



LAUDATO SI COMMUNITY ENCOUNTER IN LEEDS

By David Jackson, St Walburga's, Shipley



Diocesan Laudato Si Animators in the gardens at Hinsley Hall. David Jackson is second from the right

As we approach the tenth anniversary of Pope Francis's encyclical LAUDATO SI – Care for our Common Home (2015) - ten Laudato Si Animators (Advocates) mainly representing the Northern Dioceses met at Hinsley Hall on Friday 14th June for a day of shared reflection, discernment by way of 'Conversations in the Spirit' and contemplation.

This 'Community Encounter' was part of a national, continental and then global LSI Movement process of reflection and consultation round three connected questions:

1. What have been your experiences of being part of LSM? The joys, surprises, challenges?
2. What is the Spirit calling us to do to fully live the messages of Laudato Si in our parish, diocese?

3. What dreams do we have for our diocese in the light of the last ten years of LSI?

The aim being to contribute to global attempt to identify more clearly LSM aims, mission, goals and values world wide. We used periods of guided silent contemplation and a mindful walk in the open air to open us to the breath of the Spirit - through the four elements of the natural world – air, water, fire and earth – despite and even assisted by the rain! We ended by presenting our experiences and hopes in picture/diagrammatic form.

We used the synodal method of 'Conversations in the Spirit' as the framework for seeking answers to the questions: each person spoke uninterrupted for 3 minutes; each input then followed by a one minute silence; similarly we then shared our impressions before agreeing a short joint set of conclusions. As those who attended the first General Assembly in Rome last October



we found the method at first unfamiliar but then deeply fulfilling, formative and liberating. It helped us make room for the Spirit!

The day gave us the opportunity to share the experience of often working alone or with limited support in parish and diocese. We swim against a current not so much of denial of climate change and the need to protect creation and respond to the cries of those most affected. The task is still to link our faith (love of God) to sustainability (love of God's creation) but then of 'animating' ourselves and the communities of parish and diocese to take action together. There is, after ten years, still a job to do to translate the teachings of Laudato Si into faith-based action on behalf of the poorest and of creation.

We came away grateful for the opportunity to have meet face to face – many of us for the first time and newly determined to witness to the fruits of the Spirit: love, joy, peace and, perhaps above all – patience! Our thanks are due to all those at Hinsley Hall who made the meeting possible.

WANTED - LAUDATO SI ANIMATOR – LEEDS DIOCESAN LEAD.

An 'Animator' (Advocate) is someone 'dedicated to spreading the teachings of Pope Francis's Encyclical 'Laudato Si' – Care for Our Common Home'. There are a growing number of Animators globally - hence in every UK diocese including our own Diocese of Leeds.

The current animator for our diocese is David Jackson, of St Walburga's in Shipley. Many supporters of J&P, CAFOD and ACTA will be familiar with David. He has been an indefatigable climate change campaigner and great supporter of a more synodal church.

However, David is now in his 80's and would like to hand over the role to someone a bit younger.



Below, David sets out what the role involves. It may look a bit frightening! But what anyone reading it must understand is that the person doing this role does not do all of it alone. The point of being described as an 'animator' is that, central to this, you are animating other people to do a lot of the work – and this includes the J&P Commission itself as well as other parts of the diocesan curia.

QUALIFICATIONS

The position is open to all present LSI Animators ('Graduates' of the on-line course offered periodically by the LSI Movement based in Rome within the dicastery for Human Development)

OR - IMPORTANTLY –

to anyone willing to complete the course to become a LSIA. No previous formal qualifications are required.

AIM

To work with the clergy and people of the diocese. This is so:

- we all appreciate that care for our common home lies at the very heart of our faith – it becomes part of our core Catholic identity.



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- That, as a result, all are inspired to take practical action and advocate for taking better care of our 'Common Home'.
- That this conversion is expressed in worship, participation, community and mission.
- That the diocese, from the Bishop and its curial centre to its parishes, schools and organisations, becomes a 'LAUDATO SI DIOCESE'.



**LAUDATO SI'
MOVEMENT**
Catholics for Our Common Home

HOW WILL THIS BE ACHIEVED?

By working with attention to the Diocesan Environmental policy, in close collaboration with and receiving support from:

- the Laudato Si Movement (Rome) and the UK LSIA organisation;
- Within the Diocese: the projected Diocesan Sustainability Director; the Diocesan Pastoral Council; the Curia Laudato Si Management Group; the Vicariate for Education; the J&P Climate Action group; SPARK; CAFOD (LiveSimply parish scheme); Leeds Trinity University Leeds Director of Sustainability & Director of Catholic Mission; the existing network of diocesan LSIA's and LSI supporters; ACTA; Caritas.

PERSONAL QUALITIES?

A person who is convinced that care for our common home is a constitutive element in the preaching of the Gospel and who:

- is familiar with the teaching of Laudato Si and is able to communicate its messages and so animate and empower both clergy and laity to take action in its spirit;
- takes joy in creation and is able to work with and learn from others in parishes and school communities to inspire hope for its preservation and protection;
- is able to recognise and appreciate that everyone is at a different stage of the ecological conversion journey and find ways to accompany them;
- can develop and strengthen links creatively between faith and ecological and social justice, and is able to celebrate these in liturgy, worship, prayer and contemplation;
- has a creative approach to the ways that action for ecological and social justice can be taken by way of both practical carbon cutting measures, sustainable living as well as advocacy, lobbying and pressure on government and industry;
- is able to work cooperatively with all other diocesan and external agencies working for care for our common home mentioned above – and some outside of the Diocese as well

If this might be of interest to you then please email jandp@dioceseofleeds.org.uk and we will pass on your contact details to David

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GINGKO TREES AS SIGNS OF HOPE: UPDATE

By Joe Burns, Peace & Nonviolence Action Group



We reported recently on the arrival of ginkgo tree seeds at the *Laudato SI* centre in Salford so they could develop them into saplings to act as signs of hope in relation to our Climate Emergency and to enable more discussions about the Church’s teaching about nuclear weapons.

The centre has now had a further delivery of one year old saplings.

James Ross, from the organisation in Co Antrim that facilitates the import of the seeds commented *“Those Ginkgo tree saplings are about a year old as when they arrived from Japan they had already started to germinate (whist in the post), so we took the decision to start growing them straight away.”*



Dr Emma Gardner, Director of the Laudato SI centre with newly-arrived tree saplings

In total there will be 15 one year old saplings which will need to be cultivated for another two years before they can be planted out.

We welcome interest in taking one of these saplings from parishes and schools across the Diocese – just contact jandp@dioceseofleeds.org.uk to express your interest and a member of the volunteer project team will be in touch.

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J&P E-NEWS EDITOR APPOINTED TO CAFOD BOARD

Matthew (Matty) Maslen has been appointed to the Trustee Board of CAFOD. Matty has edited this newsletter since November 2021.

He was also involved in SPARK Social Justice from ear the beginning of the project. During lockdown he was involved in making videos for the SPARK YouTube channel.

Matty was also part-sponsored by SPARK Social Justice to attend the youth stream of the first two Conference of the Parties to the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

When Bronagh Daly(now the Creativity Lead at Leeds Church Institute) was the CAFOD Community Participation Coordinator for the Leeds Diocese she recruited him as a CAFOD volunteer. As a student, CAFOD gave him the opportunity to attend COP26 in Glasgow, where he attended university. He was a



A soggy Matty on a Climate Change demonstration

CAFOD volunteer for a number of years and also joined the Volunteer Reference Group at CAFOD. Christine Allen, Director of CAFOD, commented “We are so pleased to have you join the CAFOD board Matty. You will bring



so much. Thank you for your dedication and commitment”.

Matty commented “Thank you to Bronagh Daly for starting me on this path, and for continuing to be an amazing friend and supporter over the past 5 years. As a CAFOD volunteer I’ve had incredible opportunities. CAFOD does incredible work around the world to tackle structures that cause the climate crisis, poverty, and conflict. I’m honoured and excited to begin this new role on the Board of Trustees.”

The Commission are agreed that Matty will be an asset to the CAFOD board and offer him our hearty congratulations.

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TENDING THE EARTH THROUGH OUR GARDENING

By Michael Emly, Our Lady of Kirkstall parish

Laudato Si’ – Pope Francis’ 2015 encyclical addressed to “everybody living on this planet”- called on us all to respond to the climate crisis by embracing an ecological conversion. It has proved one of the most influential of all papal documents, both within and beyond the Catholic Church. Nine years on, the breadth and accuracy of its analysis remain valid, and recent climate events have demonstrated the need for urgent action – though that sense of urgency seems sadly lacking among so many world leaders.

Laudato Si’ has been a great inspiration to those of our parishes that decided to work towards the CAFOD Live Simply award; and so it was with great interest that we learnt that the Diocese of Salford has established a “*Laudato Si’* Centre” at Wardley Hall on the outskirts of Salford. The Live Simply groups in 3 parishes in Leeds (Our Lady of Kirkstall, St. John Vianney and St. Benedict’s) decided

to come together and organise a day out to visit Wardley Hall in the morning and then continue on to the recently established RHS Bridgewater garden in the afternoon.



The group posing in front of part of Wardley Hall

Wardley Hall was both fascinating and also a real source of inspiration and hope. The house itself is built around a Tudor core and was a recusant Mass centre for many years, eventually becoming the residence of the Bishop of Salford in 1930. We were given a tour of the house, which contains some fine 17th and 18th century furniture as well as the skull of St. Ambrose Barlow (martyred at Lancaster in 1641). Bishop John Arnold wanted to make better use of this facility and, after consulting the people of the diocese, he gave over a large part of the grounds to establish the *Laudato Si’* Centre. This provides an “environmental space for learning, well-being and spirituality for all faiths and none”. The small team welcomes groups from schools, parishes and community projects and uses the various facilities and spaces to inspire them through close contact with plants and the natural world, as well as teaching about the environmental crisis and how we might respond.

Everyone in our group was intrigued by the range of spaces that have been created: a



greenhouse and a polytunnel, raised vegetable beds, a number of beehives, a hügelkultur bed (that was a new one on me – look it up!), a wild area, a woodland space and the most amazing sort of round house constructed from living willow rods (see picture). Plus, a large cabin which can function as a classroom or other indoor space. Laura, our guide for the morning, is a former teacher and her enthusiasm was incredibly infectious, so we all came away filled with awe at the ambition of the project. We also had a brief meeting with Bishop John, who is himself an exile from “God’s own county”.



From Wardley Hall, we moved on to RHS Bridgewater, which only opened 3 years ago. This too is on the outskirts of Salford and the site originally formed the gardens for Worsley Hall, landscaped in the 19th century but left to revert to nature after the Hall was demolished in the 1940s. In designing this new garden, the RHS has sought to create a world-class resource which respects the history of the site but also embodies the best environmental practices and is resilient to the effects of climate change. Here too, a learning space for school visits – in use that afternoon – allows children to learn about and connect with the earth. With warm sunshine brightening the afternoon, we were able to relax, admire what has been achieved

in such a short time, and take home ideas for our own gardens.

No doubt about it: our group had a marvellous day out! But beyond that, we came away with hope: hope arising from seeing two inspiring environmental projects, hope founded on the young people who are our future, hope which we ourselves need to live out here in Leeds.

SEASON OF CREATION 2024

This Season of the Church’s year runs from 01 September through to the feast of St Francis of Assisi on 04 October. The 1st September has been designated by the Vatican as the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation. The theme for this day, and for the Season, is ‘*Hope and Act with Creation*’.



TO HOPE AND ACT WITH CREATION

SEASON OF CREATION 2024

The firstfruits of hope
(Rom 8:19-25)

As it has only been part of the liturgical calendar for a few years this Season is still not marked in any particular way in many parishes.

Let’s change that situation!

It is a specific Season of the Church’s liturgical year and should be celebrated as such. Liturgically, we do different things during the Seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter. This should also apply to the Season of Creation.

It need only involve as much work as you and others in your church community can commit.

The easiest thing to do would be to ensure that there are specific prayers of intercession incorporated into the liturgies during this



season. Next up would be to hold a 'Creation Mass' where the readings and other prayers specifically relate to God's Creation and our role in it.

However, there are many other possibilities. You could use this Season as a launch pad for taking additional actions. For instance, John Mary Vianney parish in Leeds have started on their journey towards obtaining a CAFOD LiveSimply award and they will be using this season to highlight various aspects of the work that they are doing.

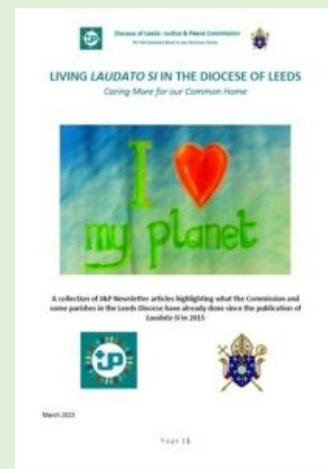
Liturgy can go beyond words and actions within church. The parish of St John Fisher & St Thomas More, in Burley in Wharfedale, obtained their LiveSimply award 2 years ago. This year they are hoping to undertake additional work in the church grounds. Parishioner, Keith Pitcher, comments: "The next phase of our project is to landscape the area behind the church to turn it into a beautiful quiet, reflective area. The idea is to base this on a new paved, circular design, with new seating and attractive insect friendly flowers. We want it to have a spiritual dimension. It will be used for meetings, liturgies, especially for the children so they can carry out more activities relating to the environment and learn more about our message of Living Simply."

What is stopping your parish from doing more about celebrating and caring for our 'Common Home'?

For church liturgy ideas there is a special website for the Season of Creation where there are lots of ideas and some downloadable prayer resources. Notably, there are some ecumenical suggestions and care of God's Creation is an area where there is a lot of scope for working with other Christians in your local area. As Pope Francis put it in his message for the World Day of

Prayer for the Care of Creation: *To hope and act with creation*, then, means above all to join forces and to walk together with all men and women of good will.

For ideas from other churches in our Diocese download a copy of our latest publication: *Living Laudato Si in the Leeds Diocese*



Use this link:

<https://www.leedsjp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/2024-01-Living-LaudatoSi-Leeds-Diocese-FINALFINAL.pdf>

Other sources of Information:

The Season of Creation Website:

<https://seasonofcreation.org/resources/>

This US-based Episcopal Resource has loads of prayers in it:

<https://newcreationliturgies.org/seasonofcreation/SeasonOfCreationEpiscopalLiturgicalGuide2024.pdf>



GAZA & ARMS SALES TO ISRAEL

By Carol Burns, Leeds Diocese Pax Christi

At a recent demonstration calling for a ceasefire, Robert Cohen (A Leeds-based blogger & activist) gave the following speech which I thought worth repeating here is full.

My name is Robert Cohen and I'm here as a member of West Yorkshire Jews Against Israeli Apartheid.

Members of our group have been marching here every week.

We carry the banner which says: 'Leeds Jews Say Ceasefire Now'.



Some of us have been vilified and condemned by a noisy and small-minded minority within our own Jewish community for daring to be part of this weekly act of solidarity. So let me tell you, and them, why we carry that banner. We carry our banner because we cannot bear to see an atrocity against Israeli civilians used to justify a far greater atrocity against Palestinian civilians.

We carry our banner because we want the Israeli hostages freed.

But we also want the bombs to stop.

We want the starvation to cease.

We want the genocide to end.

We carry our banner because we believe in human rights, international law and global accountability for war crimes.

And that goes for Hamas as well as Israeli leaders.

We carry our banner alongside Palestinian flags because we believe that holding a Palestinian flag or wearing a Palestinian badge is not an act of antisemitism. And nor is it an endorsement of terrorism.

We carry our banner alongside Palestinian flags because we care for a people whose homes, schools, universities, hospitals, mosques, churches and farmland have been deliberately destroyed.

We carry it because we believe that you cannot spend months only talking about the Israeli hostages while saying nothing about the tens of thousands of Palestinians killed, maimed and injured by Israeli weapons.

And just in the last few hours we have heard that scores more innocents have been killed in Khan Younis in an area they were told was safe.

We believe that it's only by recognising each other's humanity that there will ever be a just peace, from the River to the Sea, for all who call the Holy Land home.

As Jews, we come to this rally each week because we hear in the Palestinian story echoes of our own people's history.

Our empathy and solidarity come from knowing what it means to be displaced and dispersed.

Knowing what it means to be migrants and refugees.

...to be contained in a ghetto...

...to have our movement restricted...

...our opportunities in life curtailed...

...to be denied self-determination...

...and for our suffering to count for nothing.

We come here because we know what it means to be abandoned by the world.

We carry our banner because 'never again' must mean never again for anyone, anywhere.



We carry the banner which says 'Leeds Jews say ceasefire Now' because we know that guns and bombs and the mass slaughter of innocents (whether Jews or Palestinians) does not bring security, does not bring peace, and does not bring justice.

And so, we say to our critics, when on earth did it become 'unJewish' to call for equal rights, the rule of law, genuine democracy and the understanding that we are all made in the image of God?

We will continue to be here each week.

And we will continue to carry our banner.

The Leeds Jews that stand here say:

Ceasefire Now! Release the Hostages. And Let Gaza Live!

The UK has issued more than 100 arms export licences to [Israel](#) between the Hamas attack on 7 October and 31 May, according to government figures. A total of 345 licences to sell arms to Israel currently exist, including those issued before 7 October. The figures were released by the business department in response to what it described as exceptional parliamentary interest. (June 2024).

The statistics show no arms export licence application was rejected or revoked during the conflict, yet UK law states that if there's a clear risk UK weapons might be used for serious violations of international humanitarian law, export licences shouldn't be granted.

There can be no doubt that the indiscriminate attacks on civilians in Gaza and the prevention of humanitarian aid entering the strip are violations of international law. Objections to UK arms exports to Israel are based on the practical support they provide to the IDF, and to the signal it sends to the world that the UK regards Israel's offensive in Gaza as not in breach of international law. It

is also argued the arms helped Israel impose controls on humanitarian aid.

UK, US, and other European nations have condemned Israel's attack on Gaza and yet none have stopped arming Israel.

What more can we do?

Prayer

Sabeel Kairos, receive their Wave of Prayer every Wednesday.

<https://www.sabeel-kairos.org.uk/>

Take Action

Write to your MP calling for the Government to work harder for a ceasefire in the region- we have already seen a change of tone with the new government but pressure is always needed.

Support the High Court Action for a judicial review and sign Oxfam's petition

<https://www.oxfam.org.uk/get-involved/campaign-with-oxfam/end-uk-arms-sales-to-israel/>

Take action locally – check through the Palestinian Solidarity Campaign

<https://palestinecampaign.org/>

Give

The humanitarian crisis in Gaza, means that funds are always needed. Did you know that CAFOD works in the region?

<https://cafod.org.uk/about-us/where-we-work/middle-east/israel-and-palestine>

Many also support Medical Aid to Palestine

<https://www.map.org.uk/>



ELECTION HUSTINGS IN GARFORTH

By Marg Siberry & Brian Flynn, St Benedict's Garforth

The recent electoral boundary changes resulted in Garforth becoming part of the new Leeds East constituency, so Churches together felt it was important to provide constituents an opportunity to hear the views of all the candidates on issues that concerned them. The main arrangements for the meeting were organised by the Faith, Justice & Action group in St. Benedict's parish. Five of the seven candidates (representing the Labour, Conservative, Social Democrat, Yorkshire and an Independent) accepted the invitation, with the Reform party and Greens each sending an apology.

More than fifty people gathered at St Benedict's Parish Centre on Saturday 22nd June and were invited to write a question for the candidates so that these could then be collated to allow candidates to respond to issues that concerned their constituents the most. The meeting was chaired by Brian Flynn who invited each candidate to give a short introduction as to why people should vote for their party.

It was no surprise that the first issue raised concerned the NHS, its funding, its current problems and how each party planned to address these. Following closely the next issue covered energy - costs, the use of fossil fuels in its production and the consequent impact of this on climate change. Another concern was the political process that often pitted central government against local government in planning.

Poverty, how to deal with people seeking asylum and the extent parties would be willing to collaborate in order to resolve

some of these major issues were also discussed.



Each candidate was given two minutes to respond, with strict time keeping. This allowed a quick fire round of questions at the end, which included views on proportional representation and whether the UK government should support countries that break international law.

Finally, each candidate was given a chance to sum up and was offered the option to stay when the formal meeting had closed so that people could meet candidates individually. There was a lively buzz of conversation for a good while afterwards which reflected the energy that had characterised the meeting. The feedback from those who attended felt it had been a worthwhile event that had enabled them to hear candidates in person and consider their differing responses. The candidates also felt the morning had been well organised and worthwhile.



THE EVOLUTION OF LOVE

A Day of Reflection to re-connect with the Story of Creation



Saturday 19 October

10:30 – 16:00

St John Fisher & St Thomas More, Burley in
Wharfedale

- Creation-centred spirituality invites us to recognize our role within the ongoing evolution of the universe.
- Do we see ourselves as planetary beings, the latest expression of God's continuing creation story?
- How can we nurture the flourishing of creation rather than its destruction?

With insights from cosmology, theology and church teaching as well as workshops, the day offers an opportunity to deepen understanding, re-focus energies, generate hope and inspire shared action.

Use this link to reserve a place

<https://tinyurl.com/leedsjpaumn2024>

The Evolution of love . . . 'Love is the most universal, the most tremendous and the most mysterious of the cosmic forces. The day will come when, after harnessing space, winds, the tide and gravitation, we shall harness for God the energies of love.

And on that day, for the second time in the history of the world, humanity will have discovered fire.'





The most telling and profound way of describing the evolution of the universe would undoubtedly be to trace the evolution of love.

Teilhard de Chardin

ALL are welcome and there is no charge to come to this event (but there will be a voluntary collection during the day). As with our other Days of Reflection, we ask people to bring some food for a shared lunch (nothing that needs to be cooked or heated up). These are usually a highlight and we have never yet had 20 quiches! Obviously, if you have dietary restrictions then this may not be possible.



EVENTS

 19 -21 Jul	<p>National Justice & Peace Network Conference 2024 – Just Politics. <i>Swanwick Christian Conference Centre, Swanwick, Derbyshire</i></p> <p>A great opportunity to meet people from across the country who are passionate about issues of social justice. The Commission can afford to pay the public transport travel costs of up to 4 people to help with the costs of attending this conference. Just email jandp@dioceseofleeds.org.uk if you are interested in taking up this offer. More details about the conference, and booking, can be found by using this link https://www.justice-and-peace.org.uk/category/conference-2024/</p>
 01Sep – 04 Oct	<p>Season of Creation The theme for 2024 is ‘To Hope and Act with Creation’. For more details and ideas about what to do in your church community use this link https://seasonofcreation.org/</p>
 Sat 21 Sep	<p>Racial Justice: Agenda for Change with CARJ <i>St. Patrick’s Church, Foundry Street, Oldham, OL8 1FR</i></p> <p>This one day conference is the Northern conference in celebration of 40 years of CARJ (The Catholic Association for Racial Justice). The first keynote speaker is Max Farrar (Emeritus professor of Leeds Beckett University). Max will be followed by Alison Lowe (Deputy Mayor of West Yorkshire).</p> <p><i>Public Transport costs to get there can be claimed from the Commission. Email jandp@dioceseofleeds.org.uk if interested</i></p>
 Sat 21 Sep	<p>Caritas Day of Reflection <i>Hinsley Hall, Headingley Lane Leeds LS6 2BX 10:00 – 15:30.</i></p> <p>An opportunity for all those interested in Catholic Social Teaching in the Diocese of Leeds to come together for prayer, networking, information, and planning. In particular, we'll be considering how 'Caritas' will be developed following Bishop Marcus' designation of Catholic Care as coordinator of Caritas. Use this link to sign up to this free event: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfZYuadJt1Kn-IXttJ9FBiHqxaC7xpy_MAGSJkiui0b5oPoZQ/viewform</p>
 Sat 28 Sep	<p>Leeds J&P Extended Commission Planning Meeting <i>Wheeler Hall, Leeds Cathedral, Leeds 10:30 – 14:30</i></p> <p>A time for the Commission to review its priorities and the way in which it works. Anyone is welcome to attend. Please email us if you would like to come along and we will send you the details nearer the time..</p>
 Sat 19 Oct	<p>The Evolution of Love: A J&P Day of Reflection <i>SS Thomas More & John Fisher, Burley in Wharfedale 10:30 – 4pm</i></p> <p>Come and join us for this uplifting Day of Reflection brought to us by the ‘Begin with the Heart’ team who try to carry on the spiritual and theological legacy of Fr Donal O’Leary of the Leeds Diocese.</p> <p>More Info & registration https://tinyurl.com/leedsjpaautumn2024</p>

Please forward this email E-News onto anyone else who you think might be interested. Even better, get them to send us their email address so we can add them to our contact database.