

***The Cry of the  
Earth...  
The Cry of the Poor...  
The Cry of Our  
Neighborhoods***

Catholic Social Teaching  
Care for God's Creation

Danielle Harrison



# The Lord Hears the Cry of the Poor...

- Question:
  - What do you Picture when you hear “Creation”?
- But what if creation is also
  - The block where we live?
- What if creation includes
  - Our lungs
  - Our drinking water
  - The soil beneath the playground
  - The temperature inside a home
  - What kind of food is readily available within communities?

# Catholic Social Teaching

- Care For Creation
  - *"We show respect for the Creator by our stewardship of creation. Care for the earth is not just an Earth Day slogan, it is a requirement of our faith. We are called to protect people and the planet, living our faith in relationship with all of God's creation. This environmental challenge has fundamental moral and ethical dimensions that cannot be ignored."*
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TCcl7DoGRW0>



# Care for Creation- Stewards of God's Creation

- Human dignity: bodies exposed to pollution are sacred bodies.
- The common good: clean air, water, food, and safe public space belong to everyone.
- Preferential option for the poor: we judge environmental decisions partly by their effects on those with the least protection.

# Care for Creation- Stewards of God's Creation

- Solidarity: no neighborhood is disposable.
- Universal destination of goods: the gifts of creation were not intended only for those who can afford access to them.

# Scripture

- Genesis 1-2  
God's  
God Created the World; Made in  
image; appointed as Stewards
- Daniel 3: 56-88  
Let All Creation Praise the Lord
- Leviticus 25: 1-7  
The land "rests"
- Matthew 6:25-34  
God cares for Creation
- Revelation 22:1-2  
A healed city

# Pope Francis: Laudato Si'

*"A true ecological approach always becomes a social approach...so as to hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor."*

—*Laudato Si'*, 49

Integral Ecology: Everything is Connected!

# Laudato Si'—The Seven Goals



**Response to the Cry of the Earth:** Protect the planet by addressing climate change, cleaning water, and saving wildlife.



**Ecological Economics:** Build fair economies through ethical buying, green energy investments, and dropping fossil fuels.



**Ecological Spirituality:** Grow a deeper religious connection and gratitude for God's creation.



**Community Resilience and Empowerment:** Encourage local groups to take action and work together for sustainability

# Laudato Si—The Seven Goals



**Response to the Cry of the Poor:** Defend human life and help vulnerable groups like the poor and indigenous peoples.



**Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles:** Use fewer resources, avoid single-use plastics, and change habits like eating less meat.



**Ecological Education:** Update school lessons to teach care for nature and integral ecology.



**Community Resilience and Empowerment:** Encourage local groups to take action and work together for sustainability.

# Care of Creation-Care of the Person-Human Dignity

- Some communities receive what everyone wants
  - trees, grocery stores, parks, clean water, and quiet streets.
- Other communities receive what **everyone needs but no one wants near them**
  - landfills, highways, warehouses, pollution, and neglect.



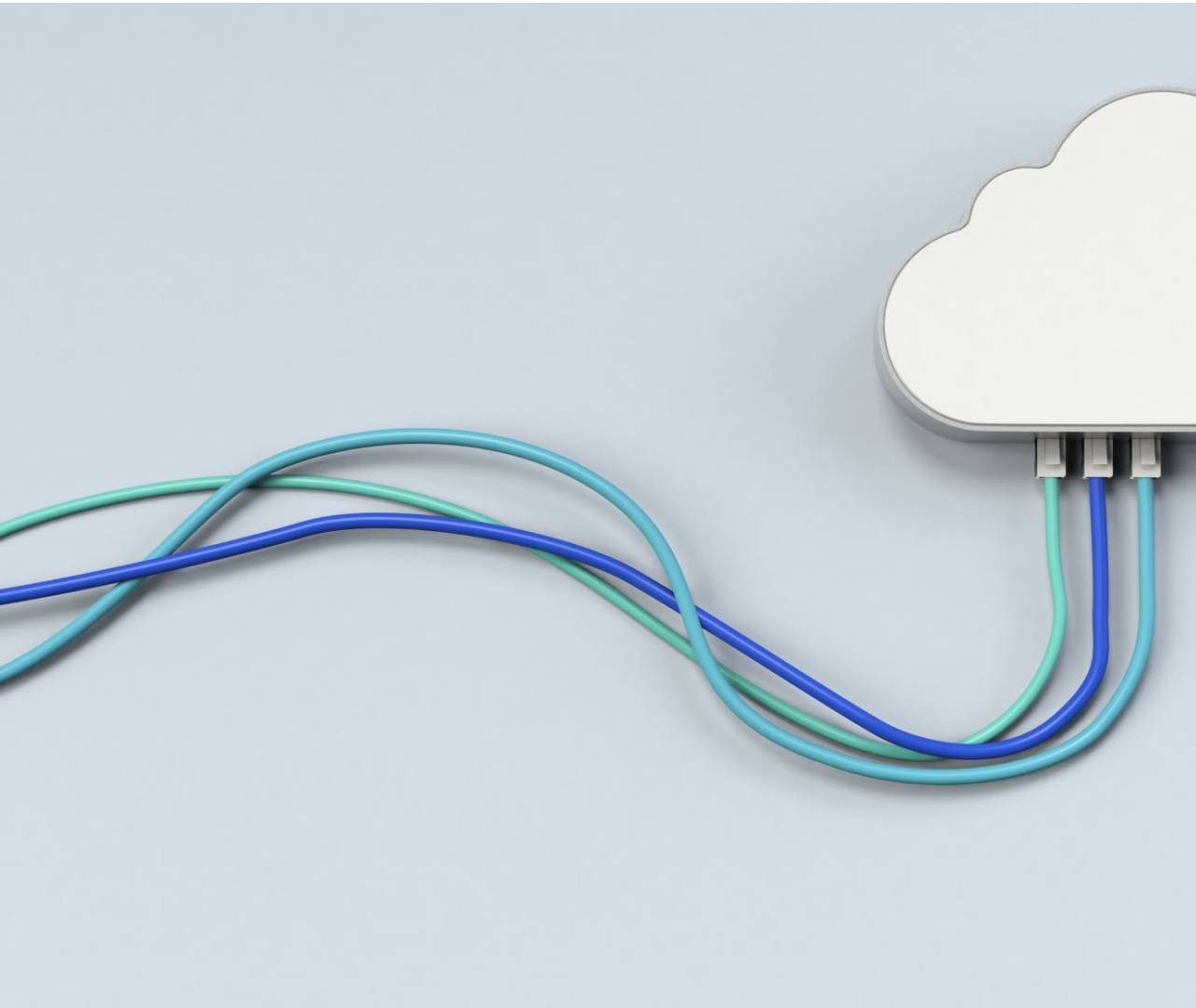
# When Creation has a color and a Zip Code

| What is imposed                                        | What is withheld                               |
|--------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Pollution and toxic facilities                         | Grocery stores with nourishing food            |
| Highways and industrial traffic                        | Trees, parks, and green space                  |
| Excessive liquor outlets and other unwanted businesses | Safe gathering spaces and community investment |
| Waste sites and environmental hazards                  | Clean water and healthy infrastructure         |
| Heat-trapping asphalt and neglected properties         | Shade, cooling, and energy-efficient housing   |

***Who gets to decide what is permitted and whose quality of life is considered expendable?***

# Pope Leo

## The connection between AI and the Environment



- *Magnifica Humanitas.*
- AI systems require enormous amounts of energy, water, computing equipment, data centers, and natural resources. He calls for sustainable technological development that protects our common home. (no.101)

# Our Response

|             |                                                                                    |
|-------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Listen      | Listen to residents before designing solutions.                                    |
| Walk or map | Walk or map the neighborhood around the parish.                                    |
| Examine     | Examine trees, food access, water, heat, transportation, and land use.             |
| Use         | Use parish property, purchasing, and political voice for community flourishing.    |
| Support     | Support resident-led organizing rather than treating people as charity recipients. |
| Ask         | Ask not merely, "How can we help?" but, "What structures are producing this?"      |

# Questions for discussion

- **Where have you experienced or witnessed a fracture between care for creation, care for people who are poor, and care for the neighborhood? Who or what suffered when those concerns were separated?**
- **Current debates about data centers raise questions about land, water, energy, jobs, and community voice. Where have we seen this pattern before—the benefits of “progress” enjoyed by some while its burdens are placed on communities with less power?**
- **How might we speak with someone who does not yet see the connection between the well-being of the land and the well-being of the community? What story, experience, Scripture, or question might help open that connection?**