

Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation News

Congregation of the Sisters of Bon Secours

Advent Edition

"From the beginning of the world,
but particularly through the
Incarnation,
the mystery of Christ is at work
in a hidden manner
in the natural world as a whole."

(Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'* #99)



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In the spirit of the Advent season we are called to pay attention to the signs of our times, to resist despair, to live with hope and to use our personal gifts to work for justice and peace. We heed the words of John the Baptist to re-form our lives, our attitudes and our hearts. In the encyclical *Laudato Si'* Pope Francis calls us to a very specific area of reform and names it "ecological conversion".

Pope Francis challenges us to turn away from an anthropocentric relationship with Earth to an eco-centric one, a relationship that is Earth-centered and one that values all of creation as an expression of God. This issue of JPIC News offers us an opportunity during this Advent season to reflect on the Sunday scripture themes in light of our "vocation to be protectors of God's handiwork...recognizing that every effort to protect and improve our world will entail profound changes in lifestyle." (LS #5, #217) We pray for the grace to be open to and commit to these changes.

December JPIC Days of Remembrance

December 1
World AIDS Day

December 2
Anniversary of the Deaths of
Maura Clark, Ita Ford, Dorothy
Kazel and Jean Donovan

International Day
for the Abolition of Slavery

December 10
Human Rights Day

December 18
International Migrants' Day

December 20
International Human Solidarity
Day



Advent – Week 1: Be watchful! Be alert! Be aware!

Be watchful: Every effort to protect and improve our world entails profound changes in lifestyles, models of production and consumption. (LS #5)

Be alert: The Universe as a whole, in all its manifold relationships, shows forth the inexhaustible riches of God. (LS #86)

Be aware: We lack an awareness of our common origin, of our mutual belonging, and of a future to be shared with everyone." (LS #202)

During this first week of Advent, pray with this image of Earth. Ask for the grace to be truly aware of and live from the oneness this image of Earth represents.

What change in lifestyle can you commit to this Advent for the sake of the world God so loves?

A misguided anthropocentrism leads to a
misguided lifestyle.
When human beings
place themselves at the center,
they give absolute priority to immediate
convenience and all else becomes relative. LS #122



Anthropocentrism



Eco-centrism

Notice instances of anthropocentric thinking, relating and acting in personal, national and world situations this month.

In what ways does an anthropocentric worldview misguide your lifestyle?



Advent – Week 2: Prepare the way of the Lord... Repent

Our goal is to become painfully aware, to turn what is happening to the world into our own personal suffering and thus to discover what each of us can do about it. (LS #19)

A healthy relationship with creation is one dimension of overall personal conversion, which entails the recognition of our errors, sins, faults and failures, and leads to heartfelt repentance and desire to change. (LS #218)

As you reflect on your relationship with the natural world, for what do you need to repent?
Patterns of consumption? Waste? Consumerism? Contributing to emissions?
Supporting the privatization of water? Something else?



If we want to help change history
and promote real development,
we need to hear the cry of the poor
and commit ourselves
to ending their marginalization.

(Pope Francis, Message for World Day of the Poor, 2017)

Developing countries, where the most important reserves of the biosphere are found, continue to fuel the development of richer countries at the cost of their own present and future. (LS #52)

Most often the “glad tidings” we bring to poor people is in the form of charity. Let this quote also stir you to action in the form of advocacy on behalf of poor people. Be alert to legislation in your country that favors the most vulnerable and support it.



Advent – Week 4:

**Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord.
May it be done to me according to your word.**

Mary, the Mother who cared for Jesus, now cares with maternal affection and pain for this wounded world. She treasures the entire life of Jesus in her heart and now understands the meaning of all things. Hence, we can ask her to enable us to look at this world with eyes of wisdom. (LS #241)

**How has your Advent reflection on Laudato Si’ affected you? Challenged you?
What will be your graced response?**

Signs of Hope for Earth

- At least 15 countries have joined an alliance against coal use at the United Nations climate change negotiations which took place in Bonn, Germany a few weeks ago. The alliance was initiated by Canada, the UK and the Marshall Islands. Current members also include Denmark, Finland, Italy, France, the Netherlands, Portugal, Belgium, Switzerland, New Zealand, Ethiopia, and Mexico but the goal is to sign up at least 50 countries by the 2018 UN climate summit. Major coal users like China, the US, Russia, and Germany have not joined. China, however, has put forward an ambitious plan for solar energy, as has India.
- A total of 20 U.S. states, 110 U.S. cities, and more than 1,400 businesses have pledged to cut their fossil-fuel emissions to ensure the U.S. meets its commitment under the Paris Climate Agreement—even if the Trump administration acts on its intention to withdraw the U.S. This group of American cities, states, and businesses who remain committed to the Paris Agreement represents a bigger economy than any nation outside the U.S. and China.



Coal plants are a primary source of carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions, the primary cause of global warming. Burning coal is also a leading cause of smog, acid rain, and toxic air pollution.

We Are Still In is a United States network of more than 2,580 mayors, governors, CEOs, faith-based groups and college presidents that are committed to supporting climate action to help meet the U.S. emission reduction targets under the Paris Agreement. The Sisters of Bon Secours are part of this network



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