

# Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation News

## Congregation of the Sisters of Bon Secours

Celebrating  
Laudato Si'

3<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary



May, 2018  
Vol. 3, Number 9



**"Earth is our environment to protect and the garden to tend to."**

Pope Francis, Laudato Si'

This month as we celebrate the third anniversary of Laudato Si', we also commemorate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United Nations International Day for Biological Diversity (IDB). The United Nations commemorates this day each May 22<sup>nd</sup> to increase understanding and awareness of biodiversity issues.

Pope Francis also gives attention to biodiversity issues in the first chapter of Laudato Si' as he both celebrates the gift of diversity and laments its loss. Over these last months as we have engaged in "ecological conversion", a movement from a human-centered to Earth-centered worldview, the JPIC news has stretched us to increasingly view non-human beings as worthy of our attention and commitment as we make both large and small decisions about our lifestyle on behalf of Earth. This issue of JPIC News focuses on the impact of deforestation on biodiversity, organizations working to address this issue and what we can do to contribute to a deforestation-free future.

May  
JPIC Days of Remembrance

May 1  
**Feast of St. Joseph the Worker**  
**International Workers' Day**

May 15  
**Anniversary of Papal Encyclicals**  
**Rerum Novarum (1891)**  
**Quadragesimo Anno (1931)**  
**Mater et Magistra (1961)**

May 22  
**International Day for Biological**  
**Diversity**  
Celebrating 25 Years of Action  
for Biodiversity

May 24  
**Anniversary of Laudato Si' (2015)**

May 29  
**International Day of**  
**United Nations Peacekeepers**

"In assessing the environmental impact of any project few studies are made of its impact on biodiversity, as if the loss of species of animals and plant groups were of little importance."

Laudato Si', #35



### Pope Francis laments the loss of ...

- Forests and woodlands
- Species of fungi, algae, worms and insects
- Extinction of mammals and birds
- Wetlands
- Marine life in oceans, rivers, lakes, seas
- Coral reefs
- Ecosystems

### Because of ...

- Short-sighted approaches to the economy
- Synthetic agro-toxins
- Business interests and consumerism taking priority over nature
- Deforestation
- Proposals to internationalize the Amazon
- Uncontrolled fishing
- Sea pollution

Have you ever considered that items you use every day – paper, oil, gas, coal – come from habitats of other species...species that because of habitat disruption have become extinct or have been displaced?

**Sisters of Bon Secours...Women of healing...defending and caring for all creation (Mission Focus)**



## What Is Driving Deforestation?

- Production of beef, soy, palm oil and wood products account for the majority of tropical deforestation.
- In countries producing the majority of these products 15,000 sq. mi. of tropical lands are devastated each year.
- 10% of global warming emissions are due to deforestation.
- Converting forest to pasture for beef cattle, largely in Latin America, is responsible for destroying 2.71 million hectares of tropical forest each year.



**Palm oil** is used in countless processed foods and personal care products, as well as biofuels and vegetable oil. Produced largely in Southeast Asia, palm oil packs a powerful climate punch, not only because of the amount of land deforested annually (270,000 hectares in three leading countries), but also because much of this area includes the carbon-rich soils known as peatlands. Peatlands contain up to 28 times as much carbon as the forests above them—carbon that's released to the atmosphere when peatlands are drained for oil palm plantations. As a result, palm oil contributes the most global warming emissions of any commodity besides beef.

*Source: Union of Concerned Scientists*

*"We cannot fail to praise the commitment of international agencies & civil society organizations which draw public attention to these issues."* (Pope Francis, Laudato, St')

### Some Organizations That Are Addressing Ecological Issues

*Learn about these organizations. Websites are in English, French and Spanish.*

**Greenpeace** is a global, independent campaigning organization that uses peaceful protest and creative communication to expose global environmental problems and promote solutions that are essential to a green and peaceful future. <https://www.greenpeace.org/international/>

**The Rainforest Alliance** is a growing network of farmers, foresters, communities, scientists, governments, environmentalists, and businesses dedicated to conserving biodiversity and ensuring sustainable livelihoods. They are an international non-profit organization working to build strong forests, healthy agricultural landscapes, and thriving communities through creative, pragmatic collaboration.



The green frog logo is a symbol of environmental, social, and economic sustainability and can be found on farm and forest products around the world.

*Look at the products in your home to see if any are Rainforest Alliance Certified™.*

**Friends of Earth International** works with local communities and indigenous peoples to conserve forests, and strengthen communities' rights and community management of forests. This organization campaigns against industrial large scale plantations, monoculture, destructive logging and the commodification and financialization of forests and biodiversity. <https://www.foei.org/>

### What We Can Do to Contribute to a Deforestation-Free Future

- Make sure that the forest-derived products you buy are made from 100 percent post-consumer content materials.
- Make informed food choices. Eating a plant-based diet or reducing your consumption of animal products like meat and dairy can help save forests.
- Buy from companies that have a commitment to reducing deforestation through forest-friendly policies. If you are buying products made from virgin forest fiber, make sure that it bears a seal from a credible forestry certification system, like the Forest Stewardship Council.
- Avoid products that include palm oil.

### International Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation Committee

- Sr. Teresa Margot Benites Montero, CBS (Peru)
- Sr. Fran Gorsuch, CBS (USA)
- Sr. Mary Beth Hamm, SSJ Co-chair
- Sr. Mary Leamy, CBS (Ireland)
- Sr. Anne Marie Mack, CBS (USA) Chair
- Sr. Noelia Lara Núñez, CBS (Peru)
- Sr. Marguerite Provost, CBS (France)
- Sr. Alice Talone, CBS (USA)
- Sr. Katherine Tierney, CBS (Ireland)
- Sr. Yolanda Morales Valiente, CBS (Peru)
- Sr. Chris Webb, CBS (USA)

### Thank You from Pax Christi International for Congregation of Bon Secours Donation

Dear Sr. Pat,

On behalf of everyone at Pax Christi International, I would like to thank you and your congregation for the generous gift in support of our Catholic Nonviolence Initiative, in particular for the meeting of Latin American theologians to reflect on the intersection between nonviolence and liberation theology. We will keep you informed on the outcomes of this gathering.

Over the past year, I have been truly moved by all the support for our Catholic Nonviolence Initiative, which hopes to ensure that the Catholic Church fully commits its resources and capacity to the promotion of Gospel nonviolence. This goal is more important now than ever.

Member organizations like the Sisters of Bon Secours of Paris are vital members of our global peace movement; I look forward to strengthening this relationship.

In peace,

Greet Vanaerschot  
Secretary General, Pax Christi International

