



Shalom News North America

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



July - Aug 2018



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Integrity of Creation

Catholics Are Still In

The School Sisters of Notre Dame Atlantic-Midwest and Central Pacific Provinces have joined with [over 600 other Catholic organizations](#) in signing onto the [Catholic Climate Declaration](#) which expresses the U.S. Catholic community's call to climate action and affirmation of the Paris Climate Agreement. From this call we envision, pray for, and act towards a thriving future, with our family and the gift of God's creation. The Declaration is now open to individual sign-ons, follow [this link](#) to sign on. Here are some ways you can support this movement over the summer: encourage other Catholic groups to [sign onto the declaration](#); join in on the [Plastic Free July](#) challenge; ask your representative to [cosponsor the Women and Climate Change Act](#).

Vatican Conference on *Laudato Si'*

Without concerted and immediate efforts toward sustainable development, "There is a real danger that we will leave future generations only rubble, deserts and refuse," Pope Francis said in his remarks to 300 people taking part in a July 5/6 *Saving our Common Home and the Future of Life on Earth* conference organized by the Vatican. The focus of the conference

was to communicate above all a sense of deep urgency and profound concern for the precarious state of our common planetary home. You can view the presentations and documents [on-line here](#).

EPA Drafts New Rule for Coal Plants

The NY Times is reporting that the Trump administration has drafted a new proposal to regulate carbon dioxide emissions from coal-fired power plants, one that is far less stringent than the Clean Power climate plan finalized in 2015 by President Obama. Once the proposal is formally published, it will need to go through a public comment period before being finalized. [Learn more](#).

People of Inspiration

July 14 is the feast day of [St. Kateri Tekakwitha](#), patron saint of the environment, environmentalism, and environmentalists, of exiles and orphans, and of those ridiculed for their faith. On July 12, we celebrate the birthday and inspiration of [Malala Yousafzai](#); July 18, the birthday and inspiration of [Nelson Mandela](#); and Aug. 28, we commemorate the 55th anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King's '[I Have a Dream](#)' speech. How might they inspire us to be voices for justice today?

Human Dignity

The Safe Third Country Agreement

The Safe Third Country Agreement (STCA) allows the Canada Border Services Agency to return refugee claimants to the U.S. under the premise that refugees should make their claim in the first "safe" country in which they arrive. But given how the U.S. has treated potential refugees lately, some think the agreement should be ended. [Learn more](#). Meanwhile, the U.S. is said to be exploring a similar STCA with Mexico that could greatly reduce asylum seekers entering the U.S. from Mexico. [Learn more](#).

Five Ways to Help Immigrant Families

The separation of children from their parents at the border has greatly escalated U.S. immigration problems. Though the president signed an executive order that nominally ends this family separation policy, the crisis is not over. The Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc. (CLINIC), knows this from their experience working with immigrants and from the

witness of 330 affiliates across the country. [Here are five ways](#) you can help immigrant families.

Acknowledging Indigenous Land

Traditional land acknowledgement statements are increasingly being used in Canada by governments, schools, post-secondary institutions, non-governmental organizations, and other civil institutions as a practice of reconciliation aimed at recognizing the traditional or treaty territories of Indigenous people. [Read](#) about the significance of this practice. The UN has declared August 9 as International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples, a day to protect and promote the rights of Indigenous people. [Learn more](#).

Hunger on the Rise Globally

The number of hungry people in the world has risen for the first time in more than a decade, according to a recently released United Nations report on the [UN Sustainable Development Goals](#). In 2016, approximately 815 million people were undernourished

globally, 38 million more than the previous year. The report determined that conflict, drought and disasters linked to climate change were among the key factors causing this “reversal in progress.” [Learn more.](#)

Global Food Security Act

The Global Food Security Reauthorization Act of 2018 (S. 2269), which helps the U.S. address global hunger and nutrition for families in impoverished countries, has passed the Senate. Activities supported and undertaken through the Global Food Security Act have resulted in a 19% drop in poverty and a 26% reduction of stunting in children, in targeted program areas. Advocates are encouraged [to contact their representative](#) and urge them to support passage of this important legislation.

2018 Global Trafficking in Persons Report

This year’s U.S. State Department report focuses on effective ways local communities can address human trafficking proactively and how national governments can support and empower them. Of the 183 countries that were ranked using the report’s tiered system, 29 showed enough progress to be upgraded, while 20 countries received downgrades. Learn more [about the report](#) and [related criticism](#) of the report. [Read full report.](#) July 30 is the [World Day Against Human Trafficking in Persons](#). Please join SSND in [this international solidarity reflection](#).

Forced labor is Still Prevalent in the Tech Industry

KnowTheChain has produced its second Benchmark Report ranking 40 global technology companies on how they address forced labor in their supply chains. The initial report was released in 2016. “It’s encouraging that companies are starting to address forced labor,” said Kilian Moote, Project Director of KnowTheChain. “But this benchmark shows that the sector needs to advance their efforts further down the supply chain in order to truly protect vulnerable workers.” [Learn more, access report.](#) Also consider “Sweat & Toil” - a comprehensive resource app for your phone or tablet that documents child labor and forced labor worldwide. Download it for free from [iTunes \(Apple\)](#), or [Google Apps \(Android\)](#).

International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade

On August 23, we recognize the [International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and Its Abolition](#). While the slave trade was abolished (legally) in 1808, there are still [40.3 million people in slavery](#) today – victims of human trafficking, the modern slave trade that generates profits of over [\\$150 billion dollars](#) each year. Continue to [pray for an end to human trafficking](#) and visit [End Slavery Now](#) for actions you can take to combat this scourge of humanity. Human trafficking is rampant in the fishing industry, please view and share our [“Seafood and Slavery”](#) resource.

Peace and Non-Violence

A “Space Force” to Ensure American Dominance

President Trump recently directed the Pentagon to establish a sixth branch of the U.S. military in space. While his comment that “it is not enough to merely have an American presence in space; we must have American dominance in space” did not sit well with many opposed to greater militarization, space is already a critical element in U.S. military operations, providing satellite-based intelligence, secure communications, weather forecasting and weapons command and control. [Learn more.](#)

We Must Do More than Remember

Many remember August 9, 1945, when the U.S. dropped a second atomic bomb, this time on the city of Nagasaki. The first atomic bomb, dropped three days earlier on Hiroshima, destroyed over 60 percent of the developed city and killed at least 70,000 people. On August 6, individuals will gather at [Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park](#) and places throughout the world to remember what took place 73 years ago and to pledge

actions for peace. Last July, 122 countries took action, voting in favor of an historic treaty, the [Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons](#). To date, 59 countries have signed the treaty and 11 have ratified it. Unfortunately, the U.S., Canada and all nuclear states did not participate in the treaty and have shown no interest in supporting it. (See [updates](#) and [booklet](#).)

International Day Against Nuclear Tests (8/29)

The human and environmental tragedies that are the result of nuclear testing are compelling reasons for the need to observe the [International Day against Nuclear Tests](#) – a day in which educational events, activities and messages aim to capture the world’s attention and underscore the need for unified efforts to prevent further nuclear weapons testing. In 2016, the UN Security Council adopted its first resolution focused solely on nuclear testing. Hopefully it represents a new momentum towards taking the essential next step in ridding the world of the menace of nuclear weapons.

