

Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation News

Congregation of the Sisters of Bon Secours



Climate Change:

The Global Reality & The Bon Secours Response

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"The gravity of the ecological crisis demands that we all look to the common good... which demands patience, self-discipline and generosity."

Pope Francis, Laudato Si, #201

Over this past year the Congregation of Bon Secours embraced Pope Francis' challenge to undergo an "ecological conversion". In these past 12 months we have prayed with, reflected on and discussed with each other the ecological content in the monthly JPIC News. Hopefully, these practices stimulated our thinking and opened our minds and hearts to view our planet from a more Earth-centered, rather than human-centered worldview. Ultimately, we desire to relate to Earth in more mutually beneficial ways. In last month's JPIC News we were invited to look back and assess where I/we are on this journey toward "ecological conversion".

While we were assessing our own growth in conversion, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change was doing its own assessment of our planet's health. The report they issued on October 8th is deeply unsettling to us who have pledged to "defend and care for all creation". In short, we have 12 years to avert a global climate catastrophe. The report calls for "rapid, far-reaching and unprecedented changes in all aspects of society." Our 2014 Chapter Call and all our attention to Earth since that time have prepared us for this moment. What does God need us, Women of Healing, to do now in light of the IPCC report?

IPCC Climate Change Report Raises Dire Warning

The United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) announced that pledges from the world's governments to reduce greenhouse gases, made in Paris in 2015, aren't enough to keep global warming from rising more than 1.5°C above pre-industrial temperatures. Their new report laid out the difficulty in stark detail: it would require a 40-50 percent reduction in emissions by 2030 (global emissions are currently rising). It would mean a carbon-neutral world — one with no net additional greenhouse gases in the atmosphere — by 2050. They now say that scenario is very unlikely without new measures and technologies to remove greenhouse gases from the air, some of which have yet to be invented. Keeping warming to 1.5°C will be really hard. But the IPCC report also makes it clear that the world has the scientific understanding, the technological capacity and the financial means to tackle climate change. Now what we need is the political will to precipitate the unprecedented concerted actions necessary to stabilize temperature rise below 1.5 C.

Source: NPR

Reflection

Each of us has a carbon footprint and it appears we can no longer be afforded the privilege of not knowing what ours is.

Go online and search "Carbon Calculator" to learn about your contribution to CO2 emissions.

If we have 12 years to avert an irreversible climate catastrophe – which will require a 40-50% reduction in emissions by 2030 – what sacrifices must each of us make and must our Congregation make to help prevent this disaster?

November
JPIC Days of Remembrance

November 3
St. Martin dePorres
Patron of Race Relations

November 9
Birthday of Rev. Thomas Berry



November 13
St. Frances Xavier Cabrini
Patron of Immigrants

November 19
World Day of the Poor

November 25
International Day for
Elimination of Violence
Against Women

November 29
International Day of Solidarity
with the Palestinian People

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

What We Must Do

While the main focus of the IPCC report is on the decisions facing governments around the world there is a role individuals and organizations can play in averting this pending disaster.

Collective action: Experts say people need to unite if the scale of this challenge is to be met, making the political space for politicians and big businesses to make the necessary changes. Form movements – or join existing groups – that can “push for changes big enough to matter”, from city-wide renewable energy programs to large-scale divestment from fossil fuels. **What would a collective action from the global Bon Secours Family look like?**

Eat less meat – particularly beef: Avoiding meat is the single biggest way to reduce your environmental impact on the planet. **Is this a sacrifice you are willing to make? What if we all made a choice to eat less meat and engaged our friends, family and others to join us?**

Insulate homes: Relatively simple measures such as insulating homes and draft-proofing doors and windows on a large scale would see a big drop in energy consumption.

Alternative forms of Energy: Switch to renewable energy wherever possible. **What are the options for wind, solar or geothermal energy in your country?**

Transport: Walk, cycle or use public transport where possible. If you need to go by car, consider an electric one or hybrid.

Reduce, refuse, recycle, reuse: Buy fewer things and consume less. Recycle wherever possible and – even better – reuse things. Demand a low carbon option in everything you consume.

Vote: Many experts – including the IPCC – say there is still a chance to create a sustainable, cleaner and more equal global system. Individuals can hold politicians to account by supporting political parties and candidates that put the environment at the heart of their economic and industrial policies.

However, the IPCC is clear that the real challenge from its report is to politicians, political systems and corporations rather than individuals.

Source: *The Guardian*

What “patience, self-discipline and generosity” will it take to embrace these actions?

Some Businesses That Are Making Positive Changes



Ikea: Invested €1.7 billion into renewable energy projects; plans to build 416 turbines and has already installed 750,000 solar panels on Ikea buildings; will ban single-use plastic products from its businesses by 2020, wants to purchase 100% renewable energy by 2020 and use only renewable and recycled materials in its products by the same year.



Unilever: According to GlobeScan and SustainAbility, Unilever is the global corporate leader in environmental sustainability. Positive contributions include ensuring that all of its agricultural materials come from sustainable sources by 2020; eliminating single use plastic packaging in the United Kingdom, where possible, by 2025; becoming carbon positive by 2030, i.e. eliminating the use of fossil fuels, and generating more renewable energy than it consumes.



Nestle: Committed to using 100% responsibly sourced palm oil by 2020, and to blacklist companies that do not comply with its policies. It will use satellite technology to ensure no deforestation is taking place in its supply chain.

Other Companies include: Seventh Generation, Panasonic, Patagonia, IBM and Adobe.

Sources: *CNN Business and Virgin.com*



It is the desire of the members of the International JPIC Committee that all of us engage the monthly JPIC News. This means not only reading it but praying with it, digesting it, talking about it in local community and clusters and most of all taking action.

12 Years to Stop This



International Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation Committee

Sr. Teresa Margot Benites Montero, CBS (Peru)
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