



PARISH OF THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD

JUSTICE & PEACE NEWSLETTER

No. 20 - June 2021

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

Live Simply, Pope Francis and 'Laudato Si'

Pope Francis' encyclical '*Laudato Si*' addresses the many ecological and political issues facing mankind and the Earth – the “common home” that we all share, rich or poor. The Pope inspires us to respond to the “cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor” and to act in our faith community to address poverty and care for creation.

The concept of “Live Simply”, which arises from the encyclical, has been adopted by CAFOD. They define the concept as : “.. a return to that simplicity which allows us to stop and appreciate the small things, to be grateful for the opportunities which life affords us, to be spiritually detached from what we possess, and not to succumb to sadness for what we lack”.

CAFOD has developed a Livesimply Award for parishes that have demonstrably acted on Live Simply principles; a number of awards have been made in this Diocese. However, nice as it is to get an award, this letter seeks only to review our current faith community activities, and consider whether there are any other actions we could reasonably undertake in support of the Live Simply philosophy.



We currently support a foodbank which helps address food poverty in our parish; we promote fair trade with our Fairtrade Parish status; we minimise use of plastic and re-cycle whenever possible. There may be opportunities to extend this work, both within our Parish and within the wider community. We could reinstate our Lenten soup lunch; create a small group of interested people to research what Live Simply means in Surrey in 2021 – perhaps providing a weekly brief tip in the Newsletter; encourage walking or cycling to work, church or school (and car-sharing when it is permitted).

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.

This is only a brief introduction to Live Simply and the opportunities it offers to improve conditions in our Common Home. We read almost daily of melting ice caps and climate tipping points and, if we remember our Genesis, “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the Earth”. Earth. Singular. Just the one. Live Simply. Think about it.

Much more here:

cafod.org.uk/Campaign/Livesimply-award

Our Parish Charity Medaille Trust



A new safe house

Medaille Trust is expanding its safe home by buying a new property in the diocese of Portsmouth offering safety and refuge to more survivors of modern slavery. This will mark 15 years after the founder and Life President, Sister Ann Teresa (SSJA), opened the first safe house. To contribute towards the purchase of kitchen equipment, bedding, curtains etc see their website for all details medaille-trust.org.uk/news or text HOUSE2HOME to 70450 to donate £10

Buy a bus ticket and help a woman affected by modern slavery on their journey to recovery.

The affordability of travel is a crucial barrier in the recovery process for female victims of modern slavery. With less than £40 per week for food and essentials they often miss appointments or opportunities to attend social activities because they cannot afford the cost of public transport.

An average cost of a single bus journey is £2.48. Medaille Trust are asking people to donate £5 to support women on their journey to recovery. Text **MOPBUS** to **70085** to donate £5. Texts cost £5 plus one standard rate message. If you do not wish to receive marketing communications about MT text **MOPBUSNOINFO** to **70085**

“Victims’ Voices”

Bringing to justice the perpetrators of human trafficking is a complex process and the prosecution rate is very low, notably because victims find it difficult to engage in giving evidence. As well as the fear of being recaptured, they distrust authority, feel the stigma of exploitation and fear repercussions for family and friends back home. In May, Medaille Trust launched a new project, “**Victims’ Voices**”, which will train staff to gather evidence admissible in court to support criminal prosecutions, and thus enable survivors of modern slavery to seek justice for their exploitation.

Selected caseworkers with significant experience in the field have commenced training to undertake interviews with survivors of modern slavery that meet “achieving best evidence” (ABE) standards. The evidence gathered can be used in criminal proceedings on behalf of police and law enforcement.

These trained caseworkers, not police officers or authority figures, will provide opportunities for women to tell their story in a comfortable environment at their own time and pace and ultimately empower them to seek justice.

“**Victims’ Voices**” is a cornerstone of the Medaille Trust “Moving on Project” which provides community based support for female survivors of modern slavery and helps them to move on positively with their lives. This project is funded by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport through the Tampon Tax

Reclaim Our Common Home Parliament in our Parish

The coronavirus pandemic has been the greatest health crisis in a century. Pope Francis tells us that this moment of extraordinary turmoil is the time to rethink the future of our common home.

"Unless citizens control political power – national, regional and municipal – it will not be possible to control damage to the environment." **Pope Francis, Laudato Si**

There is no doubt that the issues we are campaigning on are big and complex. Yet, as Catholics, we know that for God nothing is impossible. We also know that small actions can be transformative.

The UN 'COP26' climate talks will be held in Glasgow between 1-12 November where world leaders will come together to agree on the next steps needed to tackle the climate crisis. The decisions taken in these two meetings will affect millions of people around the world. As host, Britain is in a unique position to exercise global leadership in the journey towards a greener and fairer world after the pandemic.

As part of their campaign **Reclaim Our Common Home**, CAFOD has asked parishes to contact their MP and to invite them to take part in an online discussion.

We invited **Crispin Blunt** as MP for Reigate & Banstead to join us for an online conversation on this subject. He has declined this invitation from our parish and sent us the following statement:



"This country has been and always will be open and outward-looking, leading in solving the world's toughest problems and striving to be a force for good in the world. Whether it is stepping up to support desperate Syrians and Yemenis in conflict zones, leading the way in eradicating Ebola and malaria, or supporting millions of children to gain a decent education, I am proud that UK aid is keeping the UK safe while helping the world's poorest stand on their own two feet.

While the UK is currently facing its worst economic contraction in 300 years because of the pandemic and tough choices must be made, I appreciate and shared your concerns about (temporary) cuts to the UK's overall Official Development Assistance (ODA) budget this year. I therefore backed an amendment tabled by my colleague Andrew Mitchell, which would have forced the UK to commit to its 0.7% target.

I have been assured that the UK will return to 0.7 per cent as soon as the fiscal situation allows and I will share your comments with my colleagues in Government to assure that this is the case.

Finally, I also believe the 0.7% target is inadequate. There is another UN target, usually overlooked, but of much more importance. We should aim over the medium term to deliver this 1% target of GNI. This figure is a net transfer from developed to

Parliament in our Parish

developing of both private and public funds. The role of public money should be to encourage investment in poorer countries by creating the institutions required for sustained private wealth creation by the people using their labour price advantage to compete and grow. This thereby enables private-sector and non-governmental organisations to create the economic success and growth, backed by institutions that protect the investors and the people's personal assets from the terrible cost of corruption, insecurity and poor governance. Failing to make these nations safe for real wealth creation and levelling up is the real failure. That should be our overriding security and moral priority.

Due to ongoing diary constraints, although I will be unable to accommodate your meeting request, I understand and have noted your views and the impact that the cuts will have on CAFOD, and I also hope I have clearly outlined my view on the subject.'

The two immigration removal centres Brook House and Tinsley House at Gat-

News of Gatwick Detainees Welfare Group

wick Airport are open again. Both sites were shut for a period during the last months. Tinsley House has been holding some who have been transferred from Napier barracks in Kent after the very dangerous sea crossing from France. They have often arrived with very little and have needed the Group's help with clothing, phone credit and general support.

When Brook House was emptied during the pandemic many regular visitors to the centres began supporting, at a distance, the people released. They have been dispersed to hotels and elsewhere in London

and around the country to places where most of the usual help structures have been closed. This distant assistance has been a challenge to both

parties and has been made worse by a badly managed change to the system for issuing the small amount of money asylum seekers receive each week from the Home Office. There are many well documented cases of destitution as a result. The charity has been generous with its help as have many visitors too.

As the epidemic ebbs it is likely that more people will be detained and so visiting will become as necessary as before. It is also highly likely that there will be more EU nationals among them as the Brexit regulations on residence bite hard from the end of this June.

GDWG's regular newsletter is available here: tinyurl.com/yzar256p

This notice has been in the PNL newsletter but is worth repeating.

Gatwick Detainees Welfare Group would be grateful to receive good quality second-hand clothes as follows: Jeans, waist 30", 32", 33", 34"; Joggers in all sizes; T-shirts in all sizes but especially Medium; Summer jackets in all sizes; Shoes in all sizes (apart from 45) People can bring clothes to the office (The Orchard, 1-2 Gleneagles Court, Brighton Road, Crawley, RH10 6AD) during office hours, but it is best to email Josie first to fix a time in case the staff member has to go out:

josie@gdwg.org.uk .



Renewed Hope Trust

The Covid pandemic prevented this Redhill-based charity from operating the night shelter last winter, but they have been operating a drop-in service seven days a week. Working within the Covid restrictions, they have been seeing about 40 different guests a month.

Most come to the Shrewsbury Road site for a meal, a chat and some company. The Trust has also been taking meals to temporary accommodation units in the area. RHT continues to work with its charity partners to respond to new needs as they come to light.



The Trust has recently filled two important staff vacancies. They have a new support worker who will enable the Trust not only to help meet guests' immediate needs but also to support them in the longer term by referring to partner agencies. Critically, he will have time to follow up on guests' post-referral progress. The other new staff member is an experienced fund-raising co-ordinator; his role will be key to enabling the Trust to continue its work in providing practical solutions and emotional support to the homeless, vulnerable and isolated of our community.

There is more to read on their website: renewedhope.org.uk

Fighting Modern Slavery in the Diocese

As lockdown eases many of us are looking forward to meeting safely with friends and family again. In the past months, when so many events and activities have been cancelled or postponed, we are reminded that organised crime has not suffered in the same way. Scam merchants have adapted and so have traffickers. Methods of exploitation that were less lucrative in lockdown were changed, with those trapped by criminals moved like cattle into other fields of exploitation. Criminals' resources make the fight against modern slavery intense-

ly hard, especially for cash strapped and pressured agencies. Members of our churches are embedded in the communities where slavery and exploitation is taking place and there is an increasing urgency for our churches and the people in all communities to be made aware that slavery and exploitation is happening everywhere! We can all learn the signs, using our eyes and ears to observe what is going on in our neighbourhood, taking action to inform the authorities when we see something that isn't right and giving them the details that enable them to act effectively.

Fighting Modern Slavery

Our Parish is represented on the Diocesan group that is looking at the most effective ways parishioners can learn to recognise the victims of modern slavery and to help release them from the exploitative and demeaning activity they have been coerced into. This autumn the group is planning to launch a diocese-wide initiative with opportunities for parishioners to become better informed about this stain on our society.

PNL St Vincent de Paul Society Conferences

Befriending is at the heart of what we do, motivated by faith, we visit vulnerable or isolated people. However, that has been denied us in these strange times, but we have kept busy regularly phoning and writing to those we would normally visit in their homes and Care Homes. Over 650 phone calls have been made during 2020/21.

Practical action has included a coffee morning to raise money for refugees, gardening tasks, shopping for beneficiaries and church stewarding among other things.

Sainsbury and Morrison food vouchers have been provided, totalling £675 from diocesan and SVP funds for needy families in the parish.

To list a few other activities. We have provided a bus pass, purchased a Chromebook laptop for needy children in the parish. We have sponsored edu-



cation for young students in India. Two nights' accommodation was paid for a young couple with a baby who through lack of money had been sleeping in a car. And of course, we are now requesting food donations for the St Matthews Foodbank, which is particularly needed now, in the 'Yellow Buckets' prior to each Mass. Two of our members have also volunteered to help deliver from the Foodbank to the needy clients.

Lastly, the SVP is still reaching out to those in need, who would normally receive a visit and have now have a mobile phone. Should you or someone you know, like some support or would like a friendly phone call, please ring 07918980330. WE WILL CALL YOU BACK.

If you would like to contribute to this newsletter please contact the J&P Group via the Parish Office.

Protect People and the Planet - 2021

Churches are asking their congregations to support their communities in the pandemic and remember the needs of the world (Our Common Home) - regarding justice, peace, poverty, health, environment and climate. These have much impact now and even more on future generations – so education and action are needed.



Earth is a fragile blue planet, maybe the only one among billions in our galaxy with life more advanced than bacteria. The wonder of this was eloquently expressed by Carl Sagan. Humans and life on this biosphere are at risk from pandemics, climate change, unsustainable development and war with weapons of mass destruction. Hopefully the G7 leaders considered these truly global problems.

No country is safe from the pandemic until all are, likewise as we need to cooperate to reduce climate change, so peace organisations also warn of deliberate or accidental nuclear war. A commitment to No-First-Use of nuclear weapons would help to reduce this. In 2021, the UK is moving away from this policy, breaking the spirit of the Non Proliferation Treaty, refusing to participate in the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) and is reducing soft power by cutting foreign aid when needed more than ever.

Pope Francis is a strong supporter of the TPNW now in force. Regarding these weapons of mass destruction, he says that *'even their very possession is to be condemned'*. However, according to a question in Parliament answered on 21 April 2021, the UK will not send observers to the First Conference of States Parties to the Non Proliferation Treaty on 12-14 January 2022 in Vienna.

Plainly this issue need to be considered by us all. There is a lot of further reading available including:

christiancnd.org.uk/tpnwpetition

unfoldzero.org/protect-people-and-the-planet-appeal-for-a-nuclear-weapon-free-world

paxchristi.org.uk/peace-education/nuclear-weapons-ban

Even if you think nuclear weapons provide security, please read articles at the new website: nofirstuse.global

Laudato Si' Action Platform

Laudato si' (Praise Be to You), the second encyclical of Pope Francis which was published in June 2015 has the subtitle "*on care for our common home*". In it, the Pope critiques consumerism and irresponsible development, laments environmental degradation and global warming, and calls all people of the world to take "*swift and unified global action*."

In May 2021, Pope Francis launched the *Laudato Si'* Action Platform, a partnership between the Vatican and nearly 150 Catholic organisations and individuals around the world. The Platform is envisioned to bridge the gap between the words of *Laudato Si'* and the actions needed to live it in practice. It will be a tool to create *Plans* at the level of family, Parish, institution and wider community with measurable steps and goals to making tangible progress towards meeting the aims of *Laudato Si'*. Planning begins with discernment and reflection, an ecological conversion that becomes action.

The *Plans* will suggest a list of approximately 10 to 15 actions for each of the *Laudato Si'* goals. Groups will be invited to choose which actions best suit their priorities and needs, with actions taken and outcomes tracked and progress celebrated, which will be recorded and collectively represent the transformative journey of *Laudato Si'*. It is about a seven year journey with a goal of 100% sustainability. *Laudato Si' Plans* are due to be published in October this year. "*Standing on the firm ground of "three fundamental and closely intertwined relationships: with God, with our neighbour, and with the Earth itself," we commit to setting out "on the long path of renewal."* (LS 66, 202)"



The first page of this J&P newsletter addresses a part of *Laudato Si'* but the challenge of this encyclical is that it calls us to do more.

How should we as a Parish, and as individuals, react to this plea from Pope Francis? What will be our *Plans*? The coronavirus will be with us for a while yet BUT this demand cannot wait.

Please use this Newsletter as a platform for discussion.

Fratelli Tutti: An ecumenical Christian prayer

O God, Trinity of love,
from the profound communion of your divine life,
pour out upon us a torrent of fraternal love.
Grant us the love reflected in the actions of Jesus,
in his family of Nazareth,
and in the early Christian community.
Grant that we Christians may live the Gospel,
discovering Christ in each human being,
recognizing him crucified
in the sufferings of the abandoned
and forgotten of our world,
and risen in each brother or sister
who makes a new start.
Come, Holy Spirit, show us your beauty,
reflected in all the peoples of the earth,
so that we may discover anew
that all are important and all are necessary,
different faces of the one humanity
that God so loves. Amen.

This ecumenical prayer for all Christians is from Pope Francis' encyclical Fratelli Tutti, which was published on 4 October 2020.