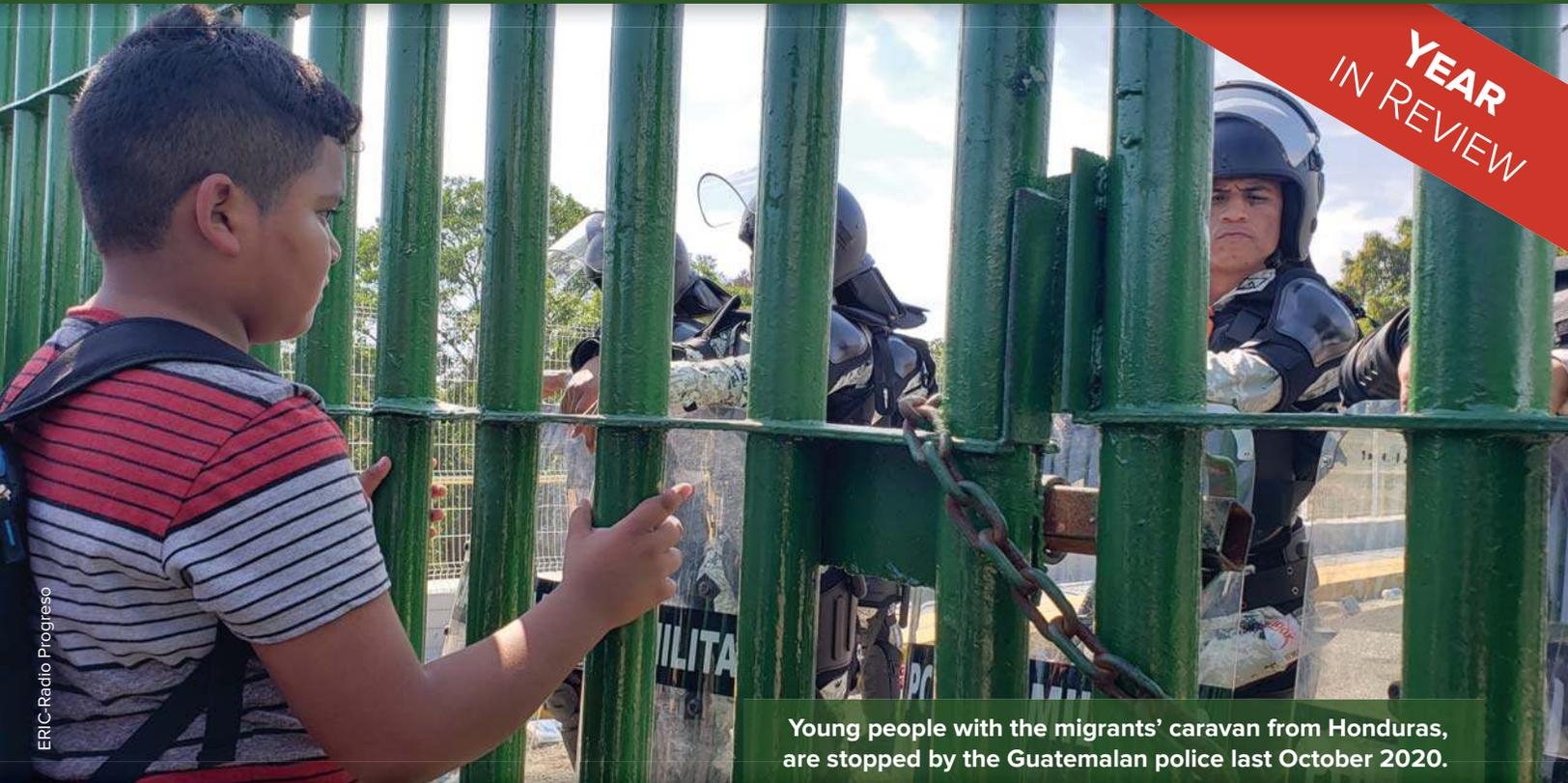


# BRIDGING BORDERS



ERIC-Radio Progreso

Young people with the migrants' caravan from Honduras, are stopped by the Guatemalan police last October 2020.

## THE **EFFECTS** OF THE **PANDEMIC** ON **FORCED MIGRATION** IN CENTRAL AMERICA, MEXICO AND THE USA

Rafael Moreno SJ is the Regional Coordinator of the Jesuit Migration Network – Central America and North America (RJM – CANA)

**C**OVID-19 has put us in a dilemma. We are faced with choices as individuals and as a society to move forward from our current predicament:

- we are either overcome by “fear of the other” or we grow in “solidarity with others”;

- we either assume an “every person for themselves” attitude, or we unite without leaving anyone behind;
- we either see God as the cause of all our suffering or as our comforter and support in facing it with hope.

The path we choose will determine the future of humanity. In Latin America, the pandemic has accelerated and aggravated the systemic crisis of migration in the region by exacerbating

the structural causes of forced displacement: inequality and violence. It has made migrant populations more vulnerable by creating a greater need to migrate, with more difficulty and risk: there are now fewer sources of income and support during their

# A WORD FROM **JENNY CAFISO** | CJI DIRECTOR



One of the first messages I received in the new year is from Fr Charles Chilufya SJ in Africa, lamenting the fact that it is unlikely that the vaccine against COVID-19 will make its way to poor countries any time soon. Fr Chilufya is the Coordinator of the Africa Task Force of the Vatican Covid-19 Commission.

Among the reasons he lists for this delay are countries that can afford the vaccine will make sure it is provided to their citizens first, and more significantly, poor countries cannot afford cost-prohibitive vaccines protected by patent laws.

Yet healthcare is enshrined in Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It is not a privilege for only some people. Accordingly, there are international agreements to ensure healthcare is available to all by allowing licences to be issued for the production of cheaper versions of medication or “generic drugs.” For this to happen, the political will of international institutions and individual governments is required.

In his Christmas message, Pope Francis said, “In this time of darkness and uncertainty regarding the pandemic, various lights of hope appear, such as the discovery of vaccines. But for these lights to illuminate and bring hope to all, they need to be available to all.”

In this issue, we review some of the highlights of the work of Canadian Jesuits International (CJI) over the last year. To use the words of Pope Francis, it has been a time of darkness and uncertainty, but it has also been a time when many lights of hope have shone. Our Jesuit partners in Asia, Africa and Latin America have been hit hard by the pandemic. It has not only affected them personally, but it has been especially devastating for the people they accompany and serve. Yet they have responded with creativity, courage and commitment.

The testimony of Fr Rafael Moreno SJ in the cover article illustrates how COVID-19 is affecting already marginalized populations such as migrants and refugees. Yet it is in suffering and marginalization that we also find a stubborn determination to fight for life, joy and hope. The same story is repeated in each of the many projects we have supported: each of them speaks of darkness and uncertainty but also of light and hope.

As Fr Moreno says, we are at a crossroad. The choices we make now, whether it is making vaccines available to all, or welcoming refugees or migrants, or ensuring a just economic recovery where no one is excluded, will determine the future of humanity. As we begin the new year, it is up to each of us to choose to be “lights of hope.”

## The **vision** & **mission** of CJI

The **vision** of Canadian Jesuits International is a world of peace, justice and integrity of creation, transformed through active commitment and finding God in all things.

The **mission** of CJI is to love and to serve by working with people struggling for social justice and dignity in the world. Together with Jesuit and other partners, CJI responds in solidarity, through awareness-raising and advocacy in Canada and supporting partnerships in the Global South.

To learn more about Canadian Jesuits International or to make a donation, please contact us at:

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## ↗ The effects of the...

| continued from cover page |

journey. It has also led to increased militarization and migration restrictions.

As a result, migrants suffer greater emotional and physical challenges during their exodus and require greater humanitarian assistance. Many of them are now stranded and destitute; disappear without a trace; are being unfoundedly stigmatized as carriers of COVID-19; and are more likely to be deported. Ironically, the pandemic has highlighted the crucial role migrants play in host countries as many of them are doing essential and high-risk jobs. However, they are not always adequately compensated or recognized or given health protection. They are often considered indispensable, but disposable.

Faced with this crisis, the Jesuit Migration Network, has increased services and adapted delivery: most shelters continue to serve migrants in person; other centres give psychological, legal and spiritual support and information virtually; they are increasing hospitality campaigns in host communities; they have developed new ways to monitor the status of migrants, to prevent, document and denounce human rights violations which have increased due to excessive immigration control and increased aggression from organized crime; they are also trying to influence governments in the region to end rapid and indiscriminate deportations.

This last issue is one of the most serious violations of human rights at this time: governments are using



📷 Guatemalan police stop migrants coming from Honduras last October 2020.

the pandemic as an excuse to deport thousands of vulnerable people without due process.

The Trump Administration carried out 59,710 expulsions between March and October of this year.<sup>1</sup> The Guatemalan government, under the pretext of the pandemic, forced the “voluntary repatriation” of 2,159 Hondurans who sought to reach the United States in a caravan last October. Among them were women, families, and unaccompanied minors, who were not allowed to seek much needed shelter.<sup>2</sup> Upon their return, young people risk being tortured or killed by local gangs (maras) from whom they sought escape.

The Mexican government threatened people in the caravan with 10 years in prison if they entered the country without complying with strict health measures.<sup>3</sup> This contravenes the government’s policy of not criminalizing, much less penalizing, those who disregard these measures. Mexico’s president himself does not even wear a mask.

Yet another caravan was set to leave Honduras last December 10 but was immediately stopped by the Honduran government. The authorities argued none of the migrants could verify undergoing COVID-19 testing.

All these restrictions ignore the root causes of forced displacement and the impact of recent hurricanes Eta and Iota on over half a million people in Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. A great majority have lost their crops, their belongings, their sources of income. As a member of the last caravan said: “I am forced to leave because I lost everything in the floods.”<sup>4</sup> “How do I tell my son, I don’t have a house, I don’t have food to give you?” added a woman while crying.<sup>5</sup>

It is clear that there is no basis for stigmatizing migrants as carriers of the virus and the real reason for deportation is the growing opposition of governments in welcoming them. We must assume a culture of solidarity and hospitality in order to realize Pope Francis’s expressed desire in his Encyclical Fratelli Tutti: “*If only this immense sorrow may not prove useless ... If only we might rediscover once for all that we need one another, and that in this way our human family can experience a rebirth, with all its faces, all its hands and all its voices, beyond the walls that we have erected.*”<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> <https://bit.ly/cbp-stats>

<sup>2</sup> JGM, *Informe Caravana 2020*, 3 de octubre 2020.

<sup>3</sup> INM, *Boletín 366/2020 Advierte INM sanción a personas extranjeras que ingresen al país sin medidas sanitarias derivadas del SARS-Cov-2*, 1º de octubre del 2020

<sup>4</sup> <https://bit.ly/radio-prog-101220>

<sup>5</sup> <https://bit.ly/eluniversal-111220>

<sup>6</sup> Papa Francisco, *Fratelli Tutti*, # 35

## RESTORING HUMAN DIGNITY AND PROMOTING SOCIAL JUSTICE

We thank all our supporters for helping our Jesuit partners who accompany poor and marginalized communities in the Global South, especially those displaced by war, violence and affected by COVID-19. In the next few pages

we list some of the over 30 projects you have supported in 2020, with one highlighted per region. For more information, please contact us or visit our website: [canadianjesuitsinternational.ca](https://canadianjesuitsinternational.ca)



### EDUCATION IN SOUTH SUDAN | AFRICA

Education is a human right and is of primary importance to the people of South Sudan. Africa's youngest nation gained independence from Sudan in 2011 after decades of civil war and continues to struggle with internal conflict. *Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) South Sudan* provides educational, health and humanitarian support services to some of the 1.67 million internally displaced people (IDP) in the country as well as 298,000 refugees, mostly from Sudan.

The Education Program of JRS operates in six schools in the city of Yambio and Maban. It provides meals and other essential items to 1,300 children suffering from the effects of war and displacement. The program has improved education and health services by attracting and retaining youth in schools, and relieving pressure on families that have difficulty providing for their children. In Maban county, JRS supports three Early Childhood Development Centres (ECD) and one Temporary Learning Space (TLS). The ECD centres aim to ensure children are prepared for basic schooling. TLS gives youth the opportunity to learn when they are unable to do so in a formal school.

COVID-19 has affected JRS's education work. Schools have only re-opened for sections dealing with exams. Others are not scheduled to restart until April 2021. Online and socially distanced radio tutoring has been implemented and JRS is working to get the full program up and running. Their programs on hygiene and COVID-19 transmission prevention has been highly effective as people have taken to hand washing and social distancing, but facial coverings have received a lukewarm reception. JRS South Sudan continues to invest in better infrastructure and technology to advance education, despite COVID-19. This offers hope and helps people see they are not being abandoned.

#### OTHER **CJI-SUPPORTED** PROJECTS IN **AFRICA**

- AFRICA – JESUIT CONFERENCE OF AFRICA AND MADAGASCAR (JCAM)  
*Pan-African Youth Leadership and Mentorship*
- AFRICA – JCAM  
*Tax justice advocacy*
- ETHIOPIA – JESUIT REFUGEE SERVICE (JRS)  
*Dollo Ado – Integrated Functional Adult Literacy*
- DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO (DRC) – FE Y ALEGRÍA  
*Access to quality education*
- SOUTH SUDAN – JESUITS OF EASTERN AFRICA PROVINCE (AOR)  
*Sowing seeds of transformation*
- ZAMBIA – KASISI AGRICULTURAL TRAINING CENTRE (KATC)  
*Capacity building in organic agriculture*
- ZAMBIA AND MALAWI – ZAMBIA-MALAWI JESUIT PROVINCE  
*Beyond Cyclone Idai – Towards restoration and reconstruction*

📷 Students from St Mark's Primary School in Maban, South Sudan listen to radio classes by Radio Miraya with instruction from JRS staff.



JRS South Sudan

## COVID-19 RESPONSE | ASIA

In March 2020, a national lockdown was imposed in India in response to COVID-19. The lockdown left migrant labourers in the cities without jobs and housing. Thousands of desperate people tried to go back to their villages but mass transportation was shut down. Many who tried to walk the long distances home collapsed along the way; some lost their lives. For the people who made it to their villages, the future remains



Shim Kallungal SJ

📷 Jesuits and volunteers deliver relief goods to migrant workers affected by COVID-19 in Kerala, India.

uncertain. They have lost their livelihood with no way to support themselves and their dependents. Migrant workers also face a new kind of xenophobia from the general population, one brought about by the fear of COVID-19. This is the reality they now face.

In response to this crisis, the *Indian Social Institute (ISI)*, an institution of the *Jesuit Conference of South Asia (JCSA)*, launched a joint COVID-19 Relief and Response initiative known as the #V4 Migrants Campaign. This project covers eight states in India and focuses on supporting migrant workers, daily wage earners and others impacted by the pandemic.

Canadian Jesuits International supports ISI as they help people meet their needs and find opportunities for their future livelihood. ISI helps migrant workers, travelling to their home provinces, arrive safely. ISI also offers transition help to those who remain in

cities. The help includes food, health care, safe shelter, transportation costs, accompaniment, and psycho-social support for the workers and their families. This support is much needed as several months after the initial lockdown, there are fewer work opportunities and they are also paid less.

The project provides basic necessities to 6,000 households: migrant workers, landless and temporary labourers, women who are the sole wage earners of their families, daily wage earners, the elderly and the homeless. They also provide training for 600 community volunteers as para-health workers. Their advocacy campaign highlights the problems and issues faced by migrants, especially now that the workers are unable to raise their voices against injustices due to new pandemic protocols.

### OTHER **CJI-SUPPORTED** PROJECTS IN **ASIA**

- CAMBODIA – JESUIT SERVICE CAMBODIA  
*Metta Karuna social services and scholarships*
- INDIA – GANDHI ASHRAM  
*Education and music training for poor children*
- INDIA – HAYDEN HALL  
*Organization and empowerment of poor marginalized women*
- INDIA – HUMAN LIFE DEVELOPMENT AND RESEARCH CENTRE (HLDRC)  
*Livelihood support and capacity building*
- INDIA – JESU ASHRAM  
*Healthcare facility and nursing school for poor women*
- INDIA – LOK MANCH  
*Community organizing for access to basic rights*
- INDIA – SASAC/SOJASI  
*Skills training and organic agriculture for local villagers*
- LEBANON – JRS MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA (MENA)  
*Education support for Syrian refugees*
- NEPAL – MORAN MEMORIAL SCHOOL  
*School for vulnerable children*
- NEPAL – ST. XAVIER'S SCHOOL  
*Education for underprivileged youth*

## REBUILDING LIVES AMONG DISPLACED VENEZUELANAS | LATIN AMERICA

The political crisis in Venezuela has caused the forced displacement of more than 4 million people or up to 20% of the country's total population. The *Jesuit Migration Network (RJM)*, the *Jesuit Service to Migrants and Refugees (SJMR) Brazil* and the *Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS)* in Latin America are providing humanitarian assistance to families displaced within Venezuela itself, and to those who have taken refuge in Colombia and Brazil. The Jesuit teams do so with compassion and dedication as they try to reach the most vulnerable migrants. They hope to alleviate suffering and mitigate the effects of the crisis by providing food, essential household items, lodging, transportation, legal and spiritual advice, healthcare (especially to children needing vaccinations and to pregnant women) and other emergency services based on need.

The millions of people who have been forcibly displaced are also victims of the growing xenophobia against migrants by local populations. To counteract discrimination, fear and prejudice, JRS, RJM and SJMR work with local communities to disseminate accurate information about the plight of displaced people from Venezuela and conduct educational and advocacy campaigns for both local and displaced people on migrant rights and the promotion of a culture of hospitality.

The spread of COVID-19 is aggravating the situation of those served. Inequality is increasing, with greater

### OTHER **CJI-SUPPORTED** PROJECTS IN **LATIN AMERICA**

- COLOMBIA – JESUIT REFUGEE SERVICE  
*Support for forcibly displaced people*
- ECUADOR – FUNDACIÓN RIO MANTA  
*Community kitchen for children and elderly people*
- JAMAICA – ST ANNE'S AND HOLY NAME PARISH  
*Support to students living in poverty*
- LATIN AMERICA – COMPARTE  
*Sustainable livelihood and production*
- MEXICO – A.C. INDIGENOUS RIGHTS CENTRE (CEDIAC)  
*Conflict Resolution from the Tseltal Normative System*
- MEXICO – DIOCESE OF SAN CRISTÓBAL DE LAS CASAS  
*Formation of Human rights promoters*
- PAN-AMAZON REGION – FE Y ALEGRÍA AND JESUIT SERVICE FOR THE PAN-AMAZON REGION (SJPAM)  
*Intercultural and bilingual education*

vulnerability and lack of access to rights for most. Migration patterns are shifting, especially at the border with Colombia. There is a marked change in the flow and migration of people, with an increase in entire families – including children and older adults – leaving their homes to seek refuge. With COVID-19, there are mobility restrictions and security measures that have adversely affected delivery of food and medicine, promotion of proper hygiene and provision of shelter, with much of the care now being offered remotely.



Glenda Pérez, a doctor from JRS, visits pregnant women in Guasdalito, Apure State, Venezuela, and delivers vitamins and surgical supplies needed for C-sections.

## A JUST FUTURE FOR ALL

Thank you to all our friends and supporters for making CJI's Giving Tuesday campaign, *A JUST FUTURE FOR ALL*, a success! We held 4 events to promote our campaign, including 3 webinars held in November 2020 and a thanksgiving online concert, *JUST Gratitude*, on December 1. The campaign highlighted the work of our Jesuit partners in the Global South who address the inequalities and societal cracks exposed by COVID-19, especially those most impacted by the pandemic: women, migrants and Indigenous people.

The first webinar, *Solidarity with South Sudan* held on Nov 10, featured Fr Augustine Ekeno SJ, parish priest of St Teresa Church in Rumbek, South Sudan, and two South Sudanese women, Lydia Casmiro and Rachael Angok. Fr Ekeno talked about the challenges facing Africa's youngest nation while Lydia and Rachel shared their experiences, hopes and dreams for their country.

*Accompanying forcibly displaced people in Colombia*, the second webinar, was held last Nov 17. Juana Potes, Programs Officer of JRS Colombia, talked about their challenging context: accompanying, serving, and advocating on behalf of forcibly displaced people amid a global pandemic.

*Resisting a democracy recession*, the last in the series, was held on Nov 24, with Fr Xavier Jeyaraj SJ of the Social Justice and Ecology Secretariat. Fr Xavier talked about the transformation of democracy in the world with the election of authoritarian regimes and how these governments are redefining justice, equality, human rights, and "development for all." Chris Adams, Rector of St Paul's College at the University of Manitoba, gave his insightful commentary after Fr Xavier's presentation.



Protesters rally in support of Fr Stan Swamy in Ghospukur Chowk, Darjeeling, India last October 17, 2020.

## IN SOLIDARITY WITH FR STAN SWAMY SJ AND HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS IN INDIA

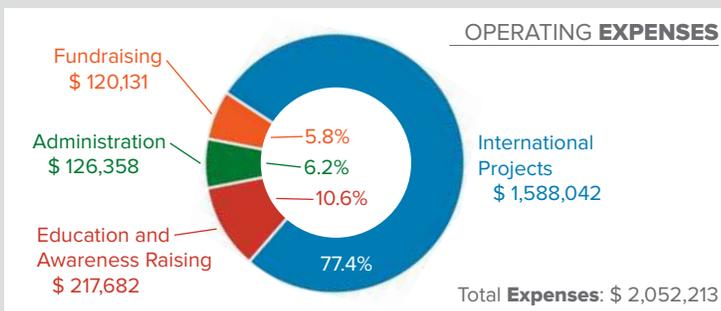
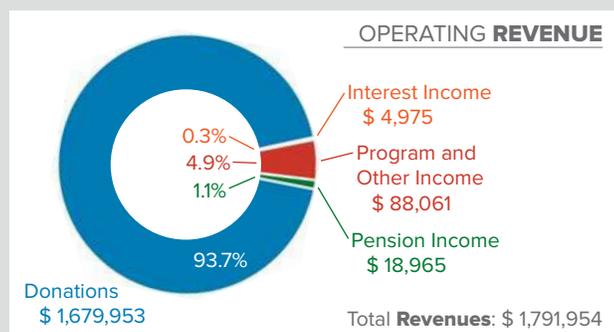
CJI stands in solidarity with Fr Stan Swamy, an 83-year-old Jesuit in India, and the 15 other human rights defenders detained by the Indian government. Fr Stan was arrested last October based on unsubstantiated claims of links to Maoist forces. People around the world have offered solidarity, urging their release, and condemning their incarceration as unjust and without warrant. Fr Erik Oland SJ, the Canadian Jesuit Provincial, has written to Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister François-Philippe Champagne to express concerns about the arrests. He has asked the Government of Canada to condemn Fr Stan's incarceration and to ask the Indian Government for his immediate release.

To view all our webinars, please visit:

<https://www.canadianjesuitsinternational.ca/webinars/>

### CJI STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

1 July 2019 – 30 June 2020



CJI holds investments, most of which are designated for specific projects. This provides stability for project partners and their ongoing work in the field. The income, including unrealized gains/losses of these investments are not included in the operations shown above.

## JUST GRATITUDE – ONE **EXTRAORDINARY** NIGHT

CJI held its first ever online concert, *JUST Gratitude – A little night music and other extraordinary performances*, last December 1. The event was held to prepare for Christmas and to thank

all our friends and supporters. We were deeply touched by the overwhelming response: over 250 signed-up, and 150 joined us for this beautiful occasion. People joined us from various parts of the globe. We are grateful to all the performers – poets, dancers and musicians – who selflessly gave time and effort to put together amazing performances. Many of you have expressed appreciation for the event, and have asked us to repeat it next year!!! We have started planning!

 Participants of the JUST Gratitude online concert sing Feliz Navidad.



## THANK YOU, **MIRIAM!**

All of us at CJI are immensely grateful to Miriam Lopez for taking on the role of International Programs Coordinator while Mercedes Arango was on maternity leave. Having held that position from 2015-2018, the transition was seamless. We are grateful for her presence, guidance and leadership during a period marked by uncertainty because of COVID-19. We wish her well as she takes on her new role as Global Shelter and Settlements Specialist with Norwegian Refugee Council in Oslo.

Emily Ding



## GLOBAL **CITIZENSHIP** AND **LEADERSHIP** COURSE

CJI is launching a course for secondary and post-secondary students on global citizenship and leadership rooted in Ignatian spiritual reflection, analysis, solidarity, collaboration, and action. The course will equip participants with tools for transformative leadership and will explore: 1. discernment and self-awareness for critical consciousness;

2. understanding composition of place and valuing our global community; 3. developing an appreciation for Catholic Social Teaching and humanitarian principles; 4. engaging in advocacy for environmental justice, human rights and sustainable economics. For more information, please contact Pieter Niemeyer at [pniemeyer@jesuits.org](mailto:pniemeyer@jesuits.org).

## **FR DAVID NORRIS**

Fr David Norris SJ died at René Goupil House in Pickering last October 31, just after his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday. Friends of CJI will remember him from the almost 20 years he spent in Zambia, primarily teaching at Chisekesi. For more information, please visit our website.

## **COVID-19** EMERGENCY APPEAL

Our Jesuit partners have not wavered in their support of people affected by this pandemic. We ask that you do not waver in yours.

Please **give generously** by making a one-time donation or a regular monthly donation.

Tax receipts will be issued for gifts of \$20 or more. All personal information is held in accordance with Canadian Government Privacy Policy.

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