

*Health in the Lord and the Blessing of the Holy Spirit..[Rule of Saint Albert]*

**JPIC 116 – JUNE 2022** Saudavel iha Maromak no grasa Spirtu Santo Nian . [Regula Sto Alberto]

22 APRIL 2022 - UNITED NATIONS – MOTHER EARTH DAY “Invest in our Planet”

22-29 MAY 2022 – LAUDATO SI WEEK “Listening and Walking Together”

5 JUNE 2022 – UNITED NATIONS – WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY “#ONLYONEEARTH”



We are being continually called upon by leaders of world organisations to collective, transformative action on a global scale to celebrate, protect and restore our planet.

This month JPIC presents an article which has been edited from The Carmelite NGO Bulletin, “Carmengo” Vol 15, No 1, 2022 <http://carmelitengo.org/en/news-en/organizing-for-an-integral-ecology/>

## THE CRISIS OF THE ANTHROPOCENE

**Dr Kevin Ahern PhD, Assoc. Professor of Religious Studies, Manhattan College**

The human family is increasingly divided and fractured. Consider the fratricide of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, the crisis of democracy worldwide, increasing political polarisations, and rising incidents of racism and xenophobia. We are facing, as the anti-racist activist Errin Haines described in a Tweet, “*a pandemic within a pandemic* (1).

At the same time, as a human species we are increasingly disconnected from the planetary ecosystem that sustains our life. We are now living in what scientists describe as the *anthropocene*, a new era where the actions of human beings threaten the future of entire species, including our own.

### **Carmelite Action - “Carmelites...have tremendous power as mediating agents.”**

In his official teachings, especially *Laudato Si’* and *Fratelli Tutti*, Pope Francis offers some helpful perspectives in laying out an integral ecology. Drawing from the Gospel, this vision proposes a new way, a new paradigm for how to relate to our planet and to other people.

But how do we get there? How do we bring about a new paradigm for our society, our planet and our Church? In this task, faith-based organizations, and especially Catholic organizations like the Carmelite NGO and other Carmelite communities, have an



enormous potential to bring about this much-needed paradigm shift. Catholic nongovernmental organisations (NGOs), lay movements, and religious congregations, have a tremendous power as mediating agents (2). At their best, they mediate complex networks of relationships, bridging local communities with influential agents, translating ideas through the religious and secular divide, and connecting people with one another across borders. Theologically, such structures may even be described as “*structures of grace*,” in their prophetic resistance to the structural sins dividing the human family today (3).

Given this transformative potential, how can Catholic organizations and structures, from parishes and local community groups to international lay movements and religious congregations, better actualize the vision of an integral ecology?

## **Towards an Integral Ecology**

*“Francis emphasized our responsibility to care for each other across borders.”*

In July of 2013, just a few weeks after being elected pope, Pope Francis made his first official visit outside of Rome to the island of Lampedusa. This son of Italian immigrants was deeply moved by the experience of migrants in the Mediterranean. In his homily on Lampedusa, Francis speaks for the first time of the “globalisation of indifference.” (4)

Our worldwide community may be more interconnected, he argued, but that does not mean we have formed a sense of true siblinghood (fraternity). Using the biblical story of Cain and Abel, Francis emphasised our responsibility to care for each other across borders. As children of the one creator God, we are all siblings. The pope develops these themes of indifference and fraternity a few months later in *Evangelii Gaudium* and his first three World Day of Peace Messages.

## Laudato Si

*“We are part of nature, included in it and thus in constant interaction with it.”*

With *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis uses the Canticle of Creation prayer by Saint Francis to creatively extend our fraternal obligation to also include creation, sister earth. In the face of a “tyrannical anthropocentrism unconcerned for other creatures” Francis proposes an integral ecology, a new approach that looks to the flourishing and common good of all of creation, including future generations. (5) This approach takes seriously the multifaceted relationships of people with our creator God, with other people, with the world around us, and with our deeper selves. We are, as Francis insists, part of nature, included in it and thus in constant interaction with it.” (6) This integral approach to ecology, much like Pope Paul VI’s integral approach to development, stands in contrast to the indifference and sinful self-referentiality that marks so much of the dominant culture. (7)



## Fratelli Tutti ...“Everyone is connected.”

In *Fratelli Tutti*, Pope Francis returns to the question of our relationship with each other. While he does not explicitly reference integral ecology in the text, *Fratelli Tutti* approaches human relationships in an ecological key. As we seek the

development of the whole person and all people, we must recognize that we are all inter connected.

The Jesuit spiritual writer, James Martin, SJ, made a useful connection in a tweet saying, “If the message of #Laudato Si was ‘Everything is connected,’ the message of #Fratelli Tutti is ‘Everyone is connected.’” (8)

As Francis teaches, “Jesus’ parable summons us to rediscover our vocation as citizens of our respective nations and of the entire world, builders of a new social bond... the Good Samaritan showed that ‘the existence of each and every individual is deeply tied to that of others: life is not simply time that passes; life is a time for interactions.’” (9)

Francis is blunter in his call for change in a meeting with popular movements in Bolivia:

“Let us not be afraid to say it: we want change, real change, structural change. This system is by now intolerable... We want change in our lives, in our neighborhoods, in our everyday reality. We want a change which can affect the entire world, since global interdependence calls for global answers to local problems”. (10)

Catholic NGOs, religious congregations and lay movements are uniquely situated to bring about this change at three different levels. Groups like the Carmelite NGO are already doing some of this important work, but much more is needed.

## Personal Conversion -

*A true integral ecology demands personal conversion and changes in lifestyles.*

Do Catholic parishes, including those attached to Carmelite communities, truly inspire lay people to a deeper personal conversion with God, their neighbors, and creation? This can be a difficult question, but it is one that must be considered given how many Catholics there are in positions of political, economic, and cultural power. Consider what could change if even a fraction of these adopted a vision of integral ecology.

To bring about a deeper personal conversion, schools and parish structures, by themselves, are not enough. Other forms of communities are needed, including small faith groups, cooperatives, and study groups to support each other in living more sustainably.

At the same time, communities also need the support of other communities nationally and internationally. Such relationships, like the creation of many Catholic NGOs, can help us go beyond the temptations to self referentiality and the comfort bubbles that usually serve to reinforce the status quo.

## Conclusion

As a global institution, the Catholic church has an enormous potential to transform our broken ecology of indifference into a just and thriving integral ecology. In this task, Catholic NGOs, movements, and congregations have an important responsibility to design strategies that can effectively transform the hearts of individuals, change the unjust institutional structures and policies that divide our human family, and renew the life of the church.

As Pope Francis affirmed in 2015, "the future of humanity does not lie solely in the hands of great leaders, the great powers and the elites. It is fundamentally in the hands of peoples and in their ability to organize."<sup>(11)</sup> At the end of the day, we must ask ourselves, are we truly willing to take up the apostolic challenge of organizing a new model? Are we really willing to support each other in this journey ahead?

### Notes:

- (1) Errin Haines tweet, 5/28/20.  
<https://twitter.com/emaravelous/status/1266178423430529024>.
- (2) See Kevin Ahern, "Mediating the Global Common Good: Catholic NGOs and the Future of Global Governance," in *Public Theology and the Global Common Good: The Contribution of David Hollenbach*, ed. Kevin Ahern et al. (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2016), 14–25.
- (3) Kevin Ahern, *Structures of Grace: Catholic Organizations Serving the Global Common Good* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2015).
- (4) Pope Francis, *Visit to Lampedusa: Homily of Holy Father Francis* (Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2013), [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va).
- (5) Pope Francis, *Laudato Si', On Care for Our Common Home* (Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2015), no. 68, [http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco\\_co\\_20150524\\_enciclica-laudato-si.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_co_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html).
- (6) *Laudato Si'*, no. 139.
- (7) Paul VI, *Populorum Progressio* (Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1967), [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va).
- (8) James Martin, SJ, tweet 10/4/20, <https://twitter.com/JamesMartinSJ/status/1312716610399096833>.
- (9) Pope Francis, *Fratelli Tutti, On Fraternity and Social Friendship* (Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2020), nos. 66–67, [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va).
- (10) Pope Francis's Address to Popular Movements, 9 July 2015.
- (11) [https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2015/july/documents/papa-francesco\\_20150709\\_bolivia-movimenti-popolari.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2015/july/documents/papa-francesco_20150709_bolivia-movimenti-popolari.html)  
Pope Francis's Address to Popular Movements

## A Covenant Prayer with the Land

Today let us make a covenant with this land.  
As new fruit can be grafted onto the branch of a mature tree,  
may we wish to be grafted onto the ancient heritage of this land of our first people,  
so that its life may flow through us.  
We commit ourselves to this land we live in and all who belong to it.  
We will care for it with gentleness, patience, strength and compassion,  
rather than merely something to be bought and sold.  
We will look on the land as a gift  
for which we are truly thankful and undertake the privileged duty,  
of respecting and looking after it.

We thank the Great Creator Spirit,  
for all the earth provides, water, food,  
and all the riches above and below the ground  
and undertake to use them wisely, daringly,  
while ensuring that any development brings danger to no one.  
As we enter more deeply into the Spirit of the land  
we will see it as a Sacrament and Icon of our Mothering Creator Spirit.  
Let us be still now - listen to the breath of the Spirit  
which has blown through this land  
for ages Past - Today - and Always –  
for this is ...  
The Spirit of the Dreaming.

© Elizabeth Pike 2002

Prayer provided by National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council (NATSICC)  
<https://www.natsicc.org.au/>

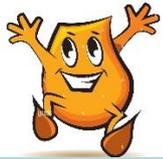


NATIONAL RECONCILIATION WEEK – 27<sup>th</sup> May – 3<sup>rd</sup> June

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY ENGLISH TEACHER CARMELITES TIMOR-LESTE



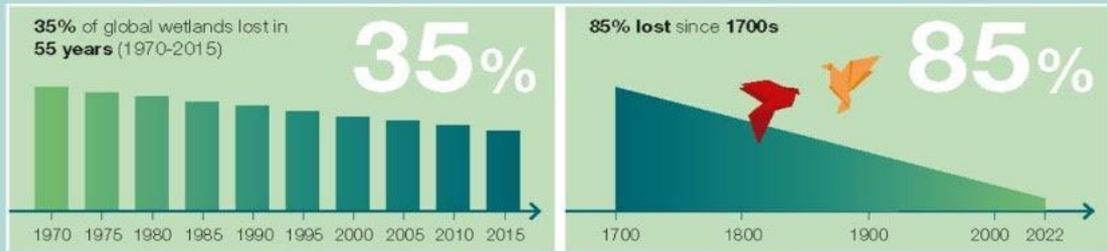
The Carmelite Brothers in Timor-Leste need English language support for the students at the Community in Hera. Are you interested in helping with this? The volunteer will live at the Hera Community and run regular English language classes with the Carmelite students, fitting around their other study commitments. A schedule of small group and individual sessions will be organised, and the volunteer will be able to experience Community life in Timor-Leste. Please contact Mayra Walsh, Community Development Ministry Coordinator, for further information. Email: [mayra@carmelites.org.au](mailto:mayra@carmelites.org.au) or Phone: 0423475564



# WETLANDS

## A CALL FOR ACTION

### NATURAL WETLANDS ARE DISAPPEARING THREE TIMES FASTER THAN FORESTS



### WHAT LOSS OF WETLANDS MEANS

<p><b>FOR PEOPLE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water scarcity</li> <li>• Exposure to flooding and extreme weather events</li> <li>• Lost livelihoods and well-being</li> <li>• Food insecurity</li> </ul> 	<p><b>FOR THE PLANET</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Biodiversity decline</li> <li>• Increased carbon and methane emissions</li> <li>• Loss of natural freshwater filtration</li> </ul> 
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

### TAKE THREE ACTIONS

<p><b>VALUE WETLANDS</b></p> <p>BIODIVERSITY HOTSPOTS FRESH WATER STORES CARBON SINKS SOURCE OF LIVELIHOODS</p> 	<p><b>STOP DRAINING</b></p> <p>THE LIFE FROM WETLANDS USE WISELY</p> 	<p><b>REWET REFOREST RESTORE WETLANDS</b></p> 
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

### SOME WETLANDS TO LOVE

<p><b>PEATLANDS</b> Pastaza-Marañón Foreland Basin - Peru</p> 	<p><b>CORAL REEFS</b> Great Barrier Reef - Australia</p> 	<p><b>MANGROVES</b> Sundarbans - Bangladesh</p> 
<p><b>MARSHES</b> Okavanga Delta - Botswana</p> 	<p><b>FLOOD PLAINS</b> Pantanal - Brazil, Bolivia, Paraguay</p> 	<p><b>ESTUARIES</b> Severn Estuary - UK</p> 
<p><b>COASTLINES</b> Amalfi Coast - Italy</p> 	<p><b>SWAMPS</b> Everglades - USA</p> 	<p><b>BOGS</b> Cuvette Centrale - Republic of Congo</p> 



**VALUE – MANAGE – RESTORE – LOVE**

#WorldWetlandsDay #ActForWetlands www.worldwetlandsday.org

**World Wetlands Day**  
2 February 2022



Wetlands Action for People and Nature

### 5 things you should know about wetlands

- Wetlands are the “kidneys of the landscape” ...
- Wetlands can mitigate climate change. ...
- Wetlands are a habitat for biodiversity. ...
- Many of the world's wetlands are degraded. ...
- Your Support for sustainable fishing can help protect wetlands.

