



Magnifica Humanitas the Rerum Novarum of our Time



AI Generated Photo

I remember it like it was yesterday, white smoke pouring out of the chimney of the Sistine Chapel. I watched with anticipation as Cardinal Robert Prevost announced to the world his new name, Pope Leo the XIV. I did not know much about Cardinal Prevost at the time, but I did know that his namesake Pope Leo XIII is often referred to as the founder of modern Catholic Social Teaching. He wrote the encyclical Rerum Novarum which means *Of New Things* in Latin. It was published on May 15, 1891, and addressed the social conditions of the working class during the first industrial revolution, a period of immense social change. Pope Leo XIII confronted the upheavals of the industrial age: vast inequality, the concentration of wealth, and the exploitation of workers and articulated principles that would anchor modern Catholic Social Teaching – the right to private property, just wages, rest from labor, and special protection for the vulnerable.

Now 135 years later, Pope Leo XIV, like his predecessor, is also leading the Church at a period of profound social change often referred to as the AI (Artificial Intelligence) Revolution. AI's rapid advancement has huge implications for the life and dignity of the human person and all of creation. Vatican officials have recently confirmed that Pope Leo is writing his first encyclical with the working title Magnifica Humanitas (Magnificent Humanity). It is rumored to be released on May 15th the anniversary of Rerum Novarum and will address AI and the state of the world.

The Pope has already talked about the dangers of using AI without conscience on numerous occasions as well as its potential for good. In 2025 the Vatican Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith and the Dicastery of Culture and Education published *Antiqua et Nova* examining the potential risks of AI particularly in education and warfare and calling for a new appreciation of all that is human. The Holy Father's first encyclical will come during a time of rapid advancement of AI with little global regulation or safeguards to protect people and the planet. Just like his predecessor, Pope Leo will share moral principles from a faith perspective to guide humanity during this time of rapid technological advancement. I'm excited for its release and I hope you are too!

JPIC Days of Remembrance

May 1

Feast of St. Joseph the Worker/International Workers Day

May 16

International Day of Living Together in Peace

May 17-24

Laudato Si Week

May 24

Our Lady Help of Christians
Patron of the Sisters of Bon Secours



June 8

World Oceans Day

June 18

Sustainable Gastronomy Day

June 20

World Refugee Day

Spiritual Ecology Retreat in Ireland



On April 8th 16 members of the Bon Secours Family set off for a two-day spiritual ecology retreat to the idyllic historical Kylemore Abbey situated in Galway in the west coast of Ireland. The Abbey is the home of the Benedictine community since the 1920s.

The Abbey is a non-profit organization committed to hospitality and ecological sustainability. The Benedictine Nuns make chocolate and soap onsite and they even have an award-winning café. Sr Magdalena of Kylemore describes it as a place of reflection and contemplation - a place where one feels connected with nature, thus with God.

For a short two days we stayed in the monastery, immersing ourselves in the lives of the community, joining in prayer and celebrating the Eucharist. This allowed us to connect in a special way with nature and to God. Julie Ferraro, a Benedictine oblate, gave us a talk on 'Finding peace within Laudato Si'. Anita, the head gardener, gave us a detailed tour of the walled garden explaining how they are dedicated to the protection, preservation and promotion of the unique biodiversity of the area.

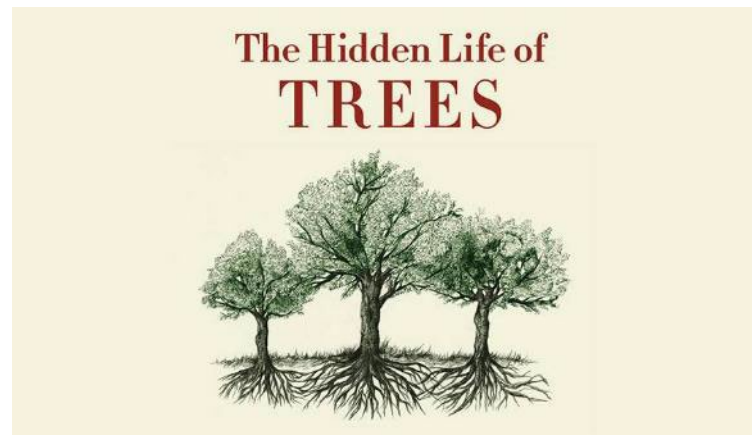
We truly felt this is a special place where spirituality is to the fore and the distractions of everyday life are in the background. A place where one feels interconnected with nature. Sr Karol quotes the poet T.S. Elliot to describe it as 'The still point of the turning world'.

Written by Brid Dunne, JPIC Coordinator, Ireland/Great Britain

Bon Secours Spring Eco Book Club

The JPIC USA Area Team is sponsoring an eco-book club to celebrate Earth Day and Laudato Si Week. We have 18 people participating representing Sisters from four different congregations, along with Bon Secours Young Adults, Associates, staff and friends. We are discussing the global best seller, "The Hidden Life of Trees" by Peter Wohlleben.

Our first meeting was lively as we discussed the parallels between tree communities and human societies like cooperation, mutual aid and inequality. We talked about humility and human identity, what we can learn from trees about patience, resilience, and long-term thinking. Finally, we discussed ethical responsibilities of humans towards the interconnected forest. Our first session ended with everyone sharing one way they will live more intentionally over the next two weeks until we meet again.



One Week. One Action. A Global Catholic Response.

Each year, the global Church unites to celebrate Laudato Si' Week – an annual moment of prayer, reflection, and concrete action inspired by Laudato Si' by Pope Francis. From **May 17–24**, Catholics across continents will once again respond together – not just with words, but with action. In a world facing ecological crisis and social fragmentation, **hope is not passive optimism – it is a decision to act**, and during Laudato Si' Week 2026, Catholics around the world are invited to transform that hope into concrete steps for our common home, inspired by Laudato Si' and lived through the global movement of the Laudato Si' Action Platform. Learn more about how you can participate in Laudato Si' week by visiting <https://laudatosiweek.org/>.