

Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation News

Congregation of the Sisters of Bon Secours



Ecological Conversion

All Christians need an 'ecological conversion', whereby the effects of their encounter with Jesus Christ become evident in their relationship with the world around them. (Pope Francis)

One year ago this month the Congregation of Bon Secours embarked on a journey of "ecological conversion" in response to Pope Francis' invitation to us in *Laudato Si'*. Over these months we have learned that an ecological conversion calls us to turn away from our well established human-centered worldview (anthropocentric) and to turn toward a worldview that is Earth-centered (eco-centric). This gradual shift will enable us to increasingly see our human species as a *part of* creation rather than *separate from* creation. It will assist us in our desires to relate to and behave toward creation in more mutually enhancing ways thus, truly living our mission focus "to defend and care for all creation".

While conversion happens over a lifetime, it's good to step back every now and then to assess where I/we are on this journey of "ecological conversion". The content of this JPIC News will offer "a year in review" as we revisit some quotes and reflection questions from the past twelve issues of the newsletter. Notice and rejoice in your own growth over these twelve months as you pray with and use this edition of JPIC News.



Anthropocentrism



Eco-centrism

An **anthropocentric worldview** is human-centered. The Earth and all her resources are first and foremost for the benefit of humans. Decisions are made with humans in mind and often for human convenience. (Eg. Single use of paper & plastic, bottled water, fossil fuels, etc.)

**Which of your behaviors support a human-centered worldview?
What is your personal "next step" to live the Bon Secours mission focus:
"to defend and care for all creation?"**

An **eco-centric worldview** is Earth centered. All living & non-living beings are at the center of our concerns. Decisions are made with all these in mind.

How has your worldview shifted to an eco-centric one during these past 12 months?

"In sum, **ecological conversion** means falling in love with Earth as an inherently valuable, living community in which we participate and bending every effort to be creatively faithful to its well-being, in tune with the living God who brought it into being and cherishes It with unconditional love."

—Ask the Beasts, Sister Elizabeth Johnson

In what ways is the Congregation of Bon Secours being "creatively faithful" to tending to Earth?



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October
JPIC Days of Remembrance

October 1
World Habitat Day

October 4
Feast of St. Francis of Assisi
World Animal Day

October 11
International Day of the
Girl Child

October 16
World Food Day

October 17
International Day for the
Eradication of Poverty

October 24
United Nations Day

October 24 – 30
Disarmament Week



The Great Work now,
 as we move into a new millennium,
 is to carry out the transition
 from a period
 of human devastation of Earth
 to a period when humans would
 be present to the planet
 in a mutually beneficial manner.

Thomas Berry, "The Great Work," in *The Great Work*, 3)

Some questions to ponder:

- How does Earth benefit from the type of electricity/heating/air-conditioning I use in my home?
- How does Earth benefit from my level of consumerism?
- How does Earth benefit from the amount of meat, particularly beef, that I eat?
- How does Earth benefit from the cleaning products I use?
- How does Earth benefit from the amount of water I consume?

Each year hundreds of millions of tons of waste are generated, much of it non-biodegradable. Earth, our home, is beginning to look more and more like an immense pile of filth. Pope Francis

Plastic Production

According to an article by the BBC:

- 8.3 billion metric tons of non-recycled plastic has been produced to date.
- Generating 6.3 billion metric tons of plastic waste.
- 9% of that waste has been recycled; 12% has been incinerated and 79% has accumulated in landfills and the natural environment.
- 12 billion metric tons will enter landfills or the environment by 2050 if current production and waste management trends continue.

Source: Earth Day Network



Becoming Aware of Plastic Usage

Notice how many plastic products are in your home: packaging for food, cleaning products and personal care products; straws, storage containers, plastic bags and other plastic items.

Do you know where these end up when you are finished using them? Are there alternatives for the plastic products you use? Are there ways you can re-use these?

What are you doing to decrease your use of plastic?

Rights of Mother Earth

In 2010 Bolivia hosted a gathering for climate justice advocates called the *World People's Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth*.

Out of this conference came a call to protect nature by recognizing her rights and thus the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Mother Earth was developed.

The Rights of Mother Earth are a call to abandon the dominant anthropocentric worldview and to imagine a new Earth society. These rights are based on the indigenous premise that asks: If we are all part of Mother Earth, why do some beings enjoy protection and privileges, while others are relegated to the status of things? This is a relevant question for all of us to ponder.

The Universal Declaration of the Rights of Mother Earth

Mother Earth and all beings of which she is composed have the following inherent rights:

- the right to life and to exist;
- the right to be respected;
- the right to regenerate its bio-capacity and to continue its vital cycles and processes free from human disruptions;
- the right to maintain its identity and integrity as a distinct, self-regulating and interrelated being;
- the right to not have its genetic structure modified or disrupted in a manner that threatens its integrity or healthy functioning;
- the right to water as a source of life; the right to clean air;
- the right to integral health;
- the right to be free from contamination, pollution and toxic or radioactive waste

How are these rights a way of protecting and defending all creation, the mission focus of Bon Secours?

How do these Rights of Mother Earth stretch and challenge the ways you think about Earth, relate to Earth and behave toward Earth?



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)

The International JPIC Committee held its in-person meeting in Paris from September 7 -9. Outcomes of this meeting included recommendations for each country to live out our commitment to defend creation, strengthening our relationship with Pax Christi International and UNANIMA, and recruiting help from our sisters and others as we advance the work of justice, especially our Chapter calls, in each country. If you are "radically available" to assist the members of the JPIC Committee, please contact your country committee member.