

## Participation-May 2017



*Pope Pius XI in 1931*

### **May 15—The 86<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of *Quadragesimo Anno***

On 15 May, 1931, Pope Pius XI published his encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno* on the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Pope Leo XIII's encyclical *Rerum Novarum*. These two encyclicals address the emerging social realities of private property, the relationship between capital and labor, and the social order emerging out of the industrial revolution. While private property is viewed as essential to human freedom and full human development, it is also at the service of the common good. For this reason, redistribution of property by governments (which happens through taxation in order to provide for the common good) is seen as essential. Capital is recognized as essential to flourishing economies, but the popes recognized the importance of just compensation for labor, and labor's role in the creation of capital. Three elements determine a fair wage: The worker's family responsibilities, the economic condition of the enterprise and the economy as a whole. Again, the common good is linked to both labor and capital. The emerging social order demands more solidarity between employers and employees, for the sake of the common good. This requires cooperation and communication. In light of these values, the popes called for "a third way" of social structuring—between capitalism and communism—in which government, industry and labor work together. These are still ideals worth working towards.

*Let us pray for all of us, as we struggle to create a more just society. May we always consider the common good as we make decisions about our lives. Help us to respect the freedom and creativity of each person and do whatever we can to help each person achieve his or her full potential. May all that we do improve not only our own lives but the lives of the least among us and protect Earth.*

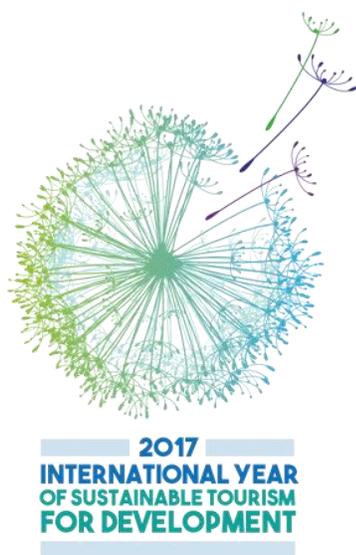


*Franz Jägerstätter*

### **May 21—Feast of Blessed Franz Jägerstätter**

Like St Francis, Franz Jägerstätter was a somewhat wild young man early in his life. He joined a gang and often fought others with knives and chains. However, he underwent a dramatic conversion to gospel non-violence, forsaking all weapons and fighting and became a member of the Third Order of St Francis. He married and became the sole supporter of a wife, three daughters and his mother. When conscripted into the Nazi army, he refused to fight in the war. He knew that to participate in even a non-combat role would be a form of participation in the violence and evil of Nazi Germany. He was arrested, tried by a military court of undermining military morale, and executed on 9 August, 1943 at the age of 33. Although many people, including Church leaders, tried to change his mind, Franz remained committed to peace and justice and refused military service.

*Let us pray for those traumatized by war and violence. May we always remain committed to the peaceful resolution of differences and to the respect for the rights of others. Holy One, help us to live Gospel non-violence in our daily lives, no matter what the cost. May we join others in acts of courageous peacemaking!*



## May 22—International Day for Biological Diversity

On 22 May, 1992 the Nairobi conference on Biological Diversity agreed to adopt the text of the Convention on Biological Diversity. The convention was inspired by the world’s growing commitment to sustainable development. This year’s theme is ***Biodiversity and Sustainable Tourism***. Sustainable tourism is recognized by the United Nations as a positive instrument towards the eradication of poverty, the protection of the environment and biodiversity, the improvement of quality of life and the economic empowerment of women and youth, particularly in developing countries. Strengthening protected areas is essential to the preservation of biodiversity. Conservation and support for indigenous communities are also important in this effort. In the spirit of *Laudato Si*, this day calls each of us to be conscious of our role in climate change and the extinction of species, and to do what we can to slow this process. Biodiversity is life—loss of biodiversity is death.

*God, we ask you to open our heart to the richness and diversity of your creation. Help us to recognize your presence in every creature and to treasure the gifts of biodiversity that we experience. As we walk through life, may we look with open eyes and experience with open hearts, the wonders you share with us. May gratitude flow forth from us in response to your loving presence.*



## May 24—Second Anniversary of *Laudato Si: On the Care Of Our Common Home*

After 2 years, *Laudato Si*, continues to challenge all of us to see the connection between caring for Earth, our common home, and caring for the poor. In this inspiring document, Pope Francis hears the “cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor” as one cry. The poor disproportionately experience the effects of global climate change, even though they have contributed to it the least. This document explores the connection

between inequality, injustice and environmental destruction. It speaks with urgency about the desolation of our planet and a ‘throwaway culture’ that is not only affecting the climate, but is devastating the lives of millions of its inhabitants who are displaced, impoverished and marginalized by an economy of exclusion and the “globalization of indifference.” Dramatic action rooted in a deep spiritual conversion is called for to change our lifestyles and systems that contribute to this crisis.

*Holy One, we thank you for Earth, the beautiful home in which we live. Help us to live with wonder, awe and gratitude each day. May we commit ourselves to change our lives so that Earth can continue to sustain life for many generations yet to come.*