



In 1511, Fr. Antonio Montesinos, OP, preached against the oppression and enslavement of the native peoples of Hispaniola, modern day Dominican Republic and Haiti. “Tell me, by what right or by what interpretation of justice do you keep these Indians in such a cruel and horrible servitude? By what authority have you waged such detestable wars against people who were once living so quietly and peacefully in their own land?”

A Legacy of Justice

Dominicans have a long history of advancing the understanding of human rights and the economic, social, and political systems that influence and shape the lives of people.

In the early 13th century, the young theology student Dominic de Guzman sold his school books to help those who were starving and destitute during a time of famine. His subsequent impassioned preaching helped to form others in the Truth of the Gospel and led to the founding of the Dominican Order of Preachers.

16th century Dominican missionaries shared their experiences of accompanying native peoples with the Dominicans at the University at Salamanca, Spain. Those Dominicans then reflected, wrote, and called for justice for the native people oppressed by the system of colonialism.

Dominicans, 800 years later, continue that work, recommitted to the promotion and defense of human rights and protection and care of Creation.

MORE RESOURCES FOR STUDY AND COLLABORATION

- Laudato Si’: Care for Our Common Home by Pope Francis
<https://laudatosi.com/watch>
- Catholic Climate Covenant
<https://catholicclimatecovenant.org>
- Dominican Life issues and calls to action at domlife.org
- United Nations Sustainable Development Goals to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure prosperity for all.



www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/

- Laudato Si’ Action Platform
www.laudatosiactionplatform.org



North American Dominican Promoters of Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation

domlife.org/peace-justice



In Laudato Sí, Pope Francis speaks to integral ecology:

Nature cannot be regarded as something separate from ourselves or as a mere setting in which we live. We are part of nature, included in it and thus in constant interaction with it. Recognizing the reasons why a given area is polluted requires a study of the workings of society, its economy, its behavior patterns, and the ways it grasps reality.

Given the scale of change, it is no longer possible to find a specific, discrete answer for each part of the problem. It is essential to seek comprehensive solutions which consider the interactions within natural systems themselves and with social systems. We are faced not with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather with one complex crisis which is both social and environmental. Strategies for a solution demand an integrated approach to combating poverty, restoring dignity to the excluded, and at the same time protecting nature.

Laudato Sí –139



Gospel Call To Justice

Presented by:

North American Dominican Promoters of Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation

The ministry of the North American Dominican Promoters of Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation is to encourage all members of the **Dominican Family** to embrace a deepening of the Dominican charism to search for and preach TRUTH as it impacts the lives of people and care for our common home, Earth. Learn more at <https://laudatosi.com/watch>.

In this effort, we join with Dominicans worldwide to promote the *Gospel Call to Justice* and help guide the study and advocacy for human rights and climate justice in our world today.

We call the Dominican Family to lift our voice toward “an even wider ‘we’ [that] will help renew the human family, build a future of justice and peace, and ensure that no one is left behind.” (Pope Francis, World Day of Migrants and Refugees, 2021.) These efforts are augmented by our Dominican presence at the United Nations in New York, Geneva, Nairobi, and Vienna.

Preach the truth as if you had a million voices.

~ St. Catherine of Siena



OUR FOCUS

Integral ecology asks us to recognize the interrelationships between self (as individuals and as communities), God, other people, and all of creation. This understanding of integral ecology calls us to move “toward an ever-wider ‘we’ that draws us into thinking no longer in terms of ‘them’ and ‘those’ but only ‘us’” (Pope Francis, *Fratelli Tutti* 35). Our awareness of this interconnectedness of the whole leads us to understand no issue is an isolated event but is part of the integral web of relationships.

We commit to the following interwoven priorities:

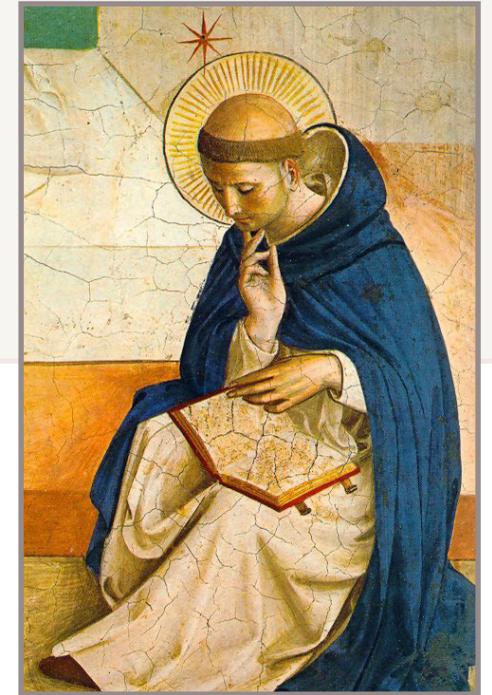
- Climate Justice
- Peace and Security of All Life
- Migration and Immigration
- Human Trafficking
- Economic Justice

OUR PROCESS

Woven through the Dominican pillars of prayer, study, ministry, and community is the quest for TRUTH. Finding truth is not a simple process, nor can we ignore truth’s complexity. How do we find truth? We begin with prayer and contemplation.

Using the framework of integral ecology, we:

- Listen to those who are oppressed, economically poor, and living on the margins.
- Seek to understand the interconnected realities that are the roots of injustice and conflict.
- Work with others to challenge and change the systems that perpetuate the harm that s being done.
- Address injustice in a spirit of respect, compassion, and solidarity.



St. Dominic de Guzman, founder of the Dominican Order of Preachers

● Climate Justice

The term Climate Justice frames global warming as an ethical, social, economic, political, and environmental issue. In August 2021, the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change released a report observing changes in the Earth’s climate in every region and across the whole climate system. Many of the changes are unprecedented in thousands of years. Some changes are irreversible over the next hundreds of years. The report noted strong and sustained reductions in CO2 and other greenhouse gas emissions would limit climate change.

“We are at a crucial turning point. A crucial fork in the road, where we can take the right path.” *Veerabhadran Ramanathan*

● Peace and Security for All Life

We extol the dignity of all life. Let us take special care to assist those who suffer most from economic and environmental injustice: women and children, the unborn, migrants and refugees. This includes the forcefully displaced, the disappeared, and those who are afflicted by racism. The Laudato Si’ Action Platform is a way for the universal Church to learn and grow together as we take “decisive action, here and now” (LS 161) to care for each other and the home we share.

“We must ask ourselves if the principal threats to peace and security — poverty, epidemics, terrorism, and so many others — can be effectively countered when the arms race, including nuclear weapons, continues to squander precious resources that could better be used to benefit the integral development of peoples and protect the natural environment.”

Pope Francis, UN address, September 25, 2020

● Migration and Immigration

According to the UN Refugee Agency, by the end of November 2021, 84 million individuals were displaced worldwide as a result of persecution, conflict, violence, environmental degradation, or human rights violations. Popes and Bishops worldwide defend the right of peoples to migrate to sustain their lives and the lives of their families.

“No matter where they come from, what color they are or what language they speak, my faith teaches me that every life has value.” *Sister Norma Pimentel*

What role must I take in bringing about a world for all to live sustainably?

How do I see the Holy in the whole of life, embrace the struggle for equality and justice for all, practice nonviolence, and love those I see as “other”?

How do I welcome the stranger? How do I/we advocate for just immigration policies and practices?

● Human Trafficking

People are trafficked for sexual exploitation, forced labor, forced begging, forced marriage, and more. Children are also sold as child sex slaves and child soldiers, while some adults are trafficked for organ harvesting. Human trafficking is a multi-billion dollar criminal industry that affects more than 40 million people in the world today, according to the International Labor Organization. It occurs everywhere and affects people of every age, gender, ethnicity, and class.

“Rescue from the hand of the oppressor, the one who has been wronged.” *Jeremiah 22:3*

What can I do to advocate for laws that protect victims of human trafficking and hold accountable those who enable it?

● Economic Justice

God’s vision is for everyone to live the fullness of life. Economic justice provides opportunities for persons to enjoy dignified, productive, and creative lives. However, since 2015, the richest 1 percent of the world’s population has accumulated more wealth than the rest of the global population combined (Oxfam International Annual Report 2020). The world’s 10 richest people have seen their combined wealth increase by half a trillion dollars since the pandemic began (Oxfam International Annual Report 2021). We denounce valuing money and profit over the dignity of human beings, access to health care, and all life on Earth.

Work is more than a way to make a living; it is a form of continuing participation in God’s creation. We are called to promote an economy that has solidarity as a core value that is a driving force for the development of all life on the planet.

“All human beings are ends to be served by the institutions that make up the economy, not means to be exploited for more narrowly defined goals.” *Economic Justice for All #28*

What steps must I take to bring about a world in which the common good of all is realized?

What changes can I make to my lifestyle to reflect this commitment?

KNOWING THAT EVERYTHING IS EMBEDDED IN THE WEB OF RELATIONSHIPS, WE NOTE THE REALITY OF RACISM AND ITS IMPACT ON ALL THESE ISSUES. OUR COMMITMENT TO JUSTICE CALLS US TO WORK TO DISMANTLE RACISM.

May God move within us and give us eyes to see with, ears to hear with, and hands that your work might be done.

A Dominican Prayer