



Shalom News North America

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



November 2015



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Integrity of Creation

Laudato Si' Reflection – Cardinal Turkson

I wish to focus on one simple word in the encyclical, *care*. *Care* is central; it is part of the title, "Care for our Common Home." It is repeated dozens of times. *Care* goes further than "stewardship" (mentioned just twice in the English version). Good stewards take responsibility and fulfill their obligations to manage and to render an account. But one can be a good steward without feeling connected. I believe that Pope Francis wants us to understand that our relationship with the environment must be more than that of a very responsible worker. To *care* is to allow oneself to be affected by another, so much so that one's path and priorities change.

Catholic Leaders Urgent Call for Climate Action

The presidents of several Bishops' Conferences from around the world have issued a compelling appeal to the heads of state and negotiators that will attend the UN COP21 climate conference in Paris at the end of the month. "We join the Holy Father in pleading for a major break-through in Paris, for a



comprehensive and transformational agreement supported by all based on principles of solidarity, justice, and participation. This agreement must put the common good ahead of national interests. It is essential too that the negotiations result in an enforceable agreement that protects our common home and all its inhabitants." [Their appeal](#) also included ten specific policy proposals.

A Month of Climate Action

In anticipation of this critically important UN COP 21 climate conference, the Global Catholic Climate Movement (GCCM) and other groups are calling for a month of prayer, reflection, and action to insist that COP21 produce sound climate policies rooted in solidarity, charity, and justice. Follow these links for [prayer and reflection resources](#), to participate in a [global prayer chain](#), to participate in [Live Earth's 24 hours of Reality the World is Watching](#) (11/13-11/14), or for information on [joining in global climate marches](#) taking place in thousands of cities around the world (11/29).

Human Dignity and Economic Justice

***I Was a Stranger and You Welcomed Me* – A Pastoral Letter on Welcoming Refugees**

"The immense and unprecedented refugee crisis today is heart-breaking, moving us to tears and urging us to act. As leaders of the Catholic Church in Canada, we believe that discussion is not enough; this is a time for urgent action." Thus begins the recently released Pastoral Letter from the Episcopal Commission for Justice and Peace of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCCB). It aims at making Canadian Catholics more aware of the current situation, while also challenging them to make a difference in the lives of refugees through prayer, support, and the sponsorship of families. They invite all Catholics to pray, "that our hands and our hearts may unite with our voices in actions that will give a loving welcome to refugees in our country." [Link to the Pastoral Letter](#).

Responding to Refugee Crisis

The Middle East Refugee Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2016 (S 2145) was recently introduced in Congress. This bipartisan bill will allow the United States to allocate an additional \$1 billion to

respond to the refugee crisis resulting from conflict in the Middle East. This funding will both support humanitarian relief efforts and increase the U.S. capacity to resettle refugees. [Learn more, take action](#). Follow these links for information on [U.S. refugee acceptance patterns](#) and the [path from Syria to the U.S. for refugees](#).

Feast of St. Frances Cabrini – November 13

November 13 is the Feast of St. Frances Cabrini, Italian immigrant, first U.S. citizen to become canonized, *and patroness of immigrants*. As we consider how current U.S. immigration policies would require women like Frances Cabrini to be subject to immigrant detention facilities in the U.S., let us pray to Frances Cabrini, Immigrant Patroness for policies that will promote justice for immigrants in the U.S. and throughout our world. [Reflection on immigrants in detention](#).

Standing for Human Dignity – St. Martin de Porres and Dorothy Day

On November 3, we celebrate the feast of St. Martin de Porres, the patron saint of mixed-race people and all those seeking interracial harmony. Learn more about his life [here](#). As you reflect on his life, consider these

articles on race relations in the [U.S.](#) and [Canada](#). On November 8 we encourage you to reflect on the life of Dorothy Day. A fierce advocate for the poor and peace, she co-founded the Catholic Worker movement. Read some of [her quotes](#) and consider [Pope Francis' address to Congress](#) in which he recognizes Dorothy for how she lived her faith.

Addressing Child Trafficking

The FBI's recent [Operation Cross Country IX](#) resulted in the arrest of 153 pimps and the rescue of 149 youths. In the nine FBI Operation Cross Country stings since 2003 approximately 4,000 children have been identified and rescued from sexual exploitation.

Homeless and runaway youth are at greater risk for sexual exploitation and trafficking. Help shine a light against child trafficking by urging reauthorization of the bipartisan Runaway and Homeless Youth and Trafficking Prevention Act. [Learn more/take action](#).

Universal Day of the Child

November 20th is the Universal Day of the Child, which commemorates the passing of the [Convention on the Rights of Children](#) by the United Nations in 1989. In the past 26 years, all countries except South Sudan and the United States have ratified this document. [Contact President Obama](#) and ask him to join the other countries of the world in defending children's rights by sending the CRC to the Senate for approval. Then enjoy these presentations by [Canada](#) and [Germany](#). Please join us in our SSND international [solidarity reflection](#) on the well-being of children.



Criminal Justice Reform

The U.S. incarcerates more of its citizens per capita than any other country in the world. Nearly 2.2 million people are held in Federal or State prisons and county jails on a daily basis. Additionally, on any given day over 70,000 juveniles are held in custody. During his visit, Pope Francis highlighted our broken criminal justice system on numerous occasions. The faith

community has been advocating on this issue for some time and invite you to take action. Recently a bipartisan group of Senators introduced an important criminal justice reform bill, [S.2123 the Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act of 2015](#). While

imperfect, this bill represents a meaningful criminal justice reform. [Learn more, take action](#). Consider this reflection on [Catholic Social Teaching and criminal justice](#).

National Buy Nothing Day – November 27

This is an international day of protest against consumerism celebrated annually on the day after Thanksgiving, traditionally the busiest shopping day of the year. Many people feel that we need to challenge the entrenched view of capitalism that consumer wants must always be satisfied and that immediate gratification is imperative. This calls for personal transformation, for realizing the difference between needs and wants, for standing firm against the advertisers hounding you to buy. [Fact sheet, creative ideas, prayer](#).

Peace and Non-Violence

Veterans Day/Remembrance Day

On November 11, we take time to honor veterans and thank them and their families for their sacrifices. While the parades and speeches are memorable in many ways, honoring veterans should also include advocacy for sufficient care and ongoing support for veterans and their families. Honoring veterans should also compel us to reflect further on the human and [environmental costs](#) of using military force. [Reflection resources](#).

Tolerance

According to Merriam-Webster, tolerance is defined as sympathy or indulgence for beliefs or practices differing from one's own. This November, we mark the 19th annual observance of the U.N. International Day of Tolerance (11/16), and the 34th anniversary of the U.N. Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination

Based on Religion or Belief (11/25). The ongoing pervasiveness of intolerance against minorities, against religious beliefs, against anything different from the established norm is proof that more needs to be done on the personal, local, national, and international levels.

[Resources](#), [prayer](#).



Violence Against Women

The UN has designated November 25 as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. This date came from the brutal assassination in 1960, of the three Mirabal sisters, political activists in the Dominican Republic, on orders of Dominican ruler Rafael Trujillo. The growing incidents world-wide of violent rapes, the trafficking of women, and spousal abuse remind us that much more needs to be done to stop this abuse. [Click here](#) for resources to mark this day.



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