

Our Common Home

Dominican Sisters Conference ~ Engaging Laudato Si'



The Dominican Sisters Conference is happy to share this monthly study series that was prepared by the Earth Charter Implementation Committee (ECIC) of the Dominican Sisters of San Rafael. We are grateful for the generosity of the ECIC in sharing the fruits of their study with all of us! We will also have these studies available on the DSC and Paris 2015 and Counting websites.

Laudato Si' – Chapter 4:

Integral Ecology

Pope Francis reminds us that:

- When we speak of the “environment,” what we really mean is the **relationship existing between nature and the society which lives in it.**
- It is essential to seek comprehensive solutions which consider the interactions within natural systems themselves and with social systems.
- Strategies for a solution demand an **integrated approach** to combating poverty, restoring dignity to the excluded, and at the same time protecting nature.
- When we speak of “sustainable use,” consideration must always be given to each **ecosystem’s regenerative ability.**
- “Every violation of solidarity and civic friendship harms the environment” - social ecology extends to the **whole of society.** [142]
- Ecology also involves protecting the **cultural treasures of humanity in the broadest sense**—that which is inherited from the past and that which is the living,

Implications and Challenges

- Challenges include the need for integrated urban planning that takes into account the quality of life for all inhabitants and that promotes the growth of community and the opportunity for a coherent and meaningful framework for their lives.
- The lack of housing is a grave problem in many parts of the world, including Marin County.
- The systems of transportation are often a source suffering bringing congestion, pollution and consumption of non-renewable resources.
- An understanding of human ecology calls us to the necessity to create a more dignified environment for the common good.
- The common good extends to this moment and to future generations.

Response - Reflect, Discuss, Pray, Act

- **Reflect on and discuss with your local community Pope Francis’ pointed questions: Consider your local area:** is there anyone I see in

dynamic and participatory present reality. This is cultural ecology. [143]

- Authentic development includes efforts to bring about an integral improvement in the quality of life — addressing concerns of extreme poverty, exploitation of people and the environment, overcrowding in cities, lack of open space and lack of access to housing.
- Human ecology implies another profound reality: the **relationship between human life and the moral law**; the ethical imperative to be in solidarity with the poorest of our brothers and sisters and the call to renew our efforts to work for the common good.
- An integral ecology is **marked by this broader vision**, i.e. intergenerational solidarity and the needs of future generations.

my daily surroundings that is vulnerable and desperate. How might my/our actions be able to make a difference?

- What is the purpose of our life in this world?
- Why are we here?
- What is the goal of our work and all of our efforts?
- **Lack of affordable housing** is impacting increasing numbers of people in our midst: our own lay employees, teachers in our schools, the elderly in our midst. What more might we do to effect change through our advocacy and/or assistance?