

## Bishop Kevin's talk on seeking justice (continued from front page)

'Both factions of the MDC opposition have called for a Truth Commission to take place under an MDC Government. But is there any hope that such a Truth Commission could succeed? Not unless official support from the highest level, i.e. Government, is given to the process; without this there are endless possibilities for such a process to be manipulated and undermined.

'There have been at least 25 Truth Commissions or Commissions of Inquiry into human rights abuses in the world. Most of them have at best been partially successful. Some of the reasons for the low level of achievement by these Commissions are: the lack of an inclusive consultation with and involvement of all role-players from the civic, Church and political sectors; the very high expectations of victims concerning prosecutions of perpetrators and reparations for victims; the post-conflict economic and political malaise which becomes so all-consuming for people who are starving and without the basic necessities to survive that they can think of little else but finding the very basic necessities; institutional reform and the necessary follow-up in the long term by key institutions, like an independent judiciary and media, to ensure that the Truth Commission process moves forward towards desirable outcomes.

'In the current political and economic situation in Zimbabwe it seems that setting up a Truth Commission at this time would not be practical and would have very little chance of even getting off the ground. Nonetheless, depending on how events unfold, a future more stable scenario may permit a reconsideration of this. Therefore, it is important that the whole civil society sector, including the Church, continue its reflection and discussion on the kind of Truth Commission which Zimbabwe would need, its mandate, how civil society can make it possible for the thousands of victims to tell

their stories, to be supported and counselled, the documentation of abuses and acts of the perpetrators, many of whom are known to the victims, and so forth.

'What, therefore, can civil society - which includes the Churches and groups like Pax Christi in Europe and its affiliates such as the Denis Hurley Peace Institute in South Africa - be engaged with in the unfolding scenario of Zimbabwe? Here, we can include ourselves, and our involvement in Palestine, as members of the worldwide Pax Christi peace movement wherever we are, our solidarity projects, our awareness and training courses, our advocacy work - all of us working together to inspire and implement a vision for justice and peace in our world...

'I have shared some of my experiences and reflections in the context of Africa in the hope that this can be an encouragement and inspiration to all of you at Pax Christi UK, as part of the worldwide Pax Christi family; to recognize and embrace the opportunities we have, in our unique contexts, to contribute to the ideal of a global community of solidarity, sustainable peace, justice and respect for human rights, individual and community healing, reconciliation and integral development. I want to affirm and praise Pax Christi UK for your notable contribution to these goals over many years, and for the inspiration this gives us in Africa to continue our own journey with our people. In addition, to develop our common spirituality built on the values of non-violence, reconciliation and peace, and to continue to make the Mystery of Incarnation happen again and again.....making Jesus incarnate in every situation so that this can be transformed into hope, new beginnings, justice, sustainable peace and integral development.

*(The full text is on the Pax Christi website and is available from the office).*

## Office Report

**Giovanni Scudiero RIP.** Sadly we report the news of the death of Giovanni in Torino on Sunday 14th June. Diagnosed with cancer in July 2008, Giovanni struggled bravely for almost a year, greatly supported by the prayers and messages of Pax Christi members around the country. He brought many gifts to Pax Christi during his almost twenty-five years association with our work. More to follow and tributes from around the world can be found on the Press page of our website.

**Hilary is on the move!** We say farewell to Hilary Topp who has been with us as our Peace Education worker since 2006. We greatly value the huge contribution Hilary has made to our work - expanding our links with teachers, chaplains and youth leaders and bringing her creativity to running workshops and conferences and producing resource materials for young people. Hilary moves to a new post as National Coordinator with the

Student Christian Movement in Birmingham. Our paths are sure to cross and we say a huge Thank You to Hilary and wish her every happiness in her new role.

**Pax Christi ICON of Peace.** We have created this opportunity for Pax Christi Members and Supporters in England and Wales to share in the hosting of the Icon and have prayer cards, posters and a resource pack Reconciliation the Heart of Peace with liturgies and activities to use with the ICON. We have the following bookings for the ICON - contact the office for a booking form.

- June, in Liverpool Diocese.
- 10-12 July, Hendon, London for Bright Lights Youth Gathering
- August, Cambridge.
- October and November, Rugby and Coventry
- December 2009 - January 2010, Nottingham Diocese with the Sisters of St Joseph of Peace

## Keep peace alive. Remember Pax Christi when making or up-dating 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

## 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.

Pax Christi, St Joseph's, Watford Way, Hendon, London, NW4 4TY  
Tel: 020 8203 4884 email: info@paxchristi.org.uk www.paxchristi.org.uk

# Justpeace

## PAX CHRISTI

International Catholic Movement for Peace

Justpeace No 271 July-August 2009

ISSN0306-7646

This issue of Justpeace reports on the Annual General Meeting held in May in London and includes an extended extract of the speech given by our guest, Bishop Kevin Dowling, a vice-president of Pax Christi International and Bishop of the Diocese of Rustenburg, South Africa.

Bishop Kevin began with his work with the Sudan Ecumenical Forum and the peace process in Sudan. He then went on to talk about Zimbabwe.

## Bishop Kevin's talk on seeking justice

Let us come further south - to Zimbabwe. Again after appalling violence, injustice and atrocities, there is a fragile hope that with the Government bringing together the Mugabe ZANU PF and Morgan Tsvangirai's opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), the people of Zimbabwe may be able to finally break out of the cycle of despair, and the many years of violence, human rights abuses, torture, politicization of food supplies, and so much else that is an affront to what should be. Last night I shared how, as a Trustee of the Solidarity Peace Trust - a civil society NGO sponsored by the Church which documents human rights abuses in Zimbabwe and engages in international advocacy - I had been to Bulawayo for ecumenical functions in the Catholic Cathedral to commemorate the United Nations Day against Torture; how I had watched broken torture victims witnessing to the horrendous suffering they had endured, and how I addressed the packed congregation denouncing the Mugabe regime and then reflecting with the people on how God was present in their struggle, that the cause of the Central Intelligence security police whom I addressed directly was lost, that the struggle for justice and a life of hope was assured because God was with them.

'Together with my colleague and fellow Trustee of the Solidarity Peace Trust, Bishop Rubin Phillip, the Anglican Archbishop of KwaZulu Natal in South Africa, we have with our network of secret activists on the ground been documenting and filming human rights atrocities in Zimbabwe for years and then exposing this at international media conferences in South Africa and also sending all our documentation to Governments and embassies.

## A process of transitional justice

'In post-conflict situations, as obtains in Sudan and Zimbabwe, the question of what is required to sustain and build on a just peace has to be addressed, and within this context the issue of "transitional justice", as it is termed, often comes centre stage. In Zimbabwe, during the 1990s, strong civil society movements engaged with the issues of



constitutionalism and human rights, and they made great efforts to have transitional justice placed on the national political agenda. Very often, when we ask the victims of atrocities what they want, their immediate answer is: "justice". Further reflection with them brings home the awareness of just how difficult it is to achieve real justice for the victims.

'In August, 2003, a symposium was held in Johannesburg which brought together many of the most important civil society organizations working in the field of transitional justice in Zimbabwe. Its long list of demands could be summarized by using Alex Boraine's concept of the 5 pillars of a "holistic approach to transitional justice": accountability, truth recovery, reconciliation, institutional reform, and reparations. He was one of the members of the South African Truth Commission. However, any focus on these 5 pillars has to take account of the wider structural issues in the political landscape - like Mugabe's years of authoritarian rule and his skilful portrayal of the human rights issue as a Western imposition forming part of a Western agenda against Zimbabwe. Likewise, the discussion needs to bring to the fore a clear focus on the need for structural economic transformation as a basis for the values espoused by the Zimbabwean civics, including the Church, especially because the debate around transitional justice in Zimbabwe has to be situated in a context of the total collapse of the Zimbabwe economy, and its education, health and food production sectors.

'A political agreement was signed by the major parties in Zimbabwe on 11 September, 2008. However, many of its provisions remain to be implemented months after its signing because of disputes over the distribution of ministerial posts and the very strong control by Mugabe over the police, the military, and the Central Intelligence organization. Any idea therefore that, as part of for example, a Truth Commission process in Zimbabwe, prosecutions of those who masterminded the massive human rights violations since the 1980s will succeed is very unlikely...

Continued on back page

## Report from our Chairperson, Stewart Hemsley

First, I would like to mention some very important people without whom we wouldn't be able to function as effectively as we do. Five Pax Christi volunteers were given an award in acknowledgement of their work at a ceremony organised by Barnet Volunteer Council on 23 January. The volunteers, Peggy Oliver, Helga Calloway, Sr Mary Ann Tyler, Sr Margaret Terese and Michael Mitchell, had each contributed more than 100 hours to Pax Christi. At the ceremony Mayor John Marshall spoke of the enormous value of volunteering to organisations such as ours - we thank them and the whole team, Pat, Fausta, Hilary and Valerie, for their indefatigable labours for peace and justice.

This year has seen us very occupied with the Palestinian situation. The onslaught on Gaza was unbelievably ferocious and even went beyond the bounds of those who would see war as a legitimate instrument. So far it would seem that there is not going to be an accounting for what many have seen as 'War Crimes.' In February a delegation from Pax Christi went to Palestine and this was reported in the last Justpeace. We are indebted to the delegation for giving of their time and energy to bring us first hand information from the West Bank and Jerusalem.

Sadly, Hilary Topp, our Peace Education worker is moving on to pastures new at the end of June so - this bright star in our firmament will not shine on us in her present capacity. We do thank her for her youth, for her imaginative approach to her work, and for all she has achieved in her time with us!

I also want to share a word about what we do about the ghastly situations we face in our world and how we respond. I am less and less convinced by the big marches coupled with the slogans and some of the speeches and sentiments we hear. Some people put their trust in new leaders to bring peace but we are already seeing, for example, President Obama discovering the limitations of high office. Those of you who are familiar with the Daily Office will have read many times in Ps.146 'Put not your trust in Princes, in mortal men in whom there is no help. Take their breath, they return to clay and their plans that day come to nothing.'



Pax Christi volunteers receive award

So what do we do? The answer lies I believe in activities such as the vigil and liturgy we hold at the MOD each Ash Wednesday. It lies in what Reverend Roy Jenkins spoke of in a recent 'Thought for the Day' when he related how he meets with a small group once a month who discuss current issues and wonder what they can do and then do the one thing they can - pray. He gave some examples of how their prayers have borne fruit, often after many years. On the same programme, Oliver McTernan also gave food for thought when he referred to the King of Jordan claiming that the U.S. is preparing an ambitious peace plan for the Israeli/Palestinian conflict. He pointed out that there can be no quick fixes particularly ones that are from the top down. He went on to say that all parties have to be involved and that if issues are not resolved from the bottom up then grand plans will remain just that - plans.

Peace plans, no matter how ambitious these may be, that are not rooted in a real effort to engage, to understand and to reflect the concerns, fears, grievances and dreams of all parties involved in this conflict will remain I fear just plans. It's the seemingly little, weak, even foolish things that make a real difference and it is these that our God works with and uses. What our Lord says to us is 'Stay here, keep watch with me, watch and pray.'

## Diary

### 23-27 July (Thurs-Mon) nr Faringdon, Oxfordshire

Come to the Peace News summer camp open to all the peace movement. Sessions will include: 'Faith-based resistance' with Susan Clarkson (Oxford Catholic Worker), 'Chomsky's Politics' with Milan Rai, Local Anti-Arms Trade Campaigning, and 'Strategy Skills' ... plus walks, poetry, games, a play reading, local organic food. Entrance £15 to £50 depending on income. Details: [www.peacenewscamp.info](http://www.peacenewscamp.info) or tel: 0845 458 2564

### 29 July - 6 August (Wed-Thurs) Warwickshire

Pilgrims of St Francis International pilgrimage walk from Stratford-upon-Avon to Coventry Cathedral. 200 people from at least 7 countries are expected and newcomers welcome. Involves carrying rucksack and sleeping in church halls. Details: Gill Myall 0121 443 5198 or email [gillmyall@hotmail.com](mailto:gillmyall@hotmail.com). [www.cdsf.org](http://www.cdsf.org)

### 6 August (Thurs) London

Hiroshima Day vigil and stall in Westminster Cathedral Piazza from 10 - 5 pm; prayers at 11.30 and 3 pm. Volunteers welcome. Pax Christi: 0208 203 4884

### 6 August (Thurs) Coventry

Service of reflection, music, poetry and silence. 6-7 pm Chapel of Unity, Coventry Cathedral, followed by refreshments. All welcome. Details: Penny Walker 02476 664616

### 8 August (Sat) Berkshire

Interfaith pilgrimage walk from Reading to Aldermaston to pray for nuclear disarmament. Meet 9 am Reading Civic Centre. Arrive 4 pm Aldermaston for Interfaith Service. Bring refreshments. Details Pete: 0118 958 8281 or Angie: 078 3535 4652

### 9 August (Sun) London

Nagasaki Day vigil and stall in Westminster Cathedral Piazza from 10 - 4 pm; prayers at 11.30 and 3 pm. Franz Jägerstätter memorial service at 5 pm in Holy Apostles Church, Winchester Street, Pimlico. Followed by peace walk to Battersea Peace Pagoda. [www.paxchristi.org.uk](http://www.paxchristi.org.uk)

### 9-13 August (Sun-Thurs) Knock, Co. Mayo

Knock Peace Academy: conference-retreat organised by Pax Christi Ireland. Speakers on conflict resolution and reconciliation include Nuala O'Loan, Fr Alex Reid, Bishop

Donal McKeown, Rev Ruth Patterson, Fr Brian O'Toole, Sean O'Boyle. €290 inclusive. Details: [www.paxchristi.ie](http://www.paxchristi.ie) or tel. Gearoid Duffy at (086) 129 33 84

### 20 September (Sun) London

Children's Mystery Walk along the London Peace Trail. Starts 11 am from Friends House, Euston Road, NW1. Details: Movement for the Abolition of War [www.abolishwar.org.uk](http://www.abolishwar.org.uk) or tel: 01908 511948

### 20-21 September (Sun-Mon)

World Council of Churches International Prayer for Peace Day and UN International Peace Day. Resources for services and events from: Rev. Brian Cooper, World Disarmament Campaign Churches and Interfaith Secretary, PO Box 28209 Edinburgh EH9 1ZR 0131-446 9545

### 18-25 October (Sun-Sun)

'Hungry for one world' is the theme for One World Week. Details: [oww@oneworldweek.org](mailto:oww@oneworldweek.org) 0118 939 4933

## Pax Christi Finances and Peace Sunday

Last year I reflected on how we have tended to be cautious financially; not wanting to jeopardise the effectiveness of Pax Christi as a whole by committing ourselves to large projects. I suggested that we didn't have to be quite so cautious; we could afford a greater level of self-confidence. However, it was with some trepidation that I approached the start of 2009; listening to gloomy reports about the future of the financial world and the Peace Sunday collections due in a few weeks when people were suffering more than average from the after-effects of Christmas. I am pleased to report that the people in the parishes have not abandoned us in large numbers, which was a fairly obvious potential consequence of the past few months. The collections to date amount to a record-breaking £90,000. The returns are analysed diocese by diocese and the amount received from some is surprisingly low; we know that this does not reflect a lack of concern among the ordinary people in the benches. It is more a consequence of the fact that every parish priest is very

busy. We can provide you with a Diocesan breakdown should you so wish.

In 2008 we didn't turn into spendthrifts - we kept things ticking over nicely; continuing to use the funds available to good effect. As always, a substantial proportion of the expenditure was on publications and a significant proportion of this is recouped from sales. I always see this as a good sign; it's not a one-off feature, it's a part of the basic character of Pax Christi activity.

Whilst the Peace Sunday collections are reassuring, we will of course proceed with a combination of the self-confidence to be prepared to take on new challenges and an awareness of the fact that we are as exposed to the current financial downturn as any other group or individual.

**John Dowbekin, Treasurer**

*(A full set of Accounts was printed in the last issue of Justpeace)*

## Pax Christi Peace Awards, 2009

Every two years, Pax Christi offers a peace award to recognise grass roots and community approaches to peace work in the UK. This began in 2003. Award winners receive a special peace medal from the Neve Shalom / Wahat al Salam Jewish/Arab project in Israel. The following received awards at the 2009 AGM.

**Theresa and Hans Kohen** were founder members of the British friends of Neve Shalom / Wahat al Salam, so it is quite fitting they should be remembered in this way. Theresa and Hans supported Jewish - Christian studies at the Ammerdown Centre, the International Mass at St. Catherine's Church, Birmingham and the Jubilee Debt Campaigns. They motivated many people they came in contact with and challenged people's thinking on various issues. In the 1980's they arranged a trip to Hungary to learn about the situation of the Catholic Church in that country during the cold war years. Hans, who was of the Jewish faith, died in 1988 and Theresa, a Catholic, died in 2005. The Award was received on behalf of their family by Sue Scott from Birmingham.

As long standing members of Pax Christi, **Marjorie and James Welch** have devoted their time and effort for more than 30 years to the work for peace and justice. In the 1970's they created a Justice and Peace group in Twickenham to raise awareness of Nuclear Disarmament, an issue much to the fore at the time. They have continued to play their part in spreading the word of peace on concerns ranging from the arms trade to Northern Ireland, Iraq and Afghanistan, particularly at parish level, addressing the question on how to engage parish clergy. In recent years they have been active in their parish in Steyning in Sussex. They have been faithful supporters of the Catholic People's Week movement and regular attendees of the annual conference of the National Justice and Peace Network in Swanwick - even making it through the terrible rain and storms of July 2007!

They have lent their personal support to Pax Christi's staff and volunteers over the years, encouraging the efforts of the office teams. Marjorie and James have been an inspiration to many, in their persistence in the work of bringing peace. They have not given up, nor lost hope or perspective, but persevered on their journey of life, in faith to the Gospel.

**Rachel Kane** is second-in-charge of the R.E. department at Our Lady's Convent High School, Hackney. Rachel has pursued peace issues for the last 8 to 10 years. The Sixth Form R.E. curriculum contains a Peace component and Rachel has used this to invite Pax Christi to the school on a number of occasions.

Rachel has championed 'Make Poverty History'; has organised a mock UN debate at the school with Bruce Kent as chair; she has facilitated war correspondent Stephen Grey to speak on 'The Nature of Modern Warfare' and has introduced the work of 'Justice not Vengeance'. Rachel has led several trips to Russia to enhance international contacts and overall she has contributed to building a vibrant, caring and egalitarian community at the school.



Marjorie and James with Bishop Malcolm