



# Where Justice and Truth Meet

January 2016

**“With active hope we choose to imagine the world we want to inhabit and accept the urgent responsibility to collaborate in bringing it to birth.”**

*Together – Birthing Anew, Chapter 2014*

## Dominican Call to Justice



As a new year begins, it is good to remind ourselves of the [Dominican Call to Justice](#). Led by our North

American Dominican Justice Promoters we respond to the call for justice in our world today. Engaging in issues using the pastoral model of *see-judge-act*, we address injustice in a spirit of respect, compassion, and solidarity with the whole Earth community.

In solidarity with our sisters and brothers around the world, we commit to study, advocate, and act in the following areas:

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

We advocate for justice through our ministries, through our preaching, through our presence at the United Nations, and through our corporate socially responsible investing. We collaborate with all who seek a more just and sustainable world.

For more information and resources on these areas of justice work, read the full [Dominican Call to Justice](#).

## Peace and Security for All Life:

### The BDS movement

Sr. Mila Díaz, presently living and studying in Jerusalem, shares a recent experience.



*Pain quivered through my whole being as I accompanied the healing process of a young couple of Palestinian Christians who could not sleep for weeks*

*because of a traumatic experience at the entrance of a shopping mall in Jerusalem. A group of Israelis falsely accused them of carrying knives and wanting to attack them. As expected, the Israeli police immediately dealt with them as if they were criminals. Lying on the ground, with six guns pointed at them, the woman cried: “I am innocent! I work in the U.S. Consulate! Look at my documents!” Encircled by guns and soldiers, she screamed louder: “We are Christians! We are Christians!” And then she fainted. With their weapons still pointed at the couple, the police verified their documents, identifying them as Palestinian Christians residing in Jerusalem, and found no weapons...so they let the couple go. With their bags destroyed and their clothes torn, they had to leave the mall with a policeman because the crowd continued shouting against them. Trembling, the man carried his wife in his arms and called a taxi. “It is incredible that we are alive,” she says now. “Just a few weeks ago a young girl was shot after somebody incriminated her. To cover their mistake, the police put a knife in her backpack. These events don’t make it into the news, but the scene does not disappear from my mind, being repeated over and over again in my dreams.” The incident is supposed to end there, with no possibility to denounce the unjust outrage and violence toward innocents.*

***I find myself wondering if another form of coexistence is possible other than this "artificial peace."***

*Meanwhile, more Israeli cameras and military equipment for Israeli soldiers and civilians are supplied. To cross the city, stopping at checkpoints—sometimes three groups of soldiers at Damascus Gate—and seeing Israeli civilians walking with their partner or children—visibly armed—is a day to day experience. I find myself wondering if another form of coexistence is possible other than this "artificial peace."*

The Dominican Call to Justice says: “We see the violence in our world and the insecurity and fear that it spawns. We believe in the sacredness of the whole of life and the right to live and flourish in a peaceful, secure world. Our efforts are focused on that which promotes just, inclusive, mutually-beneficial relationships.”

In response to this call, Dominican Justice Promoters advocate for U.S. recognition of Palestine and support the Palestinian-led BDS (Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions) Campaign to pressure Israel to end its occupation of Palestine. One effort of this campaign calls for a boycott of products from companies that benefit from the occupation of Palestine, particularly Hewlett Packard which provides IT and infrastructure systems for the Israeli checkpoints in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip as well as other support for the Israeli military.

Boycotts, divestment and sanctions have been used successfully to pressure an end to apartheid in South Africa, limit the tobacco industry in the U.S. and call for reform in Cuba and other places.

***The only way for individuals, families and societies to grow, the only way for the life of peoples to progress, is via the culture of encounter, a culture in which all have something good to give and all can receive something good in return.”***

- Pope Francis

### **Climate Justice: A Developing Understanding**

The last edition of this newsletter focused on the [Doctrine of Discovery](#) which, according to Loretto Community co-member and lawyer [Libby Comeaux](#), “authorized European ‘discoverers’ to seize the lands and subjugate the peoples found in the Americas and use their labor to extract riches for the wealthy.” Now, however, “when [Laudato Sí](#) looks to traditional church teachings to find an ‘integral ecology’ based on an interconnected web of life, it seems attuned to an indigenous worldview that honors all beings as belonging to Mother Earth,” she writes.

In movements led and supported in large part by indigenous people, Ecuador, Bolivia, Turkey, and Nepal have moved in recent years to include rights of Earth (Pachamama) in their constitutions. While Earth rights were not

specifically mentioned in *Laudato Sí*, the idea was included by Pope Francis in his [address to the General Assembly of the United Nations](#) during his visit to the U.S.



What are the rights of Mother Earth and her constituent life systems, including human communities? While there are several variations, Bolivian law (2010) enumerates seven specific rights:

- *life*: to maintain the integrity of life systems and natural processes which sustain them;
- *diversity of life*: to preserve the differentiation and variety of beings that comprise Mother Earth without being genetically altered in such a manner that threatens their existence;
- *water*: to preserve the quality and composition of water to sustain life systems;
- *clean air*: to preserve the quality and composition of the air to sustain life systems;
- *equilibrium*: to maintain or restore interdependence, the ability to complement and the functionality of the components of Mother Earth in a balanced manner;
- *restoration*: to effective and opportune restoration of life systems affected directly or indirectly by human activities;
- *live free from contamination*: for preservation of Mother Earth and any of its components with regards to toxic and radioactive waste generated by human activities.

***“Everything is related, and we human beings are united as brothers and sisters on a wonderful pilgrimage, woven together by the love God has for each of his creatures and which also unites us in fond affection with brother sun, sister moon, brother river and mother earth.”***

- Pope Francis



*Click above for ideas on what YOU can do!*