

Opinion

Letter: It is important to talk about the pope's message

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It is important to talk about the pope's message

Pope Francis has spoken: climate change is a scientific fact and nature as we know it is collapsing due, in large measure, to the burning of coal, oil and natural gas. The result, he says: extreme weather, drought, flooding, collapse of marine ecosystems due to ocean acidification and loss of hundreds of thousands of plants and animals. Among those suffering most are the world's poor, who, due to a lack of water and food, are exposed to toxic chemicals.

Francis reminds us that the Earth is God's gift, where "everything is related and we human beings are united as brothers and sisters on a wonderful pilgrimage, woven together by the love God has for each of his creatures and which also unites us in fond affection with brother sun, sister moon, brother river and mother earth."

But we, especially the very wealthy in the industrially developed world, have broken God's covenant, so the "Earth, our home, is beginning to look more and more like an immense pile of filth" due to overconsumption and dependence on fossil fuels.

The pope remains hope-filled, but humankind must undergo a moral "cultural revolution," rejecting the reckless pursuit of profits, excessive faith in technology and consumerism and political shortsightedness. "Human beings, while capable of the worst, are also capable of rising above themselves, choosing again what is good, and making a new start," he says.

"In choosing again what is good," what better place to start than by reading the letter, thinking deeply about it, and talking it over with family, friends and co-parishioners?

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