

# **Benedictine Coalition for Responsible Investment**



*Mount St. Scholastica*  
Atchison, Kansas

*St. Scholastica Monastery*  
Boerne, Texas

*Benedictine Sisters  
of Virginia*  
Bristow, Virginia

*Benedictine Sisters  
of Perpetual Adoration*  
Clyde, Missouri

*St. Scholastica Monastery*  
Fort Smith, Arkansas

*Benedictine Sisters  
of Baltimore*  
Lutherville, Maryland

*Benedictine Women  
Holy Wisdom Monastery*  
Madison, Wisconsin

*St. Gertrude Monastery*  
Ridgely, Maryland

*Monasterio Pan De Vida*  
Torreon, Coahuila, Mexico

## **Winter 2010**

Issue 5

### **2009 Benedictine CRI Meeting — Atlanta**

The annual meeting of the Benedictine CRI was held on October 22, 2009 from 12:30-1:30 at the Resource Center for Religious Institutes (RCRI) meeting in Atlanta. Approximately 35 Benedictine treasurers/business office staff attended along with Sister Susan Mika, the chair of the Benedictine CRI.

Sister Rose Marie Stallbaumer opened the meeting with the World Peace Prayer and welcomed the group. All were invited to introduce themselves. The group welcomed St. Gertrude's in Ridgely, Maryland. The monastery joined the Benedictine CRI, bringing membership to nine communities.

Sister Susan then shared with the group information on upcoming shareholder filing dates for the remainder of 2009 and reviewed the cycle for filing stockholder resolutions – usually October, November and December. She also distributed a packet of information and news articles. One article in The Business Insider entitled “Group

of Nuns Attacks Goldman Over Large Bonuses” spoke about a shareholder resolution on pay disparity filed by the Benedictine Sisters of Mount Angel, Oregon. There have been over thirty press articles, talking about the Sisters and other religious shareholders raising these questions.

Other updates were on how to access the health reform proposals and what is happening or not happening with the overhaul of the financial regulatory system. During the upcoming holidays, The Body Shop is offering the proceeds from one product to help fund work against child sex trafficking. Tyson Foods and Cargill Foods are being sued in Oklahoma over their practice of polluting the one million-acre watershed in Oklahoma and Arkansas with bird waste. The Sisters in Fort Smith are very interested in this because it is in their area. The group looked at Pope Benedict XVI's papal encyclical “Caritas in Veritate” and saw quotes related to the current financial crisis, ethics and economics.

A time for comments and questions followed. Everyone left energized and amazed by the difference we all make.

*Minutes by  
Rose Marie*

*Stallbaumer,  
OSB*

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# Reflection For 2010

## A Thought for 2010

by BRIANNA DIMAS

*"It is time now for us to rise from sleep."*

**—Saint Benedict**

As does every beginning of a new year, it begs the reflections of the past year, as well as resolutions for the future. What better time than now to reflect on Saint Benedict's teachings? He wrote his world-renowned "Rule of Saint Benedict" in the sixth century during a time when society around him was falling apart, the time of the fall of the Roman Empire. Benedict knew that this was a time, more than ever, when people needed guidance and reassurance and hope.

Thinking back on this past year, it's been one full of trials and tribulations in many ways. Everyone is feeling the stress of our damaged economy, in some shape or form. Maybe we, too, should return to the "Rule of Saint Benedict" for answers. In times of great misery, Benedict reminds us that our hearts are the empty vessels waiting to be filled by God. He tells us that remaining open to change is part of our mission of seeking God. Perhaps, we should do more than read those words, but really try and understand what it means to be open to change, to listen in our hearts instead of with our ears for opportunities God has for us.

Saint Benedict also encouraged us to reach out to others. He believed that by communicating and learning from the people around us ("praying and eating together") it would bring us closer to truly finding God and, consequently, peace. In times like these, we mustn't hide away from each other, despair silently, or blame one reason or person for our current situation. Instead, we must take the situations at hand, and turn to each other to find both inner peace and communal peace. We have to step out of our own problems, and be more aware of those around us. This does not mean diminishing our own problematic situation, but rather learning more about our own solutions and goals from those around us. By focusing inward rather than outward, we lose that opportunity to grow, and it is a necessary step to moving forward. Even while focusing on others, we still are helping ourselves.

I challenge you to consider Saint Benedict when making your New Year's Resolutions list. Try to think optimistically, and when you find yourself in a sullen place, challenge yourself to call a friend instead of ruminating alone. Go out with friends and family more; Saint Benedict reminds us that be-

ing social brings us closer to finding peace. Staying in doesn't help you and it doesn't allow you help anyone else. Stayed connected in community. Every day find one thing that is good in your life, one thing that you are thankful for. Write down what you want to be better at and promise that you'll work on that this year, then read that in writing every morning so that you will have it on your mind all day.

When some new opportunity finds itself in your lap, don't dismiss it because it is scary or unfamiliar. Use that unfamiliarity to embrace the new path God has brought you to. You may not understand it, but being open to change brings us closer to God. Perhaps, you'll find the most answers you were looking for in a place you never thought you'd end up.

*"Imagine all the people living life in peace.  
You may say that I'm a dreamer, but I'm not  
the only one. I hope someday you'll join us,  
and the world will be as one."*

**—John Lennon, Imagine**

Imagine a world of true peace. What does that mean to you? Consider what Benedict is trying to remind us. His ideas would build the image of peace, a world of people leaning on each other for solutions to problems... A world where we stop saying "no" to new changes and embrace God's plan for us... A world where we all join hands to eat and pray together. You may think that this will never happen, but if each one of us did our small share to make some personal changes and communicate with those around us, this unbelievable idea of peace could be our own reality. Remind yourself that peace isn't something to wait for, nor is it something that is going to just happen one day. Peace is something to look for in yourself, in those you love, and in everything around you. Peace is the small changes we make each day coming together in one achievement. Peace is already here; we just have to find it in ourselves and put all the small pieces of peace together to build this big, wonderful picture. So this year, let's make it a goal to truly reflect on the personal changes we can do to help make this idea into a reality. It's up to you.



Brianna Dimas is an Intern with the Benedictine Sisters. She is a graduate of Incarnate Word High School and is attending New York University.

# Coalition for Justice in the Maquiladoras Anniversary Event

## Anniversary

In June 2009, the Coalition for Justice in the Maquiladoras celebrated its 20th Anniversary with an international forum as part of the CJM General Assembly. Workers and activists from all over the world came together in Nuevo Laredo, Mexico, to celebrate accomplishments and to analyze the openings that this critical time offers; to learn from one another and strategize with collective vision and wisdom in order to overcome the challenges ahead. The message is that the only way that we can succeed is by standing united. Together we can advance our mission of empowering workers and women to defend their labor and human rights and mobilize for environmental, economic and social justice.

## Achievements

The *Stepan Chemical* and *Blades of Justice* DVDs and the *NAFTA From Below* book were produced by CJM. The Sony, Han Young (Hyundai), Custom Trim (GM, Chrysler & Ford,) DURO (GAP & Hallmark,) Lajat (Levi's) and Key Safety Systems (GM, Chrysler & Ford) workers' struggles are powerful testimonies of CJM's work. CJM set precedents as a pioneer in presenting international complaints under the NAFTA side agreements for labor cooperation. As result of its persistent work for social justice, CJM has been the recipient of the Princeton Community Peace Prize for Environmental Justice (1993); the Letelier-Moffit Memorial Human Rights Award (1994), the Quality of Life Champion award (1997), and in 1999, the President of the City Council of Oakland California proclaimed May 8 "*CJM Recognition Day*". In 2001, CJM received the Paradox Award from the Tides Foundation.

*Religious Groups have had a major role in founding the CJM, supporting all its works and in helping to successfully sustain it.*

**For twenty years, CJM has been a pioneer multi-sector organization. CJM is an international non-profit coalition composed of organizations from religious, labor, environmental, community and women's groups in Mexico, the United States, Canada, Brazil and the Dominican Republic. We strive for a better quality of life, sustainable development, social justice, human rights, and environmental stability. Our efforts are grounded in supporting workers and community struggles for social, economic and environmental justice in the maquiladora industry. We place special emphasis on defending the rights of women who suffer discrimination, humiliation, and sexual harassment in the workplace. Our actions are carried out wherever transnational corporations violate workers' rights and adversely affect their communities by destroying their cultures, traditions and polluting the environment.**



**June 2009, Nuevo Laredo, Mexico:** (in order from left to right) Rosario Ortiz, Past Board President; Martha Ojeda, Executive Director; Sr. Susan Mika OSB, Founder and Past Board President; Amelia Simpson, Current Board President.

## History

In June 1982, many groups from the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR) came to Brownsville and Matamoros for the meeting, "Problems Without Borders/Problemas Sin Fronteras". This meeting with workers, environmentalist, women's groups, unions, religious groups and interested parties formed an alliance which became CJM. The workers and unions developed the Maquiladora Code of Conduct for businesses with maquiladoras – this was one of the first codes of conduct. The Code of Conduct was used in shareholder resolutions to ask companies about their practices, their wages, the conditions inside the plants and their community involvement. The National Toxics Fund tested many of the ditches and ponds in the areas near the colonias (neighborhoods) and documented chemicals in them such as benzene, methylene chloride, PCBs and xylene. The report was published as "Border Trouble: Rivers in Peril". This report sent shock waves through the maquiladora business community because now groups were able to speak about chemicals by name and refer to the effects, as documented by Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS).



# Update on Parabens

## NEW RESEARCH ON PARABENS by KELSEY URBANCYK

Have you ever heard of parabens? What about phthalates? Parabens are a class of chemicals widely used as preservatives in the cosmetic and pharmaceutical industries. They are used primarily for their bactericidal and fungicidal properties. Phthalates are mainly used as plasticizers (substances added to plastics to increase their flexibility, transparency, durability, and longevity). These chemicals have been shown to change hormone levels and cause birth defects. If you woke up this morning and got ready in any way, you have come in contact with one, if not both of these chemicals. It happens when you wash your hair, brush your teeth, put on moisturizer, apply makeup...and the list goes on.

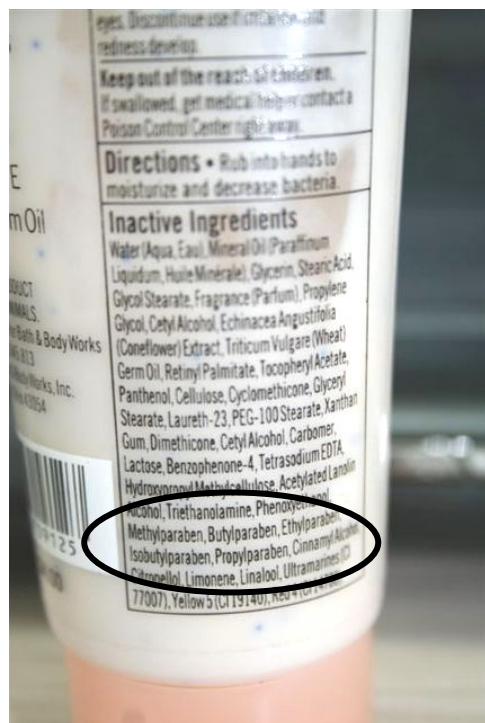
One makeup brand I have discovered that I love is called Cargo. They have a line of products called "Plant Love." There are several reasons why this is such a great line. For starters...the lipstick comes in a compostable case made from corn. This revolutionary plastic is

Phthalates are found in a lot of plastic products, including toys. Congress passed a law in August in an effort to shield children from these chemicals. This will require toys to be tested for safety before they are sold due to these chemicals being linked to reproductive problems. They are not only found in toys, they are

present in almost all plastics. Environment California suggests looking for items labeled "PVC-Free" or marked with recycling codes #1, #2, or #5 because these are going to be phthalate free.

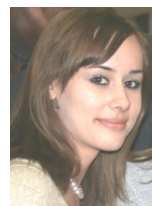
### Where to look for parabens:

- \*Body lotion
- \*Makeup
- \*Shampoo/Conditioner
- \*Mouthwash
- \*Perfume



also greenhouse -gas-neutral so it helps fight global warming. According to the website, the product is made without parabens, synthetic fragrance, synthetic dyes, petro-chemicals, or phthalates. For every sale, they donate \$2.00 to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. But the most unique thing about this product line is that the box the

lipstick comes in is embedded with wildflower seeds. So when you get home you can just moisten the carton, plant it, and grow flowers!



Kelsey Urbancyk interned with the Benedictine Sisters. She is a graduate of East Central High School and attended St. Phillip's College. She is attending Texas Culinary School currently.

## Bisphenol A (also called BPA)

### What is it?

Bisphenol A is a chemical found in common products such as automobiles, sports equipments, CDs, DVDs, food and drink containers, metal cans, and dental sealants.

### What's the problem?

The chemical behaves in a harmful way; it mimics estrogen inside the body and can cause severe health problems such as heart disease, obesity, infertility, diabetes, and cancer. It can also cause behavioral problems such as hyperactivity, impaired learning, and aggressiveness. Recent studies show that about 90% of Americans have some level of BPA in their bodies.

# Seeing Change in New Orleans

## ICCR Annual General Meeting 2009

### *New Orleans*

The ICCR had the wonderful opportunity to visit New Orleans for the AGM, beginning by celebrating The Isaiah Fund's First Year Anniversary. Some of our meeting sessions included "Predatory Credit Card Practices: Postmortem and Strategy Session," "Human Trafficking Strategy Planning," and "Global Health Strategy Planning." One of the featured speakers was Monique Harden, J.D. who is the Co-Director of Advocates for Human Rights. Her talk was followed later in the week with an Environmental Justice Tour, which highlighted the local area and all the environmental problems surrounding it, especially an area called "Cancer Alley."

## The Make It Right Foundation



The Make It Right Foundation is helping residents of the New Orleans Lower 9th Ward rebuild their lives and community living with the repercussions of Hurricane Katrina. Their goal is to bring at least 150 families home to affordable, green storm resistant houses.

For more information please visit:

<http://www.makeitrightnola.org/>

## Gathering to Pray for Preserving the Wetlands

### *New Orleans*

On Friday August 14, 2009, a prayer service was held by the Leadership Conference of the Women Religious (LCWR). Several hundred Sisters, including many Benedictine Prioresses, participated in the outdoor public prayer service at Woldenberg Park. The overall effects of coastal wetland erosion was graphically shown. The LCWR assembly passed a resolution to take new steps toward to reduce their carbon footprints.

### Photos:

Hundreds of signs like these, (bottom left) were held by many of the Sisters during the service.

The excitingly large crowd (bottom right) wrapped around the banks of the Mississippi River to discuss new steps taken towards preserving the wetlands.



# 2010 Filings of Shareholder Resolutions

## **Company: ABBOTT LABS**

### **Issue: Having a Say on Executive Pay**

Benedictine Sisters, Boerne, Texas  
Benedictine Sisters, Atchison, Kansas  
Benedictine Sisters, Bristow, Virginia  
Benedictine Sisters, Ft. Smith, Arkansas

## **BANK OF AMERICA CORP**

### **More Collateral for Derivatives**

Benedictine Sisters, Torreon, Mexico  
Benedictine Sisters, Atchison, Kansas

## **BEST BUY**

### **Principles to Combat Global Warming**

Benedictine Sisters, Atchison, Kansas

## **BB&T FINANCIAL**

### **Overdraft Fees**

Benedictine Sisters, Atchison, Kansas  
Benedictine Sisters, Bristow, Virginia  
Benedictine Sisters, Ft. Smith, Arkansas

## **BOEING CO**

### **Ethical Criteria for Accepting Contracts**

Benedictine Sisters, Ft. Smith, Arkansas

## **CAPITAL ONE**

### **Banking Overdraft Fees Practices**

Benedictine Sisters, Atchison, Kansas

## **CASH AMERICA**

### **Payday Lending Practices**

Benedictine Sisters, Boerne, Texas

## **CATERPILLAR, INC.**

### **Human Rights Policy**

Benedictine Sisters, Boerne, Texas

## **CHEVRON**

### **Comprehensive Human Rights Policy**

Benedictine Sisters, Boerne, Texas  
Benedictine Sisters, Atchison, Kansas  
Benedictine Sisters, Bristow, Virginia  
**Environmental Oversight**  
Benedictine Sisters, Ft. Smith, Arkansas

## **CITIGROUP INC**

### **More Collateral for Derivatives**

Benedictine Sisters, Boerne, Texas  
Benedictine Sisters, Atchison, Kansas

## **COCA COLA CO**

### **Having a Say on Executive Pay**

Benedictine Sisters, Boerne, Texas  
Benedictine Sisters, Bristow, Virginia

## **COLGATE-PALMOLIVE**

### **Having a Say on Executive Pay**

Benedictine Sisters, Atchison, Kansas  
Benedictine Sisters, Bristow, Virginia

## **CONOCOPHILLIPS**

### **Adopt Env. Policies - Wetlands Restoration**

Benedictine Sisters, Bristow, Virginia  
Benedictine Sisters, Ft. Smith, Arkansas  
**Oil and Gas Emissions Reduction**  
Benedictine Sisters, Atchison, Kansas

## **CORRECTIONS CORP of AMERICA**

### **Listing of Political Contributions**

Benedictine Sisters, Ft. Smith, Arkansas

## **DOW CHEMICAL**

### **Community Accountability**

Benedictine Sisters, Atchison, Kansas  
Benedictine Sisters, Bristow, Virginia  
Benedictine Sisters, Ft. Smith, Arkansas

## **DuPONT**

### **Amend Human Rights Policy**

Benedictine Sisters, Atchison, Kansas  
Benedictine Sisters, Bristow, Virginia

## **EOG RESOURCES**

### **Safer alternatives - Natural gas exploration**

Benedictine Sisters, Atchison, Kansas

## **EXXON**

### **Greenhouse gas emission reduction**

Benedictine Sisters, Boerne, Texas  
Benedictine Sisters, Bristow, Virginia

## **GENERAL ELECTRIC**

### **Pay Disparity**

Benedictine Sisters, Boerne, Texas  
Benedictine Sisters, Bristow, Virginia

## **GOLDMAN SACHS**

### **Pay Disparity**

Benedictine Sisters, Atchison, Kansas

# 2010 Filings of Shareholder Resolutions

## HALLIBURTON

### **Comprehensive Human Rights Policy**

Benedictine Sisters, Atchison, Kansas

## HOME DEPOT

### **EEO Disclosure**

Benedictine Sisters, Boerne, Texas

Benedictine Sisters, Atchison, Kansas

## IBM

### **Having a Say on Executive Pay**

Benedictine Sisters, Bristow, Virginia

Benedictine Sisters, Boerne, Texas

## JOHNSON AND JOHNSON

### **Having a Say on Executive Pay**

Benedictine Sisters, Atchison, Kansas

Benedictine Sisters, Ft. Smith, Arkansas

## LOCKHEED MARTIN

### **Weaponization of Space**

Benedictine Sisters, Ft. Smith, Arkansas

## MCDONALDS

### **Having a Say on Executive Pay**

Benedictine Sisters, Boerne, Texas

Benedictine Sisters, Atchison, Kansas

## NUCOR

### **List of Political Contributions**

Benedictine Sisters, Atchison, Kansas

## PEPSICO

### **Say on Executive Pay**

Benedictine Sisters, Atchison, Kansas

## ST. JUDE MEDICAL

### **Sustainability Report - Climate Change**

Benedictine Sisters, Atchison, Kansas

## SOUTHERN CO

### **Reduction of emissions**

Benedictine Sisters, Boerne, Texas

Benedictine Sisters, Bristow, Virginia

## TYSON FOODS

### **Sustainability Reporting**

Benedictine Sisters, Ft. Smith, Arkansas

## WALMART STORES INC

### **Having a Say on Executive Pay**

Benedictine Sisters, Boerne, Texas

Benedictine Sisters, Atchison, Kansas

## Special Thanks to our Recent Donors [2008-2009]

### Thanks to our Members:

- Mount St. Scholastica
- St. Scholastica Monastery
- Benedictine Sisters of Virginia
- Benedictine Sisters of Perpetual Adoration
- St. Scholastica Monastery
- Benedictine Sisters of Baltimore
- Benedictine Women Holy Wisdom Monastery
- St. Gertrude Monastery
- Monasterio Pan De Vida

### Individuals:

- Lady Ellen and Gerald Clark
- Jesse and Olivia Garcia, in honor of Daniel, Morgan, and Andrew
- Margaret Grohman, in honor of the Sisters of St. Benedict of Boerne
- Cheryl Grossman, ObOSB
- Dolores Houser, in honor of family
- Bobbie Rabke, in memory of Deacon Joseph D. Rabke
- Frankie F. Watson
- Jennifer D. Wood

### Groups:

- Benedictine Fathers, Elkhorn, NE
- House of Bread
- Sacred Heart Monastery, Yankton, SD
- St. Bede Monastery, Eau Claire, WI
- Sisters of St. Benedict, St. Joseph, MN
- St. Walburg Monastery, Covington, KY
- Benedictine Sisters of Elizabeth, NJ
- Benedictine Fathers, Woodside Priory, Portola Valley, CA
- Sisters of St. Benedict, Ferdinand, IN
- St. Paul's Monastery, MN
- St. Mary's Monastery, Rock Island, IL
- The Women's Hope Fund, in honor of the Sisters of St. Benedict of Colorado

*We appreciate all your generous help!*

## Caritas in Veritae, June 29, 2009 Pope Benedict XVI

“The Church’s social doctrine has always maintained that *justice must be applied to every phase of economic activity*, because this is always concerned with man and his needs. Locating resources, financing, production, consumption and all the other phases in the economic cycle inevitably have moral implications. *Thus every economic decision has a moral consequence*. The social sciences and the direction taken by the contemporary economy point to the same conclusion. Perhaps at one time it was conceivable that first the creation of wealth could be entrusted to the economy, and then the task of distributing it could be assigned to politics. Today that would be more difficult, given that economic activity is no longer circumscribed within territorial limits, while the authority of governments continues to be principally local. Hence the canons of justice must be respected from the outset, as the economic process unfolds, and not just afterwards or incidentally. Space also needs to be created within the market for economic activity carried out by subjects who freely choose to act according to principles other than those of pure profit, without sacrificing the production of economic value in the process.”

(Ch. 3, 37, Fraternity, Economic Development, and Civil Society)  
Papal Encyclical

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