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Next Issue
Ten Years Later

As I reflected on the year 2000, memories popped into mind on several fronts. I recalled the television coverage of celebrations as the new millennium was ushered in around the world. I remembered the culmination of the Church’s three years of preparation for the celebration of the Great Jubilee. In less than clear recollection, I knew there was a meeting which developed the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The media presentations from around the globe pretty much speak for themselves. There was joy and fun and excitement as countries displayed their contributions to the celebrations.

In the Church, we seemed ready to participate in this holy year having dedicated the previous three years to the Trinity. We were called to holiness, to reconciliation and to unity. We were invited to take pilgrimages and seek indulgences. We were urged to reconnect with Our Lady. Among the main points Pope John Paul II enumerated for preparation of the Jubilee of the Year 2000 was the following:

Promotion of social justice in keeping with the Biblical tradition of the Jubilee, (universal destination of the produce of the land, re-establishment of equality among the children of Israel).

From this sense of Jubilee, we celebrated a time of liberation, a time of justice and a time of peace.

The year 2000 also saw the convergence of 189 world leaders who made a promise at the United Nations Millennium Summit to address concerns related to the global food supply, climate, energy, universal education, gender equality, environmental sustainability, debt reduction, etc. Thus, the Millennium Development Goals came into existence with a target date of 2015 to see real progress.

It is over ten years since the MDGs were developed. In September of 2010, a summit was held at the United Nations to revisit and evaluate the progress, as well as to revitalize, expand and recommit to the goals. In light of the above, this issue of Harvest is focusing on some concerns within the scope of Global Justice, especially those that have touched the lives of our authors.

In his President’s message, Liem Le shares his sometimes confusion about the meaning of social justice and whose responsibility it is to pursue it. He goes on to write of his newer reflections on the subject and sets forth challenges for us to consider a more communal look at social ministry especially in light of the reorganization process that is underway within Christian Life Community - USA.

Hang Nguyen, chair. of the Reorganization Working Group gives us a report on that group’s work.

Our National Ecclesial Assistant, Father Cos, refers to the possible outcomes of the CLC Working Group on Reorganization as an example of future interdependence and solidarity, working for the common good and providing ‘creativity in our prophetic mission.’ Cos, too, proposes strength in community and ‘a visible manifestation of Christ’s Church being about his mission’ that would be fruits of such communal collaboration.

Sylvia Schmitt’s, “Poverty, Inequity and Christian Values” delves into a common concern of CLCers in mission. How do I live out the principles of our faith and our commitment in CLC so as to reform structures of society? How do I approach what appears to be overwhelming odds in the eradication of poverty?

(Included for your perusal is the listing of The Millennium Development Goals as well as Questions for Discussion prepared by the United Nations NY Working Group.)

“Could It happen in Israel?” by Donald Moore, S.J. describes a disturbing situation in Israel that receives no attention in our media. Don writes of proposed legislation that would result in racist policies in Israel. Holding on to the Holocaust instead of using the experience to protest injustices throughout the world is cited as one reason for action against non-Jews.

In “Ecojustice,” John Surette, S.J. presents a glimpse of the interdependence of the human and “the other than human communities of our planet.” Read the connections offered by John to consider your stance and actions regarding the environment which surrounds us.

Continued on page 4
Mark Hallinan, S.J. reminds us immediately that when we speak of immigrants, we are talking about human beings with dignity who are entitled to justice. In “Welcome the Stranger,” Father Halligan presents principles of reform endorsed by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. How familiar are you with the principles and how active are you in supporting them?

Maryanne and Tim Rouse share some real life happenings that immigrants in their city (Omaha) have experienced. Their passion about the plight of the immigrant in these United States is one many of us share as we see and read about the injustice perpetrated on a daily basis. “Where Will It Lead?” encourages all to explore the signs of the times in their locale and to respond from there.

In the article, “Global Justice and the Economic Downturn,” Fred Leone tells some of his own story of a change of life style as a result of age, declining health and the economic downturn. His message is one of hope and gratitude. He concludes with some advice and prayer.

Reprinted from the JustFaith Newsletter is a wonderful testimony by Jack Schmitt of St. Catharine’s CLC in New Jersey about the work he does at the Elizabeth Detention Center.

Several Regional Reports are included for your information and inspiration.

- **The South Florida Region** “lives permanently connected to the immigration issue.” Read about some of the work the CLC members perform daily to promote justice among undocumented immigrants.

- **Netta Sloboda of Westchester CLC** (NY) informs us of the Kiva Project. The CLC provides loans to a group of women in a Third World country. Read the report to find out how you might get involved.

- **Mary Wescovich of the Missouri Region** brings us up to date on news from the region: The Bridges program; Guides’ training; Cura Personalis; and recent trips abroad of local CLCers.

- **Carmen Castagna** reports from the **New Orleans Region** on a three day program presented by members of the National Formation Team to leaders of the Lord’s Ranch - a ministry of Our Lady’s Youth Center based in El Paso. “CLC: Come and See at Lord’s Ranch” was an introduction to CLC presented by the team.

- From the **North Central Region’s Newsletter**, there were reports of Advent Reflection Days for the Wisconsin and Omaha Clusters. The fall weekend retreat attracted twenty-seven to Cedar Falls, Iowa. A word of welcome is sent to Remnant CLC — newest community in the North Central Region.

In closing I would like to quote a prayer from St. Teresa of Avila.

*Christ has no body now on earth but yours;*
*Yours are the only hands with which He can do His work,*
*Yours are the only feet with which He can go about the world,*
*Yours are the only eyes through which His compassion can shine forth upon a troubled world.*
*Christ has no body now on earth but yours.*

With prayers and good wishes for a peace-filled 2011,
*Dorothy M. Zambito*

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Dear Friends in CLC,

It is with sadness, and also gratitude, that I tell you that this will be the last issue of *Harvest* that I will work on. For almost 20 years, I have prepared the layout for *Harvest*, but new responsibilities are calling me to put my time and creativity in other areas. I have taken a part-time position in my parish as pastoral associate and that along with my other part-time job as graphics designer with the Adorers of the Blood of Christ leaves me with little time for my own graphics design business much less for myself. And as I enter into the wisdom years, I realize how much I need that time, especially with the challenge of being a pastoral presence in the parish. So I made the decision to basically close down all my graphic design work. It is time for someone new with a fresh approach and energy to take over.

But there is also Gratitude. I have appreciated the opportunity to connect with so many people, especially the editors I worked with over those years, Fred Leone, Dorothy Zambito, Dolores Celantano, and the current Editorial Team which again includes Dorothy! Gratitude also for the background and spiritual growth that CLC has given me which has called forth from me many of the skills I am using in my current position at the parish. I will continue to draw on the support of the community as I continue in my new endeavors.

Peace and love,
*Pat Carter*
Dear companions of Christ:

This issue is about Social Justice, and I have three confessions to make:

Confession no. 1: I did not know what social justice really means; I thought that I did.
Confession no. 2: I thought that working for social justice is optional in our faith.
Confession no. 3: I don’t know how to move from having awareness of a need to participating in a social ministry.

I thought that social justice is about tending to the needy in our society or around the world. Giving donations to charities and responding to programs in CLC-USA have been the extent of my works for social justice, and I have been content with that. I found out differently. What I have been involved in is called social service, one of the two parts of social ministry. The second part is social justice, also known as social action. Social service tends to the effect. Social justice is about the analysis of the causes of these needs and the strategy to eliminate their causes. When someone knocks on my door asking for some assistance to take care of her family because she has been out of work for more than a year, loaning money is providing a social service. If I set out to help her look for employment, then I start to venture into social justice. If while donating money, helping her getting a job, I start to ask questions like “why is she out of work?”; “why are others out of work?”; or “which part of our social structure causes unemployment?”; I may begin to analyze the discrepancy of employment opportunities. Perhaps social justice work begins when I strategize with others who have the same concerns for concrete works to remedy the situation.

I thought that participating in works for social justice is by choice, and I thought these works are usually led by the clergy. I was wrong on both counts. I read in our Catechism that working for social justice is not a choice but a duty of being a Catholic, especially a lay Catholic.

It is not the role of the pastors of the Church to intervene directly in the political structuring and organization of social life. This task is part of the vocation of the lay faithful, acting on their own initiative with their fellow citizens. Social action can assume various concrete forms. It should always have the common good in view and be in conformity with the message of the Gospel and the teaching of the Church. It is the role of the laity “to animate temporal realities with Christian commitment, by which they show that they are witnesses and agents of peace and justice.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, No. 2442)

In the language of Ignatian Spirituality, this teaching would call me to “read the signs of the times,” ask the “why” questions, analyze (social analysis), discern with others, strategize, join force with others of good will and act.

And our General Principles clearly affirm this responsibility:

[The law of love] challenges us to see our serious responsibilities and to seek constantly the answers to the needs of our times and to work together with the entire People of God and all those of good will for progress and peace, justice and charity, liberty and the dignity of all people. (GP3)
We are particularly aware of the pressing need to work for justice through a preferential option for the poor and a simple life style, which expresses our freedom and solidarity with them. (GP4)

The field of CLC mission knows no limits: it extends both to the Church and the world, in order to bring the gospel of salvation to all people and to serve individual persons and society by opening hearts to conversion and struggling to change oppressive structures. (GP8)

At this point I wonder if everything that we do through CLC-USA contributes to eliminating the causes of social injustice. Our ministries in Africa are definitely social ministries. So would be efforts in fighting for the human rights of the unborn, immigration, environmental preservation, etc. What about the ministries in spirituality? Do they have any effect on changing the oppressive structure of our world? Would getting people to encounter a personal and loving God have the effect of eliminating these causes? Would getting more people to love God more profoundly each day lead to a better, less oppressive world? I see that all that we do can lift the oppression of the social structure of the world. I see how my involvements in Lightworks Ministry and Marriage Renewal Workshop have a connection to social justice, though indirectly.

At this moment, we are in the process of reorganizing CLC USA for growth and for apostolic effectiveness. In the new structure, how would we make our social ministries a more concerted effort? Would the social analysis, which is essential in the process, be better left to the individuals and their local communities? Or would this be a function of our National Office’s Social Ministries to provide a needed service in the process? We have many gifted experts in this field, and one comes to mind, Father Benjamin Urmonston, S.J., whom Father Cos calls “a prophet.” Our Committee of Apostolic Actions is filled with people with zeal and expertise. Are we taking full advantage of their gifts to form a concerted and discerned strategy for our social ministries? What is our potential as an apostolic body to have a “system” to help people to move from awareness to actual concerted actions for social ministries?

These are questions, but they are questions for which I believe we already have the answers. We just need to put them together, connecting the dots. The work for social ministries seems to be everywhere, permeating all that we do. It begs for the full participation of everyone, the National Office included.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my profound gratitude on behalf of the National Officers. I am grateful for all the contribution and participation of so many in helping the services of the National Office. I am very grateful for the desire of so many people to participate and contribute to the process of reorganization, which is moving forward; especially for the initiative of the Council of the New York Metro Region. I am grateful for all the financial contributions that have made the works of the National Offices possible. Soon our Annual Appeal for 2011 will begin. We really do need your contributions of any amount.

In Christ,

Liem T Le

“Today it is fashionable to talk about the poor. Unfortunately, it is not fashionable to talk with them.”

— Mother Teresa
Dear CLC-USA brothers and sisters,

Many of you may be wondering about CLC’s reorganization work. After all the discussions we had at the June 2010 Leadership Conference in Pittsburgh, not much seems to be happening. Who is working on it? Is it sitting idle somewhere? Some of you might have heard about the Working Group (WG) and wondered, “What are they doing?”

First of all, on behalf of the WG, I’d like to reassure all our CLC-USA brothers and sisters that the work is indeed in progress. After the June Leadership Conference, it took us two months to get the group together and in the past few months we have organized the group and our work. In this short memo, I would like to give you an update of where we are in our effort to deliver a recommendation on a reorganization framework for CLC-USA at the next Leadership Conference (summer 2011), this being the mandate given us by the CLC-USA National Coordinating Council.

The Working Group was formed in August 2010 by the CLC-USA Executive Council (with input from the Leadership Conference) with the following members: Rick Kunkle, Clare Maing, Rosita Maso, Hang Nguyen (chair), Trung Pham, and Maryanne Rouse. The mandate for the group is to draft a framework for a new structure (“way of being together”) for CLC-USA that recognizes and welcomes our present reality and accommodates future growth.

The Working Group (WG) met for the first time in person on October 28-31 in Houston at Khanh’s and Hang’s home and with the support of the local DH-CLC groups. This was the fourth meeting since the WG was formed (the first three were via teleconference). In addition to the WG members, Fr Costello, S.J. and Liem Le were present. As CLC President, Liem commissioned the WG to work on a proposed reorganization framework. Fr Cos was our guide to help us recognize the movement of the Spirit leading us throughout the weekend. Fr Jim Borbely, our reorganization process guide, helped develop the agenda for the meeting but was not available to attend that weekend.

The in-person WG meeting began on Thursday evening with time “to know each other more” as we shared our own interests, strengths, and weaknesses. Throughout the weekend, besides working on the reorganization process, we also spent time building our relationships and bonding. On Friday, we started the day with the commissioning Mass. I love the reading of that day because it reminds me about the mission of the WG: “And this is my prayer: that your love may increase ever more and more in knowledge and every kind of perception, to discern what is of value, so that you may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ,”

Reorganization Working Group Report;
Web-site Announced
Hang Nguyen, Chair
for the Working Group

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From the Ecclesial Assistant

Robert (Cos) Costello, S.J.

CLC’s Working Group [see www.clcwg.info] is imagining possible reorganized structures for better communication and to further incorporate Korean, Vietnamese, Hispanic and young adults. This project reveals the interdependence of cultures, ages and histories. We are moving to a vitality that empowers greater commitment to mission. Our best future will respect cultural differences, not weaken them. As we grow in interdependence, differences become a salad-like unity. The organic interrelationship of our parts is the reality of life [1 Cor 12:12-26], so CLC will retain differences as we coalesce around mission.

Their work reminded me of the encyclical of Pope John Paul II, *Solicitudo rei Socialis* [SrS]. Prayerful reading of SrS offers a lens to view global development in terms of interdependence.

SrS is an installment in Catholic social teaching wherein Pope John Paul II claims the Church is teacher to humanity, reading the signs of the times. We recognize the Principle and Foundation in SrS as it develops thoughts on interdependence, the obstacles creating developmental “gaps” between North and South, the preference for the poor, and the purpose of the world’s goods. I focus only on solidarity because the Group presupposes CLC’s diversity is one prophetic community.

SrS builds its theme of enhancing human development, be it economic, corporate, cultural, political or religious, from the interdependence of all persons and entities working for the common good - a topic not commonly heard. In foundation language a [moral] obligation stems from the purpose of creation. Personal, corporate or governmental decisions oppressing the poor, thus causing underdevelopment, are immoral. The argument of SrS calls us to work for justice together.

The world is beset with violent deaths, intractable wars, anger and alarming antipathies. We face extremist ideologies that, instead of promoting interdependence, rail at differences, turning them into justifications for hatred, even murder. Accepting interdependence elicits solidarity. We creatures are linked by common origin [Gen 2:15-26] and destiny; we owe others respect and honest dealing. Building our solidarity requires time but it will provide creativity in our prophetic mission. The Preamble speaks of serious “responsibilities” to “seek constantly the answers to needs of our times … to work together [added] with the entire People of God … for progress, peace, justice and the dignity of all…” SrS particularizes responsibilities and envisions a civilization of love.

Many factors undermine seeking the common good but the encyclical rejects abandoning hope. Concluding underdevelopment is just the way things are … sorry about that is unacceptable. Interdependence becomes a life-giving virtue: solidarity with all creation. History, however, shows this is a difficult gift to receive. Solidarity is not superficial distress over injustices; it is demanding work to relieve them.

CLC’s solidarity must pursue world development or we become isolated from suffering and injustice. The challenge is to resist privileged lifestyles for the few, the growing [unbridgeable?] gap between the super-rich and everyone else. “We were created to praise, reverence and serve God our Lord, and by so doing to save our soul…” The accumulation of goods cheaply produced in underdeveloped countries is immoral because it ignores the common good.
SrS also looks beyond underdevelopment to focus briefly on “superdevelopment” that is an insult to the common good. The accumulation by the privileged of wealth and material goods can control or isolate them in the misguided belief self-indulgence is happiness. “The other things on the face of the earth are created as helps in the pursuit of this end…”

So, why link SrS with CLC’s reorganization to accommodate diverse cultures? Is this all about acting efficiently? No, I believe the connection between CLC’s new diversity is the call to solidarity as a prophetic body. When we labor with others our differences model that Christianity means inclusion and solidarity, or it means nothing [Eph 4:1-6]. Jesus died because of his radical inclusiveness. Fr. Nicolás commented CLC is the “living word” of prophecy calling for change, but, when a living word is a *chorus* it is truer, more powerful. Prophecy speaks God’s word, opens eyes.

Compassion is not enough [Mat 15:32-39]: it can deteriorate into pity. Solidarity supports us to speak out against unjust suffering. It builds purpose for actions that foster true development. Solidarity’s roots yield a felt sense of belonging to this grand CLC association, thus empowering commitment to service. It can’t be a personal value or remain only the cherished support from a group.

Successful development requires working together not only because no one person has the answer to relieving poverty, but also that acting in concert is a visible manifestation of Christ’s Church being about his mission. Interdependence recognizes another’s personal dignity [Wis 1:21-27] while challenging the disadvantaged to participate in their own development.

SrS summarizes this way: “Development can’t consist in the use, dominion and indiscriminate passion for created things...” The foundation adds: “It follows from this that the person has to use these things in so far as they help towards this end, and to be free of them in so far as they stand in the way...”

Christ’s answer to true development comes to this [Mat 25:31-46]: “Lord, when was it we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? … Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of these who are members of my family, you did it to me…”

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filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God” (Phil 1: 10-11).

We are working on “a new way of being together in love.” It is not solely about structure or about process. It is about relationship; it is about love. We spent a significant portion of the day on Friday gaining a shared understanding of the current status of and perceptions of CLC-USA in the regions/cultural groups. From the “as is,” we progressed to develop a common understanding of the reorganization guiding principles that were given to us from the Leadership Conference in Pittsburgh in June. We grouped the guiding principles into five topics: premise, communities, delegate assembly, ongoing governing body, and national office/national management team.

On Saturday, we shared our “holy desires/dreams” for CLC-USA. The rest of the weekend, we divided into subgroups to work on the five topics of the guiding principles to identify tasks that are needed to develop the reorganization framework. The meeting ended on Sunday afternoon with the visit of several members of DH-CLC in Houston.

We were touched by their love wrapped in the care package that they sent with us to munch on in the plane. The weekend was grace-filled and at its conclusion we felt we had progressed beyond our initial planning. We have a good foundation for the next phase of our work.

The Working Group has set up a website (www.clcwg.info) as one means for communication with CLC-USA members (in addition to periodic updates to NCC/ExCo, e-newsletters, and *Harvest* publication). Please visit the site to learn more about the WG. We will be updating the website as we progress.

The next face-to-face WG meeting will be held in Houston in March, 2011. We teleconference monthly to ensure the work is progressing and we will also be conferring with a “consultant group.” (More information about this is on the web site.) All the WG members see the challenges but we are full of hope and enthusiasm about the process.

May Christ’s peace be with you during the upcoming New Year.
General Principle 8.iv

The Community urges us to proclaim the Word of God and to work for the reform of structures of society, participating in efforts to liberate the victims from all sort of discrimination and especially to abolish differences between rich and poor.....

How often have I read the CLC General Principles? Many times, I can assure you. But there are times when a familiar text resonates differently. The text of GP 8.iv resonates more deeply with me in light of recent conversations around the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs—see page 11). Most of you, no doubt, are at least somewhat familiar with the MDGs, the 8 targets established and agreed to by 189 countries ahead of the new millennium. The MDGs proclaimed that we were finally going to get serious about reducing global poverty. But what does that mean? Just who is this we? And how do I fit into that plan?

Even before I consider my commitment to the General Principles of CLC, I’ve made a commitment to live Gospel values. I know Jesus’ admonition to “love one another” and Matthew’s story of the sheep and the goats, and I know that it is the way we treat the least among us that is the measure of our love. What’s more, I know that scriptural passages like Isaiah 43.4 which promise that “you are precious in my sight, and honored and I love you” are not directed any more to me than to my sisters and brothers in Somalia, Iran and East Timor. But as a CLCer and an American living in pretty comfortable circumstances I struggle to face the reality of global inequality and to figure out how I am called to respond.

The reality is pretty grim. UNICEF estimates that more than 22,000 children die daily from preventable causes — things most people in the U.S. rarely worry about: malnutrition, unsafe drinking water or lack of access to a vaccine. (That number is twice the population of the NJ town where I raised my children, which makes the number very real to me.) Just three causes — diarrhea, malaria and pneumonia — kill four million children a year.

Each of those children shares that spark of the divine that we profess to see in every human life, but the numbers can seem overwhelming, and other problems distract us.

Americans and others from the developed world respond with amazing generosity to major disasters like the earthquake in Haiti, where approximately 250,000 people died, but sustained compassion is a very different matter. And global poverty will not respond to a quick fix. It is a complex problem with many contributing factors. Many people engaged in the MDG campaign believe that we do have the resources to achieve the MDGs but we lack the political will. In simple terms, it’s not a priority for our government, or for us.

Some people maintain that the vast inequality of our world will inevitably lead to more anger and violence than we’ve already experienced, so maybe concern for our safety and that of our children will serve as motivation. But as CLCers we are called to embrace these children (and all those who suffer alongside them) as cherished by God and acknowledge our responsibility for their wellbeing.

People of faith know that the issue of poverty eradication is too important to leave in the hands of economists or politicians. We who are called to identify with those living in poverty can speak truth to power. We can also advocate for change that will be gradual and sustainable because we have faith and trust, even in the face of setbacks.
Just as important, we have the respect for human dignity and diversity that can lead to change without imposing our culture or values on those who need assistance.

If I’m advocating for change, though, I know that the best place to start is with me. I know that my lifestyle consumes more resources and generates more waste than I would living almost anywhere else in the world. So I am constantly mindful of ways I can reduce my carbon footprint, and I try to think hard before I purchase anything. Do I really need _____ or do I only want it? It is estimated that if all the world lived the US lifestyle we would need the resources of five or six planets, so I know that improving the lives of those in need around the world will require that those of us who live well get used to doing with less.

I also try to get past headlines to stay informed on global issues. The one statistic that always startles me is how few people know the hard numbers on US foreign aid. We tend to think of our country as so generous overseas, and we are, in dollar amounts. But when you look at US aid as a percentage of our Gross Domestic Product, we fall to last place among the world’s wealthiest countries. We pledged 0.7% of GDP as our contribution to the MDG campaign, but we’ve actually contributed only about 0.1%. President Obama pledged to honor our commitment when he was elected, but then the financial crisis diverted our attention. Petitioning our government to fulfill its commitment to the MDGs is a good place to start advocacy, and there are resources like the ONE Campaign to help you stay informed.

A wise friend once said to me that poverty eradication can seem so overwhelming that she decided to choose one aspect of poverty as the focus of her energies. Aside from attentiveness to her own choices and consumption she makes hunger the focus of her advocacy efforts, writing letters to the editor, speaking on the topic both publicly and privately, following legislation and calling her representatives to express her concern….

That’s the route to the reform of structures of society that we are called to by our General Principles. We should be informed, we should be political, we should be vocal, we should be active.

Another very wise CLC friend also helped me put perspective on the vastness of the problem of poverty. She listened to my impassioned presentation and then she said, “You don’t have to save the world. God already did that. All you have to do is find the role that God intended for you in that saving plan and fulfill that.” Amen!

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**The Millennium Development Goals:**

**GETTING THERE?**

**Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty. Halve the proportion of people whose income is less than $1.50 a day.** So far, the deepest reductions of poverty have been in Eastern Asia, especially China and India. All developing regions except sub-Saharan Africa, Western Asia, and parts of Eastern Europe and Central Asia are expected to attain target.

**Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education. Ensure that children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling.** Enrollment is up to 89 percent in the developing world, but pace of progress will not be enough to meet goal by 2015.

**Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women.** Poverty remains a barrier to education, especially among older girls. Women are overrepresented in informal employment, with its lack of benefits and security. Top-level jobs go overwhelmingly to men.

**Goal 4: Reduce child mortality. Reduce by two-thirds the under-five mortality rate.** Since 1990, mortality rates have dropped by 28 percent. Against the odds, remarkable progress has been made in many of the poorest countries, but the pace of success is unlikely to meet the 2015 goal. Progress in controlling measles may be shortlived if funding gaps are not bridged.

**Goal 5: Improve maternal health. Reduce by three quarters the maternal mortality ratio.** Rates of reduction are well short of the 5.5 percent annual decline needed to meet target. The rural-urban gap in skilled care during childbirth has narrowed, but giving birth is especially risky in Southern Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, where most women deliver without skilled care.

**Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases.** Spread of HIV appears to have stabilized, though some 17.5 million children lost one or both parents to AIDS in 2008, mostly in sub-Saharan Africa. Half the world is at risk of malaria, but expanded use of insecticide-treated bed nets is protecting communities like never before. Global production of mosquito nets has increased five-fold since 2004. Tuberculosis remains the second-leading killer after HIV.

**Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability.** Targets include reversing biodiversity losses and species endangerment, halving the proportion of those without access to safe drinking water and sanitation, and improving the lives of 100 million slum dwellers. Results so far are mixed. Rates of deforestation show signs of decreasing, but remain alarmingly high. The world is on track to meet the drinking water target, though much work remains. Sanitation improvements are bypassing the poor.

**Goal 8: Develop a global partnership for development.** Aid is rising despite the recession, but Africa is shortchanged. Debt burdens are easing for developing countries. Access to the internet is still closed to most of the world’s people.


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1 “The Ethics of US Foreign Aid” by Robert Wuthnow in Reflections, the publication of Yale Divinity School, Fall 2010.
What specific experiences of social action and commitment have had a deep impact in my life?

Why were they so significant?

What people and what characteristics of their action did I find most inspiring? Why?

What is the particular call I get from this and how would I respond to it?

As you or your CLC evaluate your presence and activity in a specific project or structure, take time to reflect on how you are responding — to those present — to those involved — to yourself. Where and with whom do you relate to in this particular situation?

Relative to this particular structure or event, who are the poor and oppressed?

What am I offering to those that I reach out to?

When was the last time I have sat down to reflect on a social justice issue that I have come to be aware of?

For my own personal discernment, have I tried to know more about the widening gap between rich and poor in my own backyard or in our global village? What about the trafficking of human beings through the use of fraud, force or coercion for the purpose of forced prostitution or forced labor? How about the barefoot young girl in sub-Saharan who has to walk 8 miles a day just to fetch brownish water for her family to drink because her mother is too weak with HIV/AIDS virus to do this?

In my own CLC group, have I tried to raise awareness of Health Care Reform, Immigration Reform, or the culture of Life and the Death penalty?

As a member of an apostolic community, but fully cognizant of my own limitations, what have I discerned as the most effective way for me to address social justice issues of our time?

Have I engaged my own CLC community in a common discernment to find a common course of action on a social justice concern?

From the Vatican in October 2010

“May all the victims of poverty and those by their side in the quest for a more just and fraternal world be assured of finding in the love of God a strength able to transform the world and men’s hearts.”

May all committed in the struggle against poverty, “...not be discouraged given the magnitude of the needs and to continue with generosity their service to the poorest and weakest persons and families of society.”

— Pope Benedict XVI
Could It Happen in Israel?

Donald Moore, S. J.

Shortly before he emigrated to Palestine from Germany in 1938, Martin Buber was hailed by the Zionist Union of Germany as a scholar who taught us that “to be a Zionist, to be a Jew, and to be a human being are a single unity.” Avraham Burg, who seeks to emulate Buber and Abraham Joshua Heschel in his confrontation and critique of Israel, could well be described in similar terms: He is a Zionist who sees in Judaism a responsibility for the welfare of all humankind. “Never again” must not be limited to Jews but extended to all suffering victims in the world.

Four years ago Burg, a prominent Israeli politician with impeccable Zionist credentials, published a small work entitled in English, The Holocaust Is Over: Let Us Rise from the Ashes. It was a plea to his fellow Israelis to recognize the growing racism that was becoming more and more prevalent in his beloved Israel. Burg’s Zionism calls for a political alternative that would truly make Israel a “light unto the nations.” Few people in Israeli society, however, speak in these terms because Israel has become a prisoner of the Shoah. The Jews of Israel should be in the forefront of the protest and struggle against mass killings and violations of human rights wherever they occur – in Rwanda or South Africa or Dafur, in Tibet or East Timor or Iran, in the West Bank or the United States or in Israel itself. But instead of seeing in the Shoah the epitome of a universal evil that threatens all of humankind so that protection would be extended to all suffering victims of our world, Israel has made the Shoah its own exclusive property. No other people may lay a claim to it.

This was clearly an asset to Zionism in the establishment of the State of Israel after World War II and in the sympathetic support Jews gained from much of the world in their struggle to achieve and maintain Israel’s independence, but in so many other ways monopolizing the Shoah has been a disaster both for Israel and for Judaism. It reinforces for Jews the notion, instilled through generations of anti-Semitism that “the whole world is against us.” Security has become Israel’s primary goal and all done in its name must be condoned. As a result, Israel tends to see all opposition to its policies, from Hamas to the Gaza Flotilla, from the Goldstone Report to Palestinian non-violent resistance, as threats to its existence, as examples of neo-Nazism.

But the most disturbing aspect of the Shoah imprisonment is found in the similarities Burg perceives between the Weimar Republic in Germany and contemporary Israeli society. Burg fears that Israelis are turning a blind eye to that which is happening in their midst. The use of the term Arab in Israeli parlance is so often derogatory, signifying something or someone that is inferior, as was the term Jude in the pre-Hitler years. Are the wall scribblings in Israel, Arabs Out or Transfer Now, any less sinister than Juden Raus? The recent stories coming from IDF soldiers about their actions in Gaza, or the ever more frequent claims by Israeli settlers that they must “redeem” the Land as they appropriate more territory in the West Bank, or the policies of population transfer openly advocated by Israel’s Foreign Minister, Avigdor Liebermann, provide more evidence for Burg’s concerns about racism in Israel.

Burg warns his readers: “It happened to the Germany of Schiller, Goethe and Mendelssohn,” and it can happen “also to us.” He pleads with his fellow Israelis to open their ears and eyes and hearts. There is a vast treasure of unfulfilled potential represented by the State of Israel. Israelis must also understand that what was possible in the land of the poets and the philosophers is possible “here too, in the land of the prophets.” Yet most Israelis have chosen not to see or not to hear or not to understand.

Questions for Discussion

1. How does the golden rule apply to present day Israel?
2. How democratic are Israel’s laws to non-Jewish citizens?
3. How can Israel justify what appear to be racist laws in light of their history with the Holocaust?

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This same concern was recently voiced by Uri Avnery, a respected Israeli journalist and political activist. Writing in October 2010 he recalls how as a youngster in Germany he witnessed the collapse of the Weimar Republic and the ascent of the Nazis to power. Years later he resurrected those memories while writing a book about the situation in Israel with a chapter entitled: “Can it happen here?” It is a question that in Israel is being asked with ever more seriousness. Avnery points to a succession of racist bills that are presently being considered by the Knesset (Israel’s legislative body).

The bill that has received the most prominence and which is supported by Prime Minister Netanyahu is the attempt to amend the law of citizenship so that every applicant must swear allegiance to “Israel as a Jewish and democratic state.” This has angered Israel’s Arab minority, who comprise 20% of Israel’s population, as well as some prominent Jews. Dan Meridor of Likud calls it a proposal that “would harm relations with Israel’s Arabs and damage the country’s international reputation.” Labor’s Avi Shlomo calls it a “racist” loyalty oath that threatens the democrization worldwide. Israeli intellectuals who gathered on October 19th to protest the proposal referred to it as a “racist” loyalty oath that threatens the “very foundation of Israeli democracy.” One participant expressed sadly, “I fear for Israeli democracy due to the extremism and racist laws we are witnessing.”

Another proposal which the Knesset is considering would prohibit non-Israeli citizens from acting as tourist guides. The bill is clearly aimed at some 300 Arab East Jerusalemites (including most of the Christian guides) who are not Israeli citizens, but who have passed the rigorous exams to become guides approved by the Ministry of Tourism. They would be deprived of the right to serve as guides even at the holy places in their own city. The supporters of the bill want to ensure that foreign tourists (many of whom are Christian) are exposed to the viewpoint of the Israeli government. They fear that non-citizens are apt to deviate from the official party line.

Another bill before the Knesset would give to all state-funded communities which receive government land at next to nothing, including lands appropriated from Palestinians, the right to exclude Arabs as residents. The reason given: Arabs joining these communities might disrupt their social fabric.

Avnery claims that there are dozens of such proposals waiting to be introduced into the Knesset whose members appear to be in a frenzy “to see who can devise the most racist bill.”

Adam Keller of the Israeli organization, Gush Shalom, points to other recent events of a similar nature. For example, Rabbi Shmuel Eliyahu, the Chief Rabbi of Safed, has published a ruling forbidding its residents to sell or rent homes to Arabs. Other rabbis are supporting his position since Jewish religious law states that Jews may not sell or rent their homes to non-Jews.

In the same vein Oren Milstein, Deputy Mayor of the town of Karmiel, called upon its residents not to sell or rent their homes to Arabs and established a hotline by which residents may inform on a neighbor planning to sell to Arabs. The reason given was that Zionism’s goal is to establish towns and villages for Jews only and from which Arabs should be excluded.

Supporters of the late Meir Kahane received permission to demonstrate at Umm al-Fahm, an Arab village in Galilee, proclaiming that its residents would sooner or later be expelled from their homes and that Umm al-Fahm would become a Jewish city. The National Police came out in force to protect the demonstrators and allow them to exercise their democratic right to call for the expulsion of Arabs. Police weapons were directed at the protesting residents of Umm al-Fahm, firing rubber bullets and heavy volleys of tear gas. The police argued that the Arab residents of Umm al-Fahm were demonstrating without a permit. Kahane supporters later gathered at a hotel in Jerusalem calling for the expulsion of Arabs from all of Israel.

In all of this there is a hint of Hitler’s early efforts to make life so unpleasant for Jews in Germany that they would emigrate. These included boycotts of Jewish-owned shops, encouraging shops and restaurants not to serve Jews, banning Jews from public parks and transport and swimming pools, firing teachers and civil servants who were Jewish, and warning Germans not to use Jewish doctors or lawyers. These efforts culminated in the infamous Nuremberg Laws on Citizenship and Race promulgated in 1935 and which stated that Jews could no longer be citizens of Germany and made it illegal for Jews to marry Aryans.

If one considers all of the movements against Palestinians mentioned above, combined with the many efforts to delegitimize Palestinian residents in and around Jerusalem, the daily humiliations they suffer at check points, the demolition of Palestinian homes, the drastic restrictions placed on Palestinian workers, then the concern and anguish of Avraham Burg, Uri Avnery, and other Israelis, may not seem so bizarre: Could it also happen here?
Ecojustice

John Surette, S.J.

Do you remember the time when a college diploma guaranteed a good job or the time when one could work in the sun without worrying about skin cancer caused by a hole in Earth’s ozone layer? Do you remember the time when parents expected that their children would enjoy a better standard of living then they the parents experienced or a time when one could eat fruits and vegetables without being concerned about toxic pesticides? Do you remember the time when catastrophic climate disruption and the possibility of a nuclear exchange were not ever present realities? It is none of these times anymore. They have all passed.

The way we humans have organized our societies and economies have not created more employment, lessened poverty, or made us feel more secure. They have, however, slowly and steadily changed the chemistry of our planet, altered its biosystems, and widened the gap between the rich and the poor. The future of Earth has been mortgaged. Life for the human and the other-than-human communities of our planet has been diminished and the process continues at an ever increasing pace.

It is time to abandon the illusion that the environment is not central to the long-term economic health and well-being of all of Earth’s citizens. Injustice for the human and destruction of Earth’s ecosystems are not two separate injustices. They are one! Hidden within economic poverty today are ecological pathologies. We cannot have healthy humans on a toxic planet. Our economic systems can no longer disregard the ways Earth works. Continuing in our illusion is not good for any of us and it is especially hard on the poor and marginalized among us.

It is time to embrace the reality of our cosmic inter-connectedness. Native Americans tell us about the sacred circle and hoop. The Buddhist tradition speaks of everything being dependent on everything else for their mutual existence. Christian mystics teach us that we cannot fully be ourselves without being in communion with all that exists. Our scientific community now speaks about the Universe being a single energy event, a cosmic communion in which everything is present to everything else. I say that lasting justice for Earth and its humans is only possible within this sacred communion.

It is time to move out of that consciousness that perceives things in terms of separate-ness and dualisms. We need to abandon the worldview that structures reality into superior and inferior, dominant and subordinate. We must stop seeing the human as being over the rest of nature, men over women, the developed world over developing world, one race and religion over another. Therein is to be found the roots of all the injustices we suffer today. The fundamental conversion required is to see all as interdependent partners sharing in one Earth-human community.

It is time to build a human society that is more truly human and is radically participative in the dynamics of Earth. There is no longer any time for practitioners of religion and scientists to mistrust each other. What is needed is the awareness that the human and the other-than-human are of their very essences connected to each other, both possessing spiritual qualities and basic rights.

Is it possible for those of us who experience a lessening of hope to regain it within the cosmic reality of inter-connectedness? Is it possible for us to listen to the human poor and the withering Earth and to do justice for both? Is it possible for us, as women and men of faith, to focus our meditation upon the sacred bond that exists between Earth and its human community? I think that it is possible!

Questions for Discussion:

1. What causes the mutual distrust of religion and science?
2. What does cosmic inter-connectedness mean to you? Your community?
3. How do we change our planet from groaning to greening?
Welcoming the Stranger: Immigration and Catholic Social Teaching

Mark Hallinan, S. J.

Immigration is clearly a contentious issue in our society today. The heated rhetoric that dominates our airwaves and pulses through the worldwide web obscures the basic reality that we are talking about human beings, the majority of whom have come to this country out of economic necessity and who have contributed richly to our economy. Our Catholic social teaching demands that we honor the dignity with which immigrants have been gifted by God and to secure the justice that is owed to them.

According to Catholic social teaching, all people ought to be able to secure for themselves and their families what they need to live in dignity. When economic conditions are such that it is not possible to provide adequately for oneself or one’s family in one’s home country, individuals have a right to seek to secure their needs abroad. While sovereign nations have a right to control their borders, this is not an absolute right. Those nations that have the means to accommodate a flow of migrants seeking to secure their fundamental economic needs should receive those migrants in a manner that respects and protects their human rights.

This teaching of our Church flows directly from our scriptures. In the Old Testament, God continually commands the Israelites to protect the widow, the alien and the orphan in society. These were the most vulnerable in their midst, that is, these were the ones whose God-given dignity was most at risk and so these are the ones to whom people of faith should show particular solicitude and care. “Thus says the Lord: act with justice and righteousness…do no wrong…to the alien, the orphan and the widow” (Jer 22:3).

In the New Testament, Jesus and his parents experienced the frightening need to flee from their homeland and to become aliens in the land of Egypt. Our bishops speak of this reality in their document, Strangers No Longer: Together on the Journey of Hope (2003): “Jesus, Mary and Joseph…are, for all times and all places, the models and protectors of every migrant, alien and refugee of whatever kind who, whether compelled by fear of persecution or by want, is forced to leave his native land, his beloved parents and relatives, his close friends, and to seek a foreign soil.”

Recognizing that our scriptures call us to respect and protect the alien in our midst, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops has long sought comprehensive immigration reform. The reform our bishops seek would embody these principles:

1. Development assistance and fair economic competition with developing countries.

The absence of real economic opportunities in their home countries drives many immigrants to seek such opportunities abroad. The United States must work with other nations to develop international development policies, and trade policies, which will foster sustainable economic development in the countries from which migrant flows are greatest so that persons will not need to migrate.

2. A path to legalization that ensures undocumented immigrants have access to full rights.

In 1986, the United States Catholic bishops wrote: “It is against the common good and unacceptable to have a double society, one visible with rights and one invisible without rights – a voiceless underground of undocumented persons” (Together
a New People: Pastoral Statement on Migrants and Refugees). Immigrants have labored long and hard for our society. It is time to bring them out of the shadows and to allow them to enjoy the daylight they have earned by their labors with and for us.

3. **Expedited family reunification and emphasis on family unity for all immigrants.**
   Keeping families together is essential to human fulfillment and social stability. Tragically, visa backlogs have caused U.S. permanent citizens and legal residents to endure years of separation from close family members. The current backlog must be eliminated and sufficient visas should be made available across the socio-economic spectrum to ensure an orderly reunification of family members.

4. **A legal employment structure for future workers that protects both migrants and United States workers.**
   Both skilled and unskilled immigrants have contributed to our economy by filling labor gaps that are all too common in certain industries. Only by creating legal pathways that respond to labor-market realities in the United States can we ensure that there is a safe and economically sustainable migration flow to satisfy the needs of the United States economy.

   As a people of faith, we must not allow our thinking on immigrants to be shaped by those popular voices that seek to strip them of their humanity and their dignity. Instead, we must have the courage to speak out in defense of immigrants, challenging our society to acknowledge the contribution they have made to our collective well-being. We pray that our nation will once more honor the values that have made us a beacon of hope to our world and a symbol of the best that our humanity can be.

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**Questions for Discussion:**
1. How do you welcome the stranger in your family, your neighborhood, and your parish?
2. How do we protect U.S. jobs and allow for incorporation of immigrant workers?
3. Father Hallinan gives us 5 principles from the U.S. Bishops. Which one resonates the most with you?

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**MAJOR THEMES FROM CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING**

The following ten principles highlight major themes from Catholic social teaching documents of the last century.

1. **Dignity of the Human Person**: Belief in the inherent dignity of the human person is the foundation of all Catholic social teaching.

2. **Common Good and Community**: The human person is both sacred and social. We realize our dignity and rights in relationship with others, in community.

3. **Option for the Poor**: The moral test of a society is how it treats its most vulnerable members. The poor have the most urgent moral claim on the conscience of the nation.

4. **Rights and Responsibilities**: Human dignity can be protected and a healthy community can be achieved only if human rights are protected and responsibilities are met.

5. **Role of Government and Subsidiarity**: The state has a positive moral function. It is an instrument to promote human dignity, protect human rights, and build the common good. The principle of subsidiarity holds that the functions of government should be performed at the lowest level possible, as long as they can be performed adequately.

6. **Economic Justice**: The economy must serve people, not the other way around. All workers have a right to productive work, to decent and fair wages, and to safe working conditions.

7. **Stewardship of God’s Creation**: The goods of the earth are gifts from God, and they are intended by God for the benefit of everyone.

8. **Promotion of Peace and Disarmament**: Catholic teaching promotes peace as a positive, action-oriented concept.

9. **Participation**: All people have a right to participate in the economic, political, and cultural life of society.

10. **Global Solidarity and Development**: We are one human family. Our responsibilities to each other cross national, racial, economic and ideological differences. We are called to work globally for justice.
Where Will It Lead?

Maryanne and Tim Rouse

When Tim and I agreed to write something for this issue of *Harvest*, we chose “immigration” as our theme because we both have a great deal of passion for this issue and I thought that by now I would have more hands-on experience.

Obviously we are not the only ones passionate about the immigration issue. Each day there are more folks weighing in on what should be done about it. Here in Nebraska, we face the certain introduction of an Arizona-type law that will be debated in the State Legislature in January. There is already a similar law on the books in a small town not far from Omaha where 8% of the population is Hispanic, yet the backers of this bill sold it to the City Council as if the city were being overrun by dark-skin marauders who threatened their entire way of living. This happened despite spirited opposition from the Fremont police who would be saddled with the job of enforcing it. At the moment, a lawsuit keeps it in the courts and off of the streets.

My current “hands-on” experience of this issue amounts to a careful listening to stories: these include stories from those who do have face-to-face contact with the plight of immigrants that they have known and two very strong movies. The first, *The Visitor*, tells the story of a regular guy who befriends an immigrant couple and discovers that they are without documents when one of them is picked up and detained. Therein begins the nightmare: neither the young man’s mother nor his fiancé can visit as their papers are not in order either. His mother came to the United States pre-9/11 when no one was paying much attention to “papers” so long as you were working and staying out of trouble. Today the situation, portrayed very compellingly in the film, is starkly different. The young man does not know how long he will be detained, where he might be sent next, when or if he will be deported.

The second film, *Sin Nombre*, tells the story of a teenage daughter, her father, uncle, and cousin, who ride from Guatemala through Mexico to reach the United States on the roofs of freight trains, as do thousands of real people yearly. Not only is the ride through Mexico an extremely harrowing one, but the life situations that force them to leave their home are shown clearly: extreme lack of economic means, an abundance of street violence, few educational opportunities and so on. Train riders are often attacked by gangs, mafia members, immigration authorities, local police, as well as the elements of weather: pelting rain, broiling sun, desert cold. The particular characters are fictional, yet thousands are living these nightmares every year. (*See Enrique’s Journey* by Sonia Nazario for a real-life memoir of one of these rides.)

In Omaha, immigrant detainees are housed in the Douglas County Jail, as many as 100+ at a time; the Federal Government pays over $100 per day for each detainee held. Omaha is a comparatively small city, but you can imagine the vast amount of money being spent for this purpose throughout the country. In some places, these fees are playing a significant role in the economic recovery of county budgets.

What has begun here in Omaha is something called the Immigrant Detainee Accompaniment Program dedicated to the sole purpose of accompanying those detained here. Since March, thanks largely to the compassion and understanding of the jail’s Program Director, trained and background-cleared volunteers show up once a week to be-friend whoever comes forward to visit with them. These volunteers have nothing but their compassion and friendship to offer. They are neither attorneys nor miracle workers in any way. What they do provide is someone from the outside who lets the person

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Global Justice and the Economic Downturn

Fred C. Leone

On October 7 I received an e-mail inviting a number of CLC seniors to write an article for Harvest. As I looked at the list of invitees and the suggested topics, I felt that I should say yes, but then I realized that I could not possibly write an article as learned as any of the intended authors. At this point, let me interject that I occasionally have discussions with the Holy Spirit. He usually reaches me early in the morning, when I’m barely awake. This time He said, “Fred, go for it! Why don’t you tell them your story.” My response was, “What can I tell them about global justice?” Then he added, “Many people think that you are presently living in a dream world, a bubble made up of seniors, with comforts and perks. I repeat. Tell them your story.” “You are so right, as usual. Let’s go”, I finally replied.

I like to tell stories, some true and some not; this one is true. Some of you know most of my past. I’ve had several jobs with no interruptions (professor, visiting professor and executive director of a professional association. After my PhD and WW2 service, I married Betty and we had a life blessed by the Lord. We’ve had heartaches and joy for a period of 57 1/2 years together. Shortly before she went home to God, Betty wrote a paper as she received the “The Francis and Claire Award” from her undergraduate university. Her concluding remarks were, “I am 82. There is the story of my life, but God is not through with me yet. Three years later she went Home to God. All of our 9 children, including 2 from other lands, are married, with 26 grandchildren and 4 great grandchildren. We even have twin guardian angels (our first born). In the Sodality/CLC picture, I’ve served on the World Board, the National, and Regional Executive Council.

I am 88 now, and I often wonder why God is not through with me yet. It has been 7 1/2 years since Betty left this world. I live in a non-profit retirement community (Leisure World) with population of 8,500. The Board of Directors is made up of residents only. I have tw0 parishes, one that I have been in for 37 years (Nativity in NW Wash., DC) and Our Lady of Grace just outside Leisure World. The latter is my parish on weekdays and on Sundays it is Nativity. I’ve gone to two 100th birthday parties. At my age, I think the residents here consider me a teenager.

I’ve been in this community five years. I enjoy it and have made new friends. However, the economic situation has hit all of the residents. In my own case, the value of my property has gone down more than $100,000. In fact, my mortgage is much larger than the present value of the apartment.

But let me add a note to these woes. For the first 8 months of this year I have been quite ill. No, it was not life threatening, but serious enough to change my life style radically. But I can say that, at that time, I was quite miserable. This concerned both age-related macular degeneration and prostate problems (not cancer). Both of these illnesses are quite common after the age of 50. Let me add that, as I compose this article, I feel just great. I am back to my routine of water aerobics twice a week and gym three times a week.

Now, what about my change in life style. First of all, my driving is restricted to Leisure World and a shopping center just outside of this. At the suggestion of my doctor and my children, I have drastically reduced my many activities both at Nativity and Our Lady of Grace. I am using a walker at the request of my primary care doctor (and my children). Can you imagine me being a Eucharistic Minister or a Lector with a walker? I now have a “Visiting Angel” (a national organization of care givers) for 2 hours twice a week. She does a number of chores that I ask of her. To take me to all my doctor’s ap-
pointments, I have a team of 3 friends at Our Lady of Grace. I call them my “Chauffeur Angels.” They are very reliable.

Now I must add another true story. After three injections in my left eye, the retinologist said that the macular degeneration had stabilized in this eye, he cleared me for the removal of a cataract. About a week after surgery, the pretty nurse tested the eye. Well, she told me that it is 20/25. I said, “I could kiss you for that.” As I left her, I said, “I won’t kiss you, but I’ll give you a hug.” And I did.

Now, what message can I leave you with, what suggestions? Let’s start with God is Good. Many times I have gone through a brief period of desolation and later this turned to consolation. We all know, of course, that when we want or expect something from God, He will grant it or give us something better. To put it bluntly, our yardstick is not God’s yardstick.

You have many graces or gifts, even though you do not know them all. Ask yourself whether you are using these for others. We all know the story about giving back a hundred fold. We are only builders for the Master, He is the Master Builder. Our gifts are on loan from God. At some time He will take them back. I often “dream” of the gift of Betty in my life. When she returned to the Lord’s Home, I was consoled by the fact that God had said, “Betty, it’s time to come Home to everlasting life.”

As you struggle through this period of economic downturn, you should have a “travelling companion.” This could be a spouse, or a dear friend. There must be enough trust to listen to criticism and even look for the solution together. And now I close with a petition I hear daily at Mass, namely, “For those who are suffering from the economic downturn, we pray to the Lord.”

Questions for Discussion:

1. Are you aware of any laws in your city or state regarding immigration? Are they similar to Arizona’s?

2. Since America is a land of immigrants, are we compassionate enough to other human beings who have immigrated?

3. The Rouses’ speak about two films that have raised their passions about immigration. Have your passions in this regard been roused?

 know that he has not been forgotten nor is she a bad person despite the fact that she is being treated the same as those who are being held on criminal charges.

At this point, there are about 20 active visitors and several more like me, who have been cleared and trained, but are trying to set aside a regular time each week for visits.

What is so compelling about this issue? The ongoing human tragedies and the blatant failure by the system to attend to the dignity of each human person. For example, a high school counselor friend recounts that as this school year began, he spent the better part of a week finding a 14 year-old student a place to live. His parents had been taken, leaving him with no one here to care for him. In fact, he was not sure even where his parents are.

In a couple of weeks, I will be able to begin weekly visits. I’m eager, frightened, and resolved.

As I end this, I wonder if you, the reader, explore the signs of the times in your own city, whom and what you may discover and where that discovery may lead.

Let us hold each other in prayer.
Advocacy for Asylum Seekers

Jack Schmitt

(Reprinted from JustFaith’s GradNet web site; http://justfaith.org/GradNet/)

I am a 2006 graduate of the Just Faith program. As I know is the case with many graduates, I found the program to be fundamentally challenging, and a life-changing experience. For me, the most compelling moment during the Just Faith experience came on a “border crossing” to the Elizabeth Detention Center, barely ten miles from where I lived in New Jersey.

The Elizabeth Detention Center is a warehouse for those who have entered our country seeking asylum. I use the word “warehouse” in its literal sense. The building is a warehouse, in the middle of a warehouse district. Like many warehouses, windows are high up, letting in light but not permitting those inside to see outside. It is a building that was originally designed to store goods, not people. Unlike conventional prisons, there are no signs directing you to the facility, or making clear its purpose. Unlike conventional prisons, it is managed by a private corporation. Unlike conventional prisons, those confined within its walls have no legal rights. They have no right to a lawyer. They can be moved to another facility, deported from our country, or released to fend for themselves in the middle of the night with no money, no contacts, and no support, all without notice or explanation to anyone. The Elizabeth Detention Center is a disgrace.

As I left the Detention Center, after meeting and speaking to several of our brothers and sisters who suffered confinement, I felt a real sense of despair. Over the next several months, I thought about their suffering, and prayed for them. I also came to realize that I was called to do more.

I am a partner in a large law firm in New York City. I practice corporate law, where I advise corporations and wealthy individuals on their business affairs. I knew nothing of immigration law and, as a corporate lawyer, had rarely been to a courthouse. I knew nothing of the procedure for a client applying for asylum. However, I am blessed to be a member of a law firm with a 75 year record of commitment to pro bono work, one that is willing to support those of its attorneys who want to serve those in greatest need.

I spoke to the partner in charge of our pro bono program and told her that I wanted to undertake the representation of an asylum seeker. She immediately put me in touch with a program at a local bar association specializing in assisting attorneys undertaking such cases. She also assigned a lawyer from my firm with experience in these matters to work with me.

My first case was the representation of an evangelical pastor from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. As a consequence of daring to preach a gospel of freedom to his congregants, he had been arrested, imprisoned and tortured by his government. His story was appalling, and his fear of being returned to his homeland if his application for asylum were denied, was real and justifiable. His case took over a year from the time I was first engaged until the hearing on the merits in front of an Immigration Court Judge. Our case was compelling, and my client’s testimony clear and powerful.

I have practiced law for over thirty years, and it has been an interesting and rewarding career. I can say, however, without hesitation, that there has no moment in my career more gratifying than the moment when the judge of the Immigration Court granted my client’s asylum application from the bench. As I sat next to my client, who

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I thought then, and I think now, that, for me, there is no more important work.

Jack Schmitt is a member of St. Catharine’s CLC in Glen Rock, New Jersey. He is a partner in the lawyer firm of Patterson, Belknap, Webb & Tyler, in New York City, where he specializes in corporate and entertainment law. In 2006 Jack completed the JustFaith Program with a group in his parish, which led to his involvement with New York City Bar Justice Center and his work with asylum seekers. Metro New York CLC members know Jack for his rich Irish tenor singing voice. He is often the leader of song at our liturgies.
South Florida Region

The South Florida Region lives permanently connected to the immigration issue. Most of our CLC members are immigrants from the Spanish-speaking countries of the Americas, and a large number of undocumented immigrants share our daily life as they live and work in this area.

South Florida’s undocumented immigrants face great difficulties. Some examples: a Nicaraguan mother waiting for her son to turn 21 so he can ‘claim’ her and she can then receive legal status, meaning she could obtain a driver’s license and then drive to her house-cleaning job; a Haitian immigrant who does not have the funds to obtain the temporary permit that would allow him to work, while another undocumented Haitian who does have the funds for the permit is scared to obtain it because it would mean he is on a government list and this someday could mean deportation; many young students currently enrolled in local colleges, who with the death of the Dream Act in Congress this past year have no hope of legalizing their status in the near future.

The South Florida Region’s CLCs work with undocumented immigrants in many capacities. The Manresa Ignatian Spirituality Center offers a variety of services including special retreats for single parents and their adolescent children, many of whom are immigrants. The San Juan Bosco Clinic provides free health care for those who have no access to private health services and are afraid to go into the public system as undocumented. Many CLCers work in parishes where a large percentage of the parishioners are immigrants; services include food banks, clothing distribution and emergency rent aid, as well as religious instruction for both children and adults.

Continued from page 21

was laughing, and weeping, I realized that it was not just his life that at that moment had changed forever. It was also the life of his wife, the lives of the children they had yet to bear, and the lives of generations to follow them. I thought then, and I think now, that, for me, there is no more important work.

I continue, and will continue, to undertake asylum cases. I am currently representing a Tibetan monk who was imprisoned and punished by the Chinese government for refusing to deny his faith. I, and colleagues at my firm, are working hard, and I am praying hard, that we can secure for him the refuge from harm to which he is entitled. Again, for me, there is no more important work. I am grateful for the experience of Just Faith, which led me to the path on which I now walk. It was, in fact, life-changing.
It was her eyes that caught my attention. She had a beautiful face. But her eyes held sadness and suffering. They haunted me. The headline read Congolese Bishops Denounce International Silence on Genocide. The photo caption read “A woman displaced by fighting sits in a shelter at Kibati, north of Goma, in eastern Congo on Nov. 12.” I showed the December 1, 2008 article from America magazine to my community and they, too, felt the pain and suffering in the woman’s eyes. Later on the New York Sunday Times ran an article stating “In many parts of the world, women are routinely beaten, raped or sold into prostitution. They are denied access to medical care, education and economic and political power. Changing that could change everything.”

It was at that time that we decided to take action. We unanimously and enthusiastically agreed that here was an opportunity for our community to make a difference as a group. After some research, we were led to Kiva.org. Kiva’s mission is to connect people with needy third world businesses looking for loans.

We started by collecting $5 a month from each member of our community. Our total collection was $275 to loan. Meanwhile, I would browse through Kiva to select a group of woman from anyplace in the world needing a loan in any particular field such as a clothing store, agriculture, book store, beauty salon and other small businesses. We selected Africa, usually Uganda or Ghana. The minimum loan is $25.00. We were in! It was exciting to just press a button on the computer and know that we were helping these women buy the necessary supplies to run their businesses. There is no guarantee that you will get your money back and there is no interest paid. However, we loaned to eight groups and all paid back in full.

Our recent loan to our ninth group is called the Concerned Mothers Group. We are now working with the money paid back! A group of 10 women in Uganda needing a loan of $3,825 with a repayment term of 9 months. They have a hardware store and need to purchase more hardware stock for resale. They are in the process of paying back. There were 110 lenders to this group from all over the world. Scroll down the page of Concerned Mothers Group and you will find Westchester CLC, Tarrytown, N.Y. United States listed among other lenders throughout the world.

This is foreign aid on a small scale. Not only are we following our Lord Jesus by giving to the poor and helping to alleviate poverty, we are also allowing these women to feel good about themselves and empowering them as entrepreneurs in a third world country. These loans encourage accountability and dignity.

Kiva is a non-profit micro financing institutions website. The site has a profile and photos of the entrepreneurs as well as the lenders. The lenders choose a business and person or group of people. They click on how much to lend and pay by using their credit card on line. The loans are transferred to local partners who distribute them to the businesses. The local partners collect the repayments over time and the loan is then repaid. You can either withdraw the money or lend it to another business. It is my understanding that the word “kiva” means “agreement” or “unity” in Swahili. For more information, go to kiva.com.

“I say this not by way of command, but to test the genuineness of your love by your concern of others.” 2 Cor 8:8
"CLC: Come and See" at Lord’s Ranch

Vado, New Mexico

Leaders of the Lord’s Ranch, Mike and Mary Ann Halloran, recently invited Christian Life Community USA to present an informational program, “CLC: Come and See” on September 10-12 for their group of 26 ministers. The three-day program was presented by members of the CLC-USA Formation Team: Jen Horan, Dr. Eileen Burke-Sullivan and Robert Costello S.J. as well as regional representatives: Ken Buddendorff S.J., Ecclesial Assistant, and Carmen Castagno, Convener.

The Lord’s Ranch is just one of the many ministries of Our Lady’s Youth Center, or OLYC, based in the El Paso, Texas area. Their 26 bilingual ministers representing various OLYC programs came for the three-day program to learn about CLC. They will use the experience to discern whether their members will form pre-CLC groups.

Topics presented included:
• Vision and history of CLC
• CLC development and process
• Formation and stages in CLC
• CLC meetings
• Communication: active listening and conflict mediation

OLYC was founded in 1953 to serve the youth in El Paso, Texas. A pivotal turning point in ministry occurred in 1972 when a prayer group facilitated by Richard “Rick” Thomas S.J. read Luke 14:13 and felt called to care for the poor across the border in Juarez, Mexico. Since then OLYC ministries have expanded to include food banks, a medical clinic, jail and mental hospital ministries, an inner healing ministry, a pro-life ministry and a radio station. Mission trips, youth activities and the radio station have been operated from the Lord’s Ranch in Vado, New Mexico. Today these operations are orchestrated by about 150 ministers.

Geographically, the ministries encompass the El Paso area at the western tip of Texas and the bordering areas just north in Vado, New Mexico and south in Juarez, Mexico.

On the day prior to the CLC presentation, a few CLC presenters had the opportunity to cross the border into Juarez, Mexico to deliver food to persons unable to travel to the food banks. After the deliveries, one person commented how they were surprised that the government would permit their citizens to live in such a manner. The poverty in Juarez is incredibly striking and the drug cartel violence is only contributing further to the instability of the region.

Throughout the weekend, OLYC ministers became more and more aware of how frequently Richard Thomas S.J. had infused Ignatian spirituality into his homilies and into the ministries themselves. Richard Thomas S.J. passed away in 2006, but his spirit lives on in the daily work carried on by OLYC ministries. Jack Vessels S.J. currently serves as chaplain to OLYC.
I was particularly struck by the warm hospitality offered from the time we arrived in El Paso as well as the very real difference these vibrant ministers are making in their community. It is quite an impressive operation.

Please pray with the OLYC ministers as they discern whether to become part of CLC.

Submitted by Carmen Castagno, Convener, CLC-New Orleans Region.
Photos courtesy of Robert Costello S.J., National Ecclesial Assistant, CLC-USA.

Missouri Region

Mary Wescovich

The Missouri Region has experienced small amounts of growth along with several happenings and is planning for the future.

Sr. Mary Funge is currently guiding a group in the Bridges Spiritual Exercises program. Nicholas Owen and Sacred Circle have received new members into their respective groups. John XXIII Christian Life Community will hold the annual CLC Retreat November 19 - 21 at Todd Hall Retreat Center. Yvonne and Don DeHart, members of Sacred Circle, will host the annual Advent gathering at their home in December.

The St. Louis CLC members who attended the Guides Training last February had a teleconference at DeSmet High School with Fr. Robert (Cos) Costello, S.J., Jen Horan and Eileen Burke Sullivan. It was deemed a success and we planned an onsite visit with Eileen for this coming January. Saint Louis University student CLC is making plans to host the next Cura Personalis for the Youth and Young Adult CLCs. They have great hopes that this event will be a reality next summer at the SLU campus.

Yvonne and Don DeHart traveled to Kenya in October. One evening they met with Edel Churu, a member of St. Aloysius School Board, her husband and several other CLC members for dinner. The next day they toured St. Aloysius, the high school established with the help of CLC members. It was impressive to see the dedication of the teachers and even former students who return to help out at their alma mater. On a similar note, John XXIII CLC had a presentation by Bridget and Jerry Shen highlighting their trip to Tanzania, with a project giving local women instruction in making soy milk as a means of improving the nutrition of the children. The Shens credited their own early years of formation in CLC as the “mustard seed” that led them to undertake the project.
Dear Benefactors,

It is with great pleasure and humility that I would like to sincerely thank you for your individual generosity, kindness and prayers in supporting my education at Loyola University Chicago for the academic year 2010/2011. I promise your efforts won’t be in vain!

Sometimes it becomes challenging to find the right words to express how I feel greatly privileged to receive this special favor from you. One undoubted truth remains; your care for my education has made a great impact in my present and future life and that of my community back in Kenya.

I am currently planning to pursue a career in business with a focus on Economics and Finance. I chose to major in business primarily because I consider it more flexible with regard to my future plans to work with my community in my home country in the Kibera slums. I also think business skills are more related to the issues affecting the general public and that by studying business, I hope to formulate ideas to build development projects that might change the way things are.

My hope to succeed in the future depends on my hard work at Loyola. This has been reflected in my continued improvement in my class performance. During the last two semesters, that is, spring and summer 2010, my G.P.A improved from 3.085 in fall 2009 to 3.487 in the summer and hopefully will continue to improve to the best of my ability.

By sponsoring me, you have allowed me to focus on studies and school activities and ensure that I get all that I need from a college education. This past summer, a generous donor funded my return back to my home in the Kibera slums and I stayed there for a month. Many people that I met were so happy to see me back and could only encourage me to work much harder so that I can go back and help build Kibera. Most of my friends and my neighbors back in Kibera understand how privileged and lucky I am to have this opportunity to study here. Therefore, I continue to take this opportunity seriously and working hard in my studies and with God’s guidance, I will be able to fulfill some of my dreams for my community. While in Kenya I also had a chance to visit my two sisters, Lilian and Ann and also visited my grandparents, Charles and Jane Hauna in the village. I also spent most of my time at St. Aloysius Gonzaga High school in Nairobi with my former schoolmates and officially launched the St. Aloysius Gonzaga Alumni association which was my idea.

Currently at Loyola, I am taking Calculus, Business Statistics, Micro Economics, University Writing class and Theology (New Testament). Coming almost to the end of this fall semester, I would say my classes have been good, except for the calculus which has made me spend extra time to figure it out.

With your continued generosity, sacrifices and prayers, I believe that I would be able to achieve my college degree and hopefully be a light to my family and to my extended community in Kibera, Kenya.

Therefore, I sincerely request your continued support to help me realize this dream.

Merry Christmas and may God bless you always!

Sincerely,
Francis Ogutu
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Email: fogutu@luc.edu

Francis on campus at Loyola University

Pat and Ann Marie Brennan
Harvest / 26
Bishop’s Message for Day of Migrants, Refugees

“Our Task is to Build Integrated Communities in the Church”

LONDON, JAN. 15, 2011 (Zenit.org).- Here is the message of Bishop Patrick Lynch, chairman of the Office for Migration Policy of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales, for the 97th World Day of Migrants and Refugees, which will be celebrated Sunday on the theme: “One Human Family.”

In his address for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees today His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI takes as his theme “One human family.” He reminds us that because of globalization and migration we are becoming increasingly inter-connected and more conscious than ever that all of us belong to one human family. An important aspect of the mission of the Church in the world today is, therefore, to be a sign and instrument of union with God and of the unity of the whole human race.

Once again Pope Benedict emphasizes the central principles of Catholic Social Teaching with regard to migration — the right to migrate, the right of the State to regulate migration and the responsibility of the State to respect the dignity of every human person and therefore of every migrant. This time, however, he adds that “migrant communities have a duty to integrate into the host country, respecting its laws and national identity. The challenge is to combine the welcome due to every human being, especially when in need with a reckoning of what is necessary for both the local inhabitants and the new arrivals to live a dignified and peaceful life.” This message is particularly relevant for the Church here in England and Wales and for our society at this present time.

Integration does not mean assimilation when one looses one’s cultural, social and religious identity and is absorbed into the host culture. Integration is a process — often extending over two generations — that begins when the host community reaches out to welcome and help immigrant communities to connect with, belong to and participate in all the networks that form society today. If people don’t feel welcome they can’t fully belong and if they don’t feel they belong it is difficult to participate and integrate. Churches and in particular parishes and schools often serve as the first points of entry into society and civic engagement. It is in the parish that migrant communities experience a sense of being welcomed and belonging. It is through the parishes and the schools that immigrant families make new friends, receive practical advice, help and support and develop some of the basic civic skills that enable them to connect at a deeper level with the wider community and society. It is through the schools that immigrant families first begin to see the realisation of their dream for a better life for their children.

The Catholic Church also recognizes the importance of culture in the integration process by the way it recognizes and affirms the gifts, the faith, the spirituality and the devotions of immigrant communities e.g. the sense of community and solidarity in one community, the strong family bonds in another, the devotion to Our Lady in another, the sense of joyful thanksgiving and celebration in another.…

Integration, however, involves not only appreciating diversity but also nurturing unity. It is our experience as a Church that that unity is shaped and nurtured by four elements:

• Our shared faith in the Risen Lord,
• Our shared sense of belonging to the Church to a diocese and to a local community,
• Our shared experience of prayer and especially the Eucharist and
• Our shared commitment to build God’s Kingdom and contribute to the common good in society today.

Bishop Patrick Lynch SS.CC.
Chair, Office for Migration Policy
Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales

This is an excerpt from the article. For the full article visit:
http://www.zenit.org/article-31466?l=english
Your contribution can make a difference in faith formation, building community and promoting the Ignatian charism.

Even a small contribution can make a huge impact over time...

For more information call us at 314-633-4628, or write us at

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