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Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur Justice and Peace Office

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

CIRCLES OF LIFE

Care of Creation

[Even Tumbling Fossil Fuel Prices Can't Deter Clean Energy Revolution](#) - Common Dreams

2015 saw 'a global surge for wind and solar energy, which occurred despite oil, coal and natural gas selling at bargain rates.'

[From Paris with love for lake Poopó](#) - Sent by Rebeca Spires

Lake Poopó (Bolivia) becomes a desert while in Paris, governments conclude an agreement they call "historic" to address climate change. Will the Paris Agreement save over 125,000 lakes that are in danger of disappearing in the world due to climate change?

[Activists say human rights, financing pose obstacles to Climate Accord](#) - Catholic News Service

Human rights need to be part of the final text, to protect people from projects that could be considered clean energy, such as dams to produce hydroelectric power, but would encroach on their lands and homes.

[COP 21 Learnings](#) - Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns

To my surprise, I did not have access to many discussions and meetings, which were limited to negotiators representing 195 countries. This was different from the Rio+20 UN Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012, which was more inclusive of observers. Maryknoll Sr. Marvie Misolas was an official observer at the Paris Climate Summit (COP21) representing the Maryknoll Sisters.

Economy

[Pope tells Davos elite: Consider your role in creating poverty](#) - Reuters

Pope Francis told members of the world's wealthy political and economic elite on Wednesday that they should not be deaf to the cry of the poor and must consider their own role in creating inequality. New technologies such as robotics must also not be allowed to replace humans with "soulless machines," he said in a message to the World Economic Forum in Davos. "To all of you I appeal once more: 'Do not forget the poor!'", he said.

[WCC chief presents 'Ten Commandments' of food at Davos](#) - Ecclesia

A 21 January World Economic Forum session on how food choices can become a catalyst for positive change became an opportunity for World Council of Churches General Secretary the Rev Dr Olav Fykse Tveit to present "Ten Commandments" of food to the gathered business and political leaders.

Peace

[Western Powers Protect Arms Markets Ignoring Civilian Killings](#) - InterPress Service

The West continues its strong political and military support to one of its longstanding allies in the Middle East – Saudi Arabia -- despite withering criticism of the kingdom's battlefield excesses in the ongoing war in neighbouring Yemen.

[U.S. bishop says Palestinians in Cremlins Valley 'have lost hope'](#) - Catholic News Service

The situation was not "simply politics" but about "people's lives and about their dignity,".

[L'amore Prima del Mondo \(Dear Pope Francis\)](#) - Independent Catholic News

All You Need is Love' is a documentary film, narrated by Sigourney Weaver, focusing on the lives and dreams of the children of Good Morning School in Mae Sot, a town on the Thai-Burma border.

Migration / Immigration

[Loneliness and Memories, Syrian Refugees Struggle in Safe Spaces](#) - InterPress Service

Emelline Mahmoud Ilyas is an outgoing 35-year-old mother of three from Syria. Sitting in a community centre in Zarqa, Jordan, where she just held a meeting with Jordanian and Syrian parents on the subject of childcare, she remembers the 'journey of death' that led her family to the Hashemite Kingdom.

[Imagining America with no immigrants](#) - Boston Globe

Let's, for a moment, take Donald Trump at his word and say that it is possible to peacefully and swiftly remove some 11 million people from America's cities and towns. Let's concede it would be possible to stand up and fund a deportation force to achieve this end, and that it is also possible to keep families together by removing them entirely. And once on the other side of a huge wall, the deported would watch from a distance as America became great again.

[Pope encourages migrants and refugees not to lose hope](#) - Independent Catholic News

"Dear migrants and refugees, each of you carries a story, a culture, precious values; and unfortunately often experiences of poverty, oppression and fear. Your presence in this square is a sign of hope in God."

[Obama Administration ramps up deportations of Central American refugees](#) - LCWR Update

Just as families were preparing to celebrate Christmas, there were reports that the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) was planning to detain and deport Central American children and adults who entered the United States seeking asylum and have had a final order of removal since January 1, 2014. This includes children and families who lost their asylum cases because they were unable to find adequate legal counsel, as well as individuals who were given deportation orders in absentia or through "rocket docket" that are meant to expedite trials but in reality deny due process.

Trafficking

[Cardinal Pell pledges to 'slave-proof Vatican supply chain'](#) - Independent Catholic News

Cardinal George Pell, Prefect of the Secretariat for the Economy, has announced Holy See is taking steps to 'slave-proof' the Vatican's supply chains – ensuring that all companies the Church purchases from are ethical in their employment and business practices.

[ICE, Peruvian authorities rescue 36 sex trafficking victims, including 11 minors](#) - ICE

An international law enforcement operation culminated Saturday with the arrests of six individuals involved in sex trafficking and the rescue of 36 sex trafficking victims, including 11 minors.

[British couple jailed for keeping Nigerian as slave for 24 years](#) - Reuters

A British couple have been jailed for six years each for keeping a Nigerian immigrant as a slave for more than two decades, a London court clerk said.

[Houston Sex Trafficking Ring Leader Gets Life in Federal Prison](#) - Department of Justice

A woman behind a 14-defendant sex trafficking ring operating in Houston has been ordered to federal prison for life, announced U.S. Attorney Kenneth Magidson for the Southern District of Texas along with Special Agent in Charge Perrye K. Turner for the FBI Houston Division, Special Agent in Charge Brian Moskowitz of Immigration and Customs Enforcement – Homeland Security Investigations (ICE-HSI) and Special Agent in Charge Richard Goss of IRS-Criminal Investigation (CI).

Racism

[Race is in the Air We Breathe and the Water We Drink: The Moral Failure in Flint](#) - Sojourners

How would you feel if you realized your children's water was being poisoned, and your government didn't seem to care? That's the story of the parents of 8,000 mostly poor and black children in Flint, Mich., (which means most all of the children in urban Flint) that has finally hit our media front pages. The evening news I am watching as I write warns the parents of Flint not to bathe their young children in city water.

Extractive Industries

[Conference on Land Grabbing](#) - Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns

Land grabbing is most often described as the acquisition of large areas of land by international firms, governments, or individuals. Land grabs have increased since 2008, when the worldwide spike in food prices prompted investors to look more toward the Global South, particularly Africa, for land to produce food and biofuel for export. This is a growing concern in Africa. Pope Francis referenced land, along with labor and lodging, in a speech he gave in Nairobi in November.

Church

[Press Statement By The Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference On Accepting Former Guantanamo Bay Prisoners In Ghana](#) - Catholic Archdiocese of Accra

The Bishops Conference of Ghana has issued a statement protesting over the transfer of former Guantanamo Bay prisoners to their country, describing it as "wrong and dangerous".

[US Catholic Bishops Urge End to Surge of Deportation Actions](#) - America Magazine

Noting recent enforcement actions conducted by the Department of Homeland Security which resulted in the deportation of 121 individuals, "primarily mothers with children," in a prepared statement, the bishops who chair the U.S. bishops' Committee on Migration and the Catholic Legal Immigration Network called for the deportations to be halted.

FAITH IN ACTION

[Reduce Your Carbon Footprint](#) - CAFOD

"International Day of Prayer and Reflection against Human Trafficking" will be held Feb. 8.

During Lent reflect on Laudato Si. The Columban Office for Global Outreach has a helpful [Guide](#).

COUNTRY UPDATES

Brazil

[Brazil's Amazon River ports give rise to dreams and nightmares](#) - InterPress Service

River port terminals in the northern Brazilian city of Santarém are considered strategic by the government. But what some see as an opportunity for development is for others an irreversible change in what was previously a well-preserved part of the Amazon rainforest.

[Soy, an exotic fruit in Brazil's Amazon jungle](#)- InterPress Service

In the northern Brazilian state of Pará, the construction of a port terminal for shipping soy out of the Amazon region has displaced thousands of small farmers from their land, which is now dedicated to mono-culture.

[World Social Forum Rally in Brazil Against Rousseff Impeachment](#) - Telesur

Thousands of organizers and delegates participating in the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, Brazil, took to the streets Tuesday to mark the launch of the latest round of grassroots workshops and discussions, which continued on Wednesday. An estimated 15,000 protesters marched with slogans, signs and banners advocating for a variety of social justice causes including denouncing calls for Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff's impeachment.

Britain

[Seeking Sanctuary says: 'Let the children in...'](#) - Independent Catholic News

Following the recent court case in Boulogne when a British citizen was acquitted after an attempt to smuggle a four year old girl through border controls, Seeking Sanctuary is urging a humanitarian response to the problem of young children being left to fend for themselves in the 'jungles' in and near Calais. The say in a statement: "We support the campaign and ask all the faith communities and other organisations with which we are in touch to lobby to allow into Britain up to three thousand vulnerable minors currently in Europe who have already experienced the trauma of war and genocide, in many cases leaving them without their parents.

Congo

[Apple, Samsung and Sony face child labour claims](#) - BBC

Many of the children who work in the mining industry dig for cobalt in the discarded waste Human rights organisation Amnesty has accused Apple, Samsung and Sony, among others, of failing to do basic checks to ensure minerals used in their products are not mined by children.

[How cash is carried across Congo](#) - Economist

IMAGINE if, to collect your salary each month, you had to walk to the nearest town—perhaps tens of miles away—to congregate in a school or a football pitch or a church. There, you and your colleagues wait for a man to arrive from the capital—perhaps a thousand miles away—with a suitcase of cash. Most of the time, you do not receive as much money as you should. Sometimes the man does not arrive at all.

Haiti

[Haitian Elections Cancelled As Popular Dissent Against Ruling Party Intensifies](#) - Common Dreams

Amid energetic protests fueled by shared criticisms from people in the streets and opposition political parties that the nation's political process is awash with fraud, the ruling government of Haiti on Friday cancelled national elections scheduled for Sunday by saying it could not guarantee the safety of voters.'

Japan

[Okinawa sues Tokyo in bid to stop move of US air base](#) - AlJazeera

Move deepens decades-long row over American troop presence on southern Japanese island, many residents want base removed.

Kenya

[Kenya's smart greenhouse texts when your tomatoes need watering](#) - The Guardian

Award-winning greenhouses designed by two Kenyan students allow farmers to control temperature, humidity and soil moisture on their mobile phones.

[Kenyan Teacher Jailed For Radicalizing pupils](#) - News from Africa

A Kenyan Muslim teacher has been sentenced to 20 years in jail for radicalising primary school children in Kilifi County in the coastal region.

Nigeria

[Chibok Girls Parents Unhappy After Meeting Buhari](#) - News From Africa

A spokeswoman for the “Bring Back Our Girls” movement in Nigeria has again said it is the duty of the Nigerian government to rescue the Chibok girls from Boko Haram captivity, regardless which political party is in power.

[Cutting Nigeria's 'big men' down to size](#) - BBC

President Muhammadu Buhari, who came to office in May, seems bent on making public office less and less attractive to the average Nigerian “big man.” Beyond the unusually austere salary package for new members of his cabinet – in response to the country’s worst economic crisis in years – he has given an instruction that should drastically reduce the size of every serving minister’s entourage.

Peru

[Environmental Activist Killed on the Marañon River](#) - Peruvian Times

Hitler Rojas, 34, a leading activist in the protest against a hydroelectric project, was shot five times by unknown assailants when he was walking towards his home.

[Peruvian women install solar panels and light up their communities](#) - InterPress Service

Five women from Candarave Province, located in Tacna (Peru), travelled to India to be trained and to learn how to install solar panels. The training has enabled 272 families to have electricity and improve their quality of life.

South Africa

[South Africa maize silos dried by deepening drought](#) - News from Africa

South Africa is quickly running out of maize as the El Nino drought deepens. Like many other countries in southern Africa, South Africa is experiencing its worst drought in decades. As the current crop withers due to extreme heat and little rainfall, food prices are rising and may be out of reach for million.

[Jesuit statement of removal of Finance Minister](#) - Independent Catholic News

The Jesuit Institute South Africa has joined a chorus of voices from all sectors of South African society expressing serious concern over the removal of Nhlanhla Nene as the country’s Minister of Finance. The

institute says: “This move, announced by President Jacob Zuma, spells disaster for the stability of an embattled economy and raises questions about his ability to lead.

South Sudan

[‘Alarming’ outbreak of violence in new area of South Sudan uproots 15,000, UN reports](#) - UN News Centre
Fighting between armed groups and Government soldiers and an apparent breakdown in law and order in South Sudan’s Western Equatoria state, with hundreds of houses burned down or looted, has uprooted 15,000 people over the past five weeks, and 500 a day are now pouring into Uganda, the United Nations refugee agency reported today.

Zimbabwe

[El Nino and Drought Take a Toll On Zimbabwe's Cattle](#) - All Africa

Worsening drought in Zimbabwe has dried up water holes, crops and pasture, leaving farmers like 56-year-old Dlomo, who lives about 120 kilometres north of Bulawayo, unable to feed their animals - and unable to sell them for much either.

USA

[Obama Ends New Coal Leases On Public Lands](#) - Think Progress

The Obama administration announced Friday that it is stopping most new coal leasing on America’s public lands as it moves to modernize and reform the federal coal leasing program, which has not been updated in more than 30 years.

[President Obama takes action to reduce gun violence](#) - LCWR Update

Gun violence has taken a heartbreaking toll on too many communities across the country. Over the past decade in America, more than 100,000 people have been killed as a result of gun violence — and millions more have been the victim of assaults, robberies, and other crimes involving a gun. Many of these crimes were committed by people who never should have been able to purchase a gun in the first place. Over the same period, hundreds of thousands of others in communities around the country committed suicide with a gun and nearly half a million people suffered other gun injuries. Hundreds of law enforcement officers have been shot to death protecting their communities. And too many children are killed or injured by firearms every year, often by accident. The vast majority of Americans, including the vast majority of gun owners, believe it is time to take sensible steps to address these horrible tragedies.

RESOURCES

[PREPARE FOR RAIDS AND PROTECT YOURSELF](#) (pdf) - National Immigration Law Center
Immigration Raids Alert

The Report from the Africa Land Grabs Conference is available in [English](#), [French](#) and [Portuguese](#)

Multi Media



[Dear Pope Francis](#)



[Brazil: Descendants of slaves in a struggle for land](#)



[Together We Can Cool the Planet](#)

COMING EVENTS

February

8 International Day of Prayer and Reflection against Human Trafficking.

April

15-18 Ecumenical Advocacy Days:

Lift Every Voice! Racism, Class and Power

will take place near Washington, D.C. at the Doubletree Crystal City, Hotel (Arlington, VA).

www.advocacydays.org

August

9-14 [World Social Forum](#) Montreal Canada

[Maryknoll Mission Institute](#)

[EXPLORING EVOLUTIONARY SPIRITUALITY](#)

May 8 - May 13

Resource Person: Ann Braudis, MM, PhD.

The daily scripture readings leading to the Feast of Pentecost from the Gospel of John present to the thoughtful reader a rich array of concepts that are aligned with emerging cosmological and spiritual insights. Deep Time and the forever unfolding future are present, as is the fundamental grasp that all things are bound together. What will become the one Earth Community is present as are the undergirding framework of Kenosis and the call to faithfully fulfill the tasks of one's...[Find out more »](#)

[CARING FOR CREATION IN A CHANGING CLIMATE](#) May 15 - May 20

Resource Person: Judith Mayotte, PhD

This program will follow Pope Francis' call in his encyclical, Laudato Si', for the human family as stewards of the earth, to engage in dialogue and provoke action that will address the needs of our earth and how ecologically we might better protect and care for our common home. Through a careful reading of Laudato Si' and the book Enough is Enough: Building a Sustainable Economy in a World of Finite Resources, we will consider our place in a finite...[Find out more »](#)

[LIVING INTO DEATH—DYING INTO LIFE](#)

May 22 - May 27

Resource Person: Peter C. Phan, S.T.D., PhD., D.D.

This program deals with what was once called the “Last Things” (in Latin: De Novissimis), that is, the realities occurring at the end of life, namely, death and dying, and those occurring in the afterlife, namely, judgment, purgatory, hell, heaven, the resurrection, and the consummation of the world. In theology, the treatment of these Last Things is called “eschatology”—a term derived from the Greek: eschata and logos, meaning discourse on the last things. There is a basic methodological question about...[Find out more](#) »

[STRENGTHENING YOUR INNER LIFE IN CHALLENGING TIMES](#)

June 5 - June 10

Resource Person: Robert J. Wicks PSY.D

One of the greatest gifts we can share with others is a sense of our own peace. However, we can't share what we don't have. By discussing spiritual and psychological approaches to maintaining perspective and inner strength in challenging times, Dr. Wicks, an expert on the prevention of secondary stress (the pressures experienced in reaching out to others) and author of Perspective: The Calm within the Storm, Bounce: Living the Resilient Life and Riding the Dragon, offers insights into how...[Find out more](#) »

[TEILHARD'S MYSTICISM: Spiraling Into the Cosmic Christ](#)

June 12 - June 17

Resource Person: Kathleen Duffy, SSJ, PhD

In an early essay, Jesuit paleontologist Pierre Teilhard de Chardin provides us with a road map into the intensely mystical environment in which he lived and moved. He describes the stages of his mystical growth in terms of five concentric circles. These circles, which could be more properly imaged as the loops of a spiral that he continually revisited throughout his life, provided him with a sacred path into an ever deepening reality, a reality that is informed as much...[Find out more](#) »

[MERCY WITHIN MERCY, WITHIN MERCY: God's Love Awaits our Response](#)

June 19 - June 24

We often think that our dark side, our sins and shadows are not “pleasing” to God. We use our own standards to measure and define what gains us access to our God. We fall victim to values of our cultural traditions, or of our families or of pop culture to convince ourselves that we are “with it” and acceptable. We judge ourselves and others by how well we measure up to these artificial, superficial and false standards. We get so...[Find out more](#) »

[AWAKENING THE HEART, MENDING THE WORLD: Merton's Path to Mercy](#)

June 26 - July 1

In his address to the U.S. Congress, Pope Francis named Thomas Merton one of four great Americans who “offer us a way of seeing and interpreting reality” that is urgently needed in our world today. Describing Merton “as a man of prayer, a thinker who challenged the certainties of his time and opened new horizons for souls and for the Church,” Pope Francis chose to highlight important elements of Merton's legacy: his “capacity for dialogue and openness to God” and...[Find out more](#) »

[SAINTS, PROPHETS AND WITNESSES FOR OUR TIME](#)

July 10 - July 15

By using the lives and witness of contemporary figures as an open window to the gospel of our times, this program will challenge us to think more creatively about being faithful and active in our own historical context. Sharing the stories of women and men whose lives and message speak to the spiritual needs of our day, participants will imbibe their creativity, courage and imagination in the

face of modern challenges. Participants will deepen their appreciation that the call to...[Find out more](#)
»

[EMBODYING THE OPTION FOR THE POOR](#)

July 17 - July 22

The preferential option for the poor, like other key principles of the Christian faith, presents the faithful with a concrete and a transcendent reality. Concretely, the phrase arises out of historic situations of deep suffering and oppression in Latin America during the 1950s through the 1980s, and the Church's struggle to be an agent of hope amidst this suffering – to be the church of the poor promoted at Vatican II. This program leads participants in exploring its essential theological...[Find out more](#) »

[RELIGION AND THE COSMIC STORY: A Look Inside](#)

July 24 - July 29

The universe is still coming into being. It is a story still being told. The most remarkable thing about any story is that it can be the carrier of meaning. We tell stories to bring out the significance of a series of events, for example the episodes that make up a person's life, or that of a family, tribe, or nation. Now, at last, scientists are putting together a new story about the cosmos. Along with our growing awareness that...

[Find out more](#) »

Action on behalf of justice is a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the gospel.

Justice in the World - 1971 Synod of Bishops