



Shalom News North America

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



December 2016



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Integrity of Creation

COP 22 – Moving from Agreement to Action

At the recently held [UN Climate Change conference](#) (COP 22), 196 countries and the European Union pledged to move forward on their 2015 Paris Agreement commitment to hold the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2 °C above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels. To date, 112 countries, responsible for 80% of global greenhouse emissions, have ratified the Paris climate agreement. [Learn more](#) about the outcomes of the COP 22 meeting. [Take action](#) to help people impacted by climate change.



LaudatoSi-Fy Your Advent

At this time of the year, when stores are inundating us with the latest, greatest and must have items, it is easy to become victim of their consumeristic enticements. Pope Benedict XVI instructed that “Purchasing is always a moral – and not simply economic – act”. In *Laudato Si’* we are reminded that “Christian spirituality proposes a growth marked by moderation... It is a return to that simplicity which allows us to stop and appreciate the small things, to be grateful for the opportunities which life affords us...” It can be easy to crowd out the space for Jesus through busyness and buying. This year, consider LaudatoSi-fying your Advent by looking at ways to reduce your consumption. [Go here](#) for great ideas and resources.



Catholic Climate Covenant Webinar

Catholic Climate Covenant is hosting a webinar, [In the Footsteps of the Holy Family: Refugees in an Era of Climate Change](#) on Wednesday, December 7 at 3 pm (Eastern). The webinar will explore the impacts that climate change has on human migration and how climate change has already created climate refugees. The presenters will be Todd Scribner, USCCB Education Outreach Coordinator and Chantel Comardelle, Executive Secretary of the Biloxi-Chitimacha-Choctaw tribe in Louisiana, who has first-hand experience with climate change displacement. [Register here](#).

World Soil Day – 12/5

Soils have been neglected for too long. We fail to connect soil with our food, water, climate, biodiversity and life. We must invert this tendency and take up some preserving and restoring actions. The World Soil Day campaign aims to connect people with soils and raise awareness on their critical importance in our lives. This year’s theme is “Soils and pulses, a symbiosis for life”. [Learn more](#). Sustainable Development Goal # 15 calls for us to protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss. [Learn more](#).

Human Dignity

Human Trafficking Report Cards

Shared Hope's Protected Innocence Challenge is the nation's only comprehensive study of state laws on sex trafficking, providing 51 Report Cards which grade each state on six areas of law. What is your state's grade? [Find out here](#). December 2 is the *International Day for the Abolition of Slavery*. The focus of this day is on eradicating contemporary forms of slavery such as human trafficking and child labor. [Take action](#) to address child labor and human trafficking.



People with Disabilities

Since 1992, the UN International Day of Persons with Disabilities has been celebrated annually on December 3. This year’s objectives include assessing the current

status of the [Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#) and the UN Sustainable Development Goals and laying the foundation for a future of greater inclusion for persons with disabilities. Learn more [here](#).

Check out this article on [what not to say to a person with disabilities](#).

International Volunteer Day – 12/5

The UN [International Volunteer Day](#) provides an opportunity for volunteers and organizations to celebrate their efforts, to share their values, and to promote their work. From local community volunteers to those on the frontline of natural disasters, volunteers are quintessential to humanity – the billion volunteers globally bring communities together. The [UN Online Volunteering](#) service allows organizations and

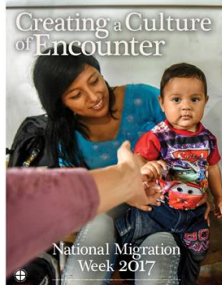
volunteers to team up to address sustainable development challenges – anywhere in the world, from any device. Online volunteering is fast, easy, and effective. [Learn more](#), [get involved](#).

Human Rights Day -12/10

Many of us are fearful about the way the world is heading. Disrespect for basic human rights continues to be wide-spread in all parts of the globe. This year's theme for [Human Rights Day](#) is "Stand up for Someone's Rights Today!". Let us step forward and defend the rights of a refugee or migrant, a person with disabilities, an LGBT person, a woman, a child, indigenous peoples, a minority group, or anyone else at risk of discrimination or violence. Be it on the street, in school, at work, on public transport, or on social media, you can make a difference! [Learn more](#), consider [this reflection](#).

Solidarity with Immigrants and Refugees

Throughout human history, migration has been a courageous expression of will to overcome adversity and to live a better life. On International Migrants Day (12/18) and throughout Advent, consider adding [the story of a migrant](#) to your prayers for our world. Take time to read and reflect on [this stirring reflection](#) from Bishop McElroy of San Diego. [Urge](#)



[Congress](#) to take action to do their part. [Make plans](#) to commemorate National Migration Week (1/8 – 1/14).

2017 Hunger Report

Bread for the World Institute has released its 2017 Hunger Report: [Fragile Environments, Resilient Communities](#). The report explains why ending hunger globally demands a clear focus on supporting fragile countries, where two-thirds of people facing hunger will live by 2030. These are nations torn apart by civil conflicts, weak governments, and the destabilizing effects of climate change. The report includes a four-section [study guide](#) with specific actions readers can take to mobilize their communities around anti-hunger advocacy.

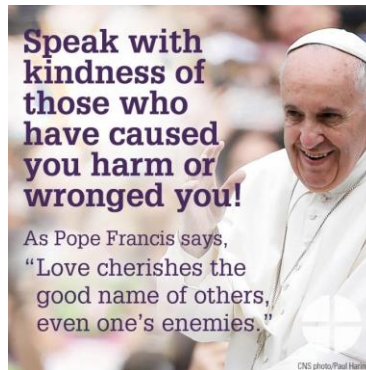
Wounded Knee to Standing Rock

December 29 marks the anniversary of the [Wounded Knee Massacre](#) on the Lakota Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in 1890. That was also the site of a [second conflict in 1973](#). In both conflicts, the U.S. government's failure to fulfill treaties with Native American people was a significant factor. But American Indian disputes are not just history; they're still alive. [Standing Rock Sioux's grievances](#) echo that failure. [Latest update](#). How will you [stand with Standing Rock](#)?

Peace and Non-Violence

Finding a Common Path

At a first-of-its-kind ecumenical prayer service with representatives of the Church of Sweden and the Lutheran World Federation (marking 500 years of separation between Lutherans and Catholics after the Protestant Reformation) Pope Francis urged members of the two faith communities to forge new common paths together. "We have a new opportunity to accept a common path. We have the opportunity to mend a critical moment of our history by moving beyond the controversies and disagreements that have often prevented us from understanding one another," he continued. How might that event inspire us to find common ground and resolve conflict in our lives and community? We invite you to explore these resources on [encounter and dialogue](#), as well as these reflections on [Replacing "Clamorous Discord" With Love and Mercy](#) and [10 Tips on Dialogue from Pope Francis](#).



Gun Violence Prevention Sabbath

Join [Faiths United to Prevent Gun Violence](#), [Newtown Action Alliance](#), and places of worship across the nation to remember those who have lost their lives to gunfire, pray for those whose lives have been forever changed because of the loss of a loved one, and to educate one another on proven strategies to reduce gun violence. [Learn more/take action](#).

World Day of Peace – January 1

In his Message for the [50th World Day of Peace](#), entitled "Non-Violence: A Style of Politics for Peace," (to be released in mid-December [here](#)) Pope Francis will urge families, faith communities, government leaders, and the international community to practice nonviolence and work to build a just peace. Gospel nonviolence is not passive; it entails active strategies such as peacebuilding, conflict transformation, and restorative justice. [Go here](#) for great reflection and action resources.



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