

Office of Peace, Justice and Integrity of Creation – March 2014 Update

Make Immigration Reform Your Lenten Promise: We Pray to Change Hearts and Minds in Congress This Lent. In collaboration with Network and other organizations, the Immigration Task Force invited sisters and associates to download a toolkit of Lenten Immigration Resources designed to help reflect on the biblical call for immigration reform, and act to impact our current political reality. Resources are excellent! Task force members are saying a short prayer each day for the legislator featured in the Lenten Calendar and when possible calling the legislator of the day. Many are also participating in the Fast for Families.



Accompanying Immigrants through Presence, Advocacy and Systemic Change. In collaboration with ten immigration and faith groups, the Sisters of Charity of New York signed on to a March 19th press release expressing disappointment that the NYS Dream Act failed to pass in the NY Senate as well as acknowledging local Democrats who voted in favor. Sr. Eileen Judge, co-chair of SCNY Immigration Task Force, is active in the mid-Hudson area through direct service and advocacy. Picture to the left shows Sr. Eileen with Ms. Betsy Palmieri, Director of Hudson Valley Community Coalition, at the March 5 Immigration Advocacy Day in Albany, NY. Consider sending a copy of the SCNY Immigration Statement to your US legislators, colleagues and family members. Contact Sr. Carol De Angelo for a copy.

Casa de Esperanza Over this past summer, Sisters Jean Bocian and Terese McElroy, Directors of Casa de Esperanza, submitted material for possible inclusion in a new *Seeds of Hope: Stories of Systemic Change* book that will offer updated information on the worldwide Vincentian Systemic Change Project. They eloquently express what Casa de Esperanza is and to what we are all called: “Key to living our charism at Casa is entering into relationship with Casa’s people, for in the relationship all are changed and graced by each other. Responding to the needs of a poor undocumented population requires great flexibility, creativity and collaboration. The negative climate towards the new immigrant continuously challenges us to create a safe environment where immigrants are treated with dignity and respect, and have a voice to speak. The sense of belonging to an inclusive community fuels and fosters systemic change in their lives.”

At the Fast for Families National Bus Tour stop in New Orleans, Sr. Claire Regan spoke at a local parish on March 8. She highlighted the Sisters of Charity of New York witness for immigrants, most recently in Albany; our commitment to immigration reform nationally; and, our witness against deportations as part of the new Sanctuary Movement. Claire mentioned Sr. Immaculata Burke, an immigrant to the United States who was welcomed by the people of Guatemala as an immigrant. Sr. Claire reminded those present that we in the United States are called to welcome those who come to our borders as the people of Guatemala welcomed Sr. Immaculata.

Immigration, Human Trafficking and Climate Change: What is the Connection? Why Are They Moral Issues for People of Faith? Sisters Lily Butler and Carol De Angelo attended the March 4 presentation of Patrick Carolan, Executive Director of *Franciscan Action Network* at Columbia University's Earth Institute's Science and Religion Program. Some highlights were: Jesus is a disturbing presence in a society that says some are worthy of God's love and others are not; we need to write a new story of interbeing. We need to live the new story of connectedness acting out of the reality that we are one. The presentation affirmed our 2011 Assembly Direction and focus. Members of the four task forces while addressing specific areas such as poverty, immigration, human trafficking and living the new story (Creation's Transformative Energy), increasingly recognize the connection and interrelatedness of issues and needs.

April 12 workshop at Convent of Mary the Queen, Acting on Behalf of Justice from a Contemplative Heart, facilitated by Sr. Nancy Sylvester will lead us in a deeper appreciation and understanding of this interconnectedness. Call Laura at 718-549-9200 x210 to register.

Corporate Public Witness – a way to participate in systemic change. The following public statements, letters or petitions were signed during March. These are concrete ways we respond to the 2011 Assembly call to speak out publicly and stand in solidarity with those who are vulnerable; and, join with the Sisters of Charity Federation and Vincentian Family in changing unjust oppressive systems through the ministry of systemic change.

1. *The People of Faith for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for the Philippines Declaration of Solidarity* (PJIC)
2. *Keystone XL Pipeline Petition* (PJIC in conjunction with Vincentian Family / SC Federation peace and justice representatives).
3. *ICCR Statement of Principles and Recommended Practices to Promote Global Health* (SCNY)
4. *NYS Dream Act March 19 Press Release* expressing disappointment that it failed to pass (SCNY)
5. With Jubilee USA Network and 78 other groups put name to *Friend of the Court Brief with US Supreme Court in the predatory fund debt case between Argentina and NML Capital*. (SCNY Global Poverty Task Force)
6. *ICCR Letter to Bank of America* expressing concerns about the company's exposure to climate-related risks (SCNY)



UN Commission on Status of Women March 2014 Picture to left shows Sr. Carol De Angelo (SCNY liaison to Sisters of Charity Federation NGO) with Mt. St. Ursula students at the side event, *Women Leaders in Business and Politics*. At a second event, *Girls Teaching Human Rights: Bringing the MDGs into the Classroom*, the students involved participants through the Girls Learn International curriculum (<http://girlslearn.net/>)

Third Commemoration of Fukushima Tsunami, Earthquake and Nuclear Meltdown Sr. Carol represented Congregation and ROAR at the March 9 prayer vigil at Peekskill Riverfront Park sponsored by Indian Point Safe Energy Coalition and Indian Point Convergence.

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