

# Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation News

## Congregation of the Sisters of Bon Secours



### International Mother Earth Day Edition

April, 2018  
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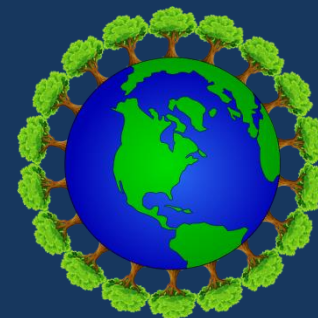
Each April 22<sup>nd</sup> offers us an opportunity to focus on our relationship with our common home, Earth, and the web of relationships that exist among her living and non-living beings. As Sisters of Bon Secours we have been reflecting on this relationship with Earth over these past several months, accepting Pope Francis' invitation to engage in an "ecological conversion". Moving from a human-centered (anthropocentric) worldview to an Earth-centered world view is challenging. Living out of that eco-centric world view is a daunting life-long task.

The theme for Mother Earth Day 2018, *End Plastic Pollution*, raises our awareness of the impacts plastics have on health and well-being of our planet. This issue of JPIC news will focus on the impacts plastics have on our lands, oceans and the creatures who live there. It will challenge us, as women of healing, to play our part in reducing our plastics footprint.

April  
JPIC Days of Remembrance

April 7  
World Health Day

April 22  
Mother Earth Day



April 24 – 30  
World Immunization Week

April 25  
World Malaria Day



If you would learn more, ask the cattle,  
Seek information from the birds of the air.  
The creeping things of earth will give you lessons,  
And the fishes of the sea will tell you all.  
There is not a single creature that does not know  
That everything is of God's making.  
God holds in power the soul of every living thing,  
And the breath of every human body.  
—Book of Job 12:7-10

"Most people do not even know that this wonderful passage from Job is even in the Bible. From the beginning of the Bible to the end, it is clear that a loving God includes all of creation in God's Kingdom. God shows authentic concern for all animals by directing Noah to take a male and female of every species onto the ark to be saved. Apparently, animals matter and are worth "saving." After the flood, God makes a covenant, not just with people but with all of creation - - stated five times in Genesis. How did we miss that?" ~Fr. Richard Rohr

This quote from the Book of Job and the reflection by Fr. Richard Rohr makes clear that God is concerned about all creation - - not just and not first and foremost the human species. As we move from a human-centered to an Earth-centered worldview, we begin to include all living and non-living beings in our concern for our shared future on Earth, our common home.

What does this quote by Fr. Rohr evoke in you?

#### For Reflection

Pray with this quote from the Book of Job.

What lessons have you learned over your lifetime from God's creatures?

What lessons do species other than the human species have to offer us during this time of ecological devastation?

How is your care and concern for our planet expanding to include concern for other species?

Each year hundreds of millions of tons of waste are generated, much of it non-biodegradable. Earth, our home, is beginning to look more and more like an immense pile of filth. Pope Francis



**Plastic Production**

According to an article by the BBC:

- 8.3 billion metric tons of non-recycled plastic has been produced to date.
- Generating 6.3 billion metric tons of plastic waste.
- 9% of that waste has been recycled; 12% has been incinerated and 79% has accumulated in landfills and the natural environment.
- 12 billion metric tons will enter landfills or the environment by 2050 if current production and waste management trends continue.

Source: Earth Day Network



Plastic Pollution and climate change are parallel global emergencies. Plastic is a petroleum product. To truly divest from fossil fuels we must reduce our collective plastic footprint.

**Plastic Pollution**

The invention of plastic in 1907 was considered a breakthrough. Plastic products soon became omnipresent in our daily lives. For many years, we only perceived the benefits of plastic and knew little of the damaging consequences for human health, natural ecosystems and the climate. Plastics are a problem mostly due to their unbiodegradable nature, the materials used for plastic production (hydrocarbon molecules— derived from the refining of oil and natural gas), and the challenges behind properly discarding them. Source: Earth Day Network

**Becoming Aware**

Notice how many plastic products are in your home: packaging for food, cleaning products and personal care products; straws, storage containers, plastic bags and other plastic items. Take an inventory. Do you know where these end up when you are finished using them? Are there alternatives for the plastic products you use? Are there ways you can re-use these? How will you decrease your plastic footprint?

**Ask Earth's creatures...**

What might the turtle, deer and seal in these photos say to us humans about our use of plastic this Earth Day? Consider the impact your use of plastics have on these creatures of God.



**Learn more**

Spanish: [VIDEO: Un buzo muestra la horrible verdad sobre la contaminación de los océanos](#)  
 French: [VIDEO: Un plongeur montre l'horrible vérité sur la pollution des océans](#)  
 English: [Plastic, plastic, plastic': British diver films sea of rubbish off Bali](#) (Video)

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- Sr. Katherine Tierney, CBS (Ireland)
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- Sr. Chris Webb, CBS (USA)

**Practicing the 4 Rs to Reduce Your Plastic Footprint**

Over the next month make a commitment to reduce your plastic footprint. Use the chart below to record what plastics you have refused, reduced, reused and recycled.

- **Refuse** to purchase or use plastics that are for a "one time" disposable use. Eg. straws
- **Reduce** plastic use. Look for alternatives to plastic: glass containers, aluminum foil, etc.
- **Reuse** something plastic that you usually use only once. Eg. Laundry detergent container
- **Recycle** everything possible. Learn where your recycled products really end up.

Refused	Reduced	Reused	Recycled