

Newsletter

September-December 2026

Taking Christian stand against weapons of mass destruction



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Justice & Peace Scotland President, Archbishop William Nolan.

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A plea for the UK government to end the “addiction” to nuclear weapons was made by Archbishop William Nolan at Justice & Peace Scotland’s annual Christian Peace Vigil at HMNB Clyde, Faslane.

The president of J&PS did so as representatives of Scotland’s major Christian denominations gathered at the home of the UK’s nuclear warheads on Saturday, 1st August. The annual peace vigil to make a cry to God over the immoral existence of weapons of mass destruction is held to coincide with the anniversaries of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki believed to have claimed the lives of more than 200,000 people.

This year’s service coincided with new UK Prime Minister Andy Burnham having welcomed an £8.4 billion investment in the new Dreadnought-class nuclear submarine programme days earlier at Barrow-in-Furness. Part of the Defence Investment Plan, under which £128 billion is due to be spent on the UK’s nuclear weapons programme over the next ten years to 2033.

“It seems that our country, our UK Parliament, our politicians are addicted to nuclear weapons,” said Archbishop Nolan. “Every time it comes up in the Parliament, it is always approved. So we are the ones, portrayed as naïve, or silly, or stupid. But we need to pray, as we come to Faslane to do, for wisdom and common sense. To pray that the resources of this earth, of this country, the money, the personnel, is not deployed on weapons of destruction but on bringing about peace in the world.” **For more on the vigil, see page 4.**



An Afternoon with Daoud Nassar: Solidarity with the Palestinian Christian Community

SAVE!
THE DATE

Christians in the Holy Land often refer to themselves as the "living stones," an acknowledgment of their continuous presence in the region since the early Church. These families carry a unique responsibility for maintaining Christian life in the very place where Jesus lived.

Today, however, these communities face escalating political and socio-economic challenges. In the village of Taybeh, families are enduring increased settler violence and isolation, while in Beit Sahour, the proposed expansion of illegal Israeli settlements threatens to dispossess one of the area's oldest Christian populations. They experience the same daily injustices impacting all Palestinians, including land confiscation, home demolitions, and military checkpoints that severely restrict freedom of movement.

To advocate for justice and demonstrate our solidarity with this community, Justice & Peace Scotland is collaborating with Christian Aid and the Church of Scotland to host a special event in Glasgow. Our guest speaker will be Daoud Nassar, a Palestinian Christian from the West Bank who directs the Tent of Nations farm near Bethlehem. During the 2025 Holy Land Coordination - an annual solidarity visit by international bishops - J&P Scotland's Archbishop William Nolan and Anne-Marie Richmond visited the farm to meet with Daoud and witness his reality first-hand. We are delighted to now welcome him to Scotland.

The Nassar family has cultivated their land for over a century, holding purchasing documents that date back to 1916. Now, their farm is completely surrounded by expanding Israeli settlements. For over thirty years the family has fought legal battles against attempts to designate their property as "state land". They face constant settler harassment, including direct physical attacks, intimidation, and the burning of their crops, all perpetuated with the intent to force them from their land. Furthermore, the military has previously blocked their main access road and cut them off from running water and electricity. In spite of these hardships, Daoud and his family choose a path of nonviolent resistance inspired by their Christian faith and values of the gospel. Living by the motto, "We refuse to be enemies," they continually replant their crops - especially the olive trees that are so significant to Palestinian culture - and welcome international volunteers as witnesses to what they endure rather than give way to hostility. **Please save the date for this important afternoon. Come along to hear Daoud's inspirational story and learn more about his family's commitment to Christian nonviolence in the face of ongoing occupation.**



SUN 4th OCTOBER



AFTERNOON
(Exact timings TBC)



GLASGOW CITY CENTRE
(Venue TBC)

Keep an eye on our social media channels and mailing list (links on the first page) for final details.

Six years of Fratelli Tutti: be the Good Samaritan

On October 3rd, we mark six years since the publication of Pope Francis's encyclical, *Fratelli Tutti*. In the UK, it often feels like a "culture of walls" is taking hold, preventing us from encountering people of different backgrounds. Public discourse frequently exploits a perceived fear of the other, fuelling hostility and xenophobia towards migrants and refugees. Yet, *Fratelli Tutti* offers a hopeful alternative. Drawing on the parable of the Good Samaritan, Pope Francis challenges us to overcome ideological barriers and recognise the infinite dignity within every person. He reminds us that welcoming, protecting, promoting, and integrating newcomers does not dilute our own identity. Rather, genuine encounters with diversity enrich our communities and makes humanity grow. As we mark this anniversary, let us recommit to rejecting divisive rhetoric, to promoting social friendship, and to opening our hearts to strangers.





**FAIRTRADE
FORTNIGHT**
21 SEPTEMBER - 4 OCTOBER

Countdown now on to Fairtrade Fortnight

Fairtrade Fortnight 2026 begins on 21st September. This year's theme, '[Do It Fair](#)' asks us to think about people, planet and fair pay.

Whether you're holding an event, running a campaign or getting creative with a social media post to inspire others, Scottish Fairtrade would love to hear from you.. You can drop them an email. Contact address is: info@scottishfairtrade.org. Anyone who does to report on what they are doing could feature in their next newsletter.

To ensure all who want to be involved head into Fairtrade Fortnight feeling prepared, Scottish Fairtrade are hosting a Campaigning Together session on 17th September.

The session will provide the opportunity to learn from the experts how you can make an impact at policy level. Scottish Fairtrade also have information leaflets available to send out to support you in your campaigning efforts.

For all info on Campaigning Together session click [here](#).



**FAIRTRADE
FORTNIGHT**
21 SEPTEMBER - 4 OCTOBER

Let Living Water Flow: Pope Leo XIV and Care of Creation

The Season of Creation is now underway. Beginning on the first of this month, the ecumenical period run until 4th October, the feast of St Francis of Assisi. Christians around the world are invited to pray, reflect and take action for creation and for those most affected by environmental injustice.

Pope Leo XIV has made clear that the Church's commitment to Laudato Si', issued by Pope Francis in 2015, continues. In 2025, he inaugurated the Borgo Laudato Si' at Castel Gandolfo, an education centre bringing together spirituality, learning, nature, art and sustainable innovation as a practical model of integral ecology, describing it as a "seed of hope" and a tangible model of ecological conversion.

For this year's World Day of Prayer, Pope Leo's message takes its inspiration from Isaiah: "They shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks." He highlights the deep connection between the ecological and social crises facing our world. War does not only destroy lives and communities; it also damages ecosystems, contaminates air and water, undermines food security and deepens poverty and inequality. The wounds of the Earth and the wounds of humanity are deeply interconnected – a key message that Pope Francis imparts to us in the Laudato Si encyclical.

At the heart of Pope Leo's message is a call to conversion. Ecological conversion is not simply about changing what we do; it begins with allowing God to transform how we see the world, one another and our responsibility towards creation. When our hearts are renewed, Pope Leo says, what has been used for destruction can instead be directed towards life: caring for people experiencing poverty, feeding the hungry, building peace and protecting creation.

This year's theme for the Season of Creation, "Let Living Water Flow," offers a contemplative image: Jesus is the living water that gives us new life but physical water, too, gives earthly life to God's creation. The Season of Creation theme, then, can help pupils move from understanding God and His creation in their head and heart, to taking action in practical ways with their hands: learning about environmental challenges, developing compassion for people and creation, and considering how they can respond.

Where are there crises of access to water around the world? How does this affect children's rights? What water sources, such as rivers, lakes, or lochs are near our schools? How can we care for them and enjoy them? Or for more advanced learning – how do different injustices intersect with access to clean water? The fast fashion industry, for example, known for its numerous abuses of workers' rights but also for polluting local water sources in towns in Bangladesh, India, China, and many other nations.

As Pope Leo reminds us, renewal can begin with each of us. This September, how can we help Living Water flow through our schools towards greater care, justice, peace and hope for our common home?

To access more information and resources for this Season of Creation click [here](#).



Living Water

Season of Creation 2026

IMMERSION IN LIVING WATER

Ezekiel 47:9, 12



No to nuclear weapons



The need to commit to following the path of Jesus in speaking truth on peace without fear was as challenge made to those who gathered for this year's Christian Peace Vigil at HMNB Clyde, Faslane. As a challenge was made to the UK government over the moral requirement to use the earth's resources on alleviating poverty and tackling the climate crisis and not for jobs sustaining weapons whose use would cause indiscriminate loss of life and natural environment.

The latest witness on the shores of Loch Lomond, organised by Justice & Peace Scotland in conjunction with the Church of Scotland, was led by J&PS president Archbishop Nolan, the Moderator, the Rt Rev Gordon Kennedy, and lay preacher Patsy Thomson, of the Scottish Episcopal Church. They were joined by representatives of the Pax Christi Scotland, the Quakers of Scotland, the United Reform Church and the Iona Community in a prayerful and powerful stand against the very existence of nuclear weapons, and the tens of billions spent to maintain such warheads.

Archbishop Nolan homed in on new Prime Minister Andy Burnham "lauding" that the £8.4bn spend on a new Dreadnought Class nuclear submarine programme would create 22,000 new apprenticeships. "You have to ask yourself: if the government is going to spend money in employment should they not spend that money on jobs that do good – not jobs that sustain weapons of mass destruction?" he said.

"Rather than being so concerned about the possibility of nuclear war, we should be concerned about the war on climate change. And how climate change is destroying our world, causing destruction and indeed death throughout it. We should spend our money to stop that. Spend our money to tackle poverty. Across the United Kingdom, over 30% of our children live in relative poverty. That is a scandal and if we are spending money on arms we are not spending money on tackling that. How many are waiting for operations in the NHS...waiting and suffering in pain for years. What about the war on ill health?"

Pathways towards an unarmed and disarming peace

Nuclear disarmament will be the theme as Justice & Peace Scotland enters new territory next month with a first-time hosting of the annual Justice & Peace Europe International Workshop and General Assembly.

The event, centred in Glasgow and running from the 18th – 21st September, will see delegates from across the 32 European J&P commissions (*pictured right during a recent Athens conference*) gather for an extensive programme of activities focussed on a topic connected to Catholic Social Teaching. With Scotland one of only nine nations in the world that houses nuclear weapons as the location for the UK's such arsenal, and campaigning for the elimination of nuclear weapons being a historic and ongoing focus of J&PS's advocacy under president and Archbishop of Glasgow William Nolan, nuclear disarmament has been chosen as this year's discussion topic.

It is particularly timely following Pope Leo XIV's first address at the beginning of his pontificate, where he called for an "unarmed and disarming peace". Giving the International Workshop the title 'Towards An Unarmed and Disarming Peace', therefore draws from this address and from the Holy Father's Message for the World Day of Peace 2026.



STANED annual Mass foregrounds Christian persecution

A key part of the Archdiocese of St Andrews and Edinburgh's annual Caritas, Justice and Peace Mass was an address from Peter Diamond (pictured right), Community Outreach Lead for Aid to the Church in Need Scotland,

The Mass was celebrated in June at St Peter's in Livingston by Canon Brian Gowans, who thanked members of the Commission for Caritas, Justice and Peace for their dedicated work throughout the past year. He also encouraged parishioners across the Archdiocese to become involved in promoting the Church's mission of charity, justice and peace locally.

This linked to the words of Peter Diamond, who spoke of the challenges faced by persecuted and suffering Christians globally. He highlighted the charity's support for Christians in more than 140 countries and shared moving examples of its work, particularly in Lebanon and the Holy Land. And encouraged those present to pray for persecuted Christians and reflected on the enduring hope and witness of faith shown by those facing adversity.

The Mass provided an opportunity for prayer, reflection and solidarity with those suffering throughout the world, while reaffirming the Archdiocese's commitment to promoting justice, peace and human dignity in the light of the Gospel.



REFLECTION

I carry the image of a Muslim child who was killed in Lebanon, who, during my visit to Lebanon, was there with a sign that said 'Welcome Pope Leo', and in this latest phase of the war, he was killed.

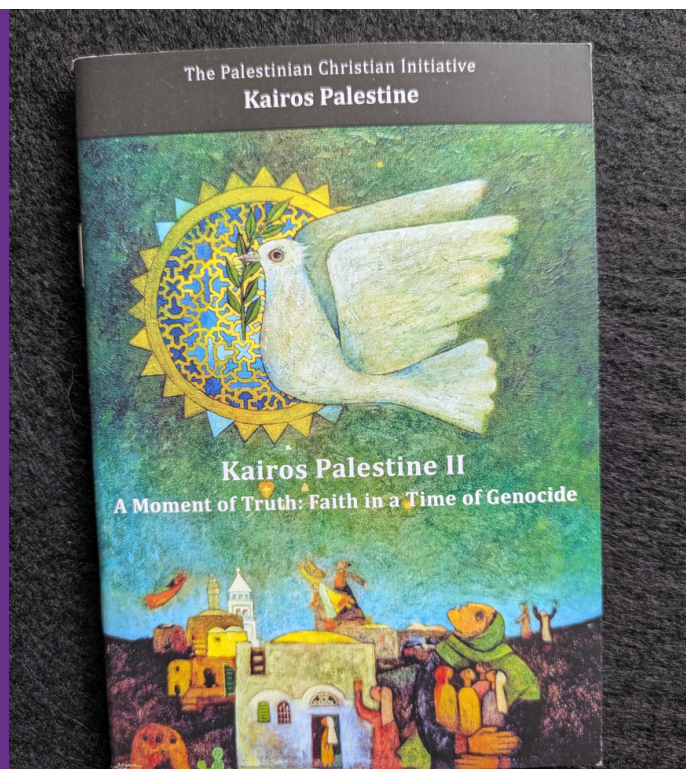
I cannot support war.

Pope Leo speaking in early August on the war that Israel is waging on Lebanon.

Stop Trade With Settlements

Justice & Peace Scotland were one of 80 organisations who signed on to the Stop Trade With Settlements campaign last year.

The advisory opinion issued by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in July 2024 makes it clear: governments allowing trade with the settlement economy are complicit in the maintenance and expansion of illegal Israeli settlements and thus in sustaining Israel's illegal occupation of Palestinian territory. **Call on our government to cease trade with illegal settlements by writing to your MP [here](#).**



Kairos Palestine II

Palestinian Christians published their second Kairos Palestine document (KP-II), "Faith in a Time of Genocide", in November 2025. KP-II urges us to listen to Palestinians and to act in solidarity as they seek the "good of this land and of all humanityfounded on justice and equality for all God's creation" [KP-II, 4.5]. Recent church conferences and synods have affirmed its importance.

The word 'kairos' characterises an urgent time with challenge and potential for a better future. Their [first Kairos document](#) in 2009 was "a word of faith, hope and love from the heart of Palestinian suffering". It would have been their only Kairos document had the world heeded that call.

KP-II is available [online](#), and also now as an attractive booklet (48 pages, A6) including art by Sliman Mansour.

Order free booklets, paying only P&P, [here](#). To help cover printing costs please use the crowdfunder [here](#).



Upcoming Events

Saturday 5th September - Season of Creation Conference, Eyre Hall, Archdiocese of Glasgow, Clyde Street, G14JY, 10am-3pm

You are warmly invited to this special event, hosted by the Bishops' Conference of Scotland and supported by Justice & Peace Scotland, SCIAF and SCES, as Christians across the world will once again this September mark the Season of Creation; a sacred time of prayer, reflection, and action to renew our relationship with God and all creation. The conference, with workshops and networking opportunities, is designed to explore how we can care for our common home across our dioceses, parishes, school and local communities. Lorna Gold, Executive Director of the Laudato Si' Movement, will be keynote speaker.

Booking is free but essential. You can secure your place by clicking here: [Register for the Season of Creation Conference 2026](#).

Thursday, 22nd October - From Romero to Gaza: The Price of Living by Our Principles, the Romero annual lecture, Immaculate Conception Church Hall, Maryhill, Glasgow, 7pm-9.15pm

Hosted by the Newman Association, the Archbishop Romero Trust, Justice & Peace Scotland, SCIAF and Pax Christi Scotland, SCIAF, please join for an insightful keynote address, delivered by Oliver McTernan, internationally recognised peace mediator, Director of Forward Thinking, and author of Violence in God's Name. There will be information stalls, a Q&A sessions and time for chatting over refreshments. The event is free but donations will be warmly received on the door for the Archbishop Romero Trust.

To sign up use QR code in poster below.

The 2026 Romero Lecture
From Romero to Gaza: The Price of Living by Our Principles

🕒 **Thur 22nd October, 7pm**
📍 **Immaculate Conception Maryhill, Glasgow**

This year's Romero Lecture will be delivered by **Oliver McTernan**, internationally recognised peace mediator, Director of Forward Thinking, and author of Violence in God's Name.

The evening will include a lecture, Q&A and refreshments

Sign up now
sciaf.org.uk/romero2026

Hosted by the Newman Association, the Archbishop Romero Trust, Pax Christi Scotland, SCIAF, and Justice & Peace Scotland

Logos: SCIAF, Justice & Peace Scotland, Glasgow Circle of the Newman Association, Archbishop Romero Trust, Pax Christi

Sunday, 29th November - St Andrew's Day Dignity Not Detention, Solidarity Witness, Dungavel IRC - 1pm to 1.45pm

J&PS are among those involved in the regular solidarity gatherings at Dungavel for those detained there for immigration purposes. A warm welcome is extended to any groups or individuals who wish to attend and bring banners, speak on the day, or bring cards or biscuits for those held inside.



“Human dignity does not lose its value crossing a border”

At Justice & Peace Scotland's Dignity Not Detention Solidarity Witness at Dungavel Immigration Removal Centre in June attendees were asked to reflect on the words of Pope Leo addressing migrants at Gran Canaria just prior to the gathering.

The Pontiff “bowed” to the dignity of those before him, stating “human dignity has no passport and does not lose its value when crossing a border”, and that as “people who had left behind families and homes” they had “dreams no one has the right to despise”.

Amid an increase in racist incidents and racist rhetoric surrounding those who come to our shores, Archbishop William Nolan and Bishop Joseph Toal spoke of the need to reject such dehumanising - the UK guilty of this in being the only nation in Europe that operates unlimited detention for immigration purposes.

Poverty in Scotland conference

A free conference open to all that will look at how to maximise and increase work to help relieve poverty in Scotland will be held at the Gillis Centre in Edinburgh on Saturday, 3rd October from 10.30am to 4pm.

Poverty in Scotland: Can we do more? has been organised by the Caritas, Justice & Peace Commission of the Archdiocese of St Andrews & Edinburgh to co-incide with Challenge Poverty Week, which runs from 5th to 11th October.

Featuring speakers including CJ&PC's Fr Tony Lappin, and SSVP president Patricia McCartney, the day will revolve around raising awareness and inspiring action on the greatest blight on our society. **Book your tickets on Eventbrite [here](#).**

An initiative of the Poverty Alliance - of which Justice & Peace Scotland is a member - Challenge Poverty Week highlights the injustice of poverty in Scotland, and show collective action based on justice and compassion can create solutions.

An opportunity to raise your voice against poverty and unite with others in calling for a just and equal Scotland, alongside hundreds of organisations including elected representatives, charities and NGOs, local authorities, faith groups, businesses, schools and colleges, trade unions, professional bodies and more.

For all event details and how get involved click [here](#).