

RECONCILING GOD,
CREATION AND HUMANITY:

ECOLOGICAL EXAMEN

In *Laudato Si'* Pope Francis asked us to care for creation and to reconcile our relationship with God, creation and one another. Borrowing from the great Ignatian tradition of examens, this *Ecological Examen* asks you to reflect on your personal relationship with creation, to acknowledge and amend your ways and to promote ecological justice by standing in solidarity with those most impacted by environmental harm.

Developed by St. Ignatius Loyola, the *Examen* is a technique of prayerful reflection on the events of the day in order to detect God's presence and discern his direction for us.



Begin the Examen by placing yourself or your group in a posture that allows you to be open to the ways the Spirit is working in you. There are six steps in the Examen:

GRATITUDE

I give thanks to God for creation and for being wonderfully made.

(Where did I feel God's presence in creation today?)

AWARENESS

I ask for the grace to see creation as God does – in all its splendor and suffering.

(Do I see the beauty of creation and hear the cries of the earth and the poor?)

UNDERSTANDING

I ask for the grace to look closely to see how my life choices impact creation and the poor and vulnerable.

(What challenges or joys do I experience as I recall my care for creation? How can I turn away from a throwaway culture and instead stand in solidarity with creation and the poor?)

CONVERSION

I ask for the grace of conversion towards ecological justice and reconciliation.

(Where have I fallen short in caring for creation and my brothers and sisters? How do I ask for a conversion of heart?)

RECONCILIATION

I ask for the grace to reconcile my relationship with God, creation, and humanity and to stand in solidarity through my actions.

(How can I repair my relationship with creation and make choices consistent with my desire for reconciliation with creation?)

PRAYER

I offer a closing prayer for the earth and the vulnerable in our society.

Here's How to Live Out the Eco-Examen:

As we celebrate Earth Day and the upcoming third anniversary of the publication of Pope Francis' *Laudato Si'* (June 2015), we are renewed in our call to care for creation. The encyclical invites us as individuals, as institutions, and as a Church to care for creation and to reconcile our relationship with God, creation, and one another.

The Office of Justice and Ecology at the Jesuit Conference and the Ignatian Solidarity Network have created an Ecological Examen to aid each of us as individuals and institutions to pray, reflect, and discern action steps that respond to Pope Francis' invitation to care for our common home. *Reconciling God, Creation, and Humanity* is a resource available in both digital and print forms that can help you to answer this call to ecological conversion. The Ecological Examen will also soon be available in Spanish.

With the entire Ignatian family, we invite you to embrace this challenge Pope Francis laid out in *Laudato Si'*.



January 2018 – Pope Francis visits Puerto Maldonado, the capital of the Madre de Dios (Mother of God) region of Peru, to meet with the Amerindian peoples of Amazonia and to call for the defense of their life, land, and cultures.

Here are Steps You Can Take to Promote Ecological Justice:

Pray: Reflect on the call to care for creation by praying with the Ecological Examen. Consider adding regular intentions to the Prayers of the Faithful each week that reflect ecological needs present in your community, nationally, and around the world.

Embrace a Culture of Simplicity: We can all take steps to live more simply and to step away from a throwaway lifestyle as individuals and in our parish, school, and workplace communities. Here are a few ideas: bring a reusable coffee cup or water bottle; encourage use of washable dinnerware; recycle and compost food waste; take shorter showers or create a rain garden to conserve water; take public transportation; walk or bike; reduce printing and expenses by sharing electronically; use energy efficient appliances; and consider doing an energy audit.

Create an Ecological Justice Subcommittee: An Ecological Justice Subcommittee can help parish communities and individuals to live *Laudato Si'* by encouraging ways to integrate regular prayer and reflection on *Laudato Si'* into parish life via speakers, parish initiatives or faith-sharing groups.

Engage Your Sister Parish: If you have a sister parish, find out how climate change and environmental degradation impacts your sister parish. Consider ways to aid your sister parish and to connect their issues to those in your own community.

Advocate: Advocate for policies that promote ecological justice and stand in solidarity with the most vulnerable in your community and around the world who are disproportionately affected by the environmental crisis. Sign up for action alerts with the Ignatian Solidarity Network at <https://ignatiansolidarity.net/advocacy/> and with Jesuit Advocates at <http://cqrengage.com/jesuit>.