



# JUST Love

MARCH 2018



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE OFFICE OF PEACE, JUSTICE AND  
ECOLOGICAL INTEGRITY OF THE SISTERS OF CHARITY OF SAINT ELIZABETH

“Day Zero- Cape Town” sounds like the name of a horror movie – as well it should. It refers to the day, anticipated in June 2018, when the water reserves will be so low that water taps in homes and public buildings will be shut off in Cape Town, South Africa. Cape Town is a city of around 4 million people, about the size of the population of Manhattan and Brooklyn combined. When day zero arrives, people will have to queue up at water distribution centers to receive the allotment of 13 gallons of water per person per day. If you imagine 13 gallon jugs of water on your kitchen floor, it seems like a lot. But in reality, it’s only one fifth of the water consumed by the average American a day.

The water crisis in Cape Town developed rapidly. Three years ago, municipal reservoirs were full. But two years of drought have strained them to the crisis point. For generations the annual winter rainy season has been enough to fill the city’s reservoirs. But climate instability brought on by global warming has caused several years of drought in a row. Cape Town residents have already been practicing water conservation



methods that have mitigated the crisis – two minute showers, using shower and dish water to flush toilets, washing clothes by hand instead of machines.

The critical situation in Cape Town is a tragic daily reality for large portions of the world’s peoples. 1 in 9 people lack access to safe water. 1 in 3 people lack access to a toilet. A survey conducted by UNICEF

in 45 developing countries reveals that in almost 66% of the households without a source of drinking water on their premises, the women and girls end up with the responsibility of collect water. The average distance that women in Africa and Asia walk to collect water is 6 kilometers. Girls who spend most of their day in water collection do not go to school and are deprived of the opportunity for advancement.

The situation in Cape Town will soon be replicated in many major population centers in the world. Scientists estimate that 11 cities currently have conditions that precipitated the Cape Town water crisis: São Paulo, Bangalore, Beijing, Cairo, Jakarta, Moscow, Istanbul, Mexico City, London, Tokyo, and Miami.



institutions is at an all time high. Even in the best of times, rarely do more than half of potential voters actually vote – a very minimal level of participation in democratic structures. Whatever the state of our

We’ve all heard people say, or perhaps said ourselves, “Why bother? Nothing ever changes.” Cynicism about political

political institutions is, we still hold tremendous power for change...in our wallets. We complain at the influence that corporate donations have over politicians. But do we use our purchasing power to bring about a world in accord with our deepest values? Do we purchase for peace, justice, life?

Check out the **Ethical Consumer** website. Ethical Consumer's primary goal is making global businesses more sustainable through consumer pressure. <http://www.ethicalconsumer.org/>

Download the **Buycott** app which enables you to participate in just consumption campaigns all over the world. <http://www.buycott.com/>



**Release the power of your dollar!**

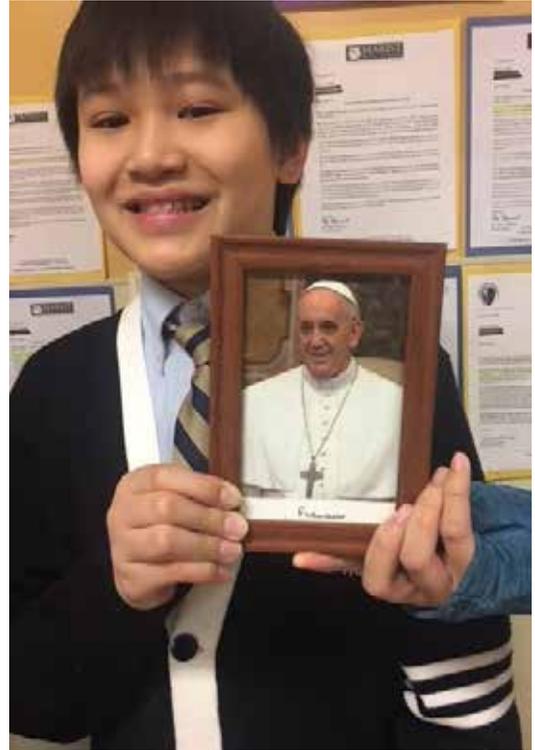
## LAUDATO SI'...INSPIRES

Saint Joseph Elementary School in Jersey City is a Peaceable School where we strive for peace with God, Earth, ourselves, and one another. Fortunately, a Sister of Charity Ministry Grant in 2017 afforded us the opportunity to focus on the cleaning and the greening of our Earth during school year 2017 - 2018.

At the start of the school year, around the opening of the Season of Creation I thought that the time is right for my 7th & 8th grade religion classes to unfold and review the fundamental tenets of *Laudato Si'*. For the next few weeks we researched and discussed ways to care for our common home. The students' eyes were opened as they realized that the small changes we have been making over the years at Saint Joseph were part of a much bigger sustainability picture. Pope Francis has challenged all people of good will, (including middle schoolers) to act on behalf of our beautiful, beleaguered planet.

In mid- October, one of the students suggested that we write letters to the Pope to express our appreciation for his leadership and to share with him our personal, local, green efforts. Months passed. . .written response and picture finally arrived. . .*Laudato Si'* continues to inspire us.

Sister Mary Anne Rattigan, SC  
Peace Education, Saint Joseph School



Jose Santiago holds the photo  
Pope Francis sent them.

**Here are some steps  
you can take to address  
the critical scarcity of  
water...**

💧 Spend some time in prayer with water every day. Drink a glass of water with the same reverence as the Eucharist. We need to change our imagination about water – from an ever present commodity to a sacred and scarce source of Life.

💧 Instead of letting the water pour down the drain, stick a bucket under the faucet while you wait for your shower water to heat up. You can use the water for flushing the toilet or watering your plants.



💧 If there is ice left over from a drink, don't throw the cubes away. Use them to water plants.

💧 Toilets are major sources of water use. As the saying goes – when it's yellow, let it mellow. Is it really necessary to flush after each use?

💧 Only wash full loads of laundry – a full load uses less water and energy than two half loads.

💧 Eat less meat. Beef production is very water intensive.

Check out this site for many more ways to conserve water  
<https://wateruseitwisely.com/100-ways-to-conserve/>

### JUSTICE, PEACE, AND INTEGRITY OF CREATION DATES IN MARCH

Continue to use our Lenten Calendar for commemorations in March  
[http://www.scnj.org/images/justicepeace/LENT\\_Calendar\\_2018.pdf](http://www.scnj.org/images/justicepeace/LENT_Calendar_2018.pdf)