



- A RESOURCE FOR ONGOING FORMATION -

Part 5: Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation

1. Integrity of Creation 1—'Francis' Love of all Creation'

Moreover they should respect all creatures, animate and inanimate, which 'bear the imprint of the Most High' and should strive to move from the temptation of exploiting creation to the Franciscan concept of universal kinship. Rule 18



Much emphasis is placed in our culture today on possessions. This emphasis is contrary to what Jesus taught...The Rule...calls Franciscans to 'universal kinship' with creation...we are related to the universe and to each other. What is inflicted on the earth wounds me and my family in some way through the chain of life that links us all. What is healed anywhere on the earth also promotes healing close to home.



Foley, Weigel, Normile *To Live as Francis Lived* Reflection 41 (p 152)



And Jesus said to him, 'Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.' (Matt 8.20)

What does it mean to be a "steward" of the created order?

How do you understand "universal kinship" as important in your life?



Praise of God rose easily to the lips of St Francis. Like the prophet Daniel, he too praised God for the sun, the moon and the stars. He gave almighty God due praise, glory and honour for all his creatures. Because of the special reverence of St Francis for all God's creatures, the Holy See was requested to have him declared the heavenly patron of all those people interested in ecology. The request was granted on 29 November 1979. The world will benefit from the spirit of St Francis. Secular Franciscans help to spread his spirit by their attitude towards, and their use of, creatures, animate and inanimate. Some people today see in their natural environment, no other meaning than what serves for immediate use and consumption. This is a deplorable mentality. It was God's will that we should communicate with and use nature as intelligent and noble 'masters' and 'guardians'. For us, to become 'exploiters' and 'destroyers' is contrary to God's intentions. The gentle and reverent approach of St Francis was so different!



Peter O'Grady *Rebuild My Church* (p 56)



Scripture—

Gen 1. 27-31a

So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.’ God said, ‘See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird in the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.’ And it was so. God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good.

Matt 6. 26-33

Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear?’ For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.