



# “Caring for Creation for a Holistic Hospitality”

*A reflection on Environmental Ethics*

General Commission for Bioethics

# Introduction

- A reflection on Environmental Ethics: The response of the Order to the ecological Crisis, the call of Pp Francis in *Laudato Si'* (24 mai 2015/ 2<sup>nd</sup> part—updates on «current issues », announced on Monday 21 august 2023) -Directives of the 69th General Chapter of 2019
- How to articulate environmental ethics based on *Laudato Si'* in response to the Cry of the Earth and the Cry of the Poor
- **Review:** The Charter of Hospitality 2000/2012 : principles of hospitality: - respect for human life ---“duties towards the resources of the biosphere” N°4.2.6 : a call was given to care for creation, but little development of this area-- main focus remained on care of the sick-needy person (anthropocentric).

# Tracing back to Our Father Saint John of God and his first followers



First real hospital (in Gomérez ascent, the only testimony of his ancient hospital ), Still exists a small garden, **Carmen de San Juan de Dios:** His attention to nature....



Antoin Martin

***Garden in the hospital***

***school of botany in Milan (1804)***

***Awareness of therapeutic balance between spaces and people***

Great sens of « home »: beauty, harmony, light and plants, colors and materials.



Benedict Menni



*The hospitaller ministry is challenged to reflect on the following:*

- 1. How can the Hospitaller family offer a new Hospitality as a response to the cry of a traumatized Earth and all its people?*
- 2. What can our Hospitality say to our suffering planet and to our brothers and sisters who are deeply impoverished by the increasingly serious environmental crisis?*
- 3. What does God's invitation to heed both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor mean to our fraternal lives and our mission?*



# Can we as hospitaliers articulate Environmental Ethics: **« Caring for Creation for a Holistic Hospitality » ?**

► Content:

- I. The concept of environmental ethics
- II. Biblical roots of environmental ethics
- III. Fundamental Principles of Environmental Ethics
- IV. Praxis: The call of Laudato Si'

# I. The concept of Environmental Ethics

- Basic definition of Ecological/Environmental Ethics:
- “Ecology «the body of knowledge concerning the economy of nature — the investigation of the total relations of the animal both to its inorganic and to its organic environment; including, above all, its friendly and inimical relations with those animals and plants with which it comes directly or indirectly into contact — in a word, ecology is the study of all those complex interrelations referred to by Darwin as the conditions of the struggle of existence.» (Ernst Haeckel)
- Ecological (environmental) ethics involves evaluating, justifying (or not), and prescribing values, norms, and standards of character and conduct in view of the ecological conditions that contribute to the well-being of humans and other life forms. (J. Bate)

## II. Biblical roots of Environmental Ethics

### A. Old Testament roots

### B. New Testament roots

Biblical sources remind: responsibility of caring for the Earth,

- humbly acknowledging that human beings are not at the center of things (Challenging mainly the anthropocentric view which exalts humankind over the rest of creation and which leads inevitably to its exploitation)
- not the measure of all things;
- discern our human identity and vocation: stewards having a vision of peace and contemplation to discover the mighty presence
- prohibit needless destruction
- Call for reverence, respect, consideration, for harmony and balance.

# III. Fundamental Principles of Environmental Ethics (8)

Doctrine of the Social teaching of the Church/ *Laudato Si'*

- 1. Sacramental Universe:** a world that discloses the Creator's presence by visible and tangible signs—reverence as stewards. *Laudato Si'*, 9.
- 2. Respect For Life:** Every creature is part of the divine plan, Respect for nature and respect for human life are inseparably related. Respect for life, and above all for the dignity of the human person, extends also to the rest of creation, other species, ecosystems. *Laudato Si'*, 85-86, 118
- 3. Planetary Common Good:** interdependent world: gifts of creation belong to everyone, everyone is affected and everyone is responsible, *Laudato Si'*, 42, 138-139, 156-158
- 4. Solidarity:** solidarity requires sacrifices of our own self-interest for the good of others and of the earth we share/promoting cooperation and a just structure of sharing in the world community, *Laudato Si'*, 13-14,

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5. **Universal Purpose Of Created Things:** obligation to work for a just economic system which equitably shares the bounty of the earth and of human enterprise with all peoples. Created things are destined for the good of the entire human family, not for few. *Laudato Si'*, 49-52
  6. **Option for the Poor:** which gives passion to the quest for an equitable and sustainable world; The painful adjustments to be undertaken in economies for the sake of the environment must not diminish the sensitivity to the needs of the poor. *Laudato Si'*, 10, 25, 48-49, 246, 134, 205
  7. **Authentic Development:** which offers a direction for progress that respects human dignity and the limits of material growth, *Laudato Si'*, 222-223.
  8. **Justice between the generations:** refers to the fact that intergenerational solidarity as the notion of the common good extends to future generations/the world we have received also belongs to those who will follow us. *Laudato Si'*, 159



## IV. Praxis: The call of Laudato Si'

A. Evaluating our lifestyle

B. Living a new lifestyle of Hospitality



# A. Evaluating our lifestyle

“Today, in a word, the issue of environmental degradation challenges us to examine our lifestyle.” *Laudato Si'*, 206

6 areas that require careful analysis:

## 1. Pollution and climate change



*Inadequate waste management*



## 2. Water



3. Loss of Biodiversity: disappearance of species
4. Worsening of quality of life, and social deterioration
5. Global inequality : more of poor and marginalized people
6. Feeble response to our environmental problems: Why are we slow to answer? –influence of financial technology (LS 53-59)



## **B. Living a new lifestyle of Hospitality**

**1. Prophetic leadership**

**2. Laudato Si' Goals based Actions**



# 1. Prophetic leadership

This response can be engaged in simple seven (7) key steps:

- 1. Develop Leadership:** Ensuring the support of key leaders from across the ministry,
- 2. Encourage Ecological Conversion:** Using education and spirituality to come to see, know and love creation as God does,
- 3. Build a Team:** Engaging a team to drive the ministries ecological vision, goals and actions,
- 4. Engage Everyone:** Providing information, removing barriers and providing incentives to engage the maximum number of people within the ministry,
- 5. Start Small:** Prioritizing easy-to-achieve projects, acknowledging ecological successes, and sustaining motivation with an annual progress report,
- 6. Take on Challenges:** Increasing credibility by tackling important and challenging changes and providing more frequent progress reports,
- 7. Review:** Taking time to celebrate achievements, identify challenges/opportunities and refocus for ongoing action.

## 2. Laudato Si' Goals based actions:

Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, The Laudato Si' seven (7) Goals guide our actions

- 2.1. **Response to the Cry of the Earth:** greater use of clean renewable energy and reduction of fossil fuels guaranteeing access to clean water for all, etc.
- 2.2. **Response to the Cry Of The Poor:** defense of human life from conception to death and all forms , attention to vulnerable groups such as indigenous communities, migrant children at risk through slavery, etc.
- 2.3. **Ecological Economics:** sustainable production, Fair-trade, ethical consumption, ethical investments, investment in renewable energy, etc.
- 2.4. **Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles:** sobriety [intense focus] in the use of resources and energy, avoid single-use plastic, adopt a more plant-based diet
- 2.5. **Ecological Education:** spirit of integral ecology to create ecological awareness and action,
- 2.6. **Ecological Spirituality** : creation centered liturgical celebrations, develop prayer, retreats, formation,
- 2.7. **Emphasis on Community Involvement and Participatory Action:** promote advocacy and people's campaigns,



## 2.2. Actions in Response to the cry of the Earth

- ▶ concrete response in the Hospitaller family could be guided by lines of action in three (3) main sectors:

1. Religious Order/Congregation,
2. Healthcare centers,
3. Homes (communities-families)

## 2.2.1. Religious Order/Congregation

- ▶ At the level of the Order/Congregation as a religious family:
  1. Integrate and promote integral ecology into formation and ongoing formation programs.
  2. Encourage members and affiliates to protect vulnerable communities and heal the earth.
  3. Prioritize care for creation in outreach
  4. Advocate consistently
  5. Be present to, take part in or support regional actions.
  6. Build network with Catholic aid, educational institutions and development agencies to support the promotion of environmental ethics ...



## 2.2.2. Healthcare centers

### ➤ 2.2.2.1. Institutional management approach:

“Charismatic management in the Hospitaller Order of St John of God: Guidelines for the evaluation and improvement of our apostolic mission”, proposes:

#### 1. Strive to improve the quality of the environment:

- Environmental policy
- Procedures for managing the principal causes of negative environmental impact: (residues, dangerous materials and products, recycling of medical supplies, environmental contamination...)
- respect of environmental legislation

#### 2. Practice a proactive policy in terms of environmental protection:

- regulation of water and energy consumption
- use of renewable energy sources
- promotion of integral campaigns aimed at raising people's awareness and educating them in environmental protection and improvement,
- Dissemination of guidelines on environmental protection



### **3. Ensure an annual review of the organization's environmental commitments:**

- Environmental policy
  - Environmental budget
  - Annual environmental report
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## 2.2.2.2. Ten Goals for actions

### 1. Leadership :

- Develop and commit to a system-wide green and healthy hospital policy/Eco friendly facilities
- Form a task force consisting of representatives/ Dedicate staff
- Assure that strategic and operating plans and budgets reflect the commitment to a green and healthy hospital.
- Build or participate in local networks /Advocate prevention/Educate accreditation bodies about the intersection between environmental sustainability, human health.



## 2. Chemicals:

Develop institution-wide chemicals and materials policy and protocols to protect patient, worker, and community health and the environment.

- Participate in the WHO Global Mercury-Free Health Care Initiative by substituting all mercury thermometers and blood pressure devices with safe, accurate, affordable alternatives.
- Adopt policies that require disclosure of chemical ingredients in products and materials and seek to ensure that all ingredients have undergone at least basic toxicity testing.
- Give alternatives when Substances of Very High Concern (carcinogenic, mutagenic or toxic for reproduction...)
- .....

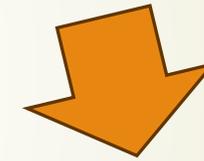


### 3. Waste:

Set up a waste management committee and allocate a dedicated budget for waste management.

- Implement a comprehensive waste reduction program, including avoiding, where feasible, injectable medicines where oral treatments are as effective.
- Segregate waste at source and initiate recycling for non-hazardous wastes.
- Implement a comprehensive waste management training program, including injection safety and safe handling of sharps and other waste categories.
- Ensure waste handlers are trained, vaccinated and have personal protective equipment.

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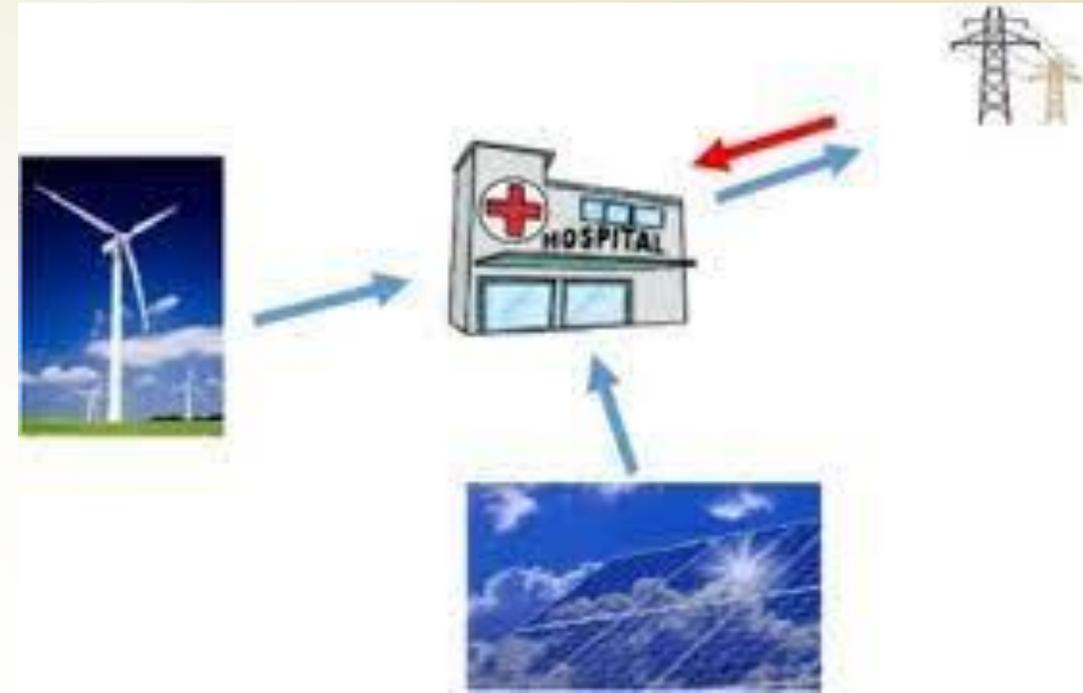


**WASTE MANAGEMENT  
IN  
HOSPITALS**



## 4. Energy

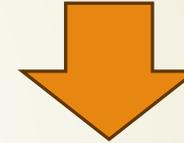
- Investigate the purchase of clean, renewable energy, and include its generation in all new building plans.
  - Identify potential co-benefits of climate mitigation efforts that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and local health threats, while saving money at the same time.
  - Integrate occupant education and awareness programs to reduce energy consumption related to occupancy.
  - In mechanically conditioned spaces, turn thermostats down a few degrees in winter or cool climates, and up in summer or warm climates.
- .....



## 5. Water

- *Reduce Hospital excessive water usage and supply potable Water.*
- Establish a framework that aspires to “net zero water use” within a hospital system.
- Install efficient faucets and toilets, routinely check plumbing and pipes to prevent leaks,.
- Switch from film-based radiological imaging equipment, which uses large quantities of water, to digital imaging, which uses no water and no polluting radiological chemicals.
- Consider harvesting rainwater and/or recycling water for process water uses.
- Regularly analyze water quality.
- Develop programs/projects to provide the community with potable water as a public health service.

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## 6. Transportation

Provide health care in locations that are accessible to patients, staff and visitors without causing them unnecessary travel.

- Consider community-based primary care, home care and co-locating medical services with related social services or community programs.
- Develop strategies for telemedicine, communication by e-mail and other alternatives to face-to-face encounters between caregivers and patients: videoconferences (ZOOM, GOOGLE-MEET)
- Advocate for progressive public transportation policies in the interest of environmental health.

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## 7. Food

### Purchase and Serve Sustainably Grown, Healthy Food

- Make the hospital a “fast food free zone”; eliminate sugar-based soft drinks in hospital cafeterias and vending machines.
- Work with local farmers, community-based organizations and food suppliers to increase the availability of locally sourced, sustainably grown food.
- Encourage food that is produced without synthetic pesticides and hormones or antibiotics given to animals in the absence of diagnosed disease, Introducing organic fresh fruit in the cafeteria.
- Minimize and beneficially reuse food waste. For instance, compost food waste or use it as animal feed. Convert cooking oil waste into biofuel.
- Fostering community gardens on hospital grounds.
- .....



## 8. Pharmaceuticals

Safely Manage and Dispose of Pharmaceuticals

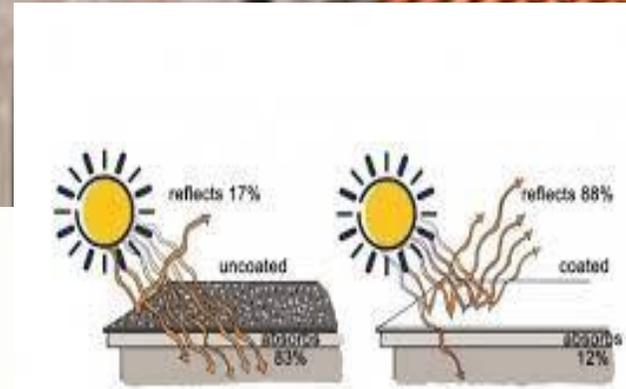
- Prescribe small initial quantities for new prescriptions.
- Do not provide samples of medications to patients,
- Inform consumers about safe disposal methods for unused or expired medications.
- Develop training programs for health care providers to optimize their prescribing practices.
- Ensure that pharmaceutical waste is treated and disposed of in accordance with national and/or WHO guidelines as appropriate.
- Ensure any donations are in line with WHO policy and the policy of the recipient country.
- Initiate and publicize take-back programs to provide.....

## DRUG TAKE BACK PROGRAM



## 9. Buildings

- Support Green and Healthy Hospital Design and Construction
- Use high reflectance roofing and paving, or “green roof” systems and pervious paving, in order to reduce urban heat island impacts....
- Design within local natural to better integrate the building with the community and natural environment.
- Create civilized built environments that foster advanced indoor air quality (through natural ventilation and mechanical systems), .
- Advocate for policy guidelines and public funding that support green and healthy buildings
- .....
- .....



## 10. Purchasing

- Buy Safer and more sustainable products and materials
- Develop coordination between hospitals to increase buying power for environmentally preferable purchasing.
- Require suppliers to disclose chemical ingredients and safety testing data for product purchases
- Obtain environmentally responsible and ethically produced products at cost competitive prices
- Follow the guidelines on ethical procurement for health
- Advocate for Extended Producer Responsibility, and for products to be designed so they generate less waste, last longer, are less disposable, use less hazardous raw materials and include less packaging.

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## 2.2.3. Homes: Communities-families

- ▶ We need to consider nine(9) areas of daily life that can help in response to the care of the environment:

1. **Water:** Turn off faucets when not using water (brushing teeth, soaping up when we wash our hands or take a shower- Repair leaks and breaks as rapidly as possible )
2. Energy
3. Garbage and waste
4. Packaging
5. Paper, batteries and toxic substances
6. Transportation
7. Food
8. Fair Trade/Purchasing
9. **Liturgy and prayer:** Christmas:decoration (replant or recycle)/ Reflections, ... blessings animals...



## 2.3. Actions in Response to the cry of the Poor: Works of Mercy in Laudato Si'

*This is the lengthy approach developed in the Charter of hospitality. ...*

Cardinal Peter K. A. Turkson, "Care of Creation as a Work of Mercy,"

"In the light of Laudato si', the Works of Mercy take on a new currency, urgency, reach and scope."

From traditional 7—to 8: particularity « Care for our common Home »

### 2.1. Corporal works of Mercy (8)

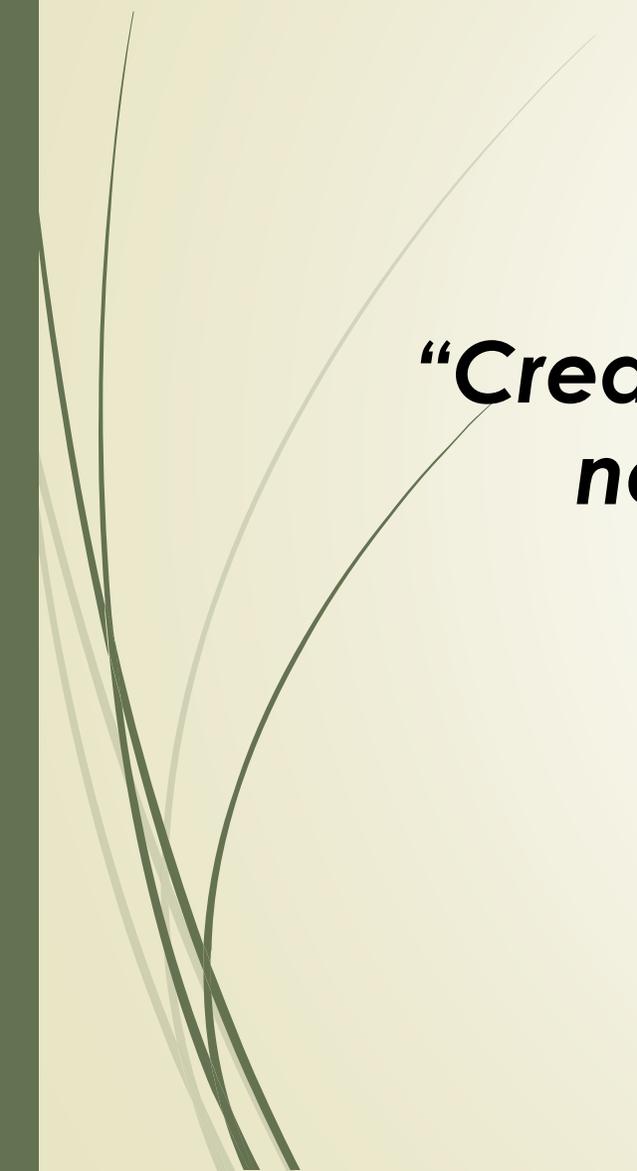
1. to feed the hungry; especially those who suffer from poverty and drought.
2. to give drink to the thirsty; especially those who lack clean, abundant water.
- ..... 8. Care for our common Home

### 2.2. Spiritual Works of Mercy (8)

1. to teach those who do not see how their lifestyles harm others.
2. to offer hope to those who despair for the future of loved ones or the future of the world.
3. to admonish those who sin against neighbor, the natural order, or the laws of nature.

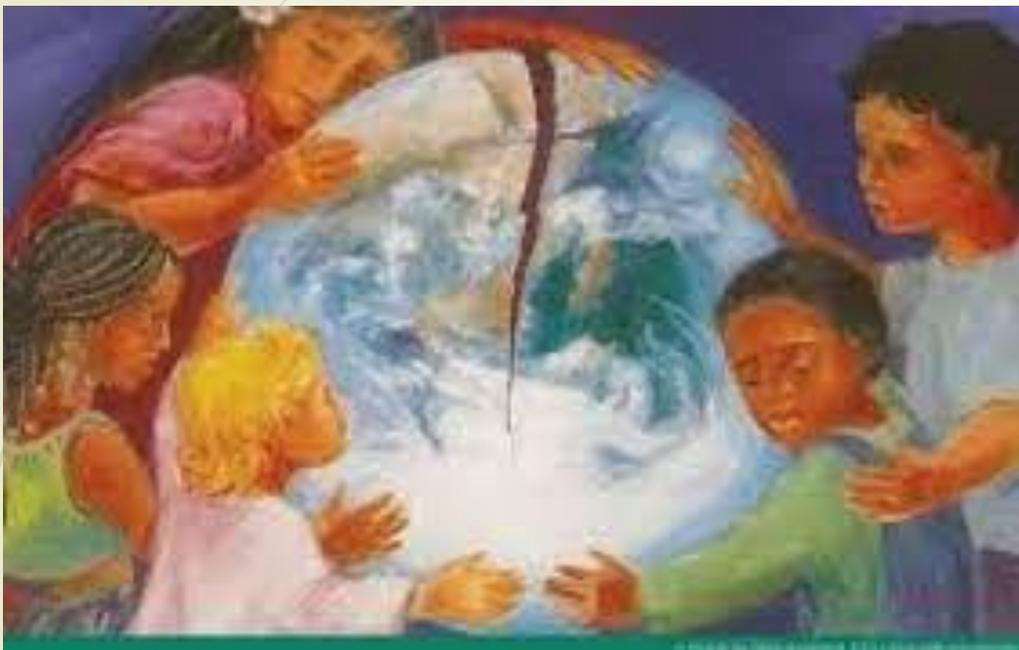
..... 8. Care for our common Home





***“Creation that has welcomed us into this world,  
needs our hospitality in order to remain  
hospitable to the entire universe.”***

# THANKS !



Fr. Hugues ASSOU,oh