they've seen. Not all of us have confronted, time and again, the very worst that human beings are capable of. Where police officers suffer – physically, emotionally, psychologically, in any kind of way – as a consequence of their service, the rest of us have an absolute responsibility to look after them. A duty, even. Because they are the everyday heroes and heroines who police our streets – and, every now and then, they might just need a helping hand.

STATEMENT FOLLOWING THE ATTACK OUTSIDE FINSBURY PARK MOSQUE

From the Joint Chairs of Merseyside Council of Faiths, together with the Bishop of Liverpool and the Archbishop of Liverpool 19 June 2017: Last night we received reports of the attack apparently aimed at Muslim worshippers in Finsbury Park in London. As leaders and representatives of faith communities in the Merseyside region, we deplore all acts of violence against others, and wish to reaffirm the unity shared by all faith groups in working together for a better society. In the last few days Mosques across the country have invited their non-Muslim neighbours to share the Iftar with them – the breaking of the fast in Ramadan. These acts of hospitality and welcome send a stronger message than any act of terror: as people of faith we stand together with mutual love and respect, and we invite all people to share in these ideals.

'HERO' IMAM PRAISES GROUP THAT SAVED FINSBURY PARK SUSPECT FROM ANGRY CROWD

UK NEWS | THE GUARDIAN Harriet Sherwood, Damien Gayle and Alice Ross 19 June 2017

Mohammed Mahmoud was among men who flagged down a police van to ensure the mosque attack suspect was not seriously harmed. In the chaos and terror of the moment, events might have taken an even darker turn. Outside the Muslim Welfare Centre, three men wrestled to the ground the driver of a van which had ploughed into people leaving the mosque. Amid confusion, distress and anger, a crowd gathered. Fists and feet struck out. Suddenly a voice shouted: "No one touch him – no one! No one!" It came from Mohammed Mahmoud, the mosque's imam, later hailed as the hero of the day. He urged the crowd to be calm and restrained until the police arrived.

Speaking to reporters on Monday afternoon, Mahmoud said he had not been the only one urging restraint. "It wasn't me alone, there were a group of brothers. They were calm and collected and managed to calm people down and to extinguish any flames of anger or mob rule that would have taken charge had this group of mature brothers not stepped in." He said he had just finished leading prayers in the mosque when "a brother came in, quite panicked, and said that somebody had run over a group of people and tried to kill them". He added: "We arrived at the scene within minutes and we found the assailant on the floor. He had been restrained by around three people. We found a group of people quickly started to collect around the assailant. And some tried to hit him, either kicks or punches. By God's grace we managed to surround him and to protect him from any harm. We stopped all forms of attack and abuse towards him that were coming from every angle. A police van drove past so we flagged them down and we told them the situation. There's a man, he's restrained. He mowed down a group of people and there's a mob attempting to hurt him. If you don't take him, God forbid he might be seriously hurt." He added: "There was a mob attempt to hurt him, so we pushed people away from him until he was safely taken by police." The man was unscathed, he said.

A LETTER TO THE FIREFIGHTERS AT GRENFELL TOWER

27 June 2017

In response to the tragic fire at the Grenfell Tower in London the White Helmets have sent a letter to the firefighters responding. We're sharing it with you because it is an inspiring testament that humanity has no borders.

To the London Fire Brigade from the Syrian Civil Defence [White Helmets] in Daraa, Southern Syria: We were saddened to hear about the loss of souls in the Grenfell Tower fire, including Mohammad al-Haj Ali, a Syrian from our home of Daraa who had fled to London seeking safety from death and destruction. We appreciate your efforts to search for bodies for days in a row and we feel your pain because this horror is our daily reality. In Daraa, we're under the heaviest attacks we've ever seen in this deadly war. Hundreds of airstrikes have destroyed entire neighbourhoods and fires are everywhere. Just like you, our teams are rushing towards the blazes and we do all we can to rescue the injured.

The past 16 days have seen 88 people killed and nearly 35,000 civilians displaced from their homes. A civil defence centre was targeted and destroyed, and 5 volunteers were injured in the bombing - as you know it's a terrible thing to see your teammates suffer.

You have been so generous to us, donating equipment to our teams when you met with our teammates in London. We've received training from British experts in search-and-rescue and firefighting. Who knows, we might have been trained by the same people. And who knows we might also be saving the lives of the friends of Mohammad al-Haj Ali here in Daraa.

We feel we have so much in common. We all risk our own lives to save as many lives as possible as fast as possible. Our hearts are with you and we wish we could help you in your search for victims. We send you strength for your mission and we hope to meet you one day.

SIGNED: The Syria Civil Defence [White Helmets] of Daraa

• **The Syria Campaign** is an independent advocacy group campaigning for a peaceful and democratic future for Syria. Our mission is to elevate the voices and demands of Syrian heroes. We take no money from governments to maintain our independence and rely solely on donations from individuals and philanthropic foundations. www.thesyriacampaign.org

TRUMP'S WITHDRAWAL FROM PARIS AGREEMENT PUTS HIM 'ON THE WRONG SIDE OF HISTORY'

Bishop John Arnold 7 June 2017

The Bishop of Salford has criticised President Trump's decision to withdraw the US from the Paris Agreement on climate change, saying the move is an "abdication of responsibility" which will impact upon the world's poorest people. In a letter published in *The Times* newspaper, Bishop John Arnold said that withdrawal from the Paris Agreement "sees Mr Trump positioning himself on the wrong side of history."

The Accord, which was reached in 2015, is a commitment by 195 countries to reduce emissions of the greenhouse gases which are changing the climate.

In the letter, Bishop Arnold noted that Pope Francis had given President Trump a copy of his encyclical *Laudato Si'* on Mr Trump's visit to the Vatican. The Bishop said it was "a pity that the President has seemingly not read it" as "he would have seen that the Holy Father asks why anyone would want to be remembered for their inability to take action in the face of the environmental crisis."

Bishop Arnold, who is the Chairman of CAFOD, went on to say: "Many millions of others – both in America and elsewhere – have listened to Pope Francis's call. They are acting to prevent the poorest and most vulnerable people being pushed over the edge by climate change. When virtually every country in the world has committed to Paris, it's for Donald Trump to decide whether to remain isolated on an issue that will define our time."

President Trump's decision was immediately denounced by world leaders. China and the European Union issued a joint statement committing to the Paris Agreement, whilst Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi pledged his country would go "above and beyond" the requirements of the Accord. Newly-elected French President Emmanuel Macron ended a speech in which he urged US scientists and entrepreneurs to "come and work here with us" by stating that the world shares a responsibility to "Make our planet great again" – a pointed reference to Trump's presidential campaign slogan.

Graham Gordon, CAFOD's Head of Policy, said that the reasoning the US President set out for the withdrawal in his White House speech amounted to "a staggering contradiction of reality." Gordon said: "President Trump argued in his speech that he is 'someone who cares deeply about the environment'. Walking away from the problem and ripping up your obligations are strange ways of showing this. It is reassuring to see so many other leaders across the US and the rest of the world restating their commitment to care for our common home, making sure that the most vulnerable of our sisters and brothers do not pay the price of inaction."

<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/32755>

[A SABBATH FOR THE EARTH AND THE POOR - JOIN US IN DERBYSHIRE ON 21-23 JULY](#)

Liam Purcell Communications Manager, Church Action on Poverty writes:

We warmly invite you to join us for a conference responding to Pope Francis' challenges for the church. Church Action on Poverty is a partner in ***A Sabbath for the Earth and the Poor***, in Derbyshire on 21-23 July, the conference of the National Justice and Peace Network. Linking the natural environment with 'human ecology', we'll explore how concerns about poverty, climate change and other social justice issues go hand in hand. **Click here to read our blog exploring the issues and ideas:** <https://blog.church-poverty.org.uk/2017/06/16/a-sabbath-for-the-earth-and-the-poor/>

We'll be running a workshop about our work tackling stigma and exclusion, and hosting a panel with members of Poverty Truth Commissions telling their stories. There'll be many other exciting workshop and speakers, including the brilliant Kathy Galloway. The conference welcomes non-Catholics and includes activities for children and young people, so the whole family can attend. Please join us if you can! **Click here to book your place:** <http://www.justice-and-peace.org.uk/conference/>

[CAFOD VISIT TO THE PHILIPPINES](#)

Ged Edwards 23 June 2017

The next three weeks will be unusual for me! Tomorrow I am going to the Philippines with two of our colleagues Maggie Mairura (from Nottingham Diocese (Maggie grew up in Liverpool!)) and David Brinn (who runs CAFOD's Education Volunteer training). We have been asked to visit our partners NASSA/Caritas Philippines and their local diocesan agencies, schools and religious orders. At the end of June CAFOD's emergency response to the 2013 "Super-Typhoon" Haiyan draws to a close. CAFOD has worked there since 1969 and now, by mutual agreement, NASSA has reached a point where they can work without CAFOD's ongoing support. They have asked us as a "legacy project" to help them set up two new volunteer schemes for their parishes and schools to support and develop programmes in the future. This is a wonderful and really exciting development for them and we are thrilled to be able to respond with this vital task.

From Manila, we will be visiting four other diocesan Caritas centres: northwards to Isabela and Nueva Ecija and then south east to Naga City and Sorsogon City. We will be training their staff in working with volunteers and help them as they start to create new resources. Some of the resources will be based upon projects NASSA supports through CAFOD, and these we will visit - so we are dying to see how our support and generosity here have helped transform the lives of people in the Philippines!

Preparing for the trip has been a careful process – I've found that CAFOD takes our well-being and our security very seriously and I'm learning fast about the Philippines. People seem to put up, even cheerfully, with the most amazing difficulties while we notoriously roll over in the face of a bit of snow! At the heart of it all for us has been the story of the Annunciation and how Gabriel is the Lord's messenger for a new life, a life of fullness for all. It is that excitement and message and how it is given and received which inspires us now. Can I ask you please to pray with us and the Church in the Philippines for people to take up their calling to be Gabriels and Marys at this vital time for the development of the Church there? There are 118 dioceses in the country so they will need all the support they can get!

If you would like to find out how we're getting on, please see our blog and if you'd like to hear more about the trip when we get back, just get in touch and I'll be happy to speak to a group in a parish or school. For now, hoping the weather will be good for you and please do try and get to our fantastic event on 8 July and support the Power to Be Campaign!

Ged Edwards, Community Participation Co-ordinator – CAFOD

CAFOD Liverpool Volunteer Centre 27 Crofton Road, Liverpool, L13 5UJ T: 0151 228 4028 M: 07779 804 241

Email: gedwards@cafod.org.uk **Blog:** cafodliverpool.wordpress.com

[GRACE - A PLAY ABOUT ONE WOMAN'S FIGHT AGAINST MODERN SLAVERY](#)

In Spring 2017, **Ten Ten Theatre** was asked by TRAC – a group of 16 religious congregations of sisters from across the UK – to consider a new piece of work which helps young people to explore: the issue of modern slavery; the problem with pornography; the dignity of the human person. Following a meeting between Sister Patricia Mulhall (a founding member of TRAC), Martin O'Brien (the Artistic Director of Ten Ten) and representatives from all of the religious orders involved in TRAC, it was decided that Ten Ten would aim to produce a new theatre play for schools, following the huge success of their production of ***This Is My Body***. This new play, provisionally titled ***Grace***, would differ from ***This Is My Body*** in the following ways:

It would tell a story about trafficking within the UK; it would not focus on the victim but on the fight against slavery, making it more empowering for the audience; it would be appropriate for young people aged 14+; it would be easier and cheaper to stage.

Please consider helping The Ten Ten Charitable Trust to support this important project. To take this new production to 25 secondary schools in Spring 2018 will cost £15,000. Ten Ten has already generated £5,562.50 plus it is anticipated that £6,875 will be raised through fees charged. Therefore, our current fundraising target is £2,562.50. We aim to raise this by August 2017 in order to enable the project.

For more information see: www.tentencharitabletrust.co.uk/current/

To make a donation see: www.tentencharitabletrust.co.uk/donate/

• **Ten Ten Theatre** (inspired by John 10:10 "*I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full*") has just celebrated its tenth anniversary. **See full report:** <http://indcatholicnews.com/news/32878>

[NEW PLAY ABOUT BLESSED OSCAR ROMERO](#)

The true story of Blessed Oscar Romero and the people of El Salvador brought to life with explosive energy and passion. With original soundtrack by Joshua James Otto and inspiring graffiti set design by Gage Graphics. Bookings are now open for the church tour of this new, original play from **RISE Theatre** – dates available from 27 September to 24 November. Churches in the Liverpool area are invited to contact Stephen Newbury, Executive Director on 07764 756811 or email touring@risetheatre.co.uk 0118 324 7775 www.risetheatre.co.uk ("*Shake off your dust; rise up.*" Isaiah 52: 1-2)

HOW TO MARK THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BALFOUR DECLARATION THIS NOVEMBER?

Robert A. H. Cohen 12 June 2017

You can be sure there's going to be no end of bad ways. Hiring the Royal Albert Hall in London on 7 November with a 500 voice international Christian choir will definitely be up there with the most crassly inappropriate ways to remember Balfour. Don't expect to see a single Palestinian Christian in the building which alone should make you question this event's integrity. However, I expect to see plenty of Jewish representatives there. They will be our Jewish communal leaders and probably the Israeli Ambassador to London. They seem to think that hanging out with Christian Zionists is good for the future of Jews and Judaism. Perhaps one day they'll get round to checking out the anti-Jewish theology at the heart of Christian Zionism before they accept another invitation to collude in our eschatological demise.

Meanwhile, the Israeli Prime Minister will be coming to Britain to celebrate with the British Prime Minister. But if by then our PM turns out to be Jeremy Corbyn, this will probably require a rethink! Members of the Royal Family will visit Israel for the first time in an official capacity. I hadn't realised the Windsors were so lukewarm about Zionism. And the British government has promised (at the time of writing) that it will commemorate the event "with pride". After all, said the official response to an anti-Balfour petition, the Declaration was "the right and moral thing to do". So assuming a Conservative politician is still living at Number 10, don't expect any acknowledgement of culpability or even regret to balance out all of that pride. Apparently, questions of responsibility for what Balfour led to are best left to the historians.

But whoever is running the British government by November, there's little doubt that they'll be plenty of Jewish led Balfour celebrations. And I expect them to be just as tactless, thoughtless and devoid of political or historical context as the Christian Zionist knees-up at the Albert Hall. Synagogues will hold thanksgiving services and eminent Jewish figures will give speeches and lectures. I guarantee you these will be excruciating in their denial of what Balfour has meant to another people. A people made virtually invisible by the language of the Declaration which reduced the indigenous majority living in the Holy Land in 1917 as merely the "existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine".

The thing that the current British government fails to notice is that Balfour is not history. It's not something long ago and only of academic interest. It's still current affairs. After a hundred years, the consequences of those 67 words of British imperial realpolitik are still playing themselves out every day in Jerusalem, Gaza, Hebron, in fact everywhere west of the Jordan river.

I'm not for a moment forgetting the centuries of Jewish oppression in Europe nor the catastrophe of the Holocaust. But in celebrating Balfour, why must we be expected to ignore the fact that the price of creating a Jewish State turned out to be the on-going dispossession of the Palestinian people? A people equal in number to the Jewish people. With the benefit of 100 years' of hindsight it's not difficult to see how this was always going to be the case.

So how should Balfour be remembered? What's an honest way to mark this centenary, one that carries with it not only a rounded understanding of history and politics but one that includes a degree of humility, penance and an outlook for peace that embraces justice and equality?

A small British Christian charity has found a way to achieve all of this. On Saturday 10 June the '**Just Walk to Jerusalem**' set out from Southwark Cathedral in London. It marked the start of a 2,000 mile journey by around 70 pilgrims walking in stages across Europe. It will take four months to complete and end in Jerusalem on 2 November, the day of the Balfour anniversary. The Just Walk is being organised by **Amos Trust** an organisation that puts a biblical inspired call for justice at the heart of its work. Amos is no stranger to the reality of the conflict. It has 30 years experience of working with Christian, Jewish and Muslim partners in Israel/Palestine and is bringing all of that experience to bear in creating this event. As the Walk approaches Jerusalem the final team of pilgrims will be accompanied by partners of Amos Trust's work to bring 'hope to the forgotten'.

You can follow and share the progress of the 'Just Walk to Jerusalem' on social media using [#ChangeTheRecord](#) a reference to the endless injustice that Balfour set the tune for. There was a celebratory send off for the first team of walkers, including Palestinian music, some very British humour, good food, great prayers and a few short speeches.

Here's my send off speech which, as you'd expect, takes a dissident Jewish perspective on the whole thing: Thank you for coming to see our first group of walkers safely on their way. And thank you for helping us to 'change the record' after a 100 years of injustice towards the Palestinian people. Our call is clear and simple: Equal rights for all who call the Holy Land home. It's astonishing how controversial that call is: "Equal rights for everyone in the Holy Land."

'#Changing the record' is about making that idea sound normal, reasonable and good for everyone. We have some way to go on that. For me, standing here is very special indeed. This year I became the first Jew to be a Trustee on the Board of Amos Trust. An organisation that's spent 30 years bringing Justice and Hope to the forgotten all over the world. I'm glad to have found a spiritual home in an incredible organisation that draws its courage and inspiration from a Hebrew prophet. 3,000 years ago it was the prophet Amos who cut through all the hypocrisy and all the denial of his own community with a passionate, raging and poetic call for justice. He recognised that the Jewish leadership of his day had got it wrong, they were leading their people down a moral cul de sac and were heading for disaster. And he called them out on it. His call was also clear and simple.

Amos and his fellow Hebrew Prophets certainly have a lot to answer for. They created a tradition. A tradition of principled counter-cultural, non-compliance. Radical dissent from oppressive power. A tradition that I and a great many other Jews think of as our primary Jewish inheritance. The values that remains true when so much else has become corrupted.

All of you are here because you want to be part of a bold and creative response to some rather dismal anniversaries this year. This year we're marking the centenary of the Balfour Declaration and I've been speaking around the country about Jewish opposition to Balfour both in 1917 and today. Jewish opposition to Balfour is not something you hear much about. It's been largely airbrushed out of Jewish history. I call the talk I've been giving: *'The Wrong Kind of Jews'* which usually raises a few eyebrows of concern. But don't worry, there's nothing antisemitic about what I have to say.

Here's a very quick story to explain myself. The man who would become the leader of the Zionist movement, Chaim Weizmann, first met Arthur Balfour at a hotel in Manchester in 1907. They spent about an hour together discussing Weizmann's ideas and at the end of their meeting Balfour said: "It's strange Mr Weizmann. Most of the Jews I meet are not like you." To which, Weizmann replied: "Mr Balfour, you meet the wrong kind of Jews."

So there were the 'Wrong Kind of Jews' then, and 100 years after Balfour, and 50 years after the start of the Occupation, there is good reason to be the 'Wrong Kind of Jew' today. It's not widely understood, but there are many Jews in Britain deeply troubled by the actions of the state of Israel. There are many Jews in Britain who see 50 years of Occupation of the West Bank as morally indefensible. Truly, a disaster. There are many Jews who see the siege of Gaza and the wars against its people as crimes. There are many Jews who believe Jerusalem must be a shared city. There are plenty of Jews, like me, who don't wish to build their Jewish identity around Zionism.

We aren't the majority. We are often dismissed, and sometimes ridiculed and vilified by our own community...especially its leadership. Sometimes it feels like we are the last remnant of that prophetic tradition of Amos.

This week ***Jewish Voice for Peace in America*** shared a prophecy written by Jewish Israelis just months after the Occupation began in 1967 and published as an ad in a national Israeli paper. Part of their ad said this: "Our right to defend ourselves... does not grant us the right to oppress others. Conquest brings in its wake foreign rule. Foreign rule brings in its wake resistance. Resistance brings in its wake oppression." That was the authentic voice of Amos echoing down three millennia.

Jews may be monotheistic in our theology but we are certainly not monolithic in our political outlook. Certainly not when it comes to Israel and the Palestinian people. Let me make special mention of a group here today – they've even brought their own banner. ***Free Speech on Israel***, is a Jewish led initiative working hard to create space for an open and honest discussion about Israel that has no time for antisemitism or racism of any kind. Free Speech on Israel is punching above its weight and making common cause with others, including Christians and Muslims, who stand in solidarity with the Palestinian people. Thank you for being here.

http://www.patheos.com/blogs/writingfromtheedge/2017/06/many-bad-ways-mark-balfour-declaration-heres-one-good-one/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=BRSS&utm_campaign=Jewish&utm_content=344

PALESTINIAN CHRISTIANS SEND OPEN LETTER TO WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

Source: *Kairos Palestine* 13 June 2017

As we meet this month in Bethlehem in occupied Palestine, we are still suffering from 100 years of injustice and oppression that were inflicted on the Palestinian people beginning with the unjust and unlawful Balfour declaration, intensified through the Nakba and the influx of refugees, followed by the Israeli occupation of the West Bank including East Jerusalem and Gaza and the fragmentation of our people and our land through policies of isolation and confiscation of land, and the building of Jewish-only settlements and the Apartheid Wall.

We are still suffering because of one political declaration from a Western Empire, based on a twisted theological premise. Even some churches and few Christian leaders supported the establishment of the colonial state in our land, and totally ignored – even dehumanized – the nation, our people that had already existed here for centuries and paid the price for atrocities committed in Europe.

A hundred years later with thousands of lives lost, towns and villages razed from the face of the earth – though not our memory –, millions of refugees, thousands of homes demolished and continued incarceration of prisoners, our Nakba goes on. Hundred years later and there is still no justice in our land! Discrimination and inequality, military occupation and systematic oppression are the rule. Today, we stand in front of an impasse and we have reached a deadlock.

Despite all the promises, endless summits, UN resolutions, religious and lay leader's callings – Palestinians are still yearning for their freedom and independence, and seeking justice and equality. Humanly speaking – we have reached the "moment of impossible", as Emeritus Latin Patriarch Sabbah said recently.

Could it be that we have reached this "impossible moment" because things were built from the very beginning – a hundred years ago – on an unjust premise? Should we expect that such an unjust declaration will create anything but strife and destruction?

Today is also an opportunity to remember the Amman Call which was proclaimed ten years ago. We are thankful to those who stood with us back then in costly solidarity; those who stood for truth and justice. We are also concerned that ten years later the situation has been worsening on the ground and still deteriorating. Like other initiatives advocating end of occupation, the Amman Call did not achieve its goals in building and achieving just peace and we must ask ourselves today – why?

We are also concerned by Israel's systemic assault on Palestinian creative resistance, and on our partners worldwide who use this method to pressure Israel to end the occupation. Many new laws were issued in Israel and around the world to oppose this creative non-violent resistance unlawfully, and to stop all effort towards peace. Not only is this an attack on the freedom of conscience and speech but it is also an assault on our right and duty to resist evil with good. Israel is even now trying to prevent pilgrims from visiting Bethlehem – the city of Emmanuel!

While we are grateful for the 'costly solidarity' articulated in the Amman Call and exercised by many churches around the world, we are concerned that some churches have weakened their positions in the last ten years as a result of this manipulating pressure. Many still hide behind the cover of political neutrality, not wishing to offend their religious dialogue partners.

Finally, we meet in an environment of religious wars and persecution in our region. Religious extremism is on the rise, and religious minorities have paid a heavy and painful price. We thank you for your efforts towards the refugees and towards ending the conflicts in our region. We also thank you for your support of persecuted Christians in places like Iraq and Syria.

As we stand in front of this "impossible moment", it gives us no pleasure to say that "we told you so" eight years ago when we declared the moment as a Kairos moment! We stand facing the impossible, but we have not lost hope, since as followers of the Risen One, we are the people of hope. However, we need you and we need you now more than ever. We need your costly solidarity. We need brave women and men who are willing to stand in the forefront. This is no time for shallow diplomacy Christians. We urge you to hear our call and adopt the following:

- That you call things as they are: recognize Israel as an apartheid state in terms of international law and in agreement of what a person like Desmond Tutu said and as the UN ESCWA report said: "Israel is guilty of imposing an apartheid regime on the Palestinian people". We are disturbed by the fact that States and churches are dealing with Israel as if the situation were normal, ignoring the reality of occupation, discrimination and daily death in the land. Just as churches united to end apartheid in South Africa and whereby the WCC played a courageous and pivotal prophetic and leadership role, we expect you to do the same!
- That you unequivocally condemn the Balfour declaration as unjust, and that you demand from the UK that it asks forgiveness from the Palestinian people and compensates for the losses. We ask that churches and Christians to support the Palestinians in their request for justice. It was his infamous declaration, after all that laid the ground for the concept of an ethno-religious state – the very same thing our region is suffering today.
- That you take a clear and the strongest theological stand against any theology or Christian group that justifies the occupation and privileges one nation over the other based on ethnicity or a covenant. We ask that you adopt and live the theology suggested by Kairos Palestine and that you organize conferences to bring awareness towards this end.
- That you take a stand against religious extremism and against any attempt to create a religious state in our land or region. We ask that you support us in combating the foundations of extremism and that you seek our council when acting against religious extremism so that you do not jeopardize and harm our standing here.
- That you revisit and challenge your religious dialogue partners, and that you are willing to even withdraw from the partnership if needed – if the occupation and injustices in Palestine and Israel are not challenged.
- That you lead campaigns for church leaders and pilgrims to visit Bethlehem and other Palestinian cities on this side of the wall in cooperation with Palestinian tourist and pilgrimage agencies, in response to recent attempts by Israel. We ask that you publicly challenge any attempt by Israel or other Christians that discourage pilgrims from visiting Palestinian places.
- That you defend our right and duty to resist the occupation creatively and nonviolently. We ask that you speak in support of economic measures that pressure Israel to stop the occupation and go further to support sport, cultural and academic measures against Israel until it complies with international law and UN resolutions urging the ending of its occupation, Apartheid and discriminations, and accepts refugees to return to their home land and properties. This is our last peaceful resort. In response to Israel's war on BDS, we ask that you intensify that measures.
- That you create lobby groups in defense of Palestinian Christians. We ask that you publicly and legally challenge Christian organizations that discredit our work and legitimacy.

We therefore propose as a matter of the greatest urgency that you create a strategic program within WCC similar to the Program "To Combat Racism" to lead efforts to lobby, advocate and develop active programs towards justice and peace in Palestine and Israel and work on maintaining the presence of the Palestinian Christians through supporting their organizations, church work and peaceful efforts. As faithful witnesses, we acknowledge, affirm and continue the long standing prophetic tradition, especially the one started by the Amman Call and articulated in the Kairos Palestine document. We fully grasp the pressure church leaders are facing here and abroad not to speak the truth, and it is because of this that we are raising this call.

Things are beyond urgent. We are on the verge of a catastrophic collapse. The current status quo is unsustainable. This could be our last chance to achieve a just peace. As a Palestinian Christian community, this could be our last opportunity to save the Christian presence in this land. Our only hope as Christians comes from the fact that in Jerusalem, the city of God, and our city, there is an empty tomb, and Jesus Christ who triumphed over death and sin, brought to us and to all humanity, new life. We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. (2 Cor. 4:8-9) **Full list of signatories at:** <http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/32791>

THE BEATITUDES FOR TODAY

Frank Regan 8 June 2017

Early this morning I came across a new version of the Beatitudes for today. It is by a US sister, a poet, Elizabeth Boyle OP. It appeared in the Irish bi-monthly *Spirituality*. Here is her version:

1. Blessed are you poor who own little, consume less, waste nothing, hoard nothing, share everything--for you shall be liberated from the tyranny of stuff.
2. Blessed are you meek who exploit no one, envy no one, look down on no one, for you shall inherit a land from the necessity to keep up.
3. Blessed are you who mourn the death of every species, from polar bears to politicians, for you are forever responsible for what you have tamed.
4. Blessed are you who hunger and thirst for justice and truth for you shall fear neither obesity nor hangovers.
5. Blessed are you merciful whose mercy and compassion extends to plants and animals, rivers and landscapes for they shall cease to rebel against you.
6. Blessed are you clean of heart and clean of air and water for you will sleep with a clean conscience.
7. Blessed are you who invest all the human resources in technologies for peace, for your children shall not be sent to kill other peoples' children.
8. Blessed are you when the comfortable call you a nuisance and big corporations mount a media blitz against you; be glad in that day and rejoice for you have the last laugh when your adversaries toast you at a banquet of crow. Yours is a truly sustainable kingdom.

In Matthew's Gospel the next verses tell us that we are salt of the earth and light of the world. Later on we hear that we are mustard seed and like leaven in the mass. These are very good models for Christian community as well as of our own presence in a world which needs persons dedicated to its life and well-being.

RESOURCES

BOOK: 'BOYS IN ZINC' BY SVETLANA ALEXIEVICH

Review: Rebecca Tinsley 22 June 2017

Svetlana Alexievich is a Belorussian journalist whose mission is to tell the truth about war, and the human condition. For this reason alone, she deserves the attention of readers of Independent Catholic News. Her book about the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, '*Boys in Zinc*,' has just been published in English for the first time, a welcome development for those of us who were unaware of her work before she won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2015.

Alexievich interviewed dozens of soldiers who served during the 1980s, cataloguing the horrors they experienced at the hands of Afghans who did not want their fraternal, socialist "help." The soldiers, most of whom were barely out of their teens, were led to believe they would be welcomed. Their bewilderment and fear soon turned to brutality: whole villages laid to waste, civilians massacred, and homes looted. Readers may find the Soviet soldiers' stories echo the experiences of Americans in Vietnam and South Africans serving in Angola and Mozambique during the Cold War. Drug abuse, boredom, loneliness, and terror punctuate each beautifully written paragraph.

Alexievich interviewed medics who worked around the clock in unspeakable conditions to save the lives of Afghan civilians, only to be spat at by their patients. If a little girl accepted candies from a Russian soldier, the Afghan guerrillas amputated her hands as a warning to others not to fraternize with the occupying army.

Equally alarming is the Soviet officers' disregard for their soldiers' health or safety. They were transported in planes flown by pilots who were literally staggering drunk; the hospitals had little in the way of medicine or basic supplies; and soldiers were fed from tins of food that had expired 25 years before. Officers sold their units' military equipment to the enemy, stripped the possessions off dead soldiers, and turned a blind eye to bullying and theft within battalions. Wounded soldiers returned home to families who believed the Soviet propaganda about military success and friendly Afghans. Traumatized and neglected, the soldiers met indifference or contempt from those who had avoided service.

Most disturbing and painful are Alexievich's interviews with the mothers of soldiers who never came home. Their agony was made worse by the brutality of their treatment by officialdom. Remains were sealed in zinc coffins and dumped in the courtyards of parents' apartment blocks or behind sheds at airports. Once it was clear there would be no victory in Afghanistan, the fallen became an embarrassment, rather than heroes.

Alexievich felt she had a duty to tell the mothers' desperate, yet tender stories. However, by the 1990s the same forces now running Russia fomented a backlash against her truth-telling. The final quarter of the book details the legal proceedings against the journalist, instigated because she challenged the popular notion that Russia is still all-powerful and that its recent history is glorious. The persecution of Alexievich reveals the mindset of those in the Kremlin, and their millions of supporters who prefer lies rather than facts.

We must hope the international fame brought by the Nobel award will protect Alexievich from the fate awaiting too many other brave journalists, trying to work in modern Russia.

For more information see: www.penguin.co.uk/books/295485/boys-in-zinc/
<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/32851>

CSAN LAUNCHES ONLINE DEMENTIA AND SPIRITUALITY TOOLKIT

Download at: [http://www.csan.org.uk/news/csan-launches-online-spirituality-and-dementia-toolkit?ct=\(CSAN newsletter September 2016 copy 02 10 31 2016\)&mc_cid=303d6ea7bb&mc_eid=880d4deb19](http://www.csan.org.uk/news/csan-launches-online-spirituality-and-dementia-toolkit?ct=(CSAN%20newsletter%20September%202016%20copy%2002%2010%2031%202016)&mc_cid=303d6ea7bb&mc_eid=880d4deb19)

CAFOD *POWER TO BE* RENEWABLE ENERGY CAMPAIGN *Speak Up* Week of Action 1-9 July

RESOURCES: Every child has the power in them to achieve great things. But with one in six people still living without electricity, the hopes of millions of the world's children are too often a distant dream. Local renewable energy is usually the cheapest, fastest and most efficient solution to bring power to the poorest communities. It can help families to lift themselves out of poverty, without harming the world we share.

Introduction to *Power to be* and main resource page: <http://cafod.org.uk/Campaign/Power-to-be/Energy-campaign>

***Power to be* campaign guide:**

<http://cafod.org.uk/content/download/41258/468550/version/2/Power%20to%20be%20campaign%20guide%20vfinal.pdf>

***Power to be* poster:** <http://cafod.org.uk/content/download/41369/469416/version/2/Power%20to%20be%20poster%20v5.pdf>

***Power to be* liturgy with leader's notes:**

<http://cafod.org.uk/content/download/41426/469853/version/1/Power%20to%20be%20liturgy%20and%20leaders%20notes.pdf>

Background: *Power to be* references:

http://cafod.org.uk/content/download/41277/468725/version/1/Power%20to%20be_formatted_references.pdf

The main action will be asking parishes/schools/individuals to sign and return campaign action cards. We will use them to show the World Bank how many people, parishes and schools want them to act.

To order free resources visit: shop.cafod.org.uk or call 0300 011 5680.

Action card: <http://shop.cafod.org.uk/mail/productpage.cfm/CAFODShop/CAF3510/531704/Power-to-be-action-card>

Call on the World Bank to ensure renewable energy access for the world's poorest people.

E-Petition to the World Bank: <https://e-activist.com/page/7676/petition/1>

***Power to be* – your questions answered:** <http://cafod.org.uk/News/Campaigning-news/Power-to-be-Q-A>

Switch your energy: <http://cafod.org.uk/Campaign/Power-to-be/Switch-your-energy>

SPEAK UP WEEK OF ACTION 1 – 9 July

Big things are happening this summer: people in all corners of the country are preparing to Speak Up on climate and energy to their newly elected MPs from 1-9 July. This is your opportunity to make sure that the concerns of the world's poorest people are one of the first things on your MP's agenda, just a few weeks after they have been elected. We are inviting you to organise or attend an event during this week in July and to invite your newly elected MP to attend. From nature walks to tea parties to a picnic after Mass, there are no limits to how you can get those first conversations about energy started. Don't worry – you don't have to be an expert! We will provide you with a briefing to give to your MP as well as suggestions for what to talk about and a guide to organising events.

Sign up to organise an event/browse events that have already been organised near you for Speak Up Week Of Action:

<http://cafod.org.uk/Campaign/Power-to-be/Week-of-Action-1-9-July>

Download the Climate Coalition Week of Action organiser guide:

<http://cafod.org.uk/content/download/41437/469914/version/1/file/Week%20of%20Action%20guide%202017.pdf>

Ann Wilson Community Participation Coordinator – CAFOD (Mon-Tues all day and Weds mornings), CAFOD Salford Volunteer Centre, Katherine House, 26 Singleton Road, Salford M7 4WL 0161 705 0605 or 07772282884 annwilson@cafod.org.uk

COMING SOON ... Creation Time resource from J&P Liverpool 01151 522 1080 s.atherton@rcaol.co.uk

AID TO THE CHURCH IN NEED *PORTRAITS OF FAITH: SYRIA'S CHRISTIANS SEARCH FOR PEACE* An exhibition of artworks inspired by the Syrian conflict

ACN Portraits of Faith: Syria's Christians Search for Peace has been assembled by the NW Office of Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) in response to the terrible suffering in Syria, particularly of Syria's Christian communities. The exhibition will feature artworks and crafts inspired by the Syrian conflict, including oil paintings by Farid Georges, a Syriac Orthodox artist from Homs, hand-made table linens by three Christian women from Aleppo and jewellery by two Christian jewellers also working in Aleppo. Photos from ACN's extensive archives will introduce visitors to some of the people and places from the suffering Church in Syria today. Over 100 drawings by Syrian children of all faiths will also be on display; these were sent late last year to the European Parliament with a plea from Syria's young people for help from the West to secure lasting peace in their country. Entrance is free and all are welcome. ACN NW is raising awareness and funds to support 25 Christian families in Syria for one year each.

To find out more, please contact ACN NW Tel: 01524 388739; email: nw.office@acnuk.org

- Lancaster Cathedral: Saturday 24 June (9am-6pm) and Sunday 25 June (9am-6pm)
- Wrexham Cathedral: Saturday 1 July (9am-5pm) and Sunday 2 July (9am-5pm)
- Salford Cathedral: Saturday 8 July (12noon-6pm) and Sunday 9 July (12noon-5pm)
- Shrewsbury Cathedral: Saturday 15 July (9am-4pm) and Sunday 16 July (9am-4pm)
- Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral: Saturday 22 July (10am-4pm) and Sunday 23 July (10am-4pm)

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

JULY

1 Refugee Week celebration *Sharing our Future* at the Friends Meeting House, Meeting House Lane, Lancaster 2-9pm. Organised by Global Link, proceeds to Lancaster and Morecombe City of Sanctuary. www.globallink.org.uk

1-9 Week of Action on Climate Change www.theclimatecoalition.org

2 Evensong for the Common Good to give thanks for Faith 2017: Working Together for the Common Good, the schools-community initiative, 6pm St Columba's Anfield, Liverpool L4 2TZ followed by refreshments. office@alsophigh.org.uk

7 Proving Torture talk by Dr Bernie Gregory, a GP who works for Freedom from Torture to assess survivors of torture who have made it to the UK and prepares medico-legal reports to support their asylum applications. Organised by Quaker Concern for the Abolition of Torture. Free admission – retiring collection. <http://qcat.org.uk> 7pm Quaker Meeting House, Frodsham St, Chester

7 Listening to the Cry of the Earth and the Cry of the Poor: the Response of the Church in Latin America to Pope Francis' Call. **CAFOD Climate Change** talk by Fr Peter Hughes SSC, expert in indigenous communities in South America at St Vincent's Altrincham at 7.30pm. Details Bridget Fenwick, CAFOD CPC Shrewsbury Diocese bfenwick@cafod.org.uk 01244 677594

8 Listening to the Cry of the Earth and the Cry of the Poor: the Response of the Church in Latin America to Pope Francis' Call. **CAFOD Campaign Event** with Fr Peter Hughes SSC, expert in indigenous communities in South America. 10am-2pm (to be confirmed) St Joseph's Parish Centre Wrightington, Crow Road, Standish, Wigan WN6 9PA. CAFOD's Campaign Manager Sarah Croft will outline the new Climate Change-related campaign **Power to Be**. liverpool@cafod.org.uk 0151 228 4028

9 Sea Sunday www.apostleshipofthesea.org.uk/about-sea-sunday

11 Three Jumbos crash in a day John Williams, retired hospital consultant, tells of some of his post-retirement activities overseas. CWDF Forum 6.45-9pm, The Unity Centre, Cuppin St, Chester CH1 2BN

11 Time out on Tuesdays An ecumenical quiet day for everyone 10am-4pm at The Convent of Our Lady of the Cenacle, Lance Lane, Wavertree, Liverpool L15 6TW. Input and time for individual quiet prayer and reflection. Tea & coffee provided. Bring your own lunch. Cost £10. For more information or to book: Tel 0151 722 2271 email: winniecenacle@mail.com

12 Songs we remember Dementia-friendly sing-a-long 11-12.30 at St Thomas Canterbury Church L22 1RD. All welcome

12 And here I am – a play for a solo actor at the Unity Theatre, Hope Place, Liverpool L1 9BG at 8pm. Based on Ahmed Tobasi's personal coming of age story. Combining fact and fantasy, tragedy and comedy, spanning both the first Palestinian intifada and the second, we follow the protagonist through his transformation from armed resistance fighter to artist, his journey as a refugee in the West Bank to Norway and then back again. £12, concessions £10. Tickets from the Unity Box Office 0151 709 4988.

21–23 NJPN Annual Justice & Peace Conference The Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, Derbyshire. **'A Sabbath for the Earth and the Poor: The Challenge of Pope Francis.** Speakers include: Dr Ruth Valerio who is Global Advocacy and Influencing Director for Tearfund; Fr Peter Hughes SSC who has spent most of his life as a missionary in Peru, working in some of the most impoverished communities in Lima. He is an advisor to the Instituto Bartolome de las Casas, working in programmes of leadership and social justice; Kathy Galloway, an ordained minister of the Church of Scotland, Leader of the Iona Community from 2002-2009 and formerly head of Christian Aid Scotland and a published poet, author and hymn writer. Separate programme of activities for young people. Full details and booking arrangements: <http://www.justice-and-peace.org.uk/conference/> Email: admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk; Tel: 0207 901 4864 www.justice-and-peace.org.uk

AUGUST

6 & 9 Anniversaries of the first use of atomic weapons at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. More information and prayer resources from Pax Christi www.paxchristi.org.uk 020 8203 4884

18-21 Pedal for Peace 2017 Coast to Coast Challenge Barrow-in-Furness • Kendal • Barnard Castle • Great Ayton • Whitby. Setting off from Barrow-in-Furness, the home of the UK's nuclear fleet, on Friday 18 August we will reach Whitby on Monday 21 August and doff our cycling caps in honour of St Hilda. Registration fee £20 for the Coast-to-Coast / £5 for the Last Leg. Deadline 30 May. Call the Pax Christi office on 020 8203 4884 or email education@paxchristi.org.uk

SEPTEMBER

1 Day of Prayer for Care for Creation

1-4 October Season of Creation <http://seasonofcreation.org> www.columbans.co.uk/creation-time/

12 Time out on Tuesdays An ecumenical quiet day for everyone 10am-4pm at The Convent of Our Lady of the Cenacle, Lance Lane, Wavertree, Liverpool L15 6TW. Input and time for individual quiet prayer and reflection. Tea & coffee provided. Bring your own lunch. Cost £10. For more information or to book: Tel 0151 722 2271 email: winniecenacle@mail.com

15 CAFOD Quiz Night Our Lady's Parish Centre, Ellesmere Port 7.30pm. With Fairtrade refreshments provided at the interval. Entry fee £3 adults, £1 children. Proceeds to CAFOD's Connect 2 Ethiopia project. Details: Tony Walsh 0151 355 6419

17 Anti Modern Slavery ecumenical service Chester Cathedral 6.30pm. Major Ann Read will be preaching and the band from Hoole Church will be playing. The Bishop of Chester, the mayor, and the High Sheriff will also be attending. Please spread the word to show we care about stopping. All welcome, but please give numbers to Canon Jane Brooke, Vice Dean to ensure adequate seating canon.brooke@chestercathedral.com

17-23 World Week for Peace in Palestine and Israel *Voices of the young ... visions for the future.* **Pray** for a peace process to end 50 years of Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories; **Learn** from the young people of the Holy Land and their visions for the future; **Act** to create a just peace for all the people of Palestine and Israel. <http://tinyurl.com/UK-WWPPI>

21 Peace One Day annual day of global ceasefire and non-violence www.peaceday.org/global-campaigns

23 NJPN Open Networking Day 10.30am-1.30pm, CAFOD, Romero ouse, 55 Westminster Bridge Road, London SE1 7JB. Speaker to be confirmed, followed by 3pm Evensong for centenary of the birth of Blessed Oscar Romero, Westminster Abbey. Contact NJPN 39 Eccleston Square SW1V 1BX, 020 7901 4864 admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk

26 Feeding Liverpool group open meeting to encourage widening membership of this group (formed in response to the *Feeding Britain* report, December 2014) to focus on the impact of food poverty on women and health issues. 10am-12.30pm at LACE, Croxteth Drive, Sefton Park, Liverpool L17 1AA

OCTOBER

ADVANCE NOTICE: COME & SEE 2017 With Timothy Radcliffe OP at Christ The King School Southport, **14 & 15 OCTOBER** with workshops by Steve Atherton, Fiona Castle, Dermott Donnelly and more.... Music by Jo Boyce and friends, also Mime artist Steve Murray and Margaret Duncan. For more info about all our events see our website www.irenaeus.co.uk or contact the IRENAEUS PROJECT on 0151 949 1199 or email jenny@irenaeus.co.uk

21 ADVANCE NOTICE: Conference to be held in Liverpool to mark the Centenary of the BALFOUR DECLARATION and to learn more about British responsibility for what happened and continues to happen to the Palestinian people as a direct consequence of it. **See articles on pages 7-9.**

The conference is organized by **Liverpool Friends of Palestine**. It will explore the history and lasting legacy of Britain's role in Palestine/Israel since the Balfour Declaration of 1917. Everyone welcome.

Venue: tbc

Speakers: **Ilan Pappé** Israeli citizen, historian, Professor at Exeter University, Director of European Centre for Palestine Studies, author of many books on Palestine

Ben Jamal British born Palestinian, Director of Palestine Solidarity Campaign

David Cronin Journalist, Deputy Editor of Electronic Intifada and author of several books on Israel/Palestine

Chair: **Rev. Nicholas Frayling** formerly Rector of Our Lady and St. Nicholas, Liverpool and Dean of Chichester. Member of The Balfour Project

Bookstall courtesy of **News from Nowhere** and other stalls. Coffee, tea and biscuits provided. Further details to be announced: www.liverpoolfriendsofpalestine.rg.uk 0151 709 2407

- Many items taken from the daily e-bulletin Independent Catholic News www.indcatholicnews.com or from Ekklesia www.ekklesia.co.uk both invaluable free resources for up-to-date J&P news, events and in-depth articles. Sign up for comprehensive weekly e-bulletins from National J&P Network 020 7901 4864 admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk

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