



## **ROMERO LECTURE 2023: Responding to the Cry of the Poor Today**

Every year the Romero Trust organise a short lecture tour with a visiting speaker with personal connections to St Oscar Romero or El Salvador.

This year the speaker will be Peggy Healy and we are delighted that, in partnership with Leeds Trinity University, we will be hosting a presentation of her talk at Leeds Trinity University on Tuesday 21 March 7:30pm.



There could be few people better placed or qualified to speak about St Oscar and the martyrs of El Salvador and how they can inspire us to respond to the cry of the poor in the world of today. Peggy has deep and broad experience of community service, of advocacy and policy work on human rights in Latin America and globally.

For more than two decades, she worked as a Maryknoll missionary sister in the United States and in Central America, where she was a close colleague and friend of the members of her congregation who were martyred in El Salvador. After working as a specialist paediatric nurse practitioner among poor, marginalised urban and rural communities in Nicaragua, throughout the repression and civil conflicts which raged across Central America, Peggy returned to health work in

the South Bronx.

A graduate of Fordham University's School of Law, amongst her many achievements Peggy has received awards for her work as a peacemaker in Central America, for her service to survivors and families of those killed in the September 11 attack on the World Trade Centre and was honoured by President Clinton for her work in human rights. She holds an honorary doctorate in human rights.

From 2009 to 2021 she served as senior Vice-President for Canada and Latin America of Covenant House International, an agency dedicated to empowering young people, to survive and overcome homelessness, trafficking and abuse. Much of her work was focused on Mexico and throughout the region of Central America, enabling young people at risk to overcome adversity and to flourish.

**Reserve a place now!**

**21 March 2023**

**7:30pm**

Reserve a place via our Eventbrite page for this event. This event is free. Leeds Trinity University will be providing light refreshments from 7pm.

Follow this link:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-romero-lecture-2023-responding-to-the-cry-of-the-poor-today-tickets-531665715467>

**The Romero Trust**

Find out more by following this link:

<http://www.romerotrust.org.uk/>



## DIRECTOR OF CATHOLIC MISSION – LEEDS TRINITY UNIVERSITY

*By Dr Ann Marie Mealey, Director of Catholic Mission at LTU and J&P Commission member*

Since Leeds Trinity was founded by the Cross and Passion Sisters in 1966 as two Catholic Teacher Training Colleges, it is clear that the vision for what was then known as Trinity and All Saints College was one of transformation of lives through education which would be informed by faith.

The whole point of Leeds Trinity's foundation was to widen access to skills and expertise that students – who may not even have believed that they could become teachers or even get into higher education – needed to carve out their futures positively.

Although today, most universities will say that they have a widening participation agenda and are keen to open access to education for those who might not otherwise have believed that they could be given the opportunity to do a degree, Catholic universities have played this role for a very long time. In fact, their very nature and foundation in the faith means that there is a requirement and an expectation that they will use their faith and their 'raison d'être' to make a difference in the world. There is one key document that makes this very clear: *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* stipulates that a 'Catholic' university is called in a unique and special way to work 'for the authentic good of individuals and of human society as a whole' (paragraph 7).

In our world which is marked by the rapid developments in technology in particular, we need to take time to reflect on the implications of this change for societies, for universities, for communities that are

vulnerable in some way – in short, we need to keep hold of what is truly human. As expressed by John Paul II,

*Scientific and technological discoveries create an enormous economic and industrial growth, but they also inescapably require the correspondingly necessary search for meaning in order to guarantee that the new discoveries be used for the authentic good of individuals and of human society as a whole. If it is the responsibility of every University to search for such meaning, a Catholic University is called in a particular way to respond to this need: its Christian inspiration enables it to include the moral, spiritual and religious dimension in its research, and to evaluate the attainments of science and technology in the perspective of the totality of the human person.*  
(paragraph 7.)

The theological discipline which is focussed on finding out what is human in every age is that of moral theology or theological ethics. While the prominence of this discipline is not that visible in the current HE climate where numbers being recruited to the remaining Theology and/or religious studies type programmes on offer at our universities are decreasing rapidly, it is still an important subject for universities that wish to continue to live out their faith mission and values – and indeed invite others along with them on the journey. Everyone who works at a Catholic university is invited to join in the search for truth and ways of living that enhance our human dignity and help us to see, as Fratelli Tutti puts, beyond the 'Dark Clouds over a Closed World.'



So many people that we work with and study with are living in this closed world that Pope Francis speaks about. Digital media is mentioned in this document too as a medium which can often lead to the gradual 'loss of contact with concrete reality, blocking the development of authentic interpersonal relationships.' (Fratelli Tutti, parag. 43.). Understanding how our Catholic Mission plays out in the working of our university and the people and organisations which it serves externally involves always going to the beating heart of matters, the flesh and blood of whatever it is that might be holding people or groups back.

We are called into a space where as much as we might like to turn a blind eye to the pain and the suffering in the name of progress or financial gain, we must challenge the structures and forms of human living and interactions that are oppressive and standing in the way of what is needed to 'really build community.' (Fratelli Tutti 43).

For some, however, doing this through a Catholic mission perspective or the reclaiming of Catholic Mission for an organisation that was founded on this very premise is not attractive. And we have to acknowledge the reasons why this might be the case but it is clear that if Catholic Mission is to make sense to universities, to local people, faith groups and others, it must also be seen as a vehicle through which education about faith and morality can play out, be accessed and supported.

This for me is the first step: understanding why it matters. And then getting to place where people can see how they can get involved or indeed the other way around. I need to also look at what is happening and where people are at themselves and then see

how Catholic mission can help and support – and even join in and learn!

Catholic Social Teaching and the entire discipline of moral theology has so much to offer the world. We know that it used to be referred to as the Church's 'Best Kept Secret'. But it's not really a secret anymore in my view; we just need to get to a place where we're being creative about how we apply it, refer to it, and use to a lens through which we can see the world with fresh eyes. It helps us to actually 'see' people – which although it may seem quite naïve in today's world is something which is often neglected and forgotten.

*Gaudium et Spes* reminds us not only of the Council's attempt to renew the Church itself but also of the calling into question of 'accepted values' and the impatience that we may feel when we are being asked or even expected to consider values. 'Many people are shaken', the document says. This feeling of 'being shaken' is a good metaphor through which Catholic Mission can be viewed as it encourages us back to the fact that people are vulnerable and need a compass to guide their path towards liberation and fulfilment.

When I was student at Maynooth, we did a module on faith and spirituality. I recall learning an Italian phrase that stayed with me and which I often share with people when they are expressing dismay about things that are affecting them in their lives: *Chiaroscuro*. It refers to the need for us to acknowledge that in life there are aspects of light and shade – each interacting with us as we progress through our lives. But the key aspect that stands out for us as regards our faith is that there is always more reason to embody and believe in 'light' and hope of



there being even more 'light' when we focus on concrete actions that bring it about.

So, in short, this is what it means to me: faith seeking expression in action that helps 'all persons of goodwill' to find fulfilment socially, intellectually, professionally and spirituality. The more we can do to make the world more human through the lens of the richness of faith and spirituality the closer we will get to being able to say we are fulfilling our mission.

In a volume entitled *Social Justice and Citizenship: Perspectives for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, I wrote an article on faith and social action from a Christian perspective. I cited the work of the well-known Catholic ethicist, Johan Verstraeten, who has written extensively on theological ethics and Catholic Social Teaching to show that the 'Catholic tradition, with its stress on individual dignity, the common good, solidarity and subsidiarity...' can help us to tackle current issues facing our communities locally and internationally (Mealey et al., 2018, p. 17). I also make mention of the 'Jesus Quest' – a term which is used by many biblical scholars. Some speak about Qumran and Jesus's ministry as a 'social programme.' This links very much with the idea that faith should impact on how we behave and how we see the world and its challenges (Witherington 1995: 160).

Ultimately this shows that from many disciplines and perspectives, faith requires action and is lived out in how we respond to the ways of living that are less than human which we can see all around us. There is a link here with Erik Voegelin's work on mysticism, science and politics which shows that there is a credible connection that can be made between setting the time to reflect and contemplate on what the world needs so

that it can provide the necessary check and balance of the day to day workings of politics (Cf for an interesting read about politics and mysticism: [Henrik-Syse1.pdf \(lsu.edu\)](#))

I am really excited about the fact that my role involves finding creative ways of bringing the social teachings to bear on how the university sees itself operating on the day-to-day basis and also to working with local people who for a long time have been waiting to be invited into the dialogue about how we can make the faith relevant to contemporary living. A lot of groups seem to be working quietly on their own without a strategic focus or direction. This is not to say that their work is not valuable; it is to suggest the opposite in fact: their work is so significant that it needs a bigger platform.

I'm obviously hoping to find support from the Diocese and the parishes, but I'm also open to people contacting me directly to suggest other ways in which we can deepen our common search to live out our humanity in the most fulfilling of ways. Research projects, events, lectures on the social teaching and related themes are all of interest in this role. Of course we also need to remember that *Fides quaerens intellectum* – we need to always find the time to make sense of what we are being guided to do and to achieve, for, in the words of Anselm of Canterbury, "Neque enim quaero intelligere ut credam, sed credo ut intelligam". In other words, 'I do not seek to understand in order that I may believe, but rather, I believe in order that I may understand.'





## Encounter, Conversion, Hope

### A Day of Shared Reflection

Sunday 30 April 2023 10:15-4:00pm

*Norwood Methodist Retreat Centre,*

*Lower Norwood Road, Norwood, Otley, LS21 2RA*



We all need to do more about our climate crisis. Sometimes, however, we need to stand back and reflect on our motivations and be re-charged in our commitment. That is what this day is about. It will be led by Linda Jones, Head of Theology Programme at CAFOD.

This day will include prayer (mass is included), the opportunity to reflect on why we must care for our Common Home, and time for personal reflection.

It is being organised in collaboration with the CAFOD group at Our Lady of Kirkstall parish in Leeds.

Join us for this Sabbath opportunity for to reflect on the challenge to care for our Common Home in the beauty of the Washburn valley in the Yorkshire countryside between Otley and Blubberhouses.

This free to attend (voluntary collection on the day) event is open to all - but booking is essential as places are limited.

Lift-sharing will be offered so as to minimise the use of cars (public transport is not available). Follow this link to book a place and offer / request a lift to the venue.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/encounter-conversion-hope-tickets-533796348247>



## NORTHERN DIOCESES ENVIRONMENT GROUP – AN INVITATION

By Paul Kelly, St Mary & St Michael Parish, Settle

*Would you like to meet and share with others active in care of the environment across the north?*

The Northern Dioceses Environment Group meets quarterly and welcomes you to join whenever you can. Aiming to meet mostly on Zoom for about 1½ hrs, but annually in person, the format generally comprises prayer, a keynote input, breakout discussion, questions/issues/concerns, 'notice board', and planning what participants most want.

At the next meeting in the third week of March **Sr Margaret Atkins**, theologian and course leader at Boarbank Hall, will give the input about learning and the environment.

It has been great to share knowledge, experience and practice whether as an individual in a parish, volunteer, J&P group, Diocesan staff, or anything in-between. Members consistently value the solidarity with others, learning new ideas, and having a safe space to raise concerns and find support.

If you would like to be on the mailing list to hear about and hopefully join some of the future meetings please send your details to [M.Scully@caritassalford.org.uk](mailto:M.Scully@caritassalford.org.uk) Mary works for Caritas Diocese of Salford and wonderfully co-ordinates things for the NDEG. Hope to see you on Zoom in March.

*The Commission has regularly attended these meetings in the past and found them to be useful sessions to understand what is happening in other Dioceses – as well as hearing from some interesting speakers.*

## UKRAINE

On Sunday the 19<sup>th</sup> March there will be a film screening of UKRLAND at the Otley Courthouse.

Tickets cost £6 and all proceeds from them will be used to support to local Ukrainian groups.

Follow this link to the 'Leeds Inspired' website:

<https://www.leedsinspired.co.uk/events/otley-film-society-present-ukrland-stories-ukraine>

Sun 19 Mar 2023

## Otley Film Society Present: UKRLAND: Stories from Ukraine

Film

Event organiser: Otley Courthouse

This screening is being shown in solidarity with the people of Ukraine. All profits will be passed on to support Ukrainian groups locally. This film records honest conversations about the war in Ukraine, and consists of 8 documentary episodes written by modern Ukrainian authors.

Actress Shorena Shonia skilfully works with each story to tell the stories of strong and loving women who will cross hundreds of roads and lead their children to their land - UKRLAND, where there will be no evil, and there will be a strong spirit, culture and love.

Ukrainian and English are used in the performance. For ease of understanding, Ukrainian subtitles are used for English scenes, and English subtitles for Ukrainian ones.



## FAIRTRADE FORTNIGHT 2023

By *Matty Maslen*

This year Fairtrade Fortnight is running from the 27<sup>th</sup> February to the 12<sup>th</sup> March. The two week long campaign aims to raise awareness about the huge impact that “making the small switch to Fairtrade [has on helping to support] producers in protecting the future of some of our most-loved food and the planet”.

Click [here](#) to see the Fairtrade Foundation’s page.

### The Endangered Aisle



On Tuesday 28 February, Fairtrade launches the Endangered Aisle, an exciting pop-up experience in Shoreditch, east London.

The Endangered Aisle will be open to the public:

- 28 February, 9am–4pm
- 1 March, 9am–4pm
- 2 March, 9am–1pm

The Endangered Aisle will shine a light on the supermarket staples most at risk of becoming endangered from the climate crisis, including coffee, bananas and chocolate.

Fairtrade will also release **new research** highlighting how climate change is endangering the future of many favourite foods grown by farmers overseas.

As part of Fairtrade Fortnight, the Fairtrade Foundation is running **free** ‘Big Fairtrade Get Togethers’. These events offer people the chance to hear directly from Fairtrade farmers on how to keep eating our favourite foods while being sustainable. The testimony of these farmers will be accompanied by talks from other experts in the field (pun intended!).

Click the link [here](#) to sign up to find more details of these events.

More locally to the diocese, smaller Fairtrade groups are running events too!

In Leeds Civic Hall there is a Fairtrade Schools Celebration on the 10<sup>th</sup> March 2023. Click [here](#) to see more.

In The Methodist Centre in Chapel Allerton there is a ‘[Fairtrade Cafe](#)’ on the 11<sup>th</sup> March from 10:30am.

Bradford Cathedral are hosting the ‘[Fairtrade Fortnight Big Brew](#)’ on the 12<sup>th</sup> March at 11:30am.

I’m sure there are many more events happening in parishes and schools around the Diocese that I haven’t listed above!

If you find that none of these dates suit you but you’d still like to be involved in Fairtrade Fortnight, here are some suggestions from the Fairtrade Foundation for how you can get involved:

#### Why not:

- Visit our Resource Library [↗](#)
- Share your plans when signing up for the Big Fairtrade Get Togethers [↗](#) or email [hello@fairtrade.org.uk](mailto:hello@fairtrade.org.uk) [↗](#)
- Read our latest blog: How campaigners are taking part in Fairtrade Fortnight
- Watch our Campaign Catch Up on Fairtrade Fortnight 2023 [↗](#).

If you know of other Fairtrade events happening near you that you’d like promoted, remember you can message us on social media and we can share your posts!

<https://www.facebook.com/LeedsJusticeandPeace>



EVENTS

 <b>Mon 27<sup>th</sup> Feb</b>	<p><b>Fairtrade Fortnight 2023</b>  This Fairtrade Fortnight, join us in spreading a simple message: choose Fairtrade now and help save our favourite foods.  Get involved: <a href="https://www.fairtrade.org.uk/get-involved/current-campaigns/fairtrade-fortnight/">https://www.fairtrade.org.uk/get-involved/current-campaigns/fairtrade-fortnight/</a></p>
 <b>Thu 2<sup>nd</sup> Mar</b>	<p><b>Creation &amp; the Common Good – Scottish Laity Network</b>  7pm - 8:30pm – online via Zoom  one of a series of 6 events organised by the Scottish Laity Network that take place during Lent 2023.  <a href="https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeWihmmwB0un4ioHUoCAognziA9cjh6SMwdMZe4JRlJqFyWw/viewform">https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeWihmmwB0un4ioHUoCAognziA9cjh6SMwdMZe4JRlJqFyWw/viewform</a></p>
 <b>Thu 9<sup>th</sup> Mar</b>	<p><b>Gender &amp; the Common Good – Scottish Laity Network</b>  7pm - 8:30pm – online via Zoom  one of a series of 6 events organised by the Scottish Laity Network that take place during Lent 2023.  <a href="https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeWihmmwB0un4ioHUoCAognziA9cjh6SMwdMZe4JRlJqFyWw/viewform">https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeWihmmwB0un4ioHUoCAognziA9cjh6SMwdMZe4JRlJqFyWw/viewform</a></p>
 <b>Thu 16<sup>th</sup> Mar</b>	<p><b>Politics &amp; the Common Good – Scottish laity Network</b>  7pm - 8:30pm online via Zoom  one of a series of 6 events organised by the Scottish Laity Network that take place during Lent 2023.  <a href="https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeWihmmwB0un4ioHUoCAognziA9cjh6SMwdMZe4JRlJqFyWw/viewform">https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeWihmmwB0un4ioHUoCAognziA9cjh6SMwdMZe4JRlJqFyWw/viewform</a></p>
 <b>Tue 21<sup>st</sup> Mar</b>	<p><b>Responding to the Cry of the Poor Today</b>  <i>Leeds Trinity University, Brownberrie Lane, Leeds LS18 at 7:30pm</i>  Peggy Healy, a former Maryknoll sister who has worked in Human Rights for over 40 years provides her unique insights in this talk which we are facilitating, along with Leeds Trinity University, for the Romero Trust. Reserve a place by using this link <a href="#">The Romero Lecture 2023: Responding to the Cry of the Poor Today Tickets, Tue 21 Mar 2023 at 19:00   Eventbrite</a></p>
 <b>Thu 23<sup>rd</sup> Mar</b>	<p><b>Synodality &amp; the Common Good – Scottish laity Network</b>  7pm - 8:30pm online via Zoom  one of a series of 6 events organised by the Scottish Laity Network that take place during Lent 2023.  <a href="https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeWihmmwB0un4ioHUoCAognziA9cjh6SMwdMZe4JRlJqFyWw/viewform">https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeWihmmwB0un4ioHUoCAognziA9cjh6SMwdMZe4JRlJqFyWw/viewform</a></p>
 <b>Sun 30<sup>th</sup> Apr</b>	<p><b>J&amp;P Day of reflection on Climate Change – led by Linda Jones of CAFOD</b>  <i>@ Norwood Methodist Retreat Centre near Lindleywood Reservoir 10:15am – 4pm</i>  This day is free to attend (voluntary collection on the day). Join us in the beautiful Yorkshire countryside to reflect on God’s Creation and why we must do more to care for it.  Lift sharing will be offered where possible, as the venue is not reachable by public transport.  Places are limited. Book a place by following this link: <a href="#">Encounter, Conversion, Hope Tickets, Sun 30 Apr 2023 at 10:15   Eventbrite</a></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.**