

The way we deal with material objects
has made it easy to accept the idea of infinite or unlimited growth...



It is the false notion that an infinite quantity of energy and resources are available, that it is possible to renew them quickly and that the negative effects of the exploitation of the natural order can be easily absorbed. (106)

The technocratic paradigm (the dominance of technology in today's world):

- tends to dominate economic and political life;
- tells us profit is more important than the negative impact on human beings;
- maintains that technology and current economics will solve all environmental problems;
- argues that global hunger and poverty will be resolved simply by market growth;
- encourages waste and consumerism. (109)



There needs to be a distinctive way of looking at things, a way of thinking, policies, an educational program, a lifestyle and a spirituality which together generate resistance to the assault of the technocratic paradigm. To seek only a technical remedy to each environmental problem which comes up is to separate what is in reality interconnected and to mask the true and deepest problems of the global system. (111)

How do you interpret the true and deepest problems of the global system verbalized by Pope Francis?

There is “an urgent need for a bold cultural revolution” (114)

What would that look like?

Pope Francis refers to the crisis and effects of modern Anthropocentrism (the belief that human beings are the central or most significant species on the planet and that Nature is an object to manipulate to make a profit). “When human beings fail to find their true place in this world, they misunderstand themselves an end up acting against themselves.” (115)

When we fail to acknowledge as part of reality the worth of a poor person, a human embryo, a person with disabilities – to offer just a few examples – it becomes difficult to hear the cry of nature itself; everything is connected. (117)



If the present ecological crisis is one small sign of the ethical, cultural and spiritual crisis of modernity, **we cannot presume to heal our relationship with nature and the environment without healing all fundamental human relationships.** Our relationship with the environment can never be isolated from our relationship with others and with God. (119)

*What cries of the poor and Earth do you hear?
How can you help heal these relationships?*

If we reflect on the proper relationship between human beings and the world around us, we see the need for a correct understanding of work. Together with the awe-filled contemplation of creation which we find in Saint Francis of Assisi, the Christian spiritual tradition has also developed a rich and balanced understanding of the meaning of work. (125)



*How are human labor and
the environmental challenges connected?*

More
Ponderings

Human creativity cannot be suppressed. If an artist cannot be stopped from using his or her creativity, neither should those who possess particular gifts for the advancement of science and technology be prevented from using their God-given talents for the service of others. We need constantly to rethink the goals, effects, overall context and ethical limits of this human activity, which is a form of power involving considerable risks. (131)

It is difficult to make a general judgement about genetic modification (GM), whether vegetable or animal, medical or agricultural, since these vary greatly among themselves and call for specific considerations. The risks involved are not always due to the techniques used, but rather to their improper or excessive application. Genetic mutations, in fact, have often been, and continue to be, caused by nature itself but at a slower rate. (133)

With the use of GM foods, productive land is concentrated in the hands of a few owners, and the disappearance of small producers. The most vulnerable are temporary laborers and rural workers. (134)

*What other positive and negative aspects
of biological technologies exist? (130-136)
How do we become more informed
about the rapid changes occurring in technology?*

As we have seen in this chapter, a technology severed from ethics will not easily be able to limit its own power. (136)

*What kind of world do we want to leave
to those who come after us,
to the children who are now growing up?
What ethics are we modeling and teaching?*



Praise be to you my God!

As we enter into 2016,
may we continue to be inspired by Pope Francis' message and
be grateful for all who are caring for our Home.

“Laudato Si’ On Care of our Common Home”

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