



SISTERS
OF THE PRESENTATION
of the Blessed Virgin Mary



Stand Together
and spend yourselves for the poor

JUSTICE UPDATE – JANUARY 2007

Where is “Sabbath” in my life and what actions result?

The gap between the rich and poor within states, nations and between countries continues to grow. In the Hebrew Scriptures we hold the vision of life in community as liberating and just. One way to reflect and act upon this is through the practice of “Sabbath cycles,” powerful reminders of God’s intent that all creatures enjoy fullness and participate in the abundance of God’s world. Every seven years, we experience a “Sabbath Year” as directed by Moses’ final words to the Hebrew people. This Sabbath Year is an observance requiring the cancellation of debts and the restoring of equal relations among community members. The intent is to prevent exploitation of others.

In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus declares a Jubilee or “year of God’s favor.” If we sit with this message and the life of Christ, we begin to glimpse the vision that became the cornerstone of Jesus’ ministry. As a gentle reminder, one of the Millennium Development Goals is to cut extreme poverty in half by 2015. While debt cancellation has occurred in small steps with the help of many of us, many more nations still feel the burden of excessive debt.

Making Connections:

Eradicate poverty as an ethical, social and environmental imperative. (Earth Charter #9)

Ensure that economic activities and institutions at all levels promote human development in an equitable and sustainable manner. (Earth Charter, #10)

“...Proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants; it shall be a jubilee for you...” (Leviticus 25:10)

Reflection:

2007, provides us with the opportunity to renew our spirits and actions with vigor to raise a prophetic call for debt cancellation and economic justice for those in developing countries as well as those within our nation. This coming year the World Social Forum will take place in Africa for the first time. It is also the halfway point to fulfillment of the Millennium Development Goals. Furthermore, we mark the 200th Anniversary to the end of the Atlantic Slave Trade by honoring previous brave abolitionists who fought slavery as we build our own strength to abolish poverty around the world.

On **January 21st**, groups around the country will join Jubilee USA to launch the Sabbath Year with a Jubilee Sunday celebration. People modeling Jesus’ message of Jubilee will ask their Senators and

Representative to support the Jubilee Act. This bill calls for the cancellation of debt of impoverished countries without harmful economic policy conditions attached. In addition, the G8 meeting in Germany this summer and the IMF / World Bank annual meeting in the fall provide opportunities for our prophetic voice.

Actions:

- 1.** Contact your Senators and Representatives. Urge her/him to urge to support legislation that would cancel the debts of all impoverished countries that require it to meet the Millennium Development Goals, without harmful economic policy conditions attached.
- 2.** The action is being called for by Medha Patkar, National Alliance of Peoples' Movements. Our sisters in India work with Medha in her work for justice. In our commitment to speak and act for global justice, we raise concerns regarding justice to be done for the people of Singur where a joint platform of local farmers, sharecroppers and agricultural workers, have been leading the movement in Singur against the coercive, undemocratic and non-transparent acquisition of land by force by the West Bengal Government for the Tata Motors Small Car Project. We urge the Government of India to devise a rehabilitation policy that is participatory and scrap the century-old Land Acquisition Act. You are urged to e-mail Prime Minister Manmohan Singh at presidentofindia@rb.nic.in or pmsb@pmo.nic.in with the above message.
- 3.** South Dakota Presentation Sisters have a congregational ministry, CAMINANDOS JUNTOS, and they keep us abreast of needed action and important information on the issue of immigration. You may have already heard, five SWIFT Beef Packing plants in MN were raided in December. Illegals were detained and sent back to their countries. Unfortunately, their children and their wives were not sent back and families became separated. Presentation Sr. Janet Horstman, an immigration officer, was helping the families through this whole ordeal. If you're interested in receiving updates from her, e-mail her at: cjmin@midconetwork.com and get on her list serve. What actions have I taken to keep abreast of the immigration raids in Iowa (or the state which I reside in)?