

# CATHOLIC PARISH OF GUILDFORD

## SOCIAL ACTION BULLETIN 006

### OUR SOCIAL MISSION

Our task as a parish community is *'to make the Kingdom of God present in our world'* (Pope Francis). We are called to embody Christ-like love for all, and especially to those who are poor or excluded or face injustice. Our concern is both for those in our own community and for our wider society and our global community.



Here is some information about some of the actions and events taking place and planned to take place within the Parish and elsewhere.

For further information on any of the items included in this issue or if you would like to contribute items for subsequent issues of this Bulletin please contact the Editor [HERE](#).

### ACAT NEW YEAR GREETINGS CAMPAIGN

One of the Justice & Peace themes is reaching out to prisoners of conscience and others unjustly imprisoned. We are inviting our parishioners to participate in a New Year Greetings Campaign based on the ACAT Christmas Greetings Campaign.

ACAT is *Action by Christians Against Torture* and details of its actions can be found [HERE](#). The Campaign involves writing a simple message of hope to a prisoner, usually overseas.

We will provide cards and specimen greetings and address labels as well as information about the people to whom greetings can be sent. We will also arrange the posting. The Campaign will take place after Mass on **14 and 15 January**.

If you would like to help with the signing process after Mass at your church please contact the organisers at [ACAT@cpg.church](mailto:ACAT@cpg.church).

### A&B JUSTICE & PEACE ASSEMBLY 2023

The Annual diocesan Justice & Peace Assembly, 'Hungry for Change', will take place on **28 January 2023, 9.30am-1.30pm** at The St Philip Howard Centre, RH10 6RP. The Assembly will explore how war contributes to world hunger with speakers from

CAFOD, Pax Christi, and the Ecological Conversion Group. To reserve your place please book [HERE](#).



## THE PARISH PANTRY

To support our mission as a community of faith, a new 'Parish Pantry' has started in each Church to support members of the community in these challenging times. Donations of non-perishable tinned or dry goods can be left in the church porches. Please email [office@cpg.church](mailto:office@cpg.church) if you can help co-ordinate this locally. **If you know of anyone in need please do collect the food from the porches or encourage them to help themselves.**

## SOCIETY OF ST VINCENT DE PAUL

SVP is well established in our Parish and its work helping people in need has never been more necessary than in the current circumstances of our community. To contact SVP phone or text the **HELPLINE** on **07360 996164** or email [svp@cpg.church](mailto:svp@cpg.church). To find out more about the work of SVP in our Parish and how you might be able to participate or support please visit the **CPG website** [HERE](#). Every Christmas the SVP deliver hampers to those in need. In the coming weeks, please keep the Parish Pantry well stocked as the SVP will be using donated items to assemble Christmas hampers for those who cannot come to collect food from the churches.

## CPG 10% CHARITY APPEAL

In the period leading up to this Christmas the annual Appeal is taking place across CPG to assist smaller, less well-known charities whose aim is to support the **Poorest of the Poor**. With a view to identifying the charities, parishioners were invited to nominate suitable charities and then to express their preferences from a shortlist of nominated organisations.

The CPG Charities Fund has selected the following charities to benefit from the Appeal.

**LOCAL :** St Thomas School Hardship Fund

**NATIONAL:** Cardinal Hume Centre [www.cardinalhumecentre.org.uk/](http://www.cardinalhumecentre.org.uk/)

**INTERNATIONAL :** WaterAid [www.wateraid.org/uk/our-history](http://www.wateraid.org/uk/our-history)

Donations are welcome by envelope or contactless terminal at church or online [HERE](#) .

The Appeal will remain open until 9 January.

# PAX CHRISTI

## (THE CATHOLIC INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENT FOR PEACE)

The work of Pax Christi – the Peace of Christ – is based on the gospel and inspired by faith. Our vision is of a world where people can live in peace, without fear of violence in any form. Pax Christi is rooted in Catholic Christianity but is open to all who share its values and work.

The main source of income for Pax Christi comes from the retiring collection on Peace Sunday in January each year. This year this is on Sunday 15 January. Pax Christi is a campaigning organisation and chooses not to be a charity so it does not benefit from government schemes such as Gift Aid. This makes donations all the more important.

CPG held a collection for Pax Christi on Peace Sunday in 2022.

To support Pax Christi further please click [HERE](#).

Tel: +44 (0)20 8203 4884, E-mail: [info@paxchristi.org.uk](mailto:info@paxchristi.org.uk)

# CARJ

## (CATHOLIC ASSOCIATION FOR RACIAL JUSTICE)

Racial Justice Sunday is a call for all Christians to engage in the struggle for racial justice because racial justice is everyone's business. In 2023 Racial Justice Sunday is on 12 February.

CARJ is an independent charity, established in 1984, working to support people from diverse backgrounds. Core objectives and activities are:

- support for and empowerment of black and minority ethnic Catholics and to give them an effective voice in the Church and in the wider society;
- supporting people from diverse backgrounds in the struggle for a more just and cohesive society;
- supporting black and minority ethnic young people through a Schools Project and Young People's Forum for World Citizenship;
- working with Catholic Dioceses and Parishes to fulfil our basic mission.

CPG held a collection for CARJ on Racial Justice Sunday in 2022.

To find out more about CARJ and consider making a financial contribution to its work please visit its website [HERE](#).

## AWARENESS OF MODERN SLAVERY

Modern Slavery is far more prevalent in this area than one might imagine. At the end of October 2022 we began 'Parish Aware', an ongoing programme to inform, encourage prayer and enable safe response to matters of concern. Some resources:

[Diocesan website](#) Modern Slavery and the Abolition Initiative

[What Modern Slavery Is](#) Brief introduction to Modern Slavery

[Sign-up form](#) Register support and receive further briefings



## SUPPORT FOR PALESTINE

Another long standing Justice & Peace theme is the need to campaign for and support the achievement of a just solution to the enduring illegal occupation of Palestine. Elsewhere in this Bulletin there is reference to the work of Pax Christi and one of its notable campaigns is towards peace in Palestine and Israel – for details click [HERE](#).

In a practical way we can assist producers in Palestine to find a market for their goods in Britain by purchasing the range of Zaytoun products that are on offer within CPG. They are available in the **Shop** at St Joseph's and on the regular Fair Trade stall at St Pius. Information about **Zaytoun** products can be found [HERE](#).

Part of our support involves acting as a **Zaytoun** distribution centre for other churches in our area and holding stalls at events in our area revealing Palestinian culture. This means we normally have access to stock in a range of items. For further information or to purchase products please contact the Editor [HERE](#).

## SUPPORT FOR FAIR TRADE

CPG strives to be a Fair Trade Parish. Volunteers work hard to encourage people to buy fairly traded goods, because Fair Trade helps people in poverty to earn their way to a better life, and reduces the need for aid.

The **Shop** at St Joseph's is open after Masses on Sunday and provides an opportunity for purchase of Fair Trade goods – some of which will be ideal for donation to the Parish Pantry facility aimed at helping those in need of basic food items to assist them to cope with the cost-of-living crisis.

Monthly sales of Fair Trade goods have resumed in the Narthex at St Pius and present a similar opportunity for the Parish Pantry.

You can find out more about **Traidcraft** goods [HERE](#) and about the Fair Trade Foundation [HERE](#).

## The Catholic Parish of Guildford

An update on what happened in the Parish in 2022 and an advance notice of what is planned for early 2023 will appear in the next issue of this Bulletin.

### *A&B CAFOD office*

CAFOD in Arundel & Brighton

Volunteer Centre

St Pius X Church, Laustan Close, Merrow, Guildford, Surrey GU2 2TS

Telephone: 01483 573273

Mobile: 07710 094448

Email: [arundelandbrighton@cafod.org.uk](mailto:arundelandbrighton@cafod.org.uk)

If you are interested in generally volunteering for CAFOD, click [HERE](#) for further information or contact the office.

If you have any questions about CAFOD, please contact Stephen Rowden at [srowden@cafod.org.uk](mailto:srowden@cafod.org.uk) or on 07899 804211.



## SUPPORT FOR REFUGEES

The Fundraising Dinner for the CPG Refugee Support Fund (RSF) took place at St Pius Hall on 22 October. At the dinner, there were reports on the activities of the Fund and in particular the ecumenical **Community Sponsorship Project**. Further detail on the Project is set out below.

The RSF was established in 2019 to respond to the call of Pope Francis to Action. Below you will find information about the Fund's activities and its aspirations for future action.

The Friends of the RSF (see more below) was inaugurated in 2021. Everyone is welcome to join this group to receive information about current activities by email and potential volunteering.

### Background

For several years, following the Syrian refugee crisis in 2015, a group of parishioners have held fundraising dinners to provide support for refugees, particularly from Syria. For the first few years, the money was sent to the Diocese to support the fund launched by Bishop Richard in 2015.

In 2019, it was decided instead to focus our support on the Syrian families who had resettled locally in the Borough. Accordingly, the CPG Refugee Support Fund was formally set up for this purpose. The Fund works closely with the Family Support Team at Guildford Borough Council and with the Anglican Diocese of Guildford which has played a major role in ministering to the needs of the refugee families who have resettled in the area.

## Recent fundraising and expenditure

From 2018 to 2022, from various functions and activities a total of £9,600 has been raised for use in the Fund's support activities.

Over the same period £4,700 has been spent in supporting the Syrian families in providing basic items needed for family life, particularly in supplying items of children's clothing and footwear. More recently we have provided some support for the Afghan families who have resettled here.

Also, in 2022 the RSF made a contribution of £3,000 to the Community Sponsorship Project.

## What next for the RSF?

The CPG Refugee Support Fund will

- Support the Community Sponsorship Project (CSP) which was started this year.
- Continue to support the Syrian families remaining on the scheme in Guildford
- Continue to support the Afghan families who arrived in Guildford this year.
- Provide support to Ukrainian families who arrived this year.

### *Community Sponsorship Project*

A scheme to assist the resettlement of refugees was launched by the Home Office in 2016 under which community groups undertake to resettle and support a family. Support is provided for a minimum of one year and accommodation for two years.

CPG has joined forces with the Anglican Parish of St James, Shere and with Rev Diane Peters – Refugee Support Advisor to the Anglican Diocese of Guildford - to undertake a CSP. A core team has been formed to run the project. More volunteers may be needed to provide on-going support to the family. If you would like to volunteer, contact the email address at the end of this bulletin.

After many months of planning and obtaining approval from the Home Office and local authorities, as well as finding an available property, we are pleased to have welcomed a Syrian family in December.

The process of helping them to obtain the services they need and to adjust to life in the UK has now commenced.

### *Syrian families*

We will continue to support the three Syrian families during the remainder of the period of their inclusion in the Scheme which ends in 2023.

### *Afghan families*

There are currently two Government schemes

**Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP)** was established in April before the crisis of the withdrawal from Afghanistan. It is intended to assist those who worked for the Government alongside our armed forces. So far GBC has found homes for 2 families, who have arrived and we have already provided some support for them.

**Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS)** was established in September in the wake of the withdrawal crisis. The intention was to resettle 20,000 of those evacuated, with some 5,000 in the first year. So far GBC has not taken in any families on this scheme.

### *Ukrainian families*

We have so far provided a limited amount of support and will continue to respond as the need arises.

### **The cost of living crisis**

This is affecting everyone and refugee families are amongst the most vulnerable. It is anticipated that requests for support for all of the above will increase during the winter.

### **Friends of the RSF**

An email group has been established to keep interested parishioners informed about refugee support locally, in particular the work of the RSF and the CSP. We like to think of them as the “Friends of the RSF”.

From time to time, volunteers are needed to provide support in various ways. Fundraising events also take place. The bulletins will inform the “Friends” of these.

As is usual, there is the ability to unsubscribe from the email list of the Friends at any time – and to come back!

If you would like to be a “Friend”, contact the **RSF Team** on **07804 119616** or email [rsf@cpg.church](mailto:rsf@cpg.church).