



Justice and Peace Scotland

Ceartas agus Sith

NEWSLETTER

December-February, 2024/25

Mass for COP29



The weeping of Jesus over the destruction he knew was to come for Jerusalem was invoked by Archbishop William Nolan as he reflected on where the world finds itself at the recent mass held at St Andrew's Cathedral in Glasgow to offer prayers for COP29.

Attended by pupils and teachers from schools across the Archdiocese of Glasgow, a congregation of around 200 heard the appeals of the Archbishop as global warming wreaks devastation. "Prophets in the old Testament...called on people to change their way of life," he said. "We too are now being called to change our way of life. We can't go on living the way we are doing now - that is destroying our planet, destroying our common home. So we have to make changes."

The mass - organised jointly by the Justice & Peace Scotland, the Care of Creation office and SCIAF - was followed by an illuminating live link up and question and answer session with Ben Wilson from the actual COP conference in Baku, Azerbaijan.

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BACK SCOTTISH BISHOPS OVER FOSSIL FUEL TREATY TO ADDRESS CLIMATE CRISIS

The Scottish bishops have shown leadership in publicly endorsing the creation of a Non-Proliferation Fossil Fuel Treaty ([read full statement here](#)). This welcome step signals a growing momentum from powerful voices across the world in recognising the moral and the scientific case to tackle climate change.

However, in an increasingly 'synodal' church, we all have our role to play. Parishes and individuals too can sign up to the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty [here](#) and all of us can write to our MPs, MSPs and local councillors calling on our local authorities, the Scottish Government and the UK Government to do the same.

Climate change is real and increasingly terrifying, especially for people in the poorest parts of the world. This year flooding in Europe and hurricanes in the US have taken hundreds of lives and caused billions of pounds of damage, whilst a climate-induced drought across large parts of Africa has driven millions to the brink of famine.

Future generations are looking to this generation to step up and start acting like we're in the perilous situation that we are in. Despite this fact, unfathomably, countries across the world are continuing to commission new fossil fuel projects. They are legally allowed to do so because the Paris Agreement - following intense pressure in its drafting by big oil producing nations - does not adequately prevent countries from doing what they need to do and ensuring to "keep it in the ground".

This is why we need a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty established soon to fill the gaps in the global agreements on climate change and drive us towards the future we need to urgently build.

All the "natural" disasters we see in front of our eyes and the mountain of scientific evidence has still not inspired world leaders to get on track to saving the planet. It is clear that creating action on climate change requires people power.

We invite everyone to do all they can to raise their voice about this initiative, knowing that it is through raising our voices and living lives of justice and peace that we can help build the Kingdom of God here on earth.

Ben Wilson, SCIAF

ROMERO LECTURE

For us here at Edinburgh Jesuit Church of the Sacred Heart, it was an exciting privilege to put on the second Romero Lecture, in partnership with so many good people. In this church, we hold a first-class relic of the saint and we're currently renovating our little Romero Chapel, where the relic is exposed, visited by many people for quiet reflection every day. We were delighted to welcome Bishop Ken Nowakowski, our guest speaker.

We knew it would be important that we not simply rehearse the narrative of St. Oscar's martyrdom, outstanding and inspiring though that story always will be. We wanted to be led into a deeper reflection of the implications and lessons of his violent death and that of his Jesuit friend and fellow martyr, Bl. Rutilio Grande SJ, for whose own canonisation we fervently pray.

What particularly pleased us all was our collaboration. We worked with SCIAF, the Romero Trust, Pax Christi Scotland, Independent Catholic News and Justice & Peace Scotland (the Bishops' Conference J&P Commission) to put this on. Each agency contributed to the event. We worked together, not competitively but collaboratively. This was a Synodal Pathway! We showed it could be done. And we'll do it again.

Fr David Stewart, clergy commissioner, J&PS

[Watch event here](#)



REFLECTION

"The homily is not being 'political' when it points out political, social and economic sins. It is simply the word of God becoming incarnate in our reality, which often reflects not God's reign but sin."

St Oscar Romero, 1979.

Action on Assisted Suicide Bill

Dangers of the proposed bill to legalise euthanasia are coming under greater spotlight as MPs prepare to debate the legislation on Friday (November 29) - with a vote expected that could impact on similar proposals in Scotland. Please consider writing to your MP to ask them to reject a bill that fails to recognise the value and dignity of all, especially at end of life, with vulnerable groups and desperately needed improvements in palliative care place under threat. [For guide to contacting your MP click here.](#)

Be The Change



The need for Fair Trade to be embedded in a circular and sustainable economy. This was one of the messages delivered as Justice & Peace Scotland in September attended the Scottish Fair Trade Forum Campaigners' Conference - under the banner Be The Change. Malawian rice farmer Howard Msukwa, of KASFA (Kaporo Smallholder Farmers Association), offered the Global South perspective. In business partnership with True Origin, he highlighted the need for partnerships to sustain applying Fair Trade criteria and so avoid the alternative exploitative trade patterns in difficult environments such as Central Africa, a region where the effects of climate change have accelerated the need for mechanised logistical support such as irrigation pumps.

Meanwhile, Kat Jones, from Action to Protect Rural Scotland, highlighted importance of grassroots campaigning and how Fair Trade principles should have a greater role in COP discussions, while other keynote speaker Louise Davies, of Scotland's International Development Alliance, impressed the need for the wellbeing economy to be supported to ensure sustainability and global trade justice.

[Read Kat Jones' blog on J&PS website here.](#)

'NAE NUKES' IS STAND FOR PEACEFUL WORLD

The placards laid out on the steps of the Royal Concert Hall in Glasgow on United Nations International Day of Peace in late September powerfully told of the Scottish peace movement's unwillingness to accept nuclear weapons, and the immoral spend on them, as a feature of modern life.

One facet of the gathering under the banner 'Nae Mair Money for Nukes, Gie's Peace', organised by the Reclaim our Clyde campaign, the placards sought to raise awareness of the billions wasted on weapons of mass destruction - the cost of these to the UK government alone \$6.5m, with the outrage of \$387m spent on them globally across the past five years to only make the world a more dangerous place.

Justice & Peace Scotland and colleagues from Pax Christi Scotland joined with representatives from ICAN (International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons), Scottish Peace Network, Reclaim our Clyde, Don't Bank on the Bomb, Peace Education Scotland, Global Justice Now, Campaign Against the Arms Trade and Scottish CND to challenge the rhetoric around these weapons.

As well as speaking to members of the public about how better the inconceivable sums squandered on the nuclear arsenal - by only nine nations - could be better spent, the afternoon witnessed a well-received performance from Protest in Harmony choir, and brief addresses from a number of campaigners. Among them MSP Bill Kidd, who is currently the convenor of the Cross Party Group on Nuclear Disarmament in the Scottish Parliament.

As one placard spelled out over the claim we must possess armaments that are no deterrent: it is nuclear weapons we can't afford.



SEASON OF CREATION



The Justice & Peace Scotland network came alive for the Season of Creation, held across September and early October. As care and prayer for our common home became the focus for events across the country.

The opening weekend brought the first Season of Creation Conference - joint-badged by Justice & Peace Scotland, SCIAF and the CoC office. The day, in St Mary's Raploch Stirling, provided an opportunity for members of various agencies across Scotland to discuss how the put Care of Creation work and Laudato Si work into practice. Justice & Peace Scotland's own Anne-Marie Clements and SCIAF's Ben Wilson (pictured bottom left) gave talks at an event with representatives from every diocese.

A centrepiece of the season was the zoom lecture given by Fr Josh Kureethadam (pictured top left), entitled *To hope and act with Creation - rooted in Laudato Si and Laudate Deum*. The coordinator of Ecology and Creation at the Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development painted the preciousness, precariousness and pitiless nature of life on our planet, in an event co-ordinated by Rab Burnett, active in J&PS and CoC.

Towards the end of the period, The Feast of St Francis of Assisi (October 4th) marked the fourth Diocese of Aberdeen Prayer for Creation service, in Mannofield, Aberdeen, (picture top right) which proved to be a beautiful and intimate event.

Two days later, the joint Youth groups and Justice & Peace groups of St Andrew's, Bearsden and St Joseph's, Milngavie, held a thanksgiving service with a Rosary for Creation (picture bottom right), which included prayers of intercession from the local primary school children, and concluded with a 'Hope' reflection and blessing.

Forthcoming Events

Saturday, 30th November, STUC Anti-Racism March, Muster at Glasgow Green at 10.30am

The annual St Andrew's Day Anti-Racism march in Glasgow celebrates its 40th anniversary this year. Unfortunately, Justice & Peace Scotland are not able to attend with our banner as we have a meeting of the Nation J&P Commission at the same time. However, we do encourage supporters and local groups to support this important gathering.



Wednesday, 4th December, Blessing of the Crib, George Square, Glasgow, 6.30pm

All welcome at this event, which will be attended by Archbishop William Nolan. Organised by the office of Lord Provost Councillor Jaqueline McLaren and Glasgow Churches Together, St Monica's primary school choir will sing a selection of carols with traditional music from Alba Brass.



Thursday, 5th December, Reflections on the conclusion of the Synod on Synodality, Immaculate Conception Church Hall, 2049 Maryhill Road, Glasgow, 7.30pm

Rev. Father Thomas Magill PhD will give the talk on the Synod, organised by Newman Association (Glasgow Circle). All welcome to free event at which donations are accepted.

Sunday, December 15th, Carols for Peace, Glasgow City Chambers, George Square. Doors open 2.30pm, event starts 3pm.

Join church leaders and Glasgow Churches Together, along with Lord Provost, Councillor Jacqueline McLaren and other civic leaders in the annual carol service for peace. Supported by the St Mungo Singers, Ukrainian Singers and children's choir, South Side Fiddlers, St Denis' Primary School, piper, harpist and St Mungo Music Ensemble. Prayers for peace throughout the world will be said, and in particular for Bethlehem, Glasgow's twin city. Refreshments will be provided afterwards in the Satinwood Suite overlooking George Square in all its Christmas splendour, and where the Crib has a place of prominence.



ENCOURAGING SIGNS IN LATEST HOLYROOD TALKS AMID NEW ASK IN FAIR PAY FOR CARERS CAMPAIGN

The Fair Pay For Carers campaign produced constructive talks with Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care, Neil Gray, in a meeting held at the Scottish Parliament in September.

Attended by Justice & Peace Scotland clergy commissioner Fr David Stewart, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, Rt Revd Shaw Paterson, and CEO of CrossReach CEO Viv Dickenson, the developed ask of 10% above the real living wage for carers was communicated to the Cabinet Secretary, who provided undertakings that he will engage in further dialogue and be open to further in-person representations.

Speaking after the meeting, Fr Stewart said he was encouraged that the Cabinet Secretary sees the importance of engaging and listening to the faith communities. "Placing the proper value on those who provide care is crucial to demonstrating that we value those for whom they provide care and not see them as a problem to be solved. And we ask that those in power appreciate the role of faith communities when they deliver around a quarter of social care provision."

