

January 1, 2015

Happy New Year from your Dominican Sisters Conference!

As we embark into this New Year, we continue our unfolding of **Paris 2015 and Counting . . .** I look at the headlines:

“The Pope thinks Climate Change Is a Major Threat. So do American Catholics.” We can add, **So Do Dominican Sisters!**

The plan of the DSC’s **Paris 2015** Sub-Committee is to encourage a specific action (described below); to educate each month on a different justice issue and how it is impacted by Climate Change; and to provide a prayer for personal and/or community use.



Because January is *Human Trafficking Awareness Month*, we will focus our study on Climate Change on how these two issues, Climate Change and Human Trafficking are related. Included in this mailing is a study guide and a prayer service for your use in your local communities, as well as in your ministries. Please feel free to share these materials with others! Resources are also available at our website: <http://paris2015andcounting.org/>.

Our Suggested Action

Be in touch with the President at least once during your congregation’s month (schedule attached). Encourage and support him in doing all in his power to continue to take a strong and positive role in **Paris 2015**, as well as to continue to put in place, in our own country, carbon-foot print reducing policies and hasten the national transition from fossil fuel energy sources to renewable energy sources as quickly as possible.

1. Be in touch with your representatives in the House and Senate at least once during your assigned period. Urge them to support the President in his efforts to take a leadership role in the negotiations leading to a positive outcome at **Paris 2015** and press them to respond positively to suggestions for their districts and states to join in meeting the 2050 goal of zero emission through renewable energy. (Confer: thesolutionsproject.org)
2. Be responsive to forthcoming alerts requesting specific action regarding emerging issues impacting **Paris 2015**.

Thank you for the time and energy you will put into Paris 2015 and Counting!

The **Paris 2015** Subcommittee for the Convocation Planning Committee

Pat Daly, OP
Pat Farrell, OP
Margaret Galiardi, OP
Lyn Kirkconnell

Marcelline Koch, OP
Margaret Mayce, OP
Claire McGowan, OP
Sharon Zayac, OP

Information for Contacting Your Representatives

The White House: Comment Line: (202) 456-1111
Switchboard: (202) 456-1414
Email: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/contact>.
For additional details visit: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/contact/mobile>

United States Congress: To call your Member of Congress:
US Capitol Switchboard (202) 224-3121
To locate your Member on-line:

U.S. House of Representatives: www.house.gov
U.S. Senate: www.senate.gov

Simple Suggested Scripts

Please feel free to create your own

Dear Mr. President,

I encourage and support you in doing all in your power to continue your strong and positive role in climate change conversations, especially at the summit: **Paris 2015**. Moreover, we need to put into place, in our own country, carbon-foot-print reducing policies and hasten the national transition from fossil fuel energy sources to renewable energy sources as quickly possible.

Sincerely,

Dear Madame/Mister Representative,

I urge you to support the President in his efforts to take a leadership role in the negotiations leading to a positive outcome at climate change summit: **Paris 2015** and press the nations to respond positively to suggestions for their districts and states to join in meeting the 2050 goal of zero emission through renewable energy.

Sincerely,

Suggested Schedule for Contacting Our Elected Leaders

January - Amityville, Racine, Roman
February - Hope, Springfield
March - Oakford, San Rafael, Tacoma
April - Adrian
May - Sinsinawa, Saratoga

June - Peace
July - Houston, Mission San Jose
August - Blauvelt, Grand Rapids, Maryknoll
September - Maryknoll, Sparkill, Caldwell



Paris 2015 and Counting.....
Study Sheet on Climate Change and Human Trafficking

What do shifting global weather patterns have to do with human trafficking?

At first glance, the links may not be readily perceived. But when we look a little deeper, we see how the great web of connections plays itself out. Pope Francis has spoken out powerfully about these two global phenomena. ***"Human trafficking is an open wound on the body of contemporary society, a scourge upon the body of Christ. It is a crime against humanity."*** In a meeting last month with Cristiana Figueres, the lead climate negotiator for the United Nations, the Pope confirmed that he would deliver a Papal Encyclical on the environment and climate change early in 2015. In his conversations with Ms. Figueres, the Pope referred to climate change as a social justice and human rights issue.

So just where is the connection between these two grave sins against humanity – and Earth?

According to Dr. Guy McPherson, Professor Emeritus of Natural Resources, Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at the University of Arizona, ***"Peer-reviewed research continues to show that climate change underlies poverty, and that poverty drives human trafficking. If we want to get at the root of slavery, it seems we're neglecting one of its deepest layers."***

According to the [United Nations Environmental Programme](#) (UNEP), human trafficking increases by 20% to 30% during disasters. Their report highlights ***"... certain difficulties faced by some women, particularly those in Asia's mountainous regions, in adapting to climate change – such as lack of formal education; poverty; discrimination in food distribution; food insecurity; limited access to resources..."***

According to [Trafficking Project](#), there is a cycle between environmental degradation and trafficking – people can be trafficked for labor that harms the environment, or as the result of environmental issues, such as flooding; water scarcity; receding coastlines. Environmental degradation places additional burdens on those who are already most vulnerable to trafficking.

