

< JPIC NEWS PROVINCE OF ST BARBARA >

ISSUE #1 - EASTER SEASON 2007

NEWSLETTER OF THE JUSTICE, PEACE AND THE INTEGRITY OF CREATION OFFICE

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JPIC Council – New Members

With adoption of the report on re-organizing the JPIC project of our province, **Keith Warner, OFM** was appointed the Chair of the JPIC Council. The other members will include **Matt Tumulty, OFM**, **Bill Minkel, OFM**, **Regan Chapman, OFM**, and **Franklin Fong, OFM** (JPIC Animator).

During this interim period, **Franklin** will be half-time with the St Francis Parish as Parochial Vicar, and half-time in the JPIC Office Sacramento from March 1, to June 30, 2007. The JPIC Office will continue to be located in the Provincial Offices in St Francis Friary,. From July 1, 2007, **Franklin** will be full-time in the JPIC Office.

This interim period will give **Franklin** some time to set up the office area and to establish the office setting, files, and to begin preparing some of the resources for JPIC. In addition, he will begin this newsletter, preparing news items for **Friars News** and do some interviewing of the friars and laity who are doing JPIC ministry within the Province.

The full report of the vision statement of the ad-hoc committee for reviewing the JPIC ministry in our Province is available in the last Definitorium Minutes. If you wish to receive your own copy of vision statement report, please email me with your request.

We have opened a new email account (jpicsacramento@yahoo.com) and are making plans to start a 'blog' (web-bulletin board) for our province's JPIC affairs

A Tucson Walk to Commemorate the Migrants

We Walk for Life: A 75 mile walk from Sásabe, Sonora, MX to Tucson, AZ

This call for action now is to prevent the tragic deaths of migrants in the desert. Thousands of men, women, and children have died due to border militarization and unjust immigration and international economic policies.

The Migrant Trail: We Walk for Life was the idea of three people who decided to first do the walk in 2004 as an act of solidarity with migrants and to raise awareness about the deaths and terrible plight that migrants face. A total of 30 people did the entire walk the first year and about 50 did the walk in 2005. Both years over 100 walkers have joined the walk for the final leg into Tucson. Walkers have come from many states and countries.

Community support for the walk has been overwhelming. Meals are delivered to the walkers by numerous organizations and individuals and one church along the route has hosted the walk overnight both years. Each year more organizations have helped organize the walk. The walk itself has been an important community building experience with walkers organized into teams which cover all aspects of the journey. Many walkers have commented that the camaraderie experienced during the walk was the best part of all.

The walk is not intended to simulate the experience migrants face as they cross the gauntlet of death. Walkers are accompanied by

support vehicles, unlimited food and water, and medical attention: things that the migrants themselves desperately lack. However by walking 75 miles in the hot summer sun we try to make a small contribution that will some day lead to change on the border. No one should be forced to risk their life in order to provide for their family.

On the journey that is the Migrant Trail, participants often have chosen to walk with or carrying certain symbols to represent their witness of the lives and deaths of our migrant brothers and sisters. These objects can include crosses, rosaries, personal items, and photos. The intent of these things was to simply reaffirm what those who are walking already know: *the casualties of the border are human beings—mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers, daughters, sons, and friends.*

Registration **for Migrant Trail 2007** has begun!

Our brothers **David Buer, OFM, Luis Guzman, OFM and Adrian Peelo, OFM** participated last year's program and will be participating as well in this year's witness for peace in the desert. Our **JPIC Office** will be one of the many supporters of this dramatic witness for peace at the border.

If you are interested in joining them, please speak to **Luis Guzman, Adrian Peelo, David Buer or Franklin Fong** for more information.



Catholic Lobby Day (April 24 Tuesday, 9am – 4 pm)

The Catholic Lobby Day Focus: the policy choices our State faces pose significant challenges for our Church. “As Catholic citizens, we are called to provide a moral haven for our democracy, to be the salt of the earth, to protect human life and to stand with those who are poor and vulnerable. Every voice counts.” *Faithful Citizenship; A Catholic Call to Political Responsibility’ A statement of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops.*

The Day’s activities will include: **a. Welcome & Issue Briefing; b. Mass; c. March to the Capitol; d. Rally; e. Lunch; f. Legislative Visits.** If you are interested in joining this Catholic Lobby Day, **let me know by April 15th** and we can add your name to the registration list. The JPIC Office will pay the registration fee of \$5 per person. Programs will be held at Blessed Sacrament Cathedral and the State Capitol Building.

The California Catholic Conference invites concerned Catholics from all over the state to raise our voices in sincere dialogue. You can find more details about the California Catholic Conference of Bishops at their major website: <http://www.cacatholic.org/>

The CCC has selected four major bills for Catholics to lobby (see below). You can readily read the backgrounder fact sheet for each of these four issues (English and Spanish) through the websites listed below.

AB 374 (Berg, D-Santa Rosa) *California Compassionate Choices Act*
(legalization of assisted suicide)

<http://www.cacatholic.org/LD2007/AB374Backgrounder.pdf> (English)

<http://www.cacatholic.org/LD2007/AB374BackgrounderSp.pdf> (Spanish)

SB 160 (Cedillo, D-Los Angeles) *California Dream Act*
(allowing qualified immigrants to apply for college loans)

<http://www.cacatholic.org/LD2007/SB160Backgrounder.pdf> (English)

<http://www.cacatholic.org/LD2007/SB160BackgrounderSp.pdf> (Spanish)

AB 1539 (Krekorian, D-Glendale) *Sentencing*
(Compassionate release of terminally ill prisoners)

<http://www.cacatholic.org/LD2007/AB1539Backgrounder.pdf> (English)

<http://www.cacatholic.org/LD2007/AB1539BackgrounderSp.pdf> (Spanish)

AB 1060 (Laird, D-Santa Cruz) *Food Stamp Program*
(sensible changes in reporting requirements which will increase food security)

<http://www.cacatholic.org/LD2007/AB1060Backgrounder.pdf> (English)

<http://www.cacatholic.org/LD2007/AB1060BackgrounderSp.pdf> (Spanish)

There are other issues which be lobbied as well, but do not have backgrounder information prepared as of April 16, 2007. These 7 topics will be: **a. Reverence For Life; b. Economic and Environmental Justice; c. Restorative Justice; d. Immigration; e. Education; f. Religious Liberty & Family Life; and g. Health Care.**

REVERENCE FOR LIFE:

SB 462 (Torlakson, D-Antioch) *Hospice providers: hospice licensed beds* would permit a certified hospice provider to provide inpatient care within an existing licensed health facility or residential care facility for the elderly as well as in a hospice facility.

AB 81 (Torrico, D-Fremont) *Child protection: child surrender* would expand current law from 72 hours old up to 30 days for the infant’s age that parents/guardians could surrender at a designated location, includes \$5 million for an awareness campaign.

AB 34 (Portantino, D-Pasadena) *Umbilical cord blood collection program* would require the Department of Health Services to establish the program to collect and store umbilical cord blood for public use.

AB 1009 (Benoit, R-Riverside) *Fetal pain prevention* would enact the Unborn Child Pain Awareness Act of 2008 to require—except in an emergency—that the physician performing the abortion offer the pregnant woman information and counseling on fetal pain.

ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE:

AB 21 (Jones, D-Sacramento) *Income taxes: earned income tax credit (EITC)* would, starting January 1, 2008, allow a tax credit to qualified individuals equal to 15 percent of the federal minimum alternate tax income threshold.

AB 433 (Beall, D-San Jose) *Food Stamp Program: categorical eligibility* would make it easier for Medi-Cal recipients to get food stamps and would seek to rename the Food Stamp Program to reflect its value as a health and nutrition program.

AB 1078 (Lieber, D-Mountain View) *Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) CalWORKs* would provide that any income derived by an individual from the EITC shall not affect eligibility relating to CalWORKs.

SB 324 (Migden, D-San Francisco) *Electricity: solar energy: low income residential housing* would expand the definition of low income housing to include residential housing that is occupied by individuals eligible for the California Alternative Rates for Energy (CARE) program or the Low-Income Energy Efficiency (LIEE) program.

SR 3 (Kehoe, D-San Diego) *Relative to low-income home energy assistance* recognizes the increasing costs of energy for residential use and its impact on many of Californian's low income and senior population and asks the President and Congress to increase funding for the federal LIHEAP program.

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE:

AB 1300 (Price, D-Inglewood) *Family Connection & Young Offender Rehabilitation Act of 2007* would expand juvenile programs in the CDCR to include comprehensive education with the goal of producing youth who are law abiding and productive members of society.

SB 299 (Romero, D-Los Angeles) *Department of Corrections & Rehabilitation: Honor Program* would require an Honor Program for level III and IV inmates, those who need to be in an environment that allows behavioral change to be positively reinforced.

SB 999 (Yee, D-San Francisco) *Crime* would provide that the maximum sentence for a defendant, who committed a crime when under the age of 18, be 25 years to life rather than life without the possibility of parole.

IMMIGRATION:

AJR 18 (Solorio, D-Santa Ana) *Legal Permanent residents: U.S. citizenship* would memorialize the legislature's opposition to a proposed increase in the fees for legal permanent residents to begin the naturalization process by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services and would call upon the President and Congress to address the nations system of financing immigration services.

ACR 28 (Alarcon, D-Los Angeles) *National Day of Human Trafficking Awareness* would recognize January 11 each year in order to encourage greater awareness of human trafficking and all other forms of modern day slavery.

EDUCATION:

SB 344 (Steinberg, D-Sacramento) *Pupils dropout prevention and intervention* would require school district to track and report on pupils who failed a year-long course or who had more than 10 unexcused absences in any semester.

SB 406 (Steinberg, D-Sacramento) *Pupil work permit* would authorize certified employees who are employed by the school district and authorized by the superintendent of the district, to issue a permit to work to a minor enrolled in the school and would authorize a similar procedure for private schools.

SB 325 (Scott, D-Pasadena) *California Post-Secondary Education Accountability Act of 2007* expresses the intent of the legislature to create a CPSEA structure so as to annually assess the effectiveness of California's postsecondary education system. This would be accomplished by annual reports issued by the regents and the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities.

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY AND FAMILY LIFE:

AB 43 (Leno, D-San Francisco) *Gender-neutral marriage* would enact the "Religious Freedom and Civil Marriage Protection Act, which would redefine marriage as a personal relation arising out of a civil contract between two persons. Legislative "findings": Prior to 1977 California marriage law was "gender-neutral."

AB 16 (Hernandez, D-Baldwin Park) *Pupil immunizations - HPV vaccine* would require, as of July 1, 2009, every female entering the 7th grade in public school to have received the HPV immunization, which appears to prevent some types of cervical cancer. We are requesting an "opt-in," i.e. parents must request, not be required, to access the vaccine for their daughters.

HEALTH CARE:

AB 8 (Nunez, D-Los Angeles) *Health care coverage: Employers & Employees* would create the California cooperative Health Insurance Purchasing Program (Cal-CHIPP) which would function as a purchasing pool for health care coverage and be administered by MRMIB.

SB 48 (Perata, D-Oakland) *Health care coverage: employers and employees* would create the Health Insurance Connector, administered by the MRMIB, to function as a purchasing tool for health care coverage and would require employers to provide healthcare coverage or pay a fee to the Connector.

SB 840 (Kuehl, D-Santa Monica) *Single payer health coverage* would establish the California Universal Healthcare System which would—on a single-payer basis—negotiate for or set fees for health care services provided through the system and pay claims for those services.

AB 770 (Hernandez, D-Baldwin Park) *Health care coverage: agriculture employees* would state various findings regarding health care coverage and declare the intent of the legislature to provide coverage to agricultural employees and to lower total health care costs for agricultural employers.

Earth Day (April 21 Saturday)

The Catholic Church's engagement with environmental issues derives from its belief that Christians have a responsibility to work for the well being of all humanity. The foundations for Catholic environmental concern are found in the Church's doctrine of the goodness of creation and in its firm resolve to defend the dignity of each human being, especially the poor and vulnerable. "Environmental justice" expresses the Church's conviction that the human dimension must be kept in focus whenever ecological issues are discussed.

The Catholic Church carries out its teaching and service on behalf of the earth and its people through an extensive institutional network: parish churches, parochial schools, hospitals, religious orders and their communities, dioceses, archdioceses, and state Catholic Conferences, and national Catholic organizations. As a religious communion spanning the globe, the Catholic Church brings an international perspective to issues of environment, peace, justice, and economic development.

Church leaders have called on Catholics to recognize environmental stewardship as their Christian responsibility and have illuminated the social justice values at stake in environmental policy. Catholic scholars have explored and developed these insights, showing how the message of environmental stewardship and justice is rooted in Church teachings. That message has become part of the fabric of Catholic life, from the local parish to national organizations and associations. Worship and education play a key role in connecting care for creation with Catholic spirituality, motivating concrete actions to promote environmental justice. Whether by modeling environmentally responsible stewardship of buildings and grounds, advocating just and sustainable public policies, or addressing environmental

problems and reaching out to those most afflicted by them, Catholics are making a difference in their communities and their world.

Since 1993, the Environmental Justice Program of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops has supported and encouraged these sorts of local efforts by parishes and dioceses. Its website provides background information, resources, and abundant and inspiring examples of how people of faith can respond to a planet in need.

For more information about the **National Religious Partnership for the Environment** go to their website: <http://www.nrpe.org/whatisthepartnership/index.html>

For more information about Earth day go to:

<http://www.earthday.net/programs/religious/default.aspx>

<http://earthday.envirolink.org/>

Earth Day Events Across the Province

Wednesday, April 18, 2007 10 am – 2 pm Oakland, CA The Sustainable Urban Environment "Together we can do great things," Mayor Dellums says. On Wednesday, April 18th, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m., in Frank Ogawa Plaza, over 100 dynamic businesses and organizations will showcase their contributions to Oakland's sustainable urban environment. City staff can mingle with others of Oakland's downtown workforce tasting organic produce, touching green building materials, seeing Bay-friendly landscaping ideas, listening to a "chalk talk" by the City's energy efficiency expert, asking questions, making connections, learning about programs and ideas, and discovering opportunities to make a positive difference.

April 21, 2007, Sacramento, CA. Sr Linda Gibler, OP will present "From Stardust to Us: Our God-Drenched Universe" from 8:30 AM – 3:30 PM in Brunsman Hall, St Francis Parish (26th St and "K" Street). Learn about Earth-centered, Catholic-spirituality via story, DVDs. Lecture, ritual, music and prayer. (\$10 donation includes lunch.)

April 21, 2007, Paso Robles, CA Paso Robles Earth Day Food and Wine Festival Come celebrate Earth Day with earth friendly cuisine, wine tasting, live music, and exhibits highlighting products for sustainable communities.

April 21, 2007, Redondo Beach, CA, City sponsored event in partnership with the SEA Laboratory a coastal science center in Redondo Beach that offers programs for children of all ages.

April 21, 2007, Spokane, WA. 11:00 am- 3:00 pm Spokane Earth Day Event, at Riverfront Park, downtown Spokane, WA. November Coalition will be hosting a table & display on "*Prisons and Environmental Racism*".

April 21, 2007; Portland, OR Earth Day 2007: Planting Seeds of Community at Woodlawn Park The City Repair Project and the Woodlawn Neighborhood Association announce the 8th Annual Earth Day Celebration at Woodlawn Park in NE Portland on April 21, 2007. Each year, the Earth Day Coalition promotes awareness of environmental issues through the sponsorships of local and sustainable organizations and businesses from the Portland metro area.

Apr 21 2007, 8:00a to 12:00p 2007 Earth Day **Huntington Beach, CA:** Repair and replace chick fence and nesting area in the Least Tern Preserve. Beach cleanup. Meet at Huntington State Beach lifeguard headquarters located at Magnolia and Pacific Coast Highway. Entrance at Magnolia Street. Parking fees waived for volunteers. Follow signs to park.

April 21, 2007 12:00 PM - 05:00 PM Berkeley Earth Day Civic Center Park, 2151 Martin Luther King Jr. Way . Berkeley Earth Day is an annual event held in April to celebrate the environmental movement and creatively challenge the destruction of our planet. We provide cultural performers, speakers and resources to link individuals and groups with each other in community based ecological activities.

April 21, 2007 10am-4pm City of Fremont Parks & Recreation Dept. The City of Fremont and local non-profit environmental groups are hosting an Earth Day event in Fremont called 'Earth Day Family Fair 2007.' Bring recyclables and old electronics for drop off. Entertainment and activities include live music by Fremont folk singer Michael McNevin, East Bay Depot for Creative Reuse featuring Madame Ovary, free raffle and tree giveaway, Friends of the Library Book Sale, Poster Judging Contest, and other exhibit booths. Beverages and snacks will be available for purchase.

Sunday, April 22, 2007 10 am - 5:30 pm Santa Barbara. South Coast Earth Day Festival Santa Barbara County Courthouse Sunken Gardens

This year's theme - "Global Warming: Change Begins with Learning" - takes a timely look at climate change through both scientific and artistic lenses. The festival will emphasize personal and community action, with displays of renewable energy technologies, conservation techniques, and advanced-fueled vehicles. This year a partnership with the Bren School will bring several new elements, including a display of striking polar bear images by noted wildlife photographer Howard Ruby. Watch for these images on flags along State Street in Santa Barbara during Earth Week, and in a large photographic installation at the festival. The festival and the activities leading up to it are great ways for the community to explore the causes and solutions of a warming climate.

April 22, 2007 11 am – 5 pm Sacramento State University – Main Quad

"Act Locally – Live Sustainably" This program will feature important resource information for sustainable living throughout the year, local musicians, delicious food from local eateries, farmers, an amazing wild-life exhibit. A labyrinth, demos on healing arts. Attendance is expected to exceed 8,000 persons.

Congressional Recess: An Opportunity to Contact your Senators or Representatives

We're grateful for this is a message our JPIC Office received from the SFO Social Justice Minister Mary Mundan, SFO. This is a great example of how we can work together with the larger Franciscan family to present the Franciscan perspective at a national level.

Members of the House and Senate will be back home in their districts and states on recess from of April 2-9 (the House will be on recess until April 13). Please use this opportunity to communicate with your Senators and Representatives, by attending town halls, arranging site visits, and setting up appointments to meet with them in their district offices. **Urge them to give priority to the needs of the poor and vulnerable, at home and abroad, in their decision making.**

SCHIP Reauthorization: Update and Next Steps

With the efforts of our Catholic network to support Children's Health Care, a 'Call-In' sponsored by USCCB, Catholic Charities USA, the Catholic Health Association and other Catholic organization resulted in passage in both the House and the Senate resolutions calling for up to \$50 billion over five years for the reauthorization of the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP). SCHIP provides high quality, vital health coverage to more than 4 million children in great need, whose families would otherwise be unable to afford health insurance. We are calling on Congress to provide adequate funding to continue to cover those children, and to reach the millions of children who are uninsured and eligible for SCHIP or Medicaid but not enrolled. By some estimates, states could need up to \$60 billion over the next five years.

When Congress returns they will work on a final version of the budget. **Contact your Senators and Representatives during the recess and ask them to support a final budget resolution with enough funding to cover all children eligible for SCHIP or Medicaid – at least the \$50 billion already approved by both Houses.**

Farm Bill Reauthorization

This year Congress must reauthorize the Farm Bill, a broad bill which sets U.S. policy in key areas that affect domestic farmers and food producers, domestic food consumers, and farmers in developing countries. This presents an opportunity to reshape our agricultural policies to build a more just framework that better serves rural communities and small and moderate-size family farms in the U.S., promotes good stewardship of the land, overcomes hunger here and abroad, and helps vulnerable farmers and their families in developing countries. **Contact your Senators and Representatives and share with them the Farm Bill priorities of the U.S. bishops and partners National Catholic Rural Life Conference, Catholic Charities USA, and Catholic Relief Services:**

- Increasing investments that combat rural poverty and strengthen rural communities
- Strengthening and expanding programs that reduce hunger and improve nutrition in the United States
- Strengthening and increasing investment in policies that promote conservation and good stewardship of the land
- Providing transitions for farmers to alternative forms of support that are more equitable and do not distort trade in ways that fuel hunger and poverty
- Protecting the health and safety of farmworkers
- Expanding research related to alternative and renewable forms of energy
- Providing direct food aid efficiently and effectively to hungry people in other nations

For more information on the Farm bill, go to <http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/projects/csmg2007.htm> and click on 2007 Farm Bill Hill Note and 2007 Farm Bill Backgrounder.

Immigration Policy

On Thursday, March 22, Representatives Luis Gutierrez of Illinois and Jeff Flake of Arizona introduced the **STRIVE Act (Security through Regularized Immigration and a Vibrant Economy Act) of 2007**. The legislation contains many of the elements outlined by the U.S. bishops as necessary for a comprehensive immigration reform plan. In the meantime, Senator Edward M. Kennedy has been developing legislation on the Senate side, while the White House and Senate Republicans have been discussing their own proposal. It is likely, though, that a comprehensive reform bill will be debated in the Senate in mid to late May. Please contact your elected officials and tell them that comprehensive immigration reform should be enacted in 2007.

Minimum Wage

Both the House and the Senate have voted to increase the minimum wage from \$5.15/hour to \$7.25/hour. But the increase has not yet become law because while both the House and the Senate include a package of tax cuts for small businesses with the minimum wage increase, they cannot agree on how much those cuts should be. A large bipartisan majority in the House of Representatives and the United States Senate support raising the minimum wage; an overwhelming number of Americans support raising the minimum wage; and still millions of low wage workers haven't received a raise. While the USCCB does not have a particular position on the tax provisions, the Conference supports a minimum wage increase – now - as an overdue and small step to helping the poorest workers in our country. **Urge your Senators and Representatives to resolve their disagreement and send a minimum wage increase to the President to sign into law.**