

Opening Reflection

Let us contemplate for a while on this painting, painted by Sr. Eleanor L. Ianes, ICM, allowing the image to touch our hearts and speak to us.

The context of this painting is the Amazon forest. This painting by Sr. Eleanor L. Ianes, ICM, depicts the contrasting experiences in the Amazon forest.

The wounded Amazon forest is depicted as a *Pietà*, a mother holding her suffering, agonized child. We see two figures. One part is the agonized, wounded, dying part, which shows the woman carrying the agonizing wounded, dying forest on her lap. And the other is the living, green part of the Amazon forest, full of life, trees, flowing streams, full of biodiversity.

We see the light touching both parts. The agonized figure continues to touch and hold on to life.

We see signs of life, there is hope, life growing in spite of these opposing experiences.

We see the small green plant growing in the midst of pain and suffering.

The lines are connected, life and death, light and shade. In all this, we see the divine light flowing, permeating the living and agonizing parts of the forest.

As we gaze at this image, let us ask ourselves: *Have I listened to the groaning of creation and to my own groaning?*



Painting by Sr. Eleanor L. Ianes, ICM

Have I paid attention to the cry of the earth and to the cry of the poor?

Am I one with the groans of creation all over the world?

Let us become painfully aware of how we have plundered the earth and destroyed the eco-system. As agents of hope, let us dare to shoulder our responsibility as true stewards of God's creation.

“When we can see God reflected in all that exists, our hearts are moved to praise the Lord for all his creatures and to worship him in union with them.” (LS, 87)

This sentiment is wonderfully expressed in the hymn of Saint Francis of Assisi:

Laudato Sì, O Mi Signore.