



### Pilgrims of Salt and Light



Mosaic hanging in the United Nations by Coop Mosaic Artistico Veneziano after Norman Rockwell's "Four Freedoms" paintings.

Pope Francis has declared 2025 a Jubilee year, a time to re-establish the correct relationship with God, between people and with creation. A time for rest, sanctuary and liberation and yet we see suffering all around us. Instead of sanctuary and safety, Gazans are returning to their neighborhoods to find rubble where their home once stood, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo thousands of people are being killed and hundreds of thousands forced from their homes. Severe windstorms in Ireland and flooding in Peru are destroying land and livelihoods, many immigrants are living in fear of deportation and the cuts to United States Government international humanitarian and development assistance are leaving families living in poverty around the world even more vulnerable to malnutrition, disease and death.

It is easy to fall into despair and become overwhelmed, leading to withdrawal and immobilization, or the opposite reaction, to quickly jump in and attempt to fix all the problems with simple solutions to complex issues. We are called to be contemplative pilgrims of salt and light on this journey of hope. Turning inward to find the way forward. Arnold Mindell states that the flow of painful or difficult events can become useful if we follow them exactly, compassionately and with awareness.

Inner contemplative work is the process of facilitating our inner world and being able to open and learn from unfamiliar or difficult experiences. It allows us to use our inner experience for the benefit of the community. As we step into our chapter call to be caregivers of our common home and live as peacemakers, we must first embrace suffering and create peace within ourselves so that we can positively influence society by adding goodness and truth, just as salt flavors food and light illuminates' darkness. We will have an opportunity to practice creating inter-communal peace at the JPIC webinar on March 27 at 9am EST. I hope to see many of your faces lighting up the screen!

(Excerpts taken from Yago Abeledo, M. Afr, presentation to the UISG JPIC Gathering, Rome 2025)

### JPIC Days of Remembrance

**March 3**

World Wildlife Day

**March 8**

International Women's Day

**March 17**

St. Patrick's Day

**March 22**

World Water Day

**March 25**

International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade



**Watch the 1.5-minute video on the Transatlantic Slave Trade and reflect on the legacy of slavery today.**

<https://youtu.be/rSUEhRlDF4>

**April 22**

International Mother Earth Day

## Laudato Si' In Action! Advocacy Visits in Maryland.

In February, Sr. Mary Shimo, Sr. Elaine Davia, Sr. Anne Lutz and Simone Blanchard met with Delegate Natalie Ziegler, Delegate Chao Wu and Senator Katie Fry Hester at the Maryland State House to advocate for 9 environmental bills to reduce pollution, reduce energy bills and support underserved communities most impacted by climate change.

This was an effort organized by Maryland Catholics for our Common Home, a grass roots advocacy group advocating for policies in Maryland to protect the environment and the most vulnerable. The afternoon started with an advocacy training, prayer and inspiration concluding with meetings with legislators. Participants spoke to or visited the offices of 43 members of the General Assembly from 19 different legislative districts!

Sisters shared the Bon Secours Charism with their legislators and stories from their years of healthcare ministry illustrating that the most vulnerable, those living in poverty and on the margins are the most negatively impacted by climate change. Many of the legislators were responsive and some were sponsors of the bills we were promoting.



### The Unity Prayer

May our feet journey together  
May our hands gather in unity  
May our hearts beat in unison  
May our souls be in harmony  
May our ears listen to silence together  
May our glances profoundly penetrate each other  
May our lips pray together to collaborate and network for the transformation of our common home.

*Adapted from a prayer by Elizabeth Szanto Kindelmann*



## JPIC Local Area Team Launches in the Democratic Republic of the Congo!



In December 2024, the JPIC local area team in the DRC was established. Under the leadership of Sr. Nathalie Lundolo several associates and young adults have joined the committee and are discerning the way forward amid extreme environmental degradation, escalating violence and the complex humanitarian emergency in the East of the country.

The humanitarian situation continues to worsen due to escalating violence. Heavy clashes between M23 and the Congolese armed forces (FARDC) have led to mass displacement, mass casualties and a deepening food security crisis. The ongoing insecurity has also triggered civil unrest, looting, and disruption of the humanitarian supply chain. Pax Christi International, a Catholic Peacebuilding organization of which Bon Secours is a member issued a [UN Call to Action Statement](#) and published a [story by board member Marhegane Godefroid](#) about the terrible atrocities in Goma.

The Chapter Call to be caregivers of our common home and to live as peacemakers is more urgent than ever. May we all pray and act for PEACE!



UNANIMA International Board Members participate in a tour of the United Nations after the international release of ["The Hidden Faces of Homelessness"](#) Global Research and Policy Report.