



Social Justice and Ecology Secretariat of the Society of Jesus

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

Narrative

The indigenous peoples of the Amazon and the "listening world"

Being called to the mission of the Society of Jesus is to partake in a living process, as it requires an on-going encounter with the inner person, from the spirit and the desire, to serve your personal concerns to be called and to be part of a new process, of pathways and of life.

Being called to work with the indigenous Awajún-Wampís people has helped me recognise the complexity of these processes. It involves asking questions about the meaning of life: Do I really try to understand the indigenous world? Is my way of building relationships really rightly-balanced? What are my prejudices and reservations about the indigenous world? What is their experience of faith, their experience of the transcendental being? What is their worldview? Do I value it? These are the questions which touch the lives and desires of those who come into contact with this reality.

All this involves breaking with one's old schemas in order to open up the possibility of a real coming together between man, environment and culture. We learn that life is only lived through listening and about learning how to listen. This requires disposition, as the mission is not only about the necessity of being. It requires disposition to know we are worlds of encounter and complementarities; brothers, who can act with very good intentions in our service, but continue to be this distant "other". With regard to this other, make no mistake, I have reservations about my way of being, those which categorise me as an outsider, the mestizo.

Within the dynamics of this encounter, our alumni from the Fe y Alegría College, Valentín Salegui, (on the banks of River Marañón in Amazonia) come with very complex experiences of community life, with emotional, as well as material needs. They come with conflicts in a world which makes new demands on them so they can "be". The young Awaruna-Wambisa also are affected by these new codes and necessities, where their aspirations take their dreams far from the land, where formal education sometimes breaks their sense of belonging.

The 'world of listening' appears as a duty of encounter, as education involves the accompaniment of human beings whose identities are being formed, being constituted, a way of valuing their way of "being" in the world. The reference points should clearly be rooted in

the value of their identity, their worldview and traditions: these are their strengths, the set of values from which they will relate to the world of "those from outside".

But have we unveiled the questions which come to us during this encounter? The responses only take form when we recognise that in parity of circumstances we are getting to know worlds which must necessarily learn to engage in dialogue in order to understand each other and from there see each other as inseparable parts of the same identity.

Dialogue begins inside each one of us; our world of certainties must give way to the desire to learn other ways of thinking, other worlds of feeling, meaning and life. These are steps towards a mission which will allow us take on this challenge, to be better brothers.

Jorge Cabeza SJ

Jorge, a Peruvian Jesuit and coordinator of the Indigenous Apostolate, lives in Yamakai-éntsa, the indigenous area of Bagua province in Amazonas. He is the deputy director of the Fe y Alegría College, Valentín Salegui, and a member of the Social Commission of the province.

Flashnews

SJES - Annual Meeting of Conference Social Apostolate Coordinators:



The annual meeting of the Conference/Assistancy Social Apostolate coordinators will be held at the SJE Secretariat in Rome, from May 14-18. This year the team will reflect on the responses of Jesuits to the Ecology document "Healing a Broken World" (PJ 106). The response has been collected from the Province Social Coordinators through a short questionnaire sent from the secretariat. They will also reflect on the GIAN and the challenges ahead.

Europe - Global Campaign for Education.



The [Global Action Week for Education](#) took place from the 22 to 28 of April, 2012. There are still 69 million children in the world that do not go to school, out of which 54% are girls. There are also 759 million adults that are illiterate and 2 thirds of them are women. Several institutions such as [Fe y Alegría](#), [Alboan](#), [Entreculturas](#) of the Society of Jesus are promoting the Campaign. And the Secretariat for Social Justice and Ecology, through its [Ignatian Advocacy Network](#) is also promoting (GIAN) 'Right to Education' as an area for advocacy.

United States - Santa Clara University Selected for 2013 Solar Decathlon:



Santa Clara University (SCU), a Jesuit University in California, hopes the third time will be the charm as it takes part in one of the world's most prestigious competitions to determine the best designer and builder of a net-zero energy house. [The U.S. Department of Energy \(DOE\) has announced that Santa Clara University](#) will compete in the 2013 Solar Decathlon, joining 19 other teams of universities and colleges from around the world.

CPAL - Meeting of SJR / SJM in Latin America:



The meeting of the Jesuit Migration Services and Jesuit Refugee Services will be held between 28 April and 4 May, at Buga (Colombia), an active and coordinated network in the Conference of Latin America. This network tries to respond comprehensively to the movements of people in Latin America, addressing in a coherent way economic migrants, internally displaced and forced migrants seeking for asylum. The meeting plans identify some common specific objectives for the network and some common actions.

Malta - Meeting of the Social Delegates of European Provinces:



Around 15 Social delegates of various Provinces of Europe gathered together for the second time at the Jesuit Retreat House, Malta from April 12th to 14th along with Fr. John Dardis, President of the European Conference. Convened by José Ignacio García, director of JESC in Brussels, the participants shared about the situation of the social sector in each of their provinces. They also shared on the main strategic options of JRS-Europe and the response of the Jesuits to the document "Healing a Broken World". The high point was the visit to the detention centres of refugees and migrants and the sharing of experiences by John Mauki and Jaroslay Mikuczenwski, two young Jesuits from Tanzania and Poland respectively, working in JRS-Malta under a joint project of the Jesuit Conferences of Africa and Europe.

United States - An International Conference on Networking in the Society of Jesus:



The Jesuit Institute at Boston College, together with the Graduate School of Social Work and the Centre for Ignatian Spirituality, is organizing an International Conference to reflect on the challenges and potentials within our International network of institutions in order to facilitate and maximize our impact as a transnational body with a universal mission. The conference brought together around 35 Jesuits and lay colleagues from all over the world, academicians and practitioners from apostolic works. The main objective was to initiate a line of reflection and research on the opportunities and ways to develop international networking in the Ignatian family; given the challenges that globalization poses to the universal body of the Society of Jesus.

France - Catholic Social Doctrine online:



CERAS, The French Centre for Social Research and Action has created a new site on the Social Teaching of the Catholic Church that helps to understand the doctrines in the context of the tradition of the Church, of the new theological perspectives and the reading of the signs of the times together with the contributions of the natural sciences. The articles that present the different questions come from very renowned authors. CERAS offers the texts for translation into other languages. www.doctrine-sociale-catholique.fr. If you wish to translate them, kindly contact CERAS.

Africa - CYNESA the Catholic youth response to environmental challenges:



Catholic Youth Network for Environmental Sustainability in Africa (CYNESA) has created a platform through which young Catholics across Africa are responding to the twin challenges of environmental degradation and climate change, from the perspective of Catholic social ethics, paying attention to the most vulnerable. Taking advantage of social media, the network has threefold aims, namely *Education and awareness creation, Networking and advocacy training, and Encouraging and supporting concrete action plans at the local level.* [Read More...](#)

India - Academicians and Activists search for an integral response to Displacement & Migration:



A Jesuit run premier Business Management Institute, Xavier Institute of Management - Bhubaneswar (XIMB), Orissa, brought together academicians and 25 Jesuit social activists, including a Provincial for an international conference on Displacement and Migration from April 10-12, one of the 5 chosen priority issues for South Asia. The participants and academicians were from Mexico, South Africa, France, Japan, China and many other countries besides India. The conference, a first of its kind, helped the intellectuals, management personnel and grass root activists to reflect together and learn from each other and search for a common response. In their search, poor and the displaced people were the focus. [Read more...](#)

Latin America - Online workshop for citizen commitment:

"[Todos somos parte](#)" an online workshop on the above theme is open and [applications](#) are available from 9 April. The online workshop for citizen commitment will commence in June 2012. It is addressed to teachers who want to deepen their knowledge and acquire values,



attitudes and aptitudes for citizen commitment. The initiative has been supported both by Fe y Alegría and the Latin American universities of the Society of Jesus (Ausjal). This is intended to be an important contribution for the renewal of democratic values among communities in Latin America.

of death penalty:



[The California Province recently endorsed the SAFE California Act](#), which would replace California's death penalty with a sentence of life in prison with no chance of parole as the maximum punishment for murder. This means convicted killers will remain behind bars forever - with no risk of being executed.

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