

JPIC REPORT



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

"As your religious Family enters its third century of life, may the Lord allow you to write new and evangelically fruitful pages, like those of your brothers who throughout these 200 years have testified – at times with blood – to a great love of Christ and the Church. You are Oblates of Mary Immaculate. May this name, defined by St. Eugene as 'a passport to Heaven', be for you a constant commitment to the mission."

(Pope Francis, to Oblate General Chapter, Rome, Italy, October 7, 2016)

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From the Director: Fr. Antonio Ponce, OMI

Ours is a planet filled with wonder

It was only a few decades ago that for the first time in the history of humanity, thanks to ground-breaking advances in technology, we had the opportunity to view our planet from space. As one would say today, it was the first time we were able to take a "selfie" of ourselves, quietly floating in the universe. It is hard to imagine that each of us exists in that blue sphere together with our loved ones--each of us carrying hopes and dreams, trials and challenges. Later, in the eighties, a spacecraft called Voyager captured an image of our solar system from 11,100,000,000 miles away, depicting it as a tiny grain of sand, so tiny it was barely detectable. Yet there it was, that planet we call home, not only beautiful but filled with wonders; a home that provides us with all we need to live: oxygen, water, food, etc. By looking at these images it is hard not to be moved with admiration, respect and wonder. It should make us feel privileged to inhabit this home that was given to us. We now know there are not only trillions of planets in the universe but trillions of galaxies out there. Yet, as far as we know, there is not even one other planet brimming with life like ours. This makes our home and us very unique and special. What should our response be to such a gift, such a blessing? How are we to treat and care for our common home, for one another, and all living things that share this space?

What comes to mind when I reflect on these questions? This: have I been mindful and grateful enough for the blessing of this beautiful home. The global online platform TED (Technology, Entertainment and Design) has a great and inspiring video by cinematographer Louie Schwartzberg entitled: "Nature. Beauty. Gratitude." In it Louie takes his viewers on an amazing tour to different places on our planet, showing time-lapsed images of people, plants and animals revealing their most beautiful colors, shapes and movements. He invites his audience to cultivate a deeper sense of wonder, contemplation and admiration for nature, a nature that connects us all as one. Louie invites us to listen to a young girl and old man discuss how exploring our world through our imagination can help us discover astonishing wonders and beauty around us. By being mindful of the many wonderful things nature provides should lead us to cultivate a sense of admiration, respect, appreciation and thankfulness. "This day, you think is just another day, this is not just another day, it is the one day that is given to you today, a gift." the old man in the video reflects. "And the only appropriate response is gratitude. Look at the skies; we rarely look at the skies," he adds. I think it is worthwhile to take heed, especially those of us whose busy city lives disconnect us from nature. We rarely spend time taking in the rising sun, the shining moon, and the many forms of life around us.

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The OMI Justice, 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.

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Antonio Ponce, OMI
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Associate Director

Séamus P. Finn, OMI
**Chief of Faith Consistent Investing
 OIP Investment Trust**

Daniel LeBlanc, OMI
**Associate, International JPIC Office
 and Oblate UN Representative**

Rowena Gono
Communications Coordinator

Meghan Gieske
Office Coordinator

JPIC Report is a publication of the
 OMI Justice, Peace & Integrity of
 Creation Office
 391 Michigan Avenue NE
 Washington, DC 20017

Tel: 202.529-4505
 Fax: 202.529-4572
www.omiusajpic.org

News & Happenings...

Our Common Home Club



The Missionary Association of Mary Immaculate – a fund-raising organization of Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate – is responding to Pope Francis' admonition to protect the earth and the poor. We have created a sustained giving program called Our Common Home. This new club will offer Oblate benefactors the opportunity to help restore and promote the integrity of creation, by protecting the earth and improving the quality of life of the poor. Members of Our Common Home will initially receive a welcome package that includes a reusable tote bag. Quarterly newsletters will also be sent, allowing the benefactor to stay up-to-date on Oblate projects and initiatives that are meant to better the earth and support the poor. Other correspondence will be sent through e-mail and various electronic means in an effort to use less paper.

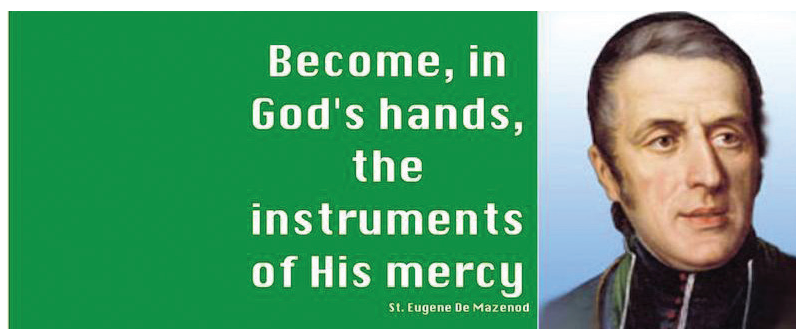
Visit www.oblatesusa.org and click 'Ways to Give'.

Fr. Kennedy Katongo, OMI 1980 - 2016



We as Oblates know that as missionaries we may be called to serve anywhere in the world, at any time, and in any ministry. We always ask and pray our Lord gives us the wisdom and strength to respond generously to this call. This call came to Fr. Kennedy Katongo, OMI, a little over two years ago to leave Zambia and travel to Rome, Italy to lead the office of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation for our congregation. For more than two years he traveled the world promoting and raising awareness about JPIC issues. In a short period of time, he made a name for himself in this field. His assignment as director of this office was for six years, but God had other plans for him. The first day Oblates convened in Rome for their 26th General Chapter, an event that happens every five years, Fr. Kennedy was called to the Father's home. We were all shocked as we learned the news of his passing. He was only 36 years old. We thank God for his vocation and dedication to his ministry.

Fr. Antonio, Ponce, OMI
 Oblate JPIC Director



A Post Election Faith Perspective: the role of government *By: Fr. Seamus Finn, OMI*

Every four years according to the constitutional process that we follow in the U.S. we have presidential elections. The election is always followed by a period of analysis and evaluation, and of course on the part of the chosen leader, a busy period of planning that includes policy priorities and cabinet selections.

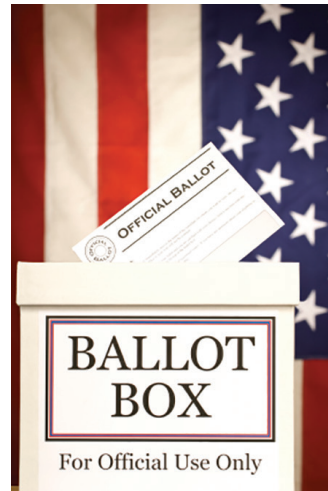
Believers and faith based institutions are very much a part of this process, as they encourage people to participate in the electoral process and examine and either praise, or critique the specific policy platforms of the respective parties, or of individual candidates on the ballot. This year was no exception and there is no shortage of responses to the election outcome.

The issue of the role of government and the responsibility of corporations often breaks down around party lines and faith communities are not homogenous on how they see the roles and responsibilities of these two institutions either. Calls to compassion and charity, social justice and personal responsibility for each person are the bedrock, and articulating how government and other institutions build and sustain sustainable communities are essential.

Over the last ten years the fallout from the near collapse of the global financial system has received a lot of attention and was reflected in a number of ways in the just completed election cycle. In the Catholic tradition, this specific issue received increased scrutiny not only because Catholic Social Teaching on the subject continues to evolve, but also because Pope Francis has been a very active participant in the conversation. This has included not only his analysis and critique of the “free market” system itself, but also calling out the responsibilities of those who play significant roles and have influence in the regulation and operation of the system.

The role of government in ordering, supervising and regulating the economy always receives a lot of attention and is the subject of many discussions and disagreements. Were Congress and the administration too generous in bailing out the big banks in the midst of the crisis and less attentive to the millions of people who suffered as a result? When we look at the data about bankruptcies, delinquent mortgages, lost jobs, deferred retirements and depleted pensions, the evidence for many suggests that more might have been done for individuals. How does one assess the adequacy of government response? The reminder across the centuries about keeping in mind the plight of the widow, the orphan and the stranger is, it seems to me, is always a solid starting point and clear benchmark for people of faith.

At the macro level, when the topic of globalization, whether driven by governments or corporations, was discussed, it also received a black eye during the campaign and in post-election analysis. Is it time for a reshaping of globalization? Some have paid a very heavy price as the engine of globalization has been promoted at break neck speed in recent decades. The winners and losers are clearly identifiable. This has usually been measured in terms of the number of jobs lost as a result of trade agreements slanted in the direction of corporations and the free movement of capital and raw material, without adequate attention being paid to how these trade agreements have impacted people’s livelihoods and communities. There is evidence that this issue was an important consideration for many in the recent election and will surely have an impact in the coming years.



The maximization of profit for the benefit of shareholders has dominated the “free market” ideology for decades and any laws or regulations that would interfere significantly with that mission have been roundly criticized. The prospect of an administration that may want to roll back many of the rules and regulations put in place in the financial services sector, particularly through laws like the Patriot Act and the Dodd-Frank law, would be

immediately welcomed by many and feared by others, especially those who suffered in the aftermath of the crisis. The concern for others who are focused on global economic stability and liquidity will be opening the flood gates for a return to the practices, policies and transactions that came close to blowing up the system less than ten years ago. The policy approach of the new Congress and administration promoted in the past often advocated for smaller government and light regulation. Will that work this time? It bears close monitoring by faith based advocates for justice and those who lead faith based institutions. The call of the Holy Father for vigilance in protecting human dignity and human rights, addressing the great disparity and inequality that exists in numerous places across the world, and the promotion of a social market economy that is inclusive and cares for our “common home,” will be an invaluable guidepost.

Public corporations in all sectors will also have to evaluate how to respond in this new period.

(Continued on p. 9)

From the Director *(Continued from p. 1)*

We are invited to experience, enjoy and thank God for Creation

At a retreat I led not too long ago with a group of catechists at an Oblate parish, we decided not to convene in the parish hall but outdoors in the countryside. We secured a place on the outskirts of the city filled with trees, birds, insects, a beautiful river, and nature's silence. The goal of the retreat was to provide a place to recollect and reflect as a group on our many gifts from God: our lives, our families, our homes and nature. We used as our guide, Pope Francis' encyclical, "*Laudato Si: On Care for our Common Home*." There was no better place to study this document than this! During a group session, one participant shared that she had heard how beautiful the location was and lived just a few miles away nearly all life, but it was her first time there! "I spend my days so busy running around and preoccupied with a multitude of things, I have never made time to enjoy this wonderful God-given garden right in my backyard."



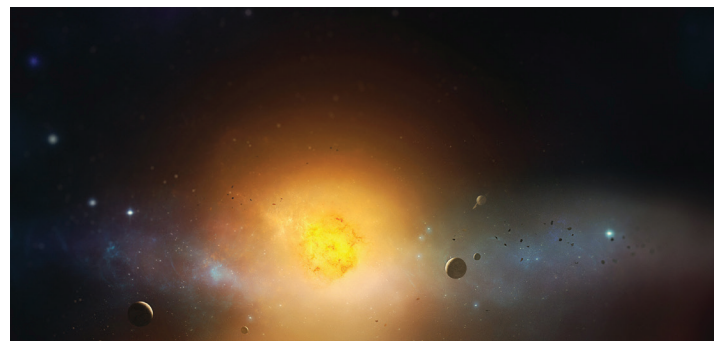
Her sharing resonates with me. I too am frequently so preoccupied with an abundance of things that I easily miss the opportunity to enjoy life's God-given gifts through people and nature. Some of you may have fallen prey to the same temptation. Today the rhythm of life, especially for city dwellers, tends to move too fast. So rushed and stressed are we to the point where it is becoming unhealthy. Pope Francis talks about this in *Laudato Si* when he writes: "The continued acceleration of changes affecting humanity and the planet is coupled today with a more intensified pace of life and work which might be called 'rapidification'... Change is something desirable, yet it becomes a source of anxiety when it causes harm to the world and to the quality of life of much of humanity" (LS#18). It would seem that today we have more things to be worried about. The question then becomes, are all our worries warranted? Are we spending our efforts and energy on things that, instead of doing us good, end up distracting and

actually harming us? Jesus, talking with his disciples, reminds them not to spend too much time worrying about temporary things. He rather invites them to invest their energy, time and talents on things that should matter more to a disciple, like more faith and trust in God. Instead of relying on their own efforts, to focus their lives on collaborating with God and building his kingdom.

He tells them: "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat [or drink], or about your body, what you will wear. (...) So do not worry and say, 'What are we to eat?' or 'What are we to drink?' or 'What are we to wear?' (...) [Rather], seek first the kingdom [of God] and his righteousness, and all these things will be given you besides" (Mt 6: 31 & 33).

Putting our gifts and talents to work together

Technology is supposed to make things better for us, widen our capacities. And this it does in so many ways. But it can also distract us from more essential things. Technology is like a two-edged sword. On the one hand, it can help us build better societies, end hunger and diseases, and make better use of our natural resources...it can also help us build better relationships with one another and with creation. On the flip side, it can be used to build walls, and cause division and destruction. The question for us today is not so much whether we have the tools and capabilities to make this a better place to live and improve our lives and those of others. But do we have the will to work together to conquer today's problems. Pope Francis says with hope that, "The urgent challenge to protect our common home includes a concern to bring the whole human family together to seek a sustainable and integral development, for we know that things can change. The Creator does not abandon us; he never forsakes his loving plan or repents of having created us. Humanity still has the ability to work together in building our common home" (LS#13).



Sr. Nathanael Lee Heads Off on a New Journey

For the last 15 months the Office of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) was blessed to have as part of our team Sr. Nathanael Lee, a member of the Congregation of Little Servants of the Holy Family. Born in South Korea, she arrived at the JPIC office in Washington D.C. in August 2015 to receive training on issues of social justice and integrity of creation. She will begin a new JPIC Ministry for her congregation when she returns. During her many months interning we witnessed her passion and commitment to JPIC issues.



Add caption: (L to R) George Ngolwe, Fr. Antonio Ponce, Sr. Nathanael Lee, Meghan Gieske, Rowena Gono

During her time here she also took courses at local universities. Despite having to devote several hours a week studying, she collaborated on various office projects such as: restructuring our web and social media sites, writing articles for the blog, attending staff and JPIC Committee meetings, and visiting Oblate missions around the U.S. and in Tijuana, Mexico.

As she concludes her time in D.C. and with us, we hope the experience for her has been one of great benefit. For us, her presence has been a great blessing. We thank Sister Lee for having spent these months with us and wish her many blessings as she continues to advance her commitment to the ministry of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation.

Fr. Antonio, Ponce, OMI
Oblate JPIC Director

Missionary Oblates D.C. Staff Bid Farewell to Sr. Lee



Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate staff gather for Sr. Lee's goodbye party. (Back row from L to R): Fr. Tom Coughlin, OMI, Rowena Gono, Saudeia Martin, Joyce Prince. (Front row from L to R): Janice Cooke, Meghan Gieske, Sr. Nathanael Lee, LSHF, Laura Glasgow, Sr. Ann Diehl, CSJ, Fr. Louis Lougen, OMI



Sr. Nathanael Lee poses with Missionary Oblates Superior General Fr. Louis Lougen, OMI at JPIC office goodbye party

U.S. Immigration Reform and Support for Refugees

By: George Ngolwe

Act for Justice for Haitians

In the aftermath of Hurricane Matthew, Missionary Oblates JPIC office joined with other faith groups in welcoming the announcement by U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Jeh Johnson to “put on hold” deportation plans for certain Haitians living in the U.S. Like past natural disasters, Hurricane Matthew had a devastating impact on the country, leaving residents in desperate need of aid. We remain concerned that DHS plans to resume fast tracking the deportation of Haitians as soon as country conditions improve. Haiti is in no condition to receive deportees anytime soon. We believe the U.S. has a moral and legal obligation to Haitians seeking safety.

As part of our solidarity with Missionary Oblates working in Haiti, JPIC launched an action alert urging U.S. Homeland Security to re-instate Temporary Humanitarian Parole for Haitians currently living in the U.S. We also encouraged people to donate to the recovery efforts of Haiti and other Caribbean nations devastated by Hurricane Matthew.

The Missionary Oblates have worked in Haiti since 1950. Today there are nearly 150 Oblates working in Haiti, the largest Catholic congregation in the country. They run parishes, schools and medical facilities throughout the island nation. Most of their ministries were damaged by Hurricane Matthew and they are trying to rebuild. Please continue to pray for the Oblates and the people they serve in Haiti as they work to rebuild their lives and ministries of hope.

JPIC partner Washington Office on Latin America sheds light on migrant enforcement in Mexico

The Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA) recently released a report, *Migration Enforcement in Mexico*. This new report reveals Mexico is seeing its highest number of asylum requests on record. This has impacted the country’s ability to adequately screen migrants who might be eligible for protection, raising concerns about whether this group is being given due process. The report further reveals that migrant apprehensions and deportations have dramatically increased in recent years and continue unabated.

WOLA also recently released a video series to raise awareness about the distressing conditions facing Central American children who flee their countries. The videos narrate the

stories of children, including young migrant women describing dangerous conditions that push them to migrate and the risks of traveling through Mexico. Many experience horrible crime, only to get deported from Mexico.

For more information about Migrant Enforcement in Mexico, visit www.wola.org

U.S. Immigration Reform

Discussions of the current broken immigration system elicit a range of rationales, fears and emotions. Beneath the tensions are personal stories, diverse views and solutions for fixing the system.

While comprehensive immigration reform does have vocal opponents, the majority of Americans support it, a position that has not wavered even in the face of an economic downturn.

2017 will provide a new opportunity for the U.S. Congress and Administration to fix the immigration system. Oblate JPIC and diverse faith coalition partners strongly believe the U.S. Congress and Administration should especially focus on the following:

- Find savings by ceasing cooperation with states to enforce anti-immigrant laws that encourage racial targeting and force an anti-immigrant lens upon local police.
- Increase funds for the Department of Homeland Security - Office of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties to empower this office to proactively protect undocumented immigrants from labor violations and other perpetrators seeking to exploit them.
- Revamp trade policies to recognize poverty as one of the root causes of migration, and to promote poverty reduction strategies and job-creation projects that target migrant sending nations.
- Provide robust funding for programs that prevent human trafficking and torture, educate communities, and serve survivors.
- Increase funding for community-based alternatives to detention programs that are both more humane and fiscally responsible.
- Protect Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and Deferred Action for Parents of Americans (DAPA) and allow a vote on Comprehensive Immigration Reform.

George Ngolwe is Associate Director at OMI JPIC.

Looking Back on My Time with Oblate JPIC

By: Sr. Nathanael Lee, LSHF

In the house where I lived for the last 15 months the chapel has a window behind the altar. Through this window I have watched the seasons change and meditated on God's creation. Looking back on my time in Washington, DC., this has been one of my many enjoyable moments. Everything was blessed.

When I arrived in the U.S. I brought with me one street address: 391 Michigan Ave., Washington, D.C. (OMI JPIC's physical location). As the newly appointed coordinator of the JPIC secretariat for Little Servants of the Holy Family, my religious community back in Seoul, Korea, I had very little knowledge about the work of Oblate JPIC and even less about similar organizations in Washington, D.C.



Sr. Lee attending a Way of the Cross event at IMF Building, Washington, DC

My internship started around Pope Francis' 2015 U.S. visit and ended with the 2016 U.S. presidential election. There were many issues to learn about, and events and meetings to attend. Following up on everything has been overwhelming. The OMI JPIC office was my source for connection and networking. I attended a great number of conferences, meetings, and seminars. Insights drawn from these activities have been extremely helpful to expand my understanding of the structure of a justice and peace ministry. I have observed justice and peace work at the local, national and international levels, where issues are always evolving and at times intersecting. I am impressed with the comprehensive approach organizations take and breath and depth of these issues. These encounters will be my guiding light moving forward.

A key pillar of the charisms of both the Missionary Oblates and Little Servants of the Holy Family is their concern for the poor. Each step of my JPIC formation has been enhanced because both organizations share this intrinsic value. I am grateful to have been enlightened on these issues. It also afforded me the chance to bring my passion and energy to the work, influenced by my community's spirituality. I am deeply touched by the Oblates' devotion to the marginalized, something I witnessed on my visits to Tijuana, Mexico and San Antonio, TX. Back in Korea, our attention to eco-justice and our fairly new ecological farm ministry correspond with Oblate ecological initiatives: La Vista Ecological Learning Center in Godfrey, IL and Three Part Harmony Farm in Washington, DC. It was a great pleasure to visit both places and observe the remarkable work being done.

I would like to thank every JPIC staff and committee member who led and inspired me through their mission. On behalf of the Little Servants of the Holy Family, thank you for having me and for all you have done for me! May our ministries continue to unite us as we strive to build a better world. You all will be remembered in my prayers!



Sr. Lee (front, far right) with JPIC Committee at meeting in Godfrey, IL

Sr. Nathanael Lee, LSHF finished up her internship at the JPIC office in Washington, DC on November 17, 2016. She will spend her remaining four months interning with Fr. Daniel LeBlanc, OMI, at Vivat International in New York City and return to Korea in the spring of 2017.

Contributing to the Integrity of Creation

By: Sr. Maxine Pohlman, SSND

Participants in La Vista Ecological Learning Center's programs are continually being awakened to the depth of meaning in that important phrase "integrity of creation". It is like a jewel with many facets, calling us in new ways as life changes in our common home and as our awareness expands to embrace social justice and ecological justice as one.



The presenter shows participants a shroud used in green burials.

Honeysuckle removal continues at La Vista with new information: in a couple decades, if we do nothing about removing it, invasive bush honeysuckle will completely take over in some areas, reducing biodiversity to an alarming degree. Since biodiversity and the continuance of life go hand-in-hand, we consider this an important project. Novices and a team of local volunteers remove honeysuckle in the Oblates Nature Preserve and in areas close to the house.

In September the new novices joined with other participants and explored the "Green Burial Option". Our presenter opened our eyes to the ways that the funeral industry has limited our choices, leading us to believe that law always requires us to embalm, purchase vaults and expensive caskets. We learned that green or natural burial honors death as part of life, is good for humans, and for the environment.



L to R: Oblate Novices Joe Olickan, Thuan Bui, Joseph Saukani, Alejandro Alvarado, Macario Sausande and Ansalin Jelastin prepare to work in the Preserve.

Sr. Maxine Pohlman, SSND, is a member of the School Sisters of Notre Dame and program director of La Vista Ecological Learning Center in Godfrey, IL.

This year's October Earth Literacy Program was unique in that its participants were all OMI's. All of us found it a great blessing to be able to explore our common home and our responsibility for it, and to share deeply the interconnection between spirituality and ecology, science and religion.

Gratitude has been the theme at La Vista: for participants' continued interest in learning about our common home, for novices who bring their cultural experiences to bear in our discussions, and for commitment to the OMI priority of justice, peace, and the integrity of creation.



The Novitiate Community spotted bald eagles at the Audubon Center at Riverlands.

Other OMI JPIC Advocacy Efforts in 2016

As part of our advocacy efforts, the JPIC office periodically joins in solidarity with other organizations to promote social justice in the political and corporate arenas.

In 2016 JPIC monitored and supported the following bill introduced in the United States Congress.

We will continue to follow these issues in the new year.

- **Conscience Protection Act of 2016:** The Conscience Protection Act would protect health care providers from penalties and discrimination and uphold their right to refuse to perform or provide abortions. The bill passed the House, but not yet in the Senate.

- **Refugee Protection Act of 2016:** This legislation would require the implementation of humane reforms within the immigration detention system. It would also provide increased support to ensure refugees are fully welcomed and legal counsel appointed for unaccompanied children and other vulnerable people.
- **Secure the Northern Triangle Act of 2016:** Supported by our partner, Latin America Working Group (LAWG), we are encouraged by the protection approach taken by the act, introduced in June in the United States Senate. The bill proposes a response to address root causes driving the flow of refugees and migrants from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras and to improve protections for asylum seekers and refugees in the region and when they arrive in the United States.

A Post Election Faith Perspective

(Continued from p. 3)

Many have voluntarily and positively responded over the last decade to greater social and environmental responsibility in their policies, practices and operations and many shareholders have urged them to continue this approach. Eliminating child labor, improving safety in their operations, protecting the environment including air quality, water and addressing climate change have become priorities and integrated into their business models. There are no simple answers to the challenges and questions that lie ahead.

As the demands on a finite planet by a growing population continue to increase, the pressure on governments and all institutions do not remain static and the answers of yesterday rarely suffice given the numerous threads of complexity that present themselves. Learning from the 19th century rabbi who teaches that “It is forbidden for us to despair,” we are encouraged by the Holy Father to sit together at a table where all the stakeholders have a voice and work together to engage the issues and to search for solutions. *May it be so!*

Fr. Seamus Finn, OMI, Chief of Faith Consistent Investing – OIP Investment Trust & Consultant

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YouTube: www.youtube.com/OMIJPIC

Website: www.omiusajpic.org

JPIC blog: <http://missionary-oblates-jpic.blogspot.com/>



Missionary Ecumenism: Justice, Peace, Integrity of Creation and Lutherans

By: Fr. Harry Winter, OMI

The visit of Pope Francis to Sweden, Oct. 31-Nov. 1, to celebrate the 499th anniversary of Luther posting his theses, trumpets the importance of both JPIC and Missionary Ecumenism. Lutheran World Federation General Secretary put it this way: “I’m carried by the profound conviction that by working towards reconciliation between Lutherans and Catholics, we are working towards justice, peace and reconciliation in a world torn apart by conflict and violence.”



His Catholic partner, Cardinal Kurt Koch, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, added: “Lutherans and Catholics will have the possibility of an ecumenical commemoration of the Reformation, not simply in a pragmatic way, but in the deep sense of faith in the crucified and resurrected Christ” (Press release from both LWF and PCPCU, Jan. 25, 2016).

Experts such as Norman E. Thomas note “Today the LWF is the strongest in staff and program of the various world confessional bodies” (Missions and Unity, 2010, p. 122). Oblates of course work side by side with Lutherans in Germany, Scandinavia, and the USA, especially our mid-western states. But the Lutheran signers of the 2013 joint booklet *From Conflict to Communion* come also from Brazil, Japan and Tanzania.

I recommend highly this 93 pp. booklet, which may be read on the OMI USA website: Mission-Unity-Dialogue (www.harrywinter.org). The booklet was written to prepare for the Oct. 31- Nov. 1, 2016 celebration. Chapters one, five and six are especially readable and relevant.

Many thanks to Archbishop Roger Schwietz, OMI, who when he was Bishop of Duluth, MN, made available to me the covenant he signed between the Diocese and the Northeastern Minnesota Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. In it, the importance of JPIC and Missionary Ecumenism are clearly stated. “We commit ourselves to:

1. Confess to God and to each other our past and present prejudices against each other’s traditions, practices and beliefs, and allow God to forgive our sins against each other and God. (I John 1:8-10)
2. Acknowledge the importance of each other’s traditions, learn to appreciate the contributions of each confession to the mission and service work of the Church, and pray for the day when we celebrate the Eucharist as one community.
3. Pray for one another in our worship, both public and private, as a sign of our unity in Christ, as God’s Holy Spirit leads us to a more open understanding of one another.
4. Listen to the Holy Scriptures and together be instructed by them. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
5. Strengthen our witness to Christ in our struggle for peace and justice. (Micah 6:8) (Luke 4:18-21)

A growing number of dioceses in the USA have similar covenants, some including Episcopalians (Anglicans) and called LARC Covenants (Lutheran, Anglican and Roman Catholic).

May every Christian involved in JPIC celebrate the success of the meeting in Sweden. And may we sense the bonding between JPIC, Mission-Unity-Dialogue, and Spirituality.

Fr. Harry Winter, OMI, is coordinator of Ministry of Mission, Unity and Dialogue, Missionary Oblates US Province



Oblate Radio in Zambia Gives Voice to the Voiceless in the Western Province

By: Fr. Barnabas Simatende, OMI

Oblate Radio Liseli (105.3FM) in Zambia was established principally to evangelize the communities in the Western Province, as the Missionary Oblates have always found rural villages hard to reach due to seasonal floods, bad terrain, and poor and nonexistent road networks. In 2017 Oblate Radio Liseli will celebrate its 12th anniversary.

Today, Radio Liseli (local language word for 'light') is playing a vital role in the Western Province's development. The station's outreach is felt in nearby provinces too.

Mongu Diocese, headed by Oblate Bishop Evans Chinyemba, OMI, has nearly 20 full parishes and over 250 outstations with a limited number of pastors and pastoral associates to serve them. The large span of the area and a growing Catholic population prompted the need for outreach through radio.

In addition to religious programs, Radio Liseli also broadcasts programs that respond to local community concerns. In this regard, Radio Liseli continues to be the voice of the community, creating space for people to air their concerns and get them addressed.

Some of the community radio programs are:

- *Good Governance* – invites local leadership responsible in an area of a particular community concern to appear on the program to address these issues and explore solutions.
- *Community Connection* - this program organizes open-air public debates around community issues.
- *Talking Space* - this two-hour discussion program is studio based. Guests are invited to address a number of community concerns with local residents joining in through a phone line.

These and several other community programs engage local residents and serve as platforms for them to speak about issues affecting their lives.

For instance, Oblate Radio Liseli found out the local council was distributing plots of land currently being used as a community burial site. Zambian Law prohibits any

development on land used as a cemetery until after at least 50 years later. Radio Liseli took on this issue and ran several radio programs to bring attention to the matter. The local authority responded by directing the local court to issue an order for every structure erected on cemetery land to be demolished. The order was implemented and graveyard plots cleared. This can ultimately be credited to Oblate Radio Liseli's empowering people through its community programs.



Fr. Barnabas Simatende, OMI

Another example is the limited access to clean running water experienced by many communities of Mongu. Oblate Radio Liseli bought attention to this issue and challenged the local water authority (Western Water and Sewerage Company) to address it.

Western Water and Sewerage Company responded by drilling four boreholes in the affected areas. One of the boreholes drilled in the township of Imwiko is already up and running. The company continues to drill subsequent boreholes and hopes to have most of them operational by late 2016.

These are just few examples of how Oblate Radio Liseli has reached out, beyond spreading the Word of God to incorporating programs that transform the lives of local residents.

So whenever you visit the Western Province of Zambia, please tune in and enjoy community programs broadcast on Oblate Radio Liseli 105.3FM!

Fr. Barnabas Simatende, OMI, is Director-Oblate Radio Liseli

The Oblates have a vibrant missionary presence in Zambia. The Congregation is primarily engaged in pastoral care to local parishes, which are made up of many small local rural communities. In addition to running the community radio station, Oblates operate a development center in the Western Province of Zambia.

To support the work of Oblate Radio Liseli in Zambia visit Missionary Oblate Partnership's website - www.oblatepartnership.org

Oblates Meet in Rome For Thirty-Sixth General Chapter *By: Fr. William Antone, OMI*

The 36th General Chapter was adjourned on October 11, 2016, almost a month to the day of its opening. There were 84 capitulars and a good number of Oblates who served in a variety of ways. I am grateful for the experience and consider it a privilege and honor to have participated.

I would like to highlight the overall missionary thrust of the Chapter for the Congregation as we move into the future. Perhaps the place to begin is the Chapter theme: “Evangelizare pauperibus misit me. Pauperes evangelizantur—He has sent me to bring the Good News to the poor. The poor have received the Good News.” This theme, our motto since our founding 200 years ago, was chosen by the superior general after consultation, and it naturally led us into a Chapter focused primarily on “Mission.” Various recommendations were made and voted on to undertake a renewed and ongoing missionary discernment on all levels.

As an example of the missionary thrust, I can say that the Chapter led us to commit ourselves:

- to learn to recognize and respond to the “new faces of the poor” in today’s world;
- to focus more strongly on the mission with youth;
- to make sure that our life-long formation, both first and ongoing, is truly preparing us to be missionaries who are living our consecrated religious life in community;
- to use better the potential of social media as a tool for evangelization;
- to value more and deepen our experiences of interculturality;
- to improve our management of finances on all levels for the good of the mission.

Also significantly, among other emphases, the Chapter has underlined:

- a stronger role of the Central Government as regards a number of first formation matters and the possible restructuring of Units;
- enhancing the integral role of Oblate Brothers in the life of the Congregation;
- the greater integration of justice, peace and integrity of creation in all our ministries;
- increased animation for groups and persons who are associated with the Oblates;
- greater transparency and accountability in financial matters;

- enhancing our participation in dialogue with the Islam;
- the safeguarding of minors and vulnerable adults in every Unit;
- our identity as missionary disciples in apostolic community.

There were many other moments of discernment during the Chapter and most notably was the election of leadership. Both the superior general and vicar general, Louie Lougen and Paolo Archiati, received very solid support to continue for another term. Cornelius Ngoka was re-elected as assistant general and Ramon Bernabe, a Filipino Oblate, was surprised by a groundswell of support for his election as 2nd assistant general. Four new general councilors were elected (Alberto Huaman-Latin America, Guillaume Muthunda-Africa/Madagascar, Antoni Bochm-Europe, Peter Stoll-Asia/Oceania) and we are very grateful to Warren Brown for accepting a second term as general councilor for the Canada-U.S. Region.



Oblates attending 36th General Chapter in Rome, Italy

The death of Kennedy Katongo, only 36 years of age, was a shock on the first day of the Chapter. He died of a heart attack at the General House. Kennedy, a Zambian, was the director of the General Administration JPIC office. Our “plans” are not God’s plans. We pray now for Kennedy, a zealous young Oblate, that he may now live the fullness of life in God.

Finally, the truly wonderful meeting with Pope Francis for about a half hour on Friday, October 7, was a blessing of peace and encouragement. His deep inner convictions are writ large in his words and gestures. May this message I am writing to you also be a blessing of peace and encouragement for each and all.

Fraternally in Jesus and Mary Immaculate,

Bill Antone, omi

Bill Antone, OMI
Provincial

OMI LaCombe: Statement on Water and Treaty Rights Crafted at Fall Symposium

(Reprinted with permission from the *Prairie Messenger*)

By: Kiply Lukan Yaworski

A collective statement about water and treaty rights — in the context of Laudato Si's call to care for our common home and for each other — was crafted Oct. 22 during a day long symposium at the Cathedral of the Holy Family in Saskatoon.

Entitled "Our Common Home: as long as the rivers flow," the symposium was presented by OMI Lacombe Canada's Office of Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation (JPIC) at St. Paul's University in Ottawa, working in collaboration with the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon, the Archdiocese of Regina, the Office of the Treaty Commissioner, St. Thomas More College, Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools, and Queen's House of Retreat and Renewal.

The collective statement was crafted as a reference point and a model for engagement, dialogue and awareness that could be shared and promoted in various ways, said organizers. "The benefit is that we have diverse partners sharing a public statement in solidarity — and one that grew from the bottom up," noted Myron Rogal, co-ordinator of the Office of Justice and Peace in the Diocese of Saskatoon.

Gertrude Rompré and Chris Hrynkow of St. Thomas More College facilitated the small group process that happened throughout the day, culminating in the collective statement. The symposium was envisioned as "a place where we collectively have a voice and we can share and listen and come to action together," described Rompré.

"Water is a path of dialogue and action," added Hrynkow, describing how water was chosen as a nexus or junction point to bring people together to address reconciliation with indigenous peoples. "Water is something we need — it is part of us."

He stressed that the symposium statement comes out of this particular time and place, and he challenged participants to "incarnate" the experience by going forth from the gathering with concrete, personal pledges for action.

The various presentations explored Laudato Si' (Pope Francis' apostolic exhortation on caring for our common home), reflected on our relationship with water and rivers, emphasized the impact and importance of treaties to all Canadians, and acknowledged the Calls to Action by the national Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).

These themes also resonated throughout the final collective statement, which includes a list of 17 commitments to "individual and collective action."

Acknowledging that the gathering was being held on Treaty Six territory and the traditional homeland of the Métis, symposium participants opened their collective statement by expressing a "duty to care for our common home as long as the rivers flow."

The statement asserts: "We recognize treaties as a covenant to share and care for our common home. As Treaty peoples we are all bound together with each other, the land, and water. Yet, this covenant has been damaged by unjust laws and policies, such as the implementation of the Indian Residential Schools and the 'sixties scoop', which have negative inter-generational impacts. To contribute to healing such trauma, we affirm our responsibility to be Treaty people in the fullest sense."



Day-long symposium on Laudato Si, the environment and the relationship with Indigenous people was held Oct. 22

Echoing Laudato Si', the statement describes the call to "hear the cry of the Earth and the cry of those on the margins of our society," and goes on to describe water as "a commons" — a precious, life-giving gift that is meant for the common good of all

"By dialoguing and acting to care for our common home, we take up our responsibilities toward future generations. We undertake this urgent and exciting task so that all might reach their full potential. The social and ecological benefits of these approaches and actions provide an important opportunity for reconciliation," says the statement.

Highlights from the 4th Annual 3-Part Harmony Farm Fall Festival

By: Gail Taylor

What a beautiful day we had for the fall festival at the farm on October 29th! Thanks to all who came out to our festival this year, and especially to everyone who helped make the festival a success! Thanks as always to Tyler for sharing his exquisite photography skills with the farm. The farm tour was recorded by Eddie Becker.

As is our tradition, it was an all hands on deck effort to plant the 2017 garlic crop. This year we had many seasoned hands that joined Laura and Tef in planting all four beds (20 pounds of garlic!!!) and the team even managed to mulch the beds so that our crew didn't have to finish the job after the festival. Thank you 2017 garlic team!

What I love most about our garlic planting tradition at the farm is that it is a family friendly event. The fall festival is the time when CSA members, volunteers, and all farm friends can come with their entire families. It's a wonderful, fun moment that we love to share with you all.

If you missed a chance to put your donation in the jar or want to share this link with someone else who you know wants to support urban agriculture in DC, please don't be shy! As we head closer towards the 2017 season we need to raise \$5,000 to help cover our next phase of infrastructure build at the farm. (Visit <https://www.youcaring.com> and search for **Three Part Harmony Farm** to make a donation)

Besides the garlic planting, this year the big hits were: face painting, chalk art, flower crowns (thanks Omolara!), games including a gigantic twister board and a burlap sack race (Vida the master of fun times), of course the fire pit thanks to our very own Hendrik Voss, and amazing potluck food coordinated by Erica. DJ Big Groove and DJ S.O.L. kept the party, well, grooving! Everyone was enjoying the tunes while partaking in the food, fire, and fellowship of the farm. Ratasha fed our souls with her beautiful songs and - what a joy! - got us all singing along in three part harmony :)

A lasting impression was made by each and every one of you, especially by the person who used chalk to leave a love note "Infinite Blessings" on the asphalt. That was the first thing I saw on Monday morning, since it was dark when we cleaned up on Saturday.

Infinite Blessings indeed!

And last but not least, there is no greater form of flattery



for a farmer than to have her fellow farmers grace the place with their presence. Shout outs to the Black Dirt Farm co-owners Aleya and Blain along with Black Dirt Farm Collective members Joel and Randy, Little Red Bird Botanicals herbalist Holly Poole-Kavana, the organic garden at THEARC manager Violet King, and of course Gale Livingstone who, along with her mother farms the 19.5 acre Rainbow Hill farm in Charlestown, WV. Gale could be seen answering important technical questions during the farm tour, and also gave a hand during the garlic planting because... well what farmer can resist getting their hands in the soil?!

A Happy 2017 to everyone, and as always many thanks to the Community for supporting our farm.

Gail Taylor owns and operates Three Part Harmony Farm at the Missionary Oblates Residence in Washington, DC. She is a longtime resident of the District, has worked in the Latin America Solidarity community with affordable housing organizations, and is now working with the food sovereignty movement.



Human Trafficking Advocacy and Legislative Update

*Catholic Organizations Against Human Trafficking host
President of National Fisheries Institute*

The Coalition of Catholic Organizations Against Human Trafficking (CCOAH^T) brings together national and international Catholic agencies working to eliminate the global scourge of human trafficking.

A key goal of the Coalition is to dialogue with government officials and others engaged in public policy on this issue.

2016 Advocacy Efforts Against Slavery in the U.S. Seafood Supply Chain

Earlier this year during Lent, CCOAHT embarked on a national postcard campaign against human trafficking in the U.S. seafood supply chain. The campaign highlighted the growing demand among U.S. Catholics that their seafood be free of the taint of slave labor and encouraged members within the various networks to mail postcards to two large U.S. seafood retailers: Costco and the StarKist. The advocacy message urged these companies to do all in their power to ensure that their supply chains are free of forced labor. The Coalition scored a small victory when thousands of people responded with 15,000 postcards sent to both companies. This got the attention of the President of the National Fisheries Institute, John Connelly, and the Coalition scored a second victory when Mr. Connelly met with the group in November to learn about each other's work and dialogue on ways to tackle this problem. (See more details of this meeting on page 16)

CCOAH T continues to find ways to work collaboratively with the global seafood industry to identify and report incidences of human trafficking in their supply chain.

*Bipartisan Legislation - S. 3441 -Trafficking Survivors Relief
Act of 2016 Introduced*

A bipartisan bill seeking to provide post-conviction relief to victims of human trafficking was introduced in September by Congresswoman Ann Wagner (R-MO), Congresswoman Tulsi Gabbard (D-HI), and U.S. Senators Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) and Rob Portman (R-OH). The Trafficking Survivors Relief Act of 2016, (S. 3441), would clear criminal records of victims and apply only in the case of non-violent crimes committed as a direct result of their being trafficked.

“We have a moral obligation to protect survivors of trafficking who were arrested or convicted for offenses that they were forced to commit,” said Congresswoman Ann Wagner. “No victims of trafficking should be criminalized for the horrific exploitation they have endured. I am proud that with this legislation we are giving survivors a fresh start and an opportunity to recover from trauma, social stigma, and discrimination.”

A criminal history could stand in the way of survivors' ability to begin a new life. They may be denied loans or housing, unable to get a job, or attend school. The Trafficking Survivors Relief Act of 2016 would require victims to provide supporting documents to qualify for the program.

Human trafficking is a modern day form of slavery affecting millions in the United States and abroad. This crime involves the use of force, fraud, or coercion to exploit a person for labor or commercial sex, or the exploitation of a minor for commercial sex.

Read more about S. 3441 - Trafficking Survivors Relief Act of 2016 at: www.congress.gov



Resource

Caring for Creation: Inspiring Words from Pope Francis

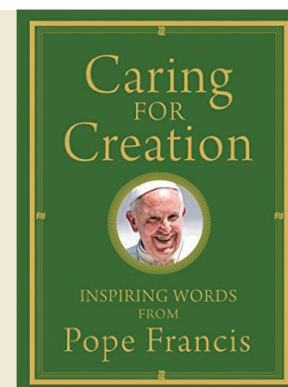
by Pope Francis (Author), Alicia von Stamwitz (Editor)

Hardcover: 192 pages

Publisher: Franciscan Media (August 19, 2016)

"In Caring for Creation: Inspiring Words from Pope Francis the writings, homilies, prayers, talks, and even tweets of Pope Francis are gathered to make a compilation of his most important and inspiring words about our shared responsibility to protect, nurture, and care for "our common home."

"This presentation of the inspiring words of Pope Francis on the gift of creation and our abiding responsibility to care for and cultivate our common home is a rich tapestry that weaves together threads from the multiple occasions when he has addressed this priority. By listening to creation, the Creator and one another, we are invited to contemplate and build on the interconnectedness that is the foundation of an integrated ecology." — Fr. Séamus Finn, OMI, Chief of Faith Consistent Investing, OIP Trust; Board Chair of the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility; OMI USP JPIC



Human Trafficking Advocacy and Legislative Update

(continued from p. 15)

A Discussion on Human Trafficking and Transparency in the Fishing Industry Supply Chain with John Connelly and Catholic Coalition members

On November 22, members of the Coalition of Catholic Organizations Against Human Trafficking (CCOAHT) physically met at the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops or phoned in from around the country for a long anticipated meeting with National Fisheries Institute president, John Connelly.

After CCOAHT launched a successful postcard campaign earlier last year that resulted in 15,000 postcards being sent to COSTCO and Starkist (The U.S.' two largest seafood retailers), a meeting was arranged for both the network and industry representative to meet and dialogue on ways they could work together to tackle this issue.

In the meeting the coalition emphasized its role as advocate for victims of supply chain labor violations and their support for companies working to address this problem. They also engaged Mr. Connelly on questions of company labeling/certification to help people make informed choices, monitoring/audits to reduce instances of forced labor, and support for legislation such as S.1968, the *"Business Supply Chain Transparency on Trafficking & Slavery Act of 2015,"* that will require companies to make available to regulatory agencies and the public their efforts to monitor and combat trafficking in their supply chains. Both parties welcomed the idea of a second future meeting.



John Connelly, President, National Fisheries Institute

Since 2003 John Connelly has been President of the National Fisheries Institute (NFI), America's leading trade association representing the fish and seafood commerce chain – from "water to table," which, in Mr. Connelly's words includes a "wide swath of interests." NFI also lobbies Congress and regulatory agencies, serves as the seafood community's spokesperson with the media, and provides technical advice to its members. Mr. Connelly serves on the Marine Stewardship Council and the International Seafood Sustainability Foundation, the global tuna industry's sustainability organization. He is also Treasurer of ALLFISH, a public-private partnership with The World Bank. Mr. Connelly is a graduate of College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, MA and George Mason University in Fairfax, VA.