

MERCY CENTRE FOR ECOLOGY AND JUSTICE
101 Mount Scio Road
St. John's, NL A1B 4E8

October 2, 2018

Dear Parishioners,

Every day we hear reports of major destruction resulting from tornados, tsunamis, earthquakes, sea levels rising, drought and flooding throughout the world including across our own country. We are realizing that Earth, our planet home, God's creation and gift to us, is being desecrated and destroyed. Pope Francis, in his World Day of Prayer message for the care of all creation, September 1, 2018 wrote, "It must be acknowledged that we have not succeeded in responsibly protecting creation."

Pope Francis has also written an encyclical letter entitled *Laudato Si'*. In this encyclical he reminds us of our baptismal vocation and says that *living our vocation to be protectors of God's handiwork is an essential part of living a Christian life*. In stronger words he tells us that this is "*not an option or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience.*" LS 217

I know from my conversations with Archbishop Currie that he is very conscious of our responsibility as Catholics to respond to the cries of suffering resulting from climate change and that he is anxious to act on the Pope's urgent call in *Laudato Si'* to care for and protect God's Creation, our "Common Home". To assist us in responding to this call Archbishop Currie has made a generous donation to the Mercy Centre for Ecology and Justice from funding received in the Atlantic Region which was designated for the purpose of promoting *Laudato Si'*. The funding will be used for the promotion and study of *Laudato Si'* with parish groups in the hope that this will lead to action for the restoration and care of our planet home.

Sister Marcella and I have just returned from a meeting at our Mercy International Centre House in Ireland with sisters from Tonga, the Philippines, Australia, Peru, New Zealand, the United States, England, and Ireland, some of whom spoke to us on line and others in person. It was heart-wrenching to hear the stories of sisters from Tonga, the Philippines and Peru which as you know are the poorest countries among those listed and which bear the brunt of the devastation, pain and destitution resulting from climate change. Some speakers spoke of it as the agony of suffering Earth which reminded us of the suffering of Jesus.

To begin this program we would like to gather a group of four or five parishioners from each parish, preferably an intergenerational group including youth, middle aged and senior people to meet twice a month for an hour and a half around a cup of tea. At this time we are eliciting your help in seeking out parishioners to form this group. We are asking each one of you to give this invitation some serious thought, and if you would like to participate, please get in touch. Or, if you know someone in your parish whom you think would be interested in becoming involved in this group, we invite you to approach them and get back to us.

In closing, we ask you to join with us in praying for God's blessing on this special venture so necessary today to help insure that our children, grand children and future generations will have a healthy planet to call home.

Sincerely,

Sister Mary Tee, Director
Mercy Centre for Ecology and Justice

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