

## Workshop No. 3: Eucharist and Care for Creation

“. . . . Thus, the Eucharist is also a source of light and motivation for our concerns for the environment, directing us to be stewards of all creation.” (*Laudato Si* #236)

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The objective of this workshop is to discuss and reflect on “the Eucharist as a source of light and motivation for our concerns for the environment challenging us to be stewards of God’s creation wherever we are and in whatever situation we are in.” (*Laudato Si* #236).

At the end of this workshop, we hope that we will all resolve to have a deeper and closer relationship with our Lord whom we receive in the Eucharist, a relationship which flows to our greater concern for the environment shown in concrete actions.

To guide our discussion and reflection, let us first go back to the text from *Laudato Si* #236, so we can focus our sharing on the theme. Let us read together: ***(the text will be projected in PowerPoint)***

Two questions that may help us focus on our theme are the following:

1. How do you understand this statement from the Holy Father that the Eucharist embraces and penetrates all creation?
2. What motivates us to be involved in programs advocating care for creation and stewardship of all creation?

This will be my introduction sharing.

Introduction:

## **Part 1: “Eucharist as the source of light and nourishment”**

In our catechism we read, “...the Eucharist is the ‘summit and source’ of the Christian life” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, n. 1324). According to Cardinal Peter Kodwo Appiah Turkson: “The Eucharist is integral to the very essence of Christianity. It also integrates all the facets of our life of faith. The Eucharist is heaven on earth and invites us to share even now in the fullness of God’s glory in heaven forever. In the meantime, we are fed on the bread of heaven and the chalice of eternal salvation.” (*Cardinal Turkson Address at the International Eucharistic Congress in the Philippines 2016*).

In the prayer over the gifts during the liturgy of the Eucharist, the bread is being offered as “fruit of the earth and work of human hands” and the wine as “fruit of the vine and work of human hands.” This illustrates that as we come together at the table of the Lord, we offer ourselves and the fruits of our labor in thanksgiving to God’s divine providence. These fruits of our hard work are tied up with creation. We till the soil, we plant seeds that sprout and bear fruits. Together with the seeds that fall unto the ground and die before they bear fruit, we bring to the altar all our experiences of the Paschal Mystery – our sufferings, our pains and disappointments as well as our joys, our hopes and dreams. Our gifts are then transformed into the Body and Blood of our Lord, whom we receive at Holy Communion.

How does the Eucharist become a source of light and of nourishment? In the Liturgy of the Word we are enlightened and nourished by the Word of God. Psalm 119:105 tells us: “Your word is a **lamp for my feet**, a light on my path.” Then, in the Liturgy of the Eucharist, we receive the Word-made-flesh, our Lord Jesus Christ. In John 6:51, Jesus says: “I am the **living bread that came down from heaven**. Whoever eats this bread will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.”

## **Part II: “Care for Creation” in the Philippines**

Allow me to share with you how we in the Philippines respond to the call of Pope Francis to “Care for our common home.”

(Show different programs of Laudato Si by the different organizations in the Philippines)

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After presenting what is being done in the Philippines, you can now open the floor for sharing. They can share what is going on in their country or share their reflection on either one of the reflection questions.

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