

## **POLITICAL MINISTRIES**

The richness of the sharing and strategizing of the Political Ministries could hardly be digested and woven in ten minutes let alone transmitted in four! How can one summarize the open wound of a sexual assault survivor who experiences little support from parishioners in holding the hierarchy accountable? How is the agony of a mother with a permanently maimed son and her subsequent activism against the war in Iraq adequately expressed? How do you begin to address the myriad laws that leave an American citizen in exile with her deported husband?

The workshop facilitators arrived not only with their dedication to ministry but armed with facts and figures varying from the staggering 200 million people world-wide who are living outside their countries of birth, to the obscene human and material cost of this war.

It is evident yet again that militarism, racism and sexism and yes, consumerism, are inherent components of *kyriarchy*, Elizabeth Fiorenza's defining term for all those structures which maintain power over. As long as the "power over" model is our cultural basis, we can expect the evils addressed in the three political ministry workshops to endure.

Here, with a bit more time and space are the more detailed reports from each of the workshops.

*Kim Wayne, Weaver*

## **MIGRATION** (note the name correction!)

Take time to

1. risk facing our own fears; identify and face our own privilege.
2. reach out to 3 others
  - ourselves and friends
  - our fellow faith people
  - those who need the truth but may scare us or be scared to talk about immigrants

Some actions:

1. Take time to listen to others and relate with those who are able to relate.
2. Organize discussion groups around the movie "Borderlands" (with Jennifer Lopez). Sneak previews with discussions are a good way to raise awareness. Other movies are also available.

*Facilitated by Mary Peter Bruce, SL and Giselle Stern Hernandez*

## **TRAFFICKING AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

### Statement

Women-Church is committed to facilitate breaking the cycle of violence in Church and Society by

- naming violence where/when we see/experience it, even in ourselves
- saying “No” to violence in our contexts (expose and educate)
- identifying language of violence and the harm it represents to women
- recognizing organized religion as educating/perpetrating violence against women (“male privilege”)

### Actions

1. Use existing institutions to educate about violence.
2. Educate about racism as violence.
3. Change violent religious language.
4. Help women see when they are part of the problem of violence against women.
5. Lobby for civil laws at the State level so victims have their day in court. (Expand time for statute of limitations.)
6. Women-Church invites religious organizations and other church personnel to listen to victims and work to heal/give restitutions to victims.

*Facilitated by Jean Schafer, SDS & Rev. Sharon Ellis Davis*

## **PEACEWORKERS**

### Commitments

- do little things, e.g. environmental actions, advocate against bottled water
- join peace marches
- join non-violent group to practice NV in own daily life and group life
- create democratic/feminist/circular structures in our work
- download 8<sup>th</sup> Day weekly Peace Vigil leaflets([www.8thdaycenter.org](http://www.8thdaycenter.org))

### Challenges

- get rid of the theology of convenience in our lifestyle
- w-cc provide “story-spaces” of challenges met on its webpage
- suggestion: w-cc use internet, e.g. blogs to share info on war and make other connections
- each time w-cc produces a political statement at their semi-annual meetings, send them out to those present at the recent forums and member groups for use in local areas.
- challenge the culture of war through joining or initiating peace groups in one’s area – writing letters-to-the-editor, holding a forum in one’s locale...

### Connections

- commonality of life-long activism – making the connections among the “isms”
- theology of story – begin with experience
- recognize the gifts of other faith traditions and promote inter-religious dialogue
- recognize that U.S. empire-building is creating another, yet invisible, “holocaust” around the world.

Facilitated by Kathleen Desautels, SP and Katy Zatsick