



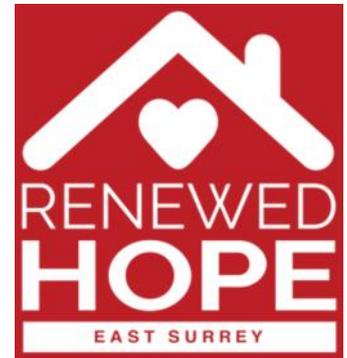
The Justice and Peace Group meets to *pray*, educate ourselves, and to raise awareness in the Parish so that we may all act on Catholic Social Teaching. You are welcome to join us. We meet online for now at 8pm on the 2nd Wednesday of each month details from 01737 216128

## Caring about local homeless people this winter

Last January, we reported that **Renewed Hope** was organizing the *Winter Night Shelter* for those without other accommodation. This involved several local churches making their halls available, and the Trust handling the logistical challenges of moving people and bedding between sites.

This winter, the Trust has extended its daytime opening hours and offers a warm safe space at the Shrewsbury Road site, with the option of a meal. This is available to those who are vulnerable or isolated, as well as the homeless.

However, the *Winter Night Shelter* is not operating this winter. Covid restrictions mean that church halls are not able to provide the degree of physical separation considered necessary to prevent transmission of the virus.



Reigate & Banstead Council has received a £148,000 grant to help with the provision of accommodation for local homeless people. It has block-booked accommodation at a number of local Bed & Breakfast establishments up to the end of March. Additionally, there are eight cabins in the Donyngs car park, to be used by homeless people who need to be in quarantine.



Local homelessness for us all to see.



All is not lost.  
Human beings while capable of the worst, are also capable of rising above themselves, choosing again what is good, and making a new start.

Pope Francis  
encyclical *Laudato Si*.

## Our Parish Charity Medaille Trust



We were delighted to welcome Marc Pearson, Community Engagement Coordinator of Medaille Trust, to the July Zoom meeting of the PNL Justice and Peace group. Several parishioners zoomed in too, and we were able to hear how the safe houses are dealing with the challenges of Covid restrictions and limitations and about the ongoing demand for the services offered. Marc stressed to us the four principles on which the Trust functions

**Prevention** – raising awareness at home and abroad about the reality and extent of modern slavery.

**Protection** – providing specialist support to victims of modern slavery through their safe house network

**Prosecution** – partnering with law enforcement agencies to secure human trafficking convictions

**Partnerships** – partnering with a wide range of institutions and organisations to eradicate modern slavery

Medaille Trust publish a regular magazine available at [www.medaille-trust.org.uk](http://www.medaille-trust.org.uk)

In the latest edition **Dame Sara Thornton**, Anti-Slavery Commissioner and former Police Chief Constable says of the role played by the Medaille trust:

*As a government sub-contractor, Medaille has a key role in the support of victims of modern slavery. That's the business. But it's not what Medaille does so much as HOW it does it that is noteworthy. The values of the Trust, the way it is led, the way in which so many of its support workers have a genuine care and concern for the people they are working with is very impressive. Sometimes, that work is tough and there may be times when it feels that no progress is being made – but I'd like to reassure them that the way they support people is making a huge difference to their lives.*

### HARD FACTS

**40.3 million** people in the world today are estimated to be trapped in some form of modern slavery.

**136,000** victims are estimated to be in the UK



### “A Taste Of Home”

the Medaille Trust Cookbook £9.99

This is just one of the many stories that accompany the varied recipes in this beautiful book available [here](#).

#### **AMARA from Ghana**

After being orphaned at a young age, Amara lived with her grandmother. The family was very poor and Amara was unable to go to school. She stayed at home to look after her grandmother and do the chores.

One day, out of the blue, her grandmother told Amara that she had found work for her. She arranged a passport for her, told her that she would be going to school

in the UK and would be able to earn money to send home. Amara was nervous, but very excited about her new life.

When Amara arrived in the UK she was trapped in a family's private home. She had to work long hours in the house, meeting the family's every need and living in horrible conditions. After many years she managed to escape

Not knowing where to go, frightened and alone, she was forced to live on the streets. In this cold and lonely situation Amara's mental condition deteriorated. After stealing some food one day she was arrested. The police officers recognised that she was ill and sent her to a psychiatric hospital. Here she received care and was able to open up. The hospital staff reported her story to the police and she was entered into the National Referral Mechanism.

Amara duly arrived at a Medaille Trust safe house where the team supported her through the ongoing effects of her trauma and she accessed counselling. She was taught how to manage her medication and engage with the community health team. She took part in relaxation sessions, music therapy, cooking and nutrition classes.

Gradually her mental health improved and she became more independent. She was encouraged to volunteer in the community and she enrolled at the local college where she was finally able to get the education she had been wanting all her life. Due to the trauma she has experienced Amara is still recovering but she is most definitely moving on with her life.

---

*For so many of us, the kitchen is the heart of our family. It's where we sit down together, and share food, stories and love.*

*Recipes are passed down through generations, and new dishes become firm favourites.*

**“A TASTE OF HOME”** is available [here](#) from Medaille Trust

## How can we support the Medaille Trust?



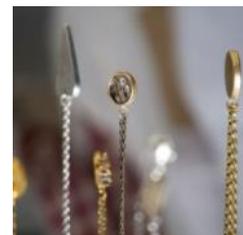
You can **RECYCLE** any **jewellery** – gold or silver jewellery, costume jewellery, watches, broken and damaged items such as odd earring, snapped chains or items with missing stones

You can **RECYCLE unwanted banknotes** from any country or any age (those pre-euro ones are perfect)

Recycling for Good Causes will reuse and recycle them and give the proceeds to Medaille Trust. Simply use your own envelope or jiffy bag (no bigger than A5 in size) download the freepost label to be found on [www.recyclingforgoodcauses.org](http://www.recyclingforgoodcauses.org) or send it to J. Manfield, 52 Carlton Green, Redhill, RH1 2DA and it will be sent for you.

You can **GIVE** your **used stamps**. Cut or rip the stamp from the used envelope and, once you have a collection, post them to The Medaille Trust, PO Box 16992, Sutton Coldfield, B73 9YA.

You can **RECYCLE** your **old inkjet cartridges**. Recycle 4 Charity will recycle your cartridges and give the proceeds to Medaille Trust. You can order your recycle envelope by email from [comms@medaille.trust.org.uk](mailto:comms@medaille.trust.org.uk)



***OR by the old fashioned and simple way of making a cash donation!***

Write a cheque, made payable to *The Medaille Trust* and send it to Finance Department, The Medaille Trust, Cathedral Centre, 3 Ford Street, Salford, M3 6DP

Details of other ways of making a donation are here:

<https://www.medaille-trust.org.uk/get-involved/donate>

## News of Gatwick Detainees Welfare Group

The charity, **Gatwick Detainees Welfare Group** (GDWG), was twenty five years old in 2020. It couldn't celebrate as it wanted to and as had been planned, but in due course it will when Covid-19 permits. It deserves to be celebrated.

Here is a story of altruism. In 1995 a small group of people became aware of an urgent need and stepped up. The need was for compassionate, non-judgmental support for men seeking asylum in this country. Now, after twenty five years, the need remains urgent, more so, in fact, since the climate of hostility to immigrants is much more aggressive now than then.

Nine years ago, I joined the band of 80 or so volunteers who, on behalf of GDWG, commit to weekly visits with a detainee in one or other of the two centres at Gatwick, Tinsley House and Brook House which accommodate male asylum seekers.

Historically, we have visited in person in large visits halls overseen by two or three officers from SERCO who are responsible for the running of the centres. Several visitors can usually be accommodated at any one time, at coffee sized tables, on one side of which is a chair for the detainee, and on the other, up to three for visitors.

The arrangement doesn't allow for any great degree of privacy.

In these times, there have been many weeks when face to face visits have been discontinued or severely modified (a maximum of two visitors at any one time, masked and gloved). Many volunteers changed to providing support on the telephone, something of a challenge, without the benefit of clues from facial expression and body language. Online workshops have been provided to help expedite the difficulty.

Currently there are no detainees at Tinsley House or Brook House, as there having been cases of Covid in both. Most have been released into the community where some continue to be supported by phone calls and where necessary, by such things as phone cards and food vouchers provided by GDWG, from a special fund. Many are near to a state of destitution

It might seem that being companionable with a detainee once a week could be of little benefit. Our clients tell us otherwise, often in very convincing terms. And so, we are well motivated to continue.

We do so with all sorts of emotions; astonishment at the tales of unspeakable cruelty; wonder at the resilience of humankind, a resilience that can be sorely tested and which often collapses under the reality of an unfair and unnecessary detention regime. A regime which GDWG is at pains to challenge on any and every legitimate forum.

We share with our clients, their fears and tears, their laughter, stories and songs, and we witness their anger, puzzlement, depression and disillusionment.

Then there are the silences.

The men can become overwhelmed by their situation, so often unexpected; by their feelings of confusion, the unfamiliarity of the systems, and often of the language. They lose control over their lives and want instead fairplay, clarity and goodwill.

Volunteers are asked not to say anything to their clients which might be construed as offering advice. But we know to whom we can direct requests for help and advice. That is to our office staff. Here is a small group of advocacy coordinators who organise and manage GDWG. Over the years they have acquired formidable expertise and many helpful and useful contacts, and every one of them comes to the job with commitment, determination and compassion. They are wonderful folk who may not always be able to resolve an issue, but who will always pursue a case vigorously and professionally.

To better serve the needs of their own clients, GDWG networks with other organisations also involved in detainee welfare. And so, in addition to membership of the umbrella organisation, Association of Visitors to Immigration Detainees (AVID) they also collaborate and cooperate with such bodies as Medical Justice, Detention Forum and many others. They work closely with immigration lawyers to try to ensure that clients have access to good legal advice and that legal challenges can be raised where necessary, against government departments intent on reducing immigration numbers at almost any cost.

As a means of increasing awareness of the plight of refugees, GDWG undertakes a number of activities. They go into schools to give talks which are well constructed, punchy and well received.

Over the last five years, an outreach program, Refugee Tales, has made, and continues to make their work widely known. The idea is that, each



### News of GDWG continued:

summer, participants should together do a planned walk of about 80 miles over the course of a week. Each daily walk ends in a social gathering (when allowed) at which an account by a leading author is read, about the tale of an asylum seeker or someone else involved in that person's journey. This was inspired by Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, and of course, by the stories of the asylum seekers themselves. There has been a number of publications comprising all the stories, which are very varied, but all of which are very powerful. [www.refugeetales.org](http://www.refugeetales.org)

During the various Covid restrictions, Refuge Tales has had to change - not the message - but the form. And so, when permitted, walks took place in socially distanced "pods" of six and when that directive changed, people walked on their own, documenting their journeys in poetry and prose and with photographs, particularly of bridges(!) to demonstrate solidarity and friendship. And of course, there were many online events including films, readings and socials. This is all evolving in line with changing government requirements. But word continues to spread. Many contacts have been made in far flung places nationally and internationally. Walks continue, with appropriate precautions with the next, if possible, this spring. Anna Pincus of GDWG would be pleased to hear from anyone wanting more information [anna@gdwg.org.uk](mailto:anna@gdwg.org.uk)

Over the last months and years, GDWG has facilitated the work of students undertaking research in subjects related to immigration, including comparisons between prisons and immigration removal centres, health in detention centres, strategies and challenges of immigration detention visitors and the effect of indefinite detention on the physical and mental health of detainees.

And please be aware, the UK is the only European country in which there is no time limit to detention. People taken into detention enter into a state of devastating uncertainty. So far, efforts to reduce detention to 28 days, have failed to get through parliament. And in 2019, on each of 28 consecutive days, one Refugee Tale was released online to mark and protest at this sad state of affairs. (see: [www.28for28.org](http://www.28for28.org))

There is so much more to GDWG. So much has continued, in altered form, during the pandemic. Attention has been paid even to ongoing training programs for volunteers dealing with subjects from safeguarding, creative writing to updates on new legislation. It punches above its weight. Over the years during which I have been a part of it, I have learned so much about the human condition and about myself. I have enjoyed the company of truly inspiring people and I am privileged to be a volunteer. *Ave Houston*.

Ave is a long term visitor to both Tinsley House and Brook House. A number of other parishioners are also GDWG visitors and supporters of the Refugee Tales Project. [www.gdwg.org.uk](http://www.gdwg.org.uk)



Brook House IRC at Gatwick Airport

---

We pray for all who are restricted limited and lonely because of this pandemic.

May each person today feel the promise of hope that knows that another world is not only possible but on the way.

May we all share love, laughter gentleness and respect this day.

Through Christ Our Lord.

### Reclaim Our Common Home

CAFOD's latest campaign is a response to Pope Francis's call for a new way of thinking about the world, and to take an active part in renewing our troubled societies by embracing the universal values of solidarity and fraternity.



**Sign** our petition to the prime minister. Follow this link [HERE](#).

In 2020, we experienced the worst global health crisis in a century. The coronavirus pandemic has devastated lives and shattered families in Britain and across the world, with disastrous consequences for people's jobs and livelihoods.

The pandemic exposed many of the inadequacies of how our world currently works. It has proved that we need greater cooperation between nations, solidarity between people and a greater focus on the poorest in society.

Did you know that?

As a result of the pandemic, **150 million people** are set to fall into extreme poverty and an additional **130 million people** will be left hungry.

**Let's do something about it.**

#### What action are we going to take?

As Catholics, we are called not to stay silent and not to be passive. This is why Reclaim Our Common Home is a call to action! It's a call to participate both individually and collectively in rebuilding a more dignified and sustainable world after the pandemic.

To do this we need to:

**RECLAIM** nature so that everyone can breathe clean air and be protected from the threat of climate disasters.

**RECLAIM** the world's land and resources so they are more fairly distributed and all our brothers and sisters around the world can live in dignity.

**RECLAIM** power so that everyone can be involved in decision making and have control over their own lives.

#### 2021 must be a year of transformation

As the host of two major international conferences, the British government has a crucial role to play in 2021. In the summer, Britain will host the G7 annual meeting where the leaders of the seven richest countries will gather to discuss how to rebuild after the pandemic. This will be followed by the UN 'COP26' climate talks taking place in Glasgow in November, where world leaders will come together to agree how they will work towards ending the climate crisis.



**UN CLIMATE  
CHANGE  
CONFERENCE  
UK 2021**

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ITALY

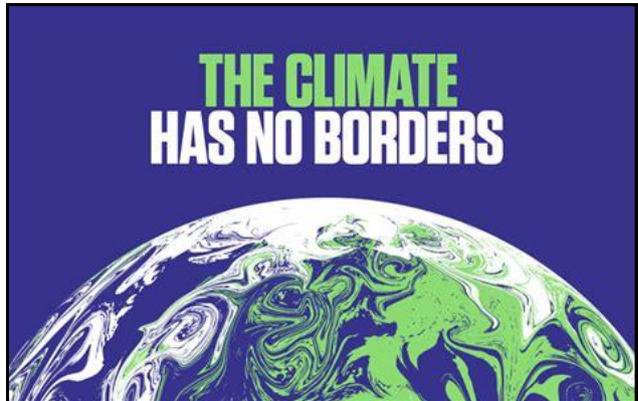
[Urge the Prime Minister to put poor communities at the heart of COP26 climate talks](#)

## Reclaim Our Common Home continued:

As the eyes of the world will be on Britain this year 2021, it is vital that we all come together to raise our voices and ensure that our government listens.

*“Global society is suffering from grave structural deficiencies that cannot be resolved by piecemeal solutions or quick fixes. Much needs to change, through fundamental reform and major renewal.”*

**Pope Francis, Fratelli Tutti**



**Wherever you are, you have a role to play in helping to address these issues:**

**Tackling the climate crisis** by urging world leaders to use this year’s climate talks to agree ambitious goals that address the scale of the climate emergency and ensure that those countries least responsible do not end up paying the highest price.

**Ending unjust debts** by pushing for full debt cancellation for low and middle-income countries. This will free up vital resources so that they can tackle the health and economic impacts of the pandemic.

**Holding business accountable** for practices throughout their supply chains to ensure that communities are protected from human rights abuses and environmental destruction carried out by multinational businesses.



**Did you know that?**

African countries will pay out more than \$10 billion in debt repayments in 2020 and 2021 alone.

More than half will go to firms such as HSBC and BlackRock, some of the richest companies in the world.

Let’s do something about it.

**Unite for the climate**

Find out more about how you can campaign against the climate crisis with CAFOD.

<https://cafod.org.uk/Campaign/Latest-campaigns>