



NOTE: As we begin a new liturgical year, in his apostolic letter, *Patris corde*, Pope Francis proclaimed this the *year of St. Joseph*, Patron of the Universal Church, which begins on the Feast of the Immaculate conception, December 8. This highlights his important role as “a beloved father, a tender and loving father, an obedient father, an accepting father; a father who is creatively courageous, a working father, a father in the shadows.” Pope Francis reminds us that “Each of us is called to bear glad tidings to all, testifying by our practical works of mercy to the joy of knowing Jesus and his love.” As we reach the end of 2020, we are filled with gratitude for the ways that we have collaborated and worked together to make our world more just, peaceful and respectful of the integrity of creation. We wish you special blessings during these holydays of Advent, Christmas and Epiphany! With a heartfelt openness to what God may ask of us in 2021, may you have a very blessed and spiritually enriching year in our journey together.

LINKS: Click underlined blue text to open a link or copy and paste the URL on your browser window.

EDITORIAL

I LOVE GOD!



St. Francis of Assisi is credited with creating the first nativity scene in 1223 at Greccio, Italy. As he was a Deacon, he sang the gospel telling the story of the first Christmas.

What does it mean to be in love with God? It means to have my life centered on what pleases God. It means doing things out of love for God and not out of duty.

How do we help people to fall in love with God? That is an important question in today’s world where we can easily be distracted by many things. Love is a deep abiding relationship that has to be nurtured to thrive. Decisions are made from love.

What about the poor and the destitute, how do they know how to love God? God finds a way to be there in the heart. There is a place in all of

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us where we are alone with God. Watching a video of [Christopher Duffley](#) at the JPIC Promoters Formation Workshop, a young boy who was extremely handicapped, autistic and blind, brought tears to our eyes as he sang, “Open the Eyes of My Heart”. This was followed by the Scripture reading where Jesus touched the eyes of the blind. We never know the workings of God in anyone’s heart, but we do know that everyone is precious in God’s sight.

Jesus showed us the way throughout his life by being responsive to others. He healed the sick, consoled those afraid, and taught everyone about the God he knew. God challenges those who need to consider and develop a different way of living.

He wants us to be life giving through the things we do and say. If we are in love with God, everything has to be that way. During these days of Christmas, we remember Jesus coming as a child and our feelings of tender love for the child. Loving this child in a way that encourages our outreach in a tenderness revolution so needed in our world today.—Contributor: *Sheila Kinsey, FCJM, Co-Executive Secretary, JPIC Secretariat*

FRATELLI TUTTI AND HUMAN RIGHTS



As we celebrate the International Human Rights Day let us listen to Pope Francis’ lament on how human rights are discarded or violated: “It frequently becomes clear that in practice human rights are not equal for all... We see numerous contradictions that lead us to wonder whether the equal dignity of all human beings, solemnly proclaimed seventy years ago, is truly recognized, respected and promoted in every situation. In today’s world, many forms of injustice persist, fed by reductive anthropological visions and by a profit-based economic model

that does not hesitate to exploit, discard and even kill human beings. While one part of humanity lives in opulence, another part sees its own dignity denied, scorned or trampled upon, and its fundamental rights discarded or violated.” (FT 22)

The lack of respect for the dignity and rights of others as well as the inequality, the injustices, the violent conflicts, etc. can be associated with the failure to regard one another as brothers and sisters and as friends belonging to a single universal family and community. Fraternity and social friendship based on love and communion is the basis for engagement in dialogue with one another that can lead us to collaborate in addressing the crisis that we face. It is also the basis for conflict-resolution and achieving peace and justice.

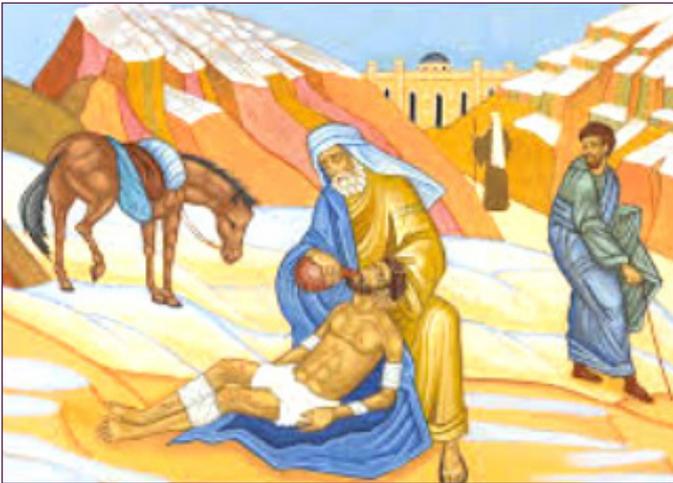
What happens when we are able to tell others: you are my brothers and sisters, you are my friends? We realize that we belong to same family and community. We are all interrelated, we are interconnected. We stop seeing them as strangers, as enemies, as threats. We do not kill them, we do not rob them, we do not exploit them, we do not oppress them, we do not spread lies about them. We care for them when they suffer, when they are sick, wounded, hungry, victimized, enslaved, oppressed, impoverished. If they are addicted, we help them to be freed from their addiction, instead of making them targets for extrajudicial killings. We share with them what we have. We respect their rights and defend them when their rights are trampled upon.

What is the basis for regarding each other as brothers, sisters and friends? It is the recognition of God as the creator and source of our being. Because we have one source—then we are all inter-related. God is Father and we are God’s children and we are brothers and sisters. We are created in God’s image and likeness. This is the basis for equality in dignity and human rights.

If we are able to see all human beings this way, we will live in harmony, in peace and justice, in freedom. This is what it means to live in love. This is what communion is all about. This is the vision that Pope Francis promotes in *Fratelli Tutti* and also *Laudato Si*. This is the vision that will help in addressing the crises that we face: the pandemic, the economic crisis, poverty, wars and armed conflict, migration, climate change/ecological crisis.—Contributor: *Fr. Amado L. Picardal, CSsR, Co-Executive Secretary, JPIC Secretariat*

[Full article.](#)

JPIC AND FRATELLI TUTTI



Spanish-Portuguese JPIC Promoters met in November to reflect on the theme of *Fratelli Tutti*. The online meeting started with a prayer based on the icon of the Good Samaritan, as proposed in the new encyclical. “Which of these persons do you identify with?... Which of these characters do you resemble?” These are the questions that Pope Francis addresses us after contemplating this biblical parable and the attitude of each of the characters therein outlined (64). This narrative challenges us to choose the actions of the Good Samaritan, who showed that «the existence of each and every individual is deeply tied to that of others,” thus encouraging us to persevere in love, to restore dignity to the suffering and to build a society worthy of the name.

Members of the Spanish-Portuguese Group who met with Fr. Joshtrom Isaac Kureethadam of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, shared with the rest of their members the information they gathered regarding the *Laudato Si* Action Plan or the Seven-Year Path towards Integral Sustainability in the spirit of the encyclical. By providing their members with feedback, they encouraged participants at the online meeting to be receptive of *Laudato Si* values and principles and to be creative promoters of ecological conversion within their local communities and the communities they serve.

Fr. José Miguel Diaz introduced *Fratelli Tutti*, highlighting relevant areas of our commitments regarding JPIC promotion. His presentation was followed by a small group reflection aimed at achieving a deeper insight of our personal experiences in the light of this “Social Encyclical.” Fr. José Miguel stressed the fact that “with the proposal of fraternity and social friendship as the horizon and ultimate end of our JPIC promotion actions,” Pope Francis offers us a unifying path for our efforts, that can be evaluated in the light of the following questions:

- Are we a fraternity able to “include” a universal fraternity approach in the local Church, in our communities’ neighborhoods, in the dramatic situations in which human life crushes and dies?
- How can we encourage our communities to become, in Jesus, an icon of God’s dream for everyone?
- Based on its specific charism and situation, each religious family should become capable of determining a change (conversion) towards fraternity. How could we make progress in this direction as JPIC promoters?
- Do we know how to walk together (in a synodality manner) with other religions and organizations for the sake of fraternity? How?

—Contributor: Cristian Bueno, CSsR, Redemptorist Coordinator of JPIC Commission for Social Ministry

[Resources.](#)

JPIC PROMOTERS AND THE *LAUDATO SI'* ROLL OUT PLAN



The Spanish-Portuguese and the English JPIC Promoters met on November 18 to have a better understanding of the the *Laudato Si'* Roll Out Plan and how their congregations can actively participate. This journey, which was initiated by the Dicastery Promoting Integral Human Development, calls on religious communities to put their spiritual lives into action. Various meetings and webinars have been developed to facilitate their practical involvement. Br. Alberto Parise, mccj, [presented an update](#) of the plan, which included many concrete examples from congregations. The participants gave the following vital input on the usefulness of the presentation:

- Action-oriented process does not take the place of the personal conversion in response to *Laudato Si'*,
- Gives concrete ideas to animate ourselves and our communities,
- Flexible and practical,

- Importance of formation, accompaniment and informing/animating congregational leaders,
- Integrate charisms in developing the plan for congregations and local communities, and
- Evaluation is essential

In moving forward, the participants expressed that being able to provide input as to what resources are helpful to actualize the Roll Out Plan is important in their efforts to promote involvement. The aim is to have as many congregations as possible to engage in making *Laudato Si'* a reality.

ENGAGING LAUDATO SI'

Over 150 committed and enthusiastic participants were engaged in the JPIC promoters five-day workshop *Engaging Laudato Si'*. The workshop featured the work of 22 presenters who spoke at sessions in relation to their work. Each day featured discussion themes important to JPIC such as integral ecology, religious life, ministry, encounter and dialogue. The methodology of See (Assess)-Judge (Discern)-Act (Transform) was woven throughout these days. Catholic Social Teachings were highlighted in *Laudato Si'*, *Fratelli Tutti* and other church documents. The important work with the Dicastery Promoting Integral Human Development and the United Nations was also interconnected.

Now the challenge to the participants is to develop an action plan. These are to be shared on March 10 from 2 pm to 4 pm in EN and ES. This session is open for others to gain valuable insights from these experiences.

The next JPIC Formation Workshop is scheduled for **November 29 to December 3, 2021**. The ability to reach JPIC promoters worldwide using the e-learning platform online provides a way to share the JPIC mission with a larger audience and more congregations. Resources are available only to workshop participants.

THE CRY OF THE EARTH AND THE CRY OF THE POOR



On December 09, 2020 the Spanish-Portuguese JPIC Promoters Group held a meeting on “The cry of the earth and the cry of the poor in *Laudato Si'*.” In order to identify and listen to these cries, we thought it better to spend a great length of our meeting to prayer. We divided our prayerful reflection into four listening moments, supported by some films of the series “Nature is speaking”, a wonderful resource developed in several languages by the [Conservation International Organization](#), which helped us to listen to the cry of the water, the sky, the coral reef and the Amazonia. With each element showing how we contribute to its degradation, including its complete disappearance.

Pope Francis stresses the need to listen at the same time, the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor. We must dare to turn the wounds of the earth and the moans of nature into our own personal suffering because we form part of a great community, a universal fraternity. Every cry of nature is echoed by the cry of the poor who suffer the consequences of nature’s mistreatment and imbalances. The films helped to highlight the following:

- The Peruvian women’s struggle against [water pollution](#) caused by toxic metals,
- The Philippine’s situation, with [15-20 typhoons](#) each year and no actions taken to reduce CO² emissions, despite the pressure exercised by its climate delegates to the United Nations,
- Our conscience, impelling us to abandon the use of [disposable plastics](#) that are severely affecting coral reefs and the whole marine ecosystem, and

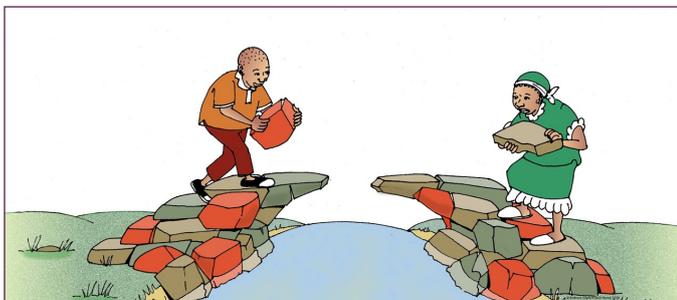
- The “Zapara”, indigenous group of Ecuador, who claim for the [cancellation of the contract](#) signed by the government with a Chinese oil company.

We prayed for those affected by these destructions to the environment, feeling the urgent need to change, as reiterated 35 times by the Pope in *Laudato Si'*.

In the second part of our meeting, we listened to the reading of some excerpts from a [conference of Leonardo Boff on *Laudato Si'*](#).

Finally, through the See-Judge-Act methodology we shared the progress made in our Congregations regarding our commitment to Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation, and the desire to strengthen this commitment by participating in the *Laudato Si'* Action Plan as proposed by the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development.—Contributors: Lilia Celina Barrera, HTC and Clotilde Fernández del Pozo, FMI

BUILDING BRIDGES AND RECONCILIATION



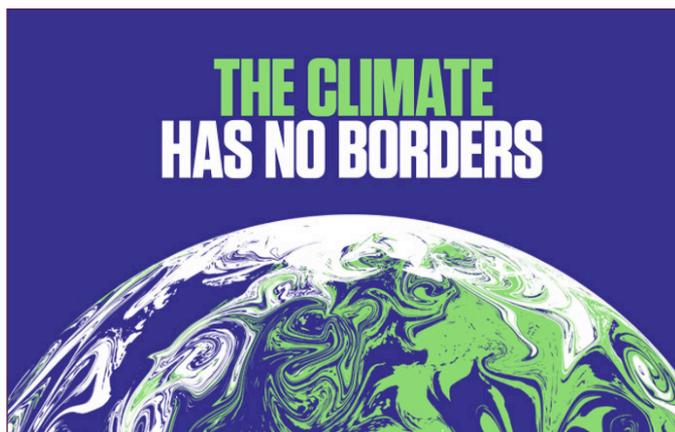
“We want to be a Church that serves, that leaves home and goes forth from its places of worship, goes forth from its sacristies, in order to accompany life, to sustain hope, to be the sign of unity... to build bridges, to break down walls, to sow seeds of reconciliation”.—Fratelli tutti 276

You are invited to participate in a five-part series on nonviolence and peacebuilding. The sessions will look at ways of promoting peace and new social bonds through the creation of a culture of encounter and dialogue. “To speak of a ‘culture of encounter’ means that we, as a people, should be passionate about meeting others, seeking points of contact, building bridges, planning a project that includes everyone. This becomes an aspiration and a style of life.” (FT 216)

Sessions include, catholic educational settings, creative peace initiatives, practice of nonviolence in conflict situations, relationship building within families and communities, and collaboration of men and women.

The sessions will be online on **February 4, 11, 18, 25** and **March 4** from **2 pm to 4 pm (Rome time)** in EN ES FR. We will be using an e-learning program to help with the organization and to have the handouts available for participants.

FIVE YEARS AFTER THE PARIS AGREEMENT: WHERE ARE WE TODAY?



The [Paris Agreement](#) is an international treaty within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), dealing with greenhouse-gas-emissions mitigation, adaptation, and finance. This year, on December 11, marks the fifth year since its adoption. What has been achieved so far? As of November 2020, all 196 members of the UNFCCC have signed the agreement and 188 remain party to it.

Although the pact prevents average global temperatures from increasing by 2°C above preindustrial levels, many countries are not delivering on the promises they made in 2015. And even if nations kept those promises, researchers predict global temperatures to rise by 2.6°C by the end of the century, unless stronger action is taken. Consequently, at the [Climate Ambition Summit](#) held on December 12, 2020, [Pope Francis](#) announced that the **“Vatican City State is committed to reducing net emissions to zero before 2050.”**

A [video](#) was released about the Paris Agreement by Mario Cucinella Architects (MCA), a member of the COVID-19 Commission. Moreover, in his [message](#) at the [Summit](#), Cardinal Peter K. A. Turkson said:

“We urgently need ambitious concrete targets and actions aimed at drastically reducing GHG emissions by 2030. Long term goals reaching out 30 years to 2050 will not suffice if we are to safeguard the crucial 1.5°C limit. We look, especially, to Europe in which hope and responsibility for new momentum lies to step up at this time and ensure it offers a fair share of the global efforts required. Anything less by Europe or others is not an adequate response to the science, to those suffering or to the young people who will inherit our successes and failures. The Paris Agreement is an essential, hard won achievement but it will not deliver the transformation needed without signif-

icant transformation of politics and policies, but also of our hearts, minds, lifestyle and how we encounter one another as a human family.” Available in EN, ES and IT.

The question is asked of all of us: What is ours to do to promote the Paris Agreement?

COP 26 will be held in Glasgow, United Kingdom from November 1-12, 2021.

NEW RESOURCES ON SOWING HOPE FOR THE PLANET



Christmas Novena from *Laudato Si'* 2020. Contributed by the Ursulines of Jesus, in ES, IT, FR and EN.

Winter Announces Spring—Women in the Church. Contributed by the Ursulines of Jesus. A reflection on the situation of women on the margins of Church institution, making them equal to Jesus, who was never at the center. The margins seem to be a privileged place for the announcement of the kingdom. In EN, FR and ES.

Congregation of the Franciscan Sisters of Our Lady (Congregação Das Irmãs Franciscanas De Nossa Senhora Aparecida)—a video of one of the expressions of the beautiful mission carried out by this congregation. In Portuguese only.

*And the angel said to them,
Fear not, for behold,
I bring you tidings of great joy,
which shall be to all people.*



JPIC PROMOTERS MEETINGS

18 December—Please join us for prayer and reflection featuring an exclusive screening of “The Third Harmony,” a new film on the power of nonviolence, and brief presentations by Nobel Peace Laureate Mairead Maguire, Dr. Bernice A. King, and Rev. Emmanuel Katongole, as well as Mons. Bruno Marie Duffé, Dr. Alessio Pecorario and Fr. Joshtrum Isaac Kureethadam from the Vatican’s Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development. Time: 4 pm-7 pm (Rome time, CET)/10 am (EST)/7 am (PST). Click your language for invitation and links for registration [EN](#) [FR](#) [ES](#).

11 January—English CORE Group meeting from 3 pm to 5 pm online.

13 January—Joint meeting of English and Spanish-Portuguese Promoters on “Solidarity as a common thread in the relationship between *Laudato Si'*, pandemic and *Fratelli Tutti*.” Hosted by the Spanish Group from 9 am to 12 pm. Online. Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81878076736?pwd=NVREc05pY3hlN0phbFA3OUxidVd1QT09>

21 January—Sowing Hope for the Planet webinar “Realizing the Vision of *Laudato Si'*”. The plans for actualizing *Laudato Si'* are becoming clearer, more developed and more formalized. Please join us for an exciting webinar where we share the work being done in the Constellation of Iraq, Lebanon, Israel and Egypt, the organizing and coordination of the Global Catholic Climate movement (Reba Elliot, Director of Strategic Communications and Special Projects and the vision of the Dicastery Promoting Integral Human Development with Fr. Joshtrum Kureethadam, Coordinator of the sector Integral Ecology and Creation in the DPIHD. 2 pm to 4 pm (Rome time) in EN, ES, FR, IT. Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87552026165?pwd=Qj9wS2VDOFkvNTJNbnxBleWR6eHRLUT09>

[Prayer Campaign based on the Seven *Laudato Si'* Goals.](#)

SAVE THE DATES

February 4, 11, 18, 25 and March 4—“Build bridges, break down walls and sow seeds of reconciliation” (FT 276). A series of five sessions from **2 pm to 4 pm** (Rome Time) in EN, ES and FR. Online. The sessions will consider the culture of encounter and dialogue in Catholic educational institutions, in creative initiatives, in nonviolence conflict resolutions, in the family and communities, in men-women relationships. Inspiration and guidance will come from *Fratelli Tutti*.

INTENTIONS OF POPE FRANCIS

December—[For a life of prayer](#): We pray that our personal relationship with Jesus Christ be nourished by the Word of God and a life of prayer.

January—For evangelization for Human Fraternity: May the Lord give us the grace to live in full fellowship with our brothers and sisters of other religions, praying for one another, open to all. The [video](#) will be available the first Friday of the month.

1 January—World Day of Peace, 2021. Peace as a journey of hope: dialogue, reconciliation and ecological conversion.

- [Voices](#)—Mercy International Association: A number of scholars and other experts share their knowledge and insights in response to the theme: ‘The Cry of the Earth and the Cry of the Poor’, in light of biblical, theological, spiritual, ecclesial and mercy traditions.

18-25 January—Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. “Abide in My Love...You Shall Bear Much Fruit” (Jn 15:5-9) Week of Prayer Churches Together:

- [Franciscans Friars of the Atonement](#)
- [Chaplaincy of Aquitaine](#)

Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity encourages the use of local resources.

INTERNATIONAL DAYS

18 December—[International Migrants Day](#) stresses the human rights and fundamental freedoms of migrants. Treating every migrant with dignity is one of fundamental requirements we face before anything else we attempt on migration. Migration is the great issue of our era, and a force for dignity because it allows people to choose to save themselves, letting them choose participation over isolation.

20 December—[International Human Solidarity Day](#) focuses on the need to work together to fight poverty. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) agenda centers on people and the planet, underpinned by human rights, and supported by a global partnership determined to lift people out of poverty, hunger and disease.

- [Prayer for Miners](#): A prayer for people working in mines in Africa, composed by African missionaries

24 January—[International Day of Education](#).

Theme—Education: Any cause for celebration? In response observers asked to honor the advances of education and to address the inequities.

27 January—[International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust](#). The holocaust resulted in the destruction of nearly 2/3 of European Jews. The purpose of remembering this day is to prevent future tragedies.

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