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NEWSBRIEFS



A monthly publication of the UJSG-USG Justice Peace & Integrity of Creation Commission

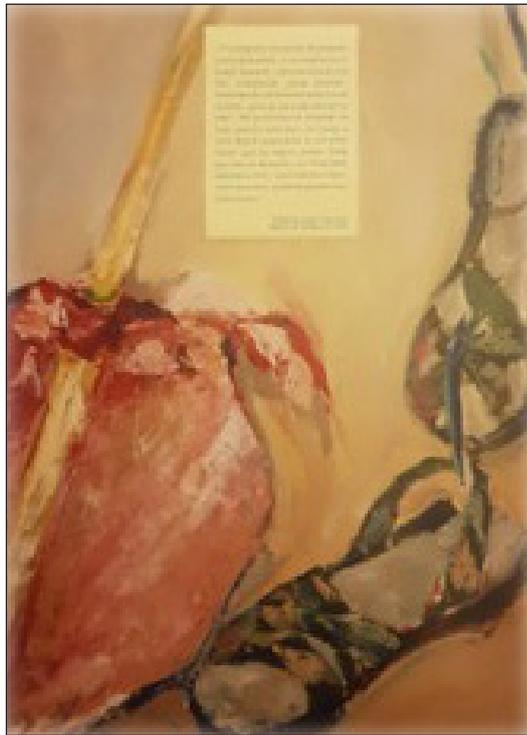


Editor's Note: As we enter into this Lenten season, Pope Francis reminds us that "Love, following in the footsteps of Christ, in concern and compassion for all, is the highest expression of our faith and hope." In this way we are encouraged to explore new ways of being messengers of peace and in solidarity for a better world through collaboration, networking and advocacy. This issue illuminates examples of how groups of consecrated men and women are engaging in promoting nonviolence and building peace, and

strengthening efforts to integrate the goals of *Laudato Si'* into our ministry and daily life. We continue to listen to the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor as we highlight the issues of the vulnerable and voiceless in areas struggling with conflict.

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

A CULTURE OF CARE AS A PATH TO PEACE



We love the brother and sister in all circumstances, because God our Father makes the sun rise on good and bad.

While reflecting as Promoters on how to share our reflection on Pope Francis' 2021 Message of Peace, we asked ourselves, *how do we personally welcome each year the "good news"?* and *how do we seek to make this message known by the greatest number of people?*

Once more, the Holy Father encourages us to care for one another and for what has been created by God, with such a great love. We want to highlight as our first identity: **we are an artwork of his hands and the loving dream of his heart which he turned into reality in each one of us.**

This filial relationship is the source of peace, which should,

therefore, be our way of being and existing in the world, as any other creature. We must pay attention to Pope Francis' call to care for the living conditions of our brothers and sisters as well as the whole Creation.

The **natural peace** derived from the dignity of being created in God's image and likeness, along with the defense of the rights of each person

IN THIS ISSUE: **1** A Culture of Care as a Path to Peace... **2** The Way of Peace and Nonviolence... **3** Towards a Global Ethic of Solidarity ... **4** Advocacy Work in Africa... **5** Sowing Hope for the Planet in the Middle East... **5** *Laudato Si'* Action Platform... **6** Building Bridges and Reconciliation: Catholic Educational Institutions... **6** Thinkific—A New Path of Outreach... **7** Calendar

and the co-responsibility for the unique universal humanity, **can only be sustainable if abilities, efforts and resources are invested in an education for care.** We must promote an education for care that is able to convey the values and attitudes of Jesus. “Meek and humble of heart,” “promotor of peace and nonviolence.”

In a world that is suffering from many different conflicts against the dignity of the human being, the Pope’s message echoes the example of both known and anonymous persons, who have spent their lives in promoting this supreme value of peace and working for the reconciliation of families, ethnic groups, nations.

The presentation of the Holy Father’s message brought to mind icons, such as St. Francis of Assisi, Nelson Mandela, politicians, unknown educators, and others who help us to understand that the dream of a peaceful world is possible. Each one of us is able to contribute to this end from the mission we are committed to and with the grace of the Spirit that God has infused in our hearts.

We are all called, according to our capacities and resources, to be co-responsible for defending human rights, with justice, truth and respect, and for living according to our free conscience, with God in the center.

Caring for the rights of each person, including the most vulnerable and marginalized, is a criterion of universal fraternity leading to peace.

Alone, we feel our fragility and impotence, but together, we are more. If we take the first step, others will follow our commitment to peace, aware of what Pope Francis reminds us—“no one reaches salvation by themselves, we are all in the same boat.” Everything starts with our own personal and community options.

United with all the JPIC Promoters, we thank God for this beautiful Creation, that deserves all our care, and we also remember in a very special way so many brothers and sisters that need to be released from their “sufferings” and from so many oppressive situations. Let us pray to the Lord with the words of the Poor Man of Assisi: **Make us instruments of your peace, and of nonviolence.**—Contributors : Marie Dominique Ladureau, RMI and Vicky Hernández, RMI, JPIC Promoters for Religiosas de Maria Inmaculada

[Link to PPT.](#)

THE WAY OF PEACE AND NONVIOLENCE



“In many parts of the world, there is a need for paths of peace to heal open wounds. There is also a need for peacemakers, men and women prepared to work boldly and creatively to initiate the process of healing and renewed encounter.” (FT n. 225)

We live in a violent world. Violence takes place in homes, neighborhood communities, schools, streets, in urban and rural areas. In attempting to solve the problem of drug addiction, some governments may resort to extrajudicial killings. In the pursuit of justice, equality and social change, people may choose violence or armed struggle. The state reacts to this by escalating violence which may lead to violations of human rights. Mining and logging companies which are destroying the environment use violence against indigenous communities and activists who try to protect the natural world. Nations wage war with other nations. The spiral of violence continues with no end in sight. The culture of violence prevails and becomes a culture of death. Peace and justice remain elusive.

Faced with this predicament, we are called as Christians to follow the way of peace and nonviolence, despite being surrounded by the pain and anguish of a culture of violence. This is the way of Jesus Christ which he showed by his death on the cross. Jesus admonished violence and called us to forgiveness in the sermon on the mount. Nonviolence means doing and intending no harm following the commandment “Thou Shall not Kill”. More than that, it is based on Christ’s commandment of love for one’s neighbor. Less easily, but just as essential, this must also include love for one’s enemy. Love should be accompanied by mercy and compassion. Love must be ready to forgive and seek reconciliation.

Nonviolence is grounded on the recognition of human dignity and the inalienable rights of all, as we are all made in the image of God. It is based on the acknowledgement that we are all brothers and sisters created by and in communion with God, each other and creation. Violence is a consequence of the rupture of this communion due to sin. Christ came to restore broken communion and friendship with God, with each other and creation. This will be achieved when the kingdom of God is fully realized.

By his suffering and death on the cross, Jesus clearly showed us the path to nonviolence. In fulfilling his liberating prophecy and mission he manifested his willingness to suffer. He gave his life without taking life. In doing so, he showed how love overcomes the forces of sin and evil and breaks the cycle of violence. The way of the cross is the way of nonviolence.

Jesus' way of peace and nonviolence inspired those who struggled for justice, freedom, equality. They transformed society peacefully: Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr, Cesar Chavez, Benigno Aquino Jr. and many others. The strategy of nonviolence has been used against dictatorial regimes in the Philippines, Eastern Europe, and the Middle East. Nonviolent actions such as peaceful protests, human barricades, marches, boycotts, civil disobedience, general strikes, non-cooperation, and negotiations have proven to be more effective than armed struggle in attaining the goals of peace without provoking escalation. Many have paid a high price by being arrested, going to prison and giving up their life to pursue Jesus' path of peace.

Embracing the way of peace and nonviolence is indeed an integral part in the promotion of justice, peace and integrity of creation. It can be used as a means for demanding justice and accountability, in addressing the ecological crisis, in peace-making and in the context of interreligious dialogue. It should be promoted in families, in homes, in communities, in schools and universities. Grassroots communities such as basic ecclesial communities can have an important role in peace-making and promoting nonviolence. This requires developing a culture of peace with dialogue and encounter—building bridges rather than walls.

We are called, each of us, to practice nonviolence in our day to day living. This should be shown in our words, behaviors and actions. We must remember that peace begins in us and around us. This requires inner healing—acknowledging negative emotions like anger, resentment, hatred or vindictiveness. This leads to inner peace, and thus outer peace. We must

also consciously cultivate compassion and love. The practice of mindfulness and meditation can be of great help. Nonviolence is not just a strategy but a way of life deeply rooted in spirituality. It is an essential part of being followers of Jesus—of discipleship. Whatever we do as a group or individual should lead to ending the cycle of violence.—Contributor: Fr. Amado L. Picardal, CSsR, Co-Executive Secretary, JPIC Secretariat

[Click here for the full article.](#)

TOWARDS A GLOBAL ETHIC OF SOLIDARITY



The parallel approach of the two Encyclical Letters of Pope Francis, *Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home*, and *Fratelli Tutti: On Fraternity and Social Friendship*, enables us to address his understanding of solidarity, defined as “a moral virtue and social attitude, born of personal conversion” (FT, n. 114).

In both Encyclicals, Pope Francis assumes “Integral Ecology” as the baseline of his reflection, thus indicating that solidarity not only includes human beings, but our common home, and proposing once more “universal fraternity” as an answer to the “cry of the poor and the cry of the planet.”

The term solidarity appears 15 times in *Fratelli Tutti* and 22 times in *Laudato Si'*. However, careful reading leads us to identify some other terms that are used frequently by Pope Francis as directly associated with the concept of solidarity such as: love, fraternity, care, common good, justice, service, and hope. These not only extend its scope but also give a particular dynamism to solidarity, emphasizing its relational nature.

In fact, *Fratelli Tutti* states: “Goodness, together with love, justice and solidarity, are not achieved once and for all; they have to be realized each day. It is not possible to settle for what was achieved in the past and complacently enjoy it, as if we could somehow disregard the fact that many of our brothers and sisters still endure situations that cry out for our attention.” (FT, n. 11).

In resonance with the disadvantaged people of this world, *Laudato Si'* states a strong complaint and an innovative proposal: “Obstructionist attitudes, even

ADVOCACY WORK IN AFRICA



on the part of believers, can range from denial of the problem to indifference, nonchalant resignation or blind confidence in technical solutions. We require a new and universal solidarity” (LS, n. 14).

Along the same lines, Pope Francis offers a marvelous synthesis of his understanding as reported in the two encyclicals: “When we speak of the need to care for our common home, our planet, we appeal to that spark of universal consciousness and mutual concern that may still be present in people’s hearts. Those who enjoy a surplus of water yet choose to conserve it for the sake of the greater human family have attained a moral stature that allows them to look beyond themselves and the group to which they belong. How marvellously human! The same attitude is demanded if we are to recognize the rights of all people, even those born beyond our own borders.” (Cfr FT, n. 117).

Further on, Pope Francis quotes a statement of his speech in Nagasaki (Japan 2019): “We can aspire to a world that provides land, housing and work for all. This is the true path of peace, not the senseless and myopic strategy of sowing fear and mistrust in the face of outside threats. For a real and lasting peace will only be possible ‘on the basis of a global ethic of solidarity and cooperation in the service of a future shaped by interdependence and shared responsibility in the whole human family’.” (FT, 127).

Based on ideas reflected in *Laudato Si’*, Pope Francis refers to the need of “educators capable of developing an ethics of ecology, and helping people, through effective pedagogy, to grow in solidarity, responsibility and compassionate care” (cfr n. 210); and towards the end of this encyclical, he explains the motivation of his statement: “The human person grows more, matures more and is sanctified more to the extent that he or she enters into relationships, going out from themselves to live in communion with God, with others and with all creatures. In this way, they make their own that trinitarian dynamism which God imprinted in them when they were created. Everything is interconnected, and this invites us to develop a spirituality of the global solidarity which flows from the mystery of the Trinity.” (LS, n. 240).

“Therefore, solidarity today is the road to take towards a post-pandemic world, towards the healing of our interpersonal and social ills. There is no other way.” With these words Pope Francis ended his General Audience of September 2, 2020. And with these words, the Spanish and English Groups of JPIC Promoters concluded their joint meeting.—*Contributor: Julia Arciniegas, fma, JPIC Promoter for her Congregation Figlie di Maria Ausiliatrice*

[Resources](#)

In January, the African Working Group hosted a webinar to raise awareness of the importance of advocacy work in Africa. The occasion was graced by the presence of Fr. Chika Onyejiuwa, Executive Secretary of the International Secretariat of Africa Europe Faith and Justice Network (AEFJN) in Brussels. The webinar was very well attended by JPIC coordinators and also Religious men and women working in Africa.

AEFJN is a faith based international network dedicated to economic justice between the European Union and Africa South of Sahara through advocacy. Many Religious Congregations are members of AEFJN and they network through their communities and join with other civil society groups to advocate for a respectful compassionate world. The network also lobbies decision makers at the national level, bringing Africans to be the main advocates for economic justice. “I personally don’t believe that Europeans can speak for me, at the lobby level,” explained Fr. Chika, giving reasons for the urgency of having Africans directly involved in advocacy work. He continued “because speaking for me means denying their own interest and the instinct of self preservation is crucial in human life. And so Africans have to speak for themselves if things have to change.”

Fr. Chika then elaborated on the AEFJN Antennae in Africa. These are national groups formed by persons in consecrated life who organize for advocacy work in their country, in collaboration with the AEFJN International Secretariat in Brussels. There are several inspiring experiences of this happening in different African countries. Of course, challenges are always there, but as experience shows they can be faced and overcome with creativity.

In the session, the African Antennae Toolkit was also presented. Besides presenting AEFJN and its work, it explains what advocacy is all about and motivates the Religious in Africa to take up their specific role in it.

It shows the work of Antennae and it offers step-by-step guidance on how to join or set up a new Antenna in Africa. The second part of the Toolkit is dedicated to an important campaign about the international Treaty on Human Rights and Trans-national Corporations (TNC). It explains the impact of TNCs in Africa, the need for a binding regulation, the position that bishops worldwide have taken on the issue, and practical steps on how the men and women religious can significantly contribute to it.

The question and answer session opened the possibility for a fruitful, lively dialogue, starting with the aspects that were most relevant to participants. In conclusion, participants expressed their high appreciation for the event, which they found interesting and constructive. They also expressed the desire to organize more such online meetings in the future.—Contributor: Br. Alberto Parise, mccj, Comboni Missionary and Assistant Secretary for Missions

[Click to view the webinar.](#)

[African Antennae Toolkit](#), available in EN FR PT.

SOWING HOPE FOR THE PLANET IN THE MIDDLE EAST



Lebanese school children planting trees.

At the January 21 webinar, “Realizing the Vision of *Laudato Si’*” we visited the UISG Middle East Constellation which featured recent developments from Lebanon, Israel, Egypt and Iraq. Sr. Nazha El Khoury, Superior General of the Antonine Sisters of Lebanon, gave an inspiring and informative presentation of her congregation’s actions in Lebanon. They have been active in many projects including education, reforestation and agriculture, aiding the poor and promoting the ideas of *Laudato Si’*. She concluded with a beautiful video sung by local children. It was truly amazing and inspiring to see

the seeds of hope sown in that country, especially in light of the recent tragedy in Beirut. It was beautiful to witness the vital signs of life in this country of rich heritage. The webinar also included presentations by Fr. Joshtrum Kureethadam explaining the vision of *Laudato Si’*, Reba Elliot discussing the Global Catholic Climate Movement, and an update on the *Laudato Si’* Platform for the religious sector by Br. Alberto Parise. The videos of the event are available on the [Planet Hope YouTube Channel](#).

LAUDATO SI’ ACTION PLATFORM



The vision of Sowing Hope for the Planet continues to guide our work with the *Laudato Si’* Action Platform of the Dicastery Promoting Integral Development .

We commit ourselves to both personal
and communal conversion and
We wish to move forward together
in an orchestrated and coordinated response
In listening to the cry of the Earth
and the cry of the Poor
As we go forth as instruments of hope
In the heart of the world.

Accepted with Acclamation by Superior Generals at 2019 Plenary

In this focused effort, religious congregations and their connections are provided with an opportunity to make a difference in our care of the planet.

Due to our fruitfulness—the experience and growth of this project—we have made major contributions in the development of the *Laudato Si’* Action Platform of the Dicastery Promoting Integral Human Development (DPIHD). In this way, we continue to raise our prophetic voice in the church and the world. Many men and women religious are already making an impact with this is a grand opportunity to systematize and organize our efforts.

The process of our involvement with the *Laudato Si’* Action Platform respects different starting points, various situations, and the unique charisms and methodologies of the congregations. In fact, the way the congregations may organize themselves and develop their commitment to integral ecology may be very diverse.

However, there is a common framework within which all can find themselves at home and that consists of three broad aspects:

1. Making a public commitment grounded in the congregational charism.
2. Making the transition to integral ecology based on the planning process of the congregation.
3. Networking and advocacy for systemic change in local, national and international areas.

We are preparing the structures and tools to support the involvement of congregations into such a common framework. Right now we are focusing on raising awareness among religious congregations worldwide. Tools have been provided for those willing to contribute to this promotion effort.

The next meeting is scheduled for February 26, from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm (Rome time). Contribution of participants in this session on “Promoting *Laudato Si’* in Your Congregation” will be valuable in raising awareness. They will explore the process of making a public commitment and begin to address the transitioning to integral ecology. For new enrollments in this program, participants are asked to review the introductory information in order to be prepared to address and contribute to the development of the *Laudato Si’* Platform from the perspective of the life of a religious. [To register, click here.](#)



The general webinar for Sowing Hope for the Planet on April 15 will provide an update on the work of the group dedicated to Promoting Laudato Si’ in the Congregations.

BUILDING BRIDGES AND RECONCILIATION: CATHOLIC EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Participants and panel presenters in the webinar on “Building Bridges and Reconciliation” have taken seriously the call from Pope Francis in *Fratelli Tutti* to engage in dialogue. This series was developed from the insights and experiences of JPIC Promoters in response to their reflective reading of the encyclical.

The series addresses main themes in the encyclical regarding encounter and dialogue in Catholic educational institutions, in creative initiatives, in nonviolent conflict resolutions, in families and communities in men-women collaborative relationships.

The first topic in the series was on Catholic educational institutions. Discussed were education for a culture of encounter and dialogue in all levels of educational institutions, interreligious and intercultural dialogue in Education and major challenges.

THINKIFIC—A NEW PATH OF OUTREACH



The JPIC Office has begun to use **Thinkific**, the all-in-one platform, for hosting its interactive sessions. This will provide more privacy for materials and participants who join our programs, and help us to connect to one another. Connections and dialogue are facilitated in the Discussion section, where experiences and contact information can be shared in such a way as to invite conversation and facilitate the exchange of ideas and information.

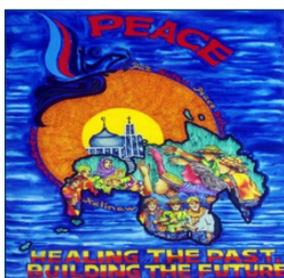
The platform also offers us a dedicated way to organize our resources in an easily accessible format. Resources can include written documents as well as videos. We can also offer resources in multiple languages to continue our commitment to inclusivity. This new platform is an exciting opportunity to share access to important and relevant information.

Thinkific allows us to schedule and organize programs and meetings as needed to further develop resources. We can provide a space for participants to network, share, dialogue and form communities around their mutual ideas.



Fr. Friedrich Bechina, Undersecretary of the Congregation for Catholic Education underlined the fact that there is no longer any teacher or learner because all become both teachers and learners. He presented an analysis of the different encyclicals and the aspects of education that are in the Catholic documents. He highlighted four principles: inspiration in the Gospel, dialogue, looking outside of the box, and building networks.

Loreta N. Castro, former President of Miriam College in the Philippines and co-president of Pax Christi Philippines, shared the school’s Twinning Project, “Building Bridges” between a Muslim school and the



Twinning Project brings meaningful encounters.

Peace Club of Miriam College. She explained how two groups divided by historical and geographical circumstances and separated by prejudice and negative attitudes were able to create dialogue, open spaces for communication and meaningful encounters.



Going beyond social boundaries creates peace.

Br. Francisco Velásquez, Rector of the La Salle College in San Pedro Sula, Honduras, presented the experience of the college with gangs and drugs. He spoke about the culture of peace, how to go beyond social boundaries, and

the way they include vulnerable and poor students in the school to give them the opportunity to have an education.

Creative initiatives explored the importance of promoting cultural heritage and exploring the value of the peace museum. There was a deeper understanding of the indigenous mechanisms of conflict resolution/transformation and peacebuilding.



Fr. Bruno Ssenyondo, M.Afr., shared the experience of the Senufo Cultura Center in Mali that preserves cultural values and engages in intergenerational dialogue to address the concerns of alienating youth. The center is a place of research and sociocultural events. Fr. Bruno described some traditional mechanisms for dialogue and peace building such as the balafon musical instrument used to bring social harmony.



Peace tree.

Munuve Mutisya shared with us his use of stories from *One Who Dreams is Called a Prophet* to create a syllabus on peace education. It builds on African storytelling traditions, making use of indigenous literary media such as proverbs, parables, riddles, poems, songs, and

satire. The stories actually pick up various themes and create a dialogue between peace traditions and social and environmental issues and situations which communities are experiencing.

By reconnecting the participants with nature, material culture, beauty, life giving relationships and ancestral wisdom, the stories evoke our humanity, heal our spiritual wounds, unveil our contradictions and dilemmas, and give us the possibility of taking a distance from the mechanisms of violence and injustice.



Meeting of elders who exchange peace staffs.

Dr. Sultan Somjee highlighted some of the themes of African peace traditions narrated in the story of Mzee Alama, an elder of a pastoralist community who embarks on a journey in search for the Source of Peace during conflicts and unrest. He travels through many ethnic communities, meeting elders to learn about the various traditions

of making and living in peace that each community treasures. When they gather, the elders exchange their peace staffs, which they also use as their walking sticks

This series is a rich exchange of encounter and dialogue. It is hoped that the participants in these sessions will determine some ways that they can continue to use the insights and inspiration of these sessions in a particular way. As we are able, we will share these experiences with the public on the jpicroma.org website.

INTENTIONS OF POPE FRANCIS

February—[Violence against women](#). We pray for women who are victims of violence, that they may be protected by society and have their sufferings considered and heeded.

JPIC [video against human trafficking](#).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o-laA8taSqM&feature=youtu.be>

March—[Sacrament of reconciliation](#). Let us pray that we may experience the sacrament of reconciliation with renewed depth, to taste the infinite mercy of God. Video becomes available the first Friday of the month. <http://popesprayerusa.net/popese-intentions/>

Lent 2021—[Pope Francis' message](#): "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem" (Mt 20:18). Lent: a Time for Renewing Faith, Hope and Love. <http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/lent.html>

[Prayer Campaign based on the seven goals of the *Laudato Si'* Action Platform](#)

[Stations of the Cross](#) based on *Fratelli Tutti* prepared by Andreas Gopfert, M.Afr., JPIC-ED Coordinator of the Missionaries of Africa.

JPIC MEETING DATES

22 February—Follow-up review session offered for participants in the December JPIC Formation workshop. This is a time for them to dialogue and to ask questions regarding their plans for JPIC. 2 pm to 4 pm (Rome time) EN and ES. Invitations sent through their thinkific learning program.

24 February—Africa Working Group (AWG) 3pm to 5 pm. ONLINE

25 February—Building Bridges and Reconciliation. Session 4: Family and Communities. For registrants, 2 pm to 4 pm Rome time. ONLINE.

26 February—Sowing Hope for the Planet: Promoting *Laudato Si'* in Your Congregation. Second session considers more ways to promote awareness, process of developing a commitment and to address areas of transitions. 2 pm to 4 pm Rome time. Online through link in Thinkific where there are the resources.

1 March—UISG-USG Interreligious Dialogue Commission. “Dialogue in a time of violence, a reading of Human Fraternity from the ground. EN and FR from 3 pm to 5 pm.

Link to participate: <http://bit.ly/3tG2mHg>
Meeting ID: 817 1354 6354-2021

2 March—English JPIC Core Group, 3 pm to 5 pm. ONLINE

3 March—Spanish and English JPIC Promoters “*Laudato Si'* and the Synod of the Amazon” animated by Rafael Bejarana SDV, from 9 am to 12 pm ONLINE

4 March—Building Bridges and Reconciliation. Session 5: Men-Women Collaborative Relationships. For registrants, 2 pm to 4 pm. ONLINE

10 March—Plans will be shared by the recent participants in the December JPIC Formation Workshop from 2 pm to 4 pm. Certificates are given to the JPIC Promoters who share their plans. EN and ES. Link to join: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84766537001?pwd=SlQrL2gzRUFYT2R5VnRlYUwpcWpRcWpxdz09>

17 March—English JPIC Promoters “Reflection on *Fratelli Tutti*” facilitated by Amado Picardal, CSsR, 9 am to 12 pm. ONLINE.

INTERNATIONAL DAYS FOR FEBRUARY AND MARCH

20 February—[World Day of Social Justice](#) which supports efforts of the international community in poverty eradication, the promotion of full employment and decent work, gender equity and access to social well-being and justice.

26-27 February—Join the Jungle Screams. The peoples and organizations of the Amazon, threatened by an increasing set of pandemics, make a call to everyone who feels the necessity of working together to protect our territories from the crisis upon us. To participate in “The Jungle Screams: Voices of the Amazon”, a virtual gathering, in which we will analyze and build proposals to fight the pandemics of COVID-19, climate change, patriarchy, feminicides, and political systems kidnapping democracy, will take place on February 26 and 27 at 13:00—Ecuador, Colombia and Peru; 14:00—Bolivia, Guyana and Venezuela; 15:00—Brazil/São Paulo, French Guyana and Surinam; 19:00—Central Europe Time. Simultaneous translation in EN ES PT. Registration: <http://bit.ly/ElGritoDeLaSelva>

1 March—[Zero Discrimination Day](#) [UNAIDS] is an opportunity to highlight how everyone can be part of the transformation and take a stand for a fair and just society.

3 March—[World Wildlife Day](#) calls on everyone to do their part in protecting the world’s wild animals and plants. 2020 theme: “Sustaining all life on Earth.” The future of wildlife is in our hands.

8 March—[International Women’s Day](#) celebrates the acts of courage and determination of ordinary women who have played an extraordinary role in their countries.

- [Woman and Panamazon Synod](#). Ursulines of Jesus, Canada. Evaluation of the theme woman in the synod of Amazon.
- [Querida Amazonía from a Woman’s Perspective](#). Ursulines of Jesus. Opinion piece on the apostolic exhortation *Querida Amazonía* from a woman’s perspective.

15-26 March—[Commission on the Status of Women](#) in public live/equal participation in decision making/end violence/gender equality

21 March—[International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination](#). This day aims to combat and take action to address racial discrimination in the spirit of recognition, justice and development.

21 March—[International Day of Forests](#) reminds us of the ways that forests and trees protect us and are important for livelihoods, medicines, fuel, food and shelter.

- [Land Commitments](#). Adrian Dominican Sisters. Believing we are part of a larger community that comprises the Earth community, we seek to live in balance, reciprocity and simplicity with Earth. As such we have committed ourselves to engage in practices that not only heal or do no further harm, but contribute to Earth's capacity to regenerate from previous practices that have resulted in ecological degradation.
- [Amazonize Awareness Project](#). Comissão Episcopal para a Amazônia da Conferência Nacional dos Bispos do Brasil. Amazonize yourself: Church and civil society organizations have launched an awareness and care campaign for the Amazon on July 27, the "Amazoniza-te" (Amazonize yourself) Campaign.

22 March—[World Water Day](#) acknowledges that water is an essential building block for life. The aim is to raise awareness and take action to tackle the global water crisis. It is vital for creating jobs and supporting economic, social and human development.

- [Reflections on Water](#). A companion to: Water and Sanitation: A People's Guide to SDG 6, A rights-based approach to implementation. Prepared by UN-NGO Mining Working Group, 2017. Compiled by Integrity of Creation Working Group JPIC Commission of USG-UISG.
- ['Hogar limpio'—Protection of Water Sources](#), Santa Leticia, Colombia. This project of the Religious of the Sacred Heart (RSCJ) aims to protect the water sources of two creeks and a river which supply the local population in Santa Leticia.

24 March—[International Day for the Right to the Truth](#) concerning gross human rights violations and/or the dignity of victims pays tribute to the important work and values of St. Oscar Romero, to honor the memory of victims of gross and systematic human rights violations and the importance of the right to truth and justice.

25 March—[International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade](#) offers an opportunity to honor and remember those who suffered and died at the hand of the brutal slavery system. It aims to raise awareness about the dangers of racism and prejudice today.

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