



Seeds of Justice

Sowers of Justice Newsletter

SEPTEMBER, 2003

WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR?

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What do you think? Are there enough Catholics engaged in the work of justice? The urgency of our times begs for greater numbers, for greater commitment and for greater leadership. As mature faithful Catholics, we know we should educate ourselves, reflect on our world and organize for public action. But this doesn't happen by itself. It takes critical parish leadership and the fostering of new public disciples to make a difference in the world in which we live.

It is understandable that the issues of our day have propelled us into organizing for policy action at the expense, perhaps, of greater leadership development. With state budget cuts, the foreign policy dilemmas of our nation, the competition between spending for human development and spending for national security, we often feel pressed to promote public policy participation at the cost of building a strong base. At the same time, we curse ourselves for not having a bigger base when these larger political issues become the major decisions of our day.

The staff of the Office for Social Justice spent the late spring and summer intensely evaluating and planning for the next two years. Given the input from the Sowers Delegate Assembly and the various parish consultations of the last year, we spent some time "denouncing." We beat our breasts a bit for not having more to show than we do. We agonized. We fretted. We argued. We even got help from a professional. And we worked to come to a consensus about the solutions.

Our conclusions centered around reflections on the following issues. Perhaps, we had been overly optimistic in the power of the educational enterprise when we expected such great things to take root in the parish after just a few people participated in a four part justice institute. Perhaps, in our efforts to be efficient, we failed to spend enough time with individual parishes and hoped that the larger group work would suffice. Perhaps we didn't have the right people in the room – we failed to have the best suited parish leader and/or OSJ staff leader. Perhaps we failed to take the long view—working intensely

***A small body
of determined spirits
fired by an unquenchable faith
in their mission can alter
the course of history.***

Gandhi

with ten parishes a year would yield 100 stronger parishes in ten years. But working with 100 individuals without a parish base usually results in less than 50 individuals continuing in the work of justice.

With these things in mind, it is now time to "announce" how we plan to grab the bull by the horns and do things differently. Highlighting the most important results, we decided that:

(Continued on page 2)

- ◆ The work of our office and the Sowers of Justice network will shift from being solely identified with the state legislature. We will work to assist parishes on a broader range of issues and actions for justice.
- ◆ In the next year, we will shift some of our resources toward greater education and leadership development.
- ◆ We will work intensely with a small group of parishes with committed teams ready to integrate the work of justice into the life of their parish and contribute to a larger Catholic voice on issues of justice.
- ◆ We will develop a five phase strategy for integrating the education and public policy that would take a parish through a process of identifying leaders, developing leaders, engaging the parish, developing a parish action plan, and celebrating the parish's recommitment and renewal.
- ◆ We are developing a few specific tools that parishes can use in order to recruit and engage parishioners and further the conversation about justice in the parish. Three specific activities are: *Reading the Signs of the Times*, a discussion series about some important questions of our time; *Consequences of our Political Choices: Tracking the Budget Cuts*, an opportunity to share the real story about the recent budget cuts; and promoting the *CCHD* collection that funds groups working to

improve their local situation or community. (See articles in this edition of SEEDs pages 5 and 6 that more fully describes these activities).

- ◆ We are targeting specific parishes for more intense leadership development and/or to be involved in the three activities mentioned in column one.

We are really excited about the future and about the future possibilities of working with parishes.

We hope that this shift in our work together will mean that more of us are more involved at a deeper level in working for justice and creating the infrastructure that will make the Sowers of Justice Network a powerhouse.

In the end, we all know that in some sense the world is waiting for us to get better at this work. As Paul says in his letter to the Romans, "*from the beginning till now the entire creation, as we know, has been groaning in one great act of giving birth....*"

We too are groaning. Our groans are not just about the pain of birth but about the liberation of birth. We must wait no longer to be the disciples that Jesus calls on us to be. Being involved in this creative struggle together will bring life to each of us, to our congregations and to our world.

Kathleen Tomlin
Director

**“Things don’t
have to be the
way you find them;
you can create
a new way
of doing things...**

Phil Murnion



“That so many people are poor in a nation as rich as ours is a social and moral scandal that we cannot ignore.”

Economic Justice for All (#16)

Tracking the Budget Cuts

This fall, Sowers of Justice will launch two new initiatives. The first initiative, *Consequences of our Political Choices: Tracking the Budget Cuts*, is an effort to track the effects of spending cuts made during the 2003 legislative session. We want to know how these changes will shape the daily lives of people who are poor and vulnerable. The second initiative is a five part conversation series, entitled *Reading the Signs of the Times*. In this series, participants will be invited to discuss how their opinions have been formed on some of today's pressing problems—and how these opinions relate to their Catholic faith.

Why Track the Cuts?

There are two reasons to track these cuts. First, the 2003 legislative session ushered in vast changes in the State's safety net programs. We now have six different health care programs, but up to 38,000 people who had coverage will lose it. Participants in the Minnesota Family Investment Program face new rules that make the struggle to leave poverty more daunting. Fewer families will receive child care assistance. In the midst of these changes, people of faith are compelled to ask: how is human dignity being protected here? Who's safe in our safety net? Will there be more people in poverty, and how will they fare?

Secondly, we want to address fundamental questions about the role of the Church and the role of government. For example, is it true that churches can fill the void left when government reduces social programs? Do Churches have the

human and financial resources to counter the ongoing sluggish economy? Many legislators believe Churches can, but is this based on fact or assumptions or hopes? This tracking effort will help us form answers based on evidence.

Why Should a Parish Host a Conversation Series?

Catholics spend far too little time talking about the important questions of our day and the values that help inform our opinions. We don't often consider the parish a place for public deliberation. Many of us would rather avoid important conversations because they might lead to conflict. But as Catholics, we should reflect on our faith and its relationship to such questions. This five part series is designed to have us meaningfully reflect on and discuss five questions:

- What experiences have been formative in developing my worldview?
- What does one generation owe the next?
- What responsibility do the haves have for the have nots?
- What is the role of the United States in a post-Cold War, post September 11 world?
- What limits should we place on individuals freedoms to protect and promote the common good?

OSJ is sponsoring facilitator trainings for each of these projects (see the Calendar on page 8). For more information, contact Matt Rezac at 651-291-4536.

Matt Gladue
Public Policy

*No one may claim
the name of Christian
and be comfortable
in the face of hunger,
homelessness,
insecurity, and
injustice found
in this country
and the world.*

*Economic Justice for All, #27
U.S. Catholic Bishops*

People and Parishes at Work

600 Risen Savior petitioners make a difference!

In April of 2002, over 600 people from **Risen Savior** participated in an advocacy campaign to ask our Congresspersons to urge the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) to release \$146 million in already-approved loans to the government of Haiti for health, education, clean water and secondary roads (including one that we use on part of the journey to our Sister Parish in Gris-Gris).

Last week, the IDB, which has been under increasing pressure from a variety of groups as well as some members of Congress, agreed to release the funds. Given that Haiti is the poorest and most dire country in the hemisphere, it is a scandal that the aid has been held up by the U.S. policies preventing the release of these funds that had already been approved by the IDB.

Michael Haas
Center for Missions

Meeting with Congressman Kline

60 people met with Representative John Kline in early August to discuss affordable housing and President Bush's plan to block grant section 8 vouchers. His plan would result in at least 184,000 fewer families receiving housing assistance next year.

Some of the members of this group were from **St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Paul Park, St. Joseph's, Red Wing and St. Thomas Beckett**, Eagan. Rep. Kline promised that he would send staff to monthly meetings addressing

the continuum of care regarding affordable housing and that he would continue to meet with advocates who are promoting an increase in the number of affordable housing units that are supported with federal dollars.

JustFaith Update

OSJ offers support and challenge to parishes that are choosing to be involved in the JustFaith process. JustFaith has been mentioned several times in SEEDS because it is a program that has wonderful potential to develop critical leadership in the parishes.

The innovation this year is our co-sponsorship with the community-organizing group of ISALAH. We are working together to bring the JustFaith program to parishes and other congregations within the boundaries of the archdiocese. As more people invest themselves in a process of learning and conversion, sources of energy and conviction are being tapped that lead to a new view of public discipleship.

Many parishes and congregations are involved this year, some for the first time, others for the second or third time. They are:

Basilica of St. Mary, Minneapolis
Cathedral, St. Paul
Divine Mercy, Faribault
Mary Queen of Peace, Rogers
Nativity of Mary, Bloomington
Our Lady of Peace, Minneapolis
Pax Christi, Eden Prairie
Peace United Methodist, North Oaks
Risen Savior, Burnsville

“Ordinary people can be extraordinary and have the capacity to make our country better.”

—Senator Paul Wellstone

Continued on page 5

Parishes at work (continued)

JustFaith Parishes...contd.

- St. Albert the Great, Minneapolis
- St. John the Baptist, New Brighton
- St. John Neumann, Eagan
- St. Joseph, Lino Lakes
- St. Joseph, Red Wing
- St. Joseph the Worker, Maple Grove
- St. Luke, St. Paul
- St. Mark, St. Paul
- St. Mary of the Lake, White Bear Lake
- St. Patrick, Edina
- St. Patrick, Inver Grove Heights
- St. Paul, Ham Lake
- St. Peter Claver, St. Paul
- St. Stephen Anoka
- St. Stephen, Minneapolis
- St. Thomas the Apostle, Minneapolis
- St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Paul Park
- St. Thomas Becket, Eagan

Sister Kerry O'Reilly,
Parish Organizing

Special thanks to the following Sowers parishes, whose 2002-2003 CCHD contribution ranked in the top 10 of all Archdiocesan parishes:

- Basilica of St. Mary, Minneapolis Cathedral, St. Paul
- St. Joseph, Lino Lakes
- St. Joseph, Red Wing
- St. Luke, St. Paul
- St. Mary of the Lake, Plymouth

Thanks as well to these Sowers parishes, whose 2002-2003 CCHD contribution increased by 50% or more over the previous year:

- Annunciation, Minneapolis
- Immaculate Conception, Columbia Heights
- St. Albert the Great, Minneapolis
- St. Edward, Bloomington
- St. Gregory, North Branch
- St. Luke, St. Paul
- St. Stephen, Minneapolis
- St. Therese, Deephaven
- St. William, Fridley

Let's keep this momentum going!

The 2003 CCHD Appeal and Collection Weekends are coming up on **November 15-16** and **November 22-23**, respectively. Experience suggests that a simple promotional strategy can have a big impact...and can help you foster a climate of social justice and action in your parish. Please contact Matt Rezac in the Office for Social Justice at 651-291-4536 for more information. Thank you!

Matt Rezac
CCHD

40th Anniversary of
Pope John XXIII's encyclical

PACEM IN TERRIS

The Office for Social Justice is co-sponsoring a fall forum marking the 40th anniversary of Pope John XXIII's *Pacem in Terris*.

This fall's forum marks the 40th anniversary of Pope John XXIII's landmark encyclical, *Pacem in Terris* with a two part reflection on the nature of war and peace.

On Thursday evening, October 2, New York times reporter Chris Hedges, author of *War is a Force That Gives Us Meaning*, will speak about humanity's love affair with war and the unforeseen consequences war unleashes around the world, particularly upon the victorious.

On Wednesday evening, October 15, Fr. Stephen Adrian will present Pope John XXIII's encyclical, *Pacem in Terris*, and its relevance in today's post 9/11 world. Fr. Adrian explains how today's War on Terrorism and global conflict gives urgency to our need for the vision of *Pacem in Terris*.

LOCATION FOR **BOTH** EVENTS:

St. Lawrence Church/Newman Ctr.
1203 5th Str. SE, Mpls.

7:00 p.m. (No admission fee)

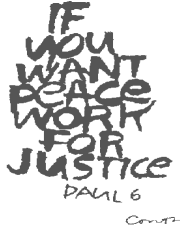
Time for discussion and refreshments will follow each evening's presentation. FMI call 651-331-7941 ext. 29

Catholic Campaign for Human Development

With its social justice mission, perhaps it should be no surprise that Sowers parishes were outstanding in their support of CCHD in 2002-2003. ***In fact, nearly 40% of the total CCHD collection in the Archdiocese came from Sowers parishes.*** This is a critical contribution and noteworthy accomplishment for the Network, and displays how our collective efforts far surpass anything we could expect to accomplish alone.

Want Results? Try CCHD

The Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD) provides grants to organizations of low-income people who work to address the systemic causes of poverty.



While familiar to many Sowers parishes (see “Parishes at Work”), OSJ staff looked at the program anew this summer. Our conversations boiled down to this: CCHD is a substantive program that’s easy-to-use and produces concrete results. How can we better use it to help integrate social justice into parish life? The responses were familiar themes of the summer: to develop skills, provide experiences, and meet the differing needs of parishes.

Testing the Waters:

If parish justice work is new to you, CCHD is an easy way to get started. Implementing a basic CCHD promotional plan connects you with the “movers and shakers” in your parish and displays your desire to contribute to parish life. You’ll also become familiar with the basics of parish administration, which is key to effective parish work. For example, who coordinates special collections? When is the bulletin deadline? Can I arrange a guest speaker before masses? Who else can I work with on this initiative? Promoting CCHD will help you learn the ropes of being an active parishioner.

Creating a Social Justice Climate:

If your parish is new to this work, CCHD can help foster a climate where social justice is an understood, expected part of parish life. CCHD provides ready made homilies, guest speakers,

and bulletin inserts that can help teach what social justice is and why it is important.

Best of all, the materials you’ll need are provided free of charge to every parish, every year. FMI contact **Matt Rezac** at **651-291-4536**

Exploring the Issues—Reaching Out:

CCHD-funded groups thrive when relating with the broader community – and so do parishes! This makes CCHD groups a great resource for educating parishioners about issues. The lived experiences they speak from are in-finitely more compelling than pages of data. At the same time, the CCHD groups benefit when parishes are informed and decide to get involved. The result can be a dynamic relationship.

Deepening Commitments and Involving Others:

If your parish is a long-time contributor to CCHD, how can you use it in new ways? Can CCHD train leaders in advanced skills, such as soliciting money, learning community organizing, or coordinating a “social justice week” around the collection? At the same time, can the tried-and-true CCHD tasks be used to invite new people into this work?

These are a just a few ideas for using CCHD to help integrate social justice into parish life. Do your own experimenting and let us know what worked for you—it not only builds your parish, but contributes to the anti-poverty mission of CCHD as well.

Matt Rezac, CCHD

Earth Charter Community Summit 2003 presents

EMERGING GLOBAL CIVIL SOCIETY: HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

Saturday: October 11— 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Sunday: October 12— 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Location: College of St. Catherine
2004 Randolph Avenue, St. Paul
Coeur de Catherine Learning Commons

Saturday Keynote: Kathryn Sikkink

Ms. Sikkink is an international expert in the area of “transnational social movements” and their ability to transform the world order; Professor of Political Science, University of Minnesota.

Sunday Plenary: Amal Yusuf

Amal Yusuf is President and CEO of the Somalian Women’s Association.

Panel Forums:

Saturday—

“Business Under Earth Charter Principles: How Can Business Support the Common Good?”

Sunday—

“Spiritual Values and the Earth Charter”

Breakthrough Sessions:

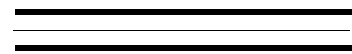
There’ll be workshops, action circles, artistic experiences and other small group sessions! Sessions (Earth Charter Activities) for youth (K-8) will also be offered.

Hosted by: The Center for Women
Economic Justice & Public Policy
The College of St. Catherine

FMI:

Web Site: www.earthcharter-minnesota.org
Email: info@earthcharter-minnesota.org
Phone: Nancy Dunlavy (651)-647-1631

Free and open to the public (donations accepted).
Cafeteria available at the summit site.



CCHD Appeal Weekend

November 15-16

CCHD Collection Weekend

November 22-23

News from

Headwater Fund

WALK for JUSTICE

Sunday, September 21, 2003

11:30 am — 3:30 pm

Boom Island Park, MN

The *Walk for Justice* is a community event for grassroots nonprofits working for social justice in the Twin Cities.

The *Walk for Justice* is your chance to raise money and visibility for groups and issues you care about most.

Last year, 800 walkers representing over 80 groups walked, raising over \$73,000.

FMI or to walk, sponsor, volunteer visit www.WalkForJustice.org or call 612-879-0602



Socially Responsible Investing Session

Sunday, September 28

1:00 p.m.

St. John Neumann, Eagan

Financial planner, Amie Burnett, will discuss socially responsible investing as a great way to put our money to “good” use by supporting organizations who share similar values and work to improve our world.

For more info or to RSVP call Kim at 651-905-1608.

People of Faith Peacemakers Breakfast Meetings

8:00 a.m. at St. Martins Table, 2001 Riverside, Mpls.

Wednesday, September 24 Part I: “North Korea: Present Realities and Future Fears”

Wednesday, October 8 Part II: “North Korea: Realities and Fears”

Roy Wolff, peace activist, and Steve Wunrow, photojournalist with the Korean Quarterly, traveled to North Korea with a group sent by the Korean Truth Commission, an international organization dedicated to working for peaceful reunification of the Koreans. FMI call (763)-784-5177.

National Observance of Children’s Sabbaths October 17-19, 2003

“Providing What God Requires and Children Need: Justice, Kindness, and Faith” — Interfaith Worship Manual

The National Observance of Children’s Sabbath is an intergenerational and interfaith event that united thousands of religious congregations across the nation in speaking out and acting faithfully on behalf of children and families.

The 2003 focus is the call to do justice for children, to serve them with compassion, and in all of our work for children to seek to do what God would have us do.

You will find ready-to-use material that is appropriate for your own tradition in this rich, interfaith worship manual. To order your free copy of the Children’s Sabbath Interfaith Manual call 612-870-3671.

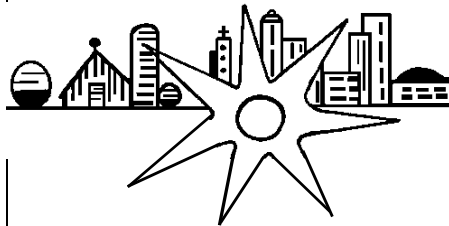
Franciscan Peacemaking and Nonviolence

Friday, October 10 to Sunday, October 12, 2003

St. Francis Center • 116 8th Avenue SE • Little Falls, MN

Participants will experience Franciscan Spirituality in the practice of transformative nonviolence.

During the weekend participants will be guided in a Franciscan journey of confronting personal and societal violence and exploring creative nonviolent alternatives. FMI or a brochure call 1-320-632-0668 or e-mail: franciscanlife@fslf.org (web site: www.fslf.org)



RESOURCES OF INTEREST

The Global Banquet: Politics of Food

Produced by Maryknoll Films, 2000

This video focuses on the exploitation of the environment and small farmers in the U.S. and developing countries. Part I (25 min.) tells the story of giant international food producers and shareholders; Part II (25 min.) addresses all the issues that surround food production from cheap labor to animal cruelty to genetically modified crops. This is a good overview of what is wrong with our global food picture. FMI call Marge Blenkush, Media Center-Hayden Center Bldg. at 651-291-4521.

Slow Food: Sustainable Agriculture and Responsible Eating

(Funded by S.A.R.E. and USDA)

This 30 minute video is made from conversations held with farmers about quality of life issues. The farmers are from Michigan, Minnesota, North Dakota and Wisconsin. FMI call SARE at 1-402-472-7081; email: ncrsare@unl.edu; web site: www.sare.org/ncrsare.

Minnesota Grown Directory 2003 — Free Resource

Be surprised by the number of farms close to you who have fresh produce & meats for sale. Find out when certain vegetables are at their peak, have a family outing at a farm or pick your own vegetables. All this is available in the free resource at your local Farmers’ Market, at the Center for Earth Spirituality and Rural Ministry (CESRM) in Mankato (1-507-389-4272), or online at www.minnesotagrown.com where you can find interactive maps, hot links to farms, and more.



Sowers of Justice
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*Sow for yourselves justice,
reap the fruit of faithful love;*

*Break up for yourselves
a new field, for it is
time to seek the Lord,
until the Lord comes
and rains down justice
upon you.*

Hosea, 10:12

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Events — 2003

September 16 & 30: Beyond JustFaith

JF Graduates are encouraged to attend a two evening program offering additional educational sessions on CST and practical skills/vehicles for effective action.

Hayden Ctr. Bldg.—Smith Hall
6:30 p.m.—8:30 p.m.

September 18: Sowers Delegate Assembly

Hayden Ctr. Bldg.—Smith Hall
6:00 p.m.—9 p.m.

October 2 & 15: Newman/Mission Forum

40th Anniversary of
Pope John Paul XXIII's encyclical,
Pacem in Terris

Location: St. Lawrence Church/Newman Ctr.
1203 5th Street, Minneapolis

Time: 7:00 p.m.

*This event is free and open to the public.
FMI call 612-331-7941 ext. 29*

October 2: Immigration Forum

CANCELLED (To be rescheduled.)

October 9:

Signs of the Times

October 20:

Tracking the Budget Cuts

For a full description see page 3 in this issue of *SEEDS*. Both meetings at Hayden Ctr. Bldg.—Smith Hall
7:00 p.m.—9:00 p.m.

October 21:

Tracking the Budget Cuts

*Pastoral Staff Training at
Corpus Christi, Roseville*

10:00 a.m. to NOON

In this meeting *pastoral staff* will learn more about how to track the effects of the spending cuts made during the 2003 legislative session.

October 30:

Sowers Membership Dinner

CANCELLED

November 11:

Rights in the Workplace

Hayden Ctr. Bldg.—Smith Hall
7:00 p.m.—9 p.m.

November 15-16:

CCHD Appeal Weekend

November 22-23:

CCHD Collection Weekend