

NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2018

CREATING A BUZZ IN LEEDS by Michael Emly

What will help the “average parishioner” engage with the Church’s social teaching? What will build unity in a parish formed by the merger of 3 formerly independent church communities? How can we make Pope Francis’ teaching in ‘*Laudato Si*’ better known? These were three of the aspirations that led the parish of Our Lady of Kirkstall in northwest Leeds to decide to work towards certification by CAFOD as a “Live Simply” parish.



CAFOD’s website (<https://cafod.org.uk/Campaign/How-to-campaign/Livesimply-award>) sets out very clearly what is involved in the Live Simply award. A parish (or school) commits to living SIMPLY, SUSTAINABLY with creation, and IN SOLIDARITY with people in poverty. At the beginning of the process, an action plan is drawn up of how the parish will put these principles into practice. The plan should include not only activities already in place but also new developments or projects around each of these themes. Once the parish feels that it has made sufficient progress and can demonstrate this fact, then it invites CAFOD to visit and hopefully validate the award.

In Our Lady of Kirkstall, the parish CAFOD Group began the process in Summer 2016 by discussing the Live Simply scheme with our parish priest, Fr. Pat Smythe, and then taking a paper to our Parish Council. Everybody could see the opportunities for parish renewal and growth and a decision was taken to embark on the Live Simply journey. In March 2017, members of the parish council spoke at all 6 Masses in the parish and a questionnaire was handed out to everyone at Mass in order to establish where members of the parish already stood on a number of matters, including recycling, involvement in “green” issues and how they travelled to Mass. Two open meetings in the early summer provided an opportunity for anybody who wished to feed into the process of drawing up an action plan, and the parish formally registered with CAFOD in September 2017.

Our Lady of Kirkstall could already demonstrate its

substantial commitment to the theme of *living in solidarity*. As well as supporting CAFOD and the SVP, our parish community provides the base for 2 registered charities, one engaged in healthcare in South India (the Sylvia Wright Trust) and one providing wide-ranging support for development in East Timor (the Peter Trust). However, many in the parish had been very moved by the plight of refugees from Syria and we decided that we wanted to build an ongoing commitment to welcoming and supporting refugees. Building on our current practice of organising collections for various charities active locally, we hope also to provide encouragement and opportunities for people to engage at a more personal level.



For the theme of *living simply*, we decided to produce a special monthly bulletin which would promote three “practical challenges” for that month and give a couple of short quotations from *Laudato Si*. This bulletin also provides an opportunity to communicate the wider vision and involve parishioners in the various projects.

It is however on the theme of *living sustainably* that our plan is starting to become really exciting and showing potential for bringing the parish together in all sorts of new ways. Our plan always envisaged developing the use of the land around our 3 churches in order to bring people closer to creation. As we started to draw up firm plans, we discovered that Leeds is one of 8 cities involved in a national project called *Urban Buzz* which aims to increase the number of urban habitats for pollinating insects (<https://www.buglife.org.uk/urban-buzz>). Such insects are essential to the life-cycle of many crops and garden plants, but the countryside no longer offers such a hospitable environment because of agricultural

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monocultures and the use of pesticides. In contrast, urban parks and gardens already provide many plants rich in pollen. Urban Buzz works with schools and community groups to develop these and other spaces with this in mind. Planting native plant species such as primroses, bluebells, ox-eye daisies and campions is particularly encouraged.



What this means in practice can be illustrated through the plans for just one of our churches, which has a plot approx. 20m x 5m down one side of the land between the church and the road. Currently, this is under grass and one end is shaded by a number of established deciduous trees. We would like to make this a more attractive feature for the community while providing a better habitat for insects. And for the changes to be sustainable, the maintenance requirements need to be low. After discussion with the project officer from Urban Buzz, our provisional plan includes:

- Planting bulbs (snowdrops, crocus and English bluebells) under the trees.
- Clearing an area of grass in the more open part to sow a small wild flower meadow.
- Stopping mowing close to the boundary wall and allowing ferns, etc. to grow to provide cover for insects. Perhaps add some hellebores.
- Putting up “bug hotels” to provide shelter for invertebrates.
- Building compost bins to allow garden waste to be recycled.

An appeal for volunteers identified several individuals who would be interested in helping with this project. Discussions with the parish uniformed organisations (scouts, guides and their younger equivalents) are also proving fruitful and we plan to identify specific projects or activities which each group can undertake as part of their work for their badges. And our two parish primary schools are both keen to become involved.

The “gardening project” is already demonstrating its potential for bringing together parishioners, schools and uniformed organisations with a common vision.



Hopefully, it will increase our awareness of the beauty and complexity of God’s creation and of our own responsibility to support and maintain the natural world. Pope Francis writes: “Our insistence that each human being is an image of God should not make us overlook the fact that each creature has its own purpose. None is superfluous.” (Laudato Si’, 84) Similarly, the 3 strands of the wider *Live Simply* programme are making us more aware of the interconnectedness of Catholic social teaching and helping us to understand what a gift we have received in the teaching of the current pope. “Everything is connected. Concern for the environment needs to be joined to a sincere love for our fellow human beings and an unwavering commitment to resolving the problems of society.” (Laudato Si’, 91)

For Our Lady of Kirkstall, this is still an early stage on our journey. Whether we will realise all our ambitions remains to be seen. But we hope and pray that the Holy Spirit will inspire and teach us along the way.

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT LIVE SIMPLY

If you want to find out more about becoming a ‘Live Simply’ community then see the [CAFOD pages](#) about it or get in touch with us at the office and we will help in any way we can.

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FAMILY POVERTY – WHAT CAN WE DO?

As Catholics, we promote the importance of family life. Today, poverty is one of the key threats to families. How can this situation exist in 21st Century Britain?

FROM AWARENESS TO ACTION – An Interactive workshop

Saturday 10 February 2018 10:30 – 15:30

Kala Sangam Centre, Forster Square, Bradford

“Today we cannot be satisfied with being aware of the problems faced by many of our brothers and sisters...because poverty has a face! It has the face of a child; it has the face of a family...”



Family Poverty: From Awareness to Action



This lively event will mainly involve working in small groups and listening to short presentations and video clips examining and discussing questions like:

- What is poverty? Why are so many families falling below the poverty line?
- What can we, as Christians, do about it? - and does it need to be more than prayer and 'charity'?

Come along and engage with us in our exploration of these issues. **FREE** to attend but **registration is essential**.

There is a separate programme for young people aged 7-12 and a limited crèche for young ones.

Refreshments are provided but, if possible, please bring along some (finger) food that can be shared at lunchtime.

Follow the link on our website home page for more information and to register

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UK FAMILY POVERTY – END HUNGER UK CAMPAIGN

Since the campaign '*End Hunger UK*' was launched 15 months ago, a main focus has been ending holiday hunger. It's easy to think of this as a new problem, or a new cause, but it's nothing of the sort. The law introducing school meals to Britain was passed in 1907. However, the new law allowed schools to provide food, but did not force them to do so. That legal obligation did not come until 1944. What's more, officials and campaigners noted another issue: children needed good food every day, not only on school days, and it was unclear where the law began and ended.

In London, at Christmas 1908, the issue came to a head. The West Ham authorities unilaterally decided to keep feeding children during the Christmas holidays. Others continued to press the matter. In 1914, Bradford MP Fred Jowett cited experiments that had been carried out in his constituency, which clearly showed that children who were receiving school meals gained weight in term time, but then lost weight during the holidays when the meals were not available.

Fast forward 30 years, and there was more confusion. In 1944, Parliament finally made the provision of meals on school days a requirement, not an option, but there was again no clarity around what councils could or must do at weekends or in the holidays.

And so, the issue of children going hungry during school holidays reared its head in Parliament dozens of times, throughout almost every decade of the 1900s. The problem eased at times, of course, through varying social welfare policies and as a side-effect of war-time rationing. But holiday hunger has flared up again many times, as it has done in the past few years.

Dr Victoria McGowan, a research associate in Newcastle University's Institute of Health and Society, and an expert in the history of school meal provision, says: "*Throughout history governments*

have intervened to reduce the burden of holiday hunger on children, through specific holiday feeding legislation and social welfare policies to support vulnerable people in times of need. Unfortunately, holiday hunger is not an issue resigned to the history books. Children are still suffering during the school holidays and governments can take action to prevent this. The impending roll out of Universal Credit could lead to more and more families relying on foodbanks and holiday hunger schemes to see them through the school holidays and without any form of mandated provision."

Now, there are signs that the law may finally change. A Bill tabled by Labour backbencher Frank Field and working its way through Parliament calls on the Government to order all councils to provide food and activities in the holiday for children who might otherwise go hungry, and to give councils the funds they need, using receipts from the new sugar tax.

So far, 130 MPs from six parties have pledged to support the bill, which is ***due to receive its second reading on January 19.***

Dr McGowan says it will not work on its own, without a broader suite of policies to help vulnerable members of society but it is, she says, a good place to start, and the End Hunger UK campaign is rallying support and harnessing the determination of activists, who are often involved in inspiring work in their own communities.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

The Holiday Hunger campaign have set up a template for people to email their MP asking them to support this bill.

It will only take 2 minutes - so what's stopping you? Follow the link:

<http://e-activist.com/page/17758/action/1>



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UPDATE FROM THE DIOCESAN REFUGEE SUPPORT GROUP

OUR DIOCESAN REFUGEE RESPONSE ONE YEAR ON

Wednesday 31 January 2018, Hinsley Hall 7pm – 9pm

Anyone interested in volunteering to support refugees and asylum seekers, as well as those who are already involved, would be most welcome.

- An introduction to the Community Sponsorship scheme,
- News from key organisations about the work they do
- A Market Place of stalls to learn about the range of volunteer opportunities across the Diocese.

A photographic exhibition will be on display and refreshments will be provided.

As an example of the sort of volunteering that can be done we reproduce here an article from the LASSN (Leeds Asylum Seekers Network) December newsletter about their 'Connecting Opportunities' Project. The Volunteers manager for this project, Fidelis, writes:

We are 6 months into the Connecting Opportunities project and so far, 16 volunteer befrienders have been recruited with majority of them fully trained and 8 successfully 'matched' with new refugees/migrants (befriendees).

Let me tell you the story of our first Connecting Opportunities match. David is a consultant surveyor and Dr Adel is a structural engineer. Dr Adel has found that despite his high academic qualifications and extensive work experience in the Middle East, he has struggled to secure employment in the UK.

David has helped Dr Adel understand the nature of the UK employment market and specific requirements of the construction industry. Together, they have reviewed and adapted Dr Adel's CV to the conditions of the UK labour market. David has also identified key employers and assisted Dr Adel to build direct links whilst facilitating contacts with employment specialists. The relationship is also enabling Dr Adel to enhance his English language skills and job application and interview skills.

Culturally, David is picking up some learning in Arabic culture while Dr Adel is also familiarising himself with services in Leeds and traits of Yorkshire society - though not so keen on the weather yet! They are both confident and hopeful about achieving their set goals, particularly employment opportunities for Dr Adel. As Dr Adel told me: *'Since meeting David, I feel more motivated and hopeful about my future prospects'*.

As the Volunteers Manager, I am proud of what they have achieved so far and very hopeful about befriending and mentoring within Connecting Opportunities.

Why not join our inspiring team of befrienders to help make a difference and also enrich your experience. If so, please contact the Volunteer Manager (Connecting Opportunities) LASSN

T: 01133731759 mobile 07927115574,

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REFLECTION: EUCHARISTIC LESSONS FROM EL SALVADOR



In November last, Steve Atherton, the Justice & Peace worker in Liverpool went on the Romero Pilgrimage to El Salvador. The picture opposite was taken by him in one of the churches in central San Salvador.

He related how, when he first caught sight of it he was puzzled – it looked as though there had been an accident that had smashed the glass of this tabernacle. It was only when he got up close to it that he realised that, instead, it was a piece of art - of a large host breaking out of the tabernacle – and breaking the glass in the process.

What a spectacular image of Eucharist!

For how long have we tried to 'lock up' Jesus in the Tabernacle and to 'tame' him into

something that isn't too threatening – something that doesn't mean we really have to change how we live? Yet, here is Jesus breaking out of that tabernacle and smashing his way into the world in which we live and showing us that where we need to look for Jesus is in the world around us and not in some fancy container.

This pilgrimage, organised by the Romero Trust, uses the Jesuit Retreat Centre in San Salvador as its base. This centre is built on the side of a steep hill – so there is much going up and down stairs during the course of the pilgrimage. The centre's chapel is built quite high up on the site. It looks nothing special from the outside but, as with the photo above, the inside view provides a transformative image - this time of the Eucharistic table. The Eucharistic table is the focal point of the room, as it should be liturgically. However, the backdrop is simply a wall of glass looking out on the city of San Salvador below. As you are



drawn into the action of the Mass the backdrop is a constant reminder of the world outside. Churches often just become safe places where we feel closer to God. That's great – but if that warm cosy feeling is where our actions stop then we have fundamentally misunderstood the Gospel of Jesus.

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SHARE THE JOURNEY CAFOD CAMPAIGN

We are going to be hearing a lot about refugees and migrants during the course of 2018. Not only has Pope Francis chosen this as the theme for Peace Sunday in 2018, but CAFOD are just starting up a new campaign centred around refugees and Migrants: Share the Journey.

Later in the year refugees and migrants will be a major topic for discussion at the United Nations. In the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, adopted in September 2016, the General Assembly decided to develop a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration. The process to develop this global compact for migration started in April 2017. The General Assembly will hold an intergovernmental conference on international migration in later 2018 with a view to adopting the global compact.

The global compact is a significant opportunity to improve the governance on migration, to address the challenges associated with today's migration, and to strengthen the contribution of migrants and migration to sustainable development.

With this in mind, CAFOD is asking supporters to sign a petition to the Prime Minister so as to try and influence the stance taken by the Government at the intergovernmental conference. The Petition asks the Prime Minister to develop a united, global response to refugees and migrants which:

- respects human dignity
- protects the vulnerable
- supports host countries
- keeps families together
- tackles the reasons why people migrate.



To find out more and sign the petition then see the CAFOD pages about this campaign:

<https://cafod.org.uk/Campaign/Share-the-journey>

60 YEARS OF CND – TEMPORARY EXHIBITION AT THE BRADFORD PEACE MUSEUM

This new temporary exhibition will run at the Peace Museum from 12 January until the end of February.



The exhibition will explore the dynamic 60 year history of the Campaign for Nuclear









Disarmament from its founding in February 1958 until the present day and will include campaign materials, such as, posters, placards, banners and badges.

One of the highlights of the exhibition is a copy of the original design for the symbol for CND, created by the artist and peace campaigner Gerald Holtom in 1958. The symbol was never copyrighted and following the large publicity and support surrounding the campaign, the symbol became known and adopted across the world as a universal symbol of peace.



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EVENTS

 Sun 14 Jan 18	PEACE SUNDAY 2018: MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES – SEEKERS OF PEACE As usual, Pax Christi has produced a range of resources for use on this day. Every parish is sent a resource pack but you can also download the materials for free or purchase prayer cards and there are children's liturgy activity sheets that you can download as well. See their website: www.paxchristi.org.uk
 Mon 15 Jan	FEEDING BRADFORD NETWORK MEETING <i>The Storehouse, 116 Caledonia Street, Bradford, BD4 7BQ 13:00 – 15:30</i> This network is open to all those who are providing emergency food to those in need, whether via a formal food bank, hot food on the streets, a pay as you feel cafe or in any other way you have found works! Or feel free to come along if you're interested in supporting efforts to end hunger locally in the Bradford area.
 Thu 18 Jan to Thu 25 Jan	"THAT THEY ALL MAY BE FREE" – WORLD WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY The theme for Christian Unity in 2018 follows easily from the Pope's theme for World Peace Day. The World Council of Churches have prepared detailed resources to enable churches to deliver special services or incorporate suitable prayers into existing services and masses. Printed copies can be purchased but they are also available for free download—simply go to the Churches Together website and click on the Christian Unity week block: https://ctbi.org.uk/
 Wed 31 Jan	DIOCESAN REFUGEE RESPONSE ONE YEAR ON <i>Hinsley Hall, 62 Headingley Lane, Leeds LS6 2BX 19:00 – 21:00</i> Everyone is welcome to come along and find out more about volunteering for the organisations that support refugees and asylum seekers across the Diocese. There are many different ways in which to help and this event will be a good opportunity to hear what the needs are and to discover where you might want to offer your skills and enthusiasm. Refreshments will be provided.
 Sat 10 Feb 	FAMILY POVERTY: FROM AWARENESS TO ACTION <i>Kala Sangam Centre, Forster Square, Bradford BD1 4TY 10:30 – 15:30</i> Poverty is a real and frightening threat to family life for many people today. How do we, as Christians, respond? – and should we be doing more than providing direct help to people? Come along and join in our exploration of this important set of issues that should concern all Christians who want to promote family life. This workshop is free to attend and families are especially welcome. Booking is essential. See the advert on the front page of our website and follow the link.
 Wed 21 Feb	CAFOD: SHARED LUNCH & TALK WITH ZIMBABWE WORKER <i>St Monica's, Hinsley Hall, Leeds LS6 2BX 12pm-1pm</i> An opportunity to listen to and talk with Livison Chipatiso, who is currently working for CAFOD in Zimbabwe. Everyone is welcome but you are asked to bring a little something to share and to email the office (leeds@cafod.org.uk) so they have an idea of how many will be coming along.
Tue 20 Mar	ROMERO LECTURE Ruben Zamora, the El Salvadoran UN representative, will be giving this year's Romero Lecture and we are hoping to have a presentation of it in the Leeds Diocese. ..Further details to follow soon.
 Find us on Facebook	Follow us on Facebook to help keep up to date with the key campaigns that the Commission is supporting.

Please forward this email E-News onto 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.