

Re : Workshop # 14: To work towards respecting and protecting the creation

Excerpts from the CIOFS manual : section The VOCATION, CHARISM and MISSION

We understand, now, that there are no limits in the scope of the mission of secular Franciscans. The object of the Mission is the whole Church and, working with it, the whole world. Secular Franciscans will have to make themselves available, like Francis, every time the Church calls, every time there is something, anything, to repair. There are no limits to its scope: reconciliations to promote, sufferings to alleviate, solitudes to fill, despair to console, marginalizations to fight, material and spiritual poverties to heal, respect for life and for nature, youth to love and to accompany, catechize, animation of Liturgy, support to the Christian communities in anything they may need, etc. There are no limits!

We must understand where God and the Church call us to serve.

We understand, then, that **the Charism** not only empowers us to fulfill the **mission**, but also animates it and guides it so as to make the mission specifically effective at all times.

The children of Francis must continue his mission! What a responsibility!

It's hard to believe! It comes natural to say: Lord, perhaps, you have made a mistake!

No the Lord does not make mistakes. *Nothing is impossible to God!*

The words of friar Masseo come to mind when he asked Francis: *why is everybody coming after you?* And Francis answered: *because the Lord has not found anyone more vile than me!* (LFI Chapter 10)
Yes, the Lord builds the house, also with us.

We only need to be his docile collaborators.

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Sunday, August 27, 2006. B16: "Thou Shalt Not Mess With Creation".

The pope said the created world was a great gift of God but is presently "exposed to serious risks by life choices and lifestyles that can degrade it."

"In particular, environmental degradation makes poor people's existence intolerable," he said.

The Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church says the world's poor, who often live in polluted slums, are connected to the environmental crisis. In cases of poverty and hunger, it is "virtually impossible" to avoid environmental exploitation, said the 2004 social doctrine.

Pope Benedict said, "In dialogue with Christians of various churches, we need to commit ourselves to caring for the created world, without squandering its resources, and sharing them in a cooperative way."

The Italian initiative aimed to promote the church's teaching on care for the environment. In churches throughout the country, the faithful were being asked to pray and to meditate on ecological damage.

In July, the pope sent a message to Ecumenical Orthodox Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople, praising his efforts in reminding Christians of their duty to protect the environment. In that message, the pope warned that the ecological balance of the Amazon region was under threat.

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Excerpts from the

...POST-SYNODAL
APOSTOLIC EXHORTATION
SACRAMENTUM CARITATIS
OF THE HOLY FATHER
BENEDICT XVI
TO THE BISHOPS, CLERGY,
CONSECRATED PERSONS
AND THE LAY FAITHFUL
ON THE EUCHARIST
AS THE SOURCE AND SUMMIT
OF THE CHURCH'S LIFE AND MISSION

The sanctification of the world and the protection of creation

92. Finally, to develop a profound eucharistic spirituality that is also capable of significantly affecting the fabric of society, the Christian people, in giving thanks to God through the Eucharist, should be conscious that they do so in the name of all creation, aspiring to the sanctification of the world and working intensely to that end.(249) The Eucharist itself powerfully illuminates human history and the whole cosmos. In this sacramental perspective we learn, day by day, that every ecclesial event is a kind of sign by which God makes himself known and challenges us. The eucharistic form of life can thus help foster a real change in the way we approach history and the world. The liturgy itself teaches us this, when, during the presentation of the gifts, the priest raises to God a prayer of blessing and petition over the bread and wine, "fruit of the earth," "fruit of the vine" and "work of human hands." With these words, the rite not only includes in our offering to God all human efforts and activity, but also leads us to see the world as God's creation, which brings forth everything we need for our sustenance. The world is not something indifferent, raw material to be utilized simply as we see fit. Rather, it is part of God's good plan, in which all of us are called to be sons and daughters in the one Son of God, Jesus Christ (cf. *Eph* 1:4-12). The justified concern about threats to the environment present in so many parts of the world is reinforced by Christian hope, which commits us to working responsibly for the protection of creation. (250) The relationship between the Eucharist and the cosmos helps us to see the unity of God's plan and to grasp the profound relationship between creation and the "new creation" inaugurated in the resurrection of Christ, the new Adam. Even now we take part in that new creation by virtue of our Baptism (cf. *Col* 2:12ff.). Our Christian life, nourished by the Eucharist, gives us a glimpse of that new world – new heavens and a new earth – where the new Jerusalem comes down from heaven, from God, "prepared as a bride adorned for her husband" (*Rev* 21:2).