

APRIL 22

Earth Day



When life around the globe returns to normal, our world cannot return to business-as-usual. Our global community has been shocked by the largest global crisis in a generation. COVID-19 has shown us the necessity of thinking ahead, but the next crises are already on their way. Climate change, species loss, pandemics and massive natural disasters might define the future — unless we do something now. We have the solutions, both natural and technological... we just need the will." ([EarthDay.org](https://www.earthday.org))

Prayer For Our World
Creator God, who made our
beautiful world,
appointed us as its guardians
and gifted us with everything we
need,
forgive us
for the times we cause it harm;
for the times our way of life
affects our neighbours.
Inspire us
to care for the environment;
to help rebuild lives and
communities;
to share in the griefs and anxieties,
joys and hopes of all your people,
so that all your creation may
flourish.
Amen.

-Stephen Davies/CAFOD
(Catholic Agency for Overseas Development)

Watch the video, **Restore Our Common Home** which is produced by the Catholic Climate Covenant. It highlights what people are doing around our country to care for our Mother Earth.

Sr. Elizabeth Johnson, CSJ, recently offered a presentation at Catholic Theological Union, called **Enfolded with Affection: Imagining "Us" in Creation Theology**. It is well worth the watch.



At the Lial Renewal Center in Toledo a new sign tells all who enter the grounds about the Geothermal Energy that is produced which helps to heat and cool some of the buildings.

Laudato Si' Action Platform is Forming

Are you interested in being part of it?

As those who are passionate about Care of Creation know, Pope Francis's encyclical, *Laudato Si'*, calls all of us to care for one another and the earth. He calls it, "Integral Ecology", as we are all connected. Everything is closely interrelated and today's problems call for a vision capable of taking into account every aspect of the global crisis. (LS 137)

The Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development plans to launch a seven-year journey toward sustainability in the spirit of this very same encyclical.

The Vatican invites seven sectors of the universal church: families, parishes and dioceses, educational institutions, health care centers, the economy, organizations and groups, and religious orders to take concrete steps toward a sustainable future.

The plan outlines seven broad goals: Response to the Cry of Earth; Response to the Cry of the Poor; Ecological Economics; Simple Lifestyles; Ecological Education; Ecological Spirituality; and Community Involvement and Participatory Action that will focus our common journey.

Each religious congregation has been invited, by LCWR to identify a person or group to serve as a *Laudato Si'* Action Platform "Designee" or "Contact Person." This person or group will work with the JPIC National Office, the Global Catholic Climate Movement and Sowing Hope for the Planet to develop a plan and commit to the journey to chart the course to sustainability.

If you would like to learn more about the Dicastery's plans or the *Laudato Si'* Action Platform, we offer the following resources:

Original Vatican Brochure which describes the *Laudato Si'* Action Platform.

***Laudato Si'* Goals** and **Graphic**.

Sowing Hope for the Planet: Roll Out Plan for *Laudato Si'*, with Sheila Kinsey, FCJM, executive co-secretary for the Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Commission, a project of UISG/USG.

Realizing the Vision of *Laudato Si'*, including an explanation of the vision of the *Laudato Si'* Action Platform by Fr. Joshtrum Kureethadam of the Vatican Dicastery for Integral Human Development.

If you would like to join the SND USA JPIC National Office in this project, please email jplic@sndusa.org and let us know. We welcome your participation.



Spot Light On...



Sr. Maria Francine Stacy, SND, ministers at Notre Dame Academy in Covington as a world language teacher. She shared how she helps her students recognize and understand wealth and racial injustices in our country and the world, as well as the other areas where she shares encounters with immigrants.

I am perhaps fortunate as a world language teacher that I have a forum to talk about injustices. My goal is to bring in the UN Development goals as I teach a particular theme. I do simple things like hanging pictures of indigenous people or black persons from the Dominican Republic next to the quote, "When I saw you with my eyes, I thought we were different but when I saw you with my heart, I knew we were the same." I also have prayer flags woven by women on the Mexican border, so I begin the year by mentioning that women there have sent their prayers to shower down upon us.

When I volunteer with the Guatemalan community, I see how they have essentially no voice. Even in the church where they attend, services are provided for the English-speaking but not for the Spanish-speaking. As the community is extremely indigenous, they are very demure and submissive. I believe that I can only be a voice for them when I encourage a bit more forwardness, but they sometimes do not desire it so I respect their desire. Their dependence on God's providence is real and sincere. It is through listening that I have seen the oppressed become more convinced of their worth and have come to find their own voice.

Jan Ferguson, one of our Associates, works with the Cincinnati Immigrant Transit Association (CITA) to organize outreach of meeting people at the bus station. As immigrants from the border are heading north to rejoin their families, the travelers pause at the station to transfer buses. We hear some of their stories and give them food and encouragement on their journey. The importance of family and of sacrifice is always an apparent value. In addition, their appreciation for any attention is obvious. It seems sometimes that people of color are not anticipating loving attention, especially after having come from a border detention camp and so their appreciation is truly heartfelt, if, however, at first, hesitant.

The other group with whom I work are inmates in the Boone County Detention Center, an immigration holding center. These people see that God is working in their lives as well. However, I see much more sadness as they are preparing to separate from their families. I see the poor as accepting change because it has always been their reality. They so often have not had the power to stop tragedy from occurring in their lives so they have needed to develop a coping mechanism. Of course, this has deep roots in the way the Catholic Church encouraged the poor in Latin American to accept their fate as God's will.

It is difficult and excruciating at times to see simple and beautiful people suffer because they are poor, indigenous or just discounted individuals. The best help just may be the blessing of being able to companion someone in his/her suffering. Being a companion with a listening (and wounded) heart is sometimes harder than even being an activist. In fact, I believe listening and compassion are the keys. [at the world faces.](#)

SND USA Corporate Stance Against Racism

A Corporate Stance is the majority of Sisters desiring to respond to a particular life issue in a more unified manner with the intent to take action.

The Corporate Stance Against Racism of The Sisters of Notre Dame of the United States ends by saying, "We will practice being antiracist and work to build a more equitable society."

As a province, we are committed to determine concrete actions that our local communities, our ministries and our sponsored institutions could take to promote a more just and equitable society.

This image explains the difference between equality, equity and justice.

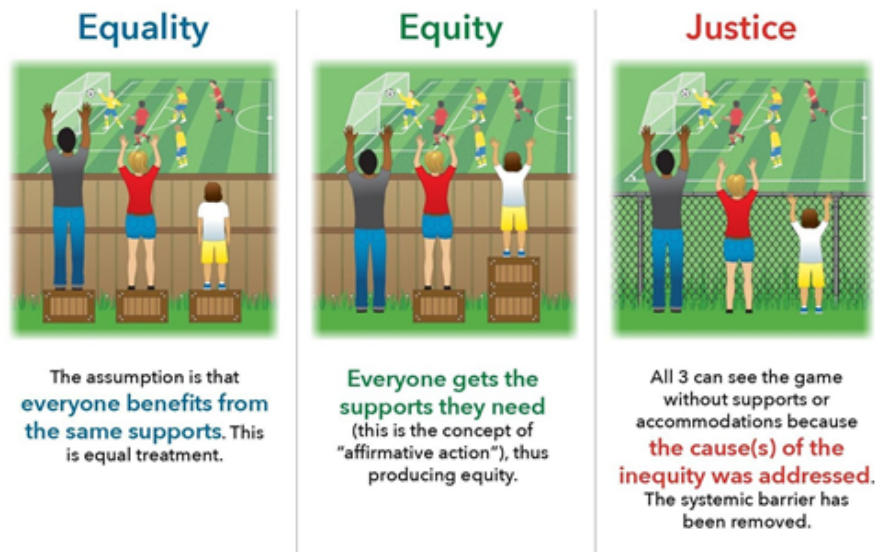


Image by Mobilize Green

As we determine other concrete actions, we keep in mind that ongoing education and discussion are crucial elements in our infusing the Corporate stance into the life of the province. Finance investor, Chairwoman of Starbucks Corporation, and president and co-CEO of money management firm Ariel Investments, Mellody Hobson said, "The first step of solving any problem is not to hide from it. The first step to any form of action is awareness." We have worked for nine months to grow in our awareness and open our eyes, minds and hearts. Mellody Hobson challenges us to be Color Brave instead of Color Blind, by inviting people into our lives who look differently, think differently, do not come from where we come from, and people who will challenge our assumptions and help us grow as individuals.

In Mellody's TED Talk, shared with the JPIC Office by Sr. Beth Anne Tercek, Mellody shares a profound story about the benefits of diversity in working together and problem solving. She talks about the smallpox epidemic, and how there were many scientists who worked to discover a cure or prevention for the disease. It was not until several cattle farmers and milkmaids pointed out that people who had contracted cowpox were protected from smallpox. This led to developing the vaccine against smallpox.

Want to view Mellody's full 14 minute TED talk (especially minutes 6:29-9:50),
[click here Color Blind or Color Brave?](#)