



# Shalom News North America

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

February 2017



[Human Life and Dignity](#)  
[Economic Justice](#)  
[Integrity of Creation](#)  
[Peace and Non-Violence](#)



## Integrity of Creation

### Living Simply, Responsibly, Sustainably

The imbalance and inequity between the haves and the have-nots, the first-world nations and the developing ones, are a glaring reality in our global society. There is an urgent need to create a sustainable lifestyle, to commit oneself to creating a lifestyle whose impact on the whole of creation stands the single and direct test of the Golden Rule, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." Join School Sisters of Notre Dame around the world in taking time this February for reflection and action on living simply, responsibly, and sustainably.

[Solidarity reflection](#), [sustainability resource](#).

### Care for Creation

President Donald Trump has signed several executive orders which will have a significant impact on our call to care for creation. One executive order supports the controversial Keystone and Dakota Access pipelines.



The second executive order freezes Environmental Protection Agency grants that are critical for water quality, climate resilience and toxic waste clean-up. Contact President Trump and urge him to take steps to care for creation and support a clean energy future.

[Learn more/take action](#).

### Urge Congress to Stand Strong on Climate

The House has approved the "Regulations from the Executive in Need of Scrutiny Act of 2017" (REINS Act) which prevents the federal regulatory agencies, whose jobs are to protect our food, environment, civil rights, economy, and workers, from issuing necessary regulations without Congressional approval. They are attempting to use the Congressional Review Act (used only once in its 20-year history) to undo regulations that limit methane emissions from oil and gas drilling.

[Learn more/take action](#).

## Human Dignity

### Standing Up for Refugees

A new executive order from President Trump halts the entire refugee admissions program for 120 days to determine additional security vetting procedures; cuts the number of refugees admitted in FY 2017 from 110,000 to 50,000; suspends resettlement of refugees from Syria; suspends the issuance of visas to individuals from countries of concern, including Syria, Iraq, Iran and other countries. The U.S. refugee resettlement program is a life-saving program for the most vulnerable of the world's refugees.

[Learn more, take action to oppose these restrictions on vulnerable refugees](#).

Meanwhile, the Canadian Prime Minister has reinforced [Canada's openness to those fleeing persecution and war](#) regardless of their faith. Learn more about [refugee resettlement](#).



work and live in the United States without the fear of deportation and family separation as long as they meet certain requirements. [Learn more/take action](#).

### Sustainable Development Goal 16

SDG 16 - Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions - is particularly relevant in light of President Trump's recent executive orders to build the southern border wall, step up deportations and block federal grants to "sanctuary cities". This goal states that people everywhere need to be free of fear from all forms of violence and feel safe as they go about their lives, whatever their ethnicity or faith. To exclude and to discriminate violates human rights. Be the change – promote inclusion and respect toward people of different backgrounds. Together we can improve conditions for a life of dignity for all.

### Justice for Immigrants

The BRIDGE (Bar Removal of Individuals who Dream and Grow our Economy) Act, S.128/H.R. 496, was recently introduced in Congress as a bipartisan effort to sustain the temporary relief from deportation and employment eligibility offered to youth through the Department of Homeland Security's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. Under the BRIDGE Act, young people who came to the United States as children would maintain their eligibility to

### February is Black History Month (U.S./Canada)

Black History Month, also known as [African-American History Month](#) in America, is an annual observance in the United States and [Canada](#) for remembrance of important people and events in the history of the African diaspora. Lots of resources for reflection and action can be found in the [EFJ African American History Month Toolbox](#). Consider using this [daily photo journal](#) and reflecting on [these current films](#).

## Bishops' Task Force Urges Prayer, Dialogue to Meet Racial Challenges

The Catholic Church has a “tremendous responsibility to bring people together in prayer and dialogue, to begin anew the vital work of fostering healing and lasting peace,” according to a recent report by a task force that was established by the USCCB in the wake of last year’s incidents of violence and racial tensions.

The work to “root out racism and create healthy dynamics in our neighborhoods” is a long-term project, but the scope of it should not cause fear or intimidation, wrote Archbishop Wilton D. Gregory of Atlanta. [Learn more, resources.](#)



## Day of Prayer and Reflection Against Human Trafficking (2/8)

The theme for this year’s day of prayer and reflection “[They are just children! Not Slaves](#)” is meant to remind us of the many children in our world today who are not allowed to be children but are forced into situations of heavy work or even sexual slavery. It is estimated that over the past thirty years, about 30 million children have been involved in trafficking. A new NGO [report](#) found that forced labor is now widespread among refugees, and an estimated 60 to 70 percent of refugee

children work instead of attend school. [Testimonials](#), [vigil of prayer](#), [prayer service](#), [toolkit for action](#).

## Human Trafficking Awareness Day (2/22)

In 2007, Canada’s Parliament unanimously adopted a bill calling for the condemnation of the trafficking of women and children. In 2012, Canada declared February 22 as National Human Trafficking Awareness Day in Canada. Review the findings of the [National](#)

[Forum on Human Trafficking](#), additional resources for [reflection and action](#).

## Day of Women and Girls in Science (2/11)

Gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls will make a crucial contribution not only to economic development of the world, but to progress across all the goals and targets of the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#). Unfortunately, women and girls continue to be excluded from participating fully in science. In December of 2015, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution proclaiming February 11 International Day of Women and Girls in Science with the goal of promoting awareness and progress in this important area. This year’s theme is “Gender, Science and Sustainable Development: The Impact of Media”. [Learn more.](#)

## Peace and Non-Violence

### Random Acts of Kindness Week (2/12 - 2/18)

There is so much negativity and bullying these days in our public discourse. “This vision of ‘might is right’ has engendered immense inequality, injustice and acts of violence.” (*Laudato Si’* 82) “We must regain the conviction that we need one another, that we have a shared responsibility for others and the world.” (229) [Random Act of Kindness Week](#) reminds us that little things do make a difference. “St. Therese of Lisieux invites us to practice the little way of love, not to miss out on a kind word, a smile or any small gesture which sows peace and friendship. An integral ecology is also made up of simple daily gestures which break with the logic of violence, exploitation and selfishness.” (*Laudato Si’* 230) During this week let us “throw kindness around like confetti” for we will see its effects are truly endless. [102 inspirational ideas.](#)



### World Day of Social Justice (2/20)

Recognizing that social development and social justice are indispensable for the achievement and maintenance of peace and security within and among nations and that, in turn, social development and social justice cannot be attained in the absence of peace and security or in the absence of respect for all human rights and

fundamental freedoms, the UN established this day in 2007. Social justice is an underlying principle for peaceful and prosperous coexistence within and among nations. The world has changed dramatically. We are going to need economic systems that respect planetary boundaries, that continue the dependence of human well-being on social relations and fairness, and that recognizes that the ultimate goal is real, sustainable human well-being, not merely the growth of material consumption. We must recognize that our economy is embedded in a society and culture that are embedded in an ecological life-support system, and that the economy can’t grow forever on this finite planet. [More.](#) [Video reflection.](#)

### Shalom Justice in Action

“Prophetic endurance lasts far beyond its time, makes itself an irritating presence, holds the real up to the ideal until the sight of the contrast hurts... Each of us must speak up, speak out and speak for justice and peace at every bridge club, every town meeting, every private party. We must persist until we become again what we have always wanted to be, until we all stand more for the truths of the gospel than for the goals of the government.” - *The Cry of the Prophet* - S. Joan Chittister



**Shalom News North America** is an e-publication of the Shalom North America Contacts of the School Sisters of Notre Dame. Email us at [tdewane@ssndcp.org](mailto:tdewane@ssndcp.org).