

# Praying and Working Together...

## for our future, for our oceans, for life on Earth.

### Water and Ocean Reflection Series

*Photo: Kristin McDermott*

## MESSAGE FROM

### POPE FRANCIS

'Let us also mention the system of governance of the oceans. International and regional conventions do exist, but fragmentation and the lack of strict mechanisms of regulation, control and penalization end up undermining these efforts. The growing problem of marine waste and the protection of the open seas represent particular challenges. What is needed, in effect, is an agreement on systems of governance for the whole range of so called "global commons".'

Pope Francis, Laudato Si #174



## CONNECTIONS AT THE UN

While the UN Ocean's Conference is from the 5th-9th of June, World Oceans Day is June 8th. The theme for 2017 is 'Our Oceans, Our Future'. World Oceans Day was officially recognized by the United Nations in 2008, yet has been celebrated by many since 1992. Oceans play a significant role for the survival of humanity.

## TAKE ACTION

- TUNE INTO THE DISCUSSIONS (LIVE STREAMED) HELD BY THE UN AND YOUR COUNTRY REPRESENTATIVES THROUGH UN WEB TV (LINK). IF YOU MISS A SESSION YOU CAN REFER BACK ON THE WEBSITE.
- READ THE ZERO DRAFT DOCUMENT (CALL FOR ACTION) THAT THE COUNTRY DELEGATES WILL BE DISCUSSING AND/OR WANTING TO MAKE AMENDMENT TO DURING THE CONFERENCE (LINK).
- CALL OR EMAIL YOUR GOVERNMENT WITH PRAISES AND CRITICISMS THROUGHOUT THE OCEANS CONFERENCE.
- EXPLORE THE OCEAN CONFERENCE WEBSITE (LINK)

# Reflection



Take a walk along a drain, stream, river, estuary or beach....notice pollution and pick up rubbish.

Reflect on the journey you have taken over the past 11 weeks....

Have you noticed any change in the environment surrounding your walk? Have you noticed any change in yourself or the people that you have met?

What would you want your local body representatives and national government representatives to do to improve/protect your waterways/coast/oceans?

From your walk, draw or take pictures. Write a poem, short story or reflection on what you discover on your journey. Continue to walk and take an interest in your drain, stream, river, estuary or beach environment. Advocate on behalf of the environment that relies on water for survival and health...



# Prayer

'A prayer for our earth

All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe and in the smallest of your creatures. You embrace with your tenderness all that exists. Pour out upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and beauty. Fill us with peace, that we may live as brothers and sisters, harming no one. O God of the poor, help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth, so precious in your eyes. Bring healing to our lives, that we may protect the world and not prey on it, that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction. Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain at

the expense of the poor and the earth. Teach us to discover the worth of each thing, to be filled with awe and contemplation, to recognize that we are profoundly united with every creature as we journey towards your infinite light. We thank you for being with us each day. Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle for justice, love and peace.'

Pope Francis, *Laudato Si* 246

## DID YOU KNOW?

- From a global resource viewpoint, global commons are those areas outside Country and State border that anybody has access to. Four internationally recognized global common areas are: the high seas, the atmosphere, Antarctica and outer space.
- Within these global commons are global issues that needs a planetary response to address air pollution, ocean acidification and climate change.
- Another emerging issue is water and water use. Many waterways and watershed areas cross international boundaries and the excessive use of water in one country may have detrimental effects to other countries in a region. Concern is growing around the issue of water commodification, where people will have to pay to have water. This becomes more difficult, if a community is in extreme poverty. Water is a human right, which means everyone should have access to water, without having to pay for it.