



# Just Notes

A newsletter from the Life, Peace and Justice Commission for the Diocese of Reno, Nevada

Summer 2009 Volume 3, Issue 3

## Statement of Purpose for the Commission:

*We, the Life, Peace, and Justice Commission, attest to the unity we share in the Body of Christ through the Holy Spirit. In solidarity, directed by Catholic Social Teaching and inspired by Scripture, we commit ourselves to encourage our parish communities to work for justice and peace. We speak for the voiceless in our community and world, seeking to advocate for the dignity of all and promote the unity that we share as the creation of a loving God.*



Walking the Walk

## Key Themes of our Catholic Social Teaching

Life and Dignity of the Human Person

Call to Family, Community and Participation

Rights and Responsibilities

Option for the Poor and Vulnerable

The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers

Solidarity

Care for God's Creation

## ON JULY 7, 2009 POPE BENEDICT XVI RELEASED A NEW SOCIAL ENCYCLICAL

By Rita Sloan

In light of the present world economic crisis, in commemoration of Pope Paul VI's Populorum Progressio, and ever in pursuit of Love and Truth, Pope Benedict XVI has released a new encyclical, *Caritas in Veritate* ("Charity in Truth"). Because " 'Caritas in veritate' is the principle around which the Church's social doctrine turns (#6)," Pope Benedict's message both acknowledges the severity of the present world social crises and calls for a new global vision, one in pursuit of justice with the ultimate goal of the common good. "The current crisis obliges us to re-plan our journey, to set ourselves new rules and to discover new forms of commitment.... The crisis thus becomes an opportunity for discernment, in which to shape a new vision for the future (#21)." "The Church's social doctrine has always maintained that justice must be applied to every phase of economic activity, because this is always concerned with man and his needs. Locating resources, financing, production, consumption and all the other phases in the economic cycle inevitably have moral implications. Thus every economic decision has a moral consequence" (#37).

## SERVICE MISSION TO YAKIMA WASHINGTON

By Nancy Childress

From July 18<sup>th</sup> to July 26<sup>th</sup> St Teresa of Avila Youth Ministry participated in a service mission with Young Neighbors in Action in Yakima, Washington, which included teens from St. Teresa of Avila Catholic Community, St Francis of Assisi Catholic Church, and Bishop Manogue Catholic High School. Twenty-five teens, accompanied by ten adults, spent the week painting and repairing houses, cleaning yards and out-buildings, and landscaping a yard.

The homes were located both on the Yakama Reservation and in the inner city of Yakima. In addition to the physical work, one team got to experience the traditional Native American sweat lodge and another team participated in authentic Native American prayer experiences.

In the evenings, we were able to relax and socialize with one hundred and twenty four other participants from various parishes on the west coast. Strong relationships were built between the participants and the families they served. We spent one evening reflecting on the seven themes of Catholic Social Teaching, which two of our participants admitted finally made the teaching come to life and make sense. Thursday evening was cultural night with Mexican food and dancing. We learned how to tie a marriage bow with our feet and how to do traditional Mexican dances.

The road trip to Yakima and back helped us form bonds of friendship and become even closer as a youth group. We returned for the 5pm Youth Mass at St. Teresa's where two participants witnessed their experience to the congregation. Caitlin Sinclair, one of our Senior Core Team members, declared that she "knows she changed people's lives by the work she did this week." That feeling was true for all of us who participated and we were deeply enriched by this experience.

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### **SAINT MARY'S WIC FARMER'S MARKET PROGRAM**

According to Michael Johnson, Director of Community Outreach, Saint Mary's Regional Medical Center, the Saint Mary's WIC program (Women, Infant and Children nutrition program) provides nutrition enhancement services for over 3400 members in Washoe County. Women and children who are low to moderate income and who are under-nourished receive health education, food subsidy, and health service referrals from five community locations.

To promote better eating habits, Saint Mary's WIC program provides its WIC members with farmer's market coupons when they complete educational programs. These coupons are redeemable for fresh fruits and vegetables at local farmers markets. The coupons are made possible through a grant from the local Ronald McDonald House Charity. Since this program started in 2006, it grew in 2008 to distribute over \$19,000 in coupon value.

Initially, women were hesitant to go to the farmer's markets to redeem their coupons. They were more accustomed to the grocery

store environment. However, because of the engaging nature of the farmers, the WIC women became comfortable with the farmer's markets. Farmers were very helpful in teaching women about the various types and use of fresh fruits and vegetables. Often family recipes were provided. In no time the WIC women and the farmers were fast friends. Soon, WIC women were bringing their entire family to the farmers markets.

One of the great values of this program is the enhanced nutrition the WIC families receive from the fresh local produce. Eating locally grown food is a much more nutritious and flavorful way to eat. Also, these families become part of the local food system. Getting to know local producers and supporting their production of food helps to insure a safe and dependable food system. It also builds connections to the very people who take pride in growing our food. It is a win-win situation for everyone while growing strong and healthy people.

### **CARDBOARD BOX CITY 2009**

Friday, September 25, 2009  
Wingfield Park, Reno, Nevada

Every night, as many as 5,000 people in Washoe County have no place to call home. Approximately one third are families with children.

Family Promise of Reno/Sparks will host its fourth annual Cardboard Box City as part of an ongoing effort to promote awareness of homelessness. All proceeds from the overnight event will help Family Promise further its efforts to transition families from homelessness into housing. Participants purchase cardboard boxes and spend the night in the park to learn first hand the harsh realities of a life without a solid roof overhead.

For more information about this event log on to the following web site:

<http://familypromisereno.com/cbc.html>

### **U.S. BISHOPS LAUNCH WEB SITE ON HEALTH CARE REFORM, THEIR POSITION AND CONCERNS**

WASHINGTON—The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) launched a Web page promoting its support of "truly universal health policy with respect for human life and dignity." The page, [www.usccb.org/healthcare](http://www.usccb.org/healthcare), includes letters from bishops to Congress, videos, facts and statistics, frequently asked questions, and links for contacting members of Congress.

Letters to Congress include an August 11 letter by Cardinal Justin Rigali, the bishops' Pro-Life chairman, criticizing abortion provisions in the House version of health care legislation and a July 17 letter from Bishop William Murphy, the bishops' Domestic Social Justice chairman, outlining the bishops concerns and priorities for health care reform as a whole.