



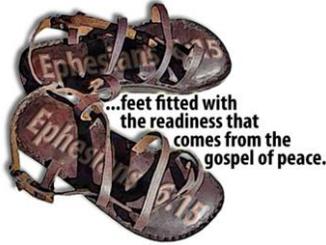
Just Notes

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

Fall 2008 Volume 2, Issue 2

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

October is Fair Trade Month

By Rita Sloan

Justice = Right Relationships: Can we imagine a just world? Can we imagine a world in which every person has sufficient food and water to live; where all have the health care they need to thrive; where each one has meaningful work and receives just wages; where all people respect one another, as well as the earth that sustains them; where conflict is resolved in creative ways that do not result in winners and losers, but rather in solutions that are acceptable to all? The word justice has varied connotations, but in the end we can say justice is about right relationships, both with God and with one another.

The foundational story of the Old Testament, God's leading a people from captivity into liberation and covenant with God's self, is primarily concerned with these right relationships. Then Jesus condenses the Law into two simple commands, "Love God" and "Love Others," not separate, but commands that are mutually implied.

Rather than just dream about such a world, Catholic Relief Services works at building it, believing, "Solidarity will change the world." Solidarity, both a virtue and a principle of Catholic Social Teaching, requires us all to be cognizant of the obstacles to the achievement of full human rights and dignity. Solidarity leads us down the path to achieving justice in the world.

So where do we begin to put solidarity into practice and personally promote a more just

world? We can begin by recognizing the power we Americans wield daily, the power of the consumer. We can start by purchasing Fair Trade products, especially coffee, tea, and chocolate, but including an expanding assortment of goods. Fair Trade is a world-wide movement that is now taking off in the U.S.

Organizations such as CRS and its many international partners, work to enable these producers to form cooperatives that further enhance their bargaining power in the market and enable them to improve production. They teach environmentally sound production methods, offer micro loans, and stress the importance of education for the youth.

The Fair Trade symbols below guarantee that the producers (small farmers and artisans) of the products we purchase, often from economically poor regions of the world, are receiving a fair price for their goods.

Responsibility for justice – that is, for right relationships – belongs to everyone. Fair Trade means a win/win economic relationship. October is Fair Trade month. Find out more about Fair Trade for yourself and for your parish at <http://www.crsfairtrade.org/>, and contact your local CRS Fair Trade Ambassador and diocesan coordinator for the Life, Peace and Justice Commission, Rita Sloan, at rwksloan@hotmail.com, Phone: 849-1653.



JUSTFAITH Ministries, 2008

By Nancy Childress

The JustFaith program is in its second year in the Diocese of Reno and several parishes are considering forming JustFaith groups: Our Lady of the Snows in Reno, St. Gall in Gardnerville, and Holy Family in Yerington have all had information nights. We continue to pray for the discernment of these parishioners as they decide whether to commit to this intensive program.

St Teresa of Avila parish currently has ten new participants beginning the journey to justice and social transformation. Their opening retreat was held the first week of September and they recently participated in their first "border-crossing" immersion experience on September 20th at Carson City Health and Human Services' annual Homeless Connect. The JustFaith participants served and fed the homeless clients by preparing and distributing breakfast burritos, sorting the large quantity of donated clothes and blankets, and learning more about the clients' circumstances through sharing their stories.

In addition to the JustFaith program,

St Teresa of Avila parish is proud to be offering the "advanced" programs of JustFaith ministries to last year's graduates. This year there are eight participants in JustMatters, a program focusing on prison reform called Prison Reform: Church of the Second Chance. This six week program focuses on the factual background for prison reform and is grounded in a deep spirituality and sense of humanity. It highlights interviews with long-term inmates and ministers from the "outside."

Another ten participants are involved in JustSkills: Practices and Skills for Parish Social Ministry. St Teresa's JustFaith graduates along with St Rosa of Lima JustFaith graduates have joined together to learn how to coordinate social ministries within a parish. The twenty week program focuses on the USCCB's document *Communities of Salt and Light*, incorporating social ministry skills and community building.

We are all looking forward to another transformative year.

Published by:

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Rev. Chuck Durante
Fran McMillen
Co-chairs

Edited by:
Elizabeth Reville

Writers:
Rita Sloan
Nancy Childress
Elizabeth Reville

Faithful Citizenship Presentations

By Elizabeth Reville

Fr. Chuck Durante and members of the Life, Peace, and Justice Commission conducted presentations on the U.S. Bishops' "A Call to Political Responsibility" using *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*, a statement from the U.S. bishops that prepares Catholic communities for the upcoming elections and ballot measures, by reflecting on forming consciences for faithful citizenship.

The presentations included prayer, reflection, a ten-minute video, *Faithful Citizenship: A Matter of Conscience*, followed by a discussion on conscience and moral decision making. Participants were then invited to take part in small group discussions to share their thoughts on a series of questions. Any unanswered questions or comments

were brought to the larger group. The presentations concluded with prayer.

The following parishes participated in the presentations: St. Teresa of Avila, Our Lady of the Snows, St. Francis of Assisi, Holy Cross, St. Gall, and Our Lady of Wisdom.

The bishops also state the following: "We strongly urge all parishioners to register, to become informed on key issues, and to vote. The Church does not support or oppose any candidate, but seeks to focus attention on the moral and human dimensions of issues. We do not authorize the distribution of partisan political materials on parish property."

For more information on Faithful Citizenship:
<http://www.faithfulcitizenship.org>