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When you have 16% of the world's population living on 2.4% of the world's land, this can cause some issues to being able to provide for all the people (Top ten Facts). As a developing nation, India has a few major issues that they are facing including, how to balance keeping up with a growing economy and an increasing population while being aware of the impacts they are making for the future of their

.country. While in India, we saw the bad habits that are affecting them such as no formal waste management system. We also saw some new practices that they are putting in place to change how things as things are done including the discontinuation of plastic bags in Delhi. Some of India's major environmental issues include water and air pollution as well as nutrient stripping of the soil. With India's diverse biospheres, the north is going to have some different issues than the south does, but these are some of the major ones that they share.

The Catholic Social Teaching that India is working towards is Care for God's creation. Under this, they are working not only to preserve the land they live on, but also the people of India. Pope Francis write that environmental change includes to "restore the various levels of ecological equilibrium, establishing harmony within ourselves, with others, with nature and other living creature and with God" (Laudato Si' para 210). Groody explains how the Catholic social teaching of "care for creations extends not only to our brothers and sisters but also to the environment itself... ecological stewardship is a way of protecting our earthly home, safeguarding its resources, and extending solidarity to those who come after us (page 117).

One of the questions I asked before the trip was what is being done in terms of educating people, to be able to take care of the area that they live to be able to preserve it for the next generation. While we were visiting Holy Cross School in Salem, we had a chance to talk to some of the teachers. I was able to talk to one of the science teachers. She told me how they have lessons about the environment and they incorporate them into other classes, not just science. The younger generations are being taught about how to take care of where they live, but it is those of older generations who are uneducated and may not understand what the impact they may have on the environment around them.

Also at Holy Cross School in Salem, there was a sign when you first entered the school property explaining how the school is a plastic free zone to help take care of the environment.

The sign stated:

“Holy Cross is a plastic free campus, concerted efforts have been made to avoid the usage of plastics in the campus. Those who enter the campus are requested to cooperate with us in this noble attempt and partake in this ecological mission of Holy Cross.”

It was a great surprise in a way to see that the school made it known to all that enter the school campus that this is apart of the mission.

A good step in the right direction is that you do not see stores use plastic bag, you either bring your own bag or you are given a paper bag or a reusable cloth bag. In Delhi, they have now completely banned the use of disposable plastics; including bags, cutlery, and cups. This will help because the plastic bags are either adding to the already polluted oceans or they are being burned increasing the air pollution. *The Times of India* comes to blame that 60% of the world's plastics that end up in the oceans comes from India. (Johnston)

While on the train to and from Salem, we saw how second nature it is for people to just throw their trash out the windows of the train. They don't have trash bins on the train for the trash to be then disposed of properly. On the side of the train tracks were monkeys who were ready to search for any food scraps that they could get from all the debris. I'm sure that other animals come and feast on the food scraps as well.

While talking with one of the students from Holy Cross School-Whitefield, she explained to me that the government has put regulations into place regarding pollution with vehicles, with having a high tax on owning a car. Another issue involves the corruption within the government to be strictly enforcing these laws and regulations. She made it clear that once they are being enforced and followed through it can help better the country. I asked her how is daily trash disposed of and she says that it is very frustrating because the garbage collection is run through the government. They are also asked to pay an extra fee for the collection of waste when they are already paying taxes on them. This adds to the frustration that the collection is irregular.

While in Bangalore, Br. Dos, explained to us that part of the traffic issue is that the roads are not built to be able to handle all of the new cars being put on the roads each day. According to a *Times of India* article, the number of new cars on the road in 2015 was about 19,600,000, that is almost 53,720 new cars per day (Dash). The urban transport expert N. Ranganathan says that the issue is likely to get worse, as they predict that the country's vehicle population could get up to 350,000,000 in the next 20-30 years (Dash). Some estimate that 75% of new vehicles are two-wheelers. Some experts say that one of the solutions lie in the availabilities of buses.

Something that both the United States and India can relate to for how climate change is affecting us on a daily bases is that of food prices. Whether the farmers get hit with a monsoon and the fields get flooded, or if they don't get enough rain and they end up in a drought, either

way affects crop production. When farmers have a bad year, we see the price of that crop go up. For families in the southern parts of India, where the main agriculture of the country takes place, when the crops that year do not do well, they are not able to provide for their families.

One thing India is working towards is renewable energy. Their goal is to have 60% of their energy come from renewable resources by 2027 (Safi). Part of what is helping India move towards renewable is that the price of solar panels have dropped 80% over the last 5 years (Safi). It's great to see that they are working towards renewable energy instead of just keeping with fossil fuels, but that they turn to renewable energies like solar, especially when they have sunshine year round, it makes the return on investment quicker to pay them off.

One of my questions before going on the trip regarding India's environment was 'is it just a way of living or are they just used to it being that way?' From observation while in India, we could see both. People were just living among trash and not having the cleanest of places to live, and part of that is just that there is so many people living in close proximity. Then we also see that it is second nature for people to just throw trash onto the side of the road. I remember when we were at Yercaud, when we were trying to find the monkeys, that along the side of the mountain were just piles of trash. Where here in the United States we have adopted a highway program, to be able to keep our high ways clean, for them it is just there.

We saw a lot of people who seemed to just live on the sidewalks in the cities and people just walk in the street. For people who live on the streets, and without trash bins for them to put their trash in, of course they are just going to just leave it on the street. People living in the streets, is apart one of India's other social issues and that being homelessness. We did see where they are building public housing apartments. This brings up the Catholic Social teaching of dignity of human person because these people do not have basic necessity of living. Groody

explains that “care of the Earth is also connected to concern for the poor, not only because the Earth is “mother” but also because the poor, in the places they are forced to live more often suffer the effects contamination toxic wastes and even ecologic disasters,” (page 117). Those who are the most marginalized and low end of society can be the ones who see the worst effects of those decisions of those power and have forget that we are all apart God’s creation that needs to be taken care of. Pope Francis writes in *Laudato Si’* that “true ecological approach *always* becomes a social approach; it must integrate questions of justice in debate on the environment, so as to hear *both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor*” (para. 49).

As India continues to grow as their own nation, and build their economy on a world stage, they are building an infrastructure to be able to handle all the citizen living in India, which means being able to provide enough adequate food, water, and shelter. Daniel Groody talks about how in “Catholic Social teaching that it emphasized that all people must become involved in the construction of a new social order even if they do so in differing capacities” (page 114). This is important for the people of India now because they are still apart of a young country where there is still a lot of power out there to build a country that can be strong on a world stage. Not just in terms of an economy, but in terms of human dignity and care for the land. Groody also says that “ as globalization puts more and more decisions into the hands of high-level political and economic leaders, and more people feel left out of the economic , social and political forces that dominate their lives, the notion of involvement becomes increasingly important” (page 114).

The younger generations are receiving an education know India’s history and they also have technology at their hands to see what the rest of the world entails in terms of ways of thinking and what is out there for advancements . They can make a difference for when they

become leaders in the communities to makes decisions that are for the common good of all their citizens. The young people have a chance and opportunities to make a difference in their country by taking what they are learning in the classroom and bringing it home to their families; to tell them this is the change we need to make so that this country can be better than it is now for future generations.

When I asked Kumar what he wished to see in India for the future in terms of the environment, he responded that he wants “people to pray to God, for good minded people to live in growing environment to support nature and love nature... by this we can protect environment”. And as he wrote on his Pongal Day drawing “love nature and nature will love you back”.

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