

A Malady Worse Than Even COVID?

A brief reflection on a cure

by Maurice Lange

We western humans suffer from **short-sightedness**. This malady makes us tend to exclude those humans who differ from us. Short-sightedness cuts us off from planet Earth and her natural processes.

How can begin to cure our limited scope? How can we “zoom out” and let an enlarged vision make us more compassionate towards other humans and all the rest of Creation?

We need to let our practices and perspectives be challenged.

Here are **two challenges** that come to mind—the first challenge is ancient, and the second challenge comes from just *this* week:

1)The tradition of Native Peoples is to not do anything without first considering the impacts that one’s action will have 7 generations into the future.¹

2)The James Webb space telescope is giving us images of the early Universe from 13+ billion years ago.²

The wisdom of the Native Peoples challenges us to ***look ahead***, to consider future generations of all species and to live rightly according to that enlarged sense of compassion and responsibility. A variation on Mother Teresa’s saying comes to mind: “*Live simply now, so that others, now and into the future, may simply live*”.

The brand-new striking images from the Webb telescope challenge us to ***look back***, to see from whence we have come, to fathom that there *was* a beginning to the Universe, and to recognize that we are all related.

-This *looking back* and *looking ahead* calls into question our short-sightedness, our wastefulness, our limited and debasing perspectives.

-This *looking back* and *looking ahead* challenges our ego-centricity, our materialism and our anthropocentrism.

-This *looking back* and *looking ahead* is humbling and can set us aright.

A related sign-of-our-times is clearly climate change: from fires in California to flooding in Virginia to extreme heat in Texas.

Here in south-central Texas, I can personally vouch for the heat. As of today, July 14, 2022 we have already had **48** days this Spring and Summer that have topped 100 degrees! This intense and dangerous weather pattern is being labeled a “heat dome” and is linked to climate change.³

We are being urged to conserve energy so that we don’t exceed the available supply of power and then experience failures of the electrical grid.⁴ So far it seems that Texans and local corporations are responding and there have been no major failures of the grid. As...we certainly don’t want to lose our air conditioning! We don’t want to lose the food in our fridges! And for those of us who are compassionate, we don’t want people made poor to suffer in this heat, especially during a blackout.

But, at other times, and most of the time---**we don’t seem to care**. Over recent years and decades it has been our **lack** of energy conservation...and our slowness in adopting other forms of energy...that have driven climate change in the first place, and thus resulting in “heat domes”, fires and flooding.

There’s our short-sightedness again!

Where do we go from here?

First, let’s remove the “blindness”. (*Remember those “blindness” that horses were outfitted with, so that their vision would be restricted?*) We need to grow beyond limited perspectives that we ourselves and our culture have placed on us.

Let us allow both **indigenous wisdom** and **new images of our inter-relatedness** stir us to re-commitment and **live simply no matter the season**. Let’s allow our creativity and passion for life to become infectious!

Let’s individually and communally breathe renewed energy into our ecological vocations!⁵

Endnotes

¹ Seventh Generation Principle [What is the 7th Generation principle and why do you need to know about it? \(mollylarkin.com\)](#)

² James Webb Space Telescope [NASA's Webb Delivers Deepest Infrared Image of Universe Yet | NASA](#)

³ "Heat Dome" [How the heat dome in Texas is related to climate change \(yahoo.com\)](#)

⁴ Energy Savings Tips [Welcome to CPS Energy](#)

⁵ Concept of "*Ecological Vocation*" from Pope John Paul II [Angelus, 25 August 2002 | John Paul II \(vatican.va\)](#) See a great description of an Ecological Vocation at [Towards an ecological vocation: a reflection on Laudato Si'. \(socialpolicyconnections.com.au\)](#)