

NGO NEWS

Sisters of Charity Federation

Vincentian Family Leaders Gather in Paris

Sister Mary Ann Daly, Federation Director and Sister Caroljean Willie, NGO Representative at the United Nations, represented the North American Federation of the Sisters of Charity at the international gathering of the heads of the Vincentian Family in Paris, France from January 28-31, 2010.

Two new members to the Family this year gave a report on the activities of their congregations. The Brothers of Charity were created 200 years ago in the city of Ghent, Belgium. Their primary ministry is to care for those who are mentally ill. In addition to the work they do in Europe, they have created psychiatric centers throughout the African continent.

The Sisters of Charity of Our



Lady Mother of Mercy were founded in the Netherlands in 1832. They are engaged in multiple ministries including teaching, care of the sick and elderly. Today they minister throughout Europe, in the United States, Surinam, Indonesia, Brazil and the Philippines.

Each branch of the family was invited to give a presentation on dynamic and creative apostolates. Sister Mary Ann highlighted the Maritime Project of the four Canadian members of the Federation and the new House of Charity

in New Orleans for our report.

Father Manuel Ginete gave a review of the activities planned in celebration of the 350th Anniversary of the deaths of Vincent and Louise.

A report was given by Father Maloney on the systemic change workshops held in Mexico, Brazil, Cameroon and Thailand.

Father Maloney also gave an update on the microfinancing project the Vincentian Family is doing in Haiti. For more info on this project go to:

www.zafen.org

Sisters Focus on Social Development at the UN

What does it feel like to be left out? For the world's majority, social exclusion arises from poverty, discrimination, injustice, violence and climate change. "Social Integration" or inclusion was the theme of the 48th UN Commission for Social Development.

This February, during the second of a two-year process, the Commission focused on social development advances and challenges in 46 UN member states. Delegates noted that the world's social safety net was weakened by the global financial crisis as

well as food and energy crises.

About 80% of the world's people lack social guarantees that would allow them to deal with life's economic and social risks.

(cont'd on p.3)

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"We humans live by stories. Our stories tell us what's natural or unnatural, possible or impossible, valuable or not valuable. We learn these stories early, before our critical faculties are developed... So we tend to accept their messages as immutable truths. And a major theme in the stories we've inherited is the devaluation of one half of humanity and everything associated with it."

-Riane Eisler

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Sr. Ann Moyalan SCN at the United Nations

Sister Ann Moyalan, attended the Commission on the Status of Women at the UN and is currently serving as an intern in our NGO office.

Ann is a registered nurse and midwife, holds a post basic BSC Nursing Degree from Chandigarh University, India and has been working with Dalits, tribal people at the grass roots level in India for 28 years. She also served as a community health organizer in Belize, Central America, for two years.

At present she is working with a Muslim community in one of the slums in Delhi, India. This group of people has migrated

from throughout India to Delhi looking for a livelihood. Most of them live in poverty and live in a single room in one of the most crowded areas under the worst hygienic conditions. Every member of the family including the children has to work very hard to meet basic needs.

The status and the condition of women/girls and children in the community is one of great vulnerability. Ann works for the empowerment and integrated development of women, children and the society through education, skill training, Self Help Groups, awareness programs, youth groups, CBOs (Community Based Organization) and Net Working.

She and other members of the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth have organized and empowered thousands of women and adolescent girls. In order to keep a balance and to involve the whole community in (cont'd on p. 3)



Sr Ann Moyalan, SCN (center) with some of the Muslim women with whom she works.

54th Commission on the Status of Women

The Commission on the Status of Women was held at UN Headquarters in New York from March 1-12, 2010. The Commission undertook a 15 year review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly.

Emphasis was placed on the sharing of experiences and good practices, with a view to overcoming remaining obstacles

and new challenges, including those related to the Millennium Development Goals. Member States, representatives of non-governmental organizations, and of UN entities participated.

A series of parallel events provided additional opportunities for information exchange and networking. For more info go to: www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing15/index.html



Participants at CSW 54

Dates to Remember

The Commission on Sustainable Development meets in New York from May 30-14, 2010. Among the themes that will be addressed are: Transport; Chemicals; Waste Management and Mining. For more info: www.un.org/esa/dsd/csd/csd_aboutcsd.shtml

Partnership for Global Justice 2010 Annual Meeting meets in New York from April 30-May 2, 2010. The meeting will be in collaboration with other NGO

Peace Groups at the International Peace Conference and the International Day of Action for a Nuclear Free World. For more info: www.partnershipforglobaljustice.com

Sisters of Earth 2010 Conference: "The Wisdom of Women, the Wisdom of the Indigenous" is the theme of the conference that will take place from July 8-11, 2010 at the Passionist Retreat Center in Riverdale, New York. Sisters of Earth is

a network of women who share a deep concern for the ecological and spiritual crises of our times and who want to support one another in work toward healing human-Earth relationships. For more info: http://sistersofearth.net/soe_conf.php

The UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues will meet in NY April 19-30. For more info: <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/>

Social Development at the UN cont'd

Many Commission delegates focused on vulnerable women and children, youth, seniors and family concerns, as well as indigenous and disabled persons. Many also emphasized the need for a “social protection floor.” This refers to a UN initiative promoting universal access to life’s basic necessities and essential services, including food, water, housing, health care and education.

Federation participants at the Commission included: Srs. Caroljean Willie, SC, Faith Colligan, DC, Janet McLaughlin, SC, Irène Leger, SCND, Marion Sheridan, CSM, Roma De Robertis, SCIC and Julie Cutter, DC.

Sr. Julie said that she appreciated international participation in, and insights arising from NGO side events such as a workshop that explored links among climate change, poverty and inclusion co-sponsored by the SC Federation.

Sr. Marion commented that “Sometimes we religious and members of other NGO faith groups think we’re not important, but this experience showed the importance of our joint advocacy efforts.”

Sr. Irène speaking on the Civil Society Forum commented that it was “an opportunity to hear about cases of extreme social exclusion, and how through programs - mostly sponsored by



Srs. Marion, Roma and Irène

NGOs– excluded persons were able to be empowered”.

Sr. Roma concluded by saying that “I respect and admire the cooperative work of UN NGOs and am happy about the leadership role played by Catholic women and men religious...”

This article was written by Roma De Robertis, SCIC

Sr. Ann cont'd

the transformation among women, the youth and the men also are included in the educational and empowerment programs.

Some Women, having recognized their strength and the ability to be leaders, like catalysts, have become agents of structural and systemic change in their own society.

By organizing women in the villages, creating awareness among the public,

Administration, Judiciary, and by net working with other NGOs, they were able to get Legislation passed in Parliament against Witch Hunting and to control Witch Hunting in West. Singhbhum, Jharkhand, India.

Ann is especially interested in the work at the UN around the issues of women and interreligious dialogue.

She is attending committee meetings and learning the role of an NGO at the UN.

She has networked with other religious NGOs from India and is exploring ways of connecting Religious throughout India to collaborate in the work of the NGOs at the UN in New York.

Short-term internships are available in the Federation NGO office. If interested, contact Sr. Cj at:

cjwilliengo@gmail.com.

Sisters of Charity of St. Elizabeth Celebrate 150 Years

On September 27, 2009, the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth officially began the celebration of the 150th anniversary of their congregation at a special Mass in the Cathedral Basilica in Newark, NJ. Two days prior though, the celebrating had already started at the Broad Street, Newark train station as the 100 plus Sisters and Associates boarded the evening rush hour express to Convent Station in an attempt to recreate the steps

their foundress, Mother Mary Xavier Mehegan, took in 1859. Only during this trip, the Sisters were accompanied by a Dixieland band.

Since that time other anniversary events have taken place: a tree planting and blessing and Masses in several locations. Future events include a 150th Anniversary Gala, a Paterson Museum Exhibit, and a Celebration of the Arts among others.



Sisters of Charity Federation

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Special Federation Events

April 6-8, 2010 - **SC UN Orientation** in New York. We have moved to a larger site so we still have room for more participants. If interested, contact: lsiers6720@aol.com.

April 24, 2010—**The National Vincentian Family Gathering** in North America will be a virtual one this year. A presentation on systemic change by Sr. Cj will be viewed by participants followed by discussion. Interested persons can gather at a host site with others or view the presentation on their own computer. More info at: <http://virtualvins.net>

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.

Thank You Thank You Thank You

The Sisters of Charity Federation collected \$75,600 for the Vincentian Family Microfinancing Project in Haiti through the Christmas Alternative Gift Giving project.



Resources

Martenson, Chris. *"The Crash Course"* is the world's most concise video seminar on how our economy, energy systems, and environment interact, and how they will impact the future. It makes the complex world of economics easily understandable. It is available to view online for free at:

www.chrismartenson.com.

Mortenson, Greg. *Stones into Schools: Promoting Peace with Books, Not Bombs, in Afghanistan and Pakistan*. Viking, 2009.

This sequel to *Three Cups of Tea* continues the efforts of Greg Mortenson to build

schools in Central Asia, particularly in Afghanistan. It provides an excellent overview of the history and geography of Afghanistan as well as the hopes and dreams of the tribal people for a better future for their children through education. Mortenson also shares his friendships with U.S. military personnel, including Admiral Mike Mullen, and the warm reception his work has found among the officer corps.

The End of Poverty? This is a documentary film that explores the question, "With so much wealth in the world, why is there still poverty?" The film is playing in local theaters (primarily art theaters), but is

now also available for purchase as a DVD. It would provide excellent input for high school or college courses, as well as groups interested in the eradication of poverty. For more information go to:

www.theendofpoverty.com

Free teachers guides at both the elementary and secondary levels are available to download free on global issues such as climate change, poverty, environmental degradation, conflict, health crises among others. For more information go to:

www.facingthefuture.org

