

**Letter of His Holiness Pope Francis for the Establishment of the  
“World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation” [1<sup>st</sup> September]**

As Christians *we wish to contribute to resolving the ecological crisis* which humanity is presently experiencing. In doing so, *we must first rediscover in our own rich spiritual patrimony* the deepest motivations for our concern for the care of creation.

*Pope Francis, 6 August 2015*

**Crowning Glory**

“...it is true that we Christians have at times incorrectly interpreted Scriptures,” however, rather than reject Sacred Scripture, “we must forcefully reject” incorrect interpretations of Sacred Scripture (*Laudato Si’* 67).

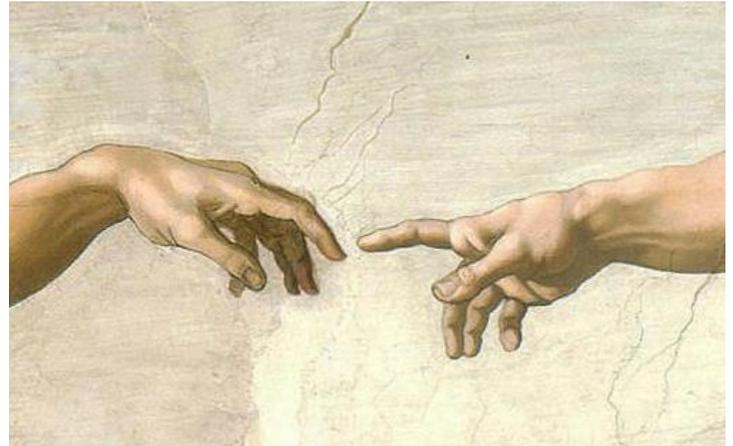
Genesis 1: dominion → kingly rule

Genesis 2: stewardship that tills and keeps

till = *abed* → reverence, service

keep = *shamar* → attentive, careful observation

Humans created by God to rule as good kings and queens who reverently serve creation, attentively watch over it, and draw goodness out of it.



*Detail of The Creation of Adam, Sistine Chapel Ceiling,  
Michelangelo (1512)*

There is a mutual responsibility between humans and the rest of creation (*Laudato Si’* 67).

Three-fold relationship:

God created everything and entrusts us with His creation

Creation depends on us to care for it ↔ We depend on creation to care for us

Psalm 8: God who created everything has crowned us with glory and entrusted us to care for His creation

We respond with reverence and awe for what God has created, and humility for what He has entrusted to us.

**The Cellarer**

*The Rule of Benedict* (6<sup>th</sup> century)

Chapter 31: *The Cellarer*

Takes care of the goods of the monastery

Fears God; father to the community

Not gluttonous, stingy, or wasteful

“Consider the pots of the monastery and all its goods as if they were the holy bowls of the altar” (31.10).

Three-fold relationship:

Harming goods → harms others → harms God

Virtue of frugality: not stingy, not wasteful

Respecting goods because God made them

Making sure people have the goods they need

For the purpose of finding God



*St Benedict delivering his Rule to St Maurus and other monks of  
his order, Monastery of Saint Gilles, Nimes, France (1129)*

### Blessed Julian of Norwich (1342-1430)

Anchoress: lived in solitary cell adjacent to church

May 1373: received 16 visions from God

*Revelation 1, Chapter 5:*

“God showed me a little thing, **the size of a hazelnut**, in the palm of my hand... I looked upon it with the eye of my understanding, and thought: ‘What may this be?’ And it was answered generally thus: **‘It is all that is made.’** I marveled how it might last, for I thought it might suddenly have fallen to naught for littleness. And I was answered in my understanding: **‘It lasts, and ever shall because God loves it.’** And so all things have Being by the love of God. In this Little Thing I saw three properties:

- The first is that God made it;**
- The second is that God loves it;**
- The third, that God keeps it.”**

Three-fold Relationship:

God made everything → all is small, fragile compared to God

Yet God loves and keeps everything in his loving hand

God has entrusted us to be His hands

We are to care for all of creation as He does

*Revelation 13, Chapter 27:*

“But Jesus, who in this Vision informed me of all that is needful to me, answered by this word and said: **...all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well.**”

*Laudato Si’* (Chapter 2): even in what looks like “bad news”, the Gospel of Jesus Christ is always Good News!

### We Are Called Today

“We must not think that these efforts are not going to change the world. ...they call forth a goodness which...inevitably tends to spread” (LS 212).

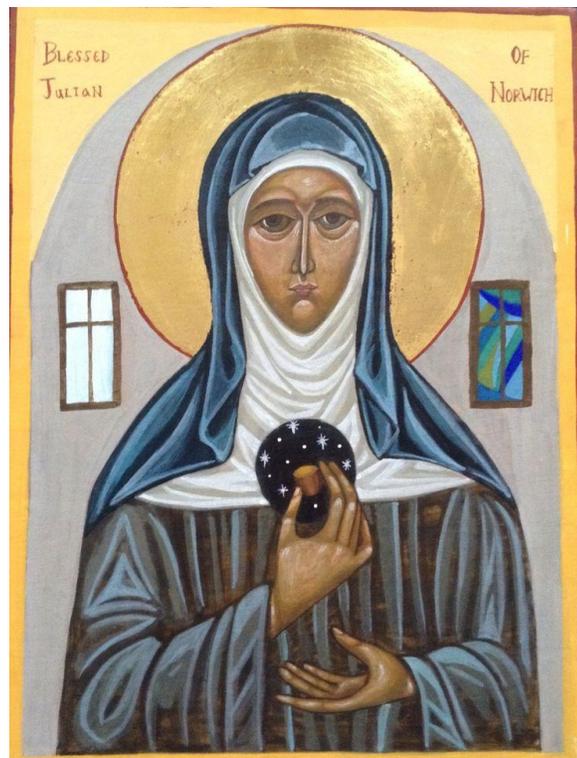
“All Christian communities have an important role to play in ecological education” (LS 214)

“Living our vocation to be protectors of God’s handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience” (LS 217).

Nuns on Shaw Island living in right relationship with God, others, and creation:

Our Lady of the Rock Monastery  
[olrmonastery.org](http://olrmonastery.org)

Sisters of Mercy of Alma  
[rsmofalma.org](http://rsmofalma.org)



*Icon of Blessed Julian of Norwich*

