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Progress 2011

Catherine of Siena Virtual College

Visions of Empowerment

We are proud to present our 2011 Progress Report. Empowerment is at the center of our work and is captured in our 2011 theme; *Empower yourself! Empower your community!* In this report, we highlight our growth over the past four years and outline our plans for the future. In the spirit of Catherine of Siena, we continue to pursue our goals with a passion for excellence and an unrelenting hunger for justice.

In the 14th century, Catherine of Siena changed her world and impacted the direction of the Catholic Church. In a politically divided landscape where Church leadership had grown brazenly corrupt, she embodied a moral authority speaking truth to power, reforming the clergy, serving the poor with generosity, and inspiring a new era of transformation. Thus, Catherine of Siena is a model for us in the 21st century and the inspiration behind our vision.

Catherine of Siena Virtual College contributes toward the development of women around the world by supporting equity and achievement for women in the Church, in society and in their personal lives. We strive to reduce and eliminate violence against and exploitation of women in all its forms. We seek to harness the energy of faith and secular communities for the benefit of women engaging both women and men as partners in this work for the transformation of the Church and society.

Mission driven, we provide transformative women and gender studies education to both women and men in order to empower women to exercise their personal agency and develop their leadership skills while promoting a full and equal partnership for women and men in the Church and in society.



Bridges of understanding

In each of our courses we intentionally create an atmosphere of understanding and respect across diverse geographical, cultural and religious divides, a vital aspect of education for our world today. One of our 2011 students affirmed these efforts when she wrote, "I felt like I was in a spiritual candy store feasting on all the wonderful research that had been done on the issue. Having our moderator/technician/registrar and fellow learners interact with one another about these issues was inspiring and motivating. I felt I grew in knowledge and skill in dealing with difficult issues with people holding a diversity of viewpoints."



My prior experience with online courses has been in impersonal, isolating, 'lone wolf' individual study. It was a breath of fresh air to have a human being leading and interacting with the group in a warm and encouraging way.

~2011 Student



International Sponsor, Dr. Aruna Gnanadason (second left, pictured here with Deborah Rose-Milavec), collaborated with CSVc to create our newest course, *Ecology, Women and the Future of the Earth*



Dr. Sr. Prem D'Souza, A.C. is Principal at St. Agnes College in Mangalore, India. She and her staff collaborated with CSVc to create one of our newest courses, *The Emerging Rights of Women in India*. In the first term nearly 50 students enrolled in the course.

Progress in 2011



After years of planning and engaging in the preliminary work of developing the college, the doors opened for the first time in October 2007 offering three online courses to nineteen students.

Course Development

Since 2007, three to four courses have been developed each year bringing the total number of courses offered to sixteen. This year we delighted in developing two new courses focusing on 1) ecology and women in collaboration with Dr. Aruna Gnanadason of India (one of our International Sponsors) and 2) women's rights in India in collaboration with St. Agnes College in Mangalore (our newest SHARING partner).

CSVc also consulted with a number of educational experts in the field who examined our courses and gave us feedback on ways to improve our interactive dimensions.

Year	Academic	Skill	Total
2007	2	1	3
2008	3	2	4
2009	2	1	3
2010	2	1	3
2011	2	1	3
Total	10	6	16

In 2012 we will develop another three to four courses based on the needs of our students and our outreach in Eastern and Southern Africa.

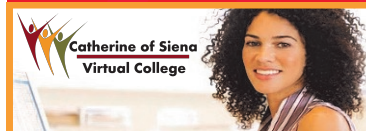
Student Enrollment Numbers

Since 2007, student enrollments nearly doubled for three years. 2011 saw a healthy 37% growth in student enrollments bringing the total number of students enrolled to date to 618.

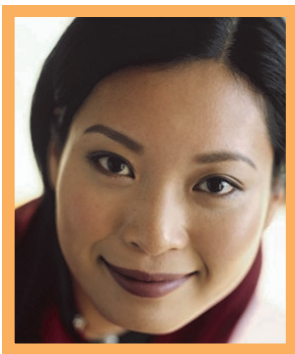
Student Enrollments

2007	19
2008	54
2009	95
2010	190
2011	260
Total	618

2011 PROGRESS AT A GLANCE



- **260 student enrollments in 2011 (37% increase over 2010)**
- **618 students enrolled from 43 countries since 2007**
- **3 new courses added (total 16)**
- **CSVc office in Mumbai India opened**
- **New website ,FB page and blog for global women's voices launched**
- **First outreach in East/South Africa, preparations being made for Africa office**
- **Prof. María Pilar Aquino accepts invitation of President Ursula King to become an International Sponsor**
- **CSVc receives first invitation to present at the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women meeting in Feb 2012**
- **New SHARING agreement signed and first co-developed course with SHARING partner in India**
- **Christ University (SHARING partner) offer Women's Certificate based on CSVc courses**



Our courses



Breakdown of courses by enrollments

Catherine of Siena Virtual College operates on a student friendly academic calendar offering courses four terms per year. Our January, April, July and October terms ensure that we align our course offerings with the academic schedules of universities and colleges around the world. We offer six courses each term, rotating them on a schedule, while allowing the flexibility needed to adjust that schedule in accordance with special requests or needs that may come from our SHARING partners.

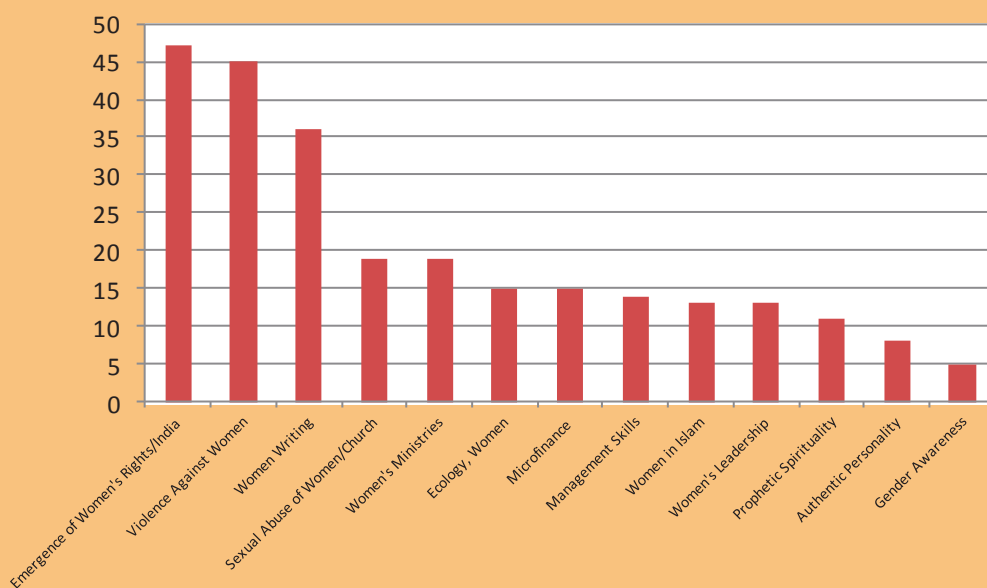
It was a pleasure to be able to share with others, who although strangers at the start became a close knit community in a way, and shared what each truly felt from their hearts. The chat room session is a great way to learn, empathise, garner strength and fortitude, especially for those who are going through a difficult time in their lives. They know that they are not alone, but have others like themselves from whom to learn, who care and understand and reach out in solidarity to one another.

~2011 Student



Artwork by EWA member, Marini DeLivera, woman's rights lawyer in Sri Lanka

2011 Courses



We endeavor to keep our classes small so that each student will have the benefit of a personalized environment and a robust interaction with the Professor/Moderator and other participating students.

Brief description of 2011 courses

Ecology, Women and the Future of the Earth

This course examines how the current social, economic, and religious systems that promote the subordination of women also favor the domination and destruction of the environment. These systems are progressively depleting non-renewable resources, destroying the ozone layer, favoring global warming and the irreversible disruption of the planet's long-term capacity to nurture its abundant life forms. Returning to the example of indigenous peoples and a women's approach toward nurturing planetary life, this course explores alternate forms of environmental belonging that foster a reexamining of the myths that we live by and promote a renewed "religious" wonder, acceptance, and subservient living in alignment with our Mother Earth.

It is evident that many wars are fought over resources which are now becoming increasingly scarce. If we conserved our resources better, fighting over them would not then occur...so, protecting the global environment is directly related to securing peace...those of us who understand the complex concept of the environment have the burden to act. We must not tire, we must not give up, we must persist.

~Wangari Maathai

Ecology, Women, and the Future of the Earth



2011 courses, continued



The Emergence of Women's Rights in Modern India

The Emergence of Women's Rights in Modern India



This course explores the human rights of women in India and provides the tools for developing the critical gender analysis needed to observe, evaluate, and act. Based on the work of various Indian scholars and created in conjunction with St. Agnes College in Mangalore, this course allows participants to explore the images of women in the media, the dignity of women, women's bodies, violence, working conditions, women's spirituality and more. Because these sessions were crafted by and for women in India, one has the benefit of becoming aware of the joys and pains of women living within this cultural setting. The issues, however, transcend the Indian culture and bring insight and healing to women everywhere in their own native cultures.

Sexual Abuse of Women in the Church (Seminar)

The Sexual Abuse of Women in the Church



For too long women have suffered both emotional and sexual abuse at the hands of those in power. This is an especially painful experience when it happens within faith communities. Pedophilia perpetrated by clergy members has been exposed in the Catholic Church, largely in the West. Yet, little has been written about sexual and emotional abuse of adult women. As International expert, Dr. Rev. Marie Fortune has noted, "Adult victims of sexual exploitation by clergy will be the next wave of the tsunami to hit the Church." This course examines the issues and the resources available for victims, advocates, ministers and others who are interested in this topic.

Quality assurance review

In July 2011, Aaron Rose-Milavec conducted a quality assurance review with Dr. Susan Bainbridge whose specialty is online educational methodology. He asked her to examine several of our courses and give us feedback for improvement. Susan found three areas for improvement.

1. The need to enhance learning and the construction of knowledge with more interesting and diverse activities. She made note of the interesting case studies that are already integrated in our courses and suggested various creative ways to diversify the examination of these cases beyond responding to exploratory questions.
2. The need to integrate self-administered assessment tools (i.e. quizzes, feedback loops, etc.) so that participants can assess their progress during the course.
3. The need to enlist learners in finding, recommending and assisting in developing a rich database of learning resources.

Following the consultation, Susan implemented her suggestions for our new course, *The Emergence of Women's Rights in Modern India*. The modifications were found to be quite satisfactory and CSVC plans to engage her services in order to upgrade our other courses as well.

Student learning and evaluations

We conduct surveys to measure the change in attitudes and learning of our students. Of students who completed our surveys

- 100% reported our courses deepened their awareness of discrimination against women in society
- 100% reported our courses deepened their awareness of gender inequality in religious/faith traditions
- 89% reported our courses deepened their appreciation and understanding of other cultures, religions, and societies.

Overall, anonymous student evaluations continue to be positive. 85% - 90% of students report that they agree or strongly favour the Case Study methodology, the ordering of lesson materials, and the interactive format with students and teachers in forums and chatrooms.

This course, *Sexual Abuse of Women in the Church*, has been a turning point in my priestly life. This course has challenged me in many ways. The course had substance, touching my heart, spirit, and intellect. An important notion that drew me closer was the notion of clerical narcissism which I believe is one of the serious reasons for the abuse. One of the important elements that opened my mind was the idea of Dr. Fortune who emphasized that the priest needs professional ethics along with personal ethics. This I will keep in my mind forever.

~2011 Student



Demographics

To speak myself without any inhibitions or any fears, The best part is the idea that we are sharing among trusted friends. I like the concept that it's ok if we make mistakes but we learn from each other through the wonderful sharing by contributing to the knowledge pool created by the contribution of each and every member in the group. A fabulous place to learn and unlearn!! The chat sessions are like the icing on the cake!!

Marvelous concept in Action!! :-)

~2011 Student

Students by geographical region

Over the past four years our student population has expanded in numbers as well as in diversity due to our robust outreach efforts, strong advertising campaigns, and our reputation for high-quality, personalized and transformational educational experiences.

In 2011 students from 37 different countries enrolled in our courses. Since 2007 we have enrolled students from more than 43 countries throughout the world!



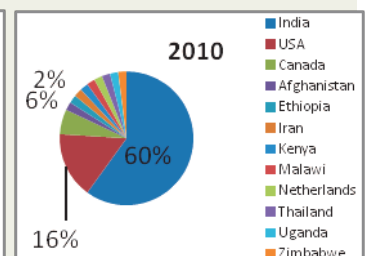
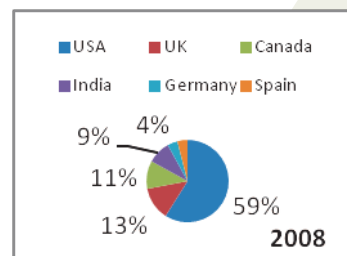
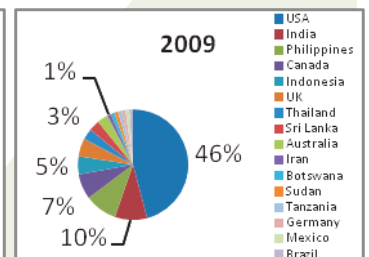
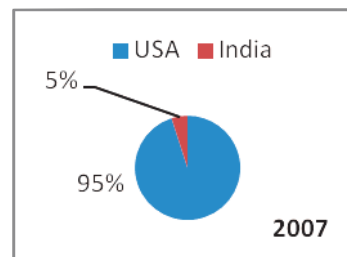
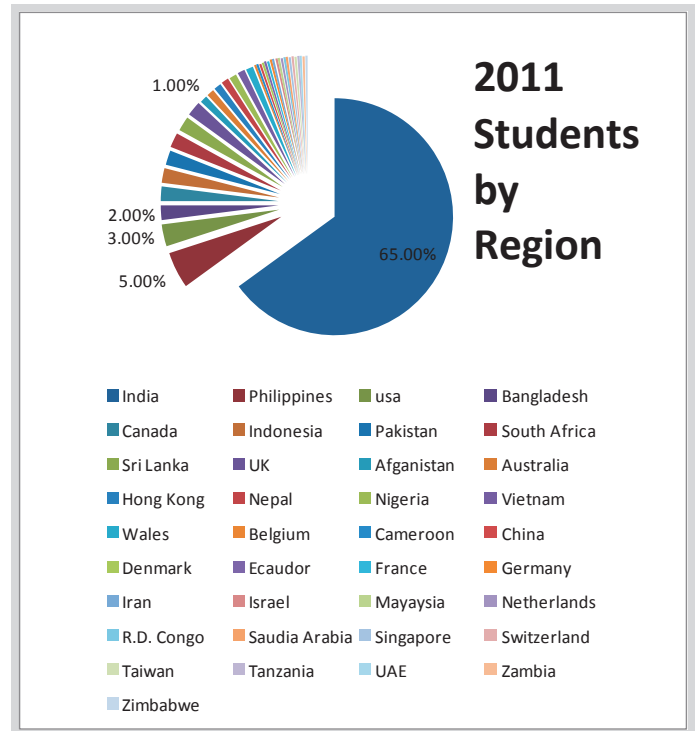
Students from Christ University (SHARING Partner) gather for cultural heritage event

Fulfilling our mission

As a mission driven organization, we focus on providing high quality women's and gender studies courses in developing regions where access to such courses may be limited. Further, we seek to engage students from developed regions to improve awareness of gender inequality, to enhance cross cultural learning and break down stereotypes, and provide a vital educational ingredient in a increasingly divided world.

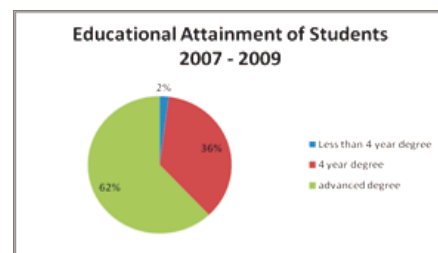
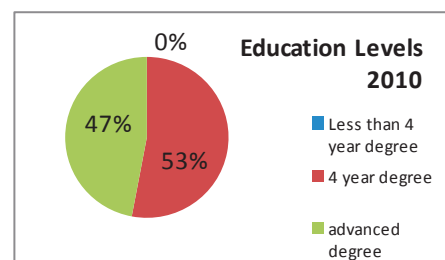
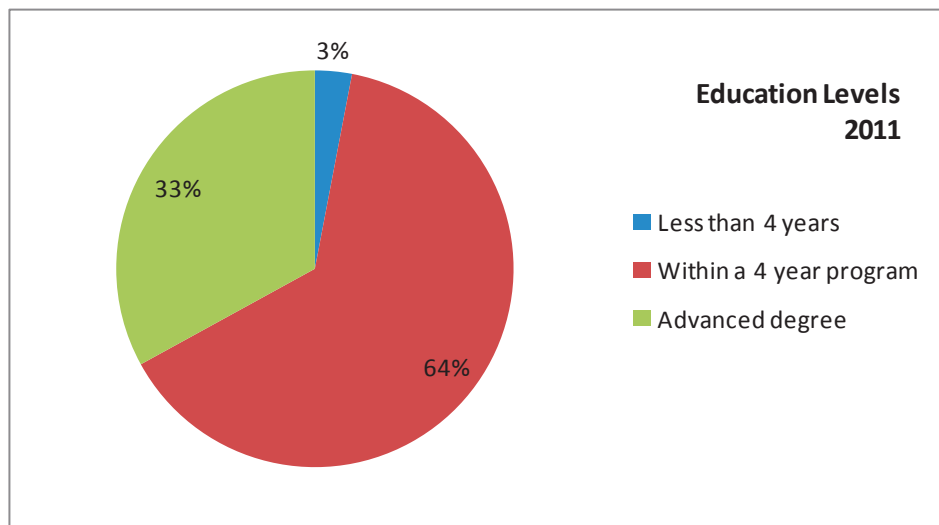
This bar chart (below right) reflects the continuing trend in our enrollment numbers to attract students from developing regions. These numbers directly correlate to the strong Integration and Outreach Program conducted by Catherine College staff throughout Asia over the past several years.

Outreach conducted in Africa in late 2011 will certainly be reflected in student enrollments in the future.

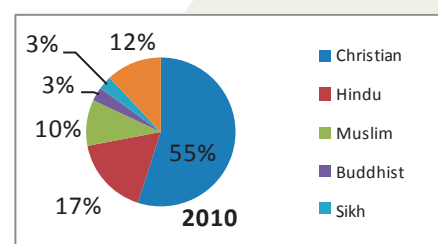
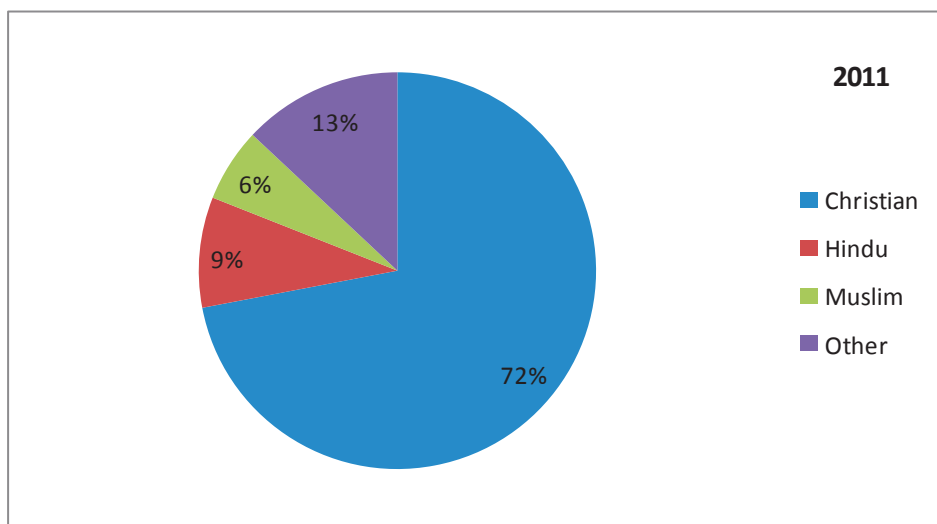


Students—educational levels

Students come to Catherine of Siena Virtual College from a range of educational backgrounds, but trends show that students who are completing a B.A. program are becoming a majority. According to registration information, students with advanced degrees tell us that they take our courses for personal and professional enrichment in nearly equal numbers.

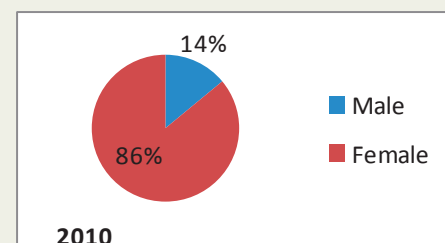
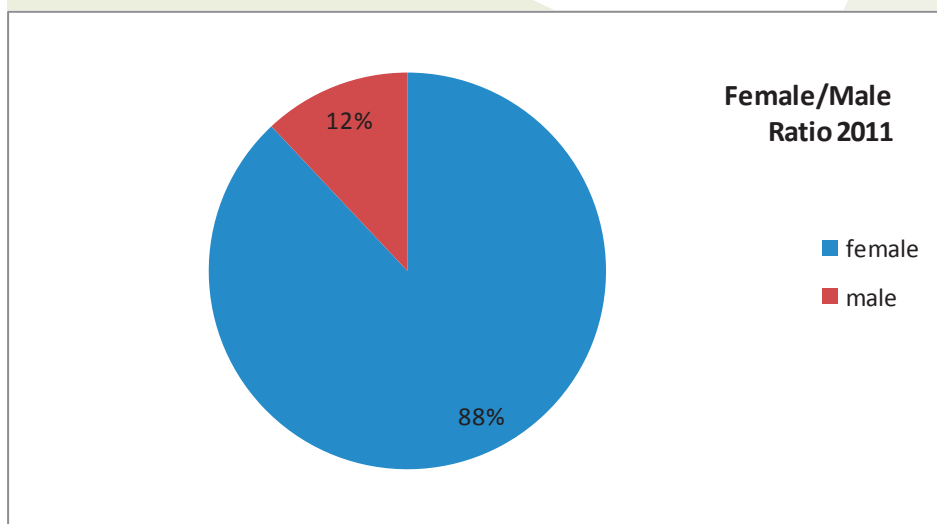


Students—religious affiliation



Of the students who chose to describe themselves in terms of religious affiliation, those from various Christian traditions represent the majority of our participants with somewhat fewer participations from other religious traditions in 2011.

Students—Female/Male ratio



The ratio of female to male students remained relatively the same as 2010.





A new look in 2011

Website development

In 2011, Catherine of Siena Virtual College launched a new website creating a fresh updated look with an easy to navigate site. The site makes choosing and enrolling for courses easy!



I ardently believe that women coming together locally and being in solidarity internationally can be a strong force to bring about change.

~From a blog by Virginia Saldanha

New blog for women's voices worldwide

Catherine of Siena Virtual College works to promote women's empowerment by promoting women's words, women's ideas and women's voices. Over the past year we have had the good fortune to showcase some of the most impressive and thoughtful women's voices from around the world such as Virginia Saldanha, Sophie Bodegon, Liza Lamis, Astrid Lobo Gajiwala and Domanay Nomad (pictured right in order). Read what they have to say (and respond!) by going to the front page of our website!



Women who blog



Catch us on Facebook and Twitter!

Our Facebook page and Twitter account help us to reach out to the millions of people who engage these modern media venues.

In these forums we can highlight events important to the College and issues that are pertinent to our mission and work.

In this modern media landscape, we are utilizing every effective tool to help build new awareness for the College and for the work of promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women everywhere!



The opening of our office in India



Virginia Saldanha, Registrar

Virginia Saldanha joined the Catherine of Siena Virtual College staff as our Registrar in 2011. A fast learner and hard worker, Virginia quickly learned the many tasks involved in the registration and tracking of our students along with dozens of other related tasks.

Virginia also conducts outreach for the College in India and other parts of Southeast Asia. She comes to our staff with a lifetime of experience working for women's empowerment. Prior to coming on staff, she worked with the Catholic Bishops Conference of India, The Federation of Asian Bishops' Conference, Pax Christi International, UCAN, Ecclesia of Women in Asia, and a whole host of other associations and organizations. She is a respected and prophetic voice working for justice for women and oppressed people in Asia.

Summary of Virginia Saldanha outreach report, 2011

Catherine College was introduced at every meeting attended in 2011 and bookmarks and posters were distributed. Outreach was conducted at the following venues:

- Women's Day - when there were a number of programmes for women in Mumbai.
- Archdiocese Commission for Women - 70 women
- YWCA Women's Day Programme - 50 women
- Catholic Council of Women in India and Diocesan Women's Commission - gatherings which draw the largest numbers of women.
- Xavier College, Mumbai
- Sophia College, Gender Cell, Mumbai
- Centre for Social Action- Women's Forum in the Archdiocese - seven large organizations are represented here together with the parish community centres
- Consultation was held in Mumbai on Gender Relations in the Church - 43 persons who are key persons in theologates, congregations and other institutions in the Church were present including a bishop.
- Missio Aachen - In May I visited and during my presentation on Women in Asia, I presented CSVC in the context of my on going work for women in Asia, and as an important tool of empowerment in democratic cyberspace.
- Fr. Agnel College in Pilar - met with the principal and teachers.
- Mater Dei Institute of Religious Studies in Goa
- Consultation organized in Pune for leaders of religious women's congregations on "BUILDING Integral Partnership for Prophetic Mission"
- Asian Women's Resource Center, Kuala Lumpur Malaysia
- AWARE organization for women's rights, Singapore
- Ecclesia of Women in Asia Conference, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

The chat sessions every Friday, was something I looked forward to. Interacting and learning from my co learners and the exchange of ideas and personal experiences made it richer. The sharing with Virginia, my moderator, was an invaluable experience. Being able to share in a climate of acceptance, learn from someone with more experience and without fear of ridicule, made the whole course even more special.

~2011 Student

New International Sponsor

Professor María Pilar Aquino

Thanks to the generous efforts of our President, Prof. Ursula King, Catherine of Siena Virtual College added its 15th International Sponsor to our outstanding list of world renowned theologians, scholars and leaders.

María Pilar Aquino, born in Mexico and raised in the Sonora/Arizona border is Professor of Theology and Religious Studies at the University of San Diego, and is a past Visiting Professor of Theology at Harvard Divinity School. She earned her doctoral degree at the Pontifical University of Salamanca, Spain (1990). In 2000, the Department of Theology of the University of Helsinki, Finland, conferred on her the degree of Doctor of Theology Honoris Causae. Aquino is a founding member of the Academy of Catholic Hispanic/Latina Theologians of the United States of which she has also been the first woman President. She is the 1997 recipient of the "Virgilio Elizondo Award" of ACHTUS for her outstanding contribution to Latina Feminist Theology. She is counted among the twenty-five most prominent Latin American liberation theologians today.



Reaching out in Africa

South Africa, Namibia and Kenya

In October 2011, Deborah Rose-Milavec conducted the first CSVS outreach journey to the African continent. Based on responses she received during several months of preliminary outreach from the USA, she journeyed to South Africa, Namibia and Kenya. Over the course of nearly four weeks, she contacted hundreds of individuals from universities/colleges, NGOs, Churches and faith based organizations. She also interviewed a number of applicants to conduct outreach for the College. Of all those contacted, the following lists represent the most promising contacts. The Africa Report will give a fuller picture of the trip along with many new contacts to be made in the future.

Universities, organizations, NGOs, etc. expressing a strong interest in a SHARING partnership with Catherine College are

- St. Augustine's College, Johannesburg, SA
- South African Bishop's Conference, Justice and Peace Office
- Namibian Catholic Bishop's Conference, Gender Desk
- Chaplaincy for Defense Ministry in Namibia and Rev. Nangula Kathindi
- Benedictine Sisters of W. Windhoek, Namibia
- Diocese of Cape Town Justice and Peace office, SA
- Justice for Women, NGO in Pietermaritzburg, SA
- SOTENI International, Nairobi, Kenya
- St. Paul's University, Kenya
- Mazi Mazuri, NGO, Nairobi, Kenya
- Catholic University of East Africa, Centre for Social Justice & Ethics, Kenya
- Regis Pachem University, Nairobi, Kenya
- Hekima College, Nairobi, Kenya
- IMANI, Maria House, Marianist NPO vocational training centre for women, Eastleigh, Nairobi

Deborah also spoke with dozens of religious women and men, theologians, professors, heads of NGOs and leaders, many of whom expressed an interest in engaging, promoting and supporting Catherine of Siena College and/or developing culturally relevant courses for Africa and beyond.

- President Fr. Michael van Heerden, Rector of St. Augustine's College
- Emilia Charbonneau, Lock Goemans, Innes Ceruti, Ann Moore of The Grail
- Sr Biddy Rose Tiernan, Sr. Shelah Mary of Sisters of Corrie
- Fr. Michael Deeb of the Peace and Justice office for the SA Bishops Conference
- Dr. Fr. Anthony Egan of the Jesuit Institute
- Sr. Dr. Judy Coyle, IHM of St. Augustine's College
- Elma J. Dienda, Gender Desk Coordinator, Namibia Catholic Bishop's Conference
- Rev. Nangula Kathindi, Chaplain for Defense Ministry, Government of Namibia
- Sr. Asteria Ndjekela, OSB, Sr. Uushana Wilbeluine, OSB of Benedictine Sisters of Windhoek, Namibia
- Fr. Thomas Manninezhath CMI, Secretary General, NCBC
- Fr. Benny Karuvelil, St. Charles Lwanga Seminary
- Dr. Mary Ryan, The Woman's Table
- Fr. Wim Lindeque, Office of Justice and Peace, Archdiocese of Cape Town
- Fr. Peter-John Pearson, South African Bishops' Public Policy office
- Dr. Alleyn Diesel, research on Women in Hinduism, Pietermaritzburg
- Mary Kleinenberg, Black Sash Women's movement and organization, Pietermaritzburg
- Phumazile Zondi-Mabizela, research in the field of HIV/Aids and women, PMB
- Professor Isabel Phiri, Pietermaritzburg
- Professor Sarojini Nadar, Pietermaritzburg
- Professor Bev Haddad, Pietermaritzburg
- Professor Helen Efthimiades-Keith, Pietermaritzburg
- Sr. Dr. Sue Rakowsy, St. Joseph's Theological Institute
- Rev. Janet Trisk, College of Transfiguration, Grahamstown, Eastern Cape

AFRICAN WOMEN WHO LEAD



Elma Dienda (former member of Parliament) of the NCBC, Gender Desk and Rev. Nangula Kathindi of the Namibia Chaplaincy for Defense Ministry discuss the issues women face in Namibia



CSVS International Sponsor, Prof Isabel Phiri discusses her research and experiences in her office at UKZN in Pietermaritzburg, SA



Lay Marianist Josephine Njeri discusses her work helping women develop job skills in Mombasa, Kenya



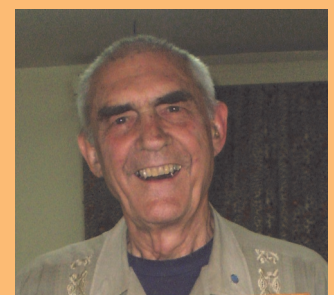
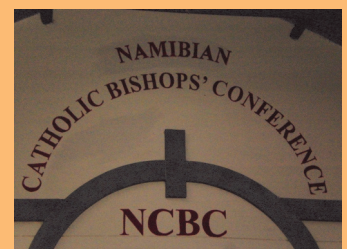
Mayor Topaguila Maphumulo of Camperdown discusses the issues particular to rural women

Reaching out in Africa, cont.

- Jenny Bell, Director of Justice for Women, Pietermaritzburg
- Lorna Mueni Kilonzo, International Lay Marianist, Nairobi
- Josephine Njeri, Lay Marianist running women's vocational program in Mombassa
- Felistas Kyuh, Lay Marianist running youth program, Nairobi
- Millicent Kiura, Lay Marianist running School for Grade 2—8 in Mathare slum, Nairobi
- Professor Philomena N. Mwaura, Kenyatta U, Gender Affirmative Action Implementation Centre
- Sr. Gachambi, AS, Regis Pacem University, Nairobi
- Fr. Gabriel Mmassi, S.J. Hekima College, Nairobi
- Dr. S.E. Kiami, Director of Wangari Maathai Centre, University of Nairobi
- Professor Esther Mombo, Deputy Vice Chancellor, St. Paul's University, Limuru
- Sr. Dr. Elizabeth Nduku, Center for Social Justice & Ethics, Catholic University of East Africa
- Professor Richard Kakweto, Centre for Social Justice and Ethics, Catholic University of East Africa
- Caroline Kavunga, Imani Maria House vocational training for women, Eastleigh, Nairobi
- Bro. Joseph, Our Lady of Nazareth, Mukuru kwa Njenga slum of Nairobi
- Edward Wanyonyi, Program Manager, SOTENI
- Marion Nelima Makhandia, Business Manager, SOTENI
- Wacera Kaganda, Microcredit program for women, Maji Mazuri, Nairobi
- Daniel Wimbua Kyuna, Microcredit and training program, Maji Mazuri, Nairobi
- Wanjiku Kironyo, Director, Maji Mazuri, Nairobi
- Fr. Richard Loehrlein, Marianist organizing programs, Theology of the Body, great connector and very helpful to me during my time in Nairobi

There is much work to do to bring a modicum of justice and peace to so many places in Africa. Reception to our educational work was strong and promises a long future in the region..

**CATHERINE
COLLEGE
CONNECTING IN
AFRICA**



ST. CHARLES LWANGA
OUR PATRON



Catherine of Siena Virtual College 2011

Conclusion



As we examine the thousands of inequities in the world through the lens of gender, we see that women and children shoulder a disproportionate share of the resulting suffering. Further, as we go deeper into this landscape of suffering, we see there are important connections. The struggle for clean water in the Mathare slum is connected to the struggle for equality in the Church. The struggle to preserve our environment is connected to the struggle to combat the spread of HIV/Aids. The struggle for dignity of the girl child in India is connected to struggle to end the controversial cultural initiation rites of female circumcision in Kenya. Whether we are examining food insecurity or war, access to natural resources or political power, women and men must stand in courageous solidarity, sharing both wisdom and resources, in order to find sustainable equitable solutions.

Catherine of Siena Virtual College will enter its fifth year of operations in 2012. There has never been a greater need for our women's and gender studies education. The growth of our number of participants and their response to our courses tells us that we are fulfilling a huge need throughout the world.

We continue to do this work in the spirit of faith. We are committed to the fulfillment of our mission of promoting gender equality and empowering women for life and leadership throughout the world. We are committed to building bridges of understanding, solidarity and hope across geographical, racial, cultural and class lines. We look forward to a day when our work is no longer needed, when the Meru and Dalit woman stands alongside the western tycoon in equality, when the earth takes its sacred place against the forces of profit, when food, water and natural resources are shared equitably by all. We work for the day when God's dream becomes our lived reality, when the lion lays down with the lamb, and when all the swords have been beaten into plowshares.

Prepared by:

Deborah Rose-Milavec, Joint Vice-President
Aaron Rose-Milavec, Joint Vice-President
Virginia Saldanha, Registrar

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