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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.

(CCSJ seeks to promote Gospel values that can empower people to be active participants in bringing about God's Kingdom here on earth, and to implement strategies for Social Justice Education and advocacy, and promote people-centred development and the transformation of inequitable systems and conditions.)

CORE VALUES

- We recognize 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 2011. We thank God for allowing us to serve for another year in His vineyard. The Commission's last AGM was held on 27 July 2010 and is available on CCSJ's website, along with all previous AGM reports. It is to be noted that a ten-year report of CCSJ's stewardship since our inception in 2003, was requested by *Bishop* Jason for publication, along with reports from all Departments, for the production of a Booklet for Archbishop Edward Gilbert C.Ss.R in memory of his tenure as the Archdiocese's 9th Archbishop of Port of Spain from 2001 - Dec 26, 2011. This report is available on CCSJ's website. Please note that throughout this 2011 AGM report, although *Archbishop* Harris and *Bishop* Gordon were installed as Archbishop and Bishop respectively during the latter part of 2011, as a mark of respect, we include their current titles in italics in the report, whenever their names appear before their installation. **Membership** of the Commission during 2011 was 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
Maria Diaz-James	Researcher:
Christine Walcott	Parish Link Coordinator (from September 2011)
Richard Smith	Vicariate Link Coordinator who coordinates the Social Justice aspect of the job descriptions of the 4 Vicariate Link Coordinators (VLCs), including his own work. The other VLCs are: Sr Gail Jagroop, Deacon Mike Smith and Deacon Paul Bousignac

Volunteers:

Prof Surindra Arjoon, Senior Lecturer in Ethics & Decision Sciences, Faculty of Social Sciences, UWI, and Chair of CCSJ's Standing Committee on Morals and Values; and

Dr Kenwyn Nicholls who runs CCSJ's Diabetes: Prevention and Management Project.

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 work.

The Commission continues to meet on the last Wednesday of each month. In this introduction, I shall seek to locate CCSJ's work within the work of the Archdiocese as a whole, since CCSJ is one of 18 Departments in the Archdiocese. The work of each Department is overseen by the Synod Implementation Team (SIT). CCSJ's Chair is a member of SIT.

In 2011, CCSJ's work was guided to a large extent by three Pastoral Priorities and Resolutions arising out of the Third sitting of Synod in 2009. It is from this Synod process that CCSJ was given its mandate post-Synod 2009. The Resolutions fall under the three Pastoral Priorities (PP) outlined in the Archdiocese's Mission Statement which was adopted after the last sitting of Synod in Jan/Feb 2009 (see previous sittings in 2003 and 2005). The PPs aim to further the mission of Christ and His Church in Trinidad and Tobago. The Mission Statement, reads as follows:

We are the people of God in Trinidad and Tobago, building the Civilization of Love - reconciliation with God, neighbour, creation and self, through:

The New Evangelization,

Revitalizing Catholic Culture and Identity, and

Regenerating the Moral and Spiritual Values of our Society.

For 1 ½ years the Archdiocese as a whole focused on the first PP – The New Evangelization: Catholic Family Become What You Are. The first PP was meant to run from December 8, 2009 (Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception) to December 7, 2010. It was extended to May 31, 2011 to allow more time for parishes, schools and Church departments to pursue the initiative.

The second Pastoral Priority – Revitalizing Catholic Culture and Identity: My Church, My Parish, My Family, was launched on Corpus Christi, June 1, 2011. It is expected to run until Dec 2013.

SIT reminded the Faithful 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.”

The overall Goals of the three PPs are as follows:

First: The New Evangelization: That all Catholics come to know Jesus and live their lives animated by His love, example and values resulting in the evangelization of culture and integral human development.

Second: Revitalizing Catholic Culture and Identity: That our Eucharistic worldview, our daily living and our celebrations are in the service of building a culture and identity that keeps the “memory of Jesus” alive; Jesus who died, to gather all who were scattered.

Third: Regenerating the Moral and Spiritual Values of our Society: 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.

CCSJ has lead responsibility for the third PP which is expected to come ‘on- stream’ at the end of 2013.

PP3 includes a Goal and Resolutions which are included in **APPENDIX I.**

CCSJ continues its efforts to raise awareness of the Faithful/Citizens of the social doctrine of the Church; to encourage them and the wider community to demonstrate our love for God and for our neighbour by reaching out in solidarity to those who are poor/socially excluded and to build the common good. We will be true witnesses to our faith when we integrate our faith with our daily lives.

As CCSJ works to implement the 2nd Pastoral Priority: *Revitalizing Catholic Culture and Identity: My Church, My Parish, My Family*, we have been stressing the need for the Faithful to acknowledge that central to our Catholic identity are love and service (see Matthew 25:35-36). To revitalize Catholic Culture and Identity in our Archdiocese, we must commit ourselves to be active in Ministry. An integral part of our Ministry must be a commitment to promote justice:

“The teaching and spreading of her social doctrine are part of the Church’s evangelizing mission. Since it is a doctrine aimed at guiding people’s behaviour, it consequently gives rise to a ‘commitment to justice,’ according to each individual’s role, vocation, and circumstances.” (The Social Concern of the Church, n.41, Blessed John Paul II).

We will achieve our mission if we stand in solidarity with each other to:

- protect and promote the sanctity of life and the dignity of each human person;
- promote integral human development (the development of all dimensions of a person and of each person);
- act as advocates for the poor and vulnerable, including our children, the differently abled, and senior citizens;
- strengthen family life, build community and the common good;
- promote human rights and meet our responsibilities;
- promote economic justice e.g. by ensuring that the economy works for the people;
- promote participation in the economic, political, social and cultural life of society;
- be good stewards of God’s creation by promoting environmental/ecological justice - recognising that the gifts of the earth that God has given to us is for all to share – including future generations;
- build a nation/world in which truth, justice, love, freedom and forgiveness – the pillars of peace, become a reality.

CCSJ's work is underpinned by prayer. We seek to develop our own spirituality/deepen our relationship with God by attending an annual retreat. This provides an opportunity for Members and Staff to come together in prayer and contemplation. Our retreat was held on 30 March 2011. Archbishop Gilbert joined us for part of the morning session. *Archbishop* Joe Harris and *Bishop* Jason Gordon ran the retreat. Throughout the day, they led us in prayerful reflection and helped us to focus on what our vocation is as members of a Social Justice team working towards achieving the Mission of our Archdiocese/the Church. Their presentations were truly inspirational and everyone left feeling refreshed/renewed for the journey ahead as we seek to do God's work. CCSJ thanks Vanessa Sabga and her family for, once again, offering their lovely home as the venue for our retreat.

On July 8, 2011, members of CCSJ welcomed the news that Pope Benedict XVI had signed the apostolic letter which appointed the then Fr. Joseph Everard Harris C.S.Sp as Coadjutor Archbishop of Port-of-Spain. He was ordained as Coadjutor Archbishop at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception on September 14, 2011 and was installed as the tenth Archbishop of Port of Spain, during a ceremony at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception on Thursday, December 8, 2011.

We take this opportunity to congratulate Archbishop Joe Harris (a Holy Ghost Father, former parish priest of St Ann's, Vicar for Priests and Judicial Vicar) and Bishop Jason Gordon (formerly Msgr Jason Gordon, Vicar for Administration in our Archdiocese, and former member of CCSJ) on their appointments. Bishop Jason was ordained Bishop of Bridgetown, Barbados on September 21, 2011 at St Patrick's Cathedral, Bridgetown. He is also Bishop of Kingstown, St Vincent & the Grenadines, and was installed two days later (September 23) in St Vincent's Cathedral of the Assumption.

As CCSJ said in our Media Release in 2011:

“Both Archbishop Joseph Harris C.S.Sp. and Bishop Jason Gordon 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.”

Members of CCSJ record our thanks to Archbishop Edward Gilbert C.Ss.R. We are grateful for all that he did during his ten-year tenure in our Archdiocese. Our Church is stronger for his leadership and guidance; for the way in which he ‘Shepherded’ the Faithful during that period. May God continue to bless him.

3. TREASURER'S REPORT 2011 - for the year ended December 31, 2011

CASH/BANK BALANCES:

Balances reduced by approximately \$14K over the preceding year, from \$206K at the beginning of the period to \$192K at the end of 2011.

RECEIPTS:

Total receipts of \$138K fell below the amount of \$155K received during the prior year.

	<u>\$000's</u>
Decrease in Direct Funding by Chancery	(69)
Decrease in Donations	(8)

	(75)
Fundraising	57
Other	1

	(17)
	=====

EXPENDITURE:

There was an overall decrease in expenditure of \$75K when compared to the year 2010

	<u>\$000's</u>
Advertising/Respect for Life	(1)
Audit Fees	5
Sacred Spaces	6
TTRF	(86)
UN World Day	3
Other	(2)

	(75)

CHANCERY DISBURSEMENTS

Disbursements by the Chancery on behalf of CCSJ reflected a reduction of \$54K when compared with the prior year. This reduction was mainly due to lesser payments for Salaries/Stipends (\$34K) as staff had been reduced. Expenditure on the Values and Virtues Formation Programme also reduced by \$34K due to the phasing out of this Programme from CCSJ's remit to that of the RE Team.

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS/EXPENDITURE 2011

The following is a statement of Receipts and Expenditure for 2011 which shows closing Cash/Bank Balances of \$192,561.36 as at December 31, 2011

Respectfully submitted,
K. C. Cipriani (Treasurer)

CCSJ
Income and Expenditure Statement
for the Year ending December 31, 2011

Opening Balances

FCB Operating Account	22320.32
FCB Money Market Account	157091.86
Republic Bank Limited	26309.12
	205721.30
Cash on Hand	535.00
	206256.30
	206256.30

Receipts

Sale items	
Compendium	140.00
Take a bite	100.00
Respect for Life T-shirts	1,730.00
	1,970.00
Proposal Writing Workshop	1,710.00
Fundraising	56,600.00
Donations	500.00
Interest	
Operating Account	39.26
Money Market Account	3265.73
	3,304.99
TTRF Annual Returns	1,920.00
Amount Over Deposited	45.00
Direct Funding by Chancery	72,140.00
	138,189.99
	138,189.99

Expenditure

	<u>CCSJ</u>	<u>Chancery</u>	
Advertising	16,419.08		16,419.08
Audit Fees	5,000.00		5,000.00
Cell Phone Exps.		9,876.38	9,876.38
Donations	655.00		655.00
Fund Raiser	33,435.00		33,435.00
Misc.	5,908.30	325.00	6,233.30
Office Equipment	2,936.50	7,417.25	10,353.75
Other catering		2,750.00	2,750.00
Policy W/shop	2,801.70		2,801.70
Postage	1,289.00		1,289.00
Rates and Taxes	872.00		872.00
RFL	15,801.61		15,801.61
Sacred Spaces	6,000.00		6,000.00
Seminar			0.00
Stationery	6,854.53		6,854.53
Stipends/salaries		193,062.50	193,062.50
Travel		14,050.07	14,050.07
TTRF	14,376.00		14,376.00
UN World Day	2,642.00		2,642.00
V&V	36,894.21		36,894.21
Xmas Party		2,200.00	2,200.00
	<u>151,884.93</u>	<u>229,681.20</u>	<u>381,566.13</u>
Expenses paid by Chancery			<u>229681.20</u>
			<u>151884.93</u>

Closing Balance

192,561.36

FCB Operating Account	8123.58
FCB Money Market Account	160357.59
Republic Bank limited	24005.19
	192486.36
Cash on Hand	75.00
Cash Shortage	
	<u><u>192561.36</u></u>

4. REPORT ON CCSJ'S WORK DURING 2011

As stated earlier, it is important to locate CCSJ's work within the overall framework of the Archdiocese, which is led by our Shepherd, the Archbishop. There are a number of structures that exist in the Archdiocese to further the Mission of the Church. One of these structures is the Synod Implementation Team (SIT), of which CCSJ's Chair is a member. SIT was appointed by Archbishop Gilbert after the 3rd sitting of Synod.

In December 2010, all Departments, parishes and schools were required to submit an Annual Strategic Plan for the year 2011 at a Mass at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. CCSJ submitted its plan and at the end of 2011, CCSJ's Plan for 2012 was submitted to our newly installed *Archbishop* Joseph Harris C.S.Sp during Mass at the Cathedral. These plans are reviewed annually and amended as necessary. CCSJ's plans – past and current - are available on our website. Heads of the 18 Departments in the Archdiocese met with *Bishop* Jason Gordon, on several occasions during 2011 to plan and review actions taken to implement Synod Resolutions. Monthly meetings between CCSJ's Chair and Archbishop Gilbert provided a useful opportunity for the Commission to receive feedback on the implementation of CCSJ's plan. CCSJ's Chair continues to meet with Archbishop Harris as our new Shepherd.

During 2011, key aspects of CCSJ's plan were implemented. Areas of activity covered are outlined hereunder:

A. PARISH LINK PROGRAMME:

Introduction by CCSJ's Chair: Early in the life of the Commission, CCSJ appointed a Parish Link Coordinator whose main task was:

- to promote the Commission's objectives at parish level e.g. by establishing Social Justice Teams in parishes and guiding them as they address social justice issues, particularly at a local level;
- to educate the faithful about the social teaching of the Church.

For most of 2011, CCSJ had no Parish Link Coordinator. (Sr) Christine Walcott O.P. (now Christine Walcott) was appointed to this position in August 2011. Since she was going on vacation before taking up her appointment, she undertook to read relevant documents about Catholic Social Teaching. CCSJ's Chair sent her numerous internet links to support her as she sought to raise awareness of the issues. She was also given a copy of the Compendium on the Social Doctrine of the Church. She informed CCSJ's Chair that she would take the opportunity while in the USA visiting Sisters from her Congregation, to discuss social justice issues with those in her Congregation who were well 'versed' in the Church's social teaching. She took up her post on 1st September, 2011 and CCSJ's Chair arranged an induction programme for her.

It is important to highlight at this point the work of the four Vicariate Link Coordinators (VLCs) and their area of responsibility with regard to CCSJ's work at parish level. In our 2010 AGM report, CCSJ recorded *Bishop* Jason's plan to include in the job descriptions of the four VLCs,

responsibility for promoting social justice in their respective Vicariates. This was done. Since the VLCs' work initially focused on supporting parishes in meeting certain requirements emanating from Synod 2009, *Bishop* Jason had informed them that they will begin working in earnest on the social justice aspect of their job description in January 2011.

Richard Smith, who was CCSJ's Parish Link Coordinator before being recruited as a VLC, was charged with the extra responsibility of coordinating the social justice aspect of the VLCs' work in their respective Vicariates and reporting to CCSJ at the Commission's monthly meetings. At a meeting between *Bishop* Jason, CCSJ's Chair and the four VLCs, these arrangements were discussed and agreed. Relevant CCSJ documents were shared with the VLCs. Richard was also given a copy of CCSJ's 2011 plan to share with his three other VLC colleagues. As stated in our 2010 AGM report: "It is hoped that these individuals will be able to establish/maintain/liase with social justice parish teams/individuals and will support their initiatives where possible."

Throughout 2011, from Richards' reports to CCSJ members at monthly meetings, the demands on the VLCs' time meant that they were not able to devote much time to social justice work.

A key aspect of Christine's work is: "To develop strategies for the implementation of the objectives of CCSJ's Parish Link Programme, which strategies will include the promotion of the Church's Social Doctrine and the implementation of Synod resolutions which fall within the remit of CCSJ. This will require a working relationship with Vicariate Link Coordinators to ensure that the activities relating to the Social Justice aspect of their Job Description and that of the Parish Link Coordinator are in sync with each other."

There is still much to be done if we are to mobilize parishes to e.g. engage in Works of Mercy and to be advocates for those who face injustices. There are many social ills in TT and many organizations - NGOs, CBOs, Faith Based Organizations etc. who are working diligently to address the many ills that plague our beloved country. CCSJ is one of these groups.

Our challenge is to educate the Faithful about the social doctrine of the Church and to work with parishioners and others to address issues such as: crime and violence; corruption; poverty and social exclusion; poor housing; the plight of socially displaced people, the differently abled, children and families at risk; unemployment/underemployment; inadequate health care; deficiencies in our education system leading e.g. to illiteracy; lack of basic amenities such as water, electricity, sanitation; poor health care; various forms of child abuse - including incest; domestic violence; drug and substance abuse - including alcoholism; inadequate transport and, in places, impassable roads; human trafficking etc. etc. The list of social ills is long.

In our land of plenty, there are tens of thousands who live on the margins. We can and must do more for them. As Catholics, we cannot afford to walk on the other side and ignore their plight. We must stand in solidarity with them and speak out on their behalf; to lift them, as Martin Luther King Jr. said, to "a higher, more noble place." All God's children deserve a place at the table of life.

In Matthew 5:13-16 we read: "You are the salt of the earth...You are the light of the world....your light must shine in the sight of men and women, so that, seeing your good works,

they may give the praise to your Father in heaven.” Through our Parish Link Programme we hope to assist parishioners to let their light shine.

Archbishop Harris has said we must move from veneration to imitation. If we imitate Christ; if we "put" on Christ, we will see Him in our neighbour and embrace Works of Mercy. We are called to do more than this. As Pope Benedict XVI has said the Church "cannot and must not remain on the sidelines in the fight for justice.”

We hope through our work in parishes to encourage the Faithful to adopt the **SEE, JUDGE, ACT** process developed by Belgian Cardinal Joseph Cardijn (1882–1967), who as a priest had ministered to poor workers and founded the Young Christian Workers. Blessed John XXIII affirmed this process in his encyclical, *Mater et Magistra* (Mother and Teacher), as a way of reading and responding to the signs of the time:

“There are three stages which should normally be followed in the reduction of social principles into practice. First, one reviews the concrete situation; secondly, one forms a judgement on it in the light of these same principles; thirdly, one decides what the circumstances can and should be done to implement these principles. These are the three stages that are usually expressed in the three terms: observe, judge, act” #236, (1961).

The Australian Catholic Social Council elaborates on this process:

“**Seeing, hearing, and experiencing** the lived reality of individuals and communities.

1. See: Naming what is happening that causes you concern. Carefully and intentionally **examining** the primary data of the situation. What are the people in this situation doing, feeling, and saying? What is happening to them and how do you/they respond?

2. Judge: The word ‘judge’ is used here in a positive sense – to **analyse** the situation and **make an informed judgement** about it. This involves two key parts: i) social analysis ii) theological reflection.

3. Act: Planning and carrying out actions aimed at transforming the social structures that contribute to suffering and injustice.”

To do this effectively, we must walk with the **two feet of Christian Service**: works of mercy and works of social action. CCSJ continues to act as Advocates for individuals and groups when necessary. If we are to build right relationships and transform unjust structures, we must strive to develop a Parish Link Programme that will educate the Faithful in using the SEE, JUDGE, ACT process to read and respond to the signs of the times.

The 1995 statistics which shows that TT's poverty level was 16.5% at that time, is now out of date. The figure is much higher (21.8% says Minister Dr. Glen Ramadharsingh). CCSJ is certain that the information gleaned from the Survey of Living Conditions that was conducted in 2011 will result in a much higher figure for our brothers and sisters in TT who are living in poverty.

Each day the gap between the rich and the poor grows. The culture of individualism and moral relativism hinders love for neighbour and philanthropy. And while some Businesses practise Corporate Social Responsibility, there is much room for others to come on board and plough some of their profits back into the community. We should reflect on Cardinal Turkson’s words in his Handbook: *Vocation of the Business Leader: A Reflection* (March 2012): *"As values have*

become relative and rights more important than duties, the goal of serving the common good is often lost.”

It is important that we raise people’s awareness of funds that are available to reduce poverty in TT. CCSJ’s Proposal Writing Workshops outlined hereunder by (Sr) Christine, are helpful. Gary Tagallie works in the Ministry of the People and Social Development and is responsible for disbursing funds for Poverty Reduction. Statistics at the Ministry show that many Catholics/Parishes are not applying for funds when they can apply for up to \$50,000 to support a variety of projects. CCSJ's aim is to educate the Faithful about the availability of the funds and to develop people's skills so that they could complete the relevant application forms. Plans are in train to arrange for Gary to tape a session at TCN so that this could be circulated to parishes for their use. (See (Sr) Christine’s report hereunder)

**Report by (Sr) Christine Walcott, Parish Link Coordinator:
Covering the period: Sept – Dec 2011**

CCSJ's Parish Link Coordinator (PLC) took up her position on 1 September. Therefore, her report covers a four-month period until the end of December 2011. CCSJ welcomed (Sr) Walcott and CCSJ's Chair organized an induction programme for her. The following are areas of work in which CCSJ's PLC was involved in 2011:

1. **Panellist on Ask Why:** Part of her induction involved appearing as a Panellist on CCSJ's monthly Ask Why TV Programme to raise viewers' awareness of her appointment and to let them know that she is available to support their social justice initiatives in their parishes.
2. **Attendance at Training Workshop:** She represented CCSJ at a Workshop held in Port of Spain from September 20-21, 2011 and entitled: “Religions for Peace and UNICEF III Meeting of the Caribbean Inter-Religious Network”. This was a Training Workshop which focused on the Guide: “From Commitment to Action: What Religious Communities can do to eliminate Violence against Children - from commitment to action.”

Having discussed relevant issues in a group which included Pundit Chandra Persad, Pundit Bramdeo Maharaj, and Ms. Bibi Neeza Hallim, CCSJ's PLC prepared and presented a power point presentation on behalf of the group. The following is the script of the presentation:

‘What can we do? In our group we recognized that violence against children is visible. We are aware of the problem. Finding the solution is paramount and critical in our world today. Education is the key to unlocking the doors of our minds and the minds and hearts of those entrusted to our care. Education is the key to empowerment and liberation from the bondages of entrapment of our defenceless charges.

‘Education is the key to once again instilling values and virtues in the hearts and psyche of our children. Education is needed in the family, church, school, society, work and community. Education is the key to respecting God’s creation among ourselves and our children. We need to be trained in anger management and conflict resolution to enable us to deal with practical situations. We need to be courageous to walk the talk; to live by example; to build self esteem to

become mentors to those whom we perceive to be falling back in society e.g. the school drop outs, and delinquents.

‘There is a need for follow up action e.g. by creating centres for mentoring, thereby creating an holistic development in order for physical, mental, emotional and spiritual upliftment to occur. There is also a need to be a collaborative entity to ensure a united, clarion voice for the future of our children.

We must develop awareness of our shortcomings. We need to become aware of each other’s cultures and beliefs in our society. The target audience needs to begin to trust us. We must address issues relating to Resources, Community and church support and the State. We must take action for the sake of our children’

3. **Meeting with two VLCs:** She met with two of the Vicariate Link Coordinators (VLCs) to discuss social justice issues. Inter alia, they discussed plans relating to the Proposal Writing Workshop and Respect for Life Week. The VLCs undertook to provide her with any contact information they have for Social Justice representatives in parishes.

4. She assisted in the organisation of **two Proposal Writing Workshops** – one at St Charles, Tunapuna and the other at St Benedict’s, La Romaine. Gary Tagallie was the Facilitator at both Workshops. The aim was to empower parishioners to be able to access funds that are available as part of the Poverty Reduction Programme in the Ministry of the People and Social Development. Gary is in charge of dispensing funds from this Programme.

Sr Gail Jagroop, Vicariate Link Coordinator for the Suburban Vicariate, assisted in the organisation of the one-day Workshop at St Charles. Richard Smith, Vicariate Link Coordinator for the Southern Vicariate, attended the Workshop at St Charles and also assisted with the organisation of the Workshop at La Romaine.

Forty-eight (48) persons attended the first Workshop at St Charles: 43 participants, CCSJ's PLC, 2 Vicariate Link Coordinators (Suburban and South), and CCSJ's Chair. Breakdown of participants: Suburban: 17 persons; Northern: 7 persons; Eastern: 8 persons; Southern: 6 persons; Religious Sisters: 5; Other individuals: 5.

The day’s agenda began with an opening prayer by Fr. Reginald Hezekiah, Parish Priest, followed by a welcome and introduction by CCSJ’s Chair who outlined the purpose of the Workshop. She then introduced Gary Tagallie who conducted the Workshop.

From the information contained in the evaluation forms, most participants stated that the Workshop was very helpful. A few individuals suggested that a workshop should be held in the Southern Vicariate. Another comment was that it should be organised over a two-day period to facilitate more practical work on proposal writing.

CCSJ followed up on one of the suggestions and organised a similar Workshop at St Benedict's, La Romaine - in the Southern Vicariate. The attendance was not as good as it had been at St Charles, Tunapuna, but the quality of the workshop was of a high standard. On that same day, there was a Workshop in the Central Vicariate as well as other activities that may have contributed to the poor attendance. Although the numbers were small (a total of 15) they

represented 9 parishes in the Southern Vicariate, and one from the Suburban Vicariate: Princess Town 1, Penal 1, Moruga 1, St. Benedict's 3, La Brea 1, Our Lady of Perpetual Help 2, South Oropouche 3, Siparia 1 and Curepe 1.

5. **Lecture series at Hugh Wooding Law School:** She worked with Anne Marie Richardson, a Graduate of CCSJ's online social justice course, to organise a Lunch time (12:15-12:50) Lecture series on *Catholic Social Teaching* for Catholic students at Hugh Wooding Law School, St Augustine: The series commenced on October 12, 2011. The first session was an introductory session on Social Justice from a Catholic perspective. The second and third were based on the "Take a Bite" DVD series on Catholic Social Teachings presented by *Bishop* Jason Gordon. The format used was: fifteen minutes presentation followed by comments, questions and answers. The DVD, *Rights and Responsibilities*, presented by CCSJ's Chair, was used for the fourth and fifth sessions. Students who attended were in their second year of studies. They originated mainly from other Caribbean islands. They expressed satisfaction with the series and hoped to continue their learning about social justice issues when they returned to their respective communities. They also suggested that in future sessions should be arranged to take place every other week to avoid clashing with time required by students to complete assignments.

6. **Other Parish activities:** CCSJ's PLC attended a number of activities in Parishes from September to December 2011 and gathered information from some Parishes about social justice activities in which they were involved. Part of her work includes identifying and sharing examples of good practice such as those outlined hereunder:

Santa Rosa: On Saturday October 1, the Graduates of CCSJ's Social Justice online course from this Parish began a six-week computer course for senior citizens to honour the United Nations International Day for Older Persons. On the opening day there were approximately thirty participants. Overall, about 60 persons attended the course.

Barataria: The Barataria Social Justice Team, headed by Cheridan Woodruffe, in recognition for the UN International Day of the Aged, honoured the senior citizens at a Eucharistic celebration followed by a breakfast.

Bourg Mulatresse: The Social Justice Team in this Parish is headed by Andrea Joseph-Hutchinson. It was formed in September 2011. Activities here included the performance of skits, by young people in the Parish, to observe Respect For Life Week. CCSJ's Chair asked me to arrange for the skits to be taped by Trinity Communications Network (TCN). NB: This was done in 2012.

7. **Respect For Life Week (RFLW):** CCSJ's PLC assisted in promoting RFLW e.g. she hand delivered Posters to Principals in schools within the Tunapuna, St. Joseph, and Diego Martin areas and attended most of the activities organised by CCSJ.

Vicariate Link Coordinators' Annual Report for 2011

Submitted by Richard Smith, Vicariate Link Coordinator, who is also responsible for Coordinating Social Justice work among the VLC/Links Team.

The Links discovered many **Social Justice “positives”** during the year that augur well for the future if nurtured and developed, these include:

1. The support of some Parish Priests in promoting SJ events. Some priests spoke on topics like justice, the environment, respect for the unborn etc. during Masses and commemorated UN days as requested by CCSJ. Others also welcomed the CCSJ chair into their parishes to speak on SJ issues.
2. Committed and capable persons in parishes who have organized community outreach programmes beyond the Church's borders and made a difference to the lives of the disadvantaged and voiceless.
3. Parishes that have made efforts to participate in CCSJ events like the *Respect for Life Week* of activities and *Proposal Writing workshops*.

Successes

Some of these good practices are exemplified in the following list of **Success Stories** extrapolated from the records of Links during the year across vicariates.

- Proposal Writing Workshop, Tunapuna (Oct 8) & La Romaine (Nov 26) 63 attendees
- The Suburban Vicariate held (as Part of a *Know your Faith* series for the whole Vicariate) a social justice teachings seminar.
- Social Justice awareness talks by CCSJ's Chair in Carapichaima
- Parish Library and Resource Centre – Curepe
- Mobile Cancer Unit – Tunapuna
- Annual Health Fair and Values & Virtues lecture – La Romaine
- Good Neighbour Project – Couva
- Waste Recycling Drive – St. Joseph
- Collection of articles on SJ practices - many parishes.
- New Social Justice Group – Santa Cruz
- New Social Justice contacts in many parishes
- Social Justice Meetings – Suburban and Central Vicariates
- Respect for Life Activities in parishes
- DVD presentation on abortion - Erin
- Dramatization of Respect for all People – South Oropouche
- Parishioners from distant parishes attended the RFLW discussion on ‘African contributions in a Multiethnic Society’ - Curepe
- Home Visitations to Catholics and Non-Catholics in Gran Couva/Tabaquite, South Oropouche

- Links commenced using Vicariate Council meetings to communicate and get feedback on Social Justice activities
- Building Community - Vicariate Sports and Family Day, Suburban Vicariate
- Improved dissemination of SJ information to parishes – emails, new media, newsletters, vicariate meetings.
- Sr. Gail met with Tricia Syms from Family Life Commission about how Links can be of assistance.
- Pathways to Marriage - Joint project of Chaguanas/Carapichaima
- Bless Carnival Fete for families – Curepe
- Men's groups formed or revitalised - Couva, Chaguanas, Tunapuna.
- Youths celebrate the elderly – La Brea
- STD Lecture & Youth Retreat on absent fathers – Erin
- Distributed fliers on decorum for carnival – San Fernando
- Movies Night & Programmes on Families supporting one another – Mon Repos
- Time management course on safeguarding family time – Pointe-a-Pierre
- Providing housing for challenged family – Rio Claro & Erin
- Beach beautification and reforestation project (150 trees) by parish youths – Penal (Morne Diablo).

Major Challenges

1. Understanding Social Justice. Many parishioners are yet to grasp the concept as it relates to their faith; they tend to limit themselves to charity, continuing education is therefore necessary.
2. Some parish leaders are still not sold on the idea of Social Justice as a ministry. Methods need to be developed to address this issue since the Church teaches us that social justice is at the heart of the Church's mission.
3. During the year Links were focused on the first Pastoral Priority as this needed to get off the ground. The communication aspect of our work was also in a development stage and the enormity of the task limited the time available to promote the cause of Social Justice.
4. Parishes have not been able to capitalize on the Proposal Writing Workshops.

Conclusion

Social Justice practices are occurring in many parishes and some success stories previously untold are now surfacing. There is therefore an opportunity to develop these existing works within the existing ministries from which they emerge. Many parishes may not be desirous of having to form yet another ministry when existing ministries are already inactive. The identification of SJ contact persons who can promote the SJ cause is a move in the right direction. Parishes have increasingly shown interest and have been receptive to hearing the message of Social Justice. The Proposal Writing Workshop is a case in point, the turnout was very good indicating a high level of interest but new projects emanating from it have not been as

forthcoming as expected. Perhaps a strategy could be developed to close this gap. Some parishes are desirous of moving boldly forward as Santa Cruz has done.

The limitations of human resources and geography (accessing remote parishes), makes the process a bit challenging but successes have been seen and there is an enormous potential for growth. The Links look forward to working with individuals and parish teams as we embrace the task of spreading the message of Social Justice.

From the Vicariate Link Coordinators:

Richard Smith

Sr Gail Jagroop

Deacon Mike Smith

Deacon Paul Bousignac

B. VALUES AND VIRTUES FORMATION PROGRAMME IN RC PRIMARY SCHOOLS (V&VFP):

CCSJ's Chair applied to the Minister of Education, Hon. Tim Gopeesingh, for a day off (Friday, 1 April) to facilitate the training of teachers for the Values & Virtues Formation Programme (V&VFP). He gave his approval. On 1 and 2 April 2011, CCSJ ran a Workshop for more than 200 teachers of RC Primary Schools to equip them with the knowledge and skills they needed to deliver the V&VFP in RC Primary Schools for Post-SEA students.

The training session was held in the Ken Galt Hall at the Centre of Excellence. We thank our sponsor who allowed us to use the facility free of charge. The 10 Monitors of the Programme, as well as the CEROs from the Catechetical team, also attended. Speakers included Archbishop Edward Gilbert C.Ss.R., Minister in the Education Ministry, Hon. Clifton De Coteau - representing Hon. Tim Gopeesingh, Minister of Education, *Bishop* Jason Gordon, and Msgr Robert Llanos.

Bishop Gordon's power-point presentation on "A Christian Moral Framework" was well received. Msgr Robert Llanos focused on Theology of the Body to develop teachers' awareness of the correct approach when dealing with issues relating to human sexuality - abstinence etc. which form part of the V&VFP. Other speakers included Ramona Khan and CCSJ's Chair. Attendance on Friday 1st April was excellent. However, fewer teachers attended on Sat 2nd April. On both days, those teachers who were present participated fully in the training. The session that involved a panel of teachers who shared best practice in relation to this programme, was particularly inspiring. TCN videotaped the key sessions during the workshop and these were aired on TCN (Channel 10).

Inter alia, CCSJ's Chair reminded teachers that schools are not value free environments. She urged them when implementing the programme, to analyze, along with their colleagues at school, the school's current values, including their own. She highlighted the importance of

parental involvement in the programme as sometimes there is a 'disconnect' between the values schools seek to instill in students and those values that exist in the homes of some students.

During the implementation of the programme in RC Primary Schools, the 10 Monitors whom CCSJ employed on a small stipend (retired Teachers and Principals), visited the 121 RC Primary Schools, gave advice and support where necessary, and reported to CCSJ on the implementation of the V&VFP Curriculum at the end of June and July. 2011 saw the last year that the V&VFP Curriculum was implemented.

Update: From 2012 the Programme was incorporated in RE Workbooks produced by the RE team. The RE books were re-printed and now include key aspects of the V&VFP Student's Workbook which comprises 4 Modules: *Self-Awareness, Relationships, Being Responsible, and Balance and Wholeness*. The RE workbooks reach a wide group of students and are introduced to students much earlier in their school life than the former V&VFP Workbooks which were only used with Post-SEA students during a 2-month period.

All those involved - His Grace, CCSJ's Chair and the Chair of the Catechetical Commission, were in agreement that this was the best course of action. CCSJ's Chair had been working for some time to secure the incorporation of this programme in the RE Curriculum as virtues and values should be embedded in any RE Curriculum and should not be seen as a separate component. As Archbishop Gilbert said in the Foreword to the V&VFP Workbook: "Virtues inform values and values influence behaviour." What better place for such a Programme than in the RE component of the Curriculum. Since CCSJ received numerous requests for copies of the V&VFP Students' Workbook and the Teachers' Guide - from individuals in TT and abroad, with His Grace's approval, both documents were uploaded on CCSJ's website and can be accessed there.

CCSJ would like to thank all those who worked with us so diligently, including the ten Monitors, to implement the Programme across our Archdiocese. Thanks to Joanne Miller who kindly analyzed the data contained in the reports from teachers and Principals e.g. to identify good practice which good practice informed planning each year. Thanks to Jo Anne Lodge and the team of teachers and Principal who worked with CCSJ's Chair to produce the Students' Workbook and the Teachers' Guide. It is to be noted that Archbishop Gilbert asked CCSJ to continue to retain overall responsibility for the V&VFP aspect of the RE Curriculum. The work of the cross-Departmental Archdiocesan V&VFP Standing Committee, which is Chaired by CCSJ's Chair, should facilitate close collaboration in the interest of students.

As CCSJ has stated before, 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, politeness, endurance, independence, equality, equity, accountability, and transparency.

C. SOCIAL JUSTICE ONLINE COURSE:

In order to promote integral human development and to develop a spirituality of justice among the Faithful since 2009, CCSJ has partnered with the Catholic Religious Education Development Institute (CREDI) and the University of Dayton, USA, to run an online course on Social Justice - since 2009. This Course now falls under the remit of the Theological Institute which is a part of CREDI. (See **APPENDIX II**.)

CCSJ Advertised in Catholic News on 2 and 9 January 2011 for applicants for the second cohort of the Social Justice online course. CCSJ's Chair organised an orientation session. Those who had completed the course during the previous year attended the session also to meet the new group and to give them some helpful study-tips. Module 1 commenced on 23 January. Eight persons signed up for the 2011 course but by June 2011 only 5 had stayed the course.

Of the 20 persons who had signed up for the first Course in 2009, only 11 persons completed most of the Modules in 2010. Three of these persons are yet to complete 2-3 Modules to successfully complete the 2009 course.

It is hoped that over the years, CCSJ will be able to draw on the expertise of a cadre of trained persons who would have completed this course and who will be able to promote social justice in their parishes and in the wider community e.g. Andrea Joseph-Hutchinson, who was among those who completed the first course, has appeared as a Panellist on CCSJ's Ask Why TV programme to discuss the theme: "Catholics Making a Difference."

CCSJ's Chair held two meetings with individuals who had completed the 2009-2010 Course to discuss plans to produce a series of DVDs for distribution to parishes on various Social Justice Themes. The team was eager to support this initiative and expressed their interest in focusing on specific themes. The plan was to film groups of individuals from this group discussing particular themes - rather than following the format used in the Take-a-Bite series where individual presenters were filmed. Sadly, because of the workload of CCSJ's link person on TCN, this plan has not been implemented as yet.

As stated earlier:

- from Saturday 1 October, Graduates of the Social Justice online course from Santa Rosa ran a six-week computer course for about 60 senior citizens to honour the UN International Day for Older Persons.
- during October, CCSJ's Parish Link Coordinator, (Sr) Christine Walcott, and Anne Marie Richardson, one of the Graduates of the Social Justice online course, facilitated a lunchtime lecture series on Catholic Social Teaching for Catholic students at Hugh Wooding Law School, St Augustine.

D. CCSJ'S WELLNESS PROGRAMME: DIABETES SELF-MANAGEMENT & PREVENTION PROJECT

Key social justice principles are: the sanctity of life and the dignity of the human person. Our life is a “gift” from God and our bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit. We have a duty to respect and sustain our lives and to strive to realise our God-given potential. CCSJ's Wellness Project is part of the Commission's Respect For Life thrust and is closely linked to the social doctrine of the Catholic Church.

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".

CCSJ wishes to record our thanks to Dr Kenwyn Nicholls who, on his return to TT after living and working in the USA and in other countries for over 40 years, volunteered to assist the Archdiocese in achieving its Mission. Since 2010, he has been working with CCSJ to establish a Project entitled: Diabetes: Self-management and Prevention.

In 2010 he 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 worrying statistics. He says that more than 143,000 persons in TT have Type 2 diabetes and more than 102,000 persons are pre-diabetic. His paper also points to the fact that TT has the highest number of amputees per capita in the Western Hemisphere as a result of diabetes. Statistics from Pan-American Health Organisation (PAHO) reveal that TT ranks fifth in the world per capita for the number of persons who have diabetes.

The Project, which was launched at Assumption Parish Centre on Sat 4 Dec. 2010 aims to:

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

CCSJ plans to work with Dr Nicholls to develop a Train-the Trainer Pilot Project to “roll out” training in various parishes.

Fr Garfield welcomed parishioners at the session at Assumption and highlighted the importance of such a Project.

On 7 June Anne Marie Richardson, a Graduate of CCSJ's Social Justice online course in 2010, as well as Denis Sue Hong, a member of the Family Life Unit in Santa Rosa Parish, arranged for Dr Nicholls and CCSJ's Chair to speak to parishioners at Santa Rosa Parish about issues relating to Diabetes prevention and management. Fr Allan Ventour and Fr Rudy Mohammed participated in the event. About 45 persons attended from Santa Rosa and neighbouring parishes.

At a meeting at the UN in September 2011, TT's Prime Minister listed Diabetes as the second highest non-communicable disease in TT and spoke about the need to address this in a more comprehensive manner. Sadly not many parishes are taking up the offer to listen to Dr Nicholls who has prepared an excellent power-point presentation on this issue. There is an urgent need to mobilize citizens to play their part in preventing and managing this disease.

E. MORALS AND VALUES STANDING COMMITTEE:

CCSJ has lead responsibility in the Archdiocese in the implementation of PP3: to Regenerate the Morals and Values in our Society. In order to plan effective strategies, in 2010 CCSJ commissioned Prof. Surindra Arjoon, Senior Lecturer in Ethics and Decision Sciences, Faculty of Social Sciences, UWI, to seek to address some of the strategies suggested during Synod:

- a. Identify performance indicators to inform a system of monitoring and evaluation of all the proposed strategies under the 3rd PP;
- b. Conduct an analysis of factors which have contributed to the decline of values in society.
 - Produce a baseline study;
 - Determine what programmes have worked in society. Determine what more can be done in terms of programmes to address social problems.

Prof Arjoon Chairs the Morals and Values Standing Committee which CCSJ established to focus on the above. In 2011 other members of the Committee included *Bishop* Jason Gordon, Fr Henry Charles, Maria Diaz-James, Ruth Saunders, Ramona Khan, and CCSJ's Chair.

Information has been gathered from local, regional and international sources to assist with the baseline study. Prof Arjoon arranged for some of his Under-Graduate Students at UWI and students on the Masters Course there to focus on the above issues as part of their research. Their research papers were analyzed and summarized and have informed the production of a report which was presented to the Committee and members of CCSJ by Prof Arjoon in January, 2011.

CCSJ would like to record its thanks to Prof Arjoon and the entire team on the Standing Committee, as well as the UWI students who supported this initiative, for their sterling work. On the advice of *Bishop* Jason Gordon, the recommendations contained in the final Report, which is the property of CCSJ, may form part of CCSJ's plan of action when the third PP is being implemented.

F. MARY CARE CENTRE

On June 29, 2011, The Mary Care Centre (MCC) in Woodbrook was rededicated by Archbishop Edward Gilbert C.Ss.R. The Centre 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.

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). CCSJ wishes to thank Deborah de Rosia, Director of ELC, who so generously agreed to run MCC on a day to

day basis. She has established a Board of Management to facilitate the smooth running of the Centre.

At the Archdiocesan level, the Board of Management for the major part of 2011 comprised: Bernadette Patrick, Financial Administrator; *Bishop* Jason Gordon (who resigned when he was installed as Bishop in Bridgetown, Barbados and Kingstown, SVG); and CCSJ's Chair.

MCC is a sanctuary for unmarried, pregnant, young women between the ages of 12 years and 17 years. The spiritual, physical and psychological needs of young women at MCC are nurtured towards self-development and growth.

The centre is a non-profit organization funded by donations received from the private and public sector. The objectives of MCC 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.

Often the lives of the young women who enter MCC have been adversely affected by difficulties. MCC provides them with a peaceful, spiritually uplifting, happy home.

By the end of 2011, fourteen young women entered MCC and spent an average of seven months there. Staff sought to inculcate spiritual values in the young women and met their physical needs. During that period of time, twelve babies were born. Most of the young women admitted to MCC are from rural areas in TT. Some are referred to MCC from POS General Hospital, the Magistracy and from certain institutions.

The activities at the Centre include a remedial education programme which focuses on English and Mathematics. Social activities are incorporated in their programme at MCC e.g. during 2011 they went to San Fernando on the Water Taxi; a Trinidadian actress who resides in Los Angeles, visited MCC and treated the young women to a Spa followed by Dinner.

The young women also attend CHOICES – a Government Institution. The curriculum at this institution includes: Cooking, Baking, Hairdressing, Nail art, English and Mathematics. Counsellors visit MCC to teach the young women life skills, such as preparation for motherhood, values and ethics.

MCC keeps in touch with the young women's families and discuss with them pertinent issues as they arise. MCC ensures that the young women keep all their hospital appointments.

The Archdiocese contributes towards the running cost of MCC and is responsible for any Capital expenditure on the property which belongs to the Archdiocese. ELC raises funds to run the Centre. A number of individuals contribute on a monthly basis. They responded to ELC's Advert in Catholic News for "Mary Care Angels". Although two corporate sponsors also assist MCC, there is a need for more businesses to support the Centre financially.

Pro-Life work remains a key aspect of CCSJ's work. The Commission continues to work in collaboration with a number of individuals and organizations in TT and abroad on pro-life issues and takes every opportunity to speak out on TV, radio, or in the printed press about issues relating to e.g. abortion and the death penalty.

G. RESPECT FOR LIFE WEEK: *RESPECT LIFE: PROMOTE JUSTICE*: (12 NOV TO 19 NOV 2011)

Respect Life: Promote Justice was the chosen theme for Respect for Life Week (RFLW) in 2011. All Parishes, Commissions/Departments, Schools and Catholic Organizations were asked to observe RFLW. The Faithful were encouraged to think about the ways in which they demonstrate that they respect all life, to join in CCSJ's/parishes'/schools' planned activities, and to pray for the success of the week's activities. CCSJ records its thanks to Sr Juliet Rajah and the RE team who prepared the Prayer Supplement for RFLW. This was published in Catholic News on Sunday, 13 November for use during RFLW. Thanks also to the Youth Commission for printing a number of banners which were displayed in various parishes across the country to promote RFLW. And Family Life Commission came on board by sending a representative as a Panellist on CCSJ's monthly Ask Why TV programme on TCN to mobilize support for RFLW. Collaboration really is the new way to be Church. Other resources produced included a Prayer Card and a **Poster** (114 cm x152 cm) which was sent to all Parishes and Departments for display (see Poster at **APPENDIX III**).

CCSJ's Chair was invited to speak about the aim of RFLW on CNMG before the commencement of the week. During RFLW, CCSJ sought to raise the awareness of the Faithful of the need to promote a just moral order; to promote the sanctity of life and the inherent, inalienable and inviolable dignity of each human being, made in God's image and likeness. As CCSJ's Chair stated in one of her articles on RFLW: "If we are to respect life and promote justice, we must see our neighbour as another 'self'. If we do, perhaps we would respond to the needs of our neighbours in appropriate ways."

She asked the Faithful to reflect on the following statement during RFLW:

"The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the men and women of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ. Indeed, nothing genuinely human fails to raise an echo in their hearts... whatever 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." (*The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World: Gaudium et Spes*: 1, 27 (Pope Paul VI, 1965).

CALENDAR OF EVENTS DURING RFLW:

The week-long series of events began with the *Sir Ellis Clarke Memorial Lecture*, held at Living Water Community, POS, on Saturday, November 12 from 3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.. CCSJ had decided to honour Sir Ellis' memory, particularly as he had been the Commission's Feature Speaker at the first RFLW in 2010.

Archbishop Edward J. Gilbert C.Ss.R opened the Conference. (See **APPENDIX IV** for his Presentation). Speakers included:

- Mr Victor Scheffers, General Secretary of the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace, Netherlands, and Executive Member of *Justitia et Pax*, Europe;
- Mr. Emrol Gould, President of the Inter Religious Organization; and
- Leela Ramdeen, CCSJ's Chair.

To mark the 40th Anniversary of the publication of the Synod of Bishops 1971 document: *Justice in the World*, Mr Scheffers had been asked to focus on the relevance of this document in today's world. His presentation can be accessed on CCSJ's Website. Archbishop Gilbert's speech and extracts from Victor's speech were printed in *Catholic News* and CNMG aired the proceedings on TCN.

Sunday November 13

CCSJ organised an Interfaith Service on the theme: "*Respect Life: Promote Justice*". It was held at St Benedict's RC Church, La Romaine 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. (See **APPENDIX IV**)

Monday November 14

A Prayer Session was organised by Eternal Light Community at St Charles RC Church, Tunapuna from 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Tuesday November 15

CCSJ's Ask Why TV Programme on TCN, Channel 10, focused on the theme: *Why should we respect life?* - from 8:00 - 9:00 p.m. Viewers were encouraged to participate in activities in their parishes and nationally during the week. Panellists on the Programme were: Fr Martin Sirju, Sr Christine Walcott, and Deacon Mike James. CCSJ's Chair was the Moderator.

Wednesday November 16

A Panel Discussion was organised at Our Lady of Fatima RC Church, Bushe Street, Curepe from 5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. to observe the United Nations' International Year for People of African Descent (The United Nations and the Organization of American States declared 2011 the International Year for People of African Descent). The Theme was: *Respect Life: Respecting the contribution of People of African Descent in our multi-ethnic society.*

Panellists were:

- Dr Rita Pemberton, Senior Lecturer, former Head of the Department of History, and Deputy Dean, Student Affairs in the Faculty of Humanities and Education at the St. Augustine Campus of the University of the West Indies; and
- Mr Rubadiri Victor, President of the Artist Coalition of T&T

CCSJ's Chair was the Moderator.

Thursday November 17

All Parishes and schools were encouraged to observe RFLW by organizing activities.

Friday November 18

Emmanuel Community in Woodbrook, Port-of-Spain, organised a Vigil for Life from 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Saturday November 19

Holy Hour: Parish priests were asked to encourage Youths to lead Holy Hour in parishes – before Mass.

CCSJ advertised a **YOUTH ESSAY COMPETITION** in the Catholic News on the topic: "Improving Respect for life in Trinidad and Tobago". Categories of entrants were: Under 14 years old and 14 to 19 years old. The winners of the Competition were announced in the Catholic News.

CCSJ's Chair presented prize money to the winners of the Competition. Winners of the Under 14 year old category were Jon-Raphael and Gerard Sealy - 9 and 11 years old respectively. Both attend Malabar RC School. Ottrisha, 17, is from the St Martin de Porres, Coryal parish community, won the 14 to 19 years old category.

CCSJ thanks the Judges of the Competition who were: Shirley Tappin and Beverly Gomes-Nunez from the Archdiocese's Human Resources Department and Sr Roberta O'Flaherty, CCSJ Member. The winning entries can be read on CCSJ's Website.

Guaico RC School: Catholic News reported on action that Guaico RC School took to observe RFLW. *Omela Baboolal, Senior Teacher wrote:* "Students, teachers and parents of the Upper Guaico RC School closed Respect Life: Promote Justice Week as proposed by the Catholic Commission for Justice with a walk through the village of Nestor (in which the school is located) with a rallying cry of: "Big or Small 1, 2, Justice for All 1, 2" on Friday, November 18.

"Villagers came out of their houses to support, encourage and take photos of students. During the week, the theme of justice for all and respect for all God's creation permeated all our school's activities, beginning at our Monday morning assembly. The tone was set with a discussion of the Sunday's Gospel.

"Lessons in Art, Comprehension, Social Studies, Family Life Education, Creative Writing and Religion carried literal or subliminal themes of justice. The messages carried by students were done during their Religious Education sessions where they were asked to compose their own slogans. A "Justice Week" corner was established where students and teachers placed pertinent information.

"On our return to school we all assembled in the school's car park where we were addressed by the acting principal Theresa Thomas who thanked all teachers, students, parents and police officers for ensuring the walk was successful.

"The theme of Respect Life: Promote Justice will be ongoing at Upper Guaico RC School since we always seek to inculcate in our charges respect for all forms of life and for all God's creation. The messages used in our walk will be mounted along the corridor so that the profoundness of these slogans will be a constant reminder to all who come into contact with them."

South Oropouche dramatised Respect For Life: Marita Auguste and the Youth Group at South Oropouche Parish, dramatically celebrated Respect For Life Week after Mass Sunday Nov 27. The youths performed a skit which reminded parishioners of the adverse effects on one's life when one disrespects his/her life through e.g. alcohol abuse, abortion, physical abuse and risky behaviour resulting in HIV.

It is hoped that during RFLW in 2012, more parishes, schools, Departments and Catholic organizations will take action to observe the Week. This is an Archdiocesan event in the Church's Annual Calendar. It will grow if everyone takes ownership of it.

H. CCSJ'S COMMUNICATION STRATEGY:

On June 5, the 45th World Day of Social Communications, Pope Benedict XVI's Message focused on: Truth, Proclamation and Authenticity of Life in the Digital Age. Because of the importance of his message to CCSJ's work, we share below some of the Holy Father's words of wisdom. Inter alia, he said:

“The new technologies are not only changing the way we communicate, but communication itself, so much so that it could be said that we are living through a period of vast cultural transformation. This means of spreading information and knowledge is giving birth to a new way of learning and thinking, with unprecedented opportunities for establishing relationships and building fellowship...As with every other fruit of human ingenuity, the new communications technologies must be placed at the service of the integral good of the individual and of the whole of humanity. If used wisely, they can contribute to the satisfaction of the desire for meaning, truth and unity which remain the most profound aspirations of each human being....

“I would like then to invite Christians, confidently and with an informed and responsible creativity, to join the network of relationships which the digital era has made possible. This is not simply to satisfy the desire to be present, but because this network is an integral part of human life. The web is contributing to the development of new and more complex intellectual and spiritual horizons, new forms of shared awareness. In this field too we are called to proclaim our faith that Christ is God, the Saviour of humanity and of history, the one in whom all things find their fulfillment (cf. *Eph* 1:10). The proclamation of the Gospel requires a communication which is at once respectful and sensitive, which stimulates the heart and moves the conscience; one which reflects the example of the risen Jesus when he joined the disciples on the way to Emmaus (cf. *Lk* 24:13-35)....

“In the final analysis, the truth of Christ is the full and authentic response to that human desire for relationship, communion and meaning which is reflected in the immense popularity of social networks. Believers who bear witness to their most profound convictions greatly help prevent the web from becoming an instrument which depersonalizes people, attempts to manipulate them emotionally or allows those who are powerful to monopolize the opinions of others. On the contrary, believers encourage everyone to keep alive the eternal human questions which testify to our desire for transcendence and our longing for authentic forms of life, truly worthy of being lived. It is precisely this uniquely human spiritual yearning which inspires our quest for truth and for communion and which impels us to communicate with integrity and honesty. I invite young people above all to make good use of their presence in the digital world.”

CCSJ seeks to use modern technology to further the Mission of our Church. For example:

i. Media involvement & Media Releases for 2011

CCSJ continues to speak out fearlessly on social justice issues and is often called upon by the Media for comment on specific issues. Often our comments/views are published in the print media or aired on radio or TV e.g. on issues relating to the Death Penalty and about the Catholic Carnival Band. CCSJ's Chair appeared on a number of radio and TV programmes during 2011 to address certain social justice issue e.g. CCSJ's Chair:

- appeared on Channel 6 (CNMG) and on Radio 101.7 (Heritage Radio) in March, to discuss issues relating to Lent and to CCSJ's work. The radio programme lasted for two hours;
- was interviewed by Gayelle TV (Channel 7) in March via telephone about the UN International day for the Elimination of racial Discrimination. The interview was aired on the 7:00 p.m. news;
- was a guest on CNMG on 29 August to discuss issues relating to TT's Independence and the development of our nation. The one-hour programme gave her an opportunity to share a Catholic perspective about integral human development etc;
- was a guest on Radio 102.1 on 30 August to discuss issues relating to the State of Emergency and progress since TT's Independence;
- was interviewed on radio via telephone in September on her views as to whether or not all of the Constitutional rights of citizens were restricted as a result of the State of Emergency called by the Government. An article relating to her response was published in the Guardian newspaper;
- was a guest on CNMG on Sept 14 for 40 minutes to share information about the process of appointing a Coadjutor Archbishop. The interview was held on the day of the then Coadjutor Archbishop Joseph Harris' Ordination at our Cathedral.

CCSJ issues Media Releases on specific social justice issues. All Media Releases were approved by Archbishop Gilbert before they were circulated. CCSJ's media releases usually led to requests for further information or for CCSJ's Chair to discuss issues raised in the releases - on TV or radio. As far as possible she responds positively to such requests and uses these opportunities to fulfil CCSJ's remit to educate the public about the teachings of the Catholic Church, particularly as they relate to social justice issues. Archbishop Gilbert's advice was that "visibility" is important if CCSJ is to get its message across and if we are to be "alive and present" in our land. During 2011 the following Media releases were circulated:

- March 1: CCSJ makes plea for modesty in dress and 'good' behaviour during Carnival.
- March 2: 100th Anniversary of International Women's Day.
- July 11: CCSJ congratulates Fr Joe, Msgr Jason on their appointments.
- August 2: CCSJ calls for justice for refugees.

- August 24: CCSJ supports the Government's decision to declare a State of Emergency and limited curfew in TT.
- October 4: CCSJ urges the Government to protect the poor and vulnerable in T&T's 2012 Budget.
- November 8 CCSJ calls on citizens to demonstrate respect for all life.
- November 18: CCSJ calls for action to build a 'child-friendly' society.
- November 22: CCSJ calls for an end to violence against women and girls.
- December 14: Civil society calls for an end to mandatory death penalty
- December 21: CCSJ urges citizens to commit themselves this Christmas to build a better TT/world.

ii. Lobbying/liaising with the Government e.g. on The Death Penalty/Capital Punishment:

A Bill that sought to amend TT's Constitution was laid before Parliament early in 2011. The intention was to nullify the Privy Council ruling regarding the time-limit for carrying out the death penalty as laid down in the 1973 Jamaican case of Pratt and Morgan. If the Bill had passed, it most likely would have led to the resumption of hanging in TT. The Death Penalty (DP)/hanging is still on TT's Statute books but it is almost impossible to implement hanging because of the ruling in Pratt and Morgan.

Early in 2011, therefore, CCSJ sought to lobby/liaise with the Government on the DP issue. Before the debate on the DP commenced in Parliament on 18 February, CCSJ's Chair wrote to the PM seeking a private audience to share with her a Catholic perspective on this issue. In that letter, she enclosed the letter that she had sent to all Members of both Houses of Parliament in the Upper and Lower Chambers in August 2010, together with a copy of the AEC Bishops' Pastoral Letters on Capital Punishment and The Gift of Life. Receipt of CCSJ's letter was acknowledged from the PM's Office. However, there was no offer of a meeting.

CCSJ spoke out publicly against the DP/Capital Punishment, urging the Government and the nation to build a culture of life and to reject the culture of death that threatened to overwhelm the nation. CCSJ also joined many pro-life groups and campaigned against the Bill e.g.

- CCSJ issued a Media Release on the Church's stance on this issue,
- CCSJ's Chair attended a Forum on the topic: "The Death Penalty in TT" which took place at UWI in February (organised by the Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social and Economic Studies). Speakers included Attorneys-at-Law, Israel Khan SC, and Vernon de Lima, and Mr Douglas Mendes SC; and Ms Verna St. Rose-Greaves, Social Worker.
- CCSJ's Chair presented a paper on the DP, from a Catholic perspective, at a meeting in Fyzabad on 8 February and also at a Multi-Faith Seminar on the Death Penalty - held at St Andrew's Presbyterian Theological College, in San Fernando on 2 March. A DVD of the proceedings at this latter event is available at CCSJ's Office. The proceedings were also aired on Heritage radio (101.7).

Members of the Commission thank Archbishop Gilbert for writing a letter to the PM urging her to allow a conscience vote. Although she did not do so, thankfully, the Bill did not receive the

constitutionally required support from MPs and it was not passed. Since this issue may continue to rear its head, CCSJ is vigilant and stands ready to continue to speak out against the DP.

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 2011 the following programmes were aired. DVDs of these programmes are used as an educational tool and are available to parishes for their use. The list is also uploaded on CCSJ's website.

- **25 January - Topic: Religious Freedom: The Path to Peace**
Panellists: Fr Joe Harris, Deacon Mike James, Br. Noble Khan (Muslim),
Pandit Bramdeo Maharaj (Hindu)
Moderator: Leela Ramdeen, Chair, CCSJ
- **22 February - Promoting social justice through culture**
Panellists: Hollis Liverpool a.k.a Chalkdust, and The Pierrot Grenade, Felix Edinborough
Moderator: Leela Ramdeen, Chair, CCSJ
- **22 March - Pope Benedict XVI's Lenten message 2011**
Panellists: Fr Clyde Harvey, Mrs Thora Best and Nadine Bushell.
Moderator: Leela Ramdeen, Chair, CCSJ
- **19 April - Journeying to Easter**
Panellists: Mr Gerard Pemberton, retired Director of the Development Finance Ltd;
Msgr Jason Gordon, Vicar for Administration
Moderator: Leela Ramdeen, Chair, CCSJ
- **24 May - Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development**
Panellist: Felipe Noguera
Moderator: Sr Theresa Vialva
- **28 June - Catholics making a difference**
Panellist: Fr Clyde Harvey, Ms Andrea Joseph-Hutchinson
Moderator: Leela Ramdeen, Chair, CCSJ
- **26 July - Observing World Unemployment Day**
Panellist: Dr Marlene Attzs, Rhonda Earle and Cheridan Woodruffe
Moderator: Leela Ramdeen, Chair, CCSJ
- **27 September - Building a nation for all**
Panellists: Fr Clyde Harvey, Sr Christine Walcott
Moderator: Leela Ramdeen, Chair, CCSJ
- **15 November - Why should we respect life?**
Panellists: Fr Martin Sirju, Rev Mike James, Sr Christine Walcott, Ms Tricia Syms
Moderator: Leela Ramdeen, Chair, CCSJ.

iv. Support of Trinity Communications Network (TCN)

TCN continues to partner with CCSJ, not only in relation to the Commission's Ask Why TV programme, but on other initiatives:

- CCSJ's Chair acted as Moderator for a TCN (Channel 10) programme in August. It focused on Refugees and on the drought in parts of Africa. The Panellists were Rhonda Maingot, Living Water Community and Honorary Liaison in TT for the UNHCR, and the UNHCR Representative on Refugee matters for the Caribbean and Latin America region. (UNHCR is The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. “The agency is mandated to lead and co-ordinate international action to protect refugees and resolve refugee problems worldwide. Its primary purpose is to safeguard the rights and well-being of refugees”);
- during RFLW, TCN taped Lectures/Discussions and aired these on TCN;
- Gitlin Aleong from TCN, is committed to working with CCSJ on the Commission's *Sacred Spaces Project*. She has undertaken to prepare a DVD for CCSJ using photos of Churches in TT and a video-tape of staff at Archbishop's House praying the Divine Mercy Rosary. The DVD, which will be an educational tool, will also include reference to the importance of "Sacred Spaces" as part of our Catholic Culture and Identity, and the importance of working for justice which is seen as a “constitutive dimension of the preaching of the Gospel” (Justice in the World, 1971).

CCSJ's Chair and a group of individuals drove around TT with a photographer taking photos inside and outside all Catholic Churches and some Chapels. Gitlin will use these photos when creating the DVD. It is hoped that the DVD will also encourage the Faithful to go on Pilgrimages to Churches other than those in their immediate area. The DVD should be completed in 2012. CCSJ wishes to thank Timmy Lewis who acted as our “Guide” as we drove to the various Catholic Churches in Trinidad. Thanks also to Musician, Gregory Wong Fu Sue, who composed music for this Project.

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

CCSJ's Website is used as a teaching tool. It 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 continues to find new ways of attracting visitors to the site e.g. by uploading CCSJ's monthly Ask Why TV programmes on the website. In February 2011 Raymond wrote to CCSJ's Chair stating: “From time to time I check on Google for the rankings of Catholic News, CCSJ etc. If you Google ‘social justice Trinidad’, depending on the time of day, CCSJ is either number 1 or 2.”

Items are uploaded on a regular basis. These include: CCSJ Chair's weekly articles and Social Justice Quotations that are printed in Catholic News, *Archbishop Joe Harris'* weekly homily, speeches and presentations delivered by CCSJ's Chair at various events. 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 contained therein very useful. The total number of visitors to CCSJ's website during 2011 was: 12,685 – up from 8,326 in 2010. See **APPENDIX VI** for Webstats for 2011.

vi. 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 often seek to incorporate aspects of the readings of the day as a form of reflection. This medium also allows CCSJ to address topical issues.

vii. Resource Production/Distribution:

*** Parish Link Newsletter**

CCSJ's Newsletters are circulated widely e.g. to parishes, schools and Archdiocesan Departments. They are also uploaded on CCSJ's website. They form part of CCSJ's education thrust. CCSJ records its thanks to Pat Hernandez whose company continues to print our high quality Newsletters free of charge. During 2011, the following Newsletters were issued:

January 2011

This first issue for the year focused on Pope Benedict XVI's World Day of Peace Message: *Religious Freedom, The Path to Peace*.

March 2011

This Newsletter focused on Pope Benedict XVI's Lenten Message – taken from St Paul's Letter to the Colossians: "You were buried with Him I Baptism, in which you were also raised with Him" (Col 2:12).

July 2011

In order to share good practice and to motivate the Faithful to engage in Works of Mercy; to reach out to those in need in their parishes/communities, this issue of CCSJ's Newsletter included examples of good practice that exists in various parts of our Archdiocese. At the request of CCSJ's Chair, the 4 Vicariate Coordinators collated various examples of good practice, together with photographs, for use in the Newsletter.

September 2011

In this issue of our Newsletter, CCSJ shared extracts from the 12-page Synod of Bishops 1971 Document entitled: Justice in the World. It was intended to be used as a resource in parishes as they planned activities to observe Respect For Life Week.

*** Take-a-Bite Series: DVDs on social justice themes**

In 2010 the five DVDs in the Take-a-Bite series were circulated in packs of five to parishes as an educational tool. The pack focuses on the following themes:

- Overview of Social Justice: *Bishop* 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

To date a number of individuals and organisations continue to draw on this resource for use with groups.

* **Other taped resources:**

All major events organised by CCSJ are taped and are available on DVD. TCN often airs some of these events.

* **Bumper stickers and Posters**

- **CCSJ's Bumper stickers**, *Catholic and Committed*, were distributed in 2011 to support the launch of PP 2: Revitalizing Catholic Culture and Identity. The aim is to remind the Faithful that, in order to become what they are, they must be committed to promoting justice also
- **Peace Posters:** CCSJ printed large Posters with the words: *145 ways of saying "Peace"*. The word "Peace" was written in over 145 different languages. These were distributed to parishes, Archdiocesan organizations, schools, and teachers who attended the V&VFP training.

* **Leaflets on social justice topics and CCSJ's annual Calendar**

- CCSJ continues to distribute its nine leaflets on various social justice issues such as poverty, education, housing etc. as part of its educational programme. The leaflets highlight the 9 issues from a Catholic perspective.
- CCSJ's 2011 Calendar was also used as a teaching tool and was widely circulated. It highlighted the *5 Pillars of Peace: Truth, Justice, Love, Freedom, and Forgiveness*. In his 1963 encyclical, *Peace on Earth*, Blessed John XXIII stated that there are 4 Pillars of Peace: Truth, Justice, Love and Freedom. In his Message for World Day of Peace in January 2003, Blessed John Paul II added another Pillar – Forgiveness.

"Truth will build peace if every individual sincerely acknowledges not only his rights, but also his own duties towards others. *Justice* will build peace if in practice everyone respects the rights of others and actually fulfils his duties towards them. *Love* will build peace if people feel the needs of others as their own and share what they have with others, especially the values of mind and spirit which they possess. *Freedom* will build peace and make it thrive if, in the choice of the means to that end, people act according to reason and assume responsibility for their own actions.

In his message for the *World Day of Peace* in January 2003, Blessed John XXIII said: "The pillars of true peace are justice and that form of love which is forgiveness...which heals and rebuilds troubled human relations from their foundations. Forgiveness is in no way opposed to justice, as if to forgive meant to overlook the need to right the wrong done. It is rather the fullness of justice, leading to that tranquillity of order which is much more than a fragile and temporary cessation of hostilities, involving as it does the deepest healing of the wounds which fester in human hearts. Justice and forgiveness are both essential to such healing."

Pope Paul VI stated (see CCSJ's cover for this AGM Report): If you want Peace, work for Justice." Blessed John XXIII's extra Pillar of Peace enhances our understanding of true peace. There can be no peace, without justice, no justice, without forgiveness.

viii. Personal contact

Each week, poverty stricken individuals, as well as individuals seeking advice and support other than financial support, come to Archbishop's House. They are usually seen by CCSJ's Chair or one or other of CCSJ's Administrative Assistants. If CCSJ is unable to meet the needs of the individual, other avenues are actively explored e.g. via the Society of St Vincent de Paul (SVP), Living Water Community etc. Since CCSJ's Vice-Chair is the Honorary Secretary of SVP, he usually acts to resolve the particular issue in a short space of time. CCSJ's Chair receives numerous telephone calls from individuals seeking e.g. advice or requesting a meeting with her. Many of these individuals are socially excluded and require support e.g. with the drafting/writing of letters to various Ministries, Banks, Companies and so on. CCSJ agrees with Archbishop Harris' **IAIM** acronym. We must strive to be: **Inclusive, Available, Imaginative, Martyrs** (willing to live the Gospel), but above all, as he says, "we must be holy".

CCSJ's social justice work includes a concern for the dignity of all God's children. As Martin Luther King Jr. said: "Injustice anywhere affects justice everywhere." We are all diminished by injustice and must never cease from doing that which we know we must do – see Luke 4:18-19:

"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."

This is our mandate. This is what inspires us as we seek to do God's Will.

ix. CCSJ's Education Programme - including Seminars and Workshops:

- * In February 2011, CCSJ organised a Seminar to observe **UN World Day of Social Justice on the theme: Social Justice and Individual Responsibility**. It was held at Living Water Community. Speakers included:
 - Dr Marcia de Castro, UN Resident Coordinator and UN Development Programme's Resident Representative who read the Message by the UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-Moon; and
 - Dr Marjorie Thorpe, Former TT Ambassador to the UN, who delivered the Feature Address.

CCSJ thanks TCN for taping and airing the proceedings on the day of the Seminar.

- * On 2 June, CCSJ's Chair conducted a Seminar in Carapichaima RC Church Hall on the theme: "Social Justice Principles." It was organised by Sr Gail Jagroop, one of the Archdiocese's Vicariate Link Coordinators.

x. Collaboration with others within and outside Church circles:

Collaborating with others is critically important if CCSJ is to optimize opportunities to promote the social teaching of the Church and to strive to transform unjust structures, policies and practices. CCSJ takes every opportunity to work/liaise with others and to attend events where possible in order to be "alive and present" in society/the world.

CCSJ's participation on SIT and as at meetings of Archdiocesan Departmental Heads provides opportunities for CCSJ to plan and execute collaborative initiatives within the Archdiocese. In March 2011, *Bishop* Jason Gordon arranged a meeting involving the Heads of the three Pastoral Priorities – Msgr Robert Llanos (PP1), Sr Juliet Rajah (PP2) and CCSJ's Chair, Leela Ramdeen (PP3), and a few other key individuals, to consider ways in which more effective collaboration can be fostered between Commissions/Departments. The meeting was very useful and has led to a closer working relationship, particularly between the three Heads of PPs.

Other collaborative initiatives include:

- Participation by CCSJ's Chair in the *1st National Conference for Environmental Management* in January 2011. Participants included 5 Government Ministers, the private sector, technical experts, and environmental activists. It was hosted by UWI, UTT and a Coalition of NGOs. It brought together government, business interests, academia, students and NGOs to discuss issues of importance concerning the environment in Trinidad and Tobago e.g. quarrying, flooding, water pollution, air pollution, waste, biodiversity and environmental justice. Like others present, CCSJ's Chair had an opportunity to put forward ideas and solutions to support effective environmental management.
- At the invitation of the Parish Priest, CCSJ's Chair addressed the Congregation during **Mass at Los Bajos, Palo Seco**, in February to raise their awareness about the Social Doctrine of the Church and to share practical examples of how they can promote social justice in their community/TT.
- **VIRTUS training: Protecting God's Children - a programme to prevent child sexual abuse:** Although CCSJ's Chair represented the Archdiocese at the VIRTUS training workshop in Guyana in 2010, Archbishop agreed with CCSJ's Chair that overall responsibility for the Programme should be located within the Family Life Commission (FLC). In January 2011, CCSJ's Chair met with the US Representative of the Programme, Pat Neal, and Dr and Mrs Dexter and Freida Shim, FLC. The Shims agreed to take responsibility for Coordinating the Programme in TT and CCSJ's Chair will act as a Facilitator during the training sessions. Mahalia Paul from Dominica is the AEC coordinator for VIRTUS.

An Advertisement was placed in Catholic News listing all those who will receive training. It is expected that anyone who is in contact with children and who works in the Archdiocese - including volunteers, must be trained. The first training workshop for Clergy and Parish Administrators was held on Tuesday, 29 March. Although participants were told that they will need to access ongoing training via the VIRTUS website, and that they should receive a Certificate shortly after the three-hour training workshop, there continues to be challenges as a number of individuals have not been able to register online or to receive their Certificates. Members of FLC staff are seeking to resolve these issues. Training for Heads of Department and members of all Religious Congregations was held on 15 and 22 November. Training workshops for the following groups were planned to take place in 2012:

Catechists & RE Teams, Principals of all Catholic Schools (Principals of privately run Catholic Schools will be invited to attend), Staff working in all Catholic Schools - teachers, ancillary staff, security staff, Managers and staff working in Catholic residential homes and in other private Catholic institutions, Volunteers, Ecclesial Communities and Prayer Groups. The

Planning Team also intends to develop a train-the-trainer programme to train parents, including members of PTAs and students.

- CCSJ was represented at the **launch of a campaign by United Way** in January, at the Youth Commission's Youth Expo in January (CCSJ ran a booth at this event);
- **Inter-faith work:** CCSJ has been involved in a number of inter-faith activities e.g.
 - . on 17 July, CCSJ's Chair presented a paper at a Conference on the theme: *Promoting harmony between the various ethnic groups in TT*. The Conference was organised by the Dattatreya Centre in Central Trinidad;
 - . CCSJ's Parish Link Coordinator represented the Commission at a 2-day Workshop organised by the Inter-Religious Organisation in September;
 - . also, as stated earlier, during RFLW, CCSJ organised an Inter-Faith Panel Discussion at St Benedict's RC Church Hall, La Romaine;
 - . on 2 March CCSJ's Chair presented a paper at a Multi-Faith Seminar on the Death Penalty - held at St Andrew's Presbyterian Theological College, in San Fernando. A DVD of the proceedings at this latter event is available at CCSJ's Office. The proceedings were also aired on Heritage radio (101.7).
- **Consultation on National Curriculum:** On 5 and 6 April, CCSJ's Chair participated in/and presented a Paper during a consultation on the National Curriculum. It was organised by the Ministry of Education and held at Cascadia Hotel. The Theme of CCSJ's Chair's Paper was: "Addressing the need for morals, ethics, values and virtues in society" (see CCSJ's Website). Following her presentation, she was invited by hosts on three radio stations to discuss issues relating to certain proposals planned by the Ministry of Education. These interviews were conducted via the telephone.
- **Documentary on Women, Peace and Security in TT:** CCSJ's Chair participated in an event organised by the Ministry of Planning, Economic and Social Restructuring and Gender Affairs and the NGO: Women's Institute for Alternative Development, on Friday, 15 April to discuss issues arising from a documentary prepared by the two groups on the theme: Women, Peace and Security in TT. The documentary comprised interviews with female individuals and groups of women in high crime areas in TT - all of whom had lost one or more members of their family to homicide - generally due to gang violence. CCSJ's Chair shared a Catholic perspective about how TT could attempt to reduce crime and violence in society.
- **UNAIDS Regional Consultation in TT:** On Wednesday, 23 – Thursday, 24 March, CCSJ's Chair attended the UNAIDS Regional Consultation entitled: Universal Access to HIV Treatment, Prevention, Care and Support. Regions around the world were engaging in such consultations with representatives from countries in each region. Reports from these meetings were fed into a High Level UNAIDS Meeting in New York in June 2011. Since financial support from donors for HIV/AIDS work in the Caribbean region was reduced by \$1.3 billion, UNAIDS is seeking to mobilize support from civil society and organizations within the region to lobby Caribbean Governments to find funding to bridge the gap and "to ensure a renewed commitment to this imperative goal."

CCSJ's Chair was a panellist discussing: *The Social and Cultural Environment: Human Rights and HIV*. She also presented a paper which is available on CCSJ's Website. She

was the only scheduled speaker representing a faith community at the Consultation. About 150 persons attended from around the region, including a number of Caribbean Government Ministers, who also presented papers. Sadly, most speakers and participants appeared to have the same agenda e.g. supporting calls for the decriminalization of laws against Homosexuality – including ‘trans-genders’, prostitution (‘sex workers’) etc.

CCSJ’s Chair used the opportunity during her presentation to state the Catholic Church’s position e.g. on homosexuality, attempts to re-define gender and the family, condom use, prostitution etc. She made it clear that while the Church will not compromise our beliefs, Catholics will continue to strive to prevent HIV/AIDS through education in morals, values, virtues, abstinence, chastity etc. Catholics will continue to offer support and care for those infected and affected by HIV/AIDS – with compassion and love. She highlighted the fact that more than 50% of service delivery for persons with HIV/AIDS in the world is undertaken by Caritas and other Catholic organizations around the world. She shared information about work being undertaken in relation to HIV/AIDS in TT by e.g. Living Water Community, the Society of St Vincent de Paul, Emmanuel Community, Mary Care, Eternal Light Community etc.

Sitting next to CCSJ’s Chair at the Consultation was a Doctor who works with Planned Parenthood. And on the Panel on which CCSJ’s Chair was a speaker, one of the other Panellists was the Chair of TT’s Coalition Advocating for Inclusion of Sexual Orientation (CAISO).

She said that the Catholic Church rejects any attempts to redefine the terms 'gender' or 'family'; to legalise abortion; or to allow same-sex unions.

- **Civil Society Consultation for Universal Periodic Review (UPR):** On June 16 2011, CCSJ’s Chair attended this Consultation organised by TT’s Attorney General’s Ministry. In this forum which included individuals who were ‘pro-choice’ – promoting abortion, and some who do not believe in God, it was important that a Catholic perspective was presented. Rhonda Maingot, LWC, and retired Madame Justice Sealy, a Catholic, were also present. CCSJ’s Chair had prepared a paper (see CCSJ’s website) which she had submitted to the AG before the Consultation. The UPR “is a unique process which involves a review of the human rights record of all 192 UN Member States once every four years. The UPR is a State-driven process, under the auspices of the Human Rights Council, which provides the opportunity for each State to declare what actions they have taken to improve the human rights situation in their countries and to fulfil their human rights obligations” (www.ohchr.org) . There are many areas of concern that must be addressed if TT is to improve its human rights records. CCSJ’s 11 page Paper sought to highlight some of the key issues.
- During September, CCSJ's Chair
 - * participated in a further Consultation organised in September by the **UNDP** on its **draft report: Caribbean Human Development Report on Citizens' Security in the region;**
 - * participated in a discussion held at Arthur Lok Jack School of Business. It focused on TT's position as reported in **The World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Report 2011;**

- * was one of the speakers at **CREDI's Symposium on the theme: The Vocation of Teaching in the 21st Century: the sacred responsibility to form children.** It was held at the UTT venue in Arima. CCSJ remains concerned about the underachievement of a significant number of our students in Catholic Primary Schools. It is hoped that the Archdiocese's Strategic Plan for Education will be implemented in the near future. In 2011 fourteen persons graduated from CREDI's Masters in Educational Leadership programme. We pray that they will use their expertise enhance the teaching and learning process in the schools in which they teach/lead;
- * delivered the feature address to **Catechists of Central and South TT** at their rally at Carapichaima RC Church Hall on the theme: **Forming God's Caribbean People: A reflection on Revitalizing Catholic Culture and Identity.** See CCSJ's website for Presentation.
- * attended an **Inaugural Lecture organised by the Judicial Education Institute on the theme: Creating a Regional Jurisprudence.** The feature speaker was Sir Shridath Ramphal.
- CCSJ's Chair presented a Paper as a Panellist during a discussion in November at Daaga Auditorium, University of the West Indies, on the theme: **The Role of the State in Higher Education.** It was organised by the Accreditation Council of UTT, UWI and the Ministry of Science, Technology and Tertiary Education. The session was aired live on CNMG TV and on two radio stations. CCSJ's Chair addressed social justice issues in her Paper which is available on CCSJ's website.
- **International involvement:**
 - * **UNAIDS Regional Consultation in Dominican Republic (21-22 June):** Having presented a paper at the UNAIDS Consultation (referred to above), Dr Ernest Massiah, Director, UNAIDS Caribbean Regional Support Team, invited CCSJ's Chair to participate in a further Regional Consultation in the Dominican Republic on a Framework that that Team has developed on the theme: Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention in the Caribbean. UNAIDS paid all expenses. Besides a young doctor who represented the Maha Sabha, Hindu Community in TT, CCSJ's Chair was the only other person who represented a Faith Community.

The Catholic perspective which CCSJ's Chair presented was at variance with others expressed by the 45 or so persons present from around the Caribbean. CCSJ believes that, as far as is possible, it is important that the Commission takes advantage of such opportunities so that the Church will be seen to be "alive and present" in society.

- * **Congress in Rome:** CCSJ's Chair represented the Archdiocese at a 3-day Congress in Rome (May 16-18 2011). It was organised by the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace to mark the 50th Anniversary of Pope John XXIII's encyclical, *Mater et Magistra* (Mother and Teacher – on Christianity and social progress). The theme of the Congress was: *Justice and Globalisation: From Mater et Magistra to Caritas in Veritate.* There were 233 participants and officials from around the world. There were more than 35 sessions. The programme and all papers are available on the following website specially created for the Congress: <http://dottrinasociale dellachiesa.net/> (click on 'documenti' along the top). 23 of the papers are in

English. On her return, CCSJ's Chair reported on the proceedings in 2 articles in CCSJ's column in Catholic News (see CCSJ's Website).

* **The First International Conference on The Death Penalty in the Great Caribbean:**
(see: <http://www.nodeathpenalty.santegidiomadrid.org/> :

CCSJ's Chair accepted an invitation by The Community of Sant'Egidio to attend this Conference which was held in Madrid, Spain from 17-19 October, 2011. The organizers met all expenses. The Conference was organised in collaboration with the International Commission Against The Death Penalty, the International Academic Network for the Abolition of Capital Punishment, the Bar Association of Puerto Rico, The Puerto Rican Coalition Against The Death Penalty, and The Death Penalty Project. The Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation sponsored the Conference. CCSJ's Chair was one of the Discussants. Gregory Delzin, TT Attorney-at-Law, and long-time advocate against the Death Penalty, also participated in the Conference. It is significant that on 30 Sept, Catholic News Service reported statements made by Tommaso Di Ruzza, Officer at the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, and expert on capital punishment and arms control. He made it clear that "there is no room for supporting the death penalty in today's world."

Most of the English speaking Caribbean countries voted against the adoption of the UN's 2007, 2008, and 2010 resolutions on a Moratorium on the use of the Death Penalty - with a view to its eventual abolition. There is a continuing trend towards abolition around the world. Amnesty International states that 139 countries have abolished the death penalty in law or practice.

There are 25 countries in the "Great Caribbean" region. Nine are abolitionist for all crimes (all Spanish speaking countries - see the Conference's Media Release). Two are de facto abolitionist, Grenada and Suriname, because they have not carried out executions in the last 10 years and because they do not attempt to do so. Thirteen countries are retentionist, out of which 11 are from the Commonwealth (Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Bahamas, Dominica, Guyana, Jamaica, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, Cuba, and Guatemala). The last hanging was in St Kitts and Nevis in December 2008.

Those attending the Conference agreed that while they recognize the urgent need to reduce crime in the region, anti-crime plans that are devised must reject the death penalty as a crime-fighting tool as this will not help to create safe, secure communities.

One of the outcomes of the Conference is the establishment of a Working Group entitled: The Great Caribbean For Life. The Group comprises 5 persons: Simeon Sampson, SC. Belize; Mario Polanco, Guatemala; Dr Lloyd Barnett, OJ, Jamaica; Carmelo Campos Cruz, Puerto Rico; and Leela Ramdeen, Trinidad (CCSJ's Chair). The remit of this Temporary Group is to communicate information, to consult widely and to draw up an operational plan. Dr Barnett, OJ, former Senator and current member of the Regional Judicial & Legal Services Commission, is a member of the Group. The Group has developed a Memorandum of Understanding to facilitate its work and is encouraging individuals to sign it.

5. TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO REINTEGRATION FOUNDATION/ANTHONY PANTIN REINTEGRATION CENTRE (TTRF/APRC)

Report for 2011:

Phase 1 of the Anthony Pantin Reintegration Centre for former prisoners was completed in the June 2011. This facility has been long overdue. This Project was initiated by CCSJ and although it was handed over, first to Trinidad and Tobago Reintegration Foundation, and now to the Society of St Vincent de Paul, CCSJ continues to work closely with SVP's Honorary Secretary, who is also CCSJ's Vice-Chair, to ensure that this Ministry gets off the ground. Indeed, CCSJ's fundraising efforts are related to APRC. While we believe that those who commit crimes should be held accountable, we have a duty to support their rehabilitation so that they can return to society and live productive lives.

Blessed John Paul II's words spur us on. He said: "Not to promote the interests of prisoners would be to make imprisonment a mere act of vengeance on the part of society...For all to play their part in building the common good they must work, in the measure of their competence, to ensure that prisoners have the means to redeem themselves, both as individuals and in their relations to society" (2000). We have a duty to play our part in the rehabilitation of prisoners and those who leave prison. Our recidivism (re-offending) rate in TT is about 55%. The challenge is to adopt a Restorative Justice approach that will help us to "re-weave a broader social fabric of respect for life, civility, responsibility, and reconciliation." (US Bishops' document: *Responsibility, Rehabilitation, and Restoration: A Catholic Perspective on Crime and Criminal Justice* (2000).

CCSJ and TTRF are aware that to build a culture of life, Catholics must also develop programmes to assist the victims of crime and their families, as well as the families of the perpetrators of crime. To build the Civilization of Love we must embrace all God's children.

A Manager was appointed and APRC opened its door to receive former prisoners from September 2011. By October there were 7 former prisoners at APRC. TTRF is seeking to partner with groups such as ALTA – the Adult Literacy Team, to assist its work. In June 2011 CCSJ held its annual Fundraising Dinner at Skippers' Restaurant at the Yacht Club, Bayshore. Half of the profits were given to TTRF to assist with the completion of the facility. The other half was used to pay the 10 Monitors of CCSJ's Values and Virtues Formation Programme.

In 2011 a meeting was held with Archbishop Gilbert, CCSJ's Chair and Vice-Chair who is also the Honorary Secretary of SVP and Chair of TTRF. It was agreed, in principle, that SVP will take responsibility for the day to day running of APRC and that members of TTRF Board will be invited to join a Team to be established by SVP to oversee the work of APRC. SVP's Management Team agreed to the proposal. However, the official "handing over" of responsibility for APRC is still to be effected. TTRF is also seeking to pay its debt to the Contractor for materials purchased. If monies promised by the Self-Help Commission are released, this will go some way to relieving TTRF of its debt. Attempts are being made to secure the funds.

At the meeting with Archbishop Gilbert, it was also agreed that the land on which the facility is built, and which belongs to CCSJ, will be transferred to the Archdiocese and then leased to SVP. The transfer is still to be effected. The Property Department in the Chancery is dealing with this issue. Relevant forms for WASA were completed and it is hoped that the Archdiocese's Attorneys will be able to effect the transfer in the near future.

Members of TTRF were invited to join the SVP Committee that was formed to oversee the work of APRC. Colin Hamilton is the Chair of the new Committee. SVP runs APRC and programmes are being developed to facilitate the development of residents and their successful reintegration into society. Most of the residents found employment through the efforts of SVP. In light of this, programmes are run for residents during the evenings – after work, or on weekends. By the end of 2011, plans were in train to develop Agricultural programmes to enhance the skills of residents. Any profits gained from the sale of their produce e.g. fruits and vegetables grown by them at APRC, will provide them with a 'nest egg' when they leave the facility.

UPDATE FROM JANUARY– JULY 2012:

The Anthony Pantin Reintegration Centre (APRC) is gradually coming to terms with the reality of providing temporary shelter for former prisoners.

One such reality is that the majority of former prisoners who are coming through the doors of APRC are drug addicts and the facility does not have the expertise to treat such persons. Of the fifteen (15) admissions to date, nine (9) have had to be referred to the Piparo Drug Rehabilitation Centre. Two (2) have transitioned and four (4) are in residence. In order to find acceptable 'candidates', the Centre is developing a relationship with Prison Welfare officers who can identify such persons.

The residents have embarked on an agricultural project on an experimental basis. This has proved to be successful and the project will be expanded through the use of greenhouses. It is anticipated that the expanded project will be self-financing and may even turn a profit which will be allocated to the residents and the operational costs of the Centre. The concept of a 'School of Agriculture' is also being explored.

The Ministry of Works has agreed to provide support through infrastructural works such as paving etc. and water lines are currently being laid in the area. This will reduce the dependence on truck-borne water. The leasing of the property to the St. Vincent de Paul Society (SVP) is being pursued at Archdiocesan level.

Payment to the contractor and the Archdiocese for the work completed remains outstanding. The National Self-Help Commission has refused to release the final payment of over two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000.00) pledged to the project. A meeting is being sought with the relevant Minister to seek to have the decision overturned. In the interim, the money raised at CCSJ's Fundraising Dinner at Skippers Restaurant in 2012 is being paid to the contractor while CCSJ's funds which are being held in the Abercrombie Fund at First Citizens Bank are being transferred to the Archdiocese to repay part of a loan from the Archdiocese. These funds were allocated specifically for use by APRC and were being held in this account.

6. CONCLUSION:

While we thank God for assisting the Commission and the Archdiocese in achieving all that we have accomplished during 2011, we are mindful that the challenges we face in TT and in the world today are, in many respects, greater than those we faced during 2010/2011.

But, as a Eucharistic people, as people of the Beatitudes, as the Body of Christ on Earth, we go forth daily assured that with God's Grace we will meet and overcome these challenges. Proverbs 29:18 state: "Where there is no vision the people get out of hand; blessed are they who keep the Precept". Our Church has a vision and a mission. These give us new impetus for action. We are part of the whole; part of a Universal Church. We pledge to continue working diligently to further the Mission of our Church.

CCSJ's challenge is to nurture in the Faithful a spirituality of justice so that each of us will contribute to the transformation of our world. As the US Bishops said in *"Everyday Christianity: To hunger and thirst for justice"* (1998): "Catholicism does not call us to abandon the world but to help shape it. This does not mean leaving worldly tasks and responsibilities, but transforming them." If we allow Gospel values to infuse our lives we will transform society.

As we seek to live our mission, we will often be swimming against the tide of secularism, materialism, autonomous/unconstrained individualism, and moral relativism. We will be swimming against a tide that seeks to deny God's existence. We know that there can be no integral human development without God. God is at the center of development.

Pope Benedict XVI has urged Catholics to do more to combat secularism and to build up Catholic values. In his encyclical, *Charity in Truth*, the Holy Father says:

"Without God, development becomes negative, 'dehumanized' (10- 12)...Secularism and fundamentalism exclude the possibility of fruitful dialogue" between reason and religious faith. A breach that "comes only at an enormous price to human development (53-56)...Reason without faith is doomed to flounder in an illusion of its own omnipotence. Faith without reason risks being cut off from everyday life (74)... God's love calls us to move beyond the limited and the ephemeral; it gives us the courage to continue seeking and working for the benefit of all." (78)(Vatican Press Office – 7 July).

There is an urgent need for personal witness to make visible the presence of Catholics in society. *Archbishop Harris'* words at Synod still ring in my ears. He listed numerous signs of moral decadence in our society and added:

"We have let the culture shape us instead of being the ones to shape the culture. There can be no doubt that we are in crisis, but crisis is always opportunity for creative ways of forging new realities...the new reality must be a Church which with humility and steadfastness is faithful to its mission of evangelizing both people and culture so that a new and morally revitalized Trinidad and Tobago comes into being."

The most effective way in which we can be counter-cultural is to live our daily lives in our homes, in our workplaces, in our communities as true witnesses to Christ; to do as *Archbishop Harris* - said at Synod and answer "the call to holiness which is part and parcel of our baptismal anointing to be priests, (live) lives worthy of being offered to God; to be prophets proclaiming

the message by our very lives and calling others through our very lives, to the acceptance of the message; to be kings, ensuring the well-being of those who find themselves on the margins.”

It is time for us to re-discover our vocation to be Catholic and to remember that discipleship and social justice go hand in hand. Let us embrace our mission with renewed vigour to build God’s Kingdom of justice, peace, love, truth, freedom and forgiveness. Justice is at the heart of who we are and what we believe. Let us show that there is some authentic, visible and credible sign that Catholics are living and working for justice in TT and in the world.

Members of CCSJ will continue to play our part in helping Catholics to rediscover the vocation to be Catholic so that the practice of our faith and parish/community involvement will lead to a deeper discipleship and commitment to Church and to community.

We ask all readers of this AGM Report to pray for us and for our important work. **Prayer:** Lord, send your Holy Spirit to fill us with wisdom and courage to continue our indefatigable struggle to realize our vision; to be a leaven in the mass.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX: I

SYNOD RESOLUTIONS: Following Synod 2009, CCSJ was charged with responsibility for taking a lead to implement Pastoral Priority 3 (PP): Regenerating the Moral and Spiritual Values of our Society. The Goal of this PP and the 7 Resolutions relating to this Goal are as follows. It is to be noted that not all resolutions fall within the remit of CCSJ:

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.

RESOLUTION #1b: Lead Department: 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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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 (see p. 22)

Social Justice Online Course: CCSJ, CREDI (Theological Institute), and the UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON

“Inter alia, the Catholic Commission for Social Justice (CCSJ) and the Theological Institute at 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.

CCSJ’s Social Justice Online Course commenced on 12 July 2009. It is run by The Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation (VLCFF), University of Dayton, and is facilitated by the Theological Institute at CREDI. 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.”

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."

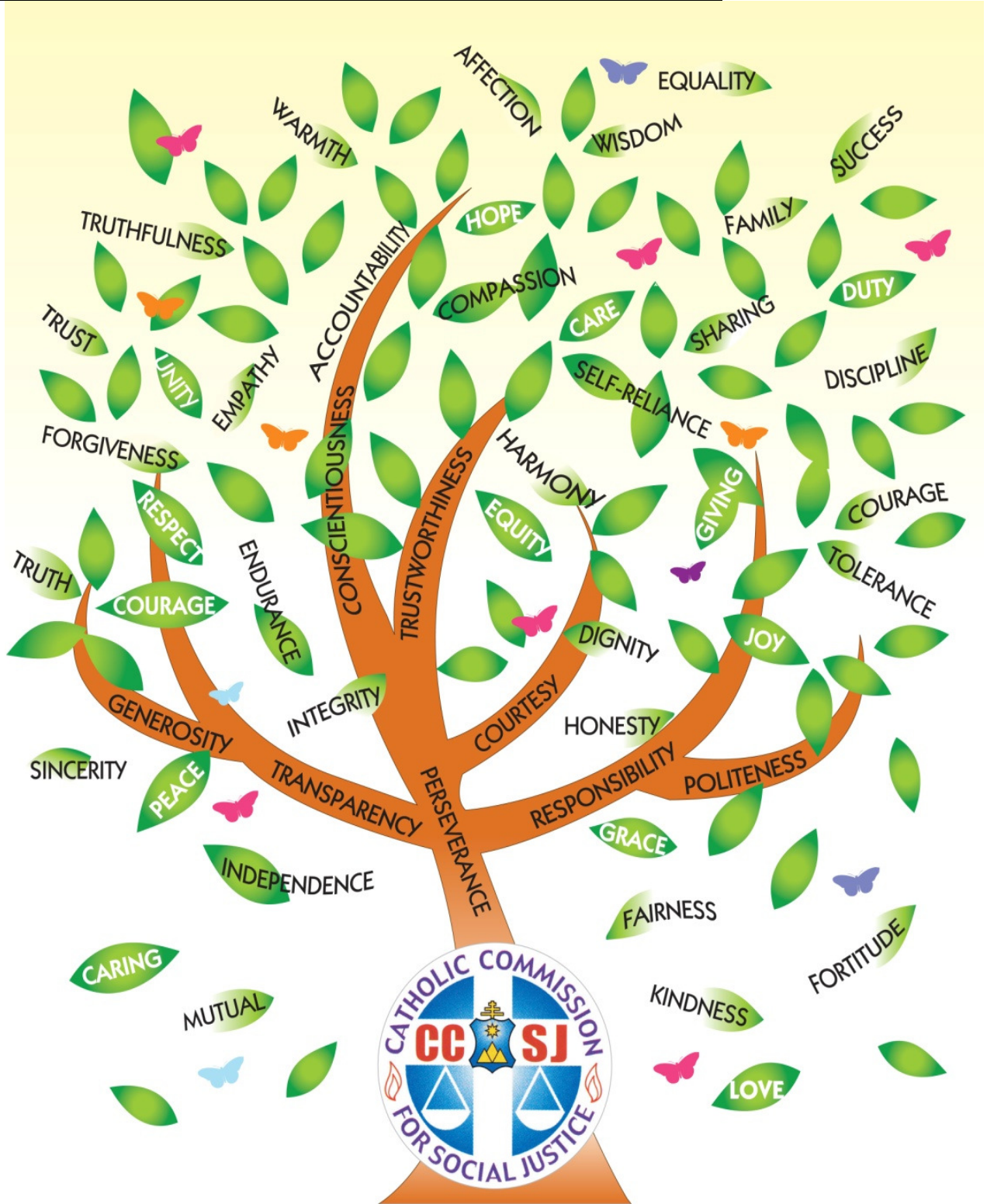
The program series currently comprises 11 modules grouped into levels: Basic, Intermediate and Advanced. Each module is about 5 weeks long. To complete the program, one must start at the Basic Level and work through to the Advanced Level. Each course is worth 2.5 CEUs (Continuing Education Units) which 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 in 2011 was TT\$260, and modules 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]. Online orientation is arranged via SKYPE between students and the Institute for Pastoral Initiatives/University of Dayton (IPI/UD).

CCSJ 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 truth, justice, love, peace, freedom and forgiveness. 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 students every success. We hope that they will share with others the knowledge gained from participating on the course and that this knowledge will assist them in their faith journey. (Adapted from the Original Media Release in July 2009).

APPENDIX III: Respect For Life Week Poster (12 Nov – 19 Nov, 2011)



APPENDIX IV:

Respect For Life Week (12 Nov – 19 Nov, 2011):

Address given by Archbishop Edward J Gilbert, C.Ss.R, at the *Sir Ellis Clarke Memorial Conference*, 12 November 2011

One of the serious pastoral responsibilities of the Catholic Church is to help individuals and groups of individuals form their consciences. The Church fulfils this responsibility in many ways e.g. by teaching during liturgies, through catechetical programmes, through value formation programmes on the primary, secondary and tertiary levels, through diplomatic contacts with representatives of Nations and through the involvement of the Church in the written and electronic media.

The experience of the Church is that if conscience formation is not done regularly, people tend either not to think about important issues or they begin to absorb uncritically secular values about the important issues of life.

Respect for Life Week is an example of a regularly scheduled pastoral effort to keep important justice issues before the hearts and minds of the people. I commend the Chairperson of the Catholic Commission for Social Justice, Ms. Leela Ramdeen, along with the members of the Commission for their persevering efforts in the Archdiocese and the Region.

Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World

One of the major documents of the II Vatican Council, the *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World*, which was issued in 1965, linked proper conscience formation to a number of life issues. I want to mention just three points from the Constitution regarding life:

1) Because we have been created in the image and likeness of God, we have the capacity to search for truth and understand the truth. The process of searching for truth can be rooted in reason or in faith or in both reason and faith. The Council taught that the future of the world is in danger unless provision is made for people of greater wisdom. Wisdom is a technical term which has little to do with academics. It means that people know how to live their lives. How do they know? Through the response already mentioned: reason, faith or the combination of both.

It is clear that legislation and judicial decisions throughout the world since 1965 have affected life issues. These developments have certainly proved the teaching of the Council to be true. The world needs people of wisdom.

2) Human beings have in their hearts a law inscribed by God. Their dignity lies in observing this law and by it they will be judged. Their conscience is their most secret core and their sanctuary. There they are alone with God.

The principle concerning conscience sounds simple but it is not. If conscience is not properly formed, it has little influence on a person's values and actions. Is the issue of poorly formed conscience a growing problem in international society? Absolutely! Why is the pattern of poorly formed conscience such a growing problem? The reason is because there is so little spiritual formation being given anywhere but especially in the family. Consequently, many nice people grow without any knowledge of God or God's values.

The result of a lack of religious education/formation is that many people make important judgements, in good faith, without any reference to God. As the Holy Father frequently says ‘too many people live their lives as if God did not exist.’ Religious education/formation must become a priority if we want and expect the patterns of behaviour in society to change.

The education of conscience is a lifelong task. It teaches virtue, identifies vice, facilitates healing and contributes to personal peace. There is no period of a person’s life when qualitative growth in conscience formation is not necessary.

3)The more a correct conscience prevails, the more do persons become guided by the objective standards of moral conduct. Therefore, even when people are initially inculpably ignorant of their obligation regarding conscience formation, they cannot remain in that condition permanently. The Church must help them to grow spiritually. They must do their best to respond.

The Gospel of Life

In 1995, Pope John Paul II issued an Encyclical Letter, *The Gospel of Life*, in which he referred to the unfortunate developments that had appeared in the world since 1965. He returned to the issue of conscience. He made two important points about conscience, societal trends and conscience itself. He wrote:

1) Choices once unanimously considered criminal and rejected by the common moral sense are gradually becoming socially acceptable;

2) No less disturbing is the fact that conscience itself, darkened as it were by such widespread conditioning, is finding it increasingly difficult to distinguish between good and evil in what concerns the basic value of human life.

The Holy Father then repeats the list of crimes against life issued by the II Vatican Council. (Confer **Gaudium et Spes** n. 27) Listen to the list:

“The varieties of crime are numerous:

- all offenses against life itself, such as murder, genocide, abortion, euthanasia and wilful suicide;
- all violations of the integrity of the human person, such as mutilation, physical and mental torture, undue psychological pressures;
- All offenses against human dignity, such as subhuman living conditions, arbitrary imprisonment, deportation, slavery, prostitution, the selling of women and children, degrading working conditions where men are treated as mere tools for profit, rather than free and responsible persons.

All these and the like are criminal: they poison civilization and they debase the perpetrators more than the victims and militate against the honour of the creator.”

The Catechism of the Catholic Church

In 1997, the time of the publication of the definitive edition of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, the *Catechism* provided a substantive treatment of the 5th commandment which speaks in detail of the various issues of life including the issues of war and peace.

This section of the *Catechism* offers extensive material for the proper formation of conscience on life issues. It is very well footnoted which enables catechists to study the Catholic tradition on life issues and to become confident as they serve the needs of the people.

The 1971 Roman Synod

The theme of this Conference ‘Respect Life: Promote Justice’ also reflects the theology of the Justice in the World teaching of the 1971 Roman Synod of Bishops. I want to mention just 6 points from that document and ask you to reflect on whether, in your opinion, what the document taught in 1971 has become reality or not. The paragraph numbers of the 1971 document are identified in my text through an asterisk and parentheses. The Justice in the World called for:

1) Scrutinizing the signs of the times and discerning the meaning of emerging history. *(2)

Reflection question: Do you think the people of the Church and the world have responded to that call of the Roman Synod?

2) There is a new awareness of justice developing which is motivating people to reject any fatalistic resignation about their present condition and which spurs them on to liberate themselves and to become responsible for their own destiny. *(4)

Reflection question: Do you see any signs throughout the world that this dynamic is in fact taking place?

3) In the perspective of the unity of nations, the forces of division seem to be increasing. *(9)

Reflection question: Do you see any progress on the theme that the world is moving from tribalism to international unity?

4) Economic injustice and a lack of social participation keep people from attaining their basic human rights. *(9)

Reflection question: Granting the difficulty that is intrinsic to this call of the Roman Synod, do you see any signs of hope?

5) Persecution on tribal grounds can take on the characteristics of genocide. *(22)

Reflection question: This particular challenge has resulted in countless violent deaths of innocent people. Do you see the world as more aware of the problem and more disposed to help?

6) Education makes people decidedly more human. It will help them to be no longer the object of manipulation by communications media or political forces. *(52)

Reflection question: Have you seen the hope in this call being verified throughout the world?

Conclusion

The reason why Justice and Social Justice ministry experiences such opposition is that its theory inevitably and sometimes very quickly leads to action. The call to action in whatever the justice issue may be, generally if not always, is met with opposition by those with very powerful vested interests. We must never forget that Justice and Social Justice ministry can be very dangerous and that at times it can lead to death.

I thank God for the many examples of Justice/Social Justice ministry in the Archdiocese and for the people who are committed to those ministries. I remind everyone that the underlying pastoral

foundation for all Justice/Social Justice ministries is conscience formation. Without ongoing conscience formation during the various stages of life very little will happen.

*The numbers refer to the paragraph numbers of the document.

APPENDIX V:

Interfaith Service held during Respect For Life Week: *Many faiths, one nation*

As part of Respect For Life Week, CCSJ organized an Interfaith Service which was held at St Benedict's RC Church Hall, La Romaine on Sunday November 13 from 3.00 p.m. to 5.00 p.m. on the Theme: *Respect Life: Promote Justice*.

Parish Priest of St Benedict's, Fr David Khan, welcomed participants. Leela Ramdeen, CCSJ's Chair, highlighted the importance of strengthening relationships between people of different faiths. She said:

"The Church urges her sons and daughters to enter with prudence and charity into discussion and collaboration with members of other religions. Let Christians, while witnessing to their own faith and way of life, acknowledge, preserve and encourage the spiritual and moral truths among non-Christians, also their social life and culture". Pope Paul VI, *Nostra Aetate* (Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions), 1965, n.2

"There is strength in unity. Together we can address the many social ills that confront us and build the common good. Together we can make a positive impact on the social, political, cultural and economic life of TT. We are here to serve society. If each of our faith communities plays its part, and draws on the wealth of expertise that exists among our people, we will accomplish our goals.

"Not many countries have an Inter Religious Organization. We should see the IRO as an asset in our efforts to develop a spirituality of justice and peace in TT. There are certain core values that we share. Let us find common ground based on these values. Religious beliefs can tear a country apart or bring it closer together. In TT, thankfully, we respect each other's religion and can come together, as we do today, to pray, as stated on CCSJ's prayer card, 'for a deeper respect and appreciation for life and all that sustains life.'"

One of the aims of the IRO, which was established by an Act of Parliament (No.33 of 1973), is: "To foster the collaboration of all religious Organizations with a view to bringing about the spiritual, intellectual and economic advancement of the people of Trinidad and Tobago."

Participating in the Service were:

Leela Ramdeen, CCSJ's Chair;

Mr Victor Scheffers, CCSJ's guest from the Netherlands who was the feature speaker at RFLW opening Lecture on 12 Nov;

Mr. Emrol Gould, President of the IRO and member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints;

Mr Stephen Burris, Baha'i;

Deacon Mike James, Catholic;

Pundit Bramdeo Maharaj,

Pundit Parishad, Hindu;

Sister Elizabeth Nandi, Raja Yoga Centre/Bramha Kumaris;

Sr Roberta O'Flaherty, CCSJ member;

Sr Christine Walcott O.P., CCSJ's Parish Link Coordinator;
Richard Smith, Vicariate Link Coordinator;
Cassandra Wharton and members of St Benedict's Choir.