

< JPIC NEWS PROVINCE OF ST BARBARA >

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

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Franciscans Along The Border

Franciscans will be gathering at La Purisima Mission, in Socorro, TX from Wednesday **Nov 5th through Friday November 7th**. This will be a great opportunity to learn more about the migration/immigration along the border. There will planned presentations and conversations with various folks who are ministering in a variety of migrant sites along the border, including, **Ruben Garcia (Annunciation House), John Stowe, OFM Conv, Dr Tony Payan, (Violence in Juarez, MX), Sr. Chabela Galbas, (Chaparral, NM), Joe Nelson, OFM, Sr. Kathy Braun, OSF, Sr. Kathleen Erickson, OSF, Fr. Terry Gorski, OFM (Brownsville, TX) , Kat Rodriguez (Tucson, AZ) and Fr. Joe Nelson, OFM.** We are anticipating several friars from Mexico to join us in the program as well. **Joe Rozansky, OFM (OFM Curia)** who is from the International JPIC Office in Rome will also be present to speak on international perspectives on migration.

David Buer, OFM is the local organizer for this gathering. He suggests that if you are interested in joining this gathering to visit some migrant sites and to meet those who are ministering in this area, please **arrive at the El Paso, TX Airport no later than the morning of Wednesday (Nov 5)** and plan to **leave no earlier than 3 PM on Friday (Nov 7)**. Sleeping accommodations will be available on a first-come-first served basis at Annunciation House and the Mission. Several motels are also located near our meeting sites.

For more conference information, airport transportation and overnight reservations, contact **David Buer, OFM (cell 314-803-6735)** or via email: buer@intermind.net .

AN APPEAL FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE IN ORISSA, INDIA

This news item came from our JPIC friars in India and is coupled with a request for any help in Advocacy.

Protect Christian Minorities in Orissa – INDIA (28 August 2008)

A. SUMMARY OF THE INCIDENTS IN ORISSA, INDIA

Since **24 August 2008**, *at least nine people have been killed* in unabated violence, four of them in police firing, in Orissa's Kandhamal district, as a backlash to the killing of Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) leader Swami Laxmanananda Saraswati. Another three persons were killed when their *houses were torched* in Raikia area. Two others, including a woman, were killed when a missionary-run *orphanage was set on fire* on 25 August. Another source, the Global Council of Indian Christians, has revealed a staggering number of 18 deaths.

The on-going carnage apparently *targets the Christian community, mostly Dalits and tribals*, in the Kandhamal district of Orissa and in several other districts including the state capital of Bhubaneswar since 23 August 2008. *A large number of churches, houses, and vehicles have been torched* by mobs in areas including Nuagaon, Udaygiri, Raikia, Phiringia and Baliguda since 24 August. *A nun from the diocese of Cuttack-Bhubaneswar has been gang-raped* in a separate incident before the building of a social service centre was destroyed. As the carnage continues unchecked and death toll rising every day, innocent Christians in Orissa find themselves in a very precarious situation. *Hundreds of Christians, priests, nuns and children have fled to the jungle* in order to escape further attacks.

The state government was widely criticized of failing to uphold law and order in order to ensure the safety of Christian minorities in Orissa. At the end of his weekly general audience on 27 August, the *Pope appealed* to "religious leaders and civil authorities to work together to re-establish among members of the different communities the peaceful coexistence and harmony which always have been a distinctive sign of Indian society."

Please write letters expressing your concern and request the authorities to:

- ***ensure protection of the lives and properties of the Christians in Orissa;***
- ***provide immediate relief and adequate compensation to the victims;***
- ***create a congenial atmosphere for peaceful civil coexistence; and***
- ***bring perpetrators to justice in order to stop impunity.***

Background information about Orissa violence

In Orissa's Kandhamal District, the worst-hit region by violence between Hindus and Christians, the Christians are still nursing their wounds from the Christmas 2007 violence, with hundreds of them still live in a refugee camp in Barakhama. Majority of the destroyed churches, which exceeds 100, remain in ruins; burnt houses are still to be fully rebuilt. Kandhamal is a primarily tribal area, where Christian missionaries have worked for decades. Almost 20 percent of the district's people are Christians.

Fresh violence broke out following the killing of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) leader Swami Laxmanananda Saraswati and four of his disciples in an ashram at Jalespeta in Kandhamal district on 23 August 2008. Swami Laxmanananda Saraswati was killed by unidentified armed assailants despite the fact that he had supposedly reported threat to his life to the police 12 hours before his assassination. His killing has been widely condemned by

various church leaders in India. While the government held Maoists responsible for the killings, the Hindu fundamentalist groups blamed Christians for the incident.

Tension ran high as the bodies of the slain were taken from Jalespeta to Chakapada, sparking violence when unruly mobs torched vehicles at Baliguda, G-Udayagiri and Nuagaon and damaged a police outpost and NGO offices at Nuagaon. Churches and prayer halls were attacked at various places.

According to local groups, the police have not given adequate protection. It is possibly due to the political climate in the state, where the ruling political party – Biju Janatha Dal – is being supported by Hindu fundamentalist groups. Hard-line Hindus accuse Christian missionaries of trying to convert illiterate tribal or Hindu villagers by alluring them with promises of free education and medical care, a charge denied by the missionaries.

Meanwhile, in the wake of the continuing violence, the administration has extended the curfew for an indefinite period from the Kandhamal district to sensitive areas, such as Phulabani, the district headquarters, Tumudibandha and Baliguda. Authorities have issued shoot-at-sight orders and police staged marches on 27 August in Kandhamal.

The International Day of Peace

The International Day of Peace ("Peace Day") provides an opportunity for individuals, organizations and nations to create practical acts of peace on a shared date. It was established by a United Nations resolution in 1981 to coincide with the opening of the General Assembly. The first Peace Day was celebrated in September 1982. In 2002 the General Assembly officially declared **September 21** as **the permanent date for the International Day of Peace**.

By creating the International Day of Peace, the U.N. devoted itself to worldwide peace and encouraged all of mankind to work in cooperation for this goal. During the discussion of the U.N. Resolution that established the International Day of Peace, it was suggested that:

"Peace Day should be devoted to commemorating and strengthening the ideals of peace both within and among all nations and people. This day will serve as a reminder to all peoples that our organization, with all its limitations, is a living instrument in the service of peace and should serve all of us here within the organization as a constantly pealing bell reminding us that our permanent commitment, above all interests or differences of any kind, is to peace."

Since its inception, Peace Day has marked our personal and planetary progress toward peace. It has grown to include millions of people in all parts of the world, and each year events are organized to commemorate and celebrate this day. Events range in scale from private gatherings to public concerts and forums where hundreds of thousands of people participate.

Anyone, anywhere can celebrate Peace Day. It can be as simple as lighting a candle at noon, or just sitting in silent meditation. Or it can involve getting your co-workers, organization, community or government engaged in a large event. The impact if millions of people in all parts of the world, coming together for one day of peace, is immense.

International Day of Peace is also a Day of Ceasefire – personal or political. Take this opportunity to make peace in your own relationships as well as impact the larger conflicts of our time. Imagine what a whole Day of Ceasefire would mean to humankind.

For more information about the International Day for Peace, go to the following weblink: http://internationaldayofpeace.org/participate/find_an_event.html

PEACEBUILDING 101

Peacebuilding 101

Peacebuilding is different from "peacemaking" and "peacekeeping" in that it focuses on creating a long-term culture of peace, rather than solving existing conflicts or preventing old ones from re-occurring. Peacebuilding activities aim at building understanding and tolerance between individuals, communities and societies and establishing new structures of cooperation. Peacebuilding activities range in scale from personal acts of kindness toward others to global inter-governmental programs.

Definitions of Peacebuilding

Peacebuilding is the construction of new environments and new cultures which transform deficient structures and capabilities. Peacebuilding unites the strengths of emerging innovations in all pathways of our local-global planetary life. Peacebuilding creates and maintains beneficial conditions for sustainable (life-enhancing) social, economic, political and spiritual development of all peoples. *(Adapted from speech given at UN by PTP and "An Agenda for Peace", a UN Report of the Secretary-General, 1992)*

Unlike peace-making and peace-keeping, which are related to warfare and settlement of conflicts, "...the concept of peace-building (is) the construction of a new environment --- the transformation of deficient national structures and capabilities, and --- the strengthening of new democratic institutions."

USCCB Study Guide on Stopping Torture

Waterboarding? Electric Shocks? References to torture can be found in newspapers, radio and TV programs, and even in cartoons. What does the Church have to say about torture? This four chapter study guide will offer reflections on torture as a moral issue. Get a group together to discuss this timely issue and what you can do to stop torture.

Torture is a MORAL Issue: A Catholic Study Guide

Introduction

Chapter 1 – Recognizing Every Person's God-Given Dignity

Chapter 2 – The Problem with Torture

Chapter 3 – Do Christians Love Their Enemies Even Now?

Chapter 4 – Action Steps To Address Torture

Appendix – Letter from Bishop Wenski to Senate on Torture

<http://usccb.org/sdwp/stoptorture/>

CLIMATE CHANGE: Our Faith Response

CATHOLIC COMMITTEE OF APPALACHIA RELEASES CLIMATE CHANGE DVD

The Catholic Committee of Appalachia (CCA) is distributing a DVD, "Climate Change: Our Faith Response," to the 27 Catholic dioceses in the Appalachian region. The ten-minute DVD is intended for religious education classes and comes with a study guide to underscore the church's teaching about the care of creation and humanity's responsibility for stewardship.

"This program teaches about the integrity of creation," said **Fr. John Rausch**, CCA's director and the 2007 Pax Christi USA Teacher of Peace, "and we hope it raises awareness about creation as a precious gift from God and how climate change will particularly affect the poor and vulnerable."

For more information, contact CCA (based in Spencer, West Virginia) at 304-927-5798 or ccappal@citynet.net.

Learn more about the Catholic Committee of Appalachia by visiting <http://www.ccappal.org/>.

USCCB: Faithful Citizenship

Pray for justice, peace, and life with the ***Novena for Faithful Citizenship***. Download the Podcast and join Catholics throughout the United States in prayer, beginning **Tuesday, September 2, nine weeks before the election**. The web link for these podcasts is:

<http://www.faithfulcitizenship.org/resources/podcasts>

Options for praying the Novena for Faithful Citizenship:

- Start on September 2 and pray for nine consecutive Tuesdays, up until the general election.
- Start the Novena on any day of the week, whenever people gather, and pray on that day every week.
- **Begin praying the Novena on October 26**, nine days before the election, and continue each consecutive day.
- Create any combination that works for you and your community—and feel free to pray the Novena more than once (1 Thes 5:17).

Catholic social teaching is a rich treasure of wisdom about building a just society and living lives of holiness amidst the challenges of modern society. Modern Catholic social teaching has been articulated through a tradition of papal, conciliar, and episcopal documents, and the depth and richness of this tradition can be understood best through a direct reading of these documents.

In *Catholic Social Teaching Principles Podcasts*, **Fr. Larry Rice, CSP**, reflects briefly on the major themes of Catholic social teaching, and how they should shape our lives as citizens of the world and as people of God. **Fr. Larry** is the Director of the St. Thomas More Newman Center, the center for Catholic Campus Ministry at Ohio State University in Columbus, OH.

The eleven topics **Fr. Larry** covers include: **Option for the Poor; Peace and Disarmament; Political Participation; Role of Government; Social Justice; Stewardship of Creation; Common Good; Dignity of the Human Person; Economic Justice; Global Solidarity; Individual's Rights**. These recordings would be an excellent way to help enliven small group discussions on different topics in social justice.

Advent Reflections 2008

We have asked **Tommy King, OFM**, who is currently ministering in Peru, to write reflections on the lectionary readings for the coming Advent season. We will be posting this booklet in its entirety on the web at our JPIC section about a week **before Advent**. **If you would like to receive a paper copy**, please send me a post card, phone message, or email message **with your address** and I'll mail it to you to arrive before Advent.

FAN ACTIVITIES: a Letter from Russ Testa

Here is a major part of a letter from **Russell M. Testa** (Executive Director of Franciscan Action Network) to our province:

Greetings of Peace and all Joy!

I am writing on behalf of the **Franciscan Action Network** family to sincerely thank you and the friars of the Province of St Barbara for your 2008 institutional membership support of \$1,500. The Action Commission and Staff of FAN have been working hard to put the infrastructure in place so that all of us can be more effective at advocacy and action for social transformation. This effort represents the second part of our start-up process. The gift of the Province of St Barbara has been used to accomplish the following:

- FAN has its legal incorporation as an entity in Washington, DC and is now awaiting IRS approval for its tax-free status.
- FAN has been working to develop a number of training opportunities in the area of peacemaking, care for creation and immigration reform.
- The website continues to be updated with content that will enable it to be a vital resource to the Franciscan family in the US and beyond.
- FAN had its first advocacy action in coordination with Franciscan International calling for a just and peaceful solution of the situation in Zimbabwe. The effort resulted in more than 150 email messages going to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.
- Through the generosity of the **Sacred Heart Province**, FAN has welcomed a new member to the FAN team: **Larry Janezic, OFM** will help improve its advocacy efforts with regard to immigration reform and US domestic policy.

This Fall, 2008 FAN will:

- Launch a mini-campaign to keep the issue of climate change on the docket of the US Congress and the election ballots. Our message is particularly Franciscan is that it will bring together the issue of care for creation with that of care for persons who are poor;
- Provide three opportunities for peacemaking training;
- Begin a new training/formation program in Franciscan ecological action;
- Coordinate with the leadership and the justice, peace and creation leaders in the Franciscan family to present and finalize developments to the organization's 2009 strategies for advocacy and action;
- Continue working to gain some grant resources to help improve the quality and quantity of web offerings and its organizational efforts in the key issues of climate change, peacemaking and immigration reform;
- And much more...

2009 will be a key year for advocacy efforts. In 2009 23 will have a new President and a new Congress taking office in a nation that is calling for change. Historically, when these two events coincide, a great deal of advocacy occurs. For those of us in the Franciscan movement, 2009 also represents a major milestone -- *the 800th Anniversary of the approval of the first Franciscan Rule and official recognition of the Franciscan movement.* Imagine the potential for good that can arise from a clearly articulated and amplified Franciscan voice in the public square.

We look forward to continuing this journey together as we deepen our relationships and our efforts at social transformation.

In the Hope of Peace,

(Signed) Russell M. Testa

**A SPECIAL 'WEB CAST' PROGRAM from FRC:
"After Elections: WHAT NEXT???" by Kathy Saile and Russ Testa**

Please save the date of **Saturday November 15, 2008**. **Kathy Saile**, Director of the **USCCB Office of Domestic Policy** and **Russ Testa**, Executive Director of **FAN** will be speaking at the **Franciscan Renewal Center, Scottsdale AZ**. After their presentations to parishioners, friars, SFO's, and interested folks of the Phoenix area, you will be invited to join in the 'questions and answers' period via the internet. **Kathy** was formerly the Peace & Justice Coordinator and member of the FRC staff.

The JPIC Office will be trying out some new web-based teleconference software with this presentation. At present we will be inviting friars and JPIC interested folks to join us in **Los Angeles and Sacramento** to watch the talks by web internet connections. After the talks we will then be able to have questions from **Sacramento, Los Angeles** and other parts of the province to join in the discussion.

If you are interested in helping us to include your local region for this discussion, please email me (jpicsacramento@yahoo.com) or give me a call (**916 502 4366**) for more details. At present we will be watching the talks in **Brunsmann Hall (Sacramento)** and at a location to be selected in downtown **Los Angeles**. This is a grand experiment in how we can communicate in the digital age. As more details and other locations are confirmed we'll be sending out more reminders in the coming weeks.

The Fall Meeting FAN Commissioners & Staff

Excerpted from a letter from Dan Mulholland, SFO, Region 6 FAN Action Commissioner

The commissioners of FAN met in Washington DC on **September 3rd and 4th** with the FAN staff to **a) update the status of FAN's efforts and projects, and b) to provide clear direction for FAN commissioners for next year with goals and benchmarks and thus increase a sense of belonging to this national project.**

Members of the FAN Staff, Board of Directors, and Action Commissioners participated. In all there were 25 attendees, which included seven Sisters, seven Friars (**Larry Dunphy, OFM**), seven Seculars (**Patrick Mendes, SFO National Minister, Tom Bello, SFO National Vice-Minister, SFO Regional Ministers - Ken Beatie, Jan Parker, Stephanie Sormane**, and SFO appointees - **Dan Mulholland, and Carolyn Townes**).

As this first year is concerned with building up the capacity of the Network there was a lot of discussion on how to get the word out about FAN. So far **692 Franciscans** have become members. **We encourage all to sign up to receive FAN updates and calls to action!**

FAN sees the need for a "**Road Show**" to present the goals and initiatives and invite the leadership of the friar and sister congregations to join FAN; the leadership tends to be located in the SF bay area, Pittsburgh, Chicago, St Louis, Cincinnati, New York and Washington DC.

This next year will be a key year with a new President and a new Congress for FAN to open dialogues on **Climate Change, Immigration and Poverty issues**. FAN has concentrated on getting a program together on the **Care for Creation, 'C4C'**, which would be a 5-part process, which may be amendable to Ongoing Formation, or part of an Apostolate Workshop.

As many people don't understand advocacy, FAN is looking at an **Advocacy Training 101** DVD to show that it is about simply discussing issues of concerns to Franciscan with elected officials (more likely their staffers), but also building a relationship that can communicate those concerns in a non-judgmental way, and can be as simple as just asking a question about what is happening in an area by email. Different Staffers are assigned areas of concern to respond to such questions.

FAN is looking at having some mini-campaigns this fall and after the election of asking the candidate and the new government about climate change, immigration and poverty issues to keep the awareness there.

We had open discussions of the website, what it can do and what we may want it to do, and a side topic of expanding the membership of the FAN Board of Directors. Currently it is a three-person board: **Sr. Margaret Mary Kimmins OSF, Rev. Mr. Tom Bello SFO, and Fr. Joe Nangle, OFM**. A number of names were suggested from the various communities for people with legal, financial and developmental experience.

FAN's funding strategy was discussed; the need \$250,000 next year to keep the lights on. They are in process of getting their 501 (C) (3) status, have the software to accept donations on-line. They are going after a number of grants and already had a grant to develop the "**C4C**" program, and will continue to pursue other grants.

One thing that was brought up is that FAN, unlike most organizations has a dignity policy; it can be found on the web page with their privacy policy. I encourage you to read this from the website site. The next meeting of the **FAN Action Commissioners** will be **March 11-13, 2009** during the **Ecumenical Advocacy Days** in Washington, DC.

Please encourage all who are interested in the social action ministry to sign onto the FAN project.

Peace and all good,
Dan Mulholland, SFO

English, French, Hindi and Spanish View to Immigration

In my search for interesting new ways of looking at immigration issues, I came across this wonderfully refreshing perspective from the **NPR radio**. It started as a music review of **Rupa and the April Fishes: Multicultural Music**

(<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=89695578>)

Here is an excerpt from the NPR website. I hope you will enjoy listening to her song "PODER" and to reading about the unique way that our life on the West Coast brings to the world!

"Raised in India, France and the U.S., **Rupa Marya** embraces her life as both an artist and a medical doctor, so it's no surprise that she naturally gravitates toward themes of combining influences. Overused tags like "multicultural," "mosaic" and "world" gain meaning when used in reference to songs sung in English, French, Hindi and Spanish; each pulls musically from all of those traditions. *Extraordinary Rendition* is filled with celebratory songs which address serious issues of place, home and identity."

"In a world defined by lines that separate one group of people from another, "Poder" explores the forces that can cross the U.S.-Mexico border: **The fish can, the wind can and money can, but "pero yo no" — "I cannot."** "

Listen to her song at this website:

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=94554077&sc=nl&cc=sod-20080912>

"The music crosses its own borders, falling somewhere between the smokey club and the joyful street parade. It's filled with strings, horns, accordion, call-and-response cries of "Si puede" and the voice of Marya herself, sounding like sips of hot coffee with bites of spiced cake, dancing happily on the tongue and in the ears."

"With songs in French, Spanish, English, and Hindi, the band **Rupa and the April Fishes** could have been formed in the food court of a suburban mall. To the contrary, the band was founded in San Francisco by **Rupa Marya**, a doctor-by-day and singer-by-night born to Indian parents and raised in the U.S., India, and the South of France. Her debut album is called *eXtraOrdinary rendition*. She and the band join John Schaefer in the Soundcheck studios for an interview and live performance of tunes from the album."

"She began with a song called "Une Americaine a Paris" — decidedly not a reference to George Gershwin's blithely upbeat *An American in Paris*, but rather an uncomfortable moment in a Parisian cafe that Marya had once experienced. A man had struck up a good conversation with her, but when the man, who was from Algeria, learned that Marya was American, the tone changed rapidly."

"This wall came down between us," she says. "And he said, 'Aren't you afraid to be an American in Paris with all these angry Arabs? If you were in my neighborhood...' and he just went [motions hand across throat]. ... That personal connection that we had just froze in that moment, and it was probably one of the most chilling experiences I've ever had face-to-face with a stranger."

“Of course, **Marya**, the daughter of Indian parents, is no stranger to multiculturalism. She was born in the San Francisco Bay Area; her parents moved her back to India, then to France; and she settled again in California.”

"I was ... so horrified by the reaction of fear, of what was unfamiliar to people that I felt happening in our country," she says. "And I wanted to write songs about love — which I had never done before — and to write them in a language that people in my immediate surrounding didn't necessarily understand, but wouldn't be wholly alienating to them. And to see if people could understand the emotion and the truth that was being conveyed under the language I was speaking through the music. So it started as an exercise, an artistic exercise to use language as a musical tool, also, with rhythm and melody inherent in the words."

“When she isn't on stage, Rupa Marya is a doctor of internal medicine on faculty at UCSF, and often draws ideas for songs from her patients' stories. She was able to take advantage of a flexible residency track designed for female doctors who may be expecting children, which allows her to spend six months working and the other half of the year touring.”

"And so after my first year of internship, I went into my program director and said, 'Listen, I'll be a terrible doctor if I'm not an artist, and I'll be a terrible artist if I'm not a doctor,'" **Marya** says. "And I need to find a way to do these things."

I am haunted by her lyrics: **The fish can, the wind can and money can, but "pero yo no" — "I cannot."** For us as Franciscans, the ‘World is our cloister!’

Franklin Fong, OFM