

The 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

THE VOICES OF WOMEN SAY: "TIME'S UP!"

4 January 2018 **Columban Missionary Fr Shay Cullen writes:**

It's a great beginning to the New Year. Prominent women and men in Hollywood and London have launched a movement to end sexual harassment in the workplace and society. They aim to challenge every act of sexual harassment and abuse that comes to light. It's called "Time's Up."

Months ago, it began with the hash tag "MeToo" - a tag that encouraged abused women no matter their station in life to speak out and challenge their abusers. It is now a defining moment in history. Since the human race began, women were always considered by men to be inferior, the so-called weaker sex, which was a way to establish, falsely of course, that they somehow had lesser rights than men and were expected to be docile and subservient. It gave permission for the males to dominate them and to do much as they pleased especially when they were in positions of ascendancy and power over the women.

The women suffered and endured the humiliation and harassment and feared if they complained they would be further discriminated against, harassed and even fired from their job or their careers would be stymied. The slogan was, it seems, "play along or pay the price."

Now no more will western women have to "play-along" and cover up their anguish, intimidation and feelings of humiliation and being exploited and used as the play things of abusive men. The "Time's Up" group is composed of well-known producers, actresses, writers and studio executives. The action has raised as much as US \$13 million for legal cases against individuals who are accused of harassment or companies who allow or ignore such harassment in the workplace. The legal fund will help the poorer women and men and youth in low-paid jobs who are sexually molested and abused and are afraid and unable to take legal action due to the high costs. They are usually afraid to speak out and are likely to lose their employment. But the movement has a strong following and is there to help everyone in need.

The "Time's Up" is to challenge the gross indecency and silence that surrounds the culture of sexual harassment. It has gone unchallenged for centuries. It's a defining moment in the age of women's freedom. The "Time's Up" movement published a full-page letter in The New York Times and the Spanish newspaper *La Opinion* to declare that "Time's Up" for the abusers and they will be challenged, exposed, and forced to step down from their preeminent pedestals of power.

One of the gagging techniques the abusive men used was to get the victims to take money and sign a non-disclosure agreement and threatened them. This ensured the silence of the victims. This is now being targeted to totally discredit the practice and have it banned.

Those abused are encouraged to never to sign anything but to seek the help of "Time's Up." It is an encouraging and historical time for the rights of women to be vindicated and protected and justice be done and be seen by all to be done. Thousands of men prone to commit acts of lasciviousness, sexual abuse and harassment can quake in their boots if this really takes off. Not only is the name-and-shame campaign empowering women to take a stand and point their accusing finger but it is backed up with legal action.

Others take a more subtle approach to their empowerment and survival.

Are women smarter than men? You would imagine that they are still subservient to men in Afghanistan as some of the women are seen to walk five meters or more behind their husbands or male guardians. Normally it is a humiliation. I read somewhere the following story. A woman's rights advocate visiting her friend in Afghanistan said, "After all this struggle for equality of women, you still walk behind your husband." "We are much smarter," the woman replied. "How is that so?" the perplexed advocate asked. The woman smiled and looked at the advocate and said one word. "Landmines."

So the day is fast approaching when there will be some change in the western world when women speak out for their rights and expose the harassment and abuse they endured. But it will take a long time for it to enter the mainstream of other cultures and change them forever. But change comes slowly like a river eating its way through a canyon. We have to take legal action and enforce the rule of law to protect women and children.

The Preda Foundation has been promoting and supporting the new proposed law in Ireland. It will be presented soon in the Dail, sponsored by Maureen O'Sullivan TD and other parliamentarians that will effectively curb the travel to foreign developing countries of convicted pedophiles. In Australia, where such a law is in place, it was revealed that as many as 800 convicted pedophiles travelled to poor countries before it was enacted. These are countries where the children are vulnerable, poor and easily available for abusers and law enforcement is weak. But stopping them may indeed be the only way to protect the children. Who could be against such a law? We need the same for the UK and the EU. Ireland can give the lead and then it will be a much safer world for children.

Read more about the Preda Foundation here: www.preda.org
<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/34082>

CHRISTIANS AWARE ANNUAL CONFERENCE – 'WINGS OF A BIRD'

Ellen Teague: 15 January 2018

'Wings of a Bird - Just Empowerment for Women and Men' was the theme of the Christians Aware Annual Ecumenical Conference, held in Swanwick, Derbyshire, last weekend. Around 60 participants were introduced to the theme with: "In our world men and women are like two wings of a bird; if one is unable to function properly the bird is unable to fly and may even perish." They left at the end committed to promoting gender awareness and participating in such initiatives as 'Women's World Day of Prayer' in March. Also, with greater awareness of the high regard in which Jesus held women. In his Bible study session, David Rhodes, who writes on spirituality and social justice, contrasted this with "the crushing negativity" towards women in many Bible stories.

I must say I left more fully equipped to participate in music with a gender slant and a general justice and peace theme. Geoff Weaver led a lovely Saturday evening session on worship music and poetry on the conference theme. Leading from the piano, Geoff led us in singing hymns produced by the Iona Wild Goose Resource Group such as 'There is a line of women' and 'Enemy of Apathy' and two Bernadette Farrell hymns, 'Christ be our light' and 'Alleluia, Raise the Gospel'. There was also a session with musician Garth Hewitt, a founder of the Amos Trust. You could close your eyes and recall Bob Dylan as Garth played his guitar and mouth organ and sang songs around themes of a vocation for justice and migrants. I found his songs, 'Against the Grain' and 'Ellis Island' particularly poignant. His song 'You are loved' is a favourite of Doreen Lawrence, the mother of Stephen who was murdered in a racist attack in London 25 years ago. Garth is currently on an 'Against the Grain' tour around England, Wales and Scotland this year. Details on his [website www.garthhewitt.org](http://www.garthhewitt.org).

I ran a seminar on 'Women and Water Justice', where we looked how women's daily trek for water undermines their access to educational and work opportunities, as well as local leadership. We looked at the issues of virtual water, and corporations such as Nestlé and Coca Cola taking control over local water supplies for their products. Our little group challenged the assertion by Nestlé Chairman Emeritus Peter Brabek that access to water is not a human right and Pope Francis was quoted as tackling this perspective. Preparing for the UN's World Water Day on 22 March was highlighted and the next Season of Creation which runs from 1 September to 4 October. We were fortunate to have in the group a couple who have many years of experience living in Bangladesh. He is a water engineer and we heard first-hand how climate change is causing severe weather, flooding of wells with salt water, and positive news such as the tackling of arsenic in Bangladeshi wells.

In fact, many Conference participants had worked for many years with Christian groups of various denominations in Zambia, South Africa, Vietnam and other countries in the global south, and the conversations were full of interesting stories about mission outreach. Terrie Robinson of the 'Side by Side' movement and Director of Women and Church in Society at the Anglican Communion Office spoke of a worship service she experienced in the Nairobi shanty town of Kibera, which was led by an inspirational 11-year-old Lucy, "but Lucy will be marginalised throughout life by her gender". She felt strongly that gender discrimination of not only a women's issue. Jenny Brown of Christian Aid showed a fascinating video of the Padare project in Zimbabwe, which specialises in engaging men on this issue.

Perhaps the most moving presentation was from Ugandan Sarah Kitakule who until recently worked for the Commonwealth Secretariat in Britain. Under the heading of 'Gender issue and human rights in Africa', she highlighted child marriage, forced marriage and female genital mutilation as key issues. Then there was a new one to me - breast ironing - which is practised largely in Christian communities to hide the early development of girls' breasts. We learnt that there is no legal protection against domestic violence in Burkina Faso, Egypt, Lesotho, Mali and Niger. Also, that women and girls account for 71% of human trafficking victims. Sarah called for more women in leadership positions to ensure that existing bench marks for human rights are enforced. She herself is a great example of the difference this can make.

In a resources area, stalls included Olive Oil and other products from the Zaytoun company, which markets Palestinian products, and products from the Philippines and Nepal. Columban JPIC and the National Justice and Peace Network - Anne Peacey and Ann Kelly - ran stalls and there was considerable interest in J&P education from one of the staff of the chaplaincy at Lincoln University. Christians Aware members are exceptionally loyal and generous. One woman had knitted beautiful baby clothes - clearly many hours of work - which were available for a donation to Christians Aware. And it's incredible that this small organisation has organised at least six overseas trips this year, including Bahrain and Zambia, with fliers available on all of them. This is also at least partly due to the dedication of members.

So, what a lovely way to spend a cold and dark weekend in January. Most of us ventured out only once, to do a bracing walk around the Swanwick Lake. In my case, I always like to visit the National Justice and Peace Network tree planted 15 years ago on its 25th anniversary and now 20 feet tall! I enjoyed the charring of Anglican Bishop John Flack - from his care to include children present, to his little anecdotes about hymnwriters. Nearly every hymn we sang he provided a story about the writer. Poor old Vicar JSB Monsell, writer of over 300 hymns, died after falling off the roof of his Guildford parish, while inspecting its roof in 1875. I particularly enjoyed hearing of Bishop Flack's conversation in Rome with American Jesuit Dan Schutte about the hymn 'Here I am Lord', which my own folk group sang in my parish on Sunday and we sang at the conference. Schutte told him he sat in a church over a two-week period in 1981 and studied Sunday's gospel about the call of Samuel. When he felt most struck by the words "Here I am" and the Lord calling Samuel in the night, he wrote his popular hymn.

Christians Aware is an educational and religious charity - under the leadership of Executive Secretary Barbara Butler - which outreaches beyond Christian networks. It works with other faiths and the secular world specifically on the promotion of Justice and Peace. **For more information visit:** www.christiansaware.co.uk
<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/34152>

POPE: EVERY STRANGER WHO KNOCKS AT OUR DOOR IS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR AN ENCOUNTER WITH JESUS CHRIST

In his homily on World Day of Migrants and Refugees, 14 January, Pope Francis repeated his call for Christians to welcome migrants, refugees and asylum seekers.

He referred to his message for World Day of Migrants and Refugees: "Every stranger who knocks at our door is an opportunity for an encounter with Jesus Christ, who identifies with the welcomed and rejected strangers of every age (Mt 25:35, 43)."

The Holy Father stressed his three essential points in addressing refugees: "to protect, to promote and to integrate." He said doing this requires that Christians must "welcome, know, and acknowledge" new arrivals.

He continued: "In today's world, for new arrivals to welcome, to know and to acknowledge means to know and respect the laws, the culture and the traditions of the countries that take them in. It even includes understanding their fears and apprehensions for the future. For local communities to welcome, to know and to acknowledge newcomers means to open themselves without prejudices to their rich diversity, to understand the hopes and potential of the newly arrived as well as their fears and vulnerabilities."

The full text of Pope Francis' homily follows:

This year I wanted to celebrate the World Day of Migrants and Refugees with a Mass that invites and welcomes you, especially who are migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. Some of you have recently arrived in Italy, others are long-time residents and work here, and still, others make up the so-called "second-generation".

For everyone in this assembly, the Word of God has resonated and today invites us to deepen the special call that the Lord addresses to each one of us. As he did with Samuel (cf 1 Sm3:3b-10, 19), he calls us by name and asks us to honour the fact that each of us has been created a unique and unrepeatable being, each different from the others and each with a singular role in the history of the world. In the Gospel (cf Jn 1:35-42), the two disciples of John ask Jesus, "Where do you live?" (v. 38), implying that the reply to this question would determine their judgment upon the master from Nazareth. The response of Jesus, "Come and see!" (v. 39) opens up to a personal encounter which requires sufficient time to welcome, to know and to acknowledge the other.

In the Message for this year's World Day of Migrants and Refugees I have written, "Every stranger who knocks at our door is an opportunity for an encounter with Jesus Christ, who identifies with the welcomed and rejected strangers of every age (Mt 25:35, 43)." And for the stranger, the migrant, the refugee, the asylum seeker and the displaced person, every door in a new land is also an opportunity encounter Jesus. His invitation "Come and see!" is addressed today to all of us, to local communities and to new arrivals. It is an invitation to overcome our fears so as to encounter the other, to welcome, to know and to acknowledge him or her. It is an invitation which offers the opportunity to draw near to the other and see where and how he or she lives. In today's world, for new arrivals to welcome, to know and to acknowledge means to know and respect the laws, the culture and the traditions of the countries that take them in. It even includes understanding their fears and apprehensions for the future. For local communities to welcome, to know and to acknowledge newcomers means to open themselves without prejudices to their rich diversity, to understand the hopes and potential of the newly arrived as well as their fears and vulnerabilities.

True encounter with the other does not end with welcome but involves us all in the three further actions which I spelled out in the Message for this Day: to protect, to promote and to integrate. In the true encounter with the neighbour, are we capable of recognising Jesus Christ who is asking to be welcomed, protected, promoted and integrated? As the Gospel parable of the final judgment teaches us: the Lord was hungry, thirsty, naked, sick, a stranger and in prison - by some he was helped and by others not (cf Mt 25:31-46). This true encounter with Christ is source of salvation, a salvation which should be announced and brought to all, as the apostle Andrew shows us. After revealing to his brother Simon, "We have found the Messiah" (Jn 1:41), Andrew brings him to Jesus so that Simon can have the same experience of encounter.

It is not easy to enter into another culture, to put oneself in the shoes of people so different from us, to understand their thoughts and their experiences. As a result, we often refuse to encounter the other and raise barriers to defend ourselves. Local communities are sometimes afraid that the newly arrived will disturb the established order, will 'steal' something they have long laboured to build up. And the newly arrived also have fears: they are afraid of confrontation, judgment, discrimination, failure. These fears are legitimate, based on doubts that are fully comprehensible from a human point of view. Having doubts and fears is not a sin. The sin is to allow these fears to determine our responses, to limit our choices, to compromise respect and generosity, to feed hostility and rejection. The sin is to refuse to encounter the other, the different, the neighbour when this is, in fact, a privileged opportunity to encounter the Lord.

From this encounter with Jesus present in the poor, the rejected, the refugee, the asylum seeker, flows our prayer of today. It is a reciprocal prayer: migrants and refugees pray for local communities, and local communities pray for the newly arrived and for migrants who have been here longer. To the maternal intercession of Mary Most Holy, we entrust the hopes of all the world's migrants and refugees and the aspirations of the communities which welcome them. In this way, responding to the supreme commandment of charity and love of neighbour, may we all learn to love the other, the stranger, as ourselves.

Source: Vatican News Service

<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/34147>

POPE'S MESSAGE FOR WORLD DAY OF MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES - *WELCOME, PROTECT, PROMOTE AND INTEGRATE*

Sunday 14 January 2018, is the 104th **World Day of Migrants and Refugees**. In his message to mark the day, Pope Francis stresses the need to create a welcoming environment for migrants and refugees stating that: "Every stranger who knocks at our door is an opportunity for an encounter with Jesus Christ, who identifies with the welcomed and rejected strangers of every age." The Holy Father calls us to express our solidarity with migrants and refugees at every stage of the "migratory experience - from departure through journey to arrival and return." Acknowledging the enormity of this responsibility to journey with migrants and refugees the Pope encourages all who are called to respond "with generosity, promptness, wisdom and foresight, each according to their own abilities".

Pope Francis proposes an action-oriented initiative and provides a template for our shared response on four related fronts: to welcome, to protect, to promote and to integrate. In each of these areas there are practical suggestions for close collaboration with state institutions and other agencies as well as for individuals.

Firstly, in welcoming migrants and refugees Pope Francis emphasises that personal safety must be a priority over national security. He calls on states to provide safe and legal pathways to migration with access to basic services and encourages the involvement of private and community sponsorship programmes to support government initiatives.

Secondly, in protecting migrants and refugees he focuses on defending their rights and dignity independent of their legal status. This protection the Pope suggests must begin at the start of the journey in the country of origin through to the country of destination. He expresses concern for the protection of underage migrants who are legally provided for under the International Convention on the Rights of the Child and warns against any form of detention of children relating to their migration status. The Holy Father believes that children should be guaranteed access to health, education and the right to nationality.

Thirdly, Pope Francis further calls for the empowerment of migrants and refugees to achieve their potential as human beings. In promoting them we must recognise and value the abilities and gifts that they bring. Of particular importance is the freedom of religious belief and practice. He calls for a determined effort to promote social and professional inclusion of migrants and refugees with access to employment being a key factor.

Finally, Pope Francis highlights integrating migrants and refugees as the key to shaping societies and cultures that create opportunities for intercultural enrichment. He invites all of us "to use every occasion to share this message with all political and social actors involved (or who seek to be involved) in the process which will lead to the approval of the two Global Compacts" that states have committed themselves to draft and approve before the end of 2018.

The Office for Migration Policy will prioritise its work with the UK Government and other partners to create welcoming environments and provide well-resourced Community Sponsorship Programmes in parishes across England and Wales, where migrants and refugees are welcomed, protected, promoted and integrated within our communities and the wider society. Bishop Paul McAleenan is the Lead Bishop for the Office for Migration and Policy.

See: www.cbcew.org.uk/CBCEW-Home/Departments/International-Affairs/Migrants-and-Refugees/About-OMP
<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/34124>

CATHOLIC CHARITIES VOICE CONCERN AT GOVERNMENT'S 'INADEQUATE' PLANS TO HELP VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC ABUSE

9 January 2018: Catholic charities in the UK have highlighted the lack of emphasis on women's refuges in new Government plans to help victims of domestic abuse to find social housing.

In a submission from Caritas Social Action Network (CSAN) to a Government consultation on advising local authority housing options teams to prioritise victims of domestic abuse, charities working with vulnerable women welcomed the intentions of the proposals but warned that providing social housing is "not an inadequate response to the reduction in funding for refuges for victims. The role of the refuge for victims is vital and the language and aims of these proposals risk minimising the significance of the refuge."

Councils have reduced their spending on refuges by 24% since 2010 (1), and one in four referrals to refuge services in 2015/16 were declined due to lack of capacity (2).

CSAN also warned that implementing the proposed guidance will be extremely difficult for local authorities, due to housing shortages and funding pressures, and prioritising one vulnerable group could lead to the de-prioritisation of others in need without the adequate provision of the necessary resources. **The full submission can be read on CSAN website:** www.csan.org.uk

- Caritas Social Action Network (CSAN) is the domestic social action agency of the Catholic Church in England and Wales. CSAN comprises over 40 Catholic charities and dioceses which work across England and Wales supporting those living in poverty, homeless people, disabled people, travellers, migrants, refugees, prisoners and other marginalised groups.

For details on the consultation, see Department for Communities and Local Government, 'Improving access to social housing for victims of domestic abuse':

www.gov.uk/government/consultations/improving-access-to-social-housing-for-victims-of-domestic-abuse
<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/34110>

HOUSING JUSTICE URGES CHRISTIANS TO MARK HOMELESS SUNDAY 2018

Homelessness across the UK has more than doubled in the past seven years. Housing Justice, the national Christian homelessness charity, is urging churches to take part in Homeless Sunday (28 January 2018), the annual chance for churches to reflect on homelessness through their services.

Homeless Sunday prompts Christians to reflect on what home means to them, and consider what they can do in response to rising homelessness across the country. Now in its 25th year, the day offers churches of all denominations the chance to unite in solidarity with those experiencing homelessness, and encourage practical action in tackling it.

Nationally, homelessness has more than doubled since 2010, with 88,410 homeless households applying for assistance during 2016-17, and 105,240 families threatened with homelessness helped to remain in their home in the same period. Meanwhile rough sleeping, the most conspicuous form of homelessness, has increased by 134% since autumn 2010, with 4,134 rough sleepers counted and estimated on a single night in autumn 2016. These huge increases in all forms of homelessness have prompted to Housing Justice to label the current situation a crisis.

Christians and church communities are already at the frontline of the response to the homelessness crisis. During winter 2016/17, more people than ever relied on the Housing Justice Church and Community Night Shelter Network, where churches and communities open their doors to offer shelter to those with no alternative place to stay.

As homelessness has risen so too has the response from churches with 107 Church and Community Night Shelters in the Housing Justice network working to alleviate homelessness, a rise from 65 just three years ago. Likewise, the number of guests accommodated across the network last winter stood at an estimated 6000 (5,885) people, whereas two years ago this figure was around 3,640 guests. Now more than ever, Homeless Sunday offers the chance to reflect on the issues at hand and provide a platform to plan further practical action.

Full details of how to get involved in Homeless Sunday and materials to support churches are available at:
www.housingjustice.org.uk

Housing Justice CEO, Kathy Mohan said: "Homeless Sunday encourages churches to reflect on homelessness, to pray and to plan practical action. Part of this reflection centres on the practical data and personal stories that speak of rising homelessness in our country, and the misery that it brings with it. With the Homelessness Crisis increasing, we believe Christians must be aware of the severity of the situation, active in our response and adamant in our determination to end homelessness.

"We also invite people taking part in Homeless Sunday 2018 to reflect on what your home means to you. A place to rest your head, to shelter, but much more besides, a place to be yourself, to raise and cherish a family or loved ones, to thrive. We believe home is much more than a house; it is a place to belong. With this in mind, there is a role for each of us in meeting the challenges of growing homelessness, and we invite churches and faith groups across the country to reflect on what that means for us and how our faith calls us to act."

How to get involved

- **Plan** your own sermon, homily, Bible study or event by using our theological reflection and our fact sheets on Homelessness for England, Wales and Scotland. **See:** www.housingjustice.org.uk/Event/homeless-sunday-2018
- **Request** a speaker for your Homeless Sunday service (speakers are limited and dealt with on a first come first served basis)
- **Send** us a written reflection on what home means to you, or send us a video or picture with a short message on the same theme. Either send via info@housingjustice.org.uk (mark the subject line as Homeless Sunday) or post to twitter with the hashtag [#homelessunday](https://twitter.com/homelessunday)
- **Support** Housing Justice through a donation www.housingjustice.org.uk/Appeal/donate

Please remember to tell us if you plan to hold an event or make Homeless Sunday the theme for your service via info@housingjustice.org.uk
<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/34116>

YCW LAUNCHES CONSULTATION ON YOUNG PEOPLE AND MENTAL HEALTH

Young people across England and Wales are being asked their thoughts about the current state of mental health in our country. The Young Christian Workers – a Catholic charity based in England and Wales – have said that an overwhelming amount of their membership have expressed their deep concerns about the current help available to young people with mental health problems, as well as the stigma attached to it. Because of this concern the YCW has launched a National Action Campaign on mental health among young people, called **MIND! The Gap**.

The first stage being run is focused around exploring the issue more deeply and finding out the opinions and experiences of young people. There is a short survey covering a variety of aspects around mental health, which can be found on the YCW website – www.ycwimpact.com/national-campaign-resources or directly at <https://tinyurl.com/ycw-mental-health-survey>.

Marc Besford, the National Training and Development Worker of the YCW, said: "This campaign is carried out on a national basis so that we can, as a Movement of young people, join together to make a real difference to the lives of our peers. We want them to know that their voice matters and hope they take part in this important survey. Once we have the information together we can then move forward with the campaign."

ICAN RECEIVES 2017 NOBEL PEACE PRIZE

22 December 2017: This year's **Nobel Peace Prize** was presented to ICAN (the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons) at a ceremony in Oslo, Norway, on 10 December in recognition of our work "to draw attention to the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons" and our "ground-breaking efforts to achieve a treaty-based prohibition of such weapons."

TEXT OF THE NOBEL LECTURE GIVEN BY THE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE LAUREATE 2017, ICAN, DELIVERED BY BEATRICE FIHN AND SETSUKO THURLOW, OSLO, 10 DECEMBER 2017:

Beatrice Fihn: Today, it is a great honour to accept the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize on behalf of thousands of inspirational people who make up the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons. Together we have brought democracy to disarmament and are reshaping international law. We most humbly thank the Norwegian Nobel Committee for recognizing our work and giving momentum to our crucial cause. We want to recognize those who have so generously donated their time and energy to this campaign. We thank the courageous foreign ministers, diplomats, Red Cross and Red Crescent staff, UN officials, academics and experts with whom we have worked in partnership to advance our common goal. And we thank all who are committed to ridding the world of this terrible threat.

At dozens of locations around the world – in missile silos buried in our earth, on submarines navigating through our oceans, and aboard planes flying high in our sky – lie 15,000 objects of humankind's destruction. Perhaps it is the enormity of this fact, perhaps it is the unimaginable scale of the consequences, that leads many to simply accept this grim reality. To go about our daily lives with no thought to the instruments of insanity all around us.

For it is insanity to allow ourselves to be ruled by these weapons. Many critics of this movement suggest that we are the irrational ones, the idealists with no grounding in reality. That nuclear-armed states will never give up their weapons. But we represent the only rational choice. We represent those who refuse to accept nuclear weapons as a fixture in our world, those who refuse to have their fates bound up in a few lines of launch code.

Ours is the only reality that is possible. The alternative is unthinkable. The story of nuclear weapons will have an ending, and it is up to us what that ending will be. Will it be the end of nuclear weapons, or will it be the end of us? One of these things will happen. The only rational course of action is to cease living under the conditions where our mutual destruction is only one impulsive tantrum away.

Today I want to talk of three things: fear, freedom, and the future. By the very admission of those who possess them, the real utility of nuclear weapons is in their ability to provoke fear. When they refer to their "deterrent" effect, proponents of nuclear weapons are celebrating fear as a weapon of war. They are puffing their chests by declaring their preparedness to exterminate, in a flash, countless thousands of human lives.

Nobel Laureate William Faulkner said when accepting his prize in 1950, that "There is only the question of 'when will I be blown up?'" But since then, this universal fear has given way to something even more dangerous: denial. Gone is the fear of Armageddon in an instant, gone is the equilibrium between two blocs that was used as the justification for deterrence, gone are the fallout shelters.

But one thing remains: the thousands upon thousands of nuclear warheads that filled us up with that fear. The risk for nuclear weapons use is even greater today than at the end of the Cold War. But unlike the Cold War, today we face many more nuclear armed states, terrorists, and cyber warfare. All of this makes us less safe. Learning to live with these weapons in blind acceptance has been our next great mistake.

Fear is rational. The threat is real. We have avoided nuclear war not through prudent leadership but good fortune. Sooner or later, if we fail to act, our luck will run out. A moment of panic or carelessness, a misconstrued comment or bruised ego, could easily lead us unavoidably to the destruction of entire cities. A calculated military escalation could lead to the indiscriminate mass murder of civilians.

If only a small fraction of today's nuclear weapons were used, soot and smoke from the firestorms would loft high into the atmosphere – cooling, darkening and drying the Earth's surface for more than a decade. It would obliterate food crops, putting billions at risk of starvation. Yet we continue to live in denial of this existential threat.

But Faulkner in his Nobel speech also issued a challenge to those who came after him. Only by being the voice of humanity, he said, can we defeat fear; can we help humanity endure. ICAN's duty is to be that voice. The voice of humanity and humanitarian law; to speak up on behalf of civilians. Giving voice to that humanitarian perspective is how we will create the end of fear, the end of denial. And ultimately, the end of nuclear weapons.

That brings me to my second point: freedom. As the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, the first ever anti-nuclear weapons organisation to win this prize, said on this stage in 1985: "We physicians protest the outrage of holding the entire world hostage. We protest the moral obscenity that each of us is being continuously targeted for extinction."

Those words still ring true in 2017. We must reclaim the freedom to not live our lives as hostages to imminent annihilation. Man – not woman! – made nuclear weapons to control others, but instead we are controlled by them. They made us false promises. That by making the consequences of using these weapons so unthinkable it would make any conflict unpalatable. That it would keep us free from war.

But far from preventing war, these weapons brought us to the brink multiple times throughout the Cold War. And in this century, these weapons continue to escalate us towards war and conflict. In Iraq, in Iran, in Kashmir, in North Korea. Their existence propels others to join the nuclear race. They don't keep us safe, they cause conflict.

As fellow Nobel Peace Laureate, Martin Luther King Jr, called them from this very stage in 1964, these weapons are "both genocidal and suicidal". They are the madman's gun held permanently to our temple. These weapons were supposed to keep us free, but they deny us our freedoms.

It's an affront to democracy to be ruled by these weapons. But they are just weapons. They are just tools. And just as they were created by geopolitical context, they can just as easily be destroyed by placing them in a humanitarian context.

That is the task ICAN has set itself – and my third point I wish to talk about, the future. I have the honour of sharing this stage today with Setsuko Thurlow, who has made it her life's purpose to bear witness to the horror of nuclear war. She and the hibakusha were at the beginning of the story, and it is our collective challenge to ensure they will also witness the end of it.

They relive the painful past, over and over again, so that we may create a better future. There are hundreds of organisations that together as ICAN are making great strides towards that future.

There are thousands of tireless campaigners around the world who work each day to rise to that challenge. There are millions of people across the globe who have stood shoulder to shoulder with those campaigners to show hundreds of millions more that a different future is truly possible. Those who say that future is not possible need to get out of the way of those making it a reality.

As the culmination of this grassroots effort, through the action of ordinary people, this year the hypothetical marched forward towards the actual as 122 nations negotiated and concluded a UN treaty to outlaw these weapons of mass destruction. The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons provides the pathway forward at a moment of great global crisis. It is a light in a dark time. And more than that, it provides a choice. A choice between the two endings: the end of nuclear weapons or the end of us.

It is not naive to believe in the first choice. It is not irrational to think nuclear states can disarm. It is not idealistic to believe in life over fear and destruction; it is a necessity.

All of us face that choice. And I call on every nation to join the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. The United States, choose freedom over fear. Russia, choose disarmament over destruction. Britain, choose the rule of law over oppression. France, choose human rights over terror. China, choose reason over irrationality. India, choose sense over senselessness. Pakistan, choose logic over Armageddon. Israel, choose common sense over obliteration. North Korea, choose wisdom over ruin.

To the nations who believe they are sheltered under the umbrella of nuclear weapons, will you be complicit in your own destruction and the destruction of others in your name? To all nations: choose the end of nuclear weapons over the end of us! This is the choice that the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons represents. Join this Treaty.

We citizens are living under the umbrella of falsehoods. These weapons are not keeping us safe, they are contaminating our land and water, poisoning our bodies and holding hostage our right to life. To all citizens of the world: Stand with us and demand your government side with humanity and sign this treaty. We will not rest until all States have joined, on the side of reason.

No nation today boasts of being a chemical weapon state. No nation argues that it is acceptable, in extreme circumstances, to use sarin nerve agent. No nation proclaims the right to unleash on its enemy the plague or polio. That is because international norms have been set, perceptions have been changed. And now, at last, we have an unequivocal norm against nuclear weapons. Monumental strides forward never begin with universal agreement. With every new signatory and every passing year, this new reality will take hold. This is the way forward. There is only one way to prevent the use of nuclear weapons: prohibit and eliminate them.

Nuclear weapons, like chemical weapons, biological weapons, cluster munitions and land mines before them, are now illegal. Their existence is immoral. Their abolishment is in our hands. The end is inevitable. But will that end be the end of nuclear weapons or the end of us? We must choose one.

We are a movement for rationality. For democracy. For freedom from fear. We are campaigners from 468 organisations who are working to safeguard the future, and we are representative of the moral majority: the billions of people who choose life over death, who together will see the end of nuclear weapons.

Setsuko Thurlow: It is a great privilege to accept this award, together with Beatrice, on behalf of all the remarkable human beings who form the ICAN movement. You each give me such tremendous hope that we can – and will – bring the era of nuclear weapons to an end.

I speak as a member of the family of *hibakusha* – those of us who, by some miraculous chance, survived the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. For more than seven decades, we have worked for the total abolition of nuclear weapons. We have stood in solidarity with those harmed by the production and testing of these horrific weapons around the world. People from places with long-forgotten names, like Moruroa, Ekker, Semipalatinsk, Maralinga, Bikini. People whose lands and seas were irradiated, whose bodies were experimented upon, whose cultures were forever disrupted.

We were not content to be victims. We refused to wait for an immediate fiery end or the slow poisoning of our world. We refused to sit idly in terror as the so-called great powers took us past nuclear dusk and brought us recklessly close to nuclear midnight. We rose up. We shared our stories of survival. We said: humanity and nuclear weapons cannot coexist.

Today, I want you to feel in this hall the presence of all those who perished in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. I want you to feel, above and around us, a great cloud of a quarter million souls. Each person had a name. Each person was loved by someone. Let us ensure that their deaths were not in vain.

I was just 13 years old when the United States dropped the first atomic bomb, on my city Hiroshima. I still vividly remember that morning. At 8:15, I saw a blinding bluish-white flash from the window. I remember having the sensation of floating in the air. As I regained consciousness in the silence and darkness, I found myself pinned by the collapsed building. I began to hear my classmates' faint cries: "Mother, help me. God, help me."

Then, suddenly, I felt hands touching my left shoulder, and heard a man saying: "Don't give up! Keep pushing! I am trying to free you. See the light coming through that opening? Crawl towards it as quickly as you can." As I crawled out, the ruins were on fire. Most of my classmates in that building were burned to death alive. I saw all around me utter, unimaginable devastation.

Processions of ghostly figures shuffled by. Grotesquely wounded people, they were bleeding, burnt, blackened and swollen. Parts of their bodies were missing. Flesh and skin hung from their bones. Some with their eyeballs hanging in their hands. Some with their bellies burst open, their intestines hanging out. The foul stench of burnt human flesh filled the air.

Thus, with one bomb my beloved city was obliterated. Most of its residents were civilians who were incinerated, vaporized, carbonized – among them, members of my own family and 351 of my schoolmates. In the weeks, months and years that followed, many thousands more would die, often in random and mysterious ways, from the delayed effects of radiation. Still to this day, radiation is killing survivors.

Whenever I remember Hiroshima, the first image that comes to mind is of my four-year-old nephew, Eiji – his little body transformed into an unrecognizable melted chunk of flesh. He kept begging for water in a faint voice until his death released him from agony. To me, he came to represent all the innocent children of the world, threatened as they are at this very moment by nuclear weapons. Every second of every day, nuclear weapons endanger everyone we love and everything we hold dear. We must not tolerate this insanity any longer.

Through our agony and the sheer struggle to survive – and to rebuild our lives from the ashes – we *hibakusha* became convinced that we must warn the world about these apocalyptic weapons. Time and again, we shared our testimonies. But still some refused to see Hiroshima and Nagasaki as atrocities – as war crimes. They accepted the propaganda that these were "good bombs" that had ended a "just war." It was this myth that led to the disastrous nuclear arms race – a race that continues to this day.

Nine nations still threaten to incinerate entire cities, to destroy life on earth, to make our beautiful world uninhabitable for future generations. The development of nuclear weapons signifies not a country's elevation to greatness, but its descent to the darkest depths of depravity. These weapons are not a necessary evil; they are the ultimate evil.

On the seventh of July this year, I was overwhelmed with joy when a great majority of the world's nations voted to adopt the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Having witnessed humanity at its worst, I witnessed, that day, humanity at its best. We *hibakusha* had been waiting for the ban for seventy-two years. Let this be the beginning of the end of nuclear weapons. All responsible leaders will sign this treaty. And history will judge harshly those who reject it. No longer shall their abstract theories mask the genocidal reality of their practices. No longer shall "deterrence" be viewed as anything but a deterrent to disarmament. No longer shall we live under a mushroom cloud of fear.

To the officials of nuclear-armed nations – and to their accomplices under the so-called "nuclear umbrella" – I say this: Listen to our testimony. Heed our warning. And know that your actions are consequential. You are each an integral part of a system of violence that is endangering humankind. Let us all be alert to the banality of evil.

To every president and prime minister of every nation of the world, I beseech you: Join this treaty; forever eradicate the threat of nuclear annihilation.

When I was a 13-year-old girl, trapped in the smouldering rubble, I kept pushing. I kept moving toward the light. And I survived. Our light now is the ban treaty. To all in this hall and all listening around the world, I repeat those words that I heard called to me in the ruins of Hiroshima: "Don't give up! Keep pushing! See the light? Crawl towards it."

Tonight, as we march through the streets of Oslo with torches aflame, let us follow each other out of the dark night of nuclear terror. No matter what obstacles we face, we will keep moving and keep pushing and keep sharing this light with others. This is our passion and commitment for our one precious world to survive.

www.icanw.org/campaign-news/ican-receives-2017-nobel-peace-prize/

- The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) is a coalition of non-governmental organizations in one hundred countries promoting adherence to and implementation of the United Nations nuclear weapon ban treaty. Pax Christi is a member. This landmark global agreement was adopted in New York on 7 July 2017. Sadly the UK Government has so far refused to sign the Treaty.

www.icanw.org/projects/pledge/

KIN-DOM AND ACTIVISM FOR FAITH COMMUNITIES, FOUR APPROACHES

Rev. Peter Sawtell, Eco-Justice Ministries, supported by the Franciscan Sisters of Little Falls, Minnesota and the Sisters of Loretto, Denver:

For several decades, Christian feminists have been using the term “kin-dom”, instead of the traditional “kingdom”, especially in saying the Lord’s Prayer. The new language has spread more broadly into some parts of progressive Christianity. As I consider the state of the world these days — ecologically, in terms of human justice, politically — I’m convinced that “kin-dom” is a valuable and enticing image that provides an alternative to what scientists are calling the Anthropocene.

Placing the two new terms side-by-side gives a vivid sense of how far astray the modern global society has gone, and of the directions that we must turn to get back on track.

Swapping in a hyphen to replace the letter G in kingdom leads to big changes in meaning and understanding. It turns us away from a notion of God as a masculine monarch, and challenges the idea that God’s creation is best seen as a hierarchical entity.

The language about God’s kin-dom is new, but the idea is deeply embedded in Judeo-Christian thinking. As I have written often, the Hebraic formulation of shalom lifts up the vision of peace with justice through all creation. Ethicist Larry Rasmussen has helped us recover that wholistic view with the powerful phrase “Earth community.”

This week, I’ve gone back to a helpful book on that theological theme, *The Bible and Ecology: Rediscovering the Community of Creation*, by Richard Bauckham. In the first paragraph of the book’s preface, he writes, “the Bible does evince a strong sense of the interconnectedness of all creatures and relates this to their common dependence on God their Creator.” Kin-dom, indeed.

In the central chapter of the book, Bauckham notes that the use of “community” to include both humans and the rest of nature probably originates with American conservationist Aldo Leopold. What is important for us about Leopold’s image of a biotic community is that it models the kind of commonality and interdependence of humans and all other creatures that the Hebrew Bible recognises and which, at the same time, is so clear from our contemporary ecological plight, especially the effects of climate change.

God’s kin-dom, God’s realm, the presence of shalom, the community of creation — all of these are found as driving themes throughout scripture. They appear as motivators of hope and behaviour, the goal toward which we are called to direct our personal and collective lives. Bauckham notes, “If there is hope for the people, then there must also be hope for the non-human creation.” He adds: “But, if we accept the diagnosis that human wrongdoing is responsible for ecological degradation, it follows that those who are concerned to live according to God’s will for [this] world must be concerned to avoid and repair damage to God’s creation as far as possible. Like the coming of the Kingdom of God, we cannot achieve the liberation of creation but we can anticipate it.”

For faithful and aware Christians today, community and our kinship with all creation are essential components of relevant theology and ethics. Christian theology has to reclaim Earth community as a central proclamation because we are now so far away from that blessed community. There is an emerging sense that we have entered the Anthropocene — another new word for our modern age.

The cover story for the September 27, 2017 issue of *Christian Century* was titled (in the print version), *Waking up to the Anthropocene*. Norman Wirzba described this new era: “The Anthropocene marks the moment when humans became the dominant force in planetary history, responsible for the widespread alteration of the world’s land, ocean, and atmospheric systems. If in the past it could have been assumed that nature’s power dwarfed and limited human ambition, in the Anthropocene the situation is reversed: human power is now the primary, determining influence shaping Earth’s future. Though planetary systems and ecological processes are still clearly at work, their expressions can no longer be understood apart from human activity. From cellular to atmospheric levels, there is no place or process that does not reflect humanity’s technological prowess and economic reach.”

That human power, unfortunately, is not benign, and it is not building up the vitality of the community of creation. In a series of graphic presentations, the website “*Welcome to the Anthropocene*” highlights the crossing of critical planetary boundaries — including species extinction and climate change — and names 1950 as the start of a “Great Acceleration” in human impacts. Wirzba (along with many other experts) connects the Anthropocene with the rise of now-dominant political and economic systems. “Both imperial power and capitalist production are driven by the desire to accumulate wealth. The wealth that is sought, however, has little to do with the commonwealth.” He also points to a philosophical/theological issue in our way of relating to the world. “But when freedom is characterized as liberation from nature, or as the ability of self-determining subjects to annex and exploit the world without end, then the degradation of places and the exploitation of communities are sure to follow.”

More than a decade ago, I named the challenge for those of us who are “liberal” and “progressive” that our notions of progress often celebrate an increasing separation from and power over the natural world. The modern mindset has infected even our theological aspirations. The new geologic era of the Anthropocene reflects human intentions that are almost exactly contrary to what is needed to build up God’s kin-dom. Our modern age has belief systems, economic systems and political systems that are devastating the planet.

Here in the United States, my great and ongoing lament is that our national political institutions — the executive branch and the congress — are driven by the mindset and the values of the Anthropocene. They, and parallel forces in state governments and business, are moving rapidly and brutally to exploit and abuse the community of creation, and to build human power and wealth.

This veering of public policy away from Earth community demands that Christians be involved actively in political and social change.

It is not a surprise that two startling new terms have emerged in recent years. The emergence of the Anthropocene is one reason why Christians have found it necessary to emphasize the blessing of God's kin-dom. Kin-dom is a profound theological hope that can guide us in this age of destruction.

Wirzba ends his article with this statement: "The dream of a perpetual growth economy that will fuel the individual ambitions of billions is over. In our Anthropocene world, it has become more important than ever to devote ourselves to the sort of homemaking that makes hospitality to all people and all creatures a distinct possibility. Christians have much to contribute to this work."

The choice before us is stark and vivid. We can continue to accelerate the destruction and destabilization of the Anthropocene, or we can turn toward the hope and healing of God's shalom for all creation.

In the preaching and teaching of churches, I pray for a dramatically stronger emphasis on God's kin-dom, and the value of the community of creation. In our advocacy and witness, I pray that we can be clear and compelling in the turn toward Earth community.

SHALOM!

Rev. Peter Sawtell, Executive Director Eco-Justice Ministries:

Our commitment to God's shalom — to peace with justice encompassing all creation — calls us beyond deep thoughts and fervent prayer, and into some form of effective engagement with the world. Our efforts at activism may be hindered, though, if we define the term too narrowly. If we can envision only one way of doing activism, we've limited our strategic toolbox, and discounted the skills and gifts of people who are better suited for other kinds of action.

Today, I want to highlight four very different forms of activism, to help clarify the range of options that are available to us — especially within the context of faith communities.

Issue activism

Tightly focused advocacy on specific issues is the classic image of activism. It is the presumed, go-to approach for many people and organizations committed to social change. It often builds on the models developed by Saul Alinsky, and his definition of an issue: a matter where a specific choice can be presented to a single decision-maker for a clear-cut answer.

Issue activism, then, focuses on decision makers — legislators, people in government offices, corporate executives — and goes to them with demands. We call members of congress, urging them to pass or block a bill. We stage a protest outside of corporate offices, calling for a decision (stop using palm oil in your products, don't frack here). Sometimes the "demand" is made politely, with phone calls to politicians. Sometimes it is more explicitly conflictual, with an angry confrontation or acts of civil disobedience.

Issue activism is the hallmark of activism because it is so effective at addressing specific issues. Wins and losses are measurable. Victories build enthusiasm and political capital.

But within faith communities, issue activism can be difficult to do. The issues that are selected may divide the congregation. The sharp lines that can be drawn between "us" and "them" who take opposing sides can feel too divisive. It is a proven and powerful strategy, but it may be hard to implement within a religious setting.

Public witness

There are many occasions when it is necessary to act, but there is no decision-maker to target, and no specific choice to highlight. In what I call "public witness", the activism is addressed to a broader community, lifting up a more general concern.

A great example of public witness comes from Billings, Montana, in 1993. In an act of anti-Semitism, on the first day of Hanukkah, a rock was thrown through the front window of a house displaying a Menorah. Within a matter of days, Christian families put drawings of a Menorah in their windows. The local paper printed a full-page image that could be displayed. 6,000 homes, in a city of 80,000, took part in the act of solidarity. Nothing was done that qualified as issue activism, but the community was changed.

This past summer, after the violence in Charlottesville, rallies and marches were held across the country. The message was fuzzy — a rejection of the KKK and the "alt-right", a rejection of racism and violence, an affirmation of community and racial justice — and that outpouring of witness has shaped community values and clarified measures of political strength. So, too, with the Women's Marches held last January.

Public witness — taking a stand about a matter of ethical importance — is a wonderfully appropriate strategy for faith communities. Our participation as clergy and as religious institutions adds strength and credibility to the witness. Acts of witness demonstrating broad concern for a cause (climate change, racial justice) can lay a foundation for issue activism, or reinforce the more specific work being done on an issue.

Constituency building

Margaret Mead's famous quotation affirms that a small group of committed people can change the world. Usually, though, that small group builds a much larger constituency of support and action. One necessary form of activism is work to build up the movement.

To make a difference in the world, activists need to bring more people into involvement on the issue. We need to move people from being “aware” of a problem or an issue, to being “concerned” and “committed” — getting to the point of making a moral judgment and taking a personal stance. The activism of constituency building is directed at our friends and neighbours and colleagues, to get them involved. We may often try to connect those folk with other organizations working on an issue or cause.

Faith communities have a mixed record on this kind of activism. All too often, I’ve seen churches do education about an important topic, and call it quits after a simple sharing of information. Nobody is moved to do anything. The better examples go beyond simple awareness into ethical engagement — in sermons, classes, or service in the community — and in encouragement to act in some way. Faith communities can do important work by getting their members to participate in work for social change.

Building conversations

In recent years, US politics has become highly polarised and communities have become deeply divided. The election of Mr. Trump, and single-party control of Washington have heightened an already existing problem. In this fractured context, and with the “bubbles” of social media and news where everything reinforces a partisan perspective, rising levels of mistrust and misinformation make communication virtually impossible across the broader community.

A new and necessary form of activism for today involves intentional work to establish communication, respect and trust in divided communities. There is a need to get people together who hold conflicting opinions and beliefs — not to negotiate a policy stance, but to hear each other’s stories and to understand each other’s motivations. Without that kind of understanding, we will be caught in a setting where opposing advocates can never compromise or cooperate.

Faith communities are an ideal setting for this kind of conversation. Often, our congregations include people with sharply divided perspectives on many issues, but who also have some sort of personal connection. Within churches, we can provide a setting where passionate people can speak and hear about why we are strongly motivated on critical issues — not to convince each other, but to better understand each other and open the door to respectful communities.

This is not an exhaustive list, of course. There are many other ways that individuals and groups can engage in action: financially with investing or divesting or purchasing decisions; through the courts; in the hands-on work of ecological restoration; and more.

These four strategies for action, though, are ones that can be considered by faith communities that want to make a difference in the world. They expand the toolbox so that congregations can find a way of acting that is appropriate for their particular setting, and the problems that need to be addressed.

There are many ways to act, and many issues or problems that need action. How is your congregation applying faith in ways that make a difference and get people involved?

catholicclimatemovement.global/activism-for-faith-communities-four-approaches/

EXCERPT FROM *AMERICA*, THE JESUIT MAGAZINE DEC 2017

“It’s important for people to know that Jesus spoke in Aramaic,” Father James Martin says, “and maybe a little Hebrew.” Making ancient Scripture sensible in contemporary languages will always prove a hazard-heavy challenge. The disciples of Jesus passed on the stories of their experiences to the early church before Gospel writers of the first century began their work, employing the *lingua franca* of the era: Greek. That means there was already something of “a distance” from the words that Jesus actually spoke in Aramaic to his followers.

Those Greek passages were then open to a number of alternative interpretations and choices when they were translated into other languages “as any translations would be,” says Father Martin.

1. *Entos hymōn*: Within or among? Among the biggest continuing interpretive challenges, one focuses around a familiar phrase from Luke, “the kingdom of God is among you,” according to Father Martin.

The original Greek expression, *entos hymōn*, could be interpreted in two ways:

- The kingdom of God could be found “within you,” as if it were an “interior reality,”
- or “among you,” to suggest “the world you live in,” a spatial expression of the rule of God present among the community of the faithful on earth.

Were Gospel writers deliberately trying to be vague on the concept? Perhaps Jesus was? “These are the kinds of things translators have to look at,” says Father Martin.

Why is it important to get it right? Because, he explains, like the Pope’s concern that the current translation of the *Our Father* might persuade some to believe that God could lead people into evil, these subtle differences in translations can have significant effects in how we understand the faith and live our lives. “If it’s ‘within,’” says Father Martin, “you have to worry less about the outside world.” But if the kingdom is “among us,” then the kingdom is here, “already but not yet,” he says, using a construct familiar to New Testament scholars.

The expression “kingdom of God” itself has been the source of interpretive disagreement, Father Martin says. Is “kingdom,” in Greek *basileia*, meant to denote a geographical reality or is it meant to suggest “more of a dynamic reality”?

catholicclimatemovement.global/accessing-the-joy-and-celebration-in-the-initial-translation-comments-by-fr-james-martin/

COLUMBAN YOUNG JOURNALISTS COMPETITION

Ellen Teague: 4 January 2018

The Missionary Society of St Columban is inviting young people to enter a journalism competition, an initiative to mark their centenary. Students aged 15-18, who are budding journalists, are asked to write an article or make a video report that informs, challenges and raises important issues on the topic: 'MIGRANTS ARE OUR NEIGHBOURS'. Teachers and parents are asked to alert young people to this opportunity.

Two separate strands are offered, one for students in Ireland and one for students in England, Scotland, and Wales. Each has two categories, writing and video. The closing date for entries is 8 February 2018. Leading journalists in Ireland and Britain will be judging the entries. The winning articles and videos will be announced on 15 March 2018. There are cash prizes.

The objective is to encourage students to use their journalistic writing and mobile skills to look at a topical issue which is relevant to Catholic Social Teaching and resonates with Columban mission. Since 2000 the Missionary Society of St Columban has committed itself in a special way to continue accompanying and defending the rights of migrants, and to address the underlying causes of the migration of peoples.

Pope Francis underlines Church teaching about welcoming the stranger when he says: "We have a duty toward our brothers and sisters who, for various reasons, have been forced to leave their homeland: a duty of justice, of civility and of solidarity." Migrant and interfaith work has been a Columban priority in all 17 countries where the Columbans work. In Ireland, the Columbans run a 'Columban Centre' in Dublin which welcomes asylum seekers and provides English classes. Also, Columban Fr Bobby Gilmore was a founder member and is on the board of the Migrant Rights Centre Ireland. In England, Columbans have engaged with migrant communities, and helped to run a house of sanctuary in Birmingham, called Fatima House, for women asylum seekers. Columbans have participated in 'Welcome the Stranger' Walks of Witness in London and Birmingham and there is a long-standing ministry to domestic workers.

The winners in the Irish category will be presented with their prizes on 29 June 2018 at Dalgan Park by former president of Ireland, Dr Mary McAleese. The winners in the British category will be given their prizes at the Centenary Columban celebration at Southwark Cathedral on 30 June 2018 by Archbishop Peter Smith of Southwark.

All details on the competition website: www.columbancompetition.com

<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/34085>

HISTORY OF CND EXHIBITION IN BRADFORD PEACE MUSEUM 12 January – to end February

This new temporary exhibition explores the dynamic 60 year history of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament from its founding in February 1958 to the present day and includes campaign materials such as posters, placards, banners and badges. A highlight is a copy of the original design for the CND symbol, created by the artist and peace campaigner Gerald Holtom in 1958. The symbol was never copyrighted and, following the extensive publicity and support surrounding the campaign, it became known and adopted across the world as a universal symbol of peace.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

JANUARY

26 CWDF Forum meets Chester MP Chris Matheson. This informal meeting is being arranged in association with the University's International Development Society. 7-9pm, Best Building CBB116, University of Chester, off Parkgate Road, Chester CH1 4BJ

27 Silent Vigil *Stop Weapons Sales to Saudi* 12.30-1.30pm The Cross, Chester. Chester CND invite you to join them in a silent vigil to highlight the plight of the people of Yemen and UK involvement. Wear black if possible. chestercnd@gmail.com

27 Holocaust Memorial Day hmd.org.uk/ **Further information:** www.cbcew.org.uk/catholic-jewish-relations

28 *Not the Daily Mail – Refugees Welcome Here!* 6.30-8pm Chester Cathedral South Transept, St Weburgh Street, Chester
Public Workshop – learn about work going on locally and how you can get involved CHendersonDavis@chestercathedral.com

28 Racial Justice Sunday: CARJ catholicchurch.org.uk/home/featured/

28 Homeless Sunday www.housingjustice.org.uk/Event/homeless-sunday-2018

FEBRUARY

5 *Soil – forgotten resource?* 7.30pm St Wilfrid's Parish Centre, Preston, R1 3JJ. Speaker Jen Jones. Soil has been called everything from 'dirt' or 'muck' to 'brown gold'. It is also called the forgotten resource. The Holy Father has written in *Laudato Si'* "soil is a caress of God." This talk will illustrate the many roles that soil plays in our lives and why we should be celebrating and caring about it.

5-7 National Conference for Rural Catholics 2018 Best Western Country Hotel, Garstang, Lancashire PR3 1YE. The programme includes: - A panel on ***Brexit and the Rural Economy*** (CLA Director Christopher Price, ADHB Chair, Sir Peter Kendall, HSBG's Gordon Whitford); - ***Laudato Si'*** (Prof K Kilby, Bede Professor of Catholic Theology - Durham); - ***The Vocation of the Agricultural Leader*** (Fr Rob Taylerson, Religious Adviser, Archdiocese of Birmingham); - A presentation on ***Statistics of Rural Catholic Parishes in England & Wales***; - A conference visit to a potato farm. Please draw the attention of senior figures in your diocese to the presentation on the Statistics of Rural Catholic Parishes in England & Wales. Cost: Full board £245 per person (including non returnable deposit of £100); 1 night D, B&B £80; half-day including lunch or dinner £25. Full details from Fr Robert Miller, Trellis House, Station Road, Tisbury, SP3 6JR - 01747 870228 - rwhm274@btinternet.com

6 Talk by Matt Jeziorski from Pax Christi at St Monica's, Appleton, Warrington WA4 3AB. 7:30 (after 7:00pm Mass) All welcome!

8 Day of Prayer for Victims of Human Trafficking [http://catholicchurch.org.uk/Home/Featured/Day-of-Prayer-for-Victims-of-Human-Trafficking/\(language\)/_eng-GB](http://catholicchurch.org.uk/Home/Featured/Day-of-Prayer-for-Victims-of-Human-Trafficking/(language)/_eng-GB)

8 St Josephine Bakhita Feast Day, patron saint of Sudan and for victims of slavery and trafficking. santamartagroup.com

10 NJPN Open Networking Day, Holy Cross, Wellington Road, Leicester LE1 6HW 10.30am-4pm. FareShares East Midlands will speak on *We believe no good food should go to waste. Saving food and changing lives.* There will be opportunities for networking with justice & peace activists from around the country and to get updates from national agencies. All welcome. Contact NJPN, 39 Eccleston Square, London SW1V 1BX, Tel 020 7901 4864, Email admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk

11 Church Action on Poverty Sunday *Voices from the Margins*. Throughout his ministry, Jesus listened to people who were on the margins of his society. He made visible those who were overlooked, and gave them hope. Our churches are called to follow Jesus' example: to listen to voices from the margins and make them heard, so that things can change.

Resources for the Sunday available from: <http://www.church-poverty.org.uk/sunday> Download the *Spark* newsletter: <http://www.church-poverty.org.uk/about-us/spark-newsletter/winter2018/sparkwinter2018pdf>

13 Time Out on Tuesdays – Input and silent prayer time. The Convent of Our Lady of the Cenacle, Lance Lane, Wavertree, L15 6TW 10am-4pm. Cost £10. Tea and coffee, bring your own lunch. 0151 722 2271, email: winnecenacle@gmail.com

14 Ash Wednesday witness to challenge nuclear war preparation www.paxchristi.org.uk

14 Climate Coalition *Show the Love* fortheLoveof.org.uk

16 CAFOD Quiz Night for CAFOD's Connect 2 Ethiopia project. 7.30pm Our Lady's Parish Centre, Ellesmere Port Town Centre, Fairtrade refreshments at the interval. Entry £3 adults, £1 children. More details: contact Tony Walsh on 0151 355 6419

16-18 *Sharing Gospel Joy* Catholic People's Week Boars Hill Carmelite Priory, nr Oxford 18+. Speakers: Columban Father Jim Fleming, Ellen Teague and Julia Corcoran, of the Columban JPIC Team plus Virginia Moffat and Chris Cole, founder of Drone Wars UK and a peace activist. Info and bookings: Ted Monks BHW2018@catholicpeoplesweek.org.uk

20 World Day of Social Justice un.org/esa/socdev/social/intldays/intjustice

23 CAFOD Lent Fast Day cafod.org.uk

26-11 March Fairtrade Fortnight www.fairtrade.org.uk/Get-Involved/Currentcampaigns/Fairtrade-Fortnight

MARCH

2 Women's World Day of Prayer: prepared by the Women of Suriname: *All God's Creation is Good.* www.wwdp.org.uk/

3 Fairtrade Wine Tasting (TBC) Hoole Community Centre led by Justine Rae (Co-op) www.chesterwdf.org.uk

8 International Women's Day

10 Fairtrade Producer displays (TBC) All-day event at Storyhouse, Hunter St, Chester CH1 2AR. A Fairtrade Fun Day event for families with children – displays and activities to help raise awareness and underline the benefits of Fairtrade to a wide range of producers in developing countries. Further info: heather@cheshiredec.org

10-11 *Faith for Life* Course Sacred Heart Parish Centre, Liverpool Road, Ainsdale, Southport. This course does what it says in the title and has even been described as 'life changing.' More details from Steve Atherton s.atherton@rcaol.co.uk

13 *Accra: City for People or Profit?* Dr Tom Gillespie of the Global Development Institute of the University of Manchester will talk about his research work, considering solutions to the homeless crisis in the Ghanaian capital. Talk arranged by International Development Studies, visitors welcome. 5-6pm, Best Building CBB116, University of Chester, off Parkgate Road, Chester CH1 4BJ. More details: www.chesterwdf.org.uk or contact Terry Green (Chair) 01244 383668, email terry@tdgreen.f9.co.uk

13 CWDF Forum Meeting 6.45-9pm The Unity Centre, Cuppin St, Chester CH1 2BN. Speaker To be announced.

13 *Time Out on Tuesdays* see 13 February

16 CAFOD Quiz Night see 16 February

16-18 *Boundaries, Borders and Identity* Catholic People's Week Monastery of Our Lady of Hying, Carnforth. Info and bookings: Breideen Murtagh BHW2018@catholicpeoplesweek.org.uk

21 *Fly Kites not Drones* dronescampaignnetwork.org.uk

22 World Water Day unwater.org/worldwaterday

24 38th Anniversary of the Death of Archbishop Oscar Romero romerotrust.org.uk

24 Earth Hour wwf.org.uk/earthhour

25 March –1 April Holy Week Student Cross Holy Week pilgrimage, 11 groups from different starting points will each carry a cross, arriving in Walsingham on Good Friday. The pilgrimage has taken place every year since 1948 Each group collectively carries a large wooden cross as a witness to the people that they pass on the way to Walsingham. Pilgrims are welcomed, accommodated and fed by kind-hearted churches along the route. **Archbishop Malcolm McMahon, Archbishop of Liverpool**, walked Student Cross in the 1980s. He recalls: "you meet yourself, that's the person you don't expect to meet, and you meet Jesus in your fellow pilgrims and those you meet on the way." A chance to celebrate Easter in a unique way, by living Holy Week in community, celebrating liturgy and tangibly walking with Christ towards the joy of the Resurrection. www.studentcross.org.uk

APRIL

16-22 Global Campaign on Military Spending demilitarize.org.uk/paxchristi.org.uk

MAY

8 CWDF Forum Meeting and AGM 6.45-9pm The Unity Centre, Cuppin St, Chester CH1 2BN.

12 NJPN AGM & Open Networking Day London (venue tbc) 10.30am-4pm justice-and-peace.org.uk/njpn/meetings/

14-20 Christian Aid Week christianaid.org.uk

15 Conscientious Objectors' Day paxchristi.org.uk

• Many items taken from the daily e-bulletin Independent Catholic News www.indcatholicnews.com an 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 0207 901 4864 admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk

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