



Shalom News North America

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

November 2016



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



Integrity of Creation

Nations Agree To Establish World's Largest Marine Reserve

After years of negotiations, twenty-four countries and the European Union have [reached an agreement](#) to establish the world's largest marine sanctuary in Antarctica's Ross Sea. Known as the polar *Garden of Eden*, "The Ross Sea is widely considered to be the last great wilderness area on Earth," according to a statement from the UN's Environment Program. [Learn more.](#)

Helping Cities Become More Sustainable

A new [report](#) from the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine offers a road map and recommendations to help cities work toward sustainability, measurably improving their residents' economic, social, and environmental well-being. With over half the world population now living in cities, mass transport and renewable energy are becoming ever more important. [Sustainable Development Goal #11](#) is focused on making cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. [Learn more.](#) Consider [this reflection](#) on *Laudato Si'* and the importance of sustainable urban planning.

What Climate Change Means for Your State

The EPA has released a series of fact sheets "[What Climate Change Means for Your State](#)" focusing on the

impacts of climate change in each of the 50 states and the territories of Guam and Puerto Rico. Increased rainfall intensity will cause more flooding in some states, while increasingly severe droughts may threaten water supplies in other states. How will climate change impact your area? After you've taken time to reflect on this information, we encourage you to [take action](#). (After the election, Catholic Climate Covenant staff will deliver the petition to Congress urging action before the end of the year.)

International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War (11/6)

The environment remains war's "silent casualty". The environment is damaged through all stages from production of weapons, through preparations for war, to combat. The environment is damaged directly from bombs and associated destruction, or indirectly by looting and coping strategies of people, or from the decay and breakdown of institutions and lack of governance.

"On this international day, let us reaffirm our commitment to protect the environment from the impacts of war, and to prevent future conflicts over natural resources." - UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon. [Learn more.](#)



Human Dignity

Every Last Girl

Every seven seconds, a girl under age 15 is married according to the report [Every Last Girl](#) by Save the Children. Becoming a child bride is one factor that greatly affects the future of women and girls around the world. The report ranks 144 countries from the best to the worst place to be a girl. The listing is based on a variety of factors including child marriage, schooling, teen pregnancy, maternal deaths and presence of female lawmakers. [Learn more.](#)



Human Trafficking Survivors Recommend Policy Changes

The U.S. Advisory Council on Human Trafficking, which is made up of 11 trafficking survivors, has issued its [inaugural report](#) offering 15 policy recommendations on five topics, ranging from seeking and allocating grant funding for survivor services to training law

enforcement agents to recognize the signs of human trafficking. The Council provides a formal platform for trafficking survivors to advise and make recommendations on federal anti-trafficking policies. [Learn more.](#) A bill to clear human trafficking survivor criminal records has been introduced in Congress. [Learn more](#), [take action](#).

Support Dignity and Living Wage for Garment Workers

All too often the compensation garment workers receive for a hard day's work barely lifts them out of desperation and into subsistence poverty. Workers who make our clothing deserve wages that will support them and their families to live a life with dignity. No major retail chain in the U.S. sells clothing that includes a fair trade type certification verifying that garment workers are properly compensated and the environment respected. Perhaps we can change that. Between now

and Black Friday (November 25), we invite you to support the [Human Thread Campaign](#) to send postcards to the CEOs of Macy's and Kohl's in support of a living wage at the sites where our clothes are made. [Learn more, take action.](#)

Buy Nothing Day – November 25

In *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis highlights the dangers of extreme consumerism, noting that people can easily get caught up in a whirlwind of needless buying and spending (216). He notes that obsession with a consumerist lifestyle, especially when few people are capable of maintaining it, leads to violence and mutual destruction (204). One simple way to tap down extreme consumerism this



holiday season is to observe Buy Nothing Day. [Learn more.](#)

Take Action to End Violence Against Women and Girls

Up to 70 per cent of women experience violence in their lifetime. The UN General Assembly designated November 25 as the [International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women](#) to raise awareness of the enduring epidemic of gender-based violence. The day also marks the beginning of 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, a global effort to galvanize action, culminating in the observance of Human Rights Day on December 10. [Learn more/take action.](#) [Prayer resource.](#)

Peace and Non-Violence

Church's Best Kept Secrets

November gives us the opportunity to review some of the [pastoral letters on Catholic Social Teaching issues](#) related to economic justice, racism, poverty, and the criminal justice system. Because of some perceptions that they, and other pastorals, have not been well-promulgated by the clergy, they are often called the Church's best kept secrets. Spread the good news! The 5th video in the Catholic Social Teaching 101 video series, on [Rights and Responsibilities](#), is now available. The video series is a joint collaboration of the USCCB and Catholic Relief Services. Other videos in the series include: [Life and Dignity](#); [Call to Family, Community and Participation](#); [Option for the Poor and Vulnerable](#); and [Care for God's Creation](#).



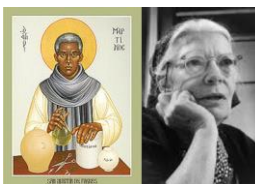
deeply about the environment and our role within our sacred universe.

Remembrance Day (11/11) – First Nation Veterans

On November 11, we take time to honor veterans and thank them and their families for their sacrifices. At this time in Canadian history we are acutely aware of the 24,000 First Nations men and women who volunteered for service in WWI and WWII and the 500 who gave their life for our freedom. [Learn more.](#)

International Day of Tolerance (11/16)

Tolerance is defined as the willingness to accept feelings, habits or beliefs that are different from our own. As we commemorate the International Day of Tolerance, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon reminds us to "recognize the mounting threat posed by those who strive to divide, and let us pledge to forge a path defined by dialogue, social cohesion and mutual understanding." Very fitting given the nature of political discourse these days! This [prayer for peace and tolerance](#) reminds us to take heed of Pope Francis's words on accepting all people as children of God, regardless of faith, ethnicity, or social status.



Remembering St. Martin de Porres (11/3) and Dorothy Day (11/8)

Let us take time this week to reflect on [St. Martin de Porres](#) and pray for racial justice and improved race relations. [Reflection resource.](#) As Pope Francis renews the church's focus on the Option for the Poor and on personal encounters with those in poverty, Dorothy Day's life and mission continues to be relevant as well. She remains an inspiration and a challenge to all who profess to be Christians. [Learn more.](#) [Prayer resource.](#)

Remembering Thomas Berry (11/9)

Thomas Berry was a Catholic priest of the Passionist order, cultural historian and ecotheologian (although geologist – or "Earth scholar" – were his preferred descriptors). Among advocates of "ecospirituality" and the "New Story," Berry believed that humanity is poised to embrace a new role as a vital part of a larger, interdependent "communion of subjects" on Earth and in the universe. [Learn more.](#) Through [this prayer resource](#), participants are challenged to think more

UN General Assembly to Vote on Nuclear Weapons Ban

The UN Disarmament and International Security Committee has approved a resolution that mandates the creation of a legally binding treaty on banning nuclear weapons. The U.S., Russia, Israel, France and the United Kingdom were among those that opposed the measure. The resolution, which calls for a conference in March 2017 to negotiate a "legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination", will go before the General Assembly in December. [Learn more.](#)

