

## The Mysticism of Laudato Si'28

### WHAT OUGHT I DO?

The Ignatian review of consciousness or *examen* can help convert us to care for creation and for the most vulnerable of the human family. The pope is unequivocal: *'Living our vocation to be protectors of God's handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience'* (217). So find a quiet place to meet the Lord: sit with him and quietly gaze in on the world as an astronaut would. He is *'present to everyone and everything'* (226). So you can chat as friend to friend.

**Be Grateful:** He says, 'You were conceived in the heart of God, and so you are the result of a thought of God. You were willed, loved, and necessary (65). God has entrusted part of the world to you (5), to be an instrument of our Father, so that our planet might be what he desired and correspond with his plan for peace, beauty and fullness' (53). What emotional response do these words strike in you? Speak with the Lord about them.

**Ask for Light:** He responds: 'Nature is a magnificent book in which God speaks to you and grants you a glimpse of his infinite beauty and goodness (12). But the harmony between the Creator, humanity and creation is disrupted by your presuming to take the place of God and refusing to acknowledge your creaturely limitations' (66). I ask the Lord to show me how I tend to usurp the place of God and distort things so badly. What does he say in reply?

**Learn where sin lies:** He says: 'Sister Earth now cries out to you because of the harm you have inflicted on her (2). If you scan the regions of the planet, you see that humanity has disappointed God's expectations (61). Because of humankind, thousands of species will no longer give glory to God by their very existence, nor convey their message to you (33). You have not heard the cry of the earth nor the cry of the poor (49)'. Confused and ashamed, I ask the Lord's forgiveness, and allow him to speak his mercy to me.

**Ask, 'What Ought I Do?'** He tells me simply: 'Replace greed with generosity, wastefulness with a spirit of sharing. Learn to give, and not simply to give up. This is a way of loving, of moving gradually away from what *you* want to what God's world needs' (9). I live in a world that is generous to me, so I ask a generous God for generosity of heart and sensitivity in my buying, my eating, my use of water and all my other choices, so that I may be reconciled with the poor and with creation.

**Ask for Hope:** He smiles encouragingly: 'You can cooperate as an instrument of God for the care of creation according to your own experience and talents' (14). Believing that God is present throughout creation and is always working for my good, I offer my heart for loving service. Surely the Lord responds with joy and thanks!