



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

In love with a displaced God

Pau Vidal, SJ (ESP)

"Paradoxically, it is among those who most intimately know the power of death that we find the most stubborn faith in the power of life and, therefore, in the power of the God who is the source of life."

Roberto Goizueta



I hail from Barcelona, Catalonia. I joined the Society of Jesus in 2000 with a deep desire to serve the poor. This initial impulse has been refined and purified from just serving to something deeper and more reciprocal, which is journeying with those at the margins of history and society. I have been privileged to be able to be with JRS (Jesuit Refugee Service) for some years now. First in Liberia, later briefly in Nogales (USA-México border), more recently in Kakuma camp (Kenya) and now in Maban (South Sudan).

Sharing with refugees I realize that what really drains their energy is the memory of the brutality of what they had to go through, the loss of their beloved ones and most of all the uncertainty of when this too long exile will finally end. The longing of their homeland is an open wound in their hearts. Thus, in a real sense, as a fellow Jesuit once said, being with JRS means touching the failure of humanity in its most radical expression.

However, in Liberia, Nogales, Kakuma and Maban I have witnessed that the lives of the forcibly displaced are not only cramped by sorrow, wretchedness, violence and suffering but also punctuated by joy, celebration, healing, transformation and beauty. With the refugees I

have experienced time and time again that mysterious human capacity to celebrate life in the midst of Death. [Read more...](#)

Flashnews

Austria - Xavier Network meeting in Vienna



The Xavier Network, a unique collaboration of Jesuit mission offices and development organizations that works with vulnerable and marginalized people around the world, met recently in Austria for its Spring meeting. The network is at a significant moment in its 14-year history following General Congregation 36 and the Encyclicals of Pope Francis. Last week Xavier Network members met in Austria, generously hosted by Jesuiten Mission Austria, to reflect on what these changes mean for their work. The agenda covered a wide range of topics including future strategy, collaboration with other Jesuit networks and the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. [Read more...](#)

Latin America - SJ Education networks of Guatemala defend the victims of Hogar Asunción



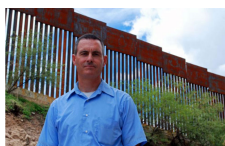
Last March 8th, a fire broke out at the Virgen de la Asunción shelter in southern Guatemala, which resulted in 37 girls and teenagers killed and almost twenty hospitalized. According to early indications, they themselves ignited the fire to protest the human rights violations they were suffering. In the face of tragedy, the educational works of the Society of Jesus and other allied organizations representing thousands of Guatemalan girls, boys, adolescents and young people have issued a statement in which they express their sadness and indignation at the facts. [Learn more...](#)

Australia - New project to help boys and men flourish



International Jesuit leader Fr Arturo Sosa has expressed his support for a new Jesuit Social Services programme aimed at tackling violence and helping men and boys build better relationships with those around them. Jesuit Social Services CEO Julie Edwards announced the new programme, The Men's Project, at the organisation's annual dinner on March 25, which also celebrated the organization's 40th anniversary. [Learn more...](#)

USA - Jesuits and partners come to the aid of deported migrants



Last February, a 35-year-old mother of two in Arizona became one of the first unauthorized migrants deported to Mexico under the Trump administration's immigration crackdown. Her case threw fuel on the debate over administration policy, but for some who minister along the border, the argument was not just political. "It was personal," said Jesuit Father Sean Carroll. [Read more...](#)

Africa - JASCNET Seminar on democracy and election knowledge in Africa



The Jesuit Africa Social Centres Network (JASCNET) organized a seminar at Hekima Institute of Peace Studies and International Relations (HIPSIR), Nairobi, from the 15th to the 20th of March 2017, on Democracy and Electoral Knowledge in Africa. The seminar was officially opened by the Director of JASCNET, Fr. Rigobert Minani, and

afterwards, Fr Orobator S.J., the new President of Africa and Madagascar, celebrated mass with the participants and welcomed them on behalf of the Jesuits Provincials and Major Superiors of Africa and Madagascar. [To access the Press Release.](#)

Africa - AJAN launched a book titled AHAPPY



AJAN (African Jesuit AIDS Network) has launched a book titled *AJAN HIV and AIDS Prevention Programme for the Youth (AHAPPY)*. According to Fr Elphege Quenum S.J., Director of AJAN, the manual intends to lead young people to an AIDS free generation, empowering them to make informed and responsible choices and equipping them with knowledge, life skills and values. [Learn more...](#)

Spain - First anniversary of Campaign for Hospitality



Following the steps of the Jesuits in Latin America, in January 2016, Jesuit social apostolate organisations in Spain launched the '[Hospitality campaign](#)' covering four areas of action: welcoming, international cooperation, social awareness and advocacy. It aims at protecting the rights and covering the needs of migrants and refugees, where the official system's services prove insufficient. Several social centres have redesigned, reinforced and expanded their reception facilities, offering new places and activities. They have contributed to the dialogue with public institutions and collaborated closely with specialized refugee institutions and citizen solidarity platforms. Jesuit organizations in the Conference of Canada and the US plan to follow this Campaign for Hospitality next year. [Learn more...](#)

Europe - EU passes conflict minerals law



On March 16, the European Parliament passed the law on conflict minerals, a regulation that aims to assure that incomes from imports of minerals to the European Union do not fund violations of human rights and armed conflicts in different parts of the world. Several European Jesuit institutions have been advocating for a fair law during the last years. They express their satisfaction, though they think the regulation has its limits. [Learn more...](#)

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