

Shalom News North America



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

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Dear Friend,

"We work actively, especially in our local situations, to eliminate the root causes of injustice in order to realize a world of peace, justice, and love." (You Are Sent, SSND Constitution #17)



Thank you for all you do to promote justice, peace, and care for all God's creation during these challenging times. May the resources found in this e-newsletter support your efforts to make a difference in the SSND spirit of Shalom.



[School Sisters of Notre Dame](#)

Shalom North America Contacts

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Integrity of Creation

Everything Ablaze: Reflections on Ecological Spirituality

"Everything Ablaze" are two meaning-making words emerging today in our consciousness and in contemporary spirituality as we contemplate and make meaning of the origin and evolving story of the universe. The story of the universe's origins and continued evolution is fascinating and evocative. It is a



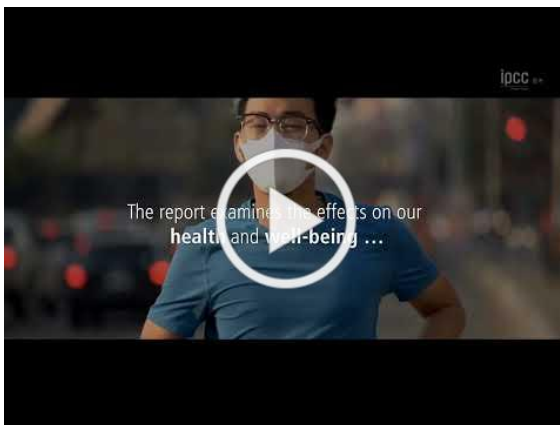
fascinating story depicted in the elegance, color and magnitude captured by modern scientific technology. It is an evocative story in that the story of life's origins holds revelatory significance for us. The story of the universe is not only a text but also a doorway into mysticism. Read more [here](#).

Integrity of Creation



IPCC Report on Climate Crisis

The latest [IPCC report](#) – authored by 270 scientists from 67 countries and approved by 195 governments – shows the earth is warming at an alarming rate, faster than had been predicted. We face catastrophic flooding, ever-strengthening storms and weather disruptions, devastating fires, as well as loss of ground, air, and underwater habitats and the creatures that live within them. The effects of global warming disproportionately affect those who are poor and vulnerable. The report sounds a strong warning that much bolder action is needed immediately to cut greenhouse gas emissions as well as to adapt to the increasing climate impacts and protect the most vulnerable. “Any further delay in concerted anticipatory global action,” the report says, “will miss a brief and rapidly closing window of opportunity to secure a livable and sustainable future for all.” [Read more](#). Click [here for the IPCC North America Fact Sheet](#) on climate change impacts and risks.



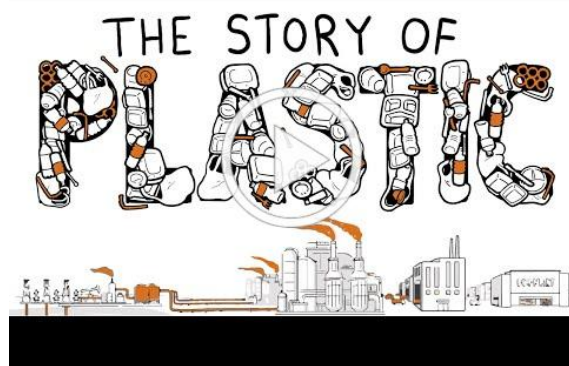
Integrity of Creation

Global Plastics Treaty

175 nations have agreed to a legally binding agreement to address the entire life cycle of plastics, from production through recycling and waste cleanup.

A critical piece of this historic agreement is the commitment to addressing the life cycle, as [plastics produce pollutants](#) at every stage of that cycle. Only about 9% of plastics produced are recycled, most plastics seeing just one use. The agreement also included microplastics, the tiny pieces of plastic that invade all parts of the environment as plastics break down over time. [Learn more](#). Looking to help reduce your reliance on plastics? Here are some tips to [reduce your plastic footprint](#); share them with others!





Integrity of Creation



Earth Day (4/22)

This year's Earth Day theme is *Invest In Our Planet. What Will You Do?* The focus is on accelerating solutions to combat the climate crisis, and to activate everyone – governments, citizens, and businesses – to do their part. Everyone accounted for, and everyone accountable. [Learn more/take action](#). Folks in the U.S. may want to join in [Faith Climate Action Week](#) activities, while those in Canada may wish to participate in [For the Love of Creation](#), a faith-based initiative for climate justice.



Everyone is invited to participate in the State of the Planet Global Survey. [Click here](#) to learn about and take this 5 minute survey and [here](#) to promote participation of the survey via social media.

Integrity of Creation

Save the Earth - Pass on the Burger

Reducing greenhouse gases in Earth's atmosphere is key to reducing the impact of climate change. Did you know that reducing the amount of meat that you consume in your diet is one of the most effective ways to contribute to the reduction of heat trapping greenhouse gases in Earth's atmosphere? Watch the videos below to learn more. Perhaps you will consider joining SSNDs who are making a commitment to reduce the amount of meat in their diet?





Integrity of Creation



Two Crises, One Root: Climate and Conflict

Corporations and political parties are seizing the war on Ukraine as their opportunity to bring in policy measures and financial support for the declining fossil fuel industry. Fossil fuel cheerleaders in Canada and the U.S. are using the

need to interrupt Russia's power as justification for pushing new fossil fuel infrastructure and exports. But more fossil fuels will not get us out of this war. Increasing gas exports or expanding our fossil fuel infrastructure will only worsen the ongoing climate crisis. Instead of doubling down on carbon, now is the time to invest rapidly in a just transition away from fossil fuels, both to address the climate crisis and to loosen the grip of oil and gas producing nations on global security. [Read more](#). All are welcome to [read and sign on to this letter](#) urging Canadian and German government officials to commit to transition out of fossil fuels.

Human Dignity

Sacred Fire and Prayer Wave

Canadian Indigenous leaders are meeting with Pope Francis this week in Rome in the latest step in a decades-long reconciliation process dealing with the mistreatment and forced placement of indigenous children in residential schools – many run by the church. In support of this meeting, the “[Sacred Fire and Prayer Wave](#)” has been making its way across Canada. At diocesan and parish gatherings people wear orange shirts or ribbons, light candles, and pray in solidarity for the delegation of Indigenous who include elders, “knowledge keepers,” residential school survivors, and youth. In Canada, more than 150,000 Indigenous children attended residential schools over more than a century. *The National Truth and Reconciliation Commission* identified 3,201 deaths amid poor conditions. Canada's Indigenous are asking Pope Francis “for an apology to be delivered in Canada” for the Catholic Church's role in the “genocide” of their people, and that papal edicts endorsing colonization be rescinded, especially the Doctrine of Discovery. [Learn more](#).



Human Dignity

UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

The UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII)

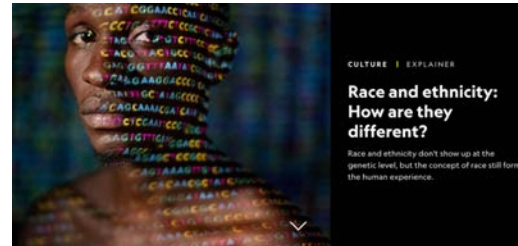


will be take place April 25 to May 6. The UNPFII is an advisory body of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) that provides expert advice and recommendations to the Council on indigenous issues such as economic and social development, health, culture, education, the environment, and human rights. This year's discussion theme is "Free, prior, and informed consent," a specific right that concerns indigenous peoples. For detailed information about the sessions [click here](#). Open meetings of the Forum will be viewable online at webtv.un.org. For more information and options to attend online meetings, please contact S. Beatriz Martinez-Garcia, our SSND UN-NGO Representative.

Human Dignity

Dismantling Racism - Terminology

It's important to distinguish between race and ethnicity. Ethnicity refers to a group of people sharing tradition, common ancestry, language, etc. Race is a social and political construct, a system of classification - not rooted in accurate biological or scientific truth – that supports empowering some social groups over others. Historically it has been used for the purpose of giving power and privilege to people considered white and to legitimize their dominance over non-white people. [Learn more](#).



Human Dignity



Ukrainian Refugees

Most of the nearly 4 million refugees who have fled Ukraine will stay in Europe. There is hope among many that they can return to their country when the conflict is over. For those being resettled elsewhere, there is a strong preference to remain close to their culture and homeland. The Biden administration recently announced that the US is committing to receive 100,000 of the newly displaced Ukrainian refugees. [Learn more](#). Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau promises a robust Canadian response saying they will take as many refugees fleeing war in Ukraine "as we can." [Click here](#) to learn more.



Human Dignity

Afghan Resettlement in the U.S.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security has agreed to designate Afghanistan for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for 18 months. This designation will protect Afghans already residing in the United States as of March 15, 2022, and permit them to remain in the U.S. instead of returning to their homeland amid unsafe conditions. While we laud this TPS decision, we recognize that it is only a short-term solution. Afghan individuals and families have been uprooted from their homes and may not be able to return safely under Taliban rule. We urge Congress to pass an Afghan Adjustment Act to provide a path to Lawful Permanent Resident status for Afghans who need a safe place to rebuild their lives. [Click here](#) to urge Congress to take action.



we are one family under God

Peace and Nonviolence



War - Enough

In his March 27 Angelus remarks, Pope Francis again lamented the war in Ukraine and appealed for peace more than a month after Russia's invasion. "Enough. Stop it. Silence the weapons. Move seriously toward peace," Pope Francis said to a crowd of

some 30,000 people gathered in St. Peter's Square. "We need to reject war, a place of death where fathers and mothers bury their children, where men kill their brothers and sisters without even having seen them, where the powerful decide and the poor die," he said. "War should not be something that is inevitable. We should not accustom ourselves to war," said Francis. "Instead, we need to convert today's anger into a commitment for tomorrow, because if, after what is happening, we remain like we were before, we will all be guilty in some way. Before the danger of self-destruction, may humanity understand that the moment has come to abolish war, to erase it from human history before it erases human history."

We invite you to read and consider [this reflection](#) from Marie Dennis on the need to reject the just war concept. SSND reflections on Gospel Nonviolence and Just Peace can be found [here](#). Download and share [this SSND prayer for peace](#).

Peace and Nonviolence

Our Inter-Faith Season of Prayer

Three of the world's great faith traditions have special seasons of prayer and remembrance this month. Ramadan, a month of fasting, prayer, and giving along with a self-evaluation observed by Muslims begins April 3. Passover, the eight-day Jewish celebration with matzah, bitter herbs and four cups of wine that begins on April 15, commemorates the miraculous Exodus from Egyptian slavery. Easter (April 17) brings an end to the Lenten season of prayer, fasting, and alms-giving for Christians while celebrating new life with the Resurrection of Jesus from the dead.



"The majority of people living on our planet profess to be believers. This should spur religions to dialogue among themselves for the sake of protecting nature, defending the poor, and building networks of respect and fraternity." *Laudato Si'* 201 [Click here](#) for an Interfaith Season of Prayer peace reflection.

Peace and Nonviolence



CATHOLIC MOBILIZING NETWORK

First Friday Prayer Vigils

On the First Friday of each month, Catholic Mobilizing Network holds a Virtual Prayer Vigil to lament upcoming executions and bear witness to the inviolable dignity of all human life. These virtual spaces offer a place to pray together as a faith community in response to the injustice of the death penalty. They include time for guided prayer, petitions, Scripture reflections, and contemplative silence. The vigils feature the voices of Catholic bishops, Church leaders, and allies across the death penalty abolition movement. The April 1 First Friday Prayer Vigil (2 p.m. ET) will feature a scripture reflection offered by Deacon Paul Shelton from St. Matthew Church in Baltimore, MD. [Learn more/register here](#).

Quick Links

[Laudato Si' Action Platform](#)

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

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

[Exploring Intersections - Racism,
Migration, and Climate](#)

[SSND Action Alerts](#)

[Global Catholic Climate Movement](#)

[SSND International Solidarity
Reflections](#)

[Interfaith Center on Corporate
Responsibility](#)

[Catholic Sisters Against Human
Trafficking](#)

[SSND Shalom International Network](#)

[Justice for Immigrants](#)

[SSND at the UN](#)

[Catholic Climate Covenant](#)

[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.



America Contacts (SNAC) of the School Sisters of Notre Dame - Arlene Flaherty, Barb Paleczny, Ethel Howley, Mary Carter Waren, and Tim Dewane. Your comments, suggestions, and feedback are always welcomed. Email us at tdewane@ssndcp.org.

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