

Seeds of Liberation

Pax Christi is delighted to be a partner in the forthcoming Student Christian Movement conference, Seeds of Liberation which will ask what does liberation mean for me and for the world? .The conference will be held at the University of Manchester from 1 - 4 March

In 1973 the Student Christian Movement held a conference, 'Seeds of Liberation: the spiritual dimension of political struggle', where Christian students came together to explore and face the issues of the time. Many of these issues, women's rights, economic justice, ecology, and violence, remain relevant today and just as complex and subtle.

The conference will explore three main themes, spirituality, non-western theologies, and activism, through workshops, speakers, panel discussions, art, drama, and music. It will conclude with a day of action. There will also be a FE day for sixth form students on Friday 1 March.

We strongly encourage students to attend this conference and benefit from this wonderful opportunity to join students, international speakers, and spiritual leaders to listen, to be transformed, and to be liberated. Full details of the conference, the programme, and booking details can be found on the enclosed flyer or on the Student Christian Movement website www.movement.org.uk

2013 Pax Christi Peace Award

Every other year since 2001, Pax Christi has awarded specially created peace medals at the Annual General Meeting and we plan to do the same this year. We need your help in making this a success by giving us your suggestions for worthy recipients. The Award Group, appointed by the Executive, will consider all nominations, the closing date for these is the end of March 2013.

Any Pax Christi member can make nominations for the award which is a Peace Medal with a symbol of the Neve Shalom-Wahat al Salam community in Israel. Proposals should be supported by 2 references. Those nominated should be UK residents but need not be Pax Christi members themselves. We are particularly interested in peacemakers in local parishes or community groups.

Any nominated person will have shown a commitment in the cause of justice and peace, either as an individual, or as a representative of a group. The medal may also be awarded posthumously.

Keep peace alive. Remember Pax Christi when making or updating your will

Please send me information on Membership Publications Legacy I enclose a donation of £ to support your work Name: Address: Tel: Return to Pax Christi, St Joseph's, Watford Way, Hendon, London, NW4 4TY Tel: 020 8203 4884 email: info@paxchristi.org.uk www.paxchristi.org.uk

The Award Group will look for opportunities to publicise Pax Christi as an organisation within the Catholic Church concerned with peace and justice matters. We will also look for opportunities to strengthen links with other organisations. We look forward to all nominations, please send them to the office, marked Peace Prize Nomination.

In recent years the Award has gone to: Audrey and Frank Campbell, Dave Webb, Hans and Theresa Kohen, Brian Wicker, Marjorie and James Welch, Sister Lelia Newman op, Rachel Kane, Patricia and Michael Pulham, Tom Mallon and Milan Rai.

Arn Dekker (For more information please contact me on 01223-861772 or by email Arn@nlgb.fsnet.co.uk)

Advent Peace Service and link with Afghanistan. At this service we took a collection for the Kabul Woman's Duvet Cooperative, which raised £710.00. We also offered special prayers and sent a card for the five women delegation to Afghanistan, Maya Evans, Mary Dobbing and Susan Clarkson, all friends to Pax Christi, were among them. They are now back and willing to speak of their visit. You can read more about the work of Voices for Creative Nonviolence at this website <http://vcnv.org/>

Where we have worked in January & February. We thought it would be good for members to know where we are working around the country. This may help local networking - you may know the schools, parishes or groups we have been in contact with and be able to follow-up or make links as a Pax Christi member.

Matt Jeziorski has been in the following schools/colleges: Sidmouth College; Comberton College, Cambridge, St Mary's College Blackpool, Holy Cross, Bury; Richard Gwyn, Flint; Trinity School, Leamington Spa; St Thomas Aquinas School, Birmingham and St Francis Xavier College, Balham, All Saints School, Dagenham; Bishop Douglas School, Finchley; St Benedict's School, Ealing.

Pat Gaffney has been to English Martyrs Parish, Southwark; St Edmund's School and St Mary's parish, Poole, PG and Douay Martyrs School, Hillingdon; Margaret Beaufort Institute, Cambridge

Follow Pax Christi on twitter: <https://twitter.com/paxchristiuk> and <http://www.twitter.com/PaxChristiYouth>

Pax Christi – Our Values

Pax Christi members live by the biblically inspired values of Peace, Reconciliation, Nonviolence. These values are supported by the witness of peacemakers down the ages and the experience of the Pax Christi community. Pax Christi is rooted in Catholic Christianity but is open to all who are in sympathy with its values and work.

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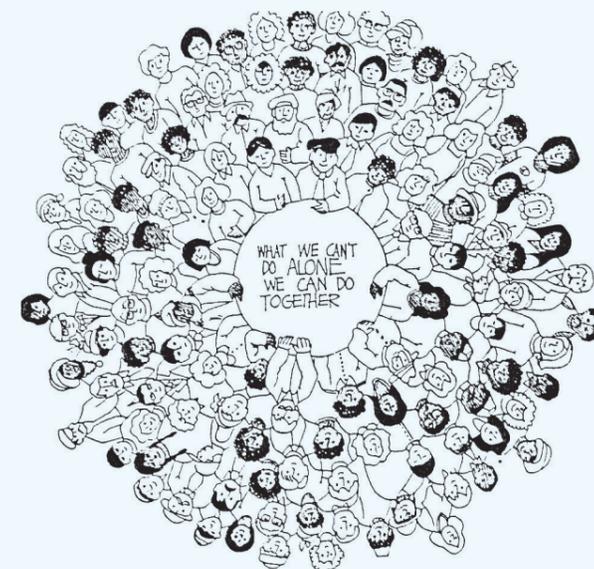
International Catholic Movement for Peace

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Together for Peace

The graphic at the side suggests that when we work together for peace we can make a better job of it! This issue of Justpeace carries a number of articles that illustrate how Pax Christi members work within their own communities, identifying local issues, making friends and alliances, drawing strength from one another to keep going in what can sometimes be a lonely or hostile environment. There are also examples of future opportunities for cooperation and coming together around the country. These stories and events are an encouragement to us all. When we circulate the leaflet, What Can Pax Christi Members do for Peace last year more than forty people responded immediately, offering, among other things, to be Pax Christi parish contacts or to run peace stalls or share education resources with local schools. We would love to hear more from our members, good news stories and frustrations too. We have just celebrated Peace Sunday - if something happened in your parish let us know about it! In this way we may find better ways of supporting and sustaining work for peace around the country. Just write to the office or email info@paxchristi.org.uk.

Pat Gaffney



The fruits of daily peace work

I appreciate so much what Pax Christi members do and wish I could be more involved. I live in an inner city mixed race and faith area, one of the most deprived in the North West. We struggle together for justice and improvement in many aspects of our lives and in welcoming newcomers.

It can be a hard place to live sometimes. I've been here since 1963, 'grandma' Joan to the little ones. Over the years I have had a bullet through my front door which thankfully got lodged in the wall instead of me. I've been held up at gun point in a local supermarket, been car-jacked twice and along with most of the street, evacuated in the middle of the night because of suspected I.R.A bomb.

In recent years several men have been convicted of plotting terrorism, and we rallied round a family who were removed from their home on suspicion and thankfully found innocent. It gave us some insight into what happens on such occasions. Raids for guns and drugs are frequent and low-flying helicopters an accompaniment to our lives. This means in a small way we are aware of conflicts in the larger world too, as some of my neighbours have relatives involved.

We share our respective feasts with each other and offer Jewish, Muslim and Christian prayers as we stand to acknowledge the body of a dead neighbour as it pauses outside his home on the way to the synagogue.

Our 'hoodies' are friendly and share a word with us as we work on our gardens as do the school children as they lark around or go by with a mobile glued to the ear. I have an opportunity to talk about World War II when asked

occasionally to help with a history lesson. I tell them what dressing battle wounds is really like, scraping out the dead flesh to pack the wound from the bottom. They are shocked and sickened. Of course this may be to help an 'enemy' soldier, I tell them, and what would they think of that?

As I write, I realise the real efforts we all make daily to keep the peace, listening, consideration, negotiation, giving way, standing firm - using whatever talents we have naturally and with pleasure but sometimes with a heartfelt struggle. In spite of its reputation this is a good place to live. It is a spiritual place where God's help and blessing is sought and the struggle to accept His will is spoken and a shared part of the sad events of life.

Somewhere along in my life I strayed from Bertrand Russell and CND to Frank Field and Child Poverty Action. Peacemaking begins in the uterus, I came to believe, trying to help parents not treat their young children like their enemies, to be kept down or mastered by them. A brief review of my work shows sad failures - children who became mentally ill, convicted criminals - one knew nothing else but war with severe emotional wounds. It will take a lot of time and effort to break this cycle. Finance has already been withdrawn from such projects. If we only spent a miniscule amount from the arms budget we could begin to save lives in our homes and in our streets as well as stopping the killing in the larger world community.

From an 88 year-old Pax Christi member living in Manchester.

Networking in Coventry around the issues of Drones

The existence of Drones first impinged on my consciousness in January 2009. I now know what I should have known then, that they have been around for a lot longer. Still, you have to start somewhere.

At that time, the Israeli Defence Force was in the middle of its Operation Cast Lead, which resulted in the deaths of some 1300 Palestinians, and reports were coming out that they were using a variety of weapons launched from Unmanned Aerial Vehicles. Furthermore, it was alleged that a factory in Shenstone, near Lichfield, had been taken over by an Israeli firm, Elbit Systems, for the production of engines to power these UAVs.

In Coventry, a local councillor and former MP, Dave Nellist, was organising a series of protests in the city centre, which went on for several weeks and from these an ad hoc group was formed to further the aims of the demonstrations. One of the members of this group was herself a Palestinian resident in Coventry, whose own family had been severely affected by the violence, and whose campaign for humanitarian relief attracted a huge amount of support from the local press and people across the city.

Another strand of this process was to follow up the involvement of the UAV (Shenstone) factory, which seemed to offer a specific local reason for campaigning. Letters from the group were sent to all Coventry's MPs, and West Midlands MEPs. We became aware of a group from the Shenstone area, led by a Methodist minister and former EAPPI, Warren Bardsley, which had started holding vigils outside the factory. Since then, this activity has spread and continues to attract growing support from groups and individuals (including one Anglican Bishop) across the West Midlands, as the issue of Drones has become more widely known and understood.

Later that year, the national Drones Network Campaign* was established, and has now reached the point where there is enough general awareness across the country to organise an annual Week of Action in October. Key sites have been identified, such as the Shenstone factory, but also an allied factory in Leicester and the RAF base at Waddington, just outside Lincoln. One of last October's events was a walk from Shenstone to the base, taking in the places already mentioned. This was organised by a former director of the Coventry Peace House and supported by members of the



Ann Farr, Chris Cole, Paul McGowan and Warren Bardsley

Coventry Justice and Peace group, among others.

An important opportunity for further action in our area comes every November with the Coventry Peace Festival. During the last three years, the issue of Drones has been kept firmly on the programme of events, under the auspices of the local Stop the War Group and by Churches Together. In addition, throughout last autumn, we were able to find church venues willing to host the exhibition of children's art from Gaza - art work produced in response to their experiences during Operation Cast Lead.

Tragically, this overlapped with the most recent attack on Gaza. This time, members of the Coventry Justice and Peace group have been able to take opportunities in local radio and press, and by public displays of support, to present an informed view of the realities of the situation, and to remind the city once again that the ramifications of this conflict reach into the life of the West Midlands. Thanks to the CAAT website, we now have a much better picture of how local firms may be being drawn in to the international arms trade, and we have contacted unions, business leaders, local councillors and MPs to raise the issues with them.

Paul McGowan, Coventry and Pax Christi Executive Committee member

*Pax Christi is a member of this Network

Revival of Pax Christi Liverpool group

Pax Christi Liverpool group grew from informal discussion amongst people who were concerned about war and violence, the international arms trade, the injustice in the Middle East and, felt a longing for an alternative witness in keeping with the Gospel values of peace and justice.

Pax Christi has this vision, and because there had been an active group in the past, we felt that there was energy to start a new group to explore our responses, as individuals, as a nation and internationally, to the violence around us. At the end of 2011 we had our first meeting in St Michael's parish house where we shared our thoughts about the issues close to our hearts.

Since then we have grown and new people have joined us, some who are already active in justice issues. We have held some public events such as hosting a meeting with Pax Christi's Ann Farr on her experiences as an Ecumenical Accompanier. With the Liverpool Justice & Peace Commission we commemorated Ash Wednesday with a public witness and act of repentance for the sale of arms and their

impact around the world. This was held in solidarity with the London witness and we exchanged messages of support. In October, we undertook some street leafleting at Liverpool University, to raise awareness of the Universities involvement in Drone research

In terms of networking, many of us have links to the wider peace movement as well as our faith based groups, we publicise events in local media, radio and press. We find that word of mouth is often most effective in terms of getting support for events locally. Some of our members are active in other campaigning groups and are able to disseminate information through these networks. If you are interested in joining us to help in the planning of some of our events come along to one of our meetings, held on the first Tuesday of the month at 7.00pm at St Michael's. Currently, we are working on a leaflet that gives an insight into our work as a local group and we are hoping to distribute this widely.

Jan Harper (contact janharper1@yahoo.co.uk)

Romero Week speaking tour with theme Romero: a prophet of peace for our times.



We are delighted that Marie Dennis, Co-President of Pax Christi International, will be with us in March for Romero Week. The visit is co-hosted with the Romero Trust. Until recently, Marie was director of the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns, Washington. Marie has visited many parts of the world, including countries in conflict, for Maryknoll and Pax Christi International, most recently Egypt, Colombia, Croatia, Sudan, Iraq, Honduras and Haiti. She is author or co-author of seven books, including *Oscar Romero: Reflections on His Life and Writings* and *A Retreat with Oscar Romero and Dorothy Day: Walking with the Poor*. If you can help in any way by promoting these events or perhaps hosting a Pax Christi stall at one them do let us know or simply come along a meet Marie and hear her speak.

Programme for the week

- 18 March Nottingham. Cathedral Hall at 7.30. Hosted by Nottingham J&P Commission and Cathedral J&P group. Contact Louise Cooke, jnnottingham@nrcdt.org.uk
- 19 March Wrexham. St Mary's Cathedral Hall, Wrexham, 7.30pm. Hosted by Wrexham Diocese J&P Commission. Contact, Maria Pizzoni, pizzoni@btinternet.com
- 20 March Birmingham. Mass at 2pm at St Chad's Cathedral, followed by talk by Marie/ reception hosted by CAFOD in the Grimshaw Room. Contact Helen Moseley, hmoseley@cafod.org.uk
- 20 March. Coventry. Evening reflection. Contact Ann Farr, annfarr@phonecoop.coop
- 21 March Oxford. Catholic Chaplaincy Chapel at 7.00pm. Hosted by Pax Christi. Contact Anne Dodd, PETERANNE@aol.com
- 23 March London. St Martin-in-the-Fields, Trafalgar Square, London. 11.00am Annual Romero Memorial, Romero Trust.

Diary

13 February (Wed) London

Annual Ash Wednesday Witness of Repentance and Resistance to nuclear war at the Ministry of Defence in London. Gather at Victoria Embankment Gardens at 3.00pm. Organised by Pax Christi, CCND and London Catholic Worker.

23 February (Sat) London

A Lenten day of reflection, discussion and quiet with the Pax Christi ICON of peace. Led by Pat Gaffney of Pax Christi. 10.30 for 11am start. End at 4.00pm. Venue: Middle Block, St Joseph's, Watford Way, Hendon NW4 4TY. RSVP [0208 203 4884](tel:02082034884)

1-4 March Manchester

Seeds of Liberation, Global perspectives, Global faith, Global Action. Student Christian Movement weekend conference. www.movement.org.uk/seedsofliberation. Pax Christi is a partner to this project.

9 March (Sat) London

CAAT National Gathering. 10.30 am - 4.30 pm. Conway Hall, 25 Red Lion Square, London WC1R 4RL. Planning for the 2013 DSEI event and other project. Booking www.caat.org.uk/nationalgathering

18 - 23 March National

Romero Week - see panel for events around the country.

13 - 15 April Scotland

Scrap Trident: Let Scotland lead the way to a nuclear free world. A weekend of protest and action. Glasgow demonstration Saturday 13th April. NVDA Training & Workshops Sunday 14th April and Big Blocade at Faslane, Monday 15 April. More information from tp2000@gn.apc.org

15 April (Mon) International

Global Day of Action on Military Spending. See website <http://demilitarize.org> and watch out for new Pax Christi resources on this issue.

11 May (Sat) London

Pax Christi Annual General Meeting. Pimlico, London. Guest speaker Prof Tina Beattie. More details in next mailing.

What have you done with our Cranes?

In December, with the support of students from Maria Fidelis School in London, Pax Christi and ICAN UK delivered a letter and a gift of 1000 origami cranes (yes 1000! each one a prayer for a peaceful nuclear-weapon free world) to David Cameron. The letter and the gift originated from young people in Hiroshima with an invitation to David Cameron to provide a message of support for the Nuclear Weapons Convention. He was informed that his response, together with messages from other prime ministers and presidents, will be displayed in Hiroshima and on-line. Imagine our dismay at the letter from the correspondence officer at Downing Street who tells us, "I can confirm that the letter and cranes from the young people have been forwarded to the Ministry of Defence for reply". What a lost opportunity - to respond to young people here and in Japan and to flag support for a process that can only increase world security. Martin Birdseye, our representative on ICAN is responding vigorously to this matter. You can read more here <http://nuclearmorality.com/2012/12/21/hiroshima-cranes/>



Martin Birdseye with students from Maria Fidelis school at Downing Street