



Poverty Awareness Day

May 1, 2008

Feast of St. Joseph the Worker

Our name, Sisters of Saint Joseph, reminds us to serve others by our lives with the same care and concern with which Joseph served Jesus and Mary. (SSJ Constitutions)

Background: In April 2007, an international gathering of Sisters of St. Joseph involved in Peace and Justice work took place in LePuy to explore ways we can “act more as one” as a global Joseph Family to address the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). At that meeting four MDGs were identified as priorities, one of which addresses global poverty: MDG #1. In September, 2007 the CSSJ Justice Ministers from the U.S. Federation met to continue the work that was begun in LePuy. As a result of that planning we agreed “to act as one” in designating May 1st as a Federation Poverty Awareness Day. A prayer service has been provided for all the congregations in the Federation to use. The Commission for Justice is recommending the fourfold corporate action noted below as well as some suggestions for individual actions as ways for us to implement this Poverty Awareness Day. It is our hope that this Corporate Action and the advertising of it in whatever way fits your circumstances (parish bulletin, etc.) will raise awareness of the issue of global poverty as we pray and advocate for its eradication as a congregation on the feast of our patron, St. Joseph.

Suggested Fourfold Corporate Action as a Congregation

- ♥ **Prayer:** Local Communities use the prayer that was provided to the Federation Congregations
- ♥ **Simple Meal:** Local Community (cluster or other gathering) eat a Soup and Bread supper on May 1st
- ♥ **Almsgiving:** Make a donation to a charity that works to eradicate global poverty
- ♥ **Advocacy:** Local communities participate in Bread for the World’s Offering of letters urging your Senators to show support for the Global Poverty Act by cosponsoring S.2433 and if possible encourage this offering of letters in your parish/place of ministry.
Sample letter: <http://www.bread.org/take-action/ol2008/sample-letter.html>

Some additional actions to consider...

Almsgiving:

- ♥ Introduce students/colleagues to www.freerice.com. This is a vocabulary building site that gives 20 grains of rice to the UN Food Program for each correct definition of a word
- ♥ Buy a gift from Heifer International to support a poor family in a developing country
- ♥ Support *Change for Global Change* as a local community; introduce this project to your parishioners/students/colleagues

Awareness:

- ♥ Return to an urban area where you lived or ministered and contemplate the reality of poverty
- ♥ Take public transportation through a blighted neighbor and observe the conditions and people you see
- ♥ Volunteer in a food pantry, soup kitchen or shelter
- ♥ Learn about the connection between Debt, Poverty and the Millennium Development Goals
<http://www.jubileeusa.org/truth-about-debt/debt-the-millennium-development-goals.html>
- ♥ Organize an event in your parish/school/ministry around global poverty.

Our hope for this century is a world envisioned by the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. Imagine that, by the year 2015 in a world where 1 billion people try to exist on less than \$2 a day-- Poverty and hunger around the world will be cut in half. (<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals>)