



JPIC Focus News

The Newsletter of the Justice, Peace
and Integrity of Creation Network

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JPIC Network Members

Sisters:

Carolyn Giera
Geraldine Nowak
Joan Jurski
Josephine Dybza
Mary Peter Kaminski
Nancy Ann Surma
Patricia Simpson
Sharon Havelak

Associate:

Deborah Schwartz

Reflection:

*"To you who hear me,
I say: Love your
enemies, do good to
those who hate you;
bless those who curse
you; and pray for those
who maltreat you ...
When someone slaps
you on the cheek, turn
the other ...
Be compassionate,
as your God is
compassionate."*

Luke 6:27-29, 36-38

Soup Kitchen Ministry

*Sister Michaelinda, Volunteer at Our Lady of Lourdes Church
Soup Kitchen*

*"Behold I stand at the door and knock, if anyone hears my voice
and opens the door then I will enter his house and dine with him,
and he with me."* Revelations 3:20

This is the voice I heard in 1992, when I came back from New Mexico. Sister Marcelline and Sister Lucilla needed transportation to the soup kitchen at Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Toledo. While there I could see the need for volunteers to dish out soup or scrub the pots and pans. So scrubbing pots and pans was my project until I was in an accident which limited how long I could stand.

However, the Lord found another job where I met God's weary, but, contented people. It was in the food line, checking the code numbers to enable people to get a bag of groceries and enjoy a delicious meal. The relief on the faces as they enjoyed their meal and carried their food bags to their cars made the light of the Lord shine through their thoughtful and thankful faces. The young and the elderly, hard of hearing and seeing prompted one to say, *"Thank you, God, for all the gifts and graces you have provided."*

Together with the other volunteers we are guided by the Franciscan values and our Mission Statement which call us to respect all creation and embrace the poor and marginalized.



Sister Michaelinda (left) and Sister M. Digna Chirpich (right) wait for more food items to bag.

JPIC Interest Groups

At the last meeting of the Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Committee the topic of our Sisters involved in outreach ministries was discussed. We know that there are many Sisters who are doing charity and promoting justice at the grass-root level. Things happen quietly and unrecognized, whether working in prison ministry, soup kitchen volunteering, and other such activities.

The JPIC committee would like to hear from you – What are you doing? How did you get involved? What benefits do you see (for yourself, for those to whom you minister, for those with whom you minister)? We would like to publish these accounts in upcoming JPIC Focus Newsletters. This is a way to draw inspiration from one another, support each other in prayer and offer the opportunity for others to join you.

Please send your information to Sister Geraldine Nowak or Sister Sharon Havelak, or one of the JPIC members listed on the front page of this newsletter.

Franciscan Federation: Resolution on Trafficking of Human Beings

This past July, at the Franciscan Federation's Annual Conference in Milwaukee, the following resolution was passed:

Trafficking of Human Beings: Our Response as Franciscans Statement of Resolution: Be it resolved that we, as members of the Franciscan Federation, upholding the inherent dignity of each human person in the tradition of St. Francis and St. Clare of Assisi, denounce all forms of human trafficking as criminal acts that violate basic human

rights and exploit innocent people. We pledge to work for the elimination of human trafficking and its causes; to advocate for rescue, safety and justice for trafficked persons; and to demand prosecution of perpetrators.

The full text of the statement paper on the resolution can be found on Franciscan Federation Web page, www.franfed.org. Click on the Annual Conference tab and find the 2011 Resolution listed below. A PDF version is available on the site to print out. Note that our congregation signed onto the statement because of our 2008 Corporate Stance.

How Many Slaves Work for You?

How much 'forced labor' supports your lifestyle? Was your cell phone made in a sweatshop? Was that sweater you are wearing made by slaves?

Were child slaves forced to put that stitching in the Catholic School uniforms or the sports uniforms worn by the students in the school you support?

You are now able to find out by going to: www.slaveryfootprint.org. This new website measures the forced labor in everyday products. Created by the U.S. State Department and a



consumer watchdog group, it seeks to help consumers become more aware of their "slavery footprint." *"This is a new way to create awareness about the issue of modern slavery and empower consumers,"* said Ambassador Luis C deBaca, Director of the State Department's Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons.

The survey asks users 11 lifestyle questions which include:

- Where do you live?
- What's in your medicine cabinet?
- What's in your closet?
- What gadgets do you own?

When completed the website uses a formula based on where the raw materials in the products come from **where the finished products are made**, and then assigns a "slavery footprint" score.

Subsequent versions of the "slavery footprint" tools will allow consumers to enter specific brands. Check it out!

To maintain its quality supportive services for our community's vulnerable victims of domestic violence, Bethany House continues to need support from donors. The Annual Appeal will be underway in November through December, and plans for the annual Wait Night fundraising event in April are underway.



Bethany House provides safe shelter and a second chance for women and children who are victims of domestic violence.

Bethany House

In its new location, Bethany House has been able to serve more victims of domestic violence than in the past. In 2010, for example, 55 persons were sheltered for a total of 9,561 nights; 39 former residents were provided follow-up care; and 138 individuals were provided outreach services at local homeless shelters. Recently, Bethany has completed several capital projects aimed at improving services for program participants. Recent projects include completion of **access-related modifications** to a housing unit, establishment of a garden and upgrades to the playground area, and installation of a new security system.



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Issue: Death Penalty

In their "*Catholic Campaign to End the Use of the Death Penalty*, announced March 2006, the Bishops asked us to pray for the victims of crime and their families, those who have been wrongly convicted and those awaiting execution. The following prisoners are on death row, awaiting execution soon. Please keep them in prayer, as well as their families, their victims and the victims' families. Also, please continue to pray for healing in our country that the spirit of peace and reconciliation, rather than violence and revenge, may prevail.

December 2011

6 Gary Haugen, OR

January 2012

18 Charles Lorraine, OH
26 Rodrigo Hernandez, TX

February 2012

1 Donald Newbury, TX
22 Michael Webb, OH
29 George Rivas, TX

Executions in 2011: 39

Executions since the ban was lifted in 1976: 1273

Sources for information:

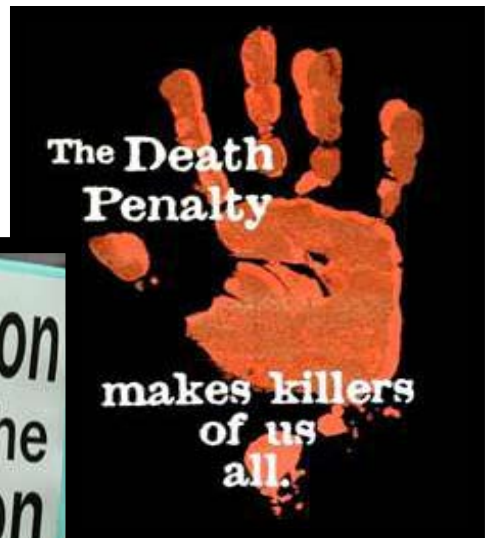
Death Penalty Information Center (www.deathpenaltyinfo.org)

Amnesty International USA (www.amnestyusa.org/deathpenalty)

Numbers are accurate as of November 13, 2011.



Execution
is *NOT* the
Solution



The Cost of War

Estimated cost of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan to date:

Iraq	\$803,045,379,853
Afghanistan	\$474,541,630,836
Total	\$1,277,587,010,690



Since fiscal year 2001, the money spent on the Iraq and Afghanistan

United States:

\$1.3 trillion or 646.0 million children receiving low-income healthcare for 1 year

Ohio:

\$44.2 billion or 8.0 million student Pell Grants of \$5550 for 1 year

Toledo OH

\$970.4 million or 174,855 student Pell Grants of \$5550 for 1 year

Michigan:

\$33.5 billion or 4.7 million Head Start openings for children for 1 year

Detroit:

\$2.1 billion or 298,416 Head Start openings for children for 1 year

Minnesota:

\$30.3 billion or 3.9 million military vets' VA medical care for 1 year

Minneapolis:

\$1.9 billion or 246,983 military vets' VA medical care for 1 year

Texas:

\$103.1 billion or 27.3 million people receiving low-income healthcare for 1 year

Bryan, TX:

\$257.5 million or 68,104 people receiving low-income healthcare for 1 year

US military deaths: 6317 (Iraq: 4483 / Afghanistan:1834)

Iraqi civilians killed: 103,5080 – 113,097

Sources for information:

The National Priorities Project (www.nationalpriorities.org/costofwar_home)

Iraq Coalition Causality Count (<http://icausalities.org/oif>)

Iraq Body Count (www.iraqbodycount.org).

Numbers are accurate as of November 13, 2011.



Haiti Happenings

Winter, 2011

Reflections on Haiti

Sister Vicky DellaValle, OSF

In August, 2010, our leadership invited us to consider the possibility of serving in Haiti. In response to that invitation, a group was formed, and I am one of the sisters blest to be part of it.

As a group, we decided that it would be best to partner with another group already well-established in Haiti. After months of researching various possibilities, we narrowed it down to two groups.

In April, during Easter vacation, I had the opportunity to spend ten days with one of these groups, The Sisters of Saint Francis of Sylvania, Ohio. The two sisters ministering there, Sister Fidelis Rubbo and Sister Josephine Dibza, could not have been more welcoming.

Although Haiti is not that far away, the trip took two full days, because the sisters live in a remote rural village in the mountains above Pestel, a coastal town in the southern peninsula. It is very poor, and as Fidelis wrote in her newsletter, *"the needs are many and have increased with the influx of earthquake survivors."*

The sisters live in a very little house, almost as poor as the houses of the villagers. The absence of electricity and indoor plumbing, the intense heat, and the annoyance of insects during the night, are quite a challenge.

However, the beauty of nature is incredible. When I opened the wooden shutters and looked outside, seeing nothing but greenery, huge mountains and the beautiful blue ocean, all I could say was "Wow"!!!

The people travel by foot, donkey, mule, horse, motorcycle, and at times, a lift from the parish priest. The roads are unpaved, very rocky, and very hilly. The parish church is in Pestel, but is surrounded by about a dozen remote villages, each with a simple little chapel, where the priest comes occasionally to preside at Mass, and where the people pray together. It takes two to three hours for the villagers to walk down to Pestel for Mass. We celebrated the Easter Vigil there. It was a four hour celebration in Creole!

The majority of the villagers are farmers or merchants. They can be seen each day cultivating



Aston Franciscan Sister Vicky DellaValle (left) and Sylvania Franciscan Sister Josephine Dybza (right).

their land, traveling on foot with a large basket of bread for sale, or sitting in the marketplace by the dock of the ocean, selling food, clothes, or whatever they have.

The sisters always told me that they had to go to the "phone booth" to call me. I came to realize that the "phone booth" meant carrying a little stool up a jungle path, to a particular spot where we could get cell phone access. Along the way we were greeted by cows, chickens and donkeys.

When Sister Fidelis first arrived in her village, she would spend most of her time doing pastoral work, visiting the people in their homes, and stopping to chat with them along the way. She and Sister Jo still do that. They seem to know all the villagers, as well as many of the people living in the shacks along the streets of Pestel.

However, as time went on, Sister Fidelis began her development group called *KPA* (Christians Progress Together). The main ministry of the sisters now is to help the Haitian people to develop leadership skills. I met five of the six Haitians who are the leaders of this group, along with the sisters. They are involved in developing many projects, one of which was to obtain a grant to build a clinic in their village. I visited there. It's run by dedicated Haitian people helping young mothers who are unable to feed their malnourished babies, teaching the villagers how to keep themselves safe from cholera-infested water, fixing broken limbs, and tending to whatever physical needs the people may have.

I met a young man who had a life-threatening heart condition. The sisters arranged for him to be brought to the states for an operation which saved his life. Sister Jo then stayed with him for months, until he had recuperated enough to return to Haiti.

They were also able to finance the education of a young man as an agricultural expert. This man is now back in Haiti, teaching these skills to the villagers, helping them to plant and tend their farms. Presently, the sisters are in the process of having a visitors' house built in order for groups, such as ourselves, to minister there for long or short term intervals.

Haiti is the poorest country in the western hemisphere, but in the short time I spent there, I came to realize that it is rich in natural beauty, and in the simple faith and goodness of its people.



Three Haitian boys with their rowboat. Some of the beauty of Haiti can be seen in the background.



Haitian workers prepare the foundation for the Guest House sponsored by Sylvania Franciscan Health.

“Hands for Haiti” Musical Benefit *Sister Joy Barker, OSF*

It started a long time ago when Sally Drennan attended St. Elizabeth's School. Her teacher was Sister Fidelis Rubbo. Fast forward to present day and situations find Sally married to Denver Mossing and living in Swanton, Ohio. Sister Fidelis has been in Haiti ministering among the people for 8 years. Sally has been writing musical pieces for various events in her family's life and so offered to do her second benefit evening for Sister Fidelis and the Mission of the Sisters of St. Francis in Haiti.



On October 15, 2011 in the Commons at the Franciscan Center, Sally performed her music sharing with the audience the occasion of each piece of music. Two instrumentalists joined Sally; Flutist, Carolyn Loebig, Assistant Band Director at Evergreen School and Rini Ng, presently at Timberstone Junior High School in Sylvania, accompanied her with cello.



Adding to the Haitian theme Ashley Pierre-Louis and her friends, Kerlyne and Kawine Clermont performed Haitian Folkloric Dances. Kerlyne and Kawine both attend Bowling Green State University studying in the area of Social Work. We are grateful to these young women for taking time out of their busy schedules to rehearse and energize attendees with their dancing talent.



Sister Ann Carmen and the Sylvania Franciscan Chorus provided a touch of our Franciscan Spirit to the event by closing the evening with the Franciscan Blessing.

Several local bakeries and stores donated sweets that added to the specialness of the evening.

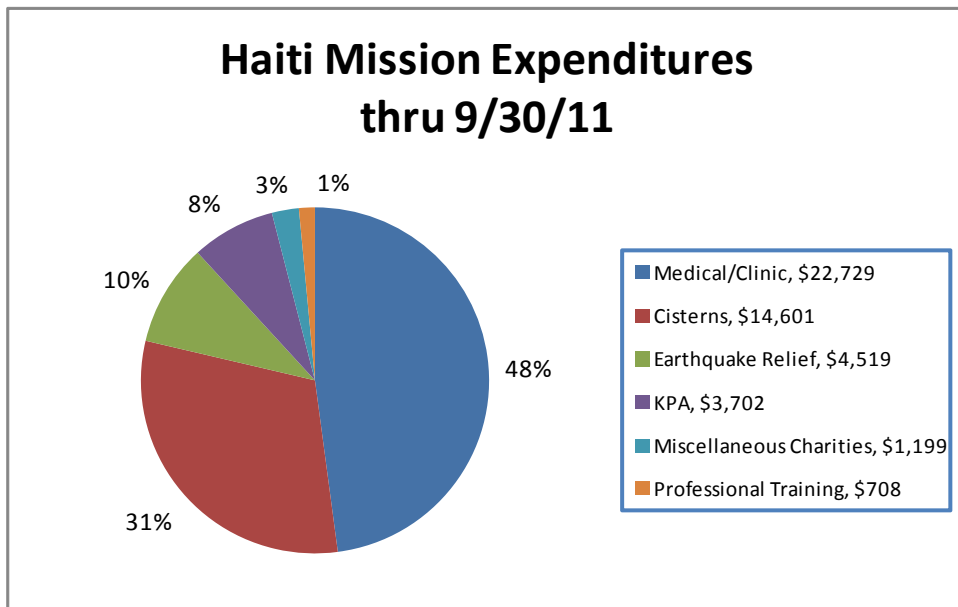
Doctor Edna Jean, a Podiatrist originally from Haiti and Ashley's mother, brought display items from Haiti. Sister Sharon Havelak displayed items made in Haiti, available for purchase at All Good Things store.

The concert generated \$2,789 in donations for our ministry in Haiti.

To all who contributed time, talent (and there was plenty), and sweets to delight all the participants, we are so grateful! Sally, thank you once more for your generosity in sharing the gift you have received with so many!

Haiti Mission Expenses - January through September 2011

Medical/Clinic	\$22,729	48%
Cisterns	\$14,601	31%
Earthquake Relief	\$4,519	10%
KPA (Kreyen Pwogre Ansanm)	\$3,702	8%
Miscellaneous Charities	\$1,199	3%
Professional Training,	\$708	1%



The “Guest House” Sponsored by Sylvania Franciscan Health



“The work is going very well. The truck driver is keeping us well-supplied so that the crew of 15 have been as busy as bees. The foundation and the cistern incorporated into it are far along to being finished. The side of the building toward the sea will be higher because of the sloping terrain, so people on the verandas will have an even better view of the sea dotted with islands.”

- Sister Fidelis Rubbo



The “Big Check”

Benjamin Frederick, M.D.

Recently, Jen and I were in Washington D.C. at an annual meeting for a group called The National Association of Theater Owners (NATO...not the North Atlantic Treaty Organization), representatives from Variety International (VI) had flown in from LA the day before. We were presented with a check for \$100,000 as a donation from NATO to Variety International’s Children’s Fund, with the funds designated to the work in Haiti!!!

The donation will be used to initiate the well-drilling effort throughout Pestel. Earlier this year after Dr. John Lane had visited the area, he came away with the recommendation that we should drill for wells in Pestel. We then approached a couple of well-drillers in Haiti, and in order for them to go out to Pestel we needed to be able to commit to a minimum of 10 wells, which could run from \$5,000 to \$10,000 per well. So we knew we would probably need something like \$100,000.

Through a series of ‘unrelated’ events, NATO contacted Variety International a couple of months ago because they wanted to make a generous donation. After learning about the Haiti Project they met with folks from VI in Los Angeles and announced that they wanted the donation of \$100,000 to go to the work in Pestel.

When Jen and I received the email about the donation, the amount was exactly the amount we had written up as needed to engage the well-drillers. And there was no doubt whatsoever that this funding was to be used for this purpose.

Our new organization, Thriving Villages International (TVI), is committed to continue

running on God’s timing and provision. That means you are not likely to see us doing typical fund-raising efforts. We have learned through these sorts of experiences, and so many others, that God desires TVI to proceed in a fashion different from most. It’s part of the challenge as we seek to be faithful and wait patiently, and it’s a part of the joy of receiving donations that come from the heart. People and organizations give as they are prompted and their timing has been incredible.

It is not always comfortable, but it is right. And when you receive these sorts of confirmations, it’s pretty awesome!

Keep in mind: we did not seek out NATO. In fact, I will admit that I had never heard of them. NATO did not know of our desire to well-drill for the exact amount.

Can you see how God works sometimes?



Dr. Ben Frderick (left) and Variety International representatives with the \$100,000 check.

On Presence and Courage

Benjamin Frederick, M.D.

When I first visited Pesteil I was struck by the great needs in the villages. I left the impoverished area faced with a choice of how I would respond to the needs that I saw before me. Were these people now somehow part of my responsibility? I also found, however, that I was immediately presented with an opportunity, one that could mean making a big difference for many very poor people.

The question was there: Would I respond to the needs that I saw, and if so, what might that mean? I decided at least in some small part to enter into their suffering and into their difficulties. In short, I decided that I was willing to be present with them. If we walk away from something that might be our responsibility we may also be walking away from an opportunity to use our individual gifts to make a difference, to make a positive change.

Let me explain: In Haiti some of the hardest times have occurred when I have had to stand by a person in great need and felt helpless. I could not help a 20-year-old girl who laid limp on her matt-bed. Having hemorrhaged for the prior two weeks since her miscarriage, she was going to die. She was a very pale young black woman, pale with a very thin, fast pulse. I felt incredibly helpless. For those brief moments I was present with her and her family.

As I left this situation I came away indignant. I have encountered many similar haunting or maddening experiences during my trips to Haiti. I am not content or satisfied with the existing answers of why things are the way they are. I am beginning to see these issues as opportunities to make a difference. I am motivated to help improve the situation.



Dr. Ben Frederick examines children in Pesteil, Haiti.

Now I must be honest: While I had compassion for these poor people in Pesteil, I lacked something. I lacked courage. This was not an easy decision for me. I am not a world-class traveler, I don't enjoy high adventures or sky-diving. I prefer to sit at home, read my books, be with my wife and kids, and drink tea.

There will be times when we will need an extra bit of courage to put our compassion into action. There will be times when you need more than compassion.

For me it meant choosing to fly to a remote part of Haiti and being willing to speak up for those who did not have a voice. I can tell you that it is not easy work, but it is incredibly gratifying work. Now, to my great surprise, I have found myself putting on my White Coat for a role that I did not expect: to seek an end to the suffering in Pesteil, Haiti because I am convinced that the solutions are out there.

(continued on back page)

On Presence and Courage, continued



Dr. Ben with Nelson in June, 2011

Several years ago my wife and I hosted some children from Haiti for heart surgery, performed at my medical center. We had no idea how that decision would change our lives. Since that point I have been traveling to a rural part of Haiti called Pestel, a very poor area on the same level of poverty as Sub-Saharan Africa. It is where Nelson lives, one of the boys we hosted for heart surgery. When Nelson arrived at our house in 2007 he was extremely thin and wasted.

I saw Nelson in June of this year and he has grown to be almost as tall as I am. His mitral valve had been destroyed by untreated streptococcal bacteria that likely began with pharyngitis. Nelson did not have access to penicillin, and this is such a sad example of where a few pennies would have prevented a great deal of suffering and resources. In these situations we do not lack the knowledge to solve or prevent these sorts of problems. Something more is needed.

In return, I have been overwhelmed by the responses of individuals and groups interested in

helping, organizations like Variety International, Heifer International, Water Missions International, Vitamin Angels, and most recently UNICEF. Together we are starting to make important differences for these folks. There is tremendous joy in receiving a million doses of free iron tablets for the Anemia Campaign now underway. There is joy in knowing that receiving a million doses of free iron tablets for the Anemia Campaign now underway. There is joy in knowing that the parents in Pestel are thrilled with the results of the de-worming campaign. One family counted 106 worms from one child. We're providing medical records to each child for the first time. We're collecting data on cell phones instead of on paper, which is an exciting step forward. We're reaching some of the farthest kids in the hardest to reach villages with medications.

All of this is part of my joy. The White Coat that is my gift has given me both an incredible and life-changing opportunity and the responsibility that goes with it.



Providing appropriate health care.