Notes from Justice Peace & Reconciliation Commission Meeting

November 13, 2019

Provincialate Offices

**Present:** Fr. Guy Blair via phone, Fr. Bob Bossie, Fr. John Czyzynski, Fr. Wayne Jenkins, Mark Peters, Fr. Ed Zemlik. Excused: Fr. Juan Carlos Castaneda

**Prayer:** John led us in a prayer for just and humane immigration reform, and we especially prayed for Juancho that his situation is resolved and he can return to the U.S.

**Director’s Report:** Mark reported on the Seventh Generation Interfaith Coalition for Responsible Investment (SGI) annual event and his continued leading of their dialogue with Macy’s. The recent SEC (Security and Exchange Commission) decision could wreak havoc on SGI and ICCR’s (Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility) ability to file shareholder resolutions, so hoping it can be stopped. Otherwise his full time has been given to the Catholic Coalition for Migrants and Refugees the past six months, and likely will continue at a high level for some time to come as the group attempts to attract more members, get into parishes to do education, lobby our elected officials and otherwise raise Catholic voices in support of just and humane immigration policies.

**Review of September meeting with Fr. Gomez, Rector of SHSST:** We were gratified by Fr. Raul’s willingness to meet with us and his encouragement of us to follow up with Fr. Ziggy and John Olesnavage. Mark will try to set up a meeting with them and Patrick Russell, Academic Dean to see if we can get “a seat at table” when decisions are made about integrating social justice into the curriculum or life of the seminary. We also hope to meet with the SCJ Formators, and Ed agreed to talk with Fr. Duy.

**CMSM JPIC Gathering:** Ed & Guy & Mark are interested in attending the event in Las Cruces in March; Mark will get them more info and they will make a decision by our next meeting. Mark will also send the commission info about the Ecumenical Advocacy Days’ schedule for its conference in April focused on migration and the climate crisis.

**Election 2020:** We will talk to Fr. Ed about a date in late January/February when we can talk with him about how to approach the November election.

**Old Business:** Mark will re-send the FAIR article on the Climate Crisis and its connection to the migration crisis and ask for a decision about whether and how to use it in the Province. We further discussed Bob’s ideas about retrofitting buildings and reducing our carbon footprint; these would require conversations with the Finance Commission and Dn. David. Guy suggested that IT WAS EASY FOR US TO RETROFIT OUR BUILDINGS BECAUSE WE HAVE THE FINANCES TO DO SO BUT WHAT ABOUT THE POOR; AND SHOULD WE USE THIS MONEY TO HELP THE POOR? We will pick up this discussion on our next phone call.

**New Business:** Suggest having climate crisis speaker at June Assembly or Dehon Lecture; Mark will talk to planners. Wayne shared the new General Plan. Mark will touch base with Jack Kurps about SHSM as we come up on the two year anniversary of our immigration formation session.

**Joint Meeting with North American Migration Committee:** At 2 PM, we joined the NAMC members to talk about the overlapping roles of both groups (and now, also including the Canadian Region Immigration Committee) on the issue of immigration. Much of our conversation was around the topic of “advocacy.” We agreed that legislative advocacy is unique to each country, and therefore the U.S. JPR Commission will handle U.S. legislation and it is up to the CRIC to decide whether or how to do this in Canada. But we agreed that advocacy means more than legislative “lobbying,” and that there are other ways to “speak out” on behalf of migrants and immigration reform that we could do together. Education on the global migration crisis could be another area of overlap or possible collaboration. We agreed to have one joint meeting at the beginning of each year to better communicate with each other and better serve the cause of justice for immigrants.

**Next Meeting:** Phone “Call-In” meeting on Friday, Dec. 13 from 10:45-11:15 AM. Next quarterly meeting will be Feb. 6-7 at the Provincialate Offices, combined with a joint meeting with the NAMC. Bob Bossie will be responsible for prayer.

Appendix: Notes from Dec. 13 Joint NAMC/JPRC Meeting, provided by Lily Ooi

* **US JPR (Justice, Peace and Reconciliation) Commission/NAMC Joint Session**
	+ NAMC Members: Jan de Jong, Richard (Mac) MacDonald, Peter McKenna, Lily Ooi, Mark Peters, Tony Russo, Diego Diaz (currently in Argentina)
	+ Initially, the North American ad hoc Committee on Immigration was established at the 2013 North American Continental Conference and was re-mandated as NAMC at the CA/US Assembly in 2017. Key objectives include: encouraging individual members and local communities to be personally involved with migrants, refugees, undocumented, etc. in the places they reside --- one of the ways of doing so is by increasing education and awareness of migration
	+ JPR Members: Mark Peters, John Czyzynski, Wayne Jenkins, Bob Bossie, Ed Zemlik, Guy Blair (joined via telephone) and Juan Carlos Casteneda (currently in Columbia)
	+ The Justice and Peace Commission was established by a Provincial Chapter during the 1970s with its name eventually changed to Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC). Then in 2015, the name was changed to Justice Peace and Reconciliation (JPR) with a primary focus on immigration justice. In 2017, the Provincial Council gave it a secondary focus on climate change. Economic justice has been a priority going back to Fr. Dehon
	+ Note: The Regional Council of Canada established the Region of Canada Immigration Committee, which focusses on working with the members of Canadian SCJ communities and educating the Canadian SCJ communities and the parishes/ministries entrusted to the care of its members.
* Today was the first joint meeting of the US Province JPR and NAMC. Objective(s):
	+ Clarify roles and objectives of the two groups
	+ Identify opportunities to leverage activities of the two groups and provide support where/when needed
	+ Ensure the two groups are aligned in terms of messaging and direction so that it is clear what is being asked of/communicated to the SCJ community
	+ **Advocacy**
	+ Advocacy is broader than ‘political lobbying’ – it is any effort to speak out on behalf of the voiceless. It supports our efforts towards social ministry – namely, direct service to the poor and those in need; and working towards systemic/structural change through advocacy, empowerment (helping people help themselves), and justice education (learning about the roots of social problems).
	+ Political lobbying, because it is unique to each country, aligns more with the work of the JPR and the Region of Canada Immigration Committee (RCIC) than NAMC, but awareness of systemic issues is universal and a focus for all groups
		- SCJs must come together collectively rather than be polarized and build on the notion of *See, Judge, Act*, with emphasis on ‘Teaching Dehonians to be Dehonian’ – support the need for social justice
* Need to identify ‘*What do we need to learn, then what do we need to teach?*’
* How can SCJs be more engaged? Both groups have struggled with this challenge

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| **Action Item:*** **Arrange a discussion and training on Advocacy for JPR and NAMC members as part of the February 6, 2020 session**
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