Discussion Questions

CHAPTER ONE:

WHAT IS HAPPENING TO OUR COMMON HOME

In the first chapter of Laudato Si’, Pope Francis draws upon the most recent scientific research on such areas as pollution and climate change, access to water throughout the world, the loss of biodiversity in our plant and animal species, a decline of the quality of human life, and an overall breakdown of society.

1. "The continued acceleration of changes affecting humanity and the planet is coupled today with a more intensified pace of life and work which might be called 'rapidification',” Pope Francis says. In what ways has your life and your family been negatively affected by "rapidification"?

2. Why is the impact of climate change disproportionately felt by the poor?

3. In some places, water is becoming a "commodity subject to the laws of the market." Why does Pope Francis say that water cannot be treated like other natural resources - available for purchase for those who can afford it?

4. How does our "throwaway culture" contribute to feelings of hopelessness in the face of our environmental problems? How can we combat this in our lives?

5. "The developed countries ought to help pay this [ecological] debt by significantly limiting their consumption of nonrenewable energy and by assisting poorer countries to support policies and programs of sustainable development," Pope Francis writes. How can you live this out in your own life?