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# *Justice and Peace*

Issue 89 Spring 2015

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## **A FAST CHANGING TAPESTRY**

Creator God,  
what a complex tapestry your creative fingers have woven;  
we delight at the daily reminders of your creative power.

This tapestry is closely interwoven, fragile, changing;  
changing too fast.

Scientists confirm what our hearts already know  
– and we are fearful.

We are fearful of seasons that have lost their pattern;  
of all the uncertainties that climate change is bringing.

Politicians bend and bow to meet national priorities  
while greenhouse gases build,  
oceans acidify and air streams shift.

Forgive us for our lack of response;  
for seeing the scale of this crisis as reason not to engage.

Grant that through our prayers your Holy Spirit may give  
wisdom, inspiration and resolve to our politicians, leaders and  
negotiators, enabling them to make the tough decisions

necessary for all people to live, to hope  
and to shape a greener world.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen

*Reflective Prayer by Mark Robinson for the campaign "Pray and Fast for  
the Climate" in the lead-up to the UN Climate Change conference in  
December 2015 see page 9*



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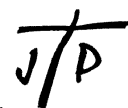
Archdiocese of Liverpool Justice & Peace  
Commission

Diocese of Shrewsbury Commission for the  
Promotion of Justice, Peace & Social  
Responsibility

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## SHREWSBURY DIOCESAN COMMISSION UPDATE



*Maura Garside Commission Secretary writes:*

The current members of the Shrewsbury Diocese Commission for the Promotion of Justice, Peace and Social Responsibility hosted their first Advent Reflection on 7<sup>th</sup> December, 2014. It seems so long ago now but the issues addressed show no signs of going away. We are grateful to Fr. Kevin at Wistaston Hall for his hospitality, and to Julie Jarman from Church Action on Poverty who gave a very informative presentation on the plight of the poorest in our society. It was lovely to see so many 'old' faces and some new ones too.

Julie organised a challenging game designed to help us understand how it felt to be able or unable (according to our allocated group) to control one's economic situation, and to help us appreciate that poverty is always relative – there are always those who are better off and it is human nature to desire to want what 'they' have. She then posed a familiar question, "How much is enough?"

We were encouraged to consider a number of facts from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation report, "Monitoring Poverty and Social Exclusion 2014." I would recommend their website, [www.jrf.org.uk/publications/monitoring-poverty-and-social-exclusion-2014](http://www.jrf.org.uk/publications/monitoring-poverty-and-social-exclusion-2014) for information on who, in our society, is in poverty, so that we can take action.

We discussed the 'poverty premium'; Save the Children website states "Poor families have to pay on average a £1,000 annual poverty premium for the most essential goods and services such as gas, electricity and insurance." We need a strategy to tackle this situation. Julie also urged us to encourage our churches and schools to pay a 'Living Wage' to all including nursery staff and cleaners who may be 'contracted out' employees, asking governors to be aware, when making financial decisions, of where cuts are made.

I felt it was a fruitful meeting and discussion continued and friendships were renewed and made over a shared table.

In January a second event was held at St Columba's, Chester to reflect on work done across the Diocese. Priests had been requested to appoint a J&P rep in each parish and those appointed, and anyone else interested, was invited to attend. After an introduction and opening prayer by Bishop Mark, and a reflection on Chapter IV of 'Evangelii Gaudium', a variety of speakers reported on their projects. These included CAFOD, Wirral Food Banks, and Friends of the Holy Land.

The afternoon was given over to sharing the work done in parishes and our hopes for the future, including publicity material from Church Action on Poverty's guides to 'Good Society Conversations' and 'Holding a Hustings'. These are designed to offer prospective candidates in the General Election an understanding of Christian churches' vision for the future and to encourage our newly elected politicians to have a vision for our society in 2020, the end of their term of election. Thus, it is hoped, we will be able to quiz candidates on their views and policies and share our hopes for our future society with them.

By the time you read this, it is hoped to have held a morning session on the forthcoming election, including material from CAFOD, the letter sent to all churches by the Bishops' Conference and a session on 'Holding a Hustings' presented by Church Action on Poverty.

### MAY 7 A DAY OF DECISION

This 2015 General Election seems more open than ever and how to vote is more confusing in view of the many challenges that face our society and our world. It is usual for churches, Churches Together or other interest groups to arrange meetings to question their local candidates on varying issues. This time the churches have a major role to play – not just in hosting hustings meetings – but in sharing with the candidates a positive '2020 Vision' of the kind of 'Good Society' we want to help create, locally, nationally and globally over the five years of the next parliament.



To help us a '**2020 Vision of the Good Society**' statement has been produced under the auspices of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland out of a common desire to see a society that works for all – in which each of us are valued - and that respects the Earth. In short, a society for the common good. The 2020 Vision focuses on five key areas – wealth and inequality, home, children and young people, livelihoods, and the environment and climate. Whilst these are not the only fundamental issues of our time, they do represent areas where we collectively have something particular to contribute to public and political debate in the run up to the General Election.

The full Good Society vision statement, a summary with questions for the candidates and a guide to planning a hustings meeting can all be downloaded from [www.church-poverty.org.uk](http://www.church-poverty.org.uk) A wide selection of questions covering a variety of J & P interests can also be found in the Spring 'Vocation for Justice' [www.columbans.co.uk](http://www.columbans.co.uk)

## OSCAR ROMERO: THE SAINT OF THE AMERICAS

Steve Atherton writes:

At last! The day we thought would never happen is coming closer. Oscar Romero (the archbishop of San Salvador in the Central American country of El Salvador from 1977 – 1980) has been officially declared a martyr and he will be beatified very soon. The ceremony will probably take place on the square outside the cathedral in San Salvador, the same place where his funeral was interrupted by military gunfire.

Archbishop Romero's mission was one of hope, of Good News. He was appointed as Archbishop because he was 'a safe pair of hands', known to be a friend of the rich and powerful, including the military rulers of the country. But they were wrong about him. He was quiet so they thought he was unthinking; he was gentle so they thought he was weak; he was traditional so they thought he was conservative; he was a friend of the rich so they thought he was an enemy of the poor; he was old so they thought he couldn't change. They didn't reckon on the power of the Gospel. Romero had always been a deeply spiritual man who spent long hours in prayer. There's a story of a man being sent to the chapel to meet the archbishop. At the chapel there was no sign of the archbishop, just an old priest saying his prayers. The visitor waited impatiently for nearly an hour, looking at his watch and wondering when Romero would turn up. Then the priest got up from his knees and came to the door. It was Romero, the man of prayer.

Soon after he'd been appointed archbishop one of his priests, Rutilo Grande who is now being considered for beatification, was murdered. We often think that it was at that point that the man of prayer became also a man of action. But a recent online National Catholic Reporter (published on Feb 5) carried this revealing account:

*"Fr. Paul Schindler recalls an Oscar Romero who once sat beside him trembling. It was Romero's first encounter with a group of priests who were furious at the just-announced news that he would be their new archbishop. It was the monthly clergy meeting in early 1977 for the San Salvador archdiocese and at the end, Romero — who hadn't yet been installed — was asked if he'd like to say a few words.*

*For all Schindler knew, they would be the last words he'd ever hear from Romero. Discouraged at the prospect of working under him, given all that he'd heard, Schindler had told his bishop back in Cleveland Ohio, that he'd decided to return home after eight years of parish work in El Salvador. "He walked to the front of the room and began to speak, and after about 25 minutes, I said to myself, 'I'm not going anywhere.' " It was Schindler's first glimpse of something that, until then, had been unknown to him and many others: in the previous two-and-a-half years, while serving as bishop of Santiago de Maria — a rural diocese where the first peasant massacres took place — Romero had begun to change from the more conservative priest they had known in earlier years."*

We rightly talk about seeing the crucified Christ in human suffering, in 'sites of suffering', and El Salvador was truly such a place. It was exceedingly violent. During the three years that Romero was archbishop the country was building up to a civil war that exploded into its full horror soon after his death. Experience of the ordinary lives of ordinary people had a huge effect on Romero. He was evangelized by the people he visited in impoverished and brutally violated communities; the people of God changed him.

Two months before he was killed Romero said: *"the Word of God is not a reading of the past but a living Word, a Spirit that is being accomplished here and now."* Romero teaches us that faith is an active thing; that God is alive in our lives; that we are called to act justly; that reconciliation is not only possible but essential. This is why he is about to be beatified; he links to the here and now of how we should live and of how we should conduct our own politics in 2015 where ever we are, be it El Salvador, USA, Ukraine or UK.

Did you know that there are only two places in the world that have commemorated his assassination every year since he was murdered in 1980? One is El Salvador and the other is here in our archdiocese of Liverpool. From now on, we'll not be mourning an assassination but celebrating a joyful life and a faithful ministry that led to martyrdom. This year we will meet on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> March at the parish 11 o'clock Mass in thanksgiving for the imminent beatification of Oscar Romero. at St Mary's, Lowe House in St Helens and we hope you can join us.

**MARCH 22 2015**

**35<sup>th</sup> Annual Liverpool Romero Mass**

11.00 Family Mass      All are welcome

Celebrant : Archbishop Malcolm McMahon OP

St Mary's, Lowe House, 99 Crab St, St Helens.

WA10 2BE

### J & P STATIONS OF THE CROSS 2015

Anne O'Connor has updated the two leaflets—for Adults and for Young People. The version for young people is semi-dramatized. Both these replace versions from previous years with new material topical to 2015 so please take down or discard versions from previous years. Download at: [www.jp-shrewsburydiocese.org.uk](http://www.jp-shrewsburydiocese.org.uk)





## TOGETHER FOR THE COMMON GOOD

**Asking the right questions:  
'Does this serve the common good?  
Is anyone being left behind?'**

Jenny Sinclair from Together for the Common Good (T4CG) gave the Annual Memorial Lecture at LACE in Liverpool on Peace Sunday, 18<sup>th</sup> January. She described a growing movement that is building a new, broad coalition to committed to the flourishing of all people.

She described our society as increasingly fractured with an evident gulf between our political class and the people they seek to represent, with a centralised state that diminishes people to statistics, with decisions driven by powerful market interests, with an increasingly unequal society and the strange phenomenon of the super-rich.

Our polarised politics and media thrives on mutual demonisation, limits the capability of good politicians, alienates the public and makes people feel powerless. The political class needs help from people of goodwill to enable civil society to play a stronger role in rebalancing the dominance of the market - and of the state.

### **How are we to secure justice and peace?**

The opposite of peace is conflict. Direct conflict is easy to spot because it means violence. Structural conflict is less visible: it is where people are not allowed to speak and prevented from flourishing. Direct conflict may be easier to spot but structural conflict is harder to deal with.

As a society, we don't know how to deal with conflict and difference, so we go to great lengths either to make an entertainment of it or to avoid offence, and in doing so we have sterilised relationships. Political correctness, while well intentioned, has had unforeseen consequences. We are meant to be dependent, not independent! Our faith tells us that we are meant to be collaborative, not in opposition!

### **T4CG is**

**grounded in a living tradition:** rooted in the Gospel, drawing inspiration ecumenically from the social traditions of the Catholic, Anglican, Free Churches and in particular Catholic Social Teaching (CST)

**a growing network** of over 1,000 people and organisations from across different Christian traditions, along with an increasing number of secular allies and friends from other faiths.

**independent** of any church institution or denomination but inspired by the legacy of the ecumenical partnership for the common good between the late Archbishop Derek Worlock and the late Bishop David Sheppard

**guided by an ecumenical steering group** of thinkers, activists, practitioners, theologians and academics.

T4CG encourages:

**the common good as a practice:** advocating the application of the CST principles at all levels and wherever we have agency, for example in business, the

workplace, neighbourhoods, the public and private sectors, among legislators and policy makers.

**collaboration:** wanting to see people across the Christian traditions working together, (especially the laity), along with others of goodwill, to do more than social action, volunteering and donating to charity. Bridge builders are needed between estranged sectors, between left and right, faith and secular, marginalised and powerful, educated and uneducated, urban and rural, intergenerational, business and unions, across fragmented single interest groups.

Worlock and Sheppard were very much 'pro-business', helping to attract the inward investment that supported the regeneration of the city. They were able to step outside the ideologies of the estranged parties. The approach was one of listening to all sides, and not imposing solutions from above.

The listening approach in the churches continues but increasingly, there is a tendency to be *only* listening to the poor, which can have the effect of alienating the very people they hope to persuade. We need everyone to be involved if we want to build the common good.

It is counterproductive to assume that the only way to change the world is to be angry. Polarisation closes down dialogue, entrenches the opposition and usually blocks the change we want to see. Although part of the solution will be structural and can only be achieved at national governmental level, an essential part of transformation will come from communities finding their resilience through and with each other, in relationship.

We want to see a building back of virtuous local institutions, and encourage a coalition for the common good between universities, churches, citizens' initiatives, unions and local business.

People in the churches are appalled by the saints vs. scroungers language, and the anti immigration rhetoric but find it difficult to challenge this powerfully divisive language, and they feel powerless. To move forward we will have to be open to all and be willing to work with people we disagree with. We have to listen to all sides. We want a situation where conciliation rather than confrontation is the norm.

We must encourage the laity not to leave their faith at home. We will need to reassure people this is about acting with moral integrity everywhere we go and applying the principles of Catholic Social Teaching to every issue that presents. So often we see a gulf between the faith that many profess and their day-to-day actions. People need help and guidance to bridge this gap. It must all be underpinned by sound theology and a constant dialogue with the Holy Spirit.

*Continued opposite*



## MARKING THE CENTENARY OF WORLD WAR I

An Inter-Faith Prayer Service for Peace took place at St. Winefride's Church in Neston, on 26<sup>th</sup> November to Commemorate the Centenary of World War I. It brought together leaders of different religions - Judaism, Hinduism, Islam and Christianity - speaking in unison on the central theme of World Peace. Each speaker introduced a prayer and reflection from their faith tradition, followed by excerpts from different sacred texts read by Key Stage 2 children from St. Winefride's Primary School, interspersed with songs of Peace.

The service provided children with a unique experience to listen to and meet other faith leaders and comments made by the children following the service showed just how much they had enjoyed it. "The service was very special and a unique occasion for the children, providing them with an experience they will always remember" said the Head Teacher Mrs. Dawn Ormes.

The focus on hope, with the courage to embrace peace and hold fast to all that is good, show the value in continuing dialogue leading to meaningful encounters between different religions. These thoughts were captured in the words of Fr. Ravi, who organised the event, "together we can be a big force for peace in the world, rather than being scattered and divided and expending our energies. Coming together like this, we can experience our real strength and use that for the common good". An action song closed the service, with an uplifting rendition of 'If I Were a Butterfly'.

We were blessed to receive such a positive response from the Neston community and would like to thank: Mgr. Chris Lightbound; the Head Teacher Mrs. Dawn Ormes; the children and staff from St. Winefride's Primary School; School Governor Mr. Phil Bramhall; Mr. Joe Tunstall who painted the dove of peace for this occasion; and the many parishioners, residents of Neston, school children and parents who all actively supported this unique event.

*Catherine & Paulo Lisboa Justice & Peace Coordinators, St. Winefride's Parish, Neston*

### FILM EVENTS ON REQUEST

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1: Days that shook the world – The Christmas Truce | 2: Harry Patch – military hero or man of peace? |
| 3: Romero – a true story                           | 4: Monseñor – The last journey of Oscar Romero  |

These four films can be borrowed from the Liverpool J&P office or brought to you with projection equipment and a team who will provide an introduction and lead follow-up discussion. All you have to do is book a room, advertise the event and provide refreshments.

*Together for the Common Good continued from page 4*

We need to have the courage and vocabulary to challenge journalists, campaigners and politicians who insist on colluding in provoking controversy and adversarial dialogue. And we must resist the replication of this temptation in the Church.

The time has come for respectful dialogue.

**So far T4CG has:**

**Hosted a series of Common Good cross party conversations in Parliament.**

**Prepared** a major edited collection of new essays '**T4CG: towards a national conversation**', – discussing the common good,

**Communicated with a growing network** via a monthly newsletter and website:

**Prepared the findings of our research** into ecumenical social action

**Devised the conversation model and toolkit**, designed to be applied to any issue, and can also be helpful within an organisation that is experiencing difficult relationships.

But the world won't change while politics remains a polarised game, based on a system of winners and losers. If we really want *peace* then we will have to practice it. We need to be clear that reconciliation is not soft; if done properly it is a rigorous process, and is not about smoothing over the differences or necessarily coming to consensus. There will be resistance from all sides from people who cannot give ground. But we need to take courage, acknowledge our differences, work alongside people we disagree with, listen to the other and negotiate actions that will benefit all. The patient process of reconciliation between estranged interests, through facilitated dialogue and common purpose will build trust, a genuine, *positive peace*.

**The Holy Spirit is calling each of us**

So yes we all want justice, but, we might ask: do you want genuine peace and reconciliation, or do you just want to be right?

**What are you going to do?**

The full text is available at: [liverpoolcatholic.org.uk](http://liverpoolcatholic.org.uk)  
*Thank you to Steve Atherton for précising this talk*



## A PLACE OF PEACE, LOVE AND JOY DESTROYED

*Clair Gadzama writes:*

I write on behalf of my husband's family and homeland in Borno State, North East Nigeria. On December 2<sup>nd</sup> 2014, Boko Haram fighters came to the town of Lassa where my husband was born. They entered it disguised in Nigerian military uniforms, asked people to gather to "advise" them and slaughtered indiscriminately. The village was 98% Christian and home to our extended family and deceased ancestors. It was ruled peacefully and democratically by a kind tribal chief. It was a place full of colour, vitality, love and joy. Now not a soul remains. Those who could, escaped to the bush and tried to get to safety. Some have nowhere to go, no one to help. Those who have relatives in other parts made their way to them. Our immediate family are all displaced with no prospect of returning home. The village was razed to the ground. The Churches were burned down first. Our family are in a state of shock.

How could the Nigerian Government not stop this? We must be a voice for our brothers and sisters.

Every week, we hear news of further atrocities committed by Boko Haram; they systematically attack schools. The abduction of the Chibok girls in April 2014 attracted a lot of media attention, but that's all it was; 219 are still missing. There are claims that the girls have been made to convert to Islam and then given to marriage to Boko Haram fighters. Unfortunately by coincidence, there is a worrying trend in the increasing number of young girls that have been used as suicide bombers in the last few weeks.

All the schools in the affected region are shut. Boko Haram means 'western education is forbidden', so schools, like our Churches, were the very first targets. They have been the sites of brutal killings, abductions and many were simply burned to the ground. Any left standing are deserted because the population has been killed or displaced. There is no education for tens of thousands of children, and some have not been to school for the last four years.

On Feb 1<sup>st</sup> 2015 Yakubu, my husband, gave a talk to a stunned and shocked congregation at St Peter's, Hazel Grove. He showed pictures of our home before all this and now, explaining how it has affected us so personally and how the Nigerian Government is only paying lip service to what is happening with no coverage on Nigerian news channels and little more here. The election of February 14<sup>th</sup> was postponed because of "instability in the region". March 28<sup>th</sup> is the new date but there is a huge worry that it will not take place at all. The election maybe cancelled and the president hold onto power indefinitely. This would not be the first time in Nigeria's history.

Meanwhile the massacres are not discussed in the campaigns - virtually ignored. For the rest of Nigeria and the world life goes on.

As a result, following a meeting of concerned individuals in the UK who have families and friends in North-East Nigeria, a petition has been started to raise awareness and request world leaders to exert pressure on the Nigerian Government to put an end to this now. Please sign this petition to indicate your support for this appeal to the international community to take action now. The petition can be reached by typing <https://www.change.org/p/david-cameron-prime-minister-of-the-united-kingdom-stop-the-massacre-by-boko-haram/u/9413731>

### **'THE STONES CRY OUT' DVD AVAILABLE FOR HIRE**

*John Logan on behalf of Friends of Sabeel UK NW writes:*

This film, about the Palestinian Christian Community, has been shown in several venues across the NW Region and met with a warm response, many people finding the information, archive footage, and current comment from Church Leaders, a real eye-opener. The DVD is available for the cost of p&p for individuals to view at home, and return immediately for use elsewhere. If you decide you want to show it, you can buy it for £15 + £4 p&p.

We need to ask for donations to be taken at showings, as we are asked to forward £3 per head to Yasmine Perni the film's Italian producer/ director. We have been able to send approaching £600 so far towards the production of the film and its Arabic version. She is still 'out of pocket' (to the tune of a 5 figure sum!) on this and so we are keen to get it shown for that reason as well! Please let me know if you would like to take me up on this offer!

Email: [logan-j@btconnect.com](mailto:logan-j@btconnect.com)

### **'OPEN BETHLEHEM'**

Leila Sansour's film went on general release in England just before Christmas and has received very positive reviews. Oxford Emeritus professor Avi Shlaim, said: "As an Israeli Jew and a historian of the Arab-Israeli conflict, I am not a newcomer to the dilemmas of co-existence, but I was moved to tears by this beautiful film and I learnt a great deal from it. I warmly recommend this film to anyone interested in the Palestine question. Find out more about the film and the open Bethlehem campaign on [www.openbethlehem.org/the-film/](http://www.openbethlehem.org/the-film/) To find out about screenings or arrange your own <https://www.ourscreen.com/film-details/173303>

Would someone like to organise one in the North West?



## BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS

Keith Taylor writes:

Blessed are the Peacemakers was the theme as Matt Jeziorski, Pax Christi's education worker, spoke to the St Alban's Justice and Peace group in Macclesfield in January. The event, in the week Peace Sunday was celebrated around the country, was also timed to mark the end of the year of prayer for peace in the Shrewsbury diocese when the faithful may be wondering *what next?*

Matt began by examining the life of the Austrian martyr Franz Jägerstätter, executed for refusing to fight in Hitler's army. Matt invited the group to place themselves in Jägerstätter's shoes and imagine facing the decision he faced. What would they do? Fight – as his friends and neighbours thought he should – doing his duty and providing materially for his family; or refuse to fight – and face certain death, abandoning his family to an uncertain future?

Reflecting on the courageous witness of Blessed Franz, Matt explored some of the lessons that we can take from his story for us as peacemakers today. What kind of peace would he have been standing up for if he fought – thereby ensuring his family were as healthy, happy, and well fed as possible – if it came at the expense of the Jew, the gypsy, the homosexual, the communist, the anarchist, or the priest?

Blessed are the peacemakers *for they shall be called children of God*. The second part of the beatitude reminds us our peace cannot be considered in isolation from our brothers and sisters. If our international security depends on dominating other nations or the murderous threat of nuclear weapons; what sort of peace is this? If our national security means closing the door to stranger, suspicion of neighbour, or the compromising of human rights; what sort of peace is this? If our economic security means cheap clothes, food, and technology because our brothers and sisters work in terrible conditions for little money; what sort of peace is this? And if personal peace means closing our hearts to those who live day-to-day with violence and the fear of violence; what sort of peace is this?

Matt concluded by observing that the work for peace demanded all of us to do our bit. We are not able to delegate our work for peace to another nor can we buy in a service to do our bit for us. Rather through prayer and liturgy, campaigning and advocacy, and works of solidarity, we are called to do what we can in our day-to-day lives. Movements such as Pax Christi are here to support us in our peacemaking endeavours.



Matt Jeziorski is the schools and youth outreach worker for Pax Christi. His work sees him visiting schools across the country to lead workshops about the vocation of peacemaking. He is available to give talks to local Justice and Peace groups. Contact: [education@paxchristi.org.uk](mailto:education@paxchristi.org.uk)

**Our group was enthusiastic and found the session very stimulating. We would recommend other groups to take up your offer to work with them.**

**MAY 21 is the Feast Day of Blessed Franz Jägerstätter - the patron of conscientious objectors.**

Pax Christi has produced 'Follow me: the way of the Cross' fifteen stations with reflections from Bl. Franz Jägerstätter. Suitable for personal or parish use. £2.50 Enquiries to: [orders@paxchristi.org.uk](mailto:orders@paxchristi.org.uk) [www.paxchristi.org.uk](http://www.paxchristi.org.uk)

## PAPYRUS: Prevention of Young Suicide

Suicide is a leading cause of death among our young people. PAPHYRUS seeks to work with communities across the UK to tackle the stigma that surrounds suicide and to promote mental health and wellbeing among young people and those who care for and work with young people. This year Marriage & Family Life Ministry are holding a series of four events across England & Wales, each providing an introduction to the work of this national charity.

**6<sup>th</sup> March 2015 at LACE | Croxteth Drive | Sefton Park | Liverpool | L17 1AA** Cost £10 per person.

*Day starts from 10.00 until 3.30 (light lunch provided). All are welcome.*

*We would like particularly to have attendance from:* Secondary School Heads, Heads of RE/PSHCE, Chaplains, Clergy, anyone in pastoral ministry, Youth Workers, Catechists, Safeguarding Coordinators, all members of Familias, anyone affected by suicide. Contact: Maureen O'Brien | T: 0151 522 1044 E: [m.obrien@rcaol.co.uk](mailto:m.obrien@rcaol.co.uk) Online booking at [www.liverpoolcatholic.org.uk/Courses-Events](http://www.liverpoolcatholic.org.uk/Courses-Events) or contact the Pastoral Formation Department 0151 522 1040.

Ged Flynn, PAPHYRUS Chief Executive, will help participants to: examine our attitudes to and beliefs about suicide; explore what causes stigma around suicide; increase awareness of the scale of young suicidal ideation and behaviours to develop knowledge, skills, and attitudes which may help prevent young deaths; think about developing local responses in our own dioceses, parishes, schools, communities, networks and organisations to help to **#saveyounglives**



*Editor: In the last edition of MouthPeace there was a two page article on the issues and dangers of TTIP (The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership). ( see [www.ip-shrewsburydiocese.org.uk](http://www.ip-shrewsburydiocese.org.uk) Winter MouthPeace 88).  
Elly Curran has become very involved in campaigning against TTIP and sent a report of her recent lobbying efforts.*

## TTIP PROTEST IN BRUSSELS

On Tuesday 3 Feb 2015 I went to Brussels with about 130 people from 38 Degrees, Global Justice Now (formerly World Development Movement) and War on Want to campaign against TTIP at the European Parliament. We were from all over the UK and all ages, from students to pensioners. What we had in common was a determination to stop the TTIP corporate power grab which would put environmental, workers and consumer rights at risk.

On arrival we went on a walking tour of corporate and lobbying buildings in Brussels with Corporate European Observatory (CEO ) who are an organisation campaigning against corporate lobbying, including TTIP, in Brussels . Big corporations spend millions to influence legislation to meet their interests and increase their profits. Of the consultations over TTIP, 92% have been with corporate lobbyists. <http://corporateeurope.org/>

On the Wednesday morning we protested outside the European Parliament with a giant Trojan horse, symbolising the fact that while TTIP is being presented as a trade agreement between governments which sounds innocuous, hidden within this TTIP is actually about corporations rather than governments making laws that primarily benefit the corporate global economic policy.

We met the three Green MEPs who are totally opposed to TTIP and have commissioned research on the risks to different sectors, including food and agriculture, and finance. We then met Labour MEPs whose policy is to try to negotiate a 'good TTIP which enhances regulation and protection' but say they will not vote for an agreement which includes the NHS or the ISDS (Investor State Dispute Settlement) clause which enables corporations to use a secret arbitration process to sue governments if they introduce policies which reduce the corporations' profits. There are dangers with this approach. The EU is already moderating policies in anticipation of possible corporate action, and the longer the negotiation goes on (and it could be years) the more pressure there will be on MEPs to vote yes.

We were told there is to be a vote in the EU Parliament in Strasbourg this May. It's not the final vote about TTIP but I think it is about whether to support continuing negotiations along same lines. If you haven't done so already please try to write to your MEPs before May expressing your concerns. They need to hear that some people are informed and concerned about this. To help you see <https://www.writetothem.com/> Enter your postcode then choose MEPs, and you can send 1 message to all your MEPs. It's also worth asking MEPs how they intend to vote on CETA, a similar agreement with Canada which is much more advanced and likely to be signed in the Autumn. This includes ISDS. The full text is available for anyone to read, all 1,634 pages of it! Ask your MEPs if they have read it all – or are they just signing something they don't understand. [http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2014/september/tradoc\\_152806.pdf](http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2014/september/tradoc_152806.pdf)

### SOME RESOURCES ON ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Look out for the **Environment Encyclical** anticipated any time between March and June.

**'Energy, Justice and Peace'** *Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace.*

The book examines how energy is linked to justice and peace. Issues mentioned include the links between food, water and energy; the challenges posed by urbanisation and remote households; access to energy and its consumption; the nuclear dilemma; the current development model. Available in English free from [pciustpax@justpeace.va](mailto:pciustpax@justpeace.va)

**Green Christian magazine** [www.greenchristian.org.uk/publications/green-christian](http://www.greenchristian.org.uk/publications/green-christian)

**Link to the Catholic Bishops' website Environmental section:** [www.cbcew.org.uk/environment.html](http://www.cbcew.org.uk/environment.html)

Read more about climate change, theology, ethics, spirituality and advocacy on the website of **ECEN, the European Christian Environmental Network.**

[www.ecen.org/content/climate-change-and-climate-justice-ecumenical-ethical-approach](http://www.ecen.org/content/climate-change-and-climate-justice-ecumenical-ethical-approach)

### Ministry Days at The Cenacle

**10 March, 14 April, 12 May, 9 June, 14 July, 8 Sept, 13 Oct, 10 Nov, 8 Dec.**

These ecumenical days offer people in any ministry days with input and sharing, and plenty of time for quiet prayer and reflection. The day is from 10am – 4pm Please bring your own lunch. Tea and coffee will be provided. Cost £10

**There are also Quiet Days on March 21<sup>st</sup>; April 25<sup>th</sup>; June 27<sup>th</sup>; Sept 19<sup>th</sup>; Nov 28<sup>th</sup>**

The Convent of our Lady of the Cenacle, Lance Lane, Wavertree, Liverpool L15 6TW For more information or to book contact : Tel 0151 7222271 email: [winniecenacle@mail.com](mailto:winniecenacle@mail.com)





## GETTING READY!

**30 November to 11 December 2015:** The **United Nations Climate Change Conference, COP21** or **CMP11** will be held in Paris, France. The conference objective is to achieve a legally binding and universal agreement on climate, from all the nations of the world.

**Climate change affects all of us – and the people and things we love. In the months leading up to the Paris:**

**Pray and Fast for the Climate on the 1st of each month:** You are invited to join other Christians who are praying and fasting for a meaningful and just global climate agreement at the UN climate talks in December.

**Background:** When Typhoon Haiyan brought devastation to the Philippines in November 2013 the climate negotiations were beginning in Warsaw. Filipino delegate Yeb Saño, despairing both at the devastation of his country and at the slow progress of world leaders in making any kind of progress towards a new agreement on tackling climate change, announced he would fast either until the end of the two week conference or until real progress was made. He has continued to fast on the first of every month and his example has led to the international '**Fast for the Climate**' movement.

**Aim of the movement:** Our desire as Christians is for God's kingdom to be raised up in our world in all aspects of life. We believe that care for creation is an essential part of that, and so we are asking God to use our prayers and fasting for the climate to build a platform upon which right decisions will be made by politicians, leaders and negotiators to allow all people to dream, to hope and to shape a greener, just, and sustainable world (Rev 22:1-4.)

**Please join us** if you believe that Christians owe it to future generations and those already impacted by climate change to respond to the climate crisis. We trust that God will use our prayers to influence politicians, to build a powerful platform for change, to strengthen our campaigning and to inspire others.

You can pray and fast at any time of day, on your own or with others. Check our website to find or add venues where people are praying together, and for suggestions on further action. We've got lots of resources, including worship materials, reflective prayers and monthly prayer points, all of which are designed to help you pray and fast for the climate

[www.prayandfastfortheclimate.org.uk/](http://www.prayandfastfortheclimate.org.uk/)

<http://operationnoah.org/what-we-do/year-of-prayer-and-fasting/>



**Wednesday 17 June 2015: Join the Lobby of Parliament on climate action**, organised by the Climate Coalition. It's the first chance to talk with our newly-elected MPs after May's general election and before the crucial Paris conference negotiations in December 2015. Together we can show our new government, whoever they may be, how much we care that climate change is pushing people deeper into poverty. Please join us – and the whole Climate Coalition - for a day of **action, solidarity and celebration of all the things we love** [www.cafod.org.uk/Campaign](http://www.cafod.org.uk/Campaign)

## FRACKING AFFECTS US ALL

Those of us who watch or read the news from the North West will be aware of the controversy about fracking for shale gas on the Fylde. We may think it does not immediately affect us so we needn't act – but we would be wrong.

Dr Stephen Garsed commented in his presentation to Lancashire CC Development Control Committee, based on papers prepared by the Blackburn Anglican Diocese: "We believe that one cannot consider fracking as a black and white issue of purely local significance and independent of a wider consideration of long-term energy and economic needs. Issues that affect the residents of the Fylde are driven by national and international politics, economics and by supply and demand considerations relating to varied energy sources. Decisions made on Fylde may also have a bearing on the global climate."

Lancaster Diocesan Faith & Justice Commission have been looking closely at the issues and encouraging local groups to do the same. In their latest Faith and Justice News Feb 2015 there are several helpful articles giving facts and figures about fracking and putting the issue into a wider Christian context. Well worth a visit to look on:

[www.lancasterfaithandjustice.co.uk](http://www.lancasterfaithandjustice.co.uk)

## A SAD GOODBYE TO 'GREEN METROPOLIS'

*Editor: Having only recently found this website last year and used it several times I was sorry to learn that due to falling sales it is now closing. It seems it can no longer compete with the ever increasing postage costs of Royal Mail, and the growing popularity of the Kindle. Over the past 12 years it has helped to keep more books in circulation for longer, helping the environment, and raising over £35,000 for the charity partners. —the Woodland Trust. Well done!*



## DIALOGUE BETWEEN QUAKERS AND THE MANCHESTER JEWISH FAITH COMMUNITY

### Introduction

This report outlines the efforts of several East Cheshire Area Meeting Quakers to engage in dialogue with Jewish faith representatives in Manchester. They are:

Wilmslow Meeting	Elizabeth Lees	Pat Baker
Cheadle Hulme Meeting	Rachel Mulliner	Peter Eccles
Ring O'Bells Meeting	Ann Lewis	Dave Swindells

Following the October 2012 Quaker Voluntary Action (QVA) Working Retreat to Palestine and Israel, Dave Swindells gave a presentation to his Local Meeting and at the invitation of Marple J & P group to several local churches. A report on his experience was published in MouthPeace (Issue 81 Spring 2013). A response was received from a member of the Manchester Jewish Representative Council, who took exception to many points in the report. Rather than airing disagreements in print, it was subsequently agreed to meet to discuss these issues. However, before this progressed the following inspiring presentation in Manchester was attended.

### An Inspiring Speaker

In December 2012, Rabbi Arik Ascherman came to Manchester to speak at the Altrincham Islamic Faith Centre and at the Jackson's Row Reform Synagogue in Manchester. These presentations were organised by FODIP, (Forum for Discussion on Israel and Palestine). It was extremely positive to see Jews, Moslems and Christians meeting, talking and shaking hands before and after Rabbi Ascherman's presentation.

Rabbi Ascherman is a member Rabbis for Human Rights movement and stated passionately there can be no peace while one group only has all the power in its hands. He also felt the continuing Israeli settlement building was adding to the sense of injustice, with no access to political representation when there are Palestinian house demolitions continuing, which is why he and other rabbis felt they had to become actively involved. Apparently the most frequent commandment in the Torah is "How we should treat the stranger", which demands equality, justice and respect in all things, which Rabbi Ascherman feels is the basis of his and other rabbis' belief, when they challenge the Israeli Government where they see this is ignored, in respect of Palestinian rights.

### Thoughts On Making The Most Of The Palestine/Israel

#### QVA Working Retreat Experience

While on the QVA Retreat and talking with Stuart Wallace, another participant, who is a member of Wimbledon Meeting, told Dave about a dialogue group which had been established between Quakers in south London and their local synagogue, which although had been challenging, was continuing to meet and exchange views. The

decision to try and establish a similar Quaker dialogue with Manchester Jewish faith representatives came about following a presentation to the East Cheshire Area Meeting about participation in the Working Retreat, which had been a powerful experience.

It seemed that establishing a similar initiative might be one way to better understand the complex and inter-related issues which continue to bedevil the best efforts of all, regarding the recognition of the rights and needs of both Palestinians and Israelis.

In March 2013 six Friends met with representatives of Windows for Peace and FODIP to ask if there might be a place for establishing a distinct Quaker dialogue with members of the Manchester Jewish faith community, or whether it might be more productive to subsume their efforts into the already well established activities of these two highly regarded organisations. The response from both was their strong encouragement to go ahead as a group of Friends in this dialogue.

Shortly after this meeting, Dr. Jane Clemence, the Director of FODIP offered to contact Rabbi Warren Elf, who is a FODIP trustee to help make possible this initial dialogue by using his contacts in the Manchester area. We enthusiastically took this up, as some of us had met Warren at the FODIP AGM in Manchester a couple of months earlier. It was clear he was committed to the human rights of all in Palestine and Israel and had also been involved in bringing Rabbi Arik Ascherman to the North West area to speak.

### An Initial Dialogue

In May 2013 two of us met with Harry Lesser, the member of the Manchester Jewish Representative Council who had already exchanged emails with Dave for an initial meeting. Lucille Cohen, who is a past president of the same Council was also present. As was expected, we had quite divergent views on the situation in Palestine, with Harry and Lucille emphatically supportive of everything the Israeli Government has sanctioned in the past and also currently, including the Separation Wall, which they felt had saved many lives. Peter and Dave stressed any critical comment we made of the Knesset's political decisions, or of the Israeli military forces were not an attack on Judaism per se but arising as a concern on human rights for all, both Palestinians and Israelis.

### A Series Of Nine Dialogue Meetings

We first met with representatives of the Manchester Jewish faith in June 2013 and to date have had nine meetings, with our next scheduled for 16<sup>th</sup> December. We average about half a dozen Quakers, plus a similar number of Jewish faith members for each meeting. It's fair to say that



despite quite difficult conversations and exchanges being quite challenging, all of us present have been mutually respectful and we've been made welcome.

On the majority of meetings there has not been an agenda established beforehand of what might be discussed but each present has been encouraged to say what they have concerns about. Jewish faith representatives have often joked that they like (and in fact expect) a good argument and debate but as Quakers we've made strenuous efforts not to get into such situations, although it's fair to say we've had some pretty vigorous exchanges at times. On a few occasions Rabbi Warren Elf has interceded, when Jewish members have become very dogmatic and not been prepared to listen to the Quaker perspective but this has only been a few times. Overall, Warren has taken a facilitating, chairing role, rather than actively contributing, to encourage the sharing of perspectives. An unspoken rule has been established which has meant that whenever someone is speaking, others must wait to make a response after they have finished and not before.

There have been many occasions when the discussion has veered into political comment, which Quaker Friends have tried to withdraw from, citing the human rights of all as being paramount, rather than taking 'sides'.

Concern had been expressed at a perceived bias against Israelis by members of the EAPPI programme. To counter this, a young man training for the Anglican Ministry who returned from his placement recently joined one of our dialogue meetings. He described how volunteers are encouraged, even required now to spend time not just with Palestinian families when not on duty at one of the checkpoints but also to spend time with Israeli families, to get as rounded a perspective as possible. However, Jewish faith representatives felt that the initial training of these volunteers could be less 'biased' against Jewish Israelis.

The United Nations/World Health Organisation 2010 Report "The Impact Of The Barrier On Health" was circulated to Quaker Friends and Jewish faith representations, to be discussed at a subsequent meeting. However, the escalating situation in Summer 2014 took precedence and so the report was not fully discussed. The reason for circulating this was to counter the assertion which had been made that there were few, or no difficulties in going through the Barrier, particularly if going to hospital. The report makes it clear this is not the case.

#### **Some Reflections On The Dialogue Meetings So Far**

As Quakers we have been taken aback at the continuing feelings of victimhood which Jewish faith representatives have, when any criticism is made of Israeli political decisions, or actions by the Israeli military, which result in

further loss of land, employment or equality of opportunity for Palestinian people. They continue to feel the wider world has no understanding or appreciation of what Jewish people have had to endure over the centuries, right up to the Holocaust in the Second World War, which they feel continues to this day.

It's fair to say up until very recently we have felt Jewish faith representatives have not accepted the validity of our criticisms of Israeli policy or military actions in our meetings. However, Rabbi Warren Elf has stressed privately he feels Jewish members who have been involved in these dialogue meetings have genuinely 'moved' in their understanding and appreciation of our concerns in some cases, which has considerably surprised him.

We have also been invited to share in social gatherings at the time of Jewish festivals by some of the dialogue group participants, which have been much appreciated.

As a group of Quakers we met informally towards the end of August to discuss whether we should continue with these meetings as we thought it unlikely we might make any further progress, particularly in the light of violent events of the Summer and the consequent rise of anti-semitism in Britain. However, we felt this was not the time to stop and it was important to maintain contact, particularly the personal contacts generated by our meetings up to then. We also decided to circulate the Britain Yearly Meeting Statement on the Israeli/Palestine conflict to all participants prior to the Dialogue meeting this September.

After the September Dialogue meeting we felt for the first time there was an acknowledgement of the element of injustice to the Palestinian community when the state of Israel was established. We also felt we had 'turned a corner' in having a more open and less guarded dialogue with Jewish faith representatives, as they now knew us better and us them. We hope this continues.

In early November we were invited to a Holocaust Memorial Day at the Menorah Synagogue in Wythenshawe, which Ann was able to attend.

#### **Future Plans**

Following our forthcoming December meeting we have another EAPPI participant (Tricia, a Quaker from Leeds), who spent time on one of the Bethlehem checkpoints in 2013 speaking at our early February 2015 Dialogue meeting.

*Pat Baker, Peter Eccles, Elizabeth Lees, Ann Lewis and Dave Swindells who is a member of Marple Churches Together J & P group.*

*November 2014*



## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

**23 FEB—8 MARCH Fairtrade Fortnight**

### MARCH

**1 Pray and Fast for the Climate** see pages 1 & 9

**2-8 Climate Week** A week to show how we can combat climate change. See page 9

**6 Introduction to PAPHYRUS a charity for the prevention of young suicide** 10 – 3 LACE Croxteth Drive Sefton Park Liverpool L17 1AA Contact: Maureen O'Brien T: 0151 522 1044 E: [m.obrien@rcaol.co.uk](mailto:m.obrien@rcaol.co.uk) see page 7

**6 Women's World Day of Prayer** prepared by women of The Bahamas [www.wwdp.org.uk](http://www.wwdp.org.uk)

**7 'A Time to Listen, A Time to be Heard'** A consultation preparing for the Synod on the Family -share your thoughts, feelings and experiences of family life— St Peter's Parish Centre, Green Lane, Hazel Grove, Stockport, SK7 4EA 2-4pm also March 14 & 21 —come to one or all meetings, each have a different focus. They are being arranged by members of ACTA (A Call To Action )

**13 CAFOD Quiz Night** at 7.30 pm in Our Lady's Parish Centre, Ellesmere Port Town Centre. All the money raised will go towards Cafod's Connect 2 Ethiopia projects. Entrance: £3 for adults and £1 for children including interval refreshments. Teams are welcome or you can join a team on the night. More details contact Tony Walsh on 0151 355 6419.

**14 A Time to Listen, A Time to be Heard** see March 7

**18 Signs of the Times #2** A follow-on evening looking at the question of how CST influences our local actions. 7 – 9 pm St Clare's Parish Centre Rutland Avenue Liverpool L17 2AU

**19 'The Stones cry out' Film** The untold story of the Palestinian Christians. 7.45 pm at Mellor Parish Centre, Church Road Mellor Stockport SK6 5LX Donation to cover costs. See page 6

**21 'A Time to Listen, A Time to be Heard'** see March 7

**21 'The truth about money?'** A day for undergraduates with Dr Helen Costigane SHCJ 10 – 4 Catholic Chaplaincy, St Philip Neri, 30 Catherine St, Liverpool L8 7NL For info ring 0151 522 1080

**22 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Romero Mass** Celebrant Archbishop Malcolm McMahon OP 11.00 Family Mass St Mary's, Lowe House, 99 Crab St, St Helens. WA 10 2BE see p. 3

**22 World Water Day**  
see [www.unwater.org/worldwaterday](http://www.unwater.org/worldwaterday)

### APRIL

**1 Pray and Fast for the Climate** see pages 1 & 9

### 5 EASTER SUNDAY

**18 Some say 'It's never been so bad'** A pre-election event to devise questions to ask candidates. The focus will be on housing and the living wage. 3-5 pm LACE Croxteth Drive Sefton Park Liverpool L17 1AA

### MAY

**1 Pray and Fast for the Climate** see pages 1 & 9

**7 GENERAL ELECTION** see page 2

**16 Inauguration of new Marian Trail** Thatto Heath, St Helens. Details of starting and end points nearer the time

**21 Feast Day of Blessed Franz Jägerstätter** see page 7

### ADVANCE NOTICE

**17 JUNE A lobby of parliament on Climate Action**, organised by the Climate Coalition. See page 9  
[www.cafod.org.uk/Campaign](http://www.cafod.org.uk/Campaign)

**17 – 19 JULY The Things that make for Peace**  
NJPN annual conference at Swanwick. This conference will seek to identify the real threats to human security and how we can work together to create a world without war. More details 020 7901 486 [www.justice-and-peace.org.uk](http://www.justice-and-peace.org.uk)

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and dates for the diary*

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