



RENEWING THE WORK OF JUSTICE & PEACE IN THE LEEDS DIOCESE.

Justice & Peace is the work of everyone

There is no getting around it: Justice & Peace is the work of **everyone** in the Diocese of Leeds. It's as much part of being a Catholic as going to mass, helping the SVP in some way or saying the rosary. The document that came out of the second ordinary World Synod of Bishops in 1971 (called *Justice in the World*) includes this magisterial statement - which puts it rather more inspirationally:

"Action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world fully appears to us as a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the gospel or, in other words, of the Church's mission for the redemption of the human race and its liberation from every oppressive situation."

So, a little over 50 years ago we have a very clear statement that working to transform the world is an essential part of being a Catholic. Being a Catholic is not just about going to mass on a Sunday or putting a few quid in the SVP box every now and again: it's about transforming the world!



Transforming the world sounds a lot more exciting than the usual messages about living a 'good' life - but what does it mean? It means interacting with those who hold power (whether it be at local, national or a

global level) to make our world a more just place. Inevitably, this means taking political action, irrespective of which party is in power. There are so many injustices ranging from the national scandal of so many people in the UK having to use a foodbank in the fifth richest country in the world, to the inhuman proposals for the treatment of people trying to cross the Channel, to the desperate need for greater action globally about Climate Change. I could go on, but it would be a very long list.

So where does anyone start? As with so many things, the important thing is to actually start. St Oscar Romero put it like this:

"We cannot do everything and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that. This enables us to do something and to do it very well. It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way, an opportunity for God's grace to enter and do the rest."

You need to work out for yourself what issue(s) of justice and peace you feel strongly about and do something about them. 'This could be as simple as adding your name to a petition about the treatment of refugees and asylum seekers. For some parishioners it has meant offering a prophetic witness about our treatment of God's creation by choosing to glue themselves to the motorway.

There is so much injustice in our world that it is easy to be overwhelmed by it and just give up. This is why I particularly like the Romero quote that recognises that we all have limitations - but that we must all do something. Who knows? - you might end up transforming the world.

Where does the Leeds Diocese Justice & Peace Commission fit into all of this?



The role of the Commission is to both provide a prophetic voice for justice from within the Church in the Yorkshire region and to celebrate and share the work of justice that is already happening across the diocese.

The Commission consists of a group of between 12-20 parishioners and others from across the Diocese of Leeds.

The Commission, typically, meets 4 times per year to review progress on its activities and to plan activities and projects to be taken forward in future months.

So that work can continue smoothly between Commission meetings, there is also a

Commission Executive that meets between full Commission meetings.

There are two main elements to the activities that we undertake:

1. Communication:

- a. About action already being taken in parishes
- b. Dialogue with others (both parishioners and the wider local community) to discern the current key justice issues - reading the 'signs of the times'.
- c. Work to communicate how key justice issues are understood and
- d. To inspire parishioners to take action about these issues

2. Projects:

Work to support one of our priorities that takes place over a specific time period and which is done to achieve a specific outcome or change.

To promote the development of projects and other ideas for action, we also have a set of **Issue Action Groups**. As the name

suggests, this is a group of people (which would include at least 2 Commission members) who focus on specific issues. Our current groups are shown in the box below:-

A key part of the remit of these groups is to

ISSUE ACTION GROUPS

Spirituality of Justice – providing the spiritual underpinning for taking action on Justice issues

UK Poverty – Why are so many families having to use foodbanks and what social policy changes should be advocated to reduce this?

Climate Action – what contribution can we make, as a Diocese, to care for God's creation?

Peace & Nonviolence – How do we promote a culture of peacemaking?

Racial Justice – This used to be a priority issue 30 years ago and, sad to say, has come back onto our priority list. Recognising our own ignorance about this, we have commissioned Leeds Citizens to undertake a listening exercise. Out of this our hope is that there will be another Issue Action group.

come up with project ideas. However, we only go ahead with a project when we know we can support the costs of doing so. The costs of organising a Day of Reflection, for instance, can usually be met from our existing funds. A set of parish meetings about Climate Change would require additional funding and would not go ahead until we have the money needed.

Across the Diocese of Leeds there are also individual supporters of the work of the Justice & Peace Commission. We always



welcome their input. The meetings of the Commission are advertised on our website and anyone in the Diocese is entitled to ask to join a full Commission meeting.

We also have **volunteer** support. Commission members themselves are volunteers, as are others who are members of Project Steering Groups or Issue Action Groups. Any aspect of the Commission's activities could be done by volunteers with the relevant skills and experience.

We need your help!

The work of justice is the work of everybody – and the more people who are involved then the more we can do and the greater the impact that we can have. We all have different skills and differing amounts of time to give and differing interests. One way to start would be by working with the Commission. Here are just a few suggestions of things you could do, and the level of commitment needed:

Become a Commission Member

We are always on the lookout for new members!

What does it involve?

- 3 x2hr meetings per year plus one half or full day planning session.
- Anything else you have time for!

Become a parish representative- we have a couple but would be very interested in more people coming forward

What does it involve?

- Making sure that J&P events, and other justice-related events are included in your parish notices
- Feedback to the Commission about the justice issues that people talk about in your parish
- Writing articles for our newsletter about what is happening in your parish

Use your specific skills & experiences:

Familiar with Websites?

- Help keep our website software up to date, develop new content and maintain the performance of the site

A social media devotee?

- Volunteer to do some regular posting about our priorities

Marketing Experience?

- Help us devise marketing materials to advertise events / set up events on our Eventbrite account

Paid Admin Work

On a self-employed basis – about 5 hrs per week (on average – will vary quite significantly) at a rate of £20 per hr.

- Arranging meetings and doing the notes and follow up
- Could also involve some newsletter production work-proofreading/editing articles – even writing some.

Join an Issue Action Group

What does it involve?

- How often they meet varies a lot - from monthly to more like quarterly.
- For smaller projects, group members may do a lot of the activities e.g. the liturgies we have done in the last 12 months have mainly been prepared by the Spirituality of Justice group members

Just email jandp@dioceseofleeds.org.uk if you are interested in any of these and would like some more information.



NEW SAINT WITH DIOCESAN CONNECTIONS – ST CHARLES DE FOUCAULD

By Marg Siberry, Commission member

On 15th May 2022 Pope Francis celebrated the canonisation of St Charles de Foucauld. St Charles is honoured for his work on inter-religious dialogue but also for his special charism of identifying with and living among ordinary people in order to share their lives and offer support and compassion. Charles joined the Trappists, living in monasteries in France and in Syria, before seeking an even more austere life as a hermit. After his ordination to the priesthood in 1901, he lived among the poor and finally settled in Tamanrasset, Algeria. St Charles lived a life of prayer, meditation and adoration, in the incessant desire to be, for each person, a "universal brother", a living image of the love of Jesus. His witness and his writings inspired people to follow his way of life and after his death, the Little Brothers of Jesus and the Little Sisters of Jesus congregations were formed.

Though we can't gather in Rome to join in the canonisation celebrations, we do want to use the occasion to honour the commitment the Little Brothers gave to Leeds and especially to remember and celebrate Brother Guy, who sadly died on 5th February 2013 and who is buried Wortley.

The Little Brothers in Leeds – Brother Guy Jarosson R.I.P.

In 1956 the Little Brothers set up a fraternity in a small house in Leeds and Brother Guy arrived in 1961. He was followed in 1972 by Brother Xavier Chevillard and the two became special friends to the Justice and Peace Commission and to all with whom they

worked and lived alongside in Leeds for more than 50 years.

Guy was born in Lyons in 1926 and moved with his family to Paris in 1929. After the war he attended the School of Commerce and then did national service some of which was in Vietnam in the late 40s. In August 1952 Guy entered the novitiate of the Little Brothers of Jesus and spent some time in the desert El Abiodh. Guy had trained as a turner and worked as an engineer. He found work in Leeds as a chemical process worker and shop steward. As a shop steward he represented the interests of his working-class colleagues. It was a wise choice because Guy cared deeply for those who suffered injustice or were disadvantaged. As a person of honesty and integrity, with a finely tuned sense of justice as well as generosity of spirit and heart, he walked alongside his fellow workers. One work friend called him "a double brother" which captures the essence of Guy perfectly.

Throughout his time in Leeds Guy was involved with local community projects as well as global NGOs, offering hospitality in the Fraternity house to Chilean refugees and later to Night Stop (for street homeless young men), as well as volunteering at the Development Education Centre and CAFOD. He led a working party on work for the Commission, producing a seminal booklet based on Catholic Social Teaching that informed and guided the Commission's programmes. Guy had a powerful intellect, tempered with wisdom, a ready wit and sense of fun. Always his compassion shone through.

Lines from a letter written to Guy by his father, who had struggled to understand his son's vocation, summed up beautifully Guy's inspiration and legacy,



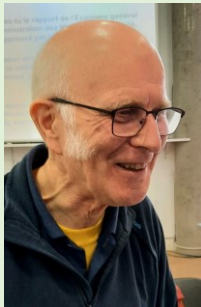
Writing to his son after he after a visit to the Fraternity, Guy's father wrote,

"just by your presence, without saying a word, simply by identifying with the way of life of all these workers, by the way in which you welcome them, you can create this link between them and Christ... I have finally understood in a tangible, glaring way, the importance of your vocation." So many of us here in Leeds were blessed by that gift.

Thank you Guy and thank-you Xavier!

Zoom meeting with Br Xavier

Tue 24 May @ 7:30pm



If you think there isn't much about Xavier in the article above that is because there is the opportunity to join him in a Zoom conversation with Commission members John Battle and Marg Siberry.

The week after the canonisation of Charles de Foucauld seemed like an ideal time to explore both the spirituality of this new saint and remember the mission of the Little Brothers in the Leeds Diocese.

Sign up via Eventbrite. Just follow this link:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/charles-de-foucauld-the-leeds-diocese-tickets-237682092087>

SPARK Social Justice WELCOMES NEW PROJECT MANAGER

By Katherine Hogg, SPARK Project Manager

Hello, I am Katherine and I am the new SPARK project manager. I'm originally from St Albans in Hertfordshire and came to Leeds to do an MA in Theology and Development at the University before getting a job with Christian Aid and working towards a PhD.



I've worked for Christian Aid for 13 years in the Leeds Office as a Regional and Project Coordinator. I was made redundant in 2020 and since then have been self-employed and initially took on a project for Green Christian. I wrote a small group discussion resource for churches called 'Plenty!' as part of the Joy in Enough programme. [Joy in Enough – Awakening to a new economics](#). I am still involved on the Enabling Group for the project.

I also work with Leeds Church Institute on Schools of Sanctuary [Schools of Sanctuary | Building a culture of hospitality for people seeking sanctuary \(cityofsanctuary.org\)](#) This

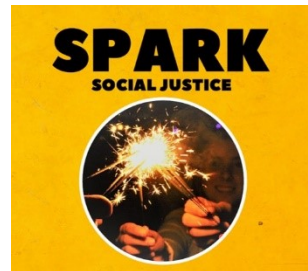


is a nationwide initiative, part of the Sanctuary movement ensuring that refugees and asylum seekers are made welcome in school and that the whole school community learns about sanctuary issues. Given that the Justice and Peace commission is concerned about climate and refugees, I hope there will be some overlap between these organisations and I am sure I will be able to draw on the work I've done for both so far. Prior to working for Christian Aid, I taught English as a Foreign Language in London and one of my first jobs was working for the Christian youth organisation, Urban Saints where I eventually organised their overseas programme for young people called CRUSOE. This followed travelling to Kenya with Urban Saints as a young person and living in Nairobi for a year in a slum and working with children who used to live on the streets.

I now live in leafy Meanwood which is a world away from the slums of Nairobi but I'm still in touch with the people I met there and am well aware of the inequalities in the world and in UK and Leeds and it is a privilege to work with today's young Catholics as they seek to speak and act with SPARK.

I am an active person and enjoy starting my days outdoors in the morning light. I decided to start my own fitness business called Meanwood Valley Fitness which is on Facebook. I moved outside in the pandemic and as someone who enjoys outdoor exercise anyhow, it has proved to be perfect! I also enjoy cycling and leading rides in the Dales with Valley Striders Cycle Club for whom I also run a stretching class on Monday nights. I attend All Hallows Anglican church in Hyde Park where I am involved with leading worship.

I've started on the SPARK project by making contact with various key people who have been involved in the past or are central to



the project now. Additionally, I've been reading various documents and looking over websites from the Catholic

community. This is one area I will need people's help with as I build up my knowledge of Catholicism. I look forward to working with young people again as it's been a while since I worked with Urban Saints and my own faith has broadened and changed since then.

In time I'll be recruiting 'animators' for SPARK - young people in the 18-30 age group who are keen to receive leadership training and show an interest in social justice issues. My first two challenges are likely to be recruiting animators and recruiting those who can share social justice issues through the creative arts. We've got off to a good start with setting **October 8 as the date for an initial gathering**. This will take place at Wheeler Hall. Who can you tell about this?



Skillsbuilding for Social Justice Activism

08 October 2022 @ Wheeler Hall

10:00 – 4pm

Aged 18-30 and want to gain better skills to campaign about the issues you care about?? (Skills that will also look good on your CV!) More information coming soon.

Interested? Then email:

Sparks.jandp@dioceseofleeds.org.uk



WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT PALESTINE?

By Joe Burns, Peace & Nonviolence Action Group

At the Leeds Palestinian Film Festival in 2021 the Commission sponsored a film showing of 'Objector'

(View the trailer:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=68LEEtO9k5k>.

This was a film about a young Israeli woman who decided that she could not, in all conscience, undertake her mandatory military service in the Israeli armed forces. This was because of the injustice in the way that Palestinians are treated by the state of Israel. In the post-film discussion, someone asked a question about what actions we could take in the UK. The film provided a much greater understanding of the structural injustices that the Palestinian people must live with.

But... what can we do in Yorkshire, thousands of miles away and with, seemingly, no way of influencing the situation in another country?

This is the basis for an event we are organising jointly with Pax Christi in the Leeds Diocese and with the Leeds Palestinian Film Festival Committee. We will explore various types of action that people have already taken (such as vigils, boycotts, challenges to academic freedom and the campaign against Elbit Systems). There will also be the opportunity to further question our panellists.

As Christians, should we be involved in international politics? The answer is 'yes': it is a Gospel imperative to speak Truth to power. Where most of us give up, is in working out what our part might be – as we seem so powerless in affecting such situations. We need to understand how our actions might form part of something larger. We also need to work out what we are capable of doing at a personal level.

Come along to find out more and – afterwards – do more!



What can We do about Palestine?

Friday 17 June 6:30pm – 8:30pm

Wheeler Hall







Doors will be open at 6pm and refreshments will be available and there will be the opportunity to purchase Palestinian goods.

Reserve a place by registering on our Eventbrite page for this event:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/what-can-we-do-about-palestine-tickets-337300824847>



EVENTS

| | |
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|  Sat 21 May | <p>Day of Action against Corporate Courts Day of action organised by Global Justice Now to bring attention to Five fossil fuel firms who are suing governments for over \$18 billion for taking climate action. https://www.globaljustice.org.uk/event/day-of-action-against-corporate-courts/</p> |
|  Tues 7 June | <p>Quarterly Commission Meeting <i>Online: 7pm-8:30pm</i> Email: jandp@dioceseofleeds.org.uk and we will send you a link near the time (and any papers that might be discussed at the meeting).</p> |
|  Fri 12 Jun | <p>CAFOD 60th Anniversary mass livestreamed <i>Online 12:30 – 1:30pm from St George’s Cathedral Southwark</i> Join CAFOD for a mass to celebrate their 60 years of indefatigable work with the poorest communities in the world. Register by following the link: https://www.bigmarker.com/cafod/60-Anniversary</p> |
|  Fri 17 June | <p>What can we do about Palestine? <i>Wheeler Hall: 6:30pm-8:30pm</i> What, practically, can people in the UK do to help those suffering unjustly in Palestine? We are organising this event jointly with <i>Pax Christi in the Leeds Diocese</i> and the <i>Leeds Palestinian Film Festival</i> There will be short inputs, film clips and the opportunity to ask questions of our panel of speakers.</p> |
|  Fri 22 Jul | <p>NJPN Conference – Hope is a Verb with its Sleeves Rolled Up <i>Hayes Conference Centre, Fri 22nd Jul 6pm – Sun 24th Jul 2pm</i> This is the 44th National Justice & Peace Network Annual Conference – which is held in the lovely surroundings of the Hayes Christian Conference Centre at Swanwick in Derbyshire. Join 300 or so other social justice activists for a memorable weekend. Booking Form: https://www.leedsjp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/NJPN-Conference-Booking-Form-2022.pdf</p> |
|  Sat 06 Aug | <p>Hiroshima Day Commemoration <i>Across Yorkshire and globally.</i> Let us remember the terrible consequences of using nuclear weapons. Join events in Leeds, Bradford or Hebden Bridge. Check our website events page for full details</p> |

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. See our website for details of these and other events which may be of interest.