



ARCHDIOCESE OF ST ANDREWS & EDINBURGH

Commission for Caritas, Justice & Peace

BULLETIN: NOVEMBER 2020

International Day of Solidarity with Palestinian People

This weekend, the First Sunday of Advent coincides with the International Day of Solidarity with Palestinian People. Palestinian Christian leaders are asking the worldwide community to remember Palestine in our prayers on that day.

Suggested posts for your website or social media, homily notes, a bidding prayer for Mass this Sunday, and text for your parish bulletin which may also be used online are included on the pages which follow.

Benefits and Support Services

Members of the Commission and its working groups have compiled a list of benefits and support services which may be of assistance when seeking to provide practical help and advice to parishioners. The document can be viewed [by clicking here](#).

Credit Unions

Credit Unions are a fantastic resource, and the Commission for Caritas, Justice and Peace is always happy to provide more information on their work. A list of Credit Unions within the Archdiocese of St Andrews and Edinburgh is available [by clicking here](#).

Debt Advice Services

A range of free debt advice services are available across the Archdiocesan boundary. More information, which may be of assistance should you be asked for practical advice, is available [by clicking here](#).

Foodbanks

The Commission's working group on Food has produced a list of foodbanks which operate throughout the Archdiocesan area. You can access this [by clicking here](#).

Further Information

For further information or resources, please contact Fr. Basil Clark, Vicar Episcopal for Caritas, Justice and Peace at VECaritas@staned.org.uk or Callum Timms at Callum.Timms@staned.org.uk



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INTERNATIONAL DAY OF SOLIDARITY WITH PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

Sunday 29th November 2020
First Sunday of Advent

SOCIAL MEDIA AND WEBSITE

Social Media

The First Sunday of Advent this year coincides with the International Day of Solidarity with Palestinian People. Christian leaders in Palestine ask that we keep Palestine in our prayers.

You can find out more at: [Link to article on parish/archdiocesan website]

An image has been provided for your use:



Website

The First Sunday of Advent this year coincides with the International Day of Solidarity with Palestinian People. Established by the UN in 1977, this day marks the anniversary of when the UN General Assembly in 1947 issued the plan to partition Palestine into a Jewish state, a Palestinian state, with special status Jerusalem.

Palestinian Christian leaders are asking that we are alert to them in our services for this day. In the Gospel for the First Sunday of Advent we read, "Stay awake."

If we are awake to Bethlehem as it is today, in the West Bank in the occupied Palestinian territories, we will see that it is surrounded by settlements that are internationally viewed as illegal. Many live their whole lives in refugee camps. Bethlehem's residents, like all Palestinians in the West Bank, are constrained in their movements by checkpoints and the separation barrier.

They live with the risk of arrest and imprisonment, not least for non-violent resistance to the occupation. In this harvest season all across the West Bank there have been many attacks by Israeli settlers on farmers, land and trees. Hundreds of Palestinians have had their homes demolished during the pandemic.



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On this Sunday, may we pray for justice for all in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories, and for all refugees from that land, and may we be inspired to see ways to act to help to fulfil our prayers.

You can find out more, and access information and prayer resources at <http://www.sabeel-kairos.org.uk/category/resources/keep-awake-preach-palestine/>

BULLETIN NOTICE

International Day of Solidarity with Palestinian People

The first Sunday in Advent falls on 29th November, which is also the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. Established by the UN in 1977, this day marks the anniversary of when the UN General Assembly in 1947 issued the plan to partition Palestine into a Jewish state, a Palestinian state, and with special status Jerusalem. Please keep the people of Palestine in your prayers, and find out more about the current situation in the Holy Land from sources such as www.sabeel-kairos.org.uk.

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

Today is the International Day of solidarity with the Palestinian People, marking the day in 1947 when the UN created a partition plan that led to what we see today: the modern state of Israel, the occupied Palestinian territories, and Palestinian refugees existing for decades in their own and other lands. Let us pray for a just and peaceful future for all who live in and belong to the land of Jesus' birth, ministry, death and resurrection.

Loving Father, too often we see people from many backgrounds, who falsely claim that their different religions justify systems of oppression, and their acts of violence. Jesus showed that God's love is for all people. May our own lives reflect God's universal, inclusive love and help to heal humanity. **Lord hear us.**

Merciful Lord, there is a crisis of truth in our world, as some in positions of power pursue power-seeking agendas. May we be guided by your Truth, and awake to the promptings of the Spirit to build God's kingdom. **Lord hear us.**

Let us pray for refugees across our world, that in being welcomed, both they and their hosts will be blessed. **Lord hear us.**

HOMILY NOTES

In Advent we pray and prepare so that Christ will come anew in our lives. In the Gospel today we have been asked to be awake and alert so this can happen. As Christians, the voices we should most attentively listen to and respond to are those that so much of the world ignores: the poorest, the weakest – those who are first in the Kingdom of God.

Today, the International Day of Solidarity with Palestinian People, Palestinian Christians ask us to hear and amplify their voices. Their voices call us to act for justice: justice for all in the Land we call Holy and justice for Palestinian refugees everywhere. Palestinians ask us to recall that we are in the communion of all humanity and injustice anywhere, against anyone, diminishes us all and dehumanises the oppressor as well as the oppressed.



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We are invited not just to hear of Palestinians' suffering and to respond to their call for us to act in solidarity, but we are invited also to hear of their faith, their steadfastness, their hope in what seems hopeless, and their commitment to non-violent action. We then find that Palestinians also encourage us to affirm and deepen our own faith and our response to our circumstances – as well as responding to theirs. We might feel weak before the pandemic and the powers that assail us - but Christ was born under oppression, in weakness and need, and so it is today. As did the Holy Family 2000 years ago, Palestinians today know what it is to be refugees, many displaced in their own occupied land. Such resonances across 2000 years have a clear impact on how Palestinians receive and live the Gospel. Our own faith can be affirmed when we hear Palestinian Christians tell us that their resilience is grounded in faith and hope because in the middle of this long Good Friday in which they are living, they set their eyes on the Resurrection – for them too resurrection is at the end of their way of the cross.

Quoting from Rev Xavier Johnson,

'Palestinian theologian Mitri Rehab reminds us that "Believing that there is something more powerful than the empire [the powers that can control lives and occupy minds, hearts, economies, politics, the media....] is an important and necessary step toward questioning it."

'Each of the lectionary texts for the first Sunday of Advent reminds us that there is something, or better someone, who is more powerful than the empire, God. In each passage God plays a pivotal role in bringing about change and transformation. Whether it is as the One on whom we call in lament to bring justice and end oppression or as the One who gives us gifts and partners with us, even while maturing us, to bring about the Kingdom of God in the world, God is an active and ready partner."

"The Christ came into the world as a brown-skinned, Palestinian-Jew who preached a message of hope that was bigger and grander than even his hearers could imagine: the coming of the kingdom of God. The coming of the kingdom and the reign of God would bring about more than just the "saving of souls." God, in and through Jesus Christ, would radically transform the social order and God would do it in partnership with humanity, despite our faults and failures."

FURTHER RESOURCES & FEEDBACK

If you are able to make use of any of these resources, our Working Group on Palestine and Israel would be delighted to hear from you so that they might share this with friends and contacts in Palestine and to receive any feedback you have. Emails to Callum.Timms@staned.org.uk can be passed to the working group.

Further resources are available at:

- Sermons, Prayers, Children's Resources and Music:
<http://www.sabeel-kairos.org.uk/category/resources/keep-awake-preach-palestine/>
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1fxvrSSFyqgmAWj8oLFRjeK3R_lxKJOHT
- Rifat Kassis, Kairos Palestine, October 2020, (4 minute video)
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1CCHjrjBfu5lffhh7djQxZPIDeqJaz0n-/view>
- Talk by Omar Haramy, a leader in Sabeel, who spoke in a webinar held by the Commission's working group, September 2020. Link to the recording is available on request.
- Letter from Bethlehem clergy, July 2020
<http://www.sabeel-kairos.org.uk/open-letter-from-bethlehem-clergy>



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- Sabeel, Contemporary Way of the Cross. (Available by request)
- Annual communiques of the Holy Land Coordination of the English speaking Bishops:
<https://www.bishopsconference.uk/we-must-not-ignore-the-voice-of-people-in-the-holy-land/>