



This is the great new problem of mankind. We have inherited a large house, a great "world house" in which we have to live together—black and white, Easterner and Westerner, Gentile and Jew, Catholic and Protestant, Moslem and Hindu—a family unduly separated in ideas, culture and interest, who, because we can never again live apart, must learn somehow to live with each other in peace.

Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.

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From the Director

Since our last newsletter the Free Trade debate has claimed a lot of attention. There have been intense debates and discussions about the Doha or Development Round of agreements at the World Trade Organization; efforts to advance the Free Trade Areas of the Americas Agreement (FTAA) in Miami; a push to finalize the Central America Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA); and evaluations of the accomplishments of the North American Free Trade Agreement after ten years.

Market access, jobs and the environment are three of the issues that usually get a lot of attention in negotiating trade agreements from differing constituencies. It is clearly recognized that there are some winners and some losers as a result of each agreement and political leaders are constantly trying to measure the impact of these agreements on their supporters.

One of the many slogans that have emerged during these debates is the call to "make trade fare and not just free". This becomes a very significant challenge when for instance the issue of jobs is on the table though it is also a very important consideration for those advocating for the well being of people in poorer regions of the world.

It is very clear that the U.S. manufacturing sector and parts of the technology service sector have a very difficult time remaining competitive in the area of wages and a lot jobs are lost as a result. It is equally important to remember the devastating impact that the \$500 billion agricultural subsidies that are supported by the United States and the European Union have on millions of farmers and villages in the developing world. Behind most of these lost jobs there lies a story of personal anxiety that ripples out into families, communities and entire regions.



As we in the U.S. turn our attention to electing the next president we are challenged by our faith to bring the message of the universal common good which is at the heart of our Catholic Social teaching into our debates and decision-making. It is critically important for members of a church community with a global presence and for members of an international religious congregation to remind our political leaders of the great responsibility and influence that our nation can and does have over the lives of so many people especially the more than 1 billion who have to survive on less than \$1 a day. Their commitment to debt cancellation, AIDS Funding and sustainable development globally can and will make a difference.

The OMI Justice and Peace/ Integrity of Creation Office

coordinates the advocacy efforts of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate on behalf of the interests of the poor and abandoned in the U.S. and in the more than 65 countries where the Oblates are in mission. These efforts include serving as a resource for province membership, supporting the community organizing efforts of the Oblates in the United States, and coordinating the Corporate Responsibility Program to insist on just practices and policies by corporations in their worldwide operations. Our work also includes advocacy with the United States government and other international institutions on a variety of justice and peace issues.

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News and Advocacy

Haiti Celebrates 200 years of freedom, efforts towards justice continue in US and in Haiti

On January 1, 2004 Haiti celebrated the bicentennial of its revolution during which black slaves rose up and defeated Napoleon's army.

The struggle to achieve peace and justice in Haiti continues. Efforts to strengthen Haiti's democracy are underway by some as others call for the undermining of the democratic process in Haiti. *For more information please see www.lethaitilive.org.*

"I Will Feed Them with Justice" Ecumenical Advocacy Days for Global Peace with Justice March 5-8, 2004

You are invited to participate in the second annual ecumenical gathering in Washington, DC, concerning urgent global issues. This event expands its focus in 2003, Africa and the Middle East, to include four regional tracks: Africa, Asia (Korea), Latin

America, and the Middle East (Israel and Palestine, Iraq), and two thematic tracks: Jubilee and economic justice, (trade and debt), and nuclear disarmament.

The event will offer challenging speakers, issue briefings, and advocacy training workshops.

Comprehensive briefings will help you prepare for effective visits with your Senators and Representatives, or their key foreign policy staff.

For further information, please see www.advocacydays.org, e-mail Anna Rhee at advocacydays@earthlink.net or call Leon Spencer at 202-547-7503.

Victories, Challenges ahead in movement to end Death Penalty

There has been more and more momentum in the movement to end the death penalty. The push to establish a Moratorium continues as activists focus on Pennsylvania and New Jersey. The Maryland Attorney General called for a moratorium. Bills are pending in several state legislatures. For a state by

state update, please see the website below. *To learn more or to become active on this issue, visit www.moratorium2000.org.*

Cover the Uninsured Week announced for May 10-16, 2004

In conjunction with the release of new government data on the number of uninsured Americans, a group of former U.S. Surgeons General and former U.S. Secretaries of Health and Human Services from Republican and Democratic administrations pledged their support for a nationwide effort. This national aims to make the issue of the uninsured – and solutions to the problem – a central part of national discussions through public education and community events.

The nation's faith community is expected to play a leading role in the effort, and will make its collective voice heard in declaring health care coverage a common community value according to the teachings of diverse faith traditions. Many major faith groups are working together to plan national and local activities.

For more information, log on to

www.CoverTheUninsuredWeek.org.

Take Action in DC to Close the SOA

The School of the Americas Protest took place in Fort Benning Georgia in November of this year. Over 10,000 people participated in this protest and 23 will be going into prison, including five men religious, a higher proportion than usual.

Make plans to come to Washington, DC from March 27-30, 2004 for the SOA Watch Spring 2004 Mobilization. The convergence will include legislative action, strategic action trainings, street theatre, social time and educational events. Please write to your respective Members of Congress and set up a meeting for March 30th (or March 29th) in DC. A vote on the School of the Americas/ Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation is coming up in the U.S. Congress in the summer of 2004!

Seamless Garment Network

The Oblate JPIC Office continues to be an active participant in the *Seamless Garment Network*. The following is this Network's

arms race, the death penalty and euthanasia. We believe that these issues are linked under a consistent ethic of life. We challenge those working on all or some of these issues to maintain a

www.seamless-garment.org.

An Invitation to Join Pax Christi USA's Lenten Fast for Peace-Shalom-Salaam

During this season of fasting, Pax Christi USA calls upon its members and people of faith everywhere to join together each Friday in fasting for peace. Fasting is a part of many religious traditions and it offers a simple, yet profound way of combining the spiritual and the political. Gandhi called it "the sincerest form of prayer."

Many Pax Christi USA members have already dedicated Fridays as days during which they will fast for peace, and in Islam, Friday is considered a holy day. We are asking that fast participants use each Friday to especially pray for peace. We encourage participants to fast in whatever way is possible for them. Please invite others to participate in this fast. This is a communal fast, and Pax Christi asks participants to please let them know if you are joining in the fast by contacting Phyllis Jepson at paxwpb@gate.net. Please provide your first and last name and your state for posting on the web.



Protestors carry crosses to the gates of the School of the Americas representing people killed by graduates

Vision Statement: "We are committed to the protection of life, which is threatened in today's world by war, abortion, poverty, racism, the

cooperative spirit of peace, reconciliation, and respect in protecting the unprotected." *For more information, please visit*

Report from the US/Mexico Border Pilgrimage

Rebecca Phares

On November 2, hundreds of Catholics and others (including six bishops from the US and Mexico and several Oblates) gathered to pray and pledge to work for an end to the thousands of deaths at the US/Mexico Border of migrants attempting to cross into the US to economically sustain their families and themselves. This was the culminating event of a US/Mexico Border Pilgrimage which took place between October 26 and November 2. Many Oblates and others participated in the Pilgrimage in order to create a national dialog about immigration issues in the United States, and to call for an end to the crossing deaths at the US/Mexico border.

Over 2000 people have died attempting to cross the US' southern border in the last six years. These deaths are the result of border enforcement policies which have closed off crossings in the cities and forced people to cross in the far less hospitable desert and mountain areas. Most of those who cross at this border without documentation are attempting to reach work in the United States, and



Oblates at the US/Mexico Border fence just after the liturgy: (l to r) Bob Wright, OMI, Seamus Finn, OMI, Maurice Lange, OMI, Rebecca Phares, Darrell Rupiper, OMI, Tom Rush, OMI, David Ullrich, OMI

fleeing difficult economic situations in Mexico, Central America and further south. The pilgrims and bishops also called for more realistic immigration policies so that migrants can cross legally rather than traverse the often deadly desert and mountainous areas in the Southwest of the United States.

Two groups embarked on this pilgrimage and journeyed from San Diego, California and Brownsville, Texas into El Paso, Texas, a trip totaling over 2000 miles. In El Paso, over 100 pilgrims from out of town joined those who had traveled the whole way and many from El Paso joined in as well.

In addition several Oblates arrived in El Paso to take part in some or all of the weekend's events and then to take part in the US Province Justice Peace & Integrity of Creation meeting. These included **Bob Wright, OMI, Séamus P. Finn, OMI, Maurice Lange, OMI, Tom Rush, OMI, David Ullrich, OMI, Darrell Rupiper, OMI, and John Lasseigne, OMI.**

Between October 27 and November 2 I was able to participate in Pilgrimage for Peace and Life as one of the pilgrims on the eastern leg of the Border Pilgrimage for Hope and Life. In this capacity talked to several Oblates along the way. In

Brownsville, **Armand Matthews, OMI** was present at the small kick off of the pilgrimage which many local press sources attended. **John Lasseigne, OMI** was the coordinator for the pilgrimage for San Juan, Texas and organized a press conference, a march attended by several hundred, and a mass focusing on immigrant rights in the Shrine. He arranged for talks at two local universities and a dinner with parishioners of Holy Spirit Parish in Mc Allen Texas. In Laredo, the pilgrims participated in a panel discussion at Texas A&M International University and attended mass in a local Oblate

parish which was celebrated by **Edward Ward, OMI**. In Del Rio, the next stop, parishioners and pastors of three local parishes, including **Jim Loiacono, OMI**, pastor of St. Joseph's Parish in Eagle Pass, Texas, celebrated mass and took part in a panel and discussion about ways the community could better minister to migrants.

The concluding events

in El Paso included an informational convocation on US/Mexico border issues, a panel to hear the perspective of migrants journeying to find work, an ecumenical worship service, a strategy session to envision responses to the deaths at the border and, as previously mentioned, in a mass at a fence at the US/Mexico Border celebrated by several hundred on both sides of

the border. The Catholic world was well represented as many men and women religious attended the convocation, participants in a US Conference of Catholic Bishops' gathering on migration issues along with several bishops concelebrated the Mass at the border fence. As this group may plan other events in the future, we will keep readers posted. ♦

Resources for individuals or parishes interested in becoming more active on these issues, such as materials to organize a posadas in your community, can be found at www.rtfcam.org.



Several hundred attended the Mass on November 2, 2004 at the US/Mexico Border Fence in honor of those who have died attempting to reach the United States

Strangers No Longer: A View from Both Sides

By Victor Carmona

Victor Carmona has worked with the Oblates in several capacities for many years. He had a key role in the drafting of the recent US Bishops' statements on migration. The Oblate JPIC Office is lucky to have had Victor represent us in planning a week of events which were part of the Pilgrimage in San Diego, planned in conjunction with Maryknoll, the American Friends Service Committee and several other religious and secular organizations.

Last October the Oblate Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Office of the Missionary Oblates, supported the organization of a week-long series of events as part of a conference titled "Strangers No Longer: A View from Both Sides." All events were held at the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice. Feel free to visit the conference's web site at www.sandiego.edu/csl/snl.html. The conference was held at the University of San Diego, in San Diego, California, and had the objective of promoting

a dialogue on migration and the way it affects the border community of San Diego and Tijuana.

The conference's second objective was to support the dissemination of the US and Mexican Catholic bishops' first Joint Pastoral Letter concerning Migration, titled "Strangers No Longer: Together on the Journey of Hope"

reflections in the Light of the Word of God and Catholic Social Teaching, identifies common pastoral challenges and responses, and proposes a shared public policy agenda vs. both countries' broken immigration systems. You may download the Joint Pastoral Letter at www.usccb.org.

The weeklong series of

suffering of migrants themselves. It shows viewers the point of view of the migrants and US Border Patrol Agents, both of whom appear powerless against the demand for undocumented workers. The main character, a wayward US Border Patrol Agent in the San Diego Sector, decides to go undercover as an

undocumented immigrant for the American Border Patrol, a white-supremacist hate-group. Things go wrong, however, and the experience lasts much longer for the agent. He ends up suffering the faith of many undocumented migrants and becomes forced labor for US drug traffickers. After the movie, the director and the



Smaller group, including Bob Wright, OMI meets to think of responses to border deaths during the Sunday morning Strategy Meeting.

(2003). The Pastoral Letter, published by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Conferencia del Episcopado Mexicano, gives Catholics on both sides of the border a common reading of the histories of migration to and between our countries, sheds beautiful

events began on Monday, October 20, 2003 with a showing of the movie "The Gatekeeper" and a conversation with its director, John Carlos Frey (a graduate of USD, 1986). The movie, made with a budget of under \$200,000 is one of the most centered one has seen and focuses on the

public interacted (over 100 people) and shared their perspective on the movie and the way it sheds new light on undocumented migrants and the US Border Patrol.

On Tuesday, October 21, 2003, the dialogue was sponsored by the University's Center for Christian Spirituality as

part of an event titled “US Mexico Border: Cross-Road to Fear or Freedom?” This session brought together a panel made up by those who experience the effects of undocumented migration as members of different organizations in our community. They included a US Border Patrol Agent, a woman who was an undocumented immigrant herself and a man who lobbies for harder anti-undocumented immigrant policies. San Diego’s Auxiliary Bishop introduced the panel. On Wednesday, October 22, Claudia Smith gave a talk titled “Immigration Policy and Migrant Deaths in the Border Region.” Smith, a renowned activist and lawyer, is experienced serving undocumented immigrants’ legal needs in the community and defended them against past abuses such as a beating by teenagers in North County against a nearly retired-age immigrant from Mexico.

The series of events ended on Friday, October 24, 2004 with a daylong conference titled “Strangers No Longer: A View from Both Sides.” Dr. Lyons, the new President of the University of San Diego, opened

this event. The day was organized according to the Bishops’ Pastoral Letter. It started with a presentation by Dr. Olivia Ruiz (Colegio de la Frontera Norte and UCSD) on the recent history of migrants and the border. Next came a presentation on Catholic Social Teaching

to many of them. Later in the afternoon came a debate titled “Migration Policy: State Sovereignty vs. Human Dignity,” between Peter Nuñez (USD) who supports a tighter border and more restrictive immigration policies and Kevin Appleby (Director,

points were an insight into the difficulty of reaching a solution, since one was concerned with how many migrants can the economy support, while the other focused on the violence and deaths many families across the border are experiencing.

The day and weeklong series of events ended with ecumenical pastoral perspectives from the Interfaith Coalition for Worker Justice, the Center for Justice and Reconciliation, Lutheran Ministries and Survivors of Torture International, Catholic Migrant Outreach and Casa del Migrante from Tijuana, Mexico. All these panelists presented different ways their faiths are moving them to take care of the migrant, including the undocumented, as their answer to Jesus’ presence in these strangers who are really our brothers and sisters: “For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me.... whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.” (Matthew 26: 35-41).❖
Victor can be reached at: viccarmona@hotmail.com



Rebecca Phares recounts her experiences on the Eastern leg of the Border pilgrimage.

and its application to this issue. The presentation, by Dr. Orlando Espin (USD) was one of the most surprising for the participants, many of whom were students, since the social aspects of the Catholic Faith were new

Migration and Refugee Policy, USCCB) who shared the Bishops’ perspective of evaluating immigration laws according to their effects on every one’s human dignity, including undocumented immigrants. Their counter

Secrets to be Told

Darrell Rupiper, OMI

Isn't it true that secrets whispered spread quickly and become known while proclamations often remain a secret? This seems to be especially true of papal and episcopal teachings on creation-based spirituality, the environment and Earth-keeping.

Modern Catholic concern for the environment traces its beginnings to Vatican II. Since that time more than a couple of dozen papal or Vatican documents have been published but by and large they remain a secret.

In these documents Pope John Paul II repeatedly urges us to take a good look at God's gift of creation and see in it a reflection of the our Creator. Like saints Augustine and Aquinas he points to creation as the primary revelation of the 'invisible One' whom our hearts seek.

Again and again our ailing Holy Father warns us as he did so strongly in his World Peace message 14 years ago that we as a species have brought ourselves and the entire Earth community of other species to the edge of an abyss. We are faced with a dramatic choice: stop our disrespectful and

devastating destruction of the Earth or die. "Man (sic) is no longer the Creator's steward but an autonomous despot who is finally beginning to

sounded but goes unheeded as evidenced by the fact that the fastest growing business in our country is the construction of self-storage compartments. Our

They know that our lifestyles virtually enslave the people with whom they minister and that the Earth can no longer support our consumptive behavior. Does what is so obvious and painful to them remain a secret to us? Do we care enough to change our behavior by living much more simply?

Pope John Paul repeatedly says that Earth-keeping, caring for creation is a moral issue. It is a matter of life or death not only for us but for all the species endangered and dying because of our immoral behavior. He insists that it is everyone's responsibility and he speaks of it as an urgent call to discover one's 'ecological' vocation. "A new ecological awareness is beginning to emerge which, rather than being downplayed, ought to be encouraged to develop into concrete programmes and initiatives."

The pope broadens the pro-life agenda of the Church: "Respect for life and the dignity of the human person extends also to the rest of creation, which is called to join man in praising God."

It is important that these concepts be preached from our pulpits, taught in our



understand that he must stop at the edge of an abyss."

He placed a large part of the responsibility at our feet when he said 'consumerism and self-gratification are the root causes of this degradation.

The warning has been

Oblate brothers in the less developed countries (of whom we spoke at our convocation in Nashville and with whom we expressed a desire to be in solidarity), work with people who will never own a pair of shoes. They look to us.

Community Organizing Meeting: A Report Back

Seamus Finn, OMI

More than 20 Oblates from around the country who are either involved in Community Organizing gathered at the King's House of Retreat in Belleville last September.

The meeting focused on:

- Sharing and mining the experience of Oblates with this vehicle/tool
- Studying research which has been recently completed on CO
- Exploring future directions and opportunities for use/support of CO
- Brainstorming on strategies for next steps



(L to R) Jim Loiacono, OMI, — and Armand Matthew, OMI Participate in a discussion at the Community Organizing Gathering

The meeting received very positive evaluations from participants and it was decided that continued

promotion of Community Organizing in the US Province as a vehicle of our JPIC ministry is important. It was also suggested that

Oblate houses and local communities be encouraged to participate when organizing efforts are taking place in their areas.

Participants were encouraged by recent research, which has documented the significant increase in the
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schools and shared in our conversations. They must not remain secrets but shouted from the rooftops.

As recently as last year John Paul together with Patriarch Bartholomew I of Constantinople issued a statement whose title hints at the bad news of its contents: "We Are Still Betraying the Mandate God Has Given to Us".

Throughout the world, bishops have issued statements in concert with the Pope echoing his words and punctuating his sense of urgency.

Here in the U.S. the bishops have written some twenty documents on issues ranging from the plight of farmers to global warming. They must not gather dust.

The highly respected Fr. Thomas Berry CP put it starkly: "The failure of Christians to assume their responsibility for the fate of the Earth is perhaps their greatest single failure in the total course of Christian history."

We Oblates and our co-workers are those Christians, we are called to be

leaders and the burden is on us to preach/teach the secrets....and who knows, maybe save the gift that God has given to us. Maybe whispering would work!❖

For more information on bringing Fr. Darrell Rupiper, OMI to your parish, please contact him at drupiper2000@hotmail.com.

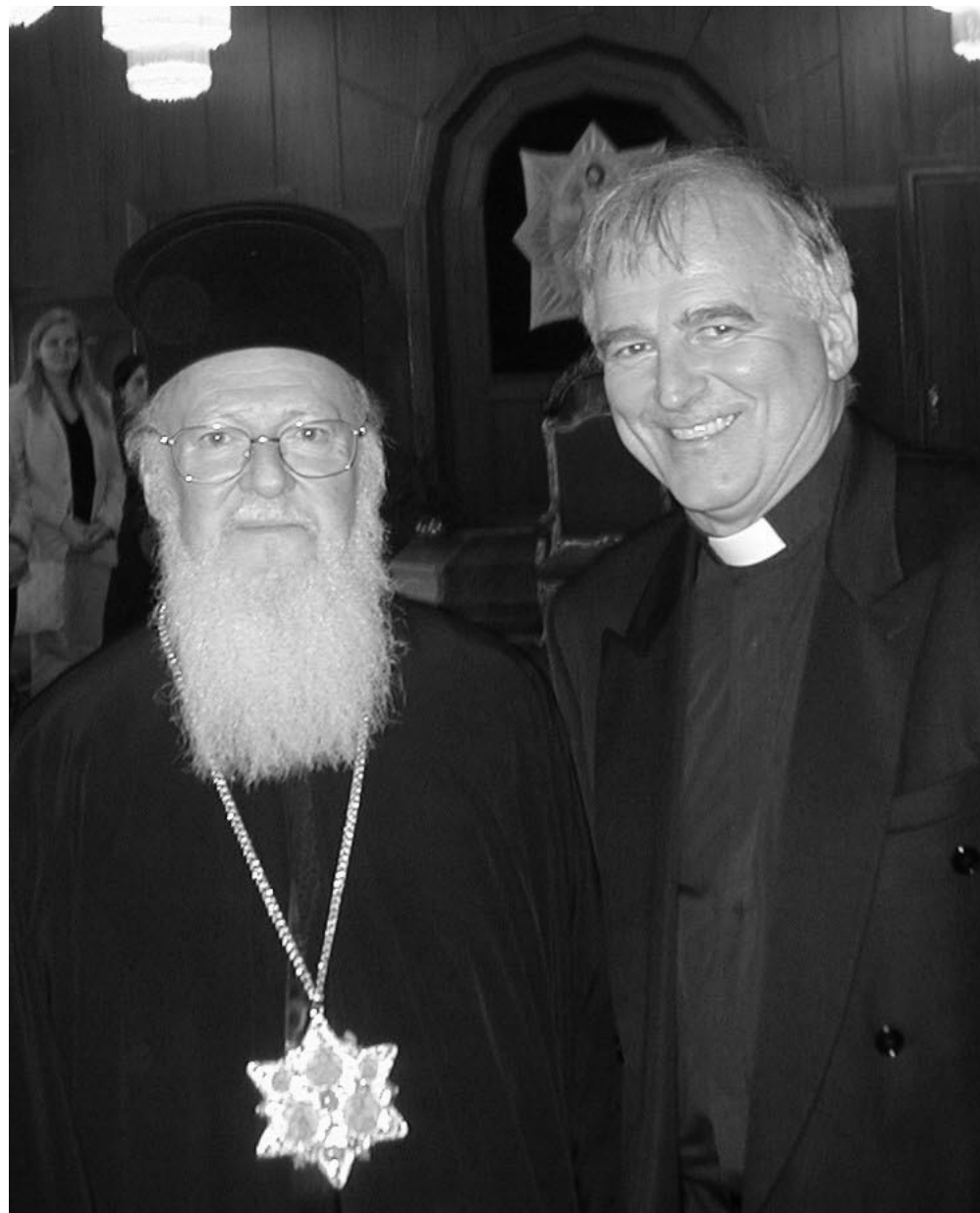
Report Back on Meeting With the Patriarch

Séamus P. Finn, OMI

At the invitation of Patriarch Bartholomew IV I participated in a three-day meeting at the Halki monastery on a small island just off the coast of Istanbul in late October. The meeting will take place on the island of Heybiliada (Halki), traditionally a sacred island for Orthodox Christians. It was attended by representatives of Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Islamic, Jain, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh and Zoroastrian faiths including representatives of investment and development funds.

Secular observers included the World Bank, Citigroup, Rabobank and several major foundations from the US and Europe. This three year project has initiated and financed by the Alliance of Religions and Conservation in an effort to explore the common principles and teachings of the world's religions about creation and the ethical imperatives that ought to guide the human behaviour including the impact of those activities on the earth's future which is shared by all God's people.

The "Green Patriarch", as he has been called, has issued a number of joint statements with John Paul II



on these issues in recent years and he has been instrumental in coordinating the involvement of people of different faiths in the cleanup of the Danube River and the Black Sea. The 3iG group has had a number of consultations with the World Bank and with the private

sector in an effort to develop a blueprint that may be helpful to all faiths that chose to respond to this challenge. Advisory agencies such as Innovest, WWF International, and economic think-tank bodies such as Medley Global Advisors have also

offered their assistance and support to representatives of the faiths.

More than ever as people of faith deepen their appreciation of cosmology and revisit the creation stories in the Word of God and their respective religious tradi-

tions all are being invited to take seriously our relationship to the earth as our home and as the source of so many elements essential to our daily survival. Coupled with the new insights which scientific exploration uncovers, the continued unfolding of the truths of our religious traditions can guide all of our choices.

In the months ahead the 3iG group will be inviting groups from the differing religious traditions at local regional and international level to consider a more formal participation in this interfaith collaborative effort which offers a very tangible opportunity for bridging the differences and often ancient animosities which have been allowed to divide followers of different faith traditions and destabilize entire regions.

For further details see www.arcworld.org ❖

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numbers of local parishes, congregations, synagogues and other religious institutions in community organizations. The research has also documented an increasing diversity both in the organizations and in their leadership as well as a wider geographic and regional presence. For copies of this research please contact the JPIC office.

An Update on Pakistan

Séamus P. Finn, OMI

In late August I had the opportunity to visit the Oblates working in Pakistan. In a little more than a week we visited all of the Oblate places of ministry and connected also with a number of other religious office sand NGO's who are active in the church's social ministry. In light of the post 9/11 strategic relationship that the U.s. has promoted with Pakistan it was a particularly opportune time to visit.

Clearly the first and lasting impression of the country was dedicated presence of missionary who are such a small minority (3%) in the midst of a population of some 150 million. The biblical story of the leaven came to mind often as we traveled about. Reviewing the history of the Indus river valley and experiencing first hand the fertility and bountiful harvests of the Punjab was also impressive.

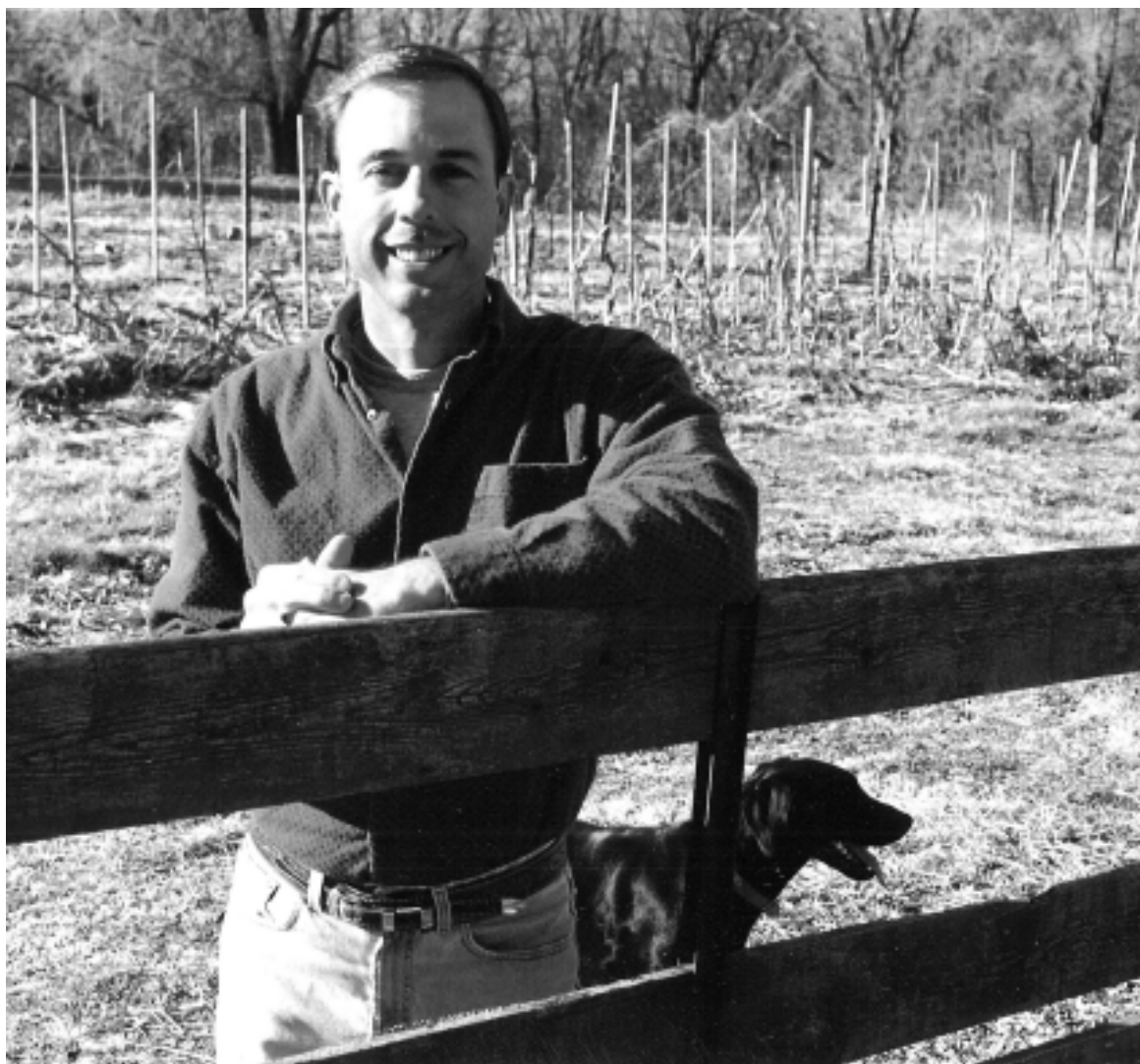
The issues of blasphemy, rules against proselytism, the effort to establish a separate electorate for non Muslims as well as the desire of some to impose the Sharia in certain regions are among the issues which frame the context of the church's presence. The National Commission for Justice and Peace and other regional Justice and Peace commissions continue their dedicated work safeguarding human rights, protesting discrimination against Christians, women and those who do menial manual labor are among their priorities. Responding to the needs of refugees and promoting micro finance are also an important part of their agenda.

Lost often in the constant reporting on the achievements of the War of Terror are the struggles of the millions of ordinary people in countries like Pakistan who are confronted with so many of the very ordinary challenges that are part of daily life: securing food, water and clothing, accessing shelter, education and health care. Often people spoke of the solidarity that they count on from the international community, their religious colleagues and collaborators in the larger human rights community. Frequently they wondered out loud about the current direction of U.S. foreign policy and hoped and prayed for an atmosphere of deeper understanding and respect.

Oblate Ecological Initiative grows and grows

Maurice Lange, OMI

What was the last thing that you ate? Try to remember... was it a candy bar, sandwich, banana or possibly a Twinkie? Do you know where this food was grown? Or the methods used for its growth? Do you have a relationship with the farmer who grew your food? Well, we may remember what we last ate but more than likely we would have to answer "no" to the last three questions. As a culture we have grown distant from our food supply, from that which nourishes us, that which fuels our work, our thoughts, our prayers, our creativity. And this alienation has drastic consequences. . . . from those which we know (epidemic cancer and childhood obesity, mad cow disease) to those consequences which we don't yet know. And we are not the only ones suffering due to this estrangement from food. The Earth itself has borne an



Maurice Lange, OMI near the Community Supported Garden at La Vista

industrial agri-business assault for the last 60 years. This is seen in the life of the soil becoming dead, water being poisoned, farm animals made into dairy and meat producing machines and now the gene commons becoming commodified!

Author, poet and farmer Wendell Berry has said

“how we eat determines, to a considerable extent, how the world is used”.

Indeed, how we choose to eat makes a difference. As Christians it would be unthinkable to support systems that deal in death. “Choose life!” we are told by our Scriptures, by our tradition and by our God. And as Oblates we have

made a beginning to integrate this call as it relates to our food.

Part of the Oblate’s new Ecological Initiative in the United States Province is the *Community Supported Garden (CSG) at La Vista*. The CSG began in early 2003 and recently completed its first season.

This project is located on the novitiate property on bluffs overlooking the Mississippi River in Godfrey, IL. The CSG is inspired by a movement called Community Supported Agriculture (CSA). CSA happens when a group of concerned people enter into covenant with a farmer and the land itself in order to create a mutually enhancing human-Earth relationship.

The harvest is purchased by shareholders the previous winter-before the first seed is even planted! What a different system!! This income guarantees the farmer's salary and also pays for the seeds, tools and

other needs of the farm. Our project had a very successful first year as our farmer, Amy Cloud, grew vegetables, herbs and flowers using organic methods. From May - November 65 local families came weekly to La Vista to pick up their share of the bounty. At the end of the

season we counted a total of 29,000 pounds of vegetables harvested and we were able to share 2,750 lbs. of this with a local crisis food center. These shareholders knew where their food was coming from, they knew how it was grown and they had a personal relationship with the farmer growing the food. The Japanese call this "food with a face on it".



Amy Cloud, farmer for the Community Supported Garden in front of the garden's first harvest

This familiarity will grow as we will feed 85 families in 2004 and hope to donate even more food to charity.

The Oblate priority of the Integrity of Creation has also borne fruit in the *La Vista Ecological Learning Center* also on the bluffs in Godfrey. Through pro-

grams, retreats and seasonal celebrations participants grow in their appreciation of the Earth that sustains us in so many ways. Our desire is that folks can return to their communities both living and teaching an awareness of Creation's Integrity.

One recent highlight was our weeklong Earth Literacy program in August,

integrity of creation! ❖

For more information on these programs or on our garden project contact Maurice Lange, OMI at 618-466-5004 or lange@omiusa.org. Find a similar CSA project near you at www.csacenter.org.

Join National Catholic Rural Life Conference for a gathering on November 7-8 in Albany, New York

The theme of this year's conference will be "Rural Life: Change and Challenge." This year marks the 80th year of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference. For all of its 80 years of existence,

2003 which involved a total of 17 participants and staff. We journeyed together learning from the story of the Universe, as well as 2004 and our regular program open to all August 3-10, 2004. Let us continue our efforts at justice and peace through a deepened awareness of the

the conference has served as a prophetic voice for America's countryside, acted as a catalyst and convener for social justice, and developed support services for rural pastoral ministers. See www.ncrlc.com or call (515)270-2634 for more information.

Socially Responsible Investing: Proxy Voting

Seamus P. Finn, OMI

The 2004 proxy season has witnessed a number of important developments and additional advocacy efforts. The recent meltdown of the Italian giant multinational Parmalat has brought a number of U.S. financial corporations to the headlines and resulted in significant losses for their balance sheet. This just as efforts to recover from troubles at ENRON, TYCO, Global Crossing, Vivendi and the recent mutual fund shenanigans have turned the spotlight on issues of corporate governance. Transparency, accountability, independence directors and conflicts of interest are at the top of that list.

Religious and Socially responsible investors have increased their activity to address both the specifics of corporate governance while at the same time continuing to address some of the policy issues which we believe deserve the attention of corporate management and shareholders. Access to medicines especially those medicines which can treat HIV/AIDS, TB and malaria in the developing

world is a top priority with pharmaceutical companies as well as access to medicines for those on fixed

monitored for compliance with International labor standards, including respect for human rights,

monitoring and reporting system in which shareholders, consumers and regulators can rely.



incomes especially women and children. There is still a long way to go in providing the funds and the medicines to respond to the AIDS pandemic which haunts many African countries and is projected to have devastating effects in numerous other countries. The establishment of a supply chain that is closely

living wage compensation continues to be on the agenda with many well-known major multinational corporations. In light of their far-flung supply chain, which continues to search for reliable, cheap raw materials and labor, their operations are still in need of a continuous reliable independent

As the heavy proxy season continues through the middle of June individual investors are offered the invitation and opportunity to exercise their responsible stewardship by reviewing the resolutions which are presented by other shareholders and returning their completed ballot. The issues presented by religious investors are coordinated through the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility and are developed from the experience of ministers and missionaries in their many places of ministry throughout the world. The proponents of these resolutions are more than willing to provide additional information and documentation on the issues which are being presented. Our office is always available to assist in this process and to answer any questions, which you may have. The ICCR website www.iccr.org would also be a good resource to consult.❖

Publications and Transitions

Bread For the World: Campaign Against Hunger

Bread for the World's campaign this year focuses on reducing poverty and hunger by fully funding the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) and the Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, without making cuts to other poverty-focused development assistance. It is entitled *Keep the Promise on Hunger and Health*. They have prepared a video and other materials to make this goal achievable through work with parishes and communities. Their phone number is 1-800-82-BREAD and their web site is www.bread.org if you need more information.

Immigration Debate Continues

President Bush made a speech this winter regarding the need for changes in the US immigration policy. His solution was a limited guest worker policy, but others have pushed for a more comprehensive solution that would create ways for large numbers of people to enter the country and eventually have the

option to become citizens. In his speech he mentioned that many die in the desert. Some wonder if this is a speech more for the purposes of winning elections rather than out of a real intention to create new responses to immigration which will decrease the risk for migrants.

Together with several other organizations, the Oblate JPIC office will sponsor a panel this spring with experts from the border and from Washington which continue our efforts to bring the issue of border deaths into this discussion while also looking towards better solutions. For more information, contact Rebecca Phares at Rebecca@omiusa.org or by calling the office.

Immigration and Border Books

The Ecumenical Program on Central America and the Caribbean (EPICA) has recently released two books which may be of interest to readers of this newsletter. *The Power of Love: My Experience in a US Immigration Jail* by Ana Amalia Guzman Molina provides a powerful

first hand narrative. Spanish and English versions are bound in the same volume. *Borderland Theology* by Jerry H. Gill is a theological meditation which provides a fresh perspective placing the reality of border crossing at the heart of its analysis. Both are available from EPICA: www.epica.org, 202-332-0292

Sixtieth Anniversary of World Bank and IMF

In the summer of 1944 a gathering of representatives from forty-four countries met at Bretton Woods and decided to found the International Monetary Fund and World Bank. This summer marks the sixtieth anniversary of the founding of these institutions. They were formed to stabilize the world economy and did so for at least two decades, but many would argue that since then they have strayed from their mission. Many have demonstrated out of frustration with the lack of accountability and democratic structures within these institutions. We heard tales of huge loans which funded roads into the Amazon, dam

projects which fuel the destruction of indigenous villages, and money ending up in the pockets of corrupt dictators. Impoverished nations were then saddled with huge external debts because of these actions. This anniversary marks a time of increased scrutiny of these institutions. To find out about events marking this anniversary or to learn more about what you can do, please see the *50 Years is Enough* website at www.50years.org.

New Book on IMF and World Bank from the Perspective of Developing Countries

Ariel Buira has edited a new book entitled *Challenges to the World Bank and IMF: Developing Country Perspectives*. This unique new volume examines some of the most burning issues on the world's economic agenda. It examines useful and realistic alternatives. The book is published by Anthem Press, and if you would like a copy but are unable to locate one, please be in touch with our office and we will help you find one.

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*I object to violence because
when it appears to do good,
the good is only temporary;
the evil it does is
permanent.*

Mahatma Gandhi



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*"Preach the Gospel. Use words if necessary."
St. Francis of Assisi*