

# J/PA Alert

CONFERENCE OF MAJOR SUPERIORS OF MEN *JUSTICE AND PEACE OFFICE*

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*CMSM:*

- *assists major superiors in their role as leaders;*
- *promotes dialogue and collaboration with the conference of bishops and other major groups in church and society;*
- *provides a corporate influence in church and society.*

July/August 2005

## Greetings from T. Michael McNulty, SJ, new Justice and Peace Director

Let me begin by saying how delighted I am to have the opportunity to participate with you all in the important ministry of CMSM. As I have begun to familiarize myself with the work, I have become aware of how much good was accomplished by Stan De Boe in this position. I can only succeed him, not replace him, but I hope eventually to approach his standard of commitment and professionalism.

Some facts about myself: I come from Minnesota, where I was raised and educated. I graduated from the College (now University) of St. Thomas in 1962 and received my Ph.D. in philosophy from the University of Minnesota in 1970. I entered the Society of Jesus in the Wisconsin Province in September of 1965, and after theological studies at Weston Jesuit School of Theology in Cambridge, Massachusetts, I was ordained in 1973. I took my final vows as a Jesuit in 1980.

I worked at the Center of Concern from September 2003 to January 2005 as director of the communications center of the International Jesuit Network for Development. Prior to coming to Washing-

ton, DC, I taught philosophy at Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, for thirty years, specializing in my later years in social ethics and the philosophy of economics.

I have had a long interest in Latin America, having spent time working in a parish in the mountains of Peru and teaching at the Jesuit University of Central America in San Salvador. My recent work has been on issues of economic justice and trade. I look forward to being able to serve CMSM's membership in the areas of peace and justice.

We live, as the saying goes, in perilous times. Now more than ever it is imperative that people of faith engage themselves with public policy. Here are a couple of the most important issues:

### **Immigration Reform**

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops has launched an ambitious campaign for immigration reform. The official title of the campaign is *Justice for Immigrants: A Journey of Hope*. It was launched with a press conference on May 10, 2005, presided over by Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, Archbishop of Washington, DC. The Cardinal described

the goals of the campaign as follows:

—To educate Catholics and others of good will about the benefits of immigration and the benefits to the nation;

—To strengthen public opinion about the positive contributions of immigrants;

—To advocate for just immigration laws which promote legal status and legal pathways for migrant workers and their families;

—To organize Catholic legal service networks to assist immigrants to access the benefits of reforms.

CMSM and LCWR are both “core” agencies in this campaign. You can check out the Justice for Immigrants web site at [www.justiceforimmigrants.org](http://www.justiceforimmigrants.org).

## **Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA)**

As I write this, CAFTA is being considered for ratification in the U.S. House of Representatives (it was passed by the Senate on June 30). It has the approval of the Ways and Means Committee, but its fate in the full House is still in doubt. Sometimes described as “NAFTA on steroids,” CAFTA has encountered mounting resistance among faith-based groups, including the Latin American Episcopal Conference (CELAM).

No one is against free trade that is fair. But the process of arriving at the agreement was not transparent: negotiations took place behind closed doors, without the broad participation of those most affected. The basic problem with CAFTA, however, is that it is much more than just a trade agreement. It regulates such areas as intellectual property, prevents the use of generic drugs in many cases, and makes indigenous medicines, seeds and agricultural methods vulnerable to patenting by transnational corporations. It opens public services to direct private foreign investment, preventing governments from guaranteeing the availability of public goods like water, electricity and education. It compromises enforcement of local preference and environmental laws. And it threatens food sovereignty.

Here are the web addresses of a number of statements on CAFTA:

Washington Office on Latin America “CAFTA fails standards of justice”: [www.citizenstrade.org/pdf/wola\\_caftaunjust\\_june2004.pdf](http://www.citizenstrade.org/pdf/wola_caftaunjust_june2004.pdf)

Latin American Bishops’ Conference (CELAM) statement on free trade agreements: [www.aprodeh.org.pe/tlc/documentos/documentos\\_otros/CELAM\\_Pronunciamiento.pdf](http://www.aprodeh.org.pe/tlc/documentos/documentos_otros/CELAM_Pronunciamiento.pdf)

USCCB-SEDAC joint statement on CAFTA: [www.citizenstrade.org/pdf/usccb\\_cafta\\_07232004.pdf](http://www.citizenstrade.org/pdf/usccb_cafta_07232004.pdf)

Pastoral letter of the Council of Churches of Latin America (CLAI) against CAFTA: [www.citizenstrade.org/pdf/clai\\_pastoralletteragainstafta\\_07082004.pdf](http://www.citizenstrade.org/pdf/clai_pastoralletteragainstafta_07082004.pdf).

CMSM has endorsed “An Interfaith Statement on International Trade and Investment.” You can review it at [www.tradejusticeusa.org/about/eng-prin.htm](http://www.tradejusticeusa.org/about/eng-prin.htm).

## **An Opportunity to Express Solidarity**

Dennis Beach, OSB, of St. John’s Abbey in Minnesota writes:

I am happy to be able to extend to you an invitation for you and/or someone from your congregation to come to El Salvador to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the martyrdom of the four US Churchwomen killed there in December 1980. As a member of the Board of Directors of the SHARE Foundation, which is planning the delegation with the co-sponsorship of CMSM, LCWR and Pax Christi, I would personally like to encourage you to come along or to seek out one or two members of your congregation or community to join us in El Salvador November 30 – December 6, 2005.

Jon Sobrino, SJ, has written that El Salvador’s primary export seems to be faith—people from all walks of life come there to walk in the footsteps of the martyrs and

to meet the people and grass-roots communities and churches carrying on their legacy and almost unanimously report that they feel their faith growing, deepening, expanding. I think you'll find SHARE's mission of accompaniment and empowerment one that embodies the church's best theology of mission: helping make the kingdom of God a reality by walking together in faith and solidarity. Please encourage your congregation or community to be ¡Presente! as we celebrate the legacy of the four US churchwomen, Archbishop Romero, Father Rutilio Grande and innumerable others who gave their lives in the struggle for justice in El Salvador and in our world.

With this message should come an attachment or two explaining the trip to El Salvador. Please feel free to contact me with any questions about it.

Yours in Peace and Solidarity,

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