

Social Service Department 2022
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Social Service aims to promote the welfare of others.

COVID-19 – December 2019

In addition to the illness and death associated with COVID 19, the pandemic has caused other social problems like loneliness, fear and depression in people who were isolated from others or suffered from loss of income or lost their businesses. We need to be aware of this and keep our ears and eyes open to see those around us who need friendship and practical support.

What does this mean for the people at the grassroots level? From kindergarten teachers to high level jobs – every level of society has been impacted.

During the hard lockdowns and restrictions - people who have lost loved ones have had to mourn – without saying ‘goodbye. Comfort them – let them tell their stories.

Each area, each country, each family, each person, will have a different need) be aware of those needs and act on them.

I am sure we all know the story of a young child, who one day got off his mother’s lap and went across and sat on an older man’s lap, who was alone. When he returned, his mother asked him what he said, he replied “nothing I just sat with him”)

Go beyond our boundaries.

(SECAM, the Symposium of the Episcopal Conferences in Africa and Madagascar, has suggested the following prayer for all those affected by the coronavirus:

Almighty and merciful Father, who show your love to all your creation. We come before you asking for a quick control of the Coronavirus currently ravaging our world. Hear graciously the prayers we make for those affected by the virus in various parts of the world. Grant healing to the sick, eternal life to the dead and consolation to the bereaved families. We pray that the ‘medicine’ to combat the sickness be effective.

We pray for the relevant governments and health authorities that they take appropriate steps for the good of the people. Look upon us in your mercy and forgive us our failings. Amen.

**Save our Ocean,
Protect our Future. SDG 14 “Life Below Water”**

As early as 1990 an article in the September Readers Digest “Save our Poisoned Shores!” by Miles Clark said, “for too long we’ve fouled our beaches and waterways. It’s time for us to clean up our act. “from the coastline of Western Australia to the rocky bays of Tasmania, we have fouled beaches, polluted waters and depleted marine life. Unless we control it now, the damage to marine life could be irreversible. Not even the once-pristine Great Barrier Reef has been spared damage from sewage. but the threat to our coastline does not come from the land alone. An average of one incident of pollution every three days from the 11,000 ships that visit Australian waters each year, etc.”

It is up to every one of us to be aware of litter and how we dispose of our used items in the best way to help preserve the environment.

“The Ocean Conference, co-hosted by the Governments of Kenya and Portugal, (scheduled for 27 June – 1st July 2022) comes at a critical time as the world is seeking to address many of the deep-rooted problems of our societies laid bare by the COVID-19 pandemic and which will require major structural transformations and common shared solutions that are anchored in the SDGs. To mobilise action, the Conference will seek to propel

much needed science-based innovative solutions aimed at starting a new chapter of global ocean action.
(Excerpts from the UN Ocean Conference)

The ocean is not just 'the lungs of the planet' but also its largest carbon sink - a vital buffer against the impacts of climate change. It nurtures unimaginable biodiversity and produces food, jobs, mineral and energy resources needed for life on the planet to survive and thrive. There is a great deal we *still* do not know about the ocean but there are many reasons why we need to manage it sustainability - as set out in the targets of SDG 14: Life Below Water. "The science is clear – the ocean is facing unprecedented threats as a result of human activities. Its health and ability to sustain life will only get worse as the world population grows and human activities increase. If we want to address some of the most defining issues of our time such as climate change, food insecurity, diseases and pandemics, diminishing biodiversity, economic inequality and even conflicts and strife, *we must act now to protect the state of our oceans*".

In paragraph 33 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Member States recognise that "social and economic development depends on the sustainable management of our planet's natural resources" and determine to conserve and sustainably use oceans and seas, freshwater resources, as well as forests, mountains and dry-lands and to protect biodiversity, ecosystems and wildlife". SDG 14. aims to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.

Human well-being cannot be achieved without the protection and conservation of the Earth's ecosystem. To maintain the quality of life that the oceans have provided to humankind, while sustaining the integrity of their ecosystems, a change will be required in how humans view, manage and use oceans, seas and marine resources.

This planning is at the highest level: however, to achieve this, it really comes down to each individual, family, a school, community, town, State, Country, each doing a small part. To realise that it is the only Earth we have – to love and to cherish our little patch. To ask ourselves what we are 'willing' to do with our families for the future. It is as important as the 'Wills' that we make to ensure our 'possessions' are gifted accordingly.

What we must do!

Reuse the 'once only' light plastic shopping bags.

Do not purchase pre-packaged fruit and vegetables, the packages only end up in the bin.

Ensure that recyclables are properly binned.

Wash vegetables etc in a container and throw the water on your garden.

Pour oil in a container for disposal – (not down the sink)

Be aware of Council clean-up days – join groups, read articles on 'how to'

These are just a few suggestions.

Land (dry land) can be divided into Countries, States, even a fence between homes – the water (oceans) flow into each other they have no physical boundaries, therefore, we are all responsible and accountable for the living creatures in the oceans.

CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION: SDG 6

THE LAST STRAW – How You Can Beat Plastic Pollution

An Inescapable Challenge

Plastic is uniquely problematic for the environment because it is nonbiodegradable. This means the plastic takeout container from the dinner last week is going to be around a lot longer, up to 1,000 years longer, than the rest of the trash. The question becomes: What happens to that takeout container once you're done with it? Globally, 79% of plastic waste ends up in landfills, dumps or in the environment; 12% of plastic waste is incinerated; and only 9% is recycled. That translates to 8 million metric tons of plastic ending up in our ocean every year – that's one full garbage truck every minute.

Unfortunately, life below water (SDG 14) has become the victim of the plastic addiction. Around 80% of the plastic in the ocean comes from land-based sources– swept in from the coastline or carried by rivers – with the remainder derived from the shipping and fishing industry. And once plastic reaches the ocean, it's difficult to

remove and reverse the damage done to marine ecosystems. As a result, it is estimated that by 2050 there will be more plastic in the ocean than fish.

The Solution: Responsible Consumption and Production

The UN recognised the importance of reducing our ecological footprint when it created SDG 12: Responsible Consumption & Production; SDG 12 is rooted in a well-known concept that has been around for over 40 years, “reduce, reuse, recycle”

What We Must Do!

Beating plastic pollution is possible. Everyone can help solve the plastic crises – by refusing to purchase items made of plastic, recommending more sustainable alternatives, and recycling/reusing as much as possible.

Simple steps:

- swap to reusable cups, use a reusable water bottle
- ditch the straws – opt for alternatives – stainless, bamboo and paper
- invest in reusable cloth bags
- change to a bamboo toothbrush
- *and add as we become more aware of the alternatives.*

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The sea is His, for He made it and His hands formed the dry land. Come let us bow down in worship and kneel before the LORD our Maker for He is our God and we are the people of His pasture. Ps. 95: 5 -7