

Shalom News North America



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

In This Issue

Season of Creation

Healthy Environment a Human Right

Divesting

Climate in Classroom

Harvest of Justice

Literacy

Hispanic Heritage

Education

Migrants and Refugees

Orange Shirt Day

Peace Day

Abolition of Nuclear Weapons

September/2022

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 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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Integrity of Creation

Season of Creation

The Season of Creation began on September 1 (the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation) and continues to October 4 (the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi). It is a time to reflect upon our interconnectedness with all God's creation as we live our congregational and province [Laudato Si'](#)



[commitments](#). This year's theme is *Listen to the Voice of Creation*; the symbol is the *Burning Bush*. Individuals and communities are invited to engage in this year's Season of Creation through prayer, sustainability projects, and advocacy. Looking for ideas and resources? [Click here](#) to download this year's Season of Creation Celebration Guide. Consider this [SSND Season of Creation Prayer resource](#).



Integrity of Creation



UN Declares Healthy Environment is a Human Right

With 161 votes in favor, and 8 abstentions, the UN General Assembly adopted a historic resolution this summer declaring access to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment a universal human right. The resolution comes as the planet grapples with what Inger

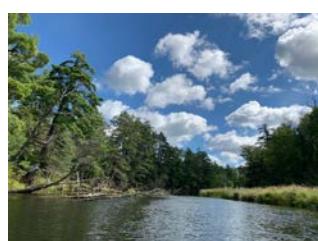
Andersen, Executive Director of the UN Environment Program, called “a triple planetary crisis of climate change, nature and biodiversity loss, and pollution and waste.” Left unchecked, the new resolution said those problems would have disastrous consequences for people around the world, especially the poor, and women and girls. [Learn more](#).



Integrity of Creation

Clean Air for Blue Skies Day (9/7)

Every year, 7 million people die prematurely due to air pollution, 90 per cent of whom are in low- and middle-income countries. Launched by the UN General Assembly in 2019, the International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies highlights the fact that air pollution is the single greatest environmental risk to human health and



one of the main avoidable causes of death and disease globally. Air pollution disproportionately affects women, children, and older persons, and also has a negative impact on ecosystems. The 2022 theme “The Air We Share” focuses on the trans-boundary nature of air pollution, stressing the need for collective accountability and action. Learn more and explore resources for taking action [here](#).



Integrity of Creation



Divesting from Fossil Fuel Financing

Canada's five biggest banks are among the top funders of fossil fuels in the world. Royal Bank of Canada (RBC) is the country's biggest fossil finance giant and the world's fifth largest fossil financier. Since the Paris Agreement was signed in 2016, Canadian banking giants, RBC, TD, Scotiabank, BMO, and CIBC, have poured over \$720 billion into fossil fuel companies -- providing continued funds for the corporations most responsible for the climate crisis to grow. [Learn more](#). [Let your voice be heard](#). In the United States, faith and values-based investors put forward shareholder resolutions this summer with Citigroup, Wells Fargo, Bank of America, and Goldman Sachs recommending the companies stop any additional financing for fossil fuel projects. While none of the resolutions came close to passing, advocates remain hopeful that this strategy will eventually bear fruit. [Learn more](#). [Let your voice be heard](#).

Integrity of Creation

Climate in the Classroom

Did you know that there are banks and oil & gas companies providing (free) ready-to-use lesson plans and worksheets on environmental issues to elementary and secondary teachers? In British Columbia, for example, more than 2,000 teachers have downloaded lesson materials from a utility company that delivers natural gas electricity to much of the province. While these materials highlight things individuals can do to conserve energy, they omit significant information about methane and carbon emissions, and include subtle nods to the company itself and the wider fossil fuel industry.



Researchers have found that misinformation about climate change is shifting these days from the outright denial of the science to more subtle efforts to delay cutting greenhouse gas emissions – like concentrating on individual

actions without referencing the need for broader systemic climate action – as found in the lesson plans shared by the utility company. [Learn more](#). One creative initiative seeking to address situations like this and the general lack of training in climate and environmental literacy is Teach the Teacher, an international youth-led campaign. [Click here](#) to learn more.



Human Dignity



Harvest of Justice

Harvest of Justice is an annual educational program of the National Farm Worker Ministry that begins on Labor Day (9/5) and concludes with World Food Day (10/16). This year's focus is *Child Labor in Agriculture*. There are an estimated 300,000 - 500,000 child farm workers in the U.S., although the specific number is unknown. What is known is that these children face many work hazards and lack many basic child labor protections. Stand in solidarity with farm workers and help make a difference in the living and working conditions of them and their families. Resources for reflection and action can be [found here](#).

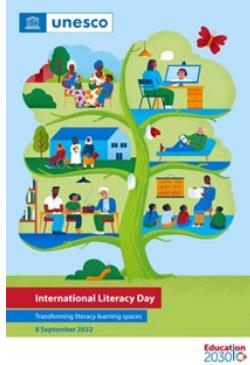


Human Dignity

International Literacy Day (9/8)

Literacy is a gift given to each of us who can read this newsletter. But that gift, the ability to read and write in one's native language, is not available to many throughout the world. [771 million youth and adults](#) worldwide still lack basic literacy skills, 2/3 of them women and girls. 250 million children are failing to acquire basic literacy skills. [Vulnerable populations and minorities](#), such as migrants,

Indigenous peoples, older citizens and people with disabilities, are still, all too often, left behind, when they should be priority groups. This year's theme for International Literacy Day is "Transforming Literacy Learning Spaces," encouraging the use of new and creative ways to engage students in lifelong literacy learning, especially for those vulnerable populations and minorities whose lives do not "fit" more traditional classroom driven models of literacy education. Learn more [here](#). Read [Literacy is More than Just Reading and Writing](#)



Human Dignity



Hispanic Heritage Month (9/15-10/15)

The United States celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month to recognize the achievements and contributions of Hispanic Americans. The date, September 15, was chosen to begin the month-long celebration in part because it is the anniversary of independence for the Latin American countries of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. The theme for 2022 is "Unidos: Inclusivity for a Stronger Nation." [Learn more](#) and join in the celebration! [Prayer Resource](#).

Human Dignity

Transforming Education Summit (9/16-19)

Sister Beatriz Martinez-Garcia, our SSND-NGO Representative at the UN, invites us to participate in the Transforming Education Summit (TES) to be held on September 16 - 19 during the 77th Session of the UN General Assembly. The Summit provides a vehicle to elevate and address the global education crisis we are facing these days – mobilizing the ideas and resources necessary to address the pandemic-related learning losses we have experienced and sow the seeds of education transformation. One way to participate in the summit is by watching the broadcast presentations on [UN Web TV](#). Another way is to submit good or exemplary educational practices that could be scaled up to benefit more people, especially the most marginalized. Learn more [here](#).



Human Dignity

National Migration Week (U.S)



National Migration Week 2022
September 19-25, 2022

Building the Future with Migrants and Refugees

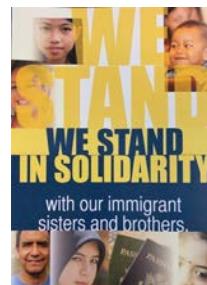
National Migration Week for 2022 takes place September 19-25, concluding with the Vatican's celebration of the World Day of Migrants and Refugees. The primary theme for this year's National Migration Week is "Building the Future with Migrants and Refugees". One way you can help build that future is by supporting the recently introduced, bipartisan Afghanistan Adjustment Act 2022 using our [SSND Voter Voice Tool](#). Learn more [here](#).

Another way you can help build that future is by using our [SSND Voter Voice Tool](#) to urge Congress to support Dreamers and DACA recipients. Learn more [here](#). You can find a variety of National Migration Week related resources for reflection and engagement [here](#).

Human Dignity

World Day of Migrants and Refugees (9/25)

The theme for this year's World Day of Migrants and Refugees is "[Building the Future with Migrants and Refugees](#)" A staggering 100 million people have now been forced to flee their homes globally according to the United Nations, highlighting worldwide food insecurity, the climate crisis, war in Ukraine, severe poverty and violence in Central America, and other emergencies. Pope Francis invites us to be part of a culture of encounter as we welcome, protect, integrate, and promote immigrants and refugees in our midst. [Click here](#) to read the Pope's 2022 World Day of Migrants and Refugees message. A variety of resources for reflection and engagement can be found [here](#).



Human Dignity

National Day
for Truth and
Reconciliation
September 30th

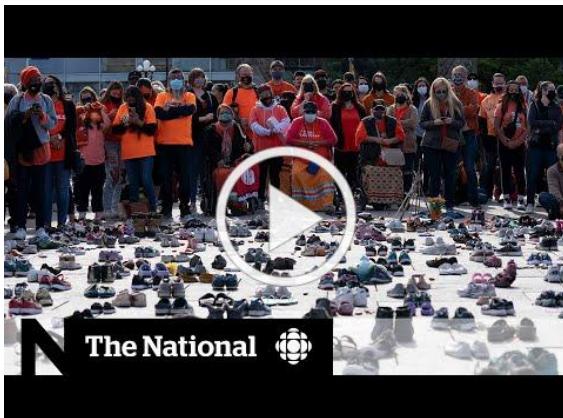


National Day for Truth and Reconciliation - Orange Shirt Day

Last year, the Canadian federal government passed legislation to mark September 30 as a National Day for Truth and Reconciliation to 'recognize and commemorate the legacy of residential schools.' All Canadians are

encouraged to wear orange on September 30 in honor of the day and in recognition of the Indigenous-led grassroots commemorative tradition that began in 2013 of wearing an orange shirt to honor the children who survived residential schools and remembers those who did not. The orange shirt is a symbol of the stripping away of culture, freedom, and self-esteem experienced

by Indigenous children over generations. [Click here](#) to learn more about the origins of Orange Shirt Day and this year's Orange Shirt Day design. Resources for reflection and engagement can be found [here](#).



Peace and Nonviolence

International Day of Peace (9/21)

We take time during the Season of Creation to observe the International Day of Peace (9/21). Peace and right relationships are essential to promoting a culture of life and oneness with all creation. This year's Day of Peace theme is "[End Racism. Build Peace](#)." Achieving true peace entails much more than the laying down of arms. It requires the building of societies where all members feel they can flourish. It involves creating a world in which people of all races are treated with dignity and respect. How will you commemorate the day? Resources for reflection, personal growth, and taking action to help dismantle racism can be [found here](#).



Peace and Nonviolence

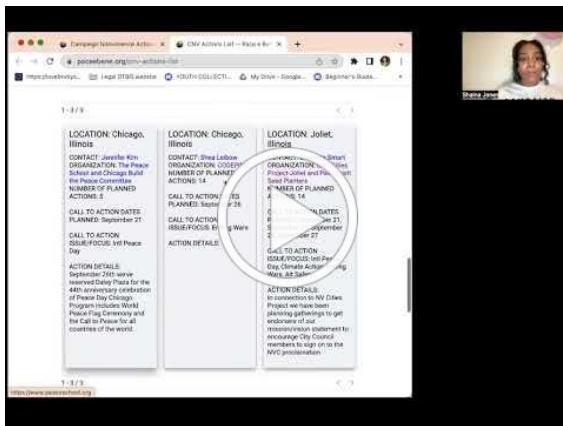


Catholic Nonviolence Days of Action (9/21 - 10/2)

Pax Christi International (of which SSND is a member) invites us to promote and celebrate nonviolence between September 21 (International Day of Peace) and October 2 (International Day of

Nonviolence and Gandhi's birthday). The theme for this year's Catholic Nonviolence Days of Action is: "Blessed is every step toward nonviolence", acknowledging that a life of nonviolence is a process that takes daily work. You are invited to take steps that broaden your understanding of its many facets, steps that deepen your faith in the nonviolent message of the Gospel, and

steps that increase your engagement as we build a nonviolent world for all of God's creation. In his 2017 World Day of Peace message, Pope Francis reminded us that "to be true followers of Jesus today also includes embracing his teaching about nonviolence." [Click here](#) for more information and resources, and [here](#) to check out SSND podcasts and reflections on Gospel Nonviolence and Just Peace.



Peace and Nonviolence

International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons (9/26)

Achieving global nuclear disarmament is one of the oldest goals of the [United Nations](#), yet today around 12,705 nuclear weapons remain. A [recently released study](#) concludes that five billion people would die in a nuclear war. "As a global family, we can no longer allow the cloud of nuclear conflict to shadow our work to spur development, achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, and end the COVID-19 pandemic," UN Secretary General António Guterres has observed. "Now is the time to lift this cloud for good, eliminate nuclear weapons from our world, and usher in a new era of dialogue, trust and peace for all people." We invite you to take time to reflect on [these thoughtful and challenging words](#) from Archbishop John Wester of Santa Fe, New Mexico (see video link below) and his powerful pastoral letter [Living in the Light of Christ's Peace: A Conversation Toward Nuclear Disarmament](#).



Consider [these observations](#) from Pope Francis. Explore ways you can support nuclear disarmament [here](#).



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[Justice for Immigrants](#)

[Catholic Climate Covenant](#)

[Exploring Intersections - Racism,
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[Global Catholic Climate Movement](#)

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**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, Colleen Kammer, 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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