



**Goodness is stronger
than Evil**

**Love is stronger
than Hate**

**Light is stronger
than darkness**

**Life is stronger
than Death**

**Victory is ours through
Him who loved us**

Archbishop Desmond Tutu
7.10.1931-26.12.2021

44th Annual Justice & Peace Conference



22–24 July 2022
The Hayes Conference Centre
Swanwick, Derbyshire
www.justice-and-peace.org.uk

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In this issue: Anne Peacey reflects on the implications for justice and peace for the Synodal process; and Laudato Si' Animators UK provide a practical guide to using the Laudato Si' Action Platform to help individuals and groups on the path of ecological conversion.

Synodality: A Justice Issue

As we move into the new year, we find ourselves in a very strange place, a limbo of uncertainty, our security blankets ripped away, a time of despair and fear for many, especially when confronted by the reality of COVID 19, ongoing climate crisis, heart-breaking loss, grief, separation, and loneliness.



The pandemic has emphasised the deep inequality and injustice already existing within our society, where so many have been failed by our education, economic, welfare, and political systems. Why on earth are we yearning to get back to normal as quickly as we can? For so many 'normal' was not a place of security, happiness, and fulfilment. Who would wish to perpetuate such an unfair model of society? As Church, many have been complicit and 'bought into' this model, largely by remaining silent in the face of great inequality, easing our conscience with donations and acts of charity. All good, but ultimately propping up unjust systems.

In writing our Christmas cards, how many of us expressed the hope that the coming year would be much better than the last? I certainly did. As people of faith, knowing that the virtue of hope is a great deal more than wishful thinking, what must we do to help create a more just and equitable society where everyone feels valued and is able to thrive? These are indeed challenging times but in the synodal journey we have a fantastic opportunity to re-imagine the mission of the Church. Seeking a new way of being in a broken world would, some say, be our last best chance to effect necessary change and survive. We are indeed fortunate to have the words and witness of Pope Francis as he seeks to lead us in the ways of Christ, calling us to dream of a better future. We have our sacred books to guide our paths and the riches of Catholic

Social Teaching are open to us all.

Those among us lucky enough to have been involved in the National Pastoral Congress in 1980, have experienced synodality in action and as a result many lives were transformed, with memories that have sustained us during difficult times. A joyful outward looking Church

seemed possible; sadly this enthusiasm was to be dampened. We are at a difficult moment in our Church's history. Within churches there is extreme polarisation, conventional boundaries are breaking down, we see abuse of power and discrimination. Among many, there is a feeling of anxiety rather than hope and time is short; it is now time for making choices, either to recognise change as inevitable and irreversible or to remain passive and hang on to the illusion that we can re-group as before.

Much has been lost but much has been learned: many among us, especially women, have discovered different ways of being Church, with alternative liturgies, allowing for the recognition and nurturing of many gifts and talents. We must discern how best to acknowledge all that has been gained, 'the genie cannot be put back in the bottle', nor should it.

It is right that the journey towards the Synod begins with parish communities but there it must not remain, mainly concerned with issues contained within comfortable walls and focussing on drawing people back but rather a movement outwards in its mission of proclaiming the Gospel message of justice, peace, and love to all people. We speak of those who have *walked away* but have we considered that they might have *walked towards* a different way of being Church, to a wonderful new reality. There are also those who feel themselves to be very much on the margins but remain and continue to struggle.

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People— news from around the Network

..SIR John Battle



John Battle was made a knight in the New Year's Honours. Anne Peacey writes:

John has been a patron, reliable supporter, and great friend to NJPN over many years. His commitment to social justice encourages us all to action. John's contribution to NJPN annual conferences has always been very special as he has the gift of presenting his deep knowledge of Catholic Social Teaching in a direct and accessible way, affirming our efforts, and challenging us to follow his example as we work and pray for a world where people may live in peace and harmony with each other and all of creation. NJPN is delighted that John's commitment to working for the good of all people has been recognised and we offer our congratulations, best wishes and an enormous thank you for everything he does.

Farewell and Thank You to...

Maria Elena Arana



Campaign Coordinator at CAFOD for 30 years, a faithful presence at our Networking Days and in

leading workshops at Conference, who retired before Christmas. At her leaving party she was described as 'the face of CAFOD for J&P activists'. Her work with parishes in helping them achieve the Live Simply Award was among her many activities which were highlighted.

See

www.indcatholicnews.com/news/43592

..and Welcome to..

Sue Grubic

who took over as Faith and Justice Worker in Lancaster diocese last summer.



Rest in Peace...

John Marshall



John, for many years the Chair of Hexham and Newcastle Justice and Peace Co-ordinating Council, died in December 2021 after several years of illness. He

and his wife Audrey were active in work for justice and peace from the 1970's. In 2001 they set up the Justice and Peace Refugee Project in the diocese, which is still going strong.

In 2011, John and Audrey were interviewed for the 'Speaking Personally' column of this newsletter. They described the influences that led to their commitment to justice and peace, through involvement in trade unions, and their understanding of the impact of inequality through their work with young people. And their hopes for the Church...

'We would like our Church to be an example of justice and fairness, seeking to vocally and actively address the balance between the overly rich and those in poverty... Within the Church, we'd like to see those in positions of authority listening to the voices of women, and treating them with more justice. Similarly to take notice of the views of lay people and not just expect blind obedience. We think that the Church is starting to move in this direction. We certainly hope and pray that it is.'

Don Gallagher

Don, married to Sheila for 60 years was an ardent supporter of NJPN attending every conference, including in July 2021. He died on 14 December.

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As we try to discover a way of living well through a period of uncertainty and misplaced priorities, we would do well to echo the cry of Amos, the prophet of old:

*Take away from me the noise of your songs;
to the melody of your harps I will not listen.
But let justice roll down like waters,
and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.*

Amos 5:24

As we listen to each other and begin to discover how we must change in order that our vision for such a just and righteous society be fulfilled, we must always seek the truth of any situation. In many instances, we must change the narrative, tell a different story, the story of lived experiences, not relying on media headlines and de-humanising statistics.

Are we really proclaiming the Gospel message to a broken world? Are we seen as a welcoming, affirming, inclusive movement of hope, offering God's all-

consuming love to those seeking new meaning in their lives?

As we journey towards the Synod, shall we re-focus and:

*"Ring the bells that still can ring
Forget 'our' perfect offering
There is a crack, a crack in everything
That's how the light gets in"*

Leonard Cohen: "Anthem" 1992 album *The Future*

We must look through the cracks within our dysfunctional systems and strive to shine the light of justice, peace, and truth to all God's people. Journeying in hope, we pray that the Spirit moving among us will open our eyes to the light of Christ, active in our world, often in the most unexpected people and places. We remain confident in God's promise to all:

"You shall be my people, and I will be your God."

Jeremiah 30:22

Anne Peacey

Using the Laudato Si' Action Platform

The Laudato Si' Action Platform is now live, launched appropriately on World Day for the Poor, November 14th, 2021. What the site provides is a resource and a method for us, either as an individual, a family, or organisation, to take the next step in the ongoing ecological conversion that Pope Francis asks for, to care for our common home. It is highly recommended for anyone who wants to engage with Laudato Si'. This little article is to help you use the platform, but please remember that this is still new and small changes can be expected.

CAFOD recently ran an online talk (30th November) on 'The Laudato Si' Action Platform and Livesimply', which can still be viewed at <https://www.bigmarker.com/cafod/Livesimply> which you might find useful, but you don't need to view all of it.

Here's the link: laudatosiactionplatform.org. Our first impression is that the site is a very professional site and demands our attention, but a little bit of help in using it goes a long way, so what follows is a short guide that might help you navigate it, especially in finding the **Laudato Si' Full Planning Guide**, explained later.

First, you need to enrol, although it might seem strange being asked to commit to something before you know what it is you are committing to! But unless you do so, you do not have access to the whole site. You use the ENROL tab to create an account. We suggest, to start with, you enrol as a 'family or individual'.

You are committing to four things:

1. Complete a Self-assessment
2. Submit a Reflection
3. Produce a Laudato Si' Action Plan
4. Each year, re-assess, reflect, and revise your action plan

which follows the analyse-reflect-act-evaluate of the 'pastoral cycle' that some of us may be familiar with, rather like the 'see-judge-act' method.

Once you have enrolled and you are logged in, you have another set of additional tabs. To start, choose the DASHBOARD. To begin it might be useful to read their Planning Guide, but to find it you need to scroll down to the button: **[Read the Full Planning Guide]** at the very bottom of the page! However, it is provided in a zip folder, and you may need some guidance to read or print the file (9 A4 pages).

Now, in the Dashboard page, you can begin. You can complete your **Self-Assessment**, your **Reflection**, and your **Action Plan**. These are easy to find and use on the Dashboard.

For the **Self-Assessment**, it says allow about half an hour, but it could take about an hour, and it is useful to find out your annual energy usage before you begin. Once completed, you will receive an email acknowledgement, with the promise "your results will be evaluated and shortly you will receive a report with the results of your overall environmental impact and carbon footprint." At the time of writing, we have yet to receive this to know exactly what form this takes. "Having an

overall view of our current practices in integral ecology can be very helpful. Being able to see where we stand gives us a sense of direction, an

understanding of how far we've come and where we might want to go from here." [LS Planning Guide]

The next stage is your **Reflection**, which is very much free-style, so you can write what you wish in any style that you wish, or even produce a video, but ideally you might want to relate it to the Laudato Si' Goals in some way. There are a few reflections of others that you can access to see what they have done.

Finally, you make your **Action Plan**. Again, what form this takes and what it contains is entirely up to you. There is no pro-forma or suggested layout. One simple approach might be as follows:

Go through the Suggested Actions for each of seven **Laudato Si' Goals**, which you will find in the Suggested Actions tab (and you will already have seen them in the Self-Assessment section). For each Laudato Si' Goal, **select the simplest and easiest action that you are able to do in the next year**. If there is any criticism to be made, it is that some of the actions are not easy to interpret or are beyond the scope of most people, but a little imagination goes a long way. If you wish you can make a list of these, for example:

Response to the Cry of the Earth:

Insulate buildings - **I could do this by draught-proofing my home as much as possible.**

Response to the Cry of the Poor:

Ensure members of the community have free access to clean water and sanitation - **I will contribute to a charity (like CAFOD) with a monthly standing order. I will be generous.**

Ecological Economics:

Purchase recycled and sustainable materials - **I will shop at a Charity Shop as a first port of call, as and when I need something.**

Then select the easiest, achievable goal. Make this your Action Plan for the next year. It is suggested you make any activity SMART – simple, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timed. This is your goal for the year.

Job done! And then, next year, you review your progress by carrying out a new self-assessment and repeat the process.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if each of us, individually, undertook a LS action plan? Wouldn't it be wonderful if every person in our parish undertook an action plan? Wouldn't it be wonderful if every parish in every diocese took part? What can we do to make this happen?

Laudato Si' Animators UK (contributed by Brian Austin)



FEBRUARY

- 13 Racial Justice Sunday
- 20 World Day of Social Justice: A Call for Social Justice in the Digital Economy
www.un.org/en/observances/social-justice-day/
- 20 Working for Peace in the Middle East: CND online conference: <https://cnduk.org/>
- 26 NJPN Networking Day via Zoom
www.justice-and-peace.org.uk, 0207 901 4864
- 27 Church Action on Poverty Sunday:
www.church-poverty.org.uk, 0161 872 9294
- 28 – 6 March Fairtrade Fortnight
www.fairtrade.org.uk 0207 405 5942

MARCH

- 4 World Day of Prayer:
 'I know the plans I have for you': Prepared by the women of England, Wales and Northern Ireland (EWNi)
 01892 541411; www.wwdp.org.uk
- 11 CAFOD Lent Fast Day
www.cafod.org.uk 0207 733 7900
- 16 Joy in Enough online talk: 7pm
<https://greenchristian.org.uk/whats-on/>
- 16 Caritas Leeds Criminal Justice Workshop 6-8pm www.leedsjp.org.uk/calendar/
- 24 42nd Anniversary of the death of St Oscar Romero (see proposed events below)

APRIL

- 17 Easter Sunday
- 25 – 8 May COP15: United Nations Biodiversity Conference in China
www.cbd.int/conferences/post2020
- 26 Chernobyl Day
un.org/en/observances/chernobyl-remembrance-day/un-action

MAY

- 2 Mass for Migrants: Westminster Cathedral
<https://westminsterjusticeandpeace.org/> 07593434905
- 7 NJPN AGM & Networking Day, London (tbc)
www.justice-and-peace.org.uk, 0207 901 4864
- 10-16 Christian Aid Week
www.christianaid.org.uk, 0207 620 4444
- 15 Conscientious Objectors' Day
www.paxchristi.org.uk 0208 203 4884
www.ppu.org.uk 020 7424 9444
- 16 – 22 Laudato Si' Week
www.laudatosimovement.org

JUNE

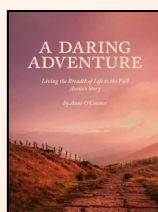
- 5 World Environment Day
www.worldenvironmentday.global
- 19 Day for Life+ www.dayforlife.org
- 26 International Day in Support of Victims of Torture: www.acatuk.org.uk 01395 577 669 and un.org/en/observances/torture-victims-day/

Romero Week 19-27 March 2022

The following programme is provisional and subject to Covid developments. To confirm check:
www.romerotrust.org.uk, 0208 986 0807

Speaker: Edgardo Colon-Emeric,
 Methodist Theologian

- 19 March 11.00am St Martin-in-the-Fields,
 London: National Ecumenical Service
- 20 March Evensong, St Alban's Abbey
- 22 March evening, Newman University,
 Birmingham
- 24 March Durham
 (North West venue to be confirmed)
- 27 March morning, Wesley Chapel, London



Annie O'Connor was only 41 when she died suddenly of natural causes on 12 June 2020. That day her family found a small notebook on her desk with just one entry which said, "Don't just live the length of life: live the breadth of it as well."

A Daring Adventure tells Annie's story, written by her mother Anne. It records a "life well lived", but more than that it provides inspiration for anyone trying to live a life of faith, guided by the teachings of Jesus.

To obtain a copy send your postal address to Anne O'Connor at adaringadventure@hotmail.com. There is no charge but donations to support the work of Church Army can be made at www.churcharmy.org/donate

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.

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