



Justice & Peace Scotland

Catholic faith in action

Bishops' Conference of Scotland Report 2025



HIGHLIGHTS OF 2025



JOURNALS FROM JERUSALEM

In January 2025, our CST Engagement Officer, Anne-Marie Clements, accompanied Archbishop Nolan on the annual **Holy Land Coordination** visit to Jerusalem. This visit, which focused on the impact of the war in Gaza, provided a humbling opportunity to express our closeness and solidarity with the Palestinian Christian community by enacting the *Four Ps* which encapsulate the mission of the HLC: Prayer, Presence, Pilgrimage, and Pressure. Social media updates we shared from the trip brought the stories of the people we encountered to a wide audience in real-time. These updates sparked a significant surge in our social media engagement, translating directly into a considerable and sustained growth in our online audience.

Upon returning we launched *Journals From Jerusalem: Stories of the Christians of the Holy Land* to share what we experienced with audiences at home. Anne-Marie has visited schools and parishes in five of the eight Scottish dioceses sharing personal, first-hand witness about the people of the Holy Land and the injustices they encounter. The insight gained from the visit re-enforced our commitment to advocating for a ceasefire in Gaza, an end to the occupation of the West Bank, and a just and lasting peace for all Palestinians and Israelis.



SOCIAL MEDIA GROWTH JAN 2025



Unique content views

18.2K



237%

Total content views

76.9K



339.3%

Content interactions

2.4K



390.3%

Profile visits

4.6K



874.2%



NO TO NUCLEAR WEAPONS

BBC

NEWS

Home | InDepth | Israel-Gaza war | War in Ukraine | Climate | UK | World | Business | Politics

Scotland | Scotland Politics | Scotland Business | Edinburgh, Fife & East | Glasgow & West

NE, Orkney & Shetland | South | Tayside & Central | Alba

More than 100 attend demo at Faslane nuclear base



Our annual **Christian Peace Witness Vigil** at Faslane took on special significance this August, marking the 80th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The ecumenical event, organised by Justice & Peace Scotland, had what we believe was our largest-ever turnout at HMNB Clyde, with almost 150 people in attendance.

We were led in prayer by Archbishop Nolan, by Rt Rev Rosie Frew, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, and by Most Rev Mark Strange, Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church. The vigil renewed our shared Christian commitment to opposing the immorality of nuclear weapons.

A notable achievement was the widespread media coverage secured by our Campaigns, Communications and Events Coordinator, Andrew Smith: radio interviews, articles in various national news outlets, and coverage on the day by BBC Scotland News.



“We are highlighting the futility of trying to achieve peace through weapons of mass destruction. We can only achieve peace by reconciliation and friendship.”

Archbishop Nolan, Faslane Peace Vigil, 2025



HIGHLIGHTS OF 2025



J&P SCOTLAND REBRAND



Throughout 2025 we undertook a comprehensive rebrand of J&P Scotland to create a more consistent and professional identity. We introduced a new logo, distinct brand colours (with purple as our lead colour supplemented by blue and green) and a new font. This fresh look and feel has been rolled out across our social media platforms, newsletters, and promotional materials, ensuring the organisation is consistently recognisable and appears modern and engaging to audiences.

A particularly effective aspect of the rebrand project was updating our banners for greater visibility at events and in photos. We redesigned our flagship banner to be more visible and created two new, message-specific banners to convey our aims clearly at regular events: 'Dignity Not Detention' for our Dungavel solidarity events and 'No To Nuclear Weapons' for our Faslane peace vigils.

Another achievement in this regard has been the developing of a consistent quarterly newsletter, which is shared online and sent to dioceses and supporters, allowing us to share success stories and highlight events, campaigns, and initiatives we invite our network to support.



PEACE AND NON-VIOLENCE



Justice & Peace Scotland joined over 80 organisations to launch the **Stop Trade With Settlements** international campaign in September, calling on governments and corporations to ban trade and investments with illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank. The *Trading With Illegal Settlements* report, which launched the campaign, evidences how investments and trade sustain the settlement economy, despite their illegal status in international law.

Our endorsement of the campaign was informed by our witnessing of the devastating impact of the occupation during the Holy Land Coordination visit. Ending economic complicity in the settlement enterprise is a necessary step towards the realisation of justice and peace for all in the Holy Land.



HUMAN RIGHTS AND SOCIAL JUSTICE



In October, we joined the Church of Scotland and the Scottish Episcopal Church for the **Scotland Demands Better March** in Edinburgh, demanding urgent action on poverty, including fair jobs, investment in essentials, and better social security. The March happened to aptly coincide with the release of Pope Leo XIV's *Dilexi te*, which encourages us to rediscover a practical love for those who are marginalised, vulnerable, or experiencing poverty.

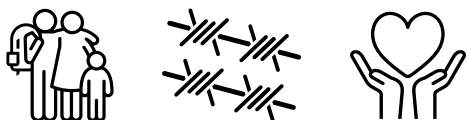
In a year marked by political hostility and division, SDB united thousands of people in a positive public witness calling for a Scotland built on inclusion, solidarity, and a better future for *all* its people.



REFUGEES, ASYLUM, AND MIGRATION



In a joint intervention with the Church of Scotland we lobbied MSPs to honour their commitment to **provide free bus travel for people seeking asylum** ahead of a budget debate in December 2024. In a parliamentary briefing we urged MSPs to resist pitting vulnerable groups against one another, after an opposition motion argued the funds should be redirected towards the Winter Fuel Payment for older people, and to uphold the dignity of those seeking sanctuary. Our message, which highlighted that the Holy Family were once refugees, was referenced by MSPs from four political parties in the Chamber and the opposition motion was defeated. At a later meeting the First Minister, John Swinney, commented that he had rarely seen a intervention have such an impact on colleagues and attributed this influence to the united voice of our two Christian churches.



DIGNITY NOT DETENTION



We continued our regular prayerful witness events at Dungavel Immigration Removal Centre with our **Dignity Not Detention** solidarity gathering in June. Archbishop Nolan led reflections, reminding supporters that the UK is the only country in Europe that holds people in detention indefinitely. We gathered to oppose this inhumane approach and call instead for an asylum and immigration system rooted in compassion and human dignity.



In October, we marked the National Day of Solidarity to End Immigration Detention by partnering with Scottish Detainee Visitors and Glasgow Solidarity Stall for a community advocacy event. Participants reflected on the injustice of detention, shared first-hand stories, and wrote postcards to people currently detained in Dungavel.



CARE FOR CREATION AND CLIMATE JUSTICE



As a member of Stop Climate Chaos Scotland (SCCS), the nation's coalition of over 70 civil society and faith groups taking action on climate change, J&PS has been represented at two major climate justice demonstrations at the Scottish Parliament this year.

In January, we participated in the **Lights, Camera, Climate Action!** gathering on MSPs' first day back after the Winter recess. Following a frustrating 2024 where Scotland's key 2030 climate targets were scrapped, the aim of the creative photo shoot was to inspire politicians to get Scotland's climate progress back on track. Using a mock film set, SCCS members conveyed the message that there can be "no more rewrites, no more delays" in delivering policies for warmer homes, cleaner travel, and good green jobs.

This was followed in September by Scotland's largest-ever mass climate lobby. Timed ahead of the new Climate Change Plan, the event saw over 500 people gather outside the Parliament then meet their MSPs face-to-face to push them to take urgent, just action to protect our common home.

LIGHTS, CAMERA, CLIMATE ACTION



SCOTLAND'S MASS CLIMATE LOBBY



CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING



CARITAS PARISH PROJECT

Our Caritas Parish Project continued to develop in the 2024/25 academic year with Anne-Marie working alongside Caritas Award students and volunteer facilitators in two parishes to respond to an identified justice and peace issue through a programme of gatherings following a Learn - Pray - Act model. This framework enables participants to investigate issues and their relevance in Catholic Social Teaching, then plan and lead responsive activities within their parishes.

At St Joseph's in Blantyre, students focused on the challenges facing refugees, hosting a *Welcome the Stranger* Holy Hour and campaigning for the right to work for people seeking asylum, gathering nearly 300 petition signatures. In Rutherglen, students addressed the issue of human trafficking by hosting a Holy Hour reflecting on the life of St. Josephine Bakhita and running an awareness raising campaign on parish social media.

In the current 2025/26 academic year we are continuing to develop the pilot with the Justice & Peace Group in St. Anthony and St. Mark's delivering the Project independently to test its sustainability without direct staff input. Feedback gathered from this experience will be used to refine and develop the project for the 2026/2027 year.

AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT 2025

Dioceses reached

8

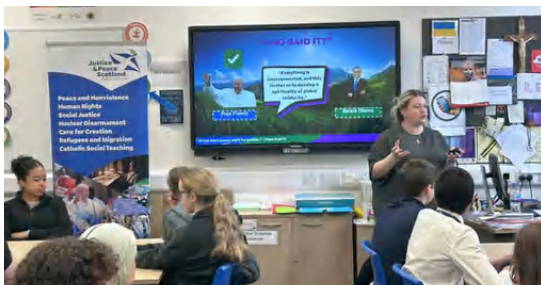
Parishes and groups reached

20+

Schools reached

30+

Note: 'reached' encompasses in-person visits, online events, and deanery or cluster events with multiple schools or parishes present.



We continued visiting parishes, schools, universities and youth ministry groups across Scotland to promote Catholic Social Teaching; including delivering a *CST Workshop Series* in two parishes during Lent, and engaging senior pupils on CST and our work at two *Caritas Formation Programme (CFP)* conferences at Conforti House. A CFP highlight was Archbishop Nolan's Q&A, where he shared his personal experiences from the Holy Land and encountering refugees at Calais with young people. We visited parishes and groups from Melrose to Inverness and presented at key educational conferences, including the CHAS Deputies Conference in May and the Fife Schools Headteachers and Clergy Day in September.

PLANNING AHEAD AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



→ NEXT STEPS ↗

1

JUSTICE & PEACE EUROPE

We will host the J&P Europe General Assembly in Glasgow next September, incorporating a three-day programme with seminars, an opportunity for public witness at Faslane, and time to pray and celebrate Mass together.

2

NEW WEBSITE

The new J&P Scotland website is currently in development and we aim to launch in early 2026.

3

PARISH ACTIONS

To increase awareness of our work among the wider Catholic community in Scotland, we will create prayer and advocacy resources with accompanying CST references to send to parishes on occasions throughout the year.

4

CARITAS PARISH PROJECT

The next stage involves finalising resources and identifying a new parish or volunteers to take part. We will explore connections and initiatives within the Diocese of Motherwell, where the project is being piloted, to support its expansion.

THANK YOUS

Our sincere thanks to the members of the National Justice and Peace Commission for their continued support and to all across the country who promote our work; your commitment to achieving justice and peace for all continues to inspire and advance the mission of Justice & Peace Scotland.

Bishop President:

Archbishop William Nolan

Chairperson:

Jill Kent

Diocesan and Representative Commissioners:

Kenneth Sadler - Diocese of Aberdeen

Marian Pallister - Diocese of Argyll and the Isles and Pax Christi Scotland Representative

Nick Marra - Diocese of Dunkeld

Susan McAllion - Diocese of Dunkeld

Anne McGuire - Diocese of Galloway

Maureen McGuire - Diocese of Galloway

Richard Jackson - Archdiocese of Glasgow

Paul Foley - Diocese of Motherwell

Deacon Brian MacKenzie - Diocese of Paisley

Rosalyn Mauchline - Archdiocese of St Andrew's & Edinburgh

Canon Brian Gowans - Archdiocese of St Andrew's & Edinburgh

Fr David Stewart SJ - Clergy Representative

Grace Buckley - J&P Europe Representative and SFAR Representative

Ben Wilson - SCIAF Representative

Staff Members:

Anne-Marie Clements - Catholic Social Teaching Engagement Officer

Andrew Smith - Campaigns, Communications, and Events Coordinator