

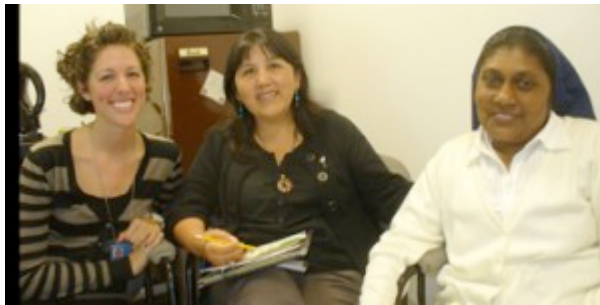


Updates October 2011

ACTION ALERT!

UNANIMA International and people everywhere need your signature. There is a signature campaign underway to get one million signatures before January 2012 to tell our governments that is important to us that all people have their basic needs met. To learn more about the campaign and to sign the petition, [click here](#).

New Interns



UNANIMA welcomes its three new interns for their three-month experience learning about the UN and the issues close to their hearts: Shiroma from Sri Lanka, Maria Antonieta from Chile, and Beth from the United States. This is what they have to say:

Beth Stortroen:

A whirlwind... a new way of thinking... a call for action... a new world inside of a world. These are all the thoughts running through my mind in my first weeks as an UNANIMA International intern in New York. I am Elizabeth "Beth" Stortroen from Denver, CO. I work for the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the Cabrini Sisters, in Golden, CO. Over the next three months I am hoping to educate myself on different issues such as women and children, water and climate change and poverty eradication. I look forward to this new path God has opened for me.

Shiroma Kurumbalapitiya:

I am from the Sisters of the Divine Saviour (Salvatorian Sisters) in Sri Lanka. I left Sri Lanka on the 15, September 2011 at 3:15 am and landed in the USA JFK airport at 3:15 pm. It was amazing flying about 20 hours in Emirates airline.

I am now living with the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary. There are 10 Sisters with 8 nationalities. What a wonderful experience!

I started my internship on September 19th, 2011 with my 2 interns from Chile and Colorado. Since I have been here I have had an orientation to know more about UNANIMA and why we are here. I have participated in working groups on poverty eradication, social development and poverty and climate change, trafficking, finances and hearing from the Holy See about their programme for the year.. One of the touching topics was climate

change. This is first time I have heard about it and I realized it is big issue in the future for all of us.

Maria Antonieta Trimpay:

In the first place, I want to thank UNANIMA and its coordinator for giving me this wonderful opportunity of an internship. This time in New York where I will be learning directly about the organization and the actions of the UN as a member of UNANIMA is really a privileged space in my formation.

Through this internship I hope to get more knowledge about the mechanisms and resources that can be used as a Sister of Providence for working in networks in which we strengthen each other mutually in our commitment and responsibility to ensure a society with opportunities for all.

UN General Assembly begins

Intern Beth Stortroen attended one of the early sessions and reports: In its first high-level meeting at the United Nations, the heads of state tackled the issue of Desertification on Tuesday 20 September 2011. Desertification is explained as the subtle and complex process of deterioration of land in the world's dry lands that is home to over 2 billion people. This issue, although new to the General Assembly, has devastating implications; poverty, food security and deteriorating land conditions. While tackling this global issue, the heads of state discussed their countries experiences with Desertification and what is being done to eradicate its causes.

Zimbabwe, and its "Million Tree Campaign," presented a compelling plan for the future of Desertification on their lands. Although simple in its design, planting trees can counteract climate change, improve access to water and regenerate soil to increase its productivity to name a few of its positive outcomes. According to UNEP, (United Nations Environment Programme) the world would have to plant 10 billion trees during 10 years to repair the damage done during the last 10 years. The question however remains, what seems like a modest plan, can it be implemented in some of the rural areas most affected by desertification and help combat climate change and poverty?

10th Anniversary Launched

UNANIMA board members and friends and colleagues met at the Church Centre on 1 October to being a six month celebration of UNANIMA's existence as an NGO working at the United Nations. The day was also an occasion to award the fourth annual woman of courage prize to Jessica Ernst from Rosebud, Alberta (Canada). She was honored for her courage in standing up to the government of Canada and the gas companies who are fracking natural gas underneath her land and contaminating her water. She

is suing them for violation of her Charter Rights as a Canadian citizen. UNANIMA believes this process of fracking is a major threat to the fresh water supplies throughout the world and we support Jessica in her efforts to bring this threat to our attention.

Presenting the Sisters of Saint Anne

The Sisters of Saint Anne are an international congregation of over 500 women religious.

Following Christ, The Sisters of Saint Anne continue the mission bequeathed to them by their foundress, Esther Blondin (1809-1890). This mission directs them to their brothers and sisters to help them grow in truth, freedom and life. Everywhere they go, they want to open their hearts to life and to transform all those situations that try to suppress it. United and in solidarity with others, particularly with women, youth, the poor and the marginalized, they want to create a world that is more just and human. Their activities are exercised where there is a void to be filled, most notably in the fields of education, health care and pastoral work. (Some examples of these activities are given below.)

The congregation was founded in Vaudreuil, a village near Montreal when, in 1850, Esther Blondin (known in religion as Mother Marie Anne) and four companions pronounced their first vows.

In time, as the number of sisters increased, they were asked to serve in other parts of the world. They now serve in localities in Quebec, Ontario, the Pacific Northwest, the United States, Haiti, Chile, and Cameroon, Africa.

In the context of the 21st century global economy, the congregation seeks to act on the level of systemic change. The Sisters of St. Anne are actively striving for the promotion and defense of the fundamental rights of other human beings, notably the right to education, affordable housing and health care.

Some areas of concern that have been or are being addressed by the Sisters of Saint Anne include:

- 1) the right of all human beings to have access to safe drinking water in all the countries where the sisters minister;
- 2) the difficulties and obstacles faced by immigrants;
- 3) the reality of human trafficking;
- 4) Eco-economy;
- 5) option for reconciliation with First Nations people, victims of colonization and the present economy. In particular, the Sisters of St. Anne support initiatives to counteract the violence shown to First Nations women and children.

These efforts imply that the congregation will be continuing its engagement in social responsibilities to help ensure a world where human rights are respected and promoted.