



STEWARDS OF OUR EARTH All of God's Creation

Social Justice Committee, Holy Cross Parish, Mt. Airy, March 26, 2023

Walk the Path of Ecological Conversion

"This Lent we are invited to continue our journey of ecological conversion! During this time of fasting and renewal, we are reminded of who we are, creatures completely dependent on God called to live in love and compassion with all God's creation." (Colleen Dauerbach, *SSJ Justice*, 2/28/23)

An integral ecology is inseparable from the notion of the common good, a central and unifying principle of social ethics. The common good is "the sum of those conditions of social life which allow social groups and their individual members relatively thorough and ready access to their own fulfilment," Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'* (LS) 156. Pope Benedict XVI spoke of an "ecology of man," based on the fact that "man too has a nature that he must respect and that he cannot manipulate at will" (LS 155). The acceptance of our bodies as God's gift is vital, whereas thinking that we enjoy absolute power over our own bodies turns, often subtly, into thinking that we enjoy absolute power over creation (LS 155). "There is no honest way to avoid the conclusion that climate change is intimately related to deep defects in the way we have defined prosperity; the way we have conceptualized standard of living." (Unitarian Society of Hartford)

"... **We face two central questions**: How are we to be stewards of creation in an age when we may alter that creation, perhaps irrevocably? How can we exercise stewardship in a way that respects and protects the integrity of God's creation and provides for the common good?" (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, USCCB, 2010)

"**Perhaps one of the greatest reasons for resistance is that the reality of climate change demands that WE change.** To change the lifestyle to which we have become accustomed. To stop our dependence on fossil fuels, which in turn decreases the profits and the power of all the related industries and corporations. To alter our habits of consumption and disposal. To transform how we view the role of the human in the enterprise we call life. We are in service to the future generations of all species and to the planet..." (*Reflections on the Care of Creation*, by Fr. Emmet Farrell and Mr. Roman Fernandez, Editor)

To motivate your journey of ecological conversion, consider attending this event coming up in April. Villanova University is preparing for a BIG event on **Tuesday, April 18th** at the Connelly Center. The Second Annual Anti-Poverty Symposium, in collaboration with the Villanova Sustainability Leadership Council and the Office for Mission and Ministry, will, to quote the website, "... assemble experts in poverty alleviation and sustainability to discuss and motivate the community to ... [build] **a sustainable planet free from poverty.** This year's discussions will be broadly framed around the intersections of poverty, ecocide, and the path toward ecological justice."

EcoPhilly's very own Father Art Purcaro and many others will present **the latest thinking on integrated ecology principles**. Speakers include the author Bill McKibben, Cardinal Peter Turkson (intimately associated with *Laudato Si'*), and Cardinal Robert McElroy (Archbishop of San Diego and a leading proponent of EcoPhilly-style sustainability). [Register your interest by clicking here.](#)

In putting ourselves on the path to ecological conversion, "we are able to take an honest look at ourselves, to acknowledge our deep dissatisfaction, and to embark on new paths to authentic freedom. No system can completely suppress our openness to what is good, true, and beautiful, or our God-given ability to respond to his grace at work deep in our hearts." (*Laudato Si'* 205)