



Message from the Chair

Dear friends,

I am very pleased to let you know that Janet Vaughan has been appointed the new part-time Administrator for the Justice and Peace Commission. Janet is from Coventry and has much experience of justice and peace and social justice work in parish level. She has also served as a member of the Commission for a couple of years. She has the skills and expertise to build on and develop the work developed over the past nine years by David Jenkins.

We are very grateful for the great contribution David has made to the work of the Commission over the past years. His efficiency, reliability and generosity of spirit has been a great asset. We wish David the very best for the future. Janet will be taking over in July and we are sure she will make her own contribution to the work for and development of justice and peace in our diocese. I am certain she can be sure of all our support.

The annual Justice and Peace Commission Assembly is being planned for Saturday 14th October (see page 10 of this Newsletter) so please make a note of the date in your diaries and make every effort to attend, as these events always provide us with the information and enthusiasm to enable us to continue all our efforts in the many causes which fall within the broad spectrum of justice and peace which require our constant vigilance and action.

With best wishes,

Fr Gerard Murray (Chair)

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CAFOD - Be a Voice this Summer

Julia Hood

MP Correspondent scheme

Our MP Correspondents (MPCs) help to ensure that the voices of many of the world's poorest and most vulnerable people are heard in the corridors of power.

Through letters and meetings with MPs, CAFOD supporters have already helped change government policy, including securing tough laws to tackle climate change and corruption. You don't need to be an expert! CAFOD will write to you three or four times a year about a current issue relating to our work, with all the information you need to write a personal letter or to speak with your MP face-to-face.

Would you like to become an MPC? Do contact CAFOD Birmingham at birmingham@cafod.org.uk or on 01922 722 944. Many thanks.

"Power to be" campaign

Every child has the power in them to achieve great things. But with one in six people still living without electricity, the hopes of millions of the world's children are too often a distant dream.

Local, renewable energy is usually the cheapest, fastest and most efficient solution to bring power to the poorest communities. It can help families to lift themselves out of poverty, without harming the world we share.

During 2017, we're calling on the World Bank to ensure renewable energy access for the world's poorest people. We are powerful when we speak up together. Please involve your parish by:

[Ordering petition cards for parishioners to sign to add their support for the campaign](#)

[Listening to our 20 minute step-by-step introduction to Power to be](#)

[Finding out more: download or order an organiser's guide, liturgy, poster and more](#)

Speak Up Week of Action: 1st to 9th July

Big things are happening this summer: people in all corners of the country are preparing to Speak Up to their newly elected MPs from 1st to 9th July on climate change and energy access for the world's poorest people.

This is your opportunity to make sure that the concerns of the world's poorest people are one of the first things on your newly elected MP's agenda. We are inviting you to organise or attend an event during this week in July and to invite your newly elected MP to attend. From nature walks to tea parties to a picnic after Mass, there are no limits to how you can get those first conversations about energy started. Don't worry – you don't have to be an expert! We will provide you with a briefing to give to your MP as well as suggestions for what to talk about and a guide to organising events.

Sign up to Speak Up! Organise an event or join one near you at cafod.org.uk/speakup

Julia Hood

Holy Land Group

Gill Myall and Miriam Wilcher

We are a group of Christians in Kings Heath who wish to support the efforts of Palestinians and Israelis who are working to secure a Just Peace. We admire their courage in their suffering and commitment to non-violence in spite of provocation.

We came together after a pilgrimage to the Holy Land where we were shocked at the effect of the Separation Wall on the everyday life of Palestinians. We saw how they were cut off from their olive groves and had difficulty getting through checkpoints to get to work.

In recent years the oppression of the Palestinians has become even more severe prompting the churches there to form a group called Sabeel (it means a well of living water). Each Thursday, Sabeel holds a communion service which includes a prayer that is sent to its supporters around the world. We meet at St Dunstan's Church Kings Heath on Thursdays at noon to say the Sabeel prayers.

We run a stall at the monthly farmer's market in Kings Heath to raise awareness of the situation in Palestine with literature and sell Palestinian products.

One of our members has a set of lovely photos, called **Silent Voices**, taken by children to show their everyday life in a Moslem West Bank village. The village is desperately trying to survive and only uses peaceful protests in spite of provocation from the illegal settlers. These have been exhibited in different venues such as Coventry Cathedral, Carrs Lane, St Martin's, local churches, and conferences including the National Justice and Peace Conference. We are looking for more venues. Also we need display boards so if anyone has a set we could have or borrow we should be grateful.

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For the past 3 years we have held ecumenical services during the World Week for Peace in Palestine Israel [an initiative of the World Council of Churches] in September. This year **the 2017 World Week for Peace will be held between Sunday 17th & Sunday 24th September.** [For details, go to Pax Christi](#)

Another group we support is [Kairos Britain](#). This is similar to the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa; 'the time is now' for Israel to acknowledge the just needs of Palestinians.

We contact our local MPs from time to time to keep them informed of our concerns. We have found this worthwhile. This group is an off shoot of St Dunstan's and St Jude's Justice and Peace group.

For more information contact Gill Myall 0121 443 5198 or Miriam Wilcher 0121 444 3568.

Another relevant link is to [Friends of Sabeel](#).
Re. the Silent Voices photos, anyone interested to host could get in touch with Gill, above.

Gill Myall and Miriam Wilcher

Creation Time 1st September to 4th October

Ellen Teague

In 2015 Pope Francis designated 1st September as a World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation in the Catholic Church. In fact, he encourages Creation Time to be celebrated in the Church between **1st September and 4th October**, as it is in other Christian Churches. And so '**Creation Day and Creation Time ...**

The day of prayer, the Pope said, gives individuals and communities an opportunity to implore God's help in protecting creation and an opportunity to ask God's forgiveness "for sins committed against the world in which we live". It was pointed out that last year, on 1st September, Pope Francis himself led Vespers for the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation in St. Peter's Basilica. Similar prayer services were held around the world. Pope Francis encourages all the Catholic Church to be engaged in the day of prayer and the spiritual and lifestyle transformations he has called for in his encyclical **Laudato Si'**, on **Care for Our Common Home'**.

The [Global Catholic Climate Movement](#), which includes around 300-plus Catholic networks which highlight creation care, coordinated efforts and shared

resources for the 2016 Season of Creation. The NJPN will be doing this in Britain for 2017, in collaboration with members such as CAFOD and the Columban missionaries who have care for creation as part of their charism.

The NJPN day looked at available resources, including sample services for 1st September used in Harrow, Southampton and Lancaster parishes. The services held over the past two years provide litanies of repentance, reflections on scripture passages, prayers and hymn choices. These and resource lists are now available on the internet. The NJPN Conference in July, **A Sabbath for the Earth and the Poor – The Challenge of Pope Francis**, will provide further formation and preparation.

The NJPN Environment Group also presented feedback on its work encouraging dioceses to develop environmental policies, developing NJPN policy on fracking, and promoting the livesimply parish award. Diss Parish in East Anglia Diocese was the latest parish to be assessed for the award the following day.

Around 30 activists from dioceses attended the meeting - including from Brentwood, Cardiff, Liverpool, Portsmouth, Middlesbrough, and Westminster – and they joined Catholic organisations and religious involved in social justice - such as the Archbishop Romero Trust, CAFOD, CARJ, PACT, Pax Christi and the Mill Hill missionaries.

The meeting was also NJPN's AGM and Anne Peacey from Hallam Diocese was endorsed to continue her role as NJPN Chair. Campaigns supported by NJPN in 2016 have included: Robin Hood Tax, Trade Justice Movement, Global Day of Action on Military Spending, and Christians Aware Action Cards. The meeting recommended that Blessed Oscar Romero, on the centenary of his birth, become patron of NJPN at the July annual conference.

Creation Time resources, listed by Columban missionaries:

<http://www.columbans.co.uk/creation-time/>

NJPN Environment Working Group:

www.justice-and-peace.org.uk/resources/njpn-environment-working-group/

Booking details for NJPN Conference 2017:

www.justice-and-peace.org.uk/conference

[Extract from NJPN NW J&P e-bulletin May/June]

Ellen Teague

Female Empowerment in Cambodia

Charlotte Bray

When I travelled to Cambodia, as part of CAFOD's Step into the Gap programme, I was privileged to be able to visit the communities that CAFOD work with. The encounters I had with the people I met have had such a profound and transformative effect on my life. It was truly humbling to be able to see first-hand the incredible work that CAFOD partners are doing to support these communities.

One of CAFOD's partners that we visited in Cambodia was called Srer Khmer. They took us to visit Lvear village which is a community that they work with near Siem Reap, in the north of the country. This community in particular is incredibly poor, and faces a lot of challenges due to the effects of climate change on their agriculture. The community invited us to join a women's self-help group which was being run by Srer Khmer. It was one of the most inspiring, profound moments of my life. We all gathered in the village's Pagoda with around 30 women from the community, many with children and babies in their laps, so as you can imagine the room was filled with laughter and energy levels were high.

It was incredible that these women were all coming together to discuss ways in which they themselves wanted to improve their communities' lives. They were being asked to analyse their situations by discussing issues which their community faces, but then they were also being enabled to come up with the solutions to these problems themselves. Srer Khmer was there to facilitate the process, providing support and advice to help these women implement their action plans.

After the meeting I spoke to a woman called Seng Mai who lives in the village with her family. She told me that after joining the group, Srer Khmer helped her to start her own chicken farm. She now sells her chickens to supplement her family's income meaning that her children can go to school. Seng Mai has big dreams for the future as, with the support of Srer Khmer, she plans to also start a vegetable garden and farm pigs.

It was inspiring to see these women empowering themselves, to see them so hopeful and determined to lift themselves and their community out of poverty. Centmill, the executive director of Srer Khmer, told me that previously these women didn't have the opportunity to dream for the future. However, because of groups like these, women across Cambodia are now being empowered to voice opinions, make decisions and implement their action plans. The knock-on effects of this empowerment for the community are incredible. In Lvear village the women

decided to build latrines for their families, which means that now sanitation and health is improving in the community. Due to this improved health their husbands can now work more, leading to a better income which means that children can go to school. Also, because women are being enabled to help supplement their families' income, there is less stress on their husbands to earn an income when farming fails, which leads to less drinking and less domestic violence in the family.

After witnessing the incredible impacts of the empowerment of these women in Cambodia, I can honestly say that in order for the whole of humanity to flourish issues of gender equality cannot be ignored. The empowerment of women like Seng Mai has led to the flourishing of her whole community. I will never be able to thank her enough for sharing her story with me and teaching me so much. I think it's fitting then to give the last word of this article to her: "Thank you to everyone who has supported CAFOD and Srer Khmer. I am very happy that people want to hear my story. I wish everyone good health and good luck."

Charlotte Bray

Green Energy

Brian Austin

Anyone would think I was trying to flog a dead horse!

At St Peter's and Our Lady's in Leamington Spa (Catholics Together in Leamington), we are trying to be a LiveSimply Parish and part of that is to live sustainably and to care for our common home.

So, those of us who are the LiveSimply Parish team, trying to keep LiveSimply high on the agenda and raise awareness of these issues, thought it would be worthwhile to encourage our parishioners to switch to a green energy tariff for their energy supply. The idea came initially from CAFOD's initiative to encourage us to switch to a green energy supplier as part of their One Climate One World campaign because it is "**...a way we can cut our carbon emissions, show solidarity with poor communities overseas and send a powerful message to the government - all without leaving our home**"

Why change at all? Well, we all know that climate change is already taking place and is having a devastating effect on the very poorest in the world and, long-term, threatening the viability of the human race on the planet. (No, I am not exaggerating, nor scare-mongering).

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We also know that the current *rate* of climate change is unprecedented in the past 500,000 years and is undoubtedly fuelled by human activity, in particular by our use of the fossil fuels, coal, oil and gas, to power our lifestyles.

Therefore, as a first step, it seems a good thing to ditch the use of fossil fuels whenever possible and turn to renewable sources. As individuals, we can at least change to a green energy tariff at home. So, how do we do this?

First, we can stay with our current energy supplier (and it's interesting to note how many of us do not know who their energy supplier is!) and see if they have a green energy tariff and change to that. However, some argue that if we are with one of the 'big six', then we are still supporting a company that is heavily reliant on fossil fuel energy production.

Better still, then, is to change to a totally green energy supplier that only supplies energy from renewables and there are now a fair number of these, although some with names we may be unfamiliar with, but small, efficient and offering very good rates. For example, CAFOD has partnered with one of them, 100% renewable energy company *Ecotricity*, to offer green electricity and gas to CAFOD supporters. Best of all, we can change to a green supplier that does not just supply renewable energy, but also invests in support for new renewable energy developments. You can find out more about this from Green Electricity Marketplace at www.greenelectricity.org who operate a GEM star rating for this purpose.

That is where I come in, since I have been offering a service to anyone in my Parish who might want help or advice in switching – who to switch to and how to switch. Theoretically, it should be easy with USWITCH, but in reality, many find this difficult. They may not know how to access USWITCH, if they indeed have access to the internet at all (and many do not), or those who find USWITCH daunting or at least off-putting, or too complex. So, I have offered to do the donkey work for parishioners, to find the best green tariffs and suppliers.

In the first few months of offering this, though, I've only had just *three* enquiries (all successful, I might add). Anyone would think I was trying to flog a dead horse! That's disappointing, although others may have done it for themselves. Despite that, in these three cases, it is

projected that they will all save money, too! One £50, one £60 and the other £140 p.a. On that evidence, it is a win-win situation; they get green energy and save money, too.

The easiest way to switch is simply to use the CAFOD-Ecotricity scheme: just go to www.cafod.org.uk and search for *Ecotricity*. But you should be aware Ecotricity may not be the cheapest green tariff on the market, although you may consider it worth that to support CAFOD, which is fine.

Now, I'm not offering to do this for the Diocese, but if you are interested in doing something similar in your own Parish and you would like to know more about my experience, you can contact me via the Justice and Peace Commission at bham.jandp@gmail.com, or [Contact Us] on the website www.birminghamjandp.org.uk

Brian Austin

On being a Schools Visitor for CAFOD: a personal view

Phil Mayland

A few years ago, I volunteered to be a CAFOD Parish Volunteer at the request of my Parish Priest. I had just retired from my teaching career. Early in my career, my wife and I had spent ten years living and working in Zambia. The first seven years we had no electricity, and the water supply was not always reliable. These experiences always provided me with the motivation to support CAFOD throughout my working life.

After retiring, it wasn't long before I was asked if I would become a CAFOD Schools Volunteer. I was promised that I would receive a lot of support, and that I could do as much or as little as I wanted. I was also told that I would have to undergo some training. My first thought was that I had spent a lifetime teaching, so why do I need more training? The answers became clear as I underwent some induction to CAFOD, and learned a lot more about CAFOD's Vision, Mission, and Values. I was really impressed by the professionalism of all the CAFOD staff, both in the Birmingham Diocesan Volunteer Centre and at CAFOD's Head Office, Romero House.

I also had to undergo a DBS check, as do all CAFOD Schools Volunteers. This is to make sure that we do not have any criminal record or history which would

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be a danger to children. I have been asked to update my training in this area which demonstrates that CAFOD does take its safety responsibilities very seriously.

This is my fourth year of schools visiting. To begin with we were asked to visit around the times of the Lent and Harvest Fast Days. We have one day's training each term where we are presented with the themes and background to the assemblies and workshops for both Primary and Secondary. We then look carefully at how to deliver them. These are always planned and tested carefully, which means we are able to deliver them with confidence.

Because these assemblies and workshops focus on Fast Days there is always an element of fund raising, but they are also excellent tools to educate our children about people living in some of the poorest countries in the world, and how they are being helped to improve and develop their way of life by CAFOD and our partners.

For the last two summer terms we have also offered visits on other themes. Last year, in response to the Year of Mercy, CAFOD developed a pilgrimage inspired by the Lampedusa Cross, focusing on the plight of Refugees and Asylum Seekers. This was, and still is, a very popular activity. It explains reasons why people become refugees, and also the extreme dangers and hardships they face in seeking a place of safety.

Another focus is Laudato Si'. We have developed a Laudato Si' Challenge for pupils to demonstrate that they have responded to Pope Francis' call to 'Live Wisely, Think Deeply, and Love Generously'. This has proved to be very popular. There are also other topics such as Becoming a Fairtrade School, A Rough Guide to CAFOD (for schools where there hasn't been a visit previously), and of course CAFOD's Campaigns 'One Climate, One World', and the new Campaign 'Power To Be'.

Schools Volunteers do not have to have any previous experience of working in schools. They can be any age, as long as they have some time that they are willing to give to this important and rewarding role. I visit both Primary and Secondary Schools in my area. We have two other School Volunteers in my area, so all schools are able to receive at least one visit per year. However, there are some parts of the Diocese where there aren't any School Volunteers currently, or only one to cover a huge area with a large number of schools.

So, I have three questions to ask you:

Are you concerned about working to help alleviate poverty in the world?

Do you have some time during the day which you may be willing to use to visit local schools?

Will you consider becoming a CAFOD School Visitor?

You will receive proper training; all expenses are paid; and the benefits and rewards are priceless.

If so, contact CAFOD Birmingham Volunteer Centre: 01922 722 944 or email birmingham@cafod.org.uk

Phil Mayland

Coventry Campaigner Travels to Parliament to Ask MP's Important Questions Before the General Election

Neil Thorns

On 24th April, local MPC Kris Pears travelled from Coventry to Westminster to speak with MPs in Parliament to ensure the interests of the world's poorest people were kept in mind during the general election. Sixty MPCs travelled from across the country to meet with MPs from different political parties at Speaker's House in Parliament.

Kris met his MP, Jim Cunningham, the Labour MP for South Coventry. Kris shares "We spoke about the climate agreement that was made in Paris at COP21 and what we thought about Trump's attitude. Then very generally about social justice issues, both at home and overseas."

"The single most important question is: Will your party maintain the UK Government's commitment to 0.7% for overseas aid into the future? Not only that, but also commit to making the money totally auditable, preferably through the Department for International Development, rather than hiving off parts of the budget to other departments who are not faced with the same level of probity."

Commons Speaker the Rt Hon John Bercow MP told the reception: "For my part, I always think the greatest moral challenge of our times is to try to do something about the gross crisis and disfiguring scar of global poverty. The fact that 1,000 million people around the world exist on less than a dollar a day and very large

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numbers of people besides exist on only moderately more than that is, frankly, a source not only of anxiety but of real shame to us all.”

CAFOD is encouraging Catholics to ask election candidates to support UK commitments on tackling poverty overseas and climate change, as well as working to ensure that Britain remains an outward-looking and welcoming nation.

Neil Thorns, CAFOD’s Director of Advocacy, said: “It is so great to see local constituents raising their voices before the general election and making their local political representatives aware of issues that are important to them.

“Pope Francis himself warns that people living in poverty can often be an ‘afterthought’ in political discussions and that’s why it’s so important that we remind candidates of the need to remain an outward-looking nation – one that cares for the interests of people in the world’s poorest communities.

“This is why the commitment to maintaining UK support for overseas aid is crucial for saving lives and pulling people out of poverty.”

Kris added he felt it was important that everyone got involved before the election. “We have been presented with an opportunity that wasn’t there a week ago, we were expecting to have an election in three years’ time and be stuck with what we’ve got until then, now is our chance to question not only our MP but also other candidates who want to take their place.”

Brian Davies, Papal Knight

Ellen Teague

After two decades as Head of Development Education at CAFOD and many years of service to the Birmingham Archdiocese Justice and Peace Commission and to Interfaith Dialogue, Brian Davies, 83, was invested as a Knight of St Gregory on 2nd April.

The investiture was conducted during a Mass at Brian’s parish, Sacred Heart Church in Rugby, celebrated by Bishop William Kenney, auxiliary in Birmingham.

"We are drawing attention to the good things Brian has done with CAFOD and Justice and Peace", said Bishop Kenney, "and through these things God is shown to our world - that God's kingdom is among us".

He said that one role of a papal knight is to defend the weak and oppressed against injustice, and Brian has already been doing that for many years. Brian and his wife Diane were also celebrating their golden wedding anniversary.

While at CAFOD Brian oversaw development education campaigns on such issues as 'Migrant labour in South Africa', 'The causes of Africa's crisis' and 'Renewing the Earth'. He was keynote speaker at literally hundreds of conferences and day events - including many linked to the National Justice and Peace Network of England and Wales - focusing on the issues, the pastoral cycle process of Justice and Peace formation, and both Liberation and Creation theology. And he has edited several books on the Church's Social Teaching.

Recent campaigns on Food and Climate Change and education work around Laudato Si 'were brought by him into his diocese and parish. Since 2003 the parish has had a series of talks each Autumn with Brian playing the leading role in securing speakers. A more recent theme has been the renewal of the Church being brought about by Pope Francis, whom Brian described as "an inspiration to all of us".

Ellen Teague

[Extract from NJPN NW J&P e-bulletin May/June]

Manchester Centre for Theology and Justice

Simon Oxley

“We are all on a journey with God towards a vision of God's kingdom of justice, of shalom. The Centre for Theology and Justice seeks to respond to the questions we encounter on that journey. We do not journey alone, we journey together, sharing ideas, resources and engaging in theological reflection.” With those words, Clare McBeath introduced the Centre for Theology and Justice to a packed chapel at Luther King House in Manchester.

The Centre for Theology and Justice, ‘connecting faith to action’, is a partnership of Christian Aid, Church Action on Poverty, Churches Together in Great Britain and Ireland and Luther King House.

The Centre is a space and an opportunity for sharing reflections, resources and actions. Representatives of those organisations symbolically signed the partnership agreement on which the Centre is based. In order to extend the network, the Centre is welcoming associate partners.

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Following the formal launch of the Centre, Father Augusto Zampini gave the first David Goodbourn lecture on **'Is justice enough? A radical Christian response to humanitarian and ecological crisis'**.

Watch a video of the whole lecture at: <https://vimeo.com/217108892>

For more information see: www.theologyjustice.org

(An extract from the NJPN NW J&P e-bulletin from May/June).

Simon Oxley

Silent Protest Against Fracking

Anne Van Staveren

More than 100 Quakers climbed windswept Pendle Hill in Lancashire on Saturday. For half an hour, they held a meeting for witness to protest against fracking. Only the skylarks and one or two friendly dogs interrupted their silence.

It was in 1652 on top of Pendle Hill that George Fox was inspired to build a movement of people. He had a vision of "great many people to be gathered" and, with others, founded the Quaker Church.

Now Pendle Hill is in the midst of an area licensed for fracking. Quakers are calling for fracking to be banned – globally, not just in Lancashire – because the process damages the land, water and potentially food supplies.

Quakers in Britain are motivated by faith to cherish the earth for future generations and to speak out against climate injustice that causes huge inequalities across the world.

In 2011 Quakers made a commitment to take action to become a low-carbon, sustainable community. In 2013 Quakers in Britain became the first church in Britain to divest their centrally held funds from fossil fuel extraction. In doing so they announced that, "investing in companies who are engaged in fossil fuel extraction is incompatible with Quakers' commitment to become a low-carbon community."

<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/32508>

(An extract from the NJPN NW J&P e-bulletin form May/June).

Anne Van Staveren

NJPN Annual Conference

Bookings for this year's conference 'A Sabbath for the Earth and the Poor: The Challenge of Pope Francis' are going well to date although so far hardly any families or young people have booked in, so here is a reminder:

If you are a family planning to come, but haven't got around to booking yet, or if your diocese/parish is planning to sponsor someone but haven't sorted it yet, please let Ann Kelly (see below) know as soon as possible. Y-Kids and the Youth Team need to have an idea of numbers to be able to plan activities and also to know how many workers they need to bring.

Bursary Fund

If you are a family and concerned about the cost, we do now have some money in our Rosemary Read Bursary Fund and a matched bursary from Christian Conference Trust for families and young people, so we may be able to give you some help. Please contact Ann if you would like to discuss this.

NJPN can also use the fund to help young people who would like to come to the conference as volunteers, so if you know any young people who may be interested do tell them about it! Information about the conference can be found on our website: www.justice-and-peace.org.uk/conference

NJPN are always open to receiving more donations to the fund; if you would like to donate send a cheque made out to "NJPN" to NJPN, 39 Eccleston Square, London SW1V 1BX, specifying that it is for the Bursary Fund. Alternatively make a BACS payment to: National Justice & Peace Network, Sort Code:16-31-15 Account No: 10089516. Put your name and BURS in the Reference field. Please notify Ann when you have done so at: admin@justice-and-peace.org

Youth Team

NJPN have a new Youth Team this year, with James Trewby of the Columbans, Matt Jeziorski from Pax Christi and Anita Motha from Bosco Volunteer Action; all three have lots of experience of working with young people and lots of creative ideas!

Please contact Ann on any of the above: Ann Kelly, NJPN Administrator, National Justice & Peace Network, 39 Eccleston Square, London SW1V 1BX. Tel. 020 7901 4864 or via:

Email: admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk

Website: www.justice-and-peace.org.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/njandpnetwork

Kathy Mohan - New Head of Housing Justice

Over the last month Housing Justice has been undergoing one of the biggest changes in our recent history as we bid farewell to Alison Gelder, who retired as Chief Executive on 17th March. As Alison's successor, I know there are big shoes to fill and big challenges to face.

Over Alison's 14 years at Housing Justice there is much to be proud of. Whether it is Housing Justice's work with Church and Community Night Shelters for the Homeless, the destitute migrant hosting project, encouraging churches to develop affordable housing or its tireless advocacy for those experiencing homelessness, under Alison's leadership Housing Justice always punched above its weight.

However, walk down any high street, visit any Church and Community Night Shelter, speak to any migrant without the means to support themselves and you will acknowledge that there is no place for complacency. The challenges many people face are stark and likely to increase in coming years and so the work Housing Justice does will become more and more important.

Faith Communities, churches and Housing Justice must continue to bring hope and practical support to those in need in the challenging years to come.

I join Housing Justice having spent my working life working in housing and homelessness services. Most recently I was Regional Head at St Mungo's, but I've also previously worked for a YMCA, The Guinness Partnership, Sanctuary, Servites and within Local Government. Throughout my working life those principles of hope and practical support for those in need have been paramount. These same principles led me to become a volunteer in my local Church and Community Winter Night Shelter, becoming the first chair of trustees of the project. We worked closely with Housing Justice in our Church Winter Night Shelter and I have seen first-hand the difference that can make.

As I start my tenure as Chief Executive I am struck by the faithfulness of Housing Justice's supporters without whose prayers, donations and thoughtfulness, none of the work the organisation does and the difference it makes would be possible. It seems appropriate that the transition at Housing Justice should take place during Lent, a time of reflection before the new beginning of Easter. As Housing Justice begins a new chapter, I ask for your prayers for our small but committed team, for the projects and people we support, for Alison in her retirement and for those

Housing Justice as the successor organisation to the Catholic Housing Aid Society was set up to assist, those experiencing homelessness or in housing need. Read more about Housing Justice at:

www.housingjustice.org.uk

Kathy Mohan

Your space for an article from your own Justice and Peace Group

Dear reader,

The Justice and Peace Commission is always hoping to include articles provided by Justice and Peace groups from within the Archdiocese.

Some groups we know to be very active, often organising regular meetings in their own locality to explore many of the issues of current interest with the overall umbrella of Justice and Peace.

Others groups, probably the majority, are organised by perhaps only one or two enthusiastic individuals who also run other groups, such as CAFOD, SVP, CWL and others; they may not even adopt the specific name of a "J&P Group" but their activities and interests clearly fall within this remit.

These groups often work alone in isolation, with little or no contact with other groups, and it can feel very lonely!

We would love to hear from all of you, whether very active or not. Please spread the expertise already existing within your group; for example: what are you doing currently and what are your highest priorities?

One article very kindly provided by Gill Myall and Miriam Wilcher appears in this Newsletter but we would appreciate very many more describing all other activities and achievements around the Diocese, particularly from the south of the Diocese where we know "JandP" is active - please publicise this!!

There is always space in our Newsletters; these full Newsletters appear three times every year, broadly in Spring, Summer and Autumn/Winter, but the regular Mini-Newsletters reflect important dates coming up in the near future, for which we are grateful that some of you already provide copy on a regular basis.

You can contact the Commission very easily on the "Contact Us" page of our website:

www.birminghamjandp.org.uk/contact-us

Vocation for Justice

We can strongly recommend the Columban Missionaries' 12-page magazine **VOCATION FOR JUSTICE**, which is sent out three times a year to around 8,000 readers, for a voluntary subscription (£15 is suggested) requested every year.

It is obtainable from JPIC, St Joseph's, Watford Way, Hendon, London NW4 4TY or email: JPICSSC:btconnect.com, but did you know you can also download (including back issues) from their website at: <http://www.columbans.co.uk/resources/publications/vocation-for-justice-magazine/>

This is really essential reading for anyone concerned about justice and peace issues. The magazine covers such issues as Environmental Justice, Patenting Life, Migrants, Mining, Debt, Nuclear Weapons and UK Poverty. Contextual theology is always central.

Over the years Vocation for Justice has promoted many campaigns, including Jubilee 2000, Stop Destructive Mining in the Philippines, Make Poverty History and Stop Climate Chaos. At their 1994 General Assembly the Columbans said that, "in looking at the world and the missionary challenges it presents, we do so from the evangelical standpoint of solidarity with the poor and the exploited Earth."

"Open Bethlehem" DVD

Can we recommend this full length documentary that focuses on the building of 'the Wall' around Bethlehem in 2006. Leila Sansour's documentary follows her campaign to stop occupying Israeli forces encircling her hometown with a concrete wall. Sansour's film follows her attempts to unite Christians, Muslims and Jews in their desire for free access to the Holy City.

You can watch it on 27th June at St Mary's in Moseley at 7.30pm, or buy the DVD, perhaps to show in your parish, from : <http://www.openbethlehem.org/buy-open-bethlehem-dvd.html> for £15.00

The Birmingham Diocese Justice and Peace Commission



For information on the J&P calendar and links to J&P organisations, as well as the J&P Commission, also for downloads from the J&P Resource Pack and much more ... access our website:

www.birminghamjandp.org.uk

J&P Annual Assembly

Saturday 14th October 2017

From 10.30am until 4.15pm

in St Peter's School, Solihull

Please make a note of this date in your diaries now – full details will be sent to you very soon.

This year's theme is "Peace"

Guest speakers:

**Pat Gaffney, General Secretary
of Pax Christi UK**

and

**James Trewby, Columban
Justice and Peace Education Worker**

As usual we shall be organising a selection of workshops during the afternoon around the theme of "Peace" as well as other workshops covering many topics under the overall umbrella of "justice and peace".

We will welcome your suggestions and offers to contribute; please contact the Administrator by Email on: bham.jandp@gmail.com

Thank you.

Articles for these Newsletters are always accepted with gratitude since we feel it is crucially important for Justice and Peace Groups around the diocese to publicise their activities for the benefit of us all, and to liaise with each other to share thoughts and ideas, and especially Best Practice.

If you have a contribution you would like included in the **Autumn 2017** newsletter please send it by Email for consideration to:
The Administrator, J&P Commission.
Email: bham.jandp@gmail.com

Autumn 2017 Edition: Last date for copy **1st Nov.**

The views expressed in this newsletter are the view of the individual contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Birmingham Justice and Peace Commission or the Catholic Archdiocese of Birmingham.