

# Shalom News North America



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

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**December/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](#).



[School Sisters of Notre Dame](#)

Shalom North America Contacts

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## Integrity of Creation

### [Laudato Si' Action Platform - One Year Anniversary](#)

"Take off your sandals because the place you are standing is holy ground." Reflecting on this line from scripture, we realize *Laudato Si'* is continuing this message as it summons us to hear the cry of the poor and the cry of the

earth. Laudato Si' calls us toward sustainability in the spirit of integral ecology. The urgent challenge in paragraph 13 tells us to "bring the whole family together . . . for we know that things can change." With profound care for each other and all creation, we are now trying to build a better future together. [Prayer resource](#).



One year ago, the [School Sisters of Notre Dame](#) were among the first religious congregations and Catholic organizations to join the Laudato Si' Action Platform (LSAP) – a seven-year journey of ecological conversion to achieve total sustainability. Click the following links to view the [LSAP Year One Global Report](#), the [SSND Atlantic-Midwest Province Year One Action Plan](#), and the [SSND Central Pacific Province Year One Action Plan](#)



## Integrity of Creation



### Reflecting on Ecospirituality

The prefix "eco" comes from the Greek *oikos*, meaning home. Our home is shared by all of earth's communities, human and non-human, and they are vitally integral to one another. Ecospirituality is more than ecology and theology. Our spirituality deepens when we open ourselves to experiencing God in the natural world, a practice that has deep scriptural roots. Read more [here](#). To further your reflection on the concept of ecospirituality, we invite you to view the videos below from our friends the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas and the Catholic Climate Covenant.



## Integrity of Creation

### COP27 Outcomes

A historic deal to establish a "loss and damage" fund for countries vulnerable to the devastating impacts of a warming world was reached at the recently concluded United Nations Climate Change Summit (COP27). Catholic and other religious attendees hailed this development as "a real breakthrough," but acknowledged that the new fund will fail to aid those already suffering from situations and promises which have not yet been delivered or implemented. [Learn more](#). While the agreed upon COP27 [Implementation Plan](#) reaffirmed a global commitment to the 1.5 C target, it made scant advances to implement past pledges to meet it. It did not include an agreement on a full phase out of fossil fuels. Learn more [here](#). Read about Catholic participation and reaction to COP27 [here](#).



## Integrity of Creation

### Purchasing Power Used for Common Good

In this Advent season, let us take time to consider our advances in simple and sustainable living and make changes to our purchasing habits so that they best uphold human dignity and the care of all earth's communities. Pope Francis tells us, "Purchasing is always a moral – and not simply economic – act." When considering a purchase, it is helpful to reflect upon such questions as – Are the rights of workers upheld concerning fair wages, safe working conditions, the right to organize, etc.? Does the product or its manufacture adversely affect the environment? Consider purchasing from companies (like [SERRV](#) and [Ten Thousand Villages](#)) that certify their products as fair trade or are transparent about their supply chain (where and how products are produced). Further your reflection on this topic by reading [this article](#) on Fast Fashion and watching the short video below. [Click here](#) for an Advent prayer on consumerism.





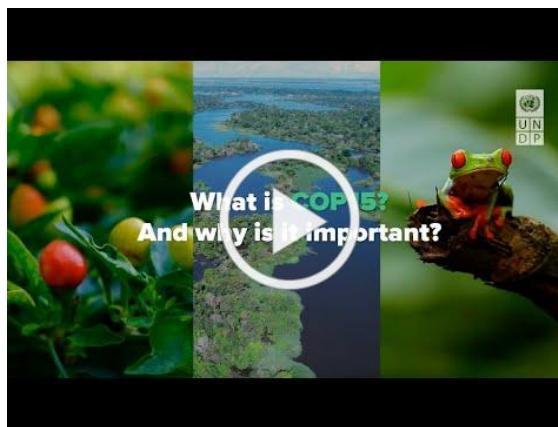
## Catholics Support Clean Car Standards

U.S. Catholics have an opportunity to urge the EPA and Biden Administration to act now by advancing clean car standards and moving the U.S to our 100% zero-emission vehicles goal by 2035. This letter was developed by the Catholic Climate Covenant, supporting "Clean Cars" regulations from the Catholic perspective of caring for our common home and recognizing, especially, the health impacts of air pollution on our youngest, most vulnerable, and marginalized sisters and brothers. [Click here](#) to learn more and [here](#) to add your name to the sign-on letter. (*Sign by December 1.*)

## Integrity of Creation

### UN Biodiversity Conference (12/7 - 12/19)

The UN Biodiversity Conference (COP15) will be held in Montreal, Quebec from December 7 - 19. Despite ongoing efforts, biodiversity is deteriorating worldwide and this decline is projected to worsen with business-as-usual scenarios. The [UN Biodiversity Conference](#) will convene governments from around the world to agree to a new set of goals for nature over the next decade through the Convention on Biological Diversity [post-2020 framework](#) process. The framework sets out an ambitious plan to implement broad-based action to bring about a transformation in society's relationship with biodiversity and to ensure that, by 2050, the shared vision of living in harmony with nature is fulfilled. [Learn more.](#)



## Human Dignity



### International Day for the Abolition of Slavery

In acknowledgement of [this day](#), we would like to lift up the efforts of [Talitha Kum](#), the one year anniversary of their [Call to Action](#), and all the work sisters around the world have done to address human trafficking - including the work done [by U.S. Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking](#) (which we sponsor). Talitha Kum's "Call to Action" is designed to unite forces against trafficking and is addressed to anyone who shares the "vision of a world free" from trafficking and exploitation. Learn more [here](#).

How can you support these efforts? How about using our [SSND Voter Voice](#)

[tool](#) to urge the U.S. Congress to take action against modern slavery by passing the Frederick Douglass Trafficking Victim Prevention and Protection Reauthorization Act before Congress adjourns. Download and make use of this [SSND prayer/resource card](#).



## Human Dignity

### International Human Rights Day (12/10)

The 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR) will be celebrated on December 10, 2023. Ahead of this milestone celebration, starting on this year's Human Rights Day, December 10, 2022, the UN will launch a year-long campaign to showcase the UDHR by focusing on its legacy, relevance, and activism. According to UN personnel, "we need all hands-on deck" in order to achieve dignity, justice and freedom for all. [Learn more, get inspired, take action](#). Also consider participating in Amnesty International's [Write for Rights campaign](#). [Click here](#) for a prayer resource.



## Human Dignity

### St. Juan Diego (12/10) and Our Lady of Guadalupe (12/12)

At the height of the worst massacres of the Indigenous in history, the genocide by explorers, Mary, a Nahuatl woman and Mother of God, Téotl, came to a poor, dignified farmer, Juan Diego of the Nahuatl Tribe in Mexico in 1531. She also healed his uncle and converted their new bishop, Fray Juan de Zumárraga. Mary became known as Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mother of the Americas, Mother of the New Creation. Bringing dignity and honor to Indigenous and converting the hearts of oppressors, she knows we all need her help urgently, again, today. Mary promised: "I will give to all people, all my love, my compassion, my help and my protection, because I am your merciful mother and the mother of all nations that live on this earth, of all who love me and speak with me, of all who search for me and trust me. I will hear their laments. I will heal and cure all their miseries, misfortunes and sorrows." [Click here](#) for a dialogue adapted from *Guadalupe, Mother of the New Creation* by Virgil Elizondo.



(The images above are of oil paintings of Juan Diego and La Morenita de Tepayac/Our Lady of Guadalupe by Barbara Paleczny SSND - learn more [here](#).)

## Human Dignity



## The Holy Family and Migrants

Since 2000, the United Nations has recognized December 18 as International Migrants Day. It is a day to uphold our brothers and sisters who choose to or are forced to migrate due to economic, environmental or social strife. There are an estimated 281 million, or 3.6% of the global population, living in a country other than their country of birth. See the [UN's interactive migration report for 2022](#).

During the Advent Season, we remember that the Holy Family was a migrant family – on the move to Bethlehem and then to Egypt to escape Herod's threat to kill the newborn Jesus. What are our attitudes towards strangers seeking to live among us? As Christians, we are called to welcome the stranger, and when we do so, we welcome God in person. In doing this, we will be made richer through their gifts of culture, skill, energy, and faith. Like migrants around the world, we too, are on a journey with God. Let us accompany one another, like the biblical innkeeper who assisted the Holy Family, offering help and refuge to those in need. [Click here](#) for Pope Francis' 2022 message on migrants and refugees.



The tradition of Las Posadas is a reenactment of the eve of the first Christmas when Joseph and Mary searched for room at the inn but none was to be found. Join the Kino Border Initiative and the Ignatian Solidarity Network (12/16 - 12/24) for a virtual Posadas that will include short videos,

reflections, activities, and advocacy opportunities. [Click here](#) to learn more and sign-up to participate.

## Human Dignity

### SSND Voter Voice - Let Your Voice Be Heard

Several important legislative items we have been tracking – focused on immigration, human trafficking, farmworkers, truth and reconciliation for indigenous peoples, preserving wildlife, and avoiding war/promoting peace – need to receive final approval in the U.S. Congress by January 3 or they fail and can only be considered again if re-introduced in the next Congress. We urge you to take a few minutes this week (and again next week) to use our [SSND Voter Voice Tool](#) to let your voice be heard and urge Congress to act on these important matters.

### Letters & Petitions





### Addressing Gun Violence in the U.S.

The United States has averaged nearly two mass shootings a day this year, according to the Gun Violence Archive, which tracks when four or more people are shot. Too often these tragedies are written off to individual cases of mental illness. That does not explain why the U.S has had more than [600 mass shootings](#) every year since 2020 and why no other country has anything close to this level of gun violence. As stated in a recent [Washington Post opinion](#) – “the fact that no single action will stop all mass shootings is no excuse not to do things that could prevent some of them or lower the toll when they happen.”

We join with LCWR (read [Statement on Colorado Springs Shooting](#)) and others in calling on elected officials at all levels to take action and pledge to continue our efforts to promote nonviolence and respect for all life. Urge Congress to [take action here](#). This December marks the 10-year anniversary of the tragic mass shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School. Vigils to mark this anniversary and call for action to address gun violence will be held in Washington DC and throughout the United States. [Click here](#) to learn more and participate.



## Peace and Nonviolence



### Roses in December (12/2)

LCWR and SHARE invite you to join them for the Virtual Delegation of Roses on December 2 at 6 pm (Central) where they will be remembering the 42nd Anniversary of the martyrdom of the four US Churchwomen. Virtual attendees will be joining an in-person delegation of approximately 50 who are journeying to El Salvador and then on to Honduras. [Click here](#) to register for this live event (and to later receive the session recording).

## Peace and Nonviolence

### Birthing the Peace of Christ - Online Advent Retreat

Pax Christi USA is partnering with Cranaleith Spiritual Center to provide three Advent online *Birthing the Peace of Christ* retreat sessions this December: Exploring Nonviolence (12/6), Nonviolence and Scripture (12/13), and Nonviolence and Contemplative Practice (12/20). Each session stands



independently, so participate in as few or as many sessions as you wish. Learn more [here](#).

## 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](#)

[Global Catholic Climate 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, Colleen Kammer, Ethel Howley, Mary Carter Waren, and Tim Dewane. Your feedback and suggestions are always welcomed. Email us at [tdewane@ssndcp.org](mailto:tdewane@ssndcp.org).

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