

**JUSTICE EN BREF  
JUST NEWS  
JUSTICIA Y ESPERANZA  
YOU TI KOUT JE SOU LAJISTIS**

Volume IX No. 3  
June 2009

The corporate responsibility of enterprises! This is an important dimension for the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Anne. This aspect of the mission enables us to question, to dialogue and prompt companies and industries to have better policies. The challenges raised by the respect for human rights and the environment guide our commitment as shareholders. The parable of the talents in the Gospel of Matthew is inspiring. The talents that are called to bear fruit prompt us to live Gospel vigilance so that the right to water, the protection of biodiversity, the free and enlightened consent of aboriginal communities and the adoption of health care principles can be included in the social and ecological rate of return of companies and banks! Corporate responsibility also affects priorities in donations. This bulletin is an overview of our commitment. You will see that we are not alone in these actions. Yes, there is life and commitment! Pleasant reading! •

**SSA Social Justice Office**



*The right to water is a fundamental right.*

*The environmental and corporate responsibility of enterprises*

**Trends in 2008-2009**

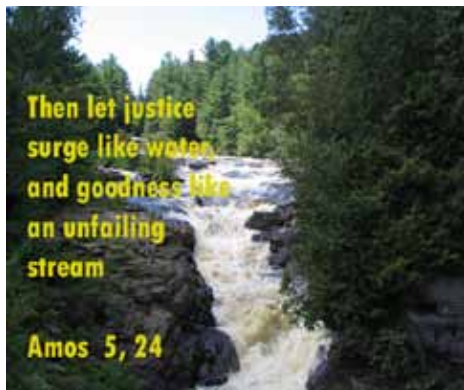
The exercise of our power as shareholders is situated in the prophetic line of religious life and Christian faith. Like the prophets who challenged the authorities to defend the widow and the orphan, we too have to challenge companies and banks so that they will adopt better practices with regard to environmental and corporate responsibility.

*(Cont. on page 2)*

**In this issue**

<b>Corporate responsibility</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The SSA's and the corporate responsibility of enterprises</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Around the garden</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>A marathon of signatures</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Toolbox</b>	<b>12</b>





In the United States, according to RiskMetrics, the most important resolutions made by shareholders in 2009 were related to the environment and health care reform.

In its January 14, 2009 issue, the Wall Street Journal published an article entitled, "Religious Investors Push Companies to Embrace Health Reform".

Why? As explained on the Website of the ICCR, Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibilities:

1. Health care coverage should be universal.
2. Health care coverage should be continuous.
3. Health care coverage should be affordable to individuals and families.
4. The health insurance strategy should be affordable and sustainable for society.
5. Health insurance should enhance health and well being by promoting access to high-quality care that is effective, efficient, safe, timely, patient-centered, and equitable.

Here are some of the companies that were challenged: American Express, Apple Computer, Boeing, ConcoPhilips, Exxon Mobil, Google, Home Depot, Kellogg, Lowes and Staples. •

## **The SSA's and the corporate responsibility of enterprises**

### **An ongoing**

In the June 2008 issue of JUST NEWS, there was a very good overview of the commitment made by the SSA's regarding corporate responsibility of enterprises. We invite you to read it again. Here is some additional information from the last year.

### **Investments consistent with the SSA mission and values**

Both at the general level and provincial level, actions were taken and vigilance was maintained to keep portfolio investments in line with the mission. Various committees are in place and those in charge are keeping a watchful eye while taking the expertise of portfolio managers into consideration.

### **Exercising our voting rights as shareholders**

Another way of exercising our corporate responsibility is to look at proposals made by shareholders and to exercise our voting rights. In the proposals made by shareholders, our discernment is carried out in conjunction with the Regrouping for Corporate Responsibility and Equity (RRSE), the Responsible Investment Group (RIG), KAIROS and Share Canada.

*(Cont. next page)*

Each year, several proposals are made by religious groups that are recognized as well as members of the ICCR in the United States. Various groups also inform us about progress being made by companies regarding certain aspects of their corporate responsibility.

### **Talisman and Barrick Gold**

In 2009, the Corporation of the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Anne notified the Talisman Company that it would be withdrawing the proposal it had indorsed in 2008. In fact, “the Talisman Company made a commitment to publish a report that evaluates the benefits related to the implementation of policies and procedures in view of obtaining the free and enlightened approval of aboriginal communities affected by the activities of the corporation.” Let us remember that we had succeeded in obtaining, with the St. Joseph province and other shareholders, the withdrawal of this company in Sudan (in 2003). The reason was because the exploitation of oil was considered as being party to violations in human rights and international laws in Sudan.



In 2009, The Sisters of St. Anne of Quebec sent a shareholder’s proposal to Barrick Gold concerning the right to water in the Pascua Lama project in Chile. This was supported by the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary and Boston Common Asset Management who manages a portfolio of the St. Mary Province. In reference to article 99 of the Ontario Companies Act (Business Corporations Act, Ontario), which states that the company is not to include the same proposal two successive years, our proposal was not included in the shareholders’ booklet. On April 29, 2009, at the Annual General Assembly, we asked the Company to review its position regarding the commitment of an independent panel of experts concerning the right to drinking water, in sufficient quantity, for the population and the environment. The person in charge asked us to present our proposal next year. •



**Almost 60 percent of the world's exploration and mining companies are listed in Canada. These companies account for over 40 percent of global exploration budgets and have interests in almost 3,200 mineral properties located in more than 100 countries. - KAIROS**

## Around the garden

### St. Marie Province

by sister Carol Proietti

On April 17, 2009, Province Leaders added the name of St. Marie Province to the list of signers of the Open Letter to the U.S. Congress and the Administration calling for dedicated sources of funding for the National Housing Trust Fund (NHTF) sufficient to produce or preserve, over the next ten years, 1.5 million homes affordable to people with extremely low incomes, and for 200,000 new vouchers each year for ten years.

We continue to support, by donations or memberships, the organizations which encourage nonviolence and a respect for all of life: for example, The Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) is an American non-profit legal organization, internationally known for its tolerance education programs, its legal victories against white supremacists and its tracking of organizations it calls hate groups. The SPLC is based in Montgomery, Alabama.

Another effective alliance: we donate to The Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition (MIRA). This coalition keeps immigrants and people working with them informed and also advocates for the immigrants.



Good Friday Silent Vigil against the Death Penalty and All Violence, State House Boston, MA, April 10, 2009

LR: Sr. Ines Almeida, Associate Jean O'Reilly, Sr. Carol Proietti, and Ann Torchia Agape Community and Pax Christi were also represented.

We support Earthjustice, an organization which protects people, wildlife and natural resources by providing free legal representation to citizen groups to enforce environmental laws in the USA. •

To know more about these organizations and the tools they offer, visit the following Web sites:

Southern Poverty Law Center: <http://www.tolerance.org/>

Earthjustice: <http://www.earthjustice.org/>

*In Chile, water is threatened but...*

## **There is success at the first meeting of the Ecumenical Coalition for the protection of the environment**

By sister Ana María Gardejon

Santiago – Chile – Using the slogan “Water, source of life and spirituality, under threat » more than one hundred representatives from twenty churches, ecumenical or pastoral organizations, religious congregations and citizens gathered on March 28, at the Provincial Institute of the Sisters of Providence.



This first meeting was organized by a large network of Catholic and ecumenical evangelical institutions, united against life threatened by the ecological crisis and the privatisation of water in Chile. The purpose of the event was to integrate contributions from various spiritual traditions and to express appreciation for water as a symbol of life to be protected and valued.

Most of the environmental conflicts in Chile stem from the fact that resources of water are threatened because they are considered as merchandise. We have heard shocking testimonies from community groups who are fighting to defend their right to water and pollution free environments.

For example, in the Huasco Valley, Manual Gajardo, the Presbyterian pastor, spoke about his community’s resistance to mining projects. Referring to Ezekiel 47, he reminded the people that Chile depended on water from the Cordilleras of the Andes. The mountains are like the temple referred to by the prophet; they are a sacred space, a patrimony, a heritage for humanity.

Other testimonies came from San Pedro de Melipilla where communities are affected by drought and practices by agro-industry societies. Plans are being made to install the Los Robles thermo-electric power plant. A representative of the faith community of Aysen also spoke about Bishop Luis Infanti’s pastoral letter entitled “Give us this day our daily water”.

We have resolved to work towards promoting the protection of water as common good. The methods proposed are varied: creativity and artistic productions to create awareness regarding these issues and the distribution of Bishop Infanti’s pastoral letter. At the end of the meeting, the participants reaffirmed their love of life by a celebration in which traditions and various spiritualities were present. The Coalition is very much alive and “water” is on the agenda”. •



---

**To know more about our promotion of right to water, read the article on page 3.**

## Visit to provinces

Last March and April, the SSA Social Justice Office visited the St. Marie Province and the St. Joseph Province. We were warmly welcomed by those in charge of the social justice committees who shared with us their actions and concerns regarding social justice issues. Here are a few photos from St. Marie Province. Turn to page 7 for the St. Joseph Province. •



*Sister Michèle Jacques introduces us to the Marie Anne Center.*



*The elderly sisters of the province share their concerns and actions in favour of social justice.*



*The sisters are very much involved in social justice issues, immigration reform being one of them.*

---

## Pentecost and human trafficking

On the feast of Pentecost, Sisters of St. Anne of the St. Marie Province joined sixteen communities of religious women in the region of Boston in the United States to publicly express their solidarity with organizations and people fighting against human trafficking. A few days before Pentecost, a letter was published on May 29 in the section "Opinions of Allston-Brighton" which said : "Pentecost is considered the birthday of the church. On the first Pentecost the Holy Spirit enflamed the hearts of the apostles to go to every corner of the earth with the message of Jesus. In this spirit, the Boston Unit of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious has set aside Sunday, May 31, Pentecost 2009, as an opportunity to express solidarity with all who are working to put an end to human trafficking." The religious communities also expressed their support of Bill 58, asking for the release of human and financial resources for victims of human trafficking. The letter from the women religious communities invited the citizens of Greater Boston to support this Bill. "The reality of thousands of our brothers and sisters laboring in modern day slavery compels us to speak out today in an effort to let the people of Massachusetts know that they, too, can support this bill, serve the survivors of this crime, and stop human trafficking." •



## St. Joseph Province

By sister Sheila Moss

### Protesting Homelessness in Victoria

A number of SSA took part in the walk to the legislative buildings on April 4 as a protest against homelessness. As the large crowd made its way through downtown Victoria, banners, placards, songs and chants gave testimony to the need for action to solve the serious problem of lack of affordable housing. This demonstration, coming just before the Provincial election, was the climax after regular “stands” on street corners throughout the year gave the same message. At the legislature a few speeches were made and photos were taken, especially of the “Street Angel”, a figure lying on a blanket at the base of the steps, symbol of all those who live on the streets.



*An Angel of the street*



*In front of the Provincial Office to combat trafficking in persons (OCTIP)*

In mid April St. Joseph's province welcomed Sister Lucille Goulet and Renaude Gregoire to Victoria. The social justice committee prepared a tour of inner city Victoria and Vancouver, introducing them to the places and people who work for change and for justice. At St. Ann's Residence sisters and associates gathered to hear the presentation prepared by Lucille and Renaude on justice issues and their work. The visitors were also shown important sites in the province: St. Ann's Academy, Glenairley, Providence Farm and Mount St. Mary Hospital. At the annual Tulip Tea at the hospital Sister Lucille gave greetings from the congregation and expressed appreciation for the care being given to the residents. In large groups and small Lucille and Renaude chatted with the sisters and learned about our history and our current province reality. We are all grateful for their visit and look forward to seeing them again.



*Above: at Mount St. Mary's Hospital at the annual Tulip Tea*

*On the right, Sr. Marie Zarowny*



## Residential Schools Delegation to Rome

It is fitting that, given our long history of involvement with First Nations peoples and Sister Marie Zarowny's contribution toward settlement of the legal issues related to the residential schools, she was invited to travel to Rome to represent the women's religious congregations in a delegation of Aboriginal and Church members who, on the very anniversary of Marie Anne Blondin's beatification, will have an audience with the Holy Father in a public action to seek healing and reconciliation.. Details of the visit will be available shortly.



*Visit to the Social Justice Office in April 2009. In Glainery. On the right, visit to Providence Farm with Sr. Anne Elizabeth Thomson*



## Earth Day

Over 1500 people participated in Earth Walk Victoria, including some Sisters of St. Ann. Celebrating Earth Day reminds us to make any effort we can to address climate change, global warming and daily care for our Earth.

## Pre Election Strategy

Three members of the social justice committee visited their current MLA asking questions related to the party stance on justice issues, particularly on poverty and homelessness. Some also attended All Candidates meetings in an effort to learn the attitudes of the candidates seeking election. •

### ***Downtown Eastside in Vancouver: a world of suffering that is ignored***

It is with great emotion that we visited this poor neglected neighbourhood where 25,000 citizens are caught in the hell of illness, poverty, drugs and sexual exploitation. We visited the Carnegie Community Centre that offers services and food. We also visited the DEWC, a centre that welcomes 300 women and their children daily, most of whom are aboriginal. We also went to The Listening Post, an oasis of peace, a ministry run by Sr. Lorraine Lamarre.

More than 50 women have disappeared in this neighbourhood. 60% of these were mostly young aboriginal women. Commemorations are held regularly in this neighbourhood so as not to forget the disappearance of women beaten to death.

- SSA Social Justice Office





## Esther Blondin Province

### UNANIMA INTERNATIONAL Campaign

By Sister Denise Caron

The UNANIMA International campaign against the demands which sustain human trafficking is very much alive in the Esther Blondin Province. The mini-sessions continue to stir an interest among sisters and associates. Two examples:

- April 9: a pot-luck supper with a group of 16 associates. The talk was followed by lively exchanges and pertinent questions. Those who had not yet sent the campaign cards signed them on the spot. Bravo!
- April 16: open invitation to the sisters of the local communities of the Mother House interested in the mini-session. Approximately sixty (60) sisters answered the call and promised to send the Prime Minister of Canada a message printed and signed on the UNANIMA card. •

---

#### A refreshing initiative

During the month of May, Ms. Josée Major, responsible for leisure activities at the pavilion of the Mother House, displayed photos and one-liners in the hallway, depicting the riches of our planet. She also presented the film, "The Blue Planet". •



#### A life more just and more humane

By Sisters Réjeanne Martin and Claudette Richard

The social justice projects we are supporting are addressed to the poorest of the poor forced to live in extreme living conditions: women in prison, women victims of family or conjugal violence, women in precarious financial situations and people who are suffering. To this, we add our daily concerns for environmental issues that keep us vigilant with regard to the future of the planet and its populations. We usually work at distance via the internet and the telephone. Since Réjeanne retired, she works from an office in our residence where she reaches out to leadership teams and caregivers from different organizations. What is important is that we transmit our educational skills to those in charge to help them set up projects that will succeed. Our objectives consist of combating injustice and offering people tools so that their living conditions will be more just and more humane. •



## Daily solidarity on 1st Avenue

by Sister Jeanne Gareau

The members of our community are developing greater awareness regarding the suffering of their fellow human beings. Throughout the year, they took part in signature campaigns. UNANIMA is now part of our vocabulary and we are proud that our congregation is involved in this NGO. On March 8, we launched the 2009 signature campaign and prayed for its success. I am also actively involved in the Association of religious for the promotion of women (ARPF). Social justice issues and women's issues are automatically part of our objectives and programs. We attended various public demonstrations. At the present time, we endorse the UNANIMA campaign against the trafficking of women and children. To date, I have gathered over one hundred signatures.

Rosemont Square is a place where the unemployed are welcomed, listened to and offered help. The accompaniment they receive helps them to break out of isolation, to take their own destiny in hand and to become full citizens". For us, it is an incentive to make concrete commitments such as attending a fund-raising brunch or supporting those involved in the program. We remain attentive to what is going on in the modest room where formation and creative workshops are held.



On April 5, the Development and Peace network – Rosemont invited the population to a peace celebration. Sr. Clairette Brunet was a member of the organising committee. Our neighbours of the School of music were among the participants. On April 22, we joined a festive march to underline the twenty years of community and volunteer work of an organization. •

---

## 20th anniversary of Justice Solidarity Base Communities

by Sister Yvette Pleau

On May 16, 2009, three Sisters of St. Anne took part in the 20th anniversary of Justice Solidarity Base Communities (J.S.B.C.). The celebration was held in a spirit of simplicity, joy, fraternity, sharing and prayer; it was an agreeable and precious Church experience. The J.S.B.C. meetings are held under the principles of see, judge and act and by integrating readings from the Bible in relation to the theme chosen.



The first part of the afternoon was set aside for sharing in small groups that were asked to suggest a theme for the coming year. The day ended with a lively Eucharistic celebration. The first reading was the letter that was to be sent to political leaders of our country at different levels of government starting with the inaugural speech of Mr. Obama, the new President of the United States who treats all people equally. This prophet of our times is inspiring for this project in society that will lead us to fair sharing and the dignity of each human being. Those present were all in favour of this concrete act of responsibility towards one another. As they left, the participants were revitalized and ready to set off on the mission to care for "life threatened" while remembering to keep their sense of humour. •

## A marathon of signatures to combat trafficking and the exploitation of minors

by Sister Denise Caron

April 16 : Ms. Smith sent a letter to the Sisters on 15th avenue Lachine, telling them that the Bill was to be debated in 2nd reading on Monday, May 4, 2009. The Member of Parliament insisted on the following: "Every action you take – whether it is an e-mail, a telephone call, a letter or a signed petition – every action will make a difference."

Yes, it was a real marathon! What will Bill C-268 change? Its purpose is to "modify the criminal Code (Canadian) in such a way that it will integrate a minimal prison sentence of five years for offences dealing with trafficking in persons less than 18 years of age. Joy Anne Smith, the deputy of Kildonan presented this Bill for the first reading in January 29, 2009.



**April 17:** The call was heard! The celebrations of the 200th anniversary of the birth of Esther Blondin prompted us to send petitions to the members of the Canadian government. We had to move quickly as there was to be a parliamentary session on April 18. We called upon help from the Mother House to photocopy 150 cards of UNANIMA International. The messages were sent to the members of the Canadian Government.

**April 18:** The "Friends of Esther" were meeting at the Mother House in Lachine when they were informed of the process. There and then, they signed 50 cards and addressed them to the Federal Deputy of the Lachine constituency.

**April 19:** The remaining 100 cards were distributed on April 19 to the Christian community gathered in the St. Louis Parish of Terrebonne where Esther Blondin was baptised 200 years ago. The parishioners had been informed of Bill C-268 beforehand and they did not hesitate to sign the message sent to the Justice Minister and the General Prosecutor of Canada. Would you believe it? We ran out of cards!

**April 22:** The parliamentary vote that was to take place on May 4th was pre-empted. The Speaker declared that the motion was adopted. Bill C-268 was passed in the 2nd reading, 232 votes against 67! Later it was to be forwarded to a Justice Committee for human rights it would hopefully receive final approval. What excellent news!

Ms. Joy Anne Smith wrote, "Once again, thank you for supporting Bill C-268. Together, we can put an end to trafficking and the exploitation of children." •

# TOOLBOX

## FIND OUT MORE

Regarding the corporate responsibility of enterprises, especially collective practices of mining companies:

Developement and peace :  
[http://www.devp.org/devpme/ENG/education/doc/MINES1\\_Backgrounder.pdf](http://www.devp.org/devpme/ENG/education/doc/MINES1_Backgrounder.pdf)

You may view a power point in English:

[www.devp.org/devpme/ENG/education/Doc/IMPACTMINING.ppt](http://www.devp.org/devpme/ENG/education/Doc/IMPACTMINING.ppt)

## WHAT TO DO NEXT

Support the REED campaign – Resist Exploitation, Embrace Dignity - Buying Sex Is Not a Sport.

Web site :

<http://www.embracedignity.org/>

## TAKING IT FURTHER

In May 2009, Sr. Rita Larivée, Superior General wrote a letter, to the person in charge of the 2010 Olympic Games in Vancouver, in the name of the whole Congregation. She underlined the action taken by sisters and associates to combat human trafficking and she reiterated our demand that Canada hold Games free from human trafficking.

You will find a reflection on the food crisis in the Annex of this bulletin and which is available by e-mail.



Next dedaline for articles :  
August 25, 2009

**To contact us:**  
**Renaude Grégoire**  
**SSA Social Justice Office**  
**Tel: 514-637-3783, ext. 216**  
**E-mail: [ssajust@ssacong.org](mailto:ssajust@ssacong.org)**

## CALENDAR

June 17 : World Day to Combat Desertification  
June 20 : World Refugee Day  
June 21: National Aboriginal Day (Canada)  
August 9 : International Day of the World's Indigenous People

## Upcoming

The world report on human development 2009 will be published in September 2009:  
<http://hdr.undp.org/fr/rapports/mondial/rmdh2009/>



## Take note:

**A former Vancouver prostitute told the Canadian Press that prostitution is a form of violence against women.**