



Living in a change of era

CONCLUSION OF SEASON OF CREATION 2022

The 2022 Season of Creation concludes on Tuesday 4 October with the feast of St Francis of Assisi. Pope Francis names this as a season to reflect on our lifestyles and how our daily decisions about food, consumption, transportation, use of water, energy and many other material goods impact our common home.

Each year we are invited to adopt simpler and more respectful lifestyles. This year we were invited to listen especially to the voice of creation as the changes in climate bring about increasing damage.

A CHANGE OF ERA

During an interview, Pope Francis made the observation that we are not so much living in an era of change but in a change of era.

The ecumenical Season of Creation was first celebrated in the Catholic Church in 2016. Many changes both locally and globally have occurred in the past seven years. Discerning the way forward from this Season of Creation individually, as families and communities invites reflection on the contexts in which we live.

Michael Casey OCSO, a monk of Tarrawarra Abbey in Victoria, has recently written *A Vision for Renewal the Social Teaching of Pope Francis*. In reflecting on some

of the changes we have experienced in recent times he points out that:

... with the global pandemic, none of us has been untouched by its far-reaching tentacles.

... we have also been living for some time with an emerging awareness of climate change, and some of us have had to deal with the natural disasters which seem to be the effect of changing weather patterns. We have to respond to changes that are not of our making. ... we are witnessing a growing level of unrest and disorder in both national and international politics ... in a manner we could scarcely have conceived twenty years ago, our eyes have been opened to serious cancers in our society; the sexual abuse of children, the exploitation of workers, domestic violence, and the ongoing effects of sexism, racism and violence.

THE TASK OF RENEWAL

Michael Casey goes on to say that we should not be overwhelmed or discouraged by the size of the task of renewal. He reminds us that Pope Francis has provided us with clear guidelines:

... that we give priority to what is possible in the here-and-now without becoming absorbed in utopian dreams of the future. An immediate task is to reflect on the

principles of renewal that he has so repeatedly clarified, to take them to heart and prayerfully determine which of these is an invitation to us within the limitation of our present circumstances.

We don't have to set the world on fire, but simply to start a little spark wherever we are. Begin with small steps ... Grace is always active but flourishes best in small and simple matters that don't impart an inflated sense of self-importance.

INTEGRAL ECOLOGY

In simple terms, Integral Ecology is about the relationships between the human and the natural world. It states that these relationships are all interconnected, deeply intertwined, and part of a larger whole. If we hurt and damage creation, we hurt our fellow human beings, especially the poor and vulnerable.

Anthony M Annett wrote *Cathonomics How Catholic Tradition Can Create A More Just Economy* earlier this year. He writes:

A recent World Bank study suggests that climate change could force 100 million people into extreme poverty by 2030. The United Nations has estimated that the number of hungry people is on the rise again, increasing by 38 million, largely due to climate change.

ECOLOGICAL ECONOMICS

One of the Laudato Si' Action Platform (LSAP) goals is:

Ecological Economics acknowledges that the economy is a sub-system of human society, which itself is embedded within the biosphere—our common home. Actions could include sustainable production and consumption, ethical investments, divestment from fossil fuels and any activity harmful to the planet and the people, supporting circular economies, and prioritising care, labour and protecting the dignity of workers.

The LSAP is not only intended for dioceses, parishes, schools and institutions. Individuals and families are invited to commit to simple annual plans drawing upon the seven goals. The website <https://laudatosiplatform.org/> contains a wealth of resources from around the world. There is a simple enrolment process which is supported by emailed updates of new items.

POPE FRANCIS AND ECONOMISTS

Members of Deloitte Global had an audience with Pope Francis last month. Deloitte Global is a worldwide network of independent firms, which together represent approximately 330,000 professionals who provide financial, accounting and strategic advice and assistance to companies such as Microsoft.

Pope Francis challenged them by asking how their consultants and managers organise their work in order to strive for a more humane, just and fraternal world?

He also said: 'You are well aware of your "power". A good question to ask yourselves would be: "What kind of world

do we want to leave for our children and grandchildren?"

CONVERSION & DISCIPLSHIP

Pope Francis calls all of us to an ecological conversion which also includes practical steps that are possible for everyone. He also sees that care for our common home is an essential part of Christian discipleship.

Living our vocation to be protectors of God's handiwork is essential to a life of virtue, it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience.

Laudato Si' 217

AN ECONOMY OF THE GOSPEL

Three years ago Pope Francis invited young economists to work with him in the pursuit of positive change. Last month around 1000 young people from 120 countries met for 3 days in Assisi. On day three, Pope Francis and the young people signed the Economy of Francesco below.

We, young economists, entrepreneurs, and change-makers, called here to Assisi from every part of the world, aware of the responsibility that rests on our generation, commit ourselves today, individually and collectively to spending our lives so that the economy of today and tomorrow becomes an economy of the gospel, and therefore:

- ◆ an economy of peace and not of war,
- ◆ an economy that opposes the proliferation of arms, especially the most destructive,
- ◆ an economy that cares for creation and does not misuse it,
- ◆ an economy at the service of the human person, the family and life, respectful of every woman, man, and child, the elderly, and especially those most frail and vulnerable,
- ◆ an economy where care replaces rejection and indifference,
- ◆ an economy that leaves no one behind, in order to build a society in which the stones rejected by the dominant mentality become cornerstones, an economy that recognises and protects secure and dignified work for everyone,
- ◆ an economy where finance is a friend and ally of the real economy and of labour and not against them,
- ◆ an economy that values and safeguards the cultures and traditions of peoples, all living things and the natural resources of the Earth,
- ◆ an economy that fights poverty in all its forms, reduces inequality and knows how to say with Jesus and St Francis, "Blessed are the poor",
- ◆ an economy guided by an ethics of the human person and open to transcendence,
- ◆ an economy that creates wealth for all, that engenders joy and not just riches, because happiness that is not shared is incomplete.

*We believe in this economy.
It is not a utopia, because we are already building it.
And some of us, on particularly bright mornings,
have already glimpsed
the beginning of the promised land.*

Assisi 24 September 2022
<https://francescoeconomy.org/>