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New Vision of Global Interdependence to Guide U.S. Policy

Thomas Massaro

nobody is surprised anymore to hear overblown rhetoric about the importance of a given election. But sometimes the hype turns out to be on target, and the rhetoric really does correspond to reality. Election 2008 is one such moment, as it will determine the role that the United States will play on the world stage for generations to come. What, precisely, makes this so special a moment?

The winner of the 2008 presidential election will wake up on the morning of November 5 with the opportunity to participate in a paradigm of global interdependence and mutuality. To seize this historic opportunity to establish a more principled and sustainable foreign policy would be a great accomplishment, but it will not come easy. Besides altering the face we turn to other nations, the task includes tutoring our foreign policy establishment through a process of “unlearning” some of the worst habits that seem to inhere in the American character: tendencies toward narcissism, messianism, isolationism and an aversion to engage in the

hard work of communicating with our neighbors in the global arena. It is long past time to overcome these national character flaws. Indeed, the events of recent years serve as a wake-up call that the deadline for reversing the corrosive effects of flawed policies may have already arrived.

Historical Tendencies in U.S. Foreign Policy

Those who follow U.S. diplomatic history easily detect certain dramatic swings in our nation’s foreign policy. Over the decades, America’s preferred mode of relating to the rest of the world has wavered between several policy poles: a firm isolationism has alternated with rampant interventionism; resolute realism has given way to occasional bouts of idealism; naked self-interest and a broader cosmopolitanism have interacted and even co-existed within given administrations. The only constant

appears to be the utter control of foreign policy making by a minuscule cabal of elites. Indeed, in no area of national life is power so concentrated as in the formation of our nation’s foreign policy. By and large, average Ameri-

can citizens are satisfied to trust a few higher-ups to make the right decisions for all of us on the international stage.

Further, the field of foreign policy exhibits only the haziest correspondence to the contours of the major political parties and their approaches. In many areas of international relations, it barely makes a difference whether a Republican or Democrat is in the White House, or who controls Congress. U.S. policy toward the rest of the world grinds on, largely insulated from the vagaries of the political process or substantial pressure from the American populace. “Politics stops at the water’s edge,” captures much about the determination of how our nation acts abroad.

A New Opportunity

But, just maybe, 2008 will be the once-in-a-lifetime moment

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when something different is possible, when a politics of principle can capture even foreign policy.



After eight years under a president with a markedly unilateralist approach to world affairs, something has to give. Because of the way the United States squandered the good will and sympathy it received after the terrorist attacks of September 11, lessons aplenty are on view. Will we make a serious effort to regain some of our lost stature on the world stage? Will our nation make sincere overtures to the global community, or will we continue to signal contempt for others' calls for restraint on our part?

Just as important as "what" we do in the coming years is the matter of "why" we will act. It is one thing to make marginal changes in foreign policy so as to improve our reputation and perhaps to reap some strategic gains for self-inter-

relations, and operated under a new vision of the global common good. A principled foreign policy that looked first to pursuing mutual gains, not merely America's narrowly defined security needs, would represent a sea change in the right direction.

At first blush, this promising prospect may seem like too much even to hope for. It would certainly constitute an about-face considering where we have been in the early years of this millennium. But before we dismiss this possibility too quickly, let us consider precisely what such a new paradigm would include.

Politics of Principle

To make an option for international policies that are more highly principled does not mean somehow to forget about the ordinarily dominant categories of national interest and national security. It merely means situating these traditional concerns more comprehensively within the global context. A president or State Department that wants to promote a safer or more prosperous America does well to recall that the surest path to these goals is through strengthening the entire global economic system as well as the specific mechanisms of mutual security. In an increasingly interdependent world envi-

The key is developing a permanent commitment to pursuing mutual gains. In our age of globalization, all parties must face political and economic challenges together. All members of the international community share the fragile natural and social environment that are endangered by massive physical threats like pollution and global climate change, security concerns like terrorism and nuclear proliferation, and global pandemics like HIV/AIDS. The list of collective challenges also includes the many regional conflicts that produce tides of refugees and long-lasting fears and resentments.

No one nation can develop solutions to these pervasive challenges individually, just as no one nation will ever benefit exclusively from progress against such threats. The necessary mutual sharing of benefits and burdens accounts for the currency of the phrase "global common good" as found in recent documents of Catholic social teaching. In a twenty-first-century world without borders, it is impossible to imagine a morally serious policy that boils down to "going it alone."

The idea of a truly global vision, a firm commitment to constructive diplomacy and multilateralism enlightened by Christian social vision and principles, will not come as something entirely new to readers of this publication. What may seem novel is the expectation that Election Day 2008 may prove to be the decisive moment when such a global vision emerges as the basis of U.S. foreign policy. Let us hope that the heightened rhetoric regarding this historic election turns out not to be so overblown this time around. The chance for change is real; may it not be squandered. ~

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ested reasons. But it would be a far more significant thing if an America under the next administration truly changed its ways, adopted a new paradigm for international

ronment, threats to America are simultaneously threats to many other nations, so the lines between self-interest and other-regard are increasingly blurred.

Ethical Considerations in an Election Year

Patrick McCormick

an election year reminds us of our roles and duties as citizens and voters and of the challenges and difficulties that come with these roles. As citizens of a democratic society *and* of the world, we have a moral obligation to work for the common good of our community, nation and planet. For along with the personal and professional covenants that bind us to our families, friends, colleagues and coworkers, we also have civic and public ties to the people of our country and every other nation.

Our duty to work for the common good is grounded in two biblical themes—that human persons are sacred and entitled to a full range of political, economic, cultural and religious rights; and that human persons are social, finding their fulfillment in peaceful and just communities. The biblical beliefs that every human is made in God's image and that every other person is "bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh" call us to work for a society where *all* persons are free, protected and equal and where each of us recognizes the stranger as our neighbor.

In the voting booth—as in other places—we must follow our conscience, selecting the candidate, party or proposition we believe represents the best moral choice, for we have a duty as citizens to work for a just and moral society. But before we mark our ballots, we must first do the hard work

of informing and forming our conscience, seeking out the best counsel and information about the candidates and their platforms, and evaluating these positions in terms of their contributions to the common good.

Informing our civic conscience requires that we make an honest and humble effort to get the best and most accurate information about the critical issues facing our nation—globalization, the war in

Iraq, tensions with Iran, the downturn in the economy, global warming, immigration, the national deficit, an aging infrastructure, fostering a consistent

ethic of life, etc. Getting good information means seeking out a wide range of expert voices and not merely listening to or reading sources that parrot back our own opinions and beliefs. It also means learning to judge what sources are trustworthy and authoritative.

And it means learning how to get the information that is not so easily available in our media or press, how to pay attention to the issues and questions that get little coverage or attention *because* they affect the poor and marginalized. Informing our civic conscience means learning how to listen to *all* the voices, learning how to discern the most *authoritative* voices, and learning to hear the most *silenced* voices.

Informing the conscience of the Christian citizen means paying attention to four voices in particular:

(1) the voice of Scripture, (2) the voice of Tradition, (3) the voice of Experience, and (4) the voice of Reason. The Bible is guided by a vision of the righteous or just community, and the Christian citizen must attend to this vision in making judgments about the kind of society we seek to create or sustain. At the same time, a hundred generations of Christian pastors and theologians have struggled with issues of social, economic and political justice, and prudent Christians will listen to such voices when forming their conscience. Moreover, making good judgments depends on paying attention to experience, asking about the results of previous and similar choices, asking about the experience of people affected by these decisions, and asking in particular about the experience of the poor and the marginalized.

Finally, making sound moral decisions requires that we listen

Do not be daunted by the enormity of the world's grief. Do justly, now. Love mercy, now. Walk humbly, now. You are not obligated to complete the work, but neither are you free to abandon it.

—The Talmud

to the voice of reason, that we use all our critical thinking skills to evaluate the candidates and their policies, and that we ask hard questions and engage in serious and sustained reflection. In particular, listening to the voice of reason means that we make a thorough search of the available options and alternatives, and that we weigh all the consequences of the different courses of action.

Informing our civic conscience
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Patrick McCormick is professor of Christian Ethics at Gonzaga University and the author of *A Banqueter's Guide to the All Night Soup Kitchen of the Kingdom of God*, and a monthly column on Christianity and Culture in *U.S. Catholic*.



David Korten (see davidkorten.org) is the author of *The Great Turning: From Empire to Earth Community* and board chair of YES! Magazine.

The New Politics of Earth Community

David C. Korten

We face the upcoming election at a defining moment for our nation and the species. One thing most all Americans seem to agree on is that we have a desperate need for new leadership. New leadership at the top of our federal government, however, will only be a start on the work at hand. No matter who the winners in this election turn out to be, their immediate priority will be to resolve our economic and health care crises and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. They will have little energy or political motivation to take on the far larger social and environmental mess we humans now find ourselves in as a legacy of 5,000 years of Empire.

Our species has a brief window of opportunity to navigate a Great Turning from a self-destructive Era of Empire, characterized by relationships of domination enforced by violence, to an Era of Earth Community characterized by peaceful partnership and based on the principles of the Earth Charter. The leadership in addressing that challenge must come from civil society, from we the people.

The imperial establishment is just beginning to emerge from denial to look for ways to profit economically and politically from the unfolding

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social and environmental tragedy that threatens the survival of the species. Meanwhile, millions of people are engaging the real work—awakening from the cultural trance that for 5,000 years has impaired our ability to actualize the higher potential of our human nature

that makes a partnership society possible. They are creating a new politics based on being and doing the change they seek. Call it the politics of Earth Community. It has little in common with the traditional politics of Empire in which opposing elite factions engage in a divide-and-conquer competition for the ultimate power prize.

In *Blessed Unrest*, Paul Hawken estimates that globally two million organizations are already practicing the new politics. They are working through their local governments, businesses, churches, educational institutions, and civic organizations to build vital, dem-

ocratic communities to achieve balanced relationships with one another and Earth. They are rebuilding local economies, campaigning for peace, promoting a living wage, advancing minority rights, reforming electoral processes, running for office, reviving local agriculture, organizing discussion groups, mentoring the young, creating intentional communities, promoting green building and solar energy, developing interfaith alliances, practicing holistic medicine, hosting local talk shows, and much more.

Three-Fold Crisis

Earth Community politics from below is growing the new culture and institutions needed to resolve a potentially terminal three-fold crisis.

- **Excess Consumption:** Growth in human consumption resulting from a combination of population growth and growth in consumption per capita is depleting the natural life support system of the planet, disrupting natural water cycles and climate systems, and threatening human survival.
- **Inequality:** Unconscionable and growing concentration of financial power in a world of ever more intense competition for a declining base of material wealth is eroding the social fabric to the point of widespread social breakdown.
- **Institutional Pathology:** The most powerful institutions on the planet—global financial markets and the transnational corporations that serve them—are dedicated to growing consumption and inequality. They convert real capital into financial capital to increase the relative economic power of those who live by money, while depressing the wages of those who produce real value through their labor. They offer palliatives that leave the deeper cause of our potentially terminal environmental and social crises untouched, because they are the cause.

The Imperative

These conditions create the imperative to:

1. Reduce aggregate consumption, which means renouncing economic growth and obsessive over-consumption as our defining economic priority, in favor of meeting real human needs, including needs for dignity, community and meaningful work.
2. Eliminate extremes of inequality, which means

renouncing domination as our defining mode of organization in favor of equity and deep democracy.

3. Transform our institutions and cultures to support the above.

The Opportunity

Properly understood, the imperative creates an unprecedented opportunity to create a world that unleashes long-suppressed human possibilities and provides a better life for everyone. Mostly what we give up are forms of consumption that are wasteful or actively destructive, to free up resources for constructive uses. We can reallocate from:

- Instruments of war to health care and environmental rejuvenation.
- Automobiles to public transportation.
- Suburban sprawl to compact communities and the reclamation of forest and agricultural land.
- Advertising to education.
- Financial speculation to local entrepreneurship.

Success depends on facing up to the extent to which the crisis is a consequence of deep social and institutional pathology. Although green technologies will have an essential role, there is no technological fix. The fate of our children turns on our current irrevocable choice between two contrasting ways of relating to one another and Earth. One is the Way of Earth Community, the way of partnership, sharing, reconciliation, mutual responsibility, and respect for all life. The other is the Way of Empire, the way of domination, greed, violence, wasted lives and environmental devastation that got us into this mess.

Global Awakening

Empire has always met resistance from those who saw the truth that violence and injustice are symptoms of deep cultural and institutional dysfunction destructive of our higher order human possibilities. Mostly, this resistance was geographically isolated and the institutions of Empire easily contained it. That has changed. We now have the means to render Empire's divide-and-conquer tactics impotent.

Modern communication technologies have breached the barriers of geography to link ordinary people into a seamless global web of communication that breaks the communications monopoly of Empire,

accelerates an awakening from our collective cultural trance, and gives us the ability to function as a collective intelligence to restore balance and act as a whole in the service of the whole.

The Work

The institutions of Empire that have led human societies to the brink of collapse in their insatiable quest for power will not act from within to voluntarily

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relinquish that power. Leadership for the turning must come from popular civic initiatives centered outside the institutions of Empire. This leadership is emerging everywhere and moves forward on three fronts:

- **New Stories:** Through dialogue, replace the stories that frame the Empire culture with the stories of an Earth Community culture.
- **New Rules:** Through political action, replace rules favoring ruthless competition with rules that favor caring cooperation.
- **New Institutions:** Through local organizing, create caring, cooperative communities to bring forth new institutions grounded in principles of partnership.

Much is at stake in the forthcoming election, but we must not allow the old politics of Empire to divert our attention from the work of growing the new politics of Earth Community. Our collective future turns on the success of the latter. It is the greatest and most creative human adventure in all of human experience.

In these dangerous and often frightening times, it is important to regularly remind ourselves that we are privileged to live at the most exciting moment of creative opportunity in the whole of human experience. The time is now. ~

EMPIRE

Korten uses Empire (with a capital "E") as a generic term for the coercive, hierarchical ordering of human relationships that creates competition for power between nations, religions, classes, races, and genders. It is the root cause of the violence, alienation, and exploitation of Earth that now threaten the human species with social and environmental collapse.

Mapping Our Way: Policy and Politics

	Economics	Environment / Energy	Health Care
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men [and women] are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. <p style="text-align: right;">—Declaration of Independence</p>		
United Nations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With a view to the creation of conditions of stability and well-being... the United Nations shall promote: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> higher standards of living, full employment, and conditions of economic and social progress and development; solutions of international economic, social, health, and related problems; and international cultural and educational co-operation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> December 3, 1968 the UN called for a conference on the environment and established the United Nations Environmental Programme in 1972 to provide leadership and encourage partnership in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing, and enabling nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom. To promote solutions of international economic, social, health and related problems.
Earth Charter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communities are being undermined. The benefits of development are not shared equitably and the gap between rich and poor is widening. We must realize that when basic needs have been met, human development is primarily about being more, not having more. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The global environment with its finite resources is a common concern of all peoples. The protection of Earth's vitality, diversity, and beauty is a sacred trust. The spirit of human solidarity and kinship with all life is strengthened when we live with reverence for the mystery of being, gratitude for the gift of life, and humility regarding the human place in nature. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uphold the right of all, without discrimination, to a natural and social environment supportive of human dignity, bodily health, and spiritual well-being. Everyone shares responsibility for the present and future well-being of the human family and the larger living world.
Catholic Social Teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The needs of the poor take priority over the desires of the rich; the rights of workers over the maximization of profits; the preservation of the environment over uncontrolled industrial expansion; the production to meet social needs over production for military purposes. —Economic Justice for All Yet the workers' rights cannot be doomed to be the mere result of economic systems aimed at maximum profits. The thing that must shape the whole economy is respect for the workers' rights within each country and all through the world's economy. —John Paul II 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faced with widespread destruction of the environment, people everywhere are coming to understand that we cannot continue to use the goods of the Earth as we have in the past... The ecological crisis is a moral issue. —John Paul II Humanity is consuming the resources of the earth and life in an excessive and disordered way, forgetting the earth's own needs and God-given purpose, provoking a rebellion on the part of nature, and overlooking our duties and obligations toward future generations. —Centesimus Annus #37 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affordable and accessible health care is an essential safeguard of human life and a fundamental human right. Any plan to reform the nation's health care system must be rooted in values that respect human dignity, protect human life, and meet the unique needs of the poor. We support health care that is affordable and accessible to all. —Faithful Citizenship
Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Of the policies and programs that are proposed, what will address the growing inequity between wealth and poverty? How does U.S. trade policy strengthen economies in the U.S. and globally? What economic development proposals will address the needs of the poorest countries? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do proposed initiatives support alternative, renewable and clean energy sources? How will corporations be held accountable for their environmental impact? What provisions will be made to promote "green collar" jobs, i.e. environmentally sustainable jobs? What leadership will be taken in the U.S. to support the Kyoto Protocol? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does a proposed health care plan make provisions for vulnerable populations, including elderly, children, low-income workers, and immigrants? Does a health care reform proposal include universal access and affordability for all? Is it affordable and sustainable for society? What is the role and responsibility of the private sector and government in health care?

Immigration	Life Issues	Peace	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain to establish this Constitution of the United States of America. 		<p style="text-align: right;">—U.S. Constitution</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law. ■ In the exercise of...rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society. <p style="text-align: right;">—UN Declaration of Human Rights</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To achieve international co-operation... in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To maintain international peace and security; ■ To develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, and to take other appropriate measures to strengthen universal peace; ■ To achieve international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character... 	United Nations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ It is imperative that we, the peoples of Earth, declare our responsibility to one another, to the greater community of life. ■ The emergence of a global civil society is creating new opportunities to build a democratic and humane world. ■ We are at once citizens of different nations and of one world in which the local and global are linked. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Let ours be a time remembered for the awakening of a new reverence for life, the firm resolve to achieve sustainability, the quickening of the struggle for justice and peace, and the joyful celebration of life. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ We must join together to bring forth a sustainable global society founded on respect for nature, universal human rights, economic justice, and a culture of peace. ■ Recognize that peace is the wholeness created by right relationships with oneself, other persons, other cultures, other life, Earth, and the larger whole of which all are a part. 	Earth Charter
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Our common faith in Jesus Christ moves us to search for ways that favor a spirit of solidarity. It is a faith that transcends borders and bids us to overcome all forms of discrimination and violence so that we may build relationships that are just and loving. <p style="text-align: right;">—Strangers No Longer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Poverty is the cause of most migration. Ultimately elimination of global underdevelopment is the antidote to illegal immigration. <p style="text-align: right;">—John Paul II, 1995</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Opposition to abortion and euthanasia does not excuse indifference to those who suffer from poverty, violence and injustice. Any politics of human life must work to resist the violence of war and the scandal of capital punishment. Any politics of human dignity must seriously address issues of racism, poverty, hunger, employment, education, housing, and health care. Therefore, Catholics should eagerly involve themselves as advocates for the weak and marginalized in all these areas. <p style="text-align: right;">—Living the Gospel of Life: A Challenge to American Catholics, U.S. Bishops, 1998</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Excessive economic, social and cultural inequalities among peoples arouse tensions and conflicts, and are a danger to peace. <p style="text-align: right;">—On the Development of Peoples #76</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ If development is the new name for peace, war and preparations for war are the major enemy of the healthy development of peoples. If we take the common good of all humanity as our norm, instead of individual greed, peace would be possible. <p style="text-align: right;">—On Social Concern #10</p>	Catholic Social Teaching
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ What provisions will be provided for a new worker program with protections and a path to citizenship? □ How is family reunification addressed in the policies? □ How will international trade policy affect and address the root causes of immigration? □ How do policies care for the documented and undocumented? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ How is the promotion of a culture of life evident in the policies and programs of the candidates? □ Do present U.S. levels of international aid and policies of international trade promote reverence for life? □ How does the candidate address issues of racism, poverty, hunger, employment, education, housing and health care? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Do plans regarding Iraq address the multi-faceted and interrelated issues of promoting peace; the needs of our military personnel; and the common good of the Iraqi people and infrastructure? □ What is the US plan for a reversal of and reliance on nuclear, chemical and biological weapons? □ What principles and practices will guide peaceful means of solving global conflicts? 	Questions



Kathy Nyland describes herself as “just a regular joe who believes in fairness and justice, who would never bet against the underdog in a David versus Goliath match.”

Zero Waste: Individual Citizens Making a Difference

Kathy Nyland

When I was young, my grandparents would make me fold garbage before I could play. *Fold garbage!* I would have to go through the trash and break down boxes and fold all paper items. If there were cans, they needed to be crushed. You get the idea.

I remember wishing I had “normal” grandparents, ones who didn’t make me rummage through waste. Who knew moments like these would have such a profound effect on me, let alone an impact on future city policy? But they did.

Fast forward thirty years. The year was 2005 and the city of Seattle was examining its solid waste management practices. Because the two current waste stations were decades old and in need of repair, Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) determined a third waste station was needed.

My neighborhood of Georgetown was selected as a possible site for such a facility.

It is true that the location first drew my attention to this issue. But that’s not what sustained me for years. After attending several, okay, hundreds of meetings, reading every report I could get my hands on, and asking questions at every opportunity, I learned the Emerald City wasn’t as “green” as it could be.

Thankfully, several others in the neighborhood agreed. There was a better way.

Rather than continuing the practice of sending a daily, mile-long train filled with trash to landfills, let’s shorten the train. Rather than extending the date to reach a recycling rate of 60%, let’s look at why we aren’t hitting the target. Rather than spending \$100M on a new waste station that

was essentially more of the same, let’s use those funds to educate and emphasize more aggressive recycling.

That is how “zero waste” entered the conversation. Fortunately, such a strategy resonated with Seattle City Councilmember Richard Conlin. Zero waste was aligned with his values of sustainability. With his leadership and our grassroots support, we were able to change the direction Seattle was heading. Essentially, we stopped the mile-long train.

In July 2007, the Seattle City Council voted against building a third waste station. They adopted a zero waste policy. Just last week, SPU sent a press release announcing its new recycling policies, which include food waste and more collections. And I smile and think of my grandparents every time I fold garbage. ~

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also means evaluating all this information and counsel in light of our duties as citizens—the duties to work for peace and justice. As citizens of our country and planet, we have a duty to work for justice for all. We must demand our government preserve and protect a full range of civil and political liberties and social and economic rights for all its citizens, and that our nation respect and honor international agreements and treaties protecting and defending these rights abroad. As voters and taxpayers, we must press our government to protect the vibrancy and fairness of our economy, and to work for a global economy that is just and sustainable.

We must call for taxes and spending that distribute the burdens and benefits of our economy fairly, and work for full employment, and fair labor and trading practices.

Citizens and voters also have a



duty to be peacemakers. We must confront the violence in our society and world; make all our schools, homes, and streets safe; and come

to the aid of victims of every sort of violence and abuse. We must also respond to the underlying causes of violence in our society—rooting out poverty, racism, homelessness, and despair. For real peace comes when all persons enjoy a full range of economic, political, cultural and religious rights, when none are left behind, brutalized or victimized. And in a modern democracy, these obligations fall squarely on its citizens.

Citizens of good conscience will make mistakes in the voting booth. That is unavoidable. What must be avoided, however, is going into the voting booth with an uninformed conscience. ~

Free The Children Empowers Youth to Change the World

By Free The Children staff writer

For students at Rideau District High School in Elgin, Ontario, every day brings another chance to make a positive impact on the world. The student group READ (Rideau Encouraging African Development) mobilized their peers, teachers and community to support regions of Kenya through Free The Children's Adopt a Village program.

After a tragic car accident in which former student Cara Howard died, the students of Rideau and the small town of Elgin were inspired to do something in Cara's memory. They built a classroom on the Enelera Primary School compound in Kenya—a shining

example of how young people can make a difference in the lives of others.

Since the group's beginning in 2005, Rideau High School has raised over \$20,000 toward education opportunities for impoverished children in Kenya. To raise funds, students have run innovative fundraising initiatives such as air guitar contests, dodgeball and golf tournaments, and bake sales. They even dedicated an entire wall in their cafeteria to Free The Children's Brick By Brick campaign, where students are able to buy and decorate a brick on the wall for \$5. The dedication and care that the students of Rideau have shown in their Adopt a Village campaign at-

tests to the ability of young people to make a difference on a global scale through local actions.

Free The Children's holistic development model, Adopt a Village, brings education, clean water, health care and alternative forms of income to hundreds of thousands of people in developing countries around the world. Here at home, Free The Children's domestic education programs have brought global issues into classrooms across Canada and the United States, educating North American students about issues facing their peers in developing countries while empowering them to fundraise toward the solutions. ~

Free The Children is the world's largest network of children helping children through education. With more than one million youth involved in its programs in 45 countries, Free The Children works to free children from poverty and exploitation and to empower young people to see that they can effect positive change in the world.
www.freethechildren.com

New Faithful Citizens

Have you ever gone to your State Capitol and asked your State Representative to leave the floor of the House to speak with you? Maria Cabrera has. Maria did what her Washington State Catholic Conference lobbyists suggested. She sent a message to Representative Newhouse, in session, that she was there hoping to speak with him about issues like housing, earned income tax, and school lunch programs buying from local farmers. The representatives came! Maria has pictures to prove it.

Earlier, about twenty Spanish-speaking residents from the lower Yakima Valley had crowded into their State Senator's office to give well-prepared testimony. When the conversation turned to the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL), Senator Honeyford, an experienced teacher,

related to his constituents with a depth of understanding. Speaking in Spanish, one mother said, "I'm not worried about my own son. He is a very successful student." The Senator agreed with her. "But," the mother continued, "what can you legislators and we parents do together on behalf of the thousands of students who work hard, but don't pass?"

Where have these Spanish-speaking parents, most of whom are farm-workers, acquired the support and resources to take these actions? They use their personal experience, their intelligence, their passion, and their faith to represent families like their own, families with hard-working, low-income adults like themselves. In the Women's Justice Circles they've practiced social analysis and action. Through classes at Nuestra Casa, in

Sunnyside, they're learning English. With help from the Intercommunity Peace & Justice Center,



they have lobbied in their State Capitol. Some have participated in school board and city council campaigns. They've learned to do their research, to communicate, and to take action. They're not all CITIZENS yet, but they are certainly FAITHFUL. ~



Congratulations!

Linda Haydock, SNJM, received the 2007 Herman and Margarita Will Peace and Social Justice Award from the First United Methodist Church of Seattle on January 13. In conferring the Award the Church noted "Sr. Linda's dedication and history of advocating for the poor through education and legislative action...She is an inspiration to all those who know her and walk with her in bringing the social gospel's teachings to fruition." The Award included a gift of \$500 for IPJC.

Women Called to be Prophets of Hope in Our Church

Early in the New Year, while many were still reflecting on the holidays just celebrated, over 200 women responded to IPJC's invitation to begin the New Year in the company of gifted, powerful and wise women; called to be church; and committed to the fullness of the Gospel.



Joan Delaplaine, OP, a gifted Dominican preacher, began her presentation by reflecting on the call of Mary and Elizabeth: "Who would have thought it? Who could ever have imagined that these two women, in this obscure town, in this obscure place, in this obscure time, were carrying inside of themselves something that would radically and forever change the world? Who would have guessed that they were gestating the Christ and the Prophet?"



She went on to say: "Who would have thought it? Who could ever have imagined that these women in Seattle, in 2008, were carrying inside of themselves something that would radically and forever change the world? Who would have guessed that they were gestating the Christ and the Prophet? The image of women, pregnant with the life of Christ, reaching out to one another in solidarity, support, solicitude seems so right for today's gathering." And it was!

Deep Hope Institute Presents



Green Discipleship:
Fostering Spirit-Inspired Hope on a Warming Planet

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Larry Rasmussen

Saturday, May 10
8:30 am—4 pm

Center for Spiritual Living, Seattle

Registration and information:

www.deephopeinstitute.org/gra2008.html

IPJC Coordinates Journey to Justice Days



The Journey to Justice Days are part of the JustFaith program. It is a partnership with Catholic Campaign for Human Development for educating and engaging parishioners to learn first-hand about struggles for justice and empowerment.

IPJC organized over 130 people from 13 parishes and brought them together with eight regional grassroots organizations who are recipients of CCHD funds.

peace & justice center

Catholic Advocacy Day

IPJC organized two full charter buses and met dozens more Catholics in the State Capitol on February 22. Our office scheduled over 100 appointments with legislators in 35 of the 49 legislative districts in Washington. Issues included earned income tax credit, sustainable markets for farmers (provide locally grown fresh fruits and vegetables to school children and low-income families), and the housing trust fund. The participants from the 43rd District are pictured with their Senator, Ed Murray (second from left).



Make Your Vote Count!

Northwest Coalition for Responsible Investment (NWCRI) members are in the midst of a productive shareholder season. We are addressing 15 justice issues with 31 corporations through letters and shareholder resolutions; and most importantly, we are in dialogue with 19 companies on issues including:

- health care reform
- human right to health and medicine
- code protecting children from sexual exploitation in the tourism industry
- human slavery in the chocolate, cotton and steel industries
- executive compensation
- climate change
- genetically modified organisms

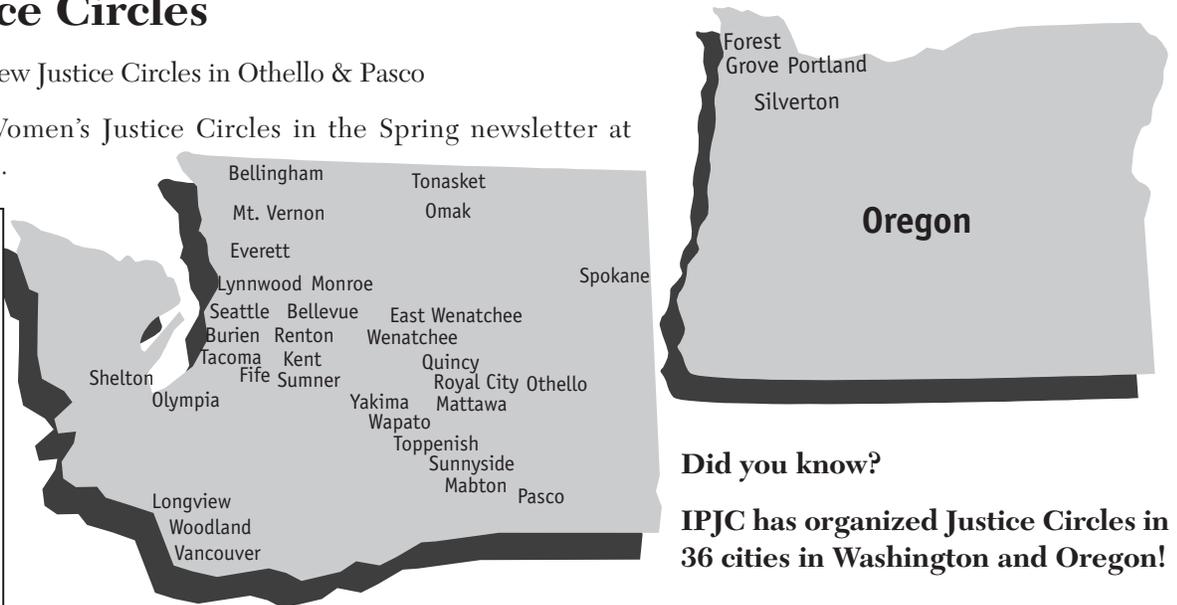


Now it is time for you to get involved in corporate change. When your shareholder proxies come in the mail—vote your values. Any proxy not voted is a vote for management. If you hold mutual funds, contact your manager and ask how the proxies will be voted.

A list of NWCRI companies/issues/actions can be found at: www.ipjc.org/programs/issues.htm

Women's Justice Circles

- This spring there are new Justice Circles in Othello & Pasco
- Read all about the Women's Justice Circles in the Spring newsletter at www.ipjc.org/programs.



Did you know?

IPJC has organized Justice Circles in 36 cities in Washington and Oregon!

Faithful Citizenship Resources

Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship: A Call to Political Responsibility from the Bishops of the United States

The responsibility to make political choices rests with each person and his or her properly formed conscience.

www.usccb.org/faithfulcitizenship

Center of Concern:

Voting the Common Good, Election 2008

Tools for analysis; evaluation of the programs and candidates; and engagement in your local community.

www.coc.org/election2008

US Elections:

Loving Our Neighbor in a Shrinking World

Election guide prepared by Maryknoll Global Concerns Office based on the principles of Catholic social tradition and gospel teachings, and experience of Maryknoll missionaries.

www.maryknollogc.org/2008elections

Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good

Promotes awareness of the Catholic social tradition and its core values of justice, human dignity and the common good.

www.catholicsinalliance.org

The Catholic Vote: A Guide for the Perplexed,

Clarke E. Cochran & David C. Cochran.

www.orbisbooks.com

Intercommunity Peace & Justice Center

www.ipjc.org

IPJC Faithful Citizenship Workshops



This year IPJC will be offering regional workshops on Faithful Citizenship.

Format: 2-3 hours, on a weekday evening or Saturday morning

Context: A call to participate in civic life, rooted in our Catholic Tradition.

Content: Highlights of Faithful Citizenship

- A Catholic Call to Political Responsibility
- Scripture
- Catholic Social Teaching
- Justice Issues
- Tools for Action

Process:

- Prayer
- Presentation
- Issue Highlights
- Activities for Action

Call IPJC to schedule a regional workshop in your area—206.223.1138

A Matter of Spirit is a publication of the Intercommunity Peace & Justice Center

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