

Mercy MOMENTS



Seven Ecological Virtues

Ten Green Commandments #10 - Cultivate Ecological Virtues

In this final Mercy Moment reflection on *Laudato Si*, we take a look at Fr Joshtrum's Seven Ecological Virtues. They are a challenge for us all.

1. **Praise:** *the title of the encyclical Laudato Si translates as Praise Be to You and invites us to see creation as an animate temple where the praise of God resounds. Pope Francis frequently reminds us that the world is a joyful mystery to be contemplated with gladness and praise (12).*
2. **Gratitude:** *when we accept each moment as a gift from God to be lived to the full (226) then gratitude should be our first response. As Fr Joshtrum writes, "...we stand in need of living our lives gratefully on Earth, in the eucharistic way, giving thanks to God for the gift of creation and sharing it generously with others.*
3. **Care:** *Laudato Si takes our relationship with creation from stewardship to care. Joshtrum calls on us all to ...cooperate as instruments of God for the care of creation, each according to his or her own culture, experience, involvements and talents (14).*
4. **Justice:** *the ecological crisis is ultimately about justice. We face the reality that the lifestyles of affluent societies are threatening the very livelihoods of the more vulnerable populations of our world. Eco-justice demands that the question of poverty alleviation be placed at the heart of a truly moral response to the climate crisis.*
5. **Work:** *Pope Francis challenges us to see work as collaborating with God's handiwork of creation. He asserts that ...work is a necessity, part of the meaning of life on this earth, a path to growth, human development and personal fulfilment (128).*
6. **Sobriety:** *Sobriety is a virtue totally eclipsed in our consumerist culture. The invitation to tread gently on Earth through adoption of a sober and simple lifestyle is at the core of Christian spirituality. Happiness means knowing how to limit some needs which only diminish us and being open to the many different possibilities which life can offer (223).*
7. **Humility:** *Pope Benedict XVI writes, "The first step toward a correct relationship with the world around us is the recognition by humans of their status as created beings." An awareness of this earthly origin should enable us to regain an authentic sense of humility before the Creator and the rest of the created world. Ecological humility is indeed vital for the salvation of Earth and of humanity today.*

These virtues are the starting point for climate consciousness and the embrace of a spirituality which is inclusive of all creation. The good news is that there are millions of people already working for our common home, in small ways and large, across the globe. Fr Joshtrum said, "From where I am at the Vatican, we see and hear about thousands and thousands of initiatives around the world, people coming together to care for our common home," he said. "We need a people's movement. It's too important to leave to politicians. We need everyone on board."



REFLECTION

How is your ecological footprint assisted by the seven ecological virtues proposed by Fr Joshtrum?

REFERENCES: 1. Pope Francis. (2015). *Laudato Si'* [Encyclical Letter]. Retrieved from www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html
2. Kureethadam, JI. (2019). *The Ten Green Commandments of Laudato Si'*. Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press.

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