



*We Mercies*

## *Care for Creation*

As you take the next step, remember the traditional custodians of the land

### LAUDATO SI THE CHALLENGE FOR FAITH GROUPS



You can download a copy of this article about the **pope's** encyclical at [www.deeptimejourney.org/uploads/2015/07/Encyclical-Laudato-Si-comments](http://www.deeptimejourney.org/uploads/2015/07/Encyclical-Laudato-Si-comments).

In an internet article by Mike Bell, climate change is presented as a real challenge for faith groups. They have always been involved in social issues – as today, asylum seekers, homelessness, human trafficking, racism and the like – but, Bell asserts, that in terms of climate change, the greatest of all impacts on the poor throughout the world, there has been a deafening silence.

It looks as if Pope Francis may change that.

Einstein declared that we cannot solve problems with the same thinking we used to create them. Francis, in his encyclical, stresses that we need a new consciousness, a new way of thinking about the environment if we are to deal effectively with the problems being brought about throughout the world by climate change.

He gives us three defining characteristics of a new consciousness.

First, earth is not just something “out there” – it is part of us.

Second, we live in a totally integrated Earth. Everything is connected with everything else.

**August  
2015**

*(ed. Anne McLay)*

Third, we have therefore a moral and ethical responsibility to care for Earth. This responsibility must be directed especially to the poor.

Mike Bell claims that one of the most interesting aspects of *Laudato Si* is its emphasis on practical applications, as in Chapter Four (*Integral Ecology*) and in Chapter Five (*Lines of Approach and Action*).

The encyclical has been positively welcomed by many, both within and without the church. There has also been a lot of negative criticism, both within and without the church. Francis is speaking as – in Thomas Berry’s term – a “geologian” – a student of Earth. He has demonstrated that climate change is the mother of all “wicked problems”. We now live in a world of interlocking systems.

Bell concludes his article by saying he finds *Laudato Si* a great source of hope. It is not a *deus ex machina* sort of hope, but a very practical, down to earth hope. He quotes St Augustine of Hippo on this.

*Hope has two beautiful daughters; their names are Anger and Courage. Anger at the way things are, and Courage to see that they do not remain as they are.”*

