



In This Issue

- *International Women's Day Message*
- *Tutor/Coordinator Delivers 6th Sarah Ann Gill Distinguished Lecture*
- *5th "Theologising Women" Conference*
- *Affective Education for Girls*
- *Project FEM*

International Women's Day Message

March 8

On this International Women's Day, the Women and Development Unit, The University of the West Indies salutes the women of the Caribbean and the world. Today, in the spirit of camaraderie and solidarity in struggle, let us honour all those women, past and present, who have given of their blood, sweat and tears to keep hope alive in this period when women's rights are flagrantly violated in systems of exploitation, abuse and discrimination.

While we must, as a priority, continue to hold fast to our rights as human rights as inalienable and indivisible, we must, at the same time, protect our children from the injustices, violence and dehumanisation brought on them by all forms of discrimination: race, religion, culture, nationality, social origin and disability to name a few. The Convention on the Rights of the Child states clearly that the "States Parties shall respect and ensure the rights set forth in the present convention to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or status" (*Article 2*, para. 1). However, in a number of countries, children, particularly girls, are denied their rights and are subject to harmful attitudes and practices: attitudes and practices which are well-known throughout the world.

Therefore, in this Women's Month (March 2012) let us as women resolve to hold our children dear and close to our hearts and nurture and respect them while we protect them from exploitation and abuse. This is a duty and not a privilege. Let us call on all women to protect and promote the human rights of all children as inalienable and integral to universal human rights and encourage them to hold governments accountable for their commitment to the enactment of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Let us with one love suffer our children to enjoy their rights as we shepherd them in the paths of righteousness.

Tutor/Coordinator Delivers 6th Sarah Ann Gill Distinguished Lecture

Judith Soares presented the 6th Sarah Ann Gill Lecture put on by the Methodist Church, South Region. Her topic was "Glorifying the Unspoken Heroines of Methodism in the Caribbean". The lecture spoke to the historically unrecognised role of slave women in spreading and keeping alive Methodism in Antigua from where this Christian denomination spread throughout the region.

5th “Theologising Women” Conference, Jamaica

The Women and Development Unit in collaboration with Hillcrest Diocesan Retreat Centre of the Anglican Church of Jamaica and Grand Cayman hosted its 5th “Theologising Women” conference under the theme, “Theologising Women: Conversations on Female Embodiment” on March 2, 2012 at the Hillcrest Diocesan Retreat Centre, Brown’s Town, Jamaica.

Female embodiment (social construction of the female body and sexuality) an area of feminist and theological research and study is relatively new. This was the first time a conference under this theme was held in Jamaica and the wider Caribbean. WAND is breaking new ground with the introduction of its “Theologising Women” conference series. Presenters included:

Dr. Judith Soares, Tutor/Coordinator, Women and Development Unit, UWI. **“Allegory and Politics: Reinterpreting the Songs of Solomon”**

Rev. Vivette Jennings, Director, Hillcrest Diocesan Retreat Centre. **“Perspectives on Female Embodiment”**

Dr Anna Perkins, former Dean of Studies, St. Michael’s Theological College, Jamaica and Editor, *Groundings: Catholic Theological Reflections on Issues Facing Caribbean People in the 21st Century*, the College’s journal. **“Questions on Female Embodiment”**

Ms. June Castello, Gender Specialist and Consultant. **“Booty”, Christian Church and Gender Equality: Towards a Successful Ménage a Trois”**

Ms. Sheila Samiel, Public Health Consultant. **“Female Embodiment in Public Health”**

Project FEM: Fashioning through Education and Mentoring

In keeping with its strategic objectives and in responding to social needs, the Women and Development Unit broadened its programme of activity to include an education project for girls in one of Barbados’ state homes for children.

”Towards a Successful Future: Affective Education for Girls”, Christ Church Girls Primary School, Barbados

The Women and Development Unit introduced an affective education/emotional literacy project for the 87 Class 3 students at the Christ Church Girls’ Primary School in Barbados. Held under the theme, “Towards a Successful Future: Affective Education for Girls”, the programme, which will run between January and December 2012 in the first instance, is intended to help young girls appreciate themselves and their education so that they can perform well in school, at home and in their community. The programme will also help them to chart a successful future in terms of career choice and personal development and in managing their own lives.

Publications

Soares, Judith, “Towards a Theology of Justice for the Caribbean and Latin America”, *Groundings: Catholic Theological Reflections on Issues Facing Caribbean People in the 21st Century*, Issue 27, January 2012.

Soares, Judith, “Guerrillas in the Trenches”: *Nettleford on Extra-Mural Studies at the UWI*, *Caribbean Quarterly: a journal of Caribbean culture, Special Issue, “The Sage Has Come of Age”*, Vol. 57, Nos.3& 4, December 2011.

Batson-Rollock, Cecelia, Judith Soares and Marva Phillips, “Forever Indebted to Rex: Women Crafting a New Story of Human Experience”, *Caribbean Quarterly: a journal of Caribbean culture, Special Issue, “The Sage Has Come of Age”*, Vol. 57, Nos.3& 4, December 2011.

Soares, Judith, “Race-Based Violence against Women Missing Agenda Item”, *Abeng News: The Caribbean Voice*, November 25, 2011.

Williams, R.K. and Judith Soares, *An Analysis of the Domestic Violence Act of Guyana 1996*, Barbados: Women and Development Unit, University of the West Indies, 2012.

Editor: Judith Soares

Production: Sheree Trotman

WAND

Notes

Newsletter of the Women and Development Unit,
University of the West Indies
School of Continuing Studies
Pine, St. Michael
Barbados
Tel: 246-430-1130, Fax: 246 426-3006
Email: wand@uwichill.edu.bb