



FRATELLI DI SAN GABRIELE
Casa Generalizia

Via Trionfale, 12840 - 00135 ROMA
Italia

A GABRIELITE HANDBOOK ON JUSTICE, PEACE AND INTEGRITY OF CREATION

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(FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION ONLY)

FOREWORD

As the Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Vita Consecrata* of Pope John Paul II affirms, Consecrated Life is integral to the life of the Church and is at the very heart of the Church's mission in the world (*cf.* VC 3). Therefore as consecrated persons, we are called upon to continue the mission of Jesus “*to bring the good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to the captives, to restore sight to the blind, and to set the downtrodden free*” (Lk. 4:18). A careful reading of the Church documents reveals to us that Social Justice is an integral part of the Church's teaching. In the section on Christian Morality entitled “*The Human Community*” the Catechism of the Catholic Church devotes an entire section (1928-48) specifically to the topic of social justice. Similarly, the 2004 Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, which gives a magnificent overview of the wider topic of the Church's social doctrine, further elaborates on the concept of social justice. The Church's social doctrine is rooted in the Scripture, and it especially draws upon the Church's social encyclicals of the past 100 or so years, beginning with Pope Leo XIII's “*Rerum Novarum*” in 1891.

The Rule of Life and Constitutions of the Brothers of St. Gabriel view our consecration and commitment as an integral part of our participation in the Church's mission of evangelization, witnessing and human promotion. We are reminded in unambiguous terms, “*Your total oblation to God demands a dedicated dynamic love for all men. Mindful of the poorer ones among them you will play your part in humanity's struggle for progress, more particularly through educational activities*” (RL 14). Reading the signs of the times and to make our mission more relevant to meet the changing needs of the changing times, our Congregation has been going through a process of growth and development on matters of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation, and the creation of a just and fraternal world, especially through the pronouncements made in the General Chapters, beginning with the 27th General Chapter.

The 29th General Chapter held in 2000 was a landmark in the process of the growth of the Congregation's commitment to Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation. A clear social theme, having socio-economic and justice impact in its life and mission was chosen for this Chapter: “*Montfortian Missionary Dynamism for a Just Society towards the Kingdom*”. The establishment of the International Secretariat (GSJP) in Rome to coordinate the Congregation's efforts in the area of “Justice Peace and Integrity of Creation” was a decision taken in this Chapter. The new impetus given in the 29th General Chapter continued to gain momentum progressively during the 30th and 31st General Chapters.

The JPIC Handbook you have in your hands is a testimony to the Congregation's commitment to the social teachings of the Church and is intended to strengthen the resolve of the Congregation to integrate the justice, peace and integrity of creation to the varied ministries we are engaged in, especially the education mission in its varied forms. The JPIC Handbook is a document that

contributes to the endeavour of the Congregation to provide practical guidelines to all our Brothers, Associates and Collaborators who are involved in programming, preparing and implementing the social dimension of our mission. It provides a road map to specify the Biblical foundation to the social teachings of the Church, a realistic analysis of the existing social realities and social structures, the pertinent orientations taken in the General Chapters, and an historical journey to the Congregation's commitment to JPIC issues.

The Congregation owes a debt of gratitude to Bro. Paulraj, Assistant General, who prepared the schema of the JPIC Handbook during his short stint as the Executive Secretary of GSJP, and saw to the completion of the project with a lot of patience and perseverance, almost single handed. We also acknowledge with thanks the contributions of Bro. T. A. Joseph to the Handbook. I wish to place on record my appreciation to Bro. René Delorme, for his 12 years of commitment to the SGJP Secretariat as the Superior General. My thanks also go to Bros. Paulose Mekkunnel and Jose Thottiyil who were responsible for this dossier during the past 12 years. My sincere appreciation to all the SGJP Secretaries, who have made their significant contributions towards the growth of JPIC awareness in our Provinces: Bros. Amnuay Yoonprayong, Anurak Nidhibhadrabhorn, Dominic Kiong, Paul Raj A. and Ambroise Ndougou. We also owe our special gratitude to all those who assisted Bro. Paul Raj in getting this project in the shape of a Handbook, especially all the members of the Central Administration who have been going through the text several times and giving their valuable suggestions, Bros. Marcel Chapeleau and Georges Le Vern, the translators who spent days and weeks on the project and Bros. Ambroise, Arockiaraj, Jayapal Reddy and others, who helped in the formatting, proof reading and printing.

It is my earnest hope that the JPIC Handbook will be a helpful tool for those individuals and institutions who wish to contribute in a small or big way for the promotion of a greater brotherhood in the world.

Bro. John Kallarackal
Superior General

INTRODUCTION

It is very disheartening to note that of all the nations in the world, only 15 have secure access to enough food for the people. The deepening poverty is more evident today than before. Our Montfortian experiences however small they may be at the Province and international levels have taught us that the poor themselves have to be the primary force for change, and any small efforts made can significantly reduce poverty. On the other hand we also feel the need for systemic change. This type of systemic change requires a critical mass of people acting in various roles according to their talents. Committed individuals and institutions like us beginning to act in various areas can bring about change. Some must study, research and teach the new vision and social analysis; some must build value base, the spirituality for the vision, and some must work to transform existing institutions from within; others create alternative patterns and models. All of these are necessary for transformational change¹. This JPIC Handbook is in this direction. It is a helpful tool for those of us, individuals and institutions who want to contribute in a small or big way for a meaningful change in our world. This Handbook is not all comprehensive in its presentation. But it is simple, readable and relevant. It talks about our Rule of Life and Constitutions; it speaks about our General Chapters and about the Justice consciousness of the Congregation. Hence it is our story - Gabrielite story.

The winds of challenge from our world blow urgently and powerfully. They cry out for committed response. The places of our services, initiatives and efforts call for a Montfortian response. What kind of response? This Handbook will enable us to see the world, see the change, work for a change and be and become the CHANGE. May all those who read, reflect, teach and put into practice this Handbook may become an inspiration for a committed response and a corporate action.

¹ Amata Miller, IHM, Winds of Challenge: Calls from our world, LCWR National Assembly, 1994

I. BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS OF JUSTICE, PEACE AND INTEGRITY OF CREATION²

INTRODUCTION:

God is the source of justice, and it flows from His very character. Therefore, we look to God's revelation of Himself in Scripture as the proper foundation of justice. Justice flows from God's heart and character. As true and good, God seeks to make the object of his holy love whole. This is what motivates God throughout the Old and New Testaments in his judgments on sin and injustice³. These judgments are both individual and corporate in scope. The Bible begins with the stories of creation and the Creator Yahweh. These form part of the first eleven Chapters which are termed 'Pre- or Primeval History'. They were written during the Babylonian Exile in the sixth century when the Israelites were taken as exiles and slaves. In their exile, when they had already lost the land, the city, the temple, the monarchy and the priesthood, they experienced a deep crisis of faith. They questioned themselves whether their God Yahweh who apparently had abandoned them into slavery and exile was more powerful or Marduk the chief god of the Babylonians was more powerful. It was in this context that they formulated the first eleven chapters of the Genesis formulating their belief in Yahweh, the God who created the whole universe, all nations and the people of Israel. For this they drew on the Mesopotamian epics like the *Enuma Elish* for Genesis 1 and the epic of *Gilgamesh* for Genesis 6-9 while purifying them of the pagan elements and presenting them according to their belief in the one-Creator God, Yahweh.

But their first experience of Yahweh was centuries earlier when they experienced oppression and slavery under the Pharaohs in Egypt. We read in Exodus 2:23-24: "During that long period of time, it happened that the king of Egypt died. The sons of Israel groaned under their slavery; they cried to God for help and from their bondage their cry ascended to God. God heard their cry and remembered his covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. God looked upon the Israelites and was aware of the situation." And so Lord decides to call and send Moses to Pharaoh. "The Lord said, 'I have seen the humiliation of my people in Egypt and I have heard their cry against their taskmasters. I am aware of their suffering. I have come down to free them from the power of the Egyptians and to bring them up from that land to a beautiful and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the territory of the Canaanites, the Hittites, ... The cry of the sons of Israel has reached me and I have seen how the Egyptians oppress them. Go now! I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the sons of Israel, out of Egypt.'" Exod. 3:7-10.

Thus Yahweh is a God who **hears** the cry of the oppressed, who **sees** the humiliation of his people, who is **aware** of their suffering and is **willing to act on their behalf** to free them and to lead them to a prosperous land. Even before He has concluded a covenant with them, He calls them 'my people'. He is a God of justice, of hope, of peace. This **concern of Yahweh for justice** we find in all the sections of the Bible.

² The contribution from Rev. Dr. Bro. T. A. Joseph, S.G. for this section is gratefully acknowledged.

³ Mike Schutt, THSC Review, May 2010

A re-interpretation of the Bible is necessary to discover the biblical theme of Justice as right relationships which run like a thread all through the Bible. In the Bible, God is not an indifferent God, but who takes the side of the poor and the oppressed. He repeatedly takes the initiative to reveal himself as Love and Compassion because of his desire to establish profound relationships:

- ☉ between himself and his creatures
- ☉ among peoples
- ☉ between people and the rest of creation

1. In the Pentateuch and the Codes:

Covenant Code (Ex. 20:22-23:33) and the Holiness Code (Lev.17:1-26:46), we meet this concern of God for justice, peace and integrity of creation. Obviously, all these detailed laws could not have been promulgated at Sinai in the desert when the Covenant was ratified. It was much later when problems arose as they lived in the Promised Land that concrete details were added. However, they are projected backwards and presented as if they were proclaimed by Yahweh at Sinai.

Thus the demand for the just treatment of orphans, widows and strangers/aliens, the weakest members of the society (Ex. 22:20-21; Dt. 10:18-19; Dt. 24:17-24). Concern for the aliens is advocated reminding them that they themselves were aliens in Egypt: 'Remember that you were a slave in Egypt, and the Lord, your God, ransomed you from there. That is why I enjoin this commandment on you' Dt. 24:18.

Just treatment of the poor and needy (Ex. 22:24-26; Ex. 23:3-11; Lev. 25:4ff; Dt. 24:12-15) is in fact a fundamental demand of the Covenant society. This is spelled out in other demands like the not taking interest from the poor (Ex. 22:24), not perverting justice in measuring length, weight or quantity (Lev. 19:35-36), (Dt. 25:13-16), not to accept bribes (Ex. 23:8) and not to spread false rumours (Ex. 23:1). And if injustices were committed, they had to be set right in the sabbatical year (Lev. 25:1-7).

2. In the Prophets:

Social justice was at the very heart of their message. Temple worship, liturgical celebration, prayers and burnt offerings have no value if their lives do not reflect true love and justice (Is. 1:10-17; Jer. 7:1-11; Amos 5:11-15.21-24; Mic. 6:1-8). In Isa. 5:8-30; 10:1-4, the prophet lists seven 'woes' which form a catalogue of social crimes and injustices which we today could well ponder over. Isaiah 9:1-7; 11:1-9 promises the realm of 'shalom'/peace which the Messiah will bring about. Second Isaiah 41:1-20 announces a New Exodus and liberation through the liberator. The Servant Songs (Is. 42:1-9; 49:1-7; 50:4-11; 52:13-53:12) announce a Servant who will seek to re-establish 'justice' through obedience and suffering. Third Isaiah speaks of true fasting as the restoration of justice by 'breaking the fetters of injustice, of untying the thongs of yoke, to set the oppressed free and to break every yoke' (Is. 58). In Is 61 the prophet announces 'the Year of the Lord's favour', which becomes Jesus' election manifesto' of his own prophetic ministry in Lk. 4:16-20. In 65:17-25, the prophet promises a 'new heavens and a new earth'

anticipating Rev. 21:1. Jeremiah while condemning the social injustices of his time, announces a ‘new covenant which will not be like the covenant I made with their fathers on the day I took them by the hand and led them out of Egypt ... But ... I will put my Law within them and write it on their hearts; I will be their God and they shall be my people’ (Jer. 31:31-34). Hosea declares, ‘It is love that I desire, not sacrifice, and knowledge of God and not burnt offerings’ (Hos. 6:6). Micah declares, ‘You have been told, O man, what is good and what the Lord requires of you: Only to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God’ (Mic. 6:8).

2.1. Prophet Amos:

He was called by Yahweh to go and prophesy to the People of Israel. Though he was not willing to be a prophet he finally accepted the task as it was a call from Yahweh. Politically, the people of Israel and Judah lived in peace as their enemies were defeated. The military victories gave a sense of greatness among the people. But they were not aware of the mortal threat hanging over Israel. Amos warned the people of their complacency. Economically there was all round prosperity and so the rich flaunted their wealth and did not care for the poor. Socially the economic boom gave way to exploitation of the poor. The rich oppressed the righteous and resorted to bribes. It was also a time of religious hypocrisy and lack of justice. Amos was disturbed to see what was happening, especially the social injustices. Amos roared like a lion against the exploitation of the poor and religious decadence. The rich and the powerful denounced him as an agitator and security risk and they expelled him from the Kingdom. But he continued to proclaim the Word of God and became the voice of Yahweh and the voice of the people who were denied justice. Amos is considered as a symbol and epitome of Social Justice in the Old Testament.

3. In the Wisdom Books:

There flourished a cultivation of wisdom, an attitude and approach to life which stressed relations between God, human beings and the rest of creation. Nature is given great importance in the Wisdom books (Prov. 6:16-19; Job 42:1-6; Qoh. 11:5; Sir. 10:6-7; Wis. 7:22-30; Ps. 103-104).

The innocent Job in the Prologue realizes his uprightness must include the concern for and the commitment to free from oppression those who are poor and persecuted. Job, specially in 24:1-12, cries out on their behalf and protests against their suffering and exploitation. ‘There are those who snatch the orphan child from the breast, and take as a pledge the infant of the poor. ... From the city the dying groan, and the throat of the wounded cries for help; yet God pays no attention to their prayer.’ As a result, the language of the book more closely resembles the language of the prophets than any of the other wisdom writings. Qoheleth in 3:16; and 4:1, demonstrates his awareness of the heart-rending injustices in his day: ‘Moreover I saw under the sun that in the place of justice, wickedness was there, and in the place of righteousness, wickedness was there as well. ... Again I saw all the oppressions that are practised under the sun. Look, the tears of the oppressed – with no one to comfort them! On the side of their oppressors there was power – with no one to comfort them’. Sirach lays claim to the prophetic spirit in 24:33. In 34:21-27, he attacks abuses in the offering of sacrifice, using ‘tainted’ wealth with goods gained from extorting the poor to multiply sacrifices. He goes further to condemn the culpability of those who

oppress the poor, calling it ‘murder’: ‘The bread of the needy is the life of the poor; whoever deprives them of it is a murderer. To take away a neighbour’s living is to commit murder; to deprive an employee of wages is to shed blood’ (Sir34:25-27). The author of the book of Wisdom, specially in the first part contrasts the faithful Jews who pursue righteousness with the ‘ungodly’ who persecute God’s people and are destined for death (Wis. 2:10-12.19-20). The personification of the Wisdom Woman or Lady Wisdom in the Wisdom books, specially in Prov. 8, Sir. 24 and Wis. 6-10 militates against the stereotypes of women created by a male-chauvinistic society as the weaker sex and as objects of sexual exploitation and promotes empowerment of women.

4. In the New Testament:

Jesus’ preaching and action centered around the Reign of God (Lk. 11:20; Lk. 17:21; Mk. 1:15; Mt. 4:17; Lk. 4:18-19). In Lk. 4:16-21, Jesus inaugurates his public ministry in the Isaian terms of announcing the Lord’s year of mercy. He is anointed by the Spirit of the Lord and is sent to bring good news to the poor and to proclaim liberty to captives, to give sight to the blind and to free the oppressed. And the Lukan Gospel is presented in this light. “The spirit of the Lord has been given to me, for he has anointed me. He sent me to bring the good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives, and to the blind new sight, to set the downtrodden free, to proclaim the Lord’s year of favour.” (Lk.4 18-19) Mathew presents the Sermon on the Mount (Mt. 5-7) as the challenge to Jesus’ disciples. In Mt 25:31-46, Jesus identifies himself with the least and the lost and makes service to them as the ultimate test of discipleship.

4.1. The Person of Jesus:

There are innumerable directives, laws and instances in the Old Testament and in the New Testament highlighting God’s relationships with human beings, among human beings and between human beings. God had a special relationship with the whole of creation. The best that could happen to the world was God sent His son Jesus Christ to the world. Jesus’ love and relationship with people crossed all barriers:

- ◆ Barriers of race – Samaritans
- ◆ Barriers of gender – Time and time again he acknowledges women as persons and as partners in mission
- ◆ Barriers of culture – accepting the mixed, hybrid culture of Galilee and Decapolis
- ◆ Barriers of religions – was against the formal religious structure of the Jerusalem Temple and befriended the pagans, sinners and tax collectors.
- ◆ Barriers of age – accepted children welcomed them and placed them at the centre.
- ◆ Barriers of outcasts – accepting political outcasts such as licensed tax gatherers, social outcasts such as lepers, religious outcasts such as prostitutes, tax-collectors and sinners.

In a society that was politically colonized, socially patriarchal, religiously conservative, Jesus introduced an alternative kind of relationship with God and with others. Jesus gave importance to universal table fellowship, breaking through social, cultural, religious, gender and political taboos. He made an option for the poor and marginalized: He ate with sinners and tax collectors... Mk.2:15-17. Jesus relativized the law: compassion is more important than the Law.

On a Sabbath day, the disciples of Jesus were hungry... he let them 'break the Sabbath' so that they can eat.... (Mk 2:23). Isn't saving life and promoting life more important than the law? (Mk3:1), he asks. Jesus breaks the Sabbath whenever human need demands it (Mk 2.23-28, 3:1-6; Lk 13:10-17; Jn 5:1-18; 9:1-34). He had compassion on the crowd and he fed them. (Mt 8:2) But most of all: You shall love the Lord... You shall love neighbour as yourself... to love one's neighbour is much more than all the burnt offerings and sacrifices... (Mt 12:28-34).

Conclusion:

While complete justice will never be accomplished by human beings, our faith that God is perfectly just should give us confidence in Him as the Righter of all wrongs and the Corrector of all errors. Yet, we all have lots of work to do, for He tells us what He requires of us: "to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God." (Micah 6:8). Biblical justice involves making individuals, communities, and the cosmos whole, by upholding both goodness and impartiality. It stands at the centre of true religion, according to James, who says that the kind of "religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless (James 1:27). The kind of religion the Bible advocates is rooted in justice that flows from the heart of God. It seeks to bring all things into the wholeness of God. As those who believe in the God of all justice, we are to experience the wholeness that he brings and extend it as citizens of his kingdom.

II. THE PRESENT SOCIAL SITUATION OF OUR WORLD

The World Summit for Social Development in 1995 defined an inclusive society as “*a society for all, in which every individual, each with rights and responsibilities, has an active role to play*” (United Nations, 1995, 66).

Such an inclusive society is equipped with mechanisms which accommodate diversity, and facilitate/enable people’s active participation in their political, economic and social lives. As such, it over-rides differences of race, gender, class, generation, and geography, and ensures equal opportunities for all to achieve full potential in life, regardless of origin. Such a society fosters, at the same time, emanates from well-being of each individual, mutual trust, sense of belonging and inter-connectedness.

When confronted with new challenges, such as external economic shocks, unexpected changes, national disaster or crisis, an inclusive society is one that shows more resilience than others. Creating such a stable, safe and just society is a slow and tedious process. This is the goal and vision of GSJP. In this section we shall reflect on the social situation of the world which we live in. We cannot study all the issues affecting our world today; but certainly we shall satisfactorily reflect on the major factors affecting our world.

We live in a world today which is facing numerous challenges of all kinds threatening the very fabric of our society. The task is enormous on our part as world citizens and as Religious Brothers to know, to understand and to take active part in the transformation of the world. On the one hand we see cut in the aid to the poorer countries and on the other increase in arms trade. We see the curse and causes of poverty all over and the conflicts in many countries. We are all concerned about the arms race, fair trade, health issues, nuclear weapons, natural disasters, human population, aging, disability, poverty eradication, indigenous peoples, social integration, family, employment, youth, social protection, climate changes and global warming, environmental issues, food and agricultural issues, human rights, sustainable development, third world debts, war on terror, world hunger and poverty, child and women trafficking, racism, global financial crisis, world military spending, migration and very many other issues affecting our world today. How do we understand these problems in order to respond adequately and in a qualitative manner as religious persons are the question many of us ask and we want answers too in our life time. We shall see some of them in this chapter.

Section: A The Root Problem: The Debt Problem

The problem really began in the 1970’s when the OPEC (Oil Producing Export Countries) raised the price of oil by over 400% in a very short space of time. A lot of money suddenly came into circulation and the oil producing nations wished to invest this money in European and American banks in order to gain interest on it. This large inflow of money on to the European and American scene could have triggered hyper-inflation if the banks did not dispose of it quickly. Africa and Latin America offered the most attractive possibilities as regards investing this money. Hence, billions of dollars were poured into the “underdeveloped” nations, at a 6% interest rate.

Unfortunately, a lot of this money went straight into the hands of dictatorial governments and instead of being invested in the country, was immediately sent back into European and American Banks so that it would create interest for these dictators. Some of the money was spent on grandiose projects that did little to benefit the receiving countries.

However, the day of reckoning came and these countries had to pay back the money that was supposed to have been invested in them. By this time, the interest on the money had risen to 23% and above. Many countries found that their GNP output could not even cover the interest repayments, so the banks and other lending institutions called in the IMF (International Monetary Fund) to regulate the economies of these defaulter countries so that their economies would now be geared towards paying back the interest repayments. Money that should have been going into education, health, agriculture, etc., was going towards re-paying the debt. This has created a catastrophic situation in many countries. Many have taken to the violence of the gun in order to try and get some power back into their lives.

The debt problem has become a great noose around developing countries' necks. It affects those involved in medical, educational and in social justice and peace works in these countries.⁴

Structural Adjustment Program (SAP):

SAP is an economic reform program based upon neo-liberal principles of free market and privatization designed to stabilize an imbalanced economy and restructure its orientation and operation. Under the guidance of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, a country undergoing SAP must implement specific reform policies and meet specific targets if it is to receive approval for further loans and grants. It does this through: Stabilization of the economy through short-term monetary and budget arrangements that aim to calm things down by curbing inflation rates and curtailing enormous budget deficits. This they try to do in the following ways: Devalue currency (to encourage exports, discourage imports), Increase interest rates (to encourage savings), Curtail interest rates (to slow down inflation), Cut services (to trim budget, impose fees in health, education sectors), Retrench workers (to increase efficiencies), Privatize state companies (to promote productivity), Decontrol prices (to effect market forces), Restrain wages (to prevent wage spiraling), Remove subsidies (to save money spent on consumption), Eliminate trade barriers (to introduce competition), Promote export orientation (to earn foreign exchange), and invite outside investment (to promote diversification and competition). The results we see of the above programmes of action are the unrest we notice and experience all over including the so-called developing and developed countries. The above adjustments programmes have not enabled many countries to develop and instead they have become worse than before. We notice that such steps have impacted all aspects of peoples' lives and that of nations.

In the past 60/65 years since World War II, the international community has seen marked progress in prolonging life, providing education for children, and in increasing the world food

⁴ *As summarized by the working group, (Missionary Religious Congregations, Rome)*

supply. Progress in the struggle against poverty and bad housing is much less notable, and the achievements in lessening social tensions, in increasing human dignity, and other qualitative aspects of the standard of living are noticed by us. The attempt to reach a new synthesis in the economic and social aspects of the development of less-developed countries, the widespread concern for the human rights and freedom of expression, the growth of public responsibility for welfare of the total population, and the attention given to rural as well as urban development are cited as important developments. But we also notice today many areas in our world that need our urgent attention, some of which we highlight here in this section.

Section: B Social issues drawing our attention in the world today

We're just touching upon the surface of these issues in this section; you can read more for a deeper study and discussion. What we did find important today is that citizens in the world are increasingly discussing issues of civil society; politics, legislation, services, etc. This is important for government policy makers, those involved with public diplomacy and the people at large. More so it is important for us consecrated persons.

1. The Global Financial Crisis:

This remains a concern; increasingly people in developed countries are more concerned with the financial crisis in the EU, seeing it as potentially impacting the global economy and certainly the Western economies. It is needless to say about the impact of this crisis on the poorer nations.

The Report on the World Social Situation 2011: The Global Social Crisis, published by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA), finds that many governments did not pay sufficient attention to the social implications of the global economic crisis. The report says economic policies considered in isolation from their social consequences often create dire results for people's nutrition, health and education, which, in turn, adversely affect long-term economic growth.

“The economic crisis reminds us that it is essential for people to be healthy, educated, adequately housed and well fed to be more productive and better able to contribute to society,” said Jomo Kwame Sundaram, UN-DESA Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development. Many first world nations are still struggling to get back to their earlier positions. Recovery has been uneven and still remains fragile, and, the report says, wide-ranging negative social outcomes linger from the global economic downturn.

Impacts on Education, Health and Employment

According to the report, the full impact of the crisis on social progress in areas such as education and health is not immediately clear and will only become fully evident over time. The increased levels of poverty, hunger and unemployment due to the global crisis will continue to affect billions of people for years to come. We know from experience that during times of financial crisis, households often adopt coping strategies, such as changing spending patterns. However,

these coping strategies can negatively influence education, health and nutrition, which may lead to lifelong deficits for the children affected and thus perpetuate poverty.

Today the challenge of generating jobs is very acute in many countries. The number of jobless persons has increased by 28 million since the beginning of the crisis. Moreover, governments around the world risk greater economic woes if they continue slashing budgets and social services at a time when greater job growth and social protections are needed most. (The UN report on the World Social situation 2011). Today 30% combined unemployment and underemployment is found in many countries; developed countries have from 5% -12% unemployment. The unemployment rate in the world today is 9% (as on 26th July 2012).⁵

2. Energy Consumption:

When we say energy, we include renewable and non-renewable sources and the adoption of greener sources. Although there is a significant rise in concerns over energy, citizens continue to increase their consumption. The exploitation of natural resources and depletion of energy sources is also a great concern. Energy security is a growing concern for rich and emerging nations alike. The past drive for fossil fuel energy has led to wars, overthrow of democratically elected leaders, and puppet governments and dictatorships. Leading nations admit we are addicted to oil, but investment into alternatives has been lacking, or little in comparison to fossil fuel investments. As the global financial crisis takes hold and awareness of climate change increases, more nations and companies are trying to invest in alternatives.

Energy crisis is a situation in which the world suffers from a disruption and lack of energy supplies (oil, petroleum, coal, natural gas, electricity and others) accompanied by rapidly increasing energy prices that threaten economic and livelihood security. The threat to economic security is represented by the possibility of declining economic growth, increasing inflation, rising unemployment, and poverty.

Global carbon-dioxide (CO₂) emissions from fossil-fuel combustion reached a record high of 31.6 gigatonnes (Gt) in 2011, according to preliminary estimates from the International Energy Agency Report 2011(IEA). This represents an increase of 1.0 Gt on 2010, or 3.2%. Coal accounted for 45% of total energy-related CO₂ emissions in 2011, followed by oil (35%) and natural gas (20%). The IEA's *World Energy Outlook 2011*, report is very distressing according to IEA Chief Economist Fatih Birol. The largest emitters are (in order) China, the United States, European Union, India and Russia. An energy crisis occurs when there is a shortage of energy resources to meet our needs. In most cases it is actually a bottleneck somewhere in the system that causes the shortage and the result is that prices rise rapidly in a short time frame. The consequences of an energy crisis are huge. The area that most people talk about when they worry about the energy crisis is a shortage of oil.

While most of the attention when it comes to an energy crisis is oil the far greater concern should be electricity. We have about 1.6 billion people (one quarter of humanity) living without electricity in our world today.

⁵ The unemployment rate rank chart and the comparative map and the World Bank indicator are very informative and useful. See website: www.index-mundi.com

Number of People living without Electricity

Region	Millions without electricity
South Asia	706
Sub-Saharan Africa	547
East Asia	224
Other	101

While there are concerns about the availability of energy there are ways to address the problem, the most obvious would be the use of alternative energies. There are lots of concerns about the mindless use of energy and the wastage of energy. Though there are lots of options like solar power and wind power other than the traditional forms of energy, which are currently being significantly under used. Probably as we face a shortage of other sources of energy this will change and alternative sources of energy will become more attractive financially.

3. Environmental Crisis:

This section of the handbook attempts to highlight some of the environmental issues and concerns that have great effect on all of us — from what we do, to what we don't do. Interrelated with energy is the environmental crisis. These issues are of major concerns⁶ for all but the concerns have not been translated into tangible actions in many countries as we see the environmental changes happening all around us. The Human Development Report of 2011 shows how the world's most disadvantaged people suffer the most from environmental degradation, including in their immediate personal environment, and disproportionately lack political power. The Report further emphasizes the human right to a healthy environment, the importance of environmental policies, and the critical importance of public participation and official accountability. Some of the environmental issues are discussed here though not all of them since it could be done in a separate handbook.

3.1. Climate Change and Global Warming

The climate is changing. The earth is warming up, and there is now overwhelming scientific consensus that it is happening, and human-induced. With global warming on the increase and species and their habitats on the decrease, chances for ecosystems to adapt naturally are diminishing. Many agree that climate change may be one of the greatest threats facing the planet. Recent years show increasing temperatures in various regions, and/or increasing extremities in weather patterns. This section explores some of the effects of climate change. It also attempts to provide insights into what governments, companies, international institutions, and other organizations are attempting to do about this issue, as well as the challenges they face.

UN Framework Convention on Climate Change

⁶ See. <http://www.globalissues.org/issue/168/environmental-issues> for more information

The world mostly agrees that something needs to be done about global warming and climate change. The first stumbling block, however, has been trying to get an agreement on a framework. In 1988, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) was created by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) to assess the scientific knowledge on global warming. The IPCC concluded in 1990 that there was broad international consensus that climate change was human-induced. That report led way to an international convention for climate change, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), signed by over 150 countries at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992.

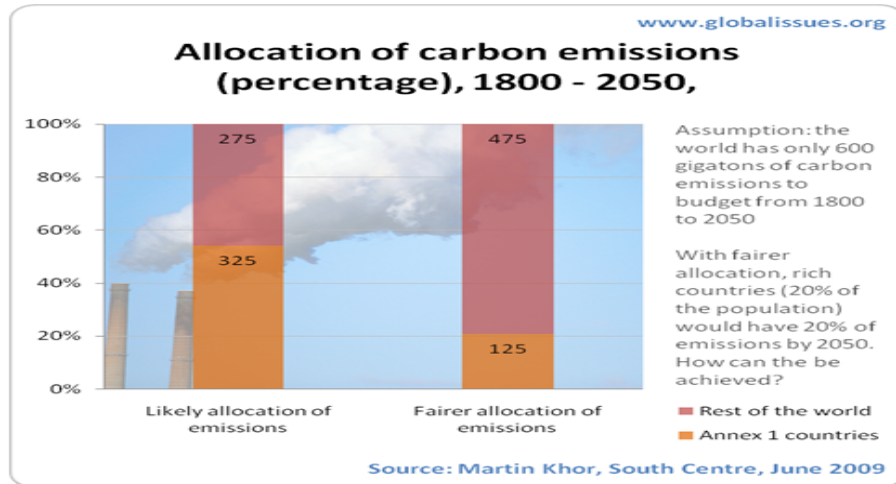
Some rich countries and many large corporations have opposed climate change treaties seemingly afraid of profit impacts if they have to make substantial changes to how they do business. For many years, large, influential businesses and governments have been against the idea of global warming. Many have poured a lot of resources into discrediting what has generally been accepted for a long time as real. Some businesses and governments that once engaged in disinformation campaigns have even changed their opinions now, some even requesting for regulation and direction on this issue. However, a few influential companies and organizations are still attempting to undermine climate change action and concerns.

3.2. Climate Justice and Equity

For a number of years, the rich nations have been contributing to climate change; they have to own responsibilities for the present situation. Realizing that greenhouse emissions remain in the atmosphere for a very long time, historically we have to acknowledge that:

- ❶ Industrialized nations have emitted far more greenhouse gas emissions (even if some developing nations are only now increasing theirs);
- ❷ Rich countries therefore face the biggest responsibility and burden for action to address climate change; and
- ❸ Rich countries therefore must support developing nations adapt—through financing and technology transfer.

This notion of climate justice is typically ignored by many rich nations and their mainstream media, making it easy to blame China, India and other developing countries for failures in climate change negotiations. Development expert, Martin Khor, calculated that taking historical emissions into account, the rich countries owe a carbon debt because they have already used more than their fair quota of emissions. Yet by 2050 when certain emission reductions are needed by, their reduced emissions will still add up to go over their fair share as we see in the diagram:



However, rather than continue down the path of unequal development, industrialized nations can help pay off their carbon debt by truly helping emerging countries develop along a cleaner path, such as through the promised-but-barely-delivered technology transfer, finance, and capacity building. So far however, rich nations have done very little within the Kyoto protocol to reduce emissions by any meaningful amount, while they are all for negotiating a follow on treaty that brings more pressure to developing countries to agree to emissions targets.

In effect, the more there will be delay the more the poor nations will have to save the Earth with their sacrifices (and if it works, as history shows, the rich and powerful will find a way to rewrite history to claim they were the ones that saved the planet).

This annual meeting is referred to as the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP). Many Climate conferences have been held so far and sadly most of them have not yielded desired results. The Climate conference (also known as COP 15) of Copenhagen in 2009, the COP16—Cancún Climate Conference in Mexico in 2010 and the COP17 conference in Durban, South Africa in Dec 2011 have shared the concerns.

Predictably and sadly, the same issues have resurfaced: lack of media coverage, West stalling on doing anything trying to blame India and China instead, lack of funding, disagreement on how to address it, etc. Scientists believe that Global Warming will lead to a weaker Ozone layer, because as the surface temperature rises, the stratosphere (the Ozone layer being found in the upper part) will get colder, making the natural repairing of the Ozone slower.

Global Dimming

Research has shown that air pollutants from fossil fuel use make clouds reflect more of the sun's rays back into space. This leads to an effect known as global dimming whereby less heat and energy reaches the earth. At first, it sounds like an ironic savior to climate change problems. However, it is believed that global dimming caused the droughts in Ethiopia in the 1970s and 80s where millions died, because the northern hemisphere oceans were not warm enough to allow rain formation. Global dimming is also hiding the true power of global warming. By cleaning up global dimming-causing pollutants without tackling greenhouse gas emissions, rapid warming

has been observed, and various human health and ecological disasters have resulted, as witnessed during the European heat wave in 2003, which saw thousands of people die.

3.3. Human Population and Better Future for All

The human population of the planet is estimated to now have passed 6 billion people. But are large numbers themselves a problem? There are certain sectors in the world which has higher population densities than other so called populated sectors. There are more than two sides to the debate on whether population numbers equate to over-population or not.

Does population affect and put stress on the environment, society and resources? Existing consumption patterns as seen in the world today can put strain on the environment and natural resources. But how much of the environmental degradation we see today is as a result of over-population and how much is due to over-exploitation due to consumerism and geopolitical interests? Especially when considering that "globally, the 20% of the world's people in the highest-income countries account for 86% of total private consumption expenditures - the poorest 20% a minuscule 1.3%", according to the United Nations Development Programme's Human Development Report.

Effects of Over-Consumption and Increasing Populations

The State of the World, 2011 Report from the World Watch Institute suggests that the global economy is seriously affected by environmental problems, such as the lack of access to enough resources to meet growing population demands. Environmental degradation can contribute to social and political instability, which can lead to security issues. This has not currently been addressed by the foreign policy of many nations. Already around the world we are seeing an increase in violence and human rights abuses as disputes about territories, food and water are spilling into wars and internal conflicts.

3.4. Gender Justice and Population

Realizing that women play a crucial role in the development of society we need to ensure that women's rights are upheld. In this way we can tackle effectively many underlying issues which lead to conflict and problems. Better care, education and rights for women mean that children should also benefit. This can eventually allow a society to enjoy more rights and the society can be enriched. The violence being done to women and to the environment is closely interconnected. Eco-feminism as the word implies is about environmental and women's concerns. The term was first used in 1974 by French writer Francoise d'Eaubonne to describe women's potential to effect environmental change. The growing awareness of women's problems is closely connected to the growing awareness of environmental destruction. Both women and the environment are suffering violence. In many cultures, we hear the "groans" of women, and the "groans" of creation. The destruction of the environment has a particularly serious effect on women.

The 2011 Human Development Report with the theme of "Sustainability and Equity: A Better Future for All" argues that the urgent global challenges of sustainability and equity must be

addressed together – and identifies policies on the national and global level that could spur mutually reinforcing progress towards these interlinked goals. As Kinda Gray says, sustainable development is development that is pro-poor, pro-nature, pro-jobs and pro-women. It stresses growth with employment, growth with environment, growth with empowerment, growth with equity.

3.5. Biodiversity Losses:

The variety of life on Earth, its biological diversity, is commonly referred to as biodiversity. The number of species of plants, animals, and microorganisms, the enormous diversity of genes in these species, the different ecosystems on the planet, such as deserts, rainforests and coral reefs are all part of a biologically diverse Earth. Appropriate conservation and sustainable development strategies attempt to recognize this as being integral to any approach. In some way or form, almost all cultures have recognized the importance of nature and its biological diversity for their societies and have therefore understood the need to maintain it. Yet, power, greed and politics have affected the precarious balance. Why is Biodiversity important? Does it really matter if there aren't so many species?

Biodiversity boosts ecosystem productivity where each species, no matter how small, all have an important role to play. For example, a larger number of plant species means a greater variety of crops; greater species diversity ensures natural sustainability for all life forms; and healthy ecosystems can better withstand and recover from a variety of disasters. It has long been feared that human activity is causing massive extinctions. Despite increased efforts at conservation, it has not been enough and biodiversity losses continue. The costs associated with deteriorating or vanishing ecosystems will be high. However, sustainable development and consumption would help avert ecological problems. Rapid global warming can affect an ecosystem's chance to adapt naturally. The Arctic is very sensitive to climate change and already seeing lots of changes. Ocean biodiversity is already being affected as are other parts of the ecosystem.

At the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development (the Earth Summit), the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) was born. In this 192 countries, plus the EU, are now Parties to that convention. In April 2002, the Parties to the Convention committed to significantly reduce the loss of biodiversity loss by 2010. Despite numerous successful conservation measures supporting biodiversity, the 2010 biodiversity target has not been met at the global level.

3.6. Natural Disasters

During the past many years we have been witnesses of numerous natural disasters like, massive earthquakes, Tsunamis, massive flash floods, torrential rains and flood causing untold misery to the humans, cyclones and flooding of human habitations, drought, hurricanes, ash storm, fire storm and many more. Media coverage of natural disasters seems to vary a lot depending on the disaster. Some regions get more attention than others. The year 2005 saw a number of disasters and relief efforts, from the Asian tsunami, to the severe hurricanes and storms in the Caribbean, the earthquake in South Asia (Pakistan and India), and drought in parts of Africa.

Asian Earthquake and Tsunami Disaster

December 26th of 2004, one of the largest earthquakes in recorded history (measuring 9 on the Richter Scale), struck just off Sumatra, Indonesia, in a fault line running under the sea. The 1200 km long rupture caused massive waves, or tsunamis, that hurtled away from the epicenter, reaching shores as far away as Africa. The rupture was 30 km below sea floor and caused 20m uplift. At least 230,000 people were killed and the livelihoods of millions were destroyed in over 10 countries. This has been one of the biggest natural disasters in recent human history. Researches are being done on the causes of many disasters and often times the fingers point to the human factors.

Third World Debt and Disaster Recovery

When poor countries face natural disasters, such as hurricanes, floods, earthquakes, and fires, the cost of rebuilding becomes even more of an issue when they are already burdened with debt. Often, poor countries suffer with many lost lives and/or livelihoods. Aid and disaster relief often does come in from international relief organizations, rich countries and international institutions, but sometimes poor countries are still paying millions of dollars a week back in the form of debt repayment.

3.7. Peoples' Protests, Public Uprising and Pro-Democracy Movements:

The protest movements, inspired by the so-called Arab Spring and the initial protests in Spain earlier in 2011, have spread globally. Many have been nicknamed as "Occupy" movements such as Occupy Wall Street, in reference to how Egyptians occupied the famous Tahrir Square during their uprising. Similar to the Arab Spring protests, these ones are largely organized and carried out by the young, who are often amongst the jobless or those struggling, while also representing the views/concerns of all ages. Elderly and middle age protesters are no doubt there, too. In some countries there are fears that it is getting close to violent as public anger boils, such as in Greece. In others, protests have been peaceful in general but police crackdown has created further tension. No doubt triggered by the Arab Spring in 2011, citizens in many other countries have started boldly public protests and defying the military regimes for various reasons. Many are positively impacted by the obvious turn to a demand for greater democracy by citizens in the Arab countries and elsewhere. The public uprising against corruption and misrule in many countries, public outcry against totalitarian regimes and violation of fundamental rights and human rights are positive developments in our world today. The ousting of more than three leaders in North Africa and elsewhere by popular resistance movements has influenced besides other regions, its politics, economics and peoples' confidence in themselves. These public uprisings have been calling the governments to be more accountable, transparent and democratic⁷.

⁷ See <http://www.globalissues.org/article/45/public-protests-around-the-world>.

These global protests are against globalization and marginalization of so many people around the world. Those protests were often against key institutions of globalization, such as the G8, World Bank, IMF and the World Trade Organization. Mass protests, throughout history have come at a time when enough of the population has been affected by policies of the rulers and elite. They have often been met with brutal, efficient crackdown by the guardians of the elite, be they local police, militias, national militaries, or even another nation's military forces. We are also witnesses to protests due to the global financial crisis in 2008; protests have occurred all over the world. In the aftermath of the 2008 global financial crisis (a Western crisis that became global), Western nations have suffered greatly. Protests in 2011 have been global. As economic growth in industrialized nations continue to suffer while unemployment rises, politicians attempt to cut back government (and various social safety nets just when they seem to be most needed) mass protests have predictably erupted around the world.

These movements are not guided, they are clearly born as a reaction to injustice and corruption around the world.. It is a global movement for true democracy and better human conditions and they reflect a collective idea, a movement without borders or leaders. Homeless people make up a significant proportion of participants in the Occupy Movement in cities across the United States, from Los Angeles to Atlanta, where at times they comprise an estimated third of the occupiers. Inspired by the movement for real democracy and people's power it has spread to hundreds of cities around the world. Barely a month after the first group of protesters set up its encampment in Zucotti Park in New York City, the phrase 'We are the 99 percent' has already become legendary. 'First they ignore you, then they ridicule you, then they fight you - then you win,' a middle-aged man yells into the microphone from a makeshift stage erected at the far end of Freedom Plaza in Washington, DC.

3.7.1. Global protests against global institutions

The large protests at the WTO meetings, at IMF, World Bank, G8 and other such summits that are seen today have typically been against the current forms of globalization and the marginalization it is causing, as well as the increasing disparities between the rich and the poor that it has predictably led to. These issues have motivated people all over the world to protest in many ways. These protests, directed at the World Trade Organization (WTO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF)/World Bank, the FTAA and the G8 respectively, were all protests at the effects of the *current forms* of globalization which go along the lines of a neoliberal/corporate capitalism ideology.

Millions of people around the world have turned up in waves of protests at various IMF, World Bank, WTO meetings or policies in various nations. Repression has been equally brutal and sometimes worse. For example there have been protests in **Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, France, India, Philippines, Italy, Peru, Papua New Guinea, Spain, Thailand, US, UK and in 35 countries.** Here too, protests occurred in numerous cities within these countries. Clearly, ordinary citizens are outraged with the institutions' policies. The continued adoption of those policies reveals the democracy disconnect fostered by the IMF and the World Bank. In almost 100 countries the protests have taken place.

The mainstream media too is likely to continue its negative portrayal, as it affects them directly as well. In addition, as the World Development Movement notes, a number of protests are directed at government policies, sometimes when people do not realize that the government is pressured by the IMF/World Bank to follow certain policies. For people at the sharp end of these policies, protest has remained the most effective opposition.” The mainstream media in western nations, however, have hardly provided any coverage of such protests. Or, if they have in some cases, they have usually been in an isolated context, without deeper discussions that may also see similarities with other protests around the world. Because a lot of policies around the world are in some ways a result of the influence and ability of more powerful nations to affect economic and political decisions, the people of these more powerful nations don’t get to see the impacts their leaders have around the world, and the faceless majority of humanity continue to live in poverty and misery while the fortunate few in the wealthier parts of the world are unwittingly supporting such policies.

3.7.2. Protestors Are Labeled as Anti-Poor, Anti-Trade and Anti-International

With such a growing movement world-wide, especially in the home nations of the powerful nations, the mainstream media and politicians that are supportive of current globalization policies are trying to discredit the protestors in various ways. One way has been to actually turn the protestors’ arguments against themselves. That is, while the protestors argue that the policies of the powerful and of pushing globalization — in its current form — is deepening poverty, the politicians, business leaders, media commentators instead are saying that instead it is the protestors who want the poor to remain poor. They have often criticized the protestors for being anti-trade or against international cooperation and hence anti people, or against giving a chance for the poor to have a decent chance for a standard living. Yet, protestors are typically crying out for such social justice, for fairer international trade or some sort of internationalism and globalism that is just, democratic, cooperative and improves social justice, chances for all people⁸. Protestors are therefore voicing their concerns to these issues. As a result, movements demanding more social justice, real accountability and real poverty alleviation are appearing in many parts of the world. The movement itself is, however, multi-focus and inclusive. It is concerned with the world: omnipresence of corporate rule, the rampages of financial markets, ecological destruction, mal-distribution of wealth and power, international institutions constantly overstepping their mandates and lack of international democracy.

In detailing many types of protests and rebellions throughout recent centuries, professor of anthropology, Richard Robbins, suggests that the way the world system is structured; protests could unfortunately be considered a “normal” state of affairs⁹. Some might think why these public protests have been included as part of Social Justice and Peace Hand book. It is important to understand that knowing more about the movements for Justice and peace, joining hands with them and voicing the concerns of the poor and the marginalized is the need of the hour.

⁸ For detailed discussion on these protest movements see web sites like: IMF and World Bank Protests; WTO Protests in Seattle; States of Unrest; Resistance to IMF Policies in Poor countries; and Grassroots globalisation Fact sheet from CorpWatch.

⁹ *Richard H. Robbins, Global Problems and the Culture of Capitalism, (Allyn and Bacon, 2002), pp. 282 - 283*

4. Poverty Eradication and tackling hunger:

Poverty and its manifestations include hunger and malnutrition, limited access to education and other basic services, social discrimination and exclusion as well as the lack of participation in decision-making.

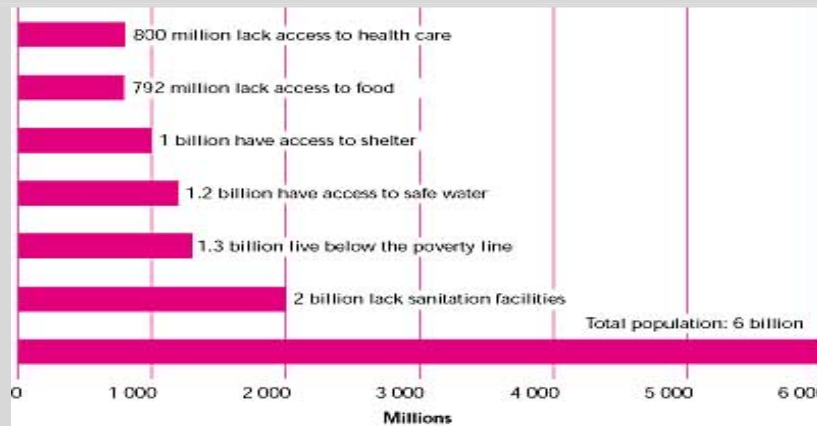
The World Social Summit identified poverty eradication as an ethical, social, political and economic imperative of mankind and called on governments to address the root causes of poverty, provide for basic needs for all and ensure that the poor have access to productive resources, including credit, education and training. Recognizing insufficient progress in the poverty reduction, the 24th special session of the General Assembly decided to set up targets to reduce the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by one half by 2015. This target has been endorsed by the Millennium Summit as Millennium Development Goal. Poverty eradication must be mainstreamed into the national policies and actions. The Second United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2008-2017), proclaimed by the General Assembly in December 2007 aims at supporting such a broad framework for poverty eradication. It means more equitable distribution of wealth and income and social protection coverage¹⁰.

Powerlessness of the Poor

Poverty is the state for the majority of the world's people and nations. Why is this? Is it enough to blame poor people for their own predicament? Have they been lazy, made poor decisions, and been solely responsible for their plight? What about their governments? Have they pursued policies that actually harm successful development? Such causes of poverty and inequality are no doubt real. But deeper and more global causes of poverty are often less discussed. The chart given below tells the tale of the poor living in absolute poverty and lacking access to essential services in the developing world.

¹⁰ From the World Social Report - 2011

Number of people living in poverty or lacking access to essential services in the developing world



Source: FAO. 2000. *The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2000*; J.R. Lupien and V. Menza. 1999. *Assessing prospects for improving food security and nutrition*. *Food, Nutrition and Agriculture*, No. 25.

Behind the increasing interconnectedness promised by globalization are global decisions, policies, and practices. These are typically influenced, driven, or formulated by the rich and powerful. These can be leaders of rich countries or other global actors such as multinational corporations, institutions, and influential people. In the face of such enormous external influence, the governments of poor nations and their people are often powerless. As a result, in the global context, a few get wealthy while the majority struggle.

Poverty Facts¹¹:

Our world is a hungry world. Half of our world goes hungry daily. Often times we say that it is an exaggerated statement. In the chart below we notice almost half the world- over three billion people- live on less than \$2.50 a day. At least 80% of humanity lives on less than \$10 a day. The poorest 40% of the world's population accounts for 5% of global income. The richest 20% accounts for three-quarters of the world income.

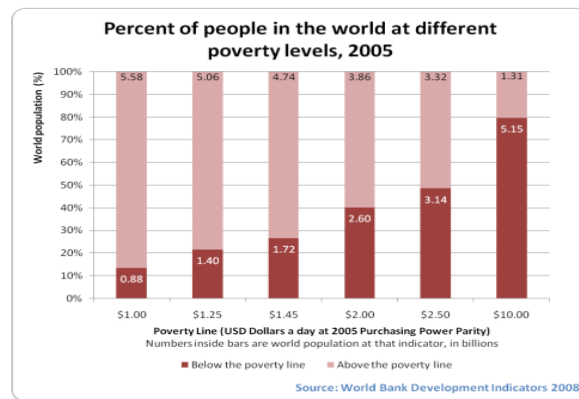
According to UNICEF, 22,000 children die each day due to poverty. And they die quietly in some of the poorest villages on earth, far removed from the scrutiny and the conscience of the world. Being meek and weak in life makes these dying multitudes even more invisible in death.

Around 27-28 percent of all children in developing countries are estimated to be underweight or stunted. The two regions that account for the bulk of the deficit are South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.

¹¹ See <http://www.globalissues.org/article/26/poverty-facts-and-stats>.

If current trends continue, the Millennium Development Goals target of halving the proportion of underweight children will be missed by 30 million children, largely because of slow progress in Southern Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.

Based on enrollment data, about 72 million children of primary school age in the developing world were not in school in 2005; 57 per cent of them were girls. And these are regarded as optimistic numbers



Nearly a billion people entered the 21st century unable to read a book or sign their names. Less than one per cent of what the world spent every year on weapons was needed to put every child into school by the year 2000 and yet it didn't happen.

Water problems affect half of humanity: Some 1.1 billion people in developing countries have inadequate access to water, and 2.6 billion lack basic sanitation.

More than 660 million people without sanitation live on less than \$2 a day, and more than 385 million on less than \$1 a day.

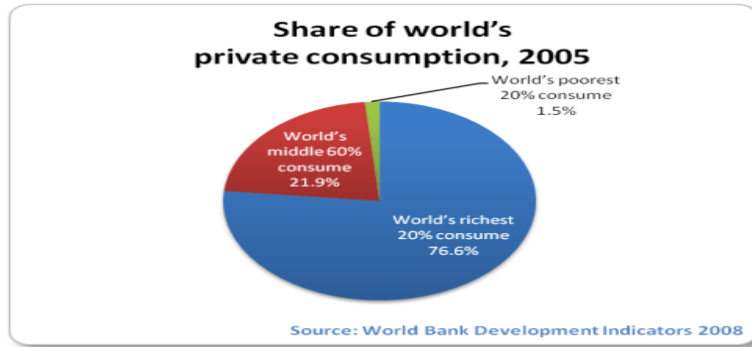
Access to piped water into the household averages about 85% for the wealthiest 20% of the population, compared with 25% for the poorest 20%.

Close to half of all people in developing countries suffering at any given time from a health problem caused by water and sanitation deficits.

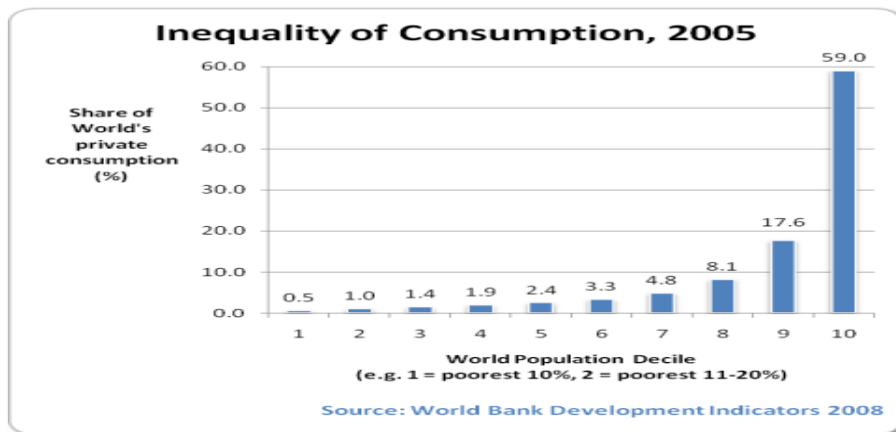
Millions of women spend several hours a day collecting water.

Approximately half the world's population now live in cities and towns. In 2005, one out of three urban dwellers (approximately 1 billion people) was living in slum conditions.

In 2005, the wealthiest 20% of the world accounted for 76.6% of total private consumption. The poorest fifth just 1.5%. The diagram no. 2 gives the details:



The poorest 10% accounted for just 0.5% and the wealthiest 10% accounted for 59% of all the consumption. The diagram no. shows the inequality of consumption.



The GDP (Gross Domestic Product) of the 41 Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (567 million people) is less than the wealth of the world's 7 richest people combined.

The world's wealthiest countries (approximately 1 billion people) accounted for \$36.6 trillion dollars (76%).

The world's billionaires — just 497 people (approximately 0.000008% of the world's population) — were worth \$3.5 trillion (over 7% of world GDP). The total wealth of the top 8.3 million people around the world “rose 8.2 percent to \$30.8 trillion in 2004, giving them control of nearly a quarter of the world's financial assets.”

In other words, about 0.13% of the world's population controlled 25% of the world's financial assets in 2004. For every \$1 in aid a developing country receives, over \$25 is spent on debt repayment.

It is noted that 51% percent of the world's 100 wealthiest bodies are corporations. The poorer the country, the more likely it is that debt repayments are being extracted directly from people who neither contracted the loans nor received any of the money. In 1960, the 20% of the world's people in the richest countries had 30 times the income of the poorest 20% — in 1997, 74 times as much.

An analysis of long-term trends shows the distance between the richest and poorest countries was about:

- ↳ 3 to 1 in 1820
- ↳ 11 to 1 in 1913
- ↳ 35 to 1 in 1950
- ↳ 44 to 1 in 1973
- ↳ 72 to 1 in 1992

“Approximately 790 million people in the developing world are still chronically undernourished, almost two-thirds of whom reside in Asia and the Pacific.”¹²

Consider the global priorities in spending in 1998:

Global Priority	\$ U.S. Billions
Cosmetics in the United States	8
Ice cream in Europe	11
Perfumes in Europe and the United States	12
Pet foods in Europe and the United States	17
Business entertainment in Japan	35
Cigarettes in Europe	50
Alcoholic drinks in Europe	105
Narcotics drugs in the world	400
Military spending in the world	780

And compare that to what was estimated as *additional* costs to achieve universal access to basic social services in all developing countries:

Global Priority	\$U.S. Billions
Basic education for all	6
Water and sanitation for all	9
Reproductive health for all women	12
Basic health and nutrition	13

The data and statistics and the details have been used in this section based largely on the references and materials cited in the foot note.¹³

¹² The new figures from the World Bank therefore confirm concerns that poverty has not been reduced by as much as was hoped, although it certainly has dropped since 1981.

¹³ References from Human Development Report of 1999,2006, 2007; Millennium Development Goals Report 2007; The State of the World’s children, 1998,1999,2005, UNICEF; State of the World, Issue 287-Feb 1997, New

5. Tackling Corruption and Fraud:

Corruption is most commonly defined as the misuse or the abuse of public office for private gain (World Bank, 1997)¹⁴. It can come in various forms and a wide array of illicit behaviour, such as bribery, extortion, fraud, nepotism, graft, speed money, pilferage, theft, embezzlement, falsification of records, kickbacks, influence peddling, and campaign contributions. While corruption is commonly attributed to the public sector, it also exists in other aspects of governance, such as political parties, private business sector, and NGO (USAID, Anticorruption Strategy, 2005).

Corruption can be classified into two types: spontaneous and institutionalized (or systemic). Spontaneous corruption is usually found in societies observing strong ethics and morals in public service. Institutionalized corruption, on the other hand, is found in societies where corrupt behaviours are perennially extensive or pervasive. In these societies, corruption has become a way of life, a goal, and an outlook towards public office.

Corruption is a problem which all governments, at any level of development, have to deal with. One of the main requisites for good governance includes effective means of combating corruption and nepotism. Action towards curtailing corruption is perceived as a commitment towards creating good government. Corruption and governance occupy opposite poles.

Thus, corruption has a far reaching negative effect on the national psyche which eventually goes back to undermine the whole system of good governance itself. Systemic corruption breeds a culture of corruption and skews the people's perception of what is right and wrong. For a number of countries where it has been effectively institutionalized, where wealth and power have become the measure of success, corruption has become socially acceptable, sometimes even aspired to. Energies of a large number of people are channeled towards occupying positions in the government to partake of the fruits of a corrupt system.

The survey conducted by the Transparency International finds that corruption in the public sector takes the same form, whether one is dealing with a developed or developing country. The areas of government activities most vulnerable to corruption are:¹⁵

- ♣ Public procurement
- ♣ Rezoning of land
- ♣ Revenue collection
- ♣ Government appointments; and
- ♣ Local government

Internationalist; World Development Indicators 2008, World Bank, 2008; World Bank Key Data & Statistics, March 2008; Debts-The Facts, Issue 312, May 1999, New Internationalist; World Resource Institute Pilot Analysis of Global Ecosystems, Feb 2001; The Scorecard on Globalization 1980-2000: Twenty Years of Diminished Progress, by Mark Weisbrot & others, August 2001; Water as Commodity-The Wrong Prescription, The Institute for Food and Development Policy, Summer 2001, vol.7,no.3; The Africa Report, N.36. Dec 2011-Jan 2012.

¹⁴ World Bank, *World Development Report 1997: The State in a Changing World*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.

¹⁵ The Anatomy of Corruption. TI Source Book 2000.

The methodologies were also observed to be remarkably similar, such as:

- ♣ Cronyism, connections, family members and relatives
- ♣ Political corruption through donations to political campaigns, etc
- ♣ Kickbacks on government contracts (and subcontracting consultancies), and
- ♣ Fraud of all kinds.

Typical features of system prone to corruption are:

- ♣ Concentration of powers in the executive and weak or non-existent checks and balances
- ♣ Poor transparency surrounding executive decision combined with restricted access to information
- ♣ Elaborate regulatory systems allowing for discretionary decision making
- ♣ Weak systems of oversight and enforcement
- ♣ Soft social control systems/high tolerance for corrupt activities

What can be done to tackle this is a big question. In many countries we notice the civil society has taken up this issue. Protests and public rallies have been organized. This needs to be seriously tackled in the coming years. What is the Montfortian response to corruption?

6. Food and Agriculture Issues

Far too many people in the world remain marginalized. The gap between the poorest and the most affluent is growing. The poorest nations of the world have felt the impact of the global marketplace. Even many industrialized nations now have soaring unemployment levels and income inequalities not seen since the nineteenth century. The extremely small proportions of GDP devoted to foreign assistance attest to the "aid fatigue" found in most affluent nations. Furthermore, foreign assistance has not been as effective as it might have been. Charity - whether for individuals or for nations - responds to short-term needs, but it fails to create the necessary conditions for humans' self-respect and dignity.

Food and agriculture is at the heart of our civilizations. Many religions and cultures celebrate various aspects of food and agriculture due to the importance in our continuity. For an issue that goes to the heart of humanity, it also has its ugly side. The East Africa Food crisis -2011 can be cited as an example. Into mid-2011, the world's worst food crisis was felt in East Africa, in Ethiopia, Somalia and Kenya. Despite successive failed rains, the crisis had been criticized as avoidable and man-made. This is because the situation had been predicted many months before by an international early warning system. Both the international community and governments in the region have been accused of doing very little in the lead up to this crisis. In addition, high food prices had forced food out of the reach of many people, while local conflicts aggravated the situation. As the international organization Oxfam described: "12 million people are in dire need of food, clean water, and basic sanitation. Loss of life on a massive scale is a very real risk, and the crisis is set to worsen over the coming months, particularly for pastoralist communities".

Global Food Crisis 2008¹⁶

The global food crisis that has made headlines in 2008 has been simmering for a while. The rise in food prices, affecting the poorest the most, has a variety of causes, mostly man-made. It has resulted in riots, an overthrow of a Prime Minister and many deaths, around the world. It has been common to attribute causes to things like overpopulation but that seems to miss the real causes as food levels continue to outstrip demand even in a growing population. While media reports have been concentrating on some of the immediate causes, it seems that deeper issues and causes have not been discussed as much.

World Hunger and Poverty

Meaningful long-term alleviation of hunger is rooted in the alleviation of poverty, as poverty leads to hunger. World hunger is a terrible symptom of world poverty. If efforts are only directed at providing food, or improving food production or distribution, then the structural root causes that create hunger, poverty and dependency would still remain.

There are many inter-related issues causing hunger, which are related to economics and other factors that cause poverty. They include land rights and ownership, diversion of land use to non-productive use, increasing emphasis on export-oriented agriculture, inefficient agricultural practices, war, famine, drought, over-fishing, poor crop yields, etc. Solving world hunger in the conventional sense (of providing/growing more food etc) will not tackle poverty that leads to hunger in the first place.

Food Aid and Food Dumping:

Food aid is a crucial part of helping tackle world hunger. However, food aid comes in various forms, and is often criticized for benefiting donors and their interests more than recipients. For example, during the Cold War in particular, food dumping was common place. Today long term food aid is giving way to emergency relief. While this is important it also has its challenges. Ultimately it seems that food aid still helps the rich more than the poor.

Food aid (when not for emergency relief) can actually be very destructive on the economy of the recipient nation and contribute to more hunger and poverty in the long term. Free, subsidized, or cheap food, below market prices undercuts local farmers, who cannot compete and are driven out of jobs and into poverty, further slanting the market share of the larger producers such as those from the US and Europe. Many poor nations are dependent on farming, and so such food aid amounts to food dumping. In the past few decades, more powerful nations have used this as a foreign policy tool for dominance rather than for real aid.

¹⁶ www.globalissues.org/global-food-crisis-2008

The Poor cannot afford it:

Some say that the food scarcity is because of the population. The people are hungry not because the population is growing so fast and the food is becoming scarce, but because people cannot afford it. Food may be scarce, but it is international trade, economic policies and the control of land that have led to immense poverty and hunger and therefore less access to food, not food scarcity due to over population.

Conclusion:

These above pages could help us to ground our vision of the future in sound social analysis that is global, comprehensive and inclusive to a large extent of different issues affecting and impacting our world today. This will help us to channel idealism and social consciousness toward real systemic change for the good of the world. Can we commit ourselves and our congregation to join hands with the positive forces of our world that influence the creation of a just and fraternal world? These above pages should enable us to commit some of our talent, corporate resources and energy to insert ourselves in those places and situations to shape global opinion and initiatives that will be integral, equitable for all people, ecologically responsible, and sustainable for the future. This section has not covered all areas of society that is in need of our urgent attention. It is only an introduction. This section on the social situation of the world has to be time and again updated, evaluated and reorganized.

III. SOCIAL TEACHINGS OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

This section will deal with the teachings of the Catholic Church down through the centuries on what affects our World. It includes various issues affecting our world, including Justice Peace and Integrity of Creation. It has come to include practically all the areas which concern our present day life on this earth and our future. In the following pages we shall highlight the important pronouncements the Church has made and the stand it has taken on important social issues affecting our world and its future. This section will help us to understand that our commitment to Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation is an outflow of the mission of the Church and our participation in the mission of the Church of Christ.

The 1971 Synod of Bishops stated, “The Church has the right, indeed the duty, to proclaim justice on the social, national and international level, and to denounce instances of injustice, when the fundamental rights of people and their very salvation demand it” (No. 36). The Church’s social teaching as it has developed has been shaped by the successive Popes through many documents and other pronouncements. It has been the sole efforts of the Church to put the Gospel into practice. It is not our intention here to enumerate all the documents dealing with the social teachings of the Church. It will be our efforts to highlight here the most authoritative and most recent teachings of the Catholic Church. We shall cover a one hundred and twenty-year period, from 1891-2011.

It is important to note that the following main themes and principles are the central aspects which run through the entire social teachings of the Church: Dignity of every person, the common good, solidarity with all especially the poor and the marginalized, option for the poor, the disadvantaged and the marginalized, Integral development of all the people and the whole person, subsidiarity: making decisions for themselves, promotion of justice and peace: Just structures within the community and the world, Reconciliation, Integrity of Creation, the protection of human life and, enhancing human dignity and respecting human rights. The preferential option for the poor: the poor and the vulnerable have first claim on our consciences and policies. Solidarity: We are one family whatever our differences of race, nationality and economic power. The people of far off lands are not enemies or intruders, the poor are not burdens, they are the sisters and brothers with life and dignity. Sanctity of human life and dignity of the person, Call to family, community, and participation, Rights and responsibilities, Dignity of work and Care for God's creation. The following pages will discuss these themes in detail.

1. *Rerum Novarum* - On the New Things - Pope Leo XIII - 1891:

The publication of “*Rerum Novarum*” in 1891 on the condition of workers by Pope Leo XIII marked the beginning of the development of social teaching of the Catholic Church. It dealt with persons, systems and structures of promotion of Church’s mission of Justice and Peace. It affirms the right to work, calls for just wages and decent working conditions, describes the responsibility of both capital and labour, promotes the right of workers to form trade unions and to bargain and condemns atheistic socialism.

The publication of *Rerum Novarum* sent shock waves in 1891 in the world as it condemned socialism but many said was itself regarded as socialist.¹⁷ It was the first great social document in a long series of social doctrine. Many of the later pronouncements were composed explicitly to commemorate its publication. Though the publication of this document had its own historical context, it was universal in scope and reflected local concerns too especially the political situation in Italy of that time. The publication of encyclical *Rerum Novarum* in 1891 marked the beginning of the development of a recognizable body of social teaching in the Catholic Church. It dealt with persons, systems and structures, the three co-ordinates of the modern promotion of justice and peace, now established as integral to the Church's mission.

2. Quadragesimo Anno - In the 40th Year - Pope Pius XI - 1931:

To mark the 40th anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*, Pope Pius XI issued *Quadragesimo Anno*, in 1931 which expanded on some of its themes. *Quadragesimo Anno* (Latin for "In the 40th Year") is an encyclical issued on 15 May 1931, 40 years after Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum*.

Pius XI subtitled his encyclical *Reconstruction of the Social Order*. In the first part he reviews and applauds the encyclical of his predecessor. The Church can be credited with participating in the progress made and contributing to it. It developed a new social conscience. Unlike Leo XIII, who addressed the condition of workers, Pius XI discusses the ethical implications of the social and economic order. He describes the major dangers for human freedom and dignity arising from unrestrained capitalism and totalitarian communism. He also calls for the reconstruction of the social order based on the principle of solidarity and subsidiarity. In *Quadragesimo Anno*, he stated that social and economic issues are vital to the Church not from a technical point of view but in terms of moral and ethical issues involved. Ethical considerations include the nature of private property in terms of its functions for society and the development of the individual.

In this document the Pope also teaches about private property, capital and labour, social order, communism and socialism, and corporatism and fascism.

3. Mater et Magistra - Mother and Teacher - Pope John XIII - 1961:

Further development came in the post-World War II period when attention turned to the problems of social and economic development and international relations. On May 15, 1961 Pope John XXIII released *Mater et Magistra*, subtitled "Christianity and Social Progress". This encyclical expanded the Church's social doctrine to cover the relations between rich and poor nations, examining the obligation of rich countries to assist poor countries while respecting their particular cultures. It includes an examination of the threat of global economic imbalances to world peace. This encyclical was to celebrate the seventieth anniversary of the publication of RN (*Rerum Novarum*) and the thirtieth anniversary of QA (*Quadragesimo Anno*). There is a lengthy section on agriculture and its problems and aid to developing countries. He was the first Pope to raise this subject in papal teaching. Very important in this document was a change in attitude towards the State. The Pope saw larger role for the State to play in the lives of its citizens.

¹⁷ Marie-Dominique Chenu, *La Doctrine Sociale de l'Eglise comme Ideologie*, Paris, 1979, p.15

In this document we also notice that the Pope speaks of the problems of farmers, how the states could help, a balanced economy, collaboration among nations, international aid, solving the problem of population growth, need for international co-operation and rebuilding society. He had an optimistic view of the world, believing not only that people could, but also that they would, co-operate at all levels of society. He proposed improvements in social structures. It is said that he relied very largely upon exhortation. He did not issue a serious challenge to the capitalist system then prevailing in the Western world.

4. *Pacem in Terris* - Peace on Earth-John XXIII - 1963:

On April 11, 1963, Pope John XIII expanded the theme of peace in *Pacem in Terris* (*Peace on Earth*), the first encyclical addressed to both Catholics and non-Catholics. In it, the Pope linked the establishment of world peace to the laying of a foundation consisting of proper rights and responsibilities between individuals, social groups, and states from the local to the international level. He exhorted Catholics to understand and apply the social teachings:

Once again we exhort our people to take an active part in public life, and to contribute towards the attainment of the common good of the entire human family as well as to that of their own country. They should endeavor, therefore, in the light of the Faith and with the strength of love, to ensure that the various institutions—whether economic, social, cultural or political in purpose – should be such as not to create obstacles, but rather to facilitate or render less arduous people's perfecting of themselves both in the natural order as well as in the supernatural.

This document, issued at the height of the Cold War, also included a denunciation of the nuclear arms race and a call for strengthening the United Nations. This was published in the course of the Second Vatican Council, an event which had focused a good deal of world attention upon Rome. The emphasis was upon rights and duties: of the individual in the society, of individuals towards the state, of the state towards each other and finally of both individuals and states. In *Pacem in Terris*, there is defence of human rights, which is new in the official pronouncement of the Church. Other conciliar documents such as *Dignitatis Humanae*, (1965) drafted largely by American Jesuit John Courtney Murray, have important applications to the social teachings of the Church on freedom today.

5. *Gaudium et Spes* - Second Vatican Council - 1965:

The primary document from the Second Vatican Council concerning social teachings is *Gaudium et Spes*, the "Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World", which is considered one of the chief accomplishments of the Council. Unlike earlier documents, this is an expression of all the bishops, and covers a wide range of issues of the relationship of social concerns and Christian action. At its core, the document asserts the fundamental dignity of each human being, and declares the Church's solidarity with both those who suffer, and those who would comfort the suffering:

The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the people of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ.

Vatican II and the 'Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World' brought about a change in the overall church attitude to its presence in the world and a call for the setting up of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, to help the Church respond to the challenges in the world. Calling for a new sense of service by the Church in a rapidly changing world, the Council presents the ethical framework of the Church's commitment to pastoral work in the world. This servant Church addresses itself to the real concerns and problems faced by Christians living in the modern age and calls for a development based on an unqualified acceptance of the inherent dignity of the human person. On the two major topics of justice and peace this document was successful. Peace was presented not merely as the absence of war, but as a consequence of the right ordering of society.

6. *Populorum Progressio* - On the Development of Peoples - Paul VI - 1967:

Like his predecessor, Pope Paul VI gave attention to the disparities in wealth and development between the industrialized West and the Third World in his 1967 encyclical *Populorum Progressio*. It asserts that free international trade alone is not adequate to correct these disparities and supports the role of international organizations in addressing this need. Paul called on rich nations to meet their moral obligation to poor nations, pointing out the relationship between development and peace. The intention of the Church is not to take sides, but to be an advocate for basic human dignity:

There can be no progress towards the complete development of individuals without the simultaneous development of all humanity in the spirit of solidarity. Experienced in human affairs, the Church ... "seeks but a solitary goal: to carry forward the work of Christ Himself under the lead of the befriending Spirit."... But, since the Church lives in history, she ought to "scrutinize the signs of the times and interpret them in the light of the Gospel." Sharing the noblest aspirations of men and women and suffering when she sees them not satisfied, she wishes to help them attain their full flowering, and that is why she offers all people what she possesses as her characteristic attribute: a global vision of man and of the human race.

Calling attention to the worsening marginalization of the poor, Paul VI presents the various dimensions of an integral human development and the necessary conditions for growth in the solidarity of peoples. Only with an accompanying theological reflection on liberation from injustice and genuine human values can there be true development towards a more human condition. The Pope asks why there is disparity of wealth among nations. He also tries to answer them. He makes a very pertinent statement when he points out that if 'nothing is done to redress the balance in favour of the poor, then the poor will be sorely tempted to redress these insults to their human nature by violent means'. But the Pope believed that the situation would change by the actions of the rich nations. But it has remained the same.

7. *Octogesima Adveniens* -A Call to Action - Paul VI - 1971:

The May 1971 apostolic letter *Octogesima Adveniens* addressed the challenge of urbanization and urban poverty and stressed the personal responsibility of Christians to respond to injustice.

The influence of Latin American Bishops upon this document was clear. It marked a new departure in papal theorizing about world affairs. It was very down to earth. He spoke of his travels, the learnings from the experiences; he insisted that individual Catholics have to learn to apply the general social teachings to the particular situations in which they live.

In this document problem relatively new to the social teaching are addressed: urbanization, industrialization, environmental issues. The Pope is aware of the failure of the developmental model for progress. His criticism of Socialism and Marxism was vigorous. The Pope also warned, that ‘the most revolutionary ideologies lead only to a change of masters’.

Realizing the need for a genuine renewal in domestic and international societal structures, Paul VI calls on Christians to live up to the duty of participation in social and political reform as a way of discovering the truth and living out the Gospel.

8. *Justicia in Mundo* (Justice in the World) - Synod of Bishops, 1971

Calling attention to the structural roots of injustice afflicting human relations, the Bishops declare that action in the pursuit of justice, and participation in the transformation of the world are constitutive elements in the Church's mission of preaching the Gospel. In 1971 this synod produced a short and direct document entitled ‘Justice in the world’. The bishops gave the language of liberation a prominent place. It once again talks about the failure of the developmental model of progress and speaks of economic growth and participation. One noteworthy observation is that this document declares that ‘if the Church wishes to put itself on the side of the poor and to proclaim justice, then it must practice poverty and behave justly towards its members’. This document also contains some specific criticisms of ecclesiastical practice in a form that is very frank.

The Synod of Bishops in 1971 is another landmark in the Church’s understanding of her mission. In this Synod, under the title ‘Justice in the World,’ the bishops pronounced the now often quoted words, “The work of justice is an integral part of the Church’s mission of Evangelization” (#5)

9. *Evangelii Nuntiandi* - Evangelization in the Modern World - Paul VI, 1975:

For the tenth anniversary of the Second Vatican Council (1975), Pope Paul VI issued *Evangelii Nuntiandi*. In it he asserts that combating injustice is an essential part of evangelizing modern peoples. The pope echoed the spirit of 1971 synod when he said that the kernel of the good news proclaimed by Christ is salvation, this great gift of God which is salvation from everything that oppresses man. He also established a firm link between salvation and liberation. *Evangelii Nuntiandi* is a profound theological statement of the Church’s commitment to the struggle for Justice.

10. *Redemptor Hominis* - Redeemer of Man - John Paul II - 1979:

Pope John Paul II was elected in 1978 and this encyclical was published in 1979. Following the teachings in the two earlier encyclicals, the Pope asserts that ‘the Church considers an essential,

unbreakably united element of her mission this solicitude for man, for his humanity, for the future of men on earth and therefore also for the course set for the whole of development and progress'. He very strongly defends human rights which he describes as the measure by which social justice can be tested.

The document is specifically concerned about with the redemptive work of Christ. It also has a lot to say about the dignity of man, human rights. It also says that Church's task in proclaiming the Gospel is not in the abstract, but to real, concrete individuals with all the threats they face within the society. The scope of the encyclical is very wide. It speaks about Church's mission and human freedom, the Church as a defender of human rights.

11. Laborem Exercens - On Human Work - John Paul II - 1981:

Exhorting Christians everywhere to be involved in the transformation of existing socio-economic systems, John Paul II presents work as a fundamental dimension of human existence through which the "social question" must be viewed. The meaning of work can only be properly understood when the dignity of labor is taken as an underlying premise. The Pope insists that work is not only an expression of human dignity but also that work increases it.

Laborem Exercens qualifies the teaching of private ownership in relation to the common use of goods that all men, as children of God, are entitled to. The Church "has always understood this right within the broader context of the right common to all to use the goods of the whole creation: the right to private property is subordinated to the right to common use, to the fact that goods are meant for everyone."

The Pope also underlined in this document the contradictions in life when he said:

On one hand there is a growing moral sensitivity alert to the value of every individual as a human being without any distinction of race, nationality, religion, political opinion, or social class. On the other hand these proclamations are contradicted in practice. How can these solemn affirmations be reconciled with the widespread attacks on human life and the refusal to accept those who are weak, needy, elderly, or just conceived? These attacks go directly against respect for life; they threaten the very meaning of democratic coexistence, and our cities risk becoming societies of people who are rejected, marginalized, uprooted, and oppressed, instead of communities of "people living together".

Time and again the Pope emphasizes the priority of labour over capital. He also speaks about the place of women in this context. The true advancement of women requires that labour should be structured in such a way that women do not have to pay for their advancement by abandoning what is specific to them.

12. Sollicitudo Rei Socialis - On Social Concern - John Paul II, 1987:

Sollicitudo Rei Socialis is an encyclical promulgated by Pope John Paul II on 30 December 1987, on the twentieth anniversary of *Populorum Progressio*. Expanding on the notion of development

in this encyclical, John Paul II reviews the state of world development in the past two decades. The moral nature of development leading humanity to the "fullness of being" is emphasized. The encyclical after making a survey of the contemporary world goes on to explain what it means by authentic human development. It also makes efforts to understand and explain the theological meaning of modern problems.

The Pope also explained that the "Church does not propose economic and political systems or programs, nor does she show preference for one or the other". Her concern is that human dignity is properly respected and promoted, and provided Church herself is allowed the room she needs to exercise her ministry in the world. The Church herself is an "expert in humanity", he said. (41)

In this encyclical the Pope brings to our notice the immense tasks before us especially about our love of preference for the poor.

Today, furthermore, given the worldwide dimension which the social question has assumed, this love of preference for the poor, and the decisions which it inspires in us, cannot but embrace the immense multitudes of the hungry, the needy, the homeless, those without medical care and, above all, those without hope of a better future. It is impossible not to take account of the existence of these realities. To ignore them would mean becoming like the "rich man" who pretended not to know the beggar Lazarus lying at his gate (cf. Lk 16:19-31).

13. Centesimus Annus - "Hundredth year"- John Paul II - 1991:

In '*Centesimus Annus*,' Pope John Paul II summarizes what went before: "During the last 100 years the Church has repeatedly expressed her thinking, while closely following the continuing development of the social question. She has certainly not done this in order to recover former privileges or to impose her own vision. Her sole purpose has been the care and responsibility for humankind, entrusted to her by Christ... Today the Church's social teaching focuses specially on men and women as they are involved in complex network of relationships within modern societies... her social teaching is aimed at helping humankind on the path of salvation."

Centesimus Annus (which is Latin for "hundredth year") was an encyclical written by Pope John Paul II in 1991, on the hundredth anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*.

Written in 1991, during the last days of the Cold War, *Centesimus Annus* specifically examined contemporaneous political and economic issues. The encyclical is partially a refutation of Marxist/Communist ideology and a condemnation of the dictatorial regimes that practiced it. The particular historical context in which it was written prompted Pope John Paul II to condemn the horrors of the communist regimes throughout the world.

The encyclical also expounds on issues of social and economic justice. The encyclical does include a defense of private property rights and the right to form private associations, including labor unions.

Throughout the encyclical the Pope calls on the State to be the agent of justice for the poor and to protect human rights of all its citizens, repeating a theme from Pope Leo XIII *Rerum*

Novarum. Addressing the question of the State's obligation to defend human rights, Pope John Paul II states:

When there is question of defending the rights of individuals, the defenceless and the poor have a claim to special consideration. The richer class has many ways of shielding itself, and stands less in need of help from the State; whereas the mass of the poor have no resources of their own to fall back on, and must chiefly depend on the assistance of the State. It is for this reason that wage-earners, since they mostly belong to the latter class, should be specially cared for and protected by the Government (33).

14. *Deus Caritas Est* - God is Love - Benedict XVI - 2005:

Subtitled "*Of Christian Love*" it is the first encyclical written by Pope Benedict XVI, in 2005, large part derived from the writings by his late predecessor, Pope John Paul II. Its subject is love, as seen through a Christian perspective, and God's place within all love. We shall discuss only the aspects related to Justice and Peace in this document.

The Pope says that the Church cannot and must not take upon herself the political battle to bring about the most just society possible. She cannot and must not replace the State. Yet at the same time she cannot and must not remain on the sidelines in the fight for justice. She has to play her part through rational arguments and she has to reawaken the spiritual energy without which justice, which always demands sacrifice, cannot prevail and prosper. A just society must be the achievement of politics, not of the Church. Yet the promotion of justice through efforts to bring about openness of mind and will to the demands of the common good is something which concerns the Church deeply... The Church's charitable organizations, on the other hand, constitute an *opus proprium*, a task agreeable to her, in which she does not cooperate collaterally, but acts as a subject with direct responsibility, doing what corresponds to her nature. (§28-29). This statement in a way takes the social teaching of the Church backward.

Christians and Social Work:

The document also talks about the contemplative dimension in life of those working for Justice and Peace in the world. Prayer, as a means of drawing ever new strength from Christ, is concretely and urgently needed... In the example of Blessed Teresa of Calcutta we have a clear illustration of the fact that time devoted to God in prayer not only does not detract from effective and loving service to our neighbour but is in fact the inexhaustible source of that service... It is time to reaffirm the importance of prayer in the face of the activism and the growing secularism of many Christians engaged in charitable work... A personal relationship with God and abandonment to his will can prevent man from being demeaned and save him from falling prey to the teaching of fanaticism and terrorism... Even in their bewilderment and failure to understand the world around them, Christians continue to believe in the "goodness and loving kindness of God" (Tit 3:4). Immersed like everyone else in the dramatic complexity of historical events, they remain unshakably certain that God is our Father and loves us, even when his silence remains incomprehensible (§36-38).

15. *Caritas in Veritate* - Charity in Truth - Benedict XVI - 2009:

Caritas in Veritate is the third encyclical of Pope Benedict XVI and his first social encyclical. It was published on July 7, 2009. The encyclical is concerned with the problems of global development and progress towards the common good, arguing that both Love and Truth are essential elements of an effective response. The document is addressed to all strata of global society – there are specific points aimed at political leaders, business leaders, religious leaders, financiers and aid agencies but the document as a whole is also addressed to all people of good will.

The encyclical contains detailed reflection on economic and social issues and problems. The Pope points out that the Church does not offer specific technical solutions, but rather moral principles to inform the building of such solutions. The economic themes include an attack on free market fundamentalism, though a simplistic polarization of the free market model versus interventionist big government solutions is rejected. There is emphasis on the need for the actions of all economic actors to be informed by ethics as well as the profit motive. Other areas discussed include the development of peoples, rights and duties, hunger, the environment, migration, sexual tourism, bioethics, cultural relativism, social solidarity, energy and population issues.

The encyclical begins with a discussion of how charity and truth are fundamental parts of our development, both as individuals and for humanity as a whole. Love (charity) is described as an extraordinary force motivating people to strive for the common good: "The more we strive to secure a common good corresponding to the real needs of our neighbours, the more effectively we love them." The Pope emphasizes that while charity is "at the heart of the Church's social doctrine", it must be linked to truth if it is to remain a force for good. Without truth, love can become an "empty shell" to be filled with emotional influences which in the worst case can result in love turning into its opposite. Similarly, social action without truth can end up "serving private interests and the logic of power".

In the last part of chapter four the Pope talks about the duty to protect the environment. He regrets the way "some states, power groups and companies hoard non-renewable energy resources" which he says "represents a grave obstacle to development in poor countries". He notes the importance for developed countries to take the lead in reducing their own environmental impact, which may involve in the adoption of new, more environmentally friendly life styles for their populations.

IV. MONTFORTIAN FOUNDATIONS OF JUSTICE, PEACE AND INTEGRITY OF CREATION

Section: A : JUSTICE AND PEACE TEACHINGS IN RULE OF LIFE AND CONSTITUTIONS

The Rule of Life of the Brothers of St.Gabriel has two parts. The first part contains the inspirational aspects and the second part the juridical aspects. It is not a comprehensive teaching on all the issues of the world or on the matters affecting our world. Therefore it is not proper to look for in the Rule book for answers for all aspects/ issues affecting our world as this is not a book purely on social teachings. In this perspective while reading the Rule of life, some say that it does not contain very many statements or pronouncements on the issues of justice and peace or for that matter any major social issue. However we do find many references in our Rule regarding what affects our world and all of us. In this section we shall deal with the teachings and statements in our Rule of Life on Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation and how they invite us to respond to social concerns in our world today.

1. Working for Justice and Peace is a Struggle for the Kingdom

As consecrated religious persons and close followers of Jesus, we are called upon to continue the mission of Jesus ‘to bring the good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and to the blind new sight, to set the downtrodden free, to proclaim the Lord’s year of favour’ with commitment and dedication. Our Rule of Life, Article 64 sets before us very clearly the mission as Brothers of St.Gabriel: “The Church is every anxious that the Good News be proclaimed to the poor. With your Brothers, you will seek out what is most urgent for the fulfillment of this task. Near you, or in far-away countries, they await your fraternal love and your help, to make them conscious of their human dignity, to free them from oppression of every kind, to dispel their ignorance, to lighten their spiritual distress, to satisfy their longing for a hope of salvation”. The invitation is very dynamic. The rule invites us to seek out time and again what is most urgent either near or in far away places. It also spells out the priorities: to work for human dignity, to work for the liberation of all kinds, to work for literacy, to work for spiritual liberation and to work for satisfying the spiritual longing of people.

The Rule of Life emphasizes the knowledge of the society. It states clearly the need to know the world before we begin to serve the world. It asks of its members to become “conscious of the values of this world and thrown into the service of people, you are in their midst a witness to the loving presence of God” (RL 6). The Rule of Life portrays working for Justice and peace as the “struggle for the Kingdom” and “commitment to Christ”. It is important to note how the Rule reminds its members the acute reality of the evil at work in this world (RL 9). It cautions the Brothers and exhorts them not to compromise in any way with evil in the world as they carry out their different commitments to Christ, participating in the struggles for the Kingdom. (RL 9). One of the very powerful and compelling statements in the Rule of Life about our commitment to the promotion of Justice and Peace is: “... suffering and death cannot leave you indifferent; you are committed to the promotion of truth, love, justice and peace”. (RL 9). This is a prophetic invitation to all the Brothers and not just to a few. All of us are called to free ourselves from

many things including from the power of death (RL 9), and become totally available to rush where God beckons us; where God calls us to respond to the urgent needs of our people” (RL 10).

Significantly our Rule views our Consecration and Commitment as integral parts of our participation in working for humanity’s struggle for progress. It is a very significant assertion by our Rule (RL 14). Working for/with humanity’s struggle for progress is a constitutive element of our oblation/consecration to God. It says, “Your total oblation to God demands a dedicated dynamic love for all men. Mindful of the poorer ones among them you will play your part in humanity’s struggle for progress”. The Rule while talking to us about the way Christ lived his poverty and the way St. Louis Marie Montfort lived it radically, invites us to be “always ready and available in the service of Christ, by seeking first the Kingdom of God and His Justice”. (RL 31).

2. Solidarity and Preferential Option for the Marginalized

The Rule of Life and Constitutions are very sensitive to the presence of the poor in our mission and apostolate. It calls for a committed and collective action from our part. It echoes the mind of the Church when it says, “the Church is ever anxious that the Good News be proclaimed to the poor” (RL 64). The Rule often reminds us of our predilection for the poor as Christ had during his life on this earth. While talking about the need for dedicated dynamic love for all, it reminds us to be “mindful of the poorer ones among them” (RL 14). In the chapter “Celibate for the Kingdom”, it is very interesting to notice that our Rule talks about the option for the poor and the marginalized. It says that our lived celibate life can find its fulfillment not only in the community we live in, not only in the schools we teach, but also when we “share Christ’s predilection for the young, for the poor, for the downtrodden...” (RL 29).

In Chapter 7 - “Poor with Christ”, the Rule of life very succinctly exhorts the Brothers that they should not be confined to the walls of their communities. The community is not an end unto itself, it says. The Rule asks the Brothers to come out of their self-proclaimed boundaries and self-proclaimed mission and apostolate. It asks the Brothers while being in solidarity with the community they belong to, to work for all those in need especially those who have nothing, and those starving. (RL 34). It is a very radical invitation to be a brother to all, especially to the marginalized, the poor, the abandoned and the ones starving and hungry. It calls upon the Brothers to open the heart to all those in need. It defines the spirituality we ought to practice. The rule says that by seeing our committed action and our solidarity with the poor ‘the world will know that the divine love dwells in us’ (RL 34). It is typically this realization that drove St. Montfort to cry out in the street of Dinan, “Open to Jesus Christ”. The very next article (RL 35) goes a step further in explaining our commitment for justice and peace in our mission. It redefines the meaning of preaching the Good News to the poor. While calling upon all of us to move towards the poor and the downtrodden, this article invites us to examine our conscience and our attitude towards the poor. It says, “Go to those who are lowly, marginalized or rejected, try to understand them and be close to them” (RL 35). It talks about insertion, contextualized life style and formation, understanding of the real situation of the poor and sharing of their life and misery.

While doing all these, we are also asked to examine our attitudes: “respect men for what they are, not for what they have... Let your attitude reveal to them (the poor) the love Christ and His Church bear them” (35). We are invited today to move from totally a welfare-based model or Charity-based style of development to rights-based approach in working for justice and peace. Art. 50 invites the brotherhood communities to develop a very positive outlook towards the poor; it asks the brothers and their communities to extend a hearty welcome to the poor and the needy (RL 50); in a very Montfortian undertone it says “... let the poor who knock at your door never go away empty-handed; to all, extend a hearty welcome”.

3. Rule of Life and Integrity of Creation: Call for the Consecration of the World

A Biblical vision of justice encompasses right relationships between all members of God’s creation. Stewardship of creation demands that the world's goods are available for humanity to use prudently which carries with it the responsibility to protect the environment. The "goods of the earth" are gifts from God, and they are intended by God for the benefit of everyone. The humans were given dominion over all creation as sustainers rather than as exploiters, and they are commanded to be good stewards of the gifts God has given them. We cannot abuse the natural resources God has given us with a destructive consumer mentality.

This is a very meaningful theme in Rule of Life and its utterances are very prophetic in nature. The Rule of Life foresaw the need for the consecration of the world especially amidst the ecological and environmental turmoil. It time and again reminds and invites the readers to look at the world with sacredness and grandeur. It invites the readers to treat the world with sacredness and consecrate the world by working for justice, peace and integrity of creation. Art 11 invites us to join hands with all men and women and work dedicatedly for “the consecration of the world to God”. It also lays down guidelines for the consecration of the world: consecration in the spirit of the Beatitudes” (11). Art. 6 is a very revolutionary one in a sense because it talks about the consecration of the world as the call of the Gospel. It goes even beyond the material world by saying “the Gospel that has been handed down to you calls for your total dedicated efforts so that all creation may be consecrated to the Father in Christ Jesus” (RL 6). The Rule while talking about the ultimate purpose and goal of the mission of the Brothers of St. Gabriel says this, “Your activity is directed to this one goal: that all men may know Jesus Christ, that all things may be permeated with Him, *and be transformed into new creation...*”. Thus it invites the Brothers to respect the creation, respect its sacredness and work for the sustainable development of the world.

In Chapter - 7 under the title “Poor with Christ” while talking about the dependence of the Brothers on their superior and other Brothers and inter-dependence, it outlines the philosophy behind this demand. It says, “thus you will proclaim before men that the goods of the earth belong to all, so as to prepare a new world where everyone shares the charity of Christ” (RL 33). It reminds the Brothers who are consecrated religious that they need not only remain poor with and for Christ but work for the removal of poverty and strive for justice, equity and fairness. We need to work for a new world order where the resources of the earth belong to all and not just to a few.

When explaining about celibacy, Art. 30 talks about the way in which we need to use the created things of this world. Our celibate life of witness and faithfulness to Christ and to His Kingdom is a beacon and a support to all. Through our life we "...manifest to them the reality of heavenly goods already possessed here below..." (RL 30) We are called upon to follow the example of Jesus our Master and St. Montfort our model 'who knew how to use the gifts of God, with the same gratitude and freedom, always ready and available...seeking first the Kingdom of God and His justice' (RL 31). The Rule also has cautioned us about the pride of possessing. Many of us know today that consumerism is destroying the peace, happiness and life of many families, peoples and nations.

The Rule asks us not to forget the evil at work in the world, in the community and in oneself (RL 36); it cautions us saying, "In desiring to gather wealth you fall a prey to pride of possessing. Ceaselessly you must die to a part of yourself..." (RL 36). It challenges the Brothers to 'live for the things of the life to come and respect men for what they are and not what they have...' (RL 35).

Finally Art. 63 of our Rule of life sums up beautifully our ecological and environmental mission in this world. What is remarkable to note here is that the Rule of life does not look at the "Ecological/Environmental mission" or "Ministry of the earth" as an isolated one from our mission of evangelization. It looks at the mission of the Brothers of St. Gabriel as participation in the evangelizing mission of the Church and one that "encompasses the whole human mystery". (RL 63). It concludes by stating: "You proclaim the sacredness and grandeur of all that is created". A note of demand on personal witnessing gives a beautiful ending to this article: "at the same time, your own life shows that the world is made for the Kingdom of God" (RL 63). Thus the Rule of life sums up its call for the consecration of the World to God.

4. Justice And Peace in the Constitutions

Our mission of love, justice and peace is made more specific in our Constitutions. It considers working for justice and peace as eminent service of high value. "The Institute dedicates itself to education, particularly that of the youth, poor children, those who are abandoned, maladjusted or handicapped in any way. The brothers will consider this work as eminent service of high value to humanity and a privileged way of making Christ known" (C. 89)

We live in a world of deprivation today. Human beings and the rest of God's creation are being deprived of LIFE. A passion for justice, a desire for peace and non-violence, a concern for integrity of all creation are essential to the living out of the gospel. Hence the call of our Rule of Life, "You are for all men, a source of life, and a pledge of fecundity" (RL 60)

The Rule of Life asserts that the Brothers give priority to the quality of human life (RL 63). This means educating the young to responsibility, solidarity, justice, respect for human rights and the promotion of women's dignity. Added to that (C 91 & 92) the Brothers with the students, the staff and the parents, form in the school, the place of their privileged apostolate, a community that fosters growth in the faith.

C 89 states that the service towards the sensory handicapped persons (blind, deaf) form part of the tradition of the Congregation. The marginalized, above all little ones claim their right to live with dignity as children of God. C 57, 98 and 149 challenge the Brothers to respond to the urgent demands of our world; should we not strive for a simpler lifestyle and dare new projects? Will there be more Brothers who will reach out in the service of “those whom the world abandons”?

C 64 reiterates that the congregation gives preference to the poor and the less well-to-do sectors of the population in the choice of apostolate. C 65 reminds the Brothers to be particularly careful to respect social justice in their dealings. We seek to insert ourselves into the different cultures in which we are present so that these cultures can be evangelized from within unto the Kingdom of God, while seeking to develop the spiritual, the moral and the socio-cultural values they contain. In the apostolate of the Brothers, they are exhorted by C 67 to teach the young to use the created things in the light of the Gospel and according to the teachings of the Church. The Constitution encourages the Brothers to work for peace and invites them to “involve themselves in the work of development as part of their evangelizing mission” (C 94). It is also very sensitive to other religions when it lists what we need to do while working among people of other religions. It says, “in their work among people of other religions, the Brothers acknowledge, preserve and promote the spiritual and moral values found among them as well as those in their society and culture” (C 95).

Finally C 100 asks the Brothers to become socially aware and enlightened by becoming competent in social fields. It tells the Brothers that by carrying out various apostolic activities in the world, the Brothers place themselves at the very heart of humanity. It reminds them that they do all these, because they hold human person and the entire creation in high esteem.

Section: B: THE TEACHINGS OF OUR GENERAL CHAPTERS ON JUSTICE, PEACE AND INTEGRITY OF CREATION

In this section we shall examine the deliberative pronouncements of the Congregation especially through its General Chapters on matters of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation. It is important to see how the Congregation has been going through a process of growth and development towards the creation of just and fraternal world. In its Directory of Formation¹⁸ the Institute has spoken about the aspect of training future Brothers to be bearers and apostles in the Mission of Justice and Peace. In this it has formulated various objectives of this formation; to form the Brothers to be more involved directly in the service of the deprived; and to have a sense of commitment to a more just and fraternal world, becoming themselves the promoters of peace, justice and integrity of creation.

The Directory also proposes the type of formation the Brothers should receive and the type of animation to be provided in the communities. It should help distance themselves from a society geared to consumerism, competition and individualism. Formation should also raise the Brothers' awareness of the many current forms of exploitation, discrimination, violence, economic neo-colonialism, drug-trafficking, racism, dignity of women, issues of migrants and refugees, the lack of respect for life in all its forms, global warming, environmental issues, etc. Thus we notice that the Institute has on various occasions and forms has spoken on the issues of Justice and Peace. But it is in the General Chapters the Institute has stated in clear terms on these issues. A preliminary study of the last five General Chapters in this background gives us an idea of what the Congregation has committed herself to, her convictions and her expectations from its members.

1. XXVII GC - 1988-89: We commit ourselves to promote Justice, Peace and Communion

The 27th General Chapter reflected on the theme: *Our Montfortian Religious Being Our Specific Mission in the Church and for Men*"; two central themes intimately linked to each other were prioritized for study during the Chapter. In its preamble it stated boldly thus: "We seek to activate the Montfortian daringness in our life and mission. We understand the end of the second millennium as a time for change and leadership at every level"¹⁹. In the section on Convictions and Proposals, the 27th General Chapter made some bold, dynamic and radical statements and proposals regarding humanity's struggle, the Brothers' participation in justice, peace initiatives and the Congregation's readiness to launch into these areas. In the subsequent years, if some of those decisions and proposals were to become priorities for the Brothers, it would have certainly made an immense difference in the Institute today. We shall examine some of those in the following pages:

Under the section Convictions (No. 2) the General Chapter realizing the challenges stated, "Being men of God and filled with the Spirit, we are challenged to get involved in the struggle for the Kingdom with all its ecclesial, social, economic and spiritual implications"(SG.L.1; 27th

¹⁸ Directory of Formation, Brothers of St. Gabriel, Rome, 2004

¹⁹ Message of 27th General Chapter, Brothers of St. Gabriel, Rome, January 1989

GC, p. 56). Going further the Chapter made a radical commitment to promote Justice, Peace and Communion. Art. 8 of this section is worth reproducing here: “In solidarity with all humanity, we want to contribute our part to denounce the injustices and inequalities of all kinds of which so many of our contemporary people are the victims. We commit ourselves to promote truth, love, justice and peace in communion with the Church and in collaboration with all people of good will in view of the liberation of the whole man and of all men”. (No. 8)

It is important to know that the 27th GC in 1988-89 already had proposed new initiatives regarding solidarity, justice and peace in many of its pronouncements. In the section on proposals, especially in its first six proposals, three major proposals were related to justice and peace initiatives to be carried out at the local, national and international levels. These proposals call for a radical and realistic assessment of our mission, participation in the struggle against the structural aspects of poverty (No. 5) and giving our support to the less fortunate - economically poor, handicapped, orphans, immigrants, illiterates, drug-addicts - by establishing partnerships.

Pope John Paul II in his message to the Capitulants of 27th GC, during the special audience granted on 5th January 1989, appreciated the Brothers for the growth in Asia and Africa; he also called for a deeper assimilation of the Gospel through personal contemplation and personal conversion. The Pope made a very pertinent observation when he told the Brothers, “In the West, you frequently have to face pervasive materialism, religious indifference, individualism and absence of ethical reference points, even though a large number of young people are keenly aware of such issues as human rights, solidarity among the nations, the fundamental value of life and peace” (No. 4). In the middle of his address the pope observed that, “...the poor throughout the world are thirsting for the love and concrete help which the Disciples of Christ can bring them... Give them pride of place in your schools or reach towards them, as your Rule of life requires”.²⁰

Though the previous 26 General Chapters had talked about the concern for the poor and our mission towards them, it was for the first time that the 27th GC had made a clear and forthright statement in getting involved in Justice and Peace issues as a Congregation. This GC also denounced the injustices and inequalities of all kinds in the contemporary world and promised to side with the victims of such injustices. Aptly the Pope also invited the Congregation to give a pride of place for the poor in our mission initiatives.

2. XXVIII GC - 1995: Give priority to the Quality of Human Life

The 28th General Chapter dwelt on the theme: *Revitalization of our religious Life: The need of the hour*”. Held in 1995 it invited each Brother to find out “what is essential for the revitalization of the Institute”. The GC emphasized our mission as Brothers, men of God, living Montfortian charism, in the Human and Christian Education of the young. It emphasized this aspect thus: “The Brothers give priority to the quality of human life. This means educating the young to responsibility, solidarity, Justice, respect of human rights and the promotion of women”. The 28th GC though spoke about Justice and Peace initiatives, it confined itself to the institutional

²⁰ Letter from Bro. Jean Friant, Superior General, No. 1, no. 5, Rome, 22 Jan 1989,

initiatives: to its schools, staff, students and parents and limited itself to its privileged field of apostolate- teaching in schools (GC. 2.)²¹.

It also reaffirmed the Congregation's commitment to the differently-abled persons, especially the visually challenged and the hearing impaired youth. "The marginalized, above all the little ones, claim their right to live with dignity as children of God". (2.3). Though the members of 28th GC acknowledged that they were aware of the changes in the society, they did not make any daring or bold statements that galvanized the Congregation to move towards Justice and Peace initiatives. It is true that the 28th GC invited all the Brothers of the Congregation to enter into the process of revitalization; it did not define clearly what it meant by revitalization and did not offer either a road map for revitalization. But the 28th GC opened the doors for fresh thinking, need for change and the cry for relevance in the Church and in the world. Though the chosen theme generated lots of expectations and hope, the final outcome was not much compared to the hopes and aspirations generated by the choice of the theme; and the end result was not much different from the traditional lines, with regard to the understanding of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation.

Pope John Paul II in his message to the members of the 28th GC during a special audience on 7th January 1995 said, "I can only encourage you in your desire to revitalize your institute, in order to answer always better your specific vocation of educative religious, especially called to an apostolate among the poorest". This time too as in 1989 the Pope exhorted and reminded the members of 28th GC saying: "In imitation of your founders, put yourselves in the service of the poor..."²²

The 28th GC took on different theme o reflect that called for renewal in all the areas of our life. It also gave impetus for expansion, consolidation and strengthening of our mission. This GC took a realistic approach in looking at the difficulties faced by the Western Provinces due to lack of vocations, aging and the decline in numbers. Hence the theme revitalization was God-given for the Institute at this point of time.

3. XXIX General Chapter - 2000: Justice should percolate to all levels of the Institute.

This General Chapter was an important one in the process of the growth of the Congregation's commitment to justice, peace and integrity of creation. For the first time the Congregation chose a clear social theme having a socio-economic and justice-impact in its life and mission. The theme was: "*Montfortian Missionary Dynamism for a Just Society towards the Kingdom*".²³ The General Chapter began with the Capitulants being attentive to the world and its sufferings. The two independent inspirational reflections on the contexts of the world prepared by the delegates from Asia and by the delegates from Africa, America and Europe (pp. 6-13) set the tone for this path-breaking GC.

²¹ Message of 28th General Chapter, Brothers of St. Gabriel, Rome, 1995

²² Letter from Bro. Jean Friant, Superior General, No. 7, Rome, 25 March, 1995

²³ Message from the 29th General Chapter, Brothers of St. Gabriel, Rome, 2000

The 29th General Chapter once again reaffirmed our mission in education of the young and the poor, especially our “solidarity with all those struggling for justice”. (GC.1.1 & 1.2). The resolutions are clearly an indication toward transforming our educational mission in coherence with our commitment to the service of justice. It acknowledged that “Our Institute is particularly devoted to the young. It must concentrate its mission efforts on actions aimed at protecting, and defending the rights of children. In our mission, we will give greater importance to the groups most neglected by society. We propose the creation of spaces for listening, welcome and dialogue in favour of the young and in favour of vulnerable groups” (1.3-1.5). By affirming our commitment to justice and fraternity, the GC wanted all the Brothers to identify more closely with the poor by their style of life and by their apostolic actions.

The GC wanted all efforts at justice should percolate to all levels of the Institute. It promised to establish the required structures to facilitate networking for justice. It said, “We will do so, with the Montfortian family, other religious groups, lay people, people of other faiths...” (2.1).

The establishment of International Secretariat (GSJP) to co-ordinate the Congregation’s efforts in the areas of “Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation” was the decision of 29th GC. It went further to suggest that “whenever and wherever possible, in our work for a just society toward the Kingdom, we will establish the required structures (in the form of NGOs or other publicly recognized bodies), to work with national and international organizations (UN or other groups)” (2.3). For a more effective exercise of our ministry for justice, the 29th GC proposed to use the media for the dissemination of information, the setting up of a network of Gabrielite institutions, an international meeting of the network, and an international federation of Montfortian Gabrielite Movement etc... It also proposed that a Assistant General be entrusted with the responsibility of coordinating the activities of “Justice and Peace, Human Rights and Integrity of Creation” (3.3). It is important to note that this GC took up other matters besides Justice and Peace issues; it took up the study of structures, government and finances of the institute and proposed that open, flexible and favorable changes in these three areas are necessary in order to apply the new orientations towards Justice and fraternity. (3.1). Based on this the GC recommended to all the Provinces the setting up of a ‘Commission for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation’ which was done in all the Provinces.

Finally the 29th GC also suggested appropriate initial and on-going formation, keeping in mind the Congregation’s new thrust and thirst for a just society towards the Kingdom. It recommended spiritual, theological and professional formation for the formators with a strong Justice content. In the initial formation the emphasis is to be placed on justice-oriented theological formation, contextualized formation, and on exposure and involvement in the context of the poor. The GC invited the Provinces to organize formation programmes to Conscientize Brothers about Justice issues and human rights, and enable them to become agents of conscientization in the struggle for justice and fraternity (4.6). It is to be noted that this was the first General Chapter which dedicated its entire energy to look at all the aspects of the Institute’s life and mission, primarily from a justice and fraternity perspective. The GC commenced by becoming aware of the world situation; it then acknowledged Congregation’s successes and failures in its mission and life especially in the areas of justice and fraternity, as individuals, as communities, as Provinces and finally as a Congregation. It moved on to work with a renewed dynamism in the areas of mission, partnership and networking, reviving structures, government and finances and finally

the formation. No doubt the 29th GC challenged the entire Institute to move forward in the promotion of just and fraternal world.

4. XXX GC - 2006: Commitment for the poor is constitutive part of Brotherhood identity

The 30th General Chapter dwelt on the theme, “*Brothers, Montfortians, Passionate for God and for Humanity*”. As it is clear from the preamble of the message of the Chapter, the key-words of the Chapter were, ‘Brothers, Montfortian and Passionate’. The impetus given by the 29th General Chapter was the driving force behind the 30th GC to be “attentive to the world and its sufferings and to work for a just and fraternal world”. The 30th GC took efforts to ‘situate itself in the globalised world, a world in which the poor face new forms of obstacles, and tried to discern where the Spirit was leading the Congregation’ (30th GC).²⁴ The General Chapter began with the sharing of the ‘struggles and successes of their attempts to create a just and fraternal world’. It also acknowledged the expansion of the mission to new territories, to new social situations, and the commitments to the poor, etc... (GC. 3). It affirmed again: “that the passion Christ, our Brother, felt for humanity and experienced throughout his time on earth, particularly on the Cross, is also the path shown to us by Montfort” (GC. 5).

The 30th GC redefined spirituality of solidarity and Justice when it stated: “We affirm that, as Brothers, we form part of a humanity thirsting for Brotherhood, spirituality, well-being and happiness... We, Brothers, feel an ever greater need for a more intense contemplative experience, lived out in the midst of the anguish and hopes of the people around us and in our own daily tasks”(GC. 7). The 30th GC, in the process of redefining the vocation of religious brothers and clarifying their identity, invited the members of the Congregation to develop a genuine spirituality of communion and manifest prophetic and authentic signs of Brotherhood. It is praiseworthy that this GC looked at the identity, mission, vocation and spirituality of Religious Brothers as an integrated reality and a wholistic commitment. It understood the commitment for the poor as a constitutive part of its identity, vocation and mission. “We are invited to develop, at individual and community level, a genuine spirituality of communion that enables us to...enter into dialogue...to live in close relationship with...especially the poor and the little ones. Beyond the boundaries of religions and cultures, we recognize in them our brothers and sisters...and become prophetic and authentic signs of Brotherhood” (GC. 23).

While attempting to redefine its mission, the 30th GC under the title, “A Mission to be Refocused” listed some far-reaching action plans and invited the Brothers ‘to manifest their “freedom” rooted in Christ, the true Wisdom. It said, ‘we are to be bold and courageous in facing today’s challenges. It also listed the areas of our attention: In formal and non-formal education our attention is to the poor and the little ones of this world. It invited to intensify our efforts towards building a just and fraternal world, by focusing our attention of HIV/AIDS etc...; to be in solidarity with the victims of unjust social structures , especially the children; and to strengthen the Montfortian Child Rights Movement with necessary structures and financial resources. The GC called for innovation in our specific mission field; to work for the formation, the professional qualification and the integration of the marginalized into the job market. It

²⁴ Message of the 30th General Chapter, Brothers of St. Gabriel, Rome.

encouraged promoting collaboration and networking activities among our institutions and our Provinces; to explore the possibility of forming and sending Brothers to specified and limited missions, for actions of urgent solidarity. It challenged the Brothers to contribute to the birth and development of visible and living Christian communities that are genuinely attractive and bear witness to Christ (30th GC. 35).

The 30th GC stressed the importance of net working in the areas of justice and peace. It re-emphasized the proposal of 29th GC in this regard. It proposed to the Central Administration to “take some concrete steps to join hands with existing international NGOs, in order to coordinate our efforts in the fields of Education, Social Justice and Child Rights. This form of networking with associations (NGOs, inter-Congregational organizations, etc.) will facilitate international solidarity” (No. 47). In this context it is significant to recall here that for the first time in the history of the Congregation, the laity (it includes collaborators and associates) were invited to participate in the 30th GC and their contribution was praiseworthy (30th GC, Annex.2).

5. XXXI GENERAL CHAPTER - 2012: Promotion of socio-economic justice, solidarity, human rights, responsibility for the environment, good governance are constitutive parts of Montfortian Gabrielite vocation and mission:

This General Chapter took on a very different theme, though at a first glance it would appear as a very secular and managerial topic: “*Authentic Leaders for a Greater Brotherhood*”. This Chapter spent its energy on defining what it means to be authentic, what it means to be a leader, what greater brotherhood is and how each one is called as a religious Brother to work for and promote authentic brotherhood in the world of today. The GC members after some self-evaluation identified various factors challenging them in their consecrated life (31st GC, 1-6)²⁵. In the section on “We are Brothers for a Greater Brotherhood” the Chapter members clearly identified that, “environmental degradation, violation of human rights, abject poverty and corruption are some of the realities of today’s world and they challenge our religious consecration”. They boldly stated that they want to “become actively passionate for the humanity and for the entire creation” (No. 7). This is an assertion of the stand already taken in the 29th and 30th General Chapters. In defining spirituality, the Capitulants also included environmental responsibility and sustainable development as part of the Brothers’ spirituality. They said: “We desire to live a spirituality of presence, communion and justice in relation to the world, thus gradually moving towards an integral eco-spirituality that promotes environmental responsibility and sustainable development” (No.9). The 31st GC even while conveying a message of hope to the congregation clearly stated the challenges and responsibilities: “We are challenged to be truly convinced that environmental responsibility, respect for human rights, gender equality, elimination of poverty and education for economic justice, peace and forgiveness are constitutive part of our Montfortian Gabrielite vocation and mission (RL 14)” (No. 10).

It is very important to note that the 31st GC to a large extent continued on the same lines as 29th and 30th General Chapters. It kept up the momentum on Justice, Peace and Fraternity in the world. The 31st went further ahead in defining our role as leaders in the world. The 31st GC is

²⁵ Message of the 31st General Chapter, Brothers of St. Gabriel, Rome, 2012

also noteworthy for another reason. It defined the vocation to religious Brotherhood as an authentic call to witness to greater brotherhood in the world which includes working for justice, peace, equality, environmental care, sustainable development, promoting human rights and caring for the earth. The entire section of decisions on “For A Greater Brotherhood” is dedicated to the promotion of socio-economic justice, solidarity, human rights, responsibility for the environment, good governance and promotion of intercultural and inter-faith dialogue (Nos. 15-21). For the first time so many pages have been dedicated to Justice and Peace theme in the message and Orientations of a General Chapter. This shows the seriousness, the transformation and the process of growth in the justice consciousness of the Congregation of Brothers of St. Gabriel.

Finally this 31st GC also offered suggestions to strengthen the existing GSJP (Gabrielite Secretariat for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation) Secretariat in Rome. It also proposed that the Central Administration could facilitate the functioning of this Secretariat from another location where it is appropriate, other than the General House. The 31st General Chapter in a way has dealt with many urgencies of our world today. It has also committed the Congregation wholeheartedly to this mission. It depends now, on the members of the congregation to carry this forward in their life and in their mission in the Provinces of the four Continents.

V. HISTORICAL JOURNEY OF MONTFORTIAN GABRIELITES

A. Gabrielite Secretariat for Justice and Peace (GSJP)- AIM, VISION, OBJECTIVES AND ROLE

This part will deal with the aim, vision, objectives and the structure of the Justice and Peace mission of the Congregation of the Brothers of St. Gabriel. The section on the “Montfortian Foundations” deals elaborately on the journey the Congregation has made in the area of Justice and Peace since its realization that working for Justice and Peace in the world is the constitutive part of the mission of Christ in the world. We have already traced the consciousness of the congregation in its mission of Justice and Peace. Therefore in this section we shall limit ourselves to the aim, objectives, structures and the vision of the Secretariat for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation which was created/established in response to the call of 29th General Chapter held in Rome in 2000

1. THE CALL OF 29TH GENERAL CHAPTER IN 2000:

“WE AFFIRM OUR COMMITMENT TO AND OUR ‘SOLIDARITY WITH ALL THOSE STRUGGLING FOR JUSTICE.’ (29th GENERAL CHAPTER P. 28)

We have responded, collectively, at the Congregational level, to the signs of the time by re-orienting our mission towards the realization of a just society modeled on the Kingdom of God proclaimed by Jesus in the Gospel. The following proposals are part of the effort to create the necessary structure in the Congregation to effectively implement our new orientation.

The focus of our Justice and Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) work is aimed at protecting and defending the rights of children (29th General Chapter 1.5, p. 28). In keeping with our commitment to justice and fraternity we want to identify ourselves more closely with the poor by our style of life and by our way of apostolate (29th General Chapter 1.6, p. 29).

Wherever possible, at all levels of the Institute, we will establish the required structures to facilitate networking for justice. We will do so, with the Montfortian family, other religious groups, lay people, and people of other faiths... (29th General Chapter 2.1, p. 30).

Whenever and where possible, in our work for a just society towards the Kingdom, we will establish the required structures (in the form of NGOs or other publicly recognized bodies), to work with national and international organizations. (29th General Chapter 2.3, p. 31).

We recommend that a Assistant General be specially entrusted with questions concerning “Justice and Peace”, Human Rights and Integrity of Creation (Message 3.3, p. 3).

“Action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world fully appears to us as constitutive dimension of the preaching of the gospel, or, in other words, of the Church’s mission for the redemption of the human race and its liberation from every oppressive situation” (Synod of Bishops on Justice in the World, no. 7 Rome, 1971).

2. VISION, MISSION AND OBJECTIVES OF GSJP:

The 29th General Chapter states: “We will establish an International Secretariat to co-ordinate our work for Justice, peace and the integrity of Creation.” (2.2. p. 30).

The GSJP, while carrying on its mission of documentation and communication, will launch itself into the struggle for justice in the world, in collaboration with JPIC, as an important mission of the Institute. It will take up programs of animation (like Advocacy for global justice) (Action Plan 1, p. 7).

THE VISION OF GSJP

The Gabrielite Justice and Peace Ministry is inspired by God’s plan for the world and invites each one of us to action for a just transformation of the world.

THE MISSION OF GSJP

Our mission is to bring about a world where all people can live as one loving family thereby building the Kingdom of God on earth.

TASKS / OBJECTIVES OF GSJP:

To Co-ordinate:

The Congregation’s effort in the field of Justice and Peace at all levels and to work in close collaboration with the Central Administration.

To Develop:

A holistic vision and spirituality of Justice and Peace Mission
A methodology of the Montfortian Gabrielite involvement for Justice and Peace.

To Organize and Animate:

Intensive programs of formation in Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) at international and Province levels.

Common programs for Justice, involving all the Provinces of the Institute.

To Promote and Encourage:

Programs in the Montfortian Gabrielite Education Project in order to create awareness of issues of JPIC.

The formation of educators and leaders who share our education mission and charism, especially our commitment to the poor and the less privileged.

Networking among our Provinces and local levels, with the Montfortian Family and other Religious Societies, lay-people and people of other faiths at all levels.

Establishing at the Province and local levels, and sustaining the Montfortian Child Rights Movement (MCRM) which was launched in Hyderabad in February 2005.

To Collect Information:

On what is done in the different regions of the Institute and to share the information throughout the Congregation.

To Record and Maintain:

Proper and systematic files in the Secretariat on all relevant information and transactions. Begin the documentation process in the Secretariat.

To Create :

A Gabrielite Website for a more effective exercise of our ministry for justice. (Message 2.10, 2.11, p 32).

To Participate:

In some international forums dealing with issues of Justice and Peace and share within the GSJP network the information and the experience gained.

In the meetings held particularly in Rome on various issues of Justice and Peace, especially the JPIC, set up by the Union of Superiors General and getting actively involved in it.

To Join Hands:

With the existing International Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and possibly tying up with the Justice and Peace Cell of the United Nations and exploring the possibility of starting an office for this purpose wherever feasible.

MANNERS OF CONTACT:

Visits (to encourage, share, record, collect / disseminate awareness, attempts and achievements, coordinate / cooperate efforts)

Meetings / Seminars (to interpret GSJP main themes, share, synthesize ideas, and to encourage, share, record, collect / disseminate awareness, attempts and achievements)

LEVEL OF CONTACT

International Level, Congregation Level, Continental Level and Province Level.

ROLE OF GSJP:

The following simple structure will be in place for the Gabrielite solidarity for justice and peace²⁶.

- ◆ Superior General and his Council
- ◆ One of the Assistants General is in charge of this portfolio
- ◆ An executive Secretary based in Rome
- ◆ A Brother appointed from each Province to be in charge of JPIC

In matters of decisions / directions / appointments / funding, etc., these rest with the Superior General and his Council. The Assistant General appointed to be in charge of this portfolio oversees to the running of this office. The Executive Secretariat is based in Rome. The roles are:

- ☛ Takes part in JPIC meetings (that is, meetings organized at the level of all Religious Congregations, in Rome).
- ☛ To give some feedback of those meetings to the Central Administration.
- ☛ To find ways to share the information, on JPIC issues, with all the Brothers of the Institute (through internet and / or various publications);
- ☛ To invite Brothers to share, dialogue, to interact;
- ☛ To encourage the existing “Justice and Peace projects”, and to make those projects known within the Congregation;
- ☛ To make proposals for new initiatives
- ☛ To build strong network of solidarity

²⁶ See Annex IV for the diagram on Structure of GSJP

- ☛ To keep the website buzzing.
- ☛ To maintain links and communication with the representative of each Province.

3. THE ROLE OF THE JPIC COMMISSION IN EACH PROVINCE:

The Brother who heads the JPIC commission should normally be a Provincial Councilor or some one who is involved in Justice and Peace mission.

His role and that of the Commission should be:

To interact, communicate and provide information on: JPIC issues, projects, initiatives to the Secretariat of the GSJP in Rome.

To aid the Secretariat in the dissemination / sharing of information, etc., to the Brothers of the Province.

To be the main link / liaison person/s between the Province and the Central Administration / Secretariat of GSJP.

To be responsible for the promotion of justice and peace in the respective Provinces.

To network, collaborate and cooperate with other Provinces in the areas / issues of JPIC.

To represent their Province in meetings at the Local / Diocese / National / International Level on issues of Justice and Peace.

To help promote programs in the Montfortian Gabrielite Educational Project, etc., and networking with the Montfortian Family and other religious, lay Institutes, and people of other faiths.

To share and pass on the information to other Provinces about the JPIC initiatives in one's own Province.

To keep proper records and create documentation on JPIC at the Provincial House.

To organize programs of formation on topics of Justice and Peace at the Province Level for the Brothers, collaborators and for men/women of good will.

To take initiatives to involve our lay collaborators in our mission of Justice and Peace.

B. NAIROBI CONFERENCE DECLARATION

1. In Africa:

We, 21 Montfort Brothers of St. Gabriel, from 11 Provinces and 2 Districts along with the Superior General and 2 Assistants (Annex) gathered in the International Centre of Demesse Sisters, Nairobi, from 18-22 January 1999. The justice situation in the African continent and our presence in 10 of these countries adds to the significance of our meeting in this part of the world.

It was aimed at an evaluation of the Congregation's commitment to justice to the poor and to chart out newer initiatives for the coming years. Being a first time event of this kind the meeting itself is an achievement for our commitment **towards a just society**, which was the theme around which we worked.

INSPIRED BY MONTFORT

- 2.1. As Brothers of St. Gabriel, we are inspired and guided by the charism of Montfort who identified himself with the poor. His writings are expressions of deep God-experience and personal commitment to a mission for His Kingdom. The example and witness of his life is fully sustained by a strong faith theologically articulated, an unshakeable hope that is manifested in great trust in providence, and a charity full of tenderness which is made effective in daily life.
- 2.2. The prophetic gestures in his life were numerous. We shall evoke three events that manifested so unmistakably his commitment to the poor:
 - ♦ The “Cesson Bridge” rupture is significant and speaking volumes.
 - ♦ The reorganization of the hospital of Poitiers in order to improve the daily lot of the poor and the consequent struggle.
 - ♦ The Dinan event during a mission provides us with the touchstone of Montfort's spirituality for combating poverty and for loving the poor: the poor is not only the image of Jesus Christ, but he is Christ himself.
- 2.3. A century later, following closely on his heels, but with a dynamism which took on a different expression, Gabriel Deshayes was touched by and preoccupied with the poor, the destitute, the illiterate, and the deaf he encountered. He tried to come to their help and to relieve them from their poverty. In his own way he responded to the urgencies of his time with great audacity.
- 2.4. Ever since, the Montfortian disciples “are free and totally available...to be bold and dynamic... to meet the urgency of men's needs” (R.L. 10). They “are committed to the promotion of truth, love, justice and peace... forbidden to compromise with evil” (R.L. 9).

These have found concrete expressions by the Brothers spread across the five continents and have become our heritage.

How could we, while taking the necessary steps with understanding, deepening and adaptation of the message of our predecessors, relegate to the background the life of poverty that they have handed down to us, and more so, the life with the poor whose visible presence Jesus has indicated as His own, and Montfort has affirmed it unequivocally ?

3. SENT BY THE CHURCH

3.1. Led by the personality of Christ who involved himself directly with the poor.

Montfortian Christology presents Jesus as someone close to the situation and concerns of the poor. He is incarnate in their midst as one among them. Response to the needs of the poor is the sign and content of His Kingdom (Lk.16-18). He associates himself with the marginalized and the oppressed. He assures the people that though He will not be with us always the poor are always with us, and thus giving us an opportunity for our own salvation and wholeness through our commitment to justice. He promises us heaven if we feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the prisoners, console the sorrowful and suffering (Mt. 25:31f).

3.2. Called to a community that shares their meals and possessions with one another.

We know from the early Church that the first Christians lived in harmony because they shared their possessions with one another. Hence we have got these valuable words from the non-believers: “See how they love one another.” This brotherhood sets the context for a church, a society that will not generate so much injustice.

St. Paul gave depth and breadth to this community of love when he proclaimed the liberty and equality of all. There are no more Jews or Gentiles or Greeks, no more slaves and freemen, but all were equal as children of the same Father, coheirs with Christ...

3.3. Sent on a mission for human rights and justice to the poor.

For the last hundred years, starting from Pope Leo XIII (*Rerum Novarum*, 1891), leaders of the Church have been addressing the situation of the poor directly even with encyclicals. The social theory of the Church has evolved further, especially during the last 40 years. The concern for the poor is stressed as a central issue of the Church. Pope Paul VI even exalted the poor to the height of being “a sacrament, a sacred image of the Lord” in this world (Eucharistic Congress, Bogota, 1968). But often there is a wide gap between theory and praxis. The nature of dependence of the local Church leaders, especially in the field of finance, does not empower them to become the voice of the voiceless.

We are heartened to note that Pope Jean-Paul II has made it an imperative for the Jubilee: “A commitment to justice and peace in the world like ours, marked by so many conflicts, intolerable social and economic inequalities, is *necessary condition* of the preparation and celebration of the Jubilee” (TMA, 51).

3.4. We are called to stand with our poor brethren and make a demand for justice.

“The church is ever anxious that the Good News be proclaimed to the poor. To make them conscious of their human dignity...to free them from oppression of every kind...” (R.L. 64).

The Church as a body dare not identify itself with the poor, not the poor with Christ himself. But we have inherited the insight and the audacity of our founder to identify the poor as Christ himself. And because of this prophetic insight, he has gone out of the way and stood against the current of the world, by rendering himself to the poor and identifying himself with them. He had the courage to stand up and cry with a loud voice, at the door of the world: **“Open the door to Jesus Christ”**.

Therefore it is high time now for us to stand up and affirm this statement. Being the followers of Montfort, wisdom demands that we do something positive at this moment of the *kairos*. We have to make a demand to somebody or cry out somewhere that the poor is a human person and that he has the right to make a demand, the right to dignity, the right to be treated as an equal and the right to live happily in this world.

4. TO THE WORLD OF THE POOR

4.1. Jesus was sent to the poor and He continues to send men and women of good will to manifest the reality of the Kingdom amidst them. We are starting a Holy year of Jubilee, at the end of a century, the threshold of a new millennium. It is a century that began by nurturing possibilities and hopes for all, a period of great discoveries and development or resources. But it ends in opulence for a few and misery for most. Water, forest and land are rapidly exhausted, degraded and eroded due to misguided development, harmful technology and exploitative trade practices. The capitalistic economic structures and systems of the past, which evaded the development of the poorer sections, have taken a more virulent form in the shape of globalization, market economy and the resultant mono-culture. The many times paid national debts of once colonized nations and the new debts incurred by its often corrupt leadership hangs like mill-stones around the necks of their poor. Weapons of mass destruction (nuclear, chemical, biological) are made, hoarded and sold, breeding cults of violence and death in nations that need their scarce resources to provide their people food and shelter, education and health care. The nature and dimension of injustice to the poor cannot be answered by any principles and policies of development.

4.2. On the political and social plane, time-tested institutions that helped humanize people are on the decline. Even social organizations and institutions that were at the service of the poor are becoming less effective in the context of the new world order. Multi-national corporations and agencies that owe allegiance to none but the principle of profiteering are

taking control of the economy. The mass media with its own value system is rapidly replacing the role of the family, religion and school as the dominant agent of socialization.

- 4.3. A global village, the information revolution, new and unprecedented productive forces at our disposal, longing in every human heart for peace, solidarity and justice, the men and women of all walks of life who are ready to give themselves for the cause of the poor... are all opportunities before us for the creation of a more humane and sustainable world. The dilemmas of our time are not of development, but of equity and justice. It calls for new structures and networks to promote a peace that comes out of justice.

5. FOR A RADICAL RESPONSE

- 5.1. Montfortian discipleship implies converting every turning point in history into a new opportunity. The almost three centuries of Montfortian history is resplendent with a rare dynamism and courage in its ever new responses to the call of the poor for a share in God's creation. The **creative genius of Gabriel Deshayes** and his pioneering work among the sensorial handicapped continues to inspire us. The missionary dynamism of Brothers in the early part of this century found new and varied expressions of Montfortian concern for the poor in different continents and cultures in a wide variety of ways. Boys Towns and boarding houses, schools and services, soup kitchens and shelters have been among these. In more recent times we have men who have taken extraordinary initiatives, creating new space and opening new doors for our response to Christ-poor and his struggle for justice of the Kingdom. *The memory of Bro. Gabriel Foucher, who spent his life as an apostle among the refugees of Vietnam, and Bro. Emmanuel among the lepers of Kon Kaen, are of Montfortian audacity of doing something great for God. Bro. C.M. Joseph in the north of India created a new paradigm of an incarnated life-style and spirituality among the poor, opening up the Montfortian mystery of incarnation into new horizons. It has inspired many new initiatives that have great potential for a revitalized Institute.* Our concern for the poor is taking new directions today, that of justice, human rights and integrity of creation. Models of involvement are shifting from charity, programmes and services, to movements and networks for structural transformation, calling for international involvement. This is the Congregational challenge of our Montfortian option for the poor.
- 5.2. The reports from the Provinces indicate substantial involvement of the Brothers, though in varying degrees, in our response to the very poor. But it is more in charity and development works for the poor than justice aspects and transformation of society. The present situation of the world calls for a shift in our emphasis to the later. In order to facilitate such a process we propose that **systematic educational programme** for human rights be organized for all the brothers, and special **training sessions** be held for the members of the social justice animators at the province level.
- 5.3. In order to be effective in our new orientation, it is important that every Province or District in the Congregation has a structure like **commission, team, centre...** All individual and community projects for the poor be networked and linked to the above mentioned Province body. These Province structures form an **international network** assisted by a **world secretariat**.

- 5.4. During the last three decades, there had been many new initiatives in different Provinces in responding to the situation of the poor. Challenged by the life of Jesus Christ and our father Montfort some Brothers have responded by **insertion among the poor**. This has an inspirational impact on the Congregation and a prophetic effect on the Church and society. As a Congregation we need to continue to reflect as to how to **enhance this experience** and make it an effective response to the situations of extreme poverty.
- 5.5. We are happy that the Congregation is opening up to work with international organizations. It is desirable that the General Council takes measures to study the implications of creating an **NGO** which may then be tried out in each country. Collaboration within Montfortian family is a welcome measure.
- 5.6. The place of this meeting on justice and peace in Nairobi, Africa, is a conscious choice. In some way it is an expression of concern for the poor of this continent where we have two provinces and two districts spread over eleven countries. Reflecting over the situation we make the following specific.

Suggestions:

- a. In every country in which we work **call one Brother** to the ministry of justice and peace. He should be suitably trained and facilitated to fulfill his mission. In addition to his involvement in justice issues in the country he will also network inside and outside the congregation.
 - b. An international Montfortian **documentation centre** on justice and peace will be of great help. This could include an Internet site.
 - c. The Provinces could organize a **network of lay volunteers** for responding to specific needs.
 - d. Our mission in Africa could have a **greater focus** for organizing people for justice and empowering them for development.
 - e. As an **international** body we could be of active **help** to our Brothers in Africa in their struggle for justice.
 - f. More **education and exposure programmes** for the Brothers on justice and human rights issues can contribute to greater possibilities in this field.
 - g. Some Brothers could **visit India** where some definite steps have been taken during the last twenty-five years.
- 5.7. We are part of the Church, a sign of the Kingdom, but deliberately unjust sometimes in its silence in the face of injustices as well as supporting structures that create and sustain injustice. Even within the Church there are grave injustices like curtailing enquiry and expressions of faith by the oppressed peoples and communities of different cultural and social contexts. Her reluctance to examine questions of morality to address new human problems and not providing equal opportunities for women and laity in the life and mission of the Church are hindering the growth of an equitable community. Diocesan Congregations often do not receive just treatment from the local Church leaders.

As Gabrielite Montfortians in the Church, we ought **not to fall a prey** to the very forms of injustices we fight against, but become the voice of the voiceless in newer ways. There is a need to acquire training and expertise so that **we can address these dilemmas** of our time more meaningfully.

5.8. There are very many organizations within the Church at the local, national and international levels that address questions of justice, human rights and integrity of creation both within the Church as well as in society. **Involvement and networking with these organizations** are of great importance in our work of justice and peace. It can be in the form of leadership, financial support, local mobilization of people, personal involvement.

5.9. While the life and work of Montfort was a protest and prophecy in the Church and society of his time, the apostolic dynamism and creative genius of Deshayes inspired thousands to commit themselves to work for the Kingdom. There is an urgent need today to recapture the vision and dynamism of our founders in a new way in our mission in the world.

Among its imperatives are:

- ☛ Bring the poor and their cause to the centre of our lives and mission.
- ☛ Provide prophetic protest against all forms of injustice
- ☛ Re-orientate our education ministry to the justice and peace perspectives.
- ☛ Evolve simplicity of life style that is open to the poor.
- ☛ Readiness to respond to every just human need.
- ☛ Influence governments and agencies in favour of the poor.
- ☛ Greater use of mass media in our justice and peace ministry.
- ☛ Provide formation for justice and peace commitment.
- ☛ Recapture the contemplative and mystical dimension of the founders in order to understand the mystery of Christ-poor.

5.10. Our charism, lived experiences in different sectors in the Congregation and the signs of the time call us to give concerns of justice, peace and integrity of creation a significant place in our Rule of Life and Constitutions.

Towards this we suggest:

- ➔ A new chapter be added in our Rule of Life on our commitment to justice and peace, with necessary amendments and additions in the Constitutions.
- ➔ The articles on education mission be reformulated to encapsulate the justice and peace dimension.

5.11. Given the global character of the problems of poverty and justice, there is a need for global responses on the part of the congregation.

Towards this we propose:

1. Set up an **International Bureau** at the Congregational level to coordinate our global efforts for a just world.
2. Foster the contributions to the International Solidarity Network and set apart a major **portion of the Aid Fund** available in the Congregation for a period of time (six years) for the justice and peace forum.
3. Organize **education and awareness** programmes for all the members of the congregation, co-workers, students and others on issues of justice and peace.
4. Choose a **specific problem** confronting the world to-day (Justice for children, for example), study it in all its aspects and address ourselves to this issue as a congregation.
5. Study the possibility of a **joint international centre** by the Montfortian Family.

5.12. The preparation and celebration of the Jubilee Year makes commitment to justice and peace a necessary condition.

Towards this we recommend:

1. The Congregation will declare the year *2000 a Montfortian year for justice and peace.*
2. Brothers in every country will identify a *project* in their own country to address the issues of justice and peace, to be completed within the Jubilee Year.
3. Join the campaign for cancellation of *international debt*, as a Congregation.
4. It is suggested that *Justice and Peace* is taken as the *theme for the coming General Chapter* and the coming 6 years be committed to this task so that our revitalization may take concrete shape among the poor.

IN CONCLUSION

The poor are at the centre of our founding vision. Place them back there and we shall find the equilibrium of our charism, integration of life and sense of mission in the new global space. The leaders of our time in the Congregation, in the Church and in the society will do well to head the advice of Mahatma Gandhi, who gives the **poor as a touchstone of a new world order**: “*Recall the face of the poorest and the weakest man whom you may have seen and ask yourself if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him. Will he gain anything by it? Will it restore him to a control over his own life and destiny? Then you will find your doubts and your Self melting away*”.

C. HYDERABAD CONFERENCE DECLARATION

MONTFORT CHILD RIGHTS MOVEMENT, INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR, 22-25 February 2005, Hyderabad, FINAL STATEMENT

Montfort Brothers of St. Gabriel have been in a process of renewal and revitalization ever since the second Vatican council. It came to a focus in their XXVIII General Chapter in 1994-95 with a call to revitalize the whole Congregation through a *Rebirth in the Spirit*. The subsequent XXIX General Chapter in 2000 oriented the mission of the Brothers towards a definitive commitment to *creating a just and fraternal society*. In order to achieve this the Institute established an International Secretariat called “Gabrielite Secretariat for Justice and Peace” (GSJP) with provincial and local units attached to it with a mandate to conscientize, educate, energize and create a movement for justice and peace. Education of the young being the privileged field of our mission, promoting the Rights of the Children was chosen as the focus of mission for the whole Institute.

As a follow up of the General Chapter mandate 76 Montfortians which included members of the Central Administration, Brothers, collaborators and children from all the 6 Provinces of India, representatives of the Provinces of Europe, Africa and Thailand, gathered at Bosco Institute of Research and Development for Youth (BIRDY), Hyderabad, India from 22nd to 25th February, 2005. We allowed ourselves to be part of an intense search to understand the many dimensions and issues regarding this project. We have looked critically at our present practices, listened to many experts and activists from the field, shared the experiences of best practices from among our Brothers and others and prepared ourselves for a renewal of our commitment to peace and justice in the world through a more definitive commitment to the Rights of the Child. We feel the whole consultation was a time of intense reflection and intimate sharing which raised our consciousness to a level high enough to launch our Montfortian Child Rights Movement (MCRM).

We decided to work towards the international standard set by the U.N. Convention on Child Rights in 1989 which defined Child Rights within the overall context of Human Rights to which 192 nations of the world accepted to be bound in obligation. The 15 years that followed after the CRC declarations has been a period of making this Universal recognition of the Rights of the Child become real in life for all the children of the world. It is in this context that MCRM takes shape within the Montfortian Family.

In its vision MCRM is a movement that can ennoble any one who come into it because it deals with the dignity and equality of every human being as Children of God. Hence at its core MCRM believes that all human beings are brothers and sisters. In the present scenario of the world, children, more particularly those from the less privileged section of the society, are denied of their basic Rights. It will be the efforts of MCRM to respond to this situation by orienting its mission to ensure the Rights of these children. In the struggle to realize it we shall collaborate with all like-minded organizations so as to create a universal movement at the service of the children’s cause so that all children can experience the greatness of being the Children of God. As Montfortians the less privileged always had a priority in our mission, MCRM will take care to continue with this sacred tradition. We Launch MCRM at Hyderabad with a hope that it will

one day reach through its ripple effect, whole of India, Asia and all the shores of the world where Montfortians are present.

In order to achieve the basic rights of Children, which are classified as Survival, Protection, Development and Participation, we Montfortians commit ourselves:

1. To build our capacity in relation to Child Rights in all its dimensions in order to become catalysts of change in our present mission setups.
2. To transform our mission approach from welfare and development to the 'Rights approach'.
3. To empower the Collaborators, Parents and Children and all the stake-holders to become effect partners in the Planning, Implementation and Evaluation of all the programs designed for the Children.
4. To break the veil of passivity whenever and wherever the Rights of the Child are violated and to act decisively to protect their Rights.
5. To Network with like-minded people and organizations to promote, propagate and Advocate the Rights of all Children.
6. To make the Rights of the Child an integral part of our life and mission and to make the struggle into a Movement by the name 'Montfort Child Rights Movement'.

D. BANGALORE CONFERENCE DECLARATION

THE INTERNATIONAL MEETING OF THE, GABRIELITE SOLIDARITY FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE, 14-19 JULY, 2008, BANGALORE, Final Statement

1. Preamble

We, 28 Brothers representing all the Provinces of the Congregation except Senegal and Brazzaville, gathered at Montfort Spirituality Centre, Bangalore, from 14-19 July, 2008, at the initiative of the Gabrielite Secretariat for Justice and Peace, Rome. The presence of the Superior General, Rev. Bro. Rene Delorme, Vicar General, Bro. Jose Thottiyil, Assistant General, Bro. Georges Le Vern, International Secretary of GSJP, Bro. Dominic Kiong and the Provincial Superiors of India and Malaysia added to the significance of the meet. We recalled the Orientation of the 29th and 30th General Chapters, evaluated its implementation in the Congregation so far; reflected deeply on the issue of Justice in the world today and planned our actions for the future. It was an intense experience of fraternal life centered on Christ and focused on the common Mission of the Kingdom of God lived in a deep spirit of sharing and prayer.

2. History:

We recalled the history of our involvement in the Institute towards promoting Justice in the world and the evolution of our collective consciousness of the importance of the issue of justice in the world of today. In the process of situating our conference in its proper context we recalled the important mile stones in the history of the Church and that of our congregation:

- 2.1. Love for the poor and commitment on their behalf was inherited by the Congregation as part of our Charism from the time of St. Louis de Montfort, our founder. (Montfort started a school for the poor of Jesus Christ in La Rochelle)
- 2.2. The need to move from a Charity-mode of approach in our love for the poor to a Justice-mode of approach was formulated officially in the 29th General Chapter.
- 2.3. It was the official teachings of the Church in the modern times starting from the Encyclical “*Rerum Novarum*” of Pope Leo XIII in 1891, leading to the II Vatican Council and all the reform programmes that followed, that formed the background of the re-orientation of our mission towards the creation of Just and Fraternal Society based on the gospel vision of the kingdom of God.
- 2.4. It helped us to see how we evolved with the church and the rest of the society into this new era where peace based on justice has become the most important felt need of the world and the Word of the Gospel is beckoning the Church to respond to it with a renewed urgency.
- 2.5. We expressed our renewal interest and a felt need to continue to evolve especially in our commitment to create a just and fraternal world.
- 2.6. We expressed the need to link up all the units in the congregation to create the desired global net work.
- 2.7. We believe it can change the concept and content of our mission as educators and help us to become the new Brothers of the new era.

3. A Reality Check by way of Report from the Provinces

The reports of implementation from the Provinces made it clear that as a Congregation, Montfort Brothers of St. Gabriel have been close to the less privileged in the society from its beginning. Our preferential option for the poor is evident from the fact that a major part of our involvement in the privileged field of education has been for the benefit of the poor. The type of our institutions we have, bear witness to the fact: Schools and Boarding Houses for rural poor, Orphanages in almost all the Provinces; a good many institutions of the Brothers are in rural areas in almost all the Provinces. Adult literacy centers, Sponsorship for poor students, Boys’ Towns for the less privileged, Schools for the differently abled, Education of tribal children, Home for the elderly, are some of the other areas of involvement of the Brothers. Institutions for the elite were exceptions till the recent past. The reports and the ensuing discussions brought home to us that under the pressure of the developing economies and the changing value systems of the globalized world; it is becoming more and more difficult to maintain our option for the poor.

Under the impact of the 29th GC many more initiatives to reach out to the poor has emerged all over the Congregation. Some of these are:

- ↳ Significant decisions made in the Chapters of the Provinces
- ↳ Mobilization and organization of slum and street children.

- ↳ Vocational Training for marginalized group.
- ↳ Introduction of Human Rights education in the curriculum.
- ↳ Budget allocation for the promotion of Justice and Peace.
- ↳ Training Centre for school dropouts
- ↳ Child Rights Clubs
- ↳ Awareness Programs on AIDS, Justice and Peace and Communal Harmony
- ↳ Celebration of International Days related to Justice and Peace
- ↳ Free Schools and Second Shift Schools for the poor
- ↳ Advocacy as a mission to promote Justice
- ↳ Working with migrants
- ↳ Working for Drug Addicts
- ↳ Just wages for our employees
- ↳ Solidarity network in schools
- ↳ Caring and Education for Children of victims of civil wars
- ↳ Working for the poor
- ↳ Free legal aid for tribals and dalits
- ↳ Peace education
- ↳ Ecology clubs in our schools.

Looking at what we have achieved so far, we can legitimately feel proud of it but it should be seen only as a good beginning because in spite of all these initiatives and achievements, we cannot say that we, as a Congregation, have moved from the Charity-mode of Justice-mode of functioning with regard to our life and mission as desired by the 29th GC. Many of the above mentioned initiatives have come from individual Brothers, often supported by the Provinces, but have not become the mainstream activities of the Provinces and most of these are operating at the level of charity. Education being our mission we need to build into its fabrics justice promotion programmes and community building practices. It has to become the concern and mission of all the Brothers of the society and not that of a few exceptional ones doing exceptional things. We have a long road to travel to reach there.

4. Biblical-theological Perspective of Justice:

In our effort to understand the meaning of Justice at a deeper level we tried to look at it from the Biblical perspective and expressed our common convictions:

- 4.1. That we are living in a very unequal world where injustice has been institutionalized through various economic and social systems, where those who till the soil are not those who eat the fruits, those who make fine garments go about clad in rags, those who build mansions live in slums, those who build luxury hotels do not have a full meal a day. We are living in a world in which 82.7% its GNP is possessed and used by the 20% of its rich people while only 1.4% is available for its poorest 20%. As Christians, it is not an acceptable situation for us.
- 4.2. That the Exodus experience of the biblical people is a prototype of God's concern for a people faced with an unjust situation like the above mentioned one. God intervened to

liberate them and change their situation for the better, created a people out of them, among whom justice and peace reigned and they become God's people (Dt. 26/5-10).

- 4.3. That in creating Israel God not only revealed His Will but also set her up as a light to the Nations (Is. 42.6). The poor of Egypt are to become a divinely willed contrast society. This new society becomes the model for all societies of the world, because it represents all human longing (Dt. 4/6-8).
- 4.4. That at the end of it all, people are convinced that an event like the exodus episode could take place only because of God. The miracles aspect is emphasized constantly: "mighty hand, outstretched arm, great terror, signs and wonders" (Dt. 26/8; Ex. 14/30-31; 15/1-21). The People are energized to venture in to such liberation projects only when they know that "the Lord will fight with them and for them" (Ex. 14/14) because working for Justice is always a struggle.
- 4.5. That the "Exodus" is a recurring theme in the entire bible (both in the Old and New Testaments) portraying the intervention of God in human history to right the wrongs and show the way human beings should live, here and now as the people of God. The hope for a perfect future in God (the Reign of God) emerged from the experience of the present.
- 4.6. That "The Kingdom of God" (KG) which is a symbolic translation of the "Reign of God" is Jesus' vision of a New Society which he proclaims as the good news: "The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is close at hand, repent, and believe in the gospel" (Mk. 1:14-15).
- 4.7. That Jesus founded the Kingdom-Community: The New Israel. It is a community joined together by their submission to him as Lord. The new community is compared to a flock (Lk. 12/32); family of God (Mt. 23/8-9); banquet of salvation (Mt. 8/11) God's plantation (Mt. 13/24); temple of God (Mk. 14/58). All are invited to enter this new community. It is "an invitation to join a community of sharing and love, where security is based not on individual land holdings/possessions, but on openness to the spirit and on the loving care of new-found brothers and sisters. As a result all relationships, economic, familial, social, political and even religious were transformed. KG is the new society, a community of Love, Freedom, Fellowship where every one lives as the children of God respecting each other as brothers and sisters.
- 4.8. That the New Testament Community, centered on the risen Christ, continued to live the experience of the Jesus-community; they were described as: "...one heart and soul...with great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord... **there was not a needy person among them.**" (Acts 4/32-35).
- 4.9. That the Mission-Command of Jesus: "Go, therefore, make disciples of all nations... and teach them to observe all the commandments I gave you. And look, I am with you always; yes, to the end of time" (Mt. 28:19-20) is to be understood from the Kingdom-Community perspective – It is the basic mission of the Church.

- 4.10. That our mission must necessarily fit in to the Kingdom Vision of Jesus if it has to be Christian. Justice in the KG is sharing in love as experienced in the Jesus-Community; we cannot be indifferent to the appalling inequalities practiced all around us and at any rate we cannot be part of it.

5. Education for a Just Society

As a Congregation of Consecrated Brothers with education as our Charism-Mission, we reflected on “Education for a Just and Fraternal Society”. In a world that is driven by profit and self gratification motives, a holistic education has become a difficult proposal. The demand for high level competence in specialized skills is making the educational systems more and more fragmented. In the face of materialism that denies God, an Economic situation of plenty and abject poverty, war and violence of all sorts, communal and religious divisions – a world thirsting for justice and peace, we need to re-orient our education to make it socially conscious and holistic. We concluded our reflection on this topic with the suggestion that we need to take up with urgency “*Montfortian Education for a Just and Fraternal Society*” as a major project of the congregation.

6. Spirituality of Justice

We reflected together on our commitment to Justice and came to the conclusion that it has to go beyond being an ideology and isolated involvements to become an important element of the spirituality of the Congregation. In this regard we agreed upon the following:

- 6.1. We have partially fallen short of the imperative of the 29th and 30th General Chapter declaration, at the individual, community, province and congregation levels in respect to our struggle for the establishment of a just and fraternal society.
- 6.2. At every level we seem to lack the skills and spiritual vitality necessary for a meaningful commitment to the promotion of justice in the world.
- 6.3. Spirituality is a way of life in which we make our understanding of a reality liveable and live it systematically. Our understanding of Justice, as discussed above, when lived concretely in our daily life; it becomes the Spirituality of justice. It will not only help the society to become more just but also help us to be just men.
- 6.4. The spirituality of justice for Montfort Brothers, cannot consist of a few acts of charity or justice oriented programs alone; it has to be an all encompassing life of justice. Simplicity of lifestyle, an enlightened socio, economic, political, cultural awareness of the world around, a genuinely deep solidarity with it, selfless commitment to change it and lead it towards a just and fraternal society, these should be the signs of our Spirituality.
- 6.5. In his struggle for the realization of the Kingdom Spirituality, a Montfort Brother remains closely united to Jesus, his brother and leader; Mary, his mother and St. Louis Marie, his founder and model.

- 6.6. We humbly acknowledge that we have a long way to go to realize in our lives the **Spirituality of Justice**. But with faith in the God who called us and promised us to be with us, we go ahead and keep struggling for its realization.

7. Action Plan for the Future

In the light of the reflections and the evaluation of what is happening in different parts of the Congregation with regard to the commitment to the promotion of a just and fraternal society in the world, we proposed the following Action Plan for the next four years:

- 7.1. A clear working structure for collaboration and coordination between GSJP-Rome and the Province units could be formulated and approved by the General Council and sent to all the provinces/community of the congregation before December, 2008.
- 7.2. GSJP could take up regular animation programmes on different Justice and Peace themes especially on child rights. Starting from January 2009, a quarterly news letter towards this purpose could be published; also updating its website and maintain it on regular basis. The Provincial and local arms of the GSJP could be enlivened in this process.
- 7.3. GSJP should publish a well prepared short documents/a hand book, on the commitment of the congregation towards the promotion of Justice Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) at the earliest; a committee appointed by the General Council could work on it.
- 7.4. An audio-visual presentation of the specific involvements for Justice Promotion in the Congregation could be prepared and made available before the end of 2009. It can be done by collecting the available materials from different Provinces and editing it in to an informative and stimulating document.
- 7.5. Encourage and promote setting up of Justice and Peace training centers at different sectors of the congregation by December 2010.
- 7.6. Establish an International Montfortian Social Institute and link it with an NGO accredited to the UN.
- 7.7. Special attention to be paid to the promotion and protection of the rights of children in Africa.
- 7.8. Consider the relocation of GSJP to Thailand or India.
- 7.9. Formation programmes (syllabus) to be re-organized by 2011, so that Justice and Peace and Integrity of creation become a way of life for the congregation in the course of time.
- 7.10. GSJP should prepare a comprehensive evaluation report of what has happened in the congregation so far by way of implementing the orientation of the 29th General Chapter and present it to the General Council for further actions.

8. Conclusion

The Orientation of the 29th and 30th General Chapters has great far sight and radical consequences for the life and mission of the Congregation. It has the potential to realize our deep desire to be born again, like the shoot from the root. As a Congregation we are yet to take it with the seriousness it deserves.

We have traveled a certain distance on this road that we have traced for ourselves but to go ahead further we need closer collaboration between the Province-units and the General Secretariat; adequate resources and personnel need to set apart; and above all muster greater faith in the God who has called us to walk this path with Him.

E. RIGHTS BASED APPROACH IN MONTFORTIAN GABRIELITE JPIC MISSION

Rights can be understood as norms and entitlements that create constraints and obligations in interactions between people or institutions. Human rights refer to norms that help to protect all people from severe political, legal, social, or other abuses. They are based on the understanding that all people are, by virtue of being human, inherently entitled to minimum standards of freedom and dignity, regardless of nationality, place of residence, gender, origin, colour, religion, language, or any other status.

Human rights came into global discourse after the United Nations passed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. This was the first global recognition that all humans are inherently entitled to rights. Then in 1976 the UN signed the United Nations Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, officially endorsing democracy. In 1997, the Secretary General to the United Nations called to mainstream human rights into all work of the United Nations. Then in 2003, various organizations and agencies met to develop a "Common Understanding" of a human rights-based approach giving six main principles:

- Universality and Inalienability
- Indivisibility
- Inter-Dependence and Inter-Relatedness
- Equality and Non-Discrimination
- Participation and Inclusion
- Accountability and Rule of Law

The United Nations developed this guide to address the significant changes occurring in the international development community with the adoption of human rights in development work.

Since the UN published their standards and steps to a rights-based approach to development, many have taken similar steps.

There is a multiplicity of explanations about rights-based approach. In recent years, rights-based approaches to development have been adopted by nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and international agencies, and written about extensively by academics. Beginning in the late 1990s when rights-based approach to development began to be a popular discourse many aid donor agencies began to support this view towards development. Their intentions are to implement support for programs to incorporate both development and human rights in an interdisciplinary fashion. 'A rights-based approach thus assumes the creation of an enabling environment in which human rights can be enjoyed. A rights-based approach also promises an environment which can prevent the many conflicts based on poverty, discrimination and exclusion'. (Goonesekere, R., A Rights-based Approach to Realizing Gender Equality, 2002).

Today Montfort Brothers of St.Gabriel have begun to look at development from rights perspectives. They have made an urgent call for people-centered development, new initiatives on comprehensive development, with a greater emphasis on social development and an espousal of the rights-based approach to development. They are focusing not only on comprehensive development and sustainable social development but also on the promotion of accountability, popular participation in development, equality and non-discrimination, which are key elements of the rights-based approach to development.(Ref. 31st GC: 9, 10,15,16,17 and 19)

Montfortian Gabrielites making a transition away from Welfare Model

The welfare model has been rooted in the charity practices since the 20th century. In the welfare model, poverty is defined as the absence of a public good or knowledge. If the government or another organization, such as an NGO, provides the absent good, then poverty can be alleviated and development will begin to happen. Lots of money has been poured into this approach, however despite some achievements there has not been success with this model. The gap between the rich and poor has widened and the *World Development Report*, says that nearly half of the world's population lives on a meager income.

This model lacks a way to hold governments accountable for their actions or inaction. It fails to address governments' inability to fulfill their citizens' rights either because of funding or knowledge. This model also considers the poor as objects of charity, pity and attention. The Governments/NGOs become a giver and the poor a receiver. Due to the failures of the welfare model, peoples and organizations have reevaluated and have transitioned more towards a rights-based approach to development. In this model, instead of the poor being considered as charity they would be considered as actors or rights holders. The role of NGOs or committed groups and Congregations and persons like us is to help the poor overcome obstacles blocking their rights and give governments the tools and training to provide these rights. It is heartening to see that Montfortian Gabrielites making this transition in their social empowerment programmes in the Provinces all over the world.

Rights-based approach in Montfortian Gabrielites JPIC Initiatives

Montfortians transitioning to rights based approach have to redefine our mission, test new methodologies, reallocate funding, and train our Brothers and lay staff. To do this there are a few steps we have to take in developing programs and campaigns around rights-based approach. Our communities, institutions, schools and our centres of mission have to become the best places for initiating these programmes and campaigns. We note with great appreciation the rights based approaches already being initiated and adopted in many Gabrielite Projects and programmes world over. We see this happening in Madagascar, Thailand, France, Kinshasa, Brazzaville, Malaysia, Tanzania, and Senegal and in many initiatives in India.

Now it is necessary first, we need to create awareness and ideas on this rights based approach. This has to begin from the initial formation stages leading up to ongoing formation stage. These are created based on an analysis of various societies and rights within. The analysis is necessary to identify and give priority to the most deprived in the society. It is then the goal of a rights-based approach to empower those people. The next step is to educate ourselves on both the rights holders and the duty bearers by articulating the rights of citizens and duty of the government.

All the Montfortian JPIC initiatives need to address human rights deficits related to certain groups, communities, or countries facing abuses or discrimination. Time and again we need to evaluate the initiatives of the individuals, JPIC initiatives and our institutions. To determine the effectiveness of such individual and institutional options, efforts, initiatives and projects, it is essential all inputs, outputs, goals, and outcomes are assessed through a human rights lens. Thus we can make a qualitative progress in bringing about a rights based approach in our JPIC efforts.

ANNEXURE- I

BIBLICAL REFERENCES ON JUSTICE, PEACE AND INTEGRITY OF CREATION

JUSTICE : Ex. 23:6; Dt. 15:7-11; 16:20; 27:19; Lev. 19:12-18; Job 29:14; Pss. 9:8.16; 11:7; 33:5; 72; 89:14; 103:6; 140:12; Prov. 21:15;29:4.7; Isa. 1:10-20; 5:23; 10:2; 29:21; 30:18; 32:15-20; 42:4; 61:8; Jer. 9:23-24; 22:15-16; 23:5; Hos. 12:6; Amos 2:7; 5:12; Mal. 2:17; Mat. 5:20; 23:23; 25:31-46; Lk. 3:10-14; 11:42; 18:8; Acts 4:32-37; Rom. 3:25-26.

WOMEN: Judg. 4:5; Judi. 8:4-8; 9:8-10; Esth. 4:12-14; 5:1-3.7-8; Ruth 1:16-18; 2:8-13; 4:9-17; Read Mat. 16:17 and John 11:27 together; Mk. 14:9; Lk. 7:36-50; 10:38-42; 21:1-4; Acts 2:17-18; 21:8-9; Gal. 3:28.

LIBERATION: Ex. 2:23-25; 3:1-15; Deut. 26:5-11; Pss. 9:3-4; 10:18;12:5;74:14; 103:6; Mic. 3:4; Bar. 4:21; Lk. 4:18; Gal. 5:1.13.

OPPRESSION: Ex. 1:11; Deut. 26:6; 28:33; Neh. 9:36-37; Pss. 6:3-10; 17:9-12; 44:22-25; 94:5-6; Jer. 50:33; Mic. 3:3

PEACE: Lev. 19:1.9-18; Pss. 32; 72; 85:9.11; 122:6-8; Isa. 2:1-5; 9:5-6; 11:1-9; 32:15-20; 52:7; 53:5; 57:19; Prov. 24:1-4.22-31; Mt. 5:1-12.38-48; 10:5-13.34; Lk. 10:35; 12:51; 24:36; Jn. 14:23-27; 19:19-23; 20:19.21; Rom. 12:18; 14:17.19; 2 Cor. 3:11; Eph. 2:11-18; 4:3.31-32; Gal. 5:22; Phil. 2:5-11; Jam. 3:13-18.

PARDON, RECONCILIATION – MERCY: Ez. 11:17-21; Mt. 7:1-5; 18:21-35; Lk. 6:27-38; 15:1-10; Rom. 5:11; 2 Cor. 5:14-21; Eph. 2:14-18; Col. 3:12-17; Philemon 1:8-21; 1 Pet. 3:8-12.

INTEGRITY OF CREATION: To “rest” the land every seventh year (Ex. 23:10-11; Lev. 25:1-7). Respect and compassion for animals (Ex. 12:12; Ex. 23:4-5; Lev. 25:7).

THE POOR: Exod. 1:8-14; 22:20-26; Deut. 15:4-11; 24:10-22; 26:5-11; Lev. 19:9-18; 25:8.10.23-24.35-38.42-43; Pss. 9:13-14.19; 12:6; 14:6; 18:28; 22:27; 25:9.16; 35:10; 37:11; 69:30; 70:6; 72:1-4.12-14; 74:19-20; 76:10; 140:13; Isa. 1:11-17; 5:1-23; 11:1-9; 58:5-7; 61:1-2; Jer. 22:13-18; Amos 2:6-16; 3:14-4:3; 8:4-7; Mic. 2:1-5; 3:1-4.9-12; 4:6-7; Zeph. 3:11-12; Sir. 34:18-22; Mk. 10:17-22; 10:23-27; Mt. 10:9-10; Lk. 1:46-56; 12:33-34; Acts 2:44-45; 4:32.34-35; 11:27-30; 1 Cor. 1:17-31; 2 Cor. 8:1-15; 9:6-13; Phil. 2:5-9; Jam. 2:1-5; 4:13-5.6.

SHARING – SOLIDARITY: 1 Kgs. 17:7-16; Isa. 58:1-12; Mk. 12:38-44; Mat. 25:31-46; Lk. 1:46-56; 10:25-37; 16:19-31; Acts 4:32.34-35; Phil. 2:4-11; Heb. 13:12-16; Jam. 2:14-18; 5:1-6; Rev. 21:1-6.

FRATERNITY: Prov. 3:27-33; Mat. 12:46-49; John 17:1.6-11.20.26; Heb. 2:10-17; 1 Pet. 2:12; 3:8-9.13-16; 1 John 4:4-21.

DIALOGUE- ECUMENISM: Gen. 17:1-7; Isa. 54:1-3; Mat. 10:41-45; 18:12-19; 22:1-10; John 17:18-24; Acts 2:1-11; 1 Cor. 12; Eph. 1:3-14; Col. 3:12-17; Heb. 2:8b-12; 1 Pet. 4:7-11.

SERVICE- CHARITY: 1 Kgs. 17:7-16; Sir. 4:1-10; Mt. 10:35-45; Lk. 10:25-37; John 13:1-17.34-35; 15:9-17; Rom. 12:9-17; 1 Cor. 13:1-13; Phil. 2:1-4; 1 Pet. 4:7-11; 1 John 4:7-17.

NATURE – CREATION: Gen. 1:1-2:3; 9:9-11; Exod. 3:7-10; 15:22-27; 23:10-12; Lev. 25:1-24; Isa. 11:1-9; 40:12-31; Dan. 3:57 ff.; Pss. 8; 19; 24; 104:16-23; 136; 148:1-4.7-10; Prov. 8:22-31; Mk. 5:35-41; Mt. 6:26-30; John 9; 12:23-26; Rom. 8:18-25; Col. 1:15-20; Rev. 21:1-5; 6:16-21.

ANNEXURE- II

DAYS TO REMEMBER- FOR PRAYER AND ACTION

JANUARY

- 1st World Peace Day
- 11th International Thank You Day
- 27th World Leprosy Day
- 27th International Day of commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust.
- 30th Non-Violence (Martyrs Day) Day

FEBRUARY

- 1st International Development Week
- 2nd Cancer Survivors Day
- 4th World Cancer Day
- 11th International Day for the Sick
- 13th World Radio Day
- 20th World Day of Social justice
- 21st International Mother Language Day

MARCH

- 1st Universal Human Beings Week
- 4th International Women's Week
- 7th World Sustainable Energy Day
- 8th International Women's Day
- 12th World Day for the Disabled
- 15th World Consumers Day
- 17th World Maritime Day
- 20th International Day of Happiness
- 21st World Forestry Day
- 21st World Poetry day

- 21st International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
- 22nd World Day for Water
- 23rd World Meteorological Day
- 24th World TB Day
- 25th International Day of Solidarity with Detained and Missing members

APRIL

- 1st Prevention of Blindness Week
- 2nd International Children's Book Day
- 2nd World Autism Awareness Day
- 4th Anti-Child Prostitution Day
- 6th Chernobyl Day
- 7th World Health Day
- 7th Handloom Week
- 7th Day of Remembrance of Rwanda Genocide Victims
- 12th International day of Human Space Flight
- 22nd Earth Day
- 24th World Children's Day
- 25th World Malaria Day
- 28th World Day for Safety and Health at Work
- 30th Anti-Child Labour Day

MAY

- 1st Workers Day/Labor Day
- 3rd World Press Freedom Day
- 7th World Asthma Day
- 8th World Red Cross Day
- 11th World Day of Social Communication
- 11th Mother's Day
- 15th International Day of the Family
- 17th World Telecommunication Day
- 21st World Forest Day
- 21st World Day for Cultural Development
- 22nd World Biological Diversity Day
- 29th International Day of UN Peacekeepers
- 31st World No-Tobacco Day

JUNE

- 5th World Environment Day
- 8th World Oceans Day
- 8th Father's Day
- 12th World Day against Child labour
- 14th Blood Donors day (WHO)

- 15th World Elder Abuse Awareness Day
- 17th World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought
- 20th Refugee Day
- 23rd International Widows' Day
- 26th Anti-Drug Day
- 26th United Nations International Day in Support of Victims of Torture
- 27th World Diabetes Day

JULY

First Saturday: International Day of Cooperatives

- 11th World Population Day
- 18th Nelson Mandela International Day
- 28th World Hepatitis Day (WHO)
- 30th International Day of Friendship

AUGUST

- 6th Hiroshima Day
- 9th Nagasaki Day
- 9th International Day of the World's Indigenous People
- 12th International Youth Day
- 19th World Humanitarian Day
- 23rd Internal Day for the remembrance of the slave trade and its abolitions (UNESCO)
- 26th Women's Equality Day
- 29th International Day against Nuclear Tests
- 30th International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances

SEPTEMBER

- 8th International Literacy Day
- 10th World Suicide Prevention Day (WHO)
- 11th World Brotherhood Day
- 15th International Day of Democracy
- 16th International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer
- 17th International Day For Peace
- Third Tuesday: International Day of Peace
- 23rd World Deaf Day
- 24th Girl Child Day
- 27th World Tourism Day
- 28th World Rabies Day (WHO)
- 29th World Heart Day

OCTOBER

1st International Day of Older Persons
 1st Wild Life Week
 2nd International Day of Non-Violence
 3rd World Habitat Day (First Monday in Oct)
 5th World Teachers' Day (UNESCO)
 9th World Post Day
 10th World Mental Health Day
 11th International day of the Girl child
 Second Wednesday: International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction
 11th World Sight Day (2nd Thursday-WHO)
 13th International Day for Disaster Reduction
 16th World Food Day
 15th International Day for Rural Women
 17th International Day for the Eradication of Poverty
 24th United Nations Day
 24th World Development Information Day
 24-30th Disarmament Week
 27th World day for Audio-visual Heritage (UNESCO)

NOVEMBER

3rd Justice Day
 8th World Quality Day
 9th Legal Services Day
 10th World Science Day for Peace and Development
 12th World Pneumonia Day (WHO)
 13th World Kindness day
 14th World Diabetics Day (WHO)
 15th World Philosophy Day (3rd Thursday)
 16th International Day for Tolerance and Peace
 17th World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims Day
 20th Africa Industrialization Day
 20th Universal Children's Day - Child Rights Day
 21st World Television Day
 23rd World Mother-in-law's Day
 25th International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women

DECEMBER

1st World AIDS Day
 2nd International Day for the Abolition of Slavery
 2nd World Population Prevention Day
 3rd International Day of Persons with Disabilities
 3rd Bhopal Day
 5th International Volunteer Day for Economic and Social Development
 7th International Civil Aviation Day

- 9th International Anti-corruption Day
- 10th Human Rights Day
- 11th International Mountain Day
- 18th International Migrants Day
- 20th International Human Solidarity day
- 29th International Day for Biological Diversity

ANNEXURE- III

1. Prayers for Liturgical Celebrations

Prayer for Justice and Peace

God of the impossible,

we pray for justice, peace and reconciliation.
And when the challenges seem too many,
remind us of your resurrection power,
and the miracles of your love that happen
whenever injustice is dismantled and rebuilt with peace.
Help us to hope that the impossible can happen
and live as if it might do so today.
Amen.

God of reconciliation and grace

You promise us a world where all is new,
where love is born when hope is gone,
where broken relationships are restored to wholeness.
May we live as people who know your story of love,
and we have the vision to imagine what could be possible
if we dared to live this story.
God of abundant life,
may we be witnesses of love, hope and peace,
and co-creators of your life in the world.
Amen.

Loving God, you make us in your image

Forgive us when we fail to see your image in each other,
when we give in to greed and indifference
when we do not question the systems that are life-denying.
As we are made in your image,
let us live in your image
and be Christ-like

in service, endurance and love.
Amen.

2. Prayers for Justice

Almighty God our heavenly Father,
guide the nations of the world into the way of justice and truth,
and establish among them that peace which is the fruit of righteousness,
that they may become the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.

Grant us, Lord God, a vision of our land as your love would make it:

- ♦ a land where the weak are protected, and none go hungry or poor;
- ♦ a land where the benefits of civilized life are shared, and everyone can enjoy them;
- ♦ a land where different races and cultures live in tolerance and mutual respect;
- ♦ a land where peace is built with justice, and justice is guided by love.

And give us the inspiration and courage to build it, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

3. A Prayer for Social Justice

Dear God, you hold all people in your compassionate heart.
You see all people through the eyes of love,
knowing that we all have the same gifts of Spirit waiting to be revealed.
Let your wisdom be my own when I feel afraid of others who seem
different from me.
Open my heart with compassion,
filling me with understanding and acceptance of others and myself.
I accept your strength to champion equality for all people,
letting your love give me courage to see God dwelling within all people. Amen.

4. Prayer for Peace and Justice

Almighty God, kindle, we pray, in every heart the true love of peace, and guide with your wisdom those who take counsel for the nations of the earth, that in tranquility your dominion may increase until the earth is filled with the knowledge of your love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Lord God, you have made all the peoples of the earth for your glory, to serve you in freedom and peace: Give to the leaders and people of this country a zeal for justice and the strength of forbearance, that we may use our liberty in accordance with your gracious will; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

O Lord our God, grant us grace fearlessly to contend against evil and to make no peace with oppression; and, that we may reverently use our freedom, help us to employ it in the maintenance of justice in our communities and among the nations, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

O God, look with compassion on the whole human family; take away the arrogance and hatred which infect our hearts; break down the walls that separate us; unite us in bonds of love; and work through our struggle and confusion to accomplish your purposes on earth; that, in your good time, all nations and races may serve you in harmony; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(Adapted from the Book of Common Prayer)

5. Prayers on Environment, Earth, and Creation

Mother Earth

(By St. Francis of Assisi)

Dear mother earth, who day by day
Unfolds rich blessing on our way,
O praise God! Alleluia!
The fruits and flowers that verdant grow,
Let them his praise abundant show.
O praise God, O praise God,
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

Mary, Queen of Creation

To greet thee is greeting all human hearts
To whom thou hast opened God's treasure troves
Of joy and salvation, of hope and peace.
Thou art more fair than Eve in her beauty,
More beautiful than star-like Esther,
More valiant than Judith, the brave,
For thou wert with God in the beginning
of His ways,
Before he made the mountains and the sea,
Delight of the Triune ever plating before Him,
First-born of all His beloved creatures,
Sweet like the dawn and mild like the dusk;
Thy name is written into the sky
A sign that shall nevermore be erased. Amen.

- Anonymous, the Christian Family and Our Missions. May 1950.

Prayer on Climate Change

By: Jane Deren

Your creative love, O God, brought forth our world,
Once a garden where humans
Could taste and see the goodness of the earth.

But our eyes have been blinded
to the beauty of Creation,
to the knowledge that it is Gift,
one given so that all humans may live and flourish.

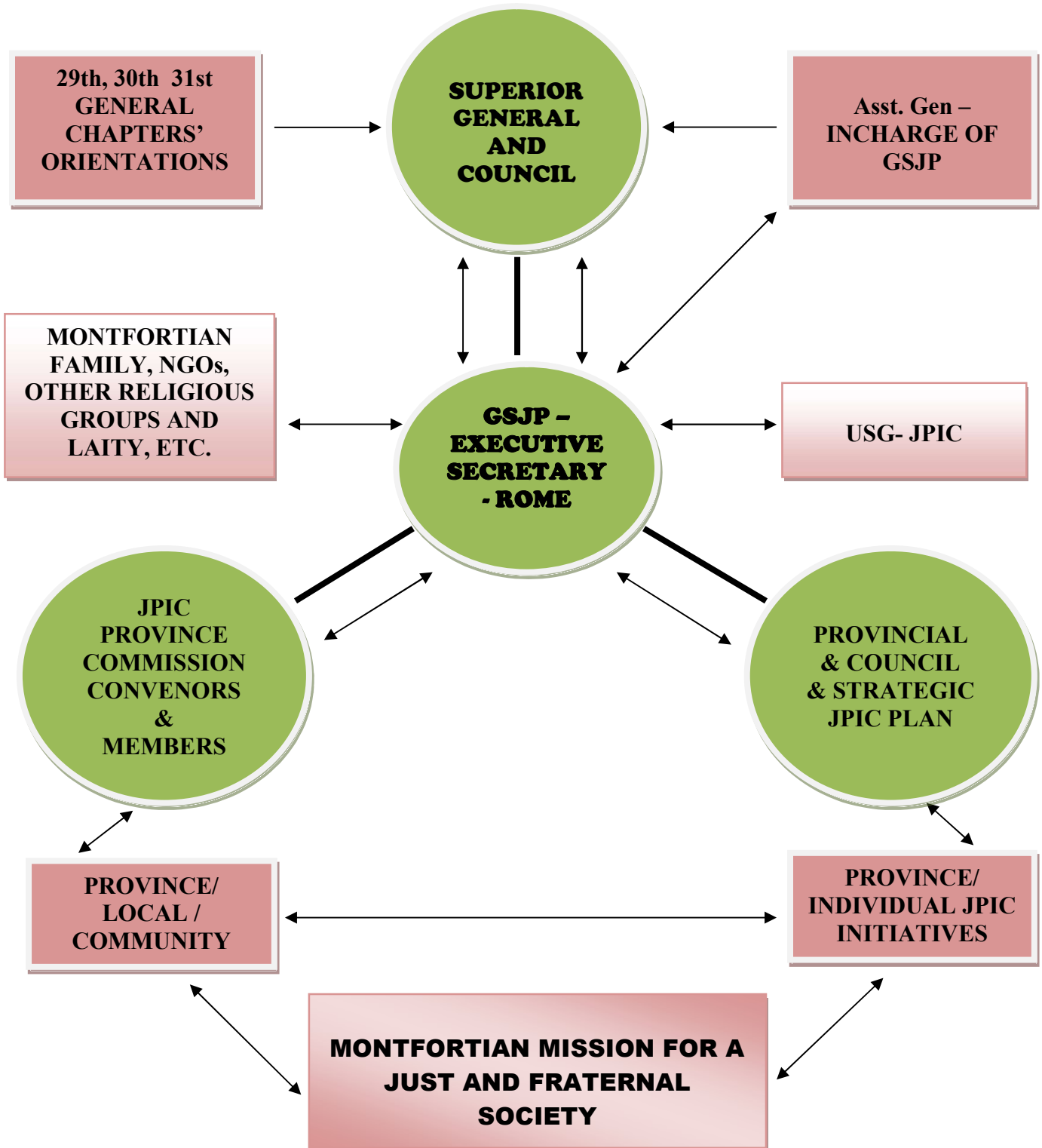
Our indifference changes the world;
Even mighty glaciers weep now.
Our disregard for our sisters and brothers
Threatens the very skies above us.
Our passivity begins to choke us, and
The excess of our lifestyles blot out the sun.

Call us to renewal, to stewardship;
Call us to solidarity to the earth and all its creatures.
Give us new vision to see the fragile beauty that remains to us;
Give us new spiritual energy to become active
In loving the world through our daily life;
Give us new voices to speak out for environmental solidarity.

Bless us again with the gift
Of being a joyful community;
Bless us with a love of your Creation
And we will glimpse your Eden once again. Amen.

ANNEXURE-IV

PRESENT GSJP STRUCTURE AT FSG, ROME



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