

God's Earth - Our Home

course structure

Study 1: Introduction

We've got a problem

The cry of the earth, the cry of the poor

Study 2: How we see ourselves makes a difference

A theology of creation

Study 3: Human roots of the ecological crisis

Sin and the vandalism of God's shalom

Study 4: It's interconnected

Integral ecology - the fruit of righteousness is shalom

Social action required

The great dialogue – renewal of society for the common good

Study 5: The happy revolution

The need for conversion and a lived Christian spirituality

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Series Structure

Introduction & Chapter 1

We've got a problem

We face a crisis. We're all in this together and God has not abandoned us. The cry of the earth, the cry of the poor are interconnected and are calling for collaborative action. We can meet the challenges of this crisis if we work together across differences.

Chapter 2: How we see ourselves makes a difference

A theology of creation

Our interconnected *creatureliness* is fundamental to +Francis' thinking. He takes a deep dive into the creation narrative and other Old Testament readings to get a right understanding of who we are in the world, what our task is, what the world is for. It is when we objectify 'nature' instead of seeing ourselves as part of 'creation' that we open the earth to manipulation and exploitation. The difference is made in understanding our God as our creator and parent from whom all families take their name.

Chapter 3: Human roots of the ecological crisis

Sin and the vandalism of God's shalom

The connection between human fallenness and state of the world is deep. The *cultural forces* that propel us into our present predicament are powerful. Our decisions and habits have major impacts. +Francis has a particular bugbear with consumerism — it looks like freedom, but it's a veil obscuring what really gives life value. A fundamental and determined change is required — our repentance.

Chapters 4 & 5: It's interconnected – action required

Integral ecology, dialogue & social action

So we understand the problem(s) and how we got here, what next? +Francis reiterates that the ecological crisis, is in fact a human crisis. Everything is connected and so an *integral ecology* must address all aspects of life as well as 'nature'. +Francis is attempting to start a conversation with the whole world. He gives pointers to the kind of dialogue and action that will be needed at different levels — from international relations, national politics, within local communities, families and individuals. He envisions a renewal of politics and economy in the service of humanity for the common good.

Chapter 6: The happy revolution

The need for conversion and a lived Christian spirituality

The final chapter is about *conversion* and living out a deep and authentic Christian spirituality. +Francis looks at how we are formed as people; how our families can inculcate this ecological conversion. Ecological education and disciplined spirituality are integral elements in following Christ. The goal is “moving gradually away from what I want to what God's world needs”. Avoiding ugly moralising but “speaking the truth in love” (Eph.4:15) our call as change agents is to be Christ in his world – to live a life of love: love for God, for God's world, for God's humanity. It is this love, welling up from gratitude to our creating, saving God which motivates our action.