NJPN North West Justice & Peace E-Bulletin March 2022

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

UKRAINE: THOUSANDS OF VULNERABLE CHILDREN UNACCOUNTED FOR

Sue Mitchell BBC News

Traffickers are targeting parentless children on the Ukraine-Poland border, says a group evacuating orphanages in the war zone. A team of US military veterans is helping to organise safe passage for the estimated 200,000 children in Ukraine's orphanages and foster homes. But they say thousands are unaccounted for and fear some may already have fallen prey to people traffickers.

Kyiv says it is tightening procedures for vulnerable children. Aerial Recovery, a team of former US military veterans who are assisting vulnerable people fleeing the crisis, is working with the Ukrainian authorities to establish a system that will make it easier to keep tabs on the country's parentless children. "The government doesn't really have the capacity to deal with the problem," says Jeremy Locke, the team's chief of operations.

The team is working with Salam, a charity which helps refugees. It told the BBC that children dropped at the Ukraine-Poland border by well-meaning organisations are being targeted. "They're very easy prey - they're looking for assistance," says Martin Kvernbekk, of the charity. "So if you're an adult with some food or refuge, they will come with you. They don't know any better." He has heard about children going missing from a number of different sources, and reports of people smugglers wearing reflective vests and pretending to belong to organisations helping the relief effort. "The gangs are very advanced - it's big, well-financed networks that do this for a living. They're good at this in peace time," he says. "Now it's a war, it's chaos, and they're exploiting the fact there is disorder to be able to snatch more kids and women." Mr Kvernbekk also points out that although most men aged 18-60 are not allowed to leave Ukraine because they have to fight, any man who has three or more children with him can pass through. But no proper vetting is taking place at the country's borders. "There is no way to check if that man is actually the parent of the kids," he says.

In a speech earlier this week, the EU Commissioner for Home Affairs, Ylva Johansson, voiced concerns. "We also have some reports of criminals taking orphans from orphanages in Ukraine, crossing the border pretending that they are relatives to the child and then using them for trafficking purposes," she said. An absence of vetting procedures for those who volunteer to help or house refugees once they have crossed the border only compounds the problem. "Everybody knows it's going on, but it's difficult to say the extent because of the chaos here. The authorities are trying to track what's happened to all of the children [but] there is no paper trail," Mr Kvernbekk says.

The Ukrainian authorities are now establishing a system with the help of NGOs to process displaced children and setting up safe areas in the east of the country. On Wednesday, Aerial Recovery discussed plans to strengthen safety protocols and create safe zones in Lviv with the regional minister for child services. "That way we don't have to take these children over borders and we can ensure that Ukraine is in control of where their children are going," Mr Locke says. During that meeting the authorities expressed concern that 5,000 children on their records were unaccounted for, he says. Nobody knows what has happened to them. "They're either casualties of war, or they've slipped across the border, or have been taken out of the border by smugglers or by people that are doing it the wrong way," Mr Locke told the BBC.

Volodymyr Lys, regional head of service of children's protection under the ministry of social policy in Lviv, told the BBC that the first 10 days of war were difficult, but it had improved. "It was very very chaotic. They didn't know where the kids were going. Nobody felt like they had worked out a system. Now there's enough NGOs, there's enough volunteers, everybody knows what they're doing," he says. He believes more than a million children remain in conflict zones in the country. Most are now being evacuated to the east, rather than abroad. Mr Lys says currently there are 550 orphans and foster children sheltering in the Lviv region, and they are expecting that number to double. He says his team spent 10 days at Lviv train station comforting, feeding and sheltering children. "The whole of Ukraine is absolutely horrified at what is going on," he says. When asked if children fleeing abroad could be trafficked or forced into prostitution, he admits: "Of course there is a risk of that, especially if they are travelling without their legal guardian or come unaccompanied.

"There's really not a way to know for sure for now how many are missing and the authorities are now trying to track what's happened to all of the children in the system," says Martin Kvernbekk. Former soldier and aid worker Rob Lawrie is volunteering alongside Aerial Recovery in Ukraine. "What we've seen is smugglers using the war in Ukraine as a shield to move in on the most vulnerable. Hopefully things are now in place to get these youngsters out of dangerous areas and make sure they can't fall into the hands of traffickers."

https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-60692442

THE KINGS BAY PLOWSHARES DENOUNCE THE WAR IN UKRAINE

March 14,2022 Heather Kiernan writes: As we enter a new phase in the Russian aggression of the Ukraine, I thought that I would post this statement by Kings Bay Plowshares. It not only condemns the behaviour of Vladimir Putin, but US foreign policy and the arms manufacturers who are profit from war.

The following statement was prepared by American social justice activist and founding member of the Amistad Catholic Worker community and house of hospitality in New Haven, Connecticut Mark Colville:

Today the Kings Bay Plowshares Seven join our prayers with the global community for the people of Ukraine, at this deeply terrifying historical moment. We watch with moral outrage and horror as another nuclear weapons-wielding state is emboldened to abandon diplomacy in favour of international gangsterism. Killing indiscriminately with impunity; environmental destruction without boundary or responsibility; the plunging of millions into refugee status; the flouting of the very fundamentals of law, human rights, international cooperation and the authority of the United Nations – these are the common threads that tie together Iraq, Afghanistan, and now Ukraine, during this most blood-stained of centuries. They are also constitutive elements of the unmitigated evil that is constantly unleashed through the design, development and existence of nuclear weapons in any nation or people.

As US Catholics, therefore, we believe that the starting point of our response should be to highlight the lesson of last Sunday's Gospel reading, Luke 6:39-45, which reads in part:

"How can you say to your brother [or sister], 'let me remove that splinter in your eye', when you do not even notice the wooden beam in your own eye? You hypocrite! Remove the wooden beam from your eye first; then you will see clearly to remove the splinter in your brother's eye."

As we unequivocally condemn the deranged behaviour of Russia's dictator Vladimir Putin and his minions, we are obliged also to acknowledge our own government's role in creating this crisis. For more than thirty years now, US foreign policy in that region of the world has been pursued with a provocative agenda of destabilization, imperilling Russia's national security through the expansion of NATO right up to its borders. This project has been intensified in recent times by apostate evangelical Christian factions in Washington, which have openly admitted their desire to provoke world events that they believe will bring about the second coming of Christ. And over all of this madness and slaughter preside its silent partners, the only winners in any war today: US-based weapons contractor corporations like Raytheon, Northrop Grumman, General Electric and United Technologies (to name just a few), whose profits increase with every cluster bomb and missile launched, everybody torn to pieces.

For our complicity with all of these forces that are literally driving the world insane, we beg the forgiveness of God and neighbour. While affirming our solidarity with both the Russian and Ukrainian peoples, we pledge non-cooperation with any armed faction in this senseless conflict. To all soldiers we say: lay down your weapons. Your courage and sacrifice belong at the service of peace for the future of the human race, not to be spent in bloodshed on the altar of the national security state. Together, we can let the words of Martin Luther King Jr. echo through these times until they shake the world back into reality: "The choice today is between nonviolence and non-existence." Amen.

https://kingsbayplowshares7.org/2022/03/kbp7-denounce-war-in-ukraine-3-4-22/

- The Plowshares group recommend this article by Brian Terrell on the underlying roots and U.S. involvement in this war: Let Them Kill As Many As Possible United States Policy Towards Russia and It's Neighbours https://www.codepink.org/let them kill as many as possible us policy russia
- On April 4, 2018, seven Plowshares activists calling themselves "Kings Bay Plowshares" were arrested at the Kings Bay Naval Submarine Base. They stated that the action had been planned to coincide with the 50th anniversary of the Assassination of Martin Luther King Jr.

VIOLINISTS SUPPORT UKRAINE

In this moving video, 94 violinists from around the world come together to accompany violinists in Ukraine, some in basement shelters, in a Ukrainian folk song.

London-based violinist Kerenza Peacock coordinated the effort: 'In the space of 48 hours, I received videos from 94 violinists, representing over 25 different countries.' If you look closely you can spot LSO violinists Carmine Lauri, Maxine Kwok, Clare Duckworth, Julián Gil Rodríguez, Alix Lagasse and Sarah Quinn.

On the website you can read the whole story, donate to charities working in the region and even download the score to record your own contribution: http://violinistssupportukraine.com/ #ViolinistsSupportUkraine W

LIVERPOOL: ARCHBISHOP LAUNCHES MAJOR APPEAL FOR UKRAINE

Source: Archdiocese of Liverpool March13, 2022

The Archbishop of Liverpool, the Most Reverend Malcolm McMahon OP, has launched an urgent and major appeal in the Archdiocese of Liverpool to support Ukraine.

The archdiocese has connections with Ukraine as Bishop Hryhoriy (Gregory) Komar, the auxiliary bishop of the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy (diocese) of Sambir-Drohobych in the Lviv region of western Ukraine was taught by Liverpool priest Father Francis Marsden while studying for the priesthood.

Ukrainian priest, Father Taras Khomych, serves at Liverpool's Ukrainian Catholic parish - based at St Sebastian's RC Church in Fairfield. Father Taras led prayers for Ukraine at the cathedral vigil on 4 March, he also comes from Lviv and has family there.

The appeal gives the opportunity for both financial donations and the donation of items which may be left at 40 centres throughout the archdiocese. Financial donations will be sent to the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy (diocese) of the Holy Family of London and our partner diocese in Sambir-Drohobych. There are three ways in which financial donations may be made:

By using the following text numbers:

- Text HELPUKRAINE to 70085 to donate £2
- Text HELPUKRAINE to 70450 to donate £3
- Text HELPUKRAINE to 70460 to donate £5
- Text HELPUKRAINE to 70470 to donate £10

(Texts will cost the donation amount plus one standard network rate message.)

By bank transfer to: Account name: Archdiocese of Liverpool Sort code: 40-29-12 Account: 01551493 Reference: Help Ukraine

Or by cheque made payable to 'Archdiocese of Liverpool' and with 'Help Ukraine' written on the reverse.

Items may be donated at the St Margaret Clitherow Centre, along with all 40 parish centres in the archdiocese **The following items are needed:**

First Aid Kits (including sterile dressings, safety pins, antiseptic fluid/cream/spray, disposable gloves, burn free kits, eye wash; Battlefield First Aid Kits; Bandages - different widths (including halo chest seals, torniquets, splints, QuikClot Combat Gauze, Steri-strips stitches, Triangular bandages, Tourni-Key Plus); Pain relief eg Paracetamol and Ibuprofen; Blankets, bedding, sleeping bags; Nappies - all ages and all sizes; Powdered Baby Milk and baby feeding bottles; Nappy Rash creams and baby bath lotions; Sanitary products; Warm underclothing including socks; Toiletries including toothbrushes, toothpaste, soap and shampoo; Rucksacks; Mattresses; Generators and different types of chargers

The archdiocese is also welcoming volunteers to support the appeal, please email: volunteer@rcaol.org.uk with name and contact details.

There are prayer resources available at www.liverpoolcatholic.org.uk/ukraine-support

Centres in the Archdiocese of Liverpool receiving items for Ukraine

(All centres are open every day from 9 am to 11 pm.)

Liverpool

Christ the King Parish Centre, Score Lane, L16 6AW
Holy Name Parish Centre, 2a Moss Pits Lane, Fazakerley, L10 9LG
Our Lady of the Assumption, Parish Centre, Hartsbourne Ave, Gateacre, L25 2RY
Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish Centre, 33 High Park St, Dingle, L8 8DX
Our Lady, Queen of Martyrs Parish Centre, Stonebridge Lane, Croxteth, L11 9AZ
Our Lady of Sorrows Parish Centre, Pirrie Road, Walkton, L9 6AA
St Ambrose Parish Centre, Heathgate Ave, Speke, L24 7RS
St Cecilia Parish Centre, 21 Green Lane, Tuebrook, L13 7DT
St Cyril Parish Centre, Southbrook Road, Netherley, L27 1YW
St Paul Parish Centre, Spring Grove, West Derby, L12 8SJ

North Liverpool and Bootle

Our Lady of Walsingham Parish Centre, Stand Park Ave, Netherton, L30 3SA

St Benet Parish Centre, Chapel Lane, Netherton, L30 7PD

St Elizabeth's Parish Centre, Pennington Road, Litherland, L21 8HZ

St Gregory's Parish Centre, 94 Liverpool Road, Lydiate, L31 2NA

St Monica's Parish Centre, Stewart Ave, Bootle L20 9JD

St Robert Bellarmine, 52 Orrell Road, Bootle, L20 6DZ

St William of York Parish Centre, 74 Edge Lane, Thornton, L23 4TG

Chorley and Penwortham

St Joseph's Parish Centre, Harpers Lane, Chorley, PR6 OHR St Mary's Parish Centre, West Street, Chorley, PR7 2SR St Teresa's Parish Centre, 34 Queensway, Penwortham, PR1 0DS

Southport and Formby

The Guild Hall, Church Road, Formby, L37 3NG St John Stone Parish Centre, 7 Sandbrook Way Woodvale, Southport, PR8 3RN

Knowsley

Sacred Heart Parish Centre, Briery Hey Avenue, Kirkby, L33 OYF

St Aidan's Parish Centre, Adswood Road, Huyton, L36 7XR

St Joseph the Worker Parish Centre, Bewley Drive, Kirkby, L32 7PZ

St Margaret Mary's Parish Centre, Pilch Lane, L14 0JG

St Mark's Parish Centre, Penmann Crescent Halewood, L26 OUG

St Helens

St Anne and Blessed Dominic Parish Centre, 40 Monastery Road, Sutton, WA9 3ZD

St Mary's Parish Centre, Birchley Roade, Billinge, WN5 7QT

St Patrick's Parish Centre, 111 Common Road, Newton-le-Willows, WA12 9JH

St Teresa's Parish Centre, Devon Street, St Helens, WA10 4HW

Warrington

St Benedict's Parish Centre, Rhodes Street, Warrington, WA2 7QE

St Joseph's Parish Centre, Meeting Lane, Penketh, WA5 2BB

St Oswald's Parish Centre, Padgate Lane, WA1 3LB

Widnes

St Basil and All Saints, Hough Green Road, Widnes, WA8 4SZ

Wigan and Leigh

St Aidan's Parish Centre, Highfield Grange Ave, Winstanley WN3 6EE St Jude's Parish Centre, Poolstock Lane, Wigan, WN3 5JE St Richard's Parish Centre, Mayfield Street, Atherton, M46 0AQ

Additional collection centres

- St Margaret Clitherow Centre, Croxteth Drive, Sefton Park, Liverpool, L17 1AA (open Monday-Friday 9am-5pm)
- Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King, Mount Pleasant, L3 5TQ
- Irenaeus Project, 32 Great Georges Road, L22 1RD

https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/44252?fbclid=IwAR2K9kyEC5E Zv2ANYKfs0dVbWDrLyeMTKcok0Y67271ga2N cqWDyDycHEo

N.B. Look out for local collection points if you are not in the Liverpool area.

BRUCE KENT: UKRAINE CRISIS IS 'A TERRIFYING WAKE-UP CALL'

Jo Siedlecka March 6, 2022

Bruce Kent was one of the main speakers at the peace rally in Trafalgar Square, London, on Sunday, organised by CND and the Stop the War campaign. Several thousand people, including a large number of Ukrainians, Poles and Russians - many carrying blue and yellow flags and banners, marched there from Broadcasting House. The demonstration was one of hundreds which took place around the world over the weekend, protesting over Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Smaller vigils have taken place outside Russian embassies in most cities every day since the invasion began.

Sinn Fein MP Chris Hazzard told the crowds: "The thought of Europe sliding once again into the perilous wars of the past is horrifying..." "Withdraw the Russian troops and return to the negotiation table."

Former Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn also called for an end to military action. He said: "If you can have a ceasefire for humanitarian corridors for people to be evacuated from certain cities in Ukraine, obviously it's better if people are evacuated than killed, but it's so cynical. If you can agree a ceasefire to take civilians out, then agree a ceasefire to stop the war...Unless this war is stopped very quickly it will degenerate into a global conflict between nuclear armed power blocs in which there will be no, no, no winners, only millions and millions of losers."

He added: "The Government needs to abandon its appalling Borders and Nationality Bill which would criminalise people for helping refugees... We support refugees, whoever they are, wherever they are, wherever they've come from."

Campaign group Freedom From Torture unfurled an 18 metre long Ukrainian flag on Westminster Bridge next to the House of Parliament in protest at the government borders bill. Other countries have now taken over a million Ukrainian refugees; 16,000 have applied to come here but as of Friday only 50 had been granted visas.

In his address Bruce Kent warned of the dangers of nuclear war, describing the crisis as "a terrifying wake-up call." He also appealed for the UK to treat refugees with compassion.

The full prepared text of Bruce Kent's address follows.

I'm inspired today by two courageous people, one British, one Russian. Cuthbert Thicknesse was the Dean of St Alban's. In August 1945 he refused to ring the cathedral bells to celebrate the end of the Second World War. He could not, he said, celebrate the ending of war by such barbarity as the dropping of atom bombs on Japanese cities.

My Russian hero is Stanislav Petrov, a lieutenant colonel of the Soviet Air Defence Forces. In 1983 he refused to obey orders to retaliate when an early warning system suggested that nuclear weapons had been launched from the west. It was a false alarm and his decision saved the world from a nuclear holocaust.

We badly need more dissidents like Thicknesse and Petrov.

Last week CND delivered a letter to the Russian Government, in which we said: "For the sake of Ukrainian children taking shelter from Russian missiles; for the sake of all those who will die if the situation escalates and for the sake of the millions of us who will perish if the heightened risk of nuclear war turns into a nuclear conflict, we urge your government to halt the attacks, withdraw the troops and withdraw the nuclear threats."

Today we're in this highly dangerous situation because Mr Putin thinks that might is right. We know that is not true. So what can we do about it? I have four suggestions.

First, redouble our efforts to dismantle all nuclear weapons everywhere. Our own government should lead all the nuclear nations to sign the new UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Our government should send a representative to the first Treaty meeting in Austria this summer.

Secondly, redouble our efforts to build more powerful ways to respond to conflicts: a fully functioning, fully respected, fully effective United Nations. Look up the Charter for yourselves. The UN was founded in 1945 "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war". Might is not right: there are better ways. We need new instruments of international law... No more aggressive rhetoric and posturing by us too... No more British arms fairs in London's Docklands or anywhere.

Thirdly, support those who say no to war and refuse to take part. Use your own power to reduce support for the war by getting the message across to ordinary Russians through all possible networks - sporting, cultural, religious, commercial, social media. It's Putin's war, not theirs.

And finally, offer compassionate help to refugees - not just those now desperately fleeing from Ukraine - but to all those forced from their homes by war and oppression. Those escaping across the Channel need our compassion and care.

This appalling situation for Ukraine, for Russia, for Europe and the world, is a terrifying wake-up call. Our vision and aim must be the abolition of war itself. Let's take encouragement from another of my heroes, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who said this: "if the world could end apartheid, the world can end war." This is a task for us all: let's redouble our work for peace - everywhere. Thank you for listening.

https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/44207

GOOD FICTION HELPS US LIVE IN THE REAL WORLD

Jon Kuhrt March 2, 2022

"Since it is likely that (children) will meet cruel enemies, let them at least have heard of brave knights and heroic courage." C.S. Lewis.

There have been a lot of articles and discussions about how parents can talk to their children about the horrific war in Ukraine. See these examples from UNICEF https://www.unicef.org/parenting/how-talk-your-children-about-conflict-and-war Sky https://news.sky.com/story/ukraine-invasion-how-do-you-speak-to-children-about-russias-war-12555059 and the New York Times https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/25/well/family/kids-teens-ukraine-russia.html

One element that is often overlooked is captured in C.S. Lewis' quote above: the role that great stories and good fiction has in equipping children for the terrible realities of life. Fictional stories are not mere escapism. Ancient myths and modern legends tell us great truths about human nature and the world we live in. Stories about hope, heroic courage and overcoming evil can inspire and equip us.

C.S. Lewis' Narnia Chronicles made a big impact on me when I was young, because they forged my imagination about what a life of faith could look like. My favourite book in the series is *The Magician's Nephew*, the prequel to *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. In *The Magician's Nephew*, two children, Digory and Polly, are tricked into travelling out of our world by magic. They arrive in a vast, desolate, eerily-quiet city where nothing seems to be alive.

Due to Digory's rash behaviour, they awaken the former ruler of that land, the Empress Jadis, from an enchanted sleep. She tells them about the world they have arrived in, (called Charn) and boasts about her oppressive rule, her devastating magical powers and the brutal wars she fought:

"It is silent now. But I have stood here when the whole air was full of the noises of Charn; the trampling of feet, the creaking of wheels, the cracking of whips and the groaning of slaves, the thunder of chariots, and the sacrificial drums beating in the temples. I have stood here (but that was near the end) when the roar of battle went up from every street and the river of Charn ran red...All in one moment one woman blotted it out for ever."

She tells them about her bitter war against her sister and why no living thing survives in Charn now:

"It was my sister's fault...She drove me to it...Her pride has destroyed the whole world...She even knew I had the secret of the Deplorable Word. Did she think – she was always such a weakling – that I would not use it?"

"What was it?" said Digory

"That was the secret of secrets...it had been long known to the great kings of our race that there was a word which, if spoken with the proper ceremonies, would destroy all living things except the one who spoke it. But the ancient kings were weak and soft-hearted and bound themselves and all should come after them with great oaths never even to seek after knowledge of that word. But I learned it in a secret place and paid a terrible price to learn it. I did not use it until she forced me to it. I fought to overcome her by every other means. I poured out the blood of my armies like water...

The Empress Jadis is incredibly destructive and evil, but she does not come to any swift end. By various misadventures, the children end up taking her to the brand new, untainted world of Narnia. Later she becomes the White Witch who dominates Narnia for a hundred years, using her magic to ensure its 'always winter but never Christmas'. It's a powerful way for a child to grasp cruel tyranny and its enduring reality.

The focus of many religious debates is the doctrines and formulations of belief. But perhaps its more helpful to think about what story we live by?

In what do we invest our lives? What shapes our key decisions? What do we truly have hope in? Authentic faith is to shape your life around what you believe, to live by a different story.

Vladimir Putin has decided to live out a story of imperial conquest, military violence and cruel domination. In contrast, many Ukrainians are choosing a story of courage, self-sacrifice and brave defiance.

This week, the Archbishop of the Ukraine Orthodox Church was interviewed on BBC radio. His courage and moral clarity was inspiring and this quote struck me: 'It is better to die a free person, than to live as a slave.' He is choosing to live under a different story to one Putin wants. And it's a story which contains the most radical truth of all: that dying is not the worst thing that can happen to you. This story and truth shows why Russia will not win this war. Putin may have military power, but the Archbishop, President Zelensky and the Ukrainian people are showing true authority.

At the end of *The Magician's Nephew*, the Lion Aslan sends the children back to London with a warning which reads very relevant for today:

"It is not certain that some wicked one of your race will not find out a secret as evil as the Deplorable Word and use it to destroy all living things. And soon, very soon, before you are an old man and an old woman, great nations in your world will be ruled by tyrants who care no more for joy and justice and mercy than the Empress Jadis. Let your world beware. That is the warning."

https://gracetruth.blog/2022/03/02/good-fiction-helps-us-live-in-the-real-world/

See also: https://gracetruth.blog/2022/03/13/herd-immunity/

THE COVENTRY LITANY OF RECONCILIATION

All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

The hatred which divides nation from nation, race from race, class from class, FATHER FORGIVE

The covetous desires of people and nations to possess what is not their own, FATHER FORGIVE

The greed which exploits the work of human hands and lays waste the earth, FATHER FORGIVE

Our envy of the welfare and happiness of others,

FATHER FORGIVE

Our indifference to the plight of the imprisoned, the homeless, the refugee, FATHER FORGIVE

The lust which dishonours the bodies of men, women and children, FATHER FORGIVE

The pride which leads us to trust in ourselves and not in God, FATHER FORGIVE

Be kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

https://www.justice-and-peace.org.uk/njpn-action-of-the-week/njpn-urgent-action-27th-february-2022-ukraine/

See also: https://paxchristi.org.uk/news-and-events/news-reports/news-reports/news-reports-2022/

PITY THE NATION

Pity the nation whose people are sheep and whose shepherds mislead them Pity the nation whose leaders are liars

Whose sages are silenced and whose bigots haunt the airwaves

Pity the nation that raises not its voice except to praise conquerors

and acclaim the bully as hero and aims to rule the world by force and by torture

Pity the nation that knows no other language but its own and no other culture but its own

Pity the nation whose breath is money and sleeps the sleep of the too well fed

Pity the nation oh pity the people who allow their rights to erode and their freedoms to be washed away My country, tears of thee, sweet land of liberty!

- Lawrence Ferlinghetti San Francisco, January, 2006

• Ferlinghetti's poem was inspired by **Khalil Gibran** in the book **The Garden of the Prophet** published posthumously in 1933. **Read Gibran's poem here:** http://www.lebanonrenaissance.org/assets/Uploads/13-Pity-the-nation-by-Gibran-Khalil-Gebran.pdf

PRAYER FOR UKRAINE

It is with deep sadness that we pray for peace and for the people of Ukraine.

God who sees the weakness in acts of naked aggression;

God who feels the fear in moments of acute helplessness:

cure this warring madness, and shield all who fall in harm's way.

Leach the poison from the mind that thinks strength is shown in a bullying force.

And may an equal strength in solidarity give resolve to those whose aim is to protect, and respect, not just the ones we call our own, but all with whom we can share a better, more peaceful world. Amen.

The Corrymeela Community

WINNING ARTICLES ON 'CHANGEMAKERS' IN COLUMBAN COMPETITION

Ellen Teague March 14, 2022

Article winners have been announced in a media competition for young people on the subject 'Anyone can make a difference: 21st Century Changemakers' run by the Columban Missionary Society in Britain and Ireland.

Young people 13-18 years were asked to consider: Who in the world today is doing something about inequality, injustice, exclusion and environmental degradation? What can they teach us? The theme was based on a quote from young climate campaigner Greta Thunberg who has said, "no one is too small to make a difference". She and many others internationally stand out for their mission to create a more just, peaceful and sustainable world.

The British competition – articles and images – attracted 156 entries from 24 schools. They were judged by panels of media experts who praised the high quality of all the entries shortlisted: Ruth Gledhill (Multi-Media Editor at The Tablet), Josephine Siedlecka (Founder and Editor of Independent Catholic News), Daisy Srblin, (Director of the Catholic youth social action charity Million Minutes) and James Trewby (Columban Education Worker).

"The quality of entries blew me away and I was amazed at their energy and thoughtfulness," said James Trewby, Columban Education Worker in Britain.

In Britain, Jessica Saxon of St George's College in Weybridge wrote the winning article about US politician and human rights campaigner Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, described by Daisy Srblin as "a barnstorming piece of writing" and by Ruth Gledhill as "a powerful article."

Jessica herself says, "only action by those who are brave enough – people like AOC and the person I would like to be – can we encourage young minds to advocate for equality of everyone."

The runner up was Mahi Sikan of Thomas More School in Bedford, who wrote about an Afghani woman on a mission to improve the healthcare of her community in very difficult circumstances. The article, "reminded us of the millions of people who do amazing work, without fame and acclamation", according to Daisy Srblin.

Ella Bothwell of St Richard Gwyn in Flint and Scarlett Peart-Lapidge of Bishop Thomas Grant in London were joint third. Ella's article on David Attenborough was described by Jo Siedlecka of Independent Catholic News as, "a really well written, mature piece combining a profile of David Attenborough with good summary of Catholic Social Teaching with references to Laudato Si' and Fratelli Tutti."

Scarlett's focus on Margaret Mizen was described as "a powerful account, with first hand reflections on the ways in which the Mizen family, specifically Margaret Mizen, turned their grief over the murder of their son into something powerful and hopeful, and created real change as a result."

The Columbans wish to thank all the young people who entered the 2022 competition.

Download the winning articles here: https://columbans.co.uk/education/9690/winning-articles-on-changemakers-in-columban-competition/

IMAGE WINNERS

The section on images received 102 entries and the Columbans would like to thank all those who entered. The quality was excellent and, from a shortlist of 11 images, four were chosen by a panel of media experts who praised the high quality of all the entries shortlisted: Ruth Gledhill (Multi-Media Editor at The Tablet), Josephine Siedlecka (Founder and Editor of Independent Catholic News), Daisy Srblin, (Director of the Catholic youth social action charity Million Minutes) and James Trewby (Columban Education Worker).

Elijah Gilbert of Richard Challoner School, New Malden won first prize in the images section for his collage of people of inspiration. Ruth Gledhill described it as, "a truly powerful and original image, with recognisable and diverse changemakers."

His image 'The Shatter of Inspiration' showed a shattered glass with a different illustrations of influential people in each shard. Elijah says, "the people in the larger shatters have done an outstanding amount of things that one can be inspired by." These include Pope Francis, Malala Yousafzai and Vanessa Nakate. Daisy Srblin said, "I love the thinking behind this image, reminiscent of stained glass in a Church, but featuring contemporary figures like Obama, Marcus Rashford and Pope Francis; visually it's extremely striking, and an original and thoughtful idea."

Second place went to Katherine Fawole of St Paul's Academy in London for her Gouache painting of Greta Thunberg. "It communicates one of Thunberg's most powerful quotations," said Daisy Srblin, "and I particularly love the earthy colours, reminding us of our roots and our obligations to the planet."

Oliver Lafite of Richard Challoner School and Paulette De Jose of Holy Cross School in New Malden came joint third. Oliver drew footballer Marcus Rashford as 'superman', saying "this is a man that has a lot of money and instead of being rich he wanted to help others in need." Josephine Siedlecka felt, it had "a simple and very clear message which works very well without words."

Paulette produced a mixed media piece focusing on four 'changemakers' around the words, 'Be the Change you want to see in the world.' The four are: Amanda Gorman (a racial justice activist – bottom right), Molly Burhans (an environmental activist – bottom left), Jamie Margolin (an LGBTQ+ rights activist – top left) and Jaclyn Friedman (a feminist – top right). Paulette says, "in my opinion, these people are very inspiring, considering that they are confident in what they believe in and are fighting for it as well as relying on their faith to encourage and help them." Ruth Geldhill felt, it was "a really impressive image that conveys a complex idea with power and thought."

Download the stunning winning images here:

https://columbans.co.uk/education/9681/winning-images-on-changemakers-in-columban-competition/

IRELAND

In Ireland, Eimear Crawford of St Louis Grammar School, Ballymena wrote the winning article about Fr Alec Reid, who was pivotal to the peace process in Northern Ireland.

William Scholes, Features Editor of the Irish News, described the article as: "Fluently written, thoroughly researched and inspired by the Beatitudes, this entry was a welcome assessment of Fr Alec Reid, a towering figure who was not only a true changemaker but also a peacemaker. It's encouraging that a new generation is aware of his contribution to the peace process, and that they might be inspired by his example to build the peace in the future."

Runners up were Erin Boylan of St Catherine's College, Armagh and Megan Nolan of St Michael's Holy Faith Secondary School Finglas, Dublin.

Responding to the news, Eimear Crawford said she was "absolutely delighted". "I chose Fr Alec Reid because I think it's so important to recognise the changemakers who have inspired peace and reconciliation within our own country. Fr Reid is especially inspirational to me because he was able to look past division and work for every life endangered by the Troubles."

Erin Boylan said she "had a great time working on this piece, but never expected that I would make it into the top three!"

Megan Nolan said she "found the experience of researching Changemakers, in particular Mark Horvath, rewarding and inspiring. I am thrilled to have been awarded this prize. I am proud of the work I produced for this competition and am grateful to have placed."

Blaithin McElligott of Presentation Secondary School Castleisland, Co Kerry won first prize in the images section. Her artwork, highlighting the cost of fast fashion and promoting her school's clothes pod, was judged by William Scholes to have been an "informative entry" which "made an impact with its imaginative presentation and thoughtful examination of the issues around 'fast fashion' and the implications of the trend. That it ended on a positive note – the school's Clothes Pod – shows that we can all make a real difference and be changemakers, wherever we are."

Blaithin explained that in Presentation Castleisland "we are making a difference by donating clothes to our clothes pod which recycles old clothes and the money raised goes to the charity Water Aid. We are now also applying for our water flag. Thank you again for choosing my project."

Runners up were Veronica Littlewood of St Catherine's College, Armagh and Amy Fleming of Scoil Phobail Sliabh Luachra, Rathmore, Co Kerry.

Veronica Littlewood explained how she based her visual image of David Attenborough "on a person who I look up to as a role model for his work on educating and protecting our environment and our wildlife."

Download the Irish winners' articles and images here:

https://columbans.ie/winners-announced-in-2022-columban-schools-competition/

BRAZIL: BISHOPS PROTEST AT GOVERNMENT PLAN TO RUSH THROUGH TAKEOVER OF MORE INDIGENOUS LAND

Source: Fides/CNBB March 13, 2022

The Catholic Bishops of Brazil (CNBB) have strongly criticized the federal government for trying to rush through two bills they say are "an attack aimed at appropriating indigenous territories."

"While the world is closely watching the war unfolding in Europe, government parliamentarians want to examine these proposals as a matter of urgency," they said.

The CNBB, in particular the Special Episcopal Commission for Integral Ecology and Mining, the Pan-Amazonian Ecclesial Network REPAM-Brazil and the Missionary Indigenous Council (CIMI) have signed the message in which they express their disagreement with the Bills no 490/2007, which hinders the demarcation of indigenous lands, and no 191/2020, which regulates mining on indigenous lands.

They said: "This is a call to all Christians to protect life, indigenous peoples and forests. We do not accept the legalization of the pollution of rivers and towns with mercury, the destruction of streams, the opening of new fronts for deforestation in the Amazon and the genocide of the peoples."

The text of the Brazilian bishops and ecclesial bodies recalls that "in the last two years, the Brazilian Parliament has tried to allow mining in indigenous territories, through bills 490/2007 and 191/2020, which became priorities announced by the Federal Government, through ordinance no. 667, of February 9, 2022". The first project "allows mining exploration, tourism, agribusiness and creates the temporary framework", while the second "proposes permission for the investigation and exploitation of mineral and hydrocarbon resources, as well as the use of water resources to produce electricity on indigenous lands and establishes compensation for the restriction of the usufruct of indigenous lands".

The Bishops point out that at this time when the world is distracted by the war in Europe, Parliament has decided to examine these measures as a matter of urgency.

"Without discussion with the whole of Brazilian society, the true social, environmental and labour disaster that has been recurring in mineral extractive companies is hidden, aggravating conflicts with indigenous peoples". "Life comes first, before any type of argument in favour of economic development" they reiterate in the conclusion of the message, recalling that "for any initiative, a broad and non-exclusionary debate is necessary with the entire Brazilian society, in particular with the indigenous peoples, who, well informed, need to decide on the uses of the territory, respecting their rights already enshrined in the Constitution and in the International Agreements and Conventions to which Brazil is a signatory."

LINKS

Bishops call authorities in Brazil 'arsonists' for denuding Amazon rainforests

CNBB www.cnbb.org.br/

https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/44256

NEWS FROM LANCASTER DIOCESE

Sue Gubric writes: The Diocese is thrilled to welcome Stephen Garsed to the position of Environmental Lead. Stephen, together with a small support team, will be looking at delivering the vision outlined in Pope Francis' Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si'* by looking at ways we can work together to protect our common home and actively respond to 'the cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor'.

Churches Together in Lancashire are planning a Social Justice Workshop for representatives from local churches on 26th May 2022. The day will focus on the contribution which local churches can make to improving mental health and wellbeing in their communities. For more information or if you would like to attend the event please contact Mike Hart mikehart@gmail.com or Peter Lumsden pilumsden58@gmail.com

God is the friend of silence. We need to find God because He cannot be found in noise and restlessness ... The essential thing is not what we say but what God says to us and through us. Jesus is always waiting for us in silence, and in this silence He will speak to us. He will speak to our soul and there we will hear His voice.

St Teresa of Calcutta

LENT RESOURCES

STATIONS OF THE CROSS https://jpshrewsbury.files.wordpress.com/2022/02/ecological-way-of-the-cross-2022.pdf

LIFE ON THE BREADLINE LENT COURSE

This Lent course has been developed from the 3 years of Life on the Breadline research as a result of engaging with Church leaders, Christians, and community groups across the UK. It has been designed with Lent 2022 in mind (2nd March to 14th April 2022) but could be used in other years, or for home groups outside of Lent. The course has 6 sessions which can be followed individually or in a group. Each session follows the same format which is planned to take an hour – combining prayer, a short video, a Bible passage, guided reflections, discussion questions, and take-away actions.

If you're taking part in the Lent Course as a group, consider having a meal together at the start or end of each session to continue conversations further.

The sessions cover 6 themes:

- 1. Christian responses to poverty
- 2. "Love thy neighbour" poverty and inequality
- 3. Race, ethnicity, austerity and faith
- 4. Deficits and assets
- 5. Housing (in)justice
- 6. Poverty and structural inequality

Download all the sessions together by clicking here: https://breadlineresearch.coventry.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Life-on-the-Breadline-lent-course for-website.pdf

https://breadlineresearch.coventry.ac.uk/churches/lent-course/

FOLLOWING CHRIST IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE SAINTS – SAINT WINEFRIDE

Churches Together in Britain and Ireland have produced a course based around a 70-mile pilgrimage from Holywell, Wales to Shrewsbury to be led by Bishop Sarah Bullock from the Anglican Diocese of Lichfield in April and May 2022.

You can use the course without going on the pilgrimage! https://ctbi.org.uk/lent-study-2022/

The pack of resources is available from https://www.lichfield.anglican.org/ourfaith/pilgrimage/ under 'St Winefride Pilgrim Trail'. These extra resources will help you follow the St Winefride 'thread' which runs through this Lent material. The resources take you more deeply into the traditional accounts of St Winefride, whose story has many touchpoints with our modern world – sexual harassment and coercion, misuse of power, the place of faith and the right to follow Jesus, and the contemporary need for healing and hope. However, if you don't want to use the extra St Winefride resources, you can still use the study for groups or for your personal journey through Lent, because other options, based on the Scripture for the day, are also provided from the Revised Common Lectionary. Or you can mix and match.

Download resources: https://ctbi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/St-Winefride-Lent-Journey-2022.pdf **See also:** https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/livelent-2022-church-resources-embracing-justice-http://www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Calendar/Cycle/LentCP.shtml

PAX CHRISTI RESOURCES

Journeying Through Lent to Easter - resources for reflection and action for peacemakers. We welcome your contributions: prayers...reflections...poems...reports of lent actions you or your group have taken. Send to info@paxchristi.org.uk

Download at: https://paxchristi.org.uk/resources/journeying-through-lent-to-easter/

CAFOD RESOURCES

Lent Appeal 2022 https://cafod.org.uk/Give/Donate-to-CAFOD/Lent-Appeal

Online prayer calendar https://cafod.org.uk/Pray/Lent-calendar

Prayers including Stations of the Cross, Lenten meditation, Lent and Easter intercessions, Holy Week prayers and children's prayer https://cafod.org.uk/Pray/Prayer-resources/Lent-prayer-2022

Primary School resources https://cafod.org.uk/Education/Primary-teaching-resources/Lent-resources-for-children
Secondary School & Youth https://cafod.org.uk/Education/Secondary-and-youth-resources/Lent-resources-young-people

THE PRINCE - AN EASTER STORY

Pedro was the oldest of all the animals in the barn. His coat was shabby and bits of fur hung in clumps around his neck where the farmer's children had clung to him as they rode on his back. One of his ears was badly crumpled; the other jagged and torn from a run-in with a much younger donkey - poor Pedro always seemed to come off worst in a brawl. Maybe it was because he had such a gentle nature and shied away from conflict: not like some of the others in the yard who were always spoiling for a fight.

If truth were told, Pedro had turned into a bit of a joke. The farmer had thought more than once about letting him go but the children kept begging him not to and anyway, who would want such a mangy, weather-beaten old scrap of a thing? He was good for nothing except pulling the hay-cart to market once a week and he was getting slower and slower doing even that.

All the other animals made fun of Pedro. 'Look at that useless old-timer!' mocked the cocky young stallion. 'He should be put out to grass!'

'Yes, he gives the rest of us a bad name,' agreed the pretty new mare. Her coat was a silky, shimmering black, dark as ebony and smooth as glass. It glistened whenever the sun caught it and the stable lads loved to brush and polish it. Heads turned wherever she went. She would acknowledge these admiring glances with a haughty toss of her mane and a swish of her luxurious tail.

One day there was great excitement in the barn and a flurry of activity. None of the animals knew what was going on until the old cart-horse overheard two of the stable lads talking together. He reported back to the other animals who huddled round and listened with great interest. 'Seem a very important Prince is expected in the city any day now,' he confided. 'Not sure who he is, didn't catch the name, but someone of the utmost majesty and style. They reckon he'll come here.'

At this the young stallion and the pretty mare became quite agitated. 'The young Prince will want to ride into the city on <u>my</u> back,' boasted the young stallion, his chest puffing up with pride. 'There is no finer animal than myself to carry him.'

'Well I don't think so,' retorted the pretty mare. 'You are strong, to be sure, but my mane is braided and tasselled with fine beads and sparkling jewels. A grand Prince will need to display his riches and authority, and what better way than to enter the city on my back.'

The wise old cart-horse said nothing. He was used to their silly boasting and preferred to keep his opinions to himself. But that night he wondered which of them might be chosen, if their stable was to provide a mount for the Prince.

The day of the Prince's arrival came. The route into the city was decked with garlands. People started gathering at the roadside from first light, all hoping to catch a glimpse of the Prince as he rode by. Some brought homemade banners to welcome him; others had flags to wave; others rose-petals to scatter on the path as he approached. There was a buzz of excitement and anticipation throughout the city. What would the new Prince look like? Would his robes be covered in splendid jewels? Would he wave to the crowd or would he be too high and mighty to take notice of them?

Pedro stayed behind in the barn. He felt too insignificant to join in the preparations.

Suddenly there was a great commotion: people running here and there in a mad panic. The farmer's booming voice could be heard approaching the stable. 'Well, your Majesty, I have many fine animals who might carry Your Highness into the city. Please, I beg you, take your pick. Here is my young stallion, the pride of the whole region.' At this the stallion bowed a deep and reverential bow. The Prince smiled. 'Or what about this pretty mare? See how her coat glistens and reflects the light. Her jewels will convey your greatness to all who see you, for I notice you wear no finery yourself, Sir.' The farmer seemed rather puzzled as he spoke, for indeed, the young Prince looked like no other he had ever seen. He was simply dressed and looked for all the world as though he were just an ordinary peasant. The farmer could not understand why he had not made more of an effort to display his wealth and power.

The Prince glanced politely at the pretty mare but he seemed distracted. 'Are there no other animals here?' he asked the farmer.

'Well none except my old donkey, Pedro, and really he's good for nothing. I only keep him because the children are fond of him.' The farmer was becoming more embarrassed by the minute.

The Prince went over to the corner of the barn where Pedro stood quietly munching some hay. 'Hello, old fellow,' he whispered. 'My, what soft fur you have.' He patted Pedro gently. 'How about taking me into the city today?'

Pedro could hardly believe his ears. The Prince wanted him, the oldest and shabbiest of all the animals in the stable, to take him into the city for the grand parade!

The other animals snorted with disgust. But Pedro was speaking. 'Yes, my Lord, nothing would give me greater pleasure. It would be an honour to carry you on my back.'

And that is how a lowly donkey, was chosen to carry the greatest Prince of all into the city of Jerusalem and why his story will never be forgotten.

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DIARY

MARCH

19-27 Romero Week www.romerotrust.org.uk 0208 986 0807

22 World Water Day https://www.worldwaterday.org/

26 CAFOD Community Walk Against Hunger This Lent, we would love parish communities to come together to take part in our Community Walk Against Hunger on Saturday 26 March, as part of the 40 day Walk Against Hunger sponsored walking challenge for individuals. Could you speak to your parish priest and friends in the parish soon about planning a sponsored parish walk to join parishes all over England and Wales? We hope parishioners and parish priests will value the opportunity to bring the community together safely. Sign up information here: https://cafod.org.uk/Fundraise/Sponsored-challenge-events/Community-Walk-against-Hunger

APRIL

1 CAFOD Quiz Night at Our Lady's Parish Centre, Ellesmere Port Town Centre at 7.30 pm with different quizmasters (sadly our long serving quizmaster Mike Ives died last year). Entrance is £3 for adults and £1 for children and the usual raffle will take place with good prizes. Refreshments will be available at the interval. All proceeds will go towards CAFOD's latest development project. Contact Tony Walsh on 0151 355 6419

17 Easter Sunday

25 – 8 May COP15: United Nations Biodiversity Conference in China www.cbd.int/conferences/post2020

26 Chernobyl Day <u>un.org/en/observances/chernobyl-remembrance-day/un-action</u>

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

15 Conscientious Objectors' Day 16 – 22 Laudato Si' Week www.laudatosimovement.org

15 International Conscientious Objectors' Day ceremony at 1pm. Tavistock Square, WC1. The event will be livestreamed. http://www.co-day.org

Info/resources on conscientious objectors: www.paxchristi.org.uk 0208 203 4884 www.ppu.org.uk 020 7424 9444

15 – 21 Christian Aid Week https://www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals/key-appeals/christian-aid-week

26 Social Justice Workshop Churches Together in Lancashire are planning a Social Justice Workshop for representatives from local churches for representatives from local churches. contact Mike Hart mikehart@gmail.com or Peter Lumsden pilumsden58@gmail.com

JUNE

5 World Environment Day www.worldenvironmentday.global

18 Liverpool Archdiocese J & P Commission Annual Assembly https://jp.liverpoolcatholic.org.uk/

19 Day for Life+ www.dayforlife.org

26 International Day in Support of Victims of Torture: www.acatuk.org.uk 01395 577 669 and https://www.un.org/en/observances/torture-victims-day/

JULY

44th Annual Justice and Peace Conference July 22-24th at Hayes Centre Swanwick

'HOPE! A VERB WITH ITS SLEEVES ROLLED UP'

Our Hope is you will return to your communities from our Conference with enthusiasm and commitment. This year commitment is so important, a commitment to new things, with new time and energy, in the post emergency time, enabling people in our country and beyond to go forward with Hope in everything they do.

How as Activists and People of Faith can we help those in need to find Hope?

Over the weekend we will be looking at Signs of Hope in Our World.

Part of the weekend will look at the Signs of Hope following last year's NJPN Environmental Conference and COP 26.

As a sign of Hope in Our Future NJPN is encouraged that the following Faith Organisations have agreed to partner together to present this Conference: NJPN. Christians Aware, Stella Maris, ACTA and The Joint Public Issues Team.

Booking form on https://www.justice-and-peace.org.uk/conference/

NB. Bookings made after Friday 20th May 2022 incur a late booking charge of £10 per adult

- Read The Spring issue of *MouthPeace* the quarterly online newsletter for Shrewsbury, Liverpool and Lancaster dioceses https://www.justice-and-peace.org.uk/cms/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Mouthpeace-Spring-22..pdf
- **Read NJPN's weekly column** online on Independent Catholic News <u>www.indcatholicnews.com</u> or find articles be uploaded onto our website at <u>www.justice-and-peace.org.uk</u>
- Many items taken from the daily e-bulletin Independent Catholic News <u>www.indcatholicnews.com</u> an invaluable free resources for up-to-date J&P news, events and in-depth articles.
- Sign up for regular news and information from NJPN including a new fortnightly e-bulletin with a comprehensive round-up of current events, campaigns, e-petitions and resources (plus copies of this newsletter & back issues for NJPN North West) at www.justice-and-peace.org.uk or contact ebulletin@justice-and-peace.org or admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk 020 7901 4864

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