

## SCNY Office of Peace, Justice and Integrity of Creation Update

December 2014 – January 2015

*This issue is dedicated to Pope Francis, the Sisters of Charity of New York, Associates, Colleagues and all people of good will who seek to live the gospel and Wake Up the World!*

I am counting on you “to wake up the world”, since the distinctive sign of consecrated life is prophecy. As I told the Superiors General: “Radical evangelical living is not only for religious: it is demanded of everyone. But religious follow the Lord in a special way, in a prophetic way.” This is the priority that is needed right now: ‘to be prophets who witness to how Jesus lived on this earth’... (to) find ways to create ‘alternate spaces’ where the Gospel approach of self-giving, fraternity, embracing differences, and love of one another can thrive... (to be) ‘experts in communion’\* ... responding to ‘the great challenge facing us’ in this new millennium: “to make the Church the home and the school of communion.” \*... In this letter, I wish to speak not only to consecrated persons, but also to the laity, who share with them the same ideals, spirit and mission... (*Pope Francis’ Apostolic Letter To All Consecrated People on the occasion of the Year of Consecrated Life, November 21, 2014*) [\*References to what other Popes have said.]



**Amend the Amendment! Overturn Citizens United!** On January 21st, the fifth anniversary of the historic Citizens United decision, Sisters Regina Murphy and Mary Donagher coordinated the Bronx advocacy group trip to Albany to support the national campaign for a constitutional amendment to overturn Citizens United and call for comprehensive campaign finance reform. Several bills for democracy were introduced in the US Senate and House of Representatives on January 21, including the re-introduction of the amendment. Pictured with Mary: Joan Woods of

Global Poverty Task Force and members of NWBx for Change.

Pope Francis speaks of three aims of the Year of Consecrated Life: to look to the past with gratitude; to live the present with passion and to embrace the future with hope. You are invited to take a moment to remember past corporate stances that the Sisters of Charity of New York have taken; reflect on their relevancy in light of today’s issues; and, celebrate how we, individually and as Task Forces, Committees, and in collaboration with other groups, wake up the world and witness hope and charity through prayer, awareness, advocacy and presence.

### **Past Corporate Stances:**

1. **Peace (1984):** “...support an immediate, bilateral, verifiable agreement to halt the testing, production and deployment of new nuclear weapons systems ... call for a halt in the research of these weapons ... call upon our government to adopt a “no first use of nuclear weapons policy.”
2. **Against the Death Penalty in New York State (1993)**
3. **A Catholic Covenant of Compassion (1996):** includes a statement of U.S. Catholic Conference, “The challenge for our Church is to be principled without being ideological, to be political without being partisan, to be civil without being soft, to be involved without being used. Our moral framework does not easily fit the categories of right or left, Republican or Democrat. We are called to measure every party and movement by

how its agenda touches human life and dignity... A key question is where are ‘the least among us’ in any national agenda?” Covenant rejects five policies and affirms five others in favor of those who are most vulnerable.

4. **Christians Call for a Shared Jerusalem Campaign (1996):** We joined with others in urging the U.S government to call upon negotiators to move beyond exclusivist claims and create a Jerusalem that is a sign of peace and a symbol of reconciliation for all.
5. **Elimination of Unpayable Debts of the poorest Countries by 2000 (1998)**
6. **Racism (2000):** Acknowledge the sin of racism, ask forgiveness and pledge, individually and corporately, to work towards an end to racism.

**The Healing of Our City** – New York City Clergy Roundtable and other groups, in the wake of recent police incidents and rising racial tension in our city and nation, invited faith leaders to two January events focusing on “In Solidarity toward Love, Non-Violence and the Healing of Our City”. CMSV graduate student, LeeAnn Braithwaite, an intern with Sr. Carol De Angelo this semester, attended the January 7 dialogue and viewing of SELMA. Freshman Owen Smith (Seton Service and Leadership Program) was present at the January 21 conversation with Police Commissioner William Bratton at Bronx Christian Fellowship Church. Owen commented, “I am happy that I attended the meeting because I learned that even the deepest and most complex divides can be bridged when people confront problems with empathy and love. Thank you for the opportunity to accompany you!” One suggestion from community faith leaders that was offered: visit or write the commanding officer in the precinct where you live to thank them for their service and to acknowledge the need to work together for change.



**2015 New York State Immigrant Equality Agenda** was publicized at three January 5 area press conferences coordinated by the New York Immigration Coalition, Hudson Valley Community Coalition, and other immigrant rights groups. The Sisters of Charity of New York endorsed the agenda. Sisters Lily Butler (in Manhattan) and Carol De Angelo (in White Plains) represented the Sisters of Charity of New York.

*“... Nuclear deterrence and the threat of mutually assured destruction cannot be the basis for an ethics of fraternity and peaceful coexistence among states. The youth of today and tomorrow deserve far more...Peace must be built on justice, socio-economic development, freedom, respect for fundamental human rights, the participation of all in public affairs and the building of trust between peoples...” (Pope Francis in a message to the December 2014 Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons) Carol De Angelo, PJIC Director, 718-549-9200 ext. 264*