

Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace



NewsNotes **October 2023**

Greetings,

We are coming to the close of the Season of Creation on October 4th, the Feast of St. Francis. Thankfully, it is not likely that this will mean an end to our concern and work to save our planet. Pope Francis will ensure that when he releases his follow-up to *Laudato Si* with his Apostolic Exhortation, *Laudato Deum* (Praise God).

Many of the photos shared among us this past month have led viewers to the same sentiment as the beauty, simplicity, and the fragility of our life on this planet was revealed in what has been shared. Praise God! The LSAP ecological conversion team meets this Tuesday and will consider how or when to celebrate what we experienced together and to consider when or if the photo sharing will continue in some form as has been suggested by many.

One part of our charism that may not be receiving the investment of our time it deserves since the outset of *Laudato Si* is our commitment to nonviolence. I hope that will be changing. Below you will see that Marie Dennis, long time Pax Christi member and leader will be drawing connections between nonviolence and integral ecology. I encourage as many as can view the webinar to do so. They are also usually recorded for those who cannot attend the original broadcast and we will make it available as we are able.

There will also be an effort through Pax Christi USA, Bread not Stones, to write to our bishops to encourage a budget that focuses less on arms spending and more on the needs of those on the margins. We will also have more to write about the Nuns Against Gun Violence group that has formed and of which we are part.

A suggestion has been made to spend time in Advent reflection on nonviolence

perhaps in a book study. Do any of you have thoughts on that and, if so, let me know. If there is a response, we can make it work.

Finally, as the weather cools, let's remember to keep our thermostats as low as we can handle. The more coal, gas, oil or wood we burn to keep warm, the more we add to global warming.

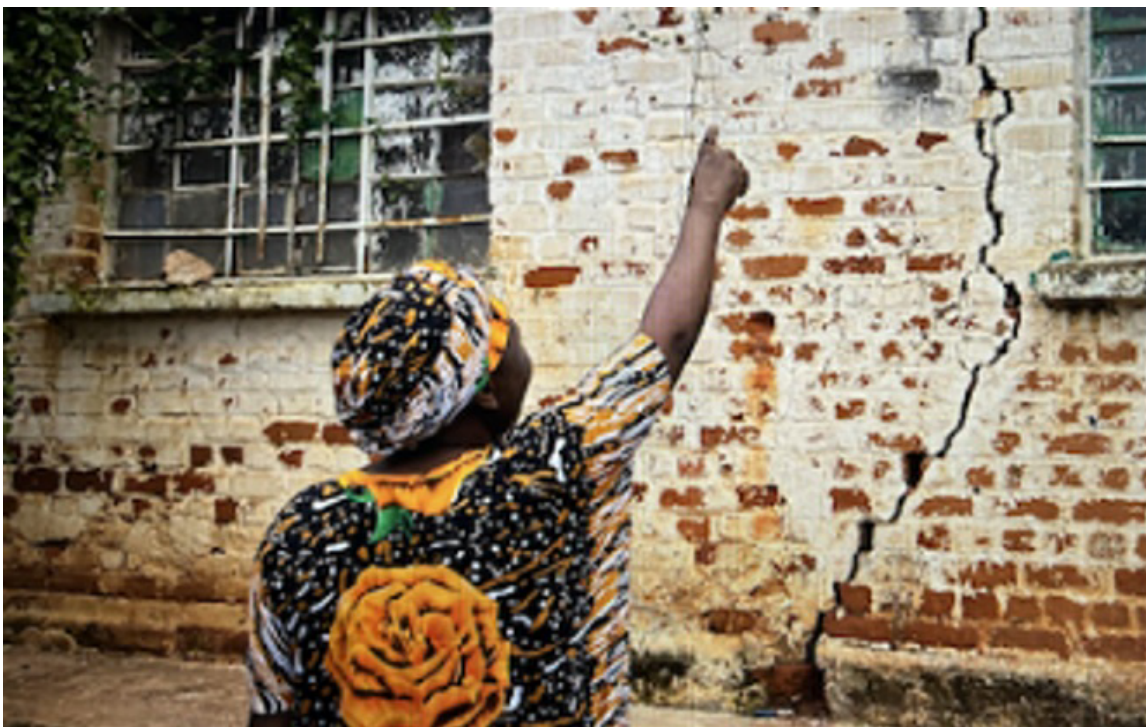
Peace and all good,

Frank

Frank McCann
Peace through Justice Facilitator
Congregation's NGO Representative to the UN
Laudato Si' Action Platform Coordinator



Mining of cobalt and copper for rechargeable batteries is leading to grievous human rights abuses



The expansion of industrial-scale cobalt and copper mines in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has led to the forced eviction of entire communities and grievous human rights abuses including sexual assault, arson and beatings.

In a report: *Powering Change or Business as Usual?* Amnesty International and the DRC-based organisation Initiative pour la Bonne Gouvernance et les Droits Humains (IBGDH), detail how the scramble by multinational companies to expand mining operations has resulted in communities being forced from their homes and farmland.

"The forced evictions taking place as companies seek to expand industrial-scale copper and cobalt mining projects are wrecking lives and must stop now," said Agnès Callamard, Amnesty International's Secretary General. "Amnesty International recognizes the vital function of rechargeable batteries in the energy transition from fossil fuels. But climate justice demands a just transition. Decarbonizing the global economy must not lead to further human rights violations.

"The people of the DRC experienced significant exploitation and abuse during the colonial and post-colonial era, and their rights are still being sacrificed as the wealth around them is stripped away."

Growing demand for so-called clean energy technologies has created a corresponding demand for certain metals, including copper, and cobalt, which is essential for making most lithium-ion batteries. These are used to power a wide range of devices including electric cars and mobile phones. The DRC has the world's largest reserves of cobalt, and the seventh largest reserves of copper.

The average electric vehicle battery requires more than 13kg of cobalt, and a mobile phone battery about 7g. Demand for cobalt is expected to reach 222,000 tonnes by 2025, having tripled since 2010.

[Read the rest of the Vatican News story here.](#)

Editor's note: The CSJP shareholder advocacy team is working with [Investor Advocates for Social Justice](#) on evaluating of the supply chains used by five major auto manufacturers in obtaining minerals needed for EVs. The CSJPs will be the lead filer with the Ford Corporation. Other manufacturers we are working with are GM, Tesla, BMW and Stellantis.

The impact of global warming has caused a severe marine heatwave and an increase in heat-related deaths in the UK

by David Richardson

The [Guardian newspaper reported](#) that scientists have warned that a rare and extreme marine heatwave off the coasts of the UK and Ireland posed a serious threat to marine species. Sea temperatures were several degrees above normal and broke records for late spring and early summer. The UK Met Office stated that global sea surface temperatures in April and May reached an all-time high, according to records dating back to 1850.

The US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration designated some parts of the North Sea as being in a category four marine heatwave, which is "extreme", with areas off the coast of England up to 5C hotter than what is typical.

The extreme and unprecedented temperatures, according to Daniela Schmidt, a professor of earth sciences at the University of Bristol, demonstrate the impact of human-induced warming and natural climate variability such as El Niño.

Heat, like on land, stresses marine organisms. Several marine plants and animals have been killed due to ocean heatwaves in other parts of the world, causing hundreds of millions of pounds of losses in fisheries income, carbon storage, cultural values, and habitat loss. As long as emissions are not drastically reduced, these heatwaves will continue to destroy our ecosystems. But since this is happening beneath the ocean's surface, it often goes unnoticed.

In contrast, the [Guardian newspaper also reported](#) that new data from the UK Office for National Statistics shows that in 2022, more than 4,500 people died in England due to high temperatures, which is the highest number on record. The number of heat-related deaths has increased, with almost 52,000 deaths associated with the hottest days recorded between 1988 and 2022. One-third of these deaths occurred within the past five years.

Scientists have warned that breaking heat records has become more common, and the human-caused climate crisis makes prolonged and intense heatwaves more likely. They also point out that multiple-day heatwaves are the biggest threat to human health because the body does not have a break from high temperatures.

Prof Antonio Gasparrini, of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, said that this data is a stark warning that high heat-related deaths will become the norm due to climate change.

Climate change is a serious ethical problem that endangers our promises to safeguard human life, health, dignity, and safety. It also challenges our commitment to promote the common good. Moreover, it disrupts our quest for peace and our responsibility to care for the environment, which is a precious gift from God.

Letting the Amazon burn



From Eko (abbreviated)

The Amazon is speeding toward a point of no return—scientists say that if 20% of the forest is lost, it will set off a domino chain that will cause the whole ecosystem to collapse. 18% of the forest is already gone. Local communities are facing a fourth year of drought while temperatures hit record highs. And now the Amazon is burning faster than ever before.

We should be in red alert. Yet the worst offenders behind the climate forces destroying the Amazon—a rotten predatory financial industry that has poured an astounding \$4.6 trillion into fossil fuels in the past few years alone—are flying completely under the radar.

We are going to change that. We have a crack team working to expose big banks responsible for this Amazon emergency, and we need your help to run massive campaigns in the media and with shareholders to force them to change. We'll shine the light on them like never before. It could be a turning point for the planet.

Yet JP Morgan Chase, Citi, and Bank of America are carrying on with the business as usual, pumping trillions into dirty energy even after they promised to slash emissions. The companies they shower with loans, investments, and insurance are responsible for 71% of all greenhouse gas emissions.

[Donate to Eko for this campaign.](#)

Further information on the condition of the Amazon:

[In the line of fire: Indigenous brigades battling forest blazes in the Amazon,](#)

The Guardian, 28 September 2023

[How the forest dies.](#) Washington Post, 18 November 2022

[Drought robs Amazon communities of 'life-giving' river.](#) BBC 10 March 2022

[World's top banks pumped \\$742 billion into fossil fuels in 2021-report.](#) Reuters 30 March 2021

[Big banks' trillion dollar finance for fossil fuels "shocking" says report.](#) Guardian 24 March 2021

Editor's note:

The CSJP Shareholder Advocacy team, working with [Investor Advocates for Social Justice](#) is already engaged with Citi on this issue.

Major changes made to the UK government's approach to achieving net zero by 2050

By David Richardson

As senior politicians and diplomats from around the world met at the United Nations, the UK Prime Minister was absent, choosing to remain in the UK to announce plans to delay a ban on new petrol and diesel cars in a major change to the government's approach to achieving net zero by 2050.



[Euronews.green](#) reported that UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak had been criticised for scaling back on the country's net zero pledges. He still aims to meet the legally binding 2050 net zero target, but there are questions on how interim and the 2050 targets will be met. Critics from political opponents, environmental groups, and the UK industry have criticised the overhaul of the climate policies.

The UK government has previously boasted of being a leader in cutting carbon emissions, with greenhouse gas emissions falling by 46% from 1990 levels, mainly due to the almost complete removal of coal from electricity generation. Sunak's approach was presented as a middle ground designed to entice voters ahead of an election next year. The most significant announcement was the delay in phasing out new petrol and diesel cars from 2030 to 2035. The second-largest rollback was the delay in the target for ending the sale of gas boilers in homes.

International reactions to the announcement also questioned Sunak's controversial decisions, with former US vice-president Al Gore calling it "shocking and disappointing" and "not what the world needs from the UK."

[A letter co-ordinated by the Economic Change Unit](#) and signed by 108 economists, suggests that going back on climate targets will raise the cost of living and put Britain behind other countries in the race to build a green economy. The letter added: "By keeping the UK dependent on volatile and expensive fossil fuels, and by reducing the likelihood of securing high paying jobs in green manufacturing, you are choosing to expose the nation to a high cost of living longer into the future".

Greenpeace U.K. executive director Will McCallum said Sunak "isn't offering working people honesty or a brighter future, he's putting his oil and gas