

# **Environment & Ecology Issue Team Report**

## **October, 2004**

**Chair:** Don Geiger SM

**List your active issue team members, their address, phone and email, and their branch of the Marianist Family.**

Don Geiger SM, Bill Hirt, Leanne Jablonski FMI, Tara Poling, Bill Raddell, Marilyn Schwieterman, Jack Somerville SM

**What are the goals and objectives that your team is working on, particularly in the past year (Oct. 2003-Oct. 2004)?**

1. Provide easy access to information – particularly through [www.msjc.net](http://www.msjc.net) - and resources that support individual, family and community actions to reduce our consumption of earth's resources.
2. Explore ways to make Marianist facilities more energy-efficient and sustainable.
3. Connect social and environmental justice issues by promoting non-sweatshop goods that are also ecologically sustainable.

**What activities have you engaged in to attain these goals? (Include the costs for these activities.) Who has been your target audience - general public, youth, Marianist parishes or schools, etc?**

1. We've developed the ecology & environment section of [msjc.net](http://msjc.net) to be resource-based and to serve as a clearinghouse for information and actions that support sustainable consumption. Cost for this will be contracted from the Marianist Environmental Education Center.
2. Four members of our team – Don Geiger, Jack Somerville, Marilyn Schwieterman & Bill Hirt – toured the environmental studies center at Oberlin University, a regional model of sustainable building and energy efficiency. There was no cost associated with the trip, and our target audience was our own team. However this is the first phase of developing a dialogue with Marianist institutions.
3. We developed a prototype cloth shopping bag and have contracted with IMANI (Incentive from Marianists to Assist the Needy be Independent) in Kenya to produce the bags to sell to Marianist family members in North America. We have developed information on green purchasing principles to be distributed along with the bags. \$1300 in start-up costs supplied to IMANI by MSJC. Funds will be recovered during the sale of the bags, and profits from the bags will be donated to IMANI.

**What has been the impact of these activities, i.e., what difference have you made as an issue team in the past year?**

We have already received several requests regarding the cloth bags, indicating our constituency is reading materials distributed through [Justice Jottings/msjc.net](http://JusticeJottings/msjc.net) and receptive to our efforts to connect social and environmental issues through consumption decisions. Through the Oberlin field trip our team gained insight into one organization's energy-efficiency decision-making process. We're preparing a survey (see plans for the coming year) to gauge the impact of the resources we've developed for [msjc.net](http://msjc.net) and to direct future resource development.

**What are your plans for the coming year?**

1. Continue to develop website and work to "drive" visitors to the site.
2. Survey a geographic cross section of participants in the 2004 Society of Mary province ecology retreat regarding purchasing and consumption patterns of local communities and the effectiveness of the resources developed for our pages of [msjc.net](http://msjc.net).
3. Market reusable shopping bags contracted from IMANI.
4. Initiate dialogue with Marianist institutions regarding how to use their purchasing power to advance sustainability and environmental justice.

5. Encourage Bob Evans restaurants to sell and serve fair-trade coffee.