

## Diary

15 February (Mon)

Aldermaston

Blockade from 7 am onwards of the Atomic Weapons Establishment where new nuclear weapons are being developed. Organised by Trident Ploughshares. email [blockawe@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:blockawe@yahoo.co.uk).

For transport details from London call London Region CND on 0207 607 2302

17 February (Wed)

London

Ash Wednesday annual witness against nuclear weapons at the Ministry of Defence in Whitehall. Time and further details to be confirmed: [www.paxchristi.org.uk](http://www.paxchristi.org.uk)

27 February (Sat)

Huddersfield

Network for Peace AGM Polling Day plus One - Where next for the peace movement? At Friends Meeting House. Details 07794 036602

1 March (Mon)

London

Christian CND walk to embassies of the nuclear weapons states asking about progress in disarmament. Details 020 7700 4200 or [christians@cnduk.org](mailto:christians@cnduk.org)

4 March (Thurs)

South Coast

Flame of Hope relay walk from Dungeness to Hastings. This is Christian CND's leg of the march from Dover to Southampton being organised by the World Court Project. The flame is being taken from Hiroshima to New York for the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty review conference at the UN. More details: [www.abolitionflame.org/?p=138](http://www.abolitionflame.org/?p=138)

8 March

International

International Women's Day. Use the Pax Christi postcards to send to women peacemakers you know.

14-18 March (Mon-Fri)

Poland

Visit Krakow and Auschwitz with Pilgrim Journeys of Encounter and Christians Aware. Led by Revd. Andrew Ashdown. Details: [www.wider-horizons.org](http://www.wider-horizons.org)

23 March (Tue)

London

The Modern Period: The Holocaust and its aftermath. Speakers, Rabbi Mark Solomon and Dr Margaret Brearley. Day Seminar, cost £15.00 at Sion Centre for Dialogue and Encounter, 34 Chepstow Villas, London W11 2QZ. Tel 020 7313 8286

16-17 April (Fri-Sat)

London

Peace History conference at the Imperial War Museum will include presentation by young entrants to Pax Christi's schools' competition on peace heroes and heroines. Details later from [www.abolishwar.org.uk](http://www.abolishwar.org.uk)

5 - 11 June

London

The Pax Christi ICON of Peace will be at St Ethelburga's Centre of Peace and Reconciliation, London. We will offer daily meditations, schools workshops on themes of reconciliation and peacemaking, evening meetings. See website for details [www.paxchristi.org.uk](http://www.paxchristi.org.uk)

19 June (Sat)

Oxford

Pax Christi Annual General Meeting. Venue to be confirmed. Speaker Dr Jane Clements, Director of Forum of Discussion of Israel and Palestine (FODIP)

2-10 August (Mon-Tues)

Vézelay, France

European peace walk through Burgundy, inspired by St Francis. For 18-35 age-group. Co-sponsored by Pax Christi France. Details: [www.vezelay2010.com](http://www.vezelay2010.com)

## Office Report

### Annual General Meeting and Elections

Please put our AGM date, 19 June, in your diary. As a membership organisation this is an important event in our annual calendar - a great opportunity to meet with others and share on our approaches to peacemaking. It is also a time to elect new members to our Executive Committee, the group that manages the work of the Movement. The Executive Committee is drawn from the membership and meets at least six times a year. Those of you who have an interest in this can find out more about the role from the office. We welcome new ideas, new experiences new people, to don't hold back!

### New Volunteers

In recent months we have welcomed three new volunteers to the office, Ann Milner from Hitchin, Sr Monica O'Brien, Peter MacNamara and Jackie Coleman, both from London. We greatly appreciate the skills and enthusiasm of our volunteers - we could not do all we do without them. Here are some of our volunteers in their 'Bollywood' outfits at our Christmas party.



Jackie, Mary Ann, Nuala and Ann

### Christmas Messages to Bethlehem

Our partners in Bethlehem were delighted with the number of messages received from the UK. This is an excellent way to show simple solidarity with the people of Palestine. You can read all of the messages at this weblink: [www.aeicenter.org/ChristmasPrayers2009](http://www.aeicenter.org/ChristmasPrayers2009)

## 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](mailto:info@paxchristi.org.uk) [www.paxchristi.org.uk](http://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.

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# Justpeace PAX CHRISTI

International Catholic Movement for Peace

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## Giving up Trident

Let us suppose, purely as a thought experiment, that following the general election next year and the ensuing Defence Review, the newly elected government decides not simply to cancel the Trident replacement programme but to take the existing fleet of out of service forthwith, disposing of the submarines and their reactors, returning the missiles to their owners (the Americans), dismantling the warheads and directing Aldermaston onto work related to disarmament and non-proliferation. If it did this what would we be losing?

The stated aim of Trident is to form 'an essential part of our capability for deterring blackmail and acts of aggression against our vital interests by nuclear-armed opponents'. This is a strange argument because, in giving up Trident, we should simply be joining the 30 odd other countries (mostly in NATO) sheltering under the American nuclear umbrella. If during the next half century that were to collapse, we should be alongside the other 150 odd countries that have chosen to join the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) as permanent non-nuclear weapon states. If these are all potential victims of blackmail or aggression by Russia, China or whoever else may go nuclear in the next fifty years, it does not seem to distress them unduly. The British government has suggested two particular dangers. One is that countries might 'seek to sponsor nuclear terrorism from their soil'. If they did so they would be most unlikely to declare the fact. The identification of the Afghan Taliban with Al Qaeda and thus with 9/11 is an exception that proves the rule. The other possibility is that a nuclear armed state might seek to deter us... 'from taking the action required to maintain regional and global security'. That is, from intervening as a 'force for good' or at least 'punching above our weight'. Some might prefer us not to do this anyway. But countries without nuclear weapons do not, in practice, knuckle under to pressure from those who have them. America was defeated by the North Vietnamese in 1975 and backed down in the face of casualties on many other fronts, most notably the Tehran hostage crisis (1980), Beirut (1983), and Mogadishu (1993). The Soviet Union was defeated by the Afghans. In none of these cases were nuclear weapons any help to the possessors.

The same applies to Britain. It cannot be shown that, by reason of its nuclear arsenal, Britain has been able to take any action vis-à-vis another country that it could not otherwise have undertaken, or prevented any action that it could not otherwise have prevented. British nuclear weapons did not deter Argentina from attempting to annex the Falkland Islands in 1982, nor did they help Britain to recover them. If we are so keen on intervention it would make more sense to spend the several billion pounds a year saved by cancelling Trident on armed forces that actually take part in these



Japanese guest, Aldermaston

operations. The most that can be claimed for our being a nuclear weapons state is that it has given us influence in promoting arms control measures and exercising our powers as a permanent member of the Security Council on issues of peace and war. Even if it is true this is a loss principally to British self-esteem - not least vis-à-vis the French!

On the plus side, by giving up Trident we should be supporting the aim, so ably articulated by President Obama, of 'getting to zero'. The point is often made that would-be proliferators (like Iran) are driven to go nuclear by their own domestic and regional concerns and would not be dissuaded by British renunciation. But any argument in favour of non-proliferation is shot to ribbons so long as this country - one of the least threatened on earth - continues to claim that nuclear weapons are 'an essential part of our capability'. And even if we grant that Britain's action will have no effect on any other country, this demolishes the other frequently heard argument that we should only renounce Trident as part of some grand multilateral bargaining process. On the contrary, if it is the right thing to do we should do it now.

Hugh Beach, Vice Chair of Council for Christian Approaches to Defence and Disarmament

# Make real the hope of a nuclear weapon free world

## Reflection from Nagasaki - Archbishop of Canterbury

*This is an address given at the epicentre of the atomic bomb blast in Nagasaki, September 2009*

There are no victories in human history without their element of tragedy. Victory in human affairs always means that someone has lost. And this usually means that life or welfare, hope or security has been lost.

But sometimes the victory has been gained at the price of such violence that we have to say that everyone has lost. Those who have won the conflict have lost some dimension of their own life, their own welfare and integrity.

To see the effects of the use of the atomic bomb here in Nagasaki is to see how this degree of slaughter and violence leaves everyone defeated. The wholesale killing of the innocent and the destruction of an entire environment, natural as well as cultural, the long-term effects, physical and psychological, on those who survived - all of this constitutes a wound that affects the attackers as well as the victims.

The Catholic writer Ronald Knox, commenting in 1945 upon the events that took place in August that year, said that the bomb was an attack on faith, hope and love - an attack on the central virtues of Christian existence.

That attack will continue so long as weapons of mass destruction like nuclear armaments are used as threats in international conflict. They are necessarily indiscriminate; that is, they will always kill the innocent.



Remains of statue of St Agnes, Nagasaki Cathedral, UN New York

They destroy the living environment; they have long-term effects on every aspect of the material and organic world. To plan a strategy around such weapons is to be defeated by them. To threaten such an outrage against humanity and its world is to begin to lose one's moral and human dignity. To work for a world free from nuclear arms is to work for the sake of that moral and human dignity.



Clear message, Aldermaston 2008

It is tempting to think that the task is too difficult. Once we have discovered this destructive technology, we cannot pretend it does not exist. Yet equally we cannot - if we are serious about our human dignity - behave as though we had no choice, as if we were the slaves of what our own hands had made. That would be a kind of idolatry: a sin against the God who has made us free to choose between life and death. However precisely we seek to make real the hope of a world without nuclear arms, we should not lose sight of the need to make real moral choices about them. Even a small step is an act of witness.

Dr Takashi Nagai, the great saint and sage of Christian Nagasaki, wrote in his remarkable book, *The Bells of Nagasaki*, that in the age of atomic energy humanity had grasped hold of a 'two-edged sword', hidden by God in the fabric of the universe and at last put into our hands: but, he went on, 'to turn to the left or the right' as we hold this sword 'is entrusted to the free will of the human

family' (p.116). His book ends, unforgettably, with the sound of the cathedral bells ringing for the Angelus - the call to prayer that is heard three times each day in the bells of Catholic (and some Anglican) churches. It commemorates the moment when the angel tells the Virgin Mary that she is chosen to be the mother of the Saviour. And it commemorates Mary's response - her choice to accept that calling.

Human freedom can start a process that transfigures the whole world. Mary's acceptance is the beginning of God's action in renewing the creation through Jesus. You could almost say that it sets up a 'chain reaction' through the human race. And even now our free actions of turning to God and doing his will have effects greater than we can see or understand - though we see a little of how such processes work when we look at the lives of Christian men and women who say yes to God's call in the most terrible and demanding situations - just as Takashi Nagai said yes, and helped to bring hope and meaning back to so many lives.

Freedom matters. And the free choice that unleashed destruction on this city also started a chain reaction - literally in the massive force of an explosion, less directly in the long-term devastation caused by radiation, symbolically in starting the age of atomic and nuclear rivalry between nations. It is like a negative image of the creative impetus of freedom turned towards God.

Our prayer must be that this creative impetus will break through the chains we have fastened on ourselves, so that we can live in the certainty that there will never be a repetition of the terrible fate visited on this city, and that we shall discover by God's grace and guidance how to live together without the threat of mass killing.

'Choose life', says God to his people in the Bible. May his own free love set us free to make that choice.

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## Resources for education and campaigning

Use this issue of *Justpeace* to take action yourself and help others become more aware of the opportunities that are before us to make the world free of nuclear weapons. There are campaigning and advocacy opportunities with an upcoming General Election and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty meetings in New York in May. There are opportunities to witness and protest, as people of faith, against illegal and immoral policies. Take part in the Big Blockade at Aldermaston on 15 February or the annual witness against nuclear war preparations at the Ministry of Defence in London, or arrange a vigil or action at a local nuclear site on 17 February, Ash Wednesday. Liturgy materials will be on our website.

### Sadako's Cranes for Peace.

An excellent education resources for Year 5 and 6 using the story of Sadako to introduce children to the impact of nuclear weapons and their first use in Hiroshima. Linked to Literacy and Citizenship aspects of the curriculum. Produced by CND's Peace Education programme. Available free from Pax Christi

### [www.reachingcriticalwill.org/resources/edkit](http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/resources/edkit)

This is a very useful website of the Women's International League for Peace & Freedom. They offer education materials for use with young people as well as up-to-date information on international disarmament initiatives, discussion and campaigning

### [www.rethinktrident.org.uk](http://www.rethinktrident.org.uk)

A multi-sponsored project, supported by MPs, Church leaders (including our own Bishop Malcolm Mc Mahon) for cancellation of the replacement of Trident. The site has good background on Trident and a statement that can be supported on-line.

### [www.icanw.org.uk/](http://www.icanw.org.uk/)

A campaign calling for an end to nuclear weapons through a Nuclear Weapons Convention which will make nuclear weapons illegal, banning their development, possession, use and threat of use. An international project, supported by Pax Christi.

### Support Trident Ploughshares -

[www.tridentploughshares.org](http://www.tridentploughshares.org)  
Trident Ploughshares is a campaign to disarm the UK Trident nuclear weapons

system in a non-violent, open, peaceful and fully accountable manner. Their website has lots of useful information from background on the Ploughshares movement to legal briefings on taking nonviolent actions and background documents on the role of Aldermaston Atomic Weapons Establishment and Trident. Also very helpful details of the 15 February blockade at Aldermaston which will include a 'Faith Gate' - the Tadley Gate.

### Disarm Now Plowshares -

<http://disarmnowplowshares.wordpress.com/>  
In the early hours of 2 November 2009 (All Souls Day) Bill Bischel, SJ, Susan Crane, Lynne Greenwald, Steve Kelly, SJ and Anne Montgomery RSCJ, entered the Naval Base Kitsap-Bangor. This is the largest nuclear weapon storage area in the US. Their action was to call attention to the illegality and immorality of the existence of the first strike Trident weapons system. They were arrested but later released and their trial is still pending and they seek support. Their website offers insights into their actions, background on the US Plowshare movement and good links to related sites.

## Some words from Church leaders

Today's world demands a courageous leadership in reducing those arsenals to a complete zero. In order to achieve this, States need trust and security. Nuclear weapon-free zones are the best example of trust, confidence and affirmation that peace and security is possible without possessing nuclear weapons. The Holy See thus encourages the nuclear-weapon States and those which possess such weapons to ratify all the protocols to the Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone treaties and strongly supports efforts to establish such a zone in the Middle East.

*Archbishop Dominique Mamberti, the Vatican's Secretary for Relations with States, UN Security Council, September 2009*

In Catholic teaching, the task is not to make the world safer through the threat of nuclear weapons, but rather to make the world safer from nuclear weapons through mutual and verifiable nuclear disarmament. This will require both bilateral and multilateral cooperation.

*Archbishop Edwin O'Brien, Delivered at the Deterrence Symposium, Nebraska, USA, July 2009*

Disarming now, reversing the decision to replace Trident with a new system, would show Britain to be truly great... Ultimately, to continue with a new generation of Trident, whether three submarines or four, 200 warheads or 160, is to admit failure and weakness. It would be weakness because weak people and weak nations do not trust their own resources, do not see their own natural strengths as adequate, and instead saddle themselves with the tools and trappings of power and might. But as people of faith we believe that only God should come with power and might.

*Cardinal Keith O'Brien, of St Andrews and Edinburgh Diocese, Scotland.*