

Benedictine Coalition for Responsible Investment

Spring 2024 – Issue 33

Hope in Action: Transforming Challenges into Opportunities



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The events of our day are happening continuously ... on every level. St. Benedict expected the monastery to be involved in the local area where it was located. Some values could be manifested as:

- * community,
- * hospitality,
- * balance – prayer, work, leisure,
- * reading the signs of the times,
- * justice and peace,
- * wise stewardship and
- * perseverance.

In the world of corporate responsibility, the winds of adversity are churning mightily. We face walls of skepticism - “Why do you keep raising the same questions?” to “Why aren’t you happy with companies just making money?” We give examples in this newsletter of the actions of our members, continuing to put forth the hard questions of our time. What kind of Earth do we want? What kind of future are we leaving for the next seven generations? What can we do to make changes and have more impact? We face ExxonMobil suing two of its shareholders about a resolution on climate change. We document that the House of Representatives in Congress subpoenaed The AS YOU SOW Foundation which files many resolutions each year on social, environmental and governance issues.

In this age when some ask, “Is this ministry still relevant?” We say YES and respond accordingly. We raise our voices to the companies and to our investment managers. We answer those who question why these issues are signs of our time – human rights, climate concerns, worker pay, CEO compensation, artificial intelligence (AI), supply chain concerns, transparency issues – to name a few. We follow immigration issues because our faith requires us – who is our neighbor?

We picked the photo of the sunflower for the front page. It turns to the sunlight each day. We, too, go from clarity to clarity as we learn about concerns and issues. We turn, adapt, change – as the new insights move us to respond.

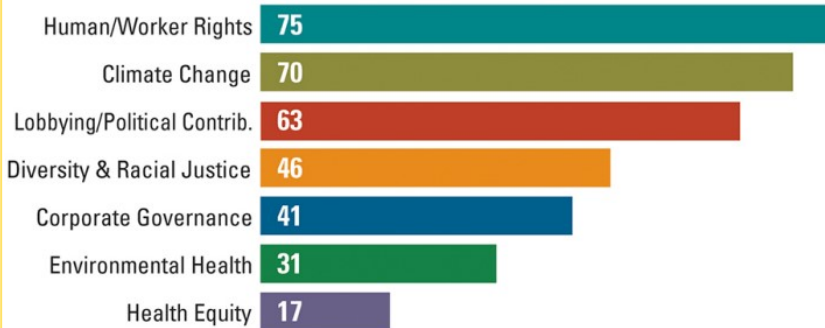
Our national group, the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR) has been raising issues with companies since 1971. Members of our Benedictine Coalition for Responsible Investment (CRI) have been working together since 2004 – so, we celebrate 20 years of perseverance and making a difference. Thank you for taking this journey of perseverance together.

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ICCR, SEC Update and Shareholder Related News

344 Resolutions Filed



2024 Proxy Resolutions and Voting Guide, ICCR, 2/15/24

Key Trends this 2024 Proxy Season

- 344 proposals filed at 215 companies.
- Human rights, the climate crisis, and corporate political activities continue to dominate investor concerns.
- Artificial intelligence (AI) is emerging as a growing investor concern.
- Worker rights provisions such as the adoption of a living wage policy, collective bargaining rights, and paid sick leave see more proposals.
- A continued focus on human rights abuses in conflict-affected high-risk areas (CAHRA), including Uyghur forced labor in the renewable energy sector and the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

SEC Lawsuit Update

In June 2021, ICCR, As You Sow and James McRitchie filed a lawsuit seeking to overturn changes to Rule 14a-8, passed in the late days of the prior administration, which limits the ability of shareholders to file resolutions. (See the full timeline of events here: <https://www.iccr.org/timeline-of-the-investor-campaign-to-preserve-rule-14a-8/>). The court has postponed a scheduled status hearing nine times. Most recently, the status hearing has been postponed to May 2024.

Exxon Suit Should Prod SEC to Tighten Shareholder Proposal Rules

ExxonMobil Corp. recently attracted significant attention after suing Arjuna Capital and Follow This, two climate activists who sent a shareholder proposal asking that the company set stringent targets to slash its greenhouse gas emissions and those of its customers. However, shortly after being confronted with the prospect of having a court of law review whether their proposal was legal, the activists decided to withdraw their shareholder proposal. Even after the investors withdrew their resolution, Exxon said that while it would drop a request for an expedited hearing, it would press forward with the case. *Lawrence Cunningham, Bloomberg, 2/15/24*
Myles McCormick and Tom Wilson, FT, 2/2/24

House Judiciary Committee Issues Subpoena to Silence Shareholders

On November 1, 2023, As You Sow, the nation's leading shareholder advocate, received a subpoena from the House Judiciary Committee demanding the organization provide documents related to its work with companies related to climate risk. This follows an August 1 letter from the Committee arguing that "As You Sow is potentially violating U.S. antitrust law by entering into agreements to 'decarbonize' corporate assets and reduce emissions to net zero — with potentially harmful effects on Americans' freedom and economic well-being."

As You Sow, 11/1/23

2024 Shareholder Resolutions: Descriptions

Report on Tax Transparency — Requests a report due to the lack of corporate tax transparency and the impact of tax avoidance.

Amend Artificial Intelligence Principles and Board Oversight Report — Requests the Board of Directors amend the charter of the Audit and Compliance Committee of the Board to make it clear that the Committee is responsible for overseeing artificial intelligence activities.

Prepare a Living Wage Disclosure Report — Requests the preparation of a living wage report to provide investors with information needed to assess the extent to which the Company is complying with international human rights standards and assessing systemic risks stemming from growing income inequality.

Publish Climate Transition Plan — Requests the creation of a climate transition plan describing how the company intends to align its operations and full value chain emissions with the ambition of limiting the global temperature increase to 1.5°C.

Assess and Report Risks on Online Sexual Exploitation of Children — Requests that the company publish a report assessing risks of its products and services being used to facilitate online sexual exploitation of children.

Amend Code of Ethics — Asks the Board of Directors to amend the publicly available Code of Ethics by expanding the topic "Inclusive & Respectful Work Environment" and to issue a report on how the Board of Directors checks and verifies board member compliance with the amended Code of Ethics.

2024 Shareholder Resolutions

ALPHABET

Adopt Artificial Intelligence (AI) Principles and Board Oversight

Mount St. Scholastica — Atchison, KS
Emmanuel Monastery — Lutherville, MD

AMAZON

Publish Lobbying Expenditures

Mount St. Scholastica — Atchison, KS
Emmanuel Monastery — Lutherville, MD
Monasterio Pan de Vida — Torreon, MX
Living Wage Disclosure
Monasterio Pan de Vida — Torreon, MX

AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL GROUP

Publish Climate Transition Plan

Monasterio Pan de Vida — Torreon, MX

APPLE

Assess and Report Risks on Online Sexual Exploitation of Children

Mount St. Scholastica — Atchison, KS
Benedictine Sisters, Boerne, TX
Benedictine Sisters of Virginia
Benedictine Sisters, Cullman, AL

CHEVRON

Implement Human Rights Policy

Mount St. Scholastica — Atchison, KS
Benedictine Sisters, Boerne, TX

CITIGROUP

Report on Respect for Indigenous Rights

Mount St. Scholastica — Atchison, KS
St. Mary Monastery — Rock Island, IL

COCA-COLA

Assess and Mitigate Potential Health Harms from Non-Sugar Substitutes

Mount St. Scholastica — Atchison, KS

CONOCOPHILLIPS

Report on Tax Transparency

Mount St. Scholastica — Atchison, KS

EXXON MOBIL

Report on Tax Transparency

Mount St. Scholastica — Atchison, KS
Benedictine Sisters, Boerne, TX
Emmanuel Monastery — Lutherville, MD

GILEAD SCIENCES

Report on Patents and Access to Medicines

Mount St. Scholastica — Atchison, KS
St. Mary Monastery — Rock Island, IL

JOHNSON & JOHNSON

Report on Patents and Access to Medicines

Mount St. Scholastica — Atchison, KS
Benedictine Sisters, Boerne, TX
Benedictine Sisters of Virginia

J.P. MORGAN CHASE

Show Proxy Voting Alignment

Mount St. Scholastica — Atchison, KS

LOCKHEED MARTIN CORPORATION

Adopt Human Rights Policy

Mount St. Scholastica — Atchison, KS

MCDONALD'S

Phase Out Routine Medically Important Antibiotics Use in Supply Chain

Mount St. Scholastica — Atchison, KS
Benedictine Sisters, Boerne, TX
Emmanuel Monastery — Lutherville, MD
St. Scholastica Monastery — Chicago, IL

MERCK

Report on Patents and Access to Medicines

Mount St. Scholastica — Atchison, KS

MONDELEZ INTERNATIONAL

Report on Effectiveness of Human Rights Policy Implementation

Benedictine Sisters of Virginia

NETFLIX

Amendments to the Code of Ethics and Report on Board Members' Compliance with the Amended Code

Mount St. Scholastica — Atchison, KS
Monasterio Pan de Vida — Torreon, MX

PNC FINANCIAL SERVICE GROUP

Implement Human Rights Policy

Mount St. Scholastica — Atchison, KS
St. Mary Monastery — Rock Island, IL

STATE STREET

Report on Proxy Voting Alignment

St. Mary Monastery — Rock Island, IL

TARGET

Measuring Pesticide Use in Agriculture Supply Chain

Mount St. Scholastica — Atchison, KS

THEMO FISHER SCIENTIFIC

Do Human Rights Impact Assessment

Mount St. Scholastica — Atchison, KS

VERIZON

Report on Lobbying Disclosure

Mount St. Scholastica — Atchison, KS

WALMART

Do a Human Rights Impact Assessment

Benedictine Sisters, Boerne, TX



- ◆ **Denny's** – The Benedictine Sisters—Mount St. Scholastica could not file and lead; shares devalued during the year.
- ◆ **Moderna** – The Benedictine Sisters, Boerne, TX did not have enough shares to file; only owned 2 years.
- ◆ **Tyson** – The Benedictine Sisters—Mount St. Scholastica did not have enough shares to file; shares devalued during the year.

Monastery Updates

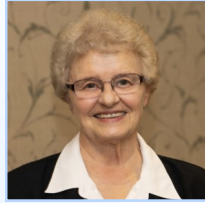
In Memoriam



Sister Priscilla Cohen, Benedictine Sister of Sacred Heart Monastery, Cullman, AL



Sister Patricia Ann Crowley, Benedictine Sister of St. Scholastica Monastery, Chicago, IL



Sister Judith Ann Heble, Benedictine Sister of the Sacred Heart, Lisle, IL

In loving memory of the three Benedictine Sisters who graced our lives with their kindness, wisdom, and devotion. Their legacy of faith, compassion, and service will forever inspire us. As we honor their lives and mourn their passing, may we find solace in knowing that they touched countless hearts and left an indelible mark on our community. Each believed in Benedictines working together to bring about a better world.

Inflation Reduction Act funding helps a Dane County monastery upgrade to clean energy

Thanks in part to President Joe Biden's signature infrastructure law, the Inflation Reduction Act, the Benedictine Sisters of Holy Wisdom Monastery located in Middleton, Wisconsin, are in the process of making several upgrades to their property that will help the monastery become powered entirely by renewable energy by the end of 2024.

In 2023, Holy Wisdom began a three-part clean energy project, first installing a 300-kilowatt ground-mounted solar array, then building a battery storage system for that power, and finally replacing a natural gas-fired HVAC system with a geothermal well-based system.



Photo credit: Holy Wisdom Monastery

The combined cost of the three projects was estimated to be just over \$3 million. The new installations will not only allow them to reduce energy costs, but will also give them more reliable heating and cooling.

Josh Israel, The Wisconsin Independent, 2/28/24

Community celebrates Benedictine Sisters

The Saint Leo University community celebrated the 135th anniversary of the founding of the Benedictine Sisters of Florida on Feb. 28, the date in 1889 when five Sisters arrived in rural East Pasco County from Pennsylvania to staff schools.

Sister Roberta Bailey, OSB, prioress of the Benedictine Sisters of Florida, acknowledged the significance of the occasion: "We are grateful for all that God has done for us throughout these 135 years since our founding sisters ventured forth from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to Pasco County, Florida. We've opened and withdrawn from schools — all still a credit to our transitional skills as they continue in some form to serve the founding purpose. Some changes were welcome and settled in easily; some sat uneasy on the sisters' shoulders as they responded to 'the call of our times,'" said Bailey in a news release.



Sr. Roberta Bailey, prioress, discusses the history of the Benedictine Sisters of Florida. (Credit: Caroline Jorgensen/Saint Leo University)

Mary Rathman, The Laker / Lutz News, 3/12/24

A complicated Emmaus milestone: What does it mean to serve the hungry for 50 years?

The Emmaus that you might know, and even support, today — a soup kitchen, food pantry, Kids Cafe, and urban garden — began as a simple desire of the Benedictine Sisters and their friends to feed the hungry people who came to their door at the Pax Center in the early 1970s. Pax was a Benedictine living community committed to nonviolence through the peace and justice movement, located at their old motherhouse.

Women who were part of the original Pax Center group showed up at Emmaus Soup Kitchen at 218 E. 11th St. on Jan. 9, 2024, to serve dinner exactly 50 years to the day since they served the first meal back in

January 1974, when the ministry began at Immaculate Conception Catholic Church.



Sr. Valerie Luckey, OSB, director of Emmaus Ministries, Go Erie, 2/9/24

Monastery Updates

Aquaponic farming at Holy Name Monastery

How can a delightful one-week guest from another OSB community perk up a hot and humid August in Florida? How? By welcoming the charming Sister Hyacintha Nepala, native of Namibia, Africa and introducing her to aquaponic farming at Holy Name Monastery.

Naturally inquisitive, Sister Hyacintha digested every new learning experience with enthusiasm and ease, starting with a golf cart tour as first on the agenda. "What's that hanging on those trees?" (Spanish moss!) Next by way of a dry-run introduction, Sister Miriam gave her an Aquasol



International student training manual from previous aquaponics classes. Our "friendly" tilapia, especially when being fed, changed a dry-run lesson into an exciting and endearing task complete with Sister Hyacintha's laughter and giggles. Hungry fish faithfully entertain newcomer guests!

With the introductions complete, Sister Hyacintha began learning aquaponic methods for a full day from Lauren R. Manders who has taught fish farming in New Orleans for years and traveled abroad starting aquaponics systems in other countries.

After Sister Hyacintha's visit to Phil Reasons creative farm in Dade City, he continued her training explaining types of systems which could be introduced in her native country. The reasons for having sustainable aquaculture farming are so many—food security and poverty, and can be summarized in one comment Sister made about commercialized food, "Food here is tasting good, but is destroying our body." Amen to that and to a wonderful and fun week of valuable beautiful experiences.

Sister Roberta Bailey, OSB
Holy Name Monastery, St. Leo, Florida

Monastery Site Transformed

Demolition of the Benedictine Sisters of Virginia's old monastery began earlier this year. The chapel was the first to be demolished. The Sisters are now planning to install a prayer garden on the site of the old monastery.



Photo Credit: Benedictine Sisters of Virginia

Warm welcome to our newest member

On behalf of the Benedictine Coalition for Responsible Investment (BCRI), we extend a heartfelt welcome to Queen of Angels Monastery located in Mount Angel, Oregon as our newest coalition member! We are thrilled to have you join us in our mission to promote sustainable business practices and foster innovation for a better future.



The Missionary Benedictine Sisters of Tutzing held their International Treasurers' Meeting in Rome

The Missionary Benedictine Sisters of Tutzing held their Third International Treasurers' Meeting in Rome at their Generalate, Casa Santo Spirito, September 20-30, 2023. Twenty-one Sisters from 12 priories and 4 dependent houses under the Generalate, as well as the Prioress General, Congregation Treasurer and four General Council members attended the meetings. The theme of the meetings was taken from the church document from CICLSAL, Economy at the Service of the Charism and Mission. The purpose of the international meeting was to bring treasurers from across the Congregation together to present reports, share ideas, concepts that are successful and also challenges that the individual priories face. There was a focus on respect for the environment and how the different priories have respect, safeguard the environment, and show good stewardship to serve the human person in all aspects of life and respect all of God's creation. I shared our membership with the Benedictine Coalition for Responsible Investment and how together as American Benedictines we strive to support those areas of immigration where there are needs, share ideas of better protecting the earth and how to more fully respect life in all its forms.

Sr. Rita Marie Tofflemire, OSB
Missionary Benedictine Sisters of Tutzing



A group of Missionary Benedictine Sisters of Tutzing at Subiaco with Fr. Mauritius Wilde Missionary Benedictine Father. Credit: Sr. Rita Marie Tofflemire

Laudato Sí Statement / The Season of Creation 2024

The cry of the earth and the cry of the poor can wait no longer. Let's take care of creation, a gift from our good Creator God.

Pope Francis,
Vatican News, 3/3/20

15 things Mount St. Scholastica is currently doing in regard to Laudato Sí 2024

1. Prayer
2. Recycling
3. Composting
4. Has 3 arrays of solar panels, hybrid vehicles, and LED lights in many places
5. Beekeeping
6. Active in Atchison's Hunger Task Force
7. Uses plastic-free laundry soap, shampoo, conditioner, cleaning products
8. Grows vegetables & herbs; has chickens (about 11)
9. Has interns, volunteers from Benedictine College & Academy both learn and help us
10. Frequent shows ecological documentary films
11. Had Table reading of Laudate Deum
12. Has a Sister w/ new degree in integral ecology
13. Cooperates w/ Benedictine College and their new Center for Integral Ecology (The Center for Integral Ecology at Benedictine College exists to meet the unprecedented ecological crisis facing our world today. The Center's vision is consistent with Catholic social teaching's emphasis that both the created world and the most vulnerable of society are a gift from God to be cherished and cared for).
14. Has an annual outside workday for the Sisters
15. Mentors traditional food artisan skills — bread baking, canning, honey extraction, etc.

Submitted by: **Barbara McCracken, OSB**
Mount St. Scholastica, Atchison, Kansas



The Season of Creation 2024



TO HOPE AND ACT WITH CREATION

SEASON OF CREATION 2024

The firstfruits of hope
(Rom 8:19-25)

The Season of Creation is the annual Christian celebration to pray and respond together to the cry of Creation: the ecumenical family around the world unites to listen and care for our common home. The "Celebration" begins September 1, the Feast of Creation, and ends October 4, the Feast of Saint Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of ecology beloved by many Christian denominations.

The theme for Season of Creation this year is To Hope and Act with Creation, and the symbol is The firstfruits of hope, inspired by Romans (Rom 8:19-25).

The biblical image pictures the Earth as a Mother, groaning as in childbirth (Rom 8:22). Saint Francis of Assisi understood this when he referred to the Earth as our sister and our mother in his Canticle of Creatures. The times we live in show that we are not relating to the Earth as a gift from our Creator, but rather as a resource to be used. "Creation is groaning" (Rom 8:22) because of our selfishness and our unsustainable actions that harm her. Along with our Sister, Mother Earth, creatures of all kinds, including humans, cry out because of our destructive actions causing climate crisis, loss of biodiversity, and human suffering as well as Creations suffering.

And yet Creation teaches us that hope is present in the waiting, in the expectation for a better future (cf. Rom 8:20-21). To hope in biblical context does not mean standing still and quiet, but rather groaning, crying, and actively striving for new life amidst the struggles.

Creation and all of us are called to worship the Creator, working together for a future of active hope and action. Only when we work together with Creation can the firstfruits of hope be born. Just as in childbirth, we go through a period of intense pain, but new life is coming forth.

Laudato Sí Movement, Season of Creation, 2024

Updates on Covid-19

FDA Authorizes Drug to Protect High-Risk Patients From Covid

The FDA has greenlit a new monoclonal antibody infusion, Pemgarda, to protect immunocompromised people ages 12 and older from Covid. Invinyrd, the company that makes this new pharmaceutical is still evaluating what the drug will cost; however, David Hering, the company's chief executive, expects that Medicare and private insurance plans will cover it.

Dani Blum, New York Times, 3/25/24

CDC recommends seniors get another Covid-19 shot

People age 65 and older should get an additional dose of the current Covid-19 vaccine, the US CDC recommends. Under the new recommendation, people 65 and older can receive an additional dose of any updated Covid-19 vaccine at least four months after the previous shot.

Jen Christensen, CNN, 2/28/24

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): Covid-19 update for the U.S.

Test Positivity >

% Test Positivity

4.0%

(March 17 to March 23, 2024)

Trend in % Test Positivity

-0.6% in most recent week



Feb 3, 2024

Mar 23, 2024

Hospitalizations >

Hospital Admissions

9,345

(March 17 to March 23, 2024)

Trend in Hospital Admissions

-13.9% in most recent week



Feb 3, 2024

Mar 23, 2024

Deaths >

% of All Deaths in U.S. Due to COVID-19

1.5%

(March 17 to March 23, 2024)

Trend in % COVID-19 Deaths

-16.7% in most recent week



Feb 3, 2024

Mar 23, 2024

Total Deaths: 1,186,671
Death data through March 23, 2024

Hostilities and Casualties from Recent Wars

Hostilities in the Gaza Strip and Israel as of March 29, 2024

Reported Fatalities in Gaza

- ◆ 32,623 persons

Reported Injuries in Gaza

- ◆ 75,092 persons

Damage

- ◆ Over 60% of Gaza's housing units reportedly destroyed or damaged

Food Security

- ◆ 265K people facing crisis levels of food insecurity

Health

- ◆ 10 hospitals partially functioning (4 in north and 6 in south of Wadi, Gaza).

Education

- ◆ 625,000 students with no access to education

United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 3/29/24

Russia's War On Ukraine - Two Years On

Casualties

- ◆ Over 10,000 Ukrainian civilians killed and over 18,500 being injured

Displacement

- ◆ Four million Ukrainians, including nearly one million children have been displaced

Damage to Cultural and Tourist Assets

- ◆ 4,779 cultural and tourist assets in Ukraine have been reported as damaged, including buildings of heritage value, and works of art, among others. UNESCO estimated that the war has resulted in nearly \$3.5 billion in damage.

Reconstruction Cost

- ◆ The reconstruction and recovery in war-torn Ukraine would cost \$486 billion over the next decade, up from \$411 billion estimated a year ago.

Dr. Ewelina U. Ochab, Forbes, 2/18/24

Immigration News

U.S. Border Patrol Southwest Border Encounters						
Demographic	FY 2019 Totals	FY 2020 Totals	FY 2021 Totals	FY 2022 Totals	FY 2023 Totals	FY 2024 Totals*
Unaccompanied Child	76,020	30,557	144,834	149,093	131,519	51,949
Family Units	473,682	52,230	451,087	482,962	621,311	354,586
Single Adult	301,806	317,864	1,063,285	1,574,381	1,293,008	487,934
Total Apprehensions	851,508	400,651	1,659,206	2,206,436	2,045,838	894,469

*The government's fiscal year runs from October to September.
***For FY 2024, we only have the statistics from October—February.**
U.S. Customs and Border Protection, 2023 & 2024

Operation Lone Star

- As of March 29, Texas has bused:
- ◆ Over 12,500 migrants to Washington, D.C. since April 2022
 - ◆ Over 40,600 migrants to New York City since August 2022
 - ◆ Over 33,300 migrants to Chicago since August 2022
 - ◆ Over 3,400 migrants to Philadelphia since November 2022
 - ◆ Over 17,300 migrants to Denver since May 2023
 - ◆ Over 1,500 migrants to Los Angeles since June 2023

Office of the Texas Governor, 3/29/24



Photo Credit: Amerika Garcia Grewal

Senate Bill 3 and Senate Bill 4 (SB4)

- ◆ Senate Bill 3 earmarks \$1.54 billion in state money for the construction of barriers along the Texas-Mexico border and allows the state to spend up to \$40 million for state troopers to patrol Colony Ridge, a housing development near Houston, TX, that publications claim is a magnet for immigrants.
- ◆ Senate Bill 4 creates a state crime for illegally crossing the border from Mexico. The new state crime is a Class B misdemeanor carrying a punishment of up to six months in jail. Repeat offenders could face a second-degree felony with a punishment of two to 20 years in prison.
- ◆ On March 26, a federal appeals panel declined to put Texas's migrant deportation law SB4 back in effect, saying the state law seizes powers that are "likely reserved to the United States." The 2-1 opinion from the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals keeps the law on hold while a broader legal battle plays out over the constitutionality of the state's new immigration enforcement scheme. The appeals court is scheduled to hear arguments in the case on April 3, 2024.
- ◆ On April 3, an attorney defending Texas' plans to arrest migrants who enter the U.S. illegally told a panel of federal judges that it's possible the law "went too far" but that will be up to the court to decide.

Uriel J. Garcia, Texas Tribune, 2/6/24
Benjamin Wermund, Washington Bureau, 3/27/24
Camilo Montoya-Galvez, CBS News, 3/12/24 and 3/20/24
Acacia Coronado, Associated Press, 4/3/24



Photo Credit: Amerika Garcia Grewal

Annunciation House

- ◆ The Texas Attorney General's (AG) office sued to shut down Annunciation House, a Catholic nonprofit, that helps shelter migrants in El Paso, TX.
- ◆ Officials from the AG's office visited Annunciation House on February 7, 2024 demanding it provide extensive documentation within the last 24 hours that includes the identities of all migrants the organization has helped. The administrative subpoena sent to Annunciation House demanded some of the organization's documents from January 2022 until February 2024.
- ◆ An attorney representing Annunciation House filed a lawsuit on February 8, 2024 to delay the release of the records and examine the legality of the AG's request.
- ◆ The AG's office filed a counterclaim accusing Annunciation House of engaging in human smuggling.
- ◆ On March 11, 2024 Judge Francisco X. Dominguez of El Paso, ruled in favor of Annunciation House, keeping them from having to immediately turn over internal documents that Paxton's office demanded last month.

William Melhado, Texas Tribune, 2/20/24
Armando Garcia, ABC News, 2/21/24; AP, 3/11/24

Six victims of the Francis Scott Key Bridge collapse in the Baltimore Harbor, were all immigrants from Mexico and Central America, when a container ship crashed into a support pillar at 1:30 a.m. EDT on March 26, 2024 and sent them plunging into the icy Patapsco River.

Gabriella Borter, Reuters, 3/28/24

Gun Violence

Gun Makers to Ask U.S. Supreme Court to Bar Mexico's Lawsuit

U.S. gun manufacturers plan to ask the U.S. Supreme Court to hear their bid to escape Mexico's \$10 billion lawsuit seeking to hold them responsible for facilitating the trafficking of weapons to drug cartels across the U.S.-Mexico border. Mexico alleges in the lawsuit, filed in 2021, that the companies undermined its strict gun laws by designing, marketing and distributing military-style assault weapons in ways they knew would arm drug cartels, fueling murders, extortions and kidnappings in the country. Mexico says over 500,000 guns are trafficked annually from the U.S. into Mexico, of which more than 68% are made by the eight companies it sued, including Sturm, Ruger & Co, Beretta USA, Barrett Firearms Manufacturing, Colt's Manufacturing Co and Glock Inc.

Nate Raymond, *U.S. News*, 2/9/24

Catholic bishops meet with Mexico's cartel bosses to plead for peace

Citing a "profound crisis of violence and social disintegration," Mexico's Catholic bishops are staking out an aggressive new role in national security, going so far as to sit down with feuding drug traffickers in one blood-soaked state to hammer out a truce. Church leaders recently persuaded the candidates in the July 2, 2024 presidential election to sign a "National Commitment for Peace" that includes a lengthy list of proposed reforms, such as strengthening local police forces and making the justice system more professional and transparent. The church is acting now, Bishop Ramón Castro says, because it has received complaints from parishioners who have suffered extortion, robbery and the disappearance of loved ones.

Mary Beth Sheridan and Lorena Rios, *Washington Post*, 4/3/24

Why are deadly weapons being sold to those who plan to inflict untold suffering on individuals and society? Sadly, the answer, as we all know, is simply for money: money that is drenched in blood, often innocent blood. In the face of this shameful and culpable silence, it is our duty to confront the problem and to stop the arms trade.

Pope Francis,

Addressing the joint session of Congress in Washington, 9/27/15

Artificial Intelligence

ABCs of AI: A brief glossary of artificial intelligence terminology

- ◇ **Artificial intelligence, or AI:** A branch of computer science that focuses on creating machines, computer programs or software systems that can perform tasks typically requiring human intelligence.
- ◇ **Chatbot:** A software application or web interface that mimics human conversation through text or voice interactions.
- ◇ **ChatGPT:** A chatbot developed by OpenAI, capable of generating humanlike text based on context and past conversations.
- ◇ **Machine learning:** A method that helps machines learn from data and get better at doing tasks without being explicitly programmed.

Stanford Medicine Magazine, 11/10/23

You're Already Using AI: Here's Where It's at In Everyday Life, from Facial Recognition to Navigation Apps

- ◇ **Facial Recognition:** Many smartphones, like iPhones and Androids, banking apps like Bank of America, social media apps like Instagram and Twitter and other apps use facial recognition in place of passwords.
- ◇ **Streaming Services:** Netflix and HBO Max tend to offer recommendations on movies and shows for their users to watch based on each user's watch history.
- ◇ **GPS And Navigation Apps:** Google Maps also uses AI to determine traffic patterns and estimated time of arrival.
- ◇ **Digital Voice Assistants:** AI-powered digital assistants, like Siri, Alexa, Cortana and Google Home can be used to complete tasks like making a grocery list, putting on music, reading the news and checking bank statements without lifting a finger.

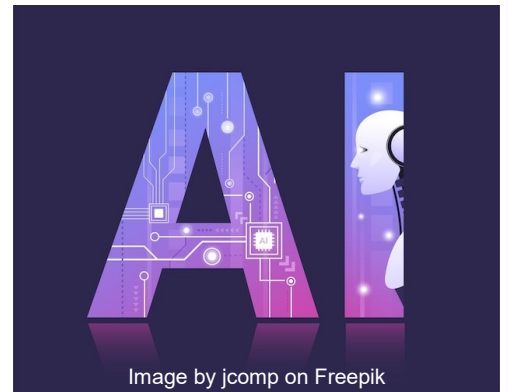


Image by jcomp on Freepik

Arianna Johnson, *Forbes*, 4/14/23

Climate Change

U.S. struck with historic number of billion-dollar disasters in 2023

In 2023, 28 confirmed weather/climate disaster events with losses exceeding \$1 billion each affected the United States. These events included: 1 drought event, 4 flooding events, 19 severe storm events, 2 tropical cyclone events, 1 wildfire event, and 1 winter storm event. The total cost for these 28 disasters was \$92.9 billion, but that may rise by several billion dollars when the costs of the December 16-18, 2023, East Coast storm and flooding event are fully accounted for.

*National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI), 2024
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), 1/9/24*

Planet vs. Plastics: Global Theme for Earth Day 2024

Planet vs. Plastics unites students, parents, businesses, governments, churches, unions, individuals, and NGOs in an unwavering commitment to call for the end of plastics for the sake of human and planetary health, demanding a 60% reduction in the production of plastics by 2040 and an ultimate goal of building a plastic-free future for generations to come. To achieve a 60% reduction by 2040, EARTHDAY.ORG's goals are:

1. promoting widespread public awareness of the damage done by plastic to human, animal, and the health of all bio-diversities;
2. rapidly phasing out all single-use plastics by 2030;
3. demanding policies ending the scourge of fast fashion and the vast amount of plastic it produces and uses; and
4. investing in innovative technologies and materials to build a plastic-free world.

Earth Day is celebrated in the U.S. on April 22 every year.

EARTHDAY.ORG, 7/31/23

How the 2024 Total Solar Eclipse Is Different than the 2023 Eclipse

- ◆ In 2017, the path of the solar eclipse ranged from about 62 to 71 miles wide. During the April eclipse, the path over North America will range between 108 and 122 miles wide.
- ◆ An estimated 31.6 million people live in the path of totality this year, compared to 12 million in 2017. An additional 150 million people live within 200 miles of the path of totality.
- ◆ In April, totality will last longer than it did in 2017. Seven years ago, the longest period of totality was experienced near Carbondale, Illinois, at 2 minutes, 42 seconds.

Abbey Interrante, NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center, 2024

2023 is officially the hottest year on record

According to Copernicus, Europe's climate change service, the global average temperature for 2023 was 58.96°F. The previous record was 58.66°F set in 2016.

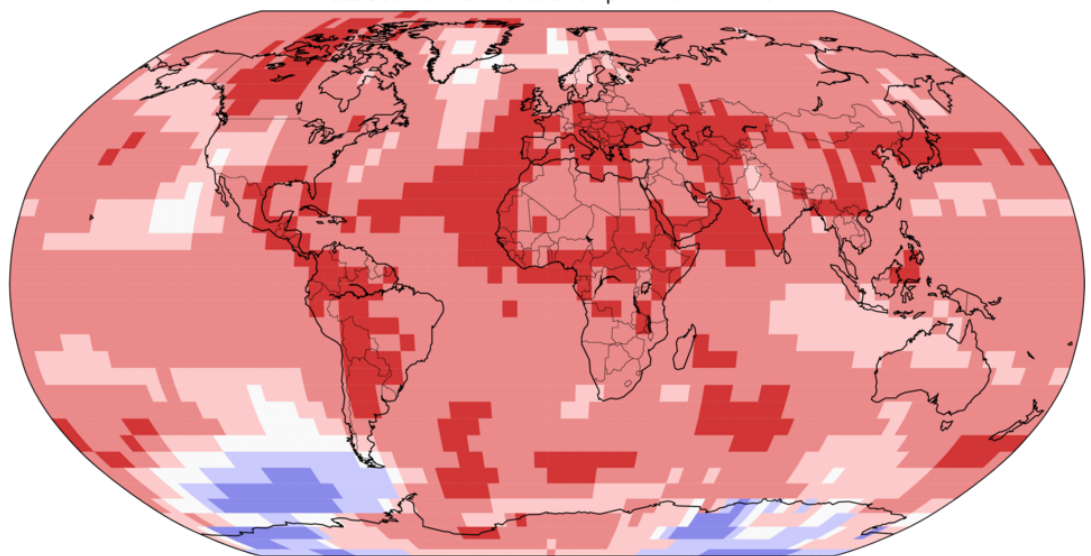
Stephanie Ebbs, Daniel Manzo, and Daniel Peck, ABC News, 1/9/24

A world map plotted with color blocks depicting percentiles of global average land and ocean temperatures for the full year 2023. Image credit: NOAA NCEI

Land & Ocean Temperature Percentiles Jan–Dec 2023

NOAA's National Centers for Environmental Information

Data Source: NOAAGlobalTemp v5.1.0–20240107



Record Coldest

Much Cooler than Average

Cooler than Average

Near Average

Warmer than Average

Much Warmer than Average

Record Warmest



Earth Day Reflection 2024

When we “seek first the kingdom of God” (Mt 6:33), maintaining a right relationship with God, humanity and nature, then justice and peace can flow like a never-failing stream of pure water, nourishing humanity and all creatures.

Pope Francis, Message for Creation Day 2023

How can we align our priorities and actions to prioritize seeking the kingdom of God, cultivating a balanced and respectful relationship with God, humanity, and nature?

Too many of our brothers and sisters are prevented from drinking from that mighty river. Let us heed our call to stand with the victims of environmental and climate injustice, and to put an end to the senseless war against creation.

Pope Francis, Message for Creation Day 2023

How can we deepen our understanding of the interconnectedness between the disharmony in justice and peace, and taking meaningful action to support those affected by environmental and climate injustice while working towards reconciliation and healing for creation?

With the help of God’s grace, let us adopt lifestyles marked by less waste and unnecessary consumption, especially where the processes of production are toxic and unsustainable. Let us be mindful as we can about our habits and economic decisions so that all can thrive—our fellow men and women wherever they may be, and future generations as well.

Pope Francis, Message for Creation Day 2023

How can we align our daily choices and economic decisions with principles of sustainability and moderation, in order to cooperate with God's ongoing creation and promote environmental and social responsibility?



Credit: ID 39296418 © Andreyi Armiagov | Dreamstime.com

Ten Simple Things You Can Do to Help Protect the Earth

- ♦ Reduce, reuse, and recycle. Cut down on what you throw away.
- ♦ Volunteer. Volunteer for cleanups in your community.
- ♦ Educate. You can help others understand the importance and value of our natural resources.
- ♦ Conserve water. The less water you use, the less wastewater that ends up in the ocean.
- ♦ Choose sustainable. Learn how to make smart seafood choices at www.fishwatch.gov.
- ♦ Shop wisely. Buy less plastic and bring a reusable shopping bag.
- ♦ Use long-lasting light bulbs. Energy efficient light bulbs reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- ♦ Plant a tree. Trees help save energy, clean the air, and help combat climate change.
- ♦ Don't send chemicals into our waterways. Choose non-toxic chemicals in the home and office.
- ♦ Bike more. Drive less.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), 2024



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 will continue.
- Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR)** — March 19-22, 2024 in New York City
September 17-20, 2024 in New York City
- Resource Center for Religious Institutes (RCRI)** — Oct. 1-4, 2024 in Orlando, FL

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)
- **Queen of Angels Monastery** (Mount Angel, Oregon)
- **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**
- **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 form 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. Linda Murphy helps edit the newsletter.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE: _____ E-MAIL _____

MONASTERY (or other affiliation) _____