



Social Justice and Ecology Secretariat of the Society of Jesus

ENG 30 July 2012

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

Greetings



**Wish you a
HAPPY FEAST OF ST. IGNATIUS !**

We pray that he may obtain for each one of us
a great measure of his own spirit
so that we may be the Jesuits
he would want us to be in our time.

*Social Justice and Ecology Secretariat
(SJES)*

Jesus at the Street Mass

At the end of August in 2011, I boarded a plane to Jeju Island, the largest island located in the southern part of South Korea to go to a small village called Gangjeong. Who would have imagined that my simple journey to a small village in an island will end up being in the jail? Unfortunately Gangjeong happens to be the village chosen for the naval base in 2007 by the government.

I work at the Center for Voluntary Social Service in Sogang University. The reason why I decided to visit Gangjeong was to meet and spend some time with Fr. Jeong-hyun Moon, a 73 year old retired Parish Priest known among people as 'the priest of streets', who has dedicated his life to pro-democracy and peace movement for the last 40 years. He was there with the people participating in a protest against Jeju naval base construction. Fr. Moon had set up a praying tent in front of the main gate of naval base construction site; and demanded cancellation of the construction of the naval base along with the village people who have been opposing the plan. In order to encourage and support him, I headed to Gangjeong with a few other Jesuits.

The navy treated the praying tent as their annoyance. They were waiting and watching for an

opportunity to tear down the tent. Two days after arrival in Gangjeong, I encountered a turning point of my journey. That day, I was sleeping in the tent with other Jesuits guarding the place. At about 5 a.m., we heard the warning sirens that made us realize a state of emergency has been declared. After a while more than 1000 policemen invaded the village. Soon the village was isolated from any contact outside by the policemen. After besieging



the village, they started to arrest the core activists who had led the protest as well as the residents who protested against their coercive and violent action. We, the Jesuits and diocesan priests were isolated by policemen for about 12 hours, later arrested and dumped us at a remote place far from the site in order to segregate us from the people. Eventually the praying tent was pulled down by the police. The cruel action of policemen on that day made me realize how serious the condition was.

In 2007, the navy enforced the law to construct the naval base in Gangjeong without following the procedure of receiving the consent of the local people. The village people immediately formed a protest group against the construction and started a peace movement. From the beginning, regardless of their peaceful protest, the navy had been responding with deception and violence. The village people had been protesting peacefully for the past 5 years in spite of receiving verbal, physical and emotional violence. As a result, roughly 75.5% of total residents had suffered from mental disorders such as compulsive hostility, anxiety, and depression; 43.9% of people felt suicidal. I was deeply pained to hear these facts.

From October 2011, solidarity activities in support of the movement by the Korea Catholic organizations had been spreading across the country. As one way of solidarity activities, the priests started celebrating mass on the street in front of the construction site. I attended the street mass whenever possible. Besides the street mass, we protested the brutal exercise of power by government authorities and demanded the cancellation of the construction. To actualize our demands, we tried to block the construction vehicles entering the construction site. In that process, we were taken to police station many times. Despite several difficulties, we did not stop the resistance. We were not even afraid of going to jail. Our activities encouraged and consoled the village people and re-energized the peace movement that was about to die down. When I was in jail, I found great comfort in the fact that I, as a priest, had this opportunity to imitate Jesus who shares the painful feelings of persecuted people and console them.

For me, Gangjeong is the place where the Two Standard Meditation of St. Ignatius became real. On one side, there is a small group of people attending the street mass, on the other side, there is a big group armed with weapons and shields waiting to devour. It is not easy to find hope because of the disparity of power. However, I firmly believe that if Jesus was here with us, he would have celebrated the street mass. Attending the street mass has been a great joy to me; because I meet Jesus who gladly becomes a neighbor to the people who are being crushed and crucified.

Fr. Chonguk Kim SJ

Flashnews

Madrid: Global Ignatian Advocacy Network - Education

Between the 16 and 20 July, the Global Ignatian Advocacy Network held a workshop on the right to quality education, involving some 20 participants from the African, European, Latin American, and South Asian Conferences. During the workshop a position paper on the right to quality education was drafted and the major lines of action over the next few years were agreed, including participation in the Global Campaign for Education, the promotion within



the Campaign of the need to undertake international advocacy in favour of the right to quality education, and the possibility of providing international support to potential campaigns undertaken in selected countries. The atmosphere at the workshop and the work accomplished were both exceptional.

Africa: Green Week at the Jesuit Theologate (ITCJ - Abidjan)



An outcome of 'Healing a Broken World' and the letter of Father General, the Jesuit theologate ITCJ (*Institut de Théologie de la Compagnie de Jésus*) at Abidjan initiated the "Green Week" and planted trees in the campus. Starting with the Rector, Fr. Victor Adangba, the formators and the Scholastics took their turn to leave an ecological trace of their passage through the ITCJ. They have planted 33 apple plants and 60 *murenga* plants (noted for its great therapeutic value) since March 2012.

India: Central Zone Provinces plan actions against Displacement



Fifteen social activists including the five Province coordinators from Madhya Pradesh, Ranchi, Hazaribagh, Jamshedpur and Dumka gathered between 24-25 July for reflections, sharing and planning for common actions in the zone. This annual meeting took place in the contexts of massive people's resistance to forcible displacement and repressive measures by the police in the zone. Accompanied by Dr. Walter Fernandes, and Sannybhai, JESA Secretary, the team deliberated and made plans for research studies on displacement, training of people, networking and collaboration among Jesuits and civil society movements.

US: Finding God in Unsettled Times



"Finding God in Unsettled Times" a conference on Ignatian Spirituality from June 29-July 1, 2012, organized by the Jesuit Collaborative at Loyola University, Maryland brought together more than 300 people both Hispanics and Anglos rich in diversity, prayer and spiritual formation. Extreme heat and a powerful storm added to a tangible sense of unsettledness for those attending. The conference blended scholarship in the Exercises, linkage with the Church, a faith that does justice, bi-lingual communal prayer, and presentations grounded in the experience of Finding God in unsettled times. [Read more...](#)

Spain: days of formation



Between the 16 and 20 July, the Spanish provinces held their first Social Training Days bringing together a group of 27 individuals engaged in the social apostolate of the Society in the country. The issues discussed included: the apostolic project within the scope of the history of the Faith-Justice mission, proposed areas of work over the next few years, the current challenges facing the Society outlined in the document, "Invited to Collaborate" by the Social Justice and Ecology Secretariat, the personal experience of Ignatian spiritual growth, and the characteristics of the identity and mission of the works of the social apostolate. It was an intense journey touching upon the present reality, the mission, the people and organisations with which we serve. It left us with a feeling of gratitude, a greater unity in our apostolic and geographic diversity and encouraged us to share the experience and the analysis of the documents in order to continue raising more and more awareness of our shared mission and of the shared responsibility to it.

Rome: SJES website updates



The SJES Secretariat has updated its website and added some new features such as videos, links to conference social sector websites and better archiving of the blogs and news. An interesting feature is the easy readability of each article and the download facility of previous issues of *Promotio Iustitiae* in all 4 languages for the last 12 - 15 years. The Secretariat will be extremely happy to receive your feedback and suggestions for improvement. Visit our website

<http://www.sjweb.info/sjs/>

India: Dalit Christians demand 'benefits of affirmative action'



Demanding deletion of Paragraph 3 of Indian Constitution (Scheduled Caste) Order 1950 which renders Christians and Muslims ineligible for enjoying the benefits of affirmative action (reservation), Christians from all over the country will hold a protest march to parliament at New Delhi on August 1, 2012. The protest march and sit-in, organized by Catholic Bishops Conference of India (CBCI) and National Council of Dalit Christians (NCDC) will be held at Ramlila grounds, New Delhi, to protest the six decades of discrimination against Schedule Caste Christians by the Indian State. [Read more...](#)

Europe: Safe Drinking Water for everyone - Rethinking water policy



Nearly 900 million people around the globe have no access to clean, safe drinking water, and 2.6 billion (40% of world's population) live without proper sanitation, according to the German *Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklungshilfe*. Managing water resources is of course a complex process and it is necessary to involve many different political and social groups. In 2000, the European Union adopted the Water Framework Directive, which established four main objectives. [Read more...](#)

Cambodia: A leading environmentalist killed



Chut Wutty, (46 yrs) director and founder of the Natural Resources Protection Group, a leading Cambodian environmentalist who campaigned against deforestation and illegal logging, was shot and killed in a confrontation with police on April 26, 2012. Fr Gabriel Lamug-Nañawa SJ, a Filipino Jesuit assigned to Jesuit Service Cambodia, reflecting on the impact of Chut Wutty in life and in death says, "One frontrunner has been gunned down, but many still stand behind him". Quoting a community leader from Preah Vihear Province he says, "Chut Wutty's heart is gone, but thousands of Chut Wutty hearts still survive. We are not afraid of the person who killed Chut Wutty for trying to stop illegal loggers; we have never been afraid." [Read more...](#)

You receive this official Headlines (HL) Newsletter from [SJES](#) - sent in 4 languages to around 9.000 subscribers in 130 countries - because you are our esteemed subscriber.

[Modify your Email ID](#) : Kindly write under subject '**Modify**';

[Unsubscribe](#) : kindly write under subject '**Unsubscribe**'

If you are not receiving our Journal **Promotio Iustitiae (PJ)**, kindly [Subscribe](#)



Social Justice and Ecology Secretariat (SJES)

Borgo S. Spirito 4 - 00193 Rome, Italy

Tel: +39-06-6986-8393, Email: sjes@sjcuria.org

Publisher - Patxi Álvarez, SJ; Editor - Xavier Jeyaraj, SJ

<http://www.sjweb.info/sis>

