



Update: May, 2016

WELCOME TO THE CONGREGATION OF MARY!

UNANIMA now has 21 member congregations. Our new member, the Marist sisters (SM), will tell you their own story:

The Marist Sisters are a small international Congregation, present in fourteen countries around the world – in Europe, South America, North America and Africa, Asia and the Pacific. Originated in post-Revolution France, it was born of a simple idea: a religious family, bearing the name of Mary, who would live her spirit, aspiring - *to think, to judge, to feel, to act as Mary*. (Jean-Claude Colin, Founder)

Their two founders, Jean-Claude Colin and Jeanne-Marie Chavoin, had a deep sense of God's call to be *instruments of divine mercy*, bringing healing, reconciliation, respect and compassion to all, especially to those who find themselves on the margins of society and Church. So there are Marist Sisters in schools and hospitals, in prisons and parishes, in the homes of the poor and

centres for the homeless. You find them alongside the displaced, the frightened, the lost, the searching, the grieving. They are involved in anti-trafficking groups, justice and peace organisations and local action groups providing a voice for the voiceless. Living the Gospel message of love and mercy - attuned to the needs of the people among whom we live - has been, and always will be, the Marist way.

It is fitting that the Marist Sisters should be accepted as a member group of UNANIMA in 2016... the bi-centenary of the Fourvière Promise to begin the Society of Mary!

For more, see Marist Sisters' Website: www.marists.net

BOARD MEETING:

The two newest board members, Anne McCabe **SM** from the Marist Sisters (third from right in the second row) and Shauna Bankemper **SND** from the Sisters of Notre Dame (third from the left in the second row) were present at the spring board meeting. Can you find your board member? Kathleen Scanlon **RJM** was absent because of illness. If they look like a really nice group—it's because they are! UNANIMA appreciates the sacrifice our member communities make to send board members for two meetings a year, some from as far away as Africa, Australia, Canada, and Italy.



UN SIGNS CLIMATE AGREEMENT:

All world leaders were invited to a signing ceremony on 22 April for the historic climate agreement reached in Paris in December last year. The signing event coincided with the UN observance of International Mother Earth Day. Ms. Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim, Coordinator of the Indigenous Women and Peoples Association of Chad, was selected to represent civil society at the ceremony. She gave a dynamic description of the climate-related situation in Chad, saying "Climate Change is adding poverty to poverty every day! If you don't increase finance for adaptation, soon there will be no one left to adapt." Here is a link to her five- minute talk:



<http://webtv.un.org/watch/hindou-oumarou-ibrahim-coordinator-of-the-indigenous-women-and-peoples-association-of-chad-civil-society-representative-at-the-high-level-signature-ceremony-for-the-paris-agreement-opening-session/4857638658001>

The ceremony was not dull: 197 children, each one representing a different country, shouted at us to take action for their sake; US Secretary of State John Kerry carried his granddaughter up with him to sign the document; Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau gave a remarkable speech and proved to be a “rock star” with the crowd; many famous environmental activists were present—Evo Morales of Bolivia, Al Gore of the US, and film actor Leonardo DiCaprio who is a UN Ambassador for Peace.

Now we must translate signatures into ratification! Many countries had already ratified the agreement (most of them small island developing states) and more were expected to do so over the course of the event. If you can, pressure your governments into ratification.

CLIMATE CHANGE LESSON #2:

Maybe we should start from the beginning with a little science lesson! There are several gases which, when released into the air, form a “blanket” around the Earth that keeps in the heat. Another analogy is that the layer of gases act like the glass in a greenhouse, which allows the heat of the sun in, but does not let it out (hence, the “Greenhouse Effect,” – and the gases are called “greenhouse gases.”) This causes the Earth and oceans to get warmer and changes the climate / weather all over the world. By changing ocean currents, some places will be colder, others warmer; some wetter, some drier. Let’s look at just one of the “greenhouse gases,” carbon dioxide. That is a waste product that we and most other living creatures generate from breaking down our food (or from burning fossil fuels). Luckily, much of that waste carbon dioxide is taken up by plants, which use it in the process of photosynthesis to make food, in the remarkable “carbon cycle.” So unless everyone agrees to stop breathing (not an option we are recommending!) there are a couple of ways to address the warming of the planet: we can stop emitting so much carbon by not burning fossil fuels, or we can plant more trees to take up the carbon.

Instead we are quickly cutting down the huge tropical forests, called the

“lungs” of the planet. But unlike our lungs, they take in the waste carbon dioxide, make it into sugar, and release our life-giving oxygen as their own waste product! We are also destroying wetlands with their plants, and polluting the oceans with their plants. The fewer the plants, the more carbon dioxide. We aren’t thinking, are we?

REPORT ON CSW:

*UNANIMA intern Jean Quinn **DW** won the lottery for the single ticket we got for the opening session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW).*

Here is her report in her own words:

Ban Ki-moon said to the thousands of women gathered “You inspire me; you empower me, and I am energized by your energy and strength. You are here to change the world.” He said that during his nine years as Secretary General he has appointed more than 150 distinguished women to UN posts; created *UN Women*; set up the *Every Woman Every Child* movement



(because no woman should die while giving birth); launched *UNITE*, a campaign to end violence against women; and was proud to be the first man to sign up for the *HeForShe* campaign to mobilize men and boys to fight violence against women. “I may be leaving my post at the end of the year, but I will never abandon the cause. I will always stand with you in the struggle for equality for all women and girls.”

The key message was articulated by Executive Director of UN Women Dr. Phumzile Mlambo – Ngcuka: Agenda 2030 says that sustainable development and economic growth are possible only through improving the economic, social, legal, and cultural status of women. The Beijing Platform for action and the Convention of the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) provide a holistic framework for that.

There was a vibrancy and energy around the hall during the session and we felt that global history was being made, where “anything possible is about to happen.” There were so many workshops and events across five different venues around the UN that it was often hard to choose where to go and how to get there! One example was a panel chaired by Rachel Moran of Ireland, herself a survivor of the sex trade and author of “*Paid For*,” a remarkable book about her experiences. This session was engaging and enraging for many reasons! The stories were diverse and spanned the globe, but in the end, had everything in common, and demanded the same solution: decriminalization of prostitution for victims, REAL options for women, and accountability for men.

–Jean

Quinn **DW**

A WIN AGAINST THE EXPLOITATION OF WOMEN:

The recent vote of the French National Assembly was a new victory for humanist and feminist associations. By adopting a law aiming to reinforce the fight against the system of prostitution and to support persons in prostitution, France reaffirmed essential values for equality between women and men, dignity and solidarity, and positioned itself on the side of prostituted persons, by recognizing the system which exploits them as a form of violence and an obstacle to human dignity.

After Sweden, Norway and Iceland, France commits to abolitionism, an approach which aims to change ideas about prostitution and end this form of violence. The French law includes a series of measures: support and protect prostituted persons and abolish any form of repression against them; criminalize all forms of pimping, trafficking, and the purchase of sex; develop real alternatives and exit strategies for prostituted persons and prevent prostitution through education and awareness raising. In the Nordic nations that have tried this approach, the incidence of trafficking has decreased.

MIGRATION IS FINALLY IN THE MAINSTREAM AT UN:

Summary of the ***International Dialogue on Migration*** in February: With the adoption of Agenda 2030 (The Sustainable Development Goals or SDGs)

migration has finally been incorporated into mainstream global development policy. Here are some examples of how migration is mentioned in the SDGs and their targets:

- The situation of migrant workers is highlighted in SDG 8 on economic growth and decent work
- The issue of trafficking is mentioned in several SDGs--for instance SDG 16 on peaceful societies
- Among all the targets, SDG 10.7 is the centerpiece for migration in the 2030 Agenda. It calls for "well managed migration policies," and for the facilitation of orderly, safe, regular, and responsible migration. Under Goal 10 there are also policies to reduce inequality within and among countries.

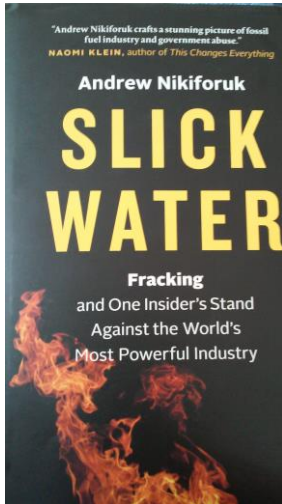
The workshop discussed appropriate tools and mechanisms that will help member states measure progress on migrant-related SDG targets. Panelists asked how can we increase the benefits of migration for the migrants themselves, and for countries of origin and destination, while reducing its economic and human costs? How can we promote and respect the rights of all migrants, regardless of their status?

A High Level Summit in September will be the first time that the global migration crises will be looked at holistically. The goal of the Summit is to create a new set of Global Principles on Refugees and Migrants—the first of their kind. The 2015 flow of migrants to Europe has made the issue of migration "front page news" (though there are similar flows in Asia). The disorganized and very uneven response of European governments to this flow has indicated that governments are unprepared to deal with such massive movements of people. The September meeting is also important because it provides an opportunity for coordinated NGO

action.

–Jean Quinn **DW**

WATER RESOURCE:



There is an excellent new English-language book on the history of fracking in Canada and the United States. It is also the story of Jessica Ernst, the UNANIMA Woman of the Year in 2011. Jessica worked closely with the author, Andrew Nikiforuk, and *Slick Water* reads like a good combination of biography, suspense novel, and investigative journalism. We thank former UNANIMA Board Chair Kathleen Ries **CSA** for bringing this to our attention!

FLASH POINTS:

- Cecilia Nya **SHCJ**, an UNANIMA board member from 2009-2014, was recently elected to her community leadership team in Rome. Cecilia, a member of the African Province, is currently the Clinic Administrator of their community's Cornealian Maternity and Rural Health Care Center in the rural area outside of Abuja, Nigeria.
- We also heard from Helen Eluagu Ozoro **RSC**, in the Delta State of Nigeria. She said that in spite of the fact that Nigeria is going through an economic slump with the new government and falling oil prices, the sisters are doing their best to continue to create awareness on the danger of trafficking. They organized seminars and other events for the feast of St. Bakhita on 8/2/16.



- Catholic priests and nuns joined fishermen and environmental activists in an April 4 protest against the Sri Lankan government's decision to go ahead with the Chinese-funded Colombo Port City project. The people fear that the project, called "anti-democratic and unfair to the people," will create social problems and negatively impact the economy, since it will displace about 50,000 families living on the coast and ruin one of the best fish breeding grounds near the city. President Maithripala Sirisena is accused of reneging on an election pledge to do away with the project. Around 50 police halted the march as it neared the President's office, and demonstrators sat on the road to continue their protest. There is former UNANIMA Intern Amila Rodrigo **SDS** in the front row, just left of center. (Photo by Quintus Colombage)



- UNANIMA and three other groups collaborated on a parallel event during the Commission on the Status of Women. The topic was "Dynamics of Human Trafficking: Catastrophe, Migration, Demand and Restoration." UNANIMA was represented on the panel by Michele Morek **OSU** (third from right)



- RJM** sister Anne John wrote about a new project the Catholic Nurses Guild of India started in the Baroda Diocese. In response to the

diocese's invitation for programs for the poor and the marginalized, a group of retired nurses and a few teachers accepted the challenge to work with migrant construction workers living in slums. After conducting a survey to discern the needs, they started providing free medical care and they set up classes in spoken English, sewing/ stitching/ knitting and crocheting, artificial flower making, and medical help. With the donation of two sewing machines the sewing classes made sling bags, cushion covers, small purses and aprons. Dresses are next! The motto of the volunteers is to help the "student" become self-reliant with a small income-generating business. They ask for our prayers.

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