EDITORIAL: During October, Rome has been alive with prayers and actions focused on the Amazonian Synod and the Casa Común. This was an experience of a listening church and a deliberate intent of en-culturating a new face of the Church developed from the experience of the people of the Amazonian countries. More importantly now is our way forward. We pray for the grace to be open to the promptings of the Spirit as we continue on a new path for the Church and promote an integral ecology that responds to the cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor. This issue shares the experience of Rome as well as highlights the preparation for COP 25, advocacy efforts for West Papua and the proposed development of a new Commission for a Culture of Care.

LINKS: Click underlined blue text to open a link or copy and paste the URL on your browser window.

THE SYNOD OF THE AMAZON HONORS POPE FRANCIS’ PASTORAL PROGRAM FOR CHANGE

Tree planting ceremony in the Vatican Garden. Pope Francis officially closes the Season of Creation which had focused on the Web of Life, and opened the Amazonian Synod, with the inclusion of the Casa Común, and announced on this 40th anniversary of St. Francis, Patron Saint of Ecology, that St. Francis would be the Patron Saint of the Synod.

On October 4, in the Vatican Gardens, Pope Francis alerted us to the importance of the present time, not only for the people of the Amazon, but around the world. During these days of the Synod, we would have opportunities to experience the Amazon, to see the realities of the people and the environment, to judge with the faith perspective of Laudato Si’, and to consider ways to act in solidarity with others in similar living conditions. Evident in the process was Pope Francis’ four-point pastoral program for change:

- Time is greater than space. The synod was preceded by a year of preparation through listening sessions with various groups, totaling

INTHIS ISSUE: 1 The Synod of the Amazon...5 Commission on “Care of Persons”... 5 Spanish and Portuguese Promoters Reflect on the Suffering... 5 Meeting on COP 25... 6 Seminar on West Papua... 7 Calendar
over 87,000 persons. Reports compiled from those sharing sessions were submitted to the Ecclesial Network of Pan Amazon (REPAM), who was responsible for summarizing the information. In addition, they initiated the Casa Común concept—a center of prayer, information, reflections, dialogues, conversation, and determining actions. By bringing people together to share our caring vision for the future of all of creation, we could strive to find ways to promote a new reality that actualizes the new path for the Church.

- **Our unity prevails over conflict.** By grounding our strengths for social concerns from our faith perspective, we could unify our efforts to work together for the good of all of humanity. The synodal and Casa Común experience brought together opportunities to find commonalities of hopes, struggles and challenges. With representatives from different perspectives, we were encouraged to look for ways to broaden our convictions and seek areas for interconnection.

- **Realities are more important than ideas.** As we shared our journeys with people who suffer deprivation of basic human rights—food, water, health, work, shelter—and the destruction on our planet, we carefully addressed these experiences to determine ways that we could make a difference in our world. We explored, in a deeper way, the root causes of pain. We asked questions from a broader and more comprehensive perspective, not only why are people are poor, but why are people rich? These questions were discussed within the framework of the Gospel and *Laudato Si*.

- **The whole is greater than the part.** The synodal and Casa Común experience were intergenerational and involved global representation. What was highlighted and carefully noted was that the condition of the indigenous population was the same around the world. Many church-related organizations shared their work and partnered with one another, attending various sessions to find more ways to work together.

The experience in Rome, with the support of the Vatican media and reliable networks, helped us to build a sustainable road map. Much will need to be done on the local levels to promote clear commitments and proposals to develop a new path for the Church and for an integral ecology. By creating such a plan, we will respond to our call from Pope Francis, knowing that “What we need, then, is to give priority to actions which generate new processes in society and engage other persons and groups who can develop them to the point where they bear fruit in significant historical events, without anxiety, but with clear convictions and tenacity.” (*EG* 223)

Ten representatives from member-congregations of the UISG and 15 from the USG attended the Synod. See [English summary](#) and [full final document in Spanish](#).

**Casa Común (Common Home)**

The JPIC Secretariat was extensively involved in the development of the Casa Común, particularly the hospitality care for 16 of the indigenous peoples. We were also on the team for coordinating the welcoming ministry at Santa Maria in Traspontina and encouraged the participation of JPIC Promoters in providing events and spiritual experiences.

The Casa Común would have over 250 events to help bring the Amazonian experience to Rome. Our JPIC Promoters participated in all of the ways offered—services honoring the martyrs defending human rights and environmental causes, informational sharing, and conversations. Much listening happened.

The Casa Común provided opportunities for reflection, honoring martyrs of the Amazon and a compelling event series on the Amazon. Fr. Roberto Carrasco, OM, one of the lead organizer of the Casa Común, also participated in the Synod. He had the special capacity to integrate both perspectives in the different meeting sites.

**Santa Maria in Traspontina**

The Church of Santa Maria in Traspontina was a place of hospitality. It was the center for welcoming, for many spiritual experiences, for reflection, for information. Many events were held there.
The opening vesper service brought together a packed community for an informed prayer for the Synod. In this reflection, we called on God to deliver the people of the Amazon from the pain and heartache in their lives.” Many martyrs were recognized with the tearful telling of their stories. Solidarity dominated the church as we held hands and sang “Casa Común”.

Stations of the Cross

The Stations of the Cross allowed us to enter into the paschal mystery of the lived experience of the people of the Amazonian countries. During the prayer, we reflected upon the struggles, heartache and pain of the living situations and were inspired by the many martyrs who have given their lives for their people.

The prayer began in the area of Castel Sant’Angelo and proceeded down Via della Conciliazione, to the Church of Santa Maria in Transpostina, ending at the Piazza de San Pietro.

JPIC Commission Participation

United in Listening to the Murmur of the Forest

The Spanish-Portuguese Group prepared a prayer at San Marcello, in keeping with the spirit of the Amazonian, celebrated the life of the Casa Común. Reflections honored the beauty and importance of all the gifts of creation and recognized the harm we have inflicted on our Earth and our need to respond to the poor. There was a beautiful representation of the many countries gathered in prayer. The song, “We are Casa Común” helped us recognize the importance of our commitment to solidarity.

Special Topics

The SVD and SSpS had a session on their religious commitment on indigenous and environmental issues through advocacy at the UN.” The Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur shared about the life and death of their Sister Dorothy Stang.

Webinar on New Pathways and Integral Ecology

The JPIC Commission of USG and UISG, through the Secretariat, organized a webinar, “Engaging in New Pathways for the Church and for an Integral Ecology,” in connection with the USIG Campaign, Sowing Hope for the Planet, and opened the sessions to the participants in the Casa Común. The event was an opportunity to listen to the cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor. (LS 49) This gave participants an opportunity to know about the Casa Común, gain a deeper understanding of the indigenous communities, inspired by personal stories of Sr. Dorothy Stang, SND, and updated on events of the Global Catholic Climate Movement.

Session on the Impacts of Mining

A session on the Impacts of Mining from the Perspective of Laudato Si’ was presented by Sr. Dani Brought, ASC and Sr. Sheila Kinsey, FCJM, who shared the outcomes the JPIC and Mining Seminar in September. The session began with a remembrance of the victims of the Brumadinho disaster and a prayerful reflection on the statement from the participants of that semi-

On the opening day of the Amazonian Synod, representation from the Casa Común, and some synodal representative joined Pope Francis in prayer. A procession accompanied Pope Francis to the St. Paul VI Building, where he officially opened the Synod.
nar. We continued to develop the session through the See, Judge and Act methodology, sharing established networking connections.

Fermín Chimatani Tayori, the indigenous leader from Peru, spoke about the problems associated with illegal arternian mining of gold. The use of mercury in the mining gold has polluted the water and has serious health consequences. He has been organizing his people in advocacy efforts to confront the government to practice their responsibility to legislate against illegal mines and provide job opportunities for his people. Video from UISG.

**Pact of the Amazon**

Three busloads of representatives from the Synod and the Casa Común traveled to the Catacombs of Domitilla for a Mass and the signing of the Pact of the Amazon. This was an historic occasion in memory of a previous document, the Pact of the Catacombs, signed by many bishops to further the spirit of Vatican II. It is noteworthy that this new document was signed by not only bishops, but laity and religious as well. The intent is to further the spirit of the Amazon Synod.

“Pact of the Catacombs for the Common Home, for a Church with an Amazonian face, Poor and Servant, Prophetic and Samaritan,” was a call to defend the Amazon rainforest in the face of global warming and depletion of natural resources. The pact calls on the Church to abandon “all types of colonist mentality and posture,” welcoming the cultural, ethnic and linguistic diversity in dialogue “with all spiritual traditions.”

Bishops pledged to recognize ecclesial ministries in the communities, and to go from “pastoral visits to pastoral presence” to ensure that the right to the “Table of the World and the Table of the Eucharist are effective in all communities.”

Signers committed themselves to finding new paths of pastoral action, with particular attention to the peripheries, such as migrants, workers and the unemployed.

Facing what signatories call an “avalanche of consumerism,” they pledge to assume a “happily sober lifestyle, simple and in solidarity with those who have little or nothing; to reduce the production of garbage and the use of plastics, favoring the production and commercialization of agro-ecological products; and using public transport whenever possible.”

Our challenge going forward is to consider ways of implementing the document in developing new paths for the Church and for an integral ecology. Sowing Hope for the Planet will be promoting ways to make the message concrete.
In October the UISG and USG called a meeting to discuss the establishment of a commission of the “care of persons”. This was a very productive gathering in which the participants gave input regarding the goals and scope of the commission, membership and the relationship with the Vatican and other institutions.

In conclusion, the two Secretary Generals of both unions, Sr. Pat Murray, IBVM and Br. Emili Tuirú Rofes, FMS, were provided with some directions to consider for the commission to be formed:

- To be at the service of the Superior Generals and Councils by—
  - Promoting awareness of a culture of care
  - Providing a platform for sharing resources, good practices
  - Networking and building partnerships

The JPIC Secretariat was also an invited participant to the meeting.

SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE PROMOTERS REFLECT ON THE SUFFERING

“The Lord said, ‘I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings.’” (Ex 3:7)

The Spanish and Portuguese JPIC Promoters reflected on what this message could mean for the coming year. There were three movements to their planning session. First, how to be present to See and listen to the pain of the suffering people. Second, being reminded that Yahweh is the one who frees up the hand of those enslaved. And third, to consider what would be the group response in the months ahead. Promoters signed up for various areas. Some of the topics to be considered and to be remembered in prayer are: “The Clamor of the Poor before the Populism and the New Dictatorships,” “Synod of the Amazon,” Reflection on the World Day of Peace Message,” “Against All Type of Abuse, Inside and Out of the Church,” and “The displaced and the Migrants.”

MEETING ON COP 25

“Really, are we doing our work from COP 24 in Poland?” With these words, Archbishop Paul R. Gallagher from the Vatican Secretariat of State proceeded to open the seventh meeting of the Working Group on Integral Ecology on October 3, 2019.

Sr. Sheila Kinsey represented the JPIC Secretariat and the UISG and Fr. Ken Thesing represented the USG. They were among some 30 men and women who attended the meeting.

A brief analysis of the Katowice Climate Package by Marcus Wandinger & CIDSE (Chiara), indicated much needs to be done with this package, especially on the human rights issue. We must see if at COP 25, countries have the political will.

According to how countries are delivering now on their agreed targets (NDCs) the world is on track for a 3 degree C increase, not 1.5C or even 2.0C. The poor countries lose out to the highly developed countries. The poorest countries are put at the heart of the talk, but not in the conclusions. Nationalisms, not multiculturalism dominates.

Archbishop Gallagher remarked that we are at a different moment now than at Katowice. Msg Duff mentioned moral and ethical issues must rate for us with science and economic issues. With the USA leaving the Paris Agreement in COP 24, too much individual interest left it impossible to reach common conclusions.

The Holy See can emphasize its critical role to fill what others cannot by calling for moral imperatives. The Church has a role to speak seriously for integral human development. Archbishop Gallagher mentioned the Church has been on this road of science and the Secretariat of State will take a more diplomatic approach regarding the core message. We have to identify those things only the Holy See can emphasize.

Prospects for COP 25

The Chilean Bishop spoke of the efforts of the Chilean Bishops Conference to move/change the Chilean people’s minds towards the importance of these issues using Laudato Si’. Speakers were emphasizing that we must keep in focus issues like lifestyle change, mining disruption and pollution, and landgrabbing.
Yes, said Archbishop (now Cardinal) Terrazini, industrial processes do not respect borders (e.g., water, air pollution livelihood disruption). An African representative said the ‘Green Belt’ initiative was spoken of by COP 21—no one talks of it anymore. Ninety percent of Lake Chad has dried up, bringing conflict among people and migration. In these and so many issues, there is the question of ‘whose rights?’ Whose rights take precedence in questions of land, water, forests, mining, and development?

Archbishop Gallagher expressed his appreciation for the full participation of all and encouraged continued reflection on the important points discussed today but especially that we keep in mind how Pope Francis is speaking more and more about the issue of lifestyle; putting Laudato Si’ into practice is our challenge.—

Contributed by Ken Thesing, MM, representative of ICR at FAO.

BREAKING NEWS: The venue for COP 25 has been moved to Madrid, Spain.

SEMINAR ON WEST PAPUA

O n 2 October, West Papua Network in Rome organized the seminar “West Papua, a neglected heaven — justice and human rights based on the Gospel value-” at Augustinianum to address the issue of human rights violation of indigenous West Papuan people. The local Catholic church of the five dioceses in West Papua and some religious congregations working in West Papua recently published the three-year human rights report, and the English translation was launched during the seminar.

Fr. Anthony Banks, OSA and Mr. Budi Tjahjono from Franciscans International introduced the context and the contents of the human rights report, and showed the interview video of Bp. Datus Hilarion Lega, the bishop of Manokwari-Sorong Diocese. Bp. Lega expressed the necessity of continuous effort to work for the promotion of human rights. Fr. Jan Pieter Fatem, OSA, who is the indigenous Papuan himself working in West Papua, spoke about the concern about the human rights violation from the indigenous point of view and the environmental crisis due to the development projects, such as palm oil plantation and mining projects. The indigenous people do not benefit much from the economic gain, but they have to bear the environmental damage. In addition, he also mentioned about the humanitarian crisis, especially in the highland, as a result of on-going political tension in the region.

Mr. Peter Arndt, the Executive Officer of Justice & Peace Commission of Brisbane Diocese, spoke online. One of the key issues was the on-going human rights violation in Papua since the integration to Indonesia in 1969. There is a need to have a sustainable solution which should be acceptable for the indigenous Papuan. He was followed by H.E. Mr. Antonius Agus Sriyono, the ambassador of Indonesia to the Holy See, who spoke about the policy of President Joko Widodo on the issue of human rights in Papua. He mentioned the commitment of the Indonesian government on development in West Papua and the challenges. Sr. Elly van Dijk, FDNSC presented the concerns and work of their sisters and brothers in West Papua. She expressed the importance of interculturality and about the human rights violation issue in our own religious communities. Fr. Budi Kleden, SVD sent a video message and shared his experience of his recent visit to West Papua when there was a huge protest. Mr. Tjahjono introduced the international advocacy effort especially through UN for the betterment of the human rights situation of the indigenous people in West Papua. He took up some pledges that the Indonesian government has to follow up.

There were around 35 participants with a good number of Indonesian religious. We hope this seminar is a good start to start talking about the issue and to collaborate in different places to promote human rights of indigenous people in West Papua. You can download the West Papua human rights report from here.—Contributed by Daisuke Narui, SVD, congregational JPIC representative
POPE FRANCIS INTENTIONS FOR NOVEMBER

Universal—That a spirit of dialogue, encounter, and reconciliation emerge in the Near East, where diverse religious communities share their lives together. The video becomes available the first Friday of the month.

17 November—The theme for this year’s World Day of the Poor is “the hope of the poor shall not perish forever” taken from the book of Psalms. On this day Pope Francis reminds us that “the situation of the poor obliges us not to keep our distance from the body of the Lord, who suffers with them.

INTERNATIONAL DAYS

2 November—International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists condemns all attacks and violence against journalists and media workers, to ensure accountability, to bring to justice perpetrators of crimes against journalists and media workers, and to ensure that victims have access to appropriate remedies. It further calls upon States to promote a safe and enabling environment for journalists to perform their work independently and without undue interference.

Spanish: https://www.un.org/es/events/journalists/

6 November—International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict. Action on the environment is part of conflict prevention, peacekeeping and peacebuilding strategies—because there can be no durable peace if the natural resources that sustain livelihoods and ecosystems are destroyed.

Spanish: https://www.un.org/es/events/environmenconflictday/

10 November—World Science Day for Peace and Development. 2019 Theme: “Open science, leaving no one behind.” Science will be essential to reach many of the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and, thus, to ensure a sustainable future.

Spanish: https://www.un.org/es/events/scienceday/

16 November—International Day for Tolerance. The United Nations has launched a campaign to promote tolerance, respect and dignity across the world. TOGETHER is a global campaign that aims to reduce negative perceptions and attitudes towards refugees and migrants, and to strengthen the social contract between 7 host countries and communities, and refugees and migrants.

Spanish: https://www.un.org/es/events/tolerance-day/

20 November—Universal Children’s Day promotes and celebrates the rights of children, including the right to life, to health, to education and to play, as well as the right to family life, to be protected from violence, to not be discriminated, and to have their views heard.

Spanish: https://www.un.org/es/events/childrenday/

20 November—Africa Industrialization Day draws attention to the efforts of governments and other organizations in many Africa countries to examine ways to stimulate Africa’s economy.

Spanish: https://www.un.org/es/events/africaday/

25 November—International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women aims to raise public awareness and to mobilize people everywhere to bring about change that eliminates violence against women.

Spanish: https://www.un.org/es/events/endviolenceday/

29 November—International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People reaffirms the commitment to support just peace for the people of Israel and Palestine. This is an International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.


30 November—Day of Remembrance for all Victims of Chemical Warfare. This commemoration will provide an opportunity to pay tribute to the victims of chemical warfare, as well as to reaffirm the commitment of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) to the elimination of the threat of chemical weapons, thereby promoting the goals of peace, security, and multilateralism.

Spanish: https://www.un.org/es/events/chemwarfareday/

2-13 December: Conference of the Parties (COP 25) will be held at Santiago, Chili. The purpose of COP 25 is to finalize the rules for the implementation of the climate change promises under the Paris Agreement. This framework deals with the green-
house gas emissions and the ways to keep global temperature risings to below 2 degrees Celsius with efforts to pursue only 1.5 degrees Celsius. See Bishops letter of support. Click here for a listing of the international days for the year.

**JPIC PROMOTERS MEETINGS IN NOVEMBER**

**4 November**—Core Group meeting, 3pm to 5pm at the Fratelli, Rm. 25.

**5 November**—ICWG and ICR at FAO meeting, 3pm to 5pm at the Fratelli.

**6 November**—Spanish/Portuguese Promoters Meeting, “Clamor of the Poor Before Populism and New Dictatorship”, 9am to 12pm at UISG.

**20 November**—English Promoters Meeting, Sr. Nonata Bezerra, SND will share her experiences of the Synod and engage the Promoters in a discussion on future directions, 9am to 12pm at UISG.

**30 November**—Prayer prepared by the Spanish/Portuguese Promoters, 7pm to 8 pm at Chiesa San Marcello.

**SAVE THE DATE**

**2-6 December**—Formation Workshop for JPIC Promoters. Theme: “New Wine and a Call to Holiness.” This workshop provides new Promoters with the tools needed to animate members of their congregation. Others engaged in JPIC-related ministries are welcome to attend the full workshop or individual sessions. Click here for more information and to register.