



OCTOBER 2023 MONTHLY DIGEST

A resource to animate education, prayer, advocacy, and action among the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Philadelphia, our Associates, and Partners in Mission

Below, you will find policy and advocacy updates, education opportunities, and ways to act on behalf of justice, some with our sponsored ministries and others with trusted collaborators. *We hope you enjoy this new tool for learning, connection, and action!*

POLICY UPDATE: Immigration

Department of Homeland Security announces \$77 million in grants to shelter migrants

On August 21, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) [announced \\$77 million](#) in grants to [53 local communities](#) and non-profit organizations to help shelter migrants through the [Shelter and Service program](#), created in the 2022 federal budget. The new program has provided a total of [\\$290 million](#) in funding to groups and municipalities in 2023. The grants serve localities along the border and in the interior of the country. For over a year, migrants seeking asylum have been bussed by Republican governors to Democratic cities, including Washington, DC, Chicago, [Los Angeles](#), New York, and Philadelphia causing political controversy across the country. These large cities can now pursue funding to support their efforts to house and shelter new arrivals. *You can read about what our sisters have been doing to support these asylum seekers in an Enews article [here](#).*

ISSUE UPDATE: Responsible investments

Catholic women religious pursue impact investing - In a recent article in *Global Sisters Report*, journalist Dan Stockman reports on the evolution of responsible investing among Catholic sisters, "For 50 years, congregations have refused to invest in corporations whose business goes against Catholic social teaching — tobacco companies, pornography, gun manufacturers — and in recent decades began moving their investments into companies and funds that make a positive impact on the world...Now, some are even using their money to change the investing landscape itself." To learn more about impact investing, click [here](#).

ADVOCACY: Take action to Stand in Solidarity with Our Afghan Neighbors

It has been nearly two years since the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan and the harrowing scenes that captivated the world as aircraft rushed to depart its capital city of Kabul. Tens of

thousands of Afghan nationals have now been resettled in communities across the United States, many of whom served alongside U.S. servicemembers. They are in need of a legal pathway to real and lasting safety.

They need the **Afghan Adjustment Act (S. 2327/H.R.4627)**, which has been reintroduced in the 118th Congress with even more bipartisan support than it had a year ago—5 Republicans and 5 Democrats in the Senate, together with 12 Republicans and 12 Democrats in the House of Representatives. *Click [here](#) to complete a digital letter that will be sent to your elected representatives and join Bishop Seitz who has sent letters on behalf of the USCCB.*

ADVOCACY HIGHLIGHT: Sensible Gun Legislation in Pennsylvania

The Sisters of Saint Joseph at the Villa have made more than forty phone calls to Pennsylvania state senators to ask them to consider gun safety bills that have been passed by the House and now need to be sent to the senate floor for votes. On October 4th, staff from the SSJ Center for Justice, Peace, and the Integrity of Creation will travel to Harrisburg to advocate for changes in legislation that reflect our call to protect human life and foster human dignity. We welcome your prayers for this advocacy effort. A post-capitol debrief will be held with the Villa sisters later in the month.

OTHER FORMS OF ENGAGEMENT AND ACTION

Sustainability in the Motherhouse - The Mount Saint Joseph Convent Sustainability Committee is newly christened as the “SSJ Green Team” with a plan to meet four times a year to educate sisters and partners in mission about current sustainability efforts and to help foster a culture of sustainability in our community. The team is comprised of residents and employees who represent the various aspects of the operation, as well as members of the JPIC team. To learn more about the committee and to join the work, contact Sr. Donna Breslin, SBS: dbreslin@ssjphila.org

Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration at St. Peter the Apostle – This year’s celebration of the annual mass in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia will also include Eucharistic adoration and Spanish language workshops for young adults to nurture their formation as leaders in the Church. Click [here](#) for the details on the liturgy, which is open to the public.

FOR REFLECTION AND PRAYER

Closing prayer for the Season of Creation - For many years now, an ecumenical effort to raise awareness about care for our common home has been hosted under the banner of the

“Season of Creation” from September 1 to October 4. This year’s theme was drawn from the Prophet Amos who cries out: *“But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!”* (Amos 5: 24) and so we are called to join the river of justice and peace, to take up climate and ecological justice, and to speak out with and for communities most impacted by climate injustice and the loss of biodiversity. As the people of God, we must work together on behalf of all Creation, as part of that mighty river of peace and justice. On **Wednesday, October 4 at 9AM ET**, as we celebrate the feast of St. Francis of Assisi and remember the first anniversary of the release of the film [The Letter](#), we will close the Season of Creation with an online ecumenical prayer service. Join people around the world through the campaign’s YouTube channel: <https://seasonofcreation.org/event/soc-closing-prayer-service/> We also anticipate that Pope Francis will release a follow up to Laudato Si on the same day. Stay tuned for this exciting development in the effort to Care for Our Common Home.

The SSJ Motherhouse community is invited to observe Indigenous People’s Day - Sr. Theresa Chato, SBS will be praying the Four Directions Prayer on October 9th at 11:30AM. Sr. Theresa is a member of the Navajo Tribe. Details on location to be shared soon.

LOOKING AHEAD...

- **October 14** - Sr. Cora Marie Billings, RSM on the Black Catholic experience, sponsored by the Archbishop’s Commission on Racial Healing and New Encounters: Catholics Confronting Racism, and held at St. Vincent DePaul in Germantown. To learn more and to register, click [here](#).
- **October 18** – Chestnut Hill College students reflect on their experience in Ghana as part of an immersion experience with the African Sisters Education Collaborative (ASEC). To learn more, click [here](#).
- **October 21** - Sr. Margaret Scott, acj will continue her theme of Eucharist and social justice with a virtual presentation titled, “Do This in Memory of Me: The Eucharist Interrupts the Narrative of Injustice.” See the Sept 21 SSJ member weekly mailing for the Zoom link.
- **November 2** – The annual Mother Mary Lange lecture at Villanova University for Black Catholic History month. For more details and to register for this free event, click [here](#).
- **November 6-10** - Undocuweek – Immigration related education and advocacy programs in collaboration with Chestnut Hill College Campus Ministry...*stay tuned for how you can be involved.*