



JUSTICE & PEACE

EUROPE - MIDDLE EAST

NEWS

04/2021



EDITO

Dear brothers and sisters:

This Newsletter is a monograph in which we share the communications of the Justice & Peace Webinar organized for the Europe region. In the season of Lent/Easter, the invitation of Fratelli Tutti resounds: "A heart open to the whole world". As Dominican Family we embrace this world in its moment of pandemic, crisis, uncertainties and hopes. May God grant that the hope initiated by vaccination, and that a more just and supportive distribution in the most impoverished countries, will help our region and the whole world to rise up as soon as possible. Let us hope to learn something from this global crisis. Above all, to grow in Dominican solidarity and compassion as we address the economic, social and spiritual consequences of this pandemic.

We are in the Jubilee Year of the Dies Natalis of St. Dominic. It is a time to remember the strength and help that our Father promised to send us from God. It is therefore a time to continue to rely together on the assistance of the saints of the FD. St. Dominic keeps his word and we must also keep ours, keep the Word of God that we contemplate and preach. Word of mercy that enables human fulfilment, and is good news for those who suffer.

The motto chosen for the Jubilee year, "At table with Dominic", invites us to deepen our understanding of fraternity and hospitality.

To discern what opportunities it offers for the life and mission of our communities and entities to grow in hospitality, fraternity and social friendship. Let us draw from the sources of the Gospel and our charism to grow in holiness, in authenticity, with simplicity and empathy towards the challenges of our world and our region. Let us open ourselves to grace and shared discernment. The Lord speaks to us from life, from his Word, his Church, his sacraments, and from the most vulnerable. In keeping with the motto of this Webinar, taken from Fratelli tutti, let us prepare ourselves to open our hearts to the whole world, from our local, provincial and regional reality.

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Happy Easter!

Fr. Xavier Gomez Garcia

A HEART OPEN TO THE WHOLE WORLD

EUROPEAN PROMOTERS OF JUSTICE AND PEACE WEBINAR
JANUARY 21, 2021



Aniedi Okure, OP
(Africa Faith and Justice Network)

Thank you fr. Xabier for making this forum possible and for inviting to be part of it. Thanks to the panelists and all participants for your commitment to the promotion of justice and peace. I am aware that some of you are carrying out your ministry in challenging contexts, and with additional responsibilities that make extra demands on your time and energy. We are grateful.

The theme of this gathering “A Heart Opened to the Whole World” is very appropriate for this time, given the current emergence of movements towards “tribal groups”, exclusionary boundaries in many parts of the world; and a growing inclination of divisive rhetoric in public discourse that treats those who do not belong to “our group” as less than human or enemies.

We see the influence social media, and all forms of electronic means of communication uncover the power of communication, of messaging that can turn people into enemies or create divisions where there was unity. We see intentional efforts by some to control information about the truth as well as calculated propagandas to create a certain a worldview that pitch one group against another.

In such a context, truth becomes a major casualty in the narrative – people intentionally propagate false narratives with the clear purpose to mislead the public. Others deliberately tell half-truth to deceive people. Half-truths can be far more dangerous than outright lie since they contain some truth and the unsuspected do not generally see the other “non-truth” in the narrative. The result is that falsehood, lies are readily accepted and transmitted as true.

The Church, which is called to be a prophetic presence in the world has, more than ever, an important role to play in countering these negative trends. There is a sense of urgency to this. We have a task of figuring out ways of facilitating the leaders of our church to speak out more openly, intentionally, and consistently the impact of these trends, about the violations of human dignity in our world – especially in those areas where the bishops have constituencies with political voice.

As members of the Dominican Family whose motto is VERITAS – Truth – we have the added challenge in the prevailing context to bear witness to the truth, to uphold, and propagate the truth in the different contexts we minister. Jesus reminds us that he came to bear witness to the truth (John 18:37). We need to build strong coalitions and networks that includes others who pursue the same goals as we do, to tackle these negative and dehumanizing trends. We need to figure out appropriate ways to bring just values to impact policies that emanates from our communities, societies, and countries.

Pope Francis in *Fratelli Tutti*, challenges us to build a global community that favors the development of all people, particularly those negatively impacted by the activities of the industrialized societies. This is an area where the Church in the industrialized communities especially in Europe, have a critical role to play by actively being a prophetic presence; challenging politicians, the business and economic conglomerate and other policy makers, whose engagements negatively impact, or undermines the integral development of those in less industrialized communities.

One way to achieve this is to harness the talents within the Dominican Family and strengthen our understanding of justice so we can in turn challenge our brothers and sisters that we serve to engage in a wholesome Christian witness. In this area, we have some work to do within the family. More specifically, it would be helpful if we can figure out ways to impress on our brothers and sisters within the family, that the work of justice is not consigned to a brother or sister who is designated as justice promoter or coordinator but rather, that the ministry of justice is an integral part of preaching ministry in all its form, and therefore the responsibility of all of us called to be followers of Christ.

The 9171 Synod reminds us that the ministry of justice must be an integral part of the proclamation of the Gospel ministry and evangelization. Indeed, to ignore or try to separate issues of injustice from the work of evangelization and Gospel ministry is a fundamental failure in our understanding of the

Webinar

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Dominicans 

mission of Christ. To separate the two would constitute a kind of propagating “half-truth”, and an impediment to an integral, wholesome Christian growth.

Europe has a long, indeed the longest tradition of Dominican presence. So, the brothers and sisters in Europe have a long tradition to rely on, a long tradition of intellectual and human formation, and a long history of engaging the ministry of justice to share with the rest of the family.

I look forward to collaborating with you in these efforts and to learning more about the respective contexts where you minister so that together we can bring our collective talents to bear on the promotion of justice as an integral part of our ministry.

Again, thank you for your investment of time and talent in the promotion of the ministry of Christ.

EXPERIENCES OF ENCOUNTER WITH MIGRANTS



Stephen Cummins OP
*(Ennismore Retreat Centre,
Montenotte, Cork, Ireland).*

Growth in Conversations

Currently one in ten of every child attending primary school in the Republic of Ireland is a foreign national or the child of a foreign national. The years following 2000 marked a vast influx of EU migrant workers and the arrival of many from non-EU countries seeking political asylum status. We moved very quickly from a Christian mono culture to a pluralist multicultural society.

Many groups reached out to welcome and integrate the migrants and those seeking political asylum. The Dominican community of Ennismore were invited by Cork Education Training Board to co-host an integration project. The title given to this project is GROWTH IN CONVERSATIONS. The title has a particular Dominican origin to it. The Ennismore community hosts a weekly forum called 'Conversations in Ennismore'. Growth in Conversation took the theme of an integration project which would be marked by conversation and task-orientated. The project consists of: a gardening project, classes in English language, IT classes and personal counselling. To date we have had 30 students attending the weekly two-year project. These students represent the countries of Cuba, South Africa, Kenya, Moldova, Syria, Iraq amongst others and also a number of Irish. Many of the asylum-seekers reside in Direct Provision Centres. These Centres are now in the process of being phased out by the Irish Government.

The unique aspect of our Project is that it is based, not on theories about how to be integrated, but rather, by working together in the various tasks:

the participants experience integration by working together. In addition to growing vegetables and flowers the participants will also receive cookery demonstrations and the setting up of a Farmer's Market where they will sell the produce of their garden projects.

The qualification (QQI) which the participants will receive at the end of the two-year Project is recognised throughout Europe, hence they can bring this qualification with them should they seek employment within EU countries.

At the heart of this Project is the principle of 'integration by doing' . For some of the Irish participants, this Project is the first direct contact they have had with foreign-nationals. In general, the foreign-national communities have been made welcome to Ireland. There have been some small episodes where three centres allocated to house asylum-seekers were burned down prior to their being occupied by the asylum-seekers. To counteract such latent racism, our Project lays a strong emphasis on doing tasks together and to work as a group. Such daily contact reduces the possibility of the Other to be seen as a threat. To date, we are confident that our Project has been successful in respecting the Other as an equal. We are aware that at this time of Covid19 people seek a scapegoat for the accompanying levels of unemployment. Such potential happenings are discussed among the participants, thus reducing any negative misunderstanding.

May I conclude quoting Fratelli Tutti:

“

No one will ever openly deny that (migrants) are human beings, yet in practice, by our decisions and the way we treat them, we can show that we consider them less worthy, less important , less human. For Christians ...this sets certain political preferences above deep convictions of our faith: the inalienable dignity of each human person regardless of origin, race or religion, and the supreme law of fraternal love.
No 39

”

I am confident that our Project promotes the dignity of our Project participants.



Alessandro Cortesi OP
(Pistoia-Italia)

In the first part of my speech, I will be presenting some data on the reality of migration worldwide, in Europe and in Italy. Almost 80 million people in the world are forced to flee their homes for various reasons. This is a number not seen since the Second World War. Among the 80 million refugees, about 50 million remain in their countries of origin, often in refugee camps.

The demand for protection in the countries of the world has increased. Nevertheless, the European Union and Italy are responding less and less to this demand. The effects of the policies of closure and rejection of migrants that have been conducted in Italy for several years became tangible in 2019 and 2020, and the pandemic that broke out in 2020 prompted even more its border closures.

At European level, the European Commission's new draft 'New Pact for Migration and Asylum' was presented in September. For the moment being, it is still a proposal, but beyond some general statements of principle, it shows that the underlying objective is not to generate solidarity between European countries with a view to receiving and integrating, but to implement a collaboration to defend the continent's borders and to avoid further entry as much as possible.

Between January and September 2020 about 9,000 refugees and migrants were intercepted and brought back to the hell of Libya by the Libyan Coast Guard, which is composed by criminal militias. Another

situation of blatant rights violations is taking place on the Balkan route. Rejections from Italy's eastern border through Slovenia and Croatia are carried out with extreme violence and according to procedures that are completely outside of the law. The situation in the refugee camps in Bosnia on the border with Croatia is dramatic.

In the second part of my speech, I will be briefly presenting the experience that has been going on for some years in the convent of Pistoia. It is a reception project conducted partly in unison with a local social cooperative, partly (consisting?) in the arrangement of a flat that hosts six young migrants. The house was named after Dominique Pire.

I will remember (sounds strange in English. I think it is better to say “Let us remember” or “I will remind you of” or maybe even “I will remember the testimony of”) this Dominican witness: Dominique Pire (1910-1969) was a Dominican friar from Belgium. After the end of the Second World War, he dedicated himself to work intensely on behalf of refugees. He undertook concrete actions of solidarity by building villages to welcome them and by creating twinning partnerships. Charity implies the fulfilment of justice and the concreteness of love: therefore, he founded the association Aide aux personnes déplacées. In 1958, he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. He then founded a university of peace to give a voice to those who have no voice. No peace can be built without fighting poverty, so he started the 'Islands of Peace' to promote poor rural areas in India and Bangladesh. He died in Leuven in 1969.

In the third part of the talk, I will be presenting some personal reflections on the experience of being close to asylum seekers and refugees.

- It is important to respond with tangible gestures to the reality of migration as a sign of the times.
- This experience gives rise to reflection and a rethinking of faith in relation to life, starting with the poor.
- Personal encounter and direct contact with migrants and refugees lead to a change in thinking about life, faith and the church.

- Dedicating time and energy to hosting them leads to seeing the central
- challenge for fraternity in these times.

In the Order, local and tangible initiatives of welcome and hospitality could be promoted.

DIALOGUE BETWEEN CULTURES



Claudio Monge OP
(Istanbul)

“

...good relations between East and West are indisputably necessary for both. They must not be neglected, so that each can be enriched by the other's culture through fruitful exchange and dialogue. FT 136

”

The chapter 4 of “Fratelli Tutti” encyclical considers the difficulties that arise **when cultures are in conflict** or are a source of division within a community, whether it is a locality or an entire nation. Here there is no tendency to brush over the real work that is entailed in creating a healthy climate of **unity and diversity combined**. Pope Francis points to the problems created when a group is a victim of “cultural sclerosis” (134) - the inability to welcome and to benefit from what the “other” brings to it. He also points to the evidence of “local narcissism” (146) that refuses to accept what enrichment may occur by a real exchange of cultural goods. The antidote would be found in “universal [mutuality] and social friendship” (142). In my concrete experience, I can say that this approach, which many have too hastily considered “humanitarian” and not really theological, is actually crucial!

Pope Francis writes, I quote: “We need to develop the awareness that nowadays we are either all saved together or no one is saved” (137) Do we manage to perceive what it means to decline this statement in soteriological terms?

Developing a **dynamic and communicative concept of culture** in his encyclical, Pope Francis seeks “to create processes of encounter, processes that build a people that can accept differences” (no. 216).

But what does Francis understand by culture?

“The word ‘culture’ points to something deeply embedded within a people, its most cherished convictions and its way of life. . . It has to do with their desires, their interests and ultimately the way they live their lives” (no. 216).

Human being is a culture-bearing creature whose cultures are diverse, permeable, fostering the possibility of interculturality, which includes an openness to influence from each other, and changeable because developing and therefore historical.

The question is, what is the foundation of Pope Francis’ appeal to fraternity in our cross-cultural encounter and engagement?

Pope Francis comes to highlight the ultimate foundation of fraternity: “Reason, by itself, is capable of grasping the equality between men and of giving stability to their civic [and cross-cultural] co-existence [see no. 273], but it cannot establish fraternity” (emphasis added)”. Francis explains, “As believers, we are convinced that, without an openness to the Father of all, there will be no solid and stable reasons for an appeal to fraternity. We are certain that ‘only with this awareness that we are not orphans, but children, can we live in peace with one another’” (no. 272).

But many consider that this requires the adherence of faith to the unchanging truth of God’s revelation in Christ, shattering the walls of division, and creating unity and, finally criticize Francis because he is apparently silent on this point. In such very critical judgment, they don’t grasp the strength of the anthropological dimension as a way to the christological one.

- Believers, whether Christian or Muslim, cannot be reduced to the religious dimension of their convictions! The encounter with the “other” is not only intellectual and not only religious but touches people’s identity to the heart. The founding primacy of the relationship, which is primary for Christianity, is the best way to counteract both secular and fundamentalist relativism.
- Cultures do not only live their own experience of God, of the world and of human being, but along their path they have to compare themselves with the different experiences of others, a comparison which can lead to new fruitful forms of synthesis.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CARE OF CREATION AND SOCIAL JUSTICE



Luc-Thomas Somme OP
(Dominicains pour JP_Genève)

In 2015 the encyclical *Laudato Si* was published. Often seen as an ecological encyclical, it was immediately presented by its author, Pope Francis, as a social encyclical. One of its main contributions is precisely the fact that "everything is linked". This applies in particular to the relationship between environmental protection and social justice. How did the magisterium of the Catholic Church come to this vision?

Especially in the pastoral constitution *Gaudium et Spes*, the Second Vatican Council did, of course, deal with creation on the one hand and social justice on the other, but without explicitly linking them. It was not until 2009 with the encyclical *Caritas in veritate* by Benedict XVI that the link became explicit. 6 years later, Pope Francis, in the encyclical *Fratelli tutti* of 2020, updates this doctrine, especially in the context of the pandemic with the new coronavirus. We can thus observe a development at regular intervals of half a decade in 3 degrees, stimulated by 3 crises: an economic and financial bubble burst in 2009, an environmental in 2015 and a sanitary in 2020, each crisis being added to the previous one.

Chapter IV of the encyclical *Caritas in veritate* updates the theme of development studied by Pope Paul VI in his encyclical *Populorum Progressio* (1967). Pope Benedict XVI emphasizes that development is linked to the relationship of the human being with the natural environment (no. 48). This is manifested in particular in the need to share energy resources (no. 49) and to put an end to harmful exploitation of the environment (no. 50). It also requires a change in "lifestyle" (no. 51) and the need to work towards a "human ecology" at the same time as an environmental ecology.

In the state of affairs proposed by the beginning of the *Laudato Si* encyclical, Pope Francis shows that realities such as pollution and climate (change?) know no borders and have a planetary dimension. He insists on the "issue of water", which requires both attention and solidarity (no. 27-31). The same applies to the "loss of biodiversity" (no. 32-42). In these areas it is not possible to deal with these problems only at the level of individuals, organisations or the State, but also at the level of nations: on their ability to unite in these areas depend lasting solutions and the stability of international peace.

In the encyclical *Fratelli tutti* Pope Francis denounced the harm caused to the environment by the search for immediate profit by the economic powers (no. 17). He sees this as an opportunity for war and a hindrance to the development of peoples, especially the poorest (no. 122). The preference for special interests over the common good is detrimental to development, leads to war and damages the environment (257).

Social justice and environmental protection are joined in their cause - attention to the common good and therefore to all our brothers and sisters - and in their effect - peace in mutual love (no. 137).

LOCAL AND UNIVERSAL DIMENSIONS



Richard Finn OP
(Las Casas Institute, Oxford)

The United Kingdom, so-called, is struggling at the present time with two major problems: first, how to cope with the danger to public health posed by the coronavirus; and, second, how to find its place on the world-stage, not only its role in relation to Europe and the consequences of leaving the European Union, but in relation to economic migrants, refugees, and people-trafficking. Both major problem areas manifest difficulties that are illuminated by what Pope Francis has written in *Fratelli Tutti*.

While much in this encyclical is relevant to these problems, I shall concentrate here on two strands of its teaching: what FT says about the ‘local’ and ‘global’, but also what it says about truth. With respect to the first, Pope Francis teaches that ‘attention to the global’ helps us ‘to avoid narrowness and banality’ (#142) Yet we also, he says ‘need to look to the local, which keeps our feet on the ground’. About the truth, Pope Francis writes that ‘[w]e need to learn how to unmask the various ways that the truth is manipulated, distorted and concealed in public and private discourse’ (# 208).

So let’s see how those teachings relate to the two problems I’ve mentioned that we face in the UK. In both cases there are multiple failures to integrate the local and global dimensions in any coherent public policy. In both cases sound policy-making is frustrated to some extent by a false narrative about what Britain is as a nation, or who the British are, and a false narrative about migrants.

It’s much more obvious of course when it comes to our place on the world-stage and Brexit. A false narrative about lost sovereignty and ‘regaining control’ had traction with many electors in the Brexit

referendum partly because a post-colonial, post-imperial, nation has not faced up to its reduced economic, military, and diplomatic power. Many took the single market, the easily available fresh vegetables, the other imports and exports, for granted. Many didn't see how the European Union protected them from some of the effects of globalisation; and many falsely blamed the EU for the progressive shrinking of manufacturing industry which relocated to cheaper labour markets in Asia and elsewhere. There was a terrible irony in the voting patterns at the original referendum: those poorer parts of the country which had benefited most from EU regional aid were amongst the areas where the vote to leave was strongest.

According to a report by Alex Dean in Prospect, '58 per cent of households with incomes below £20,000 per year voted for Brexit, while only 35 per cent of households with incomes above £60,000 did. The pattern is clear: poorer people were more likely to vote "Leave.".'¹ Cornwall received more EU funding than anywhere else in Britain – over £1bn of aid over 15 years, with more due. But '56.5 per cent of voters there opted for "Leave.".' In some cases the public were peddled lies. They were told that 'The money saved from leaving the EU will result in the NHS getting £350m a week'. A poll by Ipsos MORI in June 2016 found that nearly half the British public believed the claim. The UK Statistics Authority has since said that this was a "clear misuse of official statistics" –because the figure did not take into account the money the UK got back from the EU after paying into the budget. The available sum may have been closer to £250m, but that sum would not necessarily go the NHS. And the maths excluded the economic cost of leaving the EU, the shrinkage of the economy, money lost that would have been taxed and contributed to NHS funding in that way.²

At the same time, central government was deaf to voices in local government, and Westminster in particular was deaf to what was being said in Northern England, Wales, and Scotland, about the disproportionate social cost of austerity. At the local level funding cuts bit deeply into the provision of care for the disabled, sick, and frail elderly, care, that is, which fell outside the remit of a stretched National Health Service, a Service itself regularly required to make so-called 'efficiency savings'. To make matters worse, the UK has seen a rising or widening differential between rich and poor. Although this differential exists within many cities, especially London, it is also a north-south divide. Here, I would like to draw here on a report by IPPR North, the Institute for Public Policy Research North, a northern branch of a think-tank dedicated to addressing a wide range of social issues. The report, published in December 2020, is called, 'Levelling up Health for Prosperity'. It notes that the UK 'is the most regionally unequal

¹Alex Dean, Prospect, September 7, 2016, accessed online at [Which UK regions receive the most EU funding? - Prospect Magazine](#), January 11th 2021.

²The Independent, accessed online on January 11th 2021 at [Final Say: The misinformation that was told about Brexit during and after the referendum | The Independent | The Independent](#).

country of its size and level of development in relation to productivity and disposable household income, while regional inequality in age-adjusted mortality rates is among the most severe for comparable nations. Within England, the North and parts of the Midlands are generally at the wrong end of these inequalities, with poorer economic indicators and higher mortality' (p.8). The report summed up findings of an enquiry earlier in 2020 by Sir Michael Marmot by stating: 'people in more deprived areas live shorter lives but spend more of their life in poor health' (p.10).

Another way to approach the 'deafness' among some politicians, including Catholic politicians, is to consider the response to a decision by UNICEF. In December 2020 UNICEF pledged a grant of £25,000 (approx. 34,000 US dollars) to the charity School Food Matters to help provide thousands of breakfasts over the two-week Christmas holidays to vulnerable children and families living in the south London area of Southwark. A Catholic Member of Parliament, Jacob Rees-Mogg, accused UNICEF of performing "a political stunt of the lowest order." There was no explicit sense of shame at what this meant, what this said about poverty in the UK, in one of the wealthiest cities in the world.

Here, too, we are dealing with a discourse, ways of speaking and thinking about the world, which do not do justice to local realities. If we return to the report by IPPR North, 'Levelling up Health for Prosperity', we can note that among its proposals for improving health in the UK, and for narrowing the disparities in health, is 'redefining definitions of economic performance to include wellbeing goals'. The way economic performance is currently



discussed, the frame through which the economy is viewed, is distorting, inadequate as a guide to our flourishing or failing. IPPR suggests ‘a dashboard of five metrics for more holistic evaluation of economic performance. This includes economic factors but also builds in new core considerations for policymakers, such as wellbeing, income inequality and the gap between the richest and the poorest’ (p.28).

The report also notes another distorting narrative. As personal behaviours that can damage health are generally more prevalent in areas where various factors are likely to contribute to poor health, there can be what the report terms an ‘unhelpful “blame game” narrative that focusses narrowly on individual choices as the drivers of ill health, leading in turn to ineffective and punitive policies’ (p.12).

The social injustices and poverty resultant from these false narratives and from the selective deafness of certain politicians have played in to the havoc wrought by the other major problem we are facing: the coronavirus pandemic. It is not necessarily for genetic reasons that the death toll among the black, Asian, and minority ethnic (BAME) communities has been greatly disproportionate to the rest of the population. Let me cite a passage from the report produced on this problem by Public Health England:

“ *An analysis of survival among confirmed COVID-19 cases showed that, after accounting for the effect of sex, age, deprivation and region, people of Bangladeshi ethnicity had around twice the risk of death when compared to people of White British ethnicity. People of Chinese, Indian, Pakistani, Other Asian, Caribbean and Other Black ethnicity had between 10 and 50% higher risk of death when compared to White British.* ”

What explains this terrible bias in mortality? Well, BAME citizens are more likely to be in poorly-paid jobs that cannot be done from home, for which they are more likely to reach by public transport, and which in other ways as well expose them to greater risk of infection. They are more likely to live in higher-density housing where the virus spreads more easily, and so on. But, in addition to these higher risks of exposure, members of the BAME communities more frequently suffered from poorer underlying health due to pre-existing economic inequalities. Again, I cite from the report:

“ *Economic disadvantage is strongly associated with the prevalence of smoking, obesity, diabetes, hypertension and their cardio-metabolic complications, which all increase the risk of disease severity.* ”

“How do we move forward? In the final part of this talk, I’d like to return to the local and tell you about a meeting I was privileged to attend by Zoom as a listener on January 10th this year. It was called ‘Poverty and the Pandemic in Oxford’; it was organised by the Blackfriars Poverty Group, but co-sponsored and hosted by the Las Casas Institute for Social Justice. The speakers were two local women: Rev. Mary Gurr, who has for many years worked with rough sleepers in Oxford, and is Chair of Trustees of ‘Oxford Winter Night Shelter’; and Jabu Nala-Hartley, Chair of the ‘Oxford Living Wage Campaign.’ A report was also received from Sarah Flexen, who runs the Social Prescribing programme at Hedena Health, a large GP (doctors’) surgery in two adjacent parts of Oxford: Headington and Barton. The meeting attended by some 60+ people, heard about what local agencies had done, were doing, and the challenges facing some of the most deprived members of the community: the homeless rough sleepers now in temporary accommodation, but also migrant workers, and people in the gig economy on zero hours contracts. Isolation, domestic abuse, hunger, access to benefits, were major issues of current concern. Future issues facing the charities and agencies included shortage of affordable single-person occupancy housing, the likelihood that once the pandemic was over the government would remove emergency funding, a shortage of mentors to support people who wish to move off the streets but have little ‘social capital’ or ability to negotiate the system. Someone from “Oxford Mutual Aid” commented on how they had experienced ‘the absolute hopelessness and lack of agency some people feel. Plus the shame of having to use a supporting service who delivers food -not wanting the neighbours to see they are having aid deliveries.’ They felt they were ‘living in a hostile environment’.

But I mention this meeting not so much for the problems it threw up, but as an example of good practice – building local awareness of need by bringing people together to discuss and find a common truth, out of which positive action and sensible policies can emerge. FT encourages us to do much more of this as Church communities with the social capital to act as hosts by convening meetings of this type.

OPENNESS TO NEIGHBORHOOD WHAT PEACE PLAN BETWEEN RUSSIA AND UKRAINE?



Petro Balog OP
(Institut Saint-Thomas d'Aquin-Kiev_Ukraine)

Since 2014 a war is taking place in Europe between Ukraine and Russia. This conflict has led to increasingly tense relations between the European Union and Russia. The latter has been banned from voting by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (Council of Europe restored Russia's voting rights on 25th June 2019) and has suffered economic and political sanctions that are constantly being renewed by the European Union and the United States.

This is why the Research Centre of the Collège des Bernardins, in collaboration with the "Memorial" Association in Russia, the Mohyla Academy, the Catholic University of Ukraine, Institute of St. Thomas Aquinas in Kyiv and several European experts, has launched an initiative of building peace "Truth, Justice and Reconciliation between Russia and Ukraine with the mediation of the European Union".

The objective was to find a differentiated consensus on the main subjects of discord between Russia and Ukraine with the mediation of the EU: a common narrative of past events; possible reconciliations in religious and ecclesiological matters; expectations for the construction of the rule of law, participative democracy and the means to achieve it; finally, viable political, economic, humanitarian and geostrategic solutions in the short, medium and long term in Crimea, Donbass and Azov Sea.

Peace plan for the benefit of the Russian and Ukrainian nations

1. Educational work
2. Work with the media
3. Religious Reconciliation Work: Inter-Orthodox and Ecumenical
4. Penalties
5. Implementation and reform of international law
6. Organization of military support to Ukraine as an aggressed country.
7. Implementation of the Minsk Agreement in the following order
8. Preparing a future of peace for an internationally recognized Crimea
9. Joint reflection work on the future of security in Europe: EU / NATO, but also Russia / Ukraine
10. Support from international financial institutions.



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**DROIT RÉGIONAL ET
INTERNATIONAL RELATIF AUX
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In partnership with the Faculty of Social Sciences of the Angelicum in Rome

**INTRODUZIONE ALLA DOTTRINA
SOCIALE DELLA CHIESA**

**INTRODUZIONE ALL'ETICA
POLITICA**

ETICA DELLE MIGRAZIONI

I DIRITTI UMANI

**ETICA DELL'INTELLIGENZA
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ETICA DELLA CURA

ETICA ECOLOGICA



SPANISH COURSES

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LA TEOLOGÍA DE BARTOLOMÉ DE LAS CASAS

FILOSOFÍA MORAL Y POLÍTICA

**LOS DOMINICOS Y AMÉRICA:
ALGUNOS PERSONAJES
DESTACADOS**

LA ESCUELA DE SALAMANCA

MISIONOLOGÍA DOMINICANA

WEBINAR « **MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS** »

Yao Agbetse, professor of human rights and independent expert at the United Nations, hosted a webinar in French and English.

You can **click here** and listen to the session around the theme:

“Monitoring and Evaluation of Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law in the Context of Conflict: The Case of the Central African Republic”



REGISTRATION

Dominican participants may receive bursaries to attend courses and seminars.

Thank you for writing to **JPIC@domuni.eu**

CONTACT



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PROMOTERS EUROPE AND THE MIDDLE EAST



For Dominican Sisters International :
Sister Marie Monnet, op

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Born in 1978, Sr. Marie is a Dominican sister from the Congregation of Our Lady of Fichermont and lives in Brussels. Doctor of Juridical Science and Doctor of Theology, she is currently Vice-Rector of Domuni Universitas (www.domuni.eu). She is also a lawyer (attorney) at the Paris Bar Association. Sr. Marie Monnet was elected in 2019, at the DSI General Assembly in Rome, as Promoter of Justice and Peace for Europe and the Middle East for a three-year term.



For the Dominican Provinces :
Brother Xavier Gomez Garcia

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Born in 1970, is a Dominican friar of the Province of Spain. He lives in Madrid. Having been ordained a priest in 1994 for the Diocese of San Sebastian, he joined the Order in 2003 after serving in parishes and helping underprivileged populations. He has a Bachelor's degree in Theology and a Master's degree in Family Mediation, and he specializes in Intercultural Social Mediation. Several missions were or are still entrusted to him: Parish Vicar, Provincial Councilor, Promoter of the Youth and Vocation Ministry, Pastoral Coordinator at the Dominican College of Atocha in Madrid, and Provincial Promoter for the Jubilee of the Order of Preachers. He also works on provincial projects with contemporary artists. Being against human trafficking, he coordinates the Human Rights Observatory of the Dominicans in Spain as part of his commitment to the cause of migrants. Br. Xavier Gomez was appointed in 2016 by the Master of the Order as Justice and Peace Promoter for Europe and the Middle East.

JUSTICE
& PEACE

EUROPE - MIDDLE EAST