

**From the Office of Peace, Justice, and Ecological Integrity  
Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth  
Reflection for Election 2020 – September 18, 2020**

**From Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship, #86:**

“Care for Creation is a moral issue. Protecting the land, water, and air we share is a religious duty of stewardship and reflects our responsibility to born and unborn children, who are most vulnerable to environmental assault. We must answer the question that Pope Francis posed to the world: "What kind of world do we want to leave to those who come after us, to children who are now growing up?" (*Laudato Si'*, no. 160). There are many concrete steps we can take to assure justice and solidarity between the generations. Effective initiatives are required for energy conservation and the development of alternate, renewable, and clean-energy resources. Our Conference offers a distinctive call to seriously address global climate change, focusing on the virtue of prudence, pursuit of the common good, and the impact on the poor, particularly on vulnerable workers and the poorest nations. The United States should lead in contributing to the sustainable development of poorer nations and promoting greater justice in sharing the burden of environmental blight, neglect, and recovery. It is important that we address the rising number of migrants who are uprooted from their homeland as a consequence of environmental degradation and climate change. They are not currently recognized as refugees under any existing international convention and are thus not afforded legal protections that ought to be due to them.”

**Reflection:**

1. Reflect on the ways in which the climate crisis is related to other pressing social justice issues. How many military conflicts are spawned over access to natural resources, fossil fuels, water? Natural disasters like flooding and forest fires cause civil unrest and confusion that are often taken advantage of by human traffickers. Globally, how are BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) disproportionately affected by the climate crisis? Often they are the least responsible for climate change, yet suffer its consequence most severely and have the least resources to rebound from natural disasters. Lack of access to potable water affects women and girls in a special way; often they are the water providers for their families. A girl who has to spend 8 hours a day fetching water will not go to school. Menstruating girls without access to toilet facilities will also avoid school.

2. Check out candidates environmental records using this score card from the League of Conservation Voters <http://scorecard.lcv.org/>

3. The Archdiocese of Atlanta has produced an excellent diocesan plan for the implementation of *Laudato Si'*. Download it; invite some friends to study it with you; take its insights to your family, school, work site, parish, town council. <https://archatl.com/catholic-life/refreshatl/>

4. We are in the midst of the Season of Creation, September 1 to October 4. This year's theme is "Jubilee for the Earth: New Rhythms, New Hope." Read Luke 4:16-20 in which Jesus sees his own mission in terms of the biblical Jubilee. How are you called to proclaim a Jubilee for Earth? Good news for our Earth of whom Pope Francis has said, "The poorest of the poor is Mother Earth." Release to captives, perhaps animals raised in cruel conditions to satisfy the market for cheap meat. The forgiveness of debts – perhaps our debt to the soil exhausted from industrial agriculture. How will you proclaim a time of the God's special favor to all the creatures of earth – humankind and otherkind?

### **Deeper Dive:**

-Use the attached two-page reflection sheet *Climate Change and Care for Creation* from the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns. It can also be found at this link <https://maryknollogc.org/sites/default/files/electionbriefclimatechange.2.pdf>

-Check out these resources for celebrating the Season of Creation (Sept 1- Oct 4) from the Sisters of Mercy <https://www.mercyworld.org/about/our-initiatives/mercy-international-reflection-process/resources-and-activities-for-the-season-of-creation-2016/>

### **Prayer:**

Creator God, how deep are your designs! You made a living earth, cloud, rain and wind, and charged us with their care. We confess that the way we live today is changing the climate, the seas and the balance of life, dispossessing the poor and future generations. Build our lives into an Ark for all creation, And, as you promised Noah never to repeat the flood, so make us heralds of a new rainbow covenant: Choosing life for all that is at risk – for creation, neighbors near and far, Our children and ourselves. Amen.

From *Churches Together in Britain and Ireland*