



PARISH OF THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD

JUSTICE & PEACE NEWSLETTER

No. 17 - January 2020

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 at 8pm on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at PNL St Joseph's.

The Parish Charity for the next two years



MEDAILLE TRUST
REFUGEE AND FREEDOM FROM MODERN SLAVERY

The Medaille Trust has its beginnings in Southampton in 2006 when Sister Ann Teresa set up the first safe house for victims of modern slavery. The Medaille Trust is now the largest provider in the UK of safe accommodation for women and men. There are six safe houses, in London, Manchester and other cities, where survivors of human trafficking are offered a minimum of 45 days of safety. These houses are located at least 100 miles away from the gang-masters. In total the Trust has 112 rooms available.... and they are always full.

When we consider that there

are estimated to be 136,000 modern slaves in the UK this appears so inadequate. However, providing rescue and subsequent help is very complex and potentially dangerous. Thus support for associations like the Medaille Trust is all important and we can play our part in improving the situation.

In October, Dimple Ananda, who manages one of the London safe houses, came to PNL to give first-hand information about her experience and the work of Medaille Trust. Raising awareness, giving funds and offering prayers will all be part of the support of our parish in the coming year. Two money-raising events have already taken place. However, over the Christmas period there is the opportunity to show our concern for the

families, who are victims of human trafficking, by giving "presents" of baby supplies for the little children in the safe houses.

Look for the baskets that are placed near the cribs in our three churches. Donations of baby toiletries, wipes, nappies, new blankets and new clothes (NO toys) will be gratefully received.

www.medaille-trust.org.uk

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 in his encyclical Laudato Si.

Winter Night Shelter

Local churches started to open their doors to homeless people in the Borough of Reigate and Banstead a couple of weeks before Christmas. All Saints Merstham, St Mary's Chipstead, St Luke's Reigate are just three. The distance between churches requires daily transportation of mattresses and equipment, but Renewed Hope Trust runs everything with exemplary efficiency and the volunteers receive advance training which ensures smooth running from arrival at 6.30pm to departure after breakfast in the morning.

There is more than a hot meal and a bed provided for the guests. It is hoped that some will be helped to find accommodation or re-enter employment, whilst others value the company and emotional support offered.



<https://rhites.org>

St Joseph's will be the venue on Mondays for 5 weeks from 20 January. There are still some volunteers needed for night duties in February.

Modern Slavery

The Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery Diocesan Steering Group has been formed following the 2019 J & P Assembly to look at how we as the diocese can develop a strategy to address this growing issue happening in plain sight of all of us. Our parish is represented by members of the J & P group.

It was decided that the most pressing need was for a property where traumatised victims can be interviewed and supported by skilled people. The good news is that the diocese has been able to provide a suitable and secure property in a good location. The next step is to find appropriate staff and to furnish it.

The J & P group will be able to give further updates in the next newsletter.

The Big Issue

Vanessa and Sofia come from north London to Redhill on most days to sell the **Big Issue**. They buy them for £1.50 and sell them for £3. Vanessa was born in Madrid of Romanian parents and Sofia was born here of Moldovan parents. Both are Christian, and attend a church near to where they live. Vanessa lives with her 3 year old son Beldis. You may have seen her selling the magazine while heavily pregnant two years ago. Sofia took over her sales after the baby was born until Vanessa could return as they were afraid to lose this pitch in Redhill. Vanessa's main motivation for sales is her son Beldis. How do they manage? On a bad sales day they may sell only 10 magazines, making only £5 profit. Sofia tells me that sales of 30 copies is her record - a profit of just £45. People often say 'keep the change' or they make a donation even if they do not want the maga-

zine. These 'sisters' need these tips to get by.

If you see one of them selling on a Sunday it means that sales that week have been poor and they are really pushed for cash and this is their last chance to sell the current magazine as the new edition comes out on Monday and they have already paid for all their unsold copies. Buy one on a Sunday then, after coming from church? If you have already have a Big Issue at home buy a copy for your work, the barbers, school, the coffee shop or similar. Something kind to do on a Sunday.

Sofia hopes to get a nursing job in 2020. She does not have any qualifications as she had to leave school in London aged 14 to return to Moldova when a grandparent died and when she returned she was not able to sit the exams and her place in school had gone. She intends to

apply to a further education college in Tottenham next year to get back into education and onwards to nursing.

What does the future hold for Vanessa? She does not have any qualifications either as her family have moved around so much and school has been disrupted. Sadly her parents abandoned her in her teens. She had a job but lost it, but she has managed to hold on to her rented room as a Big Issue seller. Her ambition is just to keep herself and Beldis safe and healthy. Working as they do, do the sisters feel any threat at all? Sofia worries about being robbed of her cash, especially when it is dark. Sometimes people can be insulting, making gestures, but generally they find there is not too much aggression to them in Redhill. You may see Vanessa or Sofia in the New Year.

Food Bank

Regrettably, the Salvation Army in Redhill has closed and will be greatly missed. Our donations will now be going to the food bank at **St Matthew's Church**, Redhill. **They are asking for:** small bags of sugar, tomato and chicken soup, long-life milk, small jars of coffee, small packets of noodles, tinned meat, cooking oil and tomato ketchup. Many thanks for your continuing generosity.

Diary dates

19 January

Pax Christi promotes the Holy Father's World Peace Day Message

"PEACE AS A JOURNEY OF HOPE: DIALOGUE, RECONCILIATION AND ECOLOGICAL CONVERSION." see <https://tinyurl.com/sv9hxj6>

Peace prayer cards will be distributed by members of the Justice and Peace group in masses on 18 and 19 January.

25 January 10.00-16.00

Diocesan Justice & Peace Assembly - The Homelessness Crisis: How can we respond? St Philip Howard Centre, Crawley, RH10 6RP

15 February 09.45 - 12.00

CAFOD deanery meeting, preparation for the Lenten Appeal and Cafod's work. PNL Hall, Reigate

3 - 8 July

6th Refugee Tales Walk in solidarity with asylum seekers and refugees - Crawley to Winchester, details soon: refugeetales.org. **2020 marks 25 years** since **Gatwick Detainees Welfare Group** started visiting people in detention at Gatwick Airport. Please consider donating a birthday gift to enable it to continue <http://bit.ly/2JI9DCP>

Mary's Meals

"Before, I felt weak because I was hungry. Porridge makes me feel strong and I can concentrate in class."

We, the parish, have raised an amazing £10,344,40 for Mary's Meals and **Annette Carter** will continue to invite the parish to support this charity on an occasional basis.

The quote is from Emmanuel aged 11 from Zambia.

Mary's Meals is now working in Myanmar where healthcare provision is poor and access to education is limited. Mary's Meals is providing daily food in schools in the Irrawaddy Delta in the south-west of the country.