

**Section 53**  
**Spirituality of the Heart in 'Laudato Si':**  
**Problems that are related to each other.**  
*(Hans Kwakman msc)*

Pope Francis calls on us to wake up and *"look at the facts to see that our common home is in serious disarray"* (LS 61). In the first chapter of *Laudato Si*, he extensively discusses *"what is happening in our home [planet earth]. He sheds light on five problems with which humankind struggles and which are closely interconnected.*

Pollution and global warming (LS 20-26): *"Climate is a common good of all and for all... All people need to become aware of the need to change their lifestyle and consumption habits"* (LS 23).

The increasing shortage of water (LS 27-31): *"Access to safe drinking water is a fundamental right of every human being, because human survival depends on it"* (LS 30).

The loss of biodiversity or diversity of plant and animal species (LS 32-42): *"All creatures are interconnected and should all be treasured with love and admiration, because all creatures need each other"* (LS 42).

The decline in the quality of human life (LS 43-47): *"Realizing that people also have the right to life and happiness and are endowed with a very special dignity, we must also take into account the influence of environmental pollution and of 'the throwaway culture' on human life"* (LS 43).

The global inequality between the richest and the poorest people (LS 48-52): We should pay attention to both *"the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor"* (LS 49). Therefore, we should *"strengthen the awareness that we are one human family"* and that *"there is no room for the globalization of indifference"* (LS 52).

When faced with so many huge problems, it can make us feel hopeless. That is why the Pope urges us not to lose hope. He keeps believing in the positive attitude of so many men and women. *"In the midst of all our limitations, all kinds*

*of generosity, solidarity, and care flourish. After all, we are made for love" (LS 58).*

## **Reflection**

*"It is easy to see what is wrong with our system,  
harder to see how to fix it."*

*"The Pope calls for an "integral ecology,"  
by which he means a vision of the world  
founded fundamentally on respect for Creation,  
and a renewed emphasis on our mutual interconnection  
with one another and with nature."*

*"An integral ecology must also include...  
a culture of care rooted in  
"love for society  
and commitment to the common good,"  
as the centrepiece of civil society,  
environmental protection, religious communion,  
and finally, human dignity, happiness and love."*

*"Crucially, this culture of care  
must include not just those of us alive today,  
but also future generations."*

(Naomi Oreskes,  
Introduction to Pope Francis,  
Encyclical on Climate Change & Inequality.  
Melville House, Brooklyn, London).