Welcome to #33 of Embrace the World! In this edition you will find news concerning our sisters in Czech Republic, Germany, Ireland, about UPR, and the networking of GS across the globe. Tell me about your activities for inclusion in a future edition. Yolanda Sanchez, JP Communications Coordinator.

A “learning organization” refers to an organization that facilitates the learning of its members and continuously transforms itself.

The formation principles developed for GS in 2001 under Sr. Liliane integrate spiritual life and intellectual development with vitality and effectiveness in our congregational life. The congregation has supported training in Justice through the development of the GSJIPO Training Facilitator role in 2010. Now there are resources available on the GS Int. Justice Peace web page that enables you to access on-going learning in many ways!

The new section of the web page includes:
- GS documents such as the Position Papers and JP Training Curricula;
- Self-learning programmed models on human rights, that you can learn at your own pace;
- Recent global reports on topics relevant to ministry priorities.

Look over this new resource and discover your areas of interest. Promote creativity and openness! Update yourself for greater effectiveness in ministry! Introduce new topics for conversations in community! Share resources with staff! Be a part of keeping our congregation vital and relevant!

Go to:  
http://www.buonpastoreint.org/jp-en/training-resources

We allow the Holy Spirit to guide us in key directions for our future vitality. Inspired by the creative audacity of St. Mary Euphrasia, we are impelled to foster a deepening of our spirituality and a new consciousness which enlivens our prayer, community life, ministries and our desires...
(Adapted from Chapter Direction Statement, July 2009)

Moving towards Rio+20

“Rio+20” is the short name for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development to take place in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June 20th-22nd 2012 – twenty years after the landmark 1992 Earth Summit in Rio. Rio+20 is also an opportunity to look ahead to the world we want to see in 20 years.

The Conference will focus on two themes: (a) a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication; and (b) the institutional framework for sustainable development.

What is “Rio+20”? Why do we need Rio+20? What is sustainable development? You can get answers and more information on the followings website pages:

GS will be represented at this event through our sisters: Marta Iris Lopez, NGO Regional Designate in Santiago, Doris Lovón Fernandez (Perú), María Aurea Augusto Marques (Brazil), Fernanda Ferreira-lay partner (Brazil), and Erika Patricia Sanchez Valdez OLC (Mexico).

Rio+20 is a chance to move away from business-as-usual and to act to end poverty, address environmental destruction and build a bridge to the future.
Laudate Dominum, omnes gentes, Halleluiah!

The Sisters of the Good Shepherd arrived in Ostrava in March 1992 at the invitation of Bishop Jan Graubner.

13 Good Shepherd Sisters from different countries have participated in this Mission in Czech Republic. In the beginning, the Sisters started looking around to see how to be of service for the Community in Ostrava. Some Sisters worked in a CARITAS Home for mothers and children in distress. Later on, they bought a house in Ludgeřovice which was renovated and in 1997 was opened to give shelter to disadvantaged mothers and children.

At present there are two Communities of Good Shepherd Sisters in Czech Rep. In Ostrava, the sisters work with Roma families to help them have a better quality of life and also help the mothers and children in St. Euphrasia House. They also visit women in prison.

The second community, in Prague, the sisters are making contacts with young people, helping the sick in hospital, visiting prisoners, and occasionally meeting women in prostitution on the streets of Prague.

To celebrate this 20th Jubilee we had two activities. The first on Sunday 22nd April was in Ostrava Parish church. The Parish Priest celebrated Mass giving a very nice homily about the presence of the Good Shepherd Sisters in Czech Rep. and the Sisters participated fully through readings and offerings. Everyone present was offered a nice cake (kolače) as they left the church.

The Sisters in Ostrava were very happy to have Sr. Benedicta who came for this occasion to represent Sr. Melitta our Provincial Leader, as she could not be present because of other commitments. The Sisters also came from Prague to be with the sisters during their celebrations.

Then on the Feast of St. Mary Euphrasia, 24th April, the Sisters gathered together with the Mothers and children in “St. Euphrasia House” in Ludgeřovice, to thank the Lord in a very special way for all the blessings and graces that they have received during the past 20 years of the Good Shepherd foundation in Ostrava. The Lay Associates, Good Shepherd friends, collaborators, and benefactors were invited to join in our celebration. The mothers, together with the Staff, prepared all the refreshments which everyone enjoyed thoroughly. Everyone present was given a pen as a souvenir of this occasion, with the motto written on it “One person is of more value than the whole world.”

We are very grateful to God, to the Congregation of Good Shepherd and for the many persons from Czech Republic as well as from other countries who have supported the Sisters from the beginning and collaborated in this mission.

Cork Social Housing Forum meets Local Public Representatives.

By Shirley O Sullivan, JP contact Ireland

On the 30th 2012 January Cork Social Housing Forum (Ireland) hosted a meeting to discuss how the Voluntary Housing Sector in Cork can work in partnership with the government and local statutory agencies to adequately meet the social housing needs of the local population.
Cork Social Housing Forum is a local network whose aim is to raise awareness of social and affordable accommodation issues and to lobby the government and policy makers at local and national level with a view to enhancing accommodation provision in Cork City and City hinterland area.

Two Good Shepherd Services are members of the network, Good Shepherd Services and Baile, an Aoire Sheltered Housing Service represented by Sisters Jane Murphy and Shirley O’ Sullivan, respectively.

Cork Social Housing Forum is firmly of the opinion that in the current economic climate, it is more critical than ever that the voluntary and statutory sectors work in close cooperation to meet social housing need. The meeting was held to provide a forum where successful practical approaches to social housing provision as well as some of the current challenges and issues faced by the sector could be discussed and possible solutions identified.

Among the issues discussed were:
• Homelessness and how the Voluntary Housing Sector can help prevent it
• The operation of the Rental Accommodation and Rent Supplement Schemes
• The wider challenges facing the Voluntary Housing Sector.

For more information on Cork Social Housing Forum download a summary of the meeting visit www.corksocialhousingforum.com

For information on Good Shepherd Services Cork and their work with homeless girls, women and children visit. www.goodshepherdservices.ie

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World Day of Prayer

Province of Germany/Albania

The WDP 2012 had been prepared by the women of Malaysia. In our quarter of Würzburg, the two parishes, Catholic and Lutheran, are always celebrating this prayer together. In preparing they normally ask us Good Shepherd Sisters, if we have sisters in the respective country, and if so, they collect the money for one of our projects.

Cambodian woman in search of her sister who had gone to Malaysia for work

Thus, ahead of time, I had asked our sisters in Malaysia for a project, and Theresa Symons had proposed to financially support two migrant women from Cambodia, who had migrated to Malaysia and had worked as domestic workers, but had been exploited and abused, got sick and left without receiving their salaries. They had come to one of our shelters in Malaysia, where they experienced healing and recovery of their worth and dignity. Now, after six months in the Centre, they felt empowered to again manage and take responsibility for their own lives, and to reintegrate with their families. But they did not have any money for their return to Cambodia.

We could prepare a Power Point in order to share with the prayer participants the work of our sisters in Malaysia. The German national WDP team also knew about the difficult situation of domestic workers in Malaysia, and had prepared a petition to the Malaysian government to protect domestic workers by ensuring their rights according to law.

Thus, we prayed for the women, collected money to support them, and signed the petition to the Malaysian government demanding to change the situation of domestic workers. Afterwards, we all felt very close to the women in Malaysia, by sharing Malaysian food prepared by German women!
The Universal Periodic Review

By Margaret Lynch, NGO Representative in Geneva

The Universal Periodic Review "has great potential to promote and protect human rights in the darkest corners of the world.” – Ban Ki-moon, UN Secretary-General.

The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) is a process which involves a review of the human rights records of all UN Member States once every four and a half years. The review provides the opportunity for each State to declare what actions they have taken to improve the human rights situations in their countries and to fulfill their human rights obligations.

Currently, no other universal mechanism of this kind exists. The ultimate aim of the UPR mechanism is to improve the human rights situation in all states and address human rights violations wherever they occur.

The following GS countries were reviewed in the 13th session held in May 2012: Indonesia, India, United Kingdom, The Philippines, Brazil, Ecuador and South Africa. We congratulate Good Shepherd in Brazil who submitted their own report and India who contributed to a joint report with another NGO. Now the work continues as we monitor how our governments implement the commitments that they have made to the international community.

The next UPR session will be held in Geneva in September/October 2012. Many Good Shepherd countries will be under review: Czech Republic, Argentina, Peru, Guatemala, Korea, Switzerland, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Japan. Good Shepherd in Argentina, Sri Lanka and Japan contributed to joint reports and Korea has submitted an individual report. We commend all the hard work that has gone into these reports which ensure that the voices of the women and children in our programmes are heard at the highest level.


By Clare Nolan, input from Sr Niluka Perea, JP Commission

Background: Following decades of brutal Civil War that divided North and South, Tamil and Sinhalese, the government of Sri Lanka commissioned a report, Lesson Learned & Reconciliation Commission (LLRC), to help the country move toward healing. The report was completed in Nov. of 2011. It stirred much controversy in political circles, church circles and international circles. The issues involved in the report touch the realities of those with who GS is in service. How to be reconcilers in a chaotic climate? How to be involved in systems and structures without provoking alienation? These were question asked by the JP Commission of Sri Lanka and by other GS in Asia Pacific who wanted to support a response.

In May of 2012 GS Sri Lanka responded to the challenge to involve themselves in the National Report (LLRC), on behalf of those suffering in the aftermath of the long Civil War. Despite controversies related to governance, human rights, and proper representation, GS lifted up the positive elements of LLRC and focused it as a document that could serve those witnesses seeking justice.

In a concise “response report”, the GS JP Commission targeted five definite areas of action for GS:

- Raise awareness about LLRC for all religious;
- Educate local people about the report;
- Disseminate and study the LLRC in GS communities;
- Organize a Day of Remembrance for victims, in concert with a LLRC government recommendation; and
- Join with other civil society groups to implement recommendations of the LLRC.

Such clear and positive political action in the public sphere sets GS in Sri Lanka to be a credible voice for the voiceless, or, perhaps more appropriately, a voice with the voiceless.

**Hidden Exploitation: An issue of GS Australia New Zealand**

By Clare Nolan, based on the Executive Summary

Hidden Exploitation: Women in forced labour, marriage and migration is a report released by GS Australia New Zealand in May, 2012. The report is a result of inquiry towards understanding needs and identifying gaps in prevention and services for women and girls being trafficked and exploited in Australia.

The work was prompted by a consciousness of the need to keep pace with emerging issues that deprive women of their rights. In the Australian context employment is central, as are the concerns of migrant and indigenous women; these themes interweave and intersect throughout the report.

The report names 24 recommendations, most directed to GS Australia New Zealand in partnership with other groups working on these issues. Recommendations cover areas such as greater research, focused advocacy, development of policy, as well as improvements in resources and services. The report is a fine blueprint for the way recommendations flow from the gaps that were exposed in the research: gaps in knowledge, gaps in services. Some gaps in assessment itself led to the need to focus areas for capacity building and partnerships as well as pinpoint areas where advocacy is required.

Government laws, regulations and procedures are a constant and critical focus of the report since they will be tools toward implementation of justice. Never does the report lose focus of the women and girls in vulnerable situations for whom empowerment and love will end in the unlocking of their full dignity.

*A full copy of the report may be requested at:* info@goodshep.com.au

**Reconciliation and Hope: Rights of Indigenous Peoples**

By Clare Nolan

Winifred and Clare of the GSJPO were present in May 2012 as the Partnership for Global Justice, of which GS is a member, awarded The International Council of Thirteen Indigenous Grandmothers the Annual Global Justice Award. The award is recognition of the work the Grandmothers have done towards healing indigenous communities who have been deeply hurt by the centuries of domination since 1492.

The honor was bestowed in concert with a call for justice related to the Doctrine of Discovery and the Papal Bull of 1492. By these documents the Catholic Church justified the subjugation and killing of native nations, in favor of colonial expansion. The United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues has as its 2012 theme: The Doctrine of Discovery: its enduring impact on indigenous peoples and the right to redress for past conquests (articles 28 and 37 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples).

The Partnership is standing with the Grandmothers in asking for a clearer expression from the Church concerning these documents. They have asked for a Pastoral letter of apology, a healing ritual, a
statement about the Doctrine and an audience between the pope and the Council of Grandmothers. None has been agreed to.

The Partnership offered, “Our meager attempts… cannot repay the Indigenous Peoples …we reach out and ask for their forgiveness and offer to work together with them… to walk together in peace.”


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Our Justice and Peace team

By Georgette Tannoury, NGO Regional Designate ESCWA Beirut

Our new Justice and Peace team is already 7 months old. We meet once every 6 weeks. We are 4 sisters and 3 lay people so far, other lay people will join us in the coming months.

In our meetings, we try to analyze certain subjects, provide information on what is happening in our world and especially our region of the Middle East. We pray together and share in regarding certain issues. We keep informed about the following themes: human trafficking - Migration - Economic Justice - prostitution - girls - ecology).

We link with local teams, different people and NGOs dealing with these issues, (already the Bishop and the chair of the JP commission at the local church level, has promised to include us in the project of his team).

Each Member of the team is committed to local Justice through their daily work. However we also do our best to be creative and to look for prophetic answers to the current needs of our society.

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As a team we realize how there is an urgent need to remain vigilant, to act constantly and never to give up because of the cries of the people to whom we listen…

Now, more than ever, is the time to sow the love and the mercy of Jesus, the Good Shepherd.

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War… Violence…Trauma…

By Georgette Tannoury, NGO Regional Designate ESCWA Beirut

M. I. is 9 months pregnant; she went with her husband to join her parents. On the way, three armed and masked men kidnapped the husband and raped the woman. By-standers dared to save the woman. The child died in her womb. Sometime after, the husband was released when a ransom was paid.

The family arrived in Lebanon in the hope of getting a visa to leave the Middle East. The traumatized woman was brought into our center for assistance. The Social worker welcomed her, listened at length to her story and prepared a plan of intervention. It includes weekly interviews with the psychologist, the psychotherapist and different doctors; it will be a long journey.

M.I. is doing better now; she has begun to focus on her family and she wants to join other women for some training.

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Please distribute to all communities, programs, and Good Shepherd Friends in your Unit.

Thank you.