



Archdiocese of Southwark
Commission for

Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation



Newsletter - Spring 2012

Why should we campaign? By Bernard White Volunteer Campaigns Coordinator CAFOD Southwark.

Justice & Peace workers and supporters in Southwark are very generous and everything that you do is highly valued. In this article, I want to say a few words about campaigning, to show how it sits with other Justice & Peace work and why it is important that we do it.

Did you know that more than £65,000 million (£65 billion) is now required every year so that poor countries can deal with the effects of climate change? This includes things like building a reservoir in Kenya to provide an extra three months' supply of water during the constant droughts that affect the people of that country.

For this kind of issue, it would be quite ineffective and inappropriate to try to raise money from our local communities. These amounts of money can only come from the Governments of the rich countries of the G8 and G20 and it is right that they should be asked to give it. The Gospels contain numerous teachings by Jesus that we should love one another, and, as Pope John Paul II said, this means taking action for one another and not only some vague feeling or expression of sympathy.

Therefore, our actions, as Justice & Peace workers should be directed in such cases to means that are effective to persuade governments to take notice of the issues and take the action required.

For this reason, charities such as CAFOD have run campaigns, in which they have asked members of the public, and in CAFOD's case, Catholics in England and Wales, to lobby relevant government ministers to take action to secure this government funding. It is fundamental to the success of such campaigns that large numbers of people take part in the lobby, which is normally done by simply signing a card to be sent to the minister, in order to show the strength of public feeling on the issue. Without that, it is far less likely that anyone will take notice.

In the picture you see, in the green shirt, Jose, whose house on a hillside in Tegucigalpa, the capital of Honduras, fell down the hill when it collapsed in 2008 after exceptionally huge amounts of rain fell in October of that year. This was one example of the extremes of weather caused by climate change. Jose, his wife and two children had to live in this shack after the collapse.



Not all campaigning is directed at governments. CAFOD's recent "Unearth Justice" Campaign sought to put pressure on the gold mining industry to clean up the way some gold is mined. It focussed on the St Martin mine in Honduras where the open cast mining caused damage to local people who were ejected from their homes, and to the environment in terms of poisoned water supplies and destruction of forestation.



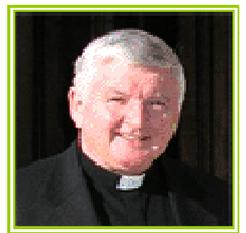
In this campaign, CAFOD supporters asked high street jewellers to sign up to twelve "golden rules" to bring about "clean" gold mining, by putting pressure on the mining companies who supplied the gold used to make the various golden jewellery items they sold. This campaign was successful because it was an action properly targeted to achieve the desired result.

In this short article, I hope that I have given you some idea how campaigning can be the most effective way, in the appropriate circumstances, to exercise our role as Christians and citizens to help the poor as Jesus instructed us to do.

I am appealing to all of you to, please, reflect on the significance and importance of campaigning, and to take up the campaigning mantle yourselves and encourage your families, friends, fellow parishioners and clergy to do so. If we do not campaign, we might turn our faces away from hugely benefitting the poor and those unjustly treated at great personal cost to them.

Fr Scanlon Interview: Sing for your Supper

Anne Collis is a young soprano from Rochester Kent who is trying to raise money on behalf of Mary's Meals. I knew Anne when she was a little blonde haired girl whilst I served at the Parish of English Martyrs Strood. She did seem to make a lot of noise back then but I'd thought I'd get to know a little bit more about the person she has grown into and the work of Mary's Meals, the charity she passionately supports.



So Anne, it's been a very long time since I last saw you... what have you been up to?

Well, it's been over 18 years, so I've done quite a lot but currently I'm doing an Occupational therapy degree at Canterbury Christ Church. It's going pretty well, but I still have a real passion for music and want to study Musical Performance at University afterwards. I've been trying to keep performing and singing even during studying, that's why I decided to make the CD for Mary's Meals.

Why did you decide to make a CD for charity?

Being at University, I felt that I was being quite selfish with my time. Everyday, you turn on the news and something awful is happening and you just wonder...Why didn't it happen to me? Why am I so lucky? The recent images of the East African drought really brought tears to my eyes. I reminded me of the Sudan crisis. I was 14 when that happened and tried to do something to help with the relief. The only thing I could really think of was singing, as that is what I am best at. So I made a CD for CAFOD and performed wherever I could to help with the cause. In the end it raised £17,000 but I had to wind the project down because of my GCSEs. I've always felt bad about having to close the project, I always wondered what happened to those people when the aid stopped coming. But now that I'm an adult I think that it is my duty to stand up and be counted and try to prevent something like this happening again.

Is there a story behind why you chose Mary's Meals?

It's a bit of a strange story really... I first heard about Mary's Meals in Medjugorje in 2008, when I shared a hotel with some Mary's Meals volunteers from Craig Lodge. They spoke so highly of the charity and I saw the shop in Medjugorje. After singing in front of the group they asked if I would be interested in singing for Mary's Meals, but shortly after the holiday we lost contact and everything was forgotten. Then in July 2011 I picked up a brochure from my university and realised how much the charity had grown, feeding over 580,000 children world wide. I was delighted and furthermore I felt inspired by how simple and effective the concept of Mary's Meals was. The sincerity and transparency of the charity was what drew me most. I loved the idea of helping to generate a future for children through feeding projects in schools rather than just foreign aid to meet the basic needs of those facing famine.



Mary's Meals sounds like a great charity and your story sounds very sincere, but is there anything that makes Mary's Meals stand out among other charities...or is it more because you know that Mary's Meals was inspired by Medjugorje?

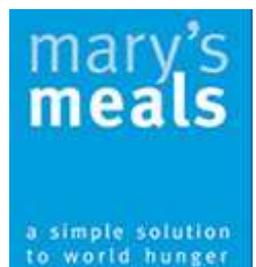
I think there are about 5 things that really make Mary's meals stand out: Sorry to re-illiterate but Mary's meals is simple, £9.15 will feed a child in a place of education for a year. That child can go to school not worrying where their next meal will come from, they do not have to work

It allows children to be children, to dream, to live to plan a future. So many children are deprived of an education and choices simply because they cannot satisfy their most basic right and need to eat. Their families watch in despair and either have to send their children to work or beg so that they can simply survive. Mary's Meal takes away so much of this worry. Furthermore, it improves children's concentration and performance at school. But what makes it stand out among other charities is it's transparency and ethic. 93p out of a pound goes straight to the cause, only 7p is spent on governance. This means that Mary's Meals is a charity run through selflessness and love. It is fuelled by volunteers from both the UK and abroad. Furthermore, it lifts communities, not just children out of poverty by ensuring that local produce is used within the school meals.

You sound very passionate about this cause, have you recorded the album with the themes of Mary's meals in Mind?

The album is a bit of an eclectic mix, but most of the songs are about hope, liberty and future aspirations. The first song of the album was written by Jason Robert Brown. It is sung through the eyes of a single young woman who discovers she is pregnant. Instead of turning away and running from the problem she thinks of & looks up to Mother Mary, swearing that, for the sake of her child, she'll suffer any pains for the future of the world. Every mother should be able to dream of a future of choice and independence for their child.

Anne's CD for Mary's Meals is available for £5.00. To find out more about Mary's Meals please go to their website. <http://www.marysmeals.org/>



From Fair Trade to Fair Justice

On 4th February Traidcraft ran a day of workshops and talks about Traidcraft's campaigning. In many ways the Fair Trade campaign has been a great success. From simple beginnings of instant coffee with a taste which put many off Fair Trade for years the UK market has now grown to £1.2 billion in 2011 and is helping 6 million workers.

Sainsbury's were quoted as saying that if you were to group all their Fair Trade suppliers into one they would be their second biggest supplier after Procter and Gamble.

There have been some great success stories. We were told that a Fair Trade project in Mali now enables 100% of the children in the community to go to school. The national average is only 40% as very many farmers are still being exploited and need their children to work to bring in the little money they can earn to help support the family. Other Fair Trade premiums are providing schools, hospitals and medical care.

In India there have been some great success stories where farmers have been encouraged to grow organic fair-trade fibre which can be sold at a premium but many farmers are still beholden to GM cotton and trapped in a vicious spiral of having to borrow money to buy GM seed and chemical fertilisers, the burden of debt often leading to suicide. The price difference is staggering: £10 for 100 grams of GM seed, compared with less than £10 for 1,000 times more traditional seeds.

One difficult question is whether we should concentrate on buying products from organisations like Traidcraft or go with supermarket own brand Fair Trade products.



Traidcraft do an excellent job and work hard with small farmers to help them produce Fair Trade goods. A recent example is work they have done with smallholders in Sri Lanka which is now enabling them to sell Fair Trade rubber gloves. They also provide regular contracts and promote innovation.

You could therefore argue that we should concentrate on buying from smaller organisations but supermarkets are moving to stock Fair Trade and produce own brand goods because the campaign over the years has produced a demand. If people stop buying from them and demand drops the goods will be de-listed and the people they are helping will lose the benefits their communities are gaining.

Two campaigns were particularly mentioned. There is a great need for a Grocery Code Adjudicator with powers to fine supermarkets and launch investigations based on credible information from third parties (e.g. trade associations, unions and charities).

The big four Supermarkets, Tesco, Asda, Sainsbury's and Morrisons control 75% of the market and are able to dictate to suppliers engendering a climate of fear. Of the £1.60 that the supermarket will charge for a box of non Fair Trade tea 1p will go to the growers. Closer to home farmers selling milk to supermarkets are struggling to break even on the price they can get.

Supermarkets will also give suppliers only an indication of the amount they wish to buy of a product leaving farmers open to having produced a surplus which is no longer required.

Traidcraft and others are encouraging us to write to our MPs to ensure that the creation of a "Grocery Code Adjudicator" - more commonly called a Supermarket Watchdog is part of the next Queen's Speech.

The second was a campaign to help stop unfair trade agreements which threaten the futures of 750 million people worldwide. Europe is negotiating Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) with 76 countries across Africa, the Caribbean and Pacific. These trade deals could have devastating effects on some of the world's poorest countries.

The agreements could up these countries markets not only to European goods but also to its service providers and investors. After Traidcraft supporters took action in December, Edward Davey, a minister in the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), has responded to what he describes as 'a large number of emails to the Government 'to consider a new approach to trade deals with Africa''. There is more information on the Traidcraft web site.

Ethical School Clothing: One company present at the event was Koolkools, a company which supplies ethical school clothing using Fair Trade cotton. For more information please check their web site ww.koolkools.co.uk e-mail andy@koolkools.co.uk or phone 023 8028 3223

We now have a twitter account @southwarkjandp The hope is to have followers with whom we can share news of campaigns and events so if you "tweet" please become a follower.

Its not too late to sign up - or just come along on the day to:

Practical Engagement in Justice & Peace

A day of training and workshops to help you make it happen.

**Saturday 10th March 10am to 4.00 (tea & coffee from 9.30)
at Amigo Hall, St George's Cathedral, SE1**

Choose 2 from a choice of 4 workshops

Why Campaign? how to make an impact - Bernard White

Putting Social Teaching into Action - Valerie Flessati

How to Live Simply in your Parish - Maria Elena Arana

Poverty (Closing the Gap) - Paul Morrison

All are welcome. Tea coffee and soup provided - bring lunch

No charge to attend but donations welcome.

To book a place e-mail office@southwarkjandp.co.uk or phone 0207 928 9742 and leave a message

OUR SPRING ASSEMBLY SATURDAY 19th MAY, THE NEW BARN, AYLESFORD PRIORY

Feed the Our World 

Speakers from CAFOD, Traidcraft, World Development Movement and Medway Food Bank.
10.30 to 4.00 All Welcome No charge to attend.

March 24th - War on Want: Blood Sweat and Gear - the Human Cost of the London Olympics

A day of discussion and workshops on how we how to take the fight to the sportswear companies, build solidarity and better links with Bangladeshi garment workers, and examine the impact of global sporting events on local communities. 10.30am – 5.00pm at Toynbee Hall, 28 Commercial Street, London E1 6LS. For more information and to register go to www.waronwant.org

March 30th - CAFOD Lent Lecture - Today's Challenge - the option for the poor and for the Earth

A reflection by Donal Door at Amigo Hall, St George's Cathedral, SE1. Reception 6pm for 7pm start. To book a place e-mail jbarrett@cafod.org.uk

March 31st - Peace Walk around the Olympic site

10.45am for a prompt start at 11.00am. The walk begins and ends at Bromley-by-Bow underground station. 100 Days of Peace worker, Colette Joyce, will lead the walk round the Olympic Park where we will pray for peace for the Games. The walk will take approximately 3 hours. Bring a packed lunch.

WWF's Earth Hour (8.30pm Saturday 31st March) A simple idea that's quickly turned into a global phenomenon. Hundreds of millions of people turning off their lights for one hour, on the same night, all across the planet.

If you would like to be added to the mailing list, receive the newsletter by email, get notice of actions or forthcoming events via email, or are able to send a donation, please use the form below:

Name:..... I would like to receive future newsletters by:

Address:..... Post: E-mail: Both:

.....Postcode: Please put me the e-mail list to receive regular updates on Justice & Peace issues:

Email:.....

I enclose a donation of £ towards costs (PAYABLE TO SOUTHWARK JUSTICE & PEACE OFFICE)

Please send to: The Coordinator, Southwark J & P Office, Cathedral House, Westminster Bridge Rd, London, SE1 7HY
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