

# Make a Fair Trade Difference

How could that chocolate you enjoy so much possibly be even more delicious than it already is? How could the fundraiser you have at school benefit the school, but also teach everyone involved a lesson in social justice, as well as help put an end to the trafficking of small children? How could that coffee you drink each morning be a delicious yet powerful tool to bring about positive change for small farmers and their families?

Both coffee and chocolate are big business in most industrialized countries. However, most consumers never know who and what was involved in obtaining the cocoa for that chocolate bar or the beans for that cup of coffee. In the cocoa fields of West Africa alone, it is estimated that close to 300,000 children, mostly boys between the ages of nine and 12, work in abusive labor conditions. Many of these children have been trafficked, sold into slavery, and serve as a source of cheap labor in the cocoa fields.

One solution to help alleviate these injustices and other abusive and unfair labor practices is to buy the Fair Trade products that are available. Coffee and chocolate, as well as other food products, can readily be purchased through Fair Trade. Clothes (including Catholic school uniforms) and handcrafts are also increasingly available on the Fair Trade market.

Products that are certified as Fair Trade assure the consumer that the product is produced under fair and safe labor conditions—forced child labor is prohibited. The one who creates or grows the product—for example the farmer or handcraft worker—is paid a fair price. Other internationally recognized principles of Fair Trade products include prohibiting environmental hazards, harmful chemicals, and genetically modified foods. All business organizations are required to be democratic and transparent. Fair trade empowers farmers, handcraft workers and other producers, particularly those in developing countries, to lift themselves out of poverty by giving them fair payment for their products. They can then reinvest this money in their farms and businesses and also in their communities.



*Several international Fair Trade certification symbols can be found at the end of this article.*

Today, the Fair Trade movement benefits over one million farmers, farm workers, and other producers in over 58 countries throughout Asia, Africa and Latin America. Buying Fair Trade products enables consumers to create a better world with each dollar they spend. Proponents of Fair Trade include international aid programs such as Catholic Relief Services and Caritas International as well as social, religious, and environmental organizations worldwide.

In many European countries a highly successful Fair Trade movement involving individuals, businesses, faith based and community organizations, civic institutions and schools has developed, known as the Fair Trade town. The first Fair Trade town was recognized in 2000 in England and the concept has spread throughout most countries in Europe. The number of Fair Trade towns is growing rapidly in Poland. In January of 2009 there were 630 Fair Trade towns in Poland; as of May, the number has increased to 663 towns. In the United States, there is only one recognized Fair Trade town: Media, Pennsylvania. The criteria involved to be recognized as a Fair Trade town varies slightly with each country, but generally includes



Recently, Cherrie Blair, the wife of former British Prime Minister Tony Blair, spoke about human trafficking at the United Nations. Mrs. Blair stated that being a “chocoholic” herself, she was appalled to learn that children were being trafficked and abused to provide the cocoa beans for major chocolate companies. Since she loved chocolate so much, Mrs. Blair acknowledged that as a Roman Catholic she “gave up chocolate for Lent.” This year to celebrate Easter, Mrs. Blair stated that she ate and purchased Fair Trade chocolate only. She is also advocating the use of Fair Trade cocoa beans by some of the major chocolate companies.

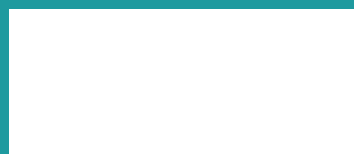
several common principles. The local government passes a resolution supporting Fair Trade and will serve Fair Trade beverages at government meetings and in the workplace. Fair Trade products are available for sale in local shops and dining places and are used in local workplaces including churches and schools. A committee is set up to continue the commitment to the Fair Trade Town status and to educate citizens about Fair Trade products.

Fair Trade products have also received the endorsement of government leaders in some European countries.

Fair Trade Catholic school uniforms are also available in some areas. The purchase of Fair Trade uniforms for school not only benefits the people who make the uniforms, but can also be a great educational tool for students and their parents. People using their purchasing power to enjoy Fair Trade coffee and chocolate, as well as other fairly traded items, may be a wonderful way for them to employ their faith values to make life better for those in developing countries.

— S Maryann Agnes Mueller (LO)

## INTERNATIONAL Fair Trade



is designed to allow consumers to recognize goods which meet internationally recognized Fair Trade

Trade Label guarantees consumers that strict economic, social and environmental standards were met in the production and trade of the product.

## Fair Trade Signs & Symbols



United States  
and Canada



Brasil



Koalicja  
Sprawiedliwego  
Handlu

Poland

Buy Fair Trade

For more information on Fair Trade and where to purchase products go to the websites below:

[www.globalexchange.org](http://www.globalexchange.org)

[www.globalexchange.org/ca](http://www.globalexchange.org/ca)

[www.globalexchangestore.org/all-poland](http://www.globalexchangestore.org/all-poland)

[www.globalexchange.org/fairtrade/stores/producers/Brazil](http://www.globalexchange.org/fairtrade/stores/producers/Brazil)

*GlobalExchange operates in many countries.*

[www.transfair.org](http://www.transfair.org), [www.transfair.ca](http://www.transfair.ca)

*Transfair operates in many countries.*

[www.fairtrade.net.pl](http://www.fairtrade.net.pl)

*Includes a weekly bulletin on new Fair Trade products available in Poland.*

[www.crsfairtrade.org](http://www.crsfairtrade.org)

*Catholic Relief Service is a proponent of Fair Trade.*

[www.equalexchange.com](http://www.equalexchange.com)  
[store.gxonlinestore.org/all-brazil](http://store.gxonlinestore.org/all-brazil)



# Climate Change: A GROWING PROBLEM

When Al Gore and the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2007, public attention turned to what the scientific community had already been claiming for years—that climate change is a serious problem. Although some critics still argue that the dramatic changes we have been experiencing in our environment are normal, scientists maintain that our environment is being altered by the actions of humans, especially by those who live in industrialized societies.

Upon winning the Nobel Peace Prize, Gore summoned religious communities to action when he stated: “We face a true planetary emergency. The climate crisis is not a political issue; it is a moral and spiritual challenge to all of humanity.” A survey conducted earlier this year in the United States showed that care for God’s creation and attention to the issue of climate change are important to Catholics in the U.S. “The majority of Catholics polled believed that their faith calls them to be concerned about how climate change impacts vulnerable people at home and abroad. The poll indicates both a willingness and desire by Catholics to reclaim the scriptural mandate to care for creation—be good stewards of God’s gift of creation—and to sacrifice and actively engage in efforts that will ensure that the poor and vulnerable do not unduly suffer as a result of climate change” (Zogby International).

Many faith-based communities are taking up the call to promote changes to protect our environment. Sister Mary Dorothy Moczygemba from New Mexico and Sister Maryann Agnes Mueller from New Jersey recently joined approximately 700 other faith-based advocates in a discussion on *Enough for all Creation*. This discussion, which focused on the abundance of God’s gifts to our world and how we can work to allocate these gifts in

a way that is fair and just for all creation, was part of the Ecumenical Advocacy Days for Global Peace with Justice, which was held in March in Washington, D.C. An important outcome of the gathering included meeting with legislators in the United States Congress to advocate for legislation that will protect both the environment and the poor.

A recurring theme during the Ecumenical Advocacy Days was the effect that climate change is currently having and will continue to have on people who are materially poor throughout the world. Many of the presenters stressed that these negative effects occur to those people who are poor but who live in prosperous societies.

For example, a majority of the victims from Hurricane Katrina, which hit the United States in 2005, were the poorest economically in an area of the country with otherwise tremendous wealth. These victims did not have the means to escape the floodwaters, nor do they have the resources to rebuild.

Worldwide, the poorest people contribute the least to climate change. For example, it

is estimated that the entire continent of Africa contributes only about 3% to greenhouse gases globally and yet it is believed that these people are already suffering from climate change due to greenhouse gases. Droughts are getting worse in the arid areas of Africa, while the equatorial and southern parts of Africa are experiencing more flooding. The average temperature on the entire continent has been warmer and, in the past 20 years, some parts of Kenya have experienced average temperatures almost 4 degrees hotter than normal.

It is feared that climate change will eradicate the efforts to end poverty in Africa. Food insecurity has increased in Africa despite the efforts of the Millennium Development Goals to insure food security for all people. The number



of food emergencies per year has almost tripled in the past 25 years in Africa, all attributed to the differences in weather due to climate change.

For many of us, our first encounter with climate change will be experiencing flooding in coastal areas. People who live in low lying areas will need to relocate. Some countries such as Bangladesh, Indonesia and the Pacific Islands are already planning exit strategies. It is estimated that about 600 million people worldwide live in coastal areas. At a recent conference on climate change in Poznan, Poland, attended by representatives from 189 nations, negotiators agreed to allocate 60 million dollars to help poor countries cope with floods and drought caused by global warming.

As Franciscan women, we are in a unique position to link care of creation and care of the poor. St. Francis, whom Pope John Paul II declared the patron saint of ecology, delighted in creation. In his Canticle of the Sun, Francis praises creation in the form of earth, wind, water and all living creatures. Additionally, in his Rule, Francis

asks his followers to give all that they have over and beyond what they need to the poor.

Many Franciscans in the United States joined the Catholic Coalition on Climate Change during the Easter season this year and signed the Catholic Climate Covenant—The St. Francis Pledge to Care for Creation and the Poor. This Covenant hopes to establish a common Catholic commitment to protect God's creation and to stand with people who are poor and vulnerable to the effect of climate change. The Covenant calls each of us to examine our lifestyles and to commit ourselves to concrete action to demonstrate our concern for creation and the poor. In his endorsement of the Catholic Climate Covenant, Pope Benedict XVI reinforced the relationship between global warming and poor people when he stated, "The great gift of God's Creation is exposed to serious dangers and lifestyles which can degrade it. Environmental pollution is making particularly unsustainable the lives of the poor of the world...."

- SM Dorothy Moczygemba (RR)  
S Maryann Agnes Mueller (LO)



Hurricane Katrina devastated this house on Beach Boulevard in Mississippi.



# Borderless Heart

In 1974, Karol Cardinal Wojtyła of Krakow made an appeal to the Nazareth Sisters in Poland to open and operate the first House for Single Mothers in Krakow. The Cardinal was horrified when he learned of the number of pregnant women who aborted their babies each year because of a sense of helplessness in not being able to provide adequately for their children. He stated that the Church needed to become involved since there were no systems in place to care for either these mothers or their children. The Cardinal was well aware that granting financial assistance to these women would not be a sufficient, nor long term solution. He felt that the women needed a home where they would feel safe and be able to live in an atmosphere of love and acceptance. Only then could these pregnant women prepare for motherhood.

*"In countries belonging to the European Union there is an abortion performed every 27 seconds. Yearly, there are approximately 1,200,000 abortions."*

*The Institute for Family Polices Newsletter, Number 56*

In more recent years, the Church of Poland was seeking to undertake another project out of concern for the defense of life similar to the abovementioned endeavor initiated 35 years ago by Cardinal Wojtyła. The first "Window of Life" (Okno Życia) was opened in the Nazareth Sisters House, at Przybyszewski 39 Street, Krakow-Bronowice, on March 19, 2006, as part of an initiative of the Department of Pastoral Family Counseling of the Metropolitan Curia and Krakow Archdiocese Caritas. The task of the Okno Życia is to take care of unwanted newborn children. Mothers who do not want or cannot keep their babies are encouraged to leave them at this window. The women, who are promised anonymity, are given time to rethink their decision to give up the baby. If the mother decides that she is unable to care for the child properly, the baby is then entrusted to a foster family.

The initial purpose of this Window of Life was to draw attention to the vast number of children who are abandoned on the streets or in garbage cans throughout



*In Poland, Windows of Life such as this one have saved many lives since their inception.*

Krakow. "We thought it would only be a symbol, but it turned out that after three months the first child was left in this window," stated Sister Jozefina, a Nazareth Sister from Krakow. In the past three years, ten children's lives have been saved by this Window of Life in Krakow.

The Church of Poland has since recognized the need for this program in other dioceses. On December 6, 2008, a Window of Life was opened in Warszawa at the request of Archbishop Kazimierz Nycz. It is located at the building of the Franciscan Sisters of the Holy Family at 53 Hoża Street. Only two weeks after it opened, the sisters found a baby left at the window. In Łódź, under the authority of the town leaders, another Window of Life was opened at the L. Rygier public hospital. "Since the moment of its opening, there have been no cases of abandoned children in garbage cans; instead, a few newborn children have been left in the window," said Doctor Janusz Lasota, unit senior registrar of newborn children in Łódź.

Other Windows of Life have been opened in Poznań at 59 Swoboda Street under the direction of the Franciscan Secular Order, and in Czeszochowa under the direction of the Sisters of the Congregation of Servants of the Immaculate Conception of the Mother of God. Windows of Life were also opened in the Tarnów Diocese at the city center of Tarnów and in Nowy Sącz. In Tarnów, the window was opened on March 19, 2009 at Mościckiego Street in the house of the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph.

Windows of Life are being established all over the country of Poland. According to Reverend Marian Subocz, Director of Polish Caritas, twenty more windows are

being set up this year alone. Diocesan Caritas Centers, congregations of women religious, family pastoral ministries, and local adoption centers are working together to establish these windows. Babies left in them have been readily adopted by families.

A Window of Life is available 24 hours a day and is equipped with central heating and ventilation. When a person opens the window to place in a baby, the alarm starts ringing immediately, calling the sisters who live in the house. Mothers who leave their children in the window remain anonymous and are not sought by the courts. The baby is brought immediately to the neonatal department of a nearby hospital to be examined. The future of the baby is then in the hands of the court and adoption centers.

*“The attitude we have toward human life is an expression of our attitude toward God and the test of our authentic religious morality (...).”*

*Pope John Paul II – Czestochowa, June 1983*

In Nowy Sącz, the Window of Life was instituted in our Felician convent at 53 Długosza Street on March 25, 2009, the commemoration of the Day of the Sanctity of Life in Poland. It is the second Window of Life in the Diocese of Tarnów. “We are to protect life, following our Lady, opposing the culture of death. The Window of Life will be a life line for the child who is born but unwanted,” the Bishop of Tarnow, Wiktor Skworc, stated during the ceremony to open the Window of Life in Nowy Sącz. “It is significant that we open this window on the day of the sanctity of life. It was a conscious choice to do so, because it is not enough just to talk about the sanctity of life and the fifth commandment: ‘You shall not kill’... This idea of the sanctity of life, this truth has to be turned very concretely into action.”

“The principal idea of these windows is to protect human life. However, they are also symbols, signs; they are the places which force us to reflect,” stated Reverend Richard Podostolowicz, Director of Tarnów Caritas.

Our Foundress, Blessed Mary Angela Truszkowska, is the Patroness of the Felician Sisters’ Window of Life.

The function of the Window of Life and concern for the sacredness and dignity of all life are deeply rooted in the charism of our Congregation. Our sisters are always ready to accept babies; however, they regret that any new mother would be in a situation in which she would feel she could not properly care for her child.

A liturgy to commemorate the opening of the Window of Life was celebrated in the Basilica of St. Margaret in Nowy Sącz. In his homily, Bishop Wiktor Skworc, Ordinary of Tarnów, stated that the Window of Life is a sign of hope and opportunity for all unwanted children. It is also a window of hope for mothers who are unable to bear the burden of motherhood, who fear it or do not have sufficient support from their families to care for the baby. Rejection of human life, done in various forms, is a rejection of Christ. The Bishop emphasized that in the combat with the culture of death, no weapon unworthy of the Christian is allowed, neither hatred nor seeking vengeance. “We, the people of the Gospel, have other weapons – prayer, fasting, forgiveness and mercy which are transformed into Christian acts like the Windows of Life or single parent houses.”

*-SM Witkima Hebda (KR)*





*As we pray for the five sisters evangelizing in Kamchatka  
the Congregational Office for Justice and Peace announces the*

## KENYA *IMMERSION* EXPERIENCE

### August 2010



### PURPOSE AND GOAL

To strengthen bonds of understanding and support within the Congregation and to learn of the ministries of the Felician Sisters in Kenya by providing an opportunity for Sisters to volunteer in the Kenyan Mission.

### DESCRIPTION

Participants (12 Felician Sisters) will spend 21 days sharing in common life and giving service as possible to the Formation House in Embu, the Hospice in Nanyuki, the Maternity Clinic in Ruiru, a school and job training program in Iramurui and other places where our sisters minister.

### REQUIREMENTS

Any one open and interested in mission life and work, open to evangelization and desiring to bring Christ to others, as well as:

- ◆ open to witness intercultural living and ministry in the Felician community
- ◆ open to new cultural experiences
- ◆ sensitive to other religions
- ◆ open to living in an international Felician community
- ◆ having an active prayer life and open to sharing God's Word
- ◆ in good physical health (there will be much walking involved)
- ◆ having an adventuresome spirit and open to another way of living the Felician charism

*Watch our website for further information and details.*

**[www.FelicianSisters.org](http://www.FelicianSisters.org)**

# Red Hand Day

February 12, 2009 marked the commemoration of "Red Hand Day," a worldwide initiative sponsored by the Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers. An optional protocol to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child has forbidden the use of children as soldiers since 2002. However, there are still 250,000 children used in war today.

The Coalition presented some one million red hands to members of the United Nations on February 12 to impress upon them the need to enforce the protocol. Over 550 high school students from St. Augustine High School in Laredo, TX discussed in their theology classes the plight and statistics of children around the world who are forced into military service and abuse. They traced their hands on red construction paper and wrote their protests and feelings on these symbols. Members of the student council then linked the red hands into a chain and sent them off to New York City to the Red Hand Campaign Headquarters.

Sisters Christina Marie Conroy and Rosemarie Goins are members of the theology department at St. Augustine High School.

*-S Rosemarie Goins (RR)*



## 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  
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