

**NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2017****REFUGEE ACTION UPDATE****Refugee Action Worker appointed**

A while ago the Diocese recognised that they needed to provide some help to coordinate and advise parishes who want to respond to the needs of refugees coming to live in Yorkshire. That was why the Diocesan Refugee Action Support Group was set up. They have now followed through on this by appointing someone to help with this in a paid role for 3 days per week. The person appointed is Katrina Burton and she has just started in her role in the last week.



Katrina has spent the last 30 years working with disadvantaged groups across West Yorkshire including ex-offenders and young people and has worked with and managed Supported Housing Projects.

She first became involved with refugees when Iraqi refugees began to be sent to Yorkshire:

*"I had already worked for many years with people who had suffered in one way or another. However, nothing prepared me for the stories that the Iraqi refugees began to tell. Their stories of persecution and torture were overwhelming. Yet, at the same time, I was immensely inspired by the resourcefulness and inner strength these people possessed. From that point I resolved that these were the people I wanted to work with".*

Since then, Katrina spent 9 years working with LASSN (Leeds Asylum Seekers Network) managing the Grace Hosting project.

Katrina will be working 3 days per week for the Diocese. She will continue to work 2 days per week managing the WYDAN (West Yorkshire Destitute Asylum Seekers Network) Winter Night Shelter scheme – which was featured in the newsletter a few months ago.

Katrina commented that "it is clear that there is a tremendous amount of compassion among the

Catholic community in Yorkshire and my role is to help shape that into something that makes a real difference to people's lives. Working in partnership with other Christian organisations and local authorities and other groups will be essential to making a success of this both for those who want to help and for those who need help. I'm looking forward to meeting many parishioners over the coming months".

You can contact Katrina by phoning 077 3999 75020 or emailing her at

[katrina.burton@catholic-care.org.uk](mailto:katrina.burton@catholic-care.org.uk)

**Refugee Action Meeting in North Leeds Deanery**

Last time we reported on the well-attended Refugee Information evening at Hinsley Hall. A follow up, and more localised, meeting was held last week in St John Mary Vianney parish in North Leeds.

Fr John Carter commented *"With Canon Wiley's support we arranged this meeting as a follow up to the diocesan meeting. It took place in St. John Vianney parish but we opened it to the deanery. Conscious that many parishioners and parish organisations in the deanery are already involved in helping refugees and asylum seekers, one of the main purposes of the meeting was to share information about what's already being done. The other main purpose was to explore ways in which everyone can help - from financial support for appropriate organisations, to simply being better informed -and therefore better able to counter some of the misinformation and negative stereotyping."*

As at the Hinsley Hall meeting, Carol Hill of Catholic Care and John Battle, Chair of the Justice & Peace Commission, presented some of the basic information. John Battle looked at some statistics relating to the North Leeds Deanery and the

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numbers involved. He suggested that this was an opportunity for renewal within our parishes. John Taylor gave a brief overview of the work which was being done for Asylum Seekers by St. Monica's Housing. He noted that Pope Francis was asking all parishes to respond in a practical way. Further accommodation is being sought in the Harehills area. Eventually parishioners and parish groups will be asked to assist with its day to-day-running and providing friendship support. Matt Campbell, from the SVP, said that they had expertise in counselling and providing furniture and clothes, especially through St. Vincent's Centre. Fifty families had been supported already. Carol gave examples of how Catholic Care was contributing to spreading the message of welcome. One primary school for example, had produced 'Hampers of Hope' for refugee families.

The meeting heard from a parishioner who came to Britain from Iraq 10 years ago. She spoke about her experience of settling in Leeds, and of the importance of the parish community in St. Paul's Alwoodley, (now part of St. John Vianney parish) in making her and her family feel welcome. People also shared some of the initiatives undertaken by local churches. These included:

- People from St John Vianney parish participating in ecumenical efforts to provide night shelters for 2 weeks for homeless asylum seekers, as part of the WYDAN (West Yorkshire Destitute Asylum Seeker Network). Shelter is provided on a rotation basis throughout

the coldest months. Matthew Sanderson spoke about the project that runs in St. Matthew's Anglican Church in Chapel Allerton and appealed for additional volunteers.

- The long standing relationship between the Holy Rosary Church in Mother of Unfailing Help parish and PAFRAS (Positive Action for Refugees and Asylum Seekers) which has included collecting food to be distributed to refugees and asylum seekers and support for the drop in centre.

Vince Borg from St. John Vianney parish commented: *"as a Church and as individuals we need to work closely with other agencies (such as the Local Authority) and ecumenical networking is essential (e.g. through Churches Together)."*

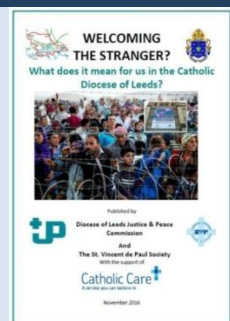
During discussions towards the end of the evening, Michael Emly from neighbouring Our Lady of Kirstall parish made a key point: *"The commitment of those already involved and the good will of so many others are a clear testimony to the generosity and desire to help that is present throughout the Catholic community. However within the city of Leeds, many specialist organisations exist, the area covered is quite large and local communities differ, so it is not always clear how we can best help."*

The recent appointment of Katrina Burton, will hopefully address this gap.

**WELCOMING THE STRANGER**

This booklet spells out the various terms used and the kinds of assistance that can be provided and summarises the Church's call to action at all levels - as well as dispelling some of the myths surrounding this whole area.

Copies can be obtained from the Justice & Peace Office (email [jandp@dioceseofleeds.org.uk](mailto:jandp@dioceseofleeds.org.uk)). They could be used just to provide further information to people within a parish or as a workbook for a parish refugee support group.



**NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2017****ICON OF PEACE “TOUR DATES” IN LEEDS DIOCESE**

As reported in the December Newsletter, the Icon of Peace is a large sacred painting that was made in the Monastery of St John in the Desert, near Jerusalem, and was gifted to Pax Christi International in 1999.

The icon depicts Christ as the source of reconciliation, liberation and peace. It is an icon symbolising in itself the living connection between Eastern and Western traditions in expressing the peace of Christ.

It will be going to the following communities:

- 27 Feb – 05 Mar** St Joseph’s Pontefract
- 06 Mar – 12 Mar** Wakefield Cathedral
- 13 Mar – 19 Mar** St Joseph’s Pudsey
- 20 Mar – 26 Mar** Skipton, Holy Trinity Church
- 27 Mar – 02 Apr** Leeds, Holy Rosary Church
- 03 Apr – 09 Apr** Garforth, St Benedict’s parish
- 10 Apr – 16 Apr** Cottingley, Our Lady & St Joseph parish

**DON'T HALT DEVELOPMENT AID** By John Battle

There are still 350 million children in our world in extreme poverty at risk from death by hunger, lack of clean fresh water, healthcare and with little chance of education, or productive supporting work.

Despite decades of international efforts and resolutions at the United Nations and some real reductions in the scale of poverty world-wide, premature death faces 350 million children today. Certainly the Millennium Development Goals programmes helped but it was really the national strategies of China and India that has made an impact on world poverty figures in the last twenty years. Nevertheless, as a feature in this month's New Internationalist magazine spells out, the difference in the African village of Sabtenga in Burkino Faso between 1985 and today is remarkable. Water then carried long distances is now accessible from wells and pumps and is clean; the quality of housing has been improved. In 1985 there was no health centre. By 1995 there was a fully functioning one and a maternity unit was added in 2005. There was no school in Sabtenga in 1985. By 1995 a primary school had been built and three more classrooms were added in 2005 with money from debt relief under the HIPC programme. In other words, real development progress is being made through governments, NGO charities and international agencies and often good cooperation between them.

In the 1970's and 1980's as poverty disasters of famine reached the TV screens, pressure built for rich governments to help and commit less than 1% (i.e. 0.7%) of GNP (the nation's estimated wealth) on aid and development. That target was only reached by the British government after cross-party agreement in 2004. Now there is a disturbing political and media campaign to step back from that commitment. The latest headlines call for the £12.4 billion aid budget to be scrapped and spent on the NHS. There is an inevitable turning inwards as stress on the NHS affects the sick and elderly in our communities. But in context of the huge government budgets, the aid spending alone would not cover the cuts to local authorities in social care provision that are a major source of the crisis in healthcare.

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It seems that playing those in need off against each other is the easy opt out instead of addressing the full budget structures and maldistribution of resources. Cutting off support for the poorest in the world itself will in no way resolve the UK crisis in health funding and despite all the proper challenges to the misuse of aid and corruption, there is a real danger of cutting off the vital development aid that enables communities to lift themselves out of poverty and not rely on food aid. Government developmental assistance is often distributed through national charities such as CAFOD with a strong presence on the ground in poor countries and with great track records in real development, working with poor people themselves. Shutting down government support and leaving development to philanthropy will be a short term fix for a tiny bit of the health challenges but may condemn those 350 million and future generations to premature deaths.

There is now a real danger of rejecting the principles of genuine 'development' in favour of a short sighted and short term appeal for emergency aid only approaches. Since the founder of Facebook has declared he is investing \$3 billion to "cure, prevent, or manage all diseases by 2100", there is evidently no need for Government and international programmes. A feature in November's medical journal, The Lancet, questioned the accountability of these philanthropic actions. Funds are channelled through private companies not bound by charity law rules and can be invested in for profit ventures with no obligation to publicly disclose where the money goes. Private individuals begin to determine health priorities and strategies to suit their own business interests Moreover donors can use philanthropy to avoid paying taxes on their business profits thus decreasing the public resources available for services available for all.

Yes there is a need to insist that aid and development funds are accountably and well spent and invested but there is no evidence in history to suggest that privatising aid and development will tackle the roots of poverty and bring about sustainable long term development and human prosperity. In the short term we need to challenge the anti-aid campaign and do it publicly through brief letters to the media, joining in radio phone in programmes and using social media to the full - and CAFOD needs our backing as never before.

**REFLECTION - THE ILLUSION OF SUPERIORITY**

"The illusion of being superior engenders the need to prove it; and so oppression is born. A bishop in Africa told me that, even though there were few Christians in the area, he had built his cathedral bigger than the local mosque. All this to prove that Christianity was a better, more powerful religion than Islam.

certitudes. Prejudice grows on such walls.

How did we, the human race, get to this position where we judge it natural not just to band ourselves into groups, but to set ourselves group against group, neighbour against neighbour, in order to establish some ephemeral sense of superiority? One of the fundamental issues for people to examine is how to break down these walls that separate us one from another; how to open up one to another; how to create trust and places of dialogue."

So we build walls around our group and cultivate our

**Jean Vanier, *Becoming Human*. (Paulist Press, 2008)**

ROMERO CENTENARY EVENT IN SHEFFIELD

## The Secret of Romero: Passion for God and Compassion for the Poor

Thursday March 23

St Marie's Cathedral, Norfolk Row, Sheffield

This talk is sponsored by the Archbishop Romero Trust and is being promoted by Hallam Justice & Peace Commission and CAFOD.

Last year our Commission hosted a presentation of the Romero Lecture at the Cathedral's Wheeler Hall. This year it is the turn of Hallam Diocese to host the event.

The talk will be given by **Sr. Martha Zechmeister CJ.**

Sr. Martha was born in 1956 in Austria and studied theology in Vienna. She was Professor of Fundamental Theology at the University of Passau 1999-2008.

Since 2008 she has been Professor of Systematic Theology at the UCA (Central American University) in San Salvador and since 2012 director of the Master's programme there. She is responsible for 'Dean Brackley House' a residence for scholarship students from extremely poor areas. Her main academic interests are: Political Theology, Latin American liberation theology and Ignatian spirituality.



### A NEW FACE AROUND THE LEEDS DIOCESE CAFOD VOLUNTEER CENTRE



This is Nikki Evans who is the CAFOD Programme Officer for Bolivia, supporting the ten partner organisations that CAFOD works with in that country.

Nikki is part of the CAFOD Head Office team in London. However, she currently lives in Saltaire. So, CAFOD have agreed that she can work 3 days a week in London and spend two days a week based at the Leeds Diocese CAFOD Volunteer Centre.

Nikki writes about herself:-

*I have been living in Yorkshire for nearly a year now having moved back here from Bolivia where I spent nearly four years based in La Paz.*

*I first travelled and studied in Latin America in the late 90s as part of my degree and fell in love with the beautiful countryside and the people with their generous passion for music and laughter. After several years working for Christian Aid in London I moved to Colombia to work as an international observer protecting human rights defenders. I lived in a hot oil town between jungle*



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*basins and mountains, an area that has suffered decades of horrendous violence due to the Colombian civil war. Working with human rights defenders was a privilege, ordinary people doing extraordinary things to protect their communities and families at huge personal risk.*

*After studying for an MA at the Peace Studies Centre in Bradford University, I headed to the altitude of the Andes mountains and began working for CAFOD in Bolivia. Bolivia is one of the poorest countries in Latin America and at present we support ten local partner organisations who work with the most marginalised people. My work has always been bittersweet. On the one hand, there is the bleak harshness of the poverty that the communities face and on the other hand there is strength, ingenuity, solidarity and love. I am so lucky to witness those qualities shine in the communities and partner organisations that we work with and also here at home whenever I meet CAFOD's amazing volunteers and supporters.*

CAFOD are thinking of organising a 'Latin American Lunch' to enable both CAFOD volunteers and Justice & Peace supporters to meet up with Nikki. Anyone who has spent any time in Central or Latin America would be especially welcome to add their perspective on life there – please email them at [leeds@cafod.org.uk](mailto:leeds@cafod.org.uk) if you might be interested in coming along to such an event..

### CAFOD LENT FAST DAY is Friday 10 March 2017

This year CAFOD will be featuring the work of partner organisations from Zambia.

As usual, CAFOD have a whole range of resources to help parishes mark this day and help them in their fundraising efforts. See the website section dedicated to this:-

<http://cafod.org.uk/Fundraise/Parish-fundraising/Fast-Day>

Or email Bronagh or Joanne on [leeds@cafod.org.uk](mailto:leeds@cafod.org.uk)

### WE NEED YOUR MONEY!

***Could you consider giving a regular amount to the Commission through a Standing Order?*** Or send us a cheque? Arrange a fundraising event?

If only 20 people agreed to give us £10 per month using a Standing Order, it would cover almost a



quarter of our ongoing expenses.

We know that people in the Leeds Diocese are generous for all sorts of charitable giving. The role of the Commission is different to direct giving – but it is equally important. By raising awareness about Catholic Social

Thought we seek to influence the ways in which parishioners interact with Governments and how they and other organisations work with the disadvantaged in our society and throughout the world – and how they look after God's creation. Please help us. Compassion is vital, but without attacking unjust structures how will lasting change come about?

Please see the donate section of our website or get in touch if you can help us.

<http://www.leedsjp.org.uk/donate/>

## TOWARDS A LISTENING CHURCH



Listen! This is the keyword - do not forget!



**SATURDAY 18 FEBRUARY**

**10:45-16:00**

OXFORD PLACE CENTRE

LEEDS LS1 3AU



Listening is something that we are all taught is important: listening to our parents, listening to God, listening to one another.

***But who is it that we listen to? How do we decide who we listen to and who we decide to ignore?***

In particular, do we hear the 'voice of the poor'?

This day will provide opportunities to explore this theme.

Although it is about listening, there won't be any long presentations. Instead there will be two sets of workshops. In the morning you will have the opportunity to explore some skills for listening. In the afternoon you will have the opportunity to try them out by listening to some people who do not have their voices heard so often.

This is also an Open Networking Day of the **National Justice and Peace Network**. This means that there will be people there from around the country who are involved in Social Justice activity through other Diocesan Justice & Peace organisations and other national organisations.

Take advantage of this opportunity to dive under the surface of some of the key social justice issues of today as well the opportunity to meet others who are both concerned and involved in action for Social Justice.

*"I ask you to learn to listen, and to dedicate more time to it. In the ability to listen, there are the roots of peace." Pope Francis*

*We will be helped in our explorations by **Tom Chigbo** of Leeds Citizens and by **Jon Dorsett** who*










*Has done much work with the Leeds Poverty Truth Commission and other organisations*

Go to the Home page of the J&P website to book a place  
The conference is free to attend, although a collection will be taken to help defray expenses.  
Please bring some food to share with others at lunchtime. Tea, coffee and water provided



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EVENTS

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| <br><b>Jan 18 – Jan 25</b>    | <p><b>WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY</b></p> <p>The theme for the 2017 week is “Crossing Barriers” and the resource materials have been produced by German Christians. It is a rich theme for exploring issues of Social Justice and, as usual, the resource materials are filled with ideas to include in liturgies. Explore them by going to the Churches Together in Britain and Ireland website:-<br/> <a href="https://ctbi.org.uk/resources-for-week-of-prayer-for-christian-unity-2017/">https://ctbi.org.uk/resources-for-week-of-prayer-for-christian-unity-2017/</a></p>   |
| <br><b>Sun22 Jan</b>          | <p><b>HOMELESS SUNDAY</b></p> <p>This day provides a way for churches to demonstrate solidarity with people experiencing homelessness in the UK, to celebrate what our communities are already doing to help alleviate such problems and to challenge the conditions that give rise to high levels of homelessness. More info from the Housing Justice Website <a href="http://www.housingjustice.org.uk/">http://www.housingjustice.org.uk/</a></p>   |
| <br><b>Wed 15 Feb</b>         | <p><b>HOW SHOULD WE MARK THE BALFOUR DECLARATION CENTENARY?</b></p> <p><i>Mill Hill Unitarian Chapel, City Square, Leeds 6pm – 8pm</i></p> <p>Robert Cohen presents a dissenting Jewish perspective in this event organised by Sabeel Yorkshire. This event is open to all and free to attend (Donations welcome). Refreshments are served from 6pm and the presentation will start at 6:30pm</p>  |
| <br><b>Sat 18 Feb</b>        | <p><b>“TOWARDS A LISTENING CHURCH” - JUSTICE &amp; PEACE COMMISSION CONFERENCE, AGM AND NJPN OPEN NETWORKING DAY</b></p> <p><i>10:45 – 16:00 Oxford Place Centre, Leeds LS1 3AU</i></p> <p>Who do we listen to? How can we better listen to the voice of the poor? Come along for a day of interactive workshops, short inputs and a new piece of drama especially commissioned for this event.</p> <p>This day is also an Open Networking Day of the National Justice and Peace Network and so provides the opportunity to meet and hear people active in social justice from across England and Wales.</p> <p>Please book via the Justice &amp; Peace website. .</p> |
| <br><b>Feb 20 – Apr 16</b>  | <p><b>PAX CHRISTI ICON OF PEACE DIOCESAN ‘TOUR’</b></p> <p>See the block article in body of newsletter to find out the locations where it will be used.</p>  |
| <br><b>Fri 03 Mar</b>       | <p><b>WOMENS’ WORLD DAY OF PRAYER</b></p> <p>In 2017 the theme is ‘Justice’ and the suggested service has been prepared by Christian women from the Philippines. More information from:-<br/> <a href="http://www.wwdp.org.uk/day-of-prayer/?tab=#tabs-5">http://www.wwdp.org.uk/day-of-prayer/?tab=#tabs-5</a></p>  |
| <br><b>Fri 10 Mar</b>       | <p><b>CAFOD LENT FAST DAY</b></p> <p>Make a note of the date now so you can properly plan how you will mark it in your parish. This year CAFOD will be focussing on their work in Zambia. If you would like some assistance from the CAFOD office in planning something then please get in touch with them by emailing <a href="mailto:leeds@cafod.org.uk">leeds@cafod.org.uk</a></p>  |
| <br><b>Thu 23 Mar</b>       | <p><b>ROMERO CENTENARY EVENT: “THE SECRET OF ROMERO: PASSION FOR GOD AND COMPASSION FOR THE POOR”</b></p> <p><i>7pm – 9pm St Marie’s Cathedral, Norfolk Walk, Sheffield</i></p> <p>See the detailed description in the newsletter</p>  |
|  Find us on <b>Facebook</b> | <p>‘Like’ our page on Facebook and ‘follow’ us to help keep up to date with the key campaigns that the Commission is supporting.</p>   |

Please forward this E-News to anyone else who you think might be interested. Even better, get them to send us their email address so we can add them to our contact database.