

Reflections on Climate Change

In May of this year I attended a Sedos conference in Assisi. The input expanded our understanding of the origins of the universe and the effects of the climate changes. The speakers took us back to the scriptures to see how Jesus himself experienced nature and lived with it and saw it as a revelation of God. We were encouraged to make an ecological commitment in our following of Jesus; to see that all of creation was made for a purpose and to reverence it and also to give God special praise and thanks for all of creation through the Eucharist.

During the conference we were made aware of the reality of what is happening in our world today in regard to climate change and the effect of what we are experiencing due to the abuse and destruction of nature/ mother earth, e.g. floods, extension of desert, pollution of the oceans, rivers, destruction of forests and sea level rising and **so on**.

That was the main concern and in need of urgent action!

Participants were questioned on what each one could do to help stop the destruction of our planet earth. Each one came up with their own answers. Several religious groups of men and women gave their input and laptop presentations on what they have already started doing in line with the topic “care of the earth” such as –

- eco farming using **non**-organic methods: Vegetable gardens, flower gardens, poultry and pigs raising, replanting of trees, recycling and so on.
- The outcome from that provides income, a source of protein and education. Also encouragement and the spread of understanding the importance of care for the earth and helping the poor.



*Maryanne Waimba
Picks vegetables from
the garden*

After my time in Rome I visited our Sisters in their missions in Bolivia and Peru. I soon realized how much our sisters have already done and are continuing to do in line with the care of the earth.

- They are deeply and practically involved in educating and in using different sorts of farming, using **non** –organic methods.

- As a result of their work at Cruz Loma, Coroico the people are being helped to raise poultry, pigs, cows, fruit trees, oranges, coffee trees, and they process their own coffee. They make their own cheese and provide milk, and fresh vegetables from their own gardens.



*Sr Helena Harney -
animal husbandry*

- At the university at Carmen Pampa there is a coffee factory which makes and sells its own organic coffee internationally. The students also have vegetable gardens and their outreach

programmes with villages have enabled the raising the poultry, cattle and pigs.

- The university works a tea plantation and a factory for pork products such as ham, sausages, cold meats, hot dogs and pork chops.

At the conference in Rome all were inspired by Franciscan spirituality and were challenged to live a simpler lifestyle - a lifestyle that reveals our inner sense of connection to the earth and to the God who creates. I am really impressed and feel proud of the example of our sisters in Latin-America: in what they have done and are continuing to do in living our Franciscan spirituality which underpins their contribution to the care of the earth. Through their example of hard work, and their involvement not only in educating so many young men and women, but also through the outreach programme which affects so many village people, they help, support, provide encouragement and give hope to many – and their outreach is especially directed towards the poor and the little ones.