

THE OLIVE BRANCH

JANUARY 2012



ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO OFFICE FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE

FROM THE DIRECTOR

On June 29, 2004 the Vatican Secretary of State, Cardinal Angelo Sodano, wrote a letter to the then President of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, Cardinal Renato Raffaele Martino. The letter begins: "Throughout the course of her history, and particularly in the last hundred years, the Church has never failed, in the words of Pope Leo XIII, to speak 'the words that are hers' with regard to questions concerning life in society." (CSDC xvii) These "words that are hers" make up the Social Doctrine of the Church and are the fruit of the Church's prayerful reflection on the Gospel and the world.

This letter prefaces the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* (CSDC) which, at over four hundred pages, is "a concise but complete overview of the Church's social teaching." (CSDC xxi) Here's the problem: according to the Bishops of the United States, "many Catholics do not adequately understand that the social teaching of the Church is an *essential* part of Catholic faith. This poses a serious challenge for all Catholics, since it weakens our capacity to be a Church that is true to the demands of the Gospel" (emphasis mine). The implications: if the social doctrine of the Church is really "*hers*" then it is also, if we are baptized members of the Body of



Scott McLarty

Christ, *ours*, ours first to hear and then to preach with our lives; and if her social teaching is also *essential*, then living without reference to it is dangerous, as dangerous as living without whatever else we might recognize as "necessary."

The danger is that we might live and preach a partial Gospel and a partial Christ, who is the Gospel in person. There is nothing quite so easy to dismiss than a partial version of Jesus, a version limited by any number of personal, partisan, moral, and social agendas. We need the whole Christ, the Christ given us by God the Father in and through the Church. This "whole Christ" cannot be conditioned by my own or anyone else's demands or agendas, but rather is the one who conditions them. He is the measure by which we must be measured, not the other way around.

So we each must be "true to the demands of the Gospel," the *whole* Gospel of Jesus Christ and oppose anything that weakens our capacity to do so. To this end, I will be devoting my "From the Director" pieces as well as my contributions to the new OPJ blog (www.opjchicago.wordpress.com) over the coming months to an examination of some fundamental ideas of Catholic Social Doctrine as presented in the CSDC. Please comment on our blog with your questions, suggestions, and comments.

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SAVE THE DATE:

Lunchtime lecture on Haiti (Meyer Center)	01/20/12
Fr. Walker Golden Rice Bowl Event & Fair Trade Lunchtime Lecture	02/08/12
CCHD Multimedia Youth Arts Contest	03/15/12
Justice Month	04/12

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Catholic Relief Services: Operation Rice Bowl

Adrienne Curry

So many of us feel powerless to address the obscene poverty that affects two-thirds of the world's population, over 35,000 children die every day for reasons that stem directly from their poverty, the cry for definitive action is deafening. Locally, the economy is adding unwanted stress to low-income families as they prepare to celebrate Christmas in 2011. The need for food assistance is also growing as the cuts to public assistance, food stamps, unemployment and underemployment continue to make a damaging impact on families. Food pantries across the Archdiocese have experienced a rise in families who need food.

I would like to invite your institution to join us in Catholic Relief Services' Lenten program Operation Rice Bowl (ORB). ORB is an opportunity to actively help the poor locally and internationally and offers another easy avenue to take definitive action for justice and increase the visibility of your ministry for social justice.

75% of the alms raised go to the development projects in the five countries designated for 2012. Those countries are: Madagascar (agriculture), Vietnam (education), El Salvador (water/sanitation), Zambia (microfinance), India (Mother/Child health), and the last week the project is in the United States (Diocese of Arlington). **25% of the alms raised in your institution stay in the Archdiocese to address hunger locally. You can designate your 25% to support your own food pantry or a food pantry or**

shelter your institution supports. In addition, you can apply for an Operation Rice Bowl grant. Last year, 39 food pantries and shelter were given \$49,449.66.

This year's theme is *"For I Was Hungry."* Materials include the rice bowl and Lenten calendar, educators' guide, posters, Coordinator's Guide and CD-Rom/DVD. All the materials are **free** and will be shipped before Lent. Materials are available in Spanish, English and some materials in Polish. You can order materials as late as Ash Wednesday. If you would like a speaker to come to your institution during Lent, one can be provided.



This year on Wednesday, February 8, 2012 at 9:30 a.m. we will be kicking off Lent with the Fr. Valker Golden Rice Bowl Award at the Cardinal Meyer Center, 3525 S. Lake Park Avenue. It will be a celebration of Fr. Valker and all of the parish coordinators of ORB.

Also, stay for a Lunchtime lecture on Fair Trade by Ms. Jackie DeCarlo, from CRS headquarters in Baltimore.

Together we can make a difference in easing the suffering in nearly two-thirds of the world and in our city. **If you have any questions about Operation Rice Bowl, or would like your parish/school to participate or would like to RSVP the Fr. Valker Golden Rice Bowl Award, please don't hesitate to contact me at :**

312/534-8367

or

acurry@archchicago.org

CRS Responds to Severe Flooding in the Philippines

Background

Tropical Storm Washi (known locally as Sendong) hit Mindanao in the southern Philippines late on Friday, December 16th. Heavy rains in the island's mountainous areas caused severe flash flooding downstream. Cagayan de Oro and Iligan City are among the worst affected areas. The current number of dead is estimated at more than 650 and over 800 people are missing. Tens of thousands have been made homeless.

Joe Curry, Catholic Relief Services' country representative for the Philippines, arrived at the flood zone and met people who had lost everything. "Some people don't even have shoes—their sandals were pulled off their feet in the flood," he said. The flood waters came late at night. Radios were switched off the night. Residents in Cagayan de Oro didn't hear the emergency warnings their homes on the riverbank. More than 50,000 people are now living in emergency evacuation centers. Government officials say that it could be up to 30 days before water is restored to most of the city. Students at Xavier University, a local CRS partner, are using Facebook to share information about where people can access drinking water



How CRS is Helping

Curry reports that CRS is prepared to help those most affected by the floods. "CRS, is partnering with the Archdiocese of Cagayan de Oro to find how we can help those in greatest need. We've seen that people in flood's path need basic household goods like water jugs, cooking utensils and soap. Water is most important over the next few days. The government has distributed food to some people, but they don't have water or pots to cook a meal," he said. "I'm hopeful that we will be able to reach people quickly and help them meet their most urgent needs," said Curry.

"We're seeing people in the community pulling together and share what little they have.

How you can help

Please pray for the people affected by the floods. We have included a prayer and petitions.

Donate to the Philippine Flooding fund. Mail donations to: Catholic Relief Services, 3525 S. Lake Park Avenue, Chicago, IL 60653-1402, on the memo line write Philippines.

Prayer for the Philippines

God of Creation, Please be with all of those who are suffering around the world as a result of war and natural disaster. We lift up our Filipino sisters and brothers whose lives have been devastated by severe flooding. Comfort those separated from their families and loved ones. Be with the relief workers so they may be compassionate with those who are affected by this disaster. Lord, help us to

respond to the needs of our brothers and sisters in the coming days and weeks. Foster in us a greater sense of solidarity, so that we are moved to help those in greatest need to find refuge and restore their communities. We ask this through your son Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.

Intercessions

Response: God of Creation, hear our prayer.

For our sisters and brothers in the Philippines who are suffering from flooding, that they will find safe refuge and comfort, we pray to the Lord...

For families separated from their loved ones as a result of this destructive storm, that they will be assisted in re-uniting with their families, we pray to the Lord...

For relief workers in the Philippines, that God will provide them with the resources to respond to this disaster and the wisdom needed for effective decision making, we pray to the Lord...

For those of us gathered here, that we honor our call to solidarity and respond to the needs of our Filipino sisters and brothers without hesitation, we pray to the Lord...

Profile: Peace and Justice Leader Mario Luviano, St. John Bosco Parish

It is very encouraging and inspiring for the overall Church when young adults step up to the plate and become leaders in peace and justice work.

About a year ago one young adult from St. John Bosco Parish approached his pastor Fr. Tim Zak and offered to lead peace and justice efforts at his parish. "I was impressed with Mario's enthusiasm and energy for peace and justice," commented Fr. Tim. "Right away I connected him with the Program Director for Justice Education at the Office of Peace and Justice for some training as well as invite Mario to join me as a guest at the CCHD annual awards dinner. Both of these experiences solidified his commitment," added Fr. Zak.

With his irresistible charisma and sharp wit, Mario soon made friends with several peace and justice leaders in Vicariate IV. "I will never forget the first time I met Mario. He put his charm on and invited several leaders to join him at an immigration rally on Saturday morning. Guess what, most of us showed up!" commented Tony Graefe, peace and justice leader from St. Luke Parish in River Forest.

Mario's first big parish project had to do with art-work. "Many at-risk Latino youth from my community don't have the opportunity to articulate their struggles, pains and uncertainties. This is the reason why drugs, suicide and violence are so prevalent among our young people, because these addictive behaviors serve as release mechanisms. I chose

art as an alternative vehicle for young people to express their inner issues and it is really taking off!"

"I really only expected a handful of people to respond to Mario's art contest this past December. When he showed me over sixty works of art that were turned in by young people from our community, I was blown away," commented Fr. Tim.

Elena Quintana, Executive Director for Public Safety and Social Justice at the Adler School of Professional Psychology heard about Mario's art project and invited him to display it at a major immigration event held at Adler's downtown campus on January 12. The event, *Separation and Loss: Deportation Through the Eyes of Children*, was co-sponsored by the Archdiocesan Office of Immigrant Affairs and the art-work Mario's community provided established a moral context for any discussion on immigration issues. "The lives of children are torn apart when unjust laws exist." Quintana emphasized.

Where will all of this justice work lead Mario in the future? "I am looking forward to continuing my studies at U.I.C. Whatever my career turns out to be, I know that I want to make a difference in my community," concluded Mario. If you are interested in joining Mario in his fight for justice through art, please contact Tom Howard at:

(312) 534-3890

thoward@archchicago.org



Mario and St. John Bosco parishioner show off art work.

January is **poverty** in America Awareness Month

Today, more than **46 million people** in America are living below the poverty line – far more than the population of our largest state.

This is **POVERTY USA**, our largest state.

NEARLY ONE IN SIX OF US LIVES IN POVERTY USA

And worse yet, nearly **1 in 4 children**

Who Lives in Poverty USA?

All those who make less than the Federal government's official poverty threshold. . . which for a family of four is \$22,314.00; people working at minimum wage, even holding down several jobs; seniors living on fixed incomes; wage earners suddenly out of work; millions of families everywhere from our cities to rural communities.

We Can End It.

Join us in breaking the cycle of poverty and helping people move themselves out of Poverty USA. Learn more about community organizations that support self-sufficiency, improve communities, and encourage independence. Understand the issues of poverty. Discover ways to make a difference. Act in your community. Give your attention, your time, your resources. Pray.

What's It Like to Live in PovertyUSA?

Living in poverty means one impossible choice after another – between food and medicine, getting to work or paying the heating bill, covering the rent or daycare for your children.

LEARN ACT GIVE

For more information on how you can help go to:
<http://www.usccb.org/about/catholic-campaign-for-human-development/povertyusa/>

Save the Date

Upcoming CRS Events at the Cardinal Meyer Center
3525 S. Lake Park Avenue



Lunchtime Lecture on Haiti

Friday January 20, 2012, 11 a.m.
Kim Lamberty from CRS HQ in Baltimore will be our guest speaker

The Father Walker Golden Rice Bowl Award Event

Wednesday February 8, 2012, 9:30 a.m.
Most Reverend Raymond Goedert will emcee the event, followed by a reception



Fair Trade Lunchtime Lecture

Also Wednesday February 8, 2012
Jackie DeCarlo, from CRS HQ in Baltimore will be our guest speaker

To RSVP any of these events contact Adrienne Curry, CRS Director at:
(312) 534-8367 or acurry@archchicago.org



The Catholic Campaign for Human Development announces the 2011-12

MULTIMEDIA YOUTH ARTS CONTEST



WHO? Students in grades 7-12

WHAT? Create art in any form about our Catholic response to poverty.

WHEN? Now through March 15, 2012

DETAILS? Visit www.archchicago.org/cchd

CARE  SHARE  DARE



Courage
in a CARING
COMMUNITY

2012 RURAL MINISTRY CONFERENCE

The Center for Theology and Land at
Wartburg Theological Seminary

Is proud to announce its 31st Annual Rural Ministry Conference

March 4 – 6, 2012

at the best Western Plus Hotel in Dubuque, Iowa.
This year's focus is "Courage in a Caring Community."

The Rural Ministry Conference outreach is continuing to grow and has become an ecumenical conference for those working in small town and rural parishes throughout the Midwest.

Find information and register online at:

www.ruralministry.com

PRAYER & REFLECTION



The Pope's general prayer intention for January:

Victims of Natural Disasters.
That the victims of natural disasters may receive the spiritual and material comfort they need to rebuild their lives.



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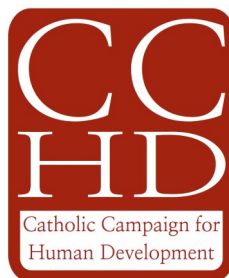
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Office for Peace and Justice



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