

## Internationality: Our Identity for Solidarity by S. Roxanne Schares



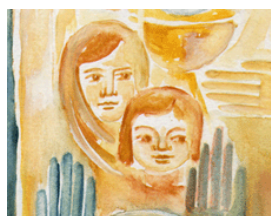
The global crises confronting us present enormous opportunities for change. Perhaps the greatest challenge of these times is to globalize solidarity. Not only does this require change in national and international policies and structures, but more urgent and fundamental is the need for a change of attitude and heart.

Global solidarity is the response to the urgent demand of the Gospel for these times. How do we begin to globalize solidarity? The *Call to Solidarity* leads us to ponder our very identity and further explore ways of being international, intercultural, and interdependent. It calls for participation with others in shaping a new human presence. The world needs the witness of attitudes, virtues, and a spirituality that will foster an authentic global solidarity.

With this comes an invitation to embrace our poverty, to let go of preconceived ideas about who we are and what makes us strong, and to acknowledge limitations. It calls us to appreciate and welcome our need for one another. The boundaries of self-understanding will expand to embrace a vision of us all, vitally connected in every way, as one in the world, as one world.

We will discover the freedom to look beyond national identities, cultures, and borders, including congregational ones, and widen our sense of loyalty. It is not about giving up personal and communal identities and cultures, homes and histories. Rather it is about being stretched, opening our hearts, creating space to receive others, and growing into the identity to which God calls us.

## Monthly Solidarity Reflections



With a commitment to foster spirituality for solidarity and to strengthen international collaboration, *Shalom* Branch Representatives decided that monthly solidarity reflections would be prepared and shared with the entire congregation beginning in January 2009. The reflections will incorporate education, prayer, reflection, and action on a theme that is global in dimension and touches the lives of everyone.

SSND *Shalom* members from around the world will prepare the reflections. These will be posted on the congregational website: [www.gerhardinger.org](http://www.gerhardinger.org). Sisters, colleagues, students, and friends are encouraged to use the reflections for personal and communal prayer, study, and discernment of concrete ways of living solidarity.

## Supporting East Timor Fair-trade Coffee by S. Anastasia Kokubo (NI)



East Timor is a small country that became independent from Indonesia in 2002. PARCIC, an NGO in Japan, helps farmers in East Timor by importing their product, organic fair-trade coffee. School Sisters of Notre Dame in Japan support this endeavor by promoting the coffee.

I began by buying the coffee for our local community. Gradually the number of customers expanded as students and workers of Kyoto Notre Dame University came to my office to buy the coffee. During our college festival, I opened “Charity Café,” in which we offered the East Timor coffee with homemade “convent cookies.” Almost 200 people came to taste the coffee. Profits were sent to the East Timor Catholic Network. Also every Friday at lunchtime there is an “open

café” in the campus minister’s room, where students and teachers are welcome to eat, have coffee, and enjoy conversation.

Two months ago S. Beatrice Tanaka, SSND, principal of Notre Dame Elementary School in Kyoto, told a mother of the “Volunteer Circle” at the school about the fair-trade coffee being promoted. The mother promptly made a big order. The other day she told me that she had finished selling 110 bags of coffee and made another order for more than 200 bags.

Our primary goal is to make as many people as possible aware of the fair-trade process and of the farmers in East Timor who struggle to live by their own work. Through this we hope that together we make a difference in the lives of the people of East Timor.

### **International Day of Peace**

Members of the SSND family around the world participated in this year’s commemoration of the September 21 [International Day of Peace](#). What follows is a sample of SSND actions.

Forquilha, Brazil—Students from [Sagrada Família School](#) joined 10,000 others who took action and brought the message of peace to their city. Sisters spoke at every mass, inviting all to join in a minute of prayer for peace as the church bells tolled throughout the 14 communities of the parish.

Milwaukee, Wisconsin USA—More than 100 sisters and associates attended the [Global Justice & Peace Commission](#) International Day of Peace prayer service at Notre Dame of Elm Grove on Sunday, September 21. Following a brief prayer, that included placing peace doves on a globe, many processed to the Peace Pole for quiet reflection.



Demarest, New Jersey, USA—Students and staff at the [Academy of the Holy Angels](#) began with the chiming of a peace bowl, followed by a minute of silence, and then prayer for peace in solidarity with the ringing of the Japanese Peace Bell at the UN. In addition, students wrote 95 peace day postcards that were distributed to world leaders gathered for the opening of the UN General Assembly.

St. Louis, Missouri, USA—Sisters throughout the [St. Louis Province](#) were invited to join those gathered in the motherhouse chapel for prayer on September 21.

Wilton, Connecticut and Baltimore, Maryland, USA—Two prayer services for peace were held in the [Atlantic-Midwest Province](#). One took place around the peace pole at Villa Notre Dame in Wilton, and another around the peace pole at Villa Assumpta in Baltimore. Both events united those gathered in prayer for peace and healing.

St. Peters, Missouri, USA—The [All Saints School Community](#) gathered for prayer and promised to be the “Voice of Peace.” Students, faculty, and parish staff listened to voices of the past and voices of the present challenging them to seek peace and to speak together God’s word of peace, shalom.

### **Stand Up and Take Action Oct 17-19**

In Chicago at Resurrection Life Center, the Stand Up Pledge was part of the 175th anniversary prayer service. (S. Joan Doyle, AM) Forty-five sisters at Villa Notre Dame in Wilton stood up, took the pledge, and wrote to the US presidential candidates asking them to commit themselves to end poverty by 2015. (S. Rita Goodman, AM) At Hope House in Port Jefferson, New York, 16 people signed up and read the pledge at Mass on Friday, October 17 (S. Mary Ann Bazata, AM)

School Sisters of Notre Dame, together with their colleagues and friends, were numbered among the more than 100 million who participated in the [2008 Stand Up—Take Action](#) events in support of ending poverty and accomplishing the [Millennium Development Goals](#) (MDGs).



Students at the [Fachakademie für Sozialpädagogik](#) in Munich read the declaration and stood up against poverty. They made their commitment public on the web site and in an interview with a local radio station. (M. Gisela Hörmann, BY)

At the [Motherhouse in Munich](#), after Sister Mary Mamwacha, SSND from Kenya spoke, 24 sisters stood up and prayed the MDG prayer. Students at the gymnasium also participated in Stand Up actions. (M. Magrit Höpfler, BY)

At the [Academy of the Holy Angels](#) in Demarest, New Jersey, faculty and students were invited to “Stand Up” to draw attention to world poverty. Students also signed petitions to the two presidential candidates, asking them to work to eradicate poverty and support the MDGs. In addition, tuna fish, peanut butter, and jelly were collected for a local food pantry. (S. Peggy McGaffney, AM)

Sixty people stood up at the 12:05 Mass at St. Ann in Lake Park, Florida and 16 more joined the Stand Up action at St. Ann Place. (S. Carleen Cekal, AM) Twenty-eight at the SSND Educational Center in Jamaica, New York participated in the initiative by praying silently for one minute then praying together the MDG prayer. Each student acted locally by bringing in a non-perishable food for the pantry at the parish, St. Clement Pope. (S. Jean McLaughlin, AM)

On October 17, the final day of a two-week conference for Maryknoll Lay Missioners the prayer from the SSND website was used as the closing prayer. It was personalized by the lay Missioners praying for specific situations of poverty in places where they minister. (S. Barbara Valuckas, AM)

Students at [Mount Mary College](#) in Milwaukee, specifically Alpha Kappa Delta (Sociology honor society), the BES club, and PsiChi (Psychology honor society), organized an education campaign on October 15 and 16 and a fundraising bake sale on the 16th as part of the Stand Up Take Action Campaign. (S. Lynne Woehrle, ML) One hundred twenty-five Sisters and parishioners at [Chatawa](#), Mississippi stood up against poverty and promised to contact our elected governmental leaders and urge them to stand up for poverty eradication, debt cancellation, and just trade agreements. (S. Judy Bourg, DA)

During the 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary novena, the [Generalate](#) Community remembered the spirit of poverty that Francis Sebastian Job infused into the foundation. Sisters sang, prayed, and stood up together, reciting the pledge and committing to a variety of actions, including prayer, fasting, using cloth bags, wearing white bands, and serving at a local meal site. Earlier the General Council had a prayer service in which they recalled the current conditions of poverty and the MDGs. (S. Lucy Nigh, Rome)

### **JPIC Training for Anglophone West Africa** by S. Roxanne Schares

School Sister of Notre Dame Mary Mayi-Ojo Abuh of Nigeria participated in an inter-congregational justice, peace, and integrity of creation (JPIC) workshop for Anglophone West Africa in Nsawam, Ghana August 24 to September 6, 2008. Thirty-three women and men religious representing twenty-

three congregations came together from Benin, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Togo, and Zimbabwe.



The workshop participants developed skills in social analysis and methodologies for dealing with JPIC issues. They focused particularly on issues of trafficking in persons, community in conflict, environmental degradation, exploitation of workers, and plight of women and children. On the last day participants worked in country groups to create networks. Coordinators of each network hope to meet at least once a year to strengthen networking within and across countries. The eight religious from Nigeria chose for their focus child exploitation and agreed to attend the Nigeria Social Forum in November.

This JPIC workshop is part of a project organized by JPIC promoters of international congregations in Rome. S. Roxanne Schares, Shalom Coordinator, has been a member of the ad hoc planning committee. The project objectives are to provide formation for religious living in Africa and engaged in JPIC ministry, prepare them to train others, and set up and engage in networking on JPIC issues. The first workshop took place in Kinshasa, DRC for Francophone Central Africa in 2007. Future sessions are planned for Francophone West Africa and for Eastern and Southern Africa during the years 2009-2010.

Sister Mary is *Shalom* contact for Nigeria and *Shalom* club moderator at Notre Dame Secondary School in Mkar. She wrote: “My experience at the training session has enriched and nourished me and has equally challenged me to do more in advocating for peace and justice in our world.”

### The 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights



With the international community we celebrate the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) (UDHR) on December 10, 2008. The theme “Dignity and Justice for All of Us” reinforces the vision of the Declaration as a commitment to universal dignity and justice. “The *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* remains one of the highest expressions of the human conscience of our time.” (Pope John Paul II) [Commemorate](#) this

important occasion, and share how you marked the day; e-mail [shalom@ssndroma.org](mailto:shalom@ssndroma.org) or [ssndunngo@earthlink.net](mailto:ssndunngo@earthlink.net).

### UN Commission on the Status of Women 2009 by S. Ann Scholz



The [53<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Commission on the Status of Women](#) (CSW) will meet in New York City March 2-13 to consider the theme “The equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including care-giving in the context of HIV/AIDS.” Students and faculty from the [College of Notre Dame](#) in Baltimore, MD will join the SSND delegation as it works to ensure that the rights and needs of girls are given full consideration by the CSW.

Preparations for the meeting are underway. The [Working Group on Girls](#) (WGG) with the support of non-governmental organizations, including the School Sisters of Notre Dame, presented a [discussion paper](#) in which they outlined the impact of inequality on girls at the October Expert Group Meeting. A written statement on the rights and concerns of girls signed by the School Sisters of Notre Dame will be presented to the Commission.

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