

“A HOME FOR ALL? RENEWING THE *OIKOS* OF GOD”



Our congregational JPIC Logo

Two hands, the hands of our God, Father Creator, that hold our common home, our Mother and Sister Earth. In this house all creation, including the human family, is related and united to each other like a home (*Oikos*) symbolized by the roof and the two green leaves.

Now both hands they are our hands, because His love has given us the common home to take care of it.

This newsletter wants to draw attention to the deep meaning of the word "Home" and what this means, if we consider our planet as our home.

This year's "Season of Creation" invites us to this reflection, a time in which the Capuchin Tertiary family will launch for its members a path of integral ecological conversion. Together with many people of good will, she wants to put her seed, so that the next generations can enjoy our mother earth as a home, the "oikos of God".

Home

Familiar sights, sounds and smells, a common language, family or friends: a home means something different to everyone. For many

people, a home is linked to a fixed place: the place of birth. Normally, when you live far away, you feel homesick and miss home. At "home" the person experiences belonging, security and orientation. It is a safe anchor in a fast moving world. An old English proverb says that "Home is where the heart lives." But what do those who have to leave their home feel: migrants, refugees? There are millions of people ...

Our Planet as our home

"The Earth, from the Latin word *Terra*, goddess of femininity and fertility, was formed approximately 4550 million years ago and it is estimated that life would have originated about a billion years later ... It is home to millions of species, including ours and it is the only planet where the existence of life is known"¹.

We have only one Mother Earth! A Creator. A human family. We are all united in this single common home that nurtures and sustains us. As Pope Francis reminds us in *Laudato Si'*: "Everything is connected"². The question is: Do we value, as I have described above, this our home?

“A home for all? Renewing the *Oikos* of God”

This is the motto of this year's "**Season of Creation**", a global ecumenical initiative, which begins each year on September 1, the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, and ends with the feast of St. Francis of Assisi, 4th of October. During this period, Christians throughout the world renew their faith in God the Creator and unite in a special way in prayer and work in favor of the defense of the common home.

The first part of the motto: "**A home for all?**" Leads us to sincerely reflect: Is the Earth really a home for all?

¹ cf. Andrés Zúñiga, estudiante de Medicina U. San Sebastián y asociado a Ipsuss

² cf. *Laudato Si'* 138

In the second part "**Renewing the Oikos of God**", "Oikos", in Greek means *home*³, we want to put at the center the interrelation with God, of all creatures with each other and with their "oikos".

As it was said in the previous bulletin, unfortunately we human beings have not taken care of our planet. What evolved over millions of years we have been able to damage in less than 200 years, since the Industrial Revolution and with enormous speed in the last 50 years. "We are responsible for air and water pollution, acid rain, the production of toxic substances such as carbon dioxide, the loss of vegetation due to overgrazing, deforestation or desertification, the loss of wildlife, of the extinction of species, of the degradation of the soil and its depletion, of erosion, of the introduction of invasive species, in addition to serious alterations in those ecosystems that allow the existence of ours and of the other species"⁴.

Urgent call to renew the "Oikos" of God

Pope Francis never get tired of making us aware of the existence of "ecological sin", of how serious it is and the need to repent of it, to convert ourselves and to act accordingly.

We are responsible and must respond on how we protect or damage our home. The Pope defines it above all as "an offense to our neighbor, by depriving them of a worthy home that God created and entrusted to humans"⁵... we negatively affect the lives of our brothers and sisters, whether they live on our same street or the other side of the world. On the contrary, the efforts to protect and positively develop our common home is an expression of love towards our neighbor... we are called to be good caretakers of the home of humanity also for the good of future generations "⁶.

In the Encyclical Letter Fratelli Tutti the Pope continues to encourage everyone to guard our "oikos": "When we speak of caring for the common home, which is the planet, we go to that minimum of universal awareness and concern for mutual care that can still be in the level of the

³ La palabra ecología tiene su raíz en esta palabra griega "oikos"

⁴ Cf. Andrés Zúñiga, citado más arriba

⁵ LS 8: "Un crimen contra la naturaleza es un crimen contra nosotros mismos y un pecado contra Dios"

⁶ Cf. Mons. Daniel Mueggenborg, en Northwest Catholic, Arquidiócesis de Seattle, 4 marzo 2020

people. Because if someone has water to spare, and yet cares for it with humanity in mind, it is because they have achieved a moral height that allows them to transcend from themselves and from their group of belonging. That is wonderfully human!"⁷.

How can we renew the "Oikos" of God?

"Everyone's response is urgent, because scientists say that the next ten years will be key to restoring ecosystems, which would mean the integral recovery of our relationship with nature"⁸.

The Pope calls and encourages all spheres of the Church to an "integral ecological" conversion, consisting of "the development of new convictions, attitudes and ways of life", which begin from the "consciousness of a common origin, of a mutual belonging and of a future shared by all"⁹. A new lifestyle cannot be imposed by law, it must be the fruit of a change in personal convictions and motivations, of a true personal and institutional conversion.

For all of the above, Pope Francis summons us to undertake, together, the path of **Seven Years Laudato Si'**, with seven specific "Objectives" that will guide this path of integral ecological conversion¹⁰, in the search for the generation of a culture of care that our Earth needs.



THE CAPUCHIN TERTIARY FAMILY ADVOCATE WITH NEW VIGOR FOR THE CARE OF OUR "OIKOS"

This year, in the Season of Creation, Sister Ana Tulia López Bedoya, Superior General of the

⁷ Fratelli Tutti 117

⁸ Cf. Papa Francisco, Mensaje Inicio del Decenio de la ONU para la Restauración de los Ecosistemas, 27.05.2021

⁹ Cf. Laudato Si' 202

¹⁰ Boletín JPIC N° 13

Congregation of the Capuchin Tertiary Sisters of the Holy Family, will launch the **"Seven Years Laudato Si'"** path for the entire Capuchin Tertiary Family.

The values of JPIC, as values of Franciscan-Amigonian spirituality, are deeply present in our Family from the beginning of its foundation. They are born from the contemplation of the merciful heart of God the Father our Creator, who gave each creature a value and a meaning. Saint Francis of Assisi, from this contemplation, named the creatures all brothers or sisters. Our Father Founder, Luis Amigó, contemplative of the Creator and of the works that came out of His hands, listened in his time to the cry of the poor and always responded promptly and generously.

Today we want to follow in his footsteps personally, communally and institutionally and respond with new vigor to the great challenges presented to us by the alarming cry of our mother earth and the poor.

The cry of the poor, who have lost their home

The ecological emergency of our planet has a human face. "It is the poor and vulnerable communities around the world who suffer disproportionately the consequences of the ecological and climate crises. They are the most innocent, since they have contributed the least to causing the problem at its source"¹¹.

In 2019 due to natural disasters such as drought, floods, storms ... 24.9 million people had to leave their homes¹². Some have never been able to return to it.

Exercise: *Now I propose to the reader to be silent in order to be touched by this immense number, because behind the number human lives are hidden. They are our brothers and I cannot read it only as news, as one more number, to be indifferent. Because he is my brother, he allows me to be touched by his suffering, his anguish, his ardent desire to have a safe home, "to have a home, where my soul lives" ... silence ... In the*

silence I also feel the heart of God, my Creator Father and my brother's Creator Father too.

Allowing yourself to be touched, not to be indifferent is part of the objective of Laudato Si': Integral Ecological Spirituality. "To see or not to see, that is the question"¹³. It is up to us, if we make an effort to see the suffering that each story entails in order to "take a painful conscience, we dare to make the happenings of the world become our personal suffering, and thus recognize the contribution that each one can make"¹⁴.

On Sunday, September 26, 2021, almost at the end of the Season of Creation, the Catholic Church also celebrates **the World Day of Migrants and Refugees**. The theme chosen by the Pope is **"Towards an ever wider 'we'."** It is a day to let ourselves be touched by the lives of so many people who leave their home and in some way to be in solidarity with them. "Do not be indifferent and pray, to put our grain of seed to build universal brotherhood together with the whole Church"¹⁵.



THE CAPUCHIN TERTIARY SISTERS OF THE "NAZARETH" PROVINCE WELCOMING, PROTECTING, PROMOTING AND INTEGRATING IN THE HOME



PROYSO is an **NGO**, founded in 1996 by the Capuchin Tertiary Sisters of the Holy Family for the integral promotion and solidarity with the impoverished. It is a non-profit association of

¹¹ cf. Dicasterio para el Servicio del Desarrollo Humano Integral, Orientaciones Pastorales sobre Desplazados Climáticos 30.03.2021

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1B7xNbUFOMi1TIFw8Z4teesLv8HKfBfRC/view>

¹² cf. Observatorio de Desplazamiento Interno (IDMC), Informe Mundial sobre Desplazamiento Interno 2020

¹³ cf. Papa Francisco Prologo Orientaciones Pastorales sobre Desplazados Climáticos, 30.03.2021

¹⁴ cf. Laudato Si' 19

¹⁵ Cf. Dicasterio para el Servicio del Desarrollo Humano Integral <https://migrants-refugees.va/es/recursos/2021-jornada-mundial-del-migrante-y-del-refugiado/>

volunteers that, respecting the culture and values of the peoples and groups where all religious, political and social positions have a place, works directly with the receptive populations of collaboration, promotion and development. It currently helps 10 projects in eight countries. <https://ongproyso.es>

UBUNTU SOCIAL PROJECT, in Barakaldo, Spain.



Ubuntu means "I am because we are". The Ubuntu project was founded in 2013, by the Capuchin Tertiary Sisters of the Holy Family,

with the aim of reaching out to immigrant women without resources who come looking for well-being and decent living conditions, with the determination to build a future in Spain. The culmination of this project is done with the legalization and insertion of these women in the society, that acquire tools and the necessary resources to do so.



The motto of **ALBERGUE COVADONGA** is "Nobody on the street and homeless". Thus, the Foundation Albergue Covadonga in Gijón-Spain, welcomes people in the situation of total social exclusion. It has places for 23 women and 55 men, who can live with dignity 7 days a month. The "Albergue" can also accommodate three families. In addition to accommodation, it responds to other basic needs that seek to improve the quality of life of the residents. The Capuchin Tertiary Sisters have resided and collaborated in this Shelter since 1995. Their mission is to accompany these brothers, welcoming, listening, supporting, promoting them. They are in charge of the dining room, the warehouse, the volunteering and teamwork with the professionals of the Work. <https://www.alberguecovadonga.es>

LET'S REFLECT AND SHARE

1. How can I exercise in allowing myself to be touched by the wonder of our mother earth, our home?
2. How can I exercise / have a painful conscience / dare myself to turn what happens in the world into a personal suffering, and thus recognize what contribution I can make?
3. How can you contribute, personally and institutionally, in these Seven years in the construction of the culture of care for Creation and in the dream that no one is left without their "oikos"?

Sister Ursula Leuffen, tc