



## **CATHOLIC COMMISSION FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE**

### **11<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

#### **Theme: Whom shall I send? (Isaiah 6:8)**

*(Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying: Whom shall I send? Who will be our messenger?" I answered, "Here I am, send me.")*

For the period 1 January 2013 to 31 December 2013



Wednesday 26 November 2014 (covering 2013 activities)

5.30 – 7.00 p.m.

Archbishop's House

27 Maraval Road

PORT OF SPAIN

**"...if you want peace work for justice" Pope Paul VI**

**Here I Am Lord Lyrics** *from Divine Love* - James Kilbane

***Chorus:* Here I am Lord, Is it I Lord.**

**I have heard You calling in the night.**

**I will go Lord, if You lead me.**

**I will hold Your people in my heart.**

I, the Lord of sea and sky,

I have heard My people cry.

All who dwell in dark and sin,

My hand will save.

I who made the stars of night,

I will make their darkness bright.

Who will bear My light to them?

Whom shall I send?

I, the Lord of snow and rain,

I have borne my peoples pain.

I have wept for love of them, They turn away.

I will break their hearts of stone,

Give them hearts for love alone.

I will speak My word to them,

Whom shall I send?

Here I am Lord, Is it I Lord.  
I have heard You calling in the night.  
I will go Lord, if You lead me.  
I will hold Your people in my heart.

I, the Lord of wind and rain,  
I will tend the poor and lame.  
I will set a feast for them,  
My hand will save  
Finest bread I will provide,  
Till their hearts be satisfied.  
I will give My life to them,  
Whom shall I send?

Here I am Lord, Is it I Lord.  
I have heard You calling in the night.  
I will go Lord, if You lead me.  
I will hold Your people in my heart.

## **CCSJ'S 11th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

For the period: 1 JAN 2013 – 31 DEC 2013. **Theme: *Whom shall I send? (Is. 6:8)***

Date: Wednesday 26 November 2014 Time: 5:30 p.m.

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

### **CCSJ's Prayer for Justice and Peace:**

O God, open our hearts to the gifts of your Holy Spirit as we seek to promote Your reign here in Trinidad and Tobago. Help us to become a nation where peace is built with justice and justice is guided by love, love of God and love of neighbour. Help us to rediscover and live our faith so that our concern for social justice will be transformed into constructive action as we spread the Good News in this land. We ask you, O God, to guide and bless all our efforts. Inspire us as you did the Prophets of old with courage, imagination, and creativity. This we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

### **AGENDA:**

**5:30 p.m.** Opening prayer, welcome and apologies for absence: Leela Ramdeen, Chair, CCSJ.

**5:40 p.m.** Minutes of CCSJ's AGM for period 2012 held on Wed 11 July 2013 & Matters arising from Minutes.

**5:50 p.m.** Presentation of Annual Report on CCSJ's work in 2012: Leela Ramdeen, Chair, CCSJ

**6:10 p.m.** Adoption of Annual Report and Questions/comments.

**6:15 p.m.** Treasurer's Report for 2013 & Presentation of Audited Accounts 2012 & 2013

**6:25 p.m.** Adoption of Accounts for 2013; Audited Accounts for 2012 & 2013; and Questions/comments.

**6:30 p.m.** Appointment of Auditors

**6:35 p.m.** Election of Officers/Management Committee – See By Laws: 7.1 (Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, Secretary).

**6:40 p.m.** Closing Prayer and refreshments .

# CCSJ's 11<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

WEDNESDAY 26 November 2013 (covering period 1 Jan – 31 Dec 2013)

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## **1. MISSION STATEMENT OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF POS**

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.

## **CCSJ'S VISION**

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

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

## **MISSION**

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

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

## **CORE VALUES**

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

## **2. INTRODUCTION BY CCSJ'S CHAIR**

CCSJ is pleased to present its annual report for 2013. Membership of the Commission during 2013 was as follows:

Leela Ramdeen, Episcopal Delegate/Chair of CCSJ

Clive Belgrave, Vice-Chair

Nadine Bushell, Secretary

Annette McKenzie, Treasurer

Annette des Iles, Member

Sr Roberta O'Flaherty, Member

Jo Ann Smith (until June 2013 when she was appointed Parish Link Coordinator for the Southern Vicariate)

Eldon Warner, Member

Deborah Boos, Jo Ann Smith, and Dianne Wells joined CCSJ as Parish Link Coordinators in June 2013. Mikkel Trestrail joined the team in August 2013. Christine Walcott had resigned in November 2012.

Richard Smith, Vicariate Link Coordinator (VLC) who coordinates the Social Justice aspect of the job descriptions of the VLCs, including his own work. The other VLCs were: Candace Adams (Suburban/Central), Kester Deverteuil (North) and Lewis Martineaux (East). They joined the Team at different times during 2013.

CCSJ records its thanks to Lorna Chee-Wah and Cheryl Wallace, CCSJ's Administrative Assistants, who, through a job-share, provide tremendous support to the Commission. I would like to thank all members of CCSJ most sincerely for their commitment to the social imperatives of the Gospel. We thank also those persons and organisations that have contributed to the Commission's work; to

Archbishop Joseph Harris and Msgr Robert Llanos, Auxiliary Bishop, for their leadership and guidance.

If we locate our work in 2013 in a wider context, we note, as Pope Emeritus Benedict rightly said in his encyclical, *Charity in Truth* (2009), that globalisation makes us neighbours but does not make us brothers and sisters.

During 2013, the worldwide Church continued to observe The Year of Faith which Pope Benedict XVI had declared and which ran from Oct 11, 2012 – Nov 24, 2013. This was an opportunity, as Archbishop Broglio said, “To deepen, nurture, and share our gift of Faith.” And, as Pope Benedict XVI said in his Apostolic Letter for the Year of Faith - *Porta Fidei* (“door of faith” (Acts 14:27) :

“To rediscover the content of the faith that is professed, celebrated, lived, and prayed, and to reflect on the act of faith, is a task that every believer must make his own, and especially in the course of this Year...

“Faith is a personal act -the free response of the human person to the initiative of God who reveals himself. But faith is not an isolated act. No one can believe alone, just as no one can live alone. You have not given yourself faith as you have not given yourself life. The believer has received faith from others and should hand it on to others. Our love for Jesus and for our neighbour impels us to speak to others about our faith. Each believer is thus a link in the great chain of believers. I cannot believe without being carried by the faith of others, and by my faith I help support others in the faith.” (166)

Two significant events that occurred in 2013 are as follows:



- On February 11, 2013, Pope Benedict XVI announced that he would resign his papal office at the end of the same month.
- After his resignation and following church law, a conclave was held and Jorge Mario Bergoglio was elected the 266th pope of the Roman Catholic Church in March 2013, becoming Pope Francis. He is the first pope from the Americas.

CCSJ Members recorded our welcome to Pope Francis and we continue to pray for him and for Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI.

As you will note in this report, there is much work to do to promote the social teachings of our Church and to achieve our goals. We strengthen our resolve to continue working in the Lord's Vineyard by developing our Spirituality. The theme of our Annual Retreat this year was: We are an Easter People. Once again, we thank Vanessa Sabga for her kind hospitality by providing us with a venue and refreshments for our Retreat.

We continue to strive to be agents of justice and peace in a country/world that is desperately in need of justice and peace. It is difficult to determine the overall impact that CCSJ has had on hearts and minds. In spite of our inputs and activities, what have been our outputs, outcomes and impact? Have we made a difference? Has society in any way been transformed to reflect Gospel values because of our efforts?

As change agents whose efforts are rooted in Scripture and in our Faith Tradition, we acknowledge that there is always room for improvement. We need to manage change more effectively and to motivate others to join us on our journey. For some reason, many either do not fully understand what the social teaching of the Church

requires us to do, or the term “social justice” sounds controversial to some while others prefer to support other Pastoral Ministries in the Archdiocese – all of which, of course, must be embedded in a Spirituality of Justice. Either way, we are about our Father’s business and will continue implementing strategic plans, monitoring and evaluating them and making the necessary adjustments. We are 1 of 19 Departments, and so any evaluation must be considered within the workings of the entire Archdiocese. We will consider this during our discussions at this AGM.

For our AGM this year, we have chosen the theme: *Whom shall I send?* to remind us that we are to be Christ’s disciples/witnesses/foot soldiers in our homes, workplaces, communities, nation, and world. **APPENDIX I** is a helpful extract from the US Bishops’ document: *Communities of Salt and Light Reflections on the Social Mission of the Church*. We urge readers of this Report to address the questions outlined in the extract as a way of determining how well you and your parish etc are doing in promoting the social mission of the Church.

Isaiah volunteered to go out and preach the word of God. We must do the same by the way we live our lives. Let’s follow the advice of St Francis of Assisi: "*Preach the Gospel at all times and when necessary use words.*" I share below Pastor Richard White’s poem which is so apt today:

“There was a clever young guy named *Somebody Else*  
There was nothing he can’t do  
He is busy from morning till late at night  
Substituting for you.  
You’re asked to do this or do that  
And what is your ready reply  
Get *Somebody Else* to do that job

He'll do it much better than I.  
So much to do in this weary old world  
So much to do and workers so few  
And *Somebody Else*, all weary and worn  
Is still substituting for you.  
The next time you're asked to do something worthwhile  
Just give this ready reply  
If *Someone Else* can give the time  
My goodness, so can I.  
Isaiah heard the call; the call was to fill a need."

I end my introduction with the words of Pope Francis – uttered during his first homily when he celebrated the *Missa pro Ecclesiae* in the Sistine Chapel in March 2013. Please find Vatican Radio's translation of the full text of his homily at: <http://www.news.va/en/news/pope-francis-1st-homily-full-text>

"When we walk without the Cross, when we build without the Cross, and when we profess Christ without the Cross, we are not disciples of the Lord. We are worldly, we are bishops, priests, cardinals, Popes, but not disciples of the Lord.

"I would like that all of us...might have the courage - the courage - to walk in the presence of the Lord, with the Cross of the Lord: to build the Church on the Blood of the Lord, which is shed on the Cross, and to profess the one glory, Christ Crucified. In this way, the Church will go forward.

"My hope for all of us is that the Holy Spirit, that the prayer of Our Lady, our Mother, might grant us this grace: to walk, to build, to profess Jesus Christ Crucified. So be it." **HERE I AM, LORD, SEND ME.**

## Treasurer's Report

The accounts for the financial years 2012 and 2013 have been audited and are presented.

The Accumulated Fund balances are as follows:

2011.....	\$407,840
2012.....	\$376,710
2013.....	\$393,990

This reflects a decrease of \$31,130 resulting from a deficit in 2012 and an increase of \$17,280 resulting from a surplus in 2013.

Income and Expenditure was as follows:

	Income	Expenditure	Surplus/(Deficit)
2011.....	\$367,656	\$371,148	(\$ 3,492)
2012.....	\$369,383	\$400,513	(\$31,130)
2013.....	\$482,731	\$465,451	\$17,280

The deficit in the year 2012 included interest in the amount of \$13,153 accrued to The Trinidad and Tobago Re-Integration Foundation which was incorrectly credited to the Accumulated Fund and returned in 2012. The operating deficit for 2012 being \$17,977.

Funding from the Chancery increased significantly in 2013 (47%) due to the increase in staffing of four (4) part-time Parish Link Coordinators.

The Annual Fund raiser netted surpluses of \$22,610 and \$8,824 in the years 2012 and 2013 respectfully. These sums were donated to the TTRF.

**Annette Mc Kenzie, Treasurer**

**Date: Nov 19<sup>th</sup> 2014**

## **4. REPORT ON CCSJ'S WORK DURING 2013**

CCSJ is one of 19 Departments in the Archdiocese of Port of Spain. As Episcopal Delegate for Social Justice and Chair of CCSJ, CCSJ's Chair is a member of the Archdiocesan Administrative Board and also a member of the Synod Implementation Team which seeks to further the Mission of the Church and to oversee the implementation of Synod Resolutions – including the 3 Pastoral Priorities:

**First: The New Evangelization:** Goal - 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:**

Goal - 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:**

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.

In keeping with the annual practice, CCSJ submitted its Pastoral Plan for 2013, along with all Departments, parishes, and schools.

Outlined hereunder are key areas of CCSJ's work undertaken during 2013:

## **A. PARISH LINK PROGRAMME**

Christine Walcott resigned as Parish Link Coordinator (PLC) in November 2012. During 2013, CCSJ appointed 4 Parish Link Coordinators who took up their positions in June and August. Deborah Boos (Eastern Vicariate), Jo Ann Smith (Southern Vicariate), and Dianne Wells (Central and Suburban Vicariate) joined CCSJ as PLCs in June. Mikkel Trestrail (Northern & Tobago Vicariate) joined the team in August.

The primary objectives of the PLCs are:

1. To be responsible for liaising with Vicariate Link Coordinators with respect to
  - promoting with them at parish level the Social Doctrine of the Church;
  - identifying and disseminating good social justice practice at parish level;
2. To exercise care and diligence in the performance of all assigned responsibilities with ongoing observation of the Archdiocese's and the Commission's Vision, Mission and Policies;
3. To support CCSJ in its implementation of Synod resolutions.

Their duties are:

- i. 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 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;

- ii. To maintain frequent contact with a representative of each parish in the Archdiocese of Port of Spain with respect to social justice ministry;
- iii. To promote the development of Parish Link Social Justice Teams/Clusters to address Social Justice issues at grass-roots level;
- iv. To facilitate training sessions for Parish Link Social Justice teams to facilitate their work;
- v. To maintain a database of contacts for all Parishes;
- vi. To report to the Chair of CCSJ on progress of Parish Link Social Justice Teams;
- vii. To develop budgets and forecasts for projects, and prepare documentation to facilitate the release of project funds for project activities;
- viii. To prepare quarterly and annual reports on Programme Objectives to be submitted to the Commission;
- ix. To participate in training recommended by the Archdiocese that is relevant to the activities of the post of Parish Link Coordinator.

Richard Smith, Vicariate Link Coordinator (VLC) for the Southern Vicariate, coordinates the Social Justice aspect of the job descriptions of the VLCs, including his own work. During part of 2013, the number of VLCs in active service was depleted. The other VLCs are: Candace Adams (Suburban/Central), Kester Deverteuil (North) and Lewis Martineaux (East). They joined the Team at different times during 2013.

CCSJ's Chair produced a Reporting Form to facilitate the PLCs' reports to the Commission on a monthly basis. The headings on the Form were as follows:

**PARISH LINK COORDINATORS' REPORTING FORM**

VICARIATE.....Reporting for the Month of:.....

TOTAL NUMBER OF PARISHES:.....

NUMBER OF PARISHES VISITED THIS MONTH.....

NATURE OF VISIT:.....

---

TRAINING:

NATURE OF TRAINING:

NUMBER OF PARISHES ATTENDING:

NUMBER OF PEOPLE ATTENDING:

OVERALL EVALUATION:

---

MEETINGS:

NATURE OF MEETING:

NUMBER OF PARISHES ATTENDING:

NUMBER OF PEOPLE ATTENDING:

OVERALL EVALUATION:

---

OTHER:

---

PROJECTIONS AND TARGETS:

---

CHALLENGES:

SIGNATURE AND DATE:



CCSJ's Chair organized an induction programme for the PLCs. This included links to a number of important documents on the Church's Social Teaching.

The 2013 reports of the PLCs and Richard, VLC for the Southern Vicariate are included in **APPENDIX II**.

## **B. VIRTUS: PROTECTING GOD'S CHILDREN: ([www.virtus.org](http://www.virtus.org))**

The Archdiocese Family Life Commission in collaboration with CCSJ, successfully launched the VIRTUS's programme: "*Protecting God's Children*" on March 29 2011 at Our Lady of Fatima Church, Bushe Street, Curepe. *Protecting God's Children* is one of several VIRTUS Programmes conceived, developed, and financed by the US-based National Catholic Risk Retention Group Inc.

According to the VIRTUS website, *Protecting God's Children* focuses on the "education and training of clergy, staff, volunteers, parents, and other adults about the nature of child abuse, child sexual abuse, and how adults can help prevent harm to children...The *Protecting God's Children* programme turns every parish into a child-safe haven".

The programme includes two awareness videos ("*A Time to Protect God's Children*" and "*A Plan to Protect God's Children*"), as well as group work with the aid of a handbook and workbook.

The first AEC training workshop was hosted by the Georgetown diocese, Guyana, on October 5, 2010. CCSJ's Chair attended on behalf of this Archdiocese. VIRTUS Training Officer Pat Neil (USA) was a Facilitator at that event. The programme is being implemented in archdioceses and dioceses of the Antilles Episcopal Conference (AEC), following a commitment by the AEC bishops "to do

all in their power to protect the children of the region from sexual abuse”. (CN, 20 Mar 2011).

All adults working with children at Catholic institutions are required to participate in this sexual abuse awareness/prevention programme. Continuous education and training is offered through VIRTUS Online, a web-based training platform.

Msgr Robert Llanos appointed Dr Dexter and Freida Shim as coordinators/facilitators. CCSJ’s Chair is also a Facilitator. Tricia Syms and the FLC Team take responsibility for organizing the event and registering persons who have attended the programme. Three other Facilitators have joined the team to speed up the training process.

In 2011-2012, training sessions were organized for: Priests, Deacons, Administrators, Heads of Department, Staff/Religious, Catholic Institutions, Volunteers, Ecclesial Communities and Prayer Groups, Catholic Primary and Secondary Principals, Administrators/Staff of convalescent children’s homes, St Joseph Primary RC teachers, St Finbar’s Parish and neighbouring parishes, Confirmation/First communion Classes, Catechists, Youth Commission and the general public.

In 2013, training was organized for the following groups:

Feb 28<sup>th</sup>, 2013: Mary Immaculate Queen of the Universe: Community members of MIQU Parish, Bourg Mulatresse

Aug. 30<sup>th</sup>, 2013: Our Lady of Fatima, Laventille: Catholic Primary School Teachers from Laventille

Oct. 5<sup>th</sup>, 2013: Holy Trinity Parish, Arouca: (9-12), Holy Trinity Parish and neighbouring parishes, Confirmation, First Communion and Catechists.

Oct. 5<sup>th</sup>, 2013: Holy Trinity Parish, Arouca: (1-3) Holy Trinity Parish and neighbouring parishes, Confirmation, First Communion and Catechists.

Nov. 16<sup>th</sup>, 2013: Assumption Parish, Maraval: Assumption Parish and neighbouring parishes, Confirmation, First Communion and Catechists.

Number of persons trained:

**2011: 217**

**2012: 572**

**2013: 245**

On Thurs 24 Jan, members of the VIRTUS Archdiocese's Team, including CCSJ's Chair, met with Msgr Llanos, who has overall responsibility for the programme – aimed at protecting God's children from child sexual abuse. The aim of the meeting was to discuss issues relating to the implementation of the programme. It was noted that the AEC Bishops have prepared a Draft Code of Pastoral Conduct which was discussed at their meeting in Guadeloupe. When it is adopted, it will provide a framework for the Archdiocese.

A session was held at Archbishop's House on 15 Feb to train a few more facilitators to ensure that all those who should be trained have access to training in a timely manner.

On Mon 24 June Chair met with Msgr Robert Llanos and the VIRTUS Team to discuss issues relating to the VIRTUS programme. CCSJ notes that at the AEC Bishops' meeting in April, Bishops discussed and approved updated Common norms for the diocesan policies dealing with allegations of sexual abuse of minors by priests or deacons. These updated norms were submitted to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith at the Vatican for approval/recognition.

## **C. PRO-LIFE WORK AND MARY CARE CENTRE**

Human life is sacred. It is worth recalling the statement contained in the Second Vatican Council, *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World* (*Gaudium et Spes*), no. 2.

“All offenses against life itself, such as murder, genocide, abortion, euthanasia and willful suicide; all violations of the integrity of the human person...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 militate against the honour of the creator.”

And our Catechism tells us that: “Human life must be respected and protected absolutely from the moment of conception. From the first moment of his existence, a human being must be recognized as having the rights of a person—among which is the inviolable right of every innocent being to life.” (2270)

CCSJ continues to promote and defend life in all forms and at all stages: from conception until natural death. Other issues that are on the front burner are the death penalty, abortion, human sexuality, assisted suicide, euthanasia and those listed above. CCSJ is committed to build a culture of life. There is an urgent need to promote the fundamental value of life from conception to natural death. Inter alia, CCSJ’s education programmes and pastoral work throughout the Archdiocese aim to raise awareness of the need for each of us “to respect, protect, love and serve life, every human life.” — The Gospel of Life (*Evangelium Vitae*), n.5. Promoting integral human development is the work of everyone.

CCSJ continues to maintain vigilance to ensure that our laws against abortion remain intact. The Commission expresses the views of the Catholic Church on pro-life issues fearlessly in the market place. Where Draft Government Policies contain clauses/provisions that, from a Catholic perspective, will not help to promote a culture of life or to build the common good, CCSJ works with other faith communities, where necessary, to urge that these clauses and provisions are excised from the Draft Policies e.g. the draft National Policy on Gender and Development and the draft Sexual and Reproductive Health Policy from the Ministry of Health.

**Mary Care Centre:** The Church, in its commitment to promote and defend life in all circumstances and at all stages, and to promote integral human development, continues to offer opportunities for young women to have their babies and to live in dignity e.g. through the work of Mary Care Centre, a sanctuary in Woodbrook for unmarried, pregnant, young women. “The centre is a non-profit organisation funded by donations received from the private and public sector. The Centre opens wide its door to young, pregnant, unmarried women from throughout the region regardless of their background or religious beliefs and tries to impart to them that the value of life is sacred. The objectives of Mary Care Centre (MCC) are two-fold:

\*To provide a safe and secure environment for the pregnant mother to give birth to her child.

\*To enable the young mother to be employable at the end of her stay at the Centre.”

MCC 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. On

June 29, 2011, MCC was rededicated by the then-Archbishop, Edward Gilbert.

The spiritual, physical and psychological needs of young women at MCC are nurtured towards self-development and growth. A doctor visits the facility weekly to tend to the needs of the young women. Often the young women who enter MCC have had a number of traumatic experiences in their lives. MCC provides them with a peaceful, spiritually uplifting, happy home. Some are referred to MCC from POS General Hospital, the Magistracy and from certain institutions. MCC falls within the remit of CCSJ but is run on a daily basis by Deborah de Rosia, Eternal Light Community (ELC). CCSJ's Chair and Ms Bernadette Patrick, the Head of the Archdiocese's Finance Department, form the Board that has oversight of the work of this Centre.

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". Donations received by MCC include money, furniture such as cribs, baby-walkers and clothes. Due to the economic downturn, the level of donations has dropped but the Centre continues its fundraising efforts. In 2013, for the first time, some monies were given to the Centre from the Government's Children's Fund.

ELC has appointed a Board, led by Deborah, to ensure the effective running of the Centre. There are 7 Board members. They meet on a monthly basis. MCC keeps in touch with the young women's families and discuss with them pertinent issues as they arise. Most of the time the young women are reintegrated into their families'

homes. The Centre ensures that the young women keep all their hospital appointments.

For the year 2013, the Centre accommodated **ten(10) girls** between the ages of fourteen and sixteen years. There was only one girl above the age of seventeen years and she was recommended to the Centre by one of the priests of the Archdiocese.

The girls begin and end the day with communal Morning Prayer. During 2013 the young women attended the Programme: *Choices*, from 8 am to 2 pm, Mondays to Fridays, at Alfredo Street, POS. There they learn Life Skills - about being a mother as well as Social Skills. Their academics are not neglected as they are taught basic English, Mathematics and Social Studies in preparation for the School Leaving Examination.

The programme is run across TT, for pregnant teenagers or adolescents - particularly first-time mothers between the ages of 13 and 19. It is “a collaborative effort between the Ministry of the People and Social Development and The Child Welfare League of Trinidad and Tobago.”

Inter alia, it offers:

- “Day care services.
- Individual and group counselling.
- Skills training, literacy training, and academic courses.
- Health and nutrition information, parenting courses, and personal development training.”

The young women receive a stipend from the Government at the end of each month. Staff members at MCC are often invited to attend Seminars at that particular Ministry. Such Seminars are of use to staff.

The young women all attend weekend mass at the St. Theresa R.C Church , Woodbrook. At the Centre the young women are ‘rostered’ to undertake chores under the guidance of the House Mother. Whenever possible, the girls partake in Social activities.

Most of the young women are from dysfunctional homes and are affected by what happened at their home. This is obvious from the attitudes displayed. In 2013, realising the problem we faced, we appealed to the Credi Centre and was fortunate to get two Counsellors, but it is a work in progress.

The Centre was invited by the Ministry of Gender, Youth and Child Development to an awards function in March 2013 at the Centre of Excellence in commemoration of International Women's Day. In April 2013, the MCC participated in a meeting with Domestic Violence Shelter hosted by that Ministry.

Leonie Bernier, MCC Team Member, says: “We thank all those who appreciate the work the Centre does in trying to support those teenagers who come to the Centre for assistance.”

CCSJ wishes to affirm Deborah and her team at MCC for their dedication and commitment to this important area of pro-life work. The MCC Team faces many challenges but do so joyfully to build God’s Kingdom here on Earth.



\*Note that in 2014 MCC was awarded a MEDAL FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN (GOLD) For Outstanding Contribution to the Development of Women's Rights and Issues in Trinidad and Tobago in the Sphere of Community Service.

## **D. RESPECT FOR LIFE WEEK (RFLW)**

### **Saturday 6 October – Saturday 13 October 2013**

The Theme chosen for RFLW 2013 was: Regenerating the Moral and Spiritual Values of Our Society – relating to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Pastoral Priority. The observation of RFLW was a strategy recommended at the 3<sup>rd</sup> sitting of Synod in 2009. The suggestion was that each year the Archdiocese should observe a week focusing specifically on Respect for ALL Life. This is the 4<sup>th</sup> year that the Archdiocese observed RFLW. In a Media Release, CCSJ stated that while this is an initiative organised by the Catholic Church, all citizens were urged to focus during RFLW on ways in which we can all Respect Life. The Commission highlighted the opportunity afforded during the week to re-commit ourselves to promote the sanctity of life and the dignity of each human person and to promote environmental justice. These are seen as key elements to achieve integral human development for TT's citizens.

Archdiocesan Departments, parishes, schools and other Catholic organizations were encouraged to organise events also. CCSJ would like to record its thanks to all those who assisted in planning and executing activities during the week.

Once again, as far as possible, all activities for RFLW were planned and implemented in collaboration with other Departments in the Archdiocese e.g. Sr.

Juliet Rajah, Directress of the Archdiocesan Catechetical Office, prepared the Prayer Supplement which was printed in Catholic News at the beginning of RFLW (Oct 26 issue). The Poster, Prayer Card and Newsletter which CCSJ prepared and distributed were appreciated by many.

The theme of CCSJ's Essay Competition in 2013 was: *What are the core Christian values that guide you on your life's journey?* The winners were:

- Under 14: Celine Regis, South Oropouche RC School
- 15-19 years: Ottrisha Carter, Coryal. On being told of her successful entry, she immediately donated her prize money to the Archbishop's Cathedral Appeal. CCSJ thanks her for her generosity.

CCSJ records its thanks to Shirley Tappin, Beverly Gomes-Nunez and Sr Roberta O'Flaherty, CCSJ member, who judged the Essay Competition.

The Essays of the winners are available on CCSJ's Website.

### **CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR RFLW:**

The following activities were planned either by CCSJ or by parishes. Parish Priests were asked to offer up relevant intercessory prayers at all Masses during RFLW:

#### **Friday 4 October:**

St Ann's Parish Church, POS. 9:00 p.m. to 5:30 a.m.:

*Adorare* – A night of praise, prayer, reflection, and intercession to celebrate the gift of life in all of its forms, and to pray for greater respect for this gift. Organised by CCSJ and CTC Community's *Reach Young Adults Ministry*. The Vigil ended with the celebration of the

Eucharist at 5.30 a.m. on Saturday morning. Light refreshments were served throughout the night.

**Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> October:** Living Water Community, Frederick St., Port of Spain, 3:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.: The public were invited to attend the Sir Ellis Clarke Memorial Conference. Speakers included:

- His Excellency Archbishop Nicola Girasoli, Apostolic Nuncio,
- Archbishop Joseph E. Harris,
- Dr Terrence Farrell, President, CREDI (his presentation was pre-recorded),
- Maureen Arneaud, Founder & Director of The Good News Project
- CCSJ's Chair was the Moderator.

**Sunday 6 October:** Parish Hall, Mary Immaculate Queen of the Universe RC Church, Sun Valley, Bourg Mulatresse, 4:00 p.m.: Reflection on the Theme: *Regenerating the Moral and Spiritual Values of our Society – What we, the Church, Can Do* . The Keynote Speaker was Rev. Dr. Arnold Francis. CCSJ's Chair and Dianne Wells, one of CCSJ's PLC, were also Panellists. The Seminar was organised by the Parish Social Justice Team.

**Monday 7 October:** St Charles RC Church, Tunapuna: 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.: Prayer session organized by Eternal Light Community

**Tuesday 8 October:** Our Lady of Fatima, Curepe: 6.00 p.m.: Seminar entitled : *Life is Precious, Beginning in the Womb*. This was hosted by The Billings Ovulation Method Association of Trinidad and Tobago. Presenters: Pauline Phelps and Tonia Gooding

**Wednesday 9 October:** St Dominic's Pastoral Centre, St. Finbar's Wednesday 6.30 p.m. Panel Discussion: *Morals and Values in our Catechism*. Presenters: Sr Juliet Rajah, Eastlyn Rawlinson and Mariam Sprott.

**Wednesday 9 October:** La Romaine RC Parish Hall: 5:30 p.m.: Workshop: Building Healthy Relationships Speakers: Councillor Michelle Byam and 2 survivors of domestic violence.

**Thursday 10 October:** *UN International World Day against the Death Penalty: Stop Crime, not Lives* – focus on the Caribbean. The faithful are encouraged to pray the Rosary for peace in Trinidad and Tobago and the world for an end to crime and violence, for the victims of crime, for the adoption of anti-crime strategies that are more in keeping with the sanctity of life and the dignity of the human person, and for the abolition of the Death Penalty.

**Friday 11 October:** Emmanuel Community, Rosalino Street, POS

6.00 p.m. – 8.00 p.m.: Vigil: *Respect for the Unborn*

\* On Friday 11 October, staff at the Chancery met in the Chapel at Archbishop’s House to say the prayers published in Catholic News to support activities for RFLW.

**Saturday 12 October:** St Francis of Assisi, Sangre Grande: 10 a.m. – 12 noon: Panel Discussion on the theme “*Regenerating the Morals and Values of our Society*”. Jones P. Madeira – Moderator. Panellists included Rev Ruth Greaves, Hope Support Group, Deacon Mike James, and CCSJ’s Chair.

**Saturday 12 October:** HOLY HOUR – All Parish Priests/Parish Administrators were asked to encourage Youths to lead holy hour in parishes – before Mass.

**NB: Sunday Oct 13 :** Pope Francis consecrated the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. The Marian Day ceremony, organized by the Pontifical Council for the New Evangelization, was held on the anniversary of the final appearance of the Virgin Mary at Fatima. The statue of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima was brought from Portugal to the Vatican for the celebration – as part of a Marian pilgrimage and the Year of Faith celebrations. During RFLW the Faithful were

asked to join the Holy Father in prayer on this special day and to say the following prayer:

*Prayer: O Immaculate Heart of Mary, intercede with your Son, Jesus, to give us the courage to transform our lives so that we will embrace morals and values that will help us to build God's Kingdom here on earth. Amen.*

## **E. SOCIAL JUSTICE ONLINE COURSE - Partnership between CCSJ, University of Dayton and CREDI (Theological Institute):**

Sadly, only 2 persons registered for the course in 2013. CCSJ's Chair continues to draw on the expertise of those who have completed the course. CCSJ hopes to develop strategies to motivate members of our Faith Community to sign up for the course.

## **F. CCSJ'S COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY:**

### **Local and International**

#### **a. Resource Production:**

i. CCSJ's Newsletters (See all Newsletters at:

<http://rcsocialjusticett.org/2.0/parishlink> )

**January 2013:** CCSJ's Newsletter for Jan 2013 focused on Pope Francis' Message for World Day of Peace. His Theme was: Blessed are the Peacemakers.

**January 2013:** CCSJ also printed Archbishop Harris' Pastoral Letter for the Year of Faith and this was widely distributed to the Faithful

**February 2013:** This Newsletter focused on Pope Benedict XI's Lenten Message entitled: "Believing in charity calls forth charity: *"We have come to know and to believe in the love God has for us"* (1 Jn 4:16)"

**July 2013:** In this Newsletter CCSJ shared with the Faithful the Official Summary of Pope Francis' first encyclical entitled: *Lumen Fidei* (The Light of Faith).

**November 2013:** This Newsletter outlined the Charter on the Rights of the Family. From Oct 23-25, 2013, CCSJ's Chair attended the 21st Plenary Assembly of the Pontifical Council for the Family (PCF) at the Vatican on the theme Anthropological horizons on the rights of the family. At the centre of the discussion was the Charter of the Rights of the Family which was presented by the Holy See on October 22, 1983 "to all persons, institutions and authorities concerned with the mission of the family in the world today."

ii. **CCSJ's 2013 Calendar** highlighted the Year of Faith and included at the top of the calendar an extract from Archbishop Harris' Pastoral Letter for the Year of Faith: "This Faith to which so many dedicated their lives and for which so many gave their lives, has been passed on to us, to you and to me, and we, you and I, have the responsibility of passing it on to our children and grandchildren. This is our responsibility and this must be our commitment...Be careful of the way in which you live your life for your life is the only Gospel that many people will ever read."

iii. **CCSJ's Take-a-Bite series:** A few years ago CCSJ arranged for 5 DVDs to be produced on the following 5 themes:

*Overview of Social Justice: Fr Jason Gordon*

*Human Life and Dignity: Sr Diane Jagdeo*

*Stewards of God's Creation: Dr John Agard*

*Rights and Responsibilities: Leela Ramdeen*

*Global Solidarity: Fr Malcolm Rodrigues.*

The DVDs were copied and circulated in packs of 5 to parishes as an educational tool. Further copies of the DVDs are available from CCSJ's Office

**iv. Nine Leaflets** focusing on various social justice themes were distributed during 2013 via the Parish Link Coordinators to raise awareness of the issues among the Faithful.

**v. Bumper stickers** with the caption

CCSJ has previously produced and distributed bumper stickers with the captions: *Just DO it – For JESUS*; and *Catholic and Committed* - as part of our contribution to raising awareness of the Archdiocese's 3 Pastoral Priorities.

**b. Website** - (<http://rcsocialjusticett.org>): CCSJ records its thanks to Raymond Syms who does an excellent job as the Commission's Webmaster. Statistics relating to the number of persons who visited our website during 2012 are available in **APPENDIX III**.

CCSJ's website is regularly updated. Archbishop Harris' weekly homily and CCSJ's weekly article that appears in Catholic News are uploaded to provide material for the formation of the faithful about the Church's teaching on Social Justice. Feedback received from visitors to the website continues to inform the Commission's work. New content is added on a weekly basis. The variety of topics covered is of interest to many. The following are some of the information that readers can access on the website:

**i. 2012 Commentaries available on CCSJ's website:**

**- Moral criteria must guide the Budget:** Posted on August 19<sup>th</sup>, 2013: CCSJ's Chair issued this letter to the Editors of the 3 main newspapers urging those involved in the national budget making process to put people at the centre of the budget. Inter alia, she stated: "A just society is one in which principles of *equity*, *equality* and *need*, in the context of distributive justice, inform the budget-making process... let us honestly reflect on whether our annual budgets meet the principles of, for example, solidarity with the poor and vulnerable, and a commitment to the common good. There are moral criteria that our annual budgets should meet. If we fail to meet these criteria, we will also fail to create conditions in which each person can realise his/her potential."

**- Concerns about administering HPV Vaccine in TT Schools: Posted on Feb 11<sup>th</sup>, 2013:** The commentary was published in Catholic News and focuses on concerns expressed to the relevant Government Authorities about the HPV vaccine and about deficiencies in the process related to the administration of the vaccine in all schools.

On Friday 1 February, Chair joined Msgr Llanos, members of the CEBM, including its Chair and CEO, and representatives from the Ministry of Health involved in the Human Papilloma Virus Vaccine in Primary Schools, at a meeting at Archbishop's House to discuss the concerns of the Catholic Church/CEBM, about the Vaccine. Dr Krishna Kumar Sundaraneedi, Medical Director, Health Programmes and Technical Support Services, led the Ministry's team which included Dr Sherene Kalloo, Obstetrician/Gynaecologist, and Dr Yitades Gebre of Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO).

See the following link to a Paper CCSJ's Chair prepared on the issues involved:  
<http://rcsocialjusticett.org/2.0/>



## Concerns about administering HPV Vaccine in TT Schools

It was eventually agreed that the Church will allow the HPV vaccination programme into its schools if the Ministry of Health fulfills certain conditions: The Ministry of Health must provide full disclosure about the vaccine to enable parents to make an informed decision. Details must include the virus strains that are not covered by the vaccine, the period for which the vaccine is effective, contraindications, and the full range of possible side effects. Further, a programme of systematic monitoring must be introduced to monitor students after they receive the vaccine.

As Catholic News reported in its issue on 10 Feb 2013, “At the same time, the Church is reminding young people of the best protection against HPV infection and other viruses: postpone sexual activity until married.”

On Ash Wednesday, 13 February, at the request of His Grace, Dr Roland Baptiste, CEBM’s Chairman, and CCSJ's Chair appeared on CNC3 to be interviewed by Hema Ramkissoon about the Church’s concerns and the conditions set by the RC Church.

### **ii. Speeches and presentations delivered during 2013:** posted on website:

- Chair was invited by Fr Bob Johnston (Society of the Divine Word – SVD) to run a 2-day Workshop on the Social Doctrine of the Church in the Diocese of Willemstad, St Maarten (Dutch side), St Martin of Tours, RC Parish on 12 and 13 April. The following are some of the themes of the sessions: An introduction to Catholic Social Teaching; Practical strategies for promoting social justice – using the SEE/JUDGE/ACT Process;

Distinguishing between Works of Mercy and Works of Social Action; The family: the basic cell of society; The Year of Faith: Integrating Prayer and Justice to develop a spirituality of Justice; Vocation of the Business Leader: A Reflection. About 50 persons, mainly Catechists, participated in the Workshop which went well. That Diocese met all costs related to Chair's trip there.

- A Catholic response to Domestic Violence (April 2013)
- May 15 Address to the Faithful at Santa Rosa Parish to observe the UN Day of Families
- June: Summary of Paper and Paper by CCSJ's Chair delivered at 5<sup>th</sup> World Congress against the Death Penalty in Madrid. Chair was invited, as Chair of CCSJ and as Chair of the Greater Caribbean for Life (GCL), to present a paper at the 5<sup>th</sup> World Congress against the Death Penalty. It took place in Madrid from 12-15 June. All expenses were paid for by the World Coalition against the Death Penalty. See CCSJ's website for Chair's presentation and for useful information about the Congress. The Congress was organised by the French association Together Against the Death Penalty (ECPM) in partnership with the World Coalition against the Death Penalty and with the support of Spain, Norway, Switzerland and France. More than 1,500 people from over 90 countries attended – including Nobel Laureates, politicians, and representatives from civil society, Bar Associations, and the media. Messages were received from Pope Francis I, Archbishop Desmond Tutu and other prominent international figures. The international focus for October 10 World Day 2013 against the Death Penalty is *The Caribbean*.

- Chair's presentation on Business Ethics – delivered at the Catholic Businessmen's Forum held at Hilton on 30 June and organized by John Paul II Centre on Fatherhood: Companions of the Transfigured Christ.
- Chair's presentation entitled: Working towards a Gender Policy that will build the civilisation of love. Delivered at Jesus Explosion XI on July 21<sup>st</sup>
- Address by Sr Angela Ann Zukowski at CREDI's Graduation on Nov 14<sup>th</sup>: The Catholic Teacher in a Rapidly Developing Digital World.
- Chair's presentation at HIV and AIDS Symposium for faith based organisations – entitled: Beyond Desire: The role of FBOs (Nov 25-26).
- Presentation by Gregory Delzin, Attorney-at-Law at CCSJ's Seminar on Human Rights Day, 10 Dec: Human Rights and the Death Penalty: Stop Crime, Not Lives

**iii CCSJ's Ask Why monthly TV programmes** are available on DVDs on CCSJ's website and are advertised in the Commission's Newsletters as resources to support social justice Ministry in parishes. During 2013, the following topics were addressed on these programmes:

**29 January Theme: The Pope's Peace Message for 2013--*Blessed are the Peacemakers*.** Panellists: Msgr Robert Llanos Moderator: Leela Ramdeen

**26 February Theme: Believing in Charity Calls Forth Charity.** Panellists: Deacon Michael James and Nigel Cassimire . Moderator: Nadine Bushell

**30 April Theme: Prof. Ryan's Report – Youths At Risk:** Panellists: Ms. Patricia Mohammed and Dr. Marjorie Thorpe. Moderators: Leela Ramdeen and Nadine Bushell

**28 May Theme: A Gender and Development Policy for T&T.** Panellists: Fr. Ian Taylor, Nadine Bushell, Rebekah Ali-Gouveia. Moderators: Leela Ramdeen and Tonia Gooding

**25 June Theme: Youth At Risk.** Panellists: Jo Ann Smith, Deborah Ann Boos, Dianne Wells. Moderators: Leela Ramdeen and Nadine Bushell

**23 July Theme: Youths and Social Justice.** Panellists: Stephanie Belle, Rodney Ryan Molligan. Moderators: Leela Ramdeen and Nadine Bushell

**24 September Theme: Gender Policy for TT.** Panellists: Rhonda Maingot, Derek Walcott Moderator: Leela Ramdeen

**22 October Theme: Faith As Small As a Mustard Seed.** Panellists: Gale Oxley, Mikkell Trestrail. Moderator: Nadine Bushell

**26 November Theme: The Charter on the Rights of the Family** (October marked the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the publication of this Charter by the Holy See). Panellists: Nadine Bushell, Richard and Jo Anne Smith. Moderator: Leela Ramdeen

**iv. Media Releases – posted on CCSJ's Website:**

During 2013, CCSJ issued 5 media releases on various topics (see below).The releases can be accessed on CCSJ's website

**Jan 28:** CCSJ calls for self-control in dress and behaviour during Carnival

**Nov12:** CARICOM Leaders must act to find solution to Dominican Republic ruling

**Nov 29:** CCSJ calls on citizens to stand up for the rights of the nation's children

**Dec 5:** CCSJ calls for more concerned action to promote Human Rights

**Dec 16:** CCSJ calls on citizens to be generous this Christmas

**v. Weekly articles in Catholic News during 2013:** CCSJ continues to produce weekly articles in Catholic News – focusing on social justice issues. These can be accessed on CCSJ's website.

**vi. Other useful information on CCSJ's website:**

- Archbishop Harris' weekly Homily
- Information about Respect For Life Week 2013

**vii. Papers posted under: Special Focus on CCSJ's website:**

- Trafficking in Persons
- Health: Diabetes
- Environment: 3 documents produced by CCSJ on this issue
- Capital Punishment
- Restorative Justice and Parole
- Social Justice: Presentation delivered at Laventille Devotions in 2008
- Family Life

**viii. Social Justice Quotations published in Catholic News weekly** – to raise awareness of the social doctrine of the Church. CCSJ wishes to thank Mr

Rene Wihby who remains dedicated to the joyful task of submitting a brief quotation - weekly - on the social doctrine of the Church for publication in Catholic News. The following are the quotations that he submitted during 2012. The aim is to raise readers' awareness of the richness of the Church's social doctrine and to motivate readers to educate themselves on this issue to assist them to SEE, JUDGE, and ACT. Included hereunder are a few of these quotations. The entire list can be accessed on CCSJ's website

**January 20** – “Peace concerns the human person as a whole, and it involves complete commitment. It is peace with God through a life lived according to his will. It is interior peace with oneself, and exterior peace with our neighbours and all creation” (3) Pope Benedict XVI World Day of Peace 2013

**February 10** – “True peacemakers, then, are those who love, defend and promote human life in all its dimensions, personal, communitarian and transcendent. Life in its fullness is the height of peace. Anyone who loves peace cannot tolerate attacks and crimes against life.” (4) *Message for World Day of Peace 2013, Pope Benedict XVI*

**March 31** – Freedom and respect are inseparable; indeed, “in exercising their rights, individuals and social groups are bound by the moral law to have regard for the rights of others, their own duties to others and the common good of all”. (5) *Message for World Day of Peace 2011, Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI*

**April 21** – “No sincere Christian can refuse concern for or involvement in the struggle for justice and dignity.” *Archbishop Samuel Carter SJ Kingston, Jamaica*

**May 26** – “What the fight against poverty really needs are men and women who live in a profoundly fraternal way and are able to accompany individuals, families and communities on journeys of authentic human development.” (13)  
*Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI*

**June 9** – *The earth and its fullness belong to the Lord, the world and all that dwell in it (Ps. 24:1).* We are in the world not as owners but as tenants and stewards. The specifically Christian dimension of stewardship must include this responsibility for the integrity of creation, for our environment. *No. 2 Caring for the Earth – Our Responsibility, Pastoral Letter of Antilles Episcopal Conference, 2005*

**July 28** -“The Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church is presented as an instrument for the moral and pastoral discernment of the complex events that mark our time; as a guide to inspire, at the individual and collective levels, attitudes and choices that will permit all people to look to the future with greater trust and hope.” *No. 10 Compendium of Catholic Social Teaching*

**August 18** – “Men and women who are made ‘new’ by the love of God are able to change the rules and the quality of relationships, transforming even social structures. They are people capable of bringing peace where there is conflict...of seeking justice where there prevails the exploitation of person by person.” *No. 4 Compendium of Catholic Social Teaching*

**September 22** – The right of the Church (to proclaim the Gospel in the context of society) is at the same time a duty, because she cannot forsake this responsibility without denying herself and her fidelity to Christ. (*No.71*)  
*Compendium of Catholic Social Teaching*

**November 24** - The common good therefore involves all members of society, no one is exempt from cooperation, according to each one's possibilities, in attaining it and developing it. *No. 167 Compendium of Catholic Social Teaching*

**c. Some examples of collaboration with others: CCSJ takes the opportunity to work collaboratively with others, both within the Archdiocese, and in the wider community e.g.**

**i. Archdiocesan Departments, Parishes, Schools, Organisations, Government Ministries, NGOs, CBOs, FBOs etc.**

- On 3 Jan Chair met with Rev Desmond Austin, President of the TT Council of Evangelical Churches, and Rev Ruth Greaves who runs Hope Support Group – a support group for women who have lost their loved ones through homicide. They are both eager to partner with CCSJ on justice issues and possible joint ventures were discussed.
- On Wed 9 Jan, at Msgr Llanos' request, Chair organised a meeting with His Grace, Msgr Llanos, Gregory Delzin, Attorney-at-Law, and others to discuss issues relating to the Government's Draft National Gender Policy. In addition to those mentioned above, about 22 persons attended the meeting – including Fr Ian Taylor, Fr George Pritchett, Annette des Iles, Eldon Warner, representatives from Family Life Commission, the Youth Commission and CCSJ's Chair. Inter alia, most Faith Communities object to the definition of 'Gender' as outlined in the Draft Policy. Concerns about the Draft have been made known to the relevant Government Minister.



- On Friday 11 Jan, Chair presented a paper on the issue of *same-sex relationships* at a Youth Forum on Relationships held at St John the Baptist Church, St John's Rd., St Augustine and organised by the Suburban Vicariate. Other individuals made presentations on: relationship with self, God, Mary, parents, and the opposite sex. There was also a presentation on *Understanding, managing and resolving relationship issues*.
- On Sunday 13 Jan, Chair attended Archbishop Harris' Vocations Week Lime – held at Archbishop's House and dedicated to promote vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and religious life.
- On Sat 19 January 2013, CCSJ, in collaboration with Msgr Christian Pereira, Parish Priest at Our Lady of Perpetual Help, San Fernando, and his Team, held a Workshop for members of the Business Community. Fr Clyde Harvey, Fr Matthew D'Hereaux and Msgr Christian were the speakers who addressed issues relating to Cardinal Peter Turkson's (Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace) *Vocation of the Business Leader: A Reflection*.

About 60 persons attended the Workshop and they participated well in the proceedings. This was the second of CCSJ's Workshops on Cardinal Turkson's guidelines on business ethics. The first Workshop was held at Assumption, Maraval in 2012. CCSJ's Chair, Richard, and Jo Ann also participated in the Workshop.

- On Sat 26 January, Chair attended a Workshop organised by: *Women Working for Social Progress*. It was held at Crown Plaza – now Radisson. The aim was to consider issues affecting young men and women in TT. Representatives from Single Fathers Association of TT (SFATT) were also present and made a plea for

women to support the group. SFATT is an advocacy group that aims “to raise national awareness in an attempt to put an end to the injustice meted out to children who have been forcibly estranged from their fathers.” It was founded by businessman, Rhondall Feeles (*see: [www.sfatt.org](http://www.sfatt.org)* ).

The group had written to CCSJ’s Chair asking for support and Chair wrote an article in Catholic News highlighting the work of the organisation and calling for the Faithful to work to create a culture in which families could thrive.

- On Mon 28 January, Chair was a guest on Heritage Radio (101.7) with Hans Hanoomansingh to talk about CCSJ’s Media Release on Modesty in Carnival. Since the time allocated was from 6:15 am to 8:00 am, Chair had an opportunity to talk about a number of social justice issues.
- On 30 January Chair attended a meeting of the Synod Implementation Team (SIT) at which issues relating to developments in the Archdiocese and progress regarding the implementation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Pastoral Priority - *Revitalising Catholic Culture and Identity: My Church, My Parish, My Family*, were discussed. The booklet produced by Sr Juliet Rajah, who took the lead on this Pastoral Priority, is available on CCSJ’s Website.
- Chair was invited by Fr Bob Johnston (Society of the Divine Word – SVD) to run a 2-day Workshop on the Social Doctrine of the Church in the Diocese of Willemstad, St Maarten (Dutch side) on 12 and 13 April. About 50 persons, mainly Catechists, participated in the Workshop which went well. That Diocese met all costs related to Chair's trip there.
- CCSJ held its annual Fundraising Dinner on Saturday 8 June from 7:30 pm at Skippers Restaurant, Bayshore. CCSJ records its thanks to Mrs Edna Sabga and Mr

Tempo for their continued support of this initiative. CCSJ was successful in getting a few excellent hampers for door prizes. The event was well attended and the entertainment was much appreciated. All profits of the event went towards the maintenance of the Anthony Pantin Reintegration Centre which is run by SVP.

- On Wed 24 April Chair joined Msgr Llanos at a Stakeholders' Consultation meeting which was organised by the Ministry of Gender, Youth and Child Development at Capital Plaza (now Radisson). Since members of the IRO had made it clear that they had not all been consulted on the Draft National Policy on Gender and Development, that Ministry invited a representative from each faith community represented on the IRO, as well as a number of Christian denominations that are not members of the IRO, to attend the meeting on 24 April to share concerns and make recommendations in relation to the Draft Policy.
- On Wed 24 April, Fr Clyde Harvey attended CCSJ's Monthly meeting to share information about a Project initiated by him in his parishes of Rosary/St Martin de Porres in Gonzales and Belmont – both parishes are joined. The Project is entitled: Community Intervention for Transformation and Empowerment Youth (CIT+E). The Project is linked to Fr Jason Gordon's (now Bishop Gordon of the Diocese of Bridgetown and Kingstown) Pride in Gonzales/Community Intervention Transforming Youth (CITY) Project.
- To mark International Human Rights Day, the Jamaica Coalition for a Healthy Society in association with the Lawyers' Christian Fellowship hosted a series of events between December 8 and December 10, 2012. CCSJ's Chair was invited to attend. The major event was the International Conference on December 8 at the Jamaica Conference Centre, Kingston. In addition to the Conference there was an event entitled "Celebrating God – the Giver of Rights" which was staged at

Emancipation Park on Human Rights Day, Monday, December 10. CCSJ's Chair produced and circulated a report on the Conference. It can be accessed via the following link on the Commission's website:

[“Human Rights, International Law and the Family”](http://rcsocialjusticett.org/2.0/) :  
<http://rcsocialjusticett.org/2.0/>

At the end of the Conference participants were invited to sign *The Kingston Declaration*, a formal statement outlining the Judeo-Christian ideals for marriage and the natural family, which serves as the basis for a healthy society.

- Chair participated/presented a paper at the 5<sup>th</sup> World Congress against the Death Penalty - held in Madrid from 12 to 15 June 2013. The event was organised by the World Coalition against the Death Penalty (WCADP). This organisation met all costs related to Chair's attendance. The focus of all abolitionists for 2013 was on the Caribbean.
  
- Msgr Llanos was among more than two dozen religious groups (Christian, Hindu and Muslim) that signed a Declaration of Commitment and Call to Action on 10 Dec 2012, at a Symposium entitled: *Building a Network of FBOs for a better response to HIV and AIDS in T&T*. The Declaration ([see: http://www.unaidscaribbean.org/node/306](http://www.unaidscaribbean.org/node/306)) has been approved by Archbishop Joseph Harris. The session was reported in Catholic News issue of 30 Dec 2012 (<http://www.catholicnews-tt.net/joomla/features/4269-church-commits-to-working-on-better-hiv-aids-response-dec-30>) in which Msgr Llanos stated that the Chair of CCSJ will represent the Archdiocese on the Committee that was formed to take forward commitments made in the Declaration. The Committee will develop and propose a plan of action, which FBOs would then examine. Once agreement

was reached, the Committee would assist FBOs with implementation. Msgr Llanos noted that this could well be the first time that FBOs have come together to such a degree to develop a plan of action. He said: "This is a good sign for the nation and for a way forward." Chair attended the first meeting of this Committee on Wed 30 Jan at Curepe Anglican Church.

- On Wed 1 May Chair attended a meeting of the Synod Implementation Team (SIT). Chair shared with SIT members suggestions listed by CCSJ members at CCSJ's Annual Retreat held on Mon 6 May for the implementation of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Pastoral Priority (PP) – Regenerating the Moral and Spiritual Values of our Society which comes on stream on 23 Nov – the Feast of Christ the King. It was agreed that CCSJ would prepare some notes for the SIT meeting on Wed 29 May on this issue.
- On Mon 6 May, CCSJ held its annual retreat which included Members and Staff. The theme was: We are an Ester People. CCSJ's work is underpinned by prayer. Members seek to develop their own spirituality/deepen their relationship with God. The annual retreat provides an opportunity for Members and Staff to come together in prayer and contemplation and to ask for God's grace to discern the signs of the times, to listen to Him and to act to promote His Kingdom of Justice, Truth, Love, and Freedom—St Pope John XXIII's and Pillars of Peace. CCSJ thanks Vanessa Sabga and her family for their continued support.
- On Tues 7 May Chair met with Kyle Dardaine and Jason from John Paul II Centre on Fatherhood to assist them in planning the Centre's 2<sup>nd</sup> Catholic Businessmen's Forum which was scheduled to take place at Trinidad Hilton & Conference Centre on June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2012 from 8.30 am to 11.30 am. Chair agreed to be one of the speakers at the event. CCSJ also supported this initiative in 2012.

- On Wed 8 May Chair attended the 2<sup>nd</sup> of 2 meetings held at Capital Plaza with the Minister of Gender, Youth and Child Development and her team, together with representatives/leaders of various religious communities in TT to discuss the Draft Gender and Development Policy. Msgr Llanos and CCSJ's Chair had represented the Archdiocese at the first meeting which was held on Wed 24 April. Chair reported on the first meeting in an article in Catholic News. The article focused on the main issues raised at these meetings. (See CCSJ's website for Media Release dated 20 June 2013 - issued by Msgr Llanos and CCSJ on the Church's position on issues raised in the Draft Policy). The Minister undertook to take concerns raised at the meeting to the Cabinet Committee that is dealing with the Draft. Subsequent to this meeting, it was noted that the *Draft Policy on Sexual and Reproductive Health* from the Ministry of Health included the “socially constructed” definition of “Gender” which had been rejected by those attending the 2 Meetings referred to above. Chair wrote to Hon Minister Fuad Khan, Minister of Health, who replied via e-mail undertaking to address this issue.
  
- On Fri 10 May Chair attended a National Consultation organised by the Ministry of Planning and Sustainable Development on the theme: “*The Future We Want.*” After the opening speeches, participants were invited to attend 1 of 10 Thematic Workshops. Chair attended the Workshop on Poverty Reduction and Gender.
  
- On Tues 14 May Chair attended a session at Cipriani College (6-8pm) to listen to presentations by SASH Consulting about a programme that this private Company is involved in with the Ministry of Education on “*Character Education and Citizenry Development – Planning for Character Education in school, home and community.*” Chair agreed with the sentiments expressed in the Express Editorial on 17 June 2012 entitled: “Red flag in education.” The Editorial raises serious

issues about this programme and the way in which public procurement is done in TT.

- On Wed 15 May (6:00 pm to 8:00 pm), Chair addressed about 175 persons at Santa Rosa Parish Church on *UN International Day of Families*. The Theme was: “Justice for the Family, the basic cell of Society.” Msgr Allan Ventour opened the session with prayer and welcomed parishioners to the event. Rebekah Ali-Gouveia was a Panellist and presented information about the natural family. CCSJ's poster: “Keep God in the Constitution” was among the resources distributed to participants.
- Chair used the Commission's poster: “Keep God in the Constitution” at a number of events to counter the call by Humanists and a few others at a meeting on Constitutional Reform, to take “God” out of TT's Constitution. The posters, which were printed and widely circulated to parishes, schools etc. includes the entire Preamble in TT's Constitution. A number of priests read the entire content of the Poster at Masses when they received it.
- On Friday 17 May, Msgr Robert Llanos granted permission for CCSJ to appoint 4 Parish Link Coordinators (PLC) – an increase of 2 persons to CCSJ's established complement of 2 persons.
- On Mon 3 June, 3 Parish Link Coordinators commenced working with CCSJ:
  - Mrs Deborah Boos (Arima) – responsible for the Eastern Vicariate;
  - Mrs Dianne Wells (Maloney) – responsible for Suburban and Central Vicariates;  
and
  - Jo Ann Smith (South Oropouche) – responsible for the Southern Vicariate.

- Mikkel Trestrail was appointed at a later date and commenced working in August 2013. He has responsibility for the Northern Vicariate and Tobago.
- From Tues 21 – Sat 25 May Chair attended a meeting of AEC Episcopal Members of the AEC Justice and Peace Commission and Diocesan representatives of Justice and Peace groups from all across the AEC region – from Dioceses of the English, French and Dutch speaking territories of the Caribbean. The meeting, which was held in Guyana, was hosted by Bishop Francis Alleyne. 3 other Bishops were present: Bishop Emmanuel Lafont of Cayenne, French Guyana, Chairman AEC Justice and Peace Commission; Bishop Neil Tiedemann, of Mandeville, Jamaica; and Bishop Wilhelm de Bekker of Paramaribo, Suriname.

Each Diocese reported on its work on J&P. A report on CCSJ's work was presented at the meeting and is available on CCSJ's website. Each Diocese was asked to identify 3 priorities, from which 1 common priority across the region was identified. The 3 priorities that Chair identified were:

- a. Eradicating poverty and social exclusion.
- b. Formation of the faithful in the social teaching of the Church.
- c. Regenerating the moral and spiritual values of our society (the Archdiocese's 3<sup>rd</sup> Pastoral Priority).

The common priority across the region was 'b' above. It is generally believed that more must be done to educate the faithful about the social teaching of the Church. Other priority areas identified by other Dioceses include: Domestic Violence; Migration; Human Trafficking; Peace-building; Unemployment; Use of properties



owned by the Church, the Government, and private owners; Human dignity and advocacy – development; work with the poor and marginalized.

One day was spent focusing on the issue of Domestic Violence. There was a public forum on this theme on that evening. Chair was one of 5 members on the panel to discuss this issue. Chair worked with Bishop Neil and Victor Scheffers to produce a statement on Domestic Violence. See CCSJ's website for a copy.

On the final day the group focused on the VIRTUS programme: *Protecting God's Children from child sexual abuse*. Pat Neil, the VIRTUS trainer from the USA, joined participants. Issues and concerns regarding the operation of the programme in the AEC region were highlighted.

- Since the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of *Pacem in Terris* (Peace on Earth) was observed on 11 April, 2013, CCSJ organised a seminar at Our Lady of Mt Carmel Carapichaima, on Sat 1 June from 9:00 am to 12:00 noon to observe this Anniversary. Fr Matthew D'Hereaux was the Keynote speaker and shared his thoughts on this encyclical by Blessed John XXIII. Those who attended participated fully.
- On Tuesday 4 June Chair met with representatives of some of the religious groups that had attended the consultation meetings on the draft Gender Policy - organised by Hon Marlene Coudray, Minister of Gender, Youth and Child Development. The Hon. Minister had asked a number of those who had attended – including CCSJ's Chair, to review the minutes of the meetings and to submit any amendments the group may have. The group made a number of amendments and submitted these to the Hon. Minister. CCSJ noted that the AEC Bishops at their meeting in Guadeloupe - April 13-20, discussed the issue of Gender and Homosexuality and Emeritus Archbishop Reece was appointed to coordinate preparation of a draft

pastoral statement on the issue of gender, which will be finalized by the bishops at an IT platform meeting prior to the Permanent Board meeting in January in 2014.

- On Wed 5 June Chair attended a meeting of the Synod Implementation Team (SIT). Members viewed a film entitled: “Madonna Murti”. The plan was to use the film, partly as a fundraiser - to be shown at various venues across the Archdiocese. Part of the proceeds would go towards the restoration of our Cathedral and the rest to the Producers.
- On 18 June Chair met with Archbishop Rivas to discuss issues regarding the Church’s teaching on Trade Unions/the labour movement - in advance of his presentation to Trade Unions in St Lucia on the social doctrine of the Church in relation to labour issues.
- On Thurs 20 June Chair was a guest on CNMG (Ch 6) with Paul Richards to discuss issues relating to the 5<sup>th</sup> World Congress against the Death Penalty. Such media exposure raises the public's awareness of the Church's position on issues such as this.
- On Wed 26 June Synod Implementation Team (SIT) met. Msgr Allan Ventour was identified as the lead person for the implementation of the 3rd Pastoral Priority.
- On 29 June Chair attended an Awards ceremony at Centre Pointe Mall auditorium, Chaguanas. Awards were given to 62 persons from various faith communities in commemoration of T&T’s 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Independence - to recognise some religious leaders for their role in nation building.

Six Catholics received awards: Archbishop Joseph Harris, Vicar for Clergy Fr Clyde Harvey, Msgr Christian Pereira, Fr Garfield Rochard, and Canon Max Murphy (deceased), and a gentleman from Fr Martin Sirju's parish. Chair wrote to the Chair of the IRO and to Fr Martin Sirju, the Catholic representative on the IRO, expressing concern that there were only 7 women among the 62 persons of faith who received awards - and none of these were Catholic.

- On Sunday 30 June Chair presented a paper at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Catholic Businessmen's Forum – organised by the John Paul II Centre on Fatherhood (CTC) - from 8.30 am to noon at Hilton Trinidad. The sessions are intended, inter alia, to support faith formation of business/professional Catholic men and to assist them in integrating their faith in their daily lives. The work of Kyle Dardaine, Mikkell Trestrail and the team at CTC is important at a time when TT is striving to strengthen family life and to empower men/fathers. CTC's Facebook page states as follows:

“The Companions of the Transfigured Christ (CTC) is a registered NGO, recognised as a private association of Christ's faithful in the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Port of Spain. The 18 Covenant Members and 2 Transfiguration Brothers that make up CTC live either in Trinidad or in Curacao at present. CTC was founded on the 6th of August in the jubilee year of 2000 by Kyle Dardaine, Shad Seaton, and Mikkell Trestrail.

“The community is involved in ministry to primarily men and their families, psychospiritual work with individuals and groups, retreat work, preaching and teaching, and youth and young adult ministry. It also operates the John Paul II Centre on Fatherhood and the John Paul II Therapeutic Clinic.”

- On Friday 5 July Chair attended an all day training session entitled: Improving Corporate Governance – organised by the Energy Chamber and held at Cara Suites, Pointe a Pierre.

- On Monday 8 July Chair attended a meeting of the Faith Based Organization for National Action (FBONA) (now called The Faith-Based Network of Trinidad and Tobago) at the organisation's base at Evangel Temple, Barataria. Msgr Llanos had asked CCSJ's Chair to represent the Catholic Church on this Committee. The Committee has expanded its focus from HIV/AIDS to health and family life issues nationally. CCSJ's Chair has written the organisation's Bylaws to facilitate registration as an NGO. Some members of the IRO are Board Members also.

- On Monday 8 July Chair met with 3 of CCSJ's Parish Link Coordinators (PLC) – Dianne, Jo Ann and Deborah, for a training session on social justice issues – from a Catholic perspective - as part of their induction. Mikkell Trestrail was interviewed and appointed to the 4<sup>th</sup> PLC post on 9 July. PLCs have also been recruited to assist in mobilizing support for the Cathedral Appeal Fundraising efforts.

- On 11 July Chair attended the 3<sup>rd</sup> Distinguished Jurist Lecture series - organised by TT Judicial Education Institute (TTJEI) at the Hall of Justice on the theme: *The continuing relevance of the jury system in the English Speaking Caribbean*. The TTJEI launched its Distinguished Jurist Lecture Series in November, 2011. This year's Featured Speaker was the Honourable Mr. Justice Marston Gibson, Chief Justice of Barbados. In his address at the Opening of the 2013-2014 Law Term recently, the Chief Justice, Ivor Archie, advocated the abolition of jury trials for all criminal offences as opposed to just for serious crimes, and further stated that jury trials were too expensive and inefficient. He said the removal of jury trials would improve the criminal justice system.

- On 1 October, in advance of World Day against the Death Penalty which falls on 10 October annually, CCSJ partnered with: Alpha Law Chambers, TT; The Puerto Rican Coalition against the Death Penalty; The Community of Sant'Egidio, and The World Coalition Against the Death Penalty to organise an International Anti-Death Penalty Conference at the Law Faculty Auditorium, UWI, St Augustine Campus from 9 am to 6 pm. Attendance was free. TCN taped and streamed the proceedings live. The sponsors of the Conference are the UK and EU. About 2 persons from each Caribbean island were invited to attend the Conference which was entitled: The Death Penalty in the context of public security: Neither right, nor effective. Speakers and Chairs of the various sessions focused on the theme: *Stop Crime, Not Lives!* They were:

\*Sir Clare Roberts, former Attorney General and Minister of Justice and Legal Affairs for Antigua and Barbuda

\*Pamela Elder, SC, President of the Criminal Bar, Trinidad and Tobago

\*Sophia Chote, SC, Vice-President of the Criminal Bar (TT)

\*Richard Blewitt, UN Resident Coordinator/ UNDP Resident Representative (TT)

\*Dr. Lloyd Barnett, Jamaica, Greater Caribbean for Life (GCFL)

\*Carmelo Campos Cruz, Puerto Rico, GCFL & Puerto Rican Coalition against the Death Penalty

\*Ms. Fenella Wenham, Dominica

\*Horace Levy, researcher on urban violence and author of *Killing Streets* and *Community Revival*, Jamaica

\*Elsworth Johnson, President of the Bar Association, Bahamas

\*Rev. Peter Espeut, Jamaica, journalist

\*Carmen Aida Ibarra, Guatemala, Grupo pro Justicia

\*Gregory Delzin, TT, Attorney-at-Law

\*Mario Polanco, Guatemala, Grupo de Apoyo Mutuo & GCFL

\*Mariana Nogales, Puerto Rico, GCFL

\*Leela Ramdeen, Catholic Commission for Social Justice TT & GCFL

**Testimonies were given by:**

\*Andrew Douglas, TT, former death row inmate

\*Selwyn Strachan, Grenada, former death row inmate

\*Rev. Gwenolyn Ruth Greaves and representatives from Hope Support Group (TT)

- a healing/ transforming ministry for victims of crime.

On 2 October, a group of abolitionists from our Caribbean region, as well as key individuals from The World Coalition Against the Death Penalty, the Puerto Rican Coalition against the Death Penalty, Amnesty International, and others, met at Normandie Hotel. At that meeting the Greater Caribbean for Life (GCL) was officially constituted. CCSJ's Chair was elected Chair of the organization. GCL's aim is to work towards the abolition of the death penalty in the Caribbean region and in the world see: [www.facebook.com/GCFLife](http://www.facebook.com/GCFLife)

- On Friday 5 October Chair joined Mikkel and others at St Ann's RC Church for the all-night Vigil organized as part of Respect for Life Week (RFLW) which ran from 6 – 12 October.

- On Thurs 10 October, International Day Against the Death Penalty, the European Union showed a film at NAPA, entitled: "Into the Abyss" (2011) subtitled *A Tale*

*of Death, a Tale of Life*. It is “a documentary film written and directed by Werner Herzog about two men convicted of a triple homicide which occurred in Conroe, Texas. Michael Perry received a death sentence for the crime, and Jason Burkett received a life sentence. The film focuses on the two convicts and various people affected by the crime.” CCSJ's Chair attended the viewing - CCSJ is concerned to promote the sanctity of all life - victims and offenders and their respective families also.

- On Monday 25 and Tues 26 November Chair participated in a 2-day Symposium organized by The HIV Awareness Unit of The Ministry of The People and Social Development. The Unit partnered with Faith Based Organizations (FBO's) in planning this two day symposium. Chair represents the Catholic Church on the Faith Based Network of TT. The theme of the event was: “*Beyond Desire: The Role of FBO's*”. The main topic addressed was that of “Idealism versus Realism”, as it relates to HIV and AIDS and its impact on our diverse religious communities. The conference was held at the Signature Hall, # 63 Longdenville Road, Chaguanas. Jo Ann and Dianne, 2 of CCSJ's PLCs and Richard, a VLC, also attended the Symposium. CCSJ's Chair's topic was: *How can faith communities be a voice and a presence in responding to issues such as HIV and AIDS?* She focused on Human dignity and Justice issues – stigma and discrimination, poverty, gender inequality, domestic violence, child abuse, stigma and discrimination. See CCSJ's website for her presentation.

**REPORT ON CHAIR'S ATTENDANCE AT CONFERENCE ORGANISED BY THE PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR THE FAMILY, HEADED BY MSGR VINCENZO PAGLIA**

- Archbishop Harris agreed that CCSJ's Chair would represent the Archdiocese at two major events at the Vatican in October 2013. Since the Chair had planned to be in London around the time of these events, this facilitated her trip to Rome. The first event was a Conference held during the October 23-25 21<sup>st</sup> Plenary Assembly of the Pontifical Council for the Family (PCF) on the theme *New Anthropological horizons and the rights of the family*.

At the centre of the discussion was the Charter of the Rights of the Family which was presented by the Holy See on October 22, 1983 “to all persons, institutions and authorities concerned with the mission of the family in today’s world”.

H E Msgr Vincenzo Paglia, President of the PCF, introduced the working session and reminded those gathered that it is important to rediscover the rights that families must have. It is significant, he said, that the meeting was being held at a time when Pope Francis had called a 3<sup>rd</sup> extraordinary general assembly of the Bishops’ Synod to be held in the Vatican from October 5-19, 2014 on the theme: “The Pastoral challenges of the family in the context of Evangelisation.”

On October 25, CCSJ's Chair was among members of the PCF and Consulters of the PCF who had a Private Audience with the Holy Father, Pope Francis. Although only a few persons had been identified to greet him personally, he shook hands with each person present.

You can read Pope Francis’ excellent address via the following Zenit link: <http://www.zenit.org/en/articles/pope-s-address-to-21st-plenary-assembly-of-the-pontifical-council-for-the-family> . He focused on three key points, referring to the family as “the engine of the world and of history”. “The family”, he said, “is a community of life which has its autonomous foundation. As Blessed John Paul II



wrote in the Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris Consortio*, the family is not the sum of the persons that constitute it, but a ‘community of persons’ (cf. Nos. 17-18). It is the place where one learns to love, the natural centre of human life. It is made up of faces, of persons who love, talk, sacrifice for others and defend life, especially the most fragile, the weakest.”

Secondly, he reminded those gathered that “the family is founded on matrimony”, the “first sacrament of the human...Spousal and family love also reveals clearly the person’s vocation to love in a unique way and forever, and that the trials, the sacrifices, the crises of the couple as those of the family itself represent passages to grow in the good, in truth and in beauty...In matrimony one gives oneself completely without calculations or reservations, sharing everything, gifts and renunciations, trusting in the Providence of God.”

Finally, he referred to “two phases of family life: childhood and old age. Children and the elderly represent the two poles of life and also the most vulnerable, often the most forgotten. A society that abandons children and marginalises the elderly cuts off its roots and darkens its future. Every time that a child is abandoned and an elderly person is marginalised, not only is an act of injustice committed but the failure of that society is confirmed. To take care of little ones and the elderly is a choice of civilisation ... The ‘good news’ of the family is a very important part of evangelisation, which Christians can communicate to all, with the witness of life...The truly Christian families are recognised by their fidelity, patience, openness to life, respect of the elderly ... The secret of all this is Jesus’ presence in the family.”

On Saturday, October 26, the Holy Father presided over an event at St Peter’s Square where over 150,000 families from around the world met in a “Pilgrimage of

families to the tomb of St Peter for the Year of Faith”. The theme was *Experience the joy of Faith*. CCSJ's Chair joined those gathered to listen to reflections, music and testimonies. It was truly a family affair.

On Sunday, October 27, Chair's five-day stay in Rome ended with the Solemn celebration of the Mass at St Peter’s Square, presided over by Pope Francis. She was fortunate to be given a pass, along with members of PCF and the Consulters, to sit to the right of the altar. Sitting in the third row, she felt truly blessed.

## **ii CCSJ’s links with the Media**

- On Wed 27 November Chair met with Fr Lumsden and some members of Chaguanas parish to produce a video as part of our Sacred Spaced Project. Hans Hanoomansingh, Radio 107.1, has asked CCSJ’s Chair to produce audio tapes and/or video tapes to air/show on the station’s website in the lead up to Christmas. Gerry Layne taped the interviews and clips of the Church. Chair drew up a list of about 8 parishes in various Vicariates and gave the details to Mr Hanoomansingh who contacted the respective parish priests and interviewed them live on radio – focusing on the history of the Churches in their parish and so on. By partnering with this Radio Host, CCSJ was able to spread the Good News – share information about our Faith.

**iii. Personal contact** with individuals/groups– by telephone, electronic media or in person is an important aspect of CCSJ’s work. CCSJ is available to meet with/speak to people to give advice and/or support, to act as advocates, or to empower individuals/groups to take action where necessary. For example, during the year a number of persons came to Archbishop’s House seeking financial support, advice, housing, and counselling Where CCSJ is not in a position to assist,

Clive Belgrave, CCSJ's Vice-Chair, reaches out to his contacts in SVP etc. and no one is turned away.

## **5. Trinidad and Tobago Reintegration Foundation/Anthony Pantin Reintegration Centre (TTRF/APRC):**

CCSJ continues to work with the Society of St Vincent de Paul (SVP), particularly in terms of fund-raising to support the running of the APRC which is located at San Raphael and which aims to rehabilitate former prisoners. Over the past couple of years the proceeds from CCSJ's Annual Fundraising Dinner have been allocated to TTRF to assist in reducing the debt owed to the Contractor who had worked to complete the facility and which is still owed money since the National Commission for Self Help (NCSH) withheld monies that were 'promised' to TTRF/APRC. CCSJ's Chair and a member of TTRF met with the Government Minister of Local Government with responsibility for the NCSH, and the Director of the NCSH to seek to find a way forward. There is clearly a mismatch in perception about the course of action relating to the release of funds from the Ministry to TTRF/the Contractor. The Ministry is of the opinion that the procedures outlined in the Contract were breached. TTRF sought to prove that it was the Officer responsible at the Ministry who strayed from the procedures outlined in the Contract. The Minister undertook to approach a Minister with another portfolio, to see if he can assist. However, the year ended without any funds being made available to pay the Contractor.

TT is in desperate need of facilities such as the APRC if we are to promote restorative justice, heal society, and return former inmates to society to live as productive citizens. In December 2013, the Inspector of Prisons, Daniel Khan,

Attorney-at-Law submitted his first annual report on the prison system in TT. The 500-page report outlines a number of helpful recommendations. In it, he also focuses on the need for rehabilitation of inmates - within and outside of prisons. He states that within 3-5 years of release from prison, 74% of those released re-offend. His report evidences the fact that what is being done in TT is not people-centred enough. Hence the need for facilities such as the APRC.

The Facility is built on lands land owned by CCSJ. A Lease between CCSJ and SVP has been drafted to Lease the land at a peppercorn rent to SVP. An Attorney is dealing with the matter to finalise the Lease.

This project was conceived by CCSJ as a response to crime. Former Archbishop Edward Gilbert had turned the sod at San Raphael on 21 February 2006. CCSJ's Chair had stated at the sod-turning ceremony: "The safety and security of our communities demand that we seek to rehabilitate offenders and reintegrate them into society so they can live productive lives".

Fr Matthew d'Hereaux, the then-Chair of CCSJ's Standing Committee on Restorative Justice and Post-Prison Support, had also addressed the audience of approximately 100 people. As Catholic News reported on 26 February 2006, Fr

Matthew said: "Great is a Church, great is a nation who will painstakingly reach out to the marginalised, despised and rejected. Impoverished is the Church, impoverished is the nation who through the burden of blindness has rejected its very own. Great is the partnership between the Church and the State that pursues a justice that seeks to restore communities and encourage and facilitate reparation and restoration, the damage caused by crime."

Fr d'Hereaux issued several warnings, saying if society failed to welcome ex-offenders back into the fold, organised crime would. If the State did not put its resources behind reintegration, the drug lords would. He noted that prisoners themselves were clamouring for social, financial and psychological support upon their release from prison.” Anthony Roberts, the then-Minister of Social Development, had delivered the feature address.

As Catholic News reported: “He described the APRC project as remarkable, he said it offered San Rafael and the rest of the community an opportunity to influence a group of citizens to turn from a life of crime to contributing to the development of society... “Roberts said research has shown that ex-offenders in Trinidad and Tobago faced several challenges that stemmed from society's non-acceptance. A large section of society ‘Believes that when a person commits a wrong, they must be locked up permanently’, he lamented. “He said society needed to recognise that prior to committing crimes, the offenders lived within the community and, as such, society must take some responsibility for their behaviour. He added that society should consider the mitigating circumstances that might have led someone to a life of crime. It might be a result of neglect, abandonment or lack of leadership in the home, he noted.

“While keeping in step with criminal elements meant adopting sophisticated anti-crime measures, the minister raised the need for social interventions in fighting crime. Deviance in the society often stemmed from a breakdown in the moral fibre of the family, he said, and called for the rebuilding of the family unit. He added that the Church also played a critical role in developing society and should not be passive about it. He said to the families of inmates must recognise their role in assisting them to take their place when they returned to society and not make it

difficult for them since this could influence a return to criminal activity. Roberts said a national parenting programme was under development...”

(<http://www.catholicnews-tt.net/v2005/archives/0206/sun26/front.htm> )

Archbishop Joseph Harris presided at the inauguration of the facility and visited the facility at the end of 2011. The Commission maintains an interest in the APRC and works to ensure its success. Clive Belgrave, SVP lead officer on the project, is also CCSJ’s Vice-Chair. The 2 sections of the facility on the site can accommodate 20 persons (10 in each section). Rules have been drawn up – in consultation with staff and residents.

Recruitment is made from the Walk Tall 20 week Pre-Release Programme in prison - for those who will leave prison within 6 months to 1 year of incarceration. Those without a place to go to, are invited to enter the facility which is open to all - not only to Catholics.

During 2013 all the residents at the APRC were employed through the efforts of SVP. In light of this, training programmes are organised on evenings and on weekends. Two of the residents started a Wood-work Programme during 2013. TTRF seeks to use the skills that residents bring with them and tailor programmes according to these skills. TTRF was able to assist a resident in being re-instated in his job at a Government Ministry after his release from prison.

Since it was envisaged that residents would embark on an Agricultural Project and all the residents were working outside of the facility, the SVP Team are looking elsewhere for persons to support the Agricultural Project in order to facilitate the sustainability of the facility.

There are also plans in train to promote animal husbandry on the land, particularly regarding the rearing of pigs. It is to be noted that many of the persons who seek places at APRC had to be referred to the Drug Rehabilitation Centre at Piparo since APRC is not equipped to meet their needs. This was also the case in 2012. The fact that persons are leaving prison as drug addicts means that drugs are available to inmates in TT prison system. This is an issue that has been raised in the media and it is hoped that the Commissioner of Prisons will take appropriate action to deal with it.

In 2013 many SVP Centres came on board to give assistance to the Facility e.g. SVP members at San Raphael often take toiletries for residents at the Facility.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

In Conclusion, CCSJ urges all those who read this Report to commit to embrace and share what some believe to be the Church's "best kept secret" - Catholic Social Teaching.

As the US Bishops stated in their 1998 document - *Sharing Catholic Social Teaching: Challenges and Directions*: "The most urgent ecclesial task of our times is the proclamation of the good news of Jesus Christ. A vital element of this new evangelization is sharing our social tradition with all Catholics so clearly that they may be engaged and challenged, encouraged and empowered to live their faith every day."

Being a Christian involves more than prayer. We are called to walk with the "two feet of Christian service." Works of mercy/charity and works of social action - the

promotion of justice, are integral elements of the Christian way of life. As the late Cardinal Basil Hume (UK) said:

“...the deepening of the spiritual life must go hand in hand with practical concern for our neighbour, and thus with social action.”

Our challenge is to raise awareness of the meaning of true Discipleship in today's world. CCSJ members strive to share the Church's social mission and message with credibility and integrity. We continue to pray for courage and resilience to do His will; we continue to read the signs of the times and SEE-JUDGE-ACT. To be Christ-like we need to act as He did. His mandate is clearly outlined in Luke 4:18:

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because He has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free.”

The enormity of the sacrifice that Jesus made for us should send us from the images of Christ crucified on Calvary to the images of Christ crucified on the highways and byways of our country and in our world. It is because of the cross that we must continue to work tirelessly for social justice.

We must not be overwhelmed by all that is wrong with our country and our world. If we feel overwhelmed, we may be paralysed and do nothing. Let us instead do what Saint Pope John Paul II asked and be “communicators of hope.”

I agree with Thomas Massaro who said in his book: *Living Justice: Catholic Social Teaching in Action*, "Catholic Social Teaching can serve as a unifying force, a banner under which believers may rally..."



As Christians we must show that we are true witnesses to Christ by the way we live and by the example that we give. Let us do as Gandhi said and “be the change you wish to see in the world.”

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 (this means being vigilant and speaking out against attempts to liberalize laws that will allow abortions, homosexuality, and striving to abolish the death penalty);
- 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.

We end with a quotation from the document, *Justice in the World*, issued by those who participated in the Synod of Catholic Bishops in 1971:

"Action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world fully appear to us as a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the Gospel, or, in other words, of the Church's mission for the redemption of the human race and its liberation from every oppressive situation... unless the Christian message of love and justice shows its effectiveness through action in the cause of justice in the world, it will only with difficulty gain credibility" [#6 & #35].

## **7. APPENDICES**

## APPENDIX I

Extract from US Bishops' website: *Communities of Salt and Light Reflections on the Social Mission of the Church*

<http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catholic-social-teaching/communities-of-salt-and-light-reflections-on-the-social-mission-of-the-parish.cfm>

### **“Leadership: Pastors, Councils, Committees, and Educators**

While pursuing social justice is a task for every believer, strengthening parish social ministry depends on the skill and commitment of particular parish leaders. Pastors and parish priests have special responsibilities to support integral social ministry. By their preaching, participation, and priorities, they indicate what is important and what is not. They can make it clear that social justice is a mission of the whole parish, not a preoccupation of a few. They are called to teach the authentic social doctrine of the universal Church.

Other parish staff members and leaders play crucial roles in shaping the quality of parish social ministry. Parish councils in their important planning and advisory functions can help place social ministry in the center parish life. Councils can be a means of collaboration and integration, bringing together liturgy, formation, outreach, and action into a sense of common mission. Councils can play a valuable role in assessing current efforts, setting priorities for the future, and building bridges between parish ministries.

Many parishes have special committees focused on social concerns. These structures can play crucial roles in helping the parish community act on the social

justice dimensions of its overall mission. Some parishes have staff members who coordinate social ministry efforts. This is a promising development. These committees and coordinators best serve parishes by facilitating and enabling the participation of the parish community, rather than simply doing the work on behalf of the parish.

Educators in parish schools, religious education, and formation efforts have special responsibility to share our tradition of social justice as an integral part of our faith. They shape the leaders of the future and by, their teaching and example share the social dimensions of our Catholic faith.

Creative and competent leaders-clerical and lay, professional and volunteer-are indispensable for effective parish social ministry. They deserve more assistance, encouragement, financial support, and tools to help them fulfill these demanding roles. Leadership development efforts and ongoing training help parishes strengthen their social ministry capacity.

### **Links to Diocesan Structures**

No parish functions totally by itself. Parish leaders often look to other parishes and diocesan social justice structures for help in fulfilling these responsibilities. Almost all dioceses have social justice structures that offer resources and training for parishes. These structures are diverse including justice and peace commissions, social action offices, CHD funding and education efforts, rural life offices, and parish social ministry programs of Catholic Charities. Other diocesan groups also offer opportunities for service and action for parishes, for example, Councils of Catholic Women, St. Vincent De Paul Society, Ladies of Charity, ecumenical

advocacy and outreach efforts. Many dioceses offer specific "handles" for parish action-legislative networks, work on specific issues or needs, convening parish leaders, providing educational programs coordinating outreach, and so forth. For the most part, parishes cannot go it alone in this area. It is just as clear that diocesan social action can only be effective if it builds parish capacity. Good ties between diocesan and parish efforts are indispensable.

### **Practicing What We Preach**

We also need to try to practice in our own parishes what we preach to others about justice and participation. Too often we are better at talking about justice than demonstrating it, more committed to these values in the abstract than in our everyday ministry. We acknowledge this not to minimize our common efforts, but to acknowledge how far we have yet to go before we fully close the gap between our principles and our performance. Sensitive, competent, and compassionate pastoral care is an expression of justice. Parish plans and priorities-as well as the use of parish facilities-that reflect the social mission of the Church are expressions of justice. Investing parish resources in social justice and empowering the poor are also expressions of justice. Just personnel policies, fair wages, and equal opportunity efforts are expressions of justice. Respecting and responding to the cultural and ethnic diversity of the communities we serve is an expression of justice. Recognizing the contributions and welcoming the participation of all members of the parish whatever their race, gender, ethnic background, nationality, or disability-these are integral elements of parishes seeking justice.

### **Some Difficulties and Dangers**

In reflecting on the social mission of the parish, the opportunities seem clear. So do some of the difficulties. One danger is the tendency to isolate social ministry, to confine it to the margins of parish life. Another is for social action leaders to isolate themselves, treating the parish as a target rather than a community to be served and empowered.

Another danger is potential partisanship, the temptation to try to use the parish for inappropriate political objectives. We need to make sure our faith shapes our political action, not the other way around. We cannot forget that we pursue the kingdom of God, not some earthly vision or ideological cause.

A significant challenge is to avoid divisiveness; to emphasize the common ground among social service and social action, education and advocacy, pro-life and social justice, economic development and environmental commitment.

We need to work together to reflect a comprehensive concern for the human person in our parish.

Another danger is to try to do too much on too many issues, without clear priorities and an effective plan of action. Not everyone can do everything, but the parish should be a sign of unity in pursuing a consistent concern for human life and human dignity.

The final and most serious danger is for parish leaders to act as if the social ministry of the Church was the responsibility of someone else. Every believer is called to serve those in need, to work for justice, and to pursue peace. Every parish

has the mission to help its members act on their faith in the world.

### A Final Word of Appreciation, Support, and Challenge

We close these brief reflections with a word of support and encouragement for pastors and parish leaders. The social ministry of the Church is not just another burden, another set of expectations to feel bad about, though in these demanding days it may sometimes seem that way.

The social ministry is already a part of your ministry and leadership. We hope these reflections help you and those you work with to explore how best to carry out this part of your parish's mission. What is strong already? What can be further developed? What needs greater attention? How, given limited time and resources and other obligations, can our parish better share and act on the social justice demands of the gospel?

The Catholic community has been making steady progress in this area. We seek to build on and share these achievements. We know from experience that parishes that strengthen their social ministry enrich every aspect of their parish, bringing increased life and vitality, greater richness, and community to their entire family of faith.

We offer our gratitude and admiration to those who are leading and helping our parishes act on their social mission. We pledge our support to those who pursue this important challenge with new commitment and energy.

In the gospel, we read how John the Baptist's followers came to Jesus and asked,

"Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?" Jesus responded in this way: "Go and tell John what you hear and see: The blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the good news proclaimed to them" (Mt 11:3-5).

These are still the signs of Christ among us-parishes across our country who in their own ways are caring for the sick, opening eyes and ears, helping life overcome death, and preaching the good news to the poor.

Today, more than ever, our parishes are called to be communities of "salt" and "light"; to help believers live their faith in their families, communities, work, and world. We need parishes that will not "lose their flavour" nor put their "light under a basket." We seek to build evangelizing communities of faith, justice, and solidarity, where all believers are challenged to bring God's love, justice, and peace to a world in desperate need of the seasoning of the gospel and the light of Catholic teaching.

## **Notes**

1. U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1990.
2. Allan Guttmacher Institute, 1991.
3. UNICEF, State of the World's Children, 1992.
4. For a more extensive treatment of Catholic social teaching, see *A Century of Social Teaching: A Common Heritage, A Continuing Challenge*. A Pastoral Message of the Catholic Bishops of the United States on the 100th Anniversary of "Rerum Novarum" (Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, 1990).



## **Discussion/Assessment (Questions)**

. . . (W)e believe the Church's social mission is an essential measure of every parish community . . . . We need to build local communities of faith where our social teaching is central, not fringe; where social ministry is integral, not optional; where it is the work of every believer, not just the mission of a few committed people and committees" (*Communities of Salt and Light*, p. 4).

The following questions are based on the framework for integrating social ministry throughout parish life contained in *Communities of Salt and Light*. They are designed to help pastors, parish councils, staff, committees, and other groups reflect on their parish's social ministry. They provide an opportunity to do a general assessment that can identify both strengths and weaknesses in efforts to integrate the Church's social mission into various aspects of parish ministry. This general assessment can lead to further discussions by those responsible for each area of ministry.

### **Anchoring Social Ministry: Prayer and Worship**

1. In what ways does our parish worship reflect Christ's call to conversion, to service, and to working for justice?
2. During the liturgy, in what ways is the gospel's call to build peace, work for justice, and care for the poor regularly reflected in the general intercessions, in homilies, in our celebrations of special feast days and holidays, and at other appropriate times?

3. How do our sacramental celebrations help us renew our commitment to reconciliation throughout our lives and rededicate ourselves to Jesus' message of love and justice, especially for those in need?
4. What opportunities for prayer, scripture study, and reflection on our Christian vocation does our parish offer? How is our social mission incorporated into these activities?
5. In what ways are our social ministry efforts clearly rooted in Scripture and spirituality, and connected to liturgy and prayer?

### **Sharing the Message: Preaching and Education**

1. How effectively does preaching at our parish reflect the social dimensions of our faith?
2. In what ways is our rich heritage of Catholic social teaching integrated into our school curriculum?
  - our religious education program?
  - our sacramental preparation program?
  - our Christian initiation ministry?
  - our ongoing religious formation and enrichment for adults?

### **Supporting the "Salt of the Earth": Family, Work, Citizenship**

1. Sustaining Christian marriage and shaping family life around gospel values can be difficult in our culture. What concrete and practical support does our parish offer
  - to married couples and to those preparing for marriage (counsel, retreats, small faith communities)?
  - to parents (parenting skills workshops, support groups)?

2. An important opportunity for living our faith is through our work, in everyday decisions and actions, in the way we treat coworkers and customers. How does our parish support our members in practicing Christian values in the workplace?
3. In what ways are parishioners providing leadership in unions, community groups, professional associations, and political organizations? How does our parish support them as they live their faith in these leadership roles?

### **Serving the 'Least of These': Outreach and Charity**

1. In what ways is our parish serving those in need?
2. How do parishioners become aware of these opportunities for service and action?
3. How effectively have we involved our parish community in our social ministry efforts?
3. What direction do our service programs provide to our parish efforts in advocacy -in changing the conditions that create poverty and suffering?

### **Advocating for Justice: Legislative Action**

1. How does our parish help parishioners become better informed on public policy issues that impact the poor and vulnerable?
2. In what ways do we encourage our members to become more active citizens, exercising their right to vote and participating in public life?
3. What opportunities does our parish provide for parishioners to speak and act effectively in the public arena on behalf of the poor and vulnerable, to bring our values to debates about local, national, and international policies and priorities?

4. How effectively have we involved our parish community in advocacy efforts?

### **Creating Community: Organizing for Justice**

1. What community organization exist in our local community or diocese"
2. How is our parish participating in or supporting such efforts?

### **Building Solidarity: Beyond Parish Boundaries**

1. In what ways does our parish provide to our members information about the needs of our brothers and sisters, especially the poor and vulnerable, in other lands?
2. What links does our parish have to people, parishes, or other groups around the globe?
3. What opportunities does our parish offer us to act in solidarity with others?.....”

## **APPENDIX II: REPORTS OF CCSJ'S PARISH LINK COORDINATORS AND THE VICARIATE LINK COORDINATORS FOR 2013**

NB: Deborah, Jo Ann, and Dianne took up their positions in June. Mikkel started in August 2013. The work of the Team is underpinned by our Scriptures, Tradition, and the writings of the Magisterium from which the following Social Justice Principles are drawn: **Catholic Social Teaching - Key Principles**

**Sanctity of life & the Dignity of the Human Person**

**Fundamental Option for the Poor and Vulnerable**

**Common Good**

**Family & Community**

**Participation in the economic, political, social and cultural life of society.**

**Rights and Responsibilities**

**Economic Justice, Distributive Justice, Commutative Justice, Social Justice**

**Environmental Stewardship – Care for God's Creation**

**Role of Government & Subsidiarity**

**Global Solidarity & Development**

**Dignity of work and the Rights of Workers**

**Promotion of Peace and Disarmament**

**Universal Destination of Goods**

**June 2013: Report of Richard Smith, Vicariate Link Coordinator for the Southern Vicariate - joint report written with his wife, Jo Ann Smith, CCSJ's Parish Link Coordinator for the Southern Vicariate**

**General**

- I introduced the new Parish Link Coordinator to the Southern Vicariate Pastoral Council membership where she spoke on the opportunities for developing Social justice in the Vicariate. Unfortunately the turnout was low (5 parishes) and she was invited to attend and present information on SJ at the next meeting. I am also exploring the possibility of having her accepted as a permanent member of the Council. This will be discussed at the next meeting carded for 27<sup>th</sup> July.
- The planned workshop for schools on The Dignity of Work planned for 21<sup>st</sup> June was postponed to the new school term. Schools were encountering difficulties in preparing students due to the end of term exams. Due to the change in date after Labour day, we discussed the possibility of opening up the workshop to include other pressing social issues. One Principal suggested that since bullying was a serious challenge in her school, she would welcome an intervention/discussion on this issue. This will be explored.
- Only 3 dinner tickets were sold for the Fundraiser. Parishes were challenged with the cost. We can consider other ways to approach the parishes for donations in the future. I thank OLPH and Siparia for their efforts in supporting the cause.
- A meeting is being planned with the new Parish Link Coordinators and all the VLCs for Friday 5<sup>th</sup> July 2013 to discuss roles, functions, reporting and how we can support each other.

**In the Parishes**

- The SICK Ministry for the Southern Vicariate will be meeting on Sat September 28<sup>th</sup> at La Romaine Church. Parishes responsible for Intercessory prayers, readers, collectors, offertory procession, hymns and refreshments will be decided at the next meeting.

- **WORLD YOUTH DAY:** A Vigil is being planned to take place this year with tents, big screen TV etc. A decision will need to be made as to whether we have the resources and networking capability to carry through with it. Input from the Youth Ministry is needed.
- Jo Ann shared the idea of a **Marriage Week**. It was suggested that we could propose this suggestion to our parishes to celebrate Marriage Week from July 22-27<sup>th</sup> with lectures, articles in our newsletters, Mass and any other activities which will help to build healthier, stronger and happier marriages. This week will end with a Mass on July 27<sup>th</sup>, the feast of Sts. Ann and Joachim, parents of Mary and patron saints of marriages.
- I reported that concern was expressed about the implementation of the **second priority** and suggested that we could probably have a rally in South. Parishes were asked to revisit their proposals for the second priority and come prepared for further discussions on July 27<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Parish Link Coordinator :**

- Jo Ann distributed brochures on Pro-Life, Disability, Poverty, Consumer Rights to all present
- Jo Ann pointed out that Social Justice deals with reaching out to others and moving towards a just society. It demands broadening our social stance on many issues e.g. domestic violence awareness child abuse, neglect, elderly abuse, stewardship of our environment and all God's creation. We need to be aware of social issues that affect our society and help to empower others especially the voiceless. In our parishes we can initiate projects through our existing groups and not necessarily form a separate social justice group. Ideas thrown out by her were: adopt a park to clean, adopt a school, adopt a grandmother. We can ask ourselves: What can I give to my community?
- Children and young people can and should also be involved in social justice ministry.

- CCSJ can offer resource personnel if parishes wish to conduct workshops or to organise a lecture. Just get in touch with Jo Ann.
- Workshop on “The Dignity of all honest work” carded for June 14<sup>th</sup> at the Fyzabad Community Complex has been postponed to June 21<sup>st</sup>. Five(5) schools from the Southern area are carded to attend - Holy Name Convent, Fyzabad Anglican, Fyzabad Secondary, Holy Faith Convent, St. Benedicts College.

## **In The Parishes**

### **MON REPOS / STE. MADELEINE:**

- Recently established young adults group undertook visitations to shut-ins.
- Youth ministry hosted by Dr. Peter Gentle: *Chastity & the scourge of STDs*
- Know your Faith in the Year of Faith series: “Habits of Effective Catholics”
- Life in the Spirit seminar in progress (session 5 tomorrow) with Fr. Merrick & team
- Leroy Prieto & Rondell Donawa honoured for their winning performances in carnival 2013
- Parish gave support to Learie Joseph show (Evangelisation Comm) & “Make a Joyful Noise” (Sembrador)
- Parish held its annual liturgy & street Procession on the Solemnity of the Body & Blood of Christ. (This was reintroduced 5 years ago.)
- Fr. Peter’s dad passed away.
- Corpus Christi Mass and Procession followed by 1 hour of Adoration

### **LA ROMAINE:**

- Our church is a popular venue for weddings and funerals and our Parish Priest is asking that people attending these events should honour our dress code.



Therefore shawls for 'tops and bottoms' are being provided for those who are not properly dressed for the Church. Couples planning their wedding at this Church have been asked to put the dress code for Church in their invitation.

- The PA system is almost completed and the next project will be the paving of the Car park area.

### **SIPARIA:**

- “La Divina Pastora 70 years and over” group went on a holiday excursion to Barbados with 19 members. They also hosted the Marabella peers in May
- Corpus Christi celebrations with Mass, procession and Benediction saw the Siparia Diatonics Steel Orchestra playing at mass. Children from two RC primary schools in the parish-St. Brigid’s Girls and Siparia Boys- attended in school uniform. There was a sharing after Mass and also a showing of the film on the Holy Eucharist.
- On May 31<sup>st</sup>. a Fashion Show and Concert Fund Raiser for participants in World Youth Day was held
- Events to come – Youth Group cookout on June 19<sup>th</sup>. First Communion on June 30<sup>th</sup>. 4 delegates from the parish will be attending World Youth day in Brazil. The Feast of Sts. Joachim & Anne will be celebrated with a Mass and renewal of vows followed by dinner and dance. The 51<sup>st</sup>. Anniversary of Independence will be celebrated with a Mass and sharing afterwards.

### **RIO CLARO:**

- A retreat for all executive members.
- St Theresa Harvest on Sunday 29th September, 2013.
- St Anne and Joachim feast day Friday 26th July 2013.
- Youth events - Bar-b-que, Car wash, Retreat in August.

## **NEW GRANT:**

- Teaching of the CREED will be facilitated by Srs. Lystra and Martin at Eucharistic Services
- Youth/Young Adults Ministry is being revitalized in the Parish. Presently, meetings are being held to see in what direction we can move forward.
- Catechist retreat will be held at la Vega on June 19<sup>th</sup> with the facilitator, Fr. Ferdinand Warner O.P.

## **SOUTH OROPOUCHE**

- A workshop on Protocols was held at the parish hall to sensitize event planners on proper procedures when hosting functions. Included were discussions on dress codes, seating arrangements, positioning of church and national flags, greeting and announcing guests, and function agendas.
- The St Thomas More, Fyzabad feast day would be belatedly celebrated with Mass and a street procession on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> June

## **June 2013: Report of Jo-Ann Taylor-Smith, Parish Link Coordinator for the Southern Vicariate**

### **Meeting the vicariate.**

- (1) On 9<sup>th</sup> June, 2013 I attended the Southern Vicariate Pastoral Council meeting held at La Romaine where I was warmly received and allotted 10mins to give a talk on Social Justice. I introduced the concept of social justice and encouraged discussion on how it can be developed in parishes. Representatives from parishes present all pledged to support CCSJ's work. Brochures on Social justice were also distributed for circulation. I proposed that a week of activities be celebrated in each parish for the feast of Sts Joachim and Anne in July and this was warmly accepted. A brochure has since been created and sent to Msgr. Christian for his approval. I was invited to attend their next meeting on 27th July and I will be attending.

- (2) 12<sup>th</sup> June - I visited the Principal at Fyzabad Anglican Secondary School. They were unable to follow through with participation in the planned *Dignity of Work* Workshop. Ms. Wong Wai (principal) and I discussed the possibility of my speaking on Social Justice to the students in the new term. I also visited the Fyzabad Secondary School but the principal was unavailable, a new appointment is being scheduled.
- (3) 16<sup>th</sup> June – I met with two Youth Coordinators, Denzil Williams of the Southern Vicariate and Marita Auguste of the Southern West parishes which include South Oropouche, Point Fortin, Erin and Siparia. We also agreed to establish a SJ youth drama group that would make presentations after Sunday Mass in parishes.
- (4) 18<sup>th</sup> June - I visited my home Parish priest, Father Reddy (South Oropouche), who was very supportive. We discussed at length some social justice ideas for the Parish for the near future.
- (5) 23<sup>rd</sup> June – I held discussions with the Confirmation Class at St. Thomas More, Fyzabad on the Dignity of All Human Life . Sister Josrick of the Missionaries of Charity conducts this class and we have agreed to have outreach projects for the students. The first is to begin on Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> June when we will visit the Hope Centre, San Fernando (shelter for displaced children). The class will distribute lunches and have interactive sessions with the children at the home.
- (6) 25<sup>th</sup> June - I briefly met with the parish priest of La Brea, Fr. Shijomon, he agreed to have a meeting in the near future on promoting SJ in the parish. I also visited the Sipiria Parish Office and was introduced to the Parish secretary Ms LumKin. I will be meeting with the Parish Priest during the month of July.

I attended the WCF (Caribbean) Pro-Family Congress - 14 and 15<sup>th</sup> June 2013, UWI

Theme: *Building a Culture of Life and a civilization of Love*. Several family-related presentations were held over the 2 days

Day 1 - discussions on Marriage, parental Rights, Medical ethics/reproductive Rights and Eugenics. Professor William Wagner, Lawyers

Nikolas Nikas and Ruth Ross spoke of laws that are being passed in many countries to facilitate the systematic corrosion of the society such as abortion laws, gender and education on sex and sexuality. All speakers were dynamic and informative and left participants with much food for thought.

Day 2 -Workshop - on Health and Family Education with Dr. Nanci Coppola, Pauline Mcarthy and Arnold Culbreath. In this workshop participants received some very sobering statistics on the sexual health of Trinidad and Tobago. STD's are most present in the 15-25 age group of females and the 25- 35 age group of males. The sad misconception of sex health and personal responsibility was outlined. In Trinidad and Tobago by the age of 19 a young women may have four children. Dr. Coppola explained the role drugs and alcohol play in the risky behaviours among our youth. The workshop covered what parents can do to minimize the eternal influences such as:

- Ø Setting Rules and boundaries
- Ø Being involved in School activities
- Ø Being involved in their academic studies
- Ø Being proactive by talking about the risks, beliefs and values of their friends as well as those of our families.
- Ø Talking about peer pressures which can be both positive and negative.
- Ø Pauline Mcarthy spoke on the Billing's method and the benefits to family life.
- Ø Rev. Arnold Culbreath of Protecting Black life shared information about his organization which promotes pro life choices for African Americans. He spoke of the systemic placement and facilitation of African Americans to have abortions which he suggested was promoted by Planned parenthood. He provided participants with staggering statistics of the genocide of unborn children in minority communities.

Advertisements for health respect instructor trainees were also made and I have applied.

## Online Resources:

The ELPIS Centre [www.elpiscentre.org](http://www.elpiscentre.org)

Program Teach, Inc [www.healthrespect.org](http://www.healthrespect.org)

Maafaa21 [www.protectingblacklife.org](http://www.protectingblacklife.org)

**JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2013: Report of Richard Smith, Vicariate Link Coordinator for the Southern Vicariate - joint report written with his wife, Jo Ann Smith, CCSJ's Parish Link Coordinator for the Southern Vicariate**

TOTAL NO. OF PARISHES: 16

- \* The Vicariate Link and Parish Link Coordinators assisted the Archbishop's Appeal Fund in locating a venue for the planning meeting in the Southern Vicariate (Text to donate) and getting parishes to send representatives. 12 of the 16 parishes were in attendance. Assistance was also provided in the delivery of promotional material to the Southland. Some parishes subsequently reported challenges in following the schedule for launching in their parish but should do so later.
- \* CCSJ's Respect for Life Week is being actively promoted in the Vicariate. There are plans for a Vicariate Workshop on Domestic Violence in La Romaine on Wed 9<sup>th</sup> October. There is also an essay competition for youths. 90% of RC primary schools and 100% of RC Secondary Schools in the Vicariate have been contacted and are considering participation.
- \* Parishes and Secondary Schools are also being contacted to send representatives to the all day workshop on the Death Penalty to be held at UWI on October 1<sup>st</sup>
- \* **OLPH:** The Family Life Ministry is offering a workshop on choosing a Marriage Partner for young adults in the parish and environs. The workshop is limited to 30 participants and will be held at the Bishop Mendes Building on 2013 October 5.
- \* **New Grant:** is restructuring its stewardship program to include New Evangelization. A Parish Assembly will be held on 24<sup>th</sup> November.

- \* **Pointe-A-Pierre:** will be hosting a Theology of the Body Workshop on Sundays in conjunction with San Fernando.
- \* **La Romaine:** The St Benedict's RC Youth Group, La Romaine, recently 'copped' a National Youth Award. President of the group, Isaiah Stewart, explained that the award was made by the Ministry of Gender, Youth and Child Development at a ceremony at Hilton Trinidad on August 24. Young persons and youth organisations throughout Trinidad and Tobago were honoured for their contribution to their community and the development of their peers/young persons. The St Benedict's Youth Group were awarded for *community service and peer development* within their parish and community.
- \* [Note] Due to the recent appointment of Mr Elie Martineaux as the Vicariate Link Coordinator for the East, he would be reporting on Social Justice in his Vicariate from next month (October).

**October 2013: Report of Richard Smith, Vicariate Link Coordinator for the Southern Vicariate - joint report written with his wife, Jo Ann Smith, CCSJ's Parish Link Coordinator for the Southern Vicariate:**

I assisted the PLC in planning and executing RFLW programmes on Domestic Violence (La Romaine) and Schools RFLW Workshop (Presentation College).

**RESPECT FOR LIFE WEEK:** "Regenerating the Moral and Spiritual Values of Our Society" from October 5<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>: See Jo Ann's report for her joint work with Richard during RFLW, and also with youths in the Southern Vicariate and so on.

**\* October 2013: Report of Jo-Ann Taylor-Smith, Parish Link Coordinator for the Southern Vicariate**

NUMBER OF PARISHES: 16

MEETINGS: 4

NO. OF PARISHES ATTENDING: 5

NO. OF PEOPLE IN ATTENDANCE: 20

## OVERALL EVALUATION: GOOD

**RESPECT FOR LIFE WEEK:** “Regenerating the Moral and Spiritual Values of Our Society” from October 5<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>

The Southern Vicariate commemorated RFLW with a seminar entitled “Building Relationships” on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> October 2013 at 5 PM. Twenty people were in attendance with a good mix of age groups as youths from various parishes were specially invited. The highlight of the session was the frankness of discussions by two victims of Domestic Violence who gave graphic details of the abuse they experienced and how they are recovering from it.[ see appendix 1]. Coming out of the workshop, two current domestic violence victims contacted me and were referred for professional support.

## SOUTHERN VICARIATE YOUTHS

**Relationship Forum:** Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2013 at St Benedict’s College School Hall from 9am-2:00pm. This took the form of a panel discussion that comprised of speakers in each of the four relationships of life: SELF, GOD, NEIGHBOUR and CREATION. Open floor discussions followed. This coincided with the last day of CCSJ’s Respect for Life Week. Several parishes were represented. I represented CCSJ on the topic ‘Who is your neighbour’ and related it to RFLW. This was well received. Organizers were open to the suggestion of focusing on Social Justice Issues as the theme for their Youth Rally next year.

## OUR LADY OF MT. CARMEL

Sr. Lydia Long of the New Grant Parish is interested in starting a Social Justice group.

On Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> October, the VLC (Richard) and I delivered a PowerPoint presentation on: "What is social justice and how can it be incorporated in the parish?" Handouts of the two feet of Social Justice, brochures on Social Justice Issues and possible ideas for projects were distributed. We also discussed the many challenges facing the Parish. I will be closely supporting and monitoring the development of this group to ensure its success.

## **OUR LADY OF ASSUMPTION –SOUTH OROPOUCHE**

The parish is planning to start a Social Justice Action group and we held discussions on the requirements for sustainable programmes and a timetable for its establishment. It is expected to start in November.

The winner of the CCSJ's RFLW essay competition, Celie Regis lives in this parish. Her success was highlighted in the parish's newsletter.

Our Lady of Perpetual Help (OLPH)

**The Word and Deed Organization**, in celebration of 8 years, organised a Prayer Brunch on Saturday October 26th from 10:00 a.m. at the Bishop Mendes Auditorium. The speaker was Mr. Keith Patrick. Part of the proceeds will go to the Prisons Ministry.

The FLU hosted a workshop on **Choosing a Marriage Partner** on Sat. 5th October. The target audience was young adults.

A pilot Parish Mediation / Alternative Dispute Resolution Service is being implemented.

**CONTACTS IN THE PARISHES:** A list of SJ contact persons with contact details have been drawn up and shared with CCSJ's Office for the Commission's Central Database. The list includes individuals from the following parishes in this Vicariate: OLPH, La Romaine, New Grant, Rio Claro, Siparia, Oropouche, Moruga, Chatham Pt. Fortin, Cedros, Erin, La Brea, Princess Town, Mon Repos.

**\* November 2013: Report of Jo-Ann Taylor-Smith, Parish Link Coordinator for the Southern Vicariate**

NO. OF PARISHES: 16

MEETINGS: 4

OUR LADY OF ASSUMPTION –SOUTH OROPOUCHE



- The Social Action group has become operational. A family has already been contacted and will be interviewed before December. The group's plans include working with the family for a six month period - providing support according to the needs of the family.
- I continue to work on CCSJ's Facebook page with Mikkel.

## **Appendix 1**

A tall, stylish, well spoken woman stepped forward in front of an attentive audience to tell a story; a story of abuse - love gone terribly wrong, and her journey to becoming a survivor. Her son sat in the audience as his mother shared her story and sobs. The hearts of the men, women and adolescents who attended went out to him as one can only imagine how emotionally painful it must be. Another woman with similar experiences stepped forward and she too had a story to tell - one of 23 years of walking on egg shells, living like a prisoner in her own home, of kicks and punches, being commanded to eat food off the floor and her courage to finally say, "No more!" to her abusive husband. The two valiant souls stood before those gathered and left all present in a state of admiration at their willingness to speak out against a hidden monster in our society- Domestic Violence.

This was the scene at La Romaine RC Parish Hall at the workshop entitled "Building Relationships" - held as part of the observance of Respect for Life week.

Guest Speaker and trained counsellor by profession, Michelle Byam, stressed, "What can save all victims of abuse is to break the silence." In breaking the silence she highlighted the importance of communication in relationships. She stated, "Many times men, more so than women, account for the lack of communication in the relationship. We need to put out an invitation to our men to see that communication itself is an action word and optimum communication in this area will earn lifelong quality and efficiency in all relationships." To the victims of abuse she emphasized, "Just keep planting a seed." At the first sign of violence the victim should go out and let someone know. "Let at least one person know what is happening because the abuser's goal is to keep you isolated and under his control."

In spite of the 'heavy' subject matter and at times graphic descriptions of real life experiences, most persons felt it really opened their eyes to domestic violence issues.

- \* **December 2013: Report of Richard Smith, Vicariate Link Coordinator for the Southern Vicariate - joint report written with his wife, Jo Ann Smith, CCSJ's Parish Link Coordinator for the Southern Vicariate:**

NO. OF PARISHES: 16

### **OUR LADY OF ASSUMPTION –SOUTH OROPOUCHE**

- The Social Action group has become operational. A family has already been contacted and interviewed. The group's plans include: working with the family for a six months period - providing support according to the needs of the family. For December a food hamper, gifts and toiletries were given to the family. For January the children will be placed in lessons. We will be working with them closely.

### **OUR LADY OF MT. CARMEL**

- Sister Long of New Grant has got a team together to start the Social Action Group in their parish.

### **OUR LADY OF PERTUTUAL HELP SAN FERNANDO**

- OLPH will mark World Peace Day 2014 the OLPH group, "Community Peacemakers" is open for inquiries about its voluntary mediation service. The formal launch of "Community Peacemakers" will take place on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2014.

### **OTHER:**

- Five hampers were sourced to distribute to families from the Blind Welfare Association in December following a request for support from Mikkel.
- Support was given to David Young (Chancery employee) in the distribution of Christmas gifts and food items to much challenged families in Retrench Village.

- CCSJ's Facebook page is now operational with Mikkel and Jo Ann as Page Managers.
- Emails and tel. calls to individuals were made to promote the observation of the National Week of Prayer.
- We attended the Southern Vicariate meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> January and reinforced SJ expectations.
- Promotion of World Social Justice Day: a meeting was held with the Principal of Presentation College San Fernando regarding the possibility of using his school to host a workshop on Social Justice Topics. Speakers on various aspects of SJ example Domestic violence, environmental issues, child abuse and the dignity of the human person are being sourced. The venue has been made available. Contact was also made with Annette Lessey (CEBM South) to assist with school participation.
- A meeting was held with probation officer Mr. Joel Hercules on 21<sup>st</sup> January in San Fernando to discuss ways of involving more parishes in the supervision of individuals having to undergo court appointed Community Service. Already Siparia, South Oropouche and La Brea parishes have assisted in the programme. Parishes in and around San Fernando will now be targeted to sign on to support our socially challenged youths as it was pointed out that this area is underserved.
- Richard met with several teachers of RC primary schools. They were informed of the importance of preparing plans to support the implementation of the Third Priority and to provide an estimated date for the implementation of these Plans. Most are expected to complete plans by mid-February. The importance of SJ was also promoted. Jo Ann will be following up with them on ways to incorporate Social Justice in their programmes.

#### PROJECTIONS AND TARGETS:

- Targeting the youth ministries and sensitizing them to the issues of SJ. Meetings are being scheduled with the Youth Commission (South).

- Promoting the need for awareness programmes in the Parishes ranging from AIDS/HIV, Domestic Violence, Anger Management and Child Abuse. Jo Ann will be meeting with Fr. Joyeau (Penal) on Friday.
- Promotion of UN days – schools and parishes to be contacted.
- Continue to work in conjunction with the various ministries, for example SVP and Family Life to promote SJ issues.
- Encouraging more Parishes to start up Social Action Groups.
- Contacting schools to do short presentations on SJ issues.

CHALLENGES: Because of the Christmas Season all parishes were involved in their Christmas programmes and concentrated on gift and food donations - the Charitable 'foot' in the 2 Feet of our Ministry. Justice-type activities/projects/plans are to recommence in the New year.

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### **June 2013: Report of Deborah Boos, Parish Link Coordinator for the Eastern Vicariate**

TOTAL NO. OF PARISHES: 11

During the month of June, I contacted all the parish priests of the Eastern Vicariate by email or telephone and was able to have only two face to face discussions.

ARIMA: The parish has recently organised its Pastoral Council and within that a Social Justice Ministry consisting of groups such as St. Vincent de Paul Society, Meals on Wheels,

Soup Kitchen and Family Life Clinics such as National Insurance, Legal Aid, Financial and Family Life Services. Representatives of these ministries met in May to discuss conduct a needs assessment exercise relating to the parish. Many ideas were put forward and they are to meet again to begin narrowing the possibilities. I

am trying to set up an appointment with the coordinator of that Ministry for further discussion.

The TNT Visioneers – Ministry of the Blind have indicated that one of their many challenges is the uneven height of the sidewalks/pavements in Arima. I will raise this issue with the Social Justice Coordinator when I meet with her as to how to proceed.

AROUCA: I have an appointment with Fr. Ashton Pierre on July 4.

CORYAL: There is no priest at the parish at the present time. Trying to reach Fr. Derek Anton the Vicar for the area on how to proceed.

LA HORQUETTA: Spoke with Fr. Bunty Hilaire. He indicated the only Social Justice

Ministry is St. Vincent de Paul. Have tried to reach him a few times to get name of coordinator and contact information.

MALABAR: Will meet with Fr. Dwight Black on June 28.

MALONEY: Unable to meet with Fr. George Lewis up to present time. Continuing to try.

MANZANILLA: Fr. Hasely King is out of the country and said he will contact me on his return.

MAYARO: Unable to reach Fr. Trevor Nathasingh.

SAN RAFAEL: Unable to reach Fr. Ian Taylor.

SANGRE GRANDE: I have a tentative appointment with Fr. Derek Anton for Thursday 27 June.

TOCO/MATELOT: Trying to reach Fr. Steve Ransome.

Contact with the various parish priests was not satisfactory and I hope that the month of July will

be better and that I can establish contact with the coordinators of the various ministries during July.

## **July 2013: Report of Deborah Boos, Parish Link Coordinator for the Eastern Vicariate**

TOTAL NO. OF PARISHES: 11

NO. OF PARISHES VISITED THIS MONTH: 6

NATURE OF VISIT: To meet with parish priests and discuss role of Parish Link Coordinator; to discuss current and future social justice work and plans in the parish in the light of Synod 3rd Priority

\* Met with Siobhan Burroughs – Social Justice Coordinator, Santa Rosa to discuss way forward on the suggestions raised for implementation at a previous meeting.

\* Met with Marylyn Sue Hong FLU coordinator at Santa Rosa to discuss expanding the celebration of St. Anne and Joachim from one evening to a week. (The extended celebration will be done in 2014). Will use this template to raise idea in other parishes.

\* Met with Raymond Francis – Youth Group Coordinator at Santa Rosa to discuss involvement of youth with Respect for Life Week.

\* Fr. Trevor Nathasingh – Mayaro indicated that due to the extreme dilapidation of church and meeting hall that he is not undertaking any projects in his parish as meetings are not possible.

\* Fr. Derek Anton – Sangre Grande asked that I not do anything in his parish until he meets with St. Francis' Pastoral Council and then invited me to attend the parish pastoral council in September and Eastern Vicariate Council also in September.

\* Fr Anton as Vicar for the Vicariate also requested I not contact Coryal until he can meet with them in the absence of a parish priest.

\*Malabar's focus is on youth and to that end, the parish sponsors a camp for youth in other

Caribbean islands to expose them to living conditions on those islands

\*Malabar is developing a multipurpose pastoral hall to assist youth aged 6 to 18 in developing life skills such as table ethics and other values. Also to be used for indoor games and study centre.

\*Malabar will also host a COR retreat for youth in October.

\* Fr. Lewis of Maloney would like to focus on family life and in particular, for men to have a greater say in their families.

\*Fr. Pierre of Arouca sees poverty as that parish's greatest challenge and lack of awareness of government social programmes as a hindrance to alleviation of poverty.

\*Fr. Hilaire – La Horquetta sees the main crisis in his parish as the lack of family life – the phenomenon of absentee fathers and mothers and barrel children.

## PROJECTIONS AND TARGETS

- There seems to be common underlying themes of lack of family life, poverty and violence in parishes I have visited. My focus would be to assist in obtaining information on the Government and NGO social programmes that can work to alleviate some of the hardships, to help develop family life unit clinics such as NIS, legal, financial and counseling and to coordinate any training that may be necessary over the next 6 – 12 months.
- Also in discussion re youth involvement in Respect for Life Week.

CHALLENGES: Unable to meet or contact Fr. Ian Taylor- San Raphael, Fr. Hasely King – Manzanilla, and Fr. Steve Ransome – Toco/Matelot

**\*August 2013: Report of Deborah Boos, Parish Link Coordinator for the Eastern Vicariate**

TOTAL NO. OF PARISHES: 11

NO. OF PARISHES VISITED THIS MONTH: 4

NATURE OF VISIT: To meet with parish priests, parishioners and groups/ministries to discuss role of Parish Link Coordinator; to discuss current and future social justice work and plans in the parish in the light of Synod 3<sup>rd</sup> Priority including Respect for Life Week.

TRAINING: NATURE OF TRAINING: Nil

MEETINGS - TWO

NATURE OF MEETING:

1. Met with Fr. Ian Taylor – Parish Priest, San Rafael to introduce myself as Parish Link Coordinator. He spoke of the tremendous social justice work being done in the parish – poverty alleviation aligned with improving home conditions, assistance in finding jobs for the unemployed, assistance with children’s education. Result: Those assisted are able to improve their living conditions.
2. Fr Taylor spoke of the parish’s financial assistance to the five R.C. primary schools in the parish. Due to the long and protracted delays by the EFCL when requests are made, the parish has to provide the assistance when needed.
3. San Rafael is also very active in opposing the gender policy bill where the parish has continual prayer intercession and is willing to speak out against it. Fr. Taylor travels regularly to both Belize and Jamaica to assist with those groups who are against the implementation of this bill. Fr. Taylor asked that all the parishes in the Eastern Vicariate be constantly reminded of this policy and pray and work to keep it off our law books since there are serious implications for our priests.
4. Met with St. Vincent de Paul Group, Malabar to introduce myself. The members raised the same concern as Fr. Black who spoke of the poverty in the community



and wanted suggestions from me on how to tackle it as they are no longer receiving information from the Malabar R.C. Primary school on needy families. My suggestion was for all the SJ ministries to come together and discuss possibilities and then bring those suggestions to their Pastoral Council. Also mentioned Respect for Life Week.

## OTHER

5. Fr. Taylor commented that the rehab centre for former prisoners was operating in his parish but that, to date, no one had come to inform the priest and parishioners about what was happening at the centre neither was anyone from the parish invited to the opening. He would appreciate that the situation be rectified.
6. Attended a health seminar on August 10 at Arouca Parish hosted by the SVP of Tacarigua. The seminar was geared to those 60 and over especially the clients of the SVP to provide information on assistance offered by the government. Theme: Ageing gracefully, Social Services and You. Ms Gabrielle Abdool, Division of Ageing provided an overview. Topics included: Grants, NIS transport, housing and medical assistance. The NIS and pension grants generated much lively and at times heated discussion and it was decided that a another seminar be held to focus solely on benefits under NIS. The second part of the seminar by a registered nutritionist provided information on diabetes, the associated complications and risks management, diet and lifestyle.
7. Santa Rosa has completed all the repairs and renovations on what will be the Cumaca R.C. School in Valencia. No sooner was this done then the Ministry of Education, who gave no funding to the project, took over the building.
8. Attended worship services at Tamana and Coryal R.C. on Saturday 24 August and was able to discuss Social Justice issues and Respect for Life Week. The parishioners were very happy to see “outsiders” and both communities commented that with the visit “they don’t feel so deserted now”. They don’t have a parish priest at the moment as Fr. Graham has retired, but he did a wonderful job of renovating, restoring and equipping the community chapel of Sts. Anne and Joachim (Tamana) of which the parishioners are justifiably proud. As part of their social justice thrust, Coryal would like to restart home visits which had been

discontinued under the former parish priest. Tamana's main concerns are the poor road conditions and the lack of PTSC transport which makes it difficult for travelling. Re: the road condition – I was informed that due to the actions of the village council the roads are slated for repair. Transport remains a major challenge.

9. Fr. Hasely King has returned to the USA and Fr. Joseph from South Vietnam is stationed in Manzanilla. I was able to speak to him on the phone and he asked me to give him some time before meeting with him. (There is a possibility his 3 month work permit may have issues).
10. Meeting scheduled with Fr. Steve Ransome on September 9, 2013 has been rescheduled.

#### PROJECTIONS AND TARGETS

- To disseminate the information gleaned from the health seminar in Arouca together with names of contact persons to the parishes in the Eastern Vicariate and to promote other such seminars in the vicariate.
- To keep the anti-gender policy in the forefront of parishioners' thoughts.
- To finalise plans for RFLW.

#### **\* September 2013: Report of Deborah Boos, Parish Link Coordinator for the Eastern Vicariate**

TOTAL NO. OF PARISHES: 11

MEETINGS: 7

NATURE OF MEETING:

1. Sept 7 - Attended meeting at Centre of Excellence for presentation of Archbishop's Appeal Parish Outreach campaign and received materials for distribution to Arima, Arouca, Manzanilla, Mayaro, San Rafael, Sangre Grande and Toco/Matelot. The other 4 parishes sent representatives.

2. Met with Principal of Arima Girls' R.C. School, Mrs. Elise Caldon-Russel to discuss Respect For Life Week 2013 in particular and Social Justice issues in general.

Discussed with Principal the essay writing competition and asked her to encourage students to participate as part of the creative writing syllabus. She agreed.

- Discussed the virtues as outlined in RFLW flier and was informed by the principal that every morning at assembly, one of the teachers discusses and promotes one virtue and encourages the girls to emulate it.
- In terms of social justice, Mrs Caldon-Russel stated that in order to encourage interaction between the youth and elderly, the girls in the choir visit the elderly at Senior Citizens' Homes on a regular basis and sing for them and that now that the Legion of Mary had reformed, those girls in the Legion would visit the sick.
- The girls assisted those students in the school in need on a regular basis.
- The school celebrated Mary's birthday on Sept 6 with prayers and flowers and the girls were encouraged to imitate Mary's life and example.

3. Met with Principal of Arima Boys' R.C. School, Mr. Brian Brooks to discuss Respect For Life Week 2013 in particular and Social Justice issues in general as with the Girls' School

- Discussed with Principal the essay writing competition and asked him to encourage students to participate as part of the creative writing syllabus. He agreed.
- Discussed the virtues as outlined in RFLW flier and requested if these could be incorporated during classes such as Social Studies or Religious Instruction to which Mr. Brooks agreed.
- The boys assisted those students in school in need on a regular basis and also contributed to the St. Vincent de Paul Society regularly.

- He also mentioned that he had wanted to introduce a project with the boys visiting the sick and the elderly and that my visit was encouragement for him to make that project a reality.
4. Met with Religious Instruction Coordinator for Government Schools in Arima, Mr. Horace Kistow. Mr Kistow informed me that R.I. in the Government primary schools continues but that it has been suspended in Secondary Schools as the Ministry of Education plans to introduce Comparative Religion in Secondary Schools but to date no syllabus was yet available.

5 Attended the priests of the Eastern Vicariate meeting on Sept. 13.

- Promoted Archbishop Appeal, Death Penalty Conference, RFLW activities including panel discussion on Oct. 12 and to organise their own RFLW activities and holy hour on Saturday 12 and Essay competition.
  - Met Fr. Joseph O. Carm who is stationed at St. Michael's Parish, St. Joseph and who is assisting at Manzanilla parish. At present, his work permit is for 3 months, but attempts are being made to regularise his situation for an extended stay.
  - Also in attendance was Fr. Glynn Jemmott, Parish Priest of the Hispanic Community who worships at the Chapel at Fatima College on Sundays at 10.00 a.m. His contact information: Email: glynn.jemmott@yahoo.com and Telephone 350-5964.
  - Distributed the Death penalty flier, RFLW fliers, slogans and ad on essay competition.
6. Ministry of Health Population Programme Unit in collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund "*National Consultation on Sexual and Reproductive Health*" Friday 20 September, 2013 - Cascadia Hotel. 9 am to 3.45pm.

This was a follow up consultation to one which had been done approximately a year ago and the contents were taken from the full policy document.

Present: Leela Ramdeen and I - CCSJ, Pauline Phelps - Billings Ovulation Method (BOMATT) of AFLU, Dr. Peter Gentle, the Seventh Day Adventist Church, Gale Oxley-Mohammed - Civil Society Organisation and various health officials of the Ministry of Health and Regional Health Authorities.

### ***Purpose***

*To provide a framework for national stakeholders to provide input for the finalization of the National Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) Strategic Plan 2014-2018 and the Operational Plan for Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) 2014-2016.*

### ***Objectives***

- *To review the contents included in the SRH Strategic Plan 2014-2018 and Operational Plan for SRH 2014-2016 with emphasis on the priority area.*
- *To provide feedback on the comprehensiveness, relevance and possible gaps in the content*
- *To make recommendations for the finalization of the National Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) Strategic Plan 2014-2018 and the Operational Plan for Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) 2014-2016.*

After greetings were brought from various sectors. we were slated into work groups and given guidelines where we did review of priority areas, strategic objectives and strategies. Each priority area had a policy objective, one or more Expected Outcomes, Outcome Indicators and Targets. Each Strategic Objective had corresponding strategies, indicators and lead agencies/partners. Then there was the plenary session where there was presentation and discussion of reports from the groups.

My group was priority area 1: Service Delivery. Together with Pauline Phelps of BOMATT, we were able to get BOMATT listed as a partner under the Strategy of Family Planning for the Objective of : ***Improve accessibility and availability of sexual and reproductive health services through an integrated approach in the primary health care system by 80%.*** It wasn't easy. There was major objection by

a MOH senior doctor and Dr. Cathy Bain, Director of IVF Clinic. I was also able to get Ministry of the People and Social Development listed as a lead agency for this strategic objective stating poverty must be addressed when discussing Sexual and Reproductive Health.

The other strategic objective where BOMATT got listed as a partner was: ***Improve the quality of sexual and reproductive health services provided to key population in the primary health care system by 80%.***

Our group was not able to address the operational plan.

Many amendments were recommended and some were sent back for additional work. Dr. Ochoa advised that the final document will be circulated to all participants before going to Cabinet.

The email contact for Dr. Oscar Ochoa - Director of PPU is : [ppu2008@live.com](mailto:ppu2008@live.com)

7. Attended the Eastern Vicariate Pastoral Council meeting on Sept. 21.

- Promoted Archbishop Appeal, Death Penalty Conference, RFLW activities including panel discussion on Oct. 12 and Essay competition. Encouraged those present to attend the Conference and participate in RFLW activities and organise their own in their respective parishes and have the youth in the parish participate in the holy hour on Saturday 12 October and to ask them for the candidates in their Catechetical programmes participate in the essay competition. Asked each parish to send 25 representatives.
- Distributed the Death penalty flier, RFLW fliers, slogans and ad on essay competition.
- Fr Derek Anton, Vicar for the Eastern Vicariate informed the gathering that the Life in the Spirit Conference for Youth was scheduled for October 11 - 13 at Malabar and so he was not sure whether any youth would be present for the holy hour on Oct 12.

- Rhonda Earle, Catechetical Coordinator for the Eastern Vicariate reported that she had sent an invitation to all the catechetical coordinators in the vicariate for them and their catechists to attend the panel discussion.
- Coryal reported they may not be able to attend the panel discussion as they will be preparing for the parish harvest on Oct 13.
- Promoted the idea of the parable presentation and will need to follow up.

NO. OF PARISHES ATTENDING: (#7) - Four

NO. OF PEOPLE ATTENDING: (#7) - 15

### **OTHER**

- Have organised a panel discussion for RFLW on October 12 at St. Francis of Assisi R.C. Church, Sangre Grande 10.00 a.m. to 12 noon. Theme: Respect for Life: Considering the person with love and mercy. Based on Pope Francis' interview released on Thursday 19 September, 2013. Moderator: Mr. Jones P. Madeira. Panellists: Chief Magistrate Marcia Ayers-Caesar and Kijana King (recommended by Winston Garcia). Trying to get one more person from Prisons Ministry. Invited Deacon Mike Smith as recommended by Fr. Robert Christo. If he is unavailable, I have asked him to recommend another person from the Ministry. Awaiting reply.
- Santa Rosa Parish newsletter, *Dateline*, carried the information on the essay competition during September and on Sept 28 will carry the info on the Death Penalty Conference and RFLW. The conference will also be promoted in the parish announcements on Sept 28.
- Spent much time during August and September telephoning and emailing parish priests and other contacts marketing the Archbishop Appeal and encouraging attendance at the meeting on September 7.

## PROJECTIONS AND TARGETS

- To coordinate a presentation on one of the parables for the Year of Faith during November - was informed at Vicariate Council Meeting on Sept 21 that October is not possible as there are too many competing events.
- Must meet Fr. Steve Ransome

CHALLENGES: Still unable to meet with Fr. Steve Ransome.

**ADDENDUM:** Attended presentation meeting at Archbishop's House on Archbishop's Appeal Parish Outreach campaign on August 8, 2013.

### **\* October 2013: Report of Deborah Boos, Parish Link Coordinator for the Eastern Vicariate**

TOTAL NO. OF PARISHES: 11

TRAINING: NATURE OF TRAINING: Nil

#### OTHER

- Represented CCSJ at the Inauguration of First Peoples Heritage Week & International First Peoples Conference 2013 – October 11 at UTT. Theme: “Exploring Heritage, Consolidating Traditions and Creating a Legacy”. Present were the First Peoples of T&T as well as from the Caribbean region, USA and Canada. There was a video presentation on the Santa Rosa First Peoples Community.

The Conference and Heritage Week highlighted the contributions the First Peoples have made to T&T in terms of sustainable agriculture, food, culture, arts and crafts, sustainable architecture as well as the many other facets of our daily life and the role the First Peoples would like to continue

- Attended the Sir Ellis Clarke lecture at Living Water on October 5 for the start of RFLW.



- RFLW – Panel discussion for the Eastern Vicariate held at St. Francis of Assisi, Sangre Grande on Saturday 12 October, 2013. Thirty five persons attended. Due to last minute adjustments, the panel consisted of Leela Ramdeen, Deacon Michael Smith, Rev. Gwenolyn Ruth Greaves with Jones P. Madeira as Moderator. There was a great deal of focus on crime, need for prison reform prisoner rehabilitation and evangelization, domestic abuse and child abuse and getting back to basics in terms of our family morals and values. Questions and comments from the floor were lively, questioning and informative. Comments were raised that education needs to get back to basics at primary school level focusing on reading writing and spelling thereby laying the foundation for the later years and so prevent or ameliorate the overloading of our primary school children. Another approach suggest an interdisciplinary approach so that the various subjects were covered as a unit rather than separate subjects.
- During visits to primary schools, I was informed about a pilot project targeting schools with low API scores which seek to address literacy concerns in our primary schools. The Trinidad and Tobago National Commission for UNESCO piloted “**Leading for Literacy Now!**” This project which saw 40 principals, 80 teachers, trained from 19 to 25 August 2013. This project (carded initially for 9 months), in its next stage to run over the upcoming academic year, is being conducted in collaboration with the Ministry of Education.

The project is aimed at improving the reading skills of Infant One and Infant Two pupils in the primary school system through the leadership of the school principal and through enhancing teaching of reading skills of the teacher. The outcome should be to successfully teach 6000 primary school students who will become competent readers. It is envisaged that this project be repeated over a period of 5 years, to include more schools.

The programme has generated much buy-in and enthusiasm from all sectors – teachers, principals, children and parents. While the focus in on first and second year students at the moment, already there is great clamour to extend the programme to other primary schools and other classes throughout the school system. Within one to two weeks of introducing the programme, teachers have observed improved reading and associated skills. A limited number of kits entitled

Jolly Phonics were available through the sponsor, but some schools have become proactive by acquiring additional kits through fund raising and sponsorship by parents. The RC schools in the Eastern Vicariate are:

- Gran Riviere RC
- Tamana RC
- Cumana RC
- Arima Girls' RC
- Malabar RC
- St. Pius Boys' RC
- Santa Rosa parish launched their Young Adult Ministry ages 21 to 35 focussing on formation, evangelization and social interaction
- Santa Rosa also launched the Divine Mercy Home Evangelisation Novena ministry praying for the nation, families, priests and religious.
- St Francis, Sangre Grande held a seminar on Billings/Ovulation on October 24. About 25-30 persons attended. It was well received as they appreciated the theological aspects of the method and how it fitted in with the church's teachings.

Addendum to September's report: Visited three secondary schools on September 25: Holy Cross College, Arima; Bishop's Girls & Trinity Boys, Trincity to issue invitations to the Death Penalty Conference on October 1. Holy Cross indicated 20 boys would attend.

**CHALLENGES:** With the number of contacts made for RFLW, I had hoped for a better turnout at the panel discussion on October 12.

## **\* November 2013: Report of Deborah Boos, Parish Link Coordinator for the Eastern Vicariate**

TOTAL NO. OF PARISHES: 11

- Fr. Joseph O’Carm. of Manzanilla parish has been granted a 3-year work permit. His immediate focus is on revitalizing and rebuilding the community and evangelisation. He is in the parish from Thursday evening to Sunday morning. On Fridays, he has home and sick visitation. He has instituted Mass on Friday evenings at 5.00 p.m. and Saturdays at 7.00 a.m. in addition to regularly scheduled Masses. On Sundays, there is exposition of the Blessed Sacrament before Mass at 7.30 a.m. The community benefits from the Elijah Bread programme where non- perishable food items collected at Maracas, St. Joseph parish are distributed to needy members of the community on a monthly basis.

There is also a newly formed group of 10-12 persons who are visiting the homes of persons no longer attending mass on a regular basis due to ill health, age or other reasons. They visit and pray the Rosary on a weekly basis. The response has been quite encouraging. The youth choir prepares lunch on a monthly basis and delivers to the needy.

The parish held the first meeting of the newly reformed Parish Council in October and the members are working to put a Synod Team in place. A major concern is that to date there is no Youth Group. All attempts have not met with success but efforts continue. In terms of the Sacraments - there is Baptism once there are babies, First Communion is ongoing and there is no Confirmation planned as yet since the last one in 2012. SVP’s annual Christmas luncheon for Senior Citizens is carded for December 7

- Met with the Social Justice Team at Arouca to plan for 2014. They are interested in training using Social Justice DVD’s. Training to include a focus on human rights. Will give possible dates in December.
- Attended the Memorial Day service and luncheon for war veterans on November 10 .

- Attended the Grief Support Team Remembrance service on November 12 for those who have died.

- Attended the Liturgical Commission seminar on November 16 to mark the anniversary of

Sacrosanctum Concilium – Constitution of the Sacred Liturgy

- Malabar held their COR Retreat at Guaico Secondary

- Santa Rosa launched their Ministry for 50+ entitled CARE : Compassionate Active Relevant Evergreens. Purpose of Group: Ministry geared towards parishioners 50 years and over

- To provide an avenue for parishioners to socialize among themselves in a safe environment

- To provide spiritual guidance and facilitate its growth

- To be a presence to each other

- To create a sense of belonging / a sense of purpose

- To assist parish in caring for other elderly members of the community some of whom may be shut-ins.

- To provide counsel and comfort in times of need

Through monthly meetings, using creative skills in organizing meetings

- CEBM held their Christmas project – Authentic Parang: A display of Songs, Dance, Art, Craft and Cuisine for the Eastern Vicariate at the Santa Rosa Park. The day started with a bilingual Mass and then moved over to the park to continue with the display. This was a whole school project for September to December to use parang to teach the Christmas story. Aims:

- Using parang to teach the Christmas story from the Annunciation through the birth to the visit of the three Kings (Les Rois)
- Integration of the Spirituality of Christmas with Parang
- Community/Parent engagement
- Curriculum Integration (e.g. VAPA, Maths, English, Social Studies, Religious Instruction)

It is anticipated the project will

- Be an annual undertaking
- Return the spirituality to parang and parang to its rightful place – the story of Christmas
- Yield rich dividends from the integration of art, craft, essay, dance etc.

**\* December 2013: Report of Deborah Boos, Parish Link Coordinator for the Eastern Vicariate**

**Total No. Of Parishes: 11**

- Attended Eastern Vicariate RC Schools Parang Project held at Santa Rosa Church and Park. Initiative of Archbishop Joseph Harris to maintain the focus and spirituality of the Christmas season on Christ and to use a whole curriculum approach - carried out under the guidance of CEBM. The day began with Holy Mass. Afterwards there were displays in the park relating to the children's understanding of Christmas as well as drama, parang and food associated with the season.
- Attended the panel discussion on the UN Day of Human Rights. The discussions were quite lively and informative. It was good to have the students' perspective provided by the girls of SJC, St. Joseph.

- Coordinated the drive for clothes, food, toys and snacks for the request from Natalie Alexis for assistance for members of the community of Salybia and for a children's party. The SVP from Arima, Malabar and Sangre Grande contributed bag hampers. Many kind people donated items generously including \$1,900.00 (incl \$500 through Mikkel Trestrail). 63 children and 20 parents attended the party, 36 persons received hampers and clothes. Ms. Alexis expressed her sincerest thanks and indicated it was the best Christmas party ever for the children.

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### **\* June 2013: Report of Dianne Wells, Parish Link Coordinator for the Central and Suburban Vicariates**

Total Number of Parishes: 15

Objectives Month 1

1. To develop data base of parishes within the Central and South Vicariates complete with Mass Times
2. To schedule introductory meetings with Parish Priests to determine on-going Social Justice activities within the Parish and outline support services available through the Social Justice Commission to promote and implement Synod Resolutions.
3. To represent CCSJ at social fora in order to promote social justice issues
4. To formulate strategies for interaction after initial visits to parishes

Please find the following deliverables attached:

1. Parish database (at Office)
2. Calendar of Meetings (at Office)
3. Report of Single Father's Association of Trinidad & Tobago meeting (narrative and power point)
4. Introduction to Social Justice

5. The Two feet of love handout (at Office)

Items 4 and 5 above represent part of the introductory package to the various parishes as we strive to ascertain what exist within the community and how we can place love in action.

Future plans include training for youth and adults, support initiatives for ongoing programs, development of Social Justice Committees, Legal Aid Clinics, Employment databases and partnerships with Habitat for Humanity.

I look forward to changing the social justice landscape within our island, one community at a time.

**1) Single Fathers Association of Trinidad & Tobago – Meeting Report June 11, 2013**

“The primary purpose of this advocacy group is to raise national awareness in an attempt to put an end to the injustice meted out to children who have been forcibly estranged from their fathers”. This excerpt was taken from the Association’s website and speaks to the rationale of the group.

In an effort to sensitize persons and add credibility to the group, a panel discussion was held at The Eric Williams Medical Sciences Complex on June 11, 2013.

Panelists were:

Dr. Robert Lee Moultry – Medical Practitioner

Dr. Karen Moore – Clinical psychologist

Margaret Sampson-Browne – Victim Support Unit, TTPS

Rondell Fields – President SFATT

Fazeer Mohammed – Moderator

The discussion centered around challenges men face to work against the stereotype of “Dead beat dads” particularly when they are before the courts on child custody or maintenance cases.

Dr Moultry opened by commenting that men are usually products of their upbringing and are influenced by those experiences of childhood. Too often, society breeds generations of men who do not speak to their parents and who go on to display a range of negative behaviors “steups”, the way they walk and the language they use; all adding to the “dead beat” perception.

We fail as a society however to celebrate those fathers who are doing an excellent job. The courts in so many instances also fail the fathers as most cases are confrontational rather than restorative, which also exacerbates the existing system.

Dr. Moore contributed that fathers should reflect on the role of the father and what are his deliverables. Where two parents exist, there is usually an inequitable division of roles. Too often we hear about those fathers who are present in the relationship, but not present enough and only try to correct when the problem is huge.

Too much reproduction without reflection!

Where are the role model fathers and can they be more visible.

Ms. Sampson Browne indicated that too often the public is of the opinion that the Victim Support Unit is for women only, however that is not the case and fathers should take advantage of the opportunity to avail themselves of the facility.

Mr. Fields mentioned that the greatest form of violence is in the impairing of the mind of the child against their parent. Additionally he suggested that “women to men” violence is increasing, but contrary to the view of Ms. Sampson-Browne, the support for the male victim is practically non-existent.

There were many passionate responses from the floor as many persons shared their experiences of the difficulty and unfair treatment they face at the courts as they are always treated as guilty.



What we are putting into men is what we are getting out of them and it is becoming critically important to manage the content of our television shows, the male to female ratio at our schools and the high level of divorce. Too many women are raising “men”.

The program ended with a list of possible solutions:

- Evaluation of the system to where family life benefits
- Men mentor men – Successful fathers can mentor others
- Educate with Information
- Have faith in fathers
- Financial transparency in court.

## 2) INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL JUSTICE

The Catholic Commission for Social Justice as part of its agenda to place the Social Justice priority issues on the minds and hearts of Catholics throughout Trinidad & Tobago, will be working with Parishes to sensitize and inform communities about its function.

In many parishes, the priority area of Social Justice found within Priority 2 – Moral & Spiritual Value of Our Society remains unassigned. This is largely due to the fact that many persons even though they know what the words social justice mean, do not understand the role and function of this priority.

In order to define social justice, let us begin, by taking a look at what social ministry is:

**Social Ministry** has two main aspects: **social service** (also known as **Parish Outreach**) and **social action**

**Social Service** is giving direct aid to someone in need. It usually involves performing one or more of the corporal works of mercy. That is, giving alms to the poor, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the sick or imprisoned,

taking care of orphans and widows, visiting the shut-ins etc. Another name for it is charity.

**Social Action** is correcting the structures that perpetuate the need.

Another name for this is **Social Justice**.

Through the lens of social justice, we begin to take a look at the problems and issues facing us in our own communities, the nation and finally the world, and we begin to ask questions such as,

- "Why is there so much unemployment in our area?"
- "Why are there so many poor in our community?"
- "How will the deforestation of our rain forests affect our global climate?" etc.

Very often when you are performing social service, you also become involved in solving the problem which created the need in the first place, and the two are closely related and often blend together. An example of this would be, someone comes to you and tells you he/she has no food, because he/she lost their job recently. You may know of an employer looking to hire someone right away for a job requiring little or no skills. You give that person food, then place that person in touch with the employer. You then would have solved both problems for that person.

(a) The immediate need of food through an act of charity (social service) and

(b) you would have corrected the problem which created and perpetuated the need. (social justice).

The Social Mission of the Catholic Church therefore revolves around two areas:

1. Social Service (Charity) Respond to the effects of a problem
2. Social Justice Respond to the cause of the problem

## **The Four Main Aspects of Social Justice**

### **1.SOLIDARITY**

Living as though other people and living things matter. Examples of this would be:

- FASTING in solidarity with the hungry, the oppressed etc
- LIVING SIMPLY. Do I really need all those gadgets coming out in the stores? Recycling where you can; being a good steward of all our natural resources and of our planet that God has given us.
- PRAYING for the poor, the homeless, for an end to discrimination, etc.

### **2.EDUCATION**

We are obligated to educate ourselves and others about social justice. Read all you can about the subject. Study all you can about all the social issues facing us in the world today. Spread the word about these issues.

Examples :Global Warming, the natural disasters, child labour, the death penalty, oppressed and persecuted Christians in the Sudan etc. ....everything!

### **3.COMMUNITY ORGANIZING**

- Get involved in the community! Join or start a food pantry.
- Start a neighborhood watch program if one is needed.
- Start or join a group in your parish that studies the issues of the community/world and decides what can be done about the problems facing us.
- Start a volunteer voter registration group.
- Organize the community in consolidating the efforts of giving its help to the poor. Join Habitat for Humanity etc. etc. ...Just do it!

### **4.ADVOCACY**

This is giving a voice to those who have no voice, that is, the poor, the sick, the shut in, the unborn, the dying, the disadvantaged, the immigrants, those imprisoned, the homeless, racial minorities etc. We are called to speak out!

Write a letter to the editor, join a march, call your Local Government Councilors and let them know how you feel. Very often legislation gets passed to the disadvantage of many, because the elected official simply didn't know how people feel about the subject. This is because no one bothered to call!

### **Points To Remember**

- **We are the Church! You** are the Salt of the Earth. The Light of the World. We are called by Christ to let our light shine forth! Matt 5:13-16
- It is not enough to come to church on Sunday to be saved. To know about a social evil and do nothing is a sin of omission. Matt 25:31-46, James 3:14-20. Parable of the last judgement
- We shall be judged by what we have done for the "least of these"
- To those who say but this is mixing politics with religion, I can't do that! I say the following: We owe our allegiance to God before we owe it to our country and as Christians we are called to **Live** the Gospel in every aspect of our daily lives.
- "Those who shut their ears to the cry of the poor, will themselves call and not be heard." Proverbs 21:13
- James 2:14-24 -Faith without good works is a dead faith
- Exodus:  
Moses didn't ask the Egyptians for better working conditions, he demanded that they change the system and let his people go.

### ***Social Justice Prayer+***

*Almighty and eternal God, may your grace enkindle in all of us a love for the many unfortunate people whom poverty and misery reduce to a condition of life unworthy of human beings. Arouse in the hearts of those who call you Father a hunger and thirst for social justice and for fraternal charity in deeds and in truth.*

*Grant, O Lord, peace to souls, peace to families, peace to our country and peace among nations. Amen*

In conclusion, let us start seeing our community, our world through social justice lens, caring for our brothers and sisters and living the beatitudes.

## **WHAT CAN WE DO IN OUR COMMUNITY?**

Blessings.

### **\* July 2013: Report of Dianne Wells, Parish Link Coordinator for the Central and Suburban Vicariates**

TOTAL NO. OF PARISHES: 15

NO. OF PARISHES VISITED THIS MONTH: 8

NATURE OF VISIT: To schedule introductory meetings with Parish Priests to determine on-going Social Justice activities within the Parish and outline support services available through the Social Justice Commission to promote and implement Synod Resolutions.

TRAINING: NIL.

MEETINGS- 8

1. NATURE OF MEETING: To schedule introductory meetings with Parish Priests to determine on-going Social Justice activities within the Parish and outline support services available through the Social Justice Commission to promote and implement Synod Resolutions.

Parishes visited – Tunapuna, St. Joseph, Santa Cruz, Maracas Valley, Bourg Mulatresse, Barataria, Couva, Tortuga

NO. OF PARISHES ATTENDING: Individual meetings with Parish Priests.

Existing SJ Status:

Of the many Parishes visited, St. Joseph, Bourg Mulatresse had dedicated Social Justice Committees. San Juan/Mt. Lambert, have ongoing support programs which assisted Parishioners, informally. What existed in the majority of areas was an

assigned person who would deal with SJ matters among many others, but no committee specifically assigned to this priority item.

One of the major barriers to the lack of a SJ team, was the lack of understanding about the role and function of this priority item, with persons visiting the Parish Priest personally, for assistance, in the absence of a SJ team. There was also an understanding that “soup kitchen,” food drives were social justice initiatives. In many areas The SVP committees were seen as Social Justice.

Mt. Lambert/San Juan and St. Joseph had existing skill databases of parishioners and provided Legal Aid, National Insurance, Financial, Bereavement and other services to its members. Couva and Tabaquite held Financial Planning sessions for its parishioners.

In so many of the Parishes the common complaint was the level of poverty which existed and that issues of inadequate housing and health care remained critical areas for intervention. In many Parishes, the elderly formed a major part of the congregation and living as they do on a fixed income, they depended on “CDAP” for medical supplies and this was not always available. Tabaquite, Tortuga, Santa Cruz and even San Juan were on a continuous food drive to assist parishioners.

Interestingly though, in the Parishes where there were largely east Indian Communities, housing was not a front burner issue, as most persons owned or inherited the land on which they lived.

### Moving Forward

- 1) San Juan, Tabaquite, Carapichaima and Bourg Mulatresse indicated an interest for sensitization session for parishioners.

Tabaquite – invitation to participate in Parish Strategic Planning Session in September

Carapichaima and San Juan – Follow up training sessions on SJ

Bourg Mulatresse and Tortuga – Intro session to Parish Council

Tortuga – Poverty Alleviation, Community Investment initiatives/ Capacity Building

- 2) To arrange meeting with Parish Councils to start/review the introduction of SJ committees within the priority area.

Met with: Andy Singh – Couva

Donna De leon – Tabaquite

Fitzroy Rafael – Carapichaima

Cheridan Quash – Bourg Mulatresse

To review plans and calendars for the parish and look at introducing support services from SJ.

## **OTHER**

- 1) Hospital Visit

Visited Mt. Hope Hospital with Father Alexander to visit a patient as per request. In a continued update from Miss. Kingston, the apparent lack of care stemmed from the fact that he is a mental illness case and was behaving rather badly as he had stopped taking his meds. A review was done on his case and based on that result, he has been prescribed medication and once the head wounds become manageable, they may recommend transfer to St. Anns Hospital.

There seems to be some wounded egos with allegations about funding and care, which calls for sensitive intervention.

- 2) Ask Why Television program

Worked with Stephanie Belle and Ryan Molligan to prepare them for participation on CCSJ's "Ask Why" program.

Participated in the program with Stephanie and Ryan.

### 3) Reflection on parables

Coordinated reflection in Maloney Church of the Incarnation on Reflection of the Parables. This ended up becoming a six week study program, held at church every Wednesday to the end of August. These sessions were facilitated by visiting priest, Fr. Patrick Alexander.

*Remember in this life that we have a responsibility to live a culture of care, compassion and concern for all life. In so doing difficult moments become an opportunity for growth and faith"*

### **PROJECTIONS AND TARGETS**

Edit teaching material from CST to include local information for use in SJ training

Schedule training sessions with Parishes where there is no SJ committees

Provide support for those areas where programs already exist

Disseminate "Two Feet" SJ information.

Make available to parishes DVD's, brochures etc on SJ

**\* August 2013: Report of Dianne Wells, Parish Link Coordinator for the Central and Suburban Vicariate**

TOTAL NO. OF PARISHES: 15

NO. OF PARISHES VISITED THIS MONTH: 7

5. NATURE OF VISIT: To provide ongoing SJ support for parishes
6. Introduce training material based on needs of community. Dropped off SJ brochures
7. Create awareness on Social conversations which allow parishioners to have a voice and or understanding of critical issues
8. Understand community needs to help the parish implement social initiatives



9. Start Archbishop Appeal and RFLW sensitization

TRAINING:NIL

MEETINGS- 8

2. NATURE OF MEETING: Suburban Vicariate

NO. OF PARISHES ATTENDING: 9 – St. Joseph, Tunapuna, St. Augustine, Bourg Mulatresse, San Juan

NO. OF PEOPLE ATTENDING: 12

OVERALL EVALUATION:

Suburban Vicariate meeting – presentation on Archbishop Appeal, CCSJ including RFLW

Reviewed job description of SJ committee as priority item

Created a subcommittee to deal with SJ implementation within suburban vicariate – Kendall Wilson, Carolyn Skerritt, myself and Fr. Warner. Initial task to do needs analysis and create a skill database within parish to determine what assistance can be developed for parishioners.

Parishes visited – Tunapuna, San Juan, Bourg Mulatresse, Couva, Tortuga, Tabaquite, Santa Cruz, Barataria, Maracas

OTHER

4) Faith Based Organisations (FBO) – United Nations

Attended three meetings with Gale Oxley and FBO team in an effort to create a voice and inclusion of community groups within the national agenda. The first meeting was for FBO's, the second for CBO's and the third was to work on a position paper/proposal for submission to The Ministry of Diversification.

5) Arranged Intercession Mass at Couva Children's Home with Frs. Stoute and George.

- 6) Attended meetings with Archbishop Appeal committee to review outreach for all parishes as part of the national campaign
- 7) Met with Joanne Lodge to review strategy and point persons for Appeal Fund parish visits
- 8) Visited parishes above to make arrangements for weekend Appeal Fund outreach, as well as follow up re training and needs analysis for communities.

*Remember in this life that we have a responsibility to live a culture of care, compassion and concern for all life. In so doing difficult moments become an opportunity for growth and faith"*

## PROJECTIONS AND TARGETS

Disseminate teaching material from CST to include local information for use in SJ training

Schedule training sessions with Parishes where there is no SJ committees

Provide support for those areas where programs already exist

Disseminate "Two Feet" SJ information.

Make available to parishes DVD's, brochures etc on SJ

**\* September 2013: Report of Dianne Wells, Parish Link Coordinator for the Central and Suburban Vicariate**

TOTAL NO. OF PARISHES: 15

NO. OF PARISHES VISITED THIS MONTH: 12

1. NATURE OF VISIT: To provide ongoing SJ support for parishes
2. Archbishop Appeal campaign
3. Plan RFLW

4. Sensitise parishioners, schools, FBO's and CBO's on Death Penalty Conference
5. Create awareness on Social conversations which allow parishioners to have a voice and or understanding of critical issues
6. Understand community needs to help the parish implement social initiatives
7. Attended Mass at Mayo, Tabaquite and Mt. Lambert
8. Held meetings with teachers at Mayo RC, Caratal RC re SJ issues at schools

TRAINING NIL – Training Scheduled for September at Tabaquite was deferred and replaced with training on Stewardship given the Appeal Fund campaign

MEETINGS- 4

9. NATURE OF MEETING: Mayo RC Church (2 meetings)

NO. OF PARISHES ATTENDING: 1 – Combined Mayo, Corosal communities

NO. OF PEOPLE ATTENDING: 6 persons attended meeting 12 persons attended meeting 2

OVERALL EVALUATION:

Meeting at Mayo RC was held to deal with some of the social challenges in the area and Fr. Hall asked that persons bring these cases to the table so that an action plan for that “Two feet” assistance to be provided.

Two family cases were brought to the attention of the committee:

Ms. Arlene Nicholas ( Single mother, terminally ill, mother of five, living in dangerous and unsanitary conditions. She is unable to work as she is diagnosed with stage 4 cancer).

Maria Thomas ( Maria lives in a lonely area, without water or electricity, in dilapidated wooden home. She is 20 years old, unemployed and lives alone with her father, who drinks alcohol almost constantly and can be abusive. Maria goes to

RC church regularly, received the Sacrament of Holy Communion, but is yet to be confirmed).

The second meeting was to meet with family of Arlene Nicholas to make arrangements to assist the family and look at legal implications for the care of her children in the event of her death.

We were able to find employment for Maria and provided her with cash to obtain working clothes. She has since been enrolled in Confirmation class and she is also receiving lessons from a teacher at Mayo RC in math, so she can resit the CXC examination.

Met with Tabaquite, St Augustine, Mt. Lambert, Santa Cruz, Bourg Mulatresse, Tortuga, Couva, to distribute Appeal Fund campaign material, RFLW posters and to develop plans for same.

#### OTHER

1. Faith Based Organisations (FBO) – United Nations

Follow up re above to arrange regional meetings for FBO's and CBO's

2. Liaise with Sherma Foster to present SJ talk on September 28, 2013 at St. Joseph

3. Disseminated information to schools on RFLW and Essay Competition

4. Disseminated information to FBO's and CBO's registered with Energy Chamber and UN NGO's re Death penalty Conference

5. Sent information to schools with Sixth Forms re attendance at Death Penalty Conference

6. Suggestions for RFLW includes:

a) procession after Mass on October 06 in communities, with posters reflecting the themes from the RFLW flyer

b) Weekly prayer meeting in each parish to focus on one of the issues identified in the flyer

- c) Poetry, rapso, song competition among youths in the parish
- d) In parishes with satellite communities, Tortuga, Tabaquite, Carapichaima there will be a debate knock out competition on Pro-Life and Death penalty.

*Remember in this life that we have a responsibility to live a culture of care, compassion and concern for all life. In so doing difficult moments become an opportunity for growth and faith"*

## PROJECTIONS AND TARGETS

Disseminate teaching material from CST to include local information for use in SJ training Schedule training sessions with Parishes where there is no SJ committees

Provide support for those areas where programs already exist

Disseminate "Two Feet" SJ information.

Make available to parishes DVD's, brochures etc on SJ

## **\* October 2013: Report of Dianne Wells, Parish Link Coordinator for the Central and Suburban Vicariates**

TOTAL NO. OF PARISHES: 15

NO. OF PARISHES VISITED THIS MONTH: 5

1. NATURE OF VISIT: To provide ongoing SJ support for parishes
2. Archbishop Appeal campaign ( Maracas St. Joseph and Santa Cruz)
3. Create awareness on Social conversations which allow parishioners to have a voice and or understanding of critical issues ( Strategic Plan Retreat)
4. Understand community needs to help the parish implement social initiatives
5. Attended Vicariate meeting Suburban Area

6. Met with Sheila Charles of Childhood Missionary Society to look at ways of assisting with implementation of the project in schools throughout the suburban region. The theme of the program is: Children Helping Children

TRAINING NIL – Training/ Retreat proposed for November to look at SJ training, ongoing activities and plans for 2014.

MEETINGS - 5

NATURE OF MEETING: Suburban Vicariate at St. Charles RC Tunapuna.

NO. OF PARISHES ATTENDING: 7 – Barataria, St. Augustine, Tunapuna, St. Joseph, Bourg Mulatresse, San Juan/Mt. Lambert, Maracas St. Joseph, Curepe, Malick.

NO. OF PEOPLE ATTENDING: 11

NATURE OF MEETING: Maracas St. Joseph – Archbishop Appeal and CCSJ

NO. OF PEOPLE ATTENDING: 3

NATURE OF MEETING: Santa Cruz– Archbishop Appeal and CCSJ

NO. OF PEOPLE ATTENDING: 4

NATURE OF MEETING: Gasparillo - Fr Hall re Strategic Planning Retreat

NO. OF PEOPLE ATTENDING: 4

NATURE OF MEETING: Tabaquite – Reena De Leon re Strategic Planning Retreat

NO. OF PEOPLE ATTENDING: 3

OVERALL EVALUATION:

Meeting at Maracas and Santa Cruz was to encourage the Parish Priest to start Archbishop Appeal and look at SJ programs in the community and proposed plans for retreat and 2014

Meeting at Gasparillo and Tabaquite revolved around proposed retreat. Looking at possible date of November 23, 2013.

Continued follow up re Ms. Nicholas in Mayo to assist family with foodstuff and identify alternate accommodations.

#### OTHER

7. Liaise with Sheila Charles re Childhood Missionaries for follow up in Santa Cruz, Malick Girls

*Remember in this life that we have a responsibility to live a culture of care, compassion and concern for all life. In so doing difficult moments become an opportunity for growth and faith"*

#### PROJECTIONS AND TARGETS

Disseminate teaching material from CST to include local information for use in SJ training

Schedule training sessions with Parishes where there is no SJ committees

Provide support for those areas where programs already exist

Disseminate "Two Feet" SJ information.

Make available to parishes DVD's, brochures etc on SJ

**\* November 2013: Report of Dianne Wells, Parish Link Coordinator for the Central and Suburban Vicariates**

TOTAL NO. OF PARISHES: 15

NO. OF PARISHES VISITED THIS MONTH: 3

NATURE OF VISIT: To provide ongoing SJ support for parishes

Archbishop Appeal campaign ( Maracas St. Joseph and Santa Cruz)

Create awareness on Social conversations which allow parishioners to have a voice and or understanding of critical issues ( Strategic Plan Retreat)

Understand community needs to help the parish implement social initiatives - Mayo

Attended Ministry of Social development HIV Awareness Conference

Met with Sheila Charles of Childhood Missionary Society to look at ways of assisting with implementation of the project in schools throughout the suburban region. The theme of the program is: Children Helping Children

TRAINING NIL – Training/ Retreat proposed for November to look at SJ training, ongoing activities and plans for 2014.

MEETINGS- 5

NATURE OF MEETING: Mayo/ Gasparillo - School Blessing

NO. OF PARISHES ATTENDING: 2 – Tortuga, Gasparillo

NO. OF PEOPLE ATTENDING: 5

NATURE OF MEETING: Mayo – Assistance to Ann Marie Callender

NATURE OF MEETING: Mt. Lambert – Retreat and attended sessions leading to Feast of Christ the King

NO. OF PEOPLE ATTENDING: 3

OVERALL EVALUATION:

Meeting at Gasparillo and Tabaquite revolved around proposed retreat. Looking at possible date of November 23, 2013.

Continued follow up re Ms. Nicholas in Mayo to assist family with foodstuff and identify alternate accommodations.



## OTHER

8. Liaise with Sheila Charles re Childhood Missionaries for follow up in Central Vicariate
9. Organizing to create awareness session during Ten Days of Activism
10. Liaised with Fr. Matthew re possible location for SJ retreat as Central & Suburban would like to have one retreat together.

*Remember in this life that we have a responsibility to live a culture of care, compassion and concern for all life. In so doing difficult moments become an opportunity for growth and faith"*

PROJECTIONS AND TARGETS: Disseminate teaching material from CST to include local information for use in SJ training

Schedule training sessions with Parishes where there is no SJ committees

Provide support for those areas where programs already exist

Disseminate "Two Feet" SJ information.

Make available to parishes DVD's, brochures etc on SJ

CHALLENGES: \_Parishes are over extended at this time with events of their own and not getting the expected buy-in.

### **December 2013: Report of Dianne Wells, Parish Link Coordinator for the Central and Suburban Vicariates**

Activities for December included: Vicariate meeting on December 20, Toy Drive in Gasparillo, visiting the sick in Mayo, and holding meeting with victims of abuse in Mayo.

(Dianne was indisposed during part of December)

## **August to September 2013: Report of Mikkel Trestrail, Parish Link Coordinator for the Northern Vicariate & Tobago**

TOTAL NO. OF PARISHES: 16

### **1. Meetings with Parish Priests**

Msgr. Alexander- The St. Peter's parish in Caranage does not have a Social Justice Committee but the topic of social justice is important to Msgr., and he does have an interest in helping shape a spirituality of justice in the entire parish.

We agreed on the following:

- The parish office will supply me with all of the contact information for the leaders of all of the groups in the parish.
- That a prayer intention for weekend Masses can be submitted each week that focuses on a social justice theme to help to express social justice in the liturgy.
- I will be invited to speak to the parish council about social justice and to begin shaping how the parish can respond to the needs of the community.

Fr. Dwight Merrick- the Laventille Pastoral Area is in need of support in starting a Social Justice Committee for youth. Fr. Merrick has selected a young man who will lead this ministry and would like my support in getting this off of the ground. We have discussed a way forward with respect to training and projects that this group will need to focus on in the community.

We agreed on the following:

- The parish office will supply me with all of the contact information for all of the various groups in the pastoral area.
- That a prayer intention for weekend Masses can be submitted each week that focuses on a social justice theme to help to express social justice in the liturgy.

- That I will assist the new ministry in getting off the ground through a process of training of its leaders and other additional support.

Fr. Steve Duncan- There is no established Social Justice Committee in the St. Joseph's parish. Tobago also presents the problem of getting persons to turn out to additional events. As a result of this Fr. Steve would like to have training for the parish that will be able to take place as part of their established meetings.

We agreed on the following:

- The parish office will supply me with all of the contact information for the leaders of all of the groups in the parish.
- That a prayer intention for weekend Masses can be submitted each week that focuses on a social justice theme to help to express social justice in the liturgy.
- Training will be organized for the parish, and possibly the vicariate after my meeting with those responsible for the Sacred Heart parish.
- I will discuss the selection of a fixed time for Respect for Life Week with the commission, so that this can be put into the parish calendar.

Other Priests- Brief conversations were held with the Parish Priests of Petit Valley, Diego Martin, Blanchisseuse, and St. Ann's about my role, and meetings for these and all other parishes will be

scheduled in October.

## **2. Northern Vicariate Meeting**

On September 10th I was able to attend the meeting of all of the vicariate representatives to introduce myself and my role with CCSJ. This will be one of my main places for communicating with the parishes on a regular basis. The next meeting will be held on November 12th 2013.

### **3. Consultation on National Strategy for Deportees to Trinidad and Tobago:**

I attended the session along with Leela and Joanne to represent the Church's position on this issue, and to help to improve the strategy for dealing with deportees to our country. I was able to take part in the discussion about the individual needs of deportees and how the process of deportation can be improved.

### **4. St. Ann's RC School**

Sadie Murrel requested the support of the commission in order to assist with an intervention to support the parents of children within their community, especially the parents of the Std 4 and 5 of the St. Ann's RC School. I attended their meeting, and helped to shape their vision for working with the parents and

students that they plan to serve. I also helped to organize with the Archdiocesan Family Life Commission to introduce the parents to the Common Sense Parenting programme, and I will continue to support this initiative in this parish and school.

### **5. Couples for Christ Strategic Planning for 2014**

I was contacted by Mr. Earl Taylor of the St. John's parish. I have become involved with helping the CFC ministry in understanding how they can help to act on behalf of justice, assist the poor, and promote a better respect for life in 2014. I have supplied them with material for their reflection at a meeting on

September 28th 2013, and I will also attend their meeting on November 2nd 2013 to help solidify their plans.

### **6. Respect for Life Week**

Adorare Vigil- I have been working with Ms. Shenelle Boyce, the coordinator for the Reach Young Adults Ministry to plan an overnight vigil for young adults at the St. Ann's RC Church on the night of October 4th 2013. The night will be a combination of silent prayer and communal prayer for a greater respect for life. The closing liturgy will be celebrated by Msgr. John Persad at 5:30AM.

### **Areas for possible CCSJ involvement:**

- Assistance with the printing of pictures that reflect social justice topics that will also have quotes about our role in these issues for reflection during the night.
- Preparing and leading rosary meditations on various life issues.
- Assistance with refreshments.
- Preparing the intercessions for the closing liturgy.
- Promotion in parishes through our Parish Link Coordinators.

Promotion of Respect for Life Week Events- I have emailed and called the Catholic Secondary Schools in the Northern vicariate to get students and teachers to attend the conference on the death penalty. I will also be working on promoting all of the other RFLW events especially the session with Sr. Juliet in the

parishes in the vicariate.

Networking meetings, planning meetings

### **October 2013: Report of Mikkil Trestrail, Parish Link Coordinator for the Northern Vicariate & Tobago**

TOTAL NO. OF PARISHES: 16

NO. OF PARISHES VISITED THIS MONTH: 2

NATURE OF VISIT: Respect for Life Week events, meeting with parents, and work with Lions Club

#### **MEETINGS**

9th October- St. Finbar's Parish Hall

NATURE OF MEETING: Meeting with parents of the religion classes at La Puerta Government RC Primary

NO. OF PARISHES ATTENDING: 1

NO. OF PEOPLE ATTENDING: 15

OVERALL EVALUATION: The theme focused on the Year of Faith, and Mary's example as a model parent. It was well received and arrangements are being made for follow-up sessions with the parents next year.

OTHER

4th - 5th October: St. Ann's Parish

Nature: Overnight Vigil for young adults

NO. OF PARISHES ATTENDING: 5

NO. OF PEOPLE ATTENDING: 15 over the course of the night

OVERALL EVALUATION: The vigil was able to engage those attending in a reflection on the call to promote life, and the various prayer activities helped to highlight the various issues related to Respect for Life. The event suffered from a low turnout in spite of advertising.

9th October- St. Finbar's Parish Hall

Nature: CCSJ Teaching on morals and virtues from the Catechism and their implementation

NO. OF PARISHES ATTENDING: not certain

NO. OF PEOPLE ATTENDING: approx. 20

OVERALL EVALUATION: The night was filled with great content, but a poor turnout. Having it filmed was a great idea.

15th October- Lion's Club- Central Port of Spain

Nature: a talk in commemoration of World Sight Day

NO. OF PERSONS ATTENDING: 40

OVERALL EVALUATION: Persons were exposed to various ways that they as individuals and as the Lions group could assist persons who are blind or visually impaired. The points were well received and a few persons showed interest in assisting various associations that serve the blind. This was also a good connection for establishing a relationship with the club.

22nd October- Ask Why Programme

OVERALL EVALUATION: I believe the programme was successful. I got positive feedback about it, and Nadine did a good job as the anchor.

PROJECTIONS AND TARGETS

It was my hope to complete parish meetings and follow up with the St. Ann's parish group that asked me to assist them to support the parents and students of St. Ann's RC School. They however have decided to host the Common Sense Parenting Programme, and will pause on the home-work supervision and mentoring programme at this time. As mentioned the Respect for Life events were successfully planned, but suffered from poor turnout.

CHALLENGES: Some of the meetings with priests had to be postponed due to problems with scheduling.

**November 2013: Report of Mikkell Trestrail, Parish Link Coordinator for the Northern Vicariate & Tobago**

TOTAL NO. OF PARISHES: 16

NO. OF PARISHES VISITED THIS MONTH: 0

OTHER

10th November- Cascadia Hotel

National Awards for Outstanding Fatherhood

In commemoration of International Men's day eleven (11) men were awarded for their contribution to society and their families are fathers. From the Northern Vicariate four (4) men were recognized:

J Douglas Walker- St. Ann's Parish

Fr. Dwight Merrick- Laventille/Morvant Pastoral Area

Michael Andrew- Laventille/Morvant Pastoral Area

Alwin Hunte- For his work at various centres in Port of Spain

Videos were made of each person that can be used to promote healthy fatherhood.

18th November- Meeting with Leela

Meeting with Leela to discuss particular issues in charting the way forward

OVERALL EVALUATION: issues discussed were:

- effective use of the media to foster a social justice culture and presence, and the development of

new resources for 2014.

- development of the Facebook page which will resume in Dec. with the Help of Jo-Ann

- the purchase of a video camera and possibly digital recorder to help capture CCSJ moments for the FB page and distribution on Trinity TV

World Human Rights Day Panel Discussion

I have contacted the major Secondary Schools and are working with them to have students and teachers present on the 10th.

I am also in dialogue with the vicariate reps for each parish on activities for the 10th.



## PROJECTIONS AND TARGETS

This month I planned to continue meeting with the parishes but did not realize this goal. This month was used to continue gathering the database from each of the parishes for the various groups within each parish. Thus far only two (2) parishes have responded with their listings. The meeting with the representative from the Laventille/Morvant Pastoral Area to start the youth social justice group was postponed til December. The names of the new Vicariate Link Coordinators were communicated to me last week, and we shall be meeting in early December to plan effectively for the Northern Vicariate.

CHALLENGES: This month I suffered three major, personal setbacks that did not allow for me to meet my targets for this month. Another major challenge faced that came from feedback of persons is the number of events and happenings in the diocese, and the need to communicate with more notice the various expectations from our commission.

### **December 2013: Report of Mikkell Trestrail, Parish Link Coordinator for the Northern Vicariate & Tobago**

TOTAL NO. OF PARISHES: 16

6:00pm – 7:00pm 17 December 2013—St. Dominic’s MLPA

NATURE OF MEETING: Presentation on Ideas for a Social Justice Youth group and its scope

NO. OF PARISHES ATTENDING: 1

NO. OF PEOPLE ATTENDING: 12

OVERALL EVALUATION: the leaders of the various confirmation groups and youth ministries in the pastoral area were present. The material presented on the nature of social justice and the presentation on see, judge, act was well received, and suggestions were made for beginning training, for both the leaders and the youth was discussed

9:00pm – 9:20pm 17th December 2013- Skype meeting with Northern Vicariate Link Coordinator

**NATURE OF MEETING:** An introductory meeting to plan how a collaborative effort can be organized to implement the 3rd pastoral priority.

**OVERALL EVALUATION:** The meeting was simple, and Deacon Kester requested some more time to settle into the post before we could make solid plans.

18th December 2013- CCSJ Meeting and Christmas dinner

**OTHER**

10th December 2013- World Human Rights Day Panel Discussion

Arrangements were made for Corpus Christi College and South East Secondary to attend. In spite of speaking with teachers up to the day before they did not turn up.

13 December 2013- St. Ann's Christmas dinner for parents

I attended the dinner for the parents of St. Ann's Primary that the parish group have been working with to run the Common Sense Parenting Programme. I also presented on opportunities for after-school support for their children and clinical testing for students with difficulties.

December 2013- Organizing for Christmas donations to persons and homes

In collaboration with Jo Ann I arranged for hampers to be donated to four persons recommended by a staff member of the Trinidad and Tobago Blind Welfare Association. Jo-Ann arranged for the collection and delivery of four hampers, in south and central, and I did the same for the 1 person in

Diego Martin.

Christ Child Convalescent Home

I arranged with a family for them to visit and donate items to the home on December 30th 2013. This was both a learning experience for the children of the family, and an opportunity for the home to receive a donation.

Mary Care Centre

Coordinated for lunch and dinner, along with toys and other items to be donated to this home on

December 30th 2013.

## PROJECTIONS AND TARGETS

Meeting to prepare for training in MLPA,

Meetings with Parish Priest

## CHALLENGES

During this period it proved to be difficult to arrange meetings with priests.

## APPENDIX III

### Website statistics

November 14, 2014, 12:23 pm

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2009							3	36	12	44	538	605	1,238
2010	430	555	616	540	411	423	688	831	1,239	833	981	779	8,326
2011	858	896	854	903	651	894	1,273	1,275	1,104	1,146	1,776	1,055	12,685
2012	1,491	1,858	1,906	1,068	1,477	1,389	1,752	1,239	1,948	1,965	1,275	899	18,267
2013	1,389	1,226	1,313	1,437	1,439	1,006	1,226	917	1,019	1,362	1,155	992	14,481
2014	1,001	1,059	1,350	962	1,038	918	853	1,425	1,448	1,320	533		11,907

### Average per Day

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Overall
2009							0	1	0	1	18	20	8
2010	14	20	20	18	13	14	22	27	41	27	33	25	23
2011	28	32	28	30	21	30	41	41	37	37	59	34	35
2012	48	64	61	36	48	46	57	40	65	63	43	29	50
2013	45	44	42	48	46	34	40	30	34	44	39	32	40
2014	32	38	44	32	33	31	28	46	48	43	40		38

### Recent Weeks