



Laudato Si'

**Reading
Laudato Si
Together**

Chapter 4: Integral Ecology

trócaire

LAUDATO SI'

ON CARE FOR
OUR COMMON HOME



POPE FRANCIS



ENCYCLICAL LETTER

Overview of Laudato Si

- Chapter 1: “What is happening to our common home?”
- Chapter 2: “The Gospel of Creation”
- Chapter 3: “The Human Roots of the Ecological Crisis”
- **Chapter 4: “Integral Ecology”**
- Chapter 5: “Lines of Approach & Action”
- Chapter 6: “Ecological Education & Spirituality”

trócaire



Chapter 4: Integral Ecology

“I suggest that we now consider some elements of an integral ecology, one which clearly respects its human and social dimensions.” (LS, 137)

1. Environmental, Economic & Social Ecology
2. Cultural Ecology
3. Ecology of Daily Life
4. The Principle of the Common Good
5. Justice Between the Generations

Environmental, Economic & Social Ecology



“It cannot be emphasised enough how everything is interconnected. Time and space are not independent of one another, and not even atoms or subatomic particles can be considered in isolation.” (LS, 138)

“When we speak of the ‘environment’, what we really mean is a relationship existing between nature and the society which lives in it. Nature cannot be regarded as something separate from ourselves or a mere setting in which we live. We are part of nature, included in it and thus in constant interaction with it.” (LS, 139).

“We are not faced with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather with one complex crisis which is both social and environmental.

Strategies for a solution demand an integrated approach to combating poverty, restoring dignity to the excluded, and at the same time protecting nature.”

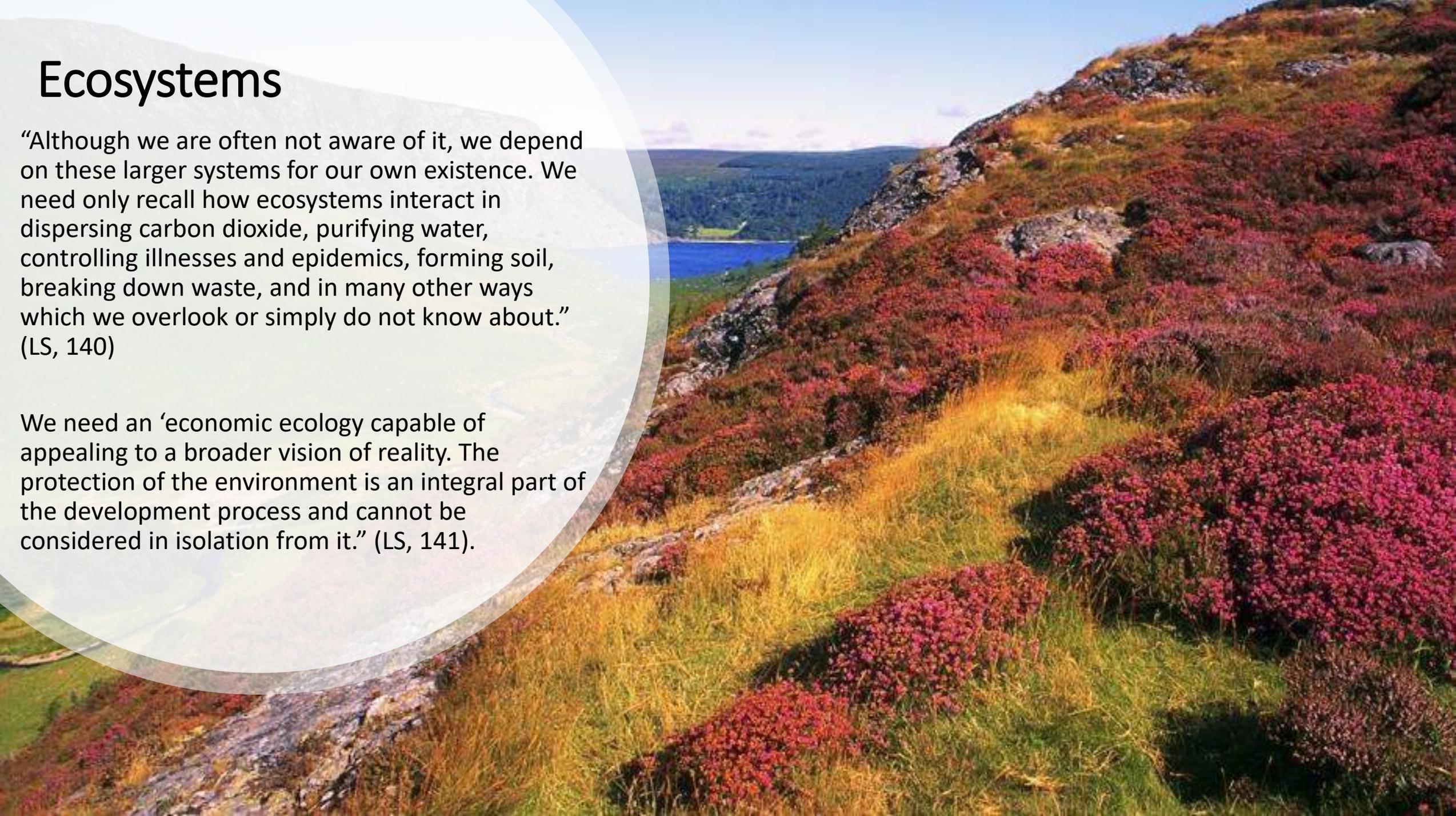
(LS, 139)



Ecosystems

“Although we are often not aware of it, we depend on these larger systems for our own existence. We need only recall how ecosystems interact in dispersing carbon dioxide, purifying water, controlling illnesses and epidemics, forming soil, breaking down waste, and in many other ways which we overlook or simply do not know about.” (LS, 140)

We need an ‘economic ecology capable of appealing to a broader vision of reality. The protection of the environment is an integral part of the development process and cannot be considered in isolation from it.’ (LS, 141).



Cultural Ecology

- “Culture is more than what we have inherited from the past; it is... a living, dynamic and participatory present reality, which cannot be excluded as we rethink the relationship between human beings and the environment” (LS 143).
- “There is a need to respect the rights of peoples and cultures, and to appreciate that the development of a social group presupposes an historical process and cultural context and demands the constant and active involvement of local people from within their proper culture.” (LS 144).



“It is essential to show special care for indigenous communities and their cultural traditions. They...should be the principal dialogue partners, especially when large projects affecting their land are proposed. For them, land is not a commodity but a gift from God and from their ancestors who rest there, a sacred space.” (LS, 146)



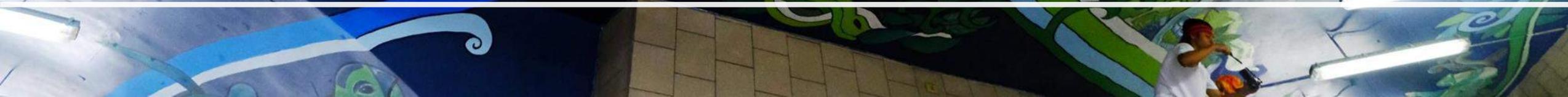
Ecology of Daily Life

- The setting in which people live their lives – influence the way we think, feel and act. In our rooms, our homes, our workspaces and neighbourhoods.
- The feeling of asphyxiation brought on by densely populated residential areas is countered if close and warm relationships develop, if communities are created.
- Extreme poverty experienced in areas lacking harmony, open spaces...
- Love always proves more powerful
- Communitarian salvation often generates creative ideas for the improvement of a building or neighbourhood.





“Those who design buildings, neighbourhoods, public spaces and cities, ought to draw on various disciplines...” (LS, 150)



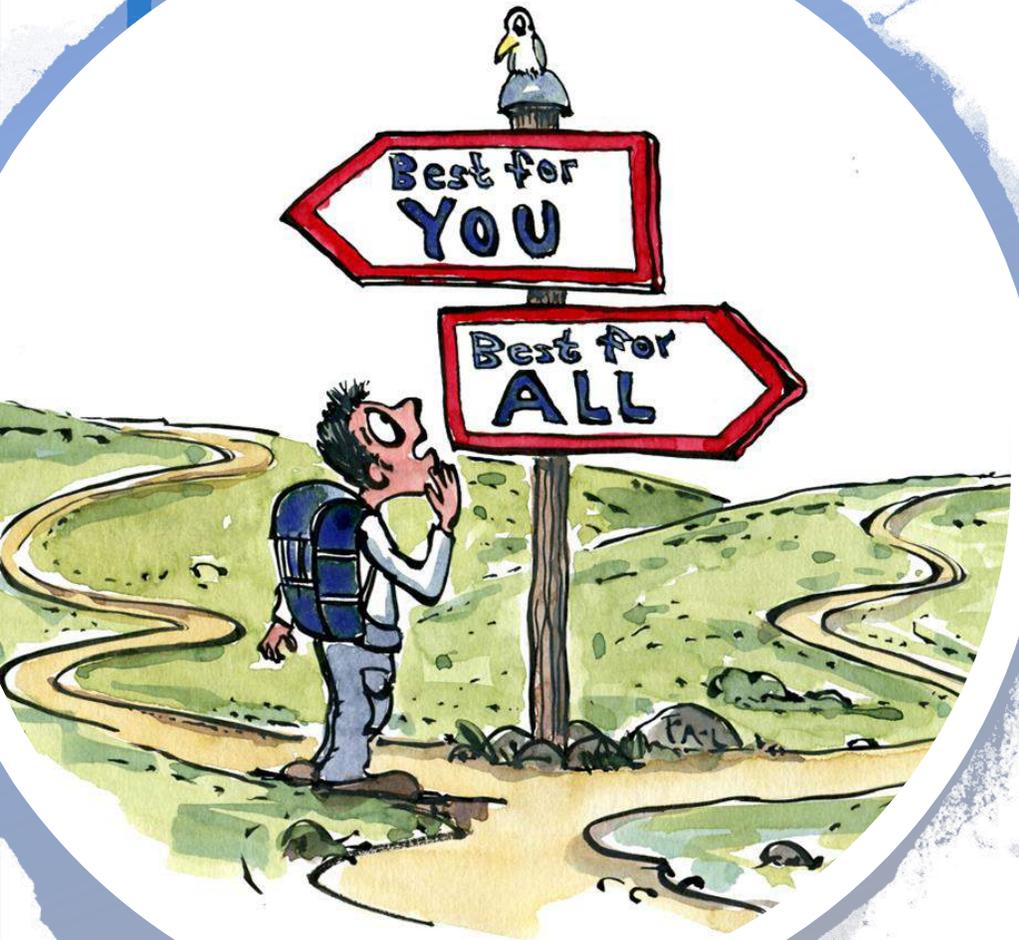
Respect for our dignity as human beings...

- “Lack of housing is a grave problem in many parts of the world...” (LS, 152)
- “The quality of life in cities has much to do with the systems of transport...” (LS, 153)
- “Rural populations which lack access to essential services...” (LS, 154)

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Principal of the common good



- “The sum of those conditions of social life which allow social groups and their individual members relatively thorough and ready access to their own fulfilment.” (Gaudium et Spes, 26)
- Freedom for **human flourishing** for all, not just the individual.
- **Subsidiarity** - decisions are made by the people closest and most affected by the issues and concerns of the community.
- **Preferential option for the poorest** of our brothers and sisters
- Recognising the implications of the universal destination of the world’s goods.

Justice between generations

- “Leaving an inhabitable planet to future generations is first and foremost up to us. The issues is one which dramatically affects us, for it has to do with the ultimate meaning of our earthly sojourn.” (LS, 160)
- “Doomsday predictions can no longer be met with irony or disdain. We may well be leaving to coming generations debris, desolation and filth.” (LS, 161)
- Intergenerational justice
- Intergenerational solidarity



“I have come that you may have life and have it to the full.” John 10:10

Trocaire

Rome, Italy



“What kind of world do we want to leave to those who come after us, to children who are now growing up?”

-Pope Francis, Laudato Si’

For reflection:

- What challenged you?
- What stood out for you in this chapter?
- Francis talks about an integral ecology in this chapter, that combines environmental (138-140), economic (141), social (142), and cultural (143) ecologies.
- What might that look like in your own context/country? What is the vision here?



Suggestion for closing reflection:

The children from Cappabue National School, Bantry, Co. Cork created a wonderful rap called One Small Change. It is available

here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kuR7VN_Q06g

They recently won the school's version of the Eurovision Song Contest with this song.