



Faith, Justice and Peace

**An Over-View
of
Christian
Commitment**

The Lancaster Diocese

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CHAPTER ONE

SCRIPTURE AND THE TEACHING OF THE CHURCH

1. A Prologue :

1.1

The first miracle of the loaves in Mark and Matthew is followed by the incident of Jesus walking on the water, recounted in very similar terms in both gospels. Mark 6:45-50 has:

And at once (Jesus) made his disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side near Bethsaida, while he himself sent the crowd away.⁴⁶ After saying goodbye to them he went off into the hills to pray.⁴⁷ When evening came, the boat was far out on the sea, and he was alone on the land.⁴⁸ He could see that they were hard pressed in their rowing, for the wind was against them; and about the fourth watch of the night he came towards them, walking on the sea. He was going to pass them by,⁴⁹ but when they saw him walking on the sea they thought it was a ghost and cried out;⁵⁰ for they had all seen him and were terrified. But at once he spoke to them and said, 'Courage! It's me! Don't be afraid.' (New Jerusalem Bible)

1.2

The startling contrast comes in the dénouement. Mark has:

⁵¹ Then he got into the boat with them and the wind dropped. They were utterly and completely dumbfounded,⁵² because they had not seen what the miracle of the loaves meant; their minds were closed.

Matthew closes his account, after the interlude of Peter's failure to come to Jesus unaided across the water, with:

³² And as they got into the boat the wind dropped.³³ The men in the boat bowed down before him and said, 'Truly, you are the Son of God.'

1.3

Matthew's account is one shaped by hindsight. The apostles and early Christians came to a fuller faith in the divinity of Jesus through later reflection on incidents such as the multiplication of loaves and the calming of the storm. Matthew breathes this later growth of faith into his telling of the earlier event. The 'calming of the storm' is pictured in the light of this later understanding. His account is catechetical in the sense that he conveys not only the details of the event but also its true significance to the believer. It is a faith-filled account.

1.4

Mark, on the contrary, has a different perspective, emphasising as he does the absence of faith until we are graced with the death of Jesus, the Son of God. Without the life and death of the Son of God, our minds and even those of the apostles are closed to the faith-significance of the gospel events, even of those which seem so 'obvious', such as the multiplication of loaves. It will be the centurion, ironically a gentile, who will make the first proclamation of Jesus as 'Son of God', but only after he has been graced by witnessing his dying, cf.15:39. Mark therefore emphasises not the *later* faith but the *earlier* search and struggle in the 'calming of the storm' and indeed in his telling of each event in his gospel.

1.5

This particular contrast between the two gospels is one reflected in our own experience. Often the struggle for understanding contrasts with that later calm as we reflect, with the mind of faith, on past events. In the search for justice, by its very nature, Mark tends to be our 'gospel' if only because 'searching' implies we do not yet understand the true meaning of our situation. For instance, as we look back on the history of emancipation we confidently recognise the presence of God 'walking on the waters' of that struggle for justice. However, this clarity of vision wasn't the case for many engaged in the question of slavery the early 19th century. Pope Gregory XVI cautiously condemned only the slave trade but not slavery in 1839. The American Catholic reaction to Daniel O'Connell's condemnation of slavery was anything but favourable. It took time to find the truth.

1.6

With regard to present struggles our feelings are often that of '*being dumbfounded*' not seeing '*what the event really means*', amazed that other minds and even our own '*so often seem closed*' to how in practice we should resolve a situation. One has only to think of present debates on 'just war', relation between the sexes', 'alleviating poverty at home and abroad', 'immigration in Europe' to be aware of how precarious is our search for justice and peace in the light of our Faith.

1.7

It follows, therefore, as members of the Church in our work for justice our actions should be underpinned:

- by prayer, inspired by the scriptures and engaged with to the teachings of the Church;
- by patience and a willingness to listen, not foreclosing prematurely on debate;
- by giving space for debate while constantly marrying principle to practice;
- by granting a measure of freedom and support to individuals in their search for justice;
- by a loyalty, on the part of those who search, to the Church and family of believers.

2. Justice and Peace in the Christian vocation :

adapted from the Faith and Justice Commission Review 2004, with grateful acknowledgement.

2.1

'Gaudium et Spes'

The joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the men of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these too are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ. (Gaudium et Spes no. 1)

Bishop Patrick, in quoting the opening sentence of Gaudium et Spes in his foreword to Catholic Caring Services annual Review 2003, quite properly roots our Christian vocation of service to those on greater need than ourselves, in this seminal and inspirational conciliar document that seeks to describe a new vision of the Church's relationship with the modern world. Forty years on it has lost none of the power of its message and indeed, has been significantly reinforced by Popes Paul VI and John Paul II in subsequent declaration on the Church's social teaching. Not only is the Church urged to engage with the poor but it is also urged to listen to and give voice to the 'cry of the poor'. While the 'preferential option for the poor' as a concept owes much to the South American Church, it is to the great credit of our own Bishop's Conference of England and Wales that it is a concept that has found resonance in the "Common Good" (1996). The notion of the servant Church is one that seems to speak to the age with an authenticity that suggests that it is the stuff of true prophecy.

2.2

An ecclesiology of service

Avery Dulles SJ (Models of Church 1987) in his consideration of 'The Church as Servant' suggests that a servant ecclesiology:

"seeks to give the Church a new relevance, a new vitality, a new modernity, and a new sense of mission." (p98)

Its purpose is described:

"This service can include prophetic criticism of social institutions, and thus help to transform human society into the image of the promised Kingdom."

Dulles firmly roots service within the New Testament notion of diakonia (life of service) which sits with kerygma (proclamation) and koinonia (sacramental worship) as the key and integrally connected aspects of evangelisation.

2.3

"Evangelisation in England and Wales" (Report Bishops' Conference of England and Wales -2002)

"It is impossible to accept that in evangelisation one could or should ignore the importance of the problems so much discussed today, concerning justice, liberation, development and peace in the world." (31) (Evangelii Nuntiandi -Pope Paul VI)

The report builds upon this important Papal Apostolic Exhortation in which Paul VI notably declared that:

"Modern man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if he does listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses. "[67]

and develops a comprehensive view of evangelisation in which:

"there is a special location of the Gospel with those who are marginalized from society; walking with the poorest and most deprived of our society has an imperative in the mission of the Church." (p17)

In considering the dynamic of mission, engagement with the Church's social teaching in the context of "walking with the poor", is recognised as:

"a priority in lay formation" (p69)

The research project upon which the report is based, warns that:

"Justice and Peace, the work of lay Christians. ...are areas where the parish is generally least engaged with the needs of the world." (p91)

suggesting that effective promotion of this work has the potential to be doubly effective. In developing the theme within the wider findings, the report concludes that low responses to:

"service, community involvement and working for social change, as opposed to the apparent commitment to worship, schools and pastoral care, tend towards creating an impression of a very insular and self-serving parish environment." (p123)

It goes on to emphasise the need to leave "the comfort zone of ecclesial insiders." (p163) and in echoing Paul VI's exhortation for witness as teaching quotes the aphorism attributed to Francis of Assisi, "Preach the Gospel always: use words only if necessary." (p136) What better way to do so than in service of those most in need?

2.4

Christian Vocation

It is as a consequence of our Baptism that we share in the continuing work of evangelisation -

"building God's Kingdom of love, justice and peace. " (Evangelisation in England & Wales p14)

"As Christ was anointed Priest, Prophet and King, so may you live always as a member of his Holy People". (Rite of Baptism) Thus we belong to a priestly, prophetic and serving community whose call is to share in the life and mission of Jesus Christ.

A Priestly Community

- which comes together to pray and to worship God especially in the Eucharist.
- which draws attention to all that is holy & sacred in everyday life.
- which is held together in the unity of Jesus Christ.

A Prophetic Community

- which listens to and reflects on the Word of God.
- which bases its life on that Word, living and speaking the truth of the Gospel.
- which is willing, in the light of the Gospel, to challenge the accepted values of our age.
- which is drawn to live the vision of what the Gospel challenges us to be.

A Serving Community

- which is inspired by the love of God to serve first the needs of others.
- which is structured so as to better serve the needs of the poor.

2.4

Prayer and Justice

All authentic faith and justice work will be accompanied and guided by prayer. The more demanding the task, the more we must have recourse to prayer. Those who work for justice and peace must lead lives of prayer. Whenever we meet in groups at parish, deanery or diocesan level, prayer should form an integral part of the gathering. Provision should be made for days of reflection, centred especially on the scriptures, to which all throughout the diocese are encouraged. Prayer is the bedrock of all work for justice and peace.

3. Justice and Peace as a gospel precept :

3.1 *Matthew 25:31 passim*

'When the Son of man comes ... he will place the sheep on his right hand and the goats on his left. Then the King will say to those on his right hand, "Come, you whom my Father has blessed, take as your heritage the kingdom prepared for you For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, ... Then the upright will say to him in reply, "Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? ... And the King will answer, "In truth I tell you, in so far as you did this to one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it to me. ..."

3.2

The significance of this passage lies not only in its proclamation that we meet Christ in our works of mercy and justice but also in the very position it holds in Matthew's Gospel. The Evangelist places this and the preceding parables of the Wedding Attendants and the Talents between the close of Christ's preaching and the opening of the Passion Narrative. Closing as it does Christ's Preaching of the Kingdom, this parable demonstrates the pivotal role of 'Mercy and Justice' for all who follow Christ in preaching the Kingdom.

3.3

Faith, Justice and Peace should not only be the concern of a few nor confined to abstract belief. On the contrary they must be central to every Christian's living of the gospel: a preaching bearing fruit in practice. Just as the call to holiness has its impact not just on elect few but a call to everyone who calls him or herself Christian and Catholic, so are issues of Christian justice the concern of all the people of the local Church, laity, religious and clergy.

3.4

Each and all of us are called to a *constant and firm will to give our due to God and neighbour. Justice towards men and women disposes one to respect the rights of each and to establish in human relationships the harmony that promotes equity with regard to person and to the common good.* *Catechism of Catholic Church #1807.*

3.5

The human virtue of justice is one of the central elements of the universal Church's mission and of the local Church or diocese, primarily because it is the concern of every Church member to respond to this call of Christ. None are exempt from this aspect of their vocation. Those who, because of their charism or authority, have a more visible role to play in issues of faith, justice and peace do so on behalf of the wider Christian community. This does not excuse others from the practice of virtue but on the contrary calls and encourages each and every one of us to practise Christian justice.

3.6

The member of the SVP who visits the sick, the commission member who monitors the diocesan policy of ethical investment and the Cafod volunteer working in the Third World do not exempt others from the need to also feed the hungry and visit the sick. Rather are they the 'light on the lamp-stand' illumining others to the way to do likewise.

3.7

Those within the Church who are *prophets, teachers and administrators (1Cor 12:28)* have guidance and oversight within the community in issues of faith and justice as well as a personal calling to the practice of justice. Chief among these is the Bishop, pastor of the local Church with overall authority in the oversight of this work showing it by example in his own life and encouraging it throughout the Diocese. The Faith and Justice Commission is the key to his exercise of this mission.

CHAPTER TWO

REFLECTIONS BORN OF PRESENT EXPERIENCES

4. Present conditions :

4.1

The Church's concern is and must always be for the **common good**:

'comprising the sum total of social conditions who allow people, either as groups or individuals, to reach their fulfilment more fully and more easily. Catechism 1924 & Gaudium et Spes 26.1

This is achieved through a sense of human solidarity

the direct demand of human and Christian brotherhood ... manifested in the first place by the distribution of goods and remuneration for work, a solidarity manifested in all its forms: solidarity among the poor themselves, between rich and poor, of workers among themselves, between employers and employees, ... solidarity among nations and peoples, ... world peace depends in part upon this. Catechism 1940 & 1941.

4.2

This sense of solidarity and concern for justice is not something new to our Diocese. Organisations such as the Catholic Caring Services and Cafod have shown for many years our concern for justice and peace both at home and abroad have and continue to shape our concerns. We should also recognise the long history of work by individuals and groups within and outside the formal structure of our parishes. Many have, and continue, to dedicate much of their time to working for justice and peace in all its aspects.

4.3

A gathering of twenty or so parishioners from the Blackpool area this early Spring 2005 gave notice of the following 'justice and peace' works. At the same time they recognised their knowledge of parishes other than their own was limited and furthermore they were very aware that a significant number of parishioners could be engaged in such work outside official parish structures unbeknown to themselves. They witnessed to the following work in their area:

- a) organisation of APF mission boxes;
- b) the SVP with its related work of visiting the sick, collecting of furniture, etc.;
- c) home visiting by the Legion of Mary (one parish);
- d) individuals and groups within parishes who visit and otherwise care for the sick;
- e) some limited involvement by individuals in local initiatives such as soup-kitchen;
- f) a caring for the sick which is centred the annual diocesan pilgrimage to Lourdes;
- g) care for people with special needs, cf. the Pilgrimage Trust, Faith and Light, NWCHG.
- h) individuals & groups linked to a village or school or other venture in the Third World;
- i) support given on a limited scale to the education of Third World students;
- j) one parish, through its priest, invites for holidays students from the Third World;
- k) individuals & parish groups involved in Fairtrade, TradeJustice, MakePovertyHistory;
- l) a few working for Amnesty International – fundraising, writing letters and cards, etc;
- m) a Faith and Justice group which also supports a primary school in Uganda;
- n) the beginnings of a junior Faith and Justice groups in St Mary's High school;
- o) the issuing of a quarterly newsletter;
- p) one parish involved in prayer group and prayer services centred on Justice and Peace;
- q) financial and active support for LIFE, SPUC and related ventures;
- r) Vincent House and its work for the homeless;
- s) education, rallies to show concern for BAC at Wharton and the arms trade;
- t) one person, through the inspiration of her parish and as a representative of it, is actively involved in Blackpool Moneyline for benefit advice, personal loans, home improvement, Tower View Credit Union, the Blackpool Environmental Action Team, Blackpool Tenants federation, Blackpool Surf – a community empowerment movement.

5. Reflections on present conditions :

5.1

The very scope of these activities shows that the issue of justice and peace is central to the faith of both individuals and groups throughout the Blackpool and Fylde areas. On the other hand at the same meeting the Blackpool representatives themselves had serious concerns to raise about their work, concerns which might be coupled with others arising from a reflection on the scope and nature of the work:

- a) *Concerning the sense of solidarity with their parish.* The comment was made with some frequency by various representatives that they felt they were working alone. The justice and peace work in which they were engaged, though of great concern to themselves, seemed to be of little concern to other parishioners or at least did not figure prominently in the formal life of their parish. There were notable exceptions – parishes where justice and peace issues played a prominent part in the liturgy and life of the parish, but they were exceptions.
- b) *Concerning the sense of solidarity within the Blackpool area.* Similar comments were made about the lack of contact between parishes and between those from different parishes often

engaged in similar work. The point was strongly made that solidarity between workers and parishes would strengthen each in their own work. Yet the difficulty of building such solidarity without multiplying parish and deanery meetings was also recognised.

- c) *Concerning the sense of solidarity with the Diocese as a whole.* It appeared from the meeting that few knew little about the Faith and Justice Commission, fewer still of the Catholic Caring Services though they were running a major venture in the Blackpool area. Contact with Cafod was chiefly confined to the parish representative collating the bi-annual envelopes and perhaps the raising of other funds.
- d) *Concerning the balance between fund-raising and active involvement.* With some very notable exceptions, much of what passes for justice and peace work centres of the raising of funds for worthy causes. With notable, individual exceptions, and while acknowledging the relative strength of numbers of those visiting the sick, it has to be recognised that few are engaged in working for justice and peace as opposed to being engaged in various forms of fund-raising.
- e) *Education and 'Justice and peace'* Though the role of education was not specifically raised in the Spring Blackpool meeting, all that was said and reported raises concern about the need to convey the Church's teaching about justice and peace, in principle and in practice.
- f) *Prayer and 'Justice and Peace'* Working for justice is not a matter of meeting the demands of a secular ideology but of answering Christ's call to love God and our neighbour in all its fullness. Prayer, being open to grace through Christ, accompanied by reflection on the scriptures and the Church's teaching should permeate the lives of those who work for justice and peace. At the very least all meetings should give space to prayer along with reflection on some scripture. It would be encouraging if 'a day or afternoon apart' for prayer around justice and peace themes were offered to workers for justice in each pastoral area of the Diocese.

6. The Bishop's oversight in matters of justice and peace :

6.1

Whereas all the faithful in our local communities should be engaged in issues of justice, it falls to the Bishop have a **full knowledge** as to how this work is being carried out in he Diocese, **to encourage** those so actively engaged and **to guide** these and others not as active in the exercise of this Christian virtue.

6.2

This oversight extends not only to those groups formally within the structure of the Diocese but also to those of our Parishioners committed to works of social justice within secular voluntary and government organisations. These above all need to be made aware of the importance of their work as gospel work and of the Church's support for their commitment

6.3

Those who form the Diocesan 'Faith, Peace and Justice' Group provide the key to the Bishop's service of **knowing, encouraging** and **guiding** his people in this work. It therefore falls to this Group to **know, encourage** and **guide** the various people and groups within our parishes and local communities who are actively engaged in the work of justice and peace, a task which extends to encouraging those not so actively engaged so as to re-invigorate this aspect of their Christian ministry.

6.4

The ethos of 'working-together', so conducive to faith and justice, is best served by a geographical area large enough to provide the necessary support but compact enough to build a natural sense of regional solidarity – something between a deanery and the Diocese. Consideration could be given to the following pastoral areas: Preston, the Fylde coast, Lancaster, Barrow, West Cumbria, Carlisle and the Kendal area. *Cf. no. 9.5 for more detail.* **The primary remit of the Diocesan Justice Group would be to know the people already working in these areas, to encourage them in their work and to be prophetically alert to necessary areas of growth.** If, at the same time, the Diocesan Justice and Peace Group should draw much of its membership from among those who work for justice and peace in the various pastoral areas it would be better placed to serve the Bishop in his knowing, encouraging and guiding the Diocese in this aspect of the Church's mission.

7. Prophetic oversight :

7.1

There is one important aspect which, if not unique to the work for justice and peace, nevertheless is most distinctive to it and strongly underpins it: the element of the 'prophetic'.

7.2

Many elements of justice and peace work are traditional and accepted: visiting the sick, giving financial support to the poor whether home or abroad. Other areas of work are at the 'frontier', so to speak, of the Church's mission, especially in their detail: What constitutes a fair and just immigration policy? To what extent can trading in armaments be acceptable? What is the relative moral value of wind, nuclear and carbon based energy sources in the face of global warming? What are the comparative roles of men and women in the workplace, the home and the Church?

7.3

These issues have no immediate answers within a formal teaching structure. On the one hand, by giving space and time for debate the Church supports those engaged in these areas of justice and peace work - often beyond any formal diocesan structures. On the other hand, by prayer and a strong sense of solidarity with the Church, those engaged in these areas will inspire others of our Diocese in a search for true justice. Yet it must be admitted, the balance is a precarious one. Here is reflected something of the tension between Matthew and Mark's Gospels we noted in nos. 1.1 to 1.7.

7.4

In working for justice and peace we can never rest content with 'things as they are'. Some situations viewed in one age or culture as acceptable with later development come to be seen as unjust. We have already mentioned the issue of slavery. There has to be a degree of openness to those who alert us to changing circumstances and, more importantly, to new gospel insights.

7.5

There will always be this element of the 'prophetic' in working for justice and peace. It follows, therefore, that those who exercise oversight, whether on a parish level in small groups such as those of the SVP or Justice and Peace, or whether on a Diocesan level should give space to those who break the mould and challenge us anew.

CHAPTER THREE

ORGANISING THE WORK OF JUSTICE AND PEACE THROUGH THE DIOCESE

OVER-VIEW

8. Linking local and diocesan structures :

8.1

The parish and local pastoral area (cf. 8.4) provide the primary loci for justice and peace work in the Diocese. This is work and prayer on the part of individuals or groups, whether or not within the formal parish structure, witnessing to the teachings of Christ in Church and Scripture.

8.2

The aim of any structuring is to build a sense of solidarity within parish, pastoral area and Diocese. The aim is to enable individual parishioners, groups based in local areas and diocesan bodies **to know** each other and their work, **to encourage** each other by friendship and example, and finally **to guide** parishioners and groups in their gospel witness by practical support and teaching.

8.3

The Bishop has the ordinary (primary) pastoral care of knowing, encouraging and guiding those engaged in the work of justice and peace. He is enabled in this by the formal structuring of this work within the Diocese.

8.4

A sense of solidarity is indispensable, mutual support and learning on the part of all working for justice and peace. This is best encouraged within a 'pastoral area' wide enough to have real strength and vitality in numbers and variety, small enough to give a sense of identity to those living in that area.

8.5

Those working for whatever variety of justice and peace within each pastoral area should build up a sense of solidarity by coming together on occasion for prayer, practical mutual support and social contact. Individual parishioners and groups should seek to know and support each other even while maintaining autonomy within their own particular work for justice and peace.

8.6

Each justice and peace group presently working in the Diocese has its own unique history. Nevertheless, the establishment of at least one local Justice and Peace group in each of the pastoral areas with oversight in their area would provide the basis for linking the area to the Diocese, especially at the bi-annual assemblies (cf. no. 8.10 below). This group would build up knowledge

of its area and those working for justice and peace within and without parish structures. It would offer encouragement by organising occasional gatherings for prayer and mutual social support, by offering opportunities for learning especially with input from Cafod, the CCS and the Adult Education Commission, and most importantly exercising a prophetic oversight by alerting the local Church to neglected issues of justice and peace in its pastoral area.

8.7

Working in conjunction with these pastoral areas are the key Diocesan organisations indispensable to any justice and peace work: Catholic Caring Services, Cafod and the Adult Education Commission. A close bond should be established between individuals and groups in each pastoral area and these diocesan bodies. These latter cover the three key areas of working **for the poor at home**, working **for the poor overseas** and learning **the teachings of the Church** in matters of justice and peace.

8.8

Other more voluntary or spontaneous bodies are also indispensable: for instance those concerned with the arms trade, with ecology issues, with ethical investment, with fair-trade, etc. Though working independently they assist the Diocese in its Christian witness it is important they are formally represented on their local justice and peace group as well as at the Diocesan Assemblies and its steering group. (*cf 8.10*)

8.9

The Catholic Secondary Schools should encourage the forming of a Justice and Peace group, involving both pupils and teachers, as well as including the teaching of Justice and Peace issues and principles within their curriculum.

8.10

A Justice and Peace Diocesan Assembly would meet bi-annually to give over-view to the work of justice and peace in the Diocese. This Assembly would consist of ten or so representatives from each pastoral area, both from that area's justice and peace group (*cf 8.6*) as well as a wider representation. It would be left to the local justice and peace groups to determine how these representatives would be selected. There would also be a representative each from the Catholic Caring Services, Cafod and the Adult Education Commission, representatives from other 'voluntary' bodies (*cf. 8.8*), from the Schools and Youth forum and a representative from the Diocesan Trustees. The Assembly would be overseen by the Steering Group, (*cf. 8.12*). These assemblies would meet for prayer, for providing a forum for the different pastoral areas coming to know each other on a social basis and to appreciate the work being done in the Diocese, to give

comment and make suggestions for overall diocesan policy and to give directions for an annual report to the Diocese and Trustees.

8.11

Each pastoral area would hold similar type gatherings for mutual encouragement, prayer and learning. These pastoral area meetings are the primary units for working closely with the key Diocesan Agencies of CCS, Cafod and the Adult Education Service, calling on these agencies for their support and expertise while also taking care to establish links with the schools and youth groups in the area. As indicated in 8.6 above a local justice and peace group would have the oversight of these meetings.

8.12

The Diocesan Justice and Peace Steering group, would act as the diocesan co-ordinating body. This would consist of two members from each pastoral area, selected by the local Justice and Peace groups, along with one representative each from the CCS, Cafod, Adult Education and the Youth Services with a personal nomination from the bishop/trustees. These would meet more regularly, at their own determining, with the primary remit of **getting to know** the work and workers in each pastoral area, seeking ways of giving these **practical support and encouragement** and **giving guidance** by being especially alert to those areas of concern where there is inadequate witness to justice and peace.

8.13

Working in conjunction with the Steering group would be a salaried lay Administrator with the same remit as the Steering Group: that of knowing the workers in each pastoral area, offering practical encouragement and giving guidance to the Diocese as a whole. He or she would be salaried on a fixed contract with line-management. (cf. 8.15)

8.14

The administrator would also serve to provide links with groups within the diocese, other diocese and on a national level.

8.15

A line manager should be bought in on a professional basis from either the CCS or the Adult Education Commission for both the administrator and the diocesan steering group. This is essential both for day to day work practice and meeting the overall objectives of a three year management plan. (cf. 8.16) The administrator would be helped in this by being based in the Pastoral Centre or the CCS offices, sharing their facilities. The steering group would meet with the line manager less frequently but with some regularity.

8.16

There should be a rolling three year management plan. This would be within the ambit outlined in *no. 8.12* above. Aims, objectives and targets would be formed from suggestions made by the pastoral areas, administrator and diocesan trustees. These would be processed on an annual basis by the steering group and administrator in conjunction with line-management and be accepted by the Bishop and or his representative on the steering group. (*cf. 8.12*)

8.17

Serious consideration is to be given to the use of present means of Diocesan Communication, especially 'The Voice' and the facilities at the Pastoral Centre. The steering group need to work with the editor of 'The Voice' to establish what could be regular channels of communication with parishes and people within the different regions of our Diocese. The Lancaster Pastoral Centre or the Preston based CCS might provide more economical facilities for 'narrow band' communications such as the present Faith and Justice magazine.

CHAPTER FOUR

ORGANISING THE WORK OF JUSTICE AND PEACE THROUGH THE DIOCESE

SOME DETAILS

9. Pastoral Areas: The challenge of a 'far-flung' Diocese

9.1

It is important to build a sense of solidarity among those who work for justice and peace in our diocese, not only for their mutual encouragement but also to give effective witness to the word of Christ and the teachings of the Church. Solidarity and the search for justice are intimately entwined. *The equal dignity of human persons requires the effort to reduce excessive social and economic inequalities. ... Solidarity is an eminent Christian virtue. It practises the sharing of spiritual goods even more than material ones.* Catechism #1940 & 1941

9.2

One particular challenge in our Diocese of Lancaster to the sense of solidarity in building communities of faith and justice is the 'far-flung' nature of the Diocese. This has two aspects: The distances to be travelled between some of the natural geographical communities – a journey from West Cumbria to Preston will be one of two hours. Some of these communities, though perhaps

close to each other and relatively large, have an individual sense of identity which marks them as separate, for instance the Blackpool and Lancaster areas.

9.3

It would seem natural therefore, in building a sense of solidarity from the grassroots upwards, to group the work of Faith, Justice and Peace in the Diocese around local communities in an effort to create a sense of identity and solidarity centred on each community in their work for justice.

9.4

These local or pastoral areas have to be large enough to provide the personnel and resources to maintain viability and yet compact enough to maintain a sense of community through self identity and solidarity.

9.5

Some pastoral areas suggest themselves more readily than others. Much will depend not so much on geography as on the choices made by the people within their local communities. There must be a natural growth and sense of identity for a pastoral area to be effective. Nevertheless as a springboard for action might the following regions are suggested:

- Preston and south Fylde
- Lytham, Blackpool, Fleetwood and west Fylde
- Lancaster, Morecambe and north Fylde.
- Barrow, Ulverston and Millom.
- West Cumbria.
- Carlisle, Appleby and Penrith.
- Kendal and the Lakes.

9.6

These pastoral areas would be the basic units for the diocesan work of faith, justice and peace. Each area would take care to assemble a picture of the kind of work being done within its region along with the names and particulars of those engaged in such work. These could be data-based stored. Those so engaged would meet on occasion for prayer, for mutual support and social contact. This would be the unit to organise linkage with the key diocesan agencies: Cafod, CCS and the Adult Education Commission.

9.7

An identifiable role for specific 'Justice and Peace' groups would be found in encouraging the forming of one at least such group in each diocesan pastoral area. It would be the role of the J & P group to exercise an 'oversight' of their pastoral area. The aim would not be to organise or interfere with other well established groups. Rather it would be to know the people engaged in justice and peace issues in their region, knowing what work was being done, offering times of prayer and

spiritual support, alerting parishes and parishioners to those areas of concern were being neglected. In this sense they would exercise an essential ‘prophetic oversight’ – cf no.7.

10. A sense of solidarity and local identity (see the Church’s Catechism 1939 to 1942)

10.1

The strength of the Church’s witness lies in the very work being done at grass root level, by individuals or groups within or alongside our parishes or pastoral areas. All other structures, meetings and organisation are to be in support of this work. Our aim is not for some central body or commission to direct and manage work done at the local level. Rather should we strengthen the sense of solidarity so that each area knows, encourages and guides the work of its people. Much work is already being done by individuals and local groups in many of the pastoral areas within our Diocese, though perhaps spread unevenly within each region.

10.2

This grouping into pastoral areas would encourage a better grasp of who in the local area had specialist knowledge, of who had a flair for organisation, of those with the gift of prayer, with the gift to lead and to inspire. Some would stand out as people with the time, means and ability to travel to other areas within the Diocese especially when this was required to start or encourage work in previously neglected areas of faith and justice. Not only would the Faith and Justice workers at parish level come to be better aware of each other but a basis would be laid for those with oversight in the Diocese to be much more conscious of those ‘living sparks’ who provide the backbone to our concern for justice and peace.

10.3

A sense of Diocesan identity in its work for justice and peace would grow out of the identity and solidarity of these local pastoral areas. The key lies in each pastoral area coming to an ‘ownership’ of its own work and activity.

10.4

However, it is clear there is little chance of such ‘bottom – up’ development in the area of Faith and Justice if the pastoral work of the Diocese as a whole is not being viewed along similar lines. The need for a balance between those working at the coal face and those with oversight of such work at regional or diocesan level is a delicate one worked out with much trial and some error. Success in one area, e.g. the work of Justice and Peace, will depend very much on the same approach being common to all diocesan pastoral work.

CHAPTER FIVE

WORKING WITH OTHER DIOCESAN ORGANISATIONS

11. Meeting the needs of the local pastoral areas

11.1

At present, though there is a considerable variety of justice and peace work being done at parish level, those engaged in such work depend very much on their own inspiration and enthusiasm with little external support from the Diocese and often not even from the Parish.

11.2

It is important that individual people and groups engaged in different works of social justice should have a broader vision of their work and how it exemplifies the Christian Faith as well as the undoubted individual enthusiasm which keeps them going in their particular work.

11.3

We already have in our Diocese a number of agencies of supreme value to any concerned with Faith, Justice and Peace (FJ&P): The Catholic Caring Services (CCS), Cafod, the Adult Education Service (AdEd) and in all media concerns, 'The Voice'.

11.4

Our Schools, especially the Secondary ones, and Youth Service (Castlerigg) provide a forum for contact with young people.

11.5

What is important to grasp is that these agencies (CCS, Cafod, AdEd, Voice and FJ&P) **are not the locii** for Faith and Justice work. Rather they **are the means** for reaching out to and energising the people in our parishes (and young people in our schools). Emphasis should be placed on **how these relate to the grassroots** rather than **on the meetings, and paperwork** generated by each individual organisation. This is not to say that a healthy organisation is not important, only that it is not primary.

11.6

Though at some risk of being trite, there is a useful rule of thumb is to ask of each meeting we attend: **are we simply talking to the talkers or are we engaged with those working at the grass-root level of our Diocese.?**

11.7

The primary role of the Diocesan Faith, Justice and Peace steering group, the bi-annual diocesan assemblies and the more local assemblies of the pastoral areas is to **know, encourage and guide** the peoples in our parishes engaged in social justice, building a sense of **identity and solidarity** in their work within each region or pastoral area.

12. The Role of our key Diocesan Agencies :

12.8

In pursuing its role the Faith and Justice steering group (8.12ff) acts as a link or channel between the people active in faith and justice works at the grassroots and the wider organisation of the Diocese especially with groups such as Cafod, CCS, AdEd. The Commission would be able to identify

those with the knowledge and (speaking) ability to assist neighbouring groups; it would be able to detect what might be the weaknesses of any pastoral area and offer remedy by drawing on the personnel or organisation of other pastoral areas.

A. Diocesan Adult Education

12.9

The Diocesan Adult Education has a vital role to play in educating our people in the principles of the Church's teaching of social justice.

12.10

It would serve our people well, either as individuals or groups, if there were clearly defined elements within the teaching programme of the Adult Education Programme which focussed on Faith and Justice issues.

12.11

Communication should be two-way with the Adult Education identifying and offering courses or element of such, and the people within a given pastoral area identifying their needs in this area of education and making the relevant requests of the Education service.

B. Catholic Caring Services

12.12

By its very nature CCS work for social justice 'at home' (as opposed to Third World or global issues). It is a well financed and professionally organised body with much to offer both by way of alerting people to the needs of their locality and the means to meet those needs. There should be close co-operation between the CCS and each of our pastoral areas as well as work for justice and peace in the Diocese as a whole.

12.13

Many in our parishes are not aware of the extent of the work of the CCS or of its potential effectiveness. There needs to be a strong advertising campaign at parish level of what it can offer.

12.14

The effectiveness of the CCS lies in its working with the people of any given area, discerning with the people of that region some key need, offering some effective funding and providing continuity of effort and organisation over a number of years.

C. Cafod

12.15

Cafod have been intent on establishing a representative in every parish, so far in about 65 of our 110 parishes. Cafod is a national organisation with clearly defined aims and objectives, chief among which is the bi-annual envelop collection and other fund raising ventures.

12.16

It would not appear there is the same scope, as there is with the Catholic Caring Services, of detailed cooperation between Cafod and those working in our parishes for their own chosen Third World targets. There is also the danger that, when Third World issues are only thinly present in a parish, the 'collecting of the envelopes for Cafod' becomes a substitute for any real advance in learning a work for the Third World.

12.17

However, there would be greater scope for co-operation with Cafod in the field of education about Third World needs and global poverty. The Steering group should establish a programme to work within each of our pastoral areas to present the Church's teaching which underpins faith and justice work concerning developing economies.

D. Communication and Media

12.18

'The Voice' presents a wonderful opportunity for communication to people in our parishes, and beyond, with whom we would otherwise find it difficult to come into contact.

12.19

Its role in education, even if in a simple way, should be explored. Certainly it is a forum for presenting faith and justice work so as to inform and encourage others.

12.20

However, it is a newspaper, and as such requires a special skill in content and presentation. The editor would always exercise final control over both and the effect of this on what might be presented would have to be explored. An 'in-house' newsletter might still be thought necessary.

12.21

Most importantly, continuity is essential. This media aspect of our work would have to be the responsibility of one or two faithful workers.

12.22

The use of a Web site as part of the larger Diocesan Web site should also be explored.

D. Schools and a Youth Forum

12.33

Schools are communities with their own identity, uniqueness and timetable. Those best able in a school to take a lead in issues of justice and peace are to be found from among the teachers, chaplain and perhaps other 'visiting' assistants. It should be the aim of every secondary school to form a justice and peace group among the more senior pupils. Care should also be taken to formally include 'peace' issues into the curriculum of our primary schools.

13. Specialist Groups :

13.1

Examples of such: ethical investment, the arms-trade, ecology issues, racial justice, immigration, covenanting with the poor, the media and perhaps a web-site, etc.

13.2

Close contact must always be maintained between these groups and the pastoral areas in which they may, albeit fortuitously, operate. They should be invited to and be able to request attendance at the monthly meetings of the steering group. They should always have a structured presence at the Bi-annual diocesan assemblies.

14. Structuring Justice and Peace work throughout the Diocese.

14.1

The introductory chapter of Gilbert Ryle's 'Concept of Mind' tells the story of the visitor being shown round Oxford University. After spending the whole day visiting the various Colleges the visitor, in exasperation, asks to see the University. It has then to be explained to him that in seeing the Colleges he has seen the University; that the university is the sum total of its Colleges. There is something of the same lesson to be learnt when talking of Justice and Peace work in the Diocese. It is not to be found in some central group or commission but rather in the work being done by our people as they give witness to the gospel command to love our neighbour.

14.2

Our human tendency is to substitute the 'meeting' for the work to be done; as is said above (11.17) 'talking to the talkers instead of supporting the workers'. This is why the focus of concern in this review has moved from the Peace and Justice Commission to those areas of our Diocese where work is being done which would be happily classifiable as 'justice and peace work'.

14.3

There is also the recognition that, very often in many areas of our work, the parish is too small a unit to be viable and yet the Diocese is too far flung to create a real sense of identity and solidarity. This is why the suggestion has been made that the primary unit is the 'pastoral area', small enough to have a sense of identity, large enough to have the personnel within it to form an effective unit. Seven such areas have been identified, cf 9.1-7, esp. 5

14.4

For the sake of mutual support these should have a sense of identity and solidarity, with people getting to know each other on a social level, meeting occasionally for prayer, reflecting on the needs of their local area, calling for help when needed from central bodies, knowing who in their ranks have expertise to be able to help on a diocesan wide basis.

14.5

Justice and Peace Groups may play a supremely effective role in these pastoral areas. There is always the danger that the prophetic aspect proper to such groups, cf.7.1ff, can be lost in concentrating on some practical though worthy venture, or even relegating most of its activity to simply raising funds. With their concern and knowledge of the deeper issues of justice and peace the members of a local Justice and Peace group are well placed to exercise a prophetic oversight of their area – not to manoeuvre and managed it but to alert it to the call of the gospel. The Justice and Peace Assembly with its Steering Group should take care to preserve the same concern on a Diocesan wide basis.

14.6

Perhaps of necessity, this Review has concentrated on justice and peace work within the parish, pastoral area or Diocese as a whole. It should not be forgotten that much of this kind of work is carried out by members of our Church engaged with secular or civic bodies, e.g. Sure Start, or by people who are not our parishioners but who work within some specific parish or deanery project. Cf. the Preston St Augustine project. True ecumenism as well as financial considerations should be lifting our vision beyond parish or diocesan boundaries for most future work in the field of justice and peace. All who share in this work share in the work of God:

*Here is the Lord, coming with power ... He is like a shepherd feeding his flock,
gathering lambs in his arms, holding them against his breast
and leading to their rest the mother ewes.*

Isaiah 40:10 passim.