

ISSUES AND ACTIONS

November 2010



The mission of the Earth Charter Initiative is to promote the transition to sustainable ways of living and a global society founded on a shared ethical framework that includes respect and care for the community of life, ecological integrity, universal human rights, respect for diversity, economic justice, democracy, and a culture of



If our Church is to be properly political and apolitical (and it must know how and when) then it must be properly mystical – again and always seeking the contemplative center.

Richard Rohr

We are awash in negativity, daily news, political, religious dissensions, worldwide wars and catastrophes. We can be tempted to a sense of helplessness in facing global problems. We can easily forget that, in our efforts to make a difference, we are connected to a power greater than ourselves.

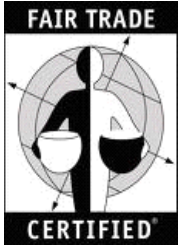
Although the problems of each era are unique, and our present circumstances hold dire possibilities if not properly addressed, history teaches us that humankind has overcome huge and daunting circumstances. The overrun of Europe by barbarians, the Black Death, the ascendancy of nazism, the threat of communism, the corruption of rulers and of popes and bishops...saints and mystics, as well as the general faithful, survived it all, doing what they could in prayer and action.

In spite of the U.N. attempt to eradicate dire poverty and injustice through the Millennium Development Goals, nearly a fifth of the world's population live on less than a dollar a day. Such poverty leads to persons leaving their homeland to seek a better life, and face great perils in attempting to do so. Families in such dire straights are vulnerable to the many forms of human trafficking—forced labor, prostitution, and manifold ways of exploitation.



Courtesy of Trade as One

What, beyond prayer, can we as groups and individuals do?



As the holidays approach, and gift giving is on our minds, we have many opportunities to purchase products labeled Fair Trade Certified, such as coffee, tea and chocolate. We can also make a difference in the lives of the desperately poor by choosing from the Heifer Project or from Catholic Relief Services throughout the world. Many in our own neighborhoods this year are also in want, and we can seize



opportunities to help them also through donations of food and clothing, as well as toys for children.

The Prince of Peace, whose coming we prepare to celebrate, tells us: "...whatever you did for the least of these brothers or sisters of mine, you did for me." –Mt.25:40

There is no better way to celebrate Christ's birth and to proclaim his coming among us than this!

Check out these websites:

www.crs.org

www.heifer.org

www.fairusa.org

www.globalexchange.org

www.crsfairtrade.org

Prepared by the Peace and Justice Committee