



Reflection on the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day April 22, 2020

The gospel today (3:16-21) is the continuation of yesterday's Gospel: the meeting of Jesus with Nicodemus. The theme of today is the relationship between God and the world. God loves the world. He loves it so much that he gave his only Son, who died a terrible death on a cross as proof of that love. God loves the whole world and not just the "good" parts but also the "bad" parts. God's love is total and unconditional for every one of his creatures. In order that we may experience the life that comes from God through Jesus, we have to believe in him, open ourselves to him, and give our whole selves to him in deep faith and trust. Then we need to share his life and love to God's other creations.

Dear sisters and brothers, it is not God who abandons or dumps us; it is we who abandon God. It is us who reject God. It might be good for us to reflect today on those dark corners of our life and then work for conversion. Pope Francis in his Encyclical letter on the "care for our common home", known as *Laudato Si*, calls all of us to carry out an ecological conversion to answer "the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor." This ecological conversion invites us to a deep and lasting change in our own lifestyles so that they become truly sustainable in a practical, material, and spiritual sense. This means that we need to combat our over-consumption and reduce our ecological footprint at the individual and community levels.

My sisters and brothers in Christ, the theme of Earth Day of 2020 is an urgent appeal for action. We realize that climate change is an existential threat to God's creation. We see that the quality of our environment is getting worse. We cannot keep postponing our action anymore. We need to take actions now; otherwise, the irreversible damage may destroy critical ecosystems, and add to the burdens of our most vulnerable brothers and sisters.

Finally, let us pray to our Lord that He may strengthen and help us to take action. "Lord God, we are your people who are longing for a better future. Inspire us to change ourselves and become the caretakers, protectors and healers of the Earth. Make us people of action who are rooted in faith, hope, and love. Help us to open ourselves to extent our hands to others and cooperate with them to do good things to our planet. Amen.

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