

diarydiary

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

Thanks to everyone who responded to the reminders. And to all those who expressed concern or even embarrassment, please don't worry. We are the beneficiaries of your subscriptions and are happy to keep preparing and distributing the magazine. For those who enquired about paying by standing order, we are changing our banking arrangements and will notify when things are settled. If anyone has a contribution they would like to make in an article (up to 800 words usually), a reflection or a poem or something else that has caught their eye, we are pleased to consider it.

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ISSUE 4: 2007



They covet fields, and seize them;
 houses, and take them away;
 they oppress householder and
 house, people and
 their inheritance.

Amos 2:2



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resisting occupation constructing peace

Ann Davis submits this account of the ongoing oppression of Palestinians

Last month in the Palestinian village of Anata, workers in a summer camp, several of them from Britain, set out to rebuild the home of the Hamdan family, destroyed in 2005 by the Israeli authorities. Anata falls within the Jerusalem municipal borders and the group intended to re-build the house last year - but the Israeli military intervened.

Hassan Yussef Hamdan, 67, his wife and three sons - two of them married - had tried several times to obtain permission to build a home on their privately-owned land which had been in their family since the time of the Ottoman Empire. At a cost of several thousands of dollars and lawyer's fees, permission was never granted. Building permits are rarely given to Palestinians, and over 18,000 Palestinian homes have been demolished since 1967, mainly as a form of collective punishment, with only 5% being for security reasons, says Linda Ramsden, director of the Israeli Committee Against House Demolition UK.

A mix of volunteers and staff of the Committee turned up to fulfil their promise to the Hamdan family to rebuild their home.

Seeing Israeli and Palestinian volunteers work side by side on the project proved a powerful demonstration that they refuse to be enemies. *"The rebuilding of Palestinian homes is a graphic, effective form of political resistance to the occupation"*, says Linda who was part of the camp two years ago and has also been involved this time.

The entire Hamdan family had been left with serious debt and homeless since 2005 and had spent the intervening time scattered among relatives. *"Denying a family the right to a home is effectively to expel them and crush their hopes,"* Linda says. *"We affirm, in our rebuilding efforts, a desire for a just and sustainable peace between Israelis and Palestinians."*

This year marks the fortieth anniversary of the Israeli Occupation of Palestinian territories. More than 460,000 Israelis now occupy land in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip. It is hard for us to imagine what life is like. Over three million Palestinians endure harsh conditions in the West Bank and Gaza and in East Jerusalem around a fifth of the historic land of Palestine is controlled by the Israeli army. In the State of Israel over a million Arabs (whose families remained in the expulsion of 1948) live as second-class citizens.

The continuing construction of the **'Apartheid Wall'** separating families, farmers from their land and breaking up communities, has been condemned internationally, while road blocks and checkpoints, school closures, curfews and the destruction of olive trees add to people's misery.

The UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in the

Territories, Professor John Dugard, sums it up: it is the first time in history that an occupied people have become victims of economic sanctions. In his 2006 report he said he could only appeal to the wider international community to concern itself with the plight of the Palestinian people.

Recently at meetings in Glasgow and Edinburgh, Samira Hassassian spoke of the impact of road closures on Palestinian producers and farmers. Born in Beit Jala near Bethlehem, she was in Scotland to appeal to all who care for justice and peace to offer hope through Fair Trade and to demand the world community to stop the building of the Wall.

Fair Trade is a window of freedom and she spoke of the relentless efforts of many Palestinians to transform their lives by simple means. In an interview with the *"Scottish Catholic Observer"* she stressed the good that church groups could do. A Catholic and a distinguished academic and business woman, she felt that they could draw attention to the arms trade with Israel and take a lead in not buying Israeli products.

Mrs Hassassian, wife of the Palestinian General Delegate to the UK, is a former chief programme officer of the Bethlehem Peace Centre and nowhere were her messages more readily understood than among the volunteers of **'Hadeel'** in Edinburgh, the only shop of its kind outside Jerusalem, selling authentic handcrafts made in refugee camps and in groups who have no other form of income.

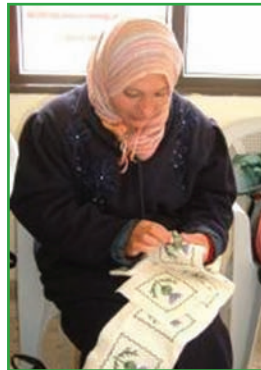
During the four years since the fairly traded shop was set up at St George's West Church Centre, thousands in Palestine and Lebanon have been supported through the sale of their pottery, jewellery, olive wood carvings and embroidered goods and now through a network of representatives in Scotland and England.

Many of the volunteers have visited the workshops and return to talk to groups throughout Scotland as part of the shop's education programme.

Recently, one group at Idna, near Hebron, had their premises raided by the Israeli Army. Damage to much of their equipment resulted. There are 24 women who embroider and five who sew and their shoulder bags, backpacks and olive branch coasters are very popular in Scotland. The soldiers took away their recently acquired computer. A recent grant from **'Hadeel'** had enabled three women to be trained in computer skills.

Activists in many organisations throughout Scotland work towards justice in Israel/Palestine and have been doing so for years. An umbrella group, **'Rediscovering Palestine Scotland'** comprises a number of charities who are active in their support of Palestinian causes.

Front cover: As this article was being prepared regular reports were being received from the volunteer builders. On day five of the rebuilding, border patrol jeeps were seen and there was panic that the work already completed would be demolished. In fact, 200 metres downhill a little house, home to a family of nine, was bulldozed as the international team and local people watched. The family returned to find their home gone. The volunteers decided to reconstruct it too even though there was a risk that the Hamdan house would be demolished even before it was finished.



At Idna, Najat embroiders a thistle coaster designed by Joan Musgrave whose husband is a former Church of Scotland minister in Jerusalem.

an important anniversary

Margaret McGowan, the Motherwell Commission representative, reports on Scottish celebrations to mark the abolition of the Slave Trade.

On 25th of March 2007 we marked 200 years since the British Parliament passed the Bill to abolish the Slave Trade in the British colonies. A Programme of events was held at the David Livingstone Centre in Blantyre, on Saturday 16th June. I attended two of the events.

At a series of short talks on Scotland and Slavery, Professor Geoff Palmer who has written a book on the consequences of slavery called *"The Enlightenment - Citizens of Britishness"*, spoke of the long and important historical links between the Caribbean and Britain. How Jamaica generated two thirds of the Empire's income in the eighteenth century. How poverty, deprivation and mixed race were the consequences of the slave trade. His wish is that the anomalies of the word race will be replaced by the harmony of the words...*human race.*

Kumono Rocks, a black performance poet, who has been performing around Scotland for ten years, spoke of two women:

HARRIET TUBMAN was an African-American abolitionist. As an escaped slave, she made thirteen missions to rescue over seventy enslaved friends and family members to freedom in Canada using the Underground Railroad. She had a price of 100 dollars on her head. During her lifetime, she worked as a lumberjack, laundress, nurse, and cook. As an abolitionist, she helped liberate scores of slaves, and inspired many more to do so independently. During the American Civil War, she was responsible for several roles such as intelligence gatherer, refugee organizer, raid leader, nurse, and fundraiser. Tubman was the first American woman to plan and lead a military operation.

SOJOURNER TRUTH was the self-given name, from 1843, of **ISABELLA BAUMFREE**, an American abolitionist. Truth was born into slavery in Swartekill, New York. Her best-known speech, which became known as *Ain't I a Woman?*, was delivered in 1851 at the Ohio Women's Rights Convention in Akron, Ohio. She was a larger than life character who was way ahead of her times as far as Women's Rights were concerned. Standing six feet high she was once accused of being a man in disguise. She answered by opening her shirt and declaring again *"Ain't I a Woman?"*

The Rev Iain Whyte, a former Edinburgh University chaplain read out parts of speeches that were made by supporters and opponents of the Slave Trade in Scotland.

There was also an Ecumenical Service to mark the Bicentenary. The music was provided by the Hamilton Salvation Army Band and the Glasgow Gospel Choir.

During the service, the Rt. Rev. Sheilagh Kesting, the Moderator of the Church of Scotland, introduced the Statement of the Churches to mark the Bicentenary. Then the Most Rev. Idris Jones and the Rt. Rev Bishop Joseph Devine read the following:

- *We remember with gratitude all those, slave and free, who worked to bring about the ending of chattel slavery, for which the first major step was the abolition of the British Slave Trade in 1807.*
- *We acknowledge that many Christians were slow to speak out against the evils of the Slave Trade and that many were actively involved in it and profited from it. We express our sincere regret for this.*
- *The legacies of the Slave Trade are still active in the world and we commit ourselves to working for reconciliation and for an end to both the economic imbalance between the powerful, rich nations and the poorer ones and to racism. We call on governments to be particularly supportive of the nations in Africa and in the Caribbean which bore the brunt of the effects of the Slave Trade.*
- *We recognise that out of this economic imbalance comes an exploitation of poverty which has led to forms of de-humanising treatment of people such as trafficking in people and forced or bonded labour.*
- *We commend the Christian men and women who are already working to combat these evils and call on the people of this Church to find practical ways to support their efforts.*

This Statement was signed by the Church Leaders and then by all present.



Bishop Devine with other Clergy at the Ecumenical Service

international day of peace



The following initiative is now well established. We are reprinting this letter to encourage J&P people to follow up on the suggested action.

Dear Friends

I founded Peace One Day in 1999 to document my efforts to create an annual day of global ceasefire and non-violence with a fixed calendar date. In 2001, POD achieved its primary objective. United Nations General Assembly resolution (A/Res/55/282) was unanimously adopted by UN member states, formally establishing an annual day of global ceasefire and non-violence on the UN International Day of Peace, fixed in the global calendar on 21 September – Peace Day.

With the Day in place, POD's main aim

is to raise awareness of Peace Day 21 September. POD is a non-profit organisation, impartial and independent of any government, political persuasion, corporation or religious creed.

Last year on 21 September, 27.6 million people from 200 countries did something for Peace Day. I hope you'll make your own commitment for Peace Day and log it on this website <http://www.peaceoneday.org/home.aspx>. By working together there will be Peace One Day. We look forward to hearing from you.

With thanks and best wishes.
In peace,

Jeremy Gilley

The following comes from our friends at the Maryknoll Community in the United States. It is intended for the American leaders, but is of course applicable beyond the US, to all world leaders.

Leaders are those who enable a group to make fresh, new connections between what they were formed to be and what it will take to maintain that direction in a continually changing world. At this time in the history of this (US) country we have never needed leadership more to enable us to reclaim our best values and to become again what we have known ourselves to be: open, committed to civil rights, tolerant, guardians of the constitution.

LET US PRAY:

Give us, O God, leaders whose hearts are large enough to match the breadth of our own souls and give us souls strong enough to follow leaders of vision and wisdom.

Give us a government that provides for the advancement of this country without taking resources from others to achieve it.

We trust you, Great God, to open our hearts to learn from those to whom you speak in different tongues, and to respect the life and words of those to whom you entrusted the good of other parts of this globe.

We beg you, Great God, give us the vision as a people to know where global leadership truly lies, to pursue it diligently, to require it to protect human rights, for everyone everywhere.

We ask these things, Great God, with minds open to your word, and hearts that trust in your eternal care. Amen.

From the Prayer for Leadership by Joan Chittister

fromrefugeeweek

There was a solidarity gathering outside Dungavel Detention Centre, organised as always by Friends of Refugees Ayrshire, to mark the end of Refugee Week 2007, and once more the rain poured down. Margaret McGowan, chair of Motherwell Diocesan Justice and Peace read out the poem below, by an unknown detainee, which she had found on the Jesuit Refugee Service website.

Message from the Berlin Detention Center, On 'Day of the Refugee', October 1994

I am afraid.
I have a fear unknown to you outside and which hopefully will remain unknown to you.
The fear lives within my stomach, my head, my feet, my hands.
My hands tremble and are wet and cold like my grandmother's hands when she died.

The fear never leaves me, not even in my sleep.
I can share it with no one and I can tell it to no one, because the men with whom I share my cell speak another language. We don't understand one another.

I think everyone of us assumes the other one has it better.
Surely he comes from a country where life is more just, more free, more educated or simply wealthier than my country was or ever will be.

We observe one another suspiciously.
How does the policeman speak with my neighbour?



Is he friendlier to him than to me?
Why does he have German visitors every week and I have none?

It is not true that a commonly experienced threat creates solidarity.
It creates selfishness and suspicion.
It creates doubt and hate.
This threat in deportation detention creates isolation.

In the first weeks I still had hope.
Hope that the judge would believe me.
Hope that the authorities would listen to me.
Hope that on the other side of the bars there would be someone who turns to me.
These hopes have burst.
The hate has burst.
The longing for freedom has disappeared.
Remaining is the fear of the policemen and security people in the country of my birth.
But I was told: Fear is irrelevant for asylum.

You, outside, build up banners and flags.
You say that it is the 'Day of the Refugee'.
You listen to talks and music.
I say: Be silent and smell the fear which creeps through these walls.

(Dictated a few days before his deportation in 1994)
Translation by Bernd Gunther, SJ.

developments in asylum

Fiona Hyslop MSP is Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning in the Scottish Parliament. We reprint part of a recent letter to Patrick Harvie MSP with particular reference to the education of children of asylum seekers which has long been a Justice and Peace priority

"...We are also determined to work with the Home Office and the Border and Immigration Agency to make progress on the key issues that affect the welfare of children like dawn raids, the detention of children at Dungavel and the review of cases of families who arrived before December 2006. I have had an initial discussion with Liam Byrne, the Immigration Minister, and we intend to meet later in the summer.

I intend to explore with him a number of key issues and changes that the Scottish government believes will help improve the experience of asylum families in Scotland. This will include:

- Holding the Home Office to account for full implementation of the measures in the March 2006 agreement;
- Exploring the detail of the forthcoming legacy review and making it clear that we want all families with children here before March 2006 to be granted leave to remain. Many asylum families, through no fault of their own, are left in limbo for years awaiting decisions about their status - more than 900 families out of the 1400 in the legacy group arrived here between 2000 and 2003 and have often become fully integrated members of the local community;
- Pressing for alternatives to dawn raids and the detention of children and their families to be explored vigorously, for example considering the use of hostel accommodation as an alternative to detention;
- Asking them to reconsider the right to work for asylum seekers; and
- Looking at how Scottish legislation can protect children within UK Immigration laws.

The Scottish contribution to the UK report to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) was also published today. The Scottish Government is committed to the rights set out in the Convention and is clear that these should apply to asylum children in the same way as to Scottish children.

I am writing today in similar terms to the Conveners of the Education, Lifelong Learning and Culture and Local Government and Communities Committees and will of course keep Parliament informed of significant developments in relation to asylum."

the scope of justice & peace

What follows is based on an Address by Bishop Tartaglia at a Day of Recollection for the Justice & Peace Group of Pantasaph, North Wales, marking the 40th Anniversary of Populorum Progressio

INTRODUCTION

Justice & Peace Groups typically have a passion for the Justice and Peace agenda and a programme for action. They also need a spirituality which draws on the richness of Catholic faith and worship. What follows is an initial attempt to trace the main lines of a spirituality for people involved in the Justice & Peace movement. This spirituality takes its inspiration from the mystery of God's love.

There can be little doubt that love belongs to the deepest nature of Catholic faith and of the Catholic Church. Three phrases from the Johannine writings confirm this insight. The source: *God is love*. The historical reality: *God so loved the world that he gave his only Son*. The commandment: *Love one another as I have loved you*. Love has to be the ultimate wellspring of the motivation which makes Christians champion the cause of justice and peace and be witnesses to the social doctrine of the Church.

LOVE OF GOD AND NEIGHBOUR

Our love for God is a response to the love of God who loved us first. *"This is the love I mean, not our love for God, but God's love for us when he sent his Son to be the sacrifice that takes our sins away."* It is fundamental to Catholic faith and spirituality to recognise God's love for us in Christ as the source even of our response of love for God, which opens then to the love of all those whom God loves, to love of one another, to love of our neighbour, to love of all our brothers and sisters in the human family. Christians recognise a profound unity in love of God and love of neighbour. We are rightly suspicious of people who claim to love God and fail to show compassion, forgiveness and mercy to their brothers and sisters. We call them hypocrites. As religious people, we are afraid to fall into that trap. On the other hand, we fear those who claim to love their neighbour but deny the existence of God because we sense that they may end up oppressing and destroying their neighbour with inhuman ideologies, as we have seen in the 20th century and with the more grotesque developments of atheistic humanism and with the unfortunate by-products of impersonal globalisation and technological progress.

So God's radical initiative of love brings us to faith, to worship, to adoration and prayer. It also brings us to love every human being and to respect their God-given human dignity. This has to be the spiritual foundation of the commitment to



justice and peace.

I am happy to quote the **Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church**. *"This doctrine (i.e. the social doctrine of the Church) has its own profound unity, which flows from a Faith in a whole and complete salvation, from Hope in a fullness of justice, and from Love which makes all mankind truly brothers and sisters in Christ: it is the expression of God's love for the world, which he gave his only Son (Jn 3,16). The new law of love embraces the entire human family and knows no limits, since the proclamation of the salvation wrought by Christ extends to the ends of the earth (Acts, 1,8) (CSDC 3).*

This is a commitment of a profoundly religious and spiritual nature. It therefore has to be nourished by the Word of God, by the Sacraments, especially the Eucharist, and by prayer and reflection. A commitment to justice and peace is not an activism. It is a commitment to action for justice which is deeply rooted in the life of faith and of prayer.

LOVE FOR TRUE HUMAN DIGNITY

The love which is the source of the commitment to justice and peace is a love for true human dignity. The message of Populorum Progressio, whose 40th anniversary we are marking, and of so much of Catholic social doctrine, is that authentic human development attends to the whole person, both material and spiritual. A love for human dignity will not tolerate poverty, political oppression, unjust economic and social inequalities, unjust discrimination on the grounds of race, religion or gender. At the same time, a love for human dignity will promote spiritual development in culture, education and religious expression. It will condemn the violation of religious freedom and freedom of conscience. Human beings are created in the image and likeness of God. This is our human dignity. This is the basis of human rights. Our commitment to justice and peace needs to draw on this religious insight so that we can attend to the development of the whole person.

LOVE FOR THE SACREDNESS OF LIFE

Life is God's first and greatest gift to us. God gives us life. He offers us new life in Christ. He holds out to us the promise of eternal life. The right to life is the first human right, and is the condition for the exercise of all other rights. According to the Catholic Church, the right to life is from conception to its natural end, and this implies the illicitness of every form of procured abortion and of euthanasia, which, as well as being deeply sinful, are immense social evils. Anyone who is committed to justice and peace must also be committed to the defence of human life. There can be no dichotomy

newsbrief . . . newsbrief

WHITE POPPIES: With the magazine you will find a flier for White Poppies. The leaflet explains the reasons for wearing a white poppy. Why not order some for your parish or school.

COUNT ME IN! WORLD DAY TO OVERCOME EXTREME POVERTY, October 17. Approximately 1.2 billion people struggle to survive on less than a dollar a day. An estimated 840 million suffer the gnawing pain of hunger, and as many as 24,000 people, many of them children, die every day as a result. People who are hungry are more susceptible to disease, and find their capacity to work diminished as well. Hunger also impairs children's ability to learn, with consequences that are felt long after childhood is over. **Take time to sign the online petition at <http://www.oct17.org/Count-me-in.html>**

CALCULATE YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT. Want to find out what your own carbon footprint is like? Visit <http://actonco2.direct.gov.uk>. Fill in the questionnaire which will calculate your own unique footprint and a personal action plan on what you can do reduce your own emissions.

FAIR TRADE - A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY: The official Launch Conference of the Scottish Fair Trade Forum will take place on Saturday 27 October. The venue is still to be confirmed but it will be in Edinburgh. Full details are not yet available, but they will be on the J&P website as soon as we have them.

WATER: It is often said that future wars will be fought over water rather than oil. Actually, scarcity of water is crossing national boundaries and competition for water is taking place in the world grain markets. Each year the gap between world water consumption and the sustainable water supply widens. It takes 1,000 tons of water to produce one ton of grain. Importing grain can be a way of importing water. Expanding irrigation can increase a country's grain harvest. However, irrigation water is being lost by the growing urban demand for water and falling water tables, which are not replenishable. If countries that are over-pumping do not move quickly to reduce water use and stabilise water tables, then an eventual drop in food production is almost inevitable. *Source: Australian Catholic Social Justice Council*

US - INDIA DEAL SAID TO 'INCREASE NUCLEAR DANGER.' The Bush administration's decision to let India obtain nuclear technology from the United States is renewing long-held fears that it could result in further proliferation of nuclear weapons around the world. U.S. *"It will allow India to increase its capacity to make nuclear weapons material,"* Zia Mian, professor of global security and environment at Princeton University, said *"[It] will increase the nuclear danger in South Asia."* (From *OneWorld.Net Courtesy of Global Network News*) Full details <http://us.oneworld.net/article/view/151869/1/>

ETHICAL FUNDS - GOOD NEWS. In Feb 2007 it became clear that an ethical fund had outperformed all other funds in the UK all Companies sector. Of the 324 unit trusts in the sector the Cooperative Insurance Sustainable Leaders Trust

was the best performing in the 12 months to 31 January 2007. (*Ethical Consumer 106*). We've touched on ethical banking in the past, perhaps it is time again to check out our bank accounts, and if appropriate change to an ethical bank.

RESULTS OF AMNESTY CONSULTATION: Readers may remember how we reported that Amnesty at its recent AGM passed two contradictory motions on the question of abandoning its traditional stance of neutrality on the issue of abortion. The results of the consultation, intended to help inform the discussion of this issue at the AGM, and published by the Pro Life Alliance at <http://www.prolife.org.uk/show?item=4> show further disregard for the views of the membership. There were 1800 responses to the consultation (just under 1% of UK membership). The views expressed in the consultation were in each of the three questions opposed to any widening of the remit of AI in the area of abortion; and were opposed to AI developing a pro abortion stance either in specific circumstances or more generally.

CELEBRATION & CHALLENGE OF THE NATURAL WORLD. Wednesday 12 September, 7.30pm Renfield Centre, 260 Bath Street, Glasgow. **Thursday 13th September, 7.30pm,** Lauriston Jesuit Centre, Lauriston Street, Edinburgh. Bishop Chris Toohey, Founder of Earthcare Australia, and Mary Colwell from the BBC Natural History Unit, Bristol. They will jointly give an audio visual presentation on our relationship with the natural world, considering the essential link between faith and the environment, and the response of churches to date.

POVERTY & HOMELESSNESS ACTION WEEK 2008: Training sessions will be taking place in October to help churches and organisations plan events for Poverty & Homelessness Action Week 2008, a new venture linking Homelessness Sunday on 28 January with Poverty Action Sunday on 3 February. The resource materials, Opening Doors, Opening Hearts, will encourage churches to hold events on either Sunday and throughout the week. It is a chance to engage with issues of homelessness, poverty and social injustice in all our communities. The usual Homelessness Sunday materials will be available; order forms will be distributed widely, and through www.homelessness-sunday.org.uk. Venues and times for training sessions in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen are listed on the Churches Housing website. To take part, please send your details to info@churches-housing.org.

THE AGM OF SCOTTISH CHURCHES HOUSING ACTION will take place at the Quaker Meeting House, 7 Victoria Terrace, Edinburgh at 11.00 am on Friday 5 October. All are welcome.

Following the formalities of the AGM, there will be reports from staff of the main areas of work. A simple lunch will be served at 12.30, for which they ask a contribution of £7.00 – book now with an e-mail to info@churches-housing.org SCHA can invoice, or you can pay on the day.



'all together now' for one world week

21-28 October 2007

Our world is threatened by climate change; survival for many is threatened by economic injustice as well as by climate change; our values and freedoms are threatened by fear of those we do not know or understand. One World Week (OWW) challenges us, all – together – now, to make a positive difference in our communities and across our world; by embracing all, learning together, and acting now. OWW wants to use this year's theme to encourage and help us to find ways to cross boundaries and build relationships of mutual respect, with others from diverse backgrounds; to come together to learn about global justice and work in solidarity to challenge inequity, discrimination and degradation.

OWW has been inspiring individuals and local groups for

decades, providing resources for all occasions. This year all resources will be found on the OWW website: www.oneworldweek.org which is being redesigned to provide downloadable resources, news of events, useful links, contacts, ideas and information about how to plan local events.

So why not mark OWW in your parish or school. Start downloading the materials, let your parish know it is happening by mentioning it in your parish newsletter. Why not include a bidding prayer, or even better, mark the week by taking some action.

Further information:
one_world_week@hotmail.co.uk
 Tel. 023 9258 2140



military rule in burma

Burma has been under military rule since 1962. The current regime, the State Peace and Development Council (formerly known as the State Law and Order Restoration Council or SLORC), is among the worst violators of human rights in the world.

In 1988, the National League for Democracy was founded in Burma by Aung San Suu Kyi, a Nobel laureate who remains the League's leader. In Burma's 1990 parliamentary elections, the party won 406 out of 489 seats, but the ruling military regime prevented it from forming a government. Since that time, the regime has harassed and arrested League members while thwarting meaningful political reform.

Aung San Suu Kyi is now serving her third term of house arrest. She was arrested in 2003 after the regime's militia attacked her convoy and killed up to 100 of her supporters. She has spent nearly 11 of the last 17 years in detention, mostly under house arrest, despite worldwide calls for her freedom and that of hundreds of other political prisoners.

In September of 2006, the U.S. led effort to

include Burma on the United Nations Security Council Agenda finally passed allowing the Security Council to discuss officially how it will deal with the human rights situation in Burma. In January of 2007, Russia and China vetoed a draft U.N. Security Council resolution that would have urged Burma to ease repression and release political prisoners, claiming human rights issues are an internal matter. In November of 2006, the International Labor Organization announced it will be seeking charges against Myanmar over the continuous forced labour of its citizens by the military at the International Court of Justice.

REFLECTION

It would be wonderful if you... would declare yourselves men of peace in these terms: leaders prepared to offer a hand of friendship to your former enemies, leaders committed to a fairer distribution of the goods of this world, leaders who acknowledge the dignity of every human person, leaders brave enough to take the risk of loving, leaders renouncing hatred and fear, leaders who will boldly tell the world that every person is our brother or sister.

Bishop Pat Power
 Australian Catholic Social Justice Council

the scope of justice & peace cont'd

between pro-life and pro-justice. There can be no dichotomy between pro-life and pro-peace. There can be no defence of human rights if that defence does not begin with the defence of life. There can be no defence of peace while unborn human life is denied the peace to grow and develop. The threat to the sacredness of life is the first and fundamental injustice and social evil. I may be like a voice crying in the wilderness, but I would love to see the Justice & Peace movement expand its remit to include the pro-life case. I am heartened in this regard by the statement of Cardinal Renato Martino, President of the Pontifical Council for Justice & Peace, who, in deploring the decision of Amnesty International to adopt a pro-choice policy in its defence of human rights, has shown that the defence of the right to life of the baby in the womb is fully within the competence and duty of the Justice & Peace Movement. I have no doubt that the spirituality of both the justice and peace movement and of the pro-life movement would benefit from the pro-life agenda coming under the competence of Justice & Peace.

LOVE FOR JUSTICE

When we speak of justice, "love faces a vast field of work... so many needy brothers and sisters are waiting for help, so many who are oppressed are waiting for justice, so many who are unemployed are waiting for a job, so many peoples are waiting for respect. How can it be that even today there are still people dying of hunger? Condemned to illiteracy? Lacking the most basic medical care? Without a roof over their head? The scenario of poverty can extend indefinitely, if in addition to its traditional forms we think of its newer patterns. These latter often affect financially affluent sectors and groups which are nevertheless threatened by despair at the lack of meaning in their lives, by drug addiction, by fear of abandonment in old age or sickness, by marginalization or social discrimination... And how can we remain indifferent to the prospect of an ecological crisis which is making vast areas of our planet uninhabitable and hostile to humanity?... Or by contempt for the fundamental rights of so many people, especially children" (CSDC 5). Much of this is traditional terrain for the justice and peace movement. It specialises in these issues and continues to be a prophetic voice in the Church and in the world.

LOVE FOR PEACE

Parliament has approved the renewal of Trident, the independent nuclear deterrent. The Justice and Peace movement joined the chorus of protests. Over the years Justice and Peace has been in the forefront of campaigns against wars, against the arms race, and against nuclear weapons in particular. Christ is the Prince of Peace. His command of love is the antithesis of war, violence and destruction. If even a proportion of the huge sums of money spent on armaments were set aside for development, much of the misery presently afflicting the human family could be alleviated. This is social sin, global sin, the sin of the world. The cause of peace is also traditional terrain for Justice and Peace, and will continue to be so. Every Christian, everyone committed to the justice and peace agenda, needs also to seek the peace and reconciliation which Christ alone can bring to our lives. Each one of us needs to be reconciled to God and to each other. Each one of us needs the forgiveness of sins. The love of peace in the world begins with the need for peace in the heart and soul of each one of us.

LOVE FOR FREEDOM

There cannot be any doubt that the dignity of the human person implies a just freedom. Freedom is listed as a fundamental human right to be promoted and protected. Freedom is part of integral human development. In speaking of freedom, the Church's social doctrine suggests that emphasis is given to the paramount value of the right to religious freedom. Since Catholic emancipation, we have taken religious freedom for granted in this country. I wonder if Justice & Peace may have to raise its voice to defend the religious freedom of Catholics, Christians and other believers, not just far away, but here at home.

LOVE FOR CREATION

Justice & Peace sensitivities are increasingly being brought to bear on environmental matters. The world at large is concerned about the present and future of "the planet": the conservation of the world's natural resources, the preservation of species, climate change and carbon emissions. It is vital that Justice & Peace should bring an authentic Christian voice to urge human beings and governments to exercise a wise and humble stewardship of the earth and of its resources for the sake of humanity and of all species now and in the future. An authentic Christian voice will remind people that we cannot seek a perfect world without God. It will speak with the serene conviction that the Christian word for this environment in which we all live is not the planet, but is the creation, the created world, the created universe, because life is always the gift of God and will not find its fullness except in God. It will offer and support solutions to environmental issues which are rooted in God's purpose for humanity and for the created universe. This Christian voice will be nourished by the Eucharist in which the bread and wine transformed into the Body and Blood of Christ is a glimpse of the mystery of the new heavens and the new earth.

THE EUCHARIST AND JUSTICE

The Eucharist is the central activity of the Catholic Church because the Eucharist is the sacrament of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and the sacrament of his real and substantial presence as the food of life. Because the Eucharist happens in Church as a sublime and beautiful liturgical activity, it may seem distant from the poverty, injustice, and misery of that many people have to suffer. In reality, however, nothing could be further from the truth. In his post-Synodal Exhortation on the Eucharist, *Sacramentum Caritatis*, Pope Benedict XVI has given us some heartfelt teaching which underscores the relationship between the Eucharist and the concerns of justice, peace, development and the environment. Because the Eucharist is the memorial of Christ's loving sacrifice for every human being, the Eucharist commits us to a universal love of our neighbour. The Eucharist commits us to a commitment to justice which is real and active. And the Eucharist as the bread of life and food of our souls commits us to overcome hunger, misery and economic injustice.

CONCLUSION

The activity of Justice & Peace Groups remains a prophetic leaven in the Catholic community. This activity needs always to be directed by the Social Doctrine of the Catholic Church and underpinned by a profound spirituality which comes from the mystery of God who is Love.

stop climate chaos



Ruth Cameron,
campaigns co-ordinator
of Stop Climate Chaos,
provides the following
background material to
the coalition and
to its work.

Justice and Peace has recently become a member of Stop Climate Chaos – a broad coalition of charities including Oxfam, Christian Aid, UNISON, Tearfund, SCIAF, Friends of the Earth, WWF and RSPB, along with student societies, community councils and women's organisations (over 50 groups in total). Collectively throughout the UK we have a coalition membership of around 5 million.

These bodies have come together to address the single biggest issue facing us all. The threat posed by human-induced climate change is the greatest crisis humanity has faced. It is not just an environmental issue; there are also economic, development and social justice implications. The World Health Organisation estimates that 160,000 people die every year because of climate change, most of them in developing countries. Here in Scotland, our weather patterns are already beginning to change and by 2080 we could see our summer temperatures up 4 degrees, our winter precipitation up 35% and a sea level rise of 0.8metres. Without urgent action now, climate change will devastate our planet.

We believe we are in a unique position to mobilise public concern, and through this the necessary political action, to stop climate chaos. By working together in a diverse, broad-based coalition, we believe we can deliver results that none of us can achieve alone. Nothing on this scale has been attempted before on climate change, but anything less is unlikely to be successful.

We intend to build irresistible public pressure - through political action and changes to our own lifestyles - to force world leaders to act. The Governments of the world must put in place the necessary policies to switch off fossil fuels, and help us all switch to lower energy lifestyles and cleaner sources of power. The sooner we do it, the less we have to fear.

By dealing with climate change, we can also deliver the access to green energy that the world's poorest people have been long demanding, add greater protection to the natural environment, increase global security and adopt smarter lifestyles - not to mention save ourselves a whole load of money in the long run. We know how to do it. All it will take is political will.

There are basically two things we want from the government. The first is a **Carbon Budget** – that will get a grip on UK carbon emissions and drive them down by at least 3% a year. The second is for the **UK to take a lead on the international stage, and vigorously champion the need to keep global warming below 2°C.**

Following May's election, SCC in Scotland has been preparing for the imminent Scottish Climate Change Bill. A Policy Brainstorm seminar was organised to provide an opportunity for members across SCCS to highlight what they want out of the Climate Change Bill.

At a UK level, the coalition has been focusing on mass public

engagement. They gathered 70,000 supporter sign-ups at Glastonbury, and more are expected from the recent collaboration with Live Earth. Product partnerships with Penguin, Ecover and Stoneyfield yoghurt over the last year have also helped increase awareness of the coalition's work.

Our public engagement work in Scotland has been slightly less glamorous on the celebrity front – but certainly not lacking because of that! We are in the process of training around 50 Al Gore-a-likes – equipping our volunteers with the skills and knowledge to go out into their communities and communicate the need for urgent action on climate change. In the last couple of months we have also collaborated with Edinburgh Council and Edinburgh Youth Services to put on two full day conferences on climate change, and secured 3000 supporter sign-ups at a very muddy T in the Park.

There are also plenty things you – as an individual - can do at home to help, and many of these will save you money at the same time as helping to save the planet. These include: insulate your home, use energy efficient lightbulbs and appliances, turn your thermostat down, use public transport, liftshare, walk or cycle rather than driving, drive more slowly, take showers rather than baths, fly less, buy local, seasonal and organic foods or grow your own, recycle and buy recycled products, switch to a green energy supplier, use saucepan lids when you are cooking, turn your lights off when you're out of the room, unplug your mobile phone charger, wash your clothes at a cooler temperature, install microrenewables... If you want to find out more, you can buy a copy of the Stop Climate Chaos **'I Count'** book online or at any good bookshop.

For more information on SCCS please contact campaign co-ordinator Ruth Cameron on

ruth@stopclimatechaosscotland.org

or call **0131 311 6500**

You can also visit their websites

www.stopclimatechaosscotland.org and

www.icount.org.uk

A Prayer by Eleanor Todd

*Jesus Christ,
tempted to turn stones to bread in the
wilderness:
teach us that when we change time for our
convenience:
night to day in our living,
patience to speed in our journeying,
winter to summer in our eating,
we change God's calendar which brings
the hatchling to the caterpillar,
the bee to the nectar,
the rains to the farmer;
to the one which brings you to the cross.*

*Give us the grace in our simplest actions
to choose the life which breathes in
the beautiful complexity of creation,
to conquer death,
and to fit us to be Easter people.
AMEN*

Pope Benedict on war

*In a recent address while on holiday,
Pope Benedict reflected on the continuing
'useless violence' that afflicts the world.*

If men lived in peace with God and with each other, the earth would truly resemble a *'paradise.'* Unfortunately, sin ruined this divine project, generating divisions and bringing death into the world. This is why men cede to the temptations of the evil one and make war against each other. The result is that in this stupendous 'garden' that is the world, there open up circles of hell.

War, with the mourning and destruction it brings, has always been rightly considered a calamity that contrasts with God's plan. He created everything for existence and, in particular, wants to make a family of the human race. In this moment it is not possible for me to not return to a significant date in history: August 1, 1917 – almost exactly 90 years ago – my venerable predecessor, Benedict XV, published his celebrated Note to the Warring Powers, asking them to put an end to the First World War.

As that huge conflict raged, the Pope had the courage to affirm that it was a *'useless bloodbath.'* This expression of his left a mark on history. It was a justified remark given the concrete situation in that summer of 1917, especially on the front here in this part of northern Italy. But those words, *'useless bloodbath,'* have a larger, prophetic application to other conflicts that have destroyed countless human lives.

Precisely these very lands in which we presently find ourselves, which in themselves speak of peace and harmony, have been a theatre in the First World War, as many testimonies and some moving songs of the Alps still recall. These are events not to be forgotten!

It is necessary to make a treasury of the negative experiences that our fathers unfortunately suffered, so that they not be repeated. Benedict XV's *'Nota'* did not limit itself to condemning war; it indicated, at a juridical level, the ways to construct an equitable and durable peace: the moral force of law, balanced and regulated disarmament, arbitration in disputes, freedom on the seas, the reciprocal remission of war debts, the restitution of occupied territories, fair negotiations to resolve problems.

The Holy See's proposal was oriented toward the future of Europe and of the world, according to a project that was Christian in inspiration but able to be shared by all because it was founded on the law of nations. It is the same program that the Servants of God Paul VI and John Paul II followed in their memorable speeches at the United Nations, repeating in the name of the Church: **"No more war!"**

From this place of peace here in the north of Italy, where one feels even more vitally how unacceptable the *'useless bloodbaths'* are, I renew the call to follow with tenacity the way of law, to firmly renounce the arms race, to reject in general the temptation to face new situations with old systems.

Mitsuyoshi Toge, born in Hiroshima in 1917, was a Catholic and a poet. He was in Hiroshima when the atomic bomb was dropped on the city on August 6, 1945, when he was 28 years old. Toge died at age 36. His firsthand experience of the bomb, his passion for peace, and his realistic insight into the event made him a leading poet in Hiroshima.

*This poem is from 'Hiroshima-Nagasaki:
A Pictorial Record of the Atomic Destruction'*

**How could I ever forget that flash of light!
In a moment, thirty thousand people ceased to be,
The cries of fifty thousand killed
At the bottom of crushing darkness;
Through yellow smoke whirling into light,
Buildings split, bridges collapsed,
Crowded trams burnt as they rolled about
Hiroshima, all full of boundless heaps of embers.
Soon after, skin dangling like rags;
With hands on breasts;
Treading upon the broken brains;
Wearing shreds of burn cloth round their loins;
There came numberless lines of the naked,
all crying.
Bodies on the parade ground, scattered like
jumbled stone images of Jizo;
Crowds in piles by the river banks,
loaded upon rafts fastened to the shore,
Turned by and by into corpses
under the scorching sun;
in the midst of flame
tossing against the evening sky,
Round about the street where mother and
brother were trapped alive under the fallen house
The fire-flood shifted on.
On beds of filth along the Armory floor,
Heaps, and God knew who they were?
Heaps of schoolgirls lying in refuse
Pot-bellied, one-eyed, with half their skin peeled
off bald.**

**The sun shone, and nothing moved
But the buzzing flies in the metal basins
Reeking with stagnant ordure.
How can I forget that stillness
Prevailing over the city of three hundred thousands?
Amidst that calm,
How can I forget the entreaties
Of departed wife and child**

**Through their orbs of eyes,
Cutting through our minds and souls?**

And they want to replace Trident ...

HIROSHIMA EXPERIENCED