



Shalom News North America

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



January 2020



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

Integrity of Creation

COP 25 Outcome

The 2019 UN Climate Change Conference, also known as COP25 was held in December in Madrid, Spain. Expectations for COP 25 were high for several reasons. The slogan for the meeting was 'Time for Action'. The recent report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) carried a bleak warning that, unless we rapidly reduce our greenhouse gas emissions, our lands, our seas and every creature, including humans will suffer greatly. It was thought that the weekly climate-strikes by young people around the world would have put pressure on the delegates to agree to lower greenhouse gas emissions in line with what was demanded by science. Unfortunately, the outcome of the conference left much to be desired as major problems were put off for another day. [Read reflection](#).



provincial governments, Northern residents, and over 25 Indigenous organizations, the federal government released its lengthy Arctic and Northern Policy Framework on September 10, 2019. [Learn more](#).

Green Habits

SSND Sisters, staff and high school students collaborated to educate grocery shoppers in Baltimore, Maryland about the impact of plastic bags on the environment. SSNDs made reusable bags that were distributed along with a tag explaining the benefits of reusable bags, and students created artwork to inspire reflection and action. Please take a moment and watch [this short video](#) of the initiative. Explore a [myriad of ways](#) you can help promote a sustainable and more flourishing world.

Arctic Policy for Canada North

Recent calculations indicate that Arctic summers may become nearly ice-free by 2030. That's why the federal government's strategy for preventing the Arctic melt has been one of the most long-awaited policy provisions by environmentalists across Canada. After three years of collaboration with territorial and

provincial governments, Northern residents, and over 25 Indigenous organizations, the federal government released its lengthy Arctic and Northern Policy Framework on September 10, 2019. [Learn more](#). The diverse, fragile, yet generative web of life is created and sustained through right relationship, mutuality, and cooperation among many varied life forms. These insights compel us to think anew about our commitment "to be one," with ourselves, each other and with the earth. We invite you to take some time to consider [these video reflections](#) on our call to "be one."

Human Dignity

January is Poverty Awareness Month

Throughout the month of January, we all are invited to take up [Pope Francis' challenge](#) to live in solidarity with the poor. How might you respond to that challenge? Consider using this [calendar of reflection](#), these [longer daily reflections](#) are also available. All of these resources are also [en Español](#). You can [sign up](#) to have the daily reflections emailed to you throughout the month. [Learn more/take action](#).



attention to the plight of migrants and people living in areas plagued by conflict, social and political upheaval, injustice, or natural disasters. Addressing thousands of people gathered in St. Peter's Square, the pope spoke of

the millions of people who have fled their homes for "places where they might have hope for a dignified life," only to find themselves "before walls of indifference." Francis lamented the miseries of several trouble spots, urging the rest of the world to take responsibility for healing those places and to embrace the refugees who leave them. [Pope Francis' video](#).

Pope Francis on Migrants

As Christians around the world celebrated Christmas, Pope Francis called for a softening of "stony and self-centered hearts," once again directing the world's

National Migration Week 2020

"Promoting a Church and a World for All" is the theme for National Migration Week in the U.S. which will be

celebrated January 5-11, 2020. It is a call to stand in solidarity with and care for those who are excluded and marginalized, including migrants, DACA and TPS holders, refugees, and those seeking asylum. The USCCB has produced a toolkit of resources to promote participation in National Migration Week – [download it for free here](#). Explore the intersection of migration and human trafficking via the [Stop Trafficking newsletter](#) and [these other resources](#) from US Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking.

Human Trafficking Awareness

January 11 (National Human Trafficking Awareness Day) to February 8

(International Day of Prayer and Awareness Against Human Trafficking) is a special time to spotlight the issues of labor and sex trafficking. Human trafficking is a multi-billion dollar criminal industry that denies freedom to tens of millions of people around the world. In the U.S. and Canada it is found in every province and state, in big cities, small towns, and even rural communities. In the 6 months since they launched the Canadian Human Trafficking Hotline, the hotline has received over 1,000 calls, emails, and messages to its online forum. [Learn more](#). Download and use [this USCCB toolkit](#) that features human trafficking talking points, sample letters to the editor, community



engagement ideas, social media, prayer intercessions, and more.

MLK Day

On January 20, the United States celebrates the life of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who gave his life in service to justice. The day is designated as “a day on, not a day off,” and we are encouraged to participate in service activities that build just communities. [Click here](#) to find a local service project to join, or serve through prayer – [click here](#) for a prayer service based on Dr. King’s thought, [click here](#) for the Rosary for Justice and Peace. [Click here](#) for a School Sisters of Notre Dame reflection resource on Dr. King and integral ecology.

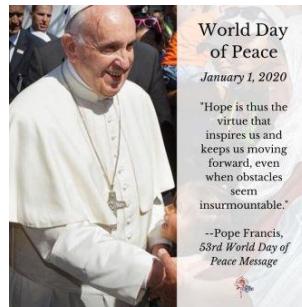
National Prayer Vigil for Life – January 23-24

The [national Prayer Vigil for Life](#) will be celebrated at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, DC with the opening Mass at 5:30 PM on Thursday, Jan. 23, and the closing Mass on Friday, Jan. 24 at 7:30 AM. Both services will be broadcast on EWTN and the National Shrine’s [YouTube](#). Those not able to attend are encouraged to dedicate time for prayer focused on protection of all life from conception to natural death.

Peace and Non-Violence

World Day of Peace

January 1 is celebrated as the World Day of Peace, because, as [Pope Francis recognizes in his message for this day](#), “The desire for peace lies deep within the human heart, and we should not resign ourselves to seeking anything less than this.” Pope Francis speaks of peace with all creation, and says that “we need to change the way we think and see things, and to become more open to encountering others and accepting the gift of creation, which reflects the beauty and wisdom of its Creator.” As we enter the new year, let us commit to heeding when “the Holy Spirit prompts in us ways of thinking and speaking that can make us artisans of justice and peace,” since “the world does not need empty words but convinced witnesses” of peace. [Click here](#) for prayers for peace.



International Holocaust Remembrance Day

On January 27, the world commemorates the tragedy of the Holocaust that occurred during the Second World War. We reflect upon the genocide that resulted in the deaths of 6 million Jews and 11 million others, by the Nazi regime and its collaborators. The Holocaust was a turning point in history, which prompted the world to say “never again”. Yet sadly [antisemitism is on the rise](#) and genocide is not simply a term of the past. “It would be a dangerous error to think of the Holocaust as simply the result of the insanity of a group of criminal Nazis. On the contrary, the Holocaust was the culmination of millennia of hatred, scapegoating and discrimination.” - UN Secretary-General António Guterres. Watch this [TED Talk](#), let us take steps to make sure “never again” is fully realized.



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