



Call to Justice: “JusticeGram” of the Salvatorian Family USA

...be very loving, understanding
and compassionate to the poor...

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Fr. Jordan, Spiritual Diary 1/133

“We stand on the shoulders of giants.” We use this phrase when we recall the lives and impacts of Salvatorians of our past who have, through their life’s work and influence, continued to profoundly impact our own. This holds true when we look back at our Salvatorian history of living out what Vatican II named the “preferential option for the poor.” It holds true in our current commitment to ministries, investments, and corporate stance(s), as well as in our personal and communal commitments to justice, peace, and integrity of creation, commitments that shape our actions and prayer lives at all levels, from global community/branch initiatives down to personal choices.

Fr. Jordan and the earliest members of our Salvatorian Family would not likely have identified this call to respond to the Gospel as a “preferential option for the poor,” but he did reflect upon the needs and realities and call to serve “the poor, the sick, the despoised, (and) the abandoned ...” seeing “in every mortal person the immortal soul purchased by the Precious

Blood, and never look down on anyone.” (*Spiritual Diary, 1/133*)

In this issue of our Salvatorian Family’s *JusticeGram*, we will take a look back at our recent past to reflect upon ways God has called us each to “hear the cry of the poor:” and the “cry of the Earth” (a Scripture call clearly reiterated in Pope Francis’s 2015 encyclical *Laudato Si.*)

In future issues, we will shift our focus to explore ways we are responding to this call to justice, peace and integrity of creation today. Then, we will look ahead, and consider how we are called to live this out in our future.

Age to age, God calls us to action. We need the “shoulders” of our past and present witnesses to help us discern our response and our responsibilities today and into tomorrow.

Take the 2021 SURVEY TODAY please!

Online: <https://forms.gle/AB4nqT6mETjBxUq28>

Paper: Print and complete, then return to

Jackie White, SDS

Saying “yes” to the “preferential option for the poor”

Salvatorians have said “yes” for generations. In a recent interview, **Fr. Bill Rimmel, SDS** spoke of the central importance of social justice for being Salvatorian:

“My awareness was ignited in my early seminary days in Lanham, MD. The march on Selma caught my attention and I became involved in advocating for people of color,” he noted. Bill marched, trying to influence the Johnson administration and raising his voice on behalf of a black employee at the parish where he ministered.

“Later I served with Fr. Luke McArthur, SDS, at Pius Parish; again, social justice became a focus.



“For ten years, I led groups to El Salvador for a ‘retreat’ experience of listening and learning from the people so as to better advocate on their behalf,” explained Bill.

In the days before being an “ally” was identified as an appropriate justice role for a person living the privileged life of white, Euro-rooted society, Bill became a learner, turning to those who lived with the ongoing oppression, discrimination, and lack of human rights to gain insight and wisdom for trying to impact societal change.

Even as the rhythm of life has changed, Bill’s passion about creating a more just world is still there.

“I believe social justice is central to being a Salvatorian,” he said. “It is a difficult and slow journey (to challenge and change systems of injustice), but being in community with others with the same focus keeps the fire kindled!”

February 8, 2021

National Day of Prayer for Prevention of Slavery and Human Trafficking:

COVID 19 has increased human trafficking and slavery. Let us remember these victims by participating in a Prayer Service. For information and to register, click on these links:

Talitha Kum/UISG: Marathon of Prayer <https://preghieracontrotratta.org/>

Coalition of Catholic Organizations Against Human Trafficking: <https://www.humantraffickingacademy.org/event/day-of-prayer/>

Prayer to St. Josephine Bakhita:
USCCB <https://www.usccb.org/about/migration-and-refugee-services/national-migration-week/upload/M7-266-Josephine-Bakhita-Prayer-Card.pdf>

@ Prayer or @ UR Parish

As we remember victims of human trafficking on Feb. 8, the Anti Human Trafficking Day of Prayer, let us also work to dismantle the systems that make human trafficking not only possible, but lucrative.

Let us pray for our brothers and sisters who continue to suffer from systems designed to benefit others.

As we continue to grow in our understanding of systemic racism, inspire us to use our power and status to create changes that will impact generations to come in positive, life-giving ways.

Anthony Scola, SDS, who is today a Lay Salvatorian, also served at the Justice and Peace Center.

“The... experience influenced my entire life by giving me the desire to constantly grow in consciousness of social issues and to participate in small ways by trying to connect with persons affected by injustice. This is a life-long learning process that takes time to internalize,” Anthony highlighted.

Margaret Scola, SDS (nee Arndorfer) also was involved at the Center. Even years later, she shared that “...this was a time that was incredibly stimulating and growth producing.... (We were engaged) in neighborhood justice issues... as well as global realities like war resistance. All of (these) became part of my life.”

Salvatorian involvement in the Justice and Peace Center continued right up until the

very end. **Sr. Jane Eschweiler, SDS** served until 1981, when the Center closed.

“We (SDS) became more astute at looking for the structural reasons for injustice and approaching systemic change more in our ministries, rather than “band-aiding” with short-term solutions. We came to realize the importance of inter-community collaboration as the only way to get this done,” Sr. Jane emphasized. “The pressure we put on companies like Kellogg... and Nestle... and through boycotting lettuce and grapes, made an eventual impact (on justice in product lines and on farmworker conditions.)”

For each of these Salvatorians, focusing on justice translated to direct involvement in raising awareness, direct responses to alleviate injustices, and systemic work toward structural change. As Jane pointed out, “complexities of racism/poverty,” as well as of other systemic JPIC issues, are “deep-seated and often subtle, and take many years and efforts” to address them.

Our prior issues of this newsletter, and also our next issue, provide a peek into how we are continuing to address justice and peace issues. The Gospel’s “preferential option for the poor” call continues, as does our Salvatorian response.



Contributors for This Issue

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