

Pax Christi has been collecting suggestions about how to make sure that peace is central to Remembrance and First World War centenary events. Our website *First World War Peace Plans* page offers information on events, articles and talks, general resources including films and visual materials, as well as suggestions for services and vigils <http://paxchristi.org.uk/news-and-events/first-world-war-peace-plans/>. Do share your own events and resources with us as the centenary progresses.

What tone, language, and symbols are appropriate? What distinctive peace messages do we want to convey? Here are some of the suggestions arising from our recent Remembrance Seminar, or sent in by members.

Approach and messages:

- Respect. Engage in discussion about what we are ‘remembering’ and appreciate why people place such value on Remembrance Day.
- Does our Eucharistic remembering, ‘Do this in memory of me’ shed light on how we might best remember war, violence and sacrifice? Might this help us to face criticisms of being unpatriotic and reclaim a deeper meaning that calls for ever new efforts to work for peace and justice?



Sides <http://armingallsides.on-the-record.org.uk/>

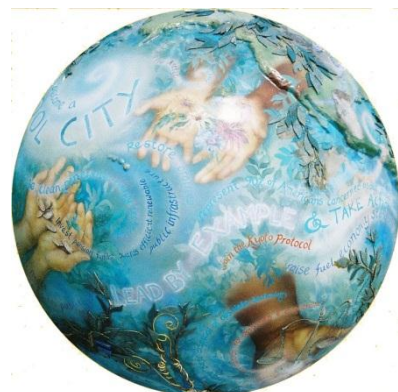
- There is nothing glorious about war and no room for triumphalism or nationalism. Liturgies and events need to reflect the international dimension of war. Parishes and communities today include many people with direct experience of war. Towns may have twinning links with war-torn areas, or countries that were involved in the First World War. How might these links be woven into commemoration events?
- That the human cost of war, from the First World War to the present, is part of our remembering. Do we acknowledge the real costs of war and confess our national complicity in war? This might include looking at support for the arms trade, the Trident nuclear programme, and lack of investment in peacemaking initiatives today. The *First World War in Numbers* is on our website, and more statistics can be found on this excellent new website: *Arming All*

- We can tell the lesser known stories of the peacemakers of that time, the conscientious objectors, Benedict XV, the women who campaigned to end the war. *Opposing World War One: Courage and Conscience* (available on our website) includes some of these. Pax Christi now has information on 90 Catholic COs for you to research further, and celebrate the COs of your area.

Appropriate language, symbols, and readings

- Should we say of the war dead, ‘those whose lives were taken away’ in place of or ‘those who lost their lives’ or ‘those who gave their lives’?
- If red poppies are used, can white poppies be used too? Someone wrote ‘I wear a red poppy because I remember and a white one because I hope’. In using red poppies do we recall their true significance, the need to lament war and of the commitment to ‘war never again’?
- Other symbols that might be used:

A prayer tree, real or created, on which people hang their prayers of remembrance and reconciliation written on cut-out white leaves.
The photo-image of earth from space
A map of the world with places of conflict today clearly marked



A peace candle - perhaps passed on from an older to a younger member of the community during a prayer of commitment

White poppy seeds, planted as a symbol and commitment to work for peace

- In 'naming' ceremonies or litanies of the war-dead of a parish or community can COs, medics, peacemakers, aid workers, diplomatic teams, journalists be included?
- Use quotations from peace poets: Sassoon's *Remorse* or *Suicide in the Trenches* or Wilfred Owen's *Parable of the Old Man and the Young*, or *Futility*, or *Dulce et decorum est* - and quotations from Pope Francis and other recent Popes on war.
- Include voices of those who have fought in recent wars from Veterans for Peace UK, www.veteransforpeace.org.uk/

Northern Friends Peace Board have produced a new poster set, price £4.00.

www.nfpb.org.uk/posters or 01204 382330



For more resources go to Pax Christi's First World Peace Plan page
<http://paxchristi.org.uk/news-and-events/first-world-war-peace-plans/>