

HEADLINES 2011/03 ... News from the Jesuit Social Apostolate ...

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

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\* Narrative: Aldo Michelis, Kino Border Initiative, Nogales, Arizona, USA: "The Coldest Day, The Warmest Day"

\* Flashnews: Germany, Zimbabwe, Mexico, Canada, World, Northern Ireland, Kenya, India, SJES, World

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They arrived: the Girl, her brother and their mother. "Take blankets out for them three", said Sister Lorena. They had all been given out in the morning, but I still looked in the closet and I only found a baby blanket.

When I saw the Girl sitting on the bench, shivering uncontrollably under her thin sweater, with a huge sense of urgency I tore the blanket out of the plastic bag and put it on the girl, wrapping her from back to front and hugging her for an instant as brief as it took the blanket to fall into place, but as perennial as gestures of love last from the heart.

I learned it that way as soon as she turned and "shot" me with that smile: a flame that melted all thermometers and, for the first time since I left the house in the morning, made me stop feeling cold. She sheltered me. That, in her face, was the expression of someone who knows well her dear friend God and suddenly comes across Him. "Oh! God took cold away from me" I could read. And she didn't need to know about my journey of faith and my personal relationship with Jesus because of whom I have found this path that brought me to Nogales; she didn't have to know about the story of Sister Lorena and the Missionary Sisters of the Eucharist that started the activities to support migrants here three years ago. She didn't know anything about Ignatius of Loyola and the Society of Jesus that with the Sisters and so many other people gave shape to the Kino Border Initiative that was now being her host. Yet less did she know about the person or for what reason that person donated the blanket that she was now wearing.

She only knew the essential fact, she had been freezing and that God warmed her up with a little blanket. That's what the smile on her face said. What an astonishing POWER! Another girl in the same girl! I have a feeling that this is the power of God Himself, that He makes available to us through love, to transform the environment, to literally change lives, starting by one's own.

The entire kitchen again had the fragrance of the Kingdom. Something felt different inside me. Something was making me behave differently. I imagine those who have children know well and are familiar with this occurrence: the love for the little ones. What I am certain about is that I know a bit better (and it has seduced me) the potency of this love without reasons or motives, without conditions, without expecting anything in return (even without knowing each other at all), which loves beyond the organic link and the bonds that life naturally places between parents and children.

How many "little ones" is God inviting me to love like this, on this path! I feel I know now a little bit better the loving ways of Jesus, that are God's ways, and it fascinates me. "There you

go, my friend: now you are like a little wrap!", I said smiling back at her, and so even her mother smiled. From then on, everything proceeded as normal. They ate, Erin (one of the volunteers) gave them clothes, we chatted and joked, they thanked us and left.

It was literally, "The Coldest Day...": The night from the 2nd to the 3rd of February was the coldest ever in Nogales history (11°F/-12°C with wind chill sensation of -2°F/-19°C), beating the record set back in 1975.

Aldo Michelis is a Mexican pre-novice who is discerning entrance into the Mexican Province's Jesuit Novitiate this July. He currently volunteers with KBI.

<http://www.kinoborderinitiative.org/en/>

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Germany: The project "Climate Change and Justice", of which the Jesuit Institute for Social and Development Studies (IGP) at the Munich School of Philosophy is the lead organisation, has published the results of a 2-year study on the impact of climate change on poor people. The book was presented to Pope Benedict XVI at the beginning of October 2010. Read a summary of the book in English here: <http://tinyurl.com/globgereng>  
The authors of the study have also published an article about it in the last edition of *Promotio Iustitiae*: <http://tinyurl.com/globgerpjeng>

Zimbabwe: On 26 February, Arrupe College in Harare organised a conference entitled "Beyond the Reign of Terror: Religion and State as Agents of Justice and Reconciliation in the 21st century". The speakers came from Zimbabwe as well as from abroad and included university lecturers, former government ministers and clergy. The newsletter of the social apostolate reported that "some Jesuits and their lay colleagues were visited by state agents who seemed displeased that they had taken senior students to the conference".

Mexico: The Jesuit-run Miguel Pro Human Rights Centre in Mexico City is leading a campaign to create a temporary transit visa for migrants passing through the country on their way to the United States. With a visa, these migrants will be able to travel onboard public transportation instead of the rooftop of freight trains, making them less vulnerable to kidnappings (more than 22,000 every year) and other grave human rights abuses. To add your voice to the campaign, send an email to [internacional@centroprodh.org.mx](mailto:internacional@centroprodh.org.mx). For more information (in English): <http://tinyurl.com/mexprodh>

Canada: The provincial of French-speaking Canada, Jean-Marc Biron SJ, has issued a Lenten letter to Jesuits and collaborators in the province to remind them that "reconciliation with creation is a spiritual and social requirement for our times". As well as being a "call to conversion that progressively leads towards an authentic 'ecological solidarity'," the letter contains practical suggestions for discernment and action. The letter can be accessed in French and English here: <http://tinyurl.com/canreconat>

World: The Integrity of Creation Working Group of the USG/UISG JPIC Commission has put together Eco-spirituality resources including prayers, books and articles, statements by popes and bishops' conferences, and websites (in English). They can be found in Word here (in English): <http://tinyurl.com/icwgres> or on these pages: <http://ecoreligious.wikispaces.com/> (set your own language on the home page).

Northern Ireland: A number of Jesuits participated in the “Spirituality and Trauma” international conference in Belfast from 9-14 March. Elias Omondi SJ from Kenya and Michael Bingham SJ from Northern Ireland both led sessions at the event which drew over two hundred people. Ray Helmick SJ from Boston gave the welcoming address, read his speech here: <http://tinyurl.com/norirlheal> and see the programme of the conference here: <http://tinyurl.com/norirlhealconf>

Kenya: The Jesuit Social Centre in Nairobi, Hakimani, has a new director. Brother Elias Mokuia Nyatete SJ has a PhD from the University of Melbourne, Australia, and has worked both for Vatican Radio and for Radio Kwizera, a radio station in Tanzania run by Jesuit Refugee Service. <http://www.jesuithakimani.net/>

India: Jesuits from Indian Social Institute, Delhi, along with many civil society groups and people's movements, organized a Candle Light vigil at India Gate in Delhi to show solidarity with the people of Japan and to protest against the use of nuclear power in India. More information and pictures here: <http://tinyurl.com/jesacan>. After the success of the vigil, Jesuits in Delhi (from ISI, JESA, SAPI, JRS, Vidyajyoti) along with others organized a protest march to Parliament on 25th March against the nuclearization of India.

SJES: From 4 to 9 April, the five leaders of the Global Ignatian Advocacy Networks (GIAN) on Ecology, Education, Governance of Natural and Mineral Resources, Migration and Peace and Human Rights will meet at the Jesuit Curia in Rome with four experts from Britain, Germany, Singapore and Spain. This workshop marks the start of a two-year formation programme on advocacy and networking designed by the leaders and run by the Social Justice and Ecology Secretariat.

World: On the occasion of the Global Day of Action on Military Spending, 12 April 2011, the presidents of the men's and women's religious institutes in Rome (USG/UISG) have issued a letter. They suggest the following actions for communities: Learn more about military spending; incorporate this issue into community prayers and/or the Eucharist; inform others about this appeal and its website: <http://demilitarize.org>; look for ways to collaborate with organizations working for peace through non-violence on this issue. Read the letter here: <http://tinyurl.com/demileng>

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