Laudato Si Reflection

As I look back on my childhood being raised on a family farm, caring for the Earth and her resources has always been an important part of my life. My paternal grandparents and my parents engaged in conservation practices so these practices have been instilled in me since childhood.

As an Affiliate of the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration serving on the Ecospirituality Committee, we read and reflected on Laudato Si. This was an eye opener for me, broadening my perspectives and inviting me to ponder my part in caring for this Earth home. It challenges me to go beyond the practices of my youth, although those have provided me a good foundation on which to build.

There are so many areas in which I have a lot to learn so I am hoping this gives me a way to deepen my knowledge and practice of earth stewardship. I am already doing some of the Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles suggestions – I try to eat more plant-based meals, aiming for at least once a week. My husband is “Mr. Meat and Potatoes” and has been hard to change his attitudes. We use our own bags for shopping to reduce the amount of plastic, compost what we can either in our own compost or the city compost service. We work to reduce the heat/air conditioning costs by keeping the thermostat lower in the winter/higher in the summer and by using fans.

Community Resilience and Empowerment and Ecological Economics are the areas that I have little experience and really am not sure where to begin. These would probably be my biggest growth areas. It is an invitation to examine my banks policies in regards to ethical banking.

Ecological Education – becoming familiar with the local ecosystem sounds intriguing to me and I would need to find resources to begin learning more about this and perhaps find ways to share it with others.

Cry of the Earth – We have had an energy audit done on our home and as a result over the years we have made improvements on insulation, more energy efficient windows and lighting. I have successfully convinced my husband that we no longer need to apply harmful chemicals on our lawn. Small steps! We do what we can to conserve water – using the rain barrel for watering outside plants, a drip hose for the vegetable garden and water in the mornings when necessary. We also save the rinse water from doing dishes to water the outside flowers and save shower water for watering inside plants. I have worked to restore a small section of our yard to native plants and the pollinators have been thriving.

Cry of the Poor – It would be interesting to meet and learn from some indigenous leaders about their practices around the ecological issues. Human Trafficking is an area I am only slightly aware of so this would be another area where I have lots to learn.

Spiritualite Ecologique – Given that I am not Roman Catholic, I don’t have an opportunity for being as engaged in the Season of Creation liturgies. I can read them for myself, but it’s not the same as being part of a community of faith that engages deeply in it. My own backyard has areas that could provide sacred space for quiet and meditation – but I need to work on making them more conducive for this. Writing prayers in nature sounds intriguing to me and is something I could offer.

There’s much to become more aware of and involved in as I seek to do my part in caring for creation. This will take prayerful discernment to be open to the Spirit’s leading for what is mine to do.

Rose M. Blank September 16, 2022