



# Loretto Earth Network News

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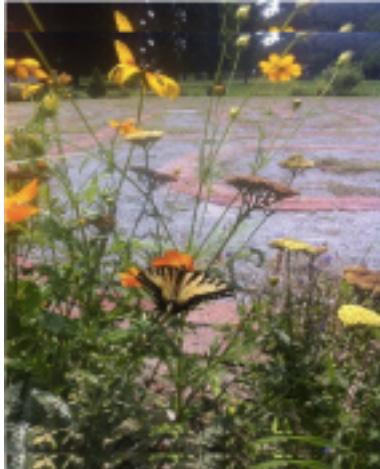
Summer 2018

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### *Women Religious and Sacred Lands*

Loretto knows **Bette Ann Jaster, OP** as the co-founder, with Cathy Mueller SL, of EarthLinks, a ministry to the economically poor in Denver that connects people and nature through gardening, nature crafts, and contemplative visits to the mountains. Now, after serving her term in leadership with Dominicans of Hope, she is on staff as outreach liaison between the congregation's values and the public.

At Mariandale, the Center for this interface, she maintains a display of all eight corporate stances, updating each with related current issues and events for members of the public who frequent the Center. She weaves community together through bee-yard tours, labyrinth walks, planting & harvesting vegetables with volunteers in the kitchen garden, managed by the Chef who then provides culinary delights for Center programs. Volunteers also tend raised beds in a cutting garden of flowers and herbs, the Hope Community Gardens. She calls her program, CO-OP for EARTHSAKE, to express collaboration with the Dominican legacy and the larger community. Every week they bring fresh vegetables and herbs to



***Find Your Center at Mariandale***

the food pantry in the Village. Saturday evening's liturgy has a social and environmental justice focus. Twice a year, in an Inter-faith effort, they turn a dining room into overnight lodging for 12-18 homeless people for a week, providing 3 healthy meals.

She is active in ROAR (Religious Organizations Along the River) and gives invited public talks. She organizes Vigils, participates in Actions opposed to the placement of a fracked gas pipeline next to Indian Point nuclear power plant, and the Walk the Talk Action at NY

State Capitol that calls on Governor Cuomo to favor solar over pipelines and bomb trains bearing fossil fuels into a famously frack-free New York. Dominicans of Hope have also joined the WE ARE STILL IN CAMPAIGN. In service to Monarch butterflies, Bette Ann & company obtained via grant, swamp milkweed plants needed by butterflies. Occasionally, someone is graced with the fleeting sight of a Monarch on its seasonal flight to Canada or Mexico. In addition, local families also gathered to build & "plant" 5 bluebird houses. In keeping with Climate sensitivity, Mariandale is reducing lawn mowing, which helps to sequester carbon while giving the pollinators a heyday in the dandelions.

On Mariandale's land along the Hudson, surrounded by pink milkweed and lambs ear, the labyrinth and its surroundings provide a metaphor for community life. "Find your Center at Mariandale," she says, "the winding labyrinth of life reorients our brains and allows for momentary pauses refreshing spirits, to turn and turn again and weave our way back into the stream of life beyond our lovingly tended landscapes & inhabitants."

### ***Brentwood CSJ's Artful Collaboration for Earth***

Loren's Spring 2018 issue noted the Brentwood CSJ's solar array and revegetation project providing 63% of their campus' energy needs. This land now provides multiple ecological benefits, including habitat for birds, pollinators and other small wildlife, soil carbon storage, and storm water retention. We celebrate the CSJ's innovative collaboration with nonprofit organizations to create such a restorative benefit for Earth. Referencing the project as a case study, the collaboration is reaching out to share best practices, leverage lessons learned, maximize funding opportunities, and hopefully form a network of religious and service organizations across Long Island for expanding solar energy generation on their lands. Search "Brentwood CSJ solar" for more detail; scroll down to the second video for three minutes of life-changing inspiration!

## **Editor's Note:**

### **Libby Comeaux CoL**

**L**oretto at the UN hosted your editor to attend the 2018 Permanent Forum, whose theme was collective land rights for Indigenous Peoples, long-enduring custodians of Earth's remaining reserves of carbon-sequestering old-growth forests, grasslands, and river ecosystems. The Permanent Forum confronts bad actors and encourages best practices, while Pope Francis reminds us that the Cry of the Poor and the Cry of Earth are One Cry. We thank Anna Maria Caldera, friend of Genesis Farm, for her first-person account of Lummi Nation's traveling totem pole and Iliff Theology, friend of Mary Luke Tobin, SL, for academic commitment to continued challenge.

In *The Great Work*, Thomas Berry critiqued the basic political tension he saw between those who see Earth as a resource for humans to exploit, and those who experience Earth as the very context of life – matrix, mother. In LENN's Spring issue, Miriam Therese MacGillis cautioned us against dropping the new cosmology into our old cosmology, continuing to drive old-paradigm policy. We thank Vivian Doremus, Loretto co-member, for her delightful prose style and enticing review of *American Nations*. Reading that book or the sequel, *American Character*, clarifies how deeply settler culture must confront old-paradigm thinking. As well, questions emerge about the influence of bioregional ecosystems on culture over centuries. [www.planetdrum.org](http://www.planetdrum.org)

As we face another election cycle, we find courage as mayors, governors, and civil society mobilize



the WE ARE STILL IN CAMPAIGN and Loretto joins CATHOLICS ARE STILL IN (search "Catholic Climate Covenant") toward September's Global Climate Summit. Our Loretto decision processes have brought forth solar panels, LED bulbs, recycling practices, and restorative land management, as we lean into shared accountability. Fortunately, renewable energy is cheaper, more effective, and more imaginative than ever before. Thank you to Roberta Hudlow, SL, for bringing the St. Louis Climate Summit to this issue, co-member Diane Fassel for inspiring us to integrate carbon sequestration into the basic rhythms of our lives, and co-member Beth Blissman, of Loretto at the UN, for reporting how we can set and meet our targets!

We are grateful that *We Are Not Alone*. Our friends are working alongside and inspiring us. We dove into some details with other congregations of religious women and found a dance of ecology as spiritual praxis, as policy activism, and as specific accountability. Thanks to Regina Drey, SL, for keeping us connected with Loretto schools, to co-member Jessie Rathburn for her interview of Loretto Motherhouse neighbor Carolyn Cromer, and thanks to LENN for opening my writing floodgates for this issue!

***"Recognizing the violence against the Earth Community that places our common home in dire jeopardy and intensifies the suffering of people on the margins, future generations and all creation, we will sacrifice to mitigate significantly our impact on climate change and ecological degradation."***

**Adrian Dominicans  
2016 General Chapter**

### **Coordinators Loretto Earth Network**

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## Corinne Sanders OP, Sustainability Director

By Libby Comeaux CoL

Over the years LEN News has featured articles on the Rights of Nature, one of whose proponents is the Center for Earth Jurisprudence founded by Patricia Siemen. Now that she is prioress of Adrian Dominicans, we thought to interview **Corinne Sanders, OP**, their Sustainability Director.

In addition to the director of the Justice and Peace office and the director of the Permaculture office, both of whom address the Integrity of Creation with collaborating volunteers, Corinne's role was established to be more strategic and intentional, especially with Motherhouse buildings and the land on which they live. This stemmed from a 2016 Chapter measure that used the term "sacrifice" to describe the congregation's sacred obligation in the face of the Earth's crisis.

When asked what education and experience prepared her for this role, Corinne laughed while referencing her prior roles as middle school science teacher, school principal, and General Council administrator. She attributes her curiosity and love of research as

being most helpful as well as serving alongside wonderful and talented co-workers.

Working with the Director of Facilities and Grounds is an especially important relationship as they address energy usage. They are able to use various monitoring criteria from websites such as the EPA, the public utility company, and the TRANE Monitor System. The Congregation seeks to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and sequester carbon using best practice principles for energy usage, food, land, transportation, waste, and purchasing/supply chain oversight. Replacing old mechanical systems with new ones that draw less power, and finding ways to reduce surges at peak times, are two current projects. Institutional replacement of light bulbs with LEDs, together with reminders to members to keep the lights turned off except when needed, has shown significant reduction in energy usage. They are exploring the suitability of self-generation plants for renewable energy.

The Motherhouse provides composting on site, using EPA formulas to calculate the amount of

carbon emissions from the landfill that this practice saves. The finished compost is then used to further enrich the soils in the permaculture gardens. An additional land practice is the reduction of mowing to just about 7 acres. Years ago, they ceased the use of chemical fertilizer and herbicides. When asked how we can significantly reduce our carbon impact, she replied that one area, major for individuals, is how and what we eat. The Motherhouse does a meatless Monday on campus, and they have found that making it delicious really helps. The Chefs have risen to the challenge.

Being intentional and strategic implies measuring and monitoring. She holds regular meetings for deepening members' awareness and knowledge of helpful individual practices and how the congregation is progressing overall. Personal vehicle use, so far, is managed mostly by individual choices, carpooling and reducing trips that could be combined, that sort of thing.

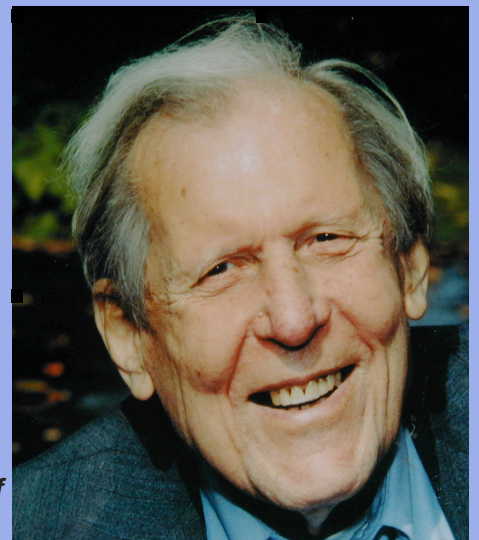
All in all, Corinne reminds us, the sustainability effort is an on-going learning and shaping of practices and behaviors. The success of the efforts lies in the deep commitment and love of Earth.

## Reminders from Thomas Berry

*Women's communities, along with everyone else, are called to accept a new role along with every other component of human society, the most W role that any of us have been asked to fulfill, that of stopping the devastation that humans, principally our western commercially-driven humans, are inflicting on the planet. Otherwise the natural world will not survive in any integral manner. Nor in this situation will humans or Christians survive in any acceptable mode of fulfillment. ...*

*Our only security lies in an integral human relation with the life systems of the planet. Every human activity, every professional role, every religious tradition, must now be judged by the extent to which it inhibits, ignores, or fosters [a] mutually enhancing human-Earth relationship. ...*

*We know now that the universe story and the human story constitute a single story. ...Devastation of the outer world is simultaneously the devastation of the inner world. To be isolated from the phenomenal order of the natural world is to be alienated from the deeper dimensions of our own being.*





# The Sisters of Charity of Nazareth Kentucky

Carolyn Cromer and Theresa Knabel

By Jessie Rathburn CoL

Just down the road from the Loretto Motherhouse live the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth. As in Loretto, three local women founded this community in 1812, and we both have vowed members in South Asia. Recently I interviewed Carolyn Cromer, SCN and Theresa Knabel, SCN. My questions are omitted due to space limitations.

In the tradition of St. Vincent de Paul, the SCNs serve the poor. Several years ago, a sister came to Nazareth, the treasurer of her congregation and someone who had visited before to speak about the financial needs of religious congregations. In this talk, she said that the Cry of Earth and the Cry of the Poor are the Same Cry. Many SCNs took that message to heart, especially perhaps because an authority on congregation finance visited to spread the word that Earth is the new poor.

The SCNs made an Earth statement that they would commit themselves to care for Earth. Then a call came from the Assembly to move forward in that direction. They struggled with how they could do this internationally, with specific steps. They decided to work step by step.

They have an Ecological Sustainability Advisory Committee now, and Theresa serves on this Committee with sisters from all through the community, helping explain what they can do individually, and why it is important for their spiritual practice and mission. The SCNs took on many projects, such as reducing waste, reducing international flights, boosting native habitat, reducing consumption.

They learned together about the important work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). The sentiment grew

that they needed to do their part to meet the Paris Agreement's more ambitious goal of capping global warming to 1.5°C by 2100. They realized that the 1.5°C goal more closely aligns with the mission of caring for the poor than the 2°C goal, since any additional rise in temperature will put the world's poor at greater risk.



The Committee recommended an overarching goal that the SCNs commit to reducing greenhouse gas emissions to zero by 2037 in the U.S. and Belize and by 2047 in India, Nepal, and Botswana. The Committee submitted the recommendation to the Executive Committee, which passed it in July 2017.

They created the position, Director of Ecological Sustainability (which Carolyn Cromer now holds), to coordinate the efforts that will support this commitment. They were intentional and strategic in setting an ambitious goal, because it complies with what is recommended by the IPCC and Paris as necessary for mission. They gave themselves 20-30 years, partly because it gives technology in the marketplace time to catch up. Right now they would have to stop all flying in order to meet their goal immediately, since all commercial airplanes rely on fossil fuels. Their hope is that by 2037 commercial flights and energy utilities will have

better options that utilize renewable energy.

The SCNs have made the commitment to risk their resources to serve mission. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions to zero means improving energy efficiency and investing heavily in renewable energy. This will obviously take significant financial resources, but they anticipate

saving money from their energy efficiency measures. In addition, the cost of renewable energy is becoming more competitive with fossil fuels, making renewable energy investment more affordable.

They are looking for the low-hanging fruit first, which means investing in energy efficiency as systems need replacing. They are conducting an energy audit to determine what uses the most energy and where they need to focus attention.

Their utility bills in the U.S. help them track emissions and reductions. They are currently shopping for an energy management system for Nazareth. They have also collaborated with others who educate local legislators to prevent them from enacting laws that discourage residential solar investment.

While the community wholeheartedly supports the mission to care for Earth, sometimes the changes and sacrifices required to reduce greenhouse emissions are unpopular or uncomfortable. This is understandable, as most community members are older and have already sacrificed so much for the good of others. Education is key to helping sisters and staff connect mission to implementation of greenhouse gas emission reduction goals. "Everyone is doing something, but we can all do more."

# We are Not Alone

By Editor Libby Commeaux CoL

Most congregations of women religious in the US have studied the new cosmology presented by Miriam MacGillis based on the writings of Thomas Berry and Brian Swimme. We appreciate Cosmogogenesis – the billions-year-in-process emergence – as the First Book of Revelation, and we see Integrity of Creation as foundational to our spiritual practice. Naturally we have oriented ourselves to the lands, water, air, and species including humans in our local bioregion. Yet the urgent climate crisis has also alerted us to the worldwide suffering our industrialized, privileged way of life has caused all species and ecosystems, notably Indigenous Peoples and other economically poor, in less “developed” regions, while contributing significantly to wars and the refugee crisis.

We want to attend to this challenge, and we are aware of at least two ongoing ways to do so. One is by continuing our ever-deepening, regenerative involvement in our local community of species, gathering neighbors together for gardening celebrations, solar gardens and the like, raising our voices as we can. Another is to commit to, and monitor, our specific share of the reductions in carbon emissions that are required if the US is to meet our obligation under the Paris Climate Accord.

We thought it would be helpful to consult friends from other communities to share questions and ideas, building on our own significant dedication and accomplishments to date. Not surprisingly, we found a lot of inspiration among our friends.

## Integrating Nature, Art, and Justice at SMA

By Regina Drey SL

Nature provided the themes for four of the three-day interdisciplinary, experiential Innovation Days workshops that St. Mary’s Academy High School engaged in during April. Hunger in Colorado, Nature and Art, Tiny Houses and Mind/Body/Spirit: Unplug in Nature all focused on important issues, including food insecurity, pollination and wildlife conservation, housing and snow ecology.

Among the session highlights were these:

### Hunger in Colorado:

Economic, health, social and justice aspects of food insecurity were woven into presentations by speakers from Hunger Free Colorado and We Don’t Waste and into information about important work done by After Hours, The Delores Project, La Puente and the Loretto Hunger Fund. The film *A Place at the Table* along with activities, journaling, and a food waste audit at home were all eye-openers for many of the students. “It was great to know about so many organizations helping. After the presentations, my family got a compost bin to do our part,” commented Zoe, a student.

**Nature and Art:** Students learned about botanic symbolism in art and nature, sketched in the greenhouse at the Denver Botanic Gardens, and learned about bee-colony-collapse disorder, pollinators, native species and invasive species. They made terrariums and created tiles based on the symbolic meaning of a plant or pollinator. The tiles will be assembled together into a large installation.

**Tiny Houses:** This group studied issues of homelessness, the need for multi-generation living, gentrification and the ways tiny homes can help provide community and stability. They visited Beloved Community Village, meeting and sharing lunch with residents who live in the 11 small homes. Julia commented, “Before this innovation day, I didn’t realize that tiny houses are not just a fun and alternative way of living ... but can provide a positive future for homeless people.” Julie summed up the experience: “Visiting and meeting the residents and seeing their homes (which they helped to build) was really cool, but the experience overall was extremely meaningful. We talked with two women about how they had been rejected from shelters for various



reasons, how they became homeless in the first place, and what they valued about living in the tiny-house village.”

### Mind/Body/Spirit - Unplug in Nature:

Students studied nature through literary movements, Eastern and Western religions, and an introduction to yoga. Having unplugged (Phones were banished!) the first day, the group traveled to Rocky Mountain National Park, where a ranger led a snow ecology lecture and snowshoe adventure followed by journal writing on environmental justice.

# Climate Summit

By Roberta Hudlow SL

How do I summarize the vast deluge of information over three days in St. Louis? 16 scientists, two evangelicals for life and Earth, a cardinal who helped write *Laudato Si'*, a director of Mississippi River Cities & Towns Initiative (85 mayors and 10 states), the Corporate Eco-Forum chairman, a former president of the Sierra Club, an amazing 17-year-old, and many others including engineer-entertainer-educator Bill Nye? I am out of breath just writing this! It was amazing to be in the room with these talented and driven people.

Add to this mix the comprehensive presentation of our current world problems as presented in Leonardo DiCaprio's film, "Before the Flood." That ended the first day, a discouraging note because what is already happening is big, but the problems will only get much bigger. It was good to hear the scientists speak of what they have done and will do in the future; that gave me hope. I realized that the political show is really a sideshow. The main act is going on in the labs, in the classrooms, by scientists and technologists and everyday folk around the world. We are living in a time of great flux where some amazing breakthroughs will also happen. We will learn to live with what we can't fix, to repair what we can, and still make our world better. Carl Pope, past president of the Sierra Club, co-authored *The Climate of Hope: How Cities, Businesses, and Citizens Can Save the Planet*. His talk was followed by a mock interview with Bill Nye, who drew more than a few laughs. Nye had one great question and one great statement that stood out for me. First, with his arms held wide, he asked "What do you think of those kids?" Everyone knew who he meant. Our young folks are taking up the banner more courageously than ever. His repeated statement said with

gusto: "We can do this, we can do this!"

Yes, we can – and we must face the challenge ahead. The map of the US with ALL of Florida gone was a real eye opener. Moving through the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we can expect a rising ocean to intrude into the middle of our southern plains. We have time to respond. We can do mitigation – carbon capture in forests, for example. So I say we get on with it.

I will leave you with some good news. We know the ocean is suffering; it supplies half of our oxygen but is consuming so much CO2 it is becoming acidic, harming coral and shellfish. There's a fisherman who has figured out how to do something like 3-D biodynamic farming in the ocean, regenerating the ocean ecosystem while allowing it to yield more healthy food that we need. This approach aids the nitrogen balance of the ocean and acts as a storm surge breaker, somewhat like mangroves on the coast. His Green Wave Facebook page has a really good 60 Minutes interview, and it includes a West Coast scientist working to monitor the results. Bren Smith began Green Wave and offers a two-year training for new ocean farmers free of charge. "We are ocean farmers creating jobs and protecting the planet," the website begins.

I was especially impressed with Kehkashan Basu, the winner of the

***When is the best time to plant a tree? Yesterday.***

***When is the second best time? Today.***

***Chinese Proverb***



***Intercommunity Ecological Council of STL***

2016 International Children's Peace Prize. She spoke with as much poise as the Ph.D's. Founder and President of Green Hope Foundation, she engages and empowers thousands of youth, especially girls and the marginalized.

Also, universities are doing their part, greening their campuses, leveraging community participation – forty campuses have joined 2700 cities, states, universities, NGOs and faith-based organizations in the WE ARE STILL IN CAMPAIGN, fully supporting the Paris Climate Accord. Mary Evelyn Tucker continues to move religions into an ecological phase so our spirituality can support the planet. She spoke of Reverence-Respect-Restraint-Redistribution-Responsibility. Global Footprint Network provides ways for organizations or individuals to figure out the size of their own footprint. A Chinese company, BYD, is the largest seller of electric vehicles (busses as well as cars). Shenzhen, China has gone totally electric in its bus pool as of January this year. San Francisco is transitioning to all electric. NY has begun a pilot program. St. Louis has a goal of all electric by 2020.

There is much more to learn by visiting the website for the forum and then exploring the websites associated with the various speakers. Tell the world to plant trees! This is my new mantra.



# Carbon Sequestration and the Backyard Gardener

By Diane Fassel, CoL

In 1999, my partner, Paulanne Balch, M.D. and I bought our home in Boulder, CO. It was in a neighborhood of larger one-third acre lots, and it contained a big raspberry patch that had grown wildly but bore little fruit. After moving in we got to work converting the raspberries to a vegetable garden and setting up a compost pile.



By the time we entered the spring of 2018 we had changed our approach to our garden. Because of our heightened awareness of carbon sequestration, we implemented the following new practices.

For years, we grew vegetables, especially tomatoes, which I made into sauce every autumn, and tried to keep current with the latest organic gardening principles. We were lucky to be living in Boulder, a progressive community that in 1970 created a vision for sustainable agriculture and the preservation of open space, wild lands, and wetlands. The citizens voluntarily taxed themselves to create a fund for the purchase of open space for the benefit of all. That tax remains in place to this day and open space is one of the chief factors that makes Boulder so attractive.



I offer these to you knowing that the small backyard gardener probably doesn't have a very huge impact on sequestering carbon. But at least these practices help to sequester carbon, rather than continuing to release carbon into the atmosphere.

About seven years ago we began experimenting with permaculture. Instead of digging into the earth and turning the soil we layered horse manure, leaves, compost and straw, and let it sit over the winter. Permaculture is a no-till approach to growing.

The problem with tilling is that it disrupts the delicate fungal network (the white lacey stuff you see in rich soil) that packages nutrients for plant systems to uptake in their roots. The other problem with tilling is that it releases carbon into the atmosphere. Most of us like to "get our hands into the dirt" by digging in our gardens in the spring. Unfortunately, that process releases CO<sub>2</sub> into the air and contributes to the emissions problem.

As we have learned more about carbon sequestration we have ceased gardening practices that disturb the soil.

Over the winter, while the permaculture was working away, we were ensconced on our sofa watching two films that changed our way of thinking about gardening. On a snowy, winter night we happened upon the films "Sustainability" and "Finding Balance" (available on Netflix). I recommend these films for anyone who wants to learn how changing gardening and farming practices can change the world.

The two films demonstrated practices both ancient and innovative that farmers around the world were using in an effort to make land healthier and more productive. These films led us back to the work of Rudolph Steiner and to a book *Secrets of the Soil* by Peter Tompkins and Christopher Bird and subsequently to a group in Boulder, the Farm Forum. This group of organic farmers, environmentalists, restaurateurs, and CU students, as well as backyard gardeners like us, gathers monthly to discuss and share best practices around agriculture and carbon sequestration.

1. Compost – all vegetable and fruit scraps go into our compost pile that consists of leaves, grass clippings, compost from earlier years and new organic matter. We compost 12 months a year. The City of Boulder picks up all other food waste (meat, bones, cooked food, etc.) and turns it into compost that is available through our local Waste Management service.
2. Do not dig or till the soil. This is essential to keeping carbon in the soil and not floating out. Additionally, no-till gardening allows the fungal network that provides nutrients to plants to remain undisrupted and beneficial to new seedlings. Your homegrown vegetables are only as beneficial as they are nutritious. Composting helps insure your food is nutritious as well as beautiful.
3. Rotate crops. In our garden that means that this year we will not plant tomatoes. Over the winter we planted rye grass to add nitrogen to the soil, and this spring we will plant peas to enrich the soil further.
4. In the fall, use a method like permaculture to allow the soil to become enriched over the dormant season.
5. Next spring enjoy your beautiful, loamy black soil teeming with life and ready to plant!

# Pope Francis Pledges Support for the Lungs of the Planet and Amazonian Defenders

By Libby Comeaux CoL

Just before the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues met in New York, Pope Francis held the preparatory meeting for his October 2019 Synod on the Amazon region. For two solid days in April 2018, he listened to the suffering of the “lungs of the planet” and its people. Brought to the UN by REPAM (a Jesuit NGO) and hosted by Benincasa, some of them travelled to the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) April 16-27. They added their stories to this year’s theme: Indigenous Peoples’ collective rights to lands, territories, and “resources.”

Their stories were hard to hear and added to the volumes of detail curated by the Permanent Forum, whose draft report of the conference notes “the high levels of global violence and threats directed at indigenous women human rights defenders” and “calls for an immediate halt to the criminalization, incarceration, intimidation, coercion, death threats and assassination of all indigenous human and environmental rights defenders.”

“The cry of Earth and the cry of the poor are one cry,” Pope Francis wrote in *Laudato Si*. We heard the cry and saw the faces you see pictured here. We heard the suffering of 50,000 Guarani in Matto Grosso do Sul

whose cries to the government of Brazil go unheeded. “Without our land we have nothing; our children are dying,” said Leila, the first woman to lead the tribe as chief. Intruding farmers are forcing them from their homes. Armed militias massacre her people. Guarani suffer ten times Brazil’s murder rate. “The day that I die and stop speaking, ... someone else will come and speak with you for my people.”

Adriando defends against intruders seeking timber, minerals, and land for farming in another part of Brazil. They damage the forests by erecting hydro plants, roads, and railways to expand business into Indigenous Peoples’ territories. They flooded his people’s lands, isolating the community for a full month. The workers who came to build the hydro plant never left; they cut down trees, divided up lands, and prospected. Since 1992, these lands have been officially demarcated for his people, yet the government of Brazil refuses to expel the intruders. Both Leila and Adriando ask our help addressing the government of Brazil: “Respect traditional people and our lands – and eject those who are invading our lands!”

Adelvia relayed the devastation the Chinese gold and silver mine, El Mirador, wreaks on the fragile ecosystem. Despite the Ecuadorian Constitutional requirement, there



**Amazonian defenders at the UN**

was no consultation, no opportunity for Indigenous Peoples to give their Free Prior and Informed Consent. The government resorts to statements that the Indigenous Peoples were given land and money in reparations, which she says are untrue.

Attilano is a leader in sustainable agriculture, a defender of Mayan land. He leads a school “where the trees are sown, where we sow the seeds of the future. We respect that ancient trees are the future.” He spoke against the ongoing privatization and pollution of the water. “They want to privatize the wind.”

From lands near UN headquarters, Sachem Hawk Storm spoke, “All the stories you tell are like our own. Our forests were once just as beautiful as yours.”

## ***The quest for collective land rights at the UNPFII***

We have written at length in LEN News about the Rights of Mother Earth, but for Indigenous Peoples across the planet, the quest is for Collective Land Rights – meaning the rights of colonized peoples to exercise sovereignty over their persons, their communities, and the lands they have occupied since ancestral times. And now, in too many cases, the lands to which they were forced as undesirable have become valuable to extraction industries, so once again, they are being forcibly removed or required to endure massive disruption, disease, and threatened extinction. Search “2018 UNPFII” to read the Permanent Forum’s report that details the numerous crises worldwide.

Yet there are two possibly encouraging developments of interest to LENN readers. In addition to Pope Francis’ support for the Amazon reported above, a southeast Australian state has made reparations in the form of lands and money. Read LENN’s next issue for details on the New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council, democratically elected by all local Aborigines from their residents, to hold in trust and manage the reparations land and money. In 2011, then Special Rapporteur James Anaya called this structure the best solution on the planet so far, to restore Indigenous Peoples’ collective land rights.



# Connecting with Water Protectors Everywhere

By Anna Maria Caldara



**“Kwel’ Hoy! Kwel’ Hoy!”** rebounded through a forest clearing in Mahwah, New Jersey on April 21<sup>st</sup>. We had gathered at the Ramapough Lenape Nation Community Center in resistance to the Pilgrim Pipeline. Lummi Indian Nation Representative Fredrick Lane translated the chant he led as, simply, “We draw the line.”

The Lummi are among the indigenous in the Pacific Northwest leading the opposition to a glut of fossil fuel proposals. In the last six years, their ancestral homeland has been targeted for seven new coal terminals and the expansion of three others, two oil pipelines, eleven oil-by-rail terminals, and six natural gas pipelines!

Recognizing the same despoiling of Mother Earth in Mahwah as in Washington State, the Lummi transported a 16’ totem pole in solidarity. Ramapough Lenape Chief

Dwaine Perry informed us that the Pilgrim Pipeline would destroy an aquifer and a watershed...”an ecosystem and our children’s future.” We were each given tobacco to tuck within cavities on the totem pole, with a prayer for guidance and strength. “It takes unity to save the earth,” declared Mr. Perry. “The four human figures on the pole show the four colors of our skins. We must stand together, one and all, as water keepers.”

The Lummi have just succeeded in blocking the

largest coal port ever conceived in North America, at Cherry Point, Washington. This landmark win underscores their message spoken in New Jersey: “We are protectors, not protestors. We are not here to fight, but to protect the elements of Life—clean air, clean water, clean earth, the sacred fire. We must be the voice for the fish, the four-leggeds, the insects. We are the first generation to recognize global climate change, and the last generation that can do something about it!”

On April 24<sup>th</sup>, the totem pole was delivered to The Watershed Institute in Pennington, New Jersey. It was set upright, but draped in a voluminous red cloth. As daylight weakened, we watched a Lummi man, Mr. Carver, assemble a semi-circle of rocks before it. He explained that this was an altar. Later we were invited to each select a small stone to place atop the row, with a wish.

The children present were asked to assist with the unveiling of the totem. As the last fold of cloth was freed, the carving’s rich colors and bold visages glowed in the dusk.

Mr. Carver described the white disk at the top as a symbol of the moon. The shadows visible upon its surface are shaped like a Native person with head bowed, “praying to Creator to please save Mother Earth for the children.” The bear and the salmon are part of Pacific Northwest folklore. The raven is a reminder that he found food for the people when they were starving. The people, with skin colors of red, brown, yellow and white, are united by their humanity, on the planet that they share.

The totem pole will stand resolutely at the Institute for four months. The Ramapough and Lummi feel that it is appropriately situated, because the facility is dedicated to “protecting and restoring our water and natural environment in central New Jersey...” And because the PennEast Pipeline will tear through the area as it winds from Bethlehem, Pennsylvania to nearby Trenton, impacting 700 waterways.

Nothing is more precious than water, necessary for all species to thrive, and indeed, survive. At this crucial moment in history, the greed and exploitation of the fossil fuel industry is rapidly diminishing our potable supplies. When it is our turn to safeguard our communities, what will we say?

***Kwel’ Hoy!***



# AMERICAN NATIONS

*A History of Eleven Rival Regional Cultures of North America*

By Colin Woodard

Reviewed by:

**Vivian Doremus CoL**

Colin Woodard's book received several awards the year of its publication, among them: One of the Best Books of 2011 by *The New Republic*; Winner of the Maine Literary Award for Non-Fiction; A Best Book of the Year by *The Globalist*

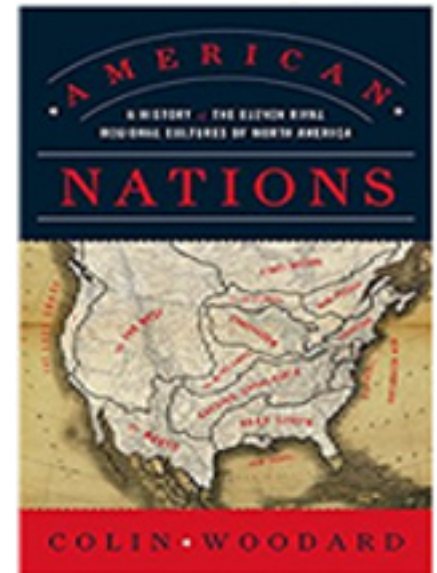
Your editor recently introduced the book to me, commenting that she found it a riveting read, one that helped her to comprehend what happened to us in the last election. I was immediately interested, as I have thought of the election, its causes, its effects, its sheer incomprehensibility every day for the past eighteen months. My daily lament has become "How, oh Lord, has this come to pass"? The following morning, I called our local library to reserve it. They didn't have it, but within the week, the book was in my hands, and I put it aside as it was very heavy and I was very busy.

The handsome book, brick red bordering a subtle brownish outline of the country with the eleven regions etched in white, eyed me from the hassock of my reading chair. For quite a few days, I avoided its eye. Realizing I wanted to respond to her who proffered it, I poured a cup of tea and opened it on a rainy spring afternoon. It's hard to read and harder to put down. The former, as Woodard packs each paragraph with geographical, historical, cultural and economic data, resulting in thickly populated pages. Hard to put down as it's just so interesting - I found myself nodding in recognition at certain regional mores. Naturally, when I reported that I was finding the book a very good read, I was invited to review it for this publication. I had no trouble agreeing, as I've been loving books and writing

book reports for about the last seven decades. This is not one of those happy moments.

The book is hard. Initially, I stiffened, wondering what credibility should be accorded to Colin Woodard; I never heard of him before. How was he entitled to make such sweeping statements about so many things? A quick search of Woodard's career and works revealed that he's pretty credible. Although only 50 years old, he has published five substantial books, all of them well reviewed by scholars, including *Ocean's End, Travel through Endangered Seas* (2000) and *American Character: A History of the Struggle Between Individual Liberty and the Common Good* (2016).

Also a journalist, Woodard was a long-time foreign correspondent of *The Christian Science Monitor*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, and the *Chronicle of Higher Education* and has reported from more than 50 foreign countries and seven continents. He currently is State and National Affairs Writer at the *Portland Press Herald* and *Maine Sunday Telegram*, and writes for *Politico*. He was a finalist for the 2016 Pulitzer Prize for Explanatory Reporting on climate change and received a 2004 Jane Bagley Lehman award for global environmental reporting. He graduated from Tufts and the University of Chicago. Thus able to relax, realizing I could trust the authority of the writer without frequent fact checking, I began to fret at not really knowing any of this. I, who have lived in more than a dozen states, known people from all over the country, traveled widely, read even more widely, must have been unwittingly burbling along all these years, bundled in an "American" patchwork quilt, happily thinking we were all pretty much the same. And I should have known better! I've lived in Yankeedom, lived on the border in El Norte, had many schoolmates from



the Deep South, have relatives who inhabited the Midlands, and the Far West, even the Left Coast, imbued with different world views, values and beliefs than I ever took into full account.

The November 8, 2018 *Washington Post* calls out this simplistic belief. Woodard has written "The borders of my eleven American nations are reflected in many different types of maps – including maps showing the distribution of linguistic dialects, the spread of cultural artifacts, the prevalence of different religious denominations, and the county-by-county breakdown of voting in virtually every hotly contested presidential race in our history." Further, he wrote, "Our continent's famed mobility has been reinforcing, not dissolving, regional differences, as people increasingly sort themselves into like-minded communities."

The Eleven Nations? Yankeedom: founded by Puritans, residents in Northeastern states and the industrial Midwest; New Netherland: the most sophisticated society in the Western world when New York was founded. The Midlands, stretching from Quaker territory west through Iowa and into more populated areas of the Midwest; Tidewater: the coastal regions in the English colonies of Virginia, North Carolina, Maryland and Delaware; Greater Appalachia, extending from

*continued on page 11*

West Virginia through the Great Smoky Mountains into Northwest Texas. The Deep South – Dixie still traces its roots to the caste system established by masters who tried to duplicate West Indies-style slave society. El Norte – Southwest Texas and the border regions – is the oldest and most linguistically different nation in the Americas. The Left Coast: a hybrid where the independence and innovation required of early explorers continue to manifest in places like Silicon Valley and the tech companies around Seattle. The Far West: the Great Plains and the Mountain West, built by industry in harsh, sometimes inhospitable climates. New France, former French colonies in and around New Orleans and Quebec; First Nation: Native Americans who never lost their land to white settlers – mainly in the harshly Arctic north of Canada and Alaska.

Woodard introduces the thesis of his book by quoting Barack Obama, presidential candidate in 2008, who said “We are choosing hope over fear .... unity over division.” Posits Woodward, such calls for unity overlook a glaring historical fact: Americans have been deeply divided since the days of Jamestown and Plymouth.

I haven’t finished reading this terrific book. But I know that I will, as I have invited a handful of friends to read it with me, and think about its message together. I urge you, gentle reader, if you are still there, to do the same. Go to the library, visit a bookstore, check it online and read an excerpt. It’s fairly expensive, but I am almost prepared to buy it, as I know I will treasure it for a long time to come. It has humbled and instructed me.

## Why I’m Confident the Paris Climate Agreement Will Bear Fruit

By **Beth Blissman CoL**

I fully realize that in these perilous times it is easy to feel despair and give up hope of positive change, However, these are the times we were made for... and it is more important than ever that we educate ourselves and act to do our part to fulfill the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Commonly known as the Paris Climate Agreement, this document flows out of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted at the 70th session of the UN General Assembly, September 2015.

As a way to learn more about Paris Climate Agreement I signed up for my first ever massive open online course, or MOOC. It was entitled *Climate Action: Solutions for a Changing Planet*, and it was an interesting challenge to re-enter the classroom online. Over 15 weeks, from November 2017 to early March 2018, this course explored the key challenges and opportunities that come with implementing the Paris Climate Agreement with a global and diverse cohort of students. The course consisted of several lecture videos for the week, and various readings and discussion board questions, which all stayed open for the duration of the course. It was an excellent way to learn about the most up-to-date strategies being used to confront the climate crisis from both experts and peer practitioners.

The most hopeful and helpful information was about the Deep Decarbonization Pathways Project (DDPP), a collaboration of scientists who are all working together to take seriously what is needed to limit global warming to 2°C or less. These scientists have formed scientific research teams from leading research institutions in 16 of the world’s largest greenhouse gas emitting countries - and they are all working together for the common good!

This inspiring global collaboration of energy research teams is working hard to map out practical pathways to deeply reducing greenhouse gas emissions in their own countries: Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Russia, South Africa, South Korea, United Kingdom and United States. [The DDPP framework has been developed and utilized by a consortium led by two non-profit organizations: The Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations (IDDRI) in Paris, France, and the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) in New York City.] You can learn more about the DDPP at their website: <http://deepdecarbonization.org/>

The initial results of their studies on deep decarbonization pathways show that moving away from fossil fuels and moving towards clean technologies like solar panels, electric vehicles, wind turbines, highly efficient boilers, hydropower plants and so forth will be both affordable and essential for the planet’s health, not to mention human health. These clean technologies also come with challenges, but those challenges pale in comparison with the ecocide we’re currently supporting with a fossil-fuel-based economy.-

SO - If you would like to learn more, and feel more hopeful, I invite you to check out the SDG Academy, which creates and curates FREE, graduate-level courses on sustainable development for students around the world. There are many topics: from sustainable cities to human rights to climate action, and each course addresses the fundamental challenge facing our world today, namely “How do people, communities, governments and companies not only coexist, but also cooperate and collaborate, to save the one planet we have?” Here’s a link to the SDG Academy website: <https://courses.sdgacademy.org/>



# An Indigenous Scholar's Career in Academia Leaves a Legacy for the Future

Retiring is something we all anticipate with eagerness and relief. It takes considerable planning for our future and for that of our families. For Dr. George (Tink) Tinker (*wazhazhe*, Osage Nation), there was an additional responsibility. He had to plan for the continuation of his academic legacy. For Dr. Tinker was that unique academic to institute a program of learning for theology students about the spiritual, cultural, social, and political history of Indigenous Peoples. He had to be certain that his work of a lifetime would not end when he left the faculty of Iliff School of Theology at the University of Denver.

Over the years, he has instructed many, including Loretto members, in the history of the 15<sup>th</sup> century papal bulls that led to the U.S. Doctrine of Discovery and Manifest Destiny, problematic strands in a fabric of dualism, religious persecution, and ecological devastation that we have inherited. As ordained Lutheran clergy, he has inspired land reparations in Denver, allowing traditional Indigenous Peoples to conduct their ceremonies



***Dr Tinker receiving ceremonial blessing***

and provide support to their communities in facilities that used to belong to the church.

At the celebration to launch the *Tinker Program Endowment* that will carry forward his legacy of offering academic content and mentoring from the perspective of an Indigenous scholar, many dignitaries offered praise. Rev. Dr. Thom White Wolf Fasset praised Dr. Tinker and Iliff for

creating “institutional integrity and an Indian presence in the heart of the Academy.” There was gratitude for Tink’s own journey, and Iliff’s role in helping him to find his own Indian voice. Referring to the United Methodist Church’s Task Force for Acts of Repentance, the Rev. Dr. Stephen J. Sidorak, Jr. proposed that Iliff move forward to establish a fully endowed Chair for the program. He described his own journey encountering Tink in the words of a friend: “The truth will set you free, but first it will make you miserable.” Full proceedings of the celebration honoring Dr. Tinker are available on video by searching “Dr. Tink Tinker Career Celebration,” where you can make an online donation to the *Tinker Program Endowment*. Thank you, Tink, for all you have taught us, and may we continue to grow in our willingness to carry the burden of lessons learned.

*Photo credit: Iliff School of Theology Photos, used with permission, showing Dr. Tinker on the left and Robert Cross (Wazhazhe Tiospaye, Lakota, Pine Ridge) giving the blessing.*



***Drew Dellinger helping to promote Elders Climate Action Day***

***June 25-27, 2018 Washington D.C.***

***<http://www.eldersclimateaction.org/ecad/>***

## ***hieroglyphic stairway***

***It's 3:32 in the morning  
and I'm awake  
because my great great grandchildren  
won't let me sleep  
my great great grandchildren  
ask me in dreams  
what did you do while the planet was plundered?  
what did you do when the earth was unraveling?***

***surely you did something  
when the seasons started failing?***

***as the mammals, reptiles, birds were all dying?***

***did you fill the streets with protest  
when democracy was stolen?***

*Read the rest of this poem and more at [www.drewdellinger.org](http://www.drewdellinger.org).*