

## New habits

Changing individual behaviour is as an important part of the fight to protect our Earth. We have heard and seen many campaigns to recycle and reduce our personal carbon footprint. But for most, change is a difficult thing to do.

Pope Francis addresses the fact that obtaining things is not enough to bring us joy, yet the marketing of “must haves” is almost too good for us to give up. He wants us to look at ‘the gravity of today’s cultural and ecological crisis’ and use that awareness to create change and form ‘new habits’. (*Laudato Si’* 209)

For Pope Francis, ecological conversion ‘entails a loving awareness that we are not disconnected from the rest of God’s creatures, but joined in a splendid universal communion’.

*As believers, we do not look at the world from without but from within, conscious of the bonds with which God has linked us to all beings. By developing our individual, God-given capacities, an ecological conversion can inspire us to greater creativity and enthusiasm in resolving the world’s problems ...* (*Laudato Si’* – 220)

One of the world’s serious problems is the volume of human waste generated in

a careless and heedless consumerism. Changing habits takes time and focused intention. It is a commitment of head, heart and hands – knowing that we all contribute to the waste inundation crisis, caring enough to change and then taking those practical steps to lighten our personal waste footprint.

Our connectedness to all of creation demands that we take steps to address the ecological issues we face and this challenge begins with our everyday habits. Refusing single use plastics, not wasting food, buying clothes only when we need them and from sustainable outlets; the list of habits which could be changed is endless. And we are not alone. There are millions of people seeking to walk more lightly on the Earth. We are part of an often silent yet powerful eco-communion, as Thomas Berry reminds us in his book *Sacred Universe*:

*Once we accept that we exist as an integral member of this larger community of existence, we can begin to act in a more appropriate human way. We might even enter once again into that great celebration the universe itself.*

The urgent nature of the ecological crisis in which we are living cannot be exaggerated. It is a universal issue of life and death for all of creation. The time to change our habits is now!

God of love,  
show us our place  
in this world  
as channels of your love  
for all the creatures of this earth,  
for not one of them  
is forgotten in your sight.

An excerpt from  
A Christian prayer in  
union with creation



### REFLECTION

- > Conversion is a process that begins with small changes – where can you begin to create ecological conversion in your home, ministry and community?

### REFERENCES

1. Berry, T. (2009). *The Sacred Universe*. New York: Columbia University Press.
2. *Laudato Si’* [www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco\\_20150524\\_enciclica-laudato-si.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html)