



Shalom News North America

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



April 2019



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Integrity of Creation

Feast of St. Kateri Tekakwitha (4/17)

The Feast of St. Kateri Tekakwitha is celebrated in Canada on April 17. St. Kateri is the first Native American to be recognized as a saint by the Catholic Church, and she is the patroness of ecology and the environment, people in exile and Native Americans. [Learn more](#). Visit the [Saint Kateri Conservation Center](#), and consider making your backyard a [Saint Kateri Habitat!](#)



Canada's Climate is Warming Twice as Fast as Global Average

Released this week, [Canada's Changing Climate Report](#) provides the first in-depth, stand-alone assessment of how and why Canada's climate has changed, and what changes are projected for the future. Canada is warming at twice the rate as the rest of the world. The effects of widespread warming are already evident in many parts of Canada and are projected to intensify in the near future. Canada is experiencing increases in precipitation, extreme fire weather, water supply shortages and a heightened risk of coastal flooding. [Learn more](#).

Earth Day

Earth Day is April 22, how will you commemorate the day? Complementing the Earth Day Network's theme of [Protect Our Species](#), Catholic Climate Covenant's

[All Creation Gives God Praise: Protecting Biodiversity in a Time of Climate Change](#) provides information, prayer, and action resources on the issue of protecting biodiversity. The Global Catholic Climate Movement invites you to advocate for action on climate change to protect the Amazon, and plant a tree to symbolize your community's commitment to protecting forestland. [Learn more/take action](#).

Arbor Day (4/26)

Deforestation is a huge problem with many implications, and cutting down on our paper usage is the most immediate way to make a difference. You can go a step further by seeking out brands with sustainable business practices and by adopting strong recycling habits. [Read more, consider planting a tree!](#)

Urge EPA to Uphold the Lifesaving Mercury and Air Toxics Standards

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has proposed weakening an existing rule that effectively limits the emissions of mercury and other air toxics from coal- and oil-fired power plants. Mercury has long been known to cause lasting harm to human persons. Weakening controls on these toxic pollutants would be profoundly damaging, especially to the unborn, young children, and the elderly. [Learn more, let your voice be heard](#).

Human Dignity

Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month in the U.S. and May is Sexual Assault Prevention Month in Canada. Every 92 seconds a person living in the US will be sexually assaulted. Every nine minutes that victim is a child. There are 460,000 sexual assaults in Canada every year. Most perpetrators in both countries are not prosecuted. One in three women will experience some form of sexual assault in their adult lifetime. Anyone can be a victim of sexual assault – learn more. – a daughter, a sister, mother or friend. [Learn more, separate myth from fact](#).



Migrants at the Southern U.S. Border

What's different today is that migrants, rather than being mostly solo men traveling from Mexico in search of work, are now largely unaccompanied minors or families with children seeking asylum from Central America, reported Maria Benevento in a recent National Catholic Reporter article. Over two-thirds of those apprehended between ports of entry in February were families or children — the highest on record. The "care and processing" of family units is a new challenge which

the U.S. hasn't adjusted its infrastructure to meet, Guerrero said. "We have double CBP agents than in the '90s but we still are not capable of providing the care needed. We don't have the agency capacity to deal with what's happening on the ground because that's not what's prioritized." [Read full article](#). Take action - urge Washington to [welcome asylum seekers and treat them with respect](#).



World Health Day (4/7)

From 1950 onward, April 7 has been World Health Day, a UN and World Health Organisation (WHO) observance meant to raise awareness of the need to improve global health. The theme for 2019 is Universal

Health Coverage. [Learn more](#), Pope Francis on [the right to health](#).

SNAP

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is the foremost anti-hunger program in the United States. Each year SNAP lifts millions of low-income Americans out of food insecurity. On February 1, a [proposed rule](#) to increase SNAP work requirements which would limit state flexibilities to adapt the needs of low-income and working families in the state was put forward. These changes would result in more than 755,000 individuals losing SNAP benefits over the next three years. [Learn more/take action](#).

Peace and Non-Violence

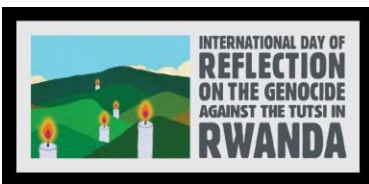
Mine Awareness & Action

On April 4, we observe the [Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action](#). There are more than 100 million landmines strewn about the Earth, and six thousand people are killed or maimed each year by antipersonnel landmines. "On this International Day for Mine Awareness, let us reaffirm our commitment to eradicating the horrendous damage caused by landmines and assisting those who have been harmed by their use." - UN Secretary-General António Guterres. Learn about the [Catholic Campaign to End Landmines](#).



Remembering Rwanda

Every year, on or around April 7 (the start of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda), the UN organizes commemorative events at its Headquarters in offices around the world. The UN commemorations focus on two main themes, *Preventing genocide* – learning the lessons of the genocide in Rwanda in order to help prevent similar acts in the future and *Supporting survivors* – raising awareness of the lasting impact of the Rwandan genocide on survivors, particularly widows, orphans and victims of sexual violence, and the challenges that they still face today. [Learn more](#).



Principles of Nonviolence

In April of 1963, while serving time in the Birmingham jail for leading demonstrations against the unsolved bombings of Negro homes and churches, Martin Luther King Jr. wrote a lengthy letter to fellow clergymen who had criticized his actions as unwise and untimely, accusing him of adding to an already tense situation. Martin responded that the demonstrators were not the creators of the tension but were bringing "to the light of human conscience and the air of national opinion" the hidden tension that already existed so that it might be cured. His [Principles of Nonviolence](#) are perhaps even more relevant today as we continue to face racial and ethnic violence on so many levels.

Still No Peace on Earth

[Pacem in Terris](#), a papal encyclical issued by Pope John XXIII on April 11, 1963, states that peace cannot be established unless the order laid down by God is dutifully observed, an order based on truth, justice, charity and freedom. The document also emphasized human dignity and equality among all people and made mention of issues such as the rights of women and nuclear non-proliferation. It states that the arms race must end and that nuclear weapons must be banned. It has been fifty-six years since this document was published. Is there any hope for *Pacem in Terris*? Lord, make me an instrument of your peace!



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