



From the Office of the President

John P. Fitzgibbons, S.J.

REGIS UNIVERSITY | DENVER, COLORADO

**A Prosperous Future for All
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Pope Francis' inspiring encyclical letter to both the worldwide Catholic community and all people of good will, "Laudato Si," or "Praised Be," challenged people across the globe to be better stewards of "our common home" in the face of the real and present danger climate change presents.

The Pope's was a clear message, one that echoes the voices of individuals across the globe challenging leaders to recognize the serious changes happening on our planet - and to take action before a distant threat becomes an immediate crisis.

Reiterating the Jesuit principles he was taught, Pope Francis' call was to people of all faiths and beliefs to participate in this global challenge. It aligns with the Regis University mission of creating men and women for others, who are taught to ask profound questions in order to assess the implications of their actions. His message also echoes our tradition of Catholic Social Teaching, which encourages us to examine such questions through the lens of a "preferential option for the poor and marginalized." In essence, they are the ones who will suffer the most from these environmental threats to our "common home."

When faced with problems of such immense magnitude, involving global financial markets and governmental bodies, it can be difficult to divine how to make a difference in our day-to-day lives. At Regis University, we begin by looking in our own backyard, assessing both the natural and "human" ecological needs of our community.

The poor disproportionately shoulder the burden of the world economic system's effects, and climate changes is no exception. Our small corner of Northwest Denver is in the midst of an explosive economic revitalization with entrepreneurs opening new ventures and new residents calling the community home each day. Yet nearly 40 percent of our community members fall below the federal poverty line and lack access to basic necessities such as fresh food or quality medical care.

It was this need that led to the launch of Cultivate Health: a sustainable resident-centered healthy neighborhood. Funded by a grant from the Colorado Health Foundation, the goal is to support the health and wellness of residents living in the multi-generational, mixed-income community within the four-census-tracts adjacent to Regis University. This project will create infrastructure and programming that promote an active lifestyle, increase access to healthy food and offer integrated health care services.



By working hand-in-hand with our neighbors to identify areas of need, we can create a prosperous future for all that is sustainable in both the short and long term. And in doing so, we answer the Pope's call to do what we can in our own lives to make a difference in our global future.

This is the first of several reflections from Father John P. Fitzgibbons, S.J., Regis University president. We welcome your feedback, and hope to see you at upcoming campus events this summer and fall.