Beginning Reflection

Everything is connected. 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.

***Laudato Si'*, 91**

Never before have there been more powerful motives for zeal in God's service than those inspired by the events taking place around us.

Blessed Basil Anthony Moreau

In *Laudato Si'* (on care for our common home, 2015), Pope Francis invited the global Church and all persons of goodwill to:

- recognize that everything, and indeed everyone, is connected.
- appreciate that creation is a gift to all and the birthright of those yet to be born.
- understand that we are each responsible for the most vulnerable of our brothers and sisters and therefore committed to the common good.
- recognize that the urgency of the converging global crises—such as climate change, which exacerbates global disparity—demands decisive action on each of our parts before it is too late.

He states clearly, "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. Strategies for a solution demand an integrated approach to combating poverty, restoring dignity to the excluded, and at the same time protecting nature." (*LS* 139) Pope Francis links the common good with the concept of integral ecology (*LS* 156), suggesting that if we want to create a sustainable society in which all life can flourish, our actions must be founded on multidimensional (e.g., environmental, social, political, economic, spiritual, etc.), interconnected, and diverse perspectives and approaches.

For decades, the Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Cross has articulated its commitment to ecological sustainability and systemic change through its corporate stands, the Family of Holy Statement on Climate Change, and through the creative and responsive programs of its sisters and partners in ministry. The urgency of these global crises now calls us to greatly expand these efforts and join with the global Church in a journey toward integral ecology outlined by Pope Francis in *Laudato Si'*. This must be a priority for us all.

You are invited to join us on this journey as we enter a period of education, prayer, and discernment that will culminate in a decisive action plan toward integral ecology. We are the ones, and our time is now.

Reflection Questions

- *Laudato Si'* urges us to "hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor" (*LS* 49). How have you witnessed these cries in the places you live and work? What vulnerabilities do you see?
- As you identify these needs, consider what personal responsibilities you might have. What role might you play in solving one of these issues? What role do you have in promoting the common good/integral ecology?
- Connection is our strength. With whom might you partner to extend your influence/efforts to promote the common good/integral ecology?

Suggested Actions

- Visit the **cscsisters.org/OurTimeIsNow.org** page to sign up for our updates and join our efforts.
- Visit the **Laudato Si' Action Platform** for more information about global resources and programming.
- Read **Laudato Si'** (also available from bookstores and online retailers).

A Prayer for the Healing of All Creation

Loving God, open our hearts that we might recognize the beauty and intrinsic value of all creation.

Instill in us a great and powerful hope that, though there is much work to be done, there is still time enough to do it.

Give us the courage and the wisdom to approach our fellow beings with care and concern for all, to change corrupt systems, to heal old wounds, and to realize our potential as persons of God, that we might act boldly and compassionately, recognizing that our time is now.

Amen.