

diarydiary

FEBRUARY

25 Start of Fairtrade Fortnight

MARCH

1/2 Fair Trade Experience 2008 - Glasgow Royal Concert Hall. 11am-6pm

2 SCIAF Sunday

5 International treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons 1970

7 Women's World Day of Prayer

8 UN Day for Women's Rights

15 The World Against War demonstration, Glasgow. See newsbriefs

19 Invasion of Iraq 2003

21 Good Friday

22 World Water Day

23 Easter Day Christ has risen! Alleluia!

24 Assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero 1980

APRIL

7 World Health Day

22 International Earth Day

26 Bishop Gerardi murdered in Guatemala 1998

MAY

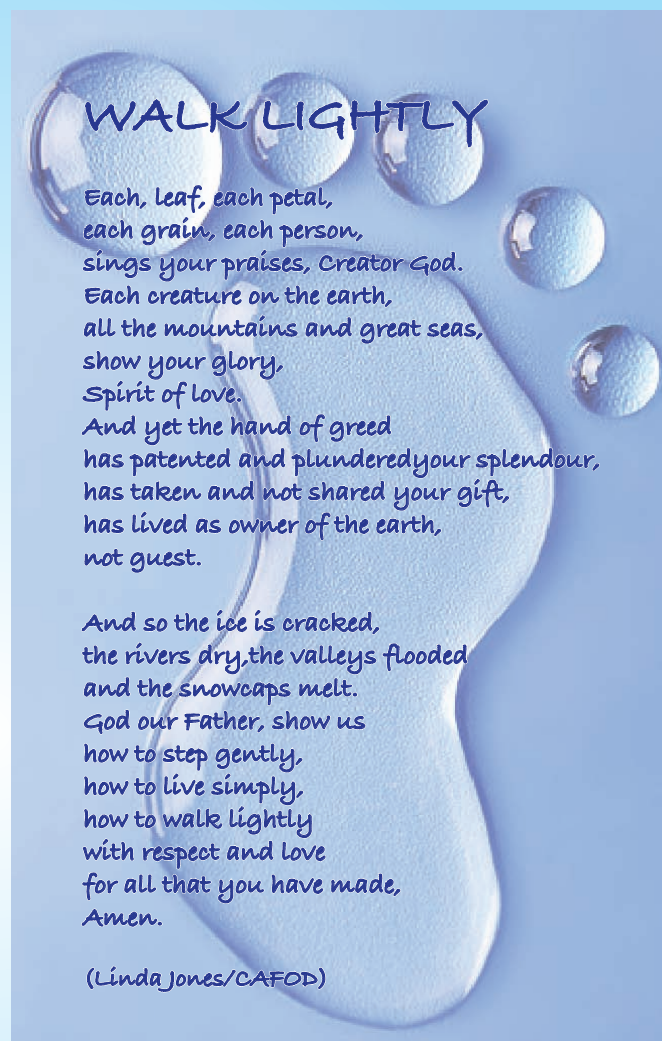
1 St Joseph the Worker, International Workers Day

3 World Press Freedom Day

13 International Conscientious Objectors Day

16 World Debt Day: 10th Anniversary of Human chain in Birmingham to cancel Third World Debt

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



WALK LIGHTLY

Each, leaf, each petal,
each grain, each person,
sings your praises, Creator God.
Each creature on the earth,
all the mountains and great seas,
show your glory,
Spirit of love.
And yet the hand of greed
has patented and plundered your splendour,
has taken and not shared your gift,
has lived as owner of the earth,
not guest.

And so the ice is cracked,
the rivers dry, the valleys flooded
and the snowcaps melt.
God our Father, show us
how to step gently,
how to live simply,
how to walk lightly
with respect and love
for all that you have made,
Amen.

(Linda Jones/CAFOD)

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ISSUE 1 : 2008



On Good Friday, Jesus was executed by the State with two other criminals. As we commemorate the death of Jesus, we are sadly aware that many nations still use the death penalty.

The death penalty is incompatible with our shared belief in life as a precious gift from God. ... The principles upon which we oppose capital punishment are such that no exceptions should be made at home or abroad. The fundamental human right to life is not a relative concept. All humans are entitled to protection from the death penalty.

Bishop Christopher Saunders, Australian Catholic Social Justice Diary

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editorial

I have heard it said that it is only when people start complaining that you can think you might be getting something right. This seems to be the case in the aftermath of Bishop Peter's New Year message (on the website). Letters complaining about people coming from 'over there', taking 'our' jobs from us and sending the money back 'home' arrived. There are similar reports from parishes as well. Most of the people seem to be concerned rather than vitriolic, but it is still worrying. One of the ironies is that the vast majority have Irish surnames, prompting a question about how their families settled here and, sadly, what bigotry they were forced to endure.

This prompted me to reflect on the current Justice and Peace main priorities: asylum and refugees; poverty in Scotland; and Trident and nuclear weapons. All three are concerned with the way we approach our fellow human beings. One of my favourite word origin stories concerns the very old word 'hos' meaning 'stranger'. In traditional societies, you can treat the stranger in one of two ways. He is either a threat and the attitude is hostile, aimed at driving away or destroying. Or he is a guest to be welcomed and incorporated with hospitality. Of necessity traditional societies have highly elaborate codes of hospitality, since there is little advantage to unrelenting hostility. Hostility is the result of societies where vested interest, economic or political, has become more important than personal respect and human dignity. People are turned into strangers, enemies and threats, so that they can be instrumentalised.

It is no surprise then that much of the opposition to asylum and migration is retailed through the popular media to people who like their ideas, like their food, processed and pre-packaged. It is useful to designate those to whom we are hostile as an undifferentiated 'them'. Then it helps to paint whole ethnic or continental groups with the broad brush of caricature as fundamentalist, or seditious or anything that is not quite 'us'. Such an approach is doubly damaging since it not only tars entire groups. It covers over the very real

problems of social and cultural integration which are always seen as purely one sided. That we might find something to learn or, God forbid, to enjoy in another culture if we put ourselves out, is completely alien.

In a similar way, the poor within our society are alienated and marginalised. I have a friend who speaks of the silent apartheid of poverty in Scotland. At least in the old South Africa, she says, you could tell the victims by the colour of their skin. But here, the poor are shunted into townships and denied full membership of the society, whether in health, education, job prospects or life experience. The final insult to dignity is found in the defensive dismissal that 'most of these people have brought it on themselves'.

For all its apocalyptic power, Trident is a confession of fear wrapped in ultimate hostility. Where else in life do we try to bend people to our will under threat of annihilation? The justification of 'supreme national interest' is no more than institutionalised selfishness – my country's interests are more important than anybody else's.

Our approach as Justice and Peace to these issues is guided by Catholic Social Teaching. This teaching clearly condemns lack of hospitality, or the failure to engage with poverty, as well as the genocidal intent underlying nuclear deterrence. It is not in the business of Catholic Social Teaching to provide specific policies. Far from being a drawback this is a stimulus to the Christian imagination, urging us to find creative and spirit filled ways of confronting these problems.

Even with the vagaries of climate change and a very early Easter, the feast is accompanied by the signs of rebirth in nature. (I recently spoke with an Australian woman now living here, who said how different it is in the northern hemisphere where the seasons reinforce the liturgical year.) The way to resurrection follows the path of suffering in the Christian gospel. This is not as glib or magical answer to life's difficulties. Rather it is an affirmation of God empowering us through the Risen Christ to face up to those difficulties. **TD**

burns day at dungavel

The latest solidarity gathering (organised by Friends of Refugees Ayrshire) outside the gates of Dungavel took place on Sunday 27 January. This gathering was to commemorate Burns Day. It was a small gathering this time with twenty people in attendance including representatives of Justice and Peace. As usual we began with a minute's silence in memory of those held inside. All the speakers spoke about Burns' humanity and social conscience and Christina McKelvie MSP read some lines from one of his poems 'The Rights of Women' written in 1792.

choosing scotland's future?



Rev Dr Graham K Blount, Scottish Churches' Parliamentary Officer, introduces a church based initiative on the National Conversation

It's a tempting prospect, "choosing Scotland's future", isn't it? Where would you start? A Scotland free of nuclear weapons ... with safe streets ... where folk in Shettleston and Newton Mearns have the same chances of living to 70 ... respecting the right to life ... prosperous, creative, caring ... built of strong families and communities?

Last August, First Minister Alex Salmond launched a "national conversation" entitled "Choosing Scotland's Future". This conversation may pave the way for a referendum on various constitutional options for our future – independence, more powers for the Scottish Parliament, or the position we have now.

You can find the full document and further information about the conversation, on the internet at www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/a-national-conversation

Like the rest of Scotland's people, church members may already have different, strong views on these options. None of our churches has an official view for or against independence. But that doesn't mean we should opt out of this conversation. Scotland's churches and their members have shaped our nation in many ways over the centuries, and our contribution is not just historical.

To encourage congregations and groups of Christians to be part of the national conversation, the Scottish Churches Parliamentary Office has prepared a series of information and discussion cards, available on our website at www.actsparl.org/natconv.htm or from SCPO, 43-45 High St, Edinburgh, EH1 1SR, 0131 558 8137 – we hope these will spark discussion in churches, ecumenical groups, or wherever you think you could start the conversation with others.

I don't believe our faith gives us a clear-cut answer to the issue of Scottish independence, but I am convinced that, in faith, we have a distinctive contribution to make. It is our faith that kindles and nourishes our vision for our country and our world; it is our faith that sparks our passion for justice, our commitment to peace; it is our faith that lifts our eyes beyond our own doorstep to a wider world. All of these

can be ingredients of this conversation.

So we might explore questions like:

Would an independent Scotland be more (or less) likely to be free from Britannia's pretensions to rule the waves, and show less inclination to want Trident Mark 2?

Would an independent Scotland be more (or less) likely to develop healthy relationships with other nations, including England? (and has the Parliament helped or hindered that so far?)

Would we be more (or less) likely to sustain the neighbourliness and sense of community necessary to sustain the welfare state and the commitment to social justice?

Would a Parliament that had responsibilities for raising as well as spending money be more or less likely to practice good stewardship?

The church should be part of shaping Scotland's future (not just its past), and this is your chance to contribute. We plan an ecumenical national gathering in May to hear your responses, but you need not wait for that. You can contribute online via the national conversation website:

www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/a-national-conversation

At the opening of our new Parliament building at Holyrood, the poet Edwin Morgan challenged those present:

*What do the people want of this place?
They want it to be filled with thinking persons,
As open and adventurous as its architecture.
A nest of fearties is what they do not want.
A symposium of procrastinators is what
they do not want.
A phalanx of forelock-tuggers is what
they do not want.
And perhaps above all the droopy mantra of
"it wizny me" is what they do not want.*

There's a challenge in that to a church too, on the edge of a national conversation. As people of faith, we aspire to more than carping from the sidelines; we aspire to a future "built of hopes and dreams and visions; rock of faith and vault of grace"; this is a conversation in which we need to talk the language of faith and hope and love.

INVEST IN HEALTH. BUILD A SAFER FUTURE

World Health Day



Health, development and global security are inextricably linked. Investment in health is a cornerstone of economic growth and development, and a prerequisite for meeting many of the Millennium Development Goals. Moreover, the security of all countries is today increasingly dependent on the capacity of each to act effectively, and collectively, to minimise health threats.

Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General United Nations, 7 April 2007

ten commandments for helping to effect change

*Try these out on whatever issue is
important to you.
Go forth and agitate!
And remember, have some fun as well.*

1. YOU'VE GOT TO BELIEVE

Have hope, passion and confidence that valuable change can and does happen because individuals take bold initiatives.

2. CHALLENGE AUTHORITY

Don't be afraid to question authority. Authority should be earned, not appointed. The "experts" are often proven wrong - they used to believe that the earth was flat! You don't have to be an expert to have a valuable opinion or to speak out on an issue.

3. KNOW THE SYSTEM

The system perpetuates itself. Use the tools you have - the internet used critically can be of great value for getting the background to an issue. Learn how decisions are made. How is the bureaucracy structured? Who are the key players? Attend public meetings.

4. TAKE ACTION

Do something - anything is better than nothing. Bounce your idea around with friends, and then act. Start small, but think big. Organize public events. Distribute leaflets. Involve youth. It's easier to ask for forgiveness after the fact rather than to ask for permission. Just do it! Be flexible. Roll with the punches and allow yourself to change tactics mid-stream. Think laterally. Don't get hung-up on money matters; some of the best actions have no budget.

5. USE THE MEDIA

Letters to the Editor of your local newspaper are read by thousands. Stage a dramatic event and invite the media - they love an event that gives them an interesting angle or good photo. Bypass the mainstream media with email and the Internet to get the word out about your issue and to network.

6. BUILD ALLIANCES

Seek out your common allies such as other

community associations, seniors, youth groups, labour, businesses, etc. and work with them to establish support. The system wins through Divide and Conquer, so do the opposite! Network ideas, expertise and issues through email lists. Celebrate your successes with others.

7. APPLY CONSTANT PRESSURE

Persevere - it drives those in power crazy. Be as creative as possible in getting your perspective heard. Use the media, phone your politicians, send letters and faxes with graphics and images. Ask specific questions, and give a deadline for when you expect a response. Stay in their faces. Here's some inspiration from Noam Chomsky: If you go to one demonstration and then go home, that's something, but the people in power can live with that. What they can't live with is sustained pressure that keeps building, organisations that keep doing things, people that keep learning lessons from the last time and doing it better the next time.

8. TEACH ALTERNATIVES

Propose and articulate intelligent alternatives to the status quo. Inspire people with well thought out, attractive visions of how things can be better. Use actual examples, what's been tried, where and how it works. Do your homework, get the word out, create visual representations. Be positive and hopeful.

9. LEARN FROM YOUR MISTAKES

You're going make mistakes; we all do. Critique - in a positive way - yourself, the movement, and the opposition. What works, and why? What isn't working? What do people really enjoy doing, and do more of that.

10. TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF AND EACH OTHER

Maintain balance. Eat well and get regular exercise. Avoid burn-out by delegating tasks, sharing responsibility, and maintaining an open process. Be sensitive to your comrades. Have fun. As much as possible, surround yourself with others (both at work and at play) who share your vision so you can build camaraderie, solidarity and support. Enjoy yourself, and nourish your sense of humour. Remember: you're not alone!

Go forth and agitate!

burns day at dungavel continued ...

While Europe's eye is fix'd on mighty things,

The fate of empires and the fall of kings;

While quacks of state must each produce his plan,

And even children sip the rights of man;

Amid this mighty fuss just let me mention,

The rights of woman merit some attention.

It was strange to think that it had been penned over 200 years ago.

Our own Margaret Donnelly of Galloway diocesan Justice and Peace spoke about the supermarket voucher exchange scheme being run by the Jesuit Refugee Service (full story on page 4).

We finished by singing 'A man's a man's for a that', words which could have been penned just for Dungavel. Gifts were then handed in for the detainees.

Please check our website for the next gathering.

Carol Clarke

a right to a place

The Rev David Lunan, Moderator Designate of the Church of Scotland, gave the following address to a Conference on Asylum Destitution recently

I want to thank you for inviting me to say a few words of welcome to you at the start of this conference on destitution.

I am no expert on this subject, but there are people here who are, who have experienced it, who have survived it, who have helped others through it, and have been enriched in doing so.

I say welcome to you today, but this conference is about those who are not made welcome, or who don't feel welcome. And if the definition of home is a place where you are always made welcome: then homelessness is not being welcome anywhere. And there can be few more desolating experiences: because where do you start, who do you turn to, who cares, who will help?

And fortunately there are people here today who can help us: who will help us to understand the issues, what is happening, and how we can get involved. This is serious stuff, pretty sobering - because we're dealing with peoples' lives, real people with real pain.

And serious though it is, I think there will be opportunities for some laughter, and some sharing, some fellowship some kindness, some hope.

I am a minister: my guidebook is the Bible, and you may know that the first half of the Bible, the Old Testament, is about the Jewish people, and how they find a homeland. That's a big part of the story, and the other part is about how they learn to live together in that homeland. And a major part of that culture is hospitality, in particular how they care for the widow and the orphan, how they treat the alien and the stranger. And they are to be given their place, treated with respect. Of course like us, sometimes they live up to the expectations, and sometimes they don't. But essentially the message is that everyone has a place, and everyone is to be given their place.

And in the New Testament - the follow-on, the story of the Christians, the world is introduced to Jesus. Who sometimes had a home, and sometimes didn't: who sometimes was made welcome, and sometimes wasn't. But his farewell promise to us all is: In my Father's house, there are many rooms: and if it weren't so, I would have told you. In other words, in the end we're invited home, we're made welcome. God wants us to be at home on earth, at home in heaven. Of

all human rights - freedom safety, education, worship, work, movement, expression - there should be a right to a place. We are physical beings and we need a physical space. Everyone matters: everyone is welcome: everyone belongs.

I am proud to be among people - within the Church and outwith it - who practise this profound hospitality. I am proud that the Church has taken action on poverty, homelessness and destitution, and that they are in partnership with so many other groups like Positive Action in Housing who are in the 'welcome' front line, and who are dealing with this despicable practice of making people homeless and denying them both benefits and the right to work, and make a living, and make a life, and make their contribution. It is a shameful, shameless piece of legislation which any civilised country should never have countenanced.

I like the title 'Still human, still here'. Sometimes we need to be reminded: poverty, asylum seekers, victims of violence can soon become invisible. Everyone has a need to be acknowledged. Off the screens, out of sight out of mind. Today we will be reminded.

And still human. The essence of the Christian life is how to become fully human, with all our potential given the chance to flourish. An early church Father said 'The glory of God is a human being fully alive'. But the secret of being truly human, is to treat every other single person as truly human, with a body that needs a home, a mind that needs stimulated, a heart that needs to love and be loved, and a soul to be nurtured: just like I have.

If we want to be truly human, we treat every single person as a human being.

And if we want to be happy, then the way to do it is to bring happiness to others.

I believe that is what you - we - are doing today, and I thank you for it. In saying welcome to you today I hope we will all learn to be able to say welcome to everyone.

A new compilation DVD 'Taking Action' by Camcorder Guerillas was premiered at the above conference. This is a follow-up film to the excellent 20-minute film Welcome, and includes material from Camcorder Guerillas' previous DVDs (including 'Dungavel, Monster of the Glen'). It is well worth getting your own copy to show to your church group, or at meetings. Copies are available from Positive Action in Housing 0141 350 2220 or contact Camcorder Guerillas at: www.camcorderguerillas.net We have a copy in the J&P office which will be available for loan.

world day of prayer march 7 international women's day march 8

World Day of Prayer is a worldwide movement of Christian women of many traditions who come together to observe a common day of prayer each year, and who, in many countries, have a continuing relationship in prayer and service. Initiated and carried out by women in more than 170 countries and regions, it is symbolised by an annual day of celebration, the first Friday of March, to which all people are welcome. It brings together women of various races, cultures and traditions in closer fellowship, understanding and action throughout the year. This year, women of Guyana have prepared a prayer with the theme God's Wisdom Provides New Understanding. For more information and prayer resources visit www.worlddayofprayer.net/ International Women's Day aims at inspiring women around

the world to achieve their full potential. Trafficking in women has been described as a modern form of slavery, and it is not confined to developing countries. It is estimated that between 700,000 and 2,000,000 persons are trafficked globally each year. Of these, approximately 80% are women and girls and up to 50% are minors. The trade in human beings earns up to £8 billion worldwide every year. Interpol estimates that each exploited woman can bring £33,500 to £110,000 a year.

Trafficking in human beings from other countries, especially in women and children, is a reality in the UK. Women trafficked for the sex industry often come thinking they are coming to work in the hospitality industry.

For more information on Trafficking, visit:

www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/human-trafficking-action-plan

For more information on International Women's day visit:

www.un.org/womenwatch/feature/iwd/

helping asylum seekers

The Jesuit Refugee Service UK has been operating a hardship fund for completely destitute asylum seekers and refugees for several years. In addition, for asylum seekers receiving voucher support (currently £35 in supermarket vouchers each week), they periodically exchange these vouchers for cash at the face value.

Voucher support is normally given to certain asylum seekers. These are available for those that have either got a judicial review in their case pending; or they have been able to introduce a fresh asylum application and so have a new case; or that they have agreed to return to their country of origin and are supported in this way in the meantime.

Vouchers are in the form of normal gift vouchers for supermarkets and can only be used in the named

supermarket. They cannot be used for transport costs, nor is change given. The result is that asylum seekers often sell their vouchers for much less than face value, so that they can buy bus tickets to attend college, to report at immigration reporting centres or to attend medical and legal appointments. The going rate for the vouchers from unscrupulous individuals locally can be as little as £20 cash.

JRS are trying to develop a network of individuals and communities willing to regularly or occasionally buy the gift vouchers from the asylum seekers via their office.

If you feel you are able to help with this voucher exchange scheme Jesuit Refugee Service may be contacted at **Jesuit Refugee Service, 6 Melior Street, London SE1 3QP**

Tel: 020 7357 0974 Email: uk@jrs.net

refugeecouncil agm

Michael Martin, a member of St Joseph's Clarkston Justice and Peace group, reports on a recent meeting on asylum seekers and refugees

The Scottish Refugee Council (SRC) held its AGM in the City Chambers in Glasgow on Friday, 18th January. It was Sally Daghlán's last such event as Chief Executive. In her speech to the AGM, she gave a flavour of the activities and events which had marked the past year.

Policy development is one of the agency's main concerns. Sally was able to give evidence to the UK Parliament's Joint Committee on Human Rights on the treatment of asylum seekers. Then in June she gave evidence to the Independent Asylum Commission's inquiry into the UK asylum system when it visited Glasgow. The evidence presented addressed the forced removal of asylum seekers and the effect on local communities. The work involved in contributing to such

enquiries is justified by the potential benefits which might accrue to refugees and asylum seekers in the long term. The other major concern of SRC is its day-to-day delivery of services to asylum seekers. Sally highlighted two initiatives: first, the support which had been given to North Lanarkshire Council to prepare for the arrival of 80 refugees in Motherwell under the Gateway Protection Programme, second, there is the success of its Family Reunion Programme, which this year brought 20 families together.

The speaker at the public meeting following the AGM was Dr. Christopher Hein, Director of the Italian Refugee Council. He spoke of the concern at the number of asylum-seekers dying while attempting to reach the European Union; and the tightening of border controls which had the effect of creating barriers to genuine asylum seekers in need of protection. This is a flouting of the UN Convention on Refugees, to which EU countries are signatories. Given the National Commission's priority to work with refugees, this is an area which groups will want to be better informed about, and perhaps be involved in activities such as lobbying.

scottish climate change bill

On 29 January 2008, the Scottish Government launched their consultation on proposals for a Scottish Climate Change Bill, designed to reduce Scotland's climate change emissions. Climate change is the greatest threat facing the world's poor, yet it is countries like our own that are responsible. Here in Scotland we (5 million people) are responsible for as much CO2 as 150 million people in Bangladesh.



The Climate Change Bill is Scotland's opportunity to lead the way on reducing greenhouse gas emissions and make a huge

difference to the millions of people globally whose lives and livelihoods are already being impacted by climate change. But it won't achieve this unless the bill:

1. Reduces greenhouse gas emissions by 80% by 2050;
2. Includes all aviation emissions;
3. Has annual targets for reductions.

What can you do: sign SCIAF's Climate Change E-Action at www.sciaf.org.uk

Justice and Peace are members of Stop Climate Chaos Scotland: to find out more about the coalition visit www.stopclimatechaosscotland.org

newsbrief . . . newsbrief

SUBSCRIPTION REMINDER: The majority of subscriptions to the J&P Magazine are due for renewal at this time. We would be grateful if all subscribers and groups who are due would renew their subscription by returning the form included with the magazine. Many thanks if you have already renewed your subscription for 2008, and thanks also to those who pay by standing order. If you would like to pay your subscription by standing order please contact the office. We are not increasing the subscription rate this year, so it is vitally important that if you wish to keep receiving the magazine you pay your subscription promptly.

THE WORLD AGAINST WAR: demonstration March 15th. Five years after the invasion of Iraq, Stop the War Coalition Scotland is holding this demonstration as part of the global protest. Assemble Blythswood Square, Glasgow, 12 noon. Similar demonstrations will be taking place around the globe including London

ALDERMASTON 1958 – 2008: 50 years after the first Aldermaston march, CND is organising a large demonstration at the nuclear research centre. Buses from Glasgow and Edinburgh leaving 11 pm Sunday 23 March and from Aberdeen/Dundee leaving Sunday. Full fare £20, concessions £10. Tel 0141 423 1222 for bookings and further information. Assemble 12 noon, Easter Monday at Aldermaston.

CND'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY: Kate Hudson CND Chair and Bruce Kent will be speaking at public meetings in Scotland marking the anniversary and the Aldermaston demonstration. Kate will be speaking in Aberdeen on the 3rd March and Helensburgh on the 4th March. Bruce will be speaking in Edinburgh on the 11 March and Glasgow on the 12 March. Full details from SCND on 0141 433 281 or www.banthebomb.org

FAIRTRADE FORTNIGHT: By the time you get this magazine, we will be in the middle of Fairtrade Fortnight. Check out the Fairtrade Foundation website www.fairtrade.org.uk and the Scottish Fairtrade forum website www.scottishfairtradeforum.org.uk to find out what is happening near you. Also visit the New Consumer website www.newconsumer.com to find out how Fairtrade Woman gets on eating nothing but fairtrade food for the Fortnight, a feat she achieved last year.

STILL ON FAIRTRADE: 'Fighting the Banana Wars

and Other Fairtrade Battles' is the title of a new book by Harriet Lamb, Director of the Fairtrade Foundation. It is published this February just ahead of Fairtrade Fortnight. It is available from all good bookshops and can also be bought online at the New Consumer. (Rider Books, £10.99)

THE ETHICAL CONSUMER magazine has started a new initiative which gives us ideas of things we can do to help the planet. Alongside their buyers guide ethical score list they have a 'do one thing' suggestion; for instance when checking out toothpaste they suggest *'Around 10% toothpaste bought in plastic tubes gets thrown away. Cutting a nearly finished tube in two ensures you're not literally throwing away resources'* When reviewing baby car seats *'do one thing'* suggests *'make sure you keep the manual for your car seat, then once it has been out grown you can pass it on to friends or family, or advertise it on freecycle'*

(www.freecycle.org/groups/unitedkingdom). More information on the Ethical Consumer at www.ethicalconsumer.org

CLIMATE CHANGE MYTH-BUSTING BOOKLET: Scottish Education and Action for Development (SEAD) has just produced a 16-page booklet *'Rising to the Climate Challenge'*. The booklet is designed to help people cut through the fog of confusion and mixed messages about climate change and to be a useful resource for community groups and individuals all over Scotland. It is produced as part of *'Switch On to Climate Change'* - SEAD's community-based programme to support people wanting to take collective action to limit climate change. For more information, email: lorraine@sead.org.uk tel. 0131 555 5550. You can download a copy from website: www.sead.org.uk you can also order paper copies from the office by sending an SAE or a small donation to cover postage. Address: SEAD, 20 Graham Street, EDINBURGH.



FREE LIGHTBULBS FOR PEOPLE ON BENEFITS: Under a new scheme, anybody

who is in receipt of any form of government benefit is entitled to two free low-energy light bulbs. Could your church or group help people to take advantage of the offer? For further information email:

AnnieGerardin@aol.com.



poverty in scotland

Westminster's Scottish affairs committee published their wide-ranging report into poverty in Scotland in December. The committee said the Government must do much more to help the one million in Scotland officially living in poverty. They should start with one of the committee's key recommendations - action to cut the sky-high interest rates faced by hard-up families. Thousands of borrowers, desperate to roll their debts into **'manageable'** repayments, end up paying more than 100 per cent in interest. We are not talking about loan sharks here but legitimate high street, phone and internet lenders. One company, Provident, charge 183 per cent APR on their average loan of £320. It might be legal, but, when the Bank of England base rate is less than six per cent, it is also immoral. MPs on the committee said people were locked into a **'never-ending cycle'** of debt. They called for the Government to cap interest rates. They also want the courts to be given powers to set **'fair'** interest rates for customers who are exploited and face destitution.

In February the Committee pulished its report on child poverty, which also makes compelling reading. Links to these reports are available from the Justice and Peace website.

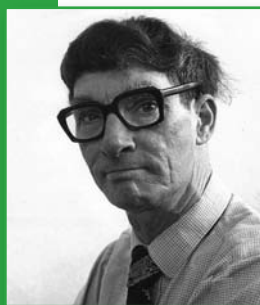
papal reflections on poverty

Pope Benedict XVI has frequently called for the alleviation of the suffering of people and asked for a more equitable sharing of the riches of the planet.

To help our brothers and sisters, we have to face the first of these challenges: that of solidarity between generations, solidarity between countries and between continents, for a more equitable sharing among all of the riches of the planet. The earth has, in fact, the capacity to feed all its inhabitants, on the condition that rich countries do not keep for themselves what belongs to everyone. 16 May 2005

Developed countries have a moral obligation to offer concrete help in eliminating poverty in the world, especially in Africa, Pope Benedict XVI said.

While the governments of poorer countries have a responsibility to fight corruption and poverty at home, the active involvement of international partners is indispensable. Helping poorer nations out of the grinding cycle of poverty and debt is a grave and unconditional moral responsibility that cannot be considered an option or be postponed in the face of pressing national concerns. 6 December 2006



Tony Hughes 06.06.1925 to 24.12.2007

Tony Hughes, who died in Edinburgh on Christmas Eve at the age of 82, was one of the good guys. He had supported Justice and Peace since its beginning in Scotland, reporting on conferences and meetings at archdiocesan and national level. He had also edited the Justice and Peace magazine for several years.

He was well qualified for these jobs having gone straight from school at 15 into journalism and worked his way up as reporter to sub editor on both the Glasgow and Edinburgh evening papers. The arrival of new technology in newspapers in the 1980s decided Tony on a slightly early retirement. His own copy, battered out on a portable typewriter and overscored with spidery handwritten amendments (usually on the reverse of a piece of junk mail), was something to behold. For a man who never owned a television, computers were well beyond the pale.

His copy may have looked chaotic, but the content was always clear and succinct. Margaret Clark, a former chair of the Commission, said to me after Tony's funeral, **'You sometimes read Tony's report of a talk you had given and thought: Wow, did I really say that.'**

Tony's great gift was to throw himself wholeheartedly into whatever he was doing. Justice and Peace, Christian CND and the Cyrenians were just some of his commitments. And the

more people you talk to who knew him, the more in the way of private acts of charity and support come out, all without any fuss.

He had an enormous sense of fun and a wicked sense of humour. When Canon Hyland of St Pat's asperged you, you stayed asperged. Tony once ruined the choir's entrance hymn with the loud whisper, **'It's the holy water Canon.'**

He was well read and well travelled - fluent in German and Russian. He was always informed on world politics and current affairs. His generation grew up in the shadow of Hiroshima and he was passionately anti nuclear. He was, therefore, an obvious member of a delegation to NATO HQ in Brussels in 1984 to carry the message of the Scottish Bishops to the nuclear planners. We were briefed by strategists and military people about the reasons for a nuclear deterrent. At one point, Tony said **'Excuse me'** and, to mounting consternation, took out his wallet. He fished out a folded press clipping from the Herald Tribune, which quoted an official source contradicting what had just been said. It remains an iconic memory of an ordinary person taking the system to task.

Except that Tony was extraordinary. In his enthusiasm and his concern for justice he remains an example to us. Yet life was too important to be taken entirely seriously. He loved music, and variously sang with, accompanied and directed, the choir of St Pat's for many years. That is how I imagine him now, strumming his own unique calypso style on the guitar, as he goes in search of angels to conscientise. **TD**

resistance is not passive

Fr John Dear is an American Jesuit and Peace activist. He has been arrested more than 75 times for his anti war and anti nuclear protests. He has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize 2008 by Archbishop Desmond Tutu as well as the Gandhi Peace Award.

Early in his career, he was in jail in North Carolina, awaiting sentencing for a civil disobedience action. He was visited by his Jesuit provincial superior, Fr. Edward Glynn. They spoke by microphone through a glass wall. John, in his orange jump suit, with guards on either side, asked simply, **'Ed, I really need to know: do you and the Society of Jesus still support me?'** Fr. Glynn sat back in his chair, put his hands up as if to frame John in a picture, and replied, **'John, you're right where we want ya.'**

He was sentenced on 24 Jan. to six months probation and community service and \$510 in fines and fees for actions during an anti-war protest at the Santa Fe office of a U.S. Senator. In September 2006, Fr Dear and other peace activists had spent four hours in an elevator after security guards prevented them from going to Senator Domenici's third-floor office where they wanted to talk with Domenici and his staff about changing his support for the Iraq war. They were found guilty of failure to comply with official signs and directions, a petty misdemeanour. They had wanted to present him with a **"Declaration of Peace"** to end the war.

Dear said he would refuse since he considered his whole life was **'community service'**. Dear's attorney, Penni Adrian, asked the court for mercy, saying Dear had a **'lifelong commitment to peace and human decency'**. However, U.S. Magistrate Don Svet had ruled earlier that the group had the right to petition their representatives, but they could have delivered the petition in the lobby.

Mr Svet reserved his ire for Fr Dear, calling him a **'renegade priest'** and **'a coward'**. **'I'm not interested in making a martyr out of you... Mr. Dear, you frankly are a phony.'** Continuing with an obviously limited understanding of symbolic actions, Svet said, **'You preach nonviolence but you are the same man who took a hammer and a can of paint against a U.S. aircraft.'** For some interesting information on a 1999 prosecution which involved Senator Domenici and Mr Svet, along with some amazing FBI skullduggery about **'national security'**,

see www.wenholee.org/Hedges.doc

Fr Dear does not mind being a thorn in the flesh of authority. It is perhaps a measure of how far we have fallen short of non violence that his words are almost embarrassing:

*It's a powerful experience to stand before a judge and be sentenced to jail for saying No to war, injustice and nuclear weapons, something I highly recommend for all followers of the nonviolent Jesus. It really helps clarify one's discipleship, one's citizenship in God's reign of peace, one's faith, hope and love. In these days of war, genocide, nuclear weapons, poverty, executions, abortion, torture, global warming, and violence of every description, it's a great grace to be in trouble with the empire for practicing nonviolence, for daring to offer a word of peace, for serving the God of peace. ... As a Christian and a priest who walks in the tradition of Martin Luther King, Jr., Dorothy Day and Mahatma Gandhi, I believe no Christian can support this [Iraq] war and still claim to follow the nonviolent Jesus because Jesus commands us to **"put down the sword"** and **"love our enemies."** Jesus blesses peacemakers, not warmakers. Christians and all religious people are called to obey a higher law, God's eternal law of nonviolence.*

Just before the occupation of the lift by the 'Elevator Nine', as one American writer called them, John Dear had been in Great Britain. On his return, he preached at Los Alamos, birthplace of the atomic bomb. The following is from his sermon:

*I didn't know it, but if you asked what country is actually on the verge of outlawing nuclear weapons, apparently, it would be Scotland. Every day for the last year, hundreds of activists, church people and politicians have vigiled at the Trident nuclear submarine base in Faslane, with civil disobedience actions every day. This has led to strong statements against nuclear weapons by the Cardinal, Bishops and leading politicians. So when I met the main organiser, I said **"This sure is very hopeful,"** and she looked at me and said adamantly, **"No! It's not hopeful. It's certain. Trident will leave and Scotland will outlaw nuclear weapons. It's just a matter of time!"***

Good to know that we're at the forefront.

Tim Duffy

oscar romero

In 1977 Oscar Romero was appointed Archbishop of San Salvador, capital of El Salvador. An academic, he was not expected to challenge the ruling class, which owned 80 percent of the land and terrorised workers and landless peasants. Working with and for the poor changed him, enabling him to see the unjust structures operating in his country.

Romero refused to complete the unfinished cathedral as long as the poor of the city were poorly housed and were hungry. He was shot on March 24, 1980, as he celebrated Mass. The previous day, he had made his prophetic call to the Salvadoran army to stop the repression, calling on soldiers not to obey unjust orders to kill their own sisters and brothers.

Aspire not to have more but to be more. If they kill me, I will rise again in the Salvadoran people. Bloodshed only denies love, awakens new hate, and makes reconciliation and peace impossible. Oscar Romero

trident conference

Trident, Trade Unions and Scotland's economy was the title of conference organised by CND and the STUC

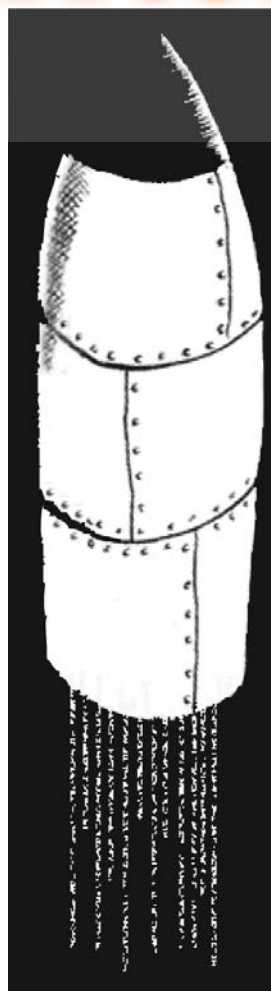
The conference was divided into three parts. The first, *Trident and Scotland's Economy* had as its speakers Katy Clark MP and Kate Hudson Chair of CND.

Kate Hudson spoke of the background to Trident, she said there were two forces one pro nuclear weapons, which had the senior NATO military in favour of a first attack, the other anti nuclear weapons which had Kofi Annan and now amazingly Henry Kissinger in its camp. She said that the US congress had voted for not funding any new Nuclear Weapons, and reminded us of the many Labour MPs who voted against renewing Trident. She also spoke about the change in public opinion against nuclear weapons; indeed Margaret Becket in one of her last speeches as Foreign Secretary, had spoken about the impact the failure of disarmament had on proliferation. Kate said there was now a change in public opinion, that the majority of people did not see the major threat as a nuclear strike against the UK, but saw the main threats coming from a terrorist attack and global warming.

Katy Clark reminded us that the majority of Scottish MPs had voted against Trident. She said the issue of jobs and unemployment was a big issue. She spoke of the many jobs lost in the past, but that we had to get on top of the economic argument, and make people believe we will have better employment opportunities after Trident. She also said it was unacceptable for any country to have WMDs and that the issue of replacement was no longer a defence issue but rather that of the UK retaining its place at a 'top table'. We are no longer in a cold war situation and the threats we will face in the future will not be from WMDs.

The second segment was entitled *Trident and Jobs – exploding the Myths*. The speakers were Professor John Foster and Stephen Boyd from the STUC.

Professor Foster spoke of the current cost of Trident. MoD figures issued in February 2007 indicated that the current cost of servicing and staffing Trident and paying for US facilities and missile refurbishment is £1.78bn a year. Scotland's contribution, in terms of tax base is £153 million a year. £50 million would cover the salary costs of all existing Scottish civilian and military personnel. He said it was now an open and shut case that Scotland in economic terms would be far better off



without Trident. He had an excellent paper detailing all the figures in terms of money saved and jobs lost if we were to retain Trident. (copies available from the J&P office). The stark reality, he said, was that keeping and replacing Trident was costing us many jobs in the public sector. The UK government has stated that the replacement of Trident will not come out of the defence budget, so other budgets will have to be trimmed if we are to replace Trident, with the subsequent loss of jobs in the public sector.

Stephen Boyd of the STUC referred to the report 'Trident and Jobs' (a link to the report is on our website) again reinforcing what had been said, that in fact renewing Trident would be to the cost of losing other jobs in Scotland.

There were many questions and comments from the floor, the most around the potential job losses, and everyone agreed that the workforce at Faslane were not the enemy. In fact the biggest round of applause came when Isobel Lindsay of CND said the workforce at Faslane should be guaranteed at least 2 years salary. It was also pointed out that an independent Scotland would retain Faslane as its naval base.

The last part of the conference was called *Building the Campaign*, in which MSPs of all parties put the case for not renewing Trident. Bill Butler said we should not underestimate the 35 Labour abstentions when the Scottish Parliament voted for not renewing Trident. Patrick Harvie asked whether we spend the money on Trident or creating other jobs. He spoke of the many good people who were employed at Faslane, and that with a that large pot of money available from not renewing Trident other jobs would be created. Bill Kidd said he had given his maiden speech in parliament on Trident. He also said we could wait till we got all the countries with WMDs around a table to begin talking about disarmament or we could show a shining example by getting rid of ours. Chris Mason the Lib Dem leader on Glasgow City Council spoke about the need to address what is happening in the developing world, the need to address global issues, and the fact that the first world is prepared to go to war for their own interests dressed up as global issues.

All and all a very interesting conference, with the evidence presented giving a clear message that Scotland's economy and Scotland's job future would be better off without Trident.

Carol Clarke

increasing inequality

New research focuses on a different aspect of social inequality

It has long been conventional wisdom that redressing inequality in society is closely linked to policies furthering progressive taxation and more just benefits. Recent research by the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) suggests that this is not the whole story.

The outlook for inequality in Britain may depend more on the outlook for the stock market than on Government tax and benefit policies, a study by IFS researchers suggested recently. Even though the current Government has increased taxes on people with high incomes, this has not prevented them from racing further away from the average level of living standards across the country. In recent years, it is only in the wake of extended falls in the stock market that the incomes of the richest have fallen.

The incomes of the richest 0.1% of the population increased at an annual rate of 6.6% a year during Labour's first five years in office. They then fell by 2.7% a year on average in 2002-03 and 2003-04. They picked up again in 2004-05, the last year for which we have data. But the subsequent strength of the stock market suggests that the growth in their incomes may have accelerated again over the past three years, increasing inequality further despite additional attempts by the Government to help the less well off. It remains to be seen what impact recent problems in the banking sector and financial markets will have.

This analysis of high income trends is based on the Survey of Personal Incomes, constructed from income tax records by HM Revenue and Customs, and the Family Resources Survey, which forms the basis of the Government's official low income statistics: Households Below Average Income. It sheds an interesting light on the characteristics of high income individuals in Britain. Figures relate to 2004/05, the most recent available, and are presented in 2007/08 prices.

The richest 0.1 percent (one thousandth) of the British population amounts to around 47,000 people. To get in to this group of the "very, very rich" you need an income before tax of more than £350,000 a year. This group has an average pre-tax income of £780,000 a year, of which they pay on average almost £275,000 in income tax. Their total pre-tax income of almost £37 billion accounts for around 4.3% of total pre-tax income across the country. This group is disproportionately likely to be male (nine out of ten of them are male),

middle aged and living in London or the South-east. They are also disproportionately likely to work in finance, property or the law.

• There are a further 420,000 people – the remainder of the richest 1% of the population with pre-tax incomes of between £100,000 and £350,000 per year. Like the very, very rich, these "very rich" individuals are more likely to be male, middle-aged and to live in London and the South-east. They also work disproportionately in the same industries, although interestingly 15% of this group are in "health and social work" (presumably doctors and senior health service managers who have enjoyed relatively big pay increases under Labour).

The average pre-tax income of all income tax payers is around £25,000, of which they pay £4,400 in tax on average. Increasing gaps between the very rich and the less well off obviously increase inequality and relative poverty. What has been less obvious is that the gap may be narrowed, more by the roulette wheel of international stock markets than by the conscious application of policies aiming at social justice.

Inequality is undoubtedly rising, but alarmingly there is little sympathy for poor people in today's Britain. People in Britain are concerned about inequality, but they are less likely to support government interventions designed to tackle poverty or redistribute income than they were 20 years ago. According to the latest British Social Attitudes report, published in January, three quarters of people (76%) say that the gap between those on high and low incomes is "too large". And yet one in four people think that poverty is due to laziness or lack of willpower, up from one in five in 1986. And only a third of people (34%) think that government should redistribute income from the better off to the less well off, down from nearly half (47%) in 1995. "Poverty is still unhappily alive in so many of our rural and urban communities," said Bishop Stephen Lowe of Hulme, speaking about Poverty and Homelessness Action Week. "Yet my worry is that indifference about it is also alive. We must shake the nation out of its indifference."

There is a current campaign by Church Action on Poverty to challenge these perceptions and assumptions with a view to building a fairer society. If you'd like to find out more about the campaign, contact the CAP office on 0161 236 9321 or info@church-poverty.org.uk

