

PROMOTIO IUSTITIAE

EXCHANGES ÉCHANGES SCAMBI INTERCAMBIOS

N° 72, November 1999

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Promotio Iustitiae is published by the Social Justice Secretariat at the General Curia of the Society of Jesus (Rome) in English, French, Italian and Spanish and is printed on totally chlorine free paper (TCF).

If you would like to receive *PJ*, you need only make your request to Father Socius of your Province, while non-Jesuits please send your mailing-address (indicating the language of your choice) to the Editor.

Promotio Iustitiae is also published electronically on the World Wide Web. The address is:

<http://maple.lemoyne.edu/jesuit/sj/>

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Michael Czerny, S.J.
Editor

INTRODUCTION

Promotio Iustitiae closes out the 1900s with an issue presenting the Jesuit social apostolate as it goes about its daily ministry in different ways around the world.

In the poor who suffer and in Jesus Christ totally identified with them, our social ministries find their mysterious origins as well as their goal. Accordingly, *PJ 72* begins with Fernando Cardenal's very moving account of families he is close to in a Managua barrio; and the issue ends with an engaging review by Edward Hyland of Philippe Landenne's book, *Résister en Prison*, about inmates who have become his friends in European high-security penitentiaries. Theirs are "lives broken and consigned to the margins of society and surrendered violently" — words written about prisoners but equally valid for the millions imprisoned in the urban slums of our world — while the poor for their part are increasingly terrorised by delinquency, theft and violence. The two realities are linked in their enormous suffering, yet Cardenal's and Landenne's last words are "compassion, generosity, mutual help and support and, in short, love" and "an act of faith and an account of hope." Such are the utterly paradoxical beatitudes, as in the Sermon on the Mount, well worth meditating on!

The two personal spiritual testimonies echo the sentiments evoked by Father General at the Congregation of Procurators in September:

- The conviction received from Ignatius and the first companions that we cannot call ourselves companions of Jesus without sharing his preferential love for the poor (*Allocutio*, 1999).
- The fervour that animates the social apostolate to which we commit our hands and our heads in efforts to promote solidarity with the poor and to render really present in society the Christ who desired to be the good Samaritan for others (*De Statu*, 1999).

PJ 72 then presents two collections. The first, "From the Assistancies," are reports about activities, essential for maintaining and developing the social apostolate, which often go unnoticed except by those who take part directly. Yet as printed here, they open a window on important if hidden efforts which others may wish to emulate for the sake of a greater, more effective service.

The second collection is on "Social Justice Networks." These networks are flexible new structures for working together *locally-globally* on major concerns and injustices. The eight examples together give a good idea of what networking is and can be for the Jesuit social apostolate.

Like nearly everything which the Social Justice Secretariat is doing at this time, the current issue of *Promotio Iustitiae* comes out against the background of the "Social Apostolate Initiative 1995-2005" and especially the draft *Characteristics of the Social Apostolate of the Society of Jesus*.¹ These are a process and an instrument meant to encourage a truly Ignatian *examen* especially throughout the social apostolate and also in the Society as a whole. Father General invites us to

¹ The 1998 draft handbook is available, in English, Chinese (selections), French, German, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese and Spanish, on request from the Secretariat.

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make just such a deep review with his questions to prepare the *ex-officio* letters for the Jubilee year. In the light of the apostolic orientations and priorities of GC34,

We must ask ourselves: How far have we come in promoting the justice which calls for solidarity and compassion, and which requires us to proclaim the poor to be blessed and to denounce all injustice? And our lifestyle, our way of thinking and behaving: do they not give the lie to the words expressed in our Constitutions and Decrees? Are we thoroughly consistent with the mission, which we received from John Paul II, to become vigorously involved in the social area and serve the least in human society, as an expression of the Church's evangelising mission?²

Michael Czerny, S.J.
Editor

² See Pope John Paul II's Allocution to the 34th General Congregation, January 5, 1995.

A REPORT from NICARAGUA: "The Insecurity of the Poor"³

Fernando Cardenal, S.J.

Several days ago, a neighbour arrived at my house around ten o'clock at night. Desperately choking back the tears, she asked me to take her to the hospital with her little daughter Jessenia, only a few months old, who, as she told me, was dying. Unfortunately she was already dead; by now nothing could be done to save her life. Later, I went to the house.

The little girl's mom lives with her mother-in-law. The house consists of only one room and a hallway. Here is where the grandmother lives with her four sons, two of them with their own wives and children, fourteen people in all. Some of the kids bring cardboard out into the hallway every night to sleep on there. The father of Jessenia loads boxes in the Roberto Huembes Market, and the other married son, injured in the war, is a watchman in the parking-lot of the Eastern Market. In the hallway of the house are three broken-down school desks to sit on, but there is not even a table to lay out the infant's body for the wake. The grandmother held her in her arms, devastated in her mourning. No one in the barrio took any notice. Some of the streets are very dark, as we went out to look for a carpenter who would be willing to make us a little coffin for the girl. Every step in the life of the poor is fraught with difficulty. They still needed to figure out where and how to bury her.

None of the neighbours knew about the death yet. Everyone was already asleep. The whole barrio was hushed and still. One felt, therefore, more deeply the family's bereavement and loneliness. Sitting by the dead little girl, I reflected a lot on how the settlers in a barrio live. Death is the final stage of a process that begins with unemployment and, in its train, bad food, then malnutrition; next comes sickness together with a total lack of medicines; and later, if nothing effective is done to reverse the process, death. It is the logical conclusion.

For me, that night, the dead little girl became a symbol of the abandonment and neglect of the poor living in the peripheral barrios of Managua. According to the latest CID GALLUP survey, only seven percent of those interviewed were covered by Social Security. On the other hand, we know that 47 percent of Nicaraguans are unemployed or underemployed and so without any insurance. The same is true for the domestics, farm workers, day labourers, self-employed craftsmen, and so many others. But even those with insurance do not have full coverage and, besides, only the most basic medicines are paid for by Social Security.

That night with Jessenia's family, it occurred to me that the worst thing the poor suffer is insecurity. They are not sure whether they will be able to get food for their children the following day, or medicines if they fall sick. Insecurity in the face of thefts and delinquency. Many of them have no clear title for their tiny property or no title at all. Insecurity from month to month whether they will be able to pay for water and electricity. The beginning of each semester brings the worry about getting whatever their children need to go back to school. When winter approaches, they have no idea how to obtain zinc to repair the leaking roof and also cement to patch up the lower part of the

³ The Spanish original may be found in *Carta a las Iglesias* 19:427 (June 1999).

house to prevent flooding every time it rains. Faced with the big problems of their lives, they stand alone, defenceless, helpless, unprotected and insecure.

Thinking about insecurity, it seemed to me that one of the few things they are sure of is that their present standard of living will never see any substantial improvement. They know that they lack education and that it is extremely difficult to find a job. The only things they see really changing are the prices of the basic food-basket and of public utilities. This leads some to despair. Take the case of a neighbour, still rather young and without work, and her husband who can only find work occasionally. She suffers almost constantly from headaches and gastritis, and her teeth are ruined. A few days ago she told me that she sees no hope of change in her life from any side: "I am tired of struggling, I am tired of living," she said sadly.

This insecurity is also felt at the political level. More than 80 percent of Nicaraguans say they do not believe in the political parties. The politicians have made them so many marvellous promises to solve their problems that now they do not expect them to do anything. They have learned along the way that all those promises are empty and that the story always ends in the same old frustration. They feel constantly swindled by the politicians.

I am convinced that it is important for all of us to become aware of the existence of this other world of the peripheral barrios. I imagine it as an immense sea of suffering, anguish, pain, hunger, sadness. We cannot go on living naively, superficially, unaware that this other Nicaragua exists.

There are some facts, nevertheless, which sustain the lives of the poor. The survival of the unemployed is possible only thanks to the solidarity of relatives and neighbours. A bit of food is shared with someone who does not have even that. There are examples of families without work who nevertheless generously welcome into their own house another family that has been evicted and ended up in the street. Among the poor that beautiful virtue still exists — solidarity — which has been disappearing from other levels of Nicaragua, swept away by a gigantic tidal wave of individualism. In spite of their abandonment, the poorest give us all a great example of compassion, generosity, mutual help and support and, in short, love.

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FROM the ASSISTANCIES

"From the Assistancies" is news of typical work taking place throughout the Society of Jesus. The examples of formation, group activity, evaluation and co-ordination differ enormously in response to very varied situations from region to region. At the same time, such efforts which promote reflection, organisation, orientation, training and solidarity are a vital support for the apostolic activities themselves today and in the future.

"Each Province maintains structures to sustain the social apostolate, and the social sector relates in particular ways with the rest of the Province and, reaching out, with the rest of the Society of Jesus" (See "The Jesuit Body," *Characteristics of the Social Apostolate*, chapter 3.10).

Please send news of your social ministry, like the reports which follow, to the Social Secretariat by fax, post or e-mail.

At the NOVICIATE: On the SOCIAL APOSTOLATE

The Jesuit noviciate of the West African Province (AOC) opened its "study experiments" with a session on the social apostolate, July 12-17, 1999. It was animated by Fr. Jaques Fédry, professor at the ICY (*Institut Catholique de Yaoundé*) and co-ordinator of the Faith and Justice Commission of the Province.

For the menu, in place of the "taro" (a dish greatly loved by the Bamiléké, in the west of Cameroon), Father served up three texts: Decree 4 of GC32, Decree 3 of GC34, and the *Characteristics of the Social Apostolate of the Society of Jesus*, a provisional working document published in Rome in 1998. The goal was to work with these very rich texts, to understand them, and to apply them to our own situations. Not so easy in only one week!

But the method adopted, combining times of personal assimilation, group reflection, and brief presentations by the animator followed by periods of discussion in common, helped us to make these texts our own.

In view of the short time at our disposal, we made good use of two well-prepared summaries: Fr. Jean-Yves Calvez's presentation of Decree 4 in his book *Faith and Justice*,⁴ and that of *Characteristics of the Social Apostolate* presented by Fr. Bernard Lestienne.⁵

⁴ *Faith and Justice: The Social Dimension of Evangelization*, St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1991, pp. 3-7.

⁵ *Évangile et Justice* n.47 (December 1998), pp. 4-13.

Along the way we saw two films: *Romero*, and *The Social Apostolate: Why?*, an 18-minute cassette on the social apostolate of the Jesuits and the Congress dedicated to it in Naples in June of 1997.⁶

Some fruits drawn from the session:

"The social apostolate as a place of conversion: where I place myself humbly, not as someone bringing salvation to the poor, but as a man called by the Lord to do something for others and with them, a place where I give of myself, but more still, where I receive from others."

"The notion of the social apostolate is now less vague for me. This has given me the enthusiasm and the desire to work for a more just and more human society. I even think that it is a sector which particularly attracts me where I feel myself called to work in a more 'professional' manner."

"The session touched profound aspirations in me: to respect the human dignity of each one and to restore it to someone who has been ridiculed by others perhaps more powerful or well-off than he. To do this for love of Christ. The passage, "As servants of Christ's mission, we have been greatly enriched by opening our hearts ... to the anxieties of the men and women of this age,"⁷ touched me very much. I have also, thanks to Romero, better appreciated the price to be paid for this option. Furthermore, the session strengthened me in visiting prisoners as I already do. I have received the fruit for which I was waiting: how to read a socio-cultural, political situation ... with objectivity and clarity."

"The conviction that the struggle for justice in the name of my faith is also up to me: I can do something at my level for justice, where I am. This opens my eyes to the future to make sure that, wherever I am, I have contact with the most deprived, the poor. The desire to become better informed about the methods and the way of proceeding of the Society in the social apostolate; the desire to give myself to those who do not have a voice with all that I have received from the Lord (life, health, education, etc.); the desire to help others in the name of my faith to recover their dignity as children of God, by collaborating with them."

"The session further opened my spirit, and moved me interiorly. It confirmed my desire to offer myself to the Lord through the service of people, the most deprived. The image of Romero remains my dream."

"The statistics and examples given showed how economic, social, and political structures can destroy human dignity, and so dehumanise a person. This gives rise within me to a feeling of refusal, of revolt, and a desire to say 'no' to any dehumanising structure. To fight under the standard of Christ poor, is to accept being a man for and with the poor."

"Today, in our Africa, where the dignity of so many people is in decline, where many are marginalized and humiliated, I feel a call to reawaken this hopeless world, to bring to it a meaning and taste for life."

⁶ Videocassette available on request from the Social Secretariat at the General Curia, Rome.

⁷ GC34, D.3, n.50.

"Certainly there exists a specific sector of the social apostolate, but I must integrate this social aspect throughout my formation and in the ministry which will be entrusted to me. This requires on my part a continual conversion."

"All men and women are conceived in the image and likeness of God, and all of us have 'value in his eyes.' It is unacceptable, therefore, that some profit from this state of poverty of others, or that the former are even the cause of this poverty."

"The session really moved me. I felt called to become engaged effectively in restoring man in his dignity as a child of God, and this in the simple things that I live in the noviciate, for example, the committees such as Caritas."

"This session has brought to me clarification on what the social apostolate in the Society of Jesus is all about. I was particularly touched by the practical example of Bishop Romero."

We have drawn great profit from this session in relation to the situation, which the world is undergoing today, and especially our continent, Africa. We were strongly challenged, because the animator related the texts we studied to concrete facts, to the situations of our countries. Truly, we are very satisfied with this session. As St. Ignatius tells us, "What fills and satisfies the soul consists, not in much knowledge, but in understanding the realities profoundly and savouring them interiorly" (Sp. Ex. 2). This is what we have done!

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EUROPE: SOCIAL SCIENTISTS

Under the presidency of Edward Kimman, S.J., eleven members of EUROJESS (European Jesuits in Social Sciences) met in Brussels from August 28th to 30th as an enlarged steering committee with the task of reviewing the mission of the organization. The president of the European Conference of Provincials, Alfred Darmanin, S.J., and the Social Justice Secretary, Michael Czerny, S.J., were also present.

EUROJESS was created in the early 1960s as a regular occasion for exchange among the social centres of the Society in Europe as well as individual Jesuit social scientists. With the many recent changes, however, a new definition of the group seemed necessary.

From now on, EUROJESS should include Jesuits reflecting on social problems: social scientists, social centres, Jesuits in insertion or with other social experiences. A meeting will continue to take place every two years, with the purpose of getting to know each other, sharing experiences, and

reflecting on Jesuit involvement in the social field. The topic chosen for each meeting is to be studied in relation to philosophy and theology in order to stimulate relevant Jesuit reflections. In between meetings, EUROJESS could serve as a network for information and co-operation.

The next meeting of EUROJESS will take place in Berlin, from August 30th to September 2nd, 2001. The theme will be migration, with a special focus on migration from Eastern European countries. Various working groups are envisaged: integration of migrants and refugees; the bases on which Europeans open themselves to them; philosophical and theological reflections on welcoming "the other"; reform of refugee law and advocacy of refugee rights. An adhoc group is planning the meeting, with OCIPE serving as the secretariat.

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SOUTH ASIA EVALUATION

The Committee for the evaluation of social apostolate in the South Asian Assistancy completed its task and submitted its report to the Jesuit Conference of South Asia on March 1, 1999.

The Committee is very grateful to the 1400 or more people who have contributed to this evaluation process at different stages. These include Jesuits in social action, Jesuits in other ministries, our collaborators and co-workers, lay and religious, men and women, and people from our focus groups. The evaluations process — Province-level group sharings, a national-level consultation, individual responses to questionnaires — have helped many groups and centres to look at their work critically and improve their way of functioning.

The main thrust of the findings is that, since GC32, the Society of Jesus in the Assistancy has been going through drastic changes as far as formation, inculturation, apostolic policies and lifestyle are concerned. We started different kinds of approaches to development, some of them very radical and promising. However, when we look at South Asia, its socio-political scenario, the challenges and possibilities, we realise that we have not moved as we should have.

The main blocks that we experience begin with the lack of an atmosphere for a justice thrust in the Provinces as a whole. Justice is considered to be the task of those in the social apostolate alone. The Provinces have neither made Province policies to this effect nor strategised their apostolic actions accordingly. Social action is often started because of individual initiatives.

Most of our social action involvements are in training, educating and organising. Very few of us have entered into people's movements.

We like to do things by ourselves and hence do not collaborate with other secular groups. Our relationship to our co-workers is one of employer-employee, leaving it difficult to generate responsible leadership.

The challenge to Jesuit social action ministry is to inspire the youngsters and create interest in them; to join hands with those who are involved in people's issues and make our contribution; to network with activist groups and learn to be partners in a movement. The evaluation has given us enough material to ponder and act on.

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LATIN AMERICA MEETING

The annual meeting of co-ordinators of the social apostolate in the two Assistancies of Latin America took place in Santiago de Chile, July 18-24, 1999.

Who were we and where did we meet?

We met at the Loyola retreat house in the neighbourhood called "Padre Hurtado." From Argentina came Juan Luis Moyano and Marcos Alemán; from Belize, Jesús Riveroll; from Bolivia, Mauricio Bacardit; from Brazil, Clodoveo Piazza and José Ivo Follman, along with Luis Correa (when he could find free time from his tertianship program here in Chile); from Central America, Pedro Marchetti; from Jamaica, Chris Llanos; from Mexico, Rafael Moreno; from Peru, Luis Herrera; from Puerto Rico, José Angel Borges; from the Dominican Republic, Jorge Cela; from Uruguay, Eugenio Blánquez; from Venezuela, Francisco José Virtuoso; from Chile, several delegates and assistants: Andrés Soto, Gonzalo Arroyo, José Aldunate, Agustín Moreira, Arturo Vigneaux, Daniel Concha, Gastón González, Rodrigo Aguayo and Carlos Bresciani.

Michael Czerny, Secretary for the Social Apostolate, accompanied us throughout the meeting, along with Klaus Vathróder from Germany.

Where were we coming from?

For our starting point we took up three questions which had been remanded for future discussion by the meeting at Tlalpan, Mexico:

- effective organization of the Social Apostolate sector;
- objective analysis of the current situation;
- creation of a network in order to enhance mutual communication.

Of these three topics, following the lead of the *Characteristics of the Social Apostolate of the Society of Jesus*, we spent most of the time reflecting on our analysis of the present reality in its various aspects or dimensions: economic, political and cultural.

Of these three aspects, we were more comfortable — and more confident of our skills and expertise — dealing with the political and cultural. We were less at ease in economics, where we are less involved or, at least, not so well prepared. Even though we did not set aside time to discuss the religious aspect, it was an obvious guiding principle from the way we brought the conference theme into focus.

What did we share?

Our exchange dealt with our analysis of the concrete situation in our several countries.

We can begin with Brazil and Jesuit collaboration with the Brazilian Bishops Conference in their social analysis of the situation presented by the reelection of Enrique Cardoso ... and his promise to resolve the problem of unemployment ... and the financial chaos which brought on the January crisis and the flight of foreign capital. We also heard about the involvement of the Society in Church-sponsored Social Weeks and the various projects on behalf of street children and children in difficulties with law enforcement agencies.

Venezuela. How are we to cope with Hugo Chávez' proposals for power redistribution; what is the Church's role as prophetic voice; how great is the Church's responsibility and what are the risks?

The Dominican Republic. The challenge here is a new political alliance marked by the rise of a civil society eager to flex its muscles.

Nicaragua and Honduras. Everything centres around Mitch. In contrast with the government's inability to respond adequately, massive international support arrived. And then, there is the pressure from future foreign debt.

Mexico. With elections coming up, the country gives the appearance of a fragile civil society with a ruling party (PRI) that does not hold all the reins of power, or at least is gradually losing its grip. The indigenous peoples are waking up to the challenge of confronting the cold war waged against them by their government.

Belize. A new country (it gained independence in 1981), it seems today to be the laboratory of a neo-liberal experiment. Its form of democracy is determined by a civil society that, for the moment, keeps changing parties for the sake of change. And the trade-off reeks of the "old boys" network.

Argentina. A country where democracy is already an established value permeating society. The armed forces and the unions have left the political stage. However, the political parties have also suffered an identity crisis. Little by little, society is mobilizing in various forms to resist the spread of poverty, corruption and impunity.

Jamaica. Here the key to understanding the situation is the nationwide unrest in reaction to the petroleum tax which the government wanted to impose in order to offset the debt, which, in turn, was due to the collapse of the national banks. It is a society that wants to restructure its democratic

system and so hold in check rampant political violence. That same nationwide unrest served to get a national dialogue going.

Bolivia. There is an air of economic optimism arising not only from privatization, but also from capitalization of various enterprises. And yet, unemployment is on the increase, as well as the drug traffic and corruption. In the meantime, the government seems to be without direction or plan and to be losing credibility. Receiving favourable notice, however, is the law dealing with the people's share in government and the organization of municipalities.

Peru. The authoritarianism of the government is still alive and kicking, playing economic stability off against social justice. The executive branch plays the starring political role and intends to continue doing so, claiming the limelight of public opinion through its influence in the media.

Ecuador. This is a country that has to cope with a government without any clear plan of action and steadily diminishing international prestige. The voice of the indigenous grows ever louder in the political arena.

Puerto Rico. National identity is the chief problem here in the shadow of the United States. The problem was recently aggravated by a blunder of the U.S. Navy which resulted in the death of a Puerto Rican.

Uruguay. This country is enjoying an interlude of tranquillity. Unemployment is on the rise, but the distribution of wealth is wider than in other countries.

Chile. We have this analysis thanks to Alberto Etchegaray, Minister of Housing during the presidency of Patricio Aylwin and currently member of the National Council for the elimination of poverty. It was co-authored by Fernando Montes, S.J., rector of the Universidad Alberto Hurtado, and Viviana Díaz, president of the association of the relatives of prisoners and *desaparecidos*.

Of the five challenges facing Latin America, according to internationally recognized indicators (level of democracy, economic growth, social equality, ecology and common values), social equality is the only one in which Chile seems to be below average.

"As a nation," said Alberto Etchegaray, "we have to reckon with the fact that human capital is the most important reality as we enter the 21st century. The key is to turn education upside down. The state has the duty of guaranteeing social equality, without confusing 'do-good-ism' (*asistencialismo*) with justice."

Fernando Montes told us that the Chilean church seeks to help all its members become active subjects of history. That is, it is not content simply to analyze the situation; analysis must lead to action. We must also see what role the Society has to play in the context of such analysis. Again, he stressed the fact that love must step in as soon as justice dies.

Before ending he added that Josse van der Rest, S.J., collaborated in their projects. He was working in Chile under the auspices of *Hogar de Cristo*, the foundation for housing, and beyond Chile, of SELAVIP (Servicio latinoamericano y asiático de vivienda popular). *Hogar de Cristo* aims at opening up living space in the cities for the poorest of the poor; it has already provided a roof over the heads of two million people.

What constant factors did we find in comparing our various analyses? For one thing, we wanted to keep our eyes on the total context of our Latin American reality and, more specifically, on our most concrete problems. For example, civil society's presence on the scene playing a leading role, the

crisis of democratic structures, the weakness of the state. Another theme: the interplay among economy, social indicators and political structures.

On the other hand, we pondered the weaknesses of our analysis: the absence of the cultural dimension, which is a variable factor deserving of equal weight with the others, the neglect of any consideration of the media, the disproportionate space given our analysis as compared with feasible proposals for change and transformation.

What shall we do in the meeting scheduled for 2000 in Santo Domingo?

We are going to conduct a seminar on Civil Society and Politics: Strategies and Projects. Our goal is to clarify the very concept of civil society. We hope to reflect on the strategies for political action from the perspective of civil society. We shall attempt to create a communication network throughout Latin America among people who are movers and shakers in civil society and who will maintain a link with our Social Apostolate. We named the coordinating team charged with setting up the seminar, who will soon be involved in the work of preparation and settlement of details.

Up to now, what have we accomplished, what do we want to accomplish, what can we accomplish?

In most of our Provinces and Regions, we find that we are still at the stage of searching for new structures of social apostolate. The search is being carried on through planning sessions which sometimes help to clarify the work of the social sector as well as the social dimension of all our works.

Transcending our regional difficulties, we see the ever more urgent necessity of teamwork. Indeed, it is even a countercultural witness to work on a project in common, flying in the face of an authoritarian and paternalistic culture.

We also contemplated taking a position as an apostolic sector on a proposal to take responsibility for creating, or at least promoting, a network of NGOs, or Jesuit centres for development. We want to determine clearly just how useful such a project would be and what would be its specific objectives.

We helped prepare the working paper on illegal immigration which is scheduled for presentation to the Provincials' Quito meeting in November, 1999.

We continued to discuss the letter on Neoliberalism, still searching for an alternative to proposals for development and a way to fight the constantly spreading poverty in the region. We reviewed what we have done so far and what we are able to do now.

In conclusion, recognition and thanks

We single out for special recognition Don Pepe Aldunate, S.J., whose presence living among the poorest and the most emarginated provides a powerful witness for the promotion of human rights.

Our thanks to the Province of Chile for accompanying our labours and receiving us with such hospitable attention to every last detail during these days.

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Special thanks to Father Provincial, Juan Díaz, S.J., who personally welcomed us and urged us to persevere in the service of faith and the promotion of justice.

We are also grateful for the opportunity to visit the cemetery where the monument to the prisoners and the *desaparecidos* and the tomb of Salvador Allende are located, as well as the house of Pablo Neruda at Isla Negra.

Although prevented by ill health from attending our meetings, Jorge Elkins, S.J., recently appointed delegate for the social sector in Chile, was very much present in spirit.

The concelebrated Eucharists and the daily morning prayer helped us grow in our corporate awareness as Jesuits — especially the closing Eucharist celebrated at the Sanctuary of Blessed Alberto Hurtado, S.J.

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SOCIAL JUSTICE NETWORKS

Global networking: Although numerous regional and international networks already exist, to exploit more fully the possibilities given us by being an international body, additional global and regional networks must be created. Such networks of persons and institutions should be capable of addressing global concerns through support, sharing of information, planning and evaluation, or through implementation of projects that cannot easily be carried out within Province structures.

The potential exists for networks of specialists who differ in expertise and perspectives but who share a common concern, as well as for networks of university departments, research centres, scholarly journals and regional advocacy groups. The potential also exists for co-operation in and through international agencies, non-governmental organisations, and other emerging associations of men and women of good will. In many respects, the future of international co-operation remains largely uncharted.

With creative imagination, openness and humility, we must be ready to co-operate with all those working for the integral development and liberation of people. Initiative and support for these various forms of networks should come from all levels of the Society, but the Secretariats of the General Curia must continue to play an important role in establishing them ("Inter-Provincial and Supra-Provincial Co-operation," GC34, Decree 21, n.14).

Co-operation and networking of all types probably represent an authentic *sign of the times* in the sense meant by Vatican II: something new emerging simultaneously in different places, something both challenging and promising in the light of the Gospel.

A great deal of co-operation in the promotion of justice is already underway, and some efforts have been very effective. We want to learn from these and reinforce them. At the same time, networking as an approach to social injustice is relatively new and sometimes quite difficult in practice, and we want to be realistic in facing the problems and resistance ("Co-operation and Networking," *Characteristics of the Social Apostolate*, chapter 3.7).

Jesuit AIDS Network

The HIV/AIDS epidemic has its roots in systemic poverty, the culture of human relationships, the dire lack of medical and other resources, and the unjust structures separating Africa from the developed world. HIV/AIDS is now the major African problem in health, economics, education and society. In the coming years, unless a remedy is found, it will only become much worse.

In 1987 the Zimbabwe Bishops' Conference wrote a pastoral letter on HIV/AIDS and set up a national structure. In 1996-97 the Jesuit Conference of Africa and Madagascar (JESAM) sponsored a survey of present involvement, concerns and apostolic desires of every Province and Region in the 24 countries where Jesuits are working. Out of this came the Jesuit AIDS Network.

The Jesuit AIDS Network is growing with the designation of a contact person in each Province/Region; a newsletter for sharing ideas, projects, problems and successes; and visits by the co-ordinator to the countries and projects. Local initiatives include diagnosis, treatment, assistance, counselling and chaplaincy, for example, projects focusing on HIV+ infants or on HIV+ women and their babies, or workshops to train teenagers as AIDS Peer Educators.

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ECOLOGY⁸

We are setting up a network of "counterparts in environment" amongst the environmental groups and projects of the universities belonging to the Latin American Association of Jesuit Universities (AUSJAL: *Asociación de Universidades de la Compañía de Jesús en América Latina*).

We want to co-operate with other NGOs that are working on this topic. We also want to work with national groups, within the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which prepare the annual reports on human development in each country.

We are making contact with those interested in environment at the Jesuit universities in the United States (AJCU: *Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities*), to see if as Jesuit groups we can do something together on a continental level regarding this "geo-ecological" region.

Setting up this network is going to take several months.

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⁸ See *"We live in a broken world": Reflections on Ecology*, (*Promotio Iustitiae* 70, April 1999) available from the Social Justice Secretariat in English, French, Italian, Japanese and Spanish.

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GLOBAL ECONOMY and CULTURES

During GC 34, directors of several Jesuit social research and action centres met with the hope of working together on a common project. The challenge they took up was to study and compare the impact or effects which the rapidly globalising economy is having on very different cultures.

The project, called "Global Economy and Cultures," strives to integrate cultural and religious dialogue into the way of proceeding of the Jesuit centres. The network's identity rests on an Ignatian discernment model as the basis for integrating social analysis and theological reflection in the process of seeking social change.⁹ Focusing on the significant ways, especially cultural ways, in which the poor experience the impact of the global economy, the approach strives to identify those critical junctures where the global economy and local cultures meet creatively or destructively.

The goal is to work out ethical guidelines for making policy and its implementation. This objective tries to address the need for more culturally sensitive global economic policy and make it available to international, national, and local leadership.

The three-year project (1999-2001), involving forty-four Jesuit-sponsored social research and action centres around the world, is co-ordinated by the Woodstock Theological Center. Those participating are scholars from a variety of disciplines, specialists in grass-roots research in their respective cultures, policy analysts, and ethicists.

Representatives from participating centres hope to meet personally, and the first of two international meetings is planned to take place in October 2000, perhaps in India.

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INTERNATIONAL POPULATION CONCERNS

⁹ See GC34, D.3, n.7; D.4, n.5; and D.5, n.8.

The 1994 International Conference on Population and Development at Cairo provided the occasion for a few Jesuits competent in demography to meet and, subsequently, to form a network called International Population Concerns (IPC). The purpose of IPC is to monitor population issues and policies in relationship to poverty, human development and social justice.

The millions in the world who must survive on an income of less than \$1 a day keep on increasing, and their lack of the basics necessary for a decent human life not only causes much suffering but gravely damages the future of their societies. At the very same time, pockets of growing prosperity are bound ever more closely together by sophisticated means of communication and transport in a single global system.

The core members of IPC are Jesuits specialised in demography and related disciplines of ethics and theology. Participants also include those working directly with the poor. IPC provides an interdisciplinary framework for the exchange of information, mutual advice and support and, perhaps, common research. IPC would like to contribute to the social teaching and pastoral practice of the Church and to the dialogue between the Church and the scientific community.

This year an international colloquium was held on "Population and Poverty," organised by Stan D'Souza, S.J., co-ordinator; Lluís Recolons, S.J. (migras@redestb.es); and Pierre Martinot-Lagarde, S.J. (pierreml@compuserve.com). The participants summarised their reflections in the following statement:

The colloquium on "Population and Poverty" took place October 11-16, 1999, at the Indian Social Institute of New Delhi and involved twenty-four Jesuits from all the continents (except Australia). The colloquium was sponsored by International Population Concerns, a network which began in 1994 with the encouragement of Father General.

As several of the colloquium participants had attended the population conferences at Bucharest (1974) and Cairo (1994), the role of the Jesuits there was reviewed to learn what we might contribute to the Church and society. At New Delhi, each participant offered a paper, and these were circulated by e-mail before the meeting. Father General's opening greeting presented the Jesuit "way of proceeding" in approaching social issues, combining competent research and dedicated action in the service of the poor, as the Church has many times recommended.

Our understanding of the issues:

The two main points of the colloquium, Population and Poverty, were treated in relationship to each other, under the specific conditions of today.

1) Population: Six billion people on the face of the globe, reflecting new demographical conditions with many different nuances. Although the population growth rate is decreasing everywhere, even in a few countries of sub-Saharan Africa, the absolute number of people is still rising. In the First World, there is an ageing population with no natural increase.

2) Poverty: Both absolute and relative poverty occur in the context of globalisation. Although the process of globalisation is developing rapidly, the problems of rising deprivation and exclusion are not adequately addressed. New poverties are arising due to growing urbanisation, mass migration, external debt, structural adjustment programs, etc.

3) The link between population and poverty: The assertion that population growth is a cause of poverty is a dangerous over-simplification, and is to be rejected. Population problems are often the consequence of poverty, and the interrelationship is always complex.

4) Globalisation has two faces: It is capable through communication technologies of creating interdependencies and solidarity that could benefit all; in fact, backed by neo-liberal ideology, it is creating dependencies and exploitation whereby the powerful exploit the powerless. There is no level playing field. Cultural, religious, and ethical perspectives must be developed to comprehend globalisation, orient and humanise it in terms of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Our response:

Our standpoint and option is that of the poor, the oppressed, and the excluded. We concluded that national governments, transnational corporations, international financial institutions, the media and local administrations often lack accountability, participation and equity to meet the challenges of integral human development. These conclusions are based upon our diverse experiences and research. Our multiple approaches to connect research and action include:

- Systematic or methodological interpretations (how to study the phenomena of population and poverty).
- Technical or statistical analyses (the presentation of the phenomena).
- Cultural and ethical assessments (the presentation of differing cultures and ethical interpretations).
- Case studies revealing the *visages* (faces) of the poor, e.g., children, women, dalits, indigenous people, forcibly displaced, and the unemployed.

In formulating our responses, we recognise that there are no ready-made solutions; but there are emerging positive trends and programs, which we identified. These include finding solutions from below, utilising networks, NGO's, and other initiatives which promote participation, empowerment, education of the poor, especially women, and programs for social (inter-religious and inter-ethnic) harmony, watershed development and shelter for the poor.

Conclusions:

The colloquium was a good opportunity for us to gather as Jesuits and to consider these pressing problems together, to share our concerns, and to discern how we might make a more effective contribution. What is specific is this group's focus on population and integral human development, and the fact that it is a Jesuit group. As Father General said, "You also grasp some of the problems which can only be grasped if faced together." In light of the urgent global situation of population and poverty today, we participants commit ourselves to promote future co-operative action through the IPC to meet the challenges with effective and equitable responses.

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JESUITS for DEBT RELIEF and DEVELOPMENT

Jesuits for Debt Relief and Development (JDRAD) is a network co-operating with Church and lay groups world-wide on issues related to Third World debt. The proposal to work together — north and south, developed and developing, research and action — on a common global issue arose at the Naples Congress of the Social Apostolate in June 1997.

Formally established in early 1998, JDRAD is a network of Jesuit centres and individuals. Fourteen partner centres located in all the continents make up the core group, while over a hundred additional centres and individuals (Jesuit and non-Jesuit) make up the network. A fulltime co-ordinator, supported by a seven-member advisory board, is based at the Jesuit Faith and Justice Centre in Dublin.

JDRAD focuses on the unpayable Third World debt. With the active participation of network members, JDRAD formulates policies and strategies for alleviating the debt, offers ethical and theological reflection on these issues, and participates in the Jubilee 2000 campaign. Members in each country are involved in analysis, public education and political lobbying at local and national levels. JDRAD prepared a letter for the Jesuit Provincials to sign on the occasion of the Cologne G7 Summit in June 1999.¹⁰

Members are kept informed of each other's concerns and activities through a monthly newsletter (available in English, French and Spanish) and through the JDRAD website. Occasional bulletins, an educational package, and background information on the debt issue are also available.

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JESUIT REFUGEE SERVICE

"There are over 45 million *refugees and displaced persons* in today's world, 80 percent of whom are women and children. Often lodged in the poorest of countries, they face growing impoverishment, loss of a sense of life and culture, with consequent hopelessness and despair. The Jesuit Refugee Service accompanies many of these brothers and sisters of ours, serving them as companions, advocating their cause in an uncaring world."^{*}

¹⁰ See *Promotio Iustitiae* 71 (July 1999).

* GC34, D.3, n.16.

The mission of JRS, since its founding by Father Arrupe nearly twenty years ago, has not changed, but the scale, speed and complexity of recent movements of peoples are surely unprecedented. GC34 mentions the Jesuit Refugee Service as an example of global and regional co-operation and networking (D.21, n.13).

JRS has become a specialised international Catholic Church service assisting displaced, returning and re-settling people, working among the most disadvantaged, through educational, social, pastoral, emergency and development services. Volunteers live simply in a community of faith, living and working as close as possible to the people we serve. There are field teams in more than forty countries.

JRS DISPATCHES is a twice-monthly news bulletin from the JRS International Office, and is available in English, French, Italian and Spanish. Subscription is free. If you would like to get on the mailing list, send your request to dispatches@jesref.org

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MINISTRY to INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Wassean-Danda, "Let there be new light for our eyes," was the name given to the first international encounter of Jesuits in ministry among aboriginal peoples. It was held at the Anishinabe Spiritual Centre in Canada in 1993.¹¹

Wassean-Danda inspired Jesuits involved with indigenous peoples in East Asia to hold a regional gathering at the mission in the Hsinchu Mountains of Taiwan in December 1999. The aims of the meeting include:

- To consider the aspirations, needs and struggle of the indigenous peoples, and our Jesuit response so far.
- To define our specifically Jesuit ministry now and in the future.
- To discuss and find concrete ways of Jesuit collaboration.
- To bring about a greater union of minds and hearts among the Jesuits involved.

In his letter of September 1999 on the tragic end of the Jesuit mission to the Hurons 350 years ago in New France, Father General wrote:

¹¹ "Review," *Promotio Iustitiae* 59 (March 1995), pp. 25-26.

Still today, in many areas of the world, the native peoples are isolated, marginalised, and threatened with losing their identity, their cultural heritage and their traditional environment. To work with them and serve them has lost none of its apostolic urgency, nor any of its arduousness. GC34 asked the whole Society to renew its long-standing commitment to these people.¹² This commitment gets mentioned, it is true, in many a Province's apostolic project but, because it is often a difficult and unrewarding apostolate, there is a real risk of it being forgotten or abandoned if those who are responsible for the priorities of a Province do not give it sufficient and sustained attention. May they find inspiration in the brief phrase of Isaac Jogues: *Ibo et non redibo* — I will go and shall not return! And also in his prayer: "May our good Master, who has won these people by the shedding of his blood, open to them, if he so wishes, the doors of his Gospel. We for our part must strive to be faithful and not hinder his work by our cowardice."

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<sjsocial> and <alsocial>

After GC34, the Jesuit Social Economic Development <sjsoced> discussion group sprang up on e-mail for the exchange of ideas, among Jesuits and colleagues, in the area of social justice. The moderator was Peter Hosking, S.J., in Australia and the list-master Ray Bucko, S.J. in New York.

In mid-June 1997, the participants in the Naples Congress were added to the list, the name changed to <sjsocial>, and management shifted to Mexico. There are now about 70 participants world-wide. English, French, Italian or Spanish may be used.

In 1998, a Latin American sub-list called <alsocial> was added, functioning only in Spanish, with about 45 participants. Both lists are open to Jesuits and colleagues working in the Jesuit social apostolate, and there is a certain degree of confidentiality.

<sjsocial> and <alsocial> are meant for the interchange of news and views on social justice, human development, and theological reflection. We have explored issues like refugees, indigenous peoples, economic policies and foreign debt, and discussed the draft *Characteristics of the Social Apostolate*.

¹² D.3, n.14.

Urgent actions have been launched on human rights emergencies in Colombia, East Timor, India and Mexico.

To join the list, send an e-mail with the word "subscribe" as the subject, to:

sjsocial-request@sjsocial.org or alsocial-request@sjsocial.org

In the body of the message please introduce yourself briefly, where you work and what you are interested in.

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A BOOK REVIEW: "Giving an Account of Hope"

Edward M. Hyland*

Philippe Landenne, S.J., *Résister en Prison: Patiences, Passions, Passages...* (Resisting in Prison: Patience, Passion and Transition...), Brussels: Lumen Vitae, 1999, 270 pp.

Elie Wiesel has described writing as an act of faith: behind each word is a page, behind each page is a chapter, and behind each chapter is a life. Philippe Landenne's *Résister en Prison* is such an act of faith. It is also an account of the hope that inhabits the catacombs of his being, where he lives as a Christian, a Jesuit, a priest.

There are many aspects of this book that are fresh and invigorating. It is also timely. Certainly in Europe and North America, there is a rising sentiment that the only response to crime should be swift, unremitting punishment. "You do the crime, then be prepared to do the time, all of it!" The guilty person *is* his crime, *is* his criminal acts. Leaders of various political stripes seek political gain by preying on and fanning the fears of citizens, claiming, "We have a problem with crime because, as a society, we are soft on criminals. The answer is to lock them up, force them to do hard time so that they'll think twice about ever doing it again." The "criminal" is a one-dimensional figure — his crime — and so not worth any real attention or consideration as a person.

Résister en Prison is a sharp rebuke of such fear-mongering. Landenne introduces us to his friends who are or were inmates in two different prisons, one in Switzerland (where he spent three months as an inmate) and the other in Belgium (where he is the chaplain). *Résister en Prison* is about friendship, about the elements that go into making and sustaining friends. What does this friendship consist of? Listen to the words of Didier, a young man who writes to Landenne from prison:

Yesterday, when reading these lines in a book, I thought of you and I recopy them for you: "*A friend is someone who can stay silently by our side in a moment of confusion or of despair, who can remain with us when we are distressed and in mourning, who can accept not knowing, not being able to nurse our wounds or to heal us, and who helps to face the reality of being powerless. Such a friend truly loves us.*"

After putting this book down, one appreciates that the "good news" which Landenne brings as a prison chaplain is the presence of friendship. As we know, though, friendship is complex, shot through with a mixture of joy, anger, misunderstanding, betrayal, forgiveness. In introducing us to his friends, Landenne does not spare us the complexity; there is nothing of the maudlin as he escorts us through the corridors of his prisons. Behind each word, page and chapter, one glimpses the lives of some extraordinary men, and the solidarity among them that a life together in prison has forged.

True to his formation in the Society of Jesus, Landenne structures *Résister en Prison* according to Ignatius' method of contemplation: a composition of place, establishing for the reader the locale of the prison itself; with the locale firmly in place, he listens to and engages the inmates in

* Edward Hyland, former director of the Jesuit Centre for Social Faith and Justice, works in a Toronto law firm.

conversation, slowly insinuating himself into the tissue of their lives; and then, in a third part, he steps back to perform a repetition of the first two, highlighting the moments of consolation and desolation, attempting to understand their significance for him in the exercise of his ministry.

Of the three parts, I found the first two the most engaging and, at times, moving. In a remarkable decision during his tertianship, Landenne voluntarily entered the prison of Bellechasse, in Switzerland, where he lived as an inmate for three months. His account of that time is excerpted from the journal that he kept while there. The daily rhythm of boredom, and work if he could get it, the unpredictable and sharp explosions of rage and violence, the mistrust and hostility among prisoners and between prisoners and guards, the unexpected gestures of kindness and generosity — Landenne gives us a glimpse of them all. Laced throughout are his reflections, as he gropes towards understanding what he and his fellow inmates are living. Because of its form, this chronicle is necessarily incomplete, indeed halting. Through it, though, we see Landenne move from fear to the point where, as he leaves Bellechasse, he can write about

a jumble of feelings inside me: sadness at leaving brothers, gratitude for the gift of this spiritual adventure, the desire to follow through on this pilgrimage, the fear of being unfaithful to such a great grace, bitterness at leaving men in a dehumanizing darkness ... and perhaps, most deeply, the joy that comes from knowing myself still to be a companion of Jesus, called to share for a long time to come the journey of the poor....

The reader senses that the men of Bellechasse were instrumental in Landenne's renewing his vocation as a priest and Jesuit.

If Landenne was a visitor at Bellechasse, at Lantin (in Belgium), where he is chaplain, he is at home. This is the heart of the book. Here, we meet Edek, Jean-Marc, Philippe, Olivier and others — convicted criminals, yes, but above all men who have a desire and capacity for friendship and fidelity. We read how, together, they resist the indignity of a life locked behind bars and concrete; how, with Landenne, they started to meet in the bowels of Lantin to share something of their lives and faith, and of their hope. From these initial gatherings in the catacombs of the prison emerged a community of friends and solidarity that transcended the prison walls and barbed wire to include strangers, members of the prisoners' families, and those of their brothers now back out on the street. However, not all is joyful and happy: the book is also a testament of lives broken and surrendered violently. We read Jean-Marc's beautiful letter to Jean-Pierre in the wake of the latter's suicide:

Was it in a moment of profound distress, isolated in this damn hole, that you convinced yourself that life only begins when death calls? I imagine that you breathed deeply one last time and, on the threshold of the freedom that you longed for, you looked at us all and whispered, "I love you and will love you in this new world that awaits me and that I hope is better..."

Landenne is in the grip of this life, in all its messiness, confusion and subtle acts of resistance. This is life inside a prison, which he invites us to enter into through the words and gestures of his friends. The big question for him is, what does it mean to be a chaplain in and to such a world? This occupies the third and final part of the book. On his own account, this is supposed to be a more systematic reflection. The topics are wide ranging: how to keep from burning out; the place of the victim in the justice system; the implications this has for him as chaplain; whether the role of chaplain ends up legitimizing the prison system; the limits that a chaplain faces in providing assistance to inmates.

In the end, this part of the book is less a systemic reflection on these questions; rather, it is a statement for a project of further analysis, study and reflection. If the reader is looking for answers from this part, none is to be found. Landenne is too tentative in his conclusions, if he comes to conclusions at all. This is not intended as a criticism, but an observation of the book's limits as a "systematic reflection." One can only hope that he will bring his intelligence and passion to these questions, once he has had more years of experience, study, and time to think deeply, and write the systematic reflection that part three of *Résister en Prison* is not.

A final comment. If this is an example of the Society of Jesus' way of proceeding in the social apostolate, then Jesuits world-wide have every reason to be deeply satisfied (not to say complacent), and the Church and the world, in turn, have every reason to be grateful. Landenne's ministry and writing are surely among the best that the Society has to offer to a world desperately in need of fidelity and hope: a man who chooses to live with those consigned to the margins of society, who lives his calling with great passion and ethical and intellectual integrity, who is not afraid of his limits, who seeks to understand and speak about his world in order to leave it measurably more human.

I look forward to Philippe Landenne's next act of faith and account of the hope that lives deep within him.

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Beginning with issue no. 71, *Promotio Iustitiae* is published in Italian as well as in English, French and Spanish. A reader who would like to receive *PJ* in Italian (instead of, or in addition to, other versions), or who knows someone who would appreciate receiving it, please contact the Social Justice Secretariat by mail, fax or e-mail. Thank you!