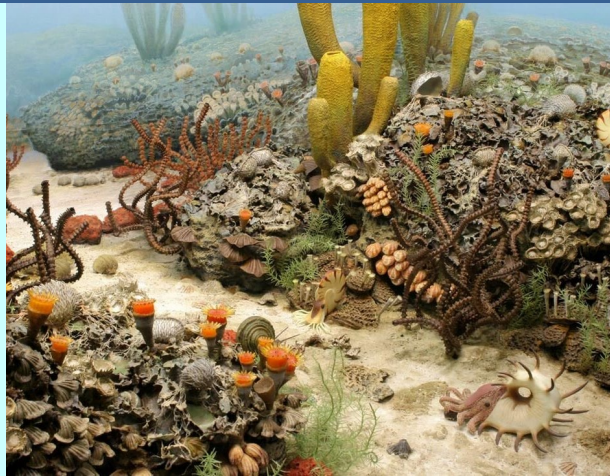


Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation News

Congregation of the Sisters of Bon Secours

Responding to The Cry of Earth



June, 2023
Vol. 8, Number 10



"Mother Earth, who sustains and governs us,
and who produces various fruit with colored flowers and herbs...
now cries out to us because of the harm we have inflicted on her
by our irresponsible use and abuse of the goods with which God has endowed her."
Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'* #1

I recently attended the Justice Conference of Women Religious' (JCWR) bi-annual Convocation entitled: *Embracing and Acting from an Ever-emerging Consciousness*. What a breath of fresh air this convocation provided! Our speakers, Sr. Sharon Zayac, OP and Sr. Toni Nash, CSJ inspired us, challenged us and stretched our consciousness of who we are as a human species and expanded our perception of how we might engage in the work of justice moving forward.

Sr. Sharon the co-founder of Jubilee Farm, her congregation's center for ecology and spirituality, focused on the fact that "*relationship is the fundamental reality of the Universe*" and that our task moving forward is "*to restore the rhythm of right relationship with the whole Earth community – human and non-human.*" Sr. Toni, a religious cosmologist, reminded us that almost everything we have depends on the exploitation of people and the planet and the only way to make changes in this relationship is to do it together. Christina Leano, Associate Director of the *Laudato Si'* Movement, led us in prayerful reflections throughout our time together reminding us of the importance of intention and attention to all we do. Finally, Sr. Carol Zinn, SSJ, Executive Director of LCWR, challenged us to "imagine something new, something that has not been done before" as we engage in our justice work at this time.

I truly wish all of you, our readers, could have been present at this convocation to experience these speakers firsthand. In lieu of that experience, this Newsletter offers some of the significant thought-provoking quotes and questions the speakers shared at this convocation in the hopes that their words will shape your evolving consciousness of who we are as human beings and the significant role we can play in the transformation of our world that God so loves.

June
JPIC Days of Remembrance

June 5
World Environment Day

June 8
World Oceans Day

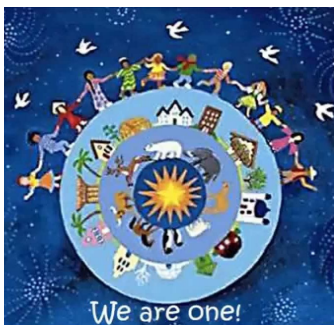


June 12
World Day Against Child Labor

June 17
**World Day to Combat
Desertification & Drought**

June 20
World Refugee Day

June 21
June Solstice



"A non-negotiable *truth* is that unless
Earth is healthy, we humans cannot be.
We are all part of the one community of life on the planet,
and the health of any of us
is dependent upon the health of the whole.
Since our actions are upsetting that balance,
it is we who must do something about it."

"The universe is awakening to "right relationships".
Sharon Zayac, OP, JCWR Convocation

Reflection

After reading and reflecting on this entire Newsletter,
what one significant change can you make in your life to help facilitate the ecological
conversion/transformation of consciousness needed by larger human family?

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

How we view the world matters

What is your dominant worldview?

This ↓



Or this ↓



Reflection #1

In *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis challenges us to look at our planet and our place on the planet differently. He says, "A misguided anthropocentrism leads to a misguided lifestyle." #122

Our convocation speakers reminded us that we, humans, need to be conscious of our inherited anthropocentric world view, the foundational belief that humans are separate from rather than a part of creation. Moving away from this anthropocentric worldview to an eco-centric one requires what Pope Francis calls an "ecological conversion". This evolution of human consciousness is currently taking place and is needed on a large scale to address the global crises of our time.

How has your consciousness grown or evolved in the past few years?

What has enabled this evolution of consciousness?

**"There are three ways to respond to the current global crises:
Direct Action
Changing Systems
Changing Consciousness on a large scale."**

Toni Nash, CSJ, JCWR Convocation

Reflection #2

What does this quote evoke in you?
What questions does it provoke in you?
What new perspective does it offer you as we engage the work of JPIC?

How are we as the Bon Secours Family responding to the current global crisis through direct action and systemic change?

What could we do to foster a change in consciousness/worldview in ourselves as a way of addressing the current global crises?

What would you/us need to do this?



"As an intimate part of an evolutionary Universe, we have no choice about being transformed.

We do have a choice into what or whom we wish to be transformed."

Sharon Zayac, OP

Points to Ponder From the JCWR Convocation

"Everyday we participate in the Liturgy of Creation."

Christina Leano,
Associate Director of the Laudato Si' Movement

**"What do I need to give up in order to live interdependently with creation?
What personal cost am I willing to make?"**

Toni Nash, CSJ

"The way we are doing justice is no longer working for the depth of the need."

"How do we begin to imagine doing something never done before?"

Carol Zinn, SSJ Executive Director LCWR



**Such an ecological conversion calls us to a renewed way of understanding the cosmos and humanity –
a new vision of what it is to be a human being before God and in the world.
It calls us to a new spirituality, or way of understanding and expressing our relationship with the Divine in our lives.
To bring about lasting change, it must also be a "community conversion".
We are being called to a new way of thinking, feeling, understanding, and living.**

Australian Catholic Bishops Conference



New Website

UNANIMA International has updated their website and the BEST new feature is that translations in Spanish and French are now available. Take a few moments to tour this site and learn about UNANIMA's many programs and resources. The Congregation of Bon Secours is one of UNANIMA's 22 member organizations.
<https://unanima-international.org/>

UNANIMA Woman of Courage Award

Each year UNANIMA International presents the "Woman of Courage Award," which honors Women from around the world who have exhibited exceptional courage and leadership to make a difference in their communities, especially for the betterment of the lives of women and children.

This year we are asking each Area to submit a nominee for this award by July 1. The members of the JPIC Committee will be in touch with the Sisters in each Area about the criteria for submitting this name. Sr. Rosie and Sr. Mary Beth will review the names we receive and choose one to submit to UNANIMA on behalf of the Congregation. Read about UNANIMA's past recipients here:
<https://unanima-international.org/woman-of-courage/>

International Justice, Peace & 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. Chris Webb, CBS

Observers for 2023:

Sr. Marianne Falanka, DRC
Beatrice Lesourd, France
Sr. Nathalie Lundolo, CBS, France

Congregation of Bon Secours Laudato Si' Action Platform Prayer Initiative
Ecological Spirituality – Responding to the Cry of Earth
June 2023

Ecological Spirituality springs from a profound ecological conversion and helps us to "discover God in all things", both in the beauty of creation and in the sighs and groans of people afflicted in any way. This month as we celebrate World Environment Day and World Ocean Day our prayer will focus on ecological spirituality from the lens of our response to the cry of Earth. The 1st Laudato Si' goal is a call to protect our common home for the wellbeing of all, as we equitably address the climate crisis, biodiversity loss, and ecological sustainability.

Call to Prayer: Let us pause to remember that we, Sisters of Bon Secours, have committed ourselves to a 7- year journey of transformation of our relationship with Earth and all who share our common home. This month as we commemorate World Environment Day, let us especially remember our commitment to respond to the cries of Mother Earth and all her beings: the cries of land, water, air; the cries of creatures great and small, the cries of people: poor, displaced and abandoned. Let us lament from the depths of our hearts, the suffering of God's beloved creation.

(Pause for contemplative reflection)



Reading: "LAUDATO SI', mi' Signore" – "Praise be to you, my Lord". In the words of this beautiful canticle, Saint Francis of Assisi reminds us that our common home is like a sister with whom we share our life and a beautiful mother who opens her arms to embrace us. "Praise be to you, my Lord, through our Sister, Mother Earth, who sustains and governs us, and who produces various fruit with colored flowers and herbs".

This sister now cries out to us because of the harm we have inflicted on her by our irresponsible use and abuse of the goods with which God has endowed her. We have come to see ourselves as her lords and masters, entitled to plunder her at will. The violence present in our hearts, wounded by sin, is also reflected in the symptoms of sickness evident in the soil, in the water, in the air and in all forms of life. This is why Earth herself, burdened and laid waste, is among the most abandoned and maltreated of our poor; she "groans in travail" (Rom 8:22). We have forgotten that we ourselves are dust of Earth; our very bodies are made up of her elements, we breathe her air and we receive life and refreshment from her waters. LS #1

Pause for reflection

Lament for Mother Earth

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G80FzOXP1Nw> (4:41)

Reflection

- What words, phrases or images from the reading and video resonate with you? Inspire you? Challenge you?
- What do these words, phrases or images ask of you?

Readings: What is Happening to our Common Home

Climate Change: Climate change represents one of the principal challenges facing humanity in our day. Its worst impact will probably be felt by developing countries in coming decades. Many of those who possess more resources and economic or political power seem mostly to be concerned with masking the problems or concealing their symptoms, simply making efforts to reduce some of the negative impacts of climate change. However, many of these symptoms indicate that such effects will continue to worsen if we continue with current models of production and consumption. LS #25, 26

Pause ... Respond: Loving God, have mercy on us! ... Pause

Pollution: Account must also be taken of the pollution produced by residue, including dangerous waste present in different areas. Each year hundreds of millions of tons of waste are generated, much of it non-biodegradable, highly toxic and radioactive, from homes and businesses, from construction and demolition

sites, from clinical, electronic and industrial sources. Earth, our home, is beginning to look more and more like an immense pile of filth. LS #21, 22

Pause ... Respond: Loving God, have mercy on us! ... Pause

Pause ... Respond: Loving God, have mercy on us! ... Pause

Water Scarcity: Even as the quality of available water is constantly diminishing, in some places there is a growing tendency, despite its scarcity, to privatize this resource, turning it into a commodity subject to the laws of the market. Yet access to safe drinkable water is a basic and universal human right, since it is essential to human survival and, as such, is a condition for the exercise of other human rights. Our world has a grave social debt towards the poor who lack access to drinking water, because they are denied the right to a life consistent with their inalienable dignity. LS #30

Loss of Biodiversity: Each year sees the disappearance of thousands of plant and animal species which we will never know, which our children will never see, because they have been lost forever. The great majority become extinct for reasons related to human activity. Because of us, thousands of species will no longer give glory to God by their very existence, nor convey their message to us. We have no such right. LS #33

Pause ... Respond: Loving God, have mercy on us! ... Pause

Reflection and Sharing:

- What **are** you doing on a personal and Congregation level to address the issues of pollution, climate change, water scarcity and loss of biodiversity?
- What more **could** you do on a personal and Congregation level to address the issues of pollution, climate change, water scarcity and loss of biodiversity?

Gathering the Graces:

What is a word, phrase, thought or feeling that you will take with you from this time of prayer together?

Affirming our Commitment to the Laudato Si' Action Platform: We pray together the Congregation of the Sisters of Bon Secours of Paris Laudato Si' Action Platform Commitment Statement.

**We, Women of Healing, commit ourselves to:
defend and care for all creation and to
cry out with others against injustice and all that diminishes life on Earth.**

Sisters of Bon Secours Mission Focus

In fidelity to this mission focus
that has guided our Congregation choices since 2009
and desiring to live our healing charism more deeply,
the Congregation of the Sisters of Bon Secours and the Bon Secours Family
joyfully embark on a seven-year journey with the universal Church
toward integral ecology in the spirit of Laudato Si'.

Impelled by the Holy Spirit and renewed by the fire of our original call,
we, women of audacious hope, commit ourselves to boldly live our charism of
compassion, healing and liberation with those in our Bon Secours Family
as we address the seven Laudato Si' Action Platform goals:

To respond to the cry of Earth and the cry of the poor,

Adopt a more sustainable lifestyle

Engage in and foster ecological education

Develop an ecological spirituality

Embrace ecological economics and

Advocate for public policies that protect our common home and all those who share it.

Through our participation in the Laudato Si' Action Platform,
the Congregation of Bon Secours and the Bon Secours Family
are walking a "path to renewal" together with all people of good will
who love and care for our common home, Mother Earth.

*Public Commitment
October 4, 2021*



Closing Prayer

Creator God, you brought us forth from Earth, and in your love for us, you entrusted to us the care and protection of all creation. Grant us the wisdom to be awed and humbled by your gifts, O God, that we might never forget: Violence against creation is violence against us all. Even as we celebrate the beauty and bounty that surrounds us, may we also acknowledge the suffering we have inflicted on creation, through our actions and through our failures to act. The cry of the Earth is a wound we feel at the soul level. As we experience this pain, O God, convert our hearts, that we might transform our vision of what is possible through active hope. Amen.

Prayer provided by Holy Cross International Justice Office

Follow-up Action: Biodiversity is more than simply the collection of plants and animals on earth; it is about local ecosystems and promoting healthy conditions for organisms to thrive. While protecting the rainforests sounds like a daunting task, there is a lot you can do to promote and preserve local biodiversity at home.

- Support local farms. Buy from local farmers, farmer's markets, or food cooperatives.
- Save the bees. Plant nectar-producing wildflowers in your backyard, or even build bee boxes for local bees to call home.
- Plant fruits, vegetables and native flowers and plants.
- Support restoration of a local habitat.