

THE LONDON CATHOLIC WORKER

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Signs and temporary structures at the migrant camp in Calais: **top left:** dwelling **top right** 'Warning: surveillance camera' **bottom left** 'Despite all the difficulties we always have a smile on our lips', **bottom right** one of the shops on the camp **Photo:** Dan Viesnik

Catholic Worker solidarity with migrants in Calais

In July members of the London Catholic Worker drove a van load of donations to Calais, to the infamous camp, known as 'La Jungle'. At the time, between 1,500 and 2,000 migrants from 20 countries – including Sudan, Afghanistan, Eritrea, Somalia, Iran and Syria- had gathered there, living in deplorable conditions in plastic and cardboard homemade shacks, grouped together into a makeshift refugee camp. To date, between 3,000 and 4,000 people have lived in this slum, plus three small groups of Syrians camped in the city.

In September Juan Peris and Dan Viesnik both made further trips, showing solidarity, talking to the residents and local aid organisations. There follow five pages of photographs, reflections, findings and notes by members of the community at Giuseppe Conlon House.

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How to get involved in a crisis

Nora Ziegler

On the first Tuesday of October this year we were back in front of the Foreign Office, holding one of our fortnightly prayer vigils in remembrance of forced migrants who have died in their attempts to reach Europe. We hold these vigils as acts of witness to the dignity of every refugee and migrant, regardless of their gender or nationality, and to the freedom of movement of all people.

Given the recent sudden media interest in the "refugee crisis" I find myself wondering: what was the use in standing there every other Tuesday for six months, handing out leaflets, if all it took was some pictures and articles in the tabloids for people to become aware and care about refugees? From one day to the next our phone at Giuseppe Conlon House was ringing every ten minutes with people wanting to drop off donations for Calais or asking how they could help, what they could do.

Living this impressive display of the mainstream media's power has been quite intimidating. It shows how easily our opinions, emotions and attention are manipulated. And it makes me question whether any of our political campaigns and actions, our use of social media, make any difference. On the other hand, perhaps it is precisely those actions, and our work of hospitality that allow us to challenge the power of the media, not over the control of other people's minds and hearts, but our own.

It is understandable that we are so easily distracted and influenced by the media. There is so much going on in the world, so much injustice and violence, that we rely on media, both mainstream and alternative, to guide us. However, by acting on the things I care about they become personal and stay relevant in my life. Vigiling outside the Foreign and Home offices for six months, saying those prayers, and reading out the names of those who have died over and over again has kept these men, women and children in my heart. It has nurtured in me a firm conviction, much deeper than any facts, figures or arguments I might pick up in the news, that I have no right to enjoy the fruits of their labour or the peace for which their blood is spilled.

This simple truth is not particularly impressive, I know. But it is durable. The media have a huge impact on our thoughts and feelings but it is up to us how we use our time, who we spend it with and where we place our bodies. When I visited the London Catholic Worker for the first time I had little interest in or understanding of issues regarding asylum and migration. However, at every moment along the way I have felt that this community was a good place for me to be. I was learning. I was becoming involved physically, emotionally, spiritually.

Getting to know, living with people and sharing their small and large struggles makes a massive difference. Acts of mourning and remembrance do too. Solidarity starts with our bodies. It is lived through the joy, anger, sadness, hope, frustration and anxiety we share with each other. When we accompany someone to an interview or pray for a positive decision from the home office. When we play a game of pool or chess, when we listen to each other, and when we do the dishes together. I have become involved and in a small way, definitely much more so than before, the struggle of refugees and undocumented migrants has become my struggle.

Based on my own experience I believe that any attempts to manipulate public opinion around these issues might just deliciously backfire. People are getting *involved*. Organizations in London have received hundreds of offers from people who are looking to host refugees in their homes. Others are organizing collections for Calais and looking for projects to volunteer with. I hope that the personal experiences and relationships people gain will last longer and lead to more radical thoughts and actions, than any journalist or politician could have imagined.

Nora Ziegler is a live-in member of the community at Giuseppe Conlon House

God's ambassador

Mirjam Johansson



Placards used at vigils at the Foreign Office **Photo:** Dan Viesnik

During a vigil outside the Foreign Office last spring a group of students passed by and pointing at one of our banners, "Refugees are God's ambassadors", they laughed out loud. I had forgotten how peculiar it sounds because it is such a well-used quote here at Giuseppe Conlon House.

In our community at the moment we are reading Dorothy Day's *Loaves and Fishes*. I have her words in mind as I write this article about my own encounter with one God's ambassador and ultimately with myself. Her words encourage me when I wonder about how to understand and portray the thoughts I am not proud of.

'How to understand people, portray people – that is the problem. St Paul said, "Are we comforted? It is so that you may be comforted" And so I, too, write of things as they really were, for the comfort of others – for many in this world have old or sick or sinful people with whom they have to live, whom they have to love.'

We have only just arrived at the so called "Jungle" refugee camp in Calais when just such a one, God's ambassador walks up to us. He asks what we are doing there. When he finds out we have come to drop off some donations he tells us the refugees don't need our stuff. There are plenty of homeless refugees in England; why don't we give our stuff to them? The only thing they want is help to get across the border. Then this man, God's ambassador, tries to convince us to hide him and some others in our van on the way back. He offers us a large amount of money. When we decline he asks, "Why are you so scared?" There is loathing, in his voice. And I think, 'It's not that. We're not scared.' However the situation is very sad.

Later I realise that fear is exactly what it's about! He's spot on! What would the walls of fortress Europe be made of, if not fear? Fear is why we close our borders, why we shut ourselves in our safe little country. We are so afraid. And with the help of the ambassador I hear God asking me – Why are you afraid? In God's question there is no loathing though. God loves us all the same, afraid or not.

We continue our conversation and the ambassador concludes - perhaps from our conversation, perhaps from his entire life experience - "I don't trust white people and they don't trust us". This time I instantly realise there is truth in his statement. Not any truth but a deeply significant one. I think these two issues are very close to the core of the migration challenges we face. As I move on along the paths in the camp and have other, less confrontational, conversations with other people in the camp, this is the one that sticks with me the most.

At the camp there are shops, restaurants, bars, a church, a mosque and a school: all built out of boards, nails, ropes, tarps and sheets of plastic. I am positively surprised at the creativity as I walk around and admire and compliment the ingenious constructions.

But, wait a minute! Why should I be surprised? I'm not surprised there is a school opposite our house back in Harringey. I'm not surprised at the shops down on Green Lanes or the mosque where we give some of our bread. There are churches, schools, shops and creativity pretty much everywhere where there are people. So, why does it surprise me to find them in a refugee camp?

My own racist ideas slowly become clear to me once again, and what really brings it home is when I realise that what actually surprised me was not the fact that those constructions are there, but that they are built and manned [continued on page 4]



The Catholic Worker in the UK

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Giuseppe Conlon House offers hospitality to destitute refugees. We also run the Urban Table soup kitchen. We organise acts of non-violent resistance and produce this newsletter.

Urban Table Soup Kitchen:

Open Sunday 2:30 — 4:30 pm,

The Round Chapel, Powerscroft Road,
Hackney, London E5 0PU

The Catholic Worker Farm

Lynsters Farm
Old Uxbridge Road
West Hude
Herts
WD3 9XJ

Tel: +44 (0) 1923 777 201

Email: thecatholicworkerfarm@yahoo.co.uk

Website: www.thecatholicworkerfarm.org

The Farm offers hospitality to destitute women. We grow organic vegetables and have a poustina and hermitage retreat. Maryhouse also offers a home to four destitute women with children.

Glasgow Catholic Worker

Email: glw@catholicworker.org.uk

Website: www.catholicworker.org.uk

The Glasgow Catholic Worker offers a place of welcome for asylum seekers and destitute refugees in the centre of Glasgow at the Garnethill Multicultural Centre, open Saturday 9:00—1:00pm and a soup kitchen on Friday nights. We keep a regular vigil at Faslane Nuclear Base as well as having monthly meetings and prayers.

(yes mostly manned and not womanned) by the refugees themselves. If they were constructed by French charity workers I would not have been as surprised!

I encounter myself again when we visit *Secours Catholique's* parish project in central Calais. While some of the others walk in I stay outside and chat to a few women who have come to collect some clothes and shoes from the centre, but they are too late and it is already closed. They all seem disappointed. It had taken them over an hour to get there. One of the women has a bandaged hand and her friend tells me that she had to get some stitches after she hurt herself trying to jump onto a train going to England. They have to wait until the police have left and then jump on when the train is already moving. Another friend had died two days earlier attempting the same dangerous quest. They are from Eritrea and remind me of some of the women I lived with at the Catholic Worker Farm. I am filled with compassion for them. At least so I think. But when they ask for a lift back to the camp the limit of my compassion is suddenly a lot nearer than I thought. One must be circumspect. There isn't enough space for us all. We might not have time. All our personal stuff is in there. What else will they request once we've given them the lift? A few minutes later a lady from the church offers them a lift in her van instead and I get a sinking feeling. I am sad and ashamed of my own fear. Of course that was the right thing to do. It is undoubtedly what I would have done could I fully understand that these women are my sisters. I am grateful for this woman's good example that wakes me up. Would I have done this for my own sister?

This trip to Calais meant for me an exposure of my own subconscious racism. Developed and nurtured in our society yes, but still mine and my responsibility. Maybe slowly I can learn to love regardless of culture and race and then I will be less afraid for "Perfect love drives out fear" (1 John 4:18)

Mirjam Johannson is a member of the live in community at Giuseppe Conlon House



'On sale here: vaccine against racism' Sign at the migrant camp, Calais **Photo:** Dan Viesnik

Borders in Europe:

Notes on visiting migrant settlements in Calais

Juanjo Peris

In September I had the opportunity to spend a week with the Sudanese community in 'La Jungle', Calais. In this article I aim to provide some findings and reflections that we made on the ground.

The settlements in Calais began to form following the decision of Nicolas Sarkozy, in 2002, to close the Migrant Reception Centre at Sangatte, managed by the Red Cross. Since then, migrants have lived in insecure and inadequate housing, or have formed shanty towns that have been destroyed by the authorities and have been rebuilt by the migrants several times.

Settlements at the Jungle are organized by nationality, as are the communal shacks, which house six mosques, three churches, a school, where immigrants learn French and English, and several shops and clubs.

Some of the migrants living in the Jungle camp come from countries in conflict: "The militia burned my house down with my father and mother inside, I ran away" said Rifat, a 22-year-old from Darfur.

"I left my country six years ago, and since then I have not spoken to my family. I think they are in Darfur," said Mustapha, who left Sudan when he was 16 years old.

We also found children travelling alone, such as Mujtba, 16 years old, who left Afghanistan last month to flee the Taliban. He travelled with his family to Iran, where he spent five days, and now travels alone with the idea of crossing to the UK. He dreams of "a normal life with my mother and my father in UK". Or Ali and Subnallah, 15 and 19 years old, who met on the road. Ali teaches English to Subnallah. We were also surprised to see children as young as three living with their families in the Jungle.

Another phenomenon that we observed and confirmed in interviews is the existence of a market for sex which, together with the identification of some indicators of human trafficking is of particular concern. We were also able to observe how some LGBTQ people are acting as sex workers.

As for the time spent outside their home country, newcomers live in the Jungle, alongside people who have spent years in Europe, without documents. "I've been in this situation more than ten years between Africa and Europe. Now I want to rest and I will start my future", a Senegalese man said to me.

In some conversations we can see indicators of absence of family concern and the process of exclusion: "Before, all these people had a family, now we don't have any. I need a family." "I know that drink (alcohol)

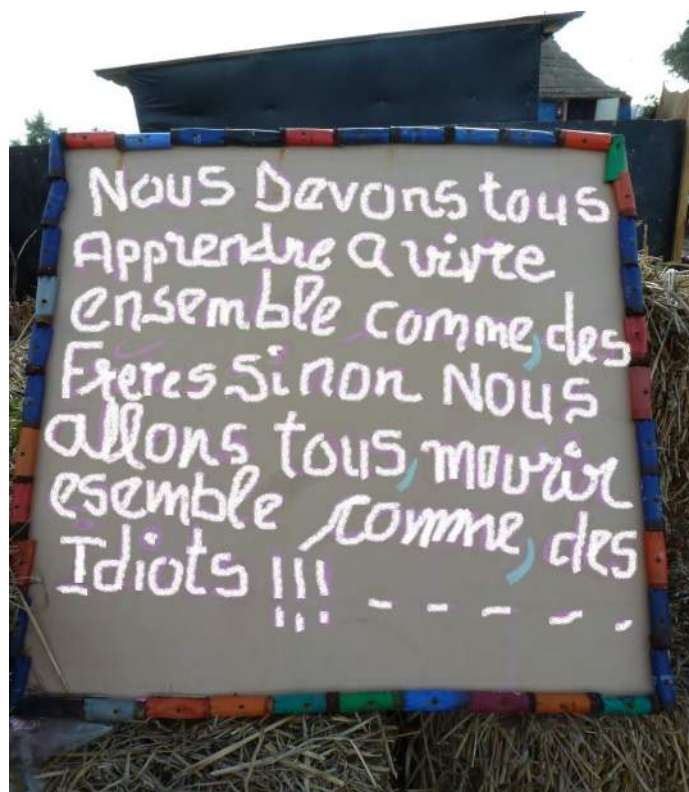
it's not good, but sometimes I drink. When I drink, afterwards, my mind is relaxed," said a young man who had not seen his family for 6 years.

Not everyone who lives in the Jungle wants to cross to UK. Caritas Calais accompanies some 300 migrants per year in the process of seeking asylum. "I do not want to go to UK, I just want peace and security. I want to live in peace and I can do it here" said Abdu, a 22-year-old, Sudanese man who has applied for asylum in France. Some fear being deported by France. Although there is confusion in this respect, we spoke at length with an Afghan man who wanted to cross to UK for fear of being deported by France, as well as another Afghan who lived in the UK and travelled to France for fear that the UK would deport him. Others want to cross because they hope to improve their situation in UK: "This is France (ie the Jungle) Here I don't have a house". "I want to study medicine," said a young Iranian who had converted to Christianity.

With the people we talked to a little deeper, we found that their migration project is temporary and that before migrating to Europe they tried their luck in other countries close to home: "Darfur is dangerous. There is not peace, not security, not education, not water, not electricity.... So, I needed to go another country. Libya was good for me, because it's not far from my county. But in Libya there is no government. Any people, any time, asked you: where are your documents? So, after many problems, I decided to leave. So, if I can't stay in Libya, where can I go? Maybe to Europe "...I want to stay here for a bit, but when my home country is good I will go back home" (For the future)" I wish that everything would be good and people from Sudan-Darfur could come back to home. Peace, community and harmony is what I wish."

The situations of vulnerability and exclusion described contrast markedly with the hardening of speech, on the part of European politicians, and the proposal of more police and military measures, as can be seen in the joint statement following the agreement of cooperation between the French Ministry of Interior and the UK Home Office to manage migration flows at Calais. Signed on August of this year, this refers to "mafias, smuggles and criminal gangs who exploit migrants" and puts the emphasis on budgetary provision for any measures to strengthen the security of the perimeter of the stations and inside the tunnel, and more resources to Eurotunnel Ltd. to strengthen its internal security.

Likewise, the agreement provides for joint efforts to accelerate the deportation of migrants, as well as more cooperation with EUROPOL, and the acceleration of the implementation of a multifunctional centre for migrants in Niger, as well as awareness campaigns in countries of origin on the risks of migrating. Concern about the existence of women and children in vulnerable situations is almost reduced to more field observation to provide information and advice, and propose voluntary return.



'We have to learn to live together like brothers. If not we will all die together like idiots'
Sign at the migrant camp in Calais **Photo** : Dan Viesnik

Meanwhile, the UK commits to work to make the UK less attractive to "illegal migrants" limiting access to housing and health.

The hardening of speech and proposed further steps of the military measures, also take the form of police aggression not against the smugglers in the abstract, but against the poor in particular. On the last day of my visit, the police evicted one of the three urban settlements of Syrians, in Calais town centre, and the shacks of the most visible area at the entrance to the Jungle. At 9:30 am I had scheduled a meeting with the head of Caritas, but when I got to the venue, given the gravity of the news, he had to leave urgently and invited me to accompany him to the field to check the status of migrants. Volunteers were helping migrants to collect from the ground what was left of their belongings. Doctors of the World and Caritas collected several children and women to carry to safety, while that morning they had an emergency meeting to manage the situation. As the children told me, the eviction was violent, police used tear gas and the brother of one of the children ended up in hospital after being attacked by one of the policemen.

Four children -three of them chosen from the Syrians that morning- together with their mother ended up being welcomed in a parish by the priest with whom I was in touch that week, so, I met them just before leaving. The mother, said to me: "If France does not want us, we'll leave. We will go to Belgium or another country".

Juanjo Peris is a social worker and currently a live-in volunteer at Giuseppe Conlon House

Will you give me a lift to England?

Dan Viesnik

A few weeks after our first visit to Calais' 'La Jungle' slum in July, there was a barrage of dehumanising right-wing media reporting and political commentary about 'migrants'. Prime Minister David Cameron referred to 'swarms' and Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond referred to 'marauding' African migrants posing a threat to our standard of living.

Tired of the xenophobic and racist portrayals of our brothers and sisters, most of them refugees fleeing violence and persecution in countries such as Afghanistan, Eritrea, Sudan and Syria, I sought out ways to do something positive to show those stranded just beyond our borders that not everyone in the UK views them this way. I joined a new Facebook group - *Calais – People to People Solidarity – Action from UK* – whose primary aim is to help co-ordinate grass roots humanitarian assistance from the UK and which has amassed nearly 30,000 members. I began to assist with administering the group and as I did so, I contemplated returning to Calais to help as a volunteer. An international solidarity demonstration in Calais, called for 19th September, provided the final prompt I needed to make the trip.

On the overnight coach from London, I hooked up with two fellow passengers, from Sheffield, whose contact drove us to a new warehouse near the camp that had just opened up for the processing of donations. Once there, I joined a party of volunteers who were helping to unload deliveries and sort through the mountains of items.

The very small charities that work tirelessly on the ground in Calais day in day out have been overwhelmed by the streams of vehicles arriving daily, stuffed full of donations. It should be said here that while this assistance is of course generally welcome, a considerable proportion of the deliveries, while no doubt well-intentioned, often contain a lot of inappropriate and unsorted items and are not co-ordinated with local charities in Calais. This creates additional challenges for their already over-worked volunteers, causes piles of unsuitable clothing to be left strewn around the camp, and results in undignified scums around vehicles as camp residents race towards them, desperate for food, blankets, appropriate footwear, jackets and whatever other essential items they can lay their hands on.

On Saturday, the solidarity march from the camp to the port took place on what turned out to be a gloriously sunny day. Perhaps two thousand people took part in this peaceful demonstration, including residents of the camp, volunteers from local groups and people who, like me, had travelled from various parts of the UK, or from other parts of France and beyond.

The camp residents chanted slogans like: "No Jun-

gle! No Jungle! Jungle is for animals!" Upon arrival at the port, there was a rally and a wall installation upon which participants could paint messages. I managed to locate fellow Catholic Worker Juan, who had arrived in Calais several days earlier. After a beer in the town centre, we got a lift back to the camp, where I joined him for the night in the Sudanese section in which he had been staying.

There isn't space for me to elaborate upon all that happened during my eventful four-day stay in Calais, which included witnessing a rather intimidating police eviction operation at the camp's entrance, facilitating some challenging improvised donation distributions and spending time with camp residents, so I'll just briefly mention one incident that occurred while I was witnessing the eviction. An Afghan boy of about ten years of age came up to me and asked if I could help him get to England. In that moment, I was starkly and uncomfortably reminded of how easy we have it, those of us with British or European passports who are free to travel as we please, and how sad and unjust it is that this is the privilege of the few who could be said to have won the lottery of life rather than the many. Those forced from their homelands further afield often perish or lose loved ones during their perilous, epic voyages that may see them crossing the Sahara desert, the Mediterranean in over-crowded, unseaworthy dinghies and Europe in the back of stuffy lorries; and at least 15 people are known to have died so far this year trying to cross the Channel on the final leg of their journey to the UK. We deeply mourn every life lost as a tragedy in which we must all share our burden of responsibility. To me, the courage and resilience of those who undertake such journeys is truly awe-inspiring and stands in stark contrast to the cowardice of our callous and arrogant, over-privileged political leaders. We can only hope and pray for more enlightened and compassionate policies from those in power in the future. For my own part, I hope to return to Calais before long.

Dan Viesnik is a member of the London Catholic Worker



Police clear part of the camp at Calais **Photo:** Dan Viesnik

Resisting the Arms trade at DSEi

Henrietta Cullinan



Catholic Workers spilled red paint round a child's coffin, blocking the road to DSEi Arms Fair **Photo:** Dan Viesnik

I joined the London Catholic Worker in a 'No Faith in War' day of action outside the Excel Centre, London. Other faith groups, Put Down the Sword, Pax Christi and Disarm Quakers came together in order to disrupt the installation of DSEi, the world's largest arms fair.

We planned to hold a mock funeral for the victims of the arms trade, but until the day came I had no idea whether the police would let us even approach the Excel Centre, or whether there would be any trucks carrying recognizable military hardware.

The intention of an action like this one is to use the symbols of the church to convey the message. The idea is also to claim a space in which to create and realise a peaceful and loving world at the same time as resisting nonviolently the arms trade, the approach of the lethal weapons of all sizes, and the holding of the arms fair itself.

For me personally my aim is to resist the trade in killing. All the machines and weapons are evidence of someone's intention to kill.

We considered ways of claiming and occupying the space, that are also symbols of the church: for instance black clothes, incense, placards, reading the word of God, singing hymns and then finally red paint that we were going to spread on the ground, to represent blood. We thought a bit about what kind of paint to throw, since throwing paint could be considered violent in itself. Oil paint would be too unpleasant. I thought of using vegetables like tomatoes and beetroot. In the end we used poster paint, mixing red and green for a realistic blood colour. Catholic Workers Nora Ziegler and I and John Lynes, a Quaker, who were willing to risk arrest, would throw the paint.

The funeral procession of small white coffin, flowers, candlesticks and placards set out at about 11am led by Fr. Martin Newell cp dressed in his plain habit, swinging the censor. We processed through the housing estate nearby, singing 'Abide with me' and 'Amazing Grace', handing out leaflets.

Once we arrived at the roundabout, I grew more and more nervous. I wasn't sure about being arrested, spending the whole night in a stuffy cell. I found it hard to concentrate on the readings until it came to my turn. It was the story of Cain and Abel from Genesis. 'The Lord says, 'Listen! [...] your brother's blood is crying out to me from the ground!'. At that moment the funeral stopped being a 'mock' funeral, and became real for me. I stared at the spot of tarmac where I would throw the paint and pictured the ground opening up and the blood screaming out in pain.

I prayed for the people of Afghanistan whose country has had so much ordnance dumped all over it that life has become almost impossible. In Kabul whole blocks are still rubble, infrastructure is smashed, high unemployment persists. That morning we heard that Cameron had justified sending drones to make the first UK 'extra-judicial' killing. I prayed that Cameron would have a change of heart.

Then as the prayers finished I made eye contact with my friends, we picked up the coffin and moved onto the road. Quickly, with no one to stop us, we spilled the red poster paint all over one side of the road around the coffin. The nervousness suddenly left me. I knelt and in the gleaming wet paint. Other members of the crowd soon came to join us and held hands. The other people on the protest stood in a big circle around us as we carried on singing. The event turned from an awkward piece of activism into a space of prayer just as we had wished.

The police seemed reluctant to interrupt us at that point, instead mildly asking how long was all this going on for. We said we'd stay there an hour. The members of all the other groups gathered around, took over the singing, prayed in silence, as if in a prayer relay. We had made a gathering place, with the writing on the placards, the scripture that we read, the prayers and the incense still burning in front of the child's coffin, and its smoke spilled out sideways in the wind.

Just as I'd imagined, the symbols and the crowd made a space of peace and prayer, instead of a road for carrying lethal weapons to market. Soon a row of lorries was stuck behind us. One low loader really was carrying an armoured vehicle, with the mountings for a missile launcher on the top. This felt like a real success to me.

Creating this space was taking prayers to the point of suffering. The Excel Centre tomorrow becomes a place of suffering as companies display weapons to envoys of regimes looking for a way to kill and maim, subjugate and oppress.

Henrietta Cullinan is a writer and peace activist

Easy Essays

Peter Maurin

from Outdoor Universities

Someone said
that the Catholic Worker
is a movement
for down-and-outs.
And it is a movement
for down-and-outs,
including
down-and-out business men,
down-and-out graduates
and down-and-out college professors.
In the Catholic Worker,
besides being fed,
clothed and sheltered,
people learn
to use their hands
as well as their heads.
And while they learn
to use their heads
to guide their hands,
the use of their hands,
improves a great deal
the working of their heads.

from The Law of Holiness

There is a rub
between the rich
who like
to get richer
and the poor
who don't like
to get poorer.
The rich,
who like
to get richer,
turn to the Church
to save them
from the poor
who don't like
to get poorer.
But the Church
can only tell the rich
who like
to get richer,
'Woe to you rich
who like
to get richer
if you don't help the poor
who don't like
to get poorer.

What keeps you awake at night?

Call for an end to oil sponsorship of British Museum

Martin Newell

"We gather here to celebrate our hope of a new world, the reign of God as proclaimed by Jesus. Our hope is that of God's world free of exploitation and oppression, a world based on care for the earth, our common home, a world that relies on renewable energy rather than destructive fossil fuel extraction and consumption." (Christian Climate Action Agape Liturgy at the British Museum, 13th September 2015)



Fr. Martin Newell with Christian Climate Action celebrate an Agape meal at the British Museum Photo: Natasha Quarmby/Fields of Light Photography

"What is it that keeps you awake at night?" The question jolted me. Not because I was dozing after a bad night's sleep. The question was political: what is going on in the world that upsets you, that worries you, that you feel passionate about so that you lie awake unable to sleep because your mind is full of it? The questioner was thinking along the lines of the various wars we were involved in at the time, torture at Guantanamo or Bagram Airbase in Afghanistan, the threat of nuclear destruction.

Or possibly the plight of refugees, so many of whom we have shared our lives with these recent years. It wasn't even the fact that most of the things that keep me awake at night are personal things, my own concerns and worries for people around me. That's very normal. No, what jolted me was the realisation that if anything other than personal worries was keeping me awake at night, it was the fear of climate change and what it will do to our planet and the lives of all the people and living beings on it, if we don't do something about it.

And what jolted me all the more was the truth that despite my fears, I wasn't doing a damn thing about it, other than trying to live as simply as I knew how, changing our electricity supplier to 100% renewable, and continuing as a passive member of what is now called 'Green Christian'.

I think it is called 'dissonance'. Maybe it is just denial. Climate change is so big. In the 80's as a teenager, I had nightmares about nuclear war. I didn't start doing anything about that either, till ten years later. But as someone said to me just the other day, you can't just go up to climate change and hit it with a hammer, which is more or less what I did eventually with nuclear weapons systems, when I took part in the 'Jubilee Ploughshares 2000' action. It is bigger and more diffused than that.

That question started a process within me, leading me to look for opportunities to act on my fear and our hope. My fear of the effects of extreme climate change ('extreme' because the change is already upon us), and my hope that the human family can respond to the 'disaster that is coming' not by 'fleeing' but by repenting – changing our ways (cf Matthew 3:7-9, Luke 3:7-8). My faith is that Jesus and the Gospels show us the Way to do this.

I had met some Christians who were involved with campaigning on climate change and had been writing about why Christians should move to direct action on climate change. So on a Sunday morning in September we sat at a table in the British Museum, along with a crowd from 'Art Not Oil', protesting against BP's sponsorship of the 'major cultural institutions' (including the National Gallery, the Royal Opera House, and the Tate). There we started to pray the words above, "*We gather here to celebrate our hope of a new world...*" and we continued to celebrate an agape liturgy at a cafe table in the great court, with a banner and an icon, with bread and wine, fruit of the earth and work of human hands, celebrating the gifts God gives us, affirming our faith that when we share there is always more than enough, that 'love casts out fear' (1 John 4:18), that – in the words of our liturgy "God has blessed the earth with glorious fertility and life, and that we and our society need to repent and stop making it an 'immense pile of filth' [Pope Francis in *Laudato Si*]".

Our prayer witness was one of fourteen 'events' that comprised the "Art Not Oil" day of action at the Museum, taking over the great hall at the end to choreograph a human chain writing the word 'NO' to BP's sponsorship. It is a small step on a journey: for me, moving my focus to climate change, for many of the other members of 'Christian Climate Action', to taking the risk of faith a step further along the way of direct action, confronting 'the way things are', the 'powers and principalities', in the hope of a world made new.

Fr. Martin Newell, founder member of the London Catholic Worker, has opened a new house of hospitality in Birmingham

The leaves in Waddington

Aavid Skagerlid

A stream of cars on the Grantham road
drive north towards Lincoln
underneath the grey sky that tirelessly
lets its heavy rain down
Bombs, Afghani village

The woman fumbling with the lock
while opening up the Post Office
looks up to the sky and sees
a lonely bird flying south
Armed combat drone

The children playing football
on the grass outside the school
don't notice the wind
howling in the treetops
The cry of a woman

On his way to the mailbox
Mr. Watson steps over rotting apples
lying on the ground
attracting flies
Scattered limbs

At the air force base just outside the village
a drone pilot walks slowly
while studying the leaves falling down
one by one
12 dead

Soon the caretaker will
rake them into piles
load them into the wheelbarrow
and cart them off to the compost

Arise and shine Africa

Arnold Christo-Leigh

Arise and shine Africa
Arise and shine for God has spirit in you.
Shine Africa, the land of many heroes.
Arise and shine Africa
The proud land of our forefathers.
The beautiful land of Africa
For God has bless you with many resources
Arise and shine Africa
The sweet home of our fore fathers
The land that God's love will manifested
The sweet land of many talents.
Arise and shine Africa
Living in peace, for only
Living in peace that your blessings will shine
out in the world.



Dan Viesnik and Juanjo Peris at Calais solidarity day

Giuseppe Conlon House update

Roland Dale

Despite hoping to have a relaxing summer, the past couple of months have been a busy time for us. The distressing images in the news and the plight of those gathered in the camps in Calais, where conditions were recently condemned as “squalid and unacceptable” by a UN migration representative, touched the hearts of many and there was a surge in donations to us of food, clothes and sleeping equipment for the people there. We thank all those who have generously shared what extra they have for those who have nothing.

We are also incredibly grateful to Arthur, the soulful “man with a van” who helps organise and transport the donations. Without him suggesting a trip and offering his time and effort, we might never have been involved in working in Calais. Many thanks also to all

who came and helped us sort the donations that continue to pile up in our church, lining the pews, reminding us during our morning and evening prayers of our brothers and sisters who struggle daily to meet even their most basic needs.

The so-called “migrant crisis” comes as an urgent call for the need to do more, to create spaces of welcome that counter the spirit of exclusion and mistrust that pervades our society and stifles the Holy Spirit. Many people have been in contact to see if they can open up their homes, to participate in the work of hospitality that is so desperately needed. If you feel called, and feel able to provide accommodation for someone seeking refuge in this country, then you can contact the London Hosting Network by email at hosting@housingjustice.org.uk to find out more.

The situation also causes us to reflect on the wars and meddling we have been involved in, and our complicity in the violence that makes so many people’s homes uninhabitable. Mindful of the great suffering caused by war and fuelled by the arms trade, members of our community disrupted the DSEI Arms Fair in London in September, joining other faith groups in blockading the road and delaying the setting up of this terrible sales event for, as Pope France calls them, “merchants of death”.

Several of our guests were able to join us on a day trip to Canterbury, and enjoy some seaside hospitality with the Passionists at Herne Bay. Despite the bad weather, spirits were high and the trip was enjoyed by all. Many thanks also to the Passionists for the grant that enabled us to remove the old, rotting, sealed shut windows in our hall and install new ones. The joy of being able to finally open the hall windows, to let the fresh air in, has not been lost on anyone in the community!

We also welcome three new live-in volunteers to the community: Veronica, Anna and Maximilian. We hope their time living, working, and praying with us in the house will be a joyful and fruitful one for everybody. We trust that you will keep them, and all of the volunteers and guests in our community in your prayers, and be assured that we will pray for you too as we continue our small work towards a more just and peaceful world.

Roland Dale is a member of the community at Giuseppe Conlon House

Make a donation to our edible wish list:

Please no alcohol or pork, mince pies

Rice, couscous
Red and green lentils
Olive oil, cooking oil

Vinegar, mayonnaise
Tinned fish
Chopped tomatoes
Spice, Sugar
Sunflower seeds
Low-fat spread
Herbal teabags
Hot chocolate powder
Decaffeinated coffee
Cereal, muesli, granola

Jam, marmalade, honey
Peanut butter, chocolate spread,
Vegetable stock cubes
Toilet paper
Liquid soap
Household cleaning products
Tealights
Deliver to: **Giuseppe Conlon House, 49 Mattison Road, Londn N4 1BG.**

Regular events

Giuseppe Conlon House, 49 Mattison Road, London N4 1 BG

Daily Prayers Monday – Saturday 9:00 am

Clarification of Thought First Thursday of the month, 7:00 pm

Bible Study Second and Fourth Thursday of the month, 7:00 pm

Monthly Prayer Third Thursday of the month, 7:00 pm

Rosary of the Oppressed Last Friday of the Month 6:30 pm

Vigil for Refugees First Tuesday of the month, Foreign & Commonwealth Office, King Charles Street, Third Tuesday of the month at the Home Office, Marsham Street, 12:30pm

All welcome. Call 020 8348 8212 for details

Would you like a speaker from London Catholic Worker to give a talk in your area?

We are available to give talks and workshops on catholic worker spirituality, peace and justice, faith and resistance, hospitality, on our work with refugees.

Contact us : londoncatholicworker@yahoo.co.uk

Upcoming Events

2015 London Anarchist Bookfair: - Find us at the London Catholic Worker stall, Saturday 24th October 10:00am-4:00pm. Central St. Martin's Kings Cross. We will be holding a seminar on radical hospitality

Christmas Ceilidh, fundraiser, Giuseppe Conlon House, Saturday 5th December, 3 pm

Clarification of Thought: Veterans for Peace, Thursday 5th November, Giuseppe Conlon House, 7pm

The People's March for Climate, Justice and Jobs, Saturday 29th November, London, 12pm

Pax Christi Advent Peace Service & Market, Tuesday 8th December, St. Aloysius, London, 7:30pm

For more information on any of these events

email londoncatholicworker@yahoo.co.uk

or call 020 8348 8212 for more details

Crunchy Chestnut Burgers

Johannes Maertens

One day last year we were given several boxes of organic chestnuts with our regular load of baby spinach, parsley and organic breads. So, I decided to experiment a bit and turn them into wholesome nutty burgers.

+/-400 gr. of boiled chestnuts
half a mug of crushed oatmeal
and some oatmeal flower
one large onion
100 gr. baby spinach leaf
a handful of fresh parsley
two tablespoons of breadcrumb
two cloves of garlic
half a teaspoon of paprika powder
pepper and salt
according to taste a teaspoon of chili flakes
olive oil for baking

Better wash your hands first.

Start peeling and chopping the onion, garlic and parsley all very fine. In a little bit of olive oil stir-fry the onion until light golden, add the garlic and half a teaspoon of paprika powder, stir well, then when the pan is very hot add the parsley. Mix in the baby spinach leaf at the end. Remove from the heat and season this with pepper and salt. Let this cool off a bit in a large metal or plastic bowl.

In a blender finely blend the (dry) chestnuts add this in to the bowl, and the crushed oatmeal and the breadcrumb. According to taste you might add a teaspoon of chili flakes. This lifts up the taste a bit.

Mix everything very well with your hands. You will have to add one or more tablespoons of oatmeal flower to bind the mixture together. The less you have to put in the better for the taste!
Heat a pan with a nice layer of olive oil, roll small flat burgers in your hands and fry them in the hot oil until they are golden and crispy. (If the mixture is to wet or falls apart in the pan add some more oatmeal.)

Cut two slices of wholemeal bread, cut off the crusts and toast them briefly (golden and crunchy on the outside, but soft on the inside) lay your burger in between with a bit of rocket salad, fine onion rings and a bit of tomato ketchup or onion jam and just simply enjoy!

Johannes Maertens is a long term member of the London Catholic Worker

Support Our Work with the crucified of today's world

We are a part of the radical, Christian, pacifist Catholic Worker movement started in 1933 in New York by Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin. There are now over 150 houses and communities in the United States and in other countries. Catholic Worker houses are independent financially. There are no headquarters, nor is there a central organization. More information is available on the U.S website www.catholicworker.com.

At Giuseppe Conlon House we run a house of hospitality for 20 homeless and destitute asylum seekers who are not allowed to work or claim benefits. In collaboration with two local churches we also serve a meal for up to 50 people in Hackney on Sunday afternoons.

Cash Donations

We are not paid for this work. We receive nothing from the government. For reasons to do with our political witness, we are not a registered charity. We are all volunteers, so we are able to make the best possible use of what we are given, for the benefit of those in need.

Bills! We rely on our readers' donations to pay all utility bills, building repairs, volunteer and guest expenses, printing and household supplies.

If you would like to support our work at the house please consider sending us a donation or setting

up a standing order.

- 20 pounds will pay for one day of heating at Giuseppe Conlon House
- 30 pounds cover the costs of one Urban Table meal for 60 guests
- 50 pounds covers one week's housekeeping including items like milk, sugar, margarine, toilet paper and cleaning products
- 150 pounds will pay for a volunteer's monthly expenses including transport
- 250 pounds is enough to take van load of supplies to Calais

Ways to donate

Cheque: payable to 'London Catholic Worker', to Giuseppe Conlon House, 49 Mattison Road, London N4 1 BG

Online banking: London Catholic Worker, Triodos Bank, Acc No. 20066996 Sort Code: 16 58 10

Paypal: a 'donate button' is on the front page of our website www.londoncatholicworker.org

Please consider setting up a regular donation. You can use the **Standing Order Form** provided below. We would be very grateful for any help you can give us.

Our accounts are available on request

Standing Order Form Please use block letters

I wish to pay the London Catholic Worker £10/ £20/£40/other amount _____ per month/ other _____

Payments to be made monthly/ other First Payment to be made on: ____ / ____ / 14 and monthly thereafter

Name of your bank _____

Address of your bank _____

Your account name _____

Your account number _____

Your bank sort code _____

Please pay: For the Credit of: London Catholic Worker
Account Number 20066996

Triodos Bank Sort Code: 16 58 10

Deanery Road Until further notice the sum of the value indicated above

Signed _____

Date _____

Please return to :

London Catholic Worker

49 Mattison Road

London N4 1BG

Your Name and Address _____

Email _____