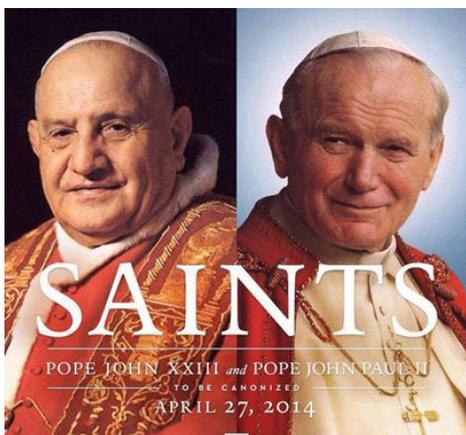




***Editorial:** This month we remember two events that marked the history of the last two decades. While the first president of a new and democratic South Africa, Nelson Mandela, was pronouncing his famous ‘never again’ speech, another country, Rwanda, was going through one of the most tragic moments of its history. The Rwandan genocide reminds us that even though in the past century the world experienced such tragic events like world wars, we pray that these events should never happen again. In this sense, the canonization of the Popes John Paul II and John XXIII represents a Christian model for peace building and the struggle to build a better and fair world.*

[CLICK UNDERLINED BLUE TEXT TO OPEN A LINK.](#)

1. ROME UPDATES



1.1 Canonization of Popes John XXIII and John Paul II. On April 27 we celebrate the canonization of two Popes that were described as “a true festival of faith” and a “festival of holiness”. There will be a series of events leading up to this important, historic event in the Christian world, starting with a youth meeting at the Basilica of Saint John Lateran on April 22. Five million pilgrims are expected to attend the canonization at St. Peter Square. *Pacem in terris* is the most important encyclical of Pope John XXIII and 2013 marked its 50th anniversary. A true “activist” for human rights, Pope John Paul II advocated for social change throughout his life and helped suffering people around the world. For information about the [canonization events](http://en.radiovaticana.va/news/2014/04/01/canonizations: a festival of holiness/en1-786607), visit <http://en.radiovaticana.va/news/2014/04/01/canonizations: a festival of holiness/en1-786607>. For the [video of the press conference](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cj-kHMQzMgg) at the Vatican, visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cj-kHMQzMgg>.

[youtube.com/watch?v=Cj-kHMQzMgg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cj-kHMQzMgg).

1.2 President Barack Obama meets Pope Francis. On March 27, Pope Francis welcomed US President Obama at the Apostolic Palace in the Vatican. They engaged in a 50-minute conversation covering a wide-range issues of concern to both leaders, particularly how to improve the fight against poverty and their renewed commitment to eradicating it. They also discussed migratory reform and freedom to decide about life, religion and objection of conscience. Beyond spoken words and gestures, an exchange of symbolic gifts seemed eloquent. President Obama’s beautiful gift of seeds to Pope Francis symbolized the Pope’s commitment to sow seeds of global peace for future generations. The Medallion of the Angel which Pope Francis gave the US president symbolized solidarity and peace—the bringing together of the world’s northern and southern regions, harmonizing them and combating all disruptive forces. Check out the following links for more information about the meeting and a video: <http://www.catholicnews.com/data/stories/cns/1401254.htm>, <http://vaticaninsider.lastampa.it/en/the-vatican/detail/articolo/francesco-francis-francisco-obama-obama-obama-33024/>, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/video/2014/mar/27/barack-obama-meets-pope-francis-video>.

1.3 Remembering the Rwandan Genocide. April 7th 2014 marked the 20th anniversary of the horrific genocide in Rwanda, “a preventable crime” in which at least one million Rwandans were murdered in less

than 100 days. In Rome, a public event was held on April 7 at Sala Protomoteca of the Campidoglio Palace to commemorate the victims, to show solidarity for the survivors, and to promote justice in a world free from discrimination. A highlight of the event was a statement by Yolande Mukagasana, a survivor of the genocide. It was also the first preview in Italy of *The Rwandan Night* by Gilbert Ndahayo, which won the first prize at the Silicon Valley African Film Festival and it is the second film of a trilogy about the Rwandan tragedy. Read about the event, <http://www.genocideprevention.eu/2014/03/12/rome-conference-rwanda-20-years-the-remembrance-of-the-tutsis-genocide/>. The English trailer of the movie can be viewed on <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eEeRifmU0z4>. Furthermore, click on the link below to read an “Open Letter to all UN Member States regarding the *Genocide Fax* and the 20th Commemoration of the Rwandan Genocide of 1994” issued by The Global Center for the Responsibility to Protect http://www.globalr2p.org/media/files/rwanda20_openletter.pdf.

1.4 Reflection on Collaboration of men/Women. A reflection day in English on “The Impact of Culture on Collaboration of Men and Women for a Healthier Church and Society” was held on March 29th at the generalate of the Congregation of Jesus in Rome. There were 27 participants, 22 women and 5 men, belonging to 15 congregations and 18 cultural groups. This is a series of reflections by the Working Group (WG) to address issues of collaboration from a cultural perspective. The first of this series took place on February 15th with a gathering of Filipino women and men. For more information or to join the WG write to: collab.wg@gmail.com.

1.5 Rediscovering the Role of Women in the Church. An interview with Sister Christine Schenk of the Congregation of St. Joseph on the theme of ‘rediscovering the role of women’ is available on http://en.radiovaticana.va/news/2014/03/25/rediscovering_the_role_of_women_in_the_early_church/en1-784687. Mention is made of a pilgrimage to visit some important places of early Christian women in history. Check out the Future Church blog to read about the pilgrimage in Rome: http://futurechurchpilgrimage2014.org/?utm_source=Report+from+Rome%3A+Working+for+Equality+in+Church+Leadership!&utm_campaign=survey+on+the+family+report&utm_medium=email.

1.6 From Eritrea to Europe: News of a Humanitarian Emergency. On March 6th, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Rome and the Agenzia Habeshia organized a news conference to raise awareness about the humanitarian emergency of people from the horn of Africa trying to escape the misery in their homeland, but ending up as victims of traffickers. Camille Piche, OMI, Fernanda Cristianelli, Arlindo Pinto, Comboni, and Felix Mushobozi were some of the JPIC promoters who attended the event. The witness given by Dr. Alganesh Fessaha and Sr. Azezet Kidane, Comboni, were forceful and the reflections by Fr. José Angel Oropeza were insightful. According to their testimonies, these people, are risking their lives on the journey that takes them through the desert on the shores of North Africa before reaching the Mediterranean area. They are faced with torture, violence and kidnapping, and many do not survive. Read more on this unbelievable reality at http://www.borderline-europe.de/sites/default/files/background/Small_HumanTrafficking-Sinai2-web-3.pdf. See also the Global Survey at <http://www.globalinitiative.net/download/human-trafficking/global/IOM>.

2. OUTSIDE OF ROME

2.1 Twenty years of democracy in South Africa. April 27th 1994: Nelson Mandela was elected as the first President of the new democratic South Africa. The struggle against the *apartheid* regime was won and one year after one of the most known and studied reconciliation process that led the country to a peaceful and successful transition to a democratic environment started. The present Government of Jacob Zuma is planning a series of events to remember and reflect on these 20 years of freedom, democracy and equality. Read more at <http://www.20yearsoffreedom.org.za/> and <http://www.gov.za/issues/20years/background.htm>

2.2 Film on *The Value of Women in Congo*. The Integrated Regional Information Network (IRIN) launched a heart wrenching 15-minute film by Dearbhla Glynn which won the 2013 Irish Council of Civil Liberties Film Awards. The documentary explores sexual violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), with gripping testimonies from both survivors and perpetrators and insight from analysts and civil society activists. It can be viewed on <http://www.irinnews.org/film/4984/War-on-Women> and <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FVISjXJPe7g&feature=youtu.be>. For more information, visit http://www.huffingtonpost.com/georgianne-nienaber/post_5135_b_3554972.html.

2.3 International Year of Family Farming

2.3.1 Family Farming Asia – India. CARITAS India sponsored a conference to promote the family farmer and family farming. Seventy five percent of the food in Asia is produced by small-scale family farming.

The farmers are struggling to preserve their farms and seeds against the pressure of industrial farming. Full story on <http://www.ucanews.com/news/india-conference-raises-profile-of-small-family-farming/70564>.

2.3.2 Farmers and Peasants Struggle in Defence of their Seeds. *La Via Campesina* is one of the strongest civil society organizations and is growing and expanding from its Latin American base, building stronger groups and links in Asia and Africa. It is unapologetically campaigning for the rights of small-scale and small-holder food producers and food sovereignty and seed sovereignty and rights, against industrial agriculture and GMOs. Read about [April 17, International Day of Farmers' struggle in defence of Peasants' and Farmers' Seeds](#).

2.4 Petition for Justice in Guatemala's Mines. Maya Q'eqchi' communities in the Izabal region of Guatemala have faced an onslaught of repression, violent evictions and land thefts over the past five decades at the hands of a series of mainly Canadian mining companies who have owned the Fenix Nickel Project. Please [read and sign this petition](#) in solidarity with Mayan Q'eqchi' Communities in Guatemala denouncing and resisting murders, violent forced evictions and land thefts, rapes, shootings, criminalization of dissent.

2.5 Counter Women Trafficking Commission in Indonesia. The religious Women in Indonesia have decided to put up a commission to deal with anti-trafficking problem in their country. The phenomenon is linked with urbanization and migration within Indonesia itself, but the problem lies in reducing migrants to victims of not only forced labor but also sexual slaves. According to the report issued by the commission, there are over six million migrant workers from Indonesia working in the Gulf area and Malaysia. Government and NGOs in Indonesia say that the most vulnerable victims are women and children. To read the report in Indonesian, visit http://indonesian.jakarta.usembassy.gov/news/keyreport_tip-2013-id.html.

2.6 Post-2015 Development Agenda Lead by UN Open Ended Working Group (OEWG) on Sustainable Development Platform. Work on the Post-2015 Development Agenda has emerged because the time-period for the Millennium Development Goals under which we are all working now ends in 2015. The United Nations General Assembly is the lead agency for the Post-2015 Development Goals. But all UN Specialized Agencies, including FAO based in Rome, are also included and involved in preparing the Post-2015 Development Agenda, a follow-up to the Millennium Development Goals. The following link, <https://www.devex.com/news/turning-the-post-2015-trickle-into-a-flood-82968>, makes reference to two items: the Co-chairpersons letter on Sustainable Development Goals, and the UN OEWG Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform of 19 Themes. (Contributed by Ken Thesing, MM, ICR at FAO)

2.7 Does Amnesty International Want Legal Prostitution? Bhakita Initiative Group, which is part of UNANIMA International, shares with us an article by Robin Morgan expressing concern regarding the document put forth by Amnesty International calling for legalization of prostitution. Although that document is still a draft and is under the discussion stage, already there is lobbying to strike down proposed legislations that would criminalize customers for buying prostituted women. More on <http://edition.cnn.com/2014/03/07/opinion/morgan-amnesty-prostitution/>.

3. USEFUL RESOURCES

3.1 35th anniversary of St. Francis as Patron Saint of Ecology. The Franciscan family is marking the 35th anniversary since St. Francis of Assisi was declared Patron of Ecology. Romans VI (the group of JPIC Animators for the Franciscan Family) has created a resource in various languages and include a reflection on the celebration, the Pope's declaration naming Francis the patron of ecology, a Eucharistic celebration, an ecumenical prayer, norms for an interreligious celebration, a Mayan Cross Prayer, Prayers of the Faithful and an article on Franciscan Spirituality. The materials are posted on the website created and inaugurated on March 22nd, the World Water Day, at www.francis35.org. The date of the commemoration is November 29th.

3.2 New resources against human trafficking in Australia. The Australian Catholic Religious Against Trafficking in Humans (ACRATH) has developed a new online education resource which was presented during their annual conference (February 27 to March 1) in Templestowe, Victoria. The resource can be accessed at <http://acrath.org.au/education-resource/>.

3.3 Weekly Lenten Reflections on *The Joy of the Gospel* by AEFJN. Wolfgang Schoenecke from the German antenna of the AEFJN (Africa Europe Faith and Justice Network) has done some reflections for each week of Lent on the Apostolic Exhortation of Pope Francis (*Evangelii Gaudium*) – The Joy of the Gospel). Go to this

link: <http://www.aefjn.org/index.php/past-newsletters.html>; then click on 'spirituality' on the left you will get numbers 1,2,3,4, of Sundays of Lent. More issues will continue to be produced and made accessible in both English and French.

3.4 New Report by Oxfam: Relationship of Hunger/Food (In) Security and Climate Change. The link below will take you to a short article and the report issued recently by Oxfam. It says that our world food system is unprepared for the connection between hunger/food (in) security and climate change: "...climate change threatens to delay the fight against world hunger for decades." The report concludes: "For the next two decades, how well countries adapt to and prepare for climate change impacts on food, and the degree to which the poorest countries are supported in doing so, will determine to a large extent whether and where people will go hungry." http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/03/25/climate-change-world-hunger_n_5021535.html.

3.5 Reports on Climate Change vulnerabilities and impacts in Yokohama. Here below find a link to the press release of the Fifth Assessment Report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). The press releases are in English, French and Spanish, but the report (Summary for Policymakers) is in English only. The findings of this publication have profound implications for JPIC work around the world and of course also for all peoples of faith. The so called green revolution is actually destroying our environment and contaminating the food we eat. "This is a clear signal that the green revolution is a dead-end, and that tried and tested agro-ecological approaches to farming must be prioritized," adds Teresa Anderson, The Gaia Foundation's international advocacy coordinator. Source: Vanya Walker-Leigh, TSSF (Economist, journalist and Environmental activist from Malta). The Press Conference of the IPCC Report can be viewed here: http://www.ipcc.ch/news_and_events/press_information.shtml. A summary of the IPCC's predicted impacts of climate change on food can be viewed here: http://climatejusticecampaign.org/images/ipcc/DCJ_Food_and_Climate_Change.pdf The Gaia Foundation's report "Seeds for Life: Scaling Up Agro Biodiversity" explains the importance of seed diversity to adaptation and farming, and the negative impacts of the green revolution in greater detail: <http://www.gaiafoundation.org/sites/default/files/seedsforlifereport.pdf>

4. JPIC EVENTS IN MAY 2014

- **JPIC English Core Group:** May 5, 15:00-17:00 at Fratelli
- **Spanish Portuguese Promoters:** May 7, 9:00-12:00 at UISG
- **Refugee/Migrants Working Group:** Reflection on Congo DRC, May 15, 15:00 at Fratelli
- **Africa Working Group:** Date TBD, 15:30 at Missionaries of Africa, Via Aurelia
- **SEDOS Residential Seminar:** May 20-24, SVD Retreat Center – Nemi.
- **ICR at FAO:** May 27, 9:30 at Passionist Generalate
- **Collaboration Working Group:** May 27, 15:00-17:00 at Fratelli
- **Anti-Trafficking Working Group:** May 28, 15:30, venue TBD
- **JPIC English Promoters:** May 28, 9:00-12:00 at UISG
- **Prayer for Peace:** May 30, 19:00 at Chiesa di S. Marcello, Via del Corso, 15

Note: Please send a brief outline of information you think JPIC Promoters might find useful for publication in future issues of *Newsbrief* to jpicusguisg@lasalle.org.

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