

JPIC supplement to candidacy formation
by Andrew Conradi, ofs (JPIC National Animator), 2016
Some ideas/points that could be included at the discretion of the formator

CANDIDACY

Chapter 26 “Universal Kinship”

The Franciscan Journey (Updated version 2010) by Lester Bach, OFM Cap.

Note: *Understanding JPIC (UJPIC)* can be found here:

<http://www.franciscanvoicecanada.com/> Click on “Understanding JPIC” at the foot of the page. [It is best to get it from this source as it will post the amendments quickly after they are made so you will get the latest updated version here]

1.

From *FJ* p 280: “Care for the earth is a requirement of our faith.”

From *UJPIC*:

“Creation

3.2.51. At first, for the Pontifical Justice and Peace Commission, the environment (creation) was not in the forefront, but that changed with St John Paul II who dealt extensively with it in his teaching, and this ecclesial concern accompanied the growing concern shown by society. When St John Paul II, declared St. Francis of Assisi patron of ecologists, in the Apostolic Letter *Inter Santos* on 29 November 1979, he wrote: “He offers Christians an example of genuine and deep respect for the integrity of creation. As a friend of the poor who was loved by God's creatures, Saint Francis invited all of creation - animals, plants, natural forces, even Brother Sun and Sister Moon - to give honour and praise to the Lord. The poor man of Assisi gives us striking witness that when we are at peace with God we are better able to devote ourselves to building up that peace with all creation which is inseparable from peace among all peoples.” In a *Declaration on the Environment*, Bl John Paul II and Patriarch Bartholomew I of Constantinople stated: “Within a single generation, we could steer the earth toward our children’s future.” (10 June 2002)

3.2.52. There has long been a growing awareness of the close relationship between justice for the poor and justice for creation (or

an option for the poor *and* an option for the earth). In fact, it was drawn to the attention of the 1971 Synod of Bishops by Barbara Ward. The origin of the term JPIC was mentioned earlier. Important moments in the Christian world include the first European Ecumenical Assembly in Basel, Switzerland (1989) (its theme was “Peace with Justice,” and it issued an inspiring final statement entitled *Peace with Justice for the Whole of Creation*). This was followed by the World Ecumenical Assembly in Seoul, South Korea (1990), whose theme was *Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation*. These two assemblies were promoted principally by the World Council of Churches, which linked ecological problems with those of justice and peace. They helped to popularize the expression “the integrity of creation,” which has since been incorporated into the JPIC entities of many Catholic and other Religious Congregations.

3.2.53. “What exactly do we mean by ‘creation’? Creation is not the same as ‘nature’; neither is it properly a scientific or philosophical term. Creation is a thoroughly religious concept. Creation means that to understand everything that exists at its deepest level, it must be seen in its relationship to God. [cf. contuition] Creation is concerned not only with beginnings but with every single moment of existence.” (Guinan, 2006, 32, emphasis added)

3.2.53.a. Pope Francis wrote in *Laudato si'*: “In the Judaeo-Christian tradition, the word “creation” has a broader meaning than “nature”, for it has to do with God’s loving plan in which every creature has its own value and significance. Nature is usually seen as a system which can be studied, understood and controlled, whereas creation can only be understood as a gift from the outstretched hand of the Father of all, and as a reality illuminated by the love which calls us together into universal communion.” (2015, n.76)

3.2.54. “We are startled to learn that creation itself is made for Christ – not Christ for creation. We think that Christ saves us *from* the world and we find it hard to believe that Christ saves us *for* the world.” (Delio, 2005, 160) For Seculars this must be reassuring!

3.2.55. St John Paul II, in his Message for the World Day of Peace, 1 Jan 1990, wrote: “The proper ecological balance will not be found without directly addressing the structural forms of poverty that exist throughout the world.” This theme of justice for the earth and justice for the poor were linked in the book by Leonardo Boff: *Ecologia: grita da terra, grita dos pobres* (1993, Ed. Ática, São Paulo, “*Ecology: cry of the earth, cry of the poor*”). Focusing on the threatened Amazon basin of Brazil, Boff traced the ties that bind the fate of the rain forests with the fate of the indigenous peoples and the poor of the land. There was a UN conference entitled *Cry of the Earth* in 1993 but Boff linked the two cries.

3.2.56. Boff, a Franciscan for 25 years, had been an OFM priest and for 22 years a professor at the Franciscan Institute in Petrópolis, Brasil but, when silenced and denied permission to publish views which differed from the Vatican’s, resigned from the priesthood in 1992. Regardless, Boff is still considered by most to be part of the Franciscan family in spirit, and this phrase was adopted by the Québec Bishops in 2001 and repeated by the Social Affairs Commission, Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops: “The cry of the earth and the cry of the poor are one.” (CCCB, 2003, n.17) “For example, environmental degradation generates poverty, loss of the means for survival, migration and displacement, especially among indigenous peoples. The global attack on the environment has become, in fact, an attack on the poor.” (ICJPIC, 2012, Nairobi, n.13)

3.2.56.a. Pope Francis wrote in *Laudato si’* (2015): “Everything is connected. Concern for the environment thus needs to be joined to a sincere love for our fellow human beings and an unwavering

commitment to resolving the problems of society.” (n. 91) and “Peace, justice and the preservation of creation are three absolutely interconnected themes, which cannot be separated and treated individually without once again falling into reductionism”.^[70] Everything is related, and we human beings are united as brothers and sisters on a wonderful pilgrimage, woven together by the love God has for each of his creatures and which also unites us in fond affection with brother sun, sister moon, brother river and mother earth.” (n. 92)

3.2.57. Benedict XVI firmly places man in creation in these words in *Caritas in Veritate*: “The Church has a responsibility towards creation and she must assert this responsibility in the public sphere. In so doing, she must defend not only earth, water and air as gifts of creation that belong to everyone. She must above all protect mankind from self-destruction.” (2009, n. 51)

3.2.58. Following this theme of protection it is fitting to recall how the first Jesuit Pope, and the first Pope to take the name Francis, said in his homily at his installation mass: “The vocation of being a “protector”, however, is not just something involving us Christians alone; it also has a prior dimension which is simply human, involving everyone. It means protecting all creation, the beauty of the created world, as the Book of Genesis tells us and as Saint Francis of Assisi showed us. It means respecting each of God’s creatures and respecting the environment in which we live. It means protecting people, showing loving concern for each and every person, especially children, the elderly, those in need, who are often the last we think about.” (19 March 2013)

3.2.58.a. Pope Francis (6 August 2015), inspired by St. Francis of Assisi, whose Canticle of the Creatures inspires so many people to live in praise of the Creator and with respect for creation, and following the example of Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, announced a World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation to be

observed annually on 1st September. The Holy Father wrote: “ ..., first of all we must draw from our rich spiritual heritage the reasons which feed our passion for the care of creation, always remembering that for believers in Jesus Christ, the Word of God who became man for us, “the life of the spirit is not dissociated from the body or from nature or from worldly realities, but lived in and with them, in communion with all that surrounds us.” (ibid.,[*Laudato Si'*], 216). The ecological crisis therefore calls us to a profound spiritual conversion: Christians are called to “an ecological conversion whereby the effects of their encounter with Jesus Christ become evident in their relationship with the world around them.” (ibid., 217). Thus, “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.”(ibid).” This last sentence leaves no room for doubt of the importance for Catholics to care for creation.

3.2.59. To summarise CST [Catholic Social Teaching] on creation, the Episcopal Commission for Justice and Peace of the CCCB [Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops], in “Building a New Culture – Central Themes in Recent Church Teaching on the Environment,” has outlined eight central themes in recent Church teaching on the environment. “These reflect on how a Catholic approach to economic questions, social justice, and environmental questions are necessarily viewed in relation to each other.” The eight central themes are the following: our creation in God’s image; creation’s intrinsic order; the relationship of “human ecology” to environmental ecology; responsible stewardship; the morality of caring for the environment; solidarity; creation and spirituality; and necessary responses to environmental problems.” (CCCB, 2013)”