

Just Us Parishioners

An Occasional Publication of Christ the King
Social Justice Committee

October 2007

CHRISTMAS IN JULY IN PORT-AU-PRINCE, HAITI

Dear Members of Christ the King,

I'm happy to tell you that the duffel bags full of toys, shoes, and school supplies you donated at Christmastime arrived safe and sound in Port-au-Prince, Haiti on July 23rd. Christ the King member and American Airlines flight attendant, Suzanne Rudiger, used her experience and connections to get the heavy bags all the way to Haiti. She linked up with Wadner Pierre, the What If? Foundation's Education Coordinator, at the airport and he got the bags through customs and to St. Clare's Church. I arrived a few hours later and could see the excitement on everyone's faces to have these wonderful gifts for the children.

The gifts were distributed at our Summer Camp, where 450 children gather for 6 weeks of arts & crafts classes. On the days I visited, they were learning how to sew, weave baskets, make belts, crochet hats, do embroidery, calligraphy, and make paper flowers. It was beautifully run and I could tell the children were so happy to be there a calm and healthy respite from their very difficult lives. Camp runs from 9 2pm and towards the end of that time, they receive a hot, delicious meal made by the cooks of our food program. Most of these children have little to no toys to play with, so when your beanie babies, matchbox cars, and other toys were passed out, you can imagine how precious they became. The shoes were also a huge hit, as the roads are rugged and most families don't have the money to buy shoes very often.

The school supplies you sent were passed out at a special party to celebrate the students in the What If? Foundation education program. We pay the tuition for 104 students who otherwise would not be able to attend school. They were thrilled to receive the pencils, pens, and other goodies! Our education coordinators gave the three students with the highest grades in their school the beautiful backpacks you sent. It was a wonderful celebration!

In a country where day-to-day survival is on the minds of most people, your love and generosity brought sunshine and solidarity to the children we serve in the St. Clare's neighborhood. Thank you so much for all your efforts to make Christmas in July a reality. Fr. Jean-Juste sends his greetings and gratitude to all of you!

Love, Margaret Trost, President, What If? Foundation

EMAIL MESSAGE FROM SAN VICENTE, EL SALVADOR

Greetings from the regional team of Cripdes San Vicente.

We are glad that you visited our country, and we are especially glad that you visited our region. You witnessed all the daily struggle of work that we take on; and we hope that you come next year. We hoped that it motivated you to share the daily struggle our community goes through.

We have experienced some incidents and we hope to unite the solidarity between the international community and Cripdes San Vicente. With the struggle we go through we also know that in the U.S. you struggle against the government and its' policies, especially immigration.

Another thing in politics is that Bush is ordering Toni Sacas to quiet the people in regard to the neo-liberal politics of the government creating repression, similar to what happened years ago. For this reason we need to put our efforts together. We will send a letter to the government of El Salvador to repudiate all the injustices against the people.

Good Wishes from all the regional team of San Vicente.
Long live the organized struggle and international solidarity.

Social Justice Up Coming Events

November 3& 4 **Christmas Collection Sign-up**

December 1 & 2 **San Carlos Sales**

January 26& 27 **January Collection**

Fair Trades Sales

October 20 & 21
November 17 & 18
December 15 & 16

PRESENTE! SOAW, CTK, & POWER OF THE PEOPLE

SOA Watch, founded by **Maryknoll Priest Father Roy Bourgeois**, is a nonviolent grassroots movement that stands in solidarity with the people of Latin America and the Caribbean and works to close the School of the Americas and to change oppressive U.S. foreign policy that the SOA/WHINSEC represents. The members of SOA Watch are inspired by their brothers and sisters in Central and South America who struggle for economic and social justice.

Christ the King Social Justice Committee provides activists that support the efforts to close the School of the Americas/Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation.

CTK has participated in the work of trying to close the SOA in two principal ways: For the past eleven years parishioners have flown to Columbus, Georgia, to join more than thousands (over 20,000 in 2006) of marchers in the peaceful, nonviolent funeral procession as the list of victims who were killed at the hands of SOA graduates are chanted. Social Justice members also contact local U.S. Congress Members to advocate for cutting funds for the school that has trained dictators, military officers, and police in torture, death squads, and human rights abuses.

This year's three days of taking a stand for justice will be November 16-18, 2007, at Fort Benning, Georgia, ninety miles from Atlanta. At least one member of the parish plans to be there and hopefully others will consider joining her. "Each year the crowd grows larger and younger—as the number of college students increases," reports **Gwen Watson**, a participant for 13 straight years. "The young people who know about the atrocities want to register their opposition and show solidarity for the victims," added **Alan and Loretta Edmonson**, CTK Just Faith Graduates who accompanied high schoolers to Fort Benning last year. Members of CTK Social Justice Committee held letter-writing and phone-call campaigns urging local U.S. Representatives **Ellen Tauscher, George Miller, and Jerry McNerney** to vote for a Congressional Amendment that would have cut funding for the SOA/WHINSEC. The good news is that all three of our Representatives voted in favor of this amendment introduced by **Jim McGovern of Massachusetts** and **John Lewis** of Georgia! Let's send them our thanks. The bad news is that it failed by only six votes! For more information, check out WWW.SOAW.ORG; or contact Gwen Watson at 925-930-9965.

WHAT IS FAIR TRADE?

Fair trade means that producers receive a fair price for their product. But fair trade goes beyond a simple economic transaction. Fair Trade promotes sustainable solutions to poverty reduction which take into account community development, gender equity, and protections for the environment. To obtain fair trade certification, a product must meet certain strict criteria, which are independently monitored. There are seven central principles of fair trade:

- Producers receive a fair price for their product or labor;
- No forced labor or exploitative child labor, and working conditions are healthy and safe;
- Producers and buyers develop direct, long-term relationships;
- Producers have access to credit and technical assistance;
- Sustainable and environmentally-friendly techniques are encouraged;
- Equal employment opportunities for all are provided;
- Workers and producers are organized into cooperatives or associations that are transparent, accountable, and democratic.



Look for the **Fair Trade Certified** label whenever you buy coffee, tea or cocoa. It ensures that the farmers who grew them are receiving a fair price for their crops.

DID YOU KNOW???

There is a U.S. Plant, **Kimberly-Clark** operating in the Northern region in El Salvador that is sending its production waste into the Rio Sucio, a river depended upon many communities in the area for food and water. Some of the products that Kimberly-Clark produces are: Kleenex, Bath Tissue, Huggie Diapers, Skin Care products, Cleansing Wipes.