# Catalystice St. Citizens for Public Justice

S	$\Box$	

Development at	What Cost?	4

Moving Against Poverty	6
------------------------	---

۷h۷	/ We	Cling to Oil	-
viiy	, vvc	Cillig to Oil	



# Getting Tough on Crime, or Refugees?

On February 16<sup>th</sup>, the federal government announced new legislation that will change Canada's refugee determination system – and according to people in faith communities who work directly with refugees – not for the better.

Similar to Bill C-10 (the severely criticized omnibus crime bill), several complicated measures are being rolled into one immense piece of legislation. Bill C-31 is actually titled "An Act to amend the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, the Balanced Refugee Reform Act, the Marine Transportation Security Act and the Department of Citizenship and Immigration Act."

Will the proposed changes increase the fairness and efficiency of the system? Or will these new measures re-victimize refugees in their legitimate search for security and freedom?

#### What needs repair?

According to Citizenship and Immigration Minister Jason Kenney, the problems at hand are long wait times, as well as a huge backlog of applicants. 23,000 refugees have private sponsors waiting in Canada while Citizenship and Immigration continues to process only about 7,000 per year. The massive wait is worse in some parts of the world – like East Africa, where there is an eight-year backlog. The Minister has thus decided to take action: he has temporarily increased the privately sponsored refugee program by 20 per cent per year, but has also placed caps on new applications, especially from Africa.

Amnesty International is deeply concerned that Bill C-31"falls short of international legal requirements with respect to human rights and refugee protection."

In terms of new legislation, the new Bill would give the Minister (rather than an established expert committee) the ability to designate certain countries from where refugee claimants would be fast-tracked through the system. But claimants from "safe countries" would have no right to appeal a negative decision and could be deported immediately. Mr. Kenney has cited, for particular attention, Roma refugee applicants from Hungary and Czechoslovakia, Mexicans, and Sri Lankan boat people, as "bogus refugees" whose applications clog up the system.

...continued on page 3

### In Review



Ms. Kristy Duncan, Patricia Graça & Joe Gunn

Heat waves, early Spring, almost no shovelling... The tremendous weather changes we have been experiencing lately are warning signs that require special attention. On February 29th, Joe Gunn and Patricia Graca met with Member of Parliament Ms. Kirsty Duncan (Liberal, Etobicoke North). She is a Member of Parliament's all-party climate change caucus, and has written scientific studies for the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Ms. Duncan recently tabled various petitions in the House of Commons in support of the Interfaith Call for Leadership and Action on Climate Change (developed by CPJ). Five Conservative MPs and various NDP MPs tabled thousands of names on these petitions, as well.



Simon Lewchuk speaking about CPJ and the Dignity for All campaign in Victoria, BC.

From March 2 to 7, Joe Gunn and **Simon Lewchuk** were in British Columbia to meet with supporters and attend several workshops. They also met with new people and had the chance to introduce CPJ, our work on poverty, including the *Dignity for All campaign for a poverty-free Canada*, and speak about our involvement with environmental issues.

The agenda included workshops at the "Do Justice, Love Fearlessly" conference at New Life Christian Reformed Church in Abbotsford; a *Dignity for All* presentation to representatives from seven different Anglican and Lutheran parishes at St. Agnes Anglican Church in North Vancouver; a presentation to members of the First Christian Reformed Church in Vancouver; and a presentation at Cadboro Bay United Church in Victoria to representatives from local congregations, KAIROS, and Faith in Action BC.

CPJ's Policy Team posted a critical review of the March 29<sup>th</sup> Federal Budget the day after it was released. The document is available at www.cpj.ca More in-depth articles covering specific issues of interest to our members — on issues like old-age security, environmental protection and international development assistance will be posted soon.



Patricia Graça & Katherine Scott

CPJ began the New Year with two additional part-time staff members: **Katherine Scott** accepted the position of Research Associate and Patricia Graça is our new Socio-Economic Policy Analyst. She is replacing Karri Munn-Venn on her maternity leave until the end of August.

Both of them share the passion for public justice and bring to CPJ a wealth of knowledge and experience.

As part of CPJ's new strategy to engage youth in social justice, CPJ is excited to welcome **Alexandra Baynes**. She is a grade 11 student at Holy Trinity Catholic High School in Kanata, and offers a few hours a day to CPJ as part of her cooperative program of studies.

#### **Citizens for Public Justice**

309 Cooper Street, #501 Ottawa, Ontario K2P 0G5 tel.: 613-232-0275 toll-free: 1-800-667-8046

e-mail: cpj@cpj.ca web: www.cpj.ca

Citizens for Public Justice's mission is to promote public justice in Canada by shaping key public policy debates through research and analysis, publishing and public dialogue. CPJ encourages citizens, leaders in society and governments to support policies and practices which reflect God's call for love, justice and stewardship.

**CPJ annual membership fee**, includes *the Catalyst*: \$50 / \$25 (low-income)

the Catalyst, a publication of Citizens for Public Justice (CPJ), reports on public justice issues in Canada and reviews CPJ activities.

Spring 2012 (Volume 35, Number 1)

ISSN 0824-2062

Agreement no. 40022119

**Editor:** Ruth Malloy

Coordinator: Patricia Graça

the Catalyst subscription:

\$20 (three issues)

# Would you prefer to receive the Catalyst electronically?

Some CPJ members have expressed interest in having their copy of *the Catalyst* sent directly to their computer. Others appreciate having the newsletter mailed to their home.

In electronic form, the Catalyst is much more environmentally friendly, saves CPJ printing and postage costs, and you would receive it at least one week sooner.

If from now on you would prefer to receive an electronic copy of *the Catalyst*, simply contact us at cpj@cpj.ca

...continued from page 1 "Getting Tough on Crime, or Refugees?"

#### Faith communities speak out

Loly Rico is the coordinator of the FCJ Refugee Centre in Toronto, a project of the Sisters, Faithful Companions of Jesus. She says, "The new Bill is going to impact the most vulnerable — women and children and the LGBT community. Some of the designated countries that are perceived as "democratic" don't have laws on gender equity, don't criminalize violence against women or have laws protecting sexual minority groups."

C-31 may thus create a twotier system where a case is no longer decided upon the merits of the particular refugee's story, but rather on the applicant's country of origin. Since the Minister would have no need to justify



his designations concerning which countries are "safe" and which are not, critics argue that the process runs the risk of undue politicization. Mary Jo Leddy, co-founder of Toronto's Romero House for refugees, stated that, "Bill C-31 criminalizes refugees who simply want to live. I believe this is a pro-life issue for the churches. It is not a crime to want to live."

"This makes it much like the refugee process in the United States," said Leddy. "Until now, Canada could take pride in the fact that its refugee determination system was independent of political interests."

The government plans to re-introduce the most controversial elements of its previously unsuccessful anti-human smuggling legislation, introduced after boats of Sri Lankan applicants appeared off the coast of British Columbia. Bill C-31 would allow detention of some refugee claimants (including children) for an entire year (something that is sure to be quickly challenged in Canadian courts.) As well, refugee claimants arriving in Canada could be prevented from bringing their family members to Canada, and to travel abroad, for 5 years. Jailing a refugee claimant for a year could cost \$70,000 per person, and it may not serve as a deterrent. Someone fleeing for their life or to protect their family will grasp at any chance of escape, including perhaps time in jail because they paid smugglers to get to safety.

A recent 100-page report by Delphine Nakache of the University of Ottawa on the Canadian immigration detention system revealed glaring problems. For instance, the cost of detaining the 492 Sri Lankan men, women, and children from the MV Sun Sea was over \$22 million. The Canadian Border Services Agency detains some 5,000 people a year, including children, in detention facilities including high security prisons.

The new legislation would also allow the government to revoke permanent residence status from those to whom it has been granted. Making such status "conditional" will further increase the instability of newcomers to our country, making it more unlikely for them to obtain secure jobs, mortgages or schooling for their children.

The Christian Reformed World Relief Committee refugee office feels that these provisions of Bill C-31 represent "a step backward" and will be "problematic" for refugees. Refugee Coordinator Rose Dekker notes, "Of particular concern to our refugee sponsorship program at CRWRC is the concept of "conditional" permanent residence that is introduced in Bill C-31. Currently, Canada grants permanent residence without the fear of revocation. This has provided security and the ability for resettled refugees to fully contribute to Canadian society. This security will be lost by making permanent residence conditional, based on changes in refugees' countries of origin. Refugees that we have sponsored arrive in Canada with permanent residence status... Changes, even for the better, in their country of origin could cause them to be uprooted from a new and safe life in Canada and sent back to the country where they suffered trauma and violence."

Linh Le is the coordinator of Carty House, an Ottawa residence for newcomer women which was opened by the sisters of the Congregation of Notre Dame. She says, "The reality of Bill C-31 has yet to fully dawn on the refugee women at Carty House...There isn't an easy way of determining with any certainty if a person is a refugee until she has been given a chance to share her story before an impartial decision maker. Minister Jason Kenney has never and will never hear their stories; and yet he has the ability to swiftly take away their rights, to destroy their lives, the lives of their children, and to further perpetuate the marginalization of displaced women around the world."

#### Canada's record

In late 2011, the world celebrated the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1951 Refugee Convention. Canada officially signed on to this Convention in 1969. The United Nations High Commission for Refugees estimates that there are 15.5 million refugees in the world – 80 per cent of whom live in lesser developed countries, not in the rich North. Canada accepted fewer than 19,000 refugees in 2010. The acceptance rate of those who claimed refugee status from inside Canadian borders was approximately 40 per cent. Obviously, Canadian refugee policy is not directed to address existing global needs – rather, these few that are allowed to stay are a small fraction of those needing refuge and security.

April 4<sup>th</sup> is Refugee Rights Day in Canada, when we commemorate the 1985 declaration by the Supreme Court that the Charter of Rights of Freedoms is meant to protect the rights of everyone in Canada, including refugees. In order to celebrate well in 2012, and beyond, Canadians should appeal to their federal government to withdraw Bill C-31.



Joe Gunn is CPJ's Executive Director.

# **Development at What Cost?**

#### By Patricia Graça

A lot of controversy has been raised recently around three pilot projects announced in September by the Minister of International Cooperation, Bev Oda. Minister Oda is responsible for the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the federal government's lead agency for the delivery of overseas development assistance.

Through these projects, CIDA will support partnerships between mining companies and development NGOs, namely Plan Canada, World University Service of Canada (WUSC), and World Vision Canada. CIDA aid dollars for these projects total US \$26.7 million, and will be used to compensate for some of the negative impacts caused by mining companies.



Photo by Marcelo Cruz

One such impact is the pollution from mining and ore processing which affects an estimated global population of 7,023,000, according to the 2011 Green Cross and Blacksmith Institute's Report on *The World's Worst Toxic Pollution Problems*. Besides suffering environmental impacts, these people are also threatened by human rights abuses, loss of land, increased poverty, health problems, as well as increased alcohol and drug use.

\$26.7 million in aid may seem like a good thing to do, but our government is doing even more for these mining companies who are rich enough to pay for their own compensation, and which cause the damage CIDA is putting their aid dollars towards.



Photo by Marcelo Cruz

A central example of this is the Canadian government's loan to the mining giant, Companhia Vale do Rio Doce (Vale), of US\$ 1 billion in 2010. According to the Globe and Mail, "The loan is one of the largest in the 65-year history of the

federal government's export credit agency". Vale is one of the world's most important producers of iron ore, iron pellets, and other minerals. It is the world's second largest metals and mining company. In 2011 it reported a record profit of US \$22.09 billion, "the highest amount ever reported by a publicly traded company in Brazil", according to Emerging Money.

In December 2010, right after the federal government awarded Vale the \$1 billion loan, the Ontario Labour Relations Board convicted the company of unfair labour practices. "In the short time since it ventured into Canada in 2006 with its takeover of

Inco Ltd., Vale has provoked unprecedented labour disputes, attacked working standards, worsened labour relations, slashed jobs, and announced harmful plant closures", said Ken Neumann, United Steelworkers National Director for Canada.

This year Vale won the 2012 Public Eye People's Choice Award for the world's worst company. This "award" was presented by Berne Declaration (BD) and Greenpeace Switzerland in Davos, during the annual World Economic Forum. The Public Eye People's website says: "A new record of people voted via the web for the Public Eye People's Award. The most votes went to Vale.... Vale is Brazil's second-largest corporation, the world's second-largest mining firm, and the largest global producer of iron ore. The corporation has a 60-

year history tarnished by repeated human rights abuses, inhumane working conditions and the ruthless exploitation of nature. Vale is currently taking part in the construction of the Belo Monte Dam in the Amazon. The dam is likely to result in the forced relocation of 40,000 people, who have neither a voice in the matter nor will they likely receive compensation. An area the size of Lake Constance¹ would be flooded, with disastrous consequences for the indigenous population as well as flora and fauna."

In a time of budget cut talks and economic instability we should ask why the Canadian government is placing so much focus on highly profitable mining companies. We should also wonder about the role these NGOs will play and whether our aid dollars are actually making a positive difference.

Not only will CIDA's aid dollars fail to repair all the damages caused by mining companies, loans will help fuel them. Instead of trying to cover up these damages, the federal government should play a regulatory role in the mining industry to prevent these environmental, human and labour rights violations from happening in the first place. Should these regulations be ignored, these giant, highly profitable firms should be held responsible for their own damages. Taxpayers' money should not be used to conceal corporate irresponsibility.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Lake Constance is the third largest lake in Central Europe. It measures 64 km in length and 12 km at its widest point. Its 270 km shoreline is shared between three countries: Germany, Austria and Switzerland.



Patricia Graça, a lawyer originally from Brazil, is a Policy Analyst at CPJ.



# **Gerald Vandezande**

Gerald Vandezande (77) passed away peacefully in his armchair at home in Scarborough, ON early on the morning of Saturday, July 16, 2011. Gerald was one of the founders of Citizens for Public Justice (CPJ) in 1963, and continued to be an active member and supporter all the days of his life. He worked as CPJ's Executive Director until 1988 and then National Public Affairs Director of CPJ for a decade thereafter. Although not blessed with the opportunity of higher education in the formal sense, Gerald received an Honourary Doctor of Letters from the Institute for Christian Studies (ICS), and, in 2001, was awarded the Order of Canada.

Gerald Vandezande was one of Canada's most renowned proponents of public justice – a true force for social change.

At a wonderful memorial evening in February, 130 friends gathered at the First Christian Reformed Church of Toronto. Organized jointly by CPJ and ICS, with many of Gerry's friends and family present, the event was titled, "Hungering for a New Politics: The Life's Work of Gerald Vandezande."



Masters of ceremony, Bob Sweetman of ICS and Joe Gunn.

The evening unfolded well, with a highlight being the premiere showing of a DVD of Gerry himself, speaking his own heartfelt beliefs. We had gathered to remember him, and there he was, reminding us of our purpose.



Gerald's wife Wynne Vandezande

In another film, Prof. Bob Goudzwaard reflected on Gerry's contributions, and all who attended were touched by the gracious presence of Wynne, Gerald's dear wife. A daughter (Karen) and grandson (Jason) movingly spoke from the Vandezande family's memory bank, with

Karen noting how she didn't always agree with her Dad's causes – as a lover of malls, she wasn't always sure that Sunday shopping was so bad!



A co-founder of CPJ, John Olthuis.

Throughout the evening, several friends spoke of Gerry, his passions and their memories. John Olthuis, who co-founded CPJ with Gerry back in 1963, remembered how they worked to defend the rights of the Dene people of the NWT. This Aboriginal

people challenged the Mackenzie Valley pipeline – and won! In a fetching turn of phrase, John remarked how "Gerry was Prime Minister of the Justice Party – and played the role of Minister in every portfolio of that government."

The Rev. Susan Eagle quipped that Gerry, an "activist theologian," was more often at Queen's Park than any elected MPP! And the Honourable John McKay, MP for Scarborough-Guildwood, complained that he never knew whether his friend Gerry would have actually



MP John McKay speaking about Gerald.

voted for him! McKay also quoted from a letter from current Liberal Leader, Bob Rae, which referred to Gerry as a "crystal spirit" in the words of a George Orwell poem.

The next day, we put into practice Gerry's words from the night before, with panel presentations and workshops on issues that Gerry was passionate about: family and child poverty, government advocacy, welcoming the neighbour among us, and preserving environmental integrity. During his presentation, Javed Akbar noted Gerry's deep commitment to interfaith action. On another panel, John Hiemstra's masterful presentation captured how Gerald's immersion in the Reformed philosophical and theological tradition stood him in good stead as a basis for his public life. From here, public justice became the roots of CPJ's charisma.

As we learned from the title of one of Gerry's books, justice is not about "just us." We'll miss the man who was mentor, voice of conscience, and faith-filled friend to so many proponents of a more just future. It is an honour to carry on and renew Gerry's passionate vision – every day – through our work at CPJ.



# **Moving Forward Against Poverty Means Acknowledging the Reality of Our Failures**

By Simon Lewchuk

This February, Citizens for Public Justice, along with our partners on the Dignity for All campaign for a poverty-free Canada hosted "What's Next? How do we Address Poverty in Canada?" on Parliament Hill. Over 130 people — including over 20 parliamentarians, advocacy groups, CPJ supporters, and members of the public — attended the public forum, which included a panel discussion with representatives from all parties.

Rather than dwelling on partisan differences, we started the event by focusing on the points of agreement and commonality that exist across party lines:

- poverty is a reality for approximately 3.4 million Canadians
- poverty exacts a heavy toll on our social and economic well-being, and
- poverty is a matter that Canadians want addressed.

We also acknowledged that

the failure to end poverty to date has been a collective failure. The 1989 and 2009 resolutions in the House of Commons to end poverty were unanimous, all-party resolutions. While it's easy for some to point the finger and blame our current government for the state of poverty in our country, there have been eight different governments formed since the first resolution to end poverty in 1989. Since that time, poverty rates have stayed more-or-less the same. We're all indicted.

Yet until the weight of the reality of our failure sinks in, we're likely to keep spinning our wheels.

Poverty statistics will remain numbers with little meaning unless we – and our elected officials – begin to identify them with real people and understand the significant impact poverty has on all of us.

I learned this from first-hand experience. Before I moved to Ottawa to work with CPJ, I coordinated an outreach ministry for a downtown Toronto church. Every day, I encountered 100 or more people struggling to make ends meet. These people changed poverty from a remote, impersonal concept to something real with a name and a face.

Our failure to end poverty, I discovered, looks like Cheryl, a single mom forced to rely on meagre government handouts, living in constant insecurity as she spends her day travelling across the city from one food bank or meal program to the next to feed her kids.

Our failure to end poverty looks like Raphael, who, as a result of a physical disability from an accident, is unable to work and finds himself living on a fixed income. After paying the rent for

> a tiny, bedbug-infested room in a boarding house, this fixed income leaves only a few hundred dollars to live on each month.

> Our failure to end poverty looks like Jim, a middle-aged man with limited education who was laid off from his job in the auto manufacturing sector, faces bleak prospects for finding work, and is forced to almost exhaust his limited savings to qualify for social assistance. The system makes it incredibly difficult for Jim to ever get back on his feet.

CPJ's February event on the Hill represented a significant step

forward in establishing a constructive, cross-party dialogue on this important issue. By acknowledging our collective failure to end poverty, we can move beyond partisan finger-pointing and work together towards our common goal. In ensuring these efforts are informed by an understanding of how poverty actually manifests itself in the lives of Canadians, we can generate the resolve and political will for action.

Over the coming months, CPJ will build on the momentum established at this event by facilitating an informed and inclusive dialogue amongst parliamentarians, civil society groups, and the public, including the establishment of an allparty "poverty caucus" on the Hill. We will continue to ensure that all voices are at the table, regardless of political affiliation, so that we can work together to implement concrete, achievable solutions for reducing poverty. We will ensure these discussions never just focus on the numbers, but rather are informed by the real stories of people who suffer the injustice of poverty. And we will continue to envision a society where everyone lives with dignity and has access to the necessary resources to live out their God-given calling.



Simon Lewchuk is a Policy Analyst at CPJ.

The Northern Gateway Pipeline:

Why We Cling to Oil

By Randolph Haluza-DeLay

The controversial Northern Gateway pipeline isn't the issue. Oh, it is an issue. But it isn't *THE* issue.

Canadian public and media attention has been focused on two pipeline proposal processes in the past half-year. The Keystone XL pipeline was to run from Alberta to Texas and was postponed by the United States federal government in September and then again in January. Hearings into the Northern Gateway pipeline — to run from Alberta to a to-be-built tanker terminal on the British Columbia coast — have become controversial. The intended purpose for both is to transport crude oil from Alberta's oil sands to new markets in the United States and Asia.

The pipeline proposals follow the pattern of other resource extraction projects in being touted as essential to economic prosperity/growth. However, the debate about the pipelines is raising troubling questions about government openness. Canada's Minister of Natural Resources, Joe Oliver, wrote in an open letter that "environmental and other groups" were trying to "hijack our regulatory system to achieve their radical ideological agenda." Then he went on to accuse opponents of the pipelines of receiving funding from foreign special interest groups (conveniently ignoring the trans-national corporations). On top of this, social costs, environmental degradation, and First Nations' rights can make it difficult to decide what to think.

The potential for problems is additionally troubling: tankers will hit reefs or face storms, pipelines will leak eventually, and even "fail-safe" technology will fail, as Japan's Fukashima reactor and BP's Deep Horizon well have recently shown. As disturbing as this is, where is the debate over whether all this is *good*?

As long as our society's transportation, travel, and ease of living are produced by fossil fuels, it's hard not to say "we *need* oil" and "there is no alternative."

The Northern Gateway pipeline is not the issue, even though its exit on the B.C. coast threatens marine ecologies and First Nations along the way consider their rights further impaired. Behind the pipelines lie the oilsands. Behind all this lies climate change. Average greenhouse gas emissions for oilsands production (extraction and upgrading) are about 3.2 to 4.5 times as intensive per barrel as for conventional crude oil produced in Canada or the United States, according to studies by the Pembina Institute and European Union. Uncontested data shows global warming is occurring now. Climate changes will disproportionately affect populations who have the least resources to mediate the negative effects and who contributed least to the human-made gases that are among the causes. These need justice.

But even climate change is not the issue. The real issue is the way we have socially organized ourselves, and the use of an easy





and powerful but rapidly

depleting fuel to do so. We fight hard to maintain that organization, despite the evidence that it is leading to global environmental changes in the biosphere, and unjustly harming people (and their livelihoods) who did not contribute to the global problem.

In theologian-historian Jacques Ellul's analysis "the technology of energy is closely linked to the spirit of domination, conquest and human lust" because it is a will-to-power and idolatrous form of security. Part of the opposition to the pipelines is because they perpetuate the existing culture of global injustice and global environmental change which economic and political institutions so vociferously defend. As transportation for oil, the pipelines represent a roadblock to a more sustainable society.

The real issue is that as long as we have a culture in which oil is the primary engine for everything we do, oil and its extraction are the way we think and the basis for how we organize our society. We have made oil into a necessity, dragging it from whatever source we can find. The Northern Gateway pipeline is just a symptom of the real issue.

Randolph Haluza-DeLay is an Associate Professor of Sociology at The King's University College in Edmonton, Alberta.



# **Groundings**

# **The Consistent Reality of Poverty**

by Anna Thede

People often cite Jesus' familiar statement, "the poor will always be with you" (Matthew 26:11; Mark 14:7; John 12:8) as an indication that, despite our attempts, poverty cannot be solved. However, over 2000 verses the Bible address poverty. Throughout the Old and New Testaments, God calls people to not only serve and care for the poor, but to redress the unjust social structures that lead to poverty. In the Old Testament books of Leviticus and Deuteronomy, for example, God gave the Israelites specific instructions for re-distributing food to their less fortunate community members. When the time came to bring the crops in from the field the harvesters were to leave a portion of the harvest (the outside edges of the field and any other leftover areas) so that the poor



would be able to collect it and have enough food for themselves (Leviticus 23:22. Also see Lev. 19:9-10 and Deuteronomy 24:19-20).

Not only do unjust social structures need to be rectified, but we must also guard against our own greed. For example, in Luke 12:33a, Jesus says: "Sell your possessions and give to charity...." and in Matthew 5:42: "Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you..." Also, in 1 John 3:17, John writes: "If we are rich and see others in need, yet close our hearts against them, how can we claim that we love God?"

If our heart is closed to the poor because that familiar statement "the poor will always be with you" has branded itself on our hearts, we won't talk about poverty. We won't even think about it. If we don't think about it and don't talk about, we won't do anything about it. However, the consistent reality of poverty demands our attention as a community of faith. Part of our call is to care for those in need, especially for those at risk: those without voice, position, power, money, or health. We need to address poverty. We need to think about it and to talk about it.

CPJ's new Bible studies can help us do just that. CPJ has developed a line of Bible studies to go along with the recent publication *Living Justice: A Gospel Response to Poverty*. The first study is *Living Justice* and *the Psalms: A Bible Study*. It is a free six-week Bible study available on the CPJ website. It focuses on how the psalms can act as examples of how to respond in, and to, situations of poverty. Each week focuses on a different psalm and the specific type of poverty it can help us address.

The second study, also free on the CPJ website, is called *Jesus and Living Justice: A Bible Study*. In this study, the four types of poverty in the book (material, emotional, community, and spiritual) are each studied along with one of Jesus' teachings from the gospels. Both of these studies are intended to bring greater awareness to poverty issues in our midst and how the Bible can help us respond.

It is not the intention of these studies to provide "the answers" to poverty. Instead, the studies are meant to stimulate discussions which could address:

- how poverty has affected us personally
- how poverty affects those in our churches, in our community, country and around the world, and
- how poverty can be addressed by those who let the Bible guide them into living with a concern for public justice for all.

Such discussions have the power to change the world as they bring about action in those who participate. It is in answer to our Christian call to care for others that we can look to our studies of the Bible, along with contemporary resources, to help us identify and address the issues facing our world today.

Anna Thede is the pastoral intern at St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Ottawa, ON. She is the co-author of the CPJ Bible Studies that use Living Justice: A Gospel Response to Poverty. To purchase copies of Living Justice, or to download and use any of these studies, see www.cpj.ca

