



VIENNA TPNW Treaty Conference

By Matthew Maslen

Previously, I have written about when I was accepted onto the Youth for TPNW 1MSP (Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons – Meeting of States Parties) delegation, my thoughts just before our delegation took off for Vienna, and now I'm going to tell you my thoughts now that I've returned from it (hopefully you're not totally sick of hearing from me)!

The first thing to say is that I was incredibly lucky to make it at all. Many in our delegation were unable to make it to the MSP in person due to difficulties in obtaining passports, visas, and funding. So once again I'd like to thank the Leeds J&P's SPARK Project which funded my travel and made it possible for me to attend.

Monday

I'd never travelled abroad on my own before, and I haven't been on a plane since pre-covid, and my mind was full of horror stories

of people waiting in queues snaking outside the airport due to strikes, so I went a little bit (very) too early to the airport! But the journey was fine. So, other than a short delay to the flight and a slight panic in Vienna before I realised you could change the U-bahn ticket machine to English, I made it to the hostel unscathed by the start of my solo-travel.

By the time I made it to the hostel, it was already past 11. I met my roommate, who was also with YouthforTPNW, and went straight to bed, having set my alarm for 6am (not sure about you but that's pretty much the middle of the night for me).

Tuesday

After a night of broken sleep in uncomfortable heat – although now that we're experiencing this heatwave I think I may have been overly dramatic at the time – I set off for the UN.



Youth Delegates to the TPNW Meeting of States Parties

Now an expert at the U-bahn, I travelled across the city with the morning commuters. Unfortunately, though my public transport skills had improved, my map reading skills left me walking in circles around the Vienna Centre for a long time. Eventually, having discovered in the group chat that I was far

from the only person to have befallen this fate, I followed someone else's step-by-step instructions (literally) and found the entrance.

After passing through airport-style security, we were given our UN badges! We have all confessed that these have become prize



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possessions that we tell everyone about! And then... we were in!

Tuesday was our main day as YouthforTPNW. The founders of the group had put together an incredible day for us with very little time. The group was created a short 9 months ago and yet they have managed to arrange a full pre-MSP programme as well as a youth delegation to the TPNW 1MSP both in-person and online for those unable to make it. The whole week I was endlessly reminded that young people, when given the space to do it, are able to do whatever we put our minds to.

After the day was opened by Lucy Tiller, Chair of YouthforTPNW, we had our first event of the day. This was a talk from Miyata Takashi, a survivor of the Nagasaki bomb. This was an extremely powerful start to the day. It brought home to me, once again, that nuclear disarmament is not a theoretical discussion, it is has real-world consequences.

For the rest of the morning we took part in workshops. I attended one on grassroots educational movements, run by SGI (Buddhism in Action for Peace). And one on nuclear weapons and the climate crisis, run by Fridays for Future.

These workshops were a great opportunity to learn from each other and to highlight the intersectionality of issues such as nuclear disarmament and climate justice.

Afterwards, we heard from a panel of young women about what the future of youth engagement with the TPNW may, and ought to, look like. This was a very interesting discussion as the panel was very international and the work that each panel member did was very different. The resounding idea that was mentioned again and again was that we must continue to push for a seat at the table where discussions about our future are happening.



After lunch we had a group discussion of the policy document that we had created in the weeks leading up to the 1MSP. This discussion was a hybrid between those of us in person in Vienna, and those of us online via Zoom.

The final event of the day was Zoom conversation with Setsuko Thurlow, a Hiroshima survivor. She told us her story and about her inspiring journey as an activist.

We also watched a short video clip that Alexander Kmentt (President-Designate of the First Meeting of States Parties of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons) had filmed where he addressed us and our side-MSP events.

And so, my first day at the UN was over! It was an incredible day, I learned an enormous amount from everyone that I spoke to, both other youth delegates and people who had been invited in to run workshops and panels.

Wednesday

In the morning we met in Kaiserwiese Park for an Advocacy Action Forum. We sat in a circle in the shade and one at a time we said two of the main things we had taken from the experience so far, and one thing we would like the group to do in the future.

Afterwards, we made our way across Vienna back to the UN building. On this day, the informal discussion in the park was the only official Youth for TPNW event happening, so



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we were able to join in with the events of the main MSP.

A few others and I attended a panel discussion on Verifying Disarmament. This was a really interesting topic. The panel consisted of: Pavel Podvig, Gaukhar Mukhatzhanova, and Zia Mian. It was moderated by Maria Garzon Maceda and was opened by Lucy Duncan (New Zealand Permanent Representative to the United Nations).

They highlighted the importance of national identities in the disarmament conversation; that by asking nuclear-weapon-states to disarm is to ask them to entirely change their identity from a 'nuclear-weapon state', and also their world view from one where there is a distinction (and an entrenched hierarchy) between nuclear-weapon-states and non-nuclear-weapons-states.

In other words, as Zia Mian put it, we are asking for a paradigm shift whereby "nuclear weapons are no longer the centre of nuclear-weapons-states' universe".

But, despite the ideological difficulties the panellists highlighted, they were also clear in demonstrating that nuclear disarmament is possible. As Pavel Podvig said: there are "no insurmountable technical challenges here, it's all politics [...] all in their heads".

After listening to this panel discussion, I went and watched the main MSP for a while. It felt incredibly cool to sit with the little headphones on which translated what each of the delegates was saying for you. At the end of each section that the delegates discussed, Alexander Kmentt would summarise what had been said and then announce "it is so decided" before tapping his hammer on the table!

Thursday

I spent the daytime on Thursday being a tourist – Vienna is a beautiful city and I would definitely recommend a visit!

In the evenings Youth for TPNW had been meeting in a pub to have a chance to socialise and to talk to each other properly as the atmosphere in the UN was rather rushed.

But on the Thursday night there was the official ICAN party. This was an extremely surreal experience to be surrounded by hundreds of delegates and activists from around the world having a mix of social conversations and others having very in-depth conversations.

I spent this evening mostly getting to know more of the other people who had attended with Youth for TPNW. There were still people who I hadn't had a chance to meet properly as the week had been so non-stop, but by the end of the evening I had met most people, learned a lot about the election process in Norway and the death of indigenous languages in Brazil!

Summary



So, as you can probably tell, my time in Vienna was without a doubt the coolest thing I have ever done! I learnt an incredible amount and met so many inspiring people.

Again, I would like to thank the SPARK Project for sponsoring me to attend in person and giving me this opportunity.





ROE vs WADE OVERTURNED

Last month, in America, Roe vs Wade was overturned 50 years after it was sworn in, meaning that women no longer have a federal right to abortion. Now, the legality of abortion is a decision for individual states to make.

This comes at a time when restrictions to abortion rights have been increasing in states across US. In 2021 over 100 abortion restrictions were set, surpassing the 2011 record of 89.

(<https://states.guttmacher.org/policies/>).

Ultimately, women's ability to access abortion healthcare in the US has been severely limited.

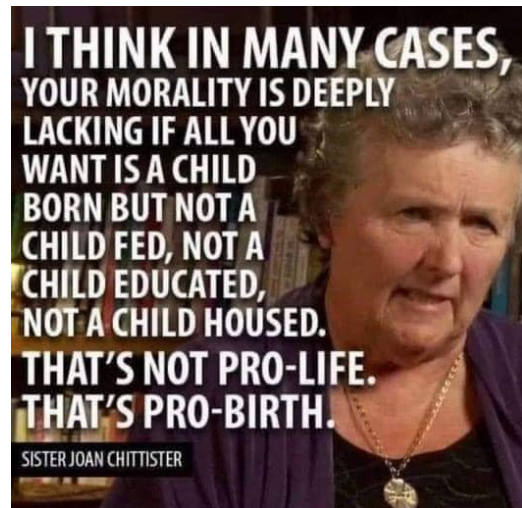
In the USA this issue has become a touchstone for the 'culture wars' that exist there. It would be a tragedy if the issue became as polarised in this country. It is a subject that needs much more open debate within the Catholic community around the world.

All life is precious, but we need to recognise that the reasons for women choosing abortion are complex and various.

We also need to consider what are the social policy actions that actually result in reducing the number of abortions. The evidence is that banning abortion has negligible impact on the number of abortions and only results in putting women in danger from obtaining illegal abortions.

Equally, women's bodies should not be used for political point scoring, which is at the root of a lot of the rhetoric in the USA.

Sr Joan Chittister, a US religious, has put it like this:



Like so many issues it is complicated – and, as a Catholic community, we need to talk about it in a more open way.

One mother in our diocese put it to us like this: "I'll often be struck by the complexities of an issue and my position will change as my understanding grows. On this issue I am clearer. I wish I lived in a world where abortions weren't sometimes the best choice for the women who find themselves with a pregnancy they can't continue with for all sorts of reasons. But that's not the world we're in. I want equality and a flourishing life for others, I'd love for that to include every unborn child but I also want protection in law for those women who need to choose otherwise. We don't care enough for each other as it is, neither here in the UK nor in the USA. Extreme wealth and extreme poverty grow each day and we see no reduction in levels of abuse and neglect of women and children. Creating legislation that claims one thing but does another thing entirely doesn't reflect the values of my faith."



FROM A TO B VIA C (ANGLIA, TO BENTHAM VIA CAFOD)

This piece is a celebration of Fr Paul Hypher. Fr Paul, a priest from East Anglia who now resides in the Diocese of Leeds, who is celebrating 60 years of ministry.

As part of his celebrations, Fr Paul has set up a Celebration Fund which you can find by using this link:

<https://celebration.cafod.org.uk/celebrations?p=fd&v=a2S4H000002PiqLUAS>

All the money that he raises will be going towards CAFOD's World Food Crisis Appeal. Millions of families are facing a food crisis that could be worse than any we've lived through. As many as 811 million people around the world are facing extreme hunger. In Kenya, Ethiopia and South Sudan, up to 20 million people are fighting for their very survival. They are facing terrifying drought and rocketing food prices. Schools are closed, and the threat of extreme hunger is forcing people to spend their life savings or leave their homes.

Fr Paul is aiming to collect £6, 000 for the World Food Crisis Appeal.

CAFOD can use the donations to:

- ✱ Help people buy food
- ✱ Grow a variety of crops that are more resistant to drought
- ✱ Mend water pumps and locate new and safe ones
- ✱ Work with communities – through local volunteers and experts – to build for the long term

The picture below is from CAFOD's website, it shows what donations can buy:

What your donation could buy

		
Drinking water £10 could ensure a family has enough safe drinking water	Food rations £50 could give a family emergency food rations	Four tough goats £112 could provide a family with four tough goats to help them through the worst of the crisis
Donate £10	Donate £50	Donate £112

By using his celebration of 60 years of priestly ministry to raise money for CAFOD's World Food Crisis Appeal, Fr Paul is helping the teams of local volunteers and experts we work with in Ethiopia, in East Africa and around the world, to help people to live through the worst of this devastating food crisis.

Local CAFOD representative, Bronagh said *"We were delighted to receive the news about Fr Paul's kind gesture to support CAFOD as part of his 60th celebration. We hope Father Paul will enjoy his retirement and make new connections with the CAFOD supporters and helpers who live in the Bentham area. Father Paul's act of solidarity with some of the world's poorest people is an inspiration to many."*

We wish Fr Paul the very best in his retirement and hope his 60th celebration is a lovely day for all.

You can follow CAFOD in East Anglia here:

@cafodeastanglia
and @RCEastAnglia

And CAFOD Leeds here:

@CAFODLeeds



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BEARD PROTEST

Ever feel like doing a bake sale or a sponsored run is a bit old hat? Well, no need to despair! Tim Devereaux's recent beard protest has lifted the vale on whacky ways to raise money for charity!

Since March 2020, Tim Devereux has been growing his beard in protest against PM Johnson.

March 2020



He pledged to keep it growing until Johnson resigned, and he asked people to support this by giving funds to the Trussell Trust for foodbanks, via JustGiving. By the start of July 2022, Tim's beard was looking deeply impressive!

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When Boris Johnson announced his resignation earlier this month, Tim visited his local barber's shop, to have the beard removed.

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So far, the beard protest has raised **£756** for Trussell Trust foodbanks.

Tim commented: *"I am overwhelmed by the response to my fund-raiser – my £200 target has been smashed. I don't know whether people really don't like ex-PM Johnson, or whether they just hate beards. Either way, I am hoping the donations will continue!"*

So, thanks Tim for showing us that fundraising ideas can be as outside the box as we like!

Donations to 'Tim's Beard Trimming' can be made at

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/timdevereux1>

Email: tim@devrx.org

Twitter: @tim_for_peace



DIOCESE OF LEEDS: JUSTICE AND PEACE COMMISSION

Web www.leedsjp.org.uk <mailto:jandp@dioceseofleeds.org.uk>



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Diocese of Leeds:

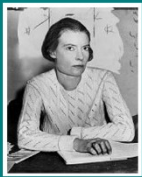


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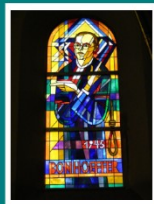
For the Common Good in our Common Home



Has the Church Become a 'Not for Prophets Organisation'?



Dorothy Day



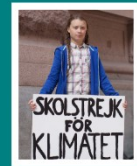
Dietrich Bonhoeffer



St Oscar Romero



Nenmonte Nenquino



Greta Thunberg

SATURDAY 08 October 2022 10am – 4pm

St Robert's parish Room, Robert St. Harrogate

This is a Day of Reflection for anyone in the Diocese of Leeds who wants to take a day out to reflect on the current state of the world.

We are delighted to have obtained **David McLoughlin** to lead us in this day.



David McLoughlin has helped to train priests, deacons, Christian activists and teachers for 40 years. He is a founder member of the Movement of Christian Workers which aims to inspire working people to transform the world by transforming the world of work. He is the Emeritus Fellow of Christian Theology at Newman University. He provides theological support for charities, religious orders, and movements including Pax Christi, Marriage Care, Caritas, MCW and ACTA. David says his favourite

religious saying is: "The glory of God is a fully alive human person."







The day will consist of 3 talks by David with opportunities for questions and time for personal reflection. Liturgy will be integrated across the course of the day.

Email jandp@dioceseofleeds.org.uk to reserve a place.

Free to attend. Voluntary collection taken on the day. Limited places, booking essential.



EVENTS

 Fri 22 Jul	NJPN Conference – Hope is a Verb with it's Sleeves Rolled Up <i>Hayes Conference Centre, Fri 22nd Mar 6pm – Sun 24th Mar 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: PLACES MAY STILL BE AVAILABLE https://www.leedsjp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/NJPN-Conference-Booking-Form-2022.pdf
 Sat 06 Aug	Hiroshima & Nagasaki Commemoration All Day & International There are commemorative events in Leeds, Bradford and Hebden Bridge – see our website for more details: https://www.leedsjp.org.uk/event/hiroshima-day-commemoration/?instance_id=438
 Sat 08 Oct	Animate with SPARK  <i>Wheeler Hall, Leeds Cathedral 10am – 4pm</i> This is an open invitation to younger Catholics in the Leeds Diocese (aged 18-30ish) who are passionate about issues of social justice. Pre-register for this event now by emailing your interest to sparks.jandp@dioceseofleeds.org.uk
 Sat 15 Oct	Has the Church become a 'Not for Prophets' Organisation? <i>St Roberts Parish Rooms, Robert Street, Harrogate 10:00am – 4pm</i> Our first in-person Day of Reflection for a while! – We are delighted to have 'jobbing theologian' David Mcloughlin to lead us in this exploration of prophecy for the 21 st century. Email jandp@dioceseofleeds.org.uk to pre-register. Spaces are limited – book a place before it goes on general release via Eventbrite.
 Fri 09 Dec	Film Screening: Boycott – Leeds Palestinian Film festival <i>Wheeler Hall, Leeds Cathedral 6:30pm Save the Date</i> In conjunction with the Leeds Palestinian Film festival and Pax Christi in the Leeds Diocese we are delighted to have been invited to host the screening of the final film in this year's film festival. It is called 'Boycott'. An Eventbrite page will be available to reserve a place from September.

See our website for the latest updates and events that may be of interest

www.leedsjp.org.uk