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JUST Love



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE OFFICE OF PEACE, JUSTICE AND
ECOLOGICAL INTEGRITY OF THE SISTERS OF CHARITY OF SAINT ELIZABETH



What Will You Take Up For Easter?

Catholics of a certain age are familiar with the question, “What are you giving up for Lent?” But a more relevant question is “what are you taking up for Easter?” The Easter season is fifty days – from Easter Sunday to Pentecost Sunday and this year it covers the entire month

of April. In the early church those who were newly baptized at the Easter Vigil would wear their white baptismal robes for the entire fifty days. There was no mistaking that they were “taking up” a radically new and different life. April 30 marks the 8th anniversary of the extraordinary peacemaker, Daniel Berrigan, SJ. Dan used to speak of our call to live an ethic of resurrection. The characteristic of the Christian life is not the grim self-denial of Lent but the radical life-affirmation of Easter: “One thing seems reasonably certain. Our ethic is a gift from the God who rolled the stone back, who beat death at its own game. If that be true, something would seem to follow. The death game is not our game. We are called to undergo death, rather than inflict death. And is so acting, to cherish life. And the vocation is no less urgent or valid in our stalled and death-ridden culture. A calling to the works of solace and rescue.” What works of solace and rescue will you take up for Easter...and beyond?

Haiti Update, Dawn Colapietro

The landscape of Haiti changes by the day, by the hour, by the minute. Though Haiti is a country that has dealt with social, political, and economic turmoil throughout its history, most agree that they have not seen this level of anarchy in their lifetime, not even after the earthquake in 2010, not since Duvalier was removed from power in 1986, and some even suggest not since it won its independence in 1804. Following the assassination of President Moïse in 2021, the country has been led by a de facto Prime Minister who was appointed by Moïse, but not installed or approved by Parliament. He has governed at will and broken his pledge to hold elections. That means there are no federally elected officials, no legislature to write laws, and no functioning judiciary to enforce them. This turned out to be an invitation to the gangs to fill in for this leadership vacuum which they have done so with impunity. Gangs are now in control of most of the capital and its suburbs leaving hundreds of thousands of Haitians displaced as their neighborhoods are burned to the ground. They are left homeless and on the streets with nowhere to go. January 2024 was the bloodiest in 38 years with thousands of women being raped and tortured, and thousands more being kidnapped and murdered. Months ago, the United Nations endorsed a resolution to support a Security Support Mission of 1500 military and police officials led by Kenya along with representatives from other countries in the Caribbean, Europe, and Africa. Their focus was to put in place security measures that would eventually lead to fair and democratic elections. This effort has been suspended because of the recent unimaginable violence that many of us have witnessed on the news these past two weeks.

Gangs have taken over the airport, blocked most major roads throughout the country, burned police stations, and have taken control of many government offices and buildings including the Presidential Palace. Most schools, markets, and



banks are closed. Henry (who was in Kenya two weeks ago) is not being allowed to reenter the country at threat of assassination. The future of Haiti is unknown. With a rejection of a provisional government recommended by the international community in cooperation with members of Haiti's civil society, takeover and destruction of many police and military installations, and Henry's exile in Puerto Rico, the only power that now exists is in the hands of the gangs. Every day that passes with no solution or intervention, is a day where gang members can continue to gain even a stronger foothold in the country. The news is grim and hope is diminishing. For those of us who have been pushing for a Security Support Mission for the last two years to address the growing insecurities in the county, the fear is that whatever the response is now, it just may be too little too late. Having waited so long, we will now see many more people die and the cost of any effort to bring security to the country escalated to

hundreds of millions of dollars. As two of our Haitian team members have said: "When we leave our homes we take our coffin. We are just waiting for our turn to die." In the meantime, the Sisters of Charity have one of the few schools in Haiti, especially of any school near the capital, which remains open. We take some solace in the knowledge that 100 children today will be able to sit in their classes, receive a hot meal, go to our medical clinic if sick, play in the school's orchestra, and work in the garden. If you would like to join us in supporting the Haiti Health Network in their petition that addresses the need for humanitarian aid to Haiti, along with other critical issues, please read and sign the petition at this link https://docs.google.com/document/d/13PHYtbmJ-6Yain_S-1kwV8BfEnxLvS3rsGymzprITeU/edit Feel free to get in touch with me at dcolapietro65@gmail.com with your questions and concerns.



Small individual actions, even something as seemingly insignificant as the search engine you choose online, can have a global impact... if enough people do them. That's exactly the premise of a company called Ecosia. For the last 15 years, Ecosia has provided a search engine that uses the ad revenue it generates from your searches to plant trees where they're most

needed, from Thailand to France. They have other climate projects too: from building roof-top solar in Germany to providing seed investments to regenerative agriculture entrepreneurs. Ecosia estimates it takes around 45 searches to pay to plant one tree. By January 2024, Christian Kroll, Ecosia's CEO, announced that the company has planted 200 million trees in over 30 countries. Recently, they've expanded their offerings to include a train travel search engine; a tag on banks that invest in fossil fuels; and a "green" AI chatbot.



The Charity Earth Network invites you to a webinar *Charity Votes Earth: Bringing Earth's Cries to the 2024 Electoral Season* Friday, April 19, 2024, 1:00-2:30 PM EDT. Mary Novak, Executive Director of NETWORK, will lead us in reflection on how the Company of Charity can use our voice to make the cries of Earth heard during what is expected to be a polarized and contentious electoral season. No need to register. Click on the ZOOM link a few minutes before the webinar. <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87294545097?pwd=OZE20i2CUsf3khUaObXeFI3AYM2azX.1> Meeting ID: 872 9454 5097 Passcode: 028830

JPIC Dates to Remember in April

11 Encyclical Letter of Pope John XXIII, *Pacem in Terris* (1963) "If any government does not acknowledge the rights of the human person or violates them, it not only fails in its duty, but its orders completely lack juridical force," (#61).

16 (1963) Martin Luther King Jr. writes *Letter from a Birmingham Jail*. "...all too many others have been more cautious than courageous and have remained silent behind the anesthetizing security of stained-glass windows."

22 Earth Day-2024 Theme is Planet vs. Plastics. Check out this site to learn ways to reduce plastic consumption <https://www.npr.org/2021/07/12/1015296355/zero-waste-single-use-plastic-trash-recycle>

27 Day of Silence, an annual day of action to spread awareness about the effects of the bullying harassment of LGBTQ and questioning students. In the United States, students take a day-long vow of silence to symbolically represent the silencing of LGBTQ students.

29 Feast of St. Catherine of Siena "We've had enough exhortations to be silent. Cry out with a thousand tongues - I see the world is rotten because of silence."

30 Death of Daniel Berrigan, SJ (2016) "There is no peace because the making of peace is at least as costly as the making of war - at least as exigent, at least as disruptive, at least as liable to bring disgrace and prison and death in its wake."