

IHMs IN ACTION



Sister Ann Oestreich, IHM, (left), and novices Sister Patricia Rodriguez Leal, CSC, and Sister Nohemi Arizpe Paredes, CSC, participate in a prayer service during a July 2008 internship program.

Sister Ann Oestreich, IHM, is the justice coordinator for the [Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy \(CSC\)](#), in Notre Dame, Ind., and as such, she claims "dual citizenship."

She is an IHM Sister to her core, but for the last 13 years, she has ministered with the CSCs, and has come to understand and appreciate their mission and charism.

"The Sisters of the Holy Cross are an international congregation, with a strong presence on four continents," says Sister Ann. "I'm the first person to hold the position of CSC justice coordinator, and I work

with an internationally-constituted Congregation Justice Committee (CJC).

"Because the CJC includes sisters from eight different countries, we approach justice issues from a global

perspective. Each member adds unique cultural perspectives to our work."

The CJC bases its work on the three major principles of the [Earth Charter](#): ecological integrity, socio-economic justice and democracy, nonviolence and peace. Each year it focuses on one major principle for education and action, and shows how the other issues interconnect with the focus area.

In addition to working with the CJC and organizing their efforts, Sister Ann's ministry involves working with CSC leadership on corporate responsibility efforts and communicating the work of the CJC to the membership. She maintains the "Justice" section of the CSC Web site and coordinates all justice-related articles for CSC publications.

Sister Ann works extensively with women worldwide who are in initial CSC formation - the time prior to final vows. The sisters participate in an internship program that incorporates Catholic social teaching with CSC justice priorities. Each participant is required to work on a project that affects her area of the world.

"By the time the internship is completed, the women are fully able to participate in the justice work of the congregation wherever they live and minister," Sister Ann notes.

Sister Ann also represents the CSC Sisters on the boards of national and international organizations, including Jubilee USA Network and the Holy Cross International Justice Office. She co-chairs the CSC Green Living Committee, whose goal is to move the congregation toward carbon-neutrality by 2050.

Sister Ann describes her ministry as "a gift and a grace." She has met women from many different cultures and been enriched by them.

"The diversity requires that we develop a collection of strategies to deal with justice issues across a wide spectrum of countries and cultures," she says. "This challenges our creativity and broadens our understanding of the demands of true solidarity with people and with the Earth."