



NewsNotes

February, 2022

Greetings Friend!

The beginning of Black History Month is a pathetic time to see so many states and school boards wishing to bury the truth of the contributions of Blacks to the history of this nation as well as the many obstacles they endured in making those contributions.

Parents who complain that teaching the truth about Black history makes their children uncomfortable must understand that they are making the teaching of true American history impossible. Children are left to learn half-truths about ideals that are enshrined in our founding documents without learning that achieving those ideals is still a work in progress to which they can contribute.

A child's discomfort at learning the truth of our history, taught in age-appropriate stages, will challenge them to address the wrongs they see and enable them to find new ways of relating. If we want to heal relationships between races truth and justice will be the paths to peace.

Frank

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

RESPONSE
TO THE CRY
OF THE EARTH



Sixth in the Series on the Laudato Si Action Platform goals

Join Fr. Terry Moran, the Sisters of Charity and ROAR for the sixth session in the series on the Laudato Si action platform goals:

ECOLOGICAL Spirituality
Monday Feb 7, 2022
6-7:30 PM ET

The presenter is Kathleen Deignan, CND, Director of the Deignan institute for Earth and Spirit, Iona College, NY

Cutting meat could be twice as good for the climate as we thought

By Damian Carrington, The Guardian's Down to Earth Newsletter

A few years ago I switched to a plant-based diet. After reporting study after study spelling out the dire environmental impact of the overconsumption of meat in rich nations, it felt like the right thing to do and I have no regrets. It's unlikely we'll **end the climate crisis** without tackling the vast environmental hoofprint of livestock. And, according to new research, the climate benefit of cutting meat consumption could be double what we thought.

We already knew that cattle and other livestock use **83% of the world's farmland** for pasture and fodder, while producing just 18% of protein. In rich countries, 70% of food-related emissions come from livestock. What the **new study** shows is that if people in developed nations adopted a healthy, low-meat diet, a huge amount of carbon dioxide could be sucked out of the air by letting farmland revert back to natural forests and grasslands.

In fact, the carbon-reduction impact of the growing trees and plants roughly doubles the climate impact of just cutting meat-eating alone, which itself reduces agricultural emissions by more than 60%. That's because we are talking about a lot of land being freed up: almost 350m hectares of pastureland and 80m more of cropland – about half the area of the US. The

total savings would be about 100bn tonnes over time, equivalent to about 10 times China's annual emissions today.

"It's a remarkable opportunity for climate mitigation," says Paul Behrens from Leiden University in the Netherlands who led the study. "But it would also have massive benefits for water quality, biodiversity, air pollution, and access to nature, to name just a few."

I can hear your questions already, so let's address a couple. First, the study did not assume everyone in the 54 nations analysed all went vegan, Instead, they used the "[planetary health diet](#)", which allows a beef burger and two servings of fish a week, plus some dairy products every day.

Second, what about farmers? Behrens says: "It will be vital that we redirect agricultural subsidies to farmers for biodiversity protection and carbon sequestration. We must look after farming communities to enable a just food transition." It is an extraordinary fact that almost 90% of the \$540bn in global subsidies given to farmers every year lead to "harmful" outcomes, according to the UN

Waterspirit's Volunteer Orientation 2022

Are you ready to get more involved in your community? Do you embody Waterspirit's eco-spiritual mission, or are you ready to learn more about how to enact that mission? This two-hour community gathering is intended for anyone who would like to learn more about eco-spirituality and volunteering with Waterspirit.



Saturday, February 12th 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM EST

Register HERE: <https://waterspirit.kindful.com/e/volunteer-orientation-2022>

Opportunity to recycle plastic bags

Submitted by Eileen McCann, CSJP-A

As someone for whom recycling has been a way of life since childhood, I was intrigued by a notice in my town's weekly e-newsletter back in September about a "*Recycle Beyond the Bag*" plastic film recycling program in which a variety of plastic-based items were being collected in containers outside our town library to be used to earn a free "Trex Bench" park bench for the community.

from [Trex Company website](#):

Trex Company, Inc. is a major manufacturer of wood-alternative composite decking, railing, and other outdoor items made from recycled materials. Headquartered in Winchester, Virginia, Trex is world's largest manufacturer of wood-alternative decking and railing. Trex composite products are made of 95% recycled materials. In redirecting more than 400 million pounds of plastic and scrap wood from landfills each year, Trex is one of the largest plastic film recyclers in the US.

Bottom line is that in two months, the required minimum of 500 lbs. to earn a

bench was dropped off by library patrons – which meant that 81,000 plastic film and bags were kept out of landfills!

Earth Day is April 22, and its accompanying focus on environmental issues is just two and a half months away. Seems like a good time to reach out to like-minded groups in your area to organize to sponsor your own *Plastic Film Recycling Challenge* and earn your own Trex Bench. See their website, trex.com/recycling for more information.

Book recommendation

Submitted by Sr. Dorothy Verna, CSJP

I am in a book group with the Multifaith Network for Climate Justice based in Bellingham, but an affiliate of Washington Power and Light. We are reading All We Can Save a series of compelling essays edited by Ayana Elizabeth Johnson and Katherine K. Wilkinson. It is worth reading especially when trying to engage and mobilize people around climate change. It has been a surprising challenge to liaise with RC parishes here, especially East of Seattle, so these various book discussion groups are helpful for me.

Beach Cleanup

Join members of Waterspirit and Save Coastal Wildlife Nonprofit as we cleanup and restore the beach area of Cedar Street Park in the Borough of Keyport, NJ, located along Raritan Bay.



Sun, February 27th 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM EST

Register HERE: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/volunteers-needed-for-beach-cleanup-of-cedar-street-park-in-keyport-nj-tickets-249888311667>



Human Trafficking Day of Prayer. Feb. 8th



Feast Day of St. Josephine Bakhita

Trafficking is one of the deepest wounds inflicted by the current economic system. Wounds that affect all dimensions of personal and communitarian life. The pandemic has increased the “business” of human trafficking and has exacerbated the pain: it has favored the opportunities and the socio-economic mechanisms underlying this scourge, worsening the situations of vulnerability that involved the people most at risk-disproportionally women and girls.

USCSAHT is organizing the U.S. participation of the February 8 prayer marathon which will include reflections on the current reality, greetings from many partners across the country, photos of our members work this past year, and of course, prayer. The eight-hour worldwide Marathon of Prayer will be divided into blocks by continent into half an hour blocks and run from 9:00 am (Rome time) to 5:00 pm (Rome time). The U.S. portion of the program will begin around 10 am ET. You can watch the livestream on the [UISG YouTube channel](#) and at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aU7bTKqPbWY>

U.S. Catholic Sisters against Human Trafficking (USCSAHT) have prepared a trafficking prevention Toolkit 2022 with all kinds of valuable resources to use with February 8th celebrations and in working to end human trafficking throughout the year. The kit includes: information about human trafficking and how to end it; prayer and faith resources; social media shareables; and a host of additional resources. Consider becoming a member so that you can keep on top of new developments in this field.

Bahamas archbishop laments ‘horrific tragedy’ of migrant drownings

From CMS Migration Update

Last week, a boat en route to the United States from the Bahamas capsized. Of the 40 migrants on the boat, one person survived, five were found dead, and 34 remain missing but are presumed dead. Archbishop Patrick Pinder of Nassau, Bahamas, said the loss and suspected deaths of 39 migrants was a “horrific tragedy” and called for more help for people who feel the need to flee their countries and risk their lives on dangerous journeys.

The overcrowded boat capsized in a storm shortly after leaving the Bahamas the night of January 22. On January 25, a commercial mariner found one survivor on the hull of the floating capsized boat. The vessel was found along a known human-smuggling route, along which 700 people have already been intercepted this year by the US Coast Guard. The route is popular with migrants, particularly Haitians, because the southern Bahamas is only 100 miles from Haiti and northern Bahamas is only 50 miles from Florida.

The US Coast Guard suspects the boat was smuggling migrants but did not reveal the nationalities of the missing people. Archbishop Pinder said, "People are looking for a better life. . . . As long as you have people living in situations where they have tremendous social, economic deprivation, and maybe even political repression, you're going to have this kind of movement."

[Read more...](#)

Afghanistan's food crisis (request for charity)

From Avaaz

23 million Afghans are on the edge of starvation and one million children could die this winter. Some are living on dry flour.

Courageous aid workers are doing all they can, but the scale of suffering is intensifying daily, and many are struggling to cope.

But we can do something—and it could help thousands and thousands of people.

With your donation, we can provide emergency food packages and medical supplies, help fund feeding centers and even help keep medical facilities open. And we could do it in days!

Afghanistan is starving: 23 million people are on the edge of famine and one million children could die this winter. Some are barely surviving on nothing but dry flour.

Courageous aid workers are doing all they can, but the scale of suffering is intensifying daily, and many are struggling to cope.

So right now, wherever you are in the world,. This is a chance to help in one of the most severe human emergencies on earth—to help thousands of families and countless children fighting to survive. Every cent we receive will go to this emergency response—donate what you can.

[\\$10 FEEDS 20 PEOPLE](#)
[\\$25 FEEDS 50 PEOPLE](#)
[\\$50 FEEDS 100 PEOPLE](#)
[\\$100 FEEDS 200 PEOPLE](#)
[OTHER AMOUNT](#)

The war, sweeping economic sanctions, and a devastating drought have created a crisis the World Food Program calls "Hell on Earth" -- but it's worse than that.

Unable to feed her family, one mother had to do the unthinkable: she sold her

son to help feed her baby daughter. With \$104 she bought some rice, oil, and flour. Now it's all gone.

The UN is calling for massive humanitarian aid, but the response from governments is slow, and the need overwhelming. We cannot look away.

Afghanistan food crisis Part 2-Analysis

Edited from VOX.com (1/22/2022)

Many of Afghanistan's current problems are intimately connected to the US withdrawal from the country last year, and the Taliban's ensuing takeover of the central government. Since then, US sanctions and an abrupt end to international aid have wrecked Afghanistan's economy and sent it spiraling into crisis.

The US and [the UN](#) have made some concessions to allow humanitarian aid to operate outside the auspices of the Taliban; the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) [granted some licenses](#) to aid groups to operate in Afghanistan without running afoul of financial restrictions on other individuals and institutions in the country.

But, as experts have said, it's not nearly enough to bring the Afghan people anywhere close to the needed aid, and regardless of the OFAC licenses, the Afghan banking system is still essentially [held hostage by US sanctions against the Taliban](#).

"Sanctions are intended to have a chilling effect, in that sanctions will always go beyond the face of the text," Adam Weinstein, a research fellow with the Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft, told [the Intercept](#) in December. Banks and businesses don't want to risk dealing with places or sectors under economic restrictions from the US, for fear that they'll violate a prohibition and be subject to sanctions themselves, Weinstein explained.

To that end, more than 40 members of the Congressional Progressive Caucus [sent a letter](#) to President Joe Biden last month, urging him to release the frozen currency reserves of the Central Bank of Afghanistan.

"No increase in food and medical aid can compensate for the macroeconomic harm of soaring prices of basic commodities, a banking collapse, a balance-of-payments crisis, a freeze on civil servants' salaries, and other severe consequences that are rippling throughout Afghan society, harming the most vulnerable," the letter warns.

So far, however, no policy shift has been forthcoming. As of earlier this month, the US has pledged [an additional \\$308 million](#) in humanitarian aid to Afghanistan, but the Afghan central bank reserves remain frozen.

"Restoring a minimally functioning public sector and stopping Afghanistan's economic free-fall will require lifting restrictions on ordinary business and easing the prohibition on assistance to or through the government," Laurel Miller, director of the International Crisis Group's Asia program, wrote in [a New York Times op-ed this month](#). "Without that, there's little hope that humanitarian aid can be more than a palliative."

The UN's [Financial Tracking Service](#) shows less than \$29 million of the \$4.4 billion needed to keep Afghanistan from disaster has been funded so far.

The UK is among a group of nations that will be in negotiations with the Taliban.

Black History Month Calendar

You can find a Black History Month calendar [here](#). The *calendar* was commissioned by the Srs. of St. Joseph of Brentwood and is shared with all. The artwork is original by Lubay Lancelot. (<https://allotrogy.com>)

IPJC offers film & discussion on restorative justice

Submitted by Max Lewis, CSJP-A

The Intercommunity Peace and Justice Center in Seattle (ipjc.org), which our Congregation sponsors, is hosting an online discussion about restorative justice at 7pm Pacific Time on February 6th.



Filmmaker Gilda Shepherd will discuss her documentary film about mass incarceration, "Since I Been Down". (sinceibeendown.com). Kimonti Carter, the subject of the film, will also participate in the discussion. People who register for the discussion will receive a link in order to view the film prior to the discussion.

Information and a registration link may be found here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/since-i-been-down-film-discussion-advocacy-for-justice-reform-tickets-230492347817>

On February 22nd IPJC will host a follow-up session, which will include Anthony Powers, from the Seattle Clemency Project (seattleclemencyproject.org), to consider further advocacy actions.

Racial Justice with Fr. Dan Horan, OFM

Racial Justice

with Fr. Dan Horan, OFM

Saturday, February 12, 2022
9:00 am – 1:00 pm PST

Attend via Zoom
www.ipjc.org/racial-justice



On Saturday, February 12, St. James Cathedral in Seattle will host a webinar on racial justice.

In this workshop Fr. Dan, author of *A White Catholic's Guide to Racism and Privilege*, invites us to actively address racism and become collaborators with our Black sisters and brothers as we work for racial justice in our society and Church.

Grounded in the Gospel, the wisdom of Catholic tradition and Catholic Social Teaching, he offers practical ways to educate ourselves and advocate for racial justice.

Daniel P. Horan, OFM, Franciscan Friar, author and speaker is the Director of the Center for Spirituality and Professor of Philosophy, Religious Studies, and Theology at Saint Mary's College in Notre Dame, IN.

[To attend online register here.](#)

Questions? Email ipjc@ipjc.org or call 206-223-1138



Waterspirit, a nonprofit center for spiritual ecology, is seeking a part-time Grant Writer. This position reports directly to the Executive Director. Our small team, flexible hours, and faith-driven mission make working at Waterspirit a unique experience.



Learn more and apply [HERE](#)



Bring Waterspirit to Your Community

Waterspirit offers a range of eco-spiritual and educational programs for schools, faith groups, and other community groups.

Learn more about how to bring Waterspirit to your community [here](#).

Waterspirit's Book Club

Our book club will meet online on Zoom at 6PM ET to discuss the book: [Loving Water Across Religions; Contributions to an Integral Water Ethic](#), by Elizabeth McAnally.

Monday, February 28th 6:00 PM 7:00 PM Online on Zoom

<https://www.waterspirit.org/waterspirits-book-club>



Mission: Joy!

**InterSpiritual Discussion with His Holiness the Dalai Lama and
Desmond Tutu**



Mission: Joy Finding Happiness in Troubled Times --- Join us to access the film and then join in an optional discussion on Saturday, 5 February 2022 at 8 pm ET. Please note that access to the film will go LIVE for 72 hours starting at 7 pm ET on Thursday, 3 February, 2022 -- so the idea is that you can watch the film on your own before the Saturday evening discussion (and then watch it again on Sunday if you wish!

Please register in advance to view the film (open from Thursday FEB 3 evening through Sunday FEB 6 evening - watch at your own pace) and join in the optional discussion Saturday at 8 pm ET.

This showing is co-sponsored by Loretto at the United Nations, the Deeptime

Network and the Cuyahoga River Community Lab (CRCL).

The above video is the brief trailer for the longer video based on the [Book of Joy](#) which features the relationship between the Dalai Lama and Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

Catholic Mobilizing Network Monthly Prayer Vigil

Our next First Friday Prayer Vigil is scheduled for Friday, Feb. 4 at 2 p.m. ET (11 a.m. PT).

The Scripture reflection will be offered by Sr. Anita Baird, DHM

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.

RSVP here: <https://catholicmobilizing.org/first-friday-vigils>

Waterspirit 10-Step Eco Anxiety Peer-to-Peer Support Group Info Session

Register for this informational meeting that will outline what this 10-step support group entails, explain the course's suggested donation, and answer any questions you might have prior to committing.



Wednesday Feb 2nd 6 PM EST
Online on Zoom

Register HERE: <https://waterspirit.kindful.com/e/waterspirit-10-step-info-session-1>

Lenten reflection booklets (Lent Starts 3/2/22)

Lent is less than a month away...

CAFOD's Lent Reflection Calendar will be available soon at:
<https://cafod.org.uk/Pray/Lent-calendar>

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[Lent reflections from Pax Christi EW can be found here.](#)

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From Pax Christi USA:

Order today this year's Lenten reflection booklet, ***The Beauty We Must Hold Fast To: Reflections for Lent 2022!***

>> [Order the print version for only \\$5/copy by clicking here.](#)

>> [Order the electronic version for immediate download to your tablet, phone or computer for \\$4 by clicking here.](#)

(There is a 10% discount on regular hard-copy booklet orders of 10-99 or 30% discount for 100+.)

The reflections in this booklet are all new, written specifically for today! Each week you'll read insights and challenges from Pax Christi USA Teachers of Peace **Mary Lou Kownacki, osb** and **Mary Evelyn Jegen, SNDdeN**; **Joe Fahey**, Pax Christi USA's first General Secretary; Pax Christi USA Ambassador of Peace **Nancy Small**; and former national coordinators and executive directors, **Sr. Patricia Chappell, SNDdeN**; **Sr. Anne-Louise Nadeau, SNDdeN**; **Ron Cruz**; **Dave Robinson**; **Anne McCarthy, osb**; and **Jo Clarke**! *(Note: Sr. Mary Evelyn passed in 2014; we drew upon her words and writings to fashion reflections that address the moment in which we find ourselves in 2022.)*

This booklet is a great accompaniment for individual reflection and prayer, with your families around the dinner table, in small groups, or within your religious community.

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

Join us [On YouTube](#) for the month of February.

Eighty-one Christian scholars call for reductions in military spending

Eighty-one Christian scholars from across the U.S. are united in the "commitment to human flourishing and ecological care as well as the cultivation of a sustainable just peace." These scholars represent various Christian communities as well as a diversity of perspectives on issues of war and peacemaking.

In light of the shared commitment, they issued a [profound statement](#) to express "strong opposition to the current sky-high Pentagon budget and recent National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) top-line of \$768 billion. We urge Congress to reduce Pentagon spending in the appropriations bills for FY 2022 and set a trajectory of practical reductions in this area, as well as reductions in nuclear weapons." In the NDAA, Congress authorized an extra \$25 billion for the Pentagon beyond President Biden's request.

[Read more...](#)



Community Advocacy Activities with Waterspirit

Creating change alone can be hard. May we gather and learn together in order to sustain these efforts over time. Join us in a hands on advocacy activity! Together, we will write individual public comments and submit them to the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC). No prior technical expertise is required.

Thursday, February 24th 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM EST
Online on Zoom

Register HERE: <https://waterspirit.kindful.com/e/community-advocacy-feb-2022>

New Congressional Representative for St. Michael's Campus

Assuming the new congressional redistricting map takes effect in New Jersey, the Congregation's headquarters will be represented in Congress by Rep. Josh Gottheimer of Wyckoff, NJ a conservative Democrat and co-chair of the bi-partisan "solutions caucus."

He was a key player in passing the infrastructure bill by not opposing it. Until he was convinced it would not add to the national debt, he and his caucus opposed the bill to the chagrin of the rest of the democrats in congress. He is seeking a fourth term as representative of NJ-05.

Among his most frequent themes are "clawing back" tax dollars for New Jersey because it contributes three time more taxes to the federal treasury than it receives. He is also strongly opposed to the loss of the "SALT" tax deductions, part of the Trump tax cut scheme. Those deductions are now limited to \$10,000 for homeowners with high property taxes for which NJ is infamous and mortgage interest.

Calendar Days in January

Feb 1-7 [World Interfaith Harmony Week](#), ([A/RES/65/5](#))

1 Feb [World Wetlands Day](#) ([A/RES/75/317](#))

2 Feb [International Day of Human Fraternity](#) ([A/RES/75/200](#))

4 Feb [International Day of Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation](#)
([A/RES/67/146](#))

6 Feb [World Pulses Day](#) ([A/RES/73/251](#))

10 Feb [International Day of Women and Girls in Science](#) ([A/RES/70/212](#))

11 Feb [World Radio Day](#) ([A/RES/67/124](#))

“Contemplation on No-Coming and No-Going”

By Thich Nhat Hanh

This body is not me.
I am not limited by this body.
I am life without boundaries.
I have never been born,
and I have never died.

Look at the ocean and the sky filled with stars,
manifestations from my wondrous true mind.
Since before time, I have been free.

Birth and death are only doors through which we pass,
sacred thresholds on our journey.
Birth and death are a game of hide-and-seek.

So laugh with me,
hold my hand,
let us say good-bye,
say good-bye, to meet again soon.

We meet today.
We will meet again tomorrow.
We will meet at the source every moment.
We meet each other in all forms of life.

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