



THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF  
ARUNDEL & BRIGHTON

## Justice & Peace Assembly 2022 - To A Safer Shore?

Our thank to all those who attended this year's Justice and Peace Assembly 'To A Safer Shore'. Speakers' notes can be accessed below, to watch to the Assembly please [click here](#). To find out more about the work of the diocesan Refugee Crisis Fund please [visit our website](#).

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### Speaker One:

CANON ROB ESDAILLE: FRATELLI TUTTI & THE REFUGEE CRISIS

**Introduction:** Pope Francis' encyclical, *Fratelli Tutti* (2020) offers building blocks for our reflection on refugees (and for many other issues regarding 'social friendship' and 'fraternity', especially in the context of Covid-19). As with *Laudato Si'* (on 'Caring For Our Common Home') the title comes from St. Francis. *FT* is an appeal to the whole world based on the conviction that what we have in common is greater than what divides us – a dream of 'universal fraternity'.

St. Francis (like Bl. Charles de Foucauld) is *'The Universal Brother'* exhibiting "a fraternal openness that allow us to acknowledge, appreciate and love each person, regardless of physical proximity, regardless of where he or she was born or lives." (*FT* n.1) All creatures and all things he saw as 'brothers and sisters', refusing "to turn reality into an object simply to be used and controlled." (*LS* nn.10-11) That insight applies above all to refugees. They are our brothers and sisters – a mystery to be encountered, not a 'problem' to be solved; nor 'objects' to be warehoused. In *FT* Pope Francis explores the unveiling of reality by Covid: the inequalities of opportunity and outcome, divisions between haves and have-nots, the 'throw-away' society and its consequences for human ecology, community and hope.

**The Spirit Of Dialogue:** Like St. Francis, Pope Francis enters into dialogue with Islam (in the person of the Grand Mufti of Al-Azhar University, Cairo): "we declared that God has created all human being equal in rights, duties and dignity and has called them to live together as brothers and sisters" (*FT* n.5). This openness is rooted in Vatican II: "since Christ died for all

... we must hold that the Holy Spirit offers to all the possibility of being made partners, in a way known to God, in the paschal mystery" (GS n.22). It is the foundation also of the 'Synodal Path' to which Pope Francis has committed the Church. Our calling is to keep on faithfully listening to the Spirit at work in and among that humanity (GS n.4; cf. Rev. 2.7, etc.) – especially as She speaks through the voices on the margins.

**Voices From The Peripheries:** A key insight of Pope Francis is that successful reform comes about not through the work of elites at the centre but through pastoral concern for ordinary people, often at the margins of Church and Society. For Pope Francis, "the peripheries" are not simply a geographical location but a theological category, drawn also from his experience in Buenos Aires – hence his fierce condemnation of the 'economy of exclusion' in *Evangelii Gaudium* (EvG n.54). Refugees reaching our shores are often almost literally flotsam and jetsam. Pope Francis' first pastoral visit outside Rome after his election in 2013 was to Lampedusa, where hundreds of migrants had recently drowned. FT reprises his reference to both God's question to Cain – *Where is your brother?* – and the Good Samaritan (Lk 10.25-37) in response to our 'globalised indifference'.

**The Good Samaritan – A Stranger On The Road:** Jesus' parable takes us beyond the requirement of the Golden Rule, "*Do to others as you would have them do to you*" (Mt 5.45) to the realisation that: "*love does not care if your brother or sister in need comes from one place or another.*" (FT n.62) The flaw Pope Francis identifies in the Priest and Levite is neither ritual purity's requirements nor fear of being mugged but lack of concern for the Common Good. Francis' criticism is pointed. They (and we) are unwilling, in particular, to spend time on the complicated problems of others. We hurry on by, not wishing to be involved. Immediately (as was surely Jesus' intention) the story is about us, not them; now, not then. In the Pope's view, the parable summons us "*to rediscover our vocation as citizens of our respective nations and of the entire world, builders of a new social bond,*" (FT n.66) We must **all** imitate the Good Samaritan! Otherwise, we too are "*either one of the robbers or one of those who walked by without showing compassion.*" But The parable also shows "*how a community can be rebuilt by men and women who identify with the vulnerability of others, who reject the creation of a society of exclusion, and act instead as neighbours, lifting up and rehabilitating the fallen for the sake of the common good.*" (FT n.67) We must choose which character we wish to be in the parable: "*Here all distinctions, labels and masks fall away: it is the moment of truth.*" (FT n.70). Having unmasked reality, the Pope turns it into an invitation and an encouragement: "*Jesus trusts in the best of the human spirit; with this parable, he encourages us to persevere in love, to restore dignity to the sufferings and to build a society worthy of the name,*" (FT n.71).

**From Enemy To Neighbour:** Our own politics have often become raucous and mean-spirited, nowhere more so than during the debates about migration. Similar bitterness poisoned relations between Jews and Samaritans in the First Century AD (cf. Lk 9.56). So Jesus' Parable of the Good Samaritan was about as deliberately provocative as could be. The

lawyer's question was: When can I stop loving? Jesus' answer shows that every single person on this planet is our neighbour – including our enemies! 'Neighbour' is more of a verb than a noun. Being a neighbour is not an accident of history but a choice.

**Facing Our Prejudices & Those Of Our Culture:** The parable also raises the question of prejudices. Those who have suffered may have complicated emotions when they encounter us. If we haven't faced our own anxieties we are unlikely to have much impact on those not schooled by Jesus' teaching to trust in the best of the human spirit or to persevere in love, whatever the cost. Jesus also had to face the reflex responses his society had taught him (cf. Mk 7.24-30), as St. Francis also had to kiss the leper in order to become a Universal Brother (a Friar Minor). Our conversion will consist in realisation that whatsoever we do to the least of these brothers and sisters of ours we do to Christ. (Mt 25.39)

**Responding To The Refugee Crisis – General Principles:** These reflections have concrete consequences – a commitment to *“a social friendship that excludes no one and a fraternity that is open to all.”* (FT n.94) It demands action to convert state and civic institutions so that they do not limit themselves to ensuring *“the free and efficient working of certain economic, political or ideological systems, [but] are primarily concerned with individuals and the common good.”* (FT n.108) It must find expression in lives of solidarity. *“It means thinking and acting in terms of community.”* (FT n.116) Moreover, human rights are universal and do not have borders: *“No one, then, can remain excluded because of his or her place of birth ... The limits and borders of individual states cannot stand in the way of this.”* (FT n.121) Given the common destination of the earth's goods, *“we can say that each country also belongs to the foreigner, inasmuch as a territory's goods must not be denied to a needy person coming from elsewhere.”* (FT n.124) In sum, *“if every human being possesses an inalienable dignity, if all people are my brothers and sisters, and if the world truly belongs to everyone, then it matters little whether my neighbour was born in my country or elsewhere. My own country also shares responsibility for his or her development.”* (FT n.125) It requires a whole different way of understanding international relations and *“a global ethic of solidarity and cooperation in the service of a future shaped by interdependence and share responsibility in the whole human family.”* (FT n.127)

**Welcome, Protect, Promote And Integrate:** FT Chapter Four ( 'A Heart Open To The Whole World') gives practical principles: *“Our response to the arrival of migrating persons can be summarised by four words: **welcome, protect, promote and integrate.**”* (FT n.129). and a list of practical measures both to make refugee travel safer and to help new arrivals (FT n.130) Arrival of a new migrant must lead to encounter, an exchange of gifts, both between individuals and between cultures. *“Immigrants, if they are helped to integrate, are a blessing, a source of enrichment and new gift that encourages a society to grow.”* Moreover, while there is a need for 'gratuitousness' in the way we welcome the stranger, the action will reinvigorate the host culture: *“Only a social and political culture that readily and 'gratuitously' welcomes others will have a future.”* (FT n.141). Failure to allow

newcomers to attain full status in their new country lead rather to wounds which fester to the detriment of all. (FTn.137)

**The Witness Of A Church Made Up Of Refugees:** The RC community in England & Wales is built from waves of immigration, including that of refugees. Moreover, since the Reformation the Catholic community has had the experience of being 'outsiders' (FTnn.97, 98). Today we run the risk of losing the memory of that gift and that capacity to integrate those who arrive with little but faith and a determination to work hard. We should recover the insight of the Jewish memory of exile and the moral demand this placed on them (FT n.61): *"You shall not wrong or oppress a stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt."* (Exod 22.21; cf. Exod 23.9; Lev 19.33f; Deut 24.21f) But that is our story as a Catholic community, too. It should make us passionate in our advocacy for those who are driven to our shores today. Matthew's Gospel told us at Christmas the story of the 'Flight to Egypt'. 2,000 years later, Christ still arrives on our shores as a refugee.

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## **Speaker Two:**

### **KAREN GOLDSMITH - PRACTICAL SUPPORT FOR REFUGEES**

In contributing to today's Assembly I've been asked to speak about practical ways of helping refugees and asylum seekers, drawing on my experience of working with them as a volunteer in Greece and then engaging others, once back home in England, to help with that support, both here and abroad.

I went out to work with CESRT (Chios Eastern Shore Response Team) now renamed *Offene Arme* (Open Arms - OA) in March 2019. OA is a local grassroots organisation with a team of international volunteers dedicated to providing support for refugees and asylum-seekers on the North Aegean island of Chios. The core work of the team, established in 2016, was to attend and give humanitarian aid and a humane welcome to the boatloads of asylum seekers and refugees who arrived, day and night, seeking sanctuary from war, conflict and persecution at the entrance to Europe. Most of our work as volunteers centred on receiving, sorting and preparing essential emergency supplies (food, drink, blankets, change of clothes etc) and taking them to the boat people as they arrived wet and exhausted from the perilous crossing from Turkey. We had a programme of activities for children and adults in the Refugee Camp; helped prepare meals for the most vulnerable outside the camp; ran a Language Centre and a Horticultural Project; we cleared beaches of landing debris, refuse from the camp, did emergency repairs (ignored by the authorities) for the safety of camp residents; provided emergency accommodation for some of those endangered by gender-based violence or discharged from hospital back to the prospect of rough sleeping in primitive camp conditions. (e.g. mothers with newborns, post-operative sick people).

OA continues to operate a much-prized free shop', a Distribution Warehouse, where refugees can come by appointment to select for free whatever they need in respect of seasonal clothing, toiletries, hygiene products and other goods - all provided by donors.

The context out there has changed continually subject to much political bartering (Turkey - EU - Greece) and Greek governmental decrees. Attending landings, Camp activities, the Language centre all bit the dust and not on the excuse of the pandemic. The aim is clearly to deter refugees from setting out for Greece. In defiance of international law they are preventing refugees from claiming asylum by instructing the Hellenic Coastguard to "pushback" refugees, even when have landed on Chios , to Turkish waters for the Turkish coastguard to arrest and return to Turkey. Anyone going to their aid on Chios will be jailed. Supporting 'illegal entrants' is now criminalised. Humanitarian goods donated in Europe come tax free but since Brexit the Greeks have imposed a huge import tax on refugee organisations like OA making it impossible for them to receive such goods. The Government's promised decongestion of the islands by moving people to the mainland has happened speedily but the lived experience of most asylum seekers and refugees is unchanged - just more of the same but elsewhere. Their lives are on hold. They experience poverty, hostility, insecurity, lack of opportunity and isolation. And yet what a lesson they have to teach us about the human spirit and about our values in the light of theirs. This is a lifechanging experience - however old or young you are . It will give you an understanding and insight nothing else can touch. What is going on as people try to cross Europe needs to be seen to be believed. And having seen first-hand , please tell people back home about what you have witnessed. There is such widespread ignorance and you can help to dispel it amongst those you meet

Supporting refugee friends is humbling. I find their spirit of perseverance, courage and kindness so inspiring, and you receive far more than you give. I think you see the Gospel at work in the most elemental way and grow in understanding of justice and truth as the bedrock of peace. You stand in solidarity with people who need to know their human dignity and worth are valued by others because the world is so often telling them otherwise.

### **Volunteering with refugees overseas**

There are many opportunities to do this and volunteers are much needed to work in a variety of organisations and situations. You need to be over 18, self-funded and self-reliant in terms of accommodation and travel; most refugee organisations are very supportive and helpful with a good team ethos. There is a wide variety of general work but many specialist openings too (e.g. teaching English, law, medics; warehouse management, catering; logistics, admin, driving etc.) You need to be flexible, resilient, fairly fit and ready to work hard at a variety of tasks! Most organisations prefer you to be with them for 3-4 weeks minimum, though two weeks can be possible.

It's important to be sensitive in interacting with the refugees and also to heed the prevailing context in the host country. Following the organisation's code is essential, if you are thinking of volunteering (or know someone you might help sponsor) I highly recommend contacting:

**Indigo Volunteers** are excellent at matching people (at no cost) to the right opportunity. Essex-based, they partner 40 grassroots humanitarian organisations offering volunteer opportunities (mainly in Greece but Calais, Bosnia, Serbia Lebanon, Turkey too). They offer sound advice and know the field well: [www.indigovolunteers.org](http://www.indigovolunteers.org)

## **Additional helpful & Practical Responses**

### **Donations - Financial**

I never asked for money but in telling everyone I met about the situation on Chios, they just gave it me - amazing generosity! In just over 2 years over £20,000 came in and as it came in, I ordered critically needed goods and services for Chios refugees as identified by OA. Over time through the kindness of my informal network of Friends, family and contacts (Church, tennis, neighbours, and friends christened the *Friends of Chios Refugees*) we funded: food and drink for the landings, thousands of items of thermal clothing for adults and children, winter jackets; baby gear; footwear, industrial amounts of underwear, medication, baby milk, dental treatment, carrycots, hijabs ... to name but a few. As well as individual donors some local parish groups held sales and donated the proceeds, the local Filipino community likewise. We designed and sold Christmas cards, bringing CESRT/OA's website to the recipient's attention. All acts of solidarity which assured the refugees on Chios they were not alone, and others cared.

### **Collect and Donate Goods** (More solidarity! Goods sent with love and received as such)

The last consignment of clothing, blankets and other much needed items such as tents and sleeping bags went out to Chios in time for Winter 2020. It is no longer possible to send them to Greece but it is possible to send them to Calais and Bosnia etc. by arrangement with charities like Hope and Aid Direct: [www.hopeandaiddirect.org.uk](http://www.hopeandaiddirect.org.uk); Distribute Aid: [www.distributeaid.org](http://www.distributeaid.org); Care4Calais.org [www.care4calais.org](http://www.care4calais.org) All items donated must be clean and in excellent condition. Blankets and toys knitted throughout the pandemic by parishioners and the *Friends of Chios Refugees* were sent out to Calais in October, so keep knitting! Also, should you have links with firms able to make appropriate surplus goods / end of the line stock available for refugee use these can be very helpful. Can you help local initiatives supporting resettled refugees here with goods they need school uniform, household equipment, befriending?

**Community Sponsorship** Visit: [www.resetuk.org](http://www.resetuk.org) to find out about this really important community response All council areas in Sussex and Surrey have undertaken to provide refugee resettlement in liaison with a local community support group that offers to help with funding housing, equipment, welcoming and befriending. UK Catholic Parishes that have done this alone or with other locals are enthusiastic about the experience. Could our diocese promote this? (To arrange an in-depth discussion or an event in the Diocese contact: Sean Ryan MBE, National Caritas Coordinator; E: [s.ryan@caritassalford.org.uk](mailto:s.ryan@caritassalford.org.uk) and visit [www.csan.org.uk/community-sponsorship](http://www.csan.org.uk/community-sponsorship))

**Look to support refugees settled here as they rebuild their lives and integrate with the community** Many have food businesses and they offer some great eateries around our

diocese. *The Syrian Kitchen* in Horsham for example runs a street food stall but also caters for parties, conferences and meetings. How good to use them - and do explore the brilliant nationwide idea that is: [www.migrateful.org](http://www.migrateful.org). For £20 you can have a voucher sent to a friend or relative for a cookery lesson in a small Zoomed class for a date and cuisine of their choice tutored by a refugee chef and you get eat the meal you prepare (I gave it to everyone for a whole year for birthdays and Christmas presents - everyone loved it).

### Discover the refugee groups in your area

Just google *Refugee* and the name of your local area/town/village- you will quickly find allies! There are many - find out what they do - Can you help? Can they help you?

Keep yourself informed about the refugee situation here and abroad, go online and explore the innumerable refugee websites, watch their videos, read their posts and keep updated.

### Useful websites:

- [www.unhcr.org](http://www.unhcr.org) : Their Data portal documents include refugee situations worldwide.
- [www.infomigrants.net](http://www.infomigrants.net) : A news and information site for migrants.
- [www.cesrt.org](http://www.cesrt.org) : Offene Arme (OA), they are also on Facebook /Twitter/Instagram.
- [www.aegeanboatreport.com](http://www.aegeanboatreport.com) : details of 'pushbacks', refugee statistics – they are also on Facebook.
- [www.seekingsanctuary.weebly.com](http://www.seekingsanctuary.weebly.com) : Calais, Dunkirk refugee support.

'My news' in the BBC news app - select news feeds on 'refugees and asylum seekers'.

Lobby and campaign: get onto your local MP and House of Lords representatives. The Nationality and Borders Bill will have devastating consequences for refugees to the UK.

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## Speaker Three:

AIDAN CANTWELL FROM THE JESUIT REFUGEE SERVICE

### JRS Mission

The Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) is an international Catholic organisation at work in over 50 countries around the world with a mission to accompany, serve and advocate on behalf of refugees and those who have been forcibly displaced. In the UK, JRS works with those who have been made destitute during the asylum process, and those detained for the administration of immigration procedures.

## JRS Values

The work of JRS is based on hospitality, carried out in a spirit of compassion and solidarity, encouraging participation and community, aiming to kindle hope, secure justice and affirm the dignity of refugees and forced migrants. Reconciliation, rooted in justice and sought in dialogue, is a theme of JRS work around the world. JRS work is grounded in Catholic social teaching and draws on the charism and principles of the spirituality of the Jesuits; participative discernment and reflective practice are part of our ethos. We serve people of all faiths and none, without favour or proselytising in return for services.

## About JRS UK

JRS UK provides advice and casework, practical support, creative and therapeutic activities, a small hosting scheme (*At Home*) and a specialist legal advice service for destitute asylum seekers; we also run a detention outreach service to Heathrow and Colnbrook IRCs, including a befriending service, as well as a peer support group for people who have experienced detention. JRS UK undertakes research for advocacy to policy makers, alongside communications and outreach to the Catholic community, to raise awareness of the real situation facing asylum seekers and to argue for a change in policies that undermine their dignity and a just society.

JRS' distinctive ethos of accompaniment radically alters the beneficiary–service provider relationship and affects all that we do: we place a high value on coming to know refugees as people with gifts and personalities, not only defined by their situation in immigration law. Through our services, we seek to offer specialist intervention and respond to practical needs, but also to create spaces of hospitality, community, friendship and participation, which enable refugees to heal and shape their own future. Our advocacy, communications and outreach are similarly rooted in accompaniment, beginning with listening to the experience of refugees, bringing opportunities for their experience and voices to be heard, understood and create change.

JRS UK is based in the Hurtado Jesuit Centre in Wapping, East London. Our centre has recently reopened after the lockdowns due to the COVID-19 pandemic and we are offering limited face to face services such as food and toiletries collections, small group activities and casework appointments. We are still providing the majority of our support to people remotely by phone and online. JRS currently has 22 full and part-time staff and around 100 volunteers, drawn from a wide variety of backgrounds and nationalities, generations and beliefs, including refugees, young graduates and vowed members of religious congregations; this diversity of perspectives and experience is a source of particular strength for our mission. We seek to work collaboratively with others, including JRS offices around the world, Jesuit works in the UK and many others in the Church and refugee and migration sector.



**Visit the JRS website to find out how can you get involved:**

<https://www.jrsuk.net/what-can-i-do>

**Donate:**

- Money
- Physical items

**Volunteer:**

- Emotional and practical support by phone

**Speak up:**

- Look at our new toolkit:
- <https://www.jrsuk.net/eight-things-you-should-know-about-the-nationality-and-borders-bill/>
- Contact your MP

**Pray:**

- Pray with detainees – monthly email
- Prayer resources available on the website
- Thank you for so much support over the years.
- Financial donations are used to cover the costs of friends' mobile tops and bi-weekly 'hardship' grants.
- To purchase the 'Home is a feeling not a place' poetry book or one of our virtual Refugee Gifts, visit: <https://www.jrsuk.net/refugeegifts/>

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**Speaker four:**

**JOHN PAUL DE QUAY, THE JOURNEY TO 2030 - REFUGEES & THE CLIMATE CRISIS**

While we are seemingly putting up barriers whether physical or political, as a way to stop people coming in to our country, it is important to understand what barriers we ourselves cross every day without even thinking about it.

Technology has afforded great progress, but often progress without a conscience has allowed the destruction of the ecosystems that people depend on, climate change and more causing great inequalities, conflict and suffering.

Because of our globalisation, barriers such as borders of nations and geography no longer stand for those who are lucky enough to have access to the receiving end of the machine. Those less lucky are further constrained by worsening climate and competition for resources.

*'It is a crisis of our lives as individuals, as family members, as community members, and as citizens. We have an environmental crisis because we have consented to an economy in which by eating, drinking, working resting, travelling and enjoying ourselves we are destroying the natural, God-given world.'* - Wendell Berry

There are no therefore no shores beyond the reach of our daily life. Through climate change and exploitation through globalisation. We should behave well on these shores as we should want to be treated on our own. And welcome those as we would want to be welcomed.

*"We aren't going to have peace on earth until we recognize this basic fact of the interrelated structure of all reality."* Martin Luther King

Technology is a God given expression of creativity. And should be used for good, however when we try and keep business as usual because we can meet our carbon targets through technological means, keeping climate as an isolated issue we end up exasperating other crises. We need a profound change in the way our society operates, and that is incredibly exciting. And a chance not to be missed.

Looking at climate and refugees in isolation of other interrelated issues is not useful because it's not about just climate change. It's about how our priorities and daily lives affect those on other shores. How our desire for goods and technological solutions affects others, leading people to become refugees, leading refugees into further risks of exploitation and climate hazards, and leading them to be turned away when they show up at our doors.

Climate change makes the problem infinitely worse and makes a crisis even more an emergency.

### **What can we do?**

- Think of people well. This is an integral part of justice. How you think defines your actions. See people as brothers and sisters and not statistics. See the beauty in creation. Do not put on what Pope Francis calls "the armour of so-whatism".
- Pray – Thank God for the beauty of all that has been given to us and make us grateful for what we have already. Pray for those who are suffering and displaced.

- Changing lifestyle. Make changes within your means. Often doing less is more. Consider helping those who live simple lives because they have to rather than want to. You can find some useful suggestions in the 'Act' section of our Journey to 2030 introductory [magazine](#).
- Campaign for people's rights – advocate to change business practices and reform the way that the systems work. There are lots of organisations to help you do that. Start with those provided by the other speakers. Over time we will be adding different ways to explore this through the "Systemic Change" pages on our Journey to 2030 website.
- Help rebuild a community.

*"Saint Therese of Lisieux invites us to practise the little way of love, not to miss out on a kind word, a smile or any small gesture which sows peace and friendship. An integral ecology is also made up of simple daily gestures which break with the logic of violence, exploitation and selfishness. In the end, a world of exacerbated consumption is at the same time a world which mistreats life in all its forms."*

*"Around these community actions, relationships develop or are recovered and a new social fabric emerges. Thus, a community can break out of the indifference induced by consumerism. These actions cultivate a shared identity, with a story which can be remembered and handed on. In this way, the world, and the quality of life of the poorest, are cared for, with a sense of solidarity which is at the same time aware that we live in a common home which God has entrusted to us. These community actions, when they express self-giving love, can also become intense spiritual experiences."*

We have been working with Arundel and Brighton to create a Journey to 2030 working group to 'Improve how our Church visibly responds to our ongoing ecological and social crises.' and 'Care of Creation Mission Statement' which aims to 'Create and communicate pathways for parishioners (and pupils) to initiate and get involved with projects.'

Please sign up to our [mailing list](#) to hear more about the launch later this year and how you can get involved. Please also visit The Journey to 2030 website: [www.journeyto2030.org](http://www.journeyto2030.org)

There are already lots of ideas for actions. Please also let us know what projects you have been doing to make this world a little more like it was intended to be. John Paul can be contacted at E: [jp@theecg.org](mailto:jp@theecg.org)