

# *Shrewsbury and Liverpool Justice and Peace Commissions*

Autumn 2009

**You cry out with sorrow**

*God, you made our  
Mother Earth, who cries out with sorrow.  
May the wonder of your creation be revealed to us:  
Water that gives life, not destruction  
Crops sown, not destroyed  
Pure air to breathe, not polluted  
Renew in us a respect for the magic of  
A tiny seed  
A flowing waterfall  
A hovering skylark.  
Restore us to closeness with you.  
Call us to change for you and  
May your spirit cry out within us always.*

Mary Clark from [www.cafod.org.uk/worship](http://www.cafod.org.uk/worship)

**A prayer for Prisons Week November 15 - 21**

*Lord, you offer freedom to all people.  
We pray for those in prison.  
Break the bonds of fear and isolation that exist.  
Support with your love prisoners and their families  
and friends, prison staff and all who care.  
Heal those who have been wounded by the  
activities of others, especially the victims of crime.  
Help us to forgive one another, to act justly,  
love mercy and walk humbly together with Christ in  
His strength and in His Spirit, now and every day.*

*Amen.*

From The Prayer Leaflet [www.prisonweek.org](http://www.prisonweek.org)

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Issue 67



# **ANSWERING GOD'S CALL**

## ***through Justice and Peace activities in the Diocese of Shrewsbury***

*Summary of an audit carried out by the Shrewsbury Diocesan Justice and Peace Commission in 2008*

### **Background**

In 2008 the Diocesan Justice and Peace Commission carried out an audit of parish-based J&P activities so as to inform its new three-year plan. Information was obtained from a questionnaire sent to all parishes, commissioned case studies and comments from Commission members. Together these sources demonstrate the richness and diversity of Diocesan J&P activities together with some areas for development. The full report carries the details of the audit findings, including the full case studies. It can be obtained from the Diocesan Co-ordinator or accessed via the Diocesan J&P website. The main points are summarised below.

### **What was covered in the questionnaire ?**

The questions were designed to cover the following areas:

- What parish activities were considered to be informed by J&P aims
- Whether J&P activities were organised by an identified group
- What links existed between groups in the parish
- What activities were designed to promote community cohesion
- How Diocesan, national and international J&P information was disseminated in the parish

### **Who responded ?**

- About a third of the Diocese's 111 parishes responded to the audit questionnaire.
- From anecdotal evidence, we know that this does not represent the totality of Diocesan J&P activities.
- However, the audit's questionnaire still indicated a high level of J&P activities.

### **Principal findings**

- Across the Diocese as a whole, there is a considerable level of J&P activity, with about two thirds of parishes making returns indicating some level of involvement.
- There appear to be at least 15 organised J&P groups, of which 7 are cross-parish, ecumenically or area based. Most of these are laity led.
- There is no discernible difference in levels of J&P activity shown by parishes with and without organised groups. However, organised groups may engage in more campaigning, awareness raising and educational activities.
- Commission members considered that successful parish activities were driven by Gospel values and especially by how the poor would benefit. The communication of this message to the parish as a whole was all important.

### **What does J&P look like in practice?**

- There is a high level of consensus among parishes with and without organised groups about a 'core' of activities perceived to be J&P related. These are all supported by a national or international organisation. They are: The Saint Vincent de Paul Society CAFOD  
Traidcraft / Fair Trade Prisoners of Conscience campaigns
- Many respondents were not clear about what was meant by 'community cohesion'. Of those who did, some thought that the J & P remit did not include issues of local and systemic poverty, and social and racial dissension, and that poverty was already well addressed by the SVP
- Individual parishes engage in a range of additional activities, often also nationally or internationally organised.
- On - line information and communication is often a feature of these.
- Many parishes also support a project or parish overseas, including fundraising for these.
- Individual parishes also engage in one or more other J&P related activities linked to a national or international organisation. These include a number which are either inter-faith or non-faith in character.
- Activities not originating in an external organisation include:

- \* networking
- \* raising awareness
- \* campaigning
- \* community building
- \* educational and parish development
- \* involvement in parish organised liturgies
- \* dedicated liturgical practices  
(e.g. peace vigils)
- \* the promotion of ecumenical activity
- \* responding to parish needs

### *Answering God's Call continued*

- Some particularly engaged parishes also address issues of 'poverty on our doorstep', usually through projects offering practical help to, for example, the homeless and asylum seekers.
- Although it was thought that fundraising should not be a central feature of J&P activity, it serves a useful purpose in awareness raising.

### **Communication of J&P issues and activities**

- Commission mailings (*MouthPeace* and *Quick News Network*) were overwhelmingly seen as the most important sources of information.
- Parishes without an organised group relied heavily on CAFOD and Traidcraft mailings, perhaps supporting a view of Justice and Peace as relating mainly to developing countries.

### **Moving on**

- J&P issues are well addressed in a number of parishes and the experience of these should inform dissemination to the Diocese as a whole .
- The success of J&P at parish level depends on a the clear communication of the Gospel message and strong leadership
- There is a need to discuss, clarify and extend our understanding of what constitutes an appropriate J&P agenda, particularly in relation to community cohesion, national and local issues of poverty and injustice, the avoidance of duplication with other parish agencies (e.g. the SVP), and J&P's contribution to parish formation and ecumenism.
- Communication of J&P issues and activities within a geographical and socially diverse Diocese needs to be flexible and versatile as does the organisation of activities at parish level.

*Margaret Cook, June 2009*

**Working Party:** Margaret Cook, Joan Sharples, Tony Walsh, Anne Westmacott

The full version of the audit is available on the website [www.jp-shrewsburydiocese.org.uk](http://www.jp-shrewsburydiocese.org.uk)



## **CAFOD *livesimply* Creation Walk**

**Shrewsbury J & P Commission Autumn Meeting**

**Sat. 10th October 2009 10am -1pm**

**All Saint's, Carrington Lane, Ashton-on-Mersey, Sale M33 5WL**

An open invitation from the Shrewsbury Diocese J&P Commission to join us for group reflection and prayer to consider how our way of life and our actions affect ourselves, our global neighbours, and God's creation itself. Take time to hear and reflect on Scripture and Catholic Social Teaching, and to pray together for change so that the earth and all humanity can flourish.

The morning will commence with coffee at 10am followed by the 'walk' which will pause at various points along the way to pray and reflect. This will be followed by a shared lunch to which everyone is warmly invited.

*More information from Anne O'Connor [anneoc980@hotmail.com](mailto:anneoc980@hotmail.com)*

***Shrewsbury Justice & Peace Commission***  
***25th Anniversary Celebration***  
***at Wistaston Hall, Crewe on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2009***

A tree will be planted in the grounds of the Hall to commemorate the occasion.  
This will replace the annual Advent reflection



## ON THE ROAD TOGETHER . A-Mazed by Migration

*Monika and Peter Timkovic and family write:*

In this article my family and I would like to share some experiences of the weekend of National Justice and Peace Conference in Swanwick, Derbyshire in July this year.

First I would like to share my experience of Morning Prayer called Quaker Meeting for Worship. Let me explain what that means: meeting is based on silence – a silence of waiting and listening. There is a silence for quite a while. In this silence we try to be quiet in mind, body and spirit. It can be a time of insight, revelation, healing or calm. For me it was a calm time. It was very deep but very hard. At the beginning I was disturbed by the strangeness of the silence and by my own thoughts. I realized that most of the time I pray using words, thoughts or singing. My prayer has to “move” as my life in my daily routine, my presence in family, work and parish. But there I had an opportunity to stop, to be calm, to put myself in presence of God without words together with other people who all gathered there to pray. I could feel a powerful spirit of love, truth and peace. Being at the presence of our Lord gave me a wonderful start to the day.

At the meeting everyone who came to the conference was invited to respond to the question:

**Migration, Asylum, People on the Move: How can we respond to the challenge of the Gospel?**

We spent time in groups where we had an opportunity to talk about different issues related to the ques-

tion. It was great to be part of different groups and meet people who were professionals in the discussed area; ordinary people like us working in parish Justice and Peace groups; people who came from different countries, with a range of aims and visions and, last but not least, asylum seekers. Talking to asylum seekers was for me and my husband a very powerful experience. Listening to their stories made me stop and think about my life from a different point of view. Sharing meals and sitting next to somebody else was another great opportunity to speak and listen to stories and experiences.

**Kristina 8:** I enjoyed being at the conference. I especially enjoyed Y kids. I liked making hedgehogs out of clay and sticks and also playing the treasure hunt. I made a shoe out of paper. On the bottom of my shoe I stuck a little story about the girl who was from Ukraine and found the asylum in Czech Republic. The shoe I made was a symbol for us to imagine being in shoes of people we read the stories about. We decorated caps and then we wore them outside. I also liked the mass after Y kids, it was very interesting. I met lot of lovely people.  
I REALLY ENJOYED IT!!!!!!

**Laura 7:** I liked being at conference because I liked the kids' activities. The activities were called Y Kids. I enjoyed the treasure hunt and my team won. I also liked making hedgehogs out of clay and sticks. I also made and decorated a little shoe which became a part of a big banner. It was lovely to meet new friends and sing songs together.

## COUNTDOWN TO THE COPENHAGEN CONFERENCE - December 11th -14th 2009

### Sunday September 20<sup>th</sup> ON YER BIKE!



There will be a gathering of bikes in the **Market Square in Shrewsbury between 2.30 and 3.00 in the afternoon**, with the intention of cycling to The Quarry (park) for a picnic. This is the first Shropshire Network

Against Poverty (SNAP) publicity event in the run up to the Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen in December.

Other Shropshire events are being planned for this Autumn in connection with Copenhagen. These include a showing of the film “The Age of Stupid”; a local lobbying of MPs and other events; all leading up to local participation in **The Wave** (see Page 8). SNAP is arranging coaches to go from Shropshire. No details yet on times, costs and so on, but any intending flooders are asked to register their interest with Jo Pattison on 01743 232670 or via [kenandjo@pattisonfamily.co.uk](mailto:kenandjo@pattisonfamily.co.uk)

### Saturday October 31st ECO DAY

**St Mary's Parish Hall Hollins Lane  
Marple Bridge Stockport  
10.30 am—3.30 pm**

Explore CLIMATE CHANGE -  
How it is affecting us - What we  
can do to help ourselves and our  
planet.

Speakers	Handouts
Workshop	Film
Quiz	Carbon Footprint
Presentations	Discussion
Information stalls	Domestic devices

Entrance FREE - donations to the day welcome  
Tea & Coffee served Bring packed lunch  
Organised by Marple Churches Together J & P  
Group  
Contact for information & directions:  
Maureen Matthews 0161 449 8907  
[maureenmatthews@which.net](mailto:maureenmatthews@which.net)



## NOAH'S BARGE

### Liverpool Justice & Peace Commission Community Challenge

*Steve Atherton & Rosemary Turner write:*

We did it! For three weeks from 19<sup>th</sup> June to 10<sup>th</sup> July we sailed a narrow boat a full circuit of the Leeds - Liverpool canal, meeting people along the way and having conversations about climate change, living simply and the environment.

If you put your foot down, you can travel by car from Leeds to Liverpool and back again in 3 hours. Our slow journey gave us a different view of the world. Being on a canal boat and travelling at 3mph doesn't seem slow. The amount of concentration that is needed to navigate the bends in the canal, the locks and the occasional narrow passages is enough to keep the crew fully occupied. It is as if time moves at a different speed.

The impetus for the journey was to find a new and interesting way to promote awareness of climate change but as the journey progressed we found ourselves becoming more and more interested in the livesimply aspect of our journey. We were like a floating microcosm of the world, carrying our supplies of food and water with us and then having to cope with our waste. Our water use became much more careful, our electricity began to seem more precious and our waste ever more problematic.

We also grew in our understanding of Noah and his relevance to our situation today. He was a prophet who didn't say no to his calling; he did what was right even though others mocked him; he saved enough of the planet to give life a fresh chance.

We had three teams: Mark and the Leeds team began the journey at Barnoldswick, Steve and friends brought it to the outskirts of Liverpool and Pippa and Rosemary did the final leg.



We clocked up nearly 30 separate events during the journey. The highlight was the Liverpool weekend (including the excitement of going through the new canal link) when we recycled jokes, had a lecture on the marine biology of the dock system, danced to rhythms from around the world, held our Contacts' Day, and welcomed over 100 people aboard at Salthouse Dock to look at the boat, sign the CAFOD petition and discuss ways to LiveSimply.

During the journey we discovered that living in a limited space required co-operation and tolerance, patience and sense of humour and an ability to anticipate other people's movements in order to make space for them to move around. The boat – or Noah's Ark – became for us a floating world. The relief felt by all when we pumped out the toilet enabled us to reflect on the problems we cause ourselves when we run out of room to dump our waste. Not knowing the amount of water left on board, or fuel, or electrical energy was a recurring concern throughout the trip. We became a floating parable. Indeed, late on in the 3<sup>rd</sup> week we were completely halted for 24 hours by an 'environmental catastrophe' beyond our control further along the canal. Fortunately no-one was hurt and things returned to normal very quickly – not so for many of our sisters and brothers in other parts of the world.

We felt the presence of history. We were in contact with the natural world. We saw kingfishers, herons, ducks, butterflies, fish, ripples on the water, stillness and mist, sun rise, rubbish in the water, trainers, timber, bottles, cans, polystyrene, plastic bags, waterweeds and old clothes that jammed the propeller, midges and flies, bikers, walkers, joggers and commuters, late evening phosphorescence. We experienced living in tune with daylight.

Thank you to everyone who helped to make the journey what it was ... CAFOD, Faiths For Change, J&P Liverpool, Liverpool World Museum, Canal Boat Escapes, Live Simply, the Brothers of Charity, the Eldonian Village, British Waterways, the Mersey Basin Campaign ... and to everyone we met along the way.

Will we do it again? It was certainly worthwhile. Perhaps we will discuss a shorter version that begins in the Archdiocese, is more like a retreat, has prayer time built in and has a less ambitious programme of events that could be publicised more thoroughly. That's a job for the LiveSimply sub group.

### COUNTDOWN TO THE COPENHAGEN

**Wednesday November 11<sup>th</sup> – Duncan Green of Oxfam** returns to Chester to further examine issues of climate change and their effects on developing economies. Organised in association with University of Chester's Department of Geography and Development Studies. Further information from Gill Miller, 01244 512190

Also **THE WAVE** on **Saturday December 5th** see page 8

## **“Tell your friends at home what is really happening here”**

### **An Alternative Pilgrimage to Israel/Palestine.**

*Shelia Cogley writes:*

Last May I had the privilege to be able to join a group of 12 on a trip to Palestine and Israel. We were Catholic, Free Church and Muslim. This ‘Alternative Pilgrimage’ has been organised by Martin Larmour who a couple of years ago spent 3 months working in Palestine as an Ecumenical Accompanier, a peacemaking/ human rights scheme sponsored by the World Council of Churches, he was assisted by Rosemary Read, a former J & P worker and also a former EA. On Sunday 25th May, at dawn, we landed in Tel Aviv and were soon in Jerusalem, staying with the Bridgettine Sisters on the Mount of Olives in sight of the Kedron Valley, Holy Sepulchre and the Dome of the Rock.

Martin’s idea was that we would be an alternative pilgrimage in the sense that we were not going just to see the ancient biblical sites, interesting though they were, no, we were there to learn more about the conflict and to stand in solidarity with oppressed people in what is effectively the occupied country of Palestine. We would do this by meeting with Israeli Jewish people and with Palestinians, both Christian and Muslims. One of our Christian Palestinian guides was thrilled by this....he said this is truly walking in the ‘footsteps of Jesus’.

For most of us this was our first time in an occupied country or any sort of area of conflict and it was an eye-opener. We knew about the Wall and had seen the DVDs but nothing can really prepare you for the personal encounters and experiences we had. Between the 12 of us we could write a book but just to give a flavour I have included a few of the people and places that had the greatest impact.

Bethlehem obviously has deep meaning for Christians. Today it is almost entirely surrounded by the Wall which seems to loom up everywhere you go. To get into the town we came through the checkpoint which the people of Bethlehem have to use to get to Jerusalem. Forget about airport security, this is more like a cattle market. People have to negotiate metal turnstiles, corridors of bars and wall, several security checks and what can only be described as ‘herding pens’. In the morning just to get to work Palestinians have to queue for up to 4 hours with no way of knowing if they will make it through on time, if at all. Many of the men are building workers. Because their hands are so ingrained with dust their palm prints are sometimes not recognised by the scanner and they are sent away to get new papers, thus losing at least a day’s work. There is a ‘humanitarian’ line for elderly and disabled people, women and children but it is often not open.

Once in Bethlehem and escorted by a guide from the Holy Land Trust we visited Aida refugee camp, where the Pope had been the previous week. There

we met Rich, a young man from Hull who had lived in the camp for 5 years. One of the saddest stories we heard was how Rich had taken a group of under 16s (who don’t yet need ID papers) on a trip back to the villages of their grandparents. These now elderly people had been forced out of their homes in 1948 when the State of Israel was created.... the Nakba (catastrophe), many still wear the key to their homes around their necks. Amazingly of the 9 villages they visited 7 are still in existence and unoccupied yet their owners cannot return as they have the ‘wrong papers’. The young people brought their grandparents back water from their old wells and soil from their now overgrown gardens. No wonder the art work on the Wall often shows a key as the symbol of liberation

People have asked ‘Were you scared?’. Well no, Martin had put a lot of work into organising a safe trip which nevertheless took us to places pilgrims don’t usually see. However the place where I felt most conscious of an atmosphere of brooding violence and oppression was Hebron. There we met one family who live in the shadow of an illegal Israeli settlement which has been built in the middle of this Palestinian town. There is a strong presence of Israeli soldiers whose orders are to protect the settlers from the Palestinians and not the other way round.

As we sat in his living room for afternoon mint tea the father of the family told us how they had lost most of their land to the settlement and how periodically settlers will jump down an embankment into their back garden, hurling abuse, and destroying their vegetables and fruit trees. My ‘holiday photos’ include one of this man pointing out the bullet holes in his house. Yet this very dignified man is so determined not to be forced out of his home. His parting words were ....”tell your friends at home what is really happening here.”

We were all very quiet on the way home after that visit and prayed for the family and all in Hebron. But we remembered too the Israeli settlers, mostly recent immigrants from Eastern Europe. They seem so full of hatred and bitterness and are passing this on to their children. But it wasn’t all depressing: we met individuals and groups who are working at the grassroots to build peace and reconciliation and challenge the oppression and occupation.

Our guide from the Holy Land Trust, an organisation dedicated to peaceful resistance to occupation told us of a non-violent demonstration which takes place every Friday against the occupation and the house demolition programme. Numbers had grown from 30 to 300 despite tear gassing and arrests. Jewish people come as well to stand alongside the Palestinians;

*An Alternative Pilgrimage to Israel/Palestine—continued..*

some have been imprisoned and fined. We were told that many young people believe the future lies in a one-state solution where Jew, Christian and Muslim can live together.

We met other Israeli Jewish people who speak out against their Government's policy: for example, B'tselem, a group which records human rights abuses by the Israeli army and challenges them in the courts. And the 'Women in Black,' Israeli Jewish women who stand in silent protest in a prominent part of Jerusalem each Friday.

Other experiences stick in the mind: the call to prayer echoing around Jerusalem as the moon came up, the benefits of an interfaith pilgrimage where we learned about Islam from one of our fellow pilgrims, praying at the Wall ( the separation barrier), the companionship of likeminded travellers and finally hummus and pitta bread for lunch.!!

Here are some web sites for you to have a look at, some also run similar trips to ours or are able to place volunteers.

I would be happy to come to any J & P or other group to tell you more about our trip and the situation in Israel/Palestine.

Please email me on : [smc17@mypostoffice.co.uk](mailto:smc17@mypostoffice.co.uk)

### **Groups working for Peace and Reconciliation in Israel and Palestine.**

**[www.holylandtrust.org](http://www.holylandtrust.org)**

Ecumenical Accompaniment programme in Palestine and Israel (World Council of Churches)

**[www.eappi.org](http://www.eappi.org)**

Lajee Centre, Bethlehem (Aida Refugee Camp)

**[www.lajee.org](http://www.lajee.org)** , **[www.refugeevoice.org](http://www.refugeevoice.org)**

**[www.btselem.org](http://www.btselem.org)**

**[www.jewishvoiceforpeace.org](http://www.jewishvoiceforpeace.org)**

**[www.paxchristi.org.uk](http://www.paxchristi.org.uk)** (lots more contacts here, including alternative tours / pilgrimages)

**[www.zaytoun.org](http://www.zaytoun.org)** ( help with the olive harvest)

**16 September Friends of Sabeel (UK) North West meeting** Court Hey Methodist Church, Liverpool. 2-7  
Contact 0151 522 1080/81

**26 October A talk by an Ecumenical Accompanier from PaxChristi recently returned from Palestine.**

In the Ludlow Conference Centre (formerly Bishop Mascall Centre) Ludlow, at 6.30 for 7pm

Tickets £5 including supper . Arranged by Churches Together Around Ludlow Outreach Group.

Tickets available from the Methodist Church in Broad Street, Ludlow, or contact Anne on 01584 874410

## **RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS**

What do your local supermarket, your gas and electricity supplier, and your bank, have in common? They are all "big business" - companies which control huge amounts of money, have large numbers of employees, and are often involved in global business operations (think of whereabouts in the world your supermarket food purchases come from).

The activities of large companies, whether national or multinational, inevitably involve *moral* considerations, considerations that are of concern to the Church. Think of operations that have impacts on the environment, or on the life of local communities, especially in the global south (mining for example). So issues of justice and of integrity are as much part of business practice as profit-margins or efficiency.

"What does the Lord require of you? To act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God." (*Micah 6.8*)

This is the area in which the *Ecumenical Council for Corporate Responsibility* (ECCR) is active. It describes itself as "a membership organisation working for economic justice, environmental stewardship, and corporate and investor responsibility in companies and the Church".

ECCR both researches, informs and supports its members. It informs through occasional reports on corporations, using its published "Bench Marks" - principles for global corporate responsibility and measurement of business performance. In recent years there have been reports on Shell, BP, Rio

Tinto, GlaxoSmithKline, Marks & Spencer. They are carefully researched and always discussed with the companies involved.

A quarterly Bulletin publishes articles on current concerns. Recent titles include "BHP Billiton yet to respond to CA-FOD's concerns" (June, 2009); "Stark choice facing the Philippines" (March, 2009); "Migrant workers in the economy" (December, 2008).

ECCR is a body in association with Churches Together in Britain and Ireland. It encourages and supports churches and faith communities in their investment policies. Its membership includes National Church denominations, Religious Orders, local churches, organisations such as Traidcraft, Christian Aid, and many individuals. It has a network of contacts in countries as diverse as Nigeria, Madagascar, the Philippines, and Ireland.

A recent promotional leaflet closes with these words: "Multinational companies are among the most powerful organisations on the planet, affecting the lives of millions of people. They make huge profits and have the potential to use their wealth and influence to bring benefits to local communities, yet often the impact of their activities is negative for these communities and for the environment. Persuasion and pressure are needed to encourage companies to act more responsibly."

*Bryan Halson*

[For more information visit [www.eccr.org.uk](http://www.eccr.org.uk) ]





## COUNTDOWN TO THE COPENHAGEN

**Saturday December 5th THE WAVE**

Families, friends, groups and parishes are encouraged to flood the streets of London and send a clear message on Climate Change to our Government as it prepares to attend the Copenhagen Climate Conference.

**11 am Ecumenical service** at Westminster Methodist Central Hall.

**1 pm A fun and peaceful March around the Thames** Sign up now [www.cafod.org.uk/copenhagen](http://www.cafod.org.uk/copenhagen)

**To prepare:** write to your MP - letter suggestions from CAFOD website

More information about coaches etc. [www.stopclimatechaos.org/the-wave](http://www.stopclimatechaos.org/the-wave)

## INTEGRATING LIFE AND FAITH IN ROMANIA

*Joan Sharples (Shrewsbury Diocese J&P Coordinator) travelled to Romania at the end of June to help deliver the Craighead Integrating Life Course.*

How often have I spoken over the years of the importance of being open to seeing life from other perspectives? And here I was in Romania doing just that. I'd been invited to help deliver Module 4 of the Craighead Integrating Life and Faith Course in Bucharest (see MouthPeace summer 2009 for an article on the programme). Trish, Paddy, and Mary had joined Craighead's Alan McKell for the first three modules and I listened avidly as each one told the story of their particular weekend trip.

It's nearly twenty years since the end of the Communist system in Romania. It's been a time of great change. After the fall of Communism two Faithful Companions of Jesus travelled Eastern Europe to see where they might feel called to work. They decided on Romania and currently six sisters live in two communities situated in Bucharest and Gala i, three of the sisters are from Europe and three are young Romanians. Through their work at the Catholic University, the sisters have made many contacts with young Catholics. Typically these young people are completing MA's whilst working in badly-paid jobs living in overcrowded accommodation on insufficient food. The FCJ sisters decided to invite the Craighead Institute to run the Integrating Faith and Life course to help with the formation of these potential leaders in their twenties and thirties. They have received little in the way of faith formation. The church in Romania 'missed out' on Vatican II and is still finding its feet in a country where it was persecuted. The Catholic Church makes up just 5% of Romania's population, with another 5% belonging to protestant traditions whilst 85% are Romanian Orthodox.

I felt disorientated. When I walk from home into town, I don't consciously think of the ages of the buildings I am passing, the position and style of the churches, the socio-cultural-economic context of the people I pass. It is my culture and I know how to read the reference points. In Bucharest, I never knew quite where I was, or what I was seeing. My mind was full of questions. Which buildings were

built in the Communist era? ...pre-Communist era? ... post-Communist? What is home like for the participants on the course? What were our taxi driver's feelings when he was in the square facing the Central Committee Building for what would turn out to be Ceau escu's last speech?

Whilst I was there I added a new name to my personal list of prophets: that of Vladimir Ghika. A Romanian diplomat, born in 1873 into the Romanian Orthodox nobility, after his conversion to Catholicism he became a priest and died in prison after his arrest by the Communist regime in 1954. In 1904 he had set up a hospital run by the Daughters of Charity for cholera victims. At the beginning of the Second World War, he left Paris, where his brother was Romanian ambassador to return to Romania to work with refugees, the sick prisoners and victims of bombings. When imprisoned under the Communists, he gave away half his food to other prisoners. I found his story inspiring - if all over the world there are stories of oppression, there are also stories of courage and hope.

I was to hear yet more stories of hope at the end of the course as the participants shared symbols of its meaning to them. It was clear that they had found it a powerful experience, one that had nourished and encouraged them. Folk who had been silent at the first of the four modules, "Because under Communism, you didn't talk about these things. You never knew who might inform the Securitate" became free to articulate their hope and determination to continue to integrate life and faith, and to work for justice and peace in the land. And for me, being part of a different culture, albeit for such a short time, has expanded my mind and enlarged my heart. My heart has been moved with compassion for countries of Latin America, particularly Peru, for the last twenty years and now Romania also, will have its place there.

*NB: The Craighead ILF Course is run in Liverpool and Shrewsbury Dioceses.*

*November 21-22 New ILF course begins in Liverpool Contact 0151 924 7689*

*Contact Joan about the Shrewsbury course in 2010.*

## OUR MAD MAD WORLD

Producing nuclear power ( and nuclear bombs) is a messy business. It leaves behind hazardous waste. This scrapheap of waste, containing many radioactive elements including depleted uranium (DU), is ever increasing and will be left for future generations to manage. DU is 60% as radioactive as natural uranium and has to be stored under secure conditions— a headache to the nuclear power industry and a good reason why many environmentalists give no credence to nuclear power.

Yet one use has been found for DU. Because it is almost twice as dense as lead it has penetrating properties which make it ideal for penetrating the armour plating of tanks. So in this mad world where toxic waste products of the nuclear industry are carefully stored under very secure conditions, one of these same waste products is used by the munitions industry to produce relatively cheap highly effective radioactive weapons that are randomly released into the environment.

The US began to develop DU weapons in 1959 followed in the early 60s by UK. During the Cold War they were stockpiled as part of our arsenal but in 1991 during Gulf War I they were used against the Iraqis. Since then they have been used in Bosnia, Serbia and Kosovo and again in the Iraq War of 2003. At least 18 countries are thought to have weapon systems containing DU in their arsenals. These include: UK, US, France, Russia, Greece, Turkey, Israel, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Oman, Egypt, Kuwait, India and Pakistan. Some have bought from US while others have developed them independently

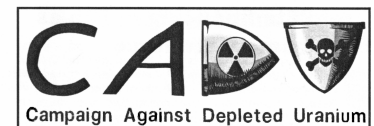
### Harmful effects

When DU munitions strike a hard target they produce a toxic and radioactive dust which burns at extremely high temperatures. The dust can spread 400 metres from the site immediately after impact. Then it can travel many kilometres in wind or air currents to be ingested by both civilians and military. It can also contaminate ground water and therefore drinking supplies.

DU dust includes submicron particles that are readily inhaled and retained by the lungs. From there the particles travel undetected around the body being deposited particularly in the lymph nodes, bones, brain and testes. In laboratory tests DU damages human cells, causing DNA mutations. In areas where DU weapons have been used there are reports of increased rates of cancers and also of birth deformities.

What is missing is a large-scale epidemiological study on the effects of DU on both soldiers and the civilian population. Because such study is difficult to do this allows governments to use scientific uncertainty to claim that DU is safe and concerns about it are misplaced.

### CAMPAIGN AGAINST DEPLETED URANIUM (CADU) 10<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY



In November 1999 CADU was formed in Manchester . From small beginnings, often working over the years to a very tight budget the campaign has gone from strength to strength. More recently The International Coalition to ban Uranium Weapons (ICBUW) has been formed from the same office in Manchester. This now has more than 102 member organisations in 30 countries world wide.

### The Aims

To fight for a global ban on the manufacture, export and use of weapons containing uranium  
To fight for recognition by the Ministry of Defence that these weapons are connected with serious illness  
To put pressure on governments to take responsibility for environmental decontamination in areas where DU has been used.

In 2006 The European Parliament called for the introduction of a total ban on DU classifying it as inhumane.  
In 2007 Belgium became the first country in the world to ban all conventional weapons containing uranium with other countries set to follow this example.  
In United States increasing concern over the DU health effects has caused individual states to implement testing regimes for returning soldiers.

### Ideas for action to celebrate the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in November

1. Log onto [www.cadu.org.uk/action](http://www.cadu.org.uk/action) to sign the global petition
2. Read up more about the issue - both on CADU and ICBUW websites [www.bandedpleteduranium.org](http://www.bandedpleteduranium.org) or from Bridge 5 Mill, 22a Beswick Street Ancoats Manchester M4 7HR Tel 0161 273 8293
3. Challenge the government over their continued use of DU—write directly or via your MP
4. Organise a fund raising/awareness event in support of CADU
5. In UK Barclays, HSBC, Lloyds TSB and Royal Bank of Scotland all fund companies which manufacture DU. If you bank with them close your account and let them know why.

*Frank & Marian Thompson*



## HARVEST FAST DAY OCTOBER 2

Pope Benedict XVI's in his social Encyclical – 'Caritas in Veritate' published in July - said that it is an ethical imperative to 'feed the hungry', yet this harvest time CAFOD is warning that the global financial crisis is pushing already poverty-stricken people over the edge as one billion people will be living with hunger.

Harvest is traditionally a time to celebrate food and the gifts of the land and reminds us of all the good things God provides. However, for many living in some of the poorest parts of the world, there simply is no food. The global financial crisis, massive hikes in food prices and climate change have all intensified the problems for those living in poverty. For them, the effects of the financial crisis are matters of life or death.

Our partners in Nairobi, Kenya, told us the story of Margaret who lives with her seven children in Mathare slum. Two years ago Margaret had a decent job and home. Her family had enough to eat, not a lot, but enough. Then the factory where she worked shut down. The family now sleep side by side in one room and Margaret goes hungry so her children can eat. Her story is repeated time and time again throughout the world. Margaret explains: "In 2007 prices were controlled, we could afford to buy food, it was not this madness of hiking prices everyday. Since 2008 prices have been going up uncontrollably. The maize flour is the worst. It was 50 shillings (43 pence) in 2007. Last year it was 75 shillings (65p) and now it's 95 shillings (82p) for a 2 kilogram packet.

"When you can't provide for your family you become useless. I'll walk any length of time to a cheaper market just to get something for my kids. I may get a small extra job like cooking at the Church or tutoring

kids. When there's no job and no food you'll find me in the Church where I volunteer. It gives me peace and somewhere to go so my kids don't see me sad."

Across its programmes, CAFOD partners are responding to this growing crisis by ensuring that the poorest and the most vulnerable are reached with life-saving food. CAFOD is only able to respond where the greatest needs lie through the generosity of Catholics in parishes and schools throughout England and Wales. Despite the difficulties of supporters' own lives and the demands on their incomes, it is humbling to know people are still willing to give their time and money in this way.



As Harvest approaches, it is hoped that parishes and schools around the Diocese will once again be holding special events

and collections to mark CAFOD's annual Harvest Fast Day on 2<sup>nd</sup> October to help CAFOD continue to meet the growing demands in Africa, Asia and Latin America where those less fortunate than ourselves need our support more than ever. .

Note that CAFOD is also asking rich country leaders to ensure that people like Margaret are given support during a crisis they did nothing to create through our campaigning work.

Further aggravating the plight of many of our partners is that of the significant reduction in the value of sterling; for some recipients of CAFOD grants the reduction can be as much as 30% . One simple way to offset this fall in value of our donations would be for all taxpayers to gift aid their donation this harvest time - in this way, at no additional cost to the donor, CAFOD receives 28pence per pound from the Inland Revenue.

**For further information please contact: Sue or Liz on 01244 677594 or email [shrewsbury@cafod.org.uk](mailto:shrewsbury@cafod.org.uk)**

## ADVENT - A TIME OF PREPARATION

Advent starts in November this year so be prepared! Anne O'Connor has compiled reflection sheets for the 4 weeks of Advent Each one includes a Gospel verse, a prayer, a reflection and some appropriate actions and are suitable for individuals and for groups  
A taster from Week 1 follows.

### **Week 1: Preparing for the Coming of the Lord**

#### GOSPEL

*Stay awake, because you do not know when the master of the house is coming.* Mark 13:33-37

#### REFLECTION

When the Lord comes how will I be judged? – not by how much wealth I have accumulated or how many possessions I have but rather by how well I have loved, especially the love and care I have shown for

my brothers and sisters in need: the poor; the lonely; the widow and the orphan; the marginalized; all those at the very bottom of the pile.

#### ACTION

Go to Church Action on Poverty [www.church-poverty.org.uk](http://www.church-poverty.org.uk) to research their current campaigns.

Download a resource pack from [www.actionweek.org.uk](http://www.actionweek.org.uk) for Poverty and Homelessness Week 30 January to 7 February 2010.

Organise a cake sale or a swap shop to 'recycle' unwanted goods and charge a small fee to raise money for CAP or a local homeless shelter.

If you would like all 4 sheets please contact Anne [anneoc980@hotmail.com](mailto:anneoc980@hotmail.com)



## INTER FAITH WEEK ACROSS ENGLAND 15th—21st November

**Promoting good interfaith relations Highlighting the contribution of faiths to building community  
Increasing understanding between faiths and the wider society**

This is a new initiative this year between the government Department for Communities and Local Government and the Inter Faith Network which has over 160 members from national faith communities, national, regional and local inter faith bodies, and educational and academic groups with an interest in inter faith issues. It hopes to promote greater understanding between people of different faiths in the UK.

### Some Inter Faith Week Ideas

Two local faith schools of different faiths hold an inter faith sports event

A restaurant features for a week special dishes linked to each of the faiths in its area

A vihara or church arranges a special open day event

A local inter faith organisation and local faith groups

hire a coach to do a 'faith trail' visiting five places of worship in their city \*

A student union works with all the student religious groups in its university to put on a forum on 'What our

faiths say about the environment'

A 'dine at mine' event with people of different faiths coming together for a meal

The local paper and radio station host daily slots during the Week for presenters of different faiths to talk about their faith and also what this teaches them about getting on well with people of other faiths

A 'faith leaders' group holds a special Inter Faith Week meeting

More information can be found on

**\* Saturday September 12 South Shropshire Interfaith Forum have arranged a coach tour of 3 Places of Worship in Wolverhampton..** They will be visiting a Hindu Temple, a Sikh Gurdwara and a Muslim Mosque. Lunch will be served at the Sikh Gurdwara, Contact Peter Cope on 01588 673463

**October 18 Telford & Wrekin Interfaith Group Prayers for Peace** Meeting Point House, Telford, 7.30pm. Contact 01952 591508.

**The Christian Muslim Forum has issued a short list of ten ethical guidelines** showing how Christians and Muslims can talk about their faith to each other in a way that is just, truthful and compassionate. It was launched on 24 June at Islamic Relief headquarters in London. The guidelines are:

1. We bear witness to, and proclaim our faith not only through words but through our attitudes, actions and lifestyles.
2. We cannot convert people, only God can do that. In our language and methods we should recognise that people's choice of faith is primarily a matter between themselves and God.
3. Sharing our faith should never be coercive; this is especially important when working with children, young people and vulnerable adults.
4. Everyone should have the choice to accept or reject the message we proclaim and we will accept people's choices without resentment.
5. Whilst we might care for people in need or who are facing personal crises, we should never manipulate these situations in order to gain a convert.

6. An invitation to convert should never be linked with financial, material or other inducements. It should be a decision of the heart and mind alone.
7. We will speak of our faith without demeaning or ridiculing the faiths of others.
8. We will speak clearly and honestly about our faith, even when that is uncomfortable or controversial.
9. We will be honest about our motivations for activities and we will inform people when events will include the sharing of faith.
10. Whilst recognising that either community will naturally rejoice with and support those who have chosen to join them, we will be sensitive to the loss that others may feel.

*From Shropshire Christian Newsletter July 2009*

### **'WHO IS MY NEIGHBOUR? Deus Caritas Est : An Encyclical for Our Times?'**

This recently published book is helpful for those who are reflecting on Pope Benedict XVI's first encyclical 'God is Love' and trying to put it into practice. The book is a compilation of papers given at a conference organised by the Irish Commission for Justice & Social Affairs in Dublin 2008 at which a variety of speakers who attempted to answer the outwardly simple question: 'Who is my neighbour?' Some of the questions that the speakers reflect on are:

How much should the Church be involved in politics?  
In dialogue and working with all who are concerned with the dignity of the human being and with stewardship of creation, do people of faith particularly Christians have something extra to offer? If so, what?

Should we offer this faith dimension and risk offending some we are working with or remain silent to accommodate?

The book edited by Eoin G Cassidy is published by Veritas at £16.95



## DIARY DATES

### SEPTEMBER

**10 Traidcraft Roadshow.** 2 – 6pm at Quaker Meeting House, Frodsham Street Chester. View a display of this autumn's range of goods, chat to the Traidcraft staff from Gateshead, meet others interested in Fairtrade, enjoy a Fairtrade drink ... Tell us if you can come: 0191 497 6421 or 01829 770847

**12 Interfaith group visit to 3 places of worship in Wolverhampton** See Page 11

**13 Racial Justice Sunday** CARJ 020 8802 8080  
[www.carj.co.uk](http://www.carj.co.uk)

**13 Racial Justice Mass with Bishop Brian** followed by light refreshments 2.30 pm St John the Evangelist Bebington Road New Ferry CH62 5BJ

**16 Friends of Sabeel (UK)** North West meeting (Page 7)

**19 NJPN Quarterly Meeting** 10.45am – 4.00pm Evron Centre I Adswood Lane West, Stockport. Speaker Ian Guest on Financial Inclusion Contact Ann Kelly: 02079014864. See [www.justice-and-peace.org.uk](http://www.justice-and-peace.org.uk)

**19 Cross - Cultural Christ** Churches Together in Cheshire Forum - Keynote speaker: Professor Gerald J. Pillay (Liverpool Hope University) Foxhill Conference Centre Tarvin Road, Frodsham, WA6 6XB . 9.30am - 1.00pm £10.00. [www.cheshire-churches-together.org.uk/index.html](http://www.cheshire-churches-together.org.uk/index.html)

**20 Shrewsbury Climate Change – On Yer Bike!**  
See page 4

**21 Global Cease Fire Day** 020 7456 9180  
[www.peaceday.org](http://www.peaceday.org)

**25 Chester Fairtrade Wine Tasting & Quiz Evening** St Columba's Hall, Plas Newton. Contact 01244 317381.

**26 Bridgnorth CAFOD Event** to explore the work of CAFOD. St John the Evangelist WV16 4ER, 10am – 1.30pm

### OCTOBER

**2 CAFOD Harvest Fast Day** See page 10

**10 CAFOD LiveSimply Creation Walk** See page 3

**10 Liverpool J&P Annual Assembly** LACE, 10am – 4 pm Contact 0151 522 1080/81

**12-18 Global Debt Week**  
[www.jubileedebtcampaign.org.uk/debtweek](http://www.jubileedebtcampaign.org.uk/debtweek)

**16-18 Stand Up and Take Action 2009**  
[www.standagainstopoverty.org](http://www.standagainstopoverty.org)

**17 International Day for Eradication of Poverty**  
[www.unmeditation.org/](http://www.unmeditation.org/)

**18 Micah Sunday** Micah Challenge UK  
0207207 2730 [www.micahchallenge.org.uk](http://www.micahchallenge.org.uk)

**18 Telford & Wrekin Interfaith Group Prayers for Peace** See page 11

**18 St Francis Day event.**  
St Anthony of Padua, Mossley Hill, Liverpool

**18-25 One World Week** *Hungry for One World*  
[www.oneworldweek.org](http://www.oneworldweek.org)

**18-25 Week of Prayer for World Peace**  
0208 968 4340

**24 United Nations Day** [www.unmeditation.org/](http://www.unmeditation.org/)

**26 Talk about Palestine in Ludlow** See page 7

**31 Eco Day at Marple Bridge Stockport** See page 3

### NOVEMBER

**7 CARJ Mass at Westminster Cathedral** to conclude 'Changing Face of Britain' initiative. Contact CARJ 020 8802 8080

**8 Remembrance Sunday** Peace Pledge Union  
white poppies 0207 424 9444

**11 Duncan Green talk in Chester** See page 5

**15- 21 Prisons Week** [www.prisonweek.org](http://www.prisonweek.org)  
Prison Advice & Care Trust [www.prisonadvice.org.uk](http://www.prisonadvice.org.uk)

**15—21 Inter faith Week** See page 11

**21-22 Integrating Life and Faith.** New Liverpool course begins. Contact 0151 924 7689

### DECEMBER

**1 World Aids Day** National AIDS Trust  
[www.worldaidsday.org/index.asp](http://www.worldaidsday.org/index.asp)

**10 World Migration Day**

**10 UN Human Rights Day** [www.unmeditation.org/](http://www.unmeditation.org/)

**13 Shrewsbury Commission 25th Anniversary Celebration** at Wistaston Hall. See page 3

**17 Multicultural & Multifaith Celebration.** Hosted by Chester Asian Council, 12.30pm at University of Chester (tbc). Lead guest speaker Yasmin Alibhai Brown. Contact 01244 343570

### Shrewsbury Chair

Tony Walsh  
54 Underwood Drive  
Ellesmere Port  
Ches. CH65 9BL  
tel: 0151 355 6419  
[tonywalsh43@btinternet.com](mailto:tonywalsh43@btinternet.com)

### J&P Coordinator

Joan Sharples  
16 Wellington Rd  
Nantwich,  
Ches CW5 7BH  
tel: 01270 620584  
[joansharples620@btinternet.com](mailto:joansharples620@btinternet.com)

### Liverpool Chair

Rosemary Turner

### 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](mailto:s.atherton@rcaol.co.uk)

### Office Secretary

Maria Hardacre  
tel: 0151 522 1081

### Editor of MouthPeace

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

### Copy date for next issue

**1 November 2009**  
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 by  
Jarvis Print  
Unit 5 Parkway Four  
Longbridge Road  
Trafford Park  
Manchester M17 1SN  
Tel: 0161 872 2228