



Justice and Peace

Issue 88 Winter 2014/15

A Prayer for the End of Human Trafficking

*God of freedom, beauty and truth
we believe that your deepest desire,
your most powerful energy,
is that all creation might know abundant life.*

*We raise our voices in anguished prayer
for our sisters and brothers,
women and girls, men and boys,
who are modern day slaves;
They are your beloved daughters and sons,
exploited sexually or forced to work
because of human violence and greed.*

*Fill us with your holy anger and your sacred passion
that those who are trafficked might know healing and justice;
that traffickers will come to repentance and conversion;
that all of us might live in such a way
that others are not made to pay the price
for our comfort and convenience.*

*Hasten the coming of the day when all people
and our precious Earth itself
will be treated, not as a commodity,
but as radiant images of your freedom, beauty and truth.
Amen. May it be so.*



Prayer as shared by the Sisters of Charity
of Saint Elizabeth, Convent Station, N.J.
(see Feb 8 page 12 also
Peace Sunday page 5)

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Archdiocese of Liverpool Justice & Peace
Commission

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

Liverpool Archdiocese Justice and Peace Commission

SUNDAY JANUARY 18 2015
Annual Memorial Lecture

"TOGETHER FOR THE COMMON GOOD"

Guest Speaker: Jenny Sinclair: co-ordinator of the Together For The Common Good project (T4CG) that is working to promote a positive language for discussion of social issues. This is an ecumenical project based on Catholic Social Teaching.

**LACE Conference Centre, Croxteth Drive,
Sefton Park, Liverpool. L17 1AA**

2- 4 pm Doors open at 1.30

More details from Steve Atherton 0151 522 1080
s.atherton@rcaol.co.uk

MARCH 22 2015

35th Annual Liverpool Romero Mass

Celebrant : Archbishop Malcolm McMahon OP

11.00 Family Mass

St Mary's, Lowe House, 99 Crab St, St Helens. WA 10 2BE.
All are welcome

**Shrewsbury Commission for Justice,
Peace & Social Responsibility**

SUNDAY DECEMBER 7
Advent Reflection

**"WHY WE NEED TO CLOSE THE GAP
BETWEEN RICH AND POOR"**

Guest speaker: Liam Purcell from
Church Action on Poverty

**WISTASTON HALL, 89 Broughton Lane,
Wistaston, Crewe CW2 8JS**
4.30 to 6.30 pm

Followed by shared food and fellowship (please
bring a little food to share, drinks provided)

For further information call Ged on 01691 831374
Or email: gerard.cliffe@btinternet.com

EARLY 2015

There are plans for an open meeting for those
interested in J & P activities to meet the new
Commission and share ideas for the future.

Date & place still to be arranged at time of printing.

Did you know THE UNIVERSE now has a regular J&P column?



This is written by a different J&P activist each week. Contributors include Pat Gaffney, Pax Christi; Niall Cooper, Church Action on Poverty; Alison Gelder, Housing Justice; Daniel Hale, Progressio; Ellen Teague and Peter Hughes, Columbans; Louise Zanré, Jesuit Refugee Service; Bruce Kent, peace activist; Mary Colwell, broadcaster and environmentalist and Anne O'Connor, editor of NW J & P e-bulletin.

If you would like to receive the North West J & P monthly e-bulletin each month this please contact Anne O'Connor:
annec980@hotmail.com

To receive a regular e- version of MouthPeace (quarterly) please contact Marian Thompson: marianet@tiscali.co.uk

Stop press:

CAFOD CUTBACKS



According to 'The Tablet' Nov 15th 2014, CAFOD is intending to reduce its costs by £3 million which will involve 50 job cuts.

It seems that the plan is to close all the 21 Diocesan offices in favour of 4 regional offices where the emphasis will be on increasing the amount of volunteer effort.

We hope to report more about how this will affect us all in the next MouthPeace.

ADVENT

A time of joyful anticipation - a time to look forward to the birth of our Saviour - also a time of preparation to make sure we are ready and well-equipped to welcome Jesus into our hearts. An Advent prayer and study guide can provide an opportunity to slow down, to make space in our busy lives to sit quietly in the presence of God, to put to one side the frenetic Christmas rush. Refreshed and renewed, we can then truly enjoy our Christmas celebrations.

Anne O'Connor has produced a series of four A4 sheets for Advent containing Scripture verses, reflections, examination of conscience and ideas for further action.

Available to download from:

www.jpshrewsbury.wordpress.com/resources



A DAY OF JOY AND HOPE



Helen Reynolds writes:

On Saturday 4th October more than forty people gathered at St Agnes, West Kirby for a half day conference entitled "Pope Francis's Vision for the Church" to explore *Evangelii Gaudium* (The Joy of the Gospel). The parish welcomed visitors from various parts of the diocese as well as our ecumenical neighbours. Brian Davies, a former Head of Education at CAFOD, was the guest speaker for the day. *Evangelii Gaudium* is an apostolic exhortation of Pope Francis on the proclamation of the Gospel in today's world that was published in 2013, following on from a Synod of Bishops on New Evangelisation in October 2012. The document therefore focuses on the church's primary mission of evangelisation in the modern world

The first session explored the document of *Evangelii Gaudium*. Brian presented an introduction to the document and led us through the themes. Amongst the themes explored was evangelisation in the modern world in which Brian suggested that evangelisation means affecting (even upsetting) by the power of the Gospel, every level and value of society which is in conflict with the plan of salvation. Brian also proposed that the document is a vision statement about the kind of Church Pope Francis wants. Striking themes from the document are a more missionary Church, a Church with the courage to change and a Church on the side of the poor. Brian spoke about Pope Francis's vision for a missionary Church that can move away from a preoccupation with liturgy and doctrine but rather concentrate on a Church for the people. He challenges us to leave behind the structure and rules that make us feel safe and secure and to actively live the Gospel. This overlaps with the Church having the courage to change. In this theme we are encouraged as laity to have a greater involvement in decision-making. The Pope also acknowledges that often the laity has not been given the formation to take on important responsibilities and that clericalism has had a negative impact. Within the theme of a Church on the side of the poor, Pope Francis is very explicit about unjust systems that are responsible for injustice within society. He says 'no to an economy of exclusion and inequality; no to the idolatry of money; no to a financial system which rules rather than serves and no to the inequality which spawns violence.' Making the poor feel welcome is the most effective way of presenting the good news of the Gospel as we are called to find Christ in the poor and to lend our voices to their causes.

Lively discussion ensued in which groups were challenged to discuss what part of the document spoke to you the most along with exploring the issues of how we see joy in the face of the Church and what issues our parish communities need to work on. This was followed by feedback in the form of a short question and answer session. We discussed our hope for the laity to have a greater role in decision making within the Church. We also heard about how one parish has provided a successful Food bank within the community.

The lunch break provided an opportunity to support the West Wirral LPA Lourdes youth group fundraising activities by buying homemade cakes that brightened up our packed lunches.

The second session explored Kingdom Spirituality. Brian talked about what Spirituality is and that it is not just about holy activities such as prayer, devotions and sacraments. Spirituality is about sharing in God's Spirit. It allows the real me to meet God. It is also about community as God's Spirit is in everyone. Brian concluded that spiritual growth is about trying to give coherence to all of these areas of our life – God, self, other people and the rest of creation. With this in mind we are called to commit ourselves to a pattern of living proclaimed by Jesus aimed at transforming the world. Spirituality therefore involves discipleship. We are all called to discipleship which involves being on a journey where Jesus is at the centre. This discipleship brings new freedom and power which can threaten religious authorities. The Gospel is about the Kingdom and not just our personal relationship with God. We therefore have to discover the Kingdom and help bring it forth. Spirituality also involves compassion and solidarity. Jesus reveals to us a loving and compassionate God. We need to be open to the Holy Spirit to allow us to renew the Church. Brian finished with saying that the Church urgently needs the deep breath of prayer, the prayerful reading of God's word and adoration of the Eucharist and not a privatised or individualistic spirituality.

The session was rounded off with feedback following on from group discussion exploring how we ask the Holy Spirit to be with us in prayer and our work and how we recognise the Spirit at work and discern the Kingdom. We were privileged to hear about a personal moving account of how the Holy Spirit had brought new life in a time of crisis.

Comments from the day showed that everybody enjoyed the sessions and found them interesting with most people leaving with a clearer understanding of the document. The day provided a valuable opportunity to learn more about *Evangelii Gaudium* and to explore and discuss some of the main themes and what relevance they have to us and allowed us to share ideas with in a dynamic group.





CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING IN ACTION

Steve Atherton writes:

It seems a long time ago but the Scottish referendum set us a great example of how wholesome politics can be. At a time when political solutions seem to be receding across the world, it was encouraging to see this process as a sign of the presence of the Kingdom of God. Catholic Social Teaching (CST) teaches us that, as the children of God, all human beings are of equal dignity and worth. CST says that the world is for everyone; for the poor as well as the rich; for the sick as well as the healthy; for the old as well as the young; for the weak as well as the strong; for the stranger as well as the family member. The principles behind the referendum debate matched some key principles of Catholic Social Teaching, in particular, human dignity, the common good, subsidiarity, solidarity, the right to participate, and equality.

Respect for **human dignity** marked both the campaigns and the post election commentary; there was certainly animosity and heated debate but throughout the process the Scots were able to respect each other and express deeply opposing views in public without any physical violence.

The overriding concern throughout the debates was that the decision had to be for **the common good** not the just the benefit of one group. The argument was not about protecting the interests of any one group but about what is actually the best for everyone. In fact, the debate was triggered by longstanding concerns over inherent structural imbalances in the union among the member countries of the union. (That's code for: England is in charge and Scotland does what it's told.) The promise from Westminster is that these imbalances and injustices will be put right.

The principle of **subsidiarity** (that those who are affected by decisions should be involved in making decisions) was clearly happening. Scotland has a measure of self governance and only people resident in Scotland were allowed to vote. **Solidarity** showed not just in the strength of feelings that were evident on both sides of the argument but in the feelings of emotional attachment that were aroused on the south of the border. I never expected to become a Unionist!

As for **participation**, we can only be astonished at the level of turnout in the election. We are more used to 20% than 87%. Clearly, the electorate thought not only that the issue mattered but also that the decision would be binding. The principle of **equality** was in play because the main reason for the independence question was that England has been a dominant and abusive partner since the relationship began. Furthermore, younger people from 16 – 18 were allowed to vote, a pattern we can expect to see happen across the UK.

As well as a huge sense of relief, I felt sadness for those

who, having taken part in a magnificent democratic process of trying to change people's minds and influence politics by talking rather than fighting, have ended up on the losing side of the argument. We need to pray that reconciliation will follow and that 'victory' and 'defeat' will not become a permanent part of the language. Reconciliation will require opponents to accept that it's OK to differ as long as they can work together to improve the common good and find a new language of cooperation and hope.

If that was moment when we could feel proud to be British, then events since then at Westminster produce revulsion.

It is awful that at the time when we are preparing for Christmas our government has decided that it cannot give any money to save the lives of some of the most desperate people in the world. We have withdrawn support from *Mare Nostrum*, the Italian government's search and rescue operation in the Mediterranean that has rescued thousands of people whose boats had capsized or were drifting aimlessly across the sea.

This year has seen more than 2,000 refugees - many fleeing IS - drown in the Mediterranean. Sarah Teather MP, Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Refugees, said: "This decision is deeply depressing. We would rather let people drown for nothing other than baseless political motives. It shows that when it comes to immigration, the Government has plumbed new depths of inhumanity. We cannot pretend this problem has nothing to do with us and wash our hands as people die. It is the policies we are pursuing, attempting to turn Europe into a fortress with no safe routes in, that are forcing migrants into risking their lives. We are forcing people to choose between dying in their own war torn country and drowning in the sea. While we agree to bomb IS and dish out weapons to other groups in the Middle East, we offer no protection to those fleeing the conflict. Instead we have to listen as Ministers claim that UK towns are "under siege" from migrants. We should all be ashamed." What we see is concern for the interests of one group not for the **common good, equality, or human dignity**. The last thing on Theresa May's mind is the **option for the poor**.

The British Refugee Council chief executive, Maurice Wren, said: "The British government seems oblivious to the fact that the world is in the grip of the greatest refugee crisis since the Second World War. People fleeing atrocities will not stop coming if we stop throwing them lifelines; boarding a rickety boat in Libya will remain a seemingly rational decision if you're running for your life and your country is in flames. The only outcome of withdrawing help will be to witness more people needlessly and shamefully dying on Europe's doorstep. The answer isn't to build the walls of fortress Europe higher, it's to provide more safe and legal channels for people to access protection."

continued on next page



Mary Varley writes:

Our Lady and the Apostles Justice & Peace group in Stockport hosted Alan's talk at the Evron Centre on 6 November 2014. An audience of people from churches in the surrounding area heard Alan talk about the vital work that CAFOD undertakes in areas of conflict. He provided a brief explanation of the origins of the Syrian crisis and the resulting mass displacement of over three million people to Jordan, Turkey, Iraq and Lebanon, with the majority now living in informal settlements among host communities. Alan described the impact on the infrastructure of host countries with the challenge of providing emergency food, shelter and health care along with longer-term financial support, schooling and health care on a scale that is equivalent to 15 million refugees arriving in the UK over a three year period.

Since refugees typically stay in their host country for over 10 years this is a long-term challenge. CAFOD funds, supports, trains and monitors the work of a range of local national partners in Syria and its neighbours with CARITAS their key partner.

Local partners face severe challenges to their safety, and in order to work securely they need to take an absolutely neutral position, have appropriate protection measures in place and adopt an approach that we 'serve all'.

Alan described his work for CAFOD in terms of remote management and support to partners since it is not safe to enter Syria. He explained the ways in which CAFOD minimises financial and other risks and builds trust and assurance in relation to its work.

We heard how CAFOD is working to enable Syrians to survive, attend school, support livelihoods and deal with the emotional and psychological impact of living through war and being displaced. Providing 'child and adult friendly spaces' is key to this as CAFOD and its partners are acutely aware of the risk of creating a 'lost generation'. Aid is provided in many ways, and designed to ensure where possible it also supports and stimulates the local economy. Critically important is monitoring the impact of aid-giving, to ensure that it reaches the most vulnerable and asking recipients what they want and how they want it to be provided so that they retain their dignity and are empowered to make choices.

PEACE SUNDAY 18 January 2015

This year's theme is 'Slaves no more, but brothers and sisters.'



The Press Notice from the Pontifical Council for Justice & Peace states:

Many people think that slavery is a thing of the past. In fact, this social plague remains all too real in today's world. Last year's Message for 1 January 2014 was dedicated to brotherhood: "Being children of God gives all human beings equal dignity as brothers and sisters...." Yet shamefully, individuals and groups around the world profit from this slavery. They take advantage of the world's many conflicts, of the economic crisis and of corruption in order to carry out their evil. *Slavery is a terrible open wound on the contemporary social body, a fatal running sore on the flesh of Christ!*

Peace Sunday is the main opportunity that Pax Christi has to raise income for its on-going work. Contact your parish priest and those involved in liturgy/children's activity in the parish. Invite your parish to have a second collection for Pax Christi or to make a donation to Pax Christi. Without this income their work cannot continue.

More information & resources ON www.paxchristi.org.uk

See Page 9 for Pax Christi's tribute to Gerry Hughes

CTS IN ACTION *continued from previous page*

Louise Zanre, Director of Jesuit Refugee Services said: "People are being forced to flee across the Mediterranean in unseaworthy boats and in overcrowded conditions. No one makes that choice if he or she does not have to. We should not make this a tragedy worse by refusing to rescue them."

If we are so concerned about national identity, why are

there so few politicians who speak out loudly in defence of a generous, caring, humane Britain where we can be proud to be citizens? It is surely possible to accept that anxiety about immigration is real and has to be addressed without denying people's human dignity. It offends against our faith to speak of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers as a kind of infection. We are called to live in the Kingdom of peace, compassion, justice and joy.



'TRADE DEAL TRUMPS DEMOCRACY'

Marian Thompson writes:

David Malone came to Stockport Forum for Peace in October to talk about **THE TRANSATLANTIC TRADE AND INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIP** (TTIP - pronounced Tee Tip). David is an independent film-maker, lecturer and since 2008 commentator on financial matters. He has written "The Debt Generation". He started boldly saying that all of us present have been born into a democratic system. Do we value it or take it for granted? Are we aware that at one stroke of the pen we risk giving it all away? TTIP could do that.

TTIP is now being negotiated between the European Union (EU) and the United States (US). In July 2013 the first round of negotiations took place. These are continuing but David reassured us that we not feel ashamed if we have only very recently heard about them and felt we did not know much. Details have (deliberately?) been kept out of the public domain and from most MEPs. While lobbyists of the big corporations from Monsanto to Nestle to Exxon Mobile have been going in and out of meetings with lawmakers of the EU Commission in Brussels, ordinary citizens and elected politicians have often been standing in front of closed doors. David has been ferreting out information over the past few months. This he unpacked for us.

He suggested looking at TTIP is like looking at Russian Dolls – you open one and then find another inside. One of the most concerning aspects of the negotiations is the secrecy.



TTIP is NOT what its name suggests. It is NOT ANOTHER TRADE AGREEMENT BETWEEN COUNTRIES designed to reduce tariffs and liberalise trade; it is NOT like the earlier World Trade Organisation GATT agreements. TTIP intends to MAXIMISE PROFITS OF THE TRANSNATIONAL CORPORATIONS by REMOVING 'BARRIERS' WHICH STAND IN THE WAY OF THIS AIM.

But what TTIP negotiators call 'barriers' are in reality some of our most prized social standards and environmental regulations such as labour rights, food safety rules (including restrictions on GM food), regulations on the use of toxic chemicals, digital privacy laws and even new banking safeguards introduced to prevent a repeat of the 2008 financial crisis. For example the EU has very stringent rules about food safety. Food is labelled with its country of origin, growth hormones are discouraged, genetically modified organisms are restricted. US has none of these 'barriers.' It would suit US companies wanting to enter EU food and agriculture markets if these restrictions no longer applied. TTIP will 'harmonise' the EU and US regulations which in effect will bring them down to the lowest level which in the case of food safety is the US level.

Some of this 'harmonisation' has already taken place. For example: The NHS has already been 'harmonised' with the US with the passing of the UK Health and Social Care Act passed in 2012. This opened up the NHS to competition from private (often transnational) companies. Unless the NHS is excluded from TTIP (and so far our government has chosen NOT to do this in spite of claims that with them the NHS is in safe hands) when TTIP is signed this privatisation will be irreversible.
How is this possible?



BILATERAL INVESTMENT TREATIES (BITs)

Although apparently signed between two governments these treaties are drawn up by lawyers working on behalf of transnational corporations. Many BITs have already been signed between countries world wide. UK has signed 80+ with various countries already. TTIP would 'tidy up' these individual BITs applying them to all EU countries and US as well as adding some more.

These BITs would give power directly to the transnational corporations in several ways once TTIP is signed.

1. No nationalisation or expropriation

The return of public services (gas, electricity or water), hospitals, waste collection, railways etc. to the public sector once they have been privatised would be very difficult or even impossible. See note on 'harmonisation' and the NHS above.

Expropriation : If a government interferes with a transnational corporation causing it to lose profits, the government can be taken to arbitration and may face a huge fine.

For example: Ecuador has been ordered to pay Occidental Petroleum \$1.77 billion in damages for terminating the oil giant's contract, even though the contract was terminated because the company had broken local laws and caused great environmental damage.

The Swedish energy company Vattenfall is suing the German government for €3.7 billion over their decision to phase out nuclear power in Germany in the wake of the Fukushima nuclear disaster.

The Canadian Mining company Lone Pine is using its US subsidiary to sue the Quebec government for the Province's fracking ban.

TRADE DEAL TRUMPS DEMOCRACY? *Continued from previous page.*

2. Equal treatment – a level playing field for all involved.

Under this, our NHS could be considered to be receiving unequal preferential treatment compared with private US health companies as it receives a government subsidy and UK government could be taken to arbitration by US health companies.

How does this arbitration work?



'INVESTOR STATE DISPUTE SETTLEMENT' (ISDS)

The arbitration is not done in a court (either UK or EU) applying laws passed by our elected lawmakers (MPs or MEPs). It does not have judge or jury. It consists of 3 ARBITRATORS who are international corporate lawyers - one chosen by the company bringing the case, the second by the government being challenged and the third by the previous two. They meet behind closed doors – no-one else has the right to know what evidence is given or who gives it. There is no right of appeal. Who are these arbitrators? They are private individuals drawn from the top 20 corporate law firms in the world e.g. Freshfields in the UK. They are nearly all white men with a shared corporate aim i.e. to maximise corporations profits with no concern with issues relating to people e.g. human rights, workers' rights or the environment. See some examples of ISDSs in Expropriation above.

As a final point, David pointed out that though ISDS corporations can sue governments, WE, the private citizens, HAVE NO RIGHTS TO SUE CORPORATIONS.

The meeting closed with people expressing dismay at how powerless it left us feeling and asking what (if anything) we could do about it. David recommended www.stopttip.net to find out more. This website offers a 28 page easy to read booklet and also has a helpful You Tube interview with Linda Kaucher of the StopTTIP working group. Also David encouraged us to follow his own blog GOLEM XIV. He thought it was very important that we pass information round to ensure as many people as possible know.

Since going to the meeting my TTIP antennae have been working overtime and I realise many NGOs and other groups are equally concerned:

The European Ombudsman -- the place where European citizens can lodge complaints about EU politics -- has opened a formal investigation into the lack of transparency of the TTIP negotiations following pressure from EU citizens and NGOs

Jean-Claude Juncker, the President of the European Commission, is opposed to ISDS being included in TTIP agreement. "Let me once again state my position clearly," Juncker said (Oct 22) "My Commission will not accept that the jurisdiction of courts in the EU member states be limited by special regimes for investor-to-state disputes.". Juncker's assurances came despite receiving a letter from 14 member states (21 October) warning him that ISDS was part of the mandate for EU-US free trade negotiations agreed by member states. The letter, which was signed by trade ministers from countries including the UK, Ireland, Denmark, Spain and Lithuania, stated that "the Council mandate is clear in its inclusion of investor protection mechanisms in the TTIP negotiations". The German government is opposed to including ISDS in the free trade deal, and German MEPs make up the largest delegation in the European Parliament.

Is it not time to write to our MEPs who will ratify TTIP and also to our government and our MP to express our concern? It is interesting to look at the websites of our 8 North West MEPs. Two have helpful open letters to their constituents about TTIP, two mention it with specific reference to NHS inclusion and the rest make no mention at all.

Some of the issues to raise in your letter (thanks to Terry Green for Chester World Development Forum who suggested some of these) :

The apparent secrecy of the negotiations.

The rights of companies to sue Governments if they change a law with a result that the company loses profits or has to cease its operation in that field.

Such conflicts will be decided by a tribunal rather than a court of law under the Investor State Dispute Settlement with no right of appeal

There is also the question of whether the NHS should be excluded from TTIP. Ministers have said they are exempt, but the EU negotiator has said they are within the scope.

The uncertainty about what TTIP will achieve. The Government say that it will result in more jobs but a report commissioned by the Government estimates that at least 1 million jobs will be lost across the EU.

Also the Government's estimate of £10 billion economic growth in the UK each year has been criticised by a Manchester University academic as "vastly overblown and deeply flawed".



DECEMBER 12

Romero Lecture

7pm at Chad's Cathedral in Birmingham

"A saint for the whole people of God: Romero and the ecumenical future "

by Lord Rowan Williams (former Archbishop of Canterbury). Dr Williams has been a Patron of the Romero Trust since its foundation in 2005. The evening will be hosted by Archbishop Bernard Longley, co-chair of ARCIC - the Anglican - Roman Catholic International Commission.
All are welcome.

TRAVEL NEWS TRAVELS FAR

It was 'Our visit to the Holy Land in May 2014 ' that caught my attention as my eyes skimmed over the books, magazines and newspapers at the back of Holy Spirit Catholic Church. The Gaza War was on and I had been on two Palestinian protest marches in London. I was also writing to newspapers – the Tablet, The Universe - and to other Christian and Catholic places of influence – Bishops and Archbishops - about the Palestinian situation.

I picked up the magazine interested to see what angle MouthPeace would take. Would it be mealy mouthed – "on the other hand" etc. with prayers as excuses for inaction. The report was honest and factual and supported the information I had gleaned from news reports, documentaries and magazines about Palestinian life in occupied Gaza and the West Bank including East Jerusalem.

That same Sunday I used it whilst protesting outside 'Kedem' in Manchester. This is an Israeli cosmetic shop manufacturing its cosmetics with minerals from illegal settlements on Palestinian land. I photocopied the article about 50 times and took it with me. The Gazan protestors thanked MouthPeace for writing an accurate article about their situation. They facebooked it to relatives in Gaza. Others forwarded it to Palestinian groups they were in.

I felt empowered by the up-to-date article to answer people's questions about Palestine and her people. I handed out copies to confirm the truth of what I had said. The Zionists always start their challenge with the same question "Have you ever been to Israel?" If the answer is "No" they say "You can't possibly know what the situation is out there". Saying that you have never been to Australia or the moon doesn't stop you from knowing what is going on there – doesn't phase them. Mentioning sources of information – The Guardian, BBC, Gideon Levy, Al Jazeera

makes them laugh. They don't watch, read or follow any British sources of news – only Jewish Ha'aratz. So when the inevitable question came I could reply "No, I haven't but I know some Catholic people who have visited in May this year and here is their report." Naturally they wouldn't read it and continued protesting Israel's innocence. They even had posters saying "We can forgive Palestinians for killing our children (none were). We cannot forgive them for FORCING us to kill their children (note the word forcing).

'Our Visit to the Holy Land May 2014' was a lifeline in knowing that I had actual confirmation from Catholics on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land/Israel this year. I have included a copy of the report in my letters to Barak Obama, Angela Merkel, Friends of Israel – Gordon Brown, Archbishops and Cardinal Vincent Nichols who replied: "Thank you for your letter of Sept 15th with attached newspaper cutting about Israel and Palestine. Please be assured I will keep your thoughts in mind when I visit the Holy Land in November. With assurance of my prayers etc. Vincent Nichols."

I have shared copies with friends and colleagues who had no idea how Israel operated in Palestine. Most were shocked that a nation which had suffered so many horrors in World War II could behave in the way it does. They thought it would be a sympathetic and peace loving neighbour.

Sometimes I have been lost for words. I always keep a copy of the article with me to argue for justice and peace in Palestine. Thank you for being a mouth piece for justice and peace. You reach far more people than you ever think you do. People who are working for justice and peace need magazines like you. Thank you.

Maria

(full name & address supplied)

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS TO THE HOLY LAND

The Liverpool Archdiocese J & P Commission are once again encouraging the sending of Christmas Cards to parishes in Israel and the Palestinian Authority. By the time you read MouthPeace it may be a bit late as it is suggested they are sent in November and at the beginning of December. If you do wish to send your greeting (maybe as a group or from your family) the list of parishes is available on www.liverpoolcatholic.org.uk or from Steve Atherton. Please do NOT send direct to the parishes but via Fr. Humam Kzouz, General Administrator,
Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, Jaffa Gate—Old City, P.O.B 14152, 9114101 Jerusalem



A Farewell to Gerry Hughes SJ from Pax Christi

With sadness we heard this week (7.11.2014) of the death of Gerry Hughes. A great friend to Pax Christi for more than thirty years, Gerry gave of his time, energy and creativity to support our movement and many individuals within it. From the mid 1980s Gerry offered his 'retreats for peace people' to individuals and groups. He felt these were important because, " it seems sometimes as if all we've achieved is a shattering of our own peace of mind. So while we look to God for hope and inspiration, we need also to see God in our rage and despair".

In 1987 Gerry walked to Jerusalem to raise funds for Pax Christi, later writing a book of the same name. Two of our most popular resources were written by Gerry, *Letting the Word Become Flesh*, daily reflections for Advent, and *Show me your Face*, daily reflections for Lent, which was re-published with SCIAF in 2009. We will post more reflections on Gerry's work with Pax Christi.

MADRE LUZ – A GUARDIAN ANGEL FOR ROMERO

Julian Filochowski remembers the life of a remarkable Carmelite nun. This first appeared in Romero News August 2014. Thank you to Julian for letting us use it.

On May 5 2104 Maria Luz Isabel Cueva, the Mexican-born Carmelite Missionary sister of St Theresa, affectionately known as 'Madre Luz' died in the Divine Providence Hospital (the *hospitalito*) in San Salvador at the age of 91. This was where Archbishop Romero lived as a special 'tenant' of the Carmelite Sisters for the three years up to his assassination in March 1980.

Madre Luz was co-founder of the *hospitalito* which opened in January 1966. She ran it for more than a decade as head of the community of Carmelite sisters there. She had tirelessly and quite shamelessly raised crucial funds from a group of wealthy benefactors to construct its eight wards and the necessary facilities to accommodate desperately poor cancer patients. But she could not have dreamt that its most famous resident was to be an archbishop, who would be martyred in the hospital chapel.

When Oscar Romero was appointed archbishop he had nowhere to live. There had been no 'Archbishop's House' since the 1965 earthquake. But he was immediately

offered the gift of a grand residence in an exclusive area of the city. He declined. So when Madre Luz and the sisters offered him a home with them at the *hospitalito* he jumped at the idea and acted as the Hospital Chaplain. For six months he lived in a tiny room opposite the hospital chapel's sacristy with a bed, a side table, two chairs and a toilet/shower. Then on his 60th birthday they handed him the keys to a very

simple three-room house, the size of a garage, which they had had built for him near the gates of the hospital grounds. He was truly filled with joy. This simple residence became his retreat, his spiritual cell, a refuge where he

could prepare his homilies in peace and in prayer.

He was made very happy there, praying Lauds, saying morning Mass and eating with the eight sisters in a family setting. He tried not to bring his terrible worries to their gatherings but they could discern from his silences and his moods the burdens and fears he was carrying. They enfolded him in love; conflictive issues were off limits but they cheered him up with a daily ration of amusing stories and jokes which the far-from-sombre Romero loved. They protected him too, they looked after the visitors that sought him out there, and in the most difficult times they took the insulting and death-threatening phone calls. His office was in the seminary; but he described the *hospitalito*, to the delight of the sisters as his 'Bethany'. They were with him and they supported him and they were witnesses to his martyrdom in their chapel.

Madre Luz was at the very heart of it: she beamed with joy and hope, she exuded tenderness and determination in equal measure. She described herself as a little bit 'terca' or stubborn – but for the Kingdom of God! Madre Luz was the very last of the wonderful community, greatly blessed to have lived alongside Archbishop Romero. I remember vividly her surreptitiously allowing me into Romero's rooms. Immediately after the funeral in March 1980, so I could see for myself how he had left his home so very tidy that he seemed to have known he would be away for a long time. It is a Romero snapshot I shall never forget.

After Romero's death Madre Luz went on to found, in Santa Tecla, a home for children who were orphans of cancer parents; and ten years later a Spirituality Centre in Candelaria. All this done with her particular brand of fundraising – she would never accept defeat and she relied on Divine Providence, knowing without a shadow of doubt that she was about God's business. She was not one of El Salvador's martyrs but surely has her place in the gallery of Salvadoran saints; one of Romero's Guardian angels.



BERNARD CAINE RIP

I have been asked to write a few words on the life of Bernard – I am well aware that many who read this are far better informed than I and they could fill a book with their reminiscences.

At his Requiem Mass today we learnt a little about his early life, how he had tested whether his vocation lay in the Holy Priesthood with the Passionist's at their Junior Seminary, Blythe Hall (known as St Gabriel's Retreat) , Ormskirk – but this was not to be .

Instead, Bernard joined the Royal Mail but found the pace far too sedentary and looked for a busier life style – he found this in the entertainment industry managing clubs and bingo halls via a chequered work career.

I was aware of his work in the SVP some 15 years ago and his efforts to help those in need especially in the Northern Moor and Wythenshawe areas, and of course passing on his telephone number for the shop or arranging for collection of furniture.

However , it was only really in 2009 that I had personal contact with Bernard . A group of fellow Vincentians decided that we really needed to raise money for the SVP and the way chosen to do it was a Sponsored cycle ride between Manchester to Blackpool . The SVP Cycle Team was pulled together but the problem arose of how to get the bikes back from Blackpool once all 20+ cyclists had arrived a little tired and weary !

Bernard was approached and asked whether he could assist and as was it style – replied “ no problem “ The SVP van plus Bernard and a driver would meet us in Blackpool and drive back to Sale – dropping bikes off at various locations. Again in 2011 we repeated the event and once again Bernard was only too willing to lend a hand and a van to assist bringing the cycles back from Blackpool.

His cheerfulness and willingness was greatly appreciated and we could not have competed the two events without his support – the SVP and Sudan Baby Feeding Appeal benefitted by > £15k.

I also had the privilege of accompanying Bernard to SVP Central Council Meetings typically in Ellesmere Port when he would report on ALL the initiatives he was involved with primarily the SVP Shop in Northern Moor, Food Banks and food distribution programs especially at Christmas he would ensure that as many needy families had meat and a little something extra to let them know they weren't forgotten.

There were so many things he was involved and this was perhaps reflected by the size of the congregation at St Anthony's today (it was packed) to celebrate the life of Bernard Caine which is a testament to the number of lives he touched in the local area and beyond.

Many people talk the talk but Bernard definitely walked the walk and put into practice “ Seeking and find those who are forgotten andTurning Concern into Action “ – the SVP Mission Statement . Along with this he also had strong faith and ensured that the “ small voice “ was heard .

His rationale in being involved in so many Committees was to ensure that those who could easily be overlooked had a voice speaking out for them and his innate sense of justice for the poor was prevalent in all that he did.

The words from St Matthews Gospel Ch 25 ring true to the welcome he will have had

“ Well done, good and faithful servant! Come and share your master's happiness! ”

Kieron Walsh Shrewsbury Commission for Justice, Peace & Social Responsibility



FAIRTRADE FORTNIGHT 2015 20 YEARS OLD!

Much has been achieved since the first Fairtrade Fortnight in 1995, educating the public on why to choose Fairtrade and increasing sales on Fairtrade terms for marginalised producers. Over the past 20 years, the Fairtrade mark has become the biggest and best known ethical label in the UK. 78% of the UK public recognise it.

From UK sales alone, £26m of Fairtrade premiums has been invested by producers. But we know there is still a long way to go to make all trade fair – sadly just 1.2% of cocoa and less than 10% of tea globally is traded on Fairtrade terms. So for Fairtrade Fortnight 2015, we are asked to celebrate the impact of Fairtrade and to turn a spotlight on the producers who grow the products we love. By sharing their stories in a fresh and compelling way, we can remind the UK of the dramatic difference choosing Fairtrade makes and how much it is still needed. Focusing on a few core commodities – cocoa, sugar, and tea – there are new materials, case studies and a brand new 15 minute film that will be available for Fairtrade Fortnight 2015. Whether as an individual or part of a Fairtrade group, there will be opportunities to take action – including asking businesses directly to switch to Fairtrade in a ‘stock it’ challenge.

The action guide will show you and your community can take Fairtrade forward. www.fairtrade.org.uk/fortnight

“We can change the world a Fairbreak biscuit at a time” heard at the North South Poverty Day in Manchester





TWO SIDES OF THE SAME COIN: POVERTY NORTH AND SOUTH
 A joint conference with Christian Aid and Church Action on Poverty



This summer, Church Action on Poverty's Director Niall Cooper and Rt Rev David Walker the Anglican Bishop of Manchester had visited some Christian Aid partners in Angola, to learn about their work to tackle poverty. They shared some of their reflections of this trip during the day in November held at the Central Methodist Hall Manchester. Also we heard from Veronica Sapalo the Executive Director of The Platform for Women's Action in Angola - Platforma da Mulheres Accao (PMA) an organisation empowering women and from Pastore Deolinda General Secretary of the Angola Council of Churches who both were visiting from Angola.

The issues in Angola and Manchester on the surface may seem very different, but David Walker reminded us that wherever we are in the world we all share the same basic individual needs. These include:

- A safe place to live – with protection against arbitrary eviction and with robust leasing laws.
- A healthy environment
- Control of the access to our place so others do not enter when we are not there
- A place available to us at any time of day or night – not just a night shelter
- A place to prepare our own food, eat, wash, relax and sleep.

And we share the same community needs:

- To be near our support networks (family, friends and neighbours who care)
- Local community services (not involving long travels) – work, schools, shops, leisure facilities
- A clean safe environment outside our home – rubbish disposal
- Opportunities to be involved in the larger community – to act as host and receive guests, to join and help with groups as a volunteer.

We then heard from the various speakers who work in some way to help meet these needs.

In Angola PMA works mainly in rural areas to change a culture that encourages girls to get married at twelve then keep on having children assuming that looking after the home and family is their only job. The Angola Council of Churches tries to speak truth to power by engaging with the government over issues of human rights, poverty and the need for reconstruction after the civil war.

In our area we heard of the porch box scheme in Bury and Rochdale, the NICE community group in Salford and the Greater Manchester Churches Together Living Wage campaign launched in October 2013. Most churches, church charities and church schools have now signed up to giving their employees a living wage and the next aim is to encourage all local authorities in the area to follow suit.

After lunch we heard from Tim Hartford, an economist the author of "The Undercover Economist" and presenter of BBC Radio 4's "More or Less". In a simple and amusing way he showed us the gaps between rich and poor in this country and between the rich and poor countries have during the past two hundred years both at times grown and contracted. Sadly both seem to be growing wider at the moment. Tim suggested there were two duties: i) the rich should help the poor ii) they should find out by research and clinical trials what help works - not just give what we think is needed (however imaginative or creative that may be!)

For those concerned with justice and poverty in the North or in the South – and most of us wear both these hats - it was an encouraging helpful day.

Marian Thompson



POVERTY- HOMELESSNESS ACTION WEEK - A NEW DIRECTION



Church Action on Poverty, Housing Justice and Scottish Churches Housing Action have decided to bring their Action Week partnership to an end. Action Week 2014 was the final year of operation.

This Action Week was established in 2008, linking Homelessness Sunday with Poverty Action Sunday. Over the seven exciting years of activity, there have been significant achievements. However, it has proved impossible to cover the costs of coordinating Action Week, and the partners are no longer in a position to subsidise this activity. They have decided therefore that they will now each focus on their own fundraising. Relationships remain strong, and they will work jointly as appropriate. The worship resources produced will remain available for anyone who wishes to use them – sadly, it looks as if they will remain relevant for some years to come. See www.actionweek.org.uk

In 2015, Homeless Sunday (note shorter name) will be on January 18 (www.housingjustice.org.uk) and Poverty Action Sunday on February 15. (www.church-poverty.org.uk/sunday) It is hoped as many Action Week supporters as possible will take part in both.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

NOVEMBER

30 First Sunday of Advent see page 2

DECEMBER

1 'Conducting a Social Analysis.' Skills workshop from Module 9 of Hope University's Diploma in Christian Ministry. Open to all. Pauline Bookshop, 82 Bold Street Liverpool. L1 4HR

7 Shrewsbury J & P Advent Reflection Wistaston Hall Crewe. 4.30—6.30 Speaker Liam Purcell from Church Action on Poverty. See page 2

9 Climate Change: impact on human responses A talk by Andrew Jarvis, Associate Director of the University of Lancaster's Environment Centre. 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm, University of Chester, Department of Geography & Development Studies, Best Building, off Parkgate Road Chester, Cheshire CH1 4BJ United Kingdom Visitors welcome

12 Romero Lecture Lord Rowan Williams (former Archbishop of Canterbury) will speak on "A saint for the whole people of God: Romero and the ecumenical future" 7pm at Chad's Cathedral in Birmingham See p. 8

18 CAFOD Carols 7.30- 9 pm St Theresa's 23 College Road Upholland nr Wigan WN8 0PY This annual event is always a beautiful and moving experience.

JANUARY

16 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. For further details contact Tony Walsh on 0151 355 6419.

18—25 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 'The Well is Deep' This year's theme comes from the people of Brazil www.ctbi.org.uk/681

18 Peace Sunday see page 5

18 Homeless Sunday see page 11

18 Together for the Common Good' Annual Memorial Lecture 2- 4 pm Doors open at 1.30 LACE Conference Centre, Croxteth Drive, Sefton Park, Liverpool. L17 1AA see page 2

19 "After the honeymoon? The next decade of South-South Development Corporation" A talk by Dr Emma Mawdsley, covering themes covered in her recent book "From recipients to donors – emerging powers and the changing development landscape 5:00 pm - 6:00 pm, University of Chester, see Dec 9. Visitors welcome

27 Holocaust Memorial Day see www.hmd.org.uk

FEBRUARY

8 Day of Prayer for victims of human trafficking See www.chausa.org/prayers/prayer-library/general-prayers-and-prayer-services/healing-and-health/a-prayer-for-victims-of-human-trafficking

13 CAFOD Quiz Night see Jan 16 for details

15 Poverty Action Sunday see page 11

18 ASH WEDNESDAY

20 UN Day of World Social Justice see www.un.org/en/events/socialjusticeday/

23 FEB—8 MARCH Fairtrade Fortnight see page 10

MARCH

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

6 Women's World Day of Prayer prepared by women of The Bahamas www.wwdp.org.uk

13 CAFOD Quiz Night see Jan 16 for details

22 35th 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. 2

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