

# Scottish Laity Network Newsletter

## Issue 2: August 2023



## Welcome to our second Scottish Laity Network newsletter!

In this issue we explore our recent events and introduce forthcoming initiatives...

**- SEASON OF CREATION - 1st September to 4th October 2023**

**- SYNOD PARTICIPATION in Rome -12th to 16th October 2023**

**- FUTURE COLLABORATION with LOUD fence Lent 2024**



### Recent News from SLN:

*We have had a busy Summer!*

- In June, after our successful Pentecost series, we presented another series of webinars entitled 'The Synodal Journey What Has The Spirit Been Saying? What Are Our Hopes and Fears?' Our companions were old friends of the SLN: Massimo Faggioli, Nathalie, Becquart, Thomas Söding and Rafael Luciani. [These webinars reviewed the outcomes of the Synodal process so far in each continent, They can be viewed NOW on our You Tube Channel](#) – they make a wonderful discussion resource for parishes or small groups.
- We also strengthened contacts with other partner groups and formally became members of [We Are Church International](#).
- Our Core Group tried to follow advice from our wise advisors and took a [Retreat Day](#) together, which was hugely enjoyable and beneficial.
- We made contact with and met Antonia Sobocki, Project Manager of [LOUD fence](#), the Survivors' Charity and discussed plans for welcoming LOUD fence to Scotland.
- SLN has also drafted a response to the questions posed by the Synod Document [Instrumentum Laboris](#) and encouraged participatory responses by Scottish dioceses and parishes.

### Inside this issue:

Page 2 SLN and the Season of Creation: a new series of Webinars

Page 3 - SLN and our contribution to Pope Francis' Synod

Page 4- SLN: Working in partnership with LOUDfence

# The Scottish Laity Network

## Season of Creation 2023

Amos 5:24 ...Instead let justice flow like a stream and righteousness like a river that never runs dry...



A Mighty River  
Amos 5: 24

**Let Justice  
and Peace Flow**  
Season of Creation 2023

The Season of Creation is an Ecumenical initiative supported by the World Council of Churches and by many Christian Charities, including SCIAF, CAFOD, Christian Aid and Laudato Si.

It runs from 1st September-4th October, The Feast of St Francis of Assisi; and the theme this year is this verse from the prophet Amos 'Let Justice and Peace Flow'.

This is a perfect time for parishes to re-assess their environmental responsibilities, commitments, and actions; and to plan together for local initiatives that will benefit the environment and support vulnerable people, animals and plants.

It's also a great opportunity for ecumenical outreach- to collaborate with other local churches - and all people of good will - so that we are united in this great mission to protect and save our planet.

There are ready made resources available on our SLN website.

## Scottish Laity Network and The Season of Creation

Once again SLN has organised a series of webinars for the Season of Creation. Each session will as usual be on Thursday evenings starting at 7pm (UK). There is a link to read about the sessions and our companions [here](#).

And there is a link to register for the sessions [here](#):



**Season of Creation 2023**  
Let Justice and Peace Flow  
like a Mighty River



<b>Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> September</b> <i>Flowing within the Divine: A Spirituality for ALL Seasons</i> Companion ~ Arlene Flaherty
<b>Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> September</b> <i>The Reality of Climate Change and Myth Busting</i> Companion ~ Fr Eduardo Agosto Scalet
<b>Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> September</b> <i>How might Christians respond to the Climate Emergency?</i> Companion ~ Val King
<b>Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> September</b> <i>Birth of the Cosmos and Self</i> ~ Revelations of the Aramaic Jesus Companion ~ Neil Douglas-Klotz



Click for [Registration Form](#)  
All sessions are on Zoom 7.00 - 8.30pm [UK Time]

### Our Companions



**Arlene Flaherty**  
Arlene Flaherty OP is a Dominican Sister of Blauvelt, NY. For the past 40 years her ministry has been at the intersection of theology, spirituality, and justice. She is a teacher, workshop leader, justice animator, and group facilitator. For the past year, she has been teaching *Theology and Spirituality in an Evolutionary Context* at An Tarsuach, the Dominican Organic Farm and Ecology Center in County Wicklow, Ireland.

The theme of the 2023 Season of Creation is: "Let Justice and Peace Flow." But what is the source of this flow? Where does it reside? How can we align ourselves with this generative and transforming power for the sake of Earth and her community of life?

In this session, we will reflect on some theological and spiritual insights emerging from contemporary understandings of creation. The hope is that throughout the session, participants will harvest the wisdom needed to align with the FLOW, so as to support God's dream and our desire - the flourishing of creation's community of life - a community to which we all belong.



**Fr Eduardo Agosto Scalet**  
Eduardo is an Italian-born Catholic priest and Carmelite friar (O Carm.), raised in Argentina. He has a Doctorate in Atmospheric and Oceanic Sciences and a Physics degree from the University of Buenos Aires. He is a parish vicar in the Diocese of Segorbe-Castellón.

He is an expert in climate variability and change and its impact on a regional level, integral ecology, eco-theology, and science-faith relationship.

He has done extensive research on the climate and climate change and held a number of academic posts in this area. He is also a consultant for the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, a member of the International Commission for Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation of the Carmelite Order, a consultant for the Latin American Episcopal Council, and Principal Advisor on Advocacy for the Laudato Si' Movement.



**Val King - Co-ordinator Christian Climate Action, Scotland**  
Val, who is the Coordinator of Christian Climate Action - Scotland, comes from a business background and was joint owner and Managing Director of a manufacturing company based in the Cotswolds.

In 2019 the business was sold to 70 employees via an Employee Ownership Trust and Val and her husband Pete moved to Stirling where they now own a 69 acre farm they are re-wilding.

She now spends her time in climate activism, advising businesses on employee ownership and growing vegans in a very large polytunnel.



**Neil Douglas-Klotz**  
Neil is an internationally acknowledged teacher, scholar, author, and musician, specialising in the native traditions of Southwest Asia (the "Middle East"). He lives in Fife, Scotland.

He is the author of *Prayers of the Cosmos*, *The Hidden Gospel*, *The Soft Book of Life*, *Revelations of the Aramaic Jesus* and many other books.

Neil's work helps us to discover the language that Jesus spoke and appreciate the culture and worldview out of which his wisdom comes. It gives insights into the thinking and the cosmology of the Aramaic Jesus.



Has YOUR parish planned its Season of Creation Special Liturgy or Celebration? Here are some useful links for resources:

[SOC Intro film:](#)

[SOC Liturgy Resources:](#)

(Press control and click on links to open)

## SLN and Season of Creation 2023

# The Scottish Laity Network

Participation in the **Synodal Journey**, started by Pope Francis in 2020, has been a crucial part of the Scottish Laity Network's mission since the very beginning of our **Journey of Discernment** in 2020. We have embraced dialogue and opportunities for discussion as part of a new way of **BEING CHURCH**.

We gathered feedback from our members during and after our webinars and organised these into our response to the initial Synod Process, representing the views we have heard from members. You can read this document on our website [here](#).

We have also taken part in the worldwide response to the Continental stage of the synod and formulated a response, again based on the conversations we have had with our companions and members. This is also available on our website [here](#).



We are currently finalising feedback from our members' responses to the **INSTRUMENTUM LABORIS** Document, which will form the framework for discussions of the worldwide church representatives in Rome in October.

## SLN and Synod Participation

### Contacts with other groups joining the Synod journey...

SLN enthusiastically supported an exciting new initiative called **Spirit Unbounded**, which has gathered many companions under its 'umbrella'. You can read about Spirit Unbounded and its members and mission [here](#).

Spirit Unbounded members will be participating in the October synod in two exciting ways. Firstly, some representative of the group will be actually in Rome at the time of the Synod, attending a programme of talks by eminent speakers from all around the world. (Live events 13-14th October)

Secondly, Spirit Unbounded have also organised a synchronized event in **Bristol** at the same time as the Rome Synod, for which places can be booked in advance (in person and online) on their website [here](#). The Bristol event will take place from **8th to 14th October** and speakers include Dr Mary McAleese, Sr Joan Chittister and Steven Newcomb.



Has YOUR parish responded to the discussion questions in **Instrumentum Laboris**? There is a link to read this [here](#).

(Press control and click on link to open)

### Scottish Laity Network and Rome Synod

SLN Core group member, **Gemma Lamarra**, is travelling to Rome, representing us all at this important and historic event for the worldwide Catholic Church. She says about her hopes for the event:

"As well as bringing back to the SLN new connections, ideas, companions and inspirations that will hopefully help empower our laity, I hope I personally will have a renewed sense of belonging in being part of an international network of Catholics with a real sense that we along with our ordained ministers ARE church, and that Pope Francis' hope for a synodal church will be grounded in something concrete. "

All of us in SLN wish Gemma God speed, safe travels and good fellowship.

# The Scottish Laity Network

## SLN and LOUDfence

As part of our Signs of the Spirit Pentecost series we welcomed **Antonia Sobocki**, the project manager of LOUDfence, the survivors' charity, as one of our companions. Antonia impressed all of us so much with her commitment, enthusiasm and most of all with her compassion and courage. You can watch her presentation again [here](#).

**Antonia's LOUDfence idea has been adopted in several dioceses in England and in France and we talked together about her bringing the project to Scotland.**

She was invited to bring LOUDfence to the installation of the new **Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle, Stephen Wright**, on July 19th, where ribbons of remembrance and support were tied to Bishop Wright's cathedra chair; and he gave an invitation to Maggie Matthews from Root and Branch to speak freely about her experience as an abuse survivor. This was a significant and very moving event.



**The day after the enthronement, Antonia travelled up to Glasgow in Scotland to meet members of the SLN Core Group, Gemma Lamarra, Frank Quinn and Anne Dobbing.**

We discussed the feasibility of bringing LOUDfence to Scotland and have provisionally agreed that SLN and LOUDfence will collaborate to organize an event in Oban next year during Lent. Details to follow.

### Prayer to the Holy Spirit by Diarmuid O'Muirchu

Come Holy Spirit, breathe down upon  
our troubled world.  
Shake the tired foundations of our crumbling  
institutions.  
Break the rules that keep you out of all  
our sacred spaces,  
and from the dust and rubble, gather up  
the seedlings of a new creation.

Come Holy Spirit, enflame once more the  
dying embers of our weariness.  
Shake us out of our complacency. Whisper  
our names once more,  
and scatter your gifts of grace with wild  
abandon.  
Break open the prisons of our inner being,  
and let your raging justice be our sign of

liberty.

Come Holy Spirit and lead us to places  
we would rather not go.  
Expand the horizons of our limited imaginations.  
Awaken in our souls dangerous dreams  
for new tomorrow,  
and rekindle in our hearts the fire of prophetic  
enthusiasm.

Come Holy Spirit, whose justice outwits  
international conspiracy,  
whose light outshines religious bigotry,  
whose peace can halt our patriarchal  
hunger for dominance and control,  
whose promise invigorates our every  
effort:  
to create a new heaven and a new earth,  
now and forever. Amen.



## SLN and LOUDfence

Thanks for your company  
reading this newsletter!

Don't forget to keep in touch till  
we meet again!

Email :  
[info@scottishlaitynetwork.org.uk](mailto:info@scottishlaitynetwork.org.uk)

And find us on Facebook

### Future SLN Activities...

**October 2023 - in Rome  
and in Bristol**

**November/December -  
Advent Webinars**

**More to follow...**