

# Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation News

## Congregation of the Sisters of Bon Secours



### International Mother Earth Day Edition

April, 2017  
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Let us be protectors of creation, protectors of God's plan inscribed in nature, protectors of one another and the environment. Pope Francis

On Earth Day, 2016 world leaders from 175 nations signed the Paris Agreement. This non-binding agreement provides an opportunity for countries to strengthen the global response to climate change by keeping a global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5 degrees Celsius. Each country is responsible for setting their own targets to reach this goal.

One year later countries around the world are taking positive steps to address climate change. This issue of JPIC News highlights both the havoc climate change continues to wreak on our planet as well as some laudatory efforts being taken to protect and defend our common home, Earth.

#### Significant Climate Events in 2016

- Europe experienced its 3<sup>rd</sup> warmest year, behind 2014 and 2015 making the past three years the warmest in the 107 year record.
- Asia observed its 3<sup>rd</sup> warmest year on record behind 2015 (the warmest) and 2007 (2<sup>nd</sup> warmest).
- 2016 was the warmest year for North America since records began in 1910.
- The Atlantic Hurricane season spawned above average activity: 15 storms and 7 hurricanes.
- Southern Africa experienced two consecutive poor rainy seasons (2014 – 2015 and 2015 -2016) leading to serious drought and substantial agricultural losses.
- On May 19, 2016 Phalodi, India reached a temperature of 51°C, becoming the highest temperature on record for the country.
- The Arctic had its smallest sea ice extent for a second year in a row.

Source: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

- On March 17, 2017 sixty-seven people were killed and thousands more forced to evacuate by intense rains which damaged 115,000 homes and destroyed more than 100 bridges in Peru's worst floods in recent memory.



"The poor and most vulnerable must not suffer further from a problem they did not create."

Ban Ki-moon



Extreme weather in Peru, March 2017

April  
JPIC Days of Remembrance

April 7  
World Health Day

<http://www.who.int/campaigns/world-health-day/2017/en/>

April 22  
Mother Earth Day



April 23 – 24  
Holocaust Remembrance Day

April 24 – 30  
World Immunization Week

<http://www.who.int/campaigns/immunization-week/2017/en/>

April 25  
World Malaria Day

<http://www.who.int/campaigns/malaria-day/2017/en/>

# On Being a Good Global Citizen...Caring for Creation

- Kenya is the most recent country in Africa to ban the use of plastic bags. Cameroon, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Tanzania, Uganda, Ethiopia, Mauritania and Malawi are among the countries that have adopted or announced such bans.
- In 2009 Copenhagen, Denmark set a goal to become the world's first carbon neutral capital by 2025. Copenhagen has focused on reducing energy consumption by using an energy-efficient district heating system that connects to nearly every household and innovative cooling systems that save around 70% of the energy compared to traditional air conditioning.
- Vancouver, Canada has committed to getting 100 percent of its energy from renewable sources by 2050.
- Singapore has taken steps toward sustainability by cultivating the concept of meaningful transportation — that is, only using the modes that are completely necessary. This philosophy has restricted car ownership among Singaporeans, resulting in both reduced pollution and crowding.
- In 2016 Paris halved the use of coal in its extensive district heating network, and now powers 50 % of the heating network with renewable and recovered energy.
- Rio de Janeiro, Brazil has launched its 50-year Neutral Carbon Rio Strategy to achieve carbon neutrality by 2065, putting the city on a low-carbon, resilient, and inclusive path to development.
- Bogota is the first city in Colombia to implement the Green Hospital Program, which aims to improve the environmental performance of its public hospitals by adopting alternative sources of energy and environmentally responsible practices. Bogotá is calculating the carbon footprint of its affiliated hospitals in order to establish a benchmark level for carbon reduction as well as mitigation strategies.
- *We Mean Business* is a coalition of organizations working with thousands of the world's most influential businesses and investors to take leadership on climate action. 991 companies have committed to actions such as: adopting science-based emission reduction targets, transitioning to 100% renewable electricity and improving energy efficiency.

Source: EcoWatch



“The era of consumption without consequences is over.”

Ban Ki-moon



We must not think these efforts are not going to change the world.

Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*

## Prayer for Earth

All-powerful God,  
 you are present in the whole universe and in  
 the smallest of your creatures.  
 You embrace with your tenderness  
 all that exists.  
 Pour out upon us the power of your love,  
 that we may protect life and beauty.  
 Fill us with peace, that we may live  
 as brothers and sisters, harming no one.  
 O God of the poor,  
 help us to rescue the abandoned and  
 forgotten of this earth,  
 so precious in your eyes.  
 Bring healing to our lives, that we may protect  
 the world and not prey on it,  
 that we may sow beauty  
 not pollution and destruction.  
 Touch the hearts of those who look only for  
 gain at the expense of the  
 poor and the earth.  
 Teach us to discover the worth of each thing,  
 to be filled with awe and contemplation,  
 to recognize that we are profoundly united  
 with every creature  
 as we journey towards your infinite light.  
 We thank you for being with us each day.  
 Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle  
 for justice, love and peace.  
 Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*

While we celebrate the many efforts taking place to address climate change around the world, the Sisters of Bon Secours in the United States are gravely concerned about some recent actions by the new Administration concerning the ecological health of Earth. Climate change deniers have been appointed to the Cabinet, funding for the Environmental Protection Agency has been reduced by 30% in the proposed Federal Budget, environmental protections have been deregulated, and the U.S. commitment to the Paris Agreement is in question. In February 125 Catholic leaders, including **Sr. Rose Marie Jasinski**, signed a letter to President Trump and Congress urging our officials to exercise strong leadership and help transition the United States away from its reliance on fossil fuels towards a clean and renewable energy future characterized by justice and peace “with God, with our neighbor and with Earth itself” (LS #66).



## Reflection

How is your country addressing climate change?  
 What impetus has *Laudato Si'* given you to change your  
 lifestyle and to decrease your emissions?

## What We Can Do Together

- Calculate your carbon footprint and take steps to reduce it.
- Create and/or participate in a creation care team in your parish or place of ministry.
- Advocate for environmental policies that protect water, air, soil and climate.
- Learn about efforts in your own country that are addressing climate change.

## 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)