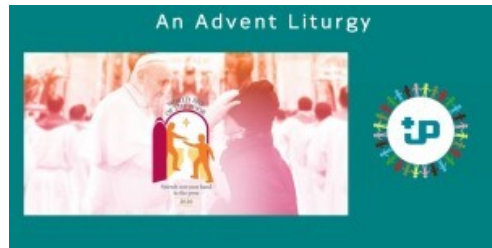




UK Poverty has had greater prominence during this year of the Covid pandemic and lockdowns. It has shown just how many people are in low paid and/or precarious employment. Millions live in or near poverty which is immoral in a rich country. J&P Leeds have been campaigning with Church Action on Poverty to urge the government to tackle the causes of poverty and we held an online Advent liturgy developed with Church Action on Poverty which focussed on the poor, hearing the stories of those with lived experience of poverty. The Poverty Action Group is developing a online tool to assist finding help for those experiencing poverty.



Online Day of Reflection November 2020.
Fr. Diarmuid O’Murchu offered an inspiring vision of what the Church could be like and what it means to ‘build God’s Kingdom’.

Zoom Liturgies
Both of our initial Zoom liturgies focused on the ecological crisis and Pope Francis’ urgent call to an ‘ecological conversion.’ The first liturgy was in May, around the time of **Pentecost** whilst the second took place during the season of creation in September. During **Advent 2020** we focused on UK poverty., and welcomed the participation of *Church Action on Poverty*. To mark Peace Sunday we worked with Pax Christi in the Leeds Diocese to prepare a prayerful liturgy, taking as our theme the statement from Pope Francis’ message for Peace Sunday, ‘Peace, justice and care for creation are three inherently connected questions, which cannot be separated.’ Mindful of the Church’s liturgical year, for Holy Week 2021 we held a powerful and moving ‘Stations of the Cross’ liturgy. These liturgies have received some very favourable feedback and clearly fulfil a need. Our later liturgies have been notable for participation from not just the Leeds Diocese but the rest of the country and participants also from Ireland, the USA and Uruguay!

UK Poverty

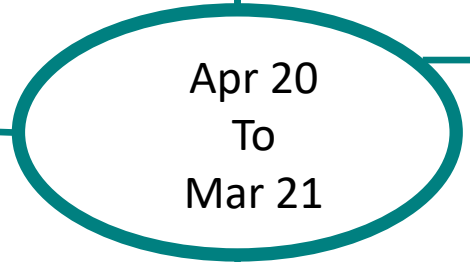
Spirituality of Justice

Project: Spark Social Justice
We had to completely reorientate the activities of this project in the light of the pandemic. Some Zoom sessions were held with students in the settings where we were working. However, most work went into creating a YouTube channel for the project with content covering a range of social justice issues and collectively these have had over 1000 views. We have also had a campaign called SPARK Voices – asking young adults to send in 2 minute videos about a social justice issue about which they feel passionate.

Outreach

Climate Change

There has been a lot of progress in tackling what we started the year calling Climate ‘Change’ but changed to ‘Crisis’ to reflect the emergency that we are facing with Global Warming. The Climate Crisis Action group has been working with the diocese on the ratification of the Diocesan Environment Policy which was signed off in the autumn of 2020, a lead for Climate Change appointed and conversations with Bishop Marcus and Ian Burrell around decarbonisation and divestment from fossil fuels. We held a reflective online liturgy for the Season of Creation in September based on Pope Francis’ *Laudato Si*



Peace and nonviolence

In **Nov 20** the Commission sponsored one of the films (“Jews Step Forward”) that was shown-online of course - as part of the **Leeds Palestinian Film festival**. During the festival period there was also a panel discussion organised with the Film festival featuring one of the producers of the film, a Palestinian student at Leeds University and Pat Gaffney, part of the Catholic Nonviolence Initiative of Pax Christi International. This is available on the Commission’s YouTube channel.

In Feb and Mar of 2021, again in partnership with Pax Christi in the Leeds Diocese, we gave a presentation of a 5 week course called “ An Introduction to active Nonviolence. About 25 people attended these sessions..

SPARK SOCIAL JUSTICE

BE A CHANGE-MAKER!
Are you aged between 16-30yrs?
Would you like to make a positive difference to the world we all call Home?



PAX CHRISTI
Diocese of Leeds | JP Commission

Making Active Nonviolence our Way of Life

DIOCESE OF LEEDS JUSTICE & PEACE COMMISSION: ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR APRIL 02 2020 TO APRIL 01 2021

	Deferred from 2019/20	Money in 2020-21	C/F to 2021-22
INCOME			
Donations		£ 2,629.99	
Regular Giving		£ 2,135.00	
Donations from Events		£ 244.99	
One off Donations		£ 250.00	
Grants	£ 15,997.82	£ 5,620.00	£ 5,827.92
Unrestricted Grants	£ -	£ 5,620.00	£ -
Diocese of Leeds		£ 5,000.00	
Religious Orders		£ 620.00	
Restricted Grants	£ 15,997.82	£ -	£ 5,827.92
Sales of Resources & books		£ -	
Other Income		£ -	
TOTAL MONEY IN	£ 15,997.82	£ 8,249.99	£ 5,827.92
		Expensed During 20-21	
EXPENDITURE			
Communications		£ 2,151.86	
Office costs		£ -	
Subscriptions		£ 295.00	
Bank Charges		£ -	
Governance		£ 1,096.85	
Publications & Resources		£ -	
Projects		£ 12,503.43	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		£ 16,047.14	

At the start of the financial year, we had received nearly £16,000 in grants for work in the 2020-21 financial year. This is the deferred income shown here.

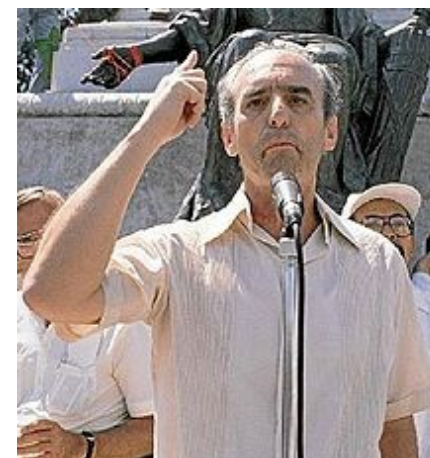
At the end of the financial year, due to the restrictions on activities because of the coronavirus, we are carrying forward £5,800 of this income to the 2021-22 financial year. Our current plans for the SPARK Programme will use this carried forward budget in the first quarter of this year. Money carried forward for the Family Poverty programme will be spent over the course of the coming financial year. By April 2022 our bank balance will be much lower (pandemic permitting!).

Our financial plans for the year ahead are still quite fluid. We will continue with some spend on our project aimed at young adults (SPARK Social Justice) but the amounts will depend on whether we obtain external funding. Our aim is maximise spend on project activities related to our priority areas: Climate Justice, UK Poverty, Peace and Nonviolence and Racial Justice. Regular communications work will also continue

The Commission is extremely grateful to those who contribute to our work – especially those few who give us some financial stability via a regular payment and I would encourage others to set one up. It gives us more confidence when planning future work. Just go to the donations page of the website for more information.

Joe Burns (Treasurer) April 2021

ANNUAL REVIEW: Apr 2020 - MAR 2021



"I want you to set your eyes and hearts on these people who are suffering so much, some from poverty and hunger, others from oppression and repression then, standing before these people thus crucified, ask yourselves, 'What have I done to crucify them? What do I do to uncrucify them? What must I do for these people to rise again?'"

This challenge from the Salvadoran Jesuit **Fr Ignacio Ellacuria**, martyred for campaigning for justice for the poor, invites us in our context to seek out, get to know and ensure the poor in our society are not invisible. We are called to "set our hearts on them".

We therefore must work together to identify the poor and oppressed in our world. Then, "standing before them", we are asked to examine our relationship to them publicly. Asking "what have I done to crucify them?" means examining and confessing how I am part of the problem, nailing the suffering poor up on the cross, using the hammer or passing over the nails, holding the wood steady or, further back, providing the tree for the wood. Accepting a sense of responsibility implies we examine whether we are part of the political economic or social arrangements and systems by which the poor are kept poor so that the rich can remain and become even richer.

So, who is being crucified where we are now?

Those hit by Covid, sick, isolated and alone, those on declining Universal Credit or in low paid temporary work, those unemployed, those young, who have lost educational courses, those seeking refuge and asylum, those homeless, those broken by alcohol, drug or gambling addictions, those suffering with serious mental health problems, those with disabilities, those ex-offenders unable to reset their lives, those suffering violence and all those set to fail.

Fr Ellacuria takes us further, stressing that recognising the existence of the crucified poor obliges us to ask "what am I doing to uncrucify them?"

Nor is this a purely individual challenge. Hearing the cry of the crucified people has to be at the heart of the role of the Church in challenging political, economic and social systems. That's the task of the Church's J& P Commissions - drawing us to work together on often "unpopular agendas".

Our current PRIORITIES as the Leeds Diocesan J& P Commission are educational action on the causes of **POVERTY** in our own society, working at the **CLIMATE CRISIS** in our parishes schools and society with the guidance of the inspirational Laudato Si, challenging nuclear defence and arms production and **PROMOTING NONVIOLENCE** (not least in Palestine). championing the compassionate work of **CARITAS** and the **SVP** with those in need, refugees and ex offenders, and most importantly championing the **PARTICIPATION of YOUNGER PEOPLE** (through our SPARK Justice Project) and the engagement work of the community organising **CITIZENS** movement.

Taking the crucified down from the cross means developing that underplayed central concept of Catholic Social Learning " **participation** ", a concept for real transformation.

John Battle, Chair of the Commission April 2021



Keep in Touch

sign up for regular updates on our website and follow us on Facebook