

Shalom News North America



An instrument of hope, formation, and action concerning priority matters of social justice.

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November 2023

Dear Tim,

In the encyclical *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis emphasizes that the social and ecological challenges of our day are interrelated (integral ecology). As you read through this month's newsletter, and the social and ecological concerns it highlights, consider how these concerns are related to the [Laudato Si' Goals](#) and SSND becoming a [Laudato Si' Congregation](#).



[School Sisters of Notre Dame](#)

Shalom North America Contacts

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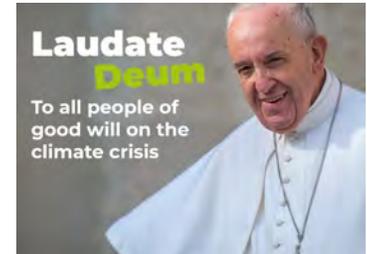
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Integrity of Creation

Laudate Deum (Praise God)

In his Apostolic Exhortation *Laudate Deum*, Pope Francis calls for brisk action against the climate crisis and condemns climate change denial. He sees that eight years after the publication of *Laudato Si'*, the reactions and the steps taken have proved to be largely insufficient. The world is not moving fast enough to mitigate the devastating effects of climate change which refers to long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns, mainly caused by human activities, especially the burning of fossil fuels.



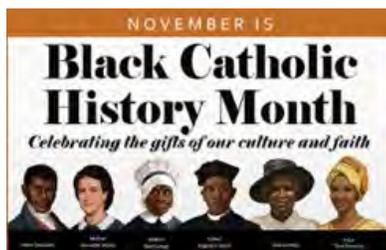
In recognition of the upcoming UN Climate Change Conference (COP 28), the document stresses the need to work boldly in meaningful global cooperation to address the crisis. As Pope Francis states in paragraph 56, this will require us to “move beyond the mentality of appearing to be concerned but not having the courage needed to produce substantial changes.” Pope Francis appeals to all people of good will to act and recall our responsibility to care for all God's creation. “Although the measures that we can take now are costly, the cost will be all the more burdensome the longer we wait.”

For further reflection on *Laudate Deum*, you are invited to: download [the full 11-page document](#); review [this infographic](#); explore [this webpage](#); embrace [this *Laudate Deum* inspired prayer](#); explore these [additional resources](#); and consider taking the [Laudate Deum Action Pledge](#).



Reconnects: Eucharistic Eating and the Global Food Crisis. No need to register. Just click on [this ZOOM link](#) a few minutes before the start of the event. (Meeting ID: 818 5344 2557 Passcode: yqjC0)

Human Dignity



National Black Catholic History Month

Black Catholic History Month was initiated by the National Black Catholic Clergy Caucus of the United States in 1990 as a time to celebrate the long history and proud heritage of Black Catholics. The designation of November as Black Catholic History Month reflects the fact that several important dates to Catholics of

African descent fell within the month, including the feast day of St. Martin de Porres (11/3), the first Black American Saint, and the birthday of St. Augustine (11/13), the first Doctor of the Church from North Africa. Resources for embracing Black Catholic History Month include [this packet](#), [this resource page](#), [this website](#), and many other online and diocesan sources.



Human Dignity

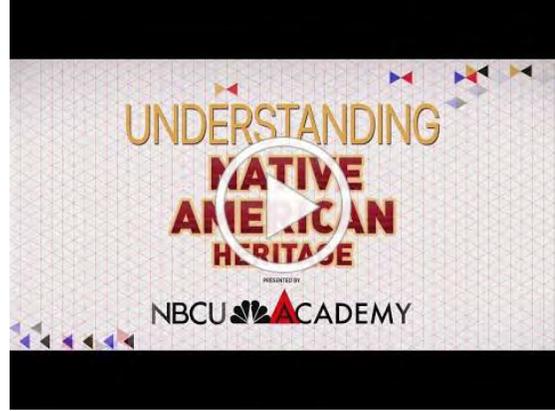


Native American Heritage Month

November is Native American Heritage Month in the United States. (June is National Indigenous History Month in [Canada](#).) The [Smithsonian](#) offers several online events, resources, exhibitions, and podcasts. Let us take this opportunity to learn about the unique cultures, traditions, and experiences of

Native Americans and honor their stories, achievements, and resilience.

Explore the [Native Knowledge 360° Education Initiative](#).



Human Dignity

Migrants and Refugees

In a Synod reflection on October 19, [Pope Francis called for](#) the reform of immigration policies to increase regular, legal channels for migration. He said, we must put "the most vulnerable at the center" of such efforts. He also noted the "need to multiply our efforts to combat the criminal networks that exploit the hopes and dreams of migrants."

Pope Francis reinforced that "it is also necessary to promote a common and co-responsible approach to the governance of migration flows, which appear set to increase in the coming years. Welcoming, protecting, promoting and integrating: this is the work we must carry out."

Pope Francis also highlighted the need to take note and address the dangers so many migrants encounter on their journey. With that in mind, you are invited to attend a virtual vigil on **November 2** (at 3 pm Eastern) in recognition of the many migrants who tragically died this past year while crossing the U.S./Mexico Border. [Click here](#) to register.



Human Dignity

[Justice for Immigrants Action Alert](#)



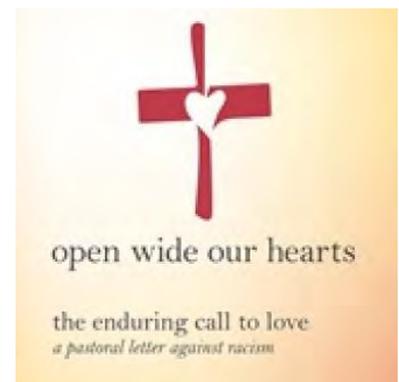
Much is at stake as the U.S. Congress continues to debate federal funding for Fiscal Year (FY) 2024, including the United States' fundamental commitment to humanitarian protection. If either full-year appropriations or the stopgap funding measure known as a “continuing resolution” is not passed by the extended deadline of midnight on November 17th, a partial shutdown of the federal government will occur, impacting many programs and services relied upon by citizens and non-citizens alike.

Use the [SSND Voter Voice Tool](#) to join with other people of faith in calling for bipartisan cooperation in Congress to avoid a government shutdown and enact a just budget that reduces future unsustainable deficits, protects poor and vulnerable people, advances the common good, and promotes human life and dignity—without sacrificing vital humanitarian protections.

Human Dignity

Open Wide Our Hearts - 5 Year Anniversary

It has been five years since the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) published their pastoral letter against racism, *Open Wide our Hearts, The Enduring Call to Love*, on November 14, 2018. Clearly racism still profoundly affects cultures in the U.S. and throughout the world. We therefore invite you to take some time this month to read (or re-read) and reflect on the statement in light of the current signs of the times. How are you/we called to respond? Follow these links to download the [document](#) and [study guide](#). Consider making use of these [Practical Steps for Eradicating Racism](#) and the [Prayer to Overcome Racism](#) put forward by the USCCB's Ad Hoc Committee on Racism.



Human Dignity



World Day of the Poor (11/19)

Pope Francis tells us in his message for the seventh World Day of the Poor that “Everyone is our neighbor...We are called to acknowledge every poor person and every form of poverty, abandoning the indifference and the banal excuses we make to protect our illusory well-being. We cannot look away from the poor, for that

would prevent us from encountering the face of the Lord Jesus.” [Read Francis' full message here](#). Reference [these resources](#) from CAFOD (Catholic Agency for Overseas Development).



Human Dignity

World Toilet Day (11/19)

This day draws attention to the global sanitation crisis and reminds us that access to water and sanitation are human rights closely tied to human dignity and human health. Consider the vulnerability and shame experienced every day by people who don't have access to safe and reliable sanitary facilities. Access to safe toilets is key to meeting Sustainable Development Goal 6 ([SDG 6](#)) - safe sanitation and water for all by 2030. Learn more and review steps you can take to make a difference [here](#). Also, consider reading and reflecting upon the SSND Shalom International Solidarity Reflection for November [Solidarity with the Vulnerable](#).





Human Dignity



The Alliance to End Human Trafficking

The Alliance to End Human Trafficking, formerly US Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking, celebrated 10 years since the organization's founding at its annual conference held in Skokie, Illinois. The conference officially announced the organization's new name, the Alliance to End Human Trafficking, and recognized Margaret Nacke, CSJ and Ann Scholz, SSND as founders of

the organization. Speakers focused on both the reality of human trafficking and the advocacy necessary to end it. Further information is available at the alliance [website](#). SSND is a congregational member of this initiative.



Peace and Nonviolence



The Israel/Gaza Crisis

Of course, we stand with all the victims. "Israel has the right to defend itself" is a general, true statement. But it is totally inadequate in view of the extreme subsequent attacks and humanitarian crisis. We risk supporting war crimes and genocide. Pope Francis pleads for us to take only one side, that of peace. "My thoughts go to Palestine and Israel. The victims increase, and the situation in Gaza is desperate." He

calls for prayer and fasting for people of all faiths, for the silencing of guns and avoidance of “a humanitarian catastrophe” in Gaza. “Listen to the cry of the poor, of the people, of the children. . . . War does not resolve any problem. It only sows death and destruction. It increases hate War cancels the future!”

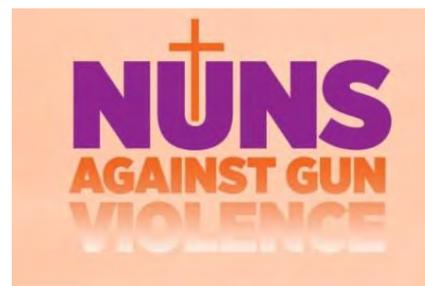
The School Sisters of Notre Dame (both the Atlantic-Midwest and Central Pacific Provinces) were among a group of Catholic organizations that sent [this letter to President Biden](#) urging him to call for a ceasefire, humanitarian aid, and negotiations for a just and lasting peace. Let your voice be heard using the [SSND Voter Voice Tool](#) and consider signing on to [the Statement of Solidarity with Israel/Palestine](#).

Did you know that the United Nations observes an International Day in Solidarity with the Palestinian People on November 29? Learn more [here](#)

Peace and Nonviolence

Gun Violence

The shooting in Lewiston, Maine was the 565th mass shooting in the United States this year and the deadliest one yet, with 18 people killed and 13 wounded, several still in critical condition. As with so many of these events, the weapon of choice was an assault-style rifle, a military-grade firearm designed to kill as many people as quickly as possible. Nuns Against Gun Violence (of which SSND is a member) issued [a statement](#) that included the following...



“As people of faith, we believe in prayer, understanding it is not an empty, pious slogan but a practice that compels action for the common good: Prayer that sustains us in the hard work of advocacy for local and federal gun legislation. Prayer that manifests in support for the healing of survivors. Prayer that enlightens the minds and stirs the hearts of recalcitrant legislators that have failed to act for too long. Prayer that aligns our energies with God’s desire for the safety, security, and flourishing of all life.”

Join Nuns Against Gun Violence for a webinar [Beating Guns: Hope for People Who Are Weary of Violence](#) on November 8, use our [SSND Voter Voice Tool](#) to let your voice be heard, and consider participating in an upcoming [end gun violence vigil](#).

Peace and Nonviolence

Bread Not Stones Campaign

Pax Christi USA’s Bread Not Stones campaign - which advocates for a transformation from a militaristic economy to



one that supports human needs - has a new sign-on statement especially for Catholic bishops in the United States. Participation is easy. Just use the campaign materials to reach out to your bishop to urge him to add his name to the new Pax Christi USA Bread Not Stones bishops' sign-on statement. The campaign is built on the recognition that too many Church and religious leaders of all stripes have

remained silent in response to the scandal of unfettered military spending. [Learn more/take action.](#)

Peace and Nonviolence

Eliminate Violence Against Women

The International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women (11/25) will mark the launch of the UNiTE campaign — an initiative of 16 days of activism concluding on International Human Rights Day (12/10). Managed by UN Women, UNiTE calls on governments, civil society, women's organizations, young people, the private sector, media, and the UN system to join forces to address the global pandemic of violence against women and girls. The global theme of this year's 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence is "[UNITE! Invest to prevent violence against women and girls](#)". Support the campaign by wearing the white ribbon during the 16-day period: A white ribbon is a symbol of peace and symbolizes the commitment of the wearer to never commit or condone violence against women and children. [Learn more.](#)



Quick Links

[Laudato Si' Action Platform](#)

[SSND Laudato Si' Reflections](#)

[Education for Justice - SSND Link/Password](#)

[SSND Podcast - *Called to Action*](#)

[SSND Action Alerts](#)

[Exploring Intersections - Racism, Migration, and Climate](#)

[SSND International Solidarity Reflections](#)

[Laudato Si' Movement](#)

[Alliance to End Human Trafficking](#)

[Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility](#)

[Justice for Immigrants](#)

[SSND Shalom International Network](#)

[Catholic Climate Covenant](#)

[SSND at the UN](#)

[Catholic Mobilizing Network](#)

[USCCB Action Center](#)

The SSND Shalom Network witnesses to the Gospel with audacity and

hope as we collaborate to build just relationships and respond to the urgent needs of our times.



Shalom News North America is an e-publication of the Shalom North America Contacts (SNAC) of the School Sisters of Notre Dame - Barb Paleczny SSND, Colleen Kammer, Ethel Howley SSND, Pat Stortz, and Tim Dewane. Your feedback and suggestions are always welcomed. Email us at tdewane@ssndcp.org.

Please only print this e-publication if necessary.

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