

“Today, we have to realize that a true ecological approach *always* becomes a social approach; it must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, so as to hear “*both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.*” Everything is connected Pope Francis, (*Laudato Si'*, 49).

## Prayer for World Food Day

Jesus Christ reminded us of the words we will one day hear from him—“I was hungry and you gave me to eat”—if we feed “the least of these.” Today we are challenged by Pope Francis to remember that food production and distribution is being affected by climate change. To feed the least of these means to work for environmental justice. Both drought and too much rain, as well as other weather disasters, are growing problems in agriculture, especially for poor farmers and for others in poverty who grow food to survive. World Food Day is sponsored by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations on October 16; this year’s theme connects climate change to agriculture and food production.

We are all connected, and the flooding in Bangladesh,  
The drought in Malawi, in Brazil,  
And the violent storms in the Caribbean  
Leave our sisters’ and brothers’ bowls empty.  
The least of these are hungry  
And their cries for bread echo  
Christ’s calls for compassionate action.

Everything is connected, and Francis reminds us  
To feed the poor today  
Means to attend to climate change,  
To see how what is happening to so many poor farmers,  
To feel the effects of the flooding, the droughts,  
The changes in temperature as crops lay stunted  
Or ruined in the fields.

We struggle to restore and renew Creation  
As we struggle to ensure that all can taste  
The abundance of this gift, this earth.  
May we all work for a future world  
That Pope Francis holds up for us,  
Where we can recognize the sacred connections  
That bind us to one another and  
To our Common Home, where  
All are called to the table. Amen.

— Jane Deren, Ph.D.

