

The Chapel at Wood Hall Carmelite Monastery

The Carmelite sisters at Wood Hall near Wetherby have invited us to spend a day with them. It will start with Mass at 10:30. There will be some input from the sisters themselves about how their spirituality helps them relate to issues of Social Justice. There will also be time available for discussion, quiet reflection and, weather permitting, time to walk around the surroundings of the convent in the beautiful grounds of Wood Hall.

2017 DAY OF REFLECTION:

A CARMELITE PERSPECTIVE ON JUSTICE & PEACE

Saturday 16 September 2017

**Starts with Mass at 10:30 am
Finishes with Vespers at 4:30pm**

Everyone coming is asked to bring some food for a shared meal at lunch time.

Numbers are very limited for this event. If you would like to attend this day then please email the office

jandp@dioceseofleeds.org.uk and tell us:

- who wants to come
- if you need a lift to the monastery or if you can offer a lift to anyone else

NONVIOLENCE WORKS!

**Tuesday Oct 3rd in the early evening-
details tbc**

Two outstanding contributors to thinking about nonviolence will be speaking at **Leeds Beckett University**.



They are on a short UK tour organised by Pax Christi UK



Marie Dennis, author and co-president of Pax Christi International who has played a leading role in the joint Vatican /Pax Christi International initiative on Nonviolence and Just Peace.



Maria Stephan, senior policy fellow at the United States Institute of Peace (USIP), where she focuses on the dynamics of civil resistance and its relevance for violent conflict prevention and democratic development

SAVE THE DATE!

REFLECTIONS AFTER 3 MONTHS IN THE JOB *by Lucy Irven*

*Lucy was appointed as the part-time **Diocesan Refugee Support Group Facilitator** about 3 months ago. Here she offers her reflections and observations about her experiences during that time*



Perhaps what has struck me most in my first weeks in this role is the number of refugees and asylum seekers we are trying to help and the level of hardship that so many are suffering. Whether it be a result of the poor accommodation that is provided, the inadequate funds they receive or the time it takes for decisions to be made by the Home Office, there is no doubt that they are experiencing great difficulties. Fortunately, I have also encountered some remarkable men and women, parishes and communities that are coming forward to support them. They are actively offering the Welcome, Sanctuary, Hospitality and Celebration that we identified as the key elements to our Diocesan response to the refugee crisis.

As Pope Francis reminded us in 2013, refugees and asylum seekers *'are human people..., who are appealing for solidarity and assistance, who need urgent action but also and above all understanding and kindness.'* Refugees want to be with their families and they want to be safe. They miss home and their culture, their old way of life. They also want to contribute their skills, use their qualifications, and share their experiences and knowledge. 'Have I made the right decision?' I heard one Syrian asylum seeker say. His life has been on hold for two years since arriving, waiting for a decision, far from his family and tired with the discomfort of his daily life. Fortunately, he has recently been given refugee status so now he can work and take steps to improve his situation. From what I have learnt in the last couple of months, it is important that we make ourselves available to support people such as this, to accompany them through the asylum

process and assist them in finding the sanctuary that they so urgently seek.

When I visited **St Augustine's Centre, in Halifax**, I saw such a response in action. Every available space was being used; there were people sitting at tables having interviews, some working in pairs on the computers, others preparing a meal in the kitchen or sitting outside in groups. But, amid the bustle, everyone was calm and I was greeted with smiles, some offered me a drink and others to show me round. I sat in on an English lesson which was attended by men and women of several nationalities and a baby sleeping in a pushchair by the door. There was a gentle murmur as some helped others with translations but everyone got involved and I was really impressed by the respectful atmosphere. As I have travelled around the Diocese, I have heard of and seen for myself this example of welcome and sanctuary repeated at the **St Vincent's Centre in Leeds**, **DASH** in Huddersfield, **Wakefield City of Sanctuary** and **CHAS@St Vincent's in Bradford**.

It is encouraging to see such an effective response already in place and the SVP, Catholic Care, St Monica's Housing and the Leeds Justice and Peace Commission, all members of the Diocesan Refugee Support Group, are an essential part of this. If you would like to get involved whether as an individual or parish group then do please get in touch as there are opportunities in many areas of support including volunteering, campaigning, fundraising and prayer.

Lucy welcomes contacts with parishes. If you have information to share or are planning something then you can contact her at the following email address:

<mailto:lriven@catholic-care.org.uk>

CAN WE REDUCE THE CARBON FOOTPRINT OF THE LEEDS DIOCESE?

Some months ago we reported how our Diocese has moved to a 'green energy' supplier, along with a number of other dioceses. In the Commission we wondered if there were other actions that the Diocese could take to reduce its carbon footprint to both demonstrate its witness to the truths expressed in *Laudato Si* and to take practical action in support of its aims.

However, given that the Diocesan finances are in a poor state and that we are not technical experts in renewable technologies, it looked like there might be a few problems in trying to do anything about this!



To overcome these difficulties we developed a project proposal suitable for a university student. We framed it in terms of evaluating the *feasibility* of reducing the carbon footprint – so that the costs and monetary benefits will be included in the work.

Originally, the idea had been to see if there were church roofs that would be suitable for solar panels. However, by using the idea of carbon reduction there is a wider range of technologies to consider-and some will be more cost-effective than others in different church circumstances.

The university accepted our Project Brief and we currently have a student from the MSc course in Sustainability and Consulting at the University of Leeds carrying out the work. His name is

Mohamed Juma and he comes from Bahrain. He came to the UK five years ago to study for an undergraduate degree in Civil Engineering at Portsmouth University. He came to Leeds because he is interested in working in the field of renewable energy. His MSc course seemed a good starting point for this goal, and our project was a good match with his interests.

He will be completing the first draft of his report by the end of August.



Mohamed outside St Benedict's in Garforth

Members of the Commission have taken Mohamed to a sample of churches in the Diocese so that he can see their size, general construction and understand their current energy usage. We have tried to ensure that he experiences the full range of the types of churches that exist –big churches such as St. Augustine's in the Harehills area of Leeds, old churches like St Stephen's in Skipton through to newer or re-furbished churches such as St Patrick's in Leeds and The Church of the Assumption in the West Park area of Leeds. We are grateful for the help of parish priests and parish administrators for taking the time to show Mohamed around and make available copies of utility bills. We will report back once the work has completed.

Have you signed the Laudato Si Pledge?? See <http://livelaudatosi.org/>



OUR FINANCES ARE IMPROVING BUT WE NEED MORE PEOPLE TO SUPPORT US FINANCIALLY. CAN YOU HELP?

Could you consider giving a regular amount to the Commission through a Standing Order?



Since we started our financial appeal we are getting an extra £100 per month in regular contributions. This is great – it means we are getting close to being able to fund half of our ongoing activities. We need another 50 people giving £5 a month to the Commission to fully fund them. Can you help?

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

We have no direct financial support from the Diocese and are slowly running out of funds.

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. Please help us. Compassion is vital, but without understanding unjust structures, and taking action against them, how will lasting change come about?

We are fund-raising by applying for grants but we also need to demonstrate that we have a supporter base who can provide financial support, especially for our ongoing activities.

THE FAIRTRADE MARK NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT

Attention all Fairtrade parishes in the Leeds Diocese!

Fairtrade labelling standards are designed to tackle poverty and empower small farmers, addressing the injustices of conventional trade which discriminates against the very poorest. It is essentially about addressing some of the worst injustices of the world trade in agricultural commodities. This differentiates it from the other major certification scheme, 'Rainforest Certified' products – which focuses on how farms and plantations in developing countries are managed, looking at the economic, social, and environmental aspects of sustainability.

Sainsbury's recently started actions to 'pilot' a scheme to sell so-called 'fairly-traded' tea rather than tea bearing the Fairtrade Foundation logo. 'So what?' I hear you ask. In the first place, from a consumer perspective it

is confusing. Fairtrade is a certification scheme. Many consumers purchase goods because they carry that certification – in the same way that many people buy food with 'organic' certification. The last thing consumers want is a set of competing and differing standards for goods that purport to be fairly traded.



More importantly from a justice perspective, the Sainsbury pilot scheme takes away one of the key elements of the Fairtrade Foundation scheme: in addition to a guaranteed price, farmers groups are



paid a 'Fairtrade premium'. It is up to local communities to decide priorities on how this premium should be used. In the Sainsbury's pilot there will be a bonus but communities have been instructed to apply to a board in London to find out if they can have it. In an [open letter to Sainsbury's](#), farmers said: *'We told Sainsbury's loud and clear: your model will bring about disempowerment. We are extremely concerned about the power and control that Sainsbury's seeks to exert over us.'*

There have already been stories in the press about Tesco following in Sainsbury's footsteps. This could be very serious for the future of Fairtrade.

But what can we do about it?

The main thing all of us can do is to express our support for the Fairtrade Foundation. The boxes on the right give two ideas for very simple actions that you could take personally or, preferably, with your church or group community.

Sign the Change.org petition:

Oxfam, CAFOD, Christian Aid, Traidcraft Exchange, Tearfund, Trade Justice Movement and Commitment for Life all support a petition to Mike Coupe, Group chief Executive of Sainsbury's. This is currently available for signing via change.org: <https://www.change.org/p/sainsbury-s-don-t-ditch-fairtrade>

Write to your local MP

There is an Early Day motion in Parliament. These rarely get debated. However, so far it has been signed by just over 60 MP's – and so far only two have constituencies in the Leeds Diocese (Angela Smith of Colne Valley and Alex Sobel of Leeds North West). Why not drop a line to your local MP asking them to sign up to this and show their support for the Fairtrade Foundation.

REFLECTION

ALIENATION

Today, our challenge is not so much atheism as the need to respond adequately to many people's thirst for God, lest they try to satisfy it with alienating solutions or with a disembodied Jesus who demands nothing of us with regard to others. Unless these people find in the Church a spirituality which can offer healing and liberation, and fill them with life and peace, while at the same time summoning them to fraternal communion and missionary fruitfulness, they will end up by being taken in by solutions which neither make life truly human nor give glory to God.

#89

Sometimes we prove hard of heart and mind; we are forgetful, distracted and carried away by the limitless possibilities for consumption and distraction offered by contemporary society. This leads to a kind of alienation at every level.

#196.

Taken from
Evangelii Gaudium (The Joy of the Gospel), Pope Francis, 2013:

LEST WE FORGET By Joe Burns

With the demise of the Soviet bloc in the late 80's the fear of a nuclear holocaust receded for a few years only to be replaced by a fear that a terrorist group of some sort would get its hands on such a weapon. More recently, with the likes of the expansionist Vladimir Putin, the belligerent North Koreans and the erratic President Trump, I think people are getting a bit more edgy.

This year the dropping of the first atomic bomb, on Hiroshima, falls on a Sunday (Aug 6) – closely followed by the anniversary of the nuclear bombing of Nagasaki on Aug 9. We could, and should, at least remember these horrific events in our liturgies on that Sunday.



In the first four months following the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima somewhere between 90,000 – 146,000 people were killed. Inevitably, most of the casualties were civilians. Even if you accept that there can be a 'just war' under certain circumstances, these circumstances cannot be applied to nuclear weapons or nuclear war, since these weapons are incapable of distinguishing between combatants and non-combatants, or even between belligerent countries and neutral countries. They just kill everything within a certain radius and farther away people may survive the initial blast only to die at a later point from radiation sickness. As we know from the Japanese experience, many people survived for a number of years but then succumbed to cancers brought on by their radiation exposure.

In a message to the UN about nuclear weapons Pope Francis said in March of this year that *'the strategy of nuclear deterrence is not an effective response to today's threats to peace and security: terrorism, cybersecurity, environmental problems and poverty.*

"Peace must be built on justice, on integral human development, on respect for fundamental human rights, on the protection of creation, on the participation of all in public life, on trust between peoples, on the support of peaceful institutions, on access to education and health, on dialogue and solidarity. The world needs to adopt forward-looking strategies to promote the goal of peace and stability and to avoid short-sighted approaches to the problems surrounding national and international security,"

He went on to say that the complete elimination of nuclear weapons is "a moral and humanitarian imperative" that should prompt people to reflect on "an ethics of peace and multilateral and cooperative security that goes beyond the fear and isolationism that prevail in many debates today."

The Good News is that just in the last couple of weeks 122 countries endorsed a UN treaty banning nuclear weapons. The Bad News is that the UK did not even send a representative to the discussions about this treaty. Overall, I think it is good news – a step on the road to completely banning nuclear weapons – as we did with chemical weapons 45 years ago. To paraphrase Alan Bennett: Let's keep on keeping on about it.

Hiroshima & Nagasaki became the symbol of boundless destructive power...

It remains a permanent warning for humanity to reject war forever and to ban nuclear weapons and every weapon of mass destruction.

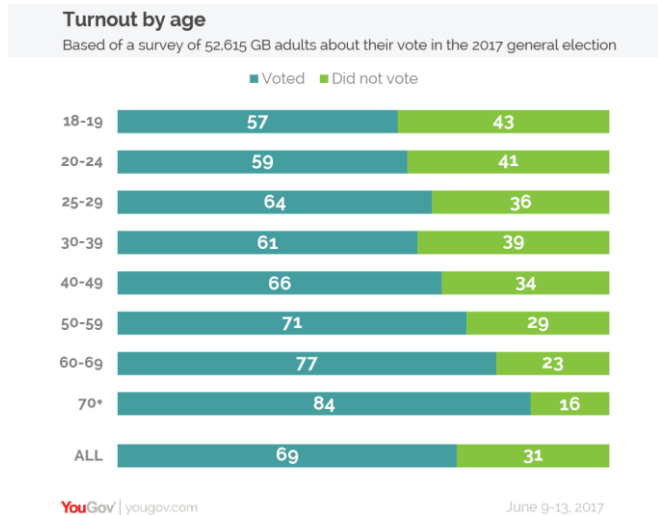
Pope Francis, August 2015



YOUNG PEOPLE by John Battle

This General Election was very different not least because of the number of young people (under 25 years) who got involved.

I remember at the launch of our candidate’s local campaign, at which more young people than usually turned up in support, declaring that this 2017 election could become the young people’s election not least because they were heavily criticized (unfairly in fact) as not turning out in the Referendum on Europe. This time a greater turnout by young people could actually change the direction of national policy and nor was their interest only in student tuition fees. It is true that now nearly 50% of young people go forward into higher education but that is not limiting their political vision and aspirations. They have ideas about the kind of societies and wider world we should be shaping to live in. They tend to be more internationalist with a strong sense of human solidarity and at the same time are compassionate to those around them.



a courtesy of yougov. Proportion of under 25's voting in the 2015 election was 43%

This time they certainly made a contribution to campaigning, door knocking and using social media and their turnout in some seats made a crucial difference. Young people were actually campaigning for a different and more hopeful future. They have much to contribute to future social economic and cultural policy of our society

and our role in the wider world. The real impact of this election was the higher turnout by the electorate as a whole and the destruction of the tradition of the ‘safe parliamentary seat’. What emerged from this election, as sitting MPs worked to defend their majorities, is that a higher turnout and an active local campaign can change things.

What promises were made during the election on tuition fees are now history, though in the present political context it is not insignificant that student debts are about to be magnified by an increase in debt interest rates by the company managing the student debts by some 6.2% in the autumn. In other words the burden of debt is about to get much worse and that will impact on the ability of a student to get a mortgage or borrow money when they start work after studies.











At recent graduation ceremonies at Leeds Trinity University both students and their families were concerned about the worrying wider world into which the new graduates would now step. Nor, it must be remembered, do all young people go into higher and further education. More than half do not go to get a degree and face a changing world of work of zero hour contracts, part time and temporary work often in the expanding service sector.

Interestingly a recent survey by a Christian youth organisation suggests that there are far more practicing young Christians than previously thought, with one young person in five declaring to be active followers of Jesus. Many stated that visiting Churches was an important factor. Interest in both large music events and quiet Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament came top of their religious likes. For too long both politics and the Church have bemoaned the lack of engagement by young people, perhaps the tide is now positively turning.



NEWSLETTER JULY 2017

EVENTS

 Sat 05 Aug	<p>‘MORE IN COMMON’: BRADFORD HOPE NOT HATE EVENT <i>Centenary Square, Bradford, 12:00 – 15:00</i></p> <p>The organisers describe this as an ‘afternoon of celebration, togetherness and Bradfordness’ – though we’re sure you will be welcome if you come from farther afield. It includes a ‘Food of the World’ celebration, stalls, international music and dance and activities for children. An event for the whole family.</p>
 Sun 06 Aug – Wed 09 Aug	<p>HIROSHIMA AND NAGASAKI DAY</p> <p>This year Hiroshima Day (06 Aug) falls on a Sunday. Could you get something suitable included in the prayers of intercession of that day? – As usual, Pax Christi have some suggestions for what can be done : http://paxchristi.org.uk/resources/prayer-and-seasonal/</p>
 Fri 01 Sep – Wed 04 Oct	<p>CREATION DAY AND CREATION TIME</p> <p>Originally set up in 1989 by the Orthodox church, Pope Francis joined in in 2015 and the day was extended into a season ending on the feast of St Francis on Oct 04. A real opportunity to reflect on God’s creation and how we care for it and to include such sentiments in our liturgies. For ideas about what to do see http://seasonofcreation.org/</p>
 Sat 16 Sep	<p>DAY OF REFLECTION: A CARMELITE PERSPECTIVE ON JUSTICE AND PEACE <i>Wood Hall Carmelite Monastery, Linton, 10:30 - 17:00</i></p> <p><i>See front page article for details and how to book a place – booking essential</i></p>
 Sat 23 Sep	<p>CARITAS LEEDS LAUNCH EVENT <i>Notre Dame Sixth Form College, St Mark’s Avenue, LeedsLS2 9BL 13:00 – 17:00</i></p> <p>The formal launch of Caritas Leeds with an introduction from Bishop Marcus and addresses by Dr Philip McCarthy, CEO of the Catholic Social Action Network. There will be also be workshops and opportunities for networking.</p>
 Tue 03 Oct	<p>NONVIOLENCE WORKS! <i>Leeds Beckett University – Timing to be confirmed but likely to be 6pm ish</i></p> <p>An opportunity to hear Marie Dennis, Co-President of Pax Christi International and Maria Stephan, Senior Fellow from the US Institute of peace, talk about creative peacemaking for today’s world. See front page article advertising this event</p>
 22 Oct – 29 Oct	<p>ONE WORLD WEEK</p> <p>The theme for 2017 is “Good Neighbours – my world depends on us”. More information and ideas for action and prayer from http://www.oneworldweek.org/v2/</p>
 Fri 03 Nov – Sat 04 Nov	<p>RESURRECTION OF HOPE: DIGGING DEEP FOR A JUST PEACE IN PALESTINE AND ISRAEL</p> <p>To mark the year of the 3 big anniversaries: 100 years since the Balfour Declaration, 50 years Occupation of Palestinian Territories, 10 years Blockade of Gaza</p> <p>Hexham Kairos and Peace and Justice in the Holy Land in partnership with Minsteracres Retreat Centre have organised this event on Nov 3rd/4th to coincide with the anniversary of the Balfour Declaration and the arrival of the Walk for Justice in Jerusalem.</p>
 Sun 19 Nov	<p>FIRST WORLD DAY OF THE POOR</p> <p>A newly instituted day by Pope Francis. He says “I invite the whole Church, and men and women of good will everywhere, to turn their gaze on this day to all those who stretch out their hands and plead for our help and solidarity.” How will you celebrate this day in your community?</p>
 Find us on Facebook	<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.