

# Our Relationship to the Ocean and Our Capacity to Change

## Water and Ocean Reflection Series

Photos: Kristin McDermott

### MESSAGE FROM

#### POPE FRANCIS

'This conversion calls for a number of attitudes which together foster a spirit of generous care, full of tenderness. First, it entails gratitude and gratuitousness, a recognition that the world is God's loving gift, and that we are called quietly to imitate his generosity in self-sacrifice and good works...It also entails a loving awareness that we are not disconnected from the rest of creatures, but joined in a splendid universal communion. As believers, we do not look at the world from without but from within, conscious of the bonds with which the Father has linked us to all beings. By developing our individual, God-given capacities, an ecological conversion can inspire us to greater creativity and enthusiasm in resolving the world's problems and in offering ourselves to God "as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable" (Rom 12:1). We do not understand our superiority as a reason for personal glory or irresponsible dominion, but rather as a different capacity which, in its turn, entails a serious responsibility stemming from our faith.'

Pope Francis, Laudato Si #220



### CONNECTIONS AT THE UN

Capacity has multiple meanings because it can be applied to a variety of different contexts. The commonality within these contexts can be described as potential.

What is the potential from a change in our thinking, our practices and our choices with new knowledge and understanding? What can we imagine in the future? Our oceans: – what is the potential of our oceans if we give more thought and care to the health and vibrancy of the environment? Or, to the people living along or needing the ocean to survive?

The last sustainable development goal of Agenda 2030 is SDG 17 which focuses on strengthening the means for implementation and revitalizing global partnership for sustainable development. To achieve this, capacity building is needed. Target 17.9 describes the need for '...effective and targeted capacity building in developing countries to support national plans to implement all the sustainable development goals...'1. Goals like SDG 6 for Water and Sanitation, and SDG 14 related to the oceans will only work if we have capacity (or potential) both at personal, local, national and international levels to want something better that will work for all.

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg17>

## TAKE ACTION

- READ AGENDA 2030 (LINK) WHICH ENCAPSULATES ALL THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS THAT NATION STATES HAVE COMMITTED TO ACCOMPLISHING.
- THINK OF WAYS YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY, COUNTRY, AND GLOBAL REGION HAS THE CAPACITY TO ACHIEVE AGENDA 2030.

# Reflection



Take a walk along a drain, stream, river, estuary or beach....notice pollution and pick up rubbish.

*If you are walking along a drain, stream or river:*

Study and map out the catchment capacity of your drain, stream or river....mark out the areas where there is pollution or water quality issues.

*If you are walking along an estuary or beach:*

Study and map out the catchment area of the entire estuary/beach....mark out the areas where there is pollution or water quality issues.

If there is major concerns...write to your local council and share your concerns. Write to the Government – with the Oceans conference coming up - place pressure on them to do the right thing.

From your walk, draw or take pictures. Write a poem, short story or reflection on what you discover on your journey.



# Prayer

Loving, All Powerful God

Give me eyes to see...not only love and good in the world, but the pain and suffering of all life.

Give me ears to hear... not only the good and joyous sounds of life, but the cries and wail of life in distress.

Give me hands that touch... not only in love and friendship but with compassion and healing,

Give me voice to speak not only the good but to speak out on behalf of those who cannot.

God, give me heart....to respond in love and action to heal our Earth.

Amen

## DID YOU KNOW?

A water catchment capacity is the area that drains into a body of water (e.g. drain, stream, river etc.). It covers from the highest point of a geographical aspect to the lowest (imagine rain falling...to what point will it drain to?). As a body of water increases...so does the water catchment capacity associated with it.

For example a small stream may only collect the water draining between a number of hills...a rivers water catchment capacity however includes all the streams flowing into the river as well as catchment area of those streams.