

March 13<sup>th</sup> - 3:30 – 5:30

## HEAR BOTH THE CRY OF THE EARTH AND THE CRY OF THE POOR

*Paragraph #49.....It needs to be said that, generally speaking, there is little in the way of clear awareness of problems which especially affect the excluded. Yet they are the majority of the planet's population, billions of people. These days, they are mentioned in international political and economic discussions, but one often has the impression that their problems are brought up as an afterthought, a question which gets added almost out of duty or in a tangential way, if not treated merely as collateral damage. Indeed, when all is said and done, they frequently remain at the bottom of the pile. This is due partly to the fact that many professionals, opinion makers, communications media and centers of power, being located in affluent urban areas, are far removed from the poor, with little direct contact with their problems. They live and reason from the comfortable position of a high level of development and a quality of life well beyond the reach of the majority of the world's population. This lack of physical contact and encounter, encouraged at time by the disintegration of our cities, can lead to a numbing of conscience and to tendentious analyses which neglect parts of reality. At times this attitude exists side by side with a "green" rhetoric. Today, however, we have to realize that a true ecological approach **always** becomes a social approach; it must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, so as to hear **both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.***

*Format of our discussion:*

- We will share in groups of 10.*
- We will introduce ourselves (short).*
- We will use a "round robin" method of sharing, i.e., each person has an uninterrupted chance to share (no more than three minutes for initial sharing).*
- After each person has had a chance to share, we will have general discussions.*
- There will be a note taker in each group to capture our ideas.*
- After the general discussion in each group, we will have reports from the note takers for the benefit of the group at large.*
- Sharing of final thoughts: "How was this conversation for you?" "What would make the conversation better?"*

*Possible Questions for sharing –*

- Your thoughts on Paragraph #49 (see above)?*
- How are the poor impacted in Rappahannock County?*
- Are there ways the wealthy negatively impact the environment because of their wealth?*
- Are there ways that the poor negatively impact the environment because of their poverty?*
- Does living in Rappahannock insulate us from the seeing the needs of the poor?*
- Is there a tension between Rappahannock County zoning and the needs of the poor?*

**NEXT CONVERSATION: APRIL 10<sup>TH</sup> – 3:30 – 5:30 AT THE Washington Fire Hall**