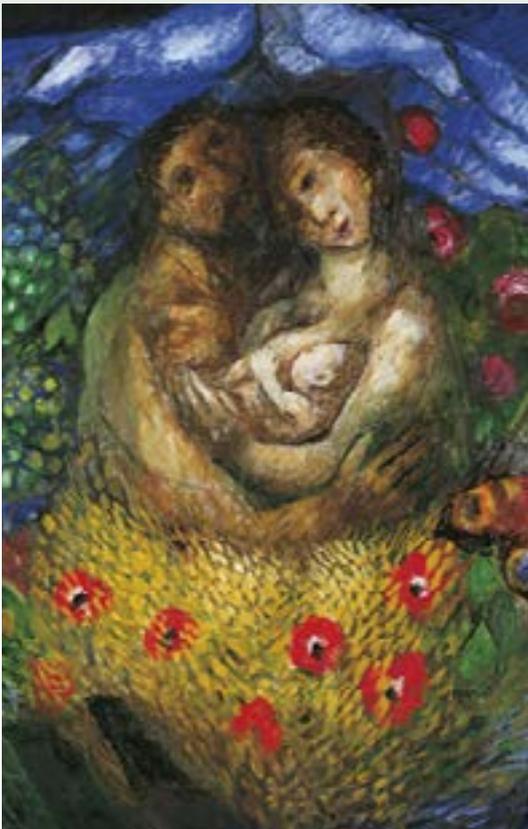


9. Show Mercy to our Common Home

GATHERING

Pope Francis added care of creation to the traditional sets of both the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy in 2016. Observing that, “We usually think of the works of mercy individually and in relation to a specific initiative: hospitals for the sick, soup kitchens for the hungry, shelters for the homeless ... he expanded the scope to include the whole of creation, “... simple daily gestures which break with the logic of violence, exploitation and selfishness and makes itself felt in every action that seeks to build a better world.” (World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, Sep 1, 2016).



READING

Human society must redesign its economy informed by ecological knowledge, proposing three simple but evolutionary principles. First, waste equals food. In nature, there is no such thing as waste. ... Second, use available solar energy. Every step toward reducing fossil fuel use and increasing solar energy use is a step toward sustainability. ... Third, value biological diversity. Nature is woven together by diversity, and all life depends upon the function and structure of diversity in ecosystems. ... These three “simple” principles... require us to redesign our systems, indeed, many systems of systems, including our economy. The sustainability revolution requires a transformation of society and also how we think. (*Care for Creation: a Franciscan spirituality of the Earth*, Ilia Delio, OSF, Keith Douglass Warner OFM, Pamela Wood St Anthony Messenger Press, Ohio, 1999)

BIBLE PASSAGE

Then God said, “I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds in the sky and all the creatures that move along the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food.” And it was so. (Genesis 1:29-31)

DISCUSSION

St Francis and Pope Francis – how do these leaders of our faith challenge us to care for the environment and respect all of God’s creation?

PRAYER (PAUSE FOR ANY SPECIAL INTENTIONS)

Extract from the Canticle of the Creatures (St Francis of Assisi, circa 1225)

Praised be you my Lord with all your creatures, especially Brother Sun,
who is the day through whom you give us light.

Praised be you, my Lord, through Sister Moon and the stars,
In the heavens you have made them bright, precious and fair.

Praised be you, my Lord, through Brothers Wind and Air,
And fair and stormy, all weather’s moods, by which you cherish all that You have made.

Praised be you my Lord through Sister Water, so useful, humble, precious and pure.

Praised be you my Lord through Brother Fire, through whom You light the night
and he is beautiful and playful and robust and strong.

Praised be you my Lord through our Sister, Mother Earth who sustains and governs us,
producing varied fruits with coloured flowers and herbs.

Amen.

May the works of mercy inspire and enrich your ministry in Mercy Partners

LIVING THE CORPORAL WORKS OF MERCY

Show mercy to our common home

Ask: What you can do to nurture the environment?

Practise simple daily gestures which break with the logic of violence, exploitation and selfishness

Show mercy to all of creation

Support action for the environment and support those who care for creation

Feed the hungry

Ask: Who is hungry and why?

Protect food sources and biodiversity

Share resources – 'be more' rather than 'have more'

Support those who feed the most vulnerable

Give drink to the thirsty

Ask: What are people thirsting for?

Oppose the privatisation of water

Be ever mindful of people who need water

Clothe the naked

Ask: Who is the vulnerable?

Protect the old, young, homeless, poor

Act for those who need human warmth

Be grateful for those who surround you

Welcome the stranger

Ask: Who needs a safe space?

Reach out to the unloved and the unloving

Practise radical hospitality

Visit the imprisoned

Ask: What captures people today?

Give up attitudes and habits which enslave

Help those who are prisoners and those confined by fear or loneliness

Visit the sick

Ask: What brings comfort to the sick?

Be there for people who need you

Be aware of those in your community who are unwell

Bury the dead

Ask: What do you need to bury?

Put away those things which can bring physical or spiritual death

Move on from the negatives of the past

Remember with gratitude those who have died and how they have impacted on your life

CARE FOR OUR COMMON HOME

- > **Support** an environmental charity. Groups and charities such as Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth, Global Action Plan and the Soil Association can make a huge impact on people's attitudes to preserving the planet.
- > **Think** of alternatives. If you're a bookworm, instead of buying new books, start a book-sharing club with friends and colleagues.
- > **Make a change!** Switch off the light and use the low energy lightbulbs. Wherever you go take re-useable bags. Use rechargeable batteries instead of disposable ones. The list is endless...
- > **Give** a night each month to being unplugged. Don't use any electricity, instead, play board games, eat raw food, play music with real instruments or simply talk to those around you.
- > **"Feel"** the earth and see the local wildlife in your backyard by creating a garden of plants local to your area.

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COMPASSION JUSTICE RESPECT HOPE



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