

### *Reflection questions: Cry of the Poor*

As we reflect on the cry of the poor in our world, let us reflect on the words of Pope Francis “Here I want to recognize, encourage and thank all those striving in countless ways to guarantee the protection of the home which we share. Particular appreciation is owed to those who tirelessly seek to resolve the tragic effects of environmental degradation on the lives of the world’s poorest. Young people demand change. They wonder how anyone can claim to be building a better future without thinking of the environmental crisis and the sufferings of the excluded.” LS 13

How can we empower our young people who demand change to be catalysts in hearing the cry of the poor?

Who are the young outside our ministries to whom we can reach out?

What are ways that we can begin to take steps toward addressing the cry of the poor in our local area? Are there some that are already happening in the local area that we could participate in?

“In today’s world, voices are being raised which we cannot ignore and which implore our Churches to live deeply our identity as disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. The first of these voices is that of the poor. In the world, there are too many women and men who suffer from severe malnutrition, growing unemployment, the rising numbers of unemployed youth, and from increasing social exclusion. These can give rise to criminal activity and even the recruitment of terrorists. We cannot remain indifferent before the cries of our brothers and sisters. These ask of us not only material assistance – needed in so many circumstances – but above all, our help to defend their dignity as human persons, so that they can find the spiritual energy to become once again protagonists in their own lives. They ask us to fight, in the light of the Gospel, the structural causes of poverty: inequality, the shortage of dignified work and housing, and the denial of their rights as members of society and as workers. As Christians we are called together to eliminate that globalization of indifference which today seems to reign supreme, while building a new civilization of love and solidarity.” (Pope Francis, Address at Patriarchal Church of St. George, Istanbul, 11/30/14)

Integral ecology links care for people and care for God’s creation. How is our concern for our fellow human beings connected to our concern for the environment?

Pope Francis encourages us to listen both to the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor (no. 49). What happens when we are attuned to only one or the other?

As Pope Francis points out, we live in an interdependent world. What is our responsibility to other members of the human family, given this interdependence?

How can we work to protect all God’s creatures, including those who live in poverty and the unborn?