



Shrewsbury and Liverpool Justice and Peace Commissions

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" ... our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, who am I to be

brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous? Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small does not serve the world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We are all meant to shine, as children do. We were born to manifest the glory of God that is within us. It is not just in some of us; it is in everyone. And as we let our light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others."

This famous quote from Nelson Mandela's inaugural speech is actually from 'A Return to Love'

by Marianne Williamson.

With thanks to Steve Atherton

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As the publication of this issue of MouthPeace coincides with the launch of the *livesimply* project, I felt it might be helpful to use one to reflect a bit on the other. The producers of the *livesimply* pack suggest that you use the logo as a stamp to put on all your group or parish activities that seem to come within the scope of the project. If I had followed that advice then MouthPeace would be littered with little fishes and round loaves. But really it should not be surprising that most (all?) of our Justice and Peace work coincides so well with *livesimply*. After all both have the same source, the encyclical *Populorum Progressio*. The first Justice and Peace Commission in Rome was established as a direct result of this encyclical and from this all our national, diocesan and local groups have developed. So even if many of us who are committed to Justice and Peace as a way of living our faith, have not in the past read *Populorum Progressio*, we have probably accepted its messages unconsciously by osmosis as it were. So now on reading the modern translation for the first time we are surprised and delighted on how relevant it is to our work.

In many areas we are already walking the *livesimply* path although in others we could do better. (A love of flying and the possibilities it opens up for personal exploring is something I would find hard to give up.) But what happens at the end of 2007 when the project supposedly ends? Can we and our fellow parishioners then forget all our good resolutions and go back to our complicated, consuming lives? If *livesimply* is to have real value it will bring about changes in minds and hearts so that we all will want to continue living in this way. It is not just a project for the year but a conversion that continues for the rest of our lives. So then like all true converts we will feel strongly enough to tell others so that the prophetic message of forty years ago will get a louder, more continuous hearing to day.

Marian Thompson

PROGRESSING TOGETHER AS PEOPLE OF GOD

The Diocesan Justice and Peace Autumn conference held at Wistaston Hall, Crewe, both took us back forty years to an examination of the Encyclical (*Populorum Progressio*) which has (whether or not we were aware of it!) informed our Justice and Peace mission for the last half century, and also showed us a clear path for the future, mapped out in the current *livesimply* project, to be launched on 26 November 2006.

Sue Bownas, CAFOD manager for the Shrewsbury Diocese, began the half day by showing how national and international campaigns such as Drop the Debt, Make Poverty History and the Trade Justice movement, have clearly echoed the prophetic message of *Populorum Progressio*. The new project, backed by the Bishops' Conference and a large network of Catholic agencies, continues these themes and further develops the encyclical's message about our responsibility for the physical world we have been given. Its strapline of living "simply, sustainably and in solidarity with the poor" puts the whole together within a coherent framework for daily life.

The project is in essence a powerful reinforcement of the essential Christian message for us to live a new kind of life, in solidarity with the community and motivated by faith. **Ian Linden, Associate Professor at London University's School of Oriental and African studies**, on a very welcome return visit to the Diocese, then outlined the context in which

the encyclical was written and its main messages. His talk included a powerful and illuminating account of a range of Catholic social justice initiatives influenced by governments engaged in campaigns against hunger before and just after Vatican Two, and provided a coherent narrative of events which for me, at least, had previously seemed largely unconnected. In the course of the talk, I became conscious of how powerfully and unwittingly my own understanding of the Christian call to Justice and Peace had been influenced and informed by the encyclical and by the people who had helped to bring it into being, many of whose names had been previously unknown to me. It seems that, for me anyway, understanding the workings of the Holy Spirit takes some time!

These early sixties "movers and shakers" including Archbishop Helder Camara, Bishop Georges-Louis Mercier of Algeria, Archbishop Georges Hakim and Fr Gauthier, and Louis Joseph Lebret, (inspirer and chief author of the encyclical) were characterised by their work with poor communities in economically deprived areas of Europe, but especially in South America, North Africa, the Middle East and the eastern Mediterranean. They had direct experience of the poor, often within contexts and cultures quite unlike those of Roman churchmen, and their work developed an urgency not necessarily typical of Church initiatives. Another influence was Charles de Foucauld and the worker- priest movement.

Continued

At the second Vatican Council they together constituted a "Church of the Poor", which first met as a body in October 1962 with a second meeting a month later, which the then Archbishop of Milan, later Pope Paul VI, attended. Their mission had three strands or elements: the development of poor countries, the evangelisation of workers and the poor, and the development of the "Social Presence" of the Church in physical actions (such as the relinquishing of the papal tiara) which symbolised the Church's commitment to the poor.

The undeniable commitment of the Church of the Poor did not however result in a sufficiently reasoned and coherent statement to significantly influence Vatican II, which then took a largely liturgical slant. The group fragmented and it was not until Paul VI succeeded to the papacy that Louis Joseph Lebert was asked to write *Populorum Progressio*. We might feel, however, that it was worth the wait in terms of its breadth and enduring quality and this was confirmed by Professor Linden's outlining some major points which the encyclical requires to be "urgently" addressed before there can be a just world regime for the poor. These include:

- the analysis and addressing of the causes of poverty and the need for "bold transformations" of current economic systems
- an emphasis on the economy as being at the service of its people, and not their master
- the indivisibility of human beings from their economic and cultural contexts
- the perception of ordinary people as the architects of their own development and the need to undertake responsibility for future generations when acting in the contemporary world
- the requirement on Christians to operate the "economics of enough" with, following Thomas Aquinas, all surplus being the entitlement of the poor

Addressing these points in the light of a Christian understanding of social justice and in solidarity with the poor, would require us currently, for example, to attempt to redress the disparity of power in trade between unequal countries; reduce or eliminate the arms trade; seek to appropriate land which is unproductive when local communities are starving; reject economic policies which privilege the rich or are designed solely to make a surplus; recognise the dignity and capability of every person; live sustainably and ensure that government policies require others to do so; recognise that solidarity with the poor gives us all a better chance of finding God; and live simply so that we have surplus which we recognise as the right of others to have.

Reflecting on Professor Linden's talk, and on the

aims of the *livesimply* project, I found that my existing understanding of the Catholic messages of Justice and Peace had certainly been confirmed and illuminated but that there were also some issues I perhaps needed to explore further. The narrative over the last forty years is certainly both inspiring and challenging as is the clear message that God works not just through His visible Church but through all social and cultural contexts and all aspects of our personal experience. While Christians are called on to act urgently, therefore, their actions are likely to be informed by the experiences of many following other faiths and none.

This last point leaves us with a problem: if I can learn so much from those who do not draw their inspiration from religious teaching, how do these common understandings of acting justly differ from those informed and confirmed by Christian teaching? Where, in other words, is the Christian spirituality which might have constituted the fourth "s" in the *livesimply* strapline, the "added value" of Christian social justice? It lies, surely, in the "transcendent humanism" of which Professor Linden spoke and which characterises Christian social teaching: the transformation of the world through grace and our own actions. Becoming the fulfilled and integrated human beings which this entails will, as the encyclical says, be largely achieved by living in community with others, the "solidarity" of *livesimply's* slogan.

The spirituality of justice must therefore lie in this essentially equal experience in which there is no giving and taking but a mutual spiritual growth. It seems that the pursuit of Christian justice requires not only developing our relationship with God but the recognition that we are also in transformable relationships with those distant from us whose lives we need to know about and experience in some measure if we are in any sense to act justly and develop ourselves, too, as fulfilled and spiritual human beings. Solidarity with the poor implies action, empathy and, usually, at least some measure of direct experience. However necessary the resources which a yearly donation to CAFOD provides (and this is not a plea to cease those collections!), the message of *Populorum Progressio* is that they are not enough: a Pentecostal flame rather than a glow of righteousness is now required.

Further details of the *Livesimply* project can be found on the project website (www.livesimply.org.uk) or from Sue Bownas (0792 023 2936 or shrewsbury@cafod.org.uk). Sue also has Action Packs for £5 each, which include a copy of *Populorum Progressio* in a new abridged translation.

Margaret Cook West Kirkby Wirral



HOAP: Bringing Hope to Homeless in Oswestry

J&P Co-ordinator Joan Sharples recently visited a project working on homelessness in South Shropshire.

At this time of the year, many parishes will be making plans for Homelessness Sunday, which this year will be on 28 January. Housing Justice, the ecumenical organisation responsible for promoting Homelessness Sunday in England, has links with some housing projects in Liverpool and also funds an initiative in Oswestry, a small town in the rural Shropshire countryside.

HOAP (Homeless in Oswestry Action Partnership) grew out of the work of local churches and has been a charity since 1992. It now operates with eleven staff and thirty volunteers providing help and advice for people with housing needs in Oswestry and the nearby town of Wem. It sees about two hundred new clients each year. Only a small minority is street homeless. The biggest group of clients: 16-25 year olds become homeless after relationship breakdowns with parents. Difficult home situations are often aggravated by parents' own broken relationships.

HOAP advisors are able to offer emergency accommodation, rent deposits, advice on homelessness law, and to liaise with other agencies. Its support workers help council and housing association tenants. Clients learn budgeting skills and ways to manage debt. HOAP also runs a furniture scheme. Not only does it make low cost furniture and other basic household goods available to its clients, it also provides an excellent recycling service to the community.

Maybe you have similar schemes running in your own locality. Could you help to publicise of its work? Volunteer with such a scheme? Use the Housing Justice Pack to raise awareness of its work and hold a collection for its work?

Housing Justice packs for available from... www.justhousing.org.uk

**homelessness
SUNDAY** 

28 January 2007: No Home No Justice

In our affluent consumer society we are all encouraged to think of our dwellings as monetary assets rather than as the heart of family life, as places of comfort and safe refuge, and as key components of our identity.

In contrast Homelessness Sunday will focus on some of the injustices that are linked with homelessness. The Resource Pack will feature material on affordability; the shortage of social housing; rural homelessness; homeless and destitute asylum seekers and the problems faced by Central European nationals in Britain who are not entitled to welfare benefits.

Homelessness Sunday has the support of all the main denominations and is celebrated in a wide range of congregations. We always try to provide flexible materials suitable for these different contexts which makes Homelessness Sunday an ideal opportunity to organise a 'Churches Together' event.

For further information on the Homelessness Sunday packs (available mid-late November) please contact Ellen Byrne on 020 7723 7273 or email hs@justhousing.org.uk

Living in Hope CAFOD Advent Reflections 2006



Bishop Brian is one of the contributors to this year's booklet which offers a fresh understanding of the scripture readings for Advent, bearing in mind the message of 'Live Simply' that challenges us to change our lifestyles so that the poor may simply live.

from CAFOD 020 7095 5571/5572.
£3.00 plus postage & packing



"Yesterday's the past, tomorrow's
the future, but today is a GIFT.
That's why it's called
the present."

Planting peace in Palestine

is a new initiative offering you the chance to sponsor olive trees in Palestine. The scheme is run by the Palestine Fair Trade Association (PFTA), in partnership with Zaytoun and Olive Co-operative in Manchester. The new trees will offset the destruction wrought in the olive groves by the Israeli army and settlers. Since the year 2000, over 500,000 trees have been destroyed in Palestine, according to the Applied Research Institute Jerusalem. Every tree represents a long-term source of income to Palestinian families, who have been harvesting olives for generations. The PFTA will deliver and distribute the trees. All farmers who take part in this scheme follow fair trade guidelines, and will benefit from future purchases of Palestinian olive oil.

£20 will sponsor five trees

More details on www.olivecoop.com

“CAUGHT IN BETWEEN” by Riah Abu EI-Assal

Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem, is a most unusual book. It is the story of an Arab Palestinian Christian Israeli. He grew up in a Christian home in Nazareth but his homeland was taken over by Israel and so his citizenship places him in a unique bridge-building position. This is what Bishop Riah has striven to do throughout his ministry. Some 20 or more years as Rector of Christ Church, Nazareth and for the last 8 years as Bishop in Jerusalem. A man daily involved in facing the challenges of the Middle East from a Christian perspective. This is why he refuses to say Holy Land, but “*The Land of The Holy One*”. Do buy the book and be encouraged and challenged.

Published SPCK £9.99 isbn 0-281-05223-9

Stop Arming Israel



Israel continues to occupy of the Palestinian Territories, in violation of international law, has a history of systematic human rights abuses against Palestinians, and killed over 1000 civilians in its July/August 2006 attacks on Lebanon. The UK-Israel arms trade not only makes us materially complicit in these crimes, but sends a message of approval from the UK for what Israel is doing. Stop Arming Israel was set up in July 2006 by Campaign Against Arms Trade, the Palestine Solidarity Campaign and War on Want, with the active support of the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions (UK), the Radical Activist Network, Voices in the Wilderness and individual activists from the anti-war movement. The aim is to campaign for an end to the UK arms trade with Israel by gathering support for a statement in favour of an embargo, by providing information on the trade and on UK companies involved, and by encouraging grassroots campaigning around the issue.

An alternative Christmas Carol

*O sad and troubled Bethlehem
We hear your longing cry
For peace and justice to be born
And cruel oppression die.
How deep your need for that great gift
Of love in human form,
Let Christ in you be seen again
And hearts by hope made warm.*

*While morning stars and evening stars
Shine out in your dark sky,
Despair now stalks your troubled streets
Where innocents still die.
And Jesus, child of Mary,
Whose love will never cease,
Feels even now your pain and fear,
Longs with you for your peace.*

*Amazingly and lovingly
Jesus, the child, has come
And brought to birth through human pain,
makes broken hearts his home.
He comes to comfort all who weep,
To challenge every wrong
And, living with the weak and poor,
Becomes their hope, their song.*

This alternative version of one of our most traditional carols can be sung to the familiar tune. How about asking to include it at Midnight Mass?

Pax Christi have sent a pack of pictures to every parish to focus our minds on the desperate situation in Bethlehem today .

The statement

In 2005 the UK government licensed the sale of £22.5m worth of arms to Israel, more than twice the amount in 2004, and has spent millions of pounds on 'battle-tested' arms from Israeli companies. Equipment licensed by the UK Government for supply to Israel includes weapon control systems, ammunition, components for various types of missiles, and key parts for Israel's Apache attack helicopters and F-16 fighter jets. These have been deployed against civilian populations in southern Lebanon and Gaza, as well as to maintain the illegal occupation of the Palestinian Territories.

We, the undersigned, call on the UK government to initiate an immediate embargo on both arms and purchases from Israeli military industry. We also urge other governments to do likewise.

More background information about the campaign can be found on www.stoparmingisrael.org

A PATH TO PEACE

In October Pat Gaffney the Secretary of Pax Christi U.K. addressed an open meeting organised by the Justice and Peace Group of Churches Together in Marple.

She began her talk with an admission of guilt. She had recently received a letter from a member withdrawing their subscription and accusing Pax Christi of being a failing organisation as it had not succeeded in bringing about peace in the world! Despite this failure Pat told us of what she and the many others who support Pax Christi are trying to do.

Pax Christi was formed at the end of World War II by Marthe Dortel-Claudet, a teacher in France, who tried to bring about Franco-German reconciliation by forgiving enemies and rebuilding trust. It was constituted as an International Catholic Movement for Peace in 1950. A UK branch was formed in 1958 with Bruce Kent as its first chaplain. Largely an organisation of lay 'amateur' members it has only two full-time staff. Although denominationally Catholic, by definition it works closely with other peacemaking groups. Two of these Pat specifically mentioned were the Sojourners, an American Evangelical association founded by the Rev. Jim Wallace, and The Quaker Peace and Social Witness group. Pat's belief that 'violence breeds violence' and we must stop this cycle is the basis of her work.

Pat reminded us how heavily our government invests in defence and how deeply involved we are as a country in the Arms Trade. She compared our national spending of 24 billion pounds a year on defence with the 4.5 billion per year given as foreign aid. As Pat aptly pointed out our budget is an indicator of where our heart is and what our values are. She and Pax Christi are adamantly opposed to replacing the Trident missile system on principle

and on the grounds that it may cost as much as 75 billion pounds. She regarded it as 'a costly destructive insurance policy'. She told us of the Defence Export Services Exhibition which is held annually in this country and is one of the world's largest Arms Fairs. The five members of the UN Security council, UK, US, France, China and Russia are the biggest arms exporters. We for example sent thousands of rifles to Sierra Leone which were used by both sides during the civil war.

Much of her own recent work has been involved with the Israeli-Palestinian Arab conflict. She pointed out that in 2006, 450 Arabs had been killed compared with 28 Israelis. The 'fence' which Israel is constructing to separate itself from the Arabs is in fact an eighteen foot high wall, surrounded by a deep trench and patrolled by soldiers. As a result of this construction for instance the Palestinian town of Qaqilya has lost 50% of its agricultural land and 30% of its water. Pat has visited Israel/Palestine several times in the past few years and she had a poignant picture of a Christian mother and her children outside their house near Bethlehem. This is one of the very few Christian families now there and yet despite all the hardships they are determined to stay.

She told us of the prejudice of the British press towards Peace activists illustrating this by the treatment meted out to Norman Kember after his time as a hostage in Iraq.

In answering questions afterwards Pat agreed that Pax Christi like other peace organisations found it difficult to maintain impetus. But to those of us who were there this was a talk to inspire us to continue working on Justice and Peace issues. We pray for her, and ourselves, that we may not lose heart.

Peter Harrison



PEACE SUNDAY 2007

(celebrated in England & Wales on Sunday 14th January)

The theme for next year's World Day of Peace message by Pope Benedict XVI will be "**The Human Person: Heart of Peace.**"

Prospects for peace today are "assailed by the misguided use of science and technology, and contradicted by widespread incongruent lifestyles", the most dangerous ideologies in question "find their inspiration in nihilism or fanaticism (material or religious)", and deny the fundamental truth about the human person. Widespread ideological propaganda, among other things, is a threat to peace, the Vatican statement argues, "because peace is in danger when human dignity is not respected and when social coexistence does not seek the common good."

The full text will be available in December. Pax Christi will produce liturgy/celebration material on the theme for distribution in November. See www.paxchristi.org.uk



TRADE JUSTICE– IS THERE ANOTHER ROUTE?

John Battle MP, a long-standing member of the Select Committee on International Development and Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Friends of CA-FOD Group, spoke on the topic of trade justice at Wirral Trade Justice Group's AGM in October.

Last year he initiated an Early Day Motion in parliament (EDM 679, Making Poverty History Through Trade Justice), calling for trade policies which will protect the livelihoods of poor farmers and develop their own sustainable economic strength.

"Make Poverty History is a long haul", he said. At the moment much of the momentum of 2005 has gone; in his own words, "there is a sagging in the rope". As other public figures have emphasised, however, our efforts can and do make a difference.

He stressed the importance of making the connections between poverty in the poorest undeveloped countries and poverty in Britain (he was national coordinator for Church Action on Poverty before he became an MP in 1987). His constituency, Leeds West, is one of the poorest in the country. Globalisation, migration and climate change are interlinked. The poorest are paying the price; for example, while much is said about advancing business development in India and 30% of its population are wealthier, 55% are left out. There are more individual Indians living on less than \$1 a day than in Africa although many African countries are significantly less developed than India.

John Battle considers trade to be the key factor in taking countries out of poverty. Many of the poorest countries are being granted more aid and debt cancellation but are simultaneously being strangled by

unfair trade rules. Moreover, while only 3% of the world's trade is in agriculture, agriculture is vital to poorer countries who disproportionately suffer from "dumping" of subsidised agricultural products from the USA and the EU.

A parliamentary debate recently took place on International Development and the failure of the Doha round of international trade talks. In the absence of international trade agreements more bilateral agreements will be struck between powerful developed countries and weak undeveloped countries. In such power games the strong are able to drive a hard bargain.

He made a plea for a stronger moral lead from Europe; he also stressed the increasing need to link climate change with the eradication of poverty.

Recently, the Financial Times stated that the world is eight times richer than 50 years ago. Development, he concluded, is crucial to the future of the planet. Justice is in the arithmetic. We must trace the connections.

Those attending this meeting, already committed to "Making Poverty History", learnt so much from John Battle. He was both informative and impassioned. We came away inspired to work harder to keep up the pressure for change.

We learnt subsequently that John Battle has decided not to stand at the next election. He will surely be putting his skills and interests to good use in other spheres, but he will be a big loss to parliament.

Kath Stephenson

Christians reach out their Arms and say NO to the Arms Trade

Hundreds of concerned residents, and Christians yesterday formed a human chain around the headquarters of DESO (Defence Export Services Organisation) labelling the building a 'Global Danger Zone'.

This year marks the fortieth anniversary of DESO, the government arms sales unit which is responsible for supporting UK companies to export arms and military equipment.

Grassroots Christian activists have been concerned for many years as to the devastating consequences of such agencies and the arms industry. An ecumenical statement calling on the closure of the arms sales unit has been signed by thirty UK church leaders.

Norman Kember, who survived kidnapping in Iraq and a trustee of the Fellowship of Reconciliation and the comedian Mark Thomas joined the hundreds in the human chain which was positively received by the

public.

Christians began the day with a prayer meeting and through prayer and song prepared ourselves for the day ahead.

The day was a huge step in raising awareness of DESO. The Fellowship of Reconciliation's detailed publication on DESO, *Living by the Sword*, has been warmly received by Christians and the opportunity to illustrate or concern together was felt by all who attended yesterday's event and participated in the Human Chain.

For further information about Fellowship of Reconciliation please contact Maud Grainger on 01865 748 796 or visit www.for.org.uk

PRESS RELEASE 17th October 2006



TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE

It was reported in the press that over 10,000 campaigners took part in the I COUNT march from the American embassy, Grosvenor Square, to Trafalgar Square on Saturday, 4th November on the eve of the international climate change talks in Nairobi. The campaigners involved at least 40 organizations both varied in type and size; these included Greenpeace, the Ramblers' Association, Oxfam, Operation Noah, the Women's Institute and Surfers against Sewage - these members with surfboards were dressed in wet suits and were covered in flot-sam and jetsam and other unmentionables!

It was a beautiful day for the event and Marian and I joined the throng of people at the about mid-day. The march had its usual complement of bands but was extra noisy as everyone was equipped with a whistle. It was, however a well-behaved stroll along the streets of London and the police were happy to accompany us all to Trafalgar Square. A few speeches later and it was all over.

So, what about climate change, is it real?

Most scientists will agree that measurable changes are happening in many parts of the globe to show that global warming is occurring at a faster rate than can be explained by natural climatic cycles. Mark Lynas, in High Tide, lists some of these; an island in the south Pacific, Tepuka Savilivili, has disappeared; similarly, the Andean glacier, Sullcon, has completely melted and permafrost in Alaska is turning to water with adverse effects on building foundations. Even in this country the temperature went to a record high (100.6°F) in August, 2003 and seasons do seem to be changing.

And how, may we ask, is this coming about?

Well, year by year, we are using more energy – in the last 20 years our energy needs have doubled - and we are using hydrocarbon fuels (mostly oil and gas) which produce an invisible blanket of carbon dioxide gas around the earth. So, if the same solar energy is incident on the earth and less is emitted from the earth, due to this blanket, then the earth's temperature will rise, the atmosphere's temperature will also rise and there will be more energy for storms and other extremes of weather. Although some people may not accept that energy usage and climate are closely interlinked, most climatologists do agree that there is now good scientific evidence which proves this linkage and computer modelling is accurately predicting these present climate changes.

So, what shall we do?

Most individuals feel quite helpless about climate change but do try to re-cycle, walk or bi-cycle and generally become a bit "greener". Many national governments, however, fail to react in any way as they are completely governed by "growth". President Bush openly admits that it will damage the US economy to make any change to oil and gas consumption and this is after New Orleans. China and India continues to forge ahead with their miracle growth and are not likely to stop until their standard of living is approaching that of the Western world.

In a recent Treasury-commissioned report, Sir Nicholas Stern and his team have brought things into clearer focus by saying that 1% of world GDP must be spent **now** to put the world on a low carbon path and, if we don't make necessary changes to our present life-style, it may involve 20% of GDP to clear up the mess at a later date. Stark warnings but will governments listen? One has to doubt it as governments are particularly bad at taking unpalatable and often long-term decisions.



After spending a day of one's life in any activity one will always ask – was it worth it? There wasn't a great deal of TV coverage but, then, Climate Change was competing with "What to do with Saddam Hussein" and "Tall'y-ho" as the new fox hunting season was getting under way. Many people were handing out leaflets and so their justification would be that x number of people had been given information. Could a number change of 10,000 to 10,002 be our own justification? We need not have gone but, then, if each of the campaigners had said that there would have been no march. It is a bit like seeing a few bricks on the ground as just a pile of bricks, but together with more and more and more...we see that a wonderful edifice, a mosque, a synagogue or a church, has been built. So, collectively each small entity can make a difference and anything any person does to stop global warming and climate change is a step in the right direction.

Perhaps we should all adopt the slogan "live simply, so that others may simply to live" and mother earth will then be handed down to our children and grandchildren in a fitting and proper state as, indeed, it was handed down to us.

Frank Thompson

'Too much is at stake. How can we claim to be empowering Africa to a new future through aid, trade and debt relief, if through our own profligacy we wreck the climate and ruin their harvests?' Rt Rev James Jones, Bishop of Liverpool, speaking at the rally



KEEPING IN TOUCH WITH A FRIEND

I have recently had a detainee whom I visited at Colnbrook. Firstly and most serious in my experience is the way that detainees who arrive shortly prior to removal are treated. My friend had signed every week for 13 months. In no way was he a criminal nor had he resisted etc. Nevertheless he was installed in the short-term unit where conditions are penal. He was locked in the cell except for two short periods each day. It was only during those 40 minutes a day that he could make outgoing calls but there is only one phone for this to be shared by 13 detainees as I understand it. To restrict men who are about to be sent to an uncertain fate in another country in such a way that they cannot contact those they are leaving behind is vicious cruelty. For incoming calls there is also one phone. Detainees who are called are brought to the phone 9 am to 9 pm. However, I was warned when I rang that it was very difficult to get through. No wonder with these men about to be removed and only one line. I also found that the Colnbrook staff did not always answer the phone during the set hours. On the night of Sunday 11th June I rang continuously from 20.10 until 21.00. At first the phone in the unit was busy but from 20.40 it just rang and rang and was never answered. This is not fair. In fact the main switchboard took up to four minutes to answer calls on some occasions.

When my friend was transferred from Manchester, he was in the van from 11.20 until just before 18.00. During the period until 17.00 when there was a change of drivers there was no air-conditioning or open window. This was only allowed when the drivers changed and the new drivers could not understand why the air conditioning was not on. This was also on 11th June when temperatures were very high. These men are not animals and even animals would not be transported like that.

I need to mention that the removal of my friend was deferred between 9 and 10 pm on the night before his departure. I rang Colnbrook to enquire if they were aware but the person I spoke to told me it was

not their business and when I tried to get further details of whom to approach he put the phone down on me. The centre must have been notified in spite of what he said as my friend was not prepared for departure. I think it is inhumane that no one told him at any point that the removal was deferred. When he was unlocked in the morning he asked and only then was told. He had been left in uncertainty all night and considering that in DRC he faces imprisonment and all that means in that country it was torture to leave him in ignorance sitting there all night.

Also when leaving Colnbrook, my friend was not allowed a phone call. He was given no notice that he was to be moved and no one would tell him where he was going until the driver told him in the van. He is not some criminal to arrange for the van to be hijacked en route. Why should he be treated like this? Detention is already a dreadful thing, loss of freedom for innocent people, without gratuitous cruelty of this sort. Then the journey took 6 1/2 hours. One hour outside Harmondsworth, another period outside Colnbrook and finally 30 minutes outside Dover until the night shift came on.

My friend was eventually taken to Heathrow on 29th July to be sent to the Congo and by the grace of God Group 4 were so slow he missed the plane. Unfortunately he was sent to the short-term in Colnbrook which is like a punishment block and now to Doncaster which is so far away. He's finding it hard as there is nothing to do, no books worth reading in the library because if there are they get taken and he's being bullied because he gets lots of phone calls and there are only 2 phones for 50 people. It's a nightmare.

Update on 19 September: He is still in Lindholme. In fact I visited him today. His MP has contacted Immigration again as it is obvious that they did not even look at the new evidence provided. They have put off a new flight until there is an answer to the MP.

Moyra Feathers National Catholic Refugee Forum

HOLIDAYS THAT DON'T COST THE EARTH

Tree-planting Holidays in the beautiful South Pennines

Treesponsibility is based in the Upper Calder Valley of Hebden Bridge. They organise short holidays or weekend breaks tree-planting. There is also plenty of free time to explore the countryside or discover the delights of the old mill towns and hill top villages, and you will have the satisfaction of knowing that your holiday will be the seed from which new woodlands will grow. As flying is one of the greatest causes of CO₂ emissions Treesponsibility also campaigns against future airport expansion.

More details on www.treesponsibility.com

www.airportpledge.org.uk



SET ALL FREE

On 25 March 1807 a parliamentary bill was passed to abolish the slave trade in the British colonies. **Set All Free** has been set up by Churches Together in England. Its aim is to remember the past and apply its lessons to tackle the legacies of transatlantic slavery and its modern day equivalent. Although slavery was finally abolished in the Americas in 1888, it is estimated that over 20 million people are still in forms of servitude today. Observances and celebrations will be held nationally and locally, with special events taking place in ports associated with the slave trade, including Liverpool.

Events include:

Liverpool:

March 24

Anglican Cathedral *A Service of Penance* 11.30 a.m.

August 23

Slavery Remembrance Day in the Liverpool docks area.

Shropshire:

Hereford (C of E) Diocese has produced an exhibition, which will be hosted in a number of places in Shropshire. Contact Ged Cliffe 01691-831374 for more details.

January 2-19

Ludlow, St Lawrence Church

Jan 22 – Feb 9

Church Stretton, URC Meeting Place

Feb 19 – Mar 3

Shrewsbury Abbey

Mar 19 – April 6

Bridgnorth

April 30 – May 18

Clun Forest

June 22 – 24

West Midlands Agricultural Show

October 8 – 26

Telford, The Meeting House

October 29 – Nov 16

Shrewsbury Cathedral



It is hoped that groups will arrange events during the year. Please let us know if you are planning anything in your area. A **Set All Free** resource pack containing study material, prayer cards and ideas for worship throughout the year is available for £10.00 plus p&p. Order through the website www.setallfree.net or by phone 0870 444 1994.

live simply

At a Shrewsbury J & P Commission meeting in October we were trying to understand what livesimply meant for us and our fellow parishioners. As a quick exercise Joan asked the group to make a note of things they had done during the last few days under the three project headings. In the hope of getting others thinking too it was agreed to print them.

Live Simply

Arranged a Christmas present 'amnesty' i.e. an agreement not exchange gifts.

Picked and ate produce from the garden.

Cycled to Mass on Saturday evening.

Gave away cooking apples as I had too many to keep and store.

Walked to the shops and only bought what I could carry home

Enjoyed looking at the sunshine on the autumn leaves.

Tended my compost heap!

Took more plant cuttings than I need for next year so I will have some to share with others.

Boiled up chicken bones to make a meal (not just for soup).

Made do with things from stock cupboard instead of

going to Hansons for something easy to prepare.

Live Sustainably

As the dark nights arrived resolved to buy more energy saving bulbs.

Shut the internal doors in the house to conserve heat and turned the central heating down a degree.

Used public transport rather than getting the car out.

Drove steadily.

Ate broccoli soup from homemade batch in freezer.

Made some chutney with apples from garden.

Made a chocolate cake to sustain the group members.

Live in Solidarity with the poor

Contributed to 'Aid to the Church in Need'.

Bought 'The Big Issue'.

Promoted the 'Unearth Justice' campaign in the parish.

Bought some Fairtrade biscuits.

Arranged to take someone's spare mattress to Asylum Link.

Packed up clothes to send to a parish in Zambia.

Please let us know what *livesimply* means to you and your parish.

SWANWICK 2006
The National Justice & Peace Conference

Our first Justice and Peace conference. What were we to expect? Lots of talks about different aspects of justice and peace work? Opportunities to chat with others about what they are doing? A chance to include the children in the work we do? It turned out to be all of this and much more. What we didn't expect was the deeply spiritual underpinning to the conference. The words of the opening liturgy summed up the conference for us as it reflected so well the nature of justice and peace work: 'The kingdom is not only beyond our efforts but beyond our vision, we accomplish in our life time a tiny fraction of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work'.

During the weekend we listened to talks about ethical finance, spirituality and important work being done by young people in Oldham to heal the racial divides there. We were moved to tears by Sr Lucina Wogan about the plight of women trapped into the sex trade in the Far East and the hope being offered to them by a band of dedicated women. There were workshops, good food and good company as well as some traditional Newcastle entertainment!!

The children were provided for by YKids who organised a programme of workshops. There was provision for all ages. At one point in the weekend there was an extended lunch break to allow us all to spend time with our families, enjoy the just fair and get to know people. The children however were not impressed and spent the whole two hours asking when it was time to go back to groups!! Between the groups, the ceilidh and 'rescuing' froglets from the grounds, I think all the children had a great time. Ours have been asking if we can go back..

We came away from the weekend with a renewed sense of the difference our small actions can make in people's lives. Repercussions and influence we could not hope to have without the grace of God. Justice and peace work often seems like a drop in the ocean and it is easy to become discouraged, but to the people touched by our prayer and our work, it is the most important drop that ever was. There is always more to do, there always will be but we can be encouraged that we are not alone, that we don't have to have all the answers but be faithful to our little bit and God will do the rest.

'We plant the seeds that will one day grow. Water the seeds planted by others, knowing they hold future promise. Lay foundations for others to build on. Provide yeast that reaches far beyond our capabilities.'

I would recommend anyone to go to a National Justice and Peace Network conference, the prayer and encouragement are well worth the time taken out of busy schedules. We came away feeling not weighed down by the enormous tasks we face and feeling we ought to be doing more (don't we feel like that all the time?!!!) but full of hope for the future and feeling secure in the knowledge that our actions were making a difference in peoples lives.

Caroline and John Shevelan

St Catherine of Sienna Parish, Lowton, Lancashire.

National J & P Conference July 20 –22 2007

Called to be Peacemakers

Resource people will include:

John Dear, S.J. is a Jesuit priest, pastor, peace activist and writer on peace. Currently, John co-ordinates Pax Christi New Mexico. John's peace work has taken him to Central America, the Middle East and the Philippines.

Zoughbi Zoughbi is a Palestinian Christian born and raised in Bethlehem. He is the founder and Director of Wi'am, The Palestinian Centre for Conflict Resolution. Wi'am, helps to resolve disputes within the Palestinian community and between the Palestinian and Israeli community.

Bernadette Farrell is composer, liturgist and musician who is also well known for her strong commitment to justice and peace and her work on local social justice projects. Bernadette eagerly works with people of all denominations

The conference, which is ecumenical, will be jointly organised by National J & P Network,
Fellowship of Reconciliation and Pax Christi



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

DECEMBER

- 1 Prisoners for Peace Day**
Amnesty 0207 814 6200
www.amnesty.org.uk
Christian Solidarity Worldwide
0208 942 8810 www.csw.org.uk
- 1 World Aids Day**
WHO 0207 814 6726
- 3 World Migration Day** National Catholic
Refugee Forum 07871 646224
www.refugee-forum.org.uk
- 4 Advent Hope** Christian Aid Carol
Service. Manchester, St Peter's
House, Oxford Rd. 7.30 pm.
- 5 Advent Hope** Christian Aid Carol
Service. Chester, Hoole URC,
Hoole Road 7.30pm
- 6 National Poverty Hearing**
Westminster, Central Hall, London,
10.00-5.00. Contact Jenny Lazarus,
Conference Administrator, on 0161
236 9321. www.church-poverty.org.uk

- 10 Jerusalem, Take off Your Dress of
Sorrow and Distress**
Advent reflection led by Rosemary Read
Wistaston Hall 89 Broughton Lane,
Wistaston, Crewe. 4.30 - 6.30 pm.

The reflection will be followed by
seasonal refreshments, and it would be
helpful if you could let Joan Sharples know
if you are intending to be present.

Rosemary Read is currently a
catechetical coordinator in a parish in Derby.
In Autumn 2004, she spent three months
in Nablus in the Occupied Territory of the
West Bank as an ecumenical
accompanier.

JANUARY 2007

- 2-19 Set All Free** exhibition at St Lawrence's
Church Ludlow (P.10)
- 14 Peace Sunday** Pax Christi
0208 203 4884 www.paxchristi.org.uk
- 18 -25 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity**
- 22-9 Feb Set All Free** exhibition at
Church Stretton URC (P.10)
- 28 Memorial Lecture**, - Alison Gelder from
Housing Justice, at LACE, Liverpool L17 1AA
2-4 pm
- 28 Homelessness Sunday: No home.
No Justice** 020 7723 7273
www.homelessness-sunday.org
www.justhousing.org.uk

FEBRUARY

- 18 Poverty Action Sunday** 0161 236
9321, www.church-poverty.org.uk
- 19 Feb - 3 March Set All Free** Exhibition at
Shrewsbury Abbey (P.10)
- 26 Feb-11 March Fairtrade** Fortnight
www.fairtrade.org.uk

MARCH

- 2 Women's World Day of Prayer**
- 2 CAFOD Lent Family Fast Day**
- 11 Annual Romero Mass** at St Albert's,
Hollow Croft, Stockbridge Village,
L28 4EA
- 17 MARGJIN Conference on Climate
Change**, focussing on Life style
changes, at The Quaker Meeting House,
22 School Lane, L1 3BT.
- 24 Set All Free** A Service of Penance at
the Anglican Cathedral in Liverpool
11.30 am. (P. 10)

**Shrewsbury
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*Don't forget to send in
reports of events and dates
for the diary*

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