

Let us take our inspiration from Pope Francis as we pray the words in this extract from his

**"URBI ET ORBI"
MESSAGE
CHRISTMAS 2019**



May Emmanuel bring light to all the suffering members of our human family.

May he soften our often stony and self-centred hearts, and make them channels of his love.

May he bring his smile, through our poor faces, to all the children of the world: to those who are abandoned and those who suffer violence.

Through our frail hands, may he clothe those who have nothing to wear, give bread to the hungry and heal the sick.

Through our friendship, such as it is, may he draw close to the elderly and the lonely, to migrants and the marginalized.

May he bring his tenderness to all and brighten the darkness of this world.

**POPE FRANCIS
December 2019**



**42nd Annual
Justice &
Peace
Conference**

**'2020 VISION—ACTION FOR LIFE
ON EARTH'**

17–19 July 2020
The Hayes Conference Centre
Swanwick, Derbyshire
www.justice-and-peace.org.uk

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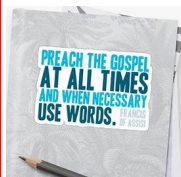


**Fighting poverty:
the incredible power of today's church**

I don't know about you, but I'm always amazed and inspired when reading the gospels and early chapters of Acts. All

the believers were so united that they sold their own possessions to give to others in need. Jesus himself didn't just meet spiritual needs. He healed physical ailments. He showed compassion for the needy, and He even fed the hungry crowds who had turned up to hear him speak. And here's the kicker: we're called to do likewise. When Paul calls us to be 'imitators of Christ' in Ephesians 5, he's setting a pretty high bar for Christians and the church. What a challenge! Do we step up to meet that challenge?

Twenty years ago, I didn't see the levels of poverty in the UK that I see on a daily basis today. We've had the 2007/2008 global credit crunch and the consequent great recession: prolonged periods of low/negative growth and rising unemployment. Readers will have different views on whether 'austerity' measures were necessary to transform the economy, or disproportionately impacting the poor. Either way, with our NHS and education ringfenced, the biggest cuts were to welfare, housing and social services. Today, unemployment has hit record lows - but we've substituted one problem for another: in-work poverty, and lack of job security.



When there's a gap, Christians and the church are called to step in. Our neighbours are across the world in famine-stricken countries, yes, but our neighbours are also the needy in our own communities. People

in the UK may not lack clean drinking water, but we do have families who won't be able to afford to put the heating on this winter - and others who struggle to buy food for the table.

The incredible happened, as always. There's been a proliferation of food banks based in church and community halls. From 2010 to 2015, the number of Trussel Trust foodbanks exploded from 45 to 445. Christian groups set up winter shelters and refuge projects for the UK's growing numbers of homeless people, and we've seen more volunteer-based support and counselling services for issues including mental health, drug/alcohol addiction, pregnancy crisis and baby loss. Street pastors volunteer from 10pm to 4am on

Friday and Saturday nights, caring for and helping people out on the streets. Even the police use this Christian-based service to help resolve lower-priority issues that their stretched resources cannot manage. School pastors, a related charity, is being trialled across the UK - teams of volunteers offering mentoring and support to children in education, responding to a generation of increased mental health concerns. Countless other Christian charities, large and small, work in innovative ways to transform lives. By so doing, they share the gospel. As St. Francis of Assisi powerfully said, "Preach the gospel to all nations - and if necessary, use words".

Chrissie Pepler, community link development officer for the Anglican Diocese of Hereford, summed the church's response up: "As austerity has deepened and other things have disappeared, the churches have remained and have grown to fill some of that gap". Even government has recognised how volunteer-based activities can offer the same or increased level of support and benefit for a fraction of the cost. We've seen communities becoming closer-knit, a sense of self-worth and value being rekindled, and a church starting to take its 'Acts 2' responsibility to the needy more seriously. I'm devastated by the impact of poverty in our society, but I'm proud to see His church step into the gap.

My prayer is for more: this responsibility is for every Christian - All of us.

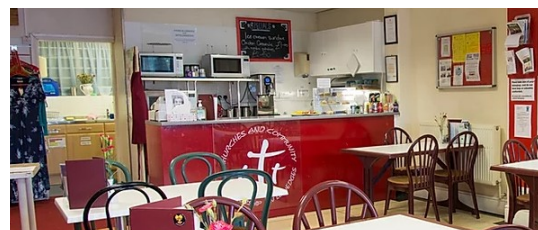
Becky Marshall

THE TERMINUS INITIATIVE is a registered charity working in partnership to meet the needs of a local community in Sheffield

"Our area is considered deprived by many measures but is rich in community. We work hard to support & empower through supported volunteering, health groups, conversation, poverty relief and more"

You can read about their work on their website:

<https://www.terminusinitiative.org/>



Watch the NJPN Conference Speakers on Liverpool J&P's You Tube at <https://bit.ly/2Mlw4t9>; order CD's of the speakers from NJPN, contact details on page 4.

BECOME A MEMBER OF NJPN

Membership is open to local groups, families and individuals. Individual Subscription only £25 a year (but you are welcome to give more!) Low Income £15. Download a membership form from the website or contact the office.



Speaking Personally: Paul Southgate



Where does your commitment to justice and peace come from?

My Grandad, 'Devil' Jack Lee, found Giggy Moon in a bit of a state on the street. Giggy was a well known character in Stockton – he was vulnerable and had learning difficulties. Grandad took Giggy home, gave him a bath and his only spare pair of trousers. It was from my family that I learned compassion, communion and reverence. "No-one is better than you", my mother would say, "but no-one is worse." If I hurt myself I was encouraged to "offer it up" for someone in greater pain than I. Over the road from where I lived as a child was a Children's Home and we would often pop in with little gifts. So I caught my values from my family, values that I would later learn to call compassion, dignity, equality, redemptive suffering, charity, social justice.

"This is what Yahweh asks of you, only this: act justly, love tenderly and walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8). Justice requires charity, humility and compassion alongside it. They travel together.

What, for you, are the most important areas of concern today?

I find 'justice and peace' such vast and complex areas of concern that I honestly have difficulty prioritising. People's concerns are differently calibrated. I'm concerned on the macro level about inequality, poverty, abortion, global climate change, environment, extinction of whole species. On the micro level I'm concerned about people who are told in a thousand ways that they don't matter: the destitute, homeless, refugee, prisoner, abused and victimised. These are the things I really campaign about, which make me weep - or angry.

I love the Church. Her teachings set my compass: good and bad, right and wrong. According to my compass, 3 areas need work: inequality, disunity and mandatory celibacy.

Inequality. The Christian language of equality begins with "Our Father"; we are all equal in grace, dignity and worth. This should include the possibility of women being ordained priests. I am also hugely encouraged by Pope Francis' condemnation of clericalism.

Disunity. I get frustrated at the snail's pace of ecumenism. We all have a journey to make. When I was young, my religion was black and white and, to my shame, I was quite dogmatic. I wanted the whole world to be Roman Catholic. As I experienced the Christian treasures and heroism in other denominations, their hunger for justice, their commitment to the common good, I became a committed ecumenist. My most memorable and fruitful 'Lent' was a couple of years ago when I made an ecumenical pilgrimage attending a different church service every day for 40 days – not just Catholic but Baptist, Methodist, Anglican, United Reformed, Salvationist, Pentecostal, etc. As you can imagine, this stranger stuck out like a sore thumb. "Who are you? What do you do? Why have you come here today?" I almost always received welcome, hospitality and friendship. In the same spirit of welcoming the stranger, for the last 15 years I have attended mosques, gurdwaras, temples and synagogues, learning about their beliefs, values, projects and problems. I am convinced that being in active and meaningful relationship with other denominations and Faiths makes for authentic Catholicism. As the Swahili proverb puts it: "A person who thinks their mother's cooking is the best has never travelled". Justice and Peace involves an urgent search for understanding, spiritual resonance and unity, and I think such ecumenical urgency is largely lacking in the Church. That said, one of the most hopeful signs today is Prof Paul Murray's "Receptive Ecumenism" project, based at Durham University, which seeks to find how denominations can learn from each other.

Mandatory celibacy. Hundreds of millions of RCs are deprived of access to the Eucharist and other sacraments because there are too few priests. This is a matter of justice and charity, not just capacity. Mandatory celibacy is an institutional sin and a functional liability when it is a barrier to God's grace - which should never be rationed. For how much longer can we be fed the line that *mandatory* celibacy is a gift for the Church? It is a burden. Church leaders speak wonderfully about the *value* of celibacy but become somewhat inarticulate about its *necessity*.

What sustains you in your commitment?

Other people, prayer and hope. I am inspired and challenged by the witness, compassion and humility of extraordinary people. In prayer I am learning to be present, to be still, to listen, to consecrate, to serve, to let the Holy Spirit lead. As someone said, "Pray as if everything depends on God, and act as if everything depends on you." That's Hope. St Augustine spoke of Hope having two beautiful daughters: Anger (at the way things are) and Courage (to change things).

The Gospel is not real for most people in our society. People are unconvinced of their divine origin, unsure of their goal, insecure in their search for the meaningful. It is a major crisis of meaning in our society which is at root a loss of hope.

Why are we not more angry at injustice? Do we simply accept that it's just the way things are?

24% of children in NE are living in poverty. Why are we not angrier? In London, the richest city in Europe, Tower Hamlets has 53% of its children living in poverty.

What are your hopes for the 21st Century Church?

Leadership. That our bishops, priests and deacons, who will be both men and women, married and single, will like Jesus be considered a little crazy, dissident, prophetic, unconventional, undomesticated, asking questions rather than giving answers. That lay people will have positions of real responsibility in forming strategy, informing policy and making decisions. I also hope that the Church will finally learn how to handle honest and faithful dissent constructively.

Unity. That the universal Church will be united and collaborative. No longer do I want everyone to be Roman Catholics, but Baptist Catholics, Methodist Catholics, Quaker Catholics, etc. The Church incorporates within itself very different cultures and we can be at the forefront of encouraging a mindshift where difference and diversity can be celebrated not just tolerated, ending the tyranny of uniformity and conformity.

Preferential option for the poor. That we will accompany, advocate and act. If we sum up the Bible in 5 words, it is "I am with you always". We shall stand with the homeless, the refugee, the prisoner, the vulnerable, the sick, the least, the weakest and the poorest. We will advocate for them giving them power, voice and dignity. We will listen, understand, and do what needs to be done, even when that involves sacrifice on our part. That's what God does. The Church will oppose the crazy gluttony of consumerism and preach the "Magnificat" delight in the triumph of the small and humble over the excess and disproportion of the rich and proud.

Systemic change. I love Pope Francis' image of the Church as a field hospital after battle but he would be the first to agree with Dietrich Bonhoeffer that "We are not to simply bandage the wounds of victims beneath the wheels of injustice, we are to drive a spoke into the wheel itself." I see the Church not accepting the way things are but championing systemic change, challenging unjust systems and structures, advocating alternatives, such as devising a social and economic strategy which promotes equality and the common good.

Paul lives in the North East. He serves on the NJPN Executive.



Our Future Networking Days in 2020

Saturday 8th February 2020 10.30 – 4.00 **'Our Common Home - creative responses'**
St Nicholas of Tolentino Parish Hall, Lawford's Gate, Bristol BS5 0RE.

Speakers: **Fr Augusto Zampini Davies and Nikki Jones** email: justiceandpeace@Cliftondiocese.com

Saturday 2nd May 10.30–4.00 **Networking Day and NJPN AGM** CAFOD, Romero House, London SE1 7J

Saturday 19th September 10.30-4.00 East Midlands (venue tbc)

Saturday 21st November 10.30-4.00 London (venue tbc)



Suffer little children ... and all vulnerable young people.

On 8 January the House of Commons agreed to a version of the European Union Withdrawal Bill, modifying the text granted a first reading in October. The earlier version required the Government to seek to negotiate an agreement with the EU aiming to facilitate family reunion for unaccompanied children who had claimed asylum in the EU and had a relative in the UK (or vice versa).

Unless removed by the House of Lords, a new Clause 37 abolishes that requirement. Instead, within two months of the Bill receiving Royal Assent, a Government Minister must make a single policy statement to Parliament "in relation to any future arrangements between the UK and EU about these children".

The Bill's Explanatory Notes do not specify why such a significant change has been made, although a spokesman for the Prime Minister said that policy on child refugees had not changed and that "we will continue to do all we can to enable children to claim asylum and be reunited with their families."

MPs commented that the new clause is an astonishing breach of faith with some of the most vulnerable children in the world, emphasising that the change was not mentioned in the general election manifesto or in any statement of support for the withdrawal agreement. Our leaders appear to have reneged on a commitment to child refugees to secure arrangements at the earliest opportunity on how to protect children elsewhere in the EU who have an adult relative living here legally, either with refugee status or in the asylum process.



Welcoming the stranger should remain a commitment, especially the young and most vulnerable. This modified Bill condemns youngsters to more years of homeless existence in and out of refugee camps across Europe and encourages them to seek illegal and dangerous ways of travel perhaps in the hands of traffickers. It is important to continue to ask MPs to urge the Government to reinstate the promise to negotiate meaningfully with the EU about future arrangements.

The Home Secretary must be held to the message that her predecessor sent to the Home Affairs Committee in October 2019, stating: that the Government is committed "to seek to negotiate a reciprocal agreement with the EU to allow unaccompanied asylum-seeking children in the EU to join relatives – parents, siblings, aunts, uncles and grandparents – lawfully resident or awaiting a decision on their asylum claim in the UK, where it is in the child's best interests, and vice versa. This commitment stands whether we leave the EU with or without a deal."

It is also important to support the proposals of "Safe Passage" for robust and accessible legal routes for seeking asylum. Given such routes, those with valid claims would not be forced to make dangerous journeys by land and sea. Lives are saved by refugee resettlement schemes (where the UK plays a leading role) and by support for refugee family reunion.

Phil Kerton

"I was a stranger, and you welcomed me."

— Matthew 25:35



BRIGHTNOW
towards fossil free Churches

In January Operation Noah announced that 20 Christian organisations are divesting from fossil fuels, as part of the Epiphany Declaration for Fossil Free Churches. This joint divestment announcement includes the first two Catholic dioceses in England to go fossil free, two Catholic religious orders (the Congregation of Jesus and Presentation Sisters) as well as sixteen other churches, Synods and religious orders from across the denominations!

NJPN ask our members and supporters to continue to lobby your dioceses, parishes, religious orders and organisations to divest from fossil fuels.



Welcome to...

Colette Joyce, New J&P co-ordinator for Westminster Diocese

Many of you will know Colette through our NJPN Conference music group and she will be again helping to plan the liturgies for 2020 Vision.

She has worked in a number of parishes & roles in the Westminster Diocese, read more about her on ICN news: <https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/38686>



Climate Crisis in Marple

On a Sunday afternoon of torrential rain in late September, 290 people turned up for "Climate Crisis in Marple" The event staged by the local environment group MESS (Marple Mellor and Marple Bridge Energy Saving Strategy) was seen as a prelude to a bigger event in 2020.

The afternoon was introduced by young people from the local high school and sixth Form College and there was a speaker from the Tyndall Climate Research Centre in Manchester. Following a question and answer session there were some twenty stalls from local organizations such as the Green Party; Friends of the Earth; Red Cross Recycling; a LED lighting business; Walk/Ride Marple and many more. A food stall produced some very tempting non-meat samples which proved very popular.

The afternoon continued with local people explaining their own initiatives and encouraging everyone to make their own 'pledges' to alter some aspect of their lives for the coming year.

An Art Competition was held for the local primary schools and the high school. The entries were amazing with the young people showing their involvement and understanding of the climate issue. Some of the entries were displayed around Marple during the following month.



Following the success of this event MESS is planning a "Climate and Environmental Festival from 19–27 September. This will include sessions on Food, Gardening, Clothes, Films Transport and a Repair café etc. The theme is 'Action for Life in Marple' and it is hoped that what is achieved this year will be celebrated and encouraged going forward from 2020.

Maureen Matthews



RIP...

Edward Echlin,

eco-theologian and organic gardener, sadly died just before Christmas on 23rd December, he will be remembered my many for his contributions to NJPN conferences in the 1990s.

Ellen Teague writes about him on ICN:

<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/38631>



Forgotten People
Forgotten Places

The ROSEMARY
READ BURSARY
FUND helped

families & young people to attend the Conference in 2019.

Please make a donation to help again this year
-see details on p4-
specifying that it is for the Bursary Fund.



DIARY

This is a selection of dates. Find more on the Rolling Calendar and Year Planner on our website www.justice-and-peace.org.uk



Like us on Facebook [njandpnetwork](https://www.facebook.com/njandpnetwork)

Follow us on Twitter @NJandPNetwork



FEBRUARY 2020

8 **NJPN Open Networking Day** Bristol: 0117 9243011

justiceandpeace@Cliftondioocese.com

8 Day of Prayer for Victims of Human

Trafficking: catholicchurch.org.uk

9 Racial Justice Sunday:

catholicchurch.org.uk; carj.org.uk

20 World Day of Social Justice: un.org/en/events/socialjusticeday

22 The Real Cost of War: Fellowship of Reconciliation, Birmingham for.org.uk

23 Church Action Poverty Sunday: Speaking Truth to Power: church-poverty.org.uk/sunday/

24-8 March Fairtrade Fortnight:

fairtrade.org.uk; 020 7405 5942

Focus on cocoa.

'Every purchase is a vote cast'



ST JOSEPHINE BAKHITA
Born: 1869 Darfur, Sudan
Died: 8 February 1947 Italy



'2020 VISION
— ACTION FOR LIFE ON EARTH'

17–19 July 2020
The Hayes Conference Centre
Swanwick, Derbyshire

See booking form with this mailing or download from our website www.justice-and-peace.org.uk

26 **Ash Wednesday witness/action:**

London, Ministry of Defence,
0208 203 4884.

Liverpool, City Centre 07746919915 janharper1@yahoo.co.uk

Coventry, 11.45am, Old Cathedral steps.



MARCH 2020

4 Kate Hennessy speaking about her book and her grandmother, Dorothy Day. paxchristi.org.uk

6 Women's World Day of Prayer prepared by women of

Zimbabwe wwdp.org.uk

6 CAFOD Lent Fast Day:

cafod.org.uk/News/

7 JPIT Conference: Renewal and Rebellion: Faith, Economy and Climate jointpublicissues.org.uk

8 International Women's Day: internationalwomensday.com

13-15 Prophets – Opening Unseeing Eyes & Unhearing Ears

catholicpeoplesweeks.org

14 Birmingham J&P Lenten Retreat led by Fr Ray Collier SSC

<https://www.birminghamnjandp.org.uk/lenten-retreat.html>

14-29 The Pax Christi Icon in Birmingham, details to be finalised

a.m_kelly@btinternet.com, 07890 066 309

22 World Water Day: unwater.org/worldwaterday

21 International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

un.org/en/events

24 40th Anniversary of the murder of St Oscar Romero:

romerotrust.org.uk; romerotrust@gmail.com

28 Our Power is Real day conference. 60th anniversary of Peace

House: housmans.com

28 Earth Hour: wwf.org.uk/earthhour

28 Iona SW Gathering with Green Christian

drosborne2@btinternet.com

31 Embassies Walk, London christiancnd.org.uk/events/

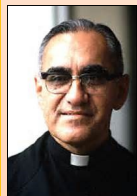


APRIL 2020

12 **Easter Sunday**

25 Network of Christian Peace Organisations: 'Prophets and Reconcilers', London. 0208 203 4884

St Oscar Romero 40 Years On March & April



The guest speaker for Romero Week is **Edgardo Colon-Emeric**, a Methodist theologian, Associate Professor & Director of the Centre for Reconciliation, Duke University



The Archbishop
Romero Trust



March 14 Romero Film 'Righting the Wrong' followed by Q&A
Canterbury

21 Mass for 40th Anniversary of Romero's Martyrdom

St George's Cathedral, Southwark

24 **St Oscar Romero Feast Day** – many local masses/events

28 'Microphones of God – Romero 40 Years On'.

National Ecumenical Service **St Martin-in-the Fields**

Church, London. Preacher: Edgardo Colon-Emeric

31 Lecture 'Romero 40 Years On – Life-Giving Legacy'

St Mary's University, Twickenham

Speaker: Edgardo Colon-Emeric

April 1 Lecture: 'Joy and Hope for the 2020s – Romero 40 Years On'

Newman University, Birmingham

Speaker: Edgardo Colon-Emeric

2 Gethin Abraham-Williams Memorial Lecture with CYTUN

'Romero 40 Years On – an Ecumenical Inspiration'

Cardiff or Swansea tbc Speaker: Edgardo Colon-Emeric

4 All-day Pilgrimage 'Microphones of God – Romero 40 Years

On' Ecumenical Service, Romero Film, prayer and picnics!

Lindisfarne, Holy Island Speaker: Edgardo Colon-Emeric

26 Chernobyl Day: chernobyl-day.org

MAY 2020

2 NJPN AGM & Open Networking Day:

Romero House, London justice-and-peace.org.uk

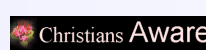
12-18 Christian Aid week: christianaid.org.uk

15 International Conscientious Objectors Day: paxchristi.org.uk

020 8203 4884: ppu.org.uk, 020 7424 9444

16-23 Christians Aware 2020 UK Pilgrimage,

Somerset christiansaware.co.uk



JUNE 2020

12-14 Christian Meditation Conference, Touch the Earth Lightly:

Meditation and the Future of the Planet.

christianmeditation.org.uk

DONATE TO NJPN: Online via our website. By cheque payable to NJPN. BACS to NJPN Sort Code:16-31-15 Account No: 10089516, put your name and Donation in the reference field. To make a regular donation by Standing Order, contact the Administrator or download the Membership Form on the website.

The National Justice & Peace Network welcomes all who share a vision of a world in which people live in peace and harmony, where our common humanity is respected and all are able to contribute freely to the common good. NJPN seeks to encourage work for justice and peace by promoting communication and shared action between members, supporters and partners.

This newsletter is produced three times a year by the Network.

The views expressed are not necessarily those of the National Justice and Peace Network.

Editorial Group: Stephen Cooke, Sue Ingham, Ann Kelly, Anne O'Connor, Anne Peacey, Geoff Thompson.

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