



## Preparation Package – Ignatian Family Teach-In for Justice – 2015

This package has been prepared by Canadian Jesuits International (CJI) for the Canadian delegation attending the Ignatian Family Teach-In for Justice (IFTJ) in Washington, D.C. This is the second year that CJI has led a delegation of Canadian students and educators from high schools and universities across Canada to participate in the IFTJ.

We suggest that you have a group meeting at least once before you depart so you can more fully take part in the three day event. The contents of this package include general information about the Teach-In, as well as preparation materials for our group discussion, the Breakout Sessions and Advocacy Day. Please prepare for this event and our discussion as a group as well as on an individual level. For more information on the Teach-In breakout sessions and speakers, please visit their website: <http://ignatiansolidarity.net/iftj/speakers/>

At the Teach-In we will finalize and prepare for our participation in the Advocacy Day, but we ask that everyone comes with the same foundation of preparation. In addition to this package, we ask that you also carry out your institution's pre-existing preparation plans for field trips (e.g. health and safety, etc.) We look forward to seeing you there!

### **This package includes the following:**

1. What is the Ignatian Family Teach-In for Justice?
  - I. Who are the Jesuit Martyrs?
  - II. What is this year's theme?
  - III. Ecological justice
  - IV. Social justice
2. Advocacy and the Teach-In
3. Additional Resources (if you have extra time) – ecological and social justice in Canada



# 1. IGNATION FAMILY TEACH-IN FOR JUSTICE

## I. *The Ignatian Family Teach-In for Justice (IFTJ)*

The Ignatian Family Teach-In for Justice (IFTJ) is an annual gathering for members of the Ignatian family (Jesuit institutions and people inspired by Ignatian Spirituality ) to **come together motivated by social justice and solidarity to learn, reflect, pray, network, and advocate together**. The IFTJ is organized by the [Ignatian Solidarity Network](#) and originally started as a protest against the School of the Americas (SOA). It now draws over 1100 people from Jesuit schools, organizations, and like-minded institutions from across the United States and around the world. The three-day event includes keynote speakers, student witnesses, small group workshops, Liturgy and prayer, and a rally on Capitol Hill.

## II. *The Jesuit Martyrs in El Salvador*

Now in its 18th year, the IFTJ has a rich history rooted in honoring the Jesuits and their companions who were martyred in El Salvador in 1989. November 16, 2015, will mark twenty-six years since Ignacio Ellacuría SJ, Ignacio Martín-Baró SJ, Segundo Montes SJ, Juan Ramón Moreno SJ, Joaquín López y López SJ, Amando López SJ and their housekeeper Elba Ramos, and her 15 year-old daughter Celina Ramos, were murdered at the Jesuit University of Central America (UCA) in San Salvador, El Salvador.

The lives and loss of these martyrs have significantly influenced the Ignatian family in the world. Jesuit institutions have re-defined what it is to be universities, high schools, parishes, etc. in light of the martyrs, discerning new ways of addressing issues of social justice locally and abroad. The Ignatian Solidarity Network itself is a direct product of the spirit of the martyrs, forming in response to their tragic deaths at the hands of many individuals who received training at the former U.S. Army School of the Americas. We gather each year in the spirit of the Jesuit martyrs of El Salvador, using their lives and ministry as inspiration for discovering the injustices of today and how we might engage in them.

## III. *IFTJ Theme: Bridges*

This year's theme for the Teach-In is '[Bridges](#)', and it invites us to reflect on how we can expand our circle of compassion, create new possibilities, and work in solidarity with others.

The idea of building bridges is emphasized by Pope Francis in his newest encyclical, *Laudato Si'*. He affirms that as human beings we must build bridges across spiritual, racial, and cultural backgrounds so that we may work as one to care for our common home. Pope Francis writes:

Beginning in the middle of the last century and overcoming many difficulties, there has been a growing conviction that our planet is a homeland and that humanity is one people living in a common home. An interdependent world not only makes us more conscious of the negative effects of certain lifestyles and models of production and consumption which affect us all; more importantly, it motivates us to ensure that solutions are proposed from a global perspective, and not simply to defend the interests of a few countries. Interdependence obliges us to think of *one world with a common plan* (LS, 164).

In *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis speaks of integral ecology as a new paradigm for justice, an ecology “which respects our unique place as human beings in this world and our relationship to our surroundings” (LS, 15). As such, he says that “We are not faced with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather one complex crisis which is both social and environmental” (139). Our analysis and action on “environmental problems cannot be separated from the analysis of human, family, work-related and urban contexts, and of how individuals relate to themselves” (LS, 141). Ecological justice and social justice are two means through which we can spur dialogue and action to end injustices in the world.



Optional activity: Review the *Laudato Si'* as a group. See:

[http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco\\_20150524\\_enciclica-laudato-si.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html)

Optional resource (via Ecojesuit): <http://www.ecojesuit.com/guidance-map/>

#### IV. Ecological Justice

Ecological Justice from a Christian perspective promotes three main themes:

1. *The interconnectedness of creation.* What we do to the rest of creation affects us. What is good for the Earth is good for us and what is bad for the Earth is bad for us.
2. *The emphasis on the dignity of creation.* We are called to see that each part of creation has worth and dignity and that all creation is good.
3. *Our responsibility to care for creation.* According to the book of Genesis, we have been given “dominion” over the rest of creation (Gen. 1:26). This means that we have the responsibility to care for creation. We must therefore “till and keep” the Earth (Gen. 2:15), so that it may continue to grow and flourish under our nourishment and care. As human beings, it is our responsibility to protect, preserve, cultivate, and care for the rest of creation.

**When we speak of the ‘environment’, what we really mean is a relationship existing between nature and the society which lives in it. Nature cannot be regarded as something separate from ourselves or as a mere setting in which we live. We are part of nature, included in it and thus in constant interaction with it” (LS, 139).**

#### V. Social Justice

Social Justice acknowledges the freedom and inherent dignity of each person as well as our responsibility to care for one another, and it “invites us to see the world from the perspective of the poor and the marginalized, learning from them, acting with and for them”, (GC Decree 3, 27). It is a call to look at root causes of injustice, to work against the forces that exclude and exploit the weak and the poor, and to establish equity and right relationships with one another (GC 3:27).

When Cain asks God, “Am I my brother’s keeper?” (Gen. 4:9), he is asking, ‘What is my responsibility towards every other human being on this earth?’

Are we keepers of our brothers and sisters on this earth? To what extent are we responsible for their well-being? God responds to our questions in Leviticus and Mark saying, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Lev. 19:18; Mk. 12:31).

We are responsible for one another because we are called to love each other like ourselves, and we are called by God to care for every person on the earth, recognizing that each of them, like us, is made in the image and likeness of God. This means that each person has the freedom of choice and their own inherent dignity.

**“[W]e have to realize that a true ecological approach *always* becomes a social approach; it must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, so as to hear *both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor*” (LS, 49).**

**“The human environment and the natural environment deteriorate together; we cannot adequately combat environmental degradation unless we attend to causes related to human and social degradation. In fact, the deterioration of the environment and of society affects the most vulnerable people on the planet” (LS, 48).**



## Group reflection and discussion

### Activity 1

Take a few minutes individually to think of the questions below in light of what you have read.

What are the key social and ecological issues in your community?

What do you think are the causes of each of the social and ecological issues you have listed? Who are the key players or change-makers?

What can you do about these issues or what do you think can be done individually and as a community?

**“There is a nobility in the duty to care for creation through little daily actions.... Reusing something instead of immediately discarding it, when done for the right reasons, can be an act of love which expresses our own dignity” (LS, 211).**

What are some “little daily actions” you are performing or can perform in your life to care for creation?

### Activity 2

After you have listed the issues in your community, review some of the topics that the speakers at the Ignatian Family Teach in are covering. See: <http://ignatiansolidarity.net/iftj/speakers/>

Which issues are the same as the ones you have identified? Are there some that you have not mentioned? Do you think they also affect your community? How?

## 2. ADVOCACY AND THE IGNATIAN FAMILY TEACH-IN

### Preparing for Advocacy Day – What Are the Issues?

Monday, November 9 is Advocacy Day, where U.S. students will have the opportunity to meet with their elected representatives and discuss key advocacy issues. Three advocacy themes have been identified; Immigration, Central America and Environmental Justice. You will find the talking points for each of these themes here:

Immigration - <http://ignatiansolidarity.net/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/IFTJ-2015-Immigration-Talking-Points-9.22.15.pdf>

U.S. Foreign Policy in Central America - <http://ignatiansolidarity.net/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/IFTJ-2015-Central-America-Talking-Points.pdf>

Environmental Justice - <http://ignatiansolidarity.net/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/IFTJ-2015-Environmental-Justice.pdf>

### Preparing for Advocacy Day

#### Activity 3

Find out who your Member of Parliament is. Find out who the candidates are in your riding or your newly elected Member of Parliament and what their position is on one or more of the issues identified above. You may find these links helpful:

Members of Parliament - <http://www.parl.gc.ca/parliamentarians/en/members>

Guide for meeting with your Member of Parliament (from Development and Peace) - <https://www.devp.org/en/advocacy/mp/resources>

**Activity 4**

Government representatives are not the only people who can enact change.

Brainstorm on who are some other actors who can contribute to solutions to the issues in your community that you identified.

**Activity 5****Preparing for Advocacy Day – What Is A One-Pager?**

A one-pager is a brief which summarizes the issue you're presenting, background information on the issue and what solutions you are proposing as well as your rationale for proposing them. This is a good way of communicating whatever message you're trying to present.

Create a one-pager based on the social justice issue you have identified in Activity 1. See links below for guidance on creating a one-pager (from Citizens for Public Justice)

1. <http://www.cpj.ca/writing-one-page-brief>
2. <http://www.cpj.ca/sites/default/files/docs/files/Sample%20Brief.pdf>

**Activity 6**

After reviewing the talking points prepared by our US colleagues, brainstorm a similar list of talking points from a Canadian context on each of the three themes, or an issue you identified in the first activity. If you were to meet with our Members of Parliament in Canada, what points would you want to make on each theme or issue? *Process: same as above*