



# JUST Love

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



## TOOLBOX OF HOPE

No matter how long we are out of school, September still has the feel of a new year and new beginnings for most of us. The work for justice, peace, and integrity of creation doesn't take the summer off; nevertheless activities take on a new rhythm and intensity with the coming of autumn. At the first national convocation of JPIC promoters of women's congregations in 2017, Marie Dennis, recently named Pax Christi Teacher of Peace, listed ten items that women religious and their associates have in their "toolbox" in their advocacy and action for justice, peace, and a flourishing planet. Find below her list and some ways in which the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth and their Seton Associates wield these tools. Let's stir up our hope and get to work!

1. A well-developed cosmic consciousness.

*The SC Ecospirituality Reflection Group has gathered monthly for ten years to look at our Vincentian-Setonian spirituality through a cosmic lens.*

2. The practice of grounded-in-faith interrogating "the system," decision makers, and powerful institutions; and of constantly seeking to identify root causes of the brokenness you see.

*The Sisters of Charity engaged in a two-year process of studying, reflecting, and sharing on the root causes of racism and white privilege.*

3. Deep relationships with marginalized people.

*Through our participation in RAMP (Refugee Assistance Morris Partners) sisters and associates accompany refugees. Our schools, hospitals, and ministries like Josephine's Place reach out to new immigrants.*

4. Tested models for living in value-based communities in right relationship with each other and the whole earth community.

*Sisters build communities of shared values by their service on ministry boards, in school, parish, and local civic organizations.*

5. Practical experience with alternative forms of social and economic organization.

*Through our work in corporate responsibility, we leverage out power as investors to build a new world of equity and sustainability.*

6. Huge credibility.

*The generosity of our benefactors speaks to the credibility of the service of the Sisters of Charity in New Jersey and beyond since 1859.*

7. Experience with prophetic action, symbol, and ritual.

*The beauty of a sister sitting on her walker at a protest for immigrant rights.*

8. Excellent communication skills.

*We've adapted to new media and reach thousands through our print publications and web presence.*

9. An amazing global network.

*Through the Charity Federation we have a presence in 26 countries and effect global change through our Federation NGO at the United Nations.*

10. Hope itself.

*Look in the mirror!*



### **Advocacy...Sr. Noreen Neary, SC Shares Her Experience**

The Bipartisan Safer Communities Act...DACA...ending Title 42 enforcement at our southern border...expansion of the Child Tax Credit...the Homes for

All Act...urging the Biden administration to protect voting rights and to halt deportations of Haitian asylum seekers... these are just a sample of the calls I've made to federal legislators in 2022, thanks to the Action Alerts provided by our Office of Peace, Justice and Ecological Integrity. The Action Alerts remind me of issues that matter to me, provide me with background information, and provide a script for a phone call to Washington. Advocacy in this way is timely, informed and couldn't be easier. I keep the phone numbers of the NJ senators and my Congressional representative near my phone. Most

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often I reach an answering machine and, after providing my name and Zip code, I give a brief, clear message about what I want the legislator to do. On the rare occasion when an intern picks up the phone, I'm patient, taking my time and making sure that s/he knows my stand on the exact piece of legislation. Rumor has it that, when LCWR asked its members to call their senators, one intern – upon hearing that a sister was calling – interrupted her and said, “You don't need to say anymore; every sister in the country has been calling today!” And, finally, the prayer at the end of each Action Alert reminds me why I am moved to do this – to let our legislators know that their constituents care about these issues which directly affect people who often are powerless and lack a voice.



*As a practice for the Season of Creation, consider using the Sisters of Charity Earth Examen of Consciousness to prayerfully end your day.*

- As the day draws to a close, I pause to recall that I am in the presence: ...of our Creator God who looked with pleasure on everything that was made;
- ...of Jesus who delighted in the flowers of the field and the birds of the air;
- ...of the Spirit of wind and flame, the energy that fills the cosmos.
- I ask for the grace to see creation as God sees it – with delight in its

wonders and with a heart broken by the cries of Earth and people in poverty.

- How have my life choices impacted creation today?
- I recall some moments when I delighted in creation today – e.g. in a sunrise, a flower, an animal companion, in an experience of human goodness.
- I recall with gratitude some moments when I chose to live in loving relationship with creation – e.g. when I was careful in my use of water or electricity, when I made healthy food choices for myself and for Earth, when I chose non-violence in relationships and speech.
- I pray for the grace of conversion for the moments in my day when I failed to live in loving relationship with creation – e.g. when I too rushed or busy for wonder and awe; when I was wasteful or selfish; when I failed to treat people and other creatures with respect.
- I look with desire and hope toward tomorrow. What is one thing I might choose to do to live in deeper harmony with God, myself, other people, all creation?

I conclude my prayer with a moment of contemplative silence. I rest in gratitude for the wonder of life. I call to mind our symbol of the pelican – a symbol which sees God as a nurturing mother. I pray that I may be a nurturing presence for all Earth's creatures.

## JPIC Date to Remember in September

### 1-October 4 The Season of Creation -

Use our Sister of Charity brochure to celebrate

[https://www.scnj.org/\\_files/ugd/a2bb32\\_b3bc0f291da2457f9936de9b5e0a5d8c.pdf](https://www.scnj.org/_files/ugd/a2bb32_b3bc0f291da2457f9936de9b5e0a5d8c.pdf)

**5 Labor Day** How have you experienced work as a form of participation in God's creative action? How are persistent low wages a barrier to full participation in that creative action? What can you do to support workplaces built upon justice and dignity?

**13 Feast of St. John Chrysostom** “Not to enable the poor to share in our goods is to steal from them and deprive them of life. The goods we possess are not ours, but theirs.”

**14 Exaltation of the Holy Cross** “Set your mind and your heart on these people who are suffering so much. Then, in the spirit of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius, ask yourself: What have I done to crucify them? What do I do

to uncrucify them? What must I do for these people to rise again?” ~Ignacio Ellacuría, SJ

**15 Our Lady of Sorrows** “It was when I began to understand the suffering Mary, that I was able to identify with her. The Mother of Sorrows who witnessed her son, a man of color, being dragged through the street. A mother who witnessed her son being vilified, tortured, and mocked by an unjust legal system. A mother who heard the verdict of capital punishment, a death sentence for her son even though he was innocent.” ~Dr. Valerie D. Lewis-Mosley

**15-October 15 Hispanic Heritage Month** – Learn some words of greeting in Spanish and share them with your Spanish-speaking neighbors: ¡Hola! ¿Cómo está? ¡Es bienvenido/a aquí! ¿Cuál es su nombre?

**27 St. Vincent de Paul** “Go to the poor; you will find God.”