

# 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 3: Technology, Creativity & Power

Pope Francis reminds us that:

- “**Our technical prowess** has brought us to a crossroads.” [102]
- “Technoscience, when well directed, can produce important means of improving the **quality of human life**.” [103]
- **Creativity and knowledge** bring power and the potential for improving life or the risk of domination of the many by a few. [104]
- “We have certain superficial mechanisms, **but** we cannot claim to have a sound ethics, a culture and spirituality genuinely capable of setting limits and teaching clear-minded self-restraint.” [105]
- The **fundamental underpinnings** of the technocratic paradigm—a technique of possession, mastery and transformation — move us unwittingly from a cooperative and relational paradigm to a paradigm of confrontation, extraction and domination.
- In the face of such forces, **human freedom** and alternative forms of creativity that may be more inclusive are **greatly diminished**.

## Implications and Challenges

- “A technology severed from ethics will not easily be able to limit its own power.” [136]
- In the face of “super development” of a wasteful and consumerist kind, we fail to see the deepest roots of our present failures — the goals, meaning and social implications of technological and economic growth.
- “‘Contemporary man has not been trained to use power well,’ because our immense technological development has not been accompanied by a development in human responsibility, values and conscience.” [105]
- Work is an expression of human dignity and creativity. It is a necessity, part of the meaning of life on this earth, a path to growth, human development and personal fulfillment.

## Response - Reflect, Discuss, Pray, Act

- Pope Francis suggests we “opt for a nonconsumerist model of life, recreation and community.”

- There is an urgent need for us to move forward in a **bold cultural revolution**. [114] There can be no renewal of our relationship with nature without a renewal of humanity itself. [118]
- We cannot heal our relationship with nature and the environment without **healing all fundamental human relationships**. Our relationship with the environment can never be isolated from our relationship with others and with God.

**Discuss:** *How as a community and as an individual can we do this?*

- **Reflect:** *Do I perceive that my freedom has been compromised by the allure of technology?*
- “Once our human capacity for contemplation and reverence is impaired it becomes easy” to dismiss the value of every person’s potential contribution to the good of the whole. **Prayerful reflection:** *How might I grow in affirming the dignity and value of those with whom I live and work?*
- “An authentic humanity, the desire to create and contemplate beauty, seems to dwell in the midst of our technological culture like a mist seeping gently beneath a closed door.” **Reflect:** *How are we encouraging and supporting the response to beauty in ourselves and others?*