Diocese of Westminster

JUSTICE AND PEACE COMMISSION

JUSTICE & PEACE E-BULLETIN APRIL 2020

Welcome to the e-Bulletin from the Westminster Justice and Peace Commission.
To contact us please email justiceandpeace@rcdow.org.uk. The deadline for the next e-Bulletin is 30th April 2020.

Fr Dominic Robinson SJ, Chair of the Westminster Justice and Peace Commission, writes:

"Dear Friends,

These are just a few words by way of introduction to this month's e-Bulletin to hope this finds you in good heart at this strangest and most challenging of times for all of us. This is a time when many are saying they need the community of the Church all the more. In my parish I have sensed the anxiety, fear and loneliness this crisis is bringing, and I know that in your own parish community there will be particular challenges as we face preparing for a long haul.

As we approach Holy Week we will live the journey to the cross in real time. But the cross also leads to the new life of the Risen Christ and we must keep that hope in close focus. And there are glimmers of that hope in the generosity of so many in our communities. As we realise that the poorest will be the most vulnerable through lack of food, we see how the Caritas Food Collective in many parishes is responding to this need. The homeless risk being forgotten, but thankfully many initiatives involving volunteers and other key organisations are feeding and giving them shelter. Asylum seekers, too, are being served by generous volunteers.

As a Commission, we are monitoring how this terrible crisis is affecting these most vulnerable groups and encouraging on-going advocacy for the welfare of all people, both at home and abroad, working closely with the Caritas Westminster team to respond to immediate priorities. Like many of you, we are wrestling with new technologies and changed means of communication as we try to adapt to new ways of giving support and encouragement to those staying at home and to keyworkers out in the community. Our mission, though, has not changed as we seek to respond to the needs of our times in the light of the social teaching of the Church.

As the scattered Body of Christ gathers in a new way, I pray that we can appreciate all the more how we are in communion with each other and with the earth, our common home. May we approach Easter together with faith and hope in the Risen Christ who calls us to be disciples in his kingdom of peace and justice for all".

Colette writes: "In this time of global lockdown, responding to online petitions is one way to show support for the causes that matter to you."

Leading petitions still taking signatures include:

1) Avaaz – Call for Global Ceasefire from the UN Secretary General and endorsed by Pope Francis.

2) Jubilee Debt Campaign - Cancel debt for countries of global south at risk of collapse from the impact of coronavirus. Charity also calling for debt cancellation for households in the UK impacted by the pandemic.

CAFOD
Catholic Agency for Overseas Development

Tuesday, 7 April 11am-12pm: Prayer and chat
Join together with other CAFOD supporters in prayer and reflection, followed by a virtual coffee morning. Register online

Wednesday, 15 April 1-2pm: Stories from Cyclone Idai - what happened next?
Tiago Coucelo tells how, with your support, local workers are helping the remotest rural communities in Africa to rebuild. Register online

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DIARY OF EVENTS 2020

LAUDATO SI' WEEK 2020

16th – 24th MAY 2020 – All people of goodwill are invited to mark the 5th Anniversary of Pope Francis' encyclical, *Laudato Si'*: On the Care of our Common Home. https://laudatosiweek.org/ Never has it been more necessary to hear the "cry of the planet and the cry of the poor."

5th April: BBC Radio 4 Sunday Worship – 8.10am. On Palm Sunday, J & P Chair, Fr Dominic Robinson SJ, will be leading the service on BBC Radio 4's Sunday Worship programme. Fr Dominic and Dr Theodora Hawksley reflect on the way Jesus accompanies Christians spiritually when facing times of trial, suffering and bereavement. Programme link: Walking in the company of Jesus

2nd May: Migrants Mass – CANCELLED - Organiser Fr Dominic Howarth from Brentwood Diocese writes: "Amongst our migrant communities are many of those working tirelessly in the NHS, as well as other front line care services. Migrant workers also include many on low pay and zero hours contracts, who face the greatest uncertainty in these times. I know that Bishop Paul McAleenan, who has national responsibility for Migrants, would want to share with me how deeply appreciated it all is, and how firmly you are held in prayer. This crisis will pass – not least due to the heroic efforts of so many from within the Church – and in calmer times we will look to see the best way that the contribution of migrants can be honoured in the months ahead."

16th-24th May*: Laudato Si'* Week – 5th Anniversary of the encyclical *Laudato Si'*.

21st June: Day for Life - http://www.dayforlife.org/

4th July: Social Justice and Peace Forum - CANCELLED – Bishops Nicholas Hudson and Paul MacAleenan will meet with the J & P team after Easter to reflect on when and how we might next gather again in a diocesan Forum and where our focus will be once we emerge from the pandemic.

17th – 19th July: 42nd National Justice and Peace Annual Conference – AWAITING DECISION. Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, DE55 1AU. Theme '2020 Vision – Action for Life on Earth.' Conference Chair Christine Allen, Director of CAFOD. Speakers Lorna Gold, Fr Eamon Mulcahy & Mark Rotherham. Liturgy with musician and composer Marty Haugen. Mass celebrant Bishop John Arnold. Workshops, prayer, 'Just Fair' stalls, separate activities for children and teenagers. Families welcome. To register interest: https://www.justice-and-peace.org.uk/conference/

1st September – 4th October: Season of Creation - an ecumenical initiative uniting Christians in prayer and action for the protection of our common home from the start of September until the feast of St Francis of Assisi. Includes Day for Creation on Sunday 6th September.

15th November – World Day of the Poor.

9th – 20th November: COP26 UN Climate Change Conference – POSTPONED TO 2021.

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