

Guardian Angels for Climate Sunday (GACS)

April 2021

We are all Brothers.

"**We are all Brothers**" is the theme of the new encyclical that Pope Francis proclaimed in October 2020 under the name "Tutti Fratelli" (in Italian: "We are brothers"). In it the Holy Father makes a direct reference to his 2015 encyclical "Laudato Si", caring for the planet. Here however, the Pope is putting a special emphasis onto caring for the poor of the planet, and the world post covid pandemic.

The Pope says we have a choice: **either** to continue to ignore the suffering of the poorest and to abuse the common home, the planet, **or** to act.

Climate crisis is a **social justice** issue - the most vulnerable, be the poor, or unborn future generations, will bear the burden of its impacts. Many communities are suffering from it now.

Here is an example: Two weeks ago, we were on a zoom call with the Bishop of Mozambique. He was telling us that in the last 20 years they suffered from 11 massive cyclones, floods and droughts of the scale never seen before. The last cyclone happened just two months ago, in February 2021. The consequences were loss of human life, loss of livestock, destruction of the crops, washing away of seeds, the infrastructure, schools, bridges and so on. Effectively the coastal town of Beira disappeared from the face of the earth. And what about these people? They have not participated in making the climate crisis, yet they are suffering the most. This is **climate injustice**.

So, in this latest address, Pope Francis is inviting us, Catholics, all Christians, all people of any faith and lastly all people of good will, to join him on a journey of transformation and action in response to as he put it " **the cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor**".

The Pope stresses that the countdown has started. The current world economic system is unsustainable. This journey has to start today, because he says: " the FUTURE is built TODAY" ... Societies need actions based on community solidarity and harmony.

In his encyclical " Tutti Fratelli" the Pope puts forward three concrete, pressing global actions:

1. Education: to promote at every level, the education of care for our common home, based on ethical and scientific approach.
2. **Access to water and food for all**. This is an universal and essential human right and requires fundamental shift in production and distribution of food. This requires implementing undisruptive farming methods.

3. **Energy transition, this** means gradual replacement of fossil fuels (coal and oil) with clean energy sources...

As a church we are taking small steps to help the climate. We have talked about the option of reducing meat consumption. Now we have started using compostable, recyclable bags to deliver food bank foods. We have used recycled paper when printing our website flyers.

We are asking our parish community to share ideas of how, as individuals or the whole church, in our everyday living, we can make a positive difference in protecting the planet.

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