Shalom News North America



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

In This Issue

Plastic Free July

Marine Life

Wildfires

St. Kateri Tekakwitha

SDGs

Season of Creation

Education

Seeking Asylum

Farm Bill

Human Trafficking

Indigenous Peoples

I Have a Dream

Gun Violence

Cluster Bombs

Nuclear Prayer Day

July/Aug 2023

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.

School Sisters of Notre Dame
Shalom North America Contacts

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Integrity of Creation

Plastic Free July

Plastic Free July® is a global movement to encourage people to be part of the solution to plastic pollution – so we can have cleaner streets, oceans, and beautiful communities. The theme this year: Choose to refuse single-use plastic. Let us mindfully consider alternatives - like

swapping liquid soap with bar soaps; avoiding pre-packaged foods by choosing bulk or loose food; and celebrating with plastic free decorations. Click here for more ideas.





Integrity of Creation



Treaty to Protect Marine Life in the High Seas

Members of the United Nations recently adopted the first-ever treaty to protect marine life in the high seas, with the UN's chief hailing the historic agreement as giving the ocean "a fighting chance." Oceans produce most of the oxygen we breathe and absorb carbon dioxide, which makes them increasingly critical in reducing carbon emissions that fuel global warming. A treaty to protect biodiversity in waters outside national boundaries, known as the high seas, covering nearly half of earth's surface, had been under discussion for more than 20 years. The new treaty will be opened for signatures this fall during the annual meeting of world leaders at the UN General Assembly. It will take effect once it is ratified by 60 countries. Learn more.



Integrity of Creation

Wildfires are a Wake-Up Call



Wildfires are increasing in frequency, size and severity, raging across Canada, and burning from Australia to Europe and from the Arctic to South America. Yes, fires and floods have always been here, and are often nature's

way of renewing ecosystems - but with global temperatures on the rise, the need to reduce wildfire risk is more critical than ever. Fires also emit CO2, exacerbating climate change. Boreal forests in Canada and Russia store large amounts of carbon and help regulate the climate, but they're especially vulnerable to wildfires. Today's more intense and more frequent record-breaking wildfire seasons serve as another wake-up call to take action to address our climate crisis. Learn more.

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. Severely scarred by the disease, she was also left with diminished sight and health. Influenced by the faith of the Jesuits, she pledged never to marry and moved to the mission of Kahnawake or St. Francis Xavier du Sault Saint-Louise, near Montreal, where other indigenous Catholics lived. She died in 1680 at age 24. St. Kateri was canonized by Pope Benedict XVI in 2012. St. Kateri National Shrine

Integrity of Creation



Upcoming SDG Summit - *Let Your Voice Be Heard*

In 2015, the United Nations adopted the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. This agenda consists of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that provide a shared blueprint for a more peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable future. The 2023 SDG Summit, which will be held Sept 18-19 at the United Nations, marks the mid-point of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Political leaders and experts from governments, international organizations, the private sector, civil society, women, youth, and other stakeholders will come together in a series of high-level meetings with the heads of state and government. The outcome of the Summit will be a negotiated political declaration. Explore ways you can support realization of the SDGs here.

In anticipation of the Summit, individuals are invited to provide input via the submission of a short video and/or statement. Learn more here and let your voice be heard! (*The due date for submissions is July 17.*)





Integrity of Creation

Looking Ahead - Season of Creation



The Season of Creation is an ecumenical celebration that is observed from September 1, the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, to October 4, the feast of St. Francis of Assisi. It is a time to pray and respond together to the cry of creation. This year's theme is "Let Justice and Peace Flow" with the symbol of *A Mighty River*. Ecumenical faith leaders from across the world have prepared a special video to invite you to take part in this season (see video below). Our Creator has given us the gift of creation: the air we breathe, the water that sustains life, the fruits of the land that nourish us, and the entire web of life without which human life cannot flourish. Let us rejoice and be glad and take action to care for our common home. Click here to download the 2023 Season of Creation Celebration Guide.



Human Dignity



Countries Pledge to Strengthen Right to Education

At the recently held UN Human Rights Council meeting in Geneva, more than 70 countries from every region of the world expressed support for "efforts to strengthen the right to education, including the explicit right to full free secondary and at least one year of free pre-primary education." Lucia Fry, director of research and policy at the Malala Fund, described three important aspects of the pledge: "It will be another strut in the scaffolding holding up the global norm that all children should have an education; it will provide 'wind in the back' for girls 'struggling to open the doors of learning to all', and; it will be an invaluable tool for children, parents, activists, and policymakers to fight for the right to free education for all." Learn more.

Human Dignity

Restoring Asylum and Dignity for Immigrants Webinar (7/12)



NETWORK is hosting a webinar, "Restoring Asylum and Dignity for Immigrants: The Work Ahead" on Wednesday, July 12, 7:00 pm (Eastern). Lawyers for Good Government at the Matamoras-Brownsville border and Kino Border Initiative from the Nogales, Arizona-Mexico border will share the realities of

working for justice at the southern border and tell faith-filled justice-seekers what is needed to support immigration services. Learn more/register here. (All registrants will receive a recording of the session.)

Human Dignity



The Farm Bill

The Farm Bill, which expires this year, is a critical piece of U.S. legislation which is authorized every five years. It includes nearly $1 trillion in spending and helps determine what food is grown, how it's grown, and how affordable it is. It provides funding for international programs that train farmers to adapt to climate change and provides emergency and developmental support to more than 4 billion people. It is also crucial in responding to the climate crisis. Learn more. We invite you to use the SSND Voter Voice tool to urge the U.S. Congress to prioritize timely passage of the 2023 Farm Bill and to reauthorize existing domestic and international programs that address hunger needs and support long-term solutions.

Human Dignity

World Day Against Trafficking in Persons (7/30)



This year's theme is "Reach every victim of trafficking, leave no one behind." We invite you to observe this day by learning about what is happening globally and how religious are working to make a difference. The UN Office on Drugs and Crime has released its seventh *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons* This edition gives a snapshot of trafficking patterns and flows detected during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Talitha Kum*, the global umbrella network of sisters, allies, and partners working to address human trafficking, has released its annual activities report. It is rich in data, stories, testimonies, and critical analyses. It indicates that climate change and conflicts increase vulnerability to human trafficking. Consider exploring and responding to this month's US Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking Newsletter (which SSND helps sponsor).





Human Dignity

World Indigenous People's Day (8/9)

There are an estimated 476 million indigenous peoples in the world living across 90 countries. They make up less than 5



per cent of the world's population, but account for 15 per cent of the poorest. They speak an overwhelming majority of the world's estimated 7,000 languages and represent 5,000 different cultures. Despite their vast cultural differences, indigenous peoples share common problems related to the protection of their rights as distinct peoples. Learn more. Related to the treatment of indigenous peoples, we invite those in the U.S. to use the SSND Voter Voice tool to urge the U.S. Congress to support S. 1723, the *Truth and Healing Commission on Indian Boarding School Policies in the U.S. Act*.

Human Dignity



International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and Its Abolition (8/23)

This day is intended to inscribe the tragedy of the slave trade in the memory of all peoples; to insure we recall the history and recognize its enduring legacy. Audrey Azoulay, Director-General of UNESCO says, "It is time to abolish human exploitation once and for all, and to recognize the equal and unconditional dignity of each and every individual. Today, let us remember the victims and freedom fighters of the past so that they may inspire future generations to build just societies." Learn more and explore resources for awareness building and reflection here. Click here to explore resources focused on addressing racism.

Human Dignity

I Have a Dream Speech Anniversary (8/28)



On August 28, 1963, more than a quarter million people participated in the historic March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, gathering near the Lincoln Memorial. It was here that Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. delivered his exalted "I Have a Dream" speech, which was carried live by television stations across the country. 60 years later, this speech is widely quoted, but is it well understood? We invite you to take time this summer to reflect on the speech – click here for the text or view video below. What resonates with you? What challenges you? What does it inspire in you? Prayer resource.





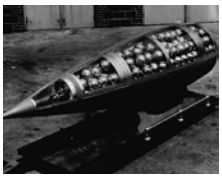
Peace and Nonviolence

Continuing Gun Violence in the U.S.



Our hearts are heavy with grief as we try to process the staggering number of mass shootings in the U.S. this past holiday weekend. Please click here to read an SSND statement. We invite you to consider once again using the SSND Voter Voice tool to urge Congress to do what it can to help address gun violence. Click here to take action. Click here to download a prayer service from Nuns Against Gun Violence.

Peace and Nonviolence



Cluster Bombs

Reports have surfaced indicating that the Biden Administration is planning to send cluster bombs to Ukraine. More than 100 nations have signed a 15-year-old treaty banning the use of cluster munitions, which are known to cause grievous injuries to civilians. Cluster bombs, which are meant to explode when they hit the ground, have caused thousands of deaths and injuries, often among children who have picked up duds that failed to go off in the initial attacks, only to explode long after a conflict is over. Consider using the SSND Voter Voice Tool to urge President Biden and Congress to refrain from sending cluster bombs to Ukraine.

Peace and Nonviolence



Nuclear Prayer Day (8/6)

On August 6, 1945, at 8:15 AM, the United States dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan. Three days later, an atomic bomb was dropped on Nagasaki, Japan. As devastating as the impact of those bombings were, the sustained build-up of nuclear weapons continues as does the potential for a nuclear catastrophe of unimaginable proportion. Last year, people of goodwill from all over the world united in prayer for a world free of nuclear weapons. It was a truly moving event that reached well over 100,000 people (see video below). The hope is that the prayer day will grow substantially this year and in the future until our prayers are realized. Please consider joining in this global day of prayer! Click here to learn more. Prayer resource.



Next Month

You can expect to receive the September edition of



Shalom News North America **on August 31.** ***Have a great summer!***

Quick Links

[Laudato Si' Action Platform]

[Education for Justice - SSND Link/Password]

[SSND Action Alerts]

[SSND International Solidarity Reflections]

[Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking]

[Justice for Immigrants]

[Catholic Climate Covenant]

[SSND Podcast - *Called to Action*]

[Exploring Intersections - Racism, Migration, and Climate]

[Laudato Si' Movement]

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

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