



Fall 2023 — Issue 32

## Seeking Balance through our Interconnectedness



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St. Benedict in the Rule talks about balance. There are so many examples of how he viewed life – through the emphasis on prayer, work, leisure. He has the monks adjust their schedule and their clothing, to meet the conditions they faced. We have to remember that this was over 1,500 years ago. He had the foresight to know that we are human – things happen, times change. The tree of leaves is a mosaic which can symbolize how we can “hang together” on this journey – no two leaves are the same. We are a mosaic of life.

The universe is in constant transition. Where does that place us who live on this planet? The struggle for balance comes full circle ... in our personal lives, in our monasteries/communities, in our weather, in our politics, in our conversations about the future.

Struggle for balance ... Our newsletter is a snapshot in time, just a small sliver of what is happening. It can serve as a catalyst for

thought. What is happening in my/our area of the world? How are we processing what is happening in the greater world?

These last few months, we have struggled with the number of catastrophes across the globe. We must not be numbed because they come – one after another – with such frequency. Even as we go to press, we are remembering the people of Maui, those in the path of Hurricanes Idalia, Hilary and Lee, those dealing with earthquakes in Morocco and flooding in Libya and Greece. Just in the USA, as of September 11, there have been 23 natural disasters and climate catastrophes that have caused \$57.6 billion in damages. (**USA Today**, 9/11/23)

At the recent 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Seventh Generation CRI in Milwaukee, Tim Smith used the analogy that we must have the endurance of a long-distance runner to do this work. (Fr. Mike Crosby started that coalition and worked tirelessly to bring about a more just world.) Another thought was in this ministry we are building God's economy through the actions we are taking with corporate America, with investments, with our voices.

Raising questions in corporate America is a task for the stouthearted. We have the privilege of living in this day and time and of working daily to implement change towards good – wherever we are. This is no small task that we have been entrusted with.

In 2024, we will celebrate 20 years of Benedictines working together through the Benedictine Coalition for Responsible Investment (CRI). What a blessing this collaboration is and has been!

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# 2023 Shareholder Resolutions

## ABBVIE COMPANY

*Patents and Access—29.60%*

Benedictine Sisters of Virginia

## ALPHABET

*Paris-Aligned Climate Lobbying—14.20%*

Benedictine Sisters of Virginia

Benedictine Sisters—Mount St. Scholastica

## AMAZON.COM, INC.

*Gender and Racial Pay Gap—29.20%*

Monasterio Pan de Vida

*Tax Transparency Report—17.70%*

Srs. of the Order of St. Benedict, Rock Island

## CHEVRON CORP.

*Racial Equity Audit—9.80%*

Benedictine Sisters of Virginia

Benedictine Sisters of Cullman, AL

Benedictine Sisters, Boerne, TX

Benedictine Sisters—Mount St. Scholastica

## COMCAST CORP.

*Racial Equity Audit—10.80%*

Benedictine Sisters—Mount St. Scholastica

Benedictine Sisters of Cullman, AL

Benedictine Sisters of Virginia

## CVS HEALTH CORP.

*Adopt a Paid Sick Leave Policy—26%*

Benedictine Sisters, Boerne, TX

Benedictine Sisters—Mount St. Scholastica

Benedictine Sisters of Virginia

## DENNY'S CORPORATION

*Paid Sick Leave—10.30%*

Benedictine Sisters—Mount St. Scholastica

## EXXON MOBIL CORPORATION

*Tax and Payments to Governments—17%*

Benedictine Sisters of Virginia

*Report on the Impact of the Energy*

*Transition on Asset Retirement*

*Obligations (AROs)—16%*

Benedictine Sisters, Boerne, TX

*Direct Methane Measurements—36%*

Benedictine Sisters—Mount St. Scholastica

## GILEAD SCIENCES, INC.

*Patents and Access—16.70%*

Benedictine Sisters—Mount St. Scholastica

## J.P. MORGAN CHASE & CO.

*Time-Bound Phase-Out of New Fossil Fuel*

*Exploration and Development—8%*

Benedictine Sisters of Cullman, AL

Benedictine Sisters of Virginia

Benedictine Sisters—Mount St. Scholastica

## JOHNSON & JOHNSON

*Patents and Access—14.42%*

Benedictine Sisters of Virginia

Benedictine Sisters—Mount St. Scholastica

*Access to Covid-19 Products—31.80%*

Benedictine Sisters, Boerne, TX

## LOCKHEED MARTIN CORPORATION

*Report on Human Rights Risk—14%*

Benedictine Sisters—Mount St. Scholastica

## MCDONALD'S CORP.

*Phase Out Routine Medically Important*

*Antibiotics Use in Supply Chain—16.60%*

Benedictine Sisters, Boerne, TX

Benedictine Sisters—Mount St. Scholastica

Benedictine Sisters of Cullman, AL

Benedictine Sisters of Chicago

## MERCK

*Patents and Access—31.10%*

Benedictine Sisters of Virginia

Benedictine Sisters—Mount St. Scholastica

## META (FACEBOOK INC.)

*Human Rights Impact Assessment*

*Meta Targeted Ads—17%*

Benedictine Sisters—Mount St. Scholastica

## MODERNA, INC.

*Covid-19 Vaccine Technology*

*Transfer—7.40%*

Benedictine Sisters, Boerne, TX

## REGENERON PHARMACEUTICALS, INC.

*Patents and Access—9.40%*

Benedictine Sisters—Mount St. Scholastica

## SOUTHERN COMPANY

*Environmental Justice Report—Filed*

Benedictine Sisters of Virginia



# 2023 Shareholder Resolutions

## TEXAS INSTRUMENTS INC.

*Human Rights and Material Risks Related to the Russian Invasion of Ukraine—23.05%*

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

## UNITED PARCEL SERVICE, INC.

*Paris-Aligned Climate Lobbying—Agreement*

Benedictine Sisters—Mount St. Scholastica  
Benedictine Sisters of Virginia  
Monasterio Pan de Vida

## VALERO ENERGY CORPORATION

*Climate Transition Plan and GHG Reduction Goals—33.10%*

Benedictine Sisters, Boerne, TX

## WALMART STORES, INC.

*Worker Pay in Executive Compensation—4.30%*

Benedictine Sisters, Boerne, TX



## ICCR/SEC Update

### 2023 McDonald's and Denny's Annual General Meetings

Representing the Benedictine Sisters of Boerne Texas, Green Century Equity Fund and other co-filers, Sister Susan Mika, OSB, attended **McDonald's** virtual Annual General Meeting. The proposal requested the company adopt an enterprise-wide policy to phase out the use of medically important antibiotics for disease prevention purposes in its beef and pork supply chains.

On behalf of the Benedictine Sisters of Atchison, Kansas, Sister Susan Mika, OSB, attended **Denny's** virtual Annual General Meeting. The proposal presented by Sr. Susan, requested the company to issue a report analyzing the provision of paid sick leave among franchise employees and assessing the feasibility of inducing or incentivizing franchisees to provide some amount of paid sick leave to all employees. At Denny's, there is currently no public information available pertaining to a paid sick leave policy for either company-owned restaurants or franchised operations.

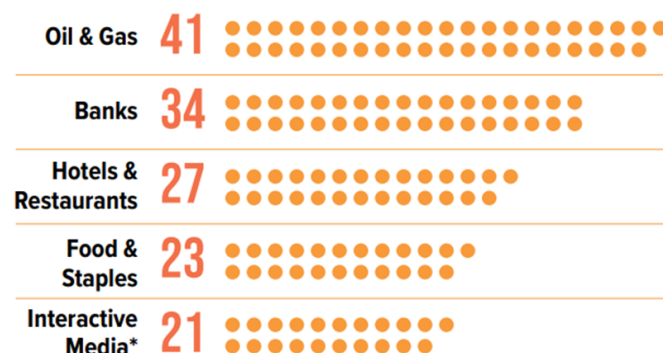
### SEC Lawsuit Update

In June 2021, ICCR, As You Sow and James McRitchie filed a lawsuit seeking to overturn changes to Rule 14a-8, which limit the ability of shareholders to file resolutions. The court postponed the status hearing that was scheduled for **August 23, 2023 to November 22, 2023.**

### A Review of ICCR's 2023 Proxy Season

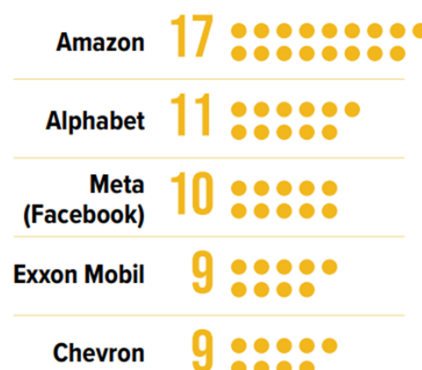
Throughout the 2023 proxy season, ICCR members filed 454 shareholder proposals. For the third year in a row, resolutions addressing the climate crisis and racial justice/DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion) were the most numerous, with 123 and 99 proposals respectively.  
*ICCR, 2023*

### 2023 RESOLUTIONS FILED BY INDUSTRY



\*The Interactive Media category includes Alphabet and Meta (Facebook)

### COMPANIES RECEIVING THE MOST ICCR MEMBER RESOLUTIONS IN 2023



Graphics Credit: *Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR), 2023*



# Monastery Updates

## UCCS research project looks to Catholic nuns on how to live a fulfilled life

Benet Hill Monastery has partnered with the University of Colorado Colorado Springs (UCCS) to become a clinical study site.



Sisters of  
**Benet Hill  
Monastery**

Under the guidance of faculty, 15 UCCS students from four areas

of study (health sciences, nursing, psychology and social work) conducted individual assessments of the Sisters determining strengths and challenges related to their physical, emotional and cognitive health and well-being. Of the 24 sisters living at the monastery, 22 voluntarily took part in the project.

The project's intent of teaching people how to individually and collectively be well in their senior years follows one of the sisters' mission to model "eldering," monastery's prioress Sister Marie Therese "M.T." Summers declared.

"Eldering is about changing your perspective so you can experience growing older in a way that allows you to have the rest of your life be the best of your life — filled with love, health, happiness and creative self-expression," she said. "It's about living fully to the end."

*Debbie Kelley, The Gazette, 8/10/23*

## Sisters participate in 55 & Under gathering

Five Sisters from Cullman and many other Sisters from other monasteries recently attended the national gathering of "55 & Under." The program, held at Immaculata Monastery in Norfolk, NE, gathered Benedictine Sisters in this age bracket from across the USA and Mexico for conversations envisioning the future of Benedictine life and an opportunity to share time together. A service project was also an important part of the gathering.



In this photo, from left to right, are the Cullman sisters who attended: Sister Lynn Marie McKenzie (who attended in her role as President of the Monastic Congregation of St. Scholastica), Sister Tonette Sperando, Sister Therese Haydel, Sister Gabriela Ramirez, and Sister Michelle St. Marie.

*Sacred Heart Monastery  
Cullman, Alabama*

## A Journey to Rome

Sr. Rita Marie Tofflemire, OSB, a Missionary Benedictine Sister of Norfolk, Nebraska will be attending the upcoming *Missionary Benedictine Sisters of Tutzing International Treasurers Conference* in Rome, Italy. She will highlight our CRI's working together. The conference is expected to take place September 20-30, 2023.

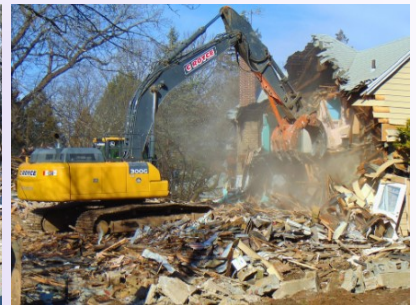


## Old Hospice Demolished

The Benedictine Sisters of Elizabeth have signed a contract with Frankoski Construction Company of East Orange, New Jersey, to complete the major renovation project. Meetings are now underway with the construction company and the project architect, Don Fiore, to develop specific logistics for the work that will begin shortly. As part of the project, three buildings will be demolished. The first, a stand-alone building, was razed in early March. Referred to as the "old hospice" by the Sisters, it was originally a carriage house for the Frank H. Davis estate built in 1901 on North Broad Street. While the Community was saddened by the demolition of a building with such significant history, the cost of repair and ongoing maintenance made it a necessary decision.



(Photo left) Sister Mariette documents the demolition with project manager, Jessica Edwards. (Photo right) Demolition began in the rear of the house.



*Sister Mariette Thérèse Bernier, OSB  
Benedictine Sisters of Elizabeth, New Jersey*

# Monastery Updates

## New Monastery for the Benedictine Sisters of Virginia

The Benedictine Sisters of Virginia have new digs! After more than ten years of planning and much consideration, we have our building and it is so nice. We looked at geothermal, we looked at various options to create as green as possible a structure and we are very happy with the results. Although some of the options did not pan out, our building does have retention ponds that allow rain water to slowly drain into the water table rather than to run off onto the asphalt. We have worked to hard incorporate the needs of our sisters in this building.

Our new building is one floor. While this creates a wider and longer footprint, it accommodates aging sisters. No waiting for nor servicing elevators. We have lovely dining and community rooms that provide large windows for viewing the exterior. And our chapel! We transferred many of our Benedictine stained glass windows to our new chapel. These and the new seating allow for more of our assembly to worship with us.

We are so blessed and thank everyone who helped us on this long journey. This includes those who donated through our capital campaign, those who contributed to our design, as well as our marvelous staff and talented sisters and prioress, who worked through each and every glitch to provide us with a building that will give us room for growth and hope for our future.

*Sr. Julia Elena Abdala, OSB*  
Benedictine Sisters of Virginia, Bristow, Virginia



Night picture of St. Benedict Monastery

## Emmaus Grove nurtures healthy outcomes

Sister Mary Miller helped to plant the seed for Emmaus Grove Urban Farm in 2013. The garden grows and thrives thanks to two Master Gardeners who coordinate the site, volunteers who provide upkeep for the garden's raised beds, and dependable benefactors, such as AmeriHealth Caritas Pennsylvania. This year, Emmaus Grove prepares to celebrate its 10-year anniversary with a Harvest Fest on October 1, the first since the start of the pandemic. "Every year, Emmaus Grove is able to provide 2,500 to 3,000 pounds of vegetables to the Emmaus Soup Kitchen and Food Pantry. The produce is healthy, it's fresh and it's as organic as possible," said Ellen DiPlacido, the garden's volunteer coordinator along with Mike Bailey. Both are certified Master Gardeners through Penn State Extension.

Longtime Emmaus Director, Sister Mary Miller passed away unexpectedly on May 14, 2023. She had been set to step down from her role after 42 years on June 1. The Board of Directors named Sister Valerie Luckey the next director at their December 2022 meeting. Sister Val assumed the role upon Mary's death, working with staff, volunteers, and donors to continue Emmaus' mission of feeding the poor in body and soul.

*Liz Allen and Sister Valerie Luckey*  
Emmaus Ministries, Inc.

*"The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members."*

Coretta Scott King



Pictured above, left to right: Emmaus Grove Coordinator, Mike Bailey; Emmaus Director, Sister Val Luckey; Grove Volunteer and Master Gardener, Deb Totzke; Emmaus Administrative Assistant, Margaret Kloecker; Emmaus Grove Coordinator, Ellen DiPlacido; and AmeriHealth's Senior Community Health Educator, Jaime McGuire.



# Laudato Sí Statements

## Statement of Commitment to Laudato Sí Action Platform

The Sisters of St. Benedict, St. Mary Monastery, Rock Island, IL is a monastic community near the Mississippi River in northwest Illinois. United with the whole Church and all people of good will, we affirm our commitment to the Laudato Sí Action Platform.

Our love for Christ and zeal for the transformation of the world impel us to treat all creation with reverence, respect and awareness of the common good. Our communal daily prayer is an ongoing song of praise and thanksgiving to God for and with all creation.

We offer hospitality to guests, sharing our sacred space and spiritual resources with retreatants, neighbors, and friends. We seek opportunities to partner with others in our region who promote ecological awareness and respond to the cry of the poor.

We strive to be good stewards of our common home, and have adopted energy-efficient actions including extensive use of geo-thermal and solar energy.

We joyfully commit ourselves to active pursuit of the goals expressed in the Laudato Sí Platform, 'that in all things God may be glorified' (Rule of Benedict 57:9).

*The Sisters of St. Benedict, St. Mary Monastery*  
Rock Island, Illinois



## Laudato Sí Commitment Statement

We, the Congregation of Benedictine Sisters, a monastic community of women, is located in south central Texas. Our mission calls us to seek God in community and to respond in ministry through sharing our spirituality and addressing the needs of the people we serve, especially the poor.

Together, with our faithful Oblates and co-ministers, we joyfully accept the invitation to join the integral ecological journey of the Laudato Sí Action

Platform and support its goals listed below:

- Response to the Cry of the Earth
- Response to the Cry of the Poor
- Ecological Economics
- Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles
- Ecological Education
- Ecological Spirituality
- Community Resilience and Empowerment

*St. Scholastica Monastery*  
Benedictine Sisters of Boerne, Texas



## Pope Francis to update landmark document on world environmental crisis

On August 21, Pope Francis announced that he was writing a follow-up to his landmark 2015 encyclical on the protection of the environment and the dangers of climate change "to bring it up to date." In 2015, Francis wrote Laudato Sí (Praised Be), a major document on the need to protect the environment, face the dangers and challenges of climate change and reduce the use of fossil fuels. An encyclical is the highest form of papal writing. In his comments, Francis did not specify what form the second part of Laudato Sí would take, when it would be released or how it would elaborate on the original. On August 30, Pope Francis said he will release a follow-up environmental document to the 2015 encyclical Laudato Sí on October 4, the feast of St. Francis of Assisi.

*Philip Pulella, Reuters, 8/21/23*  
*Hannah Brockhaus, Catholic News Agency, 8/30/23*



**LAUDATO SÍ'**  
Action Platform

# Immigration News

## Title 8 Explained

**What is Title 8?** The expiration of Title 42 rules along the U.S.-Mexico border on May 11, 2023 means that all migrants and asylum-seekers who reach American soil need to be processed under Title 8. Title 8 is a lengthy and drawn out process that begins with what's called a credible fear interview by asylum officers before migrants' cases progress through the immigration court system. Under Title 8, migrants who are deported are banned from entering the U.S. for at least five years. And if they reenter the U.S. unlawfully, they could face charges and jail time. Under Title 8 "expedited removal" proceedings, migrants can be quickly deported, without a court hearing, if they don't claim asylum.

Catherine E. Shoichet, *CNN*, 5/11/23  
Dakin Andone and Priscilla Alvarez, *CNN*, 5/12/23  
Camilo Montoya-Galvez, *CBS News*, 5/15/23  
Lauren Villagran, *El Paso Times*, 4/26/23

## U.S. Border Patrol Apprehensions

Fiscal Year 2022 [Oct. to Sept.] — 2,206,436

Fiscal Year 2023 [Oct. to Jul.] — 1,646,077

\*The government's fiscal year runs from October to September.  
*U.S. Customs and Border Protection, 2022 & 2023*

## Operation Lone Star

As of September 8, 2023, Texas has bused:

- ♦ Over 11,300 migrants to Washington, D.C.
- ♦ Over 13,500 migrants to New York City
- ♦ Over 7,000 migrants to Chicago
- ♦ Over 2,600 migrants to Philadelphia
- ♦ Over 1,100 migrants to Denver
- ♦ Over 480 migrants to Los Angeles

*Office of the Texas Governor, 9/8/23*

## Floating Barrier in the Rio Grande

- ♦ Gov. Greg Abbott put a barrier of buoys (4-foot-tall) and netting into the Rio Grande to block migrants from crossing into Texas.
- ♦ The buoy chain will cover 1,000 feet of river in Eagle Pass at a cost of at least \$1 million.
- ♦ On July 14, Mexico's incoming secretary of foreign affairs said that the deployment of buoys on the border is a violation of water treaties between the U.S. and Mexico.
- ♦ On July 24, the Department of Justice announced a lawsuit against Texas and its governor, over the use of a floating barrier.
- ♦ On September 6, Judge David Ezra ordered Texas officials to remove the floating border barriers from the Rio Grande by September 15, at the state's own expense.
- ♦ On September 13, the New Orleans-based 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals set an October 5 hearing on Texas's migrant-blocking buoys, ensuring the controversial Rio Grande barrier remains in place. This ruling blocks an order issued by a lower court in Austin that would have required the state to remove the buoys by September 15.

*Express-News Editorial Board, 6/14/23*

*Benjamin Wermund and Jeremy Wallace,*

*San Antonio Express-News, 7/11/23*

*Noah Alcala Bach, Texas Tribune, 7/15/23*

*Benjamin Wermund, San Antonio Express-News, 7/17/23*

*Maegan Vazquez, Washington Post, 7/24/23*

*Camilo Montoya-Galvez, CBS News, 8/15/23*

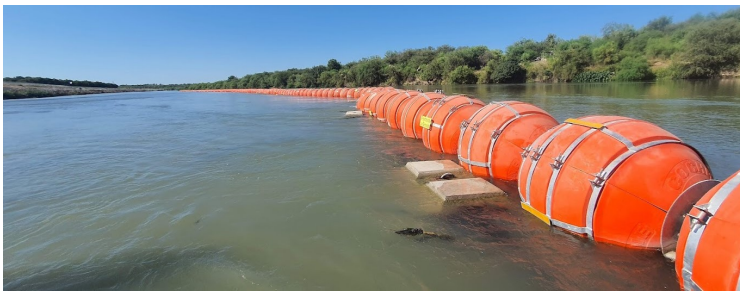
*Camilo Montoya-Galvez, CBS News, 9/6/23*

*John Wayne Ferguson, San Antonio Express-News, 9/8/23*

## DACA Update

On September 13, Judge Andrew Hanen again ruled that the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program is illegal, but kept it intact for now.

*Myah Ward and Josh Gerstein, Politico, 9/13/23*



Buoys on the Rio Grande and migrants jumping over the concertina wire south of Eagle Pass, TX. Images credit: Laredo No Border Wall coalition and the EP Border Coalition.

## Migrant Crossings Before and After Title 42 Was Lifted on May 11, 2023

May 9, 2023 — 11,000+ migrants  
May 10, 2023 — 10,000+ migrants  
May 11, 2023 — 10,000+ migrants  
May 12, 2023 — 6,200+ migrants  
May 13, 2023 — 4,400+ migrants

In mid-July, more than 2,230 migrants were crossing the border daily on average.

*Morning Joe, MSNBC, 5/15/23*  
*Adam Shaw and Bill Melugin, Fox News, 5/11/23*  
*Julia Ainsley, NBC News, 7/27/23*



# Updates on the Covid-19 Public Health Emergency

## Covid-19 is back. Flu and RSV are coming. What to know about Fall shots.

- **Who should get a flu vaccine or RSV vaccine? When can I get those?** The CDC recommends that everyone 6 months and older get a flu shot. People 60 and older can consider an RSV shot after talking to their doctors. Both shots are starting to arrive in pharmacies and doctors' offices. A new RSV injectable medication approved to protect all infants is expected to be available this season.
- **Should I get a Covid-19 booster, flu or RSV shot now or should I wait?** Some doctors suggest high risk individuals who haven't been boosted in several months, should get a shot now instead of waiting. For RSV, people who are approved to get the shot can get it at any time, due to its protection lasting through the winter. The CDC recommends people wait to get their flu shots until September or October due to the shots' effectiveness fading after a few months. Children can get shots during late-summer healthcare visits. Health officials suggest getting your RSV first, followed by Covid-19 and flu shots before Halloween.
- **Can I get all three shots at once?** It depends on personal preference, but studies and data from last season show that the flu and Covid-19 mRNA vaccines can be safely administered during the same visit.

Brianna Abbott, *Wall Street Journal*, 8/19/23

## Medicare names first 10 drugs up for price negotiations with the government

The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services announced the first 10 prescription drugs that will be subject to Medicaid price negotiations under the Inflation Reduction Act. In 2022, Medicare's 65 million recipients spent \$3.4 billion out of pocket for these drugs, with average out-of-pocket spending for the most expensive drugs as high as \$6,497 per enrollee. Drugmakers will have 30 days to sign an agreement to participate in the negotiations, or they may face tax penalties. The negotiation provision has sparked legal action from major drug companies, including Johnson & Johnson, Merck and Bristol Myers Squibb, claiming it would reduce spending in research and development, leading to fewer breakthroughs for lifesaving treatments. Other experts, however, stress the importance of lowering out-of-pocket costs older people see at the pharmacy.

Berkeley Lovelace Jr., *NBC News*, 8/29/23

## New Covid variants EG.5, FL.1.5.1 and BA.2.86 are spreading.

The EG.5, or Eris, variant is considered "dominant" in the U.S. because it makes up the largest share of new cases of Covid-19. As of August 18, the CDC estimated it made up 20.6% of new infections. FL.1.5.1, or Fornax, is the next largest variant at 13.3% of U.S. infections. EG.5 and FL.1.5.1 are XBB variant descendants that share a mutation called F456L, which seems to help them spread more than other virus siblings. BA.2.86, or Pirola, remains small for now and is currently being aggregated with its distant ancestor BA.2. A small handful of cases have been spotted in the world, including one in Michigan.



Image by Freepik

Alexander Tin, *CBS News*, 8/21/23

## This is how much the new Pfizer Covid-19 booster costs – without insurance

For those without health insurance or government assistance, they could pay between \$110 to \$130 per single-dose vial. In July of 2020, it was priced at \$19.50 per dose. That hit \$24 in July 2021 and \$30.48 in June 2022.

Cortlynn Stark and The Sum, *The Sacramento Bee*, 8/26/23

## FDA okays new coronavirus vaccine

On September 11, the FDA approved a reformulated Covid vaccine from Pfizer and Moderna. The CDC recommends everyone 6 months and older get an updated Covid-19 vaccine to protect against the potentially serious outcomes of Covid-19. Updated vaccines from Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna will be available starting this week (September 12-17, 2023).

Laurie McGinley and Lena H. Sun, *The Washington Post*, 9/11/23  
CDC press release, 9/12/23

## CDC to Launch "Bridge Access Program" in Fall 2023

Under the management and oversight of the CDC, the Bridge Access Program will allow adults who are uninsured or underinsured to receive free Covid-19 vaccinations. It's important to note that this program serves as a "temporary bridge" and is scheduled to end in December, 2024.

CDC release, 7/13/23



# Gun Violence

## Catholic Sisters Speak Out on Gun Violence

The Inter-Congregational Leadership Group of Women Religious in San Antonio (ILGSA) recently met for their spring meeting at St. Brigid's Convent on May 9, 2023. This group represents the Sisters within the Archdiocese of San Antonio, including the Benedictine Sisters of Boerne, Texas.

At this meeting, the sisters reflected on the heartbreak of the mass shootings in our state and beyond. We are horrified and shocked at the loss of life. The slaughter of men, women and children is abhorrent and must not continue. God's people deserve to live in communities free of gun violence. This is truly a pro-life issue.

Thus, we call for a renewed commitment to sensible firearms policies, including banning weapons that enable the killing of many people in a matter of seconds. We urgently add our voices to those saying that our gun laws must change. We also believe it is imperative that we as a state and nation provide better mental health care for all.

We urge our leaders to put human lives above political expediency. We recognize the power of prayer and how this prayer calls us to action. As people of faith, we must use our voices to influence our elected officials to bring about change to this serious life issue.

*Sister Anita Brenek, CDP and  
Sister Teresa Carter, CSB on behalf of ILGSA*

## Martin Luther King Jr.'s family marks March on Washington's 60th anniversary

Martin Luther King Jr.'s only grandchild was among those who gathered on the National Mall to honor the 60th anniversary of the March on Washington. Yolanda Renee King, 15, told the crowd that if she could speak to her grandfather today, she would say, "I am sorry we still have to be here to rededicate ourselves to finishing your work." "Sixty years ago, Dr. King urged us to struggle against the triple evils of racism, poverty and bigotry," she said. "Today, racism is still with us. Poverty is still with us. And now gun violence has come for our places of worship, our schools and our shopping centers." Yolanda Renee King noted another challenge during her remarks that her generation "cannot escape" -- climate change. "When people say my generation is cynical, we say cynicism is a luxury we cannot afford," she said. "I believe that my generation will be defined by action, not apathy."

*Meredith Deliso, ABC News, 8/26/23*

# Artificial Intelligence

## What Is Artificial Intelligence (AI) And How Does It Work?

Artificial Intelligence is a branch of computer science which performs tasks with the help of smart machines and various applications, with or without human cognitive functions or supervisions — such as interpreting speech, playing games and identifying patterns.

*Rashi Maheshwari, Forbes, 4/3/23*

## Biggest Risks of Artificial Intelligence

- **Privacy Concerns:** AI technologies often collect and analyze large amounts of personal data, raising issues related to data privacy and security.
- **Security Risks:** Hackers and malicious actors can harness the power of AI to develop more advanced cyberattacks, bypass security measures, and exploit vulnerabilities in systems.
- **Job Displacement:** AI-driven automation has the potential to lead to job losses across various industries, particularly for low-skilled workers.
- **Legal and Regulatory Challenges:** It's crucial to develop new legal frameworks and regulations to address the unique issues arising from AI technologies, including liability and intellectual property rights.
- **Misinformation and Manipulation:** AI-generated content, such as deepfakes, contributes to the spread of false information and the manipulation of public opinion.



Illustration 169759748 © Putilich | Dreamstime.com

*Bernard Marr, Forbes, 6/2/23*

# Environmentally Friendly Ideas

## COMPOST

### What To Compost



### What Not To Compost

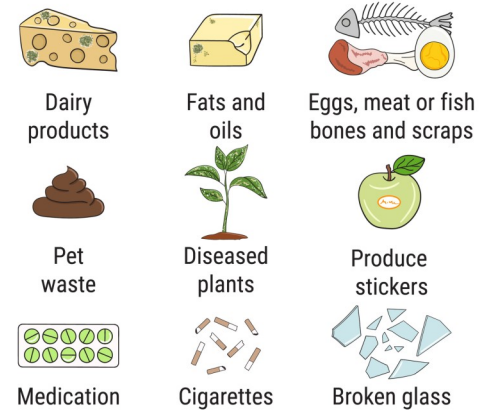


Illustration 209894860 © Maryna Hlushko | Dreamstime.com

### Plastics

Plastics products have become really popular around the world. People use many plastic products in one week. Just think about it, one plastic bottle takes thousands and millions of years to disintegrate or decompose on the earth's surface. There are about seven billion people in the world. Imagine how much plastic is being dumped in every continent (except Antarctica), which leads to severe damage to the earth in terms of our era of dying animals and decomposition problems of plastics. Animals on land and in the water tend to think plastics are food for them, and eating plastic products cause critical digestive problems or even death. Plastics are a combination of petroleum and natural gases. This combination takes a really long time to decompose. If people start using the faster decomposing items which are cloth and paper items, the earth will flourish in its lifetime.



Please make a difference in using cloth and paper items instead of plastics. We can help our future generation by doing our part today. We can do it!

*Thiagu Kannan*

### Eco-friendly laundry products

- ♦ **Blue Water** offers 100% natural and eco-friendly laundry detergent sheets. The sheets are made without bleaches, dyes, parabens, phosphates or phthalates. They are hypoallergenic, vegan & cruelty free.
- ♦ **Earth Breeze** offers eco-friendly detergent sheets that are paraben free, vegan & cruelty free, bleach & dye free, phthalate free and phosphate free.
- ♦ **Tru Earth** eco-strips are pre-measured, ultra concentrated laundry detergent sheets. The strips are paraben-free, phosphate-free, free of added dyes, free of chlorine bleach, hypoallergenic and vegan.
- ♦ **Notpla** a startup based in the United Kingdom that makes plastic-free packaging from seaweed and plants, is partnering with Mack, a U.K.-based environmentally-friendly cleaning brand, to create sustainable detergent sachets for washing laundry and dishware.

**BLUE WATER**

**earth breeze**

**TRU EARTH**

**NOTPLA**

*Blue Water, 2023  
Earth Breeze, 2023  
Tru Earth, 2023*

Gary E. Frank, **TRIPLEPUNDIT**, 8/18/23



# Climate Change

## Temperatures Intensify around the Globe

June 6, 2023: Puerto Rico — 125°F  
July 12, 2023: Spain — 112.6°F  
July 15, 2023: Greece — 105.8°F  
July 15, 2023: Turkey — 111.2°F  
July 15, 2023: Germany — 102.2°F  
July 16, 2023: China — 126°F  
July 16, 2023: California's Death Valley — 128°F  
July 18, 2023: Italy — 118.4°F  
August 8, 2023: Iran — 158°F

According to a joint U.N.-African Union report, Africa is heating up at a faster rate than the rest of the planet.

Brad Matthews, *The Washington Times*, 6/8/23

Reuters, 7/17/23

Matt Andrews, *The Guardian*, 7/17/23

Guardian staff and agencies, *The Guardian*, 7/17/23

Scott Dance, *New York Times*, 7/18/23

Ian Livingston, *Washington Post*, 8/9/23

Emma Farge, *Reuters*, 9/4/23

## Judge rules in favor of Montana youths in landmark climate decision

In the first ruling of its kind, a Montana state court decided Monday, August 14, in favor of young people who alleged the state violated their right to a "clean and healthful environment" by promoting the use of fossil fuels. The court determined that a provision in the Montana Environmental Policy Act has harmed the state's environment and the young plaintiffs by preventing Montana from considering the climate impacts of energy projects. The provision is accordingly unconstitutional, the court said. This case involved 16 young Montanans, ranging in age from 5 to 22, who brought the nation's first constitutional and first youth-led climate lawsuit to go to trial.

Kate Selig, *Washington Post*, 8/14/23

## Wildfire Season around the World

- ♦ As of July 22, the European Forest Fire Information System reported that 182,569 hectares across the European Union had been reduced to ashes.
- ♦ According to the National Interagency Fire Center statistics, as of August 28, there have been 38,831 fires in the United States that have burned just over 1.96 million acres.
- ♦ As of August 28, the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre reported 5,926 fires and 388 million acres burned.
- ♦ The Pacific Disaster Center and the Federal Emergency Management Agency released a fire damage report on August 12 that estimates that about 2,170 acres of land burned in Maui, Hawaii.
- ♦ On August 29, 2023, the European Union's civil protection service reported that a forest blaze in Greece had burned more than 310 square miles of land.

Copernicus, 7/26/23

Center for Disaster Philanthropy, 8/30/23

CBS News, 8/12/23

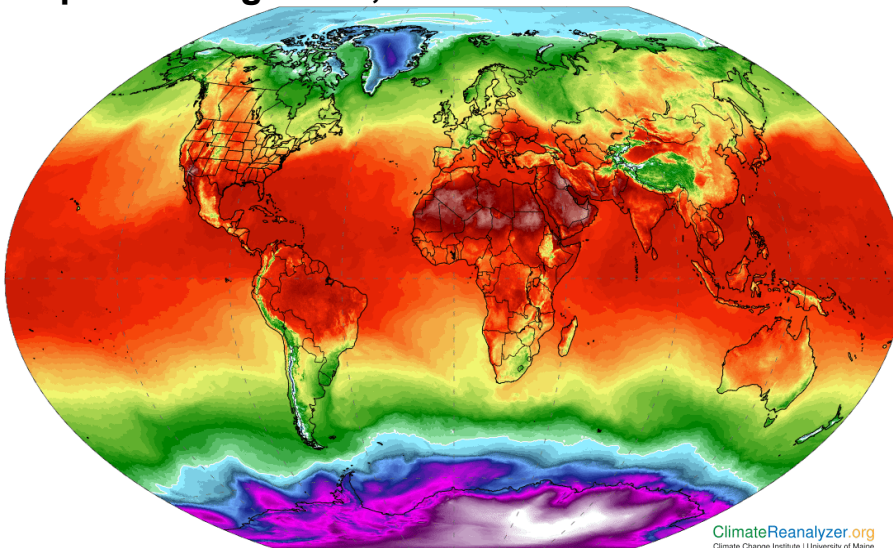
Al Jazeera, 8/29/23

## U.S. sets record for billion-dollar weather and climate disasters

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration announced that this year's climate catastrophes and weather events have so far cost more than \$67.1 billion.

Jan Wesner Childs, *The Weather Channel*, 10/10/23

Map date: August 28, 2023



Smoke from wildfires turned the skies of Flushing, New York orange on June 2023. Photo taken by Sister Ann Horgan.



## Temperature Conversion from Celsius to Fahrenheit

50°C = 122°F	-10°C = 14°F
40°C = 104°F	-20°C = -4°F
30°C = 86°F	-30°C = -22°F
20°C = 68°F	-40°C = -40°F
10°C = 50°F	-50°C = -58°F
0°C = 32°F	-60°C = -76°F



## 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.*

### Meeting Dates

**BCRI** — Monthly ZOOM meetings for the Benedictine CRI will continue.

**Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR)** — Oct. 2-6, 2023 in New York City

**Resource Center for Religious Institutes (RCRI)** — Sept. 26-29, 2023 in St. Louis

## THANK YOU, MEMBERS and DONORS

### Our Members:

- **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)
- **St. John's Abbey** (Collegeville, Minnesota)
- **Benet Hill Monastery** (Colorado Springs, Colorado)
- **St. Walburg Monastery** (Covington, Kentucky)
- **Monastic Congregation of St. Scholastica** (Cullman, Alabama)
- **Sacred Heart Monastery** (Cullman, Alabama)
- **St. Walburga Monastery** (Elizabeth, New Jersey)
- **Emmaus Ministries** (Erie, Pennsylvania)
- **Mount St. Benedict** (Erie, Pennsylvania)

- **St. Scholastica Monastery** (Fort Smith, Arkansas)
- **Sacred Heart Monastery** (Lisle, Illinois)
- **Emmanuel Monastery** (Lutherville, Maryland)
- **Holy Wisdom Monastery** (Middleton, Wisconsin)
- **St. Gertrude Monastery** (Newark, Delaware)
- **Immaculata Monastery** (Norfolk, Nebraska)
- **Mount Saviour Monastery** (Pine City, New York)
- **St. Mary Monastery** (Rock Island, Illinois)
- **Holy Name Monastery** (St. Leo, Florida)
- **Christ the King Priory** (Schuyler, Nebraska)
- **Subiaco Abbey** (Subiaco, AR)
- **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:

- **DBA Our Lady of Grace Monastery** (Beech Grove, IN)
- **Monastery Our Lady of the Desert** (Blanco, NM)
- **St. Scholastica Monastery** (Duluth, MN)
- **Sisters of St. Benedict** (Ferdinand, IN)
- **Glastonbury Abbey (grant)** (Hingham, Massachusetts)
- **St. Mary's Abbey** (Morristown, NJ)
- **Sisters of the Order of Saint Benedict** (St. Joseph, MN)
- **St. Paul's Monastery** (St. Paul, Minnesota)
- **Weston Priory** (Weston, VT)
- **Gerry Allen**
- **Eugenia Schuler**
- **Lady Ellen and Gerald Clark**
- **Mary J. Wisniewski**
- **Cora L. Hillard**
- **Marion Worthington**

### Please consider joining our Coalition as a member or make a donation today!

To become a member or make a donation, contact Sister Susan Mika, OSB, by phone at 210-348-6704 or mail this card to P. O. Box 200423 San Antonio, TX 78220

### The Benedictine Coalition for Responsible Investment

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 and Ruben Lopez.

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