

Weekly re:Cap



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Franciscan Province of St. Joseph
Contact: TL Michael Auman, Editor
1927 N. Fourth St., Milwaukee WI 53212
414.803.4449; Email: TLAuman@thecapuchins.org
On the web at: <http://sjpcommunications.org>

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U.S. Franciscans call on government to reverse refugee policy

"We stand with our refugee brothers and sisters and all those who are seeking protection. Providing protection to people seeking safety is one of our nation's proudest and longest standing traditions which we are morally obligated to uphold. This action goes back on America's promise to refugees and abdicates America's leadership role on human rights."

"The Gospels call us to welcome the stranger, so as people of faith, we advocate and support the rights and dignity of all people, especially immigrants and refugees. The United States was built by immigrants and we must continue to protect our immigrant and refugee sisters and brothers and keep families together." said Patrick Carolan, executive director Franciscan Action Network.



By effectively stopping the resettlement of Syrian refugees and narrowly preferencing religious minorities, this announcement is tantamount to the Muslim ban that was threatened during the presidential campaign. This is a clear case of religious discrimination and must be decried as such, which is why the Franciscan Action Network established Franciscan Commitment for Resistance of Muslim registry, which currently has over 1,000 individual signers and one religious community with over 1,000 members.

Reflections from Chiapas

by Vito Martinez



Vito Martinez

Walking in a downpour of rain, with only a tarp to cover me, I followed the local deacon and the village elder on the 20 minute walk to the chapel where everyone was waiting. Trying to avoid large puddles of water, I realized that this journey in the mountains of Chiapas was similar to the many stories I'd heard from missionaries who worked in Panama and Nicaragua. This small village called Unanliltik, about an hour's ride from San Andres, was more than just a CTU course for some M.Div. requirement. Rather, this cold, rainy journey we were making was a way to follow in the footsteps of the indigenous in Mexico, but also the footsteps of many missionaries who've dedicated their lives in accompanying these communities that represent the poorest of the poor in our world.

Since January 19th, I have been in Chiapas, Mexico as part of a inter-cultural course. Taught by Michal Andraos, a CTU faculty member who has extensive experience of the region and its history, offered this class to five students (including me) and two other theologians interested in the experience of the church. The days

here were less about being in a classroom, but about having an experience within the context of a region that has seen extreme poverty, oppression, corruption, and cultural extinction.



In the two weeks of being here, I had the opportunity to hear first-hand about the unique pastoral plan of Bishop Samuel Ruiz, whom the indigenous refer to as *Tatik Samuel*. Each day we were able to experience a different way of doing ecclesiology and missiology that sought to maintain the cultural dignity of the indigenous population in the Diocese of San Cristobal de las Casas. The structure of the deacons and the *catequistas* not only allowed people to take ownership of their faith in a region where they saw priests only a few times a year, but these people were called forth and supported by discernment and support of the local community. El deacono (and his wife) are not only responsible for the local church, but for the needs of the community.

While many lessons have been learned in my time here, the greatest metaphor that I have reflected on has been the role of the grandparent. In *theologica india*, the wisdom, guidance, and experience of the grandparents play an important role in the ongoing life of the people. My own grandparents had a large impact on my vocation as well as my involvement in latino ministry. And as the rector of the seminary in Chiapas said in a reflection, many of us are grandchildren of Vatican II. As the indigenous people continue to face new challenges to their culture and livelihood, they rely on the wisdom of their grandparents to provide guiding voice in the issues of the present.



The long, rainy walk to the little chapel was one of many transformative experiences of encountering the church of the poor. In spite of their poverty, we were fed a banquet of beans and rice with homemade tortillas and freshly picked coffee. Instead of faces of sadness, we shared laughter even when it had to be translated from English to Spanish to Tso'sil. And when we arrived at the chapel and the Mass began, we were invited to reflect on the scriptures for this small community who had gathered in this small, wooden chapel with a tin roof.

1996 SLS alumnus thanks the province!

By Tobias Harkleroad



Tobias Harkleroad

I write today, as I have done before, to express how grateful I am to the Capuchins for the way that my life has been changed because of your dedication to formation and education. I also write to remind you that the decisions that the province has repeatedly made to put faith in the unknown in preserving ministries like SLS has not only benefitted me personally, but benefits the hundreds of families in the nation's capital that are touched every day by the ministry of Saint Francis International School.

I continue my own Franciscan journey started 25 years ago at Calvary, just this month I began formation as a Secular Franciscan in St. Conrad of Parzham Fraternity. I was deeply moved when I looked down to see that my formation manual was written by



Lester Bach. Even now, my Franciscan journey continues to be led by the Capuchins of the Province of St. Joseph.

We started Saint Francis International School here at St. Camillus for many of the same reasons that immigrants founded the schools I had attended as a child. We started SFIS because, like those parishioners who preserved Catholic schools for me growing up, our parish and St. Mark's Parish believed we had an obligation to ensure that the unique gifts of Catholic education survive for more generations in this community. And, we started SFIS because we believe, like the thousands of benefactors who supported my high school education, that high quality Catholic schools are for everyone.



Free concert at St. Francis Parish, Milwaukee

Don't miss this opportunity to welcome this extraordinary musical ensemble on their very first visit to the United States! Created by Teresa Paz and Aland López in 1994, Ars Longa is an important promoter of the interpretation of early music in Cuba. The music of the colonial period in the Americas occupies an important place in its repertoire. This 16 member ensemble has toured widely throughout Europe and South America, and performs on instruments including: viola da gamba, flautas dulces, chirimías, sacabuche, bajón, Baroque guitar, and harpsichord. The free concert will be held on 17 February at 6:30 pm, with a reception following.



Social justice is an underlying principle for peaceful and prosperous coexistence within and among nations. We uphold the principles of social justice when we promote gender equality or the rights of indigenous peoples and migrants. We advance social justice when we remove barriers that people face because of gender, age, race, ethnicity, religion, culture or disability.

The United Nations General Assembly proclaimed **20 February** as World Day of Social Justice in 2007, inviting member states to devote the day to promoting national activities in accordance with the objectives and goals of the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly. Observance of World Day of Social Justice should support efforts of the international community in poverty eradication, the promotion of full employment and decent work, gender equity and access to social well-being and justice for all.



Ben Markwell recently underwent bypass surgery.

Burton Babcock (Joseph Babcock's father) has improved since being hospitalized.

John J. Celichowski (father of John Celichowski) was hospitalized following an apparent stroke.

Kathryn Mulvey (sister of Jim and Tom Zelinski) has entered hospice care.

The Mato, Blaze and Steffoff Families want to express our gratitude for all the prayers, cards and masses offered for the death of our mother, Dorothy Mato. Your compassion and prayers have made this journey passable for our entire family. We are blessed for the caring friends that surround us.

Happy St. Valentine's Day!



FEBRUARIE



- 8 **Mary Ghesquirere (B)**
- 9 **Wellness Video/Zoom Conference**
- 12 **Paul Craig (B)**
- 13 **Keith Clark (B)**
Brian Braun (B)
Development Video Conference
- 14 **Valentine (F)**
John Willger (B)
Harlan Swift (B)
- 15 **Chapter Prep Video Conference**
Provincial Review Board
- 15-16 **Prov Council, Milwaukee**
- 16 **Michael Crosby (B)**
Arthur Cooney (B)
- 17 **Michael Bertram (B)**
John Gau (B)
Development Video Conference



February 8: International Day of Prayer and Awareness against Human Trafficking

"Human trafficking is an open wound on the body of contemporary society, a scourge upon the body of Christ. It is a crime against humanity." ~ Pope Francis



The Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace and the International Union of Superiors General has designated February 8 as an annual day of prayer and awareness against human trafficking. February 8 is the feast day of St. Josephine Bakhita, who was kidnapped as a child and sold into slavery in Sudan and Italy. Once Josephine was freed, she became a Canossian nun and dedicated her life to sharing her testament of deliverance from slavery and comforting the poor and suffering. She was declared a saint in 2000.

On February 8, Catholics all over the world are encouraged to host or attend prayer services to create greater awareness about this phenomenon. Through prayer, we not only reflect on the experiences of those that have suffered through this affront to human dignity, but also comfort, strengthen, and help empower survivors.