

Justice and Peace - You can make a difference!

***When all the prisoners in a country are crushed underfoot,
When human rights are overridden in defiance of the Most High,
When someone is cheated of justice, does not the Lord see it?***
(Lamentations 3, 34-36)

The "Justice and Peace" group from Our Lady of Peace and Blessed Dominic Barberi parish has chosen the following case from Amnesty International for our prayer and support this month. We hope you can join your prayers with ours and consider writing a letter or sending a fax to the appropriate authority which is listed below.

Rwanda: François-Xavier Byuma, human rights defender and president of the non-governmental organization (NGO) Turengere Abana, is serving a 19-year prison sentence following a grossly unfair trial. The presiding judge at his trial had been accused of rape in a report published by the NGO.

Turengere Abana, which monitors violation of children's rights, had investigated the rape of a 17-year-old girl. It concluded that the man responsible was the judge who presides at a local "gacaca" (*i.e.* community based) court in the Bilyogo district of the capital, Kigali.

On 3 May 2007, François-Xavier Byuma received a summons from the same court. He was charged with receiving firearms training, assaulting a Tutsi woman and "participating in an attack". The trial took place on 13 May.

François-Xavier Byuma's objection to the judge was overruled by the court. Amnesty International was informed that the court prevented François-Xavier Byuma from presenting all his witnesses. He was sentenced on 27 May and his appeal against the verdict was dismissed.

Please write, asking for François-Xavier Byuma's appeal verdict and sentence to be overturned, and that he be given a retrial which complies fully with international fair trial standards.

Send polite appeals to either or both of the following:

Mme. Domitile Mukantaganzwa,
Executive Secretary of the National Service of Gacaca Jurisdictions
National Service of Gacaca Jurisdictions
BP 1874
Kigali
Rwanda

Salutation: Madame la Secrétaire Exécutive/Dear Executive

And/or: His Excellency Mr. Claver Gatete,
Embassy of the Republic of Rwanda
120-122 Seymour Street
London W1H 1NR
Fax: (020) 7724 8642

Salutation: Your Excellency

Optional helpful tips on writing appeals are available at:

<http://www.amnesty.org.uk/content.asp?CategoryID=949>

You can check for updates on the status of previous appeals at: <http://www.amnesty.org.uk/cases>

Thank you!

Your parish Justice and Peace group.

Peace is....

Peace is not a thing to possess, but a way of possessing;
Peace is not a gift to be given, but a way of giving;
Peace is not a topic to teach, but a way of teaching;
Peace is not a theory to learn, but a way of learning;
Peace is not an opinion to hold, but a way of holding;
Peace is not a resolution of strife, but a way of striving;
Peace is not a creed to preach, but a way of preaching;
Peace is not a God to serve, but a way of serving;
Peace is not a question to ask, but a way of seeking;
Peace is not a journey's end, but a way of journeying.



*Richard Skinner; from "Prayers for Peacemakers" edited by Valerie Flesatti,
Published by Kevin Mayhew, 1988*



Catholic Parliamentary Internships 2008-2009:

This scheme will provide eight recently graduated Catholics with an intensive experience of political and social action in a spiritual context. 3 interns will be placed with Christian MPs at Westminster, 1 with a working peer, 2 with Christian MEPs in Brussels, 1 with the Cardinal's Public Affairs Office in Westminster, and 1 with the Catholic Education Service Policy Office. All internships also include spiritual guidance, exploring the Church's involvement in social action, and visits to EU and Westminster institutions and the Vatican. For more information and an application visit: www.catholicchurch.org.uk/internships or see postcards in Advent Room.

Closing date for applications: 3rd March 2008

Blessed Hugh Faringdon Catholic School: great news! The school has received the go ahead for a new Sixth Form building; planned to open in 2009. See blue sheets on notice board in Advent Room for the latest Headteacher's Newsletter to Parents

Sleep Out under the stars for Reading Single Homeless Project!

Be part of a fun event with a serious side, raising funds and awareness by sleeping outside for 1 night. Friday 25th April at Madejski Stadium. See poster and application forms in Advent Room

These sentences actually appeared in church bulletins, or were announced in church services:

"Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale.
It's a chance to get rid of those things
not worth keeping around the house.
Don't forget your husbands."



"For those of you who have
children and don't know it,
we have a nursery downstairs."