

# JPIC REPORT



A publication of the OMI Justice and Peace/Integrity of Creation Office

“Peace is not merely the absence of war; nor can it be reduced solely to the maintenance of a balance of power between enemies; nor is it brought about by dictatorship. Instead, it is rightly and appropriately called an enterprise of justice.”

- The Bishops of the Second Vatican Council

## From the Director:

An important priority to emerge from the Second Vatican Council was a commitment to actively embrace “the joy and hope, the grief and anguish of the men of our time”. Fifty years on, as we celebrate the great gift of the council in the life of the church and the world, numerous articles and seminars have been organized to consider the impacts and outcomes of this historic event. In the articulation, deepening and implementation of the church’s social mission during this period three themes in the church’s social mission have endured and remain worthy of our attention and study: development, direction and inter-dependence.

In the development arena, we continue to ponder how we are, or can, or should address the persistent levels of inequality and poverty existing between and within nations, regions and continents. Is it through an outpouring of personal and communal charitable deeds, and an increase in official foreign assistance offered by well-off countries to those that are poor? Is it through the promotion of the kind of entrepreneurship and initiatives that teach someone to fish or to farm, or start a

small business, or organize a cooperative? Unfortunately the access to “integral human development” for all, elaborated so prophetically by Pope Paul VI, remains elusive.

The call of the council to embrace a new direction, characterized by an openness to the world, and especially to the poor, opened up a veritable collage of religious, cultural and ethnic diversity that we must continue to encounter and explore. A recent trip to religious centers in northern Ethiopia was a clear reminder of this reality. The effort to identify, celebrate and embrace the presence of the Spirit of God active in and through the great diversity that is the human and natural world, continues to present countless opportunities for deepening gratitude and increasing understanding.

As faith traditions and communities, we must renew our commitment to the sustained collaborative approach directed by the council to address the persistent, pressing issues of poverty, peace building and reconciliation. The council’s direction, that we identify and build upon the faith, the languages, the platforms, diversity and vision to inspire and guide leaders,

governments and other institutions and men and women of good will to work for a common good across boundaries and oceans and self-interests, remains.

Finally, while we have become all too aware of the depth of our dependence on Mother Earth for basic survival and for prosperity, we still have miles to go in the articulation of a vision that recognizes both the fragility and mystery of the earth, the potential that lies hidden and yet to be uncovered. Pope Francis has reminded us all about just how far we have to travel in this relationship. Commenting on his choice of the name Francis he said, “That is how the name came into my heart: Francis of Assisi. For me, he is the man of poverty, the man of peace, the man who loves and protects creation; these days we do not have a very good relationship with creation, do we?”

As the continuous stream of discoveries in the various fields of science, technology and understanding either remind us again of what we have ignored or awaken us to fresh new insights, may we strive to respond actively to the call of the council to engage the world, confident that our common destiny is rooted in the divine promise.

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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 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 Faith Responsible Investment 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 & Happenings

### Gerry Flood Recognized for His Years of Service

**Gerry Flood**, long-time colleague in the work of securing debt relief for heavily indebted poor countries around the world, was recently awarded the **2013 Harry A. Fagan Roundtable Award**. This recognition was for Gerry's "achievement of the Catholic social justice vision through his leadership as volunteer policy advisor to the USCCB International Justice and Peace Office".

Trained as a lawyer, Gerry joined President Kennedy's "Alliance for Progress" aid program for Latin America, thus beginning a three decade-plus career in development in Africa and Latin America. After retiring from a 26-year career with the World Bank in 1995, Gerry joined the Office of International Justice and Peace of the USCCB as a volunteer policy advisor. He became involved in the issue of poor country debt, and worked for over ten years on successful advocacy on this issue.

This work required close collaboration with Catholic Relief Services and with the global Jubilee debt relief movement, and its US branch, Jubilee USA. The Oblates have been strong supporters of Jubilee USA, and collaborated with Gerry in this work. The Jubilee USA network, composed mainly of faith-based organizations, worked tirelessly with the US Administration and the Congress over many years to achieve major debt reduction of the poorest countries.

In 2008, Gerry's work involved policy and advocacy related to Congressional reauthorization of the international program for combating HIV/AIDS. Gerry has also served as a volunteer assistant to the Papal Nuncio in Washington in his work as Permanent Representative of the Holy See to the Organization of American States. The Oblate JPIC Office is delighted to see Gerry receive this recognition of his years of dedicated and effective work on behalf of the poor.



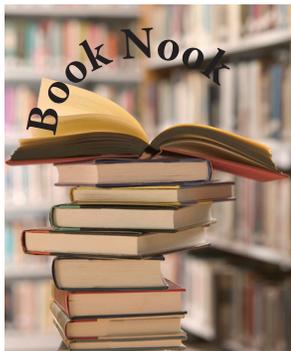
### JPIC expands use of social media...

The OMI USA JPIC Office has expanded its use of Social Media! Please 'like us' on Facebook or 'follow us' on Twitter or on YouTube. Go to our website to connect to these social media outlets, the buttons for which appear to the left on our home page: [www.omiusajpic.org](http://www.omiusajpic.org).

You can also sign up there for Action Alerts and Weekly News Updates (a weekly email with all the latest information posted on our website).

On each webpage and post you can now also 'like' or tweet the content, 'pin it' to Pinterest or share with your own social network via Twitter, Facebook, Email or LinkedIn. Just click on the relevant buttons. Abbreviated website posts now appear on our Facebook page as soon they are posted on the website. Please share this information with your own social networks, and help us spread the word about justice, peace and the integrity of creation!

## Resources



***All Creation Reveals the Glory of God***, the 32-page booklet of nature photos and quotes produced by the OMI JPIC Office, the OEI and MAMI, has been well received. Here are a few comments from people connected with the OEI:

“Very spiritual. God’s presence is definitely shown. Beautiful and amazing!”

“What a privilege to be conscious of all creation around us. This little book provides an opportunity to appreciate some of what we experience with thoughtful words to ponder.”

“*All Creation Reveals the Glory of God* takes me back to my time at La Vista in the Earth Literacy Program. It calls to mind all that we learned about creation being the first revelation of God - God’s first word! I loved sitting with the pictures and contemplating the quotes.”

Please order your copy today! The book is available through Oblate bookstores, the Oblate Ecological Initiative in Godfrey, IL and directly from the JPIC Office in Washington, DC. Call 202-529-4505, or email Mary O’Herron at [maryoh@omiusa.org](mailto:maryoh@omiusa.org)

### Immigration Resources:

- ***Beyond the Border Buildup: Security and Migrants along the U.S.-Mexico Border*** A yearlong study of the current security situation on the U.S.-Mexico border and the impact of both countries’ security policies on the migrant population. The study looks at the impact of the fivefold increase in the size of the U.S. Border Patrol in the last two decades, the changing role of U.S. soldiers along the border, the impact of drones and other high-tech surveillance, and the increase in risks faced by migrants on their journey. The study is available on the WOLA website at: [www.wola.org/files/Beyond\\_the\\_Border\\_Buildup\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.wola.org/files/Beyond_the_Border_Buildup_FINAL.pdf)
- ***Border Security and Migration: A Report from South Texas*** WOLA experts found an increase in migration flows and a doubling in migrant deaths in this area in just one year. In contrast to what has been reported in other parts of the border, this new report notes that there are fewer accusations of Border Patrol abuse in South Texas. At the same time, U.S. authorities are increasingly repatriating Mexicans through this area, often making migrants easy prey for the dangerous criminal groups operating in these Mexican border cities. Report at: [www.wola.org/commentary/border\\_security\\_and\\_migration\\_a\\_report\\_from\\_south\\_texas](http://www.wola.org/commentary/border_security_and_migration_a_report_from_south_texas)
- ***Border Fact Check*** A frequently updated blog that separates rhetoric from reality on issues related to the U.S.-Mexico border. Go to: [www.wola.org/news/wola\\_launches\\_new\\_blog\\_border\\_fact\\_check](http://www.wola.org/news/wola_launches_new_blog_border_fact_check)
- ***Border Security Infographics*** A series of graphics that help visualize the most recent data—ranging from the number of migrants apprehended per border patrol agent over time, to increasing drug seizures, migration flows, and migrant deaths, as well as other aspects of border security.
- ***An Uneasy Coexistence: Security and Migration along the El Paso-Ciudad Juárez Border*** In this report, WOLA examines the huge security buildup in the area and finds that there is no violence spilling over into the United States and that migration is dropping while drug trafficking persists. This report also describes the multitude of state, federal, and local authorities operating in this region whose roles often overlap.

All resources are available on the website of Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA) 1666 Connecticut Ave NW, Suite 400 Washington, DC 20009; Tel: (202) 797-2171; [www.wola.org](http://www.wola.org)

## Are Your Clothes Clean? Slavery and Poor Working Conditions in the Garment Industry

By: Mary O'Herron

How “clean” are our clothes? A report done by Not For Sale: End Human Trafficking and Slavery reveals the complexity of apparel production and the responsibility of multinational corporations for working conditions at the various levels of garment manufacture, from weaving the cloth to stitching a garment. The report, “Apparel Industry Trends From Farm to Factory,” is an informative, albeit disturbing, look at the human costs of our cheap clothing.<sup>1</sup>

The various stages of production that take place in different factories, often across different countries, combined together is known as the “supply chain”. Materials can come from all over the world, for even a single garment. The supply chain starts at the farm level, where wool, cotton or linen, is grown, or in oil fields where the raw material for synthetics and plastics is produced. Once harvested, these raw materials are transported to a processor where they are cleaned, spun, woven, or knitted, and dyed. The cloth is then taken to a factory for cutting and sewing. More transportation is involved in moving the finished goods to warehouses and stores. The multiple stages operated by different businesses make it very difficult to track all of the suppliers, and insure compliance with labor and environmental laws. Perhaps most importantly, there is tremendous pressure at each level to keep costs very low, thus creating little room for decent wages or acceptable working conditions along supply chains.

Slavery in the apparel sector is worst at the raw materials stage. For instance, much cotton comes from slave areas like Uzbekistan, Pakistan, Brazil or Turkey where conditions for workers are grim, and wages - if paid at all - are very low. Clothing factories are not much better. There, living wages and decent working conditions are rare. (see Box on p 7 for details) Even though grievance systems



are growing, where workers can address conditions in the factories, much still needs to be done.

### *Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)*

Many international apparel companies are open to change and are taking some responsibility for their supply chains. Some big companies have good policies but sketchy follow-through. All companies need to be encouraged to report on what they are doing.

According to the International Labor Organization (ILO), good policies or codes of conduct for suppliers would include:

- no child or forced labor
- freedom of association among workers, and collective bargaining
- fair wages, decent conditions, overtime paid
- no recruitment fees for workers
- checks on how workers are treated by some kind of audit/monitoring system
- some kind of training available to help suppliers provide protection to workers.

The report, “Apparel Industry Trends From Farm to Factory,” explains corporate behavior at specific points along

1. The report can be found at <http://www.notforsalecampaign.org/news/2012/11/14/not-for-sale-releases-report-on-modern-day-slavery-in-the-apparel-industry/>

their supply chains. It shows the degree to which corporations are aware of conditions among their suppliers, and how are they acting on the ILO Code of Conduct. The question is, do they have any policies and, if so, are they following through on them? The news is generally grim but there are a few bright spots:

After the fire in Bangladesh in March of 2012, **Phillips Van Heusen (PVH)** committed to help fund and take part in a Fire and Building Safety Agreement to evaluate and address issues found. The program includes more rigorous safety inspection, training for workers and managers and some factory renovation. PVH stands out as a company trying to address this problem. Many others are not. They have signed a legally binding and enforceable agreement showing their concern for fire and building safety.

**Asics, New Balance, Nike and Puma**, signed onto the Freedom of Association Protocol in Indonesia. This outlines the steps suppliers must take to facilitate workers' ability to represent themselves and bargain collectively. Each corporation negotiated with local trade unions

and suppliers and the results are legally binding. This creates a clear path to follow if conditions are not met, making it more likely that the company will implement meaningful action. New Balance, Nike and Puma have made the most progress implementing the agreement at the factory level. Adidas, in the view of the authors of the report, lags behind because the company hasn't paid its part of severance pay claimed by 2800 of its workers from a factory that is now closed.

Other companies like **Maggie's Organics, Timberland, Alta Gracia, HAE, Patagonia, Good & Fair Clothing** are cited for good practices, including setting fair wages, monitoring their factories to make sure adequate wages are actually paid, conditions are acceptable, and the workers are able to express any concerns.

*More information is available at:*

- *Clean Clothes Campaign:* [www.cleanclothes.org](http://www.cleanclothes.org)
- *Free2Work:* [www.free2work.org/trends/apparel/](http://www.free2work.org/trends/apparel/)
- *Stop Trafficking:* [www.stopenslavement.org/](http://www.stopenslavement.org/)

## Lethal Factory Fires in Bangladesh

In November 2012 at the Tazreen Fashion Factory in Ashulia, Dhaka, a fire broke out in the warehouse and the fire alarm went off, but supervisors padlocked a gate to prevent workers from leaving the second, third and fourth floors. When firefighters arrived, they had to use bolt cutters to cut the locks. Fire extinguishers were sparse, not suitable for big fires and some did not work. The building had no fire escapes, so about 200 Bangladeshi workers, mostly young women, were burned to death. The fire was so fierce that neighboring houses were also destroyed. What follows is an eyewitness account of the tragedy:

“Around 6:45 p.m. we heard the fire alarm go off. We were terrified, but the supervisor told us that nothing had happened, and that it was a false alarm. He ordered us to keep working. Then we heard screaming from the lower floors, and, in a minute, thick black smoke spread across our floor, engulfing the whole area. It was around 6:50 p.m. when the electricity went off. It was completely dark. We couldn't see anything. It was hard to breathe, as the air was thick with poisonous black fumes. I felt like I was suffocating. All the workers were screaming, crying and

trying to escape. We thought that we were all going to die. Then I pressed the green button on my cell phone, which gave us a little light. I grabbed my sister's hand and tried to go down the stairs. But the gate was locked. We ran back and smashed a window. We saw a bamboo ladder leaning on the wall of our building. I let my sister climb down and followed her. We were able to reach the roof of the third floor and from there we jumped to the ground. Both of us were hurt.”

“Many new workers, especially women, were trapped and burned alive. Some jumped through the broken windows or used bamboo ladders to escape. The workers who tried to get down on the stairs were suffocated and burned alive. With the electricity off and the dense black smoke, it was hard to find a way to get out because the gate was locked. We gave up hope for our lives. Now I can imagine what hell is like. If I had waited even a few more minutes, my sister and I would have died. Thank God, Who saved us. But we lost many of our co-workers.”

*From Stop Trafficking Newsletter of February 2013*  
[www.stopenslavement.org/stoptraff1102.pdf](http://www.stopenslavement.org/stoptraff1102.pdf)

## Faith Consistent Investing: From Environment to Human Rights

The 300 plus institutions that make up the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR) have focused attention on ten strategically important and intractable areas of Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) issues affecting the Earth and its people. Together, ICCR members, which include the Missionary Oblates, have filed 180 shareowner resolutions and engaged in 225 corporate dialogues during the 2013 proxy season.

### ICCR focus areas:



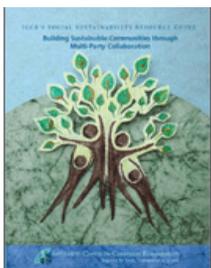
***Sustainable use of water resources that respects the universal human right to water:***

Easily accessible and usable fresh-water is limited to less than 1% of the accessible water on the planet. Humans already use 54% of the Earth's this water; by 2028, this figure could rise to 90%.



***Influencing companies to adopt practices that are aligned with a safe, secure, healthy and sustainable food system:***

Agricultural production will need to increase 70 percent to feed the global population of nine billion people expected by 2050. As a result of unfair trade, production and distribution practices, today's food system fails to provide equitable access to nutrition for nearly 1 in 7 people.



***Social sustainability: bringing the human and community impact of doing business to the forefront of corporate consciousness and the core of business planning.***

In its Addressing the Root Causes of Economic and Social Injustice, Oxfam described the importance of balancing power relations between parties so that communities have input into corporate activity that impacts their destinies.



***Human Trafficking: engaging publicly held companies to address forced child labor and human trafficking for sexual and economic purposes.***

Vulnerable people are recruited, transported, harbored or received through coercion or fraud into forced labor, sexual exploitation, prostitution or soldiering. An ICCR investor coalition corresponded with London hotels and Olympic sponsors asking them to insure their businesses were trafficking and slave free, based on the last two Super Bowls in the US and the 2010 World Cup in South Africa.



***Environmental Health: working to ensure adoption of safer policies.***

In 1971, six Protestant denominations became concerned about impacts of copper mining. In 2010 ICCR was part of a global investor campaign that pressed BP for greater risk management after its oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. This year, it has filed 10 resolutions addressing community and environmental impacts of hydraulic fracturing.



***Global Health: every pharmaceutical company incorporating access to medicines into its core business model, from geographic focus, to product development to delivery system.***

According to the World Health Organization, be-

(Continued from page 6)

tween 1.3 and 2.1 billion people lack essential health care, including access to affordable medicines. They need affordable treatment for HIV and also diabetes, heart disease and asthmas as well as neglected tropical diseases such as dengue fever, Chagas disease, sleeping sickness and blinding trachoma.



**Domestic Health: advocating for quality and affordable health care for all.**

According to the 2010 Census, more than 50 million Americans are uninsured and premiums on employer-provided premiums rose faster than both wages and inflation. Meanwhile, big pharma face increased regulatory requirements, insufficient innovation and intense competition from smaller manufacturers. There are rising prices on medical devices, and industry lobbying against full implementation of the Affordable Care Act.



**Financial Practices and Risk:**

Greater transparency, risk management and accountability across the financial sector and improved access to credit and capital for the marginalized and underserved.



**Supply chain monitoring:**

Engaging companies to adopt programs, policies and practices that account for the short and long-term sustainability of workers and communities impacted by their operations.

An example is the *California Transparency in Supply Chains Act of 2010*, which requires major retailers to put a link on their homepage detailing their efforts to address human trafficking and slavery.

## Bangladesh: the fine print....

Bangladeshi clothing manufacturing workers are some of the lowest paid in the world, and operate under the worst working conditions. Since 1990, hundreds of people have been killed in garment factories due to fires, the collapse of buildings and other problems.

- Senior sewing operators earn \$12.66 for a **48-hour workweek**. Junior sewing operators earn \$10.69 per week. Helpers earn \$8.44 for a **48-hour week**.
- It is not uncommon for supervisors to curse, slap, and even punch workers, including young women, for making a mistake at work or for taking too long in the bathrooms, which workers report are filthy.
- Overtime is obligatory. Workers who object or cannot remain for obligatory overtime are terminated. Three hours of overtime are added to the standard eight hour workday, but workers are only paid overtime wages for one of those three hours.
- Women are routinely denied their legal right to maternity leave and there is no daycare center.
- Workers who arrive late three times are immediately fired.
- Sick leave is not allowed.

Taken from *Stop Trafficking Newsletter* of February 2013, sponsored by the Sisters of the Divine Savior

Go to: [www.stopenslavement.org/archives/stotraff1102.pdf](http://www.stopenslavement.org/archives/stotraff1102.pdf)

## DISCIPLINED LISTENING: ICCR Members meet with Mining communities in Cajamarca, Peru

We are the universe, conscious of ourselves.

We are the universe, reflecting on ourselves.

We have cosmic consciousness.

*-Welcome message at ICCR meeting with Cajamarca community members*

When a five-year dialogue with Newmont Mining did not sufficiently address shareholder concerns, in 2007, ICCR members filed a resolution asking the company to research and resolve community opposition to its projects. The board accepted the challenge and agreed to undertake a study of the company's relationship with local communities near its mining operations. The resulting 2009 report, the Community Relationships Review (CRR), based on more than 250 interviews in Nevada, Peru, Ghana and New Zealand and input from a variety of stakeholders including NGOs and ICCR members, provided Newmont with numerous recommendations on a wide range of environmental and human rights issues.

Unfortunately, the company's relationship with its stakeholders in the city of Cajamarca, Peru continues to be fraught with problems, and in July of this year, clashes between local community members and the police at Minas Conga became violent and five protest-



*Reprinted from the ICCR Corporate Examiner*



*ICCR members with representatives from the Office of National Dialogue and Sustainability*

ers were killed. Directly following that incident, Newmont commissioned a study of stakeholder perceptions in Cajamarca city and learned that the company's inability to listen effectively to the community was cited as the primary source of conflict. Newmont released the findings last month in a report titled "listening to the City of Cajamarca."

But believing it was important to hear from local stakeholders first-hand, in mid-November a delegation of four ICCR members, Sr. Pat Daly of the Tri-State Coalition for Responsible Investment, Rev. Séamus Finn of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, Julie Tanner of Christian Brothers Investment Services and Pat Zerega of Mercy Investment Services traveled to Peru to meet with government officials, company representatives, faith organizations, local and national NGOs and, importantly, members of the communities surrounding the mines.

"As Newmont's new leadership team in Peru, we are committed to taking a fresh approach to listening to our stakeholders and rebuilding our relationships in the region as a top priority. We wanted to underscore this commitment by sharing the results of this listening study as one of our first actions. We are not proud of the current state of our relationship with the people of Cajamarca. We want to take this op-



*Fr. Seamus Finn, OMI at Newmont's Yanacocha Mine*

portunity to acknowledge the mistakes we have made in how we have conducted ourselves and conducted business. Most importantly, we apologize for the distress we have caused and for failing to earn your trust.” — Excerpt from Newmont cover letter – “Listening to the City of Cajamarca”

Finn, who coordinates the extractives initiative at ICCR said, “The extensive footprint of the Yanacocha and Conga mines, only 24 kilometers apart, is both a significant source of employment and development in the region and a potentially disruptive intrusion into the lives of the people in the area. Celendín community members voiced concerns about many mining impacts including the lack of access to traditionally unfenced open land, the immediate and long term impact on both the supply and quality of water, increased use of roads and infrastructure and impacts on basic services like transportation and energy. These issues have direct bearing on the quality of life and livelihoods of people

living in the area and Newmont has a responsibility to address them.”

Regarding their meetings with government groups and NGOs working with the community, Zerega said, “We went to hear all types of voices – the decision makers and those impacted by the decisions – to make sure they were actively listening to one another. Mining agencies in the capital must find creative ways to listen to the voices of the citizens in regions most impacted by their decisions. All government agencies we met with are hopeful for a brighter future and envision a day when the country’s natural resources will benefit all the people of Peru equally. NGOs are a good broker for these discussions as they have a long history with communities in the area and a good understanding of their struggles but also see the broader systemic picture for the country as well.”

Said Julie Tanner, who leads the ICCR engagement with Newmont, “We intend to continue to dialogue and monitor Newmont’s action plan to strengthen its programs, policies and procedures. Maintaining productive relationships with stakeholders requires disciplined listening. Newmont must proactively engage with a wider variety of stakeholders to not only understand their perspectives but to rebuild trust with the people of Cajamarca and to ensure that their rights are respected. By making public the results of their ‘listening study’ they have taken an important first step.”

Sr. Patricia Daly spoke of the group’s meetings with Bishop José Carmelo Martínez Lázaro and members of the Celendín community, “As their welcoming message articulated so beautifully, the people of the Cajamarca

region are mindful of both their dependence on the region’s resources and their responsibility to protect them. The Bishop spoke to the many ways that the government and company have failed to share in this responsibility, but also voiced hope that, if they learn from their mistakes, all could prosper.”



## Domestic Human Rights Updates

By: George Kombe Ngolwe

### Campaign Against the Death Penalty

#### California proposition 34: Replacing the Death Penalty with Life Without Parole

On Election Day, November 6, 2012, people in California narrowly rejected Proposition 34, which would have replaced the death penalty with life without parole. Despite the defeat, the campaign for Savings, Accountability, and Full Enforcement for California Act also known as SAFE California raised public awareness about the economic impact of the death penalty system. Faith leaders such as the California Catholic Conference, who gave their full support

to its passage, championed the campaign. Despite the loss, faith leaders will continue to look for opportunities to end the use of the death penalty and be a voice urging for the respect human life.



#### *What you can do:*

- Pray for victims of crime and their families, those who have been wrongly convicted, and those awaiting execution.
- Learn about Catholic social teaching, U.S. criminal justice policies, and the policies in your state. Go to the web site listed below for more information about the death penalty.
- Educate people in your parish or community about Catholic social teaching and the criminal justice system.
- Advocate by contacting your elected officials. Discuss Catholic teaching on the death penalty and what steps could be taken at the state and national level to curtail or end its use.

For more information about the death penalty, visit [www.usccb.org/deathpenalty](http://www.usccb.org/deathpenalty)

### Death Penalty Repeal in Maryland



In March 2013, both the Maryland State Senate and the Maryland House of Delegates passed SB 276 to repeal the death penalty in that state. SB 276 aims to replace the death penalty in Maryland with a sentence of life without parole for future crimes. Governor Martin O'Malley is expected to sign the legislation into law in April. Once enacted, Maryland will join states like Connecticut, New York, Illinois, New Mexico and New Jersey that have ended the use of the death penalty. Several faith groups in Maryland, including the Maryland Catholic Bishops Conference, campaigned actively for repeal of the death penalty.

## Campaign to End the Use of Torture: Resources

### *JustFaith Module: In the Footsteps of the Crucified: Torture is Never Justified*

The National Religious Campaign Against Torture (NRCAT), Pax Christi USA, and the Torture Abolition and Survivors Support Coalition (TASSC) have produced a wonderful educational 8-session Just Faith module. The module focuses on the reality of torture. The module has inspiring examples of faithful witness against torture with real-life stories from torture survivors.

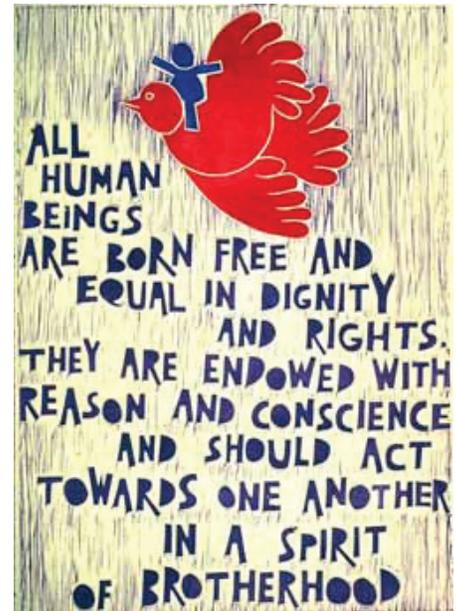
For more information, visit [http://www.justfaith.org/programs/justmatters-m\\_footstepsofcrucified.html](http://www.justfaith.org/programs/justmatters-m_footstepsofcrucified.html)

### *USCCB/NRCAT Study Guide: Torture is a Moral Issue*

This study guide produced by USCCB's Office of International Justice and Peace in partnership with the National Religious Campaign Against Torture (NRCAT) examines torture from the perspective of Catholic social teaching on human dignity and includes practical action steps.

View: [www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/torture/torture-is-a-moral-issue.cfm](http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/torture/torture-is-a-moral-issue.cfm)

National Religious Campaign Against Torture (NRCAT) is a coalition of religious organizations committed to ending torture sponsored or enabled by the United States government. The Missionary Oblate JPIC Office is a member. NRCAT provides a number of wonderful educational and liturgical resources in print and digital media. Visit: [www.nrcat.org](http://www.nrcat.org) for more information.



## JPIC Network Updates



*Santa Rosa Roman Catholic Church, CA*

### **Enthusiasm for Social Justice at Santa Rosa, CA**

Following a recent sermon on social justice by **Br. Lucio Cruz, OMI**, over 120 parishioners of Santa Rosa parish signed up to join a parish social justice committee. Br. Lucio has been working with parishioners at **Santa Rosa, Mary Immaculate and St. Ferdinand parishes** in San Fernando, CA to promote social justice ministry in line with the Oblate charism of working with the poor.

Knowing that social justice work can take many forms, Br. Lucio and a team of enthusiastic lay people have been organizing different gatherings to address felt needs in the community. In early March, they held a successful healthcare enrollment workshop where people from county clinics and a local hospital were available to enroll people in the healthcare system. In May, they are planning Citizenship classes to help people apply for citizenship, providing help to people in filling out the forms and in learning what is needed to obtain citizenship.

Social Justice Ministry is an umbrella term that Br. Lucio's team sees as including many issues from immigration to Integrity of Creation, domestic violence and human dignity. The team works with existing organizations in the area that can offer resources to help address the problems surfaced by the team. Br. Lucio is hard at work building a core team in each parish to address social justice issues, and dreams of some day having an office for this work.

## Five Misconceptions about Border Security

By Adam Isacson and Maureen Meyer\*

The notion of “securing the border” has been put forward as a precondition to immigration reform. But in our current political debate, there is a dangerous gap between rhetoric and the real security situation on the border. WOLA’s Border Security project has been studying the U.S.-Mexico border for two years. Here are five misconceptions we’ve heard:

### 1. *The federal government isn’t doing enough to secure the border.*

In recent years federal border security efforts have increased dramatically. The number of Border Patrol agents has multiplied by more than five times in the last two decades. By the end of 2011, there were 18,506 Border Patrol agents along the U.S.-Mexico border, up from 9,891 in 2005 and 3,555 in 1992. Custom and Border Protection’s Office of Air and Marine now has over 290 aircraft at its disposal, including seven Predator drones patrolling the U.S.-Mexico border.

The various security agencies have grown so quickly that managerial and interagency snarls may pose the largest challenge today. Every agency operating on the border has its own intelligence capability, including the Drug Enforcement Administration, the FBI, the De-

partment of Defense, and state governments. This has led to a profusion of task forces, fusion centers, and liaison offices aiming to get rapidly burgeoning agencies to share information with each other.

### 2. *Immigration across the border is increasing.*

All evidence suggests that the migrant population from Mexico has plummeted. Apprehensions of undocumented migrants in the border zone, the best approximation of flows, dropped by 61 percent between 2005 and 2011. (We still await official 2012 data.) As a result, the annual number of migrant apprehensions per Border Patrol agent dropped from 123 in 2005 to just 20 in 2011. Adding more Border Patrol agents would not be cost effective and would result instead in diminishing returns.

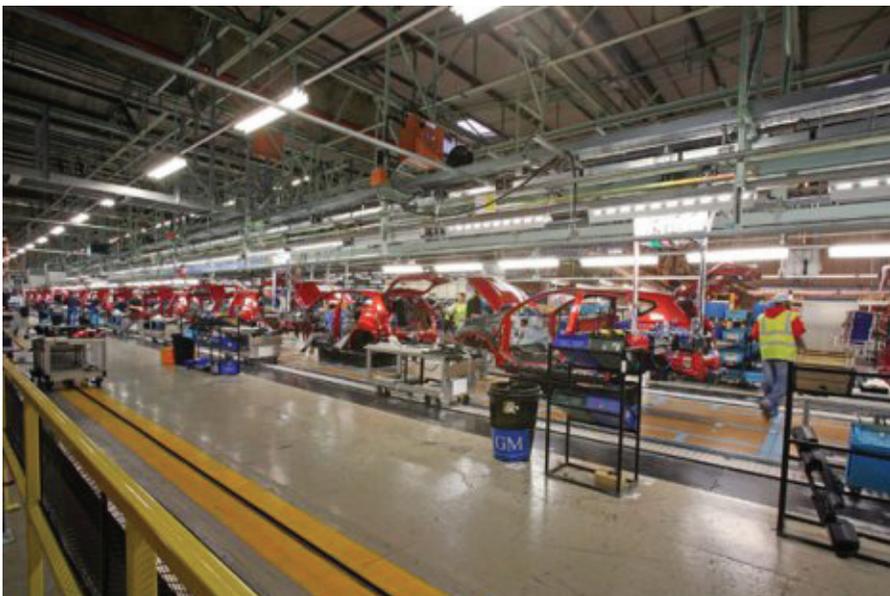
Although migration has decreased, the journey has become more deadly. As some of the longtime routes have been closed off, migrants have been pushed to more remote and dangerous areas. In the Tucson area, for example, the number of migrant deaths has increased in relation to the number of migrants apprehended, indicating a greater danger of dying of dehydration or exposure in a remote, inhospitable desert.

### 3. *Violence is spilling over the border from Mexico to the United States*

Violent crime rates have skyrocketed on Mexico’s side of the border in recent years as a result of fighting between organized crime groups. Related homicides in Mexico’s six northern border states accounted for approximately 25 percent of the nation’s total for 2012.

This violence, however, has not crossed over to the U.S. side of the border. According to FBI Uniform Crime Reports, homicide and violent crime rates for all U.S. cities within 100 miles of the border are below the U.S. national average, below their states’ averages, and about one-twentieth the average of cities on Mexico’s side of the border. El Paso, which has the lowest homicide rate of all U.S. cities over 500,000 population, sits across the Rio Grande from Mexico’s Ciudad Juárez, which in 2010 had among the highest homicide rates





in the world. Border area civic and business leaders are justifiably angry at politicians—in some cases the governors of their own states—who portray their cities as war zones.

#### ***4. Today's migrants can be deterred by tougher laws and policies.***

The U.S. security buildup of the last several years probably isn't the principal reason why fewer migrants are attempting to enter U.S. territory through the desert. A factor of at least equal importance is the stagnation of the U.S. job market since the 2008 financial crisis. Mexico, meanwhile, has been posting higher growth rates than the United States, and has undergone major demographic changes, like a dramatic drop in the number of children per family.

A small number of would-be migrants do report being dissuaded by tougher policies, but a growing percentage of migrants are being driven by motivations such as family reunification. According to ICE, during the first six months of 2011, 22 percent of deported migrants—a total of 46,486 people—left U.S. citizen children behind. It is hard to imagine that a mother separated from her children, or a husband from his wife, would stay away because of a federal government zero-tolerance policy.

#### ***5. Migration is the most pressing policy challenge along the border.***

One of the biggest challenges today is the overwhelmed and understaffed official ports of entry. While Border Patrol—which operates between the ports of entry—doubled since 2005, employees of CBP's Office of Field Operations, which interviews and inspects all would-be crossers, grew by only 15 percent, to about 5,700. As a result, waits to cross the border routinely last a commerce-stifling one to two hours or more. The majority of drugs smuggled into the United States continue to pass through these ports of entry. Evidence suggests that drugs are flowing at least as much as ever: border

seizures of methamphetamine, heroin, marijuana, and ecstasy are way up, which indicates that traffickers are very active. To deal with this problem effectively, additional investment in border security needs to go to the agents at the ports of entry, not to the Border Patrol between them.

In addition, there are humanitarian issues related to rising numbers of deportations and to the treatment of migrants. For instance, growing evidence indicates that extra-legal measures are commonly applied to deliberately make the deportation experience humiliating and even abusive. In 2011, a coalition of Arizona-based advocacy groups found in a study that over 10 percent of the 12,895 interviewed individuals suffered physical abuse, along with routine denial of water and food, deliberate sleep deprivation, separation of families, failure to return personal belongings, and other violations of rights and dignity while in custody. Preferred methods of deportation now include abandoning adult male migrants in dangerous Mexican cities in the middle of the night when shelters and services are closed and where migrants don't have networks of support and are more vulnerable to organized crime.

*\*Adam Isacson and Maureen Meyer are experts on security and U.S.-Mexico relations.*

## Comprehensive Immigration Reform at Last?

By: George Kombe Ngolwe

The year 2013 has witnessed renewed political discussion about the need for Immigration Reform in the United States. Both Democrats and Republicans - for the first time - are urging immediate action on immigration reform, with a focus on the status of the 11 million undocumented immigrants in the country. Regrettably, calls for immigration reform are being accompanied by a demand for an enforcement-first approach, despite the fact that this has been the focus for the past four years, with dramatic increases in border and interior immigration funding and enforcement.

The post-election moment for immigration reform has seen a group of eight senators introduce four basis legislative pillars on immigration. The eight senators endorsing the new principles are Senators Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.), Dick Durbin (D-Ill.), Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.), Robert Menendez (D-N.J.), Marco Rubio (R-Fla.), Michael Bennet (D-Colo.), and Jeff Flake (R-Ariz.)

This action by the group of eight senators, known as

the “Gang of Eight,” is symbolically important, because it shows a bipartisan group of legislators working together to reform an immigration system in urgent need of repair.

*The four proposed pillars are:*

- Create a tough but fair path to citizenship for unauthorized immigrants currently living in the United States that is contingent upon securing our borders and tracking whether legal immigrants have left the country when required.
- Reform our legal immigration system to better recognize the importance of characteristics that will help build the American economy and strengthen American families.
- Create an effective employment verification system that will prevent identity theft and end the hiring of future unauthorized workers.
- Establish an improved process for admitting future workers to serve our nation’s workforce needs, while simultaneously protecting all workers.

The Obama Administration is showing speed in pushing for immigration reform, has outlined similar comprehensive immigration proposals, and has promised to sign immigration legislative into law if passed by the U.S. Congress. There is growing hope that Members of the House of Representatives will follow the same spirit of bipartisanship in working on Immigration reform.



## Take Action!!

Informed by our faith tradition that upholds the human dignity of every person, the Missionary Oblates JPIC Office strongly believes and supports a process for undocumented immigrants to gain legal status with a pathway to citizenship and that upholds the priority for family unity.

Show your Senators and Representatives that people of faith want legislation that keeps families together, adopts humane enforcement policies, and ensures that immigrants without legal status register with the government and begin a path toward citizenship.

Take Action by sending an Immigration Postcard to Members of Congress in support of just and compassionate immigration reform.

Go to the USCCB's Justice for Immigrants campaign website to send an electronic postcard, available at <http://www.justiceforimmigrants.org>



## Food Workers in Crisis

By: Christina C. Herman

A recent report examining wages and working conditions in the food system concludes that major changes are needed to insure both the health and safety of food workers, but also of the US food system as a whole. *The Hands that Feed US: Challenges and Opportunities for Workers Along the Food Chain* is available on-line from the Food Chain Workers Alliance, <http://foodchainworkers.org/>

### What did the report find?

“Jobs in the food system provide low wages with little access to health benefits and opportunities for advancement. ... More than 86 percent of the more than 600 workers surveyed reported earning low or poverty wages.” Ironically, food workers are less able to be able to afford to eat than the rest of the U.S. workforce. Food system workers “use food stamps at double the rate of the rest of the U.S. workforce. They also reported working in environments with health and safety violations, long work hours with

few breaks, and lack of access to health benefits.”

“60 percent of food system workers reported not having paid sick days,” while 19 percent didn’t know if they had this benefit. “Only 21 percent of all workers surveyed confirmed that they had paid sick days.”

Some segments of the food chain offer potential for career advancement to livable wage jobs, although “actual mobility is limited, and discrimination and segregation concentrate people of color and immigrants in the lowest-paying positions.”

In a survey of small to medium-size food system employers, many employers said that “competition with large food corporations created more challenges for business success than the economic downturn. ... Several employers said that they maintained their business in the face of competition by focusing on niche markets, particularly providing local, sustainable, and organic products, and by lowering labor costs, to the detriment of workers.” The report rec-

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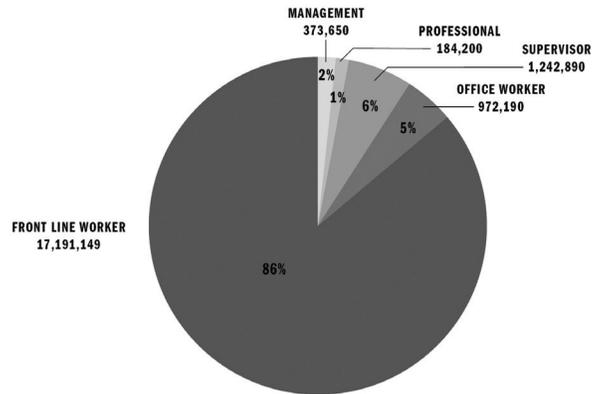
## Food Workers in Crisis *(continued from p 15)*

ognized that “there are outstanding employers in every segment of the food chain, demonstrating that taking the ‘high road’ to profitability—namely providing livable wages, working conditions, and advancement opportunities—is possible.”

Low wages and the lack of basic benefits, such as paid sick days for all workers in the food system, puts the nation’s food supply at risk on a daily basis. “Given the size of the industry and its impact on our nation’s economy, food security, and public health, it is imperative that wages and working conditions improve for the 20 million workers in all segments of the chain.” The research shows that:

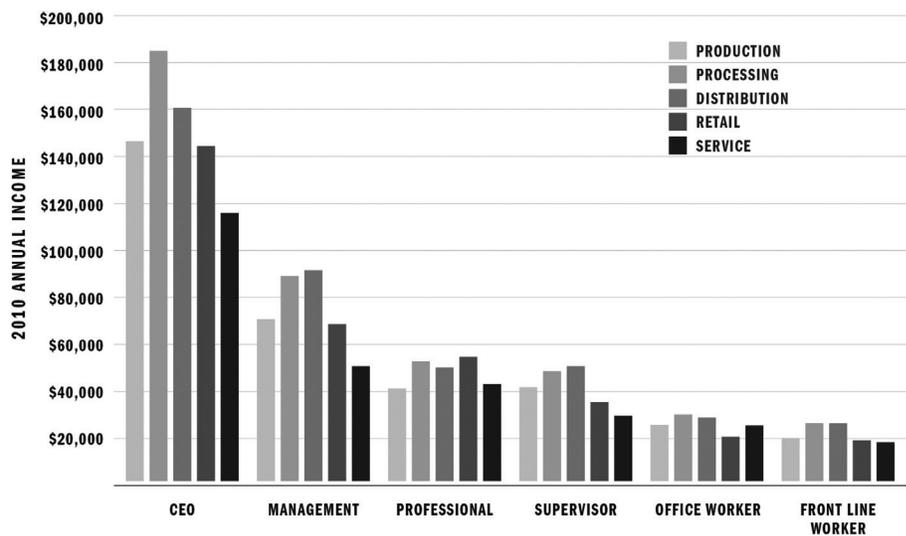
- Due to a lack of sick days provided by employers, more than half (53%) of the workers surveyed reported picking, processing, selling, cooking and serving food while sick, an average of at least three days per year.
- Due to a lack of employer-provided health benefits, more than one third of all workers surveyed (34.8%) report using the emergency room for primary health care. In addition, 80 percent of these workers are unable to pay for such care.
- Furthermore, given low wages, food system workers use public assistance at higher rates than the rest of the U.S. workforce.

BREAKDOWN OF FOOD SYSTEM EMPLOYEES BY POSITION 2010



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment Statistics 2010

ANNUAL INCOMES IN THE FOOD SECTOR 2010



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment Statistics 2010

## What Can We Do?

Food worker wages need to increase, and a good way to do this is through an increase in the minimum wage, including the hourly wages of tipped workers, which are exceedingly low. Paid sick days, adequate rest breaks and access to health care are also important in order to insure the safety and well being of food workers, and of our food supply. Workers need the right to organize, as well as to be covered by fair labor standards and basic worker protections. Agricultural workers, for instance, are not covered by minimum wage laws and worker standards, while waiters and waitresses are still affected by federal legislation passed over twenty years ago setting the hourly wage of tipped workers at \$2.13 an hour. As these issues are debated in the public sphere, we can add our voices to those calling for more just policies and practices.