



hard times

Either we have hope within us or we don't; it is a dimension of the soul, and it's not essentially dependent on some particular observation of the world or estimate of the situation. Hope is not prognostication. It is an orientation of the spirit, an orientation of the heart. ...

Hope, in this deep and powerful sense, is not the same as joy that things are going well, or willingness to invest in enterprises that are obviously headed for early success, but rather, an ability to work for something because it is good, not just because it stands a chance to succeed.

Hope is definitely not the same thing as optimism. It is not the conviction that something will turn out well, but the certainty that something makes sense, regardless of how it turns out.... It is this hope, above all, which gives us the strength to live and continually try new things, even in conditions that seem as hopeless as ours do, here and now.⁷

What Havel describes as "hopeless conditions" in the final lines quoted here is his homeland under communism. Amazingly, three years later, communism collapsed in most of Europe. What so many people had hoped and prayed for during so many years suddenly became a reality.

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⁷ Vaclav Havel, *Disturbing the Peace: A conversation with Karel Huizdala* (New York: Vintage Books, 1991), chapter 5

Working Together For Urgent Change

Fr. Fred Kammer SJ
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Report by Pauline Webster and Barbara Colla

ALTERNATIVE EXTRACTIVE
ENSURE
FOOD SECURITY

The **Adelaide Catholic Council for Integral Ecology** hosted Fr. Kammer to speak during *Laudato Si* week. Here are some things we learned from attending.

Pope Francis is not the only pope that focused on the environment and care for our natural world.

Pope Francis's 2015 encyclical, *Laudato Si* follows statements by first, Pope John Paul 2, and then, Pope Benedict.

The development of the concepts highlighted by each of these popes shows people's growing awareness of the strong relationship between the natural world and us.

In 1990, John Paul's concept of **stewardship** underlined our Christian duty to look after our natural world rather than exploit and destroy it. Then, in 2008, Pope Benedict focussed on the concept of a **covenant** between humans and the environment reflecting the realisation that what we do to our natural world we do to ourselves. He generated the idea of us being in **solidarity** not only with each other but also with the environment. *Caring for people and caring for the environment are one and the same.* Destruction of environments impacts on people – especially the poor.

And then in 2015, Francis introduced us to '**integral ecology**'.

'Integral ecology' means our moral responsibility demands more than local focus and action

All three popes have encouraged a broader focus. John Paul drew our attention from rich and poor people to rich and poor countries and the consideration of the impact of international organisations. Benedict continued this trend widening the focus to things such as migration, culture, technology, and development. In *Laudato Si*, Francis argues "everything is closely related" and that "today's problems call for a vision capable of taking into account every aspect of the global crisis."

Today, our moral responses need to adopt a **holistic** approach to some of the political, social, economic, and environmental problems. And addressing a problem usually means addressing systems and structures.

Our mission as Catholics has changed

Where once it was sufficient to support a charity, we now recognise problems are interrelated and need to be looked at more widely. This probably means we need to learn more about issues like poverty, homelessness, and environmental damage.

[Other nearby church communities, like those of The Monastery, St. Ignatius and St. Chad's (Anglican), seem to be doing this. They often host guest speakers on such topics. PW]



Faced with the difficulties confronting our world we can still have Hope.

We don't need to feel overwhelmed by the enormity or complexity of problems. We can still act with hope of changing things for the better. Fr. Krammer using the writings from the book, *Disturbing the Peace: A Conversation With Karel Hvizdala*, argued that the virtue of Hope is an orientation of the spirit and heart. We act in the hope of change because we believe the change is good. Unlike optimism, hope does not depend on success. We may not always achieve the outcome we sought, but we continue because our actions make sense. (The extract from the book which Krammer used is on the back of this page. (Karel Hvizdala was a journalist living in West Germany and Havel was the first president of the Czech Republic.)

We hope this report generates interest to support Tee Ping's desire for an Integral Ecology group in our parish.

Barbara Colla and Pauline Webster