

(cont from p3)

Current progress is slow in the UK and there is a danger that goodwill built up in the summer will dissipate by the time the refugees arrive! Hence regular prayer support, valuable in its own right, would also serve to sustain momentum in this area.

CAFOD and Jesuit Refugee Service are just two of the agencies appealing for funds to assist Syrian refugees in the region and beyond.

www.catholic-ew.org.uk/Home/Featured/Refugee-Crisis-Open-Your-Hearts/How-Can-I-Help

Diary Dates:

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| 17 Jan | The theme for Peace Sunday is “ Overcome indifference and win peace ” Resources are mailed to parishes and are available on-line http://paxchristi.org.uk/news-and-events/peace-sunday/ The Holy Father's message will be available in mid-December, http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/peace/index.html and added to Pax Christi on-line resources. |
| 24 Jan | Through prayer and reflection HOMELESS SUNDAY offers an opportunity to listen to what God has to say about homelessness, and to consider what action we are being called to take. See www.homeless-sunday.uk |
| 30 Jan | CAFOD East Anglia Day of Recollection in preparation for Lent Fast Day https://cafodeastanglia.wordpress.com/2015/11/26/day-of-recollection-2016/ |
| 7 Feb | Church Action on Poverty Sunday with the theme Bread Broken for All focussing on the thousands in the UK who go hungry. See http://www.church-poverty.org.uk/sunday/resources/download/resourcepack |
| 10 Feb | Ash Wednesday witness at Ministry of Defence http://paxchristi.org.uk/ |
| 19 Feb | CAFOD Lent Fast Day |
| 29 Feb-13 Mar | Fairtrade Fortnight http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/en/get-involved/current-campaigns/fairtrade-fortnight-2016 |
| 13 Mar | J&P Commission meets at Newmarket |

J&P Commission:

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|-----------------------------------|--|-------------------|
| Chairman: Deacon John Bell | e-mail: johnbell2010@btinternet.com | Tel: 01223 503948 |
| Secretary: Bernard Shaw | e-mail: bshaw98uk@yahoo.co.uk | Tel: 01223 240207 |
| Treasurer: Arn Dekker | e-mail: Arn@nlgb.fsnet.co.uk | Tel: 01223 861772 |

Diocese of East Anglia



Justice & Peace Newsletter

Advent 2015

Laudato Si' Learning Together Day 24 October:

Henry Longbottom SJ 'the green Jesuit' first guided us through the vision shown by Pope Francis in his encyclical letter, Laudato Si'. He then led us through how we might put this into action, by 'greening the church'.

Pope Francis caused a stir, with some people saying he is behaving like a pagan; calling the earth 'Mother'. But he has some good company, including his namesake, Saint Francis, and Julia Roberts! Henry's presentation included several video presentations, and Julia Roberts spoke about the beauty and longevity of our planet, with a reminder that echoed the end of book of Job – "We are not God". See <http://tinyurl.com/Wearenotgod>

Many of those who are likely to campaign for the preservation of the planet are not religious, some who claim that religion is actually contributing to the plight facing the inhabitants of the earth. However, it is easier to sign up to a campaign to protect bees rather than the 'invisible' threat of the climate. As Christians, the word 'creation' has a broader meaning than 'nature' but creation is a gift and involves God's loving plan in which every creature has its own recognised value and significance.

Henry offered us three keys to unlocking Laudato Si':

- Everything is related; with care for creation and for each other going hand in hand.
- We are displacing ecology and becoming more reliant on technology, without appreciating the consequences.
- An ecological conversion will be driven by a desire to become better, more compassionate people.

And four steps towards achieving that ecological conversion:

1. Do not be discouraged. Ecological conversion is counter-cultural, and it isn't easy. For a couple of inspiring examples see these videos: <http://tinyurl.com/theykilleddorothy> and <http://tinyurl.com/edwingariguez>.
2. Cultivate new habits, because consumer 'goods' baffle the heart. For example, see this film: <http://tinyurl.com/arochofood>
3. Be motivated rather by love, than by duty, in relationship with one another.
4. Act in collaboration, as people of goodwill of all faiths on issues of migration, trafficking and environment which are of common concern. For a Muslim perspective see: <http://tinyurl.com/greenmuslim>

To conclude we drafted a couple of strategies, one for the diocese and another for parishes, so that we may follow these steps and unlock the vision within Pope Francis' great letter, Laudato Si'.

National Justice & Peace Conference:

Around 300 people of all ages gathered at the Hayes Christian Conference Centre, Swanwick, Derbyshire in July for the 2015 National Justice & Peace Conference entitled 'The things that make for Peace'.

The programme provided a mix of workshops, speaker presentations, liturgy, prayer & reflection and an opportunity to meet up with others endeavouring to contribute to building peace. Children were able to explore the theme in programmes appropriate to their age and seemed to enjoy the experience. See <http://justice-and-peace.org.uk/conference-reports/young-people-at-njpn-annual-conference/> to read what some of them had to say.

Paul Rogers, Professor of Peace Studies, at Bradford University spoke of the 21st century as a crucial period in human history as humanity is challenged to address the threat that climate change makes to peace and the environment on which we depend. He spoke positively of Laudato Si', in particular the idea that 'everything is interconnected'. He challenged the view that nuclear weapons 'kept the peace' after 1945, suggesting that all the proxy east-west conflicts hardly reflected a world at peace. LIDISM is a term he used to describe a global security system which maintains the status quo without addressing the root causes of injustice. He expressed concern that the dominant neo-liberal economic model created injustice, both for people and planet. He maintained hope that extreme weather events, such as Typhoon Haiyan, would provide the catalyst to address the threat of climate change. There had been international action to address the threat of ozone layer depletion, demonstrating that international agreement is possible once a crisis is recognised widely. For more from Paul Rogers. See

www.oxfordresearchgroup.org.uk/publications/monthly_briefings

Father Edu Gariguez related his experience of addressing the threat of mining on the local population and biodiversity of Mindoro Island in the NW Philippines, recognised as a global biodiversity conservation priority area. Whilst the government sees mining as an engine for development, the Bishops' Conference says that being pro-environment is an essential part of being pro-life. Mining results in environmental degradation and displacement of people. Fr Edu sees development of sustainable agriculture as a priority for the locality. Being part of a Church for the poor has been a constant mark of his ministry. He quoted Cardinal Tagle, Archbishop of Manila and President of Caritas Internationalis: 'We all have a role to play in this ecological revolution to which Pope Francis has invited us'. Fr Edu provides an inspiring example, outlined more fully at <http://www.goldmanprize.org/recipient/edwin-gariguez/>

Sr Marie Hayes was one of three to give a short presentation on their work. She spoke of a continuing long and patient process to bring about reconciliation among faith communities in Luton.

A wide range of workshops provided an opportunity to explore some ways in which participants could contribute to building peace. Justice & Peace Family Action, www.JusticeFaithFamily.org, introduced resources which families could use together. The migration workshop highlighted the need to appreciate the reasons why people feel compelled to leave their home country. Another workshop considered the impacts of climate change as contributors to conflict, see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1u3EGSJ68x4> for an introduction.

Laudato Si' was relevant to so many aspects of the conference and will no doubt be helpful in discerning actions to follow up the conference.

Democracy is the theme of the 2016 conference to be held on 15 – 17 July.

MICHAEL PRENTICE:

It is with great sadness that we announce the death on 21 November of Michael Prentice, a long-standing member of the Commission. He and his wife Mary made the journey from their home near Downham Market to the variety of venues for our meetings and events. They brought enthusiasm and learning, as well as a deep spirituality. Even in his last weeks, Michael was studying afresh the Genesis accounts of creation to deepen his knowledge in tune with the Pope's Encyclical, Laudato Sii. He had great learning on scripture developed from his time as a priest of the Church of England. He also had a thorough knowledge of Catholic Church teaching. Yet he was also able to communicate this in a clear and brief fashion. His energy over the years in relation to CAFOD and Fair trade will be greatly missed. But he was also a man of prayer, linking his relationship with God and his activism in the world. Despite increasing frailty, he continued to come to events, and indeed managed to attend a Commission meeting before a stroke in September 2015. We extend our deepest condolences to Mary. May he rest in peace.

REFUGEES:

A number of refugees from Syria are now beginning to arrive in our region. They are currently among those most in need of medical and psychological help. It appears that those who will come to the UK will be drawn from the refugee camps in Jordan and Lebanon. Since the Christians are housed outside the camps, the people coming will be Muslim and mainly in families. They will be given 5-year permits to stay.

Local councils are negotiating with the Government about suitable packages of support and funding for this (probably from the Overseas Aid budget). Some local councils have already negotiated arrangements. The Government has taken care of housing and will not be taking up the many offers from private individuals.

The obvious needs will be to help people settle down and integrate:

1. Language-support: it is likely that the refugees will have some English, but this may need improving.
2. Accompanying: refugees in a new place will need friendly individuals with time to spare to help them, e.g. to accompany them to meetings with officials, schools, etc; to help them with transport; to help them to settle into their area (finding playgroups, best ways of shopping etc.).
3. Supplementing clothing and household items (pans etc), depending on where they are accommodated.
4. Collecting money to be sent to other places where the pressure of support for refugees is greater.

Local volunteers in these roles will need to become known to local authority coordinators. They will need to be able to spare weekday daytime to help the refugees. There are coordinators for each Deanery and parish level coordinators are now being sought. Further details from Bernard Segrave-Daly (bernard@segravedaly.plus.com)

(cont on p4)