

Please consider saving paper,  
ink and the environment —  
print only if necessary.

Thanks



### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

letter from Sr. Ceil	1
Laudato Si	1
Assembly Directives	1
Death Penalty	2
Paris Accord	3
Great Lakes Water	3
Transitions	3
Refugee Resettlement	4
Is Your Water Safe?	4

### ASSEMBLY DIRECTIVES

#### we will ...

- Continue to articulate and integrate our Spirituality in our sharing among ourselves and with others.
- Increase our use of social media to promote Precious Blood Spirituality.
- Stand with the marginalized, make a collective commitment to promote and witness nonviolence, and strive to effect reconciliation among God's people.
- Act responsibly in the use and care of our planet's resources.
- Network with other individuals, agencies, and groups to be effective in our current reality.

## Stories from around our CPPS world

Dear Sisters,  
On December 8th, you received the first Grassroots Newsletter describing a new approach to share our efforts in the area of Peace and Justice and Care of Creation. Since I continue in the role of coordinator, I wanted to get a feel where Sisters might want to put our efforts for the next four years. I asked seven sisters (see first Grassroots Newsletter for names) to brainstorm together on how they wanted to do this. After some extensive discussion, the group decided to focus our efforts on the six Directives of the Assembly.

A further decision was made to do a monthly newsletter called "Grassroots Sharing" containing what Sisters and/or clusters are doing to put the Assem-

bly Directives into action. Our united efforts will encourage, give ideas of what can be done and perhaps help motivate all of us in some way.

I know many of your clusters are discussing Pope Francis's encyclical "Laudato Si." If your cluster has come up with some specific action, I encourage you to share it with the rest of the Sisters. It doesn't have to be big things. Every action is worthwhile and keeps us mindful of being united with our brothers and sisters.

-Sr. Ceil Taphorn

### Laudato Si'

#### Do you know ?

On June 18, 2015, Pope Francis released his encyclical on the environment. He based his position on the work of the

Pontifical Academy of Sciences, composed of 80 respected scientists from 36 countries with 48 Nobel Prizes to their credit. The Academy held a series of conferences on global warming and issued a final report which concluded "human-induced climate change is a scientific reality." The pope does not claim that the church has the power to decide disputed scientific questions, but his dialogue with climate experts convinced him that there is "a very solid consensus" on "disturbing warming of the climatic system." This encyclical is an ecological spirituality drawn from the Bible, inspired by St. Francis of Assisi, and grounded in solid theology.

Many clusters are presently studying it, having discussions, sharing reflections and insights. What are you doing to save and protect our common home?

- edited By Marty Bertke from  
newsletter of Fr. J. Bacik



## Abolition of the Death Penalty

Pope Francis called for **abolishing the death penalty worldwide**, lifting the burden of debt on poor nations, global aid policies that respect life and revamped laws that welcome and integrate migrants. He urged individuals, communities, and nations . . . “to improve the world around us, beginning with our families, neighbors and places of employment.” The Pope’s multi-faceted pleas came in his message for World Peace Day, Jan. 1, 2016.

In 1999 we, Sisters of the Precious Blood took a corporate stand for the

abolition of the Death Penalty. We stated that we “publicly condemn the use of capital punishment in the United States and in the World. We believe the use of capital punishment is responding to violence with violence and perpetuates the cycle of death.”

### Today the Death Penalty declines

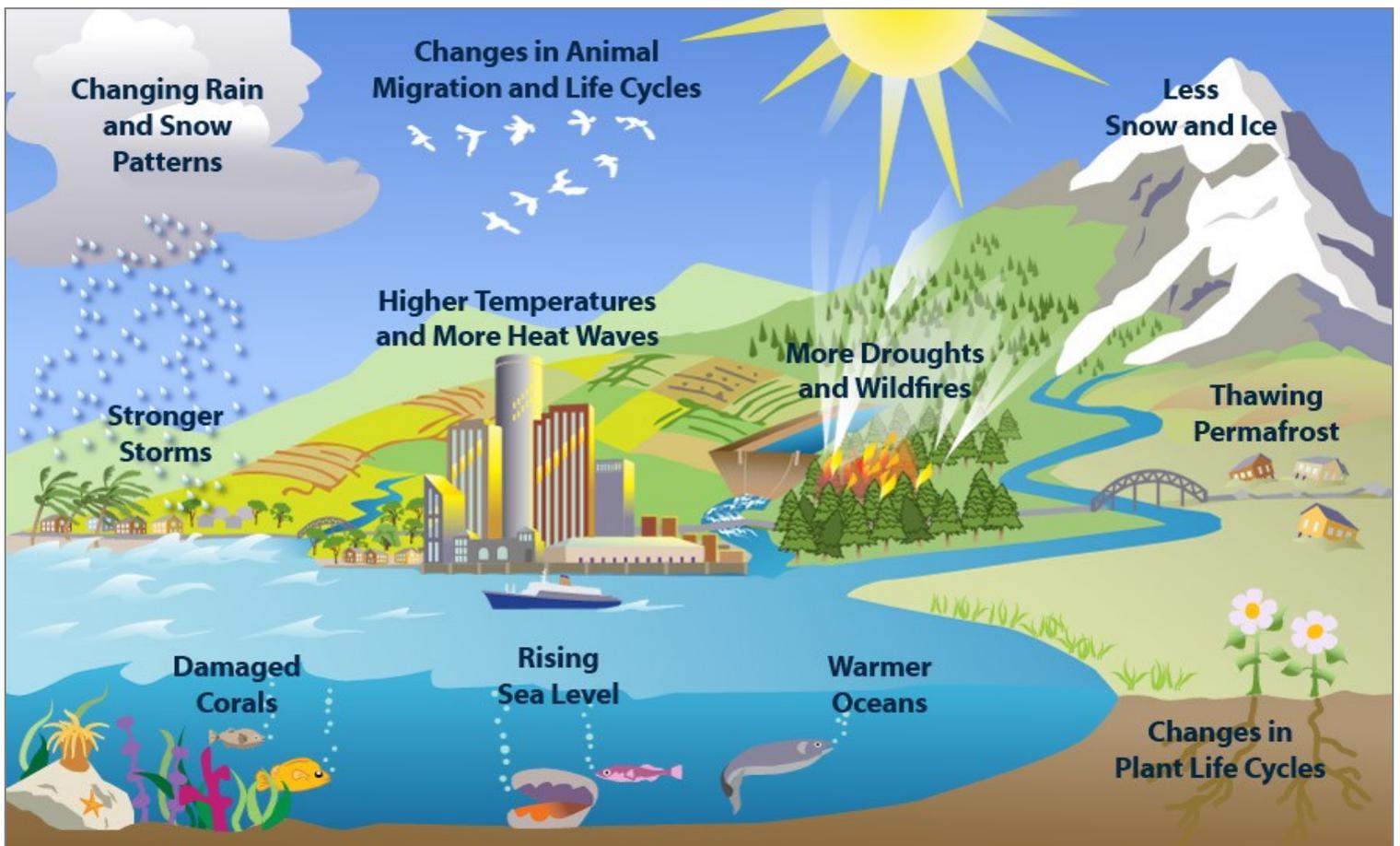
By every measure – public opinion, death sentences, and executions – the death penalty declined in 2015, according to a [report](#) released Dec. 16, 2015 by the Death Penalty Information Center (DPIC). Ohio imposed only one new death sentence this year, down from three in 2014 and an average of 4.4 new death

sentences annually over the past five years. Nationwide, there were 49 new death sentences in 2015, a 33% decline over last year’s total.

Only 6 states carried out executions this year, and the 28 total executions in the U.S. marked the lowest number since 1991. Ohio was among the 44 states that did not conduct any executions, reflecting the increasing geographic isolation of the death penalty.

“Once again, Ohio is central to a national trend,” said Kevin Werner, executive director of [Ohioans to Stop Executions](#). “We know that more Ohioans prefer life without parole instead of the death penalty when pollsters give that option.”

—Marty Bertke



## Paris Accord

The Paris Agreement is the new international accord on how to deal with climate change.

Agreed to in Paris on Dec. 12 by 195 nations, the Paris Agreement elaborates, in 31 pages several major goals and ways to achieve them. See (<http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2015/cop21/eng/loq.pdf>). After working for nine years, nearly every country commits to lowering planet-warming greenhouse emissions to stave off the most drastic effects of climate change. Read more:

<http://>

[www.cnn.com/2015/12/12world/global-climate-change-conference-vote/](http://www.cnn.com/2015/12/12/world/global-climate-change-conference-vote/)

<http://ncronline.org/blogs/distintly-catholic/climate-change-realism-paris>

—Mary Wendeln

## A New Grassroots group promotes quality of water and land

I have found a national award-winning conservation group in our Great Lakes area, the Stewardship Network <https://www.stewardshipnetwork.org/>. We care for water and land, and work to mobilize people and many organizations. We champion community based collaborative conservation utilizing talents of experts, local communities, and ordinary people in a unique model. We also rely on our local Native Americans for leadership in honoring our land and water. Our Vision is to empower and connect communities to care for land and water.

On January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016, I presented a basic mycology workshop, “The Fungus Amongst Us; The Big Picture of the Fungi Kingdom” at their 10<sup>th</sup> annual conference at the Kellogg Center

in East Lansing, MI. Last year I presented a poster session featuring the work of High School students in mycology projects supported by the Michigan Mushroom Hunters Club. Go to this link <https://www.stewardshipnetwork.org/2016-stewardship-network-conference> to read about the various programs and presentations featured at our conference and the amazing variety of speakers eager to promote water and land quality.

Please pray for this group in our Great Lakes and tell your friends and family the good news about this Grass Roots style coordinating agency. Perhaps some might like to join. We hope to grow and further unite local individual, organization, and agency efforts for clean water and land that supports life.

- Marie Kopin

## TRANSITIONS

How does one learn to take responsibility for ones actions? This is one the most difficult issues to deal with in a program geared to provide transitional housing for those in recovery or have been incarcerated. Fortunately, a few courageous women and men have taken that leap of faith to learn new values to live by. They are taking responsibility not only for their actions but for the future of their lives and families. Please pray for those of us who do work with this group of people that we may be models for them as they find their way back into society. Pray for businesses who will risk hiring and giving these folks another chance.

—Judy Niday



## Program for Refugee Resettlement

Thanks to the **Weavers Cluster** who took the initiative to plan and execute this program held at Salem Heights, Saturday, Jan. 9<sup>th</sup>. All were welcome to attend.

After an opening prayer, three individuals gave a faith response to refugees from their perspective; namely, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Basically they all said we need to welcome the stranger and to love our neighbor. Each person is created by God.

The main speaker, **Michael Murphy**, program manager of Refugee Resettlement from the Catholic Social Services of Miami Valley (CSSMV) gave a wonderful presentation and very helpful information regarding the work involved in assisting people who come to Dayton to resettle. He and

his staff work diligently to care for and assist refugees to obtain a place to live, acquire food, learn a language, gain employment, etc. Next, two individuals, a man and a woman, who have resettled in Dayton, spoke of their experiences in order to give the participants some insights into what refugees typically face. For more information go to:

[www.cssmv@cssmv.org](mailto:www.cssmv@cssmv.org)

Or, you can read the article, "**Refugee Rights**, Who is responsible for people forced into flight? By David Hollenbach in America Magazine, Jan. 4-11, 2016

- Marty Bertke

- photo: Dave Eck



Esperance Gikundiro a refugee from the Congo speaks of the violence she saw in her home country before relocating to Dayton.

### Notes about Water Quality in a Michigan City



Water quality is essential to our lives. We need it for our bodies, our homes, and our businesses. In Flint, Michigan, there is a crisis attracting national attention. Hopefully, we can all learn from their story. (As given to me by high school classmates in Flint) residents were challenged by the Detroit Water Company when the city connected to them while awaiting development of a new water source originating from Lake Huron. Soon, the price of water for residents and businesses rose again, then again and again. My classmates called it price gauging. Finally the city manager decided to reconnect to the old Flint Water Works system to save money.

That's when different chemicals were used to purify the Flint River water and the water pipes feeding the city began to corrode and leak lead. Go to [http://www.michigan.gov/deq/0,4561,7-135-3313\\_3675\\_73946---,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/deq/0,4561,7-135-3313_3675_73946---,00.html) for Michigan's list of helps when your drinking water has been poisoned with lead. You can also read about what Michigan Gov-

ernor Snyder is saying and then go to [http://www.michigan.gov/deq/0,4561,7-135-3313\\_3675\\_73946\\_73999---,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/deq/0,4561,7-135-3313_3675_73946_73999---,00.html) for an archival listing of happenings and plans to correct this problem of lead which now requires replacement of most all the city's water pipes.

Please keep this situation in prayer, especially the school children whose drinking water was not purified even when some politicians knew it contained lead. This problem has been very costly in many ways, to the children, residents, and even to state-wide taxpayers whose tax monies will be needed to help support replacement of the pipes and use of special water filters. Hopefully other city water systems can learn from this and continue to provide safe drinking water. Please let your local municipalities know your feelings, and promote assistance to the people of Flint, Michigan.

- Marie Kopin

\*\*As of going to print, Flint citizens are being given filters & free safe drinking water while the problem is being dealt with

Articles (125 words or less) for our next issue **Grassroots** is due **Feb. 1** so we can meet our goal of **having it in your hands by 2/8/2016**. Please submit to

Marty Bertke [m.bertke@hometowncable.net](mailto:m.bertke@hometowncable.net)

or to Mary Lou Schmersal [cppsnews@bright.net](mailto:cppsnews@bright.net)

**Your contributions make all the difference!**

We're on the Web!

[cppsdayton.org](http://cppsdayton.org)