**CIRCLES OF LIFE**

**Racism**

**Black (or White?) History Month** - Pambazuka News

The author traces the roots of Black History Month and reflects on its significance. The predominant focus on slavery and the slave diaspora in the United States is symptomatic of the Western-centric nature of “black” history. This trend is not just limited to Black History Month but also too much of the teaching of history on the African continent. Both Black History Month and the history of Africa in general need to be decolonized and re-oriented to reflect African perspectives.

**Food Security**

**If the world is to be fed ...** - The Tablet

In 40 years’ time the earth will no longer be able to sustain its projected population. The only chance to feed the billion who then face starvation would be for the billion overeaters in the developed world to cut back significantly on their consumption.

**Economy**

**Development aid: Enemy of emancipation** - World Social Forum - Pambazuka News

In an interview with Basta! at the World Social Forum (WSF), Firoze Manji, editor-in-chief of Pambazuka News, discusses the problems of the ‘aid industry’, the resurgence of Africa’s popular movements and the need for a new people-centred ideology. In attendance at Dakar’s World Social Forum (WSF), the Kenyan scholar Firoze Manji gives us his thoughts on the renaissance of popular movements in Africa. The editor of Pambazuka News, he is very critical of the ‘aid industry’, an industry which hampers Africans’ recovery of their continent, made rotten with corruption and the pillaging of natural resources.

**Peace**

**Egypt Rises Up** - The Economist

The West should celebrate, not fear, the upheaval in Egypt.

**UK government urged to stop 'irresponsible' arms exports** - Independent Catholic News

While the British Government has praised the non-violent democracy protests in the Middle East and North Africa - behind the scenes they have approved massive sales of tear gas, crowd control ammunition and sniper rifles to Bahrain and Libya, as well as a wide range of other military equipment to authoritarian regimes in the region.

**Migration**
LA bishops: US immigration system 'immoral' - National Catholic Reporter
In speeches the same day, Los Angeles' cardinal and its coadjutor archbishop talked about immigration in the United States, with one calling some of the rhetoric about the issue "not worthy of the Gospel," and the other saying the current system "is an immoral system that thrives upon the weakness and suffering of those without a voice."

Sustainable Development

Tunisia, Egypt, and the Big Picture - YES Magazine
Egypt lies on the fault lines of the convergence of global ecological, energy, and economic crises—and thus, on the frontlines of deepening global system failure.

 Trafficking

KENYA: Experts welcome counter-trafficking law - IRIN
Counter-trafficking specialists say a law recently passed in Kenya which, for the first time, legally defines and recognizes trafficking in persons as a crime, will help protect the vulnerable and assist survivors, while serving as a deterrent to perpetrators.

Environment

Arctic Defrost Dumping Snow on U.S. and Europe - InterPress Service
The world's northern freezer is on rapid defrost as large volumes of warm water are pouring into the Arctic Ocean, speeding the melt of sea ice, according to a new study. Surface temperatures in parts of the Arctic have been 21 degrees C above normal for more than a month in recent weeks.

Mass Tree Deaths Prompt Fears of Amazon 'Climate Tipping Point' - The Guardian
Scientists fear billions of tree deaths caused by 2010 drought could see vast forest turn from carbon sink to carbon source.

World Social Forum

The World Social Forum, Egypt, and Transformation - Common Dreams
The World Social Forum (WSF) is alive and well. It just met in Dakar, Senegal from Feb. 6-11. By unforeseen coincidence, this was the week of the Egyptian people’s successful dethroning of Hosni Mubarak, which finally succeeded just as the WSF was in its closing session. The WSF spent the week cheering the Egyptians on – and discussing the meaning of the Tunisian/ Egyptian revolutions for their program of transformation, for achieving another world that is possible – possible, not certain.

Church

Put the Poor First in Federal Budget Decisions Say Catholic Bishops, CRS President - U. S. Conference of Catholic Bishops
Expressing concern over proposed federal budget cuts in the Fiscal Year 2011 Continuing Appropriations Resolution, the heads of two U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) committees and the president of Catholic Relief Services (CRS) sent letters to Congress on February 14, reminding elected officials that "decisions on how to allocate opportunities and burdens in setting budget priorities are more than economic policies — they are significant moral choices."

FAITH IN ACTION

Plan an action for International Women's Day in support of women’s vital role in global food security -
March 8th is the 100th Anniversary of International Women’s Day.

**Congo: Is your favorite technology company conflict free?**
The Enough Project has surveyed the 21 largest electronics companies to determine what progress they are making toward conflict-free supply chains and a conflict-free mining sector in Congo. Their consumer action guide will help you understand what actions companies are or are not taking so that you can use your consumer power to make more responsible purchasing decisions and send messages to companies you purchase from, reminding them how important conflict-free is to you.

**Global Day of Action on Military Spending – the JPIC Commission** is inviting you to consider joining thousands of organizations and millions of individuals who are mobilizing in favour of LIFE. As part of this effort, a **Global Day of Action on Military Spending** has been set for April 12, 2011 ([http://demilitarize.org](http://demilitarize.org)). Please spread news of this campaign through your networks. For a copy of the letter from the Co-Presidents go to: [English](http); [Spanish](http); [French](http); [Italian](http)

**COUNTRY UPDATES**

**Brazil**

**Brazilian president's promises crumble under weight of Belo Monte dam** - The Guardian
Since the early days of predecessor Luis Inácio Lula da Silva's presidency, when she occupied the post of minister of mining and energy, many activists have seen her as a leader with an old-fashioned view of development. Something like "economic growth is priority number one, no matter if some hectares of Amazon rainforest has to be chopped down".

**Brazil Green Lights Amazon Dam Disregarding Environmental Laws and Local Opposition** - Amazon Watch
New Dilma Government Approves Fast-Track Forest Clearance and Commencement of Controversial Belo Monte Construction Site.

**Six years after the death of Dorothy Stang, CPT seeks action** - Agency Brazil
the anniversary of the death of Sister Dorothy Stang was used by the Pastoral Land Commission (CPT) to publicize a public statement in which it requested the Brazilian authorities to take steps to contain the growth of violence and deforestation in Anapu (PA) . (also in Portuguese)

**Congo**

**Congo's Kabila revises Constitution: presidential candidates now only need a plurality** - Christian Science Monitor
Congolese President Joseph Kabila altered Congo's election laws, eliminating the run-off system and allowing the candidate with a plurality to claim the presidency.

**In Congo, an assassination's long shadow** - New York Times
Adam Hochschild, known for his book "King Leopold’s Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror and Heroism in Colonial Africa," reflects on the legacy of the assassination of Patrice Lumumba, the first democratically elected president of the DRC. Hochschild traces the Congo’s history of violence, corruption and warfare, linking much of it back to Lumumba’s murder. He urges the United States to recognize their complicity in both the assassination of Lumumba and the subsequent propping up of dictator Joseph Mobutu. Ultimately, Hochschild sees Lumumba’s death as a moment that has since colored the Congo’s history, demonstrating the dangers of foreign involvement for self-interested purposes.

**Kenya**
Kenyan's mission: solar lamps to empower the poor - AFP
Evans Wadongo is not yet 25 but has already changed the lives of tens of thousands of his fellow Kenyans living in poor rural communities by supplying them with solar lamps.

Nigeria

Nigerian bishop raises alarm over Shell - Independent Catholic News
Human rights groups have filed an official complaint against oil giant Shell for breaches of basic business standards, after a Nigerian bishop protested about the company's activities.

Nigeria: 'Genuine Muslim-Christian relationship possible in Plateau'-Archbishop - All Africa.com
In support of a call addressed to people of all faiths by the Archbishop of Jos Diocese, Plateau governor said "mutual coexistence among religious faith is a major challenge globally but that it should serve as a wake up call for all to deliberately work towards building a harmonious society". He added "one of the threats to peace and harmony in Jos is religious intolerance".

Family of 5, 13 others killed in renewed attack in Jos - Sun Newspaper - Sent by Rosita Iwuanyanwu, SND
The blood-letting in Jos, the Plateau State capital continues, with an early morning attack on another village in Barakin Ladi Local Government Area of the state. The attack left 18 people including a family of five dead.

Peru

Svalbard seed vault to take Peruvian potato samples - BBC
Farmers in Peru are sending 1,500 varieties of potatoes to a "doomsday vault" in the Arctic Circle in order to safeguard the tubers' future.

Rural Girls Face Barriers to Education - InterPress Service
The study, based on official figures from 2009 and the first quarter of 2010, shows that 83.7 percent of 12 to 16-year-olds in urban areas attended secondary school, compared to 66.4 percent of that age group in rural areas.

Haiti

The Right to Housing for Internally Displaced Haitians - Common Dreams
While the eyes of the world are on Haiti's illegitimate elections and the return of the deposed dictator Jean-Claude Duvalier, about 1.5 million displaced earthquake survivors continue to live in sub-human conditions.

Sudan

A Dream Too Long Deferred: The referendum and the future of Sudan - Canadian Jesuits International
A mini report with a bit of a personal reflection by Fr. Mike Schultheis SJ, a Jesuit priest from the USA, is the Vice-Chancellor of the Catholic University of Sudan.

Zimbabwe

IMBISA Statement on Zimbabwe - Sent by Biddy Rose Tiernan, SND
Southern Africa's Catholic bishops urged the region's governments to intervene in Zimbabwe, where they warned elections would be "dangerously premature" if held this year. "Conditions in the country are emphatically not conducive to elections in 2011," the Inter-Regional Meeting of the Bishops of Southern Africa said in a statement addressed to Angolan President Jose Eduardo dos Santos, who heads the Southern African Development Community.

AU demands free, fair Zimbabwe polls - The Independent
The push for elections by Mugabe could plunge Zimbabwe, still struggling to emerge from the rubble of the decade-long political crisis and economic meltdown, into a new cycle of instability and violence. The AU needs to dig its heels in deeper if it is to remain an authentic body.

_Uganda_

**2011 News Update of Justice and Peace from Uganda Spiritual Formation Centre** - Sr. Rosita Iwuanyanwu, SND
Ugandans have gone to the polls today (Feb. 18). Let us pray all will be well.

**Uganda election: Yoweri Museveni faces Kizza Besigye** - BBC
Ugandans have been going to the polls, with President Yoweri Museveni hoping to extend his 25 years in office.

_USA_

**USCCB Chairman Supports Wisconsin Bishops on the Rights of Workers** - USCCB
In a February 23 letter to Archbishop Jerome E. Listecki of Milwaukee, Bishop Blaire wrote, ‘You and our brother bishops in Wisconsin are offering a timely reminder of what the Church teaches on the rights and duties of workers, including the right to form and belong to unions and other associations, and the obligation to address difficult problems with respect for the rights and needs of all. As you insist, ‘hard times do not nullify the moral obligation each of us has to respect the legitimate rights of workers.’

**RESOURCES**

**One Step Forward and Two Sideward** - Heinrich Boell Foundation
Regional Analysis of Climate Policy in 2010 and the Cancun Climate Conference (COP 16)

**The Lost Generation** - AARP
You may wonder why Jonathan Reed would write such a depressing poem about society—until you read the poem in reverse. [Check out the video](http://jpicformation.wikispaces.com/EN_Seminars+and+Conferences)

**March 21st Prayer Service to mark the International Year of the Forest.**
The United Nations International Year of the Forest in 2011 will create awareness of the urgency to protect fragile global forestry and to encourage a greater sustainability in its use. Please find the prayer service in languages available to date (English, Italian, German, Portuguese, Japanese, Chinese, Spanish, Croatian, Indonesian, Chez, Kiswahili, Rumanian, and Albanian, Dutch, Polish, Korean) [http://jpicformation.wikispaces.com/EN_21March](http://jpicformation.wikispaces.com/EN_21March).

**Cherishing the Tree of Life:** For copies of the Talks and a Summary: [http://jpicformation.wikispaces.com/EN_Seminars+and+Conferences](http://jpicformation.wikispaces.com/EN_Seminars+and+Conferences)

**Interview with Fr. Séan Mc Donagh on Vatican Radio** on Ecological issues: [www.vaticanradio.org/english/Articolo.asp?c=462959](http://www.vaticanradio.org/english/Articolo.asp?c=462959)

**Duquesne University is developing an on-line program in Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation:** For details of the program and to download the three pilot courses go to: [www.duq.edu/jpic](http://www.duq.edu/jpic) Three groups of religious, in India (Claretians), South Africa (Oblates) and Zimbabwe (Spiritans), agreed to test the courses this winter and spring. Adjustments will be made to the program. The program will be available to all interested in participants in July 2011. There will be no cost to participate in the program. You will be informed about applications to participate in the program in the near future.

**International Women’s Day Prayer (March 8):** A prayer service, prepared by the JPIC Anti-Trafficking Working Group, is available in several languages. [http://jpicformation.wikispaces.com/EN_8March](http://jpicformation.wikispaces.com/EN_8March)
Peruvian Bishops and mining: In a letter signed by the President of the Episcopal Conference and Bishops of the Apostolic Vicariates of the Amazon express their concern for the approval of 33 investment projects without the environmental impact having been sufficiently examined. Just since December there has been 200 conflicts related to water resources. For a copy of the letter in Spanish: www.festibiblia.org/iindex.php?h120Kja9ailbib=140&yg5WLuw17E=1001000000001

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News from AEFJN - For copies of their Newsletter in English and French go to; www.aefjn.org/index.php/past-newsletters.html

AEFJN Reports on Arms and Africa. Go to: www.aefjn.org/index.php/arms-361.html

Africa Poverty, European Wealth, Why? (EPA): Partnership for Change is a project to raise awareness and political involvement in the question of the Economic Partnership Agreements between the European Union (EU) and African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries. For more information: www.risc.org.uk/makeadifference/pfc.php?PHPSESSID=051a0d7f6b0bd5de5fbd88d62849afca

COMING EVENTS

March

8 - 100th Anniversary of International Womens' Day

8-10 - CARE Conference & International Women's Day Celebration will take place in Washington, D.C., gathering around 1,000 citizen advocates, humanitarians and global leaders to celebrate the achievement of women around the world. The conference will also be urging lawmakers to enact policies supporting girls’ and women’s empowerment worldwide. It coincides with the 100th celebration of International Women’s Day on the 8th. Find out more about the conference, the legislation that will be worked on specifically and the details of the venue at (877) 394-3747, or e-mail nationalconference@care.org.

21 - Immigration and The Church: Social and Policy Perspectives - The Catholic University of America Caldwell Auditorium; 10AM - 4PM; This one day conference will focus upon how immigration has impacted the Church in the U.S. and how it may shape it in the future. It also will examine the underlying church teaching on immigration and the Church’s role in the current national immigration debate. Panels will focus on the history of immigration and the Church and future trends; Catholic Social teaching on immigration and its impact on the public policy positions of the U.S. bishops; and how Catholics and others view the role of the Church in the public debate on this issue. Featured Speakers include: Professor Kathleen Conzen, Peggy Steinfels, Amy Sullivan, Don Kerwin, Stephen Schneck, John Thavis, Maria Mazzenga, and Kevin Appleby. For more information, please contact Todd Scribner at TScribner@usccb.org

21 - World Forest Day

25-28 - Ecumenical Advocacy Days: Development, Security and Economic Justice: What’s Gender Got to Do with It? will be held at the Doubletree Hotel in Crystal City, VA near Washington, D.C. This year is the 100th anniversary of International Women’s Day. Women’s contributions are integral to enriching social, religious, and family life. However, in homes and communities, out in fields and marketplaces, along borders and in areas of conflict
violence, poverty, and other social evils keep women from attaining their full potential. A visit to Capitol Hill is scheduled for March 28th. Watch for updates at www.advocacydays.org.

April

7 - World Health Day.

8-11 - 5th Latin America Solidarity Coalition Conference: Check out the details at www.LASolidarity.org.

12 - Global Day of Action on Military Spending (April 12, 2011): The Peace working group encourages religious to support this campaign against military spending. The world spent $1.53 trillion dollars on the military when $30 billion a year could eradicate world hunger according to the World Food Summit. You might like to consider: (i) present this campaign to members of your congregation; (ii) suggest this issue be incorporated into community prayer and/or Eucharist and (iii) network with other organizations involved. For more information go to: http://demilitarize.org/

22 - International Mother Earth Day

May

15 - International Day for Biological Diversity

June

19-21 - Interfaith Worker Justice 15th Anniversary Conference will be held in Chicago. Stay tuned to www.iwj.org.

November

40th Anniversary 'Justice in the World'. November 2011 celebrates the 40th anniversary of the Synod of Bishops (1971) with the theme of 'Justice in the World'. It influenced many religious institutes, particularly to work for ‘justice’ motivated by an understanding that it is an integral part of the gospel mission. The document states that ‘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). The Synod of Bishops (1971); 'Justice in the World' document; LA JUSTICIA EN EL MUNDO_1971.doc Espanol / Spanish; La justice dans le monde.doc Francais/ French; Catholic Bishops on Justice in the world 1971.pdf English

19 - JPIC November Seminar: The JPIC Commission is organizing a Seminar on the Impact of the Synod of Bishops’ 1971 document (‘Justice in the World’) had on Consecrated Life and its relevance for today. It takes place on November 19, 2011 in the Fratelli Cristiani. Please leave this date free in your calendar. For copies of the document in English, Spanish, French go to: http://jpicformation.wikispaces.com/EN_Justice

Action on behalf of justice is a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the gospel. Justice in the World - 1971 Synod of Bishops
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