

# Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace

Pursuing justice, we seek God's gift of peace.

NewsNotes--Lenten Edition 2015

*Dear Sisters and Associates,*

*As Ash Wednesday approaches, we have the opportunity and perhaps the motivation to select a special way of dedicating ourselves anew to the demands of justice and peace in our society. We have a Pope who never fails to call the church to faithfulness to the poor and marginalized. That is where, he says, we will find Jesus and be found by Jesus.*

*This edition will offer several options for enhancing your Lenten Experience.*

*Frank McCann, CSJP-A*

*Justice and Peace Facilitator*



## **Nonviolence**

### **Obama Seeks Permission to Continue Waging War**

In a controversial move, President Obama seeks a new Authorization for the Use of Military Force (AUMF) in the Middle East to combat ISIS/L. Many Republicans object to the exclusion of U.S. ground troops as they seek a more robust response. Others object that the new request does not end the original AUMF given to President Bush after 9-11 which is still in force.

In response, the **Dominican Sisters** issued the following statement declaring they have "relatives in Iraq", referencing their own Dominican sisters who are still serving in Iraq.



They ask us to join them and:

- 1) Pressure the governments of Iraq and Kurdistan to provide security and infrastructure for internally displaced Iraqis to remain in Iraq...
- 2) Vigorously implement the United Nations Security Council Resolution of Feb. 12, 2015 to disrupt financial resources of funding for the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and Al-Nusra Front (ANF)...
- 3) Increase International Assistance to INGO's (international non-government organizations) in the U.S. Budget in order to build capacity of humanitarian organizations to respond to the ongoing crisis in Iraq...
- 4) Expedite resettlement and increase quotas for Iraqis awaiting migration to the U.S.

To register our support of these issues, we are asked to call the White House at 202-456-1111 and/or the Capitol switchboard (202-224-3121) to be connected to our Senators or Representative.

### **Clever Protest by Campaign Against the Arms Trade (CAAT)**

A recent gathering of arms merchants at a Hilton Hotel were greeted by opening statements from a protester with CAAT. She greeted the gathering by announcing that her baby would be born in four months for which she received a round of light applause. She went on to note that the cost of their dinner that evening (£246 per person) exceeded what a person on assistance would get in a month. She called on the arms dealers to change their professions from ones that caused death and destruction... before she was removed from the stage.

You can view the video of the protest [here](#).

### **Care for Creation**

**Catholic Climate Covenant**

The **Leadership Team of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace** have signed onto the Catholic Climate Covenant Fast for this Lent.

In Lent 2015 (Feb 18th to Apr 2nd), we'll organize a global fast for climate justice, joining the year-long [#FastForTheClimate](#) interfaith effort. Catholics from more than 40 countries will fast during each of the 40 days, praying for action to solve the climate change crisis (learn more about [the facts](#) and [Catholic Teachings](#) on climate change).

WHY?

Lent is the time when we remember the 40 days that Jesus spent fasting in the desert, and we are invited to reflect, repent, fast, and listen to God. "

*"Lent is a time of renewal for the whole Church, for each community and every believer"*, said Pope Francis in his recent Lenten message. We propose that during this Lent we pray and fast for the renewal of our relationship with creation and with our brothers and sisters in poverty who are already suffering the impacts of man-made climate change. And, besides standing in solidarity with the victims of climate change, we urge our political leaders to commit to ambitious climate action to solve this urgent crisis and keep the global temperature increase below 1.5 degree Celsius (relative to pre-industrial levels).

A guide to participation can be found [here](#). In addition to Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, we are invited to pray and fast in solidarity with particular countries experiencing the effects of climate change. Some of the countries of most interest to our community might be:

March 11 - United Kingdom

March 16 - United States

March 25 - El Salvador

March 31 - Ireland

### **Protecting the Alaska Waters**

Last month, without sufficient public notice or debate, the Port of Seattle gave the go-ahead to finalize a contract with Shell allowing them to use port facilities to house their arctic drilling fleet. [That decision](#) comes despite broad scientific consensus that arctic oil must remain unused if the world is to avoid the most catastrophic consequences of climate change.

**The good news is that the Port has not yet officially finalized the contract with Shell. That means there's still time to let the Port know that this backroom deal is unacceptable.**

Please take a minute to send an email to the Port commissioners and let them know that sneaking through an arctic drilling deal without public input is antithetical to our values and responsible public service. Here is the contact information for the three port commissioners who supported allowing the arctic drilling deal to move forward:

- Commissioner John Creighton: [john.creighton@portseattle.org](mailto:john.creighton@portseattle.org)
- Commissioner Stephanie Bowman: [stephanie.bowman@portseattle.org](mailto:stephanie.bowman@portseattle.org)
- Commissioner Bill Bryant: [bill.bryant@portseattle.org](mailto:bill.bryant@portseattle.org)

If you have time, please also thank Commissioners Tom Albro ([tom.albro@portseattle.org](mailto:tom.albro@portseattle.org)) and Courtney Gregoire ([courtney.gregoire@portseattle.org](mailto:courtney.gregoire@portseattle.org)) for doing the right thing and supporting more public comment on this deal.

Shell is the only company currently pursuing plans for drilling in the arctic due to its high cost and financial risk. If they can't use Port of Seattle facilities, their only other options will result in much higher operating costs - costs that might convince them to give up their irresponsible plan.

### **Commitment to Reduce Carbon Emissions in the UK**

In the UK, the Conservative Prime Minister David Cameron, Liberal Democrat deputy prime minister, Nick Clegg and Ed Milliband, leader of the Labour opposition have all agreed and signed a joint statement committing themselves to achieving a realistic plan for reducing carbon emissions before the November meetings in Paris.

Activists in the UK launched a campaign #fortheloveof, asking people to send in photos or videos showing why they wanted to see action to mitigate climate change. There is also a poetry reading that can be found [here](#).

### **Privatizing Protest Security?**

Not all the news from the UK is good news. A group seeking to have a march about climate change was told by the local police that they did not have funds to protect the marchers and that they had to provide their own security. Immediate objections were raised reminding legislators that the protestors paid taxes to be protected and that any additional costs levied would in effect prevent legitimate protests from occurring.

To add your voice to those who do not believe the right to protest should be privatized you can [use this link](#) to add your name.

## **U.S. Senate Votes on Climate Change**

Two votes were held in the U.S. Senate on the subject of climate change. The votes were part of debate on the XL Pipeline. In the first, vote 98-1, the Senate agreed with the rest of the world that climate change is real. In a second vote, 50-49 the bare minority of U.S. Senators voted that that while climate change was real, these 49 believed that humankind has nothing to do with climate change, thus dismissing the testimony of the vast majority of scientists.

## **Immigration**

This Lent, the Justice for Immigrants Campaign invites you to pray, fast, learn, and advocate for just and humane immigration reform, in solidarity with immigrants and refugees by committing to one or more of the following activities.

- Pray daily for the protection of immigrants and their families, for the boldness of the faith community to advocate for promote human dignity, and for our elected leaders to enact legislation that provides a pathway to legal status for undocumented immigrants and that reunifies families.
- Fast in solidarity with those who hunger and migrate from their homeland to seek opportunities to provide for themselves and their families.
- Learn from your friends, neighbors and fellow parishioners each week to better understand individual views, broader societal concerns and to help your community move forward in support of the Justice for Immigrants Campaign.
- Give your time to help organize at least one bridge-building event between immigrants and non immigrants to share stories, build new relationships, celebrate differences and improve unity among participants.
- Advocate for just and humane immigration reform by going to [justiceforimmigrants.org](http://justiceforimmigrants.org) once a week and sending an electronic postcard in support of immigration reform to members of Congress. Encourage your friends, family and neighbors to go to the website and send postcards each week as well.

In each unit of the guide you will find suggestions on how you can do something that week to promote generosity toward newcomers. Show

support for pro-immigrant legislative and administrative reforms embraced by the bishops, educate your neighbors, and reach out to Catholic communities assisting immigrants in your diocese-take action!

The tool kit is attached and available for download in English. A Spanish language version will be available within the next day or two.

<http://www.justiceforimmigrants.org/index.shtml#sthash.Q2QyQr0L.dpuf>.

### **First Friends to Host Ash Wednesday March and Vigil**



First Friends will hold their annual Ash Wednesday March beginning at Liberty State Park at 10 AM. The theme is "Our Justice Knows No Mercy." Ashes will be distributed. Participants will march to St. Peter's College where they will attend a teach-in.

At 6 PM marchers and others will re-convene for the annual vigil outside the Elizabeth Detention Center. The group will convene on the corner of Dowd and Evans Streets in Elizabeth, NJ. The Detention Center Vigil will be followed by a soup-supper at St. Joseph's Social Center at 118 Division Street.

Happy Lent