

**Office of Peace, Justice and Integrity of Creation, December 2015 – January 2016 Update**

*In this Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, Sisters of Charity, Associates and Colleagues heed Pope Francis' call "to be a credible witness to mercy, professing it and living it as the core of the revelation of Jesus Christ." (The Face of Mercy, #25)*



**January is Poverty Awareness Month.** The SCNY Global Poverty Task Force (several members are in picture to left) works to change policies and laws that perpetuate systemic poverty and inequality. This is one of many ways, Sisters of Charity of New York and Associates participate in

the Vincentian Systemic Change Project and respond to the 2005 call of Fr. Gregory Gay to the Vincentian Family, "We are called upon to start actions, especially political actions, to eradicate the causes of poverty and unite in solidarity for justice in favor of the poor, because unjust systems created by selfish hearts have caused social, political and economic poverty."

**Know Your Rights!**  
LEARN HOW TO PROTECT YOU AND YOUR FAMILY  
DURING IMMIGRATION RAIDS



Above picture is from New York Immigration Coalition

**Immigration** is a major focus for the Sisters of Charity of New York. In January those working with the immigrant community addressed the fear that surfaced as ICE raided homes and work places. People were educated to their rights. The Immigration Task Force joins with Justice for Immigrants, LCWR, and local groups in advocating for comprehensive immigration reform, ending family detention, and addressing root causes of why families and unaccompanied minors flee violence and seek refuge. Sisters Eileen Judge and Carol De Angelo joined in a January 7<sup>th</sup> LCWR Region 2 Social Justice Conference Call where the Network Lobby immigration team shared

with social justice representatives of women congregations in New York State their strategy to bring the issue of immigration into the political arena. They asked: that we share with them stories of the hardship and pain families and individuals face; that we write letters to editors of newspapers; and, that we participate in a letter writing campaign. Visit [www.networklobby](http://www.networklobby) for resources and participate in the Mend the Gap Lenten Program. Advocacy email alerts were sent to U.S. Representatives and Senators in support of the Syrian refugee program in U.S.

**International Tribunal of Conscience of Peoples in Movement** – first U.S. Hearings on Human Rights Crisis in Mexico and Immigrant Justice, September 25-27, 2015 at New York University, New York – thank you to the Sisters at Haven Plaza and Seton Center who offered hospitality and lodging to some participants (and to Mary McCormick who let PJIC Office know)!



**Healing of Our City, Part I** was an opportunity for New York City Faith Leaders to join in a facilitated discussion with Commissioner Ponte, Department of Corrections, on January 19 at Bronx Christian Fellowship. Rev. Que English facilitated. Some topics addressed: expediting visiting; expanding visiting hours; improve transportation for visitors; training of staff; mental health needs. Commissioner Ponte invited the community to make recommendations and to help change the culture by being in touch with his Senior

Policy Advisor, America Cana. A second facilitated discussion followed with Norman Seabrook, President of the NYC Corrections Officers Benevolent Association.

**Saint Vincent de Paul Society USA and the Circle of Protection** – Raising the Issue of Hunger & Poverty for 2016 Presidential Campaign. SVdP has signed on to the Circle of Protection (COP) letters asking presidential candidates to focus on ending hunger and poverty. The COP is a coalition composed of more than 65 heads of denominations, relief and development agencies, and other Christian organizations. As national leaders from all the major branches of Christianity, COP cares deeply about many issues facing our country, but ending hunger and poverty is a top priority. COP letters to the presidential candidates ask them to record a three-minute video about how they intend to address the issues of ending hunger and poverty. COP presents the videos without comment or endorsement. The link to the videos that COP has received so far is: <http://circleofprotection.us/candidate-videos/>  
At [www.svdpusa.org](http://www.svdpusa.org) you can also download the Circle of Protection study guide for the presidential candidate videos.

**H**ear the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor, theme of the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Interfaith Peace Walk on January 18. Terry Michaud, chair of Blessed Sacrament Social Justice Group said, “It was a wonderful event with marchers in the hundreds led by an angel on stilts for visibility... It was a long stretch to make it all the way to Blessed Sacrament on such a cold day, but about 2/3rds of the marchers did the full route and all the places of worship were so welcoming.” PJIC Office thanks colleagues it works with in Holy Name, Blessed Sacrament, St. Francis of Assisi, St. Francis Xavier and Guardian Angel-St. Columba. As part of the West Side Deanery, they have been a strong Catholic voice and taken a leadership role in responding to Pope Francis’ call to hear the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor. Letters, written by congregants, to protect the planet and poor were carried from place to place and then collected to be sent to congressional leaders.

*Carol De Angelo, SCNY PJIC Director*