

Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation News

Congregation of the Sisters of Bon Secours

Ecological Economics



February, 2023

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“Today, a new economy inspired by Francis of Assisi can and must become an economy of friendship with Earth and an economy of peace.

It is a question of transforming an economy that kills into an economy of life, in all its aspects.”

Pope Francis

During this month we commemorate the International Day of Prayer and Awareness Against Human Trafficking. Sadly, this day brings to our awareness the reality that our global economy thrives on the work of victims of human trafficking and forced labor, from whose toil we benefit every day of our lives. These are people – men, women and children – who harvest our bananas, pick cotton, manufacture our clothes and mine the materials we use in our electronics – 50 million people. In contrast to this economy that kills, Pope Francis invites us to embrace an economy of life based on friendship and peace with Earth and all her beings, aptly named the “Economy of Francesco”.

This issue of JPIC news introduces us to the Economy of Francesco and calls us to consider how we might contribute to building such an economy in our personal, family and Congregational lives. Already, the Congregation of Bon Secours contributes to Pope Francis’ economic vision through our Socially Responsible Investment Policy. How might each of us in our personal lives more intentionally develop practices that allow us to embrace ecological economics through our purchasing power?

Aware of the connection between human trafficking and economics, this month the Congregational Laudato Si’ Prayer Initiative focuses on Ecological Spirituality through the lens of Ecological Economics. That prayer accompanies this Newsletter.

February
JPIC Days of Remembrance

February 1-7
World Interfaith Harmony Week

February 2
World Wetlands Day

February 8
Feast of St. Josephine Bakhita



International Day of Prayer and Awareness Against Human Trafficking

February 11
World Day of the Sick

February 20
World Day of Social Justice

Laudato Si’ Action Platform Goal 3 Ecological Economics

Ecological Economics involves:

- Sustainable production
- Ethical Consumption
- Ethical investments
- Divestment from fossil fuels and any economic activity harmful to the planet and its people
- Investment in renewable energy and any economic activity that benefits people and the planet

Purchasing is always a moral – and not simply economic – act’. Today, ‘the issue of human and environmental degradation challenges us to examine our lifestyle’.

Pope Francis, Laudato Si’ #206



Forced Labor by the Numbers

The 2021 Global Estimates indicate that 49.6 million people are in modern slavery on any given day. Forced labor accounts for 27.6 million people in situations of modern slavery. These statistics translate to 3.5 people in forced labor for every thousand people in the world. Women and girls make up 11.8 million of the total in forced labor. More than 3.3 million of all those in forced labor are children.

Source: International Labor Organization (ILO)

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



“We, young economists, entrepreneurs, agents of change, called here to Assisi from all over the world, aware of the responsibility that weighs on our generation, commit ourselves now, individually and all together, to spend our lives so that the economy of today and tomorrow becomes an economy of the Gospel.”

Young People Pact for the Economy with Pope Francis



In May 2019, Pope Francis wrote a heartfelt letter to young economists, entrepreneurs and businesspeople throughout the world. He invited them to make a “covenant”, between themselves and with him, “to change today’s economy and to give a soul to the economy of tomorrow”.

Last September these young economists and entrepreneurs gathered with Pope Francis in Assisi to further explore this initiative called “The Economy of Francesco (EoF).” The Economy of Francesco is a set of initiatives involving a world network of young people, which included this public event in Assisi. The goal of this meeting was for these young professionals together with Pope Francis, to question, rethink and give hope to the economy of tomorrow.

About 1000 participants from six continents gathered for this event: 3% come from North America and Oceania, 8% from Asia, 10% from Africa, 31% from Latin America, and the rest from European countries.

Thirty percent came from the business world: entrepreneurs, managers, and young people involved in start-up activities or even with projects defined and/or under development. Another 30% of participants were engaged in research. These are masters and PhD students and scholars in economics and other related disciplines. The other 40% are changemakers; that is, promoters of activities that serve the common good and a just, sustainable and inclusive economy in their communities.

Divided into 12 key topics of the economy, participants were assigned to “villages,” which served as spaces of conversation and reflections. The 12 villages included Finance and Humanity, Business in Transition, CO2 of Inequality, Agriculture and Justice, Energy and Poverty, Women for Economy, Business and Peace, Life and Lifestyle, Work and Care, Policies for Happiness, Management and Gift, and Vocation and Profit.

At the conclusion of the #EoF 2022 event, the 12 thematic villages that were part of The Economy of Francesco presented a Final Statement. This declaration reflects the work and commitment of the members of these villages, and on September 24, this declaration was signed by Pope Francis. Click the links below to read this inspiring statement.

Source: *Economy of Francesco*

Be Inspired!

The Economy of Francesco Final Statement and Commitment

- English: <https://francescoeconomy.org/final-statement-and-common-commitment/>
- Spanish: <https://francescoeconomy.org/final-statement-and-common-commitment-es/>
- French: <https://francescoeconomy.org/final-statement-and-common-commitment-fr/>

The Attributes of the “Economy of Francesco”

1. An economy of peace and not of war.
2. An economy that counters the proliferation of weapons, especially the most destructive ones.
3. An economy that cares for creation and does not steal it.
4. An economy at the service of the person, the family and life, respectful of every woman, man, child, the elderly and especially the most fragile and vulnerable.
5. An economy where care replaces discarding and indifference.
6. An economy that leaves no one behind, to build a society in which the stones discarded by the dominant mentality become cornerstones.
7. An economy that recognizes and protects decent and secure work for all, especially for women.
8. An economy where finance is a friend and ally of the real economy and work, not against them.
9. An economy that knows how to promote and preserve the cultures and traditions of peoples, all species, the living and natural resources of the Earth.
10. An economy that fights poverty in all its forms, reduces inequalities and knows how to say, with Jesus and Francis, ‘blessed are the poor’.
11. An economy guided by the ethics of the person and open to transcendence.
12. An economy that generates wealth for all, that generates joy and not only well-being, because happiness that is not shared is little.

Source: <https://www.exaudi.org/the-12-points-of-the-francis-economy-pact/>

We believe in this economy.

It is not a utopia, because we are already building it.
And some of us, on particularly bright mornings,
have already glimpsed
the beginning of the promised land.

Participants in the EoF Conference

Reflection

- How does this vision of Pope Francis and young economists resonate with you?
- Which aspect of the Economy of Francesco do you find most inspiring? Most challenging?
- What concrete actions can you take to live the Economy of Francis?

International Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation Committee

- Sr. Teresa Margot Benítez Montero, CBS
- Sr. Rosa Elena Lozada Escobar, CBS
- Sr. Mary Beth Hamm, SSJ Chair
- Sr. Mary Leamy, CBS
- Rachel Moccia
- Sr. Maria Pintado Peña, CBS Co-chair
- Nick Stein
- Sr. Chris Webb, CBS

Congregation of Bon Secours Laudato Si' Action Platform Prayer Initiative
Ecological Spirituality
February 2023

Ecological Spirituality springs from a profound ecological conversion and helps us to "discover God in all things", both in the beauty of creation and in the sighs and groans of people afflicted in any way. This month as we celebrate the feast of St. Josephine Bakhita and the International Day of Prayer and Awareness of Human Trafficking our prayer will focus on ecological spirituality from the lens of ecological economics. The 3rd Laudato Si' Action Platform Goal, ecological economics, involves sustainable production, fair-trade, ethical consumption, ethical investments and divestment from any economic activity harmful to the planet and the people.

Call to Prayer: Let us pause to remember that we, Sisters of Bon Secours, have committed ourselves to a 7- year journey of transformation of our relationship with Earth and all who share our common home. Today, let us especially remember those who labor for us: children who pick our bananas, women who manufacture our clothes, men who mine the minerals that we use in our electronics and the 50 million people, victims of forced labor, from whose toil we benefit every day of our lives. These are God's chosen people, blessed and holy, with whom we share our common home. (2 min.)



Psalm 4

O Merciful Presence, the ignorant seem
unrestrained in the world;
they defile the Sacred Altar,
your dwelling place within;
they leave those weaker than themselves in ruins.



Let the cries of the victims of injustice
come before You;
according to your great Power,
break the bonds of oppression!



Let all that has been garnered through greed
be returned in full measure with open hands.



Then we your people, those who would
companion with You,
will give thanks to You forever;
from generation to generation we will
abandon ourselves into your hands
with grace-filled, open hearts.

Psalms for Praying by Nan C. Merrill

Reading 1: The ecological crisis is also a summons to profound interior conversion. Christians all need an "ecological conversion", whereby the effects of their encounter with Jesus Christ become evident in their relationship with the world around them. *Laudato Si' #217*

Pause for reflection

Reading 2: "... We all share the status of creaturehood; we are all kin in the evolving community of life now under siege; our vision must be one of flourishing for all. The immediate aim is to establish and protect healthy ecosystems where all creatures, including poor human beings and plants and animals being driven to extinction, can thrive. The longer-term goal is a socially just and environmentally sustainable society in which the needs of all people are met and diverse species can prosper, onward to an evolutionary future that will still surprise.... guide us at this critical time of Earth's distress, to practical and critical effect": A flourishing humanity on a thriving planet rich in species in an evolving universe, all together filled with the glory of God." *Elizabeth Johnson, Ask the Beasts: Darwin and the God of Love, Bloomsbury: London, 2014, pp. 285-86)*

Pause for reflection

Reflection

- What words or phrases resonate with you? Inspire you? Challenge you?
- What do these readings ask of you?

Reading 3: Consumer movements prove successful in changing the way businesses operate, forcing them to consider their environmental footprint and their patterns of production. When social pressure affects their earnings, businesses clearly have to find ways to produce differently. This shows us the great need for a sense of social responsibility on the part of consumers. 'Purchasing is always a moral – and not simply economic – act'. Today, in a word, 'the issue of environmental degradation challenges us to examine our lifestyle'. *Laudato Si'* #206

Pause for reflection

Reflection and Sharing:

- How do we show that we value the labor of the people who produce our clothes, food and possessions?
- Are our economic transactions supporting sustainable, ethical and fair production, consumption and investment?
- Are there any ethically-sourced products that we can commit to buying (e.g., fair trade bananas or coffee?)
- Are there unethically made products that we can avoid purchasing?

Gathering the Graces:

What is a word, phrase, thought or feeling that you will take with you from this time of prayer together?

Affirming our Commitment to the Laudato Si' Action Platform: We pray together the Congregation of the Sisters of Bon Secours of Paris Laudato Si' Action Platform Commitment Statement.

**We, Women of Healing, commit ourselves to:
defend and care for all creation and to
cry out with others against injustice and all that diminishes life on Earth.**

Sisters of Bon Secours Mission Focus

In fidelity to this mission focus
that has guided our Congregation choices since 2009
and desiring to live our healing charism more deeply,
the Congregation of the Sisters of Bon Secours and the Bon Secours Family
joyfully embark on a seven-year journey with the universal Church
toward integral ecology in the spirit of Laudato Si'.

Impelled by the Holy Spirit and renewed by the fire of our original call,
we, women of audacious hope, commit ourselves to boldly live our charism of
compassion, healing and liberation with those in our Bon Secours Family
as we address the seven Laudato Si' Action Platform goals:

To respond to the cry of Earth and the cry of the poor,

Adopt a more sustainable lifestyle

Engage in and foster ecological education

Develop an ecological spirituality

Embrace ecological economics and

Advocate for public policies that protect our common home and all those who share it.

Through our participation in the Laudato Si' Action Platform,
the Congregation of Bon Secours and the Bon Secours Family
are walking a "path to renewal" together with all people of good will
who love and care for our common home, Mother Earth.

*Public Commitment
October 4, 2021*



Closing Prayer: God of all, may we be moved to tap into the countless ways that human ingenuity, animated by your Spirit, has allowed us to collectively live more sustainably on the Earth, protecting the dignity of people and planet. We pray that we always prioritize the dignity and rights of workers as we make purchasing decisions in our community, and that we consider how our financial investments impact the health of the planet.

Ignatian Solidarity Network

Follow-up Action

When you buy something this week, pray for all the people and resources that went into getting it to you. If it's an article of clothing, think of the farmers who grew the cotton, the textile workers who sewed the fabric together, the warehouse workers who sorted and stacked, the shipping workers who transported the item to you, and consider what happens to it when you finish wearing it. If it's an electronic device, think of the miners who extracted the materials from the ground, the factory workers who assembled the equipment, the shipping workers who transported it to you, and where it goes when it doesn't work anymore. If it's a cup of coffee, think of the farmers in the mountains who grew the beans, the processors who roasted and bagged them, the transportation workers who moved them to your favorite coffee shop, the barista who brewed it for you, and what will happen to that paper cup when you finish drinking and throw it away.