



HERMANAS DE LA CARIDAD  
E VERBO ENCARNADO  SISTERS OF CHARITY OF  
THE INCARNATE WORD

October 2016

## Seeds | *By: Katty Huanuco, CCVI and Jennifer Reyes Lay* |

September has been a month full of opportunities to continue educating ourselves and taking actions which open us to deeper reflection on Human Rights. This focus is in harmony with the calls of Pope Francis to eliminate human trafficking, achieve a true recognition of women in society, and make a serious commitment to our common home, in order to realize a more equitable world without hunger.

We invite you to share with us through our e-mail ([jpics.office@amormeus.org](mailto:jpics.office@amormeus.org)) your experiences that teach us alternative ways to care for life. We also want to thank all of the people who have organized, participated, and/or are participating in formative spaces on the topics of care of creation and human trafficking in your cities. Thank you for taking up our collective responsibility to promote a full and dignified life on a personal level, community level, and societal level.

Our prayers are with everyone in the United States as they near their presidential elections.

## Human Trafficking

**STOP IMPUNITY IN HUMAN TRAFFICKING** - As part of activities for the International Day Against Trafficking (September 23), the Kawsay Network (Consecrated Life against Trafficking in Persons) to which we belong, organized a public event to reject the ruling of judge Villa Stein in the Human Trafficking case in Madre de Dios.

The judge mentioned acquitted Elsa Cjuno, operator of one of the mining sites in Madre de Dios, who is suspected of trafficking workers. And the court found that the charges against her had not been proven by the prosecution. However, the Prosecutor's Office reported that they were not notified of the hearing where the case was. What sparked controversy was that the ruling found that the victim, a 15-year-old, was working 13 hours a day as "chaperone," selling and consuming liquor, but there was no crime of trafficking because the activity did not produce any physical exhaustion. In addition, supposedly when they picked her to work at the bar, the manager did not tell her that she would also be exploited sexually. Then, on only one occasion was she encouraged to perform "passes", which in the jargon of the area means having sex with clients.

In light of all this, religious congregations stood opposite the Palace of Justice (in Peru) to demand justice and reject the impunity shown by many judges when sentencing cases of Human Trafficking. We also prayed for all the victims and we called on the authorities to stop these abuses. On behalf of our congregation, the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word in Lima, the following sisters were present: Ivon Ramirez, CCVI; Katty Huanuco, CCVI and our lay associate Martha Zea.

**RAHAMIM NETWORK AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN MEXICO.** “Rahamim” is a word that translated means “The Bowels of Mercy”. The name of the network “bowels of mercy” is a concrete and courageous response to the criminal violence and insecurity caused by all forms of violation of human rights, which are certainly among the main causes of trafficking in Mexico.

In order to continue educating about the reality of human trafficking and its causes, the Talitha Kum commission from Rome and Latin America, in coordination with the Conference of Major Superiors of Religious in Mexico (CIRM) realized a week long workshop September 18-24th.

During the workshop they covered ways to respond to this crime, ranging from prevention to care for the victims. There were many powerful and moving experiences and stories shared. It is worth mentioning that representatives of over 20 Congregations attended the event, as well as Sr. Carmela Gibaja, representative of Talitha Kum and coordinator for the network in Latin America, trainer Stefano Volpicelle, Sr. Eurides Alves de Oliveira coordinator of the network “Un Grito por la Vida” in Brazil, and Sr. Lourdes Medina Vega representative of CIRM. From our CCVI Congregation sisters Covadonga Suarez and Ofelia Lozano participated.

“It was a rich experience and the beginning of a network here in Mexico,” share Sr. Covadonga. That is because the group of participants felt more and more involved and willing to join in the mission working against human trafficking in Mexico as a collaborative network, because without a doubt this crime is “a sore in the suffering body of Christ” that demands a prophetic response as women religious today.

The religious who participated in the creation of the Network Rahamim pledged themselves: to witness the values of mercy, compassion and freedom; to prevent trafficking by deepening their understanding and further training; to care for those most vulnerable to trafficking and to accompany the victims.

“We were anxiously waiting for this first gathering of Talitha Kum in Mexico and we are confident in the effort and dedication of all the participants to form a network with strong fundamentals that will make the network a powerful voice and an effective agent in the fight against human trafficking in this country where human rights are so often ignored,” wrote the Talitha Kum coordinator Sr. Gabriella Bottani.

**RESPONDING TO THE HEALTH NEEDS OF TRAFFICKING SURVIVORS.** Human trafficking, which is estimated to affect 20.9 million people worldwide, is a serious crime and a violation of human rights. It involves the recruitment and transportation of people – often by the use of force, fraud, deception or coercion – for the purposes of exploitation. People may be exploited for forced sex work, domestic servitude, forced labour in industries such as construction, agriculture, fishing, factory labour, and in forced criminal activity.

Although evidence on health and human trafficking is limited, a systematic review found that human trafficking is associated with high levels of physical and sexual violence prior to and during trafficking and a range of health problems in the post-trafficking period. Studies with survivors identified high prevalence of depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder and symptoms such as headache, fatigue, dizziness, and back and stomach pain. A number of policy and guidance documents describe assistance measures to respond to the needs of trafficked persons, which include medical and psychological care, yet there still appears to be little evidence-based guidance available on how to plan, assess or provide for the health needs of trafficked adults and children. Healthcare professionals believe they have insufficient knowledge and lack confidence about how to respond appropriately to the needs of trafficked people. Recent research in health organizations in areas with high numbers of trafficking victims identified by police in England, suggest that 13 % of health professionals had been in contact with a person that they suspect has been trafficked. Such findings underlie the importance of professionals increasing their preparedness to identify potential cases of human trafficking and make appropriate referrals.

## Care for survivors of human trafficking

Trafficked people may present to healthcare services with multiple physical, psychological, and social care needs. Responding to these needs requires that healthcare professionals adopt trauma-informed and culturally-sensitive approaches to working with victims of trafficking, conduct comprehensive health assessments, and collaborate with a range of agencies, including law enforcement and voluntary support services. Healthcare professionals' ability to provide care and to refer for further support is likely to be affected by the provision of temporary or permanent legal residency ('leave to remain') to survivors of human trafficking and the availability of stable housing, financial, and legal support. Training for healthcare professionals should include information about in-country referral and support options for trafficked people and national reporting requirements, if applicable. At the local level, healthcare professionals should establish clear referral pathways and information-sharing protocols with relevant agencies.

Studies have highlighted the high prevalence and enduring nature of mental health problems among survivors of human trafficking in contact with support services. It is likely that psychological interventions to promote the recovery of trafficked people will need to take account of physical and sexual abuse during - and often prior to - trafficking and to work to stabilize physical and psychological health and to address social needs before commencing trauma-focused therapy. However, no studies were identified that tested the effectiveness of psychological interventions for trafficked people. The acceptability of evidence-based treatments for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and depression - such as cognitive behavioral therapy, narrative exposure therapy, and eye movement desensitization and reprocessing - among trafficked people is uncertain, as is the generalizability of therapies effective for other traumatized groups such as victims of domestic violence and asylum seekers and refugees. Research to investigate the efficacy of psychological interventions for survivors of human trafficking is urgently needed.

## Conclusions

Fundamentally, human trafficking is a criminal form of extreme exploitation and abuse, from which individuals suffer multiple physical, psychological, and sexual and reproductive health problems. To foster recovery from this crime, healthcare professionals must be at the center of responses for survivors. Responding to survivors' needs requires that healthcare professionals adopt trauma-informed and culturally-sensitive approaches, conduct comprehensive health assessments, and participate in a reliable referral network, including law enforcement and voluntary support services. Training for healthcare professionals should include information about in-country referral and support options for trafficked people and national reporting requirements, if applicable. At the local level, healthcare professionals should establish clear referral pathways, trustworthy points of contact and information-sharing protocols with relevant agencies. Further health services research is urgently needed to enable health professionals to fully engage in identifying, referring and caring for victims of trafficking.

## **FREE ONLINE COURSE:** "Ending Slavery: Strategies for Contemporary Global Abolition

**DATE:** Begins October 17 and goes for four weeks.

**COST:** The course is FREE.

**MAIN INSTRUCTOR:** Lead by Kevin Bales, a leading expert in contemporary slavery, the course will cover the most cutting-edge research available. It is a free, online course available to people anywhere in the world.

**CONTENT:** This course will investigate slavery throughout history and in today's world, assess the strategies of past antislavery movements, explore ideas for ending contemporary slavery at the international, national and local levels, and engage with new antislavery solutions to help design a new blueprint for ending slavery.

HOW TO REGISTER: go to blog, click on the link: “Click to register now”  
<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/slavery/1/register>

## Ecology

**SEVEN CATHOLIC INSTITUTIONS TO DIVEST FROM FOSSIL FUELS**— Citing Pope Francis’ encyclical “Laudato Si” on humanity’s relationship with the earth and each other, seven Catholic institutions from around the world said they plan to divest from fossil fuel corporations.

Joining the divestment movement were St. Louis-based SSM Health; Jesuit Fathers of Upper Canada; Missionary Society of St. Columban, based in Hong Kong; Presentation Society of Australia and Papua New Guinea; Daughters of Mary Help of Christians (Salesians) in Italy; Diocese of Umuarama, Brazil; and Federation of Christian Organizations for the International Voluntary Service in Italy.

The organizations join a steadily growing movement that is seeing hundreds of groups worldwide divest from companies involved in the extraction of coal, oil and natural gas in recent years and turning to firms developing renewable energy instead. “It’s important because we’re finally, as a Catholic community, starting to connect the dots between ‘Laudato Si’ and our investment policies,” said Tomas Insua, coordinator of the Global Catholic Climate Movement, which announced the divestment plans Oct. 4, the feast of St. Francis of Assisi.

“We’re very concerned with stressing the level of urgency on this issue and stressing divestment,” said Tomas Insua, head of the Global Catholic Climate Movement. “The urgency is dramatic, and business as usual is terrifying.”

The announcement came as the month-long “Season of Creation” closed. The period of prayer and reflection began Sept. 1 with the World Day of Prayer for Creation that religious institutions have been observing in recent years. Pope Francis committed the global Catholic community to joining the day of prayer in 2015.

Small and large institutions have joined the divestment campaign. Fossil Free, a project of environmental group 350.org, tracks the divestment movement. It says 595 institutions have withdrawn an estimated \$3.4 trillion from fossil fuel stocks. Another 50,000 individuals have divested about \$5.2 billion, the website said.

In its announcement, the Global Catholic Climate Movement released statements by representatives of the organizations involved in the divestment effort.

“Climate change is already affecting poor and marginalized communities globally through drought, rising sea levels, famine and extreme weather. We are called to take a stand,” said Jesuit Father J. Peter Bisson, provincial superior of the Jesuits of English Canada.

Bishop Joao Mamede Filho of Umuarama, Brazil, pointed to Pope Francis’ encyclical, “Laudato Si,’ on Care for Our Common Home,” as the reason for divesting from fossil fuels.

“We cannot accommodate and continue allowing economic interests that seek exorbitant profits before the well-being of people, to destroy biodiversity and ecosystems, nor continue dictating our energy model based on fossil fuels,” he said. “We know that Brazil has abundant resources of clean and renewable energy that do no harm our common home. Therefore, I believe that the proposal to turn the Diocese of Umuarama into low-carbon is a practical way to achieve what ‘Laudato Si’ calls for.”

Presentation Sister Marlette Black, president of the Presentation Society of Australia and Papua New Guinea, explained that her religious order has committed to divest from fossil fuels to help heal Earth. “We are one planet and one Earth community and we have a common destiny,” she said.

At SSM Health, William P. Thompson, president and CEO, said its effort was meant to align with Pope Francis' vision for a peaceful world.

"Our renewed commitment to the environment keeps us consistent in word and deed with the Franciscan Sisters of Mary, our founding congregation, and with the climate change encyclical released by Pope Francis," he said.

**FREE ONLINE COURSES IN SUSTAINABILITY** - Alison, a company based on Galway, Ireland is offering the following courses free online in the field of sustainability. Visit our blog for more information and registration.

### **1) The Green Plan Champion for Communities**

In the free online course The GreenPlan Champion for Communities learn how a community can save money, reduce carbon and help society by joining The GreenPlan. The GreenPlan is a system that empowers society to tackle climate change.

### **2) Environmental Science**

This course will teach you all about the earth and its system, while giving you a good understanding of its resources. It will help you to recognize the factors that affect our environment. You will know the difference between renewable and non-renewable energy sources and understand how to manage water supplies.

### **3) Sustainable Development**

Sustainable development is a type of economic growth pattern where the use of resources meets the needs of the human population while conserving the environment at the same time. Sustainable development means resources are used in such a way that both current and future human needs can be met. This free online Diploma in Sustainable Development reviews a diverse range of topics including what exactly sustainability is and what systems of practice are most commonly used, and in particular, examines the importance of sustainable development in counteracting global climate change.

**LIVING LAUDATO SI:** Within the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word, we are blessed to have a ministry dedicated to preserving and caring for God's beautiful creation. This ministry is Headwaters at Incarnate Word! Headwaters at Incarnate Word, Inc. is a non-profit, sponsored, Earth care ministry established in 2008 to reflect the Congregation's growing awareness and sense of obligation to care for the Earth. Some of their goals are to: establish a sanctuary for all, restore health to its land and waters, offer the gifts of education and spiritual reflection, and share the stories of this place and its people.

The various ways Headwaters engages the surrounding community and cares for the land and the water is a beautiful example of living the challenge and spirit of Laudato Si every day! Not only are they protecting all of the life contained within the Headwaters Sanctuary, but by doing so they are providing a space for others to connect with God and one another through nature. They have built up a strong network of volunteers who come out to help the sanctuary look its best for all of God's creatures to enjoy. A few weeks ago for the feast of St. Francis of Assisi, the Headwaters hosted a special animal blessing led by Sr. Martha Ann Kirk.

The Headwaters also does a lot to educate the community about environmental issues. They have a monthly movie series the first Monday of each month in CHRISTUS Heritage Hall (The Village) at 3:30pm. Past months films have covered topics like light pollution, bottled water and its environmental impacts, birds' communication, bees and threats to their survival, among others. November's film will focus on the importance of having spaces for children to play and interact with nature, and then in December the film focuses on the loss of tallgrass prairie habitat. These moving showings are free and open to all! They also hope to expand their educational programs and resources in the future with hands on activities within the Headwaters Sanctuary.

Some exciting Fall events that you can participate in to reconnect to God's beautiful creation found in the Headwaters Sanctuary include birding trips, nature walks, and a special program on Celtic Spirituality of "Thin Places." The birding trips will be held the third Friday of each month through the end of the year. The program on Celtic Spirituality's Thin Places will be October 29th at 9:00am. The Celtic tradition has always honored "thin places" as places where heaven and earth were closely connected. This walk will offer quiet meditations that will reflect the Celtic vision that enables us to see "thin places" of healing and mystery right before our eyes. Retreat leader and faculty member of the Religious Studies Department at the University of Incarnate Word, Sylvia Maddox, M.T.S., will conduct the walk. She is the co-author of "Praying With The Celtic Saints". This program is limited to 14, so please contact Pam Ball [pamela.ball@amormeus.org](mailto:pamela.ball@amormeus.org) or 210-828-2224 if you plan to attend.

There are many ways you too can support the great work to protect God's creation for generations to come within the Headwaters Sanctuary! You can offer financial support through donations to the Headwaters, or you can volunteer your time and skills as a volunteer to help clean up and preserve the environment. You can find out more information as well as a calendar of volunteer days on their website: <http://www.headwaterscoalition.org/getinvolved.html> Thank you to all the incredible staff, volunteers, and board members of Headwaters who are living the message of Laudato Si every day through their ministry to God's creation!

## Sister Story

A few years ago I conducted a short interview with our beloved Sr. Juanita. We share that with you here and want to thank Sr. Juanita Albracht for her firm commitment for social justice, peace, and her impulse to care for God's creation.

Love and generosity have been part of her life for as long as she can remember. Her father, Cyril Joseph Albracht, helped anyone who was in need, which is where she learned generosity. Her eyes light up and with a kind gesture she shares that her mother, Mrs. Mary Schaefer, was a woman of strong faith and trust in God. "I learned a lot from my parents. They were so generous. It comes naturally to me because it has always been part of my life."

She attended catholic schools in San Antonio and from that experience thought that she might be called to Religious Life. However, Sr. Juanita shares how during her youth she changed her mind, but since God is God she eventually accepted becoming a vowed religious.

Her youth, joy, and various gifts (such as playing piano, reading music, drawing and painting, etc.) were freely given up to the service of God, however they were most needed. I asked her, "Why did you become a sister?" She answered me, "I felt called, and needed to respond. So I responded by becoming a Sister of Charity of the Incarnate Word. This generosity I inherited from my parents was a great resource in my life."

Sr. Juanita studied nursing, psychology, and received a masters in hospital administration. These studies allowed for this loving and simple religious woman to work in various institutions, as well as be elected to leadership within the Congregation for various responsibilities.

After finishing her leadership terms in the governance of the Congregation, Juanita requested to go to Peru as a missionary sister, specifically to Chimbote. So in 1997 she arrived in Chimbote to direct the Santa Clara clinic, now the Health System Clinic of the Incarnate Word.

"Why Chimbote?" "When I was serving in leadership for the Congregation I had the opportunity to come to Chimbote to visit our religious communities there. The people had a big impact on me. Their way of relating their simplicity spoke to me of love. These are two basic things needed to survive. I wanted to return, and two years after that visit I was able to return to Peru."

Juanita, looking at me intently and lovingly, shared with me that one of the most significant experiences she had in Chimbote was encountering the Peruvian culture, customs, and language. "It

has been a Gospel experience, like when Nicodemus was invited to be born again. I had to be born again as an adult, learning a new way to speak, walk ... just like a child.”

The radiant and optimistic Juanita explained that being in Chimbote has brought her great joy, but it makes her sad that various state institutions in the country do not offer good service. “The majority of public establishments are found centered in Lima. This centralization is a mistake. I am happy with the process of de-centralization, and I hope that it is successful.

So it was with a profound and enthusiastic look that Sr. Juanita invited us to learn about the work of Hospice in the Incarnate Word Health System. Hospice is a center in Chimbote that attends to people diagnosed with terminal illness, bringing them physical, psychological, and spiritual relief. Besides that, as an institution they don’t only care for the one who is sick, but also for their family. An “integral care” is emphasized.

Through her work, Sr. Juanita is well known among the streets of Aviacion, Camino Real, and Antenor Orrego, because each morning she walks these paths in order to arrive at her beloved Hospice. Walking to work, Juanita shared with me that she prays her rosary, asking God to end the poverty in Chimbote, so that every person can realize their gifts and embrace their power to change things.

“My dream as a sister is that more women respond without fear or delay to the call of God. Our society is in need of women religious who animate and motivate others so that all can live in freedom. I dream of more hospices in Peru, since living with dignity until your final moments of life is a right that everyone has,” shared Sr. Juanita. Standing up and giving me a big hug, she said her goodbyes sharing that the biggest lesson she has learned has been to just fully live each day.

In February of 2015, Sr. Juanita returned to her native homeland, and her Peruvian home and friends continue to miss her. However, she is always present, in the simplicity she characterizes. Thank you sister for your life of giving, commitment, and generosity which makes real a visible sign of the presence of God in our lives. In your giving, you teach us to give. Your prophetic witness and passion for the reign of God enriches the earth.

Currently, Sr. Juanita continues her commitment to the most vulnerable as liaison for Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation for the Sisters in The Village of Incarnate Word in San Antonio, TX.

## Human Rights

**PUSHAQ WARMI: WOMEN LEADING WOMEN.** When we think of the many challenges and the violence that women face (according to the Ministry of Women in Peru, between 2009 and June 2016 there have been a total of 812 femicides), and that they represent 50% of the total population according to figures from INEI, we must also remember that the gap between men and women in health, education, economic opportunities and global political representation remains 4% over the past 10 years, according to the global Gender Gap Report from the 2015 World Economic Forum. In economic terms, this means that women are still not making today the amount earned by men in 2006 (the year in which the report was first published).

Faced with this reality, hundreds of women and men are making a new path and working for change. For example, on August 13 thousands of people courageously took to the streets in Peru to demand respect, an end to the silence against femicide and end to abuses against women. In short it was an extraordinary event. But there are other actions and wonderful experiences that have been going on for many years that mobilize and create the great changes urgently needed today.

If I think of the work of women, by women, and towards women in Peru, what immediately comes to mind is Pushaq Warmi, an organization created in 2012 in Chimbote. So, we reached out to talk with them and they quickly replied with great kindness, “Yes!” Therefore, we share with you these lines reflecting the work of our friends from Pushaq Warmi who are undoubtedly sowing seeds of justice, peace and care for creation.

*Office of Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation (JPIC): How did Pushaq Warmi start?*

*Pushaq Warmi (PW):* Pushaq Warmi was born out of a group of women from different grassroots organizations of the Province of Santa and its districts. We exercised leadership in our communities without being prepared to serve as leaders, which is why the Casa de la Mujer (house of women) called women from these organizations such as: groups providing glasses of milk, soup kitchens, mothers' clubs, neighborhood directives, among others; in order to improve our knowledge and exercise leadership properly.

There were three years of preparation in the school of women leaders called 'Betty Carol Bonner'. We graduated 30 women. From that group, 15 women met to form an 'association of women leaders' in order to share our knowledge with other women of other organizations at local and regional levels.

After a time we decided unanimously to legally establish ourselves before the Public Registry under the name of 'ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN PUSHAQ WARMI'. That means 'women who guide women.' Our mission is to bring development and improve the welfare of women by strengthening their organizational and leadership skills.

*JPIC: What actions are currently underway?*

*PW:* Our first focus is the *Radio Program* with issues involving women, on Sundays from 9 am to 10 am on Radio Santo Domingo. A second focus is the local and regional *Training Program* with different topics requested by the communities we visit. And a third focus is the *Productive Project* which involves the development of arts and crafts with designs from our local area, both regional and national, developed by us, the women of PUSHAQ WARMI.

*JPIC: What are your dreams for the future?*

*PW:* We dream of achieving social justice for women, strengthening them in knowledge and skills. We see one another grow and develop each day as a group and also personally.

In the future we would like to share what we do, and learn more about the work experience of organized women by visiting other countries.

*JPIC: How does our Congregation, the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word, relate to the group of women Pushaq Warmi?*

*PW:* We are deeply linked to all of the people who are part of the family of the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word, but especially with the team from Women's Global Connection, through the unconditional support that they provide through the Incarnate Word lay missionaries who accompany our group and also with the training they bring us from competent professionals in subjects according to our areas of focus. We feel blessed and grateful for the support they give us.

*JPIC: Any final words ...*

*PW:* Thank you for considering us. We hope to meet more in order to further strengthen the bonds of fraternity, friendship, love and work that we do with Women's Global Connection, and you, our Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word. Thank you very much, God bless you.

Upon completion of this interview, I remain immensely grateful to these women. Their struggles, dreams, efforts and creativity makes hope tangible. How wonderful to get to know them better! What a great job they do! Thanks Pushaq Warmi.

Thanks to our congregational ministry 'Women's Global Connection' for promoting the learning and leadership of women both locally and globally. Thanks for supporting the women in Peru. And thanks also to our Incarnate Word lay missionaries who have accompanied and continue to accompany this beautiful group of women leaders. Thanks Kelly Nelson, Kyle Seymour, Ada Garza, Niki Varnicar, Juan Piña and Ana Mora for sharing our charism and mission with them.



**CALLED TO TAKE A STAND AGAINST THE DEATH PENALTY:** On the World Day Against the Death Penalty (October 10), we and our Congregation around the world reiterate CCVI's opposition to the death penalty. 'Nowadays the death penalty is inadmissible' says our Pope Francis.

In the wake of the death of Sister Patricia Ann Kelley CCVI, who was raped and murdered in 1987, our courageous Sisters took a stand against the death penalty. Sister Dorothy Ettl the leader of the I.W. Sisters at that time said, "Such violence will never be conquered by a retaliation of violence in our own hearts."

Pope Francis reminds us that nothing can justify the use of the death penalty, and there is no "right" way to humanely kill another person. He is building on church teaching, including pronouncements during John Paul II's papacy, that modern prison systems make executions unnecessary. Capital punishment "does not render justice to the victims but rather fosters vengeance", Francis added.

So, today we are invited to remember the Pope's call: 'all Christians and people of good faith are therefore called upon today to fight, not only for the abolition of the death penalty – whether it is legal or illegal in all its forms – but also to improve the conditions of incarceration to ensure that the human dignity of those deprived of their freedom is respected.'

**WOMEN STRIKE AGAINST VIOLENCE (#NotOneLess).** Hundreds of women every year are murdered for one reason: their gender. The United Nations Organization (UN) warned in April 2016 that 14 of the 25 countries with the highest rates of femicide are in Latin America. Therefore, on Wednesday October 19th women went on strike, prayed and dressed in mourning in the Plaza San Martin in Lima.

And we were not alone. After the rape and murder of a teenage girl in Argentina, various movements from several Latin American countries like Mexico, Peru, Guatemala, Paraguay, Bolivia and Uruguay joined the march Not One Less (ni una menos).

Thus, Latin America showed their solidarity dressing black in protest of femicide, attacks, harassment and violations suffered by women every day.

In Lima, we met with other women from various organizations and creeds in a vigil where we remembered and named the victims of femicide and attempted femicide recorded since August 13<sup>th</sup> of this year, the day Peruvian people took to the streets demanding justice.

Lucy Diana (15 years old - Ayacucho) raped, died.

Rosa Marisol (26 years old - Tumbes) burned, died.

Marielena del Carmen (20 years old - Surquillo) killed and her murderer is about to go free.

Luz and her daughter Genesis (55 and 15 years old - SJL) murdered, the young girl was pregnant after previously being raped by the murderer.

Jessica (24 years old - Tumbes) murdered, she was pregnant.

J.M.A (17 years old - Piura) brutally beaten, lost her baby, currently in a coma.

Rocio del Pilar (20 years old - Huancayo) burned and murdered.

Rosa Milagros and her young daughter (32 years old and 4 years old - Lima) the mother was killed and the girl was injured.

Elizabeth (27 years old - Arequipa) killed.

During the vigil, some women explained the reason for taking a moment of silence for them, but also the reason for not remaining silent and making heard those voices that are being violated. Before the vigil ended, one of the women said: 'Our struggle continues. We need to continue building a better society. No, it is not reasonable that even when we are killed they continue blaming us for being women. So what if we wear skirts? Why isn't anyone blaming the men who commit these crimes? Why we perpetuating these ideas?'

As the Congregational Office of Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation we stand with all the women around the world who are rising up against violence and call for an end to violence

against women. 'If they won't stop killing us, we will not stop fighting.' (Written by Katty Huanuco, CCVI.)

## Immigration

**SOLIDARITY WITH HOGAR 72 IN MEXICO.** The Office of Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation of the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word are united in solidarity against the violence and threat that is facing the members of Hogar 72 migrant shelter, located in Tenosique-Tabasco (Mexico ).

We reject any action that would endanger the lives of people of good will that help our brother and sister migrants. At the same time, we demand attention and action in response to the public denunciation in which the outrageous violence against migrants and refugees is being made known in the State of Tabasco and in the municipality of Tenosique.

**Family Detention Interfaith Letter (Sign On!) -** Join a growing list of religious and faith-based organizations and leaders using their moral authority to call for an end to family detention and a shift to community-based approaches for unaccompanied minors and families seeking asylum in the U.S. Let us use our collective power to create much needed change at this critical policy juncture.

Dear President Obama:

As religious leaders, communions, and faith-based organizations, we urge you to listen to the recommendations of the Department of Homeland Security Advisory Committee on Family Residential Centers. These recommendations were presented at its final meeting on October 7, 2016 and call for an immediate end to the practice of detaining Central American children and families seeking asylum in the United States.

While we come from diverse religious traditions, we share common values and teachings calling us to welcome the stranger and to show mercy and kindness, particularly to those most vulnerable. Surely, the children, youth, women, and men who are fleeing rape, murder, extortion, gang recruitment, and other physical and emotional horrors in countries internationally condemned for their impunity to violence deserve our most thoughtful care.

The Committee's report recognizes that simply improving detention center conditions to meet best practice standards is not a sufficient fix for the trauma and re-traumatization resulting from detention of any length of time.

In addition to being inhumane, detaining parents and children is unnecessary. According to the report, these families pose an extremely low flight risk and no harm to local host communities. Moreover, detention is extremely expensive for the U.S. government while other effective, community-based, low-cost alternatives are immediately available.

DHS's own experts make this case. There is no reason to wait any longer. We see this as a matter of conscience as well as good policy and call upon you to immediately institute a community-based asylum-seeking process for families as well as unaccompanied children.

(to electronically add your name to this letter please visit our blog).

## Prayer

**ST. MARTIN DE PORRES** ~ written by Jane Deren, Ph.D.

St. Martin, we live in a world  
that sorely needs you as a model.  
Guide us in the ways of tolerance and healing.

St. Martin, you endured the torments of so many  
Because of your mixed racial and cultural heritage.  
Guide us in the ways of tolerance and acceptance,  
Open to welcoming all without questioning  
Or challenging their identity.  
St. Martin, you displayed patience and respect  
While waiting many years  
For full acceptance in your order.  
Guide us to be patient and respectful  
As we work for the acceptance and inclusion  
Of all God's children into our communities.  
St. Martin, you became a caring and compassionate healer  
Treating the rich and poor, the powerful and the powerless  
With the same concern and compassion.  
Guide us to become a nation and a world community  
That offers every human person quality health care.  
St. Martin, we live in a world  
That sorely needs you as a model.  
Guide us in the ways of tolerance and healing. Amen

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