



# SOUTHWARK JPIC NEWS

SPRING 2008

## Migration: Blessing or Curse?

According to the **International Organisation for Migration**, there are now about 192 million people living outside their place of birth, some 3% of the world's population. Between 1965 and 1990, the annual growth rate in migration was 2.1%, today it has risen to 2.9%.

For whatever reason, they have migrated from their 'home' country. Many have gone to richer countries to try to make a better life for themselves and their families. In fact, almost 3/4 of all migrants have gone to just 12% of all countries - with the United States receiving the greatest number: 38.4 million migrants in 2005. In contrast, the United Kingdom hosted just 5.4 million.

Migration is nothing new; for hundreds of years people have been on the move. It is the pace and number of migrants that has increased. According to Bishop Patrick O'Donoghue, millions of people are on the move "*as victims of unjust social, economic and political structures of societies, of human rights abuses and of armed conflicts. They need protection, justice and peace, and the recognition of their human dignity.*"

The reasons for migration are varied and numerous- fleeing violence and persecution, looking for work, improving one's life and being trafficked, amongst them. For whatever the reason, migrants are the 'dispossessed' - having left their homeland and gone in search of another. For many they are unwelcome, seen as invaders, taking jobs and housing away from local people.

There are others, thankfully, who feel that Britain needs migrants. Many argue they are vital to an economy that has a slowing birth rate and where the ratio of workers to pensioners is diminishing.

[In 1990 there were 5 workers to every 1 pensioner, by 2030 this will be 2 pensioners to every 5 workers.] It is thought that the State pension scheme will not be viable unless we have 500,000 migrant workers to increase the labour force each year. Statistics from the Home Office already show that 30% of doctors and 13% of nurses now working in Britain were born elsewhere. Many migrant workers are found in the lower paid areas of our labour force, in cleaning, catering, and security work; whilst the accession of eastern European countries has led to an influx of workers in the building trades. Some have

been trafficked from overseas and are hidden away as domestics, nannies or worse. Many are exploited by unscrupulous employers who offer poor living conditions and low wages. Others have fled violence and persecution in their home country, only to find themselves persecuted again and forced to prove they were in danger. Many asylum seekers wait years for a decision on their case. Others are deported with little warning. Migration is an issue that won't go away. We hope that our next JPIC Assembly will help inform our understanding and action.

### Together on the Journey A Prayer for Migrants and Refugees

Dear Jesus, our journey through life is long and hard. We cannot make this trip alone; we must walk together on the journey. You promised to send us a helper, your Spirit. Help us to see your Spirit in those you send to journey with us.

In the refugee family, seeking safety from violence,  
Let us see your Spirit.

In the migrant worker, bringing food to our tables,  
Let us see your Spirit.

In the asylum seeker, seeking justice for himself and his family,  
Let us see your Spirit.

In the unaccompanied child, travelling in a dangerous world,  
Let us see your Spirit.

Teach us to recognise that as we walk with each other, You are present. Teach us to welcome not only the strangers in our midst but the gifts they bring as well: the invitation to conversion, communion, and solidarity.

This is the help you have sent: we are not alone. We are together on the journey, and for this we give you thanks.  
Amen.

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# People Trafficking- Modern Slavery?

Mia was a teacher in Thailand - her husband a head-teacher. Her son was ready for University. Mia answered an advertisement to come to London to teach English for the summer. This would pay enough money to put her son through his first year, she thought. On arrival, Mia's documents were taken away by the traffickers who had placed the bogus ad. She was abused and humiliated by the gang, until she agreed to become the 'carer' for the younger women who had already been trafficked into a life of sexual exploitation.

When Mia's establishment was eventually raided by the Police, she was taken to prison as it was assumed she was a voluntary member of the trafficking gang. Six months later, at trial, her real story surfaced and Mia was placed in a safe house. By then her family had been threatened by the gang and the full horror of Mia's plight had been revealed to them. They have been so traumatised that they have refused to have her home. Mia has tried to take her own life three times. At the present moment she feels hopeless. Mia is 49 years old. What does the future hold for her?

Although the names have been changed, this is a true story, told by the woman to her rescuers. One of many thousands of such stories of people forced to migrate, desperately trying to escape the consequences of poverty and falling prey to those willing to make a profit out of other human beings.

Awareness of the evil phenomenon of people trafficking has been growing over the past few years. It is estimated that between 700,000 - 4 million women and children are moved across international borders each year. (Council of Europe website) Profits made are the third greatest in the world after illegal drugs and the arms trade. According to the International Organisation of Migration (OIM), the trade is worth US\$8 billion each year. Is anything being done to destroy this trade? Or rather, is enough being done?

In Autumn 2006 the UK government launched its Human Trafficking Centre (UKHTC). One of its objectives is to "develop and promote a victim centred, human rights based approach to dealing with trafficking victims, working together with others." (See [www.ukhtc.org](http://www.ukhtc.org)) In 2007 the UK government signed the European Convention Against Trafficking in Human Beings, but did not ratify it - at which point it becomes law. Agencies and individuals pressed the government to take that next step. The government insisted it needed to have all the necessary procedures in place first. Amongst the other agencies with which the UKHTC works are the

Church based agency 'CHASTE', the Salvation Army, and the Medaille Trust. ([www.medaille.co.uk](http://www.medaille.co.uk)) The latter is a charity that was set up by a group of religious congregations, to work for the eradication of human trafficking for sexual exploitation and to offer support to those who have been trafficked. Britain is primarily a destination country for trafficking victims with the majority coming from Eastern Europe, the Baltic States, China, Malaysia, Thailand and the Balkans. Most who are trafficked for sexual exploitation arrive legally - with their own passports - by air, rail, sea and road (coach passengers). It is not just women who are at risk. Children as young as 5 years old are sold into slavery and pornography. Trafficking victims are not always from outside the UK either. The agency 'CROP' works with the parents of young people who have been trafficked for sexual exploitation here in the UK. ([www.crop1.org.uk](http://www.crop1.org.uk)) Often they have been the 'loner' at school, and feel flattered by the attention they receive - until it is too late.

Of course, people are not only trafficked into the sex industry. Men and boys are used as forced or bonded labour, in sweatshops or in the fields. They can be taken to fight in armies such as the Lord's Resistance Army; and older women are taken as domestic slaves. However, it is the sex business that claims most trafficked human beings.

In January 2008, Home Secretary Jacqui Smith announced that the UK was committed to ratifying the European Convention in 2008. It is now up to campaigning groups to see that the UK keeps its word, and has



*A person can be bought and sold many times by traffickers*

in place the necessary structures to help those who are rescued.

Another strand of work facing the anti-trafficking campaigners is that of reducing demand. Brothels advertising their services are common place - according to one story in the Salvation Army magazine, there are over 100 in the Croydon area alone. Often these are advertised as massage parlours, strip clubs, and lap dancing bars. But greater public and police awareness has meant that many victims are now being hidden, held captive in private houses, unknown to the neighbours. Indications may be that of tight security - barred windows and locked doors. Women may only leave under escort, and there may be a stream of men who come and go by foot. **Have you noticed this near you?**

**PUBLIC AWARENESS IS CRUCIAL IN HELPING TO STOP TRAFFICKING** report your suspicions anonymously to **Crimestoppers: 0800 555 111**

*\*Croydon Community Against Trafficking* is a coalition of concerned citizens, faith and community groups who aim to stop the injustice of human trafficking for sexual exploitation within the borough of Croydon. The harsh reality is that Croydon is one of the biggest 'ports' for human trafficking in the UK. "We want that to stop and we want the people enslaved by this trade in human life to be brought to justice. Everyone has a role to play: men, women, the council, the police, our parliamentary representatives and the media."

Go to their website for more information: [www.theccat.com/index.htm/](http://www.theccat.com/index.htm/) including urgent action against local newspaper adverts.

## Prayer for Migrants

For all those who see 'home' and  
All it means disappear behind them;  
For all those who cannot see a  
home  
In the days ahead of them;  
For all those who dwell in  
Daily insecurity;  
For all those who are weary and  
Without a safe place to rest their  
heads;  
For all families in migration we pray.

May the image of the Holy Family  
Stay with us each night  
As we are blessed with  
Returning to a home.  
May we also be blessed  
With compassion for those  
Still weary, still seeking  
Still with so far to go. Amen

Jane Deren (Permission to use applied for)

## NEW FACILITATION GROUP MEMBERS

Following our consultation and requests for new members of the facilitation group which plans and organises the Commission's Assemblies, we're pleased to let you know that we now have a new group who will be involved in the future work of the JPIC Commission. We hope to be able to introduce them at our next Assembly in April. Our thanks to all of them for accepting the Archbishop's invitation and for the service they will give to the JPIC Commission for the next three years. Phil Kerton has been asked to become a consultant to the group and will join them at their meetings.

## Terry Smith RIP

Many of you may remember Terry Smith, who was involved with Justice and Peace work in his parish and in the diocese. His wife, Mary, was the Coordinator of the JPIC Office in the 1990's, whilst he was chair of the (old) SE London J & P Commission for at least 6 years until 2001. Terry died just after the last newsletter went to print, but the Office wanted to acknowledge the work he had done and to assure his family of our prayers. Many old friends and colleagues attended his funeral in St Edmund's, Beckenham in January.

May he rest  in peace.

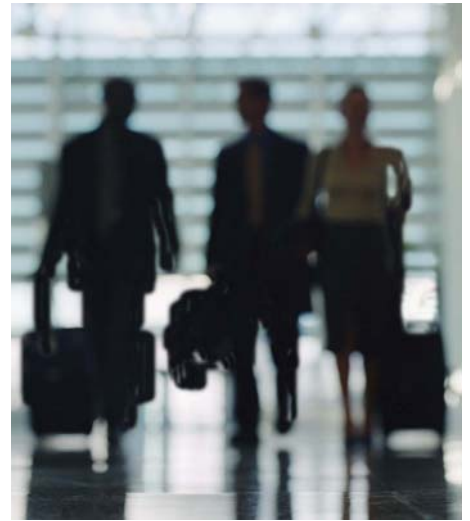
## Migrant Workers:

The British workforce has for years relied upon one form of migrant worker or another. In Scotland the 'tattie' holiday in October/November saw schools close so that families could go to pick potatoes. In Kent during the twentieth century many London families would have their 'holidays' in the country, picking the hops that made the beer, during July and August. Overseas students can work as part of the 'Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme' to earn money in the UK, and experiencing life in a foreign country. EU workers have a right to come to Britain to work. All can be classed as 'migrant' workers, that is, they have moved away from home to work.

From the countries that joined the EU in 2004, it is thought that 800,000 people have come to the UK to work, and of these, some 120,000 were in rural areas, although fewer than half were here at any one time. Home Office figures state that nearly 2/3 of them (447,000) registered with the Workers Registration Scheme. (*Obligatory for workers intending to work in the UK for at least a month. They need to have found work before they apply.*) A further 150,000 were self-employed. Revenue to the UK Government was estimated at £7,203 per migrant worker (2003/04) compared to £6,861 per UK born worker. And expenditure on migrants was £7,277, lower than for UK workers (£7,753). The Treasury estimates that whilst foreign born migrants make up 8% of the population, they contribute 10% of the Gross Domestic Product.

However, the impact of migrants on an area can be a problem for local services, and more so in rural areas. Pressure on local services, such as schools, health services and housing can bring about resentment. Tensions, hostility and even violence have been experienced by some, often due to ignorance and confusion over the differences between migrant workers, asylum seekers and refugees. Many people are unaware that migrant workers pay taxes when they work in the UK and so are as entitled to the same services as any other tax payer. They are also actually entitled to the same employment rights - such as the minimum wage and holidays. Many migrant workers however, endure a "combination of extreme low pay, very poor living conditions and long working hours." [Von

Hugel Institute for Faith in Society Report 'The Ground of Justice' Feb 2007] In some areas, private landlords and gangmasters buy up family accommodation and squeeze in as many migrant workers as they can to increase profits. Attempts are being made to extend the remit of the **Gangmasters' Licensing Authority** - set up (2004) to safeguard the welfare and interests of workers whilst ensuring that labour providers operate within the law. At present its authority is limited to the fresh produce supply chain.



The Catholic Church has always been active in 'welcoming the stranger' within our midst. Our own diocese of Southwark has chaplains for more than 30 different ethnic minority groups. Parishes have Masses in Spanish, Portuguese, Polish and so on. But the growing number of migrants bring new challenges to our parishes, schools and communities. Sparse resources must be stretched further. New priorities must be made. How will we respond to these challenges that lie ahead?

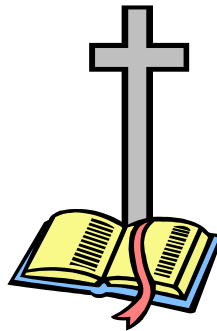
The **Catholic Bishops' Conference of England & Wales** is producing a document on the Church's Mission to Migrants, looking at our 'new social reality' and calling for a renewed welcome, hospitality and solidarity with our migrant brothers and sisters.

It is up to us to put this into practice. Do I know of any migrant workers in my local area? If so, what am I doing to make them feel a little more at home? Could my parish put on a welcoming evening? Is there anyone who could speak to them in their own language? Even a friendly smile can work wonders! Just little steps, but every little helps.....

## Diary of Events:

- March 22 World Day for Water
- April 19 Southwark JPIC Commission Spring Assembly 'Migration: Blessing or Curse?' The Friars, Aylesford, Maidstone from 10.30 - 4.00 With Bishop Pat Lynch & Don Flynn. All very welcome
- May 11 -17 Christian Aid week:  
www.christianaid.org.uk
- June 5 Environment Sunday - Christian Ecology Link: www.christian-ecology.org.uk
- June 16 - 22 Refugee Week: www.refugeeweek.org/
- July 18 - 20 NJPN Annual Conference, Swanwick 'Hear My People Cry' 020 7901 4864 or www.justice-and-peace.org.uk/

## Residential Retreat: 4th - 6th April 2008



Worth Abbey, Crawley,  
East Sussex RH10 4SB

Weekend residential retreat for Christians working in any way with asylum seekers and refugees.

Led by Mary Jane Burkett of Brighton 'Voices In Exile' and Fr Paul Fleetwood.

For more details or to apply, contact Rosemary Sanders, on 01342 710318 or email [toc@worthabbey.net](mailto:toc@worthabbey.net)

## Archbishop Romero Trust *Witnesses of dying and rising*

An ecumenical service to mark the 28th anniversary of the martyrdom of Archbishop Oscar Romero



Hosted by  
**St Martin-in-the-Fields**  
Trafalgar Square, London, WC2N 4JJ

**12.00 noon - Saturday March 29th 2008**

**Officiant: Rev'd Richard Carter**  
**Preacher: Very Rev'd Tony Lester O.Carm**

This event is supported by:  
CAFOD, Christian Aid, PROGRESSIO, Pax Christi,  
Westminster Diocese J & P Commission

Archbishop Romero Trust - registered charity no. 1110069

**And finally** ..... after 7½ years and 30 editions of the Newsletter, this is my last issue. I am leaving the JPIC Office at the end of April and will be moving to a new mission and new Community in Wrexham, North Wales a bit later in the year.

Thank you all for your support, encouragement and friendship. I hope that my work has been of service to you in the field of JPIC. I would like to thank especially my Chairs - Fr (now Bishop) Michael Evans, Fr Ian Knowles and, for the last 4 years, Fr Michael Scanlon; who have worked with me and served the diocese through their wisdom and experience in the area of justice and peace work alongside their already busy lives as parish priests. I sometimes wonder how they managed to find the time, but am very grateful that they did.

Please keep me and my new community in your prayers as we search for ways in which to serve our new mission in the Peace & Justice Centre, North Wales. In solidarity, *Pat*

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

Name:..... Please add my name to the newsletter Mailing list

Address:..... Please add me to the Email list

.....I enclose a donation of £            towards costs

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(PAYABLE TO SOUTHWARK JUSTICE & PEACE OFFICE)

Email:\_\_\_\_\_

Please send to: The Coordinator, Southwark J & P Office, Cathedral House, Westminster Bridge Rd, London, SE1 7HY

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