



June 2010 Newsletter

Dear Friends and Supporters.

New Website

We are very pleased to announce our newly designed website which can now accommodate the ever growing number of stories and information we want to share with visitors. Take a browse and do tell us what you think

www.theforgivenessproject.com

Archbishop Desmond Tutu Delivers Our Inaugural Annual Lecture



On 12th May more than 800 people piled into St John's Smith Square, London, to hear Archbishop Desmond Tutu, founding patron of The ForgiveNess Project, deliver our inaugural annual lecture - 'Is Violence Ever Justified?' Touching briefly on the Church's view of a just war and asking the audience 'what would you do if you discovered your daughter being raped?', he then asked permission to talk more generally about the things he feels most

passionate about. Archbishop Tutu was joined on stage by [Mary Blewitt](#) who lost 50 members of her family in the Rwandan genocide; [Jo Berry](#) whose father was killed in the 1984 Brighton bombing; and Patrick Magee, the former IRA activist responsible for planting the bomb. The event was chaired by BBC broadcaster Edward Stourton, and sponsored by Anglo American, with The Independent newspaper as our media sponsor. We will be shortly putting excerpts from the event on our website, but to read more check out my [Huffington Post blog](#).

New Catalogue

We have a new catalogue of stories available. It costs, including postage and packaging, £7.70 if you live in the UK, or \$10 in the US. To order contact info@theforgivenessproject.com



Stories

Stories of forgiveness and reconciliation are at the heart of everything we do, and now include several that we have collected from the organisation Combatants for Peace - a movement founded by Palestinians and Israelis who once took an active part in the cycle of violence and now work to break it. I visited Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and the West Bank last October and was encouraged by these former Israeli military and Palestinian combatants who now work together, choosing to relive their past for the sake of seeking peaceful solutions to the conflict. To read more about my trip go to http://www.huffingtonpost.com/marina-cantacuzino/palestinian-and-israeli-e_b_331886.html



One of our new stories includes that of Barry and Margaret Mizen whose son Jimmy was murdered in 2008. In the past six months, the Mizens have spoken twice at HMP High Down - the last time in May to 80 adult male prisoners. [Click to read their story.](#)

Our Prison Programme

Since we started running our victim awareness prison workshop programme in Nov 2007, we have delivered 25 workshops in five UK prisons reaching 850 prisoners. The programme is recognized by prisoners, prison officers, and governors as being both popular and effective. It is important to prisoners that we explore the notion of

forgiveness rather than teach it – debate it rather than propagate it!

An adult student, doing a work shadowing assignment with The Forgiveness Project, wrote this in a report to her course supervisors: *“The strength of TFP is that it does not deliberately lead either the victim or offender to a place of forgiveness, but allows each – in freedom - to meet and discuss issues related to crime, including responsibility, contrition, and reconciliation. Alongside the facilitators’ genuine commitment to the men, I was inspired and impressed by their constant and consistent demonstration of the absence of any emotional investment in the outcome. This gave the men a freedom to choose to be who they wanted to be or become, which I think is absolutely vitally important.”*

Schools

Knowing that for the past six years teachers have been using our stories as a resource across the curriculum and in all year groups, in 2009 we successfully piloted a school’s workshop in two Bristol schools with the view of developing a workshop model to give teachers a sustainable resource. This is currently being developed and in 2011, we hope to be ready to offer a resource to teachers. To find out more about our school pilot go to

<http://theforgivenessproject.com/projects/schools/>



Some of our speakers are also invited into schools to share their story with students. Mary Foley recently spoke at Queens Park Community School in Brent.

Events

In November last year, in conjunction with the UK Jewish Film Festival and the Parents Circle-Families Forum, we hosted a discussion at St Ethelburgas Centre for Reconciliation and Peace with Robi Damelin and Ali Awaad, two enormously inspiring speakers committed to promoting reconciliation as an alternative to hatred and revenge from both sides of the divide.

In January *The F Word* exhibition was on display inside the Houses of Parliament for the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, as we presented our work to 140

members of parliament from all over the world.

In April 20 stories from *The F Word* were translated into Chinese and exhibited in both English and Chinese in various locations during a two month tour of Hong Kong and Macau.

We're also now working towards the first German tour of *The F Word* in November.

For more information contact martin@theforgivenessproject.com

Events

All our short films are now on a video channel on YouTube
<http://www.youtube.com/user/ForgivenessVideo>

USA

In the USA the exhibition continues to be hired out all over the country and the feedback is excellent; this year alone it has been to Michigan, North Carolina, Los Angeles and Boston.

Sophie Levy, our co-ordinator in the USA, spoke at an event called "Forgiveness on Death Row," in April at the Watts Art Gallery in Los Angeles. The event was sponsored by the California Crime Victims for Alternative to the Death Penalty, The Reverence Project and The Forgiveness Project.

Trustees

To help us grow we are looking to expand our current board of trustees and are particularly looking for people with expertise within the charitable sector in strategic planning, governance and finance. To apply please contact info@theforgivenessproject.com

And finally, many thanks indeed to all the charitable trusts who have helped to fund The Forgiveness Project - without this support we would not be able to continue our work.

With very best wishes,

Marina Cantacuzino
Founder & Director

