

# Compassion

Faith doing justice in the Central and Southern Province...and beyond

March 2019

## Statement and Call For Action on Presidential Declaration of National Emergency

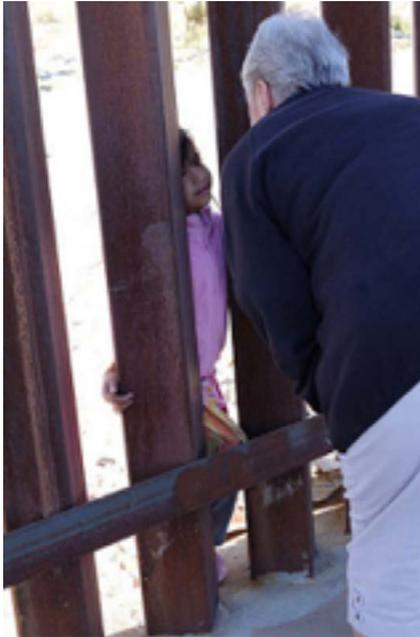
On Feb. 15, President Donald Trump declared a national emergency on the U.S.-Mexico border so that he could secure funding that was not included in the House of Representatives' budget to build a longer border wall.

On Feb. 19, the Jesuit Conference Office of Justice and Ecology and the Ignatian Solidarity Network issued a statement that asserted that "this action is both an immoral response to the challenges posed by immigration realities on our southern border and a threat to our democracy." The full statement can be read at <http://jesuits.org/news-detail?TN=NEWS-20190219032924>.

On February 26, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a resolution seeking to stop the National Emergency Declaration. The U.S. Senate is now required to vote on the resolution. The Ignatian Family is urged to [call on their Senators](#) to use the powers available to them to 1) **prevent this declaration** from coming into effect; 2) **seek pathways that promote the common good** that respond to the needs of the most vulnerable; and 3) do so in ways that adhere to the **fundamental civic values** of representative government. Click here to [TAKE ACTION NOW and contact your Senators today!](#)

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One of the four universal apostolic preferences for the Society of Jesus recently announced by Fr. General Arturo Sosa is "Caring for our Common Home, i.e. working for the protection and renewal of God's creation." All too often, however, effectively understanding and sharing in the criti-



cal work of responding to ecological concerns seems daunting and elusive. Ecojesuit is a resource that might make caring for creation more accessible – and doable.

Ecojesuit is an online publication that offers contemporary and original commentaries, reflections and insights, analysis and exchange of ideas and practices on various ecological and social concerns, including those related to water and watershed management, mineral development, food security, climate change, disaster risk resilience, renewable and alternative energy, Indigenous Peoples and cultural integrity and sustainable development.

While initially directed at Jesuit practitioners and organizations working on ecological concerns, Ecojesuit encourages participation and communication beyond the Jesuits and promotes a global collaboration and networking on ecology. By subscribing to and joining Ecojesuit, you obtain access to articles and stories twice a month in English and Spanish. You will also be part of a growing global community of more than 2,000 individuals and organizations that exchanges and contributes updates, information, tools for decision making, publications, and good practices on environmental and social topics. Visit the **Ecojesuit** website at <http://www.ecojesuit.com/> and subscribe to the biweekly newsletter at <http://www.ecojesuit.com/phplist/?p=subscribe&id=5>.

## 2019 Social Grants Applications Due March 30

Each year, the Jesuits of the UCS Province offer *small* social grants for projects that directly engage UCS Jesuits or organizations that they support in serving the poor or working for social justice. The deadline for applications for Social Grants for the UCS province is **March 30, 2019**. Grant guidelines and applications can be found online here: <https://connect.jesuitscentralsouthern.org/socialgrants>.

The primary purpose of a Social Grant is to encourage Jesuit solidarity with poor and marginalized people in the UCS province. The provincial will consider grants that meet the following criteria:

- The Jesuit has inaugurated or is directly involved in programs that benefit poor and marginalized people.
- The Jesuit is directly involved as a leader, volunteer or staff person in a social ministry organization or program.
- The Jesuit is working for social change on behalf of poor and marginalized people.

- The project has a high likelihood of increasing Jesuit concern for poor and marginalized people.

*Every grant application must be sponsored and signed by a Jesuit of the UCS province.* Grants will be modest, most often ranging from \$1,000 – \$6,000.

Any Jesuit or organization that received a grant in 2018 must complete a report on how that money was used before they will be considered for funding in 2019. The grant report form is available at the same website link as the application.

If you have ANY questions about eligible projects or difficulty accessing the online social grants materials, please call or e-mail Mary Baudouin [mbaudouin@jesuits.org](mailto:mbaudouin@jesuits.org) or 504-655-6574.

## Coffee, Soap and Honey for a Cause

In 2017, Fr. Stephen Pitts, SJ, received a small UCS province social grant to assist with research on how a coffee cooperative begun with the assistance of Mexican Jesuits in Chiapas, Mexico, had helped to stabilize the household economies of indigenous growers and participants and empowered them to participate in their own development. With good qualitative and quantitative research on the impact of the coffee cooperative, Stephen knew that the cooperative would be in a better position to engage in strategic planning, marketing, fund development and promotion of participation.

Now Stephen is on a new mission to assist this thriving cooperative by promoting the sale of the Capeltic coffee, honey, soaps and handcrafts that are completely produced by the Yomol Atel cooperative in the Bachajon Mission in the State of Chiapas. He doesn't just want people in the United States to buy their products. He wants us to understand why buying from cooperatives like Yomol Atel is helping to build an alternative economy that is more fair and inclusive.

The Jesuits of the Mexico Province began their work with the Bachajon Mission in 1958 with pastoral ministry to 600 rural communities of Tzeltal heritage. In 1975, their ministry expanded to forming indigenous deacons. Then in 2001, they began the Yomol Atel cooperative and built a roasting plant that enabled the local growers to grow coffee beans sustainably and to roast them in their own communities. While most fair-trade coffee sold in the United States provides a fair price to growers, 90% of the value of coffee is in the finished, roasted product. By roasting their own beans, members of the cooperative are able to retain more of the money derived from sales in their own commu-

nities – and their finished products are not subject to variations in the volatile green coffee market, which since 1989 has been controlled by the New York Stock Exchange prices. The cooperative can now produce 4 to 5 tons of roasted Capeltic coffee per month. Recently the cooperative has expanded to production of honey and soap. Membership in the cooperative includes access to a community bank, where members can receive loans for health emergencies, additional foodstuffs, raw materials to produce goods to sell, and participate in important cultural celebrations.

While the coffee is selling well in Mexico at markets and in five cooperative-owned coffee shops, four of which are operated on the campuses of Jesuit universities, Stephen and the cooperative leaders want to break into the lucrative U.S. market. Through an agreement with FedEx, coffee from the cooperative can now get to the United States about five days after it is roasted, insuring a fresh product. Smaller amounts of the coffee can be purchased through the Ignatian Solidarity Network at <https://isnmerch.myshopify.com/collections/coffee>, and all of the cooperative's products are sold through Inissor International at <https://isnmerch.myshopify.com/collections/coffee>.

The cooperative's ultimate goal is to get Jesuit works and other institutions to purchase larger amounts of the products. Currently there are 13 Jesuit works, including universities, parishes, high schools and Jesuit communities, who are purchasing coffee in bulk. If you and your Jesuit work or community are interested in supporting this mission through bulk purchases which will help indigenous families help themselves, contact Christina Rossini by email at [christina@inissor.com](mailto:christina@inissor.com) or by phone at 214-310-3818.

## Lenten Resource on Recommitting to Racial Justice

NETWORK, a Catholic Social Justice Lobby, has created a Lenten resource aimed at helping white social justice advocates examine their white privilege and the effects of systemic racism. The goal of the resource is to help white participants deepen their understanding of how race functions in our society and illuminate the extent of white supremacy in our political and economic structures. Those who [sign up to participate in NETWORK's 2019 Lenten campaign](#), will receive weekly emails with materials about various topics: the racial wealth and income gap, immigration, the ways our society has harmed Native and Indigenous peoples, medical racism, and more. NETWORK will also suggest a weekly action for participants and will have periodic check-in calls with the NETWORK staff and community for all who'd like to join. [Sign up today here!](#)