



Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition

"Faith Communities In Action Against Poverty"

News Release – March 10, 2009

Stalwart Kingston Vigil Moves to Queen's Park 13 years after Harris Cuts, Nuns Join Pre-Budget Prayers

At noon on Wednesday March 11, the interfaith prayer vigil at Queen's Park will be bolstered by a Kingston group that has been standing for social justice for 13 years now.

"It's not by chance that people are poor," explains Sister Pauline Lally, General Superior of Kingston's Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul. "Poverty is political. So the solutions must be political."

The Kingston stalwarts are taking their weekly protest to the Legislature to join the Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition's (ISARC) pre-budget prayer vigil for Ontario's most economically marginal people. The province's faith communities are praying for MPPs to do the right thing in the March 26 budget. And for those who are most marginalized, so that their dignity is not compromised by government decisions.

Organized by the Sisters of Providence, the Kingston Vigil Keepers have long been a Friday lunchtime feature at Kingston City Hall. In the biting winter wind, one of their signs showed a palm tree, a bright sun and a beach. "Poverty never takes a holiday."

The Kingston Vigil Keepers have sent a question to their local representative Environment Minister John Gerretsen and to each of the 28 MPPs for whom ISARC is praying for that day. What would you like us to pray for so that we can move towards an Ontario where social justice takes pride of place?

"It's critical to focus our act of faithful prayer on the need for social justice," said veteran Vigil Keeper Bert Horwood, Clerk of Kingston's Quaker Meeting. "Social justice in Ontario demands that legislators use this new budget to start implementing Ontario's strategy for poverty reduction."

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