



Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns

NewsNotes

A bi-monthly newsletter of information on international justice and peace issues

March-April 2022
Vol. 47, No. 2

Ukraine: Diplomacy is the Pathway to Peace.....	3
Archbishop Issues Letter on Disarmament.....	3
UN Climate Report: Latest Alarm Bell.....	4
Reflection by Maryknoll Sisters NGO Rep at the UN.....	4
Lenten Reflection Guide 2022.....	5
Global Concerns Brief: Sanctions.....	6
Global Concerns Brief: Vaccine Access.....	7
Foresight Africa Report 2022.....	8
Building a Circular Economy.....	9
Guatemala: Historic Mayan Land Rights Case.....	10
Honduras: Justice for Guapinol Water Defenders.....	10
Update on Haiti.....	11
Root Causes of Migration: Biden’s First Year.....	11
Stop the Violence in Myanmar.....	12
Racial Justice: Letter on Reparations.....	12
Permanent Solutions for Afghan Evacuees.....	13
Understanding Palestinian Youth.....	14
Resources.....	15

Published by the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns: Peace, Social Justice & Integrity of Creation

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Ukraine: Diplomacy is the Pathway to Peace

The Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns issued the following statement on Feb. 23, 2022, calling for a non-violent resolution to the conflict in Ukraine.

The Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns joins people around the world in praying for peace in Ukraine. As always, war represents a deadly failure by world leaders to build just peace and promote integral human security.

We applaud the Biden administration's ongoing efforts to resolve the crisis through diplomacy. We condemn the use of violence to wage conflict, and urge the leaders of Russia, Ukraine, the United States and all NATO member states to promote nonviolent alternatives to war. We call on leaders to prioritize protecting human life by seeking a swift cessation of hostilities, monitoring the impact of sanctions to ensure they do not harm civilians, and allowing aid to flow to those in need.

We also call on world leaders to address the root causes of violent conflict by committing to three priorities:

- investing in the development of renewable energy in order to leave behind conflicts driven by oil and gas needs;
- decreasing the risk of nuclear war by enacting policies such as No First Use and fulfilling our

treaty obligations to advance nuclear disarmament; and

- embracing new models of security, rooted not in deterrence by threats and arms sales, but in dialogue, mutual understanding and the common good.

Over a century ago, Pope Benedict XV warned against the “useless slaughter” of war. Today, Pope Francis and the bishops of Ukraine echo his warning. We stand with them in saying that war is always a failure of humanity. Maryknoll missionaries serving around the world have witnessed again and again the devastating consequences of war, in which the poor, the infirm, and the marginalized are always the first victims. And so, it is with heavy hearts and renewed urgency that we recall once again the exhortation of Pope Pius VI to the United Nations, so often repeated by the church and unheeded by political leaders: “No more war, war never again.”§

Faith in action: Explore resources for prayer, study, and action for peace in Ukraine from Pax Christi USA. <https://bit.ly/3sl7mCx>

Archbishop Issues Letter on Disarmament

Archbishop John Wester of Santa Fe issued a pastoral letter calling his diocese and the larger Church to embrace nuclear disarmament.

In January, Archbishop John Wester of Santa Fe, New Mexico, issued a bold new pastoral letter, “Living in the Light of Christ’s Peace: A Conversation Toward Nuclear Disarmament.” As prelate of the archdiocese in which nuclear weapons were first developed and tested, and which continues to be a major center for the development and maintenance of nuclear weapons today, Wester calls on the church to embrace disarmament as part of a larger ethic of nonviolent Christian witness.

With a pastoral awareness that many in his flock depend upon the nuclear industry for employment, he suggests ways of transforming the economy, and invites his readers into a conversation about how to live up to the challenges and demands of Catholic teaching on nuclear weapons.

“It is the duty of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, the birthplace of nuclear weapons, to support [the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons] while working toward universal, verifiable nuclear disarmament,” the archbishop wrote.

“I think we need to sustain a serious conversation in New Mexico and across the nation about nuclear disarmament. We can no longer deny or ignore the dangerous predicament we have created for ourselves. We need to start talking about it with one another, all of us, and figure out concrete steps toward abolishing nuclear weapons and ending the nuclear threat. If we care about humanity, if we care about our planet, if we care about the God of peace and human conscience, then we must start a public conversation on these urgent questions and find a new path toward nuclear disarmament.

“[Christ’s] light is the light of total nonviolence,” the archbishop concluded. “We must take concrete steps to begin the process of nuclear disarmament: to dismantle our weapons, to clean up our land, and to spend those enormous resources on structures of international non-violent conflict resolution.”

Read the letter here: <https://bit.ly/341UF6u> The letter includes group discussion questions at the end of the document in the Appendix. §

UN Climate Report: Latest Alarm Bell

MOGC issued the following statement on Feb. 28, 2022, in response to the latest UN climate report.

The new UN climate report rings the latest alarm bell, driving home the world's urgent need for action to address the mounting loss and damage from ever-increasing climate disasters and to limit further temperature rise before it is too late.

The following is a statement from Chloe Noel, Faith Economy Ecology Project Coordinator:

"With a report like this, world leaders cannot say they didn't know a deadly future is at hand. The report from the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change exposes what the world can no longer deny – the incalculable loss of life, culture, livelihoods, and biodiversity from the climate crisis. These losses and damages will only increase with each increment in temperature rise unless we act together in solidarity to protect our Common Home.

"Maryknoll missionaries have first-hand experience accompanying communities through climate-driven hurricanes, sea level rise, diseases, fires, waves of migration, and conflicts. As the report notes, while it will be difficult to stop some of the warming and damages already set in motion, adaptation and preparation can greatly reduce, but not eliminate, some of the damages.

"As the largest historical carbon emitter and wealthiest nation, it is time for the United States to hear the voices of those from impoverished nations already expe-

riencing the devastating impacts of climate change and to demonstrate leadership - including through providing finance - to address the mounting losses and damages.

"The report rightly highlights the need for adaptation solutions that incorporate rights-based, inclusive development, and Indigenous and local community knowledge. Pope Francis also named this integral approach as essential in his groundbreaking encyclical, *Laudato Si'*.

"The same must also be true of the renewable energy transition. As long as we maintain fossil fuel dependency, the ability to avert disaster by keeping temperature rise to the Paris Agreement goal of 1.5 °C becomes further out of reach. In addition, fossil fuel dependency will continue to fuel violent conflicts, as we are seeing play out around the world today.

"At the community and individual level, we can respond to this report by committing to more sustainable lifestyles, developing disaster resilience plans, and supporting environmental stewardship and adaptation in our homes and communities.

"This report is a reminder for what is at stake in the next decade. It is up to governments, other institutions, and us – as people of faith and conscience – to make the needed investments today to protect the future for all God's creation." §

Reflection by Maryknoll Sisters NGO Rep at the UN

As she concludes her term working with MOGC as NGO Representative to the UN (2018-2021), Sr. Marvie Misolas, MM reflects on the meaning of the Maryknoll Sisters' presence at the UN.

The goals at the heart of our work at the United Nations bear a striking similarity to our fundamental mission as Maryknoll Sisters. For over a century, the Maryknoll Sisters have worked to advance humanity's progress toward the universal common good through our mission around the world. The United Nations' purpose of furthering the common good parallels this hope and mission.

The work at the UN involves slow, organic processes, and at times the results do not perfectly reflect what we would hope for. Despite this, with others at the UN, we continue the process of expanding our hearts and minds to pursue the good of others.

Indeed, these slow processes of dialogue with partners at the UN allow for new bonds of human relationships and pathways for cooperation. The ever-expanding circles of connection formed through these relationships, and the knowledge gained about other cultures, ways of life, and issues of social justice, allow the expansion of understanding of one's place in the world, in local and

national communities, and in the universe itself.

Through UN gatherings, we listen to the stories of distress and suffering of people around the world and join in creating policies and actions to address suffering at the UN level. This work, however slow, will continue to influence the future of humanity and Earth.

I see the Maryknoll Sisters' work of advocacy at the UN as part of our One Earth Community vision – a vision of the interconnectedness of all creation and our call to be co-creators with the Divine. It is a networking, a unifying, a gathering of stories of suffering and hope. Maryknoll mission programs and projects contribute to the achievement of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which points to the need for integral human flourishing for all. Our work around the world unites us with so many others who want to foster change! The United Nations is an excellent source of knowledge and place of dialogue that continues to inform our present and future decisions in mission. §

Lenten Reflection Guide 2022

The following is an excerpt from the First Sunday of Lent reflection in our Lenten Reflection Guide 2022: Upholding Human Rights and Human Dignity. Find the entire guide here, available in English and Spanish: <https://bit.ly/Lent2022MOGC>

The Season of Lent offers us the opportunity to prepare our hearts for the joy of Easter. In this time, we are invited to examine our lives to see where we have fallen short of our vocation to love God with our whole hearts, minds, and souls, and to love our neighbor as ourselves. We humbly ask God for the grace to love more fully.

In the first reading for this Sunday, Moses recalls God's faithfulness to the Israelites when they were oppressed in Egypt. In the second reading, St. Paul reminds the Roman Christian community that all believers are radically equal before God. In the Gospel, Jesus rejects the devil's temptations in the desert. All three readings invite us to remember who we are in the eyes of God and our call to love God in return.

As we turn inward to examine our hearts and recall our identity and mission as Christians, we can also turn outward to see how our failure to love God fully is manifested in society. One grave temptation we face as a global community is to value some lives more than others, to deny the fundamental dignity and value of every human person. All over the world, human dignity is denied and desecrated through the violence of war, desperate poverty, and environmental degradation.

Catholic tradition affirms that an essential part of the work of Christians is to proclaim the fundamental dignity of every person as created in the image of God. Since Vatican II, the Church has recognized that promoting human dignity involves working to protect human rights, which the Church understands to be the minimum conditions and materials that every human person needs to live decently, based on their inherent dignity.

The U.S. Catholic bishops write, "The Catholic tradition teaches that human dignity can be protected and a healthy community can be achieved only if human rights are protected and responsibilities are met. Therefore, every person has a fundamental right to life and a right to those things required for human decency."

In the Catholic tradition, human rights are understood to correspond to responsibilities. Every person has a right to the conditions which allow them to live decently and a responsibility to neighbors, family, and society to help fulfill the rights and needs of others. As Christians, are we truly committed to promoting the equal dignity of every person? Are we fulfilling our responsibilities toward our neighbors?

In this Lenten reflection guide, we will be exploring the Christian call to promote human rights out of respect

for our neighbors' God-given dignity. As the readings for each week teach us how to examine our hearts and ask for renewal, they also help us reflect on this most essential piece of the Christian vocation. We will explore how Maryknoll missionaries live out this call and reflect on how God is calling us to grow as witnesses of the Kingdom of justice and peace.

Questions for reflection:

What helps you grow in awareness of your own dignity and worth in the eyes of God? How can you promote the human dignity of your neighbors?

Prayer

PRAYER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS DAY (2018)

Praise to You, faithful God of life and freedom.

Giving thanks, we celebrate your deep desire for equality and dignity amid diversity.

Guide us to hear -- as one -- cries of those made poor and cries of Earth. Together with peoples of every place and nation, we honor the anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights -- protecting individuals, upholding the common good . . . unfolding still in modern history.

... With trust and hope, we pray in the name of Jesus who stood with those oppressed, bringing Good News in his time, for all ages. Amen.

- Sr. Roma De Robertis, SCIC ~ 2018

Fast

Turn off anything that supports violence and demeaning behavior on TV, movies, and the internet. Grow in peace with yourself by fostering a spirit of gratitude instead of focusing on disappointments.

Faith in action:

Around the world and in the United States, Maryknoll missionaries witness the impacts of racial injustice and how racism leads to human rights violations. Ask your Member of Congress to support a bill that would establish a commission to study the legacy of slavery:

<https://bit.ly/HR40mogg>

Maryknoll Mission Experience

Sr. Elsie Monge, MM, has worked at the forefront of the movement for human rights in Latin America for many years. After witnessing grave human rights abuses in Ecuador, in the late 1970s Sr. Elsie helped found the National Ecumenical Commission for Human Rights (CEDHU), an organization of unions, farmers, and professional groups that focuses on human rights education and advocacy, for which she is now the executive director. Her work investigating human rights abuses earned her a nomination for the Nobel Peace Prize in 2004. §

Global Concerns Brief: Sanctions

The Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns is producing a series of two-page policy issue briefs on key global concerns topics. This is an excerpt from the latest brief on U.S. sanctions policy.

See:

Economic sanctions are often presented as a non-violent alternative to military action by governments seeking to influence or coerce foreign leaders. Far from non-violent, however, many sanctions target non-combatants and result in death on a scale comparable to war. There are many forms of sanctions, targeting different kinds of economic activity, from freezing a corrupt leader's assets to imposing broad trade embargos. Both their effectiveness and their impact on civilians vary widely.

Economic sanctions became a popular tool of foreign policy during the 1970s and '80s when an international program of boycott, divestment, and sanctions was employed against the apartheid regime in South Africa. But the potential of sanctions to devastate vulnerable civilian populations – especially women and children – became evident when U.S.-led United Nations sanctions in Iraq in the 1990s and early 2000s reportedly led to the deaths of over 250,000 Iraqi children.

When sanctions are solely punitive and too broad, civilians pay the price. Under current U.S. sanctions in Iran, for example, essential items such as medical goods are exempt, but by targeting institutions such as national banks, shipping, and currency exchanges, sanctions make it exceedingly difficult for hospitals to import needed equipment and medicines. Risk-averse financial institutions are unable to secure assurances that they will not run afoul of sanctions, so they either refuse to do business in sanctioned countries, or charge exorbitant fees to do so, thus driving inflation and making food and medicine unaffordable.

The impact of sanctions on civilians depends upon a combination of financial, political, and diplomatic factors. After the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan, the United States chose to recognize the Taliban as an international terrorist organization subject to sanctions rather than a legitimate government. As a result, desperately needed Afghan government funds were frozen as millions of Afghans faced food insecurity and impending starvation. Despite U.S. efforts to license humanitarian activities, lack of clarity over what activities fall under Taliban rule might violate sanctions inhibited relief efforts.

The United States has increasingly employed sanctions with the express goal of regime change, often explicitly seeking to inflict suffering on civilian populations to provoke them into rising up against their own

leaders. Studies have repeatedly found that this strategy has the opposite effect, leading populations to rally around otherwise-unpopular governments in the face of foreign economic aggression.

Experts suggest sanctions are most effective when employed by international coalitions, in conjunction with other diplomatic efforts, and with a combination of “carrots and sticks” offering the target country a clear path toward having them lifted. Instead, U.S. sanctions have too often been leveled unilaterally, as punishment alone, without accompanying diplomatic efforts. The Iran nuclear agreement exemplified the kind of multifaceted approach most likely to succeed, but the U.S. pulled out of this international agreement in 2017.

Judge:

Too often, the use of sanctions violates Catholic values of nonviolence and just peace by failing both to protect the vulnerable and to effectively advance the cause of reconciliation and sustainable peace. Even when employed with legitimate objectives such as halting corruption, human rights violations, or preparations for war, Catholic social teaching requires that sanctions “be used with great discernment and must be subjected to strict legal and ethical criteria.” They should be applied:

- Multilaterally,
- In conjunction with other diplomatic tools and ongoing dialogue,
- With a timetable and clear incentives for positive action,
- And must not result in harm to civilians.

Act:

Sanctions are a complicated tool of international relations, taking myriad forms and functioning within a wider framework of diplomatic or military action. Faithful citizens must:

- discern whether sanctions are being employed strategically and nonviolently, according to the criteria listed above;
- listen to the voices of ordinary citizens and those who accompany them on the ground in targeted countries; and
- urge leaders to ease or lift sanctions that threaten civilians either directly or indirectly, especially in response to disasters such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

Read the entire brief here: <https://bit.ly/3JTK390>

§

Global Concerns Brief: Vaccine Access

The Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns is producing a series of two-page policy issue briefs on key global concerns topics. This is an excerpt from the latest brief on COVID-19 vaccine access.

See:

By the end of 2020, the ten wealthiest countries in the world had administered 75% of total COVID-19 vaccine doses. Two years later, extreme inequality in vaccine access persists. While populations in wealthy countries are getting much-needed boosters, only 10% of people in low-income countries have received at least one dose.

Nearly one million from the United States and six million people worldwide have died from COVID-19 since the first outbreak in 2020. These figures are likely undercounted due to limited access to testing and reporting, especially in developing countries.

The group of the world's 20 largest economies (G20) has committed to vaccinating 70% of the global population by mid-2022. In addition, COVAX, a facility established by the World Health Organization and other public and private sources, is committed to vaccinating 20% of the population of each country, especially middle- and low-income countries. However, these goals are nowhere near being met. Fulfilling the commitments of the G20 or COVAX will require a massive ramp-up of vaccine production and distribution.

The most successful vaccines to date are the mRNA vaccines produced by Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna. This novel mRNA technology has great potential to produce vaccines for many diseases. However, despite having received taxpayer dollars to develop the vaccines, the pharmaceutical companies which created them are refusing to share the technology and licensing for generic companies to mass produce and distribute the vaccines.

A February 2021 study estimates that reversing inequities in global COVID-19 vaccine access by rapidly providing two doses of mRNA vaccine to everyone in low and lower-middle-income countries could avert 1.3 million deaths. This global vaccination effort would cost \$35.5 billion, according to the analysis. In comparison, the U.S. defense budget for 2021 was \$777 billion.

According to the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), while the economies in the Global North regained most of their momentum in 2021 after suffering contractions in 2020, the economies of low- and middle-income countries are lagging behind. The pandemic has served to significantly deepen inequality within and across countries. The UN DESA report stressed that these trends will make it all but impossible to reduce global inequality by 2030, as targeted in the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

Judge:

In an August 2021 video message, Pope Francis joined the U.S. Bishops Conference and bishops throughout Latin America in urging Catholics and people of good will to get vaccinated "as an act of love." The Holy Father said, "Getting vaccinated is a simple yet profound way to care for the common good, especially the most vulnerable."

In his 2020 Christmas address, Pope Francis asked all stakeholders to share the vaccine: "We cannot allow the various forms of nationalism closed in on themselves to prevent us from living as the truly human family that we are. Nor can we allow the virus of radical individualism to get the better of us and make us indifferent to the suffering of other brothers and sisters."

"I cannot place myself ahead of others," he added, "letting the law of the marketplace and patents take precedence over the law of love and the health of humanity. I ask everyone – government leaders, businesses, international organizations – to foster cooperation and not competition, and to seek a solution for everyone: vaccines for all, especially for the most vulnerable and needy of all regions of the planet."

The Vatican has spoken out firmly for the countries party to the World Trade Organization to approve an intellectual property waiver to allow generic companies to produce enough vaccines, testing and treatments to end the pandemic.

Some Catholics have been hesitant to receive the vaccine because the development or testing of the vaccine was derived from the cell line of one abortion 50 years ago. Given that no additional abortions are performed to create the vaccine, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and Vatican guidance have stated that receiving the vaccine is not active participation in the sin of abortion and thus it is acceptable and even recommended for Catholics to receive the vaccine in good conscience. Many common medications were developed using the same fetal cell, such as Tylenol and Pepto Bismol.

Act

Help promote the Catholic Cares Coalition, a network of Catholic organizations working to ensure vaccine acceptance and equity in the United States and around the world: <https://catholiccares.org/>

Ask President Biden to end the pandemic now by promoting global access to vaccines, testing, and treatment: <https://bit.ly/3K2DhOh>

Read the entire brief here: <https://bit.ly/3JTK39> §

Foresight Africa Report 2022

A new report highlights priorities for the African continent for 2022.

In January, the Brookings Institution released its report, “Foresight Africa,” on the top priorities for development on the African continent for 2022. In the preface for the report, Aloysius Ordu, director of the Africa Growth Initiative at Brookings, wrote that, despite significant challenges, “There are reasons to be cautiously optimistic about Africa’s future.”

Commenting on the report’s findings at a virtual launch event, Ameenah Gurib-Fakim, former President of Mauritius, called Africa the “paradox continent,” given that it has 20% of the planet’s land area, 60% of the world’s river line, 30% of the world’s reserve of minerals, the world’s youngest population, but low levels of economic growth and global trade levels.

“Despite all these riches,” she said, “the continent produces only 3% of global GDP, accounts for less than 3% of international trade, mainly commodities and natural resources. And shoulders 25% of the global disease burden.” She urged leaders to come together to work with what Africa has to offer and ensure the flourishing of the continent.

In addition, Africa supplies the world with rare metals used in electronics, such as lithium, copper, and cobalt, but has no local industrial infrastructure and needs investment in schools and technology. It also must reverse the brain drain.

In terms of economic recovery, the report states that there are good prospects for 2022, with the IMF predicting 3.8% growth for Sub-Saharan Africa as a whole.

Highlighting the report’s reasons for optimism, Ordu stated, “The region’s entrepreneurial youth, technological revolution, sustained investments, recent economic successes, and promise of its ‘latent assets’.”

The report emphasizes three “latent assets” of African culture that will contribute to this positive trajectory. The first is meritocracy: they argue that African societies are built on achieved rather than ascribed status. The second is cosmopolitanism, or the idea that Africans have traditionally been intertwined with many heterogeneous ethnic groups, making them the most able culturally to cope with the modern, globalized world. Finally, the authors argue that an attitude of skepticism towards authority will help African societies to avoid falling for the types of charismatic populists seen in Latin America.

There are painful lessons from the pandemic, however. The authors argue that the lack of international solidarity and glaring vaccine inequity show that Africa needs intra-continental solidarity and health systems that are self-sufficient.

As of this year, 9 billion vaccine doses have been produced globally, but Africa has received only 540 mil-

lion, and only 11% of the continent’s population have been fully vaccinated. However, the African pharmaceutical sector is expected to grow from \$16 billion in 2012 to \$66 billion this year, and eventually to \$259 billion by 2030. Currently Africa produces only 1% of medicines and vaccines that it consumes. In response to this problem, African leaders plan to create a decentralized, diversified manufacturing sector with the help the Africa CDC and the Africa Medicines Agency (AMA).

Gavi, or the Global Alliance for Vaccinations and Immunizations, has committed \$155 million over three years for malaria vaccinations, but the “Foresight Africa” report criticizes this, saying it prolongs African dependency on outside solutions and dampens incentives for Africa to develop its own institutions. This report recommends that vaccine production financing come from African domestic budgets, with the goal of Africa producing 60% of its vaccines by 2040.

The report recommends several strategies for empowering women and girls, beginning with greatly expanding the initiatives already begun in STEM education for girls. Ellen Sirleaf Johnson, former President of Liberia, argues in the report that, especially during the pandemic, African women leaders demonstrated their capacity to “pivot” and address the challenges at hand. “The pivot is an art form that women leaders have perfected globally, Johnson said, “making them critical problem solvers that are more responsive and effective during times of crisis.”

About the climate crisis, “Foresight Africa” argues that the continent has shown resilience and demonstrated solidarity at the UN Climate Talks COP 26, initiating successful local and national responses to climate mitigation and adaptation, and obtaining increased global commitment to climate finance.

Finally, the authors argue that the technological revolution presents challenges as well as opportunities for Africa. According to Landry Signe, Senior Fellow at Brookings, the continent “must improve its infrastructure and prepare its young workforce for new technologies to avoid asymmetric growth between it and the rest of the world. The future of Africa depends on its success in this endeavor.”

Perhaps most concerning to the authors is the persistence of “hot spots” across the continent, countries where coups have occurred, civil conflict continues and good governance is lacking. At the launch event, Greg Mills of the Brenthurst Foundation in South Africa called this the “democratic regression” and said it is essential that the continent address it.

Find the report at <https://brook.gs/3tkj8fP> §

Building a Circular Economy

The concept of a circular economy that reduces and repurposes waste is gaining momentum around the world.

In 2013, after setting the world record for sailing solo around the world in less than 72 days, Dame Ellen MacArthur said, “no experience in my life could have given me a better understanding of the word ‘finite.’ What we have out there is all we have. There is no more.”

Based on this realization, she founded the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, which is dedicated to working with leaders from business, education, and government to build what is known as a “circular economy” that fits within the physical limits of the Earth.

A circular economy is designed to reduce waste as much as possible through the sharing, leasing, reusing, repairing, refurbishing, and recycling of existing materials and products for as long as possible. Efforts to initiate this kind of economy come from non-governmental organizations, businesses, and governments alike.

Among the successes of the Ellen McArthur Foundation is the creation of the “Global Commitment,” a vision of a circular economy for plastics that has been endorsed by over 500 organizations. Companies that represent 20% of all plastic packaging produced globally have committed to ambitious 2025 targets to help realize the goals of a circular economy for plastic.

This stands in contrast to the dominant model for production, which involves businesses extracting virgin natural resources and converting them into products which are usually thrown away soon after use – the “take, make, and waste” model. Flowing from a growing awareness of the finiteness of natural resources in the wake of widespread environmental destruction, researchers and activists are working to promote more sustainable economic models, including various models for circular economies.

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has identified five primary circular business models.

The first is known as the circular supply model, in which renewable or bio-based materials are used for production instead of virgin materials. The second is the resource recovery model, in which waste from one business serves as input materials for production in other firms. Two good examples are the Kalundborg Symbiosis in Denmark and the Circular Valley in Germany, which are hubs of businesses committed to working together to create their supply chains from within.

The third model is known as product life extension, where businesses make their products more durable and easier to be reused, repaired, refurbished, or remanufactured. For example, the French government maintains a “repair index” that rates different products on their ease of repair and reuse.

The fourth model is called the “sharing model,” in which companies use virtual platforms to promote the sharing of materials. Popular examples are Zipcar and AirBnb.

The final model the OECD names is called “product-service systems,” or “services instead of product,” where instead of selling a product, a company sells the services their product can provide. Examples are Uber, the “Cloud” for data storage, and the leasing of office copiers. The user is not the owner of the product.

Several countries around the world have become leaders in promoting circular economy models in their domestic economies. China is widely considered the frontrunner.

Circular economy hubs in China tend to involve thousands of enterprises operating in concentrated industrial parks and export zones. A centralized government is helpful in scaling up projects around the country.

Finland is another leader in building a circular economy, even within the European Union, which has named building a circular economy as a goal for the bloc. The Finnish Road Map to the Circular Economy unites efforts around the country and has served as a blueprint for other countries and municipalities.

Yet even with this initiative, Finland struggles to be less wasteful. While Finns have dramatically decreased the amount of waste going to landfills, they are creating more waste than they did a few years ago, but it is being repurposed, including as fuel to be burned for additional energy.

It is important to acknowledge that while circular economy initiatives will be an important part of a future economy that is truly sustainable within the Earth’s limits, it needs to be combined with lowering overall consumption rates. Many materials can only be recycled a limited number of times. In the case of electronics, even the most advanced recycling facilities are only able to reuse 40% of embodied resources.

As the European Parliamentary Research Service shows, “the main challenge is linked with growing material stocks,” or demand for things like buildings, machinery, vehicles. “Because of [this growth in demand], we would still need significant inputs from raw materials even if we recycled 100% of discarded materials today,” the report explains. For a truly sustainable future, reusing and recycling resources in a circular economy is important but must be accompanied by an overall reduction in consumption.§

Guatemala: Historic Mayan Land Rights Case

A Mayan land rights case against the Guatemalan state has reached the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in San José, Costa Rica.

On February 9, Rodrigo Tot, who was awarded the Goldman Environmental Prize in 2017, testified at the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in Costa Rica, in a historic land rights case against the Guatemalan state. According to the North American Congress on Latin America (NACLA), the court's ruling could force the Guatemalan government "to finally recognize the Q'eqchi' people's collective rights to their ancestral lands and their right to protect their natural resources from exploitative megaprojects" – referring to the open-pit Fénix nickel mine, run by a Guatemalan subsidiary of the Switzerland-based Solway Investment Group.

The plaintiffs in the case, the Maya Q'eqchi' community of Agua Caliente, have been resisting for decades the exploitation of their land on the banks of Lake Izabal by multinational corporations, enabled by state repression. This is the first time Guatemala has faced judgement in an international court for violating the

ancestral land rights of Indigenous communities. If the community's case prevails, it would set a new precedent for Indigenous land and resource rights.

According to NACLA, a ruling in favor of the Maya Q'eqchi' community of Agua Caliente "could offer not only reparations for Agua Caliente, but also new legal tools for Q'eqchi' communities in the region in their fights against other catastrophic megaprojects and monocrops, including African palm plantations."

"The community has decided to fight, and that's why I've given my life to fight for them," Tot told NACLA. "I want Guatemala to recognize the harm it's caused us. And I want to ask [Indigenous] communities, not only in Guatemala but in other countries, to unite. This is a valuable struggle that's worth fighting for."

Faith in action: Listen to Maryknoll Sr. Dee Smith talk about her more than 30 years of ministry in Guatemala. <https://bit.ly/3vmNDnV>

Honduras: Justice for Guapinol Water Defenders

A victory for water defenders in Honduras provides hope for the future.

On Feb. 9, the Constitutional Supreme Court of Honduras overturned a lower court and threw out the conviction of six environmental defenders, members of a group known as the Guapinol 8. Two days later, the six men, all from the community of Guapinol in northern Honduras, were free, after nearly two-and-a-half years in pre-trial detention for their part in protesting a mine they say polluted the river that provides water for their community.

"While this is a significant victory for the water defenders and their families," the Honduras Solidarity Network said in a statement, "the entire process that led to this outcome highlights the injustices imposed on civil liberties under Honduras's authoritarian post-2009 coup governments and deepened during Juan Orlando Hernández narco-dictatorship. Moreover, the blatant criminalization of the Guapinol environmental defenders demonstrates that the people of Honduras pay a high price for unfettered private investment by U.S. corporations."

The Honduras Solidarity Network, comprised of 30 Canadian and U.S. organizations, described the persecution of the Guapinol 8 as a "perfect example" of the damage done by private U.S. companies in Honduras. "They disrespect the people. They disregard the environment. They cozy up to corrupt oligarchs who run the country. They collude with police and judicial authorities to criminalize human and environmental defenders.

And they leave a trail of physical, environmental, and emotional destruction with the 'development' of their megaprojects. "

Meanwhile, Vice-President Kamala Harris, who attended President Xiomara Castro's inauguration, has secured new commitments from U.S.-based multinational corporations for more private investment in Central America—more than \$1.2 billion— "to sustainably address the root causes of migration by promoting economic opportunity."

"Biden's plan is a false and misguided policy approach to addressing the root causes of migration," the Honduran Solidarity Network said.

In light of the criminalization of the Guapinol water defenders, the Honduras Solidarity Network called for a series of reforms, including investigations in Honduras of companies accused by communities of wrongdoings, and actions by the U.S. Congress to deny funding for deals like that which V.P. Harris has put together, and an end to funding for Honduran police and military until human rights violations are addressed.

At the same time, Juan Orlando Hernández, former Honduran president, was arrested on Feb. 15, less than a month after his term ended. The arrest was in response to an extradition request from prosecutors in New York who have charged him with drug trafficking. His arrest holds out the possibility of a new era for the rule of law in Honduras. §

Update on Haiti

Haitian diaspora leaders urge Pres. Biden to support the Montana Accords for restoring democracy in Haiti while Congressional leaders ask the president to stop deportations to besieged country.

As Haitians mark yet another year of political limbo, A Way Forward in Haiti, a network of Haitian diaspora faith and community leaders, is reiterating its call on the Biden-Harris Administration to change its approach to Haiti.

“By continuing to give caretaker Prime Minister Ariel Henry a de-facto veto over Haiti’s future, the U.S. State Department is reinforcing the political interests and dynamics that have driven Haiti into misery,” said Rev. Keny Felix, Pastor of Bethel Evangelical Baptist Church in Miami Gardens, and a leader with Faith in Florida, in a statement on February 7, 2022.

“Secretary of State Blinken and Assistant Secretary of State for the Western Hemisphere, Brian Nichols must send a clear signal that the winds have changed. Haitians need to hear that the U.S. supports the brave civil society and political leaders who are crafting an inclusive transition back to democracy, not the same circle of corrupt elites who are responsible for much of the violence and suffering facing Haiti,” said Dr. Francois

Pierre-Louis, Faith in Action International Haiti Director, in the same statement.

Also in February, 14 leading U.S. Senators and 88 Reps, including Senators Schumer and Menendez and House Judiciary Chairman Nadler, urged a halt to Haiti expulsions. “Haiti simply cannot safely accept the repatriation of its nationals,” the members of Congress wrote, asking Pres. Biden to review treatment of Black migrants by the U.S. immigration enforcement system.

More than 20,000 Haitians have been expelled from the United States in the last year – sent back to a country overwhelmed by hurricanes, earthquakes, kidnappings, gang violence and a presidential assassination. At least 45% of the expellees are women and children. These are overwhelmingly Title 42 expulsion flights in violation of asylum protections; see, e.g., this strong denunciation in Just Security: <https://bit.ly/3M88AJ0> §

Faith in action: Tell Pres. Biden to stop deportations to Haiti: <https://bit.ly/35chTaG>

Root Causes of Migration: Biden’s First Year

A report assesses the Biden administration’s initial efforts to address the root causes of migration from Central America.

One year after President Joe Biden issued an executive order aimed at reforming U.S. policy toward Central America and establishing humane migration policy, a new report from the Root Causes Initiative examines the Biden administration’s record of following through on these commitments.

The Root Causes Initiative is a network of faith-based organizations from Central America, Mexico, and the United States seeking to change the underlying economic, social, and political conditions driving migration and working to protect migrants from abuse. Based on publicly available data and the analysis of civil society organizations, the report assesses the Administration’s efforts and issues recommendations across four areas: Rule of Law, Localizing Aid, Inclusive Economic Policy, and Humane Migration Policy.

Considering the Administration’s efforts to advance the rule of law, the Initiative notes that the United States has “taken a relatively hard line” against the administration of Salvadoran President Nayib Bukele, criticizing and taking actions to reign in his anti-democratic actions through sanctions and other measures, while failing to apply the same pressure to the Guatemalan government.

With respect to the president’s goal to “localize aid in Central America” the report notes that while the per-

centage of U.S. aid money going to local organizations has just about doubled from 5.6 to 11.2%, much more cooperation with community-led aid and development groups is necessary. Remarking on economic policy, the Initiative says it is too soon to tell how the Administration’s efforts to encourage U.S. corporations with strong labor, environmental, and gender equality standards to invest in Central America will play out.

Finally, the Initiative decries the Biden administration’s failure to address the “cruel and counter-productive” Trump-era border policies, which have all but ended the U.S. asylum system, in violation of international law. They also urgently call for the allocation of more temporary employment visas and for greater numbers of refugees to be admitted from the region.

Dylan Corbett, executive director of the Hope Border Institute, an organization helping lead the Initiative, said, “At this one year mark, we need to recognize that the Biden-Harris administration still has a once in a generation opportunity to change course in Central America and make meaningful change. To do so, this administration will have to recommit to listening and walking alongside local leaders who have a prophetic vision for the future of their communities.” Read the report at <https://www.hopeborder.org/root-causes> §

Stop the Violence in Myanmar

U.S.-based faith groups are calling on Congress to pass a bill aimed at stopping the violence in Myanmar.

On February 15, 2022, 18 faith-based organizations sent a letter to the members of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives calling on them to support the BURMA Act of 2021, a bill that responds to the ongoing, violent repression of citizens by the military junta that seized power in Myanmar on February 1, 2021.

The BURMA Act of 2021 would provide urgently needed humanitarian assistance, support civil society, promote human rights and impose targeted sanctions against the military regime to address human rights abuses.

“Guided by our faith traditions, we believe that human dignity can be protected and a healthy community can be achieved only if human rights are protected,” the letter states. “After careful research and consultation with partners in Myanmar, faith-based and other human rights organizations, we are confident the sanctions es-

tablished in the BURMA Act would not have a significant negative impact on the civilian population, and that they are necessary to effectively pressure the junta to cease its violent repression of democracy activists and ethnic and religious minorities.”

The letter echoes the call of faith leaders on the ground who stress the urgency of the situation in Myanmar and the need for nonviolent solutions. Cardinal Charles Maung Bo of Yangon, in a recent interview with America Magazine, said, “Unfortunately, the conflict is becoming more brutal; the atrocities are more shocking each day. Our people are not resigned. They seek peace with dignity and a country that will be reborn through reconciliation.” Read the letter: <https://bit.ly/3h5siHt> §

Faith in action: Urge your Senators and Representative to help stop the violence in Myanmar by supporting the BURMA Act of 2021: <https://bit.ly/3M3NL1M>

Racial Justice: Letter on Reparations

MOGC joined over 350 organizations in sending the following letter (excerpted here) to the leaders of the House of Representatives urging them to support H.R. 40, a bill to create a commission to study the legacy of slavery and the prospect of reparations for African-Americans.

On behalf of [our coalition], we urge Congress to immediately bring House Resolution (H.R.) 40, the Commission to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African-Americans Act, to a full vote on the House floor.

H.R. 40 has a record 215 members of Congress committed to voting “yes” when the bill comes to the House floor. With this level of support, it should pass the House, so long as Leadership sticks to public promises to get behind it and advance the bill. People in the US are now more eager than ever to pull back the curtain on institutions to see whether they have helped to advance or stall racial progress, and those institutions include the US Congress. As states, cities, and other institutions, including the state of California; Providence, Rhode Island; Burlington, Vermont; Tullahassee, Oklahoma; Greenbelt, Maryland; Detroit, Michigan; Evanston, Illinois; Georgetown University; the Jesuits; and others pursue reparations at an accelerated pace, it would be sheer irony for the federal government, which sanctioned the kidnapping and trafficking in human beings that slavery entailed, and maintained subsequent anti-Black laws and institutions, to continue to lag behind.

H.R. 40 would establish an expert commission to study the legacy of slavery and how the failure to address harms stemming from it have resulted in huge racial disparities between white and Black people in: the ability

to accumulate wealth; to access health care, education, housing and employment opportunities; environmental outcomes; and policing, among other things. The commission would also recommend proposals for how to provide repair for what the study reveals. This bill does not authorize payments or any specific remedy. It simply creates a commission to study the problem, gather relevant information, extensively consult with impacted communities, and recommend solutions. Like the commission that investigated the forced relocation and wrongful incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II, H.R. 40 can help pave the way for a critical and truthful reckoning and accounting for past harms and the present harms that flow from them...

We, the undersigned organizations, firmly believe that addressing pervasive anti-Black racism and providing reparations, long overdue, cannot wait another day, month, year, or decade. We are in a once-in-a-lifetime moment that we cannot let slip away if we are to begin the process of righting the country’s wrongs. Voters will remember what Congress did and did not do when it had the power to act. It has that power now. It should ask itself: How do we want history to remember us? §

Read the full letter here: <https://bit.ly/3HtKcOO>.
Faith in action: Take action to ask Congress to support H.R. 40: <https://bit.ly/HR40mogc>

Permanent Solutions for Afghan Evacuees

MOGC joined a coalition of faith-based organizations in sending the following letter (excerpted here) urging Congress to pass a bill that would allow for newly-arrived Afghan evacuees in the United States to have permanent legal status, rather than temporary relief.

[As faith-based organizations and leaders,] we write in support of an Afghan Adjustment Act for our new Afghan neighbors. We commend the U.S.' various efforts, including those led by civil society groups, to live up to America's promise to bring vulnerable Afghans to safety to the U.S. during the humanitarian evacuation from Afghanistan. Amidst a deteriorating humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan and cases of serious human rights breaches, we also urge you to advocate for speeding up the processing of Afghans' applications for relief from overseas and facilitating their journey to the U.S.

Following the end of America's longest war, over 80,000 Afghan evacuees were resettled to the U.S. in one of the largest resettlement efforts since the Vietnam War. Afghans evacuated to the U.S. include human rights advocates, educators, interpreters, and personnel that worked alongside U.S. forces and U.S.-based humanitarian organizations. As the urgent evacuations played out in real time, thousands of Afghans were granted humanitarian parole, which is typically granted for one or two years. Given the temporary nature of this relief, tens of thousands of the evacuated Afghan men, women, and children resettled in the U.S. will need to navigate complex legal issues to find more lasting protection in the U.S. We urgently call on Congress to pass an Afghan Adjustment Act and to ensure robust funding across refugee related accounts, which will keep families together and ensure this lasting protection for at-risk Afghans.

An Afghan Adjustment Act would address this unique situation by allowing certain Afghan evacuees to apply for permanent status after one year of being paroled in the country. Without an Afghan Adjustment Act, Afghan humanitarian parolees have very few options to remain in the U.S. after their parole status expires. If they worked for the U.S. military in Afghanistan, they could apply through the Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) program in which they will likely wait years to receive a decision or they can apply through the dysfunctional, backlogged U.S. asylum system. Neither avenue is a guarantee. In particular, the SIV program has been characterized by an unprecedented backlog in applications and cases of wrongful denials

DHS reports that 36,000 Afghan humanitarian parolees in the U.S. currently lack a clear avenue to lawful permanent residency – many of whom are Afghan women's rights advocates, former reporters, and extend-

ed family members of Afghan U.S. military-affiliated interpreters. From DHS' own data and on-the-ground reporting in the U.S., we know that the parents, grandparents, siblings, nieces, and nephews of adult SIV-eligible evacuees likely make up a significant portion of those without a direct path to legal permanent residency in the U.S. Given this, the threat of family separation in these cases looms large.

Guided by our faith values, we believe that immigration policies must prioritize family unity and honor the God-given dignity of each person. Each of us, through our congregations, synagogues, mosques, and places of worship, have historically played key roles in assisting refugees with housing, language, employment, and social support necessary for rapid and effective resettlement into U.S. communities.

... Across faith traditions and practices, the message is clear. Across our communities, we work hard to live out our beliefs. Now, we call upon Congress to stay true to our promises to at-risk Afghans, who have put their faith in us. Not only would an Afghan Adjustment Act realize these values, but it would also strengthen the ongoing resettlement and integration efforts we have supported.

Every day intensifies the threat of family separation and worry shared in our communities. We call for lasting protection for at-risk Afghans. The only viable solution is to return to historic precedent and adjust the humanitarian parole status of Afghans through the passage of an Afghan Adjustment Act, as the U.S. has done for other vulnerable people such as Cubans following the rise of Fidel Castro, Southeast Asians following the fall of Saigon, and Iraqis following multiple U.S. military engagements. Adjusting the status of humanitarian parolees will allow for a pathway to lawful permanent residency and lasting safety for our neighbors. As faith leaders, we join security experts, refugee resettlement agencies, Afghan Americans, women's rights leaders, veterans groups, and legal experts in seeking passage of this legislation.

We believe Congress has a moral responsibility to act swiftly. We eagerly look forward to working with you to ensure that an Afghan Adjustment Act has bipartisan support in Congress. Thank you for your engagement and service. §

Faith in action: Write to Congress asking them to pass the Afghan Adjustment Act: <https://bit.ly/3C2qXup>

Understanding Palestinian Youth

Brian Barber, a sociologist and professor at the University of Tennessee, spoke on a webinar moderated by Churches for Middle East Peace on February 17, 2022. Below is an excerpt of his comments.

I study young people and how the context they inhabit impacts them either positively or negatively. I first went to Palestine in 1994 and specifically Gaza in 1996 where a team of sociologists and I conducted rigorous research on Palestinian families.

I didn't understand well enough [then] the main finding that we made during those early studies. That is, the young people in Palestine then and now are faring much better than theories would have predicted. ...

What I will say now from findings from our research and observation and my learning over all these 28 years, has to do with the notion of what we researchers call resilience. I like to call it endurance. It is the ability of Palestinians, and in particular, Gazans, given their unique hardships, to keep going, and not be destroyed psychologically, emotionally, given all they have gone through.

When I first sat down to speak personally with a group of Palestinian 17-year-olds in Jerusalem, it was a profound moment of personal growth for me. When I interview young people, and I have done so hundreds of times in 15 cultures or so, I always open with a question like "Tell me when you are happy" to elicit some personal insights from these four young Palestinians. ...

They were giving me answers like "I'm happy when Omar's health is good." Another one said, "I'm happy when the peace process is going well."

I was thinking to myself [they] don't understand my question. So, I probed ... Finally one of them said, "I think I know what you mean, I am happy when I run ... but whenever I run, the soldiers want to arrest me."

[Their answers] opened a whole new window to me about what it means to be well. What I learned from these young folks ... was that one's personal well-being is, in fact, in certain areas, impacted by political conditions.

...The well-being of Palestinians, Gazans in particular, really is a matter of the political context they are living in. Often their daily life is impacted by decisions made in Tel Aviv or Washington or Brussels, which border is going to be open, how many people are going to be let through, how much material is going to come in, and so forth.

... How is it that these young people are still sane? And much more than sane – active, happy, to the extent that one can be happy in those conditions.

I decided I would do a comparative study and I went to Sarajevo. It was a good comparison: population, territory politically unstable, historically the people had experienced years of exposure to violence during the siege of Sarajevo. ...

There I learned the next piece of insight. Those young people I interviewed in Sarajevo were the most distressed, most dysfunctional group of young people I have ever met in all the cultures [I have studied].

In the Bosnian case, the youth were totally unaware of why the war happened, why suddenly the next day at school, half their classmate we're gone. They turned out to be the Serbian families that fled. They didn't know who the enemy was until they deciphered the symbols on the tanks that were shooting at them. Parents couldn't explain this to the kids and the kids were pure victims. They had no way of becoming involved ideologically or physically.

The reverse is true in Palestine. The Intifada was ... a moment when young people could actually, physically and ideologically, contribute.

The lesson there is the response to adversity that the conflict included depends a lot on how interpretable the moment is, how much sense you can make out of it... [Palestinians see the conflict as] right morally, religiously, politically.

Another insight ... I have learned [is] that the most painful events to occur are attacks that target an individual's worth as a person, or as a people. Ironically, that same attack creates a resistance response. Because all of us, I am coming to learn, will defend ourselves. ...

So, another key to the success of Palestinians in surviving their horrible hardships is the fact that they are fighting for their basic dignity. That fight will never end because they will not give up on demanding basic human rights and the right to call themselves human beings and a people. §

For insights on understanding Israeli youth, see "How secular Israeli millennials feel about Palestinians," by Stacey Gutkowski, Co-Director of the Centre for the Study of Divided Societies, King's College London, published online in The Conversation, Oct. 28, 2020: <https://bit.ly/3K17WeO>

Resources

1. Read our statement on the **invasion of Ukraine**. <https://bit.ly/3Hz8s26> Explore resources for prayer, study, and action for peace from Pax Christi USA. <https://bit.ly/3sl7mCx>
2. Pope Francis has called for **Ash Wednesday, March 2**, to be a **day of fasting and prayer for peace** in Ukraine. <https://bit.ly/3vnEz2b>
3. Explore our **Lenten Reflection Guide 2022: Upholding Human Dignity and Human Rights**. In this Lenten Reflection Guide, we offer reflections, questions, prayers, and actions based on each week's Scripture readings in light of Catholic social teaching on human rights and Maryknoll mission experience. <https://bit.ly/Lent2022MOGC>
4. Explore **Lenten Resources** from **Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers' Mission Education department**, including a weekly Scripture guide for adults and families: <https://bit.ly/3hrGfzG>
5. Explore the latest "Missionary Life" podcast from the Maryknoll Sisters, this time **featuring Sister Delia "Dee" Smith in Guatemala**: <https://bit.ly/3vmNDnV>
6. On **Tuesday, March 8 at 8pm ET**, join Casa Esther and Catholic Campus Ministry organizations for "**Nonviolence and the Web of Creation**," an evening of virtual Lenten reflection featuring Dan Moriarty of MOGC and Tania-Avila Meneses, a Quechua Indigenous theologian. This is part of a **Lenten series of talks on Gospel Nonviolence**. Register here: <https://bit.ly/3pk8Hrz>
7. **Tuesday, March 8 is International Women's Day**. The UN theme is "Gender equality today for a sustainable tomorrow. The Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers are hosting a **Women's Day of Prayer on Saturday, March 5 at 11am**: <https://bit.ly/3t9vvnvB>
8. Creation Justice Ministries offers **Christian education materials for Earth Day (April 22)** to equip faith communities to protect, restore, and more rightly share God's creation. The 2022 theme is "Weathering the Storm" and focuses on faithful climate resilience and action. <https://bit.ly/3vpA8E4>
9. Watch this webinar recording explaining the USCCB's newly **revised Socially Responsible Investing** guidelines. Hosted by Seventh Generation Interfaith. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K9BOtHuz7Yo>
10. New book by Dr. Carolyn Woo, former president of Catholic Relief Services, "**Rising: Learning from Women's Leadership in Catholic Ministries**" to be released by Orbis Books on **March 15**. Dr. Woo profiles 16 women leaders and suggests actions institutions and individuals can take to support women's leadership in Catholic ministries. <https://www.orbisbooks.com/>
11. Sign up for **Ecumenical Advocacy Days, April 25-27**. The focus of this year's virtual gathering is "Fierce Urgency: Advancing Civil and Human Rights." <https://advocacydays.org/>
12. Learn about a new initiative from the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace, and Security, "**Onward for Afghan Women**." <https://onwardforafghanwomen.org/>
13. Join a webinar from "Onward for Afghan Women" on **March 11 at 10am ET: "The State of Women's Rights as Human Rights in Afghanistan"**. <https://bit.ly/3LWxhbH>
14. Watch the recording of an event hosted by Loyola University Chicago in which **Pope Francis speaks with young Catholics committed to working for climate justice**, "Building Bridges North-South: A Synodal Encounter Between Pope Francis and University Students." <https://bit.ly/3vhKjue>
15. Read about efforts to strengthen Congressional support for **peace and cooperation in U.S. policy toward China** in this op ed "Bucking the Anti-China Trend" by Zhiqun Zhu in The Hill on Feb. 17, 2022. Professor Zhu teaches at Bucknell University. <https://bit.ly/3pjM7PA>
16. Read this article from Time Magazine about Archbishop John Wester of Santa Fe's bold new pastoral letter on **nuclear disarmament**. <https://bit.ly/3tjOSS7>
17. "The open-access edition of Catholic Peacebuilding Network's s new book "**Catholic Peacebuilding and Mining: Integral Peace, Development, and Ecology**" now available for free online. <https://bit.ly/3prFafC>
18. Read this blogpost about what was missing at the UN Climate Talks COP26: "**Grassroots women for climate solutions**." <https://bit.ly/3HipsJH>
19. Learn about the role of **women and agroecology in "Our Land is our Life"** by the Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa (AFSA). This paper brings together ten case studies from six countries, including Senegal, Uganda, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Tanzania and Togo. <https://bit.ly/3JU7MWp>