

Shalom News North America



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

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Summer 2024

Dear Friend,

In the encyclical *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis emphasizes that the social and ecological challenges of our day are interrelated (integral ecology). As you read through this newsletter, and the social and ecological concerns it highlights, consider how these concerns are related to the [Laudato Si' Goals](#) and SSND becoming a [Laudato Si' Congregation](#).



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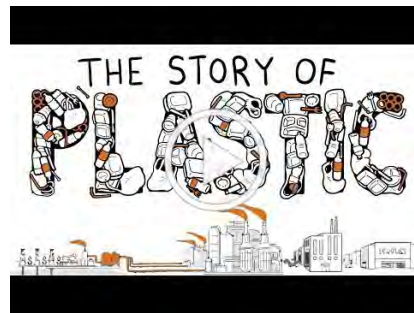
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Integrity of Creation



Plastic Free July

Plastic Free July is a global movement that helps millions of people be part of the solution to plastic pollution so we can have cleaner streets, water ways, and beautiful communities. The movement has inspired participants in 190 countries! Each of us making a small change will collectively make a massive difference to our communities. [Learn more/embrace the Plastic Free July challenge](#). Consider using the [SSND Voter Voice Tool](#) to urge your legislators to support the Break Free from Plastic Pollution Act (H.R. 6053/S. 3127), which places the burden for waste reduction on corporations.



Integrity of Creation

Plastic Promises Scorecard

As You Sow, in partnership with Ubuntu, an environmental solutions platform, have released their "[2024 Plastic Promises Scorecard](#)" ranking 225 global companies across 15 industries on their ambition and actions to reduce plastic packaging pollution. One major finding of the report is the significant gap between companies' stated plastic reduction commitments and actions taken to meet those commitments. "Companies can use the recommendations and scoring methodology in the Plastic Promises Scorecard to prepare for a future where plastic packaging pollution is no longer an acceptable part of doing business," said Kelly McBee, lead author of the report. [Click here](#) to view the scorecard.



Integrity of Creation



Victory for Environmental Justice - Canada

Governor General Mary Simon has [given royal assent to Bill C-226](#), which addresses environmental justice and racism in Canada. Now a law, it requires the creation of a national environmental justice strategy to account for the effects of environmental racism—a systemic issue that results in Indigenous, Black and racialized communities being affected by environmental hazards more than other communities. Environmental justice requires the consideration of how marginalized people—such as those in poverty or poor housing, seasonal

agricultural workers, women, and others—are also disproportionately impacted by environmental issues like unsafe drinking water, pollution, toxic wastes, climate change, lack of green spaces, workplace exposure to risks, and other risks. Learn more [here](#).



Integrity of Creation

National Strategy for Reducing Food Waste

The Biden Administration has released a “National Strategy for Reducing Food Loss and Waste and Recycling Organics”. The goal of the strategy is to prevent the loss and waste of food, where possible, increase recycling of food and other organic materials, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and build cleaner, healthier communities. The actions detailed in this strategy are designed to help the U.S. meet its *National Food Loss and Waste Reduction Goal* to halve food loss and waste, as well as the *National Recycling Goal* to achieve a 50% recycling rate by 2030. [Learn more](#). Learn about Canadian efforts to reduce food loss and waste [here](#). Explore steps you can take to reduce food waste [here](#).



Integrity of Creation



Saint Kateri Tekakwitha (7/14)

The feast day of St. Kateri Tekakwitha, the first Native North American female saint and patroness of ecology and Canada, is celebrated on April 17 in Canada and July 14 in the United States. Saint Kateri was born to a Mohawk father and Algonquin Catholic mother in 1656. She lost her family to smallpox at age 4. The disease scarred her and left her with diminished sight and health. Influenced by the faith of the Jesuits, she pledged never to marry and moved to the village of Kahnawake and the Mission of St. Francis Xavier du Sault Saint-Louis, near Montreal, where other indigenous Catholics lived. She died in 1680 at age 24. St. Kateri was canonized by Pope Benedict XVI in 2012. [Learn more](#).



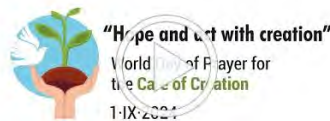
Integrity of Creation

Season of Creation (9/1-10/4)

We are invited to embrace the Season of Creation as a time to renew our relationship with God and all creation through celebration, conversion, and commitment. "[To Hope and Act with Creation](#)" is the theme for this year's annual ecumenical season where we pray and act together as a Christian family for our common home.



The season kicks-off with the *World Day of Prayer for Creation* on September 1. Pope Francis' [message for the day](#) highlights our responsibility to take care of Earth, our common home. It stresses that, as Christians called to live in faith and charity, caring for the environment is "a task to be undertaken freely, in obedience to Jesus' commandment of love."

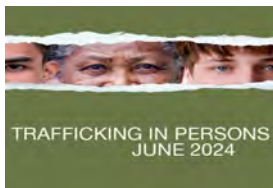


September 21 will be a day of advocacy, focusing on the ecumenical call for action to endorse the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty. This is an effort for international cooperation to accelerate the transition to renewable energy. October 4, the feast day of Saint Francis, marks the conclusion of the Season. The faithful around the world will be invited to come together for an online event prepared by the Season of Creation Ecumenical Youth Committee to celebrate our month-long journey together.

[Click here](#) to learn more and download the Season of Creation *Celebration Guide* and other resources. [Prayer for the Season](#).

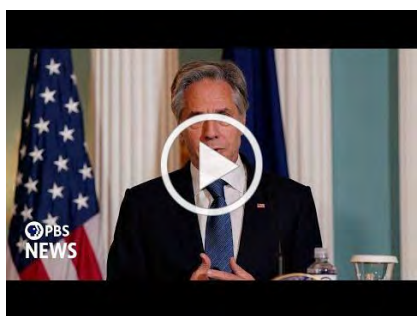


Human Dignity



Trafficking in Persons Report - 2024

The US State Department has issued its 2024 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report, which chronicles the efforts of 188 nations to combat human trafficking in their countries. The [report](#) receives international attention as nations which are cited as Tier 1—permissive and supportive of human trafficking—can be sanctioned by the US government. The 2024 report explores the intersection between [digital technology](#) and human trafficking; technology that can be used to expand human trafficking networks, but can also be used to root them out. Read more [here](#).



Human Dignity

World Day Against Trafficking in Persons (7/30)

The theme for this year's World Day Against Trafficking in Persons (7/30) is "Leave No Child Behind in the Fight Against Human Trafficking." A staggering 1 in 3 victims of human trafficking are children. Children are twice as likely to face violence during trafficking than adults, according to the [2023 UN Global Report on Trafficking in Persons](#). Regions such as Sub-Saharan and Northern Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, have the highest incidences of child trafficking which accounts for 60 percent of detected trafficking victims.



Through the [Alliance to End Human Trafficking](#) and [Talitha Kum](#), women religious around the world work creatively and collaboratively to prevent human trafficking and bring support to survivors. *What can you do?* Consider extending a message of support to those who work on the issue of human trafficking in your community. Embrace and share this month's SSND International Solidarity Reflection - [Trafficking in Persons](#). Those in the U.S. are invited to use our SSND Voter Voice Tool to support legislation efforts focused on addressing human trafficking: the [Frederick Douglass Trafficking](#)

[Victims Prevention and Protection Reauthorization Act of 2023](#) (H.R. 5856); the [Asylum Seekers Work Authorization Act of 2023](#) (H.R. 1325); and the [Immigration Court Efficiency & Children's Court Act](#) (H.R. 6145 / S. 3178).

Human Dignity



117 Million People Displaced Globally

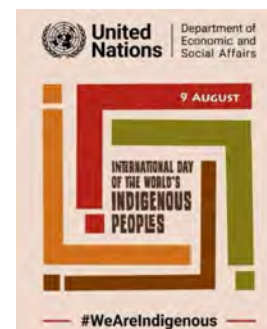
By the end of 2023, about 117 million people worldwide had been displaced from their homes by conflict, persecution or other significant threats to their well-being. This is according to the most recent report by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the UN agency tasked with supporting forcibly displaced people. The report, released in June, tracks people already recognized as refugees, those still seeking to have their asylum requests approved abroad, and those displaced within their countries of origin. Follow [this link](#) to view nine charts that show how the patterns of forced migration have evolved over time, where people are fleeing from, and which countries are receiving the highest shares of displaced people. Read more [here](#). Consider taking this [60-second quiz](#) about refugees and share with others what you learn.



Human Dignity

World Indigenous Peoples Day (8/9)

Indigenous Peoples around the world live close to the Earth and [carry profoundly wise beliefs and customs](#) to protect Earth and their community. Indigenous Peoples have the right to make and apply their own decisions in meaningful and culturally-appropriate ways. Yet throughout history, their rights have been severely violated. Among the most disadvantaged and vulnerable groups of people in the world, they suffer devastating effects of colonization, the global diseconomy, racism and extreme domination, the opioid crisis and alcoholism. How a nation treats its Indigenous Peoples is a tangible gauge of its integrity and greatness. Learn more about the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples (8/9) [here](#). *How will you commemorate the day?*



Peace and Nonviolence

Prophetic Witness for Universal Communion

The theme of the 2024 SEDOS (Service of Documentation and Studies on Global Mission) residential seminar was *Prophetic Witness for Universal Communion: Mission in Conflict Zones and Healing*. The



notion of prophetic witness for universal communion stands as a beacon of hope and a call to action. This concept, rooted deeply in spiritual and religious traditions, emphasizes the mission of promoting peace, healing, and unity, even in the most troubled areas of the globe. The speakers, combining theory with personal practical experience, provided compelling testimonials that explored the theme from biblical, psychological, and spiritual perspectives. [Click here](#) for SSND reflections on the conference and [here](#) to review the inspiring presentations.

Peace and Nonviolence

Sudan Faces Severe Famine

Sudan, which has experienced civil war since April 2023, faces severe famine, with close to 8 million battling chronic hunger and 750,000 suffering famine, according to [nonprofit groups and UN leaders](#). Rebel troops have blocked food relief and other necessities to certain areas of the conflict. As many as 9 million Sudanese have been displaced from their homes and over [2 million](#) refugees have fled to neighboring countries. Aid groups call the situation one of the worst humanitarian disasters in recent history. Listen to [this podcast](#) or read [this article](#) to learn more. [Click here](#) to urge the U.S. to do what it can to secure a truce and humanitarian aid. [Prayer resource](#).



Peace and Nonviolence



Gaza & Ukraine - Let us Not Waver in Our Call for Peace

Thousands of innocent people have been killed in Gaza and Ukraine with over a million plus people displaced. Many are experiencing hunger, disease, and all forms of hardship. We must not waver in [our prayers](#) and our calls to silence the weapons, bring in the aid, take care

of the displaced, secure freedom for the captives, and do the hard work of negotiating a just peace. Let us use our [SSND Voter Voice Tool](#) to urge leaders in Washington to do all they can to stop the bloodshed in [Gaza](#) and [Ukraine](#) and move all involved to a just and lasting peace.

Peace and Nonviolence

Prayer for a Nuclear Free World (8/6)

Our Earth is vulnerable. Our world politics are extremely

vulnerable. Experts agree that given the state of the world these days, we are closer than ever to experiencing a catastrophic nuclear disaster. [Voices for a World Free of Nuclear Weapons](#) (a part of the United Religions Initiative) invites all individuals of good will and all organizations of concern to draw strength from each one's deepest convictions and longings for a better future on [Nuclear Prayer Day](#), August 6. Make use of [this prayer](#) or create your own. A world united in moments of silence, in words spoken from the heart, and in a sure vision of a world beyond nuclear weapons – such moments will anchor and sustain our commitment as we work together to bring an end to the nuclear threat.



Peace and Nonviolence



LCWR Virtual Prayer Space - Republican National Convention (7/15-18)

The Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR) invites you to embrace communal contemplative prayer throughout the days of the Republican and Democratic National Conventions via a virtual prayer space. This virtual prayer space will be available 24 hours a day July 15-18 for the Republican National Convention and August 19-22 for the Democratic National Convention. To participate, log in, review the orientation to the prayer space in the waiting room, and then join women religious from around the world as they pray in silence. [Click here](#) to learn more and join in the contemplative prayer.

Peace and Nonviolence

LCWR Contemplative Prayer for the World (8/16)

"Who Then Shall We Be? A Contemplative Prayer for the World" is a segment of the assembly of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR) where the approximately 700 participants (and many others online) will engage in a contemplative experience created to be in solidarity with the fragility of the world while reflecting on our call to respond to that fragility as bearers of the gospel message. Through the use of the arts, brief readings, and reflective questions, participants will engage in a process of lamenting the suffering of the world -- particularly the realities of climate change, racism, migration, and polarization and their intersection. You are invited to join in the prayer on Friday, August 16 from 2:00 – 3:00 PM ET (1 – 2 pm CT). *Mark your calendars!* A livestream link will be shared [here](#) closer to the date.



Shalom News North America will not be published in September. Have a wonderful summer!



Quick Links

[Laudato Si' Action Platform](#)

[Laudato Si Movement](#)

[SSND Action Alerts](#)

[SSND International Solidarity Reflections](#)

[Alliance to End Human Trafficking](#)

[Justice for Immigrants](#)

[Catholic Climate Covenant](#)

[Catholic Mobilizing Network](#)

[SSND Virtual Prayer Room for Peace](#)
(Fridays 10 am - 10 pm ET)

[SSND Laudato Si' Reflections](#)

[SSND Podcast - *Called to Action*](#)

[Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility](#)

[SSND Shalom International Network](#)

[SSND at the UN](#)

[USCCB Action Center](#)

The SSND Shalom Network witnesses to the Gospel with audacity and hope as we collaborate to build just relationships and respond to the urgent needs of our times.



Shalom News North America is an e-publication of the Shalom North America Contacts (SNAC) of the School Sisters of Notre Dame - Barb Paleczny SSND, Colleen Kammer, Ethel Howley SSND, and Tim Dewane. Your feedback and suggestions are always welcomed. Email us at tdewane@ssndcp.org.

Please only print this e-publication if necessary.

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