



CHRISTIAN  
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# *Harvest*

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**ECOLOGY**  
*LAUDATO SI'*

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## Editorial Foreword

### *Our Common Mission: Care for Our Common Home*

*“The mission of CLC comes from Christ himself who invites us to join him in preparing the world to become the complete Kingdom of God. He calls us to be at the very heart of the world experience and to receive God’s gift in its fullness.”*

(From the Working Document issued at the completion of the Thirteenth CVX-CLC World General Assembly in Itaici, Brazil, 1998)

At the conclusion of the CLC World Assembly in Itaici, members of Christian Life Community worldwide were seeking the answer to, “What is our common mission?” The final document of the Assembly encouraged us to pursue the answer to that question much as the final document of the 2013 Beirut Assembly directed us to focus on four frontiers of mission. There were many discussions about the possibility of common **projects** as a response to the question. Other reflections pointed to ongoing attitudinal requirements (**inner conversion**) necessary to arrive at a common mission, that promotes the building of the Kingdom as we go about all facets of our daily life. In the end, I believe most CLCers felt that a combination of the two sides was the way to proceed.

In the *General Principles and General Norms (#4)* we read that members of Christian Life Community, “...want to follow Jesus Christ more closely and work with Him for the building of the Kingdom.... We propose to commit ourselves as Christians in bearing witness to those human and Gospel values within the church and society which affect the dignity of the person, the welfare of the family and the integrity of creation.” In (GP#6) we are called to become “...sensitive to the signs of the times and the movements of the Spirit...” so as to encounter Christ alongside our ecclesial leaders as we work to advance “the reign of God on earth...”

Since the publication of *Laudato Si’* earlier this year, I have seen and heard an excitement in the actions and words of many members of Christian Life Community in response to Pope Francis’ encyclical, *On Care of Our Common Home*. Communities around the country are studying the encyclical and pondering the steps they can take now and in the future. Many have prayed and continue to pray in solidarity with the Pope. Others have participated in rallies, prayer vigils and fasts. Individuals are examining their life style and making decisions to correct bad habits that lead to waste and pollution. What seems to have happened is that we in CVX -CLC have



*Harvest Editorial  
Team:  
Dorothy Zambito  
George Willett  
Nancy Head*

been handed a common mission - one that extends far beyond the local community and one in which we have a stake now and in the future. There appears to be a fire/passion within us as we discern individually and communally how best we can address at least some of the issues about which Pope Francis reminds us in the encyclical.

In order to respond to the crisis before us, Christians need “...an ‘ecological conversion’ whereby the effects of their encounter with Jesus Christ become evident in their relationship with the world around them. Living our vocation to be protectors of God’s handiwork is essential to a life of virtue...” (LS #217)

#### ***Within This Issue***

This issue of *Harvest* has for its theme, **Ecology**. It is a response to one of the frontiers that World CLC identified and a response to *Laudato Si’*, as well.

In the President’s Corner, **Ed Plocha** gives “Some Thoughts on Ecology.” He provides us with significant quotes from *Laudato Si’* that help us to focus on being custodians of creation. Among his points are the following: our interconnectedness, the use of creatures as mentioned in the Principle and Foundation, a cosmic spirituality and life as mystery.

**Sister Eileen Schulenburg, SC** in “Finding God in All Things” helps us to understand relationships of humanity with the rest of the created world. We must work “to bring everything into unity” by co-laboring with God, as St. Ignatius said. Our challenge is to participate in “Earth’s becoming.”

For CLCers, working in and through our professions is an ideal that is not stressed enough. As you read **Rick Kunkle’s** “Energy Efficiency and Ecology,” you will learn of Rick’s vocation in this vital field. In addition to becoming informed about his work, Rick identifies ways in which we, too, can become more energy efficient,

beginning with our motivation and desire to change habits/life styles.

**Pat Carter Anderson**, in “Love Your Neighbor as Your Very Self: The Body of the Christ,” reflects on the interconnectedness of creation and God’s loving presence which sustains us. She writes about ‘deep ecology’ that tells us that the human species is part of the Earth, not separate from it. Pat suggests a ‘paradigm shift’ that recognizes the spiritual and material as “different expressions of the One.”

“Environmental Challenges for the Next Generation” is a report of the actions of the St. Aedan’s CLC after studying *Laudato Si’*. Written by **Rossana Vales**, it gives suggestions for a starting place to begin our care of the environment.

**Ann Marie Brennan** and **Carol Gonzalez** co-authored “The Lord’s Ranch and Ecology.” The article describes the graced immersion experience of several members of CVX-CLC with the missionaries of the ranch as they minister to the poor in Juarez, Mexico. Their solidarity with the poor in using the earth’s resources (or lack of them) is truly inspiring.

**Veronica Kim** describes what one passionate and persistent person can do to bring about positive change and to produce beneficial results. In her article, “A Coincidental Encounter with EM,” (Effective Micro-organism) she shows how one can make a difference and how her enthusiasm spread to her community and beyond.

**Ann Marie Brennan’s** “CVX-CLC Joins the Network of Global Catholic Climate Movement” (GCCM) provides information about CLC’s involvement on the world level in preserving the environment. This network includes more than 200 Catholic organizations. Among the actions of GCCM are education, organization of fasts and prayer vigils and promotion of interfaith dialogue on climate change.

Using an interview format, **Carol Gonzalez’** “Practicing the Presence of God in Daily Life - Caring for the Earth One Person, One Day at a Time” reflects her passion, excitement and sense of urgency about the condition of our common home. With facts to strengthen her resolve, we read about the many opportunities for getting involved as individuals, families and communities. Get ideas from Carol and begin to reverse the earth’s groaning.

**Daniel Scheid’s** “Statement to the Environmental Protection Agency” on methane emissions points to another way of involvement as we care for creation. In his statement as a resident of Pittsburgh and a man of

faith, Scheid shared the message of *Laudato Si’* as he encouraged stronger methane standards.

In “An Ordinary Inspiration, Global Networks Coming Alive, The Spirit at Work...”, **James Hug, S.J.**, tells of his initiative for getting Catholic Higher Education globally to support the vision and values of *Laudato Si’*. In the future, Hug envisions implementation of the vision and values at Catholic universities. He also shares how CLC members can help.

In “Deacon Succeeds in Rallying a Day of Prayer for World Peace,” **Kenneth Keefner** tells of Deacon Don Cowles efforts to hold a day of prayer in the North Central CLC Region. Deacon Cowles is another example of how even one person can make a difference.

*God of love, show us our place in this world as channels of your love for all the creatures of this earth, for not one of them is forgotten in your sight. (LS)*

*In the peace of Christ,*

*Dorothy M. Zambito*

## IN MEMORIAM

**Annie O’Malley**, mother of Ann Marie Brennan of St. Catharine CLC, passed away on May 30, 2015.

**John T. Brennan**, father of Pat Brennan and father-in-law of Ann Marie of St. Catharine CLC, passed away on September 1, 2015.

**Bob Eddy**, brother of Mary Weskovich, died peacefully on October 19, 2015.

# Some Thoughts on Ecology

“Everything is connected. Concern for the environment thus needs to be joined to a sincere love for our fellow human beings and an unwavering commitment to resolving the problems of society.” *Laudato Si'* (LS #91)

### **We are all called to be loving custodians of Creation.**

This issue of *Harvest* is dedicated to ecology, one of the designated World CLC Frontiers.

In the encyclical *Laudato Si'* Pope Francis challenges us – not just Catholics, but every person on earth – to seek a greater awareness for and to be loving custodians of all creation. The Pope “would like to enter into dialogue with all people about our common home.” (LS #3) “Never in human history have we so hurt and mistreated our common home as we have in the last two hundred years.” (LS #53) To respond to this peril, we must explore more deeply to find solutions. And, while technology is an important component of this solution, it alone is incapable of seeing the mysterious network of relations between things and so sometimes solves one problem only to create others. (cf. LS #20) We, as Catholics, are asked to look at creation more inclusively – through the eyes of faith – for the “divine and the human meet in the slightest detail in the seamless garment of God’s creation.” (LS #9)

### **Integration of our approach to nature and to one another: we are all connected.**

While ecology is the science and the study of the relationships in nature, Pope Francis tells us in the quote above (and throughout the encyclical) that we are an ecological people intimately part of and deeply engaged with creation all around us. There must be a human ecology that complements the natural ecology. We are invited to broaden our perception of the Gospel message and to practice the Gospel of Creation where each person is not just something, but someone inextricably linked to creation. (cf. LS #65)

Celia Deane-Drummond, Professor of Theology at the University of Notre Dame, says in *The Wisdom of the Liminal: Evolution and Other Animals in Human Becoming* that we have to get away from the sense that “we are humans at the top of the pile and we are here to manage the natural world around us and ourselves.” Instead, she says, “We must have a deeper sense that we have become more human through our entanglement with other creatures.”

In fact, the Pope rejects the interpretation of Genesis that gives humans “dominion” over the earth. Rather, we are to “‘till and keep’ the garden of the world.” (LS#67) Here tilling means that we cultivate and work on behalf of the environment; and keeping means that we care for, protect, oversee and preserve our world.

### **The Principle and Foundation and Creation**

In the Principle and Foundation Ignatius says that everything created by God is good:

*“...All things in this world are also created because of God’s love and they become a context of gifts, presented to us so that we can know God more easily and make a return of love more readily...we show reverence for all the gifts of creation and collaboration with God in using them so that by being good stewards we develop as loving persons in our care of God’s world and its development.”*



*Ed Plocha*  
*President*

Nevertheless, sometimes, humankind can and has made evil out of good things.

“...if we abuse any of these gifts of creation or, on the contrary, take them as the center of our lives, we break our relationship with God and hinder our growth as loving persons. In everyday life, then, we must hold ourselves in balance before all created gifts...” (cf. *What is Ignatian Spiritually?*, David L. Fleming, S.J.)

This *tantum quantum* directive in the Principle and Foundation is the criterion Ignatius offers for us to choose what to do and how to proceed. If things help us achieve our goal (which is to develop as loving persons and call forth in us a deeper response to our life in God) use them. If they do not help, don't. Pope Francis echoes this sentiment in the encyclical: “Man must therefore respect the particular goodness of every creature, to avoid any *disordered* [emphasis added] use of things.” (LS #69) We should think of our need to be in right relationship with all things in creation so that through them we can give glory to God. We must recognize that we are linked to those who came before us and to those who are yet to come and humbly acknowledge the responsibility we have to ourselves, to those with whom we inhabit the planet and the legacy we leave to those who will succeed us after we're gone.

### **A Cosmic Spirituality**

Our integrated ecology includes all of creation, and we are invited to practice a more expansive spirituality that takes into account, not just our individual prayer life and personal relationships, but our relationships with the larger environment. In his Apostolic Exhortation, *The Joy of the Gospel*, Pope Francis warns against “privatized and individualistic spirituality which ill accords with the demands of charity...” and “can become an excuse for not offering one's life in mission...” (#262) Oftentimes, however, we do not include creation as part of our reference point for spirituality. To do so means connecting with the Cosmic Christ, with whom we are all intimately bound. Jesuit scientist and mystic Pierre Teilhard de Chardin has much to tell us in this regard: “Christ has a cosmic body that extends throughout the universe.” (*Cosmic Life*) Consistent with this, the encyclical says, “The ultimate destiny of the universe is in the fullness of God, which has already been attained by the risen Christ...” (LS #83) Later it mentions, “... the world, created according to the divine model, is a web of relationships. Creatures tend towards God, and in turn it is proper to every living being to tend towards other things, so that throughout the universe we can find any number of constant and secretly interwoven relationships... The human person grows more, matures more and is sanctified more to the extent that he or she enters into relationships, going out from themselves to live in community with God, with others and with all creatures. In this way, they make their own that Trinitarian dynamism which God imprinted in them when they were created. Everything is intercon-

nected, and this invites us to develop a spirituality of that global solidarity which flows from the mystery of the Trinity.” (LS #240)

Ultimately, “Creation is of the order of love. God's love is the fundamental moving force in all created things.” (LS #77) “In this universe, shaped by open and intercommunicating systems, we can discern countless forms of relationship and participation. This leads us to think of the whole as open to God's transcendence, within which it develops.” (LS #79) We see that ecology is at the heart of our faith and our spirituality. To quote Dr. Deane-Drummond once again, “It is not just another social concern. It is embedded in how we think of ourselves as Christians. Christ is the Cosmic Christ. He is deeply incarnate in the natural world, and we understand ourselves as creatures alongside other creatures.” This, in fact, is very Ignatian. We see God in all things and become engaged in God's creation for God's greater glory.

### **Bringing It All Together: Life as Mystery**

To look at life through the eyes of faith we must experience the mystery of things and look at creation through the eyes of wonder and mystery. Pope Francis admonishes, “We are losing our attitude of wonder, of contemplation, of listening to creation and thus we no longer manage to interpret within it what Benedict XVI calls the ‘rhythm of the love-story between God and man.’” We must regain this rhythm, live with wonder and awe, in relationship with nature, finding God in all things and in all relationships.

We are indeed a resurrection people, but in the words of Pope Francis, “We cannot live Easter, without entering into this mystery.” In his 2015 Easter Vigil homily, Pope Francis said that entering into the mystery “means the ability to wonder, to contemplate; the ability to listen to the silence and to hear the tiny whisper amid great silence by which God speaks to us...” It “demands that we not be afraid of reality, that we not be locked into ourselves, that we not flee from what we fail to understand, that we not close our eyes to problems or deny them, that we not dismiss our questions.” “To enter into the mystery means going beyond our own comfort zone, beyond the laziness and indifference which hold us back, and going out in search of truth, beauty and love.”

As a praying and discerning body, we in Christian Life Community are called to enter into the mystery. By so doing we are more able to live the joy of the Gospel and promote the Kingdom. We also know and believe that God, the Lord of life, will offer us the light and the strength needed to continue on our way. “He [God] does not abandon us, he does not leave us alone, for he has united himself definitively to our earth, and his love constantly impels us to find new ways forward. *Praise be to him!*” (LS #245)

# Finding God in All Things

by Sister Eileen Schulenburg, SC

We tread the Earth – always and everywhere at every moment. And where is God?

I invite us to enter into, contemplate – how all of creation reveals to us the ways of God and our relationship with God, a deepened renewal, finding God in all things! The Book of Genesis invites us to Be in all of Creation. And God saw that all was good!

We are completely enmeshed in the relationships of communication, exchange and response with everything around us - air, plants, water, everything we wear or use, every single person whose life touches ours in any way no matter how distant. Nature reveals and Scripture corroborates that glory and unity are a preoccupation of the Heart of God. At the Last Supper in John's Gospel, Jesus prays that his disciples may 'become completely one' in the same communion of love that Jesus enjoys with God. Might that oneness not include the whole of creation? A friend of mine, Elaine Prevallet, a Sister of Loretto, says, "How do we read the signs of bread and wine? When we see bread, when we see wine, do we see the whole of creation and all its processes nested within that sign? Do we see rain and sun, soil and microbiota, the air we breathe, the plants and the human laborers who harvest them?" She goes on to say, "Do we see all the creatures of the earth that give their lives in order that we may live? Do we include the enormous variety of ways we are nourished by beauty, by learning, by human love?" When Jesus says, 'I am the Bread of Life,' identifying Himself with the great I AM of the Creator God, might the word suggest, among other things, that He is the source of everything that nourishes, everything that gives us life - body, soul, spirit and creation? We hear in this word, this naming, an echo of that Word of God which is the source of all that is life-giving, including the I AM, the whole creation. (John 1:3) Here is the call to broaden the frame of our vision, our believing, our loving faith. In the encyclical *Laudato Si'* (LS), Care For Our Common Home by Pope Francis, we are inspired to respond. "This responsibility for God's earth means that human beings, endowed with intelligence, must respect the laws of nature and the delicate equilibria existing between the creatures of this world.... The laws found in the Bible dwell on relationships, not only among individuals but also with other living beings." (LS #68)

God's own Spirit, the Spirit of Jesus, lives within us, drawing us into communion with each other, with the whole of creation, with and in the life of God. It is our privilege and responsibility to gather up the fragments, to bring everything into unity, consciously and willingly sharing our lives, spending our energies so that nothing of this beautiful, bountiful creation

may be lost but may continue to nourish and unfold on and on and on. We have a role to play in Earth's becoming. Ignatius speaks to us of our co-laboring with God. How beautiful a call and invitation is this! Holy Mystery, in whose Presence we live and move and have our being! Jesus' teaching about the reign of God has to assume a wider perspective to include our human relationship to the rest of creation. As we all require the life and well-being of all the species whose lives sustain our own, God's justice requires caring for the whole of creation. How and why have we become so blind? Could it be that we have not probed deeply enough the full significance of Incarnation? Have we kept God separate from God's Creation?

I have come to a new awareness and have been deeply moved by the words at the beginning of the Liturgy of the Eucharist. We pray, Blessed are you, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have this bread to offer, which earth has given and human hands have made. They will become for us our spiritual food and drink. As we celebrate Eucharist we pray that these gifts of bread and wine, fruits of the earth and work of human hands, are held sacred in us and around us in all of life. Yes, how sacred!

Jesus came that we might have life and have it to the full. That was the dream of our God for you and me that Jesus came to fulfill. Our wholeness, our becoming our true selves in God happens to the extent that we are consciously living in communion. A paraphrase of Ignatius' Principle and Foundation which is reflected with all of creation in the *Retreat for Busy People* by Lauren Hanley, CSJ and Dot Horstman prays, "The goal of your life is to live with me forever. I gave you life because I love you. Your response of love allows my life to flow into you without limit. All things in this world are my gifts presented to you so that you can know me more easily and return your love more readily. I want you to appreciate and use all my gifts insofar as they help you develop as a more loving person." This calls forth deep commitment of my whole person. Do I desire to say 'Yes' to this commitment called forth by our Creator God? Ignatius reminds us in our mutual love relationship with God that there is mutual sharing. Everything lives only by sharing its life. When we live this way, Jesus calls it the Reign of God.



*Sister Eileen Schulenburg, SC. M.S., M.P.S. is a Sister of Charity, Halifax Congregation. She resides in Queens, New York. Eileen has a background in teaching, religious education and congregational administration in formation ministry. Mostly, her life has been given to social services in the ministry of programs against domestic violence and as Chaplain in the City of NY Correction System in the women's jail at Rikers Island, NY. Eileen is a spiritual director and is involved in retreat ministry. Presently she is the Ecclesial Assistant for the Metro NY CLC Region.*

# Energy Efficiency and Ecology

by Rick Kunkle, Past President, CLC-USA

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Each of us identifies in different ways with the four frontiers from the 2013 World Assembly in Beirut. Ecology is the frontier that relates most closely to my life experience. I have always loved being outdoors - I feel fully alive, more aware. Whether I am in my backyard, biking home from work, in the nearby woods, enjoying the grandeur of a National Park, or just noticing a pretty flower, there is something life-giving and even mysterious for me in God's creation that draws me beyond myself.

I have had the privilege to work in the energy efficiency field for over thirty years. I have become more aware over the years that this is a life vocation, something that is more than a job. This is a path I have been on since I was a child. Growing up during the "cold war" era, I developed a fear of nuclear weapons and nuclear power. It just seemed crazy to me. As a teenager I was fascinated by the science of nuclear energy, but also felt very strongly that nuclear power plants were not a safe and viable energy source.<sup>1</sup> I was attracted to renewable energy sources, largely because of their environmental benefits. At the time many of these energy sources were not particularly viable, but as a young person one can be idealistic and hopeful. In part this was a motivation to pursue a degree in mechanical engineering with an emphasis on energy.

I have spent most of my career working at the Washington State Energy Office and then at its successor, the Washington State University Energy Program. My work focuses on the evaluation of energy efficiency programs and research on energy efficiency technologies and energy use. The purpose of this work is to encourage the efficient use of energy. One of the energy efficiency programs I have been able to work with is the Low-Income Weatherization Program in Washington State. This program provides energy efficiency improvements, health and safety measures and repairs at no cost to qualifying low-income households. I help the staff with evaluating program performance and improving service delivery and effectiveness. In a recent research project in which I am involved, we are measuring the performance of ductless heat pumps compared to standard electric resistance heaters (baseboard) in new energy efficient Habitat for Humanity homes. The purpose of this work is to support potential changes in the energy code to limit the use of electric resistance heaters in new homes.

I feel fortunate to work in a field I am passionate about with a group of people who are also committed to their work. I believe we are making positive progress, and energy use in this country is less today because of the dedication of a lot of people to this work. However, I also feel frustration about the roller coaster of support over the years. As we jump from one crisis to the next, and as the political winds blow in different directions, interest in energy efficiency issues rises and falls. I can only wonder where we might be today with consistent levels of funding and policy support.

I personally feel a greater sense of urgency to make more progress with energy efficiency as a result of climate change. The consumption of fossil fuel energy sources (oil, coal and natural gas) is a primary contributor to the greenhouse gases that cause climate change. Energy efficiency is one of the most effective ways to reduce the consumption of these energy sources and address climate change. I am very grateful for Pope Francis's recent encyclical *Laudato Si'* – On Care for Our Common Home – and for his efforts to draw more world attention to climate change and caring for the world in which we live. I would like to share some points from my own reflections on *Laudato Si'* and my experiences living a vocation in energy efficiency. I hope this is helpful to your reflection on responding to the encyclical, the Ecology frontier for CLC and the role of energy use (and efficiency) in each of your lives.



Rick Kunkle  
Past President

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<sup>1</sup> During this period Washington Public Power Supply System (WPPSS – pronounced whoops) attempted to construct 5 nuclear power plants. For a variety of failures, only one was built and the result was the largest municipal bond default in U.S. history.

A step in any discernment process is to become aware of our reality, our collective and individual failures and sin, and our need for God's grace. In *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis tells us, "This sister [Earth] cries out to us because of the harm we have inflicted on her by our irresponsible use and abuse of the goods which God has endowed her." He reminds us of a long line of popes and Church leaders who have spoken out about the environment beginning with Blessed Pope Paul VI in 1971, St. John Paul II, Benedict XVI and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew. He recognizes the consensus of scientists, philosophers, theologians and civic leaders. Yet *Laudato Si'* is one in a long line of calls to action going back more than thirty years. The COP21 Climate Summit in Paris (November 30 to December 11, 2015) is the twenty-first United Nations Conference on Climate Change. Little progress has been made at previous gatherings. As I write this article in October, there do seem to be positive signs leading up to this event and we can hope and pray that the results of COP21 lead to substantive changes. Yet, I believe we are each called to go deeper, to evaluate our current situation, to recognize our own contributions to the destruction of God's creation, to seek reconciliation, and to strive, with God's grace, to respond to "the urgent challenge to protect our common home."

As we consider how to respond to this urgent challenge, what are your deepest desires? What are your hopes? What motivates you to act? I feel Pope Francis is suggesting that our motivation comes from our love of God and our love of God's creation. It should be rooted in our gratitude for the gift of creation, which sustains us. He presents a vision for an "Integral Ecology" that speaks of our relationships and interconnectedness, that recognizes the common good and solidarity with others (particularly the poor). Ultimately this vision draws us closer to God. This contrasts with our culture of individualism and consumerism. When I consider my energy choices and the investments of time and money I have made in energy efficiency, I recognize the influence of the broader vision of which Pope Francis speaks. It is not simply a matter of saving some money on my energy bill (economic benefits) or of reducing our nation's dependence on foreign energy sources (national security).<sup>2</sup> It recognizes the broader social and environmental benefits of low energy consumption. It reflects who I am and what I believe. It is a grateful response to the gifts I have been given.

In *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis says, "Many things have to change course, but it is we human beings above all who need to change." Change begins with each of us. Pope Francis speaks of our culture of consumerism and a "new lifestyle." Our CLC *General Principles* highlight a simple life style<sup>3</sup> and this can be a basis for limiting our energy use - our habits and lifestyle have a significant influence on our energy use. I am reminded of one of the first research projects I worked on as a college student at a large electric utility in Washington. We were measuring the energy use in a sample of energy efficient homes. Energy use varied significantly among similar households. One of the

houses had a hot tub. The annual energy use of the hot tub was equivalent to the total annual energy use of the house with the lowest energy use. I am not making a judgment about the use of hot tubs or the particular household's need for a hot tub. I am only suggesting that the choices we make (like having a hot tub or not) can significantly influence our energy use.

Simplifying one's life can also mean getting rid of things we do not need. We recently had our 25+ year old freezer de-commissioned. For many years this freezer served our household well, but we realized that it was half empty. So we decided we did not need it and could get by with the freezer in our refrigerator. We took advantage of a program from our local electric utility to take away our freezer and properly de-commission and dispose of it. This reduced our household electricity use by about 15%.<sup>4</sup> Do you have appliances or other energy using devices that you do not need?

Another topic Pope Francis brings up in *Laudato Si'* is pollution, waste and our "throwaway culture." He talks about "limiting as much as possible the use of non-renewable resources, moderating their consumption, maximizing their efficient use, reusing and recycling them." In many respects this is what energy efficiency is about. Looking at what is in our garbage is one way each of us can examine our energy use. Everything in our garbage took energy to produce. Reducing what is in our garbage reduces our energy impact on the earth. Where I live we are fortunate to have curbside pick-up of compost and recyclables as well as garbage. In our household it is a habit to sort our waste into our compost, recyclables and garbage containers. It took some effort to modify our buying habits to keep our garbage down to the 10 gallon size of our garbage container, which is picked up every two weeks. There is still room for improvement, since we are not down to zero garbage, but there are times when our garbage container is not full. What opportunities do you have for reducing your garbage?

There are many other ways to reduce energy use that I could share. However, I think the most important thing is to become more aware of your energy use. It is easy to take for granted the energy that powers our homes and keeps us comfortable. When the power goes off we realize how important energy is to our lives. However, do we realize how much energy we use? The United States and Canada have the highest per capita energy consumption of the major world countries.<sup>5</sup> How much energy does your household consume? Is your energy use going up or down? Many electric and natural gas utilities provide tools for comparing your energy use to previous consumption and to other households nearby. Becoming more aware of our energy use can help each of us to develop habits and make choices that are good for us and good for creation. I believe this is one way that we can live our CLC charism and respond to Pope Francis's call in *Laudato Si'* to respond to "the urgent challenge to protect our common home."

2 Economic benefits and national security have tended to be the primary motivations for U.S. Energy Policy.

3 GP #4 - We are particularly aware of the pressing need to work for justice through a preferential option for the poor and a simple life style, which expresses our freedom and solidarity with them.

4 Because our house has a natural gas furnace, water heater, and stove, removing our freezer has a significant impact on our electric use and allowed us to reduce our electric use below 10 kWh/day on average.

5 Iceland, Luxemburg, and some Middle Eastern countries have higher consumption. Data is from the International Energy Administration for 2012.

# Love Your Neighbor as Your Very Self: The Body of the Christ

By Pat Carter Anderson

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*Pat Carter Anderson has been involved in Ignatian spirituality in various roles since high school, first as a member of Sodality/CLC and later in the Bridges Program. She is a spiritual director, avid gardener, speaker and retreat presenter on both the Spiritual Exercises and the Universe Story. She uses her graphic art skills as an accompaniment to these programs. She recently moved from her home town, St. Louis, to Tracy, Iowa where she lives with her husband, Larry. She is the mother of Josh and the grandmother of Maggie.*

In August of 2013, I was walking along Jackson Lake in the Great Tetons when I suddenly realized that every grain of sand, every rock, every bird, squirrel, piece of driftwood, flowering plant, as well as myself, had a story of its very own. A sacred story that began at that first flaring forth — the first, “Let there be...” spoken by the Divine that brought the cosmos into existence. While I might trace my existence to the first moment when I was conceived, the reality is that every atom of my body can be traced back to that first creative act. I am stardust. The atoms in my body were once part of seas, air, water, trees, rocks, insects, birds, mammals, other humans. Every time I take a breath, I am interacting with the cosmos breathing in the molecules of air and breathing out other molecules.

But this is not simply a physical connection — a recycling of atoms. There is a divine energy that permeates the cosmos. The Genesis story of creation tells us that everything created is a result of God’s creative energy. The Word becomes enfleshed from that first flaring forth and so each particle carries within it a Spark of the Divine — Love. We are not only connected to the cosmos by matter but also by love energy. Some call this the Body of the Christ.

John’s Gospel tells us, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The Word was with God in the beginning. Everything came into being through the Word, and without the Word nothing came into being.” (John 1: 1-3 *Common English Bible* Translation) In these lines John reiterates Jesus’ message that we are one with the Divine One. That Incarnation, the enfleshment of the Word, began at the beginning of the cosmos.

This realization causes a paradigm shift in our thinking. It moves from dualities of sacred-profane, spiritual-material to an awareness of all as sacred and that the spiritual and material realms are simply different expressions of the One.

The phrase “deep ecology” was coined by the Norwegian philosopher Arne Næss in 1973. Næss rejected the idea that beings can be ranked according to their relative value. For example, judgments on whether an animal has an eternal soul, whether it uses reason or whether it has consciousness have all been used to justify the ranking of the human animal as superior to other animals.”<sup>1</sup>

From the spiritual perspective, deep ecology tells us that the human species is a part of the Earth, not separate from it, and as such human existence is dependent on the diverse organisms within the natural world each playing a unique and sacred role in the natural economy of the biosphere. Instead of seeing human life as the apex of creation, it calls us to recognize that human existence is made possible and sustained by the harmonious balance of interdependent relationships between these non-human organisms. In the words of Chief Seattle, “Man did not weave the web of life; he is merely a strand in it.”<sup>2</sup> Chief Seattle’s words reflect the world view of many indigenous peoples. These cultures which have continued to live close to the Earth tend to see more easily the interconnectedness and oneness of the Cosmos. They live in and honor the presence of the Great Spirit in each one. They understand that the more we expand our sense of self to identify with “others” (people, animals, ecosystems), the more we realize our true selves.

These thoughts are very similar to those expressed by Ignatius in the First Week of the Exercises [60] and the Contemplation to Gain Love. The interconnectedness of creation and

1 Næss, Arne (1973) ‘The Shallow and the Deep, Long-Range Ecology Movement.’ *Inquiry* 16: 95-100

2 A line from Chief Seattle of the Suwamish tribe’s letter to Franklin Pierce, 1854.

“The world is part of our own self, and we are part of its suffering wholeness. Until we go to the root of our image of separateness, there can be no healing.”

God’s loving presence which sustains us is expressed in David Fleming, S.J.’s contemporary reading of this section [237]. “Just as I see the sun in its rays and the fountains in its waters, so God pours forth a sharing in divine life in all the gifts showered upon me.”<sup>3</sup>

Vandana Shiva, an Indian environmental activist and author, states, “The food that we eat, the food that nourishes us, is a gift from the earth, from the sun, from the millions of years of evolution....When we forget the earth from where we receive our food, food becomes unsustainable. Food is life. Food is not just our vital need: it is the web of life.” The truth of these words can be seen in the U.S. food industry in which food is a commodity in which profit rather than sustainability and care for the earth is the motivating force.

As we begin to make this shift from an anthropomorphic world view to an ecocentric one, Jesus’ words take on a different meaning. “The most important [commandment] is *Israel, listen! Our God is the one Lord, and you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your being, with all your mind, and with all your strength.* The second is this, *You will love your neighbor as yourself. No other commandment is greater than these.*” (Mark 12:29-31 Common English Bible).

“Loving your neighbor as yourself” has often been interpreted as meaning that we should treat others as we would like to be treated. But a more profound meaning would be to love others as if they were part of your very being — because they are. And if our world view expands to include all of the cosmos as our neighbor, then this commandment takes on an entirely new significance. It changes how we look at every being and our very selves. We are drawn more deeply into the realization that all is part of the Body of the Christ, from the first flaring forth into the promised fulfillment. We realize that this Body of the Christ is an evolutionary process in which we are all participants. There are no bystanders. Even to do nothing is a participation because it affects the whole.

It also changes our understanding of the Passion of the Christ. No longer is this a single event that happened 2000 years ago. It is a part of today’s reality that we are reminded of every time we watch the news. As Sufi mystic, Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee, is quoted as saying, “*The world is part of our own self, and we are part of its suffering wholeness. Until we go to the root of our image of separateness, there can be no healing.*”

So our daily call is to enter more deeply into this reality of our Oneness and make daily choices animated by love-energy. “Love alone is capable of uniting living beings in such a way as to complete and fulfill them, for it alone takes them and joins them by what is deepest in themselves.” Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

<sup>3</sup> Dave Fleming, SJ, (1996) Draw Me into Your Friendship, The Spiritual Exercises, A Literal Translation and a Contemporary Reading. Institute of Jesuit Resources

# Environmental Challenges for the Next Generation

By Rossana Vales

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*Rossana Vales is working as a part-time psych nurse. She has five children and three grandchildren. Rossana has been a member of St. Aedan's CLC since 2013. She is inspired by St. Francis' peace prayer.*

At St. Aedan's CLC we have met and discussed Pope Francis' *Laudato Si'*. We saw a video about environmental challenges this and the next generation face. Our generation has taken so many things for granted. In the effort to simplify and make life convenient and fast-paced, we have created enormous deleterious effects on our environment. The by-products of automation and technology have eroded our protective atmosphere and caused destructive climate changes felt worldwide.

People have noticed and some communities have started GREEN initiatives to prevent further damage. St. Aedan's discussion centered on the current situation and ways we can impact, albeit minutely, our care for Creation. We've come to realize that in our daily lives, simple acts of conservation add up in terms of preserving our environment. Actions like turning off electricity (lights, computers, gadgets) when not in use; using paper or cloth bags (versus plastic) when shopping; walking or riding a bike, if feasible, are recommended. Using less makeup helps reduce synthetics used in the manufacture of lipstick, for example.

One important facet of Pope Francis' message on ecology deals with caring for nature and those most vulnerable among our brothers and sisters. As we reflected on this message, members discussed the challenges our community faces, and what we can do to make a difference. St. Aedan's community is culturally diverse. The area surrounding the parish consists of Hispanics, Arabs, Indians, Filipinos and some Europeans. There are issues of poverty, homelessness, illegal immigration, drugs and mental health concerns.

Inspired by Pope Francis' message, St. Aedan's CLC has partnered with campus ministry of the neighboring Jesuit school, St. Peter's University, in its clothing and soup kitchen services.

Recently, some members joined the Breast Cancer Walk in Lincoln Park, Jersey City as part of the St. Peter's University support team.

The community has branched out to help the monthly health services ministry at the nearby St. Aloysius parish in Jersey City. During this monthly health ministry, free blood pressure and sugar testing are offered. We invite guest speakers. Other services include testing for lead, stroke counseling, information about diet and exercise and management of stress with free massage, when available.

While caring for our environment and others, we should not neglect ourselves. We have to remember that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit and should be treated with reverence.

It is up to us to face the challenge offered by Pope Francis to be environmental stewards. We CAN make a difference. We just need to start with ourselves.

# The Lord's Ranch and Ecology

By Ann Marie Brennan and Carol Gonzalez

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*In October 2015, members of CVX-CLC participated in a graced mission trip to the Lord's Ranch in Vado, New Mexico. Our number included members of the North American team: Dominique Cyr from CVX Canada, Chartur Gonzalez-Ayala from CVX Mexico, Ann Marie Brennan and Carol Gonzalez from CLC-USA. Other CLC-USA members included: Henry Gonzalez, Chungsook Chung, Charlie Hoover, Mary Ann McDonald and Carol Zieba. Many thanks for your prayers as we experienced the fruitfulness of this year long DSSE (Discern, Send, Support, Evaluate) process!*

Situated in the desert with a backdrop of beautiful mountains, the Lord's Ranch is a retreat center as well as the home of several missionary families who have served more than thirty years in ministries for those experiencing poverty in El Paso, Texas and in Juarez, Mexico. To assist in their ministry, the ranch has a radio station KJES which broadcasts 24 hours a day in both English and Spanish.

Their ministries include: food banks, medical clinics, pro-life ministries, a barber shop, visitations to the homebound, youth programs, religious education and a soccer program. A building ministry constructs about ten homes in Juarez each year and makes many home repairs, especially roofs.



Ann Marie Brennan

The founder of the Lord's Ranch was the Jesuit priest, Fr. Richard Thomas, S.J., who died in 2006. Since the 1950s, he and many lay volunteers have worked in these areas of extreme poverty and in places overrun with gang violence. Many miracles and healings have been attributed to him, and there is currently a process in place to pursue his canonization. After Fr. Thomas' death, the lay leaders at the Lord's Ranch joined Christian Life Community at the suggestion of then Jesuit Provincial, Fr. Mark Lewis, S.J.



Carol Gonzalez

The people on the ranch live very simply. They do not earn money, relying on donations for their basic needs. There is a very large organic garden which feeds those that live there and provides food for the food banks. While water is still available on the ranch, there is a strong sense of solidarity with the poor they serve who do not have access to much water. The families take conservation of water very seriously. CLC has focused on water concerns for a number of years. The importance of this precious resource was brought home to us in very practical ways during this immersion. We limited taking showers and found ourselves using buckets of water for toileting purposes in Juarez. Back at the ranch, we performed small daily acts of prayerful solidarity. We used ecological practices such as water collection (as we waited for water to warm or from bath waters) and water re-use (for plants or toileting).

There is no heating or air conditioning—houses are solar powered, and the people adapt during the winter with warm jackets! Pope Francis also mentions using less heating in the winter and putting on an extra sweater instead. They have chosen not to have central heating or air conditioning in any of the residences at the Lord's Ranch, even though temperatures reach the 100s in the summer and can dip down to the 20s in the winter. An effort has been made to build passive solar houses at the ranch, utilizing the warming sunshine in the winter with large windows facing the south, and small windows on the north side of the homes to allow for ventilation but to minimize the burning heat of the sun in the summer. Although these energy-efficient designs help greatly in keeping the houses at livable temperatures, when they get too hot or too cold, they try to embrace the discomfort, remembering those who are much worse off than themselves. They, recall, too, the precious natural resources they are conserving for future generations.

Our group ventured across the Mexican border to Juarez on two days. On the first day, we formed small groups and visited the homebound. Most of the homes were one-room shacks with no plumbing, with dirt floors, bolted doors and gates, and corrugated metal roofs. We distributed a bag of food to each home and prayed with the people. Through an interpreter, one woman named Coyita, ninety years old and about 4 ½ feet tall, had tears in her eyes as she thanked us for coming to see her. Then she gave us a blessing. This was a moving, holy moment.

On the second day of our trip, we visited another section of Juarez. Mass was celebrated with enthusiastic singing and music. Then we visited the classrooms. There were many religious education classes for little children through Confirmation age, plus classes for parents. Additionally, there were a couple of pre-CLC groups. Since not all are able to read, the Lord's Ranch members have adapted the materials so that groups listen to audio tapes of Fr. Rick Thomas—in both English and Spanish—that are related to the theme of the session. Then they answer reflection questions, and do the “second round” of sharing.

There have been many difficulties in Juarez, especially with gang violence, drug cartels, high unemployment and much poverty. In the last two years, while things have calmed down, there still persists a huge lack

of basic services, corruption in government and many abandoned homes. Some areas are seeing improvements, and the people at the Lord's Ranch are very positive in their approach to what they can do. They have plans to build a chapel as well as a vocational school in Juarez so that the youth can develop skills leading to gainful employment. They have their eye on a building that is for sale right next to their catechetical center. They don't know where the money will come from, but they trust that if God wants them to move forward with this project, He will provide the way! The volunteers participate in daily mass, and they gather weekly to assess their resources and discern how best to serve those in need around them.

There is an abundance of volunteers working on both sides of the border-- about 75 in Juarez and 75 in El Paso-- including lawyers, engineers and teachers as well as locals with very big and generous hearts. During Fr. Rick's time, when priests asked how they get so many volunteers, Fr. Rick would say, “Your job is to teach scripture. God will provide the volunteers.”

As we read and study *Laudato Si'* together, we want to evaluate further how we are doing in our care “for our common home.” We have a long way to go, and as Francis reminds us, “...the ecological crisis is also a summons to profound interior conversion...an ‘ecological conversion’....Living our vocation to be protectors of God's handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience.” (LS #217)

These can be gentle reminders to pray for our sisters and brothers in Juarez, holding them in the Light of God's Love as we pray for just and equitable access to such resources there and around the world.



*CVX-CLC members.*

# A Coincidental Encounter with EM

By Veronica Kim

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When I began the search to make homemade soap with recycled vegetable oil, a coincidental encounter with EM (Effective Micro-organism) led to what is now a big lifestyle change for my family and me.

Fifteen years ago in Korea, I happened to attend a lecture on the environment held at my church. This lecture really resonated with me. It may have been because I was studying the book of Genesis at the time, but I began to believe firmly that it was our duty to protect this world that God created.

I made an effort to buy organic produce through a store called "Han Sal Lim." My mother worried about the fact that I was paying much more to buy small and insect-damaged fruits. As she saw me making soap instead of buying it, she tried to stop me, saying, "Don't live such a foolish life." However, I persistently did what I believed would help the environment, small family farms and also protect the water from getting contaminated. When I moved to America with my family, this passion fizzled and I limited myself to not using disposable items.

About six years ago, I could no longer ignore the fact that throwing away used vegetable oil could contaminate the water and soil. I began my search to find ways to make soap by recycling used vegetable oil. I found that people were using EM for their homemade soaps. I did further research on EM and found that it is a group of very positive microorganisms. As I got to know more about EM, I was intrigued by how it had cleansed a once contaminated river, how it can be a natural substitute for chemical fertilizers, and how metal nails resist rust in water diluted with EM. I also learned that it could be used as an all-purpose cleaner in the kitchen and bathroom when fermented with the used water from rinsing white rice. It seemed like such a powerful, yet safe resource. I attempted to purchase EM. However, this wasn't as easy as I thought.

When I finally found out that I could purchase EM through [emamerica.com](http://emamerica.com) I was very excited and happy. I immediately purchased it to make soap and fermented solutions and found so many different uses for it. I was so satisfied with the results when I used it as a detergent and softener for my laundry and for cleaning and getting rid of odors in the kitchen. I was satisfied, but my family did not approve. They were complaining and even worried about what I was doing. It took two years of persuading and consistently sharing its benefits, but I began to see the changes in my family's view on EM. My son now uses the fermented solution to clean the stains and food buildup from the grill grates. My eldest daughter, who lives with her husband's family, always takes the solution and soap made with EM whenever she visits the house. After finding out that SLS, a common chemical found in shampoos, is harmful to the body, I started using EM made soap instead of shampoo. It was a real bonus to see my hair loss was reduced, and it actually started to grow even more.

Many of my friends have shared the positive effects of EM based solution. They shared how it helped keep their plants healthy,

got rid of strong odors in the bathroom and from their pets; how it easily removed oil stains on stove tops and helped drain clogged bathtubs; and even how it got rid of skin rashes, like atopic dermatitis.

A couple of years ago, I volunteered to support a fund-raising at our church by making soap and fermented EM solutions. One of the parishioners who helped to make the EM solution for the event shared her belief that a widespread use of EM would do so much to help maintain good soil in our environment and work towards decontaminating ocean water for our future generations. So, with her passionate support, we were able to create our parish EM team to promote it even more to our parishioners. We have been donating all our profits from sales to the needy. We started an EM soap-making class for the parishioners.

At first, it wasn't very easy to get people's attention. Since we did not have many people actively helping to make more EM soaps and solutions, the work was very burdensome. Then one day, Anna, a member from our CLC Galilee group, joined us. We also started to get more people from the Korean CLC New York Apostolic Team to help with making EM solutions. The team actively supported EM. This gave us the opportunity to teach more members in CLC about making solutions with EM. It really made me feel that our effort was worthwhile. I invited them to my house to show them the process of making EM soaps, as well as to see some of my home grown produce, which was raised with EM fertilizers. They were amazed at how huge and fresh all the vegetables were. I was very pleased to see them enjoying the food and I also gained inner strength as they cheered me on.

These days, I am into vegetable gardening using EM. Making compost from food wastes has helped me grow beautiful fresh vegetables, such as tomatoes, red, yellow and orange peppers, and so much more. When I get to taste and share these delicious vegetables, I can't help but feel so very blessed. I thank God each day for allowing me to experience this great mystery.

Although I am grateful, I started to notice how I put so much of my life's focus on farming that my prayer and self-reflection time was affected. The more I realized this, my heart became complacent and dull. Even if my instincts told me, this was not how it was supposed to be, I could not easily stop. It was as if I were going downhill quickly. Before I knew it, it was a longer journey to get back up.

Recently I was able to attend a five day silent retreat to pray and do self-reflection while spending time with Christ. It was a great experience where I was able to find contentment and peace and regain the courage to do what I needed to do step by step. Through this retreat, I realized once again that even if I enjoy doing all these good works, if it is not with God, I can lose direction and eventually will lose my strength to keep going. With this in mind, I am committed to start my day with prayer and then end it with the *Examen* in front of Christ. AMDG!

# A Coincidental Encounter with EM

By Veronica Kim

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폐식용유를 이용해서 비누를 만들려고 하다가 우연히 만난 EM 은 어느새 나의 삶의 한 부분이 되었다.

15 년전 한국에서 살고 있을 때 청담동 성당에서 전신자 대상으로 환경 교육을 하였다. 창세기 공부를 하면서 하느님께서 만든 이 세상을 잘 지키는 것이 우리가 해야 할 일중의 하나라는 생각을 하고 있던 때라 환경 보호를 위한 강의가 머리에 쑥쑥 들어왔다.

한살림이라는 곳을 통해 유기농 야채와 과일을 구입해서 먹는 나를 지켜보는 어머니께서 별레먹고 작고 모양도 예쁘지 않은것을비싼 돈을 내며 구입해 먹는다고 걱정하시며 좋은 비누도 많은데 왜 하필 공상 스텝게 비누는 만들어 쓰느냐고 힘들고 어리석게 살지 말라고 하셨다. 그래도 나는 작은 일이 땅을 살리고 농민을 살리고 물의 오염을 적게 하는 것이라며 고집을 부리며 살다 미국으로 돌아와서 별생각없이 일회용 사용하지 않는 것에만 좀 신경을 쓰며 살아왔다.

약 6 년전인것 같다. 튀김을 하고 남은 식용유를 버리면 물이 오염되고 땅도 오염된다는것을 알고 있으면서 그냥 버릴수 없어 고민을 하다가 전에 폐식용유로 비누를 만들어 쓰던 생각이 나서 인터넷을 뒤지다 보니 이제는 EM 을 이용해서 만들게 되어 있다는 발견을 했다. EM 은 환경을 살리는 우리에게 크게 유익한 미생물의 집합체임을 알게 되었다. 특히 악취를 풍기며 죽어가는 강을 생명체가 되돌아 오는 강으로 만들고, 화학 비료와 농약을 사용하지 않아 땅도 살리고 건강한 먹거리를 내며, 항산화 작용이 탁월해 이엠 발효액이 든 물에서는 못이 녹슬지 않고, 가정에서는 부엌에서 버려지는 쌀뜨물로 발효를 시켜 악취제거, 부엌 청소, 화장실 청소...물이 오염되는 것을 막는 등 너무 좋은 효능을 보며 구입하고자 했으나 쉽지 않았다. Emamerica.com 이란 곳에서 파는 것을 알았을 때는 크게 기뻐다. 바로 구입하여 비누도 만들고 쌀뜨물은 이용해서 발효액도 만들어 사용하면서 세탁을 할때 부엌을 청소 할때 찌든때와 냄새까지 없애주는 것을 보며 너무 기뻐다. 가족들은 시큰둥할 뿐만 아니라 오히려 우려하는 목소리가 높았고 불평까지 했는데... 2 년 정도 지나자 한번씩 사용하면서 긍정적인 반응을 보이기 시작했다. 아들은 그릴을 사용할 때면 EM 쌀뜨물 발효액을 찾고 스프레이를 해서 그릴판을 청소한다. 시집간 큰 딸은 집에 오면 쌀뜨물 발효액을 챙겨가고 EM 으로 만든 비누도 챙긴다. 샴푸에 든 SLS 가 몸에 해롭다는 것을 안 후에 머리도 비누로 감기 시작했다. 그리고 머리카락이 새로 나기 시작 했고 훨씬 덜 빠진단다.

그동안 많은 분들이 발효액을 사용한후 좋았던 점들을 나누어 주셨는데 희석한 발효액을 사용했더니 식물이 잘 자란다는 분, 냄새나는 화장실에 발효원액을 부으면 금방 냄새가 없어지고 애완견에서 나는 냄새 뿐만 아니라 피부에 난 발진도 없어지며 무좀이 나왔다,

아토피성 피부염이 나왔다, 찌든 레인지의 기름때가 없어졌다, 막힌 욕조를 발효액과 활성액을 부어서 뚫었다는 말들을 하셨다.

몇년 전 불우이웃돕기기금 마련으로 비누와 발효액을 만들 때, 같이 봉사한 한 자매가 EM에 대해서 알고 나서 이것은 우리 자녀들에게 좋은 땅과 물을 물려주기위해 우리가 해야 하는 것이라며 열정적으로 투신해서 본당 EM팀이 생겼고 꾸준히 홍보하고 버려지는 쌀뜨물로 EM 발효액을 만들고 비누도 만들어 판매 해서 이익금은 불우 이웃 돕기에 사용하고 홍보용으로도 사용하고 있다. 전신자 대상으로 원하는 사람들에게 EM 비누 만드는 법도 가르쳐 준다. 처음에는 사람들에게 전하는 것이 쉽지 않았고 매주 발효액을 만들고 가끔이긴 하지만 다량의 폐식용유로 비누를 만드는 것은 힘든 작업이었다. 봉사자가 없었고 사람들의 관심도 별로 없었기 때문이었다. 그러던 어느 날 내가 소속된 갈릴리 공동체의 안나 자매님께서 함께 해주셨다. 뉴욕지역 한인 CLC 공동체에 사도부가 생기면서 이엠 팀으로 같이 일을 하고 있다. 사도부에서는 이 일을 적극 지지해주고 워크샵 때마다 회원들에게 만드는 법을 가르쳐 줄 기회가 생겨 보람과 긍지를 느꼈다. 집에서 회원들에게 유기농으로 식사대접을 하고 비누 만드는 과정을 보여주니 모두 맛이 각별한 야채의 맛과 크기에 감탄하면서 즐거워하였다. 돌아갈 때는 각자 야채를 푸짐하게 선물로 안고 갔다. 기뻐하면서 모두 관심을 보이며 응원을 해주니 힘을 얻는다.

요즘 나의 관심사는 EM을 사용해서 텃밭 농사를 짓는 것이다. 모임이나 집에서 버려지는 음식 쓰레기를 발효시켜 키운 토마토, 빨강 노랑 주황의 투명한 피망 등 여러가지 야채들을 키울 때, 딸 때, 향과 맛과 식감이 우수한 야채를 먹을 때, 매순간 느끼는 감사와 신비로움은 나만이 누리는 특권이다.

그러다 보니 관심이 농사에만 있고 피곤하다보면 기도 의식성찰들을 하지 않게 되고 미사 중에도 마음이 텃밭에 가 있거나 비누 만들기 등 해야 하는 일들에 가있을 때가 많아지고 그러한 날들이 쌓여 모든 일상의 삶이 기계적으로 되어가면서 나의 마음도 무디어져 가고 마음 한 가운데는 이것이 아닌데 하면서 어떻게 할 수가 없었다. 한번 내리막길을 달리기 시작하면 다시 올라오는 것이 쉽지않은데 ....

다행히도 연피정이 있어서 모든 것을 뒤로한 채 4박 5일을 주님 안에서 보내고 오니 다시 기도 할수 있고 의식 성찰도 할수 있게 되면서 기쁨과 평화가 찾아오고 앞으로 해야할 많은 일들도 차분히 하나씩 할 수 있을 것 같은 용기도 생겼다. 아무리 좋은 일이라도 주님과 함께 그분 뜻안에서가 아니라면 쉽게 방향을 잃게 되고 힘도 빠져 주저 앉게되는것 같다. 하루를 시작하기 전 아침 첫 시간 먼저 기도하고 일하고 저녁에 그분 앞에서 성찰 하는 삶을 살아야겠다고 다짐을 한다.

# CVX-CLC Joins Network of Global Catholic Climate Movement

By Ann Marie Brennan, Consultor WCLC



Ann Marie Brennan

## A Little History

**First!** This is a significant time in history where movements worldwide are converging around the issue of ecological awareness, climate change and responsible action. Though conservation and environmental groups have been in existence for about 200 years since the Industrial Revolution, where the effects

of pollution were clearly visible, there has been a growing and evolving understanding of the harmful impacts of human activity on the environment, the limits of environmental resources, and the moral and ethical imperative to protect the environment for present and future generations. Even more understood is the link between ecological disasters and mass poverty. Among people of faith, this has become a social justice issue, where we see the interconnectedness of humanity with all of God's creation. Most often, it will be the poor and most vulnerable who will feel the brunt of climate change: reduced harvests due to shorter growing seasons; loss of homes and jobs due to more devastating weather patterns; violent conflicts due to limited access to water and energy resources; forced migration of indigenous people due to massive deforestation, mining and violence; and extinction of plants, insects and animals that play vital roles in the web of life, and more!

For many years, environmental sustainability has been a discerned priority area for World Christian Life Community. For many years, we focused on water issues. In 2005, we signed on to the Earth Charter, a civil society document originally proposed at the UN and endorsed by over 6000 organizations worldwide. The Earth Charter describes an ethical framework for building a just, sustainable and peaceful global society that Pope Francis quotes in *Laudato Si'* (LS). At our World General Assembly in Lebanon, CVX-CLC confirmed Ecology as one of our four frontier priority areas. With our NGO status at the UN, we participated in the 2014 DPI/NGO Conference at the UN in New York where CLC hosted some workshops. The purpose of this conference was "to harness the strategies, expertise and resources across the broadest spectrum of civil society to move poverty eradication, sustainability, human rights and climate justice into the mainstream discourse, and spark sustained public demand for lasting political action in support of an ambitious outcome from the post-2015 sustainable development process."

Conferences raise awareness, but to realize concrete actions—well, that is another matter!

**This is where the GCCM begins!** This past January, concerned about human-made climate change and united by our Catholic faith, the Global Catholic Climate Movement (GCCM) came together to discuss ways to promote care for God's creation, care for the poor who are the most vulnerable to climate disruption, and care for our children, who will face the worst impacts in the coming years. The GCCM has grown to a network of more than 200 Catholic organizations worldwide. "We encourage Catholics to renew our relationship with creation and with our brothers and sisters in poverty, and we urge our political leaders to commit to ambitious climate action to solve this urgent crisis and keep the global temperature increase below 1.5 degree Celsius (relative to pre-industrial levels)."

Members of World ExCo saw several advantages in networking with the GCCM on this priority area of Ecology. We read in the *General Principles* and *General Norms* (#2): "... constantly to seek answers to the needs of our times, to work together with the entire People of God and all people of good will to seek progress and peace, justice and charity, liberty and the dignity for all." And (GP #7) "Our responsibility to develop the bonds of community does not stop with our local community but extends to ... the whole Church and to all people of good will." With the GCCM, we found much common ground in our foundations of Catholic Social Teaching combined with a depth of experience and expertise, wonderful synergies, vitality of fresh ideas and approaches, and support for efforts to raise awareness and mobilize people to act on these very important issues. Mauricio Lopez (WCLC President), Fr. Luke Rodrigues, S.J., (World Ecclesial Assistant) and Ann Marie Brennan contribute to the GCCM steering committee and help gather resources for their website. Additionally, Allen Ottaro of CLC Kenya works as a GCCM representative in Kenya. Mauricio Lopez has also been working with Renewable Energy Policies Advocacy and Monitoring (REPAM) and REBAC, working with rainforest nations in Africa and in the Pan-Amazonian ecclesial network. REPAM and REBAC bring together many themes of *Laudato Si'* – human rights and thriving, in the context of life for all people, cultures and species. Combined with sustainable clean energy, such respect for people and the earth, and leadership by defenders of the earth may steer us on a better path, away from ecological destruction and climate change.

## What are the GCCM objectives?

- To raise awareness within the Church about the urgency of climate action in light of Catholic social and environmental teachings

- To support global solidarity on the current ecological crisis and to restore our relationship with all species
- To advocate with our brothers and sisters in poverty who are on the frontline in bearing the brunt of the effects of climate change
- To promote ecological conversion through personal and organizational change to reduce our emissions and to transition to a low carbon world
- To advance the Catholic relationship between faith and reason, especially as it relates to adaptive decision-making in areas of climate change policy
- To urge political, business and social leaders to commit to ambitious climate action to solve this urgent crisis and keep the global temperature increase below 1.5 degree Celsius (relative to pre-industrial levels)

### What are some GCCM actions?

- Praying and fasting in solidarity with those who are most affected by the changing global climate
- Educating about the climate crisis and how it impacts all peoples and species, the Church's social and environmental teachings, and how to reduce our carbon footprint
- Advocating for the world's policy makers and all Catholics to act in ways appropriate to their spheres of influence to protect the common good through mitigation and adaptation policies which promote social and environmental resilience to climate change
- Mobilizing Catholics on individual, community and regional levels, ahead of the 2015 Paris COP 21 – along with the global climate movement
- Sharing Catholic actions, best practices and case studies on climate change
- Promoting interfaith dialogue and action on climate change with all people of good will

On May 7, Msgr. Guillermo Karcher, a papal master of ceremonies, signed the petition on behalf of the Pope, as protocol prevents popes from signing such documents themselves. "The Pope's endorsement was a huge support for the ongoing promotion of this climate petition in the Catholic community, and his support legitimizes our movement," Insua said. The network is seeking one million signatures to present to world leaders in December at the Paris climate negotiations, where they are expected to achieve a fair, legally-binding and universal agreement on climate from all the nations of the world.



*Global Catholic Climate Movement representatives Tomás Insua, left, and Allen Ottaro (CLC Kenya), center, present Pope Francis with a copy of the Climate Action Petition, calling for world leaders to address climate change. (Fotografía Felici) The petition reads:*

***“Climate change affects everyone, but especially the poor and most vulnerable people. Impelled by our Catholic faith, we call on you to drastically cut carbon emissions to keep the global temperature rise below the dangerous threshold of 1.5°C, and to aid the world’s poorest in coping with climate change impacts.”***

### GCCM responds to *Laudato Si'*

Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si'* is a beautiful document that promotes a culture of care for all creation to protect our common home, Mother Earth. Additionally, the Pope very clearly emphasizes the importance of engaging in the political arena in order to do this. "Climate change hits the poorest first and hardest, and will leave an unnecessarily dire legacy for future generations," said Allen Ottaro, of CLC Kenya, and director of the Kenya-based Catholic Youth Network for Environmental Sustainability in Africa (CYNEA). "We Catholics need to step up against climate change and raise a strong voice asking political leaders to take action urgently." "Climate change is a symptom of a greater issue," said Patrick Carolan, Executive Director of Franciscan Action Network, who attended the meetings. "And the greater issue is our lack of connectedness, our viewing ourselves as separate from creation instead of part of creation." When Pope Francis visited the United States in September 2015 to give historic talks to the U.S. Congress and the UN General Assembly, members of the GCCM organized 10-Day Fasts and Overnight Interfaith Prayer Vigils in support of

Pope Francis and his significant message. In November, GCCM made massive efforts in advance of the Paris Climate Summit to mobilize people in signing the Climate Petition, in praying in solidarity for a strong climate agreement and in attending Global Climate Marches in over 3000 cities!

In 2016, following the COP21 Paris Climate Summit, GCCM will focus on political elections and holding leaders accountable to commitments made at the COP21. In observing the Year of Mercy, we will continue to make links to environmental justice. Some ideas and planned projects include: creating "Green Parishes," Lenten Fast for Climate Justice, resource sharing with focus on *Laudato Si'*, Season of Creation and World Youth Day. We will continue to work with the expanded network of over 200 Catholic and other faith-based organizations who together feel what Pope Francis calls a summons to profound interior and ecological conversion. "Living our vocation to be protectors of God's handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience." (LS #217)

We invite CLC members to join together in the actions promoted by the Global Catholic Climate Movement of which we are all a part. Together, we pray that we will be instruments of God's justice, holding in our hearts those who are already deeply affected by climate disruptions.

# Practicing the Presence of God in Daily Life— Caring for the Earth, One Person, One Day at a Time...

By Carol Gonzalez



Carol Gonzalez

Carol (CJ) Gonzalez is a member of Chesed CLC in Pittsburgh, PA. She serves as coordinator for CLC-USA's office of Apostolic Advocacy & Action, and as a member of the North American working group for CVX-CLC. As a CLC/ Ignatian Guide, Carol helped to launch a young adult Breathing Room CLC (three years ago) and has served with Pittsburgh's Bridges/ Prayer Companion program since 2003. She leads weekly spiritual support groups for incarcerated women, and has been active in community development locally. A former history teacher, she is a contemplative activist, an Episcopal laywoman and is married to Henry.

**Nancy:** Please share something about how you became interested in the environment.

**Carol:** I'm a farm girl who was blessed to grow up with the earth. As a young adult I sought to discover my mission in the context of an urban environment and as part of an intentional Christian community, to buying an abandoned 1885 house for \$5800 (yep, 'bout the price of a used car these days!) The journey has included a rediscovering and valuing of ordinary day to day activities: relationships, making choices about food and water, energy, transportation, what we invest in, being a citizen. These are discerned choices to live our daily lives with *apostolic intensity*.

Quoting John Paul II in *Laudato Si'* (LS), Pope Francis observes that Christians "...realize that their responsibility within creation, and their duty toward nature and the Creator, are an essential part of their faith." (LS #64) Integrating mission into daily life, I have spent my whole adult life trying to understand the implications of what the bishops prophetically taught us years ago that, "**The cry of the earth and the cry of the poor are one.**" Archbishop Balvo reiterated this integral connection: "To eradicate poverty... we must protect nature and create a good environment in which to live, which is possible only with the cooperation of everyone, without exception." We have a basic hunch that the invitation to *live simply* (part of our CLC charism), so that others may simply *live*, will help guide our choices. The *Spiritual Exercises* can further our contemplative experience of Creation while also addressing the underlying causes of the ecological crisis we face today and enable us to act in a hope-filled, healing way. "...in my effort to decipher the sacredness of the world, I explore my own." (LS #85, quoting Paul Ricoeur)

When I read *Laudato Si'* for the first time, I wept and laughed with a profound relief of feeling less alone, comforted somehow that others hear so clearly the earth groaning. In this encyclical we see an awareness of the urgency that Pope Francis confronts directly. We read daily in the news of the rapid extinction of many species, for example, the starfish and the monarch butterflies. We read of the impact of climate change on creating the worst crisis of refugees since WWII with over 51 million displaced persons. Amidst these sobering realities we must not turn away from our faith. Its perspective invites us to recognize a commitment that a dear friend and mentor, Fr. Jim Profit, S.J., regularly reminded me of: *the earth cannot afford our despair*.

**Nancy:** So where do we/you begin?

**Carol:** The kitchen and our home are great places to consider these daily choices. If we want to have hope, we best be about hopeful things, daily practicing this hope, living with an awareness of the GENEROSITY of God that empowers our discerning, life-giving choices.

Choosing to live simply includes buying with care, using less, reducing waste, recycling, composting. Sometimes it's resurrecting practices from fifty years ago when carry-in bags were used by everyone. The single-use plastic bag is a more recent habit. We can simply switch to re-usable bags. Getting manufacturers to stop excessive packaging is a more systemic, real challenge. There are many practical ideas to help us reach a realistic goal of ZERO WASTE! I encourage folks to watch the documentary,

*YERT Your Environmental Road Trip*—available on Netflix—for playful creative approaches that a friend, Mark Dixon, discovered all around the country as people realize these intentions. On November 15, thousands of events in communities nationwide will celebrate AmericaRecycles-Day.org. This program is dedicated to promoting recycling in the U.S., where we trail many other countries who have implemented recycling for many years with a much higher percentage of participation than in America. This can be as simple as re-using envelopes so often included in fundraising appeals (cover w/ new label, etc.) or cut-up the ubiquitous paper in our culture for note pads rather than buying new paper products. Or, more systemic, it might be helpful to organize increased neighborhood recycling as we recently did with new efficient bins distributed to each household.

Known as “Composting Carol” in Breathing Room CLC, I have a love affair with earthworms who take our food waste and give us back nutrient rich soil... what’s not to like? In addition to the two we use in our personal household and garden/orchard, I set one up at our church and as I worked with troubled children struggling to learn to read, esp. it became apparent that if a child can learn to respect an earthworm, she/he is more likely to treat fellow peers a bit more kindly, too!

Minimizing what our households put in trash sent to landfills through recycling and composting is an important contribution. A typical landfill is the size of 200 football fields, and destroys habitats and unleashes potential for environmental consequences. Even if we don’t garden, if we all were to compost we could reduce the amount of material sent to landfills by 25%. Recycling reduces it by an additional 50%. Along with personal choices, I’m working with a city-wide effort, Waste to Resources, as we explore more systematic solutions. For a look at this issue on a national scale, see: <http://www.npr.org/sections/the-salt/2015/09/16/440825159/its-time-to-get-serious-about-reducing-food-waste-feds-say>

Pope Francis writes that “...everything is interconnected, and that genuine care for our own lives and our relationships with nature is inseparable from fraternity, justice and faithfulness to others.” (LS #70)

Agricultural practices and food policies, along with environmental pollution, have contributed to much disease, especially among the poor. Fair trade and organic purchases are part of a movement to care for God’s creation. I was influenced by Doris Janzen Longacre’s *More-with-Less Cookbook* from the late 1970s that nurtured a faith-based awareness of how to eat more healthily and consume less of the world’s limited resources. This gradually led to our family’s current plant-based/whole grains eating that we find has encouraged creativity, planning and learning as

we make our daily choices without any animal products for food. As members of a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture), we enjoy the weekly routine of picking up organically grown produce from a neighbor’s porch. This comes from farmer Don Kretschmann, who --after forty years of feeding us-- has become a dear friend.

An excerpt from Farmer Don’s weekly email illustrates *the ripple effect* of our choices: “...Three years ago, we committed our best efforts to be energy independent. Many now take this phrase to mean the sudden widespread extraction of American fossil fuels in the shales. With sun energy covering our needs, we have the freedom to say ‘no’ to the landmen seeking gas leases...” Thankfully many of us now have the option, as my husband, Henry, and I have done, to choose an electric supplier that offers 100% renewable energy from wind and solar sources.

**Nancy:** I heard from KCLC about their recent graced experience as you led a greening immersion, *Ecology, Culture and Spirituality*. Can you tell us more about one of the sites where CLC members worked that morning?

**Carol:** One of the joys of my daily life is to serve on the leadership team of Ballfield Farm (BFF), an old-timer among a vibrant group of next generation servant-leaders. Started in 2008 as part of reclamation of an abandoned, junk heap of a former ballfield, Ballfield Farm is a neighborhood project that collectively grows organic food on Pittsburgh’s Northside, one of the urban food deserts of this country. Volunteer members (minimum of an hour and a half per week is required to be involved) have transformed an overgrown baseball field into a sanctuary, a one and a half acre urban farm that produces fruit, vegetables and herbs. The production includes permaculture like raspberries, rhubarb, blueberries, sorrel, arugula, asparagus, and annuals like chard, kale, spinach, potatoes, tomatoes, garlic and other organic crops.

We plant and harvest together and build community in the process. From March through November, the farm is open every Wednesday from 5:30 p.m. until dusk, and every Saturday from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m., with a watering team that stops in daily to tend to hi-tunnel plantings. To become involved, potential participants fill out an online membership form or show up during gardening hours to register. There is an annual \$15 fee for individuals or \$30 for a family.

Ballfield Farm is very family-friendly, and the intergenerational aspect of BFF has become formative as children naturally come to fall in love with delicious vegetables, many of which they have never tried. However when one plants, weeds, and harvests, eating that arugula, sorrel, squash, leeks and peas, is a natural development, not an enforced rule.

There is a special garden area where children can participate in making choices in growing fruits and vegetables, as well as playing in the sand. The multigenerational aspect of BFF makes it unique as we all work together in this shared space.

This connectedness with creation invites us to encounter the earth as sacred, holy space in a kind of homecoming where we resonate with what Julian of Norwich wrote in the 14th century: *Be a Gardener. Dig a ditch. Toil and sweat. Turn the earth upside down. And seek the deepness. Water plants in time. Continue this labor and make noble and abundant fruits to spring. Take this food and drink, and carry it to God as your true worship.*

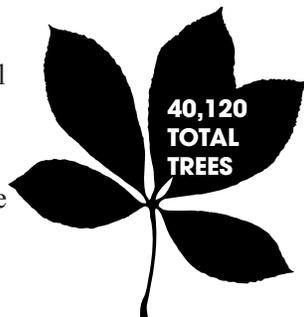
**Nancy:** At the National Assembly in St. Louis, you asked for our prayer as you sought approval of an application to work with PENN DOT in a tree planting. How's that going?

**Carol:** A fan of CLC, Fr. Jim Profit, inspired me to become a certified "Tree Tender." Working with neighbors in Manchester Greening Collective, we have begun to transform a barren strip of ugly land along a highway into an evergreen urban forest with forty conifer trees planted so far, with another couple sections to complete the project next spring. This is nowhere near the vision of the Jesuit Ignatius Centre's awesome 500 Year Plan for the Old Growth Forest Project of which each can be a part. In my little neck of the woods I've planted these evergreen trees in Jim Profit's honor and as a prayer of gratitude for his inspiration and graced presence in the world.

**Nancy:** I understand you belong to a neighborhood group, Manchester Tree Steering Committee. Tell us more about that.

**Carol:** Tree Pittsburgh was started by a group of concerned citizens who saw our urban forest declining. To reverse that decline, an Urban Forest Master Plan was developed to assess tree canopy in Pittsburgh. This strategic plan drives our work at the local neighborhood level by implementing in a systematic way the planting and caring for thousands of trees every year. Year-round, trees help to clean our air, shield our waterways from pollutants, improve water quality by slowing and filtering rain water, protect aquifers and watersheds, shade our homes and buffer city noises. Trees, and collectively our urban forest, provide sanctuary for birds and other wildlife and provide a respite from our daily stresses. My neighborhood, Manchester, like many low-income areas, has the lowest tree canopy, 17%, of any residential area in Pittsburgh. Focusing in this area we can have the most significant impact in planting trees, as well as training residents to be stewards and advocates for trees through the Tree Tender

program - a program with over 1,400 graduates city-wide. Through advocacy efforts, we provide a voice for trees to ensure they are protected and thrive for future generations. Our November 7th Chateau Forest Project tree planting was Tree Pittsburgh's 74th volunteer event this year, as we planted 25 trees and made Manchester a more beautiful, healthy and shady space for years to come. Thanks to such volunteer-driven efforts, Tree Pittsburgh has weeded 1342 trees, mulched 1638 trees and planted 523 trees so far this year. Pittsburgh's trees provide valuable economic and ecosystem benefits to the city. By helping to protect these trees, we are part of something larger, ensuring that benefits like these continue annually:



**Tree Benefits of Pittsburgh's Public Trees**

<b>Total Yearly Economic Benefits</b>	<b>\$4,899,447.38</b>
<b>Greenhouse Gas Benefits</b> . . . . .	<b>\$36,588.96</b>
7,242,174.63 lbs CO2 avoided	
5,393,548.99 lbs CO2 sequestered	
<b>Water Benefits</b> . . . . .	<b>\$420,196.63</b>
52,524,578.56 gallons saved	
<b>Energy Benefits</b> . . . . .	<b>\$1,987,499.71</b>
3,076,788.59 kWh saved	
1,105,427.30 Therms saved	
<b>Air Quality Benefits</b> . . . . .	<b>\$303,568.14</b>
48,685.62 lbs pollutants saved	
<b>Property Benefits</b> . . . . .	<b>\$2,151,593.94</b>
3,575,907.46 leaf surface area (sq. ft.)	

data from: [pittsburgh.mytreekeeper.com](http://pittsburgh.mytreekeeper.com)

I've done my share of protesting, marching, organizing, letter-writing, legislator visiting, all good and vital citizen actions, but I've also attended too many funerals and mourned with too many who've lost family members to violence in my city. Do you know what? I've noticed that almost no one gets shot in front of a garden, or a beautiful common good space.

Living one's mission in daily life is, for me, all about relationships. If love is the measure, one's daily life is, at the core, a moment by moment discovery of what it means to love one's neighbor as oneself.

A mysticism of service, Ignatius urges us to seek and to find the mystery of God by means of prayerful choice and a service of loving humility, in the heart of all created things.

The experience of oneness is there for each of us. Merton may have written about his epiphany at Fourth and Walnut. The poet Auden in a similar experience called this awareness of our profound cosmic oneness "supernatural sympathy."

*Continued on page 26*

# Statement to the Environmental Protection Agency

By Daniel P. Scheid, Ph.D.

*The following was given at the U.S. EPA methane rule hearing in Pittsburgh on September 29, 2015.*

I want to thank the EPA for proposing this standard on methane emissions, which is crucial to slow climate change, to improve public health and to protect our children's future. I also thank you for inviting public discussion on this issue: it is not a special interest or partisan issue, but is of vital concern to every person now living on the planet, and especially to every resident of Pennsylvania and to every American.

I speak today not only as a resident of Pittsburgh but also as a person of faith, as a Catholic who is inspired by the recent visit of Pope Francis. As some of you may know, Pope Francis issued a major document called *Laudato Si'* (LS) in June of this year. In *Laudato Si'*,



*Some of the collaborative organizations gathered at a press conference/rally in support of the various testimony around the EPA regs...*

Pope Francis continues the Catholic Church's longstanding teaching on climate change, affirming that it is real, that it is a moral issue, and that prudence demands immediate and urgent action.

The encyclical follows a familiar format for Catholic teaching: See-Judge-Act. The first element is to see what is happening, to rely on the "best scientific research available" (LS #11) today. And science is telling us that methane pollution persists for decades; that industry releases millions of tons of methane and other toxic chemicals into the air every year; that without new limits on meth-

ane pollution, emissions from the oil and gas industry will increase by 25 percent in the next ten years; that in some areas, methane emissions are even higher than the EPA currently reports; and importantly, that methane and other toxic air pollution exposes neighboring communities to harmful pollution and causes serious health problems including cancer, asthma and other respiratory illnesses. Toxic emissions particularly impact vulnerable groups like children and the elderly.

The second step Francis makes is to judge through the lens of faith: to understand and to interpret the ecological crisis according to theological and moral principles from the tradition. There is, he says, a "Gospel of Creation." Some of the principles he lays out include: the need to approach nature with awe, wonder and joy; the Earth is not just a resource but is our common home; the climate in particular he tells us is "a common good, belonging to all, meant for all;" (LS #23) we must pay special attention to the poor, who will be most impacted and have the least power; and in looking with the eyes of faith, we should understand that the Creator has always intended creatures to live connected to and dependent on each other. The gaze of Jesus invites us to "be attentive to the beauty that there is in the world" (LS #97) and to perceive the divine message of

the Creator's love in each thing. Indeed, "Creation is of the order of love." (LS #77) Pope Francis takes us to the heart of what it is to be human – linked to all creatures, humans, the cosmos, because of our one Creator. Because of this divine plan, we should treat all creatures with love and respect, and pay special attention to the vulnerable.

*Daniel Scheid, Ph.D., a professor in Duquesne University's Theology Department and a member of Breathing Room CLC, is a longtime environmental activist and a participant in the Catholic Climate Covenant. Having recently written The Cosmic Good: Religious Grounds for Ecological Ethics(Oxford Press), Dan has been speaking about Laudato Si': On the Care of Our Common Home to a variety of groups, including a presentation focused on this encyclical at MAR CLC's Fall Regional meeting in October 2015. Dan is married to Anna Floerke Scheid, and is the father of three energetic, young children.*

Finally, in light of these faith convictions and moral standards, Pope Francis calls us all to action. “Reducing greenhouse gases,” he tells us, “requires honesty, courage and responsibility. . . .” (LS #169) We are all called to respond, in our individual lives and our families; in our neighborhoods and communities; and in all of this, our national policies also have a vital and indispensable role. Francis specifically challenges elected leaders to have the courage to enact those policies we need, on behalf of future generations and the earth itself. If they do so, “. . . they will attest to their God-given dignity and leave behind a testimony of selfless responsibility.” (LS #181)

I thank the EPA again for proposing stronger methane emission standards. Please, embody courageous political leadership and help us heed the moral call to act. The proposed standards would reduce methane and also reduce toxic air pollution. Technologies to cut emissions have been around for years, and industry needs these standards to find the impetus to implement them. These standards will protect Americans with low-cost safeguards that already exist to plug the leaks and to stop the pollution. It is important for the health of children and the elderly, for future generations and indeed for us all. Let us act with love. Let us act with prudence and courage. Let us act with justice: I urge you, do not delay in implementing the EPA’s new Methane Pollution Standard.

## Deacon Succeeds in Rallying a Day of Prayer for World Peace

*By Kenneth R. Keefner*



*Ken Keefner is a retired Professor of Pharmacy from Creighton University School of Pharmacy and Health Professions. He and his wife, Mary, have been members of the Oasis Christian Life Community for 20 years. He is the North Central Regional Promoter.*



Donald Cowles

In the summer of 2014, and after much thoughtful reflection in prayer, Deacon Don Cowles (Oasis CLC, Omaha, Nebraska) decided to ask for a “Day of Prayer for World Peace.” In his vision, the day would include persons praying as often as possible, a limited fast and performing good works throughout the day. He contacted religious organizations and colleges to recruit interested persons to volunteer to pray for world peace on November 13, 2014. In the preparation process he generated a flyer and approached the CLC North Central Region ExCo and CLC-USA National ExCo to ask for support in disseminating the call for a day of prayer for world peace. The flyer was shared with any individual or group willing to join the day in prayer. Both committees spread the call for participants to join the day. In addition, through individuals Deacon Cowles knows, businesses, colleges, universities, prayer groups of all denominations and through our Omaha Archdiocesan publication, *The Catholic Voice*, he was able to spread the word to garner interested persons to join the effort. Later articles from *The Catholic Voice* pointed out, the success of his effort cannot be quantified. But, what is clear is that Deacon Don Cowles has tried to make a difference in attitude for the Greater Glory of God. Certainly his foresight and actions are a lesson in which we should all take part.

### **About Deacon Donald Cowles**

Deacon Donald Cowles became an ordained deacon in 1995 in the Archdiocese of Omaha, Nebraska. Don has practiced his diaconate through St. Wenceslaus Parish and service ministries in the Greater Omaha area. Working with the late Fr. Jack Zuercher, S.J., he was a founding member of the Oasis CLC. Don’s membership and the Oasis community are now approaching twenty years in existence.

His Ministries have included the following:

- Chaplain at the University of Nebraska Medical Center
- Chaplain at five Omaha hospitals
- Chaplain and counselor at a mental health facility for several years
- Organizer Bible Study groups through St. Wenceslaus Church for fifteen years
- Provider of Bible Study groups at his home for seven years
- Minister in Omaha City and Douglas County Nebraska jails

# *An Ordinary Inspiration, Global Networks Coming Alive, The Spirit at Work CLC We Want Your Help*

*James E. Hug, S.J.*

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*James Hug, S.J., is part-time sacramental chaplain for the Adrian Dominican Sisters in Adrian, MI, and part-time freelance writer and trouble-maker for justice' sake, networking erratically around cyberspace. He is the grateful recipient of the 2009 NCLC-USA Populorum Progressio Award.*

*"We must not focus on occupying the spaces where power is exercised, but rather on starting long-run historical processes." Pope Francis*

I can't really say that this statement from Pope Francis inspired the project I kicked off last March, but it is a statement of great wisdom that sheds light on the project's importance and success. And it leads me to ask how you could become part of it and contribute to making it a "long-run historical process" central to the critical issues of our times that Pope Francis wrote about in *Laudato Si'*.

What is this project that I'm inviting CLC to join? Well, it started innocently enough.

I attended a conference on climate change at Loyola University, Chicago. There were good insights there and I wanted to see them get out further, so I wrote some descriptive blog pieces for the Ignatian Solidarity Network <http://www.ignatiansolidarity.net> and for NCR online.

In the course of working on the final blog piece, I became aware that there would be four back-to-back meetings of leaders in Catholic Higher Education globally in Melbourne, Australia during the summer – timed to occur shortly after the highly anticipated encyclical from Pope Francis on climate change. That's when the pretty ordinary and obvious inspiration struck me: these meetings would be a providential opportunity for Catholic Higher Education globally to respond with support for the vision and values of the encyclical *in the various ways that are appropriate for a university*.

[That last phrase was inspired by the approach of Ignacio Ellacuría, S.J., who put the UCA in El Salvador at the service of the poor, not as a social work organization or a political lobby group, but *in the various ways that are appropriate for a university* -- research, social analysis, education, etc. That proved so powerful as a service to the poor and to justice that the Jesuit leadership at the university was martyred in 1989.]

Prodded by that inspiration, I wrote to the hosts of the four meetings to lay out the wonderful opportunity they would have at their meetings and to see if it was possible to get a resolution of support for Pope Francis onto their agendas. Only one of the four felt there was time to deal with the proposal at their meetings. But as that door seemed to close, another opened.

The organization hosting the largest of these meetings was the International Federation of Catholic Universities [IFCU/FUIC]. Their leadership thought that a common response was a great idea and offered to send a memo to all 900 of their members. They encouraged me to set up a sign-on process online where schools could commit themselves. IFCU/FUIC interest was followed quickly by endorsements from the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities [AJCU] and the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities [ACCU] in the U.S., and AUSJAL, the association of Jesuit higher education institutions in Latin America.

The Ignatian Solidarity Network stepped forward, offering to set up the online sign-up system and manage it. In consultation with colleagues internationally, I formulated the commitment and we posted it at <http://bit.ly/LaudatoSi-English>. The various education associations notified their members and encouraged them to sign. The momentum was building toward takeoff!

And take off it did. Thus far, a little over 200 Catholic universities and higher education associations from 32 nations have signed the statement of commitment. The names are all available following the statement on the website. [Can you find your alma mater?] Schools can still sign on; we don't have plans for closing that part of the process. But now a new phase of this project is evolving.

A small team of people led by the sustainability director at Loyola in Chicago has put together three templates, spelling out how a university might implement the commitment it has made across the university in curriculum, policies, investments, etc. The three provide a beginner level set of action steps, an intermediate level set and a superior, more comprehensive set. They were presented to the presidents of Jesuit colleges and universities in the U.S. at the end of October "for the purpose of helping our campus leaders to envision the possibilities for implementation of their commitments." The hope is that they might prove useful as "a set of common guidelines based on the research" already done at Loyola and elsewhere.

Discussion will soon take place to explore how to adapt and share these guidelines more widely with all 200+ signatories to the statement of commitment. In addition, FIUC/IFCU has expressed interest in helping to coordinate international research efforts as follow-up to the commitments.

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### ***Practicing the Presence of God in Daily Life—Caring for the Earth, One Person, One Day at a Time...*** continued from page 21

This is an awareness available to every attentive human being by the power of the Holy Spirit alive in us. "The Exercises, are integrating elements in our encounter with God... Pope Francis said that *"one of the greatest challenges of our time is conversion to a development that respects Creation."*

We have experienced as CLC a deep desire to be co-laboring with the Creator, reconciling the broken places, those places where the Light gets in. We are blessed as CLC with community, empowering us for ministry in the world that begins with the integrity of our day to day lives. I am so grateful to our local Chesed community, CLC-USA's Office of Apostolic Advocacy and Action, so faithfully

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*Now, would you like join in and help make this a "long-run historical process?" Here are a few ways:*

- First, let your imagination go to work! Any inspirations about what you could do to keep this process evolving in new directions? Trust your intuitions and inspirations. The Holy Spirit is working overtime these days. Once She gets your creativity going, She won't quit.
- Read the statement of commitment and look through the signatories. If you went to a Catholic college or university, is it in the list? If not, contact the president and/or the alumni/ae office as "a concerned alum," ask why you didn't find the school's name and encourage them to sign. Suggest that being known as committed on these issues can be good for recruitment – as it has been for the University of Dayton.
- If your school is on the list, contact them and thank them – and ask them how they are implementing it. Let them know you're interested and will spread the good news.
- If you can get word to anyone on the Board of Directors, encourage them to raise the issue with the administration and encourage their active and imaginative implementation of the commitment.
- Ditto for the student newspaper, student government, campus ministry and other campus groups that might not know whether their university has signed or not and that would have interest in organizing student support or pressure – whichever might be needed. Students care. And student movements can be great signs of hope and formative experiences.
- And please let us know what steps you take and what happens. We may need to set up a communications hub for sharing stories and developments to inspire each other and continue to build the momentum.

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accompanied by Fr. Jim O'Brien and Fr. Ben Urmston, and interactions with World CLC. Members help us to ***See, Understand, Discern and Act*** as a graced community of 'mountain climbers,' gratefully holding the rope for one another as we stay persistent. Amidst the chaos and the clarities, we discern love's invitations, reading the signs of the times individually and together, seeking a graced way forward to do what is ours to do as part of the Christ Project. We remind each other to Breathe DEEPLY Every Day!

### **Suggested Reading**

"We Live in a Broken World: Reflections on Ecology," April 1999, *Promotio Iustitiae*, <http://www.ecojesuit.com/jesuit-response-to-environmental-and-ecological-challenges-healing-a-broken-world/1427/>

*Spiritual Exercises and Ecology*, Jim Profit, S.J.



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*Globalization and Poverty*