

NGO NEWS

Sisters of Charity Federation

OLMs in South Carolina Host Annual Meeting

The Sisters of Charity of Our Lady of Mercy (OLM) hosted the annual federation and NGO liaison meeting in Charleston, South Carolina. The theme of the Federation Leadership meeting was "Weaving the Vision". The hall at the Marriott where the meeting was held was decorated with beautiful hand-made baskets from the area.

Participants enjoyed a boat tour of Charleston Harbor and a barbecue on the beautiful grounds of the OLM Motherhouse with entertainment provided by a local Hispanic dance troupe.

Following the leadership meeting, the liaisons from each of the member congregations of the Federation gathered to review the work of the NGO office from the past year and chart new ini-



Liaisons gather in South Carolina

tiatives for the coming year. Sr. Caroljean gave a powerpoint presentation on the activities of the NGO office this year. She also showed two short movies of her trips to South Korea and India.

Sr. Julie Cutter gave a presentation on "Awakening the

Dreamer", a workshop initiated by the Pachamama Alliance on environmental awareness and stewardship. Julie is trained as a facilitator.

Sr. Marie de Paul shared the initiatives she has taken on behalf of the women in the Congo. (cont'd p. 4)

Getting to Know the UN: UNICEF

More than a year after WWII, many nations of the world were struggling to recover from the devastation caused by the war. Famine and disease were common and children were among the most vulnerable.

The fledgling United Nations General Assembly responded

with the creation of the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF). Today it is simply called the United Nations Children's fund.

Since its founding UNICEF has saved more children's lives than any other humanitarian organization. UNICEF cur-

rently operates in more than 150 countries and territories and is funded entirely by voluntary contributions of individuals, foundations, corporations, nongovernmental organizations and governments.

For more information:

www.unicef.org

Volume 5, Issue 2

June 2011

Dates to Remember

- 9/3-5/2011 - UN-DPI Conference in Bonn, Germany
- 10/5-7/2011 - National Gathering of Canadian Justice and Peace Coordinators in Montreal
- 10/20-23 - Vincentian Family Gathering in Indianapolis
- 10/26-28 - UN Orientation
- 2/1-10/2012- Commission for Social Development
- 2/27-3/9/2012 - Commission on the Status Of Women

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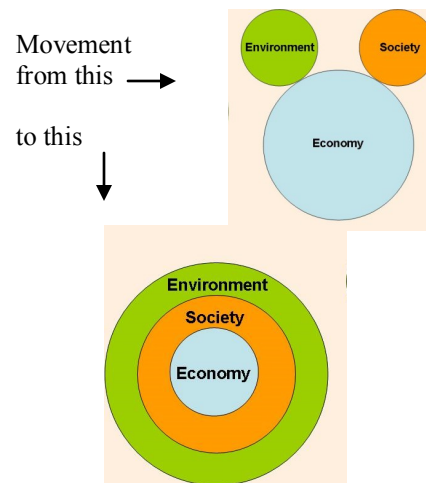
What Is a Green Economy?

Green economics is based on three pillars: the environment, society and the economy. In contrast to the traditional approach to economic development which is based on the maximization of profits, green economics is concerned with human development and social justice.

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) defines a green economy as “one that results in improved human well-being and social equity, while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities. In its simplest expression, it can be thought of as one which is low carbon, resource efficient and so-

cially inclusive.”

A green economy is characterized by the values of sustainability. According to J. Porritt in *Capitalism as if the World Mattered* these include: “the recognition of our interdependence, self-determination, diversity and tolerance, compassion for others, upholding the principle of equity, the recognition of the rights and interests of non-humans, respect for the integrity of natural systems and for the interests of future generations..” A green economy is holistic and places both economic and social development within the framework of a sustainable environment.



Did You Know?

The United Nations estimates that:

- * More than 2 million children have died as a direct result of armed conflict over the last decade.
- * More than three times that number—at least 6 million children—have been either permanently disabled or seriously injured.
- * More than 1 million have been orphaned or separated from their

families.

- * Between 8,000 and 10,000 children are harmed by landmines every year.
- * An estimated 300,000 child soldiers—boy and girls under the age of 18—are involved in more than 30 conflicts worldwide. (Source: www.unicef.org/protection/index_armedconflict.html)

- * A report issued this May by a Vatican-appointed panel of independent scientists called for an urgent reduction of carbon dioxide emissions and other pollutants contributing to climate change. Posted on the Vatican website (www.vatican.va), the final report by the Pontifical Academy of Sciences says “if we want justice and peace, we must protect the habitat that sustains us.”

Banner Calls for Indigenous Rights

by Roma de Robertis, SCIC

The Sisters of Charity of the Immaculate Conception of New Brunswick and the Sisters of Saint Martha of Antigonish have created banners as part of a national campaign advocating Aboriginal rights in Canada.

The SCIC banner pictured on the right features a nature scene with words in English as well as Maliseet, the language of the original inhabitants of the area.

It highlights the national KAIROS: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives national campaign, set to culminate in a June 20th event

on Parliament Hill in Ottawa. The day before national Aboriginal Day, the event will feature the Velcro joining of banners from across Canada into one giant banner.

The CSM banner depicts where they are located on a map of the Mi'kmaq territory indicated by a teardrop. Each of their local houses has sent a message of support for the UN Declaration on the Rights of the Indigenous Peoples. Kairos is urging the Canadian government to fully implement the Declaration which the government signed last fall.



Sr. Helen O'Neil (left) and Sr. Angie Martz (right) display the SCIC banner.

Vincentian Family UN Orientation

The spring Vincentian Family UN Orientation was held in New York from April 28-30, 2011. Sisters from Evansville, Albany, St. Louis, Emmitsburg, New York, and Halifax participated in the three-day orientation as well as two Daughters of Charity from Colombia.

Each day began with prayer and the opportunity for personal reflection.

As part of the orientation Sisters attended a Department of Public Information (DPI) Briefing on "Indigenous Rights, Mining and Development" at the UN, visited the Haitian Mission to the UN, heard presentations on an overview of the UN system, human trafficking, advocacy, climate change and

sustainable development, systemic change and the Millennium Development Goals. Each presentation was followed by the opportunity for input and discussion. A film entitled "End of Poverty?" was also shown.

Comments from participants:

"I am proud and grateful to be a member of the Vincentian family!"

"I am very grateful for the work you did to prepare an excellent, meaningful experience. I will not look upon the UN in the same way again."

"I would recommend this program to anyone."

"You are a voice for us at the UN."



The Vincentian Family at the UN: Joe Foley, CM, Pat Connolly (next to Joe) and Germaine Price (far right) representing the Daughters of Charity and Caroljean Willie (next to Pat) and Faith Colligan representing the SC Federation.

Around and About the UN at the Orientation



Teacher Training in Southern Sudan

Sr. Yvonne Pothier, SC (Halifax) went to Southern Sudan as a member of an organization of religious priests, brothers and sisters called Solidarity with Southern Sudan. This organization is a UISG-sponsored collaborative venture of more than 140 religious congregations. Its aim is to help rebuild the Church and society after more than five decades of civil war.

Solidarity with Southern Sudan has es-

established communities in five towns, a nursing training institute and two teacher training colleges.

Sr. Yvonne worked with religious from New Zealand, Kenya, the US, India and Chile.

She served for several months in a new Teacher Training Institute.



Sr. Yvonne Pothier, SC

Sisters of Charity Federation

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Sisters of Charity Federation

Mission Statement

Impelled by Christ's love and joined together in the mission of Charity, we, the Sisters of Charity Federation, respond to the cries of those who are poor and marginalized.

Vision Statement

Impelled by the Gospel charism of Charity, we commit ourselves to be in solidarity with our sisters and brothers who are poor and marginalized. We will use the energy of our love, the gifts and talents of the members of our communities, and our material and spiritual resources to collaborate in the creation of systemic change locally and globally for the common good of all.

South Carolina, cont'd

The liaisons viewed a condensed version of the film *The End of Poverty? Think Again* which traces the history of poverty, especially in the Americas, to the days of colonialism. It also starkly portrays how poverty in the global South today is reinforced by the trade policies and lifestyles of those living in the global North.

A second ten-minute film entitled *Sisters* was also viewed. This is just a sample of a movie currently being produced by Sr.

Carol Rittner, RSM, on religious women today. Film crews have recently been at the UN to shoot footage of the work of the Sisters in the NGO community. Sr. Carol has also been in contact with Sr. Monica Gundler at the House of Charity in New Orleans about the possibility of including their work in the film.

Sister Kati Hamm, a Halifax Charity and the new Justice and Peace Coordinator for the New York and New Jersey Charities suggested the possibility of finding a way to bring together the Justice and Peace Coordinators from all of the congregations in order to share expertise and resources.

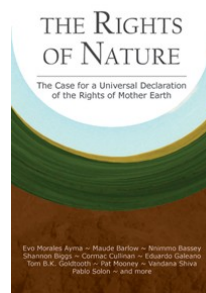
Sr. Caroljean advised the liaisons that the Department of Public Information (DPI) Conference this September will be in Bonn, Germany and the International Heads of the Vincentian Family will gather in Rome in January of 2012.

Resources

Council of Canadians, Pachamama Alliance, Global Exchange (co-editors)
Nature: The Case for a Universal Declaration of the Rights of Mother Earth.

This book brings together the voices of acclaimed authors, progressive thinkers, political leaders and environmental and community activists from around the world who share their passion and insights about the Declaration on the rights of Mother Earth which came out of the People's Conference on Climate Change held in Bolivia in 2009. It highlights the Rights of Nature and the urgent need to recognize the unbreakable link between respecting ourselves and re-

specting the planet – Mother Earth – on which we all live and depend. The authors all reflect on the important question: What would our world look like if nature had rights? This book is available at www.canadians.org or by calling 1-800-387-7177.



Wheatley, Margaret, Deborah Frieze.
Walk Out, Walk On: A Learning Journey into Communities Daring to Live the Future Now. Berrett-Kohler Publishers, 2011.

In *Walk Out Walk On*, the reader is invited on a learning journey to seven communities around the world to meet people who have walked out of limiting beliefs and assumptions and walked on to create healthy and resilient communities. These Walk Outs who Walk On use their ingenuity and caring to figure out how to work with what they have to create what they need. "We discovered a gift inside ourselves," one participant said, "something that was already there."