



Shalom News North America

*An instrument of hope, formation, and action
concerning priority matters of social justice.*



June 2015



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Human Life and Dignity

Declaration on the Future of Education

A transformative vision for education over the next 15 years was adopted at the recently completed World Education Forum in Incheon, Republic of Korea. [The Incheon Declaration](#) encourages countries to provide inclusive, equitable, quality education and life-long learning opportunities for all. The Declaration will underpin the education targets in the Sustainable Development Goals that will be ratified at the UN in September. [Learn more.](#)

World Day Against Child Labor – June 12

It is estimated that as many as 120 million children between the ages of 5 and 12 are engaged in child labor. This year the World Day Against Child Labor will focus on the importance of quality education as a key step in tackling child labor. To end child labor nations of the world need to provide free quality education for all children. [Learn more/take action.](#)

Proof that You Exist



Approximately 230 million children under the age of five don't have a birth certificate. Without a birth certificate, it's nearly impossible

to participate fully in society. The Girls Count Act supports birth registration and other legal documentation of children around the world. It would help to protect young children who are particularly vulnerable to human trafficking and child marriages. The legislation also authorizes the U.S. Agency for International Development to build governments' capacities to increase girls' access to education, property rights, and other means of economic security. [Learn more/take action.](#)

Number of Hungry People Drops Below 800 Million

The number of people in the world still going to bed hungry 15 years after the U.N. placed eradicating hunger and extreme poverty at the top of its Millennium Development Goals (MDG) has dropped to 795 million, according to a recently released UN report "State of Food Insecurity in the World 2015". The report indicates that 72 of 129 countries have met the MDG goal for reducing hunger. [Learn more.](#)

Global Food Security Act

Years of insufficient investments in sustainable food production and nutrition programs have exacerbated the

global hunger crisis. In recognition of this deficit, the U.S. has supported programs such as Feed the Future, which works with small farmers and local governments to increase their capacity for boosting production and availability of nutritious food. Congress is currently considering bipartisan legislation, the Global Food Security Act, which would build upon the successes of the Feed the Future program to fight malnutrition, hunger, and promote global food security. [Learn more, take action.](#)

Nepal: Drop the Debt

Two devastating earthquakes in Nepal have killed 8,000 people and affected millions more. Nepal is desperately in need of resources to recover, rebuild, and protect its citizens from the looming monsoon season. Yet Nepal is paying nearly \$600,000 a day in debt, more than \$4 million a week. Jubilee USA and others are calling upon the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to use funds in the Catastrophe Containment and Relief Trust (CCR) to cancel the \$23 million in debt that Nepal owes the IMF over the next two years. Debt relief will free up immediate resources to help Nepal's people living without shelter or access to schools, food, water, or health care. [Learn more/take action.](#)

Immigrant Detention Report

The U.S. immigrant detention system, which treats vulnerable immigrant detainees as criminals, needs extensive reforms, said representatives of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Center for Migration Studies, as they released a [report with policy recommendations](#). They urge Congress and the administration to build a system that affords due process protections, honors human dignity, and minimizes the use of detentions. We have repeatedly spoken of the Gospel imperative to protect the rights of refugees, to promote the reunification of families, and to honor the dignity of all persons. Join us and others in calling for an end to this unnecessary and inhumane practice. [Learn more, take action.](#)

Juneteenth – Emancipation Day

Juneteenth is the oldest nationally celebrated commemoration of the ending of slavery in the United States. It commemorates the announcement, 150 years ago, of the abolition of slavery in the state of Texas in June of 1865 and, more generally, the emancipation of African American slaves throughout the Confederate South. Although President Lincoln issued the

Emancipation Proclamation on September 22, 1862, the news did not reach Texas until May of 1865 and was enforced with the arrival of federal troops on June 19 to declare an absolute equality of personal rights and property between former masters and slaves. Given the history of the Ku Klux Klan, Jim Crow laws, and the Civil Rights movement, we know that emancipation has been an ongoing struggle. [Learn more.](#)

World Refugee Day – June 20

Let us reflect on the courage, strength, and determination of women, men, and children who are forced to flee their homeland under threat of persecution, conflict and violence. [Pictures tell a thousand words](#), Mediterranean Sea: A Growing

Graveyard for Migrants [prayer service](#), a [Litany for Refugees](#), a [Prayer Service for Refugees](#).

June is Torture Awareness Month

On June 26, 1987, the nations of the world took a major step against the immoral and abhorrent practice of torture as the Convention Against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment or Punishment entered into force. This month the National Religious Campaign Against Torture invites you and your faith community to join others throughout the world in commemorating [this anniversary](#) through prayer and action. Resources for [reflection](#), [prayer](#), and [action](#).

Integrity of Creation

World Environment Day – June 5

The theme for [World Environment Day](#) *Seven Billion Dreams, One Planet, Consume with Care* calls us to recognize that the well-being of the entire Earth community depends on responsible and sustainable living. Many of Earth's ecosystems are nearing critical tipping points of depletion or irreversible change. Consuming with care means living within planetary boundaries to ensure a healthy future for all. Since we have the most control over our food choices, we can refuse to support industrial, chemical-intensive food production, which harms small farmers, animals, forests, air and water. Roughly one third of the food produced globally is wasted. [Learn more/take action.](#)



Mapping Factory Farms

The research team at Food & Water Watch has compiled and analyzed data on the largest farms raising animals. Known as factory farms, these operations raise animals in a highly industrial way to produce as much meat and dairy as cheaply as possible. This model prioritizes profits over the health and welfare of people, small- and mid-sized farmers, animals, and the environment. Use this interactive [Factory Farm Map](#) to see where these factory farms are located and the impact they are having. [Learn more/take action.](#)

Wal-Mart Adopts Farm Freedom Principles

Walmart is [calling on its food suppliers](#) to follow stricter guidelines for animal welfare and the use of antibiotics as it aims to be more transparent with customers about where its food comes from. This action represents the first time the retailer has established an official position on the treatment of animals used in its supply chain. Coming on the heels of [dozens of other declarations and pledges](#) from other major food retailers against [gestation crates, battery cages, and tail docking of dairy cows](#), the move by Walmart could bring more oversight and awareness of animal welfare throughout the industry. [Learn more.](#)

Celebrate the Summer Solstice

With the longest hours of daylight in the northern hemisphere, the summer solstice on June 21 celebrates the life-giving gift of the Sun, which pours out four million tons of energy every second, enabling life to emerge and blossom on Earth. Since this day signals the beginning of summer, take the advice of Edward Hays to mark the arrival of a new season “as an opportunity to begin something new in your life. Examine your life patterns, and if you find that you are stuck in old ruts that keep you from being fully alive, today’s the day to jump out of them and start afresh.”

Tar Sands Resistance March

On June 6, thousands will gather in St. Paul, MN, for the largest anti-tar sands event ever in the Midwest. The protest against dirty tar sands oil is not just about the Keystone XL pipeline. Big oil companies like Enbridge are trying to build and expand an enormous network of tar sands pipelines from Canada to the Midwest. These pipelines, along with crude oil trains and tankers, pose a growing risk to the Great Lakes, our rivers, and our communities. Tar sands crude is the dirtiest oil, producing three times more climate pollution than conventional oil. [Learn more/take action.](#)

World Oceans Day – June 8

The oceans are essential to food security and the health and survival of all life; they power our climate and are a critical part of the biosphere. Through World Oceans Day we raise awareness of the current challenges faced by the international community in connection with the oceans. This year's theme is Healthy Oceans, Healthy Planet. [Learn more/take action.](#) [Video reflection.](#)

