**Winning article**

**Let's Demolish The Wall**

**By Oaratwa Tebelelo**, **All Saints, Sheffield**

I don't remember the exact facts of the story but what I do remember is that it was someone who did everything ''right'' and by that I mean had followed the unwritten safety precautions we as society have. Don't go out at night and if you do go in a large group. Don't do that. Don't do this. I remember thinking this could be me and when I looked at my mum, I could tell she felt the same. Often times with any conflict I see or hear about I instinctively build a wall between me and the person experiencing the conflict as a way of not making myself frightened of the world but with that story it was like everything the journalist was saying was demolishing the wall and reminding me that conflict can happen to anyone even if they do everything ''right''.

Following this we did not watch the news for a couple of days and then when we did the same story was on the news but this time we did not stop and give each other the same look which people who are grateful that the tragedy did not happen to them make. Instead, this time the conversation we were having carried on and the wall went undamaged. Had I somehow grown ''strong'' over the couple of days we had stopped watching the news and the answer to that was no and I don't think anyone with any empathy can become ''strong'' enough to hear the suffering of others and not feel any kind of emotion. So what was the reason for I and my mum's attitude that could be perceived as nonchalant.

To understand our reaction for that you need to understand our failed attempt at not watching the news as a way of blocking out the story but we did not stop hearing about the news story. I was reminded of the news story on the bus, when I walked past newspapers, on my recommended videos on YouTube and she in conversations with colleagues so when the story came again on the screen it was hard to feel sadness, but that is not to say we did not feel any emotion. We felt anger but the kind anger that was laced with the impression that we could not do anything and that all we could do was to let the story play in the background as we spoke and listened to it for what felt like the hundredth time. This story is not the only story I felt like I had heard a hundredth time; it felt like a cycle with the news. Feel sadness. Feel anger. Feel helplessness. Do nothing. So when I saw the question ‘is conflict inevitable?’ my immediate answer to that was yes and as sad as that it is that my answer was immediate I felt that the world we live in justifies that.

The world we live in justifies that. What does that even mean? The world we live in justifies that according to Global Trends 89.3 million people were forced to flee their homes due to conflict, violence, fear of persecution and human rights violation. The world we live in justifies that and how do we justify that with excuses such as the ones I made that I am helpless that I can't anything about conflict because I know deep down that I am not helpless because of the school I go to I am surrounded by images and talks of people have made an impact to the world. Despite all of that I build the wall this time in an effort to excuse my lack of action. They are saints. They are perfect. They are old.

I am none of the above but again the wall is demolished this time by a face radiating of youth - St Therese of Lisieux, the saint of my school house Belief. At age 15 she become a Carmelite nun and gave her life to God. St Therese of Lisieux did small things with love and without expecting anything in return. This became known as The Little Way. St Therese of Lisieux said ''Our Lord does not look so much at the greatness of our actions, or even the difficulty, as at the love with which we do them”. I like that quote because it shows we do not have to make a massive impact in the world but to do something little with love in our hearts.

To do something little with love in our hearts.

Anthony Olaseinde runs a non-profit organisation called Always An Alternative and through this he has begun an anti-knife campaign called Keep Sheffield Stainless. Olaseinde has put weapons bins around Sheffield in which people can hand in their weapons in without fear of persecution.

According to the Ben Kinsella Trust the police recorded 50434 offences involving a knife or sharp instrument in the last 12 months to September 2022 and a 50 percent increase in knife crime in England and Wales in September 2022 compared to March 2012. Anthony alone can not end knife crime but his small actions are an example of what can be done to create a peaceful future.

The wall has been demolished and without it there I can see why I don't take action. Fear. Like I said I am lucky to go a school where I am surrounded by examples of people who have made a change but I am also surrounded to the answer to my fear. I walk past the answer on the way to the canteen. I wear the answer on my school tie underneath the shield; the letters are small but if you look you will see them. Fortis in Fide. Fortis in Fide is Latin for From Faith comes Strength and I know that in the words of St Therese of Lisieux ''God would not make me wish for something impossible and so in spite of my littleness..'