Justice, Peace, Integrity of Creation
A Mission of Love

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Over the last years I have been asked on more than one occasion if JPIC is political. My response is always the same: the work for justice, peace, and integrity of creation in the Franciscan orders is grounded in the love of Christ for us and the planet. Sometimes the work may interface with others in the political arena but that is not where it starts, stays, or ends. Its beginning, middle, and end are firmly rooted in the Lord and His love for His people and the planet. May I suggest that our prayer be:

Love the Lord
Love His Kingdom
Love the Earth

This is the Franciscan intuition that comes to us as we live our Rule. When we Love the Lord, we turn to the Gospel as we seek to live our lives from the Gospel to life and life back to the Gospel (Article 4, Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order). There in Matthew 25 we learn what our Lord called us to do. He is clear – feed the hungry, give water to the thirsty, invite in the stranger, cloth the naked, look after the sick, visit the prisoner. When we do this, we love Him, for when we do it to the least among us we do it for him.

When we Love His Kingdom, we seek ways to advocate for those in need, and we seek to build social structures that assure that the dignity of each of God's children is honored in our care for them (Articles 13,14,15, 19).

When we Love the Earth, we care for it lovingly, tenderly, knowing as St. Bonaventure told us, that each blade of grass carries a trace of the Divine (18).

So, sisters and brothers, let us join our hearts, minds, prayers, and actions in Love. Let us reach out together to those in need and to creation with loving hearts, minds, and spirits, and act in ways that reflect the deep love we feel for our Lord. Let us carry together a vision in which the Lord's love fills every corner of the earth, and we all live in harmony and peace, with each other and with creation.

Peace and All Good,
Patricia Grace, OFS
JPIC Animator, St. Francis Region