NOT JUST A TACTIC, BUT A WAY OF LIFE

BY PAT GAFFNEY

Former General Secretary of Pax Christi explains how the organisation is promoting nonviolent peacemaking

One of the benefits of retirement (I left my role as General Secretary of Pax Christi in March) is the luxury of choosing how I use my time. I try to join the weekly Women in Black vigil in London at the Edith Cavell statue. Each week they take a different focus: the impact of war on women; the Israel-Palestine conflict; non-military approaches to security or the UK’s arms sales to Saudi Arabia, and produce a leaflet to share with anyone interested. The audience is very international, some identifying closely with particular vigils, engaging in dialogue, or signing letters or petitions.

For me, this shows nonviolence in action, a grass-roots challenge to the culture of violence. But even such action is not enough to transform the destructive creature that is violence in our world. To paraphrase the Jesuit Daniel Berrigan, it seems that we want peace with half a heart, while the waging of war is total. His words were addressed mainly to our churches which, if they chose, could become powerhouses of peacemaking, providing resources, training, diplomatic skills and critical reflection on the centrality of nonviolence.

There is a shift taking place today: Christian peacemakers can hope that we are ‘getting somewhere’ in this long-haul journey of nonviolent peacemaking. Why the emphasis on nonviolence? Because it is not just a tactic but a way of life, which takes peacemaking beyond simply challenging war, and draws deeply on our spirituality and faith. The Catholic Nonviolence Initiative, a project of Pax Christi International, which I am deeply involved in, is one powerful example.

It begins with Pope Francis, whose words and actions for peace have been crystal clear to all; from nuclear weapons: “Spending on nuclear weapons squanders the wealth of nations”, to the arms trade: “We plead for peace for this world dominated by arms-dealers, who profit from the blood of men and women”. A ground-breaking conference was held in Rome in 2016, co-sponsored by Pax Christi International and the then Pontifical Council for Justice & Peace, bringing together 80 peacemakers, theologians and academics from 35 countries, moving the institutional church closer to a commitment to Gospel nonviolence. The process itself was new. There were no “experts”: all voices were equal. We listened to contemporary experiences of nonviolence; we deepened our knowledge of Jesus’ way of nonviolence; we began to outline how active nonviolence and war prevention might be better woven into the life of the Church, to move us beyond what Pope Francis has called “world war in instalments”. The gathering heard how nonviolence is twice as effective as violence and is likely to produce more sustainable and democratic communities. It gave a platform to practitioners of nonviolence such as Fr Francisco de Roux from Colombia who has worked for justice and nonviolent change for more than twenty years. Francisco challenged the Catholic Church’s support for the just war paradigm which he believes has sustained violence in that...
country. The painstaking work of dialogue and mediation in preventing the escalation of violence in countries like Sudan, Uganda and the DRC was also shared. The good news of church workers and leaders facilitating conversations between warring groups is little acknowledged; yet this is politics for peace in action.

The gathering produced An appeal to the Catholic Church to recommit to Gospel nonviolence calling for:

- The development of Catholic social teaching on nonviolence, inviting Pope Francis to produce an encyclical on nonviolence and Just Peace;
- An integration of Gospel nonviolence explicitly into every aspect of the life of our churches;
- The promotion of and training in nonviolent practices and strategies.

An academic who has accompanied us in this work is Erica Chenoweth, co-author of Why civil Resistance Works, who observed “We have a critical mass of actors, within the Vatican institutions and outside, who could mobilise, effect change.”

GIVING LIFE TO AN IDEA

Words and appeals only gain power when translated into action. We were delighted therefore when Pope Francis chose for the 2017 World Peace Day Message, Nonviolence: A Style of Politics for Peace. The message reminded us that the Gospel, and the person of Jesus, set out radically nonviolent approaches. It highlighted those who show us that nonviolence is a dynamic and risky confrontation with injustice, following in the footsteps of Jesus, Gandhi, Ghaffar Khan, Martin Luther King Jr, the peace women of Liberia, and the Christians of Eastern Europe, who all brought about change through nonviolent means. In England and Wales, Pax Christi created resources for the day which were shared with every parish, including how to create a map embedding nonviolence in every level of parish life. We offered workshops to members and congregations in England and Scotland, which are available on our website. We co-sponsored four seminars with academic institutions to share the themes and project with staff and students. As one participant reflected, “I had just not thought of all the different aspects of nonviolent action. I need to reflect more on Jesus’ response to situations and relate these to modern day issues.”

As this initiative grows, creating a pool of resources, it serves as a model in nonviolent cooperation. Five international roundtables have met ‘virtually’ each month for a year exploring themes such as Nonviolence and Scripture, Nonviolence and Theology, Integrating Nonviolence into Church Structures, and the Power of Nonviolence. I co-facilitated one, which wove together experiences of violence – from Mexico to London, Colombia to the Philippines. Members offered experiences of nonviolent resistance and peacebuilding; the use of unarmed civilian protection, through organisations such as Christian Peacemaker Teams, EAPPI and Operation Dove; the use of humour, culture, music and drama in defusing violence; the role of community and church leadership in creating spaces for healing and dialogue; the power of the church as a voice in national and international diplomacy. These are just some of the resources that surfaced from this group. Helping us to learn from our stories was Jamila Raqib, executive director of the Albert Einstein Institution, who commented: “What came through very clearly is that in each of the cases I looked at, the church and spiritual communities acted as connectors and facilitators in environments where there was a weak civil society because it has been eroded due to conflict, or for other reasons. As a global institution with a deep and diverse network, the church connected local struggles with global movements.”

A WORK IN PROGRESS

Where are we going now? In April, another gathering in Rome engaged with Vatican staff around the process of roundtables and other work. Keeping them on board is key.

In England and Wales we continue to produce resources to help people understand nonviolent approaches. One resource is the image of the black Christ stained-glass window produced by Welsh artist John Petts in the 1960s as a gesture of solidarity with the Alabama community whose church had been fire-bombed. One of Christ’s hands is upright, saying “No” to violence and injustice; the other open in invitation saying, “We have to do this together, and recognise our common humanity if violence is to be transformed.” Pax Christi is making short videos of people saying what nonviolence, its power and value, means to them. So far four have been produced and are excellent ‘starters’ for group work. Pax Christi has also produced a reading guide to Choosing Peace: The Catholic Church Returns to Gospel Nonviolence, a collection of papers and discussions from our April 2016 gathering. This year marks the 150th anniversary of Gandhi’s birth, on 2 October, International Day of Nonviolence. Pax Christi is encouraging faith communities to use this day to reflect on nonviolence, recalling the legacy of Gandhi and of their own faith traditions, and celebrating what nonviolence can mean today.

This exciting journey continues. From the grassroots to Bishops and Archbishops, all of us can root our life experiences in the nonviolent Gospel with the choices we make to transform violent situations. Pietro Ameglio from Mexico expressed this well: “An important nonviolent tool is the moral reserve of a society, putting their bodies in front of the adversary, in the street… denouncing. All churches can be a part of this ‘moral reserve’.”

Opportunities are available to us through our schools, parishes, teachers, sacramental and formation programmes and our place at the diplomatic table. The role of faith in challenging all forms of violence is often neglected. Our churches and organisations such as the APF and Pax Christi have a ‘moral reserve’, a voice, international experience, people, resources and networks to change this.

Pat Gaffney was General Secretary of Pax Christi from 1990 – 2019 and is an Executive Member of the Catholic Nonviolence Initiative

MORE RESOURCES

Catholic Nonviolence Initiative: updates on work/resources www.nonviolencejustpeace.net


Pax Christi has produced a range of worksheets, videos and more on nonviolence for personal and group use www.paxchristi.org.uk
COMMUNITY OF THE CROSS OF NAILS

In order to foster our connections with other partners in the Community of the Cross of Nails (CCN) each issue of TAP features a CCN partner. As well as churches and Christian organisations, the CCN includes schools, known as ICON Schools. This time we are delighted to share a piece from the ICON School in Guntramsdorf, Austria.

TIME FOR INTRODUCTIONS: THE ICON SCHOOL IN GUNTRAMSDORF, AUSTRIA

FROM KRISZTINA GEIFING

Where are we? Guntramsdorf is a small town in eastern Austria close to Vienna. Many suburbs have already grown together with metropolitan Vienna. One of these suburbs is Guntramsdorf in the south of Vienna.

Our school is a middle school attended by 315 children between the ages of 10 and 14. These children belong to 12 nationalities and 4 faiths – Catholicism, Protestantism, Orthodoxy and Islam. They are a very colourful bunch of kids. After two intensive preparatory years, we finally received the Cross of Nails during a memorable worship in 2015. The prayer was followed by a procession, in which we carried the Cross of Nails through the town into the building of our school, where it was placed at its designated spot in the entrance hall. We are the only ICON School in Austria and it is important for me to highlight, that we are not a Christian school, but a normal state-run middle school.

Our small town of Guntramsdorf has had a tumultuous history, especially during WWII. An Aircraft Engine Factory was located here, which used the forced labour of the inmates of the local concentration camp. The ruins of the camp are now managed by an association, dedicated to the remembrance of the Holocaust. As a school, we often collaborate with the association. The president of the association regularly visits our school to talk about the lives of the inmates and the Holocaust. Each year we visit the site of the former concentration camp, so that our pupils may understand a bit better circumstances of the inmates, who were worked to death. By engaging with this history of the past, maybe the wounds of the past can heal, while the memory and lesson remain.

We are a school which brings children from very diverse backgrounds together. Diversity is the most natural thing for us. Our school worship is attended by nearly all pupils, no matter their own religious beliefs. We organise numerous projects with our pupils to foster a culture of peace and forgiveness. Every year selected pupils are trained to be mediators for their colleagues, to help in conflict situations. The pupils are also supported in their work by teachers.

Democracy is also an important subject to discuss. This year we had a chance to take part in a Student-Democracy project, funded by the mayor of our town. The mayor offered 5000€ to fund a project designed and administered by the pupils, but the pupils had to decide on the project. Each classroom proposed an idea, complete with a financial plan. These ideas were presented to a forum of students' representatives, teachers and town council members. The top five ideas were then put up for a vote by the entire student body. Once the heated phase of the election campaigns began it was clear that while the children have not been exposed to politics, their strategies were similar to real-life campaigns. The posters of other proposals were taken off the wall, the competition was bad-mouthed and false promises made. After the election, there was plenty of opportunity for forgiveness. The winning project turned out to be a proposal from the fourth-years, who suggested communal games and new furniture for the break-room.

Peace and reconciliation are at the heart of everything we teach at our school. To promote our message, we organised our first Concert for Peace. The school band prepared an entire concert's worth of music about peace. The concert was accompanied by an exhibition which featured our pupils’ artistic interpretations of the theme “Peace and Reconciliation”.

Last but by far not least, I would like to introduce our annual charity tradition, the Charity Lunch. Each year one classroom organises a lunch for all the other pupils. The children offer the ingredients and spend the entire day in the school kitchen preparing sandwiches and snacks. These are sold in the breaks to collect donations. With these donations, we support a variety of projects focusing on children in need – for example in Bolivia, Burundi, Togo and Tanzania. The initial idea for this project was given by a former pupil, who wanted to help children in difficult situations. This idea has quickly turned into an annual tradition.

We are incredibly proud of all the ideas, projects and new traditions from our pupils and for our pupils which have become integral parts of our work for peace and reconciliation. These are only a few examples of our projects, but hopefully, you will find inspiration in these stories for your own community and work.

Krisztina Giefing, Coordinator of the ICON School Neue Mittelschule Guntramsdorf - Austria www.nagellkreuzguntramsdorf.wordpress.com
RESOURCING PEACEMAKING

RAZOR WIRE & OLIVE BRANCHES

This teaching pack is aimed at young people aged 14-18. It explores conflict, human rights and peace building in Palestine and Israel.

Produced by Quaker Peace & Social Witness in partnership with the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI*), Razor Wire & Olive Branches supports learning & understanding of the historical and sociopolitical landscape of the region as well as developing key skills and empathy.

The teaching resource adopts EAPPI’s policy of ‘principled impartiality’. It is not about taking sides but focuses on the themes of human rights, international law and nonviolence.

The activities in the pack cover not only citizenship, history and social studies (linking to the curricula in England, Wales and Scotland) but also other areas, including drama, writing, talking & listening, maths and art & design.

It does not offer a series of lesson plans; rather it contains a range of activities which can be used as the teacher feels appropriate. The case studies offer first-hand experience of Israelis and Palestinians supporting peace; the resource cards suggest activities including role play, mime, games and art activities; and there are also downloadable slideshows and video resources, all offering an interactive way for young people to learn about the situation.

This resource does not suggest answers, but encourages the students to arrive at their own assessment of the human rights effects of conflict and invites them to offer the changes they would want to see.

APF GRANTS

An important part of the work of APF is funding peacemaking projects around the Anglican Communion. Projects that are currently receiving grants from APF are:

- Training parish council members on their role in keeping and building peace in Burundi.
- Peacebuilding training, through a ‘Behavioural Change Project’ based in Cueibet, South Sudan.
- Peace Balls: A scheme to provide footballs with peace messages to work with young people in Kenya, Zimbabwe and South Sudan.
- Peacebuilding in Primary Schools, delivered by the Edinburgh Peace and Justice Centre, UK.
- Faith and Peace Textile Project, with the Bradford Peace Museum. A travelling exhibition has been developed and exhibited around the UK.
- Wilson/Hinkes Peace Prize – a prize awarded to people who are doing grassroots peacemaking work. The 2019 winner will be announced at the Week of Prayer for World Peace Service in October. (See notices and diary of events on p.10).

Some previous grants made by APF include:

- funding the production and revision of ‘Teach Peace’, a schools’ education pack, produced by the Peace Education Network.
- supporting Women’s Community Peace Training delivered by South Sudan Community Change Agency (SOSUCCA).

As well as supporting ongoing projects, APF supports smaller one-off projects and activities. You can read about a recent example, providing peace books to secondary schools in the Diocese of Kigali, Rwanda, below:

BOOKS FOR KIGALI SCHOOLS

In the April issue of The Anglican Peacemaker, we published an email from a Rwandan teacher asking for ‘peace story books to help students enhance their forgiveness’. We are pleased to report that a small grant from APF was made to supply three secondary schools in the Diocese of Kigali with sets of books, mainly on the lives of Nobel Peace Prize winners. The books were accompanied by an outline suggestion of four ways they could be used with students. Teachers at each school had a session on this and could see a number of ways of widening interest in peacemaking with the students while also improving their English skills.

Pascal, one of the teachers, wrote: “Just thanking you for everything you have done to sharpen my teaching experience and the very interesting books I received from APF.”

If any APF members know of a project they would like to undertake or support, APF is looking for applications for small grants to support peacemaking.
FROM SUE CLAYDON, APF CHAIR

A few weeks ago, I sat down to write this piece but after staring at a blank screen for some time decided to wait. Maybe closer to September things in the world might have ‘improved’ and I would have some inspiration? Well, that was another plan that did not work. As I write, Kashmir, Hong Kong, Yemen, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and London seem no closer to moving from disruption and violence. Not just days but hours seem to bring more disquieting reports.

So, I have decided to look back a few months for some inspiration. This came from my visit to the Diocese of Shyogwe in Rwanda. During my time there, I was once again taken by the level of forgiveness that Rwandans manifest. I had shared in the celebration of Pentecost at the Cathedral in this very rural area and later we walked to the local memorial for prayers for peace, forgiveness and reconciliation. It is twenty five years since the 1994 Tutsi Genocide. Each of the hundreds of genocide memorials has its own story. Here it is not just a memorial but the burial place of a Canon of the Cathedral and four others. The manner in which God chose to reconcile those at enmity with himself involved pain-bearing love. If Jesus had resisted arrest, many might have ignored his call to repentance for the Kingdom. As it was, the way Jesus died impressed the centurion in charge of his crucifixion. Then Jesus rose from the dead and said to the disciples: “Peace be with you… Receive the Holy Spirit.” At Pentecost Peter called those who had colluded in the crucifixion to repent and turn to Christ for sins to be forgiven, and receive the Holy Spirit.

In today’s troubled times, Christians seeking reconciliation must go the extra mile, love the enemy, and pray for the persecutor. Where there are opposing parties mutually trapped in violence, deeds of love may open a bridge for penitence and dialogue to begin. I give two examples.

In 1219 Christian Crusaders were besieging the Muslim-held city of Damietta on the Nile Delta. Francis of Assisi went unarmed across the battle lines, ridiculed by Christians and beaten by Muslim soldiers. But Sultan Malek el Carmel received him, and Francis and the Sultan fruitfully asserted their respective faiths. In his earlier Rule for his brothers (chapter 16), Francis stated “Be subject to every human creature for God’s sake”, as Jesus was subject to the unjust rule of those who had crucified him.

In France, the Vichy Government of 1940–44 adopted the antisemitic rules of the Nazis. The village of Le Chambon sur Lignon resisted with weapons of the Spirit. When the Vichy Deputy Minister, Lamirand pursued the rounding up of Jews, the students of L’Ecole Cevenol publicly stated that they only recognized one race: the human race. At Pentecost they called those who had colluded in the crucifixion to repent and turn to Christ for sins to be forgiven, and receive the Holy Spirit.

In 2019 Christian Peacemakers are beseeching the Muslim-held city of Damietta on the Nile Delta. Francis of Assisi went unarmed across the battle lines, ridiculed by Christians and beaten by Muslim soldiers. But Sultan Malek el Carmel received him, and Francis and the Sultan fruitfully asserted their respective faiths. In his earlier Rule for his brothers (chapter 16), Francis stated “Be subject to every human creature for God’s sake”, as Jesus was subject to the unjust rule of those who had crucified him.

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This reflection on the redemptive mission and peacemaking of Jesus is a foundation for today’s Anglican Peacemakers and our partners in becoming instruments of peace.
EPF CELEBRATES 80TH ANNIVERSARY

FROM BOB DAVIDSON,
CHAIR OF EPF

Episcopal Peace Fellowship (“EPF”) was born on Armistice Day in 1939 as a nonprofit organization of concerned Episcopal laity and clergy to support young men who were conscientious objectors to avoid being conscripted into military service during the Second World War. Originally known as Episcopal Pacifist Fellowship, our name was changed to Episcopal Peace Fellowship in 1968 in our heyday during the Vietnam War.

“Cross before flag” is a watchword of ours, and our commitment is to nonviolence and all issues of social justice. From our founding as a call to remind the church that as followers of Christ we are bound to oppose war and violence in all forms, we have grown to include other important issues such as gun violence prevention, abolition of the death penalty, racial reconciliation, peace between Palestine and Israel, environmental justice, abolition of nuclear weapons, immigrant rights and labor rights. EPF is the saddle of the Church; it is our job to remind the institutional church of our call to be peacemakers.

EPF is calling 2019 our “Year of Action,” focusing on our mission to pray, study and act for peace in support of our call as baptized Christians to do justice, dismantle violence, and strive to be peacemakers. For a large part of the year, our new Executive Director, Melanie Atha, is a lone pilgrim, moving from town to town, parish to parish, diocese to diocese, connecting with our peace partners, empowering them to continue in our peace work with resources and renewed inspiration, and making new friends and connections who will want to share in EPF’s peacemaking mission.

At certain way points during the year, the larger EPF community will gather together and we will have grand showings of commitment to our cause. We started in April in Columbine, Colorado, site of one of the most horrific mass shootings in America’s history. Twenty years ago, on April 20, 1999, fifteen people were shot dead with assault rifles at Columbine High School, including the two young gunmen. On April 2019, many of us marked the anniversary with an Easter vigil leading into the bright promise of Easter Sunday, April 21. The weekend after Easter, April 26-28, EPF and our co-sponsors gathered in Columbine to remember the lives lost and the survivors, and we recommitted ourselves to efforts to eradicate gun violence from America’s culture. We partnered with advocates against all forms of gun violence, which includes the daily loss of lives in communities across the country due to domestic and urban violence, the mass killings, suicide and accidental shootings. Preaching on the Sunday of our Columbine commemoration was former Lutheran pastor Don Marshhausen, who was forced out as pastor of his congregation when he dared eulogize, humanize and preside over the funeral of one of the young gunmen. The Columbine event was a transformative and empowering remembrance.

In August, along with the Episcopal Diocese of Alabama and the Episcopal Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast, EPF sponsored the pilgrimage in commemoration of blessed Jonathan Myrick Daniels and the Alabama martyrs of the civil rights movement in Lowndes County, Alabama. Finally, EPF will commemorate our 80th birthday in New England with a racial reconciliation event on November 10-11, 2019 with a gathering of faith and community supporters at the Center for Racial Reconciliation in Providence, Rhode Island and a festival evensong at St. Michael’s in nearby Bristol, Rhode Island. This event will include a stop at the Legacy Museum and the National Memorial for Peace and Justice, which many are calling the Lynching Memorial, a project of Bryan Stevenson and the Equal Justice Initiative in Montgomery. The Lynching Memorial powerfully makes the case that racial terror is alive and well in America today, and that we continue to enslave our young men of color at alarming rates. It is a simple fact that one in three young black men in America will go to prison and will remain disenfranchised and stigmatized by our justice system.

In between all of the planned national events, our EPF chapters and Peace Partners will have EPF birthday parties and action events in places all across the country in celebration of our legacy of peace and justice work. We hope we will have marked well the legacy of our decades of peace advocacy, and assure our future as the hopeful, peaceful and justice center of the Jesus Movement.

This year we have also remembered Bishop Paul Jones, a prominent Episcopal voice against World War I, who was forced to resign his post when he revealed his deep convictions about war, stating: “I believe that the methods of modern international war are quite incompatible with the Christian principles of reconciliation and brotherhood.” However, Jones’ work for peace continued. He was a founder of the Fellowship of Reconciliation and served as its secretary for ten years. He helped found the Episcopal Peace Fellowship prior to his death in 1941. During World War II, he helped resettle Jews and others who fled Nazi Germany, and he argued for greater understanding in relations with Japan. His voice and witness are still missed, and his influence drives our ongoing commitment to nonviolence.

“The day will come when, like slavery which was once held in good repute, war will be looked upon as thoroughly un-Christian. At present it is recognized as an evil which nobody honestly wants, but not yet has it received its final sentence at the bar of Christian morality. Only when Christian men and women and churches will be brave enough to stand openly for the full truth that their consciences are beginning to recognize, will the terrible anachronism of war … be done away.”

- Bishop Paul Jones
This new film by Terence Malick is inspired by the sacrifice of a man who is little known (‘hidden’ perhaps) outside the Christian peace movement. It is not about grand deeds and public heroism. The film’s title is taken from George Eliot’s Middlemarch: “The growing good of the world is partly dependent on unhistorical acts…to the number who lived faithfully a hidden life.”

Franz Jägerstätter was an Austrian conscientious objector during WW2 who made a personal stand for his anti-Nazi beliefs. Refusing to take the Hitler oath as a Wehrmacht conscript, he was executed in 1943.

He was not, by most measures, a remarkable man. A farmer in a small village, with a wife (Fani) and three children, he had aspirations for a quiet life; wrote no books, made no films, led no movements. He was, in a word, ordinary.

Franz does his military service at a base, away from the war, without seeing combat, and is soon sent home. But Hitler’s adulation is rising, and it creeps into his small village. Soon, he becomes certain that his faith will not permit him to participate if called to active military service again.

His conscience might have permitted him to serve in a hospital, but for one thing: all Austrian soldiers are required to swear an oath of loyalty to Hitler. And he refuses.

Much of the film’s nearly three-hour runtime is devoted to Franz and Fani wrestling with his conviction. From the distance of history, it is relatively easy to imagine that we might do what he did, that we would see evil for what it is and resist it. But his neighbours accused him of being conceited, of sticking to principle because he feels superior to everyone else, of harming his family and his village needlessly. “Don’t you think you ought to consider the consequence of your actions for them?” someone asks him. Yet Jägerstätter stands firm.

He confides his misgivings to the local priest, who flatly warns him he might be shot for objecting and adds, “Your sacrifice would benefit no one.” His bishop, too, glosses over the issue when Franz comes seeking counsel. “The priests call them heroes, even saints,” Franz says of the way the clergy speak of those who engage in the Third Reich’s military atrocities. Franz and Fani never lose their faith, never succumb to self-pity or hate, and even the Nazis that appear in the film are not portrayed as purely evil.

But the film’s lasting message is meant to be uncomfortable, especially for people where they have majority power. Jägerstätter could have lived a peaceful (even idyllic) life if he’d simply ignored what was happening in his homeland and been willing to bow the knee to the fatherland and its fascist leader, whose aim is to establish the supremacy of Franz’s own people.

Malick is obviously urging us to heed the warning signs of dangerous nationalist populism and stand up for our principles. There are unmistakable contemporary echoes in lines such as “Oh my wife, what has happened to our country?” The film is thus a critique of our time, when radical right-wing nationalist sentiment and white supremacy are in the ascendancy and sometimes cloak themselves in the disguise of Christianity.

Intriguingly, the film will be released at about the same time as English Heritage opens a new museum at Richmond Castle in Yorkshire to recognize the 400 COs held there during WW1. Sixteen of these were absolutist objectors who refused even non-combatant duties and willingly faced possible execution. Their belief and commitment bear interesting comparison with those of Jägerstätter, for those who wish to make it.

Jägerstätter did eventually become better recognized for his part in the war. In 1964, the American sociologist Gordon Zahn wrote his biography, titled In Solitary Witness. Thomas Merton included a chapter about him in his 1968 book Faith and Violence. An Austrian TV series told his story in 1971, and in 2007, Pope Benedict XVI declared him a martyr. He was beatified on October 26 of that year.

‘A Hidden Life’ premiered at the Cannes Film Festival in May and will be released later this year.

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**APF MEMBERS DAY AND AGM**

**19TH OCTOBER 2019**

All Welcome.
APF Annual Eucharist. Lunch provided.
Peace House, Oxford, OX1 1LD, UK.
If you would like to come please contact Tilly at the APF Office.
FIRST WORLD WAR PEACE FORUM

FROM SUE GILMURRAY, APF TRUSTEE

The First World War Peace Forum was set up for the years 2014–2018, to mark the centenary of events in the “Great War” from the point of view of those resisting it. Many of us who are pacifists and peace campaigners will have given a sigh of relief when Remembrance Day 2018, the centenary of the Armistice, marked the end of a host of events looking back to the 1914–18 war. Although the war’s dreadful destruction had been remembered, there was still too much militarism and patriotic pride in the coverage for our taste. For me, it was a privilege to be part of the expression of an alternative view of the war. I have been representing the APF in the First World War Peace Forum, which set out to remember those who determinedly opposed the fighting, the Conscientious Objectors.

Since the year 2000 I have been a member of a group called Right to Refuse to Kill, which has organised an event in Tavistock Square, London, on May 15th every year to mark International Conscientious Objectors’ Day. There is a stone dedicated to COs in the square, unveiled in 1994 by the composer and ex-CO Sir Michael Tippett. We gather at midday for a secular ceremony, when we hear speakers, sing songs, and place white carnations on the stone, one for a representative CO from every nation we know of, past and present. For many years Bill Hetherington, archivist of the Peace Pledge Union, has researched and prepared the list of names. My chief contribution has been musical. A song written for May 15th 2000, The ones who said No, has been sung there every year since.

To mark the centenary of a war which saw both appalling slaughter and also the introduction of conscription in Britain, it was decided to expand the RRR group into a First World War Peace Forum and give COs a higher profile. Alongside all the memorials to fighters, it was important that those who suffered because they would not fight were honoured as well. Twelve peace organisations, some Christian and some secular, made up the Forum, APF among them.

Each year has seen a different emphasis in the Tavistock Square ceremony. On May 15th 2014 the descendants of First World War COs were invited to attend. Family members of over 30 of them came to honour their fathers, grandfathers and uncles. Details of their stories were posted for all to read. A local school choir came to lead the singing.

In 2015 the emphasis was on women who opposed the war. One speaker was Sheila Triggs, from the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom, and the other was Mia Tamarin, an Israeli woman who was a CO in recent years.

2016 was the centenary of the introduction of conscription, and two 1916 COs were especially commemorated by their family members. One, Bert Brocklesby, survived the war after being shipped to France under a death sentence, which was then commuted to hard labour. The other, Walter Roberts, died as a result of the terrible conditions at the work camp in Dyce where he was sent as punishment.

2017 marked 100 years since the entry of the USA into the war. It was also 50 years since the escalation of the war in Vietnam. The eminent actor Mark Rylance came to read extracts from a play about the poet Siegfried Sassoon, and an American CO from the Vietnam era was the other speaker.

2018 saw an Eritrean human rights activist describing the situation there, and a world perspective on conscientious objection was given by a speaker from War Resisters’ International. On November 11th 2018, the Peace Forum provided a vibrant alternative to militaristic Armistice celebrations. The event, mentioned in September’s The Anglican Peacemaker, was entitled “No more war – let’s make peace happen.” An Act of Remembrance in Tavistock Square included the laying of wreaths of white flowers by the members of the Forum. Then the afternoon was devoted to a Peace Festival in nearby Friends’ House. All the organisations had stalls showing their distinctive character and approach; there were films, spoken presentations, activities for children and live music. It was a time of learning, sharing and encouragement as different peace groups got to know one another better.

The Forum’s final event was on May 15th 2019, to mark the centenary of the release from prison of many COs. The speakers were Lois Bibbings from the University of Bristol, on the history of the COs; and Jay Sutherland from Scotland Against Militarism, on current resistance to the promotion of the military as a glamorous career to impressionable young people.

At a final meeting in June the Forum officially wound up; but several of its members, including the APF, will continue to join with the Right to Refuse to Kill Group to mark May 15th every year, and to pay our respects to those who established and maintained the right to conscientious objection. As we continue to remember those who suffered in past wars, we shall also try to raise awareness of the plight of COs in other countries today, and to counter the propaganda of militarism.

REMEMBERING REV'D JOHN STEPHENSON

FROM ELSIE HINKES, APF MEMBER

Sidney and I met John through APF and our bonds were secured when one of our daughters married a ‘Geordie’, and moved to the north–east. This led to John and Sidney exchanging parishes for holiday purposes, and the chance for us to visit our daughter and her husband. Eppleton vicarage gave us a safe and comfortable base for many wonderful excursions to Co. Durham, Tyneside and Northumbria, during which time we came to learn of John’s passionate striving for peace, and his devotion to his congregation and the wider community of pitmen. A miner’s lamp hung in his church along with a multitude of colourful pictures depicting peaceful and anti-war activities world-wide. His output of poems, articles, cartoons and stories of mining life and peaceful pursuits were published with amazing frequency in his self-produced journal. He continued this task well into his retirement, during which time we were privileged to maintain our friendship.

Our Oxford congregation welcomed John’s visits enthusiastically and there was a notable increase in numbers on his Sundays here.

We say goodbye to a truly remarkable advocate of the Jesus way of life.
REMEMBERING CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS

ICO DAY IN HEREFORDSHIRE
FROM DAVID CHAPMAN, APF MEMBER

On 15th May, International Conscientious Objectors Day, a small group of Herefordshire people came together by the Freedom Bench in the walled garden in Ledbury to remember past and present Conscientious Objectors in Britain and across the world. The event was coordinated by the Hereford Peace Council.

It was a quiet, reflective ceremony, the first of its kind in Herefordshire. We heard moving testimonies of some of the men of WW1 in Britain who objected to killing other people on conscientious grounds. Ten white flowers were laid on the bench in memory of named individuals around the world as a representative sample of people who are currently imprisoned for their principles and beliefs.

The ceremony followed closely the format used in the annual event held in Tavistock Square Gardens, London, UK. The group agreed to meet again on May 15th next year, in Leominster. And it is hoped that more people of all faiths and none will feel able to join us.

ICO DAY IN EDINBURGH
FROM JAN BENVIE, APF TRUSTEE

On 15th May, Conscientious Objectors, past and present, were remembered at an event organised by Edinburgh Peace & Justice Centre.

Pop-up banners created as part of the WEA Scotland/P&J 'Legacies of Resistance Project' were on display and Andrew Farrar spoke about three of the Edinburgh Quaker WW1 COs whose stories he researched for the project.

Arainna Andreangelini spoke on behalf of Pax Christi, telling the story of St Franz Jägerstätter who was put to death for his refusal to join the German army in 1943; Pete Cannell from Edinburgh Stop the War Coalition read a statement from Columbian COs; and P&J intern Elizabeth Mitchell spoke about contemporary Conscientious Objectors in prison around the world today.

Anne McCullough from Conscience, the Peace Tax campaign, gave a powerful speech saying we should not have to pay for war; and Protest in Harmony, a radical singing group based in Edinburgh, sang protest songs, including ‘Tell me the names’, a song interspersed with the reading of the names of COs from WW1.

After the vigil flowers were laid in Princes St Gardens at site where the Opposing War Memorial will be.

OPPOSING WAR MEMORIAL
FROM JAN BENVIE, APF TRUSTEE

A memorial in Edinburgh to Conscientious Objectors and all who oppose war

Edinburgh Peace & Justice Centre are leading a consortium of organisations from across the UK to create Edinburgh’s first CO memorial not only to honour the history and struggle of COs but also to highlight opposition to war.

Conscientious objection and opposition to war are a significant part of Scotland’s history, yet are scarcely recognised in public spaces. During WW1 COs were imprisoned in harsh conditions: 73 died during or following imprisonment. The treatment meted out to the nearly 60,000 COs during WW2 was less harsh; some did non-combatant service and risked their lives as stretcher bearers.

Artists were given the objective of creating a memorial to show the breadth of conscientious objection, and the contributions made by individuals and organisations that together seek peaceful alternatives to war.

Edinburgh artist Kate Ive’s winning design of a bronze sculpture of a peace tree draws inspiration from Davidia involucrata ‘The Handkerchief Tree’. The tree sculpture will be covered in bronze embroidered handkerchiefs, each showing a different aspect of conscientious objection, opposition to war and peacebuilding. The memorial will include a curving granite bench with the inscription “Dedicated to conscientious objectors and all who oppose war”, a space where visitors will feel invited to contemplate the memorial’s meaning in a welcoming and non-confrontational way.

The committee are still raising funds for the fabrication and installation of the Opposing War Memorial and anyone wanting to find out more or donate can do so at: www.opposingwarmemorial.wordpress.com
NOTICES AND DIARY OF EVENTS

ANGLICAN PEACEMAKERS: BALLOT ON CHANGING THE NAME OF APF
Each member of APF has been sent a ballot paper by post or email. There is one vote per APF member. Postal and online voting closes on 16th October.
You can vote in person at the AGM on Saturday 19th October at Peace House in Oxford when the result of the ballot will be announced.
If you have not received information about how to vote and believe you are an eligible member, please contact Tilly Martin at the APF Office.

7–19 September Faith and Peace Exhibition at Bradford Cathedral, UK
21 September International Day of Peace. Events worldwide
22 September Peace Sunday. Contact Fellowship of Reconciliation for resources www.for.org.uk
29 September Cross of Nails Sunday. CCN partners across the world will join us in celebrating our first Cross of Nails Sunday. CCN 29 September www.for.org.uk
24–30 October UN Disarmament Week. Worldwide
29 October–15 November Faith and Peace Exhibition at Coventry Cathedral. UK
13–15 November RISING Global Peace Forum. For peacebuilders, policymakers and academics from around the world resolving violent conflict and ensuring sustaining peaceful societies. Coventry Cathedral, UK
14 November Coventry Lord Mayor’s Peace Lecture delivered by Baroness Shami Chakrabarti. Coventry Cathedral, UK. 6.30-9pm
22 February "The War Business and its Consequences", Church and Peace Day Conference in collaboration with the Fellowship of Reconciliation. Quaker Meeting House, 40 Bull St, Birmingham B4 6AF, UK
5–6 October No War 2019: Pathways to Peace. World BEYOND War’s fourth annual global conference on the abolition of war.

If you would like to join the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship and are in agreement with the pledge:

"We believe that as Christians we are called to follow the way of Jesus in loving our enemies and becoming peacemakers. We work to transform our Anglican Communion and the world to overcome those factors that lead to war within and between nations."

Members must be 18 or over and members of the Anglican Communion or Christians in communion with it. Then please (✓) box one in the form below.

If you are sympathetic to the view expressed in the pledge but feel unable to commit yourself to it, you may like to become an Associate of the APF and receive the Fellowship’s newsletter and notice of our various open events, then please (✓) box two.

Send your completed form to the Membership Secretary: Sue Gilmurray, 13 Danesway, Pinhoe, Exeter EX4 9ES.

I am in agreement with the pledge and wish to become a member of the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship.
I wish to become an Associate of the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship.

Name and designation (Revd, Dr, Mr, Mrs etc):
please print clearly and give your Christian name first.

Address

Year of birth
diocese

I enclose a cheque for …………. as my first subscription (makes cheque payable to the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship)

If you are a UK-income tax payer and want your donation to be treated as a Gift Aid donation. APF can then reclaim income tax paid on the donation.

If you want to make a regular monthly or annual subscription using a Standing Order

I heard of APF through ……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………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NUCLEAR MATTERS

SAVING NO TO NUCLEAR WEAPONS

In the last issue of TAP we informed readers about the imminent service of Thanksgiving to be held at Westminster Abbey, London to mark the 50th anniversary of the Continuous At Sea Deterrent (nuclear submarines). Many clergy and lay people wrote to the Dean of Westminster, over 200 Anglican clergy members signed the Christian CND (CCND) statement calling for the service to be cancelled and over 1000 people signed a petition to the Dean.

The service went ahead on 3rd May, and so APF joined with many others from CCND, Pax Christi, Fellowship of Reconciliation, Church and State, Community of Reconciliation and the Network of Christian Peace Organisations for an alternative event outside the Abbey. With a shared belief that nuclear weapons are contrary to the teachings of Jesus and the Bible we shared scripture, prayers and thoughts on a world without these weapons of mass destruction.

APF Counsellor, Canon Paul Oestreicher was not able to be at the event. He sent the following message which was read by APF member Revd. Azariah France-Williams:

“AROHANUI: much love to you all in the Maori language in the peaceful struggle from Aotearoa/New Zealand - the small Pacific nation which will not allow ships carrying nuclear weapons into its harbours.

As a human being, trying to follow Jesus and as a Vice-President of CND I join you in Spirit, though I wish I were physically with you to pray in penitence and solidarity, as together we go on working for a world without nuclear weapons. My prayer today is with the members signed the

APF Counsellor, Canon Paul Oestreicher was not able to be at the event. He sent the following message which was read by APF member Revd. Azariah France-Williams:

“A tree is a natural, living organism – but it is also a metaphor: for example a “family tree” or when a person is leaving a job which they have made a success someone is likely to quote the phrase, “a tree that is well planted…….”

We are celebrating the anniversary of the dedication of the Peace Chapel at Molesworth and the garden which was created around the chapel (which had no roof.) I remember the hope we all felt on that sunny day as the trees and shrubs were planted and although our hopes for a peaceful world by the turn-of-the-century have not been realised, I still feel that hope. This is because I still say the Lord’s prayer every day (as most Christians do), saying, “Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth…” and we know that people will not kill or harm one another where God is King – Ruler of a continent, a nation, community or a single human heart. Almost from our foundation, there were plenty of voices forecasting the demise of APF well before today, so through all the fluctuations of membership and respect for our ideals, let us keep the faith in love and hope: “Thy kingdom come, O Lord, Thy reign on earth begin……”

The re-dedication was organised by Christian CND and included many people from the 1980s who had been part of the movement to get the missiles off UK soil. As you might imagine, a number of photos from the time were brought out, including this one of APF members (Andrew Smith is on the far right). Do you recognise anyone else? While the day was a joyful reminder of working together, it also showed the necessity to continue to work for the elimination of nuclear weapons and to push to get the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons into international law.

MOLESWORTH PEACE GARDEN

FROM SUE CLAYDON, APF CHAIR

In June my family and I attended the re-dedication of the Peace Garden at RAF Molesworth. While many people remember the role that Greenham Common peace camp played in the campaign against American cruise missiles, the fact they were also at Molesworth has been somewhat overlooked. Living not far away, my young family and I were there a number of times. One of those was the blessing of the incomplete ‘Peace Chapel’ by Gordon Roe, Bishop of Huntingdon. I asked Mary Roe for her memories and, as well as recalling bringing coal and food to the peace camp, she wrote:

“A tree is a natural, living organism – but it is also a metaphor: for example a “family tree” or when a person is leaving a job which they have made a success someone is likely to quote the phrase, “a tree that is well planted…….”

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INQUIRIES INTO UK NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Recently two inquiries into nuclear weapons policy have been undertaken within the UK Parliament. The first was an inquiry into the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty by the House of Lords International Committee. In the report the House of Lords International Relations Committee called on the Government to address grave concerns about the deteriorating state of nuclear diplomacy.

Secondly, the Defence Select Committee in the House of Commons completed an inquiry into the decision of Donald Trump to withdraw from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF). The INF was signed in the 1980s and led to more than 2000 nuclear weapons being removed from service. The withdrawal of the United States threatens a new nuclear arms race which could suck in other states including China. It could also lead to US nuclear missiles being stationed in the UK once again.
FROM TILLY MARTIN, APF COORDINATOR

On Tuesday 3rd September I took part in the No Faith in War day ahead of Europe’s largest arms fair, DSEI (Defence & Security Equipment International). DSEI happens every two years, and is held at ExCeL in London Docklands. DSEI hosts arms buyers and sellers from around the world, enabling them to network and make deals on small arms, missiles, planes, tanks, military electronics and warships, and surveillance and crowd-control equipment. The guest list for DSEI includes military delegations from 67 countries, including a number of dictatorships and human rights abusing regimes; Saudi Arabia, Uzbekistan, Philippines, Egypt, United Arab Emirates, Turkey and Bahrain. All delegations were invited by the UK Government. As I write, thankfully Hong Kong, whose police are known to use UK-made tear gas, has reportedly withdrawn its delegation from DSEI. No Faith in War is a day collectively organised by diverse faith groups to declare with a united voice that they have “No Faith in War”. The protest opposed and sought to block the set-up of DSEI as military equipment arrived. The following words of support were read out during the day:

The Rt Revd David Walker, Bishop of Manchester and APF Bishop Protector: “At this time when the world’s arms manufacturers are preparing to display their wares here in London, I’m delighted to know that Christians are gathering together to engage in a display of a rather different sort. Tensions, both between and within nations, will not be resolved by simply manufacturing ever more complex and deadly weaponry. May God bless you in your act of witness.”

The Rt Revd Paul Bayes, Bishop of Liverpool: “Friends, I can’t be with you in person but today I stand with you in spirit because, like you, I have no faith in war. For over fifty years I have been a Christian and as such I follow the Prince of Peace and the God of love. Glamourising and commercialising the instruments of death is not the Jesus way. So may God honour, affirm and strengthen the witness you’re making. And may God bless you all.”

The former Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, also made a statement supporting the protest: “The way much of the arms trade currently works continues to be a blot on the global moral landscape. Governments have been negligent or collusive about the role played by arms exports in sustaining brutal and even genocidal conflicts, and the recent court judgement about arms exports to Saudi Arabia has highlighted the issue.

The principles of ethics and international law need to be defended more robustly than ever in a world where local wars of great savagery are fuelled by what often seems to be wildly irresponsible attitudes, and I welcome this fresh effort to alert citizens to the cost of indiscriminate, profit-driven trading in weapons of death and mutilation.”

At around lunchtime one of the roads was successfully blocked as protesters made use – at an extremely slow pace – of the pedestrian crossing! Three lorries were turned back as they were unable to proceed along the road. Another part of the entrance was blocked as protestors remained in place after a Quaker gathering for worship in the middle of the road. About 60 people were arrested on the day. And I later learnt that we had successfully stopped any deliveries being made that day. This being my first time at a DSEI protest, I was encouraged and impressed by the peaceful atmosphere and how a spirit of love and kindness prevailed.

Find out more: #StopDSEI #NoFaithInWar

Watch APF member Rev Chris Howson, speaking about his opposition to DSEI by searching: Kevin Snyman, Beating Ploughshares into Swords on YouTube.