

Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation News

Congregation of the Sisters of Bon Secours



COP27

Climate Change

November, 2022

Vol. 8, Number 3



A third of Pakistan is flooded. Europe had the hottest summer in 500 years. The Philippines were hammered by Typhoon Noru. The whole of Cuba was in black-out. In the United States, Hurricane Ian delivered a brutal reminder that no country and no economy is immune from the climate crisis. And while climate chaos gallops ahead, climate action has stalled,"
UN Secretary-General António Guterres

November
JPIC Days of Remembrance

November 3
St. Martin de Porres
Patron of Race Relations

November 9
Birthday of Rev. Thomas Berry



November 13
St. Frances Xavier Cabrini
Patron of Migrants

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

The 27th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP27) will be held from November 6 -18 at Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt located on the Sinai Peninsula, the land held sacred by followers of Abrahamic religions as the place where God appeared to Moses and called him to a mission of liberation. Many voices will be heard at this Conference, notably the voices of faith groups, and in particular the voice of Catholic Sisters. On October 25th the International Union of Superiors General (IUSG) hosted a webinar, *Sisters at COP27*, which featured four Catholic Sisters including Jean Quinn, DW, Executive Director of UNANIMA who will bring their voices, concerns and grassroot stories of people impacted by climate change to COP27.

As Sisters of Bon Secours who have committed ourselves to boldly address the causes of climate change with others, this issue of the JPIC Newsletter offers us an opportunity to learn more about COP27 and support those who will be attending this conference through our interest, prayer and action.



Oil exploration threatens the water supply of one million people in DRC.



Climate action is about people, their health and their future.

"We know that the Global North is largely responsible for the climate crisis and must contribute their fair share to address it.

This means leading the way in emissions reductions, providing funding for climate adaptation, loss and damage and supporting countries in the Global South to achieve just levels of development."

Ambongo Besungu, Archbishop of Kinshasa, DRC
African Climate Dialogues in Preparation for COP27

Reflection

What invitation and challenge do you hear in these words from the Archbishop of Kinshasa?

How can we better support the people of the Global South in achieving just levels of development especially those in Peru and the DRC?

"On climate, the Democratic Republic of Congo is vital to the future of the planet.

The Congo basin rainforest absorbs more carbon than is emitted by the entire continent of Africa.

It's a place of tremendous biodiversity.

Its rainfall helps sustain agriculture across the region,"

Antony Blinken, US Secretary of State

DRC and COP27

Climate representatives from more than 40 countries gathered in the Democratic Republic of Congo's (DRC) capital, Kinshasa, in October to discuss a common position ahead of the COP27 meeting scheduled for November in Egypt. The DRC, rich in natural resources and with an abundance of tropical rainforest, can play a pivotal role in international climate and environmental protection yet there is abusive exploitation of natural resource.

The rainforests of the Congo Basin are home to millions of people and countless animal and plant species. They are a treasure trove of biodiversity and crucial to the fight against climate change.

Despite this, the government of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) began auctioning 27 oil and 3 gas blocks in late July. The blocks cover some of the last remaining intact forests on Earth.

Three of the blocks overlap the Cuvette Centrale peatlands, which are estimated to store 30 billion tons of carbon, the equivalent to one year's worth of global emissions. The peatlands are so vast and remote that little is known about the biodiversity at stake there. More than half of the Congo Basin's peatlands and 60 percent of its rainforest are in the DRC, the country plays a key role in the fight against the climate crisis.

Ève Bazaiba Masudi, DRC Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development reminded those present that this situation puts Africa in a dilemma. She shared that Africans are faced with the choice of either exploiting their resources so they can feed their children and grandchildren or challenging the exploitation of these resources that would result in their children and grandchildren dying of hunger.

In his speech at the UN's COP26 conference in Glasgow, DRC President Tshisekedi promoted the vital role of the Congo Basin forests in regulating the global climate and his intention to enhance DRC's energy mix by "combining several types of energy: biomass, hydro, solar." The cost of not doing so, he said, would be a climate crisis. The science is clear: the governments of the world must cut carbon emissions in half within the next eight years.

Sources: Greenpeace and Africa News



Scientists discover peatlands in the DRC basin



A protestor in Kinshasa accuses the world of climate 'hypocrisy'

UNANIMA and COP27

Jean Quinn, DW, Executive Director of UNANIMA International and Lara Hicks, Executive Assistant will be participating in COP27 and in collaboration with other NGOs of Catholic organizations will be sponsoring a side event on November 17 from 12:00 – 1:30 Egypt time. This event will include a video exhibit showing the effects of climate change and a roundtable discussion. The Congregation of Bon Secours has submitted the video depicting the work of the Sisters in Peru in the aftermath of the 2017 floods in Trujillo for this video exhibit. The group also intends to prepare a Statement on Climate Change that they hope will receive the endorsement of Pope Francis. The side event will be live-streamed and UNANIMA will provide the link when it becomes available.

Congregation of Bon Secours



September 30: The International JPIC Committee approved a timeline for implementing the SMART Actions for each Area in 2022 – 2023 as well as developing SMART actions for 2023 – 2024. We were fortunate to have Sr. Rosa Gomez and Sr. Elaine Davia present at that meeting.

October 4: On October 4, 2022 a new documentary film about the message of Laudato Si' called **The Letter, A Message for Earth** was presented at the Vatican. **The Letter** offers a compelling new message for our planet and a way to reflect and prepare ourselves to continue our journey towards integral ecology. This is a meaningful film to view and discuss together. The film is available with subtitles in English, Spanish and French and can be viewed here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rps9bs85BII>

October 6: The Sisters of Bon Secours Laudato Si' Action Plans for each Area were downloaded on the LSAP webpage as required for participation in this 7-year journey. We need to continue posting our plans each year.

Congregation-wide SMART Actions: The Congregation Team is focusing on two LSAP initiatives for 2023 that will help us further develop an **ecological spirituality**:

- Adapting the current prayer initiative to focus on Ecological Spirituality rather than feasts of saints. We will continue to provide prayers for Congregation Feast Days.
- Planning a Congregation-wide retreat on Ecological Spirituality to be held in Fall 2023.

Area SMART Actions: Action plans for each Area were shared across the Congregation and with the Bon Secours Family as an addendum to the October JPIC Newsletter.

Sisters at COP27

Sisters for the Environment

On November 3, 2022 the International Union of Superiors General (UISG) will be launching the statement *Sisters for the Environment: Integrating Voices from the Margins*. The statement will be published in preparation for the UN climate summit COP27, aiming to bring the voices of marginalized communities served by Catholic Sisters to the center of discussions on global environmental policy. On this same day at 8:00AM ET the UISG will host a webinar to spotlight the work of Catholic Sisters' ministries for care of Earth. The webinar will be livestreamed in English, Spanish and French on the UISG YouTube channel.

Global Prayer Vigil for Earth at COP27

Join Catholic Religious delegates at COP27 as well as your sisters and brothers around the world in an online prayer service for fruitful dialogue in Egypt and inspired responses toward Earth justice in every nation. The Global Prayer Vigil for Earth will take place on November 7 at 6:30PM Egypt time. Register here: <https://bit.ly/3F1XaVg>

International Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Committee

Sr. Teresa Margot Benites Montero, CBS
Sr. Rosa Elena Lozada Escobar, CBS
Sr. Mary Beth Hamm, SSJ - Chair
Sr. Mary Leamy, CBS
Rachel Moccia
Sr. Maria Pintado Peña, CBS - Co-chair
Nicholas Stein
Sr. Katherine Tierney, CBS
Sr. Chris Webb, CBS