



The Atlantic-Midwest (AM) Province takes corporate stances on issues that are of great importance to the province and to its mission. A corporate stance is an expression of the collective consciousness of a group about a grave social concern of the day. The decision to take a corporate stance is informed by study, dialogue, prayer and consideration of the teaching of the church on the social concern being considered.

“A corporate stance provides the rationale for the province’s position on a particular social issue and the elements around which the sisters will engage in advocacy,” says Sister Arlene Flaherty, OP, Director of the Office of Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation (JPIC) in the Atlantic Midwest Province. “It also states the faith-based or moral perspectives which guide SSND action around this issue.”

The province took their corporate stance on comprehensive immigration reform five years ago. It states: *“We, the members of the Atlantic Midwest Province of the School Sisters of Notre Dame, compelled by the Directional Statement of our 23rd General Chapter, which commits us to ‘intensify our efforts to witness to unity in a divided world while addressing these divisions with audacity and hope,’ support a comprehensive immigration reform for the United States. It includes pathways to citizenship for undocumented persons in the United States; family reunification as a priority in immigration policy; opportunities and protections for low-skilled immigrants to come and work in the United States; due process protections within our immigration enforcement policies; addressing the root causes of migration such as global, economic, environmental and social injustices; and effective and humane border security that recognizes the human rights of all people.”*

The province has a second corporate stance, too, against human trafficking.

It states, *“We, the members of the Atlantic- Midwest Province of the School Sisters of Notre Dame, in union with other individuals and groups worldwide, regard modern day slavery/human trafficking as an affront to the dignity, and God-given rights of the human person. Therefore, we oppose modern day slavery/human trafficking as a fundamentally immoral and socially reprehensible global practice.”* The Sisters, in the context of their corporate stance against human trafficking, also pledged to take many steps, including actions to address the root causes of human trafficking, empowering survivors to regain their dignity, advocating for the rights of exploited laborers and to use only those hotel chains that have signed THE CODE to eliminate child prostitution and trafficking.”



The decision to take a corporate stance is not one that happens quickly. In our province's case, "Sisters expressed a desire for a corporate stance on both issues," said Sister Arlene. "In consultation with the province, The JPIC office provided education on what should be contained in the corporate stance and helped to craft the final statement. There was a province-wide period of discussion and discernment regarding the elements of the corporate stance statement, then the majority of the members of the province voted to approve it."

*You Are Sent* calls upon sisters to "deepen communion with God and among people wherever we are – in every place, in every time, in every situation (C9)." The corporate stances of SSND are more than written expressions of the Sisters faith based perspective on the issues of the day. They are indeed a call to action, to which Sisters are responding every day of their lives