

JUSTICE & PEACE E-BULLETIN DECEMBER 2022

Welcome to the e-Bulletin from the Westminster Justice and Peace Commission. Please send Events for inclusion to justiceandpeace@rcdow.org.uk. The deadline for the next e-Bulletin is 3rd January 2022.

Bishop Nicholas Hudson writes:



“For the peace of Jerusalem pray!” (Psalm 122, 6). That was the phrase that resonated most deeply within me as we sought as a group of bishops to fathom Jerusalem’s religious vocation. We had gathered from diverse nations to make up this year’s Holy Land Coordination.

That Jerusalem is a Jewish city, a Christian city, a Muslim city: that was the deepest truth we took away from our visit to this city, which is so sacred to all three faiths. We also took away the conviction that the Christian community in Jerusalem has a particular calling to articulate this conviction. Not only is the Christian community an essential part of Jerusalem’s identity. It also has a peculiar freedom to speak the truth of Jerusalem’s multiple identity.

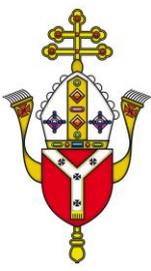
Meanwhile the Holy Land Coordination feels duty bound to warn that the Christian community’s continued presence there is threatened by occupation and injustice. Many of those we encountered are facing violence and intimidation by settler groups, restrictions on their freedom of movement, or separation from their families because of the status they are assigned.

Issues of occupation, status, diverse cultures and faiths being forced to live alongside one another - every one of these modern realities was, of course, central to the Jerusalem into which walked the Holy Family two millennia ago. The Massacre of the Innocents, of “Rachel weeping for her children” (Jeremiah 31, 15), were made all the more real for us as we witnessed the pain being experienced by the family of Palestinian Catholic journalist Shireen Abu Akleh. She had been gunned down as she went about her work as a journalist reporting on the inequities she observed in Israeli society - only for her mourners to be fired upon as they laid her body to rest.

“I came into the world for this,” Jesus told Pilate, **“to witness to the truth” (John 18).** Because he witnessed to the truth, his life was taken from him. The life was taken from Shireen because she too witnessed to the truth.

Visiting Jerusalem at the time of her mourning brought home to us with greater force than ever the truth that Christians worldwide share a dual vocation with regard to Jerusalem: to denounce the persecution of the continuing Christian community there but, at the same time, call that community to have the courage to declare more loudly than ever that this sacred place is not only Christian but also Jewish and Muslim. For that is surely the only way path to “the peace of Jerusalem”.

+Nicholas Hudson
Advent 2022



DIARY OF EVENTS

1st December, 3-8pm: Carol Singing for London Churches Refugee Fund – Oxford Circus Underground Station. Wear something festive and come to sing, play an instrument or rattle buckets!

1st December, 6pm: World AIDS Day Mass. Church of the Immaculate Conception (Farm Street Jesuit Church), 114 Mount Street, Mayfair, London W1K 3AH. Reception to follow in the Arrupe Hall. Celebrant: Fr David Birchall SJ. During his training, at the height of the HIV pandemic, Fr David worked on the AIDS Ward of San Francisco General Hospital. Watch on live-stream www.farmstreet.org.uk/livestream www.lgbtcatholicswestminster.org ALL WELCOME!

1st December, 7.30pm: Advent Carol Service in Westminster Cathedral - in aid of a new anti-trafficking charity, [Mary Ward Loreto UK](http://MaryWardLoretoUK.com).

3rd December, 2pm: Pax Christi Advent Peace Service - Holy Apostles' Church, 47 Cumberland Street, Pimlico, London, SW1V 4LY. The service is followed by a FairTrade Christmas market and refreshments.

6th December, 7pm: PACT Christmas Carol Service - Church of the Immaculate Conception (Farm Street), 114 Mount Street, London, W1K 3AH. Led by Bishop Richard Moth. Music from Cardinal Vaughan Memorial School Sixth Form Choir, directed by Scott Price. Followed by a reception. Mass celebrated beforehand at 6pm. [Book your place here](#)

10th December, 11am: CAFOD's Nativity Fun Run! You are invited to Clapham Common to run, walk, roll or stroll 5k. Entry is £10 for adult, £5 for children, and £20 for a family. Register: <https://cafod.org.uk/Fundraise/Sponsored-challenge-events/Run-for-CAFOD/Nativity-Fun-Run>

12th December, 12.45-2.00pm: Southern Dioceses Environment Network – Feedback from COP27, Advent and Planning for 2023. Guest Speaker: Neil Thorns (CAFOD) who was a participant at COP27 with the Vatican delegation. [Register with Eventbrite](#)

12th December, 7pm: Aid to the Church in Need Carol Service - Church of the Immaculate Conception (Farm Street), 114 Mount Street, London, W1K 3AH. Music by the Schola Cantorum of the London Oratory, directed by Charles Cole with organ and brass ensemble. Free entry. A collection will be taken for [ACN's](#) work with persecuted Christians.

9th January 2023, 12.45-2.00pm: Joint Meeting of the Southern Dioceses Environment Network & Northern Dioceses Environment Group. Open to all Catholics and our friends. [Register with Eventbrite](#)

15th January 2023: [Peace Sunday](#)

27th January 2023: [Holocaust Memorial Day](#)

5th February 2023: [Racial Justice Sunday](#)

21st-23rd July 2023: [National Justice & Peace Network Annual Conference](#)

