



Social Justice and Ecology Secretariat of the Society of Jesus

July 2019

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

Greetings



Wish you a Happy Feast of St. Ignatius !

Narrative

Love, Hate and Reconciliation in Syria

Susan Dabbous, JESC Communications Assistant



When I learnt of Father Frans van der Lugt SJ's death I was tempted to hate.

I could imagine his killers - their faces, their features, the colour of their clothes, the repeated ritual words that would have come out of their mouths at the moment they knocked at his house in Al Bustan and then shot him. I imagined I could smell the dusty carpets on which they would have slept just before shooting an innocent man. Why would an Islamist rebel group in Homs kill a priest, a Jesuit, a Dutch man who decided to move to Syria fifty years ago and stayed for the rest of his life? He arrived when he was in his late twenties and fell in love with Syria, the same beautiful country where I was born 37 years ago. I lived for most of my life in Rome, raised in a mixed family with an Italian mother and a Syrian father. That kind of a

mix of cultures that Father Frans would have appreciated a lot.

I fully understood why a man of profound spirituality would decide to stay in such a place. Syria was not just a beautiful archaeological site with rich and well-preserved antiquities. It was also a magical place where you could find different minorities living together. Armenians, Christians, Druze, even a tiny Aramaic-speaking community, all living happily in a predominantly Muslim country. [Read more...](#)

Flashnews

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



On the 50th anniversary of the creation of the Social Justice and Ecology Secretariat at the Curia of the Society of Jesus in Rome, we invite the former secretaries to share their views and reflections. They tell us about what caught their team's attention when they were leading the apostolic secretariat of the Society and the challenges they perceived for the social and ecological ministry then and now. Fr. Michael Czerny SJ who led the secretariat between 1992 and 2002, currently the Under-Secretary for the "Section for Refugees and Migrants" in the new Vatican department for the Promotion of Integral Human Development shares with us his reflections. [Read more...](#)

Global - Ignatian Delegation Participates in the UN's High-Level Political Forum on SDG



At the initiative of SJES, a 13-member Ignatian/Jesuit delegation took part in the United Nations High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development, between July 9 and 18, 2019, in New York. Fr. Arturo Sosa, SJ, the Superior General of the Society of Jesus, expressed his support in a [video message](#). He says, "This is an important event for the Society of Jesus, first of all because we have a long experience of working in all these fields in numerous places in the world: accompanying excluded persons and communities, working for justice and reconciliation and for the care of our common home". [Read more...](#)

Honduras - Jesuits Denounce Government Abuses in Honduras



The Jesuits in Honduras are denouncing the Honduran government's repression of protests over the past two months. The protests have been triggered by the government's privatization initiatives. Honduran security forces have killed and wounded teachers, students, health care workers and other Honduran citizens demonstrating to protect the health and education systems. "We deplore the social and political crisis experienced by the Honduran population as a result of the historic violation of fundamental rights and the deterioration of the rule of law, which are a result of the erratic and corrupt practices of politicians and decision-makers in the public administration", the Jesuits wrote in a statement on behalf of all their apostolic works in the country. [Read more...](#)

Europe - A New Leader for Justice in Mining

Guillermo Otano, from the Spanish NGO Alboan, has been appointed by Frank Janin SJ, President of Jesuit Conference of Europe, as the new coordinator of the GIAN - Justice in Mining Network. The network began in 2010 in Ranchi, in India, and since expanded all over



the world. Guillermo in an interview shares his views on the network. He says, "The real challenge for the coming years, in my view, is to strengthen our ability to work together, connecting the local struggles with the global dynamics that lay behind them. We need to collaborate in order to stop the criminalisation of human rights defenders and those who defend our "Common Home"; to speak out against the unethical behaviour of companies and governments involved in

mining projects; and to open a public conversation about the environmental degradation produced by mining (specially, regarding the use of water)". [Read more...](#)

Mexico - Inspiring Document from the CPAL Social Apostolate Meeting



After five decades of neoliberal policies in Latin America and the Caribbean, the increase of inequality and poverty is outrageous. While financial capital grows, human rights are violated and millions of people cannot live a decent life. Economic policies foster violence and democracy crises, forcing millions of people to leave their countries in order to save their lives. Indigenous people, people of African descent and peasants are threatened by the voraciousness of the extractivist

model, which does not respect their ancient territories while the states remain passive in a somewhat conspiratorial attitude. [Read more...](#)

Africa - The Pan-Africa Youth Summit on 'The Africa We Want'



The Jesuit conference for Africa and Madagascar (JCAM) and Justice and Ecology Office, in Partnership with the Rwanda Religious Leaders Forum (RRLF) and other likeminded youth organization from the East Africa Community region is organizing, a Pan-African youth roundtable summit in Kigali Rwanda. The 3 day summit from July 29 - 31 will bring over 250 youth from all over the continent, and 5 youth ministers representing the four regional blocks of the African continent and Rwanda (the host), to discuss on the

involvement of the youth in the leadership and affairs of the continent reflecting on the theme 'Africa We Want'. [Read more...](#)

Mexico - 8th COMPARTE Meeting Took Place in Bachajón, Chiapas



On Tuesday June 11th we closed the 8th meeting of the COMPARTE network with a happy heart (as the tzeltal people say). Sixty members of social centres, production communities, CPAL, universities, and foundations of 10 different Latin American countries, the United States, Canada, Spain, and Kenya sowed seeds of hope, knowledge, opportunities, and

confidence in that other, more human and sustainable economic logics are possible. The economic-productive experiences shared during the three-day meeting are a sign of it. [Video](#); [Read more...](#)

Indonesia - Raising Awareness on the Dangers of Human Trafficking



In Asia and the Pacific, an estimated 24.9 million men, women and children were living in modern slavery on any given day in 2016 according to the Global Slavery Index 2018. The region had the highest number of victims across all forms of modern slavery, accounting

for 73 per cent of victims of forced sexual exploitation, 68 per cent forced to work by state authorities, 64 per cent in forced labour exploitation and 42 per cent of all those in forced marriages. With a view to provide guidance for better understanding, to prevent, to eradicate trafficking and to protect the vulnerable, the Catholic Church in Indonesia translated the Vatican document "Pastoral Orientations on Human Trafficking" into Bahasa. [Read more...](#)

Ireland - Still Building the Peace



In 1980s the Irish Jesuits decided to start a Jesuit community in Churchill Park, Portadown in Northern Ireland, just simply to be a presence to the beleaguered people who lived there and who suffered from poverty and sectarian violence. The area made world headlines when the Orange Order demanded the right to march through this nationalist area. Brendan McPartlin SJ, the Province social delegate and a member of this community spoke about the peace-building ministry in the area. One of the big changes in the locality over the last 10 years has been the arrival of migrants from Africa, Eastern Europe, and Asia. The Portadown-Craigavon area has the largest density of migrants in Northern Ireland. According to Brendan, they are hard-working people who have helped improve the local economy, often doing jobs that others are reluctant to take on. [Read more...](#)

Kenya - Hakimani Social Centre's Conference on Climate Smart Water Governance



On 11th and 12th of June 2019, all roads for a moment led to HIPSIR for a two-day conference. The turnout was impressive: 500+ participants representing different constituencies and social interests. The first day was dedicated to a conversation on the effects of climate change on the two river basins in Kenya, out of its six; i.e., River Tana and Athi River ecosystems. The conference speakers and participants before and during the breakaway sessions examined the effects of climate change along these two river ecosystems and how livelihoods have been impacted negatively especially access to water. [Read more...](#)

Argentina-Uruguay - CPAL's Word: What Have We Learnt from this Crisis?



The credibility crisis in which the Chilean Church is immersed and which has also had a huge impact on the Society of Jesus, triggered by the sexual abuses perpetrated by priests, has forced us to examine and reflect on the causes of the loss of credibility and of trust in the institution. This has been a painful opportunity to learn how much pain and suffering have been caused by some of us abusing of innocent and defenceless people, as well as to admit our failure to act properly in some cases. [Read more...](#)

USA - Kino Border Initiative Honoured with a Grant and an Honorary Degree



The Kino Border Initiative (KBI) was awarded a grant for educational programming, and Father Sean Carroll, SJ received an honorary degree for his work with the KBI. **Valley Leadership Youth Grant:** The Valley Leadership Youth Grant was given to support Kino Teens educational programming. Brophy College Preparatory student Tony Mattalino nominated the KBI for the grant, and board member Dora Vasquez

represented the KBI at the presentation ceremony in Phoenix, AZ. Thank you, Valley Leadership for your support and for cultivating strong leadership in Arizona! [Read more...](#)

Ecuador - Land, Housing, and Jobs in Pope Francis' thought



More than 150 people came together in one of the auditoria of the Universidad Politécnica Salesiana to listen, see, and act. The idea was put forward by the Housing Corporation "El Hogar de Cristo" (Christ's Home), a work inspired, coordinated and run by the Society of Jesus in Ecuador, which is about to celebrate 50 years of presence in the city of Guayaquil and along the Ecuadorean coast. The goal was to reflect on these three constant demands of Pope Francis on behalf of the poor. Moreover, we wanted to commemorate with this event the life work of the former Superior General of the Society of Jesus, Pedro Arrupe SJ, whose beatification cause has already been launched. It was he who in 1969 created the Social Justice Secretariat. [Read more...](#)

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Headlines (HL) - Social Justice and Ecology Secretariat (SJES)

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