

# ADVOCACY FORMATION GUIDE

**CJI works with Jesuits and other partners to support communities worldwide in their struggles for peace and social justice**



Fr Jacques Nzumbu S.J. and CJI Executive Director, Jenny Cafiso hold a press conference on Parliament Hill, Ottawa, on environmental and human rights violations in resource extraction industries connected with the green energy transition. Photo: Victor Reyes/CJI

# Table of Contents



• The what and why of advocacy	1
• Foundations of faith-based advocacy	2
• Ignatian advocacy is...	3
• Tips before you start	4
• Social analysis and advocacy	5
• Advocacy tools	6
• Sign a petition	6.1
• Write a letter to a Politician	6.2
• Meet your Member of Parliament	6.3
• phone your MP	6.4
• Prepare an elevator speech	6.5
• Write a letter to the editor or an article	6.6
• Write a press release	6.7
• Use Social Media	6.8
• Offer a public prayer witness	6.9
• Appendices	7

## **CANADIAN JESUITS INTERNATIONAL**

**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.**

"Joining hands with people around the planet energized in the Spirit and drawn to universal solidarity, we align ourselves with the poor, marginalized, and exploited of creation, inviting the rich, powerful and dominating to join us in the new creation being held out to us all."

Adapted from the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises, #146



*"I always wondered why somebody doesn't  
do something about that. Then I realized I  
was somebody." -Lily Tomlin*

Acknowledgment:

CJI wishes to thank Citizens for Public Justice (CPJ) and Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) for permission given to utilize sections from their advocacy toolkits.



# 1

## The What and Why of advocacy



### Why Advocate?

"Unless someone like you cares  
a whole awful lot, Nothing is  
going to get better. It's not."  
- Dr. Seuss, The Lorax



### What is advocacy?

At its simplest, advocacy is influencing outcomes so that change can occur.

If we dig a bit deeper, for us at CJI, advocacy encompasses the idea that there is an injustice or concern that needs to be addressed and requires focused attention. Organized actions begin to take place to change behaviours or policies in order to build more accountable and equitable political, economic or social institutions of power.

Digging deeper still, advocacy is rooted in a vision of the world: a just, sustainable, dignified, inclusive vision of the world.

### Why Advocate?

Faith informs us that when one part of the body suffers, all suffer, and so when partners in the Global South are suffering, especially because of actions and policies in the Global North, it is our responsibility to speak out and advocate for positive change to relieve suffering. For example, Canadian-based corporations have emerged as leaders in mining and resource extraction around the world. CJI partners from the Global South have asked CJI to advocate for laws that would hold these companies accountable for the health impacts, social disruption, economic exploitation, and environmental destruction associated with mining activities in their communities.



### 'A stone in a shoe'

Honduras is a country where speaking up and advocating for human rights can get you killed. Regardless of this fact, Fr Moreno Coto SJ, or "Padre Melo," as he is affectionately known, speaks up anyway. He speaks up and uses what means he has to amplify the voices of those who face injustices.

Each week, Melo and his team at Radio Progreso/ERIC raise awareness regarding political, social and environmental injustices that occur throughout the country. "He's a stone in a shoe for Honduran president Juan Orlando Hernández," says Fr Roberto Jaramillo SJ, President of the Jesuit Conference of Provincials of Latin America. Hopefully such stones will help lay new paths of justice for the people of Honduras.



CJI study tour participants in the Dominican Republic learn about the impact of Canadian mining upon local agriculture.



## Foundations of faith-based advocacy

*"Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves; ensure justice for those being crushed. Yes, speak up for the poor and helpless, and see that they get justice." Proverbs 31:8-9*



Lok Manch (People's Forum) is a CJI-supported project that advances human rights among marginalized communities in India.

2018-2-13

### Catholic Social Teaching: foundations for faith-based advocacy

#### 1. Human dignity

Faith informs us that all human beings are created in the image of God and therefore the dignity of the person is the foundation of a moral vision for life and society.

#### 2. Preferential option for the poor

Faith informs us that a basic moral test is how society's most vulnerable members are faring. Preference is to be given to those on the margins of society.

#### 3. Solidarity

Faith informs us that human rights are protected and responsibilities are met when we understand that we are one human family-neighbours one to another.

#### 4. Common good

Faith informs us that how we organize our society in economics and politics, in law and policy directly affects human dignity and the capacity for all to flourish.

#### 5. Rights and responsibilities

Faith informs us that human dignity is protected and healthy community achieved only if human rights are protected and responsibilities are met.

#### 6. The role of Government

Faith informs us that the State has the positive moral function as an instrument to promote human dignity, protect human rights, and build for the common good.



CJI study tour participants to the Dominican Republic join in solidarity with local organizations that are protesting government impunity and corruption.





# Ignatian Advocacy is...



## Loving

Ignatian advocacy is inspired by love of God and love of neighbour. It sees God in all things and values relationships built on justice, love and peace.

## Reflective and analytical

Ignatian advocacy is rooted in reflection and undertakes analysis on a local, national, regional and international level.

## Contemplative and self-aware

An Ignatian approach to advocacy recognizes that it is a spiritual endeavour through which conversion and transformation will emerge for all involved. As matters of injustice are explored, there is openness to discover ways in which we are complicit with injustice and in need of conversion toward justice and right relationship.

## In solidarity with the poorest and most marginalized

Ignatian advocacy respects the experiences and perspectives of the people and groups most affected by injustices. It stands in solidarity with poor and marginalized people, seeks to amplify their voices and advocates for their inclusion in decision-making processes.



## Discerning and reconciling

When our faith compels us to advocate and amplify the voices of those who are marginalized, it can bring about potential conflict with vested interests that sustain injustice. Discernment needs to be applied as to how to navigate negative responses toward opportunities of reconciliation. Reconciliation is to be directed toward a deeper justice.

(Adapted from Introducing the Ignatian Advocacy Network, Social Justice Secretariat, Society of Jesus, pages 22-25, 2010)



"The complexity of the problems we face and the richness of the opportunities offered demand that we engage in building bridges between rich and poor and establishing advocacy links of mutual support between those who hold political power and those who find it difficult to voice their interests."

35th General Congregation of the Society of Jesus, Decree 3, no. 28





## Tips before you start



### **Listen to people**

Advocacy is about helping to make things right for people. Listen directly to those who are affected by a particular problem. Ask them how you might help to “amplify” their voice. Be guided by their counsel. If it’s you who is directly affected, talk to others around you who might also be affected.

### **Do your research**

Make sure that you know the issue well. Talk to others. Read about the issue carefully and critically. Expose yourself to different viewpoints. Look to reputable organizations and institutions for analysis and reflection. Get the best information you can.

### **Learn the system**

Make sure you understand the political, economic, or social systems that can be used to make change. It is important to know some basics on parliamentary government and the legislative process. Understand how to act strategically within those systems. Citizens for Public Justice have produced a helpful guide covering the Canadian parliamentary system.

### **Work with others**

It is fine to advocate on your own, but it is even better to do it with others. Gather a group of people that shares your concerns and seeks to act on them. Discern together what you are hoping to achieve. Share responsibilities.

### **Plan carefully**

Take care in planning your advocacy strategy. While there are moments for spontaneous action, your advocacy is likely to be more successful if it is carefully planned. Be clear on your objectives and what you hope to achieve. Anticipate the resistance you may encounter.

### **Pray**

If you are a person (or people) of faith, spend time in prayer, seeking divine wisdom and guidance as you accompany those who are asking for advocacy. Pray for strength, courage and perseverance to face disappointment and discouragement and to persist for the long haul.



# Social analysis and advocacy

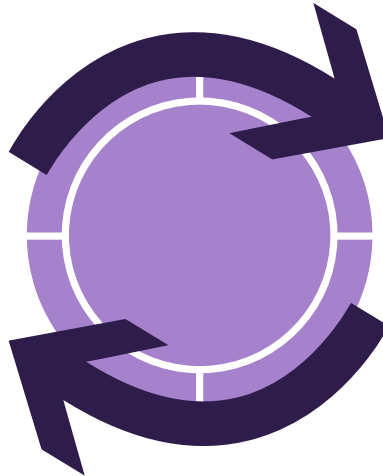


## 1. SEE

What are you witnessing? What is the reality of the injustice or problem? Whose voices are you hearing?

## 4. ACT

New ways of thinking lead to new ways of acting- addressing root causes of injustice and the promotion of the common good.



## 2. ANALYZE

Who has the critical decision-making power? Who benefits? Who suffers? Whose voices are missing and how does this affect the common good?

## 3. REFLECT

What new ways of thinking need to be engaged personally, and on a societal level? How is the Spirit of Christ calling us to act for the common good?

“We are not 'a voice for the voiceless'; we lend our privilege as a megaphone. — Samantha Baker Evens

## Advocacy: ‘To call’



- Informing
- Amplifying voices of the underrepresented
- Calling others to action
- Researching/writing/talking about the issue
- Supporting organizations

## Activism: ‘To do’



- Demonstrations
- Researching/proposing solutions
- Fundraising/funding efforts
- Preparing and submitting petitions
- Meeting with or writing to your elected representative



# Advocacy tools



## Letter-writing

Amnesty International says that a third of their appeal cases see improvements because of letter-writing campaigns. A personal letter to your MP (Member of Parliament) can be an effective tool for change. Whether you are writing individually or with a letter-writing campaign.



## Visit to politicians

The single most effective way to communicate your message to an elected official is through a face-to-face meeting,

## Awareness raising

Study groups can be an effective way to learn about a particular issue or situation and to explore potential advocacy options.



## Social Media

Posts can amplify your message and increase awareness across multiple platforms.

## Networking

Working with like-minded groups and coordinating efforts can be effective in multiplying outreach.

## Media

Letters to the editor or opinion pieces can be effective tools to increase awareness.

## Public Witness events and demonstrations

Public events can be effective awareness-raising tools to call for change.

## Workshops and lectures

Whether in schools, churches and other public forums, they can be effective awareness-raising tools.

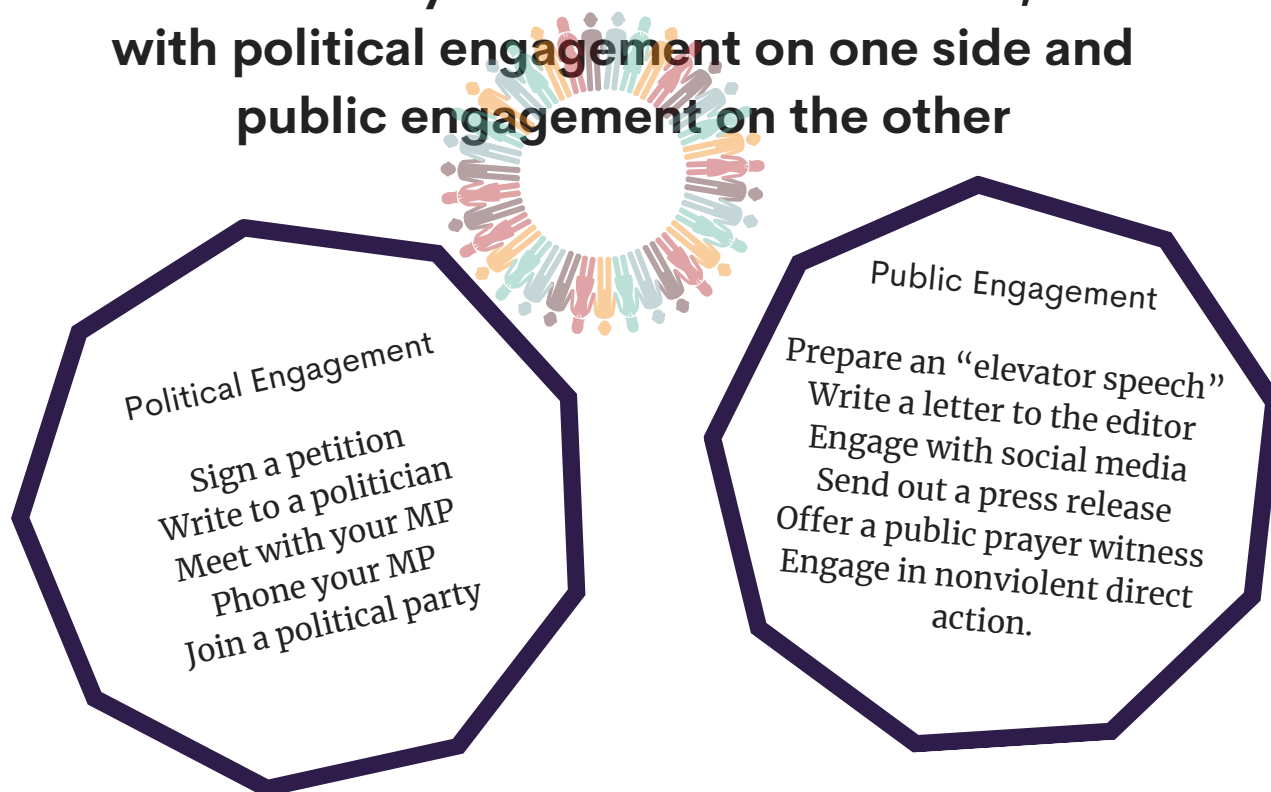
## Study Tours

Study tours are an important part of building relational engagement with communities and individuals directly affected by injustices.



Left: Ramón Ventura showing participants of a CJI study tour, the impact of Canadian gold mining on agriculture in his community. In his right hand is a healthy cocoa pod while in his left, is what currently grows. Study tour participants were able to meet and, learn first hand from, communities directly affected by injustices.

**Advocacy is like a two-sided coin,  
with political engagement on one side and  
public engagement on the other**



**Political engagement involves direct engagement with the political system.**

## **6.1 Sign a Petition**

When citizens add their names to a petition that is presented in the House of Commons, Members of Parliament (MPs) can see that an issue is important to Canadian voters (particularly if the petition has many signatures!).

Many MPs see it as their obligation to present any paper petition they receive from constituents in the House of Commons—this gets an issue on the public record. Politicians appreciate the extra effort that goes into gathering and delivering hand-written signatures. In recent years, electronic petitions have exploded onto the scene, making it quicker and easier to gather signatures in support of a cause. In November 2015, it became possible to create, sign and send electronic petitions to the House of Commons on the Parliament of Canada website.



Want to start a petition? Whether you circulate a paper or electronic petition, make sure that you follow the precise guidelines outlined on the website. Paper petitions, for example, should have a minimum of 25 signatures. Electronic petitions need to be supported by five individuals and sponsored by an MP, before they are made available for signing.

*See a sample petition in the appendices.*

Signing a petition may be a fast and relatively easy way to advocate; however, it is not generally as effective in bringing about change as meeting with, writing to or calling a politician. These latter methods speak more directly to those with decision-making power, and can allow for conversation around the issue you would like to discuss; whereas petitions can often go unnoticed, especially if not very many people have signed on.

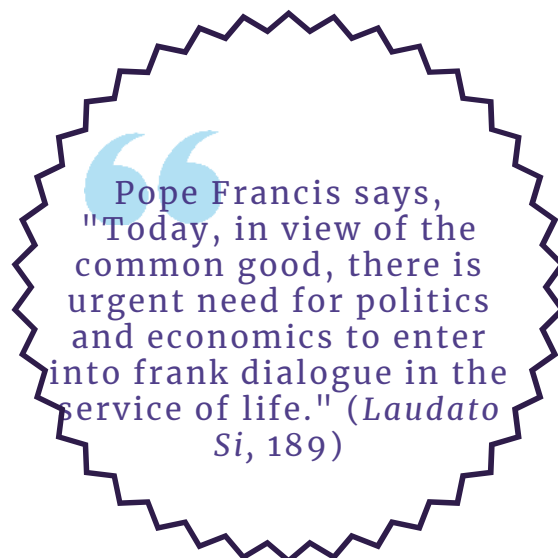
## 6.2 Write a letter to a politician

Letters are a very helpful means of political engagement because they let you make the case for why you think an issue is important. Make sure you are concise. For instance, even if an issue may warrant a 15-page explanation, the fact of the matter is it will not get read. When writing a letter to a politician, “short and sweet” should be your motto.

*Here are a few tips:*

- Focus on one topic or issue.
- Clearly outline your concerns.
- Keep the letter short (ideally 1-2 pages) so that an MP will be sure to read it.
- Use a constructive tone. Be critical but polite.
- If you have credentials or personal experience that would increase your authority, be sure to list these things.

Amnesty International (Canada) also provides in-depth tips for letter writing. They strongly encourage appeals to be based on international law, and to be factual, respectful and brief.





Consider all the relevant MPs who should receive your letter and share copies with them. If you are writing to the Prime Minister, send copies to your MP and to leaders of the opposition parties. Make sure to include your full mailing address.

Review the letter. Have a friend or family member read it over before you send it. See the appendices for a sample letter. Like paper petitions, letters sent by mail—particularly when they are hand-written, rather than typed form letters—still make a greater impact than those sent by email. Hard copy letters also require no postage if they are sent to this address:

(Name of Member of Parliament)  
House of Commons  
Parliament Buildings  
Ottawa, Ontario  
Canada, K1A 0A6

If you choose to send your letter by email, you can find email addresses for all politicians here:

<http://www.parl.gc.ca/Parliamentarians/en/members>

Speaking with an MP is usually more effective than writing a letter. However, if you do not have the time to set up a meeting with an MP or if you feel you can express your ideas more clearly through writing, letters can be powerful in communicating a message. This is especially true when MPs receive many letters from many different people or organizations advocating for the same thing.



Image of a painting by Mary Pimmel-Freeman of the Jesuit Martyrs of El Salvador and their companions.

### **‘A duty to work for human rights’**

On November 16, 1989, six Jesuits committed to the work of peace and social justice were targeted and murdered, along with two of their companions, at the University of Central America in El Salvador. Segundo Montes, SJ, one of the six, once said, "I consider it a duty to work for human rights... It is the duty of every human being who has the sensibility and sensitivity to the suffering of people." Their lives and witness call us to move from charity to justice and to move from complicity with violence to non-violent resistance to global injustice.

## 6.3 Meet with your MP



Believe it or not, MPs don't spend all of their time in Ottawa. In fact, many weeks are set aside in the Parliamentary Calendar for them to spend time in their ridings and meet with their constituents. A face-to-face meeting with your MP is usually the most effective way not only to advocate, but to build a relationship. They are more likely to remember you and your message if you meet in person; moreover, you will quickly gain a sense of the MP's own views.

However, meeting with an MP does require more time and effort in preparation and delivery than other advocacy methods. Making a good impression, communicating effectively, and coming prepared will open up the door for further advocacy efforts. Going as a group, with one or two other individuals, can make the experience less intimidating and also lend weight to the issue you are concerned about.

Below  
Donovan Martin, from St. Paul's High School, Winnipeg, addressing MP Staffers as part of CJI's *Just Change* advocacy symposium in Ottawa, Feb. 9-11, 2020.



### Before the Meeting

**Contact your MP.** Call the MP's office ahead of time to set up a meeting. Be ready with times that you are free to meet. Be flexible.

**Prepare your argument.** Do your research, prepare questions, and understand the MP's stance on the issue.

**Develop a short brief.** Write a 1-2 page brief that identifies who you are, what you are asking the MP to do, and why you are asking it. You will leave this with the MP.

**Determine who will do what.** If you are visiting your MP in a group, decide in advance who will take charge of presenting your concerns and what the responsibilities of each group member will be.

**Plan to keep your pitch short.** MPs are busy, and you may only have 15 minutes for your meeting. Decide beforehand what the crucial information is you want the MP to take away.

## At the Meeting

**Be on time.** Although you have a democratic right to dress as you wish, wearing “business casual” will eliminate any unnecessary distractions that may discredit what you have to say.

**Focus on only one or two issues.** Although you may have lots of issues to discuss, focus on only one or two, giving precise and clear arguments for your perspective. This will enable you to get your point across, and provide clarity for your MP as to what they can do for you.

**Share a personal story.** A story or personal experience can lend weight to your arguments.

**Don’t hesitate to ask kindly for clarification.** MPs don’t always give straight answers, or you may find their arguments unclear. It’s okay to ask for clarity as long as you ask in a respectful tone.

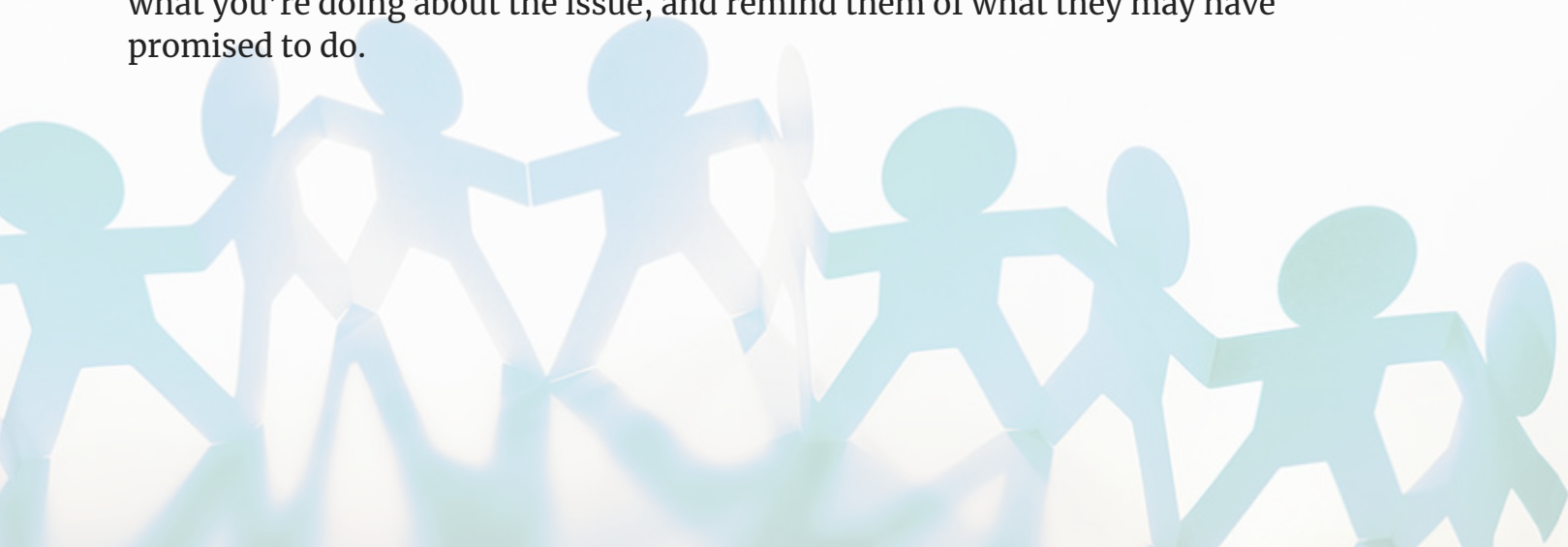
**Ask what you can do.** Sometimes, if an MP is particularly passionate about an issue or knows someone who is, they can give you resources or suggestions of how best to advocate. So don’t just tell them what they should do; ask them their opinion on what you can do to carry your concern forward.

**Ask for a response.** If you have made a specific request of your MP, indicate that you would like to hear from them or their staff in the near future.

**Keep it short.** MPs are busy people, and if you go overtime an assistant will quickly usher you to the door. Keep it short. Keep it sweet.

## After the Meeting

Make sure to follow up. Again, MPs are busy people. Be sure to send them an email or call them to thank them for their time. In the future, keep them up to date on what you’re doing about the issue, and remind them of what they may have promised to do.





## 6.4 Phone your MP



If you are not prepared to meet with your MP but want to share your view on a particular topic, phone their constituency office. Indicate that you would like to register an opinion and would like it passed on to the MP.

An assistant will take your name, contact information, and write up a brief summary of your comments to share with the MP. Make sure that your statement is brief, clear and concise.

A phone call does not allow for the building of a relationship, but it is still a very effective method of engaging directly with a decision-maker.

Calling an MP is especially helpful when an important decision is about to be made in Parliament—the more phone calls an MP receives on the issue, the better! Indeed, if you are calling just prior to a vote in the House of Commons, you should call the MP's office on Parliament Hill.

You can find phone numbers for your MP's constituent office and their Parliament Hill office here:

<http://www.parl.gc.ca/parliamentarians/en/members>

## Public Engagement

### 6.5 Prepare an “elevator speech”

An “elevator speech” is a short, succinct way of talking about your issue to get others on board. The name comes from the idea that you should be able to get someone interested in your cause in less time than a normal journey on an elevator. Your elevator speech should explain the problem, what needs to change and why, and how ordinary people can support that change. Practice your speech with friends before you try it out on others. Be prepared to speak clearly in more depth if you are given the opportunity.



## 6.6 Write a letter to the editor or an article

In a democracy, a major purpose of the press is to hold the government accountable by being the “eyes and ears” of the people. Newspapers and media outlets appreciate when citizens weigh in and offer opinions to ensure their work is factually accurate and that citizens have their voice heard. Writing a letter to the editor can be a great way to influence public opinion on a particular issue. To increase your chances of getting published, here are some tips for writing a good letter to the editor.

Make sure your letter:

- Responds to an article and does not just offer an opinion.
- Follows the paper’s guidelines for letters.
- Is short, clear, concise, and thought-provoking. The rule of thumb is 150–300 words maximum.

If you wish to raise a concern about an issue that has not been addressed by the media previously, consider writing an article or opinion piece. Check your newspaper’s guidelines for unsolicited writing. Make sure that you have done your research, know your subject very well, and write clearly. Make sure to have someone read your piece before you send it off.

## 6.7 Send out a press release

Are you planning a public engagement event or wanting to highlight the important work your group is doing? A press release is a very effective way of getting the word out. The main purpose of a press release is to convince media outlets that what you have to say is newsworthy.

Here are some tips for writing a good press release:

### Write a catchy headline

For example: *Ombudsperson holds Canadian mining companies accountable for human rights violations*

Imagine you have 10 seconds to convince a reporter to look further into your story. The title is likely the first thing they read. Do make sure, though, that your title is not misleading or false, or you will quickly lose credibility.

## Communicate the main points

Be concise and be convincing that your story is relevant. It's not uncommon for reporters to take things verbatim from your press release and put them into their articles. Therefore, include all of the things you would want people to know (who, what, when, where, why, and how) and communicate them clearly. The goal is to catch the reporter's eye and make drawing from your piece as easy as possible.

## Include quotations

Include an insightful quotation from someone — even yourself — about the purpose of your event or project. This gives your piece a personal touch and lures the reporter into your story. Reporters, especially from local newspapers, also appreciate when you put a local twist on your press release.

## Provide extra resources

Make sure that you make the reporter's research as easy as possible by attaching a link to your event page or any other literature or websites relevant to your cause. Add a good photo with a caption.

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## The life and death of Berta Cáceres

Berta Cáceres was born to Austra Bertha Flores Lopez, a midwife and social justice advocate who worked with refugees from El Salvador. Austra was a significant role model for Berta who followed in her mother's footsteps. They belonged to the indigenous Lenca people of Honduras, from whom Berta learned to respect and honour the environment that gave them life.

However, since the 2009 coup in Honduras, there has been an explosive growth in environmentally destructive megaprojects that threaten the livelihood and sustainability of indigenous communities. Almost 30 percent of the country's land was earmarked for mining concessions, creating a demand for cheap energy to power future mining operations. To meet this need, the government approved hundreds of dam projects around the country, privatizing rivers, land, and uprooting communities.

Berta Cáceres rallied people and waged a grassroots campaign that successfully pressured the world's largest dam builder to pull out of the Agua Zarca Dam. The dam would have cut off the supply of water, food and medicine for hundreds of Lenca people and violate their right to sustainably manage and live off their land.

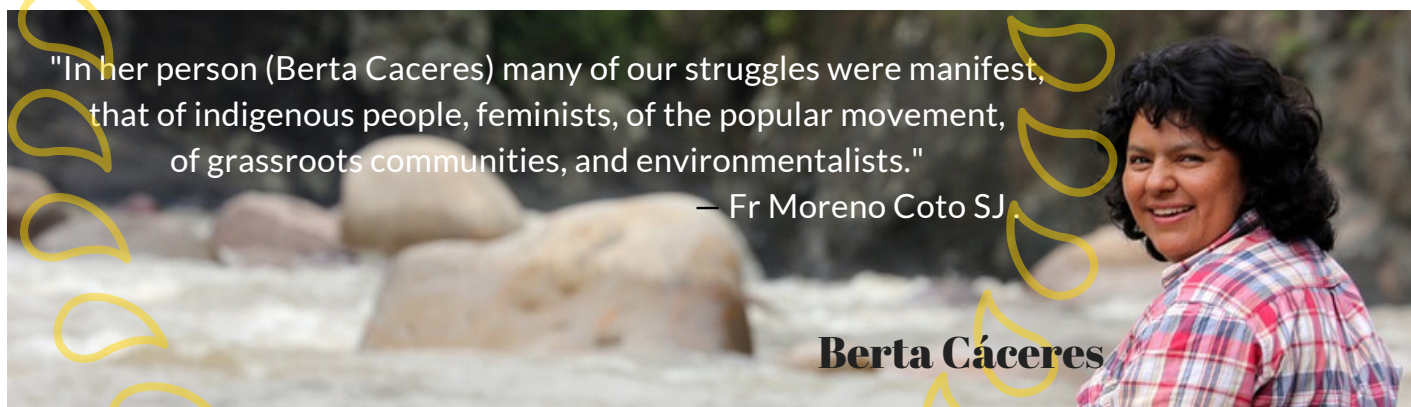
Bertha and her colleagues faced fierce opposition, and received regular death threats until March 3, 2016, when she was killed by gunmen in her home in La Esperanza, Honduras.

To this day, her killers have not been brought to justice and now her daughter, Bertita Zuniga Cáceres, continues the work of her mother and grandmother.

"In her person (Berta Cáceres) many of our struggles were manifest, that of indigenous people, feminists, of the popular movement, of grassroots communities, and environmentalists."

— Fr Moreno Coto SJ

**Berta Cáceres**





**Look for allies.**

Pay attention to what topics reporters cover, targeting the people you know have worked on the issue you are concerned about. For example, if you're advocating on refugee issues, look for articles on the topic and see who wrote them. Send your press release to those people. They will be more likely to take a closer look.

**Be selective.**

If you send reporters lots of information about many topics, especially topics they are not interested in, your emails will quickly turn into "white noise." On the other hand, if particular reporters are used to getting a good story when they hear from you, they'll pay closer attention when you do get in touch.

## **6.8 Use social media**

In our electronically connected world, social media has become a powerful tool for creating social change. Canadian Jesuits International uses Facebook, X/Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and Threads to engage its supporters, and has found these tools to be very effective in reaching a broad audience. Like anything else, however, there are more and less effective ways to use social media.

Using social media effectively requires savvy. People are employed full-time to manage social media platforms for companies, organizations and governments, and they are experts at knowing how to reach the public. So how do ordinary individuals make their voices heard through all of the noise of the Internet? It is possible, but it takes practice and dedication.

*Here are some pointers to start you off:*

**Don't use social media to replace other forms of advocacy.**

Ideally, social media should be used to enhance, rather than replace, traditional or face-to-face forms of advocacy. For example, using a Facebook event to organize a march, or writing a blog to update the public on the advocacy efforts of your group, are effective uses of social media to propel your advocacy efforts. On the other hand, using Twitter to vent your frustration with politicians without more personal contact is not very effective.

**Choose only a few platforms and do them well.**

Remember, using social media is a skill that needs to be honed. Start with a commonly used platform like Facebook, Twitter, a blog, or a website and make one of them the central hub that all of your other social media platforms link to.

Pay close attention to how other individuals or groups use these platforms as advocacy tools by visiting their pages; find out what “works” for them by measuring Likes, Shares and re-Tweets.

Follow those who have similar advocacy agendas so you can plug into a like-minded community and collaborate on important shared concerns.

**Know your goals and exercise caution.**

There are plenty of issues to get excited about. However, if you advocate for all of them on social media your voice will become watered down and people will begin to ignore you. Don’t share every article that you like. Moreover, think carefully about what you share and how you share it so that your opinions will gain respect and carry weight.

If you post articles that are not credible or offer distasteful comments, people will likely keep on scrolling the next time they see your post. You may also be upset by the injustice that occurs around a particular situation. Although it is perfectly okay to feel that way, using social media as an outlet for your emotions is a big deterrent for many readers. Your posts should be thought-provoking, but keep them professional and respectful.

**Reach your intended audience.**

Knowing your audience can be difficult on social media. Messages sent into the World Wide Web are accessible to virtually anybody and it is therefore difficult to know exactly who your message is reaching. Different platforms can be used to access different groups or individuals.

Here are some tips for advocating using specific social media tools and for getting your message across to your intended audience.

## Facebook:

- Use an organizational Facebook account, as opposed to a personal account which will connect you to your friends and family.
- Use Facebook groups and events to connect like-minded people, create an open forum for discussion or attract more people to a public event.
- Ask your Facebook friends to share your content on their website, blog, Facebook page or other social media accounts.
- Include links and original photos in your Facebook status to increase the chance people will read them.

## formerly known as Twitter:

- Follow X accounts that align with your advocacy efforts. This way you get to know the people that may follow you back or retweet you, expanding the audience that will see your message.
- Tweet directly to a politician, an MP or whoever you would like to hear your advocacy efforts.
- Tweet directly to groups or individuals you wish to partner with in your advocacy efforts.

## Using Hashtags:

- Use hashtags to gain interest from the general public by attracting those who share similar interests. They can be used on a variety of platforms including Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.
- Use hashtags that are already well used by other users. Creating original hashtags is not likely to relay your message to a wide audience.
- Don't overdo it: Tweets with hashtags have been found to receive twice as much engagement than those without; however, those with more than two hashtags actually showed a 17 per cent drop in engagement. And let's face it, nobody wants to read this: #Hashtags are essential #to most tweets #but too many #make #tweets #unreadable, especially to #newbies. Why complicate it? #TwitterTips





**Canadian Jesuits International staff participate in the ecumenical Good Friday Walk for Justice in Toronto.**

## **6.9 Offer a public prayer witness**

Gathering in a public place or demonstrating with fellow believers who share a common concern can be a profound and meaningful way to create change. Praying, singing, and lamenting in public can strengthen and inspire participants in ongoing advocacy. It can also offer a powerful witness to the public, whether passersby, the media, or elected officials. A public prayer witness or vigil also refutes a common perception that faith has nothing to do with political engagement. Here are some things to think about:

Gather a group to plan the demonstration or prayer service. Don't do this alone! Be as inclusive as you can be in pulling together your group.

Pray together as you plan your prayer witness.

Choose a site, considering accessibility to public transportation, visibility and symbolic significance. Determine if the site requires a special permit.



Plan the outline for your public witness. Include a variety of elements such as candle-lighting, litanies, scripture readings, songs, poetry, brief reflections, rituals, and moments of silence. Keep it short, especially if the weather is cold.

Create a brief and concise leaflet that can be distributed to passersby. Make sure to include contact information. Notify the media if you wish to draw that kind of attention.

Send a brief press release to media outlets several days in advance and again on the morning of your event.

Delegate responsibilities to specific individuals: worship leader, song leader, speaker(s), media spokesperson, photographer, sound person, etc.

Anticipate disruptions of your public witness. Ensure that a few people — ideally with training or experience — are present to manage conflicts with or disruptions from people who resist your message.



Above: Climate Action March, September 2019  
CJI photo

Below: Good Friday walk and awareness raising campaign held in Toronto.  
CJI Photo





# Appendices



## Sample letter to Member of Parliament

(DATE)

(Name of MP)

Member of Parliament for (Location)

(Mailing address)

Dear (name of MP),

RE: Creation of the Office of Ombudsperson to oversee the overseas activities of Canadian companies in the extractive sector

I write to you as one of your constituents with regards to the creation of the Office of Ombudsman to oversee the overseas activities of Canadian companies in the extractive sector. I understand that an announcement from your government on this matter is imminent.

As someone who has worked in the area of international development for decades, I have witnessed firsthand in Latin America, Africa and Asia the deleterious and dramatic effects of the work of extractive industries, including Canadian companies, on the lives of so many people, resulting in violence, displacement, illness and sometimes even death. It is for this reason that I fully support the model legislation released by the Canadian Network on Corporate Accountability (CNCA), in November 2016, to create such an office. You can find the legislation, a summary of the text and explanatory materials here: <http://cnca-rcrce.ca/campaigns-justice/ombudsperson/>

The mere creation of an Office of Ombudsman by our government is not sufficient. It is important that it be characterized by a number of features without which it will be ineffectual. These include:

- the office will be independent (from government and industry)
- company participation in the process will be mandatory
- the ombudsperson will undertake independent investigations
- the process will be transparent
- it will feature public reporting, including reports on ombudsperson investigations
- the ombudsperson will publish a final report for each case that includes recommendations on prevention of harm and on remedy (this can include recommendations for the Canadian government)
- the ombudsperson will monitor compliance with recommendations
- companies that do not comply with recommendations will become ineligible for several forms of government support

These are essential elements for the creation of this office, without which the office will lose credibility.

I thank you in advance for your attention, and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely

(Name of Executive Director)

name of organization

address

(Phone number and e-mail )



## Sample Press Release

**PRESS RELEASE:** At last, communities affected by Canadian corporations overseas will be heard: Government creates human rights watchdog

17 January 2018

For immediate release

OTTAWA, January 17, 2018 – The Canadian Network on Corporate Accountability (CNCA) is greatly encouraged by the Minister of International Trade’s announcement of the creation of a Canadian Ombudsperson for Responsible Enterprise. The human rights ombudsperson will investigate complaints concerning the overseas operations of Canadian companies and will issue public findings on allegations of harm. The office will make recommendations for redress; regarding corporate eligibility for government services; and with respect to policy and law reform.

“Over the years, cases of real concern have mounted, involving worrying allegations that Canadian mining and other companies have been responsible for serious human rights abuses in countries around the world,” said Alex Neve, Secretary General of Amnesty International Canada. “At long last there will be a body and process in place to hold Canadian companies accountable for human rights in their overseas operations.”

“Sexual violence against women – especially Indigenous women – has been associated with Canadian commercial projects overseas,” said Jean Symes of Inter Pares. “This government’s feminist foreign policy needs an ombudsperson who will address the violence that has happened in the past, and work to deter it in the future.”

“Our primary goal in working for the creation of this office has been to ensure access to remedy for the mining-affected people,” said Catherine Coumans of MiningWatch Canada. “In nearly 20 years we have seen the level of human rights abuses and mining-related conflict increase globally as companies push deeper into remote areas and onto the lands of Indigenous peoples.”





“The credibility of this new office depends on its power to access relevant information,” said Karyn Keenan, Director of Above Ground. “The ombudsperson office must be equipped with the tools needed to compel corporate disclosure.”

“Canada’s new corporate accountability watchdog must have the power to force companies to disclose how their activities impact local communities, and women in particular. The credibility of this office will hinge on its ability to access all the information it needs to conduct thorough investigations,” said Ian Thomson, Extractive Industries Policy Specialist of Oxfam Canada.

“Individuals and communities impacted by Canadian mining operations around the world are counting on this office to prevent and redress human rights abuse by Canadian companies,” said Reverend Jordan Cantwell, Moderator of The United Church of Canada.

“Canadians have been asking for the creation of an ombudsperson since 2006,” said Serge Langlois, Executive Director of Development and Peace Caritas Canada.

“Today’s announcement responds to a decade of actions by over 500,000 Canadians calling on the government to create an ombudsperson.”

“The CNCA wants to ensure that the new human rights ombudsperson has the powers and independence necessary to secure its credibility with all stakeholders, including the overseas communities impacted by Canadian companies,” said Emily Dywer of the CNCA.

An effective ombudsperson office will help position Canada as a global leader in business and human rights.

CONTACT: name of person

(Title of position)

Phone: (555) 555-1234

E-mail: (insert your e-mail address)

Website: (name of your website)

## Sample Petition



We the undersigned agree to support a PETITION TO ESTABLISH A DEPARTMENT OF PEACE TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED –

Whereas non-violent peace has been sought by people since time immemorial;

Whereas there exist proven methodologies for the non-violent resolution of conflict;

Whereas the Military-Industrial Complex ought to be constrained from perpetuating armed conflict;

Whereas the promotion of a culture of non-violent peace should be placed firmly in decision-making structure of the government;

Whereas Canada's foreign and military policy should return to UN peacekeeping, peacebuilding and peace diplomacy;

Whereas, to redirect this policy consistent with Canada's interests for peace and human security, there is an urgent need for a Federal Department of Peace to establish a sustainable culture of peace at home and abroad through the creation of a Minister of Peace in Cabinet;

Whereas over a million Canadians actively support a federal Department of Peace as an important Ministerial position to provide critical leadership in the heart of government towards ensuring the federal government's commitment to the promotion of peace worldwide;

THEREFORE, your petitioners call upon Parliament to establish a Department of Peace headed by a Minister of Peace as a senior cabinet position; and that this Department will reinvigorate Canada's role as a global peacebuilder and work towards developing Culture of Peace and Non-violent Resolution of Conflicts as a top priority.

Thank you.

Name

Address

Signature



## **Developing a Social Justice Week**

Week-long efforts to educate school communities about particular social justice issues is a growing trend in Catholic secondary education. The following is a resource from the Ignatian Solidarity Network, of which Canadian Jesuits International is a member that highlights the ways that schools have used this strategy to form students “commitment to doing justice.”

### **Choosing a Committee**

- Plan early – put together a committee before the end of the preceding school year.
- Think broadly – choose committee members who represent diverse student interest groups.
- Foster long-term learning – invite teachers and faculty into planning to initiate later classroom involvement

### **Choosing Theme & Speakers**

- Think local – consider themes which directly impact your local community.
- Go beyond – consider local themes from a global perspective.
- Ask – what topics will encourage student interest? Student dialogue?
- Approaching controversy – do not be afraid to be counter-cultural.
- Use your resources – utilize student and faculty speakers to share personal witnesses.

### **Engaging the Community**

#### **Students**

- Start small – begin connecting with student campus ministry group, word spreads!
- Foster learning – provide resources for students to engage with related materials during weeks prior to event.
- Give choices – plan elective breakout sessions, smaller groups of students led by various guest speakers.
- Extend involvement – plan field trips or other after-school activities to give opportunities for firsthand experience.
- Gather opinions – consider conducting a pre-event survey to gauge levels of prior knowledge of topic.

#### **Teachers/Faculty**

- Make accessible – connect with school librarian and other media sources to provide educational materials by department.
- Advance interest – provide curriculum resources early, allowing teachers to incorporate theme into the classroom experience.
- Encourage creativity – focus on involving art and music departments to encourage students to go beyond only academic reflection.
- Give incentive – involve teachers in providing classroom encouragement for student attendance and involvement.

## Parents

- Communicate – utilize email and newsletters to outline theme and events; provide parents with online videos and other resources.
- Handling controversy – invite parents into dialogue on themes, speaking from the lens of Catholic Social Teaching.
- Encourage involvement – consider hosting a parent theme night to give a look into weekly student events.

## Keeping the Fire Alive

### Reflection

- Journal it – provide a reflection sheet with questions for students to take notes on throughout the week.
- Create a discussion space – on the day of keynote address, provide time for each homeroom to meet and discuss stories heard.
- Gather feedback – gauge from teachers student reactions and quality of discussion.
- Reflect together – 2-3 weeks after event, meet as a committee to discuss what went well and areas of improvement.
- Be patient – recognize growth takes time.

## What Now?

- Stay educated– maintain a resource page of speaker bios, videos, and a further reading list.
- Call to action – post a list of potential theme-related service opportunities and advocacy materials.
- Stay connected with organizations like *Canadian Jesuits International* on topics and issues as they relate to social justice issues that impact people and communities around the world.



Above Left:  
Parliamentary staff meet with participants from the JUST Change advocacy symposium. L to R; Tyler Crosby representing Matthew Green (Hamilton Centre, NDP), Robert-Alexandre Seguin representing Niki Ashton (NDP, Churchill—Keewatinook Aski), Tara Beauport representing Catherine McKenna (Liberal, Ottawa Center) and Murray Heinzlmeir, representing Michael Kram (Conservative, Regina-Wascana)



Above Right: Participants for the JUST Change advocacy symposium gathering in Ottawa, February 9-11, 2020.