

Shalom News North America



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

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March 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 month's 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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Shalom North America Contacts

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Peace and Nonviolence

Gaza - Let Us Not Waver

We invite you to watch the short video below of eleven-year-old Dareen al-Bayaa. She is one of at least 17,000 children across the territory who have been orphaned or separated from their parents over the past couple months.



As we consider her suffering (their suffering), we also reflect upon the thousands of innocents killed, and the million plus people displaced, living in poverty, and at risk of famine and disease. This is far beyond too much. Our hearts and their spirit challenge us to stay vigilant with our prayers and calls to stop the violence. Our message must not waver. Silence the weapons - now. Bring in the aid and take care of the displaced - now. Secure freedom for the captives and do the hard work of negotiating a just peace - now.

The U.S. has a [particular responsibility](#) to make sure this gets done. We invite those in the U.S. to use our [SSND Voter Voice tool](#) to urge President Biden and members of Congress to do all they can to stop the bloodshed and move all involved to a just and lasting peace. Letters to the editor are also an effective tool for communicating messages. [Click here](#) for assistance in putting one together.

Integrity of Creation



UN Environmental Assembly - UNEA-6

The sixth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, UNEA-6, is being held this week at the United Nations Environment Programme headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya. UNEA-6, spanning five days, stands as one of the world's paramount decision-making bodies concerning the environment, with a core objective of fostering harmony between humanity and nature while enhancing the well-being of the world's most vulnerable populations. This year's UNEA-6 will focus on how multilateralism can help address the challenges of climate change, nature and biodiversity loss, and pollution and waste. Learn more and follow the proceedings [here](#).



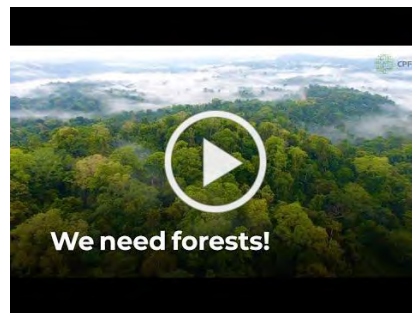
World Wildlife Day (3/3)

World Wildlife Day in 2024 (#WWD2024) focuses on digital innovation, emphasizing how digital conservation technologies and services can drive wildlife conservation, sustainable and legal wildlife trade, and human-wildlife coexistence. The 2024 theme is “Connecting People and Planet: Exploring Digital Innovation in Wildlife Conservation”. [Learn more](#).



International Day of Forests (3/21)

Forests provide for our health and well-being; they purify water, clean the air, capture carbon, support biodiversity, and provide many medicines we use. On March 21, we recognize the importance of forests and their role in innovation, as reflected in this year's theme '[Forests and Innovation - New Solutions for a Better World](#)'. Learn more about the [Collaborative Partnership on Forests](#)' vision for meeting the [United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals](#) by 2030.



World Water Day (3/22)

Rooted in the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro, World Water Day celebrates [freshwater](#) and raises awareness of the 2.2 billion people living without access to safe water. It is all about taking action to tackle the global water crisis. This year's theme is '[Water for Peace](#)', which focuses on the critical role water plays in the stability and prosperity of the world. When water is scarce or polluted, or when people have limited or unequal access, tensions can rise between communities and countries. More than 3 billion



people worldwide depend on water that crosses national borders. Yet, out of 153 countries that share rivers, lakes and aquifers with their neighbors, only 24 countries report having cooperation agreements for all their shared water. Resources to learn more and promote engagement can be found [here](#).

Integrity of Creation

Zero Waste (3/30)

The second annual [International Day of Zero Waste](#) on March 30 highlights the need to increase waste management globally and recognize the importance of sustainable production and consumption practices. We need to view waste as a resource, recovering materials as much as possible and reducing extraction of limited natural resources. Zero waste initiatives help achieve [Goal 11](#) and [Goal 12](#) of the UN's Sustainable Development agenda. These goals address all forms of waste including food loss and waste, natural resource extraction and electronic waste.



Human Dignity



The Poor People's Campaign

On March 2, *The Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival* will hold a national event to promote action to address poverty. Marches and assemblies will be held at more than 30 state capitals and Washington DC. There are more than 135 million people in the U.S. impacted by poverty and low wages.

While they make up over 40% of the U.S. population, their needs and concerns are all too often ignored by elected leaders. Learn more about this important effort and how you can get involved [here](#).



Human Dignity

Annunciation House

Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton has sued

Annunciation House, a Catholic organization which operates houses of hospitality for migrants in El Paso, Texas, claiming the organization is engaged in “facilitating illegal entry to the United States, alien harboring, human smuggling, and operating a stash house.” The lawsuit seeks “to revoke Annunciation House’s authorization to do business in Texas and asks the court to appoint a receiver to liquidate their assets.”



The [Catholic Bishops of Texas](#), along with [other faith](#) and [community groups](#), have stated their strong support for Annunciation House – and so do we! Over the years, Annunciation House says it has hosted more than 500,000 migrants fleeing death squads, civil wars, human rights abuses, and poverty. What can you do? Consider sending a message of support to [Annunciation House](#) and a message to the [Office of the Attorney General Of Texas](#) encouraging him to reconsider his lawsuit.



Human Dignity



International Women's Day (3/8)

The 2024 theme for International Women’s Day is “[Invest in women: Accelerate progress](#)”. Gender equality is one of the most effective ways to build healthy, inclusive communities where everyone can reach their full potential. Here are five key areas needing joint action:

- Investing in women, a human rights issue.
- Addressing poverty.
- Implementing gender-responsive financing.
- Shifting to a green economy and care society to amplify women's voices.
- Supporting feminist change-makers: Despite leading efforts, feminist organizations receive only 0.13% of official development assistance.

It is time to act – because women’s well-being is everyone’s well-being. Learn more [here](#). Consider spending time with the SSND International Solidarity Reflection [Empowerment of Women and Girls](#).

Human Dignity

Eliminating Racial Discrimination (3/21)

The International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination is observed annually on March 21, commemorating the tragic day in 1960 when police in Sharpeville, South Africa, opened fire and killed 69 people at a peaceful demonstration against

apartheid. In 1979, the UN General Assembly decided that a week of solidarity with the peoples struggling against racism and racial discrimination should be organized annually in all States (3/21-3/27). [Learn more.](#)



In this divided and wounded world, recognizing and addressing systemic racism and racial bias is essential if we are to witness and reveal the oneness for which Jesus Christ was sent. Links to SSND and other dismantling racism resources can be [found here](#). Check out our *Called to Action* Podcast series on Racial Justice [here](#).



Human Dignity



Addressing Slavery

March 25 is the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade. The racialized system of enslavement brutally dehumanized Africans and their descendants for centuries. Its legacy persists to this day. We invite you to take some

time to view the short video message from UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and the address by Professor Bryan Stevenson on reckoning with the legacy of slavery and creating a new era of liberation, justice and truth that our world desperately needs.



Human Dignity



Stop Trafficking at Sea - Lenten Campaign

Maritime trafficking is modern slavery at sea, a violation of the human dignity of laborers at all stages of the seafood supply chain and aquaculture industries. The virtually unregulated fishing industry in many countries, coupled with the global demand for cheap seafood, create the lawless conditions under

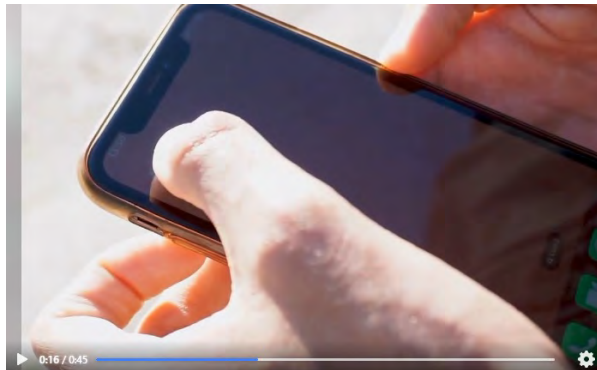
which trafficking at sea flourishes. Some migrants are recruited into fishing crews by false promises of a living-wage, incurring crippling debts to obtain the job that becomes their trafficking situation. Facing a shortage of fishing crews, many traffickers resort to kidnapping and enslaving fishers to work on their vessels. [Learn more](#). What can you do? Print and mail [these postcards](#) urging Kroger and Whole Foods to do all they can to address this situation.



Human Dignity

"Walking in Dignity" App

Talitha Kum, the international initiative of women religious working to end human trafficking, has released the app "Walking in Dignity". This app aims to raise awareness and promote engagement on the issue of human trafficking using a step by step approach. Yes, by walking (literally, not a metaphor) you get to learn, engage, and support efforts to end human trafficking. For every 1,000 steps you take, you earn one token to learn. You engage by donating your steps to any Talitha Kum or survivor-led project of your choice. *Each step taken will be matched by donors!* The app is available through the Apple Store and Google Play. [Learn more here](#).



Human Dignity



Farmworker Awareness Week (3/25-3/31)

National Farmworker Awareness Week is a call to action for communities to help raise awareness of the millions of essential workers that plant, raise, grow, handle, harvest, pack and ship the food we consume. It emphasizes the important and essential contributions they make to the food supply chain. We invite you to take time to [read this very inspiring article](#) about the Fair Food Program and the difference it is making for farm

workers. Additional resources for awareness building and engagement can be found [here](#) and on the National Farm Worker Ministry [website](#). Click [here for prayer resources](#).



Peace and Nonviolence

War in Ukraine - Two Years In

February 24 marked the two-year anniversary of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Two years of bloodshed have taken a devastating toll on the people of Ukraine. More than 27,000 civilians have been killed, along with more than half a million soldiers who have been killed or wounded on both sides. Today, more than 14 million people are in need of humanitarian aid, with six million people driven from their homes in the past year alone. The consequences have also reached well beyond the borders of the two countries, as disruptions to the global food system caused by the war have exacerbated hunger and humanitarian crises across the globe. [Click here](#) to learn more and [here](#) to urge the U.S. to do all it can to secure a just peace.



Peace and Nonviolence



Nuclear Weapons and Catholic Ethics

In recognition of the anniversary of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons entering into force, the Catholic Peacebuilding Network offers a new curriculum on nuclear weapons and Catholic ethics. The curriculum contains five modules that can be integrated into courses and include many materials from the [Project on Revitalizing Catholic Engagement on Nuclear Disarmament](#). Each module contains suggestions for primary resources, additional resources for further study, and questions for discussion. [Click here](#) for the resource modules.

Peace and Nonviolence

SSND Virtual Prayer Room for Peace



“Where there is peace, there is God; where God, there is every good.” – Blessed M. Theresa Gerhardinger.

Every Friday, Sisters, Associates, and friends can enter a peaceful space to unite for the needs of the world. We invite all to enter the room, both for our own restoration and for the power of our united prayer. **The Friday prayer room is open 10 am – 10 pm Eastern (9 am – 9 pm Central).** Use [this link](#) to enter the virtual prayer space. You can also enter the prayer space using the link found on the [SSND.org](#) and the [SSND Atlantic-Midwest](#) websites.

Quick Links

[Laudato Si' Action Platform](#)

[SSND Laudato Si' Reflections](#)

[Education for Justice - SSND Link/Password](#)

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

[SSND Action Alerts](#)

[Laudato Si' Movement](#)

[SSND International Solidarity Reflections](#)

[Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility](#)

[Alliance to End Human Trafficking](#)

[SSND Shalom International Network](#)

[Justice for Immigrants](#)

[SSND at the UN](#)

[Catholic Climate Covenant](#)

[USCCB Action Center](#)

[Catholic Mobilizing Network](#)

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, Pat Stortz, and Tim Dewane. Your feedback and suggestions are always welcomed. Email us at tdewane@ssndcp.org.

Please only print this e-publication if necessary.

SSND Shalom North America Coordinating Committee | 10700 W. Research Drive, Suite 145,
Wauwatosa, WI 53226

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