

“Be a Prophetic Witness to a World in Need of Healing”

Sisters from the four continents on which we minister gathered at Mother of Good Counsel Provincial House in Chicago on September 6–9, 2007 to discuss the establishment and structure of a Congregational Central Office for Justice and Peace. In her opening address to the sisters, Sister Mary Barbara Ann Bosch, minister general, thanked the sisters for responding to the directive of the 22nd General Chapter that unanimously mandated that a Congregational Central Office for Justice and Peace be established in our Congregation. Sister Barbara Ann noted that this office is being set up with the hope that it “would be the foundation of a vital element of our Vision Statement and that is: Be a prophetic witness to a world in need of healing.” Sister Barbara Ann outlined for whom the office is established: first, for “those whose lives are harmed by the sinful lack of justice and peace in our world,” and second, for “your sisters, who are called by virtue of our commitment, to actively affect Gospel value changes in our world.”



Front Row: Sister Mary Jeanine Heath (CH); Siostra Maria Inga Borko, general councilor (RO); Sister Mary Sophia Gaconi Muturi (KE); Siostra Maria Izajaszka Rojek (PR). Back Row: Sister Maryann Agnes Mueller (LO); Sister MaryAnne Olekszyk (CA); Sister Mary Jacqueline Keefe (CA); Sister Kathryn Marie Augustyniak (BU); Sister Nancy Marie Jamroz (LI); Siostra Maria Wiktima Hebda (KR); Siostra Maria Agnieszka Mruga (RO), translator.

The sisters developed a Plan of Action centering around three main issues: Women and Children, Human Dignity and the Care of the Environment. The tasks were delineated for the three levels: the Justice and Peace Office, the General Administration, the Provincial level, with each province organizing or re-establishing a Provincial Justice and Peace Committee.

Four sisters, each representing a continent where our Felician Sisters minister will undertake the global issues of justice and peace: Siostra Maria Wiktima Hebda (KR) will represent Europe, Irma Maria Leona Kutsko (BR) will represent South America and Sister Mary Sophia Gaconi Muturi (KE) will represent Africa. Sister Mary Jeanine Heath (CH), representing North America, will serve as the coordinator of the Congregational Central Office for Justice and Peace for the first year. Other members of the Office with their areas of responsibility include: Sister Kathryn Marie Augustyniak (BU) along with Sister Mary Jeanine Heath will undertake issues regarding women and children, Sister Nancy Marie Jamroz (LI) and Sister Maryann Agnes Mueller (LO) will deal with issues affecting human dignity and Sister Mary Jacqueline Keefe (CA) and Sister MaryAnne Olekszyk (CA) will be concerned with environmental issues.

The sisters agreed on the value of cooperating with other Franciscan organizations, for example Franciscans International, which address issues on a global level. In addition, the recently organized Franciscan Action Network roused the interest of Felician Sisters from the United States.

The sisters thought it important to address the immediate issues of the war in Iraq and human trafficking. A letter was sent on behalf of the Congregation addressed to George Bush, president of the United States, in October 2007 requesting an immediate withdrawal of troops and a compassionate response to the Iraqi refugees. In addition, a letter expressing the concern of the Congregation regarding human trafficking was sent to the United Nations representatives from the twelve countries in which our sisters currently serve: Brazil, Canada, England, Estonia, France, Italy, Kenya, Mexico, Poland, Ukraine, United States, and Russia.

A meeting of the Congregational Central Office for Justice and Peace and the Provincial Justice and Peace Coordinators was held in Lodi from January 17-20, 2008. The hope of our Congregational Central Office for Justice & Peace is that we carry on the legacy of both Saint Francis and Blessed Mary Angela to be instrumental in awakening our world to the plight of the downtrodden and the marginalized.

CNBB–National Conference of Bishops of Brazil Brazilian Justice and Peace Commission

The Catholic Church of Brazil is noted for its strong stand in defense of human rights and for its struggle in behalf of ethics and justice in society. This stand is due to the desire to concretely act upon the Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes*. It is the spirit of this document of the Vatican Council II that impregnates the Commission for Service of Charity, Justice and Peace.

The Brazilian Justice and Peace Commission is just one among many commissions (45 diocesan commissions) dedicated to Service of Charity, Justice and Peace. This Commission was generated in Brazil as an extension of the Commission created in Rome after the Vatican Council, which in January 1967, created the Pontifical Justice and Peace Commission to study the great problems of social justice within the developing of young nations and especially, the situation of hunger and peace in the world.

In 1971, the members of the Commission were being strongly solicited to protect those who were suffering from political persecution. Widely known, are the courageous attitudes of the members of the regional Commission in São Paulo, especially those of Dom Paulo Evaristo Arns, archbishop of that city, in the struggle against torture and the killing of political prisoners. Those attitudes generated

more than 250 Centers of the Defense of Human Rights throughout all of Brazil—within dioceses and other religious entities of the civil society.

One of the activities of the Commission is the “Fraternity Campaign” which focuses on a special theme each year, based upon the outstanding problem existing at that time, such as: Hunger, Political Corruption, Violence, Unemployment, etc. This campaign is an annual event that extends all throughout Lent. Booklets are published for use in parishes, to bring to the people the knowledge of the actual existing situation in Brazil. The Commission encourages the participation of the people in the preparation of the campaign, soliciting musicians to compose songs relative to the theme for Eucharistic Celebrations. In addition, artists are asked to contribute by creating posters that will be used throughout the parishes. In both cases, the best presentation is accepted and used throughout the period. In this way, all the people of the Church in Brazil become aware of the situation and live in the atmosphere suggested by the Commission all through Lent. This theme is developed in Bible Study Groups and after group reflection, members are asked to perform some activity related to the theme during the week. The theme is also carried over to the performance of the *Way of the Cross*.

(Reference: *Document II, History and Actual activities of the Brazilian Justice and Peace Commission*)

– IM Leona Kutsko (BR)

Look at the World through the Eyes of the Poor

Religious communities have always been sensitive to the needs of the poor. Poverty in its most diverse aspects, whether material or spiritual—deprivation, homelessness, rejection, loneliness or discrimination—has frequently been an area of concern and action for religious communities of women and men throughout the ages. Following the model of the poor Christ has had radical evangelical consequences for the life of religious persons. Religious have never renounced their original ideal: to be poor following the example of the poor Christ, and to extend themselves to those most loved by God—the poor of the world.

Today's world is full of paradoxes. On one hand, human beings have achieved outstanding advancements in technology, manufacturing, science, medicine and other fields. Today there is much communication of ideas about undeniable humanistic values, such as equality, individual freedom and socio-economic prosperity for all. Some contemporary people can embrace the whole world and have an impact on reality in a meaningful way, demonstrating an authentic love that brings together and unites all people.

On the other hand, despite these great possibilities in today's world, almost two thirds of the world population is starving or undernourished. Illiteracy, unemployment and homelessness are rampant. The freedom of millions of people has been curtailed, and there are systems of domination in place that impose economic and political dependence on vast populations.

Today, we women religious can contribute to a more just world.



However, we do not often want to do so. If we religious, through our negligence or indifference, comfort or lack of courage, give in to the situation of injustice or silently acknowledge it, we take responsibility for it. Such an attitude runs contrary to the faith we profess; faith in God who is the Father of all and sees goodness in all, who seeks to give to all through Christ awareness that we are all sisters and brothers of one another.

Presently, homelessness and poverty have become social phenomena on a worldwide scale and, as such, have become objects of attention for many scientific disciplines including economics, philosophy, psychology, sociology, political science, and pedagogy. The problems of homelessness and poverty require numerous systemic solutions. Only such an approach can provide opportunities for solutions and can help the homeless find a permanent roof over their heads.

Poland does not offer an instant solution to homelessness; neither

do other countries. In Poland the homeless are looked after by approximately a hundred institutions, including Monar (a non-governmental organization that helps people in difficult circumstances who may be socially excluded), St. Brother Albert's Aid Society, Caritas Polska, Polish Red Cross, Polish Social Help Committee, as well as many smaller groups such as the Helping Hand Foundation, or the People for People Foundation (which helps women and children who are victims of family violence). Several religious congregations also aid the homeless.

There exist various categories of homeless people and a multitude of causes leading to such situations. The causes most often mentioned are: breakdown of the family, eviction, return from prison without accommodation, family violence, the closing of workers' hostels, leaving children's homes (orphanages) or mental hospitals without a particular place of return, as well as social intolerance of drug addicts and HIV virus carriers. Another group of homeless people are comprised of recent immigrants: refugees and temporary residents from another country.

The phenomenon of homelessness is and will continue to be an element of social life. This fact must be taken into account in the social policies of the nation. Most social assistance is organized by municipalities, which provide well-organized and competent basic assistance in situations of poverty and homelessness. A network of institutions has been appointed to carry this out. They provide assistance, care, and give an opportunity to the homeless to change their life situation. As a result, the homeless are granted



a return to social life. Because of the diversity of the homeless due to education, cause of poverty, and the attitude of the homeless to their own situation, one solution does not fit all situations.

In view of the above-mentioned circumstances, it is essential to form a network of institutions of public assistance, whose aim is to provide emergency relief, such as night shelters, soup kitchens, medical dispensaries and first aid posts, and temporary or permanent residence shelters. All the homeless, irrespective of the category of their

homelessness, can fulfill their daily life needs in these places. The above-mentioned institutions provide assistance by serving meals (e.g. soup kitchens run by Felician Sisters), distributing clothing and personal hygiene products and medicine. They also grant counseling, as the homeless person should be given a chance to take appropriate steps to change his/her life situation.

In conclusion, I would like to stress again that the phenomenon of homelessness in Poland has taken on large-scale proportions. Limiting and reducing its effects is the obligation of not only specialized institutions but of all people of good will. It is about taking on a new perspective or a new point of view in reading and interpreting reality. For religious persons, this change means a real effort to look upon society by paying special attention to the poor and homeless, to their needs and problems. Truly this means by looking at the world through the eyes of the poor.

– SM Wiktima Hebda (KR)

What is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

In the years immediately following World War II, when the atrocities committed during the war became apparent, there was a consensus among representatives of the world community at the United Nations that it was essential to write a document that specified the rights of individuals. In 1948, the 58 member states of the United Nations represented a variety of ideologies, political systems, religious and cultural backgrounds as well as wide ranges of economic development. A committee comprised of people from different regions of the world and chaired by Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, widow of the former president of the United States, endeavored to guarantee that the document would reflect different cultural traditions and incorporate common values inherent in the world's principal legal systems as well as its various religious traditions. The committee concurred on the fundamental importance of affirming universal respect for human rights and basic freedoms, including the principles of nondiscrimination, civil and political rights as well as social, cultural, and economic rights.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which consists of 30 articles, was first presented to the general assembly in January 1947, but the document was not immediately accepted. Several Islamic states disapproved of the articles pertaining to equal marriage rights and the right to change religious beliefs. Additionally, some western countries objected to the inclusion of statements ensuring economic, social and cultural rights for all people. The assembly debated these issues and voted on practically every word and clause of the document, voting a total of 1,400 times!!! Finally, on December 10, 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was unanimously adopted with

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— human rights are universal, not because of any state or international organization,
but because they belong to all of humanity.*

– Universal Declaration of Human Rights

eight abstentions. Since then, December 10 has been celebrated every year as Human Rights Day. This year the sixtieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights will be celebrated on December 8.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights delineates the range of human rights in the 30 articles. The first two articles specify the fundamental basis of human rights: that human beings are equal because of their shared essence of human dignity and that human rights are universal, not because of any state or international organization, but because they belong to all of humanity.

The remaining twenty-eight articles are divided into three sections:

- ◆ Section 1, Articles 3 to 21 identifies civil and political rights to which everyone is entitled. The right to life, liberty and personal security established in Article 3 sets the foundation for all the subsequent political rights and civil liberties, including freedom from slavery, torture, and arbitrary arrest as well as the rights to a fair trial, free speech, free movement, and privacy.
- ◆ Section 2, Articles 22–27 delineates the economic, social and cultural rights to which all human beings are entitled. The cornerstone of these rights expressed in Article 22 acknowledges that every person is entitled to the realization of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his or her dignity and the means by which he/she may achieve his/her full potential as a human being.
- ◆ Section 3, Articles 28–30 provides a larger protective framework in which all human rights are to be universally enjoyed. Article 28 recognizes the right to a social and international order that enables the realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Article 29 acknowledges that along with rights, human beings also have obligations to the community that



Eleanor Roosevelt holds the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. Photo © United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

also allows them to develop their individual potential freely and fully. Article 30 protects the interpretation of the articles of the declaration from any outside interference contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

In 1956, the United Nations requested progress reports on human rights every three years from member nations. *The Guinness Book of Records* describes the United Declaration of Human Rights as the “most translated document” in the world. In fact, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is translated into nearly 250 national and local languages and is the best-known and most cited human rights document in the world. It has served as a model for numerous international treaties and declarations and has been incorporated in the constitutions and laws of many countries.

– S Maryann Agnes Mueller (LO)

For a complete copy of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* click on the link provided below or go to:

<http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html>

Water, water everywhere and not a drop to drink



“Praised be to You my Lord, through Sister
Water, which is very useful and humble
and precious and pure.”

(Adaptation of the *Canticle of Praise*, St. Francis of Assisi)

During the North American Journey in Hope Convocation in Livonia, Michigan in November 2007, SM Cabrini Procopio, general councilor, shared with us how a lake near Centralia, Illinois had been completely dry this past summer. Sisters currently living in that area said that the situation has not changed. Until recently, Muriel Lake near Bonnyville, Alberta, Canada, had a lovely beach and cabins. The beach is now overgrown with weeds and the lakefront is about a half mile away. The water from the lake was used to fill in underground cavities where oil was extracted.

These are only two visible signs of changes to our environment, specifically our water supply, caused by human activity throughout the world. Some areas of the world are experiencing extreme drought while others experience flooding on a yearly basis. Moreover, the water that is available has become so contaminated that the natural cleansing systems of the earth can no longer purify it. Some toxins currently in our water supply will never be broken down. Furthermore, pollutants do not remain localized. A few molecules of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), which were used for cooling and insulation until

banned in the 1970's, released in the state of Texas in the United States traveled through various waterways and ended up in the seals and polar bears, as well as in the breast milk of the Inuit people in the island of Broughton in northern Canada. There is no safe, uncontaminated area on our earth.

Saving beaches in North America and Canada pales in importance when, according to the Franciscans International Statement on Water as a Human Right, “more than a billion people lack the most basic water supply and 10,000 people die each day due to diseases caused by a lack of clean water and sanitation.” Nearly two-thirds of the world's population will face a serious water shortage by 2025. Moreover, the death of plant life, mammals, amphibians, insects, birds and fish is immeasurable.

From space, our earth appears blue with bits of green. Seventy-four percent of the Earth's surface is water and 97% of this is ocean. Of the remaining three percent that is fresh water, 90% is bound up in glaciers and underground ice sheets. That leaves 0.0001% of the fresh water available for the use of all life forms. The waters of the earth are a closed system; no more fresh water can be added to the cycle. Water exists in an ever-moving cycle—delicately balanced—where the sun causes water to rise as vapor from the oceans, cool and fall back on the earth and then returns to the oceans. Water purifies, cleanses and brings nutrients to all living things.

An additional danger in this age of globalization is that those who have financial power will treat water as a commodity to be bought and sold and only those who have money will have access to it. People in Centralia and Bonnyville can live without beaches, but the poor of the world cannot live without access to clean water.

What can we do as women religious?

- ◆ **Become aware of your environmental footprint.** Use only what you need (Reduce. Reuse. Recycle). Become aware of ways to use less and to replace household cleaning products that contain harmful chemicals

with more environmentally friendly products. Can you use less water while bathing, brushing your teeth, washing clothes? Visit www.wateruseitwisely.com for information on saving water and take one specific action to conserve water.

- ◆ **Become aware of what is happening in your backyard: convent, school, community, country, etc.** Take a stand when possible to support more environmentally friendly practices.
- ◆ **Resist the corporate agenda to view water as a commodity.** Support efforts to stop the sale of public waters to “for profit” corporations. Insist on making access to water a human right. You can find more information on the issue at: www.blueplanetproject.net.
- ◆ **Make your convent, your school or other place of ministry a “Bole Free Zone”.** There are situations where bottled water is appropriate and even necessary. Most bottled water is less regulated than the public water systems. Also, some bottled water is taken directly from the publicly funded treated water and then sold to the public. Once the young are hooked on a brand name, the company hopes to have life long loyalty. Furthermore, if the sale of water is imprinted in their psyche, people will not object to the privatization of water.
- ◆ **Support alternate energy investments.** It takes 5 barrels of water to produce one barrel of oil. This water is then returned into the water table with many contaminants. A pipeline through the ecologically fragile permafrost in Eastern Canada which was defeated in the 1970’s with the support of the Canadian Catholic Church, was recently brought to vote surreptitiously and approved. The delicate ecosystem may never recover and some species that are disturbed by the building of the pipeline may become extinct.

The United Nations has designated March 22 each year as World Day for Water when nations focus public attention on the critical water issues of our time. In 2005, World Day for Water marked the start of the second UN International Decade for Action for Water (2005-2015.) The theme for World Day for Water in 2008 is “Sanitation.” Throughout the years, member nations and participating agencies concerned with water issues, as well as Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO’s) have highlighted issues such as the role of gender in access to safe water.

According to the World Health Organization, the minimum amount of water needed to meet a person’s daily needs is five gallons a day. Water is even more necessary than food for survival of all life.

The time to act is NOW!!

– S. MaryAnne Olekszyk (CA)
SM Jacqueline Keefe (CA)



May there only be peaceful and cheerful Earth Days . . .

On April 22 of each year the international community celebrates Earth Day, a day dedicated to educate people about the environment and to call attention to local and global environmental problems. Many activities are planned worldwide on this day to improve the environment, such as planting trees, cleaning streams and organizing recycling drives. In 1971, then United Nations Secretary General, U Thant, signed a proclamation declaring the international observance of Earth Day. He stated, “May there only be peaceful and cheerful Earth Days to come for our beautiful Spaceship Earth as it continues to spin and circle in frigid space with its warm and fragile cargo of animate life.” As followers of St. Francis we can resonate with these words and imagine that if St. Francis were alive today, he would certainly celebrate Earth Day through prayer and action.



“A crime against humanity!”

This is how the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime describes this contemporary outrage.

Human trafficking is the action of recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring, or receipt of persons by means of threat, use of force, coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power or vulnerability, or payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person for the purposes of exploitation. There are many forms of exploitation: for adults—forced labor, prostitution, slavery, and for children—international adoption, child soldiers, begging and sexual exploitation.

Statistics on trafficking are inaccurate and estimates vary, but according to the Secretary of State of the European Union, Jorge Lacao, between 800,000 and 1.2 million people across the world are victims of trafficking. Eighty percent are women and over half are children. Human trafficking is the world’s fastest growing illegal activity, second only to drug trafficking. According to Ann Veneman, executive director of UNICEF (United Nations Children Fund), millions of children trafficked every year are sold like commodities.

Pimps and traffickers take advantage of women who cannot find work in their own countries and because of hunger and debt they are often drawn into the sex trade. Frequently many of these women are poorly educated and in order to reach the country of their choice, they contact recruiters in their home countries and run up such a large debt that they can only repay it by submitting themselves to this modern-day slavery for months or even years.

Traffickers give money and passports to the victims who believe they will work as nannies or dancers. When they reach their destination, the women’s passports are taken away and they are held as slaves.

Human trafficking occurs in southeastern Europe, former Soviet Union countries, Latin America, the Caribbean and main destinations are the United States, Western Europe, Israel, Japan, Thailand and Turkey. According to the United Nations, Brazilians are the major victims of international human trafficking. The government has recently joined an international effort to put a stop to trafficking by passing new laws and launching a media campaign. According to the United States Department of Health and Human Services, around 16,000 trafficked persons are brought to the United States each year.

A case study presented by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime relates Sonia's story. Sonia began working as a prostitute in a Latin American country when she was evicted from home at the age of 14. Although she tried to get other jobs, this proved difficult and she always returned to prostitution. When she was 17, a taxi driver invited her to go to Europe. With her looks, he said, she could probably work as a model and make a fortune. He would take care of all the arrangements. Sonia was very tempted but still afraid. After a while, she accepted the offer. It took him a month to arrange everything for her. Three other girls went with her. When they got to Europe, another taxi driver took their passports and said they needed to trust him since the city was very dangerous. They had to work every day from 6:00 pm to 6:00 am as prostitutes and were told they would not get their passports back until the house manager was paid back for the travel arrangements. Sonia says she expected prostitution but had never imagined she would be a prisoner, threatened day and night.



In 2006, Pope Benedict XVI stated, "Trafficking of human beings—especially women—flourishes where opportunities to improve their standard of living even to survive are limited. It becomes easy for the trafficker to offer his own services to the victims, who often do not even vaguely suspect what awaits them. In some cases there are women and girls who are destined to be

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– Pope Benedict XVI

exploited almost like slaves in their work, and not infrequently in the sex industry too." Though I cannot here closely examine the analysis of the consequences of this aspect of migration, I make my own the condemnation voiced by John Paul II against 'the widespread hedonistic and commercial culture which encourages the systematic exploitation of sexuality' (*Letter of Pope John Paul II to Women*, 29 June 1995, n. 5)."

Trafficking cannot be stopped by a single effort. Combating trafficking takes the effort of many entities. The United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking (UN GIFT) has the mission to increase knowledge and awareness of human trafficking; promote effective rights-based responses; build capacity of state and non-state participants; foster partnerships for joint action against trafficking.

Several Catholic organizations have formed the Coalition of Catholic Organizations Against Human Trafficking. Some of the organizations are Catholic Charities USA, Catholic Health Association, Catholic Relief Services, Conference of Major Superiors of Men, Leadership Conference of Women Religious, National Conference of Catholic Women, and US Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The Coalition advocates several strategies for increasing government response by creating public awareness; informing people so they can be aware of potential victims in their communities; educating community responders—such as police, social workers, healthcare providers—about who the victims are; strengthening laws and policies which combat trafficking and aid the victims; and collaborating with government to assist the victims.

What can we do to help fight human trafficking?

The Initiative Against Sexual Trafficking, a coalition of 30 organizations spearheaded by the Salvation Army, gives 17 suggestions:

1. Be informed. There are numerous Web sites that give information.
2. Pray for the end of trafficking.
3. Give a talk - formal or informal about trafficking.
4. Share information - distribute brochures and other literature.
5. Host a seminar or workshop on trafficking.
6. Write articles or letters to the editor.
7. Watch and report if you become aware of a trafficking situation.
8. Sign up for a list serve which distributes information about trafficking.
9. Volunteer to do research, help an organization that works with victims.
10. Write a song about trafficking.
11. Produce an anti-trafficking video.
12. Organize to enforce zoning laws and to close strip clubs and "massage parlors" in local communities that are fronts for prostitution and trafficking.
13. Work with local churches and community agencies to create outreach programs for trafficking victims.
14. Develop social services for trafficking victims.
15. Protect children from exploitation.
16. Visit, call or write government leaders to support anti-trafficking legislation
17. Eliminate demand. Support programs in the local community for people struggling with sexual addictions.

In focusing on concerns regarding Human Dignity, as Felician Sisters, we need to learn more about this appalling injustice that afflicts our global family so that we can be among those who will work and pray to put an end to this horrible "crime against humanity."

— S Nancy Marie Jamroz (LI)

WebSites on Trafficking

www.catholic.org/international

www.crs.org

www.usccb.org/mrs

http://www.humantrafficking.org/organizations/106

www.catholiccharitiesusa.org

www.chausa.org

www.cmsm.org

www.lcwr.org

www.catholicweb.com

Anti-Human Trafficking Newsletter

The Felician Sisters join international congregations of women religious in sponsoring the *Stop Trafficking, Anti-Human Trafficking Newsletter*. This newsletter is a forum for exchange among religious congregations to:

- ◆ Promote awareness about the issue of human trafficking;
- ◆ Exchange means for the healing and empowerment of victims of human trafficking;
- ◆ Promote actions that help eliminate human trafficking.

“Be a prophetic witness to a world in need of healing.”
— first, for “those whose lives are harmed by the sinful lack of justice and peace in our world,”
and second, for “your sisters, who are called by virtue of our commitment,
to actively affect Gospel value changes in our world.”

– SM Barbara Ann Bosch, Minister General

WE ARE CALLED

In response to the directive of the 22nd General Chapter, June 2006, we are called to:

- ◆ Fast once a month in reparation for the “Culture of Death” prevalent in society.
- ◆ Pray once a week to Mary, the Mother of the Living, the following prayer to counteract the “Culture of Death:”

*O Mary, bright dawn of the new world, Mother of the Living,
to you do we entrust the cause of life.
Look down, O Mother,
upon the vast numbers of babies not allowed to be born,
of the poor whose lives are made difficult,
of men and women who are victims of brutal violence,
of the elderly and the sick
killed by indifference or out of misguided mercy.
Grant that all who believe in your Son
may proclaim the Gospel of life
with honesty and love to the people of our time.
Obtain for them the grace to accept
that Gospel as a gift ever new,
the joy of celebrating it with gratitude throughout their lives
and the courage to bear witness to it resolutely,
in order to build, together with all people of good will,
the civilization of truth and love,
to the praise and glory of God, the Creator and Lover of Life.*

Evangelium Vitae, March 25, 1995, Pope John Paul II



The hope of our
Congregational Central
Office for Justice & Peace
is that we carry on the legacy
of both Saint Francis
and Blessed Mary Angela
to be instrumental
in awakening our world
to the plight
of the downtrodden
and the marginalized.



JUSTICE & PEACE

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Abbreviations

Rome, Italy – RO

Kraków, Poland – KR

Livonia, Michigan, USA – LI

Buffalo, New York, USA – BU

Chicago, Illinois, USA – CH

Przemyśl, Poland – PR

Lodi, New Jersey, USA – LO

Coraopolis, Pennsylvania, USA – CO

Warszawa, Poland – WA

Enfield, Connecticut, USA – EN

Rio Rancho, New Mexico, USA – RR

Mississauga, Ontario, Canada – CA

Curitiba PR, Brazil – BR

Embu, Kenya – KE