

# **CCSJ'S 8th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**FOR PERIOD 1 JANUARY 2010 – 31 DECEMBER 2010**

**Date: Wednesday 27 July, 2011**

**Time: 6:00 p.m.**

**Venue: Archbishop's House, 27 Maraval Road, Port of Spain**

## **Prayer for Justice and Peace:**

O God, open our hearts to the gifts of your Holy Spirit as we seek to promote Your reign here in Trinidad and Tobago. Help us to become a nation where peace is built with justice and justice is guided by love, love of God and love of neighbour.

Help us to rediscover and live our faith so that our concern for social justice will be transformed into constructive action as we spread the Good News in this land.

We ask you, O God, to guide and bless all our efforts. Inspire us as you did the Prophets of old with courage, imagination, and creativity. This we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

## **AGENDA:**

- 6:00 p.m. Welcome and apologies for absence: Leela Ramdeen, Chair, CCSJ.
- 6:05 p.m. Opening Prayer and address by Archbishop Elect, Fr Joe Harris
- 6:20 p.m. Confirmation of Minutes of CCSJ's AGM held on Wednesday 25 August, 2010.
- 6:20 p.m. Report on the CCSJ's work in 2010: Leela Ramdeen, Chair, CCSJ.  
Questions/Comments:
- 6:35 p.m. Treasurer's Report & Presentation of Audited Accounts: 2008 & 2009
- 6:50 p.m. Re-appointment of Auditors
- 6.55 p.m. Election of Officers See By Laws: 7.1 (Pres., VP, Tre, Sec.)
- 7:00 p.m. Other business and Closing Prayer.

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## **1. CCSJ'S VISION**

We envision a transformed national/world community where Justice, Peace and Love prevail, as divinely ordained by God, and which:

- ensures human rights, duties and human dignity
- celebrates diversity and promotes equality
- promotes the common good, respect for human life and ecology justice.

## **MISSION**

To be a fearless united voice challenging injustice, awakening social consciousness and fostering integral development. We strive to do this through:

- Social Justice Education and Advocacy
- Promoting people-centred development, and
- Working for the transformation of inequitable structures and systems.

## **CORE VALUES**

- We recognise our duties and obligations to the wider community.
- “To bring good news to the poor, liberty to captives, new sight to the blind, and to free the downtrodden” (Luke 14).
- Always respecting the dignity of the human person.
- We value the process of Reflection, Research and Action.

## 2. INTRODUCTION BY CHAIR

CCSJ is pleased to present its annual report for 2010. We thank God for allowing us to serve for another year in His vineyard. Membership of the Commission is as follows:

- Leela Ramdeen, Episcopal Delegate/Chair of CCSJ
- Clive Belgrave, Vice Chair
- Nadine Bushell, Secretary
- Kenneth Cipriani, Treasurer
- Annette des Iles, member
- Mike James, member
- Sr Roberta O’Flaherty, member
- Eldon Warner, member
- Researcher – Maria Diaz-James
- Vicariate Link Coordinator – Richard Smith
- Volunteers: Jo Anne Lodge, Joanne Miller, Anna Ackbarali and Prof. Surindra Arjoon, Senior Lecturer in Ethics and Decision Sciences, University of the West Indies. He is the Chair of CCSJ’s Standing Committee on Morals and Values. Members of this Committee include: Fr Henry Charles, Ruth Saunders, Ramona Khan and Maria Diaz-James who co-ordinates the Committee’s work.

The Commission usually meets on the last Wednesday of each month. In 2010, CCSJ’s work was guided to a large extent by Resolutions arising out of the 3<sup>rd</sup> sitting of Synod in 2009 – particularly by those relating to the third Pastoral Priority (PP) – **Appendix 1**, and by the first PP on which the entire Archdiocese focused: *The New Evangelization: Catholic Family, Become What You Are*.

All 3 sittings of Synod: 2003, 2005 and 2009, took place under the stewardship of Archbishop Edward J. Gilbert, C.Ss.R. The Mission Statement of our Archdiocese, which arose out of Synod 2009, reads as follows:

*“We are the people of God in TT, building the civilization of love, reconciliation with God, neighbour, creation and self - through:*

- *The New Evangelisation*
- *Revitalizing Catholic Culture and Identity*

- *Regenerating the moral and spiritual values of our society”.*

CCSJ is responsible for taking the lead on the 3<sup>rd</sup> PP: *Regenerating the moral and spiritual values of our society*. The goal of this third PP is: “*That each Catholic, as a committed disciple of Christ, knows, lives and witnesses to the rich moral teaching of the Church; and actively partners with people of good will towards the moral and spiritual renewal of Trinidad and Tobago*”. It is expected to come ‘on-stream’ at the end of 2012.

As the Synod Implementation Team (SIT) said in Catholic News on 5 June, 2011: “The Mission, to build the Civilisation of Love, is the reason for the Church's existence. It is what we are called to do and the deeper meaning and logic behind all of our activities. The three Pastoral Priorities are three interlocking and inseparable aspects of the Mission of the Church.

“New Evangelization, Catholic Culture and Identity and Moral and Spiritual Renewal refer back to the threefold mission of Prophet, Priest and King, and as such give focus to these in our unique context.

“In this sense a Pastoral Priority does not really end. It is the moving of the light from one part of the painting (New Evangelization) to another part (Catholic Culture and Identity). Because the Pastoral Priorities are integral to the Mission of the Church, they do not really begin or end. They are given more or less prominence.

“Synod 2009 proclaimed a Mission of the Church with three Pastoral Priorities. The Mission, to build the Civilisation of Love, is the reason for the Church's existence. The first Pastoral Priority of The New Evangelization was embedded at every level of the Archdiocese, the Archdiocese as a whole reflected upon the theme Catholic Family Become What You Are.”

The focus on the first PP was extended until 31 May, 2011.

CCSJ continues its efforts to raise awareness of the faithful/citizens of the social doctrine of the Church; to build the capacity of Catholics/citizens in T&T to build a nation/world in which justice, truth, love, freedom and forgiveness – the pillars of peace, become a reality.

I would like to record my sincere thanks to God for the opportunity to use my gifts to build the common good. Thanks to all members of CCSJ and to volunteers for

their commitment to the social imperatives of the Gospel, and to those persons and organizations that have contributed to CCSJ's achievements. Special thanks to

Archbishop Edward Gilbert C.Ss.R., for his leadership and guidance and to Msgr Jason Gordon, Vicar for Administration, for his leadership on SIT and for his continued support of CCSJ's work.

Since this report is being written in July 2011, members of The Catholic Commission for Social Justice (CCSJ) would like to congratulate Fr Joe Harris C.S.Sp and Msgr Jason Gordon on their appointment as Coadjutor Archbishop of the Catholic Archdiocese of Port of Spain and Bishop of the dioceses of Bridgetown, Barbados and of Kingstown (SVG) respectively. As we said in our Media Release:

“They both fit the description outlined by Pope John Paul II when he said: ‘We need heralds of the Gospel who are experts in humanity, who know the depths of the human heart, who can share the joys, the hopes, the agonies, the distress of people today, but who are, at the same time, contemplatives who have fallen in love with God.’

“We will keep you in our prayers as you both continue your work in the Lord's vineyard. May the Holy Spirit fill you with even more wisdom and grace and may God walk with you on your pilgrimage. We know that you both possess the 3 essential Episcopal characteristics as outlined by Pope Benedict XVI: fidelity, prudence, and goodness.”

The Archdiocese's website proclaims that “Collaboration is the new way to be Church”. In this context, the words of the French Dominican, Yves Congar, are apt: *“In the vessel of the Church we are all part of the crew, there is nobody who is a passenger.”* As “crew” members, the challenge for us is to “pull together” to achieve our goals.

Since love of God and neighbour has global dimensions, we will continue to play our part in addressing regional/global injustices and disasters such as the devastating earthquake in Haiti on Jan. 12, 2010 in which more than 150,000, including Archbishop Joseph Serge Miot and Vicar General Msgr Charles Benoit, lost their lives. May their souls rest in peace. And as we move forward, let us remind ourselves of our Scriptural mandate: *“The spirit of the lord has been given to me, for he has anointed me. He has sent me to bring the good news to the poor,*

*to proclaim liberty to captives and to the blind new sight, to set the downtrodden free, to proclaim the Lord's year of favour.” (Luke 4:18-19).*

### **3. TREASURER'S REPORT**

The attached statement outlines the financial position for CCSJ for the year ended December 31, 2010.

The Commission's Cash balances fell by some \$72,000 mainly as a result of a release of funds (\$100,000) to the Trinidad and Tobago Reintegration Foundation (TTRF) in January 2010. This sum went towards the construction of the TTRF facility for former prisoners who have nowhere to go on their release from prison. The release of this sum of money also impacted negatively on Interest earned, which was down by \$5,000 over the prior year.

Direct funding from the Chancery increased to \$141,120 from \$46,700 in the preceding year. This included \$61,000 which was allocated to CCSJ from the Chancery to meet expenditure for the Values and Virtues Formation Programme (V&VFP) for Post-SEA students.

Expenditure for this Programme included the production of material for teachers involved in the Programme; refreshments for teachers who attended the 2-day Training Programme in Chaguanas to prepare them to implement the V&VFP Curriculum; and payment of a stipend to 10 Monitors who monitored the implementation of the Programme in RC Primary Schools. Operational costs also included Salaries and Stationery/Office Supplies.

Cash outflows from the Commission increased by \$190,000 due to increased spending for the

- V&VFP in RC Primary Schools;
- cost of Respect For Life Week activities; and
- release of funds (\$100,000) to TTRF.

A statement of Revenue and Expenditure is attached and shows a Cash Balance of \$206,256.30 as at December 31, 2010.

Respectfully submitted,

K.C.Cipriani (Treasurer)



## CCSJ

### Income and Expenditure Statement for the Year ending December 31, 2010

#### Opening Balances

FCB Operating Account		63428.07
FCB Money Market Account		203974.79
Republic Bank limited		10495.14
		277898.00
Cash on Hand		<u>202.76</u>
		<u><b>278100.76</b></u>

#### Receipts

Sale Items	101Questions		
	Compendium	420.00	
	Take a bite	45.00	
	Leaflets		
	Respect for Life T Shirts	1,800.00	2,265.00
Donations			8,500.00
Interest	Operating Account	112.25	
	Money Market Account	3,117.07	3,229.32
Reversal of Bank Charges			
Amount Over Deposited			
Direct Funding by Chancery			141,120.00
			<u>155,114.32</u>

## Expenses

	<u>CCSJ</u>	<u>Chancery</u>	
Advertising	2,985.75	1,976.00	4,961.75
Ask Why	200.00		200.00
Bank Charges	63.69		63.69
Cell Phone Exps		557.50	557.50
Donations	320.00		320.00
Misc	2,306.95	-680.00	1,626.95
Office Equipment	4,795.00	6,135.70	10,930.70
Policy W/shop	3,140.20		3,140.20
postage	997.00		997.00
RFL	37,915.68		37,915.68
Seminar	2,160.00		2,160.00
SJO		2,860.06	2,860.06
Stationery	2,424.03	3,974.00	6,398.03
Stipends/salaries		226,941.94	226,941.94
Travel	4,531.00	8,616.89	13,147.89
TTRF	100,000.00		100,000.00
V&V	64,424.95	34,132.50	98,557.45
Xmas Party	664.47		664.47
	<u>226928.72</u>	<u>284514.59</u>	<u>511443.31</u>
Expenses paid by Chancery			<u>284514.59</u>
			<u>226928.72</u>

## **Closing Balance**

**206,286.36**

FCB Operating Account	22320.32
FCB Money Market Account	157091.86
Republic Bank limited	26309.12
	205721.30
Cash on Hand	535.00
Cash Shortage	30.06
	<u>206286.36</u>

## **4. REPORT ON CCSJ'S WORK DURING 2010**

Like all other Departments in the Archdiocese, CCSJ was asked by SIT in 2010 to revise its 2009 action plan, taking into account the Commission's key areas of responsibility as outlined in Synod Resolutions and strategies, and integrating into our work the first PP: *The New Evangelization: Catholic Family Become What You Are*. CCSJ's plan for 2010 is available on the Commission's website.

In order to assist the reader of this report, CCSJ would like to draw your attention to 2 articles in **Appendix II**. The first article is from Msgr Robert Llanos, whose responsibility it was to "lead" us all through the first PP. The second article, written by the Synod Implementation Team (SIT), was published in July, 2010 in Catholic News. CCSJ's Chair is a member of SIT.

Key aspects of CCSJ's plan were implemented and areas of activities covered are outlined below.

### ***A. PARISH LINK PROGRAMME***

For a variety of reasons, as outlined hereunder, work in parishes has not developed as planned. In June 2010, Robert Persad, CCSJ's Parish Link Coordinator, resigned in order to pursue his career as a musician. CCSJ records its thanks to Robert for his contribution to the Commission's work e.g. in seeking to establish social justice groups in certain parishes, in preparing CCSJ's Newsletters, and in assisting with the launch of CCSJ's *Draft Framework towards an Archdiocesan Environmental Policy* - on 23 February at Our Lady of Fatima RC Church Hall, Curepe.

On 15 July and 3 August, 2010 Anna Ackbarali and Richard Smith, who had applied for the advertised positions, took up their appointments as CCSJ's 2 Parish Link Coordinators. CCSJ's Chair developed an induction programme and a plan of action for them. After their induction, they diligently set to work to implement the plan which CCSJ's Chair had developed with them.

The work of the Parish Link Coordinator is critical to the success of CCSJ's work as we seek to implement Synod Resolutions. The Church's "best kept secret" must be shared at parish level and the faithful must be motivated to form social justice groups at parish level. In order to equip the faithful with the capacity to adopt the

“See, Judge, Act” methodology, it is essential that the Commission establishes outreach projects in parishes; plan education programmes there; share good practice; empower and mobilize parishioners to walk with the 2 feet of justice – works of mercy and social action.

During the course of the year, Parish Link Coordinators have been working with social justice parish teams/individuals – where these exist, supporting their initiatives and giving advice where necessary. They have also been identifying good practice for dissemination e.g. via our Newsletters.

As is stated in the Synod of Bishops (1971) document, Justice in the World: *“Action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world fully appear to us as a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the Gospel, or, in other words, of the Church's mission for the redemption of the human race and its liberation from every oppressive situation”*. (#6)

In August, Msgr Jason Gordon attended CCSJ’s 2009 AGM to share plans to appoint Vicariate Link Coordinators (VLC) whose roles will, in some ways, subsume the work of Parish Link Coordinators. He sought to allay the fears of members of CCSJ who expressed their concerns that our work will be hampered if we do not have the human resources to implement Synod Resolutions for which we have responsibility.

Although CCSJ’s Chair shared their concerns, as a member of SIT, she is aware that, to a large extent, the various Departments in the Archdiocese continue to work in silos and that without a coordinated approach, progress will be slow. She was ‘sold’ on the idea of adopting Msgr Jason’s plan as a further strategy to get things moving.

Shortly after this, Msgr Jason presented his plan to SIT and it was approved. In September he attended one of CCSJ’s meetings to explain in more detail the work of VLCs and to seek approval for Anna and Richard to be part of the new team of VLCs. CCSJ members agreed to second Anna and Richard for 1 year in the first instance.

In October 2010, the VLC posts were created in the Archdiocese. 4 persons were appointed – including Richard Smith whose work covers parishes in the Southern Vacariate. He ceased working in his role as Parish Link Coordinator. The other 3 persons are: Deacon Mike Smith (Northern/Tobago), Sr Gail Jagroop (Suburban & Central, Deacon Paul Bousignac (Eastern). One aspect of the job description of all

4 persons relate to the promotion of the social doctrine of the Church. Richard Smith has been allocated responsibility for coordinating social justice work with the team of VLCs.

Because the task of assisting parishes to complete aspects of post-Synod work took priority, it was agreed that VLCs would devote more time to social justice issues from 2011. We look forward to working with the VLCs.

Anna Ackbarali, who did not wish to take on the position of VLC, applied for a senior position in the corporate “world” and was successful. However, because of her commitment to CCSJ’s work, she continues to support the Commission on a voluntary basis. CCSJ records its thanks to Anna for her continued support of our work.

### ***B. DRAFT FRAMEWORK TOWARDS AN ARCHDIOCESAN ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY:***

On 23 February 2010, Archbishop Gilbert, launched the above Draft Framework at Our Lady of Fatima RC Church Hall, Curepe. Wendy Lee Yuen, an expert in environmental and agricultural matters, was the feature speaker. About eighty persons attended the launch. A lecturer from the College of Science, Technology, and Applied Arts of TT (COSTATT) brought 22 of his students to the launch and they asked some pertinent questions.

The Draft Framework had been developed by CCSJ in response to a Synod Resolution. It was widely circulated for consultation. A 4-page pull-out supplement of the Draft was published in Catholic News on 14 March and TCN programmes, focusing on the Draft, were aired. The consultation period ended on June 30, 2010 and no major changes have been recommended/made.

Three documents relating to the Draft are available on CCSJ’s website:

- a. A 4-page Executive Summary.
- b. A 13 page version of the Draft.
- c. A 28 page version which can be used as guidelines by parishes. This version contains a resource list and a bibliography.

These documents were sent for information to key individuals and organizations, including the President of the Republic of TT, the PM, The Minister of the Environment, and Government Agencies such as the EMA, and The Green Fund.

### ***C. VALUES AND VIRTUES FORMATION PROGRAMME IN RC PRIMARY SCHOOLS (V&VFP)***

2010 saw the production of a second edition of the Students' Workbook for this Programme. This one was localized and was produced by a Focus Group that included a Primary School Principal, 4 Primary school teachers, a member of CEBM, CCSJ's Chair and CCSJ's Volunteer, Jo Anne Lodge, co-ordinated the Group's work. Members of the Archdiocesan V&VFP Standing Committee were able to make an input via their comments on the draft document before it was finalized. Archbishop Gilbert wrote the Foreword for the Workbook which is more student-friendly and reflects TT's culture.

CCSJ would like to thank those sponsors who so generously contributed to the printing of the Workbook. Thanks also to Derek Fields who so kindly allowed us to use his composition, Child of God, as the Theme Song for the Programme and for joining us from Barbados, where he lives, to sing the song for those gathered at the launch of the Workbook. CCSJ's Chair updated the Teachers' Guide. Both the Workbook and the Teachers' Guide are available on CCSJ's website.

An article published in Catholic News reported on the launch of the revised Workbook in March, 2010. It is included in **Appendix III**. The turnout at the training days for Post-SEA teachers, whose task it was to implement the Programme, was very good and teachers participated well during the 2 days.

CCSJ would also like to thank the 10 Monitors, mainly retired Principals, who, for a small stipend, faithfully monitored the implementation of the Programme in RC primary schools across the Archdiocese. Thanks also to Joanne Miller who kindly analysed the data contained in the reports from Teachers and Principals e.g. to identify good practice. This informed the planning for the 2011 Programme.

Archbishop Gilbert, Msgr Jason and members of the Archdiocesan V&VFP Standing Committee have agreed that from 2012, this Programme will be incorporated within the RE syllabus from the beginning of a child's school life in

RC schools. Schools will be encouraged from the start to work with parents to instill in students the kind of values and virtues that the Programme seeks to promote. Currently only 2 months are available to implement the Programme. This is totally inadequate. During 2011, therefore, when Sr Juliet Rajah and other members of the Catechetical Commission re-print their RE books, key aspects of this Programme – as contained in the 4 Modules: Self-Awareness, Relationships, Being Responsible, and Balance and Wholeness - will be incorporated in the RE books.

To promote integral human development, Catholic Education must incorporate in the teaching and learning process, character and conscience formation – based on gospel values. To achieve this goal, our students must be grounded in their faith and nurtured in values and virtues that will assist them in achieving their potential and in playing their part in building the civilization of love.

In an age in which secularism, individualism, moral relativism, and selfishness are rampant, it is essential that the overt and covert/hidden curriculum in our schools promote core values such as: Love, peace, mutual respect, integrity (including honesty, truthfulness and fairness), kindness, generosity, courtesy, discipline, self-reliance, tolerance, forgiveness, compassion (including caring, empathy, and consideration for others), generosity, courage, fortitude, perseverance, sincerity, conscientiousness (including responsibility and trustworthiness), politeness, endurance, independence, equality, equity, accountability, and transparency.

It is to be noted that CCSJ will continue to retain overall responsibility in 2012 for the V&VFP. The work of the cross-Departmental Archdiocesan V&VFP Standing Committee, which is Chaired by CCSJ's Chair, will facilitate the development, monitoring and evaluation of the Programme.

#### ***D. CCSJ's WELLNESS PROGRAMME:***

The promotion of integral human development and the common good requires that we create conditions that will allow each person to realise his/her potential. As part of this process and linked to CCSJ's Respect for Life thrust, the Commission is working with Dr Kenwyn Nicholls to establish a Wellness Programme in the Archdiocese - entitled: *Diabetes self-management and Prevention*. The programme was launched in Assumption RC Parish Hall on Sat. 4 December, 2010.

Dr Kenwyn Nicholls, who has returned to TT after working as a medical doctor in the USA for more than 40 years, has offered his services free of charge to pilot this project in at least 2 parishes and later to assist CCSJ in rolling out the programme in other parishes. The aim of the project is to:

1. raise awareness of the faithful of issues relating to diabetes
2. empower people to manage Type 2 diabetes
3. promote prevention strategies for those who may get diabetes if they don't take action.

Dr Nicholls produced a paper for CCSJ, entitled: *The diabetes epidemic in TT: Attacking a burdensome disease with conventional weapons* (see CCSJ's website). It contains some frightening statistics about the number of people with Type 2 diabetes in TT (143,000 plus) and those who are pre-diabetic (102,000 plus).

We cannot promote social justice without promoting “wellness”. Participation in society is a key social justice principle. Many people cannot participate in society because they are ill and spend a lot of time dealing with their illness. Integral human development includes a concern to promote “wellness”.

### ***E. REDEDICATION OF MARY CARE CENTRE BY HIS GRACE:***

On 29 June, Mary Care Centre in Woodbrook, was rededicated by His Grace. Mary Care Centre is a sanctuary for unmarried, pregnant, young women. It was founded in 1980 by the late Archbishop of Port of Spain, Most Reverend Anthony Pantin, in his concern for and commitment to the preservation of life. The centre is a non-profit organization funded by donations received from the private and public sector. The objectives of Mary Care Centre are two-fold: To provide a safe and secure environment for the pregnant mother to give birth to her child; and to enable the young mother to be employable at the end of her stay at the Centre.

CCSJ has overall responsibility for the work of the Centre, which is being run on behalf of the Archdiocese by a Management Committee of Eternal Light Community (ELC). At an Archdiocesan level, the Management Board comprises: Msgr Jason Gordon, the Financial Administrator of the Archdiocese, Ms Bernadette Patrick, and CCSJ's Chair.



The property in Woodbrook belongs to the Archdiocese. Therefore, all capital works will be carried out by the Archdiocese. And while the Archdiocese contributes a certain sum monthly towards the running cost of the Centre, the ELC Management Team/ELC has responsibility for raising the rest.

**Pro-life work** remains a key aspect of CCSJ's work. CCSJ maintains links with SPUC, UK, Elliott Institute, USA, Human Life International, Emmanuel Community and Lawyers for Jesus in TT. During 2010, CCSJ's Chair participated in discussions on radio and TV about pro-life issues e.g. abortion, the death penalty etc.

### ***F. MORALS AND VALUES STANDING COMMITTEE:***

This Committee is Chaired by Prof. Surindra Arjoon\*, UWI, Senior Lecturer in Ethics and Decision Sciences, Faculty of Social Sciences. Maria Diaz-James coordinates the Committee's work on a voluntary basis. CCSJ members record our thanks to Prof. Arjoon and to Mrs Diaz-James for their invaluable support of CCSJ's work. Through the work of this Committee, CCSJ hopes to implement *Synod Resolution #1a: Be it resolved that the Archdiocese develop a comprehensive strategy to educate the People of God in values and virtuous living, based on the rich tradition of magisterial teaching and theological heritage of the Catholic moral tradition.*

*Res 1a:1: Identify performance indicators to inform a system of monitoring and evaluation of all the proposed strategies under this Pastoral Priority*

*Res 1a:2: Conduct an analysis of factors which have contributed to the decline of values in society.*

*a. Produce a baseline study;*

*b. Determine what programmes have worked in society. Determine what more can be done in terms of programmes to address social problems.*

Information has been gathered from local, regional and international sources to assist with the baseline study. Mr Arjoon arranged for some of his Under Graduate Students at UWI and students on the Masters Course at UWI to focus on this issue as part of their research. Their research papers have been analysed and summarized and have informed the production of a report which will be presented to the Committee shortly by Prof. Arjoon.

\* Surendra Arjoon was awarded a Professorship at UWI in June, 2011.

### ***G. AEC YOUTH LEADERS TRAINING WORKSHOP ON THE SOCIAL TEACHINGS OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH***

At Archbishop Robert Rivas' request, CCSJ's Chair attended the above workshop as a facilitator, focusing on key social justice principles (**Appendix IV**). The workshop was held in St Lucia from July 20 – 25 on the theme: *Empowering Youth Leaders to build a culture of solidarity and justice*.

Participants came from the following Arch/Dioceses of the AEC: The Diocese of Roseau, Dominica; Archdiocese of Nassau, The Bahamas; Diocese of Willemstad, St. Maarten and Curacao; Archdiocese of Castries, St. Lucia; Diocese of Kingstown, St. Vincent; Diocese of Bridgetown, Barbados; Archdiocese of Port Of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago; Diocese of Georgetown, Guyana; Diocese of St. John's-Basseterre, St. Kitts. (Grenada and Jamaica were not represented).

Presenters included Rev. Fr. Peter McIsaac, SJ; Deacon Ronald Thwaites, Member of Parliament, Radio Personality and Attorney at Law, and his wife Marcia Thwaites, from the Archdiocese of Kingsgton, Jamaica; Deacon Mike James and me.

Those gathered focused on: Life and Dignity of the Human Person, Major concerns and threats to the family, to life and human Dignity and human rights in the Caribbean Context; Call to Family, Community and Participation; Rights and Responsibilities; Option for the poor and vulnerable; Solidarity and Justice; Strategies and techniques to help participants design programmes and implement justice and service projects in their local churches; Dignity of work and rights of workers; and Care of God's Creation. The participants also had an opportunity to develop their awareness of the See, Judge, Act process (Cardinal Joseph Cardijn's method).

### ***H. RESPECT FOR LIFE WEEK (RFLW) (24 SEPT. – 3 OCT, 2010):***

In seeking to implement Synod Res. 3a:1, CCSJ agreed to dedicate a week every year to the theme: *'Respect For Life.'* CCSJ has responsibility for organizing activities for the week. A cross-Departmental Committee was established in

February, 2010 to allow sufficient time to plan effectively for the week. CCSJ records its thanks to all those who contributed to the success of the week.

Activities took place from 24 September – 3 October, 2010. The following is a list of some of the activities held during the week and material produced for the week:

- a Seminar at which the late Sir Ellis Clarke TC.GCMG. was the feature speaker on the theme: *Our People, Our Land: Journey to becoming a Republic*. The proceedings were taped. Copies are available at CCSJ's Office;
- an Interfaith Service which was combined with the Inter-Religious Organization's National Day of Prayer. His Grace opened the week during this Service;
- a 4-page pull-out Supplement and articles in Catholic News;
- Media Release, Calendar of Events, and Poster relating to the week **(Appendix V)**;
- a Prayer Session praying for the grace to allow us to build a culture of Life;
- CCSJ Chair appeared on TCN TV to raise awareness of RFLW;
- CCSJ's Ask Why TV programme also focused on the theme;
- an Interfaith Panel Discussion on the theme: "Threats to Life and Opportunities to promote 'integral human development'" (Pope Benedict XVI);
- a Vigil;
- Youths leading Holy Hour in certain parishes;
- activities in schools based on the theme; and
- an Interfaith Procession and Prayers around part of Queen's Park Savannah. His Grace walked for part of the way with those who participated in the event.

Most activities went well, except that on many occasions the number of participants was small. For example, we expected thousands to join us for the Inter-faith Procession and Prayers around the Savannah. Less than 200 participated in the event. At parish level also, there could have been more activities around this theme. We have a long way to go to build a collaborative approach to ministry.

## ***I. CCSJ'S COMMUNICATION STRATEGY:***

In his 2010 Message for *World Communications Day*, Pope Benedict XVI made it clear that “The development of the new technologies and the larger digital world represents a great resource for humanity as a whole and for every individual...” While we are all aware of the ways in which new technologies can be abused, the challenge for CCSJ is to use these to build the common good. There is no doubt that the media/new technologies offer us an opportunity to raise awareness of the social teaching of the church and the “Word”, promote advocacy/social action as well as social service, motivate others to take action to transform society/the world as we seek to build the civilization of love.

### **i. Radio and TV appearances and other Resources:**

To promote the formation of the faithful, CCSJ uses the media/new technology to raise the faithful’s awareness of the teachings and the values of the Catholic Church e.g. through appearances by CCSJ members on radio and TV programmes to address social justice issues such as the death penalty, abortion, poverty and social exclusion, socially displaced persons, environmental issues, and inadequacies in the justice system. CCSJ also seeks to raise awareness of social justice issues through its publications e.g. the Commission’s 9 leaflets (Justice, Poverty, Crime, Prejudice and Racism, Quality in the Education System, Pro Life, Disability, Consumer Rights and Access to Health) which focus on various aspects of social justice and through other publications such as our Newsletter, articles, social justice quotations published in Catholic News, and Media Releases (see below).

### **ii. Lobbying/liaising with Government:**

When the issue of the death penalty reared its head again this year, CCSJ sent copies of the AEC Bishops’ Pastoral Letter on Capital Punishment with a covering letter to all MPs and Senators, including the PM, Leader of the Opposition, for information. (**Appendix VI**). CCSJ’s letter included recommendations for action, other than the death penalty, that can be adopted to reduce crime and create safe communities. This letter and the AEC Bishops’ Pastoral Letter were also sent to all parish priests/administrators.

Msgr Jason Gordon, Clive Belgrave and CCSJ’s Chair participated in a “Compact Partnership” established by the Minister of Finance, Hon. Winston Dookeran, to assist him in preparing for budget day on 8 Sept. 2010. This gave us an opportunity

to highlight the need to consider the kind of society that we wish to build – one that is people-centred and in which integral human development is a priority.

### **iii Monthly Ask Why TV Programme on Trinity Communications Network:**

CCSJ's monthly TV programme on TCN, entitled ASK WHY, continues to be a vital part of the Commission's work. During 2010 the following programmes were aired. Videotapes of these programmes are used as an educational tool. The list is also uploaded on CCSJ's website:

- **26 January** Panel: Msgr. Jason Gordon/Fr. Joe Harris. Presenter – Sr Teresa Vialva.

**Topic:** Pope Benedict XVI's Peace Message for the celebration of World Day of Peace, 1 Jan., 2010: "If you want to cultivate Peace, protect Creation."

- **23 February:** Panel: Mike James/Derek Walcott. Presenter – Sr Teresa Vialva:

**Topic:** Pope's Lenten Theme: "The justice of God has been manifested through faith in Jesus Christ" (cf. Rm 3, 21-22).

- **23 March** Panel: Leela Ramdeen/Wendy Lee Yuen. Presenter – Sr Teresa Vialva.

**Topic:** Draft Framework towards an Archdiocesan Environmental Policy.

- **27 April** Panel: Gary Tagallie, Natalie Alexis and Leela Ramdeen . Presenter – Sr. Teresa Vialva.

**Topic:** Poverty and Social Exclusion.

- **22 June** Panel: Nisha Ali, Science Teacher . Presenter – Sr Teresa Vialva.

**Topic:** Discussion on Draft Framework towards an Archdiocesan Environmental Policy.

- **27 July** Panel: Francisca Rousseau and Joy Rush (Newtown Girls' RC School) Presenter – Sr Teresa Vialva.

**Topic:** Values and Virtues Students' Workbook.

- **28 September** Panel: Anna Ackbarali, Richard Smith (CCSJ's Parish Link Coordinators) . Presenter – Leela Ramdeen.

**Topic:** Respect All Life

- **26 October** Panel – Boyd Reid and Diana Mahabir-Wyatt. Presenter: Sr Teresa Vialva.

**Topic:** Good Governance

- **23 November** Panel: Msgr Robert Llanos and Surendra Arjoon. Presenter: Leela Ramdeen

**Topic:** Morals and Values

#### **iv. Media Releases for 2010:**

CCSJ seeks to speak out fearlessly on social justice issues. All media Releases are approved by Archbishop Gilbert before they are circulated. During 2010 the following Media Releases were circulated:

**Jan 18** – Haiti – How we can help

**Feb 17** – Consultation on Draft Archdiocesan Environmental Policy

**Mar 17** – Archbishop Edward Gilbert launches Values & Virtues Students' Workbook and Teachers' Guide

**Mar 25** – CCSJ urges citizens to mark Earth Hour on Saturday 27 March

**Apr 26** – A reflection on the General Elections 2010

**Jul 14** – CCSJ says hanging not the answer to creating a safe society.

**20 Sept** - Respect for Life Week

**Nov 3** – CCSJ condemns torture of a minor in Guyana

**Nov 18** – Every child matters – Universal Children’s Day message

**Nov 18** – Justice for people with HIV/AIDS

**Nov 24** – CCSJ calls on citizens to combat violence against women

**Nov 30** – CCSJ on UN Human Rights Day – ‘Embrace diversity, end discrimination’

**Nov 29** – Let the spirit of compassion and generosity reign in our hearts this Christmas

CCSJ’s media releases usually led to requests for further information or for CCSJ to discuss issues raised in the releases. CCSJ’s Chair responded positively to requests to appear on e.g. TV, radio and to interviews by journalists for articles in the print media. Given the cost of advertising, CCSJ is always pleased to respond as it is one way of spreading the Good News – free of charge e.g.

- In November CCSJ’s Chair was a guest on Gayelle TV to discuss the theme: Embrace diversity, End discrimination.
- On Universal Children’s Day, November 18, CCSJ’s Chair was a guest on radio 101.7 for 1 hour 45 minutes, discussing with the host, issues relating to children’s rights.

Such appearances provide CCSJ with an opportunity to fulfil our obligations to educate the public/faithful about social justice issues and to encourage listeners/viewers to join us in the promotion of justice and peace. Archbishop Gilbert rightly says that “visibility” is important if we are to get our message across and if we are to be “alive and present” in our land.

#### **v. Use of Trinity Communications Network (TCN):**

TCN continues to draw on CCSJ’s expertise by inviting members to participate in events such as its Annual Fundraising Telethon and on special programmes focusing on topical issues e.g. Capital Punishment, Abortion and Flood Relief.

**vi. CCSJ's Website:** (<http://rcsocialjusticett.org> )

CCSJ's website allows the Commission to raise awareness of the Church's Social Doctrine. We record our thanks to Raymond Syms, our Webmaster, who continues to give yeoman service to us by maintaining the website. He is constantly seeking new ways of attracting visitors to the site.

Items are uploaded on a regular basis. These include: CCSJ's weekly Catholic News articles and Social Justice Quotes, Fr Joe Harris' weekly homily, speeches and presentations made by CCSJ's Chair at various events. Those visiting the site are also encouraged to support those in need e.g. citizens of Haiti who are in need, particularly after the earthquake and floods there. CCSJ records its thanks to Mr Rene Wihby who continues to send weekly social justice quotations to be printed in Catholic News. Many find the "bite-sized" quotations helpful.

From the feedback received from visitors to the site, it is clear that many find the information therein very useful. It is important to note that the Holy Father is reading the signs of the times and continues to invite the faithful "to make astute use of the unique possibilities offered by modern communications. May the Lord make all of you enthusiastic heralds of the Gospel in the new "agorà" which the current media are opening up." (Pope Benedict XVI, World Communications Day, 2010).

During 2010, there was an average of 23 visitors to CCSJ's website per day. This is based on the following figures provided by our Webmaster:

Jan: 429, Feb: 555, Mar: 605, Apl: 551, May: 412, Jun: 423,  
Jul: 684, Aug: 830, Sept: 1,242, Oct: 833, Nov: 978, Dec: 782

**Total numbers of visitors during 2010: 8,324 persons.**

**vii. Catholic News:**

CCSJ continues to ensure that an article is submitted to Catholic News in good time for publication on a weekly basis. Generally the articles focus on social justice issues and seek to incorporate aspects of the readings of the day as a form of reflection. This medium also allows CCSJ to address topical issues e.g. to celebrate our Priests during the Year for Priests which ended on 11 June, 2010.



### **viii. Resource Production/Distribution**

- **Parish Link Newsletter:**

During 2010, CCSJ produced 3 Newsletters which were widely circulated e.g. to parishes, Archdiocesan groups, and schools. This is a useful communication tool that not only raises the faithful's awareness of social justice issues, but also facilitates networking across the Archdiocese. We thank Pat Hernandez for his generosity in printing our Newsletter free of charge. The following is a summary of the issues dealt with in each newsletter:

January's Newsletter included:

- Reference to Pope Benedict XVI's World Day of Peace Message for 2010: *If You Want to Cultivate Peace, Protect Creation*. The faithful were encouraged to read it.
- An update on progress re the formulation of a Draft Framework towards an Archdiocesan Environmental Policy
- Reflections from Pope Benedict XVI's encyclical, *Charity in Truth*, on the links between human ecology and natural ecology and the need to be good stewards of God's creation.
- Action for sustainable living – practising the 4 Rs: Reuse, recycle, reduce, restore.
- Tips on how to build a social justice group.
- List of CCSJ's Resources

April's Newsletter included:

- A celebration of Good Practice around the Archdiocese.
- Report on the launch of The Draft Framework towards an Archdiocesan Environmental Policy on Feb 23rd at Our Lady of Fatima Parish Hall, Curepe.
- Some ways in which one can protect the integrity of creation.
- Quiz relating to the Draft Framework.
- Information about the Values and Virtues Formation Programme
- Informing the faithful about CCSJ's Seminar Series on Values and Virtues for the general public – organized on a Vicariate basis.
- Calendar of events for Respect for Life Week.
- Teaching on major social justice themes.
- List of CCSJ's Resources.

September's Newsletter celebrated Respect for life week with articles on:

- Poverty and social exclusion
  - The Environment
  - The differently-abled
  - Respect for animals
  - Quotations and prayer for reflection on the theme
  - List of CCSJ's Resources
- **Take-a-Bite Series: DVDs on social justice themes**

CCSJ arranged for the 5 DVDs in the Take-a-Bite series to be copied and circulated in packs of 5 to parishes as an educational tool. The pack focuses on the following themes:

- Overview of Social Justice: Fr Jason Gordon
- Human Life and Dignity: Sr Diane Jagdeo
- Stewards of God's Creation: Dr John Agard
- Rights and Responsibilities: Leela Ramdeen
- Global Solidarity: Fr Malcolm Rodrigues.

The availability of these resources is publicized in CCSJ's Newsletters and during 2010 a few individuals purchased copies for use in their parishes.

- **Bumper stickers** were produced - displaying CCSJ's logo and the words: "*Catholic and Committed*". The aim was to remind the faithful that, in order to become what they are, they must be committed to promoting justice also.
- **Leaflets and written papers on social justice topics** e.g.
  - *Catholic Family Become What You Are* – written from a social justice perspective.
  - CCSJ's 2010 Calendar is also used as a teaching tool. It focused on the Year for Priests and was widely distributed
- **Distribution of material to educate the faithful** e.g.

Pope Benedict XVI's Encyclical, *Charity in Truth* and his Peace Message for 1 Jan, 2010 were sent to all parishes and to His Excellency, President George Maxwell Richards; the then PM, Hon. Patrick Manning; the then

Leader of the Opposition, Hon. Basdeo Panday; and the then Leader of the Congress of the People, Hon. Winston Dookeran.

#### **ix. Personal contact**

Personal contact is developed/maintained with individuals/groups where necessary – by telephone, electronic media or in person. It is important that CCSJ members are available to meet with/speak to people to give advice and/or support, to act as advocates, or to empower individuals/groups to take action. Our availability is essential if we are to be servant-leaders.

#### **x. Collaborating with other partners within and outside Church circles:**

Communicating with/collaborating with others is critically important if CCSJ is to optimize opportunities to promote the social teaching of the Church and to transform unjust structures, policies and practices.

Although “collaboration is the new way of being Church” since Synod 2009, it is clear that many in our Archdiocese – at all levels - continue to work in ‘silos’. The challenge still exists for us to forge stronger working links between the various Archdiocesan Departments and between Departments and parishes.

We fail to optimize the use of our human, financial and other resources by working in this way. It should be noted that although CCSJ members sometimes attend events organized by certain organizations whose values are different from ours, we make our Catholic position on issues clear. We do not journey alone, and it is better to attend such events and to stand up for what we believe in, than to isolate ourselves. We use these opportunities to evangelize the wider society. We stand a better chance of transforming the world by being “in” it. Of course, we are aware of the importance of praying for God’s grace constantly lest we fall prey to values that are not in keeping with those that underpin our faith.

CCSJ takes every opportunity to work /liaise with others. For example:

- At the end of the AEC Justice and Peace Seminar held at the Regional Seminary of St John Vianney and the Uganda Martyrs on September 12 and 13, 2009 - led by Bishop Emmanuel Lafont of the Diocese of Cayenne, French Guiana and Chair of the AEC Justice and Peace (AEC J&P) Commission, it was agreed that reflections on the following themes will be submitted to Bishop Lafont by March 2010 for consideration by the AEC

Bishops at their meeting in April 2010:

**T&T:** *Climate change – taking into consideration issues arising out of the UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, Dec 7 – 18, 2009;*

**Jamaica:** Racism

**Guyana, Suriname and French Guyana:** Youth and the challenges they face in the midst of unemployment, HIV/AIDS, crime and violence and so on;

**Caribbean Conference of Churches:** Economic arrangements impacting on integral human development in the Caribbean e.g. addressing concerns about the sustainable development of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in the Caribbean, in light of the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) with the European Union.

Although specific dioceses were allocated areas of responsibility above, each diocese, including those that were not represented at the Conference, were invited to submit reflections on each of the four areas by March 2010.

CCSJ's Chair prepared a paper on Climate Change, and, after it was approved by members of the Commission, she forwarded it to the AEC Secretariat for onward transmission to Bishop Lafont, and thereafter to the AEC Bishops for consideration at their meeting in April.

- CCSJ invited Wendy Lee Yuen, an expert in environmental and agricultural matters, to be our feature speaker at the launch by Archbishop Gilbert of the *Draft Framework towards an Archdiocesan Environmental Policy* on 23 February at Our Lady of Fatima RC Church Hall, Curepe.
- CCSJ's Chair participated in e.g.
  - a UNDP Workshop on HIV/AIDS,
  - a Ministry of Education Conference at Crowne Plaza on “*Same Sex Schools Pilot – in 20 Secondary schools in TT*”. This Pilot commenced in September, 2010,
  - a UNDP meeting on 16 August to discuss plans to execute a Project entitled: Formation of a National Coalition on Women and girls and HIV/AIDS,
  - a 2-day workshop on 11 & 12 August – focusing on accountability principles and practices of Civil Society Organizations in TT,

- the launch on 23 August of a 1 year study focusing on *The role of stigma in cervical cancer screening in TT*. This is a joint study between a number of local and overseas partners,
  - a Conference on Human Trafficking in Paramaribo, Suriname, on 15 and 16 October – organized by the Catholic Church. A report of the proceedings is available on CCSJ’s website,
  - the launch of the UNDP’s 2010 Human Development Report. The event was held at the Institute of International Relations, UWI on Mon 22 November. 2010 marked the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the annual production of the Global Human Development Reports which include the human development index (HDI) which measures a country’s development by national income, life expectancy and literacy. In 2010, 3 new measures were added: inequality, gender inequality and the multi-dimensional poverty index. It was noted that although over the years TT had made some gains, in 2010 TT moved down from 48 to 59 in the HDI.
- CCSJ worked with members of the Anthony Pantin Reintegration Centre/Trinidad and Tobago Reintegration Foundation (TTRF/APRC) for former prisoners to organize a fundraising dinner which was held on May 1 and which raised approx. \$90,000 TT. This sum went towards the construction of the facility. Phase 1 will be completed in 2011.
  - On May 13 CCSJ’s Chair participated in a 1 hour prayer session on TCN to pray for peace during TT’s General Elections and to raise awareness of the kinds of questions that viewers should ask candidates – relating to social justice issues. The programme was repeated on a number of occasions in the lead up to the elections on May 24. CCSJ’s Chair also participated in other TCN programmes on this issue during that period.
  - CCSJ encouraged the faithful via the Catholic News, our Website and e-mails to Parish Link persons, to reach out in love and compassion to those in need in Haiti after the devastating earthquake and floods there;
  - CCSJ encouraged the public to respond positively to TT’s Prime Minister’s National Cleanup and Beautify Day in TT on 27 June.
  - On Sunday 21st November, 2010 CCSJ, Richard Smith and a team from South Oropouche, on behalf of CCSJ, joined *Arrive Alive* to mark the United Nations World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims.

- CCSJ's Chair secured the support of the IRO for Respect for Life Week (RFLW). This led to e.g. a joint Interfaith Service & IRO National Day of Prayer & Thanksgiving on Sun 26 Sept during RFLW. Some faith communities also joined the procession around the Savannah on 3 Oct.
- CCSJ's Chair delivered the following speeches as part of her collaboration with other groups (all available on CCSJ's website):
  - \* "Legal and marital issues of women of Indian origin: GOPIO Women's Conference"
  - \* "Women of spirit and vision in Trinidad and Tobago" (delivered to Raja Yoga group)
  - \* "Rededication of Mary Care Centre"
  - \* "Can the Catholic Church lead the way for reform of the education system?" (Delivered to CREDI students on their Masters course - at St Joseph's College, St Joseph, on Sat 24 April. )
  - \* "Charity in Truth - Authentic Integral Human Development and Education" (Delivered to CREDI students at Conference in Chaguanas on 2 March, 2010).
- With His Grace's approval, CCSJ's Chair invited a Senior School Supervisor III from the Ministry of Education to address an Archdiocesan group, which included His Grace, Msgr Jason Gordon, Madam Justice Sealy (Chair of the Education Conversation Committee (ECC) in the Archdiocese), representatives of CREDI and Ramona Khan, member of the ECC.

The meeting was held on April 15 at Archbishop's House. The Senior School Supervisor shared information about the Ministry's Performance Enhancement Programme in the Primary School Sector and the involvement of 43 RC Primary Schools in this Programme. In TT there are 537 Primary Schools. 139 of these are causing concern. The data shows that over a 5-year period, many students in these schools have been consistently achieving less than 30% in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year national tests and in the SEA. 43 of these are RC Primary Schools. The Archdiocese has responsibility for 119 RC Primary Schools.

CCSJ's Chair raised concerns about possible injustices in the RC Education system which leads to the underachievement of many students attending RC Schools. CCSJ recognizes that this is an issue that was addressed at Synod, hence the establishment of the Committee led by Madam Justice Sealy. However, CCSJ's Chair felt it was important for key persons in the Archdiocese to hear from someone at the Ministry about the problem and about national plans to improve the performance of schools. Everyone recognizes the need for urgent action to be taken to meet the educational needs of all students in all our schools. The work of Madam Justice Sealy and her team will assist the Archdiocese in our efforts to promote quality education for all in our RC schools.

#### **j. TRAINING PROGRAMMES:**

- CCSJ has lead responsibility for implementing Resolutions relating to the 3rd Pastoral Priority in the Archdiocese: "Regenerating the Moral and Spiritual Values of our Society". One strategy adopted by CCSJ is to run a series of seminars on this theme across the Archdiocese. The **first such Seminar** was held at Our Lady of Fatima RC Parish Hall, Curepe on 6 May on the Theme: *Living Christian values and virtues in a secular world*. The Presenter was Msgr Michael de Verteuil. About 85 persons attended.
- The **second Seminar** in the Values and Virtues series was held at Assumption RC Parish Hall on May 20. The Presenter was Fr Henry Charles. He spoke on the Theme: *Why the world needs Christian Values and virtues*. About 50 persons attended.
- The **third Seminar** was held on 23 Oct. at St Francis of Assisi, Sangre Grande on the Theme: *Morals and Values*. The Presenter was Msgr Robert Llanos. About 40 persons attended.

TCN taped the Seminars for use as part of CCSJ's training programme in parishes.

- Training also took the form of **Lenten Retreats**. At the invitation of Fr Clyde Harvey (Rosary RC Church, POS), and Fr Christopher Lumsden (St Philip & St James RC Church, Chaguanas), CCSJ's Chair agreed to lead Lenten Retreats on justice issues during 2010 e.g. 5 days during morning Mass at Rosary Church and 1 evening session at St Philip & St James Parish. CCSJ's collaboration with parish priests, Parish Administrators and

Deacons is essential if we are to work together to build God's Kingdom on earth.

- **Social Justice online course (Appendix VII)** – CCSJ has partnered with CREDI and the University of Dayton, USA, to run this course. The University of Dayton's website states:

“The Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation (VLCFF) is a growing initiative to offer adult religious education and faith formation anytime and anywhere via the internet. The goal is to support the church's professional ministry of religious education and faith formation in cyberspace. The VLCFF is coordinated and sponsored by the Institute for Pastoral Initiatives (IPI) at the University of Dayton - a Catholic Marianist Institution.

“Our mission is to mobilize the resources of the University of Dayton for partnerships with the Church that create and implement innovative pastoral initiatives designed to meet the needs of the Church and to articulate faith within the context of contemporary culture.”

Of the 20 persons who registered for the 1 ½ year course which commenced on 12 July, 2009, only 11 persons completed the course which ended at the end of 2010. CREDI will be advertising for the second cohort of students for the next cycle. CCSJ will draw on the expertise of those who have completed the course so that they can share their time, talent and treasure with others. (NB: 5 persons registered for the 2011 course which commenced in January 2011).

- Training is also being planned for all those who interface with children in the Archdiocese. On 4-6 Oct CCSJ's Chair represented the Archdiocese at the **VIRTUS** training programme in Guyana. VIRTUS/Protecting God's Children programmes, “are comprehensive and multidimensional—incorporating proven best practice standards for the prevention of child sexual abuse by clergy, staff, volunteers, and others who interact with children within the church environment. The training programs incorporate training for local facilitators, facilitator-led training for all parishes and religious organizations, awareness videos, and regularly scheduled continuing education and training for those who interact most closely with children.



“The continuing education and training is provided via VIRTUS Online, a state-of-the-art web-based training platform....The VIRTUS programs were conceived, developed, and financed by National Catholic Risk Retention Group Inc, USA...National Catholic is 100 percent owned by, and exclusively devoted to, the needs of the Catholic Church.”

The programme focuses “on the education and training of clergy, staff, volunteers, parents, and other adults about the nature of child abuse, child sexual abuse, and how adults can help prevent harm to children. Additionally, program developers have researched possible school curricula and religious education programs to include children and young people as partners in prevention.

The *Protecting God’s Children* program turns every parish into a child-safe haven. Through expert trainers, the VIRTUS programs bring education and awareness to the entire faith community, and ongoing training is provided through *VIRTUS Online*.”

The training programme comes with a video: Part 1 = A time to protect God’s children. Here children who have been abused (and actors) share their story. Also, 2 abusers share the strategies they used to ‘lure’ children. Part II = A plan to protect God’s children. Mahalia Paul, Dominica, is the AEC Coordinator for VIRTUS.

Each Archdiocese/Diocese must appoint a Coordinator to facilitate training for all persons who interface with children in the Diocese. US Presenter, Pat Neil, explained the process for Registration and ongoing training - which is a requirement of the programme.

On her return from Guyana, CCSJ’s Chair submitted a report to His Grace and to Msgr Jason who has approached Msgr Robert to identify a couple who are members of Family Life Commission (FLC) and who may be able to take responsibility for this programme. (NB: In 2011, Dr Dexter Shim and Mrs Frieda Shim, members of FLC, were appointed as Coordinators of the Programme for TT and CCSJ’s Chair is a Facilitator.

- Training programmes are being planned to address a number of current issues. For example, in relation to Human Trafficking - a modern-day form of slavery which is a scourge in the Caribbean region and in the world. CCSJ has a key role in raising awareness of this issue. CCSJ’s Chair accepted an

invitation to attend a Conference in Paramaribo, Suriname, on Human Trafficking from 15-16 Nov. In 2010, TT moved from Tier 2, to Tier 2 Watch List on the US Dept. of State's list of how countries are responding to this issue. Key issues arising out of the Conference was disseminated in CCSJ's weekly Catholic News and a report was uploaded on CCSJ's website. (NB: In June 2011, TT moved back up to Tier 2 as our Government is taking action to introduce appropriate legislation and other strategies to eliminate Human Trafficking).

## **5. TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO REINTEGRATION FOUNDATION/ANTHONY PANTIN REINTEGRATION CENTRE (1 January 2010 – 27 July 2011):**

After evaluation of two tenders for the construction of the first phase of the Anthony Pantin Reintegration Centre, Mr. Sunil Ramdeen was selected as the preferred contractor. The TTRF team responsible for construction arranged site meetings with the contractor to evaluate the project and to determine the way forward. As a consequence of this evaluation a change in the design of the facility was agreed. This change provided for the housing of twenty (20) persons in the first phase of the project instead of the eight (8) persons as originally planned. It also provided for the use of a smaller number of containers than originally projected. Due to unfavourable weather conditions work on the redesigned facility recommenced only in January 2011 and was completed in early May 2011.

In terms of finance, the TTRF has experienced great difficulty in accessing the balance of funding (\$235,000.00) agreed by the National Self Help Commission and has had to source loans in the sum of \$250,000.00 from the Archdiocese to satisfy contractual payments. The sale of some unused containers has also helped in this process and efforts to continue to effect further sale of these items. The TTRF owes the contractor \$300,000.00. A joint fund-raising dinner with the CCSJ was organized in 2010 and another in 2011. This netted some \$90,000 in 2011 and \$50,000.0 in 2011 for the two parties. Other sources of funding are currently being explored.

In operational terms, a Manager for the Centre has been selected after an interview process by Fr. Robert Christo and Mr. Collin Hamilton. The Archdiocese has also reached an agreement with the Society of St. Vincent de Paul whereby the Centre will be leased to the Society which will undertake the responsibility for its operations. This agreement is currently being formally finalized. Members of the

Board of the TTRF have been invited to serve on the Committee to be established by the Society of St. Vincent de Paul to manage the project.

On 21<sup>st</sup> May 2011, members of the SVP, the TTRF Board, representatives of the Prison Service/Ministry of Justice and other interested parties met on site to familiarize themselves with the facility and to discuss issues relevant to the Centre's operations. As a consequence of these discussions the Walk Tall Programme has been revitalized. This will ensure a steady inflow of residents to the Centre. At the time of writing, two (2) residents have been admitted and three (3) more are expected to take up residence in August. A daily programme of activities for the residents has been developed and this will be subject to constant review to ensure its effectiveness. Included in the programme is the upkeep and enhancement of the physical infrastructure, landscaping of the grounds and the planting of short-term crops which can be monetized to support the Centre's operations and to provide a source of personal income/saving for the residents prior to their leaving the facility. Technical assistance is being sought in this regard.

It is anticipated that visits to the Centre by major donors will be organized on an individual basis prior to the formal opening which, given weather conditions in San Raphael, is likely to take place in the 2012 dry season.

## **6. CONCLUSION:**

On 8 December 2010, CCSJ, along with other Commissions, Departments, parishes, schools, and ecclesial communities, presented a document - celebrating the Commission's achievements - to Archbishop Gilbert during a Mass at the Cathedral. That date marked 1 year since each group had submitted Pastoral Plans to His Grace. The Mass was intended to be a celebration. Groups were invited to bring with them for submission during the Mass a report, prayer, hymn, poem, and/or piece of art work to celebrate achievements during 2010.

CCSJ and the Archdiocese face many challenges. However, there is a clear, flexible model that will assist us as we move forward. While there is much that remains to be done, it is important to celebrate small steps. There is enormous good-will and talent in our Archdiocese and in TT, and we need to tap into this so that we can move forward in unison. May the Holy Spirit inspire us with grace and wisdom so that we will stay focused and do the will of God.

## 7. APPENDICES

### **APPENDIX 1:**

#### **INFORMATION ABOUT SYNOD 2009 AND PASTORAL PRIORITIES FOR THE ARCHDIOCESE**

Following Synod 2009, the efforts of everyone in the Archdiocese are focused on implementing Synod Resolutions in order to achieve our mission. Most of the Archdiocese's work centres around 3 Pastoral Priorities (PP):

**PP1:** *The New Evangelization*, deals with evangelization, family life, youth and Catholic education. Msgr Robert Llanos has lead responsibility for the Cluster that leads the Archdiocese in the implementation of this PP;

**PP2:** *Revitalizing Catholic Culture and Identity*, deals with Catechetics, liturgy and stewardship. Sr Juliet Rajah has lead responsibility for the Cluster that leads the Archdiocese in the implementation of this PP; and

**PP3:** *Regenerating the moral and spiritual values of our society* deals with issues of social justice and communications. CCSJ's Chair, Leela Ramdeen, has lead responsibility for the Cluster that leads the Archdiocese in the implementation of this PP. Cluster 3 includes: CCSJ, CEBM, and CAMSEL.

We, the People of God in Trinidad and Tobago, will seek to achieve our mission of building the civilization of love through these three pastoral priorities. It is from this Synod process that CCSJ has been given its mandate post-Synod 2009.

PP3 includes the following Goals and Resolutions. Each Resolution is accompanied by a number of strategies. The Goals are outlined below. The full list of the goal, resolutions and strategies for PP3 can be viewed in **Appendix II**. It should be noted that while it is compulsory for Synod Resolutions to be implemented, the strategies outlined in Appendix 1, and which emanated from Synod 2009, are a guide to support the implementation of Synod Resolutions. As far as possible, CCSJ seeks to adopt these strategies. Since they cannot all be addressed at the same time, they are being dealt with on a phased basis. The Archdiocese's website: <http://www.rcpos.org/v2.0/synod-impl.htm> lists the process since Synod 2009:

“In this first year of implementation – Easter 2009 to December 2009 - the parish work plan is built around the theme – *The Vocation to be Catholic* – and the purpose is to prepare the parish, its people, groups, ministries, administration and structure to align with, embrace and live the mission.

To accomplish this goal requires two specific sets of actions that are inter-related:

- 1) Facilitate all Catholics to rediscover the vocation to be Catholic so that the practice of the faith and parish involvement will lead to a deeper discipleship; and
- 2) To realign the structures of the parish to implement the threefold mission of the Synod

In Year 2/3, which runs from December 8, 2009 to May 31 2011, the theme of the Pastoral Priority the New Evangelization is **Catholic Family. Become What you are.**

Year 3/4 (June 1, 2011 to December 7, 2012 (subject to change) will deal with the Pastoral Priority –Catholic Culture and Identity with its theme - **My Church, My Parish, My Family.**

The theme of Pastoral Priority #3 – Regenerating the moral and spiritual values of our society, with its theme **Trinidad and Tobago, a Community of Families**”, is likely to come on-stream at the beginning of 2013.

It is to be noted that all Departments are to address each year’s theme in their work.

CCSJ’s work must be seen within the context of new structures in the Archdiocese post Synod 2009, for example, Synod Implementation Team (SIT), Vicariate Implementation Teams (VIT) and Parish Implementation Teams (PIT).

## **SYNOD IMPLEMENTATION TEAM**

As the Archdiocese website states, shortly after Synod 2009, Archbishop Gilbert “named a seven-member team and approved its mandate, its purpose and objective were identified as ‘to oversee, facilitate and evaluate the process of implementation of the Resolutions of the Third Sitting of the Archdiocesan Synod’. As with the Synod process itself, SIT functions under the authority and in union with the

Archbishop.” The term of each member is 3 years, renewable. The members are listed alphabetically below:

“Msgr Jason Gordon (Chair), Fr Joseph Harris CSSp, Msgr Robert Llanos, Bernadette Patrick, Sr. Juliet Rajah HF, Leela Ramdeen, Msgr Allan Ventour, Derek Walcott.

“When Archbishop Edward Gilbert named the seven-member team and approved its mandate, its purpose and objective were identified as ‘to oversee, facilitate and evaluate the process of implementation of the Resolutions of the Third Sitting of the Archdiocesan Synod’. As with the Synod process itself, SIT functions under the authority and in union with the Archbishop.”

### “THE PLAN”

One of SIT’s first tasks was to prepare a Parish Action Plan - spanning Easter to December 2009 - aimed at engaging Catholics in the rediscovery of their vocation to be Catholic. The Plan, which was circulated as a poster to all parishes, lists the following key areas for action:

#### **Theme: *The Vocation to be Catholic***

1. Set up Parish Implementation Team
2. Study and discuss Archbishop’s columns\* (published in *Catholic News* March 15, 22 and 29) in families, schools, parish groups, ministries and Confirmation classes
3. Parish Groups meet, study and discuss DVD presentations on three pastoral priorities
4. Conduct repentance service
5. Stewardship appeal
6. Reflection retreats on the theme
7. Restructuring to reflect the three priorities;
8. Use of programmes, including Alpha and Catholicism 201, to complement theme;

9. Prepare Pastoral Plan for offering on December 8, 2009
10. Initiate youth creativity competition
11. Conduct Family census
- 12 Leadership training for school leaders”

(See the Archdiocese’s website for further information about SIT). It is important to note the above as the implementation of Resolutions related to the 3 Pastoral Priorities, including CCSJ’s, had to take into consideration the “demands” that were being made of parishes. It was important that Parishes were given “space” to prepare their Action Plans.

### **PARISH IMPLEMENTATION TEAMS:**

*Resolution #2: “Be it resolved that every parish and ecclesial community appoint a Synod Implementation Team”* was adopted by Synod 2009. The Archdiocese’s website states: “A strong and result-driven Parish Implementation Team (PIT) will go a long way towards ensuring a successful implementation of Synod resolutions...The major role of the PIT is to ensure that the Synod mandate is successfully implemented. In addition, however, the Team has to coordinate the ministry of the parish and find the best ways to organise the parish for mission. It directs ministry, deals with administration, and seeks to find the most effective ways to achieve the aims of the various themes and pastoral priorities. The PIT coordinates the individual parts into a whole and focuses on monthly planning.

“The Pastoral Council, on the other hand, exerts leadership of the parish with emphasis on overall direction and vision, focusing on the whole and ensuring the cohesiveness of the various parish ministries.”

CCSJ remains concerned that many Pastoral Plans prepared by PITS do not incorporate a concern to address social justice issues in the respective parishes. Training for PIT members must include a social justice dimension that will seek to educate members about the importance of the social doctrine of the Church e.g. social justice principles and fundamental values – from a Catholic perspective, and guidelines for action.

The social teaching/doctrine of the Church is not an optional extra. Therefore, if the major role of the PITs is “to ensure that the Synod mandate is successfully

implemented”, members of PITs must immerse themselves in a training programme that will raise their awareness of the social doctrine of the Church. Since there is currently a training programme for PITs in progress (2010), it will be helpful if this could be expanded to include a social justice dimension.

### **Synod Resolutions and strategies for Pastoral Priority 3:**

#### **REGENERATING THE MORAL AND SPIRITUAL VALUES OF OUR SOCIETY: CLUSTER: CCSJ, CEBM, CAMSEL**

**GOAL:** That each Catholic, as a committed disciple of Christ, knows, lives and witnesses to the rich moral teaching of the Church and actively partners with people of goodwill towards the moral and spiritual renewal of Trinidad and Tobago.

**RESOLUTION #1a:** *Be it resolved that the Archdiocese develop a comprehensive strategy to educate the People of God in values and virtuous living, based on the rich tradition of magisterial teaching and theological heritage of the Catholic moral tradition.*

Res 1a:1: Identify performance indicators to inform a system of monitoring and evaluation of all the proposed strategies under this Pastoral Priority.

Res 1a:2: Conduct an analysis of factors which have contributed to the decline of values in the society

a. Production of baseline study;

b. Determine what programmes have worked in society. Determine what more can be done in terms of programmes to address social problems.

Res 1a:3: Develop a comprehensive programme on values, virtues and social justice for dissemination to parishes using a "Train the Trainer" approach (post SEA Formation being one aspect of the comprehensive programme).

Res 1a:4: Collaborate with other Christian denominations and faith communities in authentic and meaningful dialogue to foster the development of moral and spiritual values and in the promotion of social justice in society.

Res 1a:5: Use the media to promote the values of the Catholic Church.



Res 1a:6: Address social justice issues such as those outlined in the Vatican II document - The Church in the Modern World (“...whatsoever is opposed to life itself such as any type of murder, genocide, abortion, euthanasia or willful self destruction, whatever violates the integrity of the human person, such as mutilation, torments inflicted on body or mind, attempts to coerce the will itself; whatever insults human dignity, such as subhuman living conditions, arbitrary imprisonment, deportation, slavery, prostitution, the selling of women and children; as well as disgraceful working conditions, where men are treated as mere tools for profit, rather than as free and responsible persons; all these things and others of their like are infamies indeed. They poison human society, but they do more harm to those who practice them than those who suffer from the injury. Moreover, they are supreme dishonour to the Creator.” (n 27, *Vatican II document. The Church in the Modern World (Gaudium et Spes)*).

NB: This is the theological foundation for implementation of Resolution #3b re pro-life work.

And see Res #5:8 Review/develop outreach programmes to address social justice issues such as those outlined in The Church in the Modern World – work in progress – responding to local, national and international issues: works of mercy and works of social action.

Res 1a:7: Develop guidelines to ensure that persons working with the Archdiocese and in Ministry understand the values and virtues of the Catholic Church. This can be used as a guide when hiring individuals or screening persons to lead in Ministry in the Parish.

### **RESOLUTION #1b: Lead Dept.:Catechetical Team**

*Be it resolved that the Catholic parishes and schools, as well as the Archdiocesan Departments, be responsible for the implementation of the comprehensive strategy of #1a.*

Res 1b:1: Establish parish and school based discipleship formation programmes.

Res 1b:2: Emphasize Praxis in the Catechetical programme in schools and Parishes and encourage and assist teachers to include this as an essential element of their religious formation programme.

Res 1b:5 Develop an approach to having Catholics in all spheres of life understand the values and virtues of the Catholic Church.

Res 1b:7: Address parish and community issues with relevant outreach programmes.

## **RESOLUTION #2: Lead Department – Family Life Commission**

*Be it resolved that* the Archdiocese develop a comprehensive strategy for the formation of families as the domestic Church – the first moral community, for the moral and spiritual renewal of Trinidad and Tobago.

**RESOLUTION #3a:** *Be it resolved that each Catholic parish and school become a community celebrating the dignity of human life, from conception to natural death, affirming and developing the whole person.*

Res 3a:1 The Archdiocese to dedicate a week every year to the theme of ‘**respect for life**’ (see Res #1a:6).

Res 3a:2 Develop programmes to educate all Catholics in schools and parishes on the Church’s teaching on the death penalty, abortion, euthanasia, artificial birth control (and other pro-life issues).

Res 3a:3 Each parish to conscientiously, honestly assess how it respects life, in terms of facilities for and service to persons from all walks of life and implement systems accordingly.

**RESOLUTION #3b:** *Be it resolved that the Archdiocese develop a comprehensive programme as it relates to pro-life (including the topical issues of abortion and contraception) given our belief in, and our celebration of, the sanctity of life.*

Res 3b:1 The Archdiocese to promote the teaching of the Catholic Church’s position on life issues from conception to natural death and to be proactive in promoting a culture of life in T&T.

Res 3b:2 Parishes to host ongoing fora to teach/educate the faithful on the social teaching of the church and encourage youth and community debates on values and counter-values.

Res 3b:3 Develop programmes within the parish to support those young women and men who have chosen life in difficult circumstances.

Res 3b:4: Organize a national concert for life, featuring popular artistes who are pro-life, regardless of religion (Linked to Item 12, Res 3a:1).

**RESOLUTION #4:** *Be it resolved that Catholic families, schools and parishes commit themselves to spiritual and moral renewal; and that as Church we seek ways to partner with people of good will in the building of a just and harmonious society.*

Res 4:2: Educate the People of God in their responsibility for the transformation of society and implement practical projects in each parish to achieve this purpose.

Res 4:3: Use the Church's teaching on social justice in Homilies.

Res 4:4: Make regular use of Catholic social teachings in lessons and public debates or wherever possible in Catholic schools and parishes and encourage students to incorporate Catholic social teaching in their studies. (Relevant documents to be provided to them).

Res 4:8: Educate the faithful on Chapter IV of the Vatican Council 11 document on the Constitution of the Church. This Chapter focuses on the role of the laity in the Church and its mission.

**RESOLUTION #5:** *Be it resolved that Catholic parishes, in the spirit of solidarity and stewardship, serve the community by promoting and creating opportunities, structures and programmes to achieve social justice.*

Res #5:1: Parish Priests and all clergy to be made aware of their responsibility to impart the Social Teachings of the Church and to bring social justice values in their parishes and ministries.

Res #5:2: Each parish to establish a data bank of skills and needs and to use the data collected to support its strategies to serve the community.

Res #5:3: The Archdiocese to encourage the active involvement of individual Catholics in the Social cultural and political life of the nation. (By membership in Village/Community Councils, Local and National Government) and to encourage

Catholics in decision-making positions to allow their decision-making to be influenced/shaped by Catholic tradition and teaching.

Res 5:4: The Archdiocese to work in collaboration with the relevant Government authority in matters of social Justice.

Res #5:5: Encourage and teach networking and partnering skills using existing structures and where necessary creating new ones for the moral renewal of Trinidad and Tobago.

Res #5:6: Invite rural and urban parishes to engage in twinning arrangements to share time, talent and treasure in the spirit of solidarity.

Res #5:7: Include the work of Couples for Christ as a strategy for providing and creating opportunities, structures and programmes to achieve social justice.

Res #5:8 Create awareness of apprenticeship programmes, cottage industries and other programmes to meet the needs of marginalized persons in challenged areas and encourage parishioners to take advantage of them and support them.

Res #5:9: Parishes to be sensitive to the needs of carers of disabled, very young, aged, persons who are ill and encourage parishioners to support them in practical ways.

**RESOLUTION #6: *Be it resolved that in keeping with the Catholic position on Creation, our families, schools and parishes recognize our responsibility as stewards of Creation and express this in relevant tangible ways.***

Res 6:1: The Archdiocese to formulate policy and guidelines on environmental awareness.

Res 6:3: Organize/encourage participation in events that promote good stewardship of God's creation e.g. turtle watching, reforestation/replanting of trees, beach cleanup etc.

Res 6:4: The Archdiocese to take action to promote the Church as a 'green' Church, e.g. by raising awareness of how our daily choices affect the environment; encouraging the faithful to avoid being wasteful, to re-use items where necessary, and to re-cycle.

Res 6:5: Establish an agricultural programme in Catholic **Schools** and **Parishes**

Identify one or two Parishes that will be willing to establish an agricultural project (CCSJ, CEBM).

**RESOLUTION #7:** *Be it resolved that Catholics be educated and advised concerning matters of respect, reverence and modesty in dress and conduct at all times, particularly during Mass, other religious occasions and parish events.*

NB: Res. 7 will be achieved if all the other resolutions are achieved

## **APPENDIX II: A**

**Catholic Family, Become What You Are – The New Evangelization and its relationship to Catholic Family Life - Written by Msgr. Robert Llanos, Friday, 07 May 2010 00:31**

### **THE NEW EVANGELIZATION AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO CATHOLIC FAMILY LIFE**

The consequence of all of this is that the Church in its wisdom, through its Servant, Pope John Paul II in 1984, called people to “a New Evangelization that would unfurl with great vigour – just like the original evangelization – a potential for sanctity, a great missionary boom, a vast catechistic creativity, a bountiful manifestation of collegiality and communion, an evangelical commitment to give dignity to man, to generate ...a great future of hope in order to propose the civilization of love and, as a mean, a new ‘Christian Culture’ ” (Synod Documents 2009). This New Evangelization would have as its focus “entire groups of the Baptized (who) have lost a living sense of the faith or who no longer consider themselves members of the Church and so live a life far removed from Christ and his Gospel” R.M. 33. This focus on the New Evangelization must not be so exclusive however, that it compromises the pastoral care of the faithful or general missionary activity to the unbaptized which, as we have seen, has existed from the beginning of the Church’s history.

The chief characteristics of the New Evangelization are as follows:

- The New Evangelization is Christ Centred.
- The New Evangelization is the responsibility of the entire People of God.
- The New Evangelization begins at home in the family and in the parish.
- The New Evangelization is directed to individuals and to whole cultures.
- The New Evangelization is not limited to the basic Gospel message but is a comprehensive process of Christianization.
- The New Evangelization calls for a missionary spirituality.

(Synod Documents 2009.)

What is being asked for here then is an invitation to those in the Church to deepen their encounter with Christ and become themselves missionary disciples who invite those who are not part of the Church's communal life and worship to renew their relationship with God and the Church's living community of faith. As stated by Msgr. Jason Gordon, Catholics in the New Evangelization "are called to be persons who make a clear option for Christ, have coherence (congruence) between faith and life, live the values of the Kingdom, promote the civilization of love and are willing to be a sign of contradiction" (Official Synod Documents 2009). It was agreed at the Synod that the renewal of three institutions is vital to the success of the New Evangelization in this Archdiocese. These are the family, the Catholic school and the Catholic parish. Familiaris Consortio states very clearly that the well being of society and the Church's own good are intimately tied to the good of the family. It says that "At a moment of history in which the family is the object of numerous forces that seek to destroy it or in some way to deform it, and aware that the well-being of society and her own good are intimately tied to the good of the family,(7) the Church perceives in a more urgent and compelling way her mission of proclaiming to all people the plan of God for marriage and the family, ensuring their full vitality and human and Christian development, and thus contributing to the renewal of society and of the People of God". (F.C. #6). It therefore sees human and Christian development as contributing in an essential manner to the renewal of society and the people of God. F.C.#7. At the 6th World Meeting of Families in Mexico City in 2009 the principal conclusions were in line with Aparecida's "Disciples and Missionaries" which stated that "the Christian family is called to be today, with particular urgency, a subject of evangelization in the ecclesial aspect and a subject of socialization in the civil aspect". (Papal Address to the Pontifical Council for the Family d.d. 8.2.10)

Archbishop José Gomez of the San Antonio archdiocese in a February 15, 2010 document stated that "the primary apostolate of lay people, since the early Church, has always been to spread and defend the faith among their families and neighbours and to bring the teachings of Christ to bear on the issues facing their communities".

Paul VI says, "The family, like the Catholic Church and Christ, ought to be a place where the Gospel is transmitted and from which the Gospel radiates. In a family which is conscious of this mission, all the members evangelize and are evangelized....And such a family becomes the evangelizer of many other families and of the community of which it forms part" F.C. #52. In light of the above it

becomes clear that the family is the first and primary location for the New Evangelization to take root and thrive.

When this begins to happen the Catholic school and the Catholic parish will have a wellspring of resources for the evangelization of our society and the world. Msgr. Jason Gordon states it clearly in the Synod Documents 2009 when he says “If the family becomes the domestic church, then it becomes a structure of grace that feeds the Catholic School and Parish, married life, vocations and a renewed Trinidad and Tobago”. (SD 2009 ). It is important to note here that the Catholic school and parish both draw from and contribute to the new evangelization of the family.

The focus for this, the first of a three year cycle of Synod implementation, is the family because as we have seen above that is where the New Evangelization must begin and be focused even as we continue to evangelize in all other aspects of the Church’s life. We anticipate that beginning with the evangelization of families the three Pastoral Priorities of Synod 2009 (New Evangelization, Revitalizing Catholic Culture and Identity, and Regenerating the Moral and Spiritual Values of our Society) will flow into and complement each other as the Archdiocese strives to bring about a Civilization of Love. “Evangelization of the family is about a process that begins with the announcement of God’s purpose for man and woman, married life, human sexuality, and parenting”. (Synod Document 2009). There appears to be no better theology with which to address the evangelization of the family than with John Paul II’s ‘Theology of the Body’ and it is to this catechesis that we turn to next.

## **APPENDIX II: B.**

### **A new way of being Church – July 10, 2010**

**From the Synod Implementation Team (published in Catholic News)**

SYNOD 2009 proclaimed the New Evangelization a Pastoral Priority for the Archdiocese. This is the first time that the Archdiocese has had a Pastoral Priority that coordinated the imagination, reflection and pastoral action of the Church. This is one of three Priorities, the others, Revitalizing Catholic Culture and Identity and Regenerating the Moral and Spiritual Values of our Society; together they fulfil the three-fold mission of Christ -- Prophet, Priest and King.



The Pastoral Priority of The New Evangelization was embedded at every level of the Archdiocese; the parishes had Pastoral Plans, the Departments worked together in coordination around the Priority, the Archdiocese as a whole reflected upon the theme: **Catholic Family Become What You Are.**

The first value of the Synod is the coordination of all of our efforts around one theme. This had the effect of multiple approaches to the same pastoral problem for a year and a half. It also called us to review our structures at parish and Archdiocesan levels and to reflect on and find innovative ways to implement the priority. All of this is already The New Evangelization; it focused the Church and called forth new pastoral approaches and action.

**Blessed John Paul II, in a 1983 address to the Bishops of Latin American said: “Look to the future with commitment to a New Evangelization, one that is new in its ardour, new in its methods, and new in its means of expression.”**

Reflecting on the first priority let us explore these three aspects of The New Evangelization.

### **New in ardour**

That the whole Church, families, parishes, schools, Archdiocesan Departments all worked in unison around the theme for a year and a half speaks about new in ardour. There has been a new commitment in the Archdiocese with much more reflection, prayer and pastoral action than we have known before. In the reports that follow over the next few weeks we will see how deep this pastoral commitment went.

**New in method:** Synod Resolution #9 says: *Be it resolved that the Archdiocese at all levels adopt the evangelization of the family as the central component of The New Evangelization.*

Together with Resolution #7 that speaks about the renewal of the Catholic School, these became the new approach adopted by the Archdiocese. By implementing Synod we have committed to the renewal of the parish, by focusing on the family we committed to the renewal of the central institution of Church and society, by the renewal of the Catholic School we again work for the renewal of Church and society. These three together -- parish, family and school -- are the frontier of The New Evangelization.

**New in its means of expression:** This will be seen more clearly as we begin to see some of the things that were done at a diocesan level.

Shortly after the synod, the Departments of the Archdiocese met for a two-day "Planning Session" and reorganized themselves into clusters around the three Pastoral Priorities (Resolution #10). They planned and coordinated their work over the last two years in this way. This made collaboration the heart of how we are Church and foundational for all our ministry. It is not *what* we do but also *how* we do it that is important. This new structure of collaboration is a commitment to build the Civilisation of Love in all we do. Out of this the Department of The New Evangelization was born in July 2009. Pope Benedict announced one for the Roman Curia on June 28, 2010.

During 2009 we prepared the parishes for implementation by having several meetings to communicate the new structure of Church around collaboration (Resolution #10) on renewal of our baptismal promises -- "**Called to be Catholic**". Each parish had a 12-point list to achieve in preparation for the first priority. Many parishes did well in making the shift to this new way. This was demonstrated by the enthusiasm around implementation. We all read the three-part series by Archbishop Gilbert – "Our Freedom as Believers", "Conversion and Discipleship" and "Rediscovering the Vocation".

In September we facilitated the parishes through a Pastoral Planning exercise using Appreciative Enquiry where dreams and aspirations for family life emerged. Out of this the parishes developed the Pastoral Plans and brought them to the Cathedral to present to the Archbishop on December 8, 2009. Coordinated Pastoral Planning around Evangelization of the Family had begun.

The Synod decided that the Evangelization of the Family would be "the central component of The New Evangelization" (Resolution #9) so the Pastoral Plans focused on the Evangelization of the Family. Most of our Lenten retreats, many teachings, seminars, courses have been conducted on the theme at an Archdiocesan and parish level.

All of this is already The New Evangelization. It is animating the life of the parish and parishioner in a very different way. It is a coordinated approach to the pastoral life of the Archdiocese. It involved a major catechetical movement on the theology of the family and in many respects a rediscovery of the Catholic tradition and teaching on the family. It brought Blessed John Paul's Theology of the Body centre stage in the Archdiocese.

During this time a team worked on a Pastoral Plan for Catholic Education (Resolution #7). The articulated Mission for Catholic Education is to: "***form students to achieve their full potential as children of God and citizens of the world***". This is a whole person approach where academics, spiritual and non-

academic formation are given great attention. Parents' involvement is critical and school governance and forming a community of values are the foundation.

In tackling The New Evangelization, the Archdiocese has had a three-pronged approach. It has sought to bring renewal to the three institutions over which the Church has most influence -- the Catholic family, the school and the parish. By focusing on these three essential institutions, it is our hope that in obedience to the Spirit, the Church may be faithful to the call of Christ.

"...a new Evangelization that would unfurl with greater vigour - just like the original evangelization - a potential for sanctity, a great missionary boom, a vast catechistic creativity, a bountiful manifestation of collegiality and communion, an evangelical commitment to give dignity to man, to generate ...a great future of hope in order to propose the civilization of love and, as a mean, a new 'Christian culture'". (Pope John Paul, 1984)

The end of The New Evangelization is a new Christian culture. The first two Pastoral Priorities are intertwined. As we revitalize Catholic Culture and Identity we are continuing the New Evangelization. Let us pray for the grace to heed the Spirit's call to build the Civilisation of Love in Trinidad and Tobago

### **APPENDIX III**

#### **Article published in Catholic News on March 28, 2011: 2010 Values and Virtues Formation Programme launched Keeping children on the right track**

Church, State, parents, guardians and teachers must work together to instil proper values in children growing up in today's world.

That was the opinion of the main speakers at last Tuesday's launch of the 2010 Values and Virtues Formation Programme (VVFP). The VVFP for post-SEA students in Catholic primary schools was launched two years ago and this year's programme will be run in the next term. A volunteer focus group of Catholic teachers examined the content of the first edition of the students' workbook, revamped and localised it, to produce a second edition. Activities centre on four modules: "Self-Awareness", "Relationships", "Being Responsible", and "Balance and Wholeness". A teachers' guide was also produced to accompany the workbook.

Leela Ramdeen, chair of the Catholic Commission for Social Justice, which is coordinating the VVFP, welcomed all to the Canon Max Murphy Centre in Chaguanas for Tuesday's launch and start of a two-day workshop for teachers who will be involved in the programme.

Archbishop Edward Gilbert gave the opening prayer and remarks before officially launching this year's programme. He told the audience of teachers, principals, sponsors, representatives from the Ministries of Education, Social Development, the National Parent Teachers Association, and other invited guests, that the main issue being faced is "forming the consciences of children". He said it had become necessary because the values they need were either "not taught or insufficiently modelled for them at home". He said the Church has the infrastructure to make a contribution and called on parents to support the programme by doing the activities with their children. "We have to help reclaim the generation that has drifted away." Speaking on behalf of the Ministry of Education, curriculum officer Laurence Jaggassar said the Ministry was fully supportive of the VVFP. Barbadian singer/composer Derek Fields travelled to Trinidad to performed the theme song, *Child of God* and another one of his compositions, *Children are the light of the world*.

Vicar for Administration Msgr Jason Gordon also addressed the assembly on “Values and Virtues, A Vision of Catholic Education”.

He said the VVFP must start with teachers and principals examining and challenging their own values, before they can teach their students.

He said while many teachers and parents were likely raised using an authority model, children today must be raised using a credibility model. “Our witness is more important than our instruction for our children.”

Msgr Gordon said transformation to that model must happen because children are being raised in a totally different world. “We have to do values formation because what they are exposed to is not what we were exposed to.”

Msgr Gordon explained that the world today is secularised and materialistic with a focus on pleasure. They are facing “a tidal wave” of forces hostile to the values of the Kingdom of God, he remarked, and the media culture will not help inculcate these values in young people.

Msgr Gordon said Catholic education must therefore focus not only on “great academics but forming great human beings that can make significant contributions to the country and the world...We must be about forming servant leaders to build a civilisation of love.”

On the opening day, teachers viewed a video presentation of students’ views on values and virtues produced by TGN (The Good News) Media, participated in a panel discussion, and a post-lunch session on Abstinence that continued into day two. – Raymond Syms

## **APPENDIX IV:**

### **KEY SOCIAL JUSTICE PRINCIPLES:**

"The Church's social teaching is a rich treasure of wisdom about building a just society and living lives of holiness amidst the challenges of modern society. Modern Catholic social teaching has been articulated through a tradition of papal, conciliar, and episcopal documents. The depth and richness of this tradition can be understood best through a direct reading of these documents. In these brief reflections, we highlight several of the key themes that are at the heart of our Catholic social tradition." (US Bishops).

1. The Sanctity of Life and the Dignity of the Human Person
2. Common Good, family and Community
3. Option for the Poor and vulnerable
4. Rights and Responsibilities
5. Role of Government and Subsidiarity
6. Economic Justice : The economy must serve people, not the other way around.
7. Stewardship of God's Creation
8. Promotion of Peace and Disarmament
9. Participation: "All people have a right to participate in the economic, political, and cultural life of society. It is a fundamental demand of justice and a requirement for human dignity that all people be assured a minimum level of participation in the community."
10. Global Solidarity and Development
11. The dignity of work and the rights of workers
12. The universal destination of goods



## **APPENDIX V:**

### **CCSJ's MEDIA RELEASE & CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR RFLW (Sept. 2010)**

In keeping with Synod Res. 3a:1, The Catholic Archdiocese of Port of Spain has decided to dedicate a week every year to the theme of '*respect for life.*' (Synod Res. 3a:1). The Catholic Commission for Social Justice (CCSJ), which has responsibility for organizing activities for the week, calls on all citizens to join us in observing our first *Respect For Life Week* (RFLW) (24 Sept – 3 Oct). The Inter Religious Organisation supports this initiative.

Leela Ramdeen, Chair of CCSJ, says: "Respect For Life Week (RFLW) gives us an opportunity to demonstrate that we stand for LIFE in T&T. Jesus came so that we may have life and have it to the full (John 10:10). Our AEC Bishops in the Caribbean made it clear in their Pastoral Letter, *The Gift of Life* (2008), that: 'As Christians we are to be 'people of and for life;' we are to be genuinely pro-life, with a proper understanding of what this means.'

"Pope John Paul II emphasized what this means in his encyclical, *The Gospel of Life* (1995). He said: 'To be actively pro-life is to contribute to the renewal of society through the promotion of the common good. (However) it is impossible to further the common good without acknowledging and defending the right to life from conception to natural death...it is not enough to remove unjust laws. The underlying causes of attacks on life have to be eliminated.'

"We need a multi-faceted approach if we are to: address these underlying causes, build a culture of life and a civilization of love. RFLW requires us to look beyond our own shores to consider threats to life and opportunities to build a culture of life and just societies worldwide.

"What are some of the threats to life today? The list is long indeed and include: crime and violence, poverty and social exclusion, substance abuse, unjust wars, genocide, religious intolerance, euthanasia, torture, subhuman living conditions, incest, domestic violence, neglect of the elderly, arbitrary imprisonment, slavery, prostitution, human trafficking, abortion, the death penalty, disgraceful working conditions, child labour, forced labour and forced migration, pornography, racism, sexism, class bias, environmental degradation."

CCSJ urges citizens not to be overwhelmed by these threats. There is much that we can and must do to eliminate these. However, this requires action on our part.



There can be no neutrality in the face of the many attacks on human life and on our environment. The situation is so grave that it is essential that we come together to pray and work to build a culture of life in our communities and in the world.

As Catholics we believe that human life is sacred – at every stage - and that the dignity of the human person is the moral foundation of our vision for T&T/the world. It is for this reason that we urge all people of goodwill to join us as we seek to tackle the many injustices that stand in the way of achieving this vision.

As we plan events to observe RFLW, let us remember that the primary capital to be safeguarded and valued is the human person in his or her integrity. As Pope Benedict XVI says, “...respect for life cannot be detached from all other matters of social justice and human development.” And by human development he means “integral human development”, that is, the development of every dimension of the person and of each person (Charity in Truth, 2009).

During RFLW we ask each Archdiocesan Department, faith community, educational institution, public and private sector group – including Government Ministries and Local Government Authorities, to conscientiously and honestly assess how it respects life, in terms of facilities for and services to persons from all walks of life and implement systems accordingly.

RFLW also provides each of us with an opportunity to reflect on how we respect our *own* lives. And let us not forget, as Pope John Paul II reminds us: “Respect for life and for the dignity of the human person extends also to the rest of Creation.” We have one home – planet Earth, which God has given to us as a gift – to cultivate and care for (Genesis) – not to exploit it in the way that humankind is doing today.

During RFLW each of us should ask ourself: “How do I respect myself and others in my community? How do I respect my environment? How do I protect, defend and enhance life at all stages and in all circumstances – from conception to natural death? How am I using my time, talent and treasure to promote a culture of life in my home, my community, T&T, the world? How will I observe Respect for Life Week? Leela Ramdeen says: "What better way to start off our activities than by sitting at the feet of one of our nation's icons, Sir Ellis Clarke, and listening to him tell us about our journey to becoming a Republic. It is fitting that this session will be held on Republic Day (Friday 24 September - from 4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.). Please see the attached Calendar of Events for RFLW. We would be delighted if you could join

us in our various activities. For further information about RFLW activities, contact Leela Ramdeen on 299 8945 or Lorna/Marge on 290 1635.

APPENDIX V

**RESPECT FOR LIFE  
WEEK**

24th September - 3rd October 2010

**RESPECT ALL LIFE, GOD'S GIFT TO US.**

*Let's build a culture of life together.*

For further information contact Catholic Commission for Social Justice on 290-1635.  
PHOTOS BY KAMINI RAMDEEN

## RESPECT FOR LIFE WEEK CALENDAR OF EVENTS ALL WELCOME

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION
Friday 24 Sept (Republic Day)	<b>Seminar:</b> Sir Ellis Clarke TC.GCMG Our people, our land: Journey to becoming a Republic.	Living Water Community, Port of Spain 4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Sunday 26th September	<b>Respect For Life Interfaith Service &amp; IRO National Day of Prayer and Thanksgiving</b> (including address by His Grace)	55-57 Pointe a Pierre Rd., Raja Yoga Center, San Fernando 4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Monday 27th September	Eternal Light Community <b>Prayer session:</b>  <b>Trinity Communications Network's (TCN) Telethon</b> will include a focus on Respect for Life (RFL).	St Charles RC Church, Tunapuna 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.  TCN TV (Channel 10) 8:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.
Tuesday 28th September	<b>TCN's Telethon</b> (including RFL focus)  CCSJ's <b>Ask Why</b> TV Programme: Respecting God's Gift of LIFE.	TCN TV (Channel 10) 8:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.  TCN TV (Channel 10) 9:30 p.m. - 10:30 p.m.
Wednesday 29th September	<b>Interfaith Panel Discussion</b> on Life Issues - Threats to Life and Opportunities to promote "integral human development" (Pope Benedict XVI).	Our Lady of Fatima RC Church Hall, Bushe Street, Curepe 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Thursday 30th September	<b>TCN's Telethon:</b> Archbishop Edward J. Gilbert C.Ss.R. - will include a focus on Respect for Life (RFL)	TCN TV (Channel 10) 8:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.
Friday 1st October	Parish priests are asked to focus on RFL during Adoration and Mass which many Parishes celebrate on the <b>First Friday</b> of each month  <b>Vigil</b> - Emmanuel Community	All Parishes  46 Rosalino St., Woodbrook 7:00 pm - 12:00 midnight
Saturday 2nd October	<b>Holy Hour</b> - Parish priests are asked to encourage Youths to lead in parishes - before Mass.  <b>TCN's Telethon</b> (including RFL focus)	All Parishes  TCN TV (Channel 10) 8:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.
Sunday 3rd October	<b>Interfaith Procession &amp; Prayers</b> (from Casuals Corner to St Ann's Roundabout)	Queens Park Savannah (pending permission) 3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.



## The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Port of Spain

Catholic Commission for Social Justice (CCSJ)  
Episcopal Delegate / Chair: Leela Ramdeen



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27 August, 2010

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Hon. Minister,

### Re: Capital Punishment

This Commission has responsibility in the Catholic Archdiocese of Port of Spain to take action to regenerate the moral and spiritual values of our society. I am sure that you will agree with me that the erosion of morals and values in T&T has led, to a large extent, to the unprecedented rise in crime and violence.

The causes of crime are complex, many and varied and require a multi-faceted approach. We all have one common purpose; to rid our beloved country of this plague. The challenge for us is to find ways of doing so while still affirming and protecting the sanctity of ALL human life as a gift from God at all stages and in all circumstances.

We must all take action to embrace the victims of crime and their families. CCSJ is working with communities to create victim support networks across the country. The words of Rev. Bernice King, daughter of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., are instructive. She said:

"Having lost my father and grandmother to gun violence, I will understand the deep hurt and anger felt by the loved ones of those who have been murdered. Yet, I can't accept the judgement that their killers deserve to be executed. This merely perpetuates the tragic, unending cycle of violence that destroys our hope for a decent society."

At a time when the issue of resuming hangings in TT is being discussed, CCSJ offers you for your reflection a copy of a *Pastoral Letter on Capital Punishment (2000)* written by the AEC Bishops of the Caribbean. It is worth noting that in their *Pastoral Letter of 2008: The Gift of Life*, they reaffirmed their belief in the Church's teaching that: "Non-lethal forms of punishment are more in keeping with the concrete conditions of the common good and more in conformity with the dignity of the human person."

Society has a right to protect itself from those who destroy the lives of so many of our people without impunity. But let us develop methods other than hanging to provide for the safety and well-being of the public. We oppose hanging and continue to pray and work for its abolition.

We offer the following suggestions that may be of use to our nation as we seek to nurture a peaceful society and to develop a comprehensive crime plan. These suggestions have been drawn from comments made to CCSJ in the recent past and do not only relate to those who commit murders. We can:

“- strengthen family life e.g. promote good parenting and enhance the quality of life of families, address poverty and social exclusion, review safety nets available through the various Govt. Ministries, and empower citizens to take responsibility for their lives and their health;

- develop and implement programmes to regenerate the morals and values of society: at all levels (including our families, schools, universities, and workplaces);

- encourage faith communities to address the issue of crime and violence in their communities;

- revamp the education system to make it more relevant to needs of young people. Establish special projects to help truants and school drop outs. Review subventions to NGOs, CBOs and FBOs that support the work of schools – are these sufficient? Offer tax deduction incentives to encourage corporate contributions to such initiatives.

- develop the capacity of the police service to undertake their duties effectively and to ensure quality policing e.g. through systematic performance appraisal, EPA, and adequate equipment;

-deal with gangs. Root out those who are bringing in drugs and guns and white collar criminals;

- develop first class detection strategies. Lay charges and enhance the criminal justice system so that cases will proceed swiftly through the judicial system - followed by conviction where cases are proved and appropriate penalties applied.

- achieve swift justice/improve the criminal justice system e.g. by abolishing preliminary inquiries - with indictable offences being heard only through the High Court; streamline prosecution; set up special courts such as gun courts and review sentencing for possession of guns.

- improve detection rates with new technology such as:

a) wire-tapping to assist detection (the Govt. will need to introduce legislation dealing with wire-tapping which should be subject to a Court Order (St Kitts to use wire-tapping to ‘get’ gangs);

b) DNA (beef up the DNA legislation and the capabilities of the forensic lab with an ability to use foreign facilities if necessary);

c) GPS and criminal database should be made available to all police cars.

Evidence can then be produced without lay witnesses who are susceptible to intimidation, being killed.

- improve the prison system e.g. develop a comprehensive programme to rehabilitate prisoners (within prisons and on their release) and address issues such as mobile phones being used by inmates. Sentences could be based on time taken by the prisoner to learn e.g. a trade/skill, reading, writing, mathematics, along with good behaviour.”

Yours faithfully,

*Leela Ramdeen*

Leela Ramdeen, Chair of CCSJ and Attorney-at-Law

## **APPENDIX VII**

### **Social Justice Online Course: CCSJ, CREDI, and the UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON**

“Inter alia, the Catholic Commission for Social Justice (CCSJ) and the Catholic Religious Education Development Institute (CREDI) are concerned to promote integral human development.

Pope Benedict XVI states in his latest encyclical, *Caritas in Veritate*, Charity in Truth, that the essential quality of “authentic” development is that it must be “integral, that is, it has to promote the good of every man and of the whole man” – every dimension of the person. He says that “The vocation to progress drives us to ‘do more, know more and have more in order to be more’... Development needs Christians with their arms raised towards God in prayer...Development requires attention to the spiritual life...”

Our vocation to be Catholic requires us to develop our knowledge about the Church’s teaching. Ongoing faith formation requires us to foster learning for life in our Archdiocese. If we are to “know more” we must respond to the challenge outlined by His Grace, Archbishop Edward J. Gilbert, in his 3rd leaflet which was circulated in Catholic News last week: “Called to be Catholic: Rediscovering the Vocation” (adapted from his Column published in the Catholic News 29 March 2009).

His Grace asks: “How can the Church help people who have been confirmed live their confirmation, i.e. manifest that they have accepted a strengthening of the Spirit, and take up their responsibility to spread and defend the faith as true witnesses of Christ?”

He lists certain action that is required. This includes: “Personal study and reflection on the Faith.” The New Evangelization requires that we develop our knowledge of our Faith. It is for this reason that CCSJ and CREDI have partnered with the University of Dayton, USA, to run an online course that will help the faithful to develop a spirituality of Justice. One of the positive aspects of modern technology is that the computer can be used to create virtual learning communities.

The Social Justice Online Course, which was advertised in the Catholic News, will be run by the University of Dayton and will be facilitated by CREDI. The Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation (VLCFF), part of the University of Dayton, is “a growing initiative to offer adult religious education and faith formation anytime and anywhere via the internet. The goal is to support the

church's professional ministry of religious education and faith formation in cyberspace. The VLCFF is coordinated and sponsored by the Institute for Pastoral Initiatives (IPI) at the University of Dayton - a Catholic Marianist Institution.”

VLCFF’s mission is “to mobilize the resources of the University of Dayton for partnerships with the Church that create and implement innovative pastoral initiatives designed to meet the needs of the Church and to articulate faith within the context of contemporary culture.”

The program series currently comprises 11 modules grouped into levels: Basic, Intermediate and Advanced. Each module is about 5 weeks long. To complete the program, one must start at the Basic Level and work through to the Advanced Level. Each course is worth 2.5 CEUs (Continuing Education Units) which are based on the International Academic Standards for Continuing Education - 10-12 hours per CEU. Students will be engaged in approximately 25 hours [5 hours per week] with the course material and interacting with the online students and facilitator during the course.

Themes covered on the course are as follows: Conscience, Introduction to Practical Morality, Catholic School Teaching, Marianist Studies: Social Justice, Advanced Catholic Social Teaching, History of Catholic Social Action, Parish and Social Action, Poverty in the US and Around the World, Scripture and Justice, Spirituality and Inclusive Faith Communities.

The cost of each module is TT\$260, and modules will require access to books. At the end of the series, successful participants will be awarded a Certificate by the University of Dayton and the Archdiocese of Port of Spain [CREDI]. Twenty persons have signed up for the first online module: Conscience – 12 women and 8 men from across the Archdiocese. They have had their online orientation via SKYPE with the Institute for Pastoral Initiatives/University of Dayton (IPI/UD).

We wish to thank our Vicars and priests for assisting us in recruiting candidates, as well as IPI/UD for assisting us in reaching this important milestone. We will continue running such courses to develop the knowledge of the faithful in our parishes so that they can spread and defend our faith and promote God’s kingdom of love, truth, justice, peace and freedom.

Module 1, which focuses on Conscience, commenced on 12 July 2009. Our Catechism tells us that “A well-formed conscience is upright and truthful...The word of God is a light for our path.” (See: Catechism, 1776 – 1802). We wish our 20 students every success. We hope that they will share with others the knowledge gained from participating in the course and that this knowledge will assist them in their faith journey. (By: CCSJ and CREDI Original Release Date: Jul. 2009).”