



“Just Us”

News & Notes from Sisters of St. Joseph
Justice & Peace Office
150 French Road, Rochester, NY 14618

No.446 April 12, 2021

1

ptierney@ssjrochester.org

(585) 641-8180

Earth Day is April 22



Many websites have resources to use in Preparation for Earth Day

Plastic Pollution

<https://www.unep.org/interactive/beat-plastic-pollution/>

This is a visual presentation of our growing accumulation of plastic waste that is overwhelming our earth.

The same properties that make plastics so useful — their durability and resistance to degradation — also make them nearly impossible for nature to completely break down. Most plastic items never fully disappear; they just get smaller and smaller. Many of these tiny plastic particles are swallowed by farm animals or fish who mistake them for food, and thus can find their way onto our dinner plates. They've also been found in a majority of the world's tap water. By clogging sewers and providing breeding grounds for mosquitoes and pests, plastic waste — especially plastic bags — can increase the transmission of vector-borne diseases like malaria.

If current trends continue, our oceans could contain **more plastic than fish** by 2050. The global volume of plastic waste continues to grow, and **some of the biggest producers don't manage their waste** effectively.

New York State Legislation Update

Excluded Worker Fund is Included in NYS Budget!

Message from NYS Worker Justice Center of Central NY:

New York lawmakers reached an agreement on the state budget that includes the first Excluded Worker Fund in the nation to provide such substantial relief to those excluded from federal and state income support since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. The program will include retroactive monthly benefits and eligibility for workers in the informal economy. This is a monumental win that will directly benefit hundreds of thousands of immigrant New Yorkers... Our victory comes after months of intensive organizing and advocacy in coalition with over 200 other organizations across the state, with tremendous leadership from directly impacted communities. We are especially humbled by the courage and sacrifice of the workers and allies who sustained a 22-day hunger strike through the final weeks of this campaign--despite formidable opposition fueled by anti-immigrant bias and misinformation.

HALT Solitary bill becomes law!

Thank you for advocating for reform of solitary confinement in NYS. The bill was passed by the legislature and signed by the governor!

“For generations far too many men, women, and even teens have been left to suffer for months and years in solitary confinement, an experience that amounts to torture. The extreme isolation only serves to exacerbate the root causes that lead to prison disciplinary issues to begin with, such as anger, anti-social behavior, or mental illness, putting public safety at further risk when incarcerated individuals are released back into society, sometimes directly from a solitary confinement cell.”

- Statement from the NYS Catholic Conference

Earth Day Opportunities

The U. S Federation of Sisters of St. Joseph is Partnering with Rise St. James in St. James, Louisiana to protest the Formosa Plastic Plant being built which will continue the water pollution in the area and destroying the lives of the people.

The Federation asks us: [read our interview](#) with Sharon Lavigne, founder of **Rise St. James**. Read more about how she got started in her work and all about St. James Parish, the center of Cancer Alley and the fight against building Formosa Plastics plant.

Next, you can [register](#) for Sharon's Earth Day presentation on **Thursday, April 22 at 12 pm ET/11 am CT/10 am MT/9 am PT. This event is free and open to the public.**

21 Day Environmental Challenge

The Ignatian Solidarity Network, Jesuit Conference of the US and Canada, Catholic Climate Covenant, Global Catholic Climate Movement and the Sisters of Mercy are sponsoring a 21-day environmental justice challenge April 23-May 16. Each day will focus on a particular topic with educational resource, prayer resource and call to action. Topics include solidarity with the resisters of Oak Flat and Line 3, the disproportionate harms of air and water pollution on Black and brown communities, heat disparities with climate change, environmental racism and factory farms, and the efforts of water protectors in Honduras and land defenders in the Amazon rainforest and Boreal forest in Canada.

You may learn more and register [here](#) . And please share widely with your networks.
<https://ignatiansolidarity.net/21-day-catholic-enviro-justice-challenge/>

SSJ Website www.ssjrochester.org/
and links to **Facebook!**

Find us on Facebook: [facebook.com/SistersofSaintJosephofRochester](https://www.facebook.com/SistersofSaintJosephofRochester)
(CTRL & Click)

Brazil link: Copy & Paste:
<http://www.isjrochester.com.br>



Immigration Issues –What is Happening in Central America?

Notice: Join Catholic Relief Services' Virtual Presentation: *Central America and Migration: Addressing Push Factors and Promoting Rootedness*, this Thursday, April 15, 2021 at 3 PM ET. As the Biden administration develops a strategy to confront the instability, violence, and economic insecurity that drive migrants from Central America, there are opportunities to learn from past, and ongoing development initiatives, that address push factors and promote opportunities and desire to live and thrive in one's home community. Join policy experts in this discussion to learn more.

[RSVP required.](#)

More information and Donation Opportunities Here:

Update on the Southern Border and Unaccompanied Children

Unaccompanied children continue to arrive at the U.S.-Mexico border in large numbers. Coordinating with the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Department of Health and Human Services has opened emergency intake sites in several cities around the country in order to move children out of the custody of U.S. Customs and Border Protection as quickly as possible. The government is continuing to evaluate new sites. For more updates on the situation at the southern border, related policies, and unaccompanied children, please see our [briefing document](#).

Donations to Organizations working at the Border are badly needed! Here are a few possibilities.

[Catholic Charities of the Rio Grande Valley](#) (also has an Amazon Wish List)
[Annunciation House of El Paso](#)

[Kino Border Institute](#)

Look up their work on their websites.