

November 2022 **Franciscan Voice Canada** blog
by Andrew Conradi, ofs; JPIC & [Laudato si' Animator](#)



I acknowledge and thank the Lkwungen People for allowing me to live, pray, work, and play on their lands. I am deeply sorry for the injustices inflicted upon the First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples in Turtle Island by the complicity of Governments & settlers, including the Catholic Church, in the colonialism inherent in the Indian Act and Residential Schools including racism, neglect, many forms of abuse & cultural genocide. I commit to work for truth, healing and reconciliation.

WHY DO WE DO JPIC?

Sr. Margaret Carney, OSF

2022 Recipient of (US) Franciscan Vision [Award](#)

Sr Margaret said: “The question that rises in me when I am in the presence of people like you—people who spend every day [*or a lot of time*] on the JPIC barricades—is this: What allows you to go on day after day? How can you continue your work even when it appears that little progress is made, or progress can be demolished after untold efforts. Outstanding successes are few and often not heralded in the Times or CNN. How do we sustain ourselves on the quest for a better world and church? If I were to put the question to each of you this evening, you would surely answer with some [*or all*] of the following explanations:

- I have been called to this. I know this and accept this vocation.
- I am so inspired by those who do this work; I want to be part of it.
- The grace of God urges me forward.
- My community is a source of strength and hope.
- I must help to alleviate this suffering.”

I thank my wife, my OFS Little Portion Fraternity and my parish Social Eco Justice Ministry for keeping me going. What is Social Justice? See Catechism of the Catholic Church, nn 1928-1948).

EPIC EARTH HEALING

This video will give hope, warm hearts and lift spirits:
5 Most Epic Earth Healing Projects (video 12.43 mins)
<https://youtu.be/TpozW1CAxmU>

All are done by local farmers & people to catch and save flood water to restore vegetation and increase food production and reduce poverty. So simple yet effective!

Project 1: Arvari River Restoration Project Website (India)

Project 2: The Chikukwa Project (Zimbabwe)

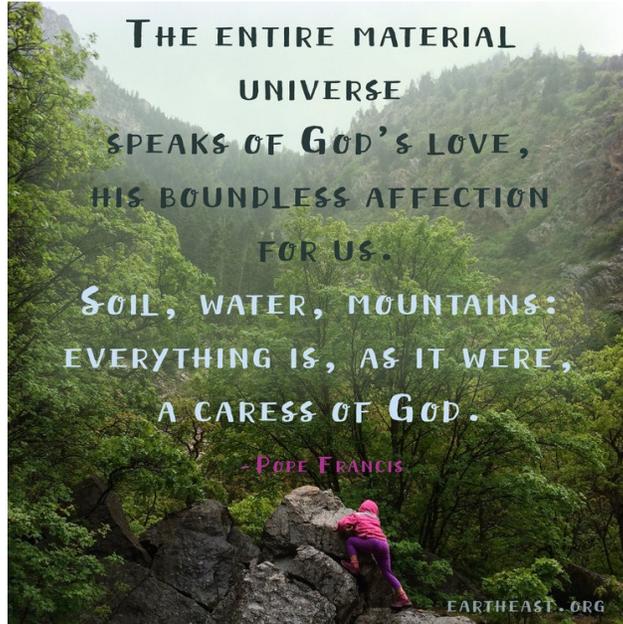
Project 3: GRAVIS Jodhpur Project (India)

Project 4: The Loess Plateau (China)

Project 5: The Paani Foundation Project (India)

(Thanks to Megan Desouza, a member of the Social Eco Justice Ministry)

at OLOR, Langford, BC, who actually worked on the Paani Project.



Picture source: <http://eartheast.org/pope-francis-care-for-the-earth>

Quote in picture above is from LS 84. I have just re-read *Laudato Si'* from a paperback. That is so different from my downloaded computer file no matter how useful that is. I can hold the book and flip through my many marked up passages and quote and show it to people (I already have!). I am again amazed at the comprehensive coverage and beautiful expressiveness of the writing. *Laudato si', mi signore!* The Letter has now been seen by over 8 Million people.

DANIEL HORAN, OFM, ON FREEDOM OF RELIGION FOOD FOR THOUGHT

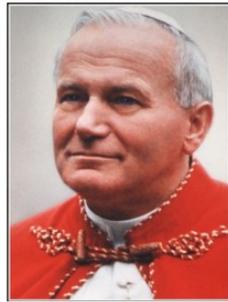
"As the church's Declaration on Religious Freedom, *Dignitatis Humanae*, states, "The human person has a right to religious freedom. This freedom means that all men are to be immune from coercion on the part of individuals or of social groups and of any human power, in such wise that no one is to be forced to act in a manner contrary to his own beliefs, whether privately or publicly, whether alone or in association with others, within due limits." [Andrew says: Ah, there you have it! What are the limits and who sets them? See *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nn 1897-1927]

While the Roman Catholic Church would not internally recognize the sacramental validity of same-sex marriage, this theological and disciplinary practice of restricting marriage *ad intra* exists in tension with the church's affirmation of the fundamental human right that exists for others to exercise their own religious traditions, including equal access to marriage within their churches and a pluralistic, constitutional society. [Belgium's Catholic bishops support the possibility of blessings for unions of same-sex couples — in defiance of the Vatican. [In an interview](#) with Vatican media, Cardinal Jean-

Claude Hollerich, S.J., said he believes Church blessings for same-sex unions, which the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith has ruled against, is not a settled matter.]

From a Catholic perspective, it is also important to note that religious freedom is a relatively new part of the universal teaching of the church, something that can only be traced back to the 1962-65 Second Vatican Council (note to those inclined to invoke the teaching yet reject the council). Therefore, there is also a clear theological and pastoral need to clarify how it is being understood and deployed.

The church itself teaches that all people have "a right to religious freedom" and that, as both *Dignitatis Humanae* and the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, [Gaudium et Spes](#), state, even Catholic Christians have recourse to their consciences. Rather than recognize this, the [US] bishops have instead sought to impose their religious views on others. *[At this point let me insert an image and quote of Pope St John Paul II and ask to what extent is it true?]*



*"The Church proposes;
she imposes nothing.
She respects individuals
and cultures, and she
honours the sanctuary
of conscience."*

1990, *Redemptoris missio*, 39

Presentation compiled by Andrew Conradi, ofc

Today, it seems that within many Catholic circles 'religious freedom' is only invoked by those who wish to suppress the rights and freedoms of others who may disagree with them.

Not only are such attitudes anti-American and unconstitutional, *[or I, as a Canadian, would say anti-human and inconsistent. Freedom of religion in Canada is protected by the Canadian Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms and the Canadian Human Rights Act]* but they also fly in the face of the church's teaching about the inherent dignity and value of all people, especially in their fundamental right to exercise their religious freedom. But the core of both the American constitutional right and the Catholic Church's teaching is that religious freedom is not a zero-sum game, but a way of being in relationship with others and organizing a society rooted in an authentic understanding of the common good — where all people can live with their inherent dignity and value recognized."

MORE FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Sr Teresa Forcades:

A Catholic Nun Who Rejects the Pro-Choice/Pro-Life Binary

Catalan Catholic Benedictine nun and medical doctor Teresa Forcades says women should make their own abortion decisions.

Sister Forcades' take: "I don't believe the state can impose an absolute ban on abortion. The fetus or the embryo, it's a very particular form of life because it's within another. It's within a mother who has to be able to make decisions in her life as a full human being."

Forcades is quick to clarify that she is not “pro-choice” and that she, too, believes in the sanctity of life, but the situation is “way more complex” to squeeze into the pro-choice/pro-life binary that frames today’s abortion debate.

Routinely called Europe’s most radical and vocal nun, Forcades is known for her public opposition to the Catholic church’s doctrine on women’s ordination, same-sex unions and abortion as well as her vaccine skepticism.

The Vatican urged the Catalan nun to publicly retract her views and suggested she be disciplined. Undaunted, Forcades instead replied with a rigorous theological case for abortion rights that, she argued, was “compatible with the gospel” and “defendable within the church.”

Forcades remains an active Benedictine nun today, regularly broadcasting her convictions and bracing for the debate and, at times, vilification that follows.

She poses a broader, philosophical question for religious circles: Is a mother’s life more or less valuable than the child who relies on her for survival?

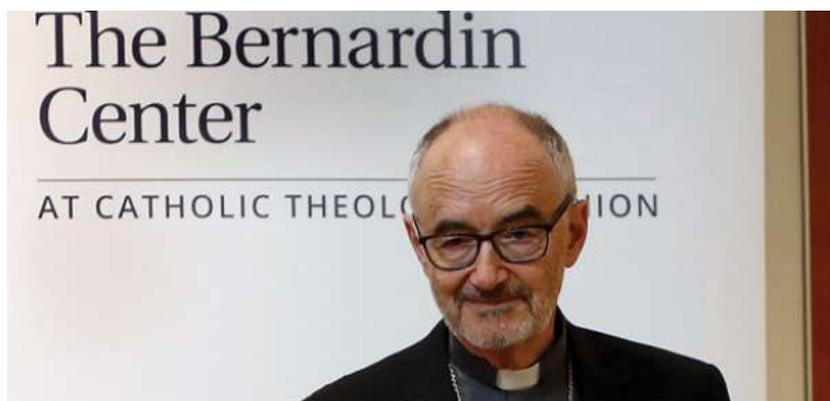
“I’m saying, precisely, that there is a problem and it is huge. You have two fundamental principles at play: the dignity of a human being that cannot be instrumentalized and the sanctity of life. What happens when those two conflict?” ...

“I don’t think I’m afraid of confrontation. That’s how you sometimes come out with a better solution for all. You acknowledge the difference by confronting it. Not of course in any violent or tricky way but openly. You confront and you say, “No, I don’t think like this.” And somebody else says, “Okay, I do.” And then we see how we can work together.

I think one of the highest human actions or human tasks is politics. That’s what Aristotle would say, that one who only cares about himself has ethics. One who cares about all has politics. Politics is ethics for everybody, not only for you. I don’t want to be only ethical. I want to be political because I think that’s what we are called to do from the gospel.”

[Pope Francis does not agree as we see in *Laudato Si’* 120: “Since everything is interrelated, concern for the protection of nature is also incompatible with the justification of abortion.” Where does this leave those who are trying to form their conscience?]

YET MORE FOOD FOR THOUGHT A CONSISTENT ETHIC OF LIFE



[Cardinal Michael Czerny, SJ](#)

“Embracing a consistent ethic of life must include working to create economic and social systems that foster relationships and build the common good, rather than focusing only on what are seen as traditional life issues such as abortion and euthanasia.”

The Canadian Jesuit, who is prefect of the Vatican’s Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, delivered his remarks at a recent public lecture on “Life, Solidarity and Fraternity: The Consistent Ethic of Life in Light of *Fratelli Tutti*” hosted by the Bernardin Center at Catholic Theological Union.

“The Church is calling for a consistent ethic of solidarity that aims at making sure no one, from the first moment of life to natural death, from the wealthiest community to our poorest neighbourhoods, is excluded from the table of life,” he said

“Our Church teaches that promoting the development of human life, meaning in the fullest sense the flourishing of human life in salvation history, must be a multifaceted mission that protects and enhances life’s sacredness, its solidarity in which we are all sibling offspring of God and its caring nurture of our common good.”

The failure to see humanity as one family in which all the members have an obligation to one another generates isolation, fear and division, Czerny said. This has led to a situation in which people see both the Earth — our common home — and other people as things to be used, rather than cared for, he explained.

“Tragically, unjustly, and acting contrary to life, the momentum of our age is against integral human development, against our divinely appointed role to care for our common home, against the sacredness of human life, against human solidarity,” he said.

“At its core, many of the contradictions that our present ages pose for integral human development turn on erroneous understandings of the human person, a flawed anthropology.”

Catholic social teaching has been developed along this thread for the past 130 years, since Pope Leo XIII’s *Rerum Novarum*, considered the first social encyclical, he said. Pope Francis’ encyclicals *Evangelii Gaudium* (2013), *LaudatoSi* (2015) and *Fratelli Tutti* (2020) build on the theme.

“Pope Francis takes aim at the ideology where self-interest and indifference are not only tolerated but justified and even invoked, and solidarity is sidelined as an option and the common good is viewed as an abstraction,” he added.

This results in an unfettered marketplace, where even human beings can be bought and sold, Czerny said.

“If suppliers are willing to sell, and consumers are willing to buy, then anything can be traded, and human trafficking is just one horrible example,” he said. “The market mindset shapes how human beings understand themselves, their value and their worldview.”

People who claim to support the sanctity of life cannot ignore what the current economic and social paradigm does to people, he said.

“Do not the shorter lifespans and higher infant mortalities of those in poverty cry to Heaven for justice and mercy in the same way the deaths of the unborn do?” he asked. He continued: “if Christ’s garment is truly seamless and whole, being genuinely pro-life requires accompanying, welcoming and joining with others as sibling children of God, especially those who, because of their differences, are hardest for us to love. A consistent ethic of life is also a consistent ethic of solidarity.”

SYNODALITY

While Pope Paul VI established the Synod of Bishops at the end of the Second Vatican Council in 1965, "synodality" has emerged as a key theme in Francis' pontificate.

"An essential element of the synodal journey is the development of a greater sense of co-responsibility of the lay faithful for the life and future of the church," the pope said 20 Oct 2022. It is a key part of fostering "the communion, participation and missionary commitment of all the baptized."

The Frascati document (27 Oct 2022)

[C White writes:](#)

A newly released Vatican document produced [in Frascati, Italy] for the next phase of Pope Francis' ongoing consultation process for the world's Catholics reckons with a number of topics once considered taboo in the Catholic Church, including women's ordination, LGBTQ relationships, children of priests, sexism and clergy sexual abuse.

The [45-page document](#), released on Oct. 27, distills a number of the major themes from listening sessions held with millions of Catholics across the globe over the last year. While the document is careful to note that it is not magisterial church teaching, it is arguably the most comprehensive and candid expression of the Catholic Church's relationship with the modern world yet released by a Vatican office.

The document will serve as the framework for the continental phase of the church's ongoing synod process, which will involve ecclesial gatherings on every continent over the next six months, ahead of two assemblies that will be held in Rome in Oct. 2023 and Oct. 2024.

The document, titled "Enlarge the space of your tent" after the passage in Isaiah, was produced by a team of 30 advisors who gathered in Frascati, Italy for two weeks in late-September and early October, the majority of whom were lay Catholics, one of whom was Austen Ivereigh, a British biographer of Pope Francis with whom the Pope collaborated on *Let Us Dream: the Path to a Better Future* (Simon & Schuster, 2020). He writes in a personal capacity and all views expressed [here](#) are his own. "We have been summoned here with the task of listening to the people of God," Cardinal Grech reminded us. "If in our synthesis we do not represent what the people of God are trying to say, then we have failed."

"These local church reports, each a synthesis of diocesan processes, were the main material we worked on. But we also kept in view the reports that the synod secretariat had sifted through already: syntheses from the superiors of religious orders across the world; a single submission from 150 associations of lay faithful; reports from 17 dicasteries of the Roman curia; and a report compiled by "influencers" in the digital world whose breakthrough online listening exercise drew in over 100,000 people. Finally, we heard a presentation on the submissions from more than 1,000 individuals or groups who had chosen, for different reasons, to write directly to the secretariat rather than through their local churches.

Out of 114 episcopal conferences from around the world 112 had submitted synthesis reports, [2 were unable because of particular situations e.g.war] along with all the Eastern Catholic Churches and Vatican departments, religious and lay Catholic associations and online "Digital Synod" consultations submitted directly.

While stating in the document's introduction that the text is neither official church teaching nor fully conclusive, the writers note that it is theological "in the sense that it is loaded with the exquisitely theological treasure contained in the experience of listening to the voice of the Spirit enacted by the People of God, allowing its *sensus fidei* to emerge."

The reports from across the world said it: The top-down structures and *modus operandi* of the church today are tired and do not fit the missionary context, whether the church be old or young.

In what emerged, I began to grasp the truth of what Pope Francis says in "[Evangelii Gaudium](#)," that "God furnishes the totality of the faithful with an instinct of faith—*sensus fidei*—which helps them to discern what is truly of God." It is an instinct that comes, the pope goes on, with a certain kind of wisdom, "to grasp those realities intuitively, even when they lack the wherewithal to give them precise expression."

The idea arose among us that became the icon at the heart of the Frascati document. The tent of meeting in Isaiah 54:2 has the tabernacle at its center and is firmly anchored by sturdy pegs; yet it is capable of being enlarged and moved as the mission demands. It struck us as a perfect metaphor for what the people of God were calling for, which the document calls the "missionary synodal church."

What is this something new, this big-tent church? Inspired by "Evangelii Gaudium," paragraphs 30-33 of the continental document note the two spiritual temptations facing a diverse church: on the one hand, to become trapped in conflict and polarization; on the other, to ignore the tensions that diversity brings, pretending they do not exist in a kind of fragmented coexistence.

It was through such [synodal] processes that in its early, missionary era the church was able to grow so rapidly across boundaries of race, language and culture.

[To those] who suspect the whole synod process is a dilution or capitulation, it will sound dangerously vulnerable and open-ended. But no one can doubt, reading the local church reports as we did at Frascati, that the *sensus fidelium* has awoken and has spoken, and that we cannot possibly confront these tensions without first creating the capacity for a synodal church. If we have managed to bottle that call and share it so that others can grasp it, our mission in Frascati is accomplished.

[C White writes:](#)

"Women remain the majority of those who attend liturgy and participate in activities, men a minority; yet most decision-making and governance roles are held by men," it states. "It is clear that the Church must find ways to attract men to a more active

membership in the Church and to enable women to participate more fully at all levels of Church life."

The document goes on to quote New Zealand's episcopal conference report, which states that the "lack of equality for women within the Church is seen as a stumbling block for the Church in the modern world."

[The Tablet](#): "Catholics want the role and vocation of women to be tackled urgently, ... [and] repeatedly express the desire for a more welcoming, inclusive Church that eradicates the misuse of power."

U.S. bishops' national synthesis of synodal reports ..., [Specifically](#), the synthesis states: "Synodal consultations acknowledged that 'the Church needs to help parishioners understand the connection between Catholic social teaching and outreach beyond the borders of the parish.' " *[Franciscan Voice Canada wholeheartedly agrees and that is one reason to support Development & Peace/Caritas Canada!]*

Vatican II

Dr Catherine Clifford (see picture below) said that that Vatican Councils and Synods are basically the same thing. She summarised Vatican II as rediscovery of early church practice and promoted *aggiornamento* (updating) and reconciliation. Others stress it was a renewal of ecclesiology, especially its ideas of collegiality, subsidiarity, co-responsibility, and human dignity.



KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

 DR. DONNA ORSUTO JOYFUL MESSENGERS OF CHALLENGING PROPOSALS 25 OCT	 DR. CATHERINE CLIFFORD LISTENERS ON THE SYNODAL WAY 1 NOV	 ARCHBISHOP DON BOLEN CHARTING A PATH FORWARD: THE VISIT OF POPE FRANCIS AND NEXT STEPS IN SOLIDARITY WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLES 8 NOV	 FR. JOHN MCCARTHY, SJ CREATION AS A SOURCE OF LIFE AND OUR CALL TO CARE FOR IT 15 NOV
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Registration Open

Too late for the first three presentations but not for 15 Nov in which case you'll be able to get the recording of the previous three others. I missed the first but watched Dr Catherine Clifford and it was such an eloquent and inspiring presentation! I'm certainly going to watch the last two.

REGISTER ONLINE TUESDAYS 1:00 PM -2:30 PM EST

at this address:

https://cccb-ca.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_ddzsQg6bT8aQ6ntrcfnN4A

Michael Sean Winters: “What Francis understands – and what every pope of the council starting with Papa Roncalli and including Montini, Luciani, Wojtyla and Ratzinger has understood – is that the dominant themes of the council were and are vitally necessary: a Christocentric focus, a retrieval of sound sacramental theology, pursuing ecumenical and interreligious dialogue, and getting out of the defensive crouch that had been the church's stance towards the modern world.”

The Mass was meant for participation not just listening to the priest “saying” mass. No more could people recite their beads while the priest “said” Mass.”

[Oh, but some still do!]

D&P/CARITAS CANADA

Wishes for Development and Peace's 55th anniversary

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jWQjmZoJRJ8> (video 3 mins)

In Lent: we learn & reflect. In Fall: we mobilize

To understand why we are pushing for stronger mandatory human rights and environmental due diligence (mHREDD) legislation than the one being considered, refer to the Canadian Network on Corporate Accountability's handy [comparative chart](#).

For an individual case, Sonia Perez, a Lenca from Honduras, check out:

<https://www.devp.org/en/blog/the-trial-of-a-truth-teller-defending-a-persecuted-honduran-journalist/>

Watch a video (1.33 mins) then please sign the petition (if you have not already) and ask others to do so. There is no age limit as long as the young person has reached the age of reason i.e. can understand the issue. Video and e-petition are here:

<https://www.devp.org/en/campaign/people-planet-first/take-action/>

To print paper petition go here:

https://www.devp.org/wpcontent/uploads/2021/09/EN_Petition_instructions-1.pdf

UKRAINE

Russian Orthodox [Patriarch admits war cannot be holy](#) But Kirill continues to support Vladimir Putin and to see his invasion as a just defense of Russians in Donbas.

The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church's position is clear as shown by the [Ukrainian synod](#) held 7-15 July 2022 in Przemyśl, Poland, near the Ukrainian border, one of the oldest episcopal sees of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. His Beatitude Sviatoslav Shevchuk, Archbishop Major of Kyiv-Halyč issued a Pastoral Letter including "to All People of Good Will." It is worth reading. Here are some excerpts:

"The Russian army kills the innocent and rapes the defenseless, kidnaps children and deports the occupied, tortures prisoners and starves the besieged, steals the grain we grow and loots our homes, annexes lands and destroys seized enterprises, fires at peaceful cities and terrorizes residents. The Russian leadership seeks to destroy Ukrainian statehood and deprive us of our name. ... Everyone and everything can be destroyed "for the sake of operational tasks." Every day, as if in a daze, the whole world contemplates the barbarism, moral decay, and vileness of the attackers. Ukraine, on the other hand, defends itself, because its people, once and for all, have refused to become slaves, they simply strive to live their God-given life and God-given dignity in freedom. No one dares to take this away from him – thus says the Lord.

Ukraine does not want to conquer or humiliate Russia. It wants the aggressor neighbour—having a territory 28 times larger, stretching across 11 time zones, and a population almost four times larger—to stop its centuries-old attempts to enslave and destroy Ukraine, to free itself from the pathology of imperialism and become a law-based state that respects the rights of others. The thief must leave our house! The Russian Orthodox Church must stop ideologically promoting the heresy of the "Russian world"! ... over the past centuries, every time the boot of the Russian occupier—be it tsarist, Soviet, or Putinian—stepped on our land, the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church was persecuted and destroyed." You can read the complete letter [here](#).

IUU FISHING

[Illegal fishing](#) spurs billions in losses for developing countries, study says.

Illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) **fishing** is a major contributor to declining fish stocks and marine habitat destruction and is a form of modern slavery.

Peace & joy, Andrew, ofs