



SOUTHWARK JPIC NEWS

Autumn 2007

Seeking to renew the work of Justice & Peace in our Diocese

Muslim, Jewish, Christian Prayer for Peace

O God, you are the source of life and peace.

Praised be your name forever.

We know it is you who turn our minds to thoughts of peace.

Hear our prayer in times of crisis

Your power changes hearts

Muslims, Christians and Jews remember, and profoundly affirm,

That they are followers of the one God, Children of Abraham, brothers and sisters;

Enemies begin to speak to one another; those who were estranged join hands in friendship;

nations seek the way of peace together.

Strengthen our resolve to give witness to these truths by the way we live.

Give to us:

Understanding that puts an end to strife;

Mercy that quenches hatred, and

Forgiveness that overcomes vengeance.

Empower all people to live in your law of love.

Amen

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AUTUMN ASSEMBLY 2007

SATURDAY OCTOBER 20th

10.30 am - 4.00 pm

*'Four years on -
an evaluation of the JPIC Commission'*

Facilitator

Fr John O'Toole

Director, Christian Education Centre, Tooting
(Morning)

&

*'Offering the hand of friendship to
other faiths - a practical approach'*

Speaker

David Jackson

Interfaith Coordinator for the Leeds Diocese
(Afternoon)

AT:

THE AMIGO HALL

St George's Cathedral Southwark,
Lambeth Rd, SE1

Stalls

Please bring a lunch, Tea/coffee & Soup provided

EVERYONE WELCOME

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CAFOD & Climate Change

This autumn, the UK Government will be putting forward its draft Climate Change Bill, as mentioned in the Queen's speech. Climate Change is certainly on everyone's lips at this time. And even the UK has been affected by it - think of the devastation and heartbreak caused by the floods of June. Climate change refers to the variability of average weather patterns over a period of time. These are caused by both natural and human factors. It is linked inextricably with the greenhouse effect - the role of gases which trap energy from the Sun in the Earth's atmosphere. Without this effect, our planet would be too cold to sustain life.

There is now a large amount of scientific evidence showing that human activities are changing the make up of the atmosphere by increasing the levels of greenhouse gases (GHGs) which in turn are changing our climate. The 'key' GHGs are carbon dioxide, nitrous oxide and methane. Levels of carbon dioxide, the most significant GHG, has been increasing since the industrial revolution, primarily because of the burning of fossil fuels - such as coal and oil.

Effects already observed include eleven of the last twelve years being the warmest since records began, and the 2005 hurricane season being rated as one of the most destructive in history. Last June, CAFOD published its policy statement on Climate Change, and from autumn, will be launching its new campaign on the subject. The policy explains that whilst climate change will af-



fect everyone, it is the people living in poverty who will be most seriously and disproportionately affected. In fact, climate change threatens to reverse all the progress that has been made to help people living in poverty and will make them even more vulnerable to natural disasters such as droughts and flooding. Therefore, CAFOD states that, "*the potential consequences of climate change for the poor mean that [CAFOD] cannot remain neutral on this issue.*"

Basing its statement on key foundational principles from Catholic Social Teaching, the agency sets out the reasons why we must act.

First and foremost, we have been created in the image and likeness of God, and given the gift of sharing in God's creative ability to transform our world. As co-creator, we must behave in a way which reflects God's love for all of creation.

The statement goes on to say that historically the developed nations have used up more than their share of the Earth's common resources. Because of this over-consumption and because they have accumulated wealth and the knowledge to solve the problem, they are called upon to pay.

CAFOD believes that developed countries should acknowledge their ecological debt to developing countries and take full responsibility for substantial reductions in GHG emissions through coordinated measures.

Visit their website to find out how you can get involved, to download materials etc: www.cafod.org.uk/climatechange/

"What is needed today is to remind ourselves that nature cannot be destroyed without humankind ultimately being destroyed itself. With nuclear weapons representing the ultimate pollutant, threatening to convert this beautiful planet of ours into a scorched cinder unable to support even the most primitive life forms, mankind is finally forced to face its dilemma. Centuries of rapacious exploitation of the environment have finally caught up with us and a radically changed attitude towards nature is now not a question of spiritual merit or condensation, but of sheer survival.

This earth, so touchingly looked upon in the Hindu view as the Universal Mother, has nurtured humankind up from the slime of the primeval ocean for billions of years. Let us declare our determination to halt the present slide towards destruction, to rediscover the ancient tradition of reverence for all life, and even at this late hour, to reverse the suicidal course upon which we have embarked. Let us recall the ancient Hindu dictum: the Earth is our mother and we are all her children."

Theft from the Poor

Did you know?

The UK is the second largest military spender in the world, spending £29 billion per year, that is, about £490 per person (almost £10 a week).

The US spent US\$534.1 billion a year - equivalent to US\$1,791 per head of the population.

With the amount spent on war each year, the world could:

- meet the Millennium Development Goals for poverty alleviation & development
- build a more effective system for global governance based upon a reformed, better resourced United Nations
- avoid the worst effects of climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and stabilising temperatures
- invest in international confidence building, progressive disarmament and conflict prevention programmes.

The new Pax Christi pamphlet '*a theft from the poor*' explores the link between arms expenditure and poverty. In 1967 Pope Paul VI regarded money spent on arms as "a theft from the poor and an 'intolerable scandal' while schools, homes & hospitals remain unbuilt." 40 years later money continues to be spent on arms and the poor continue to be robbed.

The pamphlet gives many examples of the connection between poverty and arms spending. Contact Pax Christi to get your copy: info@paxchristi.org.uk or 020 8203 4884

CALLED TO BE PEACEMAKERS - WHO ME?

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called the children of God." [Mt 5:9]

The 29th annual Swanwick J & P Conference took as its theme the exploration of the Christian vocation of peacemaking. For the first time, it was planned and promoted ecumenically by the National Justice & Peace Network in partnership with two Christian peace movements: the Fellowship of Reconciliation and Pax Christi.

The Keynote speakers were John Dear SJ, and Zoughbi Zoughbi. They helped delegates to reflect from two very different perspectives of the strong Christian tradition of active peacemaking.

John Dear SJ is well known as a priest, peace activist, organiser, lecturer, retreat giver and author/editor of some 25 books on peace and justice; his most recent being "Transfiguration", published 2007. His work for peace has taken him to a great number of peace-less countries and situations, including El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Haiti, the Philippines and Iraq. Currently he coordinates Pax Christi New Mexico.

John began by thanking everyone for accepting the call to work for peace - no matter what. On a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 1982, he said that he had had an awakening to the call to be a peacemaker. He was in the Chapel of the Beatitudes reading the phrases from the Sermon on the Mount, when he felt God calling him to 'Love your Neighbours'. This, he recalled, had changed his life. Since then, as a Jesuit, he has had many experiences around the world of peace-less situations.

John recalled one of the writings of Martin Luther King - "*our choice is no longer between violence/non-violence; it is now between non-violence or non-existence.*" The world, he said, has moved into total war - there are 35 wars happening today. There is global violence/war/poverty. For him, violence includes racism, climate change, environmental disasters as well as actual physical violence. "The USA," he said, "had crossed the line on August 6th & 9th 1944, when they had

vaporised people in Hiroshima & Nagasaki." Since then, he felt, the world is moving towards a 'spirituality of war' where, in the minds of many politicians & military, 'war brings peace'. But, "*war does not work, it always sows the seeds of future war*"; John said, quoting M. L. King again.

In speaking of Jesus, John said that he was non-violent, but that didn't mean he was passive. Jesus' last words to the (fledgling) Church in the Garden of Gethsemane were '*put down your swords*'. What culture are we teaching? John asked. Jesus had refused to become powerful, and called upon us to do the same. We can't take on positions of power, he felt, because power corrupts. That was why Ghandi would have nothing to do with power for himself. And we are called to do the same, we must look for an alternative way of confronting injustice without becoming part of the system which is causing it.

Zoughbi Al-Zoughbi is from a Palestinian Christian family that has been living in Palestine for almost 600 years. Reflecting upon his call to be a peacemaker, he said he had been an activist since a child. One event that came to mind was when he was 13 yrs old. At that time all persons under 16 were not required to have an identity card. He had decided to go to Jerusalem on Good Friday to the services, and had got on a bus. At the 'flying checkpoint' all were told to get off the bus and show their IDs. Of course, he didn't have one, but as he looked older, the soldiers didn't believe him. "The Jewish Captain made me face the wall with my hands up", he said, "and called me a liar when I repeated that I didn't have an ID." Then he was beaten up. This had been around 6.30 am in the morning. He had tried to explain but was just beaten up more and was still there at 3pm. By then he had remembered that his mother had made him take his birth certificate with him, but when he tried to produce it he was hit further. Later that evening one of his brothers came to the checkpoint and saw him standing there. "After that" recalled Zoughbi, "there was a lot of screaming and shouting, but finally I could

show my birth certificate and they had to let me go. When I got home, my mother said I was not to hate the Jews because my father's best friend was a Jew, and she helped me to direct my anger into activism and to struggling non-violently."

Zoughbi is now the founder and Director of Wi'am, the Palestinian Conflict Resolution Centre. It uses the traditional Arab form of meditation, Sulha, along with western models of conflict resolution. Wi'am focuses on non-violent conflict resolution, and in particular with women and children. Those for women try to help them be a part of society on an equal footing, as equal citizens. With children it's focusing on trauma coping, (*he insists it is not trauma healing, because unlike post-traumatic stress, this is ongoing for the children, layer upon layer*). So, they work to help them cope and play together, in an environment where they can air their feelings and vent their problems. This includes poetry, art, drama, sport etc. It is important because children will be the youth of tomorrow and the leaders of the coming years.

Zoughbi said that along with many others, he and the people of the West Bank are walking the Stations of the Cross every day. It can be seen in the West Bank getting smaller, in the prisoners taken by Israel, in the taking of 86% of the water. For them, the Stations don't end with the 14th (Resurrection) but with the Empty Tomb. BUT, they do believe that the 14th will come and are continuing to work for it. When it comes, he said, they must work hard for restorative not punitive justice, based upon forgiveness not revenge.

Such powerful words from both speakers set the scene for the rest of the Conference. Testimonies from people who have been caught in non-peaceful situations, workshops on different aspects of peace-making, a Peace Market, youth activities, and peace oriented liturgies all worked to make this a very successful weekend. Of course, as usual there wasn't enough time for everything, but there is no doubt that those who attended went back feeling inspired to continue to work for peace where they lived and to pray for peace throughout the world's disturbed areas.

Forthcoming Events:

October 5 CAFOD Harvest Fast day Contact CAFOD or go to their website for more details. 020 7733 7900 or www.cafod.org.uk

October 17th International day for the Eradication of Poverty. Details of events from United Nations info@una.org.uk

October 20 Southwark JPIC Autumn Assembly - see front for details. All welcome to attend - as well as providing tea & coffee there will be soup and rolls available!

October 21-28 One World Week 'All Together Now' See the website for downloadable materials: www.oww.org.uk

November 9th Diwali/Diwali - Festival of Lights

November 18 Prisoners' Sunday Call PACT for details - 020 7490 3139

November 28 Lobby of Parliament - by Enough! Details of event at www.enoughoccupation.org

December 1 World Aids Day

December 2 Advent begins

December 10 Pax Christi Advent Service, St Aloysius, Phoenix Rd, London

Peace & the Environment

Have you ever thought of the link between Peace & the Environment? Obviously, the absence of peace - war or violence - brings about a devastation to the land, polluting everywhere with spent or live arms, destroying crops and livelihoods. But there is more to it than that.

St Francis of Assisi, Patron Saint of Ecologists, teaches us that living peacefully means living in peace in all aspects of our lives - with God, with our sisters and brothers, with ourselves and with creation, the environment. Just recall his beautiful **Canticle of the Sun** (*All praise to you, Lord God, for brother Sun ...*). The Hebrew word for peace is 'Shalom' - which means much more than a simple absence of war. We are not living in 'Shalom'/peace if we spoil any part of God's creation. That includes all the creatures of the earth, natural resources, and our environment.

Pax Christi France have been



NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL?

As a way of cutting some of our costs, the JPIC newsletter is now available as a pdf document which the office sends out by email. If you would like to receive your copy this way, please send your email address details to:

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To be able to open a pdf document you just need to download the free - and safe - Adobe Acrobat - go to www.adobe.co.uk if you don't already have this facility.

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www.southwarkjandp.co.uk

working for a number of years on the environment. They set up an Ecumenical network, entitled "*Peace, the Environment & our way of life*"; in which a variety of groups (to date more than 20) come together to work on a number of different local actions for the environment. One such at Bure, N. France, is fighting against the proposal to store nuclear waste underground. Another, in the South of France is studying birds to develop Ecological Studies.

They have also held a national campaign to raise awareness of our duty to care for the environment. Known as "**Live differently**" (*sound familiar??*) it has taken different times of the year and given ideas of how we can show our concern for creation in that season. The first was "Live Christmas differently", aimed at getting people to return to the true meaning of Christmas; the second, "Live Summer differently" focused on the pollution linked to transport, with a paraphrase of the Beatitudes "*Happy those who travel differently, they will give the Earth in heritage*".

The Southwark Justice & Peace Newsletter is sent free to all on our mailing list, although donations towards our office costs are always greatly appreciated. If you would like to be added to the mailing list, receive notice of actions or forthcoming events via email, or are able to send a donation, you can use the form below:

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