



GREETINGS FROM MARtha JUSTICE MINISTRY

Greetings to you all!

As I write, it's difficult not to feel the weight of the times we are living in. It's natural to experience moments of fear, unease, or frustration when faced with the significant challenges before us—challenges that call for collective effort in a world often marked by division in our political and social landscapes. In light of this, it is more important than ever to find and shine a light on what is good, and there is so much good at work.

In our work as Martha Justice Ministry, we are so blessed to be part of communities and networks for people dedicated to making life better for everyone. We see this in our work to end poverty, in our work to care for creation, and in our work for reconciliation, justice, and peace.

I hope that these updates offer some inspiration and encouragement in these challenging times.

Peace and Blessings,

~ Darlene O'Leary, Coordinator, Martha Justice Ministry





ORCIE UPDATE



As a representative of the Marthas on the Board of the Office of Religious Congregations for Integral Ecology (ORCIE) and as a member of the ORCIE Executive Committee, I get to share in the great work ORCIE has been doing in advocating for strong federal climate action and meaningful reconciliation work with Indigenous communities.

On August 28, ORCIE Executive Members Joe Gunn, Sue Wilson, and myself, as well as new ORCIE Researcher, Sasquia Antunez Pineda, had an online **meeting with Environment and Climate Change Minister Steven Guilbeault** and his senior staff person, Jennifer Lash, along with Maryo Wahba (Citizens for Public Justice), and Cheryl McNamara (Kairos). This meeting followed on a letter sent by 13 faith leaders and organizations requesting a meeting with the Minister to discuss *federal climate action*.



The discussion included a call for more ambitious climate targets, as well as ongoing collaboration with the Minister's office on shared priorities, including moving toward decarbonization and a just transition. It also included updates on CPJ's *Give it up for the Earth* campaign, and For the Love of Creation's *100 Faithful Climate Conversations*.

Minister Guilbeault shared about his government's climate work and challenges they have faced. He was enthusiastic about continued engagement with faith groups on our shared commitments for urgent and meaningful climate action.

In September, ORCIE Executive Members and staff had two days of strategic planning at the Ottawa office to review the progress of the past year and to outline priorities and goals for the year and years ahead. It was a very constructive two days together, and it is exciting to be part of ORCIE's growth as a voice for religious congregations advocating for federal action on climate justice and reconciliation.



*Embracing Our Neighbour
and Our Common Home*

VICAR OF THE FOUNDER LECTURE

On October 4, I had the great pleasure of giving this year's Vicar of the Founder Lecture at St. Ninian's Place, as part of the St. Francis Xavier Homecoming activities.

Bishop Wayne Kirkpatrick presided at mass before the event. Following this, those gathered had a wonderful meal together. I then spoke to the group about the work of Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation (JPIC), with a particular focus on Pope Francis' *Laudato Si'*.

It was a lovely event and a good opportunity to share the important messages from *Laudato Si'* on **Care for Our Common Home**, as well as the work of Martha Justice Ministry and as the Marthas' Liaison to the Sisters of Charity Federation UN NGO.

Many thanks to Bishop Kirkpatrick for the invitation to give the lecture!



*Bishop Wayne Kirkpatrick with
Darlene O'Leary*

TAMARACK ENGAGEFEST CONFERENCE

Sister Marion Sheridan, Joanne Tompkins, and I joined Tamarack's Natasha Pei and Sylvia Cheuy in a workshop on October 30, as part of Tamarack's annual *EngageFest Conference*. This year's theme was "The Power of People and Place".



Our workshop was called "Building a Movement for Change: Lessons from Atlantic Canada." We had a great discussion about **the Marthas' engagement in work on poverty eradication, particularly through**

Antigonish Coalition to End Poverty, the larger context of the Antigonish Movement, and the more recent initiative with Tamarack of the Basic Income NOW Atlantic Canada group. It was nice to share our experiences and reflections on building these movements and being part of wider, and growing, movements for change.



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WALKING TOGETHER FOR PEACE

Walking Together for Peace is a grassroots initiative involving Peace walkers from around the world who came together in September to walk from Pugwash to Halifax to promote interconnected peace issues, including nuclear disarmament and decolonization.

We were so pleased that the group was able to come to Antigonish before their walk to have two sessions. The first session on Friday, September 6, was an afternoon on **Nonviolent Economy** with Jill Carr-Harris (*on the photo below*), Anuj Jain, and others at the Antigonish Peoples Place Library.



The second session on Saturday, September 7, was a gathering at the Coady Institute and walk to the Bethany Property to pray together at the Marthas' Peace Pole. We then joined for a lovely lunch and an afternoon session of teaching and learning together through stories of **peace building**.

Though the day was blustery, it was a beautiful time to walk, pray, eat, and learn together.



*Many thanks to the Peace walkers
who joined us for the event!*



BASIC INCOME

In September, members of Martha Justice Ministry, Sister Marion Sheridan, Joanne Tompkins, and Amy Brierley, participated in the annual Basic Income Guarantee Nova Scotia conference in Halifax, called *“Confronting the Challenges: A Livable Basic Income Guarantee for All Who Need It.”*

Joanne moderated a panel discussion on the work of Basic Income NOW Atlantic Canada, and Sister Marion spoke on the panel as one of the founding members of the group, which now includes representatives from each of the Atlantic provinces.

The panel discussed the history of the Atlantic group and the **importance of partnerships**, particularly reflecting the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

There was also a discussion on the **PEI basic income demonstration project proposal** that is being considered for implementation by the province of PEI in conversation with the federal government. In addition, there were updates from each of the Atlantic provinces on their **work promoting basic income**, and there was helpful information on resources to access for those participating.

Other workshops included a very profound sharing by Niigaan Sinclair, Anishinaabe writer, scholar, and activist, who talked about **basic income as an extension of the Indigenous practice of sharing a meal and ensuring everyone has enough.**

It was a very positive day of sharing ideas and strategies for moving forward on basic income!



Basic Income NOW Atlantic Panel





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MARTHA NEW GROWERS

It has been a very active season for the New Growers, David Matheson and Meghan Johnny! Along with the amazing growing season they had, they also hosted four workshops, and several tours of community groups and classes interested in the program and the work they are doing.

New Growers workshops took place in June, July, August, and October, through all kinds of weather, so congratulations to the hardy souls that came out in the extreme heat and heavy rain! David and Meghan offered helpful information and guidance to participants about planting, soil health, addressing challenges, and preparing your garden for the winter.



Meghan and I had a chance to **speak to a Religious Studies class** at Mount Allison University in New Brunswick, who were interested in the connection between theology, in particular integral ecology, and local, organic farming. We had a great discussion, touching on themes including what Gospel Hospitality means in sustainable farming.

Meghan and David also gave a **presentation to the Marthas** at Parkland about their year, what they have learned, what challenges they faced, and their hopes for local food security and for young farmers.

We are so grateful to have David and Meghan with us to share about the New Growers program and their work!



We also had **several groups come to the farm area for tours**, including from the Coady Institute, StFX Nutrition and Climate/Development classes, and others. It is wonderful to see the interest from the community in the great work being done, and the interest in local, organic, and sustainable food!



Embracing Our Neighbour
and Our Common Home

TAKE ACTION!

Development and Peace Caritas Canada has launched its fall campaign, *Reaping Our Rights*, with a focus on supporting the rights of small-scale farmers and peasants' movements globally.

**REAPING
OUR RIGHTS**

Help protect small farmers' rights.
DEMAND A DUE DILIGENCE LAW NOW!

Development and Peace
CARITAS CANADA

Join us!
devp.org | 1-888-234-8533

Along with this **call for solidarity**, the campaign continues the years long call for the federal government to adopt strong human rights and environmental due diligence (mHREDD) legislation to ensure that Canadian companies are not violating human rights or causing environmental damage when they operate internationally.

**LET'S ACT
IN SOLIDARITY**

**GLOBALLY
SIGN THE
ACTION CARD**

Canada has a duty to uphold human rights by putting people and the environment before corporate interests, both at home and abroad.

This is why we are asking the Government of Canada to adopt a **strong human rights and environmental due diligence law**.

Scan to sign online:
devp.org/act

**LOCALLY
HAVE A
SOLIDARITY MEAL**

Organize a meal with your family, community, school or parish. Take the time to consider the foods that make up your meal.

- Where do they come from?
- Who produced them?
- Under what conditions?

Be thankful for the abundance of food we are privileged to eat and discuss how it can be produced and sold in fairer, more sustainable ways. **Take the opportunity to collect signatures on the action card!**

Together, let's work towards *Reaping our Rights!*

- **Ask your MP** to support due diligence legislation.
- **Talk to your family and friends** and invite them to sign the action card.
- **Make a donation** to support peasant communities in the Global South.
- **Follow us on social media:** @DevPeace #ReapingOurRights

Development and Peace
CARITAS CANADA

1-888-234-8533
devp.org

To learn more about this campaign, as well as the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas (UNDROP)*, and to take action in support of mHREDD legislation, go to:

<https://devp.org/en/campaign/reaping-our-rights/>



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UN NGO ORIENTATION

Jimmy Walters, the Sisters of Charity Federation United Nations (UN) Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Representative, has offered two virtual UN Orientations (October and November) to provide a glimpse into the work of the UN and the NGO.

Jimmy walked participants through a presentation that included the work of the UN bodies, the work of the UN NGO, some of the key priority issues that the NGO engages in, some committees Jimmy is on, and **how the Federation congregations engage through the work of the NGO Liaisons.**

It was a very informative look at the UN, key issue areas, and the work of the Federation UN NGO. Jimmy did a wonderful job engaging the participants in conversations.

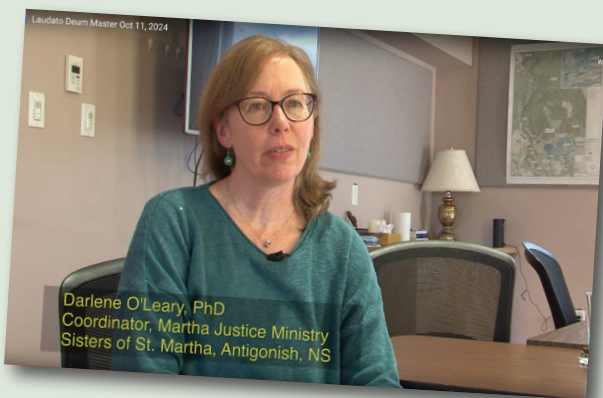
It was certainly a reminder of the importance

of our engagement as global citizens and of the voice of civil society in issues of global importance.



LAUDATE DEUM DOCUMENTARY

The latest documentary from film maker Kevin Moynihan is on *Laudate Deum*, Pope Francis' apostolic exhortation released in 2023, ahead of the UN Climate Conference (COP 28).



This documentary, a great educational resource for faith communities and others, looks at the significance of *Laudate Deum*

in its call for **urgent action to address the climate emergency and protect the planet.**

It features interviews with theologian Hilda Koster, St. Michael's College/Regis College, Caroline Brouillette, Climate Action Network (CAN-Rac) Canada, and me.

I was happy to share some of the ways the Marthas are **living the call to care for creation**, through **the use of solar panels on buildings** to the **New Growers program** supporting sustainable, organic farming.



MJM LIBRARY

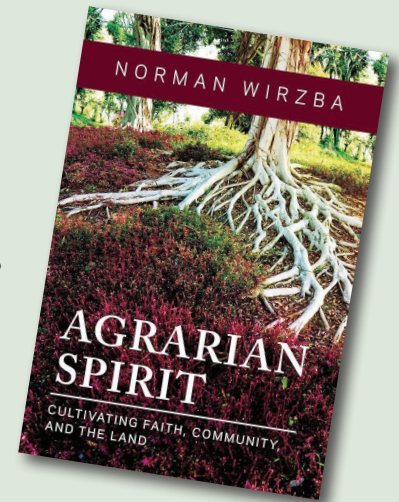
The most recent additions to the Martha Justice Ministry Library are two books on care for creation and action for the planet.

Norman Wirzba

AGRARIAN SPIRIT: CULTIVATING FAITH, COMMUNITY, AND THE LAND

“The God of scripture is an agrarian God.” With this statement, Norman Wirzba invites the reader to explore a new perspective on how God engages with us in and through creation. He also offers directions on how we might engage with God through the nurturing of the earth as a spiritual practice. As the population of the planet increasingly urbanizes, the challenges we face requires that we encounter the earth, watersheds, and species as sacred gifts.

This book starts out as a very broad ranging and dense exploration of agrarianism, it is strongly influenced by writer Wendell Berry, and it includes some analysis of the racism that has excluded many from accessing the land. It then leads to an outline of “agrarian spiritual exercises” that deepen this exploration of connecting with God through creation as gift.



Ayana Elizabeth Johnson

WHAT IF WE GET IT RIGHT? VISIONS OF CLIMATE FUTURE

This book is a wonderfully **positive and hopeful exploration of climate and ecological solutions** that is deeply personal for author and marine biologist Ayana Elizabeth Johnson.

It starts with her personal story of falling in love with coral reefs as a child and exploring the water in her father’s country of origin, Jamaica, in the context of the racism that made her path more unlikely.

This book has a wonderfully casual style, not shying away from the harsh realities of the climate crisis, but also choosing to explore what visioning a better future could involve, through interviews with environmental activists, film makers, fishers, farmers, artists, and others.

It is a creative and energizing approach to looking at the climate emergency head on with hope.

