

Shalom News North America



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

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May 2024

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](#).



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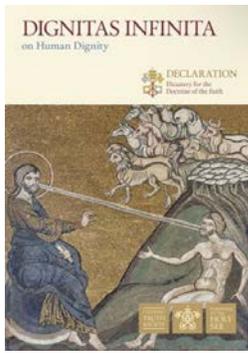


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"Dignitas Infinita" on Human Dignity

On April 2, 2024, Pope Francis signed the Declaration of the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith, "[Dignitas Infinita](#)" on Human Dignity. Uniting Pope Francis' progressive social agenda with holistic reverence for human life and dignity, it presents a seamless garment of moral and ethical concerns, by respecting and protecting all life from conception to natural death in both private and public spheres of life.

It highlights a number of grave violations of human dignity that we are called to be attentive to, including: poverty, war, travail of migrants, human trafficking, sexual abuse, violence against women, digital violence, abortion, the death penalty, surrogacy, gender theory and sex change, genocide, euthanasia, willful suicide, mutilation, physical and mental torture, undue psychological pressures, subhuman living conditions, racism, arbitrary imprisonment, deportation, slavery, prostitution, selling of women and children, degrading working conditions, and the marginalization of people with disabilities.

The declaration urges that respect for human dignity and the common good be placed at the center of "every legal system," and that states not only protect this dignity, but guarantee "the conditions necessary for it to flourish in the integral promotion of the human person." (#64) [Click here](#) for background and perspective on this declaration.

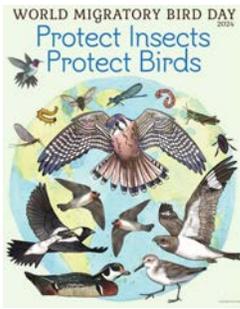
Integrity of Creation

Three Greenhouse Gases Hit All-Time Highs

The levels of three crucial heat-trapping gases in the atmosphere – carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide – all reached historic highs last year, growing at near-record fast paces, according to the [U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration](#). These aren't one-off anomalies. In each case, the rising emissions continued a long-term disturbing trend. In related news, it has been confirmed that the critical 1.5C global warming threshold set in the Paris Agreement has been breached over a twelve-month period for the first time in history. While this does not signal a permanent breach of the limit, which scientists say is measured over decades, it sends a clear warning to humanity that we are approaching the point of no return much faster than expected. [Read more](#). UN Climate Chief Simon Stiell recently put it in more stark terms saying humanity has only two years left "to save the world" by making dramatic changes. [Learn more](#).



Integrity of Creation



World Migratory Bird Day (5/11)

World Migratory Bird Day is officially celebrated on the second Saturday of May in Canada and the US (May 11th in 2024), and the second Saturday of October in Mexico, Central and South America, and the Caribbean (October 12nd in 2024). Insects and their importance to migratory birds are the focus of this year's World Migratory Bird Day. [Learn more.](#)

Integrity of Creation



Laudato Si' Week (5/19-26)

This Laudato Si' Week and Pentecost, let us gather in community to contemplate and nurture seeds of hope for our “suffering planet” (Laudate Deum, 2). The Apostolic Exhortation [Laudate Deum](#) is a reminder about the urgency of the Laudato Si' message and the need for both personal and cultural transformation amidst our ecological and climate crises. This year's Laudato Si' Week theme is inspired by the symbol for Season of Creation 2024, “[The firstfruits of hope.](#)” Let us be seeds of hope in our lives and our world, rooted in faith and love. Resources for Laudato Si' Week will be available soon [here](#).

“There are no lasting changes without cultural changes ... and there are no cultural changes without personal changes” (LD, 70)

Integrity of Creation

International Day for Biodiversity (5/22)

“*Be Part of the Plan*”, the theme of [International Day for Biodiversity](#) 2024, is a call to action for all stakeholders to halt and reverse the loss of biodiversity. Because women play critical roles in biodiversity conservation, ecosystem restoration, and environmental justice, it is essential Biodiversity Plans [ensure gender equality in the implementation framework](#) and include a [gender plan of action](#). Governments, indigenous peoples, local communities, non-governmental organizations, lawmakers, businesses, and individuals are encouraged to highlight the ways in which they are supporting the implementation of the Biodiversity Plan. Everyone has a role to play and therefore can *Be Part of the Plan*. [Click here](#) to learn more.



BE PART OF THE PLAN
International Day
for Biodiversity
2024



Human Dignity



Dirty Dozen List for 2024

The Dirty Dozen List is an annual campaign by the National Center on Sexual Exploitation calling out twelve mainstream entities for facilitating, enabling, and even profiting from sexual abuse and exploitation. Since its inception in 2013, the Dirty Dozen List has galvanized thousands of individuals to call on

corporations, government agencies, and organizations to change problematic policies and practices – resulting in a number of significant victories. [Click here](#) to view the Dirty Dozen List for 2024 and explore ways you can take action to make a difference.



Human Dignity

Red Dress Day in Canada (5/5)

May 5 is Red Dress Day in Canada, a day to remember and honour missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and [2SLGBTQQIA+ peoples \(MMIWG2S+\)](#). It serves as a painful reminder of the ongoing genocidal crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people and invites solidarity and action, to press the government to solve the crimes and to protect the vulnerable more effectively. Red Dress Day began as an art installation by Canadian Métis artist Jaime Black using empty red dresses to provide a striking visual reminder of the staggering number of missing and murdered Indigenous women across Canada and soon morphed into a movement. Indigenous women make up 16 percent of all femicide victims, 11 percent of all missing women, and are 6 times more likely to be murdered than their non-Indigenous counterparts. [Learn more](#). Looking to take action? Join a local march or observance, share information with others, and don't forget the power of prayer.



Human Dignity

Artistic Bridges

Artistic Bridges is a joint project with The Children's Charter for Compassion and The International Charter for Compassion. It is a global collaboration of young people ages 4-18, involving expressions of art, song, and dance. Youth possess a unique lens unfiltered by prejudice, full of creativity, pure wisdom and love, and Artistic Bridges wants to showcase it! Their hope is to bring young people from around the world together through artistic expressions of peace, love and hope. [Click here](#) for all the details and to learn how you can have young people you know participate in this special endeavor.



Peace and Nonviolence



Gaza - Let us Not Waver in Our Call for Peace

Thousands of innocent people have been killed in Gaza with over a million plus people displaced and experiencing hunger, disease, and all forms of hardship. We must not waver in our prayers and our calls to silence the weapons, bring in the aid, take care of the displaced, secure freedom

for the captives, and do the hard work of negotiating a just peace. The U.S. has a [particular responsibility](#) to make sure this gets done. We invite those in the U.S. to use our [SSND Voter Voice tool](#) to urge President Biden and members of Congress to do all they can to stop the bloodshed and move all involved to a just and lasting peace. Letters to the editor are also an effective tool for communicating messages. [Click here](#) for assistance in putting one together.

Peace and Nonviolence

The Forgotten War - Sudan

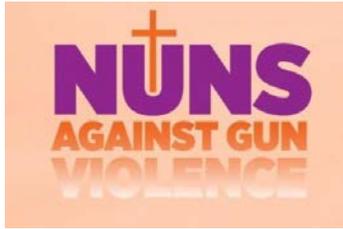
It was just over a year ago that [war broke out in Sudan](#). Tens of thousands have been killed and over 8.5 million people displaced, either within Sudan or across Sudan's borders. Reports of ethnic based targeted killing in Darfur are surfacing as are reports about [widespread hunger](#). We invite you to hold the people of Sudan



in your prayers and to consider taking action by [signing on to this petition](#). The petition, put forward by Refugees International, urges President Biden to speak out about the crisis in Sudan and to take a series of specific actions to help prevent further atrocities and loss of life.



Peace and Nonviolence



Good News - Closing the Gun Sales Loophole

For years, unlicensed gun sellers in the U.S. have been able to exploit loopholes to avoid conducting background checks on guns sold to customers, including online and gun show purchases. That loophole is being closed thanks to a new rule put forward by the Biden Administration as part of the implementation of the historic Bipartisan Safer Communities Act passed in 2022. “Expanding background checks and closing the gun seller loophole is a massive victory for safer communities — and it was made possible thanks to the tireless advocacy of our grassroots movement,” said Angela Ferrell-Zabala, executive director of Moms Demand Action. [Learn more.](#)



Peace and Nonviolence

Civilize It: Unifying a Divided Church (5/14)

Join Cardinal Robert McElroy, Bishop Robert Barron and Bishop Daniel Flores for a dialogue on May 14 at 3 pm ET (2pm CT) regarding the challenge of polarization in the Catholic Church today and the path forward. Gloria Purvis, renowned Catholic speaker and host of The Gloria Purvis Podcast from America Magazine, moderates the conversation. Learn more and register for this free webinar [here](#).



Quick Links

[Laudato Si' Action Platform](#)

[SSND Laudato Si' Reflections](#)

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

[SSND Podcast - Called to Action](#)

[SSND Action Alerts](#)

[Laudato Si' Movement](#)

[SSND International Solidarity](#)

[Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility](#)

[Reflections](#)

[SSND Shalom International Network](#)

[Alliance to End Human Trafficking](#)

[SSND at the UN](#)

[Justice for Immigrants](#)

[USCCB Action Center](#)

[Catholic Climate Covenant](#)

[Catholic Mobilizing Network](#)

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

Please only print this e-publication if necessary.

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