

Speech for Dr. András Rácz deputy state secretary for the
Conference of Creation Protection
30th of September 2017

Dear audience, revered Archbishop, honoured bishops, respected leaders, Lord Mayor, my dear friends!

The Encyclical Letter of the Holy Father Pope Francis titled *LAUDATO SI'* - *on Care for our Common Home* has been published in June 2015. It immediately generated hot reaction: some greeted that first high level document from the Pope concerns environment protection, while others were disgusted emphasizing that a spiritual leader should not horn in scientific areas. Only in Hungary seven conferences disputed the issue during the following autumn.



Please let me remind you that in 2015 the Ministry of Agriculture also organized a conference about the environmental roles of the churches. Our aim was to introduce different approaches, and so we have invited catholic, evangelical, Calvinist, Krishna, Buddhist and Jewish leaders. We expected to enter into a new field and to explore new fields of cooperation. But we surprisedly saw that invited leaders of the churches embraced each other as great old friends, as in many issues they had helped each other for long time. First it was strange to hear that organizing crowd events in Krishna Valley had been helped by the Abby of Pannonhalma. First it was strange, but we recognized that that was the way and is very well.

The fact that the Creation Protection movement appeared in the common talk is the fruitage of the *LAUDATO SI'* Encyclical Letter. Natural science is based on the rationale where state has well defined roles: scopes are assigned by laws. Different measures are to enhance development of green economy, which helps human wellbeing, utilises resources on an efficient and sustainable way, and creates new jobs. But all this “business as usual” approach seems not being enough, and that is why religion-ethic based approach gains role. In our world it is not enough anymore to think about financial benefits, and to meet all the requirements of laws. We also have to think about what is right.

Why to take care about the elderly ones? Does it give financial benefit? Or just because our constitution and other laws require that? In fact we all know that it is not the reason, but that is a moral order. The Encyclical Letter highlights that protection of our environment is also a kind of moral order. Environmental awareness should be raised not only for our own interests but also because that is right.

Churches gain attention. Little signs are recognised. When fruit trees are planted at the yards of the churches, and are taken care, people notice it. They know that the ones who plant fruit trees do believe in future, and care about children and grandchildren. They know that it is important providing healthy nutrition, shadow in summer heat and fresh oxygen.

Our world is changing. As climate is changing, new crops have to be produced. We also change, we have new needs and expectations. And of course, the churches also change.

Encyclical Letter *LAUDATO SI'* has been revealed in a critical time. It was the time when it was rather doubtful if leaders of the countries sign the UN document that summarizes the common goals of sustainable development. At that time somehow the differences, tensions and disagreements seemed to

be stronger. But then the LAUDATO SI' made it clear that this is not only a political issue. It is also a moral issue.

And then, in September 2015 humankind made something that never happened before: virtually all leaders signed the document summarizing our goals. Yes, it is true that it misses important parts that should be included. And yes, there are sentences in a format that should be different. But the leaders of the countries recognized that we had more common tasks to do so we did not have time for more debates. Because as Pope Francis worded in LAUDATO SI': *"everyone's talents and involvement are needed"*.

Thus we have a document in hand that summarizes our common goals. Now our job is no other than to implement it. It seems that politicians are not too great in organizing it. There is no example to follow how to distribute the tasks among all countries, nations and cultures of the world. It seems that this must be started by the cultures and communities themselves. Cultures and communities – and thus by the churches too.

As for the implementation *"everyone's talents and involvement are needed"*.

Thank you for your attention!