

(from p1) be killed in Iraq in an illegal and unjustified war. We mourn the taking of innocent lives by protesting at the MoD here in Whitehall. Angela said "to celebrate the Incarnation – God with us – I must acknowledge those maimed and destroyed by our military action in Iraq, perhaps as many as in the tidal wave. At the site of political

decisions we prayed "Jesus remember them..." Scott Albrecht said, "Herod slaughtered the innocent in the wake of a perceived threat to the imperial structure and children died in great numbers. This slaughter continues in Iraq today. Our silence in the face of ongoing British complicity makes us complicit too."

DIARY DATES:

ASH WEDNESDAY witness @ MoD & elsewhere Feb 9th tel 02073770674
PITSTOP/SHANNON AIRPORT PLOUGHSHARES trial starts March 7th
 Contact: www.ploughsharesireland.org or Dublin CW tel: 00-353-1-454-9144
BLOCK THE BUILDERS-Aldermaston 25th-28th March.tel:07969 739 812
Nuclear Non-ProliferationTreaty - Global Week of Action, April 10th-16th
 phone: (020) 7700 2357
G8 SUMMIT GLENEAGLES - 6th - 8th : contact- www.dissent.org
& MAKE POVERTY HISTORY' demo at G8, July 6th - contact CAFOD etc.

Contact LONDON CATHOLIC WORKER

Address: 14 Deal Street, London, E1 5AH
 Phone: 007788 481036

E-mail: londoncatholicworker@yahoo.co.uk

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London CW Needs:

- House / café for hospitality for the poor
- New members
- Photocopier
- Donations
- Participants in vigils
- Prayer — *without this all the rest is useless*

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"the only solution is love" - Dorothy Day

Remembering the Innocent

Five Christians were arrested on 28th December at the Ministry of Defence (MoD) in Whitehall, London while converting the front lawn into a war cemetery in memory of the dead of the invasion and continuing occupation of Iraq. Angela Broome and Scott Albrecht, and Sr Susan Clarkson sc of the London and Oxford Catholic Worker communities respectively, and Liz Yates were digging graves. A child's coffin was ready to be placed in one. Fr Martin Newell cp of the London Catholic Worker and Chris Cole had begun to inscribe a wall as a memorial with the words "Remember Iraqi War Dead", "Slaughter of the Innocent", "Stop the War" in red paint. "Father Forgive Us" was also written on the ground. Prayers of repentance and remembrance were said. Chris Cole (41) said, "2000 years ago innocent children were killed by the powerful in an attempt to keep a firm grip on their authority. Today, children continue to

We Are Still Here !

It is eight months since our last newsletter. We and the world have seen a lot happen in that time. Maybe you thought we died a premature death, but it was only a spell in intensive care. With time and a lot of prayer, we're gearing up for full renewal of our life and work. In the meantime, we continue to try to live by the political and spiritual disciplines of 1st World discipleship.



above (left to right) Sr Susan Clarkson, Angela Broome and Scott Albrecht kneel to pray at graveside

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The Power of Non-Violence

Today is Remembrance Sunday. Today we are asked to remember: to remember all the victims of war, all those who died and were killed in war, especially in the World Wars of the 20th Century. We come to pay our respects, and we do respect the great sacrifices that were made. We remember also all those who suffered but lived through those times. And those too who continue to suffer in war – in Iraq, Afghanistan, Palestine, Darfur in Sudan, in Congo – the litany goes on.

“At the setting and the rising of the sun, we will remember them” – and pray for them.

To remember means to learn the lesson of history. As it has been said, “to be ignorant of history is to be doomed to repeat it.” Let us pray today that we, as the human race, as God’s family, brothers and sisters, will soon learn those lessons and not continue to repeat those mistakes, as we seem to do.

But if we are to learn the lessons of history, we have to look at the single most important event in history: the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. We have to look at the Gospels. In today’s Gospel, Jesus speaks of times of war and what our response as Christians should be. Jesus says: “All these fine buildings [this Temple] not one stone will be left upon another – it will be destroyed.” And we have seen the Twin Towers, we see Fallujah right now – being destroyed: “not one stone left upon another.” Jesus says, “They will come using my Name, deceiving you”. And both George Bush and Tony Blair have come, in the name of Christ, calling themselves Christians, calling us to war., as happened in both 1st and 2nd World Wars, when Churches on both sides backed war. Jesus advice is “when you hear of wars and rumours of wars, do not be frightened.” He says to us today, “Refuse to join them. They are not acting in my name - not in my name!”

Pope John Paul II grew up in Poland during World War II: like Jesus, he lived in an occupied country: he worked in labour camps. He has said, “No More War!”, “War – never again!” and “War is always a failure for humanity.” When Jesus was being arrested and his own life was threatened, he refused to fight. He said, “Put away your sword. He who lives by the sword will die by the sword.” And he told Pilate, his judge and jury, “I could have called on legions to protect me – but my Kingdom is not like the Kingdoms of this world.” This is the way of Jesus, the way of the cross. It is also the way of non-violence.

But if we are called to “refuse to join them” in violence and war – if this is the lesson we have to learn – how are we to resist evil in our world? *We are* called to resist evil – to respect and protect God’s gift of life, from the moment of conception to a natural death: but we are called to resist non-violently. We are called not to be passive, but to actively confront evil and hatred and violence



with love of enemies, forgiveness and self-sacrifice. Jesus on the cross showed us that it is the willingness to suffer – not the willingness to inflict suffering – that changes- and saves – the world.

My own practical introduction to non-violent resistance came with the campaign for East Timor. You may remember Indonesia had invaded east Timor in 1973 and massacred the people. Meanwhile, British Aerospace and other British firms were selling planes and other arms to Indonesia, to use against the Timorese people. So, in December 1997, nine of us – six Timorese refugees and three English people – climbed over a fence at a British aerospace base near Preston, with banners and a child-sized coffin to represent the dead Timorese children, and knelt down to pray.

We were arrested and spent 24 hours in police cells before being charged and released. That action was part of a wider movement of non-violent resistance, and East Timor is now a free country.

More recently, two of us spent six months in prison for incarnating the words of the prophets Isaiah and Micah, “they shall hammer their swords into ploughshares”, by disarming - or decommissioning - a lorry that carries nuclear warheads. In doing these things we were very much aware of the words of Jesus in today’s Gospel: “Before all this happens [all these wars and violence, that is] men will seize you and persecute you, and imprison you, and bring you to court. This is your opportunity to bear witness.” – to bear witness to the truth.

I believe these things are what it means to “refuse to join them” to “not be frightened”, to be conscientious objectors today. Today, with hi-tech warfare, they don’t need our young men, all they need is our silence and our taxes. This is the way of the cross today, in following Jesus who was arrested, charged, tried, convicted and executed for the crime of doing and speaking the truth, and living according to his Father and his conscience.

This is the wisdom and the power of the cross, this is the “eloquence that no opponents will be able to contradict: this is the wisdom and the power that has been given to us and the world. And make no mistake. Non-violence *is* powerful. The last century was a century of non-violence as well as violence. Non-violent struggles changed the world. The Suffragist movement brought votes for women. Gandhi’s non-violence brought independence to India and fatally undermined the justification for Empires. Martin Luther-King’s non-violence brought civil rights for U.S. blacks. And more recently movements of non-violent resistance were the key factor in the downfall of apartheid in South Africa, Communism in Russia and Eastern Europe, and the Marcos regime in the Philippines.

So, let us pray for peace in our world, in our hearts, our lives and our families. Let us pray that God’s family can learn to live together in peace, justice and harmony. Let us pray that we will truly remember and pay our respects by learning the lessons of history.

