

# Christian Vegetarian Association UK



## NEWSLETTER

Pentecost - May 2007 - No.4

### Our Threefold Ministry

1. *Of Environment and Health*
2. *Of Animal Rights and Welfare*
3. *Of Discipleship*

### Our Threefold Mission

1. To support and encourage Christian Vegetarians in the United Kingdom.
2. To share with non-vegetarian Christians how a vegetarian diet can add meaning to one's faith, aid one's spirituality, and enhance one's moral life.
3. To show all those with eyes to see that a plant-based way of life represents good, responsible Christian stewardship for all God's Creation.

### Our In-Flight Team:

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*Jerry Howse - Chat Group Manager*  
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### Our Website

[www.christianvegetarian.co.uk](http://www.christianvegetarian.co.uk)

### Our UK Chat-Group

<http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/christveg>

Photograph courtesy of Rodney Hale MSc,  
Chairman of the British Brown Hare Preservation Society.  
[www.brown-hare-preservation.org.uk](http://www.brown-hare-preservation.org.uk)  
"As a teenager I witnessed a hare being shot and injured.  
It cried just like a human baby."

**Alleluia! The Spirit of the Lord has filled the whole world.  
Come let us adore Him, alleluia!**

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**Editorial...** Has 'hot' news always been more interesting than 'good' news? Two thousand years ago the Apostles evacuated the Upper Room when tongues of fire descended upon them, in a way that personal visits from the Risen Lord failed to inspire. Similarly, international government bodies are now beginning to adjust their policies about livestock farming in the light of climate change statistics in ways that the wistful eyes of a condemned animal could never move them. Is Jesus too cool for humans to understand Him? Like water, He is elemental and essential but wet. His love is so obvious and ordinary, sharing it hardly seems worth the effort. If He is the Way, the Truth and the Life, why does He always put the dampener on everything that seems to be happening? The Christian God cannot reasonably (in part or whole) be represented as a consuming fire - it is too far out of character. But as the temperature rises and the flames of thirst spread, our attention catches alight to a quick, dry and flamboyant wit which has been patiently searing at our own boring and lamentable apathy all along. Yes, it's Jesus! And as hell fire and destruction burn their way onto the political agenda again, He regains the status of a popular attraction...

*Eleisha Carol Newman*

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### **Future Publication Dates...**

#### **Harvest Newsletter 2007**

*Final submission date: 11 August 2007*

*Publication: Week beginning 3 Sept. 2007*

*(Harvest Thanksgiving, around 23rd Sept. 2007)*

#### **Advent Newsletter 2007**

*Final submission date: 11 November 2007*

*Publication: Week beginning 26th November 2007*

*(First Sunday of Advent - 2nd December 2007)*

#### **Lenten Newsletter 2008**

*Final submission date: 11 January 2008*

*Publication: Week beginning 28 January 2008*

*(Ash Wednesday: 6th February 2008)*

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Christian Vegetarian Association UK  
Working towards a violence-free world

*Wishing You All A Very Good Summer..*  
*From the CVAUK Team.*

\* Whilst doing the best we can to ensure that the information contained in our 'Newsletter' is accurate, unbiased, and still relevant, we cannot guarantee it. As amateurs giving our time and resources freely to promote what we believe to be important and true, we hope that you will forgive any unintentional errors or omissions, and if you think there are any significant discrepancies of fact, we ask that you please bring them to our attention.

\* It is our policy and preference to obtain permission for quoting information from other sources, and to abide by the terms that they set. We also like to obtain appropriate agreement from those to whom we distribute information before passing it on without charge. We ask that all members respect these policies and, if in any doubt, ask the advice of a member of the CVAUK team.

\* The articles and letters contained herein do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Editor, or of the CVAUK as a whole.

\* As a non-denominational Christian association, the CVAUK Draft Code of Conduct published and referred to in previous Newsletters and documents, is prone to unsought disagreement. Therefore, this Newsletter is necessarily a testing ground for developing the diverse rationales underlying the CVAUK, with a view to attaining her threefold mission and ministry purposes, and equipping our members with the authoritative Theological back-up and other expertise required (1 Thessalonians 5:21).

## *Vegetarian Christians... Identifying Our Patron?*

Last Pentecost, Pope Benedict XVI met with the Ecclesial Movements and New Communities in St Peter's Square. Whilst CVAUK is not a recognized Ecclesial Movement, or even a new community as such, his words also speak to us. "...The world in which we live is the work of the Creator Spirit. Pentecost is not only the origin of the Church and thus in a special way her feast; Pentecost is also a feast of creation." This year, Pentecost Sunday is also the Feast of a less well known saint of the British Isles; St Melangell (27<sup>th</sup> May).

Pope Benedict went on to say that "The world does not exist by itself; it is brought into being by the creative Spirit of God. For this reason Pentecost also mirrors God's wisdom. In its breadth and in the omnicomprehensive logic of its laws, God's wisdom permits us to glimpse something of his Creator Spirit. It elicits reverential awe... Those very people who, as Christians, believe in the Creator Spirit become aware of the fact that we cannot use and abuse the world and matter merely as material for our actions and desires, that we must consider creation a gift that has not been given to us to be destroyed, but to become God's garden, a garden for men and women." The accuracy of historical information about the life of St Melangell is questionable, but a beautiful legend survives along with her shrine and sanctuary, which is consistent with Pope Benedict's Pentecostal words.

Nigel Pennick, who has written a beautiful account of her life, says that "the most potent instance of Celtic harmony with nature is the story of St. Melangell." Her very name may be translated from ancient Christian Latin and original Greek to mean "sweet angel", or "harmonious messenger", and her story is like an echo of a word that comes straight from the heart of God.

Perhaps typical of Celtic heroines, she is thought to have been "the daughter of an Irish king." Although she was called to the Religious Life and became a nun, renouncing her status as princess, her father still ordered her to marry a man of his choice. "To escape this forced marriage, she fled eastward across the Irish Sea" and settled in a small valley with a stream running through it in the Cambrian Mountains of Wales." This valley still bears her name, "Pennant Melangell".

She is known for her powers of Protection, and the fact that her name, legend and the shrine (which contains her grave) have survived for about 1400 years so far, and her valley is still quite remote and unspoilt, seems to bear witness to this. There have been changes; four or five hundred years after her death, her shrine was attached to a Romanesque Church, a single cell (*mona cella*) house for the Cistercian Order who occupied the valley and Cambrian mountains for centuries. This ancient church also survives and is in use today.

Last Pentecost, Pope Benedict XVI said "If we look at history, we see that creation prospered around monasteries... The same thing happened around Francis of Assisi (1181-1226); it has happened everywhere God's Spirit penetrates souls, this Spirit whom our hymn describes as light, love and strength... As to what the Holy Spirit is, what he does and how we can recognise him; He comes to meet us through creation and its beauty... Dear friends, we want to be these children of God for whom creation is waiting, and we can become them because the Lord has made us such in Baptism. Yes, creation and history – they are waiting for us, for men and women who are truly children of God and behave as such." Such was St Melangell.

A fifteenth century author, who took the story from an earlier source, says that a hunt took place in St Melangell's valley in the year 604, fifteen years after she had arrived there. It was led by the prince of Powys, Brochwel Ysgithrog. Whilst his hounds were trying to find the hare they had been chasing, the prince came across St Melangell, praying devoutly amongst some blackberry bushes. The hare was hiding inside the sleeve of her robe, and peeped out at the dogs. When Prince Brochwel commanded the pack to catch the hare, they ran away from St Melangell, and did not attack. This was not what the prince expected, and he asked the woman what her name was, and what she thought she was up to. She must have told him very clearly because Brochwel then acknowledged that her power was holy and that she was "a handmaiden of the true God, and a most sincere worshipper of Christ." The prince then gave her the lands across which his hunt had come, so that other women called to the Religious Life might join her.

The land of Pennant Melangell then became a sanctuary and she its guardian. Apparently she lived a long life, departing this world 37 years after her meeting with Prince Brochwel.

According to Nigel Pennick, whilst she lived in the valley "no animal was killed on her land. The wild animals living there became tame. Humans could claim sanctuary from persecution at Pennant Melangell as well. After her death, St. Melangell became the tutelary saint of hares, and to kill a hare in Melangell's

parish was an act of sacrilege. St. Melangell is recognized today as the Celtic patroness of animals and the natural environment. According to the Celtic Christian philosophy, because the natural environment is the manifestation of God's will on earth, those who destroy it are not only threatening the continuance of all life on earth, but also going counter to the protection and favour of the Creator.” This is the same message that Pope Benedict XVI communicated to the Ecclesial Movements and New Communities last Pentecost.

The incident about the hares may well have some affinity with pre-Christian folklore. They are associated with fecundity, and the cycles of the moon, through a feminine pagan deity whose name has developed into the words “Easter” and “oestrogen”. Conception, birth, lengthening days and nests laden with baby hares and eggs, are part and parcel of the natural season. The hare is therefore representative of all creatures whose existence depends upon a feminine, maternal care and protection, to assure them of fullness of life.

Like so many other creatures who struggle to survive, both in captivity and the wild, the hare is in need of St Melangell's strong protection again today. During the late 1800s the brown hare population reached a peak. There were about 4 million in Britain alone, and gamekeepers have been credited for this due to their thorough extermination of all predators (apart from man). Recent surveys show that the brown hare has since declined by more than 80% during the past 100 years and the decline continues. In some parts of Britain the hare is now either very rare or extinct.

The brown hare (*Lepus europeus*) is far more ancient than St Melangell. Having evolved in Continental Europe, hares probably did not migrate northwards until after Britain was cut off from the mainland by the formation of the English Channel around 7,500 years ago. The Scottish Mountain Hare is our most ancient native species, characteristically changing its colour to white during the snowy Highland winters. The Irish hare, with its shorter ears and changing white patches, is distinct but has evolved with greater similarities to the brown. The brown hare was probably introduced by the Romans around 2,000 years ago – from Asia. Brown hares have longer ears than the Scottish and Irish hares, and black on the upper side of the tail, and have a mottled coat. Modern biochemical evidence suggests the Lagomorphs (the zoological order of hares, rabbits and pikas) have been a distinct lineage for around 90 million years. The dinosaurs became extinct 65 million years ago, and so it seems probable that hare-like creatures loped and hopped about the feet of the giant reptiles for 25 million years (whilst the ancestors of human beings were more rodent than primate, if recognizable at all). The evolution of the Lagomorphs was greatly influenced by the rise to dominance of grasses among the flowering plants of the Oligocene and Miocene periods between 35 and 5 million years ago. Vast tracts of prairie developed in Asia and the Lagomorphs were given opportunity to develop in these advantageous circumstances, having such a rich food supply and plenty of space to stretch their legs.

A lack of gamekeepers cannot be blamed for the recent decline of the brown hare though. Hares still require landscapes rich in biodiversity. Their ancestral homes provided a wide range of grasses and herb species maturing in succession throughout the year. Changes to the landscapes introduced with agriculture in relatively recent times, including traditional hay meadows and crops grown in rotation, provided similar diversity, enabling hares to survive despite man's interference. But 95% of hay meadows have been lost since the Second World War. Hay making has been replaced with silage production because this is more profitable, and is not dependent upon favourable weather. Single species of grass are sown for silage production, and this eliminates biodiversity. Grass for silage is cut with machinery, and this can result in hares being killed by the blades. Baby hares (leverets), lying in their nests (forms), may be easily destroyed in this way. And adult hares may be unable to escape the harvesters if they are hemmed in, and freeze in fright rather than try to escape. The dairy and livestock farming systems which combine with silage production, further contribute to decline in hare populations. The cattle disturb them both deliberately and incidentally, compete with them for food and eat their cover which they need to hide and sleep in. Hares can suffer severely from stress due to the way their parasympathetic nervous system functions; if chased or manhandled, their response can result in collapse of internal organs and death.

Pollution, including crop spraying, also kills hares. Many are also mowed down on the roads. It may be argued that the recently introduced practice of sowing winter crops provides hares with food during the coldest weeks (when they would naturally slow down and hibernate a little) but by the time spring comes and the hares require abundant food to fuel their meeting and spurning activities (so cheering to see), there is then no succulent food to be found. Climate change is also changing breeding patterns, and young are being born

at times of year when they are more vulnerable. Destruction of habitat is a huge factor in their decline. In the last 50 years, 150,000 miles of hedgerow have disappeared, which once provided the biodiversity and shelter that they need. Despite all of the above disadvantages, the surest single killer of the brown hare population is hunting by man, with 40% of the nation's brown hare population killed every year in East Anglia alone. There is no 'close season' for hunting hares - yet. The only law which gives them some relief prevents the flesh of UK hares being served in restaurants for a short period during the traditional spring mating season. Other predators, such as foxes, occasionally take a leveret but their tastes do not account for the 75% which do not survive the first year of life. Hares are nearly as big as a fox, and as the fastest land mammal in the UK, are not their prey.

Pope Benedict XVI said last Pentecost, "A thick layer of dirt has covered God's good creation, which makes it difficult if not impossible to perceive in it the Creator's reflection, although the knowledge of the Creator's existence is reawakened within us ever anew, as it were, spontaneously, at the sight of a sunset over a sea, on an excursion to the mountains or before a flower that has just bloomed. If we want to protect life, then we must above all rediscover the source of life; then life itself must re-emerge in its full beauty and sublimeness; then we must let ourselves be enlivened by the Holy Spirit, the creative source of life.

"The Holy Spirit... makes us sons and daughters of God. He involves us in the same responsibility that God has for His world, for the whole of humanity. He teaches us to look at the world, others and ourselves with God's eyes. We do not do good as slaves who are not free to act otherwise, but we do it because we are personally responsible for the world; because we love truth and goodness, because we love God Himself and therefore, also his creatures. This is the true freedom to which the Holy Spirit wants to lead us."

There is an additional story about St Melangell. At some point in time, a brute named Elise arrived at Pennant Melangell. He attempted to ravish the nuns whose chastity and faith were respected in that remote valley. But God's protection through St Melangell was greater than the destroyer's strength and he came to a sudden and grisly end. This incident may have aroused secular interest and provided occasion for writing the story of St Melangell's life which has survived, and through which we may today know about her.

Attacking God's creatures and His Creation causes atrocious division, whereas salvation unites peoples divided by distance, culture, and time.

"The Holy Spirit, in giving life and freedom, also gives unity. These are three gifts that are inseparable from one another..." Pope Benedict says "let me say a brief word about unity. To understand it, we might find a sentence useful which at first seems rather to distance us from it. Jesus said to Nicodemus, who came to him with his questions by night: "The wind blows where it wills" (Jn 3:8). But the Spirit's will is not arbitrary. It is the will of truth and goodness. Therefore, he does not blow from anywhere, now from one place and then from another; his breath is not wasted but brings us together because the truth unites and love unites..."

"With His breath, the Holy Spirit impels us towards Christ. The Holy Spirit acts corporeally; He does not only act subjectively or 'spiritually'. The Risen Christ said to His disciples, who supposed that they were only seeing a 'spirit': 'It is I myself: touch me, and see; for a spirit has not flesh and bones as you see that I have' (cf Lk 24:39). This applies for the Risen Christ in every period of history. The Risen Christ is not a ghost, He is not merely a spirit, a thought, only an idea. He has remained incarnate – it is the Risen One who took on our flesh – and always continues to build His Body, making us his Body. The Spirit breathes where He wills, and His will is unity embodied, a unity that encounters the world and transforms it."

Today, in the valley of Pennant Melangell, a parish church remains with a small home for the person in charge (currently a Christian vegetarian lady psychiatrist and psychoanalyst ), and a Centre where people seek sanctuary for peace, prayer and inner healing. Archaeologists excavated the cemetery and uncovered the Romansque church in recent years with great care. With scrupulous attention to all relevant details recovered, the shrine where St Melangell's relics were laid to rest has been restored. Her church is once again a pilgrimage centre visited by Christians of all denominations, from near and far, who tread down the narrow, muddy tree-lined path from the small village near by.

"Dear friends, I ask you to collaborate even more, very much more, in the Pope's universal apostolic ministry, opening doors to Christ. This is the Church's best service for men and women and especially for the poor, so that the person's life, a fairer order in society and peaceful coexistence among the nations may find in Christ the cornerstone on which to build the genuine civilization, the civilization of love. The Holy Spirit gives

believers a superior vision of the world, of life, of history, and makes them custodians of the hope that never disappoints.

“Let us pray to God the Father, therefore, through our Lord Jesus Christ, in the grace of the Holy Spirit, so that the celebration of the Solemnity of Pentecost may be like an ardent flame and a blustering wind for Christian life and for the mission of the whole Church. We want the true, great freedom of heirs, the freedom of children of God. In this world, so full of fictitious forms of freedom that destroy the environment and the human being, let us learn true freedom by the power of the Holy Spirit; to build the school of freedom; to show others by our lives that we are free and how beautiful it is to be truly free with the true freedom of God’s children.” (*Pope Benedict XVI, Pentecost 2006.*)

*This item is published with sincere thanks to Pope Benedict XVI, and to D Claudio Rossini sdb, Director, and Francesca Angeletti, of the **Libreria Editrice Vaticana** for permission given to quote in this context words from the Address of Pope Benedict XVI given on Pentecost Sunday 2006 in St Peter’s Square to the Ecclesial Movements and New Communities. The complete address may be viewed on the Vatican website [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va). Reproduction of this text for selling is strictly forbidden, nor may it be reproduced with any modifications or changes made.*

*Sincere thanks are also due to Rodney Hale MSc, Chairman of the **British Brown Hare Preservation Society**, [www.brown-hare-preservation.co.uk](http://www.brown-hare-preservation.co.uk) and to Mike Rendle of **The Irish Hare Initiative**, [www.irishhare.org](http://www.irishhare.org) for permission to use their information.*

*Similar thanks to CVAUK member (Rev) Linda Mary Edwards, of the **church of St Melangell**, [www.st.melangell.org.uk](http://www.st.melangell.org.uk).*

*Also to Don Gwillim and Marian Hussenbux for nominating and seconding St Melangell as our patron saint.*

### **Green Church Awards 2007...**

Paul Handley, Managing Editor of the Church Times ([www.churchtimes.co.uk](http://www.churchtimes.co.uk)) has gathered together a number of Christian organisations which have been hitherto working independently to encourage and assess the ‘green’ effort being made by Christians in the UK. “This is an innovative set of awards to celebrate what churches and individuals have done to help make the planet a place of safety and justice.” There are separate awards of cash prizes being offered in eight different categories: Action with the community; Biodiversity; Campaigning to cut the carbon; Celebrating creation; Changing lifestyles; Energy-saving in church buildings; International action; Young people. There is also an overall award for the ‘best of the best’, which will win an ‘environmental makeover’ for their parish. If the award is successful this year, it will continue on a two-yearly basis which ought to give parishes sufficient time to build on past experience and to introduce new ideas before re-entering the competition. The awards are open to parishes and Christian groups of any and every denomination.

The deadline for applications is 30th June 2007. More information can be found on [www.greenchurchawards.org](http://www.greenchurchawards.org).

If you decide to enter your parish for this award, please make a note of the ways it succeeds and in which it may fail to address the concerns of Christian vegetarians. If CVAUK can put together a credible pilot scheme to assess parishes in the United Kingdom in 2008, we may be included on the Green Church Awards billing for 2009 with a separate Award and evaluation system for greening the Church with vegetarianism.

### **Don Gwillim’s Lent Campaign - to the Anglican Bishops...**

Of 62 letters mailed out for Lent with a quick and easy questionnaire, (refer to copies circulated with the Lenten Newsletter) only 4 were initially responded to:

#### **1. The Archbishop of York**

Thank you for your letter of 1 March 2007. I cannot but disagree with "editors of the World Watch Institute" whom you quote as concluding that "the human appetite for animal flesh is a driving force behind virtually every major category of environmental damage ..." While I myself adopt a vegan diet during Lent, I cannot agree that the various resolutions you cite in your letter support your argument. What they do support, and what we can agree on, is a simpler lifestyle. With my prayers

#### **2. The Bishop of Thetford**

Dear Administrator, Thank you for your letter of 1 March addressed to the Bishop of Norwich. He is away on study leave for a few weeks, so I am replying briefly on his behalf. I thought you might like to see our diocesan Environmental Policy, which builds on many of the references which you quote, and also summarises the Church of England Report Sharing God's Planet. We adopted this a year ago at our Diocesan Synod, and each parish and committee and church school is now working towards implementing this. I hope you will find this encouraging. With all good wishes for your work, Yours sincerely,

#### **3. The Bishop of Guildford**

**Caring for God's Creation** Thank you for your recent letter to the Bishop of Guildford concerning Caring for God's Creation, to which I am responding on his behalf. There is no doubt that we all have a responsibility to care for God's creation, but there are differing opinions on how this should be undertaken. Yours sincerely.

**4. The Bishop of Carlisle. Returned questionnaire.** He answered ‘yes’ to general creation questions A1 (Lambeth Resolutions 1.8 and 1.9) to B1 (parishioners’ reducing impact on environment) but no to Veg4Lent questions B2 (parishioners’ embracing vegetarian diet for Lent) & C (would you embrace a vegetarian diet for Lent?), with comment: “The vegetarian option is only one of many”.

***Don Gwillim's CVAUK Campaign to the Anglican Bishops - Lent 2007 - continued...***

**CVAUK followed up the campaign with a further letter to all Anglican Bishops, with the first paragraph adapted for those who had already replied to the first:**

Your Grace,

***Request for Your Support Please***

On the 1st March, the Christian Vegetarian Association, as part of their Veg4Lent 2007 campaign, sent you a letter and Questionnaire. The letter introduced and substantiated various theological insights regarding a Christian's responsibility towards God's creation and showed how a vegetarian diet is now recognised as a major factor in reversing adverse climate change. We asked for your opinion and support and to assist you, enclosed a very easy questionnaire.

The Bishops who kindly replied confirmed our concern that vegetarianism is still a contentious issue within the church. The World Watch Institute's conclusion that '*the human appetite for animal flesh is a driving force behind virtually every category of environmental damage now threatening the human race*', supported CVAUK's desire to promote vegetarianism within the church. This conclusion was however, either rejected or ignored by your silence and vegetarianism casually dismissed as irrelevant or as only one of many options.

The World Watch Institute's conclusions were verified in November 2006 by the **United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation report 'Livestock's Long Shadow'** which concludes that '*The livestock sector emerges as one of the top two or three most significant contributors to the most serious environmental problems, at every scale from local to global. The findings of this report suggest that it should be a major policy focus when dealing with problems of land degradation, climate change and air pollution, water shortage and water pollution, and loss of biodiversity. Livestock's contribution to environmental problems is on a massive scale and its potential contribution to their solution is equally large. The impact is so significant that it needs to be addressed with urgency.*'

CVAUK maintain that when considering wise Christian stewardship of the animal kingdom, eating becomes a morally and spiritually significant act which has far reaching implications as to the integrity of creation as a whole. Being made in God's image is a privilege but it comes with certain duties and obligations that as good stewards our behaviour should, as far as is humanly possible, benefit the whole of God's creation, not just mankind.

CVAUK's letter dated 1st March, was primarily designed to encourage you to research our claims for yourself and to come to conclusions that made sense to you, so that you could decide whether the version of discipleship that we are advocating is one of integrity or self deception. CVAUK was established to support Christian vegetarians and encourage secular vegetarians seeking spiritual guidance. Whilst also wishing to help non-vegetarian church-goers to adopt a compassionate diet, it becomes doubly hard to proclaim Christian compassion and mercy when our church leaders fail to support Christians who oppose those industries which systematically, wilfully and wantonly degrade the quality and integrity of God's creation.

Matthew C. Halteman, Christian Philosopher, puts it this way: *Far from being a trivial matter of personal preference, the question of how we choose to eat cuts to the very heart of our calling to be good stewards of God's creation. If it is the renewal of creation (rather than its unmaking) that we profess to serve, we as Christians must address ourselves with more honesty and conviction to the ethics of eating.*

Please consider supporting the efforts of CVAUK by endorsing a vegetarian diet as both a logical and acceptable Christian response to the care of God's creation. If however, you are still unable to accept the authoritative reports and exegesis contained in this and our previous letter, we would be grateful if you could explain why, so that we may try to understand your position.

Yours in Christ, Don Gwillim - Administrator CVAUK

***May We Suggest....***

***1 Timothy 4:1-5 (continued from the Lenten 2007 Newsletter)...***

We need to use our reason to see beyond a pro-meat and pro-promiscuity interpretation of this text. It tends to be used unreasonably, in attack of Christian abstinence and continence by those with hedonistic tendencies. We can be browbeaten into questioning whether we Christian vegetarians are lacking fidelity and practicing cruelty, by wishing to deprive essential pleasure and satisfaction to less pernickety people who have displaced all moral considerations with their appetites. Our second defence (having reassured ourselves that we believe our Creed) is to be reminded that God feeds us first and foremost on His Word, which is Love. To digest this properly we must receive it properly (like interpreting like) with Love. We do not first grab the body to satisfy desire, and then come to Love afterwards. We love first, and then treat the body as Love directs. God is Love, His body is essentially Love, and to receive Love is to receive His body. That is why, in the Christian Liturgy, the Word of God is listened to first. Only afterwards ought communicants (whose state of life is an unequivocal demonstration of the Word's meaning) offer themselves up as a 'sign' for the people by receiving holy communion. If food is prepared for us in accordance with the Word of God, the Law of Love must permit us to eat it. If it is holy, it is benign, whether consumed by the ears, the eyes or the belly. *May we suggest that this is the point that St Paul was trying to make to Timothy...*

## ***Stark Realities...***

A layer of 'greenhouse' gases naturally insulates the planet, keeping it about 33 degrees centigrade warmer than it would be otherwise. Our units of measuring global temperature appear to be small, but slight numerical increases have a big effect in reality. There has been only a 1 degree centigrade increase in global temperatures since the end of the 'little ice age' when water bodies iced over significantly during winters. (By weird coincidence, the little ice age roughly correlates with the period of the Church's suppression during the years of the Reformation until Catholic emancipation; 1550 to 1850.) Global temperatures have only risen by between 3 and 6 degrees centigrade since the last major ice age, 10,000 years ago (more than 8,000 years before the setting of the earliest Old Testament stories). In contrast, 75 million years ago the earth's average temperature was only 10 degrees centigrade higher than today, and some life forms did survive the experience. Whether mankind is to blame, or this is part of a natural cycle, it would be useful if we could learn to keep global temperatures at an optimum level.

It may be Good News for Life that the earth is warming up rather than cooling down, because crops and other plants may be cultivated over a wider area. However, rising sea levels and spread of diseases which have until recently been confined to the tropics, will increase causes of premature and unnatural death – which is supposed to be a matter of grave concern to our governments. The UK's Environment Agency is taking the matter seriously, but is encountering severe difficulties in communicating the problem to the general public, as it is bound to do. The difficulty is compounded with the restriction that they are not allowed to frighten people. Defining the environment as 'The Air [We] Breathe, The Water [We] Drink, and the Ground [We] Walk On' (© March 2006, waterwise), it now seems resigned to the fact that whilst it may be possible to maintain the preconditions for life's existence, the quality of life in England is set to decline, perhaps to the levels of domestic space and service provision experienced in medieval times. Our environment and the species that live therein, and the way we all live together, will undergo a transformation.

Not all essential gases in the air we breathe compound the greenhouse effect: nitrogen and oxygen do not insulate. However, most of the other naturally and anthropogenically occurring gases in our atmosphere do: water vapour (not including clouds) contributes 36-70% of the green house gas effect; carbon dioxide contributes 9-26%, methane 4-9%, and ozone 3-7%, and nitrous oxide in smaller but potent quantity too. There are also chemicals which only occur artificially, and these are probably innumerable, although mainly sulphur hexafluoride, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, and chlorofluorocarbons. Some can both break down needed ozone molecules, and raise radiation levels: CFC-11, CFC-12, CFC-13, CFC-113, CFC-114, CFC-115, carbon tetrachloride, methyl chloroform, HCFC-141b, HCFC-142b, Halon-1211, Halon-1301. Other names which turn up include tetrafluoromethane (carbon tetrafluoride), hexafluoroethane, sulphur hexafluoride, HFC-23x-trifluoroethane, and HFC-134ax-tetrafluoroethane, and HFC-152ax-1,1-Difluoroethane. If you read any of these on the side of a canister, fridge or fire extinguisher, watch out! They ought not be released into the environment and ought to be recycled under very careful factory or laboratory conditions.

It is possible that steam produced by industry, and through domestic use, does accumulate dangerously in our environment; it must go somewhere and it doesn't all form condensation on windows. Whilst it is tempting to ignore its presence in the atmosphere as harmless, there must be sensible measures that we can take to reduce the water vapour content in greenhouse gases. For example, foods that require shorter cooking times could be chosen, and pure water drunk instead of brewed and processed beverages. Steam could be collected from kettles and cooking pots in especially designed lids; when cool it could then be re-used as water.

Carbon dioxide is unnoticeable to the human senses, being a colourless, odourless and non-flammable gas. But it now exists in very large quantity due to human activities. Burning fossil fuels, deforestation for timber, pulp, fuel and clearing land for grazing livestock mean that stored and newly created carbon is being abundantly released, whilst the natural method of recycling (photosynthesis) and sinking carbon (growth of trees and woodlands) is not being done.

Methane is also unnoticeable, being colourless and odourless, but it does burn. It is formed by ruminant animals, and when plants decay in thin, stagnant air, such as over sheltered marshlands. Since 1750 the quantity of methane in the air has doubled, and this could happen again by 2050, given present trends. Livestock farming, rice paddies, coal mining and fossil fuel drilling, as well as emissions from landfill sites, increases its potency. Once released, it remains in the atmosphere only 10 years, but it traps 20 times more heat than carbon dioxide.

Nitrous Oxide is colourless, but you would notice it if you breathed it in. It has a sweet odour, and is otherwise known as 'laughing gas', having a medical use as an anaesthetic, but it is no joke. Oceans and bacteria in soils do release it naturally, but its quantity in the air has risen by more than 15% since 1750 which is due to its artificial manufacture. Nitrogen based fertilizers currently release between 7 to 13 billion tons into the atmosphere each year, as a quick fix for unsustainable farming practices; treatment of human and animal waste in sewage works and vehicle emissions, also contribute to its prevalence. Once in the air it remains trapped there for 100 years, and it is thought to have an incredible 296 times the effect of carbon dioxide as a greenhouse gas. Manufacturing it has its dangers because it can spontaneously combust in a big way; whole neighbourhoods have been razed when factories have been just a little careless. It is used in combustion engines and rocket ships to boost speed, and the component materials are widely available through agricultural uses for terrorists to manufacture into devastating amateur explosives. It is also used as a food additive (E942), especially in artificial whipped cream and spray oil canisters, but also in crisps and other packet snacks. It may be labelled as suitable for Vegans and vegetarians because it does not contain any animal products, but it is not really suitable for anyone because it immobilizes the body's ability to absorb necessary vitamin B12 and may be a cause of problem behaviour in children. What might happen to the earth if a blazing meteor made contact with a pocket of Nitrous Oxide as its course clipped our planet's atmosphere? Refer to Apocalypse (Rev.6:12-17). God is kind; we might not feel a thing and all die together in tears of laughter!.

*With thanks to Wikipedia, and other freely available websites, for providing much of this information.*

## ***Facing Up To The Facts...***

It is not 'normal' to eat meat, nor for British farmland to be turned over to livestock rearing. The intensive meat industry is now centred around huge integrated breeding, slaughtering, and rendering plants (called CAFOs). On a global scale, 43% of the beef eaten now comes from these intensive units. China alone (which until recently had a predominantly if not totally plant based diet) now has over 14,000 such units (Nierenberg, D. [2005] *Happier Meals - World Watch Institute*), and grain consumption has increased fivefold there as a result of this.

In 2002, over 800 million animals were slaughtered for food in the UK, 99% of these being raised in intensive factory farm units (Gold, M.[2004] *The benefits of eating less meat. CIWF Trust*).

If a meat eater ever tries to justify eugenics to you on the grounds of over-population of human beings, do try to explain that between 1950 and 1994, global meat production increased four-fold, which is far greater than the human population increase (Leckie, S. - [www.idrc.ca/en/ev-30610-201-1-DO\\_TOPIC.html](http://www.idrc.ca/en/ev-30610-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html)). It doubled in the 1970s (Nierenberg, D. [2005] *Happier Meals - World Watch Institute*) and is set to double again by 2020 (Walker and Gold [2005] *Public Health Implications of Meat Production and Consumption. Public Health Nutrition 8[4], 348 -356*). Animals bred to feed people now outnumber people by 3:1.

In contrast, since 1970, 30% of English apple orchards were grubbed up; there once being 2,300 varieties only a few of which are now found on shop shelves (eg. coxes, bramleys, russets). The British previously grew their own apples and ate them when fresh. We now require Government education programmes and policies to encourage people to eat 5 portions of veg a day, because the British population do not have healthy food around them and do not seem to know what to eat.

Countries which have suffered an Industrial Revolution now feed over 60% of available grain to livestock, whereas people in industrially undeveloped lands retain higher direct consumption of grains and are healthier as a result. Do remember, that the Industrial Revolution in Britain was made possible by acts of inclosure, whereby peasants were evicted without recompense from their homes, and common lands were privatised, to make room for lucrative new strains of selectively bred sheep which produced more wool, and heavier meat. The dispossessed people, of all age groups, were then exploited as cheap 'labour' for textiles manufacturing in the urban areas which rapidly became unsanitary cities, built either for profit or the profiteers' prestige.

Current Research Documents: "The Global Benefits of Eating Less Meat", Mark Gold, ([www.ciwf.org.uk](http://www.ciwf.org.uk) - free);  
"How Meat Centred Eating Patterns Affect Food Security and the Environment", Stephen Leckie, International Development Research Centre free books ([www.idrc.ca/en/ev...](http://www.idrc.ca/en/ev...)).  
"Happier Meals - Rethinking the Global Meat Industry", D. Nierenberg [www.worldwatch.org/publications/papers](http://www.worldwatch.org/publications/papers) - not free).  
"Public Health Implications of Meat Production and Consumption", P Walker et al, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, Baltimore, USA. ([www.jhsph.edu/](http://www.jhsph.edu/)). "Livestock's Long Shadow", Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations Report, November 2006 ([www.fao.org](http://www.fao.org) - not free).

*Thank you to Isle of Wight Vegetarians and Vegans group ([www.MCLveganway.org.uk](http://www.MCLveganway.org.uk))*

## ***Keep In Touch...***

### **Up-Date On "Sheep Drive" and London Architecture Week...**

This event has proven to have been the fruit of woolly thinking, and not that of the sheep. Firstly, 'Architecture Week' is organised by the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), occurs every year, and on a national scale. There are events organized in every region to raise the public's awareness of the value of good architecture, and its place in our environment and society. This year it occurs between 15th and 24th June, and may coincide with Schools of Architecture end of year exhibitions (which are also open to the general public). Last year, and two years previously, The London RIBA organisers decided to team up with other groups who wished to raise awareness and funds for charity around the same time. It was thought that driving animals across the bridge, as in days of old, would help people appreciate the significance of architecture in the form of 'bridges'. There was one 'London Bridge' (of undeniable importance) until quite recently. History, its foundations, and the emotive practices of the past, are not as predictable as the concrete and steel deep piles which underpin the modern bridge across which the sheep were driven.

The reaction of animal rights protesters surprised those involved. The 'London Architecture Week' theme for this year, 2007, is "How Green Is Your Space?" and it is concentrating on sustainability issues, which are recognized by the profession as quite important and urgent - needless to say given the laws and so forth that are now in place, as well as the extensive, long-term knowledge and interests of many practitioners. Their website is [www.architectureweek.org](http://www.architectureweek.org), and events will be added to this as the week approaches. You may wish to see what architecture is about today, and take any opportunity offered to peaceably have your say about how 'good' design includes the wellbeing of other species. If you know of any architecture which promotes animal-friendly values, you could even organize an Architecture Week event - get in touch with me if you would like to share ideas.

Secondly, there is another celebration of Art (which includes Architecture) which occurs only in London, and every two years. This one is called the "London Biennale". They too have a website, upon which information for the 2008 events will be posted. [www.londonbiennale.org.uk](http://www.londonbiennale.org.uk). All artists are welcome to participate appropriately and positively to this.

I would like to thank the RIBA National Press Officer, and Peter Murray of the London Building Design Centre, for explaining the situation to me more clearly. You may like to keep your eyes open for any animals in the City being driven too far, but it is unlikely there will ever again be anything like a RIBA cattle or sheep drive over a London bridge. **Editor**

## Chickens are people too By Tracy Gwillim



*Rodney a Silkie Bantam Chicken*

**The humble chicken** is not very high up the list of animals that we humans care about. After all, their brains are so very tiny that they are not very intelligent, are they? They don't live long, do they? It is not like they have family values or anything, is it? As long as they are kept free range, then that's as far as we need go in worrying about them, isn't it?

WRONG, WRONG and WRONG! I LOVE chickens! Although we do not have any now, my family kept them in our garden for over 18 years. No, we didn't eat them when their eggs became few and far between. They died either of old age, through illness, or a daytime fox attack. They are all buried in the garden.

Old-fashioned hens can live well into their teens. They become broody and will rear their chicks. Sadly the new breeds of hybrids die much earlier. They rarely go broody they just keep laying eggs. They die through diseases caused by this excessive egg laying. We lovely humans have genetically modified them so that they lay so many eggs that their poor bodies pack up under the strain placed upon it. Farmers cull laying hens after the first year of laying and the hens go into the food industry. This is so the eggs are all the same size. Older hens lay fewer but bigger eggs.

As for intelligence, well Ok, they may not conform to our blinkered idea of what is clever but they are far from daft. Whenever we had a bonfire, the girls would all lay on their sides, usually with one wing up, warming their bodies in sheer bliss. If they wandered into the kitchen, they were bright and bold enough to chase the dogs off of their food bowls and then proceed to eat their lunch. If they were stuck indoors for too long due to inclement weather (hens hate rain), they became depressed. Just the same as us, don't you think?

They formed tight friendships in the flock, often having a 'best friend', and usually 2 friends would always do everything together. Yes they could be bullies at times but that is no different from us either. One of our most endearing cockerels, Rodney, actually tried to 'steal' clutches of eggs so he could brood them. He also took on a very active role as a father, his son Rupert, was very similar to him. Rodney adored a cuddle, and would actually fall asleep in your arms. Rupert was a bit more of a drama queen, he adored his mother though, and was always with her. The two boys always loved each other and never fought once.

All our flocks loved a clean house; they hated soiled bedding or perches and detested mud. They loved good food, especially pasta. They enjoyed each other's company and the company of other animals and even people. They simply adored sunbathing on warm summer days and had a lay in on cold winter mornings. I don't know about you, but I think I have a lot in common with them!

Yet, they are one of the most terribly treated animals in history. Slaughtered in their millions, imprisoned for ease of egg collection. Their rights are ignored by most, and even chicken fanciers have little regard for their feelings. They are so disposable, just get as many eggs or chicks from them and once they are past their best (in our eyes), bung them in the freezer for lunch.

I think our Lord loves the humble chicken. He likened himself to a mother hen, gathering her chicks under her wings to protect them (Matt 23:37, Lk 13:34). Dreadful diseases like bird flu; Newcastle disease and salmonella are rife because we treat our Lord's chickens as a product rather than a personality.

**Next time you are lucky enough to see a flock of free range or garden chickens, take a few minutes to study them. You will see how vibrant and social they can be. May God bless the humble hen. I, for one, would like to say "I am truly sorry for our treatment of you and your kind".**

### **CVAUK Annual General Meeting**

**Saturday 18th Aug. from 2 pm. - St Stephen's House, 16 Marston Street, OXFORD OX4 1JX.**

**All CVAUK members are welcome.**

If there are any matters that members would like to be raised and discussed, future plans for CVAUK, or questions you would like to ask, please inform Don Gwillim by the 28th July to ensure inclusion on the agenda.

### **Inaugural Conference of The Interreligious Fellowship for Animals (IRFA)**

**On Saturday 16th June from 1.30 pm. to 5 pm. - Friends' House, Euston Road, London (opp. Euston Station)**

**Speakers from all the main faiths, including Fr John Ryder, for Christianity.**

## **The Animal Welfare Act 2006 – Is Now In Force**

Our Patron Deborah Jones (CCA General Secretary and Editor of the Ark Journal), says that “It is a good step, but not far enough!” Deborah contributed to its drafting, along with members of many other Animal Welfare groups kept on the animal legislation consultation list of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (defra).

It mainly concerns ‘Companion Animals’ which are all those species of animals which are kept by man for companionship and are often referred to as pets, and thereby ‘protected’. Unprotected animals, which are usually game to hunters and fishermen, remain unprotected. The act defines ‘animal’ as referring to any living vertebrate creature, although this may be extended if scientific evidence shows that other creatures are also capable of experiencing pain and suffering; some parts of the Law do apply to all animals. Farm animals are included, but the Law does not actually exceed existing EU livestock legislation in any remarkable way. The Act actually brings pet animals in line with livestock’s existing standards of protection. Laboratory animals, although species which are normally domesticated in the British Isles, are exempt because another set of legislation applies to their circumstances.

The Act increases the legal duties of animal owners, those whom the owners place in charge of their animals, and the guardians of animal owners who are under 16 years of age. Children under 16 are not now allowed to purchase pets, nor be given them as prizes if unaccompanied by a responsible adult. No animals whatsoever may be used in fights. Breaches in the Law may be responded to with an Improvement Notice, or Criminal proceedings. Where criminal offence is proven, punishment may extend to 51 weeks in prison, a fine of £20,000, and never being permitted to own animals again. Within the limitations of given economic structures and values, kindness to animals is now the Law

Companion animals must be (i) provided with a suitable environment, (ii) housed with or apart from other animals as appropriate, and where they may (iii) exhibit the normal animal behaviour patterns for their species. They must be (iv) protected from pain, injury, suffering and disease, and (v) provided with a suitable diet. Pet owners are encouraged to join clubs and societies which specialise in the care of their particular kind of animal, in order to learn what is appropriate and how the Act affects them. For example, a nutritionally balanced homemade vegetarian meal for a dog may be fine if it keeps the animal healthy, whereas commercially produced dog food purchased for convenience may result in prosecution if it poisons the pet. Owning animals may become prohibitively expensive for many.

There are many codes already designed to assist animal owners with their duty to care for them. For example, the Farm Animal Welfare Council have a ‘framework’ for the care of sheep called the ‘Five Freedoms’, as guidance for those who find the wording of legal documents uninspiring of care. 1) Freedom from hunger and thirst – by ready access to fresh water, and a diet to maintain full health and vigour. 2) Freedom from discomfort – by providing an appropriate environment including shelter and comfortable resting area. 3) Freedom from pain, injury and disease – by prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment. 4) Freedom to express normal behaviour – by providing sufficient space, proper facilities and company of animals of its own kind. 5) Freedom from fear and distress – by ensuring conditions and treatment to avoid mental suffering. Sheep farmers who choose to abide by the Five Freedoms demonstrate good will towards their animals which stands in their favour should they be subject to prosecution proceedings. Bear in mind though that the Law which the Five Freedoms encapsulate states that the owner of an animal must kill it in some situations, or they fail in their duty to care. The owners must practise, in support of the Five Freedoms, a) caring and responsible planning and management, b) skilled, knowledgeable and conscientious stockmanship, c) appropriate environmental design (for example of the husbandry system), d) considerate handling and transport, and e) humane slaughter. Life is not held sacred; cruelties observed in nature may be seen as ‘kind’.

Junior environment minister Barry Gardiner has called the Animal Welfare Act 2006 “the most significant reform of animal welfare legislation for a century and said it would help stop suffering before it occurred”. It will not make much difference to most animals, but animal legislators have a more comprehensive document to help them close their files.

### ***Getting To The Root of the Problem...***

All CVAUK members believe that eating meat is morally wrong, and some even dare to call it murder (a mortal sin). It is true that meat can only be served to people as food if a healthy animal is deliberately killed for the purpose of eating their body. If it were a human that were subject to this treatment there would be no doubt that each killing was the most savage and brutal act of murder, however painless the death may be made for the victim. Whether called murder or not, it is a phenomenon commonplace in our society which we struggle to understand. We often concentrate our attention on the indirect victims, including the perpetrators, who suffer the health, environmental, economic, fiscal repercussions etc. These arguments do convince people, but are not reversing escalating trends. Whatever we might choose to call the type of hurt caused to the direct victim/s, we do not yet seem to have a fitting handle to grasp when naming the ‘social collusion’ that perpetuates and increasingly systematizes the problem. But perhaps Teachers and parents amongst us may recognize the pattern in the following examination of conscience which may help....

- 1) Have you ever desired to eat meat? (Desired to harm an animal?)
- 2) Have you killed, or paid (or otherwise encouraged) someone else to kill an animal for you, so that you, or someone else, can eat meat? (Actually harmed an animal?)
- 3) In what way do you consider yourself, or those with whom you colluded in this action, to have been superior to the animal whom you killed? (In what ways was the animal less competent or powerful than yourself?)
- 4) Did the animal do anything offensive that meant to you that it deserved to be treated in this way? (What qualities of life and relationships possessed by the animal were terminated with their death, and to what extent do you consider this to be unjust?)
- 5) Since the first time you desired and ate meat, have you repeated the action? (Have you been motivated to repeat the action by encouraging others to join in with you and to do the same?)

### ***Getting To The Root Of The Problem continued...***

6) Have you obtained any enjoyment or satisfaction as a result of desiring, killing and eating meat? (What is it that you desire and enjoy about the taste of killing an animal and eating their meat that makes you want to do it again, and again, and again...?)

If this line of questioning fits the problem, Adam and Eve probably set the mould for human beings to be a bunch of what our society today calls “bullies”. How are we Christians to tackle that? A few ideas follow...

- a) Not serving up meat in schools and community refectories which are committed to reduce bullying – because the livestock-animal/meat-eater relationship is a bullying one which underpins and reinforces the patterns which they profess to oppose.
- b) Without undermining their innate human dignity, openly question the respect shown to people whom society tends to respect because of their trade or consequential financial status, when this is party to the act of providing animals for people to eat. Help them to feel their shame, and inspire them to take up a new career. Show them how they can make some amends.
- c) Calmly reprimand teasing and provocative behaviours directed against animals and those who care about them, wherever possible, and try to make sense of grey areas in your understanding of relationships and behaviours if you are not certain whether they are just or not.
- d) Don't use the names or qualities of animals as a form of abuse, and try to prevent other people from doing so.
- e) Gently expose the hidden existence of livestock animals and their God-given appeal (especially where they may only be thought of as dead; meat), so that they are not kept out of sight and out of mind.
- f) Don't act violently towards animals in any way, do not pay or otherwise encourage or allow another to do so for you, and when you come across those who do use violence against animals, ask them kindly to please stop it.
- g) Voluntarily include farmed, wild and hunted animals within our perceived circle of protected animals (in whatever ways we can) so that they may all one day become universally and legally recognized as pets.
- h) Prudently raise awareness within our society about the distinctions between natural amorous and breeding behaviours in animals to perpetuate their species, and artificial practices which are an expression of man's desire to hurt, oppress, and ultimately kill them and their progeny, for the satisfaction of unjust human desires.
- i) Be aware of the true weaknesses and vulnerabilities of different animals (as well as untrue prejudices held against them), and look out for ways to peaceably and constructively protect them.
- j) Promote and reinforce the ability to empathise in our society, and extend this virtue to the realm of animals.
- k) Help others to understand the personalities of different animals, so that they are not misunderstood as machines that only have automatic reflex reactions. If threatened, why and how might their attempt to escape, fight back, act cool, seek help or distract be better perceived as an intelligent attempt to survive the cause of their anxiety?

If you have successful experience of dealing with bullying in your school and community which may be extended to help animals who are typically bullied to death, *please write to the Editor and share them with members of CVAUK. Thank you.*

*Information obtained from 'Stop the Bullying; A handbook for schools',  
by Ken Rigby, Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2001*

### ***Fit To Eat...***

As summer approaches, life unfurls. Our world turns green, and food for all of the creatures appears no longer scarce. We witness an image of the 'sixth day'.

**Genesis 1:29-30** God said [to man], “**I have given you every seed-bearing plant which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree that bears fruit with seed. It will be for your food.**

**To every wild animal, to every bird of the sky, to everything that creeps along the ground, to everything that has the breath of life, I give every green plant for food.”**

So it was. God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.”

All plants are 'green' at some stage in their lifecycle (they contain chlorophyll, through which they can make their own food by photosynthesis), and all of them are food for some kind of creature, in part or in whole, or at some stage of their growth and decay. Not all plants are seed-bearing though; there are plants amongst particular types which are suitable for mankind to eat, in part or in whole, at some stage of their growth and decay, and perhaps no others.

All plants require 'light', as created on the first day. All plants require 'air', as created on the second day. All plants require 'nutrients' as found in soil and water, as created on the third day. It was on the third day, with light, and air, and nutrients, that the plants appeared.

There are two 'divisions' within the plant kingdom as a whole; **vascular plants** (those containing fluid-carrying tissue) and **non-vascular plants** (which have no fluid-carrying tissue). All of these, Scripture says, God gave to his creatures to eat. However, seed-bearing plants and trees with seed in their fruit fall into the 'vascular' division only, and so Genesis says that not all plants were given to mankind to eat. Vascular plants further divide into two categories; those that have seeds, and those that do not. It seems to have been the observation of those who passed on the tradition in Genesis, that not all vascular plants either were suitable for mankind to eat. Of the vascular plants that have seeds, there are also two types; those which have seeds which are not contained within a fruit (**gymnosperms**) and those that have seeds which are contained within a fruit (**angiosperms**). If modern scientific systems of classification do pass on the same observation, that has been passed on in Genesis, humans are intended to feed on gymnosperms and angiosperms only. There are four types of gymnosperms: **conifers** and **cycads**, **ginkgoes** and **gnetae**. There are two types of Angiosperms: **monocotyledons** and **dicotyledons** and with some being toxic, cannot be eaten by humans. The plants which are not seedbearing are those which reproduce using spores, and according to Genesis, were not given to humankind to eat many being toxic.

[“Of the 20,000 known species of food plants documented today, 90% of those grown for food come from just 20 species” (Movement for Compassionate Living, [www.MCLveganway.org.uk](http://www.MCLveganway.org.uk).)]

*Continued on page 13...*

There must once have been a huge variety of wild plants for early people to feast on, and knowledge of how best to prepare and serve them – and which ones to avoid because many poisons exist. Today, in the UK, if there are edible plants of these categories in the countryside, it is probably either illegal or antisocial (and unwise from a conservation point of view) to pick them. Those with land may like to maintain wild species within their gardens and allotments to compare and contrast with the plants that are cultivated today, instead of plucking them all out as weeds. Plants which grow wild and which the fruits, flowers or leaves were once regularly eaten include alexanders, beech leaves and nuts, bilberry, bittercress, blackberry (bramble), blackcurrant, blackthorn berries (sloes, bitter ancestor of plums), cherry, comfrey, (cowberry (lingonberry), cranberry and crowberry - though not raw), dandelion, dead-nettles, elder flowers and berries, hawthorn leaves and their rosehips, fat-hen (or 'melde' in Anglo-saxon), good king henry (or 'good henry' in Anglo-Saxon), gooseberries, hawthorn leaves and berries, hazel nuts, heather (as an infusion), juniper berries, lime leaves, flowers and fruits, mallow leaves (cooked in oil) and seeds, medlar fruits, milk thistle leaves (trimmed) - stems and flower heads, oak acorns, pignuts, pine nuts, ramsons leaves, raspberries, redcurrants, reed sap and dried stalks if harvested when green, wild rose petals and rosehips, rowan berries, service tree fruits (if cut at right stage, eaten later when ripe), sweet chestnuts, violets (petals) walnuts, watercress, wild strawberries, wood sorrel (salad leaves), and then many other herbs and flowers which may be used for distinctive flavouring if used very sparingly with other plants. Foraged meals may have comprised a salad starter, followed by roasted nuts with green vegetables and jam, with sweet (or sweetened) stalks, roots and fruits for pudding served with sprouted mixed-grain bread or cakes – and as many cupped handfuls of bubbling fresh spring water as could be wished for. Few people would have the patience to expend time, expertise and commitment locating and preparing such small fare in the same ways today, but they still have a value: we can wonder at the beauty of God's designs, and begin to see why God rested on the seventh day.

### **Food Security...**

95% of our food depends upon oil, a depleting finite resource.

Dr Caroline Lucas, Green MEP for the South East, has written a report called 'Fuelling a Food Crisis' which may be viewed on her website: [www.carolinelucasmep.org.uk/publications](http://www.carolinelucasmep.org.uk/publications). A useful background document is also available now on: [www.fao.org/biotech.conf14.htm](http://www.fao.org/biotech.conf14.htm), on agriculture and water security problems as being approached by the United Nations.

### **Are You In Touch With Computers?**

Computers can become out of date very quickly. They are filling landfill sites, and where not disposed of correctly, causing environmental damage through leakage of the many hazardous chemicals incorporated into their parts and casings. The damage to wild-life and food sources through contamination of watercourses is still unresearched and undocumented. It is a bigger problem in India and China, where there is no legislation to protect workers, waste-pickers or the environment at all. Many computers sold in the UK are manufactured in India (such as Dell) or in other Asian states. One way of reducing IT waste is to refurbish and recycle computers which do not meet the needs of their first owners any more, but are still in working condition. If a recycled machine could meet your ethics and budget

[www.wasteonline.org.uk](http://www.wasteonline.org.uk)

have a page on computer recyclers and refurbishers throughout the UK. There may be a company near you who could supply you with a quality secondhand one, to keep in touch with.

## **BIRDS OF A FEATHER.....**

### **Why we must flock together....**

*Whilst the Church is a mysterious, universal body of believers known only to the ineffable God, in many ways we fail as Christians if we do not gather into the formal and organized societies which are 'Churches' in the various places. The Church is too often misrepresented, misunderstood and mistreated because she is regarded as either a folly and object of futile pursuits, or at the other extreme, a redundant power structure which may be manipulated for private and personal gain. Whilst Christian Vegetarians know that She ought to be an instrument of a living and loving Religion, and an expression of the Spirit of the True Creator God in human culture, She is missed out of the plans of many who have hopes for a future which Ecclesiastical abuses and other irregularities seem to threaten. It may help CVAUK Members, therefore, to consider some of the "purposes" which are supposed to be the bedrock motives and from which the true Church springs forth:*

~ Eastern Orthodox Christians call the Church a 'hospital for sinners'. By baptism all Christians share in the common priesthood's ministry of curing sin within ourselves, within our families and within society in our capacity as citizens. We also have various official ministries where we may be trained and appointed to heal people of sins in a professional working capacity. *If we believe in life after death, sinners need treating as much as victimized creatures need rescuing.*

~ Latin Rite Christians call the Church a 'school of prayer for saints'. By baptism all Christians share in the common priesthood's responsibility of developing our knowledge of and relationship with God through Jesus Christ, and helping others in our families and society to do the same. We have official Religious Leaders whose knowledge of God is recognised and reliable enough to give direction to categories of people who are not known personally to them. *If we believe God loves all His creatures, necessity for a veggie-diet must be recognized and widely broadcast.*

~ St Jerome, translator of earliest Scripture into a comprehensive Latin volume (the Latin Vulgate), said that "Ignorance of Scriptures is ignorance of Christ"; and without knowing Jesus Christ mankind cannot know God. By gathering in Ecclesial groups or Christian communities we can share our costly books of Scripture, and the benefit of the education of our official and lay Ministers. Thus we continue the tradition of passing on the Teaching of Jesus Christ which must be learned anew by every generation of believers. *If we believe Jesus favours plant food, we must recover lost knowledge and enrich the Church's tradition with our humane dietary teaching.*

~ Presbyterians say that the way to know Scripture is by reading a little every day at home. Scripture needs to be pondered and studied in a way that reveals the personal meaning and seeks to answer the questions that arise in each person's heart. All Ministers of the Word must prepare for public proclamation with careful home study of the Bible, so that the intended meaning may be communicated to the Church. *If we believe that the Holy Spirit has inspired Scripture, we have a duty to understand how His holiness may be portrayed in relation to each passage of text.*

~ Catholics say that you need to attend Church to be able to understand how Scripture is interpreted by the Church in the world today. By listening to the Word of God together as a Church, under the guidance of a genuine Christian Religious Leader, we are informed about matters of Faith and morality that we could not know by reading Scripture at home by ourselves. *If we believe that we are all parts of the same body in Christ, we need to know how other parts of the body are thinking and functioning so that we may all work together. We may need to teach others how we must reflect God's love to all His creatures, if we are to be in His 'image'.*

## **“One Day At A Time” – A Twelve Step Program for Christians Who Have Difficulty Giving Up Killing, Cooking and Eating Animals**

1. We admitted that killing, cooking and eating animals is wrong. We acknowledged that we were not managing our lives sufficiently well to stop it, and that we were powerless to stop doing wrong.
2. We came to believe that only Jesus, whose power is greater than ourselves, could restore us to sanity.
3. We made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of Jesus, *as we understood Him*.
4. We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves, to identify the weaknesses of character that resulted in our offences.
5. We admitted to Jesus, to ourselves and to a fellow Christian (if possible a priest), the exact nature of what is wrong with killing, cooking and eating animals, and why we had collaborated in it.
6. We were entirely ready to have Jesus take away all these defects of character.
7. We humbly asked Jesus to remove our shortcomings.
8. We made a list of all the creatures (including humans) who had been harmed as a result of our killing, cooking and eating animals, (including feeding them to others).
9. We made direct amends to such creatures (including humans) wherever possible, except when to do so would further injure them or others. We made amends to their kind, wherever reconciling ourselves to the individual was impossible.
10. We continued to take personal inventory and when we killed, cooked, ate or fed animals to others again we promptly admitted it.
11. We sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with Jesus *as we understood Him*, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Twelve Steps (which we studied and sought to gain an increasingly deep understanding of), we tried to carry the message to others, and to practice these principles in all aspects of our lives.

*Adapted from the Twelve Step Program of Alcoholics Anonymous.*

### **Is the Gospel a Guarantee for a Cruelty-Free Liturgy?**

Do you check what your Christian books are bound in before buying them? Be assured that Harper Collins UK Liturgical, publishers of many Christian Service books, bind all of their Catholic books in forms of vinyl or imitation leather (either PU or plastic coated paper). Similarly, leather is not used for any of their mainstream Bible editions. Conscience has dictated this practice at Harper Collins for a very long time. This company has been exclusively commissioned by the Vatican to publish the new English translation of the Roman Missal, which it is hoped will be available next year – which is good news for all God’s creatures. It is not the first or only company to recognize that Christianity is kind, but there are companies, and special editions on the market, which wrap God’s Word in soft skins (often torn from baby creatures whilst still alive). Be careful also when purchasing breviary cases and missal covers; a quality synthetic may cost more money, but if you buy leather innocent animals will continue to die.

### **Why Did Jesus Do That?**

If you would like some help trying to understand *why*, in the Appendix of the Gospel of John (John 21:1-13), Jesus is presented cooking and serving dead fish to his followers after the Resurrection - try reading it in conjunction with Deuteronomy 30:8-20, especially verse 15: “Choose Life ‘See, I set before you on this day life and good, evil and death.’” Surely, the interpretation is to be found in the Scriptures which spoke about Him.

*Why we must flock together.... Continued from page 13..*

~ The Church is the reference point for Mission and the headquarters of Missioners. Christians must contribute to it, materially and otherwise, so that what is manifest is a true and worthy measure for Missionary activity. *If we believe that the Gospel is worth sharing, a true vision of unity needs to be realised. Our contribution may be necessary to ensure that the church and Liturgy are cruelty-free.*

~ The Church must be a Sanctuary for victims of rape and casualties of other injustices and abuse. People who are escaping danger and have nowhere else to turn, will seek God in the building designed to be ‘His house’, and amongst the society which claims to be ‘His people’. *If we believe that God is just and charitable, and recognize the closeness of connection between sexual and dietary passions for flesh, and man’s structured tendency to treat humans and other creatures alike, we will seek to create a sanctuary where all creatures are treated kindly, and strict veg-diets and products are the unbroken rule.*

~ The Golden Rule of St Matthew’s Gospel (Mtt 7:12) is that “Whatever you wish that men should do to you, do so to them.” By gathering together, we receive ‘graces’ which can empower us to do what we could not do otherwise; things that may be good and necessary. The church is a place where those with strengths for Christ are called in to carry the lame and to prop up the weak, often physically as well as metaphorically. *If we believe that Christ makes the blind see, the dumb speak, the deaf hear, and the lame walk, and preaches the good news to the poor, we must help him restore the senses of those who do not recognize the sufferings they cause to dis-empowered humans and other species - by not seeing, not speaking out, by not hearing, by not walking away, and not sharing the Gospel with those poor creatures who are vulnerable and suffer at human hands.*

~ We should not harden our hearts against our poor brothers and sisters. The Church is a place where resources may be pooled for redistribution amongst those whom Christians see with new Gospel insights to be in need, and who would otherwise remain in danger or neglected. *If we believe that our maturing as Christians involves extending our compassion to the whole Creation (for this is what it is to be holy) then we need to remain with our Churches, and not abandon them because of the dangers and neglect that other members are slow to see.*

~ If we give our lives to Christ, Christ lives in us. The Church is the milieu in which hope in God is transformed into genuine trust in the people who together form His body in the world today. *If we believe that Jesus loves animals and would not eat them by choice, we can be the sort of Jesus people that vegetarians and animals can trust.*

~ People go to Church to find Jesus. Our churches are the places where we may meet God in His Word, His priestly ministers, in the Eucharist and in all those who gather together in His name. *If we believe that Jesus is the God who probes the heart, the loins and the bowels, our bodies can become Temples fit for His Holy Spirit to dwell in, and others may then find His Real Presence in us.*

~ Christ said that where two or more of us are gathered together in His name, there He will be. It is Christian to identify compassionately with others who are different to ourselves; in so doing, we develop an ability to be self-critical and self-correcting. *If we believe it is right to gather with Christians who are not vegetarian, we may learn to love them as God does, for the virtues that they have - and they may become vegetarian.*

~ The Eucharist is Vegan. Before He suffered and died for us, Christ left the instruction that we should remember Him by keeping His ritual meal, which requires gathering together in order to share it as He directed. *If we believe that Christ’s memorial manifests what is eternal, by Faith alone we may know that a Vegan diet and lifestyle is sustainable, and that maintaining His memorial is highly advisable for our own reassurance and that of future generations.*

## *Nursery Rhymes for a Future...*

Mary, Mother of God (a theological understanding now shared by the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of England) is also Queen of Heaven. Being a real woman, assumed into heaven body and soul (not a spirit or an abstract idea of the mind alone), it is hard to imagine her living anywhere except in the most beautiful garden - paradise.

We have a lovely old nursery rhyme, which nearly every child in the UK must surely know, which is a meditation on this theme:

**Mary, Mary, quite contrary  
How does your garden grow?  
With silver bells,  
And cockle shells,  
And pretty maids all in a row!**

This rhyme does not mock Mary, but provides opportunity to open children's minds to Scripture and Creation.

- Mary is contrary, in the sense that her values are controversial and her words in the Gospel have often been suppressed by totalitarian powers (ie. "The Magnificat" Luke 1:46-55). "He has put down the mighty from their thrones and lifted up the lowly. He has filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty."

- The rhyme questions what heaven is like, enkindling interest in how earth may be increasingly likened to it.

- Silver bells still ring (whenever possible) every time the Eucharist is consecrated during Mass. It marks the moment when the gates between heaven and earth are opened for an instant and angels pass between God's throne and the sacrificial bread. It is a time for knowing Mary's closeness to Christ in his living, dying, and rising; and of her closeness to each of us as we attend to little every day tasks.

- Cockle shells, in Christian imagery, are a symbol of pilgrimage. The whole life of a Christian is a journey towards heaven, of apology and self-correction, and of increasing in holiness. The common cockle, found on British seashores, is a mollusc with two identical shells. It is found buried in mud and sand. The outside of each shell is scored with radiating ridges marking the progress of its growing seasons, but it is shiny and pure white on the inside (as outer bodies and inner souls may be through living lives in holiness).

- By sharing and organising the work of making the garden grow, the burden is made light and beautiful. In strict monasteries which cultivate their own land, nuns still tend the fields in orderly lines keeping pace with each other.

### *A Prayer of Self Offering to Christ*

For Thy greater glory and consolation,  
O Sacred Heart of Jesus.

For Thy sake to give good example,  
To practice kindness to animals,  
And to make reparation to Thee

For the sins of cruelty and carnage,  
And for the conversion of wanton flesh-eaters,

I will abstain for life from all flesh-meat,  
And discern to avoid all things that deny

The sanctity of the life given by Thee,  
And which cause suffering to any of Thy creatures.

*Adapted from the Prayer of Heroic Offering  
of the Pioneer Total Abstinence Association.*

## *Why we must flock together... Continued from page 14..*

~ The Church is the means through which we may devote ourselves in obedience to Him. Two thousand years ago, there was a shrine in Rome to an unknown God. As then, so it is today; how can humankind love and serve a God whom we do not know? *If we believe that we know some things for certain about God, it is because the Church has taught us so. If we have a focus of devotion in our souls, it is because the Church has made us so. To orientate ourselves about a true God whom we may reasonably obey is to be a definitive part of the Church.*

~ God wishes us to attend Church. The Church is the means through which God feeds us with His love, so that we may be more like Him. *If we believe that it is idolatry to worship perishable and imperfect things like buildings, statues and sinful people (as well as animals) as though they were divine, then we must believe that the Church can be instrumental in re-introducing God to the parts of ourselves which have gone astray.*

~ A thriving Christian community can help those who wish to but are unable to participate. Together, the practicing Church forms the community that can bring healing and consolation to those who are sick through the prayers, laying on of hands, and anointings of our genuine ministers. *If we believe that our Christian Vegetarian concerns are important, we will promote them in our communities so that the whole Church may flourish.*

~ The Christian home is the place where Christian values are first taught and Christian culture first experienced and passed on. Together, the Church safeguards the wellbeing of our human family by recognising suitability (or not) of proposed marriages, supporting married couples through approval in the sight of God and the prayers of the community, providing with Christian moral teaching for good conduct within the family, and through giving continued guidance in faith and providing faith-led education for Christian children. *If we believe that Christian parents ought to teach children to be kind to animals, and abstain from eating flesh and other harmful products, we need to ensure that new families are convinced and equipped with the faith, knowledge and resources to be able to do so from the beginning of their married lives as part of their preparation.*

~ Eating animal-products may be a cause of death, and blindness to animal-cruelty the cause of many sufferings. By gathering together when a Christian dies, it is possible to say farewell to the mortal remains whilst welcoming the deceased anew at the same time, because together we can see that the one who has passed on takes their place in Christ in a new way; their lives with us are changed but not ended. This is also an opportunity to ensure that those people left bereft are helped to live their lives in the new ways that circumstances now demand. *If we believe that human bodies are designed to consume plant foods and not flesh, we have a responsibility to teach preventative health care, where possible to explain how and why loved ones have died, and help survivors in times of loss and change to adapt to healthier and friendlier ways. This may include providing Funeral Services for pets and other animals.*

~ We have a vision of a peaceable kingdom to reveal and defend. By gathering together we witness to Christ, affirming one another, and making Him known and present to those of other faiths and none. Thereby, being both a 'light in the darkness for the upright' to attract those whom Christ calls into His Church, and a 'bastion of Christian faith and culture' to conserve a centre of Christian peace and unity where this appears to be threatened anywhere in the wider community. *If we believe that Christianity is a truly benign religion, we must be careful that the vision we display at least equals the peacefulness of other Faith groups amongst whom we live.*

### ***With Thanks to our Patrons...***

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*...In the Kingdom of Heaven...*

**St. Melangell**

*And With Thanks to All of our Members...*

### ***Why we must flock together... Continued from page 15..***

~ Reconciliation brings about greater unity in human society. Through gathering together we may learn to acknowledge our sins, say sorry to God and the community for the consequences of our errors, and receive forgiveness in amendment of life. *If we believe we can change for the better, and not repeat past wrongs, through the auspices of the Church we may discover the company of increasing numbers of people who believe the same about each other too.*

~ There is lots of work yet to do for animals. The good news has yet to reach all the Creation which, along with many humans, still awaits its moral and material salvation (in whole and in its diversely created parts). *If we believe that all life is sacred we must learn to recognise and revere life everywhere it is to be found - with Christ, in and through the Church.*

***Any other reasons why Christian Vegetarians should keep encouraging one another to keep the faith and practice our Religion?***

**Editor**

### ***PAINLESS FINANCING OF CVAUK...***

By becoming a '**Friend of the Wisdom Trust**' members who have **Internet access** can raise money by visiting the '**Wisdom Trust**' web site and voting for CVAUK. If enough members sign on, just a few minutes a day can raise a significant amount of money. Last quarter (Jan. to March 2007) I alone raised £20.55 and managed get CVAUK promoted onto their 'Main Charity' list, just imagin what 20 or 30 members could achieve.

#### **A. How to get started:**

1. Visit <http://www.wisdom4all.co.uk/index.php> (consider making it your 'Home Page').
2. Click '**Register**' in the left hand 'Side Menu'.
3. Type in your **Email Address** (this will be your login ID) and a '**Password**'.
4. In '**Sponsor's Email Address**' type '**dongwil@uk2.net**' and then go down to '**Choose Charitable Cause Here**' and select from list '**Christian Vegetarian Association UK**'.
5. Click on '**Register**'.

#### **B. Raising Money by Voting for CVAUK:**

1. Visit <http://www.wisdom4all.co.uk/index.php> and '**Log In**'.
2. Click on '**Vote**' in menu along the top of the page and in the '**Main Charities List**' select '**Christian Vegetarian Association UK**' and in the '**Other Nominated Charities**' choose a charity of your choice from the list provided.
3. Click '**Vote**'.
4. Check CVAUK's position in the 'Main Charities List' below and Log Out.

The above is the minimum you can do and will only take a few minutes a day.

#### **C. Earning extra votes:**

If you have the time, say over the week-end, you can increase the number of votes by clicking on '**Education**' and earning bonus points. For every 10 points you earn you will get another vote. So after you have earned 10 or 20 points go to **B.2** above and vote again. The number of points you can earn is limited to 10 points initially followed by 6 points every 2 hours thereafter.

**Please seriously consider this easy way to raise much-needed funds for CVAUK without it costing you a penny.** Don Gwillim

### ***THE BRISTOL VEGAN FAYRE.***

**Amphitheatre & Waterfront Square, Central Bristol. Saturday & Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> June.**

"CVA (USA) has generously sponsored a stall for CVAUK at the above show. I will arrive in Bristol on the Friday afternoon, ready to setup our stall early Saturday morning & will return home Sunday evening. There is a CVAUK volunteer for both days but additional volunteers are welcome, so that all will have time to browse the fayre and it's 130 stalls, also a great opportunity to meet CVAUK members in the Bristol area. I will be staying at the 'Ibis Hotel' (a minute's walk from the Fayre), and can be contacted on my mobile phone 078 5764 9748. Now in its fifth year, the Bristol Vegan Fayre incorporates a huge variety of entertainment, education and excellent shopping opportunities, with the world's biggest selection of vegan products on offer. It is the largest gathering of vegan people anywhere on the globe. An awesome programme of bands, DJ's and entertainment complements the vast selection of produce available, alongside a comprehensive programme of talks, demos, videos, presentations and cookery lessons, covering almost every vegan aspect under the sun. Please help us to demonstrate Christian compassion to the secular world and reach out to other Christian vegetarians. For more information visit: <http://www.bristolveganfayre.co.uk>. Don Gwillim

#### **Useful Websites:**

[www.christianvegetarian.co.uk](http://www.christianvegetarian.co.uk) (CVAUK website)  
<http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/christveg> (Chat Group)  
[www.christianveg.com](http://www.christianveg.com) (CVA/USA/International)  
[www.veg4lent.org](http://www.veg4lent.org) (Veg4Lent)  
[www.all-creatures.org/fof](http://www.all-creatures.org/fof) (Fellowship of Life)  
[www.ordergoldenage.co.uk](http://www.ordergoldenage.co.uk) (Order of the Golden Age)

[www.parrotpets.co.uk](http://www.parrotpets.co.uk) (The Gwillim Family)  
[www.ivu.org](http://www.ivu.org) (International Vegetarian Union)  
[www.ivu.org/ku](http://www.ivu.org/ku) (Kindness Unlimited)  
[www.pcrm.org](http://www.pcrm.org) (Physicians for Responsible Medicine)  
[www.st.melangell](http://www.st.melangell) (Church of St Melangell)  
[www.brown-hare-preservation.org](http://www.brown-hare-preservation.org) (British Brown Hare Preservation Society)  
[www.irishhare.org](http://www.irishhare.org) (Irish Hare Initiative)