SUMMONED to RESPOND: CLC NATIONAL ECOLOGY WORKING GROUP

1 Cor. 12:7-11

"But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit…"



Climate change: website of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU): the United Nations specialized agency for information and communication technologies – ICTs.

CLC graced history is the revelation of 'God with us'. In this article, we invite you to pause and ponder the way travelled by CLC in the past 20 years and to recognize how the whisper of how the Spirit has spoken, challenged and encouraged us through Ignatian rooted voices. These generous and knowledgeable world citizens have willingly shared their gifts with the wider community and continue to share their experiences of discovering God present in all things.

In Laudato Si (Encyclical Letter 2015), although specifically calling attention to the state of 'our common home', Pope Francis skillfully weaves a united whole while addressing all four frontiers as well as stressing key points mentioned in *Progressio Supplement #57*. He writes, *'…the earth herself, burdened and laid waste, is among the most abandoned and maltreated of our poor'*. He affirms that, because of the interconnectedness of all creation, this necessitates the need for science and religion to address environmental problems with a common plan and goes on to write*, "… the goals of this rapid and constant change are not necessarily geared to the common good or to integral and sustainable human development".* In fact, the Pope makes clear that, "*It is essential to seek comprehensive solutions…"* and throughout the document, he keeps reiterating that, "*Everything is interconnected, and this invites us to develop a spirituality of that global solidarity which flows from the mystery of the Trinity.*

Along with many noted scientists, Pope Francis pinpoints the fact that the planet is warming at an accelerated rate and *human activity is the primary cause*. Most pointedly, the unrestrained burning of fossil fuels, which causes greenhouse gases, is a key driver in heating up the atmosphere and causing climate disruptions. Acknowledging that global warming is a complicated issue, he makes clear that our response cannot rest with the sum total of an individualistic self-improvement or good deeds approach but, rather, through communal and collaborative networks – a familiar CLC mode of discerning communal mission.

Adding to this ecological awareness view, Neil Levy, Senior Research Fellow at the Oxford Uechiro Centre for Practical Ethics, suggests that in order to slow down the warming of the planet, we will need 'cathedral' thinking. He explains that during medieval times, building the grand cathedrals took so many years to complete that the

builders who began the work never saw the completion. Levy goes on to say that hope rests today in the billions of caring people in the world who can make a difference by challenging governments and corporations to make systemic changes needed in counteracting global warming.

If we agree that climate is a common good that belongs to all then it is up to all of us to care for it. This is not an easy task. In the face of growing evidence of unprecedented rapid climate change, any attempts to slow things down will demand far-sightedness and pre-emptive action aimed at 'flattening the curve' and cooling our feverish world.

For more than a year, the world has been reeling from the cries of a world pandemic. At the same time, it is noted that the by-products of Covid 19 are both healing and hurting a world that was already deep in an ecological crisis. As a result of an accumulation of data, a lengthy discernment process, and awareness of the Ignatian Criteria for Mission, it has become very clear to the National CLC Ecology Frontier Working Group that the most critical ecological issue facing the world today is rapid climate change which is caused by *global warming*.

It is also very clear that many known and unknown CLC members, often collaborating with others, continue to be attentive to the 'signs of the times' and, in a variety of ways and means, are quietly responding to healing our wounded world and improving the quality of life for all creation. It is these largely unknown efforts that, when shared with the wider Christian Life Community, encourages what the Pope calls, *"…a culture of care".*

In 2020, five years after Pope Francis published the encyclical *Laudato Si: Care for our Common Home*. **Kevin and Anne Moynihan from Halifax produced a documentary on how Canadians have responded to the encyclical since its publication in 2015. The 35 minute video features a few Canadians reflecting on this papal encyclical on climate change, among them David Suzuki and Maude Barlow. The responses, to date, of various groups and governments to the crises affecting our planet are highlighted as well.**

The video is very well done and summarizes the key points in Laudato Si. We suggest it as a resource that you or your CLC group might want to use as reflection and/or discussion as each one of us strives do our part to slow down global warming. The link: www.kmproductions.ca/laudato-si-5.html ... The Title: Laudato Si +5: A Canadian Response

We are are planning in the next few months to invite CLC's from across Canada to write and share how their CLC is engaged in pro-active responses to mitigate the impact of global warming in their neighbourhood, region or world. Let us be mindful of the fact that, *"The human environment and the natural environment deteriorates together".* As CLC, we have the responsibility to respond to the voices who 'summon' but to do so as signs of hope, joy and justice – together!

Recently the Working Group for the National Ecology Frontier sent invitations out to a number of CLC's across Canada asking them to prepare a submission for Update relating to an ecological issue. The following is one response we received. As we receive responses from other CLC's we will have them printed.

CLC Central Region discerned Integral Ecology as their Communal Mission; the following article is a sharing of their reflections on Laudato Si.



This beautiful photo is from the Global Catholic Climate Movement

COMMENTS ON LAUDATO SI FROM FAITHFUL FOLLOWERS CLC, ONTARIO

After a period of communal discernment from various options, Faithful Followers realized that the Holy Spirit had been leading us into Intergral Ecology as our Common Mission. For this purpose one of the most important activities on our agenda is reflection and discussion on a previously agreed chapter of Laudato Si.

Emerging from a contemplative spirit, and conscious of the effects caused by climate crisis, especially on all people presently suffering poverty, as well as on generations to come, starting from our own personal and family life, we commit ourselves to act from individual, to community, to national, and to global concern in care of our Common Home.

Aware of our constant interconnection and inter-relation with our Common Home, our discussions on **global warming and climate change,** (which we prefer to call **"climate crisis")** are focused on the need to **dialogue** in this rapidly changing world and particularly in this present situation of pandemic, which makes the sharing of our experiences more and more revelant. Thus, we relate to the needs of our native population, feeling with them, that the land is not a commodity. We are facing the abandonment of communities from their own land because of lack of agricultural and othere means of production, hunting, and lack of clean water due to contamination from mineral or other extractions, plastics and pollutant residues. We support "Water First" and advocate for their protests on the construction of the pipeline, the train, and their history in relation to the Church. We express our deepest feelings of concern and shame for the ones who could not keep their own language.

One of the most important aspects of climate change is the farming practices of our region and in many areas of the world. The documentary "Kiss the Ground" showed us how a change to regenerative agriculture could draw a lot of greenhouse gas into the earth and keep the carbon that is already in the soil to remain there. Regenerative agriculture can help farmers produce healthier food and stop producing so much food tainted with harmful pesticides and chemicals. Persons who understand the importance of drawdown could explain to others how together we can design lines of action to address climate crises and the crises of humanity.

CLC could start to dialogue with farmers and people interested in healthy food, and a healthy environment. We even think how we could link with refugees who need a home instead of living in a refugee camp or running for their lives. CLC could encourage encounters with farmers, our powerful clergy, and politicians to start a national discussion; we should not leave this to the politicians alone. CLC needs to let CLCers come together to have our

own spiritual conversation so we can organize some responses to the signs of the times. Not everyone is interested in the same subject.

We are all one, we are all connected. We are aware of our big responsibility and we turn to God in prayer. We are called to participate in the rebuilding of the unity that was intended from the beginning of Creation. Our Motto is: Think big, act small, go deep. Become a testimony of a journey of Integral Ecology, step by step.

Faithful Followers CLC, Central Region

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