



**JUSTICE, PEACE AND INTEGRITY OF CREATION (JPIC)
Communication No. 3**

October 6th, 2015

Dear Sisters,

The following text is a way of deepening our understanding of JPIC and we offer it for your reflection. It is a framework from which any issue of JPIC can be considered. At the end of the text are some questions which you are invited to use and share as you wish.

TRANSFORMING RELATIONSHIPS

Religious of the Sacred Heart are called to enter an ongoing process of transformation for the service of God's mission of love in a blessed and broken world. (Const.21, *Life Unfolding, Offering the Gift*, 7). The initial charism for such a project came through Saint Madeline Sophie Barat (1779-1865).

The spiritual energy for such a vast project came from Sophie's insight into the love of God revealed in the Heart of Christ wounded on Calvary. The ultimate range of her vision was the transformation of her world, 'into a multitude of adorers, in spirit and in truth'(Jn.4.23) (Phil Kilroy, *Madeleine Sophie Barat A Life* (Cork University Press), 2000, Epilogue: pp 429-432).

The language of transformation has always been the preferred way RSCJ have expressed themselves as women who seek and share God's love in relationship with God, each other, all people, and with all creation. RSCJ today are invited to enter this process of transformation through renewed integration of community, interior life, and a simple life among the poor (*Life Unfolding, Offering the Gift*, 14). These three means invite RSCJ to allow the Spirit's work of transformation to integrate three levels of relationship: communal, individual, and planetary. Today, "(o)ur spirituality is embodied by our becoming global citizens and it revitalizes our vocation to transform the world with the hearts and minds of educators" (*Life Unfolding, Offering the Gift*, 23).

Transforming Relationships: a means for understanding an RSCJ perspective on JPIC

The concept "transforming relationships" and the graphic below, describe an RSCJ expression of Justice, Peace, and the Integrity of Creation (JPIC). The threefold, circular movement, "compassion, relationships, transformation" is the dynamic that best expresses a Sacred Heart understanding of JPIC. This was articulated by RSCJ worldwide and with others who participated in the *Society of the Sacred Heart's JPIC Spiritual Journey: Lent to Pentecost* in 2012.

SOCIETÀ DEL SACRO CUORE – CASA GENERALIZIA

The term JPIC comes to us from the World Council of Churches (1991). Within the Roman Catholic tradition, the most common structure for analysing issues of JPIC and responding to the signs of the times is the See, Judge, Act model (also known as Head, Heart, Feet or Head, Heart, Hands). The three-fold dynamic: compassion, relationships, transformation, offers a unique Sacred Heart perspective. It puts explicit focus on transforming relationships as the foundation of an RSCJ understanding of the See, Judge, Act model.

- a) **Compassion: to see through the perspective of transforming relationships** brings an attitude of hope to a broken world. Sophie was convinced of the primacy of God's love, and through God's love saw possibilities for the transformation of lives and social structures. In her time and place, the best means available for women to participate in God's mission of love was through the education of girls. In contemporary times, the international Society continues to view the world first through God's eyes of compassion. We do this infused with the same hope for transformation of individuals, and of structures that inflict suffering on the most vulnerable people and endanger all life on Earth. Today the means available for this work are multiple and varied according to context: teaching, formation, human development, promotion of justice, pastoral work, and guidance in the faith (Const. 13), to name a few.
- b) **Relationships: to judge through the perspective of transforming relationships** offers analytical and spiritual depth to the way persons participate in God's mission. We are aware of the extent to which all kinds of human relationships of domination have wounded other persons and our Earth home (war, racism, sexism, poverty, deforestation, natural resource extraction, extinctions, patriarchy, colonialism, etc.) Needed are new models of relationships, ones that do not discriminate. Therefore, to judge through the perspective of transforming relationships involves education. This is so that new perspectives can assist decision-making and so lead to personal and structural transformation. Right relationships can happen when there is awareness and openness for the Spirit to do her creative work.
- c) **Transformation: to act through the perspective of transforming relationships** implies Spirit. Transformation surpasses human efforts. "We have come to know that transformation is not the same as change. The strategies of change come from our own initiative, while transformation is always the fruit of an Encounter" (*Life Unfolding, Offering the Gift*, 11). Understanding that God's Spirit is involved comes through our experience of individual and social transformation that previously seemed impossible.

The work of JPIC is for us a work of relational transformation (personal, communal, social, ecological, planetary, and cosmic). It involves the contemplative and active aspects of our Sacred Heart charism, which remain one movement for RSCJ today. Seeing the world through the perspective of God's compassion, engaging in education and prayerful reflection, and acting from a deep place of love, help us to understand "transforming relationships" as a value, a goal, and a way of life.

Our mission is to discover and make known God's love. Transforming relationships through God's compassion is the contribution RSCJ bring to the work of JPIC. Ours is a conviction that at its foundation, JPIC are rooted first in the experience of God's compassion.

The Image: “Transforming Relationships” by Ana Morales, rscj

The image “Transforming Relationships” is a visual representation of an RSCJ approach to JPIC. It represents our blessed and broken world, and visualizes how RSCJ strive to be open to the Spirit who invites us to integrate community, interior life, and life with the poor. The image depicts a threefold movement for the transformation of minds, hearts, and actions within all forms of relationship: cosmic, planetary, and social. It represents God’s embrace of the simultaneous complexities of relationships as blessed and broken, and depicts how the dynamic charism of the Society of the Sacred Heart, to glorify God by discovering and revealing God’s love, can be transforming for all.

Some elements expressed in the image:

Sophie leads the way: The open heart shows energy and depicts the dynamism of the Sacred Heart charism. The open heart is formed by men, women and a girl. The figures in green and grey are doves. The artist expresses the transformation that is achieved through the action of the Holy Spirit.

A View from Behind and Below: We look at the open heart from behind and the world from below. We are followers of Jesus and our response is to the calls of the world. This emphasizes that we are not the initiators; we are capable responders who collaborate with the Spirit in the work of transformation. Following Jesus transforms our perception of the dominant way the world is more commonly viewed.

Water, Fire, Earth, Air, Humans, Plants, Animals, Energy, and Colour: JPIC reflects human and other than human life, all connected and sharing the same elements and energy. The artist says that the figure that emerges from the abyss of the continent is in red symbolising suffering. It could represent fire as well.

Blessed and Broken: The dynamic image portrays the complex realities of life.

Now it is your turn!

The International JPIC Coordination Committee invites RSCJ throughout the International Society:

- To offer your reflections on the notion and image, “Transforming Relationships” in order to enhance its collective meaning (Send to our Webweaver, Joy Luz, rscj)
- To meet in community and use the “transforming relationships” tool to engage with the Encyclical, “Laudato Si.”
- To share how you use this approach.
- To express the transformation you experience and witness.

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