



1.4 MILLION FARMERS AND WORKERS BENEFIT FROM FAIRTRADE



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I've more or less decided that for Lent I'm going to give up on my daily diet of news, or what society calls current affairs. Well, not entirely, since that's impossible; but more along the lines of a restrictive diet. Diets fail because people try to do too much, but the essence seems to be getting rid of things which are not good for you and doing things which are. So, just for the fun of it, here is Tim's Lenten J&P diet.

A usual first step in a diet is to keep a journal of what we eat and drink. This seems like a good strategy here: listing all the sources of information and news that we take in and the amount of time that we spend on this. It's useful to remember also that we get information in two ways. One is interactive: we buy and read a newspaper or search for something online. The other is essentially passive: we half-listen to the news on the radio, or sit down for the news or discussion of current affairs that is presented to us on the television.

Nowadays we are faced with an extraordinary range of media: from the global tentacles of Rupert Murdoch's empire in print, visual and social media, to the solitary individual updating their Facebook page. The only thing that they have in common is that they all have an agenda. And while most of us would look to any form of media to be informed we like the information to be packaged in a comprehensible, accessible and pleasing manner.

In all media, the purpose of informing is always subordinate to the purpose of selling. And like any other product we are encouraged to develop a brand loyalty, based on the profile each form of media projects. It can be very useful to look at our favoured (or default) sources of social media and do a classic social analysis on them. What is the social and cultural groupings they appear to be aimed at? What kind of income level do they take for the norm among these groups? Whereabout on the political spectrum do they seem to come from and aim at? This is a bit like establishing our dietary intake of protein, carbohydrate and fat.

Much of what passes for current affairs, news and discussion is of course

simply gossip or speculation. There is an old and useful verse: 'People everywhere confuse/ what they read in the newspapers for news'. In dietary terms, that is like the sugar, artificial colourings, flavourings and preservatives. The way in which current affairs and news are disseminated - the media and presenters - is the equivalent of the processing and packaging.

With his usual clarity, Thomas Merton diagnoses the problem: 'The greatest need of our time is to clean out the enormous mass of mental and emotional rubbish that clutters our minds and makes of all political and social life a mass illness. Without this housecleaning we cannot begin to see. Unless we see, we cannot think.' (*Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander*).

The founder of monasticism Saint Benedict in his rule advises his monks 'to make themselves strangers to the actions of the age', to become strangers to the city. This state of living somewhat apart does not require us to become monks. But it does suggest an attitude different to the mixture of titillation, sensationalism, prurience and the race to the bottom that so often characterises the media's account of the world. To call upon the analogy of the diet again, it's not enough to give up or change for a period of time before resuming the old habits. It requires a complete change.

The great reformed theologian Karl Barth reputedly said that we should approach social problems with a bible in one hand and a newspaper in the other (the playwright Ibsen also suggested that for him the bible and a newspaper were enough). The reformed principle of *sola scriptura* - that the bible alone is sufficient - lacks the Catholic emphasis on the tradition of the Church, which gives us Catholic Social Teaching. In fairness it should be said however that Barth, like other great reformed theologians, in his biblical commentary and his highly developed theology becomes a kind of tradition himself.

One of the reasons that Catholic Social Teaching is still referred to as the church's 'best kept secret' derives from the failure of the laity to educate themselves in this area of

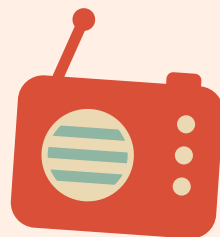
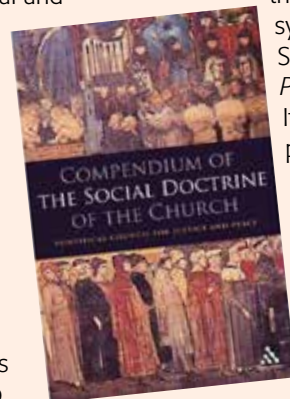
church teaching. This in turn comes from widespread and general failure among clergy to preach or celebrate social teaching. Who among us has given any serious or systematic study to the tradition? When was the last time you, dear reader, looked into the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Catholic Church*?

Well, the other necessary element of a contemporary diet is exercise. With a general election coming up, I have a suggestion. Chapter 8 of the *Compendium* is a synopsis of Catholic Social Teaching on *The Political Community*. It's only about fifteen pages, 8,500 words and available online. Admittedly it's fairly dense writing; all the more reason to slow down from the usual skim reading. Be slow, attentive and reflective: chew the food and get the full flavour. It will provide a marvellous point of reference for judging the mixture of pap and trivia, sensationalism and celebrity, the prepackaged and processed junk food that we are served up with as political debate.

All the more reason too, I think, to keep this new diet within the framework of Lent. This is the period in the liturgical year when the message of the Kingdom of God comes into direct conflict with the Imperial power of Roman occupiers and their collaborators. At the climax of the last week, the promise about the Bread of Life (John 6:35ff) is consummated in the Last Supper. More than any other diet could, this eucharist offers the promise of new life. The expressions of the ordinary violence and greed of secular politics seem to triumph on Good Friday. But they are undermined by forgiveness and sacrifice, which lie at the root of the Easter triumph of resurrection.

As the cover of this issue of the magazine demonstrates, we have an opportunity to start immediately in our own lives consolidating our relationship with food between providers, consumers and our faith. Fairtrade Fortnight is a time for consolidating and advocating patterns of consumption which try to give consideration, consistency and a proper recompense to those who produce the food that we can too readily take for granted.

Tim Duffy



HOMELESSNESS – THE CHALLENGE CONTINUES

Alastair Cameron, Chief Executive of Scottish Churches Housing Action, contributes the following article on the work of the agency

John is coming to the end of a life sentence and gets home leave once a month. The terms of his conviction mean he cannot return to his original home, so he lives in temporary accommodation when on leave. He has no contact with family or friends: he is very isolated and struggles to make friends. Now matched with a befriender, he is very slowly engaging, talking more, goes for his shopping with her and may have something to eat.

Kirsty is 17. She's an outgoing young woman but she and her Mum had many arguments and eventually her Mum put her out. For two weeks, she stayed on various friends' sofas and floors, becoming very stressed. She was running out of friends, and was scared she'd end up having to sleep rough. She found a hostel place, and now she's waiting for somewhere more permanent. She's worried about having to manage on her own - and she feels she's burned her bridges with her family.

People like John and Kirsty are among the 36,000 last year who went to their local council for help with homelessness. Lack of somewhere settled isn't their only problem, but without that, they're not in a good place to deal with life's other challenges.

For the last 20 years, Scottish Churches Housing Action has worked under the slogan *no room for homelessness!* We want John, Kirsty and the others to have a secure home - a base from which they can go to work, share with a family, offer hospitality. It's not the same for everyone, but in some form, we all need somewhere to call home.

Scottish Churches Housing Action marked our 20th anniversary with a service at St Andrew's RC Cathedral in Glasgow on 17 January. With the theme of *celebration, challenge and commitment*, it was highly ecumenical in spirit. Following a welcome from Mgr Chris McElroy, the service was led by an Episcopalian, with the preacher from the Church of Scotland, prayers from a Catholic, and readings by a member of the URC and a Quaker.

We highlighted the continuing blight of homelessness on our society: and we celebrated the work of the churches in response. Across the country, key organisations working to tackle homelessness were set up by churches - Bethany Christian Trust, Glasgow City Mission, Churches Action for the Homeless (CATH) in Perth, and many more. Many of Scotland's housing associations have their roots in Christian action: Trust Housing was once Kirk Care, and Glasgow West started as Hillhead Housing Association with a major input from Wellington Church.

Scottish Churches Housing Action has added to this diversity, helping to set up some 27 starter pack projects across Scotland - in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Dundee and in smaller places as far apart as Kirkwall and Campbeltown. Starter packs provide kitchen equipment, bedding and cleaning materials to people as they move out of homelessness into a tenancy. They are needed because people going through homelessness don't generally have the cash to set up their new home. Starter packs prevent repeat

homelessness, because it's hard to keep a place going if you haven't got these essentials.

It's not just starter pack projects that we develop. Our Julius Project, supported over the past three years by the Church of Scotland Guild, has set up befriending schemes in Paisley, Perth and Dunfermline. These initiatives recruit volunteers who meet up with people going through homelessness to share their interests and offer support. We also help develop much-needed affordable housing through the use of church-owned property.

We work all over Scotland. In many places, many would think 'surely there aren't homeless people here?' but there are indeed. People experiencing homelessness aren't all on the street selling the *Big Issue*: they are getting on with their lives as best they can, sleeping on friends' sofas, in refuges or hostels. And the causes of homelessness - which include family breakdown, poverty, mental health problems, problem drinking or drug use - are a reality in every community in the land.

The Scottish Government will tell you - rightly - that headline homelessness has reduced substantially in the last few years. Ten years ago, 60,000 households asked for help with homelessness - last year it was 36,000. But behind that success lie severe problems - homelessness in Scotland is still a challenge.

Firstly, the reduction in numbers has been achieved by dealing better with the easier cases. That means among those becoming homeless now, there is a greater concentration of people with significant problems - people coming out of prison, people with drug or drink problems, people experiencing mental illness, women and their children who have been through domestic abuse. People are more likely to have slept rough - the most extreme form of homelessness.

Secondly, Scotland is trying to reduce homelessness without building the new extra homes we need. Affordable homes for rent are in short supply in most parts of the country, rural as well as urban, and we can't tackle the problem without them. The main thrust of housing policy for

the last three decades has been towards home ownership, but not many people can buy their way out of homelessness.

That feeds into the third problem: not enough temporary accommodation. Everyone agrees that bed & breakfast accommodation is expensive and unsuitable - particularly for children. But the alternatives are limited. At its most extreme, in Glasgow and Edinburgh people who've been sleeping rough can get turned away when they go to the council - even though the council has a legal duty to find them temporary accommodation.

With challenges like this, we're convinced that a shared response from the churches is essential. The need is local: along with foodbanks and other responses to austerity Britain, we must help people who become homeless. It's also national: the churches should speak for a just approach that isn't based on housing as something we consume, but on solidarity. Everyone deserves a place to call home.

Scottish Churches Housing Action fulfils these roles and more. We are a development organisation, stimulating and supporting local responses to local situations; we are a campaigning organisation, speaking out for justice. It is to the credit of Scotland's churches that they have supported this work for the past 20 years - with financial support, by offering volunteers, through making property available. We ask for continued support to allow us to take on the challenges of the future.

For more information about the work of Scottish Churches Housing Action, visit www.churches-housing.org Or contact Alastair Cameron, Chief Executive: 44 Hanover St Edinburgh EH2 2DR or alastair@churches-housing.org

Scottish Churches
Housing Action



no room for homelessness!

A New Year Peace Service

John McDonald of the Justice and Peace group in Croy has sent an account of their exemplary New Year Peace Service

The Holy Cross Croy Justice and Peace group organised a second public service of remembrance which was held immediately after the Mass of Mary Mother of God, on New Year's Day 2015.

The format was similar to our first service last year, with a planned short service for Peace at the *Memorial to the Fallen* stone, which is situated outside in the parish grounds, where we remembered all who had died as a result of war. The service of remembrance is open to all faiths and to none. Unfortunately, because of sleet and strong winds, this year's service was held inside the chapel.

This year to commemorate the start of the First World War, we as a community remembered the soldiers and civilians of all nations who lost their lives. A peace wreath was blessed and placed at our memorial to the fallen. As a gesture of Solidarity, the Justice and Peace group exchanged prayers to be incorporated into joint services of remembrance with the Parish of *Heilig Kreuz* (Holy Cross) at *Volksdorf* in Germany.

The prayer from *Heilig Kreuz* remembered the Christmas truce of 1914 and concluded: 'For a short moment, God's peace could be felt on earth. Men of different nations and beliefs put down their arms and celebrated Christmas together. This short moment of peace did not have any visible effect on the later course of the war. But maybe it had changed the lives of those men and our lives as well!'

Unfortunately, continuing wars and conflicts experienced today are partly responsible for human trafficking and slavery, themes recently highlighted by the Holy Father and brought out during our service. The congregation who gathered for the service were also asked to reflect on Pope Francis' theme for World Day of Prayer for Peace 2015: *No longer slaves but Brothers and Sisters*.

A Candle for Peace was lit during the service by one member of the Saint Maurice High School Caritas Group, while another read a prayer:

*Lord of all nations, Saviour and judge of all:
remove from human hearts all bitterness and hate.
Let the sounds of strife, the cries of battle,
be silenced for all eternity in Your loving and endless grace.
Grant to those who have died in war your mercy and forgiveness
and bring us all to the peace of your eternal Kingdom.
Pray for all those who mourn,
for the establishing of a just peace and stability in the world,
for victims of terror, for those maimed and injured in war,
the lost and forgotten, those whose names are not remembered,
those haunted by dark memories and the depressed,
the homeless and the broken-hearted,
those who died violently and those who died as a result of injury
and for all those who went to the grave unable to tell their stories*

The candle was placed beside a copy of this prayer on the altar rails at the Sacred Heart Altar and the candle will be lit a few minutes before each Mass for the Month of January.



The involvement of the St. Maurice High School Caritas Group further illustrated how Justice and Peace issues are relevant to all and their input was gratefully received. It is hoped that this link will continue and indeed may develop. Of course, many thanks to all those who 'volunteered' to read during the service, there were a number of comments from members of the congregation who found it 'moving' and 'thought provoking', this was due largely to the readers and the choice of sensitive music performed by the Holy Cross Music group.

Many thanks of course goes to Fr Joseph Sullivan, our parish priest, who continues to encourage the Croy Justice and Peace group; and to everyone who supported this second commemoration for World Day of Peace in Holy Cross Croy, it looks as though this can now be a regular opportunity to publicly support Justice and Peace.



NO MEDAL FOR THIS

Recently, the European Ecumenical peace church network Church and Peace moved into new premises, requiring a clearance of the archives. Among all these piles of papers was a newspaper article, presumably from 1980, a short text with a photo, entitled: 'They were not honoured for this'. A story that is nearly a century old. A different kind of war story to those we are familiar with.

It is the story of two German soldiers in the First World War. They were stationed on farms in Belgium and France during 1916. The inhabitants had abandoned them. These soldiers could not bear seeing the farm going to rack and ruin. In every free minute they ploughed, scattered seed, weeded, harvested, cared for the animals – until the end of the war. Against the background of the slaughter which took the lives of so many people, this story is not only encouraging and comforting. It could be a symbol of a church that is on the way to becoming a Peace Church, a church that lives out its calling as ambassador of reconciliation and takes practical steps.

Willi and Franz were apparently not convinced by the war propaganda that fuelled the hatred on all sides of the conflict. They did not adopt the enemy stereotypes that were propagated in public and also from the pulpits. For them, the farmers whose fields and cattle they cared for, were not wicked French people or barbaric Belgians, but just farmers – like themselves. As farmers they knew what it meant if fields were not ploughed and cattle not fed. They felt a sympathy that was not wiped out by the label 'enemy'. Ignoring enemy stereotypes is one of the signs of a church of peace.

Unfortunately, people of faith are not automatically immune to them. The attitude of the churches on all sides of the conflict in the First World bears sad witness to this. Today, where a war is unthinkable between English, French and German people, other stereotypes are in circulation, e.g. with respect to Islam.

The spontaneous solidarity of the two farmers with people declared to be enemies is a symbol of that openness, that great freedom and readiness to accept all people that we see in the life and teachings of Jesus. The two farmers are also a parable of a church of peace in their actions. It all started with

their annoyance that the war prevented the tending of the fields. So they took action themselves – voluntarily, doing what was necessary. Working as a church of reconciliation and peace means just that: saying a decisive No, being outraged at the forces of destruction – and, on the other hand, doing what is necessary, as an echo to God's great affirmation of life.

That is the special thing about the Church and Peace network. It is made up of groups and communities who, day by day, demonstrate their calling between this decisive No and this clear Yes: they work for social justice in cities or train people for nonviolent actions and conflict resolution; they actively oppose the arms trade or stand up for the rights of refugees. They are always concerned for the same thing: rejecting the use of force in all its forms and, at the same time, working nonviolently for justice and for life. And that is how we may long for – and become - a church that refuses to become habituated to different forms of destruction and is ready to act.

Willi and Franz were able to look beyond the present. They worked towards the future. In the middle of the war they were already focusing on when it would end, and the joy of unknown people when they came back and found everything in order on their farms. This too is a symbol of the Peace Church: it lives and works with hope and joy towards the future. When members of Church and Peace in Serbia and Kosovo work - under difficult circumstances - for the benefit of Roma children and young people they are working towards the future. When these children manage to finish primary school and even go on to secondary education, there is hope that the life of their population group will change.

It is very important to stay hopeful and to keep our vision, because the road is full of obstacles - Franz and Willi would perhaps say full of weeds. This kind of farsightedness is needed today more than ever. Today it is important to encourage children and young people to be enthusiastic for life and for discipleship if we do not want them to end up in death-bringing militias, through lack of orientation. The church's perspective is a reconciled world in God's Kingdom, a reality that needs to be practiced here and now - so that it will be visible tomorrow.

THE VOICE of the voiceless

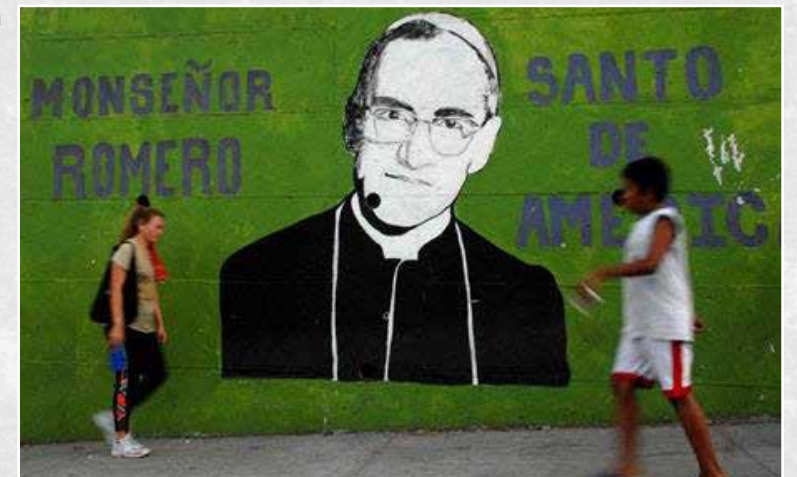
In whichever political system or situation the church should not identify itself with any specific political option. Rather, it supports whatever there is that is just in it, while it is, at the same time, always ready to denounce what is unjust in it.

It will not cease being the voice of the voiceless as long as there are people who are oppressed, who are marginalised from participation in the creation and the benefits of the development of the country.

Oscar Romero, May 20, 1979

On Tuesday, February 3, 2015, Pope Francis received Cardinal Angelo Amato SDB, Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, in a private audience, and authorized the Cardinal to promulgate (officially authorize) Archbishop Romero's decree of martyrdom, meaning it has gained the Congregation's voting members and the Pope's approval. This clears the way for the Pope to set a date later for his beatification.

The Congregation for Saints' Causes voted unanimously to recommend Pope Francis recognize Romero as a martyr. 'He was killed at the altar. Through him, they wanted to strike the church that flowed from the Second Vatican Council'. His assassination 'was not caused by motives that were simply political, but by hatred for a faith that, imbued with charity, would not be silent in the face of the injustices that relentlessly and cruelly slaughtered the poor and their defenders.'



Islam Under Fire

Sister Isabel Smyth SND has long been at the forefront of Interfaith dialogue in Scotland. Here she reflects on some of the issues underlying recent tragic events in France and elsewhere

Islam is under fire again! While people are bending over backwards to assure us that they don't hold all Muslims responsible for terrorist activities the Westminster Government sends a letter to Mosques throughout England to conscript the help of religious leaders to 'explain and demonstrate how faith in Islam can be part of British identity' and to teach their congregations that it is possible to be Muslim and British.

There has been a reaction from the Muslim community, particularly the Muslim Council of Britain, who feel that they are being targeted with the suggestion that Muslims are not fully integrated into British society and need government intervention to preach peace and tolerance in their Mosques. The government no doubt meant well, but while the letter claims to recognise the positive contribution faith communities make to society as a whole, it failed to hit its mark.

Why? I wonder if it is because it failed to speak and consult groups such as the Muslim Council of Britain. It did consult with organisations such as its own Anti-Muslim Hatred Working Group but it might have helped to speak with grass roots organisations to gauge the reaction and help form the letter. For it is surely true that Mosques are concerned about the radicalisation of their young people and need support in tackling this.

All of this has come out of the Charlie Hebdo affair in Paris. In the aftermath of the shootings at the offices of the satirical journal there was much in the news about liberty, freedom of speech and democracy. There was a sense of outrage - and quite rightly so - at extremist groups who plan and perpetrate such violence in cold blood, claiming that they are doing so in the name of God and religion. There should be outrage and horror at such things. Religious leaders, as well as politicians, and members of the public were very clear that this was a distortion of Islam. Muslims decried the atrocities in the name of God as debasing and distorting their faith. Islam is a religion that offers a way of peace and faithful Muslims want to live in peace with their neighbours. For them the idea of *jihad* is to fight against our own evil inclinations to live an upright and principled life, not to kill other innocent people.

So we are all standing up for - what?

Democracy, freedom of speech, the right to say what we want and satirise other people and the institutions that they hold dear? Some commentators certainly think so and laud freedom of speech as characteristic of a liberal, free, democratic society and a value which we must not lose. Quite right too, but how absolute is freedom of speech and has it to be modified sometimes for the sake of a greater good - peace in our society? With rights come responsibilities.

The weekend after the shootings, Humza Yousaf MSP wrote in a Sunday newspaper that satire was not an excuse for murder. While all right minded people know he is right and would, I am certain, agree with him I do feel a bit concerned about absolutising freedom of speech - particularly when it happens in a public space or is spread by the media. Do we not have the duty to use our freedom of speech responsibly and to avoid encouraging hate of those who are different? In this country we have legislation which outlaws hate crimes.

I'm not sure about the legal situation in France. But why would people deliberately publish caricatures that they know will cause real offence to some people and that there might well be a violent reaction to them. Why provoke people like this? Laughing at what people hold dear is akin to laughing at them, akin to dismissing their commitment to their faith as foolish, akin to suggesting that they and what they believe are not worth respecting, that they are in fact stupid. This is akin to turning them into the other, the enemy. And it's this approach which leads to violence.

Cartoons and caricatures of the Pope during the Reformation contributed to anti-Catholic feeling and a hatred between Catholics and Protestant that has taken centuries to overcome. Cartoons against Jews contributed to the anti-semitism which led eventually to the Holocaust. We know that relationships with the Muslim world are fragile and yet we never seem to ask why young Muslims are so disaffected by life in the West that they go to join the Islamic State. We never seem to want to dialogue or consider their concerns, or feelings of alienation or marginalisation.

The attack on the Kosher restaurant and the murder of four Jews has not had the same publicity as the attack

on the offices of Charlie Hebdo offices. They were not murdered because of anything they had done but simply because they were presumed to be Jews who happened to be shopping at that time.

Recently a Jewish friend pointed out that the BBC in reporting the situation in Paris talked about alarming trends in France: Jews leaving for Israel because they do not feel safe; more hate crimes against Muslims reported; armed police men in front of Synagogues; unarmed, plain clothes policemen outside Mosques, but little mention of the Jews murdered in the supermarket. And James Naughtie, on the radio spoke of 'the man who lost his life in the supermarket taking hostages' - no mention of the man being a terrorist or killer or that it was Jews who were taken hostage. Language is powerful in forming attitudes - in what is said and what is not said.

And while all this was happening 2,000 old, young and sick people, many of whom were Muslim, were massacred in Nigeria by Boko Haram; and people continue to suffer in Syria and Iraq because of arms built and sold by western governments. Somehow they don't arouse our sympathy or outrage in quite the same way. Perhaps they were too far from home.

What passes for satire in contemporary culture is often little more than the failure to even try to understand another point of view. Out of fear and ignorance we choose to live with a caricature of others. Properly employed, satire challenges our willingness to live with caricatures and encourages us to engage with the real thing. Satire, like charity begins at home. So why not use satire to laugh at ourselves and use the media to inculcate respect of others?

Wouldn't it be great if the forty heads of Governments walking arm in arm in Paris on the Sunday after the attack had done so for peace, for dialogue, for understanding and respect for other faiths?

GLOBAL CATHOLIC CLIMATE MOVEMENT LAUNCHED

In advance of the publication of Pope Francis' Encyclical on the Environment, a group of Catholic theologians, scientists, clergy, religious and laypeople have launched the Global Catholic Climate Movement. Announcing the news on 15 January, they issued the following statement 'to the Church and the world'.

Who we are

The Global Catholic Climate Movement is a first-of-its-kind international coalition of Catholics from many nations, continents, and walks of life. We are laity, religious, and clergy, theologians, scientists, and activists from Argentina, the Philippines, the United Kingdom, Kenya, Australia, the United States, and many other nations. We are united by our Catholic faith and our work in various roles and organisations on climate change issues.

Our collaboration echoes the global dimensions of the Catholic Church and a shared sense of responsibility to care for God's beautiful, life-giving creation. We are inspired by Church teachings and guided by the virtue of prudence—understood by St Thomas Aquinas as 'right reason applied to action'. We accept the findings of scientific leaders, such as the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), that humanity's greenhouse gas emissions are contributing to widespread and mostly harmful changes to planetary systems. We are certain that anthropogenic [human-made] climate change endangers God's creation and us all, particularly the poor, whose voices have already spoken of the impacts of an altered climate.

What we believe—and why

The basis of our concerns is scriptural and founded on the tradition of the Church. From Genesis through to Revelation, Catholics accept as a revealed truth that creation and its order is a good that we must embrace and steward. This has been echoed and championed by Church leaders for two millennia. In response to what God has given the human race—clean air, life-sustaining water, fruits of the earth's harvests, and the bounty of the sea—we are called to honour God our Creator for these many blessings. We are obliged to respect these gifts, which are for all people. For this reason climate change is for Catholics a profoundly spiritual, ethical, and moral issue. While discussions of climate change often involve debate about economic theory and political platforms, and while it can involve issues of partisan politics as well lobbying by special interest groups, our focus is on the moral and spiritual issues involved. Climate change is about our responsibility as God's children and people of faith to care for human life, especially future generations, by caring for all of God's wondrous creation.

The interdependency of creation and humanity is underscored in Pope Francis's visit to Philippines. The impacts of extreme weather on the vulnerable and marginalized become clear as we join the Holy Father in praying for all the

families that were impacted by super Typhoon Haiyan—for the many thousands dead or missing and the countless more who remain homeless.

A call for prayer, a call for action

'We are people of hope' the bishops of the Philippines once wrote. Like them we believe that together and with the grace of God 'we can change the course of events'. First, we recognize that conversations about the climate crisis have historically been more about intellectual arguments than about the profound spiritual and moral implications of our failure to care for God's creation. Catholic leaders are thus called to speak with a prophetic voice and in a spiritual dialogue with all people, especially those political and business leaders and consumers who engage in climatically destructive policies and practices. And we recognise our own need for ongoing conversion to live more in keeping with the Creator's intentions for life in abundance for all people. Until the moral implications of anthropogenic climate change are clearly established and accepted, it is unlikely that societies can or will transition in an appropriate timeframe to sustainable technologies, economies, and lifestyles.

And so in light of growing scientific evidence and real-world experiences, we offer our prayers for God's healing grace as we work in the world to care and advocate for the needy and all creation. We do so by calling on our brothers and sisters in Christ to defend the common good by acknowledging those least able to defend themselves—the world's people living in poverty, our children, born and unborn, future generations, and all forms of life that populate God's creation.

Knowing that there are abundant positive solutions available, we offer to assist those voices that demand strong international climate agreements, as well as call for and encourage the conversion of hardened hearts. We invite all Catholics to explore the issues of climate change and to join future actions—both to raise awareness about this important issue and to act within the public sphere. And finally we entrust all our efforts to Jesus Christ, who makes all things new.

Conclusion: a continuation of Catholic teachings

Pope Francis will be issuing an encyclical about caring for the environment. This document will carry on the teachings of the Church given to us by Saint John Paul II and Benedict XVI, as well as many bishops across the globe. We have already heard this continuity in the words to date of Pope Francis. With this statement, we the undersigned now seek to help bring these teachings of the Church to the world.

Thus we conclude with these words of hope, offered at the opening of the Holy Father's papacy:

'Today too, amid so much darkness, we need to see the light of hope and to be men and women who bring hope to others. To protect creation, to protect every man and every woman, to look upon them with tenderness and love, is to open up a horizon of hope; it is to let a shaft of light break through the heavy clouds; it is to bring the warmth of hope! For believers, for us Christians, like Abraham, like Saint Joseph, the hope that we bring is set against the horizon of God, which has opened up before us in Christ. It is a hope built on the rock which is God.'

+ Pope Francis, Inaugural Mass, March 19, 2013

Signatories: 34 individuals and agencies

For more information see: <http://catholicclimatemovement.global/join-the-movement/>

Source: Independent Catholic News



FOR THE LOVE OF OUR SISTERS AND BROTHERS, LET'S DO SOMETHING ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE

Frances Rayner, SCIAF's Campaigns Officer, calls on us to make this year the dawn of a new climate movement.

“Creation is a gift, it is a wonderful gift that God has given us, so that we care for it and we use it for the benefit of all, always with great respect and gratitude.”

(Pope Francis' Audience, May 21, 2014)

The average person in the UK is responsible for 79 times more carbon emissions than someone in Malawi.



This year, we have a historic opportunity to stop climate change pushing people deeper into poverty. Pope Francis' much anticipated encyclical on human ecology will provide the world's Catholics with inspiration to reflect on the relationship between the environment and human flourishing - and take action. In September, the United Nations will agree a set of new Sustainable Development Goals and in December, world leaders will meet in Paris to sign a global deal to tackle climate change. At home, we face a General Election and in Scotland, we have ambitious climate change legislation – but we need to put pressure on the new First Minister to take action to meet our emissions reduction targets.

Teaming up with more than 60 Scottish organisations, and many others around the UK, we're calling for climate action for the sake of all the things we love that climate change threatens - whether that's the price of coffee, the changing of the seasons or the food we need to survive. Everyone loves something that's affected by climate change.

SCIAF's Lenten campaign asks people to act on climate change, 'for the love of' Mary Jackson, a small-scale farmer from Chiholomba village, Malawi. Mary relies on rain to grow food for her four children. But climate change is making the weather unpredictable. Mary told us that she used to know when the rain would come and how much would fall, but she can't rely on it anymore. In the past, when she hasn't been able to grow enough food, she's had to take her children out of school.

You may have seen on the news that there's been bad flooding in Malawi, with more than 121,000 people thought to have lost their homes. We don't know for sure that these floods are a direct result of climate change – but we do know that around the world, extreme weather events are becoming more frequent and severe, harming the poorest families the most.

We're helping Mary adapt to her changing climate, and we're working with Caritas Internationalis to respond to the flooding, but every day, climate change is pushing people further into poverty.

For the love of our sisters and brothers, we must:

1. Ask the First Minister what she's going to do to prioritise action on climate change.
2. Play our part by making a commitment to cut our carbon footprints and share what we're doing with the First Minister and others.

SCIAF's 'For the love of' Mary campaign postcard makes it easy for you to do this and offers some suggestions of ways to cut your carbon footprint. We're focussing on transport because it's one of the biggest sources of emissions in Scotland. If everyone in Scotland drove just 5 miles less each week, it would be equivalent to taking nearly 70,000 cars off the road. There are lots of ways you can do this. For example, try leaving the car at home for short journeys, car-pooling to Mass or commute by bike or public transport at least one day a week. If you never use a car, perhaps you could think of a friend or family member who does and ask them to consider these actions for Mary's sake. We've got lots of suggestions for actions you can take to cut your carbon footprint in all aspects of your life on our website.

What you can do to support the campaign

- Order copies of the campaign postcard to distribute. If you're sharing them in your group or parish you could offer to collect completed postcards and return them to us.
- Organise a meeting with your MSPs and tell them why you want them to act on climate change. Please contact me so I can help you prepare.
- Travel with us to London on 17th June for a mass lobby of the UK Parliament.
- Send Nicola Sturgeon this tweet: I've just put my name to @sciaf campaign asking @NicolaSturgeon what she's doing about climate change. Look fwd to response. @sccscot
- Write to your local paper to let them know why you're cutting your carbon footprint and ask others to do the same.

If you choose to take any of these actions, please email me at frayner@sciaf.org.uk or call 0141 354 5507.

This year is also a big year for SCIAF, as we mark our 50th anniversary. It's a time for us to reflect on the huge difference we have made and thank those who have made it possible. But our anniversary is not a time purely for celebration. Widespread poverty and injustice remain hallmarks of our world and one in eight people still go hungry. We must continue to help people in need and lobby those in power. This year, our WEE BOX appeal will have twice the impact because we have been awarded aid-match funding from the UK Government. Every £1 donated to the WEE BOX appeal before 17th May will be doubled - so the money you give this year will have twice the impact.

As we embark on this momentous year, let the words of St Francis offer inspiration; 'Start by doing what is necessary, then what is possible, and suddenly you are doing the impossible.'

For The Love Of...

Justice and Peace is a member of the Stop Climate Chaos Scotland coalition. Here are the details of their latest campaign and postcard lobby

For the love of country walks and Scotland's beautiful seasons. For the love of the food on our plates. For the love of the Arctic and the Great Barrier Reef. For the love of all the things we care about, we're taking climate change seriously. And we're not alone.

This year, we are joining with organisations, businesses, members of the public and some famous faces to highlight the things they care about that are, or will be, affected by rising global temperatures.

As members of the Stop Climate Chaos Scotland coalition, we are encouraging our supporters to connect climate change with the things that matter to them, and offer them opportunities to be part of the solution to this, the 'defining issue of our time'.

What do you love? You can share your ideas at www.fortheloveof.org.uk

All of this is important because 2015 is set to be a huge year for the global climate movement. In Paris, in

December 2015, global leaders are expected to conclude negotiations for a new global deal to tackle climate change and address its impacts.

As a country that has already committed to take ambitious action on climate change, Scotland has a key role to play in that movement. People across Scotland are already telling us about things they care about that are affected by climate change.

In February, we'll be turning Valentine's Day green. There will be local events across Scotland and lots of activity on social media. There will be further opportunities to learn more about climate change and take action throughout the year. Join in via www.stopclimatechaos.org/scotland.

For the Love of... is a campaign by Stop Climate Chaos Scotland. Please send the enclosed postcard to the First Minister. Further postcards available from the SCCS office or from SCIAF



Boof Review

During this period of centenary, Michael Martin revisited a classic novel of World War I

All Quiet on the Western Front by Erich Maria Remarque is one of the best-known novels to emerge from the First World War. What adds to its interest is that it portrays the life of the soldier in the German army, not the allied army. The story is told through the eyes of a nineteen-year old Bavarian boy straight out of school, Paul Baumer. He and his whole class have been harried into joining the army by their PE teacher, Mr. Kantorek. The unit he serves with includes three of his classmates. The new recruits' respect for authority, 'representing as they thought deeper insights and a more humane wisdom', is the first casualty of the war. 'The first dead body that we saw shattered this conviction', writes Paul. 'The view of life that the teachers had given us fell to pieces' with the first heavy artillery fire.

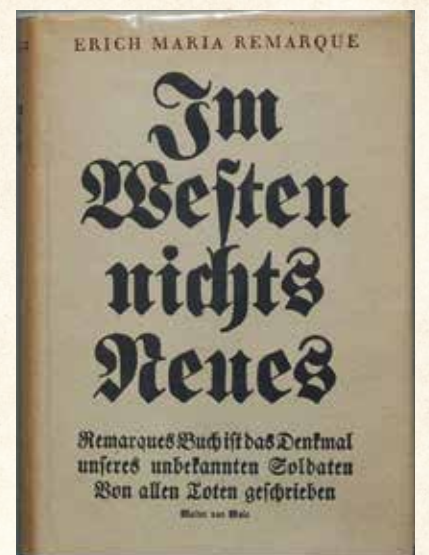
Altogether, the book is an overwhelmingly bleak view of the experience of warfare, especially of trench warfare. But Paul's lament for the life they have lost is so poignant and eloquent. When he recalls the sights of home, it is the silence - such a feature of his memory - which strikes him most forcibly; that and 'the feeling of community, the way we all felt a kinship with the objects and events of our existence'. And he finishes this meditation by saying: 'We are like children who have been abandoned and we are as experienced as old men, we are coarse, unhappy and superficial - I think that we are lost.'

Of course, the book is not an unrelieved paean of pain for a lost youth and a lost generation. It is a narrative of the shared experiences of a group of soldiers thrown together by war. One remarkable feature is that there is no expression of hatred or antagonism towards the enemy. It is often a desperate fight for survival but never a personal war against the enemy soldier. It is shot through with accounts of brotherly love - the care and concern of individual soldiers for their colleagues. For all the inhumanity inherent in their situation, individuals did not lose their fellow-feeling or their sensitivity to the needs of others.

There are also incidents and events of a humorous nature which lift the narrative, and accounts of individual achievements which add warmth to the story. But overall it is a challenging indictment of the failure of mankind to find alternatives to the organised mass killing of people. As Paul says: 'How pointless all human thoughts, words and deeds must be, if things like this are possible! ...if thousands of years of civilization weren't even able to prevent this river of blood...' The greatest regret, looking back at that conflict, is that mankind has still not responded to that challenge, is still having resort to violence and war to solve internecine disputes. Peace has still to be achieved!

The novel was published in 1929 and banned by the Nazis when they came to power in 1933. They claimed it was a betrayal of the German frontline soldier, perhaps reflecting the lack of antagonism expressed by the author towards the enemy. In many ways, it is a humane and touching story of human achievement in the midst of war. But the final fate of Paul Baumer simply emphasises the pessimism which ultimately defines the story.

[Remarque always claimed he had not written an anti war book as such. Towards the end of his life, however, he said in an interview: 'I always believed that everybody was against going to war - until I realised there were some people who do actually want to go to war - particularly those people who do not need to go themselves'. Ed]



NEWSBRIEF

Magazine Subscription: The majority of subscriptions to the Magazine fall due for renewal at this time of year. Along with the website, the magazine is still our main way of communicating news and views about Justice and Peace. Subscriptions go some way towards covering the ever increasing costs of production and postage. We would be grateful if all subscribers and groups whose subscriptions are due, would renew their subscription by returning the form included with the magazine. Many thanks if you have already renewed your subscription for 2015, and thanks also to those who pay by standing order. Cost should never be a barrier to receiving the magazine; if there is a problem, let us know. This year once again the subscription rate remains unchanged. Cheques should be made payable to the 'Catholic National Endowment Trust' and returned to J&P office. Thanks for your continuing support.

Earth Hour Saturday 28 March: Earth Hour started in 2007 as a lights-off event to raise awareness about climate change. It has grown to engage more than 162 countries and territories worldwide. Earth Hour is on Saturday, 28 March 2015. Households and businesses are asked to turn off their nonessential lights and other electrical appliances for one hour, from 8.30 to 9.30 pm, local time, to raise awareness of the need to take action on climate change. Earth Hour belongs to you. Celebrate your commitment to the planet with your friends, family, community or at work - in your own way. For one hour, focus on your commitment to our planet for the rest of this year. To celebrate, you can have a candle lit dinner, talk to your neighbours, stargaze, go camping, play board games, the possibilities are endless. More information at www.earthhour.org



The World Development Movement has changed its name to Global Justice Now. It's not some stupid corporate rebranding, but a political decision. Crucially, they're responding to the views of their allies in the global south. From their perspective, the word 'development' has been captured by big business and tainted by the stupid policies of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. So 'World Development Movement' just doesn't seem right any more. And some campaigners in the global south even thought they were part of the World Bank. They'll still be working on the same broad themes of climate justice and food sovereignty, and actively opposing TTIP.

Their new email address for the Scotland office will be thornhouse@globaljustice.org.uk. Find them on the web at www.globaljustice.org.uk

News from Take one

Action: Their 'Wee Green Cinema' has gone live! Take One Action are now able to now offer their brand new, staffed 40 seater 'Wee Green Cinema' to festivals and event organisers across Scotland. Backed up by solar panels, audiences and crew pedal bicycles to power it and are rewarded with sweet treats, facilitated fun and exclusive programmes of the best new international short films about our shared planet. www.takeoneaction.org.uk

Letter-writing campaign against the arms trade: The arms business has a devastating impact on human rights and security. The UK plays an active role in the trade. In the first six months of 2014 alone, the UK granted arms export licences to 18 of the 28 states on its official blacklist; states about which the Foreign Office has significant human rights concerns. This includes states with long histories of repression, intimidation and violence.

The trade can be stopped if enough people speak out. A campaign is being organised to try to get people to write to Government asking that the UK withdraw from its role in the global arms trade. If you are interested in being part of this please email jjthegeordie@outlook.com

Gandhi-King-Chavez Season for Nonviolence: The eighteenth annual 'Gandhi-King-Chavez Season for Nonviolence' runs from January 30–April 4, 2015. The Gandhi King Season for Nonviolence (SNV) commences for the 18th consecutive year on January 30, 2015 in cities across the globe. The annual 64 day campaign, co-founded in 1998 by Dr Arun Gandhi and The Association for Global New Thought (AGNT), is an educational, media and grassroots awareness campaign spanning the January 30th and April 4th memorial anniversaries of Mahatma Gandhi and Dr Martin Luther King, Jr. The purpose of the campaign is to focus educational and media attention on the philosophy of attaining peace through nonviolent action as demonstrated by legendary leaders Mohandas K. Gandhi, Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., Cesar E. Chavez, and President Nelson Mandela, as well as living legends such as His Holiness, Tenzin Gyatso, the 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet. More information: www.agnt.org/season-for-nonviolence.

£4.2 billion spend before Trident decision made: A report by Rob Edwards in the Sunday Herald reveals that the UK Government plan to spend

£4.2 billion on the Trident replacement programme before the decision is made to go ahead with the new system. This 'Main Gate' decision will be made in 2016 by the MPs elected in May 2015. The initial 'Concept Phase' of the project cost £900 million. We are now part-way through the 'Assessment Phase' which will cost £3.3 billion, giving a total of £4.2 billion. The figures come from a new report by the National Audit Office (NAO). The NAO also disclose that the MOD failed to anticipate how difficult it would be to design a new reactor for the Trident replacement submarine. More information on the Scottish CND website www.banthebomb.org. There will be a Scrap Trident demonstration on Saturday 4 April, George Sq, Glasgow. Assemble 10.30am.

TTIP: The video European leaders don't want you to see: a new leak on the world's dirtiest trade deal emerged that confirmed the worst fears about TTIP. The deal gives big business unprecedented power over decision-making across Europe. The leaked text started out as complicated legalese - but when legal experts broke it down into plain language, the news was the most shocking of all the leaks seen so far. Chlorinated chicken, GMO veggies, and chemicals in our food that can damage the development of our children are just three examples of the devastating effects TTIP will have on our day-to-day lives. The European Commission has been blasting out on all horns to put a positive spin on TTIP. So 'SUM of Us' made a video to counter the spin and hot air coming from the Commission. And given this latest leak, making sure as many people as possible see the video has never been more important. View the video at <http://tinyurl.com/me9urb5>



World Day of Prayer 6 March:

The World Day of Prayer is a global ecumenical movement which brings Christians of many traditions together to observe a common day of prayer each year. World Day of Prayer services are held all around the world, beginning in Tonga and New Zealand in the east and continuing throughout the day to Samoa and Alaska in the west. This year the service comes from The Bahamas and the theme is: Jesus said to them, 'Do you know what I have done to you?' Through preparation and participation in the worship service, we can come to know how our brothers and sisters of other countries, languages and cultures understand the Biblical passages in their context. We can hear their concerns and needs and can feel ourselves in solidarity with them as we pray with and for them.

On Mercy

Mercy heals in every way. It heals bodies, spirits, society, and history. It is the only force that can only heal and save... Though there is no use in placing our hopes on a totally utopian new world in which everyone is sublimely merciful, we are obliged as Christians to seek some way of giving the mercy and compassion of Christ a social, even a political, dimension.

The eschatological function of mercy, we repeat, is to prepare the Christian transformation of the world, and to usher in the Kingdom of God. This Kingdom is manifestly 'not of this world', but it demands to be typified and prepared by such forms of heroic social witness that makes Christian mercy plain and evident in the

world....

Christian mercy must discover, in faith, in the Spirit, a power strong enough to initiate the transformation of the world into a realm of understanding, unity and relative peace, where mankind, nations and societies are willing to make the enormous sacrifices required if they are to communicate intelligibly with one another, understand one another, cooperate with one another in feeding the hungry millions and in building a world of peace.

Thomas Merton, *Love and Living*, edited by Naomi Burton Stone and Brother Patrick Hart

Churches Mutual Credit Union

A new credit union has been formed by the Church of Scotland, and other denominations, which aims to show banks and pay day lenders a fairer approach to finance.

The Church of Scotland, the Church of England the Methodist Conference, the Scottish Episcopal Church, and the Church in Wales have all come together to form the Churches Mutual Credit Union (CMCU). The CMCU will offer a range of savings and loan products. Fairness will be at the heart of the CMCU's values. Initially members will be able to invest in the 'Founder Member's Bond' with ordinary savers accounts and loans becoming available in March. In due course CMCU will offer ISA savings accounts.

At least 60,000 people across the UK, notably ordained ministers, elders, employees and trustees of churches and church charities are eligible to join, along with churches and Church of Scotland and Anglican charities.

Rt Rev John Chalmers, the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, said: 'Many of the most successful credit unions are, or were originally, employment based, and CMCU will ensure that many people in the community will have first-hand experience of a credit union and be able to pass the word on about the services they can provide.'

The Church of Scotland established a high-powered Commission on the Purposes of Economic Activity in 2010 to look into what had gone wrong with our economic system and to suggest how it might be improved. It set as its principal task to establish how the Church could 'best offer Scottish society a new vision of what might be achievable in the economic, social and community life of the nation'.

The credit union movement was identified as being able to help deliver an ethical approach to finance. 'The Church is perhaps uniquely placed as having a publicly accessible facility in every community in the country. Thus, in addition to helping to develop the CMCU, we have been encouraging congregations to form partnerships with their local credit unions, in order, for example, to allow the credit union to use the church hall as a branch office, perhaps on a weekly or monthly basis. This has allowed more people to access the services that credit unions offer, and has also raised the profile of the credit unions- resulting in more people joining.'

Canon Antony MacRow-Wood, CMCU President, and a former President of ABCUL (the Association of British Credit Unions Ltd) said: 'After several years of development this is a great day for our churches and a great day for the British credit union sector... The Church forms an obvious community with many shared interests and as such it has a natural fit with the idea of a credit union. The recycling of capital within the community, not least for mission, will be of benefit to all.'

The CMCU was given formal authorisation by the regulatory authorities in December, after a rigorous process undertaken by the Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulation Authority. The Financial Services Compensation Scheme covers deposits up to £85,000.

If you want to find out more about the union please visit <http://cmcu.org.uk>

WHY IS PADDINGTON BEAR SO IMPORTANT TO ALL AT ASYLUM AID?

Debora Singer, the Policy and Research Manager at Asylum Aid, draws an interesting parable from the story of a well known bear

Paddington Bear is probably the best known unaccompanied child asylum seeker in the world. So well known that he's now the star of a film. Like many other children before and since, he arrived with nothing but a small brown suitcase and a label round his neck saying 'Please look after this bear'. Reliant on the kindness of strangers, in this case Mr and Mrs Brown, to take him in and look after him as he adjusted to life in Britain.

Paddington Bear may be a much-loved book and an entertaining film but to me Paddington is a metaphor for unaccompanied children arriving in a strange country and being faced with everything unfamiliar.

In creating Paddington Bear, I wonder whether Michael Bond was influenced by images of children arriving with similar suitcases and similar labels as they fled the Nazis on the *Kindertransport*. These children were also reliant on British people who took them in or supported them; people such as the families of Richard and David Attenborough and of the sculptor, Anthony Caro.

I always think of these children myself whenever I see children at Asylum Aid for whom we are providing legal representation. Children like the ten year old who played with

a plastic car nearly as big as him while his brother explained how they had arrived in England, the girl who loved reading Harry Potter or the teenager for whom we did a whip round so that she could go swimming every day to chill out while she waited for her asylum decision.

I remember the girl escaping FGM in Mali, the girl fleeing persecution in Eritrea for being a Christian, the girl who experienced such awful sexual violation on her journey to England that she was physically sick when she recounted her story to her caseworker. And there's the boy who waited seven years for his asylum claim to be heard, growing from a teenager to a young man in the process.

Paddington Bear found a welcome from Mr and Mrs Brown. When these children seek protection, what sort of welcome are they finding?



For further information, contact Asylum Aid at (020) 7354 9631 info@asylumaid.org.uk www.asylumaid.org.uk

FEBRUARY

- 23 Fairtrade Fortnight Starts
28 – 1 March
Meeting of General Secretaries of European J&P in Glasgow

MARCH

- 1 International Death Penalty Abolition Day
5 International Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons: 1970
6 World Day of Prayer
8 International Women's Day
11 Trafficking: reflections on a Catholic response - Gillis Centre
15 SCIAF Sunday
21 UN International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
21 Stand up to Racism and Fascism demonstration - Glasgow
22 World Water Day
22 Solidarity Gathering Dungavel
24 Assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero (1980)
25 International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade
26 The Biological Weapons Convention enters into force (1975)
28 Earth Hour

APRIL

- 4 International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action
4 Scrap Trident Demonstration – Glasgow
5 Easter Sunday - Rejoice Rejoice
7 Day of Remembrance of the Victims of the Rwandan Genocide
17 Palestinian Prisoners' Day
22 International Earth Day
26 Bishop Gerardi murdered in Guatemala (1988)
26 Day of Remembrance for all Victims of Chemical Warfare

MAY

- 1 International Workers Day - St Joseph the Worker
3 World Press Freedom Day
16 World Debt Day
29 International Day of UN Peacekeepers

JUNE

- 2 Nuclear Abolition Day

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



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