

## **2020 Essay and Multimedia Contest**

**Olivia Anthony**

**St Mary's School**

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### **The dreams of a Pope**

Pope Francis has a dream. His dream is that the world can be better for everyone. He wrote a letter to everyone in the world no matter what their belief is and this was called Laudato Si "Care of Our Common Home". The beginnings of Catholic Social Teaching Principles were started by Pope Leo XIII and carried on by every Pope since. These social teachings are a moral guideline on how to solve the world's social problems. Pope Francis has taken the ideas from the previous Popes and sparked an interest in making the world a better place for all of humanity and life on earth now and for the future.

Stewardship (kaitiakitanga) is one of the Catholic Social Teachings which means caring for God's gifts as his humble people. As part of upholding the care of stewardship, we have to learn about all the different parts of the world.

In the letter Pope Francis wrote (Laudato si) he talks about all of the problems in the world, one of the major ones is climate change. He states that "climate change is gradually building up and affecting the earth's health." He says that "climate change will eventually affect us."

The cry of the earth and the cry of the poor means if the earth is suffering then people of the earth suffer too especially the poor people and nations. As stewardship explains when we care for God's gifts, we also need to look after ourselves as well. As the Catholic Social Teachings (CST) say we need to look after the gifts from God and there are many people starting to try to work a way to prevent climate change in the world. Not all people follow the CST principles, however others can have their own beliefs and help others but do not believe in how God is involved.

NASA scientist James Hansen, predicted 32 years ago that 2020 would be a year that had exceptionally high temperatures - mega fires (Australian bush fires?), carbon emissions, Co2 from fossil fuels - coal, oil, gas, world land temperatures increase and lack of rainfall. The new thing that has just been invented and is making its way on the road is electric cars which are helping the earth save on petrol usage.

The cry of the earth to the cry of the poor means the richest 300 people on earth have the same wealth as the poorest 3 billion people. Wealthy countries are 80% wealthier than poor or undeveloped countries.

Ways to prevent the poverty of others (known as our brothers and sisters) are instead of spending all the money we have on things we don't really need, we could share it by buying things that the less fortunate need like food and clothes. Instead of throwing out food that is a little brown we could keep it or make it into something else. For example a banana (which is the most common thing to be thrown away when it has "turned" bad) could be still used for maybe making something like a smoothie or if you see some people on the streets you could offer them it which is helping the less fortunate.

When you help someone, just by giving them a little thing, can make a big impact on someone's life. For example, if someone hasn't eaten in days a small cup of water or a spoonful of rice can help them feel better and live longer.

And for the earth, at least be aware of or try to invest in the power you use. Actually buying the food you know will get eaten, minimise and reduce the amount of water wastage that is if you don't need to have the tap on if you are putting soap on your hands, can help the earth.

The phrase "love thy neighbour" comes from the bible and it is along the same lines as the meaning of solidarity (whakawhanaungatanga). Solidarity means "being aware of your brothers and sister accomplishments and being aware of what they're doing".

When reading *Laudato si*, it states that as part of climate change the poorest people will be affected by it more greatly than the more fortunate people of the world because they do not have the houses and shelter that other people have. People also need to realise that they are part of the world and they have an impact on the earth too. We have to look at people and how much effort they put into being the person that they are. A person who is acknowledged for their effort will increase it and this will help them become a better version of themselves. Not only do we need to realise when someone is doing something good but when someone is making a difference that will help others. For example, you could answer the maths question but if you help someone who has been struggling in it, it could make a difference and impact in their life by having someone help and care about them. Out in the world there are many people that work very hard and it just helps them if a person that they care about admires what they are doing for their family and/or community and acknowledges what they are doing.

Another way to show solidarity, is taking the time to step back and actually see the world from a different perspective and also look at the people around you, build a strong relationship with them and see what they like to do. Also to step into another person's shoes, "walk a mile in their shoes" and see how life is for them compared to yours . Do little things for others, help them if they need or want it and maybe what you are doing is enough to make life a little easier for them.

We should all be equal when it comes down to our life and what we have. However it is not equal, even though we are made in God's image and with all our life planned by him. We as God's people are expected to show Preferential Option for the Poor and Vulnerable (He Whakaaro Nui Mo to Kunga Rawakore). It's not fair that someone isn't getting what they deserve just because of where they live or what situation they find themselves in without any fault of their own. God loves us all the same, therefore we should all have the same. I don't know about you but everytime I walk down a street and see someone begging for money just to get medication or food it makes me feel utterly upset and sad.

When you see a little child walking places, looking in shop windows with a sad look on their face because they see what the other kids their age have - bright coloured clothes and adorable soft toys and they realise they won't get them, it is heartbreaking. It's really not fair that many parents are not necessarily really poor but can't afford any treats yet they work exceptionally hard and are only just able to afford one weeks worth of food or enough to pay rent, power and then also need to pay for a child's education.

We need to stop pointing out material items that people have like the newest shoes, phones and clothes and envying them and putting poor people on the spot which makes them feel like they stand out for a bad reason in the world. We need to help them feel the same as others and feel equal. We need to help all of God's children feel equal. As the Catholic Social Teachings are put in place to help us try and fix the problems in the world. As Catholics if we all tried to at least help the poor every year the population of poor people would go down. Not only do we need to help the poor, we need to help the vulnerable become more confident in their own selves and be comfortable in their situations, we can teach them to fight for themselves. By helping them it will help them realise that they can do anything and know someone is there for them whenever they need it just to talk or give them a hug.

By caring for God's gift of the world, the life in it and the future of it, it is dependent on us working towards solving the issues we face. By recognising others as our brothers and

sisters we work together to make the world a better place. By thinking of those who are less fortunate in body, mind and spirit as well as basic items we are working towards a better life for all. All of these ideas and actions will help make Pope Francis as well as the previous Popes dream for a better world a reality. It will not happen overnight but if we all work together it will happen.