



what's inside

Editorial..... 2
 Archbishop Tartaglia speaks out on
 Benefit Reviews..... 3
 The Meaning of Martyrdom 3
 Pope Francis on Economics..... 4
 Child Labour 4

Pacem in Terris 5
 Arms Trade Treaty will save lives 6
 Coffee Waiting!..... 6
 Iona to London Peace Walk 7
 Need a Pick Me Up? 7
 Losing my religion for equality... 8

Prayers in Support of Victims of
 Torture 9
 Newsbrief 10
 Values and Principles of International
 Development..... 11
 Diary..... 12

editorial

It has been a momentous six months for the Catholic Church, both universally and in Scotland. The high drama of papal resignation, conclave and the election of the first South American Pope were among the highs. In Scotland, clerical scandal at the highest level has left many bewildered and undermined in their faith.

Nevertheless, faith life goes on, even as it leads to questions about the nature of authority and power in a hierarchical church. Fortunately, there is an existing principle developed to justify the validity of sacraments, but which can help here. The principle of *ex opere operato* literally means operative in virtue of the work, that a sacrament is valid irrespective of the minister. It is also a reminder that we are none of us worthy in our own right, but are reliant on God's mercy. It is not for us to judge; and confessed shortcoming should not be allowed to wipe out a legacy of good work.

Statistics from 2009 suggest that there are about 850,000 nominal Catholics in Scotland (augmented by recent immigration). About 180,000 are regular mass attenders. Readers can judge from their own experience how many of these people are publicly involved beyond mass attending. The intention here is not to bemoan or criticise so much as to see if the numbers involved in the work of justice and peace can be increased. In a world of ever increasing consumerism and distraction, there is also the perennial problem of how to involve more young people in participatory activity relating faith to society.

We are more than halfway through the Year of Faith, with a number of activities undertaken at national, diocesan and parish levels so far and a number still to come. It is doubtful whether more than a small number of Catholics know about these events, far less have attended them. To those who are actively involved in these apostolates it can seem frustrating. Can't people see the need? If ever there was a case of the harvest being great and the labourers few, surely this is it. Yet the very fact of personal involvement can often skew the perspective of those who see their area of work as having a special priority.

We had a fine example of an appeal to conscience in the powerful New Year Message from Justice and Peace President, Bishop Peter, which resulted in a number of enquiries to the National Office and several new Justice and Peace groups setting up. In his message, the Bishop said:

For many people, even in Scotland, Justice is a distant dream. I believe, and so do you, that this has got to change. Don't war and injustice make you angry? Peace and justice are what God wants. When is somebody going to do something about it? Somebody? Let me quote a well-known remark: If not me, who? If not now, when? As Catholics, we have been asked to think again about how Christ's good news can spread: You'll have heard it called 'New Evangelisation'.

The part of the process concerned with justice is also sometimes known as 'conscientisation', or more colloquially, waking up to reality. This waking up is a spiritual process, a stage in our formation as Christians; the dawning realisation that our faith has a social and political responsibility. This is not some sort of optional extra or the means of subordinating our faith to some

other partisan interest. It is the means of growing in the deep knowledge of how we love our neighbour; or what social teaching calls promoting the common good.

One frequently heard concern, for example at our recent conference, was that we hardly ever hear Catholic Social Teaching preached from the pulpit. Rather than merely leaving this point as a gripe against clergy it might be worth remembering that responsibility for our formation is a not a one way street: *'let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another'* (Hebrews 10:24-25).

In section 43 of *Gaudium et Spes* (a mini social encyclical in its own right) there is perhaps more than a glimmer of diplomatic irony illuminating undeniable fact: *'Secular duties and activities belong properly although not exclusively to the laity... Laity should also know that it is generally the function of their well-formed Christian conscience to see that the divine law is inscribed in the life of the earthly city; from priests they may look for spiritual light and nourishment. Let the laity not imagine that their pastors are always such experts, that to every problem which arises, however complicated, they can readily give a concrete solution, or even that such is their mission. Rather, enlightened by Christian wisdom and giving close attention to the teaching authority of the Church, let the laity take on their own distinctive role.'*

And if this requires us to take the position of the persistent widow (Luke 18:1-8), then it is good training for dealing with government agencies as well. So how about Social Teaching quotes from the J&P website in the parish newsletter, Father?

I often think that to the classic Seven Deadly Sins, our age has added another: Distraction. But it is not new: all the great spiritual traditions have always recognised the damaging instability to faith that comes from distraction. It is also at the root of the realisation that spiritual growth requires time of withdrawal to balance the hubbub of the world. This need is all the greater in a frenetic world dominated by marketing, advertising and entertainment. In fact, as the social thinker Neil Postman suggested, we currently run the risk of being 'entertained to death' in a constant state of passive receptivity, in which any possibility of reflection or critical discernment has long since been washed away by endless distraction.

All the more reason then (as the motto has it) to believe as if our salvation depended on God alone and act as if it depended on ourselves alone. It is perhaps also worth remembering the reflection of Archbishop Romero which saves us from despondency and throws us back on our faith:

*No programme accomplishes the church's mission.
No set of goals and objectives includes everything...
We cannot do everything
and there is a sense of liberation in realising that.
This enables us to do something,
and to do it very well.
It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way,
an opportunity for God's grace to enter and do the rest...
...We are prophets of a future not our own.*

Tim Duffy

Archbishop Tartaglia speaks out on Benefit Reviews

This is a copy of a letter from Archbishop Tartaglia to Iain Duncan Smith, Minister at the Department of Work and Pensions, asking him to reconsider aspects of health benefit reviews

Dear Mr Duncan Smith

I am writing to you to express my concern at the impact on very many vulnerable people in this Archdiocese and beyond, of the assessment system currently being operated by the firm Atos, under your Department's supervision, to review the benefit entitlement of people currently deemed unfit for work.

I do not write as a politician, and the concerns I express are not party political. I acknowledge your own personal commitment to improving the benefit system and I know that you have visited this city on more than one occasion to learn about the local situation. For this I thank you.

My concern is as a bishop whose people are suffering. It is not the Church's role to define benefit levels or set targets for savings. It is, however, the Church's role to speak out against injustice, especially when those affected are often weak and without means.

I have been made aware of cases of terminally ill people being summoned for assessments; people with severe learning difficulties being asked to present themselves for assessment not knowing what the process is all about; people being passed as fit for work and having their benefits stopped when they are clearly still seriously ill. People's human dignity is being trampled upon and glaring errors are being made (reflected in the fact that 40 per cent of appeals are, I believe, currently successful).

These circumstances, together with recent revelations by nurses and doctors who have spoken out against the tests they are being asked to perform on people, and which they, in conscience, can no longer collaborate with, must surely mean the time has come for a re-think.

In addition, it is wrong for Atos to be profiting when sick and disabled people are suffering because of the harshness and bluntness of the work capability assessment, and there are many in this city who question the wisdom of having them as sponsors of the Commonwealth Games. But while Atos implements the assessments it is your own department's responsibility to regulate the system, and so it is to you that I address my appeal.

My concerns are shared by very many people of all parties and none, of all faiths and none. And while I recognise that you cannot comment on individual cases or respond to specific claims, surely the large number of successful appeals, the widespread concern among parliamentarians and the press, and the testimonies of health professionals who have spoken out against the indignity and injustice of the process must lead you to the conclusion that a rethink is needed.

In response to this situation, I ask you to consider ordering a review so that thousands of the most vulnerable people in this city and beyond may be spared the anxiety and distress which has already befallen so many.

+Philip Tartaglia
Archbishop of Glasgow

The Meaning of Martyrdom

Originally a martyr was simply a witness. It was only later that the term attached to religious belief, persecution and possibly death. The testimony of such witnesses was valuable to the Church because it provided role models for the life of faith in the face of opposition.

In our last issue, we celebrated the hundredth birthday of Franziska Jaegerstaetter, the widow of Franz Jaegerstaetter. Franziska died shortly after reaching her centenary, having outlived her husband, who was executed seventy years earlier by the Nazis.

Franz was the only person in his village in Austria to vote against the Anschluss linking Austria and Germany in 1938 – his vote was suppressed by the Nazis. He subsequently maintained his opposition to fighting as a

soldier by offering to work as a medic.

Called up for active service in February 1943, Franz, by now a member of the Third Order of St Francis again refused to fight. Arrested and charged with undermining morale, he was sentenced to death in July 1943 and executed by guillotine on 9 August. His widow Franziska was left to bring up their three daughters in the face of local disapproval (she did not receive a widow's pension until 1950).

Indeed, throughout and beyond his life, the Catholic community (including the clergy) played an undistinguished and pusillanimous role. So it was perhaps apt that Benedict XVI declared him martyr in 2007; and three months later, in October 2007, he was beatified. Now, seventy years on, he and Franziska are reunited.

POPE FRANCIS ON ECONOMICS

On 16 May, Pope Francis welcomed four new ambassadors to the Vatican and delivered this programmatic address



Ladies and Gentlemen, our human family is presently experiencing something of a turning point in its own history, if we consider the advances made in various areas. We can only praise the positive achievements which contribute to the authentic welfare of humanity, in fields such as those of health, education and communications.

At the same time, we must also acknowledge that the majority of the men and women of our time continue to live daily in situations of insecurity, with dire consequences. Certain pathologies are increasing, with their psychological consequences; fear and desperation grip the hearts of many people, even in the so-called rich countries; the joy of life is diminishing; indecency and violence are on the rise; poverty is becoming more and more evident.

People have to struggle to live and, frequently, to live in an undignified way. One cause of this situation, in my opinion, is in our relationship with money, and our acceptance of its power over ourselves and our society. Consequently the financial crisis which we are experiencing makes us forget that its ultimate origin is to be found in a profound human crisis. In the denial of the primacy of human beings! We have created new idols. The worship of the golden calf of old (cf. *Ex 32:15-34*) has found a new and heartless image in the cult of money and the dictatorship of an economy which is faceless and lacking any truly humane goal.

The worldwide financial and economic crisis seems to highlight their distortions and above all the gravely deficient human perspective, which reduces humanity to one need alone, namely, consumption. Worse yet, human beings themselves are nowadays considered as consumer goods which can be used and thrown away. We have started a throw-away culture. This tendency is seen on the level of individuals and whole societies; and it is being promoted! In circumstances like these, solidarity, which is the treasure of the poor, is often considered counterproductive, opposed to the logic of finance and the economy. While the income of a minority is increasing exponentially, that of the majority is crumbling. This imbalance results from ideologies which uphold the absolute autonomy of markets and financial speculation, and thus deny the right of control to States, which are themselves charged with providing for the common good.

A new, invisible and at times virtual, tyranny is established, one which unilaterally and irremediably imposes its own laws and rules. Moreover, indebtedness and credit distance countries from their real economy and citizens from their real buying power. Added to this, as if it were needed,

is widespread corruption and selfish fiscal evasion which have taken on worldwide dimensions. The will to power and of possession has become limitless.

Concealed behind this attitude is a rejection of ethics, a rejection of God. Ethics, like solidarity, is a nuisance! It is regarded as counterproductive: as something too human, because it relativises money and power; as a threat, because it rejects manipulation and subjection of people: because ethics leads to God, who is situated outside the categories of the market. God is thought to be unmanageable by these financiers, economists and politicians, God is unmanageable, even dangerous, because he calls humanity to its full realisation and to independence from any kind of slavery.

Ethics – naturally, not the ethics of ideology – makes it possible, in my view, to create a balanced social order that is more humane. In this sense, I encourage the financial experts and the political leaders of your countries to consider the words of Saint John Chrysostom: “Not to share one’s goods with the poor is to rob them and to deprive them of life. It is not our goods that we possess, but theirs” (*Homily on Lazarus*, 1:6 – PG 48, 992D).

Dear Ambassadors, there is a need for financial reform along ethical lines that would produce in its turn an economic reform to benefit everyone. This would nevertheless require a courageous change of attitude on the part of political leaders. I urge them to face this challenge with determination and farsightedness, taking account, naturally, of their particular situations. Money has to serve, not to rule!

The Pope loves everyone, rich and poor alike, but the Pope has the duty, in Christ’s name, to remind the rich to help the poor, to respect them, to promote them. The Pope appeals for disinterested solidarity and for a return to person-centred ethics in the world of finance and economics.

For her part, the Church always works for the integral development of every person. In this sense, she reiterates that the common good should not be simply an extra, simply a conceptual scheme of inferior quality tacked onto political programmes. The Church encourages those in power to be truly at the service of the common good of their peoples. She urges financial leaders to take account of ethics and solidarity. And why should they not turn to God to draw inspiration from his designs? In this way, a new political and economic mindset would arise that would help to transform the absolute dichotomy between the economic and social spheres into a healthy symbiosis.

Child Labour

An estimated 215 million children worldwide are involved in child labour.

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) defines child labour as work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity. It refers to work that is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children and interferes with their schooling.

Domestic work is the leading employment for girls under the age of 16. It is a particular problem in some African countries including Tanzania and Kenya. Girls who are isolated and invisible in households face high risk of abuse and generally have limited access to educational opportunities.

The Agricultural sector is the largest employer of children

worldwide, accounting for 70% of global child labour. In Africa, it is estimated that between 56 and 72 million children work in agriculture. This is a particularly dangerous activity for children because of the risks faced when working with pesticides, tools and machinery.

The cocoa industry in Africa relies heavily on child labour but gradually chocolate companies are using cocoa that is independently certified to have been harvested without the use of forced, child or trafficked labour. These chocolate products have the Fairtrade, Rainforest Alliance or UTZ Certified logos on them so you know your chocolate is ethical chocolate. (*Australian Catholic Social Justice Council*)

More information at

www.antislavery.org/english/slavery_today/child_domestic_work.aspx
www.unicef.org/esaro/5480_child_labour_sexual_exploitation.html

Pacem in Terris

Pope John XXIII's last encyclical, published in April 1963, has just celebrated its fiftieth anniversary

The twentieth century is often described as being the most violent and brutal in history. Industrialised warfare greatly increased the scale, scope (and profit) of destruction, while improved communication allowed much more efficient internal repression. Not just the two world wars, but the seemingly endless dirty local conflicts, whether the massive ideological upheaval in the Soviet Union and China, the colonial or post colonial ethnic conflicts in every continent, or the proxy wars of the Cold War adversaries in south east Asia, Africa and Latin America certainly seem to support this view.

It is also however the century of modern Catholic Social Teaching. And *Pacem in Terris* is arguably the most directly relevant of all the social encyclicals. It uses the language of Church documents, of course, and Pope John XXIII was, in the words of Donal Dorr, 'on social issues... not a radical'. Nevertheless, it addresses the root problems of the modern world in a language that can be shared, not only with those inside the Church but, as the opening dedication (for the first time in an encyclical) makes clear, to 'All People of Good Will'.

'Now more than ever' the pope said a week before his death, 'we are called to serve man as such, and not just Catholics, to defend above all and everywhere the rights of the human person and not merely those of the Catholic Church.' This perspective underlies Pope John's reversal of the long held view that 'error has no rights'; and his belief that those who have different, even opposing beliefs and ideologies could be worthwhile partners in dialogue. His determination to respect the personal integrity of others, and not to simply reject other belief systems out of hand in the search for true peace, was perhaps the most significant engagement with those outwith the fortress of the Catholic Church (see especially PT 158-60). It is a view that looks forward to what was then not even thought of by the council fathers: *Gaudium et Spes* – the Church in the Modern World.

This view, from which much of the Church has since frankly stepped back in apprehension if not fear, was underwritten by Pope John's extraordinary faith in God's providence and the possibilities for conversion in all of humanity: 'there exists in man's very nature an undying capacity to break through the barriers of error and seek the road to truth. God, in His great providence, is ever present with His aid. Today, maybe, a man lacks faith and turns aside into error; tomorrow, perhaps, illumined by God's light, he may indeed embrace the truth' (PT, 158. The exclusive language has been left as historically appropriate).

Unlike his papal predecessors, Pope John's background was as a historian who dealt with the vagaries of human actions rather than the theologian's counsels of perfection or the philosopher's view of truth as an integrated intellectual system. His teaching is also profoundly pastoral, with a sharp sense of the difference between compassion and an indulgent relativism. It was this quality which had led to him offering to be an intermediary at the time of the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962. His intervention was acknowledged by President Khrushchev as 'humanistic assistance which will be recorded in history. The Pope and I can diverge on many questions, but we are united in our desire for peace.'

Two weeks later, the Pope received a terminal diagnosis from his doctors and *Pacem in Terris* was to be his final testament. It extends into a modern world of diverse and divergent ideologies claiming to have absolute answers to social issues.

The encyclical begins with a wide ranging assertion of the need for human rights as rooted in our unique and individual creation in God's image and a life of mutual responsibility governed by the ancient doctrine of the 'tranquillity of order'. There follows an extended list of human rights (the UN Charter of Human Rights was only fifteen years old at this time); and along with them the concomitant duties and obligations. When those who drafted the UN Charter were asked why they did not include a corresponding list of obligations, they said would

never have achieved agreement among so many states if obligations had been included.

These obligations are not some mechanical *quid pro quo*, but rather an expression of a mutual concern for the Common Good, the balance of right relationships which is another way of seeing peace. And they apply no less to governments, whose authority ultimately derives from God. Indeed, 'if any government does not acknowledge the rights of man or violates them, it not only fails in its duty but its orders completely lack juridical force' (n61). Later, the Pope quotes St Augustine: 'What are kingdoms without justice but large bands of robbers' (n92). The Common Good must obtain between nations, with mutual respect for national differences and levels of development (nn73-4, 100).

Chief among the duties is the avoidance of strife. Indeed, as the Cuban Missile crisis had just shown, the level of modern armament stockpiles, particularly atomic weapons, makes it crucial that war is avoided. In a statement that approaches the prescriptive, the Pope says 'it is contrary to reason to hold that war is now a suitable way to restore rights which have been violated' (n127). Here is the first stage of what was to be the sole prohibition of Vatican II: 'Any act of war aimed indiscriminately at the destruction of entire cities of extensive areas along with their population is a crime against God and humankind itself. It merits unequivocal and unhesitating condemnation.' (*Gaudium et Spes*, n 80).

The Common Good applies between persons and within states. But Pope John now sees a body which could possibly oversee the Universal Common Good in the recently created United Nations (n145). It is in part the old Roman Catholic dream of hegemony, of worldwide influence stretching back to Constantine's Empire and still at the root of Vatican support of the UN. The UN can be a medium for great human good – think of the Millennium Development Goals for example – but it cannot help but fall short of the aspirations of God's Kingdom.

Nevertheless, Pope John's vision of peace is not tranquillity in the sense of withdrawal from the world:

'in order to imbue civilization with right norms and Christian principles, it is not enough to be illumined with the gift of faith and enkindled with the desire of forwarding a good cause. To this end it is necessary to take an active part in the various organisations and influence them from within' (n147).

In a recent interview with Catholic News Service to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the encyclical, Cardinal Turkson, President of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace said *Pacem in Terris* remains as important for the world today as it was when it first appeared. 'Peace is an attribute of God himself. God is peace. Creation aspires to peace' he said, '... If any factor in society in any way treads on or diminishes or makes it difficult for people to realise their dignity, the common good, human flourishing, human development - that for us is a crisis moment. If we can do anything to promote the development of human society that's what we stand for.'

The powerful and prophetic legacy of *Pacem in Terris* inspired a generation of Catholic peacemakers; but also removed what in recent Catholic tradition had tended to be a presumption in favour of war, where the war could be conformed to the criteria of the Just War. The measure of this can be found in the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Catholic Church*: 'Cooperation, even in its less structured forms, shows itself to be one of the most effective responses to a mentality of conflict and unlimited competition that seems so prevalent today. The relationships that are established in a climate of cooperation and solidarity overcome ideological divisions, prompting people to seek out what unites them rather than what divides them' (n 420).

Arms Trade Treaty will save lives

On April 2, just two weeks before the fiftieth anniversary of Pope John XXIII's encyclical *Pacem In Terris*, the United Nations voted 154 to 3, with 23 abstentions, to adopt the Conventional Arms Trade Treaty. The treaty completes humanitarian treaties that have had significant input from NGOs: the 1997 Ottawa Treaty banning anti-personnel land mines, the 2008 Oslo Convention on Cluster Munitions and now the Arms Trade Treaty.

Over 70 governments have now signed the world's first Arms Trade Treaty at the United Nations as it opened for signatures in the first week in June. Once 50 states have ratified it, the treaty came into force. The high turnout mirrored the broad support for controlling the \$70 billion per year international trade in conventional weapons arms sales. Signatories included states that export arms and states where imported arms fuel violence. The treaty covers only the international sale and purchase of weapons, not gun ownership within countries.

In April, 156 countries had voted for the treaty, a milestone in bringing the multibillion-dollar arms exports under control. **In the meantime, without these new binding global controls, some 2000 people will continue to die each day from armed violence.**

Major arms exporters including the United Kingdom, Germany, and France took part in the first day of signing, as did smaller exporters such as Norway and Sweden. The world's largest arms producer and exporter, the United States, said it would sign later, despite opposition from the U.S. National Rifle Association. Russia, China, India and others abstained from the treaty vote and have not indicated if they will sign.

The urgent need brought nearly 100 churches and related organizations into the campaign for the treaty. Churches in dozens of countries urged them to sign in order to keep up the momentum from successful negotiations until the new treaty takes effect. 'Sign early' was the message that ecumenical campaigners gave to 24 governments in the days leading up to the signing – 14 of them in Africa, the continent that has suffered most from unregulated arms sales.

The human cost of illicit arms trading has been the focus of church advocacy for the arms treaty to many countries when negotiations peaked earlier this year. When the treaty is in force and working, it should be more difficult to supply the arms that are fueling the ongoing bloody conflict in Syria. Until then, as Fr Paul Lansu of Pax Christi International

pointed out, it remains easier to sell bullets, bombs and deadly weapons than it is to sell bananas or pineapples. The campaign was able to speak with one voice to four different kinds of governments, those that make and sell the most weapons; those that have suffered the most from irresponsible arms trading; those that want the arms trade to be reformed, and those that may not be focused on the issue but see its value.

The *Ecumenical Campaign for a Strong and Effective Arms Trade Treaty* developed out of a WCC Central Committee action in 2011. A campaign network was formed in mid-2011 during the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation in Kingston, Jamaica. Churches and church ministries in 40 countries joined the campaign, including Uganda, DR Congo, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Brazil, Mexico, Canada, Sweden, Germany, Norway, India, South Korea, Australia and Papua New Guinea. There was close collaboration with Catholic and Evangelical groups.

African churches and governments played a key role in the campaign. Countries heavily affected by decades of irresponsible arms sales stood together and made their voices heard. A key demand was that the treaty must include small arms and light weapons, plus ammunition, or it was not the treaty that Africa needed. Two major players in the negotiations, the U.S. and China, both took note of the African position. Changes in their stance followed, and negotiations were able to continue.

For the first time, a global treaty covers small arms and light weapons, ammunition, human rights violations, international humanitarian law and gender-based violence. It bans exports of conventional arms where there is knowledge that weapons could be used in war crimes, genocide, attacks against civilians and other grave breaches of international humanitarian law.

Support for the treaty from so many states, including major arms exporters, will put pressure on states that abstained to reform their practices. Members of the ecumenical campaign continue to work so that more governments will sign and then ratify the long-awaited treaty.

Pax Christi has an interesting article with liturgical resources on the background to this decision and some fine ethical considerations according to Catholic Social Teaching from Fr Lansu.

This item has been compiled using information from *Ekklesia* and the Canadian *National Catholic Register*

Coffee Waiting!

Difficult times for many in much of Europe are reviving a tradition that began a hundred years ago in the Italian city of Naples, which had the first coffee shop in 1683. It's called *caffè sospeso* – 'coffee in waiting'. A customer pays in advance for a person who cannot afford a cup of coffee.

The Neapolitan writer Luciano de Crescenzo recently used the tradition as the title of one of his books, *Caffè sospeso: Saggezza quotidiana in piccoli sorsi* ('Suspended coffee: Daily wisdom in small sips'). The writer says the tradition is part of the city's philosophy of life. 'In other words, it was a cup of coffee offered to the rest of humankind!' It was a time, he adds, when there were more customers who were poor than those who were well-off.

'It was a beautiful custom,' he says. 'When a person entered a cafe and ordered a cup of coffee, if he could afford it he didn't pay just for one, but for two cups,

allowing someone less fortunate who entered later to have a cup of coffee for free.'

The barista would keep a log, and when someone popped his head in the doorway of the cafe and asked, 'Is there anything suspended?' the barista would nod and serve him a cup of coffee... for free.

It's an elegant way to show generosity: an act of charity in which donors and recipients never need to meet, the donor doesn't show off and the recipient doesn't have to show gratitude.

It's a tradition that's spreading too – London, Spain, Austria and Bulgaria all have outlets. Next time you are in a coffee shop, you might want to ask if they have heard of this service!



Iona to London

Peace Walk

Grace Buckley, Commission vice Chair, relates her experiences doing a part of the Peace walk

When I heard about the Iona to London Peace Walk – a walk of 700 miles to draw attention to the peace and justice issues involved in the massive spending on nuclear weapons at a time of severe public spending cuts – I felt Justice & Peace had to support the brave and hardy souls doing the walk. I told myself that I couldn't give the time for the whole walk because of other commitments (any excuse!) but I felt obliged to join them for at least some of the way.

So Tuesday 28 May saw me meeting up with them at St. Augustine's church in Dumbarton to walk with them to Glasgow. There were 6 core walkers – Kath McDonald, Jill Saunderson, Bob Dixon, Margery Toller, along with Cath and Richard Dyer.

They had been soaked the previous day – a typical Bank Holiday Monday – but clearly the devil was looking after his own when I joined them, as the weather kept mild and sunny till we got to Glasgow.

They loaded up their colourful support van, which had been acquired with a grant from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, with their baggage which would be taken on into Glasgow. We then started off to generally positive responses from passing pedestrians and motorists. Two of the group carried rainbow-coloured peace flags, I was pressed into service to carry a *Bread not Bombs* flag and Cath at the front carried a placard explaining the purpose of the walk.

At the Bowling roundabout, we met up with 4 members of St. Mary's, Duntocher Justice & Peace group and their banners, and then, at Old Kilpatrick, we were joined by Sr. Pat Graham from my own St. Leo's group, and another gentleman from Clydebank. So now we were beginning to look like a pilgrimage!

We handed out leaflets to parents taking kids to school, to OAPs waiting for buses, to cyclists out for the day. One lady in Bowling invited us in for tea! The scenery was beautiful and we were really enjoying the walk. Near Clydebank we met up with two secondary school children who were very interested in what we were doing and why. They asked lots of questions and wished us well.

At Clydebank shopping centre, we stopped for lunch and the St. Mary's group wished us good-bye as they had other commitments. Then we continued on the canal path to Anniesland and headed down towards



Great Western Road.

At Morrisons supermarket we experienced a moment of pure farce. Some of the group went in to the shop and, as the rest of us (4 people) stood outside to wait for them, holding the flags and banners and minding our own business, we were approached by two very polite and clean-cut members of staff. We thought perhaps they had heard of the walk and were going to offer us best wishes or even hospitality but instead they were there to inform us that protests and demonstrations were not allowed on their premises.

Our dumbstruck looks of disbelief must have told them they had it wrong even before we explained that we were simply waiting for our colleagues. Quite why they thought we would be protesting outside Morrisons against nuclear weapons, we have still not worked out. Morrisons – you have missed an opportunity for some positive publicity!

It was with relief and amusement that we moved on to Anniesland Station where we met up with Bill Kidd MSP for a photo call and to hand over a statement. He kept us company as we walked on to Byres Road, still accompanied by supportive car horns and peace signs. There I took my leave of the group and headed home.

I was humbled by the spirit and determination of the walkers who were giving up so much time. One member has very bad knees and uses two sticks, but he is determined to do the whole walk even if it means taking the occasional day in the van to recover. Others will leave the walk later and be replaced by new walkers. At any given time, they will probably not be a large group but they are getting a message across – our prayers go with them!

Need a Pick Me Up?

Dermot Lamb describes how he invited peace activist Fr John Dear to Scotland in September

Towards the end of 2012 as I watched the evening news coverage of another war, terrorist attack and more innocent civilians being killed, I was struck by the overwhelming sense of 'when will this ever change', when will the Gospel message of peace and non violence ever be heard and followed?

I thought of all the activists I know here in Scotland who continue to plough the furrow of Justice and Peace year after year and decided that we all needed to hear a prophetic voice of encouragement. I took a gamble and simply contacted Fr. John Dear SJ who had dedicated his life to peace and non violence and direct action inspired by the example of Jesus. He agreed to come and thanks to generous assistance from the Justice and Peace Commission and SCIAF he will be here in Scotland for 10 days in September. He will visit Glasgow, Lochgilphead and Dundee. Check with the website or the office for dates and times. Come and be inspired.

Losing my religion for equality...

This article by ex President Jimmy Carter, originating from 2009, has gained considerable notice since it was re published in January of this year

Woman and girls have been discriminated against for too long in a twisted interpretation of the word of God.

I have been a practicing Christian all my life and a deacon and Bible teacher for many years. My faith is a source of strength and comfort to me, as religious beliefs are to hundreds of millions of people around the world. So my decision to sever my ties with the Southern Baptist Convention, after six decades, was painful and difficult. It was, however, an unavoidable decision when the convention's leaders, quoting a few carefully selected Bible verses and claiming that Eve was created second to Adam and was responsible for original sin, ordained that women must be 'subservient' to their husbands and prohibited from serving as deacons, pastors or chaplains in the military service.

This view that women are somehow inferior to men is not restricted to one religion or belief. Women are prevented from playing a full and equal role in many faiths. Nor, tragically, does its influence stop at the walls of the church, mosque, synagogue or temple. This discrimination, unjustifiably attributed to a Higher Authority, has provided a reason or excuse for the deprivation of women's equal rights across the world for centuries.

At its most repugnant, the belief that women must be subjugated to the wishes of men excuses slavery, violence, forced prostitution, genital mutilation and national laws that omit rape as a crime. But it also costs many millions of girls and women control over their own bodies and lives, and continues to deny them fair access to education, health, employment and influence within their own communities.

The impact of these religious beliefs touches every aspect of our lives. They help explain why in many countries boys are educated before girls; why girls are told when and whom they must marry; and why many face enormous and unacceptable risks in pregnancy and childbirth because their basic health needs are not met.

In some Islamic nations, women are restricted in their movements, punished for permitting the exposure of an arm or ankle, deprived of education, prohibited from driving a car or competing with men for a job. If a woman is raped, she is often most severely punished as the guilty party in the crime.

The same discriminatory thinking lies behind the continuing gender gap in pay and why there are still so few women in office in the West. The root of this prejudice lies deep in our histories, but its impact is felt every day. It is not women and girls alone who suffer. It damages all of us. The evidence shows that investing in women and girls delivers major benefits for society. An educated woman has healthier children. She is more likely to send them to school. She earns more and invests what she earns in her family.

It is simply self-defeating for any community to discriminate against half its population. We need to challenge these self-serving and outdated attitudes and practices - as we are seeing in Iran where women are at

the forefront of the battle for democracy and freedom.

I understand, however, why many political leaders can be reluctant about stepping into this minefield. Religion, and tradition, are powerful and sensitive areas to challenge. But my fellow Elders and I, who come from many faiths and backgrounds, no longer need to worry about winning votes or avoiding controversy - and we are deeply committed to challenging injustice wherever we see it.

The Elders are an independent group of eminent global leaders, brought together by former South African president Nelson Mandela, who offer their influence and experience to support peace building, help address major causes of human suffering and promote the shared interests of humanity. We have decided to draw particular attention to the responsibility of religious and traditional leaders in ensuring equality and human rights and have recently published a statement that declares: "The justification of discrimination against women and girls on grounds of religion or tradition, as if it were prescribed by a Higher Authority, is unacceptable."

We are calling on all leaders to challenge and change the harmful teachings and practices, no matter how ingrained, which justify discrimination against women. We ask, in particular, that leaders of all religions have the courage to acknowledge and emphasise the positive messages of dignity and equality that all the world's major faiths share.

The carefully selected verses found in the Holy Scriptures to justify the superiority of men owe more to time and place - and the determination of male leaders to hold onto their influence - than eternal truths. Similar biblical excerpts could be found to support the approval of slavery and the timid acquiescence to oppressive rulers.

I am also familiar with vivid descriptions in the same scriptures in which women are revered as pre-eminent leaders. During the years of the early Christian church women served as deacons, priests, bishops, apostles, teachers and prophets. It wasn't until the fourth century that dominant Christian leaders, all men, twisted and distorted Holy Scriptures to perpetuate their ascendant positions within the religious hierarchy.

The truth is that male religious leaders have had - and still have - an option to interpret holy teachings either to exalt or subjugate women. They have, for their own selfish ends, overwhelmingly chosen the latter. Their continuing choice provides the foundation or justification for much of the pervasive persecution and abuse of women throughout the world.

This is in clear violation not just of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights but also the teachings of Jesus Christ, the Apostle Paul, Moses and the prophets, Muhammad, and founders of other great religions - all of whom have called for proper and equitable treatment of all the children of God. It is time we had the courage to challenge these views.



IT WAS the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way- in short, the period was so far like the present period, that some of its noisiest authorities insisted on its being received, for good or for evil, in the superlative degree of comparison only.

Charles Dickens: A Tale of Two Cities

*It is impossible to say you are committed to the poor
and not know that two-thirds of the hungry of the world are women
who get only the leftovers after their husband and children have eaten;
two-thirds of the illiterate of the world are women
enslaved by their lack of education as the chattel of men;
two-thirds of the poorest of the poor, according to UN statistics, are women.
And all of them ignored, rejected and omitted
even from the language and the official theological development of the church.
So much for life; so much for baptism.
It is simply impossible to be really committed to the poor
and not devote yourself to doing something
to change the role and status of women in the world.*

Sister Joan Chittister OSB



Prayers in Support of Victims of Torture

The Light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it. John 1:5

To mark the United Nations International Day in Support of Victims of Torture, 29 June, ACAT – Action by Christians Against Torture – calls on all Christians to join in prayer on this particular day for the tortured and their families. This annual International Prayer Vigil will be held during the week 24th -30th June 2013.

As a human rights defender ACAT has been cheered to see so many communities, minorities and movements through the world crying out for human rights. These protests and demonstrations (especially in the Arab world) demand that we – western societies – cannot stand aside. Every day reporters risk their lives to bring us costly information from countries such as Syria but so often we remain passive bemoaning the continuing stories of torture and abuses. But for Christians inaction is not a valid option. We must seek to work towards a better and more harmonious world; this means never resigning ourselves to barbarism. It is our duty, our Faith: God has no other voice than ours to pray and to act.

The Vigil's theme for this year will resonate with Christians, coming as it does from the readings in preparation for the Christmas season. Christmas, following on as it does from Advent – the season of hope. It gives the strong message of God in Jesus breaking into our world bringing hope and light. How do Christians continue to see the light breaking into the darkness of the world today? As we meditate on this theme we continue to hold onto the belief that the power of this light of God is stronger than the darkness; we ask that we can be witnesses to the light breaking in and to find ways to be part of God's work of healing and establishing true justice.

Last year, thirty countries around the world were united in prayer. We ask you to join with other Christians in this international vigil. Each one of us can make a difference praying for a few minutes at home, lighting candles and interceding for individual victims, meeting with friends, asking your priest for a specific prayer at Sunday services.

ACAT is an ecumenical movement, they are a campaigning organisation that takes up individual cases and situations in particular countries where torture, assassination and death threats are wide spread and hidden by ruling governments. ACAT seeks to make the churches of our country, as well as individual Christians, aware of one of the evils of modern society and to involve them in working for its abolition.

Information about this event or prayer materials can be found at www.acatuk.org.uk or by contacting Margaret Russell at 01179 710379 uk.acat@gmail.com

ACAT (UK) prayer

Lord Jesus,

You experienced in prison the suffering and death of a prisoner of conscience.

You were plotted against, betrayed by a friend,

and arrested under cover of darkness by men who came with clubs and swords.

You were tortured, beaten and humiliated, and sentenced to an agonizing death though you had done no wrong.

Be now with prisoners throughout the world.

Be with them in the darkness of the dungeon, in the loneliness of separation from those they love;

Be with them in their fear of what may come to them,

in the agony of their torture and in the face of execution and death.

Stretch out your hands in power to break their chains and open the gates of freedom, so that your kingdom of justice may be established now among them.

Amen

Newsbrief . . . Newsbrief

Bedroom Tax: Further proof that disabled Scots are being hit hardest by welfare cuts has been published by leading disability charity Capability Scotland. Research shows the most vulnerable are going without essentials such as food, heating and clothes to make up for the loss in their income caused by the bedroom tax. The charity commissioned the research to find out the impact changes to housing benefits, would have on disabled people. Almost a quarter of disabled people who took part said that their housing benefit would be cut as a result of the bedroom tax. Find out more at www.capability-scotland.org.uk

Positive Alternatives to Arms Spending: The Campaign Against the Arms Trade (CAAT) are looking for support for their campaigns this year. In late 2013, CAAT hopes to launch a campaign calling for positive alternatives to arms spending. CAAT will also be running campaigns which will challenge sales and promotion of arms to repressive regimes. This will involve lobbying MPs; challenging the London arms fair, (due to be held in London in September 2013); highlighting the involvement of local arms companies; and promoting the Christian Network Day of Prayer on 8 September. Please go on the CAAT website and sign up to support their campaigns: www.caat.org.uk

Nuclear weapons factory fined £200,000 for safety breaches: The company which operates the factories where the UK's nuclear weapons are manufactured was fined on the 28 May, £200,000 for breaches of safety laws following a fire in which a member of staff was injured. AWE plc, which operates the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE), pleaded guilty at Reading Crown Court on 16 May to failing to ensure the health, safety and welfare at work of its employees following a charge under section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. The charge followed a fire which broke out in an explosives handling facility at the AWE Aldermaston site in Berkshire on the evening of 3 August 2010. The incident left a member of AWE staff with burns to his face and arm and required the evacuation of a number of local residents and closure of roads around the site as safety precautions. More info at www.nuclearinfo.org

Scottish submarine berths suspended following inadequate emergency exercise performance: Three recent exercises to test nuclear emergency planning arrangements in the event of an accident on board one of the Royal Navy's nuclear powered submarines have failed to meet standards set by Government safety regulators. As a result, nuclear submarines have been temporarily banned from berthing in two Scottish lochs. More info at www.nuclearinfo.org

How should we remember World War 1: the 'war to end all wars'? In a time of international tension we call on writers, actors, musicians, teachers and campaigners to join with us to ensure that this anniversary is used to promote peace and international co-operation. Sign the petition at ww1.stopwar.org.uk

Concern over Scottish involvement in rendition flights: Following a detailed report which claims that Scottish airports were used as part of a US programme of rendition flights, Green MSP Patrick Harvie has called for a more proactive approach by Scottish authorities to uncover the truth. Questioning him at Holyrood, Mr Harvie pointed to a 2005 debate when the Justice Secretary Kenny MacAskill (then in opposition) stated that it was political will that was lacking on this important issue. Independent MSP John Finnie has also written to the Lord Advocate seeking a criminal investigation into the use of Scottish airports.

Refugee Council's 'Dignity in Pregnancy' Campaign: Earlier this year, many people wrote to MPs asking them to tell the Home Secretary to protect pregnant women in the asylum system and their babies – if you were one, thank you. As a result of these actions, the Home Office are now carefully considering the recommendations of the research, 'When maternity doesn't matter' and have agreed to look again at their guidance, despite initially issuing some spurious questions about details of the research. This is amazing progress in less than three months! You can still join the campaign at www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/dignityinpregnancy



Children Seeking Asylum Should 'Be Better Cared For' by the State: Hundreds of children who travel by themselves to Britain seeking asylum every year should be better cared for by the state, a parliamentary human rights committee has concluded, noting that currently the state does not always have their best interests at heart. The report by the joint committee on human rights warns that the system designed to identify which children have been trafficked into the UK is flawed, and as a result many children who have been brought here by traffickers, usually to work or for sexual exploitation, are not helped. As a result, the system is failing to prevent child victims of trafficking from ending up in the criminal justice system, accused of committing a crime. (Guardian, 12/06/13)

Public panic over immigration is causing harm to the economy, the Business Secretary has warned. In the 'Independent', on 29 May Vince Cable said overseas students were being deterred from studying at British institutions and tight visa controls were causing difficulties for foreign experts working here. Overseas students were being caught up in the 'very torrid and emotional' argument about the number of immigrants, he said. Official figures just released reveal that, in the year to September 2012, net migration fell, with a 22 per cent decrease in the number of foreign students. Mr Cable said: 'When the numbers decline, this is a great triumph for immigration control, which is quite absurd and, unfortunately, is seriously distorting the debate on sensible university policy and, indeed, sensible immigration policy. 'I just want to make absolutely clear, as far as the Government is concerned, we have no cap on the number of overseas students, we don't propose to introduce one.'

Shelter Scotland, a leading member of the Poverty Alliance, has led a powerful coalition of Scottish charities to criticise proposals by the Scottish Government to put all new social housing tenants on 'probation'. A letter to Scotland's Housing and Welfare Minister, Margaret Burgess MSP, warns that probationary or 'introductory' tenancies are an attack on hard-won tenants' rights, unfairly stigmatise all council and housing association tenants and could ultimately destabilise Scotland's social housing sector.

Nourish Scotland is the network for sustainable and local food in Scotland. They connect more than 1200 organisations and individuals from across Scotland including small producers and community food groups. It is reconnecting producers, growers, retailers, consumers and all who care for local, sustainable food in Scotland. It works to create a stronger food culture to make healthy, local, seasonal, and organic food available everywhere in Scotland. To find out more visit www.nourishscotland.org



VALUES AND PRINCIPLES OF INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judith Robertson, Head of Oxfam in Scotland, gave this address at the recent NIDOS conference 'Scotland 2013 and beyond - Our values and principles for a just world'

It is said that no one truly knows a nation until one has been inside its jails. A nation should not be judged by how it treats its highest citizens, but its lowest ones.

Nelson Mandela

Why have values – why state them or consider them – what do they do, what are they for? They are intrinsic to our motivation, underpin our thinking and provide the framework for our actions. They have the potential to determine how we act as well as why. If they are explicit we can be held accountable to them. They are often the constructs that we measure ourselves against. They are expressions of care.

Scotland has no monopoly on any values – values can be activated or suppressed, they can be stimulated or oppressed. When the Scottish Parliament was reconvened in 1999 four words were inscribed on the mace: Wisdom, Justice, Integrity and Compassion as representing the key values and aspirations of a new Scotland. We all, individually will have our views as to whether the work of the Parliament has adequately lived up to those ambitions and we can discuss today whether, from our perspective, they are the right values, good enough or worth adding to or changing.

But from my perspective they are a good start so let me reflect on them a little and what they might mean for international development.

Wisdom: intrinsic to wisdom is knowledge and experience but for me real wisdom is generated in how the knowledge we have is used: to always keep poverty reduction in our sights; to understand that the needs of women and children will not automatically rise to the top; to listen and to learn primarily from those we aim to help; to correct our mistakes quickly and honestly.

Justice: Nelson Mandela said 'overcoming poverty is not a task of charity, it is an act of justice. Like Slavery and Apartheid, poverty is not natural. It is man-made and it can be overcome and eradicated by the actions of human beings.' Think about that for a minute – poverty is man-made and can be eradicated by the actions of human beings. You really have to wonder who on earth thought that generating mass poverty was a good way to do things ... but clearly someone benefits.

Underpinning justice is the concept of fairness - is it fair that our carbon emitting practices are causing untold damage and threat to the livelihoods of women and men all over the world? Is it fair that tax havens around the world are robbing developing country governments of billions of dollars of revenue? Raising questions however is not enough - it is in our response to these questions that our values are activated and become real.

Compassion: You might think this is a fundamental prerequisite of international development and from my perspective, or that of Oxfam, it is. But it is remarkably easy for that value to be lost as other interests crowd out our care; our agendas, the needs of the funder, the bottom line. It's not easy to keep on caring for people who are vulnerable, to acknowledge their limitations and ours, to see ourselves in others suffering, to constantly challenge the blocks and barriers to change. Maybe this is the hardest value of all to live out – maybe we should acknowledge that more and understand this better.

Integrity: This is a complex word encompassing honesty but implying something more: respect, wisdom, compassion?

Maybe this value underpins all these others: being honest with ourselves and others about what is possible, being transparent in our dealings, not shying away from the harder facts but also staying true to our purpose - if we are engaged in an exercise to tackle poverty lets really do that - let's not pretend we are doing that and do something else instead or allow ourselves to be pulled away by vested interests or make compromises just for expediency. Or - If we do see a need to divert our focus lets be explicit about it, tell people - be up front and be sure of our reasons why.

But there may be other values that are important for international development. About a year ago now staff from Christian Aid, SCIAF and Oxfam met to discuss some of these issues. We identified other values that we thought underpinned international development work: values of equality, partnership, solidarity, participation, subsidiarity and exchange.

I'm sorry the word equality is not on the mace. We are in one of the most unequal times in modern life and in many countries inequality is rising. Not just income inequality but equality between diverse groups, between people's life chances and between women and men, boys and girls.

I haven't talked about rights explicitly so far but underpinning all these values are the values of rights - the Universal UN Declaration identified and defined our fundamental human rights: our right to life, our right to equal treatment and to live in dignity - and many other rights. In fact it seems that rights and values are inextricably linked - if we bring alive these values we stimulate people's rights. If we respect people's rights our values are given light and air.

In a small way the IF campaign in Scotland is attempting to bring life to our values and people's rights. In recognising that there is enough food for everyone but 1 billion people are going to bed hungry every night we are highlighting the absence of rights. At a UK level the IF campaign is seeking some redress: keeping our aid promises, challenging unfair tax practices, ending illegal land grabs and shining a light on business and government practice that seeks to undermine poor people's rights.

In Scotland we've highlighted Scotland's potential to play its part: to support those living out the devastating impacts of climate change by increasing the climate justice fund, to protect livelihoods and rights all over the world through fair play in procurement and environmental policy, to inspire more knowledge and understanding of the experience of people experiencing land grabs through hosting a global land hearing in Scotland where those people's voices are the loudest heard, through learning and ensuring our own young people understand their place in the world and can identify how our man-made poverty is brought about and what we can do to change it and finally to improve our own understanding of our impact on the most vulnerable people and to do this through transparent analysis and reporting.

We need to know our values and be explicit about them but we need to bring them to life. As Nelson Mandela made clear it is the actions of human beings that are causing poverty. Only positive action underpinned by decent values and rights is going to end it.

“There's an old saying that the soup of life is salty enough without adding tears to it.”

Iain Banks (1954-2013), Scottish author, Look To Windward

diary



JUNE

- 17/18 G8 meeting - County Fermanagh
- 17/23 Refugee Week
- 20 UN World Refugee Day 26 International Day in support of Victims of Torture July
- 6 International Day of Cooperatives 16 First atomic bomb detonated in New Mexico
- 18 Nelson Mandela Day
- 19/20 English and Welsh Justice and Peace Network 35th Annual Conference 26 Fellowship of Reconciliation Scotland, Annual Conference

AUGUST

- 1 Convention on Cluster Munitions comes into effect (2010)
- 6 Hiroshima - Anniversary of Atomic Bomb 9 Nagasaki - Anniversary of Atomic Bomb
- 9 International Day of the World's Indigenous People
- 19 World Humanitarian Day
- 23 International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition
- 29 International Day Against Nuclear Tests

Cover Photograph

Our cover shows Carol Clarke from the National Office and Margaret McGowan, chair of Motherwell Diocesan J&P Core Group, with the signpost for the IF demonstration in Belfast on 16 June. Covering the demonstration and the G8 meeting would have made publication of the magazine very late.

We will provide coverage of the Belfast demonstration and the G8 meeting (as well as all the usual updates) on the website.

SEPTEMBER

- 7 Day of Witness, Faslane
- 8 International Literacy Day
- 8 Day of Prayer - Campaign Against Arms Trade
- 10 -13 DSEi arms fair returns to London's Docklands - Or does it?
- 15 International Day of Democracy
- 16 International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer
- 21 UN International Day of Peace
- 22 International Migrants Day

Full details and links on the events page of our website www.justiceandpeacescotland.org.uk/EventsDiary.aspx

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