

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

SYRIA: PAX CHRISTI ASKS WORLD LEADERS TO REFRAIN FROM AIR STRIKES, AND STABILISE RELATIONS FOR LONG-TERM PEACE

Pax Christi International 13 April 2018

Pax Christi International said in a statement today:

Syria's seven-year war has completely devastated the country and created the worst humanitarian crisis of our lifetime. More than half of Syria's people have been killed or fled. Over 13 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance, while aid workers haven't been able to deliver aid in many parts of the country due to the violence.

It's clear that foreign military involvement hasn't made Syria a safer place. The desperation felt by Syrians for a long-term solution for peace is shared around the world.

Our peace movement condemns the use of chemical gas attacks in Syria and is again heartbroken by the images reaching us on 7 April of another attack in Douma. Despite Syria's ratification of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), the supposed destruction of Syria's chemical stockpile by the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and UN Security Council resolutions, these weapons remain available - possibly to different actors - and have already been used several times this year.

We support the OPCW's recent fact-finding mission to Douma as well as the call of civil society organisations for a UN mechanism of inquiry.

Pax Christi International deeply believes that the possible air attacks by the US and its allied countries shouldn't be the response to this recent chemical weapons attack because they will cause further suffering of innocent Syrian civilians and could escalate into a wider conflict between countries.

We fear that in these last days the war in Syria has reached a dangerous turning point with violence-inciting rhetoric and call upon world leaders to immediately stop any further military steps.

It is our view that a fully inclusive and nonviolent political process through diplomacy and dialogue is the only way to end this brutal conflict.

We strongly affirm Pope Francis's message in response to the latest chemical weapons attack in Douma in which he condemned the attack and stated that 'there is not a good or a bad war, and nothing can justify such instruments that exterminate defenceless people and populations.' He also asked us in his message to pray that the responsible politicians and military leaders choose another path: that of negotiations, the only one that can bring peace.

<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/34707>

SYRIA: PAX CHRISTI COMMENTS ON MILITARY STRIKES

Pax Christi International 14 April 2018

In the wake of this morning's attacks on Syria by the US, UK and France, Pax Christi International issued this statement:

"Pax Christi International deeply believes that the possible air attacks by the US and its allied countries shouldn't be the response to this recent chemical weapons attack because they will cause further suffering of innocent Syrian civilians and could escalate into a wider conflict between countries. We fear that in these last days the war in Syria has reached a dangerous turning point with violence-inciting rhetoric and call upon world leaders to immediately stop any further military steps. It is our view that a fully inclusive and nonviolent political process through diplomacy and dialogue is the only way to end this brutal conflict..."

ATTACKING ASSAD: TO DO OR NOT TO DO

Professor Paul Rogers wrote in *Open Democracy* on 13 April: There is no easy, immediate and clear-cut alternative, and the situation is made worse by the current antagonism between the West and Russia. By far the strongest argument against attacks is that war will most likely make matters much worse. Nevertheless, some other approaches can be recommended ...

Read on here: www.opendemocracy.net/paul-rogers/attacking-assad-to-do-or-not-to-do

MORE BOMBS IN SYRIA WILL HELP NO ONE

Professor Maryann Cusimano Love wrote in *America Magazine* on 9 April: There are many ways the United States can help: President Trump can increase US humanitarian aid; accept refugees from Syria; help frontline states Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt and Iraq minister to the victims; press for humanitarian access corridors so aid can reach the war-torn Syrian population; and press for the implementation of a ceasefire to accompany the start of peace talks.

To read on see: More US bombs in Syria will help no one www.americamagazine.org/politics-society/2018/04/09/more-us-bombs-syria-will-help-no-one

<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/34708>

STOP BOMBING SYRIA PROTESTS: BRUCE KENT QUESTIONS LEGALITY OF AIRSTRIKES

Jo Siedlecka 16 April 2018

Protests against Saturday's airstrikes on Syria took place in a number of cities across the UK on Monday. A huge crowd gathered in Parliament Square, at the same time as Prime Minister Theresa May was being grilled by MPs in the Commons over the attacks. The Prime Minister decided over the weekend to join US and France in launching airstrikes on Syria, targeting the Assad regime's alleged chemical weapons bases. Many MPs had wanted a debate in parliament before any decision was made to bomb Syria. One of the speakers at the London demonstration was Bruce Kent, CND Vice President. Describing the attack as 'undemocratic', he asked why it had gone ahead without consultation with governments or the UN.

The full text of Bruce Kent's address follows:

Last week our Prime Minister ordered the RAF to bomb Syria - as a punishment for an alleged chemical weapon war crime. She did so in partnership with President Macron of France and President Trump of the United States. None of the three sought the approval of their democratic institutions in advance. What shocked me most was the lack of any reference to the United Nations by the three leaders, by almost any of our national media, or by other commentators.

The Charter of the United Nations was signed in June 1945. Its prime purpose was to 'save succeeding generations from the scourge of war'. Any independent decision by a country to go to war was ruled out. The only exception was in Article 51 which allows self-defence after an attack by another country - but only until the Security Council has taken charge of the situation. Even the Security Council only has 'primary' responsibility (art.24.1). After that comes the General Assembly.

Don't May, Macron and Trump know about these legal obligations?

Had I been aware of what was planned last week I would have thought it my duty to tell the RAF crews involved that they should raise the issue of illegality with their superiors and if necessary refuse to take part in the recent illegal bombing of Syria. But not even our Westminster Parliament was allowed to know what was going to happen. Democracy?? Not as in my dictionary.

The ongoing mess in the Middle East needs an entire new approach. We are playing on the edge of nuclear weapon disaster but most people are not even aware of the perils of this Trump-Putin conflict.

We need to get some sane heads together. The Dalai Lama, the Pope, Caroline Lucas of the Greens and the ex-President of Ireland Mary Robinson just to start with. The heads of Oxfam, CND, CAAT Amnesty International and the Red Cross perhaps as well. Perhaps too one or two of those who have known war and its horrors - like our Veterans here today.

It is time for other brains with other mind-sets to make their own contributions as well as the current political figure heads. Meanwhile why not a ceasefire in Syria, warm welcome for war driven refugees, relief corridors created, hospital ships in the Mediterranean, and as well - long term here - the distribution of UN Charters in all schools and Universities?

We have had too much foolish nationalism. We are first of all global citizens and as global citizens we face the same opportunities and the same risks. Clear air, fresh water, sufficient food, respect for human rights, are universal needs. The dangers arising from global warming and world militarism clearly face us all. It's absolutely obvious that the world must abolish war and militarism, and find better ways of dealing with human rights abuses, corrupt governments and wider conflicts. The United Nations exists to do just that. Why don't we use it?

<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/34724>

SYRIA: BISHOP APPEALS FOR PEACE - 'WE NEED PRAYER NOT FURTHER VIOLENCE'

Source: Aid to the Church in Need 17 April 2018

Following the latest attacks in Syria, one of the country's leading bishops has issued an impassioned plea for peace - saying that the country needs prayer and not further violence. Melkite Archbishop Jean Abdou Arbach of Homs, Hama and Yabroud told Catholic charity Aid to the Church in Need that after seven years of war - and the latest bombing raids on the country - Syrians are tired of the conflict.

Archbishop Arbach said: "People cannot take any more. They simply want to live an ordinary life, to sleep peacefully in their beds and wake and go to work, and not to the sound of falling bombs. It is enough - it is too much."

The prelate called for everyone around the world to pray for the Syrian people and for lasting peace. He said: "We want and we need peace - please pray for us. We need prayers, prayers and more prayers. It is the only thing that can bring us unity in this country." He added that Pope Francis had also asked for prayers for the situation in Syria.

On Sunday (15 April), Pope Francis said: "I am deeply disturbed by the present world situation, in which notwithstanding the instruments at the disposition of the international community, it struggles to agree on a common action in favour of peace in Syria and in other regions of the world. I pray incessantly for peace, and I invite all people of good will to continue to do the same. I appeal anew to all responsible political leaders, so that justice and peace may prevail."

Archbishop Arbach added: "What was the point of this war? Everything has been destroyed, there are millions of refugees... If only the politicians of the world would work for peace and not for war."

ACN is helping with projects in Homs including scholarships for 4,000 students and the provision of essential foodstuffs and medicines. The charity is also supporting repair of homes and Church buildings. Archbishop Arbach said that up to 80 percent of churches and catechetical centres in his archdiocese have already been rebuilt.

<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/34725>

IRELAND: CHURCH LEADERS ISSUE JOINT STATEMENT ON 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF GOOD FRIDAY/BELFAST AGREEMENT

9 April 2018: Archbishop Eamon Martin, Catholic Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland and Archbishop Richard Clarke, Church of Ireland Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland have issued the following statement this morning:

As we mark the 20th anniversary of the signing of the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement tomorrow, we wish together to give thanks to God for all that has been achieved in building peace since that historic moment. The Good Friday Agreement sought to address contentious political problems in the context of decades of violence, divided communities and immense suffering and death on our streets. As such it was a complex and, in places, controversial document. However, we are convinced that its explicit rejection of the use or threat of violence, together with its emphasis on the principles of "partnership, equality and mutual respect" as the "basis of relationships" within these islands, has continuing potential to transform society and life for all of us. Nothing remotely its equal has been outlined then or since.

We thank God for all that has been achieved in shaping a peaceful and shared future over the past twenty years. We acknowledge the efforts of the international community who not only invested significantly in the process which led to the Agreement, but who have remained alongside us as our partners for peace. Above all we thank God for the generation of young people who are growing up without the sounds of bomb or bullet on a daily basis; for the livelihoods and businesses which have not been destroyed; for the families and neighbourhoods who have been spared the heart-breaking pain and trauma of death or serious injury.

No single political agreement can be expected, of itself, to solve or heal the deep wounds in any society. The Good Friday Agreement offered a framework for a new beginning, outlining the interlocking structures and safeguards under which the relationships required for healthy democracy could develop and be sustained. Northern Ireland still presents many problems and opportunities, but these are problems and opportunities for all of us - and not simply politicians - to solve and grasp. Some say we have failed in this task; others that we have only just begun. Too often, any vision of a common good has been submerged beneath sectional interests. At this present impasse in political life in Northern Ireland it is worth asking ourselves: is it because the principles and structure of the Good Friday Agreement have failed us, or, rather is it that we have together failed to make the most of those supportive principles which it offered?

In the Christian tradition we share, Good Friday is a time of returning to God and of "calling out" anything which prevents us from living truly as disciples of Jesus Christ. This can be a painful exercise. But we are an Easter people. We are always beginning. We are always making a fresh start. It was in the light of the Resurrection that Saint Paul urged us to be "ambassadors" of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5.20).

The peace we have today took a great effort to achieve; it will equally take risk, and leadership at all levels, to maintain. It is therefore our sincere shared prayer that this anniversary will help to rekindle a spirit of opportunity, healing and hope for lasting peace which is now needed more than ever. We call on all people of good will to be ambassadors of reconciliation, helping to rebuild trust and mutual respect in order to move us further forward and closer together as a society that places the common good as its primary purpose. <https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/34672>

THE PRINCE OF WALES' EASTER MESSAGE

John Newton and John Pontifex 31 March 2018

The Prince of Wales has expressed his support for Christians suffering for their faith around the world in a video message released on Good Friday. The Prince spoke of his concern for all those persecuted on religious grounds - and highlighted the problems faced by Christians in particular. He said: "At this time of Easter, when our minds are recalled to the suffering of Our Lord 2,000 years ago, we think especially of those Christians who are suffering for their faith in many places around the world. I want to assure them that they are not forgotten and that they are in our prayers."

The video follows The Prince's meetings with Church leaders from the Middle East, where Christians and other religious minorities have been targeted for their beliefs. The Prince met Chaldean Archbishop Bashar Warda of Erbil, who has been overseeing the care of more than 100,000 Christians driven out of their homes on Iraq's Nineveh Plains and Melkite Archbishop John Darwish of Zahlé and Furzol, Lebanon, who is helping Syrian Christian refugees receiving no help from other sources.

The meetings with Archbishops Warda and Darwish were organised with help from Catholic charity Aid to the Church in Need which supports the local Churches' work. The charity's last *Persecuted and Forgotten?* report, which examines human rights' violations against Christians around the world, highlighted the genocide of Christians in the Middle East, concluding that the resulting exodus could threaten the continuing survival of the region's ancient Churches.

In his message, The Prince of Wales pointed out causes of optimism for the faithful, including the return of Christians to their homes in northern Iraq and elsewhere. He said: "I have also heard that in the darkness there are small shafts of light, signs of Resurrection and of hope that, slowly but surely, Christians who have had to flee from their homelands are beginning to return and to rebuild their shattered homes." According to figures released last Sunday (25 March), 3,249 Christian houses on the Nineveh Plains have been restored out of 12,217 and 37,086 Christians have returned home.

The Prince noted that for centuries different faiths - particularly the three Abrahamic religions of Christianity, Islam and Judaism - "lived side by side as neighbours and as friends". He said that in Lebanon, Muslims join with Christians at the Shrine of our Lady of Lebanon to honour Mary, adding that she "occupies a unique and elevated position in both Christianity and Islam". He said: "Over the years, I have met many who have had to flee for their faith and for their life - or have somehow endured the terrifying consequences of remaining in their country - and I have been so deeply moved, and humbled, by their truly remarkable courage and by their selfless capacity for forgiveness, despite all that they have suffered." He added: "All three Abrahamic faiths have known and continue to know the bitterness of persecution when religion has fallen into the barbaric grip of those who distort and misrepresent faith."

The message, recorded by Associated Press, can be downloaded here: www.apmultimedianeewsroom.com/multimedia-newsroom/the-prince-of-wales-records-easter-message-in-support-of-persecuted-christians
<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/346721>

UPDATE FROM THE PHILIPPINES

Linda Tiongco 18 March 2018

It's raining! At last the rains have begun....maybe. Although this is the time of year when they should come: Easter is the time for planting the primary maize crop for the year. But no-one is sure any more. I remember when I first came out here as a VSO in 1976 the farmers were saying, even then, that the climate was changing. They could no longer be confident the rains would come when they should. El Nino droughts were happening more frequently...every 3 to 4 years instead of 7 years, giving farmers no time to recover from one drought to the next.

The majority of the farmers in Damulog, Bukidnon on the island of Mindanao are very poor living on less than £2/day. Bukidnon is the 4th poorest Province in the Philippines. They borrow from the middle traders to buy the seed and other inputs they need to plant. The loan is usually two to three times the actual cost of the seeds etc, but they have no choice and they are obligated to sell their harvest back to the trader they borrowed from... at a lower than market price. Their collateral is their land. If the rains fail...or come at the wrong time and the crop fails...and they can't pay back the lender they will forfeit the land becoming day labourers and sliding deeper into poverty.

To make matters worse, despite the Philippines being the most typhoon prone country in the world, the island of Mindanao has always been typhoon free. That is why Del Monte made Bukidnon the site of its pineapple plantation when they moved their production from Hawaii in the 1930s later adding plantations of bananas and papaya.....that is until the last few years when super typhoon Haiyan and Bopha tracked further south than usual, devastating the eastern and northern seaboard of Mindanao causing massive destruction. In the past few months tropical storm Temba battered Marawi which is still recovering from a 5-month siege by ISIS inspired extremists. Evacuation centres were flooded and landslides washed houses and people away with the loss of over 120 lives. Mindanao can no longer claim to be typhoon free. Everything changes.

Climate change is affecting the poorest the most. Land is being concentrated in fewer and fewer families as the changing weather creates increased risk of crop failure and uncertainty. With little future on the land the young are moving to the coastal cities where they join the vast numbers squatting along the rivers and coastal margins and as storms and rising seas create increased flooding their lives become increasingly precarious.

In a very small way MuCAARD teams are trying to help. It has been a busy couple of months visiting MuCAARD member teams and a visit from Rob who came out here with me as a VSO all those years ago. He's also a trustee of MuCAARD-UK and an agriculturist. Some of you may have seen the photos on the MuCAARD-UK Facebook page of the work of COSEED reforesting the mangroves, protecting the coastline from tsunamis and helping farmers redeem their land through a Land Redemption programme we support. We met 4 of the beneficiaries of this programme and they all told us how this programme has given them hope that they will, once again, benefit from the harvest of their land.

Just one story: Reminda Tingson: widow, 4 children.

In 2007 her child working in Manila and was emergency admitted to hospital with meningitis. Cost of hospitalisation: Php 100,000 (£1400 or more than her annual income). She borrowed or 'Prenda' Php45,000 using 2has. of coconuts as collateral with no time limit to repay. Prenda means: 100% of the income from the coconuts goes to the lender. The loan has to be paid in full in a single payment. In 2014 Reminda approached CoSEED for help to buy back her land but they had no funds at that time. But it made them realise the extent of this problem. They sent a proposal to MuCAARD-UK and we were able to give a small grant. In 2016 CoSEED gave her the Php45,000 to repay the loan and a formal agreement signed agreeing that:

25% of the harvest retained by Reminda

25% towards repayment of the loan

10% to hire individual to monitor the coconuts

15% Federation of CoSEED Community Organisation to build up capital for projects

25% CoSEED staff /office costs and expand programmes

Net income from first harvest: Php 5833.30 of which Php2916.66 is down payment on loan. Coconuts are harvested 3x pa. This means that in less than 6 years the loan will have repaid. Reminda has been unable to pay it off over the past 12 years because the lenders will only accept it as a lump sum. Over the past 12 years she has earned money from taking in sewing selling slipper and bags. Now Reminda is helping one of her children to buy a small house and has small capital to start up a dried fish business. MuCAARD-UK has supported this project for the past 3 years.

BUT THEN....Romy got a small wound on his lower leg and ignored it until a temperature of 39.7c meant emergency admission to a hospital with cellulitis, for 4 days of intravenous antibiotics. Two weeks later he's much better, still taking medicines, but slowly building up his energy and getting mobile again. Maybe now he'll be more careful of his diet as being borderline diabetic means he can't eat as many bananas as he likes!

I have been helping out the MuCAARD staff responding to the ongoing crisis in Marawi. Romy, when he hasn't been in hospital, has been spreading the word about the BISAP PuLPuG/GRACE health scheme. One village organised a meeting at which over 850 people came. The programme has now been officially adopted by the local officials and will begin operating in the next few months. In the meantime my okra plants are flowering, tomatoes are growing and beans have been planted. May the rains continue!

• **Romy Tiongco** grew up in Bukidnon, Mindanao in the Philippines. Some readers will know Romy and his wife Linda from the many years they worked for Christian Aid in the North West and their close involvement with J&P. In recent years Romy served as mayor in Damulog, a municipality of nearly 30,000 people in the province of Bukidnon. His (maximum) 9 year term completed, Romy and Linda are now back working/volunteering with MuCAARD, an organisation jointly set up by Muslims and Christians to work together for peace and development on the island of Mindanao. MuCAARD aims towards building sustainable communities by increasing skills and by encouraging self help.

CHEATING CRICKETERS AND THE MESSAGE OF EASTER

Jon Kuhrt 31 March 2018

I'll never forget my first match for my University Cricket Club. I was 19 and nervously excited. I had played a lot of league cricket down south but now I was playing alongside teammates from the northern leagues. They were a tougher breed. In the changing room before the match, I was genuinely taken aback to see one of my new team mates deliberately squirt sun-cream onto the outside of his trousers and rub it into the material. He said 'Keep throwing the ball to me, I'll keep it nice and rosy'.

This week there has been a hail-storm of media coverage about the Australian cricket team cheating through using sandpaper to illegally alter the condition of the ball. Roughing up one side of the ball helps the ball swing and aids the bowling team. After what they were doing was exposed on the big screen on the ground, the young player actually doing the cheating, Cameron Bancroft, farcically attempted to conceal the sandpaper in his pants. Immediately after the days play, the captain, Steve Smith and Bancroft faced the media and confessed their crimes. It turned out that Bancroft was carrying out a plan hatched by the team's leadership. I doubt they realised what was just about to hit the fan.

The sporting world was stunned. Cricket is a far bigger sport in Australia than it is in England and Steve Smith is the best batsman in the world. When the Australian Prime Minister joined the chorus of condemnation you knew they were in trouble. The reckless disregard for the rules along with the premeditated nature of the plan and the coercion of a young player to carry it out, drew widespread condemnation. In addition, the Australian team's reputation for aggression, arrogance and self-righteousness meant any sympathy was in short supply. And it got worse. It turned out that even their televised confession was not truthful as key facts were covered up in an attempt to lessen the damage. A hastily completed investigation from the Australian Cricket administration has led to year-long bans for Smith, David Warner (the vice-captain) and a slightly shorter one for Bancroft. After being sent home, Smith gave a painfully emotional press conference. It is hard to watch but it is a study of man who through foolishness and weakness has lost an incredible amount. He is truly broken.

I love cricket more than ever. I have coached a youth team for the last few years and last season I came out of retirement after a 15 year gap to play again for my old club side. Playing matches alongside my sons was a brilliant experience that I will always cherish. Despite my love for the game, it is important to recognise that sport is ultimately unimportant. Eleven people chasing a bit of red leather around a patch of grass really does not mean much in the great scheme of things. But sport represents and embodies things which are incredibly important such as teamwork, bravery, skill, judgement and character. Sport gives opportunities to develop these qualities in a unique way. Even deeper than these human qualities are the underlying issues of forgiveness, redemption and hope. As a Christian, I believe that what has happened in the cricketing world resonates with the message of Easter.

Each week we host a mid-week church group at my house. This week to start the evening, I gave everyone a cricket ball to hold and we discussed the cricket controversy. I asked everyone to reflect on the things we don't get right. Gloating and enjoying the suffering of others, especially our competitors, is something humans enjoy. But the truth is that we all mess up – we are all weak, negligent and do things deliberately for our own gain. Rather than simply join in gleeful condemnations, this week is an opportunity to examine ourselves. Smith, Warner and Bancroft have done wrong and are paying a bitter cost for their actions. Time will tell whether in a cricketing sense they will be rehabilitated and come back successfully.

But the message of Easter is that in an ultimate sense, redemption is always available. Jesus offered forgiveness even to those who condemned and killed him. And through His death and resurrection, God showed the world the kind of love and grace powerful enough to break any wrong-doing.

Cricket is great and has been a big story this week. But the message of Easter is the Big Story which endures and speaks to our deepest needs. We all mess up – but hope and redemption is available for everyone.

<https://resistanceandrenewal.net/2018/03/31/cheating-cricketers-and-the-message-of-easter/>

• **Jon Kuhrt** works with people affected by homelessness, offending and addictions at the West London Mission. He, his wife and three children live in Streatham, south London. He likes football...but loves cricket.

STEPHEN HAWKING'S FINAL GIFT WAS TO HELP FEED THE HUNGRY

"Today's lunch is a gift from Stephen... from the Hawking family." On 31 March, the day of Hawking's funeral, his family made a donation as a "gift from Stephen" to a local charity hosting a lunch for vulnerable members of the community. The donation allowed FoodCycle, a nonprofit based in Cambridge that provides meals to the hungry or lonely with surplus food, to provide treats to 50 guests in a room decorated especially for Easter.

There are 37 FoodCycle projects across the UK, serving 1,000 meals every week using food otherwise destined for the bin. Since 2009 the charity has cooked over 230,000 meals using 265 tonnes of reclaimed surplus food — all prepared by volunteers.

https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/stephen-hawking-funeral-cambridge-foodcycle-food-b/?utm_source=Iterable&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=UK_06_Apr_2018_content_digest_alive

FoodCycle Manchester cooks every Wednesday evening at the Roby, a mental health and social inclusion initiative in Longsight, Manchester. We serve healthy three-course meals each week for around 40 people and encourage local people to volunteer, to help develop new skills and also feel a part of the wider community. FoodCycle Manchester is only made possible with the great volunteers giving their time, enthusiasm and energy. We have opportunities available for people to come along and cook, host guests and be involved in collecting the surplus food donations from local suppliers. You don't need to have any previous cooking experience, although if you do that is just as welcome! We want as many local volunteers as possible and everyone is welcome to be a part of FoodCycle Manchester. **Please email** manchester@foodcycle.org.uk if you need more information.

Find out more about other NW FoodCycle projects at: <https://www.foodcycle.org.uk> – currently based in Salford Langworthy, Prestwich, Liverpool and Salford Central.

AFTER WINDRUSH U-TURN, JRS CALLS FOR COMPLETE END TO GOVERNMENT'S 'HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT' IMMIGRATION POLICY

Jesuit Refugee Service UK 17 April 2018

Responding to the welcome news today that the Government has bowed to media pressure and reversed its mistreatment of Windrush-era citizens, the Jesuit Refugee Service in the UK (JRS UK) has called on the Home Secretary to abandon its cruel hostile environment agenda altogether.

Following weeks of stories about Windrush-era citizens losing their rights to work, to rent property and to access free healthcare under tightening immigration laws, Home Secretary, Amber Rudd, was yesterday forced to apologise for the "appalling" actions of her department. Addressing Parliament, she stated that the Home Office had become "too concerned with policy" and had "lost sight of the individual". The Home Secretary announced the creation of a new taskforce tasked with resolving the immigration status of Commonwealth-born long-term UK residents.

However, JRS UK has long been drawing attention to the aggressive web of policies that constitute the hostile environment agenda, and sees the same cruelty meted out to asylum seekers as faced by the Windrush-era citizens. This Home Office policy of aggression towards undocumented migrants leaves those JRS UK serves unable to access government support and prohibited from working, and so forced into destitution, reliant wholly on charities to meet their most basic needs.

In response to the Home Secretary's announcement JRS UK Director, Sarah Teather, said: "JRS welcomes the announcement that the gross mistreatment of Windrush citizens is to be abandoned. In these citizens, the government has been forced to consider immigration policy through a more human lens and so to glimpse the devastation that its hostile environment agenda wreaks on human lives. However, the hostile environment has far wider consequences. In our work at the Jesuit Refugee Service, we see daily how it crushes the lives of many who have come here in search of safety. If the Home Secretary is serious about delivering an immigration policy that cares about human lives, she must now reflect deeply on the direction of travel of the department she leads and abandon the hostile environment agenda altogether."

• Sarah Teather has been Director of JRS UK since January 2016. She was previously MP for Brent Central until 2015 and exposed the government's hostile environment agenda in July 2013.

See: www.theguardian.com/theguardian/2013/jul/12/sarah-teather-angry-voices-immigration
<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/34727>

TURN CLIMATE WORDS INTO ACTION SAY COMMONWEALTH FAITH LEADERS

Source: CAFOD 17 April 2018

More than 170 faith leaders from across the Commonwealth have issued a call to governments to turn "words into action" on climate change at a summit in London this week.

A letter published in the *Daily Telegraph* in London and signed by dozens of religious leaders states that "Not even the remotest corner of the Commonwealth remains unaffected" by the changing climate, with the greatest impact felt by the poorest people in the group of nations. The signatories - including archbishops, church moderators and rabbis from all continents in the Commonwealth - call for politicians attending the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting to pursue "every effort" to keep global temperature rises below the Paris Agreement target of 1.5 degrees Celsius. The meeting will take place at Buckingham Palace, St James's Palace and Windsor Castle between Monday 16 and Friday 20 April.

The official website for the summit states that "urgent action" on climate change is needed "to reduce vulnerability and increase resilience" and notes that 39 of the 53 Commonwealth countries are classed as small or vulnerable states. The faith leaders' statement is the latest in a series of calls by religious figures for action on climate change at international summits. Several heads of government cited Pope Francis's encyclical on the environment as a catalyst for the success of the UN climate talks that resulted in the Paris Agreement in 2015. The letter says:

'We, faith leaders from across the Commonwealth, representing peoples of Africa, Asia, the Pacific, Europe and the Americas, come together in friendship and co-operation to mark the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in London. Not even the remotest corner of the Commonwealth remains unaffected or unthreatened by the impacts of climate change. Commonwealth citizens, especially the poorest, struggle to thrive amidst our changing climate.

Subsistence communities in African countries struggle to grow crops in increasingly arid earth. In the Pacific, rising sea levels threaten the existence of whole countries. In Asia, salination is driving people from their land. Arctic communities' ways of life are undermined. Ever more violent and unpredictable storms devastate the Caribbean.

At the scale of the Commonwealth we can see that the crisis of poverty and the crisis of ecology are one; each of our faith traditions reminds us of the deep interconnectedness of people and our planet. As a common problem, this crisis requires a common solution. And it is needed now.

The Charter of the Commonwealth affirms the foundations for cooperation between Commonwealth nations. But it is time to turn words into action. We call on the Heads of Government gathering in London to commit to urgent action on climate change adaptation and mitigation in line with the Paris Agreement and to pursue every effort to keep the increase in average global temperature below 1.5 degrees. Our people call out to you. We stand beside them. Your time to act is now.

You can see a full list of signatories here: <https://cafod.org.uk/News/Campaigning-news/Turn-climate-words-into-action>
<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/34728>

31 ORGANISATIONS URGE FULL PARTICIPATION IN NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY COMMITTEE

17 April 2018: Thirty-one organisations, including Pax Christi, have written to Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, to urge the UK Government to use the imminent Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Preparatory Committee meeting to recognise and act upon the UK's international obligation to work for a world free of nuclear weapons. In addition the letter encourages the UK Government to participate in the up-coming UN High Level International Conference on Nuclear Disarmament and to use the opportunity to develop relations with NNWS and make progress on the UK's disarmament obligations.

Dear Secretary of State, We are writing to urge the UK to use the imminent Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Preparatory Committee meeting to recognise and act upon the UK's international obligation to work for a world free of nuclear weapons.

As you will be aware, disarmament is a fundamental pillar of the NPT regime. However, the widespread feeling that the NPT's Nuclear Weapons States (NWS) are neglecting their disarmament obligations recently led the UN's High Representative for Disarmament Affairs to link the lack of visible progress on disarmament to the declining health of the NPT regime. Izumi Nakamitsu stated in a recent meeting at Parliament that only demonstrable progress towards nuclear weapons states' implementing their obligation under Article 6 to negotiate in good faith towards disarmament can "ensure the long-term viability of the Treaty."⁽¹⁾

Little progress has been demonstrated to the international community on the steps towards disarmament agreed in the NPT's 2000 and 2010 Action Plans. At the same time, the NWS have been taking steps to modernise their arsenals - tolerating the risks of global devastation through accident, mistake or cyber- attack - with Russia and the US also adopting more aggressive nuclear postures. For example, both states have rejected ICBM de-alerting, and have placed emphasis on 'lower yield' nuclear weapons ⁽²⁾ and their 'usability' in recent policy announcements. These represent not only a dangerous development but also a set of policies that are clearly opposed to NPT commitments. We were therefore deeply disappointed to see the UK government "welcome" the recent US Nuclear Posture Review,⁽³⁾ and we ask what steps the government will take to ensure that our close ally steps back from policies that will undermine the NPT regime.

There is clearly an urgent need for states to build common ground on disarmament. Steps should be taken by the UK to build bridges with Non-Nuclear Weapons States (NNWS), which must include signalling unmistakable progress towards the UK's obligation to disarm. They must also include acceptance of, and engagement with, the new realities in the international non-proliferation and disarmament architecture.

As a country whose National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review links the UK's future security and prosperity to the health of the rules-based international system, the UK needs to ensure it acts to strengthen, not undermine, this system. Irrespective of the UK's position, the rules-based international system now unquestionably includes the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). In that context we would point out that the TPNW, as is made clear in its Preamble, is firmly anchored within international humanitarian law. Consequently, the UK should announce its intention to start constructively engaging with the TPNW, including through a commitment to attend future Meetings of States Parties as an observer.

Such a participatory policy could minimise misconceptions about the TPNW and the continued importance of the NPT to states. Many UK allies will now be pursuing additional and mutually reinforcing work under the TPNW, towards common goals on non-proliferation and disarmament that are described within the NPT and other treaties. Participation would also provide an opportunity for the UK to contribute towards these goals by offering expertise to discussions and processes on subjects such as verification, and measures to assist individuals. Such an approach would send an important signal to NNWS that the UK is taking seriously their legitimate concerns about the catastrophic humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons and the urgent need for disarmament, which led to the negotiation of the TPNW. Within the UK, the Scottish Government and Parliament share the views of the UN member states that adopted the TPNW. The Scottish Government and Parliament's constructive participation in the UK's engagement with these allies should be welcomed by the UK Government.

An additional opportunity to cooperate with states on efforts to bring about nuclear disarmament, the UN High Level International Conference on Nuclear Disarmament, takes place in May 2018. We urge the UK to attend this meeting at ministerial level or above and to use the opportunity to develop relations with NNWS and make progress on the UK's disarmament obligations.

If the UK is to live up to its aspirations of a Global Britain, the UK cannot cherry-pick those forums for multilateralism that the government is most comfortable dealing with and ignore others. By adopting a policy of engagement and supporting the system as a whole, the UK can strengthen international cooperation at a time when the risks posed by nuclear weapons are considerable and arguably growing. We urge the UK to take all opportunities to work constructively towards the common goal of a world without nuclear weapons.

Philip Austin, Coordinator, Northern Friends Peace Board; Chris Butler, Yorkshire Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament; Francis Brienens, Deputy General Secretary (Mission), United Reformed Church; Arthur Chapman, Chair, and Brian Larkin, Coordinator Edinburgh Peace & Justice Centre; Tim Devereux, Chair, Movement for the Abolition of War; Ben Donaldson, Head of Campaigns, United Nations Association – UK; Dr Gari Donn, Convenor, UNA Scotland and Executive Director, UN House Scotland; Janet Fenton, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom – Scotland; Pat Gaffney, General Secretary, Pax Christi UK; Cllr Ernie Galsworthy, Chair and Cllr David Blackburn, English Forum Chair, Nuclear Free Local Authorities, UK and Ireland; Robert Harrap, General Director, Soka Gakkai International – UK; Dr Stephen Herman, Director, Multifaith Committee on Shared Security, Religions for Peace (UK); Andy Hinton, Aberdeen and District Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament; Steve Hucklesby, Policy Adviser (International Affairs), The Methodist Church; Dr Rebecca E Johnson, Executive Director, Acronym Institute for Disarmament Diplomacy; Brian Jones, Vice Chair, Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament Cymru; Bill Kidd MSP, Convenor, Scottish Parliament CPG Nuclear Disarmament; Gina Langton, 80,000 Voices; Fiona MacGregor, Hastings Against War; David Mackenzie, Trident Ploughshares in Scotland; Dr Judith McDonald, Coordinator, Medact Scotland; Anne Milne, Edinburgh Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament; Elizabeth Minor, Advisor, Article 36; Dr Sophie Neuburg, Executive Director, Medact; Paul Parker, Recording Clerk of Quakers in Britain; Oliver Robertson, Fellowship of Reconciliation; Paula Shaw, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, UK; Martin Tiller, Co-Chair, Christian Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament; Dave Webb, Chair, Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament; Dr Philip Webber, Scientists for Global Responsibility; Arthur West, Scottish Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament.

Notes

1 UNA UK, 'UN disarmament chief urges states to build common ground on nuclear disarmament,' 5 February 2018
www.una.org.uk/news/un-disarmament-chief-urges-states-build-common-ground-nuclear-disarmament?page=3

2 These weapons are in fact similar in size to those used in Hiroshima and Nagasaki

3 USA: Nuclear Weapons: Written question - HL6250, www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-03-12/HL6250 and remediate environments affected by nuclear weapons - given our history of nuclear testing, which continues to carry a legacy of harm.
<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/34726>

SHARE THE JOURNEY: WE NEED YOUR MILES!

Patrick Gardner, CAFOD Community Participation Coordinator, Lancaster writes:

Share the Journey walks are off to a flying start. This spring, CAFOD supporters up and down the country are walking in solidarity with refugees. We're seeing walks starting to happen all over the country: from the north, with Chester University's CathSoc clocking up 81 miles, to the south, with St Mary's Moorfields parish in London clocking up 29 miles in 15 minutes.

Pope Francis launched Share the Journey as a global campaign for the rights of people on the move. Key decisions are being made by world leaders this September. They will finalise two new global agreements at the United Nations: one on refugees and one on migration. We walk to offer our support with our global neighbours and to send a message to world leaders – they must step up too.

Get inspired here to organise your walk – every mile walked counts towards our target of 24,900 miles
<https://cafod.org.uk/campaign/share-the-journey>

MATCH FUNDING FOR CAFOD LENT FAST DAY APPEAL

Thank you for your support to our Lent Fast Day appeal. Donations to CAFOD until 12 May will be doubled by the UK Government. We have planned a £5 million programme to combat malnutrition - and with it we hope to be able to reach 245,000 people. But we need the full amount of match funding to make it happen. You can help us reach the full amount needed for this crucial programme. We still have some way to go yet!

To donate please go to cafod.org.uk/lent

GAUDETE ET EXSULTATE - REJOICE AND BE GLAD

Vatican Media 11 April 2018

"The Lord asks everything of us, and in return offers us true life, the happiness for which we were created."

In his third Apostolic Exhortation (following *Evangelii gaudium* and *Amoris laetitia*) Pope Francis reflects on the call to holiness, and how we can respond to that call in the modern world. "My modest goal" in the Exhortation, Pope Francis says, "is to repropose the call to holiness in a practical way for our own time."

The five chapters of *Gaudete et exsultate* follow a logical progression, beginning with a consideration of the call to holiness as it is in itself. The Holy Father then examines two "subtle enemies of holiness," namely, contemporary gnosticism and contemporary pelagianism.

The heart of *Gaudete et exsultate* is dedicated to the idea that holiness means following Jesus. In this third chapter, Pope Francis considers each of the Beatitudes as embodying what it means to be holy. But if the Beatitudes show us what holiness means, the Gospel also shows us the criterion by which we will be judged: "I was hungry and you gave me food... thirsty and you gave me drink... a stranger and you welcomed me... naked and you clothed me... sick and you took care of me... in prison and you visited me."

Pope Francis devotes the fourth chapter of *Gaudete et exsultate* to "certain aspects of the call to holiness" that he feels "will prove especially meaningful" in today's world: perseverance, patience and meekness; joy and a sense of humour; boldness and passion; the communal dimension of holiness; constant prayer.

Finally, the Exhortation makes practical suggestions for living out the call to holiness. "The Christian life is a constant battle," the Pope says. "We need strength and courage to withstand the temptations of the devil and to proclaim the Gospel." In the fifth chapter, he speaks about the need for "combat" and vigilance, and calls us to exercise the gift of discernment, "which is all the more necessary today," in a world with so many distractions that keep us from hearing the Lord's voice.

"It is my hope," Pope Francis concludes, "that these pages will prove helpful by enabling the whole Church to devote herself anew to promoting the desire for holiness."

www.indcatholicnews.com/news/34692

The full text of the Apostolic Exhortation *Gaudete et Exsultate* is now available on the Holy See website:

https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20180319_gaudete-et-exsultate.html

For a longer summary, and to buy printed copies, see: www.indcatholicnews.com/news/34674

FIGHTING PLASTIC POLLUTION

Greenpeace 28 March 2018

Great news, we won! Yesterday we handed in more than 300,000 names to Environment Minister, Michael Gove, demanding action on plastic pollution. Today, he announced that the UK government is going to introduce a Deposit Return Scheme for drinks containers. In the UK, we use 35 million plastic bottles everyday - and 5.5 billion of them go un-recycled every year [1]. This is a huge step towards reducing those numbers - offering vital protection to our wildlife and oceans.

A Deposit Return Scheme is a simple and effective way of tackling the problem. When you buy a drink you pay a little extra, which you get back when you return your empty drinks container [2]. Last year Scotland announced they would introduce a scheme [3]. Now, thanks to our supporters' help, England will soon catch up.

Of course, we haven't done it alone. Along with all your support, organisations like Campaign to Protect Rural England, the Marine Conservation Society, and many more have demanded real action - and helped achieve real change. While this is a huge, ambitious first step, we need to make sure that the Deposit Return Schemes are effective. They need to apply to all drinks bottles and cans of all sizes - and return points should be convenient.

Notes:

[1] Guardian: Government 'dragging its feet' over plastic bottle scheme, say MPs

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/feb/26/government-dragging-its-feet-over-plastic-bottle-scheme-says-mps>

[2] Greenpeace: Deposit Return Schemes. What exactly are they?

<https://www.greenpeace.org.uk/deposit-return-schemes-what-exactly-are-they/>

[3] Guardian: Scotland plans deposit return scheme for bottles and cans

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2017/sep/05/scotland-planning-deposit-return-scheme-for-bottles-and-cans>

CPRE DELIGHTED BY DEPOSIT RETURN ANNOUNCEMENT

Press release 27 March 2018

The Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) wholeheartedly congratulates the Government on its decision to introduce a nationwide deposit return system (DRS) for plastic and glass bottles, as well as aluminium cans. The introduction will help boost recycling rates and combat the plague of litter blighting our countryside. This is a watershed moment for recycling in the UK, given that similar systems around the world produce extremely high results.

The long-awaited decision came following a call for evidence in October last year which investigated how the littering of plastic, metal and glass drinks containers could be reduced, as well as the recycling of them increased. The evidence submitted was examined by retail giants such as Coca-Cola and Tesco, alongside other members of the Voluntary and Economic Incentives Working Group, for which CPRE provided the Secretariat.

CPRE has campaigned for the introduction of a DRS for 10 years, and are absolutely delighted by the announcement. There has been increasing pressure from environmental organisations, the media and the public for more action to be taken against the tide of waste that is polluting our natural environments - with single-use drinks containers being a huge contributor.

Samantha Harding, Litter Programme Director at the Campaign to Protect Rural England said: "This is a brilliant and significant decision by Michael Gove. I am thrilled that we will finally see the many benefits a deposit system will bring to England, not least the absence of ugly drinks containers in our beautiful countryside. What's significant is that producers will now pay the full costs of their packaging, reducing the burden on the taxpayer and setting a strong precedent for other schemes where the polluter pays. This really is a bold and exciting step by the Government."

Bill Bryson, author and former President of the Campaign to Protect Rural England said: "I wholeheartedly congratulate Michael Gove for his wisdom in finally accepting the case for a deposit return system in the UK - I never thought I would see this in my lifetime. Future generations will look back on this decision as a piece of supremely enlightened policymaking, and one that raises the prospect of the world's most beautiful country becoming free from drinks container litter at last. My most profound gratitude goes to the tireless campaigners and heroic litter pickers of CPRE who, for the past decade, have kept the issue alive in the minds of our politicians, press and public."

Emma Bridgewater, President of the Campaign to Protect Rural England said: "This landmark announcement is the breakthrough we have been waiting for. CPRE have been campaigning for the introduction of a DRS for almost 10 years - it has been a long battle, but this significant victory is an enormous leap forward in the war against waste. Our countryside, oceans and wildlife have long since been the victim of our obsession with single-use bottles and cans, with the UK producing billions of them year after year. Many end up damaging our natural environments and killing our wildlife - and is also a shocking waste of valuable materials. The proven success of DRS in other countries means that now most of these bottles and cans will be captured and recycled - we congratulate the government on their decision."

Deposit systems are already successfully operating in 38 countries around the world, producing average recycle rates for collected materials of 90% - reaching as high as 95% in Norway. The concept is simple - consumers will pay a small deposit on top of the cost of any drink that they buy. This is then returned to the customer when the container is returned to a retailer. Economic incentives such as these are proven to be the best driver of behaviour change when it comes to boosting recycling and reducing waste. The consumption of plastic bags has gone down by more than 80 percent in England since the 5p charge was introduced. www.cpre.org.uk/media-centre/latest-news-releases/item/4810-cpre-delighted-by-deposit-return-announcement?utm_medium=email&utm_source=engagingnetworks&utm_campaign=drs-success-email-2018&utm_content=2018+DRS+campaign+success

BOOK REVIEW

***Faith and Resistance in the Age of Trump* Miguel A. De La Torre (editor)** Orbis Books, 2017, £19.99 (available from Alban Books Edinburgh).

Frank Regan March 2018

One year and a half ago the impossible happened in the United States: Donald Trump, a New York real estate mogul, former casino owner, known womaniser and with dubious financial connections with Russian mafiosi was elected President.

Catholic commentator Garry Wills has called President Donald A Trump an "irreligious lecher". Yet Trump received the votes of more than 80% of white evangelicals. Jim Wallis, founder of Washington-based Sojourners, writes in this very worrying book that Donald Trump ran on white identity politics and brought white nationalism back into the mainstream of American national life. Wallis wrote elsewhere that white evangelicals voted for Trump because they were more white than evangelical. He wants to make the United States white again.

Trump's campaign was an exercise in promoting nostalgia for a past longed for by millions. Some wanted to travel in Trump's time machine back to the 30s before Roosevelt. Others longed for the 50s when coal was king and factory jobs plentiful. The big crunch came in the 60s. For racist whites, figures like Martin Luther King, the founders of Black Power and Lyndon Johnson who signed the Civil Rights Act were anathema. Older men could never adjust themselves to the challenges represented by the women's movement. For most Catholics, evangelicals and Mormons the 60s brought the sexual revolution with the availability of contraception and abortion, and more recently the affirmation of LGBTQ identities. They had to hold their noses - and they did - at Trump's conspicuous misogyny, racism, sexism and his rank disregard for truth.

This book brings together in twenty-five short vivid hard-hitting chapters the concerns, not to say trepidations, of several constituencies of the US population which feel intimidated by what a Trump presidency could mean for their communities. Each Chapter is written by a member of the constituency concerned. For example, Marvin M. Ellison, a member of the LGBTQ community, writes that Mr Trump has a preferential option for all things white, male, heterosexual and rich within a Christian-supremacist social order. Ellison teaches at Union Theological Seminary in New York and has written extensively on contemporary sexual ethics. He goes on to say that Trump has succeeded in cultivating a pervasive sense of fear, powerlessness, loneliness and vulnerability found in increasing numbers of people within a neo-liberal social order.

Disturbing for Christians should be what Ellison has called a Christian-supremacist social order. This would be what US evangelicals have been working toward since the days of Richard Nixon who was closely pastored by the recently deceased Billy Graham. Trump meets weekly with a sizeable group of evangelicals to pray and break bread together. Many evangelicals regard Trump as "God's anointed". He will restore Gospel order the way the Founding Fathers willed it. Indeed some believe he is the one who will prepare the Second Coming with its rapture and apocalypse.

Perhaps the most worrying area of concern is the environment. President Trump denies the reality of climate change and is ignorant of the impact of fracking on human health. As a result his appointed head of the Environmental Protection Agency is also a climate change denier. The Republican-controlled Congress is enacting legislation which will allow oil exploration in forty National Parks. This will nullify the very concept of what a National Park is all about. And from the beginning of the Trump presidency there is no link on the White House website to anything that has to do with the environment.

One other constituency is one that has been on the North American continent since 1650: the black Afro-American. Between 1650 and 1863, year of the partial emancipation of slaves, ten generations of them, five million died - either in transport or in the fields or in various forms of punishment. Charles Dickens, in his *American Notes*, points to the white mother who promises her little boy a whip for his birthday to punish "the little niggers" who get out of hand.

The late James Baldwin, renowned US author, black and gay, wrote in his *The Fire Next Time*, "...the political institutions of any nation are always menaced and are ultimately controlled by the spiritual state of that nation." This book has much to say about the spiritual state of a nation governed by the like of Donald Trump. Kelly Ann Douglas writes in her piece: "The time has come in this era of a Trump presidency for us to be a people with a moral memory, a moral identity, and moral participation."

And so the question becomes: what can be done. The editor of this fine collection writes in his Conclusion that what is needed is an ethics and praxis of *joder*. This is a Spanish word one would not use in polite society. In a society rife with institutional violence one must become a right royal pain in the rear end. To *joder* is to cause trouble (echo of words of Pope Francis to youth), to disrupt the established norm, to create instability and to upset the prevailing social order which covers up the disorder in which countless millions live and which prolongs the injustice which marks their lives. To *joder* is an act of love which forces the oppressors to confront their complicity with oppressive structures. It is a non-violent survival strategy based on love designed to liberate abused and abuser alike.

This book is not just about the United States of Trump. It is about the gradual drift towards a right-wing fascism supported by millions of mostly white Europeans and North Americans who have lost faith in their swamp-dwelling politicians, who feel the chill of an economic downturn in their future well-being and who reject the arrival of foreigners who they fear will encroach on their space and question their cultural identity.

Ireland's Taoiseach Leo Varadkar marched in New York's Archdiocesan St Patrick's Day parade, along with his partner, without controversy. This is the kind of change Trump voters reject.

This book addresses the relationship between our Faith and our politics. Our politics, beyond our ideologies, our economic interests, our cultural identities, is a politics guided by Christ's call to build up and await God's reign of peace, justice and wholeness.

We are social/communal beings, yet we have fragmented into individuals fearful of "the other". North American Christians are sinking into a comfortable personal relationship with a blue-eyed blonde dashboard Jesus who looks a lot like themselves. To destroy that idol concerned Christians must reach out to "the others" who come seeking a better life, many of them without the protection of legality. This implies acting politically, embracing political agendas and belonging to political grassroots organisations. We must listen to God's query: "where is your brother?"

Pope Francis, speaking some years ago, in Lampedusa, criticised the "globalisation of indifference". We are so accustomed to the suffering in Yemen, Syria, Eritrea, Niger, Mali etc that our compassion has become dull and fatigued, our awareness dim.

The coming of Donald Trump, a known xenophobe (despite his foreign wives) is a threat to the US and world community. He embodies all that is wrong with US materialist, consumerist and fundamentalist Christian culture.

Our Christian tradition offers a vision of the human being living in right and responsible relationship with all of humanity and with all planetary life. It is a vision shared by many who live outside our tradition. All of us share a vocation and have heard a call to struggle to build up a human community, world-wide, and nurture a planet almost choked and exhausted by a greedy and exploitative materialist culture. We are called to live and act in faith, resistance, solidarity and healing. Only thus can we envision a just society, a healed humanity and a protected planet.

A CONFESSION OF FAITH IN A TIME OF CRISIS — ASH WEDNESDAY LETTER: US CHURCH LEADERS

We are living through perilous and polarising times as a nation, with a dangerous crisis of moral and political leadership at the highest levels of our government and in our churches. We believe the soul of the nation and the integrity of faith are now at stake. It is time to be followers of Jesus before anything else — nationality, political party, race, ethnicity, gender, geography — our identity in Christ precedes every other identity. We pray that our nation will see Jesus' words in us. "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:35). When politics undermines our theology, we must examine that politics. The church's role is to change the world through the life and love of Jesus Christ. The government's role is to serve the common good by protecting justice and peace, rewarding good behaviour while restraining bad behaviour (Romans 13). When that role is undermined by political leadership, faith leaders must stand up and speak out. Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said, "The church must be reminded that it is not the master or the servant of the state, but rather the conscience of the state."

It is often the duty of Christian leaders, especially elders, to speak the truth in love to our churches and to name and warn against temptations, racial and cultural captivities, false doctrines, and political idolatries — and even our complicity in them. We do so here with humility, prayer, and a deep dependency on the grace and Holy Spirit of God.

This letter comes from a retreat on Ash Wednesday, 2018. In this season of Lent, we feel deep lamentations for the state of our nation, and our own hearts are filled with confession for the sins we feel called to address. The true meaning of the word repentance is to turn around. It is time to lament, confess, repent, and turn. In times of crisis, the church has historically learned to return to Jesus Christ. Jesus is Lord. That is our foundational confession. It was central for the early church and needs to again become central to us. If Jesus is Lord, then Caesar was not — nor any other political ruler since. If Jesus is Lord, no other authority is absolute. Jesus Christ, and the kingdom of God he announced, is the Christian's first loyalty, above all others. We pray, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10). Our faith is personal but never private, meant not only for heaven but for this earth.

The question we face is this: Who is Jesus Christ for us today? What does our loyalty to Christ, as disciples, require at this moment in our history? We believe it is time to renew our theology of public discipleship and witness. Applying what "Jesus is Lord" means today is the message we commend as elders to our churches. What we believe leads us to what we must reject. Our "Yes" is the foundation for our "No." What we confess as our faith leads to what we confront. Therefore, we offer the following six affirmations of what we believe, and the resulting rejections of practices and policies by political leaders which dangerously corrode the soul of the nation and deeply threaten the public integrity of our faith. We pray that we, as followers of Jesus, will find the depth of faith to match the danger of our political crisis.

I. WE BELIEVE each human being is made in God's image and likeness (Genesis 1:26). That image and likeness confers a divinely decreed dignity, worth, and God-given equality to all of us as children of the one God who is the Creator of all things. Racial bigotry is a brutal denial of the image of God (the imago dei) in some of the children of God. Our participation in the global community of Christ absolutely prevents any toleration of racial bigotry. Racial justice and healing are biblical and theological issues for us, and are central to the mission of the body of Christ in the world. We give thanks for the prophetic role of the historic black churches in America when they have called for a more faithful gospel.

THEREFORE, WE REJECT the resurgence of white nationalism and racism in our nation on many fronts, including the highest levels of political leadership. We, as followers of Jesus, must clearly reject the use of racial bigotry for political gain that we have seen. In the face of such bigotry, silence is complicity. In particular, we reject white supremacy and commit ourselves to help dismantle the systems and structures that perpetuate white preference and advantage. Further, any doctrines or political strategies that use racist resentments, fears, or language must be named as public sin — one that goes back to the foundation of our nation and lingers on. Racial bigotry must be antithetical for those belonging to the body of Christ, because it denies the truth of the gospel we profess.

II. WE BELIEVE we are one body. In Christ, there is to be no oppression based on race, gender, identity, or class (Galatians 3:28). The body of Christ, where those great human divisions are to be overcome, is meant to be an example for the rest of society. When we fail to overcome these oppressive obstacles, and even perpetuate them, we have failed in our vocation to the world—to proclaim and live the reconciling gospel of Christ.

THEREFORE, WE REJECT misogyny, the mistreatment, violent abuse, sexual harassment, and assault of women that has been further revealed in our culture and politics, including our churches, and the oppression of any other child of God. We lament when such practices seem publicly ignored, and thus privately condoned, by those in high positions of leadership. We stand for the respect, protection, and affirmation of women in our families, communities, workplaces, politics, and churches. We support the courageous truth-telling voices of women, who have helped the nation recognize these abuses. We confess sexism as a sin, requiring our repentance and resistance.

III. WE BELIEVE how we treat the hungry, the thirsty, the naked, the stranger, the sick, and the prisoner is how we treat Christ himself. (Matthew 25: 31-46) “Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.” God calls us to protect and seek justice for those who are poor and vulnerable, and our treatment of people who are “oppressed,” “strangers,” “outsiders,” or otherwise considered “marginal” is a test of our relationship to God, who made us all equal in divine dignity and love. Our proclamation of the lordship of Jesus Christ is at stake in our solidarity with the most vulnerable. If our gospel is not “good news to the poor,” it is not the gospel of Jesus Christ (Luke 4:18).

THEREFORE, WE REJECT the language and policies of political leaders who would debase and abandon the most vulnerable children of God. We strongly deplore the growing attacks on immigrants and refugees, who are being made into cultural and political targets, and we need to remind our churches that God makes the treatment of the “strangers” among us a test of faith (Leviticus 19:33-34). We won’t accept the neglect of the well-being of low-income families and children, and we will resist repeated attempts to deny health care to those who most need it. We confess our growing national sin of putting the rich over the poor. We reject the immoral logic of cutting services and programs for the poor while cutting taxes for the rich. Budgets are moral documents. We commit ourselves to opposing and reversing those policies and finding solutions that reflect the wisdom of people from different political parties and philosophies to seek the common good. Protecting the poor is a central commitment of Christian discipleship, to which 2,000 verses in the Bible attest.

IV. WE BELIEVE that truth is morally central to our personal and public lives. Truth-telling is central to the prophetic biblical tradition, whose vocation includes speaking the Word of God into their societies and speaking the truth to power. A commitment to speaking truth, the ninth commandment of the Decalogue, “You shall not bear false witness” (Exodus 20:16), is foundational to shared trust in society. Falsehood can enslave us, but Jesus promises, “You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” (John 8:32). The search and respect for truth is crucial to anyone who follows Christ.

THEREFORE, WE REJECT the practice and pattern of lying that is invading our political and civil life. Politicians, like the rest of us, are human, fallible, sinful, and mortal. But when public lying becomes so persistent that it deliberately tries to change facts for ideological, political, or personal gain, the public accountability to truth is undermined. The regular purveying of falsehoods and consistent lying by the nation’s highest leaders can change the moral expectations within a culture, the accountability for a civil society, and even the behavior of families and children. The normalisation of lying presents a profound moral danger to the fabric of society. In the face of lies that bring darkness, Jesus is our truth and our light.

V. WE BELIEVE that Christ’s way of leadership is servanthood, not domination. Jesus said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles (the world) lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. It will not be so among you; but whoever wishes to be great among you must be your servant” (Matthew 20:25-26). We believe our elected officials are called to public service, not public tyranny, so we must protect the limits, checks, and balances of democracy and encourage humility and civility on the part of elected officials. We support democracy, not because we believe in human perfection, but because we do not. The authority of government is instituted by God to order an unredeemed society for the sake of justice and peace, but ultimate authority belongs only to God.

THEREFORE, WE REJECT any moves toward autocratic political leadership and authoritarian rule. We believe authoritarian political leadership is a theological danger that threatens democracy and the common good — and we will resist it. Disrespect for the rule of law, not recognizing the equal importance of our three branches of government, and replacing civility with dehumanising hostility toward opponents are of great concern to us. Neglecting the ethic of public service and accountability, in favour of personal recognition and gain often characterised by offensive arrogance, are not just political issues for us. They raise deeper concerns about political idolatry, accompanied by false and unconstitutional notions of authority.

VI. WE BELIEVE Jesus when he tells us to go into all nations making disciples (Matthew 28:18). Our churches and our nations are part of an international community whose interests always surpass national boundaries. The most well-known verse in the New Testament starts with “For God so loved the world” (John 3:16). We, in turn, should love and serve the world and all its inhabitants, rather than seek first narrow, nationalistic prerogatives.

THEREFORE, WE REJECT “America first” as a theological heresy for followers of Christ. While we share a patriotic love for our country, we reject xenophobic or ethnic nationalism that places one nation over others as a political goal. We reject domination rather than stewardship of the earth’s resources, toward genuine global development that brings human flourishing for all of God’s children. Serving our own communities is essential, but the global connections between us are undeniable. Global poverty, environmental damage, violent conflict, weapons of mass destruction, and deadly diseases in some places ultimately affect all places, and we need wise political leadership to deal with each of these.

WE ARE DEEPLY CONCERNED for the soul of our nation, but also for our churches and the integrity of our faith. The present crisis calls us to go deeper — deeper into our relationship to God; deeper into our relationships with each other, especially across racial, ethnic, and national lines; deeper into our relationships with the most vulnerable, who are at greatest risk. The church is always subject to temptations to power, to cultural conformity, and to racial, class, and gender divides, as Galatians 3:28 teaches us. But our answer is to be “in Christ,” and to “not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God — what is good and acceptable, and perfect.” (Romans 12:1-2)

The best response to our political, material, cultural, racial, or national idolatries is the First Commandment: “You shall have no other gods before me” (Exodus 20:3). Jesus summarises the Greatest Commandment: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, your soul, and your mind. This is the first commandment. And the second is like unto it. You shall love your neighbour as yourself. On these commandments hang all the law and the prophets” (Matthew 22:38). As to loving our neighbours, we would add “no exceptions.”

We commend this letter to pastors, local churches, and young people who are watching and waiting to see what the churches will say and do at such a time as this. Our urgent need, in a time of moral and political crisis, is to recover the power of confessing our faith. Lament, repent, and then repair. If Jesus is Lord, there is always space for grace. We believe it is time to speak and to act in faith and conscience, not because of politics, but because we are disciples of Jesus Christ — to whom be all authority, honour, and glory. It is time for a fresh confession of faith. Jesus is Lord. He is the light in our darkness. “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life” (John 8:12).

SIGNED:

Bishop Carroll A. Baltimore, President and CEO, Global Alliance Interfaith Networks; Rev. Dr. Peter Borgdorff, Executive Director Emeritus, Christian Reformed Church in North America; Dr. Amos Brown, Chair, Social Justice Commission, National Baptist Convention USA, Inc.; Rev. Dr. Walter Brueggemann, Professor Emeritus, Columbia Theological Seminary; Dr. Tony Campolo, Co-Founder, Red Letter Christians; Dr. Iva Carruthers, General Secretary, Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference; The Most Rev. Michael B. Curry, Presiding Bishop and Primate, The Episcopal Church; Rev. Dr. James Forbes, President and Founder, Healing the Nations Foundation and Preaching Professor at Union Theological Seminary; Rev. Wesley Granberg-Michaelson, General Secretary Emeritus, Reformed Church in America; Rev. Dr. Cynthia Hale, Senior Pastor, Ray of Hope Christian Church, Decatur, GA; Rev. Dr. Richard Hamm, former General Minister and President of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ); Rev. Dr. Joel C. Hunter, Faith Community Organizer and Chairman, Community Resource Network; Rev. Dr. Jo Anne Lyon, General Superintendent Emerita, The Wesleyan Church; Bishop Vashti McKenzie, 117th Elected and Consecrated Bishop, AME Church; Rev. Dr. Otis Moss, Jr., Co-Convener National African American Clergy Network; Dr. John Perkins, Chair Emeritus and Founding Member, Christian Community Development Association; Bishop Lawrence Reddick, CEO, Christian Methodist Episcopal Church; Fr. Richard Rohr, Founder, Center for Action and Contemplation; Dr. Ron Sider, President Emeritus, Evangelicals for Social Action; Rev. Jim Wallis, President and Founder, Sojourners; Rev. Dr. Sharon Watkins, Director, NCC Truth and Racial Justice Initiative; Dr. Barbara Williams-Skinner, Co-Convener, National African American Clergy Network; President, Skinner Leadership Institute; Bishop Will Willimon, Bishop, The United Methodist Church, retired, Professor of the Practice of Ministry, Duke Divinity School.

<http://reclaimingjesus.org/>

EL SALVADOR JOURNAL

By Steve Atherton, Liverpool Archdiocese J&P Fieldworker based on a visit in November 2017. A 44 page booklet with numerous colour photos. Foreword by— +John Rawsthorne, Emeritus Bishop of Hallam.

Bishop Rawsthorne writes: “This was my fourth visit to El Salvador, my second as a member of a pilgrimage group in the footsteps of Blessed Óscar Romero. It was a wonderful experience. These memories, meditations even, of Steve help me continue the pilgrimage into the present, into my own life and ministry. His background in Justice and Peace in a diocese where the memory of Óscar Romero has been revered since his death, and where there is now a fine bust of him in the Metropolitan Cathedral, forces Steve to ask how is the life and death of this bishop from Central America speaking to us today in our country, speaking to all of us, but perhaps especially to bishops.

The Archbishop lived with his people and suffered with his people, in a country where there was dreadful inequality, great poverty and very great wealth. And the status quo was held with armed repression.

Óscar Romero preached the Gospel of his Lord, the Gospel of the love of God for all His children, but especially the poorest and most vulnerable. He listened to the experience of his poor people and challenged the rich and powerful; he condemned repression and violence. And finally he paid the price. Now the world reveres his memory. But Steve asks us whether those memories move us to see our world in all its inequality and injustice through Óscar Romero’s eyes and to act as he would have done.” This little book moves us in that direction.

Download at: <https://liverpooljp.files.wordpress.com/2018/03/el-salvador-journal.pdf>

NEW WEBSITE FOR LIVERPOOL J&P COMMISSION

The Liverpool Justice and Peace Commission now has a new website, which can be found at <https://jp.liverpoolcatholic.org.uk> This website forms a key part of our communications subgroup’s strategy for the future, and will work in connection with our social media accounts, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube, to keep you up to date with news and events, as well as information about the Commission and our work.

The site is simple in design, and easy to navigate, yet detailed and up to date. Please visit the site and follow it for regular updates. If you have any thoughts or comments about the site we would be grateful to hear them at j-p@rcaolp.co.uk

You can find links to all of our social media accounts at <https://jp.liverpoolcatholic.org.uk/social/>

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ASSASSINATION OF DR MARTIN LUTHER KING

WASHINGTON—The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) Administrative Committee has issued the following statement today marking the 50th anniversary of the assassination of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The Administrative Committee serves as the Board of Trustees for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The committee's full statement follows:

"No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends' (Jn 15:13). April 4th marks 50 years since the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee. On this day, as we reflect on his life and work, we need to ask ourselves if we are doing all we can to build the culture of love, respect, and peace to which the Gospel calls us. What are we being asked to do for the sake of our brother or sister who still suffers under the weight of racism? Where could God use our efforts to help change the hearts of those who harbor racist thoughts or engage in racist actions?

This anniversary gives us an important moment to draw inspiration from the way in which Dr. King remained undeterred in his principle of non-violent resistance, even in the face of years of ridicule, threats, and violence for the cause of justice. Dr. King came to Memphis to support underpaid and exploited African-American sanitation workers, and arrived on a plane that was under a bomb threat. He felt God had called him to solidarity with his brothers and sisters in need. In his final speech on the night before he died, Dr. King openly referenced the many threats against him and made clear that he would love a long life. But more important to him, he said, was his desire to simply do the will of God.

Our faith urges us to be courageous, to risk something of ourselves, in defending the dignity of our neighbour who is made in the image of God. Pope Francis reminds us often that we must never sit on the sidelines in the face of great evil or extreme need, even when danger surrounds us. St. Paul proclaims that: 'We are afflicted in every way, but not constrained; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our body' (2 Cor. 4:7-10). We can best honour Dr. Martin Luther King and preserve his legacy by boldly asking God — today and always — to deepen our own commitment to follow His will wherever it leads in the cause of promoting justice."

<https://zenit.org/articles/catholics-mark-50th-anniversary-of-death-of-martin-luther-king-jr/>

"DARKNESS CANNOT DRIVE OUT DARKNESS; ONLY LIGHT CAN DO THAT.
HATE CANNOT DRIVE OUT HATE; ONLY LOVE CAN DO THAT."

- The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

KATIE HOPKINS MUSICAL CONFRONTS THE AGE OF OUTRAGE

Ian Youngs BBC Arts & entertainment reporter

The title of a new musical - *The Assassination of Katie Hopkins* - is designed to provoke a reaction. And it has succeeded, not least from the woman herself. But its creators say the show is not what she - or the audience - might expect. "We wish Katie Hopkins nothing but a long and healthy life." Chris Bush, the writer of *The Assassination of Katie Hopkins*, is spelling out the fact that her show is neither about how brilliant it would be if the right-wing controversialist was bumped off, nor is it encouraging anyone to help her meet that fate. Bush will make this clear several more times during our interview, just to get the message across. Her show does begin with news reports about Hopkins' imagined killing. And Bush admits her own politics are "to the left" - but insists the musical is "not leftist wish fulfilment". Instead, the writer says, after the opening, her musical goes on to use the bitter fallout from that fictional event to examine burning issues in society, like free speech and the increasing polarisation of public debate.

"I sort of hope she comes to see it," director James Grieve says. "Because it won't be what she thinks it is, it won't be what she expects it to be, and I'm genuinely fascinated about what she'd think about it." Is she invited? "I hereby invite her."

If Hopkins does join the audience at Theatr Clwyd in Mold, north Wales, she'll see a story that follows the characters of two young women in the aftermath of her "assassination". One is Kayleigh, a charity worker who comes around to the view that Hopkins was misunderstood and underestimated, and joins the *Justice For Katie* campaign. The other, Shayma, is a trainee human rights lawyer who is seeking justice for a dozen fruit pickers who died in a fire on the same day, but whose stories get eclipsed by Hopkins' death.

"The main things we're looking at are free speech and how news spreads and is discussed online," composer Matt Winkworth says. Hopkins has carved out a place as a vocal outrager of the British mainstream, regularly courting controversy with her views on immigration, religion, race and crime. She's no stranger to death threats, and in a court case last October, a woman who was convicted of terrorist offences said she fantasised about Hopkins' beheading.

Hopkins herself has described the play's title as "an invitation", and asked why it was her name in the title and not "a woman of colour or a Muslim man". She declined an interview request to speak about the musical. "It absolutely isn't an invitation," Bush says. "However much we might disagree, we wish no ill will to her. "Unless you think *Death of a Salesman* is encouraging people to go and kill salesmen, then a show called *The Assassination of Katie Hopkins* is in no way an invitation or an incitement."

Explaining the decision to single her out, the writer says: "It's important that this show is focused around a woman, because controversial, outspoken women are still judged far more harshly, and held to much different standards in the public eye than men are. "That's something that's worth digging into and exploring. It needs to be a divisive figure in terms of how it challenges how we have respect for the dead and how we value life. *The Assassination of David Attenborough* would be a very different show."

Bush goes on: "The reason why we wanted a figure from the right rather than the left is actually because we wanted to challenge, among other things, a certain type of leftist hypocrisy which goes, 'I abhor violence against anyone, but would make an exception for Katie Hopkins.' And we're calling that out." So, those audience members who go because they actually quite like the sound of the act in the title will have their prejudices challenged, she says.

The story will look at what's acceptable for us to say and why so much public debate is so vicious and voluble, with little middle ground seemingly left. "That's indicative of the form of 280-character Twitter, but in a two-hour stage musical you can do the deep dive into those arguments and show the shades of grey within it," Bush says. "Which feels like a really important thing."

Grieve speaks of Hopkins as a "pioneer" of the media, who has forged a career as a polemicist who speaks directly and largely free of editorial control. And he believes that, after taking advantage of free speech to build her persona, Hopkins should be able to handle the fact she's the subject of the show's title. "In tackling a public figure like Katie, I think you have to do so on her terms," the director explains. "She's kind of created the playing field and what we're doing is going, 'Yeah, all right, we will play on it.' So I think we're using her vernacular." Using her name also allows the show's creators to highlight and deconstruct the "liberal echo chamber", he says.

"This will be a completely pointless exercise if it did not acknowledge and indeed interrogate and satirise the fact that there is a prevailing feeling among certain elements of the left that violence is wrong - unless it's against right wingers, in which case it could be potentially acceptable," Grieve says. "And that's a really problematic ideology. But it's an ideology that we see played out actually on Twitter in response to the title of this show. For all the anger and the death threats and the Americans wading in with KKK banners in their Twitter avatars, there's also been a lot of slightly smug, left-leaning commentary that goes, 'Shame it's only a play.'"

Grieve has had "a couple" of death threats himself from Hopkins supporters who object to the title. That's before the show has opened. He says its makers have been "defended and attacked with equal levels of ferocity, even though the vast majority of people who are talking about us at the moment have never met us and have no idea what we're doing or who we are as human beings". He continues: "This is what the show's about. This bizarre point that we've reached in society where the only way people feel comfortable being oppositional is to take the absolute extreme oppositional view. What seems to be happening to us as a society is that we seem to be shouting ever louder at each other across an ever widening void. And that means the conversation is making less and less sense."

The Assassination of Katie Hopkins runs at Theatr Clwyd from 20 April until 12 May.

www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-43746654

IMPORTANT NOTICE: NEW DATA PROTECTION REGULATIONS

As you may be aware, Data Protection legislation is changing in May 2018 and we need your express permission if you want to continue to receive information from the North West National Justice and Peace Network by email - this includes the regular E Bulletin and occasional seasonal Resources.

We will continue to protect your privacy and promise never to share your email details with anyone.

Please reply to the Editor, Anne O'Connor (anneoc980@hotmail.com) by email by 18 MAY, stating clearly that you are happy to continue to receive email communications from NW NJPN.

If you do not reply we will not be allowed to send you any further bulletins or resources.

If you have already responded to a similar request from the National J&P Network you will still have to respond to this email, as we cover the NW region only. However readers from outside our region are still very welcome and we would be delighted to continue to include you in our mailings.

Apologies if you are on more than one list - you only need respond once.

Please state your full name, email address and, only if you are willing, your parish and or diocese - this is purely to get an idea of the geographical spread of our readers and will not be used for marketing purposes or passed on to others.

If you wish to make any comments or suggestions to help improve the bulletin they will be treated in complete confidence.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

MAY

National Walking Month <https://www.livingstreets.org.uk/what-you-can-do/campaigns/national-walking-month-2018>

1 Working for a Better Future the Mechanics' Institute, Manchester. Marking the 150th Anniversary of the founding of the Trade Union Congress a meeting to gain insights from Catholic Social Teaching into the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Automation, Brexit, workers' rights, discrimination, the gig economy - the world of work is rapidly changing. How do we face the threats and opportunities presented by this new world, so that no one is left behind and all are respected and valued? Speakers: Dr Mary Bousted, Joint General Secretary of the NEU, 2017 President of the TUC; Bishop William Kenney, Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Birmingham; Rob Ffello, Political consultant, former Labour MP and shadow Justice Minister. Panel discussion with: Dr Anna Rowlands, Associate Professor of Catholic Social Thought and Practice; Clifford Longley, author, broadcaster and journalist; Kevin Flanagan, National President GMB Commercial Services Section. The meeting is for people of all faiths and none who are interested in the world of work and in promoting the wellbeing of the workforce. Starting with a buffet lunch at 1pm and meeting from 2-4.30pm. For the full agenda and to book a free ticket, please visit www.csan.org.uk/events/workingbetterfuture/ Organised by Caritas Social Action Network and The Centre for Catholic Social Thought and Practice.

8 Time Out on Tuesdays Input and silent prayer time at 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: winniecenacle@gmail.com

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

9 Theology for a Learning Church: Christian Education, Lay Formation and the Language of 'Discipleship' annual David Goodbourn Lecture 3.45pm Metropolitan Cathedral, Liverpool to be given by Professor Elaine Graham, Grosvenor Research Professor of Practical Theology at the University of Chester. Recent work on 'lay leadership' and 'discipleship' notes the challenge of 'setting God's people free' from clericalism, to exercise a wider ministry as the church in the world. The lecture will examine the tension between Christian education for the 'gathered' and 'scattered' church, and consider what patterns of learning and formation are best suited for the challenges facing the church in the world today. This is an open event so there is no need to apply for a ticket. Please share the invitation in your own networks if you can.

12 NJPN AGM and 40th Anniversary Celebration at CAFOD, Romero House, 55 Westminster Bridge Rd, London SW1V 1BX 10.30am-4pm. Come and celebrate 40 years of people working together for justice and peace in England and Wales.

justice-and-peace.org.uk/njpn/meetings/ Follow the link: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/njpn-agm-and-anniversary-celebration-tickets-4487896496>

13-19 Christian Aid Week christianaid.org.uk/christian-aid-week

15 Conscientious Objectors' Day paxchristi.org.uk

18 Utopia for Now a play about basic income 8-9m at Blackburne House Group, Blackburne Place, Liverpool L8 7PE. The play explores the lives of a few people in Liverpool and imagines how their lives might be transformed with the introduction of Basic Income. To be performed twice at 8pm and 8.30pm

21-25 Walk to School Week With one in four cars on the road at peak times heading to school, **Living Streets** wants to get as many families walking as possible. Join together to reduce congestion around the school gates, making our roads safer and helping to clean up toxic air for little lungs. Take our pledge: <https://e-activist.com/page/21955/petition/1?ea.tracking.id=e-box&ea.url.id=1315710>

25 Interfaith Meditation for Peace Manchester Cathedral, Victoria St, M3 1SX 10am-4pm. Join people of different faiths or none in a silent meditation of unity. Keynote speaker Laurence Freeman OSB. Enquiries or to book, contact Pat Higgins 0161 962 8661 patricia_higgins@hotmail.com All welcome

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

JUNE

12 Time Out on Tuesdays (see 8 May)

22 CWDF 25-Year Celebratory Event 7-9pm Hoole Community Centre, Westminster Rd, Hoole CH2 3AU Info: 01244 350323

23 Ecumenical Quiet Day (see 26 May)

23 Liverpool J&P Annual Assembly, LACE 10am-4pm. More info: 0151 522 1080 s.atherton@rcaol.co.uk

30 Friends of Sabeel & Kairos Britain Conference 10am-5pm Oxford. Main speaker : Revd Naim Ateek, prominent Palestinian Theologian, Father of Palestinian Liberation Theology, the founder of Sabeel Theological Center Jerusalem, a co-author of the Palestinian Kairos Document, and the author of several important books such as Justice and Only Justice and A Palestinian Christian Cry for Reconciliation. More details: www.friendsofsabeel.org.uk/events/251/friends-of-sabeel-uk-kairos-britain-conference-2018-oxford/

• 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 (plus copies of this newsletter and back issues) and resources at www.justice-and-peace.org.uk or contact admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk 0207 901 4864

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

ACN IS WALKING FOR IRAQ!

This year the North West Office for Aid to the Church in Need is raising awareness and funds to support Iraqi Christians as they return to the Nineveh Plain. Throughout 2018, Caroline and Bridget will be walking a route that takes in all five NW Cathedrals. So far we've scheduled walks for 18-21 May (Lancaster Cathedral - Salford Cathedral), 15-16 June (Salford Cathedral - Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral), 6-7 July (Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral - Wrexham Cathedral) and 14-15 September (Wrexham Cathedral - Shrewsbury Cathedral).

Why not get your parish or school walking to provide a brighter future for Iraq's Christian community? You can donate over the phone or take part by contacting ACN NW on 01524 388739 or NW.office@acnuk.org. Or sponsor them at www.justgiving.com/fundraising/walks4iraq

2018 ANNUAL JUSTICE & PEACE CONFERENCE: *'In the Shelter of Each Other the People Live'*

Friday 20 – Sunday 22 July 2018 The Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, Derbyshire SEE below

2018 ANNUAL JUSTICE & PEACE CONFERENCE: *'In the Shelter of Each Other the People Live'*

Friday 20 – Sunday 22 July 2018
The Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, Derbyshire

How do we build a church and a society with the marginalised, the excluded and the most vulnerable at its heart?

What does 'home' mean for those who are homeless or struggling to keep a roof over their heads, for those who have fled their homes, for those who are rejected or don't 'fit in'?

And for the comfortable and secure, is it a space to defend or to open in welcome?

Can we recognise that it is only in relationship with each other and with the earth that we share that we can all be truly 'at home'?

SPEAKERS

Rev Al Barrett is Rector of Hodge Hill Church, a Church of England-URC ecumenical partnership in east Birmingham. He lives on a diverse outer estate on the edge of the city, and has been involved in a journey of community-building there, with friends and neighbours, for the last 7 years.

He writes and teaches a bit, blogs irregularly at www.thisestate.blogspot.com, and recently finished a PhD, seeking to develop 'a radically receptive political theology in the urban margins'.

David McLoughlin teaches at Newman University.

He is a theological resource person for Caritas Europe, CAFOD, Pax Christi, the J&P network and various groups of Religious. He is a founder member of the Movement of Christian Workers and an active member of their Birmingham revue of life group for 30 years. He explores the relationship between theology and everyday life and offers radical readings of the Bible for Christian activists.

Sarah Teather has been Director of Jesuit Refugee Service UK since January 2016.

She served for 12 years as MP in North West London. She stood down in 2015 and worked with JRS International, visiting refugee projects around the world, before taking up her present post.

John Grogan MP, a Catholic, was elected in 2017 as Labour MP for Keighley and Ilkley, having previously been MP for Selby before boundary changes abolished the seat.

He is committed to issues of social justice and peace, voting against Trident renewal.

The Conference will be chaired by Housing Justice

CELEBRANT: Fr Colum Kelly, Apostleship of the Sea port chaplain for Immingham.

PLUS *Just Fair Market Place* *Workshops* *Festival* Programmes for Children and Young People

Information and booking forms available at: www.justice-and-peace.org.uk/conference/

or for more information contact: The Administrator, NJPN, 39 Eccleston Square, London SW1V 1BX,
Tel: 020 7901 4864; Email: admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk