

# ISSUES AND ACTIONS

*April 2006*



## Dates to remember:

- April 14 Rachel Carson died 1964 (author of “Silent Spring” and the “Sense of Wonder”)
- April 17 World Day of Prayer for Vocations
- April 22 International Earth Day

*“Every human being has an obligation to return to this planet and to all our relations the sound of beauty, the power of prayer, the sense of harmony.”*

Dhyani Ywahoo



**Earth Day is April 22** — going back to our Commitments to the Earth Charter and how all things are connected, I interviewed two Sisters from our local communities and asked them to share information their communities worked on.

Sister Karen, Shalom Community, shared that their community met on January 6— after a discussion on an article Sister Elaine Marie had given them. They all agreed to begin to save their personal change and put it aside for a project to help women in Africa. Fifty-five dollars is needed to help train women so they could use a solar cooker to purify water. Another \$15.00 would go towards purchasing the solar cooker. What a project to help women in need to be trained to help themselves and their families, so they may have life’s valuable source of clean water.

Keeping this in mind, an article “On Tap at the World Trade Organization: Private Water” by Joshua Holland AlterNet posted Dec. 15, 2005 <http://www.holyfamilysisters.org> Among other things this article says: 1.3 billion people in the world lack access to clean water and world wide demand is doubling every twenty years. Tragically more than 5 million people die each year in Africa from lack of water access. Please read this article to better understand about billion dollar companies resorting to selling bottled water to people who have the ability to pay, while poorer people go without water.

Sister Lucille from Holy Family Community did some research on water and websites. Check this out on the Holy Family Calendar, August 2006. She talked of how each Sister is more aware of putting in a full load of clothes before doing laundry, seeing and turning off dripping faucets, looking at bottled water usage for medical needs and needs versus want as part of their commitment to the Earth Charter. She also discussed an article from Time Magazine Dec. 2005, “War on the Water Front” by Jyoti Thottam (business section)

“Maine is one of several states where activists are challenging the U.S. bottled water industry.”

“Water is Maine’s Oil in this century.”

“Fueling demand for the natural resource is water’s continuing transformation from a necessity to a commercialized global product.

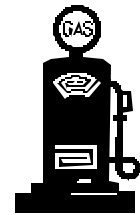
This community shared their ideas on the above article and asked: is water a precious resource? Is bottled water a luxury item, a fad?

How does my personal use of water add to my awareness of the Earth? Her valuable gifts invite us to stop and wonder in our use of them.



How does our individual response aid my brothers and sisters elsewhere or is it harmful to them? Every person adds to the constant drip, drip, drip in breaking away of the rock that results in either a beautiful canyon or just a destructive wearing away of the rock formation.

Another community taking action in living out their Earth Charter commitment - “Since our last Assembly, one of the projects that our Mother Dolores Community has been working on is locating gas stations which do not purchase oil from the Middle East. In doing so, we decided to find the closest locations where our Sisters live and need to purchase gas. We believe this is one small practical way our community is deliberately able to take an action that does not support the war efforts.



**Valero** Service Stations are located almost everywhere SHF are living. However, they are not available in Nevada, Hawaii or Kentucky. This is one of the few oil companies founded in the United States, actually Texas. Valero is not connected in any way with the Middle East countries that we are concerned about with regards to profiting from the war.

Out of the five companies on several emails we have become aware of during the past six months, the following two companies are located where a number of our Sisters can participate if they so desire not to support the war in the purchasing of their gas.

**Citgo:** Founded in Texas and still maintains their headquarters there, although it was purchased in the 1990s by Venezuela

**Sinclair:** Is a USA company, but seems to only have stations where SHF live in Las Vegas and surrounding areas.

The three other oil companies are the following:

**Sunoco:** With regards to fuel, they specialize in fueling race cars.

**BP/Phillips and ARCO** are listed as not connected with the Middle East, but at this time our SHF gas cards do not include these.

Sister Ann Maureen, representing her community, also took another step by locating stations near our community residences. If you have not received this information from Sister, you can also go on the internet and look for the particular gas company store locator.

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Recently on CBS-5 “Shopping for Free Clothing with Dignity, January 25, 2006, Kate Kelly reported on Bernadine “Bernie” Dutra of Fremont, California. She is a long time benefactor to Sisters of the Holy Family.

The article stated that Mrs. Dutra wants all children, especially those who can’t afford it, to feel special. She spoke of her own childhood growing up with not a lot of money in her home. She went to school with her three brothers with their hair not combed and having dirty clothes feeling ostracized by the other children.

Mrs. Dutra, a grandmother of 13 and a breast cancer survivor, opened a small store in Washington Hospital called “One Child”, with the help of her husband and social service agencies. The article stated Mrs. Dutra serves over 350 children a year. They get a tremendous amount of clothing, a backpack of school supplies, dental supplies and more. Community social service agencies and local schools refer children from infancy through high school to the “One Child” Store.

The article concluded by saying “for filling the hearts and building self-esteem for underprivileged children in her community, the Jefferson Award went to Bernadine “Bernie” Dutra of Fremont.” What a wonderful story about one woman so close by, in helping so many young people to experience dignity.

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JUSTICE FOR IMMIGRANTS .. a journey of hope. The Catholic Campaign for Immigration Reform. [www.justiceforimmigrants.org](http://www.justiceforimmigrants.org)  
A wealth of resources on this topic can be found at this website.

EARTH DAY: A prayer service on Earth Day can be found on our SHF website home page under Earth Day Prayer Service.

SUBMITTED BY THE SOCIAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE