



Continuing the Journey Laudato Si' On Care for Our Common Home

“In Laudato Si’ Pope Francis is speaking as a spiritual and moral leader calling each of us to more fully answer the call to care for others and care for God’s creation. He sees the “ecological crisis” as first and foremost “a summons to profound interior conversion” (LS, no. 217). That conversion must begin with humility when confronting the results of human activity unmoored from God’s design.”

“This is integral ecology, and it’s at the heart of the encyclical. As Pope Francis says, “it is no longer enough to speak only of the integrity of ecosystems. We have to dare to speak of the integrity of human life, of the need to promote and unify all the great values. Once we lose our humility, and become enthralled with the possibility of limitless mastery over everything, we inevitably end up harming society and the environment” (LS, no. 224).”

“Those teachings remind us that when we don’t responsibly care for God’s creation, it’s the poor who suffer most. Pollution, food and water insecurity, and conflicts over declining resources first affect those on the margins – “the least of these” Jesus entrusts to our particular care. There’s an “intimate relationship between the poor and the fragility of the planet” (LS, no. 16), and we have a responsibility to live out our solidarity with the poor in concrete ways.” [*“Pope Francis’ New Encyclical”* By Kim Daniels, JUNE 18, 2015 U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops Blog Post]

So what’s next? All this care for creation stuff can be overwhelming! Pope Francis suggests that we begin by creating awareness so we can translate our current actions into new habits. We must become conscious consumers. **We at St. James are already doing some great things** like

- Growing local organic produce to support the Sussex food pantry
- Hosting a parish thrift sale each year that allows us to “recycle” our goods among the community and help keep them out of the landfill
- Redistributing second hand bedding to area shelters that would otherwise go to a landfill
- Replacing throw away Styrofoam coffee cups with good old fashion ceramic cups in the Great Room

And we are offering more ideas in the bulletin and website and creating awareness with displays in the gathering space. Our motto is “One Simple Act”. There are many things that we have begun to do differently over the years simply because our culture has made it convenient. Convenience is great as long as it is responsible convenience. Unfortunately some of our conveniences, like the constant use of bottled water, are not very sustainable.

We will continue throughout the year to offer ideas that create awareness of good environmental habits and not so good habits that we have acquired in our culture. Your opportunity is to check out the information and decide if you would like to **take “One Simple Act” for the care of our common home.**

Interested in this topic? We are forming a team at St. James to look at what we can do as a parish to take simple acts toward environmental responsibility. Contact Debra Schneider at djschneider@wi.rr.com or 414-550-2167 if you would like to join the team.