Farewell and welcome
At the end of November, 2011 the department bade farewell to Sr. Mary McCreath (OP) who had managed our finances since February 2009. We are grateful for all that she has done for the department, and we wish her well in her well-deserved sabbatical. In January 2012 we welcomed Margaret Madisha who replaced Sr Mary as the Financial Controller and we wish her every success with the department.

Departmental Activities July 2011 to January 2012

Training of diocesan animators
The last training sessions of the three year cycle took place in July 2011 with 48 animators from 23 dioceses gaining formation in advanced engagement with the local municipalities using their Integrated Development Plans (IDPs); in conflict resolution; and in how to engage in land reform at the local level. The overall assessment of the three year cycle of training of diocesan animators was very positive. Of those who participated in the training in 2011, 30% completed the full 3 years, 44% completed the last 2 years and 27% joined in the last year. There is a lot of growth and increased capacity visible in the trainees.

Regional Conferences
Regional Conferences took place in all of the four SACBC J&P regions in 2011. The first Conference for KwaZulu Natal took place in June in Durban, focusing on engagement with local government, climate change and land reform. The GALIMMA (Gauteng, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, Manzini) Conference took place in August in Manzini, Swaziland for the first time, focusing on Democracy and Human Rights Advocacy, J&P Spirituality and Climate Change and COP 17. The Botswana-Free-West Conference took place in September in Gaborone, Botswana, also for the first time, focusing on Climate Change and COP 17, Church and Politics, and J&P Spirituality. The Cape Regional Conference also took place in September in George and focused on Xenophobia, Climate Change and COP 17, and J&P Spirituality. In all, 231 people from 28 of the 29 dioceses attended the regional conferences in 2011. The participation of dioceses in J&P activities has improved significantly and many diocesan actions have been effective in improving living standards and service delivery at local levels.
Workshops for clergy and pastoral workers

Invitations from bishops and priests to offer workshops and sessions for clergy and pastoral workers continued to be received. A workshop on “Church and Politics” in Bethlehem diocese in August was attended by 12 priests. A Day of Reflection for 20 priests and deacons of Kroonstad Diocese took place in September. Workshops on Justice and Peace Spirituality were conducted in November for 16 priests & deacons of Rustenburg Diocese and for 33 priests and deacons of Witbank Diocese. A workshop on Justice and Peace Ministry was also conducted at the AGM of SACOP (Southern African Council of Priests) in Mariannhill in August.

Crime Roundtable

In July 2011, a Roundtable discussion was organised in Johannesburg to discuss the ‘Role of the Church in tackling the causes of crime’. The high-profile speakers included Prof Johan Burger from the Institute for Security Studies (ISS), Dr David Bruce from the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR) and finally General Shadrack Sibiya from SAPS. This offered an opportunity to highlight the urgent need for the Church to be involved and to play a role in fighting crime by supporting the SAPS efforts. Causes of crime such as inequality, inadequate child-rearing, unemployment, easy access to guns, drugs and alcohol and the strong culture of violence came under spotlight. About 40 people from dioceses, NGO’s and the SAPS participated. The full report of the roundtable is available on the J&P website.

Police Day

As a follow-up to the Crime Roundtable and with the full support of the bishops on the SACBC Admin Board, all parishes were encouraged to commemorate Police Day on Sunday 29 January 2012 to affirm and encourage the role of the police in combating crime and corruption and to highlight the Church’s role in supporting this. Many parishes from all corners of the region responded enthusiastically by inviting local police officials to attend the Mass and to speak about the causes and effects of crime. They encouraged parishioners to support the police through prayer, rehabilitating ex-offenders, teaching children the evils of drugs and violence as well as informing the police of any criminal activities and corruption. Some dioceses were invited to attend the National Police Day Celebrations on 28 January. Durban Archdiocese delivered a message in support of the work being done by the police at Chatsworth Stadium as part of the KwaZulu Natal SAPS Provincial celebrations.

Launch of a report by Swiss J&P Catholics on their role during Apartheid

J&P agreed to assist J&P Switzerland to organize the launch of a report by Swiss J&P Catholics on their role during Apartheid. This took place (in collaboration with the Jesuit Institute) on 9 August at Sacred Heart College in Johannesburg around the theme: From Colonialism to Partnership: Learning from our past (Swiss-South African Catholic Cooperation in struggle and beyond). The report was presented by its author, Bruno Soliva and by the Director of Swiss Lenten Appeal, Antonio Hautle. More than 80 people participated and there was a lively interaction between the four respondents to the report: Archbishop Buti Tlhagale OMI, Fr Albert Nolan OP, Prof Sarojini Nadar and Prof Farid Esack.
J&P Initiatives around the 17th United Nations Conference on Climate Change (Conference of the Parties—COP 17)

Pastoral Letter on Climate Change and COP17

In November 2011, in order to prepare for the United Nations COP 17 which took place in Durban, the J&P Department through the Environmental Justice Working Group wrote a pastoral letter which was endorsed by all bishops. The letter addressed all people of goodwill in calling for a change of mindset and a change of lifestyle to reduce our dependence on fossil-fuel energy like coal and oil that cause Greenhouse Gas emissions. It also called for pressure on the South African Government and on the nations attending the conference to set targets to reduce carbon emissions so that temperature rises would remain below 1.5 °C; and to extend the Kyoto Protocol of 1997 and to make it a binding agreement.

Workshops on Climate Change and COP17

To raise awareness at the local level about climate change and COP17, a workshop was held in Bloemfontein in July for representatives from seven dioceses (Bloemfontein, Kimberley, Bethlehem, Keimoes-Upington, Aliwal North, De Aar and Kroonstad). The workshop was attended by 51 participants from different Christian denominations and other faiths. A workshop on the issue was also conducted in all the regional conferences.

Bicycle Ride for Climate Justice

The major activity organised by J&P in 2011 was a Bicycle Ride for Climate Justice from Beit Bridge (Zimbabwe border) to Durban) that ran from 9-25 November. It made strong use of the symbolism, COP 17: 17 cyclists- riding for 17 days, with 17 road shows to welcome the cyclists being organised along the way. At any given point there were 17 cyclists on the road who included eight core cyclists (one female, seven males – including one 70-year old, our J&P Coordinator of the project, Shaka Dzebu, and people of several faiths) who rode the whole way (1400kms) and 9 others (males, females, priests, religious – including Bishop Jose Luis Ponce de Leon of Ingwavuma) who joined them in relays between the towns giving a total of 220 participants who cycled for the campaign. The route passed through the dioceses of Tzaneen, Polokwane, Pretoria, Johannesburg, Witbank, Dundee, Ingwavuma, and Eshowe and ended in Durban. The cyclists were sent off at Beit Bridge by the Mayor of Musina, Carol Phiri, and also the Deputy Director General of the Dept of Environmental Affairs, Mr Blessing Manale. The cyclists arrived in Durban to a ceremonial welcome at the COP17 Expo Centre, which included Cllr Logie Naidoo (Speaker of eThekwini Municipality) and Bishop Barry Wood (Chair of the SACBC J&P Department).
Road shows

The cyclists were welcomed in the towns along the route with road shows (festive hour-long events with music, cultural dancing, speeches of dignitaries, and awareness-raising through banners, pamphlets, stickers, T-shirts, caps and petitions). These road shows were largely organised by the local J&P groups in cooperation with local municipalities and communities. 17 road shows were organised in Beitbridge, Makhado, Bandelierkop, Polokwane, Mokopane, Modimolle, Bela Bela, Pretoria, Johannesburg, Witbank, Ermelo, Piet Retief, Vryheid, Hlabisa, Mtuba, Richards Bay, and Durban). They mostly took place in public places (eg taxi ranks, parks) where the message of the urgency of climate justice was communicated to many people passing by.

Green transport in Durban

On 6 December the J&P Department was requested to support the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) in handing over 300 bicycles to eThekwini Municipality in order to promote green transport in Durban. The J&P Department provided 17 cyclists who accompanied the Minister of Transport, Mr Sbu Ndebele and the Mayor of Durban, Mr James Nxumalo, cycling along the beachfront to the place of the handover ceremony where the J&P Coordinator, Fr Mike Deeb, was also asked to speak on behalf of the SACBC.

Caravan for Climate Justice

To complement the Bicycle Ride, the J&P Department also organised a Caravan for Climate Justice to enable people from all parts of the country to make a contribution towards COP17 through a ‘weekend pilgrimage’ to Durban from 25-27 November—the weekend before the start of COP 17. Three buses travelled to Durban from Queenstown, Polokwane and Johannesburg, picking up along the way 140 people (of several faiths, but mostly Catholics and J&P members). They arrived in Durban in time to meet the cyclists and celebrate the closing roadshow on Friday 25th November.

On 26 November the pilgrims went on a Toxic Tour of the City of Durban to witness the environmental destruction caused by petroleum and other industrial companies.
Finally, on 27 November the pilgrims took part in a Mass in Durban Cathedral celebrated by Cardinal Napier followed by a procession to Kings Park to be part of a Multi-Faith Rally featuring Archbishop Desmond Tutu, the President and Secretary General of COP17, the former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson, and many religious leaders (as well as Ladysmith Black Mambazo and Yvonne Chaka-Chaka!). At the rally, our cyclists were recognised and given a prominent reception. A banner of our petition demands, which hundreds of people had signed along the cycle route, was also presented to the COP 17 President, the South African Minister for International Relations and Cooperation, Ms Maite Nkoana-Mashabane.
Helping communities gain easy access to water - Witbank

In the Bushbuckridge Municipality, access to water was a great problem. The municipality managed to install pipes and taps yet the people still did not have water in their homes and the community had to travel some distance to get water. After reading the municipal Integrated Development Plan (IDP), the J&P group approached the municipality offices to get an explanation about the water problem and to lobby for access to water. J&P approached the Mayor who later provided the community with lorry tanks that brought water to the community to provide clean and safe water. The group continued to advocate for water to be pumped through taps, and finally the Mayor completed the piping project to pump water from Injaka dam and now people have easy access as well as clean and safe water.

Diocesan Stories

Dioceses educate citizens on climate change

Many dioceses have engaged in action around climate change in the past year. A remarkable effort was made in Kroonstad diocese where a series of workshops was facilitated in all corners of the diocese to educate communities on climate change and its effects on people’s lives. The workshops encouraged people to find local ways to deal with environmental issues such as smart use of water and trees. At the end of each workshop the J&P group planted a tree at the venue.

Similarly in Keimoes-Upington J&P undertook a campaign to encourage communities to preserve water and electricity. The campaign provided communities with tips and tricks on how to save water and electricity such as smart use of these commodities when switching on geysers, watering of gardens and washing of cars.

J&P campaigns against xenophobia - Keimoes-Upington

After the re-occurrence of xenophobic violence, the J&P group in Keimoes-Upington went on a campaign in the city centre to denounce violence and xenophobia. Wearing “parking guard” reflectors donated to them by the diocese and t-shirts on xenophobia, the group handed out fliers at the taxi rank. They spoke to taxi drivers and people passing by the taxi rank about the evils of xenophobia and showed them pictures of people wounded by xenophobic violence. The activity was praised by both taxi drivers and the community.

J&P speaks out against land eviction - Klerksdorp

The J&P group in Klerksdorp organised a series of workshops through the help of the Land Desk Coordinator to help people address land issues. As a result of these workshops a community approached J&P to assist them with a land eviction problem in Ext 3 at Alabama. The J&P group approached Sekwele Centre for Social Reflection and the Landless Peoples Movement of South Africa to assist them to deal with the problem. Together with them, the group approached the Municipality office and after several discussions and lobbying the Municipality through its speaker finally agreed to stop the evictions.