

PREPARATORY ENCOUNTER 1

Get up now, and stand on your feet.

RISE UP!



INTEGRAL ECOLOGY

PREPARATORY ENCOUNTER 1: INTEGRAL ECOLOGY

Preparatory encounters
Rise Up WYD Lisbon 2023

Technical file

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PREPARATORY ENCOUNTER 1

INTEGRAL

ECOLOGY

Motivations and objectives of the meeting

- This preparatory encounter will provide young people with a time of mutual listening about the various dimensions of integral ecology.
- The aim is for young people to be exposed to some extracts from the Encyclical *Laudato Si'* in which the Holy Father identifies some aspects that threaten our common home.
- In the light of the concept of integral ecology, young people have an opportunity to identify challenges and share concrete experiences in which their action contributed to the living out and promotion of integral ecology.

Required material and practical indications

- The WYD Lisbon 2023 logo and a backpack are placed at the meeting site.
- Key-words written on visible cards and initially inside the backpack: Integral Ecology, Social Friendship, Mercy.
- In the process of community discernment proposed in this meeting, a first moment of individual prayer takes place after listening to the word of God (Rejoice).
- For the moment of group sharing (Believe) the method of spiritual dialogue is closely followed which aims to promote
- “active participation, attentive listening, reflected intervention and spiritual discernment” (Vademecum for the Synod on Synodality, Appendix B, No. 9).
- Given the length of the meeting, it is proposed that it should last approximately two hours. If appropriate, it could be held in two sessions: the first up to item 5; the second from item 6 to item 8.
- At the end there are some videos of Pope Francis that can serve as support for the meetings (Appendix 1).



GET SET

The encounter begins with
the WYD Lisbon 2023 hymn



From far and wide to gather in this place
We spread our wings and here we are,
And with Mary proclaiming our Yes
We seek to serve and follow the will
Of the Lord, our Father
Chiamati ad essere come Cristo Gesù,
Vogliamo dare, diventare,
Docili al sì, essere come Maria.

Tú que buscas saber quién eres
parte a descubrir, ven a ver lo que vi.
Ven con nosotros a mirar más allá,
de lo que haces y que no te deja
reír y amar.
Oublie le passé, ne dis pas non.
Écoute donc ton coeur,
Et pars sans peur sur cette mission.

**Todos vão ouvir a nossa voz,
Levantemos os braços, há pressa no ar.
Jesus vive e não nos deixa sós:
Não mais deixaremos de amar.**

È stata Maria ad accogliere per prima
La grande sorpresa della vita per
sempre.
Fiduciosa e semplice, volle ricevere
il grande mistero di un Dio che è
Per te e per me
No puedo callar, no puedo dejar
de cantar: “Mi Señor,
cuenta conmigo, ¡no más callaré!”

Sans aucun doute sur sa mission,
Si jeune, Marie quitte promptement
Sa maison et part dans les montagnes
Voir Elisabeth et trouve immédiatement
Salutation, communion.
Le fruit est béni, c’est mon Seigneur!
And I want to hear: You trusted in my
word and happiness is yours!

The group leaders introduce the meeting as follows:

The World Youth Day Lisbon 2023 is almost upon us. To live it better, we propose a preparation journey. Imagine that you have to prepare your backpack for this pilgrimage. What do you think you need to pack in your backpack?

Let the group express themselves regarding what they think is essential to bring to WYD.



READY

After hearing to the participants' opinions, the group leaders invite three people to take the three cards from the backpack, each with an expression: Integral Ecology, Social Friendship, Mercy. Afterwards, the group leaders explain that those three elements are essential to carry in the backpack that each person will prepare for WYD.

Mention that throughout the pilgrimage to WYD Lisbon 2023, young people from all over the world will be able to reflect on these themes, sharing their ideas and learning about them. It can be noted that these themes are essential in Pope Francis' magisterium and that it is the Holy Father himself who challenges young people to reflect on them. It is indicated that this first meeting will reflect on integral Ecology.



GO

Referring to Mary's attitude who got up and left in haste (Lk 1:39), the group leaders invite the young people to accept to set out on this pilgrimage that will lead them to WYD Lisbon 2023. To this end, the video of this preparatory encounter is shown.





MAKE HASTE

Based on some of Pope Francis' texts, the youths are challenged to reflect on what is happening to our common home. Small groups can be formed and each one works on a text. They are asked to take note of what they find most relevant in the texts.

a. Pollution and climate change

“Some forms of pollution are part of people’s daily experience. Exposure to atmospheric pollutants produces a broad spectrum of health hazards, especially for the poor, and causes millions of premature deaths”. (*Laudato Si’* 20)

“Account must also be taken of the pollution produced by residue, including dangerous waste present in different areas. Each year hundreds of millions of tons of waste are generated, much of it non-biodegradable, highly toxic and radioactive, from homes and businesses, from construction and demolition sites, from clinical, electronic and industrial sources. The earth, our home, is beginning to look more and more like an immense pile of filth.” (*LS’* 21)

“These problems are closely linked to a throwaway culture which affects the excluded just as it quickly reduces things to rubbish. [...] our industrial system, at the end of its cycle of production and consumption, has not developed the capacity to absorb and reuse waste and by-products. We have not yet managed to adopt a circular model of production capable of preserving resources for present and future generations, while limiting as much as possible the use of non-renewable resources, moderating their consumption, maximizing their efficient use, reusing and recycling them.” (*LS’* 22)



“Humanity is called to recognize the need for changes of lifestyle, production and consumption, in order to combat this [global] warming or at least the human causes which produce or aggravate it.” (LS’ 23)

“Climate change is a global problem with grave implications: environmental, social, economic, political and for the distribution of goods. It represents one of the principal challenges facing humanity in our day. Its worst impact will probably be felt by developing countries in coming decades.” (LS’ 25)

b. The water issue

“Fresh drinking water is an issue of primary importance, since it is indispensable for human life and for supporting terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems.

Sources of fresh water are necessary for health care, agriculture and industry. Water supplies used to be relatively constant, but now in many places demand exceeds the sustainable supply, with dramatic consequences in the short and long term.”

(LS’ 28)

“One particularly serious problem is the quality of water available to the poor. Every day, unsafe water results in many deaths and the spread of water-related diseases, including those caused by microorganisms and chemical substances.” (LS’ 29)

“Yet access to safe drinkable water is a basic and universal human right, since it is essential to human survival and, as such, is a condition for the exercise of other human rights. Our world has a grave social debt towards the poor who lack access to drinking water, because they are denied the right to a life consistent with their inalienable dignity.” (LS’ 30)

C. Loss of Biodiversity

“The earth’s resources are also being plundered because of short-sighted approaches to the economy, commerce and production. The loss of forests and woodlands entails the loss of species which may constitute extremely important resources in the future, not only for food but also for curing disease and other uses. Different species contain genes which could be key resources in years ahead for meeting human needs and regulating environmental problems.” (LS’ 32)

“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.” (LS’ 33)

“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.” (LS’ 36)

“Greater investment needs to be made in research aimed at understanding more fully the functioning of ecosystems and adequately analyzing the different variables associated with any significant modification of the environment. Because all creatures are connected, each must be cherished with love and respect, for all of us as living creatures are dependent on one another.” (LS’ 42)



d. Decline in the quality of human life and the breakdown of society

“Human beings too are creatures of this world, enjoying a right to life and happiness, and endowed with unique dignity. So we cannot fail to consider the effects on people’s lives of environmental deterioration, current models of development and the throwaway culture.” (LS’ 43)

“Nowadays, for example, we are conscious of the disproportionate and unruly growth of many cities, which have become unhealthy to live in, not only because of pollution caused by toxic emissions but also as a result of urban chaos, poor transportation, and visual pollution and noise.” (LS’ 44)

“In some places, rural and urban alike, the privatization of certain spaces has restricted people’s access to places of particular beauty. In others, “ecological” neighbourhoods have been created which are closed to outsiders in order to ensure an artificial tranquillity. Frequently, we find beautiful and carefully manicured green spaces in so-called “safer” areas of cities, but not in the more hidden areas where the disposable of society live.” (LS’ 45)

e. Global inequality

“The human environment and the natural environment deteriorate together; we cannot adequately combat environmental degradation unless we attend to causes related to human and social degradation. In fact, the deterioration of the environment and of society affects the most vulnerable people on the planet.” (LS’ 48)

“It needs to be said that, generally speaking, there is little in the way of clear awareness of problems which especially affect the excluded. Yet they are the majority of the planet’s population, billions of people. These days, they are mentioned in international political and economic discussions, but one often has the impression that their problems are brought up as an afterthought, a question which gets added almost out of duty or in a tangential way, if not treated merely as collateral damage. Indeed, when all is said and done, they frequently remain at the bottom of the pile. This is due partly to the fact that many professionals, opinion makers, communications media and centers of power, being located in affluent urban areas, are far removed from the poor, with little direct contact with their problems. They live and reason from the comfortable position of a high level of development



and a quality of life well beyond the reach of the majority of the world's population. This lack of physical contact and encounter, encouraged at times by the disintegration of our cities, can lead to a numbing of conscience and to tendentious analyses which neglect parts of reality. At times this attitude exists side by side with a "green" rhetoric. Today, however, we have to realize that a true ecological approach always becomes a social approach; it must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, so as to hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor." (LS' 49)

At the end of the group work, a plenary on what is happening to our common home can be made and displayed for all to see.

The youths are then challenged to deepen their reflection on the basis of the reading and meditation of a biblical text.



REJOICE

**Reading from the book of the Prophet Jeremiah
(Jer 12:4, 10–11)**

How long will the land mourn
and the grass of every field wither?
For the evil of those who dwell in it
the beasts and the birds are swept away,
because they said, "He will not see our latter end."
Many shepherds have destroyed my vineyard;
they have trampled down my portion;
they have made my pleasant portion
a desolate wilderness.
They have made it a desolation;
desolate, it mourns to me.
The whole land is made desolate,
but no man lays it to heart.

The word of the Lord



Here follows a short commentary on the biblical text.

This biblical passage shows how man's action on nature is an evident sign of the breakdown of the harmonious relationship between both, a relationship dreamed of by God in creation. In fact, as the Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches, because created in the "image of God", man "is capable of self-knowledge, of self-possession and of freely giving himself and entering into communion with other persons. And he is called by grace to a covenant with his Creator, to offer him a response of faith and love that no creature can give in his stead." (CCC, 357).

By virtue of sin, the distorted and selfish action of human beings damages the relationship with God, with others and with creation. «Everything is connected. Once the human being declares independence from reality and behaves with absolute dominion, the very foundations of our life begin to crumble, for "instead of carrying out his role as a cooperator with God in the work of creation, man sets himself up in place of God and thus ends up provoking a rebellion on the part of nature"». (LS' 117)

If it is true that God does not regret having created us, nor does he forsake his loving project, he wants us to reverse everything that hurts our relationships. (LS, 13.66)

One of the important dimensions to consider in integral ecology is the relationship with oneself, since we know that it is from the human heart that evil inclinations come out (M1 15,19). If there cannot be a healthy ecology without an adequate anthropology (cf. LS' 118), we must discover the greatness and responsibility of the human being, knowing that "our relationship with the environment can never be isolated from our relationship with others and with God" (LS' 119).

*This is followed by a moment of individual prayer,
for which the group leaders offer some
of the following suggestions:*

- *Am I aware that in being created by God I become an essential part in building of the common home?*
- *What signs do I identify in myself that point to the disorder that I cause to myself, to others and to creation?*
- *Have I experienced that the relationship with God helps me be more of a person and to understand the value and dignity of who I am?*
- *Do I feel joy in knowing that I can be the feet and hands of Jesus in the construction of integral ecology, knowing that everything is interconnected? How can I do this concretely?*



BELIEVE

The group leaders invite the youths to deepen their faith, highlighting that “believing in one God who is trinitarian communion suggests that the Trinity has left its mark on all creation” (LS’ 239). They do so by proposing the reading of the following text, which follows as a synthesis of faith and a starting point for the group dialogue.

“The divine Persons are subsistent relations, and the world, created according to the divine model, is a web of relationships. Creatures tend towards God, and in turn it is proper to every living being to tend towards other things, so that throughout the universe we can find any number of constant and secretly interwoven relationships. This leads us not only to marvel at the manifold connections existing among creatures, but also to discover a key to our own fulfilment. The human person grows more, matures more and is sanctified more to the extent that he or she enters into relationships, going out from themselves to live in communion with God, with others and with all creatures. In this way, they make their own that trinitarian dynamism which God imprinted in them when they were created. Everything is interconnected, and this invites us to develop a spirituality of that global solidarity which flows from the mystery of the Trinity.”

(LS’ 240)

This is followed by a group dialogue, illuminated by the Word of God and the voice of the Church, in three steps:

a) After what they have reflected upon, the youths formulate three challenges related to each of the relational typologies, completing the sentence: “Young people are called to...”

Young people are called to...	
Relationship with God	
Relationship with others	
Relationship with creation	

b) The young people then identify experiences they have already had where these challenges have been translated into personal or group action. They can also research initiatives taking place in their dioceses, movements and groups.

Concrete experiences...

**Relationship
with
God**

**Relationship
with
others**

**Relationship
with
creation**

c) Lastly, participants can formulate questions they would like to see answered in the week of WYD.

Questions...

**Relationship
with
God**

**Relationship
with
others**

**Relationship
with
creation**



GIVE THANKS

Triune Lord, wondrous community of infinite love,
teach us to contemplate you
in the beauty of the universe,
for all things speak of you.

Awaken our praise and thankfulness
for every being that you have made.
Give us the grace to feel profoundly joined
to everything that is.

God of love, show us our place in this world
as channels of your love
for all the creatures of this earth,
for not one of them is forgotten in your sight.

Enlighten those who possess power and money
that they may avoid the sin of indifference,
that they may love the common good, advance the weak,
and care for this world in which we live.

The poor and the earth are crying out.
O Lord, seize us with your power and light,
help us to protect all life,
to prepare for a better future,
for the coming of your Kingdom
of justice, peace, love and beauty.
Praise be to you!

Amen.

(Pope Francis, A Christian prayer in union with creation, Laudato Si', adapt.)



The results of the groups' reflections (p.14, p.15, p.16) will be shared on an online platform from which a synthesis will be made to share with everyone.

Share reflections in:

<https://www.lisboa2023.org/en/rise-up>



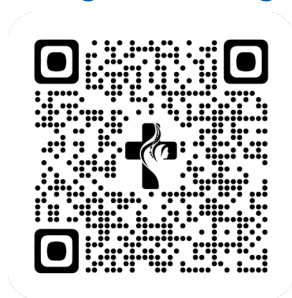
Appendix 1

Support videos

1. Respect for creation

Video of the Pope, February 2016.

Link: <https://youtu.be/gcxYgjFuTK4>



2. Respect for the planet's resources

Video of the Pope, September 2020.

Link: <https://youtu.be/lbJmerZuxwY>



3. An eco-sustainable lifestyle

Video of the Pope, September 2021.

Link: <https://youtu.be/AkIrkjhOLs0>

