



Reconciling God, Creation, and Humanity: an Ignatian Examen

GRATITUDE

Where did I feel God's presence in creation today?

The first step in our ecological examen is gratitude. We begin by giving thanks to God, who is unconditional love and infinite creativity, for creation and for being wonderfully made.

The universe unfolds in God, who fills it completely. Hence, there is a mystical meaning to be found in a leaf, in a mountain trail, in a dewdrop, in a poor person's face. The ideal is not only to pass from the exterior to the interior to discover the action of God in the soul, but also to discover "God in all things." I see that God is part of every facet of creation, operating in the world in the smallest organism to the greatest mountain range.

I give thanks to my God who created all the Earth, all the creatures upon the Earth, the fishes of the sea, the birds that soar through the skies, the water that gives us life and all humanity.

I give thanks to a God who molded me in my mother's womb and who crafts me into the person who I am today. I thank God for my life and for all that God has provided me to sustain this very life. I recognize all I am and all Creation that surrounds me is a gift from God.

After engaging in this reflection, parishioners are invited to post a photo of places in creation where they sense God's presence and to prayerfully view others' photos on the Ecological Examen page of our parish website.

Meatless meal idea

Since limiting meat consumption reduces our carbon footprint and strengthens our global solidarity, our weekly examen page will include a meatless recipe from different parts of the world.

Nicaraguan gallo pinto

- 2 cups cooked red beans
- 3 cups cooked rice
- 1 small onion (chopped)
- 2 garlic cloves (minced)
- 2 tablespoons of vegetable oil

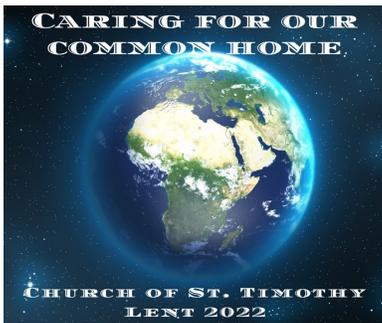
Heat the oil in a frying pan and saute the onion until translucent. Add the garlic, rice, and beans and cook for 5-7 minutes.

Did you know?

Nearly all tuna sold in grocery stores is dolphin-free, but only those marked certified sustainably sourced are harvested in ways that conserve tuna populations and preserve other ocean life, upon which other people may depend. Our consumer choices make an impact on the Earth and our global human family. Learn more sustainably-sourced tuna at www.greenpeace.org/usa/oceans/tuna-guide/

"There is a nobility in the duty to care for creation through little daily actions." - Laudato Si, 211

To learn more about responding to our call as Catholics to care for our common home, visit www.ecologicalexamen.org or laudatosiactionplatform.org.



Reconciling God, Creation, and Humanity: an Ignatian Ecological Examen Week Two

AWARENESS

Do I see the beauty of creation and hear the cries of the earth and the poor?

I ask for the grace to look at the world as God does – to see the world in its infinite goodness, diversity, and interconnectedness. I see the close relationship between all creatures and our common home and how we are dependent on one another for our mutual well-being. Like God, I rejoice in how the earth and the creatures and people who inhabit it are all wonderfully made.

But like God, I also hear “the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.” I hear how “this sister now cries out to us because of the harm we have inflicted on her by our irresponsible use and abuse of the goods with which God has endowed her.” I see the impact of our actions in the “symptoms of sickness evident in the soil, in the water, in the air and in all forms of life.” I see how indigenous peoples have been displaced from their lands and seen water contaminated due to an economic system that prioritizes profit over people and the common good. I recognize how a “throwaway culture” discards not only things but people as “leftovers,” and how it is the poor and vulnerable who suffer most from climate change. I see how poor people and persons of color disproportionately live near industries that produce contamination and waste, whether in urban cities, rural areas or in precious natural biomes such as the Amazon. I see how poverty and inequality contribute to “social exclusion [and] an inequitable distribution and consumption of energy and other services.”

I am moved with compassion by the increasing negative impacts on the earth and humanity. As Pope Francis exclaims, we cannot ignore the cries of creation, the poor, and the earth who “is among the most abandoned and maltreated of our poor.”

Meatless meal idea

Simple Indian dal (lentils)

- 1 cup dried red lentils
- 4 cups water or vegetable broth
- 1 tsp turmeric
- 1 tsp salt

Combine ingredients in a large pot over high heat and cook until lentils are soft. Season with ginger, garlic, lime juice, and chili powder and serve over rice.

Did you know?

66% of cocoa comes from Ivory Coast and Ghana in Africa where tropical forests (carbon sinks) are being replaced with monocultures (carbon releasers) of cocoa trees. Workers, many of whom are children, are treated unfairly. Make a difference by purchasing fair trade chocolate. To learn more, visit www.fairtradecertified.org.

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Reconciling God, Creation, and Humanity: an Ignatian Ecological Examen Week Three

UNDERSTANDING

How can I turn away from a throwaway culture and instead stand in solidarity with creation and the poor?

I ask for the grace to look closely at my own life and the decisions I have made. I reflect on my level of care for the gift of creation and the resources of the Earth, which are meant for the benefit of all, including our brothers and sisters around the world and future generations. How do my choices impact creation and people in my community, nation and around the world, particularly the poor and vulnerable?

Choose one or two questions to reflect upon each time in your prayer

How present am I to the world around me? How do I show my love for God through my respect for creation and my neighbor? How does my environment shape who I deem to be my neighbor or part of my community? Who is left out?

How can I move away from a throwaway culture? How can I demonstrate care for creation and solidarity with my brothers and sisters that are vulnerable?

How do I use water throughout my daily life? How am I a responsible steward of this gift? How do my consumption patterns and demand for energy impact the availability of clean water for communities in my country and around the world?

Who has access to clean water, a basic human right, and who does not?

Am I aware that my use of power here disempowers another environment somewhere else? How can I be more conscious of the impacts of our demand for energy, be it increased carbon emissions from coal, oil and gas, increased deforestation or the potential contamination of a community's access to clean water. Could I live with less energy?

Do I recognize that eating is a moral act? Do I take more than I can eat?" Do I waste food when many around the world are hungry? Am I conscious of where my food is grown and under what conditions? Am I aware of the energy and water that went into the production of my food, and the impact on the environment?

Did you know?

Only 9% of all plastic is recycled. Unlike aluminum or glass, recycled plastic must be made into something different like carpeting, electronic casings, or used in clothing like nylon and fleeces. Laundering fabric made from plastic causes micro-shedding of the plastic, which makes its way into waterways and ultimately into the oceans, causing disruption to marine life. Action step: ditch single-use plastics like cups and silverware. Invest in a reusable travel mug or water bottle to reduce plastic waste.

Source: www.nationalgeographic.com/science/article/plastic-pollution-huge-problem-not-too-late-to-fix-it

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Reconciling God, Creation, and Humanity: an Ignatian Ecological Examen Week Four

RESTORATION

Where have I fallen short in caring for creation and our brothers and sisters?

In my desire for reconciliation with creation, I ask God for forgiveness and the grace of ecological conversion and to turn towards restoration with the gift of creation.

I acknowledge the ways in which I personally have chosen convenience, selfishness, and greed over ecological and social justice.

I also acknowledge the ways structures, patterns, and cultures of sin impact my life, the lives of people on the margins and the earth. Through my recognition of where I have fallen short in caring for creation and fellow humans, and through God's mercy, I pray for a conversion of heart to amend my ways. I seek through my prayer and actions to reconcile myself with God, creation, and humanity.

I ask for the grace to become someone who chooses to see the world through the eyes of the marginalized and acts to contribute to a more socially and ecologically just society, rooted in my firm belief of the dignity of the human person and God's call to be a good steward of the marvelous gift of creation. Seeing the joys and suffering of the Earth and its creatures and persons across the globe, I also see "signs of God's work, of the great ministry of reconciliation God has begun in Christ, fulfilled in the Kingdom of justice, peace, and the integrity of creation."

Did you know?

Palm oil, found in items from peanut butter to laundry detergent to beauty products, is a major source of tropical deforestation and habitat destruction. The loss of natural tropical forests means the loss of other potential products like spices and medicines such as quinine, a treatment for malaria. In addition, decline in natural tropical forests leads to the extinction of other plant and animal life, including endangered species like tigers, rhinos, and elephants.

Action step: Look for products made with certified sustainable palm oil.

Source: www.amazonfrontlines.org/chronicles/palm-oil-amazon-health/



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Reconciling God, Creation, and Humanity: an Ignatian Ecological Examen Week Six

CONTINUING THE JOURNEY

As we begin Holy Week and Lent draws to a close, we conclude our parish ecological examen. But we continue in our commitment to living in right relationship with creation, continuing to respond to Pope Francis' invitation call to ongoing ecological conversion. Stay tuned to our parish communications channels (bulletin, Flocknote email newsletter, Facebook, and the website) for more events, opportunities, and resources as we continue the journey of caring for our common home.

A Prayer For Our Earth

All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe and in the smallest of your creatures. You embrace with your tenderness all that exists. Pour out upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and beauty. Fill us with peace, that we may live as brothers and sisters, harming no one. O God of the poor, help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth, so precious in your eyes. Bring healing to our lives, that we may protect the world and not prey on it, that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction. Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain at the expense of the poor and the earth. Teach us to discover the worth of each thing, to be filled with awe and contemplation, to recognize that we are profoundly united with every creature as we journey towards your infinite light. We thank you for being with us each day. Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle for justice, love and peace.

- Pope Francis (Laudato Si, 246)

Online resources to learn more

- www.ecologicalexamen.org
A resource from the Ignatian Solidarity Network\
- www.catholicclimatecovenant.org
This website offers resources for Catholics to learn, advocate, act, pray, and learn about climate change.
- www.laudatosiactionplatform.org

Suggested books to learn more

- "Care For Creation: a Franciscan spirituality of the Earth"
By Ilia Delio, OSF
- "Global Climate Change: A Plea for Dialogue, Prudence, and the Common Good"
By the USCCB
- "All God's Creatures: a Theology of Creation"
By Dan Horan, OFM



Reconciling God, Creation, and Humanity: an Ignatian Ecological Examen Week Five

RECONCILIATION

How can I repair my relationship with creation and make choices consistent with my desire for reconciliation with creation?

God calls us as caretakers of the earth not simply to take the earth's resources for our own benefit, but to use the earth's resources to praise, reverence, and serve God.

By working for environmental justice and reconciliation with creation, we reverence the God of love and co-labor with God towards Christ's own mission of reconciliation and love. We "are called to help heal a broken world," to embrace a culture of solidarity and encounter. This means embracing a new sustainable path forward and a "new way of producing and consuming [that] puts God's creation at the center." I ask for the grace to reconcile my relationship with God, creation and humanity. With Catholics around the world, I take up this challenge by identifying personal concrete action steps to live more sustainably.

- In what ways can I pray at home and with others for reconciliation with creation and for a conversion of heart to embrace ecological justice?
- In what ways will I seek to live more simply (in my home and community) and to make choices consistent with my desire for reconciliation with creation?
- In what ways through my actions can I stand in solidarity with the most vulnerable who are disproportionately affected by the environmental crisis?
- In what ways will I advocate for environmental policies that care for creation and the most vulnerable?

How are you taking action to turn away from a throwaway culture and stand in solidarity with the earth and the poor? Share your response and view responses from other parishioners online at https://bit.ly/STT_EcologicalExamen

Did you know?

Most of the clothing for sale is produced by people, primarily women, toiling where working conditions don't reflect our Catholic commitment to human dignity, the rights of workers, and care for creation. In 2013, more than 1,100 Bangladeshi garment workers were killed when a Rana Plaza factory collapsed. Pope Francis condemned the conditions there as "slave labor," saying "that goes against God." Bangladesh produces more clothing than any country besides China.

Action step: seek out fair trade clothing. Learn more at www.fairtradecertified.org/shopping-guides/fair-trade-clothing-guide

To learn more about responding to our call as Catholics to care for our common home, visit www.ecologicalexamen.org



MAY 22-28 IS LAUDATO SI' WEEK!

This week we celebrate the seventh anniversary of Pope Francis' landmark encyclical Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home. It's a good time to return to our parish Lenten commitment to ecological conversion. Pope Francis reminds us that it is not just what individuals do in our own neighborhoods but also the choices we make that affect people around the world. Climate and the earth's biodiversity are complex systems that do not operate independently, but are very much globally interconnected and interconnected with people's lives. Our ecological conversion includes a "loving awareness that we are not disconnected from the rest of creatures, but joined in splendid universal communion." (Pope Francis, Laudato Si', #220)

Did you know?

Did you know that the US, the largest beef producing country, is also the largest importer? Brazil is the top exporter of beef. In order to produce the beef that we consume, farmers in Brazil (which contains almost 1/3 of the earth's tropical forests) must feed their cattle soybeans grown on deforested, nutrient-poor land. When the soil becomes even too poor for further soybean production, more tropical forest must be cut down to create farmland. Not only are tropical forests some of the most biodiverse systems, they also are large carbon sinks. Destroying tropical forests thus releases carbon into the atmosphere, while eliminating wildlife and plants with potential medicinal or food value.



What can you do? Eat more poultry products or try vegetarian dishes at least once a week. Before firing up that grill, choose local sources for your beef and other food products. In addition to reducing demand for Brazilian beef, purchasing locally-sourced beef supports Minnesota farmers and reduces your carbon footprint. This website can help you find local retail sources for many food items, including beef, eggs, and vegetables: minnesotagrown.com/search-directory/products-new/

Care For Creation Family Service Activity

Clean Up Your Neighborhood: This activity can be done anytime, anywhere, and will have immediate results. Grab a garbage bag for each family member, gardening or work gloves, and you're set. Clean up areas around your local park, an empty lot, or just your own streets. When you're done, dispose of trash properly, recycling where appropriate. Talk about why we should pick up litter and other ways we can take care of common spaces. Notice the beauty around you as you are outdoors and give thanks.



Continuing the Journey of Ecological Conversion

Pope Francis reminds us that all life is interconnected and our choices have an impact on others around the globe. He strongly encourages us to reconsider our lifestyles and actions.

- “Because of us, thousands of species will no longer give glory to God by their very existence, nor convey their message to us.” (Laudato Si’, #33)
- “Once we start to think about the kind of world we are leaving to future generations, we look at things differently; we realize that the world is a gift which we have freely received and must share with others.” (Laudato Si’, #159)

Did you know? Lawn care and creation care

Creating and maintaining the “perfect,” weed-free, golf-course-style lawn destroys beneficial insects and soil micro-organisms. It stealthily contributes to air and water pollution. About 20-30% of the fuel in gas-powered small engines is released into the atmosphere. An estimated 800 million gallons of gas are released yearly by mowers and leaf blowers. That “perfect” lawn requires synthetic fertilizers, insecticides, and herbicides – the production of which releases harmful carbon into the atmosphere.

Fertilization of those “perfect” lawns often exceeds what is necessary. Excess nitrogen is released into the atmosphere as nitrogen oxide or runs off into wetlands, ponds, lakes, and rivers, causing algal blooms and killing fish and aquatic insects. Mowing too often and too low leads to weed growth (more herbicides needed), drying soil (more irrigation needed), poor root growth (more fertilizer needed), and disease.

What can you do instead?

- Let your lawn grow to 4-5 inches before mowing and set the mower blade to at least 3 inches. This helps retain moisture and shades out weeds.
- Leave grass clippings on the lawn to decompose naturally. This organically releases the nitrogen that grasses require and eliminates the need for additional fertilizing.
- Aerate your lawn to help break up compaction, reduce thatch buildup, and bring more air, water, and micro-organisms to foster healthier root systems.
- Water lawns in early morning to reduce evaporation and wind drift. If you use underground sprinklers, use a moisture monitor so watering occurs only when needed. Note that Blaine has watering restrictions between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m.
- Let some of the weeds grow, too. Their flowers provide nectar and pollen to beneficial insects, especially native bees. To learn more: visit www.bwsr.state.mn.us/l2l or www.extension.umn.edu/lawns-and-landscapes/lawn-care

Care For Creation Parish Service Project

All parishioners are invited to share in service on Thursday, June 23 from 6 to 8 p.m. We will meet at a location near Minneapolis to learn about keeping our Mississippi River and area lakes clean by controlling what goes into the storm drains. Then we'll clean and stencil around storm drains and pass along educational literature in the neighborhood. All ages are welcome; children and youth must be accompanied by parents. To receive the address of the project, contact Cindy Novak in the office.

Continuing the Journey of Ecological Conversion



“A sense of deep communion with the rest of nature cannot be real if our hearts lack tenderness, compassion and concern for our fellow human beings ... Concern for the environment thus needs to be joined to a sincere love for our fellow human beings and an unwavering commitment to resolving the problems of society.”
- Pope Francis (*Laudato Si'* #91).

Did you know?

Did you know that the United States is one of the top waste producers per capita? Where does all that garbage go?

Approximately 9% is composted, 12% is incinerated for energy, 26% is recycled (mostly paper products), and 52% goes to landfills. Landfills are a storage facility not a decomposing facility. While the methane gas produced is harnessed for energy the rest rots, rusts, and remains. Present day landfills are highly managed affairs with specially engineered liners, methane harnessing, and groundwater monitoring. Once full, the landfill is sealed and covered with clay and topsoil. It can be repurposed as golf courses, athletic fields, solar and wind farms.

But did you know electronics, Styrofoam, tires, and rubber products (such as flip-flops) cannot go in landfills? Instead, they are exported to countries in the developing world for sorting – hand sorting! In countries such as Thailand, Malaysia, Nigeria, Ghana there are no mandated safety standards in place. Those sorting trash likely have no access to hazmat suits, face protectors, or gloves to prevent toxic exposure to mercury, lead, chromium, and other chemicals.

How can you make a difference?

Become an informed consumer with an awareness of the consequences of your purchases. Think twice before buying that new iPhone or that 70 inch TV. Aim to reduce consumption, compost all organics, recycle, and strive for a zero-waste lifestyle. For more information on zero-waste see: www.goingzerowaste.com/zero-waste-1/ For more information on home composting see: Composting - Simple Steps for Starting at Home (scdhec.gov).

Action Item: Create An Upcycle Bin

Many items can be repurposed after their initial use so they won't end up in a landfill. If you have children or grandchildren, challenge them to use their imaginations to come up with creative ways to upcycle. Use this link to find specific directions for creating your own upcycle bin ([Start an Upcycle Bin — Doing Good Together™](#)). A simple Google search for “upcycling” or “repurposing” will provide you much

Continuing the Journey of Ecological Conversion



“When they had had their fill, he said to his disciples, 'Gather the fragments left over, so that nothing will be wasted.'”

- John 6:12.

“To blame population growth instead of extreme and selective consumerism on the part of some, is one way of refusing to face the issues...we know that approximately a third of all food produced is discarded and 'whenever food is thrown out it is as if it were stolen from the table of the poor.'”

Did you know?

About **1.4 billion tons of the world's food items are wasted every year**. Yet over 30 million people experience hunger or food shortages. In the US it is estimated that most of that 30-40% wastage goes into landfills! Not only is the food wasted but so is the water and energy and human effort that went into the production and transportation of that food. What can you do to reduce food waste?

- 1) Plan your meals and only buy what you and your family can reasonably consume in a few days. Freeze whatever excess (or leftovers) you have to eat later.
- 2) Overlook those blemishes on fruits and veggies. They are usually only skin deep.
- 3) Read labels. “Best if used by” means that item is safe to consume after the listed date but the taste might not be a perfect 10. “Use by” means the item is highly perishable and must be consumed by the listed date. The USDA has created a free app called Foodkeeper to help consumers understand food and beverage storage. Learn more at www.foodsafety.gov/keep-food-safe/foodkeeper-app
- 4) When dining out, use take-home containers for leftovers and skip the “all you can eat” buffets.
- 5) Find out what is your grocer's policy on blemished food. Do they throw it away? Do they send it to pig farms for fodder? Are they willing to sell it at discount or donate to local food shelves?

Action Item: Compost!

Food waste accounts for approximately 29% of landfill content. Since it is usually contained in plastic garbage bags and buried deep in a landfill, decomposition is delayed and incomplete. Consider composting your food waste to decrease the amount of food that ends up in landfills. Composting is a natural way to recycle decomposed organic materials like fruit and vegetable scraps, coffee grounds, eggshells, and other kitchen leftovers. Check out these online resources to learn more about composting.

- ♦ Do you live in a home with a yard? Visit www.sodgod.com/composting/ for an introduction and frequently asked questions about beginning to compost.
- ♦ Don't want to set up your own compost bin? If you are an Anoka County resident, visit www.anokacountymn.gov/360/County-Organics-Drop-off-Program to learn about and sign up to participate in a community composting program.
- ♦ Looking for opportunities beyond Anoka County? www.sharewaste.com connects people with compostable material with those who can use it.

Season of Creation Parish Presentation



“Indigenous peoples are a living cry of hope...they know what it is to listen to the earth, to see the earth, to touch the earth. They remind us that we human beings have a shared responsibility to care for our ‘common home.’”

- Pope Francis, address to 2019 Indigenous Peoples Forum

Mitakuye Oyassin, All My Relations

Mitakuye Oyassin (translated into English as “all my relations”) is a Lakota/Dahkota/Nahkota expression that encapsulates how many American Indian spiritualities relate to the other beings with whom we share the earth, our common home. Join us for an informative and inspiring evening of reflection on how American Indian spirituality can help us to hear with new ears the call to ecological conversion. Come learn and explore how our current spirituality can be informed and enriched by the relational spirituality practiced by American Indians.

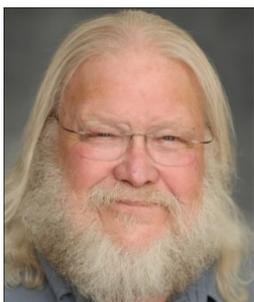


St. Joseph Indian School mural by Br Mickey McGrath, OSFS

www.bromickeymcgrath.com

Sunday, September 25
6:30-7:30 p.m.

The presentation will be held in the Church of St. Timothy sanctuary with refreshments to follow. The event is free and open to the public; a free will offering will be collected.



About the presenter: Shawn Phillips is the Lay Director of Gichitwaa Kateri Parish and the Office of Indian Ministry, Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis. He is also a member of the Archdiocesan Care for Creation Team. Shawn has been in ministry for 39 years and has walked at the intersection of the Church and American Indian relations. Vicky and Shawn have been married for 40 years and have spent the last several years as Franciscan Associates. He served on the staff of the Church of St. Timothy for 10 years.