

PAX CHRISTI AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

KIA TAU TE RANGIMARIE KI A TAATOU KATOA / WORKING FOR PEACE FOR ALL EVERYWHERE



This month's news...

Climate Change
in New Zealand

NZ too slow in face of
Climate Warning.

Ways to care for
the
Environment.

Harmful Subsidies

Pax Christi Australia
Conference
Summary

Tēnā koutou katoa

Our attention recently has been focused on Covid, in particular the ever increasing number of Omicron cases in New Zealand. Then we had the shocking news of Putin's invasion of Ukraine and the subsequent heartrending destruction, deaths and flight of countless refugees.

So the burning issue of climate change, Pax Christi's focus this year, has taken a back seat. However, the spotlight has been recently, disturbingly, centred on climate change with the latest IPCC report that warns of "cascading and compounding" climate impacts ahead. We are also told that New Zealand's adaptation efforts are moving too slowly.

Thus our main focus in this newsletter is climate change with an article outlining the New Zealand government's climate policy and also the challenge of the Lawyers for Climate Action NZ Inc. As to what we personally can do about it, the Laudato Si movement provides us with 52 ways to care for our planet and we have chosen 10 for us all to consider.

Also included in this newsletter are other issues of importance. There is an article from the Guardian newspaper on how subsidies are damaging the climate and wildlife and a report from the Australian Pax Christi conference focussing on Australia's security. Lastly, since it was the Feast Day of St. Josephine Bakhita, patron saint of human trafficking survivors on February 8, there is an account of her life and a focus on human trafficking, still a scourge in our day.

Helen Doherty

CLIMATE CHANGE IN NEW ZEALAND

COP26 still not here but closer than we were.

These are some of the comments made by James Shaw, Minister of Climate Change, after COP26 in Glasgow last November.

“you may well be reading this thinking COP 26 should have resulted in a stronger outcome. I agree, but a lot was achieved. For a start, COP has got us, just about, closer to a 1.5 degree world.”

“For the first time ever, countries agreed to take action on fossil fuels.”

“one of the biggest disappointments was the failure to get enough climate aid over the line to support lower income countries.”

“Our focus is very much on our Pacific neighbours, many of whom are among those first and worst hit by the climate crisis....We owe them our support in whatever way we can provide it.”

About New Zealand’s climate change programme

Cabinet has agreed a framework for the whole of Government, which will drive our climate change policy towards low greenhouse gas emissions and climate resilience in New Zealand.

The framework supports New Zealand’s commitments under the Paris Agreement, including our target of reducing emissions by 30 per cent below 2005 gross emissions (or 11 per cent below 1990 emissions) for the period 2021-2030. It also recognises that we need to adapt to climate change impacts to address the changes we are already seeing and will continue to encounter (even with a global reduction in future emissions). Guided by the framework, the Government’s programme of work and initiatives will help us reduce our emissions and adapt to the effects of climate change.

Climate Change Commission on trial

The Climate Change Commission was set up to advise the New Zealand government on climate change policy. Lawyers for Climate Action NZ Inc (LCANZI) have taken the climate Change Commission to court on the grounds that the Commission has made erroneous calculations regarding emissions reduction. “This has the impact of masking Aotearoa New Zealand’s continued poor performance by making historic emissions look higher than they actually were and projected emissions this decade look lower than they actually will be.”

A judgement will be issued in the coming weeks..



Caring for Planet, Caring for People – let's live sustainably!

by Martin De Jong, Caritas New Zealand

The latest IPCC report on climate change highlights – once again – the urgent need to cut carbon emissions rapidly and adapt to long-term climatic change already underway. We all have a role to play. In this light, the Vatican is encouraging all sectors of the Church to embark on a 7-year journey towards living sustainably in the spirit of *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis' letter on integral ecology.

The Vatican Dicastery for Integral Human Development has launched the *Laudato Si' Action Platform* with guidelines, tools and inspiration to help the Church on this journey. As families and individuals, parishes, schools, religious communities and organisations, we are encouraged to reflect on our ecological impact and, each year, complete a self-assessment, share a reflection, and develop a *Laudato Si'* Plan by 1 September. Caritas has additional tips and links to help from Aotearoa New Zealand.

Seabed mining

Meanwhile, some companies and governments are touting seabed mining as necessary to provide mineral resources needed for renewable technology in the 'green transition'. The International Seabed Authority, responsible for governing the seafloor in international waters, is under pressure to finalise rules for international seabed mining within the next 18 months.

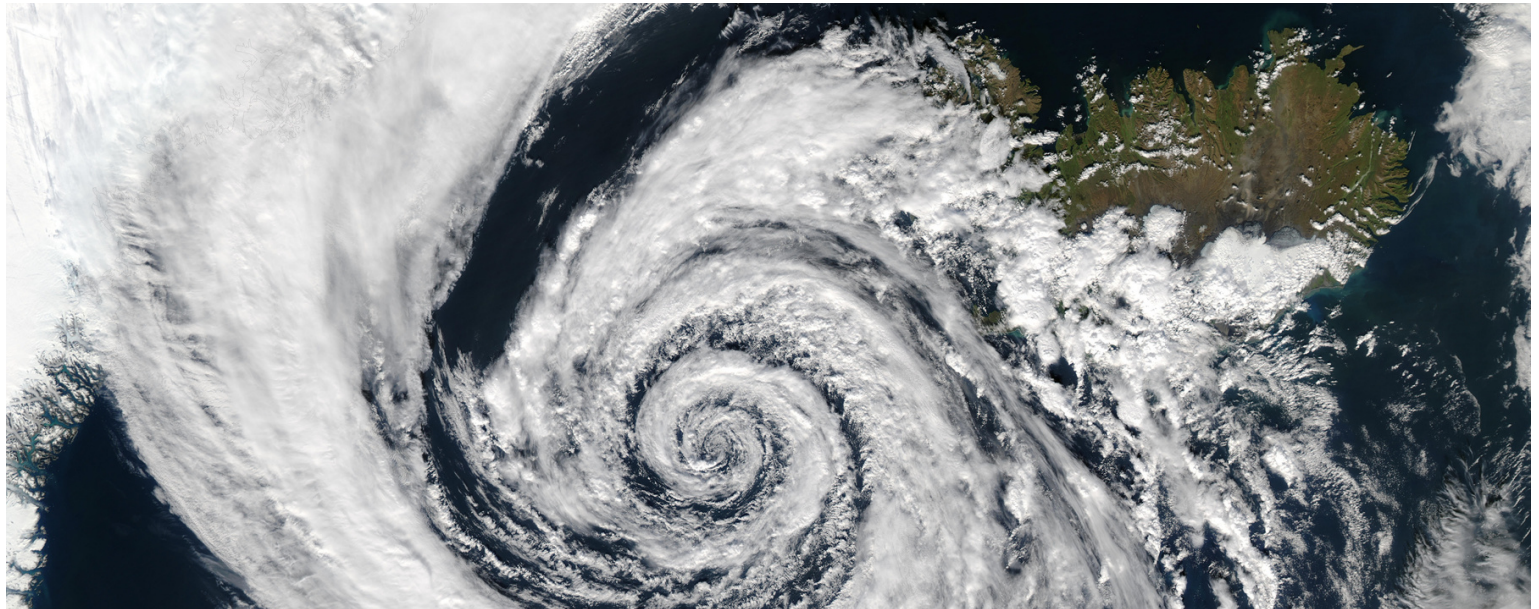
However, seabed mining will destroy marine life and ecosystems where it operates, and potentially cause harm over a much wider area. Ocean health is already threatened by overfishing, pollution, and the climate emergency. We don't need seabed mining. It is not wanted, and has not been fully consented to by coastal and ocean-reliant communities across the Pacific. We can do more to reduce consumer demand and recycle existing minerals, while technologies for renewable energy are rapidly changing.

The Caritas network in Oceania wants seabed mining banned. Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand is promoting two online petitions calling for a ban in New Zealand and globally. Each will be closing off soon. Please visit us online to read more and sign the petitions.

Find out more about caring for our common home at:
<https://www.caritas.org.nz/environmental-care>

‘NZ ‘too slow’ in face of Climate Warning.’

Headline in the New Zealand Herald Tuesday March 1, 2022.



The latest report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) warns that some severe impacts could become irreversible if warming even temporarily passes the 1.5C mark.

By 2100 the proportion of the world's population exposed to deadly heat stress was projected to climb from 30 per cent today to somewhere between 48 and 76 per cent.

As many as 3 billion people could experience chronic water scarcity from drought if warming reached 2degreesC, with grim consequences for food production and eco-systems.

New Zealand could expect much more of what climate change has already brought us: more hot days, fewer cold days, melting glaciers, heavier deluges and gradually acidifying oceans.

The report is very frank about the fact that those most affected are going to be the poorest and most vulnerable including the elderly, children and the disabled.

A 2020 government risk assessment found 675,500 Kiwis lived in areas already prone to flooding, with a further 72,065 potentially vulnerable to some of the most dramatic effects of sea level rise in the future.

New Zealand needs to “step up” action through better governance arrangements and investing in smarter adaptation. The Government is still to release its long-awaited national adaptation plan. Work on its new Climate Change Adaptation Act has been delayed by Covid-19.

Having more people exposed and vulnerable to climate impacts would create a “huge cost” for future generations, said one of the report's authors, Dr. Judy Lawrence of Victorian University of Wellington.

Climate Change Minister agreed; a “huge step change” in our approach to climate adaptation was needed. He continued, “The next 10 years is make or break for the planet and the severity with which we will experience climate change will be lessened if we do all we can to limit warming.”

James Shaw said that New Zealand's first Emissions Reduction Plan will soon be released. It will outline the changes we need to make across every sector to lower emissions and limit catastrophic warming.

WAYS TO CARE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT...

from *Laudato Si*.

The *Laudato Si* movement (formerly GCCM) has suggested 52 ways to care for the environment. Here are some that we can consider:

Shop at your local market for fresh food

If you buy fresh, seasonal food, you can eat healthier and avoid additives and storage in large refrigerators. If you buy local food, you can avoid costly and polluting transportation and packaging, and you will also help support your local community.

Save paper

Take care of the forests by recycling as much paper as possible and print only what is necessary.

Clean the house, school, or parish with ecological and biodegradable products.

We care for the atmosphere and our health by avoiding chemical compounds that degrade the ozone, pollute the air and cause damage to our respiratory system.

Buy only the clothes you need

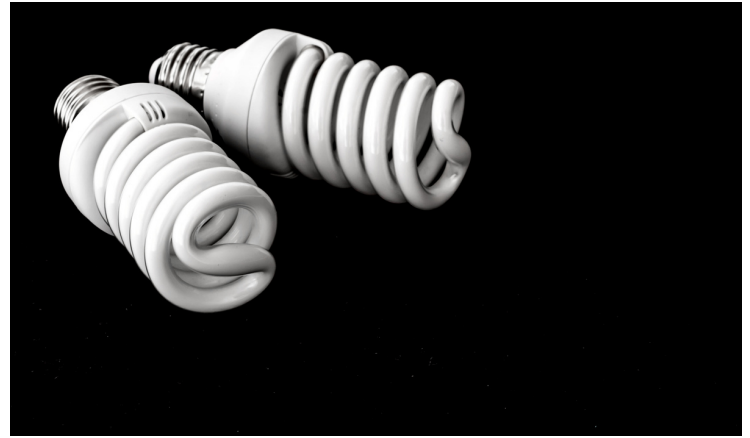
Try to know your clothes' origin and how they're created. Reject the throwaway culture by sewing and mending your clothes. Shop at second-hand stores.

Carpool

With your colleagues and friends, try to create a schedule and use different ways of transportation in order to reduce how often you're travelling by yourself in your car.

Try taking a shower in the time that your favourite song lasts

Be creative so that saving water is not a nuisance but a fun game. Invite your friends or children to participate in such challenges.



Save electricity at home

Be careful in your consumption habits but also be aware of your energy options. Does it make sense for you to place solar panels on your roof? Investigate your options locally.

Grow a tree

On your balcony, at school or in the parish. Learn about the tree's life cycle. And then plant it with the children: organize an Arbour Day and continue throughout the year visiting the tree, watering and preserving it.

Use public transportation more

Demand public policies so that transportation is sustainable and free and serves the city's peripheries well. You can write a letter to the press as well, or organize a debate among neighbours.

Save water in the toilet flushing system

If you have a double-flush toilet, use the small button of the double flush. If that's not an option, look into ways you can be more efficient with your water throughout your home. Consider collecting cold water from the shower or rain water.



LAUDATO SI': On Care for Our Common Home.

*A Zoom study on Pope Francis' Call to Listen
to and Care for all Creation*

Pax Christi Aotearoa New Zealand

Invites you to join this two-part series:

Tuesday 3 May, 7:30-9pm

The Call of Laudato Si' to an ecological spirituality and
conversion

Tuesday 10 May, 7:30-9pm

Living Laudato Si': taking up the challenge of the
Laudato Si' Action Platform

Presenters: Mary Betz and Liz Beazley

Please enrol by Friday 29 April

by emailing paxchristiaotearoa@gmail.com

or by phoning Liz: 0274 714 120

On enrolment you will be sent a zoom link for the first
meeting

'Harmful' Subsidies.

by Susan Healy.

World spends \$1.8tn a year on subsidies that harm environment, study finds
Research prompts warnings humanity is 'financing its own extinction' through subsidies damaging to the climate and wildlife. (From *The Guardian* Thu 17 Feb 2022)

The world is spending at least \$1.8tn (£1.3tn) every year on subsidies driving the annihilation of wildlife and a rise in global heating, according to a new study, prompting warnings that humanity is financing its own extinction.

From tax breaks for beef production in the Amazon to financial support for unsustainable groundwater pumping in the Middle East, billions of pounds of government spending and other subsidies are harming the environment.

This government support, equivalent to 2% of global GDP, is directly working against the goals of the Paris agreement and draft targets on reversing biodiversity loss. The authors, who are leading subsidies experts, say a significant portion of the \$1.8tn could be repurposed to support policies that are beneficial for nature and a transition to net zero.

The report calls for governments to agree a target to eradicate environmentally harmful subsidies by the end of the decade. The fossil fuel industry (\$620bn), the agricultural sector (\$520bn), water (\$320bn) and forestry (\$155bn) account for the majority of the \$1.8tn, according to the report. No estimate for mining, believed to cause billions of dollars of damage to ecosystems every year, could be derived.



Lack of transparency between governments and recipients means the true figure is likely to be much higher, as is the implicit cost of harmful subsidies. Last year, an International Monetary Fund report found the fossil fuel industry benefited from subsidies worth \$5.9tn in 2020, but the vast majority of this figure comes from the hidden costs of failing to make polluters pay for the deaths they cause and global heating.

“Subsidy reform allows us to improve the price signals so that we are not protecting income in more polluting industries,” said Doug Koplow, founder of Earth Track, which monitors environmentally harmful subsidies, and co-author of the report, “It creates space for alternative and cleaner forms of energy to enter the marketplace.”

Where does Australian Security lie?

Pax Christi Australian Conference 19 February 2022

by Mike Beazley.

This Zoom conference involved 4 sessions:

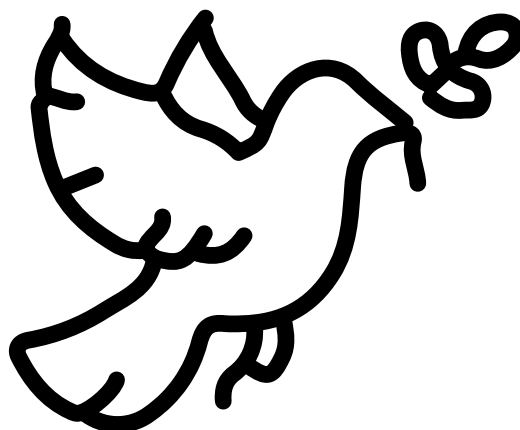
- 1) Where does Australia's security lie?
- 2) Our relations with China
- 3) Australia's overseas aid
- 4) Just Peace in the context of Fratelli Tutti

The following is a summary of Just Peace in the context of Fratelli Tutti:

- Everyone is connected.
- We are all called to conversion.
- No one person possesses the whole truth, others have valid points.
- Listening to others and caring for them is important. It's the path to peace.
- Recovery of kindness and a culture of encounter is of importance. These are the opposite of globalisation and indifference.
- It is not naïve to choose peace.
- Fratelli Tutti de-emphasises the Just War theory.
- Australia needs to listen to and act on the "Uluru statement of the heart".

The reality of the situation in Australia:

- Racism runs deep.
- There's a politics of fear and exclusion.
- There's a need for truth, forgiveness and reconciliation with the Aboriginal people.
- More social housing is needed.
- Australia has an excessive Defence budget.
- Australia and China are talking past each other.



Human Trafficking

Human trafficking is a real scourge in the world today. It occurs for many reasons including working in sweatshops, illegal adoption of children, organ transplants, forced marriages, drug trafficking, begging and prostitution.

February 8th is the day of Prayer against Human Trafficking and it is also the feast day of St Josephine Bakhita who died on February 8th 1947. She was born in about 1869 in Darfur, Sudan and was kidnapped at the age of 9 by Arab slave traders and sold into slavery. For the next 12 years she was sold three more times and some of the treatment she underwent from her owners, included great cruelty and torture, leaving her with almost 150 scars on her body. She eventually gained her freedom when left in the care of the Canossian sisters in Italy, and subsequently in 1896 joined their community when she took her final vows.

St Josephine became known as Madre Moretta (Black Mother) as she showed great calmness, gentleness and piety, and always had a smile. A strong missionary drive animated her throughout her life and she helped to prepare young sisters for work in Africa. 'Her mind was always on God and her heart in Africa'. She was beatified in 1992 and canonised in 2002. She has been adopted as the patron saint of modern Sudan and human trafficking survivors.

Slavery is by no means a thing of the past; in fact, according to the anti-human trafficking organisation, Talitha Kum, 'More people are currently victims of slavery than at any time in history.'

Talitha Kum is a network of religious sisters created ten years ago throughout the world to combat the scourge of human trafficking and slavery. Today, the "Talitha Kum" network spans 77 countries and involves over 2,000 sisters who have devoted their lives to the victims and the survivors of trafficking.

Inspired by the Gospel and by the leadership of Pope Francis, whose condemnation of human trafficking has been robust and frequent, the sisters share one mission: to rid the world of this evil through a sustained focus on Prevention, Protection and Social Rehabilitation.

Here in New Zealand, slavery usually involves the exploitation of migrants and takes the form of low pay rates, long hours of work, no holiday pay and forcing employees to work even though they are sick. They may be housed in shocking conditions and obliged to pay money back to their employer. If we become aware of such cases, they should be reported to MBIE or the police.

On my altar
 here in the forest there is no chalice but
 only a little mushroom
 rooted in the aged tree trunk standing,
 it seems with propriety bearing,
 amidst a small bundle
 of nuts
 covered with dying leaves.
 Spiders, little beetles,
 and a thousand
 unseen living things
 dance upon and within
 my forest altar.....
 Yet for all its simplicity,
 It is, for me
 as mighty a testimony
 to the wonder
 and fertility of God
 as the most magnificent
 marbled altar
 swathed in gold
 but upon which
 nothing grows
 or dances.

Edwina Gately

The Voice of the Earth speaking God's Presence

Earth teach me stillness
 as grasses are stilled with light.
 Earth teach me courage
 as the tree stands straight and alone
 Earth teach me limitation
 as the ant who crawls along the ground.
 Earth teach me freedom
 as the lark who sings and soars.
 Earth teach me joy
 as the bee delighting in
 the nectar of life.
 Earth teach me to know the author of life
 as I daily gaze in wonder at the
 marvelous mysterious
 sustenance of all creation.

From Woman Mystic

“Let us then approach God’s throne of grace
 with confidence, so that we may receive mercy
 and find grace to help us in our time of need”
 (Hebrews 4:16)



Though the human body is born complete
 in one moment, the human heart
 is never completely born.
 It is being born in every experience of your life.
 Everything has the potential to deepen you.
 It brings to birth within you
 new territories of the heart.

John O'Donohue

Aroused by Beauty

How is it that we lose sight of you
 Until you reappear
 In the poetry of a leaf, a bud, a wild bloom
 a surprise in the garden,
 a web of morning dew
 O how You capture our seeing,
 hold us in the moment!
 Take us into your world,
 our world at heart
 our whole being aroused.

Noel Davis.

DIARY DATES

22nd April	Earth Day
29 April	UN Day of Remembrance of all victims of chemical warfare.
1st May	May Day. (Workers Day)
3 May	Pax Christi NZ Zoom Study on Laudato Si' begins (see advertisement pg 6)
5 June	World Environment Day
8 June	World Oceans Day

PAX CHRISTI AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

Pax Christi is an independent Catholic social justice organisation . We work hard to address issues of peace and justice at a local, regional and global level.

If you want to know more about Pax Christi, to join meetings, or to set up group meetings in your area, please contact paxchristiaotearoa@gmail.com or ring 09 377 5541 / 021 729944

Pax Christi relies on volunteers & donations to enable the work to continue.

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