

Laudato Si in Action

In Chapter One of Laudato Si, Pope Francis calls our attention to unsustainable energy use and consumption:

...a number of scientific studies indicate that most global warming in recent decades is due to the great concentration of greenhouse gases (carbon dioxide, methane, nitrogen oxides and others) released mainly as a result of human activity. As these gases build up in the atmosphere, they hamper the escape of heat produced by sunlight at the earth's surface. The problem is aggravated by a model of development based on the intensive use of fossil fuels, which is at the heart of the worldwide energy system.

As I mentioned last time, my approach to consumption of resources can be summed up with these five words: reduce, reuse, renew, reconsider, and recycle. In prior columns, I discussed reduce and reuse. This time, I'd like to talk about renew.

When I think about renew, I think about the use of renewable resources. We need to reduce our usage of non-renewable resources such as oil, coal, and gas, and move in the direction of renewable resources. Making use of renewable resources is not something that is easy, but it can and must be done. When purchasing your next car, will you consider an electric or hybrid automobile? How about installing solar panels on your roof? Yes, I realize that this is a bit more of an investment than purchasing a steel water bottle. Nonetheless, these are viable options for some of us.

Another way you can work on "renew" is to lobby your state and federal elected officials for greater investment in renewable resources. An easy way to communicate with the governor and your state representatives is to go to the website <https://access.wa.gov/>. At the federal level, you can go to <https://www.senate.gov/>, <https://www.house.gov/>, and <https://www.whitehouse.gov/>.

How about contacting one federal or state official this week and making a pitch for investing more in renewable resources?

Working together, we can help take care of our common home. Visit <http://saintfrancisseattle.wordpress.com> for all prior Laudato Si in Action columns.

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