

Dear Justice and Peace Supporter

Travels of a Social Justice Co-ordinator

**NEWSLETTER
OCTOBER 2017**

To quote from a popular book/TV series; “Winter is Coming”! I’ve certainly started to notice the change, with the heating going on for longer, lights on when I get back home, and still dark out when I leave the gym in the morning. It’s strange how long-ago summer feels now, when at the time it flew by. My summer was dominated by a visit to Sindh province in Pakistan. This opportunity to travel and meet with justice and peace workers was organised by the Columban Missionaries, and I was part of a group of 4, the others a Chilean Columban lay-missionary, a CAFOD volunteer, and a Catholic Worker. I have travelled before, and am no stranger to dangerous situations, but Pakistan, for reasons I am still reflecting on was somewhere I approached with trepidation. Pakistan was, after all, a country which I had never imagined I would have reason to go to. The country which supported the terrorists who laid siege to Mumbai in 2008 when I lived in India. My impressions formed by the press (which only ever reports on ‘the negative’), but also by people I had met working as a civil servant; Christians and Amardi Muslims persecuted for their faith.

My own experience was one of warmest welcome; every school, community centre, or house which we visited opened doors to us, and, of course, offered *chai*. This unquestioning action to ‘make welcome’ was a shared spirit, in a country where the gap between the rich and the poor is massive (and growing). But tea was given in all circumstances, be that in fine china with cakes from an exclusive bakery, at the Pakistani ‘Eton’ (a school in Hyderabad run by the Daughters of the Holy Cross), or in old glasses, complete with the taste of smoke from the open fire in villages. This spirit is something which I think we try to emulate here (certainly no one gets into our office without tea and coffee being offered!), but I doubt I could do what Danesh (a Columban co-worker) and his family did when they took us in for our three days in Hyderabad.

Whilst my experience was overwhelmingly positive the realities for many local Christians weren’t lost on us. Christians are in many cases on the lowest rung, in a society and culture which remains quite rigid in terms of both caste and religion. In one place the parish is involved with an Underground Railroad, helping the brides and families from forced conversion marriages to escape the area. If this ever became public the lives of the activists would likely be forfeit. We also heard from a Columban Sister how the community had lived in hiding, not even daring to open the doors for a month when a Danish magazine had published offensive cartoons of the Prophet Mohammad. But in some ways times are moving on. The death, the day before we arrived of Dr Ruth Pfau, a nun, sometimes called Pakistan’s Mother Theresa, led to extraordinary events. Dr Pfau had lived in Pakistan for over 50 years, and been responsible for eradicating leprosy in the country. Well known, and highly regarded she became the first non-Muslim in Pakistan’s 70 year history to be given a state funeral, which took place the day we left in Karachi Cathedral. Things may be precarious, but the church in Pakistan did not feel like it was about to go into hiding, or give up and run away. The risks are real, but so is the faith of the communities. Perhaps this is worth keeping in mind next time we read an article, or opinion piece in the press bemoaning the “persecution” of the Church in the UK. We’re blessed to live somewhere that we don’t really know the meaning of that word. Dr Pfau was always noted for the “faith, service and love” which she conducted her work with. Let us hope that through the activities of our groups, and churches people will be saying the same about the Justice and Peace network.

Danny (Social Justice Co-ordinator)

Give Me Five:

The Child Benefit
Top-up Campaign



The deadline for petitions for the **Give Me Five** campaign is fast approaching and we need your help! Please consider printing off a petition sheet from the Justice and Peace Website

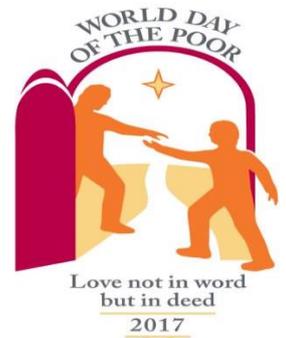
<https://www.justiceandpeacescotland.org.uk/Home.aspx> and ask your family, friends, work colleagues or community to sign it. Some Justice and Peace activists have contacted us to say that they intend to set up a street stall to encourage their community to sign the petition! If you do something in your community take a picture and email it to us at

office@justiceandpeacescotland.org.uk so that we can share it. Signed petitions need to be returned to the Justice and Peace office 3rd Floor, 65 Bath Street, Glasgow G2 2BX by Friday 17th November 2017.

This would be an excellent way to put your faith into action. In Pope Francis' message for the 1st World Day of the Poor on Sunday 19th November he told the faithful to "Love not in word but in deed".

Volunteer Directory

We have joined up with SCIAF for an exciting new project! We plan to produce a Volunteer Directory which will list the Scottish faith organisations working with the poor either in Scotland or abroad. Our hope is that the directory will be a useful resource to those wishing to volunteer enabling them to find out what opportunities are available near them. We are asking anyone who is involved with an organisation that works with the poor to register their organisation with our directory here <https://www.justiceandpeacescotland.org.uk/Home/tabid/40/ctl/details/itemid/2315/mid/531/volunteer-directory.aspx> We plan to make the directory available to mark the World Day of the Poor on Sunday 19th November 2017.



Campaign of the Month

Justice and Peace Scotland

We have a new feature on the Justice and Peace Scotland Website – **Campaign of the Month**. Every Month we will highlight one campaign on which you can take action. The campaign for October is The Jubilee Debt Crisis – the UK's role in Africa debt crisis – also take a look at our **Get Involved** page which highlights other campaigns you can take action on.

Poppy Appeals

Both the British Royal Legion (<http://www.poppyscotland.org.uk/>), and the Peace Pledge Union (<http://www.ppu.org.uk/>) poppy appeals are now underway. Both poppy campaigns are intended to commemorate the victims of war, and work to a better, peaceful future.



Responding to Refugees and Migrants

20 Action Points

Pope Francis has released through the Migrants and Refugees section of the Dicastery for the Promotion of International Development a document '20 Action Points' calling on governments to consider their responses to migration. For more information please see our video : https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rc01w8c_o2I

20 Action Points



 Justice and Peace Scotland

Rise Theatre

'Romero – Heartbeat of El Salvador' is a new play by **RISE Theatre** in association with **The Archbishop Romero Trust**, looking at the life and legacy of a man who chose to challenge those in power and stand up for social justice. The play is coming to Edinburgh on 3rd November and Glasgow on 4th November. Not to be missed, Get your tickets here: <http://www.risetheatre.co.uk/current-tours>



Like Living in Hell

At the recent national Commission meeting the situation of vulnerable young people in Calais was noted of being a particular concern, as these children seem to have been forgotten by both UK and French governments. A report by Human Rights Watch titled 'Like Living in Hell' details the situation since the destruction of the migrant camp in Calais this time last year. This report is available

(https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/report_pdf/france0717_web_3.pdf)

Any group or individual who is considering ways which we can support those working in Calais please contact Danny (Social Justice Co-ordinator).

Encounter with a Christian Minority - Talk available to parishes/ J&P groups

Christians in Pakistan are less than 1% of the population. Many live as the lowest caste in an Islamic country, and problems with corruption, poverty, and debt-bondage remain. But for all this the Church is vibrant, alive, and living the Gospel.

Danny Sweeney, who travelled to Pakistan with the Columban Missionaries would be happy to share his experiences with groups and organisations in Scotland. This offers an opportunity to learn about the Christian community's justice and peace work in Pakistan.



Music for Worship

A selection of music for praise, thanksgiving, and comfort inspired by faith.

Matt Maher – Because he lives <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PBvU7arNhQs>

Matt Maher is a Canadian, Catholic, worship leader and composer. He has performed for both Pope Benedict XVI (USA visit 2008), and Pope Francis (WYD Rio 2013).

Sidewalk Prophets – You love me anyway <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y8BBCYFAYRI>

Sidewalk Prophets are from Nashville, TN. You love me anyway reflects on the merciful love of God, and is from their first album These Simple Truths.

Taizé – The Kingdom of God <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MSI2xdDvX6Y>

The Justice and Peace Europe meeting closed with delegates and Taizé community members singing together. This is a "more rehearsed" performance of 'The Kingdom of God'; one of our favourite Taizé chants.



Food for thought

Each edition we will try to bring something thought provoking, and perhaps challenging for you to reflect on. This edition we have three selections. First from Channel 4, asking 'Would you take in a stranger?'



<http://www.channel4.com/programmes/would-you-take-in-a-stranger/on-demand/62925-001>

This documentary meets three young people who need emergency accommodation, as they're matched with families who can give them a home for the night. The Nightstop service shown in this programme is delivered by the [Depaul Trust](#) (England and Wales). Here in Scotland [Rock Trust](#) (Edinburgh), and the [Simon Community](#) (Glasgow) are providers of this service. For more information, please follow the links.

Our second piece is from the conference 'Reclaiming Gospel Nonviolence' which we held 14th-16th July at St Mary's Monastery, Kinnoull.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GT1nCc_lock

Fr. John Dear is a leading voice in the peace and nonviolence movement. He is the author of over 30 books, has lectured in theology, and recently advised Pope Francis on his World Day of Peace Message 2017. John also lives out his witness to Jesus in homeless shelters, soup kitchens, warzones and areas of conflict around the world, being detained and imprisoned over 70 times for his nonviolent opposition to war. John was one of the keynote speakers at our conference, and unpacked the challenge we face with 3 questions; what happened? What are we reclaiming? How do we do it?

The third video comes from the BBC. 'Professor Green : Living in Poverty.'

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/p059b6sp/professor-green-living-in-poverty>

In Britain today, one in four children are growing up in poverty. Experts say these figures are predicted to rise by nearly one million in the next five years. Rapper turned documentary maker Professor Green (aka Stephen Manderson) has done well, but he grew up in a home where there was a lot of stress over money. In this intimate documentary, he sets out to uncover what life is like for young people living on the breadline today. It is young people like the ones in this documentary who will benefit from the 'Give Me Five' Campaign which we are currently supporting. For more information please visit

<https://www.justiceandpeacescotland.org.uk/Home/tabid/40/ctl/details/itemid/2267/mid/531/give-me-five-petition.aspx> .

Don't hesitate to be in touch with the Justice and Peace National office on 0141 333 0238 and please consider printing out a copy of our newsletter and leaving it at the back of your church, or sharing it with a friend in print, or by email.