

ST. MARY'S CATHEDRAL J. & P.

GROUP MINUTES 17 03 2011

Present

David Cross, CAFOD Diocesan Manager, Middlesbrough

(For talk)

Carol Cross

(“ ”)

C. Lyth

(“ ”)

Bernard McCaffrey

(“ ”)

Margaret Stacey

(“ ”)

Teresa Lyth

Laurie Waley

Ted Cox

John Walton

Paul Bowen

Carol Rowntree

Frances Howling

Slawomir Ziemian

Elizabeth Collings

Rev Len Collings

Ann Smith

Apologies

None

Talk

Teresa welcomed David Cross and his wife Carol.

David thanked the group for expediting the parish choice of the CAFOD Connect2 Project. This initiative commenced in 2010 and focuses on small areas in places such as: El Salvador; Brazil; Cambodia; Ethiopia; and Rwanda, the latter being the area the cathedral parishioners would assist.

Each project is supported by approximately 30 – 100 parishes in England and Wales (Rwanda has 100 supporting churches). As a new initiative, it is hoped to provide support over several phases, gravitating towards reciprocal exchanges of individuals between the UK and these third world areas, in future phases. The idea behind this new type of involvement is for the people of the chosen areas to tell their story, identifying their own needs, and responding parishes helping to meet these needs. It would not have the personal interchange experienced with the Peru project, but there would be short newsletters giving highlights of recent events. David distributed an example from January 2011 produced in MUSHA, Rwanda, showing individuals giving witness to their histories and progress.

A slide show followed where statistics and details of the region were described and the plight of the Mushan villagers were related, for example:

- RWANDA has a population of 10, 000,000 people
- It is the newest member of the Commonwealth
- Famous for the film, “Gorillas in the mist”; its forests contain the last 500 mountain gorillas
- 1994 uprising, massacre and genocide
- Has over 1000 hills, tropical forest, fertile soil with main industry farming
- Crops include: coffee, tea and cassava (main crop producing flour used in bread-making, tapioca and alcohol)
- North West of RWANDA is volcanic
- A country struggling with aftermath of its violent past, where people are still suffering.
- Statistics from the genocide of 1994:
 - ❖ 1,000,000 killed in 100 days
 - ❖ 80,000 husbands lost
 - ❖ 75,000 orphaned children
 - ❖ Rape used as a weapon of war – 67% of women raped and left HIV+
 - ❖ 50% of children not able to finish school as a result of trauma and poverty
 - ❖ High levels of HIV resulting in mass trauma
 - ❖ Nature of conflict resulted in killers and survivors living side by side = more trauma

CAFOD began its link to RWANDA in 1994 following the genocide. The focus of the work is still threefold:

1. Justice & Peace
2. Rebuilding Lives
3. Trauma Healing

Emotional first-aid is provided, together with legal advice, support group work and counselling, education, house-building, rebuilding hope, not just putting on bandages. The aim of Project 2 is to use locally-based individuals to address the need, ensuring they are trained in practical, legal, educative and therapeutic subjects.

The village of MUSHA is 35 km from the country's capital, consisting mostly of mud and concrete homes. Main occupation is subsistence farming. The local church harboured people fleeing for their lives, but in the wave of violence following, all were massacred in the genocide; the area is still full of skeletal remains piled high, vivid evidence of the traumatic past. MUSHA is home to many widows following 1994. Some of them gave witness as follows:

ODETTE KAYIRERE

She lost her childhood sweetheart and her husband and went on the run in 1994, never seeing her husband again. She had no means of support for herself and children. With outside help she set up AVENGA EAST – an association for widows and orphans of the genocide. CAFOD has supported AVENGA since 1996; it provides counselling, medical and legal support together with work opportunities.

FEZA

She is 43 and mother of 5 children. She was raped by the rebels and infected with HIV. AVENGA helped her survive and obtain funding from the banks to finance projects to address injustice and begin her life again. Identity cards used to include details of tribal groups which the rebels used to identify victims who were killed on the spot. These cards, after much legal effort, no longer note ethnic distinction.

JULIENNE

She was funded by CAFOD to obtain legal training to obtain justice through the courts. She is now a judge, looks after two of her four

children, together with a baby grandson. Her husband was stopped by the rebels and hacked to death with machetes. She was eventually able to bring his killers to justice.

VERENE

She was beaten and left for dead for refusing to say where her children were hiding. X-rays show her permanently damaged spine. She is in constant pain

BERINA

The mother of five, her husband was killed by a gang of neighbours and his body left outside to rot. She went into hiding with her children and was on the run for many years.

These women wish to share their stories and remind people they are not victims but survivors who want to thank those who, through CAFOD, support them. It is a country with more women than men (56%) as a result of the massacres. They are determined to change things for the better and, with outside help, become independent.

Following the power point presentation there was a question and answer plenary.

Question: Will the aim of sending individuals on reciprocal visits divert funds from the practical help needed in a third-world country?

Answer: It is hoped to build up a rapport, spread the story of MUSHA and encourage villagers to feel equal whilst learning to be independent. It is not a voyeuristic or prurient approach to people wanting to see first-hand suffering. The Daughters of Charity nuns have a website encouraging people to visit and share their skills as teachers, health practitioners and crafts people; they must raise £600 individually and then CAFOD funds the air fare.

Question: What percentage of money is spent on administration?

Answer: CAFOD is a registered charity and does incur costs. For every £1 raised, between 85p and 91p goes to source projects – better than any other registered charity by a long way. Some charities spend 65p on administration costs. Recent re-organisations in CAFOD have resulted in

staff reducing hours and salaries. No large costly campaigns are used; CAFOD mostly relies on catholic communities for support. Occasionally small amounts are received from events such as Comic Relief and CARITAS International.

Question: If MUSHA is the recipient of all monies raised by 100 parishes in England and Wales, is this at the expense of surrounding areas receiving nothing?

Answer: Support is directed at MUSHA but also permeates through the surrounding area and villages.

Question: What feedback to individual parishes is there?

Answer: General newsletters, as per example given, are distributed 3 or 4 times per year to all contributing 100 parishes. There is no vehicle for individual rapport; it will not have the personal exchange experienced with the Peru Project.

Question: What is the breakdown of the 91p in the £1 reaching the project?

Answer: Do not have actual figures to hand, but they can be obtained from CAFOD which keeps all details. The emphasis is in using the indigenous population, to train and educate them to teach others to succeed, to be agents for change. No money is given to Government agencies. CAFOD has guidelines about what links are used and there is a review and monitoring system in place.

The length of time CAFOD remains involved varies; between 3-5 years usually, ordained by need, with an exit strategy in place. Practical help and financial support helps with the following:

- £20 -seeds and tools for farming
- £50 -3 individual trauma counselling sessions
- £250-repairing roofs for widows and orphans
- £1,000- training 5 women as volunteer paralegals to help fight for human rights in the court systems

Teresa thanked David for a very informative talk, after which he, and those referred to in list of attendees, left the meeting.

AGENDA

1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES

Teresa welcomed all to the meeting and noted there were no apologies

2. OPENING PRAYER

Rev. Len led the group in asking Our Lord to bless our endeavours

3. MINUTES OF INAUGRAL MEETING 17 02 2011-03-21

Minutes were accepted. Ann Smith thanked by Ted Cox for producing same. Ted asked if the books suggested by Father Peter had been ordered as referred to in the minutes. **Rev Len** to chase up.

4. RESULT OF BALLOT AND WAY FORWARD

Ted asked how long we should support the two identified causes. Discussion took place re length of time – 1, 2, 3 years? It was mooted by Slawomir that we should support until an identified task was completed, however long that was. It was agreed there would be an annual review for both causes and decisions made accordingly.

Regarding the Catholic Handicap Fellowship, after discussion, it was suggested a speaker be invited to talk to both the parish and J & P Group to explain the work and how the money would be used. Fran reminded the support extended to spiritual matters also; there was a monthly mass held in different parishes and the Cathedral had not hosted one recently. **Teresa** agreed to discuss with Canon Gerry and to contact the Fellowship re speaker and times after agreeing same with Canon.

5. DISPLAYS/NEWSLETTERS/UPDATES

Various options were discussed, it was agreed:

- J & P notice board needed at back of church. **Teresa** to ask permission of Canon Gerry and **Paul Bowen** kindly offered to supply the board.
- Minutes of J & P meeting to be displayed on board – **Ann Smith** to be responsible
- **Ted** to provide a finance report which would be a permanent item on the agenda and would ensure parishioners had permanent access

to fiscal details. To date £658 had been collected in the bowl. Ted had been given £350 from a social evening, but this had been returned on request when an alternative use was identified. Over the past 18 weeks, on average, the bowl realised £36 weekly, £18 for each cause. Over a one year period this would result in £936 per cause. When we supported Peru, the average weekly amount was just under £100. There was an improvement last week when the causes were identified.

Teresa thanked Ted on behalf of the group for the presentations he made at all the masses, explaining the work of the J & P group and identifying the causes to be balloted.

- **Laurie** agreed to access the CAFOD website to register the parish commitment support Project 2 in MUSHA, RWANDA. He will feed back information at next meeting
- **Slawomir** agreed to contact John Duffield who is responsible for the Cathedral website, to ensure the J & P group is incorporated and the minutes can be accessed via the website.
- Vocations for Justice leaflets (Columban Fathers) – These are produced 3 times per year. £20 buys a couple of years' supply. It was agreed these be obtained and displayed on the J & P notice board as suggested by Father Peter Keeling. **Teresa** to discuss with Canon Gerard.

6. OTHER NOMINATED CHARITIES

a. Friends at AHOTOKUROM. Both Teresa and Ann had spoken to Sister Pat, recently visiting Middlesbrough convent. She explained the great need of the people the sisters supported and how little they had to help them. They needed:

- Replacement vehicles for outreach work
- Setting up independent centres where victims of leprosy, children with mental illness reaching adulthood and their families, could be more self-sufficient. The sisters help set the centres up, working to make people as independent as possible.

It was agreed an individual fund raising event to be held sometime later this year, arranged by **Ann Smith**.

b. Paul reminded the meeting that the Peru project received all of the monies raised and the CAFOD project did incur administration costs, albeit small compared to other

charities. He suggested future projects could look at 100% of funds reaching the cause.

7. CAFOD LENTEN CAMPAIGN

Members had been circulated with details and invitations to attend; it was hoped to be a joint venture with a few local J & P groups. The campaign will extend to September 2011. The meeting will take place at 7 pm 07 04 2011 at St Francis' Parish Hall, Canon to be asked by **Teresa** to include details in our bulletin.

8. SISTER IMELDA

She will give a talk on her experiences working with trafficked girls, Roma men, women and children from inner-city and rural areas of Albania. To take place at Christ the King Parish Hall on 06 04 2011 at 7 pm. All encouraged to attend. **Teresa** to ask Canon to include details on church bulletin.

Items **9, 10 and 11** deferred until next meeting. The talk was prolonged and it was difficult to extend the time of the meeting.

12. AOB

- It was suggested the group consider limiting the length of time taken by speakers in future to ensure all items on the agenda were addressed and members were able to stay throughout.
- Ann Smith will be undergoing surgery next week and may not be able to take the minutes of the next meeting. Members to be aware of possible need for alternative minute-taker.

13. Date and time of next meeting: Tuesday 12 04 11 7 pm

14. Rev Len kindly led the meeting in the closing prayer.

Ann Smith

Secretary

