

Creation Matters!

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Goals

- Identify problematic perspectives on creation
- Illuminate resources from our faith tradition for addressing these problems
- Propose some actions
- Discuss implications for Catholic individuals, organizations, and institutions

Problems

- Mind > Body
- Spirit > Flesh (Galations 5)
- Anthropocentrism
 - Then God said, “Let us make human beings in our image, after our likeness. Let them have dominion over [all other creatures]” (Genesis 1:26).

Problems

- Mind > Body
- Spirit > Matter (Galatians 5)
- Anthropocentrism
- Examples? Where do these show up today?
- Results
 - Rest of creation is instrumental
 - Patronizing perspective on rest of creation

Pope Francis

The earth, our home, is beginning to look more and more like an immense pile of filth. In many parts of the planet, the elderly lament that once beautiful landscapes are now covered with rubbish (LS 21).

Pope Francis

It is not enough to think of different species merely as potential “resources” to be exploited, while overlooking the fact that they have value in themselves. ...Because of us [and our contribution to extinctions], thousands of species will no longer give glory to God by their very existence, nor convey their message to us (LS 33).

Genesis 1

- Day 1: God saw that it was good.
- Day 2: God saw that it was good.
- Day 3: God saw that it was good.
- Day 4: God saw that it was good.
- Day 5: God saw that it was good.
- Day 6: God looked at everything God had made and found it very good.

Thomas Aquinas: Solidarity as Interdependence

Difference is the perfection of the universe
And because God's goodness could not be
adequately represented by one creature alone,
[God] produced many and diverse creatures,
that what was wanting to one could be supplied
by the other and the whole universe together
participates in and manifests the divine more
than any single being (*Summa Theologiae* I.
47.1).

Bible:

Solidarity as Interdependence

Then the wolf shall be a guest of the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat; the calf and the young lion shall browse together, with a young child to guide them (Isaiah 11:6).

Updated



Bible:

Solidarity in Praise

Sing to the LORD a new song;
sing to the LORD, all the earth.

...Let the heavens be glad and the earth
rejoice; let the sea and what fills it resound;
let the plains be joyful and all that is in them.
Then let all the trees of the forest rejoice
before the LORD who comes...to govern the
earth...with justice (Ps. 96:1, 11-13).

Bible:

Solidarity in Wisdom

Ask the beasts to teach you, the birds of the air to tell you;

Or speak to the earth to instruct you, and the fish of the sea to inform you.

Which of all these does not know that the hand of God has done this? (Job 12:7-9).

Bible:

Solidarity in salvation

- Jesus is “firstborn of all creation” (Col 1:15)

Bible:

Solidarity in salvation

I consider that the sufferings of this present time are as nothing compared with the glory to be revealed for us. For creation awaits with eager expectation the revelation of the children of God; for creation was made subject to futility...in hope that creation itself would...share in the glorious freedom of the children of God. We know that all creation is groaning in labor pains even until now (Romans 8:18-22).

Sacraments: Solidarity in materiality

- Fruit of the earth, work of human hands
- Fruit of the vine, work of human hands.

Learn

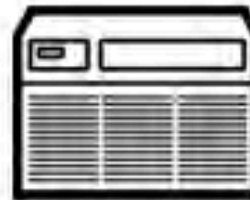
There's no single solution for climate change, but there is one that would be more effective than others. What do you think it is?



Build more
wind farms



Eat less meat
worldwide



Improve air-
conditioners



Switch to
mass transit

Illustrations by Jessica Ma / The New York Times

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/07/13/climate/climate-change-make-a-difference-quiz.html>

Learn

Fig Leaves Are Out. What to Wear to Be Kind to the Planet?

By TATIANA SCHLOSSBERG MAY 24, 2017



Smarter Living

Stories to help you understand the most of it.

[Dear Match Book: Give Me Fictional Sagas, the Longer the Better](#)

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<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/24/climate/eco-friendly-organic-clothing.html>

Learn

- <http://www.catholicclimatecovenant.org>
- <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/environment/index.cfm>
- Vincent Miller, editor, *The Theological and Ecological Vision of Laudato Si': Everything is Connected* (Bloomsbury).

Be Inspired By

- The Psalms
- Nature writers (e.g., Annie Dillard, Barry Lopez, Thomas Berry, Belden Lane, Gerard Manley Hopkins, SJ, Peter Wohlleben)
- Excerpt
- Images

Connect

- Source exercise
 - Source of things
 - Carbon footprint
 - Source of environmental injustice
 - Towards other humans here and elsewhere
 - Towards other creatures here and elsewhere

Act!

- Act on solidarity, of wisdom, praise, interdependence. Reject patronizing anthropocentrism.

Reframe

Highlight that school and parish environmental actions aren't just to improve the environment but that they:

- Augment praise of God and not diminish it
- Enhance creation's pedagogy and not diminish it
- Recognize reality of interdependence