



# Pax Scotia

Issue 19

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## Praying for peace in Ukraine

Major Archbishop Sviatoslav Shevchuk, leader of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, speaking as Russia invaded his country, said, “Today all of humanity has been placed in danger — that the powerful have a right to impose themselves on whomever they wish, with no regard for the rule of law.”

Pope Francis has announced a global day of prayer for Ukraine to be held on March 2, Ash Wednesday.

The Communications Director of Caritas in Ukraine, Vladyslav Shelokov, is working with Caritas partners worldwide (which includes SCIAF) to secure enough food parcels, drinking water, hygiene kits, and shelter for those who will be affected by the conflict.

**‘Human fraternity’ guides our commitment to overcome:  
‘Come back to me with all your heart’ (Joel 2:12)**

By Fr John Convery,  
Pax Christi Scotland  
chaplain

These are the words that will be proclaimed in our churches up and down the country and around the world when we once again as pilgrims embark on our Lenten journey. On our journey to Jerusalem much emphasis will be placed on our own personal conversion, our own personal need for forgiveness, our own personal weakness, our own personal confession of sin and our own personal pursuit of new life and resurrection. There will be much soul searching, prayer and reflection on our personal need to change our ways and experience the caring and healing hand of God in our lives. In the Gospel of Matthew for Ash Wednesday we will be asked not to imitate the ‘hypocrites’ with gloomy looks and long faces but to put ‘oil on our heads, wash our faces, so that no one will know that we are fasting’ (Matt. 6:16-18).

I suspect however, and this has been my experience, that we may not hear too much of the need for our COMMUNITIES/CHURCHES to do likewise. We are not simply individuals setting out on our Lenten journey. We are a church of broken and wounded seeking to become better and witnessing to the world that it is possible to change and be renewed. We are a community of peacemakers who are called to reflect and confess that sometimes we just don’t get it right. We are each called individually to become part of something that is much bigger than each one of us. The community of peacemakers is called to prayer, struggle and challenge each other and the world around us to ‘come back’. Called to reflect on the stations of the cross and pick up our own ‘Pax Christi cross’ acknowledge our weakness and become better at what we are called to do and as the psalmist on Ash Wednesday prays;

“A pure heart create for us, O God,  
Put a steadfast spirit within us”.

*Fr. John Convery Sx*

## Nuclear weapons, the climate crisis... We listen to Scottish voices

### Nukes on My Patch – What Possible Justification?

*Pax Christi Scotland has no political allegiances but will always share the views of politicians who support a nonviolent society. In this issue, Jenni Minto, SNP MSP for Argyll and Bute, speaks out about the nuclear weapons that are situated in her constituency.*



*'The ownership of nuclear weapons does not reflect the decency and humanity of the Scottish people' –  
Jenni Minto MSP (left)*

More than a year has passed since the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons became legally binding and yet when crossing the Clyde into my constituency of Argyll & Bute I can see nuclear powered submarines carrying these weapons of mass destruction.

There is absolutely no political, economic or military argument that justifies the possession and maintenance of nuclear weapons in Scotland. Ridding our country of such monstrosities is a strong foundation for many as to why independence is required for Scotland.

I am proud to represent the Scottish National Party, which has never and will never support the retention or renewal of nuclear weapons – I believe nuclear weapons are not only completely immoral but also ineffective and expensive.

The people of Scotland have made clear through demonstrations, opinion polls and at the ballot box time and time again that they do not support the retention of nuclear weapons. Their views have been ignored.

In times of imposed austerity, the £205 billion which is being spent on Trident replacement over the next 30 years could be much more effectively used on improving healthcare, childcare and education, and help ensure a just transition.

The UK is not alone in hosting nuclear weapons but the path to global disarmament can start here. An independent Scotland can rid the Clyde of Trident and start a conversation across the world to see an end to this evil. The ownership of nuclear weapons does not reflect the decency and humanity of the Scottish people. *Jenni Minto*

### The Military Boot-print

Post COP26, it is essential to assess how best to reduce our carbon footprint – from the individual to the biggest industry. Some contributors may not yet have even been considered as guilty of adding to the climate crisis.

**Scientists for Global Responsibility (SGR)** is an organisation that promotes ethical science, design and technology, based on the principles of openness, accountability, peace, social justice, and environmental sustainability.

Dr Stuart Parkinson SGR has assessed the huge carbon emissions of the global 'boot-print' of the military and argues that only reductions in military spending will lead to the necessary cuts in this form of pollution. The links between the climate emergency and peace issues are becoming more apparent.

See <https://www.sgr.org.uk/> & this video of a Zoom event organised by Quaker Peace and Social Witness and Northern Friends Peaceboard: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gX5\\_2vOLLFc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gX5_2vOLLFc)

## Nationality & Borders Bill

*Dr Agatha Kai-Kai, a trustee of the Refugee Survival Trust, summarises her new report on migration and refugees.*



### REVIEW OF DEATHS IN EUROPEAN MIGRATORY SEA ROUTES

Millions of people around the world migrate seeking opportunities for a better life for themselves and their families. Yet, for many the search for opportunities come at an extremely high cost, as they face unimaginable and often fatal dangers along their journeys. Death is a risk worth taking in desperate situations of violence, persecution, famine or even extreme poverty.

In the last 20 years, Europe has recorded the highest figures of deaths. Since year 2000, over 22,000 migrants have lost their lives trying to reach Europe crossing the Mediterranean. The 'Missing Migrants Project' (2014-2020) recorded deaths of 34,532 people, including 3,368 in 2019 alone.

The Mediterranean's central route between North Africa and Italy remains the region's deadliest corridor. These figures do not include the shipwrecks, 'ghost' boats that go missing and unconfirmed drownings, according to data collected by the UN's International Organisation for Migrants (IOM)'s Missing Migrants Project, based at IOM's Global Migration Data Analysis Centre in Germany. In spite of repeated calls for concrete action to reduce tragic loss of life during migration journeys the death toll in 2021 exceeded 4,470 more than in 2020.

According to Frank Laczko, director of IOM's Global Migration Data Analysis Centre, "Covid-19 has meant an unprecedented decrease in human mobility, but the Missing Migrants Project still documented deaths almost every day."

### ENGLISH CHANNEL MIGRANT CROSSING

Seaborne crossings aboard small boats by people seeking asylum in the UK and migrants were rare before November 2018. More commonly, displaced people stowed away aboard trains, trucks or ferryboats, but this has become more difficult in recent years as British authorities have intensified searches of such vehicles. Prices charged by smugglers for illegal rides across the Channel in lorries, trains and ferries had risen sharply, making boat crossings common but dangerous.

### Summary of Dr Kai-Kai's table relating to migrants crossing the English Channel

In 2018, 764 migrants crossed the English Channel, with one drowning. In 2019, the figure was 1,900, with 6 deaths by drowning. There were 8 deaths by drowning out of the 8,500 who crossed in 2020. In 2021, 28,395 crossed and 35 drowned. In January of 2022, 66 crossed the channel. The total of those crossing between 2018 and 2022 is 39,625, with 50 people – men, women and children – having drowned. Between 2014 and 2022, 121 migrants have died by drowning, in vehicle accidents or 'haphazard transport, 8 due to violence, five due to unknown causes, and three due to sickness – a total of 187.

## Nationality & Borders Bill – What's at stake

*Pax Scotia* has followed this Bill and encouraged members of Pax Christi Scotland to write to their MPs with the intention of lessening the harsh impact it will have.

A reminder of what the Bill says:

*Make provision about nationality, asylum and immigration; to make provision about victims of slavery or human trafficking; to provide a power for Tribunals to charge participants where their behaviour has wasted the Tribunal's resources; and for connected purposes.*

The Bill's sponsors are Priti Patel, Home Office, and Baroness Williams of Trafford, Conservative life peer. The Bill has had three readings in the House of Commons, is now at the report stage in the House of Lords, and will return after a third reading in the House of Lords to the Commons for any amendments and then for the Royal Assent, making it law.

A report from a team of leading immigration lawyers concluded that the Bill would lead to challenges under international human rights and refugee treaties. The Bill aims to make the asylum system fairer, deter illegal entry to the UK, and remove people with no right to be in the country. Anyone arriving in the UK by an illegal route, such as by a small boat across the Channel, could have their claim ruled as inadmissible, receive a jail sentence of up to four years, have no recourse to public funds, and could have their family members barred from joining them.

According to the lawyer's report, the inadmissibility regime outlined in the Bill is potentially in breach of articles 31 and 33 of the UN refugee convention as well as articles 2, 3 and 4 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and could be challenged in court. Plans to send those claiming asylum to offshore centres would breach three articles of the ECHR, three of the articles of the refugee convention, and while plans to "fast-track" cases with an expedited, accelerated appeals process would risk unfairness under common law as well as articles 2, 3, 4, 8 and 13 of the ECHR.

Steve Crawshaw, the policy director of Freedom From Torture, has said that the bill showed the government seemed not to care that they were "riding roughshod" over international obligations.

There is still time to write to your MP (our website make that easy (scroll down this page: <https://www.paxchristiscotland.org/contact/>) and seek changes as the Bill goes to its final stages.



## ***Pax Christi Scotland***

# ***Engaging with the world, seeking peace***

### **40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Bishops' Condemnation of Nuclear Weapons**

**Pax Christi Scotland** is part of the coalition of non-governmental organisations promoting adherence to and implementation of the United Nations nuclear weapon ban treaty – jointly known as **ICAN** (the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons).

On March 21, **Daniel Högsta**, campaign coordinator of ICAN, who is responsible for the ICAN Cities Appeal, the ICAN Parliamentary Pledge, as well as supporting the campaign activities and political engagement of ICAN's partner organisations, will join **Archbishop William Nolan** for our on-line event to mark the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Scottish Bishops' Conference statement condemning the possession and use of nuclear weapons.

During the negotiation of the TPNW in New York in 2017, Daniel helped to lead ICAN's lobbying team to ensure the Treaty reflected ICAN's core principles. Now he works to broaden the community of stakeholders that champion the TPNW.

We are delighted to welcome two such influential campaigners against weapons of mass destruction.

**March 21, 18.30 UK time.** The registration link is: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZEkcO2hqjltE9w2mBsJopJBhIck79-jikjU>

#### **Membership Reminder**

Most membership fees were due in November at the time of the AGM.

**You can pay on the membership page of our website.** If you pay by online banking, please give your name to identify your payment.

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

Membership fees are £10 for waged, £5 for unwaged. Explore the website for all our activities: [www.paxchristiscotland.org](http://www.paxchristiscotland.org)

#### **Where to find Pax Christi Scotland:**

[www.paxchristiscotland.org](http://www.paxchristiscotland.org)  
<https://www.facebook.com/PaxChristiScotland>  
[@PaxScotland](https://twitter.com/PaxScotland) (Twitter)

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

### **The Peace of Christ – Our Faith Defines Our Work**

The Ukraine situation has shown how fragile peace can be. Pope Francis continues to promote dialogue and prayer as a pathway to resolution.

Pax Christi Scotland invites you to join an on-line reflection prepared by executive committee member Arianna Andreangeli with prayers from our chaplain Fr John Convery – Stations of the Cross focusing on seeking the peace that Pope Francis says will triumph, banishing the words "division", "hatred" and "war" from the heart of every man and woman'.



**Pax Christi Scotland's Stations of the Cross** online: **April 5 at 18.30 UK time.** Please share the registration link in your parishes.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZludeqhQzMuGdSO78dmDn0E1WPWFeJHKWAK>

#### **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 Computers -

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

Pax Christi Scotland now has a Youtube Channel where you can find recordings of past events. Find us at: [https://www.youtube.com/channel/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.