May The Blessing Of Mercy

May the blessing of mercy carry us through each day.
May mercy be tattooed on our hearts and minds
to speak the truth in love
as we go about the ministry of our life.

May mercy be sown deeply in our souls,
core to our identity, who we are in mercy.
May mercy invite mercy to be the prophetic voice
in this moment of time.

May the word of God that is in our hearts
spill mercy over Earth
to light the way toward peace.

May mercy be seeded in our hearts
sown and cultivated by the work of our lives.

May we know we are the body of Christ
one mercy ... open to respond to the needs of our time.

May God use our hands
to feed the hungry, to build community,
our eyes to see the needs of others,
our ears to hear the cries that are carried in the wind
across oceans and desert lands and in our cities,
our mouths to speak tenderness and love,
to be mercy here and now.

May we bless the other in mercy
over and over and over again.

Amen.

Photo by Jennifer Hardy for CRS. In Cambodia, CRS
works with local organizations and advocacy groups to
help people access services and to strengthen government
health systems.

“May the Church be a place of God’s mercy and
hope, where all feel welcomed, loved, forgiven
and encouraged to live according to the good
life of the Gospel. And to make others feel
welcomed, loved, forgiven and encouraged, the
Church must be with doors wide open so that all
may enter. And we must go out through these
doors and proclaim the Gospel.”

— Pope Francis

Source (adapted): www.sistersofmercy.org
Pope Francis reminds young people that Jesus calls each one of us to become His missionary disciples - the path to sainthood. MISSIO, from the Pontifical Mission Societies USA, helps all children on the path of holiness, those at home and those in mission countries. Visit http://missio.org/resources.

Do You Have The "Social Justice" Gene?

Build community, deepen your spirituality, and act for justice with the IPJC Justice Cafés for Young Adults! Topics for Season 1 on Global Issues, Local Action will include Poverty Near & Far, Sharing the Journey with Migrants and Refugees, and Violent Conflict and the Need for Peace. Season 2 on Justice for Daily Life will include Spirituality for Social Justice, Overcoming Polarization, and Social Justice as a Vocation.

Contact Elizabeth Murphy for more information at emurphy@ipjc.org or 206-223-1138.

Preaching?

WeAreSaltAndLight.org is a great resource site sponsored by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. One resource is a “Preaching” page that includes homily helps for topics such as Labor Day, World Day of the Poor, care for creation, etc. Visit www.wearesaltandlight.org/act-together.

Bishops Launch New Digital Platform

Striving to enhance communications with Catholics and others in the state of Washington, the Catholic bishops have launched WACatholics.org, a new website and digital platform. “We know connecting with Catholics and others in Washington is more important than ever,” said Archbishop J. Peter Sartain. The new platform includes information on the Catholic Church’s position on a range of public policy issues, details on key programs sponsored by the bishops, and facts on the positive impact of the Catholic Church in Washington state.

**Missionary Discipleship Institute (MDI) for 7th Grade**

The Missionary Discipleship Institute (MDI) consists of three units—aligned with our Archdiocesan Religion Standards—to provide a framework for students to encounter the lives of their neighbors on the margins and the injustices that they face; reflect on how the Church responds in love and the disturbance this creates in our own sense of discipleship; and discern, develop, and carry out a missionary response. Throughout the year, students engage in a local immersion experience, research issues currently prevalent in our world, and are empowered to take hopeful Christian action.

A commitment to these three units can serve as the core 7th grade religion curriculum for the school year.

Click here to register your class for the MDI or visit https://tinyurl.com/MDI1819. Questions? Contact either Kelly Hickman (email below) or Anna Johnson (aclarke@maryknoll.org) of Maryknoll.

**Join the Corps: Catholic Relief Services Parish Ambassador Corps**

You’re invited to participate in a Catholic Relief Services initiative called the Parish Ambassador Corps (PAC). PAC is a corps of local Catholic volunteers who are passionate about global solidarity and want to take action.

CRS Ambassadors commit to helping support global solidarity efforts in their parishes by helping with Rice Bowl as well as two other initiatives over the course of the year. Learn more at www.seattlearchdiocese.org/crs or by contacting us (info below).

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Homeowners Fight To Save Their Community

The following inspirational story comes from one of our CCHD-funded organizations. With thanks to organizer, Kylin Parks.

Homeowners at Firs Mobile Home Park in SeaTac are hardworking families, parents, and retirees - many of them Latino immigrants. They are low-income workers and, for more than two years, they’ve been organizing together against a terrifying threat: the loss of their homes, life savings, and uniquely supportive community to a mass eviction. The landowner at their park seeks to displace their tightly-knit community and, eventually, to develop hotels where the mobile home park currently sits.

Just blocks from the Angle Lake Light Rail Station and across the street from the award-winning Madrona Elementary School, Firs is the perfect place for a family (as the 90 children who live there know well). Neighbors look out for and rely on one another, allowing a marginalized community to thrive. But with income inequality, housing costs, and land values soaring throughout our region, neighborhoods like Firs are increasingly vulnerable to being displaced by speculative development. Ten years ago the current landowner, who operates several local hotels, bought the property for just under $5 million. He has made no investments or improvements to the park since then - and now, it seems, seeks a greater profit than renting to low-income families can provide. But rather than playing a passive role in a tired story of gentrification and displacement, families at Firs are fighting for a more just future for their community.

Since receiving word two years ago that the park owner had decided to pursue closure and eviction, the community has organized for justice. With help from the Association of Manufactured Home Owners, they formed their own HOA and are waging a legal battle to make sure the landowner complies with the requirements to lawfully close a park. HOA members have testified at public meetings and generated media coverage, and high school students in the community even made a documentary about their experiences. So far, these strategies have worked to keep the community in place.

Through bi-weekly community meetings and partnerships with nonprofit organizations, Firs HOA members have educated themselves and their community about alternatives and next steps, and have chosen to pursue the purchase of the land beneath their homes. If successful, they will guarantee permanent affordability and community control over their neighborhood, and a future for their children free from the destabilizing threat of eviction and looming homelessness. Crucially, they’ve achieved an allocation of $2.5 million dollars in the State’s Capital Budget to go towards the purchase of the land underlying Firs… making their dreams that much closer to reality.

Through their struggle, homeowners at Firs have become an example to vulnerable communities throughout the region - and their partnership with AMHO has helped build power for low-income homeowners statewide. Recently, as the City of Kenmore debated zoning changes and policies that could protect (or fail) manufactured home owners in a rapidly-changing city, Firs HOA members joined forces with AMHO to knock on doors in Kenmore parks and encourage residents to form their own Association - and to unite as a community to fight for more just and affordable housing policies.

Catholic Campaign for Human Development Collection September 15/16

This annual collection (September 15/16 in 2018) supports the national and local effort of the U.S. Catholic Bishops. The Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD) serves to combat domestic poverty and to implement the Church’s social teachings. Donations are used for grants to low-income controlled community organizations, such as AMHO and its organizing effort at Firs in SeaTac, (information and listings at our office’s web site), and for education in our parishes and schools on Catholic social teaching. A recommended educational tool for all ages from CCHD is the resource site at www.povertyusa.org.

Read the Good News (and other items!) on our website.
Prayer to Our Lady of Guadalupe for Justice

Most merciful mother, you came to tell us of your compassion through St. Juan Diego, whom you called the littlest and dearest of your sons.

Give your strength and protection to all who live in poverty today, especially the young, elderly, and vulnerable. Plead for them to the Father, that they might experience the Divine Love tangibly in their daily lives, and that all who work for justice on behalf of the poor might grow in fortitude and humility. In these ways, manifest your charity and concern in our lives, that the weeping of humanity may be heard, and all our suffering, pain, and misfortune may be filled with divine comfort and healing.

May we always know the peace of being in the cradle of your arms, and bring us safely home to your son, Jesus. Amen.

Oración a Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe por la Justicia

Madre misericordiosa, tú viniste a contarnos de tu compasión a través de San Juan Diego, a quien tu llamaste el más pequeño y el más querido de tus hijos.

Dales tu fuerza y tu protección a todos aquellos que hoy viven en la pobreza, especialmente, a los jóvenes, a los ancianos y a los vulnerables

Implora por ellos ante el Padre para que puedan sentir el Amor Divino en forma tangible en su vida diaria y que todo aquel que trabaja por la justicia a favor de los pobres pueda crecer en fortaleza y humildad.

De estas maneras manifiesta tu caridad y tu preocupación en nuestra vida, que el llanto de la humanidad sea escuchado y que todos nuestros sufrimientos, dolores e infortunios sean colmados con la sanación y el consuelo divino.

Que siempre conozcamos la paz de estar acunados en tus brazos y que nos lleves sanos y salvos a casa de Jesús, tu Hijo. Amén.

2018 World Day of the Poor Message

Pope Francis has released his message for the 2018 World Day of the Poor, which is observed throughout the world on the 33rd Sunday of ordinary time, this year, November 18, 2018. The message reflects on Psalm 34 and is titled: “This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him.”

This year’s message affirms the work of the Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD) and Catholic Relief Services (CRS), and The Pontifical Mission Societies (TPMS) to empower and stand in solidarity with those living in poverty: “God’s answer to the poor is always a saving act that heals wounds of body and soul, restores justice and helps to live life anew in dignity. God’s answer is also a summons to those who believe in him to do likewise” (no. 3).

Stay tuned (next newsletter and on our website) for a pastoral aid, including a homily help and Prayers of the Faithful, for use on the World Day of the Poor.

The Missioner’s Prayer

May we be prophets proclaiming the Reign of God in all things. May we be mystics experiencing a real sense of at-one-ness with God; With all humanity and all of creation.

Mission is to go to a no-place, serve God’s nobodies and (in the eyes of the world) accomplish no-thing.

In this way we realize we are at the center of what time, meaning and history are all about.

O God, give us the courage to dream new dreams, think new thoughts and go forward into the future with the Spirit.

O God, fill us with the joy of the Gospel and may we pass it on to others, pressed down, flowing over, full measure, above and beyond.

Amen.

By John J. Walsh, MM
New Life In Malawi: Farmers Overcoming Climate Change

by Jennifer Ibach

As part of the Catholic Relief Services (CRS) Parish Ambassador Corps, Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish’s Pastoral Assistant for Outreach, Jennifer Ibach, traveled with CRS this July to gain a deeper understanding of CRS’ work overseas and to enhance global solidarity here in western Washington.

As we enter the Season of Creation, my mind turns to Earth and the continuing effects of climate change. In July, I traveled with Catholic Relief Services to Malawi where farmers repeatedly told us of the climate change impacts in their communities. They told us the rains used to reliably come from October to April but now they are inconsistent and sometimes don’t appear until December. They spoke of droughts, floods, food insecurity and malnutrition among their children. But they also spoke of positive changes. Through a comprehensive CRS program, the villagers were learning new techniques to weather the effects of climate change, increase agricultural production and access to markets, and feed their children.

We met a group that had constructed a watershed above their village. A barren hillside once stripped for charcoal had been transformed into an oasis of fruit trees and ground cover. Where heavy rains used to rush down the hill and flood the village, there were now staggered stone walls constructed by the villagers, who in turn received food rations for their work. The walls slowly filtered the water down the hill and allowed the soil to retain moisture for the generation of new vegetation. The people told us of animals returning to the forest and new trees they had planted from the seeds of the old ones. They were also learning irrigation, intercropping and pest-control methods to increase resiliency in their variable climate. It was amazing to witness the new life this program provided both for the earth and the people. As one CRS participant named Maria told us, “I have learned new technologies that I can use on my own farm. I have been able to increase my crop and buy clothes for my kids. I now know how to cook nutritious food using locally grown food. This has improved nutrition for my little children.”

This CRS program is funded by the Farm Bill, which is soon up for a vote in the House and Senate. You can ensure programs like it continue by raising your voice at Catholics Confront Global Poverty: www.confrontglobalpoverty.org (See “Nourish the Change” and “Help People Facing Climate Change”)

CATHOLICS ARE STILL IN

The Catholic Climate Covenant has developed a “Catholics are Still In” Declaration in solidarity with the We Are Still In campaign, a U.S. civil society response to the Administration’s announced U.S. withdrawal from the Paris Agreement. Individuals and institutions can sign on in order to express the U.S. Catholic community’s commitment to pray for, and act towards a thriving future with our family and the gift of God’s creation.

Our “thank you” to the following communities for signing on to Catholic Climate Covenant’s U.S. Catholic Climate Declaration.

How about your community? See www.catholicclimatecovenant.org

Assumption, Seattle
Benedictine Sisters, St. Placid Priory
Intercommunity Peace and Justice Center
PeaceHealth, Vancouver
Providence Saint Joseph Health, Renton
Sacred Heart/St. Ann, St. John of the Woods, Tacoma
Seattle University
Secular Franciscan Order - Troubadours of Peace Region, Olympia
Sisters of Saint Dominic of Tacoma
Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary
St. James Cathedral, Seattle
St. Patrick, Seattle

A New Solidarity with Creation
Catholics Acting on Laudato Si’

Season of Creation Sept. 1 – Oct. 4

From September 1 to October 4, Christians around the world unite to pray and care for creation. In this archdiocese, there will be a Care for Creation Mass held at St. James Cathedral on Saturday, September 22, 2018 at 10:30am.

For additional information on other parish celebrations and more, visit http://www.ipjc.org/programs/a-new-solidarity-with-creation.
“Share The Journey” – And A Meal

Our neighbors live across the street and the country, across oceans and hemispheres. As millions of God’s children flee war, persecution and poverty, Pope Francis, Catholic Relief Services, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, and Catholic Charities USA invite you to share their journey by walking with them in prayer and support.

September marks the one-year anniversary of Share the Journey, the global – and local – campaign. Catholic Relief Services, Catholic Charities USA, and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops continue to provide resources for parishes, schools and households (English and Spanish).

All are invited this Fall to consider “Encounter Meals” – an anniversary idea being kicked off by Pope Francis in late September. Resources for this idea will be available at www.sharejourney.org.

Our office continues to be a local contact for the length of this campaign (into late 2019). Contact us (page 2) for resources and support in your community’s participation in this campaign.