



Social Justice and Ecology Secretariat of the Society of Jesus

February 2019

...to exchange social justice and ecology news, stimulate contacts, share spirituality and promote networking...

Narrative

Crossing Borders with Hope

Jenny Cafiso, (CJI-Canada)



As I write this, over 7,000 Honduran migrants including children have crossed the Guatemalan and Mexican borders and are marching toward the United States border. Some, including the President of the US, are describing them as murderers, rapists, "very bad criminals". Helicopters are hovering over them, the border patrol and the military have been alerted, ready to act. There are calls to close the border.

While some migrants have turned back, most are staying the course. Jose Mejia, 42, a father of four from the Honduran city of San Pedro Sula, was quoted as saying, "We are going to sleep here in the street, because we have nothing else".

I was in the same city of San Pedro Sula in Honduras just a month ago. This is where Radio Progreso and ERIC, a Jesuit radio station and human rights centre, work under the leadership of Fr Melo Coto. [Read more...](#)

Flashnews

Father General announces the Universal Apostolic Preferences



This Tuesday, February 19 at noon, Fr. Arturo Sosa, Superior General of the Society of Jesus, announced the results of two years of common discernment to determine "Universal Apostolic Preferences". The four preferences are: 1) Promoting discernment and the "Spiritual Exercises"; 2) Walking with the excluded communities and people; 3) Caring for our Common Home; and 4) Journeying with Youth [Read more...](#)

Global - Justice in Mining network in Solidarity with Brumadinho



GIAN - Justice in Mining (JiM) Network joined hands with [Churches and Mining Network](#) to express its solidarity with the victims and local communities in Brumadinho, Brazil. On January 25th, a tiling dam burst releasing a mudflow of toxic waste leaving 60 people dead, around 300 disappeared and more than 24.000 people displaced with the potential risk of collapse of a second dam nearby. Sadly, this is not the first time the company Vale S.A is involved in such a

crime. In November 2015, the collapse of San Marco dam killed 19 people and caused the worst environmental disaster in Brazil's history. JiM network denounces the impunity given to such companies, demands justice, corporate accountability and full compensation for the victims. [Read more...](#)

USA - Pope Francis Centre Responds to Extreme winter weather in Detroit



The [Pope Francis Center](#) in Detroit, a ministry of the Midwest Jesuit province, responded to needs of those experiencing homelessness during the extreme winter weather. In collaboration with Saints Peter and Paul Jesuit Church, the Center opened its doors as a 24-hour shelter between Jan. 29 and Feb. 1. "We are keenly aware of our mission to protect and serve our most vulnerable members of society", shared Anne Blake, chief administrative officer. "When I took him [a police officer] into the church to see the sleeping guests he said, 'This gives me chills. This is really what it's all about, isn't it? The church as a home and a place of refuge'".

[Read more...](#)

Haiti - From a Locked Country to a Country in Ruins



Jean Denis, the Jesuit Superior of Haiti writes, "The country's political and social situation is increasingly explosive, and the population, left to its own devices, has been trapped at home for fear of being in the wrong place at the wrong time...On the side of the Jesuits: like the population, we get stuck in the communities - caution is required. Since February 7, fear and anguish have conquered the minds and hearts

of many people. We know very well that in all this, the real victims are the most vulnerable, the poorest. We also call for the solidarity of all so that the existence of our people and their destiny is not forgotten". [Read more...](#)

Amazon - REPAM Denounces 13 Cases of Human Rights Violations in Amazon Communities



The Pan-Amazonian Ecclesial Network (REPAM), of which several Jesuit organizations form part of, released its most [recent report](#) on the current human rights situation in the Amazon. Over 300 pages, the report documents abuses and violations of the rights of women and children. Over the last few years, the extractive industries and illicit crops have been responsible for a number of multi-million dollar activities," the report says, "based on the intense

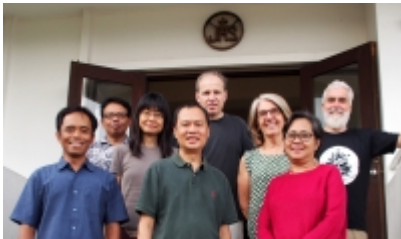
exploitation of natural resources that uproot the earth's wealth at the cost of devastating impacts on the Amazonian environment and on the health and social peace of its inhabitants". [Read more...](#)

India/USA - Seeking Alternatives to an Extractive Economy, U.S. Jesuit Delegation in Kohima



In January, a delegation of representatives from the Midwest Province, including Loyola University Chicago's Institute for Environmental Sustainability and St. Thomas More Parish (St. Paul, Minn.), visited the Kohima Region to explore possible areas of mutually beneficial exchange. As a foreshadowing of what the group was about to see, several weeks before the delegations arrived, 15 miners were trapped and subsequently died in an illegal mine 370 feet deep. The coalmines operate around the clock with coal barons enlisting desperate Indian and undocumented Bangladeshi day labourers for the equivalent of about of \$4.50 U.S. dollars a day. [Read more...](#)

Asia Pacific - The Road ahead for the Social Apostolate



With the Universal Apostolic Preferences (UAPs) to be unveiled soon, the conference Social Ministries core team reviewed insights gained over the last few years to help guide plans and programmes for the next few years. "Our goal is to get a bigger picture of the social ministries situation in the conference by updating on what is happening in our own contexts and to learn from the experience of Fr. Benny Juliawan", shared Fr. Adrianus Suyadi SJ, who took over from Fr. Juliawan as conference Secretary for Social Ministries. The core team gathered at the Environmental Science for Social Change office at the Ateneo de Manila University in the Philippines for a two-day meeting, from January 30 to 31. [Read more...](#)

Spain - 100 families to receive refugees



The Jesuit NGO [Migra Studium](#) has launched the "Hospitalaris" campaign, with the aim of getting 100 families in Barcelona to welcome a migrant, asylum seeker or refugee, into their home for 3 months. During this time, the person receives practical support, job training and language classes from [Migra Studium](#).

This campaign is part of the work carried out by the Jesuit Migrant Service to promote the welcoming of migrants and refugees. [Read more...](#)

Africa - Arrupe Jesuit University Organizes a Safeguarding Workshop



Arrupe Jesuit University started the New Year with a workshop on Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection against abuse. Fr. Arturo Sosa, the Superior General of the Society of Jesus, in his letter to the whole society, "To Share the Suffering of Victims of Abuse and Foster a Culture of Protection", encourages all Jesuit owned institutions to ensure that all Jesuits and their collaborators are educated to join the fight against abuse of children and vulnerable adults. It was in this spirit that participating in the workshop was compulsory for all members of staff (teaching and non-teaching), and students of Arrupe Jesuit University. The workshop was organized by the African Forum for Catholic Social Teaching (AFCAST) team headed by Sr. Anna Mandeya; the Child Protection Officer in AJU. [Read more...](#)

India - Stan Swamy: 'Question the Government, You can be called an Extremist'

The 82-year old Jesuit Stan Swamy believes he is being treated as a 'suspect' in Bhima Koregaon case, Pune because he has been working with tribals in Jharkhand and questioning the state government. On the eve of Indian Republic Day (26th Jan.), he released a letter appealing to the conscience of the nation because about 20 human rights activists, including him, were working for the fundamental rights of the poor and marginalised and upholding constitutional values were being labelled 'Urban Naxals'



and harassed to no end. In it, he asks why the judiciary believed everything that the police presented in front of it and never questioned the violation of rules by Pune police. [Read more...](#)

USA/Mexico - Coffee, Jesuits, and Justice: A Cooperative Model Addresses Root Causes of Migration



Fr. Stephen Pitts, an associate pastor in El Paso, Texas who has spent significant time in Chiapas, Mexico both ministering as a priest and conducting significant research, looking at a cooperative economic model that is transforming the rural, isolated community of coffee farmers. During a recent conversation, Fr. Pitts spoke about the flawed approach to the issue of migration in the U.S. and beyond. "We don't need a wall", he said. "We need investment in development projects in communities that send migrants to the U.S.". [Read](#)

[more...](#)

Nepal - Jesuits construct Xavier Road to Connect Remote Villages of Himalayas



The people of Tipling village in Nepal, who spent 2 to 3 days walking to access basic facilities of education or health, can now reach Kathmandu in just 8 hours. The 27 km Xavier Marg (road) construction from Somdang, bordering Rasuwa district, went through the most difficult terrain of steep and rocky hillsides up to Tipling. Nepal Jesuit Social Institute, with the support of Xavier Network undertook the road construction as part of the earthquake rehabilitation and reconstruction

activities. [Read more...](#)

Latin America - AUSJAL and REPAM define plans for Amazon Synod



As part of the collaborative work, AUSJAL and Pan Amazonian Ecclesial Network (REPAM) jointly organized a Regional meeting on the Synod of the Amazon at the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro (PUC, Brazil). During this meeting, the members prepared a document synthesising their reflections and contributions of the AUSJAL universities to the process of Synod on Amazon, which will be presented to the Synod through the REPAM. [Read more...](#)

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