



JUSTICE & PEACE E-BULLETIN

JUNE 2024

Welcome to the e-Bulletin from the Westminster Justice and Peace Commission. Please send Events for inclusion to justiceandpeace@rcdow.org.uk. The deadline for the next e-Bulletin is **28 June 2024**.

Fr Dominic writes:

Dear All,

Most of us were taken by surprise at the calling of the General Election. How are we to prepare for it in the five frantic weeks that are ahead of us?



Many in our communities will now be looking for concrete help with approaching the election. On a national level the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales has produced a full set of resources guiding us through what seem to be the issues in our Catholic communities, suggesting actions and questions to candidates. I'd like to recommend these documents for use in our Justice and Peace groups and generally in our parishes, schools and chaplaincies, whether you are preparing hustings, other meetings, articles in newsletters and magazines, homily notes and the like. In addition to these resources, there are excellent documents prepared also by CAFOD and SVP and the Catholic Union.

Justice and Peace Westminster, however, represents the local Church. The Diocese of Westminster spreads over central and inner London and Hertfordshire, in urban and rural communities. Our parishes and schools represent a great racial and cultural diversity. Many in our Catholic community will not be eligible to vote and we should think carefully of how we represent them. Many of our young people have the opportunity to vote for the first time and they must be encouraged to do so. Together as local communities, we are called to discern well the needs of our local community in its diversity, and especially thinking of those without a voice and on the margins.

Voting is a duty and responsibility for all. We are called to discern our choices not as individuals nor on single issues but for the good of the local community as a whole. This is our task for the next five weeks. The issues to be addressed will emerge to a greater or lesser extent in each local community but each is different so our discernment of choosing an MP will be different in each place. That requires finding out who are the candidates, where they stand on the needs discerned, and importantly how they will build relationships with the local community and work together for the common good.

As Catholics, we play such an important role in the building up of society. In our parishes, schools and chaplaincies, we contribute so much through our work of education, healthcare, caring for the poor, creating community cohesion in a multiracial society. As citizens guided by the Gospel of justice and peace we have a duty to cast our votes with careful discernment for the common good of all. This is our God-given opportunity to use our power to bring about change for the good of all.

May the Holy Spirit guide us in these coming weeks.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

Fr Dominic Robinson SJ



WAYS TO GET READY FOR THE GENERAL ELECTION

The Prime Minister has called a General Election to be held in the United Kingdom on Thursday 4 July 2024. This is an opportunity for the Catholic community to exercise active citizenship and contribute to the building up of God's Kingdom of "love, justice and peace". (*Gaudium et Spes*, 39)

The Church does not tell people which party to vote for and, as our bishops reminded us prior to a previous election, "a general election must never be confused with a single-issue referendum" (*The Common Good*, 65), but the Church gives us the principles by which we can discern which candidate and which party will best advance the common good.

Suggested Newsletter Insert

With the UK general election due on Thursday, 4 July, politicians will be looking for our votes. We have a responsibility as Catholics to use our vote to make sure that parties commit to tackling issues such as poverty, injustice and human dignity. The Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales (CBCEW) offer a guide to issues for the election www.cbcew.org.uk/election24/ as do CAFOD together with the Saint Vincent de Paul Society (SVP) cafod.org.uk/encounter. These sites provide information on a range of topics from a Catholic Christian perspective to help us ask key questions of local candidates and parties who need our votes. Please ensure you are registered to vote by 18 June and have suitable Photo ID, which you will need this year for the first time.

A Prayer for the General Election

Lord God, who govern all peoples in every time and place,

instill in us a spirit of wisdom that we may choose Members of Parliament
and a government who truly serve the common good of all.

Help us to do all we can to shape a society which upholds the right to life itself,
works for justice and peace at home and abroad, welcomes the stranger,
protects God's beautiful creation, and enables us to flourish as citizens.

May his Kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Our Lady, Queen of the Universe – Pray for us.

St Thomas More – Pray for us.

~ Westminster Justice and Peace



RESOURCES LIST

The following resources are designed to be useful to Christians preparing for the General Election on 4 July. They are not party political but aim to prompt engagement with the election process, highlighting issues of importance to churches.

Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales

Gospel values inform how we look at the world as Christians. These values can also offer a different way of looking at politics, a way that puts the common good before self-interest. Throughout this election season, we will be seeking answers which will help the poor, the marginalised, and the vulnerable. We seek a society in which all families can flourish and where we care for our common home, where we offer a welcoming hand to strangers in need, where we look out for those struggling to get on. Families are the heart of our communities and society...

www.cbcew.org.uk/election24/

CAFOD/SVP

We must make 2024 a 'Year of Encounter' where we use the general election as a special opportunity to speak with those running for election about the key issues that matter to us as people of faith...

<https://cafod.org.uk/campaign/campaign-with-us/a-year-of-encounter-call-for-action-with-your-parish-at-the-general-election>

Catholic Union

Offer a weekly Briefing service, giving updates on news from Parliament and world issues of particular interest to Catholics. Sign up here: <https://catholicunion.org.uk/weekly-briefings/>

Catholic Social Action Network (CSAN)

CSAN is launching a campaign - #RegistertoVote - to encourage everyone in the Catholic community who is eligible, to register to vote and to use their vote on 4 July. If you haven't registered to vote in the General Election, you must do so by 23:59 on Tuesday, 18 June 2024. Those eligible can do so here: gov.uk/register-to-vote. Photo ID is necessary in order to be permitted to vote. www.gov.uk/apply-for-photo-id-voter-authority-certificate

Columban Justice, Peace and Ecology Team

Vocation for Justice Newsletter Summer 2024: Preparing for the Election. Articles, and materials for discernment, engaging with candidates and manifestos, and, ultimately, playing our part in encouraging candidates to be disturbed by injustice and ready to respond lovingly for the common good. Outline ideas for organising hustings. Themes tie in with Cafod and SVP, with an additional call for candidates to support the Climate and Nature Bill and Peacemaking initiatives.

<https://columbans.co.uk/justice-peace/14136/columban-vocation-for-justice-newsletter-preparing-for-the-election/>

The Centre for Catholic Social Thought and Practice has compiled an easy-to-use webpage where you can find links to resources to help parishes and individuals to engage with the general election. The site includes a directory of speakers. Also, short videos introducing the Catholic Social Teaching.

<https://ccstp.org.uk/general-election>



Joint Public Issues Team

They say: "We believe that Christians have an important role to play in elections: to love, to pray, and to vote. From registration and voter ID, issues briefings, how to engage with the election as a church, holding a hustings in your neighbourhood and even more! Find all of our General Election resources here: <http://jpit.uk/elections>

Green Christian/Operation Noah election pack

<https://greenchristian.org.uk/general-election-pack-for-churches/>

Asylum Matters has developed 'Building a compassionate refugee ' protection system' a two-page document setting out key principles and policy asks for parliamentary candidates.

<https://asylummatters.org/2024/03/19/new-general-election-resources-calling-on-candidates-to-defend-the-right-to-seek-safety/>

JustMoney says the General Election is an important time to champion a range of voices calling out for a fairer tax system, with more taxes on wealth. See: <https://justmoney.org.uk/speak-out/good-measure-campaign/>

Christians in Politics video: www.youtube.com/watch?v=bf-QD-2s9S4

BIDDING PRAYERS

Westminster Justice & Peace Commission offers the following Intercessions, one of which could be used each weekend leading to 4 July 2024.

- 1) As we prepare for the General Election, we pray that all Government policies will promote a preferential option for the poor, ensuring that we create an economy in which all people can flourish. We pray that children, young people, and those with particular needs might find safe and respectful places of education and formation where they can develop as responsible and committed citizens. Lord, in your mercy – **Hear our prayer.**
- 2) As we prepare for the General Election, we pray for the health and well-being of our nations. May all Government policies express a clear commitment to the dignity of human life from the womb to the grave. May our rich heritage of health and social care be protected and promoted, and those who serve be fully valued and respected for their service to others. Lord, in your mercy – **Hear our prayer.**
- 3) As we prepare for the General Election, we pray that Government policies will exemplify a commitment to the common good, not only for the peoples of the United Kingdom, but for the poorer countries in our world. May those who seek justice and safety on our shores be respected and welcomed for the gifts they bring, as we hold to international human rights. May our nations continue to respond to the challenges of environmental justice, global poverty, and the need for peace in a war-torn world. Lord, in your mercy – **Hear our prayer.**
- 4) As we prepare for the General Election, we pray that all people of faith will exercise their rights to vote as a sign of a strong commitment to promote the integrity of civic life. May our faith lead us to do justice as we vote, and so move us, beyond passivity, to become active citizens, promoting the values of God's reign in our land. Lord, in your mercy – **Hear our prayer.**



DIARY OF EVENTS

Until 6 June 2024: Child at War Exhibition - Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral. Free <https://beyond-conflict.co.uk/mediahub/blog/beyond-conflict-announces-child-of-war-exhibition-2024/>

31 May, 14, 21, 28 June, 5 & 12 July, 7.30-9.00pm*: The Music of Justice and Peace - All are welcome to these informal Friday evening music drop-ins at the London Catholic Worker House, St Augustine's Church, Mattison Road, N4 1BG. Enjoy old favourites and learn new hymns and other songs with a justice and peace flavour. Voices and instruments welcome. Facilitated by Colette Joyce, Westminster Justice & Peace Co-ordinator, 07593 434 905 / colettejoyce@rcdow.org.uk
*N.B. No session on 7 June.

1 June, 11am: Pax Christi AGM in Liverpool (and online) www.paxchristi.org.uk

2 June, 11.30am – 2pm: Meet the Survivors - Stories from Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Friends House, 173 Euston Road, London, NW1 2BJ. Two survivors, currently touring the world on Peace Boat, will give their stories through translators. There will also be speakers from Peace Boat, a performance workshop and origami crane making. Just turn up. [Quakers in Britain](http://QuakersinBritain.org.uk)

2 June, 12.30-4.00pm: Kew Gardens Outing with Westminster Justice & Peace - All welcome to join Fr Dominic Robinson SJ and Colette Joyce on an exploration of the world famous botanical gardens to see Marc Quinn's sculpture exhibition, 'Light and Life'. Please purchase your own tickets in advance via the Kew website or on arrival. Adult tickets are £10 for those aged 29 and under and just £1 for anybody who is on universal credit or pension credit. The meeting point is just inside the ticket barriers at the Victoria Gate entrance at 12.30pm where we will begin the day with prayers and a picnic lunch. Drinks, sandwiches, cakes and ice-cream are available to purchase in the café. Please contact Colette Joyce – colettejoyce@rcdow.org.uk / 07593 434 905 to let us know you are coming or just join us on the day. [Kew Gardens Tickets](http://KewGardensTickets.org.uk)

4 June, 6.30pm: London Churches Refugee Forum (LCRF) Annual Speaker Meeting - Guest Speaker Revd Dr Inderjit Bhogal, Founder and President of City of Sanctuary. Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church, Shaftesbury Avenue, WC2H. Email: info@lcrf.org.uk [LCRF Website](http://LCRFWebsite.org.uk)

4 June, 6.00pm: Anthony Storey Memorial Peace and Justice Lecture 'The Courage of the White Flag?' Speaker - Fr. Rob Esdaile. Hosted by Middlesbrough Diocesan Justice and Peace Commission via Zoom. Rob Esdaile is a priest of Arundel and Brighton Diocese. For the past 20 years he has written reflections for Pax Christi for use in Peace Sunday celebrations and he is Priest Adviser on Social Action in Arundel and Brighton Diocese. To register please email Barbara Hungin at bhungin@yahoo.co.uk

6 June: 2.00-6.30pm – Balfour Project Annual Conference: Peace with Justice – how to get there. Bush House, 30 Aldwych, London WC2B 4BG and online. Keynote Speaker Martin Griffiths, UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator. More details and registration: <https://balfourproject.org/2024conference/>

8-16 June: Great Big Green Week – Theme 'Swaps' <https://greatbiggreenweek.com/>
Make a swap in your shopping this Great Big Green Week and support farmers and workers to earn a fair wage whilst tackling the climate crisis together. [Fairtrade Great Big Green Week](http://FairtradeGreatBigGreenWeek.org.uk)



9 June, 1.00-4.00pm: Faith for the Climate Interfaith Picnic - St John's Church, 73 Waterloo Road, London, SE1 8TY. **1pm** Communal picnic in the garden of St John's Church – including children's activities and faith-based stalls focused on the Great Big Green Week's theme of '[swaps](#)'. Please bring your own picnics. **2.30 pm:** Creative Responses to the Climate Crisis Entertainment including poetry and performances. **3.15 pm:** Interfaith Responses & Commitment. **3.30 pm:** Tea [More details](#)

10 June, 12.45-2.00pm: Southern Dioceses Environment Network – Preparing for the Season of Creation. Monthly online meeting for prayer, sharing and networking on the Care of Creation. Attend as a one-off or participate regularly. New participants welcome. [Southern Dioceses Environment Network](#)

15 June, 10.00-11.30am: West London Justice and Peace Network – Online Meeting. Fr Dominic Robinson SJ will be the guest speaker. Contact Maggie Beirne for more details and the Zoom link if you are in any of the West London parishes. maggiebeirne@googlemail.com

16 June: Day for Life. The theme this year is 'The Lord is my Shepherd – Compassion and Hope at the End of Life'. <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/day-for-life/>

17-23 June: Refugee Week. The theme for Refugee Week 2024 is "Our Home". From the places we gather to share meals, to our collective home, planet earth: everyone is invited to celebrate what Our Home means to them. <https://refugeeweek.org.uk/>

17 June, 12.30-1.30pm: Monthly Prayer Vigil outside the Home Office – Organised by Westminster Justice & Peace, London Catholic Worker and the London Churches Refugee Fund to pray for migrants seeking safe passage to the UK. Marsham Street, SW1P4DF. Contact Barbara Kentish barbarakentish@talktalk.net

22 June, 11am: RESTORE NATURE NOW - Rally in central London to call for the protection of the environment, reversal of nature loss and action on climate change. Backed by a wide-range of nature, wildlife and climate groups and campaigners, including Chris Packham, the demonstration aims to be the biggest-ever gathering of nature and climate supporters in the UK. Christian environment groups will gather first for an ecumenical service at Farm Street Church, 114 Mount Street, London, W1K 3AH at 11am. Includes outdoor messy church activities for children. We will then join the march in Park Lane at 12noon. [More details – Restore Nature Now Rally](#)

29 June, 4.00-6.00pm: Westminster Holy Land Roundtable. All are welcome to join us for the fourth Roundtable meeting at Farm Street Church, 114 Mount Street, London, W1K 3AH. New participants welcome. This month's meeting will focus on parish responses to the war in Gaza. Please do come along to find out more or get in touch with the Justice and Peace Co-ordinator, Colette Joyce. Mobile: 07593 434905; Email: colettejoyce@rcdow.org.uk

6 July, 11am-5pm: Catholic Union Annual Summer Gathering at Worth Abbey. The day will include an address from Catholic Union President, Baroness Hollins and a talk by Abbot Christopher Jamison. [More details on Catholic Union website](#)



8 July, 12.45-2.00pm: Southern Dioceses Environment Network – The Climate Coalition. Monthly online meeting for prayer, sharing and networking on the Care of Creation. Attend as a one-off or participate regularly. New participants welcome. [Southern Dioceses Environment Network](#)

13 July 2024: CAFOD in partnership with the Archbishop Romero Trust - Pilgrimage to the Holy Island of Lindisfarne. 10.00am Coaches meet at Purdy Lodge cafe on A1. [CAFOD](#)

15 July, 12.30-1.30pm: Monthly Prayer Vigil outside the Home Office – Organised by Westminster Justice & Peace, London Catholic Worker and the London Churches Refugee Fund to pray for migrants seeking safe passage to the UK. Marsham Street, SW1P4DF. Contact Barbara Kentish barbarakentish@talktalk.net

19-21 July: National Justice and Peace Network Conference - ‘Just Politics’. The Hayes Conference Centre, Hayes Ln, Swanwick, Alfreton DE55 1AU. As people of faith, how are we called to work towards honest dialogue and respectful listening in political and social engagement and seek good governance in all seats of power; local, national, and global? Chair - Sir John Battle. Keynote speakers - Rt Revd Dr Guli Francis-Dehqani, Bishop of Chelmsford and Molly Scott Cato, Former Green MEP and currently Finance and Economy Spokesperson for the Green Party. Steve Whiting, former manager of the Quaker Turning the Tide Programme, will start to pull together what we have learned from speakers and workshops and help us identify common themes. Colette Joyce of Westminster Justice and Peace Commission will facilitate a panel with young people. Conference Mass celebrated by Fr Dominic Robinson SJ. Take part in workshops, find resources and information in the ‘Just Fair’ and listen to the voices of young adults as they share their hopes and concerns for the future of our world. Places still available. Book at [NJPN](#)

22-25 August: Greenbelt Festival ‘Somewhere to Come Together.’ A weekend of music, comedy, craft, theatre, dance, food, spirituality, talks, provocation and more. <https://www.greenbelt.org.uk/>

1 September – 4 October: Season of Creation. This year’s theme is ‘To Hope and Act with Creation’. [Season of Creation website](#)

9-22 September: Fairtrade Fortnight. NB New dates!! Celebrate 30 years of the FAIRTRADE Mark here in the UK. The issues that we are addressing through our public campaigns go to the heart of our calls for greater price and power for farmers and call for rapid action on environmental sustainability and climate justice, the most urgent issues of our time. [Fairtrade Foundation](#)

2-27 October: Synod on Synodality Second Session, Rome.

11-24 November: COP29 in Azerbaijan. UN Climate Change Conference, 29th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 29) [UN COP29 Website](#)

24 December 2024 - Feast of the Epiphany 2026: Jubilee Year 2025. The theme is “Pilgrims of Hope”, and it will be a year of hope for a world suffering the impacts of war, the ongoing effects of COVID-19 pandemic, and a climate crisis. <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/jubilee-2025/>

20 September 2025 – Jubilee of Justice, Rome.