



# Pax Scotia

## Issue 25

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## Season of Creation: our voices count

**St** Teresa of Avila said:

*Christ has no body but yours,  
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,  
Yours are the eyes with which He looks  
Compassion on this world*

Ahead of the Season of Creation, Pax Christi Scotland chair *Marian Pallister* reflects on how best we can work for peace, confronted as we are by the problems facing Sister, Mother Earth.



**Listen to the  
Voice of Creation  
SEASON OF CREATION 2022**

*September 1:  
World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation*

**W**hat has the Season of Creation to do with peace? For me, the answer is 'Everything'. If we don't care for our common home, if we don't ensure that our brothers and sisters have enough to eat, access to clean water, the ability to pursue their livelihoods, then we will add to the already alarming numbers of displaced persons, the violence that flares when people are afraid for their families, their lives.

The Season of Creation begins on September 1 and continues until October 4. The theme this year is simple – "Listen to the Voice of Creation."

The Scottish Laity Network has a series of talks on Thursday evenings during that period. In many parishes, we will share special prayer resources. There will be ecumenical events in some areas. The Laudato Si movement has begun a new online training session for animators who will learn how to encourage their communities to listen to that voice of creation – hear the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.

In my own parish, Bishop Brian McGee will bless the Laudato Si garden that we have been creating. We hope it will attract pollinators. We hope we will be able to produce fruit and vegetables to donate to the local Multiple Sclerosis centre, which has a food stall for those in need.

Because the cry of the poor isn't only heard in other far-away continents: in 2022 it is increasingly heard in our own communities. Anxiety levels are rising.

We have exploited the earth to within an inch of its life, expecting it to go on nurturing us. I think that WE are listening – but we need to make world leaders listen, too. Those promises made at COP26 are feeling pretty empty now – can we re-ignite them by making our voices heard ahead of COP27 in Egypt in November?

If we leave it to others, we're just ignoring those cries of the earth and the poor. We are inviting the advent of a violent society literally fighting for its life.

**Pax Christi Scotland is small but we can punch above our weight if we all pull together.**

We can give a voice to the voiceless. We can call for divestment from fossil fuels as well as from nuclear weapons (as Delia Chatoor reminds us elsewhere in this newsletter, the money spent on weapons of mass destruction could be so much better used to facilitate humanitarian projects). We can nip the ears of our politicians until they're so tired of us they actually fulfil their promises on renewable energy.

Pope Francis said in his message for this year's Season of Creation, "If we learn how to listen, we can hear in the voice of creation a kind of dissonance. On the one hand, we can hear a sweet song in praise of our beloved Creator; on the other, an anguished plea, lamenting our mistreatment of this our common home."

He added, "In the name of God, I ask the great extractive industries – mining, oil, forestry, real estate, agribusiness – to stop destroying forests, wetlands, and mountains, to stop polluting rivers and seas, to stop poisoning food and people."

For the sake of peace, may we add our voices to that of Pope Francis?

*Marian Pallister*

Lack of clean water, rising sea levels, droughts & forest fires - all symptoms of the climate crisis that is affecting our brothers and sisters around the world; all symptoms that affect peace. Politicians seem to be in denial, citing the cost of changing to renewable energies for their tardy reactions. Yet nuclear nations still spend billions on weapons of mass destruction. Can the Caribbean Climate Network show us the way forward?



## A universal human right: Access to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment

*Delia Chatoor wears many hats. She is a retired diplomat, Trinidad and Tobago (1983-2014), a Life Member of the Trinidad and Tobago Red Cross Society, a Lay Minister in the Catholic Archdiocese of Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago; and a Member of the Caribbean Climate Change Network. Here she links environmental issues to weapons of mass destruction - a link that echoes Pax Christi International's stance.*

### The Role of the Caribbean Climate Network

On Thursday July 28 2022, the United Nations (UN) adopted a resolution declaring access to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment as a universal human right. This Resolution had already secured the support of the Human Rights Council, Geneva in 2021.

With the overwhelming acceptance by most of the Member States, the UN Secretary General acknowledged that there should now be enhanced efforts to reduce the glaring environmental injustices being experienced and empower the most vulnerable groups, such as environmental human rights defenders, children, women and indigenous peoples, the elderly, specially-abled people and low-income individuals to name a few.

Through the provisions of the Resolution, Members States affirmed "the importance of a clean, healthy and sustainable environment for the enjoyment of all human rights." The Secretary General also noted that the Resolution should help States "accelerate the implementation of their environmental and human rights obligations" under the many multilateral environmental agreements.

The Resolution, however, is not limited to States but to "international organisations, business enterprises and other relevant stakeholders." This would necessitate the adoption of workable and measurable policies as well as engender greater co-operation, capacity-building and sharing of good practices.

The adoption of the Resolution was timely in that during the period Sunday July 31 to Wednesday August 3, 2022, members of the Caribbean Climate Network (CCN) held a meeting in San Fernando, Trinidad and Tobago to review its activities and initiate preparations for a Day of Action during the first week of October 2022 throughout all the Members of the CCN.

The aim of the CCN is to work together to address the effects of the climate crisis and to render support to regional and community-based bodies to protect all territories. Of primary importance would be the adoption of adaptation measures which would be based on justice and sustainability.

Overall among CCN Members, there continues to be heightened concern on the impact of climate change on humanity and whether the development of adaptation and mitigation measures would be effective. There is evidence of sea-level rise among many Small Island Developing States (SIDS), acidification and bleaching of coral reefs, destruction of mangroves at an alarming rate. These are only some of the challenges being encountered and which are negatively affecting development.

In light of incontrovertible scientific evidence, the CCN is seeking to have the climate crisis declared "**a Climate Emergency**" so that there would be greater awareness and as the UN Secretary General has advocated, adequate and realistic resources would be mobilised. The diversion of millions of dollars on the evolving arms race would be better spent on addressing this Emergency. Such a practical and equitable approach could alleviate, inter alia, the special needs of the most vulnerable groups who are already being affected and stem the tide of any environmental disaster. We must also note that those who contribute the least to the impact of climate change are the ones who are the most likely to suffer the most.

The UN Resolution and the activities being developed by CCN (some of which are already being implemented) should enhance the climate justice agenda that "*is founded on the principle of equity, across all aspects of climate change.*" It is in this regard that more resources should be allocated to adaptation efforts. Resilience within communities is pivotal so that the ongoing mantra should be one that would ensure that no one is left behind. In so doing, we could also work to bring about the realisation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

*Delia Chatoor*



# The violence of The Batman - or the nonviolence of the Prince of Peace?

## Our choice...

*Pax Christi is a worldwide network that advocates nonviolence. As Pax Christi Scotland member **Kenneth Sadler** explores here, that can be an uphill struggle despite Gospel teaching.*

It is curious to note that Gospel nonviolence, as advocated by Pax Christi Scotland and related organisations, remains something of a minority tradition among Christians – certainly when compared to the support given to the doctrine of 'just war' (CCC 2309).

Despite the clear message of Jesus, and the inspiring witness of holy men and women like Franz Jägerstätter and Dorothy Day, abjuring fighting and loving our enemies remains a step too far for many of us, even as we admire and venerate such conscientious objectors.

We know how the Jesus of the Gospel acts and we know what Jesus, the Prince of Peace, says about violence and about the attitudes that can lead to acts of violence (see especially 'The Sermon on the Mount' [Mt 5-7]). However, the briefest reflection on the cultural artefacts of our civilization, from *The Iliad* to *The Batman*, compels us to recognise a deeply rooted perception of violence as something positive.

By showing their proficiency in fighting, injuring, and killing, heroes display their courage, prove their worth and can avenge the wrongs, genuine or imagined, they have endured. Representations of violence and warfare in films, television shows, video games and other media can make it appear effective and attractive, even glamorous (the consequences for those on the receiving end of such violence rarely feature in these depictions).

What impact does the consumption of a brutal media diet, with its relentless depiction of violence and killing, have on us? Does it increase our capacity for compassion and kindness?

If not, we should utilise the traditional Catholic practice of 'custody of the eyes' to reduce our exposure to graphic and dehumanising on-screen violence.

The reality of violence is not attractive or glamorous: it is ugly and sordid. When we see violence up-close on the street, in pubs and clubs, at protests, or in any other setting, our reaction is most often one of shock and disgust. Such banal, 'ordinary' violence is the kind that appears in the local news sections of our daily papers, and the results of which our Scottish hospitals and Sheriff Courts are accustomed to deal with.

There is a sense in which this commonplace violence, wherever it occurs, is violence unadorned and honest: it lacks the tawdry glamour that gifted writers, or the film industry, can bestow. When we see it, we can appreciate it for what it is: a disturbing expression of our fallen human nature: a failure in our calling to 'fraternity and social friendship' (a calling that Pope Francis explores in his encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*).



Kenneth Sadler

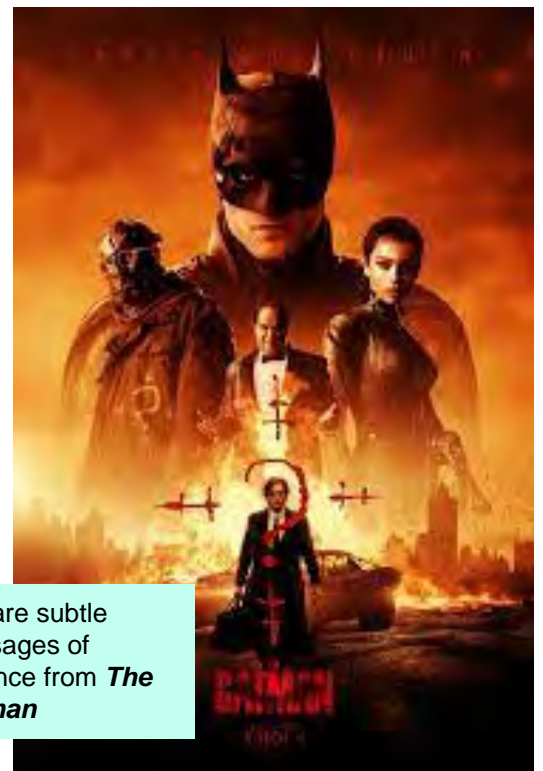
### Violence - a violation of humanity

Perhaps some of our negative reaction to violent incidents in real life is due to our intuition, however imperfect, of the gravity of assault on a human being made in the image and likeness of God.

In any case, while we can praise the literary brilliance of *The Iliad* and the cinematography of *The Batman*, we should be wary of the implicit, subtle messages our culture sends us.

Advocates of Gospel nonviolence should maintain a clear-headed understanding of violence as a dismal violation of our essential humanity.

*Kenneth Sadler*



Beware subtle messages of violence from *The Batman*



## Our website

Blogs, podcasts, past and future events – these are all on our Pax Christi Scotland website. All newsletters are archived there. You can pay your annual membership fee on the Membership page and make donations. Please explore and share:

<https://www.paxchristiscotland.org/>

Continued thanks to webmaster Chris Boles of Caledonian Websites:

<https://www.caledonianwebsites.com/>

## Membership Reminder

**Easiest method? Pay on the membership page of our website.**

If you pay by online banking, please give your name to identify your payment.

If you wish to pay by cheque, send to the address below, cheques payable to Pax Christi Scotland.

You can also make regular donations on our 'donate' page - thank you.

Membership fees are £10 for waged, £5 for unwaged.

Explore the website for all our activities:

<https://www.paxchristiscotland.org>

## Where to find Pax Christi Scotland:

<http://www.paxchristiscotland.org>

[@PaxScotland](https://www.facebook.com/PaxChristiScotland)

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Snail mail:

Pax Christi Scotland  
c/o Xaverian Missionaries  
Calder Avenue  
Coatbridge ML5 4JS

## YouTube Channel

You can find recordings of all our events at:

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCCcmLpQv27Py\\_ul14szp95g](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCCcmLpQv27Py_ul14szp95g)

[UCCcmLpQv27Py\\_ul14szp95g](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCCcmLpQv27Py_ul14szp95g)

Click on the word 'Subscribed' and you will be informed whenever a new recording is posted.

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# Tackling root causes to achieve peace

**P**ax Christi Scotland's website lists our main concerns - discrimination in all its forms, the language of violence, the need for a peace-filled welcome for refugees and migrants, the need to divest from nuclear & conventional weapons, - and of course, the ever-present need to remove Trident from Scottish shores and nuclear weapons from our world.

In September and October, we will host two online events that will explore the interconnectedness of so many issues that threaten peace, and how by tackling root causes, we can achieve a nonviolent world.

At the first, on Thursday September 21, head teacher Nikki Munro, Glasgow councillor Graham Campbell, and Margaret Ann Fiskin, barrister and former chair of the Catholic Association for Racial Justice will discuss the issue of racism under the headline ***The narrow white lens: time for change.***

Register for this Zoom event, which starts at 19:00 UK time, at:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZEpeCoqTwuH9eorLTh0c51KRB9PmMacAbI>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email with information about joining the meeting.

Please share the flyer we'll send out at the beginning of September.

## Poverty and The Bomb

With billions being spent on nuclear and conventional weapons, how can we fail to link poverty with that obscene cost? In Scotland alone, the effects of inflation and rising fuel and food costs are condemning families to choose between heat and eat; sending working families to food banks. The climate emergency is exacerbating poverty world wide.

As **Delia Chatoor** writes on P2 of this issue, "The diversion of millions of dollars on the evolving arms race would be better spent on addressing this Emergency."

**Delia** will be one of the speakers at our Zoom event on October 17, along with **Michaela Sorensen** of the Youth Fusion Team (see their website at <https://www.youth-fusion.org/>), which participated in the recent NPT Review Conference.

Put the date in your diary. It's the UN International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, and these two international speakers will make the case for divesting from nuclear and conventional weapons and diverting the billions spent to humanitarian needs, including the climate emergency.

As always, at both events there will be the opportunity to have your say and to ask questions. Register at:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZYsd-mrrTovHtcPRFCHrESTBiC4wxaPvB6i>



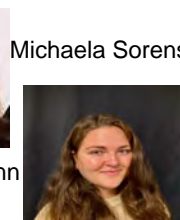
Graham Campbell



Nikki Munro



Margaret Ann Fiskin



Michaela Sorensen



Delia Chatoor