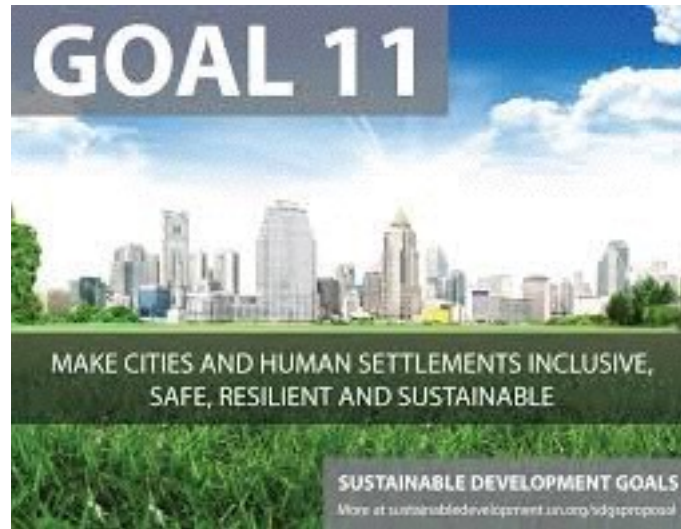


# Wednesday Earth Wisdom

Wednesday, April 13



*Reduce inequality within and among countries* is the 10<sup>th</sup> **Sustainable Development Goal**: inequality that is vividly demonstrated by skyrocketing levels of poverty, lack of basic education and adequate health and housing amongst the general population.

**Pope Francis, in paragraph #51 of *Laudato Si*** reminds us the “Inequality affects not only individuals but entire countries; it compels us to consider an ethics of international relations. A true ‘ecological debt’ exists, particularly between the global north and south, connected to commercial imbalances with effects on the environment, and the disproportionate use of natural resources by certain countries over long periods of time. The export of raw materials to satisfy markets in the industrialized north has caused harm locally, as for example in mercury pollution in gold mining or sulfur dioxide pollution in copper mining ...

“We note that often the businesses which operate this way are multinational ... they do here what they would never do in developed countries or the so-called First World. Generally, after ceasing their activity and withdrawing, they leave behind great human and environmental liabilities, such as unemployment, abandoned towns, the depletion of natural reserves, deforestation, the impoverishment of agriculture and local stock breeding, open pits, riven hills, polluted rivers and a handful of social works which are no longer sustainable.”

**Look around in our own country.** Where do you see this happening in the United States? You need not look too hard or think too long to find the answer to this question. Pray and reflect on your answer. What are you called to do about this issue?

