



NEWSBRIEF

A publication of the USG-UISG Commission for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation.

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Editorial: *The month of June is marked by World Environmental Day (June 5th), a United Nations commemoration inviting society at large to be committed to stewardship of creation. Pope Francis gave a strong message on Wednesday May 21st, calling all people, and most particularly faith communities, to be responsible for the care of our “Mother Earth”. “If we destroy nature, nature will destroy us” said Pope Francis: Creation is “a gift from God to us...and when we exploit it, we destroy the sign of His love. Destroying creation is like saying to God, ‘I don’t like it’, and this is not good, it is a sin. Care for creation is care for*

God’s gift to us, and it means saying to God, ‘thank you, I am the custodian of creation, but to enable it to progress, never to destroy your gift’”. This month of the Sacred Heart invites us to love God, neighbor and heed what God has endowed humanity, not to exploit but protect it!

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1. ROME UPDATES

1.1. Search for JPIC Commission Secretariat Co-secretary. The JPIC Executive Commission has announced the search for a woman religious to fill the position of **executive co-secretary** for the JPIC Commission Secretariat of the USG-UISG. This is a full-time position based in Rome, Italy. The deadline for submission of applications is October 31, 2014. The letter of invitation and job description is available on <http://jpicroma.wix.com/jpicroma>.



1.2 JPIC English Promoters reflect on trafficked migrants from Eritrea. On the May 28th the Anti-trafficking and Refugee Migrant Working Groups co-organized the May Promoters Meeting to reflect on the situation of immigrants coming from Eritrea. Fr. Mussie’ Zerai, who works with Agenzia Habeshia, and Mrs. Lula Teclhaimanot, from the GHANDI NGO, gave a very strong testimony of the humanitarian emergency of people from Eritrea and other parts of Africa whose efforts to reach Europe cause them to risk their lives along the paths leading through

the desert, to Libya and Egypt, often ending up captured, tortured, sold as slaves, and many of them lose their lives. Mrs Lula shared an interview with a little girl and a man who was protecting her, acting like her father to save her and her mother, which was really touching. After the presentation, the promoters exchanged ideas on how religious congregations can contribute to change the situation. Listen to the story at <http://youtu.be/RHLAULEW-Ik> to get a grip on this tragic situation.



1.2. SEDOS Residential Seminar 2014. This year’s SEDOS residential seminar, May 20-24, featured “*Sent by the God of surprises, new ways of being.*” The theme was chosen to celebrate the 20 years of the association’s documentation and research on the mission of the Church. Highlights of the event include reflections by Sr. Giselle Gomez, STJ, Sr. Angela Gabriella, LSJ and Sr. Marie Vaille, FMM. They all brought their experiences on the theme during these days of reflection and prayer, a precious testimony which celebrated the value of their missions. Much time was dedicated

to dialogue which enriched the event, allowing live debate on the past, present and future of SEDOS. A very important piece of that was about how to bring innovation through formation and collaboration with the laity. Copies of the talks in English, Spanish, French and Italian are available on <http://www.sedosmission.org/web/en/home/13-english/announcements-en/74-sedos-seminar-2014>.—*Aglaya Jimenez Turati*

1.3. End Sexual Violence in Conflict—Time to Act. On June 3 the English Vatican Radio, in cooperation with the British Embassy to the Holy See, hosted a studio discussion on “**End Sexual Violence in Conflict: Time To Act.**” The webcast was streamed live on Vatican Radio’s You Tube channel www.youtube.com/vaticanradio. The participants in the discussion were: Nigel Baker, Her Majesty’s Ambassador to the Holy See; Michel Roy, Secretary General Caritas Internationalis; Sr. Elena Balani, Comboni Missionary Sister (Makala, South Sudan); Sr. Victoria Chiharhula, MSOLA (Congo); and Pádraic MacOireachtaigh, Regional Advocacy officer for Jesuit Refugee Service (was web-connected from Burundi). Philippa Hitchen, Director of the English Vatican Radio, was the moderator.

1.4. Request for prayers. Please remember in your prayers the Congregation of the Daughters of Mary and Joseph (Dames De Marie) who are meeting for their General Chapter, June 13-28, 2014. Their former Superior General died suddenly on December 4, 2013, as she was visiting their communities in Uganda.

1.5. RIP Pilar Martinez. Please pray for the eternal rest of Pilar Martinez who passed away in May 24th in Barcelona, Spain. Pilar was a member of the Good Shepherd Sisters and a very active JPIC promoter. She was a very generous soul and loved to put her gifts at the service of others. For almost two years, she volunteered to do translation of our **Newsbriefs** from English to Spanish, for which we are grateful. The Sisters who were with her told us that she died peacefully.

2. OUTSIDE OF ROME

2.1 Environmental Justice

2.1.1. June 8 is World Ocean Day. Oceans ensure we can continue to enjoy seafood. However, human impact not only endangers the oceans and their inhabitants in various ways of pollutions, but also the situation of oceans are aggravated by climate change. The level of overfishing is reaching alarming levels, putting at risk marine ecosystems, including ocean acidification on shellfish. Read David Suzuki’s article to have the sense of gravity in humanity’s relationship with the source of all life: <http://www.davidsuzuki.org/blogs/science-matters/2014/06/the-ins-and-outs-of-oceans/>.

2.1.2. Global warming in West Antarctica has reached a point of no return. Scientists have now collected enough observations to conclude that the retreat of ice in the Amundsen sea sector of West Antarctica is unstoppable and with major consequences. It will mean that sea levels will rise one meter worldwide. What’s more, its disappearance will likely trigger the collapse of the rest of the West Antarctic ice sheet, which comes with a sea level rise of between three and five meters. Such an event will displace millions of people worldwide. Read Eric Rignot’s article in the Observer, May 17, 2014 at <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/may/17/climate-change-antarctica-glaciers-melting-global-warming-nasa>.

2.1.3. Canadian mining doing serious environmental harm in Latin America. The growing role of Canadian mining companies across Latin America has been put under the spotlight at the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) in Washington, DC, following the presentation of a revealing report. Mining operations by Canadian firms across nine Latin American countries are causing “serious environmental impacts” by destroying glaciers, contaminating water and rivers, and cutting down forest, according to the report, as well as forcibly displacing people, dividing and impoverishing communities, making false promises about economic benefits, endangering people’s health, and fraudulently acquiring property. Some who protest such projects have been killed or seriously wounded, it states, and others persecuted, threatened or accused of being terrorists. Read the 126 page report by IACHR on <http://www.theguardian.com/environment/andes-to-the-amazon/2014/may/14/canadian-mining-serious-environmental-harm-iachr>.

2.2 Land, Agriculture and IYFF 2014

2.2.1. Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) become corporate takeovers in Africa. While we are reaching the equator line of the IYFF-2014—promoting better agricultural policies based on the rights of women and men family farmers, peasants, traditional fishers, pastoralists, indigenous communities, to land, water, markets, etc.—the G-8 Alliance is pushing ahead a comprehensive offensive to control agriculture in Africa. According to some sources, they are trying to get the European Community (EC) involved in supporting their PPPs tool. The EC is supporting Family Farming in Europe. Let us hope that its policy for Africa will be coherent. To read Christine Haigh's Analysis of the situation, visit <http://allafrica.com/stories/201404040937.html>.

2.2.2. Principles for Responsible Agricultural Investment (RAI) negotiations at CFS (Committee on World Food Security) in FAO, Rome. Ken Thesing, the director of ICR at FAO, is part of the Working Group which has been actively working to make sure the 'RAI' document being developed as a new FAO policy statement will protect small-holder agriculture, small-scale farmers, fisher people and forestry residents and their land rights. It is an application of a continuation of the VGGT (Voluntary Guidelines for Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forestry) Policy Statement which was passed by FAO member governments in the 38th Session of Civil Society Mechanism (CSM) in October 2012. Can religious congregations with many members in local rural areas be active in monitoring the implementation of the VGGT Policy by governments—national and local? Only monitoring and evaluating and reporting of results will help ensure that these 'voluntary' guidelines do in fact protect and enhance the livelihoods of small-holder and small-scale farmers, fisher people and forestry residents who all depend on land for their livelihoods.—*Fr. Ken Thesing, MM*

2.2.3. Land grabbing in Paraguay. Last month, the Indigenous people—Guarani Aváof Ygapo community of Corpus Christi, Department of Canindeyú, Paraguay—were evacuated from a property of 4,000 hectares that is part of their ancestral lands. According to the report given by Sr. Raquel Peralta, who coordinates the National Pastoral Coordination for Indigenous (Conapi), an official from Laguna SA cops enterprise ordered about 100 homes and sacred places like temples burnt or destroyed. The article is available in Spanish in *E'a* (Periódico de Interpretación y Análisis) at <http://ea.com.py/desalojan-a-indigenas-de-sus-territorios-ancestrales-en-canindeyu/>.

2.3 Social justice and human rights

2.3.1. Women Sowers of Development International Award by Caritas Internationalis. Caritas International has recently announced that they are offering **two prizes of 10,000 Euros each** to women's groups who have found ways to beat hunger. Examples could include: women using new irrigation technologies to water dry land; micro-savings groups that lend money to women entrepreneurs and encourage small businesses; soup kitchens that have formed innovative partnerships to use food that would otherwise be wasted; women who have developed new ways to market their vegetables and earn money for food. Congregations who may be working with women's groups are encouraged to submit their projects for consideration. This is a way of highlighting the work of women who are working together to combat hunger. The form needs to be submitted by June 16, 2014. For more information, go to: <http://www.caritas.org/2014/05/caritaswomensowersprize/>. For application, go to: <http://www.caritas.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/CaritasWomenSowersApplicationForm.pdf>.

2.3.2. Greece rounding up “undesirables” and sending them to camps. First migrants and recently immigrants were rounded up from Greece's streets and forced into internment camps. Then they threw the drug users in. Next came the sex workers, forcibly HIV tested, publicly humiliated, and imprisoned. Now they're coming for transgender men and women—and the list of “undesirables” just keeps longer. Read more: <http://www.2ndcouncilhouse.co.uk/blog/2013/06/05/and-then-they-came-for-the-trans-people/>.

2.3.3. Slavery was abolished only on papers in the 1770s. It's hard to believe, but even today, people are forced into slavery, girls are sexually exploited and children are forced to do hard labor—all for the sake of profits. To find out just how widespread “forced labor” is, the International Labor Organization (ILO), a United Nation's agency focusing on labor issues, recently has release a report on this shameful global industry. While the figures in the ILO's report are estimates, they help shine a light on the economics of a dangerous and flourishing underworld. Visit http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/05/22/modern-slavery-profits-big-oil_n_5365220.html?ncid=fcblklnkushpimg00000063;http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---declaration/documents/publication/wcms_243391.pdf.

2.3.4. Portraits of reconciliation: a positive story to be shared. Anna Mary Mukamwezi a member of the Congregation of the Daughter of Mary and Joseph shares with us a positive story from her home country, Rwanda. It is a series of photos and stories collected by Pieter Hugo and Susan Dominus about of a process of reconciliation in Rwanda 20 years after the Genocide. The people who agreed to be photographed are part of a continuing national effort toward reconciliation and worked closely with AMI (Association Modeste et Innocent), a non-profit organization. Read more at http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2014/04/06/magazine/06-pieter-hugo-rwanda-portraits.html?emc=edit_th_20140405&nl=todaysheadlines&nid=61191784&r=1.

3. USEFUL RESOURCES

3.1. Advocacy Toolkit: Influencing the Post-2015 Development Agenda. You can find on the [UNANIMA](http://www.unanima-international.org) website a very useful resource developed for civil societies and other Stakeholder organizations, coalition and individuals who wish to influence the Post 2015 Development Agenda. The toolkit supports advocacy activities at the national, regional and international levels. It does not assume a given level of experience in either the post-2015 development agenda or in advocacy activities. Please remember to recognize the authors of this toolkit. http://www.unanima-international.org/wp-content/uploads/SD2015-Post-2015-Advocacy-Toolkit_FINAL.pdf.

3.2. Human trafficking and objectification of women. A **module on Objectification of Women** has been developed by the U.S. Sisters against Human Trafficking (Bakhita Initiative) to create awareness, analyze the phenomenon and work out strategies to defeat the treatment of women as commodities, which is connected to human sex trafficking. Objectification of women is common in mainstream media, advertisement, calendars magazines and movies, which creates a climate of violence and exploitation of women and girls that are not only tolerated but also implicitly encouraged. To read the extent of the phenomenon and how we can collaborate to counteract this degradation of human dignity, visit <http://www.unanima-international.org/wp-content/uploads/ObjectificationofWomenModule.pdf>.

4. JPIC UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Collaboration WG: Third Conversation with Mary McAleese, 15:00-17:00, June 13 at Fratelli,**
- **English Promoters meeting: 9:00-12:00, June 18 at UISG**
- **ICR-FAO meeting: 9:30-12:00, June 24 at Passionist Generalate**
- **Collaboration WG meeting: 15:00-17:00, June 23 at Maryknoll Missionaries, Via Sardegna 83**
- **English JPIC core group: 15:00-17:00, September 8 at Fratelli**
- **Spanish Portuguese JPIC Promoters meeting: 9:00-12:00, September 10 at UISG**
- **Integrity of Creation WG: 9:00-12:00, October 13 at UISG office**
- **Economic Justice WG: 15:00-17:00, September 10, venue to be determined**
- **Anti-trafficking WG: 9:30-12:30, September 27 at Fratelli**

Note: Please send a brief outline of information you think JPIC Promoters might find useful for publication in future issues of *Newsbrief* to jpicusguisg@lasalle.org.

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