



Shalom News North America

An instrument of hope, formation, and action concerning priority matters of social justice.



March 2018



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Integrity of Creation

World Wildlife Day (3/3)

The animals and plants that live in the wild have an intrinsic value (*Laudato Si'* #33, 36, 140) and contribute to the ecological, genetic, social, economic, scientific, educational, cultural, recreational and aesthetic aspects of human well-being and sustainable development. [World Wildlife Day](#) provides an opportunity to celebrate the many beautiful and varied forms of wild fauna and flora and to raise awareness of the multitude of benefits that conservation provides to people. This year's theme is 'Big cats: predators under threat'. [Learn more, ideas for action.](#)



International Day of Forests (3/21)

On this day we celebrate and raise awareness of the importance of all types of forests. This year's theme 'Forests for sustainable cities,' focuses on how forests and trees in urban areas regulate temperature and water flows, provide nutritious foods and shelter, cleanse the air and foster community cohesion and individual well-being. [Learn more/ideas for action.](#)

Human Dignity

Youth Leaders Discuss SDGs at the UN

More than 1000 youth leaders from over 100 countries gathered at the UN to develop creative solutions to shape a better world and help achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The global education goal, SDG 4, was a primary focus for many of the discussions during this assembly. [Learn more.](#)

International Women's Day (3/8)

"On International Women's Day, let us all pledge to do everything we can to overcome entrenched prejudice, support engagement and activism, and promote gender equality and women's empowerment." – UN Secretary-General, António Guterres. Read about [progress and challenges in gender equality](#), [watch this video](#) on the value of unpaid work. Consider this powerful [reflection resource](#), and [these ideas for action](#). The sixty-second session of the Commission on the Status of Women will take place at the UN Headquarters in New York from



March 12-23, 2018 with a priority focus on empowering rural women and girls. [Learn more.](#)

Dreamers at Risk

Congress' failure to pass a permanent solution to protect Dreamers leaves the status of millions in doubt as we approach the March 5 deadline for the expiration of DACA. While the expiration of DACA might be delayed due to a court injunction, the reality is

Dreamers are at risk until Congress acts. Urge Congress to act – call (1-855-589-5698) or [send an email](#). Consider this reflection resource, [Journey of a Man of Sorrows](#), a contemporary Stations of the Cross which invites us to reflect on the journey of an immigrant toward "el Norte."

International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

The International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination is observed annually on March 21, recalling on that day, in 1960, when police opened fire

and killed 69 people at a peaceful demonstration in Sharpeville, South Africa, against the apartheid "pass laws". Proclaiming the Day in 1966, the General Assembly called on the international community to redouble its efforts to eliminate all forms of racial discrimination. This year's theme is *Promoting tolerance, inclusion, unity and respect for diversity in the context of combating racial discrimination*. [Learn more, ideas for action.](#)

Harvest Without Violence



The SSND supported National Farm Worker Ministry (NFWM) has adopted [a statement of support](#) for the *Harvest Without Violence* efforts of the Coalition of Immokalee Workers' (CIW). While there may be a new awareness of the sexual harassment of women in the entertainment and political arenas, farm worker women have lived under the reality and threat of this violence for decades. NFWM supports CIW's efforts to eliminate violence against women and their ongoing work to expand the Fair Food Program. They also continue to [support CIW's boycott of Wendy's](#), the last major fast food company not to sign on to the Fair Food Program.

Peace and Non-Violence

Call for Action to Prevent Gun Violence (LCWR)
Our prayers go out to the families in Parkland, and to all those around the country, who have lost loved ones to gun violence. We grieve with mothers and fathers whose children are victims of senseless killing made easy by the proliferation of guns and a pervasive culture of violence. We call our elected officials to immediately take up legislation that: requires universal background checks and mandatory waiting periods for all gun purchases; bans civilian ownership of high-capacity weapons and magazines; and makes gun trafficking a federal crime. Read the entire [LCWR statement](#) and the [U.S. Bishops' statement](#). Consider this [Prayer for Students Against Gun Violence](#) and the [Voices of the Gun Violence Debate](#) reflection resource. The Coalition to Stop Gun Violence has a [Myths vs. Fact Sheet](#) on mental illness and guns and [ideas for action](#).

International Women's Day Peace Campaign

In anticipation of International Women's Day (3/8), the Catholic Nonviolence Initiative and Pax Christi



Farmworker Awareness Week (3/24 - 3/31)

85% of our fruits and vegetables are handpicked. There are an estimated 2-3 million men, women and children working in the fields in the United States. The people who plant and harvest our fruits and vegetables suffer from the highest rate of toxic chemical injuries and have higher incidences of heat stress, dermatitis, various infections and other illnesses than other wage earners. And pay and working conditions often do not meet even the most basic standards. [Learn more, send a note of appreciation](#) to the farmworkers who harvest our food.

Birthday of Cesar Chavez (3/31)

Cesar Chavez was a Mexican-American farm worker, labor leader and civil rights activist who, with Dolores Huerta, co-founded the National Farm Workers Association which later became the United Farm Workers. He focused attention on the plight of migrant farm workers and gained support to have his organization be the first successful farm workers' union in the United States. He used principles of non-violence with strikes and boycotts. [More information on Chavez' life and work.](#)

International are inviting women [to sign this online postcard](#) to Pope Francis thanking him for his leadership in affirming the gospel call to nonviolence and just peace and for his consistent appeal for nuclear disarmament and an end to the arms trade. All messages will be delivered to the Vatican on March 8. [Learn more.](#)

International Day of Happiness (3/20)

In 2011, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution which recognized happiness as a "fundamental human goal" and called for "a more inclusive, equitable and balanced approach to economic growth that promotes the happiness and well-being of all peoples" and not just growing the economy. In 2012 the first ever [UN conference on Happiness](#) took place and the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution which decreed that the International Day of Happiness would be observed every year on March 20. It was celebrated for the first time in 2013. What brings you happiness? How can you bring happiness today?



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