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What they are saying

University of Dayton

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Thursday June 18, 2015

What they are saying

University of Dayton faculty are weighing in on the pope's historic encyclical on the environment.

Vince Miller, Gudorf Chair in Catholic Theology and Culture, in *The New York Times*, June 18, 2015:

"The basic idea is, in order to love God, you have to love your fellow human beings, and you have to love and care for the rest of creation," said Vincent Miller, who holds a chair in Catholic theology and

culture at the University of Dayton, a Catholic college in Ohio. “It gives Francis a very traditional basis to argue for the inclusion of environmental concern at the center of Christian faith.” He added: “Critics will say the church can’t teach policy, the church can’t teach politics. And Francis is saying, ‘No, these things are at the core of the church’s teaching.’”

Dennis Doyle, professor of religious studies, June 18, 2015: "I was struck by how the encyclical does not sound like an official document but rather as a person of faith speaking sincerely and knowledgeably to other people. The pope moves back and forth from the personal to the social without ever changing the subject. Science and faith fit together seamlessly for him. Francis doesn't ask for much: just that we change the way we think, relate, behave, and so on. I fear that many of the people whom he is calling out live in such deep denial that few will be able to hear him. The encyclical is deeply touching — I am moved by the interconnectedness of his vision."

Vince Miller, from his blog in *America* magazine, June 18, 2015: "Pope Francis speaks as a teacher and pastor. Following papal social teaching before him, he summons Catholic doctrine to interrogate the dysfunctions of human civilization and propose more healthy and just directions. These are far more than prudential matters, they implicate the central doctrines of the faith in our forms of social life. Francis has not pronounced on matters of science. He has done something more demanding. He has reminded that we are made in the image of the divine communion of the Trinity; and asked us on that basis to open our hearts to the whole world (including the lessons of climate science), to feel its suffering and respond with generous love. To refuse his challenge involves so much more than disagreement concerning prudential judgments."

Sister Leanne Jablonski, S.M., Hanley Institute Scholar-in-Residence for Faith and Environment, June 18, 2015: "Pope Francis' encyclical is built on sound science, interweaving an understanding of the impact of humans on ecosystems, climate change, pollution realities and biodiversity with a call to become ecological converts and heed the cry of the poor. With the solutions he highlights — energy efficiency, renewable energy sources and reducing deforestation — Pope Francis invites scientists, people of faith, elected officials and all humankind to make personal choices as well as find public policy solutions. Like Noah, he says, we can play an important role in saving creation by taking action in a time of need."

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