

Table breakout discussions related to the questions – February 3, 2020

All

What does Integral Ecology mean to you?

- A relationship of interconnectedness exists in the world at all levels from the smallest microbe to all human beings. All life is interconnected, and humans cannot separate themselves from their effect on their environment without effecting the common good, wholeness, dignity and unity we hunger for. All living things are tied together in one great interdependent network of ecosystems that interact to disperse carbon dioxide, make oxygen, purify water, form soil, break down waste, control disease, produce food and many other ways which we overlook or simply do not know about. Harming this ecosystem harms us all but especially the poor.
- Respecting this knowledge of our interconnectedness in God's creation enhances our relationship with God and one another and informs our stewardship of the environment.
- Integral Ecology means long term sustainability and a healthy world and society we can pass down to our children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren.
- Interconnectedness, responsibility for all, we are not alone in this concern, God exists in all (Thomas Aquinas – everything is related to God)
- Human interaction with each other and the world and the environment
- Mixture of human life and all life, relationships, interconnectedness, beautiful – overwhelming, "Horton Hears a Who" (A 1954 Dr. Seuss book about the dignity of all living things and the environment)
- Balance, interconnectedness, wholeness, stewardship
- Hebrew translation of dominion and stewardship that leads to a different interpretation than the sense of "dominion" as we have been led to understand (See Jacob's piece in the symposium material)
- Integration of life and spirituality and the implication of this on the choices we make
- Everything is connected. Mind, body, spirit, environment.

How do you rank climate change among all the other things to be concerned about?

- It affects everything, it doesn't operate in a vacuum, it's accelerating, it will hurt those who come after us, we can do climate change while dealing with the other issues, IT MUST BE DONE!!
- Ecology impacts everything, more people are getting on board – it's getting to be a higher priority, the consequences are overwhelming, there is too much focus on the economy in the present and too little on the future
- We now have climate refugees.
- People celebrate prolife in the womb instead of life in a bigger context.
- We must have a mind shift – consider the ramifications of consumerism
- It's moving up the list
- Number 1, it impacts all the others
- Climate change is a key issue upon which other social effects develop
- The effect of climate change in the world with its inevitable impact on human sustainability has a direct effect on all other manmade conditions that inflict misery on

humanity. Because it is a root cause of many if not all conditions that plague humanity, we cannot fully address racism, poverty, income inequality, healthcare, famine, migration/ immigration, refugees, conflict between people without fully understanding the changes that climate change is making on the environment and the world's resources and the pressure placed on the human condition.

Concerning climate change, what would you like to learn more about?

- How to get involved, how to communicate with relevant organizations
- What are effective solutions? What legislation is being proposed that would impact climate change? What candidates are proposing?
- How to “depoliticize” the issue and bring balance to it
- We would like to understand the what motivates the climate denier and the arguments for continuing the way of life that has brought us to this point of deep division.
- How can we modify the capitalist system which is premised on private ownership of capital and someone else’s labor and the wholesale exploitation of natural resources for what increasingly seems like short term gain, to focus on the long-range goals of integral ecology and sustainability?
- We would like professional speakers to address theology and science of climate change
- Learn about recycling, single stream recycling, and the importance of reusing and repurposing things.
- Invite Waste Management speakers and corporate representatives to speak about how companies are changing.
- How to minimize single use plastics?
- How to minimize plastic waste, eliminate single use plastics
- Would like more information about efficient recycling processes

How have you experienced climate change?

- Harvey, weather fluctuations
- Hurricane Harvey and its aftermath.
- Severe flooding, Severe fires, Severe drought. Melting of the polar caps, Rising sea levels
- Steadily warming temperatures that are affecting food production all over the world and creating more intense competition for basic resources that sustain life.
- Not only have we personally been affected but we are keenly aware that our brothers and sisters throughout the world are affected by climate change.

What is an appropriate Dominican response to climate change?

- The four pillars, study, preach, pray, collective action (community).
- What Pope Francis asks of us – How do my actions impact climate change?
- Raising awareness is important. Denial doesn’t help things
- Pray, Study, Preach, Organize
- Stand up, be heard and be counted
- Lead by example with their great and brave hearts.

Group 1

How do you feel about the focus on climate change in the media and the political arena?

- Climate change is seen as a partisan issue.
- Is there a focus? More accurately, a lack of focus
- The present administration – undoing environmental protections
- Contradictions between what scientists and politicians say, the term “global warming” has been misunderstood – climate change has become climate crisis
- Climate action and sustainability can be economically beneficial
- Industry will play a key role in effectively addressing climate change
- Politics is more about keeping one’s job, personal security
- Personal comfort, security equally important to voters
- We do not want to be inconvenienced, uncomfortable

What are the barriers to taking action to address climate change?

- Consumerism, political partisanship
- Our consumer culture makes instant gratification a way of life. In this system, it is difficult to think beyond the present moment to plan 30 years down the road
- Driven by economics (supply and demand) and profit motive
- Economic profitability, consumerism, unrealistic expectations
- Transforming the economy – doable but will take a lot of time
- Global challenges are huge but also huge just in US, even though many of us want change
- Not reflected in corporate governance
- How to live in a changing climate. We live how we have been taught. Relearning new routines takes time. Rate of change is overwhelming.
- We live in a corporate oligarchy, not necessarily a democracy
- It’s too expensive in the US to recycle

What do you think a transformation in religion means?

- Recognizing interconnectedness, homilies on environmental issues, hearing about these issues from people of faith, some parishes are moving to solar energy
- Parishioners taking the initiative to demand action from their faith communities, recognize that systemic change requires political action – can’t separate religion from politics
- Need to develop an integrated sense of who we are – interdependence with nature, culture, society, politics

How do you feel connected to the natural world and everything else?

- We like to drink clean water, breath clean air, eat healthy food.
- Connection through the national and state parks

Group 2

What do you believe about climate change?

- It's happening, it might not be perceptible to us day in and day out but the empirical science and related data, while complicated, is clear.
- Climate change is real and present and continuing unabated if the world does not wake up and take action.
- There is no negotiating with Hurricanes, catastrophic flooding, famine, or mass migration because people can no longer feed themselves or find sufficient water. T
- Those who continue to deny climate change or the effect that it has on the future of mankind remain a mystery. Why would you not take action to reduce the effects of climate change when the effects are so apparent and catastrophic.
- Katrina was a bell-weather for climate change, subsequent patterns of extreme weather noted

What would you be willing to do to support sustainability?

- People have to be shown how climate change has an impact on their lives
- Educate people on how they can have an impact on climate change
- Make climate change facts accessible to more people.
- Conserve and recycle, reduce consumption, reuse more effectively, don't waste, do a little more, for example, set goals (use less water, drive fewer miles
- Install solar energy, consider in college choice, LED bulbs, recycling/reusing, full washing loads, teaching others, volunteering
- Practice "Care-full living". Consciously reduce, recycle, reuse. Reduce our carbon and waste footprint. Promote sustainability by example, word, and deed. Speak up, stand up, be counted.
- Share the Good News, hope and promise of Laudato Si' and suggest to your friends, communities, Pastors, and others that they study the issue or preach on the subject.
- Share the "Walking in Praise with Pope Francis /30 days with On Care of Our Common Home".
- Pay attention to the Youth Climate Movement
- Move from Knowing to Acting
- Talk to Costco, UPS about recycling
- Listen to our youth.
- Pray about it and for it to come about.

How can you make a political difference? What can you do?

- Talk to candidates for office, learn about what they believe about climate change, let them know how important this issue is to us
- Write to congresspeople and senators, be an informed voter (locally and nationally)
- Motto for climate change: Keep learning, keep living, keep fighting
- Vote and Vote often.
- Call and write your elected officials. Challenge candidates to be informed and aware of the issues.
- Demand legislation and enforcement of same: Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act.

- Support all the voices worldwide calling for action. Get back in the Paris Climate Accord.
- Be willing to participate in mediated conversations with climate deniers.
- Invest in socially responsible companies.
- Consider Green energy.
- Study the Green New Deal and act on that which you can control: conserve water, food, eat healthier (less red meat).
- Live intentionally and with purpose.
- Move from Knowing to Acting.

What role does religion or spirituality play in responding to climate change?

- Focus on Catholic Social Teaching – this is what we believe, can be a bridge to connect with others, helps provide a moral imperative to do something about climate change
- As stewards, we must return earth to its earlier state or better
- Frames moral responsibility, it deepens the meaning, human dignity and dignity of the earth are intertwined, the planet is “on loan” to each generation, it gives it greater beauty and value, the loss of a species is the loss of God’s creation
- Evolutionary theology is congruent with Dominican charism and teaching. (St. Thomas Aquinas)
- God created the world and all life in it. God created humanity. God gave us this amazing earthly home as a pure gift of his Grace.
- To deny the sacred value of what has been freely given us by God is to separate ourselves from God.
- Separation from God is a Sin.
- Love of God and Neighbor and all creation are His greatest commandments.
- Our relationship with God and one another informs our relationship with the environment.
- Cherish God, Cherish One Another, Cherish the Earth.
- To waste, squander, and misuse God’s ultimate gift to mankind is to no longer recognize the priceless value it brings to our very lives.

Note - One of the members of the DF who attended our session was inspired by what she heard and in Mass the following weekend, made note of this hymn that was sung. The communications coordinator, Lauren Wasielewski put this quote up on Flock notes about the program.

*Still the nations curse the darkness,
 Still the rich oppress the poor.
 Still the earth is bruised and broken
 By the ones who still want more.
 Come and wake us from our sleeping,
 So our hearts cannot ignore
 All your people lost and broken,
 All your children at our door.*

- Excerpt from God of Day and God of Darkness by Marty Haugen