

Proposed R & R Project and Rationale

Proposed action:

This proposal is to set up and staff two R(Reuse)&R(Recycle) Tables before and after a Sunday Mass, on one Sunday each month. (See *Rationale No 5 below*). This initiative would be a joint CoC and SVdP Taradale activity.

The tables will be:

- a collection point for parishioners' contributions to the SVdP opshop
- a collection point for small recyclables (toothpaste tubes, batteries, bottle tops etc.) for the Environment Centre
- an opportunity for sharing garden produce brought by parishioners

A trial period:

Initially the R & R Project would take place at St Mary's on one Sunday per month for 6 months, with a view to extending the practice to the other faith communities.

Purpose: (see *Rationale 1-4 below*)

1. To provide opportunities for parishioners to take positive environmental and social action
2. To enable the CoC and SVdP to work collaboratively towards their common goals
3. To raise awareness of both environmental and social justice issues
4. To promote Pope Francis' call to 'ecological conversion'

Rationale:

*Extracts from the Encyclical Letter **LAUDATO SI'** of the Holy Father Francis, on the Care for our Common Home.*

1. Opportunities for parishioners to take positive environmental and social action

'There is a nobility in the duty to care for creation through little daily actions, and it is wonderful how education can bring about real changes in lifestyle. Education in environmental responsibility can encourage ways of acting which directly and significantly affect the world around us, such as avoiding the use of plastic and paper, reducing water consumption, separating refuse, cooking only what can reasonably be consumed, showing care for other living beings, using public transport or car-pooling, planting trees, turning off unnecessary lights, or any number of other practices. All of these reflect a generous and worthy creativity which brings out the best in human beings. Reusing something instead of immediately discarding it, when done for the right reasons, can be an act of love which expresses our own dignity.' (211)

2. Collaboration between CoC & SVdP

'St Francis of Assisi ... 'shows us just how inseparable the bond is between concern for nature, justice for the poor, commitment to society, and interior peace.' (10)

'Today ... we have to realize that a true ecological approach always becomes a social approach; it must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, so as to hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.' (49)

3. Raising awareness of both environmental and social justice issues

'All Christian communities have an important role to play in ecological education.' (214)

'If we want to bring about deep change, we need to realize that certain mindsets really do influence our behaviour. Our efforts at education will be inadequate and ineffectual unless we strive to promote a new way of thinking about human beings, life, society and our relationship with nature. Otherwise, the paradigm of consumerism will continue to advance, with the help of the media and the highly effective workings of the market.' (215)

4. The call to 'ecological conversion'

'... the ecological crisis is also a summons to profound interior conversion. It must be said that some committed and prayerful Christians, with the excuse of realism and pragmatism, tend to ridicule expressions of concern for the environment. Others are passive; they choose not to change their habits and thus become inconsistent. So what they all need is an "ecological conversion", whereby the effects of their encounter with Jesus Christ become evident in their relationship with the world around them. Living our vocation to be protectors of God's handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience.' (217)

'The ecological conversion needed to bring about lasting change is also a community conversion.' (219)

'Love, overflowing with small gestures of mutual care, is also civic and political, and it makes itself felt in every action that seeks to build a better world. Love for society and commitment to the common good are outstanding expressions of a charity which affects not only relationships between individuals but also "macro-relationships, social, economic and political Ones". That is why the Church set before the world the ideal of a "civilization of love". Social love is the key to authentic development: "In order to make society more human, more worthy of the human person, love in social life – political, economic and cultural – must be given renewed value, becoming the constant and highest norm for all activity". In this framework, along with the importance of little everyday gestures, social love moves us to devise larger strategies to halt environmental degradation and to encourage a "culture of care" which permeates all of society.' (231)

5. It is fitting that the R & R project will take place on Sundays.

'Sunday ... is meant to be a day which heals our relationships with God, with ourselves, with others and with the world. Sunday is the day of the Resurrection, the "first day" of the new creation, whose first fruits are the Lord's risen humanity, the pledge of the final transfiguration of all created reality.' (237)