



Committee on International Justice and Peace

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September 8, 2009

Dear Friends in Religious Life:

Especially at this time of economic crisis, we cannot forget our obligations to the poor around the world. As Pope Benedict XVI taught in *Caritas in Veritate*, “[S]olidarity with poor countries in the process of development can point towards a solution of the current global crisis.... Through support for economically poor countries by means of financial plans inspired by solidarity ... not only can true economic growth be generated, but a contribution can be made towards sustaining the productive capacities of rich countries that risk being compromised by the crisis.” The fates of rich and poor countries are linked.

I write to invite your religious order or congregation to partner actively with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and Catholic Relief Services (CRS) to promote our ***Catholics Confront Global Poverty (CCGP)*** initiative. This initiative aims to mobilize one million Catholics in the United States to confront global poverty by defending the life and dignity of people living in poverty throughout the world, and to urge our nation to act through advocacy and action.

The *Catholics Confront Global Poverty* initiative is inspired by Pope Benedict XVI's 2009 World Day of Peace Message, *Fight Poverty to Build Peace*. The initiative focuses its efforts on seven key areas that require more attention to effectively confront global poverty: U.S. international assistance, peacekeeping, debt relief, fair trade, natural resource extraction, migration, and global climate change. This effort provides ways for Catholics to confront these global poverty issues by praying, learning, acting, and giving. For more information, please consult the attached flyer or have your justice and peace staff person visit the *Catholics Confront Global Poverty* website: www.usccb.org/globalpoverty or www.crs.org/globalpoverty.

There are no costs involved in joining the CCGP initiative. We would simply encourage your religious community to distribute CCGP action alerts, updates, and resources electronically and would welcome hearing about events and activities your religious community and institutions take to confront global poverty. We hope to feature these local initiatives on our website. We would also ask you to consider placing the CCGP logo and web link on your community's website, but this is not required.

Please have the person on your staff charged with justice and peace issues contact the USCCB Office of International Justice and Peace (jzurcher@usccb.org or 202-541-3160) to indicate your community's interest in actively partnering with Catholics Confront Global Poverty or sign up on our website using the “Join Catholics Confront Global Poverty” link (www.crs.org/ccgp).

Thank you for your consideration. USCCB and CRS look forward to partnering with your religious community as together we confront the challenge of global poverty.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Howard J. Hubbard
Bishop of Albany
Chairman, Committee on International Justice and Peace