



## Laudato Si': Our Journey to and Beyond COP 22

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My reflection for the "Joint Consultation on *Laudato Si'* and the path to COP22" addresses several aspects of *Laudato Si'* which seem most relevant to our journey to and beyond COP 22: 1) support the scientific data, 2) environmental livelihoods, 3) integrate the language of ethical guidance in our narratives and 4) stress the economic implications with the social change necessary to resolve the distressing gap between the rich and the poor.

### Support Scientific Data

Reaffirm the implications of the scientific data and the impact that climate change is having on our globe. Highlight the realities of the disturbing differences in weather patterns, increased frequency of severe changes in droughts and floods, and disastrous turbulence in hurricanes and tornadoes. Since our church and religious congregations have contacts in all of these affected places, it is possible to further utilize the potential of these contacts with those areas which are the great contributors to climate change. The personal stories of pain and the deeds of relief service bring the situations to life. Connections can be made to how life on the planet affects one another.

**Environmental livelihoods of the poor are being significantly altered.** The church is engaged in calling for dialogue in some of these significant areas such as the impacts of mining on the environment, the human right to a healthy environment which includes safe drinking water and clean air. The combustion of coal, oil and gas is a major contributing factor to the increase in temperature. This issue needs to be considered in line with the social responsibility of the most frequent users and the impact of the poor with a dialogue for the common good of all.

### Integrate the Language of Ethical Guidance in Church Narratives

Climate change and poverty need to be seen as key ethical changes. Problems of migration can be related to displacement of peoples due to "economic developments" from such factors as land grabbing, single crop agriculture, extractives of resources and the reconstructions of water usages. The poor around the globe are especially affected. Large treasures of forest lands are being lost in the name of "economic development". The loss of resources impacts both the inter-intra generational justice. Current actions affect the future of our planet. It is imperative that the safeguarding of human rights not be a voluntary consideration. The Vatican has spoken out clearly for an internationally binding treaty on International Corporations in respect to human rights. It is important to continue to promote the passage of this proposed UN treaty.

Dialogues between science, politics, economics and religion help to identify and resolve ethical dilemmas. Honest, thoughtful and committed exchanges encourage the ability to find solutions to common problems.

### Economic and Social Change

Lifestyle changes are insufficient to de-carbonize the world economy. However, lifestyle changes and advocacy efforts can force changes in the production of goods.

There are common but differentiated common responsibilities. The polluters need to act in solidarity with the poor who are most affected with climate change. It is important to advocate for some creative thinking by which the polluter needs to pay and the funds used for observable progress with the Sustainable Development Goals.

The solution lies with everyone. Our throw away culture is incompatible with our culture of stewardship. Advocacy efforts need to put pressure on politics and markets to make products that can be upgraded and repaired rather than thrown away for a new one.

### Collaboration

The Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) Commission are open to collaboration with these concerns. We look forward to building on our experience.

We had an exciting year reflecting on *Laudato Si'*. During 2015-2016, all of the prayers and activities integrated into the JPIC sessions the message of *Laudato Si'*. This included the JPIC Formation Workshop, the Stations of the Cross at Via Borghese and the pilgrimage to the Holy Door at Caritas. All working groups studied *Laudato Si'* in light of their particular concerns. Members participated in COP 21 in Paris and in the World Social Forum in Montreal. Franciscan members helped to develop a Reflection Guide in several languages which has been promoted with the congregations. ([www.francis35.org/laudato-si/](http://www.francis35.org/laudato-si/)) Our efforts were connected and publicized with those of the Global Catholic Climate Movement (GCCM).

From the past year's intensive integration of all of our experiences with *Laudato Si'*, this year, we intend to focus on the theme, "Integral Development: Nonviolence, Migration and *Laudato Si'*". We are strengthening last year's foundation through further assessments with our congregations. We know of many initiatives regarding applications from *Laudato Si'*, but the data needs to be gathered more systematically. From the study and analysis, actions and advocacy can be suggested. Best practices can be shared with the congregations.

Our efforts highlight climate change, poverty and inequality as key ethical challenges. We understand that the issues of climate change and poverty need to be resolved together. Our efforts to be part of the solution include the promotion of international cooperation, action by states, religious congregations and at local, family, and individual levels.

Impact at COP 22 would be made through the representation of our members who have NGOs at the United Nations. Also, in the parallel meetings and exhibitions open to the general public, we have opportunities for sessions and displays.

We are on the planning committee of an upcoming seminar with GCCM regarding divesting in fossil fuels and reinvesting in alternative energy sources.

Through the mining survey conducted by the Integrity of Creation WG in 2013, there is a study of targeted countries regarding the impacts of mining. In a confidential way, we continue to solicit input from religious congregation contacts and those provided through the support of the Pontifical Council of Justice and Peace. The *National Catholic Reporter (NCR)*, which is based in the USA, has taken mining as one of their priorities. Carefully researched and in depth articles have been published on Ghana, Guatemala and Honduras. Currently, *NCR* reporters are gathering information for a report on Japan and the Philippines. There will be several other countries involved in this study. We are in a reciprocal relationship with many groups as we strive to determine the most effective means to deal with the impacts on mining. Working on issues related to mining provides many opportunities to listen to the cry of the poor and the cry of the Earth in the aspects developed in *Laudato Si'*. Possibly the sharing of this experience could be a side event at COP 22. The feed back from this experience could provide additional opportunities for coordinated actions.