

HEADLINES 2011/01 ... News from the Jesuit Social Apostolate ...

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

Dear Friends,

A very Happy New Year to all of you. We apologize for the delay in sending you Headlines this month.

As you know, on the 7th February 2011, Francisco Javier (Patxi) Álvarez is officially taking over as Secretary (Director of the Secretariat). From the same day Fr. Patxi's email address will be <sjes-dir@sjcuria.org> and his phone number is +39 06 689 77 392. Please send any non-official communication to Fr. Fernando Franco to <fernando.work41@gmail.com> from now onwards. Note that his email address <fernando.franco@sjcuria.org> will be closed.

We are also taking this opportunity to let you know about the contact details of all of us here at the Secretariat:

Tina Negri (office administrator): sjes-sec@sjcuria.org

Filippo Duranti (assistant Promotio Iustitiae): sjes-pjas@sjcuria.org

Uta Sievers (communication and advocacy networks): sjes-com@sjcuria.org

Best wishes for 2011 from all of us!

The SJES team

* Narrative: Luísa Fernandes, Itinerant Team, Amazonia, Brazil

* Flashnews: SJES, Australia, India, Canada, USA, Sudan, Ireland, Venezuela, Senegal, Belgium, Haiti, United Kingdom

* Econews: USA, Philippines, Spain

* Narrative: Luísa Fernandes, Itinerant Team, Amazonia, Brazil

Father Christophe Six SJ travelled to the Amazon in September 2005, specifically to the Brazilian Amazon Region of the Society of Jesus, to become a member of the Itinerant Team working out of Manaus. My own arrival in the region was at the end of January 2006.

What is the Itinerant Team? We are a team of missionaries who do itinerant work in the Amazon region; we are both lay and religious and come from a variety of institutions and cultures. We share our lives with the people living along the river, with rural workers, with native peoples, and with the poor in the cities. For twelve years now the team has been working hard at forming new networks and joining hands with other Amazon projects – in a word, embracing frontiers. We work out of three central locations, one in Manaus, another in Tabatinga (where Colombia, Peru, and Brazil come together), and a third in Roraima (where Venezuela, Guyana, and Brazil come together).

“Close proximity to the most marginalized” was always the main concern of Fr. Christophe. It was for that reason that his first option was for the urban poor. His attention was focused on the challenges of the cities, where river-dwellers and native peoples intermingle and where drug addiction and crime are serious problems. There in the cities he saw reflected the violence of the larger society.

Subsequently Christophe, due to circumstances and his own generous and bold disposition, gave up his preference for the urban milieu and committed himself to learning about and working closely with the indigenous reality of Amazonia. Working with the Native Peoples Missionary Council, he dedicated himself heart and soul to the Munduruku people of the Nova Olinda region. He visited villages and lived close to the people, he promoted the women's movement and the training of women leaders, and he accepted the challenge of reaffirming the value of the native culture. He also formed part of a team that was accompanying and doing research with riverside dwellers who were reasserting their Maraguá origins. His wholehearted dedication opened up new horizons for this native people and paved the way for the recognition of the Maraguás as an ethnic group that was seeking land and better conditions as a resurgent population. They feel tremendously grateful to Christophe.

Christophe impressed me by his habit of constant prayer, his discernment, his boldness, and also his humility. He had a tremendous ability to find the sense of God in the worst of conflicts, and he also sought out ways to get around obstacles when apparently, and perhaps objectively, there were none. In this way he helped avoid ruptures which would impede the progress of a work, and he fostered more amicable relationships which produced new life.

In October 2007 he was found to have lung cancer, and from that time until 4 January 2011 he did his best to take better care of himself and stay alive. From 2008 on he lived and worked in Itaiçi (São Paulo) as a director of the Spiritual Exercises. When I spoke to him in September to wish him a happy birthday, he told me that he was pleased because for a year and ten months he had not received chemotherapy; it seemed the nodules were no longer a problem. In November, however, his condition took a sudden and drastic turn for the worse and was out of control.

His lack of health did not allow him to realize his greatest desire, which was to lead a more contemplative life. Only God knows!

We are immensely grateful to you, Christophe, for your magnificent witnessing to God's loving presence in the midst of us.

Luísa Fernandes
Itinerant Team, Amazonia, Brazil

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* Flashnews: SJES, Australia, India, Canada, USA, Sudan, Ireland, Venezuela, Senegal, Belgium, Haiti, United Kingdom

[SJES: The new issue of Promotio Iustitiae, the quarterly journal of the Social Justice and Ecology Secretariat, has just been published. Click here to access PJ 105:](http://sjweb.info/sjs/pjnew/)
<http://sjweb.info/sjs/pjnew/>

Australia: The re-launched website of Jesuit Mission Australia includes video, photo galleries and a "Letters from the Field" section which contains writings from Jesuit missionaries

working in countries as diverse as India, Cambodia and East Timor.

<http://www.jesuitmission.org.au/>

India: The Jesuit Udayani Social Action Forum is backing the claims of some 40 million 'illegal immigrants' from Bangladesh for Indian citizenship. The social centre has supported the members of dalit (former untouchables) Matua community, spread in 13 states of the country. Father Irudaya Jothi, who directs the Jesuit centre, said their support to the causes of dalit, tribal, women, children and minority groups "is part of our Jesuit option for the poor."

Canada: The social apostolate of the province of French Canada has re-launched its newsletter (in French) which covers issues such as social justice, ecology and indigenous peoples. If you would like to subscribe, please get in touch with Marco Veilleux: mveilleux@jesuites.org.

USA: Jesuit-run Santa Clara University has launched a website to educate Catholics about the death penalty. The website, sponsored by the University together with California Catholic Lawyers Against the Death Penalty, actively promotes the repeal of California's death penalty law. www.ccladp.org

Sudan: The preliminary results of the referendum in Southern Sudan indicate that the region will become an independent state. The Society of Jesus is present in the North of Sudan with a centre for Ignatian spirituality in Khartoum and in the South with two communities in Rumbek and Wau, where they have recently opened a high school. Two Jesuits are teaching in Juba, the Southern capital, and Jesuit Refugee Service is active in Lobone camp. The provincial in December asked all Jesuits to remain in the country in spite of rising tensions before the referendum, as "part of our call to testify the mission received by the Lord and of our dedication to the people of God in southern Sudan."

Ireland: The Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice (JCFJ) in Dublin has a new director: John K. Guiney SJ, who will also continue to be director of the Jesuit Mission Office. For the past fifteen months, Eoin Carroll, the Advocacy and Social Policy Research Officer, had been Acting Director. On 20 January, the centre also launched a new website to help promote an understanding of issues such as human rights, poverty, inequality, homelessness and crime. The website provides a variety of audio and video clips, articles, class activity plans and links to relevant organisations in order to encourage informed debate among young people and to underline the importance of acting for social justice. www.whycare.ie

Venezuela: The ninth quarterly analysis of the political situation in Latin America has just been published by the Jesuit social centre Centro Gumilla in Venezuela. It looks at the situation in Latin America during the months of October to December 2010 and includes an annex on "New socio-religious identities in Latin America". Download the publication here (in Spanish): www.gumilla.org

Senegal: **The World** Social Forum will take place in Dakar from 6 to 11 February 2011. SJES is not going to participate officially, but we are glad to announce that Llorenç Puig SJ from Spain has shown his willingness to organise an informal get-together at the Forum, if circumstances permit. Please email puigpuig@jesuits.net if you intend to go.

Belgium: A workshop on "Integration of Migrants" for European Jesuit apostolates working on migration will take place in Brussels on 30 and 31 March 2011. It will be aimed at

initiating an exchange of experiences and, where appropriate, **will start a** shared planning process for common activities. The workshop takes place immediately after another one, organised by JRS-Europe, on destitution among forced migrants. Contact Luis Muñoz for details: migrationdesk@jesuits-europe.org

Haiti: The 20 Jesuits who live in Haiti, most of them Haitian, are working hard for the reconstruction of the country. They have established five priorities in the wake of the earthquake: to develop basic schools in collaboration with the “Fe y Alegría” network; to support refugees and to defend their human rights; to help rebuild the social tissue of the country; to offer spiritual accompaniment; and to contribute to the improvement of Haitian-Dominican relations.

United Kingdom: Amazon.co.uk donates 5% of the purchase price from any transaction that goes through a specific link to Jesuit Refugee Service in the UK. Before Christmas, this has already generated 120 GBP which are being used to provide bus tickets to help refugees go to important appointments. **Support JRS when you shop at Amazon.co.uk through this link:** tinyurl.com/amazonjrs

* Econews: USA, Philippines, Spain

USA: At the Jesuit-run Gonzaga University in Spokane, Washington, dining hall food scraps are turned into nutrient-rich compost for healthy gardens. The initiative dramatically reduces the amount of waste generated in on-campus restaurants, and then repurposes it as garden compost. By tossing food scraps and food-soiled papers into a separate waste management bin, Gonzaga students and staff are diverting about 80 percent of dining hall waste.

Philippines: Father Jorge Beneito SJ, a Spanish Jesuit who has worked in Peru for the last 49 years, is currently on sabbatical in the Philippines, in northern Mindanao, where he teaches theology and gives workshops to students on hydropower and engineering. Read an inspiring article about his work with the local community here: <http://tinyurl.com/5ra2so8>. Sign up to receive similar articles by email here (in English and Spanish): <http://ecojesuit.com/>

Spain: The new Loyola-Abengoa Research Centre in Seville aims at developing teaching and research activities around renewable energies and sustainable development. It was launched on 14 January by Abengoa, a technology company specialising in sustainable energy, and the Jesuit-run Loyola Andalucía University.

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