

QUESTION: WHAT HAS CLEARLY BEEN DONE FOR US TO CARE

As kaitiaki of the earth, we have a responsibility to focus our attention on the integrity of our planet's ecosystems. These are essential for our survival. We must understand the responsibility that God has given to us. As inhabitants of God's creation, it is our duty, whether rich or

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poor, to conserve it to the best of our ability. In gratitude to God for this wonder-filled world, we are called to sustain an environment in which future generations can thrive. How we tend to our environment is a measurement of our stewardship and devotion to God.

Today, the challenge is great as we face a multitude of issues that jeopardise our Earth's ecological systems including: pollution, climate change, depletion of natural resources, loss of biodiversity and global inequality.

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goal

In *Laudato Si'* Pope Francis asks "every living person on this planet" to care for our common home. In other words, we are responsible for maintaining the health of our natural world, no matter our background.

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Because of high air pollution rates in cities around the globe, the UN advocates a worldwide shift to affordable, clean energy. Although this may not solve all environmental crises, it aims to provide clean, affordable energy across the globe, a big step towards reducing air pollution.

Currently, the main source of energy used in many countries is fossil fuels, which are non-renewable sources of energy. Their combustion releases "greenhouse gases" such as methane and nitrous oxide and carbon dioxide. In 2016 we saw a record high in atmospheric carbon dioxide levels. It is carbon dioxide which is associated with the disruption of historic weather patterns of the globe.

Fossil fuels are economically unsustainable. Their

Unfortunately, the state of our natural world, once glorious and thriving, has been rapidly degrading. The major turning point in our relationship with the environment began in the Industrial Revolution.

The world is a vastly different place from what it was just a few decades ago. Due to our treatment of the Earth, we need to rapidly adjust to many modern issues. With the world in such a fragile state due to climate change, we cannot afford to lose time. Pope Francis has

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called for this action to take place within the Catholic Church. In his encyclical, *Laudato Si'*, he invites us to modernise our thinking and is encouraging the Church to support morally right paths. He has spoken up clearly about what we need to do as Catholics and humans. This is based on both clear scientific evidence and our understandings from the Scriptures.

The work of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is essentially aligned to the goals of our pope. UNDP is working hard to reach the Sustainable

The harsh reality of the news can be depressing: Our world is dying. Animals are becoming extinct. Forests are being cut down. The air is filling with greenhouse gasses. Populations are growing but we can't feed everyone. So what are we going to do?

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While it may seem we can't do anything, in fact, we can. We can help our Earth by reducing what we buy, recycling waste and reusing what you can. Other things will take more time, more energy, even more money. But when our Earth is at stake, everything can help.

We can develop vertical farming using less space to feed more, replant trees when forests have been chopped and develop and use transport that doesn't rely on fossil fuels.

Vertical farming has advantages over regular farming.

AN ENERGY TO DO WITH THE POPE'S CALL FOR OUR COMMON HOME?

7 (SDG) is pursuing a global mission to grant access to affordable and clean energy around the world. This UN Development Programme supports governments to transform their renewable energy markets. It aims to identify and implement policies that catalyse investment in renewable energy technologies. All renewable energy solutions supported by Goal 7 focus on integrated approaches that address climate change and assist local development. Renewable energy is a core element in achieving climate targets, reducing disaster risks

(associated with rising temperatures), and “building back better” following a disaster event.

It is imperative that we take steps to prevent our home from perishing. Although it is a problem that is global in scale, even small acts of empowerment can have big results. Our actions can help to limit further damage. We, too, can support the United Nations in their wise mission to ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services. ☀️

extraction also causes immense damage to the land (such as erosion), as well as water pollution.

Alternative clean, renewable energy sources include wind, solar, geothermal and hydroelectric, which do not produce air pollutants. Replacement of non-renewable fossil fuels with renewable energy sources will significantly lower air pollution levels.

Another issue tackled by the UN goal for affordable, clean energy is “energy poverty”. This defines the situation where poorer people cannot afford or access sufficient energy to support their basic needs. It is an issue for approximately one fifth of New Zealanders today.

We are already seeing a global surge in technology

innovation. The challenge for my generation is to advance new technologies so they are safe and efficient in harnessing and transmitting clean energy to users. And we should make existing technologies cleaner and more efficient as we transition to the next stage of our energy economy. I believe my generation will discover a new combination of the three sciences to upgrade our energy technology.

Sufficient, clean energy should be accessible to everyone. ☀️

Development Goals (SDG). Clean sustainable energy is clearly needed for the future. The whole world needs to understand this and stop ignoring the undeniable evidence that we are changing the climate.

However, this is only the beginning to the solution. Pope Francis knows that these problems of global warming will affect everyone and it is the responsibility of all of us to do something about this. Therefore, the next steps involve the cooperation and contribution of everyone. It is at times like this, that “all people of good will” need to

work together to solve these problems and reach solutions that will prevent our planet from dying. We are no longer Catholics, other Christians or of other Faiths, we are all citizens of this one world. We all need to act NOW. The survival of our beautiful home depends on it. ☀️

Not only does it save space and feed more, but it uses less water and grows other produce, even fish if we use aquaponics. Crops don't have the same risks from pests coming and eating them.

Replanting trees is essential. They give animals a home and they help keep greenhouse gases down. There are fewer than 275 Sumatran rhinos left in the world because of the deforestation of their habitat. Replanting trees is like restoring the land to what it once was.

Changing to electric cars would mean less carbon

emissions which makes the air cleaner. The air pollution in China can be seen from space. Can we really tell ourselves that our world doesn't need help?

There are multiple little and larger ways we can help. The point is: what difference are we going to make? ☀️