



LAUDATO SI IN ACTION – VISITING THE SALFORD DIOCESE CLIMATE CHANGE GARDEN AND CENTRE

By Sean Morris, Good Shepherd Church Community, Mytholmroyd & Commission member

The Church, like so many parts of society, is acutely aware of the damage humans have made to our planet, and the real risks climate change has for all of us. It is important to encourage the Leeds Diocese to follow in the footsteps of other dioceses in tackling these issues.



Parish members of the Church of the Good Shepherd in Mytholmroyd have set up a 'Laudato Si' group and held a fact-finding tour of the Salford Diocese's climate change garden and centre, based at Wardley Hall. The parish has been engaged on Laudato Si since it was launched by the Pope, with house groups and education events.

Members of the group had attended a Zoom meeting of the Commission with Bishop John Arnold, who leads on climate change matters for the Bishops Conference. Bishop John highlighted in his talk the positive work the Salford Diocese had taken to tackle climate change, including the Laudato Si garden at Wardley Hall. The Greater Manchester 'Our

Faith, Our Planet' partnership recently met Pope Francis to discuss its work and direct future action -

<https://religionmediacentre.org.uk/news/delegation-off-to-the-vatican-to-tell-pope-this-is-how-we-are-tackling-climate-change-in-manchester/>



Keen to learn more, our group met the Diocese's Head of Environment, Dr Emma Gardner, who explained the importance of the Salford Laudato Si Centre and its wider work in developing a climate change plan for the Diocese.

The Diocese seeks to be zero carbon by 2038.

The Laudato Si Centre includes educational and wellbeing spaces in the walled gardens, greenhouses, an orchard, an outdoor classroom and more recently connections to adjoining woodland. As well as a partnership to create a memorial woodland, it has a bee colony living across





the hives in the walled garden producing award winning honey. It also includes thriving polytunnels and greenhouses. The outdoor classroom is made up of eco-bricks in the walls which has been made by parishioners, and it is surrounded by an accessible surface to provide equal access for all.

The visit inspired our group to look at developing our own smaller Laudato Si garden, start drafting a local climate change plan and promote this work through the Commission. We want to connect with our local councils to understand more about wider sustainability projects. We were pleased to hear the Leeds Diocese is moving in the same direction and will be appointing its own Environment Officer shortly. We encourage other parishes to visit Wardley Hall and be equally inspired to work on the values of Laudato Si in saving our planet for our future generations.

To arrange a visit to the Laudato Si Centre:

Email an enquiry to:
laudatosi@dioceseofsalford.org.uk

They will respond to you with the necessary form to fill out to make your visit possible!

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SIGNS OF HOPE IN A TROUBLED WORLD

By Angela Powell, CAFOD Leeds

Christine Allen, CAFOD Director recently gave a talk 'Signs of Hope in a Troubled World', as a Memorial Lecture in the diocese of

Middlesborough. Read the opening paragraphs or watch the full lecture [here](#).

Christine began by explaining her reasons for choosing this theme: "it is easy to feel overwhelmed in the face of so much that is wrong in our society, we rarely see 'good news' stories on our news, and yet, there is so much witness and hope out there.

I want to reflect on what it means to be a sign of hope at different levels and how they are connected."

The reality of our world

Our world is troubled. What worries you?

At the local level we might think of crime and violence, especially towards our young people – gangs and drug cultures. We might worry about poverty and the increasing numbers of people who struggle to get by – to put their heating on, to put food on the table. My two local churches (one catholic one Anglican) organise food distribution. More than 300 packs of food are given out between them every week.

At work, as part of the Caritas Network, I get regular updates on emergency responses and situations every day.

- The conflict in Sudan
- Over 30 million facing a food crisis across East Africa
- The war in Ukraine
- The floods in Pakistan
- The earthquake in Syria/ Turkey

I could go on. You don't need me to tell you that we have a troubled world, or that the underlying causes are structural: climate change, conflict, economic inequality.

Our world is structured and organised based on a set of values that frankly are at odds with the Christian values of human dignity, of



integral human development: that holistic and profoundly spiritual sense of development that Paul VI outlined in 1965 *Populorum Progressio*. He didn't just talk about people having the basics, he talked about how people should be "artisans of their own destiny". This, along with the 'ethic of solidarity' idea that Francis has developed further, are essential in the Christian conception of the human person.

A Christian sense of hope

So, it is easy to feel overwhelmed. To perhaps cower in fear in a locked room like the disciples did on the first Pentecost. It is an easy place to be.

CAFOD has "hope" as one of our values, that guides our work and informs our strategic framework: *"Hope transforms despair, feeds love and fuels our work. We are profoundly hopeful, inspired by Scripture, Catholic Social Teaching and the resourcefulness and strength of our supporters, volunteers, local partners and the people and communities we seek to serve. Hope joins us in confidence with others to act for the common good."*

You will know the people who inspire you. Whether it's food banks or local Caritas agencies around the world, as a church we are bringing that hope. In buckets.

But for us as Christians, this is something more than us just doing nice things – as important as they are. As Pope Francis reminded us: *"no act of love however small, is without meaning"*!

We are witnessing to a different understanding of the human person: as our brother and sister. We are obeying the imperative of Christ to be as love to one another.

Pope Francis said at the Caritas Internationalis General Assembly:

"There is no better way to show God that we understand the meaning of the Eucharist than by giving to others what we ourselves have received when, in response to Christ's love, we make ourselves a gift for others."

We aren't just another set of NGOs, we are church: witnesses, the embodiment of love. It's not just heroic service or activism.

It's not narrow interests, it's love. When we embrace God's love and remain in it, and love as God loves, we understand the meaning of our own lives: we find life only when we give it away; we find our own life important, when we recognize how totally precious is the life of every other.

"Yes, our sibling neighbour's needs question us, disturb us, and challenge us to respond. As they should! For this is Christ questioning, disturbing, and challenging us. And God's love gives us the strength to respond."

These were the words that Cardinal Czerny reminded us, words that Pope Francis had talked about. Being a sign of hope in the world is all about love, and how we show that love. Which is easy to say but much, much harder to do in practice.

In our world, self-interest and indifference are not only tolerated but justified and indeed imposed. Solidarity is side-lined as optional, the common good reduced to an abstraction, and people deprived of their proper hope.



So, our expressions of love, our practice of solidarity and the common good is a counter-cultural witness to hope.

Could you volunteer with CAFOD?

Contact Mrs Sharon Matthews at:
smatthews@cafod.org.uk

07748 514641

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REFLECTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

By Sara Forrest, Commission Member

A couple of weeks after the last J&P Day of Reflection (about care of Creation), I enjoyed a short break on the Norfolk Broads in a vintage sailing cruiser. I enjoyed living with the basic amenities for a few days. There was a little storage in a cabin that was approximately 6x8 feet. Cabinets in the well

Water, in a 10 litre plastic can (needed to be boiled before it was drunk)

A car battery providing LED light (which needs to be supplemented by a head torch for reading in the evening)

Two gas burners for cooking

A pump action toilet that pumped straight out into the river/ broad water

Mobile phone signals varied significantly.

provided storage for food. We also had:

We had a small outboard engine, so we didn't have to sail everywhere, we planned our route to enable us to buy food at appropriate times, top up the water from a

hose pipe, and to get a shower. In the peace and quiet my thoughts often returned to the day of reflection and the challenge of climate change. A powerful thought struck me.

At home I have reliable supplies of drinking water, gas and electricity, the shops have the food I want in stock. I have broadband and good mobile phone reception. I live within a democratic, stable place where the basics of life can be taken for granted. As such, I am protected from many of the many negative aspects of climate change.

BUT, across the world many people do not have that stable infrastructure. Life is precarious. The impacts of Climate Change already threaten crops, water supplies, shelter, health, safety and economies.

As I write this, our Southern European neighbours and tourists are struggling in temperatures over 40°C. Our government continue to adopt populist policies against immigration.

So, I ask myself, what more should I do?

I have concluded that it is time to take a more public stand. I will write to my MP about the lack of progress on upgrading the poor insulation of our current housing stock and the failure of building regulations to ensure that new buildings are fit for our future climate. And against the stance towards immigration.

I will consider climate change policy when I cast my vote in future elections.

I believe that millions of little, individual actions such as these will make a difference.

I hope and I pray that my belief is well placed.



REFLECTION ON THE NJPN CONFERENCE 2023

By Chukwuemeka Nwachukwu



The 45th Annual conference of the National Justice and Peace Network held on 21 – 23 July 2023 at the Hayes conference centre in Swanwick, Alfreton Derby. With the Theme 'Sustainability? Survival or Shutdown'. It was a very great weekend filled with interesting and interactive sessions. This is my second time at the conference, and it was worthwhile. The conference speakers were very resourceful and really inspired everyone. Brian O'Toole who is the director of the Presentation sisters Justice Desk for Ireland and England spoke on the importance of embracing the sustainable development goals. He further reiterated on the need to heed to the cry of the earth and to the people kept poor.

Christine Allen who is the Director of CAFOD in her rendition said, *"Work for justice is part of preaching the Gospel."* Speaking about the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) she opined that the Catholic Social Teaching went further by addressing the sin of structural injustice. Adding that some people are rich because some people are poor and such injustice is clearly seen in our economics.

Sir John Battle who is currently chair of Leeds Diocesan Justice and Peace Commission urged the catholic church to shift towards action on climate and poverty. He opined that it was not enough for the bishops to ask people to support the common good. *"We need consistent and sustained advocacy action"* if the Church is to be a catalyst for change. He told delegates *"Advocacy attempts to understand the causes of poverty and injustice, and to work on behalf of the poor to change the structures of injustice."* He furthermore said, *"a Church that takes risks"* is needed rather than *"softly whispered backroom lobbying"*. He suggested that Catholics should use *Laudato Si'* and *Fratelli Tutti* to combat those seeking to create a division between care for the earth and care for the poor.



I am grateful to SPARK and the Leeds Justice and Peace Commission for the opportunity to be at this year's conference. I urge young people to join me as to advocates for our common home.



FOLLOW-UPS FROM THE NJPN CONFERENCE

As you may have seen, following on from the conference in July, Hexham and Newcastle J&P have released a letter template to help local campaigners to contact their MPs and call on them to take a more active role in fulfilling their obligations to the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals.

Hexham and Newcastle J&P Letter to MPs about the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Given that the NJPN Conference this year was based around the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Hexham and Newcastle Justice and Peace Co-Ordinating Council have kindly supplied a document that we urge you to edit, print off, and send to your local MPs, making the point that it's time they start acting on and making those goals a reality.

You can download the letter by clicking the link below;

To access the full letter, click [this link](#) which will take you to the NJPN website where you can download it.



The letter includes a very clear explanation of what the sender is asking of their MP:

"Hence, I am advocating for the following policies to be included in the Conservative/ Labour Manifesto:

An end to the development of new fossil fuel fields in the North Sea (we simply do not need more fossil fuels [1]);

A firm commitment to deliver on the UK's net zero target by 2050 (or sooner), including the important interim steps of achieving a minimum 68% reduction in territorial emissions by 2030, the power grid to be 100% renewable energy by 2030 with a minimum 78% reduction in emissions by 2035;

A commitment to deliver on the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) by 2030 as key to creating a fair, sustainable society where no-one is left behind."

Please take the time to read the letter in full and consider contacting your MP!

Talks that were given at the conference were recorded so that those of us who were unable to attend can now see for ourselves what was said!

If you'd like to view the recordings then follow [this link](#) to the National Justice and Peace Network's YouTube channel where you can find the talks from John Battle, Christine Allen, and Brian O'Toole.



LEEDS TO HOST PEACEJAM SLAM 2023

By Matty Maslen

PeaceJam is an international organisation led by 14 Nobel Peace Laureates working to support a generation of future Nobel Peace Laureates. Their vision is "To Make Peace a Verb".



So far, over 1.3 million young people in more than 40 countries have taken part in the PeaceJam programme.

On the 11th of November 2023, Leeds will be home to PeaceJam's one-day event with the theme 'Your World, Your Way'.


During the day, youth will take part in workshops, near-peer mentoring groups and a social action planning session to empower them to be the change they want to see in the world.

To facilitate sustainable change, schools and youth groups will also have access to a six-week programme that compliments the Citizen GCSE curriculum.

The day's inspirational keynote speaker is David Owumi.

"David envisions a world without waste bins, where everything is reused and has taken steps towards this future with the creation of 'Qinq'. 'Qinq' is an app that works with various community groups to reuse materials

and supports the circular economy! His personal journey embodies what it means to be resilient, and his community actions show how everyone can be empowered to change the world for the better. Learn more about David [here](#)." [quoted from PeaceJam email].

Registration for the Leeds Slam opens on the 25th of September  Inquire for more at: unitedkingdom@peacejam.org

A few years ago, I had the pleasure at volunteering at a PeaceJam UK event, and I would highly recommend PeaceJam as an organisation to get involved with! They are about to open applications to join their Youth Team:

Applications open on the 18th of September to join our Youth Team 

Who are we looking for?

Anyone aged 14-25 who lives in the UK and will continue to live in the UK until at least July 2024.

What does a year on the Youth Team look like?

A year commitment that runs from the start of November to the end of July with a break for summer and a quiet period during the exam season in May and June. We run monthly Zoom meetings with Youth Team members from across the UK on the first Sunday evening of every month. During the year, there are loads of opportunities to be involved (see a summary below) and at the end of the year, Youth Team members will receive a certificate of recognition for their achievements.

What opportunities are there as part of the Youth Team?







Help shape **PeaceJam** UK events by giving your input and feedback throughout the process and then attending and volunteering on the day. This includes, potentially creating and running workshops, mentoring and finding speakers. There will also be the opportunity to submit a social action project for the chance to receive support and mentorship in developing your project. As well as other competitions and awards to get involved in throughout the year. We also run training days based on what our young people wish to have more support and experience in. **PeaceJam** can also count towards volunteer modules and volunteer placements (such as the Duke of Edinburgh Award) and provides a great experience for anyone looking to work in the charity sector.

If you or any youth you know, are interested in applying for our team and learning more please contact us below!



NEWSLETTER September 2023

EVENTS

 Fri 01 Sep – Wed 04 Oct	<p>Season of Creation <i>The newest Season of the Church's year</i></p> <p>What will be happening in your church and parish community to celebrate this Season of the Church's year? The theme for 2023 is 'Let Justice & Peace Flow' – so there must be some possibilities that come to mind about the interconnectedness of working for Climate Justice and working for justice more generally.</p> <p>If you need ideas then take a look at the Westminster Diocese J&P website: https://westminsterjusticeandpeace.org/season-of-creation-1st-september-4th-october/</p>
 Sat 23rd Sep	<p>LCI Creativity Carousel <i>10:30am – 3pm, @Leeds Church Institute</i></p> <p>'Learning for a Faithful City' is at the core of this day retreat. LCI is inviting volunteers, paid workers and faith setting staff from across the city to come together, reflect and inspire each other aided by invited artists, poets and musicians.</p> <p>Book here: https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/creativity-carousel-tickets-602560934977</p>
 Mon 25th Sep	<p>Catholic Social Teachings & the Public Sq: Relevance for our Universities Today? <i>7pm – 9pm, @Online</i></p> <p>Online open lecture has been organised by the office of the Director of Catholic Mission at Leeds Trinity University. Lecture given by Dr Ann Marie Mealey, Director of Catholic Mission, Leeds Trinity University.</p> <p>To book, contact Dr Ann Marie Mealey a.mealey@leedstrinity.ac.uk</p>
 Wed 4th October	<p>Journeys of Hope: Launch Event <i>7pm – 9pm, @Bradford Cathedral</i></p> <p>In partnership with the University they are hosting an exhibition of Ugandan Asian migration stories, alongside stories from the Windrush Community. At the launch, a panel of guests speaking about their own experiences of journeying to Bradford and how they have contributed to our shared history.</p> <p>Book here: https://bradfordcathedral.org.uk/event/journeys-of-hope-launch-event/</p>
 Mon 16th Oct	<p>We Need a better story: What shape might it take? <i>7pm – 8:30pm @Online</i></p> <p>Online open lecture has been organised by the office of the Director of Catholic Mission at Leeds Trinity University. Lecture given by David McLoughlin, Emeritus Fellow, Newman University, Birmingham.</p> <p>To book, contact Dr Ann Marie Mealey a.mealey@leedstrinity.ac.uk</p>
 Tue 24th Oct	<p>Hospitality & Sanctuary for all: the 2023 Hook Lecture <i>Leeds Minster, 2-6 Kirkgate, Leeds LS2 7DJ 7pm to 9pm</i></p> <p>Revd Dr Inderjit Bhogal, former President of the British Methodist Conference, and Founder of the City of Sanctuary network and movement will give this year's lecture. For more information and to book a place see the Leeds Church Institute website: https://lcileeds.org/events/</p>
<p><i>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.</i></p>	