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The UN & YOU

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AT A GLANCE

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From the NGO Desk



Jesus Wept



There are three times in the Gospel when Jesus wept: before He raised Lazarus from the dead, before His final return to Jerusalem, and in the Garden of Gethsemane. As the suffering of our

world is only increasing with violence and injustices, I found myself reflecting on the tears of Jesus as I wiped my own tears away.

My prayer invited a deeper reflection on why Jesus wept in each of these occasions, and I was especially drawn to his tears before He entered Jerusalem.

Scholars debate on why Jesus wept at this time. Some say it foreshadowed the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD. Others wonder if it was because of the suffering that awaited him. Jesus knew He was going to die there, He told his disciples quite clearly although they did not understand (Luke 18:31-34). If I knew I was about to suffer and die, I would cry too.

Another thought, which resonates especially during this time of global unrest, is that Jesus wept because despite His ministry of miracles, parables, healings, and love, people still missed the point. And He was running out of time. “How do they not see and understand,” He must have pondered with frustration and with sadness.

This is not just about those in Jerusalem at that time, it is all of us. Generation after generation, we continue to fail to see who Jesus truly was and is. We are blinded by our need to maintain power and comfort, to value law over mercy, and to create a Jesus that fits our ego instead of the radical life of love that Jesus models in the Gospels.

We especially see this in recent public debates over “just war” and what Jesus would approve of or not approve. Pope Leo has weighed in as has many theologians and Catholic voices, reminding us that the Jesus of the Gospels was and is the Prince of Peace, as He explicitly tells us to “put down our sword.”

Just as the Jewish people of Jesus’ time wanted a Messiah that was a great soldier who would strike down the enemy, many continue to shape Jesus in this image.

It is important as war continues, and as over 100 countries are experiencing armed conflict, that we remember that war is never the answer, and violence only begets violence. As we work tirelessly to address social issues at the United Nations, war only makes things worse. War leads not only to injury and death, but also forced migration and displacement, famine, sexual violence and trafficking, and it negatively impacts many human rights like access to clean water and air, to name a few.

Our ministry at the United Nations focuses on social and economic issues. The Security Council, which addresses war and conflict, is not a place where Civil Society is welcome, other than to receive updates. We make our voice heard in the form of statements, public protests, and prayer, but it is limited as compared to Social Development. Still, we strive, at the global stage, to point to a different way- the way of non-violence, dialogue, and respect for human rights and dignity.

This month and next, our focus at the UN will be on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The treaty was enacted in 1970 to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, to foster cooperation in peaceful nuclear energy use, and to promote disarmament. The treaty will be assessed in New York as we find a safe way to move forward.

I imagine Jesus would join us in weeping at the thought of how powerful and dangerous humanity has become in creating weapons of such immense destruction. Let us pray and demand that our world leaders do all in their power to secure that nuclear weapons are never used, because as Albert Einstein famously suggested, “If World War III were fought with nuclear weapons, World War IV would be fought with ‘sticks and stones.’”

Let us weep at the sight of such human suffering these days, but let us not stop there. Let our voices be heard to demand peace at all costs, and may our prayers transform the hearts of those who have the power to destroy. Then, our tears of sadness will be transformed into tears of joy as we, as a shared human community, will finally understand and followed the way of Jesus of the Gospels.

Haiti



A Glimmer of Hope



The situation in Haiti continues to be disastrous and unsafe. There is a glimmer of hope; however, in the new Gang Suppression Force (GSF) begins this month. The GSF is a UN-authorized, 5,500-member multinational security mission combatting the rampant gang violence that has taken over the country. The GSF replaces the Kenya-led Multinational Security Support mission that failed to quell the violence.

Over 1.5 million Haitians are displaced, and their living conditions are a humanitarian crisis. You can read more about this reality [here](#).

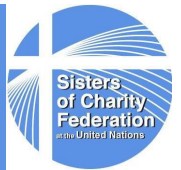
There is great concern for the children of Haiti, and all they have experienced in recent years. The hope is the GSF will be effective and displaced people can eventually return home, although they will likely find it in ruins. The hope is that Catholic communities will be in an instrumental position to help with the healing of the nation.

We will be working with our congregations present in Haiti along with other Catholic NGOs who have a ministry there, to see what role we can play. We also will continue to call upon both our Canadian and United States congregations to advocate with their governments to prioritize and provide financial, security and human rights resources.

Finally, US congregations will continue to be encouraged to advocate for greater laws and policing of illegal weapons that are sent to the gangs in Haiti. A new tracking system and data base is helping to identify where the weapons are coming from in both the US and Mexico. A [BBC story](#) from last summer provides more insights into this reality.

Let us keep the people of Haiti in our continued prayers.

UN Secretary-General



First Female SG?



The process of selecting the next UN Secretary-General has officially begun. As of mid-April, there are four official candidates, two of whom are women. There has never been a female UN

Secretary-General.

The two female candidates are Michelle Bachelet of Chile and Rebeca Grynspan Mayufis of Costa Rica.

Ms. Bachelet is the former President of Chile and former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. You can read Ms. Bachelet's vision statement for the UN [here](#).

Ms. Grynspan is the Former Vice President of Costa Rica and she is currently the Secretary-General of the UN Conference on Trade and Development. You can read Ms. Grynspan's vision statement for the UN [here](#).

The two male candidates are Rafael Grossi of Argentina and Macky Sall of Senegal.

Mr. Grossi is the Director of the International Atomic Energy Agency. You can read Mr. Grossi's vision statement for the UN [here](#).

Mr. Sall is the Former President of Senegal and you can read his vision statement for the UN [here](#) (it is currently only available in French).

In late April, the candidates will meet with the General Assembly for interactive dialogues. The process will continue in the coming months and the new Secretary-General will begin their five-year term starting on January 1st, 2027.

It is important to point out that before the General Assembly votes on a candidate, the Security Council has input and power on who will move forward. The five countries with veto power (United States, China, Russia, United Kingdom, and France) must agree to a candidate, and they can torpedo a candidate if they have concerns.

In mid-April, Mike Waltz, the US envoy to the UN, raised concerns about Ms. Bachelet. While he acknowledged that the US is not currently in a position to say whom they would support as the next Secretary-General, this news is troubling for Ms. Bachelet's chances. You can read more [here](#).

As a member of the Justice Coalition of Religious (JCoR), we are issuing a statement to each candidate, expressing our hopes and expectations for the Secretary-General. We pray this will provide the moral perspective that values human rights and human dignity. Once finalized, this letter will be shared with our NGO Liaisons from each Congregation to be distributed for your information.

Reach Out



Let's Stay Connected

For questions, feedback, article ideas, or story contributions, email JWalters@sistersofcharityfederation.org and we'll be in touch.

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