

Who are we and why are we here?

We are a group of people from the Parish who are interested in what is happening to people here in Britain and in the world, particularly those who are disadvantaged or oppressed in some way. We welcome anyone who would like to come to the meetings. These are publicised in advance in the Parish Newsletter.

Sacred Heart of Jesus and St Joseph RC Church, Ware

JUSTICE+PEACE GROUP

The aim of the Justice and Peace Group is to pray about and raise awareness in the Parish of local, national and international justice and peace issues.

Topics have included:

- ♦ Fair Trade
- ♦ Prisoners of Conscience
- ♦ Salvation Army
(aid to local homeless and needy)
- ♦ The Election
- ♦ The Environment

Contact: Deacon Adrian Cullen
Tel: Presbytery 01920 462140

Why not come
along to our next
meeting on Friday
16 September at 8pm.
You will be most
welcome.

Visitors and new members very welcome

BD100708

Our Overall Aim:

To inform, engage and involve the Parish in Justice and Peace issues.

The Objectives being:

to bring before people of the Parish matters of concern because the Catholic Parish is a Justice and Peace Community.

Areas of concern:

Family and Life

Life issues e.g. Euthanasia, Abortion
Supporting families of prisoners

Justice and Freedom

Christian Democracy
Prisoners of Conscience
Basic Human Rights around the world
Fairtrade

Developing Countries/ World

CAFOD campaigns
SPICMA
Christian Aid

Marginalised and Social Care

Immigrants/refugees
Homelessness

Personal and Group Development

Community activities in Ware

Here are just some of the issues the group has become involved with over the last few years...

CAFOD

Fast Days

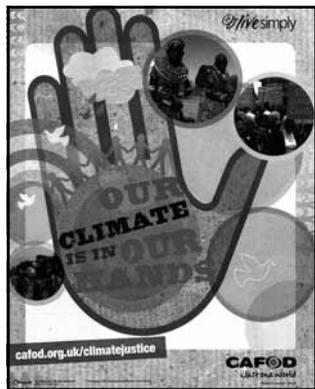
Theme: "Sustainability: are we caring for creation in the way we care for our lives?"

Organising, publicising, talking from the altar, giving out and collecting envelopes.

Our climate in our hands

A member of the group gave a brief talk on "Climate is in our hands" after masses.

"A way of life that disregards God's creation, forces the poor into greater poverty and threatens the right of future generations is contrary to the vision of the Gospel." (Call of Creation - Bishops Conference of England and Wales, 2002)



"The natural environment is given by God to everyone, and so our use of it entails a personal responsibility towards humanity as a whole, particularly towards the poor and towards future generations." (Pope Benedict XVI, Address to UN Summit in New York, September 2009)

Human Embryology Bill



Parishioners were asked to write to their MP about this proposed bill.

No replies were received from Mark Prisk MP so we had no indication of how he would vote.

A reply was received from Gordon Brown by one person... *"a note has been made of your comments"*.

Charles Walker (MP for Broxbourne) replied that he will vote according to his conscience.

An item was placed in the parish newsletter - people who had written and not received a response should re-contact the MP requesting a response of how he intends to vote.

Fairtrade Fortnight



"Every time we buy we make a decision as to how we want to live"

Fairtrade Fortnight has been publicised each year in the newsletter in advance of the event.

Posters have been put on the notice board at the back of church and in the hall.

Publicity from Fairtrade has been displayed in the Hall encouraging parishioners to buy Fairtrade goods from their usual shop, with a giant inflatable tea cup as a reminder.

Fairtrade biscuits were offered with tea and coffee after Masses each weekend of Fairtrade Fortnight and also, for the first time this year, Fairtrade products were available in the hall.

SPICMA

SPICMA (Special Projects in Christian Missionary Areas) is notable in that two of its staff are currently parishioners of The Sacred Heart of Jesus and St Joseph, and it is encouraged in its activities by the Justice and Peace group.



Boreholes replace polluted lakes and rivers

SPICMA has already funded a total of thirty boreholes in Kotido Catholic Diocese, Uganda, in 2008/9 but in an area about half the size of Wales with 650,000 souls, many more boreholes are needed and with your continued assistance SPICMA hopes to achieve this.

The charity, which was set up in 1967 in North London, has assisted with the building of churches, mission schools, hospitals and clinics, the provision of pharmaceutical products and ambulances, the financing of bore holes and the relief of

starvation. It has also supported the provision of education in mission schools to children who were orphaned as a result of both AIDS and war.

SPICMA is unique in that all its workers are volunteers. They may be few in number but collectively they have over forty years experience and skills in a number of areas, which they hope benefit the people they endeavour to help with your support.

More about SPICMA may be found on the website:
www.spicma.org

Christian Democracy



Members of the Justice and Peace group have attended lectures, hosted by Lord Alton at the House of Lords, organised by the Christian Democracy Movement.

The lectures, given by prominent European MPs, highlight problems facing Christians in politics. Transcripts of these are to be found in "Christian Politics".

Bill Gribbin

Bill is a very enthusiastic person who gave a talk about the "whole way" – our Christian response to politics. He helps raise awareness of issues discussed in parliament from a Christian perspective.

Spare copies of the Christian Democracy newsletter "Christian Politics" are provided to the Church by Bill, a founder member of the Movement for Christian Democracy.

The Salvation Army

The group hosted a talk by John and Helen Parry, ordained Salvation Army Ministers working in Ware.

They spoke eloquently about the work of the Salvation Army and helped us to understand the needs of some people in our local area and what the Salvation Army does to help them.

As a result of this talk the parish was encouraged to donate items of food and clothing which the Salvation Army distributed to those in need in the area.

The Passage

Andrew Hollingsworth and Sr. Elizabeth came to talk about the work of the Passage. The mission of the Passage is to provide the resources which encourage, inspire and challenge homeless people to transform their lives.

The work provides facilities for the homeless to have a shower and a change of clothes.

In 2008 they saw over 4000 people and have a capacity to help up to 200 people at any one time.



The location of the Passage near Victoria Coach Station is a catchment area for a large number of people who are homeless.

Prisons Week

Prisons Week embraces not just prisoners but families, workers in the prisons and the victims and their families.

Parishioners were given the Prisons Week newsletter and encouraged to use the suggested prayers through the week.

Prisoners of Conscience

The Justice and Peace group has always encouraged the parish to support the Prisoners of Conscience greetings card campaign in the run up to Christmas.



Four international Prisoners of Conscience are identified from the many found on various websites such as Amnesty International.

Details of these prisoners are given in the Parish Newsletter and posters produced to show in more detail the reasons for their arrest and imprisonment.

Leaflets are handed out at all Masses and parishioners are welcomed into the hall to sign cards and write brief messages to the prisoner of their choice.

The many thousands of cards arriving at prisons throughout the world make the authorities aware that their actions in detaining political prisoners are known. This has often resulted in the release of prisoners.

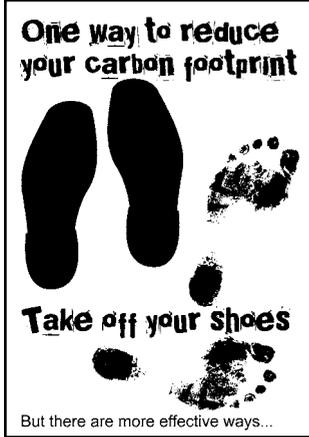
"Poppy talk"

The parish was invited to a talk about human trafficking, organised by the Ladies Group, given by Kevin Hyland from the Metropolitan Police Trafficking team and a parishioner of The Sacred Heart of Jesus and St Joseph.

This was followed by cheese and wine, tea and coffee.

South East Climate Change launch

An important message was that over 40% of the emissions come from the USA and China but most of the impact is on the developing world.



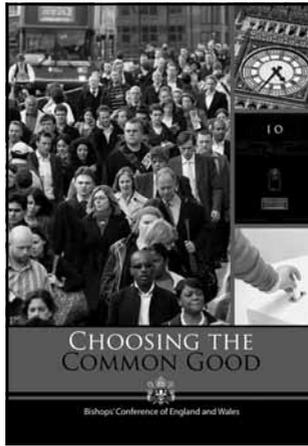
In order for parishioners to be aware of their own use of resources the Justice and Peace group produced a leaflet called "One way to reduce your carbon footprint".

The aim was primarily to raise people's awareness of the impact of their actions and decisions that they make. This hopefully helped them to change some of their habits.

General election guidelines

Epiphany Trust provided links to sites with guidance for voting in the general election in 2010. The group publicised the election guidelines and where to find them.

The booklet produced by Archbishop Vincent Nichols and the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales "Choosing the Common Good" stated clearly the issues facing Britain. It was decided to enlarge short



comments, by the leaders of the three main parties, from the booklet.

All the material was displayed in the hall to alert parishioners to the views of the parties and the availability of the booklet. There were also suggested questions to ask their local candidates if they wished to.

One World Week

The Justice and Peace group hosted a 'One World Supper' to celebrate diversity among the congregation of our parish. Parishioners were invited to contribute small plates of food from their different countries,

Italian, Spanish, Indian etc. as a shared meal.

A large map of the world was produced with flags to identify relevant countries.



The response was marvellous. There was a good number of people from a variety of backgrounds who had brought along some delicious dishes.



The young people enjoyed the challenge of finding the countries on the map. There was much conversation and the evening was a great success.

