

# Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation News

## Congregation of the Sisters of Bon Secours



### Migration



December, 2016  
Vol. 2, Number 4



*“Migration today is not a phenomenon limited to some areas of the planet. It affects all continents and is growing into a tragic situation of global proportions.”* (Pope Francis)

Throughout human history, migration has been a courageous expression of the individual's will to overcome adversity and to live a better life. The choice to migrate, to leave one's country because of the threat of violence was echoed in the life of the Holy Family as Mary and Joseph fled to Egypt to protect the infant Jesus. Since 2000, the U.N. General Assembly has observed International Migrants' Day on December 18<sup>th</sup> as a way to focus on the plight of migrants. This past year, the number of international migrants worldwide was the highest ever recorded. During this Advent Season we join as the family of Bon Secours in opening our hearts to the plight of the migrant and advocating on their behalf.



#### On the Move

- In 2015, the number of international migrants worldwide was the highest ever recorded, having reached 244 million (from 232 million in 2013).
- 65.3 million people were forcibly displaced by conflict and violence by the end of 2015, of whom 21.3 million across international borders (UNHCR).
- Over 5,400 migrants worldwide are estimated to have died or gone missing in 2015.
- The large majority of international migrants in the world are migrant workers.
- In almost every region of the world people are more likely to be in favor of migration than against it. The one, notable exception to this is Europe. (IOM Gallup)

#### Migration to Europe

- More than a million migrants and refugees crossed into Europe in 2015, sparking a crisis as countries struggled to cope with the influx and creating division in the EU over how best to deal with resettling people.
- The conflict in Syria continues to be by far the biggest driver of migration. But the ongoing violence in Afghanistan and Iraq, abuses in Eritrea, as well as poverty in Kosovo, are also leading people to look for new lives elsewhere. (Source: BBC News)

#### Migration to the United States

- Over 6,000 people have died along the U.S./Mexico border since 2000.
- The USA has the largest immigration detention infrastructure in the world with over 400,000 migrants held annually, including mothers & children.

December  
JPIC Days of Remembrance

December 1  
World AIDS Day

December 2  
International Day for the Abolition of  
Slavery

December 10  
Human Rights Day

<http://www.un.org/en/events/humanrightsday/>

December 18  
International Migrants Day

December 20  
International Human Solidarity Day



"On International Migrants Day, let us commit to coherent, comprehensive and human-rights based responses guided by international law and standards and a shared resolve to leave no one behind."

Ban Ki-Moon, U.N. Secretary General



## Living Out Our Chapter Call

Promoting Ecological Health

Ending Violence

Crying Out Against Human Trafficking

This month Sister Marguerite Provost shares how Bon Secours France are living out our Chapter Call.

### Ecological Health:

In October three persons from the Bon Secours retirement home at Vendôme, including Sr. Marguerite, participated in the Cèdre (a christian based collective purchasing group) meeting. The theme was: *"Blessed Are Those Who Live in Moderation: The Economy at the Risk of Ecology"*. It was comforting to see so many people concerned about the future of "our earth and common home". We were about 500 people each motivated by this ecological concern on which the future of generations to come depends. The core message of the presenters was to learn how to live, to spend and to consume in a different manner!

In November two people from the retirement home in Vendôme participated in the meeting on *Laudato Si'* organized by "justice and peace international". This meeting took place at UNESCO in Paris. The theme was: *"The Earth, Our Common Home: Challenges and Hopes."*

### Nonviolence:

Four persons from Vendôme, including Sr. Marguerite, participated in the regional meeting of the ACAT (christian action for the abolition of torture). Theme: "Non-violence and forgiveness".

The presenters: Dennis Gira, dialogue specialist, especially between christians and Buddhists; Vincent Roussel, member of Non-violence News": Learning to Resolve conflicts in a nonviolent manner; J.F. Herchin, regional director of ACAT:" Nonviolence according to Francis of Assisi"; Christopher Hahling, pastor of the Baptiste d'Orléans Church: "Martin Luther King and nonviolence".

### International Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation Committee

Sr. Teresa Margot Benites Montero, CBS (Peru)

Sr. Fran Gorsuch, CBS (USA)

Sr. Mary Beth Hamm, SSJ Co-chair

Sr. Mary Leamy, CBS (Ireland)

Sr. Anne Marie Mack, CBS (USA) Chair

Sr. Noelia Lara Núñez, CBS (Peru)

Sr. Marguerite Provost, CBS (France)

Sr. Alice Talone, CBS (USA)

Sr. Katherine Tierney, CBS (Ireland)

Sr. Yolanda Morales Valiente, CBS (Peru)

Sr. Chris Webb, CBS (USA)

### A Migrant Story

I made the crossing from Libya to Sicily last November, after several attempts. I am from The Gambia and had been trying to get to Europe since I left home, originally in 2009. I travelled through Senegal to Mali and on to Libya, working along the way when I could find jobs and trying to save money for the trip. I worked loading trucks and any other jobs I could get. Once I eventually got to Libya, it was very hard.

It was difficult to find work there. I was also arrested three times and taken to five different prisons. I had to pay each time to get out of prison. I also had to pay a few different people to try to get on one of the boats making the crossing to Italy. The men that run these boats take people's money, and put too many of them into the boats. That's if you can get on to the boats.

The first attempt I made to cross on one of these boats from Tripoli failed. After two days in the water, we had to turn back. After someone I knew helped me to raise the money, I eventually managed to get on another boat after paying 1,200 Libyan dinar (\$870, £585). There were far too many people on the boat, and it wasn't safe. After a difficult journey across the Mediterranean, I managed to make it to Sicily. From there, I eventually ended up in Milan. It's not easy here, with harassment and other problems, but I am so happy to have got across. (Gassama, an African Migrant)

Source: BBC News



### Message of Hope to Migrant from Pope Francis

Dear migrants and refugees! You have a special place in the heart of the Church, and you help her to enlarge her heart and to manifest her motherhood towards the entire human family. Do not lose your faith and hope! Let us think of the Holy Family during the flight in Egypt: Just as the maternal heart of the Blessed Virgin and the kind heart of Saint Joseph kept alive the confidence that God would never abandon them, so in you may the same hope in the Lord never be wanting. I entrust you to their protection. (Pope Francis)

"It is necessary to respond to the globalization of migration with the globalization of charity and cooperation, in such a way as to make the conditions for migrants more humane."

Pope Francis

How have the quotes, statistics and migrant's story in this JPIC News touched you?

What is your response?