



" I am establishing my covenant with you and with your descendants after you, and with every living creature .."

Genesis 9:9-16

A Summary of Key Environmental Themes in Chapter Ten of the Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church

A detail from Michelangelo's 'The Creation of Adam' showing the hands of God and Adam reaching towards each other.A photograph of the Christ the Redeemer statue in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, set against a green background.

The entrance of Jesus Christ into the history of the world reaches its culmination in the Pascal Mystery, where nature itself takes part in the drama of the rejection of the Son of God and in the victory of his resurrection.

(Mt 27:45, 51) ...
[No. 454]

A photograph of a field of orange flowers growing in a charred landscape, symbolizing renewal after destruction.

Nature is, by the Resurrection of Christ, reconciled to God, and given new peace – although nature still awaits full liberation from corruption, “groaning” in an effort to give birth to “ a new heaven and a new Earth”.
(Col 1: 15-20) ... [No. 454]

The whole of creation participates in the renewal flowing from the Lord's Paschal Mystery. (Rom 8: 19-23) ... [No. 455]



In every scientific and technological endeavour an attitude of respect for all creatures is necessary. One "must take into account the nature of each being and of its mutual connection in an ordered system".

We cannot interfere in one area of the ecosystem without paying attention to the consequences of such interference to other areas and to the well-being of future generations. [No. 459]

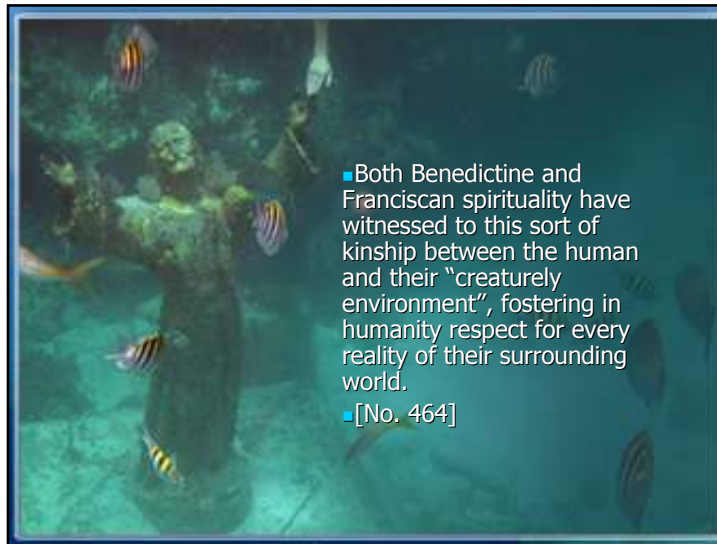


Humanity must not make arbitrary use of the earth as though it did not have its own requisites and prior God given purposes, which we may develop but not betray. [No. 460]

With the progress of science and technology, questions as to their meaning increase and give rise to an ever greater need to respect the transcendent dimension of the human person and creation itself. [No. 462]



Christian culture has always recognised the creatures that surround humans as gifts of God to be nurtured and safeguarded with a sense of gratitude to the Creator. [No. 464]



- Both Benedictine and Franciscan spirituality have witnessed to this sort of kinship between the human and their "creaturely environment", fostering in humanity respect for every reality of their surrounding world.
- [No. 464]




There is a need to place greater emphasis on the intimate connection between environmental ecology and human ecology. [No. 464]




- Care for the environment is a common and universal duty, respecting a common good, destined for all.
- It is a responsibility that must continue to mature by preventing anyone from using with impunity the different categories of being – whether living or inanimate – animals, plants, the natural elements – simply as one wishes, according to one's own economic needs. [No. 466]



Programs of economic development must carefully consider the need to respect the integrity and cycles of nature because natural resources are limited and some not renewable. The present rhythm of exploitation is seriously compromising the availability of some natural resources for both the present and the future. [No. 470]




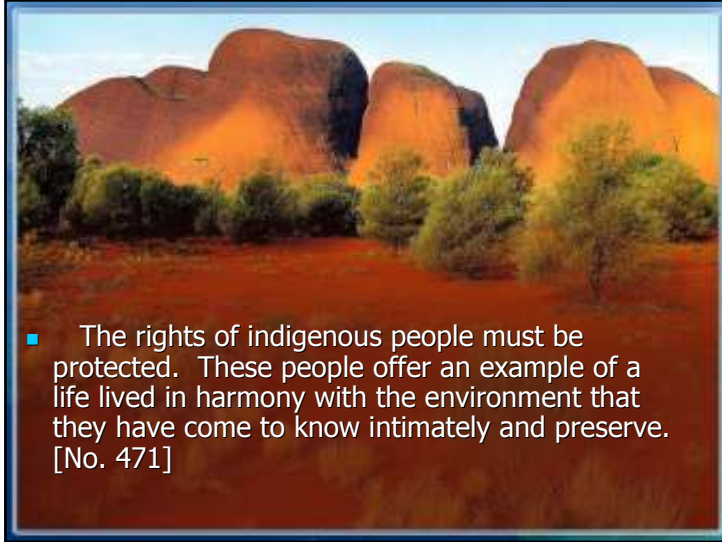
In this context one considers relations between human activity and climate change. The climate is a good that must be protected and reminds consumers and those engaged in industrial activity to develop a greater sense of responsibility for their behaviour. [No. 470]



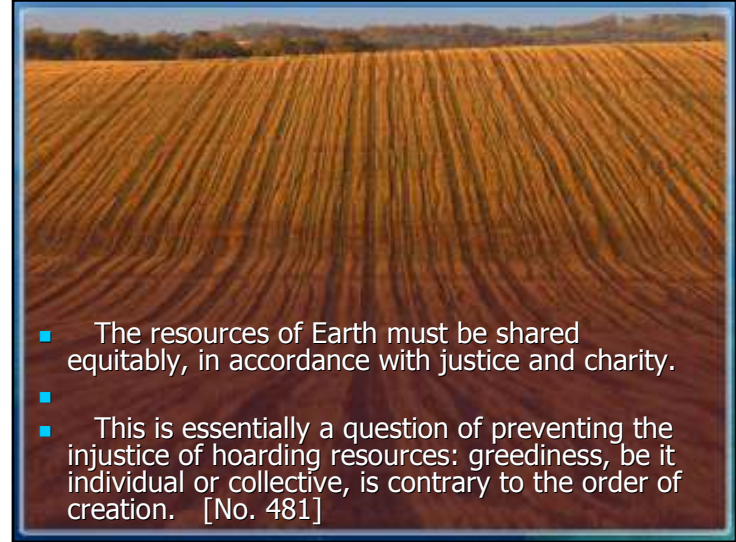
- From a moral perspective based on equity and intergenerational solidarity it will be necessary to identify new sources of energy and develop alternative sources.
- Such responsibility must be illuminated and guided by continual reference to the universal common good.

[No. 470]

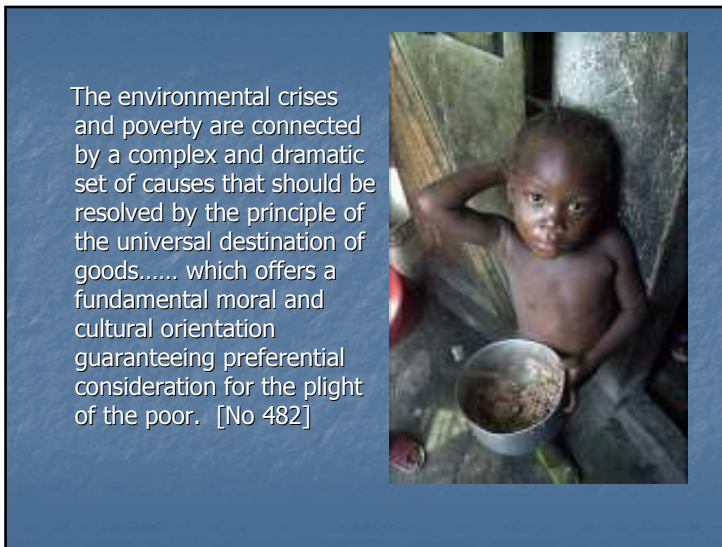




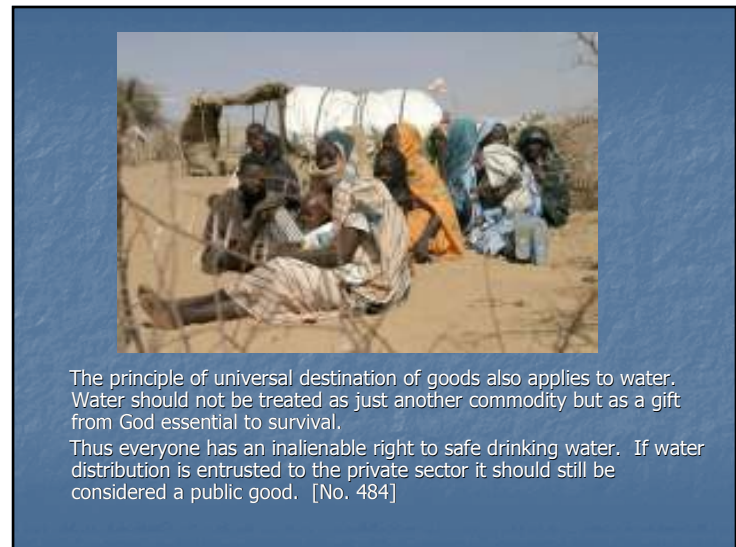
- The rights of indigenous people must be protected. These people offer an example of a life lived in harmony with the environment that they have come to know intimately and preserve. [No. 471]



- The resources of Earth must be shared equitably, in accordance with justice and charity.
- This is essentially a question of preventing the injustice of hoarding resources: greediness, be it individual or collective, is contrary to the order of creation. [No. 481]

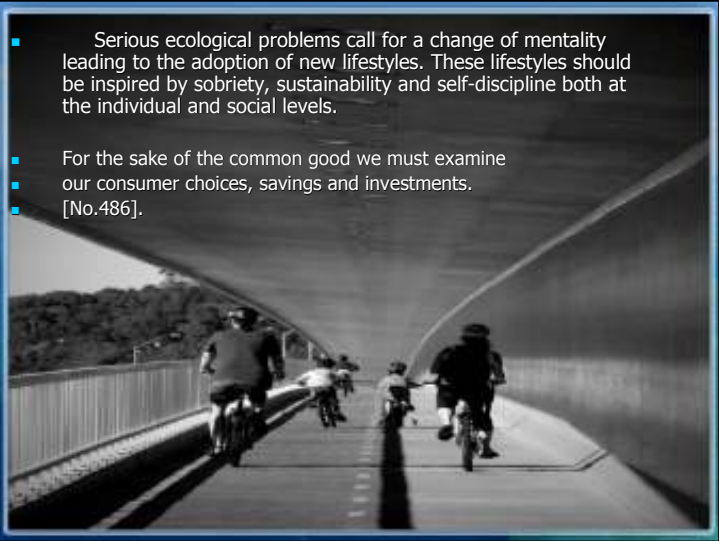


The environmental crises and poverty are connected by a complex and dramatic set of causes that should be resolved by the principle of the universal destination of goods..... which offers a fundamental moral and cultural orientation guaranteeing preferential consideration for the plight of the poor. [No 482]



The principle of universal destination of goods also applies to water. Water should not be treated as just another commodity but as a gift from God essential to survival. Thus everyone has an inalienable right to safe drinking water. If water distribution is entrusted to the private sector it should still be considered a public good. [No. 484]

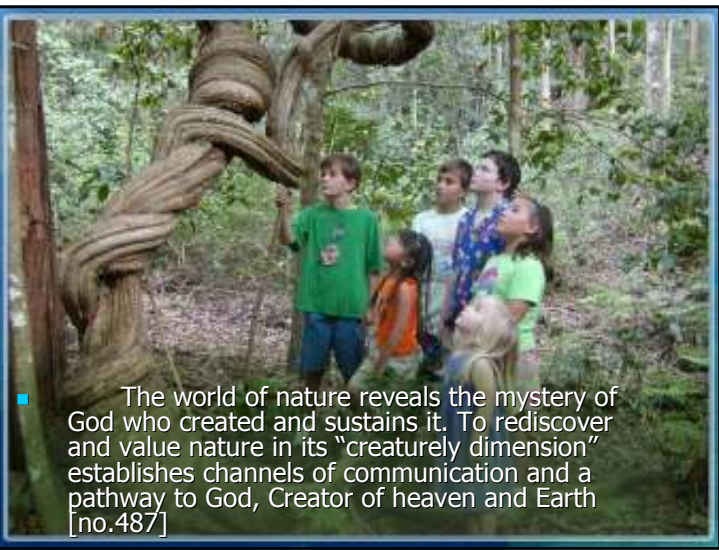
- Serious ecological problems call for a change of mentality leading to the adoption of new lifestyles. These lifestyles should be inspired by sobriety, sustainability and self-discipline both at the individual and social levels.
- For the sake of the common good we must examine our consumer choices, savings and investments.
- [No.486].



There is a need to break with the logic of mere consumption and promote forms of agriculture and industrial production that respect the order of creation and satisfy the basic human needs of all [no. 486].



- The world of nature reveals the mystery of God who created and sustains it. To rediscover and value nature in its "creaturely dimension" establishes channels of communication and a pathway to God, Creator of heaven and Earth [no.487]



In solidarity with the prophets of old, may God's Spirit poured into the human heart make the above sentiments of justice and care for creation, which resides in the Lord's heart, take root in you who is called to be a prophet of the modern era. Amen.

