



# BRIDGING BORDERS



This fall and in 2027, Canadian Jesuits International (CJI) will host educational and advocacy events focusing on ecological justice, see page 7.



Comparte

## ECOLOGICAL JUSTICE FOR A SHARED FUTURE

By Louie Bacomo

*"[A] true ecological approach... must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, so as to hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor."*

Pope Francis, *Laudato si'*: 49

**E**cological justice acknowledges that environmental and social issues are inextricably linked. Neither can be solved without addressing the other.

Based on the principle that everyone has an equal right to a

healthy environment, ecological justice means that all living things, including people and nature, must be treated fairly and with respect. Among other things, it advocates economic growth that does not harm nature and people, especially the poor who are already suffering the most from ecological damage. It calls for environmental benefits and burdens to be shared fairly and for marginalized groups to be able to participate in decision-making processes.

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



## A PERSONAL MESSAGE AND MORE

There is an image on page 6 of this newsletter which struck me deeply. For me, it summarizes the problem with the state of the world today and why we need ecological justice. In the image, you can see children and their teacher in a classroom in the Philippines, carrying

out their lesson with their feet deep in water. They seem oblivious to the flooding, and the perils of stagnant water. The image also speaks volumes about the determination of the students and their families and the commitment of the teachers to education no matter what.

Unfortunately, this is a reality faced by many people as the effects of climate change and ecological damage are felt around the world. As we read in the cover article, it is those living on the margins of society and in the Global South who are affected most severely. This demands a response that is rooted in human dignity and respect for our common home.

In Pope Leo XIV's first encyclical, *Magnifica Humanitas* (Magnificent Humanity), published on May 25, 2026, he devoted a section on the principle of social justice, which he described as "a concrete way of following Jesus and remaining faithful to the Gospel." The Pope underscored the need to "recognize that injustices do not arise solely from the wrong choices of individuals, but

also from structures, mechanisms and economic and cultural systems that produce inequality almost automatically." He referred to the principles of Catholic Social Teaching (CST) as "living wisdom" to safeguard human dignity, protect the vulnerable, and address inequalities. These are the principles that guide Canadian Jesuits International's (CJI) response to the ecological crisis that we are living today.

In this spirit, this newsletter highlights the issue of ecological justice, which will be the focus of our education and advocacy campaign this fall. The cover story explores the meaning of ecological justice. On page 4, we look at a Jesuit-led project in the Pan-Amazon that promotes care for our common home. On page 3, a Jesuit from the Democratic Republic of Congo discusses the impact of mining. We hope that these and other stories will inform and encourage you further to live out the CST with the poor and marginalized that we serve in the Global South.

I take this occasion to let you know that after 23 rich and inspiring years as Executive Director at CJI, I have informed the CJI Board and staff that I will be stepping down from my position at the end of 2026.

This isn't goodbye yet. Over the next few months, we will have the opportunity to talk, meet and reflect, and be grateful together, as well as dream. You will hear from me again before I pass the baton to my successor.

## 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.

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# 'AFRICA MUST NOT REMAIN THE SACRIFICE ZONE OF GLOBAL PROSPERITY'

**Fr. Dr. Touissant Kafarhire Murhula, SJ**, Director of the Arrupe Center for Research and Training (CARF) in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) was the guest speaker at a forum, *Balancing Development and Ecological Justice in the Global South*, co-hosted on May 12 by Canadian Jesuits International, Regis College, and the University of St. Michael's College in the University of Toronto. The following are excerpts from Fr. Murhula's presentation:

## GREEN COLONIALISM

The global transition toward renewable energy and digital technologies has intensified international demand for critical minerals such as cobalt, lithium, copper, and rare earth elements, many of which are concentrated in Africa. Although this transition is widely presented as a universal project of sustainability and technological progress, its prevailing extractivist model risks reproducing older patterns of colonial dependency, ecological degradation, and social injustice within the Global South. The transition toward renewable energy is not merely a technological or environmental project. It is also a geopolitical and economic one. Beneath the language of sustainability lies an intensifying competition over the strategic resources required to power the new global economy.

## THE BURDEN ON AFRICA

Africa remains primarily perceived as a reservoir of raw materials and

a zone whose environmental and human costs remain acceptable in the pursuit of prosperity elsewhere. Africa has long been encouraged to evaluate itself against external standards that present industrial growth, privatization, and market expansion as the primary pathways to development. Yet the meaning of development has continually shifted in response to changing global economic priorities... Despite these changing paradigms, the underlying extractive logic has remained remarkably consistent. Colonial railways, ports, and administrative systems were primarily designed to facilitate resource extraction for European markets rather than autonomous African development. Although independence movements promoted state-led industrialization and national sovereignty, postcolonial economies remained deeply integrated into unequal global economic structures...

...The DRC remains one of the world's most strategically important mining economies. In 2025, the country was projected to produce [about] 240,000 metric tons of cobalt – 70 to 75% of global supply – while copper production was expected to approach three million metric tons. Yet this immense mineral wealth contrasts sharply with persistent poverty and insecurity among local populations: 73% of Congolese citizens continue to live on less than \$2.15 per day, while many artisanal miners work under dangerous and poorly regulated conditions marked by child labour and environmental degradation.

## UBUNTU AND ECOLOGICAL JUSTICE AS ALTERNATIVE PARADIGMS

African philosophical traditions such as Ubuntu ("I am because we are") offer important conceptual resources for envisioning development grounded in dignity, solidarity, relationality, and ecological responsibility... Ecological justice requires recognizing that communities living near extractive sites possess rights not only to compensation, but also to participation, environmental protection, public health, and democratic control over natural resources...

A truly sustainable transition requires more than technological innovation or market-driven growth. It requires ecological justice, democratic accountability, stronger public institutions, and alternative conceptions of development. Africa must not remain the sacrifice zone of global prosperity. A just ecological future depends upon recognizing African societies not merely as suppliers of strategic resources, but as equal participants in shaping the political, economic, and moral foundations of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

 Fr. Dr. Touissant Kafarhire Murhula, SJ

Tess Sison/CJI



# FEATURED PROJECT: **EDUCATION** FOR ECOLOGICAL **TRANSFORMATION** IN THE **PAN-AMAZON**

Canadian Jesuits International (CJI) is supporting Phase II of the project, Care for Our Common Home: Awareness, Intercultural Education and Education in Fe y Alegría Educational Centers. The project by Fe y Alegría Pan-Amazon, a CJI Jesuit partner, promotes socio-ecological justice and the

 Students at a Fe y Alegría school in Guatemala learn about how plants help maintain ecological balance.



Fe y Alegría

protection of the Amazon and Indigenous territories. Founded in 1955 by Jesuit priest José María Vélaz, SJ, Fe y Alegría is a federation of local education institutions that provides education to marginalized populations in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

The project promotes integral ecology through education, recognizing that, as stated by Fe Alegría, schools are “spaces for transformation, action, and hope in response to the ecological crisis.” First popularized by Pope Francis in *Laudato si’*, integral ecology asserts that “the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor” are one and the same.” This means addressing ecological damage also requires tackling social injustice.

Implemented across Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, Guatemala, Paraguay, Peru, and Venezuela, the initiative focuses on expanding leadership and strengthening the ecological education of educators and students through training, self-guided courses, and diploma

programs. Training opportunities include a Diploma in Integral Ecology and Socio-environmental Justice for 50 educators, and two self-guided courses reaching 300 participants from Latin America, Africa, and Asia. These will address growing global concerns about the impact of climate change on education and help to strengthen environmental citizenship. According to UNICEF, around one billion children live in countries that are highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Meanwhile, studies have revealed gaps in environmental education and ecological understanding among young people.



The project builds on achievements from the first phase, which advanced teacher training, standardized educational frameworks, promoted knowledge sharing across the Pan-Amazon region, and strengthened advocacy among teachers and students in international climate spaces such as COP, with the People’s Summit, Children’s Summit and Indigenous Peoples’ Gathering, serving as a powerful platform for youth advocacy. The project also promotes care for the Amazon through virtual encounters, student activities, educational publications, webinars, and participation in international advocacy networks.

## Expected results of the project for fiscal year 2026-2027:



**350** teachers and community leaders will participate in self-guided and diploma programs on Integral Ecology and Socio-Environmental Justice.



**22,500** students will benefit from the training received by teachers participating in the program.

# IN SOUTH SUDAN, JRS HELPS REFUGEES REBUILD THEIR LIVES

By Felix Omollo

Since the conflict in Sudan erupted in 2023, more than 1.3 million refugees and returnees have crossed into South Sudan, with Renk in Upper Nile state serving as the main entry point.

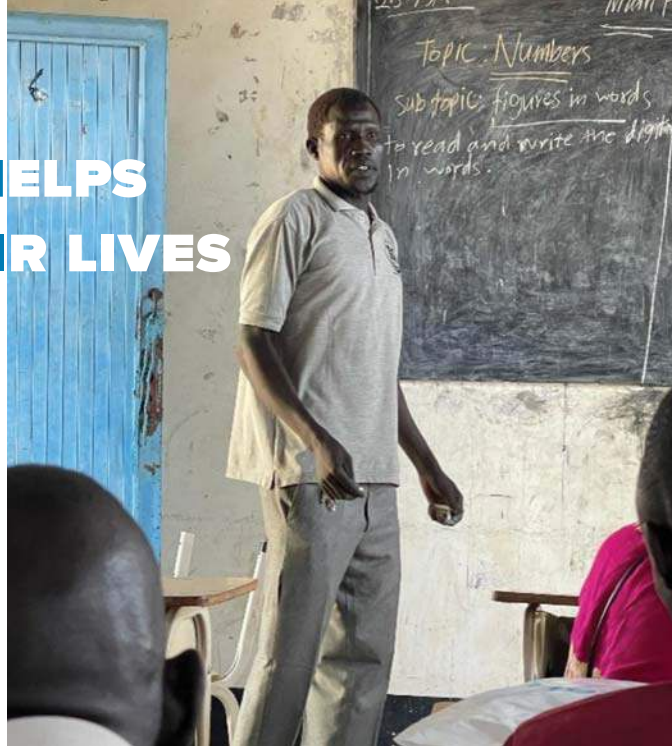
They continue to arrive at the Renk Transit Centre, which was established by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in 2024. As of May 14, 2026, the centre was hosting 8,205 individuals, almost three times its intended capacity.

Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) South Sudan has been responding to the humanitarian crisis with support from Canadian Jesuits International and the Xavier Network. Today, JRS continues to provide critical social services to people at the transit centre and in new settlement sites. In 2025 alone, JRS provided 1,606 individuals with individual counseling and 850 children and youth with recreational activities. About 40 teachers received English classes; 550 adolescent girls were provided with sanitary kits. JRS built two latrines and five handwashing facilities in schools.

*Here are two stories that demonstrate the impact of JRS' work:*

**Martin Adiang** sought refuge in Sudan during the conflict in South Sudan in 2013. He found a teaching job in Khartoum. However, when Sudan experienced its own crisis in 2023, he was forced to abandon his job and flee to Renk. Adiang then began volunteering as a teacher at a JRS-supported primary school. He also enrolled in English courses provided by JRS and consistently topped the assessments and final exams. Recognizing his talent, the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) recruited him to teach English in LWF-supported primary schools. He continues to advance his English studies and expresses deep gratitude to JRS for restoring purpose to his life.

**Nadia Ishag** fled to Renk with her young son after her husband and other children were brutally murdered in front of her in 2023. Overcome by grief, anger, and despair, she shut down, unable to



JRS South Sudan

 Martin Adiang

express her suffering. A friend encouraged her to seek help from the JRS mental health and psychosocial support team. Initially, she was too overwhelmed to speak, but she found the strength to share her ordeal through continued participation and listening to other people's experiences. With JRS support, Ishag regained emotional stability and a renewed sense of purpose. She now works with a JRS partner NGO and encourages others to seek support. "Sometimes, the simple act of listening and being heard can bring comfort and healing in times of loss and grief," she said.

*Felix Omollo is Project Director at Jesuit Refugee Service-South Sudan.*

 Nadia Ishag

JRS South Sudan



Genuine ecological justice cannot be achieved without confronting the colonial history that has led to the climate crisis. For centuries, wealthy nations have built their fortunes by exploiting the Global South. They dismantled local cultures and cleared vast natural resources using enslaved labour. This has brought us to staggering levels of carbon emissions today. Various studies show that Java in Indonesia lost half of its forest in just a century; logging and agriculture decimated Madagascar's major forests in just 30 years; destroyed lands in Brazil and Caribbean became breeding grounds for epidemics like yellow fever and malaria that killed entire populations. This pattern of exploitation continues today with growth-fueled economic development centred in urban areas. A recent study published in *Nature Communications* shows that 44 out of the 48 largest coastal cities in the world are experiencing land subsidence rates faster than rising sea levels. All but one city in the top 10 list is from the Global South. Although China's carbon emissions are growing, the United States and European countries still have the highest cumulative and per capita emissions.

Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) has seen the destructive impacts of climate change in refugee communities. In Thailand, more than 100,000 refugees from Myanmar have been confined to national forest reserves for over three decades. They endure floods, landslides, forest fires, dengue, and malaria, even as they struggle to meet basic needs. Situations have worsened worldwide since the US government abruptly cut humanitarian aid and billions of dollars in development assistance.

JRS engages climate-vulnerable communities in research and advocacy so that they can make informed decisions about their future and bring their concerns to policymakers. However, this can come at a high cost. Some environmental activists and land defenders have been persecuted and killed because of their advocacy.

Global collaboration is urgent because the climate crisis is outpacing our ability to adapt. We must act quickly and shift the focus toward ecological justice. This requires confronting the unjust colonial history and giving the

Global South a stronger voice at the negotiating table. Debt-for-nature swaps must be expanded to fund biodiversity conservation and climate action. Increased climate financing to island states and low carbon emission countries would help atone for past harm. Those who have suffered the most must be listened to when calculating loss and damage.

The call for a climate-resilient planet is addressed not only to countries, but also to individuals and communities. We all need to heed the call for ecological conversion. The climate crisis we face today requires us to recognize our shared future as the basis for collective action. Only by working together to build a carbon-free future can we address past injustices and tackle today's inequalities, ensuring everyone's protection across our common home – North and South.

*Louie Bacomo is Director of Climate and Forced Displacement at Jesuit Refugee Service-Asia Pacific.*

#### Sources:

*Carbon Brief* – Analysis by Simon Evans: Which countries are historically responsible for climate change?

*E-International Relations* – Climate Justice in the Global South: Understanding the Environmental Legacy of Colonialism, by Nishtha Singh

*Nature Communications*, Subsidence more than doubles sea-level rise today along densely populated coasts, by 1 Oelsmann, J., Nicholls, R.J., Lincke, D. et al

Jesuit Refugee Service, Asia Pacific: Research and Advocacy for Climate Policy and Action – Climate Change, Human (Im)mobilities, and Resilience



📷 Communities in Bohol, an island province in the Philippines, have become more vulnerable to tidal flooding and the other effects of climate change. Yet life goes on, including in schools.

## WORKING FOR SOCIAL CHANGE REQUIRES COLLECTIVE ACTION

Effective action for social justice and structural change requires collaboration across many sectors and institutions, according to Fr. Roberto Jaramillo, SJ, Secretary of the Social Justice and Ecology Secretariat at the Jesuit curia in Rome.

Speaking at an event organized by Canadian Jesuits International (CJI) in Toronto on April 30, Fr. Jaramillo said that advocacy must remain grounded in lived experience. One cannot truly raise awareness “if you

do not know the conditions of the people... if you have not visited their [homes],” he said. Fr. Jaramillo was in Toronto to deliver a lecture at Regis College. CJI took the opportunity of his visit to organize this event for CJI supporters.

Fr. Jaramillo also discussed the mission and structure of the Global Ignatian Advocacy Network (GIAN), a Jesuit initiative to address major global challenges through collaboration, advocacy, and discernment.



Juan Emilio Hernandez/CJI

Fr. Roberto Jaramillo, SJ

Read more: [bit.ly/43mZwdg](https://bit.ly/43mZwdg)



Tess Sison/CJI

Fr. Ismael Matambura, SJ, (right), speaks about the work of the African Jesuit AIDS Network at Presentation Manor in Scarborough, Ont.

## AIDS EPIDEMIC NOT OVER IN AFRICA, SAYS JESUIT PRIEST

Fr. Ismael Matambura, SJ, Director of the African Jesuit AIDS Network (AJAN) stressed the importance of supporting HIV-AIDS initiatives, saying that the AIDS epidemic in Africa is not over. “HIV is still there,” Fr. Matambura said during events co-organized last May by Canadian Jesuits International (CJI) with various parishes and schools in Toronto, Hamilton, Guelph, Parkhill, and Ottawa. UNAIDS has noted that although West and Central Africa have made “notable progress” in their response to AIDS, this remained “insufficient to meet global targets to end AIDS as public health threat by 2030.”

AJAN was founded in 2002 by Canadian Jesuit priest, Cardinal Michael Czerny, SJ. Jesuit efforts to combat HIV and AIDS in Africa include providing services such as HIV care and treatment, psychosocial and spiritual support, awareness raising programs, particularly among the youth, and livelihood support for vulnerable women and girls, said Fr. Matambura. The Building Resilience Among Women and Girls in Africa, a project being supported by CJI, provides women, particularly those living with HIV, with training in financial literacy and business management. Successful trainees receive seed grants to start a small business.

Read more: [bit.ly/4tQE8rT](https://bit.ly/4tQE8rT)

## CJI's 2026 FALL EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY CAMPAIGN

This fall and in 2027, Canadian Jesuits International (CJI) will host events on ecological justice, which highlights the inseparable link between caring for our common home and a just and dignified life, especially for the poor and marginalized, and future generations.

Please visit [bit.ly/CJICampaign2026](https://bit.ly/CJICampaign2026) for announcements of events related to the theme, *Ecological Justice: It's not complicated.*

# A QUIET **GENEROSITY** SHAPED BY **FAITH**

By Julianne Keegan

Judith Keegan lived a life defined not by what she accumulated, but by what she gave away. While she never considered herself wealthy, she possessed a richness of spirit and faith that touched countless lives around the world. She faithfully supported CJI for more than 30 years, as its mission resonated deeply with her values and her desire to help those facing hardship and injustice.

She believed that every person deserved dignity, opportunity and hope. Rather than spending extravagantly on herself, she chose a simple life so that she could share more with others. Giving was not something she did occasionally, it was woven into the fabric of who she was. She followed the needs of vulnerable communities with genuine concern and responded with quiet generosity, never seeking recognition.

One of the most meaningful chapters of her philanthropic journey was shaped by her beloved son, Peter. Following his unexpected passing, she carried out his wishes by directing a significant portion of his estate to charitable causes of her choosing, with the Jesuits being one of them. Having witnessed her lifelong compassion, he had wanted his legacy to reflect that same commitment and he trusted her judgment to carry out that vision.

 Judith Keegan (right) and her son, Peter shared a commitment to charitable causes.



Submitted

Her commitment remained steadfast throughout her life. Upon her death, she left a significant portion of her estate to two charitable organizations, with Canadian Jesuits International being one of them. This final gift was a natural

expression of a lifetime spent supporting causes that brought hope to people in need. For her, generosity was never measured by the size of a donation, but by the willingness to help. She was guided by faith, gratitude and a profound sense of responsibility. Her legacy lives on through the organizations she supported and the lives she touched. We remember her with love, celebrating a life beautifully lived in service to others.

*Julianne Keegan is one of the daughters of Judith Keegan, a long-time supporter of CJI who contributed to projects in Darjeeling, India; Africa; and the Middle East.*

## LEAVE A **LEGACY** OF **LOVE** AND **SERVICE**

There are three things that endure: faith, hope, and love, and the greatest of these is love.  
(1 Corinthians 13:13)

**Love** is more than a feeling: it means **selfless concern** for the welfare of others. Your **love for others** will endure.

You can **change lives** by leaving a **bequest** in your will, naming Canadian Jesuits International (CJI) as a beneficiary in your insurance policy or giving stocks or bonds to CJI.

Please arrange your life changing support today at:  
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