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Parish Social Ministry
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Parish Social Ministry

~Life, Justice, Charity and Peace~

OFFICE OF PEACE & JUSTICE / PARISH SOCIAL
MINISTRY
MARCH / APRIL 2011



Providing Help.
Creating Hope.

"The principle of the common good, to which every aspect of social life must be related if it is to attain its fullest meaning, stems from the dignity, unity and equality of all people."

-Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, Pontifical Council for Justice & Peace, 2005

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A Catholic Message to Congress: Don't Balance the Budget on the Backs of the Poor

Catholic Leaders from NC met with 4 Representatives and staff of both Senators Burr and Hagan on February 15, 2011 to stress the needs of the of the poorest at home and overseas.

Catholic leaders from across the country were in Washington, DC on February 15, 2011, to urge members of Congress to remember the needs of the most vulnerable in society, whether at home or in the developing world, as it prepares its budget. The message of the Church is that it is unjust for the poor to bear a heavier burden of cuts than those more fortunate.

Six constituents from NC discussed how to pass a responsible budget that protects the safety net for the most vulnerable in soci-

ety and provides long-term assistance to lift the poor out of poverty. International assistance is proportionally a very small area of the budget that saves lives where no other help is available and should be protected from cuts. The current rise in world-wide food prices reminds us of the need to maintain these investments or risk increased hunger and instability.

"These are harsh times financially for many Americans and we are all making sacrifices," said Melissa DuCharme. "But let's make sure that we all carry the appropriate burden and don't heap misery on people already in need by asking them to sacrifice the most."

The NC group was part of more than 400 Catholic

delegates from 40 states who visited Capitol Hill during the annual Catholic Social Ministry Gathering to advocate policies that uphold the life and dignity of human life and pursue justice and peace world-wide.

"This is a great example of how our collective advocacy work benefits poor and vulnerable people overseas while at the same time providing opportunities for Catholics to act on their faith here in the United States," said John Carr, Executive Director, Department of Justice, Peace, and Human Development, USCCB.

Read the following pages to learn more about how you can engage in advocacy work as well!

Pope Benedict's Lenten Message

In his 2011 Lenten Message, Pope Benedict challenges our human greed and asks us to be more generous. He says, "In our journey, we are often faced with the temptation of accumulating and love of money that undermine God's primacy in our lives. The greed of possession leads to violence, exploitation and death; for this, the Church, especially during

the Lenten period, reminds us to practice almsgiving - which is the capacity to share. The idolatry of goods, on the other hand, not only causes us to drift away from others, but divests man, making him unhappy, deceiving him, deluding him without fulfilling its promises, since it puts materialistic goods in the place of God, the only source of life... The prac-

tice of almsgiving is a reminder of God's primacy and turns our attention towards others, so that we may rediscover how good our Father is, and receive His mercy."

As we continue with our fasting, prayer, and almsgiving this Lent, let's challenge ourselves to less be greedy and more generous, particularly to those who are most vulnerable.

Catholic Relief Services/US Bishops Confront Global Poverty

Be One in a Million— Join Us to Confront Global Poverty

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and Catholic Relief Services (CRS) call on **one million Catholics** in the United States to confront global poverty. Advocate with us to end hunger, disease, conflict, and other issues that affect the lives of our brothers and sisters worldwide.

Catholics Confront Global Poverty and take action to:

- improve and increase **U.S. international assistance**, so people like Domingas de Sousa, of East Timor, can lift themselves out of poverty.
- strengthen **international peacekeeping and peacebuilding** initiatives, so children like Raneen Qumsieh and Mariam Syriani, in the West Bank, can live in peace.
- complete **debt relief**,

so poor nations can invest in the needs of their people, like Aurelie Nyapeye, from Cameroon.

- reform **global trade and agricultural policies**, so that people like Rasmata Sawadogo, in Burkina Faso, can flourish, and smaller farmers in the United States are protected.
- ensure that poorer countries' wealth of **natural resources** are explored in ways that protect the environment and ensure that poor people like Yolanda Zurita, from Peru, benefit and have a voice.
- promote comprehensive immigration reform and address the root causes of **migration**, so the rights and dignity of migrants like Anselmo Ramundo, of Guatemala, can be upheld.
- address **global cli-**

mate change and help people like Bedossa Betella, in Ethiopia, adapt to its effects.

Catholics Confront Global Poverty would be a great project for the Social Justice or Social Concerns committee at your parish. Planning activities to educate the parish about poverty may encourage parish members to engage in advocacy with Members of Congress about the seven issues mentioned above. The many activities and ideas encourage parishioners to pray, learn, share, and advocate for an end to global poverty.

See www.usccb.org/globalpoverty or www.crs.org/globalpoverty for more information about Catholics Confront Global Poverty and many, many resources.



Bread for the World Offering of Letters Workshop in Raleigh!

2011 Raleigh
Offering of Letters
Workshop on

Thursday, April 28, 2011

**The Catholic
Community of St.
Francis of Assisi**
11401 Leesville Rd.
Raleigh, NC 27613

6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Register today
(click above)
or call 1-888-239-0073

At the workshop, you will:

- Participate in an interactive training and get ideas about how to conduct an Offering of Letters in your church, campus, or community group.
- Learn about how U.S. foreign assistance is changing lives in countries like Haiti and Liberia, as well as what we can do to ensure even greater impact.
- Connect with other people of faith who are

answering God's call to end hunger.

- Enjoy FREE refreshments!

Last year, your voice helped keep 1.2 million kids out of poverty in the United States. That's just one example of the impact Bread for the World members like you have—year in and year out. With your voice and dedication, 2011 holds equally great possibilities!



Fair Trade Information

What is Fair Trade? How can I promote fair trade in my parish?

Fair Trade is based on the principal that people should earn a fair profit for the items they produce. Fair Trade guarantees fair wages and provides access to technical and financial assistance and most importantly, connects these producers with consumers like us who understand that the choices we make every day have the power to make the trading system work better for our brothers and sisters around the world.

Catholic Relief Services promotes fair trade and fair trade products far beyond coffee and chocolate.

See www.crsfairtrade.org for more information.

Many of our parishes have had Fair Trade Festivals, workshops, and are even selling fair trade coffee after Mass. Contact our office for more ideas on how to get started or to share a best practice!



A parishioner at Sacred Heart Cathedral in Raleigh, Sally is a Fair Trade Ambassador for Catholic Relief Services. Please contact Sally at 919-828-2607 or email: sally@sapoland.com. She would love to talk to you!

If you or someone in your parish might be interested in becoming a Fair Trade Ambassador please read the attached and send to any candidate. This is a tremendous experience for you or another in your parish and for the diocese. The present diocesan Ambassador, Sally Poland, would welcome an energetic partner. The next training is in Raleigh.

Please contact our office for more information!

Operation Rice Bowl

Each year, Operation Rice Bowl calls us to pray with our families and faith communities; fast in solidarity with those who hunger; learn more about our global community and the challenges of poverty overseas; and give sacrificial contributions to those in need.

Your parish participation in Operation Rice Bowl ensures that Catholic Relief Services

can continue to provide assistance to those in need in more than 100 countries. Seventy-five percent of your gifts will go to CRS to help farmers in Bolivia receive training to improve crop yields, children in Afghanistan gain more opportunities for quality education, communities in Ethiopia access reliable water sources even during times of drought, and

fund many other vital projects. Twenty-five percent of your gifts remain in our diocese and support local hunger and poverty alleviation efforts.

Go to <http://orb.crs.org/> for information. We also have rice bowls in our office which we can send to you. Contact the Office of Peace, Justice/Respect Life at Jur-ski@raldioc.org or (919)821-9751.



Upcoming Events

March 5, 2011

Justice for Immigrants Study Day (bilingual)
Our Lady of Guadalupe, Newton Grove
See diocesan website for more information.

Lent 2011

40 Days for Life

See page 7 for more details.

April 2

Diocesan Pilgrimage to the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington DC
See diocesan website for more information.

April 28, 2011

2011 Bread for the World Offering of Letters Workshop

The Catholic Community of St. Francis of Assisi
Raleigh
See page 2 for more details.

April 30

**Catholic Charities
Celebrate God's Gifts Gala
6:00 p.m.**

**A Fundraiser for Catholic Charities,
Diocese of Raleigh**

Cardinal Gibbons High School
More details will be available soon.

October 1, 2011

Parish Social Ministry Training Day
Details will be available during the summer.

Watch for more information on 2011 Events on the Diocesan Website:

<http://www.dioceseofraleigh.org/home/>

**“Let
justice
roll down
like
waters...”
Amos
5:24**

North Carolina Council of Churches Legislative Seminar

Protecting the Common Good

Tuesday, April 5, 2011
8:45 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
St. Mark's Episcopal Church
1725 N. New Hope Road
Raleigh, NC

Registration is
[available here.](#) (click on link)
Or go to [http://
www.nccouncilofchurches.
org/](http://www.nccouncilofchurches.org/)

Cost including lunch is
\$23,\$12 for students. In or-
der to guarantee lunch, your
registration payment must be
received by March 29, 2011.

Workshop Topics:

- People of Faith and the Common Good
- How to Be an Effective Grassroots Lobbyist
- The Legislative Process and How to Influence It
- Messaging - Framing It and Getting It Heard
- Social Networking for Social Justice
- Finding Narratives of Hope in Discouraging Times
- And more!

Pope Benedict XVI underlined the importance of ecumenical work in a November 18, 2010 address to members of the Pontifical Council for Christian Unity. He said the Catholic Church has an “urgent need to revive ecumenical interest and give a fresh incisiveness to dialogue.” This day with the North Carolina Council of Churches gives us an opportunity to revive our personal ecumenical dialogues.

**Hope to see you on
April 5!**

Catholic Charities Celebrate God's Gifts Gala

April 30, 2011
6:00 p.m.

A Fundraiser for
Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Raleigh
Cardinal Gibbons High School, Raleigh

Keynote address from Rev. Larry Snyder,
President of Catholic Charities USA
Special Tribute to Bishop F. Joseph Gossman
Master of Ceremonies: Bill Reh, NBC-17

Hosted by Bishop Michael F. Burbidge and
the Board of Directors of Catholic Charities
Featuring dinner and multicultural entertainment

For more information - contact Patricia Reid at 919-821-8146 or
patricia.reid@raldioc.org

All proceeds will benefit the Catholic Charities programs in Eastern North Carolina. Last year, the seven regional offices and additional community outreach locations touched the lives of more than 54,000 individuals.



*Providing Help.
Creating Hope.*

Immigration Reform Update



As part of an ongoing effort by the Diocese to educate Catholics on Catholic Social Teaching on Migration, a leadership study day on Justice for Immigrants was held on February 24 at Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Raleigh. Approximately 100 pastoral administrators, deacons, parish staff and parish leaders, as well as the Most Reverend Michael F.

Burbidge, Bishop of Raleigh, attended the gathering. The study days are part of an ongoing series of educational efforts in the Diocese of Raleigh on the issue of Justice for Immigrants, pursuant to the Diocesan Pastoral Plan promulgated by Bishop Burbidge last year.

Sister Joan Jurski, OSF, said, "I found the enthusiasm and the serious dialog among the participants re-

garding immigrants in our Diocese very encouraging. Hopefully, we can continue with similar deanery and parish sessions throughout the diocese."

Look for more resources for parishes in the coming months and let us know what your parish is doing to assist the immigrants in your community through relationships, acts of charity, community development and advocacy.

"The Catholic Church proclaims that human life is sacred and that the dignity of the human person is the foundation of a moral vision for society."

Sharing Catholic Social Teaching, U. S. Catholic Bishops, 1999

JustFAITH

What is JustFaith?

JustFaith offers an opportunity for parishioners to experience a spiritual journey into compassion. Most of us long to be a generous and compassionate people. However, the opportunities to explore our tradition's Catholic social teachings in a deliberate and engaging way have largely not been available. JustFaith, now offered in hundreds of parishes across the country, provides a lively and challenging format to read, view, discuss, pray, experience and be formed by the justice tradi-

tion, which changes lives, inspires faithful witness, and transforms the world through love and service.

Our Catholic faith and biblical tradition extend an extraordinary invitation to each of us and to our faith communities to become agents of God's compassion and healing in a wounded world. The Good News of Christ is both a comfort and a promise for the poor and, at the same time, a call to those of us who are not poor to be linked with God's vision of justice and reconciliation.

Many parishes in our Diocese already have JustFaith programs. Now is the time to begin organizing and recruiting for next Fall!

Please contact our office for more information or go online to www.justfaith.org to find out more about the JustFaith program and other adult formation modules on many other issues which are available for parish use.

We look forward to hearing from you!

North Carolina Catholic Voice: An Opportunity for Advocacy

More than 800,000 residents of North Carolina profess the Catholic faith in the 187 parishes and missions of the Dioceses of Raleigh and Charlotte. Catholic Voice NC facilitates a grassroots effort by concerned Catholics in North Carolina to educate and influence our lawmakers.

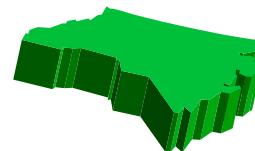
When an important issue arises you will receive an e-mail alert with the option to contact your legislator to express your Catholic views.

Register today, it's free!

Each of these issue areas are currently covered:
- Respect Life

- Stem Cell Research
- End of Life
- Immigration
- Family Life

Go to the website www.CatholicVoiceNC.org for more information and to register.



North Carolina Catholics CAN Make Difference!

What are Some Gospel Imperatives?

By: Richard McBrien

Most Catholics would readily agree that the following principles, values or moral imperatives are among those that are at the heart and center of the gospel:

1. **The call to love one another.** Jesus said that our love for one another is the sign by which others will know that we are his disciples (Jn 13:34-35).
2. **The call to love even our enemies.** "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. ... If you love those who love you," Jesus said, "what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them" (Lk 6:27, 32).
3. **The call to forgive one another.** Jesus said that we cannot ask forgiveness for our own sins unless we are also ready to forgive those who sin against us (Mt 6:12).
4. **The call always to seek reconciliation with one another.** Jesus said that we should not presume to offer sacrifice to God unless and until we have been reconciled with our brother or sister (Mt 5:23-24).
5. **The call to renounce revenge.** "If anyone strikes you on the cheek," Jesus said, "offer the other also" (Lk 6:29).
6. **The call to avoid judging and condemning others.** "Do not judge," Jesus said, "and you will not be judged; do not con-

demn, and you will not be condemned. ... First take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your neighbor's eye" (Lk 6:37, 42).

7. **The call to avoid self-righteousness, presumption and resentment toward others.** Jesus repudiated the proud Pharisee (Lk 18:10-14) and the resentful elder brother in the parable of the prodigal son (15-25-30). He condemned those who try to shut the doors of the kingdom of God so that others could not enter it (23:13) and said the publicans and prostitutes would enter the kingdom before their detractors would (21:31-32).
8. **The call to befriend those whom society looks down upon.** Jesus made himself the friend of outcasts (Mt 11:19) and did not avoid their company (Mk 2:16).
9. **The call to serve one another, humbly and unselfishly.** Jesus gave us an example when he washed the feet of his disciples (Mt 13:4-15; see also Lk 22:27). "But when you give a banquet, he said, "invite the poor, the crippled, the lame and the blind. And you will be blessed because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous" (Lk 14:13-14).
10. **The call to serve the poor.** Jesus singled out

the poor in the beatitudes, insisting that the reign of God will be theirs (Lk 6:20), as did Mary in her Magnificat: "He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty" (1:52-53). Jesus' parable of Lazarus and the rich man (16:19-31) is particularly compelling. Indeed, Pope John Paul II frequently cites it in summoning the church to the service of the poor and the powerless.

11. **The corresponding call to beware of riches and the attachment to possessions.** Jesus said it would be easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter into the kingdom of God (Mk 10:25). He said that those who would be his disciples should be ready to sell all that they have and give to the poor (10:21).
12. **The call always to be just in our dealings with others.** Jesus attacked the scribes and Pharisees for straining at gnats and swallowing camels and for neglecting the weightier matters of the law, including justice first (Mt 23:23).

Are these imperatives alive in our parishes today?

What might we do to ensure that these Imperatives are alive and well?

"The dignity of the human person, realized in community with others, is the criterion against which all aspects of economic life must be measured."

- *Economic Justice for All*, USCCB, 1986

Catholic Climate Ambassadors Ready to Spread Church Teaching on the Environment



From December 3-5, 2010, twelve Catholic leaders from across the country gathered outside Washington, DC, to immerse themselves in Catholic teaching on care for creation in light of climate change and to prepare to share this teaching and help promote the [Catholic Climate Covenant: St. Francis Pledge to Care for Creation and the Poor](#) in Catholic parishes, schools and other organizations.

“The Catholic community across the country will soon have access to Catholic Climate Ambassadors: men and women who understand and can articulate the messages of Pope Benedict XVI and the U.S. Catholic Bishops on care for creation and climate change,” said Dan Misleh, Executive Director of the Catholic Coalition on Climate Change. (The work of the Coalition is supported by 11 national Catholic organizations including the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.) “We are delighted with the

caliber and enthusiasm of the new Ambassadors,” he continued.

In March, thirteen more Ambassadors will be trained and, “expand the ability of the Coalition to reach many more Catholic parishioners, students, pastors, teachers, and other ministers,” Misleh said. “The Ambassadors will share this teaching and encourage audiences to join the Catholic Climate Covenant by taking the St. Francis Pledge.” The Coalitions’ Covenant campaign and St. Francis Pledge is designed to help Catholic individuals, families, parishes and schools fulfill the obligation of their faith to care for both creation and those who already suffer the consequences of climate change..

Since 2006, the Catholic Coalition on Climate Change has played a pivotal role in the U.S. Catholic response to the enormous challenge of climate change. The Coalition has taken on the responsibility to develop strategies

for spiritual formation and education of Catholics, to create resources, programs and projects that engage youth, families and parishioners, and to spur action that leads to public policy change at local, national and international levels. (For More, go to: catholicclimatecovenant.org).

Melissa DuCharme, Office of Peace & Justice/ Parish Social Ministry Office Assistant was trained as a Catholic Climate Ambassador. Contact us today to schedule Melissa for your parish event on “Care of Creation.”

Lenten Resources Available!

See our website for Lenten resources based upon Pope Benedict’s encyclical *Caritas in Veritate*. We also provide links to many other Lenten Resources!

It’s not too late to be planning your Lenten practices and encouraging your fellow parishioners to have a faith-filled Lenten season!

“Respect for life and for the dignity of the human person extends also to the rest of creation, which is called to join man in praising God.”

-Pope John Paul II, The Ecological Crisis: A Common Responsibility

40 DAYS FOR LIFE™ In Chapel Hill

From **March 9 - April 17**, our community will be one of many joining together for a faith-filled, groundbreaking, coordinated pro-life mobilization -- *40 Days for Life*. *40 Days for Life* is a focused pro-life effort that consists of:

- 40 days of **prayer and fasting**
- 40 days of **peaceful vigil**
- 40 days of **community outreach**

We are praying that, with God's help, this groundbreaking effort will

mark the beginning of the end of abortion in Chapel Hill -- and throughout America.

While all aspects of *40 Days for Life* are crucial in our effort to end abortion, the most visible component is the peaceful prayer vigil outside the local abortion facility.

You can help make a life-saving impact by joining our local vigil at:

**Planned Parenthood
1765 Dobbins Drive
Chapel Hill, NC 27514**

For more information, go to <http://www.40daysforlife.com/chapelhill/>.

To learn more, sign up for specific vigil hours, or let us know how you feel called to serve God in this effort, please contact us at: 40dayschapelhill@gmail.com

During Lent and throughout the year, we pray for ALL human life, from conception to natural death.

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Operation Rice Bowl Prayer



God of all people,
Hear us as we join in prayer with our
brothers and sisters in need.
Bless our Lenten fasting, learning, and giving.
May your generous love for your
people be our guide as we
reach out to all who live with
hunger and poverty. Amen.



*To learn more about Operation Rice Bowl and how you, your family, and your parish can be involved,
go to <http://orb.crs.org/>.*