

Mission Espada

September 8, 2019

When God created the heavens and the earth, he saw that it is very good! God put women and men on the earth as stewards of its riches and resources. But we have not been good or wise stewards. There is growing and very serious concern about the deterioration of the environment that impacts every human life. Pope Francis has asked, who is the poorest, poorest, poorest mother in the world? His answer is Mother Earth! We must begin again to care for the earth, to treat it wisely, not greedily. An ancient African proverb says: “You do not own the land. Your grandchildren gave it to you as a gift!” The environment-- the air, the water, the land – these are all gifts given to us to be handed on to our grandchildren!

We know how the enthusiasm of a new beginning frequently erodes when we learn the true costs and risks of the promises we have made. Initial commitments are easy. Perseverance is hard!

Today, large crowds gather around Jesus. They are enthusiastic. They are not aware that he is on his way to Jerusalem or what will happen to him there. Jesus knows what awaits him in Jerusalem. He does not want to scare us away or frighten us.

But he clearly tells us that, if we wish to be his disciples, we must be willing to pay the costs and take the risks involved.

Following Jesus, being missionary disciples, means listening attentively to the living Word of God, allowing it to take deep root in our lives and bearing fruit. We must act on the gospel, not merely think or meditate on it! The kingdom of God is a place of justice and peace, unity and harmony, wise stewardship of the earth's resources.

We live in very difficult times. There is so much division and polarization, so much anger and hatred, so much enclosing ourselves behind walls with people who think exactly the way we do. It is hard to build up the kingdom today. But Pope Francis gives us the antidote to all of this poison: true encounter with others; authentic mutual respect and dialogue; recovering respect for Mother Earth, the environment. The Holy Father reminds us that "the Eucharist is a source of light and motivation for our concerns for the environment, directing us to be stewards of all creation." We are nourished by the Word of God and by Christ's Body and Blood and led by the Holy Spirit. Let us walk courageously in faith, love, and hope. Let us care for Mother Earth, a gift from our grandchildren!