

Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace



NewsNotes **May 2023**

Before having my cardiac pacemaker replaced on Friday, I spent the first three days of the week in St. Louis Missouri with 75 other members of the Justice Conference of Women Religious (JCWR) who serve as justice and peace promoters for various women's congregations across this country.

The speakers described a movement to a fourth stage of justice ministry, the first being direct service, the next is seeking systemic change, a third was the formation of NETWORK, a political ministry. The new stage we were beginning they called Transformative Justice: embracing and acting from an ever-emerging consciousness.

It will take time for me to understand all the implications of what we were presented, but a few things are clear. One, climate disruption (the now preferred term) is the overall priority for justice work. And rather than symptoms of the problem, we are to focus on the root cause which was described as a human inability to see ourselves as interconnected with all creatures in a way that would cause our behavior to change. Another way of saying it might be that we as humans act selfishly because we are addicted to a false sense of our independence and right to control.

The universe itself is offered as a path to curing our ills. It is always moving forward and we are encouraged to be caught up in that movement in relationship with all life. We are told we are in a transformative journey and we will only become transformed in interdependent relationship...because that is how the universe works.

Practically speaking, it means much that we have become accustomed to such as patriarchy, anthropocentrism, and capitalism must be discarded or significantly modified. We were told the work will not be easy.

That I understand.

Frank

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



The Big One



by David Richardson

Between the 21st and 24th of April, protesters converged in London from all parts of the UK, emphasising peaceful protesting. Led by extinction rebellion (XR), over 200 organisations came together to draw attention to the overlapping racial, financial and social emergency connected with the climate and ecological crisis we are experiencing. XR organisers estimated that the total number of people who attended over the four days was more than 60,000, making it one of the biggest joint environmental protests in the UK.

The Big One" commenced on Friday the 21st, featuring a convergence of faith groups, including the Congregation of the Sisters of St Joseph of Peace. Despite the forecast of heavy rain, the day remained dry for the most part. Converging from different parts of the UK, CSJP sisters and associate met together at St John's Waterloo for a service with music led by the Salvation Army. Inside the church, it was standing room only, with chairs being removed to make room for more people, but still, there was not enough room, and people spilt out into the church grounds.

After the service, approximately 1500 of us started a pilgrimage to Westminster, Houses of Parliament, led by Church leaders and the former Anglican Bishop of York, John Sentamu, now Lord Sentamu. The pilgrimage was ablaze with banners from different faith organisations, and we had a strong feeling of unity.

As we walked, we paused halfway at Shell headquarters, where Lord Sentamu tried to deliver a letter calling for the multinational oil and gas company, "to stop all new fossil fuel exploration and extraction immediately". The doors to Shell were locked, and security turned Lord Sentamu away, in response, he said: "We want simply to deliver a letter. We're coming in peace."

The pilgrimage continued along Westminster Bridge over the River Thames and into Westminster, where we converged with other protesters. It started to feel more like a carnival atmosphere. Banners were waving, different groups were marching in from other parts of London, the beating of drums, music playing, a diverse smell of food being cooked, public speakers, and small stalls representing different organisations. Such was the diversity of the people. It brought a sense of unity, but more than that, feelings of hope.

What Happened at the UN Water Conference?



Are you curious to learn what happened when the world came together at the United Nations Water Conference in March 2023? Register for this one-hour webinar to hear stories from the Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace and their sponsored ministry, Waterspirit. Learn more about global water issues and what people of faith can do to protect life-giving water.

Register here: <https://waterspirit.kindful.com/e/what-happened-at-the-un-water-conference>

Cloud Computing Impact

By David Richardson

What does the label cloud computing suggest to you? The word cloud feels quite airy and almost unreal, which contributes to us not thinking of it as a physical entity with actual physical and environmental impacts, such as energy use and carbon emissions. So, the word cloud can be pretty ambiguous. Two decades ago, the cloud did not exist. During that time, it has turned into an increasingly power-hungry industry. The cloud comprises of large data centres, and there are approximately 8000 worldwide.

Our pictures, emails, films, music, books, videos and online shopping, it's all stored in the cloud. The cloud has changed how we live, working from home

and online meetings, cutting travel and saving energy.

Research suggests a five-minute internet search uses as much energy as boiling a kettle for a cup of tea. [Anneli Ohvril, from Digital Cleanup](#), said. "If each British adult would abstain from sending out a "Thank you" email, we would conserve more than 16,000 tons of CO2 per year - equal to 81,000 flights from London to Madrid".

[The BBC Panorama TV programme](#) reported that the cloud is thought to be responsible for up to 1.5% of all greenhouse gas emissions. America's data centres now use approximately 2% of the country's electricity supply, and some data centres use more than a billion litres of water a year to keep them cool.

The cloud isn't up there. It's where we live, which has implications for our energy infrastructure and, significantly, our environmental policies.

In 2022 Slough, just outside London, experienced a hose pipe ban due to a water shortage; the 140 data centres nearby still got their water supply. The data centres did not cause the water shortage but put significant demand on an already depleting water supply.

Large data centres use a considerable amount of electricity; some use the equivalent of up to 200,000 homes. The [FT](#) reports that this has caused significant difficulties in West London because the electricity grid has run out of capacity to support new homes until 2035, despite there being a housing crisis.

Pope Francis called Catholics to "adopt lifestyles that are more respectful of nature." So we need to ask the question, what ecological impact does the use of our data make? How does it fit in with care for God's creation?

There are practical things that we can do;

- Keep an eye on our data usage and storage.
- Delete unnecessary emails.
- Unsubscribe from unnecessary mailshots.
- Campaign for more green energy within the data centre and cloud industry.

Rubbish cleaning shark



By David Richardson

Canary Wharf is a thriving financial district located on London's River Thames old docklands. 120,000 people visit every day to work or shop there, and the high footfall means it is easy for coffee cups and lunch wrappers to end up in the water.

Inspired by a whale shark's wide mouth - which scoops up whatever is in front of it - Ran Marine created the WasteShark. It's an autonomous machine that scoops pollution from the water on the surface level." "That pollution could be plastic or any debris or biomass like algae,"

[Euronews](#) report that WasteShark is entirely electric and is so quiet that it doesn't disturb wildlife. The WasteShark is battery-powered and travels up to 5km on one battery. That amounts to around 8-10 hours of cleaning time. A daily feed for the WasteShark is about 500kg of debris or the equivalent of guzzling roughly 21,000 plastic bottles, which includes microplastics. The rubbish collected in the robot's belly is then returned to shore, sorted, recycled, or disposed of responsibly.

While this is only a drop in the ocean to the 8 million tonnes of plastic that enters the UK's ocean every year, it is nevertheless a creative innovation worth mentioning.

Words to consider from Thomas Berry

The deepest cause of the present devastation is found in a mode of consciousness that has established a radical discontinuity between the human and other modes of being and the bestowal of all rights on the humans. The other-than-human-modes of being are seen as having no rights. They have reality and value only through their use by the human. In this context, the other than human becomes totally vulnerable to exploitation by the human.

from The Great Work

St. John XXIII's prophetic encyclical 'Peace on Earth' –

dangerously remains ignored

By Tony Magliano

Just over 60 years ago, the earth as we know it came dangerously close to being engulfed in a nuclear fireball.

In October of 1962, the United States demanded that the Soviet Union's nuclear missile sites in Cuba be dismantled and removed. After the Soviet Union refused, the U.S. established a Cuban naval blockade.

With the situation quickly escalating towards nuclear war, Pope John XXIII issued an urgent appeal for peace.

In a letter to American President John F. Kennedy and Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev, St. Pope John XXIII pleaded, "We beg all governments not to remain deaf to this cry of humanity. That they do all that is in their power to save peace. They will thus spare the world from the horrors of a war whose terrifying consequences no one can predict."

A few days later, Khrushchev agreed to withdraw the missiles. And Kennedy soon lifted the blockage.

The Cuban missile crisis had ended, but it had a profound effect upon "Good Pope John."

Just months later in April of 1963 he issued his prophetic landmark encyclical letter *Pacem in Terris* ("Peace on Earth").

Mindful of humanity's recent close brush with nuclear war, and the devastation conventional wars cause, he wrote "Justice, then, right reason and consideration for human dignity and life urgently demand that the arms race should cease, that the stockpiles which exist in various countries should be reduced equally and simultaneously by the parties concerned, that nuclear weapons should be banned, and finally that all come to an agreement on a fitting program of disarmament, employing mutual and effective controls."

Tragically, St. Pope John's appeal to justice, right reason, and consideration for human dignity and life is largely ignored when it comes to ending the arms race, banning nuclear weapons, and moving toward verifiable multilateral disarmament of all weapons.

Big money is a gigantic obstacle here. War making and war preparation is an extremely lucrative business, especially for arms producing corporations like Lockheed Martin, Raytheon, General Dynamics, Northrop Grumman, Boeing and BAE.

According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, worldwide annual military spending is now at an all-time high of over \$2 trillion (see: <https://bit.ly/41xUO9K>).

St. Pope John wrote "Disagreements must be settled, not by force ... but rather in the only manner which is worthy of the dignity of man, that is, by a

mutual assessment of the reasons on both sides of the dispute, by a mature and objective investigation of the situation, and by an equitable reconciliation of differences of opinion.”

And as Good Pope John wisely counseled, true peace will be born when human rights are universally respected, and when equality of arms is replaced with “mutual trust alone.”

In a recent article written for the Italian magazine L’Espresso, Pope Francis wrote, “Only by stopping the arms race, which takes away resources for fighting hunger and thirst and ensuring medical care for those who have none, can we avert the self-destruction of our humanity” (see:

<https://bit.ly/3KOTQ2a>).

“What is needed is what 60 years ago St John XXIII, in his encyclical ‘Pacem in Terris,’ called ‘integral disarmament,’” he said. The idea that peace can be based on an equal balance of weapons ready to use “must be replaced by the principle that true peace can only be built in mutual trust.”

“One must have the courage to ‘disarm’ hearts, to ‘demilitarise’ them, to remove poison and resentment,” Francis wrote.

So, please consider reading and praying with Good Pope John’s still highly relevant and challenging encyclical letter *Pacem in Terris* (“Peace on Earth”).

Perhaps this could become a parish-wide project (see:

<https://bit.ly/3KMgKHh>)? And please sign the petition: <https://bit.ly/3GPD3e6>.

Don’t ever think, “I can’t make a difference?” The truth is that you can surely make a difference! Start with one step. And then another step. Just keep on walking toward peace, with the Prince of Peace!

Tony Magliano is an internationally syndicated Catholic social justice and peace columnist. He is available to speak at diocesan or parish gatherings. Tony can be reached at tmag6@comcast.net.



Native Americans respond to Vatican repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery

The Nuns and Nones land trust is a group of Catholic sisters working with young women who have no religious affiliation (nones) to incorporate land justice into the planning of religious congregations to move in the direction of racial and ecological justice in the use of their lands. The core team of the

group put together a response to the Vatican's repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery in March. The video features four native American speakers, some who are attorneys, trying to share with us how the Doctrine is embedded in American Law and in the memories of injustice endured by generations of Native Americans.

If we are serious about living out the commitments of our chapter call to:

- Cultivating and practicing peace through justice by the intentional living of interculturality, anti-racism, and inclusion
- Addressing, healing, and being present to the wounds and broken relationships among ourselves and all of God's Creation
- Resisting every form of war and violence
- Making a place for everyone at the table where all are welcomed and gifts are honored
-

This is a video we could all benefit from viewing:

https://youtu.be/Y4afmi_d1nI

NETWORK continues campaign for Medicaid, housing and food programs



NETWORK, the Catholic social justice lobby founded by religious sisters 50 years ago is leading a campaign to protect food, nutrition, housing and Medicaid programs that Republicans want cut in order to pass a bill to raise the debt ceiling.

The Sisters at St. Michael's Villa signed a letter asking for protection of those programs that help low-income Americans. Despite their efforts, the Republicans passed their measure in the House with a margin of three votes. The Senate will not take up the bill and the president has promised to veto it if it did pass. The Democratic administration insists on a clean debt limit bill and believes any spending cuts should be considered as part of the budget

process.

Continued efforts to protect these programs will be necessary after a debt ceiling rise is agreed upon.

If the debt ceiling bill is not passed it could cause incredible fiscal catastrophe pushing even more people into low-income status. Failure to raise the debt ceiling is likely to cause the loss of as many as six million jobs.

Love the Stranger



By David Richardson

In March's NewsNotes, I spoke about [Love the Stranger](#) report by the Department for internal affairs of the UK Catholic Church. It aims to assist local churches in walking together as one and present the UK Catholic response to refugees and migrants through 24 principles.

In response to this report, on 17th May, 7.00 – 8.30 p.m. GMT, Caritas, Nottingham UK and Sisters of St Joseph of Peace will host a joint Zoom workshop, which you are invited to. It will be an opportunity to;

- Develop support for those fleeing violence and destitution, or settling in the UK for a better life.
- Meet others who want to ensure those caught in our asylum system have human dignity restored.
- Hear from people volunteering in various settings to support refugees and asylum seekers.
- Learn about the work of partner organisations.
- Plan ways to engage MPs in developing a compassionate asylum policy.
- Prepare support for those likely to be housed at RAF Scampton near Lincoln.
- Ensure that people from all over the world thrive in our parishes.
- Help to build a network for advocacy and practical service in the Diocese of Nottingham.

Root Causes of Migration Webinar



The Franciscan Action Network (FAN) will offer a webinar on the root causes of migration on Wednesday May 17 at 4 PM in the East, 1 PM Pacific

There will be a simultaneous translation between Spanish and English. Speakers include an expert on the history of migration, an impacted person and a Salvadoran friar providing support at the border.

Register to attend by clicking [here](#).



Laudato Si Ecological Economics teams still at work

On 25 April at the Citibank Annual General Meeting (AGM) the CSJP led proposal for Citybank to review and report on its performance in protecting the rights of indigenous people netted 31 percent of the votes of shareholders. While it is a very respectable result it is unlikely to cause Citibank to develop the report or reform some of its procedures. The vote netted two percent fewer votes than a similar proposal got last year.

This was despite considerable news coverage of our proposal:

4/24/23, Independent: [Nuns lead shareholder vote over Citigroup's fossil fuel financing: 'Sisters are very persistent'](#)

4/18/23, EarthBeat: [Catholic sisters press Citigroup to reexamine pipeline financing](#)

4/11/23, BMF: [These Shareholder Nuns Want to Pressure Citigroup Bank](#) (en français)

4/10/23, Financial Times: [Nuns Urge Citigroup to Rethink Financing of Fossil Fuel Projects](#)





On Wednesday May 3, 4-6pm Eastern (1-3pm Pacific) The Franciscan Action Network will sponsor a screening of "[The Ants & The Grasshopper](#)," followed by a discussion of action we might take regarding the Farm Bill 2023.

The film is a documentary ten years in the making that weaves together the urgent themes of climate change, gender and racial inequality, the gaps between the rich and the poor, and the ideas that farmers and others have generated in order to care for our Sister, Mother Earth.

Immediately following the film, we will host a discussion with Madison Mayhew, Congregational Organizer and Federal Policy Advocate at Interfaith Power and Light. Madison will discuss ways to respond to the documentary's message through advocacy around the Farm Bill.

FAN is using a new technology for this webinar. To [register](#) click on "Save my Spot," fill out the form with your email and name, create a password, and on the final screen click "Confirm & Join."

You will be emailed a confirmation and a reminder 10 minutes before the event.



Upcoming Waterspirit Events



Journey of the Universe

Wednesday May 3 6-7:30 pm

Join Waterspirit as we screen "Journey of the Universe," a film exploring the human connection to Earth and the cosmos. "Journey of the Universe" invites viewers to become travelers on a journey through the origins of the universe, the emergence of life, and the rise of humans. Visit

<https://waterspirit.kindful.com/e/journey-of-the-universe> for more information or to register.

Universe Walk

Wednesday May 10 6-7 pm

Join Waterspirit as we walk our way through the Great Emergence of the universe, the evolution of Earth, the birth of humankind and the formation of civilizations. This meditative walk is a way of bringing our knowledge of the 13.8-billion-year Universe/Earth process from our heads to our hearts. Visit

<https://waterspirit.kindful.com/e/universe-walk> for more information or to register.

Joys of the Sea

Saturday, June 10 2pm-5pm. 4 East River Road, Rumson, NJ

Join Waterspirit's Joys of the Sea gala as we celebrate 25 years. This event will be an afternoon of delicious food and wine, beautiful harp music, and special remarks by honorees Drs. Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim, Yale professors who cofounded of the field of religion and ecology.

Tickets available for \$100. <https://waterspirit.kindful.com/e/joys-of-the-sea-2023>

Climate Pastoral Care Course

(Online course-at your own pace)

Learn more about the physical, emotional, mental health, and spiritual impacts of the climate crisis and how to address them through the practice of pastoral care in this new thirteen-module course. To learn more about this online course visit our website <https://www.waterspirit.org/climate-pastoral-care> Your copy should address 3 key questions: Who am I writing for? (Audience) Why should they care? (Benefit) What do I want them to do here? (Call-to-Action)

ECOLOGICAL SPIRITUALITY



Meditation for Earth



Please join Waterspirit for a 30 minute "Meditation for Earth" in-person in the Sanctuary at the Rumson Presbyterian Church 4 East River Road, or livestreamed on Waterspirit's YouTube channel

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCFzJckCctU22hEjrmoLitwQ>

[Find the Meditation on the Waterspirit YouTube Channel.](#)

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & PARTICIPATORY ACTION



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