

**What is a Millennium Development Goal?** Initiated through the United Nations, MDGs are the most broadly supported comprehensive and specific development goals the world has ever agreed upon to end global poverty.



## **Millennium Development Goal #3 Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women**

### **The Goal:**

**Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015**

### **The Challenge:**

- For girls in some regions, education remains elusive
- Poverty is a major barrier to education, especially among older girls
- In every developing region except the CIS, men outnumber women in paid employment
- Women are largely relegated to more vulnerable forms of employment
- Women are over-represented in informal employment, with its lack of benefits and security
- Top-level jobs still go to men — to an overwhelming degree
- Women are slowly rising to political power, but mainly when boosted by quotas and other special measures

### **Success Story:**

*Today, Rwanda has the highest number of women parliamentarians in the world with women constituting nearly 50 percent in the Chamber of Deputies and about 35 percent in the Senate.*

Recently, Rwanda conducted elections for the Presidency and the parliament had a referendum on a new constitution. For the first time in Rwanda's history, free and fair elections were held. The new constitution guarantees a minimum of 30 percent of parliamentary seats and other leadership positions to women. Today, Rwanda has the highest number of women parliamentarians in the world with women constituting nearly 50 percent in the Chamber of Deputies and about 35 percent in the Senate. The Government of Rwanda also has 34 percent of women in its Cabinet. UNDP has been supporting the Rwanda Parliament, in particular the Rwanda Women Parliamentary Forum. In February 2007, the Forum held an international conference to share its experiences and to forge partnerships with development allies in the area of nation building. Speakers at the conference agreed that women play a critical role in the development of nations and in the attainment of the MDGs.

### **How to Help:**

- **LEARN ABOUT THE SITUATION FROM AN EXPERT ON OCTOBER 9, 2011.**

Ak Tenamit, the mission to bring improved health care, sanitation and education to very poor people in central Guatemala, has as a central theme "We Must Educate the Girls." Wanting to know more about what this means in that setting, we have invited Ak Tenamit's founder and Director, Steve Dudenhoefer, to speak at both services here on October 9<sup>th</sup>. We look forward to learning from Steve, whose mission at Ak Tenamit we have supported through Guatemala Tomorrow for many years.

- *JOURNEY TO HONDURAS ON GOOD SHEPHERD'S ADULT MISSION TRIP IN 2012.*

Participate in empowering the young women who benefit from Our Little Roses. An opportunity for Good Shepherd parishioners to visit Honduras and participate in life at OLR is planned for late March 2012. You may wish to go on this mission and will receive information later as to how you can. Contact Deacon Mimi Howard at 746-4674 or [mhoward@goodsheponline.org](mailto:mhoward@goodsheponline.org) to find out more.

- *OPEN THE LINES OF COMMUNICATION ON THE TOPIC OF GENDER EQUALITY.*

We are inviting all parishioners to read A Thousand Splendid Suns by Khaled Hosseini **by October 1** so that we can have discussions about issues raised by that book. It is a story of Afghanistan's last thirty years from the time of the invasion of the Soviet Union through the Taliban's hard control of people's lives. It spans two generations of the story's characters' struggle to survive and it brings the reader a unique perspective on the role women are forced to play in the culture and family life. Opportunities for discussion during October will be announced. If you have difficulty obtaining the book let us know in the office so that we can help out.



***Our scripture and tradition is overflowing with God calling us to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, care for the sick, nurture children, steward creation and everything else the MDGs are about. Visit our display in the narthex to learn more about how you can answer the call.***

To find out more about Millennium Development Goals and the progress that is being made visit [www.un.org/millenniumgoals/](http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/)

[www.mdgmonitor.org/](http://www.mdgmonitor.org/)