



## **NewsNotes**

### **April 2022**

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#### **Greetings Friend!**

We are fresh from our Chapter meetings that were unique among our history of Chapter meetings. During our time together, we explored the implications of what we committed to in our joining the Laudato Si Action Platform. If I read the members correctly, there was excitement about how we can share our charism(s) through this global effort of the church.

The first story below is about joining the Laudato Si Animator course. I encourage all of you to consider this short but impactful program. It was an honor, when I took the course, to spend a half hour each of the four weeks in conversation with other believers from around the globe, each concerned about the suffering of Earth in their regions.

Some of the stories below indicate how we have begun to respond. The first group to start meeting, the Simple Living/Food book group has finished its book study and challenged us at Chapter to practice meatless Mondays and Fridays. Yesterday, I received a note reporting that the Sisters at St. Michael's Villa have adopted this challenge and will begin on Monday. This is a simple action, but simple actions engage our imaginations on other things that can be done. They can move our hearts to a deeper awareness of how our world community is in need of deep healing. This consciousness raising will also continue as more and more of our charism-focused teams get organized and begin to act.

Our Congregation may be getting older but the will to make a difference, to share our charism of peace through justice lives on.

Let us give thanks to God as we complete our Lenten journey and celebrate all things new as we approach Easter.

# Frank

Frank McCann  
Peace through Justice Facilitator  
Congregation's NGO Representative to the UN

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## Laudato Si Animator's Program-Registration is Open



**Become a voice for ecological change in your community.**

As Pope Francis tells us, "Everyone's talents and involvement are needed to redress the damage caused by human abuse of God's creation" (LS 14).

The **Laudato Si Animator's Program**, run by the Laudato Si Movement is a six-hour course run in 4 sessions. With each meeting there is one hour of prayer

and lesson by a leader of the Movement, followed by a ½ hour break out session with others from around the world who are concerned about the climate crisis and the quality of life in our common home.

Visit [this link](#) for more detailed information.

[Click here to register for the course.](#)

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## Human right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment.

On 8 October 2021, during its 48th session, the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) adopted resolution 48/13 with 43 votes, no objections and only 4 abstentions which “recognize[d] the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment as a human right that is important for the enjoyment of human rights”. By doing so, the HRC took a decisive first step towards ensuring that the UN human rights institutions can better address one of the most pressing threats to the enjoyment of human rights. The resolution invited the UN General Assembly to consider the matter. During the informal meeting of the GA plenary, held on 19 January 2022, to hear the President’s briefing on his priorities for the resumed part of the seventy-sixth session, representatives of the Maldives and Costa Rica called on the GA to adopt a resolution reaffirming the recognition of the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment as a matter of priority.

The United States is one of the nations whose representatives express opposition to this proposal. When it comes before the General Assembly this spring for a vote it is our hope that the US will reverse its position and support this resolution.

We owe the children of today and tomorrow a healthier environment than we currently inhabit.

Dramatic real-world events stemming from environmental destruction and pollution on all continents show the daily impacts on people of our failure to recognize the links between a healthy environment and peoples’ well-being. Recent scientific reports from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services<sup>[2]</sup> further drive home this reality. It is urgent for states to take ambitious, coordinated action – grounded in human rights laws and principles – to create the foundation to accelerate action to stop and reverse environmental decline for the survival of all life on earth and the benefit of people and planet.

If President Biden is serious about being a leader on environmental issues it is important that the US support this initiative.

Consider writing to the President and or Secretary of State Blinken asking them to vote in favor of the resolution.

Please [sign the petition on Change.org](#), and then spread word about it on social media.

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## Hike-A-Thon Launch

Saturday, April 2nd, 2 - 3:30 PM ET  
Register here:



<https://runsignup.com/Race/NJ/AtlanticHighlands/WaterspiritHikeathon>

Throughout the month of April, the more time you spend outdoors, the more money you can raise for Waterspirit!

Set your goal, share your progress with your friends & family, and celebrate the spring by getting outside for a good cause! Your team of supporters can use your special link to donate as you hike. Don't forget to tag #WaterspiritHikeathon when you share this event on social media!

Why is this hike-a-thon virtual? Because you can hike as much or as little as you would like, anywhere in the world!

If you are located in New Jersey, please join us for our kick-off hike on Saturday, April 2 at 2 p.m. We will meet at the gazebo near the playground at the Atlantic Highlands Marina and walk the Henry Hudson Trail to Popamora Point, Highlands, and back (approx. 3.5 miles roundtrip).

Thank you for supporting our eco-spiritual programming and clean water advocacy by participating in this virtual hike-a-thon. Learn more about Waterspirit at <http://www.waterspirit.org>.

Share in your social media the [invitation to the training](#) and [this video](#) to let your friends know the importance of training to bring Laudato Si' to life.

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## Planting Seeds of Hope

On 3/19/22 more than 100 participants at Seattle University. Intercommunity Peace and Justice Center's Creation Care Network's Planting Seeds of Hope. The day opened with a reflection by Seattle Archbishop Etienne. It was followed by an overview of Laudato Si. After Youth and Young Adults presented their concerns for Our Common Home, the Laudato Si Action Platform was discussed. Later presentations included a descendant of Chief Seattle offering environmental wisdom, Creation Ministry, and Statements of Intent.



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A Synodal discussion of Care for Creation will take place on 4/12 from 6:30-8pm (PDT):

Register here: <https://forms.gle/tTRnGdMhn8JpUXWh9>

Resources from Planting Seeds of Hope including recordings are available [here](#).

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## Eco Poetry: Bringing Attention to Plants, Animals, and Bodies of Water

Saturday, May 7th, 2 - 3:45 PM ET, Fair Haven, NJ  
Register here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/eco-poetry-bringing-attention-to-plants-animals-and-bodies-of-water-tickets-271185050787>



This is a generative workshop where we will be concentrating on a living thing(s) you love (plant, animal or body of water). Through writing exercises, research and observation, you will create poems or small pieces that the writer, if she wishes, can expand on after our gathering. Work with like-minded people who wish to praise the beauty of the natural world all around us by writing about it. No experience in poetry or writing necessary. Bring a notebook and pen and your curiosity. We will be working outside in a landscape with waterbirds, a tidal creek, and ancient oak trees.

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### IPCC Report on Climate Crisis

The latest [IPCC report](#) – authored by 270 scientists from 67 countries and approved by 195 governments – shows the earth is warming at an alarming rate, faster than had been predicted. We face catastrophic flooding, ever-strengthening storms and weather disruptions, devastating fires, as well as loss of ground, air, and underwater habitats and the creatures that live within them. The effects of global warming disproportionately affect those who are poor and vulnerable. The report sounds a strong warning that much bolder action is needed immediately to cut greenhouse gas emissions as well as to adapt to the increasing climate impacts and protect the most vulnerable. “Any further delay in concerted anticipatory global action,” the report says, “will miss a brief and rapidly closing window of opportunity to secure a livable and sustainable future for all.” [Read more](#)

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### Concern for Ukraine

The [Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns](#) has compiled a resource a [resource page on Ukraine](#). It includes prayers, statements, and ways to help. They will continue to update it as resources come along.

They also offer a very helpful two-page issue brief on U.S. sanctions policy, [“Sanctions: Nonviolent Tool or Lethal Weapon?”](#)

Many thanks to our colleagues at Maryknoll.

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## Assistance for Afghan Refugees

Afghans who have come to our nations now need our voices as well as our welcome.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security has agreed to designate Afghanistan for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for 18 months. This designation will protect Afghans already residing in the United States as of March 15, 2022, and permit them to remain in the U.S. instead of returning to their homeland amid unsafe conditions. While we laud this TPS decision, we recognize that it is only a short-term solution. Afghan individuals and families have been uprooted from their homes and may not be able to return safely under Taliban rule. We urge Congress to pass an Afghan Adjustment Act to provide a path to Lawful Permanent Resident status for Afghans who need a safe place to rebuild their lives. [Click here](#) to urge Congress to take action.

In the UK, 16,000 Afghans were received during the airlift out of Afghanistan. Of them only about 4,000 have been moved into homes where they can actually begin to live life as a family together. 12,000 families are still housed in hotel rooms, and “untenable” situation. Most cannot cook for themselves and have little room for their families. Their situation is also being compromised by recent refugees from Ukraine.

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## Advocacy for Refugees and Asylees

Please join CWS as a member of the refugee Council USA, for the annual Virtual Refugee Advocacy Days on May 9- May 13th, 2022. This is an opportunity for community members, faith leaders, advocates, resettlement staff and others to show their support for pro-refugee legislation with their members of Congress.

Register to participate: Register to participate using [this form](#) by April 15<sup>th</sup>. For more information about the advocacy days please visit <https://rcusa.org/2022-refugee-advocacy-days/>.

Participants will not only have the opportunity to meet virtually with their members of Congress but will also be part of a number of special training sessions to help build and expand their advocacy toolbelt. Refugee and asylee leaders will have additional leadership training opportunities in the lead up to the Advocacy Days kickoff. A full list of sessions and a proposed schedule (tentative to updates) can be found [here](#).

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### **LSAP teams forming and meet with our CFO**

Three teams are working on how best to use the financial resources of the congregation to further our mission and in response to the Laudato Si Action Platform. Our CFO, Melody Maravillas has responded very positively hoping to involve members of the Congregation in making these financial decisions that move our mission forward.

The **Impact Investing Team** picks up from the pilot project of our 2014 Chapter. They will look at opportunities to make significant contributions to organizations globally, such as the previous effort to assist in feeding the hungry people in Yemen. Their work involves research on the efficiency of organizations being helped and the need. Ideally impact investing donates funds that are later repaid so that they can be used again.

The **Congregational Charitable Giving Team** is picking up donations can assist in things like the resettlement of Afghan refugees, assisting the development of the global Sisterhood. The first meeting of the team was last week and they plan to meet again in May. This team will not replace regional teams who determine donations to local charities.

**Shareholder Advocacy** is an on-going effort that has been led for years by Northwest Cri (NWCRI) which is part of IPJC in the West, and formerly by TriCri in the East. Now, TriCri has become Investor Advocates for Social Just (IASJ). A similar team is workig in the UK.

Anyone else wanting to participate should contact Frank McCann or Melody Maravillas.

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## Reporting from Book Group on *The Meal that Reconnects*

During the Chapter the update on participation on the Laudato Si Action Program included a video presentation by Annie Welch from the book group that focused on simple living and food, reading the book, *The Meal that Reconnects, Eucharistic Eating and the Global Food Crisis*. In that presentation, Annie presented the groups suggestion that the congregation take up a plan for meatless Mondays and meatless Fridays. You can view the video here.

There were three reasons given, 1) it is healthier for us all to eat less meat. 2) it is healthier for the planet, and 3) it means a more nonviolent life for many animals.

Dr. McGann, the book's author who met with them for one session suggested several topics that complement the [CSJP Land Ethic](#), that we think deserves serious ongoing discussion by the Congregation. Food Justice includes making sustainable food choices, which includes not only where the food is grown, but also where do you shop? Do you have a relationship with local farmers?

Look at your own situation – if you're not able to plant a full vegetable garden, how about trying to a few in containers? (Check out <https://extension.umd.edu/resource/growing-vegetables-containers> for more ideas.)

Do you know if there is access to a plot in a community garden near you? How about your own parish – is there any lawn area that could be put to better use as a parish/community garden? And don't forget to support the efforts of local famers by shopping at Farmers' Markets (many of which are held year-round), or by committing to purchasing a share in a farm's produce known as Community Supported Agriculture – CSA.

Those of you who would want to discuss these food issues more in-depth with other groups you are a part of might want to look into JustFaith materials <https://justfaith.org>. Each topic is built around an eight-session guide of "study, dialogue, and an immersion experience". Relevant topics include *Food Insecurity – Hunger: A Faith and Justice Response (in partnership with Bread for the World)*; and *Eco-Justice – Sacred Lands: Food & Farming; Sacred Air: Climate & Energy*; and *Sacred Water: Oceans & Ecosystems*.)

Finally, *The Meal That Reconnects* brings to light just how far our highly structured parish eucharistic celebrations have strayed from the radical sense of food, community and sharing that marked the early church. While all aspects of this topic call for significant study and discussion beyond our focus at this time, there are a few that should be considered, specifically what is being "blessed and broken" and distributed as communion? How locally produced and bread-like is it? As Dr. McGann suggested in her sharing with us, you might want to incorporate into the beginning of your family/community meals the breaking apart of a locally sourced loaf of bread as part of your pre-meal "grace" as a way to begin to address this issue.

**UPDATE: St. Michael's will initiate "Meatless Mondays" this coming week!**

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## Some Simple Living Options from the UK

### Wonky Fruits and Vegetables

submitted by Katrina...

"Oddbox" delivers to your door (overnight to keep the carbon footprint as low as possible) fruit and veg that would otherwise go to waste because it is either too big, too small, an odd shape, or because they have too much. You can choose the size of box you want, the frequency of delivery, and it comes with recipe suggestions to match what is in your box. It cuts the carbon footprint and food waste.

<https://www.oddbox.co.uk/>

Ecover range available in most of the UK supermarkets now, but the next step is to keep refilling your plastic bottles/containers (be that washing up liquid, laundry detergent, toilet cleaner etc).

Sorry if I'm repeating resources you already know or have shared.

<https://www.ecover.com/action/refillution>

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### The Congregation's LSAP Nonviolence Team to meet

The first meeting of the Laudato Si Action Platform Nonviolence Team will take place Wednesday, April 6th at 9 AM Pacific, Noon Eastern and 5 PM in the UK. The meeting will be on Zoom. This is the first meeting of the group. If anyone not signed up wants to join, please contact Frank McCann for the Zoom link

and reading to look at in preparation for our time together.

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## Catholic Mobilizing Network Monthly Prayer Vigil

Our next First Friday Prayer Vigil is scheduled for Friday, April 1st at 2 p.m. ET (11 a.m. PT). A scripture reflection will be offered by Deacon Paul Shelton from St. Matthew Church in Baltimore, MD.



[Register here.](#)

Virtual prayer vigils are held live via Zoom conference and livestreamed on [CMN's Facebook page](#). The day of the vigil, all registrants will receive an email with a link and additional instructions on how to join the event.

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## Meditation for Earth

We read a short blessing for a flourishing Earth, followed by an excerpt from Hal Borland's '12 moons of the Year'. Then we lead a simple meditation to music followed with silence. The meditation and silence last approximately 30 minutes.



No matter where you are in the world, you can join us as we meditate for our Earth!

**Tuesdays 12:15 pm - 12:45 PM EST**

There are two ways to meditate with us:

1. In-person in the Sanctuary at Rumson Presbyterian Church
  2. Online on our YouTube channel. Click [HERE](#) to Meditate for our Earth together!
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## Community Advocacy Meeting

Please save the date, 28th April, from 11 - 12 for our next working meeting!



We will meet and discuss how to actively empower ourselves with key legislative tools toward our statewide and local coalition.

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## Calendar Days in April

[World Autism Awareness Day \(A/RES/62/139\)](#) 02 Apr  
[International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action \(A/RES/60/97\)](#) 04 Apr  
[International Day of Conscience \(A/RES/73/329\)](#) 05 Apr  
[International Day of Sport for Development and Peace \(A/RES/67/296\)](#) 06 Apr  
[World Health Day \(WHA/A.2/Res.35\)](#) 07 Apr  
[International Day of Reflection on the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda \(A/RES/58/234\)](#) 07  
[International Day of Human Space Flight \(A/RES/65/271\)](#) 12 Apr  
[World Chagas Disease Day \[WHO\]](#) 14 Apr  
EASTER 17 April  
[Chinese Language Day](#) 20 Apr  
[World Creativity and Innovation Day \(A/RES/71/284\)](#) 21 Apr  
[International Girls in ICT Day \[ITU\]](#) 22 Apr  
[International Mother Earth Day \(A/RES/63/278\)](#) 22 Apr  
[World Book and Copyright Day \[UNESCO\] \(UNESCO 28 C/Resolution 3.18\)](#) 23 Apr  
[English Language Day](#) 23 Apr  
[Spanish Language Day](#) 23 Apr  
[International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace \(A/RES/73/127\)](#) 24 Apr  
[World Immunization Week, 24-30 April \[WHO\]](#) 24 Apr  
[World Malaria Day](#) 25 Apr  
[International Delegate's Day \(A/RES/73/286\)](#) 25 Apr  
[International Chernobyl Disaster Remembrance Day \(A/RES/71/125\)](#) 26 Apr  
[World Intellectual Property Day](#) 26 Apr  
[World Day for Safety and Health at Work](#) 28 Apr  
[International Jazz Day \(UNESCO 36 C/Resolution 39\)](#) 30 Apr

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