



Archdiocese of Southwark  
Commission for  
**Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation**



## Newsletter ~ Summer 2010



### Welcome to Archbishop Peter Smith

With this newsletter we offer a warm welcome to our new Archbishop, Peter Smith. We hope and pray that his time amongst us will bring many blessings for our diocese; particularly for those involved in the field of Justice and Peace.  
*(Fr Michael Scanlon, JPIC Chair)*

### Now the election is over

With a "balanced parliament" we have entered an unusual phase in British politics. The combination of a coalition government and the large number of new members should encourage us, even more than usual, to make our voices heard through our support for campaigns and initiatives which promote the Common Good and seek to achieve a better world for our generation and generations to come.

Archbishop Peter Smith, in his role as Vice-President of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, issued the following statement:

*"On behalf of the Catholic Community of England and Wales I would like to pledge an assurance of our prayers for the Prime Minister and the new coalition government as they begin their work in the service of the common good of our society.*

*In wishing the new government well, it is good for us all to recall that many of the deep seated problems of our society can only be addressed through a renewal of shared values. Change for the better cannot be left to politicians alone to bring about. It needs all of us."*

**"It needs all of us"** But what can we do? Our Spring Assembly was on the subject "Grassroots Social Justice" with speakers from seven organisations, all working in our communities tackling social problems at a local level. A report on the meeting is enclosed or will follow shortly. Could you do more to help these organisations? Become a member of one perhaps?

**And our politicians?** What do CAFOD see as the priorities for the early days of this parliament?

### Aid for the poorest:

- \* Aid can save lives, for example by funding health-care and clean water, and promoting long term development. A major source of aid is money spent by rich countries' governments to reduce poverty overseas
- \* The global economic crisis has pushed more people into poverty and increases the need for aid
- \* The UK's governing parties committed in their pre-election manifestos to spending 0.7 per cent of national income on aid by 2013
- \* To make sure this promise is kept, we want this target to be put into law.

**CAFOD**  
Just one world

### Climate change:

- We cannot address poverty without addressing climate change. People in the developing world are already feeling the effects of a changing climate. The frequency and severity of extreme weather will increase, putting millions of people at risk of losing lives, homes and crops
- \* We urgently need a fair, ambitious and binding global climate deal, in which the voices of poor countries, who are most affected by climate change, are listened to. The UN is the best place for this to happen
  - \* The UK government has a vital role to play in leading Europe and making sure rich countries take action
  - \* We're aiming for a low-carbon future, providing more jobs and a cleaner environment in the UK and world-wide

### Private Sector:

- Multinational companies have huge global power and influence
- \* Businesses can bring jobs and investment to poor communities, but can also add to corruption, human rights abuses and environmental damage
  - \* To make business work for the poor, companies need to be open and honest about the impacts of their activities and answerable to the communities in which they are operating.
  - \* The UK government can play a powerful role by making appropriate laws which make sure all UK companies operate responsibly around the world.

**A Good start will be to go to [www.cafod.org.uk](http://www.cafod.org.uk) click on "Act on Poverty" and send an e-mail to David Cameron to let him know what you think.**

## Living in Israel Palestine March to August 09

Josephine Goggin

From March to August  
2009 I participated in an  
international World Council

of Churches project called EAPPI, Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel. The programme is managed and funded for the English and Irish volunteers by the Quakers. The programme was set up in 2002 as a direct response to the heads of churches in Jerusalem asking the WCC to send an international monitoring team to Israel / Palestine.

The programme has four aims:

- To offer a protective presence to vulnerable Palestinian communities.
- To monitor and report on human rights abuses and breaches of international law.
- To support Israeli and Palestinian peace activists.
- To undertake advocacy from the field and on return to country of origin.

The programme has 6 placements with four volunteers at each base. I was placed in the Jerusalem team for 3 months and in the tiny village of Yanoun for 6 weeks. The EAPPI work in Jerusalem was very varied and many faceted.

### Home Demolitions:

One of the main challenges facing the Palestinian community of East Jerusalem, occupied by Israel since 1967, is the chronic housing shortage and the difficulty of getting building permits on the tiny 13% of over developed land zoned by Israel for the building of Palestinian homes – (35% is earmarked for Israeli Jewish settlements and 52% for green space.) One of the most heartbreaking experiences I had was attending home demolitions to monitor, report and offer solidarity with those affected. Generally the bulldozer was already there when we (an EA colleague and I) arrived. We



The remains of someone's home at Al Bustan

would get a text to say a home demolition was in progress. The families get no notice! Once a demolition order has been issued they have two choices, demolish their own home or wait for the Israeli Authorities to do the job for them.

However, if they choose the latter, they are then faced with a huge fine and the cost of the soldiers, police, workmen and equipment sent to destroy their home. They wait each day with the pain and fear that today may be the **DAY**. The family's possessions, furniture, clothes, toys, pictures and all those special things that represent that family would

Ecumenical  
Accompaniment  
Programme  
in Palestine  
and Israel



be stewed around, hastily and carelessly thrown out by the soldiers, police and workmen. The bewildered family would be standing close by.

The destructive work over, the soldiers and police would withdraw and the bulldozer and crew trundle off leaving the family to try to rebuild its shattered life. At this point we and other international agency personnel would try to speak to the family. What do you say to someone whose home is lying ruined around them, who face financial ruin and whose lives have been destroyed? If the family had refugee status they would be provided with a tent from UNRWA (United Nations Relief & Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in Near East.) If they didn't have refugee status the help would come from the ICRC (International Committee of Red Cross/Crescent). It is easy to see why humanitarian agencies step in to help these families, but incomprehensible to understand why Israel, a modern first world economy, accepts no responsibility for housing a family it has made homeless simply because they built without a permit. They are residents of East Jerusalem, with Israeli IDs but are they are neither wanted there nor valued?

The Israeli Authority's politically motivated housing policy is driven by a determination to alter the demographic balance of the Old City and the area directly to the east of it known as the Holy Basin so that in any final settlement to the Israeli Palestinian conflict Jerusalem remains one undivided Israeli Jewish city. The aim in the words of Ariel Sharon, is to create "facts on the ground" to scupper any hope of East Jerusalem being the capital of any future Palestinian state. Those who are paying the price of this agenda are the current Palestinian population of East Jerusalem and their children.

One district of the Holy Basin is Silwan. Silwan is a community of 45,000 Palestinians just south of Temple Mount and the original site of the city of Jerusalem. ELAD, a right wing settler group manages the archaeological site there and misuses archaeology to help alter the demographic make up of the whole area. They want to build "King David's Park" in the valley area of Silwan and have persuaded the Israeli authority to demolish 88 homes there to make this possible. This will make 1,500 people homeless, over 60% of whom are children.

I visited Silwan once or twice a week and spoke to residents such as Fakhri Abudiav, one of those whom home is threatened, he told me: "They destroy our lives not just our homes. Each morning we wake up and we wonder if today is the day." He recalled how his neighbour's 7 year old took his toys to school because he was "afraid the soldiers would destroy them" before he got home.

The only law these people have broken is building without a permit, not because they have not tried to get one but because it is impossible to get one in the discriminatory policy Israel applies. A recent UNOCHA report states: "Since 1967, Israel has failed to provide Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem with adequate planning to meet natural growth. While Palestinians face significant obstacles to legal building on the 13% of East Jerusalem designed for Palestinian construction, Israeli settlements have flourished on the 35% of land expropriated for them, in contravention of international law."

### Evictions:

Where Israel cannot use planning law to drive Palestinians from East Jerusalem they adopt other tactics. Sheikh Jarrah is a Palestinian community in the north of the Holy Basin. It is home to 28 refugee families driven from West Jerusalem or elsewhere in Israel in 1948. They were settled there by

the Jordanian government in partnership with the UN in 1954. Now Israel says the houses were built on land owned by Jews prior to 1948 and gradually but surely they are evicting the families. The Al Kurd family was evicted in November 2008. The father died of a heart attack two weeks later and his widow Um Kamel, who refuses to be moved from the area, lives in a tent which has been demolished and rebuilt 5 times. Her stance was a focal point of resistance. She states: *"I will never leave. I have nothing to fear. I will continue to fight to get my home back."* Mahar Hanoun, another resident, served a three month prison sentence in 2008 for refusing to leave his home and hand over the keys but on 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2009 the Hanoun family along with their neighbours the Ghwai family, were evicted. Just before 5:00 am a large number of police in riot gear smashed their way into the Hanoun and Ghwai homes and forced everyone out on to the street at gunpoint. Totally insensitive to cultural norms, the police refused to allow even the women to dress and they arrived on the street in their night clothes. The families' possessions were brought out, loaded on to lorries, taken to the edge of Jerusalem and dumped there. Israeli settlers moved into the homes within an hour. I had got to know both families well in the previous four months. I had accompanied them to court as they struggled to get justice and visited them frequently to offer solidarity. When I visited the families after the eviction as they camped on the street I choked on my words. It was mid August and very hot, we all edged towards the shade but what of the cold, wet days of the following months?

#### Refugee camp:

Fortunately, not all my time in Jerusalem was spent at demolitions and evictions. I visited Shua'fat refugee camp to the north of Jerusalem and helped with after school activities. One of the young people who showed me around the camp explained: *"It is very difficult to live here. This camp was built for 4,000 refugees, now there are 33,000 living here."* It is an anonymous urban sprawl with 60% unemployment and serious drug and deprivation issues. Although, part of Jerusalem there is a checkpoint at entry and exit and the Wall is being built around it to fence the community out, to exclude it as it becomes a more crowded and poverty stricken place.

#### Bedouin Communities:

Jahalin Bedouin Community overlooks the city's rubbish dump. The Bedouins were forced there from their grazing lands in the Judean desert to allow for the building of the Ma'ale Adumim Israeli settlement. We spoke English with some very excited, curious and wonderful girls aged 8 to 15, and laughed a lot.

We also visited the Bedouin Community at Ma'ale Mikhmas, well within the West Bank. They still try to follow their traditional way of life but are harassed and threatened by the Ma'ale Mikhmas settlement. They too have lost land to the settlement and struggle to access water and electricity, freely available to the settlers on the hill. Ibrahim one of the leaders of the community said, *"We have to buy water and in the summer the animals need a lot of water. It is very expensive."*

#### Vulnerable communities: (Adu Dis & Al Azariya)

We offered solidarity to communities such as Adu Dis, a small town about 3 kms south east of Jerusalem, just beyond Al Azariya. It is a community which has suffered great deprivation as a consequence of the building of the Wall, 84% of which is built on Palestinian land. The journey to

Abu Dis used to take 10 minutes, now it takes an hour. Its access to markets significantly hampered there has been a huge exodus of people from Adu Dis. They leave to find employment as the life blood of the town is squeezed by the movement restrictions imposed by the Wall and the lost of land taken to build it. One parishioner at the Catholic Church in Al Azariya told me: *"We have lost 90 Catholic families from the community since the building of the Wall. The Israelis make it impossible for young people to stay."*

#### Checkpoints:

Then there were the checkpoints. Three mornings a week we rose at 4.30 am to go to Qalandia, the main terminal between Ramallah and Jerusalem. Qalandia is well within the West Bank, it is not a border crossing on the Green Line. As soon as you got off the bus you knew what kind of morning it would be. The noise levels were the indicator. Up to 2,000 people would be milling in the large shed the exit from which involved going through a narrow tunnel, two separate turnstiles and a body and baggage scanner. IDs and permits would be checked and hand prints taken before Palestinians could finally get through. The "Qalandia experience" was almost as traumatic as a home demolition. Watching people just wanting to get to work, patients struggling to get to a hospital or clinic and children, as young as 6, trying to get to school, being humiliated, shouted at, ignored and frequently deliberately delayed by young, bored, conscript soldiers who treated every one as a potential terrorist, left me feeling angry and helpless. Hopefully the information we recorded for the UN will one day help to turn the tide in this very one sided struggle.

#### Israeli Peace groups:

One of the most hopeful signs of a negotiated just peace is the work of Israeli peace activists with whom I was privileged to work in Jerusalem. They are a small but persistent, proactive and committed group and their work for justice frequently brings them into conflict with the Israeli authorities. I was humbled by their courage and refusal to be silenced. Each Friday between one and two I joined a group



*Rabbi Asherman being arrested at a peaceful vigil*

Activestills.org

of mostly older Israeli women known as Women in Black. For the past 21 years they have demonstrated at a square in West Jerusalem against the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories. This is just one of many Israeli peace groups actively working for peace and understanding, e.g. Breaking the Silence, New Profile, Family Circle, Rabbis for Human Rights, Israeli Committee Against Home Demolitions, Other Voice, B'Tselem, Machsom Watch.

For more information about this work or to download an application pack go to: [www.quaker.org.uk/applyeappi](http://www.quaker.org.uk/applyeappi)

## Thank You Joan Brown

From Marie Quarman, Justice & Peace, Bearsted:

"Over more than 25 years, Joan has tirelessly worked to heighten awareness in this parish (and with neighbouring Christians too) of the Church's teaching about Justice and Peace. With other parishioners over that time she has brought many practical concerns to our attention, and organised campaigns and appeals. Even recently, when she has had to cope with some infirmity, she has continued unremittingly. Now she has decided to take a step back. On behalf of the whole parish I would like to express our appreciation for all she has done in this important area of Christian concern and witness."

## National Justice and Peace Network

### 2010 Annual Conference

#### 'Our Daily Bread:

#### Food Security, People and Planet"

16-18 July 2010

The Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick

Food is an essential part of our lives; the "breaking of bread" with others celebrates love, mutuality and the gifts of the natural world. Yet the global food system upon which we depend is increasingly fragile. One in six people in the world goes hungry, low - income groups have trouble accessing nutritious food, justice is denied to many of the world's food producers and we in the UK throw away one third of our food. The conference will explore the food system and exciting new initiatives to help us reconnect to sustainable agriculture and food, and highlight insights into 'our daily bread' offered by our faith and worship. **Booking forms available from [www.justice-and-peace.org.uk](http://www.justice-and-peace.org.uk) or Southwark JPIC office.** If you haven't been before you will find the conference to be inspiring and a fabulous opportunity to meet with hundreds of others involved in Justice and Peace.



## June 18th A commemoration for the 58 Chinese who died in Dover.

Silent vigil and reflection at the memorial.

## June 21st London Premier of

### STOP THE TRAFFIK

7.30 at The Oasis Centre, Kennington Road, SE1 (opp. Lambeth North tube)

RSVP to 020 7921 4464 or [fran.ruiz@oasisuk.org](mailto:fran.ruiz@oasisuk.org)

## June 22nd CARJ Urban Network Meeting

Taking stock and discussing problems and possibilities for urban communities under a new government. 12:00 – 5:00 at CARJ, 9 Henry Road, London N4 2LH (020 8802 8080).

## June 24th Schools Low Carbon Day

[www.lowcarboday.com](http://www.lowcarboday.com)

## June 26th Shadow banking and destructive mining: a guided tour

12.30 - 4pm, starting in Piccadilly, London W1 To register, contact: Richard Solly, London Mining Network, [contact@londonminingnetwork.org](mailto:contact@londonminingnetwork.org), 07929 023214

## June 30th Green Gone Wrong

6.30 pm Institute of Contemporary Arts, The Mall, London W1. A talk by WDM campaigner Kirsty Wright and journalist Heather Rogers. For more information or to buy a ticket go to [www.ica.org.uk](http://www.ica.org.uk)

## July 13th Climate change and the City: scepticism or solutions?

JustShare debate organised by ECCR1.05 pm. at All Hallows by the Tower Church, Byward Street, EC3R 5BJ. Further details from Rachel Lindley 07732 014181)

There is more information about these events on our web site [www.southwarkjandp.co.uk](http://www.southwarkjandp.co.uk)

The office is always happy to print and post web site information for those who do not have internet access.

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