



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

ZOOM MEETING HELD ON 19th May 2021 AT 7:30PM

“Laudato Si” Chapter 5 - Paragraphs 163 - 201

Participants: 16

Contributions

SEE - JUDGE - ACT

Chapter 5 Lines of Approach & Action

GROUP 1

General

Sr Patricia’s slide highlighting natural plant-based diets can be found also via Deliciously Ella. The latter established by Ella ... to address her own autoimmune / nerve disorder /skin health issues. (look up). Plant-based food is boring & straight vegetarian is preferred.

- Word of caution see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ella_Woodward
- Discussion switched to the challenges of the gig economy (Defined as: a labour market characterized by the prevalence of short-term contracts or freelance work as opposed to permanent jobs. "working in the gig economy means constantly being subjected to last-minute scheduling" –added as Sarah wanted to know exactly what this term means). Amazon has opened a new warehouse in the UK using 500 robots to assemble orders. For Interesting Video on Amazon robotics & impacts on workers see: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IMPbKvb8y8s>



- “Human right to work and human dignity in work” (Find LS para.). The Clothes Sweat shops in Leicester are sold online via BooHoo Online Fashion for example. It was the conditions in these clothes sweat shops that contributed to the spike in Coronavirus in Leicester in 2020. (See for example: <https://www.reutersevents.com/sustainability/leicester-sweatshops-show-urgent-need-change-unethical-business-practices>)
- We discussed the plight of delivery persons e.g. Deliveroo. Sr Patricia had passed onto Sarah the example of a local hairdresser who had been furloughed & had subsequently become a delivery driver during Lockdown in order to cover the household bills. He was required to deliver 80 packages a day (i.e. on average 8 parcels per hour or 1 parcel every 7 minutes for 10h! – not including parcel loading time at a depot) and was paid £7.90 per hour, not sure if this included petrol money, but unlikely to have included wear & tear or business insurance on his own vehicle. Other highlighted paragraphs:
- #189: Pope Francis’ call for politicians & economists to be in dialogue – we need to support that. Sarah’s comment: Note the current discussions around the UK – Australia Trade Deal involving the import of cheap Australian beef & lamb to the UK (see: <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2021/may/20/uk-australia-trade-deal-what-are-the-key-issues>)
- #179 & 180: The role & importance of local groups & individual in bringing about change. There is much that we can do see #180. Often small groups can do more than large ones – they are more flexible & can pick up issues faster than big institutions (as an example Sarah says remember how quickly we put together the *Laudato Si’* Stations of the Cross for Holy Week – a small but very positive experience!)
- #194: Highlighting Pope Francis statement “Redefining our notion of progress. A technological and economic development which does not leave in its wake a better world and integrally higher quality of life cannot be considered progress”.
- #196: Noting that the slow & weak should not be put aside; reinforcing Pope Francis’ words call for “subsidiarity, which grants freedom to develop



the capabilities present at every level of society ... For, the current model with its emphasis on success and self-reliance does not appear to favour an investment in efforts to help the slow, the weak or the less-talented to find opportunities in life". Compare this sentiment with the YouTube link on Amazon Robotics above!

- #189 - the need for global laws to counter overproduction. See #189 "Production is not always rational & is usually tied to economic variables which assign to products a value that does not necessarily correspond to their real worth. This frequently leads to an overproduction of some commodities with unnecessary impact on the environment and with negative results on regional economies."
- #173 – Global regulatory norms are needed to impose obligations and prevent unacceptable actions, for example, when powerful companies dump contaminated waste or offshore polluting industries in other countries. – The poorer countries need the money and the powerful companies being willing to pay for it.
- The use, production & disposal of Disposable Nappies – each taking 500 years to degrade (NB estimates vary widely from 40-500 years but both are far too long for the environment to have to handle!) See below for edification.
- "If the baby Queen Elizabeth (the first one) had worn a modern disposable, parts of it could be around today, especially if King Henry VIII had adhered to modern advice and had sealed it in a plastic bag, effectively mummifying the contents!" (from <https://littlamlambnappies.com/pages/the-environment>).
- Also a nice example of Reuse at the Soft Play Centre. A staff member there had supplemented her furloughed income during Lockdown by picking up 2nd-hand furniture being offered free to takeaway, upcycling it and reselling it for a small profit. An example of an enterprising, green, innovative, local business!



Group 2

- Thanks go to Sr Patricia from all of us for her great presentation and explanation of chapter 5 which was quite difficult.
- Paragraph 179 talks of co-operatives being developed to use renewable sources of energy and how they can benefit local people. This is one of the key paragraphs of chapter 5. In Africa, land and seeds were given to the local people to grow food, but they ended up growing drugs to sell for easy money. This was disappointing and not in line with church values.
- Paragraph 180: there are no uniform solutions as each country and region has its own problems and limitations. Much needs to be done in communities to preserve the eco-structure. In Cyprus, behind the big houses were rubbish dumps where the poor people lived in tents, selling what they could find in the rubbish. Poor people were sent to Cyprus from Turkey to work in the houses. Unlikely, a family could always invite the cook and maid to sit down with them at table and share their meals.
- Paragraph 201 – religions should lead the way in protecting all levels of society with open and respectful dialogue. *Laudato Si'* has been adopted by many groups and organisations, not all of them religious, as a clear indication of the way forward in saving our planet.
- Paragraph 193 states that it is the responsibility of advantaged people to encourage those less fortunate who live in overcrowded cities in bad conditions with no parks to walk their children in. The SVP at the church in Yateley had a clothes bank – donations went to charity shops or were recycled.
- Paragraph 167 is worth remembering as it is so important. At the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, it was proclaimed that “human beings are at the centre of concerns for sustainable development”.
- We also discussed paragraph 172 – a huge priority is to eliminate poverty and to promote social development of the people in poor countries. This is being forgotten by affluent countries with scandalous levels of consumption and corruption by the rich and powerful.



- Paragraph 173 advises that “... enforceable international agreements are urgently needed ...”. Local authorities do not have the power or influence to carry through legislation that will make a difference.
- We also need to address paragraph 198 which stated that politics and the economy do not take responsibility when it comes to poverty and environmental degradation but tend to blame each other.

Group 3

- We all felt that Pope Francis had raised an aspiration for dialogue, but he hadn't said how you could make it effective.
- We all don't have much faith in politicians.
- We agreed that we need to push for the environmental impact of new initiatives or enterprises to be assessed at the planning stage so that the planning includes ways to mitigate the impact. (# 183)
- We strongly support “One world with a common plan” # 164. The COVID pandemic has shown us this is possible as we have had to adopt a common plan to fight it. It led to some discussion of the potential positive side of the COVID pandemic, it made the world stop, which included polluting. For example, aircraft were grounded for months and the roads were empty of cars and the atmospheric pollution levels dropped dramatically.
- We also agreed that if people are poor or caught in the crossfire of war and civil unrest they cannot be expected to worry about the environment when they are just worried about surviving. We need to stop war and poverty.
- All these factors above taken together makes the likelihood of change seem impossible, individuals can make changes, but they will also have to lobby to make policy changes. The Pope talks about hope being the answer in Fratelli Tutti. Siobhan referred back to an earlier chapter in Laudato Si' in which we are asked to slow down, so that we positively impact the exponential growth of destruction, e.g. walk instead of drive. A news channel called Tortoise News is just that, slow news.
- We can watch out for opportunities as COP 26 comes up to speak either individually or collectively. She will be sharing some campaign literature with the whole study group.



NEXT MEETING

2 June 2021

7:30 p.m.

Laudato Si'

Chapter 6: "Ecological Education and Spirituality"

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