

**JUSTICE EN BREF
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December 4th : Vigil against human trafficking

Did you know...?

a chain of solidarity was formed when the Social Justice Committee from the St. Joseph Province told us that a vigil against human trafficking would take place on December 4 in Victoria?

(cont. page 12)

CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS DIFFERENTLY

Have you looked closely at the nativity scene? Yes, the nativity scene...

It's asking us to CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS DIFFERENTLY. Its message, that «the excesses contributing to global warming - too much heating, fairy lights, an excess of presents and food,» is shared by the ecumenical movement. It brings us back to basics and asks us to focus on the relationship between the planet and its inhabitants, especially the poorest among us, as symbolized by the shepherds, and the Earth's creatures, as symbolized by the cattle, donkeys, and sheep.



Haitian Nativity

Creation was right there at the birth of the Lord!

How are we going to celebrate Christmas in communion with the marginalized and the excluded? And with the blessed Earth?

We wish everybody a Merry Christmas for 2009 and Happy New Year for 2010.

SSA Social Justice Office



Victoria, BC : Vigil against human trafficking

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SSA SOCIAL JUSTICE NETWORK - EVENTS

Welcome – Wednesday evening, September 23, 2009

The Social Justice Office team eagerly awaited the members of the SSA Social Justice Network for a welcome meal with the Congregation's General Council! A wonderful moment of unity!



From left to right: Sisters Jacqueline Brunette, Monia Joseph and Monique Prud'Homme, Ms. Diane Corriveau, Sisters Rachel Agnès and Lucille Goulet.

Day 1: Thursday, September 24

After Sister Lucille Goulet's welcome speech, the day started with a prayer for our work and reconciliation at the tomb of Marie-Anne Blondin.



Our reflection on the subject of reconciliation was continued by Sister Rita Lari-
vée. She spoke about the three steps of reconciliation.

1. See the humanity in the person who hurt me
2. Renounce the right to avenge; let it go
3. Change our feelings toward the aggressor: wish the other person well, see the human being in him or her.

EXPERIENCE RECONCILIATION inside yourself, in the Congregation and in the world; this is a life objective. And here are some questions she asked us: Do we believe in the power of reconciliation? What is preventing us from being full of life? How can we see the oppressor in ourselves?

In the afternoon, we heard various reports on Social Justice activities in the provinces. The sisters and associates are very committed to the fight against human trafficking, for the environment and against poverty. You can find many of these reports in the JUST NEWS editions from the last year! And those to come!



Highlights:

- the sisters from Chile presented us with 2 posters made for the fight against human trafficking (photo, top right).
- Sandra Araya made us aware of the plight of immigrants in northern Chile
- St. Joseph Province is very committed to building and maintaining fair relationships with indigenous people. There is a real commitment to healing and reconciliation
- Esther-Blondin and St. Marie Provinces are continuing to question their respective country's decisions on laws concerning human trafficking
- Sisters from Notre-Dame-du-Perpétuel-Secours province made the most of Lent to hold in the prayers with the victims of human trafficking.

An African themed evening!

The day was not over. Sister Lucille Goulet welcomed us around the table for a typical Congolese meal. Over the candlelit meal, with bread, chicken wings, deep-fried bananas, mangoes, pineapple, and some water, she showed us some photos of her last visit to this devastated African country. Sister Rita Larivée was able to join us to ask what we thought. An experience we won't forget any time soon.



Day 2: Friday, September 25

At the start of each day, before communal prayer, we shared our thoughts with one another. Here is a selection:

- Reconciliation is linked to social justice
- Reconciliation is a long process
- On a personal level, the important thing in the reconciliation process is to look for the solution inside, to create something new
- We confirmed that our network is an essential part of our congregation

After praying for the rivers, inspired by Psalm 137 (see the previous edition of the Bulletin), H el ene Gobeil, a representative from Development and Peace, spoke to us about water and mining (photo, below).



«The fact is, too many rivers are polluted. Too many people are dispossessed from their land. Not enough communities are consulted before mining companies start their projects. For Development and Peace, the ecological balance as well as human rights should be respected when natural resources are extracted, managed and used. These principles should act as a guide for the Canadian mining industry, the global leader in this sector. Canada is a big global player when it comes to mining. Bill C-300 would allow those southern communities affected by the Canadian mining industry to sue the Canadian government through NGOs.»

H el ene Gobeil showed us how land and communities are treated by a capitalism hungry for gold and precious metals.



In the afternoon, we worked in small groups to share our analyses of the obstacles to greater social justice and the ways for overcoming them. Already a common denominator was emerging: poverty.

Day 3 - Saturday, September 26

Here are a few of the best ideas shared before starting work.

- I learned that the tragic reality of the state of our water is linked with mining
- Taking action as shareholders is a long process
- It was an emotional moment for me, a moment of great pain, to see our mother earth abused like this by business interests – when did we lose our sense of humanity, exactly?
- We are used to seeing poverty and we have to take action so as not to lose our compassion.
- We have to work together but also in partnership with others, working as a network...

We prayed for the victims of human trafficking by putting anti-trafficking posters up on different colored flags. (see photo, right)



We use our position as members of UNANIMA International to assess the material and sessions of the STOP

THE DEMAND campaign. It is a very positive assessment; some provinces have been involved in it for a number of years.

Afterward, Sister Lucille Goulet presented the Congregation's contribution to the next UNANIMA International campaign on water. This research work on the link between water, mines, and local communities, especially indigenous people and women, has been keeping the Social Justice Office busy over the last few weeks. The Network would like to highlight their efforts. This story continues on page 11.

In the afternoon, Jean Bellefeuille, from the Canadian Religious Conference, gave an update on the work religious communities are doing to fight human trafficking. We also discussed the 2010 Vancouver Olympics and its link with human trafficking and sexual exploitation. What more can we do? This story continues on page 12.



Day 4: Sunday, September 27

Our day started with a prayer centered on the theme of ACTING AS A CONGREGATION.

Using the metaphor of ships belonging to the same fleet, we talked about what ACTING AS A CONGREGATION means.

To Act Congregationally means that as a body of vowed women we respond to the injustice that surround us. We respect our Chapter mandates regarding our future involvement. We cannot respond to every issues, but to the ones we do, we have faith that our foundress who forget ahead at all odds will continue to inspire us and give us courage.

To Act Congregationnally is :

- to be motivated and guided by the SSA charism, example of B.M.A. and the Orientation of the Congregation*
- to seek ways together in which the calls to speak and act for justice may be embraced by the whole congregation.*

In the photo: Sisters Denise Caron, Sheila Moss and Joyce Harris.



Acting as a Congregation means: daring to take a stand by calling for, supporting or condemning projects, laws, actions, etc. governmental, civil, or religious institutions which contribute to making the world a fairer and more humane place or to its destruction.



We proposed an initial wording of our priority and Sister Sheila Moss agreed develop it.

Our priority for 2009 - 2010 is:

Recognizing the constantly growing reality of poverty in our world and its negative effects on our society, including the tragedy of human trafficking, and the abuse of our earth by our own destructive actions and our negligence, we, THE SISTERS OF SAINT ANNE, are committed to working to eliminate poverty by collaborating with groups and partners working for the same causes.

We took the time to evaluate three subjects before adjourning : our role as a Network, the Social Justice Office, and our closing session.

We closed this session with a Eucharistic celebration presided over by Martin Laliberté, P.M.E. in the presence of Sister Rita Larivée.



Photo: Sister Rita Larivée receives the boat, the symbol of our mission.

The symbols we used each held a special significance for us. The bread we shared came from Vaudreuil, where the Congregation was founded; the wine was from



Chile, to highlight the painful realities of our world. We gathered at the tomb of Marie-Anne Blondin to launch the mission together. The small boats symbolized our Congregation, just like a fleet, setting out to confront the threat to our humanity. Each of us is called to continue changing the world on every level. Godspeed!

We would like to thank those, from near and far, who made this session possible. Including : The General Council, sister Rita Larivée, SSA, Hélène Gobeil, Dev et Paix, Jean Bellefeuille, CRC Martin Laliberté, PME , Francyne Morissette Diane Corriveau, Sylvie Hamelin, Rose-Marie Guèvremont, SSA, Irène Riopel, SSA, Marlène Gérard, SSA and Jean-Marc Beaudoin.
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Around the garden

Visit to Esther-Blondin Province

Saturday, October 31, 2009: the SSA Social Justice Office visits the province in the presence of over 150 sisters and associates from the province in the Marie-Anne Blondin conference hall at the Motherhouse. The day began with a prayer, an introduction of the province's Social Justice Committee members, as well as the history of Social Justice in Esther-Blondin Province by Sisters Denise Breault and Denise Caron. The history panorama was created by Sister Réjeanne Martin. Sister Lucille Goulet then presented the meaning of this day by referring to the text on the Visit from the Gospel of Luke.

The PowerPoint presentation on activities, positions taken, and partnerships of the SSA Social Justice Office, by Lucille Goulet



and Renaude Grégoire, was delivered in two parts - - one in the morning and one in the

afternoon. More than a few of us were touched by a quick presentation of some articles from Benedict XVI's Social Encyclical. The United Nations flag was used to highlight our commitment via the UNANIMA International NGO.



Photo: This shows the history panorama made by Sister Réjeanne Martin. In this photo, Sisters Denise Caron and Denise Breault.

The contributions of the people present highlighted the province's concerns in the area of social justice, including the fight against human trafficking, the right to water, corporate social responsibility, poverty, etc. We reminded ourselves of the importance of fighting against the trafficking of women and children in areas of poverty, etc.



We underlined the importance of acting on all levels: personal, local, national, and international.

(from page 8)



Three extraordinary women meet at the home of Sisters Réjeanne Martin (top photo, right) and Claudette Richard, whose projects are funded by Esther's Dream. Ms. Ruth Gagnon, from the Elizabeth Fry Society in Quebec (center), spoke to us about the legal advice service which helps more than 300 women a year who are incarcerated either awaiting their court hearing or already sentenced. And from Arrêt-Source, a shelter for young women in crisis aged 18 to 30: Ms. Salina Moussouni, post-accommodation liaison officer (far left) and Chantale Gobeil, General Director (2nd from right). Réjeanne Martin and Claudette Richard support these liaison officers by being there for them and being positive.

On the right: Teachers and volunteers from the ALPHA Center, which allows immigrants to learn more than one language! After all, family and brotherly spirit have a unique place in Montreal. Standing, on the right, Renaude Grégoire from the SSA Social Justice Office.

Visit to the Centre au Puits (photo, below). Since its founding more than a quarter of a century ago, the Au Puits center welcomes and helps adults suffering from loneliness or social isolation. The work of the Sisters of Saint Anne has changed over the years and has had to adapt to the ongoing developments in our society. However, the center managed to preserve its values such as solidarity, self-sacrifice and generosity.

Danielle Pilon, Director (on the left) with her Assistant.



The ALPHA Center - so much more than just French lessons, a positive welcoming atmosphere.





Rosemont Square helps the lonely and destitute by offering workshops in creativity, culture, and pastoral care to make their social integration easier. In the photo (from left to right): Jean and Carole, permanent staff, Sister Lucille Goulet, Sister Clairette Brunet, volunteers, and Ernest Beausoleil, priest and pastoral worker.



Last November 15, the benefit brunch was an absolute success.

So much more than just soup, a reassuring presence!

Three times a week on Notre-Dame Street in Lachine, those marginalized from society and in financial difficulty find not only a good hot meal but a warm welcome. Fathers, mothers and children find an environment in which there is faith and someone to listen to them. And of course there was the benefit event the soup kitchen organized last November!



That kept Sister Jeanne Arseneault very busy!



We were there!

At the Second Social Forum of Quebec, October 2009, photo on the right, from left to right: Sister Jeanne Gareau, Sister Michelle Joseph, and Jean Siry, from France.



10th anniversary of RRSE

Several SSAs marked the 10th anniversary of the Réseau pour la responsabilité sociale des entreprises (RRSE). In this photo: Sisters Jacqueline Brunette, Denise Pilon, and Rachel Agnès.

UNANIMA International: Do you want to prepare recommendations for the United Nations?

This question was put to Sister Lucille Goulet at the 2009 UNANIMA International conference in New York.

Given the fact that UNANIMA International is preparing a campaign on water, the Social Justice Office gave a SEE, JUDGE, ACT PowerPoint presentation on the theme of WATER, MINES AND COMMUNITIES, especially on indigenous people and women. This PowerPoint presentation was sent to all the UNANIMA International delegates last September, in preparation for the conference in October 2009.



Finally, at the October meeting in New York, Sister Lucille Goulet delivered the presentation, which was not on the day's agenda. She was asked if our Congregation was putting together recommendations for the United Nations. The Social Justice Office therefore had several days to send Sister Louise Cleary, president of the board of UNANIMA International, their recommendations, to be used at the UNANIMA International speech, in preparation for the 18th session of the Sustainable Development Commission taking place in 2010 and which will cover the topic of mining.



Sister Louise Cleary with sister Lucille Goulet, SSA. Louise Cleary is a Brigidine Sister from Melbourne, Australia.

We are very proud to be able to help reach these positions of decision and influence through our active involvement in UNANIMA International.



TOOLBOX

(from page 1)

Hundreds of people and communities organized a vigil by signing a letter demanding that the Canadian authorities take action at the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver? Also, their commitment inspired visible actions on the route of the Olympic torch to say NO TO HUMAN TRAFFICKING, YES TO HUMAN DIGNITY.

Thanksgiving prayer by Ana Maria Gajardo

How great is your love, Lord!

Light the way, trees full of color
The water sings, the sky cries and your daughters
contemplate your might, discover beauty, and
feel your presence.

You speak to us and tell us: «I am with you.»
The sun is a gift, and the rain a caress, admire
the trees draped in a multitude of colors and the
whole landscape shrouded in a thousand aromas.

What artist are you?
Can you tell us your name?



December 10th : Vigil against human trafficking in Lachine with sister Louise Beauchemin.



December 10th - Olympic torch in Montréal : NO TO HUMAN TRAFFICKING, YES TO HUMAN DIGNITY!

NEXT EDITION

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