

RELIGIOUS OF
THE ASSUMPTION



Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation

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*Send forth your Spirit o Lord and
the face of the earth will be renewed!*

This is an emergency! Our house is on fire. As we give thanks for the power of the Spirit to shake us and waken us, let us remember that it is in God's beautiful and fragile world that we live, that we are part of, that we depend on. The time to act is now! May the Spirit help us to work to renew the face of the earth!

How do you see this picture? Is it a threat or an opportunity?



*"Yet all is not lost. Human beings,
while capable of the worst,
are also capable of rising above
themselves, choosing again what is
good and making a new start..."*

Laudato Si 205

A Question: what will be needed by the next generation as climate chaos kicks in? how can we help create educational tools for resilience and adaptation as well as prevention?

Special edition of JPIC News Spring 2019
'A Climate and Environmental Emergency!'

ECONOMICS in the AGE OF CLIMATE BREAKDOWN

Divest from fossil fuels, reinvest in renewables, stop subsidies to fossil fuels companies, regenerate agriculture, forests, waterways, work towards a circular economy, replace economic growth with degrowth... for heaven's sake do something!!!

A Day with Global Justice Now - Kennington, February 14th 2019

They had to find a bigger venue so many people wanted to come. But even that was packed. There were about 250 people in all, lots of young, assured, bright and active, then old campaigners, Trade Union representatives, some involved in politics, a very articulate recovering heroin addict, an old lady with Alzheimer's who came with her husband, a young conservative, some people who had been involved in the Occupy movement, and others freshly into Extinction Rebellion (XR) a new non violent civil disobedience movement that is growing exponentially and becoming global. What was the attraction? I think it was the underlying intuition that our present economic system is exacerbating the terrifying climate chaos which is already beginning to wreak havoc and is set to become so much worse unless we do something.

It was '*economics for the age of climate breakdown*' and a realisation that economic growth, so quoted by politicians, cannot continue. It stands to reason, unbounded economic growth cannot co-exist with a finite planet. It was an exploration of DE-GROWTH. It may not be a pretty word but it will be much needed in the days to come.

There were two speakers, a quick lunch break and then a series of workshops. It very much an exercise in listening to one another, then gathering ideas to be pondered and digested and then become part of the Global Justice Now campaign challenging the economic status quo.

Dr Jason Hickel stated bluntly - '*growing the economy is suicide*'. Even the Paris Agreement, if actualised, would result in 3.2 C degree increase in global temperature. What is needed is huge public

investment in renewables, reforestation, soil regeneration programmes and reduction in the use of both plastic and cement: rates of material consumption need to shrink as does energy demand, the two may well be linked; the emphasis needs to be on human wellbeing and development (not to mention planetary wellbeing). Some points for **working towards a new economic system** would include: -

- Stop using GDP as a unit of measurement for the economy – it does not include social and environmental costs. Accounting measures need to include these.
- living wages and a shorter working week would need to be part of a new economy. It would be important to reduce inequality and enhance redistribution as the present system is wildly off balance and people are really suffering.
- Scale down consumption and production– decrease planned obsolescence, reintroduce the idea of repairing items, ban food waste, tax beef etc.
- Control capital and speculation
- Articulate an alternative future!



Lessons for us all - the School Strike, May 24th 2019



It is estimated that about one and a half children and young people have taken to the streets to express their concern for the climate in 1.400 cities on 110 countries. And they re intending to keep at it. They want climate change and its social consequences to take priority in all school curricula.

Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) released its report on what it called nature's "unprecedented" decline on the same day that the Duke and Duchess of Sussex had their first child, news reports on the study's grave implications were few and far between. IPBES's report detailed how "The health of ecosystems on which we and all other species depend is deteriorating more rapidly than ever," the panel's chairman, Sir Robert Watson said in a statement. In addition to the potential loss of one million species, the biodiversity crisis carries substantial risks for world economies, food security and the spread of disease, scientists warn.

The report calls on policymakers to take immediate concrete action to protect nature by promoting sustainable agricultural practices, inclusive and equitable water management, renewable energy sources and other reforms.

Greta Thunberg, the initiator of the school strikes, commented: -

'Where are the breaking news? The extra news broadcasts? The front pages? Where are the emergency meetings? The crisis summits? What could be more important? We are failing but we have not yet failed. We can still fix this. But not if we continue like today. Not a chance.'

The kids are right. We need to sit up and take notice. And then take action at all levels.

You are never too small to make a difference!

“Imagine what we could do together if we really wanted to” - says Greta Thunberg, the young climate activist who has set off a wave of school strikes across the globe. A new youth climate movement has now been sparked off. ‘Sea levels are not the only things that is rising. We are rising and we are not giving up’ - said Caroline Lucas as she introduced Greta when she was in the UK to support the Extinction Rebellion over Easter.

As David Attenborough pointed out, what happens now will profoundly affect generations to come. The children ‘get it’. Could this be a real turning point?



The Truth Is Out

It had an effect, all that disruption in London over Easter, a pink boat labelled Berta Caceres at Marble Arch, after the environmental defender murdered in Honduras, a garden bridge at Waterloo for free, camping in the trees in Parliament square, movement growing fast, 1,000 arrested. But it was all good natured with considerable understanding on the part of Londoners trying to get to work, thankfully there was sensible policing.



Apart from distinctly improving the air quality in central London it seemed Parliament had eventually heard something. The chamber was full, unlike not so long ago when climate was debated and there were only about a dozen MPs present.



It was an evening session on May 1st; outside in Parliament Square there was a colourful scene, lots of XR logos, banners, young and old and particularly noticeable the number of babies and toddlers with their young mums; of course they have most to lose. The Firefighters Union had lent a fire engine which served as a platform for the speakers, the first speaker came from the union and pointed out that firefighters were the first on the scene to cope with climate emergencies and chaos whether it be wild fires or flooding. Caroline Lucas thanked XR for their **'clarity, commitment and courage'**. XR was modelling the urgency of the situation. She reminded us that at present we were on course for a 3 – 4 degree warming and time is running out. She called for a Green New Deal, a sustainable agriculture and mass mobilisation, this was a start. 'We are rising! we have an awesome responsibility and an opportunity for clean air, food security and insulated homes,' she pointed out. Tens of thousands had taken part in the very effective protest which grew in membership and support daily. At Marble arch they were saying 'this is an

emergency': at Oxford Circus it was **'tell the truth'**: at Waterloo Bridge **'Act Now'**. Parliament square said this is beyond politics and Piccadilly Circus was given over to the young. XR has clear demands: - that the government tell the truth and declare a climate emergency: that the government act to halt biodiversity loss which is reaching epidemic proportions and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2025. The final request is that citizens assemblies be set up as it is clear that citizens need to be in the driving seat for a sustainable future and climate and ecological justice, and we all need to be in on how best to do this. As Ed Miliband pointed out in the debate all the disruption was because of the **'failure of politics to do enough'**. Climate change is with us here and now.

I was just leaving the Square when Parliament unanimously declared a **'climate and environmental emergency'**. There was a roar of approval. The UK is the first country in the world to declare this climate and environmental emergency. It may be largely symbolic and it remains to be seen how this will affect actions and whether action will be adequate and in time. But people are waking up, the campaign of civil disobedience has got the first of its three desires, and this is just the beginning. As one young man said to an enquiring journalist: 'this movement is not just about symbolic actions, but about building the necessary resilient and regenerative culture that the world needs now. The truth is out and the real work is about to begin'.



Biodiversity

"We have been protecting forests, biodiversity, and the climate for thousands of years by living with respect for and in balance with the Living Forest.

We will continue to do this for the sake of our future generations and all life on the planet."

– Patricia Gualinga (Kichwa from Sarayaku)



Indigenous people are our best bet to halt rampant deforestation. These tribes are defending the most biodiverse places that remain on earth. At the same time they face serious threats and violence.

Now we know a million plants and animals are facing extinction, insect numbers are plummeting. Transformative change is needed. We need to prioritize nature for itself and set aside vast areas of water, land and ocean to protect them from industrial development and exploitation. We know the wellbeing and happiness of people are closely linked with nature, for survival, culture and identity, for quality and enjoyment of life. There is a strong link between climate change and biodiversity loss.

'We have entered an era of rapidly accelerating species extinction and are facing the irreversible loss of plant and animal species, habitats and crops, while coming face to face with impacts of global climate change. In 2018 alone, there were deadly heat waves across Europe and south-east Asia, while the US experienced floods and wildfires, Insurance companies went under, unable to bear the cost of rebuilding' writes Robert Watson, chair of IPBES (Intergovernmental Science- Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services) This is the body that is warning us we are eroding the very foundations of economies, livelihoods, food security, health and quality of life worldwide.

What can we do? Set aside vast areas and maximise with new

laws the protection of nature, support restorative agricultural practices and work on soil health, minimise fertilizer use, safeguard fresh water from pollution and reduce wasteful consumption, pay attention to local knowledge, for a start.

I thought all this would be headlines in the newspapers next day. Well, no, it did not happen; in the UK most had only full coverage of the new royal baby. But what sort of world will he grow into?

Jess, May 2019

PS, this raises the question: what will be needed by the next generation as climate chaos kicks in? how can we help to create educational tools for resilience and adaptation?

