



Benedictine Coalition for Responsible Investment

Spring 2020 — Issue 25

Living in the Midst of a Worldwide Pandemic

Who could have imagined a worldwide pandemic (Covid-19) here on Planet Earth in 2020? We believe this to be an unprecedented time for so many and in so many ways. Yes, but, when I looked up “Pandemics” in Wikipedia — the list is long. The first one suspected was influenza in Babylon in 1200 BC.

Today, we see monasteries living their values, as monasteries have since the time of Benedict, in slightly different ways because of social distancing. In the Dark Ages, monasteries took in visitors and guests to protect them from those decimating their countryside. Monasteries were places where manuscripts were meticulously copied and preserved for posterity. Monasteries have been places of rest, retreat, sanctuary. As you will see in this Newsletter, monasteries continue to make a tremendous difference by the reflections and actions they embrace — even while dealing with the issues of a pandemic.

When we are in crisis, there are so many questions which surface. What shall we do? Who shall lead us? Who will make decisions? Who pays? Who benefits? In our work together of holding corporations accountable, we ask those same questions.

In the Newsletter, you see the many questions we, as shareholders, are asking the corporations. Some of these include:

- ❖ What jobs are indispensable – for our monastery, for corporations, for our society? Who is considered an essential employee?
- ❖ How are workers being treated, being protected?
- ❖ How are decisions made, implemented, reviewed and re-assessed?
- ❖ What actions are we implementing to lessen the effects of climate change?
- ❖ How are we treating those seeking asylum at our country's borders?
- ❖ How are we asserting our rights as shareholders, as owners of companies, by holding these shares in our portfolios?

We always say that the Newsletter is **a snapshot in time**. That statement is so true here. We were ready to publish when the pandemic hit. We quickly revised much of our material to reflect what we are experiencing. Shelter-in-place has affected all our lives. In this ministry, many of the shareholder meetings for 2020 will be virtual meetings. This raises questions of access and who controls the phone logistics, or the microphones being turned on or off. We are awaiting the Securities and Exchange Commission ruling on the changes and the vote percentages needed to continue to raise issues. These are major challenges.



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Julian of Norwich eloquently professed, “All shall be well...” In our time and in this moment, we talk of sustainability for the future. Another word coming to the forefront is “resilience.” How will we use this new reality to push ourselves towards greater sustainability — personally, locally, nationally, internationally? Monasteries have been resilient for over 1,500 years — living each day, forging forward courageously, making the decisions which must be made.

“All shall be well...”

2020 Shareholder Resolution Filings

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ALPHABET

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Child Exploitation Online
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AMAZON.COM

Executive Pay — Incorporate Diversity and Sustainability Metrics
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Human Rights Impact Assessment
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Monasterio Pan de Vida, Torreon

AMGEN

Executive Compensation and Drug Pricing Risks — Feasibility Report
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Gender Identity Non-Discrimination Policy
Benedictine Sisters — Mount St. Scholastica

BLACKROCK, INC.

Proxy Voting Policies Related to Climate Change
Benedictine Sisters of Cullman, AL

BOEING

Lobbying Expenditures Disclosure — Climate Change
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BRISTOL-MYERS SQUIBB

Independent Board Chair
Monasterio de San Benito, Mexico City

CATERPILLAR

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CHEVRON

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Report on Plans to Align Operations with Paris Agreement
Benedictine Sisters of Cullman, AL

COMCAST

Lobbying Expenditures Disclosure — Climate Change
Benedictine Sisters — Mount St. Scholastica

DUKE ENERGY CORPORATION

Lobbying Expenditures Disclosure — Climate Change
Benedictine Sisters of Virginia

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Gender Identity Non-Discrimination Policy
Benedictine Sisters — Mount St. Scholastica

EXXON MOBIL

Lobbying Expenditures Disclosure — Climate Change
Benedictine Sisters — Mount St. Scholastica
Report on Plans to Align Operations with Paris Agreement
Benedictine Sisters of Virginia
Benedictine Sisters, Boerne, TX

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Benedictine Sisters — Mount St. Scholastica
Benedictine Sisters of Cullman, AL

GENERAL MOTORS

Lobbying Expenditures Disclosure — Climate Change
Benedictine Sisters, Boerne, TX
Benedictine Sisters of Virginia

GILEAD SCIENCES, INC

Independent Board Chair
Benedictine Sisters of Cullman, AL

GOLDMAN SACHS

Report on Measuring GHG Footprint of Lending Activities
Monasterio Pan de Vida, Torreon

HOME DEPOT

Workforce Diversity Report
Benedictine Sisters — Mount St. Scholastica
Benedictine Sisters of Baltimore
Benedictine Sisters of Virginia
Benedictine Sisters, Boerne, TX
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INTERNATIONAL FLAVORS AND FRAGRANCE

Gender Identity Non-Discrimination Policy
Monasterio Pan de Vida, Torreon

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Develop Strategy to Reduce Contributions to Climate Change
Benedictine Sisters — Mount St. Scholastica

2020 Shareholder Resolution Filings

J. P. MORGAN CHASE & CO.

Project Financing Related to the Arctic and Canadian Oil Sands

Benedictine Sisters — Mount St. Scholastica

Proxy Voting Policies Related to Climate Change

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Benedictine Sisters of Baltimore

Report on Reducing GHG Emissions Associated with Lending

Monasterio Pan de Vida, Torreon

JOHNSON & JOHNSON

Independent Board Chair

Benedictine Sisters — Mount St. Scholastica

Monasterio de San Benito, Mexico City

Benedictine Sisters, Boerne, TX

Benedictine Sisters of Virginia

MERCK & CO., INC.

Report on Allocation of Corporate Tax Savings

Benedictine Sisters — Mount St. Scholastica

Senior Executive Incentives — Integrate Drug Pricing Risk

Benedictine Sisters of Baltimore

Benedictine Sisters of Virginia

PFIZER

Lobbying Expenditures Disclosure — Pharma

Monasterio de San Benito, Mexico City

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Lobbying Expenditures Disclosure — Climate Change

Benedictine Sisters — Mount St. Scholastica

TJX COMPANIES, INC.

Report on Inequities in Compensation due to Gender, Race, or Ethnicity

Benedictine Sisters — Mount St. Scholastica

Consider Pay Grades When Setting CEO Compensation

Benedictine Sisters — Mount St. Scholastica

Recruitment and Forced Labor

Benedictine Sisters of Cullman, AL

Benedictine Sisters of Virginia

VERIZON COMMUNICATION

Child Sexual Exploitation Online

Benedictine Sisters of Virginia

VERTEX PHARMACEUTICALS

Senior Executive Incentives — Integrate Drug Pricing Risks

Benedictine Sisters — Mount St. Scholastica

WELLS FARGO & COMPANY

Report on Reducing GHG Emissions Associated with Lending Activities

Benedictine Sisters — Mount St. Scholastica

Benedictine Sisters of Cullman, AL



2020 Proxy Season Overview

ICCR members filed 254 resolutions for 2020 corporate proxies, up from 250 this time last year. Thirty-seven resolutions have been successfully withdrawn for agreement. Notably, for the first time resolutions related to human rights and worker rights were the most numerous, at 52. They exceeded resolutions directly addressing climate change, which was the second most active issue with 45 resolutions. Lobbying and political spending saw 43 resolutions, and inclusiveness, 42.

This year, investors presented corporations with a large and diverse set of requests ranging from the adoption of a human rights policy and human rights risk assessments, to the appointment of board members with human rights expertise. Concerns addressed included technology and data privacy, immigration, child sexual exploitation, ethical labor recruitment, prison labor in supply chains, gun violence, human capital management, workplace discrimination and conflict zones.

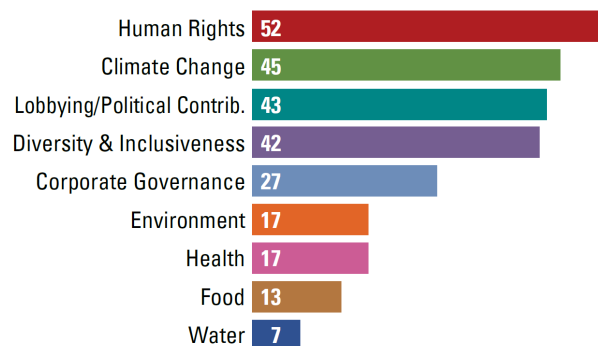
2020 Proxy Resolutions and Voting Guide, **ICCR**, 2/27/2020

Investor Successes

- **Carnival** agreed to expand its existing policies and practices on human rights and develop a more strategic/holistic approach.
- **Western Union** announced it is ending its relationship with the Burmese military-owned bank.
- **Chipotle** committed to address its contribution to climate change, including an intention to set emissions reduction targets for its full carbon footprint.
- **Nucor** agreed to report on its climate change mitigation strategies.

2020 Proxy Resolutions and Voting Guide, **ICCR**, 2/27/2020

Resolutions by Issue



Graphic Source: 2020 Proxy Resolutions and Voting Guide, **ICCR**, 2/27/2020

Coronavirus Response Statement

ICCR Investor Statement on Coronavirus Response

We are 195 long-term institutional investors representing over \$4.7 trillion USD in assets under management with global exposure across capital markets. We recognize the long-term viability of the companies in which we invest is inextricably tied to the welfare of their stakeholders, including their employees, suppliers, customers and the communities in which they operate. As such, we call on these management teams and boards of directors to join us in facing this unprecedented threat. The long-term consequences of COVID-19 are difficult to imagine at this early stage. What we do know, however, is that the virus will strain all our global social and financial systems. Millions of working people will face impossible hardships as COVID-19 shuts down schools, workplaces, hourly employment, transportation and more. We also know that vulnerable communities are the most at risk as they have limited access to social safety nets and financial resources to weather this uncertain period.

While we all face considerable challenges in this environment, there are things we can do to protect our society and the companies we invest in from the worst potential outcomes, and that includes protecting workers. Board directors are accountable for long-term human capital management strategy; the companies they oversee have invested in their workforces and will be well served by having retained a well-trained and committed workforce when business operations are able to resume. Furthermore, the prospect of widespread unemployment will exacerbate the crisis and pose grave risks to basic social stability and the financial markets. Finally, in the face of this global humanitarian crisis we all benefit by coming together.

In that spirit, we urge the business community to ... consider the following steps in particular:

1. Provide paid leave: We urge companies to make emergency paid leave available to all employees, including temporary, part time, and subcontracted workers. Without paid leave, social distancing and self-isolation are not broadly possible.
2. Prioritize health and safety: Protecting worker and public safety is essential for maintaining business reputations, consumer confidence and the social license to operate, as well as staying operational. Workers should avoid or limit exposure to COVID-19 as much as possible. Potential measures include rotating shifts; remote work; enhanced protections, trainings/cleaning; adopting occupational safety and health guidance, and closing locations.
3. Maintain employment: We support companies taking every measure to retain workers as widespread unemployment will only exacerbate the current crisis. Retaining a well-trained and committed workforce will permit companies to resume operations as quickly as possible once the crisis is resolved. Companies considering layoffs should be mindful of ... the risk for subsequent employment discrimination cases.
4. Maintain supplier/customer relationships: ... [M]aintaining prompt payments to suppliers and working with customers facing financial challenges will help to stabilize the economy, protect our communities and small businesses and ensure a stable supply chain is in place for business operations to resume normally.
5. Financial prudence: During this period of market stress, we expect the highest level of ethical financial management and responsibility... We recognize this may include suspending share buybacks and showing support for the predicaments of their constituencies by limiting executive/senior management compensation.

We hope companies and their boards will consider measures beyond these recommendations, particularly those that are faring well in these difficult times. Such measures may include childcare assistance, hazard pay, assistance in accessing government support programs, employer-paid health insurance for laid off workers, or deploying resources to address the current needs related to the pandemic. While we acknowledge many of these recommendations may be out of reach, over the last several years we have seen corporations show leadership by using their power as a force for tremendous good — leadership critically needed as we face COVID-19 together.



Photo by Edwin Hooper on [Unsplash](#)

The Supreme Court Will Decide the Fate of the Affordable Care Act — Again

Claiming that the Affordable Care Act is no longer constitutional because the current administration has removed the mandatory health insurance provisions contained in it, 21 states' attorneys general await a Supreme Court ruling on their coalition's appeal regarding the ACA's constitutionality. The rules of the Court require that briefs for this case be filed by mid-June at the earliest, which in effect means the case will most certainly not be decided in this term — since oral arguments must be heard by April 29. Rather, oral arguments for the Fall term begin October 5, so this outcome will likely not be decided before the November elections.

Timothy S. Jost
Commonwealth Fund, 03/03/2020



Image Credit: U.S. Census Bureau

Important New dates for Census Data Collection

Due to the Corona Virus pandemic, the Census Bureau has changed certain collection dates and methodologies to complete the 2020 Census, as follows:

- ⇒ **June 1, 2020**
Field operations to collect data from households
- ⇒ **Oct. 31, 2020**
Household surveys must be completed
- ⇒ **April 30, 2021**
Final results of the census count reported **

** According to the U. S. Constitution, this report must be completed by Dec. 31, so the Bureau is in the process of requesting an extension from Congress for changing the date of reporting the count.

Reflections for our Time

The often overwhelming way in which our way of life, our ministries, our world have been changed by the global crisis we now face challenges us to look both inward – and outward – at the work we do and the people our work impacts. Three words dominate our conversations: **essential**, **access**, **normal**. Perhaps we might take time to reflect on the meaning of these words for us and for our mission.

WHAT DOES ESSENTIAL MEAN? What are the essential things in our lives? What are things we thought were essential, but now know are not? What are the essential things in the lives of those we serve? How can we help deliver those essential things?

In this pandemic, some jobs have been deemed essential, for example in the health care system and in meat-packing plants. In these difficult times, what does that designation mean for the people involved? Their risks? Their heroism? Their protection/service of us at great personal sacrifice? What are we called to do as a result of this understanding?

WHAT DOES ACCESS MEAN? The crisis we now face brings into sharp focus the limitations poverty has imposed on marginalized populations. What can we as communities of faith accomplish in the areas of:

- Access to health care at every level (preventive, therapeutic, emergency, etc.)
- Access to improved infrastructure (transportation, the internet, etc.)
- Access to affordable and healthy food (food bank relief, school lunch programs, etc.)
- Access to protective equipment (nursing home patients/staff, hospital workers, etc.)
- Access to the technology needed for distance learning (tablets, smart phones, etc.)
- Access to monetary relief for those displaced by job loss (living wage, paid sick leave, unemployment benefits, etc.)

WHAT DOES NORMAL MEAN? When we are forward-looking to the other side of this crisis, what are our visions about what could become our way of life? The lives of those we serve? How might we change the tears in the fabric of our society? How might our values change? What will our commitments be toward improving access? Other ideas?

In everything, we come full circle to the trust our faith reminds us to have in God. The Gospel challenge in Matthew 25, however, makes it abundantly clear that it is we who must feed the hungry, quench the thirsty, welcome the stranger, clothe the needy, care for the sick, and visit those imprisoned. What is my place, my role, my duty in these dangerous times?



SEC Rules Change Proposal

Proposed SEC Rules Change Procedural Requirements and Resubmission Thresholds under Exchange Act Rule 14a-8

The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) proposal does away with the simple requirement that shareholders must have held at least \$2,000 worth of shares for one year in a company to be eligible to file a shareholder proposal at its annual meeting. Instead, the proposed rule creates a new tiered system based on the length of time the shares are held. For shares held one year, the SEC proposes a massive 1200 percent increase in the stock ownership required—to \$25,000. If held for two years, the amount is \$15,000 and for three years, it's \$2,000.

Historically, investors have been able to combine holdings to meet the ownership threshold in order to file a resolution. The proposal bars share aggregation while imposing a huge increase in ownership thresholds for shares held less than 2 or 3 years.

The support that shareholder proposals must receive — based on the percentage of the shares voted — to be eligible for resubmission historically has been set at modest levels to allow for emerging issues to build support over time from other investors. The proposal changes these support thresholds from 3% of the shares voted the first year, 6% the second year and 10% the third year and beyond to 5%, 15% and 25% respectively.

More troubling is a new provision that attacks proposals that reach the 25-50% range after three years. If such a proposal's support decreases by 10% from the previous year's vote, a company can omit it from the proxy. This sets up a bizarre scenario where a proposal that loses support from 49% to 44% in the fourth year (a 10% decline from 49%) can be omitted, but a proposal that remains steady at 27% on the fourth year's vote can be resubmitted. This would imply that the vote of 44% is a weaker outcome than a vote of 27%.

The proposed rule would constrain an investor or a representative to offer one shareholder proposal per meeting. A shareholder-proponent would not be permitted to submit one proposal in his or her own name and simultaneously serve as a representative to submit a different proposal on another shareholder's behalf for consideration at the same meeting.

The proposed rule adds a new provision to Rule 14a-8 mandating that the proponents make themselves available to the company for dialogue in person or by phone. For asset owner proponents who have hired asset managers or other representatives for their professional guidance and advocacy services, this represents an interference with the client/manager relationship. The SEC proposed rule also contemplates the possibility of banning asset owners from hiring representatives and managers to conduct shareholder advocacy on their behalf. This portion of the proposed rule represents a radical departure.

U.S. SIF Opposes SEC's Proposed Changes To Rule 14a-8 And Proxy Advisors, **U.S. SIF**, 11/5/2019

Editor's Note: The U.S. SIF is the United States Sustainable Investment Forum.

As of today, the SEC decision on when — or whether — to implement these rules changes has not been announced, although the 60-day comment period required by law has now passed. A sampling of the responses appears on these two pages. We await this pending outcome.

Business is a noble vocation, directed to producing wealth and improving the world. It can be a fruitful source of prosperity for the area in which it operates, especially if it sees the creation of jobs as an essential part of its service to the common good. This common good also includes the earth... the environmental challenge we are undergoing, and its human roots, concern and affect us all.

Pope Francis, Laudato Si', #129



MISSION STATEMENT

The US Securities & Exchange Commission

The mission of the U.S. Securities & Exchange Commission is to protect investors, **maintain fair, orderly, and efficient markets**, and facilitate capital formation.

As of April 1, at least 286 ICCR investors, including the Benedictine Coalition for Responsible Investment, have opposed these proposed rules changes. Here are some of their responses.

The Response...

We believe that reviewing our ownership in the stock market and raising concerns is part of our ownership responsibility and commitment to long-term stewardship for the common good...Trade associations like the Business Roundtable, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and the National Association of Manufacturers have lobbied rigorously for the proposed changes by exaggerating the cost of the process to companies, and by misleadingly painting shareholders raising ESG issues as "activists" imposing a "social agenda" who are "uninterested in shareholder value." This misinformation feeds a political agenda by the trade associations to limit the ability of shareholders to engage with the companies that they own...In recent decades, our groups have filed resolutions with oil and gas companies on the risks of climate change that often received below 5% of shareholder support when first introduced beginning in 1998, but which now receive substantial, and even majority shareholder votes, and have been adapted by numerous companies. Resolutions highlighting human rights risks in global supply chains initially received low votes at companies, but as a result of engagement prompted by the proposals, sector leaders have adopted human rights policies and supplier codes of conduct that help minimize legal, reputational, and financial risks. Clearly, these and other votes on critical matters signify that investors appreciate the value being raised in these resolutions.

Benedictine Coalition for Responsible Investment

The SEC exists to protect investors and these new rules would only restrict small investors like ourselves and those who represent them; the very groups that in a major way help keep corporations honest...Changing to the new rules will undermine the very corporate engagement process that has been of great value to both companies and investors. It will leave companies without accountability to their own shareholders and eliminate, for most of the shareholders, a process that has worked well for many decades. The new rules would limit the ability of small investors like ourselves to influence corporate behavior, thus making the world of finance less transparent, less accessible and less democratic.

*Sister Barbara McCracken, OSB
Mount St. Scholastica, Atchison, KS*

Member Response to SEC Proposal Cont'd

Are we afraid of questions? Are we afraid of the hard questions or the unpopular ones? Asking for answers to important concerns is needed – in our day and age more than ever. The solutions to many of the concerns raised in the proxy process will take all of us working together to reach a solution that is for the common good of people and the planet...Why is this important? We have been able to raise questions with companies which reflect our values. For example, we raised questions on proxy ballots in the 1990s about working conditions and the wages paid to maquiladora workers in Mexico. Shareholders were able to discuss the extreme gap of wages in the United States and what the same company was paying across a border. In 1995, we filed a shareholder resolution and were able to ask Walmart to stop selling guns and they did – at that time...We own shares of McDonald's. We filed a resolution in 2014 for the 2015 Proxy Season. We engaged the company, speaking about the antibiotics which we humans use and asked that they be eliminated in their supply chain – chicken, beef and pork. The company has taken these antibiotics out their chicken supply chain and are working on the beef supply chain.

***Sister Susan Mika, OSB,
St. Scholastica Monastery, Boerne, TX***

As Benedictine women, we believe that justice is at the heart of the Gospel. One of the core values of our Benedictine charism is the creative sustainability of our human and fiscal resources.

***Sister Therese Haydel, OSB
Sacred Heart Monastery, Cullman, AL***

Based on published information in the public record, the input and impact of resolutions submitted by smaller investors over the last years alone has been essential to making positive changes to corporate practices in regard to human rights, social, economic and environmental issues. Most important, these resolutions align with shareholder and public interests – and the public good.

***Christine Zinni, PhD
Western New York***

I believe these local histories serve as examples of how small investors using investments to speak to issues of social justice can have a positive impact on corporate policies. These are but two examples (Ecumenical Task Force of the Niagara Frontier & Western New York Coalition for Environmental Justice) of scores of small-investor shareholder resolutions that have positively influenced corporate policy to represent the interests of shareholders and the public.

***Roger A. Cook
Riverside-Salem United Church of Christ and the
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)***

Arguing that these proposed changes will modernize operations in an era of increasing economic inequality and conflict promises only to increase tensions and an ability of all relevant parties to achieve collegial discussion and cooperative endeavors. We encourage you to reassess not only the proposed changes but a process that seeks to silence shareholders, thereby diminishing information that could be helpful to all corporate organizations.

***Rev. John R. Long, Convenor
Interfaith Peace Network of Western New York***

I am the treasurer of the Benedictine Sisters of Chicago and we are shareholders in a number of corporations because we are saving money for the care of our elderly members. Since so many of us are elderly now, we are no longer able to engage in many of the charitable, religious, and educational activities that we used to, but the savings that we have to put by for the future can be put to good use by submitting shareholder resolutions that bring to the attention of corporations various issues of justice including shareholder rights, worker rights, consumer rights, and ecological issues. We assume that the leaders of corporations are decent human beings who cannot know everything and we provide a service when we can bring issues of concern to their attention. Everyone benefits, including the corporations and their shareholders.

Making the eligibility requirements for making resolutions more restrictive will make it more difficult for small shareholders like us to communicate effectively with the leaders of corporations and with other shareholders, even though resolutions submitted from small shareholders have often been a source of good ideas and changes that have benefitted the corporations, their customers, and their workers, as well as society as a whole. Cutting off this source of information will deprive the leaders of corporations of ideas that, while beneficial, they may otherwise never have considered.

***Sr. Mary Ann O'Ryan, OSB
St. Scholastica Monastery, Chicago, IL***

As awareness of social needs has grown, we have become increasingly involved in socially responsible investing, raising questions as owners of companies in our portfolio...We have seen the support for issues increase over the years as issues continue to be addressed and challenged by shareholders.

Recognizing the need for diversity in opinion offers the potential for new and/or improved ideas. An example of this is the increased support for environmental sustainability concerning the risks of climate change related to oil and gas production.

***Sister Patricia Kirk, OSB
Benedictine Sisters of Baltimore***

We have been engaged in value-based investing and have long advocated for accountability and conscientious stewardship among stakeholders in corporate enterprises...

As long-term investors who engage with companies on critical environmental, social, and governance (ESG) issues, we believe that the proposed rules are unnecessary, and will undermine a corporate engagement process that has been of great value to both companies and investors.

***Sister Andrea Westkamp, OSB
Benedictine Sisters of Virginia***

From the SEC Website:

... [I]nvesting is not a spectator sport. By far the best way for investors to protect the money they put into the securities markets is to do research and ask questions.

Benedictine Values Provide

From Christ the King Priory, Schuylar: BALANCE

Scripture is rather reluctant to promote boasting about plans to go here and go there or to do this or do that. It suggests adding a little phrase "If God wishes, we will live and do this or that" (James 4:15). And these days we come face to face with interrupted trips, interrupted meetings and having to stay put. These changing plans have an added dose of anxiety.

Each night at Compline we monks sing, "Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit." Admittedly, most of the time, we just sing the words routinely. But now is the time to stand in those words. Placing our lives into God's hands is one certain thing we can do. We can pray and in praying, practice letting go of what we cannot control and hearing what we can do.

The experience of staying at home is not usually difficult for us monks, but this new "staying put" may be hard for everyone, especially those not used to it. St. Benedict has some simple suggestions: make up a schedule for the day. Put in it time for prayer, do some work in the place where you are, take time to read -- spiritual and other literature. Now is the time for doing everyday things mindfully, with a sense that even small things matter. Work at remembering others, staying in contact, going slow and looking carefully at what is around us. We might discover what we never saw before.

Fr. Joel Macul, OSB

From Holy Name Monastery, St. Leo: CALL TO PRAYER

Dear Friends,

We miss the presence of our monastery guests and pray daily that all of you and your families are safely sequestered and free from any signs of COVID-19.

I continue to be inspired by the care and concern people are showing toward each other. As a former educator, I feel for the principals and teachers who now scramble to provide worthwhile experiences for their students, the parents who are trying to work from home sharing their one computer with their children, and all those without technology.

On April 2, we joined Benedictine communities in the HERALD OF HOPE practice of ringing our Angelus bell each day of the pandemic at 3:00 p.m. We stop to call to mind and pray for all those affected by COVID-19: our friends, the unemployed and lonely, the elderly, the hungry and the food providers, the sick and their caretakers. There are SO many... We invite you to join us at 3 p.m. for people everywhere.

Sister Roberta Bailey, OSB

Although the world is full of suffering, it is also full of the overcoming of it.

Helen Keller

From the webpage of the Benedictine Sisters of Erie

From St. Scholastica Monastery, Boerne: CARE OF THE SICK

"Care of the sick must rank above and before all else, so that they may truly be served as Christ, for he said: 'I was sick and you visited me' (Matt 25:36), and 'What you did for one of these least brothers you did for me' (Matt 25:40). **Rule of Benedict – Chap. 36** In that spirit, the community prays:

O, Divine Healer, we offer our prayers for those infected with this virus. We pray for their healing. May they be shown mercy and compassion as they heal. Help them feel your loving presence surrounding them as they struggle. Divine Healer, eradicate this virus from their bodies and bring them back to wholeness. Provide the medical care they need, provide each of them with loving and caring staff. Provide them with the mental, physical and spiritual healing that each needs.

We pray for the medical staffs, care givers, custodians, suppliers, administrators of hospitals and nursing homes, all that are working overtime to help all victims of this disease. Give them strength in body and mind to do their work and keep them safe. Help them to feel your presence with them. Keep their families safe as they return home. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

From Mount St. Benedict, Erie: HOSPITALITY

At Emmaus Soup Kitchen, where people in need can usually sit down for a hot meal and conversation, food is now being packed to go.

"What's hardest for us is that we can't engage them (soup kitchen guests) in conversation and ask how they are," explained Sr. Mary Miller, OSB, Emmaus' director, in an article in the *Erie Times-News* (3/29/20) on the plight of the homeless during the pandemic.

She explained that instead of the usual daily sit-down dinner, Emmaus is now packing hot meals and distributing them at the door. "We provide food for the body and care for the soul, but right now, other than our prayers for them, there's no way to engage in conversation ... and express that kind of care and concern for them."

From Mount St. Scholastica, Atchison: MANUAL LABOR



We are doing our best to stay safe. Some of the sisters are making masks for the sisters, our employees and Saint Benedict's Abbey. Pray for us as we pray for all of you.

Rays of Light and Hope

*Run while
you have the
light of life.*

John 12:35

RB: Ch 72



From Emmanuel Monastery, Lutherville: COMMUNITY

WHEN THIS IS OVER

***When this is over,
may we never again
take for granted
a handshake with a stranger
full shelves at the store
conversations with neighbors
a crowded theater
Friday night out
the taste of communion
a routine checkup
the school rush each morning
coffee with a friend
the stadium roaring
each deep breath
a boring Tuesday
Life itself.***

***When this ends,
may we find
that we have become
more like the people
we wanted to be
we were called to be
we hoped to be
and may we stay
that way - better
for each other
because of the worst.***

by Laura Kelly

<https://motheringspirit.com/>

E-News, April 2020

From St. Walburga Monastery, Elizabeth: SACRED VESSELS

Suddenly, Everything Matters.

I must admit I've never paid too much attention to how many seconds I take for hand washing... to how many times a day I touch my face... to how close I sit or stand next to someone. All of a sudden all that matters and could literally mean life or death for someone whose health is delicate or compromised.

As we sequester ourselves in the hope of "flattening the curve" and stemming the tide of COVID-19, let's be mindful of "what matters."

Many people will not have the "luxury" of sequestering themselves until the siege is over. They will go to their daily work in clinics, hospitals, police cars, firehouses, sanitation trucks, and other "essential services," risking their own health to serve others, deserving our gratitude and prayers.

In our monastery, we have built-in routines of common prayer, common meals, and work that enable us to be of service to one another and to the larger world. ... This crisis is part of our lives, but it doesn't have to own us.

The *Rule of St. Benedict* instructs all monastics that the pots and pans and utensils of the monastery should be handled with the same reverence as the vessels of the altar. All of us, monastic or not, are being called to handle things and people (including ourselves) with a new and careful reverence -- whether it's those six feet of social distancing, that 20-second hand wash, or whatever. Our lives are touching in new ways because we all face a common problem, and we are truly in it together and responsible for one another in ways we never expected... Suddenly, everything matters ... but then it always did.

Sr. Marlene Milasus, OSB

From the World : SEE THE NEED AND RESPOND



Face shields, a type of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) in extremely short supply, created on a 3-D printer as a personal response to the health care crisis.

Robert Shinn, a nephew of Sr. Ursula Herrera from the Benedictine Sisters of Boerne, Texas, has found a way to contribute to the greater good by seeing the need and taking action. This work is featured at the link below.

<https://www.ksat.com/news/local/2020/04/02/how-sa-woman-helped-spark-grassroots-movement-to-donate-3d-face-shields-to-healthcare-workers/>

From the Sisters of Charity, Leavenworth, Kansas:

CARE FOR THE POOR and CARE FOR THE EARTH

Editor's Note: Our BCRI Partner Community embodies the values we hold and cherish.

We, the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth, affirm our call to communion and mission as women of the Church. In the spirit of our heritage, we continue to seek the path of charity and justice in our day.

Impelled by our baptismal commitment, we claim as our own the prophetic mission of Jesus and our call to discipleship.

In collaboration with those who also embrace Gospel values, we affirm our evolving charism and re-envision our ministry and sponsored works to sustain our mission.

Mindful of the fragility of the earth and of the suffering of God's people, especially the exploited and marginalized, we commit ourselves to address these critical needs and their systemic causes.

Mission Statement

Immigration

Court halts Trump asylum policy, then suspends its own order

The Migrant Protection Protocols (MPP) policy, (also known as "Remain in Mexico" (RIM)), that requires asylum seekers to wait in Mexico while their cases wind through U.S. courts was blocked and then reinstated by a court in a matter of hours. A three-judge panel of the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals put the policy on hold midday Friday (Feb. 28). But by the end of the day, the court allowed the program to go back into effect after the Justice Department argued that its suspension will prompt migrants to overrun the border and endanger national security. The "Remain in Mexico" policy took effect in January 2019 in San Diego and gradually spread across the southern border. About 60,000 people have been sent back to wait for hearings. Asylum has been granted in less than 1% of the roughly 35,000 RIM cases that have been decided. Only 5% are represented by attorneys, many of whom are reluctant to visit clients in Mexico.

Elliot Spagat, **Associated Press**, 2/29/2020

Judge finds government is violating protections for migrant children during pandemic

On April 24, Judge Dolly Gee ruled that U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, which detains migrant families with children, and the Office of Refugee Resettlement, which has custody over unaccompanied minors, are both violating the Flores Settlement Agreement during the coronavirus pandemic. Gee required both ICE and the U.S. refugee agency to "make every effort to promptly and safely" release the children in their custody who have sponsors, don't pose a danger to themselves or others and are not flight risks. Gee also ordered the U.S. refugee agency to temporarily waive the fingerprint requirement for some immediate family members, distant relatives and unrelated adults seeking to sponsor unaccompanied migrant minors.

Camilo Montoya-Galvez, **CBS News**, 4/24/2020

Migrants expelled under public health order

The U.S. has expelled more than 6,300 undocumented migrants on its Mexico border using emergency powers to curb coronavirus spread. The emergency public health order issued on March 21 by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) bans the entry of foreigners considered to pose a "serious danger" to the spread of communicable disease.

BBC, 4/10/2020

Texas' Catholic Bishops denounce Abbott's plan to refuse refugees entry

On January 13, Texas' 16 Catholic Bishops called Gov. Greg Abbott's decision to reject resettlement of new refugees "deeply discouraging and disheartening," joining other religious and secular groups pressing the governor to reconsider. "While the Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops respects the governor, this decision is simply misguided," the Bishops' statement says, "It denies people who are fleeing persecution, including religious persecution, from being able to bring their gifts and talents to our state and contribute to the general common good of all Texans. The refugees who have already resettled in Texas have made our communities even more vibrant." Abbott said the state is already overburdened with immigrants crossing the U.S.-Mexico border and on January 10, made Texas the first state to opt out of the federal program facilitating refugee resettlement. Forty-two other states, including 17 led by Republican governors, have said they'll remain a part of the program.

Taylor Goldenstein, Allie Morris and John MacCormack, **San Antonio Express-News**, 1/13/2020

Awaiting DACA decision

Advocates for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients anxiously await a U.S. Supreme Court ruling on the faith of these "dreamers". These advocates have indicated that such a decision is imminent.

The Supreme Court sessions usually conclude by the end of June.



Trump signs order pausing immigration

President Trump signed an executive order on April 22, restricting certain categories of immigrants from entering the U.S. for 60 days as the country reels from the coronavirus pandemic. The order, which took effect April 23, will not apply to immigrants who already are living and working in the U.S. and are seeking to become legal permanent residents. Medical professionals, farmworkers and others who enter on temporary "nonimmigrant" visas are unaffected. The measure also freezes the Diversity Visa Lottery, which issues about 50,000 green cards annually. Legal permanent residents who are trying to bring their spouses and children into the country also will be unable to do so.

Nick Miroff, **The Washington Post**, 4/22/2020

Migrants deported by U.S. make up 20% of Guatemala's coronavirus cases

As of April 26, 99 migrants recently deported to Guatemala by the U.S. have tested positive for coronavirus. Deportees from the U.S. make up nearly 20% of the 500 cases in Guatemala, which has had 15 pandemic-related deaths. In January and February, ICE deported more than 4,000 migrants to Guatemala each month. In March, when U.S. officials started rapidly expelling unauthorized border crossers under the public health order, the agency deported more than 2,900 people to Guatemala. In April, before deportation flights were suspended, ICE deported more than 600 migrants.

Camilo Montoya-Galvez, **CBS News**, 4/27/2020

Southwest Border Migration FY 2020

2020 Fiscal Year	Unaccompanied Children	Family Units	Single Adult	Total Arrests
October	2,841	9,723	22,843	35,407
November	3,310	9,002	21,208	33,520
December	3,228	8,595	21,031	32,854
January	2,679	5,163	21,359	29,201
February	3,070	4,612	22,392	30,074
March	2,949	3,367	23,637	29,953

Data gathered by U.S. Customs and Border Protection

FY 2019 (Oct.-Sept.) total apprehensions: **851,508**
FY2020 (Oct.-Mar.) total apprehensions: **191,009**

Immigration

U.S. officials say they are highly confident to have reached tally on separated children: 4,368

U.S. officials assured U.S. District Court Judge Dana Sabraw on January 17 that they are highly confident that they have accounted for all of the children who were separated from their parents under the “zero-tolerance” policy. The total tally: 4,368. Judge Sabraw has been at the forefront of that accounting effort since 2018, but he raised new concerns over whether it was complete after a November report by the U.S. Office of Inspector General.

The report suggested that government computer systems had made it impossible to reach an accurate tally. The effort under Sabraw happened in two stages. The first focused on children in government custody as of June 26, 2018, which came to 2,812 (three additional children have been determined not to have been separated after being initially counted). When it was later revealed that the administration had been separating families in certain border cities as early as July 2017 as part of a pilot program, an effort to tally those separations launched. It was a more challenging prospect, since the children involved were no longer in government custody. Each possible case file was examined twice by hand and verified through various agency databases. That tally came to 1,556 children, according to court documents.

Beyond quantifying the separations, Sabraw ordered the government to help track down the separated parents and give them the option to reunite with their children. That effort has largely been completed as to the first group, but attorneys and nonprofit workers are continuing to track down parents of the second group, many of them in Central America. So far, in the course of more than 47,000 phone calls, the lawyers have been able to reach 364 parents or their attorneys. Additionally, on-the-ground efforts by the nonprofit Justice in Motion has contacted 113 parents outside of the U.S., said New York-based attorney Steven Herzog.

Kristina Davis, *Los Angeles Times*, 1/18/2020

ICE has tested about 1 percent of migrants for coronavirus

As concerns grow over the potential spread of coronavirus in immigrant detention centers, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) released figures on April 22, that show it has tested only 425 of the 32,309 immigrants in the jails — or about 1 percent. Of those tested, 287 migrants were infected with the virus.

Silvia Foster-Frau, *San Antonio Express-News*, 4/22/2020

Some Thoughts on Being a Refugee

“No one puts their children in a boat unless the water is safer than the land.”
Warsan Shire
2014 Young Poet Laureate of London

“The world will not be destroyed by those who do evil, but by those who watch them without doing anything.”
Albert Einstein
Nobel Prize recipient in Physics 1921

“Refugees didn’t just escape a place. They had to escape a thousand memories until they’d put enough time and distance between them and their misery to wake to a better day.”
Nadia Hashimi,
Afghan-American pediatrician and novelist

“It is the obligation of every person born in a safer room to open the door when someone in danger knocks.”
Dina Nayeri, 2019
Finalist for the *Los Angeles Times* book prize

“Every person who comes is a human being and has the right to be treated as such.”
Angela Merkel, German Chancellor

“A nation ringed by walls will only imprison itself.”
Barack Obama, 44th President
of the United States

Administration postpones many immigration hearings, but courts remain open for detained children and other asylum-seekers

- Hearings for non-detained immigrants are postponed until at least May 1, the Department of Justice announced.
- Asylum-seekers in Mexico are ordered to present themselves at the border to obtain new court dates.
- Judges, prosecutors, and activists alike have been demanding that immigration courts be shuttered during the pandemic.
- More than 38,000 immigrants are currently detained, according to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

Charles Davis, *Business Insider*, 3/31/2020

President Trump, don’t ignore the suffering at the border caused by your policies

President Trump, I was thankful to be able to attend the State of the Union address, where I hoped to hear you mention your policies at our southern border in a human-focused way. I invite you to take a closer look at what is happening along the border due to the Migration Protection Protocols (MPP), which requires migrants seeking asylum to remain in Mexico while their applications are considered.

If you visit my community in Brownsville, TX, the first thing you will see as you cross the Rio Grande into Matamoros, Mexico, is what has become a “tent city” along the riverbank. Some 2,500 people, many of them women and children waiting in harsh open air, are finding shelter in donated tents.

If you had come last week, you would have heard the story of a 14-year-old girl who was raped in her home country and is now five months pregnant. You might have also heard about a man who heroically saved a young girl from being kidnapped — and who now fears that the men he thwarted will come back and hurt him.

Under the MPP, each day brings a new challenge. It is a challenge for our times — how do we, in the words of Pope Francis, counter the “globalization of indifference” that leaves so many uncared for and neglected? What these families must endure is a slap in the face to the sacredness of human life, which should be cherished in every form. And finally it is an opportunity — an opportunity to help restore the human dignity that many of these vulnerable families have had taken away from them or have given up on.

Sister Norma Pimentel, *The Washington Post*, 2/5/2020

Earth Day 2020

This year's celebration marks the 50th anniversary of Earth Day when millions of people around the world will take an oath to protect the planet. Due to the COVID-19 lockdown globally, the Earth Day 2020 celebration will be the first-ever Digital Earth Day where the organisers have asked people to rally online.

The first Earth Day in 1970 mobilized millions of Americans for the protection of the planet. Earth Day led to passage of landmark environmental laws in the United States, including the Clean Air, Clean Water and Endangered Species Acts.

EarthDay.org, 4/21/2020



Natural Catastrophe Losses In The United States, 2018

As of March, 2019	Number of Events	Fatalities	Estimated Overall Losses (US \$bn)	Estimated Insured Losses (US \$bn)*
Severe Thunderstorm	56	66	18.8	14.1
Winter Storms & Cold Waves	9	26	4.2	3
Flood, Flash Flood	20	49	2.6	1.2
Earthquake & Geophysical	2		0.5	0.4
Tropical Cyclone	5	107	30.4	15.6
Wildfire, Heat Waves & Drought	16	107	25.4	18
Totals	108	355	\$81.9	\$52.3

Source: © 2019 Munich Re, NatCatSERVICE; Property Claim Services (PCS®)*, a Verisk Analytics® business. As of March 2019.

Over 1 billion animals feared dead in Australian wildfires

Professor Chris Dickman, an ecologist at the University of Sydney estimated that nearly half a billion animals had been wiped out since Australia's **devastating** wildfires started spreading in September. The figure includes mammals (excluding bats), birds and reptiles. It does not include frogs, insects or other invertebrates. Nearly 20 million acres have burned across the country, and authorities say the fires could keep burning for months.

Sophie Lewis, **CBS News**, 1/7/2020

New Data Show Air Pollution Drop Around 50 Percent In Some Cities During Coronavirus Lockdown

Air pollution in some cities is less than half what it was a year ago, according to new data from the satellite that has been documenting the impact of the coronavirus lockdown on air pollution across the world. Paris has seen nitrogen dioxide drop by 54%, while Madrid, Milan and Rome saw a drop of nearly 50%, according to scientists from the Royal Netherlands Meteorological Institute, who have been monitoring air pollution over Europe. Nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) is a noxious gas that has been linked to respiratory problems and other health conditions. It also reacts with other chemicals in the atmosphere to form fine particulate pollution, which health agencies have identified as the leading cause of the world's 7 million annual deaths from air pollution. NO₂ comes from the combustion of fossil fuels in vehicles, power plants and factories.

Jeff McMahon, **Bloomberg**, 4/16/2020

Assessing the U.S. Climate in 2019

In 2019, there were 14 weather and climate disaster events with losses exceeding \$1 billion each across the United States: (1) three inland flooding events; (2) eight severe storm events; (3) two tropical cyclone events (Dorian and Imelda); and (4) one wildfire event. In 2019 the U.S. experienced an above-average year of costs (\$45.0 billion) as the 40-year (1980–2019) annual cost average was inflation-adjusted to \$43.9 billion. The total cost of U.S. billion-dollar disasters over the last five years (2015–2019) exceeds \$525 billion.

- Several large and dangerous wildfires impacted parts of California during October and November. The Kincade Fire, located in Sonoma County, California, burned through nearly 78,000 acres.
- The 2019 Hurricane Season was above normal, in terms of the number of named storms (18 with winds ≥ 39 mph).
- The Northern Tier of the U.S. received above-average snowfall during the 2018–2019 snow season. In Caribou, Maine, it was the snowiest January on record (59.8 inches).
- 2019 was a top-five year across the contiguous U.S. with over 1,500 tornadoes reported. The most active day in 2019 for tornadoes was May 27, with over 77 confirmed tornadoes from Colorado to Ohio.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, 1/8/2020

Environmental Impacts

Antarctic heat wave melted 20 percent of an island's snow cover in days, caused melt ponds to proliferate

The Antarctic Peninsula, which is the part of the continent closest to South America, experienced a record heat wave of sorts in early February. On February 9, a weather research station on Seymour Island reached a temperature of 69.3 degrees (20.75 Celsius), which if verified would be the ice-covered continent's hottest temperature on record.

Mauri Peltó, a glaciologist at Nichols College, told NASA's Earth Observatory that the island lost four inches of snow cover in this one warming event. This amounted to about 20 percent of the seasonal snow accumulation in the region.

Andrew Freedman, *The Washington Post*, 2/24/2020



Melting on the ice cap of Eagle Island, Antarctica, during a warm period between Feb. 4 and Feb. 13, 2020, seen in images gathered using the Operational Land Imager (OLI) on Landsat 8. (NASA)

"Time Is of the Essence"

In an address to ministers throughout the world, reiterating and strengthening the important climate considerations of *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis challenged them (and us) to commit to several climate-specific goals:

- ✧ to value what is important, not what is superfluous;
- ✧ to correct our national and business accounts, so as to stop engaging in activities that are destroying our planet;
- ✧ to put an end to global dependency on fossil fuels;
- ✧ to open a new chapter of clean and safe energy, that utilizes, for example, renewables such as wind, sun and water;
- ✧ above all, to act prudently and responsibly in our economies to actually meet human needs, promote human dignity, help the poor and be set free of the idolatry of money that creates so much suffering.

Pope Francis

radio address on climate change
5/28/2019

Seismologists search for new earthquake data in suddenly silent world

As the new coronavirus pandemic forces people to stay home, some cities might find it easier to detect small, local earthquakes, which could further researchers' understanding of these movements and of fault zones more broadly. "All of this is very theoretical for now," said Thomas Lecocq, a geologist and seismologist with the Royal Observatory of Belgium. "But if you come back in six months, people from all around the world will have good examples to show you." Seismologist Rob Porritt, a research science and engineering associate at the University of Texas Institute for Geophysics, examined three Texas seismographs for a similar silence. "In an earthquake prone area to have the city be suddenly silent, the data quality will improve a lot," said Rice University professor and seismologist Alan Levander.

Andrea Leinfelder, *The Houston Chronicle*, 4/14/2020

Measuring the Carbon-Dioxide (CO₂) Cost of Last Year's Worldwide Wildfires

Last year's mammoth wildfires in the Amazon, Indonesia, and the Arctic Circle triggered a global conversation about the environmental and economic consequences of climate change. These enormous blazes aren't just destroying native forests and vulnerable animal species. They're also releasing billions of tons of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, potentially accelerating global warming and leading to even more fires. Total carbon emissions from forest fires in 2019 rose last year by 26%, to 7.8 billion metric tons, the highest since 2002, according to the Global Fire Emissions Database (GFED).

- Australia's fires emitted 409,700,000 metric tons of CO₂ in the summer of 2019. Fires across the continent burned more than 6 million hectares, including national forests, with smoke reaching as far as Argentina.
- Arctic fires emitted 182,000,000 metric tons of CO₂ in the summer of 2019. Fires in Siberia burned for three months. In Alaska, fires released more than double the amount of carbon dioxide emitted from fossil fuels in the state annually.
- Brazilian Amazon fires emitted 392,000,000 metric tons of CO₂ in 2019. While total figures for 2019 haven't yet been released, the greenhouse gas emissions from last year's Amazon fires were equivalent to more than 80% of Brazil's 2018 greenhouse gas emissions.
- Indonesia's fires emitted 360,000,000 metric tons of CO₂ in summer 2019. Burning for more than six weeks, the fires emitted greenhouse gas equivalent to 60% of Indonesia's 2018 emissions from burning fossil fuels.

Laura Millan Lombrana, Hayley Warren
and Akshat Rathi, *Bloomberg*, 2/9/2020

Meeting Summary — BCRI Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the Benedictine CRI was held on Oct. 3, 2019 at the Dallas RCRI conference, with 23 Benedictines attending. We began with “A Prayer for Peace in the World.” Sr. Andrea Westkamp of Bristow, chairperson, welcomed all. Two members were recognized: Sr. Mary Ann O’Ryan (Chicago) became chair of her CORT region and Ravi Thiagarajan (Ft. Smith) was elected to the RCRI board!

Sr. Susan presented the financial report. This past year, BCRI received an emergency grant from the Conrad Hilton Fund for Sisters, which allowed us to provide 1,575 backpacks for immigrant families and funds to document what is happening on immigration issues.

Then communities were asked to share their areas of involvement and/or concerns, showing the Coalition’s diversity in ministry and the common thread of social justice in the work. For example, Colorado Springs sent members to minister at the El Paso border, presented a human trafficking education series and began work with women freed from human trafficking. The Leavenworth, Kansas community and the Sisters from Ferdinand sent members to the Mexican border to work with and advocate for refugees. The community in Ft. Smith is focused on companies and issues including Walmart, Tyson, fracking, violent video games and gun control. The Norfolk monastery works with Native Americans on the Omaha Reservation. The Sisters in Chicago minister with females released from childhood detention. The Bismarck community is focusing on refugees and ministry on the margins. Issues voiced by the Sisters in Cottonwood included care for older Sisters and underpaid caregivers. Bristow raised the need for interreligious dialogue and advocacy for children.

Sr. Susan reviewed shareholder work. She reminded all to submit a list of stocks held by each community so that her office can assist in the timely filing of resolutions. Under SEC regulations, a minimum of \$2,000 worth of shares must be held for at least one year in order to file a resolution; however, Susan suggested having at least \$5,000 in case its value fluctuates. Sister reported possible future changes in the 14a-8 SEC Rule that could affect filing and resubmission thresholds.

Susan noted that first-year resolution filings require a 3%-minimum vote to be able to file the resolution a second year. The second year it must receive 6%; the third year and thereafter, resolutions must receive at least 10%. She encouraged all to consider their areas of interest and get involved in dialoguing with companies or filing their own resolutions on these issues.

... [O]ur response to the challenges posed by contemporary migration can be summed up in four verbs: welcome, protect, promote and integrate. Yet these verbs do not apply only to migrants and refugees... If we put those four verbs into practice, we will help build the city of God...”

Pope Francis, May 27, 2019
World Day of Migrants and Refugees

Next was an update on corporate responsibility actions on key issues:

✧ **Climate change** — This is an ongoing concern throughout the world. The Friday for Future movement has helped to raise awareness.

✧ **Walmart** — Susan continues to encourage wage increases. Another area of dialogue is gun violence. After the El Paso shooting last August, Walmart promised measures regarding ammunition sales and open carry in their stores. They agreed to put pressure on Congress for universal background checks and a new assault rifle ban.

✧ **Fracking** — This issue involves flaring methane gas into the air. Shareholder proposals recommend more cost-effective technologies to limit methane emissions from hydraulically fractured oil production.

✧ **Opioid Crisis** — An Oklahoma court ruling in August ordered Johnson & Johnson to pay a \$572 million settlement, shedding light on the opioid crisis.

✧ **Wells Fargo** — The dialogue continues on a Business Standards Report. The recently hired Wells Fargo CEO will need to continue working to resolve issues and concerns on fair business practices.

✧ **Antibiotics in the Meat Supply Chain** — Dialogue continues with McDonald’s for eliminating antibiotics in their entire meat supply chain.

✧ **Water** — Through privatization, water supply chains seriously impact the human right to water.

✧ **Child Sexual Exploitation Online** — A resolution by Christian Brothers Investment Services (CBIS) with Verizon received a 34% vote for increased efforts to protect children online.

✧ **Human Trafficking** — Dialogues with airlines and hotels continue for training personnel to notice and help trafficked people. Southwest Airlines is reviewing its human rights policies in this area.

✧ **Gun Manufacturers** — Are we willing to buy their stocks to impact the issue?

✧ **Immigration** — Susan spoke about her experiences in the Dilley Family Detention Facility, which should have been filled due to the number of immigrants seeking asylum. ICE determines where detainees go, which is further compounded with the new policy “Migration Protection Protocols” (MPP). People are now given a number and sent back into Mexico to wait for their number/court date to come up. In Mexico, many are exposed to violence and crime as their papers and numbers are stolen.

Sr. Andrea reminded members of the discussion last year to increase member dues. The suggestion now was to consider a range of what communities would be able to give. The meeting then adjourned.

Submitted by: *Andrea Westkamp, OSB*

2019 BCRI Member Snapshots



Attendees at 2019
BCRI Annual Meeting,
October 3, 2019



RCRI Panel Discussion Highlights Human Rights as Key Component of Socially Responsible Investing

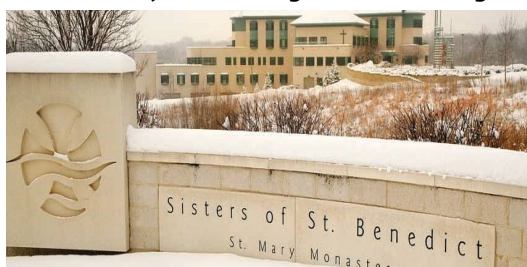
Sharing their experiences of practical stewardship and active ownership, panelists presented insights related to their work in socially responsible investing. Drawing on the dictates of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights “to respect, protect and remedy” in their investment strategies, speakers summarized the specific ministries in which they engage corporations to improve their human rights profile.

The discussions included the negative impact on people and the environment, on migrants in for-profit prisons, on victims of human trafficking, and on how social responsible investing aligns with the missions of religious community shareholders.



Presenters for the RCRI panel, “What Have Human Rights to Do with Socially Responsible Investing?” From Left to Right: Dan Tretow, Sr. Andrea Westkamp, OSB, Frank Sherman, David Schilling, and Sr. Susan Mika, OSB

Welcome, St. Mary Monastery



St. Mary Monastery in Rock Island, Illinois, has become the 24th member monastery to join the Coalition. The community’s mission and ministry can best be summarized in the logo they have chosen and the meaning ascribed to it.

“The logo of St. Mary Monastery is a circular blue and green cross with a stream of water flowing through it. The circular cross shows that our lives are encircled by and centered in the Benedictine tradition of seeking God through prayer, work, hospitality, reverence, moderation, and stewardship. The water flowing through the cross symbolizes Baptism by which we are filled with the life of Christ. The blue at the bottom of the cross signifies our baptismal commitment as

the foundation of our lives in this Benedictine community. The green suggests the new life which emerges as we live in fidelity to our monastic profession. The water flows outside of the cross signifying our Christian life, steeped in the Benedictine tradition and extending beyond the monastery to those whose lives we touch. This out-flowing water also symbolizes our Benedictine monastery as a place where “Guests are to be welcomed as Christ” (RB 53.1) so that they may be refreshed and renewed by life-giving waters.”

Thank you for the Benedictine spirit and traditions which you now bring to the corporate responsibility work of the Coalition. And, welcome!





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) — St. Louis, MO
Sept. 28-Oct. 1, 2020

BCRI — meets during RCRI

Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility (ICCR) — New York, NY
October 5-9, 2020

THANK YOU TO OUR 2019-2020 DONORS

Our Member Monasteries:

- **Mount St. Scholastica** (Atchison, Kansas)
- **St. Scholastica Monastery** (Boerne, Texas)
- **St. Benedict Monastery** (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)

- **Emmanuel Monastery** (Lutherville, Maryland)
- **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)
- **St. Mary Monastery** (Rock Island, IL)
- **Holy Name Monastery** (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)
- **Our Donor Friends:**
 - **St. Benedict Monastery** (Bakerstown, PA)
 - **Monastery of Our Lady of the Desert** (Blanco, NM)
 - **Saint Benedict Monastery** (St. Joseph, MN)
 - **St. Paul Monastery** (Saint Paul, MN)
 - **Monastery Immaculate Conception** (Ferdinand, IN)
 - **Glastonbury Abbey (grant)** (Hingham, MA)
 - **Gerry Allen**
 - **Lady Ellen Clark**
 - **Fabian and Helen Pawelek**
 - **Eugenia Schuler**

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) _____