

JUSTICE PEACE & INTEGRITY OF CREATION (JPIC) B AND FORMATION

1. CPPS COMMITMENT TO JPIC

The General Council in its six years plan for leadership made a choice to animate our CPPS world community on **Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation** (JPIC) as it was mandated by the last two General Assemblies. The Extraordinary General Assembly which took place in 2004, and the XIX General Assembly which took place in (2007).

The 2004 General Assembly stated clearly in its final statement regarding our involvement in issues of Justice peace and Integrity of Creation:

“We recognize working for justice, peace, human life and integrity of creation is an integral part of the ministry of the Word in a spirituality of the Blood of Christ as an expression of Catholic social teaching.” (Cfr. ACTA of the XVIII General Assembly (2004), Values and Resolutions, Value # 11).

Thus, The final Message of the XIX General Assembly commissioned the newly elected General leadership of the congregation to: *“Leading the Congregation into a deeper sense of vocation to the “new evangelization” or re-evangelization that gives primacy to preaching the word in all its forms, to the Eucharist, and to the option for the poor and marginal; Continuing to give attention to issues of human rights, the integrity of creation, and migration; Giving greater attention to the victims of violence and to eradicating the causes of violence; Working toward reconciliation at all levels – socially, economically, within the family, the Congregation, the Church.”* (Cfr. Message of the XIX General Assembly (2007), Future Directions b, f, g & j).

The missionary awareness of the conditions and needs of the people of our time and our wholehearted response to them should animate our lives more and more to respond to the signs of our times in **creative fidelity** to the charism entrusted to us by our founder St. Gaspar (Normative Texts C22). The challenges that face our contemporary society are extensive: poverty, diseases like HIV – AIDS, unemployment, human trafficking, child labour, prostitution, deprivation of freedom, false democracy, ignorance, global warming, abortion, euthanasia, terrorism, the building of walls of division on basis of religion, race and social structures, and the list can go on. But beyond awareness, we are called to weigh the issues carefully and to provide an evangelical response to them as a renewal of our mission.

This kind of awareness in the CPPS should be built right from the years of formation where candidates are prepared to integrate into their life a flexible and dynamic identity. Consecrated person today need a preparation that

allows them to situate themselves within a social cultural context with a meaningful, alternative and prophetic identity; a vocational and charismatic identity capable to deal with the essential challenges by searching and questioning those aspects that need to be changed or eliminated so as to be credible signs of a God that is always near, contemporary and capable of developing efficiently their own mission in the Church and in society¹.

2. JPIC AWARENES IN FORMATION THROUGH “SEE-JUDGE-ACT” FRAMEWORK

The pastoral methodology found in the social teaching of the Church which proposes the framework **See-judge-act** can be used to prepare our candidates to JPIC orientation of their future ministry. “*First, one reviews the concrete situation; secondly, one forms a judgment on it in the light of these same principles; thirdly, one decides what in the circumstances can and should be done to implement these principles*” (MM 236). In our case it is important not only to prepare our future missionaries to read the signs of the times by means of a social analysis (see), but also to be able to make a correct and balanced judgement by means of an application of values and fundamental principles (judge) inherent in the social doctrine of the Church (SDC). In this way they will be able to do an apprenticeship geared to social transformation (act) enabling them to prepare themselves well to be future missionaries.

1.1. Preparing to identify the “cries of Blood”.

It is true that the way we look at reality impacts everything about how we relate to it. Thus, as candidates to missionary life, it is important that right from the first years of their formation be used to take a good look at the social reality in which they live and are called to be sent for evangelization. Just as Gaspar could look at the social situation he was living and observed; ‘there is “confusion amidst in which we live in these wretched times”; “a sad picture which we see before our eyes”; “a miserable state of affairs in our times”². The Gospel calls us to see reality from the point of view of Christ and the mission entrusted to him by his heavenly Father. That is why we are also called to look at our shared experience of community with the society that surrounds us to ensure that our witness to justice peace and integrity of creation is credible and coherent. While giving an answer to the question about how would Christ himself have reacted to the given social situation, we are invited to hear the cry of the poor as an integral part of the new paradigm

¹ JPIC Commission – Religious Promoters of JPIC, guide us in your Justice, A Formation Itinerary for a prophetic Life, EMI-SERMIS, 2010, #3.

² CONTI, Beniamino, *The Apostolate of our Society according to the Charism of our Founder*, p. 99.

and important dimension of our consecration and service to the Kingdom of God. (See Formation on SDC # 6).

We are aware that it is not enough to perceive only the immediate issues and needs of those around us, rather we are called as a way of commitment to JPIC to look at the experience of the poor in the light of the underlying cause of their experience. Thus in this light, candidates in formation need to be trained, in creative fidelity with our charism and spirituality entrusted to us by our founder St. Gaspar, to collaborate actively with the local civil and church institutions in building a civilization of love. This task demands an evangelical discernment of the social reality, the identification of systems and structures of injustices, and a determination of root causes of each one of the problems affecting the world (See Formation on SDC #8). It requires a trained and patient awareness to see the complex global realities with the deep understanding that it essential for the faith-filled judging and effective response.

1.2. Trained to be sensitive CPPS

I hereby underline the importance of training future missionaries to perceive the realities of marginalization with CPPS senses. Put into simple terms, this means that motivated by the mystery of the shedding of Blood of Christ, they are prepared to dedicate their lives *“to the service of the Church through the apostolic and missionary activity of the **ministry of the word which includes the promotion of human dignity, justice peace and integrity of creation**”* (NT C 3). The social teaching of the most recent popes, especially Paul VI and John Paul II, have clearly stated, not only that the social teaching of the Church is *“a valid instrument of evangelization”* (John Paul II, CA 54), but also that *“this social doctrine is a distinctive way for the Church to carry out her **ministry of the word** and her prophetic role”* (Paul VI, OA 4; John Paul II, SRS 41). In effect, *“to teach and to spread her social doctrine pertains to the Church’s evangelizing mission because it is an essential part of the Christian message, since this doctrine points out the direct consequences of the message in the life of society and situates daily work and struggles for justice in the context of bearing witness to Christ the Saviour”* (CSDC, 67).

Therefore, as part of the process of preparing future missionaries to be able to make a social analysis of realities they are confronting, it is recommendable that integration of the social doctrine of the church in their formation programs be considered a priority; since it is only by assimilating the principles, the criteria to judge, and guidelines for action motivating the evangelizing mission of the church that one can interpret the reality of today and find appropriate options for action (See Formation on SDC # 8). It is moreover important to develop a dialogue of judging that is rooted in community life. This means that candidates in preparation for their future

community life develop a habit of judging reality objectively against what each one holds to be true and good and assimilate what Scripture, theology, the church social teaching and CPPS charism exposes.

1.3. Trained to be Carthusians at home and Apostles outside.

The world needs both deeply *lived spirituality* and *active apostles* of the Blood of Christ and JPIC is the area which might help us in this regard. Commitment to transformation of society should be part of formation curriculum both at initial and ongoing levels. In order to be transformative we need to begin with witness as an essential part of mission. As Pope Paul VI wrote, “the first means of evangelization is the witness of an authentically Christian life” (EN # 41); and St. Gaspar saw this element as fundamental as he engaged his missionary community to **the ministry of the word**. In his Rule he wrote: “*the people think Missionaries are holy men and this is also what the Church expect of them*” (p. 7). Missionaries therefore must be, more than anything else, living witness of the word of God which they preach³.

Then that plan of God, broken by personal and structural sin (the same that is the origin of violence, injustices, wars, hunger, social fractures, violation of human rights, exclusion, ecological crises) becomes a reality in our world when we are truly dedicated to social transformation. There is a need for both personal and social conversion. There cannot be a genuine personal conversion if there is no true interior conversion at the social level⁴.

3. PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

The world of today demands that formation to religious life does not remain solely at a theoretical but make room for experiential and contact with the reality of the people. This will not only help them to identify themselves with the people and their struggles, but also will invite them and involucrate them to the total commitment to their social transformation.

3.1. Inclusion of JPIC in the annual formation schedule

Since we are talking about the essential aspect of our missionary identity, in order to prepare well future missionaries we need to evaluate the amount of time we set aside for preparation to face challenge that are posed with issues of JPIC. Special care is to be made to make sure that this concern is included in annual, monthly, weekly and daily schedule of formation itinerant.

³ CONTI, Beniamino, *The Apostolate of our Society according to the Charism of our Founder*, p. 124.

⁴ Cf. E. Colom, *Consecrated life and the Social Teaching of the Church. The Theological and Spiritual significance of a relationship*, in AA.VV., *Consecrated Life and the Social Teaching of the Church, Formation Course*, EMI, Bologna, 2007, p.182.

ANNUAL:

- a) Active participation to campaign organized by local civil or church institutions to deal with social issues. For instance Lenten season campaign to help the poor; take part in established structure to help street children etc. Partner with local community organizations and agencies that provide expertise and information Use experts in the area to educate the formation community and partner in sustainability.
- b) Ecological campaign to plant trees or others. Plan Advent and Lenten observances that are connected to good stewardship and reducing consumption/consumerism.

MONTHLY:

- a) A reflection on social issues organized at a practical level to raise consciousness for justice of peace problems. Participate at adoration of the Eucharist to pray for victims of injustice etc. Plan liturgies and prayer services using the resources available online.

WEEKLY: Fix a day to make the candidates available to collaborate with Caritas or other organizations to distribute food or cloth or any other basic necessities.

- a) Plan a Fair Trade awareness Week.
- b) Hold an Eco-awareness week.
- c) Host an assembly on Fair Trade.
- d) Calculate the carbon footprint of individual students and the school community as a whole.

DAILY: Make sure that the whole community of formation does something for environmental issues, like

- ◆ Try to promote local foods and regional providers
- ◆ Plan a vegetable garden and have candidates cook using fresh vegetables and fruits.
- ◆ Invite local farmers to give a presentation to the candidates on sustainable agriculture and nutrition
- ◆ Partner with a local farm for produce purchases
- ◆ Identify Fair Trade products that can be served/sold in the dining hall (Tea, Coffee,
- ◆ Reduce use of bottled water by sports teams and students school-wide
- ◆ Encourage use of or provide for purchase BPA-free bottles for beverages and eliminate the use of bottled water.
- ◆ Conduct a water audit and identify ways to conserve water – identify leaking faucets, low flow toilets, etc. Learn about water purification or initiate a rain barrel water collection system

3.2 FURTHER PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

- ◆ Promote personal and communitarian prayer on JPIC issues, especially based on current local events. This will make candidates have a providential vision on the signs of the times and how God is at work through those events bringing salvation to mankind.
- ◆ Consider to give to the candidates the opportunity of direct contact with the daily struggles of poverty, marginalization etc. during the years of formation.
- ◆ There is a necessity of continuation of the content of formation between initial and permanent formation of our members. Most of the time candidates in formation assess the content and quality of formation according to what they see put in practice by those who are already members.
- ◆ Simplicity of life can be assumed by adopting an economical and financial transparency so that candidates may be aware of the real cost of their life in the house of formation. This can better give an idea of what it means by critical spending and the danger of consumism.
- ◆ Train candidates for dialogue and non violence by community planning and accountability; solving community conflicts through dialogue and reconciliation. Build the culture of listening to others.