

NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2017**THE SEASON OF CREATION**

The Season of Creation runs from September 01 through to October 04 (the feast of St Francis of Assisi). It is when Pope Francis and Christians around the globe will pray for the care of creation. Last year over 300 Season of Creation events were held around the globe, many of them ecumenical in a beautiful display of Christians coming together in prayer for creation.



There is a global online prayer service which you can join on Sep. 19th – see the website details below to find out how to join this. But,

THE LAUDATO SI PLEDGE

Organised and promoted by the Global Catholic Climate Movement, the pledge which, has been endorsed by the Pope, invites individuals, families, parishes, and organizations to pray for and with creation, live simply, and advocate for our common home.

The aim is to get a million Catholics and church communities to sign this pledge by 2020. The Pope's endorsement adds to the momentum of recent Catholic climate action: Pope Francis requested that Angela Merkel uplift the Paris climate accord during the G20 summit, several Catholic organizations recently divested from fossil fuels, GCCM joined other Christian groups calling on governments to take strong action before the G7 last month and the Movement's Executive Director joined other scientific, political and faith leaders in publishing a letter in Nature Magazine, pushing the G20 to recognize the urgency of the

what could you do in your parish to celebrate this season?

If you are not sure then there is plenty of help at hand. A website has been specifically set up to help liturgy groups with lots of ideas that can be adapted to particular church community circumstances. There are ideas for ecumenical services, as well as ideas specifically for Catholic situations. Go to:

<http://seasonofcreation.org/>

This is a global initiative that is part of the Global Catholic Climate Movement and which is fully supported by CAFOD in the UK (Dan Hale, Head of Campaigns at CAFOD is a member of the GCCM Steering Committee). When you go to their website one of the first things that hits you is a map showing where in the world events have already been planned. There are a lot – but not so many in the UK.

If a special event is too much effort then think about Sunday liturgies and how some of the ideas can be incorporated into these. We can all do something.



climate crisis.

See the livelaudatosi.org website for more details about how to promote this in your church community.

THE UK – A LEADER IN DEVELOPMENT AID? By Joe Burns

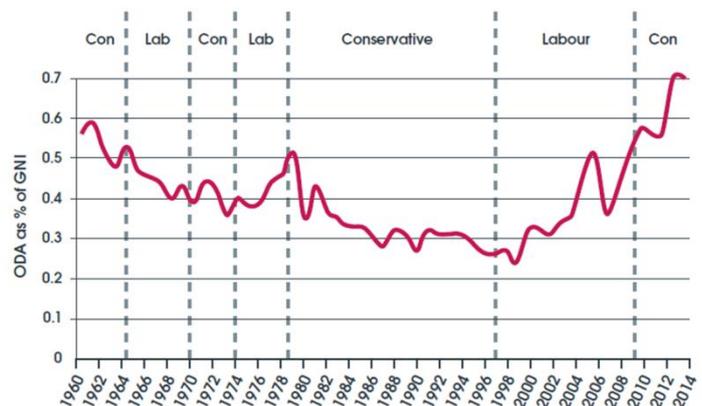
During 2009-10 I was a VSO (Voluntary Service Overseas) volunteer in Sri Lanka, working with a small NGO (the Business for Peace Alliance – or BPA for short). It is a network organisation of regional Chambers of Commerce. The civil war there had recently reached its bloody climax and the island was now 'at peace'. The BPA was a contributor to a USAID programme focussed on economic development in the east of the country, which had been badly affected by the conflict and still had a military governor in place at the time. The main part of their programme was concerned with moving small businesses (i.e. most business in Sri Lanka) 'up the value chain'. So, for example, instead of producing milk and trying to sell that to local populations, farmers were being encouraged to collaborate on buying (with USAID help) equipment that would enable them to make yoghurt or other milk-based products that would have a much higher value and could be marketed well beyond the local area; moving them 'up the value chain' to use the economic jargon.

The BPA contribution to this programme was to put on a series of activities designed to bring local communities together. In the rural parts of Sri Lanka villages are often largely Sinhalese, Tamil or Muslim. Consequently, there was not a lot of mixing of different ethnicities and there was certainly a lot of suspicion of 'other' communities as a result of the war. The 3 field workers for the BPA assigned to this programme, as well as presenting conflict reduction sessions for farmers, helped to shape elements of the programme. To continue the example above, they encouraged a Muslim village and a Sinhalese village to cooperate on building a small milk processing plant. There were not enough cows to justify one village undertaking such a project but if the two villages worked together then it would be justifiable for USAID to contribute

significantly to the capital outlay and other costs. The BPA operated on the basis that conflict and suspicion between people was bad for business – as well as being bad for everyone else. By encouraging different villages to cooperate in this way, not only could they develop economically, but they would also get to know one another better and, in the long run, this would lead to reduced tensions between the two villages.

About 3 months after 'victory' in the war had been declared by the Government, USAID decided its priorities had changed (the country was now 'at peace') and the BPA was dropped from the programme. This was 12 months into what was supposed to be a 5 year programme. Apart from the difficulties this caused the BPA it also made me re-think several aspects of development aid.

In 2017 the UK reached the target of giving 0.7 of its Gross National Product as Development Aid. In 2015 this was enshrined in law. This makes the UK the second largest contributor in the world to Development aid (in the amount of money provided).



UK aid over time - courtesy of Global Justice Now

Whilst this is fantastic, the focus on how big the aid budget is has prevented a robust debate over

- *how* this money should be spent,
- *what* it should be spent on, and
- *why*.

These were the sorts of things that my experiences in Sri Lanka made me re-think.

NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2017

In July I was able to accompany CAFOD supporters from St Benedict's parish when they attended a meeting with the Secretary of State for International Development, Priti Patel. The meeting was in Rothwell and was introduced by the local MP (Alex Shelbrooke) saying, that as he received so much correspondence about aid and development, he had asked Priti Patel to come to a meeting. *(So all those letters to MP's really are read – keep on doing them!).*

Both Priti Patel and Alex Shelbrooke emphasised the role of UK trade and more involvement from private enterprises in UK aid programmes. Private enterprise is more effective at creating growth in economies, which then leads to raising the incomes of everyone. Their line, essentially, was one of 'trickle down' economics; you might get some very rich people by doing development in this way but that's OK because everyone's income is lifted. This is much better than having Government intervention which is hugely wasteful and inefficient.

I think their approach is wrong on two fronts. Firstly, the trickle-down theory is largely discredited. As Pope Francis put it in 2015:

The promise was that, when the glass was full, it would overflow, benefitting the poor. But what happens instead is that, when the glass is full, it magically gets bigger – and nothing comes out for the poor.

This is seen in our own country in the growth in the divide between the rich and the poor – where those with the least money have no job security and have witnessed significant cutbacks in welfare benefits of various sorts. Secondly, the reality of using private enterprise in delivering aid programmes is that much less money goes to developing countries and that, whilst individuals may have altruistic

motivations, the companies running these programmes are doing so for profit. In the Sri Lankan example, the programme was run by a US company called AECOM. The total budget for the programme was \$18million. However, the amount actually budgeted for spend in Sri Lanka was \$5million. The rest was spent on using consultants from the USA and elsewhere to be flown in and write reports telling the Sri Lankans how they should do things.

So, the **amount** of development aid, whilst it is important, does not tell the whole story – for this you have to consider **how** you go about distributing and using that aid. That is where organisations like CAFOD have got it right. They work with local partners and commit to those partnerships for the longer term – building relationships with communities that recognise their dignity as humans and respect their local knowledge of what will work best for them.

For a more detailed analysis of what is wrong with the current UK Government priorities for aid and how they go about delivering it I recommend taking a look at a recent Global Justice Now report that was published in July.



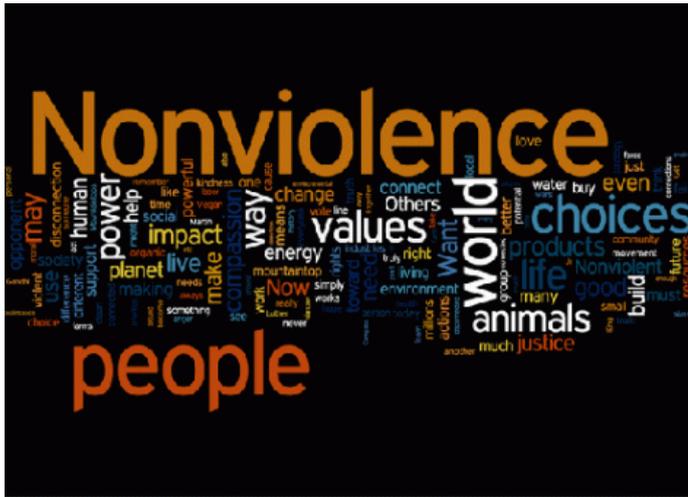
As is usual, they provide lots of examples and evidence to back up the changes that they propose in the way aid is delivered by the UK.

This analysis is available for free download from their website <http://www.globaljustice.org.uk/>

CHARLOTTESVILLE: A CLEAR AND URGENT INVITATION

BY Marie Dennis, Co-President of Pax Christi International

Despite decades of faith-based activism, I remember very few occasions when the invitation has been so clear and urgent. As their town became a lightning rod for white supremacists, Charlottesville faith communities issued a call for clergy and religious leaders from other parts of the country to come to Charlottesville to participate in carefully orchestrated nonviolent resistance to the public demonstration of racist violence planned by extremist groups for August 12th.



I was able to get to Charlottesville for the interreligious service at St. Paul's Memorial Church on Friday evening. The standing-room-only gathering was solemn and prayerful. Traci Blackmon, Cornell West, Lisa Sharon Harper and other leaders from many different communities and traditions spoke a powerful message in word and music – that fierce, risky love is stronger than hate, a message repeatedly affirmed by all of us present. “Congregate Charlottesville” organized a response to expected violence that was intentionally nonviolent and very articulate in addressing the roots of racism and white supremacy.

As a Catholic, however, I was very disappointed that no Catholic clergy or leadership person participated in the service itself. Were Catholic religious leaders invited and did they refuse to participate – or are we so invisible in the struggle against racism and hatred that no one in Charlottesville knew a Catholic leader to invite?

During the Convocation of Catholic Leaders in early July, I was on panels in two different breakout sessions focused on violence and racism. A repeated plea from African American deacons who were also on the panels was for the institutional Catholic Church to be more visible in response to the violence of racism. They were particularly focused on bishops being “in the streets,” but how do we as the Church/people of God become more visible and engaged in a consistent way? Pax Christi USA has been working for over 20 years to become an anti-racist organization. Lots of important effort has been dedicated to recognizing our own participation in the mortal sin of racism and to rooting out our ways of living and organizing that perpetuate racism. But I am convinced that is not enough. Racism is systemic in U.S. society – woven into the fabric of the structures that shape our ways of life.

Some of us have been deeply involved in the Catholic Nonviolence Initiative for the past few years. From our effort to engage the institutional Catholic Church worldwide in teaching and developing our understanding of active nonviolence it is very clear that one major form of violence we are trying to counter is the institutionalized violence of racism. But what does that mean? How do we live that commitment?

Strategic nonviolence has to be contextual. Racism is the context here. I believe those of us who live white privilege have to be attentive to our own racism but we also have to be more visible in the streets and more engaged in dismantling racist structures in our society. Our statements of shock and solidarity

NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2017

are important but insufficient. Holding a candle in front of the White House is a good step but not the only important step. If we take Catholic social teaching seriously we have to figure out why there was no visible Catholic presence in Charlottesville and do something about it!

This blog post was first published on 17th August in "Peace Stories" - a Project of Pax Christi International. Come and hear Marie Dennis in person:



"In order to seek solutions to the unique and terrible 'world war in instalments' ... humanity needs to refurbish all the best available tools to help the men and women of today fulfill their aspirations for justice and peace... revitalising the tools of nonviolence and of active nonviolence in particular."

Message from Pope Francis to the Rome gathering on Nonviolence and Just Peace, April 2016

NONVIOLENCE WORKS!**Tuesday Oct 3rd****17:30 – 19:30****Leeds Beckett University****Portland Terrace, Leeds LS1 3HB**

Marie Dennis is the author or co-author of seven books and serves on the steering committee of the Catholic Peacebuilding Network. She is a contributing editor to *Sojourners* magazine and recently completed her service on the national board of JustFaith Ministries. Marie is currently working with Orbis Publishers, editing a book on the Nonviolence and Just Peace conference in Rome in 2016.



Maria Stephan is a 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. Previously, she was lead foreign affairs officer in the US State Department's Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations, where she worked on both policy and operations. Her last assignment entailed engaging the Syrian opposition in Turkey. Earlier, she was detailed to the US Embassy in Kabul, Afghanistan, to focus on subnational governance and civil-military planning.

Please register via Eventbrite – see the link on the J&P website event page for this event

NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2017**LAUNCH OF LEEDS DIOCESAN CARITAS ORGANISATION. By Rev Dr Joe Cortis**

In September the Leeds Diocese is launching a Caritas Organisation. Caritas Leeds is an umbrella organisation for all charities, agencies, projects, services and groups (defined as having at least a simple structure and organisation) that are involved in social action or social care in the Diocese of Leeds, whose work is inspired by the Gospel and which operate in accordance with Catholic doctrine and social teaching.

The Vision for Caritas Leeds, driven by the ethos of the Year of Mercy, is to create a forum, where they can meet regularly and network in order to:

- Assist the Bishop in exercising 'his proper pastoral solicitude for the service of charity in the particular Church entrusted to him as its Pastor, guide and the one primarily responsible for that service' (Intima Ecclesiae natura, Art. 4 §1);
- Assist the Bishop in encouraging and supporting 'the initiatives and works of service to neighbour', and encouraging 'in the faithful the spirit of practical charity as an expression of the Christian life and sharing in the mission of the Church' (Intima Ecclesiae natura, Art. 4 §2);
- Provide a strong and coherent voice, at the service of the Bishop, on important social issues and policies for the Diocese of Leeds;
- Share and celebrate ideas and projects;
- Encourage the development of, and to support, good care practice;
- Arrange joint training where this is appropriate/requested;
- Develop on-going formation for members in Catholic social teaching;
- Reflect on the Catholic foundations of the work the members undertake;
- Identify areas of need within the Diocese of Leeds and to discuss how best to work to satisfy those needs;
- Encourage and promote social action and whenever possible work collaboratively;
- Encourage the use of the spiritual, human and material resources of the parish, deanery and diocese in the service of the poor.

**CARITAS LEEDS LAUNCH EVENT
SATURDAY 23rd SEPTEMBER 2017****13:00 – 17:00,****Notre dame 6th Form College, St Mark's Avenue, Leeds LS2 9BL****ALL ARE WELCOME**

After an introduction by Bishop Marcus there will be an address by Dr Philip McCarthy, CEO of the Catholic Social Action Network (CSAN). There will also be the opportunity to engage in workshops and to meet and network with people from across the Diocese.

Please register via Eventbrite: <https://tinyurl.com/leedscaritaslaunch>

(This is a free event)

NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2017

MILLION MINUTES CELEBRATING YOUNG PEOPLE AWARDS.

In 2016 nearly 250 young people were nominated for these awards which celebrate the remarkable work done by many young people in putting Catholic Social Teaching into action.



NOMINATIONS FOR 2017 ARE OPEN NOW See: <http://millionminutes.org/awards/>

The main nomination categories are:

The Jimmy Mizen Award: Promoting solidarity and Peace.

The Cardinal Hume Award: Living out the option for the poor.

The Joseph Cardijn Award: Protecting the dignity of workers.

The Dorothy Day Award: Fostering community and participation.

The Barbara Ward Award: Caring for the environment.

The St Josephine Bakhita Award: Celebrating human dignity.

Young nominees should be aged between 11 and 25.

Last year there was **NO ONE** nominated from any **Catholic School, college or university in Yorkshire.** **Who could you nominate? Let's have lots of nominations from Yorkshire this year.**

EVENTS

 Fri 01 Sep – Wed 04 Oct	<p>CREATION DAY AND CREATION TIME 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>J&P COMMISSION DAY OF REFLECTION WITH THE CARMELITES OF WOOD HALL This event is now fully booked. If you are interested in going then your name can be added to a waitlist. Just email jandp@dioceseofleeds.org.uk to let us know.</p>
 Sun 17 – Sun 24 Sep	<p>WORLD WEEK OF PRAYER FOR PEACE IN PALESTINE & ISRAEL 2017 This is a time when people of all faiths are encouraged to make a common witness through services, educational events and acts that support peace and justice for Israelis and Palestinians. See www.paxchristi.org.uk for some resources you could use in your parish.</p>
 Sun 17 Sep	<p>ACN GARDEN PARTY TO SUPPORT EMERGENCY AID IN SYRIA & IRAQ <i>Gresgarth Hall Gardens, Caton, Lancaster LA2 9NB</i> If you fancy a day out beyond the boundaries of Yorkshire then this might be of interest. See our website Events page for more details</p>
 Wed 20 Sep	<p>UPDATE ON THE STOP ARMING ISRAEL CAMPAIGN <i>Mill Hill Chapel, City Square, Leeds LS1 18:00 – 20:00</i> This is the next meeting of Yorkshire Friends of Sabeel. Their speaker is Hilary Smith who is involved in the 'Stop Arming Israel' campaign. ALL Welcome</p>



NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2017

 Sat 23 Sep	<p>CARITAS LEEDS LAUNCH EVENT <i>Notre Dame Sixth Form College, St Mark's Avenue, Leeds LS2 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. Please register for this free event by using Eventbrite: https://tinyurl.com/leedscaritaslaunch</p>
 Mon 02 Oct	<p>INTERNATIONAL DAY OF NONVIOLENCE <i>Instituted by the UN in 2007</i></p> <p>Worthy of a mention in Sunday liturgies the day before – and why not really do something by coming along to the event below on the day after.</p>
 Tue 03 Oct	<p>NONVIOLENCE WORKS! <i>Leeds Beckett University Portland Crescent Leeds LS1 3HB 17:30 – 19:30</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. They are on a short UK tour organised by Pax Christi UK and this is their only appearance in the North this side of the Pennines. See our website for the link to register (no charge) to attend this event.</p>
 Sat 21 Oct	<p>BRITAIN AND PALESTINE 1917 – 2017 ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF BROKEN PROMISES <i>Quaker Meeting House, School Lane, Liverpool L1 3BT 10:00 – 16:15</i></p> <p>If you want to understand some of the history of conflict in Israel and Palestine – and the key role that Britain has played in exacerbating it – then this conference will be well worth a day out in Liverpool. Use the title above to search for the conference on Eventbrite. It is free to attend and has been organised by Liverpool Friends of Palestine.</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</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100 years since the Balfour Declaration • 50 years Occupation of Palestinian Territories • 10 years Blockade of Gaza <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”. See the URC website for more details and to download a booking form. http://urc-northernsynod.org/event/resurrection-of-hope-in-palestine-and-israel/</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.