



*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

## CIRCLES OF LIFE

### **Food Security**

[Agriculture in TPP: Repeating NAFTA's Mistakes](#) - Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy

Farmers, union, environmental and women's activists gathered in Mexico City to take stock of the lessons from NAFTA and plan strategies to confront the next big threat: the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP). One of the earliest lessons from the NAFTA experience was that people and environments in all three countries were affected.

### **Economy**

[Elites Will 'Consider Inequality'](#) - IPS

With no acute crisis on the radar, this year's Annual Meeting of the World Economic Forum (WEF) will move away from the response mode of the past years and "look for solutions for the really fundamental issues," its founder Klaus Schwab said at the pre-meeting press conference.

[World's 85 richest own wealth close to that of poorest 3.5B: report](#) - Daily Nation

The 85 richest people on the planet have as much wealth as that of half the world's population, a meeting of political and financial leaders in Davos has been told.

### **Peace**

[World churches condemn use of drones](#) - Independent Catholic News

The World Council of Churches (WCC) today issued a statement condemning the use of drones which indiscriminately target civilian populations, injuring and killing innocent civilians in complete violation of international human right law.

[Vatican on Syria: 'Don't go in if you can't get out'](#) - Boston Globe

A senior Vatican official speaking before a US congressional committee had blunt advice for American lawmakers who may be weighing the use of force to bring down Syrian President Bashar al-Assad – in essence, don't go in if you can't get out.

### **Migration**

[Child Migrants](#) - America

Dangerous conditions in their homelands are leading tens of thousands more families in Central America and Mexico to send their children to cross the U.S. border illegally by themselves, according to a report by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Migration.

## ***Trafficking***

[Does Anybody Care about Human Trafficking](#) - National Catholic Reporter

The story is 20 years old, but it is true. Two Chinese girls came to the United States. Taken to a New Jersey motel, they were raped repeatedly and forced to work as prostitutes in New York City's Chinatown.

[Hospitality, Agriculture Firms Vulnerable to Human Trafficking](#) - IPS

Shareholders are calling on 15 U.S.-based multinational corporations to ensure that their global supply chains are not facilitating human rights abuses, particularly labor and sex trafficking.

[Human Trafficking Survivors Urge U.S. to Take Action](#) - IPS

Advocacy groups and some legislators are calling on the U.S. government to mandate an increase in corporate supply chain transparency, with the aim of cutting down on the estimated 14,000 to 17,000 people trafficked into the United States each year and the tens of millions enslaved globally.

## ***Extractive Industries***

[U.S. Federal Court Action Requests Information from Newmont Regarding Repression of Protests at its Conga Mine Project](#) - Earth Rights International

EarthRights International (ERI) filed an action in federal court today on behalf of a protestor paralyzed by police violence at the site of Newmont Mining's Conga mine project in Peru. ERI is seeking documents and information from Newmont to assist in pending legal proceedings in Peru related to the police repression of protestors against the Conga project.

## ***Environment***

[GMOs in agriculture: Part of the solution or part of the problem?](#) - EcoJesuit

Genetically modified organisms or GMOs are formed by transferring genetic information and are not possible to be formed naturally. This includes the transfer of genes between taxonomically remote groups such as bacteria and animals or plants and animals.

[The commoditization of water and its social impact](#) - EchoJesuit

Faced with a task of feeding 8 billion (and counting) hungry mouths, agriculture is becoming more and more intense, with water usage (70 percent of the world's freshwater is used in agriculture) promising to go up drastically. However, sinking ground water levels, contamination due to indiscriminate use of fertilizers and pesticides, and pollution have all combined to put severe caps on this front.

[High tides and winds threaten more flooding](#) - BBC

High tides and gale force winds could bring more flooding to parts of south-west England and the Midlands, the Environment Agency has warned. It has five severe flood warnings – meaning a danger to life – three on the Severn estuary near Gloucester and two on the north Cornwall coast.

[Drought-hit California unable to supply state water](#) - BBC

California's water agency has announced it may for the first time be unable to deliver water to local agencies, amid a worsening drought. Two-thirds of state residents and 1m acres (404,500 hectares) of farmland get part or all of their drinking and irrigation supplies from the agency. A state-wide drought was declared earlier this month, as the largest reservoirs sank to record low levels.

[Mining boss found liable for company's environment damage](#) - Mail & Guardian

The director of Blue Platinum, based in Tzaneen in Limpopo, was found guilty of causing environmental degradation outside Batlhabine village. (Delwyn Verasamy, M&G)

[Fracking is depleting water supplies in America's driest areas, report shows](#) - Guardian

America's oil and gas rush is depleting water supplies in the driest and most drought-prone areas of the country, from Texas to California, new research has found.

[Fossil Fuel Subsidies Dampen Shift Towards Renewable](#) - IPS

Despite evolving public awareness and alarm over climate change, subsidies for the production and consumption of fossil fuels remain a stubborn impediment to shifting the world's energy matrix towards renewable sources.

[World's Largest Solar Thermal Plant Uses As Much Water As Two Holes On Nearby Golf Course](#) -

ClimateProgress

Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz marked the opening of the world's largest solar thermal plant on Thursday in the Mojave Desert near the border of California and Nevada. The 392-MW Ivanpah project, developed by BrightSource Energy Co, started operating last month after six years of construction.

[If We Don't Connect It to Race and Class, Then Green Politics Is Just High-End Consumerism](#) - Creative Times Report

As environmentalism goes mainstream, corporations are marketing the word "green" as a panacea for the world's climate crisis. Today the word describes a set of prescribed, mostly consumerist actions: buy local, organic and fresh; go vegan; eat in season; skip the elevator; take the stairs. "Green" has come to mean shopping at Whole Foods and possessing a Prius.

[The rights of nature: A new strategy in the struggle for ecological wholeness](#) - Eco Jesuit

Do West Virginians have a right to clean water? Beyond that, do West Virginia waterways have the right to be protected from polluters? Do rainforests or the Great Barrier Reef have the right to survive? Can the court systems of the countries of the world be used to protect Mother Nature's rights?

## **Church**

[Pope Francis sends message to World Economic Forum in Davos](#) - Independent Catholic News

Pope Francis has sent a message to participants at the World Economic Forum which met in the Swiss resort city of Davos. Catholic Church leaders are among those taking part in the four day meeting, which is focused on the theme 'The Reshaping of the World: Consequences for Society, Politics and Business'.

[Church Urged to Fight Homophobia As Same-Sex Prohibitions Pass](#) - America

As some African nations continue or contemplate a legislative clampdown on gay and lesbian people, The Southern Cross, South Africa's Catholic weekly, urged Catholic Church leaders to do more to confront societal homophobia and laws that it might inspire. In an unsigned editorial published on Jan. 29, Southern Cross

editors said, "It would require a very peculiar reading of the Gospel to locate Jesus anywhere else but at the side of the marginalized and vulnerable."

## FAITH IN ACTION

[It's Time to Act on Flooding](#) - Friends of the Earth

Sign the petition to David Cameron, recommended by Margaret Clark

[Make Immigration Reform Your Lenten Promise](#). NETWORK

In collaboration with the Justice for Immigrants campaign of the U.S. Catholic Conference of Bishops, NETWORK is calling on Catholics, along with people of faith and good will, to make immigration reform your Lenten promise. We will guide you through 40 days of strategic, coordinated prayer and action. [Please click this link to commit.](#)

## COUNTRY UPDATES

### *Brazil*

[Descendants of Slaves Report Military Abuses in Brazil](#) - IPS

Residents of the small community of Rio dos Macacos, made up of descendants of slaves in the northeastern Brazilian state of Bahia, reported to United Nations bodies that they were attacked by military personnel from the Aratu naval base, which occupies part of their land.

[Brazil's Prison Violence Worsens in Maranhão](#) - IPS

Nearly every day, violence breaks out in a Brazilian prison. In January the focus has been on the northeastern state of Maranhão, where orders issued from behind bars wreaked havoc in the streets of its capital city, illustrating the scope of national prison anarchy.

[Brazil: Environmental activist wins Dorothy Stang human rights award](#) - Independent Catholic News

Laísa Sampaio, an environmental activist supported by CAFOD, has been awarded the Human Rights Dorothy Stang award. It is the highest award given by the Brazilian government to individuals or organizations who work tirelessly in defense of justice and human rights.

### *Britain*

[Immigration Bill could leave vulnerable people without housing or healthcare warns Church](#) - Independent Catholic News

The Catholic Church has warned that the Immigration Bill risks leaving vulnerable people unable to access healthcare or find housing. The Immigration Bill, which is due to come before the House of Commons again 30 January 2014, proposes to restrict migrants' access to free NHS services and will require landlords to conduct checks on tenants' immigration status.

[UK storms wash away railway line and leave thousands without power](#) - BBC

The railway line in Dawlish is hanging in mid-air, as Jon Kay reports. Parts of Britain are being hit by a powerful storm which has washed away a stretch of railway line and left thousands of homes without electricity. The Environment Agency says around 328 homes have been flooded since Friday evening – with more heavy rain and strong winds forecast into the weekend.

[High water everywhere](#) - The Economist

JOHN LEE likes to tinker with vehicles: his four-wheel-drive resembles a tractor more than a car. "It's watertight," he beams. For the past week he has been driving down sodden lanes in Surrey, south-west of London, transporting people and medicines. Flooding is a misery, but at least it provides an opportunity to show off a set of wheels.

## **Congo**

[Jesuit scholastics reflect and act on ecology: National Tree Day at Kimwenza, Democratic Republic of Congo](#) - Eco Jesuit

Jesuit scholastics of the Saint Peter Canisius community (Central Africa Province) at Kimwenza in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo organize activities every three months to raise more awareness among Jesuits and friends on the need to be in harmony with Mother Earth and to be reconciled with Creation. This awareness and commitment is the result of the work of the Group of Reflection and Action on Ecology.

[DRC Mega-Dam to Be Funded by Private Sector, Groups Charge](#) - IPS

Watchdog groups warn that a deal has been struck that would see Chinese investors fund a massive, contentious dam on the Congo River, the first phase of a project that could eventually be the largest hydroelectric project in the world.

[DRC Mega-Dam to Be Funded by Private Sector, Groups Charge](#) - IPS

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## **Japan**

[Japanese bishops: Vatican mindset doesn't fit Asian church](#) - National Catholic Reporter

Japan's bishops have publicly responded to a Vatican survey of global Catholics' views on family issues, stating bluntly that church teachings are not known in their country and the Vatican's Europe-centric view hampers efforts at Anglicization in places where Catholics represent a small minority of the population.

[Energies Clash in Tokyo Election](#) - IPS

Tokyo, one of the largest and most energy-guzzling cities in the world, is set to hold elections for a new governor Feb. 9. Analysts say it could prove crucial in stopping the Japanese government from restarting some nuclear reactors this year.

[A Green Challenge to the Asia-Pacific Pivot](#) - Foreign Policy in Focus

Cetacean lovers are celebrating the recent, brash statement of newly appointed U.S. ambassador to Japan, Caroline Kennedy, in her condemnation of Japan's "inhumane" tradition of dolphin slaughter. Now that she finds herself professionally and geographically smack-dab in the middle of President Barack Obama's "Pacific Pivot" toward Asia, she has the opportunity to cast more light on the ecological holocaust taking place in the region.

## **Kenya**

[Kenya's Scorched Earth Removal of Forest's Indigenous](#) - IPS

Kenyan government security forces are forcefully evicting thousands of people, including the indigenous Sengwer tribe, from the Embobut forest in western Kenya by burning homes and possessions in an effort to promote forest conservation, safeguard urban water access and “remove squatters”.

[Looted in Plain Sight: Kenya and its Multi-Billion Dollar Invoicing Problem](#) - Think Africa Press

Kenya lost over \$700 million in taxes in 2012 due to smuggling. But despite popular belief, the main problem with smuggling isn't corruption. It's tax havens, phantom firms and secrecy.

## ***Nigeria***

[Report: At least 74 dead in twin Nigeria attack](#) - Daily Nation

At least 74 people have been killed and scores others injured in two separate attacks in North eastern Nigeria. 22 people were killed in an attack on a church in Waga Chakaa village in Adamawa state while 52 others were killed in a market in a busy market place on Sunday.

[Nigeria: At least 138 killed in weekend terror attacks 30/01/2014](#) - Christian Solidarity Worldwide

At least 138 people are now known to have died on 26 January in attacks by members of the Islamist terror group Boko Haram on villages in Adamawa and Borno States in north east Nigeria.

[President Jonathan Suspends CBN Governor Sanusi](#) - Tell Magazine

what appears to be a tale of the hunter being the hunted, Lamido Sanusi, governor, Central Bank of Nigeria, CBN, has been suspended by President Goodluck Jonathan. Sanusi who has been having a running battle with the petroleum ministry and the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation, NNPC, over his allegations of \$20 billion missing oil money, was suspended for allegedly engaging in financial recklessness and misconduct.

## ***Peru***

[Climate Change Imperils Peru's Drive to End Poverty](#) - Climate News Network

Peru is the country chosen to host the 2014 UN climate conference, a key meeting for trying to advance an ambitious plan to rein in greenhouse emissions which is planned for agreement in 2015.

## ***South Africa***

[Poll shock alarms ANC](#) - Africa Confidential

The governing African National Congress sees a sharp decline in support in recent opinion polls, less than six months before legislative and local elections.

[Resistance Over GMOs as South Africa Pushes Biotechnology](#) - IPS

On a family farm tucked between the rolling hills of Masopane, 40 km outside of South Africa's capital, Pretoria, 35-year-old Sophie Mabhena is dreaming big about her crop of genetically modified (GM) maize.

[Khaya Dlanga: Is a post-racial South Africa possible?](#) - Mail & Guardian

There is one moment that opened my eyes and made me realize that there was something wrong in the country we live in. I had not yet turned 10 and I lived in a village that was about 3km from the N1 in Transkei. It was during the school holidays, when my cousins and I would have to look after my grandfather's cattle.

## ***South Sudan***

### [Breakdown in South Sudan – What Went Wrong — and How to Fix It](#) - Foreign Affairs

The South Sudanese people made extraordinary sacrifices to achieve independence two and a half years ago. That makes their leaders' abject failure to build a viable South Sudan since then all the more galling. Now, a political crisis imperils the nation. But there is a silver lining: The turmoil could give South Sudan the opportunity to reset the national agenda.

### [South Sudan rivals sign ceasefire agreement](#) - BBC

South Sudan's government and rebels have signed a ceasefire agreement after talks in Ethiopia. Under the deal, signed in a hotel in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa, the fighting is due to come to an end within 24 hours. In the past week, government forces have recaptured the two main cities under rebel control. More than 500,000 people have been forced from their homes during the month-long conflict.

### [South Sudan: calls for humanitarian corridor after ceasefire](#) - Independent Catholic News

Since a ceasefire was agreed in South Sudan, last week, Church and aid agencies have called for greater action from the international community to ensure that the truce holds, and the establishment of an aid corridor to enable much-needed medical and humanitarian support to be delivered.

### [Sudan: Bishops make appeal to Catholics worldwide](#) - Independent Catholic News

CAFOD has launched an immediate appeal for funds, after Catholic Bishops from Sudan and South Sudan appealed to all international Catholic agencies to support communities affected by recent violence "through all possible means."

### [South Sudan ceasefire 'ends' amid Malakal fighting](#) - BBC

Fighting has broken out in South Sudan's Upper Nile state, officials say, the first major clashes since the government and rebels signed a ceasefire agreement in January.

## **Zimbabwe**

### [Mugabe's 90th birthday plans cause outcry](#) - Mail & Guardian

Zimbabwe's celebration of "the life of a very special person" has been criticized for coming at a time of job losses and slowing economic growth.

## **USA**

### [Elderly nun sentenced over US nuclear site break-in](#) - BBC

An elderly Catholic nun has been sentenced to nearly three years in prison for damage caused while breaking into a US nuclear defence site.

### [Report: Tar Sands Mining Pollution Far Worse Than Industry Reports](#) - Common Dreams

Using predictive computer models, University of Toronto Environmental Chemistry professor Frank Wania and his PhD candidate Abha Parajulee found that officially reported emissions of the atmospheric pollutants known as polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) do not factor in "indirect pathways" of pollution, such as those which blow off mining sites or evaporate from tailings ponds.

### [U.S. Reforming "Outdated" Overseas Food Aid](#) - IPS

U.S. lawmakers are in the final stages of approving reforms to a half-century-old system of providing overseas food assistance that critics say is outdated, inefficient and sometimes harmful to local economies in developing countries.



[Why Cutting the Child Tax Credit Is Bad Policy](#) - National Immigration Law Center (NILC)

Nearly every year, members of Congress attempt to end the refundable Child Tax Credit (CTC) for workers who pay their taxes using an Individual Tax Identification Number (ITIN) instead of a Social Security number (SSN). This cut would affect workers who are ineligible for an SSN and therefore pay taxes to the federal government using the only means legally permitted—the ITIN.

## RESOURCES

[Africa Rising? Inequality and the Essential Role of Fair Taxation](#) - Christian Aid

Unprecedented economic growth in a number of African countries is going hand in hand with soaring inequality, which national tax systems are failing to address, according to a new report.

[Connection](#) - NETWORK

New Book by Sister Simone Campbell – “A Nun on the Bus: How All of Us Can Create Hope, Change, and Community” – Pre-order now!

[NewsNotes](#) - Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns

[Echoes from AEFJN](#) - AEFJN



[Apple Forecast: Immigration Reform](#) - 5 minutes



[Five things we can do to cut poverty today](#)



[The Scourge of Bio-Piracy](#)

## COMING EVENTS

### March

#### 8 - International Women's Day

**21-24 - 12th Annual Ecumenical Advocacy Days: *Jesus Weeps: Resisting Violence, Building Peace*** will expose the violence that pervades our culture and world - guided by the image of Jesus weeping over a capital city that turned from the true way of peace (Luke 19: 41-42), and then imagine how to transform it. Through prayer, worship, speakers and advocacy training, we will discover a faith-based vision for national policies that “guide our feet into the path of peace.” The site is the DoubleTree Crystal City Hotel in Arlington, VA, across the Potomac and Washington, D.C. Congressional Lobby Day will be held on the 24th. \$195 until February 21. **Go to [www.advocacydays.org](http://www.advocacydays.org)**, or for more information, call (202) 543-1126.



## *April*

**14 - Global Day of Action on Military Spending** coincides, once again, with the release by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) of their annual statistics on global military spending. In the U.S., Tax Day actions will be held on April 15, and some groups will combine the GDAMS actions with those. Visit <http://demilitarize.org/>.

**27 - South Africa 20th anniversary of liberation day** on 27 April 1994

**30 - May 6 - Sisters of Notre Dame Justice and Peace Meeting Namur**

## *June*

**12 -13 - FIFA World Cup: All in One Rythm** will take place in 12 cities in Brazil. "Human Trafficking" will be spotlighted separately but concurrently, more pending. For the official site, visit [www.fifa.com/worldcup](http://www.fifa.com/worldcup)

## *July*

**7-10 - USCCB/MRS and CLINIC to host National Migration Conference, Washington, DC**

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops/Migration and Refugee Services (USCCB/MRS) and the Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc. (CLINIC) will host the National Migration Conference in Washington, DC from July 7-10, 2014. The Center for Migration Studies of New York (CMS) is also assisting with the conference. **Early Registration ends February 28.** To get more information, visit: [www.nationalmigrationconference.org](http://www.nationalmigrationconference.org).

## *October*

**5-19 The Synod of Bishops Meeting at the Vatican on the Family**

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

Justice in the World - 1971 Synod of Bishops

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