



Shalom News North America

An instrument of hope, formation, and action concerning priority matters of social justice.



October 2011

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Economic Justice

Ending Global Poverty: UN MDG Update

The United Nations [Millennium Development Goals](#) (MDGs) were created in 2000 to set targets to help end extreme poverty, improve health, promote education, and promote partnerships for development in poor countries by 2015. The recently published [2011 UN Update](#) reports steady progress, but notes that the global economic downturn has derailed some of the gains. [Click here](#) for a new two-page prayer and information resource concerning the MDGs. More ideas and information can be found [here](#).

World Food Day—October 16

“Food Prices: From Crisis to Stability” is the theme chosen for this year’s [World Food Day](#). Price swings, upswings in particular, represent a major threat to [food security](#) in developing countries. According to the World Bank, rising food costs pushed nearly 70 million people into extreme poverty in the past year. What can you do about it? How about hosting a Sunday dinner—one that fosters conversation about where our food comes from, who cultivates it, and how we can make the food system more just and sustainable? [Click here](#) for hosting ideas and free resources. Another action you can take is read about



the [First Fridays for Food Security](#) initiative and consider participating!

International Day for the Eradication of Poverty—October 17

The theme for the 2011 International Day for the Eradication of Poverty (IDEP) is “From Poverty to Sustainability: People at the Center of Inclusive Development.” The objective of the IDEP 2011 is to illustrate the important and tangible ways in which people living in poverty can simultaneously protect the sustainability of their environment and break the cycle of poverty. It also presents an opportunity to acknowledge the efforts of the poor and to have their voices heard. [Learn more here](#).

Jubilee Weekend Addresses Global Poverty

The [Jubilee USA Network](#) urges advocates to make October 15-16 a Jubilee Weekend by taking concrete action to address systemic global poverty. Their focus is the introduction of the Jubilee Act, legislation which provides solutions to international debt crises and works toward implementing responsible lending and borrowing practices that should help produce greater worldwide economic justice. [Click here](#) to learn more and take action!

Education & Human Dignity

Education for All – A Matter of Keeping Promises

As many as 70 million children are denied a place at school said former British Prime Minister Gordon Brown at the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) meeting in Geneva. Focusing on the MDGs and education, Brown said, “In the four-and-a-half years to December 2015, we have to show that we can keep promises, we have to show that we can renew the dream of Education for All, and we have to show that we can build the trust that is necessary between rich and poor countries.” [Read More](#).

Rural Women’s Day—October 15

[Rural women](#) around the world play a major role in ensuring food security and in the development and stability of rural areas. Yet, with little or no status, they frequently lack the power to secure land rights or to access vital services such as credit, inputs, extension services, training and education. Their vital contribution to society goes largely unnoticed. [Read more](#).



Stolen Sisters—Vigils Against Violence and Discrimination

Vigils to stop discrimination and violence against indigenous women and girls will be held throughout Canada on October 4. Amnesty International, in partnership with the Native Women's Association of Canada, KAIROS, the National Association of Friendship Centers, the Canadian Federation of Students and others help to organize these awareness—raising events. Learn more about our “Stolen Sisters” and efforts to make a difference [here](#).



Girls Not Brides

Men have “aided and abetted child marriage,” according to Nobel laureate Desmond Tutu, who characterizes the practice as “one of the critical issues of our time.” Tutu made his remarks in support of the [Girls Not Brides](#) campaign, which has pledged to raise \$3 million to fund activities aimed at ending child marriage in central and western Africa, south Asia, and parts of the Middle East. An estimated 10 million girls are married each year before they are 18. Tutu said that six of the eight [Millennium Development Goals](#) would not be met without a concerted effort to stop this practice. Learn more [here](#).

Integrity of Creation

Climate Change “Lapping at our feet”

When United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon recently visited Kiribati and the Solomon Islands, he noted that these small island nations are “on the front line” of climate change and that the threats of rising sea levels are literally “lapping at our feet.” In fact, some villagers in Kiribati have been forced to relocate because the ocean has already encroached on their land. Emphasizing that something “is seriously wrong with our current model of economic development,” Ban called world leaders to forge an agreement on a plan to halt climate change. Read more [here](#).

St. Francis Pledge to Care for Creation

The Feast of St. Francis on October 4 calls us to remember the importance of caring for Earth. As part of the [Catholic Climate Covenant](#), new resources have been developed to help parishes and community groups celebrate the Feast of St. Francis and reduce their carbon footprint. Besides details about the [St. Francis Pledge to Care for Creation and the Poor](#), there are helpful resources for schools, youth, colleges and adult education, including lesson plans, prayers, reflections, and other materials for school and parish settings.

Peace & Non-Violence

Happy Birthday SSND & UN!

The School Sisters of Notre Dame and the United Nations share a common birthday, October 24. Although that may be a mere coincidence, since the UN came into being 112 years after SSND, we do share something else in common. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon stated in 2010 that on UN Day “we resolve to do more; more to protect those caught up in armed conflict, to fight climate change and avert nuclear catastrophe; more to expand opportunities for women and girls, and to combat injustice and impunity.” As School Sisters of Notre Dame, we also are called to do more, “to risk all we are and all we have for the sake of the mission of Jesus Christ” and “to lay down our lives to be bread that is blessed, broken and shared for the life of the world.” Our common birthday is an opportunity to recognize anew our connection to the United Nations and to renew our commitment and response to that call to do more.

Women, War & Peace



Women, War & Peace is a five-part PBS television series considered the most comprehensive global media initiative ever mounted on the roles of women in war and peace.

[Women, War & Peace](#) will premiere on your local PBS station Tuesday nights from Oct. 11 to Nov. 8, 2011. Check your [local listings](#) for air times.

A Catholic Call to Abolish the Death Penalty

A new call from Catholic theologians to end the use of the death penalty states in part, “We urge our nation to abolish capital punishment, and we also implore our churches to work unwaveringly to end it as well as all other threats to human life and dignity.” [Click here](#) to learn more (be sure to scroll to the end to see how you can add your name).

