

## < JPIC NEWS >

### PROVINCE OF ST BARBARA

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

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## Human Rights Issues at the UN

**Franciscans International (FI)** associates itself with a global petitioning campaign launched by a group of NGOs, in order to express its support to the Special Procedures. The **United Nations Human Rights Council’s** special reporters and representatives, independent experts and working groups, - collectively known as the ‘Special Procedures’ - , are among the most innovative, flexible and responsive tools created by the UN to promote and protect human rights. They cover various human rights issues which are of great concern to FI and its members, such as the rights to education, to food, to health, the rights of migrants and of minorities, freedom of religion, the right to be free from torture, human trafficking, violence against women, to mention just a few examples.

Some mandates also exercise scrutiny over the human rights situation in certain countries. They have helped thousands of individuals whose rights were violated or threatened. (More on the Special Procedures on the following UN website:  
<http://www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/chr/special/index.htm> )

The **United Nations Human Rights Council** is currently discussing changes to the Special Procedures through a review, ***which must be completed by June 2007.***

Despite the clear need for the **Human Rights Council** to strengthen the Special Procedures, several states are instead proposing changes that would cripple the ability of Special Procedures to promote and protect human rights effectively. Those states are disregarding the harm that such measures would do to the men, women and children whose human rights are violated every day in all parts of the world, and who look to the Special Procedures to intervene on their behalf and defend their rights.

**FI** believes that it is crucial to show to these states and to the international community as a whole our strong support to these Procedures, and calls on its members to take action for the protection of the UN Special Procedures by signing the petition, which can be found at:

[www.actforspecialprocedures.org](http://www.actforspecialprocedures.org)

## Ten Elements of Effective Advocacy

A talk presented by **Marie Dennis, SFO** (Director of **Maryknoll Office For Global Concerns**) and forwarded to us by **Dr. Elias Mallon, SA, PhD, Franciscans International** ([www.FranciscansInternational.org](http://www.FranciscansInternational.org)) .

Presented to **the National Gathering of Franciscan Family**, Baltimore, March 7 – 9, 2007 which was attended by **Mel Jurisich, OFM** and **Mark Schroeder, OFM** who represented the **English Speaking Conference of the OFM**.

1. A good sense of opportunity. Knowing what decisions are under consideration or being able to help put important issues on the table for discussion, e.g. World Bank, IMF, US Treasury, G8, or US Congress to consider debt reduction.
2. Experience that gives good, clear insight into a problem.
3. Experience that helps shape proposals for solutions to the problem.
4. The ability to provide decision makers with succinct, accurate information and/or accounts of reality that help them understand the impact of their decisions. Ability to maintain links with the grassroots and to put anecdotal information in a form useful for policy debate.
5. The ability to express opinion with ideological baggage. We have to take sides with those who are excluded and at the same time keep a critical distance from partisan politics.
6. Maintain a grassroots network that can be activated effectively and in a timely manner.
7. Maintain relationships in every direction (including the politically powerful) based on respect and trust.
8. Develop and maintain diverse advocacy coalitions.
9. Have a willingness to work inside and outside places of power to inform and dialogue with decision makers inside and to bring the pressure public opinion to bear from the outside.
10. Maintain the belief that a better world is possible and the courage to act to make it a reality.

## Reduce Poverty in America

**Catholic Charities USA** has launched a Campaign blog as an interactive site to post Campaign activities on a daily basis. The new Campaign blog allows anyone interested in reducing poverty in America to read what's new, instantly respond to messages and retrieve current, valuable ideas and resources. Blogging allows you to easily search and archive a comprehensive anthology of Campaign activities, news stories, field events, etc.

The success of the Campaign blog hinges upon current, compelling content that encourages you to return day after day. We will strive to include interesting and thought-provoking content so that you will be compelled to voice your opinion, share your ideas and express your concerns. CCUSA hopes that this Campaign blog will help to create a sense of community and serve as a way to learn what agencies and individuals across the country are doing to reduce poverty in America. CCUSA hopes this blog will continue the discussion on poverty and move more people to take action. Visit the **Campaign to Reduce Poverty in America** blog.: [http://povertyinamerica.typepad.com/campaign/2007/05/take\\_the\\_food\\_s.html](http://povertyinamerica.typepad.com/campaign/2007/05/take_the_food_s.html)

One of the ways that each local community (family or friary) can begin to move from a purely academic view of poverty is to try this **“Take the Food Stamp Challenge”**. Most of us will never face the prospect of going without a meal. We can only imagine what a life of hunger and poverty must be like. The reality, however, is more present than many of us realize:

**35 million Americans don't have enough to eat**

**Four out of five food stamp recipients in our country are children**

*See if you can eat nutritious meals on \$3.00 a day. Experience the reality faced by millions of Americans living in poverty.*

### **The Challenge:**

Take one week and buy your groceries using the average food stamp benefit of \$3.00 per person per day and then...

- Send me a email comment about what happened during that week and describe your experience.
- Talk with friends and neighbors about the sacrifices you were forced to make.
- Talk to another friar about what happened.
- Learn about and endorse **Catholic Charities USA's Campaign to Reduce Poverty in America** and invite friends, family and fellow parishioners to endorse the campaign as well!
- Encourage community groups and organizations that you are a part of to endorse the campaign as well.

For those who are living alone, consider doing this challenge as written. For those who live in communities, it may be interesting to simply find out how much is actually spent in your local friary for food (exclude drinks and non-food items) on a weekly basis. Divide this amount of money by the number of meals prepared during the week. This would give you the average cost per meal. Finally, with this number of the “average cost per meal” divide it by the average number of friars who are eating at each meal. This final number would give you the average cost per meal per friar.

This website includes a very extensive overview of the Catholic Social Teaching on Poverty. It includes scriptural references and commentary, an overview of the USCC Bishop's Pastoral letters, Papal letters and statements and other Catholic resources.

(<http://www.catholiccharitiesusa.org/poverty/cst.cfm> )

## Hope, Healing and Restoration **CATHOLIC LOBBY DAY 2007**

This year the **U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops** filmed the **Catholic Lobby Day** (Sacramento, CA) for a new **Faithful Citizenship DVD**, which will be a companion piece with the Bishops' new "**Faithful Citizenship**" statement issued later this year. The DVD will have a presentation for English-speaking adults, one for Spanish-speaking adults, and one for teens. The DVD, which is funded by the **USCCB's Catholic Communication Campaign**, will be available through the USCCB's Publication Office.

The **California Conference of Bishops** have developed an extensive executive summary for each of the following four pieces of legislation that are under debate:

**NO on Physican-Assisted Suicide (AB 374);**

Web: <http://www.cacatholic.org/LD2007/bgab374.html>

**YES on Compassionate Release of Terminally-III Prisoners (AB 1539);**

Web: <http://www.cacatholic.org/LD2007/bgab1539.html>

**YES on Food Security for the Poor (AB 1060);**

Web: <http://www.cacatholic.org/LD2007/bgab1060.html>

**YES on Inclusion of Immigrants in College Loan Programs (SB160).**

<http://www.cacatholic.org/LD2007/bgsb160.html>

Go to the **California Conference of Bishops** website:

<http://www.cacatholic.org/LD2007/> to read about the activities of the day and more details on national issues. Representatives of several California Dioceses were present for a day of lobbying (**Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernadino, San Francisco, Monterey and Sacramento**). The homily by Bishop Gabino Zavala may be accessed through the following website: <http://www.cacatholic.org/LD2007/cld2007homily.html>



*If any friars or interested laity are interested in joining me for next year's Lobby Day event in May 2008 – let me know at the JPIC Office. For those who may be more interested in national politics, there will be the Ecumenical Advocacy Days (March 2008) in Washington, D.C. This event is co-sponsored by Holy Name Province.*

## Major Legislation Being Considered in Sacramento

The **Catholic Conference of Bishops** has highlighted over 40 pieces of proposed legislation that are currently being considered. You can readily see the progress that each bill has made to date (May 4<sup>th</sup>) by going to their website. This listing is sorted by the assigned number of the bill, the bill's sponsor(s), followed by a brief description of the basic elements of the bill. Then, for each bill, the CCC (California Conference of Catholic Bishops) has written a recommendation, followed by the name of a contact person and a summary of any recent action taken on this bill. ***This is one the best legislative summaries I have come across!***

Website: <http://www.cacatholic.org/2007majorlegs.php>

## JPIC Activities by the Friars

*If you're doing any writing or speaking about JPIC issues, please let us know when and where you'll be doing this article or program.*

**Larry Dunphy, OFM** has begun writing a bi-weekly column for the St Francis Parish, Sacramento website for more information and to read his column.

<http://www.stfrancisparish.com/>

**Louie Vitalie, OFM** will be talking about “**TORTURE ON TRIAL**” to the faith community and the Social Action Committee at the **Renewal Center (Scottsdale)** on Wednesday, **May 16, 2007** at **7 PM**. The topics will include: the US role in teaching torture; interrogation procedures developed at Ft. Huachuca, AZ; his arrest and trial on June 4, 2007 for his protest activities on Nov 19, 2006; and a general discussion about what role we can take in opposing torture.

From **David Buer, OFM**

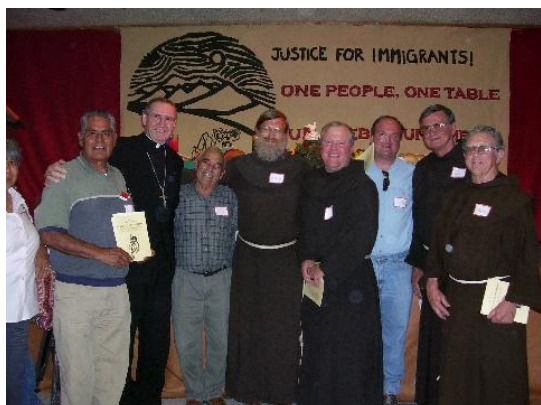
A Report on “**FRIARS IN MIGRANT MINISTRY (2003 to present)**”

**Cardinal Roger Mahoney** celebrated an outdoor mass with 2000 people in front of Annunciation House in El Paso on April 14<sup>th</sup>. Annunciation House was founded by **Ruben Garcia** and has offered hospitality to undocumented migrants for over 29 years. During his homily, **Cardinal Mahoney** continued to speak forthrightly on behalf of the obligation of the Church to be able to assist un-documented people in the United States. He reminded us that Jesus commands us to help those in need. He never asked us ‘to check’ if they have documents first.

A ‘border ministry’ in El Paso began in 2003 when three OFM Provinces (**Sacred Heart, St. John the Baptist, Our Lady of Guadalupe**) decided to begin an inter-provincial friary by the Summer 2004. In the summer of 2005, three friars from this El Paso border friary to join the ‘**Franciscans Along the Border**’ gathering in Topawa, AZ. Together with six other friars, including **Luis Guzman, ofm, Jose Luis Nerio, ofm, and David Buer, ofm**, participated along with three Franciscan Sisters and representatives from Catholic Relief Services, Casa Maria Catholic Worker, Annunciation House, Derechos Humanos, ‘No More Deaths—Phoenix’. This momentous meeting gave time for lively discussion of various issues of the ‘border’ situation as they met with the past and current Vice-Chairman of the **Tohono O'odam** tribe, with the **Border Patrol** and with **Sr. Angie Mayer, osf**.

In November 2006 there was an inter-provincial/inter-Franciscan justice and peace meeting on immigration issues. In attendance were **Jack Clark Robinson, ofm (Guadalupe Prov.)**; **Frank Probst, ofm (Sacred Heart Prov.)** and **Rigoberto Caloca-Rivas, ofm (St. Barbara Prov.)**

Currently, **Joe Nelson, ofm (Guadalupe Province)** and **Frank Probst, ofm (Sacred Heart Province)** are pastors at the La Purisima Mission on the border, and in Socorro, east of El Paso. **Henry Beck, ofm (St. John the Baptist Province)** is chaplain at the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP). **Francis Wendling, ofm (Guadalupe Prov.)** ministers across the border in Juarez, and is part of the extended friar community. Franciscan candidate **Chris Kerstiens** has just arrived and there was some discussion of hosting another ‘Franciscans Along the Border’ summit in 2008.



Friars and others involved with migrant ministry gather with **Cardinal Roger Mahoney** at Annunciation House's Solidarity Dinner where they gave **Cardinal Mahoney** their Voice of the Voiceless Award. The friars are (l-r) **David Buer, ofm (St. Barbara Province)**; **Frank Probst, ofm (Sacred Heart Province)**; **OFM Candidate Chris Kerstiens (Guadalupe Province)**; **Joe Nelson, ofm (Guadalupe Province)** and **Francis Wendling, ofm (Guadalupe Province)**.

## Action Alerts

NETWORK is the organization for the **National Catholic Social Justice Lobby**. They have a great website with extensive articles and suggested ways of responding to different issues. One of the most user-friendly sections of this website is their **ACTION ALERTS**. In the most recent website site they have guided the visitor to four different topic areas: **“Help the Iraqi People By Building Peace”**; **“The Emergency Supplemental Must Pass”**; **“Keep pressing for a Federal Budget Resolution”**; **“We Need A Just, Humane, and Family—Centered Immigration Policy”**. <http://www.networklobby.org/action/advocacy/index.html>

In each of these subsections, they provide you with a sample email message which you can edit to personalize to your opinions. This is about the most painless way make your opinions known to our representatives and senators.

## SPECIAL TELEVISION BROADCAST!

On Monday, June 4, the leading Democratic presidential contenders – **Hillary Clinton, Barack Obama, and John Edwards** – will be joining **Jim Wallis (Editor of Sojourners Magazine)** for a nationally televised conversation on faith, values, and poverty. Check your local cable television for the specific channel: 7 -8 pm EST.

Check the Sojourner's website for more updated information:

[http://www.sojo.net/index.cfm?action=action.display&item=P07\\_watch\\_signup](http://www.sojo.net/index.cfm?action=action.display&item=P07_watch_signup)

## Anti-torture Protest: June 6 Trial Date Set for Vitale

The following is a press release from the Nevada Desert Experience website:

<http://www.nevadadesertexperience.org/issues/2007/huachuca.htm>

### TORTURE ON TRIAL

### JUNE 6 TRIAL DATE SET FOR PRIESTS ARRESTED AT NOVEMBER ANTI-TORTURE PROTEST AND RELATED UPCOMING EVENTS

On Wednesday, June 6, **Fr. Louis Vitale and Fr. Stephen Kelly** will stand trial in U.S. District Court, 405 W. Congress St., Tucson, Arizona. They are charged with trespass and failure to obey an officer's orders for their nonviolent action on November 19, 2006 at Ft. Huachuca, in Sierra Vista, Arizona. The two men attempted to speak with enlisted personnel and give a letter condemning torture to the post commander of Ft. Huachuca. The two priests each face a maximum sentence of 10 months in prison.

**Fr. Vitale and Fr. Kelly** will give several talks in mid-May entitled "Torture on Trial". They will speak about the U.S. role in torture, Fort Huachuca and U.S. interrogation tactics, the Military Commissions Act of 2006, the School of the Americas and their upcoming trial. The talks, sponsored by **Pace e Bene** and SOA Watch, will take place on May 15, 16 and 17.

On May 15, the pair will speak to students at Brophy High School in Phoenix, AZ. **On May 16, their talk will be held at 7 p.m. at the Franciscan Renewal Center, 5802 E. Lincoln Dr., Scottsdale, AZ.** On May 17, the program will take place at Southside Presbyterian Church, 317 W. 23rd, Tucson, AZ with a 6:30 pm potluck and 7:30 pm talk.

On Tuesday, June 5, the eve of the trial, Tucson supporters will host a Festival of Hope starting at 6 p.m. at St. Mark's Presbyterian Church, 3809 E. 3rd St., Tucson, AZ. Please join **Frs. Vitale and Kelly**, lawyer Bill Quigley and others in a celebration of hope for a future free of the terror and injustice of torture and war. The evening will include talks, testimony of victims of torture, music, food and fellowship. **Fr. Louis Vitale**, a Franciscan priest, is an Action Advocate for Pace e Bene, co-founder of the Nevada Desert Experience and SOA Watch Prisoner of Conscience. **Fr. Stephen Kelly**, a Jesuit priest, has served time in prison for his participation in several Plowshares direct disarmament actions. In December, 2005, he served as chaplain for Witness to Torture, a delegation which marched through Cuba to the gates of the prison at Guantanamo Bay.

Please visit <http://tortureontrial.org> for updated information about the trial and related events.

**Let us keep Fr. Louie and Fr. Steve in our prayers as they prepare for their June 6th trial date.**