**DECEMBER 2018**

**STEWARDS OF OUR EARTH**

**Bulletin: December 2**

**Did You Know….**

As many as one in five users of disposable contact lenses flush them down the toilet or sink, and researchers from Arizona State University recently estimated that each year 7 to 11 tons of plastic lenses end up in wastewater in the U.S. alone, contributing to growing “microplastic pollution” of our waterways. (*University of California, Berkeley Wellness Letter*, December 2018)

Ninety percent of the world’s seabirds are estimated to have plastic fragments in their stomachs. (World Wildlife Fund Report 2018)

In the first study of its kind, a team of scientists has confirmed what has long been suspected, that plastics ultimately reach the human gut. Microplastics have been detected in tuna, lobster, and shrimp. Earlier this year, a team of scientists working with Orb, a non-profit journalism organization, found that a single bottle of water can contain dozens – or even thousands – of tiny plastic particles. (Frank Kummer, Inquirer, October 24, 2018)

*“…. We must never allow the throwaway culture to enter our hearts, because we are brothers and sisters. No one is disposable! [….] I would therefore like us all to make the serious commitment to respect and care for creation, to pay attention to every person, to combat the culture of waste and of throwing out so as to foster a culture of solidarity and encounter.”*(Papal addresses on July 25 and June 5, 2013, by Pope Francis)

**Bulletin: December 9**

Care for nature is part of a lifestyle which includes the capacity for living together and communion. Jesus reminded us that we have God as our common Father and that this makes us brothers and sisters. Fraternal love can only be gratuitous; it can never be a means of repaying others for what they have done or will do for us. That is why it is possible to love our enemies. This same gratuitousness inspires us to love and accept the wind, the sun and the clouds, even though we cannot control them. In this sense, we can speak of a “universal fraternity.” (Pope Francis, *Laudato Si’ On Care for Our Common Home*, 2015)

PEACE ON EARTH!

**Bulletin: December 16**

The Earth Charter asked us to leave behind a period of self-destruction and make a new start, but we have not as yet developed a universal awareness needed to achieve this. Here, I would echo that courageous challenge: “As never before in history, common destiny beckons us to seek a new beginning….Let ours be a time remembered for the awakening of a new reverence for life, the firm resolve to achieve sustainability, the quickening of the struggle for justice and peace, and the joyful celebration of life” (*Earth Charter*, The Hague, 29 June 2000). (Pope Francis, *Laudato Si’ On Care for Our Common Home*, 2015)

JOY TO THE WORLD!

**Bulletin: December 30**

All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe and in the smallest of your creatures.

You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.

Pour out upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and beauty.

Fill us with peace, that we may live as brothers and sisters, harming no one.

O God of the poor,

help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth, so precious in your eyes.

Bring healing to our lives, that we may protect the world and not prey on it,

that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction.

Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain at the expense of the poor and the earth.

Teach us to discover the worth of each thing, to be filled with awe and contemplation,

to recognize that we are profoundly united with every creature as we journey towards your infinite light.

We thank you for being with us each day.

Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle for justice love and peace. **Pope Francis**

CHRISTMAS BLESSINGS TO ALL!

**Our Social Justice Committee meets on the 1st Sunday each month after the 11:00 Mass. Come and share your ideas and suggestions for taking care of our common home!**