

Participation-October 2016

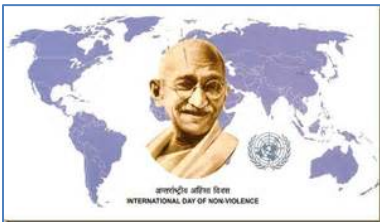


October 1—International Day of Older Persons

The World Health Organization's International Day of Older Persons is a day for honoring elderly persons as holders of wisdom that comes with life and history. This year's theme is "Take a Stand Against Ageism". It is a day to raise awareness of abandoned and abused elderly persons and those who suffer loneliness, loss of dignity, hopelessness and illness. Elderly members of society continue to play important roles in their families, communities and the world. They are able to share their experiences of life with a perspective that only years

of living can bring. Let us reach out to those in our own lives who have lived many years and learn from their experience and wisdom.

Let us pray for all of us who are elderly, especially those who are abandoned and forgotten, that someone will reach out to them in kindness and respect. May each of us treat our elders with the dignity and love, spending time listening to their wisdom and lived experience.



October 2—International Day of Nonviolence

The International Day of Non-Violence is observed on **October 2**, the birthday of **Mahatma Gandhi** and has been celebrated since 2007. It is a day to promote nonviolence through education and public awareness in order to secure a culture of peace, tolerance, understanding and non-violence. As Franciscans prepare to celebrate the feast of St. Francis, the great peacemaker, this day reminds us that we are all called to rededicate ourselves

to active peacemaking in our daily lives and to carry the principles of non-violence into the world.

Let us pray for conversion of heart for ourselves and world leaders. May we turn from violence and embrace lives of peace, justice and nonviolence. May we turn our swords into plowshares and may we train for war no more. May we see all of creation as brothers and sisters.



October 10—Indigenous Peoples' Day

Indigenous Peoples' Day began as a holiday celebrated in various localities in the United States. It began as a counter-celebration to **Columbus Day**, promoting **Native American culture** and commemorating the history of **Native American** peoples. It is now celebrated as a day to honor indigenous people around the world whose cultures are endangered by destruction of the environment and by unjust policies that fail to protect their ancestral homelands from those who would steal their land and threaten their livelihoods. Their lives and land are often

coveted by mining companies, hydroelectric companies, loggers, and oil companies. Indigenous people have a knowledge of the natural world that is invaluable at this time of ecological crisis. This is a day for honoring and learning from our indigenous brothers and sisters and working with them for the protection of their human rights and for preservation of their lands.

Let us pray for indigenous peoples throughout the world who suffer injustice and whose lives are threatened by greed. May we live and work in solidarity with all indigenous people, respecting their human rights, preserving our natural environment and respecting indigenous homelands.



October 13—International Day for Disaster Reduction

The UN General Assembly sees International Day for Disaster Reduction as a way to promote a global culture of risk-awareness and disaster reduction. That includes disaster prevention, mitigation and preparedness. This year, the emphasis is on "The Sendai Seven Campaign – 7 Targets, 7 Years", an advocacy initiative to encourage implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk

Reduction with the goal of saving lives, reducing disaster losses and improving management of disaster risk. The UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Disaster Risk Reduction, Mr. Robert Glasser said, "Despite many successes there are still far too many lives being lost in predictable events because of failures to deploy early warning systems, learn lessons from past events and to grasp the growing threat of climate change and its

impact on extreme weather events including storms, floods and drought.”

Let us pray for people throughout the world who have suffered from any natural disaster, especially this past year. May they be comforted and given hope and assistance to rebuild their lives. May we be generous in lending whatever assistance we can to those in need and may we continue our efforts to address climate change which contributes to the frequency and severity of such disasters.



October 15—International Day of Rural Women

The first International Day of Rural Women was observed on 15 October 2008. This new international day, established by the General Assembly in its [resolution 62/136](#) of 18 December 2007, recognizes “the critical role and contribution of rural women, including indigenous women, in enhancing agricultural and rural development, improving food security and eradicating rural poverty.” Rural women, the majority of whom depend on natural resources and agriculture for

their livelihoods, make up over a quarter of the total world population. In developing countries, rural women represent approximately 43% of the agricultural labor force, and produce, process and prepare much of the food available, thereby giving them primary responsibility for food security. 76% of the extreme poor live in rural areas. Ensuring rural women’s access to productive agricultural resources contributes to decreasing world hunger and poverty, and makes rural women critical for the success of the new Sustainable Development agenda for 2030 to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger worldwide.

Let us pray for all women who live in rural areas, especially for those living in rural poverty. May their crops grow well, so that they can successfully feed themselves, their children and their communities. May their strength and health endure and may all women be respected and treasured by their families and society.



October 16—World Food Day

World Food Day is celebrated every year around the world on 16 October in honor of the date of the founding of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in 1945. It is a day to honor those committed to food security around the world, to celebrate those who grow and produce food, especially many small farmers who live in rural poverty while caring for the earth and feeding the world. Climate change is drastically affecting farmers in many parts of the world through increased floods and drought, leading to crop failures, often on a massive scale. World Food Day has adopted a different theme every year. The theme for 2016 is **Climate change: Climate is changing. Food and agriculture must too.** Let us support local farmers as much as possible, buy fair trade products that ensure a just income for farmers, and do what we can to hold our leaders accountable for implementation of the COP21 Paris Climate Change Agreements so that together we can address climate change, which threatens the world’s food supply.

Let us pray those who plant and care for the earth in order to grow food for the world, for those who harvest, and for those responsible for food distribution. May food justice be a priority in our world. May we do all we can to address climate change and to protect our Mother Earth so that the bounty she produces may continue to nourish us. For the bounty of the earth, we are thankful.



October 17 – International Day for the Eradication of Poverty

This special day is a day to raise awareness of the need to work to eradicate poverty and destitution worldwide. This is one of the main Sustainable Development Goals approved by the UN in September 2015. It is a day when individuals and non-governmental organizations urge governments around the world to make the ending of poverty a central goal of their foreign policy. Even members of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank agree that this goal is achievable if the political will is present.

Let us pray for all those who live in extreme poverty around the world that our global community will join together in efforts to bring political will and resources together to end this preventable suffering and hunger.