

"I give you a new commandment:"Love one another."



Love ultimately means willing the good for the "other" and "the others."

This would include our planet earth which is the womb of all life.

And the Earth's welfare must be a pursuit of love.

This is what the Pope's encyclical, Care for the Earth" is promoting

"Caring for the earth is as old as Genesis, as clear as The Sermon on the Mount, as

transformative as Saint Francis.

The sainted John Paul II and the retired Pope Benedict frequently and eloquently spoke of the Christian requirement to tend the garden and protect the poorest. Caring for creation is one of the 7 tenets of Catholic Social teaching..

What is new is that Pope Francis is moving environmental protection to the fore. He writes that all life depends on clean air and water and reliable climate. As being a chemist by background, and with a team of scientists at the Vatican, he is clear that climate change is real and the greatest threat to our life on earth has ever seen.

And that climate change is caused by humans."

from *EARTH MINISTRY* WEBSITE.

{You can also visit this website and key in Pope Francis encyclical.}

At a recent gathering of friends, in a discussion among them I asked the question "Have you fallen in love with the earth?" and the reaction I got from them seemed to be confusing. Like "I have never thought of that before!"

Do we need to stop, look, listen to the beauty we take so much for granted, and let it elicit within us a sense of unity and love? I think so.

The recent movie that had Matt Damon stranded on Mars illustrated

how bleak is Mars. Do we have to journey to Mars before we begin to love

our earth home?

□ **"This is how they will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."**

Pope Francis is telling us very clearly that our caring love must include our beloved planet and home: The Earth.

And so we pray:

Our loving creator,

help us not to spurn the great gift you have given to us:

our Earth Home.

Help me to do my part:

taking time to recycle,

turning away from plastic bottles,

which are the scourge of our oceans.

EARTH DAY and 5th Sunday of Easter Apr. 24, 2016

Written by Fr. Fitz
Friday, 22 April 2016 13:50

Fill me with hope.

deliver me from the cynic's lilt,

and the "know nothings who scoff.

Help me to realize that loving our earth home

means loving the children to come.

Amen