

Judaism, Climate Change, and Laudato Si

In June 2015, Pope Francis published his first encyclical (authoritative Catholic teaching), *Laudato Si*, on climate change and Creation care. Groups like [COEJL](#) (the Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life) – which for over 20 years has worked arm-in-arm with our [interfaith partners](#), including the [US Catholic Conference of Bishops](#) and the [Catholic Climate Covenant](#) – welcome the attention newly given to the eco-religious sector, in which we’ve long been active.

Through the critical Paris global climate negotiations, these teachings will remain in the news – but much is not new, as we’ve long applied classical texts and values to today’s situation, which demands an urgent and intense response to the real threat of climate change. Our Muslim, Protestant, Hindu, Buddhist, and other friends have done likewise (as the Pope notes, para. 7). With the Catholic Church offering remarkably parallel teachings, we now link our insights with those of *Laudato Si*.

Please read, even **study**, this document – and then, please **act!** Take the implications of these teachings seriously (see resources at www.coejl.org); apply them to your life, and to your community.

<i>Each quote from the</i>	OF THE HOLY FATHER	<i>is accompanied by parallel classical</i>
ENCYCICAL LETTER	FRANCIS	<i>or contemporary Jewish teachings.</i>
<i>LAUDATO SI’</i>	ON CARE FOR OUR COMMON HOME	<i>Enjoy; Compare; Discuss; Act...</i>



1. "*LAUDATO SI’, mi’ Signore*” – "*Praise be to you, my Lord*". In the words of this beautiful canticle, Saint Francis of Assisi reminds us that our common home is like a sister with whom we share our life and a beautiful mother who opens her arms to embrace us. "Praise be to you, my Lord, through our Sister, Mother Earth, who sustains and governs us, and who produces various fruit with coloured flowers and herbs".



"Blessed are You, Eternal our God, Ruler of the world, Creator of the fruit of the tree" (one of many traditional daily *berakhot* / blessings... Note too the biblical roots of "Praise be to You" [as in *Hodu L’Adonai*, Psalm 136]; and the parallel language in our daily thanksgiving prayer, *Modim Anachnu Lach*. [*hodu/modim* connote both thanks & praise; *shevach* is simply praise].)



11. Francis...communed with all creation, even preaching to the flowers, inviting them "to praise the Lord, just as if they were endowed with reason". His response to the world around him was so much more than intellectual appreciation or economic calculus, for to him each and every creature was a sister united to him by bonds of affection. That is why he felt called to care for all that exists.



"May it be my custom to outdoors each day, among the trees and grass, among all growing things... May I express there everything in my heart. And may all the foliage of the field, all grasses, trees, and plants, awake at my coming – to send their powers of life into the words of my prayer – so that my prayer and speech are made whole through the life and spirit of all growing things, which are made as one by their transcendent Source." (Reb Nachman of Bratzlav, circa 1800, *Sichot HaRan* 227. See also Rav Avraham Yitzhak HaCohen Kook, 1865-1935, leaf-lover, who ate low on the food chain.)

CHAPTER ONE WHAT IS HAPPENING TO OUR COMMON HOME



19. ...Our goal [in reviewing climate facts] is not to amass information or to satisfy curiosity, but rather to become painfully aware, to dare to turn what is happening to the world into our own personal suffering and thus to discover what each of us can do about it.



“My neighbor’s material needs are my spiritual needs.” (attributed to R. Israel Salanter, founder of the ethical Musar / מוסר movement, ca. 1858)



23. The climate is a common good, belonging to all and meant for all. At the global level, it is a complex system linked to many of the essential conditions for human life. A very solid scientific consensus indicates that we are presently witnessing a disturbing warming of the climatic system. In recent decades this warming has been accompanied by a constant rise in the sea level and, it would appear, by an increase of extreme weather events, even if a scientifically determinable cause cannot be assigned to each particular phenomenon. Humanity is called to recognize the need for changes of lifestyle, production and consumption, in order to combat this warming or at least the human causes which produce or aggravate it.



“key aspects of Halakha...point toward a contemporary environmental ethic... A pro-regulation stance, unafraid to enforce zoning laws or other restrictions on private property and private profit, is one central example of this; the seemingly dry and arcane legal arguments of Seder Nezikin, the one-sixth of Talmud known as ‘Damages’, is awash with texts which point to current debates about individualism versus communitarianism, the private good against the public good, even specifically around environmental health.” (Fred Scherlinder Dobb, 2009 [thesis](#), 4:61. Note as well the numerous Jews and other faithful folk, counted among the 2000 or so scientists on the global Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, leading the solid consensus of which the Pope speaks.)



33. It is not enough, however, to think of different species merely as potential “resources” to be exploited, while overlooking the fact that they have value in themselves. Each year sees the disappearance of thousands of plant and animal species which we will never know, which our children will never see, because they have been lost for ever. The great majority become extinct for reasons related to human activity. Because of us, thousands of species will no longer give glory to God by their very existence, nor convey their message to us. We have no such right.”



“The trees of the Lord drink their fill, the cedars of Lebanon, [God’s] own planting, where birds make their nests; the stork has her home in the junipers. The high mountains are for wild goats; the crags are a refuge for rock-badgers...” (Psalm 104:17-18)



36. Caring for ecosystems demands far-sightedness, since no one looking for quick and easy profit is truly interested in their preservation. But the cost of the damage caused by such selfish lack of concern is much greater than the economic benefits to be obtained.... We can be silent witnesses to terrible injustices if we think that we can obtain significant benefits by making the rest of humanity, present and future, pay the extremely high costs of environmental deterioration.



“God, God...extending loving-kindness to the thousandth generation...but...applying the sins of the parents onto the children and grandchildren, even to the third and fourth generation.” (Ex. 34:6-7)



52. ...The poorest areas and countries are less capable of adopting new models for reducing environmental impact because they lack the wherewithal to develop the necessary processes and to cover their costs. We must continue to be aware that, regarding climate change, there are *differentiated responsibilities*. As the United States bishops have said, greater attention must be given to “the needs of the poor, the weak and the vulnerable, in a debate often dominated by more powerful interests”. We need to strengthen the conviction that we are one single human family. There are no frontiers or barriers, political or social, behind which we can hide, still less is there room for the globalization of indifference.



“Humanity was created singly [descended from one common mythic ancestor]... for the sake of peace among people, so that one should not say to his or her fellow, “My parent is greater than yours.”

And...again, to declare the greatness of the Holy Blessed One: for a person stamps out many coins with one die, and they are all alike; but the King, the Ruler of rulers, the Holy Blessed One, stamped each person with the seal of Adam, and not one of them is like his or her fellow.” (Mishnah Sanhedrin 4:5)



58. In some countries, there are positive examples of environmental improvement: rivers, polluted for decades, have been cleaned up; native woodlands have been restored; landscapes have been beautified thanks to environmental renewal projects; beautiful buildings have been erected; advances have been made in the production of non-polluting energy and in the improvement of public transportation. These achievements do not solve global problems, but they do show that men and women are still capable of intervening positively. For all our limitations, gestures of generosity, solidarity and care cannot but well up within us, since we were made for love.

✧ “You & I will change the world. You & I: then soon all will follow. It’s been said before; that doesn’t matter. You and I will change the world.” (Arik Einstein / Miki Gavrielov, “Ani V’Atah”, 1970)

CHAPTER TWO THE GOSPEL OF CREATION



66. ...human life is grounded in three fundamental and closely intertwined relationships: with God, with our neighbour and with the earth itself... these three vital relationships have been broken, both outwardly and within us. This rupture is sin.

✧ “The dominant classical understanding of the *mitzvot* divides them into *mitzvot bein adam la-makom* (obligations of people to God...) and *mitzvot bein adam le’chavero* (obligations between people...). The former are seen usually as ritual or cultic observances, while the latter are ethical and social responsibilities. Environmental issues, neither ritual/cultic nor ethical in a classical sense, fall between the cracks. Today we need a new category... we need to begin speaking in Jewish language of our moral and ethical obligations to the Earth...as *mitzvot bein adam le’olam*, ‘between people and the world’.” (Jeremy Benstein, *The Way into Judaism and the Environment*, 2006, pp. 88-89)



67. We are not God. The earth was here before us and it has been given to us. This allows us to respond to the charge that Judaeo-Christian thinking, on the basis of the Genesis account which grants man “dominion” over the earth (cf. *Gen* 1:28), has encouraged the unbridled exploitation of nature by painting him as domineering and destructive by nature. This is not a correct interpretation of the Bible... “The earth is the Lord’s” (*Ps* 24:1); to him belongs “the earth with all that is within it” (*Dt* 10:14). Thus God rejects every claim to absolute ownership: “The land shall not be sold in perpetuity, for the land is mine; for you are strangers and sojourners with me” (*Lev* 25:23).

✧ “If humanity merits it, *yirdu*, it will have dominion. If humanity does not merit it, *yeradu*, humanity will stumble and fall, and the animals shall rule over it” (Rashi, ca 1100, on *Gen*. 1:26). “Do not think that this verse [conferring dominion, *Gen*. 1:28] comes to tell us how we should behave; rather it simply gives information as to the nature with which the Holy Blessed One has stamped each human” (Maimonides, 1190, *Moreh Nevuchim* 3:13).



68. ...rest on the seventh day is meant not only for human beings, but also so “that your ox and your donkey may have rest” (*Ex* 23:12). Clearly, the Bible has no place for a tyrannical anthropocentrism unconcerned for other creatures. 193. ... we need also to think of containing growth by setting some reasonable limits and even retracing our steps before it is too late...

✧ “For Jews, it is the awareness of the Sabbath that can bring the realm of time and its accompanying sense of restraint and limit to stewardship. It is the Sabbath that defines the relationship between steward and Ruler. It is the Sabbath, ultimately that completes and confirms the environmental wisdom of Judaism.” (David Ehrenfeld and Rabbi Philip Bentley, 1985, in *Judaism* 34, p. 311)



69. Together with our obligation to use the earth's goods responsibly, we are called to recognize that other living beings have a value of their own in God's eyes: "by their mere existence they bless him and give him glory", and indeed, "the Lord rejoices in all his works" (*Ps* 104:31). By virtue of our unique dignity and our gift of intelligence, we are called to respect creation and its inherent laws, for "the Lord by wisdom founded the earth" (*Prov* 3:19).



"It should not be believed that all beings exist for the sake of humanity's existence ... [rather] all the other beings too have been intended for their own sakes." (Maimonides, 1190, *Moreh* 3:13)



84. ...that each human being is an image of God should not make us overlook the fact that each creature has its own purpose. None is superfluous. The entire material universe speaks of God's love, his boundless affection for us. Soil, water, mountains: everything is, as it were, a caress of God.



"Even things you see as superfluous (*meyutarin*) in this world -- like flies, fleas, and mosquitos -- they are part of the greater scheme of the creation of the world, as it says (Genesis 1:31), "And God saw all that God has created, and behold it was very good." And Rabbi Acha bar Rabbi Chanina said, even things you see as superfluous in this world -- like snakes and scorpions -- they are part of the greater scheme of the creation of the world." (Exodus Rabbah 10:1)

CHAPTER THREE THE HUMAN ROOTS OF THE ECOLOGICAL CRISIS



124. Any approach to an integral ecology, which by definition does not exclude human beings, needs to take account of the value of labour... Developing the created world in a prudent way is the best way of caring for it, as this means that we ourselves become the instrument used by God to bring out the potential which he himself inscribed in things... 125. If we reflect on the proper relationship between human beings and the world around us, we see the need for a correct understanding of work; if we talk about the relationship between human beings and things, the question arises as to the meaning and purpose of all human activity.



"Even in the lands of the diaspora, Jews must look to labor, to nature; they must strive to recreate their own lives. We should engage in all forms of labor, especially in the tilling of the soil; we should avoid the exploitation of the labor of others... We, who have been torn away from nature, who have lost the savor of natural living -- if we desire life, we must establish a new relationship with nature... And when, O Man, you will return to nature -- on that day your eyes will open, you will gaze straight into the eyes of Nature, and in its mirror you will see your own image. You will know that you have returned to yourself... that your former life did not befit you, that you must renew all things: your food and your drink, your dress and your home, your manner of work and your mode of study; everything! On that day, O Man, deep in your heart you will know that you had been wandering until you returned to Nature." (Aaron David Gordon, labor-Zionist thinker, 1910 -- from "Labor", in A. D. Gordon's *Collected Essays*, p. 79; "Zion," in Arthur Hertzberg's *The Zionist Idea*, p. 381; and "Logic for the Future", *op cit*, p. 371)

CHAPTER FOUR INTEGRAL ECOLOGY



139. 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 as a mere setting in which we live. We are part of nature, included in it and thus in constant interaction with it... We are faced not 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. 141... There is an interrelation between ecosystems and between the various spheres of social interaction, demonstrating yet again that "the whole is greater than the part".

 “Environmental Justice is a Jewish value. The Torah has numerous laws which attempt to redress the power and economic imbalances in human society and Creation. Examples are the Sabbatical year (Ex. 23:11, Lev. 25:2-5, Deut. 15:1-4) and the Jubilee (Lev. 25:8-24). There is a whole program in the Torah for creating a balanced distribution of resources across society (Ex. 22:24-26, Lev. 25:36-37, Deut. 23:20-1, 24:6,10-13,17). This is an expression of the concept of *Tzedek*, which means righteousness, justice and equity. It is the value which tries to correct the imbalances, which humans create in society and in the natural world” ... “Environmental protection cannot be allowed to burden the poor. Scarcity cannot be allowed to burden the poor. Debt cannot be allowed to condemn the indebted. Caring for the earth cannot be done at the cost of burdening the poor. When both land and the poor are cared for, everyone thrives.” (Rabbis Lawrence Troster, [2012](#), and Nina Beth Cardin, [2008](#), at [coejl.org](#))

 156. An integral ecology is inseparable from the notion of the common good, a central and unifying principle of social ethics. The common good is “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*, 2^d Vatican Council]. 158. ...the principle of the common good immediately becomes... a summons to solidarity and a preferential option for the poorest of our brothers and sisters.

 Shimon bar Yochai said: “People were sitting on a boat. One of them took a drill, and began to drill under his own place. His fellow travelers said to him, ‘what are you doing?!’ He said, ‘what do you care – aren’t I drilling [only] under my own place?’ They said, ‘the water will rise and cover us all!’” (Vayikra Rabbah 4:6)

 159. The notion of the common good also extends to future generations... We can no longer speak of sustainable development apart from intergenerational solidarity. Once we start to think about the kind of world we are leaving to future generations, we look at things differently; we realize that the world is a gift which we have freely received and must share with others... Intergenerational solidarity is not optional, but rather a basic question of justice, since the world we have received also belongs to those who will follow us... An integral ecology is marked by this broader vision.

 *L’dor vador* is a newly relevant and multivocal expression: We pass down the tradition from generation to generation, out of love for Judaism and for the Jewish people; we pass down a healthy balanced planet from generation to generation, out of love for creation and for our future. And as this exploration of science and eco-Judaism has shown, those efforts are mutually reinforcing – thinking and acting in Jewish-inspired ways is good for the Earth, and our robust defense of Creation today is good for Judaism. (Rabbi Fred Scherlinder Dobb, *CCAR Journal*, Winter 2012)

CHAPTER FIVE **LINES OF APPROACH AND ACTION**

 201. The majority of people living on our planet profess to be believers. This should spur religions to dialogue among themselves for the sake of protecting nature, defending the poor, and building networks of respect and fraternity. Dialogue among the various sciences is likewise needed, [...as well as] between the various ecological movements... The gravity of the ecological crisis demands that we all look to the common good, embarking on a path of dialogue...”

 Our communities won't and needn't agree on everything -- within the Jewish or Catholic worlds, much less between us! But on a wide range for social teaching -- social justice, racial equality, worker's rights, human dignity -- Jewish and Catholic thought aligns closely, and our institutions work arm-in-arm to bring those values to the wider world. Nowhere is that more obvious than with the challenge of climate change. (R. Fred Scherlinder Dobb, [COEJL Encyclical Guide](#), June 2015, p.1)

CHAPTER SIX **ECOLOGICAL EDUCATION AND SPIRITUALITY**



202. Many things have to change course, but it is we human beings above all who need to change. We lack an awareness of our common origin, of our mutual belonging, and of a future to be shared with everyone. This basic awareness would enable the development of new convictions, attitudes and forms of life. A great cultural, spiritual and educational challenge stands before us, and it will demand that we set out on the long path of renewal.



“Each of us should learn to think of [sic] himself as though he were a cell in some living organism – which, in a sense, he actually is – in his relation to the universe or cosmos. What we think of as a coherent universe or cosmos is more than nature; it is nature with a soul. That soul is God. As each cell in the body depends for its health and proper functioning upon the whole body, so each of us depends on God. (Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan, et al, “Introduction,” Reconstructionist Prayer Book, 1945)



205. Yet all is not lost. Human beings, while capable of the worst, are also capable of rising above themselves, choosing again what is good, and making a new start, despite their mental and social conditioning. We are able to take an honest look at ourselves, to acknowledge our deep dissatisfaction, and to embark on new paths to authentic freedom. No system can completely suppress our openness to what is good, true and beautiful, or our God-given ability to respond to his grace at work deep in our hearts. I appeal to everyone throughout the world not to forget this dignity which is ours. No one has the right to take it from us.



“Everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of human freedoms - to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way.... Man does not simply exist, but always decides what his existence will be, what he will become the next moment. By the same token, every human being has the freedom to change at any instant...” (Victor Frankl, 1946, *Man's Search for Meaning*). “In spite of everything I still believe that people are really good at heart. I simply can't build up my hopes on a foundation consisting of confusion, misery, and death. I see the world gradually being turned into a wilderness, I hear the ever approaching thunder, which will destroy us too, I can feel the sufferings of millions and yet, if I look up into the heavens, I think that it will all come right, that this cruelty too will end, and that peace and tranquility will return again.” (Anne Frank, 1943, *Diary*)



208. We are always capable of going out of ourselves towards the other. Unless we do this, other creatures will not be recognized for their true worth... Disinterested concern for others, and the rejection of every form of self-centeredness and self-absorption, are essential if we truly wish to care for our brothers and sisters and for the natural environment. These attitudes also attune us to the moral imperative of assessing the impact of our every action and personal decision on the world around us...



“The very relationship with the other is the relationship with the future... Faith is not a question of the existence or non-existence of God. It is believing that love without reward is valuable.” (Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, 1969)



210. Environmental education has broadened its goals. Whereas in the beginning it was mainly centred on scientific information, consciousness-raising and the prevention of environmental risks, it tends now to include a critique of the “myths” of a modernity grounded in a utilitarian mindset (individualism, unlimited progress, competition, consumerism, the unregulated market). It seeks also to restore the various levels of ecological equilibrium, establishing harmony within ourselves, with others, with nature and other living creatures, and with God. Environmental education should facilitate making the leap towards the transcendent which gives ecological ethics its deepest meaning. It needs educators capable of developing an ethics of ecology, and helping people, through effective pedagogy, to grow in solidarity, responsibility and compassionate care.

 “Cooped up in the concrete box of a classroom -- under humanity’s dominion, kids don’t stand much of a chance of finding God. But outdoors, feet touching the earth, bodies immersed in the wind, Ruach Elohim, there’s a real likelihood they and we might remember our Creator....What surprises me is that Jewish leaders and board members aren’t clamoring for more outdoor Jewish educational experiences and hiring Jewish eco-educators, and that funders aren’t jumping at the opportunity to pour money into this work. The point is that we need to take this outdoor education—this farm and wilderness education, this authentic Jewish spiritual education—seriously. We need to give it the dignity it deserves and infuse our curricula and our Jewish life with it. And if the biological, psychological and spiritual arguments are not convincing enough of the supreme value of this approach to Jewish education, then maybe the threat of global climate change is...” (Rabbi Ellen Bernstein, CAJE Keynote, [2008](#))

 217. ...the ecological crisis is also a summons to profound interior conversion... all need...an “ecological conversion”, whereby the effects of their encounter with [divinity] become evident in their relationship with the world around them. Living our vocation to be protectors of God’s handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our [religious] experience. 218. ... a healthy relationship with creation is one dimension of overall personal conversion, which entails the recognition of our errors, sins, faults and failures, and leads to heartfelt repentance and desire to change.

 “Finally, love of the Creator, and love of that which God has created, are one and the same.” (Martin Buber, *On Judaism*, 1920, p. 209). “For sins between a person and God – *bein adam l’Makom* -- Yom Kippur atones. But for sins between one person and another – *bein adam l’havero* – Yom Kippur does not atone, until the one has appeased the other.” (Mishnah Yoma 8:9)”

 222. ... We need to take up an ancient lesson, found in different religious traditions and also in the Bible. It is the conviction that “less is more.”... It is a return to that simplicity which allows us to stop and appreciate the small things, to be grateful for the opportunities which life affords us, to be spiritually detached from what we possess, and not to succumb to sadness for what we lack.

 “Ben Zoma said: ‘Who is rich? – Whoever is happy with their lot’.” (Mishnah Avot 4:1)
בן זומא אומר, איזה הוא חכם? -- הלמד מכל אדם.

 225. ...integral ecology includes taking time to recover a serene harmony with creation, reflecting on our lifestyle and our ideals, and contemplating the Creator who lives among us and surrounds us... 227. One expression of this attitude is when we stop and give thanks to God before and after meals. I ask all believers to return to this beautiful and meaningful custom. That moment of blessing, however brief, reminds us of our dependence on God for life; it strengthens our feeling of gratitude for the gifts of creation; it acknowledges those who by their labours provide us with these goods; and it reaffirms our solidarity with those in greatest need.

 “How should we bless produce? Over the fruit of the tree, one says ‘Creator of the fruit of the tree’ – except for wine, for over wine one says ‘Creator of the fruit of the vine.’ And over fruit of the land, one says ‘Creator of the fruit of the earth’ – except for loaves, for over loaves one says ‘who brings forth bread from the land.’ Over vegetables, one says “Creator of the fruit of the earth”; R. Yehuda says, “Creator of the many kinds of growing things.” (Mishnah Berakhot 6:1, introducing basic food blessings)

 230. Saint Therese of Lisieux invites us to practise the little way of love, not to miss out on a kind word, a smile or any small gesture which sows peace and friendship. An integral ecology is also made up of simple daily gestures which break with the logic of violence, exploitation and

selfishness. In the end, a world of exacerbated consumption is at the same time a world which mistreats life in all its forms.



Ben Zoma said: “Who is honored? – Whoever honors all the created ones.” (Mishnah Avot 4:1) איזה הוא מכובד? -- המכבד את הבריינות



233. The universe unfolds in God, who fills it completely. Hence, there is a mystical meaning to be found in a leaf, in a mountain trail, in a dewdrop, in a poor person’s face. The ideal is not only to pass from the exterior to the interior to discover the action of God in the soul, but also to discover God in all things. St. Bonaventure teaches us that “contemplation deepens the more we feel the working of God’s grace within our hearts, and the better we learn to encounter God in creatures outside ourselves”.



Teach me, O God
a blessing, a prayer – on
the mystery of a withered leaf
On the splendor of ripened fruit
On this freedom to see,
to feel, to breathe, to know,
to hope, to despair

Teach my lips
a blessing, and a song of praise
As You renew your time
with morning and with night –

Lest my day today
be like the one before
Lest my day
become routine

למדני אלוהי
ברך והתפלל
על סוד עלה קמל
על נוגה פרי בשל
על החירות הזאת לראות
לחוש לנשום לדעת לייחל
להיכשל

למד את שפתותי
ברכה ושיר הלל
בהתחדש זמנך
עם בוקר ועם ליל
לבל יהיה יומי היום
כתמול שלשום
לבל יהיה יומי
עלי הרגל

Leah Goldberg (1910-1970)



246. At the conclusion of this lengthy reflection which has been both joyful and troubling, I propose that we offer two prayers. The first we can share with all who believe in a God who is the all-powerful Creator... *A prayer for our earth*

All-powerful God, you are present
in the whole universe
and in the smallest of your creatures.
You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.
Pour out upon us the power of your love,
that we may protect life and beauty.
Fill us with peace, that we may live
as brothers and sisters, harming no one.
O God of the poor,
help us to rescue the abandoned
and forgotten of this earth,
so precious in your eyes.
Bring healing to our lives,
that we may protect the world and not prey on it,

that we may sow beauty,
not pollution and destruction.
Touch the hearts
of those who look only for gain
at the expense of the poor and the earth.
Teach us to discover the worth of each thing,
to be filled with awe and contemplation,
to recognize that we are
profoundly united with every creature
as we journey towards your infinite light.
We thank you for being with us each day.
Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle
for justice, love and peace.

Assembled in August 2015 for COEJL (www.coejl.org) by Rabbi Fred Scherlinder Dobb



Protecting Creation,
Generation to Generation