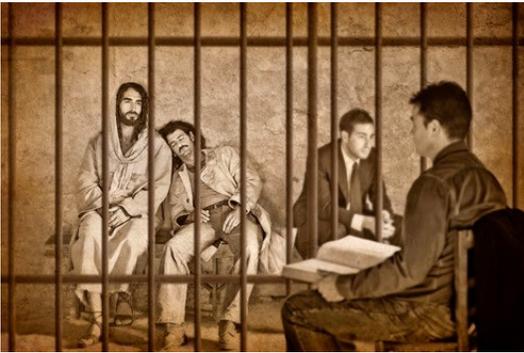


If you want Racial Justice....

## Reform the Parole System in New York State: It's **GO** time!



Now is the time to speak out for our incarcerated sisters and brothers. The NY State legislative session is scheduled to end on June 10, so we have to redouble our efforts to advocate for the passage of the two parole reform bills we've been supporting.

Jose Hamza Saldaña, the director of [RAPP](#) (Release Aging People in Prison), speaking at our diocesan social ministry conference earlier this month, reminded us that this issue addresses racial injustice. The high numbers of young Black and Latino New Yorkers who have been incarcerated - many younger than 18 years old- and who have been given long sentences constitutes a social crisis.

If this were happening to white youth at the same numbers, there would be a public outcry. But somehow, we don't seem to care as much about these lives.

By passing these parole reform bills, we can redress in at least some measure the racial bias in the criminal justice system. We can give people a chance to be part of their families and communities again, and to serve as mentors to youth and young adults on how to stay out of the prison system.

The Diocesan Public Policy Committee is asking for your support of two bills that would give more prisoners the opportunity to be released on parole. The **Fair and Timely Parole** (S.1415/A.4231) bill would mandate that prisoners who've served their terms be granted parole unless they pose a clear risk of violating the law. It would give people a chance to be assessed for parole on the reforms they've made to their characters, and not just on their past crimes.

The **Elder Parole** (S.15/A.3475) bill allows people in New York State prison aged 55 and older who have served 15 or more consecutive years to be considered for parole, regardless of their crime or sentence.

Both bills have passed out of committee and could be called to a vote on the floors of the Assembly and State Senate.



That means we have **FOUR phone calls** to make to nudge the leaders to insure a floor vote takes place:

Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie: 518-455-3791

State Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart Cousins: (518) 455-2715

Your own Assembly Member via the State Assembly switchboard: (518) 455-4100

Your own State Senator via the State Senate switchboard: (518) 455-2800

*Please make the calls to promote justice and mercy!*

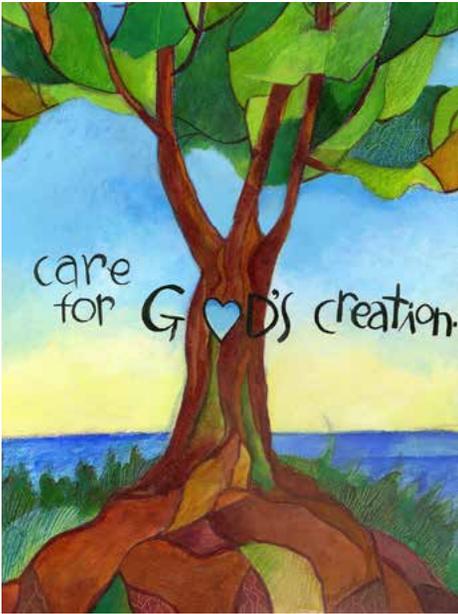


Photo from USCCB, courtesy of Brother Mickey McGrath, OSFS

## We're Destroying Our Common Home

It's been six years since the publication of Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si: On Care for Our Common Home*. Environmental destruction has continued; climate change has gotten worse. What have we done about the moral imperative to protect the Earth? Pope Francis calls us to go beyond obvious, easy steps like recycling, insulating our homes, and driving less, to a "profound interior conversion" (LS no. 217). We should always be thinking about how our decisions affect creation. And we need collective action and policy change!

Here's one [Study guide](#) developed by the US Conference of Catholic Bishops you can bring to your parish to inspire more people to care.

**Take Action:** One policy to address climate change that has gained support by the US Conference of Catholic Bishops is a **carbon fee and dividend**. This program would place a steadily increasing fee on fossil fuels (coal, natural gas and oil) which would be returned to U.S. households.

As production of fossil fuels gets more expensive, companies will be incentivized to shift into cleaner forms of energy. Consumers will also find that, while the dividend will help them cover increased costs, using less fossil fuel will mean even greater savings. That will encourage them to support green energy. To learn more about this brilliant plan to reduce carbon emissions, address climate change and spur the creation of new jobs in the green energy sector, see Citizens Climate Lobby's web site:

[www.citizensclimatelobby.org/price-on-carbon/](http://www.citizensclimatelobby.org/price-on-carbon/) and watch a short informative video [here](#).

Call your Senators and Representative to ask for their support of the legislation that would establish a carbon fee and dividend, called the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act.

*Senate and House of representative switchboard: (202) 224-3121*



# Let Us Dream

## The Path to a Better Future

### May 25, 26 & 27, 2021

Join us for 3 virtual evenings for prayer, music, insight and sharing as we commit to care for God's creation!

Sponsored by the Dioceses of Ogdensburg and Syracuse

3 nights online,  
come to any or all nights,  
7:00-9:00pm

Register at:  
[www.rcdony.org/dream](http://www.rcdony.org/dream)  
Questions: [TMay@syrdio.org](mailto:TMay@syrdio.org)  
or 315-472-6753

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