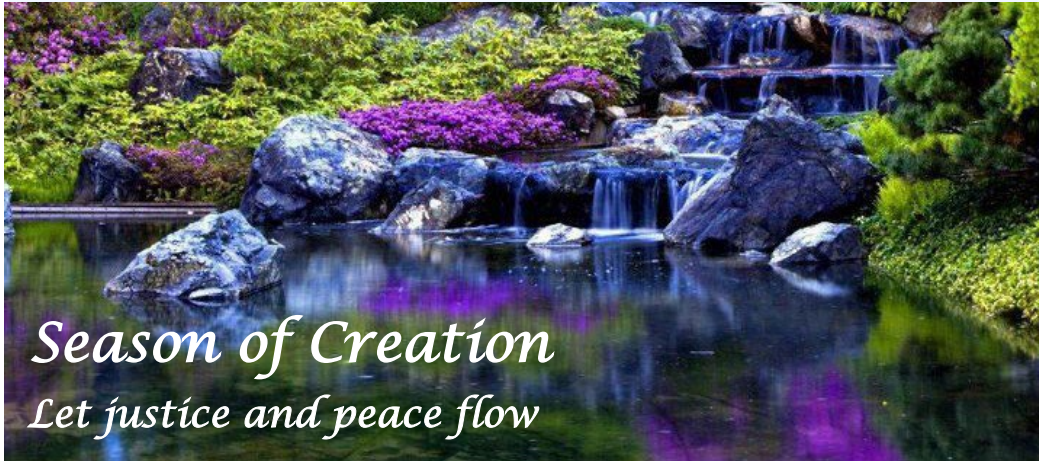


# Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation News

## Congregation of the Sisters of Bon Secours



*Season of Creation*  
*Let justice and peace flow*

September, 2023  
Vol. 9, Number 1



Prophet Amos cries out:  
*"Let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!"*  
and so we are called to join the river of justice and peace,  
to take up climate and ecological justice, and to speak out with and for communities  
most impacted by climate injustice and the loss of biodiversity.

A mighty river is the symbol for the Season of Creation 2023. Just as tributaries come together to form a mighty river, the entire global community is invited to converge our individual identities, of name, family or faith community and join in this greater movement for justice – living in right relationship with Earth and all her beings.

One way the Congregation of Bon Secours is contributing to this "mighty river" of peace and justice is through our participation in the Laudato Si' Action Platform (LSAP). We are one of over 4,000 global organizations who have committed ourselves to take part in a seven-year journey of transformation towards integral ecology. Through the lens of integral ecology we increasingly view the "cry of Earth and the cry of those who are poor" as one cry, integrally connected. By engaging in ecological education and developing an ecological spirituality, we hope to become more "painfully aware" of what is happening to our planet and her people and respond by living more sustainably, using our financial resources on behalf of Earth's healing and advocating for public policies and practices that support planetary health. In all these ways we commit ourselves to be who we say we are: "Women of healing, defending and caring for all creation." Join us in celebrating the Season of Creation!

"The Season of Creation is an opportunity  
for Christians around the world  
to embody the communion for which we  
human earthlings are created,  
and to do so in the quest for lifeways that  
build justice among people  
and allow Earth's web of life to flourish."  
Cynthia D. Moe-Lobeda, Ph.D.,

### Reflection

What spiritual practices are enabling you to  
experience a deeper communion with all  
of creation...human and non-human?

How has your lifestyle changed over these  
past eight years as a result of engaging  
Laudato Si'?

### Laudato Si' – the sequel!

At a meeting with European lawyers on August 21<sup>st</sup> thanking them for their attention to environmental protection laws, Pope Francis shared that he is "writing a second part to Laudato Si' to update it on current problems". "It must never be forgotten that future generations are entitled to receive from our hands a beautiful and habitable world, and that this entails grave responsibilities toward the natural world."

### Season of Creation Global Event

September 1

Global Ecumenical Online Prayer Service

8:00AM Peru, 9:00AM USA, ET,

2:00PM Ireland/GB/DRC, 3:00PM France,

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pv3kExaSMml>

[kExaSMml](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pv3kExaSMml)



September  
JPIC Days of Remembrance

September 1  
World Day of Prayer for the  
Care of Creation

September 1 – October 4  
Season of Creation  
2023 Theme:  
Let Justice and Peace Flow

September 16  
International Day for the  
Preservation of the Ozone Layer

September 18  
World Water Monitoring Day

September 21  
International Day of Peace

September 26  
World Environmental Health Day

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

**Climate Change: July 2023**

Flooding, global wildfires, the hottest month the world has ever experienced, oceans reaching their hottest ever recorded temperature as they soak up warmth from climate change, with dire implications for people and our planet's health.



*What sacrifices am I/are we willing to make to address climate change?*

*What more is ours to do?*

*"Let us heed our call to stand with the victims of environmental and climate injustice, and to put an end to the senseless war against creation."*

Pope Francis, Message for World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation 2023

## Laudato Si' Action Platform (LSAP) Update

In July the Congregation Team approved the 2023-2024 LSAP Actions for Ireland/Great Britain and the United States. Plans for Peru are expected to be approved at the September meeting. As we celebrate the Season of Creation and the theme "Let Justice and Peace Flow" we present some of the actions that will enable justice to flow through the Bon Secours Family and beyond as we implement these LSAP initiatives:

**Ireland/Great Britain:**

- Will reduce fossil fuel use by at least 25% by installing Solar PV panels.
- Will form a book club with a goal of reading two ecological based books per year.
- Will plan an ecological pilgrimage for the Bon Secours family.

**USA:**

- The Native American Land Acknowledgement Working Group will finalize the land acknowledgement and roll it out to the CBS family with opportunities to reflect on and engage the acknowledgement, including an employee forum for education.
- The USA Leadership Team with the Buildings & Grounds Task Force will continue to explore land trusts, easements, deed restrictions and the transfer or selling of development rights, for the protection of our resources and will investigate their ramifications.
- JPIC USA Team will incorporate a short quote from Laudato Si' or other related text with a question for sharing in the employee newsletter and circulate to the Bon Secours family on a monthly basis for short 5 –10 minute discussion at committee meetings, department meeting, ministry meetings and events, etc.
- The JPIC USA Team will work with the USA Leadership Team and Retreat and Conference Center (RCC) managers to host a half day Laudato Si' retreat for all employees at Marriottsville on November 15, 2023.
- The JPIC USA Team will keep the RCC staff informed of web and print resources on ecological spirituality and education that can be included on the RCC website, retreat brochure, social media and electronic communications on a quarterly basis. Tessa will include JPIC LS themes in what she does as well. The Team will also continue to suggest presenters for programs at the Center.

### Congregation Virtual Retreat in the Spirit of Laudato Si' September 14 and 15

All Sisters of Bon Secours are invited to participate in a two-day virtual retreat as part of our commitment to embrace an ecological spirituality. Our retreat facilitator is Christian Leano, Associate Director of the Laudato Si' Movement. Throughout our two days together we will be contemplating creation to "discover in each thing a teaching which God wishes to hand to us." The retreat will include guided contemplative practices, interactive exercises, and personal and group discernment on deepening our communion with God, each other, and all creation.



### Congregation Prayer Initiative in the Spirit of Laudato Si'

Since January 2023 the Sisters of Bon Secours have been preparing monthly prayers on ecological spirituality as part of the Laudato Si' Action Platform initiatives. These prayers are most effective if prayed communally (local community, cluster, friends, colleagues, etc.) so please set aside some time during the month of September to share in the prayer that accompanies this Newsletter. Sisters can access the prayers from January to September 2023, on the JPOTEL intranet.

### Read Pope Francis Message for the World Day of Prayer for Creation (September 1)

<https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/pont-messages/2023/documents/20230513-messaggio-giornata-curacreato.html>



#### Thank you, Sr. Teresa Margot Benites!

Since 2015 Sr. Teresa Margot has faithfully served on the International JPIC Committee and during the past three years on the JPIC Peru support team as well. During that time her passion and energy for justice and peace has been apparent to all of us on the JPIC Committee. Whether through her commitment to addressing human trafficking by participating in Red Kawsay, her determination to help women victims of domestic violence or her concern about the effects of climate change, we could always depend on Teresa for inspiration. As Teresa Margot steps aside from participation on our Committee, we want to express our heartfelt thanks to her for serving us so faithfully all these years.

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

- 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
- Nicholas Stein
- Sr. Chris Webb, CBS

#### Observers for 2023:

- Sr. Marianne Falanka, DRC
- Beatrice Lesourd, France
- Sr. Nathalie Lundolo, CBS, France

**Congregation of Bon Secours Laudato Si' Action Platform Prayer Initiative**  
**Season of Creation – Ecological Spirituality**  
**September 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. We recognize the cosmos (all of creation, not just what we can see) as a place of God's continuing self-revelation and creation.*

**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. This month as we commemorate the Season of Creation, let us especially remember our commitment to develop an ecological spirituality – a spirituality that acknowledges the cosmos (all of creation, not just what we can see) as a place of God's continuing self-revelation and creation.

*(Pause for contemplative reflection)*

**Psalm 148**

Praise the Blessed One!  
 Give praise from the heavens, and from the ends of the earth!  
 Give praise all you angels, angels of earth and of heaven!

Give praise, sun and moon, give praise, all you shining stars!  
 Give praise, all universes, the whole cosmos of Creation!

Praise the Blessed One! For through Love all was created  
 And firmly fixed for ever and ever;  
 Yes, the pattern of creation was established.

Give praise to the Beloved, all the earth,  
 all that swim in the deep, and all the winged ones in the air!

Give praise all mountains and hills, all trees and all minerals!  
 Give praise all four-legged and all the creep on the ground!

Leaders of the nations and all peoples, young and old,  
 Give praise! United together in all your diversity,  
 that peace and harmony might flourish on earth!

Let all people praise the Beloved,  
 who is exalted in heaven and on earth;  
 whose glory is above heaven and earth.

For all are called to be friends,  
 companions to the true Friend,  
 giving their lives joyfully as  
 co-creators and people of peace!

Praises be to the Blessed One,  
 the very Breath of our breath, the very Heart of our heart.

*Nan C. Merrill, Psalms for Praying*



**Reading 1:** Creation is of the order of love. God's love is the fundamental moving force in all created things. Every creature is thus the object of the Father's tenderness, who gives it its place in the world. Even the fleeting life of the least of beings is the object of God's love, and in its few seconds of existence, God enfolds it with affection. LS #77

**Reflection**

- What words, phrases or images from the psalm and reading resonate with you? Inspire you? Challenge you?
- Does this reading reflect your worldview?
- What does this reading ask of you?

**Reading 2:** When we speak of the “environment”, what we really mean is a relationship existing between nature and the society which lives in it. Nature cannot be regarded as something separate from ourselves or as a mere setting in which we live. We are part of nature, included in it and thus in constant interaction with it. LS #139

*Pause for reflection*

**Reading 3:** A healthy relationship with creation is one dimension of overall personal conversion. The Australian bishops spoke of the importance of such conversion for achieving reconciliation with creation: “To achieve such reconciliation, we must examine our lives and acknowledge the ways in which we have harmed God’s creation through our actions and our failure to act. We need to experience a conversion, a change of heart.” LS #218

*Pause for reflection*

**Reflection and Sharing:**

- Is your worldview shifting from seeing yourself apart from nature to seeing yourself a part of nature? If yes, are their habits you have adopted over these past few years that reflect this shift in your worldview?
- How might the Congregation of Bon Secours communally acknowledge ways we have harmed creation – by our action and/or our inaction – and truly lament and grieve our complicity in Earth’s suffering?

**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**

Creator of All,  
From your communion of love your Word went forth to create a symphony of life that sings your praise. By your Holy Wisdom you made the Earth to bring forth a diversity of creatures who praise you in their being. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they reveal knowledge.

You called human beings to till and keep your garden. You placed us into right relationships with each creature so that we could listen to their voices and learn how to safeguard the conditions for life. But we turn in on ourselves and away from our co-creatures.

We close our ears to the counsel of our fellow creatures. We fail to listen to the cries of the poor and the needs of the most vulnerable. We silence the voices of those who hold the traditions that teach us to care for the Earth. We close our ears to your creative, reconciling and sustaining Word that calls to us through the Scriptures. We lament the loss of our fellow species and their habitats that will never speak again. We grieve the loss of human cultures, along with the lives and

livelihoods that have been displaced or perished. Creation cries out as forests crackle, and animals alike flee the fires of injustice that we have lit by our unwillingness to listen.

In this Season of Creation, we pray that you would call to us with the sustaining fire of your Spirit. Breathe upon us. Open our ears and move our hearts. Turn us from our inward gaze. Teach us to contemplate your creation and listen for the voice of each creature declaring your glory. For "faith comes from hearing." Give us hearts to listen for the good news of your promise to renew the face of the Earth. Enlighten us with the grace to follow the Way of Christ as we learn to walk lightly upon this holy ground. Fill us with the hope to quench the fires of injustice with the light of your healing love that sustains our common home.

In the name of the One who came to proclaim good news to all creation, Jesus Christ. Amen.

**Follow-up Action:**

1. Make it a practice to connect with nature every day.
2. Include the needs of the natural world in your personal and community prayer.
3. Be intentional about taking personal responsibility for learning about ecological spir
4. Choose to read a book as a local community/cluster on ecological spirituality and form a discussion group to share new insights. Suggested authors include: Teilhard deChardin, Thomas Berry, Robin Wall Kimmerer, Joanna Macy