

J/P Alert

CONFERENCE OF MAJOR SUPERIORS OF MEN *JUSTICE AND PEACE OFFICE*

IN THIS ISSUE

- Policy Change on U.S.-Mexico Border
- Coalition Urges U.S. Administration and Congress to Take Action on Sudan
- Caritas International Campaign for Peace in Columbia
- Ecumenical Advocacy Days for Annual JP Directors Gathering
- Haiti ...
- Books of Interest
- Save the Date



CMSM:

- *assists major superiors in their role as leaders;*
- *promotes dialogue and collaboration with the conference of bishops and other major groups in church and society;*
- *provides a corporate influence in church and society.*

November 2004

Policy Change on U.S.-Mexico Border Has Negative Human, Environmental Impact.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is proposing a staggering number of new and expanded infrastructure projects along the Arizona-Mexico border, including significant increases in off-road operations, portable lighting, border fencing, temporary camp details, and increased road construction. These activities are likely to have profound and lasting impacts on many of Arizona's threatened and endangered species and their habitats, and will irreversibly harm many of Arizona's most spectacular state parks and federally-protected lands which lie along the Arizona-Mexico border.

In addition, these proposed changes will have significant negative impact for immigrants, already forced to cross the U.S.-Mexico border in some of the most dangerous terrain, and will infringe on the sovereign rights of the Indigenous peoples living in the region.

The continued actions of militarizing and sealing the U.S.-Mexico border do not address the true root causes of migration, and will do nothing to stop the death and havoc experienced by the border communities and migrants. Migrants will be forced to shift their routes to even more dangerous areas, including the possibility of crossing a

military range. Further endangering the lives of migrants by shifting them into even more dangerous areas is not only irresponsible, it is morally unjustifiable and unacceptable as a strategy to deter migrant traffic.

The proposed changes would also limit the rights of mobility and passage for Indigenous peoples living in the area. The Tohono O'odham Nation, whose people live here, have already experienced great disruption in their lives and culture and these changes could now cause an increase of deaths of migrants that would take place on their sacred lands.

The U.S. must develop a humane border policy that will not destroy the environment, route individuals to even more dangerous regions, and trample the sovereignty and rights of Indigenous people. The JP Office has sent a letter to Army Corps of Engineers District Supervisor, Mark Doles expressing the Conference's commitment to just immigration and environmental policies. A copy of the letter is posted on the website (www.cmsm.org). Many of our member institutes are working along the U.S.-Mexico border and could use our support. You can fax a letter similar to the one from the National Office to express your concern about the militarization of the border and the plight of the migrants.

Coalition Urges U.S. Administration and Congress to Take Action on Sudan

The Catholic Task Force on Africa, a coalition of Washington-based organizations concerned about Africa, sent a letter to President Bush, key members of the Administration and leaders in the House and Senate urging them to take action to address the ongoing crisis in Darfur.

The letter follows on the recommendations of CRS President Ken Hackett, who recently returned from Sudan. It specifically asks that President Bush immediately name and dispatch a high-level peace envoy to Sudan to assist in brokering a cease-fire and to begin a peace process.

CTFA also asked that the Congress support a Senate-approved funding package for Sudan that includes \$75 million to expand African Union forces charged with protecting the hundreds of thousands of refugees and displaced persons, and \$150 million for emergency humanitarian assistance.

This money must be approved by the House before the end of the congressional session and the new House and Senate are sworn in. Call or write your member of Congress and urge them to fully fund the Darfur relief package at the levels approved by the Senate. The U.S. must be a leader, working with the African Union and the global community, in bringing about a peaceful and lasting settlement to this crisis. A copy of the CTFA letter with the signatories can be found at <http://afjn.cua.edu/news/ctfa>.

Caritas Internationalis Campaign for Peace in Colombia

CI has initiated a four year campaign for peace in Colombia. The "Peace is Possible" campaign is based on the Colombian Bishops' Conference statement that "peace can only be obtained through negotiations and peace can only be sustained through social justice."

The purpose of the campaign is to motivate people to engage in solidarity with the victims of the armed conflict in Colombia, and to advocate governments and international organizations to implement coherent policies in support of the Church's call for political negotiations and social justice. The first phase of the campaign now

underway is to raise awareness about the longest ongoing armed conflict in the Americas. The second phase will present concrete proposals on ways to make a lasting peace possible.

More information, including a CI position paper, "Peace is Possible in Colombia," a fact sheet on the situation in Colombia, and a suggested prayer service, can be found on the CI website at www.caritas.org.

Ecumenical Advocacy Days and Annual JP Directors Gathering

"Make All Things New" is the theme for the third annual ecumenical gathering in Washington, DC, March 11-14, 2005. The conference brings together faith-based social justice advocates from many Christian traditions to focus on critical regions and issues including Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Middle East, U.S. foreign and domestic policies, eco-justice, and Jubilee and economic justice.

The gathering will feature challenging speakers, issue briefings, advocacy training workshops and a Lobby Day on Capitol Hill when participants will speak with their Senators and Representatives and key Congressional staff.

A PDF version of the brochure is available on the CMSM website.

The Advocacy Days will be followed by the annual gathering of JP Coordinators in Washington, DC, beginning the evening of March 14 and ending the afternoon of March 15. This meeting is an excellent opportunity for the JP Office and congregational JP Coordinators to dialogue on issues and priorities, to network, and to learn about the broad justice agenda of men religious in the U.S. This year the meeting will be open to all CMSM related participants to the Ecumenical Advocacy Days. More details about the gathering will be sent out soon. Save the dates. Pass this on to your JP Coordinators and others who might be interested.

Haiti Continues to Suffer Violence and Unrest

September and October were very troubling months in Haiti. Earlier this year the political coup earlier unleashed new waves of violence and the devastating floods caused by Tropical Storm Jeanne have left thousands dead or missing and hundreds of thousands homeless.

Recent reports from Haiti indicate that the violence is increasing in the cities and there have even been reports of beheadings of people. This particular form of violence indicates the desperate situations the people experience and the extremes they are going to raise awareness and vent frustration and anger. However, no situation justifies this inhumane action. On October 13 Fr. Gerard Jean-Juste, an activist for the poor in Port au Prince, was arrested by Haitian National Police officers, some of them wearing masks, at his church. Amnesty International reports that he was punched and dragged during his arrest and that the officers did not have a mandate of arrest as required by Haitian law. He is still being held without charges.

As a sign of CMSM's continuing support and commitment to Haiti and CMSM-sponsored delegation will visit Haiti December 13-17. The delegation members are Bill Quigley, CICM; Jeff Duaine, CSSp; Phil Reed, MAfr; Brian Massingale from the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, and JP Director Stan De Boe, OSST.

Books of Interest

Two new books with strong ties to CMSM have been published by Orbis Books. *Birth of a Church* was written by former JP Director Joe Nangle, OFM. The book tells the inspiring story of Joe's journey as young Franciscan priest assigned to found a new parish in a middle-class neighborhood in Lima, Peru and what happened when they decided to make an "option for the poor." It is not just the story of one person, but of a movement that changed lives. *Like Grains of Wheat: A Spirituality of Solidarity*, is written by Margaret Swedish and Marie Dennis and is the story of the birth of the Solidarity Movement told through the stories of people involved in it from Central and North America. Swedish was the long-time director of the Religious Task Force on Central America and Mexico and Dennis is the Director of the Maryknoll Office of Global Concerns. CMSM was instrumental in founding the RTFCAM. The book also helps the reader to connect the principals and impact of the Solidarity Movement with contemporary issues in the Church and society today. Both books are available from Orbis Books at www.orbisbooks.com.

Crucible for Change: Engaging Impasse through Communal Contemplation and Dialogue. Edited by Nancy Sylvester, IHM and Mary Jo Klick. Sor Juana Press, San Antonio, TX. The book is an invitation to journey with

those who entered into a unique process of communal contemplation and dialogue to engage the impasses encountered in church and society. Twelve women share their stories of how participation in the circles of contemplation and dialogue awakened in them fresh insights into being and acting in new ways as they continue to engage in ecclesial and societal impasses. Available from the Institute for Communal Contemplation and Dialogue, 5907 Chris Mar Avenue, Clinton, MD 20735. Cost 16.95 plus shipping.

Save the Date

Leadership Conference on Trade Agreements: "Crossing the Borders of Trade" April 14-16 Clarion Santa Rita Hotel, Tucson, Arizona. The conference is designed to give pastoral and social ministers in the U.S., in collaboration with partners from Canada and Mexico, the information, skills, and tools for action that they need to respond effectively to the complex issue of how trade agreements affect immigration, worker justice, etc. The conference included an emersion experience in Nogales, Mexico, speakers on the issues and action workshops on human trafficking, worker justice, legislative advocacy, agriculture, and environmental justice. Registration information will be available January 6, 2005.

Stan De Boe, OSST, Editor