

MAY 2020



NUNNTIA

Newsletter of the Congregation of the Mission

FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ENCYCLICAL **LETTER LAUDATO SÍ'**

"I renew my urgent call to respond to the ecological crisis. The cry of the earth and the cry of the poor cannot continue." With these words, Pope Francis invites us all to celebrate the 5th anniversary of the encyclical letter, *Laudato Si': On the Care of the Common Home*. Through a video message, the Pope encourages the Church to celebrate *Laudato Si' Week*, May 16 to 24, 2020. "Let's take care of creation, a gift from our good Creator God."

If we had pictured a week of many "pro-environmental activities", the COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions in that it entails have caused a reorientation what it means to celebrate this important date. We are certainly not going to spend the week picking up litter from the streets, planting seedlings in green places or holding forums on environmental issues - although they are all important activities.

How, then, can we mark this significant date when the Pope gave to the Church and the world a profound reflection on the environmental crisis and our responsibility to repair it?

Perhaps the key to the answer is found in the language of the Pope in the encyclical itself, particularly in two widely used terms: ecological conversion and integral ecology.

We can take advantage of the peculiarity of this time at home for an examination of conscience

and ask ourselves if the ecological conversion that the Pope has invited us to live has taken deep root in our lives. True conversion changes our perspective and blossoms with evidence of a new way of acting and being. All conversion begins with the humble recognition that "we have sinned". In this case, we accept that our relationship with creation is not what the Creator expects of us; that humanity has forgotten its place in the creative plan of God, and has been wrong in overemphasizing "dominion over" creation instead of maintaining the harmony established by the Creator from the beginning.

But it is not enough to remain under the cross of Good Friday, we are invited also to live the resurrection and the new life God desires for humanity and all creation. It is not too late to return to the correct road and restore a right relationship with Mother Earth, as "the Creator does not abandon us; he never forsakes his loving plan or repents of having created us" (LS 13). And just as we are all involved in the degradation of creation, we all play an important part in restoring it. In celebrating *Laudato Si' Week* in this time of Easter gives Christians the opportunity to deepen the ecological conversion, "whereby the effects of their encounter with Jesus Christ becomes evident in their relationship with the world around them" (LS 217).



Congregation of the Mission
Communication Office

The true conversion in our life never remains in thoughts and emotions, but is joyfully manifested in concrete action. Integral ecology, as the Pope presents it, is not a compartmentalized ecology in our life and society; it is not so much something that we “do” at specific moments, but something that we “live” daily. Integral ecology effects all aspects of our lives: from the origin of our food to the mode of transportation we choose; from the clothes that we put on each day to the decisions against consumerism we make.

Integral ecology cannot be only individual, knowing that the crisis facing humanity requires a response from humanity itself. “Social problems must be addressed by community networks and not simply by the sum of individual good deeds” (LS 219). Accumulated individual efforts will never reach the necessary goals if we continue with a linear system of extraction, production, consumption and discard in a finite world. Local initiatives are not enough if we continue with national politics more concerned with the next elections than the next generations. Integral ecology requires creativity in imagining and implementing new economic and

social relations that respect human life and all life.

And finally, integral ecology affirms that we are part of a whole, of one creation. It is of no help to refer to humanity as a plague or virus to “nature”, as if we existed outside of it. The Pope states that “as believers, we do not look at the world from without but from within, conscious of the bonds with which the Father has linked us to all beings” (LS 220).

Although we are not going to carry out the activities planned in the worldwide Church to mark this 5th anniversary, we can live *Laudato Si’* Week by deepening our ecological conversion to bring it more in harmony with the heart of the Creator and committing ourselves to living an integral ecology in all its aspects. Praise be!

Catholic Panorama (Panama)
May 10, 2020
Father Joshep Fitzgerald, CM

TOO MUCH PLASTIC?

I have been considering the problem of plastic for some time. You might not know that plastic is almost as long-lived as fired clay. I first thought about recycling. Now I know that only about 2% of plastic is effectively recycled, meaning that it does not reenter the waste cycle. Then I thought about reducing use. But the use of plastic is everywhere in my life and giving me access to food, medicine, clothing and shelter. I tried to get my local house not to use single use plastic cups and have had a small victory there, although convenience for guests is a higher priority than dealing with plastic waste. The problem is overwhelming.

Do I have a solution? No.

Do I suggest a process of awareness and conversion that follows our Vincentian way of listening to see where God is calling us? Yes.

I suggest you watch a documentary “The Story of Plastic”. You can stream this documentary by hosting a virtual screening. Go to this link: <https://www.storyofplastic.org/community-screenings/host>. The film is subtitled in Arabic, Bulgarian,

Cantonese, Croatian, Danish, Dutch, Farsi, French, German, Greek, Hindi, Hungarian, Indonesian, Italian, Mandarin (traditional and simplified), Marathi, Polish, Portuguese (Brazilian and European), Romanian, Russian, Spanish, Swahili, Tamil, Thai, Turkish, and Vietnamese.

After you have the information, you might want to spend some time in prayer. I suggest Philippians 2: 2-11 as a reference. The text generally calls us to detach from privilege in favor of the Will of the Father. I think it will help you discern a path, which unavoidably will involve suffering. The problem is systemic, unseen, compounded by greed expressed in market manipulation and willful participation in consumption. Just look at what you bring home the next time you go to the store.

Then you might want to begin the journey.

Father. Miles Heinen, CM
Assistant General

54TH WORLD COMMUNICATIONS DAY:

“THAT YOU MAY TELL YOUR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN (EXODUS 10:2) LIFE BECOMES HISTORY.”

The Church, especially since the Second Vatican Council, has devoted very special attention to the topic of social communication. Bear in mind, for example, that the World Communications Day begins to be prepared in September with the presentation of the theme; then, in January, the Pope publishes the Message for this day that will be celebrated a few months later, on the Sunday of Jesus' Ascension (usually in May).

Personally, I think that this time of pandemic, among the various discoveries that we have made (good and bad), has placed before something evident: we are in the information society and the digital already “dresses” our daily lives. The experience of confinement had profound repercussions on the Church's habits, to the point that we were confronted with new questions: on the one hand, the bombardment of information and the difficulty in keeping up with its speed and veracity; on the other hand, the usefulness of digital platforms to continue to maintain the “relationship” as a Christian community. How is this experience going? How do we think to “end” this time? What assessment will we make? How will we coexist between physical and digital?

The answers to these questions cannot be simple and stick to the dualistic technology-person view, but they must start with the certainty that the “media are us.” It is the person who is at the center and it is in dialogue with his/her deepest questions that the Church is called to “think” pastoral responses in this digital time. That is why it was not difficult to use these means, but it is becoming complex to incarnate the faith in this society.

Thus, in the face of the varied reflections that emerge on this topic, none of them can lead us to dispense with a careful reading of the Messages for the World Communications Day. If we think that,

in 1984, John Paul II stated that “culture, faith and communication are three realities among which a relationship is established on which depend the present and the future of our civilization”; or when Benedict XVI alerted us to the media as an integral part of the anthropological issue, which put us before one of the crucial challenges of the third millennium, then we can understand why Pope Francis invites us to reflect from his Messages in communication, where the center is the person and not the technology: culture of encounter (2014), family (2015), mercy (2016), hope (2017), truth (2018), community (2019) and memory (2020).

In summary, I see the Pope's invitation to this 54th World Communications Day as an opportunity to make memory a light that illuminates the new normality that we will start. Now, a certainty stands out: the relationship with the digital cannot be concrete without the transition from a pulpit communication style to a round table one; basically, a participation in a living tissue, which reveals “the interweaving of the threads which connect us to one another”.

*Pope Francis, Message for World
Communications Day, 2020
Pedro Guimarães, CM
Province of Portugal*

THE “MEDITERRANEA” TOGETHER FOR THE PROMOTION OF URBAN BEEKEEPING

“Mediterranea” is the social inclusion project for political refugees in which the General Curia of the Congregation of the Mission in Italy is involved.

The project came forth on the wave of the Vincentian Jubilee marking the 400th anniversary of the charism, “I was a stranger and you welcomed me.” Its first year, 2018, was a year of formation and orientation. It actually began in 2019, when five political refugees formed an association together with Father Giuseppe Carulli and the architect, Michela Pasquali, who coordinate the project and the association.

In this first year of activity, we experimented in various areas and sectors: from the nursery sector to that of organic agriculture, from outdoor wood and iron furnishings to the recycling and valorization of waste materials.

With the development of the herb garden, a line of salts and sugars flavored with herbs and citrus has been produced, which is very successful and interesting. In addition, there is the production of citrus jams thanks to the enhancement of the plants present on the property of the Vincentian priests and brothers.

Under the careful and creative direction of Michela Pasquali, an entire original and compelling line of design has been developed for outdoors and for gardens: iron and wood vases and planters, vertical gardens, chairs and tables for gardens, hotels for insects, games for children, etc.

Mediterranea, however, is not just production and work.

It is also a place for meeting, discussion, and cultural formation on the themes of inclusion, sharing, welcoming, and the care of creation.

Crucial in this regard was the June event: “Inclusive. Site beyond the border.” It was three days of celebration in the Mediterranea garden, but also a creative citadel in the area where you can meet and get to know each other beyond the borders and reaffirm every human being’s need for knowledge, growth, and sharing.

The first year’s evaluation is certainly positive.

Three of our young people, thanks to the professionalism they acquired and their increased self-esteem and dignity, have found work

elsewhere, and others have taken their place.

Collaboration arose with companies such as “**Foo reuse design**” for the production of lampshades from recycled plastic bottles and “**Gustolab international**,” an academic studies center for students from all over the world on the topic of nutrition and sustainability. The invaluable collaboration with the “**Medihospes**” **cooperative**, with **Stefania Barzini** and many other splendid friends and supporters of our project, has been consolidated.

The beginning of 2020 was not the best, as for everyone, because of the Pandemic. But we did not stop! It was an opportunity to review some priorities and plan new challenges.

Collaboration with the “**Api romane**” [“**Roman Bees**”] association is part of this line.

We started with the installation of six bee families for the production of honey, propolis, and royal jelly, but the goal is much more. We want to become promoters and supporters of urban beekeeping as an added value for the city of Rome, to try to bring people closer to bees, raising awareness of them. The bee is the most important pollinating insect, fundamental for the reproduction of plants and, consequently, for all living beings. In recent years, the decline in hives worldwide has been over 50 percent. Making people aware of this problem is fundamental. Fewer bees, less pollination, less guarantee of biodiversity with the harmful consequences of botanical impoverishment.

Once again, Mediterranea wants to work hard for safeguarding creation and for a more “bio-sustainable” life!

*Father Giuseppe Carulli, CM
27 May 2020*

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER: PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS DURING THE TIME OF COVID-19

On March 8th, Pope Francis published his message on the occasion of the 57th World Day of Prayer for Vocations, a time when the crisis of the pandemic caused by Covid-19 was beginning to come to the surface. The gospel text that the Pope chose is Matthew 14:22-38, a passage that narrates the events surrounding the storm at sea and Jesus walking on the waters and calming the disciples. Could a more appropriate biblical text have been chosen for this time of world distress?

Francis' reflection revolves around four words: gratitude, encouragement, pain, and praise. With those four words the Pope weaves together a wonderful vocational itinerary just as the winds of the pandemic have begun to shake our little company that is traveling in Peter's boat.

Gratitude

Pope Francis states that every vocation is born of that gaze of love with which the Lord came to meet us, perhaps even at a time when our boat was battered by the storm. Vocation, more than our own choice, is a response to the Lord's unmerited call.

In many countries the pandemic has emptied our churches, programs have been cancelled and the hurried life of the members of the Congregation has been slowed down, providing them with an opportunity to return their glance to some basic questions regarding their vocation: Why are we here? What is the reason for our option in life? Then, we hear the questioning words of Vincent de Paul: *God is the one who calls us and who, from all eternity, has destined us to be Missioners, since he did not bring us to birth either one hundred years earlier or later, but precisely at the time of the institution of this Company (CCD:XI:98).*

We have always known that God took the initiative in calling us to be servants of the poor, but seldom have we had to time to deepen our understanding of that reality. Now, however, is the time to respond to that call with a sense of gratitude.

Encouragement

When the disciples see Jesus walking towards them on the sea, they first think that he is a ghost and are filled with fear. Jesus immediately reassures them with words that should constantly accompany our lives and our vocational journey: "Take heart, it is I; have no fear" (*Matthew 14:27*).

It is impossible to be a member of the worldwide family of Vincent de Paul and view with indifference the millions of people who have been infected by the virus, the one hundred and seventy thousand people who have died, the countless number of people who are unemployed, and the extreme levels of poverty that have not been seen for several decades. Nevertheless, in the midst of this fear which encompasses humankind (especially our lords and masters), we find in Jesus that word that refreshes and renews our missionary vocation: Courage!

Fatigue

Nothing causes greater harm to the missionary endeavor than a witness of personal frustration and nothing enhances that endeavor more than well-formulated proposals, accompanied by joyful witness and a sense of vocational fulfillment on the part of those who have been sent to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ. In this regard, the Pope refers to that "sweet sorrow", *that is, the interior discouragement that holds us back from experiencing the beauty of our vocation.*

It is in Peter's boat, face to face with Jesus Christ, the evangelizer of the poor, that the conversion of the heart of those who have been called to be fishers of humankind begins. This is an excellent time to enter into a process of missionary conversion, beginning with our own life, apostolate and ministry. That is how a renewed culture of vocations is born.

Praise

The fourth concept is the symphony of the culture of vocations: praise of God. Vincent de Paul stated: *you know ... that the first act of religion is to praise God. Let's go further; it even*

takes precedence over sacrifice (CCD:XII:265).

Vocational success is not found in numbers just as success in the mission is not found in the number of activities that are planned and brought to fruition. Furthermore, we were not called to be successful but to praise God through missionary service on behalf of those men and women who are poor. Everything else is extra.

Accepting the vocational challenge that this pandemic presents to us should not be reduced to “changing channels” (moving from traditional means to social networking), but rather should be viewed as an opportunity to change our heart, to

allow the voice of Jesus to guide our life and to revitalize the call that at one time led us to opt to follow him in fulfilling the same mission as did Vincent de Paul.

Therefore, perhaps on this Fourth Sunday of Easter, our prayer for vocations might take on a special significance. Perhaps we will take the resolution to pray with our life, to pray with gratitude, and encouragement, to pray during times of fatigue, and above all to pray and praise our God.

*Father Rolando Gutiérrez, CM
Vice-Province of Costa Rica*

POPE FRANCIS MERGES ALASKAN DIOCESES TO ERECT

ARCHDIOCESE OF ANCHORAGE-JUNEAU

The Holy Father has provided for the merging of the archdiocese of Anchorage with the diocese of Juneau, United States of America, and has at the same time appointed Bishop Andrew Eugene Bellisario, C.M., bishop of Juneau and apostolic administrator of Anchorage, as first metropolitan archbishop of the new metropolitan see.

Archbishop-elect Andrew Eugene Bellisario, C.M.

Archbishop-elect Andrew Eugene Bellisario, C.M., was born on 19 December 1956 in Los Angeles, California, in the archdiocese of the same name. After attending Saint Stephen Elementary School in Monterey Park (1963-1971), and Saint Vincent minor seminary in Montebello (1971-1975), he entered the Congregation of the Mission in Santa Barbara (1975). He carried out his studies in philosophy at Saint Mary Seminary in Perryville, Missouri (1976-1980) and in theology at DeAndreis Seminary in Lemont, Illinois (1980-1984).

He was ordained a priest on 16 June 1984 for the Congregation of the Mission at Saint Vincent's Parish in Los Angeles.

Since priestly ordination he has held the following roles: dean of students at Saint Vincent minor seminary in Montebello, California (1984-1986); parish vicar (1986-1989) and parish administrator (1989-1990) of the Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal parish in Montebello; parish priest of Saint Vincent de Paul parish in Huntington Beach, California (1990-1995) and of Sacred Heart parish in Patterson, California (1995-1998); treasurer and consulter of the province (1996-2002); director of De Paul

Evangelization Center in Montebello (1998-2002); superior of De Paul Center Residence in Montebello (2001-2002); Provincial (2002-2010); Director of the Daughters of Charity in Los Altos Hills, California (2003-2015); parish priest of Our Lady of Guadalupe Co-Cathedral in Anchorage, Alaska (2014-2017); and superior of the International Mission in Alaska (2015-2017).

Appointed as bishop of Juneau on 11 July 2017, he received episcopal consecration the following 10 October.

On 7 June 2019, he was appointed as apostolic administrator of Anchorage.

The main statistics of the new metropolitan archdiocese of Anchorage-Juneau are the following:

Area: 320,932 km..

Population: 563,372

Catholics: 55,297

Parishes: 32

Missionary stations: 14

Diocesan priests: 34

Religious priests: 13

Permanent deacons: 33

Major seminarians: 4

Men religious: 14

Women religious: 23

Educational institutions: 8

Charitable institutions: 10

Baptisms: 438

NOMINACIONES / CONFIRMATIONES

BAÑAGA LAPUS Gregorio Jr.	15/05/2020	Visitor of the Philippines (Reconfirmed)
RADINA Hans-Georg	20/05/2020	Director DC Cologne - Netherlands
RENES AYALA Miguel Ángel	20/05/2020	Director DC Spain-North
PRESIDENTE ARÉVALO Rafael Antonio	25/05/2020	Visitor of Central America (Reconfirmed)

ORDINATIONES

LABA Kamil	Sac	POL	23/05/2020
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NECROLOGIUM

Nomen	Cond.	Dies ob.	Prov.	Aet.	Voc.
LARRAÑETA OLLETA Jesús	Sac	02/05/2020	CAE	88	72
NDZANA Benoît	Sac	03/05/2020	FRA	63	34
ULIBARRENA BAZTÁN Antonio	Sac	03/05/2020	CAE	83	67
STONE Robert J.	Sac	05/05/2020	ORL	70	49
VERGARA IRIVERTEGUI Jaime	Sac	12/05/2020	POR	88	70
SLEIMAN Paul	Sac	16/05/2020	ORI	79	60
MULACKAL John	Sac	23/05/2020	INM	85	65
GONZÁLEZ HERAS Julián	Sac	27/05/2020	SVP	91	72

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