

# OPEN Jesuit Forum SPACE

*...Engaging the signs of the times...*

April/May 2012  
Volume IV, No. 2

***No, you can't have faith without justice,  
so you can't keep faith out of politics***

***Why not highlight the 40th Anniversary of  
Justice in the World - when we need it so much?***

*“Action on behalf  
of justice and  
participation in the  
transformation  
of the world  
fully appear to us as a  
constitutive dimension  
of the preaching of the  
Gospel.”*

Quoted from the 1971  
Roman Synod Document:  
*Justice in the World*



Favela in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil  
(Safe Democracy Foundation)



*Twenty years after the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, the UN is again hosting governments, international institutions and civil society in Rio June 20-22.*

*See the back page for some thoughts from Mary Evelyn Tucker on the Earth Charter, developed as a follow-up to the 1992 conference.*

## ForumWord

**N***o, you can't have faith without justice, so why has the 40th anniversary of this significant church statement, signed by almost every Catholic bishop around the globe, not been celebrated and lifted up at this time in our history when we desperately need to inspire the Catholic community and all people of goodwill to seek ways to address the root causes of poverty, oppression and ecological devastation.*

*And at this very time, our own Development and Peace, an organization founded after Vatican II, but very much inspired by Justice in the World, has had its funding drastically cut by the Government (see page 9), when we need it more than ever.*

*Ironically too, we recently celebrated the life and legacy of a great church leader who died last year, Bishop Samuel Ruiz Garcia. He was a participant at Vatican II and certainly led the Latin American bishops in shaping Justice in the World in 1971. The Forum collaborated on a series of events with Development and Peace, KAIROS, the United Church, the Anglicans, Canadian Jesuits International and the Loretto Sisters. For many years, Development and Peace supported the profound work of Bishop Ruiz's diocese of mainly indigenous people in Chiapas, Mexico. Indeed, to help us commemorate Bishop Ruiz, we welcomed Fr. José Avilés sj, currently Vicar for Justice and Peace in this diocese - San Cristóbal de Las Casas, Chiapas.*

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**T***he issue of doing justice was the topic of an evening we held during this year of marking the 400th anniversary of the arrival of the Jesuits in Canada. In February, a sizable crowd came together to look at the dilemmas of Jesuits doing justice, inspired by the film: Of Gods and Men.*

*A growing issue for our time, both locally and globally, is precarious employment – lack of jobs, lack of permanent positions, part-time, temporary, contract (see page 10). Currently, the Jesuit Forum is working with the Wellesley Institute in Toronto to put a specific focus on precarious youth employment. A roundtable of experts on different aspects of this issue are meeting on April 3 and a public event is planned for May.*

*In the coming months, we at the Jesuit Forum want to delve further into the whole notion of de-growth. As it happens, Montreal will soon host the latest international conference which has previously been held in Paris and Madrid. It's about redefining growth which is, of course, at the heart of capitalism – an economic system which can produce untold wealth for some and impoverishment for many, but cannot produce meaning. More to come.*

*Anne-Marie Jackson*

# **Justice in the World**

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## **Synod of Bishops 1971**

The 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the influential 1971 Roman Synod document *Justice in the World* passed by in silence in the official Church both at the Canadian and Vatican levels. That raised some worried eyebrows, because anniversaries of an important encyclical or statement are very often used by the Vatican to re-emphasize the teaching that was the point of the document.

But this 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary was noted only by a few ardent social justice voices, who asked: why no celebration? Seven years earlier the same voices had asked: why was this significant document omitted from the Compendium of Catholic Social Doctrine, issued in 2005 by the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace?

And yet this still timely document on social justice was affirmed in 1971 by a vote of 94% of the bishops at the Roman Synod which was held that year and was devoted to the obligations laid on the Church by the Gospel itself to hunger and thirst—and act—for justice.





It was approved by Paul VI and was discussed widely in the church and in the public forum, both favourably and critically.

The challenging core message of *Justice in the World* was a new, even revolutionary way of making a point that the Bible has been trying to get us to understand ever since the writing of the Book of Exodus: "Action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world fully appear to us as a 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." [#6] And again, "... unless the Christian message of love and justice shows its effectiveness through action in the cause of justice in the world, it will only with difficulty gain credibility." [#35]

*Justice in the World introduced concepts of "social sin" and "sinful social structures" that had only recently found their way into Catholic social theology.*

*Justice in the World* was prophetic also in other ways. For example, it used the language of 'reading the signs of the times', and of liberation, solidarity and the option for the poor, although these terms were "a red flag" for some Catholics because they were the language of Latin American liberation theology.

Also, for the first time, the statement made concern for ecology a dimension of Catholic social teaching.

It was far-sighted in recognizing the emerging socio-economic and political interdependencies arising from the globalizing of communications, technology and the management of capital. And it introduced concepts of "social sin" and "sinful social structures" that had only recently found their way into Catholic social theology, as the Catholic tradition absorbed from the social sciences an enhanced awareness of the power of economic and social structures in shaping human society and culture.

Finally, *Justice in the World* challenged the Church herself to make an examination of her own life and practice in order to be able to give credible witness to her teaching on justice.

**continued next page**

These creative, hard-working and inspiring women in Guatemala are three times oppressed:

They are indigenous;  
They are poor;  
They are women.



Conavigua, Guatemala

## THE STORY OF THE SYNOD: CANADIANS PLAYED A SIGNIFICANT ROLE

*For the first time [1971],  
the statement made  
concern for ecology a  
dimension of Catholic  
social teaching.*

In its method, this Synod was a bit different from the beginning. The Synod Secretary, Archbishop Rubin, gave the task of drafting the preparatory document to the new Pontifical Commission (in 1988 re-named Pontifical Council) on Justice and Peace. Philip Land sj, an economist and professor at the Gregorian University, became the chief drafter. He was supported by associates of the Justice and Peace Commission, such as the French Dominican priest Vincent Cosmao and the eminent Catholic lay woman, Barbara Ward, a former editor of the magazine *The Economist*.

Canadians played a significant role in this Synod process from beginning to end. Land himself was a born Canadian. Cardinal Maurice Roy, archbishop of Quebec City, was then President of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace. At the time I was Director of the Office for Social Affairs of the Canadian bishops. Under that hat I was asked to prepare, in cooperation with US theologian Father Joe Komonchak, a draft entitled "Liberation of Men [sic] and Nations – Some Signs of the Times." (*Catholic Mind*, New York 1972)

That document was prepared as a draft of a possible North and South American bishops' response to the Roman preparatory document for the upcoming Synod. As such it was presented at a meeting of the Inter-American Bishops in Mexico City, as they prepared for the Synod.

The document received enthusiastic support from the Canadian and Latin American bishops. The U.S. bishops were divided, with Cardinal Dearden and Bishop Bernadin supporting the draft and Cardinal Krol hostile to it. In any case, the author was invited by the Canadian bishops to be a peritus (Latin for "expert") with their delegation at the Synod.



The Canadian bishops had prepared carefully for the Synod on *Justice in the World*. When it opened on November 30, 1971, each Canadian bishop-delegate spoke in the name of all the Canadian bishops, because the core ideas of their presentations had been presented and accepted at a previous plenary meeting of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCCB). The Canadian team were Cardinals Maurice Roy and George Flahiff, Archbishop Joseph-Aurèle Plourde of Ottawa, and Bishop Alexander Carter of North Bay. Archbishop Plourde, then President of the CCCC, was elected to chair the drafting committee of the Synod.

The talks given by Bishop Carter and Cardinal Flahiff made a noticeable impact on the Bishops gathered for the Synod, and also made headlines in the press, particularly in the major French newspapers Le Figaro and Le Monde. Carter's presentation on the then sensitive issue of the abusive power of multinational corporations in poor countries, won him an invitation to the headquarters of UNCTAD [United Nations Conference on Trade and Development]. And Pope Paul VI warmly congratulated Cardinal Flahiff for his intervention on education for justice.

A paragraph from Flahiff's speech has been quoted hundreds of times by social educators and activists. He asks why our Church's social teaching seems to have had so little impact. He suggests that this is because we have believed that teaching a theoretical knowledge of the guiding principles of social justice is the most important, if not sufficient, responsibility of leaders of the Church with regard to justice. And he goes on to say:

*"I suggest that henceforth our basic principle must be: only knowledge gained through participation is valid in this area of justice; true knowledge can be gained only through concern and solidarity. We must have recourse to the biblical notion of knowledge: experience shared with others.*

*We have too frequently separated evangelization from social action, and reserved social involvement to the elites and eventually to the clergy. Unless we are in solidarity with the people who are poor, marginal, or isolated we cannot even speak effectively about their problems.*

*Theoretical knowledge is indispensable, but it is partial and limited; when it abstracts from lived concrete experience, it merely projects the present into the future."*

*And he adds another factor. "Programs are stamped by the age of the persons who conceive and execute them. Church programs in which youth have not been involved will lack a sense of daring and courage as well as an acceptance of mistakes."*

*Cardinal George Flahiff*



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## FAITH AND JUSTICE ARE INSEPARABLE

*“Unless we are in solidarity with the people who are poor, marginal, or isolated, we cannot even speak effectively about their problems.”*

Cardinal George Flahiff

The final statement of this 1971 Synod on *Justice in the World* has had more circulation and influence, especially in North America, than any other statement of a Roman Synod. For example, the Canadian bishops issued 25 social statements in the decade following the Synod – most of them applying to particular situations and issues (unemployment, technology and disarmament, etc) the principle that faith and justice are inseparable. These Canadian church statements were deliberately echoing the Synod’s teaching that the doing of justice is a constitutive, essential dimension of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Religious congregations in North America used *Justice in the World* extensively to educate their members in Catholic social teaching. Congregations of Sisters applied its principles as they promoted the role of women in the church and in society. The Center of Concern in Washington took *Justice in the World* as a kind of manifesto. Working out its principles as applied to church and society, the Center published a tabloid-sized resource entitled *Quest for Justice* that sold over 200,000 copies and was used widely in workshops on social justice.

And in 1975, when a General Congregation of the Jesuits decided after 13 weeks of discernment to describe their mission in the present age as, inseparably, ‘the service of faith and the promotion of justice’, the Decree expressing that conviction quoted resoundingly from *Justice in the World*.

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## WHY NO 40th BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION?

So why hasn't that fruitful document been greeted with grateful celebration on its 40th birthday, either in Rome or in Canada? Has the disagreement concerning some of its ideas or wording, felt in some networks from the moment of its publication, won out over the conviction of the bishops synodically gathered in 1971?

The use of the term 'constitutive' to describe the relationship of justice to evangelization has been seen by some bishops, right from the beginning, as misleading or too strong. Their objection seems to stem from a conviction that the Church – as Christ's body – is a perfect society and so cannot be essentially linked to earthly justice, which is never perfect.

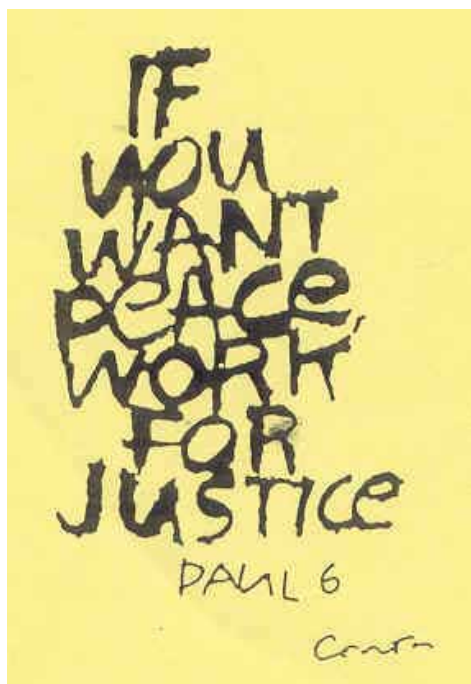
Phil Land recounts that one of the Cardinals at a meeting at which the draft of *Justice in the World* was presented shook his finger at Phil and shouted, "You are destroying the church!" But that un-named cardinal's fear does not seem to have prevailed in Rome. Popes Paul VI, John Paul II and Benedict all have affirmed this essential link between faith and justice –and, just as essentially, between love and justice.

Some commentators think that the practical recommendations made in *Justice in the World* explain why Rome does not want to draw attention to the document forty years later. For example, one such recommendation urges that a high level commission be set up to consider seriously the future role of laity –especially of women— in the church and in society. And others think that the use of terms from liberation theology still jars some people in Rome.

*Justice in the World* pointed out, of course, that the Church should make a serious examination of its own lifestyle and practices to ensure that it gives a genuine witness to what it presently preaches on justice. Such self-criticism is always difficult, for any organization. The Canadian bishops did issue a statement in 1972 on *Justice in the Church*, suggesting criteria and guidelines to be followed.

But like it or not, in recent decades the Church has been so pressured by the highly publicized scandal of sexual abuse by clergy, and bishops' slowness to take it seriously, that that one issue has, as it were, absorbed all the energy available for the risk/effort/opportunity of critical self-examination.

Do the difficulties just mentioned explain the absence of attention to *Justice in the World* on its 40th birthday? Partly, perhaps. And like it or not, Canadian culture has been shifting to the right; enthusiasm for social change is much less popular than it was in 1971.



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# Development and Peace: a rich response to *Justice in the World*

The Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace (CCODP) was born of the papal encyclical, *Populorum Progressio*. However, the organization received a boost and much inspiration for its work from *Justice in the World*.

## What can you do?

1. Please join hundreds of people fasting on Good Friday (or choose another day) and giving any monies saved to Development and Peace.
2. Please increase your donation this year, if you can.
3. Please write to the Prime Minister and your MP, expressing disappointment at the devastating cut.

See: [www.devop.org](http://www.devop.org) for more actions and information.

The *Basic Principles and Orientation* for Development and Peace use the great quote: "Action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world fully appear to us as a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the Gospel." as a fundamental principle for its work.

And great inspirational work it has done! For 45 years, CCODP has supported wonderful projects and programs across the Global South – programs that support people to organize and be empowered to make long-term social change. And those creative people have inspired us here.

In Canada, CCODP has built its membership and has inspired thousands of people to see that faith requires doing justice – addressing the root causes of poverty and marginalization, working in solidarity with the partners overseas.

Sadly, the Canadian International Development Agency has chosen to drastically reduce its contributions to CCODP, despite the fact that every time CIDA has thoroughly evaluated its work, Development and Peace has consistently received the highest rating.

We deeply lament this damaging funding cut – a devastating blow to D&P partners around the world working with the most impoverished people and a devastating loss to Catholics across Canada – and the general public.



Women in Nepal, carrying wood for fuel  
Nigel Bruce/Practical Action

# Unemployment: the global picture

“While many developing nations have enjoyed economic growth, the benefits of that growth have not been distributed evenly and the high proportion of unemployed young people undermines further economic growth.”

Arianna Coleman & Carlin Carr  
Bertelsmann Future Challenges

From the recent riots in Angola, Uganda and South Africa and to fuel subsidy removal in Nigeria, youth unemployment and under-employment is increasingly recognized as a potential trigger for social instability in the African region.

Africa in particular faces demographic challenges as its population of young people ages 18-34 increases and access to secure jobs continues to be problematic.

Beyond economic costs, high rates of youth unemployment and underemployment have social ramifications. As we all are very much aware, the global financial crisis threatens to further strain labour markets and exacerbate a tenuous situation for Africa's youth.

Marc-Jordan D. Degadjor  
Bertelsmann Future Challenges

The world enters the year 2012 facing a serious jobs challenge and widespread decent work deficits. After three years of continuous crisis conditions in global labour markets and against the prospect of a further deterioration of economic activity, there is a backlog of global unemployment of 200 million – an increase of 27 million since the start of the crisis. In addition, more than 400 million new jobs will be needed over the next decade to avoid a further increase in unemployment. Hence, to generate sustainable growth while maintaining social cohesion, the world must rise to the urgent challenge of creating 600 million productive jobs over the next decade, which would still leave 900 million workers living with their families below the US \$2 a day poverty line, largely in developing countries.

Opening paragraph of the executive summary,  
Global Employment Trends report for 2012  
from the International Labour Organization.

The following is an excerpt from an article by Joseph Kishore, published by the International Movement for a Just World, based in Malaysia:

Three years after the crash of 2008, “economic growth in major advanced economies has come to a halt and some countries have re-entered recession, notably in Europe,” the ILO notes. “Growth has also slowed down in large emerging and developing countries.”

The advanced economies have 13 million fewer jobs today than in 2007, with the United States (6.7 million) and Spain (2.3 million) accounting for more than half of this figure. Due to the growth in the labour force, to restore pre-crisis employment rates, 27 million jobs would have to be added in advanced countries, and 80 million globally, over the next two years.

The jobs situation is particularly bleak for young people, and this holds true in almost all parts of the world. “Among countries with recently available data, more than one in five youth (aged 15-24), that is 20%, were unemployed as of the first quarter of 2011 – against a total unemployment of 9.6%...”

The economic crisis is, predictably, producing a sharp increase in social discontent. The year 2011 has already seen a significant growth of the class struggle, beginning with the revolutionary upheavals in the Middle East and North Africa. They have since expanded to Europe, Latin America and the United States, including in the Occupy Wall Street movement that began in September...

continued next page

## Unemployment (continued)

According to a metric of “social unrest” based on various indicators, including unemployment, the ILO calculates that 40% of the countries surveyed have seen a significant increase in the prospect of unrest. The likelihood of social unrest has increased particularly sharply in advanced countries. Moreover, the majority of countries worldwide reported a collapse of public confidence in national governments. Dissatisfaction over the availability of quality jobs is over 80% in sub-Saharan Africa and over 70% in Central and Eastern Europe. It is over 60% in the Middle East and North Africa...

### The root of all evil...

An armed conflict between nations horrifies us. But the economic war is no better than an armed conflict. This is like a surgical operation. An economic war is prolonged torture. And its ravages are no less terrible than those depicted in the literature on war properly so called. We think nothing of the other because we are used to its deadly effects....

The movement against war is sound. I pray for its success.

But I cannot help the gnawing fear that the movement will fail, if it does not touch the root of all evil - human greed.

M. K. Gandhi  
“Non-Violence -  
the Greatest Force”  
1926



## Justice in the World (continued from page 8)

With church attendance down, bishops do not today have the financial resources nor the lay and clerical expertise as readily available at their Conference as they were in an earlier time. Episcopal statements come more rarely, and they get less media coverage.

On the Vatican level, there has been a de-emphasis in recent years on collegiality and so on the magisterial significance of synods of bishops. In the theology of Pope Benedict, Roman synods, like episcopal conferences, do not have the ecclesial stature that Vatican II and Pope Paul VI seemed to have been willing to give them. Archbishop Maxime Hermaniuk of Winnipeg argued bravely at several Synods that such gatherings should be seen as deliberative, not merely advisory. But his pleading found no echo in the official synod documents.

So perhaps the core teaching of *Justice in the World* - that the doing of justice is an essential dimension of evangelization - is not what is being down-played. Perhaps what the Vatican does not want to emphasize these days is precisely the teaching status of synods.

If so, we can still hope and pray that the upcoming synod on The New Evangelization will integrate into its own teaching the 1971 Synod’s bold conviction about the vocation of believers to struggle for justice—precisely because of their Christian faith. “Action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world fully appear to us as a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the Gospel.” Surely that fundamental conviction deserves a central place in the Church’s 21<sup>st</sup> century understanding of what it means to evangelize the world.

Bill Ryan sj



***A*** t present, we face a crisis of hope that we can make a transition to a viable future for the Earth community. The capacity of the world's religions to provide moral direction and inspiration for a flourishing community of life is significant. The potential of the Earth Charter to create an ethical framework for sustainable development plans and practices is considerable. Together they may provide a comprehensive grounding for creating a common future.

Mary Evelyn Tucker  
Senior Lecturer and Senior Research Scholar at Yale University

## Mary Evelyn Tucker on religions and the Earth Charter



There is a growing recognition that cultural and religious values have a significant role to play in helping to shape a sustainable future. While religions have their problematic dimensions, including intolerance, dogmatism, and fundamentalism, they also have served as wellsprings of wisdom, as sources of moral inspiration, and as containers of transforming ritual practices. Thus they tend to be both conservators of continuity and agents of change...

It is thus at a moment of immense significance for the future of life on the planet that the world's religions may be of assistance as they move into their ecological phase. The common set of values for human-Earth flourishing identified from the Harvard conference series on World Religions and Ecology can be seen as compatible with the ethical principles of the Earth Charter.

The Earth Charter was developed over almost a decade through an extensive process of international consultation, with contributions from over five thousand people. It was created as a follow-up to the 1992 Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro.

The Earth Charter's key components are: 1) cosmological context; 2) ecological integrity; 3) social equity; 4) economic justice; 5) democracy; 6) non-violence and peace.

Excerpt from the preface to a  
Unesco's **Exploring Synergies between Faith Values  
and Education for Sustainable Development**

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