

JPIC International Meeting 2025
A World of Living Beings Sharing a “Common Home”
The Cries of the Earth and the Cries of the Poor: A Challenge for the Assumption Today

7-11 July 2025

Opening Message [7th July 2025]
Sr. Rekha M. Chennattu, RA, Superior General, Religious of the Assumption

Greetings of peace to one and all.

It is indeed a privilege to address you today. At the outset, I would like to express my deep appreciation to the International Secretariat of the JPIC of the Assumption Family, Sr. Marcia Ferreira, PSA, and the entire team for their enthusiastic and meticulous preparation of this session. I consider it an evangelical hope for today's world.

Our reflections today focus on the theme of **Integral Ecology**, which challenges us to respond to the cries of our common home and the cries of the world caused by war and poverty. In the words of Pope Francis, “Nature cannot be regarded as something separate from ourselves or as a mere setting in which we live” (LS 139).

One of the General Objectives of this online session is, as Assumption Family members, to identify and respond to the challenges posed by integral ecology. In response to Pope Francis's invitation, we want “to incorporate the new theological approach, based on integral ecology.”¹ In this context, we aim to uphold the three fundamental principles outlined in the **Encyclical Laudato Si**. First, the principle of **wholeness** (everything is connected) – we are invited to become aware of the interdependence that affects all aspects of our lives; Second, the principle of **gratuity** (all is given as God's Gift) – we are asked to embrace Mother Earth not as our property, but as an inheritance given to us; Third, the principle of **fragility** (everyone is fragile and needs the other) – we are invited to assume responsibility in the collective search for the “promised land” by taking care of one another. It is indeed an invitation to transform our way of seeing and understanding humanity and the world, which is constantly changing, and to live with greater mercy, fairness, and justice. In other words, we are called to renew our commitments to JPICS in support of systemic social change.

Thus, the questions for us include, **how do we re-appropriate the vision of our founding mothers and fathers for Today? How do we re-appropriate their vision of our mission as extending “God's Kingdom”?** To gain a deeper understanding, let us return to the Scriptures. The Gospels proclaim God's Kingdom by narrating the story of Jesus, his life and mission. Let us focus on the Gospel of Luke.

Saint Luke presents Jesus as the one anointed by God to preach the Gospel to the poor, the one fulfilling the messianic prophecy of Isaiah 61: “The spirit of the Lord is upon me, for he has anointed me to bring the good news to the afflicted. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives, sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim a year of favour from the Lord” (4:18–19). Like the Old Testament prophets, Jesus was committed to bringing Israel

¹ Encyclical Laudato Si, Chapter Four, Nos. 137-62.

back to God. He was in search of the lost sheep of Israel – sinners and those who lived on the margins of the Jewish community. Jesus' extraordinary outreach to those on the fringe of the community, as well as his powerful protest and fearless resistance to all forms of evil, proclaimed God's Kingdom.²

Let us continue Jesus' mission by proclaiming God's Kingdom through our lives and shared mission.

This international session marks a Kairos moment—a unique and timely opportunity for formation for everyone in the Assumption Family. It offers us a valuable chance to reflect on our shared experiences, strengthen our collaboration, and renew our apostolic passion in service of those who are displaced and suffering. May our discussions in these coming days encourage deeper reflection within our local communities, spark creative initiatives, and reinforce our commitment to integral ecology.

I wish you a very stimulating, empowering and fruitful Session!

May God bless us and our mission of JPICS! Thank You!

² From the Message to Religious of the Assumption on 10 March 2023.