



**With Sr Patricia Mulhall
And
Sarah Gardner Lobo**

ZOOM MEETING HELD ON 2nd June 2021 AT 7:30PM

“Laudato Si” Chapter 6 - Paragraphs 202 - 246

Participants 21:

Contributions

SEE - JUDGE - ACT

Chapter 5 - Ecological Education and Spirituality

GROUP 1

The section on the Eucharist (#236) contains a beautiful message. The beauty of the Eucharist as 'food for his creatures...a fragment of matter...come so that we may find him in this world of ours. An act of cosmic love'. Luminous writing but there are places in this world where it's almost impossible for people to access the Eucharist and that perhaps it's time to rethink the rules surrounding the distribution of this precious gift.

- We talked about passing on the faith to our children/grandchildren, how observance has fallen dramatically. This causes much concern and heartache, but the young have so much to teach us.... their generosity, openness, acceptance of difference and their strong desire to care for the earth. They are in the lead on Climate Change and often brave and passionate in its defence. Truly in keeping with the Pope's *Laudato Si*.
- There was mention of the Mystics having powerful messages for us all. St John of the Cross, St Francis, St Bonaventure and a Sufi Mystic Ali al Khawas: "mystical meaning to be found in a leaf, mountain trail, in a dewdrop, in a poor person's face". These writings unite us all in our



various faiths. Most of us were born into our Catholic Faith. Perhaps in their own way our descendants will find God themselves? This was a comforting thought.

- People outside of Christianity have much to teach us.
- Change is needed. This was a common cry from all the group ... a change of spirit, and in the attitude of the heart. We need to recover peace and harmony, to appreciate life with the 'serene attentiveness'. We have lost our sense of peace.
- "I think now about everything I do, in the kitchen the garden the supermarket".
- This course has changed the way I see things. There was mention next of money and how we are always private about our 'giving'. It used to be considered bad taste to mention it. Is this what is meant by 'not letting the right hand know what the left hand is doing'. Yet we must not think our efforts aren't going to change the world or benefit society often unbeknownst to us for they call forth a goodness which invariably tends to spread, restore our self-esteem and enable us to live more fully (and feel that life on Earth is worthwhile.).
- We ended up talking about doing our shopping at Zero Joe's and about Nail Bars as one of us had recently had her nails done and encountered worrying signs that there were suspect conditions of employment.....very long working days, no meal breaks and other signs of exploitative practices. All agreed when encountered these should be called out, not reluctantly but sensitively and firmly.

Laudato Si' in action? **Pax et Bonum.**

Group 2

- *Laudato Si'* has been a good guide for what we need to do to save our world.
- We should become more self-sufficient in all areas and be in control of what happens in the production of everything to ensure it does not harm people and the environment.
- Individualism – the me society. We need to realise that other human beings are part of our world.



- Investments funds are being vetted by environmental companies to make sure they do not damage society and creation. Anything non-sustainable is rejected.
- **Paragraph 202** calls for human beings to change and highlights the cultural, spiritual, and educational challenges before us. We need renewal.
- In the Philippines when there is no rain for the rice crops, the children must go out and collect plastic to sell for money to buy food.
- We need to change our hearts to be like Jesus, but the devil is always present. We need humility.
- Pollution is affecting our health.
- The theme running through **Chapter 6** is that the family is the heart of culture, but family life has changed for the worse and children are not being educated in ecological and environmental truths.
- **Paragraph 211** talks about how educating individuals in environmental responsibility can reflect a generous and worthy creativity and bring out the best in us.
- Choose to live simply: consume less, wear more clothes to save on heating.
- **Paragraph 222** – return to simplicity, appreciate the small things as we did during the Covid lockdowns – stop and see the beauty around us.
- **Paragraph 223** – happiness comes from limiting our needs and being open to possibilities.
- **Paragraph 226** – develop serene attentiveness – be present in the moment. We all strive for this.
- In the beautiful prayers at the end of the book, Our Lady's role is acknowledged by Pope Francis – Mary made Jesus human. They are linked in their humanity.
- We suffer from compulsive consumerism – buy, buy, buy. We are overwhelmed with material things and need to think hard about what it is we need and what we could do without.
- Do not waste – buy only what you need. Think about what we do with things we are finished with. Small, good habits add up.



- Pope Francis talks scientifically but it comes down to religion. A world without faith falls to pieces. He calls to the heart of our being to restore what has been destroyed by selfishness.
- We are called to change hearts but are far from changing our own hearts. It is the Holy Spirit who changes us.
- The Trinity resounds and makes us aware of our interconnectedness with creation and with each other in a world of relationships.
- **Paragraph 240** – we need to get out from ourselves to live in communion with God, with others and with all creatures.
- **Paragraph 214** talks about Christian communities having an important role to play in ecological education. Christians are doing so much. The secular world must also take responsibility.
- We upset people when we try to tell them to stop breaking our world, but we must persevere.
- Things are changing at the Sacred Heart Church. We have the Alpha Course and our website. We have learnt a lot since the pandemic started.
- There are so many things we can do individually, picking up good habits and making people want to change. People have more of a public conscience now. We should support representative groups and organisations to raise awareness of what can be done.
- Start awareness groups in our Parish.
- We must look for ways to touch people with no faith. No one wants their grandchildren growing up in a broken world. There is an inherent moral obligation to improve things for them.
- One way forward is to join an ecumenical group called the Green Christians who are doing a course on Creation Care.
- Support groups like the CAFOD Living Simply initiative, Stella Maris looking after foreign seamen, and Green Christians who find ways to recycle awkward items.
- The terrible slogan on the bus from Sarah's presentation: 'There's Probably No God, So Stop Worrying and Enjoy Life' is a devastating thought.



Jean Paul Sartre wrote a play about the hell of living with a group of people. The above sentence would make that play come true, for without God we do not even have reasons to be tolerant of each other.

- **Paragraph 209** talks about how young people today have a real ecological sensitivity towards the environment and should be appreciated and applauded and assisted.
- **Paragraph 238** says that the world was created by the three Persons acting as a single divine principle: The Father as the ultimate source of everything, the Son as His reflection through whom all things were created, and the Spirit as the infinite bond of love. When we contemplate the beauty of the world, we must remember to give praise to the Trinity.

Group 3

- Struck by the call for good ecological educators and all agreed we are fortunate to have that in Sarah and Sister Patricia. They were to put it in English: “Brilliant.”
- **Paragraph 212:** Discussed how teenagers are very ecologically aware in some respects but can fall in favour of convenience. We need to teach by example and to let them know we faced crisis in our youth, e.g., nuclear war threat we got through it, and we can get through the ecological crisis if we all play our part, “goodness which albeit unseen, inevitably tends to spread”
- **Paragraph 242:** Reference to St Joseph who is a wonderful example of sacrificial love, taking care of his family. We noted this year the Pope has made this a special year of devotion to St Joseph.
- There are other Saints who can inspire us to be more ecologically minded and the Sacraments which help to close the gap between Heaven and Earth in particular the Eucharist.
- Promoting social love, it is the key to authentic development, respecting the social framework in which we live. President Biden has just halted drilling for oil in Alaska at one end of the extreme and the person who



can afford to pay for excess heating but chooses to put on another jumper rather than turn up the thermostat.

- **Paragraph 222:** Christian spirituality call for us to approach life in moderation, to be happy with less and appreciate the small things. Talked about even if you do not have a garden, grow flowers or food in a window box or pot. This is the first year the RHS has appointed a specialist in this area and these growing spaces will be taken seriously at the shows and allowed to win awards.
- In an extension of “being happy with less”, learn to detach from what we have, do not be possessive. Be prepared to give away.
- Service is a way: help others to develop their own gifts something spiritual in this.
- We recounted a story of children kicking soft drink cans in the park. Their guardian said it would be cleared up. Eventually, it was cleared up, but by adults. Two points arose from this story: one, if children do not clear up after themselves, will they ever learn the importance of doing so?; second, it illustrates how it is good not to destroy, but depleting is a best first choice.
- **Paragraph 203:** The wealthy and powerful minority are not necessarily free, they often live in a gilded cage and ill health is a great leveller. Here is an opportunity to fill their empty hearts with that which does not end, God’s love.
- How we can face up to those, like Dawkins, who seek to destroy faith:
 - o Prayer, teach the young to pray.
 - o The Sacrament of reconciliation brings us back into harmony with God our neighbour and the environment.
 - o Help people especially the young to understand themselves better, their own gifts and in appreciating themselves they will come to appreciate others and the world around them, becoming less anthropocentric.



NEXT MEETING

9 June 2021

7:30 p.m.

Laudato Si'

CONCLUSION

“Laudato Si’ Church Community”

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