

Remarks by Bishop Jaime Soto at media availability for Pope Francis' encyclical, "Laudato Si."

June 18, 2015 at St. Francis High School in Sacramento

Pope John Paul II introduced the vision of a culture of life during his long pontificate. Pope Francis, standing on the moral legacy of his most recent predecessors, wraps the whole planet into a consistent culture of life with the promulgation of a new encyclical, *Laudato Si*, "Praise be to you, O Lord."

Human Solidarity embraces the concern for future generations as we consider how the resources of "sister earth" are harnessed for the betterment of humanity's common home. A culture of life must cultivate a climate of life and hope for people around the globe.

The throw-away society is indicted by the Holy Father as a foolish culture of death that has made the markets the ultimate arbiters of the worth of people as well as creation. The problem is not too many people. There is too much waste as well as too much human potential wasted.

The Human Ecology proposed by Pope Francis places the poor and the marginalized at the center of renewing the face of the earth. He also reminds us of our moral responsibility to be stewards of the common good of creation, as well as brothers and sisters of one human family with room at the table for everyone.

Here in California, we have faced many challenges to create the harmony of resources, ingenuity, and solidarity that can cradle all of God's children and quench their thirsting hopes and aspirations.

In the best of the Catholic tradition, humanity is part of creation while also called to share in the work of the Creator. Jesus used all of creation as a parable for God's mercy: the mustard seeds of the kingdom, the lilies of the field, the vine and the branches, the spring of life-giving water, the weeds and wheat, the sheep and goats, and the final harvest to come.

Catholic ritual shows reverence for the gifts of creation as part of God's saving plan: the water of baptism, the bread and wine of the Eucharist, the precious oils for ordination, and even the procreative union of man and woman. All of these sacramental signs unite humanity with all of creation in singing, *Laudato Si*, "Praise be to you, O Lord."