

PJIC Update, July 2017

An opportunity to pray, reflect and act on Laudato Si and the SDGs

Celebrate the Season of Creation (September 1 – October 4). September 1 was proclaimed as the World Day of Prayer for Creation by the Orthodox Church in 1989, and many other Christian churches have joined since then, with Pope Francis most recently in 2015. It was then extended to be a month-long Season of Creation, ending on October 4 (Feast of St. Francis). New to this year's celebration, Christian communities will be engaging in symbolic actions in front of coal mines, fracking wells, and other sites of ecological destruction. Resources are available at www.seasonofcreation.org Global Catholic Climate Movement and Catholic Climate Covenant also offer resources, information and action steps in caring for creation. Consider planning or joining a prayer service, vigil, or action during the Season of Creation. Take action by signing the Laudato Si' Pledge at www.livelaudatosi.org More information is below.



Individuals, families, parishes and groups are invited to answer Pope Francis' urgent call in Laudato Si, by pledging to:

- Pray for and with creation
- Live more simply
- Advocate to protect our common home.

Organized and promoted by the Global Catholic Climate Movement, this pledge aims to mobilize at least 1 million people to directly engage in turning the encyclical's message into action.

Laudato Si' and Big Cities – this three-day July event in Rio de Janeiro aimed to contribute to the humanization of large urban centers in a world in which a growing 52% of the global population lives in highly populated urban centres. Pope Francis' encyclical Laudato Si' was used as a focal point of discussion and reference regarding environmental, ethical and management issues pertaining to big cities. Respecting Creation is one of our 'core tasks' Pope Francis wrote in his strongly worded message to conference participants. He reaffirmed, as he did in his encyclical to which the Rio conference was dedicated that we "cannot just remain on the sidelines when we notice a serious degeneration in the quality of the air or an increase in the production of waste that is not adequately disposed of". Pope Francis urged governments to take the lead in caring for creation. Respect, responsibility and relationship were the three themes highlighted by Pope Francis.



The Sisters of Charity of New York are addressing the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)! How might we collaborate with our Sisters of Charity Federation NGO to make this known at the UN? What are ways we can increase awareness of SDGs so that each person is aware of them and their right to have them fulfilled! The UN 2017 High Level Political Forum (HLPF) this July, so connected to the charism of

Charity, Vincentian/Setonian heritage and spirituality of systemic change, illustrated how Sisters of Charity/Associates and colleagues are positioned to be leaders in increasing awareness of and working towards implementation of the SDGs. If asked for specifics on how *“Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world”* (HLPF theme) is happening at the New York Foundling, LEFSA, POTS, Casa de Esperanza, St. Joseph’s Hospital and Medical Center, Barbara Ford Peacebuilding Center, through Task Force members, etc., how would you reply? How do we work to end poverty; stop hunger; promote good health and well-being, gender equality and industry, innovation and infrastructure? Goal 17, *Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development*, might be more of a challenge! A modern-day St. Vincent de Paul, Dr. Jeffrey Sachs, President of the Earth Institute at Columbia University, and ardent advocate to end poverty and inequality, gave an excellent keynote address found at the following link about 34 minutes in:

<http://webtv.un.org/search/43rd-meeting-high-level-segment-economic-and-social-council-2017-session/5510504566001?term=sachs#full-text>

Embryo, **A Defense of Human Life**, by Robert P. George and Christopher Tollefsen. As we pray and work to promote the dignity and sacredness of life, we share a comment from Bruce Segall (SCNY Coordinator for Immigrant Matters): “I found this to be a remarkable book. Its authors offer clarity and compelling arguments regarding the “miracle of birth”. One quote that impressed me was: “There are three important points we wish to make about the human embryo. First, the embryo is from the start distinct from any cell of the mother or the father. This is clear because the embryo is growing in her own distinct direction. Her growth is internally directed to her own survival and maturation. Second, this embryo is human: she has the genetic makeup characteristic of human beings. Third, and most important, the embryo is a complete or whole organism, though immature. The human embryo from conception onward is fully programmed and has the active disposition to use that information to develop herself to the mature stage of a human being and unless prevented by disease or violence will actually do so... “

The Joy of the Gospel in America was the theme of July 1 – 4 Convocation of Catholic Leaders convened by the USCCB. With *Evangelii Gaudium* (Joy of the Gospel) as a foundation, Catholic leaders were reminded of the gospel call to love, respect, be inclusive and welcoming...that we are called to be missionary disciples and accompany people, especially those affected by unjust structures that create inequality, poverty, oppression and need. St. Elizabeth Ann Seton was mentioned as a “saint on the periphery”. As I viewed videos of the plenary sessions and prayer gatherings at www.usccb.org. I was reminded of the many ways Sisters of Charity, Associates, Task Forces, sponsored ministries, and all our colleagues reach out to those on the peripheries and work with them to change unjust structures.
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