

INTERCONNECTION



MARCH 2018

Today... we have to realize that a true ecological approach always becomes a social approach; it must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, so as to hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor. – Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'* (49)

CAPUCHINS JOIN OTHERS ON CATHOLIC DAY OF ACTION FOR DREAMERS AT U.S. CAPITOL



Source: #CATHOLICS4DREAMERS

On February 27th, 2018, as part of a Catholic Day of Action For Dreamers, several of our Capuchin brothers from the Province of St. Augustine joined over 200 other Catholic lay leaders, priests, sisters, bishops and brothers at a gathering at the U.S. Capitol. About 40 persons were arrested after engaging in nonviolent civil resistance in the rotunda of the Russell Senate Office Building. Capuchin friars Francisco Lopez and Saúl Soriano were among the hundreds gathered. Br. Saúl, a recent immigrant from El Salvador, spoke about his personal connection with DREAMERS since he at one point struggled to gain legal status himself and was asked to leave the country, although ultimately was able to gain legal status. *"I'm here to be in solidarity with my brothers and sisters who are also immigrants [who do not] have the fortune to have legal protection... [and have] great potential and are definitely part of our society."* Also present were Carmelite Sisters of Charity, Dominican Sisters, the Dorothy Day Catholic Worker among many other groups and affiliations.



Br. Saúl Soriano,
Capuchin College

Faith in Place

By Nick Blattner, OFM Cap.

Memories have immense power. They have the ability to stir up emotions in ourselves at any moment. It was a memory from my youth that awakened a desire to discover more about care for creation. My family and I used to hike the sand dunes of [Kohler-Andre State Park](#) in Sheboygan, Wisconsin. Several times a year we would find ourselves at the dunes in order to escape the hustle and bustle of everyday life. I have such fond memories of hiking the dunes in the hopes of spotting a deer or some other wildlife with my siblings. One time my Uncle found a crawfish and decided to chase us kids around the beach with it. We were terrified of the odd-looking creature! The very thought of these memories brings a smile to my face.

However, there is one memory in particular of hiking the dunes with my family that transformed me for the rest of my life. There was a tree along the dune trail that my family grew attached to. It grew in such a way that it split down the middle, causing the tree to look like two trees in one. My family would always stop by this tree to rest from our hike. I don't remember the name now, but we even had a name for our tree. One day as we were hiking we came upon the place where the tree should have been; but it was gone. It seemed that the tree had fallen over due to high winds. All that was left of our family favorite tree was the scarred stump from a chainsaw. That day was a sad one for my family. It almost felt like a member of our family had been removed from our lives. It was at that moment that I realized the powerful connection possible between human beings and all of creation. Our tree was not just another tree; it had a relationship with my family.

This memory caused me to seek out ministry with a focus on fostering the relationship between humanity and all of creation. For the past few months I have been working at [Faith in Place](#) in Chicago. Faith in Place is an interreligious organization focused on building environmental awareness within worshipping communities. For myself, and the other Catholics at Faith in Place, Pope Francis's encyclical *Laudato Si* has become a springboard for us to become involved with care for creation. We work with several Catholic parishes who want to live out the principles of *Laudato Si* within their worshipping communities. The work has been slow, but it seems as though more and more Catholics are becoming aware of their call to care for all of God's creation. Like the story about my family hiking the dunes, we

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Photo courtesy of Faith In Place

Br. Nick with fellow Faith In Place volunteers and staff at the October 2017 Green Team Summit in Chicago.

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have tried to help other Catholics become aware of their inherent relationship with all of creation. In a city inundated with cement, this can be difficult. But seeds of hope are being planted daily.

As Franciscans, we have a special call to live out *Laudato Si* in the most prophetic of ways. The great thing about caring for creation is that it does not take much effort. Simple acts like taking shorter showers, wearing heavy sweaters during the winter, turning off lights in unoccupied rooms, installing programmable thermostats, and using reusable shopping bags are but a few ways we can show our care for creation. Every little bit helps. Mother Earth cries out for justice. Will we sons of Francis answer her call? Will we raise our voices for the voiceless? Generations of future Franciscans will judge us on the type of response we will have today. May the future Franciscan history books be filled with words of praise and not words of condemnation for our lack of action.

"As a Church on the border, the Catholic communities of San Diego and Imperial Counties witness daily to the suffering of the undocumented and the threats to their family life. The Dreamers are young men and women of immense promise and love for our country who never knowingly broke the law, but are faced with the loss of their jobs and deportation because our broken political system cannot enact into law the conviction of the overwhelming majority of Americans that these young people should not be punished for the actions of their parents."

"We join in supporting the direct action on behalf of the Dreamers which seeks to enlist the strong traditions of the civil rights movements in the United States to focus the conscience of the nation on the need to recognize the Gospel call to safeguard the human rights of the Dreamers at this critical moment when they are faced with enormous peril."

-Bishop Robert McElroy, Diocese of San Diego



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LA VERNA



SGI members score progress with utilities on climate change

Feb. 28, 2018 | by Chris Cox, Full text [here](#)

“This year, SGI members filed resolutions with two midwestern utilities: [CMS Energy](#) and [WEC Energy Group](#). Each resolution aimed for the public disclosure of an assessment of the long-term business impacts of limiting global warming to under 2-degrees Celsius, as adopted by the [Paris Climate Agreement](#).”

“We have great news: both resolutions have been withdrawn as the companies agreed to the main components of the resolutions. Despite the Trump administration’s decision to end the [Clean Power Plan](#), both midwestern utilities rise to meet the challenges of climate change. In fact, [CMS announced last week that they reduce carbon emissions by 80 percent and no longer using coal to generate electricity by 2040.](#)”



To learn more about the issues, our actions, and the work of our allies, you may want to join some ICCR calls in the coming weeks:

- **Water and Food Call**, Tuesday, March 27, 9:30 a.m. to 10:45 a.m. (Central). Dial [877-326-0011](#), and enter the meeting code: *419 0285*
- **Climate Change Call**, Wednesday, March 28, 11 a.m. to noon (Central). Dial [877-326-0011](#), and enter the meeting code: *9385603*
- **Human Trafficking Call**, Tuesday, April 3, 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. (Central). Dial [877-326-0011](#), and enter the meeting code: *2301221*
- **Health Call**, Thursday, April 5, 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. (Central). Dial [877-326-0011](#), and enter the meeting code: *4422231*

Capuchin Franciscan Province of St. Joseph Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation Office. Please contact us at jplic@thecapuchins.org if you would like to contribute to the newsletter. Follow our blog at: thecapuchins.org/jpic and receive more up-to-date actions, prayers, and news at: facebook.com/sjppic/