
OUR PRESENCE

FSM Mission and Focus

Winter 2020 Quarterly Report

Launching the Just Culture website

For FSM, compassionate care has always been an integral piece of our ministry. As we have entered into the latest phase of our Mission and Focus, we have had to learn how best to support the many different leaders and organizations we collaborate with to care for creation.

From the earliest days of FSM's philanthropy, it was important to our sisters to not only support our collaborators with a check, but also through prayer and presence. As we have walked closely with our collaborators over the years, we have built trust and gained insight about the best ways we, as funders, can support them.

Over time, we have learned that there is an unmet need for funders to more intentionally support the internal strength and growth of grantee organizations. The funding community's passion for addressing some of our society's greatest challenges—like climate change, poverty, hunger, and environmental racism—is inspiring and important. But, sometimes, in a race for measurable outcomes, funders overlook the basic needs of the individuals and teams who are doing that excellent work.

In 2019, FSM began a research project with consultant Jumana Vasi to survey our collaborators and other nonprofit leaders about the challenges they have supporting a healthy culture—what we are calling a

Just Culture—within their organizations. We define a Just Culture as one where all nonprofit workers have access to fair compensation and benefits, pathways for shared decision making, opportunities to grow professionally, and the ability to work in a safe, welcoming, and healthy environment.



Through surveys, interviews, and a pilot round of Just Culture-specific grantmaking process, we learned so much from our collaborators about what they need to more holistically support their staff, volunteers, and organizational culture. We're excited to share the findings from our research, video reflections from partners, and Just Culture resources on the brand new Just Culture website, which can be found at: **www.buildingajustculture.org**

We invite you to check out the website and watch the videos (a snippet of one video is pictured above). We hope this site can be a resource for anyone working to promote more caring, supportive environments for nonprofit workers.

Over 220 Catholic organizations have now divested from fossil fuels

In November 2020, forty-seven faith-based organizations from 21 different countries announced their commitment to divest from fossil fuels. Of the 47, 42 were Catholic, including the Association of U.S. Catholic Priests and the philanthropic network, of which FSM is a part, FADICA.

FSM is proud to support partners working to promote these types of bold and needed commitments. One of FSM's collaborators, Operation Noah, has been instrumental in helping Christian institutions in the U.K. to divest from fossil fuels. Through education, advocacy, organizing, and deep relationship-building, Operation Noah helps faith-based organizations they prepare and commit to divesting. Nine of the 47 organizations announcing their

divestment commitments in November were from the U.K.

The Global Catholic Climate Movement (GCCM) is another FSM collaborator committed to the divestment movement. GCCM works with Catholic institutions worldwide to help them divest and to take action in care of creation.

Operation Noah and GCCM also work alongside another FSM collaborator, the Catholic Impact Investing Collaborative (CIIC) to help Catholic institutions learn about and start impact investing. FSM is glad to support these efforts, and we pray to continue to see both divestment and impact investment commitments throughout the global faith community.

St. Louis congregations for environmental justice

In 2020, Metropolitan Congregations United (MCU) hired a full-time Environmental Justice (EJ) Organizer, Emmaline Giles, to assist congregations in leading and joining EJ initiatives in their communities. While MCU has long helped St. Louis congregations engage on many important policy issues, Emmaline's position became the first at MCU to focus specifically on EJ.

Despite the unprecedented challenges that came with the COVID-19 pandemic, MCU was able to grow strong relationships and begin to organize St. Louis congregations around their EJ concerns. MCU helped congregations address immediate health concerns that arose with the pandemic, for instance, helping to distribute over 40,000 masks in North County in 2020. One distribution event is pictured right.



In 2020, MCU helped Catholic parishes, including Sr. Judy Bell's parish, advance care for creation work such as a webinar co-hosted by the St. Louis Archdiocese. MCU is also working with congregations in North St. Louis to track energy usage, investigate ways to be more energy efficient and monitor nearby air quality. We're grateful to see MCU help activate local faith communities around the issues of environmental justice.

The St. Louis Mutual Aid Network

When the pandemic began last year, our friends at Solidarity Economy St. Louis launched the STL Mutual Aid network,



so helps to connect folks to provide transportation, grocery delivery, and emotional support to one another.

The Mutual Aid network is just one example of the need and the potential for a “solidarity economy” - in other words, an

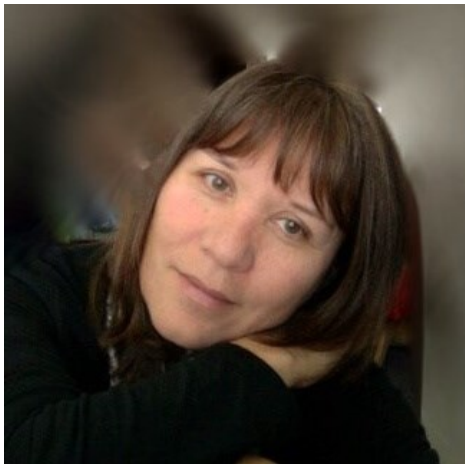
connecting St. Louisans to one another for support during this difficult time. The network has since grown to include over 2,000 neighbors and has distributed over \$730,000 to those in need. The network al-

economy which resists the notion of “every person for themselves.” Engaging in mutual aid is a way of embodying the beliefs that we all truly depend on one another’s survival for our own survival and that, together, we can thrive. Solidarity Economy St. Louis is continuing to grow their network, educate the St. Louis community about the principles of solidarity, and lift up the leadership of those who are most impacted by financial hardship. We are grateful for their efforts to make our region a more compassionate, equitable, and consciously interrelated place.



Dr. Cecilia Martinez named Senior Director for Environmental Justice in Biden Administration

We are excited to share that Dr. Cecilia Martinez has been appointed by the Biden Administration to serve as Senior Director of Environmental Justice at the Council of Environmental Quality. This is the first position in the Executive Offices of the President focused on realizing the principles of Environmental Justice from the highest levels of government. Dr. Martinez is the co-founder and Executive Director of the Center for Earth, Energy, and Democracy and a leader of the Midwest Environmental Justice Network, both of which are organizations FSM has been fortunate to be in partnership with for several years. Dr. Martinez’s leadership was critical in the collaborative effort which brought environmental justice leaders and national environmental advocates together to develop and promote the Equitable and Just National Climate Platform, a set of bold and equitable national climate policy goals. This appointment is just the latest in Dr. Martinez’ well-deserved and impressive accomplishments. Just this past September, we were thrilled to see her named to TIME Magazine’s list of The 100 Most Influential People of 2020.



Compassionate Care in Chicago

Over the past year, our friends in Little Village, a Chicago neighborhood, have cared deeply for their community in the face of not only the COVID-19 pandemic, but also of industrial pollution. Throughout the pandemic, LVEJO has provided emergency food distribution, including fresh produce, to 350 families, and they are continuing to advocate to stop the expansion of harmful industry, including through a billboard campaign exposing the truth about the impacts of industry on their neighborhood.



Animating Laudato Si' Worldwide



The Global Catholic Climate Movement trains people around the world to become “Laudato Si’ Animators” in their respective communities. Laudato Si’ Animators learn about and take part in the spirituality, practices, and advocacy which propel the spirit of Laudato Si’ forward. GCCM has now trained and certified 6,800 Laudato Si’ Animators worldwide! We are grateful for these leaders promoting care of creation all over the world.

Be present with us

Prayer Request: Please pray for all those who continue to be impacted by COVID-19. Please pray for our collaborators who continue caring for Creation and all those working tirelessly for peace and health in their communities despite challenging circumstances.

Join GCCM’s Monthly Virtual Prayer Meeting: On the first Friday of every month in 2021, the Global Catholic Climate Movement will host a virtual Global Laudato Si’ Monthly Prayer Service. Go to catholicclimatemovement.global/global-laudato-si-monthly-prayer-services/ for more information and to register.

Read more online by Google searching the “Environmental Justice Mapping & Data Collection Act” introduced in January by St. Louis’ new U.S. Congresswoman Cori Bush. This bill seeks to make environmental justice a priority on the federal level.

If you have questions or comments about this report, please contact Katie Mangum, Program Associate at (314) 768-1650 or kmangum@fsmonline.org
