

DIOCESE OF SALFORD

Social Action Network (DiSAN)



The Diocese of Salford Social Action Network (DiSAN) brings together charities and outreach groups in the Diocese of Salford to share information, strengthen and facilitate the network and develop the capacity for voluntary and community action within the diocese. The group is open to all organisations and individuals who support its aims.

Meeting Thursday 25th March 2021 by zoom

Present

Kath Ansley	Caritas Diocese of Salford
Fr Joseph Kiwango	Revive
Pat Okekearu	Revive
Mark Thompson	Out There
Peter Donnelly	SVP
Margaret Kerr	Caritas volunteer (Radcliffe Road Young Parent Unit)
Peter Kerr	Caritas volunteer (schools)
Aisling Griffin	Pax Christi
Annie Sykes	Parish Rep, St James Pendleton
Marc Besford	Impact and YCW
Paul Quinn	Caritas Rep, St Teresa Irlam
Patrick O'Dowd	Caritas Diocese of Salford
Christine Singleton	Union of Catholic Mothers
Kaye Hodgson	Caritas Rep, Brownedge Saint Mary's
Edward Whelan	Catholic Fellowship of Disabled People (National)
Jane Whelan	Catholic Fellowship of Disabled People (Diocese of Salford)
Kevin Flannigan	St. Antony's Centre for Church and Industry
Anthony Brown	Caritas Anti-trafficking and Modern Slavery
Fr Ged Murphy	Episcopal Vicar for Caritas
Peter Fahy	Trustee Diocese of Salford & Hudson Society, Birmingham
Jonathan Billings	Loaves and Fishes, Salford
Paul Ashton	Loaves and Fishes, Salford
Mark Wiggin	Caritas Diocese of Salford

Apologies

Fr Andrew Pastore

Tony Murray

Vincent Murray

Mark Thompson

Dee Kennedy Peers

Agenda

- 10.25 Log in to zoom ready for 10.30 start.
- 10.30 Welcome and opening reflection.
- 10.35 The Pandemic: Crisis or Opportunity?
- 10.45 Discussion in break out groups.
- 11.00 Feedback from discussions.
- 11.10 Presentation from Mark Turnbull ~ Out There.
- 11.30 Diocesan & Caritas Salford news.
- 11.40 News round - all.
- 11.55 Summary & plans for next meeting.
- 12.00 Close.

Welcome

Opening prayer and reflection was followed by an opportunity for all participants to introduce themselves.

Covid-19 Vatican Commission and planning the future

The 21st century has started with four major crises:

1. The financial meltdown
2. The social divide between rich and poor
3. The climate breakdown
4. The Covid-19 lockdown

These have created economic, political, ecological and social crisis as Pope Francis says the pandemic is a crisis we emerge from a crisis is a better or worse than before it is up to us to choose.

To help us understand the crisis, particularly as Christians, Pope Francis through Catholic Social Teaching and his encyclicals has encouraged us to analyse the crisis from a very human perspective. In particular, *Laudato Si* and *Fratelli Tutti* help us to prepare the future and to reach out to care for a common home the Earth and the development of new friendships that create dialogue and peace. The Vatican Commission created to address COVID-19 has set out three priorities for 2021:

1. Health + vaccines for all
2. Food for all
3. Jobs for all

There is a decade of action planned to follow between 2021 and 2027 of seven years of Jubilee where for example poor and developing countries are released from their debts, people in bonded labour and slavery are set free and workers are paid a just and living wage. This culminates in 10 years when the Vatican Commission will have worked with the UN sustainable goals to address climate change by 2030.

In discussion groups we shared what has been the challenges and opportunities created by the COVID-19 pandemic in our communities and organisations.

Feedback from DiSAN members

It has been a difficult and challenging time for many of the members of DiSAN. There has been missed opportunities to respond to the needs of people especially vulnerable and isolated people due to the closure of our parishes. Underdeveloped communication systems have not helped to coordinate a parish-based response to the pandemic.

In contrast the SVP has continued its support role mainly through telephone calls to those in need and the delivery of food parcels. Organisations such as Caritas have managed to keep open all their services though the services have sometimes been on a reduced scale due to the availability of staff and volunteers.

Other organisations have had to rely simply on newsletters and phone calls and the sense of isolation, even amongst these organisations has been felt keenly as it has been very difficult for people to physically meet up and support each other. St Antony's Centre for Church and Industry has been busier than ever as they have adapted technologically to online services particularly for their training programs. However, they are still concerned about the high rates of unemployment and an increasing caseload of over 300 people facing redundancy and redeployment/re-training on their books. One of their roles is to work with employees facing redundancy and represent their interests to employers.

COVID-19 has demonstrated how important it is for individuals and organisations to be well connected both physically through the Internet and socially through group friendships. Digital exclusion has been exposed as a major concern as it has prevented many poor people from access to services, support and practical help because they have not been connected sufficiently well to the Internet. Their children have also not benefitted significantly from home schooling as a result of poor training, equipment and poor connectivity.

Collaboration has increased, especially amongst the volunteers and voluntary groups who have been able to organise themselves to respond to the pandemic. Unfortunately, parishes have struggled due to an over-dependency on a small group of people many of them older people who have had themselves to isolate. There are lessons here for the future as parishes need to be more organised to face a future crisis and need to be able to call upon a wider group of people to assist in reaching out to the community and those in need. Collaboration has been best expressed through the vaccination program with thousands and thousands of volunteers who have stepped forward to assist the NHS in ensuring everybody gets their vaccine.

The feedback from the group sharing exercise can be summed up by a need in the future to be better prepared through improved communications, look to partnerships and collaboration to serve the local community and take initiatives that are risk assessed.

Presentation by Mark Turnbull on the work of Out There (*please see separate presentation slides*)

Out there was established in 2006 by the Daughters of Charity of Saint Vincent DePaul. It's a small charity but since it started it has supported over 1000 families and people who have experience of one of their family members being in prison. It is part of the Vincentian family and closely associated with the work of Caritas and the Diocese of Salford

Currently Britain has the highest prison population in Western Europe and over the last 30 years there has been an increase of 70% of people being incarcerated within the legal judicial system of the UK over the last two years there has actually been a slight decline in the number of people going to prison and receiving prison sentences. The current figure stands at 78,877 in prison of which 5% are women.

When a member of the family goes to prison it has an impact on the rest of the family.

- 1) there is the visiting dynamic especially if people are imprisoned in prisons far away from their homes
- 2) there is the financial impact of a loss of income to the family and therefore the need to supplement the income in other ways such as food banks and
- 3) there is the ability to pay rent which can create a housing crisis and homelessness occasionally.

Within families themselves, these three issues alone require the support of Out There who can provide practical and emotional support to family members to address the shame, anxiety and stigma often attached to those imprisoned and their families. It is estimated that there are 300,000 children and parents who have experienced long-term detrimental effects on their mental health and well-being as a result of the situation last year out there supported 87 families through assisting them with a long-term family support.

News sharing

Patrick O'Dowd, Deputy Director Caritas outlined a new strategic plan for the charity that is a direct response to COVID-19. The new plan will strengthen the mission of the charity through 4 pillars of support:

1. Strengthening core services
2. Developing parish and community based outreach to meet local needs
3. Amplifying our voice on social justice issues through advocacy
4. Investing in the sustainability of the charity

The plan is currently being considered by stakeholders as part of the consultation process.

The SVP has a network of prison visitors and if you would like to find out more you can contact the SVP directly to find out where the work is taking place and in which prisons.

Saint Antony's Centre for Church & Industry has a new website that can be visited at www.stantonyscentre.org.uk and is opening its new training centre in Blackpool – an area of high deprivation.

Pax Christi is looking for new members particularly in the Diocese of Salford. They are also happy to discuss the peace work they do here in the UK especially with schools and young people. To find out more contact Aisling Griffin Schools and Youth Officer at Pax Christi at education@paxchristi.org.uk

The Diocese of Salford through the Laudato Si Centre is leading the way on diocesan decarbonisation and has a project aimed at parishes in schools at reducing carbon emissions contributing to climate. Please find the link to the Diocese Environmental Survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/SalfordEnvironment> To find out more contact decarbonisation@dioceseofsalford.org.uk

The Catholic Fellowship (of Disabled People) has produced a new national parish guide to disability with over 2,500 copies printed for distribution. To find out more contact and visit www.catholicdisabilityfellowship.org.uk

Special notice: Mayoral Elections 27th April 2021

The mayoral assembly organised by Citizens in Greater Manchester is on Tuesday, the 27th of April at 6-8 pm via zoom. This is a key opportunity for us to join communities from across Greater Manchester to seek specific pledges from the GM Mayoral candidates, including current GM Mayor, Andy Burnham. Caritas and the Diocese of Salford are founder members of Greater Manchester Citizens - a people powered alliance dedicated to challenging injustice and building stronger communities. We have pledged to bring min 50 people from the Diocese/Caritas.

Attendance is by invitation only from a member organisation like the Diocese or Caritas. ***The Diocese of Salford and Caritas are inviting YOU to be part of this unique and important event!***

Please contact Kath Ansley k.ansley@caritassalford.org.uk if you are able to join us.

To register, please go to:

https://actionnetwork.org/events/citizens-uk-greater-manchester-assembly-2021-2?link_id=2&can_id=ee4e98c8f4d10f9b97b13d8b7b5282a7&source=email-mayoral-assembly-registration&email_referrer=email_1115443&email_subject=mayoral-assembly-registration

Please share this invitation with your parishioners/parents/staff members/service users and network as appropriate. Your presence will be a powerful demonstration of commitment from the Catholic community to our role as active agents for positive local change and justice. We look forward to seeing you there!

Diary dates

An International Mass is proposed for Saturday, June 19, 2021 but subject to confirmation from the Diocese and Bishop John.

Refugee Week starts on Monday, the 14th of June and planned activities are welcome

The Big Sleep-in is planned for later this year as well as a fundraiser for homeless people

Caritas Sunday - there is a suggestion that in addition to a financial appeal on Caritas Sunday there should be an appeal to the Caritas family of charities for volunteers. This will be taken into consideration when planning.

Saint Mary's University - Catholic Social Teaching - is holding a conference on Catholic Social Teaching (please see advert at the end of this document) and is also running an MA in Catholic Social Teaching. For further details about the MA please go to: <https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/postgraduate-courses-london/catholic-social-teaching>

The Annual Mass for the Catholic Fellowship is currently scheduled to take place on Saturday 9 October at 2pm, concelebrated with Bishop John at Salford Cathedral. All people of any disability from all over the diocese are welcome to attend along with their families and/or carers as guests of the Fellowship. Our members cordially invite all to the Mass and to join us in the cloisters afterwards for refreshment (Covid-19 regulations allowing at that time).

Young People Pilgrimage to Glasgow COP26 - the [Young Christian Climate Network's \(YCCN\) Relay](#) to COP26. A pilgrimage relay to Glasgow will be launched on 13th June after the G7 starting in Cornwall. Although the YCCN are all 18-30, there is no restriction to the age range as they want to make the relay as inclusive, accessible and diverse as possible. Manchester is one of ten 'residency hubs', with the relay arriving in Manchester ~10th Sept. This is a great opportunity to do something with our youth. Such as, invite the relay to Wardley Hall alongside some of our schools to have a climate related event and/or look at some of the actions & leadership opportunities for youth groups, Faith in Action and Caritas Ambassadors. Please share your thoughts on the idea of a relay with Emma Gardner, Head of Environment at emma.gardner@dioceseofsalford.org.uk



St Mary's
University
Twickenham
London

Institute of Theology
& Liberal Arts

Cluster for Catholic
Public Initiatives and
Global Service



International Conference (online) *Rerum Novarum* 130 Years on The Future of the World of Work

Wednesday 5th-Saturday 8th May 2021

An International conference to assess the significance of Pope Leo XIII's encyclical addressing the needs of industrial workers; it will also look at current realities of the world of work, particularly during and after the pandemic.

The conference is open to all and free of charge.

Confirmed speakers

André Acevedo Alvez, Luke Arredondo, Tina Beattie, Ashley Beck, Ian Benson, Philip Booth, Bernard Bourdin, Malcolm Brown, Helen Costigana, Patrick Daly, Francis Davis, Maria Exall, Richard Finn, Edward Hadas, Will Hutton, Austen Ivereigh, Patricia Kelly, William Kenney, Renée Kohler-Ryan, Christopher Lamb, Ian Linden, Clifford Longley, John Loughlin, Chi Maher, Paul Martin, Mary McAleese, Carole Murphy, Tom O'Loughlin, Matias Peterson, Jeremy Pilch, Clemens Sedmak, Russell Sparkes, Ellen van Stichel, Matthew Tan, Matthew Taylor, Anthony Towey, Dermot Tredger and Charles Wookey.

To register contact the Rev Dr Ashley Beck:
ashley.beck@stmarys.ac.uk