



Justice and Peace

Issue 91 Autumn 2015

Lord, you call us to discipleship and loving service.

*In prayerful response
may we be beacons of your light
where there is darkness;
May we bring hope where there is despair,
fostering compassion and love where there is hatred and
division.*

*May we strive at all times to live simply,
finding joy in small things,
content to have less do others might have more.
Mindful of our responsibility as stewards of creation
may we tread lightly on the earth,
respectful of all living things.*

*Rooted in faith,
may we work together to make your kingdom
of peace and justice a reality for all people.*

Amen

This prayer written by Anne O'Connor was adopted by the
NATIONAL JUSTICE & PEACE NETWORK at Swanwick 2015



Archdiocese of Liverpool Justice & Peace Commission

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

In this issue

❖ J & P events and notes	2
❖ Steve Atherton on Refugees	3
❖ Pax Christ Peace Planner	4
❖ Some Swanwick workshops	4
Reflections on Swanwick	5
❖ Laudato Si'	6
❖ Fr Edu Gariguez	6
The accidental environmentalist	6
❖ The Road to Paris and Baked Alaska	7
❖ Time to Act - Kairos Britain	8
❖ The unseen march - Stop the Arms Fair	9
❖ Disenchantment with Fossil Fuel Investment	10
❖ Elections in Burma	11
❖ It's not fair	11
❖ Dates and addresses	12

Archdiocese of Liverpool Justice & Peace Commission

OCTOBER 3 & 4 'COME AND SEE 2015 CONFERENCE'

at Christ the King High School, Stamford Road, Southport. PR8 4EX

Keynote speaker:

**Helen Prejean - the real woman behind 'Dead man walking'
Sunday Mass with Archbishop Malcolm McMahon**

Poster with full details of programme available on
www.irenaeus.co.uk/newsletters---diary-dates.html
Booking via Irenaesus project, Liverpool 0151 949 1199
jenny@irenaeus.co.uk

OCTOBER 24 A DAY ON "LAUDATO SI'" with the Columbans

at LACE Croxteth Drive Sefton Park Liverpool L17 1AA
10.30am - 4.30pm

Booking via the Columbans: Stephenawre@columbans.org.uk

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

SEPTEMBER 26

**CARITAS SOCIAL ACTION NETWORK
ROADSHOW**

Ellesmere Port Catholic High School
Capenhurst Lane Whitby CH65 7AQ
10.30 - 3.30

The Commission will have a stall and hope those
involved in Justice and Peace in the Diocese will
attend.

Advance notice:

ADVENT REFLECTION

December 6 at Wistaston Hall Crewe.

LAUDATO SI'

**This latest encyclical is not just about ecology and care of our earth but links together many of the issues that
Justice & Peace enthusiasts have been considering for years.**

A Study and Action Guide for Laudato Si' has been produced by the Columban Center for Advocacy and Outreach in
Washington DC. Copies were handed out by the Columban JPIC Team at the conference at Swanwick. It is very helpful
for personal reflection with a study and action section for each chapter of the encyclical. It could also be used with
groups (6 sessions) Good for Lent? Download your copy from <http://columban.org/18128/columban-center-for-advocacy-and-outreach/our-response-to-the-crisis-of-climate-change-must-be-prophetic/>

More about Laudato Si' on page 6



www.justicefaithfamily.org



This new website has been developed aimed specifically at families with a passion for
justice, a desire for peace and a concern for creation. Believing these are all essential to
the living out of the gospel, the site offers free materials to help families and groups of
families to explore learning and acting together for the common good. This is a joint venture by Columban J & P Edu-
cation, Diocese of Arundel and Brighton J & P, CAFOD Arundel and Brighton. All parents (and grandparents and
teachers) are encouraged to have a look.



THANKYOU TO SHREWSBURY CAFOD WORKERS

*Many CAFOD supporters in Shrewsbury Diocese were saddened to hear that
Sue Bownas and Liz Aiello had been made redundant from their posts from July 31st, 2015. Whatever the future
structure of CAFOD in the Diocese may be (and the name of the new Diocesan Contact has not been announced at
the time of writing), we would be remiss not to express our enormous gratitude and appreciation to Sue and
Liz. They have worked tirelessly in leading and encouraging all of us who have called on them in so many ways in
recent years. We have been able to rely on their enthusiastic response to all our cries for help or requests for sup-
port.*

*I know that all those in the Diocese who have had any contacts with Sue or Liz as our CAFOD workers will wish
to join me in offering our heartfelt thanks. We wish them well and pray for them as they follow whatever new path-
ways lie ahead.*

Ann Taylor, Christ Church, Heald Green and Churches Together in Heald Green Justice and Peace Group.



Steve Atherton asks :

J/P

What do you think of when you hear the word 'refugee' ?

Refugees were a regular feature in the news during the summer. The images were very striking: the stark contrast between the asylum seekers and holiday makers on the Greek islands; the queues of lorries in Kent; the desperate attempts to get into the Channel Tunnel in Calais.

The newspapers and the government are hostile to refugees, sometimes presenting them as though they are a swarm of ants trying to break into the kitchen and make the house uninhabitable. The ants are a threat. The refugees are a threat. The Prime Minister has appeared on TV to assure us that the problem will soon be sorted by increased security and the refugees will be kept out whether by use of troops or by better fences. The Home Secretary has warned that our standard of living is under attack. More refugees means a lower standard of living.

While the newspapers largely share the same outrage as the Government, TV, on the other hand, sometimes takes a more sympathetic view. Some TV reporters, who have met the refugees, present them as desperate people who are fleeing intolerable situations, or as sad people who are living precariously on the edges of society. Actual contact and conversations with the refugees makes it easier for the reporters to begin to connect with them as fellow human beings. The reporters are not actually solving their problems but they have moved from outrage to sympathy and are beginning to break through the distinction between 'us' and 'them'. Contact makes it much easier to be sympathetic. Once the stories have awoken empathy in us, our perception of the problem changes from the abstract to the personal. Abstract problems can be solved with the brain but personal problems affect our feelings. Personal problems involve our hearts.

The Government appeals to our self-interest: if our comfort or security is threatened it makes sense to protect ourselves. Why would anyone choose to be less well-off and to have a lower standard of living? Why would anyone choose to share their goods with the poor?

Clearly, that attitude is not a Christian response. We are called to love one another, not to 'pass by on the other side', and to have a special concern for the poor. This example is clear in the Gospels and in the lives of the saints. It is clear today in the response of many Christian organisations in our country. The Jesuit Refugee Service, Asylum Link Merseyside, the Catholic Worker and many others are committed to sharing their wealth with the poorest of the poor. This acknowledgement that the world needs to be reshaped has been a call from the last three Popes. Recently Pope Francis said: "The current global situation engenders a feeling of instability and uncertainty, which in turn becomes 'a seedbed for collective selfishness'. When people become self-centred and self-enclosed, their greed increases. The emptier a person's heart is, the more he or she needs things to buy, own and consume. It becomes almost impossible to accept the limits imposed by reality. In this horizon, a genuine sense of the common good also disappears. As these attitudes become more widespread, social norms are respected only to the extent that they do not clash with personal needs."

The difficult question that is becoming ever more real is: how we should react as a nation to the presence of such gross inequality? How can we be so rich when others are so poor? Is it anything to do with me? What should I do?

* * * * *

In August a group of friends from Tunbridge Wells decided to make a documentary illustrating the human stories in Calais's migrant camp, The Jungle, to counteract the negative portrayal of the migrants in the media. With that aim, the Worldwide Tribe started a crowdfunding campaign which raised the necessary money in 4 days. Now as well as raising more funds they are collecting items to take to Calais, including bedding, clothing, sewing kits and shoes. The group has been seeking advice from French charities on how best to help the migrants and is considering collaborating with other groups to boost future funds. "We're not politicians, we don't pretend to have all the answers, and we're not charity workers. We're just normal people from Kent who want to help our fellow human beings with their basic needs," says Jasmine O'Hara, a member of the Worldwide Tribe in Calais

see www.facebook.com/theworldwidetribe Also working in Calais are Doctors of the World www.doctorsoftheworld.org.uk/ and the French branch of Caritas www.secours-catholique.org/

Louise Zanre from [Jesuit Refugee Service UK](http://www.jrsuk.net/) challenged people in her workshop at Swanwick this Summer —see report by Tony Walsh page 5 www.jrsuk.net/

Refugee Action has offices where they welcome volunteer helpers in Liverpool at Kuumba Imani Millennium Centre, 4 Princes Road, Liverpool, L8 1TH Tel. 0151 214 3020 and in Manchester at Canada House 3 Chepstow Street Manchester M1 5FW Tel. 0161 831 5 www.refugee-action.org.uk/

Asylum Link Merseyside runs a drop in centre for asylum seekers and refugees - opening times Monday—Thursday 9am—4 pm St Anne's Centre 7 Overbury Street Liverpool L7 3HJ www.asylumlink.org.uk/



THINGS THAT MAKE FOR PEACE from Pax Christi Peace Planner for September— January 2016



RETHINK TRIDENT

6-9 August saw the 70th anniversaries of Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings. Remember that Trident, the UK's nuclear weapons system, is 8 times the power of the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima. In 2016 the Strategic Defence review takes place and decisions will be made about replacing Trident. NOW is the time to write to your MP about this. Have you signed the RETHINK TRIDENT statement?

www.rethinktrident.org.uk Some church leaders including a number of Catholic and Anglican Bishops have signed. Invite yours to do the same. ** see UK Arms Industry - Dr Parkinson's workshop below.

WORLD WEEK FOR PEACE IN PALESTINE & ISRAEL 20 -26 September

Theme: 'Bridges not Walls: God has broken down the dividing wall' (Ephesians 2:14)

This is an opportunity for a liturgy, exhibitions, films, discussion.. on the impact of the separation wall on life in Palestine. Lots of resources from <http://paxchristi.org.uk/campaigns/israel-and-palestine/world-week-for-peace-in-pi/>

DRONE WEEK OF ACTION 3-11 October

Drones are fast becoming a 'weapon of choice' for our politicians yet they cause havoc and destruction in the lives of many in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen.

Look at the resources on the campaign website, plan an event or take part in the big demonstration on Sat 3 October at RAF Waddington, the base of the Reaper pilots. More information <http://dronecampaign.wordpress.com/> New education resources for use in schools <http://peace-education.org.uk>

PEACE SUNDAY 17 January 2016

An opportunity to celebrate the World Peace Message of Pope Francis in your parish, school or community. Resource material available from Pax Christi in November.



Why not link this to **WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY 18 –25 January 2016**

Theme: 'Called to proclaim the mighty acts of the Lord' Resources will be available <https://ctbi.org.uk/week of prayer>

SOME SWANWICK WORKSHOPS

'UK ARMS INDUSTRY – ethical issues and alternatives' led by Dr Stuart Parkinson. He gave us some basic facts about the UK arms industry: UK has arsenal of 215 nuclear warheads • UK military budget was £36.7 bn in 2014 – world's 6th largest behind USA, China, Russia, Saudi Arabia and France • UK is 6th largest arms exporter behind USA, Russia, China, Germany and France • UK arms exports recipients include authoritarian countries, including those suppressing Arab uprisings. He then gave us details of the key arms companies in UK and their subsidiaries, and he looked amongst other things at employment issues, drones and Trident replacement.

He finished by suggesting some 'green' alternatives to the arms industry including environmental monitoring, marine pollution control, waste management, (recovery and recycling) and furthering renewable energy - including wind, wave and tidal, biomass, geothermal, hydro and photovoltaic energy generation. The full list is available in the notes of his talk on the Scientists for Global Responsibility website:

www.sgr.org.uk/resources/uk-arms-industry-ethical-concerns-and-alternatives-july-2015

See page 9 Campaign against the Arms Trade

Marian Thompson

GREEK DEBT

By 2010 310 billion euros had been lent to the Greek government by banks and others in the finance sector. For example German banks were owed 18.7 bn, French 11.6 bn, and British banks 4.1bn. The private sector was suffering the risks of their loans.

Between 2010 and 2014 huge 'baleouts' were paid to Greece, but only 8% went to the Greek government's budget. 92% went to the banks to repay the loans, leaving the (innocent) Greek people with the debt.

An example of the old adage: capitalism seeks to privatise profit, and to nationalise debt.

All this, and more, I learnt at a superb workshop at Swanwick run by Jubilee Debt Campaign www.jubileedebt.org.uk

We can't fight injustice unless we know the facts. The NJPN conference at Swanwick is a place to get them.

John Murray St. Helens



THINGS WHICH MAKE FOR PEACE *Two Reflections on Swanwick 2015*

Ellie Turner (Liverpool Diocese) writes :

When anticipating my weekend at the 37th Annual National Justice and Peace Network conference, I was not expecting such a weekend of contrasts: from outrage and frustration in response to the workshop on refugees, to awe and admiration of Fr. Edu Gariguez and his work as an “accidental environmentalist” in the Philippines, to peace and tranquility during my early morning Tai Chi on Saturday morning. The weekend felt like an unusual mix of university tutorials and a prayerful retreat. This year’s theme, “The things that make for peace”, resulted in a wide array of workshops on multiple aspects of peace – from justice and peace in the family, to conflict and climate change, to debt, and to the role of the EU as a force for peace.

Classed as a “young” delegate, at age 26, I felt that the material at the conference was incredibly topical, and issues raised are those that are hotly debated amongst people of my generation; it was a great opportunity to meet other like-minded people of my age. Despite the (often overwhelming) challenges raised by the speakers and in the workshops, the feeling of energy and optimism throughout the weekend about confronting these global justice issues was infectious. It was particularly inspiring listening to Professor Paul Rogers Friday night talk on conflict over time, so much so, that we were still discussing it at Sunday lunch. There were moments during the weekend when I did feel incredibly grounded and humble, notably listening to Lorraine Dinnegan speak about her work in North London reducing crime and gang wars between young people as a response to her son being murdered. Throughout each of the speakers’ talks, I felt the powerful (and exhausting) combination of being deeply moved, heart-wrenched, indignant and inspired. To help us consolidate and ruminate on the huge amounts of material covered throughout the weekend, Rev. Dr. Martin Poulson’s thoughtful and soothing reflections interspersed throughout the speakers were welcome moments to take a breather and pray. Further opportunity to delve deeper into particular issues were there during the workshops, and I felt revitalised by the time spent in smaller groups to pray and discuss initial thoughts and responses on the topics covered.

The stunning grounds of the Hayes conference centre, the delicious food and accommodating staff, the interesting delegates, the speakers and workshops, and prayerful liturgy and reflection made for a weekend like no other, and I certainly feel motivated to continue to explore “the things that make for peace”.

Tony Walsh (Shrewsbury Diocese) writes:

I found the Conference stimulating and challenging with some very informative speakers and workshops.

I thought Professor Paul Rogers’ opening address set the right tone for the rest of the Conference. Looking at the period from 1945 to 2045 he stated that it has and will be a crucial century when we could have destroyed ourselves with nuclear weapons and now we are facing a similar challenge from climate change. He also referred to the growing inequality in the world with one fifth of the world’s population having 85% of the world’s wealth. He did hint at some positive developments including the fact that 950 million people are members of cooperatives and that there is an increasing spread of photovoltaic panels in Sub Saharan Africa. He also said that Pope Francis’ Encyclical *Laudato Si’* is of major importance.



CAFOD'S Maria Elena's workshop on Saturday morning focussed on the Encyclical and the events leading up to the very important Conference on Climate Change in Paris at the end of the year where it is hoped and expected that meaningful targets will be set for a considerable reduction in greenhouse gas emissions across the world to prevent runaway climate change. The Global Climate March on 29th November in London will be an opportunity for thousands of people to demonstrate the concerns of so many people in this country and will deliver a powerful message to the world leaders gathering in Paris.

(see page 7)

I also found the workshop led by Louise Zanre from the Jesuit Refugee Service very challenging. She told us that the number of refugees in the world is estimated to be nearly 60 million and that 12 million people in Syria have been forced to leave their homes. 4 million of those are refugees in neighbouring countries with 1/4 million in Europe. In spite of all the media focus on migrants into this country only 4200 have been granted refugee status. Louise described in a very clear way how difficult it is for refugees to make it to Britain. She described the journey of Ibrahim (not his real name) who left Eritrea which has a very repressive regime to make it to Britain. He eventually arrived in this country where he had to spend time in hospital but was then refused asylum. He is still in the UK but destitute. If he is forced to return to Eritrea it is probable that he will be imprisoned in dreadful conditions. How fortunate we are and how much we take for granted.

A fuller report on the speakers at the conference is available in NJPN NW Justice and Peace E Bulletin
<http://jpschrewsbury.wordpress.com/e-bulletins/> see NW Bulletin August



LAUDATO SI'

'The most important encyclical since Vatican II' was the verdict on 'Laudato Si'' of **Maria Elena Arana**, CAFOD's campaign organiser at her workshop at the Swanwick NJPN Conference in July. She urged everyone to read it for themselves. Having done this, many J & P enthusiasts would agree with her. The key themes that so impressed Maria personally are : human dignity, human development and integral ecology.

Important themes for CAFOD supporters:

1. The Pope recognised the encyclical would have a real political impact this year leading up to the UN Paris conference in December. It links very well with the 'One world, one climate' campaign and the petition to David Cameron about reducing carbon emissions to 1.5° that CAFOD is encouraging us to sign before November 15th (see Road to Paris opposite page)
2. There is a need to tell politicians they need to be taking decisions for the long-term—not just for this year. (see Disenchantment with Fossil Fuels - page 10)
3. Deep down we know the way we live now is not working for everyone—especially for the poor
4. Our consumer culture focuses on what we can get and not what we can give.
5. The encyclical offers joy and hope for the future.

Quotes from Laudato Si' from the section on Biodiversity

32. The earth's resources are also being plundered because of short-sighted approaches to the economy, commerce and production. The loss of forests and woodlands entails the loss of species which may constitute extremely important resources in the future, not only for food but also for curing disease and other uses. Different species contain genes which could be key resources in years ahead for meeting human needs and regulating environmental problems.

34. We must be grateful for the praiseworthy efforts being made by scientists and engineers dedicated to finding solutions to man-made problems. But a sober look at our world shows that the degree of human intervention, often in the service of business interests and consumerism, is actually making our earth less rich and beautiful, ever more limited and grey, even as technological advances and consumer goods continue to abound limitlessly. We seem to think that we can substitute an irreplaceable and irretrievable beauty with something which we have created ourselves.

FATHER EDU GARIGUEZ An accidental environmentalist— Saturday morning speaker at Swanwick

Father Edu from Mindoro island in the northwestern Philippines said he became a Catholic priest to serve the poor. This led him to defend the land rights of tribes of Mangyan people who have lived sustainably from the island's natural resources for generations. For them Fr Edu said 'Land is life'. The island is considered the seventh most important biodiversity hotspot in the world. So in defending livelihood of these indigenous tribes he also became 'an accidental environmentalist' .

Unfortunately Mindoro is also rich in nickel deposits which attracted the attention of the transnational mining companies who with government support in 2001 started to mine destroying forests and causing great pollution. Fr Edu with a group of his Mangyan parishioners went on hunger strike outside the Department of Environment. After 11 days the government relented and the mining was stopped. For this Fr. Edu won the Goldman environmental prize in 2012. A YouTube of his work can be seen on <https://youtube/ibXQjiau3II>

The work continues. There are 92 outstanding applications for mining in the Philippines. But there are other ways. Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle of Manila, Philippines who has recently been elected as the new president of Caritas Internationalis suggests a new model is needed for mining. No mining where there are indigenous people or where there is environmental damage to the watershed which is almost everywhere in the Philippines! Research studies show that biodiversity and an undisturbed ecology are far more viable and helpful with development long term than mining.

Singing Laudato Si' at Swanwick

Mass on Saturday evening was celebrated in the Conference Hall by Rt Rev Bishop John Rawsthorne, Emeritus Bishop of Hallam. Bereft of the usual liturgical books he ably used an iPad to lead. 'It's the first time I've kissed an iPad!' he commented after reading the Gospel. We finished with the hymn "Laudato Si'" which now had taken on great significance. The enthusiastic singing and clapping felt like an endorsement of support for Pope Francis's encyclical.

NB: KEVIN MAYHEW has invited NJPN to circulate a PDF of the hymn Laudato Si' and has waived any copyright fee plus a link to play it: www.kevinmayhew.com/hymn-of-the-week.html You can get a free copy of the music and an audio file by following the link, setting up an account and placing an order. The check-out price is zero (ignore June cut-off date). Items are placed in the "My Downloads" area on the Mayhew website. Contact Ann Kelly for a PDF copy of the words and sheet music: admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk



THE ROAD TO PARIS

The United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris 29 November to 11 December 2015

Travel by train

CAFOD will be travelling by Eurostar with a group of 25 of their CAFOD supporters to stay in Paris from 9 to 13 December. While there they will pray and campaign together to stop climate change pushing people further into poverty overseas. Their presence will be a witness to the church's commitment to justice and solidarity with those living in poverty. CAFOD is looking for enthusiastic, passionate people who will be willing to share their experience with others when back home. The deadline for completed applications is 10 September 2015. Those applying will be informed whether they have been chosen by 20 September 2015.

www.cafod.org.uk/Campaign/One-Climate-One-World/Campaigning-in-Paris

Feeling adventurous? Why not walk?

A Walking Pilgrimage to Paris- organised jointly by Christian Aid, CAFOD, Tearfund and C of E Shrinking the Footprint. 2-week walking pilgrimage starts from London on November 13th. The pilgrims will arrive in Paris with others from around Europe on Fri 27 Nov to be present at an interfaith event and hand in campaign actions on 28 Nov. and then take part in a mass mobilisation on Sunday 29th More information from james.buchanan@churchofengland.org

I can't be there, but want to play my part

If you can't make it, don't worry, there are plenty of ways for you to get involved. Here are some ideas:

- **Email David Cameron ahead of the Paris talks** to remind him you expect strong leadership from the UK Government on poverty and climate change. Sign the CAFOD on line petition about reducing carbon emissions (see page 6)
- **Tell others in your parish about the CAFOD campaign and encourage them to sign the petition too:** Download a paper copy of the petition to share in your parish. www.cafod.org.uk/oneclimate
- Pray for the leaders who are making crucial decisions about the future of our world, that they will be wise and take into consideration the experiences and sufferings of the poorest communities: Find climate reflections to inspire you on CAFOD website and elsewhere.
- On **29 November**, at the start of the talks, **join thousands of people in London for The People's Climate March**. More details coming shortly...

BAKED ALASKA Time To Change The Temperature

An island in the South Pacific has a problem. It's hollow. Anxiety levels are rising in a North American boardroom. Eve's garden is bursting with next door's rubbish. Even the ducks have relocated... they're in Bangladesh.

From the four corners of the earth come colourful, inter-connecting stories of humanity living with the wild, unpredictable effects of climate change.

Scientists, farmers, oil magnates, climate warriors, prophets, mothers, journalists and others just like you and me – we're all in the mix and hungry for a recipe of hope. In the struggle over power, some sound the warming bell, some blow hot and cold, while others make a pudding of the planet.

Vivid, sharp and deliciously entertaining, *BAKED ALASKA* serves up the realities of climate change with flair and clarity about the temperatures involved.

In the high-energy, 'seriously funny' style for which Riding Lights is well known, *BAKED ALASKA* is something we can all look forward to... unless we do something about it.

Extra-ordinary theatre for these extraordinary times. Looking towards the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference, Christian Aid, with Riding Lights, Diocese of Lichfield and Operation Noah have created *BAKED ALASKA*...

Touring from September 16th until November 22nd 2015

October	Mon 19 Alderley Edge Methodist, Knutsford	Wed 21 St Paul's, Longton Hall, Stoke-on -Trent
	Fri 23 Lichfield Cathedral	Sat 24 Church of the Holy Spirit, Shrewsbury
November	Mon 2 Hoylake Chapel, Wirral	Tues 3 Church Stretton School, Shropshire
	Mon 9 St Cuthbert's, Preston	Tues 10 St John's Sunshine, Old Trafford
	Fri 13 St Andrew's Methodist, Wythenshawe (Greater Manchester)	

Box Office: 01904 613000 or online at <http://ridinglights.org/baked-alaska/>

If you would like your local church to have a voice for climate justice and you are unsure where to start, Christian Aid's regional coordinators can come and run a workshop to engage your church and help identify ways that we can all work together to tackle climate change. Please contact Helen Howe on 01925 582820 or email hhowe@christian-aid.org for further details.



KAIROS BRITAIN - TIME TO ACT FOR PALESTINE

Marian Thompson writes:

On that very hot Wednesday in July, Charlotte Marshall Advocacy Worker for Kairos Britain talked to a small but enthusiastic group at the Amani Centre in Manchester. After watching a short film produced by Kairos Palestine "4 years of Kairos Palestine" (available on CD or on the Kairos Palestine website as a YouTube www.kairospalestine.ps) we were encouraged to consider our response.

Background

In 2009 the 'Kairos Palestine' document was produced by Palestinian Christians. It is a call from the heart of Palestinian suffering for others (not just Christians) to share their suffering. We are encouraged to 'Reach a common vision based on equality and sharing' and reminded that if one member of the body of Christ suffers – we all suffer

In 2012 various concerned individuals and groups met at Iona to consider a UK response. This led to a further meeting at Hawkestone Hall resulting in the booklet '**Time for Action**'. This was launched at Greenbelt 2013.

In 2014 Charlotte was appointed as a full time worker for Kairos Britain– this is part of a global Kairos movement. It is apparently particularly strong in Brazil

Why Kairos?

Kairos means 'an opportune moment' It offers a **non violent** means to look at conflict. When violent responses around the world are gaining momentum it is important to speak **now** for non violence.

Why now?

The situation in the Middle East is getting worse and it is harder to find a way out: last year's attacks on Gaza, more and more settlements in West Bank and Netanyahu re-elected

'**Time for Action**' makes various suggestions:

1. Go and See Many people go on pilgrimage to Israel/Palestine but don't see anything but holy sites and what Israeli tourist board want. It is important to see both Palestinians and Israelis – and hear both narratives

2. Political action

'If you are neutral in situations of injustice you have chosen the side of the oppressor' Desmond Tutu

'If an elephant stands on the foot of a mouse and you say you are neutral the mouse won't appreciate your neutrality'

There are several possible actions on Kairos Britain website.

3. Challenge misuse of Bible putting situation in context

Lack of awareness of the situation in Israel/Palestine and misreading of the Bible can often legitimise the infringement of Palestinian rights. There is an important role for churches to be prophetic: All people made in God's image – none are superior: Palestinian Christians are 'Living Stones': God's kingdom is built on justice, peace and love not aggression and violence: Jesus came to break bonds of oppression and free captives: Grace is available to all in Jesus: Land boundaries are man made.

4. Prayer as important as action – there are suggestion on website – try and mark World Week for Peace in Palestine Israel Sept 20 –26 with a prayer vigil or event. See page

Many individuals have signed up in support of 'Time for Act' on the Kairos Britain website.

There is now a new suggestion since the printing of the booklet

5. Become a Kairos Community. As well as individuals joining Kairos Britain, groups of people who are involved already with supportive activities such as those mentioned above could join as communities. This gives even more encouragement to the Palestinian Christians.

For more information see www.kairosbritain.org.uk/

As Charlotte challenged—what are you and your group going to do?

Book review : **Coexistence and Reconciliation in Israel - voices for inter-religious dialogue**
 Edited by Ronald Kronish Paulist Press 2015

Since secular leaders have failed to secure peace in the Holy Land, why not give faith leaders a chance? After all, religious identity is central to many citizens in the region, and with sufficient education, and through personal encounters, people may find they have more in common than separates them. This is the message from a collection of essays by a group of brave, patient, determined faith leaders who are taking constructive steps to narrow the gulf between the people of the Holy Land. Some in Israel are sceptical about the value of the projects described in the book, fearing that cultural interactions merely plaster over the difficult reality, creating an illusion of co-existence. The alternative view is that these projects make dialogue possible, and that a common language, a joint loyalty, and an awareness of the humanity in the other, is essential.



THE UNSEEN MARCH

In June Quakers in Britain released *The Unseen March*, a film which questions the increasing, and largely unseen, militarisation of schools in Britain. In the film, former paratrooper Ben Griffin, school principal Chris Gabbett and activist Mark Thomas speak out about the strategy that has seen the Ministry of Defence and Department for Education working in close partnership on 'military ethos' projects. The film reveals the evidence for this policy: £45 million of new programmes with "a military ethos" committed since 2011. At the same time, the government has slashed Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA), Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) and mental health services for young people.

Each new 'military ethos' programme is presented as in children's best interests, boosting self-discipline, building character, developing 'grit'. The agenda has led to military-led activities being integrated into national education policy, aggressive plans to spread cadet forces to state schools (550 by 2020); arms companies and the military sponsoring new academies and influencing what they teach; military personnel being fed into classrooms as speakers, recruiters and teachers, and **all of this is taking place with virtually no public debate or wider scrutiny**. Ben Griffin, founder of Veterans for Peace UK says that the military is selling this idea of the military ethos in order to gain access to schools. He says 'military ethos' is actually about instilling obedience without question, developing a gang mentality and removing the innate psychological barrier to killing. Brian Lightman of the Association of School and College Leaders says "A 'military ethos' is not a learning ethos". Education requires the ability to question and evaluate different perspectives.

You can watch *The Unseen March* (5 mins) www.youtube.com/watch?v=OgJ83yYIR1g. This leads to another short YouTube about the Armed Forces teaching resource that has been sent to every school in the country. Quakers are asking parents and pupils, governors and teachers, to watch the films and question this militarisation in education.

STOP THE ARMS FAIR

The arms trade is a deadly, corrupt business. It supports conflict and human rights abusing regimes while squandering valuable resources. It does this with the full support of governments around the world. This trade is dominated by the five permanent members of the UN Security Council: China, France, Russia, UK and the US, along with Germany and, increasingly, Israel. The permanent members alone account for around three quarters of exported arms. While relatively few countries sell large volumes of weaponry, the buyers are spread across the world. Some of the largest purchasers are in the Middle East and South and East Asia.

The arms themselves range from fighter aircraft, helicopters and warships with guided missiles, radar and electronic warfare systems, to tanks, armoured vehicles, machine guns and rifles.

There is often confusion about the legality of the arms trade, with the impression given that it is the illegal trade that is damaging while the legal trade is tightly controlled and acceptable. However, the vast majority of arms sold around the world, including those to human rights abusing governments or into conflict areas, are legal and actively supported by governments. **UK is one of the world's largest arms exporters.**

This September, the world's largest arms fair, Defence & Security Equipment International (DSEI) , is due to take place in London from 15-18 September. The arms fair involves more than 1000 companies and 30,000 attendees, and its results are felt around the world as people are killed, economies are devastated, refugees are traumatised and peaceful protest is crushed.

Despite Israel's brutal attacks on Gaza last summer, it will host a pavilion at the arms fair to market its "battle-tested" weapons. Despite UK-made weaponry being used to suppress protests in Bahrain during the Arab Spring, the country's brutal rulers were among 14 authoritarian regimes invited by the UK government to shop for weapons at DSEI 2013. Real security involves tackling the causes of problems, not creating more. Climate change is one of the biggest threats that we face yet the UK government spends 25 times more on weapons research than research into renewable energy. From 7-12 September there is a week of action to try and stop the arms fair from taking place. Each day will highlight a different way in which the arms fair fuels repression and injustice, with a big day of action on Saturday 12 September near the ExCeL Centre, London E16 1XL which hosts the arms fair. See www.stopthearmsfair.org.uk/

To find out more about the ongoing campaign against the arms trade see www.caat.org.uk



DISENCHANTMENT WITH INVESTMENTS IN FOSSIL FUELS

Frank Thompson writes:

In church circles, there is a growing movement to reduce or remove investments from the fossil fuel industries to perhaps those areas with a more ethical base. (See an article in the Guardian by Damian Carrington on Sat. 2 May.) With the United Nations Climate Change Conference, due to take place in Paris (30th Nov. to 11th Dec.) **NOW** is definitely the time to focus sharply on the production of energy from hydrocarbons and the inexorable rise of CO₂ emissions.

We do however need energy so the question arises : does taking money out of the fossil fuel pot imply that the churches are seeking to invest in some other energy source? Purely by chance, my reading of the above article coincided with my being asked to deliver a lecture on Hydroelectricity to one of our local groups. Could water power be one such area for investment? I know that at the moment the government in its eagerness to pursue fracking seems to be devaluing renewables. However waterpower could offer a long term alternative to fracking that is secure and sustainable.

Mechanical power from rivers in the form of water wheels dates back to Greek and Roman times but it was only in the early 1900's that this power was converted to electricity production. Whereas, with a mechanical system, a factory using water power had to be in close proximity to the water wheel, the move to electrical generation removed the need for intimacy between power generation and power use. Transmission of power with electrical cables, though relatively costly, allows the electricity to be injected into the National Grid at a suitable point.

A recent Government report (**Harnessing Hydroelectricity, 22 Jan 2013**) does not paint a very encouraging picture for the exploitation of water power. In the UK approximately 1.5% of our electricity comes from water power whereas USA have 6.5% of their electricity produced from Hydro-electric sources. Some other countries, Norway for instance, gets over 90% of its electricity from water power. Being an Island Nation it is obvious that we have a large coastline where wave power could be harnessed and several estuaries that may be ideal in using tidal power to generate electricity; surely, we should not dismiss water power with such haste.

Several community projects involving microgeneration have already been set up. These consist of Archimedes Screws being installed at disused weirs up and down the country . In some cases the electricity is fed directly to Supermarkets to run refrigeration equipment but in other cases the energy supplements the National Grid network and gains income via the Feed-in-Tariff (FIT). The initial funding for such projects (typically £500,000 - £700,000) comes from a combination of Share sales, Bank loans and Government grants . The pay-back time may well be 10 to

15 years and then all profits are ploughed back into other local community projects. In our area we have two local generation units, namely, at the Torrs (New Mills, East Cheshire) and Otterspool (Stockport) sites.

According to the Government report (above) it would appear that most sites in the UK with the potential for hydroelectricity have now been developed so other water power sources need to be explored. Tidal, which would give a very predictable supply, is normally dismissed out of hand on environmental grounds and yet a site at La Rance in France has been supplying energy since 1966. Perhaps, as a nation, we need assess whether the impact of, say, a Severn Barrage, would be more detrimental to our local environment than the complete devastation of the global environment by CO₂ emissions.

Wave power has not emerged as a meaningful renewable energy source though there was great excitement when the Salter Duck was proposed in the 1970's. Perhaps we need a rethink on this energy source.

A third aspect of water power that I would rate as very important is that of energy storage. The Dinorwig installation in North Wales is an example of this type of electricity storage. When power demand is low, turbines pump water from a low reservoir to a higher reservoir thus storing energy in the form of gravitational energy. To supplement the supply network when demand is high the Dinorwig power station can be brought up to full power in 10 to 15 minutes. If, indeed, the country is relying more on renewable sources of energy in the future at least THREE storage installations of GIGAWATT size must be built.

To get back to the topic of possible church reinvestment., the final message is a mixture of hope and pessimism. The three last projects mentioned would require gigantic financial investment. Would the churches consider such a capital investment into these rather newer forms of water power? Whereas the community water projects involving Archimedes Screws are typically 100 of thousands of pounds the latter projects would involve 100 of millions of pounds. In our privatised world the big SIX companies will never consider such an investment and the government just washes its hands of serious energy planning so let us see if the churches can come up with a miracle!

Editor: If this topic is new to you there is a very good explanation of water power on www.need.org/files/presentations/NEED_hydropower.pptx NEED (The National Energy Education Development Project) is a US website that seeks to educate on the use of sustainable energy. Although the material is good, all the examples seem to be in the US!

For more about disinvestment in fossil fuel movement see www.gofossilfree.org/uk



ELECTIONS DON'T MEAN DEMOCRACY

On November 8th there will be a general election in Burma but unfortunately it is impossible for any election there to be 'free and fair'. As Aung San Suu Kyi has stated "There will be no fair elections with the current constitution."

Under the 2008 Constitution endorsed by President Thein Sein after the 2010 Election, the military hold power at every level of government. 25% of seats in Parliament are reserved for soldiers hand-picked by the head of the Burmese Army. The President is not accountable to Parliament and must have military experience. Above the President is a National Defence and Security Council dominated by the military. This is unaccountable to anyone and constitutionally able to veto anything Parliament does.

The coming elections are for the upper and lower houses of Parliament – 664 seats – and for 14 regional and state Parliaments. But millions of people are denied the right to vote including by coincidence many for oppose the government. These include monks and other members of religious orders, ethnic Rohingya and people from other groups who have fled attacks from the Army and now live in refugee camps i.e. Karen, Kachin, Karenni and Shan. Political exiles can't vote nor political prisoners. The number of political prisoners has increased five-fold since the last election to 160 in jail and a further 1,500 activists awaiting trial. *

The government's Election Commission, many members of whom are retired military officers, have control over the rules of the election. They decide which political parties can register and have a say over who the party candidates are. You have to be rich to stand, a deposit \$250 is needed for each candidate (more than many people earn in a year) Big parties can find the money but it is impossible for small ethnic parties. Candidates need to get permission to give a speech or hold a rally. Last year the Commission reportedly told election commission members that candidates would not be allowed to campaign outside their own constituencies. So leaders of parties like Aung San Suu Kyi cannot travel around the country during the campaign.

There was pressure to change the constitution which led to a vote in Parliament on June 25th. The bill proposed several amendments including the requirement for passing bills to be reduced from 75% to 70% of parliamentary votes and a change to Clause 59 (f) which makes those with a foreign spouse or children ineligible to be President. This seems to have been written specifically with Aung San Suu Kyi in mind. However although 67% of MPs voted for change the bill failed as all the military MPs voted against.

In recent months, Aung San Suu Kyi, President Obama and the United Nations have all said that Burma's reform process is stalled, backsliding, or backtracking. It is not a transition to democracy, but a transition to a new form of authoritarian rule with the same people in charge.

Repression of the ethnic Rohingya is increasing leading to many fleeing by boat to drift in the Bay of Bengal with little hope of finding a safe haven.

New laws are being proposed which could restrict the right of women to marry non-Buddhists.

Burmese Army attacks in ethnic states continue, as has the use of rape and sexual violence.

Despite this, the previous British government refused to admit the reform process has stalled. Instead, Ministers talked up reforms, played down human rights violations, and focused on promoting trade and investment. The Burma Campaign, who have supplied this material, are urging us to write to our MPs and this new government asking them to look realistically at the present situation and review the assistance they give to the authoritarian Burmese government. For more information see www.burmacampaign.org.uk

*You can take action to help free political prisoners: www.burmacampaign.org.uk/take-action/free-political-prisoners

There is also a Letter Writing Guide to write directly to prisoners available from info@burmacampaign.org.uk

"It's Not Fair" Friday 16th October 7.30pm Frodsham Methodist Church WA6 6BA

The Diocese of Chester is hosting this production by the Rhema Theatre Company to present the complex issues of human trafficking in a format accessible to wider audiences. Using a blend of theatre, storytelling, puppetry and music, the show raises awareness of issues surrounding trafficking and slavery. The audience will go away with the knowledge that change is possible and armed with some simple practical steps to bring about change. Although thought-provoking, the content is not graphic or offensive. It informs but also inspires and brings hope. Suitable for ages 11+, the show will be accessible for church youth groups and other members of the congregation. Tickets are free and can be booked via Diocese of Chester events page www.chester.anglican.org/event.asp?Page=1253



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

SEPTEMBER

8 Ministry Day at The Cenacle 10 – 4 ecumenical day for people in any ministry – input, sharing and time for quiet prayer and reflection - cost £10 Tea & coffee provided Bring your own lunch The Convent of our Lady of the Cenacle, Lance Lane, Wavertree, Liverpool L15 6TW For more information or to book : Tel 0151 7222271 email: winniecenacle@mail.com

8 A look at “Sustainable Development Goals” Gill Miller 6:45 pm - 9:00 pm The Unity Centre, Cuppin Street Chester, CH1 2BN CWDF meeting Looking at what might be happening at the UN Summit taking place in New York in late September. This is looking at “the Post-2015 Development Agenda”, with the adoption of a series of Sustainable Development Goals taking over from the earlier Millennium Development Goals which expire at the end of this year. 01244 350323.

12 Stop the Arms Fair Day of Action see page 9

13 Campaign against the Arms Trade Christian Network Day of Prayer As the week of the London Arms Fair begins, join with Christian communities across the UK in prayer and action. www.caat.org.uk/events

13 Racial Justice Sunday This year’s theme - Hospitality and Sanctuary For All aims to prompt conversation and reflection on the theme of hospitality and sanctuary. <https://ctbi.org.uk/racial-justice-sunday-2015/>

15-18 Arms Fair (Defence & Security Equipment International (DSEI)) in London, see page 9

18 CAFOD Quiz Night Our Lady’s Parish Centre, Ellesmere Port Town Centre 7.30 pm Entrance: £3.00 (children half price) Quizmaster Mr. Mike Ives All money raised will go to CAFOD’s Connect2 Ethiopia fund raising project. Fair Trade stall and Fair Trade refreshments provided at the interval. Organised by Ellesmere Port LPA J & P group For further details contact Tony Walsh on 0151 355 6419.

21 September Peace One Day - An annual day of global ceasefire and non-violence is organised by Peace One Day, a non-profit organisation that raises awareness of peace issues. www.peaceoneday.org/global-campaigns

20-26 World Week for Peace in Palestine & Israel

www.pief.oikoumene.org/en/world-week-for-peace

26 CSAN Roadshow Ellesmere Port Catholic High School see page 2

OCTOBER

3 & 4 ‘Come and See Conference’ keynote speaker Helen Prejean at Christ the King High School, Southport. Booking via Iranaeus project, Liverpool 0151 949 1199 jenny@iranaeus.co.uk see page 2

3- 11 Drone Week of Action see page 4

13 Ministry Day at Cenacle see Sept. 8

16 CAFOD Quiz Night see Sept. 18

16 ‘It’s Not Fair’ 7.30pm Frodsham Methodist Church WA6 6BA see page 11

20 The Worldwide Governance of Migration” 7.30pm Room CBB115, Best Building, University of Chester, Chester Campus, Chester CH1 4BQ

An informal open meeting, with a presentation by Paul Tacon of ESCAP – UN Economic and Social Commission, Asia/Pacific. Hosted by the University’s Department of Geography and Development Studies. 01244 512190.

24 A Day on Laudato Si’ with the Columbans at LACE 10.30 – 4.30. Booking via the Columbans. Page 2

26—31 October One World Week

www.oneworldweek.net

NOVEMBER

10 Ministry Day at Cenacle see Sept. 8

10 CWDF Forum Becky Reeve will talk about her recent work in Togo, volunteering with the International Citizen Service, the ICS scheme. 6:45 pm - 9:00 pm, The Unity Centre, Cuppin Street Chester, CH1 2BN 01244 383668.

13 CAFOD Quiz Night see Sept. 18

29 Nov to 11 Dec 2015: The United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris see page 7

DECEMBER

6 Advent Retreat Shrewsbury Commission. Wistaston Hall, Crewe page 2

6 VSO Christmas Concert Chester Town Hall, 7pm

8 Ministry Day at Cenacle see Sept. 8

Liverpool

J & P Fieldworker

Steve Atherton
J&P Office, LACE
Croxteth Drive,
Sefton Park,
Liverpool L17 1AA
tel: 0151 522 1080

s.atherton@rcaol.co.uk

Liverpool Chair:

Susan O’Halloran

Liverpool Office Secretary

Maria Hardacre
tel: 0151 522 1081

Maria is off work while she recovers from surgery following a severe recurrence of her Crohn’s disease. She is greatly missed.

Shrewsbury

Secretary: Maura Garside

mauragarside@hotmail.com

Editor of MouthPeace

Marian Thompson
37 Dale Road,
Marple
Stockport SK6 6EZ
Tel: 0161 427 7254
marianet@tiscali.co.uk

Copy date for next issue
1/11/2015. Don’t forget to
send in reports of events
and dates for the diary

The opinions expressed in MouthPeace are the views of the individual contributors or organisations concerned and do not necessarily reflect those of the Justice and Peace Commissions of the dioceses of Shrewsbury and Liverpool

edited and typeset by
Marian Thompson
and printed at LACE
Liverpool