

# Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation News

## Congregation of the Sisters of Bon Secours

Indigenous  
Wisdom  
&  
Our  
Relationship  
with Earth



July, 2018  
Vol. 3, Number 11



"Our common home is like a sister with whom we share our life and a beautiful mother who opens her arms to embrace us."

(Pope Francis, Laudato Si')

Over these last several months, each issue of JPIC news has invited us to embrace Pope Francis' challenge to undergo an "ecological conversion". This "conversion" from a human centered (anthropocentric) worldview to an Earth centered one invites us to cultivate a more harmonious relationship with Earth. This month as we commemorate the feast of St. Kateri Tekakwitha, the patron saint of ecology and the environment, the JPIC Newsletter will focus on the wisdom of our indigenous neighbors. May their reverence for the natural world be an inspiration to us who are striving to live in more mutually enhancing ways among the human and non-human beings that comprise the Earth community.

July  
JPIC Days of Remembrance

July 14  
St. Kateri Tekakwitha  
Patroness of  
Ecology and the Environment



July 28  
World Hepatitis Day

July 30  
World Day Against  
Human Trafficking



### Legend of the Eagle and Condor

There's an ancient legend told in both the Andes and the Amazon of Peru that predicts the coming of an era when bridge-building between two apparently opposed cultures will become necessary for life to continue on Earth. This legend is known as the prophecy of the Eagle and the Condor.

The prophecy of the Eagle and the Condor speaks of two ways of being: that of the Eagle, far-seeing, rational, linear, and structured; and that of the Condor, earth-connected, intuitive, wise and receptive.

One telling of the legend from the Peruvian Quechua culture states that the 500 years beginning around the 16th century would be a period in which the Eagle way of life would dominate the world. The Condor People, those who embodied intuitive and receptive wisdom, would be almost wiped out. The legend additionally states that at the end of the cycle, which corresponds roughly to 1990, a chance would emerge for these two types to co-exist and cooperate moving forward into a future that would honor both approaches to living, and bring Earth back into balance.

This possibility for a sustainable future can be witnessed with the re-emergence of interest in indigenous wisdom and the return to Earth-based knowledge on the part of many from the Eagle culture. We will need both our love and compassion for the Earth and its creatures, and the foresight and technology necessary to save them. Only when the Eagle people and the Condor people learn to work together, and balance is restored, can they then fly together and recreate the world as it was meant to be.

Source: *Threads of Peru*, Laurel Thompson

***In what ways do you see this prophecy coming true in our times?***

***Sisters of Bon Secours...Women of healing...defending and caring for all creation (Mission Focus)***

## Rights of Mother Earth

In 2010 Bolivia hosted a gathering for climate justice advocates called the *World People's Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth*.

Out of this conference came a call to protect nature by recognizing her rights and thus the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Mother Earth was developed.

The Rights of Mother Earth are a call to abandon the dominant anthropocentric worldview and to imagine a new Earth society. These rights are based on the indigenous premise that asks: If we are all part of Mother Earth, why do some beings enjoy protection and privileges, while others are relegated to the status of things? This is a relevant question for all of us to ponder.

## The Universal Declaration of the Rights of Mother Earth

Mother Earth and all beings of which she is composed have the following inherent rights:

- the right to life and to exist;
- the right to be respected;
- the right to regenerate its bio-capacity and to continue its vital cycles and processes free from human disruptions;
- the right to maintain its identity and integrity as a distinct, self-regulating and interrelated being;
- the right to not have its genetic structure modified or disrupted in a manner that threatens its integrity or vital and healthy functioning;
- the right to water as a source of life;
- the right to clean air;
- the right to integral health;
- the right to be free from contamination, pollution and toxic or radioactive waste

**How are these rights a way of protecting and defending all creation, the mission focus of Bon Secours?**

**How do these Rights of Mother Earth stretch and challenge the ways you think about Earth, relate to Earth and behave toward Earth?**



There is currently a petition circulating to ask the United Nations to adopt the "Universal Declaration of Rights of Mother Earth". The Global signature campaign, "Rights of Mother Earth", is asking the United Nations to adopt the "Universal Declaration of Rights of Mother Earth" as one of the key documents besides the Human Rights Declaration. On December 10, 2018, the 70th anniversary of the Human Rights Declaration, the petition with a goal of one million signatures, will be delivered to the United Nations. The petition is available online in English (<http://petition.rightsofmotherearth.com/>). There are printable petitions in Spanish and French to gather signatures:

Spanish: [http://www.rightsofmotherearth.com/images2015/ARCHIVES/Petition%20lists/ES\\_petitionlist.pdf](http://www.rightsofmotherearth.com/images2015/ARCHIVES/Petition%20lists/ES_petitionlist.pdf)

French: [http://www.rightsofmotherearth.com/images2015/ARCHIVES/Petition%20lists/FR\\_petitionlist.pdf](http://www.rightsofmotherearth.com/images2015/ARCHIVES/Petition%20lists/FR_petitionlist.pdf)

## Wisdom from Indigenous Peoples

All humans  
have the right to return home  
and become indigenous to this  
Earth,  
to become real human beings  
living their full potential  
as caretakers of life,  
to become people with big hearts  
living in cooperation  
with each other and with other  
forms of life.

Arkan Lushwala (Indigenous leader, Peru)



Humankind  
has not woven the web of life.  
We are but one thread within it.  
Whatever we do to the web,  
we do to ourselves.  
All things are bound together.  
All things connect.

Chief Seattle (Native American)

We are all visitors to this  
time, this place.  
We are just passing  
through.  
Our purpose here is to  
observe, to learn, to grow,  
to love...  
and then we return home.

Australian Aboriginal saying



Bon Secours Assembly,  
Ireland, 2017

Our spirituality  
is a oneness  
and an interconnectedness  
with all that lives and breathes  
even with all  
that does not live or breathe.

Mudrooroo (Aboriginal, Australia)

### International Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation Committee

Sr. Teresa Margot Benites Montero, CBS (Peru)

Sr. Fran Gorsuch, CBS (USA)

Sr. Mary Beth Hamm, SSJ Co-chair

Sr. Mary Leamy, CBS (Ireland)

Sr. Anne Marie Mack, CBS (USA) Chair

Sr. Noelia Lara Núñez, CBS (Peru)

Sr. Marguerite Provost, CBS (France)

Sr. Alice Talone, CBS (USA)

Sr. Katherine Tierney, CBS (Ireland)

Sr. Yolanda Morales Valiente, CBS (Peru)

Sr. Chris Webb, CBS (USA)