**REVIEW OF THE YEAR**

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**2022/23**

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Justice and Peace at



Catholic Leamington







*St Peter the Apostle, Dormer Place, Leamington Spa, CV32 5AA*











Our monthly meetings were usually held in person this year as we moved out of COVID restrictions although some winter ones were by Zoom. There were 10 meetings (none in December or August)

We have rather a small gathering as we have not managed to attract any new members and lost old ones.

However we have been working closely with the CAFOD rep, we work with the ‘Live Simply team’ and report to SPAN about our actions. We try to keep in touch with the Warwick J and P and find out what they are doing.

Regular topics of discussion were local issues around poverty and homelessness, Climate change,

CAFOD’s agenda, fair trade and ‘living Simply’, awareness raising on peace issues, keeping abreast of political moves and new legislation, liaison with local and Diocesan Justice and Peace and other action groups, promoting prayer and actions to the Parish via the liturgies, newsletters, monthly prayer intention. We also organized a weekly liturgy in Lent using the CAFOD stations of the cross in a PowerPoint presentation. Information is regularly put in the Parish newsletters, ‘Extra’ newsletter, Parish website [www.catholicleamington.org.uk/justice-and-peace an](http://www.catholicleamington.org.uk/justice-and-peace)d via the Google group email.

 ***Many thanks to all who contributed through the year and our Parish priests who have supported us.***

# Poverty and Homelessness

In April 2023 the Way Ahead Project, which we and SPAN have supported through the Saturday Friendship Group since 2009 stopped operating, and after unsuccessfully trying to recruit new staff they had reluctantly to close. This is a sad loss for the town and several Catholic volunteers were disappointed that they could not work with this client group at the WAP in the future. There is obviously concern as to provision for the clients. Helping hands has stepped in to some extent and the Leamington and Warwick Night Shelter operates 2 nights a week offering a meal.

The former manager of WAP is starting a rehab centre for those suffering from drug or alcohol addiction in Leamington and we are being informed as to the progress of this. A house has been rented and staff are being recruited. SPAN is helping with funding of this project.

The homeless situation continues to be of concern, as accommodation is limited and the cost of living situation makes life even more difficult for those on the edge.

It is encouraging that ‘Pastimes’ who meet on a Tuesday afternoon are now registered with Warwick District Council as a ‘Community Hub’ for anyone who would like company, warmth and some refreshments.

**Live simply**

The ‘live simply’ team had a stall for ‘Ecofest’ on the Pump Room Gardens in September 2022 and 23. This event promotes environmentally beneficial ways of living. The CAFOD rep also had information on display and she was obtaining signatures for the CAFOD petition to go to the World Bank to ask them to reconsider their support for policies that prevent small farmers in the developing world from saving and storing their seeds for future seasons, as they have done for generations. The emphasis now by countries is on forcing farmers to buy seeds from multinational companies.

 There was colouring and other activities for the children and this was very successful, combined with promotion of fair trade including giving out fair trade bananas. A lot of families engaged and this led to good discussions on how we can improve our carbon footprint.

There is a recycling box to collect old mobile phones, jewellery, stamps etc which has gone between the 3 churches and has raised more than £150 for CAFOD so far.

**CAFOD**

We keep up to date with the CAFOD campaigns at our meetings and support the Family Fast days in the parish.

In Lent and in the Autumn for Harvest there were soup lunches for Family Fast Days . This is an opportunity for information sharing and for raising money for CAFOD. There was a special collection for the earthquake appeal in Syria and Turkey.

At Christmas the World Gift Catalogues are promoted at all the Churches and the crib collection at St Peter’s was designated for a world gift of maternity services.

# Fair Trade

We were able to run Traidcraft stalls at St Peter’s and Our Lady’s for Fairtrade fortnight in 2023. We sold their Christmas cards at SP and OL too. Unfortunately Traidcraft is no longer operating so cannot supply for a FT stall in the future.

We have highlighted Fair Trade in the Newsletter EXTRA although no longer running a regular FT stall.

# Peace issues

For Peace Sunday in January we produced bidding prayers for use on that weekend’s Masses and asked for appropriate music. We gave the children’s liturgy leader some material for their use. We also suggested bidding prayers for the anniversary of Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings in 1945 in August.

Members attended the laying of the wreath of white poppies last Remembrance Day at the War memorial in Leamington. The white poppies represent all those killed in war, not just the military personnel.

# Liturgies

We produced bidding prayers for ‘the Season of Creation’ last September.

We recommend a prayer intention every month on a topical issue, for example - climate change, refugees, and recently the situation in Ukraine. This is published in the parish Newsletter each week and promoted on the J and P board at St Peter’s

#  Stations of the Cross

#  In Lent this year we used the CAFOD Stations of the Cross , delivered via their Power point presentation in the SP church hall. This was on a Friday morning after mass (which was in the hall due to heating problems). Attendance was poor and the material was felt to be rather repetitive. This activity will need to be reconsidered in future.

# Cards for Prisoners of conscience

# In April 2023 we had a table at SP and OL with names and details of Prisoners of Conscience, which were obtained from ACAT (Action by Christians against Torture), and volunteers helped parishioners with filling in the details of an appropriate greeting and signing the cards. 54 cards were sent by the team to several people in different countries, China, Pakistan, Iran and Myanmar among them. This helps parishioners to engage and take a positive step to reach out to those in these terrible situations.

**Campaigning**

There have been many issues throughout the year which have been of great concern, regarding the treatment of refugees, and in particular the ‘Illegal Migration Bill’ - several members wrote to their MP’s regarding this bill , which includes the ‘off shoring’ of refugees in Rwanda. We have followed the situation with Ukrainian refugees and a member has been involved in a scheme to rehouse them.

We have supported CAFOD’s climate change petition.

We promote suitable campaigns from CAFOD, the Diocese or the U N Association through our Google groups email.

**Dialogue with Warwick St Mary Immaculate**

Their J and P group showed the film ‘The Letter’ which we promoted.

**Links with the diocese**

Last year the J and P assembly was held on Zoom and several attended remotely. We circulate the emails from the J and P Commission of the Diocese.

**The Future**

With limited numbers of attendees we need to attract more helpers, raise awareness and decide how to engage with the younger people. It would be good to have a spread of people over the three Churches in Catholic Leamington~~.~~

However we will continue to raise awareness through the communication channels and engage with our clergy regarding the liturgies where appropriate. We are encouraged by their support as they have so many calls on their time and resources.