



# Our Global Obligation

Presented By: Student Advocates for Social Justice

**“We are workers, not master builders: ministers, not messiahs.  
We are prophets of a future not our own.”**  
Archbishop Oscar Romero

## Local News

DAYTON — Two years after Ohio voters overwhelmingly passed a ban on smoking in public places, officials are struggling to enforce the law.

Just 5 percent of complaints investigated by officials across the state have resulted in fines. The appeals process can drag on for months.

In Warren County in southwest Ohio, officials have not imposed a single fine for smoking violations, despite more than 200 investigations since May 2007.

"It's an unenforceable law," said Jerry Badders, owner of The Courtyard Lounge in Englewood. Badders appealed his \$100 fine in August and plans to continue to fight it all the way to court.

Restaurant owners and anti-smoking groups, including

the American Cancer Society, are fighting legislation in the Ohio House and Senate that would permit loopholes in the ban.

A Senate bill would allow smoking at certain family-owned businesses and private clubs while a House bill would exempt stand-alone bars from the ban.

Sen. Tom Roberts of Dayton said the difference between the proposed law and its enforcement has led voters to believe there was a "bait and switch" on promised exemptions.

"The law has to be enforced for everybody, or some businesses will have an unfair advantage," said Amy Haverstick, president of the Miami Valley Restaurant Association.

Local health officials say the state failed to provide a viable means of funding enforcement of the smoking ban

For more please go to: [http://blog.cleveland.com/metro/2008/12/after\\_2\\_years\\_smokingban\\_foes.html](http://blog.cleveland.com/metro/2008/12/after_2_years_smokingban_foes.html)

## National News

WASHINGTON - The nation's public transportation systems saw the largest quarterly ridership increase in 25 years as more Americans shunned their automobiles even as gas prices began to ease, according to industry figures to be released Monday.

Subways, buses, commuter rail and light-rail systems saw a 6.5

percent jump in ridership from July to September, according to the Washington-based American Public Transportation Association. During the same quarter, Americans drove 4.6 percent less on the nation's highways.

The average price for a gallon of gas peaked at more than \$4 in mid-July, then began falling.

For more please visit: <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/28102241/>

- **S.A.S.J. meets every Wednesday at 4:00 in the chapel. Please come and join us.**



## Student Advocates for Social Justice

### Contact the Leadership Team

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### A Note from the Leadership Team,

*The leadership team of S.A.S.J. is excited to debut Our Global Obligation, an ongoing weekly bulletin that will inform and educate the St. Martin's community about social justice issues. So, be on the lookout for upcoming issues, and feel free to email the leadership team with any questions or comments.  
God Bless!*

## International News

ATHENS, Greece - Gangs of youths smashed their way through central Athens and Thessaloniki on Monday, torching stores and buildings after the fatal police shooting of a teenager sparked Greece's worst rioting in decades.



Dozens of shops, banks and even luxury hotels had their windows smashed and burned in a night of lawlessness as youths fought running battles with riot police. Black smoke rose above the city center, mingling with clouds of tear gas.

Prime Minister Costas Karamanlis, whose increasingly unpopular government has already faced a growing number of sometimes violent demonstrations in recent months, called an emergency Cabinet meeting Monday night.

In Athens, rioters torched the capital's massive Christmas tree in central Syntagma Square. As the hooded youths moved on, some protesters posed for photos in front of the blaze, and others sang the Greek version of "O Christmas Tree."

For more please visit: <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/28090788/>

## The School of Americas Corner

Recently, S.A.S.J traveled down to the school of the Americas, in Fort Benning, Georgia, with Walsh Jesuit High School. Each week one of the members of S.A.S.J. will reflect on their experience during the weekend. For more information on the School of Americas please visit [soaw.org](http://soaw.org)

Junior Ariel Powell's thoughts on the puppeteers during the festival on the Saturday prior to the protest: *"When the procession was over and the puppeteers began to leave, it struck me: I had just witnessed something amazing. At the time I was a little grumpy, being that it was so cold and I was hungry, but even with that attitude I couldn't lie to myself. This whole experience would change my life. It took some giant heads and gastrillions of dancing people for me to*

*realize that. What was so great about the puppets (other than the fact that puppets of any kind are extremely awesome) was that all of this happiness can exist in front of a place of such cruelty. Who knew? Here people were dancing, singing, playing instruments, and just enjoying being shoeless (yes, in like, Cleveland weather) in front of the School of Americas, a school that is no stranger to torture and oppression. It was mind-boggling. I thought people would be depressed the entire weekend but here they were, happy. Seeing those happy people behind those big-headed (I'm talking HUGE) puppets showed me what hope really was and how easy it is to find it in the worst situations. Now, if only Harry Potter Puppet Pals could do that... "*

Stay tuned for next weeks reflection.