

Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation

*I cannot do all the good that the world needs,
but the world needs all the good I can do.*

Greetings!

Many thanks to everyone who sent us feedback following the first JPIC Newsletter, in December. It was very encouraging!

We are hoping that in each Area there will be a JPIC convenor / coordinator / encourager to liaise with the steering group. Please let us know who might take that on in your Area.

With our National Retreat coming up in March we would like to focus particularly on the Story of Parihaka. You will remember Sarah Hart's excellent article in *Tau* (May 2016—Pentecost) In the last few *Tau* there have been quotes from Dick Scott's *Ask that Mountain*. This book is highly recommended reading for everyone interested in learning about this sobering chapter in New Zealand, Aotearoa's history. It is interesting to reflect on why this story is not familiar in every home in the land.

The JPIC group is hoping to follow up with post-retreat reflections and ideas for study and possible action for all who went to the retreat or are familiar with the story.

We look forward to hearing from you – inspiring stories from your Area and how these link with our Principles, activities for prayer, ideas for action – especially across an Area or across our NZ Province.

We are hoping to have specific things for our prayer from Melanesia in our next Newsletter.

Peace and all that is good,

*Pip Colgan (convener), Peter Bargh, Margaret Bedggood,
Marion Fairbrass, John Hebenton, Blair Matheson & Brother Damian SSF*

Avoiding Palm Oil – Step One

I recently felt challenged to become more proactive in avoiding palm oil in products I use. I was out of hard soap, so on my next trip to the supermarket I began reading labels. Every bar of soap on the shelf that day contained palm oil. I was somewhat daunted.

The very next day I heard a radio programme about “sustainable palm oil”. This was described as palm oil which is grown without any natural forest being destroyed. For example, by a farmer who decided to pull out a rubber tree plantation and replace the trees with palms. Aha, I thought, “That sounds promising.”

Another trip to the supermarket was called for, and I found two things. One a hard soap which states on its cardboard (not plastic) wrapping that the firm is committed to the use of sustainable palm oil. Not a statement that the product did not contain it, but heading in the right direction.

Then I spied a new brand of soft soap which clearly states that it does not contain palm oil. (see photo) A later visit to the Trade Aid shop found that their hard soap does not contain palm oil. Mission accomplished and I know what soap I will be using from now on. I have now discovered that the “Only Good” brand has a range of products which are palm oil free. Their hand cream is superb; the higher price is offset by needing to use much less of this than of other brands I have used.

Now, what other products do I use that need the same investigation???

How does this express my Franciscan Charism? Not easy to link it to the Principles but very clearly linked to the call to care for the integrity of creation – so it is at the “IC” end of JPIC.



Marion Fairbrass, tssf

(With apologies if I sound like an advertisement!)



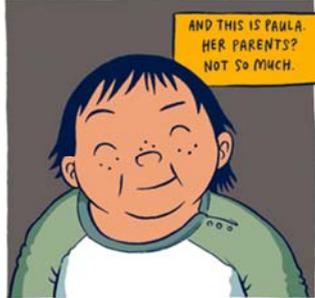
**Do you have an
Integrity of
Creation
article or
story to share?**

ON A PLATE

A SHORT STORY ABOUT PRIVILEGE



THIS IS RICHARD. HIS PARENTS ARE DOING OK.



AND THIS IS PAULA. HER PARENTS? NOT SO MUCH.



RICHARD'S HOUSE IS WARM AND DRY. HIS SHELVES ARE FULL OF BOOKS AND HIS FRIDGE IS FULL OF FOOD.



PAULA'S HOUSE IS FULL OF PEOPLE AND NOT MUCH ELSE. IT'S DAMP AND NOISY AND SHE KEEPS GETTING SICK.



... AND OVER THE YEARS ALL THESE LITTLE DIFFERENCES...

(PARENTS PAYING FOR UNI)



(JUGGLING WORK AND POLYTECH, STILL GETTING IN DEBT)



... THEY START TO ADD UP. TO BUILD INTO SOMETHING BIGGER.



AND BECAUSE EACH LITTLE DIFFERENCE SNEAKS BY UNNOTICED...



RICHARD'S PARENTS WILL DO ANYTHING FOR THEIR BABY...



... AND SO WILL PAULA'S. THAT'S WHY THEY'RE WORKING TWO JOBS.



RICHARD GOES TO A GREAT SCHOOL. WELL RESOURCED, GOOD KIDS. HIS TEACHERS LOVE THEIR JOB.



AT PAULA'S SCHOOL, THE CLASS SIZES ARE LARGE, THE SCHOOL IS UNDERFUNDED, AND LOOKS IT. HER TEACHERS ARE TIRED, STRETCHED THIN FROM THE STRESS.



SO MAYBE WE CAN SEE WHY THE EXPECTATIONS SET FOR RICHARD...



... MIGHT BE SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT TO THOSE SET FOR PAULA...



THEN MAYBE RICHARD STARTS TO BELIEVE THAT HE DESERVES TO BE ON TOP. THAT HE DID IT ALL HIMSELF.



AND MAYBE PAULA STARTS TO SETTLE. LEARNS TO 'KNOW HER PLACE'.



CONGRATULATION RICHARD



Um... excuse me...



Less whinging, more hard work I say. I'm sick of people asking for handouts. No one ever handed me anything on plate.



I REALLY HOPE NOT.

FURTHER READING: LOOK UP AUCKLAND CITY MISSION'S 'SPEAKING FOR OURSELVES' BOOKLET ©XTOTL 2015

Foundation for the Relief and Reconciliation of the Middle East

In 2015 the Auckland Northern Group of the Third Order Society of Saint Francis talked about the refugee problem in the Middle East, persecution of Christians and the attacks by ISIS. We felt so helpless in the face of such huge problems. We agreed one thing we could do was to pray for the people and the situation.

Could we take this idea one stage further and try to make contact with a group of Christians in the Middle East to let them know we were praying for them?

This idea led us to make contact with FRRME, a UK-based charity that is doing wonderful work in the Middle East. FRRME put us in touch with the church of St George, Baghdad. We bought a card, shared the idea with our wider Auckland-based brothers and sisters and they all signed the card. The card with a £10 note donated by one member was sent to the UK office. The card was taken to Baghdad by one of their team who was travelling there.

We have now sent £300 to support FRRME, raising money at meetings and sharing the message.

St George's is a beacon of light in Baghdad. The congregation is now very reduced, but with the help of FRRME they run medical and dental clinics, a pharmacy and an x-ray service. Any person seeking help is cared for, no questions are asked, across all faiths.

Hundreds of Christians worshipped at St George's over Christmas 2016, even Father Christmas came!

Our relationship with St George's has now developed and we send cards at Easter and Christmas. At convocation everyone signed a card to send love and prayers from Third Order Franciscans in New Zealand.

The Foundation is at work on the front line in Iraqi Kurdistan, throughout several IDP (internally displaced people) camps working with the UN and other charities. They employ IDPs in the camps, paying a small stipend which is a valuable resource for people who have nothing.

The battle for Mosul continues, creating a huge refugee problem. The refugees walk out over mine-strewn battlefields and roads. They arrive often semi-starved, many suffering from hyperthermia. FRRME is supplying two hot meals a day, blankets, shoes and warm clothing. The temperatures at night are now sub-zero and the refugees are in tents.

Latest UN figures show 3.1 million IDP in Iraq with 10 million in need of assistance.

The foundation also works in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan where it works with four denominations, including the Nazarene Church, Syrian Orthodox and Greek Catholic. This is one of the safest places for persecuted Christians in the Middle East, but they cannot work, cannot go back to their homes and their only hope is to be accepted as refugees in a resettlement programme.

Please keep St George, Baghdad, in your prayers, praying for safety and the future. Please keep praying for FRRME and their most valuable work and for peace in the Middle East.

Diane Brown TSSF

We hope to bring you updates from FRRME as Diane receives them.