



Institute of Bethlehemite Sisters
Daughters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus
General House

Bethlemites, repairers of the Common Home



GUIDELINES OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECT

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Inspired by the Word of God,

the magisterium of Pope Francis, especially his encyclical *Laudato si'*, and the guidelines of the XXIII General Chapter regarding care for the environment, we have created this environmental document, "Bethlemites repairers of Common Home", which we hope will be an instrument that inspires and motivates joint actions that strengthen the care and protection of our Common Home and our commitment for an integral ecology.

The book of Genesis recounts in a majestic way the creation of the universe, the earth, the sky and all forms of life that inhabit them; likewise, it gives an account of how God formed man and woman, out of clay, in perfect harmony with nature and granted them authority as administrators of his creation, to care for it and make it productive (Gn 1,24-30).



In this sense, the first Christian communities live the evangelizing message from solidarity and care, making communion not only a liturgical act, but also breaking bread among those who do not have it, as evidenced by the book of the Acts of the Apostles.

In accordance with the above, the Church continues to seek the development and integral promotion of man, both in the psycho-socio-ideological aspect as in the effort to live in harmony with his environment, where the human being fulfills an essential function, as the encyclical *Laudato si'*, of Pope Francis, indicates from number 202, which speaks of an integral spiritual education (Heb 2,42-46).

From this perspective, it is very important for us to speak of an integral ecology, which focuses on the total and complete harmony of man with himself, with others and with nature. The encyclical *Laudato si'* expresses the importance of an ecological education and spirituality that seeks to change humanity, especially in consciousness. To understand that we are all equal and have the same value, we must accept a mutual belonging and maintain joint co-responsibility in caring for the world.

Education must act as a mechanism for an alliance between humanity and the environment, and it must be taken into account that Christian spirituality promotes awareness and love for the conservation of the world. That is why we join the universal and charismatic call to repair all forms of life.

For its part, the "Concluding Document" of the XXIII General Chapter of the Institute of Bethlehemite Sisters (2019), in a broad and profound sense, delves us into the dynamics of an integral ecology. In topic 1, "Joyful to live and share the charismatic dream", in lines of action 3 and 4 it expresses:



3 Make a change in our life through a new spiritual ecology that will recover the style of the founders, the attention to one's interiority, the sorority as an experience among sisters who live the gift of communion, the accompaniment in the journey of growth of each one, secure personal spaces dedicated to oneself, to God and to fraternal life; and learn to make bold and innovative decisions.

4 Humanize oneself to humanize, that is, transmit to others the charm of living together in diversity, creating warm and enriching spaces, open and joyful for oneself and for others.

The same document, in topic 3, "Prophetic presence that is incarnated in reality", presents the care and protection of the environment as a new apostolic scenario, to which at this moment in history we must give special attention; present it as a new scenario does not mean ignoring the commitment and attention that we have always given it, but recognize that our own dynamism today marks great challenges for us. For this, in the lines of action 9 of the "Concluding Document" it is proposed: "To promote an ecological spirituality from the culture of care and pedagogical itinerary that creates awareness and environmental responsibility."



Thus, our pledge for an integral ecology and the call made to us for a "new spiritual ecology", to human ecology, touches the internal spaces and the way in which we relate to ourselves, within the community and with the other recipients of the apostolic mission; from this perspective, considering it as a "new scenario", in the condition of religious and participants in the Bethlehemite missionary work, places us as active agents immersed in the broad field of an integral ecology that calls for new lifestyles and new forms of relationship that in community discernment and under the action of the Spirit we must find.

This search for a new way of being and relating to the environment takes us back to our charismatic roots, our history and tradition. It is an invitation to appreciate the path traveled because –since the Bethlehemite origins– the care and protection of God's creation has been a fundamental element of our spirituality.



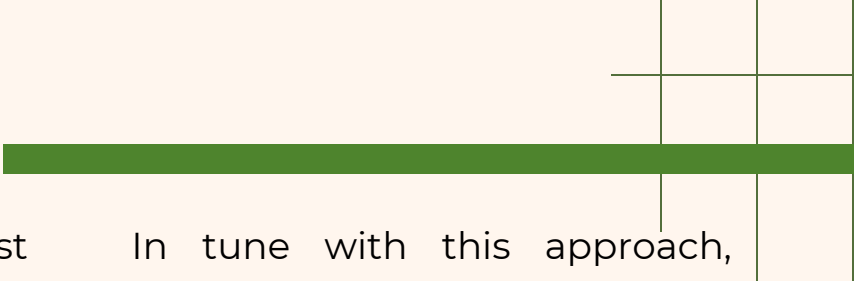
It is beautiful to contemplate the attitude of reverence and respect of our father Pedro towards his brothers of the community, the constant invitation to live fraternity between them and the recipients of the mission: poor, disabled, convalescent, children without education, animals and resources of nature.



The permanent search of our mother María Encarnación for an atmosphere of peace and silence is also beautiful: we can perfectly situate her, in her first years in the Beaterio, as someone who calls for a “new spiritual ecology”; great was her concern for procuring an environment conducive to recollection; she sensed the importance of human ecology, and for this reason she was exquisite in fraternal life: she ensured that all the sisters were well, she concealed the defects of the others, she asked for special care with the sick and the elderly, she took pains to provide a community environment pleasant, austere and tasteful.

How can we not remember her the last Christmas which she lived in Pasto, with that beautiful gesture of pleasing the taste of the sisters in food... To contemplate the figure of our mother María Encarnación in the context of an integral ecology allows us to discover, in the reparative dimension of her spirituality, a precious path of inner healing. To repair the pain of humanity in acts of love and prayer is pledging on a true human ecology.

Without a doubt, we have an origin and wonderful story of love and ecological commitment. The I Fair of Significant Environmental Experiences of our apostolic works, held in April 2022, helped us to get closer and make some experiences visible, without ignoring that many other valuable actions could not be presented. Even so, the commitment to take care of the work created by God is latent and alive in the heart of every Bethlehemite and of every apostolic work.



The motto of this first environmental fair was "to make visible to value", aware that in the apostolic works important efforts are made for the care and protection of the environment. Hence, we proposed to know the existing environmental experiences, recognize and value the process of each one, some with significant advances and others in their beginnings, but all of them expression of love and commitment for our planet from the Bethlehemite spirituality.

Thus, from this meeting point and this document that we present with great affection to the Bethlehemite Institute, we propose to continue inspiring, accompanying and motivating specific and simultaneous actions that allow to progress in the process of reparation and care for our Common home.

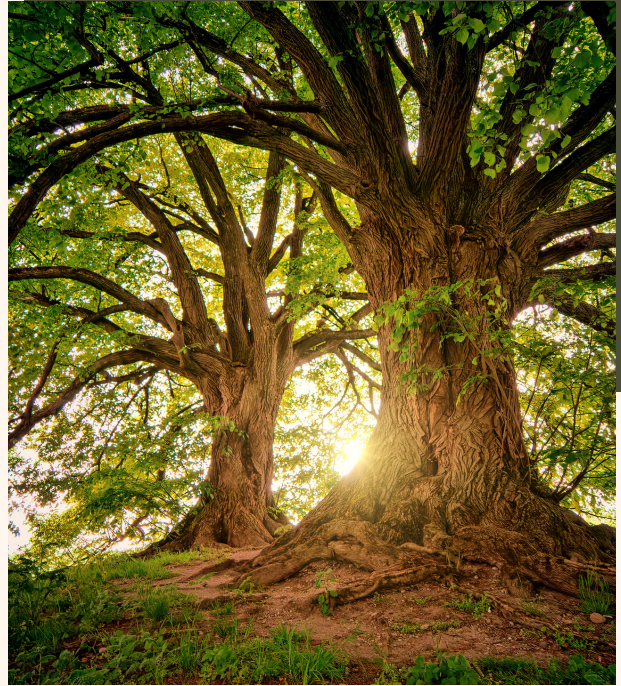
In tune with this approach, from the General Advisor of Apostolate we have formed a team of sisters and apostolic companions to think and reflect on pedagogical and apostolic practices with an ecological impact. With this, spaces for dialogue, inter-communication and interaction have been opened that have made it possible to value the path traveled, design an action plan together that allows us to respond to this great challenge of joining the multitude of men and women who work for care and protection of our environment and advance in the construction of some guidelines to accompany and energize our environmental commitment in the today of our history.

“ Let's go out to share the bread of Bethlehem ”
bread that helps us "to promote an ecological spirituality from the culture of care and pedagogical itineraries that create awareness and environmental responsibility", as indicated by line of action number 9 of topic 3 of our current "chapter document". As a Bethlehemite family we must responsibly assume the legacy of our founders, and not with mere isolated actions. Consequently, we invite you to repair our Common Home with true pedagogical itineraries.



ENVIRONMENT.

It is the physical space in which a living being develops, has constantly changing physical, chemical and cultural characteristics, to guarantee the harmonious development of the beings that are part of him



RESPONSIBLE, SUSTAINABLE, INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENTAL CONSCIOUSNESS



It is the ability that we humans possess to identify and experience the aspects that favor the harmonious development and adequate use of the planet's resources, to guarantee the survival of all existing forms of life, regardless of their nature or function.

REPARATIVE CONVERSION

It includes attitudes, actions and commitments aimed at repairing the damage and effects caused by human activities, and implies a change in the way of thinking and acting that leads us to develop habits tending to the rational use of resources for the protection and regeneration of the Planet.



ENVIROMENTAL CULTURE

It refers to the attitudes, customs, beliefs and values rooted in a community, which show the relationship with nature, the adequate and sustainable use of the resources that it provides.



INTEGRAL ECOLOGY

It is understood as the total and complete harmony of man with himself, with others and with nature, to guarantee the adequate and rational use of the planet's resources, which guarantee the survival of life in short, medium and long term.



ECOLOGICAL SPIRITUALITY



They are the principles and attitudes that characterize and typify the relationships between man, the beings that surround him and nature in general, and impregnate him with unique characteristics for survival in a certain environment.

PEDAGOGICAL ITINERARIES

They are the steps that show the path to follow in the process of formation and development of the identity and ecological culture of a community.





FUNDAMENTALS OF THE PROJECT

“Bethlemites repairers of the Common home”

Within the framework of bethlemite spirituality, the care for being and for the creation is part of the evangelizing and reparative action of everyone who center their lives in the incarnate Word.

In the illustration of the achievement, B is formed by two fingerprints found of Bethlemite identity, which form a green heart and which mark the charismatic root of the Institute of Bethlemite Sisters, from where life sprouts in the same trunk, from the hands of the Holy brother Pedro and the blessed mother María Encarnación Rosal, visionaries of innovation, care, humility and service, source of inspiration for the way we should be and be in relation to the environment; a life that makes a path marked by reparation and that is represented by the lit lamp that is light and guide.



LOGO OF THE PROJECT

The logo is surrounded by the text "Bethlemites, repairers of the Common home", which we have adopted as motto, to show the ultimate goal of all action in favor of the care for being and of the creation. This text forms the outline of a heart that denotes the creative love full of hope and that unites the identities.

The project " Bethlemites, repairers of the Common home" is an invitation so that from our Bethlemite identity, in accordance with the example of our holy brother Pedro, who lived in perfect harmony with the work created by God, and our mother Encarnación, who evokes a call to reparation and care.

As Bethlemites we commit ourselves to leave a green footprint, a contribution to care, protect and repair our mother Earth.





CHARISMATIC ROOTS, OUR ECOLOGICAL INSPIRATION

God created the universe as a whole, in close interdependence and in function of the goodness, and the beauty; he created man and woman, gave them dominion and appointed them administrators of his created work: "And God saw all that he had made, and it was very good," (Gen 1, 31). The universe comes from a common origin, we are all closely related and interdependent, we need each other; God's salvific project is located here, a project that in Jesus Christ reaches its total plenitude and realization.

The mystery of the incarnation of God and his birth in Bethlehem is the most beautiful expression of his Kingdom in the universe, because on the great night, in the first Bethlehem in history, the entire cosmos converges. It is moving to contemplate this event, and to see next to the child God the tender image of the woman, a loving mother, and of the man, a caring father, who care for, protect and defend life; of angels and celestial beings that express divinity; of the shepherds as normal and simple people of the place; of the great sages of the East, whose studies allowed them to observe the star and follow it...

There, in this first Bethlehem, humanity, nature, animals, the great stars meet to recognize God incarnate as King of the universe and to recognize us, among all, brothers and sisters in equal dignity, called to live fraternity, each according to their specific mission.

To contemplate the Child of Bethlehem connects us salvifically with the incarnation of the Lord, and if we keep this in mind, we verify that the Son of God assumed our human condition, except in sin. This implies that his body, like ours, embraced the elements of creation, for his constitution, and assumed the creation of his Father. We know that the human body is made up of the same elements of the universe.

To learn more about the relationship between humans and the universe, the Observatory Chandra X-ray shared an image indicating that 73% of the atoms in the human body come from the explosion of massive stars; 16.5% of the human being is the product of the death of low-mass stars; 9.5% of human atoms came from the fusion of the big bang, the great explosion that created the universe; 1% of the atoms of the human being are part of the explosion of white dwarfs. In fact, about 99% of our body is made of four chemical elements: carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, and nitrogen. Oxygen is the most abundant, with approximately 65%, followed by carbon, which occupies a little more than 19% (UAM-Faculty of Sciences, s/f).



This means that the human being, by taking care of creation, takes care of himself. Jesus Christ in assuming the elements of the universe in his body, invites us to assume and/or welcome creation, caring for it , managing it, being good gardeners (Gn 2,15).

The Holy Spirit of God continues creating, renewing the face of the Earth and sanctifying humanity.

This Spirit, in the XVII century, makes possible the birth of a new charism in the Church, with a style of life that emerges to recall the central event of history: Jesus becomes man in Bethlehem to teach us to live according to the heart of the Father God; for this, the bethlemite spirituality contains a profound richness, which inspires the way in which we must understand ourselves, identify, and the way in which we must relate to the work created by God.

For us bethlemites, the mystery of God in Bethlehem is a classroom that teaches and energizes our lifestyle; it takes us into the ecological spirituality and the culture of care; in this source, Pedro de Betancur is inspired and makes his life an act of continuous praise and care, in all dimensions of God's creation; for this reason, we know him as brother Pedro, the universal brother.



To speak of the ecological spirit of brother Pedro de Betancur is to begin to discover and unravel, from the depths of his soul and his personality, the relationship with God and with creation through contact with nature.



In Vilaflor, a village that sits in a valley to the south of Teide, among pine trees and vines with yellow and white flowers, with crops on the slopes and nearby mountains with abundant pastures and fresh foliage, with streams of fresh water that flow into the sea and under the intense blue sky, Pedro's childhood and youth pass by. There he awakens his contemplative spirit, of love and trust in a creator and provident God; there the affectionate obsession for everything that lives and breathes in nature was incubated, in communion with creation and in the solitude of the countryside, praising God in his works and thinking of the pains of men, he joyfully planned the work he had to crystallize in the soil of Guatemala. Years passed, Pedro had become a man and had matured his projects, when the time came to leave, he embarked on a ship that was going to Havana, brother Pedro being a man with a reflective spirit and sensitive to beauty, presumably, which during this long voyage vibrated in unison with the immensity of the sea, with the transparency and color of its waters and with the life that moved in it; with the blue sky, with the capricious shapes of the clouds, with the caress and freshness of the wind that drove the boat.[1]

[1] Taken from the document "Pedro de Betancur, the ecologist of yesterday, today, always", of the authorship of the Srs. Nidia Osorio and Amparo León.

Thus, our founder, from his origins, tunes his sensitivity, respect, care and environmental awareness. The natural environment where he was born and grew up, as well as the pure Christian values of his family were shaping his way of being and relating. Holy brother Pedro de Betancur has been called the American Francis of Assisi: because of his love for creatures and his delicate treatment of nature. Among the testimonies that we preserve about the life and virtues of our founder are the stories that present him as a "universal brother" who showed pain in the face of mistreatment of nature and advised people to abandon practices of this type. He used to call the animals "little brothers", and treated them as such, taking care of them with great love and delicacy; to cage a bird was for him a cruel act.



To contemplate this dimension of our founder inspires the way in which today we must relate to our pets and even to the animals that serve us for work, entertainment and food, so as not to fall into the serious sin of humanizing them, which is also another way of mistreatment.

The figure of the saint of Guatemala, brother Pedro, is a reference on the way in which we should relate to the work created by God and on the spirituality that two centuries later Blessed María Encarnación Rosal enriches, from the reparative dimension, in the mystical experience that she has with the heart of Jesus, on April 9, 1857, to whom he asks to "celebrate the sorrows of his heart".



To celebrate is to make memory, to make visible, to name, to recognize, so that it is not forgotten, and in this context, we question if the ecological devastation is only an expression of economic and technical problems, or if it sinks its deepest roots in the human condition degraded by the sin.

Our reparative dimension is discovered in the dynamics with which our mother María Encarnación responded to God's complaint for man's non-response to his salvific project, both in the non-living experience of the Ten Commandments as in the new sins, more institutional, such as described in the Ten Sorrows suffered by the Church. Hence, discovering, in the cry of the Earth, the divine project that is frustrated by the handling that man has given, makes us think of the deep pain of God before the dream of a planet that was life and now is death, which is in fact a breach of the alliance, of the pact established between the Creator and man.

The ecological question represents a moral and spiritual challenge. The problems that threaten the Common Home are not solved only with the technique. A "radical change in the behavior of humanity" is needed (Francis, 2015: No. 4)[1], because if we approach others, nature, the world, with the attitudes of the dominator, the consumer, the exploiter of resources, and we are not capable of setting limits to our interests (LS 11), we assume a colonizing mentality that destroys fraternity with all creation.



[1] From now onwards, this reference on the encyclical letter 'Laudato si' of pope Francis will appear abbreviated in the text, like this: LS, and will be followed by the quoted numeral.

Pope Francis points out to us in his encyclical two intimately related realities: the suffering of the poor and the suffering of the Earth (LS 14, 49), a single crisis, which is social and environmental at the same time (LS 139). this model of development is the environment in which innumerable evils are generated, among others: the culture of discarding (LS 16); the non-recognition of the alterity of the other, considered an object, an instrument (LS 119); the mercantilist vision of the goods of creation (LS 38); consumerism (LS 203); exclusions and inequities (LS 469); cultural (LS 143) and ethnic discrimination; practical relativism (LS 122); disrespect for limits (LS 27, 53); the pursuit of profit at all costs (LS 195); the destruction of nature (LS 66, 204); the growing inequalities (LS 82); the crises of democracies subjected to the dictatorship of the market (LS 109); the commodification of life (LS 56); forced migrations (LS 25); and the degradation of human life (LS 48).

The book of Genesis recounts in a majestic way the creation of the universe, the earth, the sky and all forms of life that inhabit them; likewise, it gives an account of how God formed man and woman, out of clay, in perfect harmony with nature and granted them authority as administrators of his creation, to care for it and make it productive (Gn 1,24-30).

**“ The violence
present in our
hearts, wounded
by sin, is also
reflected in the
symptoms of
sickness evident in
the soil, in the
water, in the air
and in all forms of
life. LS 2 ”**

It is possible to identify the stages of a process that, little by little, leads to human degradation and, consequently, to reinforce the ties of "structural sin", both in personal and social life: The first, self-referentiality, an expression of being focused on oneself, of a narcissism that leads to value everything that is done based on whether or not it responds to one's own interests. "When the human being places himself in the center, he ends up giving absolute priority to his circumstantial conveniences and everything else becomes relative" (LS 122).



The second stage, consumerism. The problem consists in passing from satisfying needs to fulfilling all desires with avidity; this threatens the ecological balance and becomes, according to the pope, "a serious illness", because "the emptier a person's heart is, the more he needs objects to buy, possess and consume" (LS 204). Certainly, people have needs, but the logic of the market seeks to generate new needs and encourage people to consume what is not needed, with false promises, because it is not only the product that is offered, but a promise, for example, to stay young, to be happy, healthy, attractive etc. "The market tends to promote extreme consumerism in an effort to sell its products, people can easily get caught up in a whirlwind of needless buying and spending." (LS 203).

In the third stage, not imposing limits leads to blurring the horizon of the common good. This in turn leads to “violence and destruction”, which is the situation in which we find ourselves. " In the third stage, not imposing limits leads to blurring the horizon of the common good. This in turn leads to “violence and destruction”, which is the situation in which we find ourselves" “In the present condition of global society, where injustices abound and growing numbers of people are deprived of basic human rights and considered expendable, the principle of common good [...] becomes, logically and inevitably, a summons to solidarity.” (LS 158) that requires limits to be imposed to avoid suffering or the deterioration of what surrounds us (LS 208).

This cycle of human and social degradation calls for a reparative conversion: it is not enough to apply external solutions; even new practices that correct the unhealthy habits that we have assumed from the culture of consumption and exploitation would be insufficient. It is necessary to develop a conversion of mind, heart and action that enables us to reforestation, in the protection and regeneration of the planet. The reparative spirituality will be the renewing force that is born from the contemplation of pain, rupture, death. The planet is yet another among the persecuted just, with no other voice than the one that those of us who love and defend life can recognize.



It is necessary to allow ourselves to be challenged by the Gospel, which questions our way of thinking, feeling and living, and to cultivate a mysticism that encourages us to nourish the passion for caring for the world (LS 216). A profound change of heart expressed in personal habits is imperative, but also a structural change expressed in social habits, laws and programs that contribute to an alternative, integral and supportive human and environmental development, based on an ethic that includes responsibility for authentic natural and human ecology based on the Gospel of justice and solidarity, and that overcomes utilitarian logic.



Thus, we have named this project "Bethlemites, repairers of the Common home" because our Common Home needs to be repaired: repaired after the great damage that we have inflicted on it for a long time with the excessive exploitation of natural resources, pollution and other unsustainable practices of contemporary societies. Today we already experience the consequences of our actions and recognize the imminent need to repair this wonderful treasure that God has given us and that we have not known how to take care of.



Consequently, our action as a Bethlehemite family -from the spirituality of reparation- must be addressed as a whole (we, others and the environment), and we need to evaluate the way in which we relate, recognizing that we have harmed ourselves and have contributed to the environmental deterioration. It is indispensable to recognize, to raise awareness or conscientize, and be part of the change. Let us repair our Common home, which suffers because of the actions of our own species against it.

The document “We educate in love for service.” Guidelines for the Bethlehemite education”, expresses:

“*Bethlemite education forms in and for solidarity, with a strong social commitment. Its educational processes combine autonomy and collaboration, individual development and shared commitments, so that its students develop a social sensitivity that commits them to the transformation of situations that generate poverty, marginalization, injustice, destruction of life, the environment and the planet, from an ethic of care and service to the common good. (Bethlemite Sisters, 2015: No. 40).*”



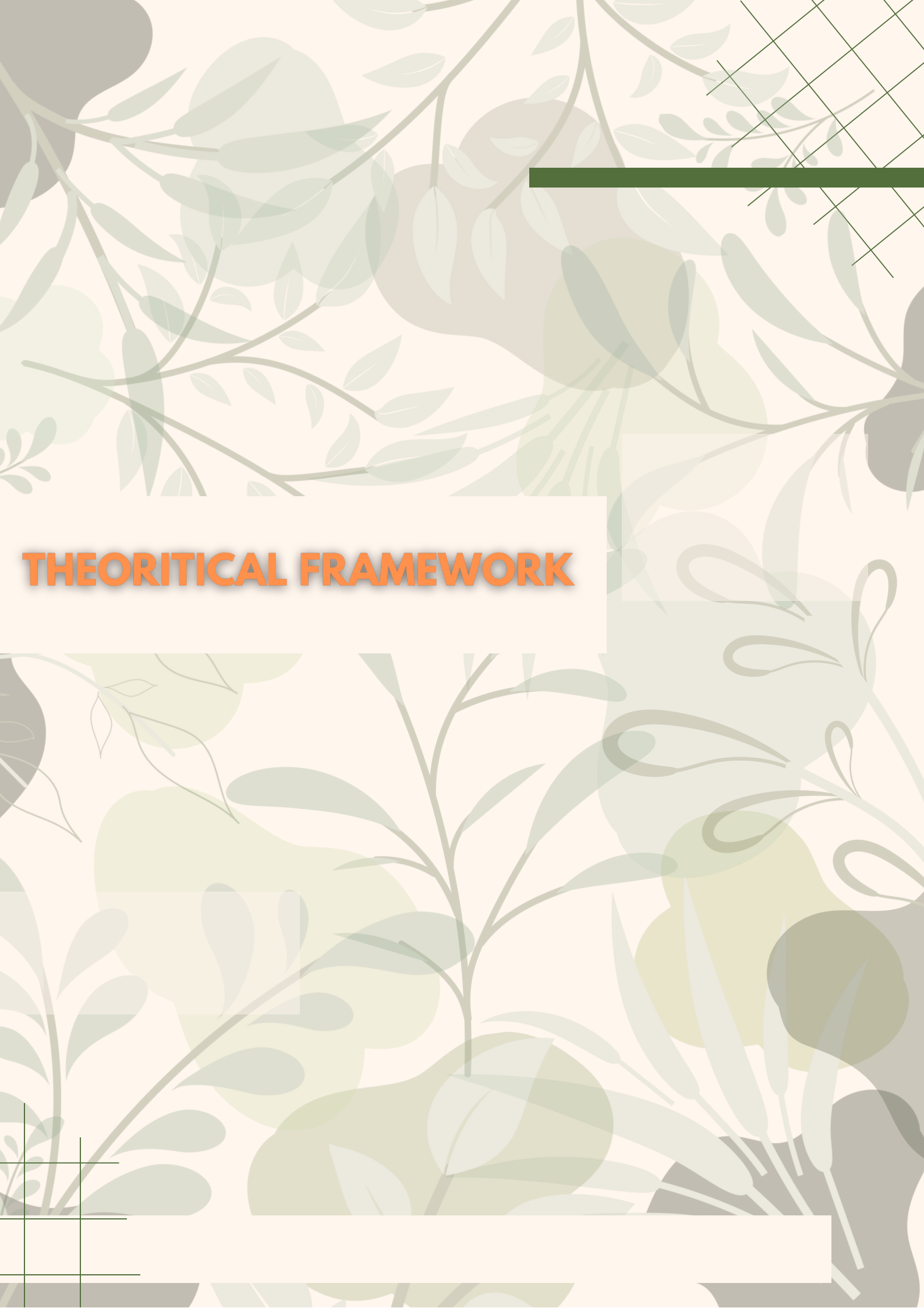
Thus, due to charismatic heritage, tradition and institutional culture, the commitment to the care and protection of the environment has been latent in the heart of each Bethlehemite and in the missionary dynamism of the apostolic works of the Institute.

Just as the wise men from the East contemplated the star and set out on their way to Bethlehem, let us also contemplate God's creation and set out on our way, leaving behind green footprints, free of carbon, footprints of love and respect for creation, footprints of life and not of death and destruction.

Let us share the bread of Bethlehem, a bread that helps us "promote an ecological spirituality from the culture of care, and pedagogical itineraries that create awareness and environmental responsibility", as indicated in line of action number 9 of topic 3 of our current chapter document.

As a Bethlehemite family, let us responsibly assume the legacy of Pedro de Betancur and María Encarnación Rosal, to promote integral ecology, good human ecology practices, inner healing, forgiveness and reconciliation, fraternity, solidarity, etc. Let us remember that each one of us is the most marvelous work of God's creation to rediscover our essence and help build the culture of encounter with others, my brothers, and with sister nature, its finite resources, its fauna and its flora.





THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK



The doctrine that supports environmental commitment today is very extensive; different international organizations have pronounced themselves and have contributed relevant theories in this regard, for which we are called to investigate and learn about them.

The encyclical *Laudato si'* is a letter of deep and broad content that illuminates our action in favor of the environment. Although we have quoted some of its sections in this project, it continues to be a document that we will always have to refer to. Likewise, we must be attentive to all the deployment that the *Laudato Si'* Movement makes today regarding this issue.

In continuation we refer to the Belgrade Charter, drawn up from the debates that arose at the International Conference on Environmental Education, held at the end of 1975, which includes the goal and objectives of environmental education, in the terms that refer to continuation.

1 GOAL OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION:

Ensure that the world's population is aware of and interested in the environment and its related problems and that it has the necessary knowledge, aptitudes, attitudes, motivations and desires to work individually and collectively in the search for solutions to current problems and prevent those that could appear in the future.

2 OBJECTIVES OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION:

- **Awareness.** Help people and social groups to acquire greater sensitivity and awareness of the environment in general and related problems.
- **Knowledge.** Help individuals and social groups to acquire a basic understanding of the environment as a whole, related problems and the presence and role of humanity in it, which entails a critical responsibility.
- **Attitudes.** Help people and social groups to acquire social values and a deep interest in the environment, which encourages them to actively participate in its protection and improvement.
- **Aptitudes.** Help individuals and social groups to acquire the necessary skills to solve environmental problems.
- **Capacity to evaluation.** Help individuals and social groups to evaluate the means and programmes of environmental education based on ecological, political, economic, social, aesthetic, and educational factors
- **Participation.** Help people and social groups to develop their sense of responsibility and to become aware of the urgent need to pay attention to environmental problems, to ensure that adequate measures are adopted in this regard.

Likewise, it is essential to bear in mind, as a framework for our actions, the UN sustainable development goals [1].

Immersed in a global world and in a planetary society, we cannot be oblivious to these doctrines and the actions that derive from them; however, in order not to lose ourselves in the breadth of the challenges that the environmental problem we face leads us to, it is convenient to focus on five major environmental areas, in which it is our intention to sensitize to raise awareness, create awareness and carry out actions that contribute to the care, reparation and conservation of the environment.



[1] In 2015, world leaders adopted 17 objectives as an agenda to be achieved by 2030. These objectives (to which 169 goals and 231 indicators correspond) aim to protect the planet, fight against poverty and seek its eradication, with a view to building a more prosperous, just and sustainable world for future generations. That is why they are known as the “17 Sustainable Development Goals” (SDGs). The member states of the UN have committed to its realization, which is why this is a universal and profoundly transformative agenda.



THE FIVE AREAS OF BETHLEMITES ENVIRONMENTAL WORK

To protect, care for and repair our Common home is a necessary but a very broad challenge; for this reason, as a Bethlehemite family we propose, in the next three years, to focus on five areas of work that were thought by virtue of their feasibility and possibilities of action.

Without forgetting other important ecological areas in which communities and apostolic works can work according to their possibilities and contexts, in order to unify our plan of action here we consider it relevant to focus on the issues mentioned below.

It is worth clarifying before that we are committed to integral ecology, giving special relevance to human ecology, according to what the XXII General Chapter of the Bethlehemite Institute (2019) expressed, "New spiritual ecology". It is about helping us so that all human beings live according to our dignity, given our condition as children of God, made in his image and likeness. This is the first area of our environmental proposal. The management of solid waste, water and natural resources, as well as the protection and care of animals and the fight against deforestation, are other nearby areas in which it is possible to undertake our action in favor of the environment and natural resources.



1 INTEGRAL ECOLOGY



Listed below are the different aspects of integral ecology that clearly incorporate the human and social dimensions according to the encyclical *Laudato si'*

By Por Sister Johana Parra[4]

When we talk about integrality, we are talking about a whole, a set of dimensions that weave together the greatness of a company, a person, a population or a situation. In this case, when Pope Francis speaks of "integral ecology", he wants to condense the social and spiritual reality of the human being that transcends ecology and harmonizes it with the place it occupies in the world.

Pope Francis teaches us that it is not enough to talk about an ecological culture because environmental realities seek urgent and partial answers, where the technique must be limited to seek human, social and integral progress. Ecology is becoming an interpretative key to reality as a whole. We are invited to bet on another lifestyle and rediscover that everything is related to everything.

Also called ecological spirituality– proposes creating a new alliance between human beings and nature that generates a sense of solidarity with future generations and manages to create dignified social relationships. It is about establishing bonds of tenderness, care, immense fraternity and solidarity with what we previously considered to be below us, subject to our domination and exploitation, and at our disposal to manipulate it, and to consider, therefore, working in communion with nature and not against it.

[4] Bethlehemite sister

ENVIRONMENTAL, ECOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL ECOLOGY

When speaking of "environment", a relationship is particularly indicated: the one that exists between nature and the society that inhabits it. This prevents us from understanding nature as something separate from us or as a mere framework for our lives. We are included in it, we are part of it, and we are interpenetrated. The reasons why a place is contaminated require an analysis of the functioning of society, its economy, its behavior, its ways of understanding reality.

Given the magnitude of the changes, it is no longer possible to find a specific and independent answer for each part of the problem. It is essential to seek comprehensive solutions that consider the interactions of natural systems with each other and with social systems. There are not two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but a single and complex socio-environmental crisis. The lines for the solution require a comprehensive approach to combat poverty, to restore dignity to the excluded and simultaneously to care for nature. (LS 139).

On the other hand, economic growth tends to produce automatisms and homogenize, in order to simplify procedures and reduce costs. That is why an economic ecology capable of forcing us to consider reality in a broader way is necessary. Because "environmental protection should be an integral part of the development process and cannot be considered in isolation"; but at the same time, the urgent need for humanism becomes current, which in itself summons the different knowledge –also the economic one– towards a more comprehensive and integrating look.





Today the analysis of environmental problems is inseparable from the analysis of human, family, work, urban contexts, and the relationship of each person with himself, which generates a certain way of relating to others and to the environment. There is an interaction between the ecosystems and between the various worlds of social reference, and thus it is shown once again that "the whole is superior to the part" (LS 141).

If everything is related, the health of a society's institutions also has consequences for the environment and the quality of human life: "Any impairment of solidarity and civility causes environmental damage." In this sense, social ecology is necessarily institutional, and progressively reaches the different dimensions that go from the primary social group, the family, through the local community and the nation, to international life (LS 142).

143. Along with the natural heritage, there is a historical, artistic and cultural heritage, equally threatened. It is part of the common identity of a place and a basis for building a livable city. It is not about destroying and creating new supposedly more ecological cities, where it is not always desirable to live. It is necessary to incorporate the history, culture and architecture of a place, maintaining its original identity. For this reason, ecology also supposes the care of the cultural wealth of humanity in its broadest sense.

145. Many highly concentrated forms of environmental exploitation and degradation can deplete not only local livelihood resources, but also the social capacities that have enabled a way of life that has long provided cultural identity and a sense of existence and place. The coexistence, the disappearance of a culture can be as serious as or more serious than the disappearance of an animal or plant species.





The scenarios that surround us influence our way of seeing life, feeling and acting. At the same time, in our room, in our house, in our workplace and in our neighborhood, we use the environment to express our identity. We make an effort to adapt to the environment and, when an environment is messy, chaotic or loaded with visual and acoustic pollution, the excess of stimuli challenges us to try to configure an integrated and happy identity. (LS 147).

In conclusion, we can assume that human life is not only experiencing an environmental crisis due to nature, but also due to the identity crisis caused by poverty, displacement, the economic, political and social reality that marks personality, dreams, illusions and expectations of the new and future generations. Every human being is the best gift that God can give us. Let's work to promote initiatives together, so that among all of us we become aware of the care and protection of our common home, building an increasingly humane world, where nothing and no one is superfluous and we are all necessary. Let's not lose any detail of life, we are dignified and integral beings.

2 SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

By Patricia B. Ballesteros Quintero [5]



"The earth, our home, seems to be turning more and more into a huge garbage dump," Pope Francis wrote on his Twitter account in June 2015. Today, that statement – which seemed strong to us – is not far off of the reality. Solid waste and its accumulation is causing severe damage to our mother earth, which is degraded more every day by our actions, and this, without us realizing it, is affecting our quality of life.

Solid waste management is the set of processes through which common and uncommon solid waste or residues are disposed of, without harming the environment and without exposing the health and safety of people.

The mismanagement of solid waste is causing our oceans, seas, rivers and other water resources to become contaminated, and drains and channels to exceed their capacity and cause flooding that affects the homes and environment of the most vulnerable.

What can we do to contribute to the correct management of such waste?

[5] Bethlemite College, Chinandega (Nicaragua).

From our simplicity and the knowledge that our mother Earth is God's creation, in order for human beings to live and develop in harmony with the plants, animals and abiotic factors that affect life, we must commit ourselves to promoting small actions and to maintain the beautiful legacy of our founders, holy brother Pedro and blessed María Encarnación Rosal, of caring for creation, seeing Jesus in the simple, the vulnerable and the needy.

Likewise, we must strengthen in our Bethlehemite works, in the homes of each student, each apostolic collaborator, supporting and administrative staff, the practice of the "5 Rs": reduce, reuse, repair, recycle, and reject). This looks difficult, but it is easy when organized correctly.

To *reduce*, let's return to the expression "less is more": the less polluting energy sources we use, the freer we will be from carbon dioxide (CO₂), whose excessive emissions are the cause of global warming. Faced with this reality, what should we do? Here are some ideas:

- Going to school by bike.
- Connect less cell phone chargers.
- Buy what is necessary, with which we will help to generate less garbage.





When donating the computer that we don't use, because we have a more recent model, when making didactic material with everyday objects, and when building recreational spaces using wheels or tires, etc., we make use of the verb to reuse. In addition, good solid waste management reduces environmental pollution and CO2 production, somewhat slowing down global warming.

Let's promote recycling from our homes, classifying the waste we generate, and return to the production chain those objects or goods whose useful life has ended, to transform them into raw material with which new products will be manufactured. For example, if we recycle paper or cardboard, we are helping to stop the felling of trees, and with it to generate more oxygen and protect the habitat of many animals. Remember that recycling begins at home and is strengthened at school.

To reject is an important action that can involve anyone, regardless of age or condition. The invitation is for us to buy what we really need and reject what we don't need; to reject the world of superfluous and useless consumerism, in which –by means of sophisticated and deceptive market techniques– we are invited to buy just to buy, because it is fashionable, or to try the new, what we do not know even if we do not need it.

Holy brother Pedro de Betancur and the blessed María Encarnación Rosal are examples of how to take care of the weak: our Common Home, our poor, helpless brothers, our vulnerable boys and girls... They left us a true example of integral ecology, who lived with simplicity, joy, authenticity and in harmony with God, in a few words, who lived a special commitment in the care of our mother earth.

Go ahead and join this beautiful project, which must be heard in all our Bethlehemite works: "I am a repairer of our Common Home"; and if we manage well the solid waste, we not only take care of our planet, but we also help many families dedicated to recycling to earn a living.

3 MANAGEMENT OF WATER AND NATURAL RESOURCES

By Engracia Vargas de Domínguez [6]

“Drinking and clean water is an issue of prime importance, because it is essential for human life and to sustain terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems.

Pope Francis

”



The deterioration that the planet is suffering is no secret to anyone. Our Common Home is dying, and we –as educators who strive for an integral education– prepare autonomous and respectful students, capable of loving and caring for the environment. In other words, we assume the commitment to implant an environmental culture in the new generations, creating awareness and respect for the ecosystem.

The accelerated deterioration of our planet is no longer a distant threat, but a present reality. For this reason, the school represents a cornerstone for the care and protection of the environment. Aware of this situation, we propose the care of the Common Home as a transversal axis, in which one of the important points to address is the management of water and natural resources.

[6] Area of Biology, Our Lady of Bethlehem College, Panamá (Panamá).

As a Bethlehemite community that follows the legacy of its founders, with a process of integral formation, based on love, organization and discipline, we faithfully believe that it is of the utmost importance to learn to take care of water, since life exists thanks to it. And it's getting scarcer all the time. There are many who do not have access to it, and even if they do, it can be contaminated.

Unfortunately, inappropriate practices –such as pouring household oil into sinks and toilets– contaminate the water. For this reason, it is essential that our students know the risks involved in throwing this waste anywhere. It is estimated that a liter of oil contaminates a thousand liters of water; Consequently, it is essential to know that domestic oil can be recycled, to prevent it from reaching rivers. By implementing the recycling of used oil, it has been possible to reduce the consumption of this product and not pollute the water.

All the garbage that is thrown on the beaches goes directly into the sea and affects the marine ecosystem.

Hence, in places where it is possible to do so, it is important to plan days of "beach cleaning" days in which the entire Bethlehemite educational community participates in garbage collection. It is even more important to raise awareness among our communities of students, assigned personnel, and sisters so that they refrain from littering on beaches, natural parks, and public places, generate in these people empathy with the environment and understanding that, if we reduce the use of plastics in our homes, we prevent these products from reaching our beaches and contaminating the ecosystem.



Making full use of rainwater helps solve major problems such as water scarcity, floods, contamination of natural sources, and deterioration of water quality. Rainwater is usually clean and pure, plus it does not contain chlorine or lime; and most importantly: Mother Earth gives it to us for free. If we think about it and put our hands on our hearts, we would realize the impressive amount of water we waste when washing our teeth and hands, bathing, watering the plants and washing cars.

Collecting rainwater is applying the values bequeathed by our founders, since they gave us an integral education, through which the knowledge is used to benefit the environment and shows that with love and empathy we can create a more rational and sustainable world.

We know that we have a great challenge, to protect our common Home, and that following the Bethlehemite philosophy – which is based on reparation – means applying measures such as those indicated, which we want to become a way of life for our students and communities linked to the missionary works of the Institute, so that we all learn to love and value the planet we inhabit. We are a small community, but a community that by working as a team contributes to preserving life on Earth.

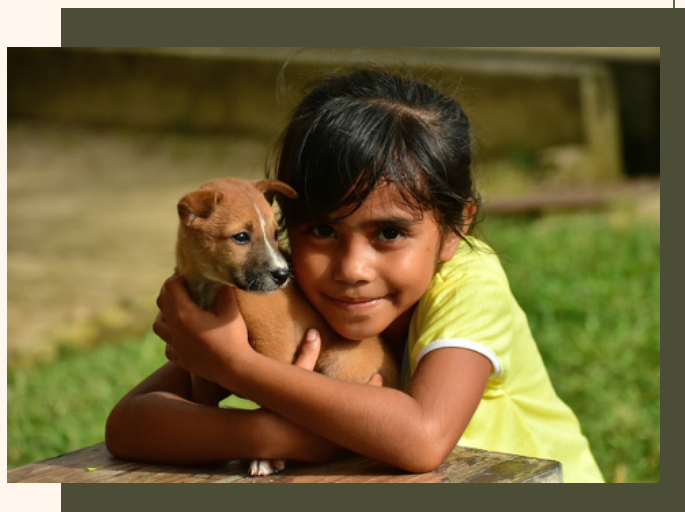


4 PROTECTION AND CARE FOR ANIMALS

By Diana Paola Moncayo Herrera [7]

Our Bethlehemite community is committed to a quality pedagogy that allows us to implement an integral ecology in our mission and direct students to strengthen values and principles in the care of all living beings, knowing them, highlighting the importance of ecosystems and our environment. Among these principles is sensitization and awareness as a fundamental pillar, to start from reflection to action in participation towards the care and protection of all sentient and voiceless beings who share our Common Home with us.

For this reason, we must know the rules of protection and the rights of animals and be at the forefront of their compliance based on the three main relationships on which human existence is based, on which Pope Francis invites us to reflect. in the encyclical *Laudato si'* (2015): "The relationship with God, with our neighbor and with the earth" (LS 66).



Taking into account that our relationship with animals goes back to the very origin of the human species, as a source of food, support at work, company in our homes, regulations and laws have been implemented around the world that govern their protection and care. Within this framework, our role as companions in the educational process acquires great importance, since –with our students– we must reflect on human actions that threaten countless species, or on acts of cruelty or unnecessary exploitation of defenseless beings, to generate changes in attitude and transform the indifference felt by so many people into compassion and motivate actions that allow us to help the most vulnerable, those who need us the most.

[7] Area of Natural Sciences and Environmental Education, College of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Bethlehemites Pasto (Colombia)



At present, the habit of having pets has generated distortions in our relationships with some animals that are removed from their natural habitat, to turn them into companion animals. Here it is no longer about the interaction between species, but about a coexistence that tries to “humanize” these creatures, believing that this means loving them; such behavior constitutes another kind of mistreatment against them, since it forces them to alter their natural behavior, break their nature and their own way of acting and living.



The fact that animals live under our roof – in the manner of a “multispecies family” – brings with it great responsibilities, since caring for them not only means ensuring their food, health and shelter, but also understanding their needs and behaviors of their kind, without expecting them to act like humans.



5 FIGHT AGAINST DEFORESTATION

By Esteban Jiménez [8]

Planet Earth, our home, or as Pope Francis says, the Common home use, the one that gives us spring colors and everything we need to live, is the house where countless beings live. Our coexistence should be harmonious, but the unbridled ambition of human beings has been degrading and destroying day by day the beautiful big home that God gave us.

Laudato si' recalls the expression of Patriarch Bartholomew, in the sense that we are "stripping the land of its natural forests." Indeed, every year 178 million hectares of forest are deforested, and with its destruction the flora and fauna that inhabit them are lost, including species that we will never see again.

“

The trees are poems that the Earth writes in the sky.

Kahlil Gibran”

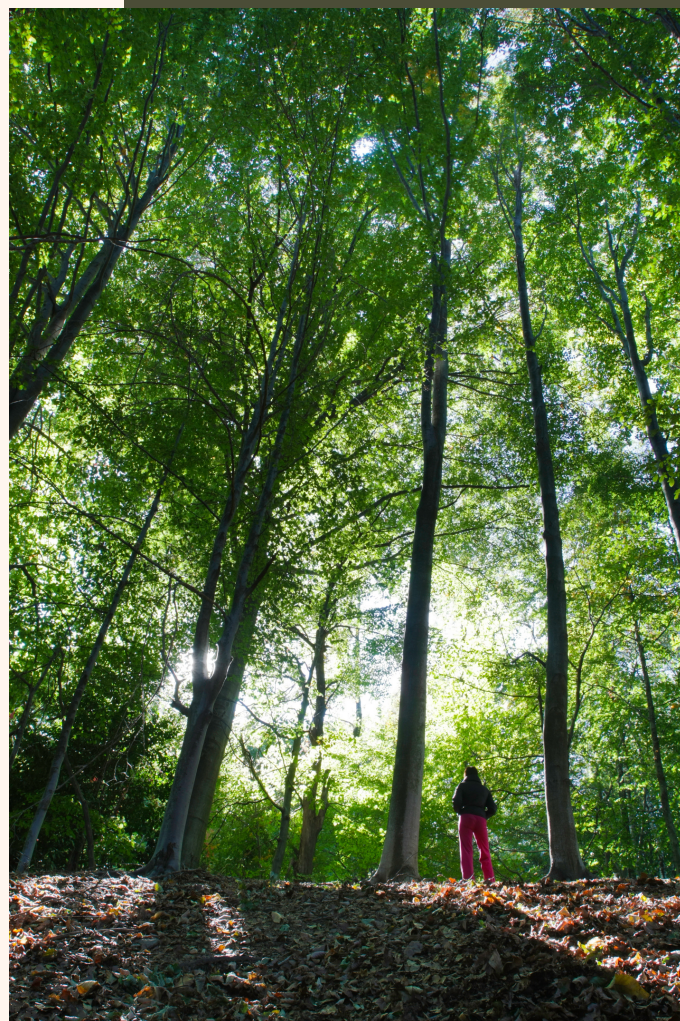
If we were to think about the work that a tree does in favor of life on the planet, we would take care of it like a son. Because the tree takes carbon dioxide to transform it into oxygen (which we breathe 24 hours a day), it provides the habitat for numerous animal species –when not food for others–, provides shade, protects from the inclement weather, attracts the rains, adorns the landscape... If only we would think that 22 trees are needed to meet the oxygen demand of a person... If we were aware of the important role that tree plays in our lives, we would not destroy it.



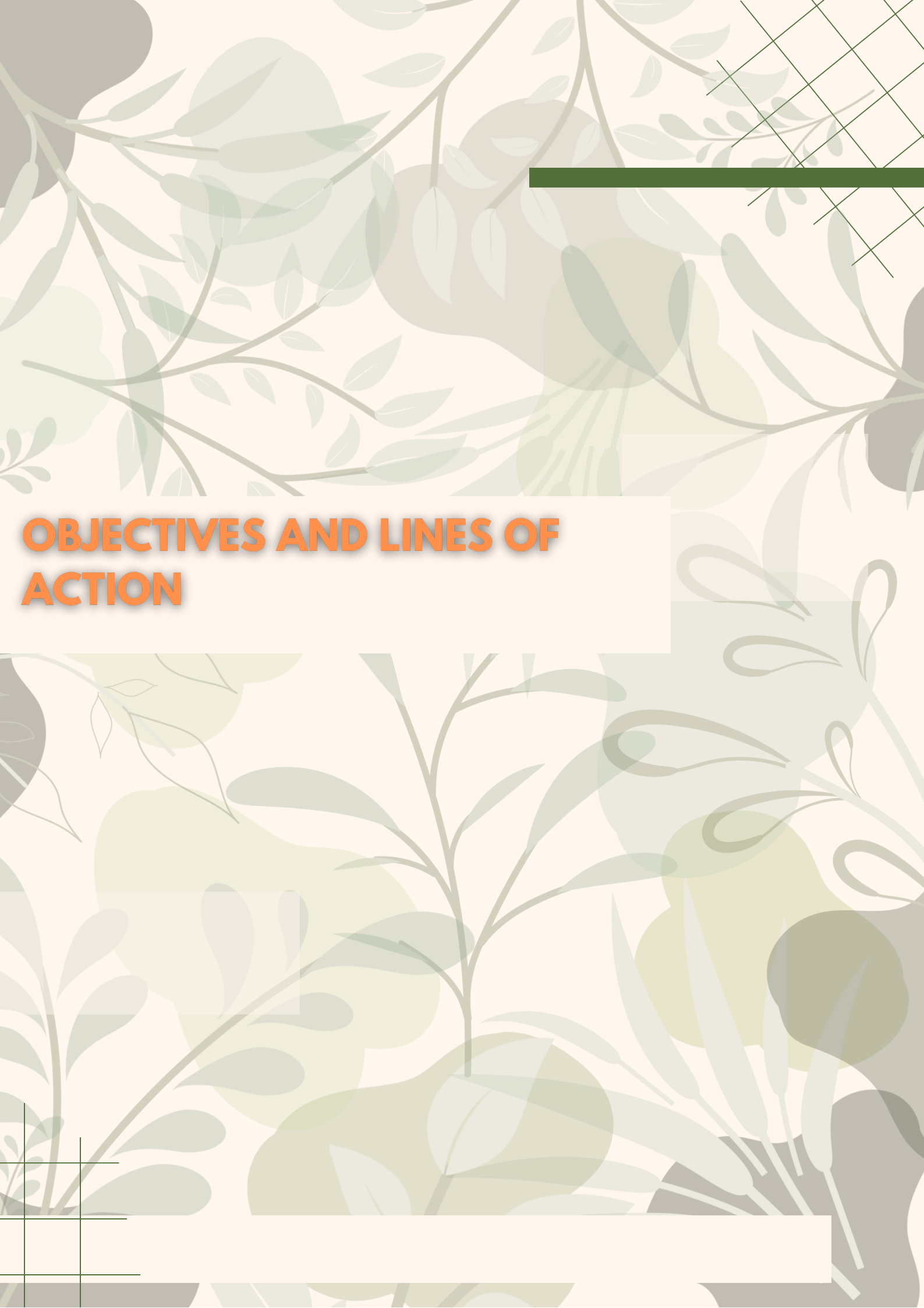
[8] Sacred Heart of Jesus Educational Unit Bethlehemite Sisters Ibarra, Ecuador.

It is time for harmony to be restored to all creation and the message of *Laudato si'* is clear, in its Chapter IV: "The soil, the water, the mountains, everything is God's caress." It is time to follow the example of the holy brother Pedro de Betancur, who was considered the American Saint Francis, and of the blessed mother María Encarnación Rosal, living examples of love for creation. We must all contribute to restore harmony to the forests, so that deforestation is stopped and the important role that a tree plays in the life of the human being is understood, so that plains stripped of their clothing are no longer observed, so that there are more extinct species; because if every human being became aware and planted trees, future generations would inherit a world like the one bequeathed to us by our ancestors, not a world in which air will no longer be free, and water will be a reason for war. Let us always remember that "man will disappear with the last tree felled on earth", a truth expressed by an anonymous wise man.

It is time to capture history and leave a green mark that lasts in our Common Home; let us join the army of men and women who, throughout the planet, work for reforestation. Bethlehemites: let's set out on the road so that, in the year 2025, united as a universal family, we can achieve the planting of a million trees!



[8] Sacred Heart of Jesus Educational Unit Bethlehemite Sisters Ibarra, Ecuador.



OBJECTIVES AND LINES OF ACTION



GENERAL OBJECTIVES

Implement actions of environmental culture in the Institute of the Bethlehemite Sisters, based on the strengthening of ecological spirituality and the care of the Common Home, to generate responsible, sustainable and inclusive environmental awareness, through pedagogical itineraries, and thus advance in the process of reparation and care of the Common home.



SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES



1 Design actions to raise awareness in the care, protection and reparation of the Common Home, from a sustainable and inclusive integral ecology in the apostolic works of the Bethlehemite sisters.

2 Promote prayer spaces that involve the educational community, building solid relationships of respect and care for the creation created by God.

3 Establish proposals for the proper management of solid waste in apostolic works, with pedagogical itineraries that inspire, accompany, and motivate specific and simultaneous actions that favor the process of reparation and caring for the Common home.

4 Manage the planting of one million trees for the year 2025, with the commitment of all the Bethlehemite apostolic communities in the world, the Association of Laity, the former students, friends and allies of the Bethlehemite family, as part of a process of restoration of the ecological niche.

LINES OF ACTION

Although in the Bethlehemite communities and apostolic works significant actions are carried out to care for and preserve the environment, in this present project we wanted to focus on the five major environmental areas already described, in which we have to develop lines of action that make visible our environmental commitment; but we also expose other lines of action that can be implemented depending on the realities and contexts in which the communities and works operate. Let's see:

- 1** Create a pleasant, aesthetic, orderly, tasteful institutional environment with healthy human relationships, where care for one another, fraternal and supportive relationships, and the ability to love and forgive are noted.
- 2** Take care of the people who work, are educated or have some relationship with the educational institution, which is to take care of the human talent that sustains all our work.
- 3** Take care of the psychological and social aspects of those who participate in the works of the Institute and teach how to relate in the most appropriate way with people and the environment.



- 4** Advance awareness campaigns for the care of the common House, especially the impact of the carbon footprint, which is threatening life on the planet.
- 5** Form the institutional environmental patrol with representatives, managers, administrators, teachers, students, parents, supporting staff and graduates. Also form environmental leadership teams.
- 6** Make agreements and articulations with government entities or corporations in charge of promoting care for the environment.
- 7** Form the seedbed for school research on water treatment and the preservation of wetlands.
- 8** Establish virtual learning communities to comply with the guidelines of the encyclical *Laudato si'* of Pope Francis.
- 9** Take advantage of virtual media to reduce the use of paper.
- 10** Strengthen collaborative work and learn about the positive experiences of other schools, articulation with government entities or non-governmental organizations dedicated to care for the environment.
- 11** Ensure the transversality of the environmental project with all areas of knowledge and pedagogical training projects.
- 12** Exchange experiences and information between school environmental projects (PRAES) and government projects of external institutions and entities.
- 13** Using clean energy for the operation of the educational institution, for example, favoring collective transport over private transport or promoting the use of bicycles.

- 14** Establish ecological criteria for purchases, in relation to the type of food consumed, which are healthy and accessible.
- 15** Carry out recycling campaigns and classification of solid waste and its reuse.
- 16** Save and use water consumption, and reuse rainwater.
- 17** Take care of the plants and animals existing in the community and apostolic work.
- 18** Execute actions of ecological impact of the institution and outside the walls (neighbors, community, neighborhood, social and/or ecological institution).
- 19** Organize organic gardens, without using chemical products, or vertical gardens where possible.
- 20** Celebrate the commemorative days in favor of environmental care, at a regional, national, global level (Water Day, Earth Day, etc.) and join such celebrations through social networks, publishing a digital poster and celebrating educational activities in the works of the Institute.
- 21**
- 22** Organize educational and ecological outings to wetlands or forest reserves.
- 23** Produce commercial products from recyclable raw materials (a Science and Entrepreneurship Day can be organized).
10. Organize products (videos) and campaigns in favor of the appropriation of biosafety protocols.
- 24** At the church level, devise ways to celebrate the time of creation.
- 25** Lead the realization of the Bethlehemite Ecological Innovation Congress.
- 26** Join the program of the Bethlehemite family, for the year 2025, planting a million trees.

To the previous list, which presents a vast range of possibilities for action (some of which are already under development), many more can be added. The particular action plan, its structure, monitoring and evaluation are tasks that we leave in the hands of each community. The important thing is to move forward and make our environmental commitment visible and effective.

We leave this project in the hands of God, so that our Bethlehemite lifestyle continues to inspire us in this historic moment that calls for a serious environmental commitment, either as an apostolic work, as a community, as former students, but above all as religious, lay people, collaborators and active members of the great Bethlehemite family, and for us to assume our personal commitment to be repairers of our Common home; all inspired by Bethlehemite spirituality and the charismatic legacy of our Founders, holy brother Pedro and Blessed Mother María Encarnación Rosal, as well as the good practices of our Bethlehemite tradition.

**BETHLEMITES: WE SET OUT ON THE ROAD SO THAT,
IN THE YEAR 2025, UNITED AS A UNIVERSAL FAMILY,
LET'S ACHIEVE THE PLANTING OF A MILLION TREES!**





REPAIRERS OF THE COMMON HOME

Institute of Bethlehemite sisters
Bethlemite: Repairers of the Common Home

Foundational Pillars: Scripture and Tradition

Our mission as "Repairers of the Common Home" is rooted in the divine mandate to cherish the world as a gift from the Creator.

"The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it." (Genesis 2:15)

The Bible teaches us that the earth is not a commodity for exploitation but a sacred trust. As the Psalmist declares, "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof" (Psalm 24:1). This spiritual conviction has been reinvigorated by the Magisterium of the Church. In the Apostolic Exhortation *Laudate Deum* (2023), Pope Francis issues a stark reminder: "'Praise God' is the title of this letter. For when human beings claim to take God's place, they become their own worst enemies" (LD 73).

Our Charismatic Heritage: St. Pedro Betancur and Mother Encarnación Rosal

Our commitment to the environment is an authentic expression of our Bethlehemite identity, drawing inspiration from our foundational figures:

- **Saint Pedro de San José Betancur:** Our holy founder saw the face of God in all of creation. His life was a testament to "Human Ecology." He walked the earth with profound humility, treating every person and every element of nature with "Bethlemite tenderness." To him, the world was a living Bethlehem—a place where God is constantly being born.

- **Blessed Mother Maria Encarnación Rosal:** As a reformer of profound interiority, she taught us that the "repair" of the world begins in the Heart of Jesus. She saw nature as a reflection of Divine Love. Her "firmness in work and sweetness in manner" reminds us that caring for our common home requires both a disciplined will to act and a gentle heart to appreciate God's handiwork.

Strategic Implementation: The Five Pillars

Over the past three years, our apostolate has focused on five strategic areas to strengthen our identity as "repairers":

1. Human Ecology: Prioritizing the dignity of the person and the harmony of community life.
2. Solid Waste Management: Combatting the "throwaway culture" through rigorous recycling.
3. Natural Resource Management: Developing sustainable systems for water and energy.
4. Protection of Animals: Fostering a "universal communion" with all living creatures.
5. Fight Against Deforestation: A bold commitment to restoration and ecological health.

The Tree Planting Initiative

Despite the significant challenges posed by severe water scarcity in our region, our commitment to the "one million trees" goal has remained unshaken. Through persistent effort and creative irrigation, we have successfully planted 9,540 trees during this triennium. These saplings stand as living symbols of resilience and our dedication to a greener future.

Advocacy and Global Solidarity

To instill a sense of stewardship, we observed 30 International Awareness Days, bridging the gap between local action and global concern. We focused on:

International Awareness Days Observed:

- Water & Oceans: World Water Week, World Wetlands Day, World Ocean Day, River's Day.
- Wildlife: International Cheetah Day, World Elephant Day, Bird Day, Penguin Day, Sea Turtle Day, Whale & Dolphin Day, Chimpanzee Day, Rhino Day, Vulture Day, Lion Day.
- Climate & Air: Int. Day against Climate Change, Day of reduction of CO2 emissions, Int. Ozone Day, Int. Day against Nuclear Test.
- Sustainability: Plastic Bag Free Day, Int. Straw Free Day, World Day for Non-use of Pesticides, World Food Day, Energy Day, Soil Conservation Day.
- Protection: World Nature Protection Day, Green day, Int. Day of Environment Education, World Day to Combat Desertification & Drought, Tropical Forest Day.

These celebrations moved our schools and communities from mere awareness to active, collective responsibility.

Strategic Objectives and Impact

The primary purpose of our advocacy was to empower a new generation of "Bethlemite Stewards." Our impact is measured through:

- Educate and Inform: Increasing understanding of ecological challenges like habitat destruction.

- Promote Conservation: Highlighting the plight of endangered species to move from indifference to active concern.
- Encourage Sustainable Habits: Practical shifts, such as becoming "plastic bag free," creating a "new culture" of prudence.
- Inspire Collective Action: Demonstrating that "every little bit helps," and avoiding even a tenth of a degree of warming can alleviate suffering for many (LD 70).

A Note of Gratitude

Pedro Betancur province wish to express our deepest and most heartfelt gratitude to Sr. Edith Amparo, General Advisor of the Apostolate. Her unwavering encouragement has been the heartbeat of this project. Her contribution has been far more than administrative; it has been truly maternal. We thank her for being kind-hearted yet firm in work, providing us with a model of leadership that balances high standards with exceptional patience and goodness. Your constant support has empowered the Pedro Betancur Province, students and youth to truly become "repairers" of our shared home.

Conclusion

As we conclude this triennium, we reaffirm our commitment to this "pilgrimage of reconciliation with the world" (LD 69). We do not labor alone; we work as "Repairers," knowing that the risen Christ is mysteriously holding all things to Himself.

3. LOTTA ALLA DEFORESTAZIONE

Come Provincia non abbiamo lavorato su quest'area perché l'Italia è colpita da questo fenomeno ambientale solo indirettamente, attraverso l'importazione di materie prime legate al disboscamento come soia e olio di palma. Si tratta solo di un fenomeno locale che riguarda zone dove non siamo presenti.

Relativamente alla piantumazione, in Italia è possibile procedere solo attraverso finanziamenti o con il sostegno di carabinieri, per cui abbiamo potuto solo procedere alla piantumazione di arbusti di piccole dimensioni: olivo, limone, mandarino, piantine e bulbi per un totale circa di 300 piantumazioni.

Una nota degna di segnalazione è la sana prassi di regalare piante in occasione di festività e/o celebrazioni. Altre forme di regalo sono le adozioni di alberi e l'uso di piante nella decorazione.

PRATICHE SOSTENIBILI E REPONSABILI

Consideriamo importante soffermarci sulle buone pratiche attuate nella nostra Provincia e che giovano alla difesa e custodia dell'ambiente, tali come:

- Uso idoneo e consapevole della carta, dei fogli di lavoro e dei quaderni; riutilizzo di quaderni non esauriti e delle agende non usate nel corso dell'anno, ricorso al registro elettronico e all'invio dei documenti di valutazione in formato digitale.
- Nelle mense scolastiche gestite dalla comunità betlemita: uso di stoviglie con basso impatto ecologico, piatti e posate di metallo; uso delle lavastoviglie per la pulizia delle stoviglie della mensa scolastica; controllo della concentrazione di alcuni detersivi e uso del misurino nell'utilizzo del sapone liquido durante il lavaggio.



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Institute of Bethlehemite Sisters
Daughters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus
General House

