



ENCOUNTER : CALAIS

"The most deadly poison of our times is indifference."

St. Maximilian Kolbe



Encounter : Calais

In October 2016 the migrant camp in Calais, commonly known as ‘the jungle’ was bulldozed and the thousands of residents displaced, many of them taken to reception centres across France.

The story didn't end there.

Since the demolition of the jungle many of those displaced have returned, and the wider political and social issues which contribute to the current migration situation have remained unresolved. There are hundreds of vulnerable migrants, many of them young people still in Calais, Dunkirk, and other parts of northern France facing hostile tactics from French riot police including teargassing and physical assault. The UK government contributes to the security situation in these areas. Calais is 26 miles off our coast.

Pope Francis has called on the Church to look to margins of our society. The young people in Calais, who don't fit any of our usual labels of "refugee" and face a daily struggle for survival could not be more marginalised.

Encounter : Calais is offering a chance for members of the church community in Scotland to engage with questions of welcome, to experience the situation in Calais, and participate in the work of some of the organisations on the ground.

Is this for me?

This visit isn't an 'end in itself'. We are looking to engage with people who upon their return to Scotland can witness to their experience and engage others in supporting the work being done there. This could be in schools, parishes, chaplaincies, local communities, through ecumenical and interfaith networks wherever you are across the country.

So if you have a passion for social justice, a desire to explore Christ's command to 'welcome the stranger', and aren't afraid of a few days hard work : this could be for you!

Dates and Accommodation

We have a small house in Calais where our group will be staying¹. All participants will have their own room. We will live in a small intentional community with time for prayer and reflection on the experience. There will also be 1 meeting before and 1 meeting after for all participants.

¹ Our accommodation can be viewed here :

<https://www.airbnb.co.uk/rooms/9458380?location=Calais%2C%20France&adults=8&children=0&infants=0&toddler=0&guests=8&s=uQV8lxsO>

There are three visits running to Calais in Jan/Feb 2019.

Group 1 : Monday 28th January – Friday 1st February

Group 2 : Friday 1st February – Tuesday 5th February

Group 3 : Tuesday 5th February – Saturday 9th February

Groups will travel from Scotland early on their first day, have three days in Calais and return on the fifth day.

Costs and Logistics

Justice and Peace Scotland are asking for a contribution of £100 from each participant to the cost of this experience. If this amount is a significant barrier to you / your parish or school, please contact us.

All participants need the appropriate documentation to travel to France. (For most people this will be an UK or EU passport, but please check your own passport/ visas.)

All participants need the appropriate health insurance. For most people this is the European Health Insurance Card. This can be applied for/ renewed here : <https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/apply-for-a-free-ehic-european-health-insurance-card/>

Drivers

This visit is dependant on having drivers to travel to and from Calais with each group. If you are a driver and able /willing to assist in this way please let us know.

Drivers will be paid at the Bishop's Conference of Scotland rate of £0:45 per mile. (This is about £450 for a round trip Glasgow - Calais). Your vehicle does not need to travel around the Calais area, as Justice and Peace Scotland staff will facilitate transport in Calais.

To apply

Please return the completed Application Form to daniel.sweeney@justiceandpeacescotland.org.uk by **31st December 2018**. (If you have not received the application form with this letter please get in touch.)

Participants will be notified by **7 January 2019**. Decisions about applications will be based on availability of group dates and drivers. Our hope is to be able to include as many people as possible.

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Danny Sweeney

(Co-ordinator, Justice and Peace Scotland)

Further Information

For those considering applying to participate the links below are to some of the organisations working on the ground.

Maria Skobtsova Catholic Worker House <https://mariaskobtsova.org/>

The Catholic Worker house in Calais with a mission to be prayerfully present with and amongst refugees. The house began in Feb 2016 when ‘the jungle’ was still standing as a house for volunteers. Since the demolition of ‘the jungle’ in October 2017 the work of the house continues to support the most vulnerable in and around Calais, working with Caritas France.

Short video of Br. Johannes speaking about the work of the house for Diocese in Europe
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bFH-H821H70>

Secour Catholique – Caritas France <https://www.secours-catholique.org/> (in French)

<https://www.caritas.org/where-caritas-work/europe/france/> (Profile on Caritas International website – in English)

Refugee Community Kitchen <http://www.refugeecommunitykitchen.com/>

A volunteer-led response to the situation in Calais in 2015 RCK provides food to thousands of people each day in Calais, northern France, Paris and other parts of the region. Since ‘the jungle’ was destroyed they continue this work which provides not just nourishment, but a place and moment to gather and connect.

Care 4 Calais <http://care4calais.org/about-us/who-we-are/>

Volunteer-led humanitarian organisation operating in northern France, Belgium and other areas providing supplies and resources to migrants in need across the region.

Refugee Info Bus <https://www.refugeeinfobus.com/refugee-info-bus-refugee-rights-eur>

One of the human rights monitoring organisations in Northern France. This link (below) is to a recent report (5th December 2018) on Police Violence against migrants.

https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/5eb73a_ae875cd65dcc434588a7a69ed4cf3167.pdf

Safe Passage <http://safepassage.org.uk/>

Safe Passage advocates for safe, legal migration routes for vulnerable minors to in Europe. They involved with the #itsourturn campaign, calling on the government to take in 10,000 vulnerable children 80 years on from the *kindertransport* when the UK government offered sanctuary to 10,000 children in Nazi occupied parts of Europe. This campaign has been heavily promoted by Lord Alfred Dubs, who was a child of the *kindertransport*.

<https://80yearson.org.uk/>