



I have come that you may have life to the full - John 10:10

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Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur Justice and Peace Office

Did you know? The 10th annual Ecumenical Advocacy Days (EAD) gathering is approaching. Are you coming? [Learn more.](#)

CIRCLES OF LIFE

Food Security

[Cajun Crayfish Invading Africa, Eating Native Species](#) - National Geographic

Voracious crustacean will eat everything from plankton to amphibians. It's a far cry from Cajun country, but a U.S. crayfish used in Southern cooking is now eating its way across Africa, scientists say. Without any native predators to keep it in check, the Louisiana crayfish, also known as the red swamp crayfish, is gobbling up small freshwaterfish, fish eggs, mollusks, crustaceans, and aquatic plants.

Millennium Development Goals

[Global development reimagining the goals](#) - The Guardian - Sent by Margaret Clark, SND

Now is the time for making and not breaking new year's resolutions – and resolutions don't come bigger than global goals for human development. Discussions have begun on replacing the millennium development goals (MDGs), the world's framework for fighting poverty. But that fight has not been going as well as it should. Global poverty statistics can be deployed in all kinds of ways, but the essential story of the last 15 years has two elements. Hundreds of millions have been lifted out of poverty. Yet more people – about a billion – live in extreme hunger than ever before. We are entering a new age of inequality, especially within countries and especially in the emerging powers.

Economy

[CELAM official: For real progress in Latin America, spread the wealth](#) - The rocky road to Milagros While immigration, organized crime and protests against huge development projects grab headlines around Latin America as 2012 begins, little progress will be made unless underlying poverty and inequality are addressed, said Peruvian Archbishop Pedro Barreto Jimeno, who heads the social justice commission of Latin American bishops' council, or CELAM. While poverty rates in Latin America have crept downward in recent years, countries that are rich in natural resources must ensure that the economic benefits of industries such as mining, oil and gas reach the people.

Peace

[Congolese Rape Survivor Shares her Story: "Tell Them We Need Peace"](#) - Enough Team

This is an Enough Moment about a mother and rape survivor in eastern Congo, whose name has been changed to protect her identity. She describes the violent attack against her family in 2005 that claimed the life of her late husband, and how she has slowly pieced her life back together. She longs to share her story with Congo's President Kabila, and to tell him to bring peace to Congo. Francine is a beautiful young lady, with a soft spoken voice and a shy smile, from the Walungu territory in eastern Congo. When we first met her, the only indication that something might be wrong was her noticeable limp as she walked up the stairs.

Migration

[New Rights for California's Undocumented](#) - YES Magazine

A handful of new laws this autumn will strengthen civil rights, improve access to education, and protect jobs for the state's undocumented immigrants.

[Sisters launch billboard campaign for immigration reform](#) - Catholic News Service

In anticipation of the Iowa caucuses Jan. 3, 10 communities of women religious in Iowa and nearby states bought billboards throughout Iowa to deliver a call for comprehensive immigration reform. Quoting chapter 25, verse 35 of the Gospel of Matthew, the billboards read: "I was a stranger and you welcomed me" and are signed "Jesus." But the words "a stranger" are crossed out and replaced with "an immigrant."

[Obama Administration Proposes Sensible Changes That Will Let Many Families Avoid Prolonged Separation](#)

- National Immigration Law Center

Many immigrants in the process of obtaining permanent residency through sponsorship by U.S. citizen spouses or parents will no longer need to undergo prolonged separation from their families, if a proposal by the Obama administration is put into effect.

Trafficking

[New video launches about the lack of adequate child sex trafficking laws in the U.S.](#) - ECPAT

Arresting children involved in prostitution does not rescue them. That is the clear message of "*What I've Been Through Is Not Who I Am*," a new documentary released by ECPAT-USA and WITNESS that tells the story of Katrina, a formerly sexually exploited teen who was arrested many times. It was only after she accepted an offer of help from a safe haven that she was able to escape.

Environment

[Trying to Understand Climate Change Deniers](#) - Faith, Economy, Ecology, Transformation

I never really tried to understand the folks who deny climate change before. Their resolute refusal to acknowledge reality was just baffling. But an article by Naomi Klein in *The Nation* makes it clear. If you are committed to our economic and political system continuing in its current form, denial may be the only possible position to take—since climate change calls it all into question.

[Defining Climate Smart Agriculture](#) - Faith, Economy, Ecology, Transformation

At the 17th Conference of Parties of the United Nations' Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Durban, South Africa this past December, the World Bank touted a Kenyan agricultural pilot project that on the surface seems to promote sustainable agro-ecological farming. The World Bank's attempts to get African countries to adopt the pilot as an agriculture work program under the negotiations on climate change mitigation failed when small holder farmer organizations, environmentalists and even African agricultural ministers greeted the proposal with caution.

[New Climate Agreement Increases Gender Equality Commitments](#) - UN Women

Gender equality issues rose a step higher on the international climate change agenda at the recently concluded UN climate talks in Durban, South Africa. The Durban Platform that resulted from the meeting highlights an unprecedented 11 commitments to gender equality, including in a widely heralded new agreement to create an international Green Climate Fund.

Church

[Catholic Leaders Challenge Gingrich and Santorum on Divisive Rhetoric Around Race and Poverty](#) - Edit

Pax Christi USA

More than 40 national Catholic leaders and prominent theologians at universities across the country released a strongly worded open letter today urging "our fellow Catholics Newt Gingrich and Rick Santorum to stop perpetuating ugly racial stereotypes on the campaign trail."

FAITH IN ACTION

[Video Contest for Young Justice Seekers](#) - NETWORK

If you *Mind the Gap!* and are between 18 and 25 - or know someone else who fits this criteria – start thinking about why this gap really matters. Create a short video (5 minutes or less) demonstrating why wealth disparity in the United States is an issue for all of us, and you could win a trip to DC to showcase your video at NETWORK's 40th Anniversary Celebration.

[50 years of CAFOD: What lit your flame?](#) - CAFOD

Whatever age we are, whatever background we come from, and however different our stories are, we are united by our fire for justice. So let us share that fire, and celebrate our unity. To tell us what lit your flame, please post your story on our blog , email: flame@cafod.org.uk or write to What Lit Your Flame? CAFOD, 55 Westminster Bridge Road, London SE1 7JB.

[Fast for Life](#) - Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance

Join with churches, Christian organizations and people of faith around the world in prayer and fasting on Ash Wednesday, 22 February 2012.

COUNTRY UPDATES

Brazil

[The federal government formalizes expropriation in Pará without consultation and explanations](#) - sent by Rebeca Spires, SND

Without public hearings, consultation and explanations the federal government, through the National Agency of Electrical Energy (ANEEL), formalized the expropriation of 282 hectares of land between the cities of Vitória do Xingu, Altamira New and Brazil, State of Pará.

[Dam it: Brazil's Belo Monte stirs controversy](#) - AlJazeera

About 24,000 people will be displaced from towns in the Amazon to make way for the world's third biggest dam.

Congo

[Catholic bishops condemn DR Congo presidential poll](#) - BBC

Catholic bishops in the Democratic Republic of Congo have denounced elections in November which re-elected President Joseph Kabila. A statement from 35 bishops complains of "treachery, lies and terror" and calls on the election commission to correct "serious errors". The archbishop of Kinshasa called for a campaign of disobedience and for the results to be annulled. The poll was heavily criticised by foreign observers and the opposition. International observers said the elections – in which more than 18,000 candidates contested 500 parliamentary seats – suffered from widespread irregularities.

[Press Statement on Congo Elections](#) - U S Secretary of State Hillary Clinton

The United States is deeply disappointed by the Democratic Republic of the Congo Supreme Court's decision to uphold the electoral commission's provisional results without fully evaluating widespread reports of irregularities. We believe that the management and technical execution of these elections were seriously flawed, lacked transparency and did not measure up to the democratic gains we have seen in recent African elections. However, it is still not clear whether the irregularities were sufficient to change the outcome of the election.

Japan

[Mothers Rise Against Nuclear Power](#) - InterPress Service

Japan's nuclear power industry, which once ignored opposition, now finds its existence threatened by women angered by official opaqueness on radiation from the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant after it was struck by an earthquake- driven tsunami on Mar. 11.

[New Year Brings Economic Aftershocks](#) - InterPress Service

Hideo Sato, 47, and his family escaped to this snowy city 200 km from the radiation emitting Fukushima

power plant that was struck by a massive earthquake-driven tsunami on Mar. 11. "We were forced to move from our house in Okuma-machi barely eight kilometres from the damaged nuclear plant. We wanted to protect our children from radiation, but now we are at the mercy of the government," he said

Haiti

[Seven Places Where Earthquake Money Did and Did Not Go](#) - Common Dreams

Haiti, a close neighbor of the US with over nine million people, was devastated by earthquake on January 12, 2010. Hundreds of thousands were killed and many more wounded. The UN estimated international donors gave Haiti over \$1.6 billion in relief aid since the earthquake (about \$155 per Haitian) and over \$2 billion in recovery aid (about \$173 per Haitian) over the last two years.

Kenya

[Women Set to Make Their Mark in Politics](#) - InterPress Service

The August 2012 elections in Kenya will open doors to massive political participation by women for the first time ever.

[Kenyatta and Ruto to face ICC trial over Kenya violence](#) - BBC

The International Criminal Court (ICC) has ruled that four senior Kenyan officials are to stand trial over violence after the 2007 election. Those who will stand trial are Finance Minister Uhuru Kenyatta and cabinet secretary Francis Mutura. They are accused of crimes against humanity, including murder and persecution.

[Four Years On IDPs Remain in Camps](#) - IPS

In December 2011 the government created a task force mandated to fast track the resettlement process. But Peter Kariuki, the coordinator for the IDPs National Network, says that four years down the line this is "too little too late."

Nigeria

[Christmas tragedy: Bomb explosions kill 35 in church](#) - Sun News

Many families have gone, many families have gone. They came to worship their God, but all of them killed". This was how Rev. Fr Isaac Achii, the Parish Priest of St Theresa's Catholic Church, Madalla, near Suleja, Niger State, captured the bomb explosions that rocked the church on Christmas Day. Not less than five explosions took place within the church's premises and along the road. Eyewitnesses said that four policemen detailed to the church accosted three suicide bombers, asking them about their mission. The suspects claimed they were going to worship in the church. Suddenly, the bombs were detonated, consuming all of them.

[Archbishop speaks on Christmas bombings](#) - Independent Catholic News

Dozens of Christians and Muslims in Nigeria were killed on Christmas day when a series of bomb attacks took place on churches around the country. The extreme Islamic Boko Haram sect orchestrated the attacks. At least 35 people died in a suicide bombing on the church of Santa Teresa, in Madalla district in Abuja, the federal capital. Other bombs exploded elsewhere, including a Pentecostal church in Jos, the capital of Plateau State. The Archbishop of Abuja, Mgr John Olorunfemi Onaiyekan said: "I hope that these people have not died in vain, the Nigerians are realizing that terrorism threatens us all, Christians and Muslims."

[Nigeria's Christmas a day of tears and sorrow](#) - The Catholic Register

Christmas was a day of joy but also a day of tears and sorrow for Nigerian Christians. As the world celebrated the birth of the Prince of Peace, the Nigerian Church was struck by senseless violence that wiped away entire families and slaughtered scores of worshippers at three churches: St. Theresa's parish in the town of Madalla, the Mountain of Fire and Miracles Church in Jos, and the church in Gadaka. I could have been among the victims but for divine providence. Until last April, when I was appointed as an assistant chaplain at the University of Abuja, I did weekend pastoral ministry at St. Theresa's parish. But for that appointment I would have been in St. Theresa's on Christmas day.

[Archbishop condemns reports of 'civil war'](#) - Independent Catholic News

One of Nigeria's leading bishops has condemned the media for portraying recent violence in the country as a civil war between Muslims and Christians. Archbishop John Olurunfemi Onaiyekan of Abuja criticised news reports that describe Nigeria as descending into 'ongoing religious violence'. His interview with Aid to the Church in Need followed five separate bomb attacks across Nigeria on Christmas Day, killing at least 40 people, and clashes between the Nigerian military and Boko Haram, an extremist Islamist group which claimed responsibility for the explosions.

[Nationwide fuel protests sweep Nigeria](#) Content - AlJazeera

Clashes reported as thousands take to the streets to demonstrate against government's decision to end fuel subsidies. Protesters and police have clashed briefly in the city of Lagos, as Nigerians held a national strike over soaring fuel prices in Africa's largest oil producer. Security forces, already under pressure over spiralling violence blamed on a radical Islamist group, were on high alert as several thousand people took to the streets of the economic capital.

[Nigeria violence: Scores dead after Kano blasts](#) - BBC

Co-ordinated attacks by Islamist militants in the northern Nigerian city of Kano killed at least 120 people, witnesses and reports say. Aid workers said dozens of bodies had been recovered from the streets, and hospital records seen by reporters said 120 corpses had been admitted.

[How the fuel row caught fire](#) - Africa Confidential

An unwieldy and spontaneous opposition has won its first battle against the government; now it needs a strategy. Nobody in government, least of all President Goodluck Jonathan, seemed prepared for the torrent of opposition excited by the decision to end fuel subsidies. This doubled the retail price of petrol on New Year's Day. The inflationary effect of the new fuel prices on goods and services was devastating for poor people and lost the government any goodwill it had picked up since April's elections. Many know that the main beneficiaries of the subsidy are a cabal of crooked oil traders, so they ask why the government can't pursue them and keep the fuel cheap for the public.

Peru

[CELAM official: For real progress in Latin America, spread the wealth](#) - Catholic News Service

While immigration, organized crime and protests against huge development projects grab headlines around Latin America as 2012 begins, little progress will be made unless underlying poverty and inequality are addressed, said Peruvian Archbishop Pedro Barreto Jimeno, who heads the social justice commission of Latin American bishops' council, or CELAM. While poverty rates in Latin America have crept downward in recent years, countries that are rich in natural resources must ensure that the economic benefits of industries such as mining, oil and gas reach the people.

South Sudan

[UNHCR Declares Massive Humanitarian Disaster In South Sudan](#) - Oye! Times - Sent by Carolyn Buhs, SND

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Mr. Antonio Guterres has described the situation at Doro Camp in Maban County, Upper Nile State after visiting the Blue Nile refugee's camp as a massive humanitarian disaster which deserve support from the international community.

[South Sudan: A Beacon of Hope?](#) - Africa Files

In January 2011, over 98 percent of Sudanese in South Sudan and in the diaspora voted in favour of secession from Sudan. Six months later, the media were filled with images of joyous celebrations from around the world that marked the birth of world's newest country, the Republic of South Sudan. It was an historic moment with powerfully moving scenes of people hugging each other and jubilation in the streets of Juba, capital city of the new republic. After decades of a brutal civil war that left millions of people dead and millions more displaced, this was truly an occasion for rejoicing. For many South Sudanese (and indeed for many Africans as well), South Sudan represents a golden opportunity: a blank slate, a chance to "get it right" by learning from the myriad of post-independence mistakes made by other African countries.

South Africa

[ANC celebrates its centenary trading on past glories](#) - Mail and Guardian

The South African president, Jacob Zuma, will be joined by foreign heads of state where it all began: a Wesleyan church in Waaihoek, Bloemfontein. At the stroke of midnight, he will step forward to light the "centenary flame" symbolising the resistance that gave hope to all of Africa. The African National Congress, the oldest liberation movement on the continent, turns 100 years old on January 8. A year of celebrations costing at least R100m will kick off with a "centenary golf day", a dinner, a church service, a centennial address by Zuma, a performance of the ANC's history in song and dance and a shindig for 100 000 people.

Zimbabwe

[Microcredit Aggravates 'January Disease'](#) - InterPress Service

Thomas Dlakama has experienced what he calls "January disease" all his working life. This phenomenon afflicts millions in Zimbabwe, and its symptoms include an empty purse, rising blood pressure among irascible breadwinners, and a general inexplicable hope of manna from heaven.

[Street Vendors' Protest Sparking a Revolution](#) - InterPress Service

Although the protests are a long way from sparking a revolution in Zimbabwe, the determination of vendors to fight for their livelihoods is a sign that people will no longer remain silent about their suffering.

USA

[Elusive Dreams](#) - Trinity University

2012 Martin Luther King Day arrives on the cusp of another presidential election year. Was it only four years ago that some commentators hailed the start of the "post-racial" era in America with the election of Barack Obama, the first African American president of the United States

[Obama Seeks to Distance U.S. from Israeli Attack](#) - InterPress Service

President Barack Obama and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu are engaged in intense maneuvering over Netanyahu's aim of entangling the United States in an Israeli war against Iran. Netanyahu is exploiting the extraordinary influence his right-wing Likud Party exercises over the Republican Party and the U.S. Congress on matters related to Israel in order to maximise the likelihood that the United States would participate in an attack on Iran.

[America Wakes Up to the Reality: Inequality Matters](#) - Common Dreams

If you're part of the one percent, even getting fired comes with a cushion made of eiderdown. GMI, a research company that gets paid to keep an eye on such things, just issued a study headlined, "Twenty-One U.S. CEOs with Golden Parachutes of More than \$100 Million."

RESOURCES

[How big business has seized control of global climate negotiations](#) - Polaris Institute

The Polaris Institute has prepared a report outlining how multinational corporations and their lobbyists have infiltrated the United Nations and are influencing the outcomes of climate negotiations. The report uncovers and describes where corporations influence the United Nations in the build up to and during climate change negotiations and how this corporate interest is the driving force behind the preferred market based initiatives that are emerging from the UNFCCC process.

[Post Synodal Exhortation: Africae Manus](#) - The Vatican

On November 19th, 2011, in the Republic of Benin in West Africa, Pope Benedict XVI published the Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation Africae Munus which means Africa's Commitment, marking the climax of the Second Synod of Bishops for Africa (2009).

[Food Security Toolkit](#) - AFJN

Recent drought and famine in the Horn of Africa has shed new light on the importance of food security

for the African continent. What is food security? Why do famines occur? How can we prevent these tragedies? This toolkit, published by Africa Faith and Justice Network, can answer these and other questions regarding food security in Africa.

[AEFJN News](#)

[Around Africa](#) - AFJN

[NewsNotes](#) - Maryknoll

Bill Moyers is back on PBS. His first show on January 15 was about inequality, and he plans to continue this topic in future shows. See <http://billmoyers.com/episode/on-winner-take-all-politics/> for the first show and more information on inequality in America.

[The Story of Broke](#) - The Story of Stuff

The United States isn't broke; we're the richest country on the planet and a country in which the richest among us are doing exceptionally well. But the truth is, **our economy is broken**, producing more pollution, greenhouse gasses and garbage than any other country. In these and so many other ways, it just isn't working. Video

[Stop Trafficking](#) January 2012

[Resources on Human Trafficking](#) - Sisters of the Holy Cross

COMING EVENTS

February

29 - The New Economy: Moving Toward a Sustainable Future - Center of Concern

See the world anew through the lens of the New Economy Movement. **Join in the celebration of the Center of Concern's 40th anniversary with a look into the future** -- sponsored by Center of Concern and Washington Theological Union. Speakers: Gar Alperovitz -- author of "America Beyond Capitalism"; E.J. Dionne -- noted editorial writer the Washington Post (invited); Professor Laurie Cassidy -- Assistant Professor of Religious Studies, Marywood University, Scranton, PA See [invitation for RSVP link](#)

March

Water Forum in Marseille , France

23-26 - Ecumenical Advocacy Days for Global Peace with Justice: Is This the Fast I Seek?

(Isaiah 58) Economy, Livelihood and Our National Priorities will be held in the Washington , D.C. area. In this era of economic and political urgency, as critical decisions are being made about U.S. federal budget priorities and as national elections are fast approaching, join other Christian disciples in seeking a global economy and a national budget that breaks the yokes of injustice, poverty, hunger and unemployment – heeding Isaiah's call to become "repairers of the breach and restorers of streets to live in." Experts will lead sessions. Watch www.AdvocacyDays.org for more details.

April

14 - 40th Anniversary Celebration for NETWORK at Trinity College in Washington, D.C will include speakers, awards and food. They'll explore what it means to be a faith-filled justice activist today. To make sure you receive a personal invitation, email: sniedringhaus@networklobby.org. Watch the 40th anniversary news at www.networklobby.org/about-us/history.

June

20 - 22 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) (Rio + 20) is scheduled in Rio de Janeiro , Brazil . Visit www.uncsd2012.org

July

12 - 15 SND International Education Conference at Emmanuel College

20 - 22 Pax Christi USA National Conference 2012 celebrates the 40th anniversary of Pax Christi USA at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. More information available soon at www.paxchristiusa.org.

2013

March

1-3 - 30th Anniversary of the Africa Faith & Justice Network (AFJN) Conference will take place at Notre Dame University in Notre Dame, Indiana . Details much later!!!! Visit www.afjn.org.

Action on behalf of justice is a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the gospel.
Justice in the World - 1971 Synod of Bishops