



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

A Legacy of Justice

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

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

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

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

MORE RESOURCES FOR STUDY AND COLLABORATION

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



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



Dominican Sisters
Grand Rapids, Michigan
grdominicans.org
dominicancenter.com



North American Dominican Promoters of Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation
domlife.org/peace-justice



In *Laudato Si*, Pope Francis speaks to integral ecology:

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

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

Laudato Si –139



Gospel Call To Justice

Presented by:

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

The ministry of the North American Dominican Promoters of Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation is to encourage all members of the **Order of Preachers** and their associates to embrace a deepening of the Dominican charism to search for and preach TRUTH as it impacts the lives of people and planet.

In this effort they join with Dominicans world-wide to promote the call of Gospel justice and help guide the study of and advocacy for human rights and climate justice in our world today. These efforts are augmented by our Dominican presence at the United Nations in New York and Geneva.

Preach the truth as if you had a million voices.

~ St. Catherine of Siena



OUR JUSTICE MINISTRY PRIORITIES

In Laudato Sí, Pope Francis proposes integral ecology as the new paradigm of justice. It reflects the many relationships that keep a system intact, whole, and healthy. Integral ecology looks at a comprehensive picture of reality and is essential to our understanding the interconnectedness of the whole.

This paradigm respects our unique place as human beings in this world and our relationship to all which surrounds us.

No issue is an isolated event but is part of the web of relationships.

We commit to the following interwoven priorities:

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

OUR PROCESS

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

Using the framework of integral ecology, we:

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

● **Climate Justice**

The term Climate Justice frames global warming as an ethical, social, economic, political and environmental issue. CO2 levels in the atmosphere now reach 415 ppm, far above the 300 ppm level of the last 3 million years. The consequences of the climate's heating are intensifying around the world. We have 11 years left to limit climate change catastrophe.

Our Earth is talking to us and we must listen to it and decipher its message if we want to survive. Pope Benedict XVI

● **Peace and Security for All Life**

We extol the dignity of all life. We hold the joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of all those threatened by war or gun violence, of prisoners, of the sick, of children in the womb, of mothers in crisis.

According to the World Health Organization, 1.4 million people lose their lives to violence each year and 2 billion people are living in countries affected by fragility, conflict, and violence. Long lasting consequences include increased hunger and crop failure, threat to water supplies, environmental degradation, massive displacement and migration, escalation of crime and terrorism.

Peace, in effect, is the fruit of a great political project grounded in the mutual responsibility and interdependence of human beings. But it is also a challenge that demands to be taken up ever anew. It entails a conversion of heart and soul. Pope Francis, 2019

● **Migration and Immigration**

According to the United Nations, 70.8 million individuals are displaced worldwide as a result of poverty, persecution, conflict, violence and environmental degradation. Popes and Bishops worldwide defend the right of peoples to migrate to sustain their lives and the lives of their families.

You shall also love the stranger, for you were once strangers in the land. Deuteronomy 10:19

What role must I take in bringing about the kind of world I wish for all to inhabit?

How do I see the face of God in the whole of life, embrace the tenets of nonviolence, and practice loving those that I see as "other"?

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

● **Human Trafficking**

Pope Francis calls human trafficking an open wound on society, a scourge on the Body of Christ, a crime against humanity. There are an estimated 20 million victims of trafficking and human slavery worldwide, 9.1 million victims have been trafficked internally or internationally. 11.8 million are subjected to forms of modern slavery in their place of origin within their own national borders. Nearly 1.5 million victims are currently laboring in conditions of forced labor, sexual exploitation and servitude in the United States, Canada and developed countries of the EU.

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

● **Economic Justice**

God's vision is for everyone to live the fullness of life. Economic justice provides opportunities for persons to enjoy dignified, productive, and creative lives. We denounce the global economic system that allows the world's richest 1 percent to own 45 percent of the world's wealth. We denounce valuing money and profit over the dignity of human beings and the life of the planet.

All human beings are ends to be served by the institutions that make up the economy, not means to be exploited for more narrowly defined goals.... When we deal with each other, we should do so with the sense of awe that arises in the presence of something holy and sacred. Economic Justice for All #28

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

What can I do to expose the truth about modern-day slavery and advocate for substantive laws that protect victims and hold accountable all who facilitate and enable human trafficking?

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

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



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

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

A Dominican Prayer