

Contemplative Reflection for the Month of November

Second Goal on the Action Platform: Response to the Cry of the Poor

In the Encyclical *Laudato Si*, Pope Francis relates the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor. Literally, cry is a metaphor pregnant with meanings. It can mean the feeling of pain and suffering, the experience of sadness and loss calling out for relief and sympathy. The earth and the poor have equally endured these tears of lamentation. The cry is not just an expression of pain but also an appeal to responsibility. We need to take seriously the groaning of our ecology and humanity. In the context of climate change, global warming affects the whole world, but it specifically affects the poor more. *Delfo Cortina Canceran*

Proverbs 14:31: "Whoever oppresses a poor man insults his Maker, but he who is generous to the needy honors him."

Call to Contemplation:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7CibZWEzu6I>

"The Servant Song" sung by Bukas Palad Ministries

Leader: Each individual Christian and every community is called to be an instrument of God for the liberation and promotion of the poor, and for enabling them to be fully a part of society.

Response: This demands that we be docile and attentive to the cry of the poor and come to their aid. (Pope Francis)

Reflection: 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. It is clearly inconsistent to combat trafficking in endangered species while remaining completely indifferent to human trafficking, unconcerned about the poor or undertaking to destroy another human being deemed unwanted. LS 91

We have to realize that a true ecological approach is always a social approach; it must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, to hear both the *cry of the earth and the cry of the poor*. LS 49

<https://ignatiansolidarity.net/blog/2018/03/08/cry-earth-cry-poor/>

Considerations:

- Why does Francis argue that "we are faced not with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather with one complex crisis which is both social and environmental" (139)?
- Why is the impact of climate change felt disproportionately by the poor?
- How does poverty, overcrowding, lack of open spaces, and poor housing affect the poor (149)? Why are these environmental issues?