

Blessed Sacrament Province 2013-2014

In Blessed Sacrament Province, our numbers and locations lead us to work with Coalitions in order to be effective. In addition, we take our corporate stands as foundational in our Justice and Peace efforts.

Corporate Stands:

Cancel the Debt of the poorest Nations (I)

Coalitions: Jubileusa, Network, LCWR

We frequently advocated for Budget Priorities, which were based on the Common Good and supported the “Nuns on the Bus” in several states where we are located.

Abolish Modern Slavery Trafficking (I)

Coalitions: NY Stop, Collaborative Center for Justice – CT (CCFJ)

In collaboration with several Coalitions, we worked to educate the Hospitality Industry about the connection between the Super Bowl and increased trafficking. It was a three state effort: New York, New Jersey, Connecticut. I worked with the School Sisters of Notre Dame in contacting Connecticut Hotels. The STOP Coalition in New York, co sponsored a Conference Day on Labor Trafficking with St John’s University More than 250 participants. The Stop Coalition collaborates with Lifeway Network to provide long term housing for Trafficked Survivors. To date it has provided 800 safe nights to 13 women from 9 countries. A CND volunteers at the Safe House. In collaboration with Covenant House NY, Lifeway Network is in competition for a substantial grant to start a second house. Our Province continues to be a Cosponsor of the Stop Trafficking newsletter.

Abolish the Death Penalty (P)

Coalitions: National Catholic Coalition Against the Death Penalty, National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty

This year, advocating for ending the Death Penalty in Maryland was successful. 18 States have abolished the death penalty. There is more work to be done here.

End Government Use of Torture/ Preemptive War (P)

Coalitions: National Religious Campaign Against Torture, Pax Christi, SOA Watch

Our focus this year includes, raising awareness of the use of solitary confinement as government sponsored torture and demanding the publication of the Senate Intelligence Committee’s report on the treatment of detainees after the September 11 attack in NYC. We continue to advocate for closing the School of the Americas.

* (I) = International Stand (P) = Province Stand

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In following the Plans of Action on the International and Province Level, we have done the following.

Ensure quality of life for all humanity, indeed for all creation As a part of the *CCFJ*, I joined the **Don’t Waste CT Coalition**, a broad based environmental group determined to ban fracking waste from Connecticut. I co-sponsored a showing of *Split Estate*. Two of us lobbied in our state legislature, and many of our Sisters and Associates joined in letter writing and petition campaigns. Across state lines, we have advocated to stop the Keystone Pipeline.

Compassionate Immigration Reform Our “point person “ on immigration is Sr. Marilyn Medinger who is a founding member of the Coalition *Sisters and Brothers of Immigrants*. She reports, “At present I attend the Friday morning prayer vigil at 7:15 AM at the Broadview Immigration Processing Center in Broadview, IL – about a half hour drive for me. This is where undocumented people are brought when they are picked up in neighborhoods or at work. On the second Tuesday of the month I can be found at the McHenry County Jail in Woodstock, IL where up to 400 detained immigrants are housed. I have also done Court Watch and Public Witness. Now, I have become involved with Post Detention Accompaniment – we are opening a house of hospitality for women and one for men. These are for people who are released from immigration detention and have no place to go – maybe they are awaiting asylum (could take 2 years) or they are out on bail but their next court date is in 2016 or 17! They do not have a safe place to live nor the means to sustain themselves, no work papers nor green card.” Sr. Marilyn will be part of the residential community at this house of hospitality.

Both *Network* and *LCWR* have issued calls to Action on Immigration and our Sisters and Associates have responded.

Fukushima Solidarity We established the CND Fukushima Solidarity Project whose main goal was to stand with our Sisters, Associates and the residents of Fukushima in the face of their terrible uncertainty and suffering because of the triple disaster they experienced. The project raised awareness among American Sisters and Associates, fostered some personal contacts between them and our Japanese Sisters and Associates and generated financial help for the scholarship programs in our schools in Fukushima and for the Fukushima Badge Company. In addition, several schools and parishes supported the project after learning of the continuing suffering and dislocation suffered by the people in the areas still so affected by the earthquake, tsunami, and meltdown.

Rose Mary Sullivan, CND