



Just News...You've got a date with us!

Four times a year, **Just News** makes a date with you. An important date, because **Just News** a tool that puts different people in communion with each other and helps us combine forces to choose life for ourselves and for the world!

For years now, **Just News** has helped to provide us with different stories than the major media, because Just News enables us to look at the world according to our faith values and in light of the mission of the Sisters of Saint Anne, and to act as a network along with other religious communities and groups pursuing the same goals. Warmest thanks to Sr. Denise Caron and Ms. Diane Boudreault for their tremendous work and their faithfulness during their years at the helm. We plan to carry on in their footsteps. You'll note that this first issue contains a few more pages than usual in order to cover all the news. A happy New Year 2009 to everyone, filled with acts of solidarity and justice!



Hands for the life of the world!

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The legacy of Esther Blondin



UNANIMA INTERNATIONAL What's in a name?

In her first letter to the community, Sr. Rita Larivée, s.s.a., spoke of the legacy of Blessed Marie-Anne Blondin:

“ Blessed Marie Anne Blondin understood the meaning of these words and committed herself and her daughters to reaching out to those most in need, wherever they might be. She knew personally the effects of poverty and illiteracy. She understood the suffering of the oppressed and those whose human dignity had been brushed aside. She saw firsthand the needs of the most vulnerable — the young and the old. And she felt the consequences of a world that had forgotten the meaning of compassion and forgiveness.

This is the legacy she left to us — to see the world through her eyes and heart and to follow in her path of love in action for those less fortunate. Whether through a ministry of prayer or active commitment, we are reminded on this Feast of All Saints of our solidarity with each other in service and in prayer for those in need.”

Letter of October 27, 2008

Why did a group of 16 religious congregations choose to be known as UNANIMA? What does UNANIMA mean?

UNANIMA is a word composed of two parts: ANIMA, the feminine principle of life, which animates and gives life; and UN, which, combined with ANIMA, suggests the word unanimous, indicating our desire to work together in a collegial and harmonious way, like the UN (United Nations). The word also suggests *cor unum et anima una* – one heart and one soul.

UNANIMA is a coalition of 16 religious congregations with members on all continents committed to work at the United Nations for peace and human dignity in response to the needs of:

- ✘ Women and children living in poverty
- ✘ Immigrants and refugees
- ✘ The welfare of the planet.

In this spirit, the entire Congregation begins another year of commitment to the cause of justice! Who are the most vulnerable?

The women and children who are the victims of human trafficking.

We express our solidarity locally, nationally and internationally by participating in the UNANIMA INTERNATIONAL campaign.



NEW CAMPAIGN

Stop the demand for trafficking in women and children: this is the option chosen by the religious congregations belonging to UNANIMA INTERNATIONAL.

This option is supported by a number of convictions:

“We believe that the buying and selling of persons, especially women and children, for sexual exploitation is today’s most common form of slavery.”

“Affirming the dignity of all human beings, especially women and children, who are the most vulnerable, will help stop the demand.”

Furthermore, persons working with victims of trafficking point out that, once a woman has been trafficked, the trauma she experiences makes it almost impossible for her to be reintegrated into a normal social life. Stopping trafficking protects victims better than trying to treat them afterwards. Since trafficking is very lucrative, we believe that eliminating the profits will decrease this form of exploitation.



The campaign logo

The campaign logo, a black broken circle intersected with a red S, represents a wholeness and integrity that have been broken. Both the lives of those trafficked and their families and communities have been shattered because of this modern-day slavery. The white line symbolizes the vulnerable individual trapped by the intertwining red S of immense profits, which motivate traffickers, pimps, brothel owners and those who buy and provide the money which drives this crime.

**CREATED IN THE IMAGE OF GOD
Women and children aren't for sale!**



We are encouraged to look at UNANIMA's campaign resources, promote them, and take action. Working to stop demand is working to eliminate the causes of an international phenomenon that affects millions of women and children.

**To find out more, go to the
TOOLBOX page**

A successful campaign launch for CATHII!

by Sr. Denise Breault of the Esther-Blondin Social Justice Committee



Sr. Lucille Goulet at the microphone

On October 22, we were at the launch of the anti-demand kit for trafficking of women and children. About 100 members of 16 religious communities were present, including 11 Sisters of Saint Anne and two laywomen. Among those involved was a member of the RCMP (Royal Canadian Mounted Police), an indication that she is on our side to provide assistance to victims. One day a month, the 18th, we are encouraged to display our solidarity and pray with one heart with all the communities that belong to UNANIMA International. Every sister can be part of this launch through personal prayer, finding out more about the cause and encouraging those responsible at the different levels.

N.B.: CATHII is a French acronym that stands for Committee for action against domestic and international human trafficking.

Women Religious in Network Against Human Trafficking takes a stand

Sr. Louise Madore, D.W., UISG President, opened the June 2008 congress by declaring: *The phenomenon of trafficking in persons, especially of women and children, calls us to involve ourselves in a prophetic and creative presence alongside poor women, men and children and most particularly those who have faced the dehumanizing experiences of this modern-day slavery.*



Here are a few excerpts from the Network's June 2008 declaration.

We denounce the crime of trafficking in persons and proclaim it as a grave offence against the dignity of the person and a serious violation of human rights. As religious women in solidarity with our sisters and brothers who suffer the consequences of this evil, we will not remain silent. We know that only by working in collaboration and solidarity will we be able to confront the structural causes that generate trafficking. This mission obliges us to take a prophetic stance that requires of us continuous conversion and a change of mentality.

Saint Marie Province

SSAs take a public stand

In a letter published in the Worcester Telegram & Gazette at the beginning of July 2008 and signed by Sr. Carol Prioietti, the sisters at the provincial house in Malborough affirmed their solidarity with the victims of human trafficking and everyone who is opposed to it. The U.S. State Department estimates in its 2008 Trafficking in Persons Report that 20,000 people became victims of human trafficking in the U.S. in 2008.

Human trafficking: Stopping the demand

Sisters from the Congregation took part in the second day of a symposium on "The Human Face of Trafficking" on November 1. Sr. Catherine Ferguson, SNJM, presented the STOP THE DEMAND campaign and a social worker discussed how to recognize a person who is or has been a victim of human trafficking. The first day of the symposium took place in the spring.

In addition, on October 4, the SSA Social Justice Committee sponsored a talk about efforts to counter the trafficking of women and girls in Ghana. Sr. Constance Gemme, a Missionary Sister of Our Lady of Africa touring the U.S., spoke on the question.

Chile : SSAs join in the STOP THE DEMAND campaign

Sr. Anamaría Gajardo Calderón writes to us: "With two companions from our local community, Irène Riopel and Yazmin Lahsen, and the 30 other people present, I had the privilege of attending this workshop on the UNANIMA campaign, led by Sr. Catherine Ferguson and organized by the Chilean Conference of Religious. We appreciated the experiences shared by delegates from Latin America, including Brazil, Argentina, Colombia, Honduras and Chile. Ever since the American Dream lost its power to attract, the U.S. has not been the only country that seems to promise happiness. Trafficking in young women has shifted toward the East and Asia. While some countries are looking for support to legalize trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation, others are organizing information campaigns to wake society from its lethargy concerning this disastrous experience."



Chile: 26 hours on a bus for the life of the world to protest mining project

On September 28, some 45 religious from different congregations left Santiago to take part in the MARCH FOR LIFE in Vallenar, in northern Chile, in order to protest the Canadian company Barrick Gold's Pascua Lama mining project, on the border between Chile and Argentina, at an altitude of 4,000 metres in the Andes Mountains.

Three Sisters of Saint Anne spent about 26 hours on a bus, round trip, to take part in the march: Therese Noury, Director of Formation; Anamaria Gajardo Calderón, and the Chilean novice, Marisol Cornejo Rojas. They joined with families, young people and citizens who were deeply concerned about the actions of Barrick Gold.



Here is what Sr. Anamaria writes: "On the ground, we discovered this lovely valley with its crystalline waters flowing down the centre of the mountain. These valleys are a true paradise, with huge vines that produce grapes for export and fruit of all kinds. These are the valleys that will be destroyed and their waters contaminated by the mining activities of the Canadian company Barrick Gold, which wants to mine precious metals there, including gold. Many citizens from Vallenar and neighbouring towns supported the protest. We began our march with Mass at the Cathedral in Vallenar, and then took to the streets of the city. Afterwards, we created a PowerPoint document on our experience."

Saint Joseph Province



Saint Joseph's Social Justice Committee participated in the regional meetings of Kairos and Development and Peace on two important issues: the question of food sovereignty and Canadian companies' mining activities in developing countries. Postcards are circulating in the community to call for concrete action. In addition, on the International Day of Peace on September 21, the prayer for peace was sent to all sisters.

Esther Blondin Province

On November 6, Sr. Denise Caron led an enriching evening at the Motherhouse on the UNANIMA INTERNATIONAL campaign. Participants were able to appropriate the campaign for themselves and find out more about human trafficking, including the connection between trafficking in persons and demand.



Nepalese mother in India to search for her daughter

The United Nations Protocol to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons, particularly women and children (the Palermo Protocol), is the first international document to establish that it is essential to start with demand in order to eliminate trafficking in women and children. Governments and NGOs are concerned about the victims of trafficking and are deploying efforts to prevent trafficking as well as to protect and reintegrate its victims.

That's good... but we have to do more!

The men who exploit women and children through prostitution are invisible; in fact, they are even "protected" by culture and the law. As long as men are able to take pleasure in exploiting women and children by buying their bodies, trafficking will continue to prosper. If trafficking were not lucrative, those who profit from the sex industry would find other ways to make money. If men stopped paying to obtain sex, the profit source would dry up.

As simple as that!

The 18th? Yes, the SSAs of Quebec have chosen the 18th of each month to show their solidarity with the women and children who are victims of trafficking, by placing them under the protection of Mother Marie-Anne. Each community will recite the UNANIMA INTERNATIONAL prayer in front of a burning candle.

"There are 144 ways to rape women..."

This shocking statement was made by a bishop from the Congo while visiting Canada in December. Bishop Fulgence Muteba of Kilwa-Kasenga was on a tour through the U.S. and Canada together with another bishop and Sr. Marie Bernard Alima to meet with conferences of bishops and elected officials in order to make them aware of the vital need for peace. In the face of so much suffering, Bishop Muteba affirmed that Christian hope was a force to keep people working tirelessly for peace.

On this visit to the U.S., see the following article:
<http://www.catholicnews.com/data/stories/cns/0806188.htm>

TOOLBOX

FIND OUT MORE

The UNANIMA INTERNATIONAL campaign can be found on the Internet, with sections in English, French and Spanish, on the website www.unanima-international.org/.

Did you know that in June 2005, at a Vatican-sponsored conference on immigrants and travellers, Bishop Marchetto was insistent that every Catholic bishop must make the elimination of human trafficking and slavery a priority in his diocesan program? Did you know that in 2007, human trafficking brought in more money than Google, Nike and Starbucks combined?

TAKING IT FURTHER

Human trafficking cannot exist or thrive unless people demand the services or provide “the market” for them.

Susan Maloney, SNJM

This is a excerpt from a highly relevant analysis by Susan Maloney, available in English and French on the UNANIMA INTERNATIONAL website.

In English: <http://www.unanima-International.org/Stop%20the%20demand%20web%20English/resources.htm>

CALENDAR

January 11, 2009 in the U.S.: 3rd National Human Trafficking Awareness Day

March 4, 2009: 1st World Day of the Fight Against Sexual Exploitation

WHAT TO DO NEXT

After reading this issue of JUST NEWS:

- Discuss it with members of your community...what stands out in your mind?

- Say the UNANIMA INTERNATIONAL prayer or the one on page 10.

- Read the UNANIMA INTERNATIONAL dossier to understand the importance of striking at demand in order to eliminate trafficking of women and children

Next deadline for articles:
March 1, 2009

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Each year, 4 million more women and girls are victims of worldwide trafficking for sexual exploitation, or 76 more victims each week!

Reasons for hope

Ten years after Sweden, Norway criminalizes the purchase of sex

“We want to send a clear message to men that buying sex is unacceptable. Men who do it are taking part in an international crime involving human beings who are trafficked for sex,” said Norwegian Justice Minister Knut Storberget to Agence France-Presse.

The Norwegian law, which outlaws the buying of sex instead rather than the sale, was passed by a vote of 44 to 28. It improves on the Swedish legislative model that has been in effect for nine years in three ways: it designates “sexual acts” rather than the vaguer and more ideologically charged concept of “sexual services”; it penalizes the purchase of sexual acts by Norwegian citizens abroad (“sex tourism”); and it provides for a sentence of up to one year’s imprisonment for conduct especially prejudicial to a prostituted person. The law came into force on January 1, 2009.

PRAYING

Litany of Remembrance for those who are enslaved - by J. Cather, snjm

For child soldiers, child laborers and children exploited in pornography, we pray:

Response: Deliver them from darkness into your wonderful Light.

For young girls, exploited on city streets and hidden in brothels, R.

For enslaved women, desperate, alone, and abandoned, R.

For men in bondage, betrayed, forgotten and despairing, R.

For all Human Family members currently enslaved around the world, we pray: R.

Litany of Thanksgiving for the Spirit's Action in our World:

For UN and world leaders, state and local government officials,

Response: Give them with wisdom, confirm them in courage, bless them with perseverance.

For members of NGOs, anti-trafficking organizations, women's and children's rights groups,
R.

For members of religious communities and women's organizations working for justice and
equality, R.

For children and youth engaged in their own struggle for security, independence and
freedom, R.