

Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation News

Congregation of the Sisters of Bon Secours



Andean indigenous agriculture is one of the best examples of the adaptation and knowledge of farmers to their environment for more than 5,000 years.

"All Christian communities have an important role to play in ecological education. Our efforts at education will be inadequate and ineffectual unless we strive to promote a new way of thinking about human beings, life, society and our relationship with nature."

Pope Francis, Laudato Si', #215

Two years ago the Congregation of Bon Secours responded to Pope Francis invitation to participate in the Laudato Si' Action Platform (LSAP). The goal of this seven-year journey is a profound interior transformation that will express itself in a more positive relationship with all beings who share our common home. Among the commitments that decision entailed was a commitment to engage in and foster Ecological Education.

This month as we commemorate the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples we can be inspired by the ecological wisdom practiced by these First Nations that is increasingly becoming accepted and adopted in our Western culture. As you read this Newsletter, savor the wisdom – and hope - these Indigenous people offer us. At the same time consider how your own personal commitment to engage in ecological education is broadening your perspective and transforming your relationship with Earth and all her beings.

Ecological Education points us to the need to rethink and redesign curricular and institutional reform in the spirit of integral ecology to foster ecological awareness and transformative action.

Reflection

What role are the Sisters of Bon Secours playing in your Area to engage in and foster ecological education?

What resources (books, articles, videos, hands on learning) in ecological education have you found helpful to your own growth?

What new ways of thinking about human beings and our relationship to nature have these resources offered you?

How has your commitment to engaging in ecological education made a difference in how you relate to Earth and all her beings?



Our Bon Secours Beekeepers: Sr. Margaret Mary Hanafin and Sr. Michelle Sheehan, Cork, Ireland



Sister Gumerinda Córdova meets with families in Los Ranchos, Peru, to discuss implementation of bio-gardens.

August, 2023

Vol. 8, Number 12



August
JPIC Days of Remembrance

August 6 and 9
Anniversary of the Bombings of
Hiroshima & Nagasaki

August 9
International Day of the
World's Indigenous Peoples



Learn more:
<https://www.un.org/en/observances/indigenous-day>

August 19
World Humanitarian Day

August 23
International Day for
Remembrance of the
Slave Trade & Its Abolition

August 29
International Day
Against Nuclear Tests

Indigenous Wisdom

A Hopi Elder Speaks

"You have been telling the people that this is the Eleventh Hour. Now you must go back and tell the people that this is the Hour. And there are things to be considered ...

Where are you living?
What are you doing?
What are your relationships?
Are you in right relation?
Where is your water?
Know your garden.
It is time to speak your Truth.
Create your community.
Be good to each other.

And do not look outside yourself for the leader."

Then he clasped his hands together, smiled, and said, "This could be a good time! There is a river flowing now very fast. It is so great and swift that there are those who will be afraid. They will try to hold on to the shore. They will feel they are torn apart and will suffer greatly.

Know that the river has its destination. The elders say we must let go of the shore, push off into the middle of the river, keep our eyes open, and our heads above water. And I say, see who is in there with you and celebrate. At this time in history, we are to take nothing personally, least of all ourselves. For the moment that we do, our spiritual growth and journey comes to a halt.

The time for the lone wolf is over. Gather yourselves! Banish the word struggle from your attitude and your vocabulary. All that we do now must be done in a sacred manner and in celebration.

We are the ones we've been waiting for."



"We are all visitors to this time,
this place.

We are just passing through.
Our purpose here is to observe,
to learn, to grow, to love...
and then we return home."

– Australian Aboriginal saying



The land is my mother.

Like a human mother, the land gives us
protection, enjoyment and provides our
needs – economic, social and religious.

We have a human relationship with the land:

Mother, daughter, son.

When the land is taken from us or destroyed,

we feel hurt because we belong
to the land and we are part of it.

Djinyini Gondarra, Australian Aborigine

Engaging in Ecological Education and Putting It into Practice

- Listen and learn from the original people who lived where you are.
- Choose to read a book that gives an indigenous perspective of care for Earth.
- Get to know the plants on your land/neighborhood and the benefits they provide.
- Research plants that are native to your region. Make a goal to add them to your yard to create a habitat for pollinators and other creatures.
- Live seasonally by growing your own vegetables or only purchasing what is in season.
- Invest time and energy into the needs of your local environment.
- Pray outside and contemplate the tremendous goodness of God.

Source: Shauna'H Fuegen, NCR

Laudato Si' Congregation Prayer Initiative

Since January 2023 the Sisters of Bon Secours have been preparing monthly prayers on ecological spirituality as part of the Laudato Si' Action Platform initiatives. The prayer for August has been prepared by the Sisters in Ireland. These prayers are most effective if prayed communally (local community, cluster, friends, colleagues, etc.) so please set aside some time this month to share in this prayer. Sisters can access this prayer, as well as archived prayers from January to July 2023, on the JPOTEL intranet.

Reflection and Sharing

What new insight or perspective did you gain from these words of indigenous people?

What words caused you to ponder deeply?

What words caused discomfort?

What words gave you hope?

You might remember: In preparation for participation in the Laudato Si' Action Platform (LSAP) the Sisters participated in a survey in 2021 to learn to what degree we were aware of and responsive to Ecological Education. While awareness and responsiveness across the Congregation varied from Area to Area the average scores showed 36% were very aware and 37% were very responsive.

What progress do you think the Congregation has made since 2021?

*What has helped you/us become more aware of and responsive to
fostering and engaging in Ecological Education?*

International Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation Committee

Sr. Teresa Margot Benítez 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