

Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation News

Congregation of the Sisters of Bon Secours



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World Environment Day – World Oceans Day

“If we approach nature and the environment with openness to awe and wonder...
if we feel intimately united with all that exists,
then sobriety and care will well up spontaneously.” (Pope Francis, Laudato Si’)

For many of us, the month of June ushers in the season of warmer weather and time at the beach – a place of relaxation, wonder and renewal for our spirits. This month as we commemorate World Environment Day and World Oceans Day we pause to reflect on the life-giving gift the ocean offers us. Not only does it provide nutrition, the greatest biodiversity on the planet and a livelihood for many, the ocean offers enormous potential for renewable energy technologies. This issue of JPIC News focuses on both the gift of the sea as well as our responsibility to preserve it for generations to come. As Sisters of Bon Secours we are committed to defending and caring for all creation and we invite you to join us as we play our part in supporting the ecological health of our planet and its oceans.

The Gift of the Sea

- The ocean is home to the majority of Earth's plants and animals—from tiny single-celled organisms to the blue whale, the planet's largest living animal.
- The ocean contains nearly 200,000 identified species, but actual numbers may lie in the millions.
- The ocean produces over half of the world's oxygen and stores 50 times more carbon dioxide than the atmosphere.
- The ocean regulates our climate and weather patterns.
- Over three billion people depend on marine and coastal biodiversity for their livelihoods.
- The ocean serves as the world's largest source of protein, with more than 2.6 billion people depending on the oceans as their primary source of protein.
- Globally, the market value of marine and coastal resources and industries is estimated at \$3 trillion per year or about 5 per cent of global GDP.
- Medicinal products come from the ocean including ingredients that help address cancer, arthritis and heart disease.

Source: U.N. World Oceans Day



“The sea,
once it casts its spell,
holds one in its net of wonder
forever.”

Jacques Cousteau

Reflection

- How has the ocean cast its spell on you?**
What memories do you have of time spent enjoying the ocean?
What gifts has the ocean offered you?



June
JPIC Days of Remembrance

June 5
World Environment Day

June 8
World Oceans Day



June 12
World Day Against Child Labor

June 17
World Day to Combat
Desertification & Drought

June 20
World Refugee Day

June 21
June Solstice



Earth, our home,
is beginning to look more and more like a pile of filth.

Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*

The Plastic Rule: If you can't reuse it, just refuse it!



Ending Plastic Pollution

"Ending Plastic Pollution" was the theme for Earth Day 2018 (April 22) and has also been adopted as the theme for World Environment Day (June 5) and World Oceans Day 2018 (June 8) highlighting the state of emergency plastic is inflicting on the environment, especially the ocean environment.

Plastic Pollution facts:

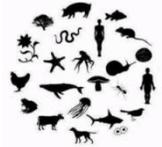
- Every year the world uses 500 billion plastic bags.
- Each year, at least 8 million tons of plastic end up in the oceans, the equivalent of a full garbage truck every minute.
- In the last decade, we produced more plastic than in the whole last century.
- 50 percent of the plastic we use is single-use or disposable.
- We buy 1 million plastic bottles every minute.
- Plastic makes up 10% of all of the waste we generate.

Source: www.worldenvironmentday.global



As we become more and more ecologically aware and move from a human-centered to an Earth-centered worldview, these statistics not only disturb us, but they compel us to make some changes in our lifestyle.

To what degree do you participate in the "throwaway culture" Pope Francis warns against in *Laudato Si'*?



What steps can you take to reduce plastic use?

The Great Barrier Reef

There are many threats to coral reefs, but by far the biggest is global warming. Spikes in ocean temperatures cause a phenomenon called bleaching, which is often fatal. Right now, the Great Barrier Reef is experiencing the worst bleaching in its history. More than two-thirds of the Great Barrier Reef's living coral is at risk of dying from this episode.

When we burn oil, coal, and gas, it heats up the planet and the oceans, killing coral reefs. The fossil fuel industry has lobbied for years to make sure we have limited alternatives to these choices that disturb our climate and threaten our oceans — to make sure we only have choices that protect its profits.

We have known for a long time that relying on fossil fuels is not sustainable. The technology to shift to cleaner, greener renewables has been available for years, and is getting more efficient and affordable every day. Of course, there are things that we can all do to live in a way that minimizes our carbon footprint. (Greenpeace)



A side by side comparison of a healthy portion of the Great Barrier Reef (left), compared to a bleached portion (right). (Greenpeace International)



What is one new practice you can adopt this month to minimize your carbon footprint as a way to commemorate World Environment Day and World Oceans Day?

What We Can Do About Plastic Pollution

Corporations like Coca-Cola, PepsiCo, Nestle, Unilever, Starbucks, Procter & Gamble, and McDonald's all have a huge role to play when it comes to plastic pollution. We are sold coffee, soda, chips, candy, sandwiches, shampoo, face wash, and soap contained in plastic that we have no choice but to throw away. It is time for corporations to invest in alternatives and phase out single-use plastic. Write to the CEO of a major company in your country and ask him/her to do their part to end the plastic crisis by ensuring their companies' packaging is never found in our oceans, or waterways again. Encourage them to invest in alternatives to single-use plastic. Mention this to the manager of the stores and eateries you patronize as a way to raise awareness of the detrimental effects of plastic.



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