



Social Justice and Ecology Secretariat of the Society of Jesus

June 2019

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

Narrative

Walking and Working with the Excluded

Benny Chiramel, SJ (KER)



The fisher people of Thiruvananthapuram have been historically excluded as an outcaste with a host of attendant vulnerabilities like debased identity that makes them powerless to be part of rights-based social action; landlessness leading to poor, unsafe, and unhealthy living conditions; illiteracy denying access to the resources available to the mainstream society; deteriorating quality of education in public schools excluding them from higher education; over-dependence on fisheries owing to lack of access to alternative livelihoods; increasing alcoholism that gives rise to frequent incidents of domestic violence; ineffective public distribution system and tsunami-like disaster-prone living space.

Sneharam, a centre for social welfare and charitable activities, was started by the late zealous Jesuit missionary priest, Antony Manipadam SJ, a quarter of a century ago to deal with the deteriorating quality of public schools through a remedial education programme. The centre is situated near Anjengo Fort, in Thiruvananthapuram district of Kerala, India. It forms part of a long stretch of ecologically fragile coastal land sandwiched between the Arabian Sea and the backwaters of Anchuthengu. Sneharam has played a significant role in putting education as an important item on the agenda of the life of the coastal people of the nearby villages. [Read more...](#)

Flashnews

SJES - 50 Years of Justice and Reconciliation: An Anniversary for Justice



It's tempting to view the Secretariat for Social Justice (SJES) as simply another office of the Society of Jesus in Rome. It operates in the same halls as the other offices, abides by the same rules as the other offices, and is under the same General Superior as the other offices... and yet to think of SJES as just another office in the Curia would be to trivialize the influence that the

secretariat has held across the world for decades. Since the time of Father Arrupe, SJES has been dedicated to finding and implementing strategies to encourage social justice, equality between individuals and peoples, and a proper ecological balance that does not destroy the sustainability of our planet. [A Video](#), [Read more...](#)

Mexico - What is God calling us to?



The annual assembly of the Social Centres Network of the Jesuit Conference of Latin American and Caribbean Provincials (CPAL in Spanish), mainly focused on the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Secretariat for Social Justice and Ecology (SJES), took place in Puente Grande (Guadalajara, Mexico) from June 3rd to 6th. The meeting was also attended by the Reflecting Team on Latin American Indigenous Cultures and Religions (ERCRILA in Spanish) and the Jesuit Migration Network (RJM in Spanish), who addressed subjects like Latin American and Caribbean reality, situation and trend analysis in order to rightly face those challenges and needs that are calling us to act, etc. [Read more...](#)

Canada - A personal and Institutional Conversion: Fr. Peter Bisson on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission



"The Jesuits first had to learn to say: "We are responsible," then "We are sorry," and finally, "We need your help". This is how Fr. Peter Bisson, SJ, summarizes the evolving relations between the Jesuits and indigenous peoples regarding residential schools in the latest edition of the [Canadian Jesuits](#). Indeed, the Jesuits ran a boarding school for boys, St. Peter Claver School (that later became Garnier College) in Ontario, which closed its doors in 1959. However, the Jesuits did not leave the region since they still serve there in indigenous parishes, working closely with former students. [Read more...](#)

India - Rights Group Condemns Repeated Raids on Jesuit Activist



A human rights group in Jharkhand, eastern India, has condemned what it called repeated raids on Jesuit social activist Father Stan Swamy. "The raids and arrests are part of the government's growing attempts to stifle dissent and intimidate those who are fighting for justice", the Jharkhand Janadhikar Mahasabha (Grand council of people's rights in Jharkhand) said on June 12, soon after the police raid. An eight-member team of the Maharashtra police raided the Bagaicha campus, the 83-year-old priest's residence at Namkum near Ranchi, the Jharkhand state capital. [Read more...](#)

Africa - JCAM Statement on World Environment Day: 5 June 2019



June 5 marks the World Environment Day. World Environment Day reminds us of the damage we have done to our God-given Common Home and the action we need to take to heal it. As Pope Francis tells us, "Never have we so hurt and mistreated our common home as we have in the last two hundred years" (*Laudato Si'* no. 53). The theme of this year's World Environment Day focuses on air pollution. Approximately 7 million people worldwide die

prematurely each year from air pollution, with about 2 to 3 million of these deaths occurring in Africa. [Read more...](#)

USA-Canada - Jesuits Invest in Corporations, Fight for Better Business Practices from the Inside



Working through shareholder activism, the Jesuits West Province recently helped pass [a shareholder resolution](#) to hold GEO Group, one of the largest for-profit prison and detention center operators in the U.S., accountable for human rights and treatment of detainees. Working in partnership with investors and members of the [Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility \(ICCR\)](#), the Jesuits requested that GEO "report annually...on how it implements" its human rights policy in its facilities, which include 69 in the United States. Jesuits

West was one of a number of religious organizations that bought a small number of shares in GEO nine years ago with the intention of influencing corporate policy and standards, a tactic known as shareholder activism. [Read more...](#)

Spain - Fifty years in the neighbourhood



In the 1960s a great number of families moved to Barcelona from other parts of Spain in order to look for jobs in the factories of the industrial belt of the city. Many of them dwelt in shantytowns which later developed into working class neighbourhoods. It was a time of lively social and ecclesial activity, even in the Society, and many Jesuits felt called to an insertion apostolate in the most underprivileged contexts. In Barcelona a group of Jesuits wanted to devote themselves to education, not in the historical schools of

the Society, but in the outskirts of the big city. [Read more...](#)

Colombia - Sergio Restrepo: a Jesuit who offered his life moved by an experience of deep love for life and for the people of Tierralta



With his characteristic joyfulness and pleasant closeness, Sergio became friend of many peasants of the region, together with whom he gathered a great variety of beautiful plants in order to make visible the extraordinary diversity of the flora that adorns each and every corner of the paths and fields of the area. He also collected thousands of objects pertaining to the different indigenous cultures that once inhabited this beautiful land, wishing to keep alive the meaning and depth of ancient cultures which left their mark in a

great variety of vessels, pots and other handicrafts. After having been buried for a long time, these objects are now traces and testimonies of how human life was in the past. [Read more...](#)

Europe - European Climate Policy between Ambition and Disappointment

Edmond Grace, JESC's secretary for ecology and justice, gives an overview on the achievements and challenges of European climate policy. Not all news relating to climate change is bad. The EU is on track to meet its emissions reduction target of 20% by next year. In fact, there was a 22% reduction of emissions between 1990 and 2017 while the economy grew by 28% over the same period. The main driver behind the emission reductions is innovation, including progress on renewable energy and energy efficiency. All of the above appears on the official website of the European Union (www.europa.eu) which also tells us



that 2020 target excludes emissions from the land sector but includes emissions from international aviation. [Read more...](#)

USA - Sr. Norma Pimentel and Fr. James Martin Honored for Commitment to Faith and Justice



On May 21, 2019 at the first annual [Ignite: A Celebration of Justice](#) in New York City, the Ignatian Solidarity Network honored **Sr. Norma**

Pimentel, M.J., and **Fr. James Martin, S.J.,** for their commitment to faith and justice-for "being a beacon of light to those who have been discarded, dehumanized, or forgotten." As executive director of Catholic Charities of the Rio Grande Valley in McAllen, Texas, [Sr. Pimentel](#) works to provide humanitarian aid to migrants arriving at the U.S.-Mexico border. Her role has situated her as a [powerful voice](#) in the U.S., advocating on behalf of those who migrate and urging immigration reform that upholds the dignity of those seeking refuge at the border, fleeing violence, poverty, and other injustices. [Read more...](#)

India - Jesuits Training Aims to Spread Ignatian Spirituality



A group of Jesuits underwent intense five-week training on Ignatian sources to help those interested in discernment and experience of Christ in daily life. "There has been an increased enquiry on Jesuit spirituality after a Jesuit became a Pope. People want to know the specialty that makes a Jesuit different and the guiding principle and practice that make them and their institutions successful", says Father Jossie D'Mello, a resource person for the April 3-May 9 training. The Jesuit superior general with the approval of Pope Francis in February declared a 10-year Universal Apostolic Plan (UAP) for more than 16,000 of his men spread across the world. [Read more...](#)

USA - New Book Celebrates 30 Years of Homeboy Industries



A new photo book, "[Walking in Grace](#)", by Alison Fogg Carlson, commemorates 30 years of [Homeboy Industries](#), founded by Fr. Greg Boyle, SJ. Homeboy Industries is currently the largest gang intervention, rehabilitation and re-entry program in the world. With photographs by Michael Collopy accompanied by intimate stories and poetry written by former gang members, the book gives a look into the services Homeboy Industries provides, including tattoo removal, job training, substance abuse treatment, mental health care and legal assistance. "In our current culture where dehumanizing speech about gang members is being normalized, the compassion and empathy of which they are so deserving is withheld from them", said Fr. Boyle.

[Read more...](#)

Global - Ecojesuit Takes Action for Water

Jesuits and partners from around the world joined the call to take action for water on [World Water Day](#). Ecojesuit sought water pledges from colleagues around the world and many expressed solidarity in caring and defending this resource that is fundamental to all life and human dignity.



Roberto Jaramillo SJ, President - CPAL and Rigobert Minani SJ, focal person of the Ecclesial Network of the Congo Basin Forest (Réseau Ecclésial du Bassin du Congo - REBAC), took the pledge during the [International Conference on Integral Ecology](#) at Georgetown University in Washington DC, USA. Xavier Jeyaraj SJ,

director of the Social Justice and Ecology Secretariat (SJES) outlined steps towards water for all, emphasizing its spiritual and living qualities, while colleague Rossana Mattei shared a [poem](#) on how water is a gift from the Lord. [Read more...](#)

Spain - Launching #CaminosdeHospitalidad



The initiative #CaminosdeHospitalidad was launched last May. This activity is part of the Hospitalidad (Hospitality) campaign fostered by the Society of Jesus. Their goals are is both to highlight the causes which are forcing millions of people each year to migrate and demand policies ensuring equality, protection, freedom and dignity for everybody. #CaminosdeHospitalidad was launched this year in Valencia with an unusual walk: participants went around Malvarrosa Beach picking up plastics and other rubbish, as one of the

drivers of migration is climate change, which is behind natural disasters due in great part to our consumption model. [Read more...](#)

Britain - Jesuit Missions London to make some noise for Climate!



Jesuit Missions will be joining the Climate Coalition and thousands of individuals from across the UK on the 26th June to lobby our MP's to tell them that the UK can no longer contribute to climate change and the destruction of our common home. We want the UK to commit to a net zero carbon emissions target, but we need your help. The day will begin at the Jesuit Centre

at 114 Mount Street, London at 10.30 am with a briefing from Jesuit Missions who will speak about the work that we do across the world supporting communities affected by climate change. [Read more...](#)

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