



NEWS BRIEFS



A monthly publication of the UISG-USG Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation Commission



Editorial: During these liturgical days, the Acts of the Apostles tells us many stories in which the disciples boldly called for a response to the message of Jesus to spread nonviolence and peace and to compassionately touch those who were marginalized. Clearly, to be a disciple demands a total commitment. Today, the Holy Spirit continues to guide our lives, so that we can bring about a world of justice, peace and love.

LINKS: [Click underlined blue text to open a link or copy and paste the url on your browser window.](#)

PATH OF NONVIOLENCE: TOWARDS A CULTURE OF PEACE



Participants to the workshop included bishops, archbishops, peace practitioners, theologians, social scientists, educators and those in pastoral ministry from many parts of the world. Dicastery Prefect Cardinal Peter Turkson (Ghana) and Cardinal Joseph Tobin (Newark, New Jersey, USA) also graced the occasion.

Vatican City.—On April 4-5, the Vatican’s Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development (DIHD) and Pax Christi International’s Catholic Nonviolence Initiative organized a workshop on the theme, “Path of Nonviolence: Towards a Culture of Peace.”

Taking into consideration and understanding the current situation of conflict and violence, participants engaged in dialogue about its roots and the hope for peace and reconciliation, reflecting on paths towards a conversion to nonviolence. Noting that nonviolence is not only a method, but a way of life, it is used to protect and care for the conditions of today and tomorrow.

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“Our conversations on nonviolence and peace filled our hearts and minds with a consideration of the dignity of each person—young people, women and men, people who are impoverished, citizens and leaders,” said Mons. Bruno Marie Duffé, Secretary of the Dicastery. “Nonviolence and peace call us to a conversion to receive and to give, to gather and to hope.”

“Pax Christi International deeply appreciates the support and participation of the Dicastery in this workshop, which has been a significant and positive step in the work of the Catholic Nonviolence Initiative,” said Marie Dennis, Co-president of Pax Christi International. “We are touched by the interventions from all the participants, who reiterated the importance of nonviolence rooted in respect, patience and spiritual strength.”

Participants will continue their dialogue and research. Their reflections will be shared with the Holy Father, with the hope for a possible encyclical that will address these issues and challenges and will promote nonviolent initiatives as a way for mediation, rights, hope and love.

“We need to be artisans of peace, for building peace that is a craft that demands serenity, creativity, sensitivity and skills.” (Pope Francis, Apostolic Exhortation *Gaudete et Exultate*, March 19, 2018)

Visit [JPICRoma website](http://JPICRoma.com) for more information.



The faithful at St. Cecilia Church.

deepen our consciousness of who we are in relationship with God, others, and all of creation. We turn towards Christ as he accompanies us on our journey to explore our own motivations and desires in areas needing social change. By knowing ourselves, we are better able to organize and network with others so that our strengths are integrated in faith-filled efforts to build the reign of God as we care for all of creation. “The ideal is not only to pass from the exterior to the interior to discover the action of God in the soul, but also to discover God in all things.” (LS 233)

Each year a chosen theme guides the reflections. This year the preparatory committee decided to adapt reflections from Pope Francis’ Encyclical *Gaudete et Exultate* and his message for the 52th World Day of prayer for peace, “Good Politics is at the service of peace”.

Gratitude is expressed for all who contributed to the success of this year’s Way of the Cross beginning with the preparatory committee representing their respective JPIC groups who prepared the text: Stations 1&2—Anti-trafficking Working Group; Stations 3&4—Africa Working Group; Stations 5&6—Refugees and Migrants Working Group; Stations 7&8—Integrity of Creation Working Group; Stations 9&10—ICR at FAO Working Group; Stations 11, 13&15—Spanish



In front of the train station built for Mussolini to welcome Hitler to Rome.

WAY OF THE CROSS FOR CONSECRATED LIFE

For more than seven years now the JPIC commission secretariat has been organizing the Way of the Cross-prayer event at the beginning of the Holy week. Our prayer together reflects the awareness of women and men religious today of being called to continue Christ’s mission of announcing and witnessing to the Gospel of the Kingdom by a way of life which is mystic-prophetic and in solidarity with the poor of this world.

Through contemplation, we take time to reflect more deeply on issues which need to be addressed and the relationships we need to develop. We strive to



In front of St Bartholome Chrch, the place of relics of contemporary martyrs and to the left is the door to the hospital founded in 1600 with the aim of providing a minimum of health care to the Roman Jewish population.

and Portuguese Promoters Group; Stations 12&14— Collaboration Working Group.

We also are grateful to Fr. Luis Gabriel Martin, CS, Chaplain of the Latin American Migrants in Rome who assisted us by opening their S. Maria della Luce Church to allow us to pray the 12th station; to Fr. Angel Lopez the Director of the pastoral section of the Fatebenefratelli Hospital who allowed us to use their chapel to pray the 15th station and conclude our prayer there. We thank the Inter-faith Center for Peace (CIPAX) for allowing us to use their loud-speaker. We thank numerous men and women religious who participated, devoutly walking prayerfully through the streets of Rome from Ostiense through Trastevere to Tiber Ireland!



Greta (holding a microphone), speaking on the stage with other students.

“WE WANT CLIMATE JUSTICE!”

These words began the rally lead by Greta Thunberg in the Piazza de Popolo in Rome on April 19. She stirred the thousands assembled to the need to act to counter the effects of climate change—NOW! She said that the time is short, in fact she says that we need to be in a panic since the majority of scientists say that we have a eleven-year window of opportunity to address the foreseen catastrophes resulting from climate change. Government officials want selfies with her and tell her that they are inspired by her action. Yet, there are no results, no change and no follow-up on their commitments made at COP 21.

By the time she is 26, Greta wants to be able to tell her children that she had done all that she could to care for their future. “We, the youth, are the ones making a difference fighting for their future.”

The JPIC Secretariat also participated in the rally in support of the efforts of the youth in dealing with the crisis resulting from climate changes.



Greta has met with [Pope Francis](#) who encouraged her in her efforts, having often asked the youth to raise their voices for their concerns. Tomás Insua, the Executive Director of the Global Catholic Climate Movement, was her interpreter for this encounter. In his recent Apostolic Exhortation, he tells the youth: “Don’t be parked cars, but dream freely and make good decisions. Take risks, even if it means making mistakes. Don’t go through life anaesthetized or approach the world like tourists. Make a ruckus! Cast out the fears that paralyze you.”

The next school strike for climate is scheduled for May 24, the fourth anniversary of *Laudato Sí*.

MIGRATION AND THE CHALLENGES FOR THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY



Sr. Florence de la Villeon, RSCJ and Emmanuele Selleri with participants in the final migration session.

The last session of this series on migration “Thinking about the future, acting now: pathways of welcome and integration” featured the inspiring testimonies of people working in projects for persons in migration. Each shared uniquely how their ministry has been meaningful.

Sr. Maria Garzol, RSCJ, spoke of the challenges and benefits of living with Sisters from different communities in Sicily. From that experience, she learned patience, tolerance and respect which were very helpful qualities in working with the migrants and refugees. She is committed to be a woman of hope and to share her life with those who are marginalized in accordance with the charism of her congregation. Walking hand in hand, giving and receiving, she strives to motivate the migrants by sharing possibilities for their lives. During the day she helps the children to read and to write. She listens to many stories about their many painful challenges and hopes for a better future. Working with persons of different backgrounds and countries, she realized the richness that we are all God's people.

Sr. Carmen Bando, SSPS began by telling how her different experiences of working in other countries has helped her to know what it is like to be the different one. She spoke of the importance of knowing yourself and what you can do. It is essential to be in the space of encounter. To experience the pain, the issues and the tensions and the culture of the immigrants. By being in touch with our personal limits, we can accept the vulnerability of others.

She is the coordinator of a new refugee project in Greece which is trying to give back the dignity of the migrants in a hospitality center. It is not possible to solve all of the problems. She has learned that all personal history has meaning, and it is important to encounter others. Sr. Carmen used the phrase "remotely close" to explain the boundaries of the person. She also collaborates with other groups, such as the UNICEF and the Jesuit Refugee Service, in providing services.

In working with volunteers, she stresses the importance of providing them necessary training.

Emmanuele Selleri, a lay Scalabrini and Executive Director of Casa Scalabrini 634, spoke of his experiences in Venezuela, Columbia and Bolivia which at that time, it was easy to travel from one country to another. Faced with so much poverty and unsettled people when he arrived, he gave up the idea of being a missionary to save the world. As a foreigner from Europe, he was challenged as to why he was there. He realized that God was in the suffering of these people. Hospitality houses played a crucial role in welcoming new migrants.

In Casa Scalabrini 634, he works with 30 persons, welcoming them, supporting their economic independence with jobs. The Casa focuses on relationships both within the center, the parish and the neighborhood. Counseling services are provided to help the migrants deal with personal issues and to achieve their goals. Community is built with the experiences of everyday life.

All of the presenters stressed the importance of being with the migrants and to accept their personal vulnerabilities. This allowed them to be open to the migrants who had to overcome many barriers and for many this also included paying to come. Unfortunately, social media can give a false picture of what is available in other countries. This builds up the hopes and dreams of many who are fleeing their countries for a safer and better life. We were very grateful for the examples shared by our three presenters whose lives have been deeply affected by living and walking with the migrants and refugees.

UPDATE ON SOLIDARITY WITH SOUTH SUDAN



“Seek that which unites. Overcome that which divides”, was the message of Pope Francis to the leaders of South Sudan at the closing of the spiritual retreat on April 11, 2019 in Rome. At the same time, Solidarity with South Sudan (SSS) board met from April 9-11, 2019 at La Salle, Rome. Some of the highlights of the board meeting were their appreciation of the outgoing executive director Br. Bill Firman, FSC and welcoming incoming executive director Fr. Jim Greene, MAFr who were present for the meeting. The board members are grateful to all the donors for their generosity and for many women and men religious who have been relentlessly served and are serving in South Sudan for the past 10 years.

Moving forward, SSS is exploring ways to be sustainable in South Sudan. One of the initiatives taken by the board was an in-depth evaluation of SSS projects by Nicole Moran and Nyokabi Kahuraind, the independent reviewers. Preliminary findings indicate that there are strong positive changes due to the presence and programs of the SSS, which include providing education for so many through the Catholic Health Training Institute and the Solidarity Teacher Training College. The issue of the sustainability of the project was highlighted as one of the challenges going into

the future. To achieve this, SSS needs to do more to prepare the South Sudanese people take responsibility as educators and local leaders. The final report of the evaluation will be ready by June 2019, which will throw more light on how to move forward.

In the immediate term, SSS needs more personnel to continue its mission effectively. The area of addressing the widespread trauma suffered by young and old was highlighted for a particular concern. The board is renewing its appeal for volunteers both lay and religious, men and women to work in the areas of pastoral, education, health and farming in South Sudan.

On the evening of April 11, Sant Egidio community organized a prayer service in Santa Maria in Trastevere church for Peace in South Sudan. In attendance were the leaders of South Sudan both political and religious, and some of the Solidarity board members also joined the prayer service. Everyone gathered prayed for Peace and end to conflict in South Sudan and that the Unity government of South Sudan work towards making South Sudan an Abode of Peace.

The Solidarity General Assembly will take place on November 27 at La Salle, Rome.—*Contributed by Gretta Fernandes, SSpS, Board member, SSS and Mission Secretary for her Congregation*

ANTI-TRAFFICKING WORKING GROUP MEETS WITH TALITHA KUM



Felix Mushobizi, CPPS, Gabriella Bottani, Comboni, Cecilia Espenilla, OP, Sheila Kinsey, FCJM and Andreas Göpfert, M.Afr.

Members of the Anti-trafficking Working Group (ATWG) met with Sr. Gabriella Bottani, Talitha Kum Executive Director, to discuss the group's various programs, perspectives and ways that they can work together. Talitha Kum is establishing and sustaining a number of networks with religious congregations around the world. The JPIC Promoters ATWG is working with the religious congregations by sharing information about the trafficking of persons.

The ATWG will focus this year on Fair Trade products to combat the trafficking of persons through the promotion of fair business practices. May 11

Click the following title for a recently released publication: [Pastoral Orientations on Human Trafficking.](#)

SOWING HOPE FOR THE PLANET



Focusing on “Growing Seeds of Hope,” the April webinar of the UISG campaign highlighted the integration of religious community responses to the “Cry of the Earth and the Cry of the Poor.” As Pope Francis so often says, “Everything is interconnected”—underlining the fundamental connection that exists between the environmental crisis and the social crisis. The webinar featured some outstanding examples of how this is done.

From Australia, Sr. Adele Howard, RSM, beautifully described the Mercy integration process of *Laudato Si* in the Sisters of Mercy Congregation. Their journey had four stages: see, judge, reflect and act which enabled the Sisters to set their priorities in their responses to the needs of the earth and the poor. This experience has made a significant contribution to the local church and in the broader community where there are Mercy Sisters and where they have their institutions. Participants met in 274 groups, in various countries and generated plans in two areas: 1) in response to the displacement of persons and 2) in relation to the degradation of Earth.

Sr. Julia Arciniegas, FMA (Colombian National) and Sister Victoria Ulate, FMA Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, Salesians of St. John Bosco, presented their community in action in India, Ireland and the United States. Their diorama vividly displayed the inspiring spirit of the Sisters' work in their various ministries in these countries. The expressions on the faces of those involved in the various projects spoke volumes of how meaningful these experiences were for them. Through *Laudato Si* they have been encouraged to address the harmful effects of pollution and have careful use of

paper and power. They are ocean guardians and have studied marine life and are working to eliminate plastics. Life-labs encourage many activities such as tree planting, organic farming and using rain water.

Marisa Vertrees, Organizing Director at GCCM and Tomás Insua, Executive Director of GCCM, spoke about the *Laudato Si* Animators Program, which educates people through the “See, Judge, Act,” looking at the science of Climate Change, the church’s response and our personal call. They cited their work to support the Synod on the Amazon, Earth Day campaign promoting the planting of trees and a call to advocacy. This is an appeal to write government officials asking for a clear plan to be put in place to keep global warming well below 1.5 Celsius. GCCM also has a youth group called the *Laudato Si* Generation which is strongly supporting the climate strikes being led by Greta Thunberg.

Please sign the [Global Deal for Nature](#) calling on world leaders to support nature that protects and restores half of the Earth’s lands and oceans.

Click here for the [webinars](#).

JUSTICE AS A LIFESTYLE



L-R: Raoul Traoré, FSC, Odette Gapira, CMT and Felix Mushobozi, CPPS.

Justice as a lifestyle was the subject of the April meeting of the Spanish/Portuguese JPIC Promoters. It was developed in three interconnected parts: 1) The sociological foundation of Justice: justice in the civil society; 2) The biblical/theological perspective of justice; 3) Justice in the perspective of the Consecrated life.

Raoul Traoré, FSC presented the first part, highlighting the importance of moral conscience, social values and inner liberty. “Justice is based on what the society de-

fines as good according to its own values. Its purpose is to establish a just society, repressing what is evil and celebrating what is good. Justice consists in bringing back the individuals to social values, healing relationships and reestablishing confidence.”

“In the human being’s heart God has written his law: moral conscience. This is the voice of God speaking in the most intimate of the human person, allowing it to discern between evil and good, and calling it to choose good and reject evil”. This topic challenges us about fair trading and patient capital.

The second part was presented by Odette Gapira, CMT who recalled that “Jesus’ life is the the most influencing life ever lived on this planet, and it is an increasing influence.” (Kenneth Scott). For Jesus, to be just is to love. “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples.” (John 13:34-35)

Sister Odette also shared her experience with persons who are excluded from society due to leprosy in Eastern DRC, as well as the closeness of the missionaries.

The third part was presented by Felix Mushobozi, CPPS, who called us to contemplate a God who dreams a new humanity: a new and different humanity, that is fraternal and shows solidarity, where each person lives in fullness, with the dignity for which it has been created—“in the image and likeness of God,” in communion with God, with the others and with the whole creation, without national, cultural, religious barriers, where everybody is recognized as son and daughter of the same Father and as brothers and sisters.

The increasing and active participation in the present historical context of the mission of the Church appears to be the feature of the renovation process of Consecrated Life. Indeed, they implement a “social” mission through the works of their Institutes or of the local Church, including in places where circumstances demand new initiatives that take them closer to the life and problems of the people. St. Teresa of Calcuta has been mentioned as an exemplary religious who was close to the poorest of our times.

Participants broke into small groups to identify the persons who are excluded in our contexts. Our influence on surrounding culture was considered, and ways were explored for an evangelization of our cultural behavior.—Contributed by Sister Odette Gapira, CMT

Resources available on the [Spanish JPIC website](#).

MAY INTENTION POPE FRANCIS

[The Church in Africa, a Seed of Unity](#): That the Church in Africa, through the commitment of its members, may be the seed of unity among her peoples and a sign of hope for this continent.

MAY INTERNATIONAL DAYS

11 May—[Fair Trade](#) is a global event that aims to draw attention to the objectives and achievements of the Fair Trade movement by highlighting solutions and actions.

15 May—[The International Day of the Families](#) 2019 theme: “Families and Climate Action: Focus on SDG 13.” The day promotes education and awareness of issues and calls forth the integrating of climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning.

16 May—The [International Day of Living Together in Peace](#) is to promote the creation of “a worldwide movement in favor of an awareness that a fraternal bond based on the Culture of Peace is a necessity for Humanity.”

21 May—[World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development](#) celebrates cultural diversity as a means of providing new perspectives for sustainable development and promoting creative industry resources for millions of jobs worldwide— particularly for youth and women.

22 May—[International Day for Biological Diversity](#) stresses the theme “Our Biodiversity, Our Food, Our Health.” In so doing it recognizes that biodiversity is the foundation for life and for the essential services provided by ecosystems.

23 May—[End Obstetric Fistula Day](#) is meant to significantly raise awareness and intensify actions towards ending obstetric fistula. Sufferers often endure depression, social isolation and deepening poverty.

24 May—Fourth Anniversary of *Laudato Si* and Global Student Strike to Protest Climate Change and Government Inaction

29 May—[International Day of UN Peacekeepers](#) honors the more than one million men and women who have

served under the UN flag with care and courage since 1948. More than 3,400 have lost their lives in service.

[Click here for a listing of the international days for the year.](#)

MAY JPIC PROMOTERS MEETINGS

8 May—Spanish and Portuguese Speaking Promoters Meeting, “Different types of Justice,” 9 am to 12 pm at UISG.

13 May—English Speaking CORE Group meeting, 3 pm to 5 pm at the Fratelli.

15 May—JPIC Promoters Meeting, 9 am to 12 pm at UISG. It will feature Fr. Joshtrom Kureethadam, SDB, Coordinator of the sector on Ecology and Creation in the Dicastery for the Promotion of Integral Human Develop (DPIHD). He will discuss the purpose of the sector and describe some of the upcoming program opportunities. Promoters will be engaged in a dialogue around how we can work together with some of the major upcoming events. This is an exciting opportunity to be involved in these possibilities.

16 May—Refugees and Migrants Working Group, 3 pm to 5 pm at the Fratelli.

27 May—JPIC Commission Meeting from 9 am to 12:30 pm at UISG. For commission members only.

31 May—Africa Working Group, 3:30 pm to 5:30 pm at the Missionaries of Africa curia

31 May—Prayer “Different types of Justice,” 7 pm to 8 pm at Chiesa San Marcello.

SAVE THE DATE

2-6 December—Formation Workshop for JPIC Promoters. Theme: “Call to holiness as contemplatives in action: promoting God’s reign of justice, peace and love.” This JPIC Formation Workshop provides new Promoters with the tools needed to animate members of their congregation. Others engaged in JPIC-related ministries are welcome to attend the full workshop or individual sessions. For more information and to register, visit the [JPIC website](#).

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