

# Benedictine Coalition for Responsible Investment

Fall 2019 — Issue 24

## Extending Our Hands to Bridge Gaps



When we observe things every day, we can't un-see our reality. When we become aware of things around us, we can't become un-aware. This can be a burden and a blessing. The world is in our hands in so many ways. The Benedictine Presence and Charism has graced the world since the 5<sup>th</sup> century. While this may seem a long time ago, we know that in God's time, it is a flash.

Where can our core values make a difference? As we view the world, where do we see our Ora et Labora – Prayer and Work? We lift up all the intentions that require our prayers. We use our hands to work for justice in the myriad of ways that reach out to the poor, the widow, the orphan, the

stranger—all so prominently mentioned in the Bible. Who are those in 2019 that need us ...

- those without the basics needed to sustain life.
- those affected by weather events, especially hurricanes and fires.
- those migrants attempting to come into the United States at our ports of entry.
- those children orphaned/separated from family as they came through our ports of entry.
- those crying out for justice at every level – local, state, national, international.

In August 2019, the Business Roundtable issued a document signed by the Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of 181 companies. This statement—"On the Purpose of a Corporation" speaks of leading companies for the benefit of **all stakeholders** – customers, employees, suppliers, communities and shareholders. This inclusion of the broader common good is refreshing. For years, the companies have taken actions aimed primarily for the benefit of shareholders. We have encouraged ourselves and companies where we own stock to invest in the greater good looking at the long-term, not just the next quarterly returns.

In September 2019, 145 business leaders wrote a letter to the U.S. Senate, saying doing nothing about the level of gun violence is simply unacceptable. They ask the Senate to pass background checks and a strong red flag law. Red flag laws allow family members or law enforcement to petition the court to prevent a person temporarily from obtaining a firearm.

We focus within our sphere of influence. As Benedictine monasteries across the globe, this sphere is enormous. Let's continue to extend our impact using our hands and efforts to reach across any divides that we encounter!

*"We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that. This enables us to do something and to do it very well. It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way, an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest."*

*Archbishop Oscar Romero*

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# 2019 Shareholder Resolutions Filed

## ABBVIE

*Report on Indirect and Direct Lobbying—25%*  
Benedictine Sisters of Virginia

## ALPHABET

*Human Rights Impact Policy*  
*Google Search in China—2.17%*  
Benedictine Sisters – Mount St. Scholastica  
Benedictine Sisters of Virginia  
Monasterio Pan de Vida, Torreon  
Benedictine Sisters of Cullman, AL  
Benedictine Sisters of Virginia

## AMAZON.COM

*Executive Pay, Incorporate Diversity and Sustainability Metrics—19.3%*  
Benedictine Sisters – Mount St. Scholastica

## AT&T

*Lobbying Expenditures Disclosures - Climate—Withdrawn*  
Benedictine Sisters – Mount St. Scholastica  
Monasterio de San Benito, Mexico City

## BANK OF AMERICA

*Lobbying Expenditures Disclosure—Withdrawn*  
Monasterio de San Benito, Mexico City  
Benedictine Sisters of Virginia

## BRISTOL-MYERS SQUIBB

*Drug Pricing Strategies and Incentives for Senior Executives—Withdrawn*  
Monasterio de San Benito, Mexico City

## CATERPILLAR

*Business Activities in Conflict-Affected Areas—7.77%*  
Benedictine Sisters, Boerne, TX (filed with Bishop Brian Grieses)

## CELGENE

*Drug Pricing Strategies and Incentives for Senior Executives—Withdrawn (Celgene was acquired by Bristol-Myers Squibb)*  
Benedictine Sisters of Virginia

## CHEVRON

*No Business with Governments Complicit in Genocide – Burma—Withdrawn*  
Benedictine Sisters – Mount St. Scholastica  
Benedictine Sisters of Cullman, AL  
*Human Right to Water—32.20%*  
Benedictine Sisters, Boerne, TX

## COMCAST

*Lobbying Expenditures Disclosure—18%*  
Benedictine Sisters – Mount St. Scholastica

## DOMINO'S PIZZA

*Phase Out Routine Medically Important Antibiotics in Supply Chain—Withdrawn*  
Benedictine Sisters – Mount St. Scholastica

## ELI LILLY

*Drug Pricing Strategies and Incentives for Senior Executives—Withdrawn*  
Benedictine Sisters of Cullman, AL  
Benedictine Sisters of Virginia

## EXXON MOBIL

*Lobbying Expenditures Disclosure – Climate—37.30%*  
Benedictine Sisters – Mount St. Scholastica  
Benedictine Sisters of Baltimore  
*Independent Chair of the Board—40.80%*  
Benedictine Sisters of Virginia  
Benedictine Sisters, Boerne, TX

## FACEBOOK

*Separate CEO and Chairperson Role—20%*  
Benedictine Sisters – Mount St. Scholastica  
Benedictine Sisters of Cullman, AL

## GENERAL MOTORS

*Grassroots Lobbying Communication—29.50%*  
Monasterio Pan de Vida, Torreon  
Benedictine Sisters, Boerne, TX (with NY Comptroller's Office)

## HOME DEPOT

*EEO-1 Disclosure—33.08%*  
Benedictine Sisters – Mount St. Scholastica  
Benedictine Sisters of Baltimore  
Benedictine Sisters of Cullman, AL  
Benedictine Sisters of Virginia  
Benedictine Sisters, Boerne, TX

## JOHNSON & JOHNSON

*Anti-Competitive Practices (Opioid Coalition)—Withdrawn*  
Benedictine Sisters – Mount St. Scholastica  
Monasterio de San Benito, Mexico City  
Benedictine Sisters, Boerne, TX  
Benedictine Sisters of Virginia

## JP MORGAN CHASE & CO.

*Lobbying Expenditures Disclosure – Climate—Withdrawn*  
Benedictine Sisters – Mount St. Scholastica  
Benedictine Sisters of Baltimore  
Benedictine Sisters of Cullman, AL  
*Report on Indirect and Direct Lobbying—Withdrawn*  
Benedictine Sisters of Virginia

# 2019 Shareholder Resolutions Continued

## McDONALD'S

### *Phase Out Routine Medically Important Antibiotics Use in Supply Chain—Withdrawn*

Benedictine Sisters – Mount St. Scholastica  
Benedictine Sisters of Baltimore  
Benedictine Sisters of Chicago  
Benedictine Sisters, Boerne, TX

## MERCK & CO.

### *Drug Pricing Strategies and Incentives for Senior Executives—29.07%*

Benedictine Sisters – Mount St. Scholastica  
Benedictine Sisters of Baltimore  
Benedictine Sisters of Virginia

## MYLAN

### *Board Risk Report Response to U.S. Opioid Epidemic—Withdrawn*

Benedictine Sisters – Mount St. Scholastica

## PFIZER

### *Board Oversight – Drug Pricing—Withdrawn*

Monasterio de San Benito, Mexico City

## PHILLIP MORRIS

### *Review Policies, Discourage Smoking Among Young People and Report—Withdrawn*

Benedictine Sisters of Cullman, AL

## SOUTHWEST

### *Human Rights Policy—Withdrawn*

Benedictine Sisters of Cullman, AL  
Benedictine Sisters, Boerne, TX  
(*withdrawal: company will work on further policies*)

## TJX COMPANIES

### *Report on Inequities in Compensation due to Gender, Race, or Ethnicity—18.42%*

Benedictine Sisters – Mount St. Scholastica  
Benedictine Sisters of Cullman, AL  
Benedictine Sisters of Virginia

## UNITED PARCEL SERVICE

### *Lobbying Expenditures Disclosure – Climate—20.17%*

Benedictine Sisters – Mount St. Scholastica

## VERIZON COMMUNICATION

### *Lobbying Expenditures Disclosure—Withdrawn*

Monasterio de San Benito, Mexico City  
*Child Exploitation (filed with CBIS)—33.90%*  
Benedictine Sisters of Virginia

## VERTEX PHARMACEUTICALS

### *Greenhouse Gas Reduction in Line with Paris Goals—Withdrawn*

Benedictine Sisters – Mount St. Scholastica

## YUM! BRANDS, INC.

### *Greenhouse Gas Reduction – Renewable Energy—Withdrawn*

Benedictine Sisters – Mount St. Scholastica  
Benedictine Sisters of Baltimore



## 2019 ICCR Successes

- **Wells Fargo** agreed to update its Business Standards Report to include language on private prisons.
- **Emerson** committed to establishing a GHG reduction target.
- **Atrion** will fill its next director seat with a woman.
- **Sanderson** will stop unnecessarily administering two medically important antibiotics to its chickens.
- **General Electric** will significantly expand transparency regarding its election-related spending.

## Shareholder Votes

- **Walgreens Boots Alliance** - Board oversight of risks related to the opioid crisis: 60%
- **Analog Devices** - Workplace diversity: 48%
- **Atmos Energy** - Methane emissions: 34.8%
- **Disney** - Climate lobbying expenditures disclosure: 39.27%
- **Costco** - Supply chain policy on prison labor: 29%

## Walmart will stop selling ammunition

Walmart will discontinue all sales of handgun ammunition and sales of short-barrel rifle ammunition that can be used with military-style weapons, following two “horrific” shootings at Walmart stores this summer. The company will also stop all handgun sales in Alaska, marking its complete exit from the handguns category.

The announcement from Walmart comes as the retailer has faced backlash, some from its own employees, for not pulling weapons from stores after a deadly shooting in July at a Walmart store in Southaven, Mississippi and another in August at a Walmart in El Paso, Texas, where 22 were killed.

In 2015, the company stopped selling semi-automatic weapons such as the AR-15 rifle. Following the mass shooting at a high school in Parkland, Florida in 2018, Walmart stopped selling firearms and ammunition to people under the age of 21.

Kroger, the country’s largest grocery chain, joined Walmart in announcing it would also be ending its open carry policy in stores, a year after it stopped selling guns and ammunition at its Fred Meyers chain in the Pacific Northwest. Walgreen’s and Albertson’s will also end the open carry policy.

Lauren Thomas, **CNBC**, September 3, 2019

Abha Bhattacharai, **The Washington Post**, September 3, 2019

# 2019 Annual Shareholder Meetings

## Statement at Home Depot's shareholder meeting May 23, 2019 — Ivy Jack

I am Ivy Jack, here today representing the Benedictine Sisters from Boerne, Texas, as well as several members of the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility, long-term Home Depot shareholders and proposal co-filers.

Ballot Proposal #4 seeks a Board review of our company's policies regarding disclosure of equal employment opportunity data (EEO-1 data), and public reporting of diversity issues to shareholders. We received 48% last year – the highest vote this proposal has ever received. Equal employment opportunity is an investment concern.

Allegations of discrimination in the workplace burden shareholders with costly litigation and added risk. We contend descriptions don't go far enough to mitigate potential risks. Home Depot has paid out more than \$100 million to settle discrimination lawsuits over the past 17 years. Our reports do not include data which identifies employee gender and race in the EEOC defined categories.

This resolution focuses on the importance of measurement and disclosure of diversity issues to shareholders. To manage diversity, companies have to be able to measure it. An EEO report is submitted annually by Home Depot to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Providing data to shareholders would not pose an added financial burden. Without meaningful disclosure, investors cannot fully assess potential risks Home Depot faces, nor for that matter, fully identify successful diversity efforts.

In 2015, the U.S. EEOC reported that racial minorities comprised 37.2% of private industry workforce, but just 14.01% of executive and management positions. This bottom-line issue affects competitiveness and market share. We ask Home Depot to report its diversity disclosure to all stakeholders.

## United Health Group shareholder meeting June 3, 2019 — Sr. Mary Ann O'Ryan, OSB

The shareholder meeting of the United Health Group met in Chicago June 3. I presented the only shareholder proposal, which urged greater opportunity for shareholders to nominate board members. It received less than 27% of the vote. Votes on board members garnered over 95%, senior executive compensation 95%, and the auditing firm 98%. The meeting began at 10 AM, included the annual report's outline of progress and future goals and the vote totals. None of those present had questions or comments, so the meeting was adjourned by 10:25!



Dilley facility flags at half staff to commemorate those massacred at the El Paso Walmart

## Boeing shareholder meeting, April 29, 2019 Sr. Mary Ann O'Ryan, OSB

The Boeing shareholders' meeting was held on April 29, 2019 at the Field Museum in Chicago. The Board Chairman and CEO, Dennis Muilenburg, began the meeting with a comprehensive statement of sympathy for those who died and all those affected by the two fatal crashes of Boeing planes in the past year and by the grounding of all 737 Max aircraft. Although he spoke about efforts to solve the problem and train pilots to deal with the revised software, he failed to refer to the cause of the accidents.

Last year Carolyn Kennedy joined the board and this year former ambassador to the UN, Nikki Haley, was added, bringing a total of three women on the thirteen-member board. Usual board proposals — accepting board members, compensation for senior executives, and approving auditors — passed.

Five shareholder proposals followed: 1) additional disclosure of Boeing's lobbying activity (no % given); 2) financial performance metrics to be adjusted to exclude the impact of share repurchases (7%); 3) separate roles of Chairperson and CEO (34%); 4) allow an unlimited number of shareholders to form a group for proxy access purposes (24%); 5) requiring senior executives to retain a fixed percentage of all equity-based compensation until reaching retirement age (25%).

## CoreCivic Shareholder Delegation visits Dilley Detention Center

On August 6-8, 2019, a delegation of CoreCivic shareholders met in San Antonio. Led by Mary Baudouin and Susan Weishar (representing the Jesuits) the group included Anna Falkenberg (Socially Responsible Investment Coalition, Sr. Susan Mika (Benedictine Sisters of Boerne, Texas), Sr. Gwen Farry (Sisters of the Blessed Virgin Mary), Sr. Judy Byron (Northwest CRI), Pat Zerega (Mercy Investment Services), Sr. JT Dwyer (Daughters of Charity) and Mark Peters (Province of St. Joseph of the Capuchin Order - Capuchins).

Activities included visiting the Dilley Family Detention Center (called South Texas Residential Center) in Dilley, Texas and meeting with an executive from the company about the implementation of their human rights policy. The delegation attended the Interfaith Welcome Coalition (IWC) monthly meeting and de-briefed with several of those doing work at the Dilley facility.

Sister Susan Mika, OSB, August 7, 2019

*Benedictine spirituality requires that we be willing to stand up for something and be willing to pay the social price that comes from taking a stand.*

Joan Chittister, *A Little Rule for Beginners*, p. 115

# 2019 Annual Shareholder Meetings

## **J.P. Morgan Chase shareholder meeting, May 21, 2019 — Sr. Mary Ann O’Ryan, OSB**

I attended the J.P. Morgan Chase shareholders’ meeting in Chicago on May 21, 2019. The board chairman and CEO, Jamie Dimon, presided and gave the annual report.

Voting on shareholder proposals went as follows: 1) board members (80%); 2) senior executive compensation (72%); 3) auditors (96%); 4) gender pay equity proposal (29%); 5) shareholder proxy access proposal (28%); 6) cumulative voting proposal (10%). The voting to approve board members and executive compensation was unusually low.

J.P. Morgan Chase’s “aggressive” funding of fossil fuel projects and the looming disaster of climate change were the focus of many questions from shareholders. One speaker questioned why discounts to NRA members had been withdrawn and wanted to know if it was for personal or political purposes. Mr. Dimon said the board had discussed and collectively made that decision, offering no other response.

## **United Airlines shareholder meeting May 22, 2019 — Sr. Mary Ann O’Ryan, OSB**

On May 22, 2019 I attended the shareholders’ meeting of United Airlines in Chicago. CEO Oscar Munoz gave the annual report. The preliminary voting results were reported in a non-numerical way: nominees for board membership, executive compensation, and auditor approval were passed with a majority vote. I presented two shareholder proposals: proxy access and the ability of shareholders to nominate board members. Both were described as “receiving less than a majority.” These votes should require exact numbers in the company’s SEC report.

Reverend Jesse Jackson spoke during the question and comments session, urging the company to invest philanthropically in the city of Chicago — including courses at city colleges to train airline mechanics and teach other skills for employment. CEO Munoz stated the company is already heavily involved and intends to increase its involvement.

Three employees of vendors under contract to United Airlines (e.g., providing food for flights) stated they are only paid \$13.80 an hour with no benefits, making health care insurance unaffordable. They were asking United to influence those vendors. Although Mr. Munoz spoke courteously, he somewhat dismissively replied that the speakers may have over-estimated his influence. He agreed to talk with the vendors, but the situation would not likely change even if United switched to other vendors. Reverend Jackson supported the employees.

The person representing the NRA who spoke previously at the J.P. Morgan Chase meeting, then spoke asking why the discount for NRA members had been withdrawn by United. Mr. Munoz responded firmly that the daughter of one of United’s pilots had been killed in the Parkland shooting, and the decision had board approval.

## **McDonald’s shareholder meeting statement, May 23, 2019 — Sr. Susan Mika, OSB**

The Benedictines and other shareholders have engaged McDonald’s since 2015, asking that the antibiotics which we humans used be phased out their supply chain (chicken, beef and pork). McDonald’s eliminated these in the chicken supply chain as of 2017. In December 2018, they announced a beef policy — that by 2022, they will publicly report progress against antibiotic reduction targets across their top 10 beef sourcing markets. As a result of this policy, the Benedictines withdrew the resolution and made a statement at the annual shareholder meeting in Dallas.

“I am Sr. Susan Mika with the Benedictine Sisters of Boerne, Texas. We filed a shareholder resolution, asking McDonald’s for a policy on antibiotics and the beef supply chain. In December, McDonald’s published a new policy, an important step forward in McDonald’s antibiotics journey. It sends an unmistakable market signal to beef producers worldwide.

We urge McDonald’s to set ambitious antibiotics use reduction targets at the end of the pilot phase, as well as to publicly report regularly on their progress. Consumers want assurance that pledges are being met by suppliers. Adding a third party verification program will increase confidence in McDonald’s plans. We will continue to meet with and monitor McDonald’s progress toward implementation of these policies.”

## **Fast Food Chains Serving Plant-Based Meat Substitutes**

- *Kentucky Fried Chicken*: Beyond Fried Chicken
- *Dunkin’ Brands*: Beyond Sausage breakfast sandwich
- *Carl’s Jr.*: Beyond Meat burger
- *Burger King*: Impossible Whopper
- *The Cheesecake Factory*: Impossible Burger
- *Little Caesars*: Impossible Supreme Pizza

\*\*\**McDonald’s* introduced a McVegan in Germany using a plant-based “Incredible Burger” from Nestle.

*Dane Rivera, UPROXX, August 16, 2019*

## **Meatless Burgers Stoke Sales and Questions about Nutrition**

Nutritionists point out that the plant-based products introduced by Beyond Meat Inc. and Impossible Foods Inc. contain almost as many calories and more sodium than beef. Plant-based patties tend to contain roughly five times more sodium than beef. Impossible and Beyond mimic ground beef by extracting proteins from soy and yellow peas and combining them with starches, oils and juices to produce patties that convincingly sizzle, brown and bleed.

*Jacob Bunge and Heather Haddon  
Wall Street Journal, August 1, 2019*

# Climate

## Here's how the hottest month in recorded history unfolded around the world

On August 5, scientists officially pronounced July 2019 the warmest month the world has experienced since record-keeping began more than a century ago. **How hot was it?** Wildfires raged across millions of acres in the Arctic. A massive ice melt in Greenland sent 197 billion tons of water pouring into the Atlantic Ocean, raising sea levels. In Canada, a military installation in Alert, Nunavut — the northernmost permanently inhabited place on Earth — recorded 69.8 degrees on July 14 (the average July high for the outpost is 44.6 degrees).

Brady Dennis and Andrew Freedman  
*The Washington Post*, August 5, 2019

## A Quarter of Humanity Faces Looming Water Crises

According to data published by the World Resources Institute on August 6, 17 countries around the world are currently under extremely high water stress, meaning they are using almost all the water they have. In those countries are several big, thirsty cities that have faced acute shortages recently, including São Paulo, Brazil; Chennai, India; and Cape Town, South Africa.

**Groundwater is going fast:** Mexico City is drawing groundwater so fast that the city is literally sinking. Dhaka, Bangladesh, relies so heavily on its groundwater for both its residents and its water-guzzling garment factories that it now draws water from aquifers hundreds of feet deep. Across India and Pakistan, farmers are draining aquifers to grow water-intensive crops like cotton and rice.

**How to fix the problem?** First, city officials can plug leaks in the water distribution system. Additionally, wastewater can be recycled. Lakes and wetlands can be cleaned up and old wells can be restored.

Somini Sengupta and Weiyi Cai  
*The New York Times*, August 6, 2019

## Change food production and stop abusing land, major climate report warns

United Nations scientists and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) concluded in a landmark report that:

- We only have until 2030 to drastically reduce our dependence on fossil fuels and prevent the planet from reaching the crucial threshold of 1.5 degrees Celsius.
- Human use degrades the planet's natural resources, with chemical fertilizers, deforestation and intensive farming—enough land to equal South America.
- Food waste and meat consumption needs to be reduced to slash global emissions. Both are big contributors to global warming, with food waste producing between 8-10% and livestock 14.5% of global emissions. Nearly 25 to 30% of all food produced is never eaten, while 821 million people worldwide are undernourished.

Isabelle Gerretsen, *CNN*, August 8, 2019  
Jen Christensen, *CNN*, August 9, 2019

## The Loneliest Word, And The Extinction Crisis

According to a report published by an international committee known as the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), 1,000,000 plant and animal species are threatened with extinction. The last remaining member of a species is called an endling. Research suggests that endlings (those lonely last survivors) will continue to occur because of human interaction.

The report states that these are the five ways people are reducing biodiversity: 1) changes in land and sea use, 2) direct exploitation of organisms, 3) climate change, 4) pollution, and 5) invasive alien species.

Other findings in the report consist of:

- 75% of the land and 66% of the marine environments have been significantly altered by human actions.
- Up to \$577 billion in annual global crops are at risk from pollinator loss (bees and other insects).
- In 2015, 33% of marine fish stocks were being harvested at unsustainable levels; 60% were maximally sustainably fished.

Steven Salzberg, *Forbes*, July 8, 2019

## Amazon Fires

- According to data published by the Brazilian National Institute for Space Research on August 26, there have been a total of 57,509 of fires in the Brazilian Amazon region so far in 2019.
- Brazil's space research institute reports that from January through July, some 4,700 square kilometers of rainforest had been cleared.
- 60 percent is the approximate amount of the Amazon rainforest in Brazil alone.
- 6 percent is the highest possible estimate for how much of the planet's oxygen comes from the Amazon rainforest.

Vicky Stein, *PBS News*, August 26, 2019

David Luhnow and Paulo Trevisani  
*Wall Street Journal*, August 30, 2019



Photo (Top Right): Dan Smedley Photo (Bottom Right): Jonathan Chng

# Environment

## Hotel Toiletry Bottles Are on Their Way Out

Hotel industry officials say the tiny shampoo, conditioner and body lotion bottles are slowly being replaced by wall-mounted, refillable dispensers. Bill A.B.



1162 is making its way through the California Legislature, hoping to scrap the tiny single-use plastic bottles at hotels and other hospitality establishments. Lynn Mohrfeld, California Hotel & Lodging Association chief executive, estimated it could cost about \$70 for each of the 500,000 hotel rooms in California to accommodate multi-use dispensers.

*Christine Hauser, The New York Times, June 4, 2019*

## 4ocean has pulled millions of pounds of garbage out of the ocean

In 2017, Andrew Cooper and Alex Schulze founded 4ocean, a for-profit business that pulls plastic and glass waste from oceans around the world in order to repurpose it by making bracelets out of those recycled materials. 4ocean sells each bracelet for \$20 with the promise that the money from each purchase will fund one pound of trash removal. So far, 6,240,597 pounds of trash have been removed from the ocean and coastlines by paid 4ocean employees through the sale of their products. For more information visit 4ocean.com.

*4ocean, August 2019*

## Ocean Conservancy Report

According to the 2019 Ocean Conservancy report, during their 2018 Cleanup effort, 1,080,358 volunteers in more than 120 countries collected 23.3 million pounds of trash. Under 3.7 million plastic straws and stirrers were collected. Nearly 2 million plastic cutlery items and approximately 1.8 million plastic beverage bottles were also collected.

*Ocean Conservancy, 2019 Report: The Beach and Beyond*

## Methane Rollback Proposal

On August 29, the Trump administration and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposed a rule that would loosen restrictions on how oil and gas sites monitor and repair methane leaks from pipelines and storage facilities. The EPA estimates that the proposed rule would save the oil and natural gas industry \$17 million to \$19 million a year, for a total of \$97 million to \$123 million from 2019 through 2025.

Four of the world's biggest automakers (Ford, Volkswagen, BMW, and Honda) opposed the administration's plan to let vehicles pollute more by striking a deal in California to curb their own emissions. Fossil fuel companies including Shell, Exxon and BP have also opposed the methane rule rollback and urged the EPA to continue to regulate those emissions.

*Emma Newburger, CNBC, August 29, 2019*

## So, Should We Recycle? YES WE SHOULD!

False Facts	Actual Facts
You create more environmental harm by recycling plastic bottles than throwing them out.	Plastic bottles are a very valuable commodity – people are not paying to have them recycled, they are being paid for them.
When they couldn't recycle something they shoved it into the oceans as a common way of handling the material.	The Chinese have not been simply shoving plastic bottles into the ocean. Much of Southeast Asia does not have a widespread solid waste and recycling infrastructure, so the plastic gets thrown out, or is littered.
In order for plastic containers – such as peanut butter jars – to be recycled they have to be tripled rinsed in hot water.	They shouldn't be full of peanut butter, but the usual leftovers on the sides just aren't a problem for recyclers. What is a problem are bottles full of liquids, half-full food containers, kitchen waste, and dirty diapers.

*Lynn Rubinstein, Executive Director of the Northeast Recycling Council (NERC) and Steve Alexander, President of the Association of Plastic Recyclers (APR), July 23, 2019*

*\*Alfred Dubois, an Oblate, was kind enough to share this great blog with us.*

## San Francisco International Airport (SFO) enacts a plastic water bottle ban

At the end of July, San Francisco International Airport announced its decision to ban the sale of plastic bottles as part of a larger zero-waste initiative and in compliance with a 2014 city ordinance. Starting on 20 August, only water in glass, recycled aluminum, or certified compostable materials can be sold at the airport. Under the new policy, shops, restaurants, lounges and vending machines will not be allowed to sell or offer water in plastic bottles. Instead, passengers are encouraged to bring their own containers and refill them at stations around the airport. Sodas, juices and flavored water can still be sold in plastic bottles.



*Hannah Sampson, The Washington Post, August 5, 2019*

# Immigration

## What is "Remain in Mexico"?

"Remain in Mexico," officially known as the Migrant Protection Protocols (MPP) was implemented in January, 2019. It is a U.S. immigration policy, forcing asylum seekers arriving at ports of entry, on the U.S. southern border, to be briefly processed and then returned to Mexico to wait for the duration of their U.S. immigration proceedings.

### Ports of Entry/Cities Involved

- Brownsville, Texas / Matamoros, Tamaulipas
- Calexico, California / Mexicali, Baja California Norte
- Del Rio, Texas (Sector) / Ciudad Acuña, Coahuila
- Eagle Pass, Texas (Sector) / Piedras Negras, Coahuila
- El Paso, Texas / Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua
- Laredo, Texas / Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas
- San Ysidoro, California / Tijuana, Baja California Norte

*Latin America Working Group "Remain in Mexico" Impacts, 8/9/19*

*Silvia Foster-Frau, San Antonio Express-News, 9/5/19*

## Administration moves to terminate court agreement, hold migrant children and parents longer

The administration is moving to formally terminate the 1997 Flores Settlement Agreement (FSA) which restricts how long U.S. officials can detain migrant children with their parents. The Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Health and Human Services issued a new rule Friday, August 23, to withdraw from FSA. The new rule would eliminate a 20-day cap for detaining migrant children and create a new licensing regime that would make it easier for federal officials to expand family detention nationwide. The rule is set to take effect 60 days after it is published. Advocates have vowed to challenge the rule in court, which will put the change in front of U.S. District Judge Dolly M. Gee, who denied the administration's request last year.

*Maria Sacchetti, The Washington Post, August 21, 2019*

## Mexico is busing asylum-seeking migrants to southern border

The Mexican government said August 16, that it is busing migrants who have applied for asylum in the United States to the southern Mexico state of Chiapas. Mexico's National Immigration Institute said the goal of busing migrants is "to provide a safer alternative for those who do not want to remain on the U.S.-Mexico border."

*The Associated Press, August 16, 2019*

## Supreme Court Says Trump can Bar Asylum Seekers While Legal Fight Continues

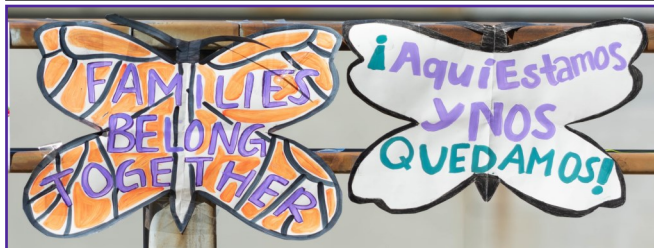
On September 11, a Supreme Court ruling allowed the enforcement of a new Trump administration policy that denies asylum to migrants coming to the U.S. Under this policy, almost any foreign national "who enters, attempts to enter, or arrives in the United States across the southern land border on or after July 16, 2019, after transiting through at least one country outside the alien's country of citizenship, nationality, or last lawful habitual residence en route to the United States, shall be found ineligible for asylum."

*Ian Millhiser, VOX, September 10, 2019*

## The administration seeks to deport children with life-threatening illnesses

Each year, the U.S. gets about 1,000 applications from immigrant families in the U.S. seeking permission to stay in the country and not face deportation so family members can continue lifesaving medical care that is not available in their home countries. The administration recently told families who were granted permission to stay for medical care that their permission to stay has been rescinded and they have 33 days to leave the country. The policy, which was not publicly announced, is being applied retroactively to any requests filed on or before Aug. 7. On Sept. 2, the administration announced that it would reconsider its decision to force immigrants facing life-threatening health crises to return to their home countries.

*Suzanne Gamboa, NBC News, 8/29/19*



## 'Metering' At The Border

Metering is the term that Customs and Border Protection (CBP) uses for a process by which it limits the number of people who can request asylum at a port of entry at a U.S.-Mexico border crossing each day. As far as U.S. asylum law says, anyone who steps foot in the U.S. has the ability to request asylum. Due to the surge of migrants requesting asylum, CBP stationed a guard at border crossings. Asylum-seekers that show at any port of entry, are told by these guards that they have to turn around and go put their name on a waitlist (where they get an assigned number), back in Mexico and wait for their turn to request asylum. People are waiting weeks or sometimes months for their opportunity to request asylum. This metering policy was implemented by the administration back in April, 2018.

*James Fredrick, NPR, 6/29/19*

## Interfaith Welcome Coalition Backpack Ministry

Location: San Antonio, Texas	Backpacks Given in 2017	Backpacks Given in 2018	Backpacks Given in 2019 as of August 31
Bus Station	4,916	14,180	17,265
Airport	0	7,507	6,437
Total	4,916	21,687	23,702

\*One backpack given per family. In 2017, IWC didn't have airport volunteers handing out backpacks.

# Immigration

## Stop the Inhumanity Now

September 4 saw a Day of Action for Immigrant Children and Families. Several monasteries and communities participated in various ways. Srs. Mary Feehan, Mariette Therese Bernier, Philomena Fleck and Marlene Milasus from St. Walburga Monastery in Elizabeth, NJ attended in Newark. They also hosted members of the Benedictine community in Erie, PA who attended the day of action. These included: Sr. Anne McCarthy, Jacqueline Small, Janice Etchison, Kathleen Kutz, Sam Miller and Juan Llarena.

The demonstration protested the mistreatment of immigrant children and families. The common theme was "do whatever you can to raise your voice on behalf of immigrant children." Contact the White House and senators, hold prayer services, and affirm the dignity of all people, and provide refugee for children and families fleeing violence.

## Who Profits From Migrant Detention in the U.S.?

Since the beginning of this administration, the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency (ICE) has awarded over \$480 million in federal funds to GEO Group and over \$331 million to CoreCivic. Bloomberg Government found the total fiscal spending in 2018 on immigration detention was \$7.4 billion, a \$2.1 billion increase since 2014. As of 2019, Geo Group runs 14 ICE detention centers with a combined capacity of 14,966 people.

*Dana Nickel, The Globe Post, August 19, 2019*

Southwest Border Migration FY 2019				
2019 Fiscal Year	Unaccompanied Children	Family Units	Single Adult	Total Arrests
January	5,105	24,188	18,686	47,979
February	6,817	36,530	23,533	66,880
March	8,956	53,206	30,671	92,833
April	8,882	58,715	31,677	99,274
May	11,475	84,490	36,894	132,859
June	7,373	57,353	30,178	94,904
July	5,563	42,546	23,873	71,982
August	3,729	25,057	21,907	50,693
Data gathered by U.S. Customs and Border Protection				

## Management Alert—Dangerous Overcrowding

In May 2019, the Office of Inspector General issued a management alert about dangerous overcrowding observed in the El Paso area during their unannounced inspections of U.S. Customs and Border Protection holding facilities. One example occurred during the week of June 10, 2019, when inspectors traveled to the Rio Grande Valley in Texas to further investigate serious overcrowding and prolonged detention in Border Patrol facilities requiring immediate attention. They discovered consistent non-compliance to regulations and court rulings.

*Office of Inspector General Report, DHS Needs to Address Dangerous Overcrowding and Prolonged Detention of Children and Adults in the Rio Grande Valley, 7/2/19*



Participants at Newark Day of Action for Immigrant Children and Families on September 4, Newark, NJ. Photo credit: Sr. Mariette Therese Bernier, OSB

## 'Tent cities' cost more than keeping migrant kids with parents

The cost of holding migrant children who have been separated from their parents in newly created "tent cities" is \$775 per person per night, according to an official at the Department of Health and Human Services.

The reason for the high cost is that the sudden urgency to bring in security, air conditioning, medical workers and other government contractors far surpasses the cost for structures that are routinely staffed.

It costs \$256 per person per night to hold children in permanent HHS facilities like Casa Padre in Brownsville, Texas. Keeping children with their parents in detention centers like the one run by U.S. Customs and Immigration Enforcement in Dilley, Texas costs \$298 per resident per night.

*Julia Ainsley, NBC News, June 20, 2018*

## Health and Human Services Unaccompanied Alien Children (UAC) Program

➤As of June 2019 (FY19-YTD), DHS has referred over 58,500 UAC to the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR), an increase of over 57 percent from the same time period in FY 2018.

➤As of August 5, 2019, there are approximately 8,700 UAC in HHS care. At the end of June, 2019, the system-wide length of care is 45 days.

➤As of August 3, 2019, no UAC are sheltered at the Homestead facility.

➤The Carrizo Springs Shelter (previously used as a private dormitory "man camp" for oil field workers) closed at the end of July due to a decrease in the number of unaccompanied children who end up in U.S. custody. Capacity at this shelter was 1,124. Since opening on June 30, 2019, 354 children were housed at the shelter and 217 children were united with a sponsor.

*Health and Human Services, Unaccompanied Alien Children (UAC) Program, August 6, 2019*

*Shelter at Carrizo Springs, Texas, July 22, 2019*

*Shelter at Homestead Job Corps Site, Homestead, FL August 6, 2019*

# The Work of Justice

## Sister Helen Prejean traces a slow journey to justice in 'River of Fire'

Sister Helen Prejean, C.S.J., is best known for her work against the death penalty, but her new memoir, **River of Fire**, is a prequel to her bestselling **Dead Man Walking**, in which she counsels and then walks a death row inmate to his execution and witnesses it firsthand.

**River of Fire** covers the first half of Prejean's 80 years. It shows how and why it took the Dixie-born nun decades to shake off the cultural haze of white Southern privilege to comprehend the complex configuration of poverty, racial disparity and discrimination, capitalism, social injustice and all the other issues that conflate inside her death row advocacy work.

Janet Kinsian, *Los Angeles Times*, August 9, 2019

## 2019 LCWR Assembly honors Sr. Norma Pimentel, a member of the Missionaries of Jesus

The Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR) honored with its 2019 Outstanding Leadership Award Sister Norma Pimentel, M.J., an acclaimed leader in serving and advocating for refugees crossing the US-Mexico border and awaiting asylum. She received her award and addressed the assembly at the closing banquet on August 16.

As the executive director of Catholic Charities of the Rio Grande Valley on the U.S.-Mexico border, Sister Pimentel sees up to 800 migrants every day pouring into her center, often their first stop after being released from U.S. Customs and Border Protection. Here, the Missionaries of Jesus sister and her staff help them organize the rest of their journey to their final destinations, and provide them with new clothes, a hot meal and shower. More than 150,000 migrants have passed through her ministry's doors.

LCWR, *News*, August 7, 2019  
Soli Salgado and Dan Stockman,  
*Global Sisters Report*, August 17, 2019



## WITNESS ... A Week in the Life

During the summer, three students from St. Gertrude High School – a ministry of the Bristow, Virginia, Monastery – joined the community for a week of witnessing, experiencing, and understanding the Benedictine lifestyle. Rachel, one of the women who “walked the walk” that week, shared her impressions about one specific ministry encounter they had during an English as a second language class:

*“During the middle of the class, a young woman named Guadalupe (Lupe) walked in. She sat next to us, so Madison and I started talking to her. It was initially very hard, because of the language barrier – she had a hard time speaking in English, and it was the opposite for us. At first we talked in our normal speed to Lupe, but she didn’t understand the words. I tried to figure out a way to break down the barrier because I wanted to learn more about her. We used our limited Spanish and basic words to communicate, and she used her basic English words to communicate.”*

*Once we found a way that we could both communicate, we talked about how Mexico and the US are different, Lupe’s family and friends, the culture, and the reasons for her coming to the US.*

*We even shared a bit of our culture – she gave us candy from her country (chili covered watermelon bites) and we gave her our Werther’s Originals.*

*It was an incredible experience to be able to break down a language barrier and find ways to communicate.”*



## Caridad de Corazón—Eagle Pass, Texas

Sr. Ursula Herrera of the Boerne Benedictine Community ministers to the needs of the poor and disenfranchised living in communities near the Texas/Mexico Border. Caridad de Corazón, Charity of the Heart, was founded in 2000, promoting health education and providing food, household goods, and medical equipment to those in need.

In responding to the BCRI survey, Sister identified some of the many people and groups who have helped her in this vital work. For example, volunteers from Immaculate Conception Monastery in Ferdinand, IN included Srs. Gail, Teresa, Karen, Ann Marie, Judith, Jean Marie, Jane Ann, Shiela Marie, and Mary Agnes, as well as volunteer student Maria. They contributed time, talent, and treasure from November of 2018 thru this September. Sister Dorothy Schutte from St. Walburg Monastery in Covington, KY ministered for nearly a month in August and September.

This ability to share common work for those less fortunate demonstrates how each piece of our ministry connects to form a more dynamic Benedictine vision. We are most grateful to each of these volunteers who have greatly enriched the lives of so many in need.

# Reflections from Monasteries

We received many responses to our request for input from member monasteries as to how our communities are responding to the issues and challenges of our times. The survey contained four specific areas of focus — Care for the Earth and its Resources, Hospitality, Gratitude, and Stewardship of Resources, although respondents were free to identify other ways in which their Benedictine charisms were impacting the communities in which they ministered. Here are summaries of this amazing work.

*Special thanks for the contributions of Srs. Rose Marie Stallbaumer, Barbara McCracken, Benita Peters, Rosalie Ruesewald, Andrea Westkamp, Ursula Herrera and Susan Mika*

## CARE FOR THE EARTH

At Sacred Heart Monastery in Cullman, Alabama the sisters adapted to conditions of a serious drought by setting up a cart for prerinsing dishes after each meal. This allowed for less water being needed in the rinse cycle of the dishwasher.

Although recent floods have left the Mount St. Scholastica community "awash," the Wangari Committee encourages the sisters to carry their own water bottles to fill and reuse. Those floods produced a boil water order, so community members chose to boil water instead of resorting to bottled water during the crisis. They have also installed three sets of solar panels, with more to come in future planning.

All survey respondents have indicated an extensive effort to reduce plastic waste by choosing reusable alternatives to single-use items.

## GRATITUDE

The Atchison community makes it a point to thank local, state and federal representatives when they do the right thing.

## G.E.M. PROGRAM BREAKS POVERTY CYCLE

St. Scholastica Monastery in Fort Smith, Arkansas began the G.E.M. (Girls' Education Matters) scholarship program for girls in Guatemala 7 years ago. The 35 recipients, mostly from single-parent families living in material poverty, attend Colegio San Benito, a K-high school run by Benedictine monks in Esquipulas, Guatemala. Then they go on to attend the university, a dream they could never have imagined a few years ago. Our first graduate is now completing her 4th year of medical school; one young lady just finished nursing school; 2 are in their second year of university majoring in business, and one is studying physical therapy. Five more scholarship recipients will begin university studies in January. The program focuses on girls because, "According to the UN's Global Initiative on Education, educating girls breaks the cycle of poverty and positively influences future generations." A full scholarship for one year to Colegio San Benito is only \$500. Donations are appreciated and checks should be made to St. Scholastica Monastery with "GUATEMALA SCHOLARSHIP FUND" on the memo line.

*No amount of special asceticism can equal the amount of spiritual growth and human maturity that comes with care for others.*

Joan Chittister, *A Little Rule for Beginners*, p. 91



Sor Dina and coworkers from the G.E.M. (Girls' Education Matters) Program in Guatemala

## HOSPITALITY

The Cullman community has hosted a Vietnam refugee family in the 1970's, families displaced by Hurricane Katrina, and religious sisters from other countries seeking English proficiency. Interest from their Partnership with the Poor Fund provides for specific needs identified by various community agencies.

Mount St. Scholastica's Sister Gabrielle chairs the city's Hunger Task Force, other members volunteer at Catholic Charities, distribute food at the monastery and in the local community through an established process, provide financial assistance where needed to the poor, and offer temporary shelter to the homeless and refugees at a local hotel. Through letters to decision makers in the community, as well as utilizing the regular column in the Atchison newspaper entitled "View from the Mount," the sisters have raised awareness about key Benedictine values like caring for the earth and alleviating the plight of the homeless, refugees, and asylum seekers. Three members of the community recently spent two weeks in El Paso assisting Annunciation House in their care for refugees crossing the border.

## STEWARDSHIP OF RESOURCES

Renovation of the monastery property as part of a Master Plan brought the Cullman monastery up to code, allowing for increased energy efficiency and better use of facilities.

Two communities have recently moved into new monastery buildings. St. Scholastica Monastery in Ft. Smith has built new facilities to allow for greater accessibility for sisters with mobility needs, reducing utility costs through improved insulation, and other improvements.

The new monastery in Boerne, Texas, was master planned with care for the earth as its guiding principle. Solar panels, water catchment systems, and floor to ceiling windows that showcase the natural beauty of the Texas Hill Country and provide maximum sunlight to reduce the need for artificial lighting — all reduce the carbon footprint of the building and grounds.



## Benedictine Coalition for Responsible Investment

P.O. Box 200423 San Antonio, TX 78220

### Our Mission

*Recognizing the directive from the Rule of St. Benedict that distribution should be made to each according to need, the Benedictine Coalition for Responsible Investment works to build a world in which corporate policies and practices reflect just and equitable distribution of resources for the common good.*

### Upcoming Meeting Dates

- + **Resource Center for Religious Institutes (RCRI)** — October 1-4, 2019, Dallas, TX
- **BCRI** — Meeting is October 3, 2019, from 7:30-8:45 a.m., in Dallas, TX
- + **Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility (ICCR)** — October 28 - November 1, 2019, New York City, NY

## THANK YOU TO OUR 2019 MEMBERS

### Our Member Monasteries:

- **Mount St. Scholastica** (Atchison, Kansas)
- **St. Scholastica Monastery** (Boerne, Texas)
- **Benedictine Sisters of Virginia** (Bristow, Virginia)
- **St. Scholastica Monastery** (Chicago, Illinois)
- **Benedictine Sisters of Perpetual Adoration** (Clyde, Missouri)
- **Benet Hill Monastery** (Colorado Springs, Colorado)
- **St. Walburg Monastery** (Covington, Kentucky)
- **Sacred Heart Monastery** (Cullman, Alabama)
- **St. Walburga Monastery** (Elizabeth, New Jersey)

- **Mount St. Benedict** (Erie, Pennsylvania)
- **St. Scholastica Monastery** (Fort Smith, Arkansas)
- **Sacred Heart Monastery** (Lisle, Illinois)
- **Benedictine Sisters of Baltimore** (Lutherville, Maryland)
- **Benedictine Women — Holy Wisdom Monastery** (Madison, Wisconsin)
- **Monasterio de San Benito** (Mexico City, D.F.)
- **St. Gertrude Monastery** (Newark, Delaware)
- **Immaculata Monastery** (Norfolk, Nebraska)
- **Mount Saviour Monastery** (Pine City, New York)

- **Benedictine Sisters of Florida** (St. Leo, Florida)
- **Christ the King Priory** (Schuyler, Nebraska)
- **Monasterio Pan De Vida** (Torreon, Coahuila, Mexico)
- **Mother of God Monastery** (Watertown, South Dakota)
- **Sacred Heart Monastery** (Yankton, South Dakota)

### Our Partner Community:

- **Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth** (Leavenworth, Kansas)

*Thanks*

## The Benedictine Coalition for Responsible Investment

P. O. Box 200423 San Antonio, TX 78220 Phone: 210-348-6704

Members of the Benedictine CRI work to influence corporate practices on issues relating to basic human rights. For further information about the coalition's work, please complete the following and mail it to the coalition at the address above. The Coalition staff includes: Sr. Susan Mika OSB, Nina Martinez, Ruben Lopez and Linda Murphy.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
 ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
 CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_  
 PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_  
 MONASTERY (or other affiliation) \_\_\_\_\_