

JUSTICE & PEACE

THE JUSTICE & PEACE GROUP NEWSLETTER OF SS JOSEPH & SWITHUN, BROMLEY
AUTUMN 2018

GLOBAL HEALING

In his second encyclical, *Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home*, Pope Francis begins his letter to the people of the world with the words "LAUDATO SI', mi' Signore" – "Praise be to you, my Lord" – praising God the Lord of creation and drawing all Christians into a dialogue with every person on the planet about our common home. We as human beings are united by the concern for our planet, and every living thing that dwells on it, especially the poorest and most vulnerable. Pope Francis' letter joins the body of the Church's social and moral teaching and draws on the best scientific research, providing the foundation for "the ethical and spiritual itinerary that follows".

"In the heart of this world, the Lord of life, who loves us so much, is always present. He does not abandon us, he does not leave us alone, for he has united himself definitively to our earth, and his love constantly impels us to find new ways forward. Praise be to him!"

– Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*

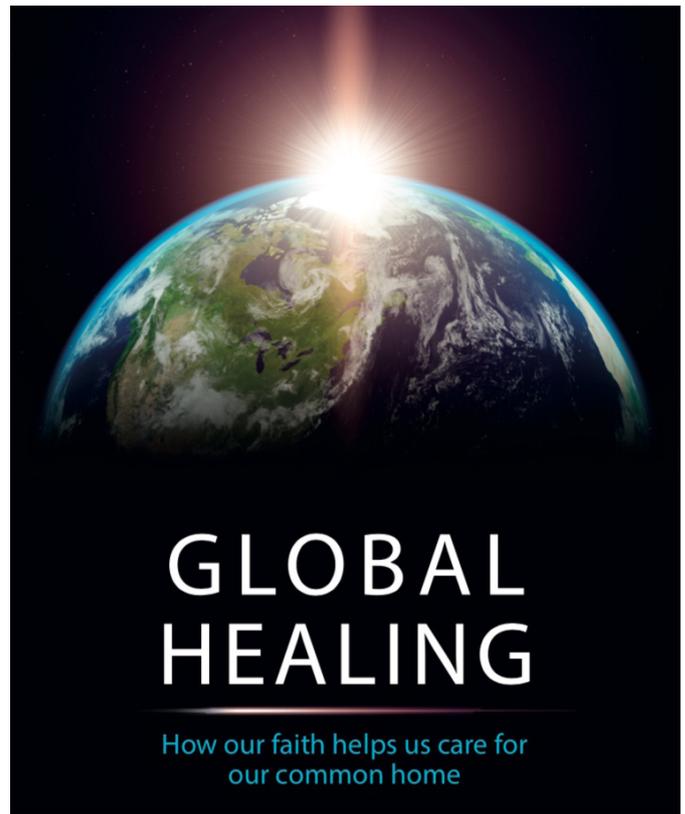
Come and join our parish Advent events and reflect on how we can find new ways forward to care for our common home and our finite resources – in our homes, our parish, our world:

- Wednesday 28 November – Shared supper and Global Healing film showing
- Wednesday 5 December – Sharing session on Global Healing.

These two sessions will prepare us to be in tune with our world away from the commercial rush of Christmas.

Caring for our Common Home

On 2 June, about 30 people from all over our diocese met for the Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Spring Assembly. Our topic of discussion was based on *Laudato Si'*: What does God want us to do with our world? How do we get the balance between living in our world and caring for our world?



It proved to be a vast subject with lots of very informative presentations, discussions, sharing of experiences.

We discussed ideas for our parishes as well as some that we could implement as individuals. Here are some of those ideas:

- Sustainable lifestyles – the 3 Rs – Reduce, Reuse, Recycle
- Reduce your carbon footprint – look at food, energy use, transport
- Appreciate water
- Speak out locally in favour of the poor and of the Earth.

■ For more ideas, link with Green Christian www.greenchristian.org.uk and use your LOAF – Locally produced, Organically grown, Animal friendly and Fairly traded – whenever you can.

Fabienne Brazzill

BROMLEY HOMELESS SHELTER

We've had a long, hot and dry summer, which may be great for many people, but not if you are sleeping rough and find it difficult to get adequate supplies of drinking water.

In spite of government and charity efforts to reduce the number of rough sleepers, the numbers continue to rise. In 2017 over 1,000 people were sleeping rough on any night in London alone, and this may be a low estimate, because rough sleepers tend to sleep where they cannot be found.

Last winter the Mayor of Bromley, Kathy Bance, asked the Bromley Homeless Shelter to open a Winter Homeless Shelter in the north-west corner of Bromley borough. A suitable building has been found, and it is planned to open the shelter just before the New Year 2019.

Starting a new shelter requires a lot of money and work, from fitting out the building with beds, bed-linen, cupboards and so on, to recruiting and training a new and largely inexperienced team of over 100 volunteers. So we may lose some of our existing Bromley volunteers to work with teams in the new shelter.

If you would like to consider volunteering for either of the Bromley shelters, please come along to the Volunteer Information morning on Saturday 3 November at 9.45 at Christ Church Beckenham, just for 90 minutes. You will be able to hear from and talk to experienced volunteers and can sign up on the day.

The other important date is the Annual Sleep-out on Friday 16 November at Bromley Parish Church (behind Primark); last year several of our parishioners slept out and raised over £1,000, so please sponsor someone who

will be sleeping out this year. Or try sleeping out yourself to raise funds for the shelters – you will have lots of good food, good company, and support.

■ More information from www.bromleyshelter.org

CHRISTIAN UNITY

In what seems to be an increasingly anti-religious society, we look to our parish priests, deacons and pastoral leaders for guidance on how we should conduct our lives as Catholics. We may feel alone and isolated but we are not. St Joseph and St Swithun is one of 12 parishes in the Bromley Deanery, which is part of the Diocese of Southwark, one of 22 dioceses within England. So we have strength in numbers and can be confident in our faith.

At the recent International Conference of Catholic Theological Ethics in the World Church, held in Sarajevo, Pope Francis gave the following guidance: *“Be faithful to God’s word, appreciate others’ viewpoints even if you do not agree, and show solidarity with and accompany others.”*

How can we apply those words of Pope Francis in Bromley, densely populated with all the advantages and problems that this entails, with areas of affluence, but also some of the most deprived areas in the UK? Here are a few ideas to take forward:

- We need to be more aware of what others in our deanery and diocese are doing, so that we can learn best practice from their experiences.
- We need to increase our awareness of the problems experienced by some members of our community. Where help is needed beyond what our own parish could provide, we need to work with other like-minded communities to achieve better results. We already do this to some extent, working with other churches in the area helping the homeless and those in unmanageable debt. Parishioners already volunteer for the Bromley Homeless Shelter; more volunteers will be needed when a second shelter opens in January 2019. Could you help? Find out more about the work of the CAP (Christians Against Poverty) Bromley Partnership and think how you could help in the work that it does.
- We could do more to help older people avoid having to go into care by visiting them regularly in their own homes; find out more about the work that the local charity Careplus does, and if possible give them a few hours of your time. It will make a great difference to an older person.



Volunteer Information Morning
Saturday 3 November 2018
Christ Church, Beckenham, BR3 3LE
9.45 tea/coffee
10.00 start
11.30 end

bromleyshelter.weebly.com
bromleyshelter@gmail.com

Want to learn more about how you could help Bromley's homeless this winter? Come along and learn how you could join our team

The Bromley Homeless Shelter | Registered Charity 1163353

If you hear of other great initiatives in our community or via other churches in our deanery, please let our parish office know so that everyone can get to hear about them.

CAREPLUS

Careplus is a registered charity offering a free volunteer support service to over-65s in the Borough of Bromley. Did you know that according to 2014 figures our borough has the largest elderly population of all London boroughs and a greater proportion of people aged 85+ than any other London borough?

It is vital to encourage this group to participate in the community, maintain independence, and stay active and healthy – and to help them remain in their own homes if they wish to.

Careplus volunteers help with tasks like shopping, gardening, transport to medical appointments and personal administration. They also befriend those who cannot get out of the house and feel lonely. We believe that older people prefer to remain in their own homes if at all possible but that they sometimes need a little help to make this a reality.

Currently Careplus has around 40 volunteers helping about 70 older people, whose average age is almost 90. However, they are experiencing a growth in applications for assistance and, like many local organisations, have a shortage of volunteers, which has led to some older people having to be on a waiting list for help.

■ If you are free for one or two hours a week and wish to help, whatever your age, please contact Miranda, the Careplus coordinator, on 07930 955398.

CAFOD

St Joseph and St Swithun's CAFOD group has been going for many years. We meet monthly to discuss topical issues and look at ways to raise awareness and funds for CAFOD projects within the parish community.

Alongside the two fast days a year the group tries to raise other funds which are directed to a specific linked community. In recent years this has been Puentecitos, in El Salvador, and we receive regular updates on how the money has been spent – the focus of the link is to assist long-term development rather than alleviating short-term crises. The group have recently decided to move their support to the new "Hands On" programme that CAFOD have organised within Colombia. The reason for this is our close understanding of the problems facing that country given that one of our members has

worked tirelessly on the Colombian peace process over the past few years. We have previously organised talks in the parish to highlight the difficulties and progress of building peace in South America.

The group receive information about CAFOD national campaigns and also about other talks and events that are organised centrally. We try to disseminate this through the weekly parish bulletin when appropriate.

PACT (PRISON ADVICE AND CARE TRUST)

Pact's mission is to support prisoners and their families to make a fresh start and to minimise the harm that can be caused by imprisonment on people who have committed offences, on families and communities. In a recent Ministry of Justice report, it was found that reoffending can be reduced by as much as 39% through maintaining meaningful relationships while serving a prison sentence. Pact work to build stronger families and safe communities.

This is David's story: Last year, David was sentenced to two years in prison, leaving behind his three-year-old daughter Maisy. Before going to prison, David had played an active role in Maisy's life; he loved taking her to play group and watching her laugh and play with her friends. He really enjoyed being a dad. He was worried that while in prison he couldn't be in Maisy's life.

In his first few weeks in custody, social services got in touch with Emma, a Pact Family Engagement Worker in the prison, and asked what she could do to support David in maintaining his relationship with Maisy. Emma told David about Pact's parenting courses. The thing David missed the most was reading bedtime stories with Maisy, so he decided to get involved with Pact's Family Literacy in Prisons (FLiP) project.

As part of the FLiP course, David attended a two-day workshop where he learned more about Maisy's development, literacy and learning. The following week he attended the FLiP Family Day, a special visit where he was able to spend time with Maisy and put his new learnings into practice. They made puppets, told each other stories and he helped Maisy to write some of the letters of her name. He was overjoyed to be able to spend some quality time with his daughter.

Afterwards, David spoke with Emma and asked to get involved with more Pact family days so he could spend more time building his relationship

with Maisy. He also asked Emma to contact social services to let them know how much he enjoyed the course and to arrange for him to go on another parenting course when he is released.

■ Each year Pact support hundreds of fathers and mothers like David. Last year alone we provided relationship and parenting education programmes to 661 prisoners and their family members. For more information on our services or for support, visit www.prisonadvice.org.uk or call 0808 808 3444.

MIGRANTS

The mayor of a town in southern Italy famed for taking in migrants has been put under house arrest. Domenico Lucano, mayor of Riace, has been detained over his alleged involvement in organising “marriages of convenience” for immigration purposes, although the evidence for this seems flimsy. The arrest follows months of tougher migration enforcement from Italy’s populist government.

The mayor, known as Mimmo, made headlines around the world for his unusual programme that welcomed migrants to the sparsely populated town in Calabria, giving them abandoned homes and on-the-job training, in the hope that the new arrivals would rejuvenate the economy.

He started the programme in 1998 under a previous government, and since then hundreds of migrants have joined the small town of about 2,000 people. The success of the programme, praised by many as a model of integration, led to him being named one of the world’s 50 greatest leaders by *Fortune* magazine in 2016.

On Tuesday 2 October, he was arrested by Italy’s financial police as part of an investigation into allegedly facilitating illegal migration. We should pray that Domenico Lucano is freed to continue his compassionate and effective work; we should also pray for the success of our own efforts to integrate migrants into our communities, and we should look for ways to make this happen.

In particular let us pray for the success of a project bringing a Syrian refugee family to the UK to an empty property in Broadstairs, Kent. This has been on-going for months and hopefully the project is getting closer to a success.

MODERN SLAVERY

On Saturday 6 October, Saima Raza, Manager of the Croydon Community Against Trafficking (CCAT) team held an interactive session at St Joseph’s parish to discuss the various ways in which the youth of Bromley deanery can join the fight against modern slavery. The presentation focused on the role of CCAT, whose aim is to campaign and raise awareness about human trafficking, oppression and the enslavement of people, that exists in our community.

CCAT currently work with local, regional and national agencies to uncover incidences of modern slavery and to protect human rights. The session raised awareness of the prevalence of human trafficking, defined as the act of recruiting or transferring a person by means of coercion, abduction or deception for the purposes of exploitation. The presentation highlighted real-life examples of human enslavement, such as domestic servitude, forced labour, sexual exploitation and organ harvesting. Currently, 45.9 million people are enslaved in the world today and 30% of those trafficked are children, with the UK being the most prominent country for trafficked children.

Amongst the group, there was plenty of discussion around the factors which cause adults and children to become vulnerable to slavery along with some of the most significant signs which might indicate someone could be at risk.

CCAT currently operate in Croydon but are keen to reach out to neighbouring boroughs to raise awareness and to highlight ways we can all become involved in the fight against slavery. Discussion in the group concluded with agreement to consider running a campaign amongst the youth of the deanery and the parish community. It was felt that Faith in Action sessions could be an excellent forum in which to raise awareness amongst our youth and to fundraise in order to support the excellent work done by CCAT on behalf of the vulnerable members of our community.

■ For more information on CCAT, visit <http://theccat.com/>

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

You will be kept up to date with everything that is happening in our parish relating to justice and peace and the integrity of creation, both for the groups listed above, and also for the following groups and organisations.

- Racial justice
- Foodbank and other initiatives
- Catholic social teaching
- New shelter in NW Bromley
- CAP Bromley partnership group