

Protecting LGBTQ Youth

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PASSIONIST SOLIDARITY NETWORK

WITH THE CRUCIFIED OF TODAY

Social Justice • Earth Care

AWAKENING THE COMPASSION OF CHRIST



Dear Friends in Solidarity,

We had accomplished so much in just those few days during our 35th Provincial Chapter, June 5 to 11, 2019. We had affirmed many exciting proposals that arose from our Visioning process. Approaching the conclusion of our gathering, Fr. Clemente Barron asked me to help with some language for a final declaration which could be the "icing on the cake" for our time together. I agreed and Clemente crafted most of it. While the declaration was not acted upon during that Chapter, I am happy to celebrate and raise it up again now as it seems so right for the

signs of our times.

Clemente reflected that at the Chapter, "Fr. Joachim gave us this stirring image of the statue of St. Paul of the Cross in St. Peter's Basilica in Rome: St. Paul of the Cross pointing to the Crucifix which he holds in his left hand with his right hand. He does not point to himself. As I reread this reflection, I think this is St. Paul of the Cross pointing to the living crucifix today."

From the declaration:



It is being at the foot of the Cross where we Passionists are reminded of the cost of redemptive love, as we gaze on the dying Jesus the Christ. The foot of the Cross reminds us to be in solidarity with everyone who has ever lived and who will breathe the air we do in the future. It is the Cross that gives us hope and the courage to commit to creating a better community, a better world and sustaining God's beautiful creation. As Passionists, we commit to prayer. We also commit to education, advocacy, and action at the local and national scene. We resolve to commit to this work, in our homes, in our neighborhoods, in our cities and states where we live."

[Read the entire declaration here.](#)

Let it be so!

David Horvath

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U.S. Withdrawal from Afghanistan



In the last two weeks of August, the United States military withdrawal and evacuation of U.S. citizens, allies, and other vulnerable Afghans concluded while the Taliban formed a new government in Afghanistan. A terrorist attack outside the Kabul airport, and a retaliatory U.S. attack which killed innocent Afghans including children was further traumatizing. As the situation

unfolds, there is a scramble to respond to both emergent and long-term needs of the Afghan people.

Among the courageous Afghan staff carrying out the bulk of the aid and peacebuilding work for international NGOs are [many women](#). International diplomatic pressure must be applied to the Taliban, particularly through the United Nations, to allow these women to continue their vital work, especially in serving other women and girls.

[Faith groups](#) and other peace advocates have discussed what [peacebuilding in Afghanistan](#) might look like going forward. Often these are conversations that [began](#)

[20 years ago](#) in the wake of the 9/11 attacks. But 20 years of war have made the work more challenging than ever. (Thanks to Maryknoll Office of Global Concerns)

Actions:

- Contact the Biden administration to urge them to generously welcome Afghan refugees and provide humanitarian aid on the ground.
Visit: <https://bit.ly/3k4zi8s>
- Explore a list of ways to help Afghan refugees from Women for Afghan Women. Visit <https://womenforafghanwomen.org/> and click on “Resources and Other Ways to Help.”
- Read this powerful interview with Kathy Kelly, peace activist, on the situation in Afghanistan in the National Catholic Reporter: <https://bit.ly/3Bvwj05>

Passion of the Earth, Wisdom of the Cross

This Critical Season of Creation

Dan Misleh, from the Catholic Climate Covenant, urges us to [unite our voices](#) this Season Creation (September 1 - October 4) and to call on President Biden and Congress to enact bipartisan, forward-thinking solutions to save our planet for future generations. Dan says, "We will deliver our messages in the coming weeks, faithfully hoping and praying they will move the needle of the nation's moral compass toward the bold and ambitious solutions the nation and world need to address the climate crisis.

- [Sign the Petition. Join your voice with thousands of American Catholics in signing our climate action petition](#), a faith-filled appeal to President Biden and Congress to work beyond partisanship and create climate solutions to care for our common home.
- Ask your Catholic leader to sign the Letter. Please encourage your bishop, priest, or other church leaders to sign the [related Climate Action Letter for Catholic Institutions](#). The Passionist Solidarity Network has signed onto this letter.

UPDATE:

Dicastery Plans for Laudato Si' Action Platform

At this writing, the Dicastery in Rome is considering moving the official start for active promotion of the Action Platform from October 4 to mid November. This is in response to appeals from important parts of the community that there hasn't been sufficient time to fully prepare the technology necessary for the complex international structures, local realities, cultural and language needs. The pandemic has also created serious limitations for many regions.

The November start date will also be timely given the presence of Pope Francis at the critical meeting of the United Nations Climate Change (COP 26). There is a sense that this meeting may produce some dramatic developments.

Meanwhile, the U.S. delegation made up of leadership of men and women religious is working with the Dicastery on implementation of the Action Platforms. Currently, they are seeking parishes, dioceses, families and religious congregations to make a public commitment to creating their 7-year Laudato Si' Action platform. We invite all our Passionist entities--communities, parishes, retreat houses, the entire Passionist family--to pledge your commitment at <https://laudatosiactionplatform.org/pledge-your-commitment/>.

Laudato Si' and North American Passionists

The Passionist Solidarity Network is taking a lead role working with others in Holy Cross and St. Paul of the Cross provinces who are deeply engaged with Laudato Si' and integral ecology. These include the HCP Laudato Si' Vision Fulfillment Team, Thomas Berry Place and the Passionist Earth and Spirit Center. We are planning a North American launch event in November following the international occasion being scheduled by the dicastery. We envision a multi province celebration with commitment from provincials and mutual commissioning. The program will also include an explanation of the Action Platform for the Passionist Family, a description of the six-part Congregational program, and our vision for moving forward. This event will also launch our participation in the Congregational program Passion of the Earth, Wisdom of the Cross. As part of this effort the HCP Laudato Si' Vision Fulfillment team will be offering a series of facilitated small-group sessions for the North American Passionist Family with discussion, brainstorming and sharing experiences for at least the first year as the Congregational materials for the six sessions of Passion of the Earth, Wisdom of the Cross are released.

For those who are eager to learn more about the emerging Passionist Congregational program being promoted by Fr. Joachim, Passion of the Earth, Wisdom of the Cross, [click here](#). It includes links for Fr. Joachim Rego's

introduction to the program, the online launch from May, and links to the program materials.



As the Passionist Family deepens the appreciation of our charism and understanding of caring for God's creation and integral ecology, we have created a "webliography" and resource list, a fluid and organic document, tailored for Passionist Family, intended to be referenced by Provinces and Congregation with their Laudato Si' initiatives. Your input is encouraged as we grow this resource. [See the latest version here.](#)

As we continue to work on our 7-year Action Platform for Laudato Si' and integral ecology, we have also created a response form as a way to record both our dreaming and visioning (the world and work we hope to see) and our commitment for personal and community action to make it so. Respond to [Passion for the Earth - Our Laudato Si' Commitment and Vision](#) as often as the Spirit moves you.

Amazing Series of Programs - The Constellation Project



Weather Reports: The Climate of Now

September 20 – November 29, 2021

Online events on Monday evenings

7:00 - 8:30 pm Eastern Time



In the course of history, there comes a time when humanity is called to shift to a new level of consciousness, to reach a higher moral ground. ... A time when we have to shed our fear and give hope to each other. That time is now."---

Wangari Maathai

The Constellation Project — a collaboration between the Harvard Divinity School, the Planetary Health Alliance, and the Center for the Study of World Religions—explores the spiritual crisis that underlies the ecological and public health crises associated with destruction of Earth's natural systems. How do we share news stories about our relationship to each other and the natural world that could help set us on a different path? The Constellation Project aims to feature faith leaders bringing science into their sermons; scientists giving 'reverence for life' alongside their analyses; and scholars and students finding a place for their spiritual life.

This series is a "constellation" in partnership with the Center of the Study of World Religions, Religion & Public Life, and The Planetary Health Alliance. Brian Kirbis of

Theosophia Teas will open each conversation with Tea. Each conversation will begin at 7:00 p.m. EST and end at 8:30 p.m. virtually conducted by Terry Tempest Williams, writer-in-residence at the Harvard Divinity School.

[Event webpage](#)



As faith leaders, it's time for us to stir some things up. We've been quiet, we've been not wanting to get, as we would say, political. But it's time for us to reach out to our political leaders and stir up some things so that we can bring hope back, yes, to our communities, bring hope back for our environment." Rev. Lynn Godette, pastor of St. Paul AME Zion Church in Aurora, North Carolina



Now more than ever we need to be asking for significant investments in action on climate justice and resilience, because this is the moment for our congressional representatives to demonstrate moral leadership on climate. They need to know that as people of faith we expect them to lead on climate change," Avery Davis Lamb, co-executive director of Creation Justice Ministries

[Read more about describing this work as a political and moral imperative.](#) From Earth Beat/NCR

Passion for Justice

Truth and Healing Facing the legacy of Indian Boarding Schools

U.S. and Canadian religious orders and institutions are beginning to engage the process of facing the terrible legacy of boarding schools they operated for indigenous people in the 19th and 20th centuries.

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Jesuit Conference statement - [Read it here](#)



Unpacking Histories is a Jesuit sponsored series reflecting on the relations of Indigenous Peoples and Jesuits in what we currently call the U.S. and Canada. The series will bring together Indigenous leaders and Jesuit partners to reflect on the complex history between Jesuits and Indigenous Peoples. There is no one version of this history that is full of brokenness and beauty. .

Kick Off Thursday September 30th: 9:30amPT-1:15pmPT // 12:30pm-4:15pmET. [Register here.](#)

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Four sessions, October 14 - November

18 from Catholics for Boarding School Responsibility. A series intended for members of men's and women's religious congregations as well as associates, co-members, and lay staff. [Learn more here](#)

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Resolution from the LCWR Global Concerns Committee
Libby Comeaux, Loretto Co-member; Brenna Cussen Anglada, Catholics for Boarding School Accountability [Read their resolution to action document on Native American Boarding Schools here.](#)

Image/Sculpture, Keeper of the Plains, Wichita. Kiowa-Comanche artist Blackbear Bosin.

ADVOCACY

GOD IS ON YOUR SIDE: A STATEMENT FROM CATHOLIC BISHOPS ON PROTECTING LGBT YOUTH



Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin
Archdiocese of Newark
New Jersey



Archbishop John C. Wester
Archdiocese of Santa Fe,
New Mexico



Bishop Steven Biegler
Diocese of Cheyenne
Wyoming



Bishop John P. Dolan
Diocese of San Diego
California



Bishop Joseph R. Kopacz
Diocese of Jackson
Mississippi



Bishop Robert McElroy
Diocese of San Diego
California



Bishop Alberto Rojas
Diocese of San Bernardino
California



Bishop Oscar A. Solis
Diocese of Salt Lake City
Utah



Bishop John Stowe
Diocese of Lexington
Kentucky



Bishop Anthony B. Taylor
Diocese of Little Rock
Arkansas



Bishop Edward Weisenburger
Diocese of Tucson
Arizona



Bishop Thomas Gumbleton (Ret'd.)
Archdiocese of Detroit
Michigan



Bishop Denis Madden (Ret'd.)
Archdiocese of Baltimore,
Maryland



Bishop Ricardo Ramirez (Ret'd.)
Diocese of Las Cruces
New Mexico



The Passionist Solidarity Network has joined the Tyler Clementi Foundation and announced its support of the statement [God Is On Your Side: A Statement From Catholic Bishops On Protecting LGBT Youth.](#)

Please hold this initiative up in prayer that many hearts and minds will be changed as we work together to share God's love, hope and compassion to everyone. And please spread the word and reach out to additional bishops about the importance of having their name attached to this very momentous statement.

Passion for Solidarity

Update from Haiti from Fr. Hugo Esparza

In his latest news report from Haiti, following the assassination of the president, a 7.2 magnitude earthquake, then followed by a direct hit from tropical storm Grace, Fr. Hugo Esparza begins with a piece titled Grace and Bleakness. In the story he addresses those who have said to him that "these tragedies, which give no break to the Haitian people, are because these beautiful and people have been consecrated to Satan." But no, he says!



The life of the disciple is to plant the Kingdom, fields of justice, truth, compassion, etc. More so, we are called to sustain the grace of redemption as we face the bleakness of our sin and the power of our accuser, Satan, fully displayed before us in the fruit of the weeds of corruption, the mendacity in Haitian Politics; neo-colonization, the not-too-invisible-hand of first world powers, interventionism; the arms industry, that makes a few millions of dollars by arming our thugs and police, at the same time; and hunger, sustained by intermediaries who raise the price of the basic food the poor can afford."



We are pleased that Fr. Hugo was recently joined by Father Julián Díez González, CP (Sacred Hearth Province). Fr. Julián is from Infinillas, Northern Spain and has been a missionary in the lands of Central America for two decades: in Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Chile. With permission of his Provincial he has come to accompany and reinforce our Mission in Haiti.

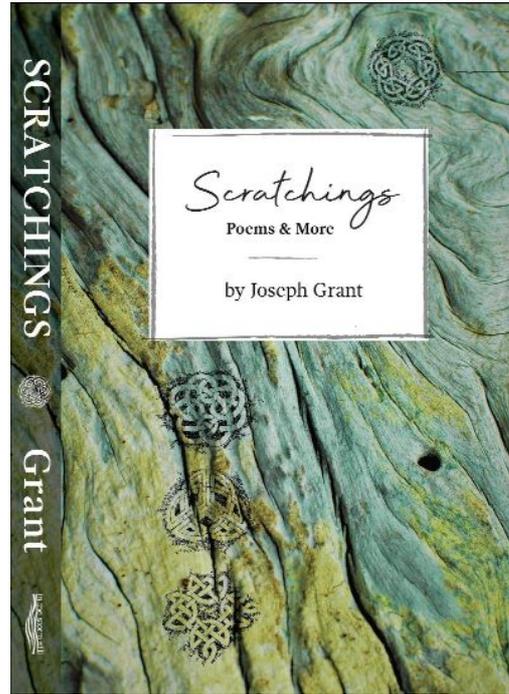
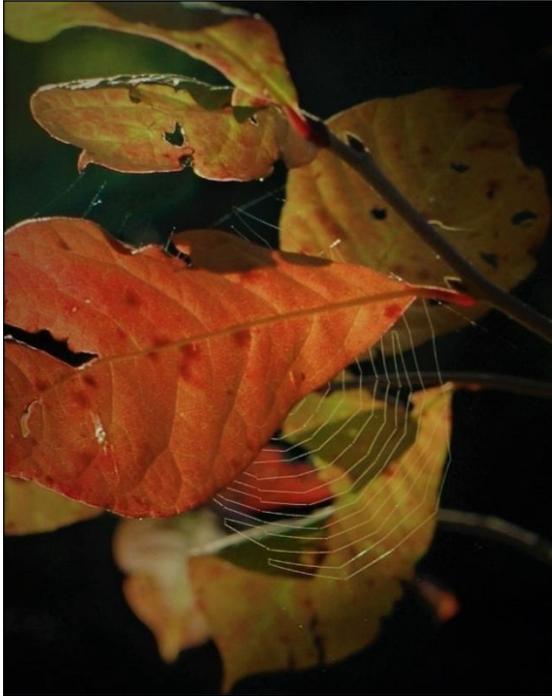
[Read Fr. Hugo's latest newsletter](#)

[here](#)

Please keep the work of the Passionists in Haiti in your prayers, and if you can, make a donation to their work through the website setup by Fr. Hugo Esparza CP. (it also includes Hugo's great podcast, Ask A Haitian I Ask a Foreigner) It is here: <https://spphaiti.com/>

Something extra- Enjoy some Scratchings!

A new book from Joe Grant



Glowing Grate

By
stories
are fireplaces
fueled.

Growing up along the northern rim, requires familiarity with lengthy, cold midwinter nights.

Hardy ancestors, like our wilder kin, made provision for this protracted season of frigid darkness, gathering together for warmth, sheltering close to the flame.

The Saxon word “hearth,” or “burning place,” in the middle of ancient dwellings, still encapsulates the warm heart and center of family and home.

Childhood remembrances “couried-in” (covered together) around a coal-fired hearth, illumine warm flashes of storytelling, glowing ruddy faces, and the casting of colossal shadows that leap and dance all over the living room.

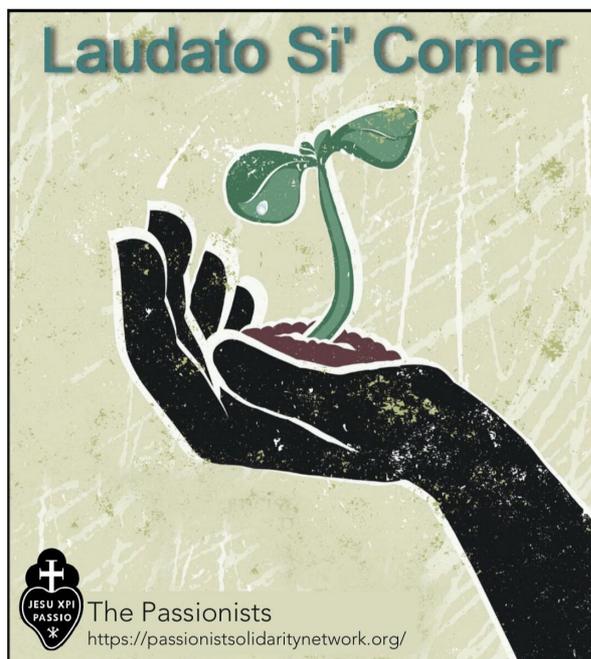
And all the while,
rattling windowpanes

conjure worried wondering
about poor souls
forced to weather
the whistling
gale.

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Image: Joe Grant

Laudato Si' Corner



In the meantime, we come together to take charge of this home which has been entrusted to us, knowing that all the good which exists here will be taken up into the heavenly feast. In union with all creatures, we journey through this land seeking God, for “if the world has a beginning and if it has been created, we must enquire who gave it this beginning, and who was its Creator”. Let us sing as we go. May our struggles and our concern for this planet never take away the joy of our hope. [244]



I do not want to write this Encyclical without turning to that attractive and compelling figure, whose name I took as my guide and inspiration when I was elected Bishop of Rome. I believe that Saint Francis is the example par excellence of care for the vulnerable and of an integral ecology lived out joyfully and authentically. He is the patron saint of all who study and work in the area of ecology, and he is also much loved by non-Christians. ...He was a mystic and a pilgrim who lived in simplicity and in wonderful harmony with God, with others, with nature and with himself. He shows us just how inseparable the bond is between concern for nature, justice for the poor, commitment to society, and interior peace. [10]

Hope and joy are among the central themes of Laudato Si'

Question: How can we reclaim the right and blessing of hope when it comes God's creation, in the face of a barrage of depressing news?

Homework and Actions:

- [Read this article by a young person](#) who refuses to give up the right to hope. and that "Hope is not a happy accident. Hope is a right we must protect."
- [Do some forest bathing](#)
- [Read "Dont Hesitate" by Mary Oliver.](#)

Linking Justice and Peace in the Lectionary



The Passionist Solidarity Network collaborates with other community justice and peace offices and we would love to see homily resources coming from the Passionist charism. Contact the [Passionist Solidarity Network](#) office if you would like to contribute.

Scripture reflections by Maryknoll missionaries starting in each new liturgical year. [Click here to subscribe.](#)

The Holy Cross Passionist website features [wonderful daily scripture reflections](#) from the Passionist Family. Three regular contributors are members of the Passionist Solidarity Network Advisory Board.

[The Catholic Climate Covenant has homily helps](#) incorporating Laudato Si' as well as weekly tip bulletin inserts (including Spanish).

New Content:

- Franciscan Action Network: Belonging Begins with Us uses [video homilies](#) from priests across the country to help find points of connection and shared experiences toward creating a more welcoming nation where everyone can belong. Catholic clergy interested in writing: [contact Jason Miller.](#)
- [Catholic Women Preach](#): Text and video are used to address some of the most pressing challenges facing the Church today. This project is a deeply faithful, hopeful and joyful initiative intended to build up the Church.
- [We are Salt and Light](#): A [lectionary index](#) assists homilists in preparing messages that surface justice and peace themes plus see [a homily help resource](#) from the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace.

Forward to a Friend

Be sure to forward this newsletter to friends who would be interested in the work of Passionist Solidarity in North America. We'll be happy to add them to our mailing list. You can update your mailing preferences for this list using the link below. Thank you!



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