



CAAPA NEWSLETTER AUGUST 2021

Dear CaAPA members,

We hope this Newsletter continues to find all our members, your families, friends and loved ones healthy and safe as the restrictions end. And especially for anyone who finds themselves alone: we hope that your faith is giving you the courage and resilience to live with the changing times, and able to keep spirits high despite the challenges. Though summer is passing we still retain a sense of hope!

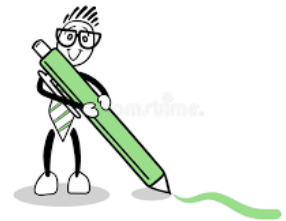
We also always welcome any news that members would like to share.

Are you involved in online projects – theatrical, musical, hobbies?

What are your future professional plans?!

How have you kept yourself busy during the lockdowns? Have you learnt new skills?

Please do write!!



(For this Newsletter we are indebted to Michael Slater; and this would not be the Newsletter it is without the design talents of Nadia Ostacchini!)

We begin by remembering the past members of CaAPA whose anniversaries occur at this time. This includes those who have made an invaluable contribution to the life of our predecessor, **The Catholic Stage Guild**.

MEMORIAL LIST FOR AUGUST

1993 ALAN RYE

1995 MONICA MURRAY, VICE CHAIRMAN

2000 SIR ALEC GUINNESS: C.H. CBE, CAAPA VICE PRESIDENT



Michael Slater remembers:

MONICA MURRAY Although not an actress, Monica had the Guild's interests close to her heart and was a hard-working member of the *Committee* and **Vice Chairman**.

Monica invited my wife **Ann** and the family to lunch at Richmond one Palm Sunday, and after that I joined the **Stage Guild**. She was very interested in travel and would periodically return from one of her trips to give a very interesting talk- I especially remember her talk after she visited **Petra**.

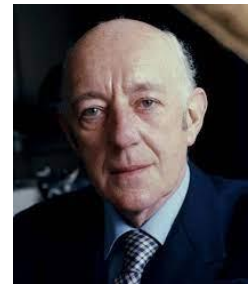


SIR ALEC GUINNESS would always try to support us by attending mass - I remember the '**Station Mass**' celebrated during **Lent** by **Cardinal Hume** at **Corpus Christi**. He left us a wonderful legacy, which has enabled us, for many years, to support and fund **The Sir Alec Guinness Award** for one final year student from the drama schools.



When we received the lovely bequest from Sir Alec it was very difficult to decide how we were to honour his name.

I was at a gathering at the **Theatre Royal Drury Lane** where I met someone who was part of the **Actors' Centre** in **Covent Garden**. He explained that their work was to provide classes, led by leading members of the profession, for those actors that had left drama school.



Having done my **National Service** in **1955** in **Berlin**, where everything was done for you, it was a shock to be back in 'Civvy Street' where I had to think about national insurance etc.

I was lucky to spend a year at **Derby Rep** where I was protected from some of life's rigours.

I was musing on this when I realized that the **Sir Alec Award** should be used for a final year student from an accredited drama school to give them a 'protective wrapper'.

The Award included membership of the **Actors' Centre**, which included free classes: membership of **Equity** and **Spotlight** for a year: a copy of **The Stage newspaper** for a year and a photoshoot. This would give the lucky winner a bundle of vital tools to get them started.

Each year, at a dedicated students' evening, the Award was presented by leading members of the theatre, and to date this has included **Prunella Scales, Dame Eileen Atkins, and Janie Dee**.



Jeremy Rowe writes:

PROFESSIONAL PROJECT



MIKE GANNON and **JEREMY ROWE** are looking round for ways of starting a **not-for-profit Catholic theatre company**. **Actors, script writers, directors and technicians would constitute the paid staff**, but any profits would be ploughed back immediately into the company's activities.

LITTLE AMAL MEETS POPE FRANCIS

This morning, **Little Amal**, the 3.5 metre **puppet** of a nine-year-old **Syrian refugee** girl who is on an 8,000 km journey from the **Syrian border** to **Manchester**, was greeted in the **Vatican** by **Pope Francis**.

Pope Francis has been deeply engaged in the plight of refugees over recent years including many who fled war-torn **Syria** in search of safety. Little Amal was invited to the **Vatican** where the Pope blessed her and wished her well on her journey in search of her mother. **She is an emblem of the millions of displaced refugee children separated from their families**. Embodying the urgent message **"Don't forget about us"**, her journey shines a light on the stories of the refugee children she represents.





Among migrants, says Pope Francis, children like Amal constitute the most vulnerable group, because as they face the life ahead of them, they are invisible and voiceless. Amal invites us to open our eyes and hear their voices, so please come to meet her when she is in Rome."

The Walk, the name given to the long journey of the puppet, consists of more than *100 acts of welcome in 65 villages*, towns and cities. Beginning in the city of **Gaziantep** in south-east **Turkey** on 27 July and ending in **Manchester** on 3 November, *at each stage of her journey she is being welcomed by artistic and cultural events created by and reflective of the communities she visits.*

Addressing Amal as she stood amidst a crowd in **St Peter's Square, Cardinal Michael Czerny, Undersecretary of the Migrants and Refugees section of the Vatican**, said: "Amal is great and beautiful. Meeting her is a pleasure, but she reminds us that encountering asylum seekers and vulnerable migrants in our midst requires more than just looking."

To celebrate the occasion of Amal's arrival, the diocese of **Rome organised a party for hundreds of children from different Roman parishes.**

Little Amal is at the heart of *The Walk*, one of the most ambitious artworks ever created, produced by **Good Chance Theatre (www.goodchance.org.uk)** under the artistic direction of **Amir Nizar Zuabi** and producers **Stephen Daldry, David Lan, Tracey Seaward** and **Naomi Webb**, in association with the **Handspring Puppet Company** (based in Cape Town, South Africa): (www.handspringpuppet.co.za/)

A 70+ page Education & Activity pack and Teachers' Notes in six languages featuring illustrations by Syrian artist **Diala Brisly**. This can be downloaded from *The Walk's* website: www.walkwithamal.org/education/activity-pack/
The Walk brings together celebrated artists, major cultural institutions, community groups and humanitarian organisations as well as municipalities, civic and humanitarian organisations, faith leaders and schools.

For a full list of partners please visit: www.walkwithamal.org/friends/

The Walk website contains a donation page which invites the public to help to fund Amal's journey at £1 per step.

The full programme is available on The Walk's website: www.walkwithamal.org/events/

TWENTY YEARS ON: REFLECTING ON 11 SEPTEMBER ATTACKS

Twenty years ago, a horrific set of terrorist attacks took place in the **United States**, killing and wounding thousands of people.

The attacks and the military response to them by the **US**, the **UK** and other **NATO** member states contributed to a cycle of violence which resulted in immense suffering, death and destruction.

In 2001, the response made by **Quakers** in **Britain** to the attacks included promoting a thoughtful nonviolent approach focused on addressing the root causes of violence. A letter to the UK government at the time stated:

"We are gravely concerned that a military response could magnify the violence. Talk of war is dangerous. Violence in response to violence can only worsen human suffering and increase hatred and fear.

"It is the roots of violence which have to be addressed. It is our experience that these lie in the way our world community is organised."

Oliver Robertson, head of **Witness and Worship** for **Quakers** in **Britain**, said this week, *"Quakers believe in the sanctity of every human life. That leads them to work for nonviolent responses to conflict, and to building a sustainable*





peace. The recent military takeover of Afghanistan by the Taliban forces is a tragic reminder of the need to continue promoting approaches that foster lasting peace and security."

The recent statement on the situation in **Afghanistan** from **Quakers** in **Britain** emphasised that the **UK** has a moral responsibility to help people displaced by the conflict that ensued following the attacks on **11 September 2001**. The statement urged the **UK government** to support the expansion of safe and legal routes for migration, and to offer sanctuary to those who need it.

The terrible events that took place twenty years ago, and the series of conflicts that followed in their aftermath, have left deep scars. Quakers say work must continue to overcome violence through peacebuilding and human development, on which the prospects for a more peaceful and humane future depend.

HAVE YOUR SAY ABOUT THE CHURCH

Russell Pollitt SJ

Last week the Vatican released the preparatory document and a 'handbook' for dioceses as part of the global church's preparation for **the 2023 assembly of the Synod of Bishops**, discussing the theme, **"For a synodal church: communion, participation and mission."**



The document says that **"Pope Francis invites the entire church to reflect on a theme that is decisive for its life and mission: 'It is precisely this path of synodality which God expects of the church of the third millennium.'"**

Synodality is close to the heart of Pope Francis. He believes in a Church that listens, dialogues, works and journeys together collaboratively. The document says that Holy Father wants the whole Church to "journey together" so that Catholics everywhere can **"imagine a different future for the Church and her institutions, in keeping with the mission she has received."**

"The purpose of this synod is intended to inspire people to dream about the church we are called to be, to make people's hopes flourish, to stimulate trust, to bind up wounds, to weave new and deeper relationships, to learn from one another, to build bridges, to enlighten minds, warm hearts, and restore strength to our hands for our common mission," the preparatory document said.

Although **the Synod of Bishops will take place in October 2023**, it will officially start next month, with a process of **listening, dialogue and community discernment in local churches.**

This is why it is important that all Catholics know about this process. The Vatican is inviting the Church everywhere to enter into a listening process. It envisages that in every parish and diocese, people will be able to contribute. Nobody should be excluded. It was specifically pointed out that widespread consultation should be done, no one should be excluded. **"We must personally reach out to the peripheries, to those who have left the church, those who rarely or never practice their faith, those who experience poverty or marginalization, refugees, the**





excluded, the voiceless, etc.," it says. In other words, it is not only diocesan bodies, parish councils and other Church structures that need to be consulted, but every Catholic should have their say.

"The whole Church is called to deal with the weight of a culture imbued with clericalism that she inherits from her history, and with those forms of exercising authority on which the different types of abuse (power, economic, conscience, sexual) are grafted," the document says.

Some of the suggested questions the Vatican ask us to consider are: "To whom does our particular church 'need to listen to'" and "how are the laity, especially young people and women, listened to? What space is there for the voice of minorities, the discarded, and the excluded? Do we identify prejudices and stereotypes that hinder our listening? How do we listen to the social and cultural context in which we live?"

That is now the challenge that lies ahead for all of us: to have our say and shape the future of our Church's communion and mission.

*The handbook or guide for listening and discerning in local Churches can be found [HERE](#)

RECOGNISING CONTRIBUTION OF FAITH COMMUNITIES DURING PANDEMIC

Sep 9th, 2021



Cardinal Vincent Nichols joined other faith leaders at the **Tower of London** to celebrate the contribution of faith communities during the **Covid-19 pandemic**. The interfaith event last Thursday was organised by the **Naz Legacy Foundation**, a UK-based charity with a mission to help young people from minority communities and disadvantaged backgrounds by supporting their education while encouraging positive integration into British society (www.nazlegacy.org/). The evening celebration was the charity's first in-person event since 2019, with young people, Covid heroes and community leaders from across London in attendance.

Cardinal Vincent Nichols was one of the speakers at the event. Addresses were also made by Health Secretary Sajid Javid, Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis, Imam Mahmoud, Senior Imam at the East London Mosque and Sajidah Patel, Director of Operations at the Naz Legacy Foundation.



In his address, Cardinal Vincent spoke about the 'heroic service' given in every community during the pandemic:

"This evening is our opportunity to salute and thank so many people for the steadfast, quiet and, at times, heroic service given in every community in this land during the pandemic which has so shaped our lives. Most of that service has gone unsung. It has been freely given and gratefully received by those in need. It consists in **countless, simple acts of kindness as well as well-coordinated community efforts to alleviate loneliness, to combat stress and fatigue and ensure practical help to so many.**"

The Cardinal also spoke about the **role of faith** in underpinning **service**:

"This evening is also our opportunity to appreciate the role of faith in the lives of so many people in underpinning this service. **I believe there has been an increasing recognition of the role of our faith communities in the long struggle against the pandemic.** Indeed, our communities are also emerging as significant contributors to the ways



in which we meet the challenges of people arriving here from Afghanistan. **Faith in God fashions who we are; it deepens the motivation to serve; it helps us to understand that whatever strength and resources we possess are best used in service.'**

During his speech, **Sajid Javid** said: *"The term "social distancing" was never quite right. I think in many ways we came together in no way that we had seen before ... We've seen the role that **interfaith dialogue** has played in this coming together."*

Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis pointed to our responsibility to those in need: *"An integral part of our responsibility to God is our responsibility to the weak and to the vulnerable."*

Imam Mahmoud spoke about community: *"Building communities is not just about physical proximity, but about fostering connections of the heart."*

Speaking about the response of faith communities during the pandemic, **Sajidah Patel** said: *"There have been beacons of shining light. Communities have come together and shown what it means to be a United Kingdom."*

Jonathan Coote appeared in **Stephen** (about **Stephen Lawrence**) on ITV on Monday 13th September at 9pm. You can watch the series here (Jonathan is in episode *three!*):

www.itv.com/hub/stephen/10a0537a0001

And **Jane Garioni** appeared in an episode of **EastEnders** on Tuesday 14th September at 7.30pm.

You can watch it here: www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/m000zpl6/eastenders-14092021



Congratulations to you both!



FUTURE DATES FOR THE DIARY

.....(fingers crossed there won't be further lockdowns!)

- Wednesday 6 **OCTOBER** 7pm at CAA Covent Garden:
book launch: *Beth* by Julia Scott
- Tuesday 26 **OCTOBER** 7pm at CAA: CaAPA playlets evening:
Action for the Church in Need
- Tuesday 16 **NOVEMBER** 7pm at CAA: CaAPA AGM
- Tuesday 14 **DECEMBER** 7pm at CAA: CaAPA Christmas Dinner



Please do send in any items you have written, or think may be of interest to members, for inclusion

in future Newsletters to: kennethmichaels@hotmail.com

Until next month, may you all remain safe.

God Bless.

Kenneth Michaels
(Hon.Secretary)

@Wearecaapa



www.catholicassociationofperformingarts.org.uk/



Our diverse group of members comprise actors, singers, directors, writers, musicians and other entertainers who share their spiritual values in a creative community.