

## *ss.cc. women with an ecological spirituality*



For some years, environmental issues such as: ecology and concern for our planet, have been and are a major concern, and a pending worldwide task.

This topic recovered strength and visibility in 2015, due to two important events. On the one hand, the Paris Agreement, where the international community established the objectives of sustainable development: the fight against poverty, care for the environment and work against climate change. On the other hand, from the Church, Pope Francis published the encyclical “Laudato Si”, calling us to the awareness and responsibility that we all have on this subject; putting the ecological question and the fight against poverty at the centre of ecclesial life.

Every day, to a greater or lesser degree, we experience the effects of climate change as a protest of a damaged and offended nature, due to the irresponsible and violent action of human beings. It is evident that the uniqueness of the earth is progressively falling apart, the consequences of which are affecting all living beings, but especially the weakest and poorest of the earth.

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At Congregational level, the theme of ecology, concern for climate change, care for our common home ... needs to be welcomed, reflected on and assumed with great responsibility and commitment. Right now, we are all involved in the development of the Apostolic Plan of the Congregation, and when talking about the most significant aspects of our world, a clear reference is made to issues related to ecology. This means that, that reality is affecting us, we are more sensitive to this socio-environmental problem and we see that we need to work on it.

***“God saw that everything he had made and found it very good”  
(Gen 1:31)***

We are called to expand our contemplative spirit, looking at creation with new eyes, coming into contact with the Creator God, so that it leads us to love creation as He loves it. *“God saw that everything he had made and found it very good”* (Gen 1:31).

We are called to discover the value of the created world as a revelation of the divine, where each human being sees himself as an integral and significant part in the whole of creation, and at the same time responsible for its care: *“Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden, to cultivate and to care for it”* (Gn 2:15). Here it is good to remember the words of Pope Benedict XVI when he says: *“Nature ... speaks to us of the Creator and of his love for humanity ... Nature is at our disposal not as a pile of waste scattered randomly, but as a gift from the Creator who has given him an intrinsic order, so that man discovers guidelines that must be followed to till it and care for it”* (Caritas in Veritate N° 48).

The care for and defence of nature is in communion with the defence of the poorest, because they are the ones who are most exposed to the consequences of the destruction of the environment. As Pope Francis says: *“We are faced not with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but with one complex crisis which is both social and environmental”* (LS 139) and adds: *“The defence of the land has no purpose other than the defence of life”*.

We are called to live “an ecological spirituality”, because as Pope Francis says *“Everything is interconnected, and this invites us to develop a spirituality of global solidarity which flows from the mystery of the Trinity”* (LS 240). I will leave you with some texts of “Laudato Si” to encourage and accompany us in our reflection on and living out of it.

***We are called to live “an ecological spirituality”***

*“I would like to offer Christians a few suggestions for an ecological spirituality grounded in the convictions of our faith, since the teachings of the Gospel have direct consequences for our way of thinking, feeling and living. More than in ideas or concepts as such, I am interested in how such a spirituality can motive us to a more passionate concern for the protection of our world. A commitment to this cannot be sustained by doctrine alone, without a spirituality capable of inspiring us, without an ‘interior impulse which encourages, motivates, nourishes and gives meaning to our individual and communal activity”* (LS 216).

*“Given the complexity of the ecological crisis and its multiple causes, we need to recognize that solutions will not emerge from just one way of interpreting and transforming reality. Respect must also be shown for the various cultural riches of different peoples, their art and poetry, their interior life and spirituality. If we are truly concerned to develop an ecology capable of remedying the damage we have done, no branch of the sciences, nor any form of wisdom can be left out, and that includes religion and the language particular to it”* (LS 63).

In the light of these calls and questions we can ask ourselves: does our SS.CC. spirituality have something to contribute to this reality that affects us all? In what way does the cry of the earth touch the doors of our reparative ministry? The Pope invites us to see how such a spirituality can motive us to a more passionate concern for the protection of our world. Within our SS.CC. spirituality we have a great wealth and values that can direct us to a serious commitment in this field.

***Does our ss.cc. spirituality have something to contribute to this reality that affects us all?***

We are living in a world characterized by selfishness, technology and connectivity. We are more informed than ever; the news goes around the world in an instant through social networks. However, human beings have become more solitary: communication is done through the computer and the telephone; each one is locked in his/her personal world. This selfishness prevents us from becoming aware of what is happening to nature.

This is the dynamic of our world of which we are often accomplices. If we are sincere, all of us, somehow, are immersed in this technological and individualistic world. The call is to become aware of this reality and to be converted.

Let us remember that our evangelizing activity *causes us enter into the dynamism of Christ's Love for his Father and for the world, especially the poor ... and also for our land that needs to be restored.*