



Prayer guide to accompany our presence at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development Rio +20 and Peoples' Summit, Rio de Janeiro, June 2012

INTRODUCTION

The Ignatian family – inspired by our founding life-force, the spirituality of the Exercises of St Ignatius – takes on the task of promoting the values of a new world in the way in which the reign of Jesus has shown us; and it becomes increasingly clearer, as a true apostolic body woven around the call for the promotion of justice and preferential option for the poor. In this sense, as Ignatian archetypes united in the mission, we actively participate in diverse social action networks. This is why we feel called by the most pressing issues in the world today. Environmental and ecological problems, and the many others issues preventing people from living a dignified life, are crucial for the way in which they reflect the vulnerability of creation and humanity today, and for their inescapable importance for the future of the coming generations.

It is in this context that some members of the Ignatian family – the Christian Life Communities (CLC), the Social Justice and Ecology Secretariat, the social sector of the Conference of Jesuit Provincials in Latin America (CPAL), the Eco-Jesuit Network, the *Equipo Itinerante Amazónico*, and *Fe y Alegría* – have come together to participate in the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, Rio +20, in June 2012. A group of people from various countries will be participating, seeking to strengthen the Ignatian presence at this important United Nation's event, in the People's Summit (the parallel civil society event) and in activities of exchange and reflection. This is a real opportunity to focus our actions on environmental issues, and on development models oriented towards the unlimited wealth accumulation and economic growth on a planet with finite resources, and to commit the Ignatian network to tackling these challenges. For this reason, we hope that this will be a real experience of our presence as an extended apostolic body. For this purpose, we present you this prayer and reflection guide so that all of the personnel of our networks that are interested can accompany us in this process.

METHODOLOGY

Below this simple guide is presented. It seeks to facilitate prayer-reflection, through which all of us feel equally involved in the process. The guide has been divided into four separate phases (moments), the preparation phase "contemplate" which we suggest you do until the 19 June, and three subsequent phases (see, judge and act) to be undertaken during the three days of Rio +20, the 20, 21, 22 of June. Each day of prayer-reflection, which we hope you will undertake as part of a community, even though it can also be done individually, includes A. a preparatory context for the day, B. a key phrase to inspire the moment, C. text for reflection, D. a simple guide for reflection, E. a closing prayer, and F. complementary audio-visual material. We ask everyone who participates to email us (mauriciol@cvx-clc.net, exsec@cvx-clc.net) the reflections which come out of these communal and individual prayers so we can share disseminate them, together with our reports from Rio +20.

Moreover, together with this prayer guide, we will send you a daily bulletin of the main news from Rio +20; this will be done by the ecology working group, Eco-Jesuit, coordinated by the international advocacy network of the Society of Jesus, <http://ecojesuit.com>

Prayer before Rio + 20

CONTEMPLATE

A. Context in preparation for the day: the incarnation

The Three Divine Persons, contemplating the whole of humanity in so many sinful divisions decide to give themselves completely to all men and liberate them from all their chains. Out of love, the Word became human and was born of Mary, the humble Virgin of Nazareth.

Inserted in this way among the poor, and sharing their human condition, Jesus invites all of us to offer ourselves to God and to work for a united human family. Inspired by the Holy Spirit, we respond with gratitude to God for this gift of Jesus in every circumstance of our lives. (General Principles No. 1, Christian Life Communities)

- B. Key phrase:** *“The Son, therefore, came, sent by the Father. It was in Him, before the foundation of the world, that the Father chose us and predestined us to become adopted sons, for in Him it pleased the Father to re-establish all things. (Cf. Eph. 1:4-5 and 10)” (Lumen Gentium n.3).*

C. Core text for pastoral reflection:

“The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the men of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ. Indeed, nothing genuinely human fails to raise an echo in their hearts. For theirs is a community composed of men. United in Christ, they are led by the Holy Spirit in their journey to the Kingdom of their Father... That is why this community realizes that it is truly linked with mankind and its history by the deepest of bonds” (Gaudium Et Spes n.1).

“Through his labors and his native endowments man has ceaselessly striven to better his life. Today, however, especially with the help of science and technology, he has extended his mastery over nearly the whole of nature... Hence many benefits once looked for, especially from heavenly powers, man has now enterprisingly procured for himself. In the face of these immense efforts which already preoccupy the whole human race, men agitate numerous questions among themselves. What is the meaning and value of this feverish activity? How should all these things be used? To the achievement of what goal are the strivings of individuals and societies heading?” (Gaudium et Spes n.33).

D. Reflection guide

- What are our first reactions and perceptions about the issue of ecology? How much do we understand and how do we feel about the issue?
- As Christian members of the Ignatian family what do need before we can take this issue on as a priority essential to our identity and what do we need to do to integrate it seriously into our work?
- As Ignatian communities and individuals what invitations have we received from the God of life with regard to the environment? What can we do about this?

- A. Closing prayer:** All praise be yours, my Lord, through all you have made, and first my lord Brother Sun, who brings the day; and through whom you give us light. How beautiful is he, how radiant in all his splendor; of you, Most High, he bears the likeness. The second death can do them no harm. Praise and bless my Lord, and give him thanks and serve him with great humility. (St Francis of Assisi)

- E. Support material:** <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8hiXd-w4tGU>

Prayer for the 20 June 2012, Rio+20

SEE

A. Context in preparation for the day: the current situation¹

The world in which we live is not the paradise we would like it to be. Most of today's problems with the environment are man-made.

1. *Continued pressure on natural resources*
2. *Increasing deterioration of the environment due to inappropriate agricultural practices and the unsustainable exploitation of natural resources.*
3. *Marked differences between the incomes of the rich and the poor.*
4. *Lack of access to basic services, such as education, health, etc.*
5. *Rapid urbanisation generating large numbers of poor and homeless people in cities.*
6. *Increasing consumerism inside an economic model which does not take account of the costs of ecological deterioration, among others costs.*

The ecological crisis threatens the livelihoods of everyone, particularly the poorest and most vulnerable: they live in increasing fragile circumstances, characterised above all by the natural disasters, climate change, pollution, deforestation, desertification and land degradation... the link between the environment and poverty is inescapable; this is our challenge.

- B. Key phrase:** *"Nature expresses a design of love and truth. It is prior to us, and it has been given to us by God as the setting for our life. Nature speaks to us of the Creator (cf. Rom 1:20) and his love for humanity" (Caritas In Veritate n.48).*

C. Core text for pastoral reflection:

"Today the subject of development is also closely related to the duties arising from our relationship to the natural environment. The environment is God's gift to everyone, and in our use of it we have a responsibility towards the poor, towards future generations and towards humanity as a whole... Nature is at our disposal not as "a heap of scattered refuse" (cf. Gen 2:15), but as a gift of the Creator who has given it an inbuilt order, enabling man to draw from it the principles needed in order "to till it and keep it" (Gen 2:15). Consequently, projects for integral human development cannot ignore coming generations, but need to be marked by solidarity and inter-generational justice... The way humanity treats the environment influences the way it treats itself, and vice versa. This invites contemporary society to a serious review of its life-style" (CIV n.48 and 51)

D. Reflection guide

- What examples of this violation of creation do we see in our context and what impact does it have on the most vulnerable?
- How are we directly affected by this situation?
- What hurts and moves us most about this reality?

- E. Closing prayer:** All praise be yours, my Lord, through Sister Water, so useful, humble, precious and pure. All praise be yours, my Lord, through Brother Fire, through whom you brighten up the night. How beautiful is he, how cheerful! Full of power and strength. The second death can do them no harm. Praise and bless my Lord, and give him thanks and serve him with great humility. (St Francis of Assisi)

- F. Support material:** <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gLBE5QAYXp8>

¹ Taken from *Healing a broken world* Special Report on Ecology. Social Justice and Ecology Secretariat of the Society of Jesus, Rome, 2011.

Prayer for the 21 June 2012, Rio+20

JUDGE

A. Context in preparation for the day: The proposal for a green economy and its serious risks and challenges. One of the basic premises underlying the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, Rio+20, is the concept of a “green economy”. Most reflections, contributions, and areas of work of this international event revolve around this concept. However, we must accept that the concept of a green economy merely underpinned by the free market, sustaining and reproducing the current model of development, has clearly demonstrated its limitations and led to increased poverty and injustice in relation to the distribution of resources and goods. Our perspective as believers should be based on the approach of the Social Doctrine of the Church which speaks of searching for another model. It is equally important to anticipate the already noticeable areas of discussion around Rio+20; the green economy is spoken of as a new model, but it is integrated into the vision of the free market that has proved a useless tool in the reduction of poverty and inequality, since its purpose is to generate profit, regardless of the social consequences.

B. Key phrase: *“Indeed, nothing genuinely human fails to raise an echo in their hearts”* (Gaudium et Spes n.1).

C. Core text for pastoral reflection:

“Nature, especially in our time, is so integrated into the dynamics of society and culture that by now it hardly constitutes an independent variable... The hoarding of resources, especially water, can generate serious conflicts among the peoples involved... In the face of the unrelenting growth of global interdependence, there is a strongly felt need, even in the midst of a global recession, for a reform of the United Nations Organization, and likewise of economic institutions and international finance, so that the concept of the family of nations can acquire real teeth. One also senses the urgent need to find innovative ways of implementing the principle of the responsibility to protect and of giving poorer nations an effective voice in shared decision-making. This seems necessary in order to arrive at a political, juridical and economic order which can increase and give direction to international cooperation for the development of all peoples in solidarity... to guarantee the protection of the environment” (CIV 51 and 67)

“The supremacy of technology tends to prevent people from recognizing anything that cannot be explained in terms of matter alone. Yet everyone experiences the many immaterial and spiritual dimensions of life... In every truth there is something more than we would have expected, in the love that we receive there is always an element that surprises us” (CIV 77).

D. Reflection guide

- What are the underlying causes of this situation?
- How do we contribute with our lifestyles, decisions or omissions to this situation?
- What significant examples of environmental defence or promotion do we see in our surroundings? What strikes us most? What can we learn from them?
- Is the concept of the green economy really a new model? What are the limitations and dangers associated with it? And what alternatives can we propose?

E. Closing prayer: All praise be yours, my Lord, through our Sister Mother Earth, who sustains us and governs us, and produces various fruits with colored flowers and herbs. The second death can do them no harm. Praise and bless my Lord, and give him thanks and serve him with great humility. (St Francis of Assisi)

F. Support material: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GMK-ahQFmtU>

Prayer for the 22 June 2012, Rio+20

ACT

A. Context in preparation for the day: promote integrated human development

"In development programmes, the principle of the centrality of the human person, as the subject primarily responsible for development, must be preserved. The principal concern must be to improve the actual living conditions of the people in a given region... Development programmes, if they are to be adapted to individual situations, need to be flexible; and the people who benefit from them ought to be directly involved in their planning and implementation. The criteria to be applied should aspire towards incremental development in a context of solidarity — with careful monitoring of results — inasmuch as there are no universally valid solutions... The peoples themselves have the prime responsibility to work for their own development... Solutions need to be carefully designed to correspond to people's concrete lives... there is need for the active mobilization of all the subjects of civil society, both juridical and physical persons" (CIV n.47).

B. Key phrase: *"The missionary disciple to whom God has entrusted creation must contemplate it, care for it, and use it, while always respecting the order given by the Creator"* (Fifth General Conference of the Latin American and Caribbean Bishops, CELAM V – Aparecida, n.125).

C. Core text for pastoral reflection

Awareness is growing of nature as a free legacy that we receive to protect, as a precious space for shared human life and as careful responsibility of human stewardship for the good of all. This legacy often proves to be weak and defenceless against economic and technological powers. Hence, as prophets of life we want to insist that the interests of economic groups that irrationally demolish sources of life are not to prevail in dealing with natural resources, at the cost of whole nations and of humankind itself (CELAM V, No. 471).

In the face of this situation we offer some proposals and direction:

- a) Evangelise our peoples so that they discover the gift of creation, knowing how to contemplate and take care of it as the home of all human beings and womb of the life of the planet... educating them for a life of sobriety and austere solidarity.
- b) Deepen the pastoral presence among the populations which are most fragile and threatened by predatory development, and support them to achieve an equitable distribution of land, water, and urban spaces.
- c) Seek an alternative, integral and just model of development, based on ethics which include responsibility for an authentic humane and natural ecology.
- d) Try our best promulgating acts and civic involvement that may guarantee the protection, preservation and restoration of nature.
- e) Find ways to monitor respect for international environmental standards.

D. Reflection guide:

- What specific, feasible and sustainable actions do we feel called to take as Christian communities, and as individuals, to help protect the environment?
- What action or initiatives could we – as Ignatian followers or fraternal organisations – take or what proposals could we make to respond to this situation at local, national or international level?
- What kind of Church or other networks do we need to establish or strengthen in order take significant action?

E. Closing prayer: All praise be yours, my Lord, through those who grant pardon for love of you; through those who endure sickness and trial. Happy are those who endure in peace, by You, Most High, they will be crowned. Happy those she finds doing your will! The second death can do them no harm. Praise and bless my Lord, and give him thanks and serve him with great humility.

F. Support material: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nGeXdv-uPaw>

Complementary documentation and biography:

Official Web of Christian Life Community (CLC)

www.cvx-clc.net

ZERO DRAFT of RIO + 20

<http://www.uncsd2012.org/rio20/content/documents/370The%20Future%20We%20Want%2010Jan%20clean%20no%20brackets.pdf>

HEALING A BROKEN WORLD. SOCIAL JUSTICE AND ECOLOGY SECRETARIAT. Society of Jesus

<http://www.sjweb.info/documents/sjs/pjnew/PJ106ENG.pdf>

ENCYCLICAL LETTER CARITAS IN VERITATE. BENEDICTO XVI

http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20090629_caritas-in-veritate_en.html#_edn124

V CONFERENCIA DEL CELAM. APARECIDA

<http://www.celam.org/aparecida/Ingles.pdf>

SOCIAL JUSTICE AND ECOLOGY SECRETARIAT

<http://www.sjweb.info/sjs/>

ECO-JESUIT NETWORK

<http://ecojesuit.com/>

EQUIPO ITINERANTE AMAZÓNICO

<http://peregrinos-robertoyruth.blogspot.com/2011/06/jesuitas-las-fronteras-en-la-amazonia.html>

CONFERENCIA DE PROVINCIALES JESUITAS DE AMÉRICA LATINA –CPAL-

www.cpalsj.org Sector social: <http://www.cpalsj.org/apostolado/>

FE Y ALEGRÍA

<http://www.feyalegria.org/>

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