

< JPIC NEWS PROVINCE OF ST BARBARA >

MARCH 2009

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

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Tell us something about the JPIC news in your area. Please submit your articles by April 20, 2009 for our May, 2009 issue. With this issue the JPIC News will be an on-line newsletter. We will mail one paper copy to each friary, rather than one per friar. This will save in paper costs, postage and handling. We will automatically post and archive each newsletter on our provincial website where you may easily download and print out a copy if you wish.

In this March 2009 issue:

- JPIC at St Elizabeth Parish, Oakland, CA
- Gubbio Project at St Boniface Parish, San Francisco, CA
- Prayer for Peace in the Mideast
- Hints on Greening the Local Friary
- National Farm Worker's Ministry
- Prayer for Peace in the Mideast
- Debut of Vatican YouTube Website
- Recycling Stuff. Greening of the Local Friary
- Franciscan Action Network Bulletin Article
- International JPIC Newsletter: CONTACT

St Elizabeth Parish, Oakland, CA

By **Sara Brebec** (Social Ministries Coordinator, St Elizabeth Parish, Oakland)

The social ministry at **St. Elizabeth Parish** focuses on assisting community members in meeting their most basic needs. We rely on volunteers from the parish to staff and run our programs. The majority of our funds go to stock our food pantry; as the funds allow after that, we assist community members in paying bills and finding furniture for their homes.

Our food pantry is open two days a week to serve the more than 350 families who are registered to pick up food with us. Primarily, we stock the pantry with food purchased through the St. Vincent de Paul Society of Alameda County. Donations of canned food from our parishioners and school families and donations from the parishioners of our sister parish, St. John Vianney, supplement the food we purchase. Since November 2008, the requests for assistance in paying bills and finding furniture have increased dramatically. Through home visits and conversations with those seeking aid, we work with individuals and families to help them pay their bills. We give special priority on connecting families with beds. While space is often limited in apartments that are shared by multiple families, there is sometimes space for a twin bed in a room.

In exchange for the financial assistance we offer, we ask that families share their time with us in the form of community service hours. All of the available funds come from donations from parishioners of St. Elizabeth and St. John Vianney.

Gubbio Project, St Boniface Parish

By **Dave Ayotte, SJ** davida@thegubbioproject.org

While I had heard of St. Boniface Church from other Jesuits who spoke of ministry on the streets of the Tenderloin, I wasn't quite ready for what I saw when I stepped into the worship space of those windows, pews and on-going snoring. Residing in Berkeley, I was woken at 6am by 'who knows what' to make it on time for the 7:30am weekday mass. I felt Francis was urging me up. And I must say, I was ticked off by the saint's intrusion. I arrived at the sign of the cross to the discovery that the day's memorial was Francis' reception of the stigmata. The stigmata with some 50 guys and gals resting in the pews. The living wounds of Christ had been walking all night and had found sacred sleep and sanctuary in St. Boniface. This was due to the generosity of the pastor, **Jorge Hernandez**, and the parishioners, as well as the dedicated staff and board of **the Gubbio Project**. (www.thegubbioproject.org)

It was the streets **IN** the Church beneath those windows of light that moved me the most. It was not bringing food, not a night shelter, not good intentions. It was tangibly a Church that had invited the streets to meet the more affluent in prayer. Such a dangerous place for changing stereotypes. Such a daring model of Christianity. Not only our neighbors of the streets were invited in to rest and be safe for a few hours, Gubbio risked irritating the more affluent of us who wanted safe prayers, polished churches, and a divided spirituality. If I simply sit in the pews amidst the snores, shut-up and open my eyes, the conversation with God changes. Priorities change and many of my self-preoccupations acquire their appropriate triviality. But my gosh, I love being trivial.

Having only one day a week I could give to ground my studies at the Jesuit School of Theology, going Franciscan was not what I had in mind. How dare God drag me across the boundaries of spiritualities to meet other saints and visions. I want to study Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. But the French Pierre seems to have made an alliance with the Italian Francesco. That was 6 months ago.

Gubbio has been amazing, warming and hanging on the edge daily. It's meager finances are only a month ahead of itself. \$8500/month for a mix of 60 people to rest Monday through Friday from 6am-1pm. It is very possible that Gubbio could close in 2-3 months. What a tragedy this would be. Not simply for those at the heart of the Tenderloin but for all of us who must have symbols of hope and transformation. Places where saints cross the boundaries of reality and make real that the kingdom is not tomorrow but right in front of me. So how stuck I am. A Jesuit begging for the Franciscans for a project on the streets. Maybe even Ignatius of Loyola is mixed up in this group of holy plotters for Christ. Whether we're called troubadour or companions of Jesus, we are all in the same soup.

Why don't you visit? Sit in the pews. Or, if you know someone who can cover a month of the expenses or the year (\$120k) then pass the word. It's good to be foolish. It's good to keep one's doors open. Lord knows, God just might walk in.



Don't Quit
BEFORE
the Miracle!

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Prayer for Peace in the Mideast

Prayer for Peace in the Mideast by Jane Deren

On the sacred soil of the Holy Land
Where You were born, lived and died,
Your people are engulfed in destruction and death.
Christ, Prince of Peace, you are in agony again,
as the children of God indulge in the oldest tragedy:
Cain killed Abel, and the slaughter thus begun
Has not yet ceased.
We pray that the children of Abraham,
Both the Israelis and the Palestinians,
Recognize that violence will not heal
The wounds of the past.
Before more blood is shed,
May they recognize the face
Of their brother, their sister
Across the barriers.
We pray, with our Bishops and our Pope,
That the Israelis may stop the attack,
That the Palestinians may refrain from retaliation,
That the international community may find its voice
And create a time and space for a peaceful settlement.
May the peace that Christ offered to all
Become a reality in Gaza and throughout the Mideast.

-Jane Deren 1/09

www.educationforjustice.org

Debut of the Vatican YouTube Website....

Vatican Website on YouTube

The Vatican has launched their new YouTube website. Some 50 different videos are posted currently on this site which is in four languages, Spanish, Italian, English and German. You can readily watch any of the videos which range in length from 45 to 70 seconds long. These video news clips are of a very, very high quality and are a quick way of seeing if you really want to get the full text of the talk from the regular Vatican website.

Drop in and take a peek at the new wave of communications from the Vatican Press Office.

<http://www.youtube.com/vatican>

Hints on Greening the Local Friary

Wondering what to do with your stash of old batteries or the cans of unneeded paint taking up space in your garage? You know you shouldn't throw them out, but it really is time to get rid of them. Resist the temptation to toss them in the trash anyway. The reason: They (and

everything on the list below) contain toxic chemicals capable of contaminating the environment if not disposed of properly. Unlike items that are picked up at the curb, you'll have to make a special effort to unload these ones responsibly. But, with a little advance planning and some good info, you'll see that it's really quite simple to dispose of these seemingly mysterious items. Here's how:

Batteries. Recycling [rechargeable batteries](#) is fairly easy. [Home Depot](#), [Staples](#), [Radio Shack](#), [Best Buy](#), and other retailers take them back free of charge. There are fewer options for single-use batteries, but look for bins at your local [Whole Foods Market](#), [Ikea](#), or library. Otherwise, your best bet is the local household [hazardous](#) waste drop-off site. Where is it and what are your closest drop-off options? Search [here for answers](#).

CFLs. These energy-efficient bulbs are becoming easier to get rid of. Just drop old bulbs off at any [Home Depot](#) or Ikea for free recycling. Or ask about [CFL](#) recycling at your local [Ace Hardware](#) or home improvement store. You can [search](#) for other nearby solutions.

Electronics. Every retailer that takes back rechargeable batteries also accepts mobile phones, as do most wireless providers. For computers, cameras, televisions, and others it's worthwhile do a little homework because some [stores](#) charge fees depending on item and brand. Check out [Best Buy](#), [Staples](#), and [Office Depot](#) to see what's the best fit. Some places, like Radio Shack, have [trade-in programs](#) where you can receive store credit for your old gadgets.

Motor Oil. In case you need some motivation, consider this factoid from [Earth911](#): Every gallon of used motor oil that's improperly disposed of can contaminate one million gallons of drinking water. Bring it to [Wal-Mart](#), [Autozone](#), [Jiffy Lube](#), or search online for more [convenient choices](#).

Paint. It's among the harder items in this group to dispose of, but it's worth it and totally doable. If the paint is still in good shape, consider [donating](#) it. As of now, there aren't any retailers that accept used paint so you'll need to make a special trip. Search Earth911 for a [comprehensive list](#) of options.

National Farm Worker Ministry

by **Mark Schroeder, OFM**

For twenty years, JPIC animators from our Province have sat on the board of the National Farm Worker Ministry [NFWM]. We are a member organization, joining over thirty-five other faith-based organizations to assist the NFWM staff to link church and faith coalitions to the efforts of farmworkers to unionize. **Mark Schroeder, OFM** has just finished his second, two-year term as President of the Board, and now sits on the Executive Committee as "Past President."

The National Farm Worker Ministry has two California staff people, working out of the United Farm Workers office in East Los Angeles. Presently, the UFW has begun coordinating a major campaign to show the injustices in the fields of three giant table-grape companies in California. The role of the NFWM staff and supporters will be to bring these issues into churches in the Los Angeles area (because of the gigantic consumer market in L.A.) and throughout the state.

There is one half-time National Farm Worker Ministry staff person in Oregon. One of our Ascension parishioners, **Helen Querino**, sits on the Oregon advisory board. **Loren Kerkof, OFM** and **Armando Lopez, OFM** have been active in farmworker issues in the Portland area.

We all eat. It is always a wonderful meditation to picture our sisters and brothers (and youth) who had planted, picked, and processed what we see before us on our dinner plates. Imagine where they sleep, what their working conditions are like, and what they are able to afford to eat. *Where are their families? Why can't they just speak up at work?*

Want more information? Contact **Mark**. Explore the website of the National Farm Worker Ministry at www.nfwm.org.

Franciscan Action Network Bulletin Announcement

Here is a ready-made bulletin announcement you can use for your weekly parish bulletins or newsletters for your ministry. Make the appropriate changes to include your local FAN person or just leave it with a contact to **Larry Dunphy, OFM**, FAN National Committee Member.

FRANCISCAN MINDED PEOPLE

We are looking for Franciscan-minded people to join with Franciscans of all the First Orders, Third Order Regulars, and Seculars in a network to speak with a common voice of advocacy in Washington DC on issues of peace-making, poverty and human rights, and care for creation. Franciscan Action Network (FAN) is seeking people from the ministries we serve to join with us in trying to bring a Franciscan voice to DC. The focus is on issues of ending war and creating peace, the poor, torture, immigration reform, water, and climate change, and always supporting respect for life. Signing up provides one with information on current issues via e-mails, electronic news letters and action alerts and a means to respond through suggested e-mails, your representatives and senators phone numbers and talking points.

To learn more visit our website www.franciscanaction.org, or call Fr. **Larry Dunphy, OFM** 916-397-0055. Larry serves on the National Committee for FAN.

International JPIC News from CONTACT

The latest articles from the February Newsletter of our Curia's JPIC Office is available in English and Spanish. I can email this issue by return reply. Or, you can download it from our weblink. Send me a request at jpicsacramento@yahoo.com.

- Solar energy in the OFM Province of Austria
- Some JPIC activities in the Irish Province
- News from Japan
- Environmental education in the Franciscan School Centers of El Salvador
- V International Solidarity Franciscan Seminar
- The World Social Forum and our Franciscan presence
- The keys of Saint Peter. A Faith-filled Reading of the Signs of the Times
- The Convention on Climate Change ought to listen to the poor



Water Color by Jackie Mikesell (Parishioner, St Francis Parish, Sacramento)
"Father and Daughter at Loaves & Fishes", Sacramento, CA