

Laudato Si'

EARTH BEATS

October 2015

Earth and Environment Commission Newsletter
US Region



Coordinator:
Members:

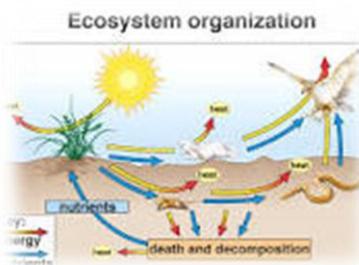
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In Chapter I – No. 46 of *Laudato Si'*, we find several symptoms of social decline enumerated:

- the effects of technological innovation on employment
- social exclusion
- the inequitable distribution and consumption of energy and other service
- social breakdown, increased violence
- a rise in new forms of social aggression
- a growing use of drug [and human] trafficking
- the loss of identity among the young.



How would you explain the link between environmental decline and the deterioration of the quality of human life?



...the way natural ecosystems work is exemplary...



It is hard for us to accept that the way natural ecosystems work is exemplary: plants synthesize nutrients which feed herbivores; these in turn become food for carnivores, which produce significant quantities of organic waste which gives rise to new generations of plants. But our industrial system, at the end of its cycle of production and consumption, has not developed the capacity to absorb and reuse waste and by-products...

Chapter I – 1 – No. 22

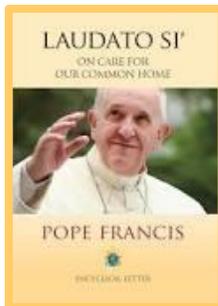
In Chapter I – Nos. 53-59 of the encyclical “**Weak Responses**” point to:

- the weak international political response to the global summits on the environment
- the lack of leadership capable of striking out on new paths responding to the environmental crisis
- the need for a legal framework to set clear boundaries that protect the indispensable ecosystems
- and the alliance between the economy and technology which ends up sidelining anything unrelated to their own concerns.

In addition,

there is mention of some positive environmental improvements like:

- our cleaner rivers
- restored native woodlands
- advances in the production of non-polluting energy and public transportation
- growing ecological sensitivity.



To all of this, Pope Francis adds that we can note the rise of a false or superficial ecology which bolsters complacency and a cheerful recklessness. We are tempted to think that what is happening is not clear...apart from a few obvious signs of pollution and deterioration, things do not look that serious and the planet could continue as it is for some time. Such evasiveness serves as a license to carrying on with our present lifestyles and models of production.

**What impression are you left with
after reading these facts and insights gleaned from the section entitled
Weak Responses?**

There has been a tragic rise in the number of migrants seeking to flee from the growing poverty caused by environmental degradation. They are not recognized by international conventions as refugees; they bear the loss of the lives they have left behind without enjoying any legal protection whatsoever.

Chapter I – 1 – No. 25



Refugees are not recognized by international conventions.

We were not meant to be inundated by cement, asphalt, glass and metal, and deprived of physical contact with nature.

Chapter 1 – 4 – No. 44



beautiful and carefully manicured green spaces in so called "safer" areas of cities, but not in the more hidden areas where the disposable of society live.

Chapter 1 – IV – No. 45



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.

Chapter 1 - !V – No. 49



*Jesus,
you preached to the crowds,
inviting them to sit on grassy hillsides.
Open our eyes
to the beauty of our world
and
make us understand the need
to protect our environment. Amen.*

People's Companion to the Breviary
Liturgy of the Hours

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