

## **10. Towards a new theology**

In *Laudato Si'* Pope Francis encourages all people to reconsider the universe story and the interrelationship between all living beings on our planet. This requires a new way of seeing our Earth, our relationships with all living things and our understanding of God.

*The universe unfolds in God, who fills it completely. Hence, there is a mystical meaning to be found in a leaf, in a mountain trail, in a dewdrop, in a poor person's face. The ideal is not only to pass from the exterior to the interior to discover the action of God in the soul, but also to discover God in all things. Saint Bonaventure teaches us that "contemplation deepens the more we feel the working of God's grace within our hearts, and the better we learn to encounter God in creatures outside ourselves. [§159]*

## READING

The theology of creation in Laudato Si' is in profound continuity with that which underpins Evangelii Gaudium (2013) and Misericordiae Vultus (2016) – about the immeasurable abundance of God's mercy. 'Not one sparrow is forgotten before God'. But we have forgotten. The environmental theologian Carmody Grey reminds us that Dostoyevsky believed that we should ask forgiveness of the birds... how much more should we pray for all creatures, on whom we are mutually dependent?... Evolution is a process of moving towards a more complex life, to a greater degree of relatedness, consciousness and deeper union. The Spirit of God is seeking to create newness in our lives, calling us to a fresh wholeness that requires much letting go of what we have known, and co-creating with God an undreamt-of future for our Church, for our world and for ourselves... The gospel life is about a new future in God. (O'Leary, 2017, p73)

*How does  
the theology of God in  
all things challenge your  
view of the world?  
What might change in our  
world if all people  
embraced this  
understanding of  
God?*

*The kingdom of  
heaven is like a mustard  
seed that someone took and  
sowed in his field; it is the smallest  
of all the seeds, but when it has  
grown it is the greatest of shrubs  
and becomes a tree, so that the  
birds of the air come  
and make nests in its  
branches.*

*Matthew 13:31-32*

***As we contemplate new understandings  
of our world, let us pray***

God of wisdom,

Help us to embrace new ways of seeing  
our world and our connections  
with all living beings.

Open our hearts to others  
as expressions of your love.

Inspire us to encourage, empower and  
enable others to seek new ways of living the  
Gospel in a changing world.

Help us to live always with love, peace,  
mercy and justice.

Amen.