

INTER-CONGREGATIONAL JPIC TRAINING SESSION FOR ANGLOPHONE WEST AFRICA

**CATHOLIC CONFERENCE CENTRE, ADOAGYIRI – NSAWAM, GHANA
24TH AUGUST – 6TH SEPTEMBER, 2008**

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

We, 33 women and men Religious belonging to twenty three Congregations, converged as participants for the Inter-Congregational Training Session on Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) from 24th August to 6th September, 2008 at the Catholic Catholic Divine Word Centre, Adoagyiri-Nsawam in Ghana. We came from Benin, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Togo, and Zimbabwe. The planning group is comprised of representatives of our Congregations in Leadership positions in Rome.

We are grateful to our Religious Superiors for sponsoring us to take part in this training session. The entire course was aimed at training leaders in the field of JPIC who eventually will become trainers themselves within their respective congregations. Over and above, the enrichment received throughout the course has opened our horizons. “Were our hearts not on fire as the facilitators exchanged with us basic ideas on how to tackle and address social problems?” It is high time we went out there to become the light of the world and salt of the earth.

We shared the joys and pains of the people we work with in our various areas of apostolate. Through this sharing, we came to realise that we as religious needed to join hands with others in doing something tangible to uphold the dignity of every person.

In a nutshell, we looked at the following social issues affecting our people:

- Trafficking in Persons
- Community Conflict
- Environmental Degradation
- Exploitation of Workers
- The plight of Women and Children
- Child Abuse
- Single Parenthood

PLAN OF ACTION

On a wider level, we were challenged by the continued impoverishment and exploitation of the African Continent by various external powers, were they from the

East or the West. The training provided us with the opportunity to renew our commitment to contributing our own quota to the liberation of all men and women from every force that keeps them under bondage.

Among many other things, we would like to commit ourselves to the following:

1. We would network among ourselves at all levels within the country, the region and the sub-region.
2. We would network and **Add Value** to the existing groups, organisations, institutions (both NGOs and Faith based) already on the ground dealing with similar issues.
3. We shall commit ourselves to preaching and bringing awareness to the public on these social issues to ensure that justice prevails. “*Whoever ventures to speak about justice must not only be just but must be seen to be just*”.
4. Once a year, the sub-region co-ordinators for JPIC would meet to evaluate their programmes and activities and come up with a plan of action.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To ensure continuity, we encourage our Superiors to continue supporting us financially so that whatever we are committed to starting will succeed.

We further appeal to our Superiors to appoint a co-ordinator who may be in this office for a reasonable period of time, most preferably not less than five (5) years to ensure continuity.

We equally recommend **capacity building** in information technology for all JPIC Co-ordinators.

For better progress in this commitment, we suggest that the co-ordinators should meet yearly to share their experiences, evaluate and draw up a strategic plan.

CONCLUSION

To you all people of goodwill, we call upon your support in this noble work for the transformation of society. Our main goal is to make the world a better place to live in.

May God gracefully help us achieve our intended goals. And may God bless you all!