

Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation News

Congregation of the Sisters of Bon Secours

Plastic



June, 2020
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Each year hundreds of millions of tons of waste are generated... This problem is closely linked to a throwaway culture which quickly reduces things to rubbish.

Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'* #21. #22

Truth be told, we are personally and collectively addicted to plastic on a global scale. Many times this is because we opt for convenience but almost always our choice to use plastic is beyond our control. If we look around the house we will discover that every room contains multiple plastic items: combs, toothbrushes, hangers, plastic coated electric cords and more. We have plastic packaging for everything: food, personal care items and cleaning products to name just a few. Even this newsletter is being produced using a plastic keyboard and a plastic mouse!

Yet, the Sisters of Bon Secours have made a commitment to eliminate single-use plastics and reduce the use of other types of plastics. Pope Francis suggests that changes in our throw-away lifestyle are not possible without first having an interior conversion. Over these past five years since *Laudato Si'* was promulgated, how have you been changed and what new Earth-friendly behaviors have you adopted because of it? Allow this issue of JPIC News to foster continued conversion within you. Then, in the spirit of Bon Secours, discover what you can do to more fully defend and care for God's creation.

"Our goal is not to amass information but to become painfully aware of what is happening to the world; to turn it into our own personal suffering and thus to discover what each of us can do about it."

- Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*



Sit with these images frequently throughout the month until they enable you to become "painfully aware" of the suffering that plastic pollution is causing to God's beloved creation.

Imagine what the seal, turtle and little girls are experiencing.

June
JPIC Days of Remembrance

June 5
World Environment Day

June 8
World Oceans Day



June 12
World Day Against Child Labor








June 17
World Day to Combat
Desertification & Drought

June 20
World Refugee Day

June 20
June Solstice

Seven Types of Plastic



							
	PET or PETE	HDPE	PVC	LDPE	PP	PS	OTHER
Recyclable	Commonly recycled	Commonly recycled	Sometimes recycled	Sometimes recycled	Occasionally recycled	Difficult to recycle	Difficult to recycle
How long to decompose	5 – 10 years	100 years	Never	500 – 1,000 yrs.	20 – 30 years	50 years	Never



The Recycling Myth

Globally, only 9% of plastic gets recycled. Even in developed countries, the recycling rate for plastics collected by households is often far less than 50%, with very little of that converted back into packaging. Most "recycled" packaging waste is down-cycled into lower value or un-recyclable products, meaning that the process is only delaying the plastic's inevitable journey to the landfill. *Source: Greenpeace International*

What effect does the information in the graphic above have on you?

What "pain" does it bring you to know that eventually all plastic ends up in a landfill?

More than 90% of plastic is made from fossil fuel.

If the overproduction and consumption of plastic continues uninterrupted, it could account for 20% of the total global oil consumption by midcentury.

Greenpeace International

Decreasing Plastic Use in the Bon Secours Family

JPIC Committee members are planning ways to implement the plastic initiative in each country. Here is what you can expect in your area:

France: Camille Grippon and the France JPIC team will offer a reflection/education series on plastic using the JPIC Newsletter and videos that will include discussion opportunities.

Ireland/Great Britain: Mary Leamy and Katherine Tierney will choose a documentary on plastics to show throughout Bon Secours Ireland/GB.

Peru: The JPIC Committee members are sponsoring a song contest on the use of plastics and will share the songs with the Bon Secours family.

USA: The JPIC Committee members and the USA JPIC team will encourage the Bon Secours USA Family to read, reflect and act on the content of this Newsletter and also participate in a plastics inventory.

International Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation Committee

Sr. Teresa Margot Benites Montero, CBS (Peru)
 Eileen Fernandini, CBS Associate (USA)
 Sr. Fran Gorsuch, CBS (USA)
 Camille Grippon (USA; France Liaison)
 Sr. Mary Beth Hamm, SSJ Co-chair
 Sr. Mary Leamy, CBS (Ireland)
 Sr. Anne Marie Mack, CBS (USA) Chair
 Sr. Maria Pintado Peña, CBS (Peru)
 Sr. Katherine Tierney, CBS (Ireland)
 Sr. Yolanda Morales Valiente, CBS (Peru)
 Sr. Chris Webb, CBS (USA)



The Power of ONE

- Notice the plastic packaging on the food in your kitchen: bottles, wrappers, etc. Is there ONE alternative you can purchase for ONE of these items? (eg. salad dressing in glass bottle vs. plastic)
- Notice the plastic packaging on the cleaning and laundry items in your home. Is there ONE alternative you can make for ONE of these items?
- Notice the plastic packaging on your personal care products. Is there ONE alternative you can choose for ONE of these items? (e.g. bar soap vs. liquid soap)
- Notice the single-use plastic items you use: plastic bags, plastic wrap, etc. What can you choose instead?
- Notice the recycle numbers on your household products. What did you learn?

A Vision for the New Plastics Economy

The New Plastics Economy is a vision of a circular economy for plastic, where plastic never becomes waste. Spearheaded by the Ellen MacArthur Foundation with support from the UN Environmental Program, it is an effort to reduce plastic pollution. The ambitious goals to curb plastic pollution include:

- Elimination of unnecessary and problematic plastic packaging through redesign and innovation
- Transition from single-use to reuse where relevant reducing the need for single-use packaging
- Ensuring all plastic packaging is 100% reusable, recyclable, or compostable
- Ensuring all plastic packaging is reused, recycled, or composted in practice
- Ensuring the use of plastic is fully decoupled from the consumption of finite resources

More than 450 organizations have signed up to this vision as part of the New Plastics Economy Global Commitment.

Learn more:

<https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/our-work/activities/new-plastics-economy> (ENG)

<https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/fr/economie-circulaire/concept> (FR)

<https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/es/economia-circular/concepto> (ES)