

Laudato Si in Action

Washing the Feet of the Earth

Last week, I introduced the concept of an Ecological Conversion and that Pope Francis, in his Laudato Si encyclical, was calling upon us all to undergo such a conversion.

Once you commit to an ecological conversion, you need to consider the effect of your decisions and actions on the integral ecology and try to choose a path that shows your respect for God's creation.

But the ecological converts' *work* is often about learning to do more with less. Less consumption, less purchases, less waste, less resource usage, *less of a footprint on the planet*. Less usage of fossil fuels, less eating of meat. And when they consume/heat/cool/travel, they try to do it most efficiently, especially if they can afford to take the most creation-friendly path.

The ecological convert shares their ecological convictions with others, but in a non-judgemental way. That is, they lead by example rather than by constant admonishment!

During his Holy Thursday homily, Father Crispin spoke about Jesus washing the feet of the apostles as an example to them and the fact that the apostles had to spread Jesus' message by washing the feet of others. Father Crispin stated rather emphatically, "*Feet must be washed!*"

I am going to take the liberty of extending Father Crispin's metaphor a bit further: dirty feet have a large footprint and leave a trail of dirt and refuse, while clean feet leave a minimal trail. So the ecological convert looks for feet to wash, to spread the "care for creation" message while reducing everyone's footprints. The convert starts by washing their own feet (i.e., personal actions), then washes the feet of those closest to them (i.e., family and friends), the feet of their community (i.e., community members), and finally looks to advocate for clean feet for their city, their country, and the whole world (i.e., political/systemic actions). Yes, the ecological convert washes a lot of feet and everyone is the better for it.

Another reminder for two excellent opportunities to practice your ecological conversion at the community level (and to start washing some feet):

- On Saturday, April 23, by attending the Eco-Summit on the Ridge. Details at community.works/ecosummit. Register with the special discount code of **High5ForEarth** for \$5 off the already low registration fee.
- On Sunday, April 24, by joining the St John Neighborhood Cleanup. More info at saintfrancisseattle.org/earthday2022.

Working together, we can help take care of our common home.

Paul Litwin