

Monday 16 May: Welcome to Laudato Si' Week 2022!

From the Encyclical

"The urgent challenge to protect our common home includes a concern to bring the whole human family together ... for we know that things can change." Laudato Si' n 13

For Reflection

"Behold, I make all things new!"

(Revelation, 21:5)

The essence of our Easter season was proclaimed joyfully in yesterday's Eucharist. The invitation from Pope Francis in the week ahead is to integrate the affirmations and challenges of the encyclical *Laudato Si'* and the *Laudato Si' Action Platform* that was launched last year.

Whether you are an artist or activist, economist or educator, parishioner or parent, student or seeker, the encyclical and *Action Platform* provide a realistic yet hope-filled invitation 'for a new dialogue about how we are shaping the future of our planet' (LS n 14). Pope Francis' emphasis on dialogue and discernment, inclusivity and intellectual rigor models a heartfelt desire to engage with all: 'I would like to enter into dialogue with all people about our common home' (LS n 3).

Laudato Si' is not simply a manifesto on climate change. It offers a new vision of the world as glorious as the vision in Revelation of 'a new heaven and a new earth' (Rev 21:1).

Laudato Si' Week calls us to be Easter people, acknowledging the dark places in ourselves, our families, neighbourhoods, nation, and wider world, while praying and planning for a more peaceful and interconnected world. Inspired by the Vatican Dicastery for Integral Human Development, the Australian Bishops' Office for Justice, Ecology and Peace invites families, parishes, dioceses, educational institutions, the healthcare sector, businesses, and religious orders on a seven-year journey toward integral ecology. This requires an integrated approach. Therefore, we commend prayer, reflection, study, dialogue, and action across *Laudato Si' Week*. 'All of us can cooperate as instruments of God for the care of creation, each according to his or her own culture, experience, involvements and talents.' (LS n 14)

Prayer

Gracious God,
you are good to all and compassionate
to all your works.

As we commence *Laudato Si'* Week:
we are mindful of your generous love in all creation,
we acknowledge the traditional owners of the land
on which we live,

we accept your invitation to engage with the
wisdom of *Laudato Si'*.

With Pope Francis, concerned citizens
and all creation,

we commit to the call and challenge
of the week ahead,

so that, in prayer and protest, silence and song,
reflection and renewal,

we might live the Easter promise
of love's triumph.

We make this prayer in the name of Jesus, our risen
Lord, through the power of the Holy Spirit, now and
for ever. Amen

Action



Head Check the websites: laudatosi.org and laudatosiactioplatform.org to engage with Pope Francis' vision of integral ecology.



Heart Pray each day using the prayers from these daily prayer and reflection sheets.



Hands Highlight *Laudato Si'* Week in your own context e.g., parish or school bulletin, prayer at a work meeting or faith sharing group, display a poster on your workplace's reception desk, display quotes from *Laudato Si'* on noticeboards.



Tuesday 17 May: Goal 1- The Cry of the Earth

From the Encyclical

"Living our vocation to be protectors of God's handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience." Laudato Si' n 217

For Reflection

Today we focus on *Laudato Si'* Goal 1 – the cry of the earth. As we attend to the raised voice and tears of the earth, we are consoled by Jesus' words. In today's Gospel he says: "Peace I leave you; my peace I give you. Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid" (John 14:27).

In the first chapter of *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis names the pain we have wrought on our planet: pollution, climate change, a throwaway culture, loss of biodiversity, global inequality, and the issue of water. In response to this devastation, he calls us to integrate personal and social responsibility, spirituality and science, economics, and education.

How might we truly listen to the cry of the earth, the cry of our land? These cries might arise from the cacophony of birds in our backyards, the scarred earth yielding minerals for our mobile phones, choked rubbish receptacles overflowing with poisoned packaging, or the wound of defiled sacred sites of the First Peoples.

We are also challenged to listen to the cries of those voices raised in solidarity with our oceans, land, and sky. They include leaders in the Oceania region whose communities are living with rising sea levels, young people desiring a future in harmony with creation, First Peoples spiritual leaders inviting us to listen in a spirit of *dadirri*, or deep inner listening.

Maybe, if we are still enough, today we will hear the lament of our earth mingled with its songlines, with ancient psalms of praise and with passionate protest.

Prayer

God of peace,
you call us to act out of love, not fear.
The earth is full of wonders that sing
of your goodness.
May we, your friends, make known the
glorious splendour of your kingdom.

Incline the ear of our heart to the cry of the earth,
oceans, and skies.
Humble our desire for dominance over creation.
Soften our engagement with
our brother earth and sister sky,
our cousin, the kookaburra, and friend,
the spreading fern.
Lead us move from awe to awareness,
tears to togetherness,
and from wonder to work for justice for all.

We make this prayer in the name of Jesus,
our risen Lord,
through the power of the Holy Spirit,
now and for ever. Amen

Action



Head Investigate the ecological impact of your personal and corporate purchasing power and investments. Access a free carbon calculating tool here <https://carbonpositiveaustralia.org.au/calculate/>



Heart Reflect anew on Dr Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr Baumann's Dadirri video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tow2tR_ezL8



Hands Make a conscious effort to choose more sustainable options in your life, shrink your carbon impact and pollution in big and small ways.



Wednesday 18 May: Goal 2 - The Cry of the Poor

From the Encyclical

"Strategies for a solution demand an integrated approach to combatting poverty, restoring dignity to the excluded, and at the same time protecting nature." Laudato Si' n 139

For Reflection

Picture in your mind the favelas on barren Peruvian hillsides, a diminishing Amazon rainforest, mines displacing people from their land, mudslides destroying houses in Bangladesh, and closer to home, rising tides displacing villages and threatening whole low-lying islands in the Pacific. Throughout *Laudato Si'* runs Pope Francis' constant commitment "I will point to the intimate relationship between the poor and the fragility of the planet" (LS n. 16).

The cries of the earth and of the poor have always been intertwined in our land. Sometimes these cries are loud and obvious, for example when floods and fires claim lives and livelihoods. However other cries often go unnoticed. They include the cries of incarcerated children, asylum seekers held in indefinite detention, of people seeking to escape abusive relationships, and of the First Peoples seeking justice.

Climate change is already affecting low-income households and disadvantaged communities in Australia disproportionately. ACOSS points out that "low-income earners tend to live in areas more likely to be adversely affected by climate change, and have far less ability to move or make other necessary adjustments to their living circumstances... Few households with low incomes are able to afford significant energy efficiency measures such as insulation, new hot water systems or rainwater tanks... Energy consumption in low income households is partly shaped by the market in second-hand appliances. Many second-hand appliances are inefficient, waste energy and increase bills."


Pope Francis constantly invites us to cultivate a culture of encounter, moving beyond our comfort zones to draw close to those pushed to the edges. We can listen. We can learn. We can let go of privilege and power.

Prayer

God of mercy,
you draw near to hear the cry of the poor.
From the edges, hear our cry.
From women in abusive relationships, hear our cry.
From parents struggling to care for children,
hear our cry.
From those dispossessed of land and lore,
hear our cry.
From those excluded from public spaces and
policy, hear our cry.
From those made poor by unjust structures and
systems, hear our cry.
From our humble hearts, hear our cry.

We make this prayer in the name of Jesus,
our risen Lord,
through the power of the Holy Spirit,

Action

-  **Head** Read the *Uluru Statement from the Heart* and explore this website: <https://ulurustatement.org/the-statement>
-  **Heart** Spend time really listening to someone on the edge.
-  **Hands** Volunteer with a small-scale local organisation.



CELEBRATE LAUDATO SI' WEEK 2022

Thursday 19 May: Goal 3 - Ecological Economics

From the Encyclical

"The emptier a person's heart is, the more he or she needs to buy, own and consume."
Laudato Si' n 204

For Reflection

Laudato Si' rejects consumerism and what Francis describes as the technocratic paradigm. It calls us instead 'to seek other ways of understanding the economy and progress' (LS n 16).

Our economy relies on the biosphere – our common home – and it should serve people and respect creation. Therefore, ecological economics focuses on sustainability, resilience, and integral human development rather than focussing only on efficiency and growth. It is also why Pope Francis continues to promote a circular economy and the use of renewable energy.

The work of nurturing the human ecology of our communities is deeply linked with our thinking about development, how we understand success, what we think is valuable, and our relationship with the rest of creation. Pope Francis goes to great lengths to affirm social and economic inclusion as part of integral ecology.

People and communities who rely on extractive industries for their livelihoods need special attention if we are to make a just transition to a more sustainable economy. As energy markets continue to change, these people and communities need to be able to see a bright future for themselves and for future generations.

The First Peoples are one of the most economically disadvantaged groups in our society. Yet, as our Bishops acknowledge in Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor, "when it comes to human knowledge of the lands and waters now known as Australia, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are our first teachers". We need to listen with humility and to learn.

Prayer

God of justice,
you govern the peoples with equity.
You gift us with creation as a common good,
not a commodity.
You gift us with sisters and brothers
made in your image, not as tools.
You gift us with minds that question, not quell.

Help us to imagine an economy that:
promotes connection and community,
honours dignity and dialogue,
leads to gratuity, not greed.
May our reflection today
give a soul to the economy of tomorrow.

We make this prayer in the name of Jesus,
our risen Lord,
through the power of the Holy Spirit,
now and for ever. Amen.

Action



Head Find out if your bank or insurance company invests in socially irresponsible activities and consider your options.



Heart Support campaigns that promote better wages for those who perform 'care labour' such as aged care, childcare, health care, and disability care workers.



Hands Take part in local initiatives that promote the sharing, reuse, repair, and recycling of goods.



CELEBRATE LAUDATO SI' WEEK 2022

Friday 20 May: Goal 4 - Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles

From the Encyclical

"Reusing something instead of immediately discarding it, when done for the right reasons, can be an act of love which expresses our own dignity." Laudato Si' n 211

For Reflection

Laudato Si' invites us to adopt sustainable lifestyles, encouraging greater material simplicity. This goal calls us to a happy sobriety in our use of resources and energy, cultivating a sense of satisfaction with 'enough' rather than constantly seeking more. It underpins all the Laudato Si' goals.

While we are invited to make changes in our own households and daily lives, this effort is linked to ensuring a good life for all. By consuming less, we can work toward a future where people living in 'impoverished countries can afford a simple lifestyle, overcoming poverty without damaging nature's life' (LS n 51-52).

As we move towards winter, we might consider our use of energy. Can we reduce our energy consumption? Can we improve the energy efficiency of our homes and workplaces? As we try to do so, let us reflect on Pope Francis' words: 'there is an urgent need to develop policies so that ... the emission of carbon dioxide and other highly polluting gases can be drastically reduced, substituting for fossil fuels and developing sources of renewable energy' (LS n 26).

We might also consider our dietary habits. Can we opt for a more plant-based diet? Can we consider a day of prayer and fasting for the needs of the world each week, or abstain from meat on Fridays?




Adopting a simpler lifestyle takes commitment and creativity. Sharing the experience in a loving spirit enables us to '... experience what it means to appreciate each person and each thing, learning familiarity with the simplest things and how to enjoy them.' (LS n 223)

Prayer

Loving God,
your mercy towers to the heavens,
and your faithfulness to the skies.
May your love temper our desire for more.
May your love shape lifestyles that
lead to life for all.
May your love guide our steps
towards sustainability.
May your love be enough.

We make this prayer in the name of Jesus,
our risen Lord,
through the power of the Holy Spirit,
now and for ever. Amen

Action

-  **Head** Assess where you have power or influence for procurement e.g., at work, school or in parish life. Research available ethical purchasing guides that address your regular purchases, for example food, clothing, and energy, and follow their advice.
-  **Heart** Before purchasing anything, ask: Do I need this? Will this make me happy? Whose lives will be impacted by this purchase? Where are there opportunities for me to make a change?
-  **Hands** Actions could include reducing waste, recycling, and adopting sustainable practices across your life e.g., using fair trade products, sustainable dietary habits, greater use of public transport, walking and cycling, and avoiding single use items.



CELEBRATE LAUDATO SI' WEEK 2022

Saturday 21 May: Goal 5 - Ecological Education

From the Encyclical

"Ecological education can take place in a variety of settings: at school, in families, in the media, in catechesis and elsewhere. Good education plants seeds when we are young, and these continue to bear fruit throughout life." Laudato Si' n 212

For Reflection

We are all life-long learners, especially when it comes to the development of our faith, values, relationships, and patterns of behaviour. *Laudato Si'* promotes engagement with all facets of our world: science, technology, human development, political, economic, and social paradigms. Ecological education can thus be seen as a means of conversion and integration. It includes '... an education in responsible simplicity of life, in grateful contemplation of God's world, and in concern for the needs of the poor and the protection of the environment' LS n 214.

Pope Francis does not see ecological education as a task for teachers alone. Rather his challenge is addressed to families and a range of other communal contexts. It is not enough to raise awareness of environmental issues. If we want to bring about deep change, we need to realize that certain mindsets really do influence our behaviour. This leads us to promote 'a new way of thinking about human beings, life, society and our relationship with nature' (LS n 215).

Pope Francis' vision of ecological education moves from 'care for creation through little daily actions' (LS n 211), to an affirmation of the role of the Church and political groups in leadership that challenges extreme affluence and consumerism. With humility, Pope Francis places the example of the young, with their 'new ecological sensitivity and generous spirit' (LS n 209) at the heart of our education and formation efforts and processes. Creative ecological education programs can 'enable us to live more fully and to feel that life on earth is worthwhile' (LS n 212).

Prayer

God of truth,
you are good and your kindness endures forever.
In your Son, Jesus, you give us a teacher who:
fills our minds with questions and concerns,
daring and discomfort,
opens our eyes to the brokenness
and blessedness of our world,
enlarges our hearts with love for all,
and propels our bodies toward those in most need.

Humbly, we place before you
our unknowing and desire for truth.
Help us to learn from our land,
from the First Peoples, the young,
and those made poor.

We make this prayer in the name of Jesus,
our risen Lord,
through the power of the Holy Spirit,
now and for ever. Amen

Action



Head Promote *Laudato Si'* themes in homilies, service-learning programmes, strategic planning, learning, and teaching across the formal and informal curriculum.



Heart Ground action for justice in prayerful reflection on *Laudato Si'* themes, relevant Scripture, and resources from the *Laudato Si'* Action Platform
www.laudatosiactionplatform.org/resources



Hands Encourage ecological leadership in your work, parish, school, or diocesan context by allocating time and resources for formation opportunities.



Sunday 22 May: Goal 6 - Ecological Spirituality

From the Encyclical

"The universe unfolds in God, who fills it completely. Hence, there is a mystical meaning to be found in a leaf, in a mountain trail, in a dewdrop, in a poor person's face. The ideal is not only to pass from the exterior to the interior to discover the action of God in the soul, but also to discover God in all things."
Laudato Si' n 233

For Reflection

When we use the word creation, rather environment, or nature, we are acknowledging the Creator. For Christians our 'responsibility within creation' and our 'duty towards nature and the Creator' are an essential part of our faith (LS n 64).

Laudato Si' culminates in a call to an ecological spirituality that 'can motivate us to a more passionate concern for the protection of our world' (LS n 216). It invites us to understand our heritage of Christian spirituality in a way that does not fall into the trap of viewing the life of the spirit as something separate from our bodies, nature, and the world. In fact, we live our spirituality in and with our bodies and in communion with all of God's creation. We can discover God in all things.

Where and when have you experienced a sense of connection with God in creation? What was it like? Do you have a favourite place to pray outdoors? How do you think an ecological spirituality might be better reflected in our prayer and liturgy?

When he wrote *Laudato Si'* Pope Francis wanted to speak to every person living on the planet. Now we are moving toward the feast of Pentecost when people gathered from across the known world and yet were able to understand one another. Let us ask the Holy Spirit today to renew the face of the earth. With Pope Francis we can be confident that 'the Spirit of God has filled the universe with possibilities and therefore, from the very heart of things, something new can always emerge' (LS n 80).

Prayer

May the peoples praise you, O God:
May all the peoples praise you!

In the spirit of *Laudato Si'*, may we:
repent as well as rejoice,
sigh as well as sing,
learn from new voices in an ancient land,
respect all that is different and diverse,
love connection and community,
enjoy participation and possibility,
search both inner and outer landscapes
for your Spirit.

May the peoples praise you, O God:
May all the peoples praise you!
Laudato Si' mi Signore! Amen

Action



Head Read and reflect on "Who Are We Before God and in Creation" by Dr Sandie Cornish
<https://socialjustice.catholic.org.au/2020/09/04/who-are-we-before-god-and-in-creation/>



Heart Reflect on your day using an ecological examen like this one
<http://www.ecologicalexamen.org>



Hands Reach out to another Christian community to plan and co-host an event to celebrate the Season of Creation incorporating elements of the natural world.



CELEBRATE LAUDATO SI' WEEK 2022

Monday 23 May: Goal 7 - Community Resilience and Empowerment

From the Encyclical

"We need a conversation which includes everyone, since the environmental challenge we are undergoing, and its human roots, concern and affect us all." *Laudato Si'* n 14

For Reflection

The COVID-19 pandemic has challenged us to creatively reimagine our ways of connecting and living community. We have sung in virtual choirs, attended Mass livestreamed into our homes on social media platforms, taught and studied in online classes, delivered groceries to people required to isolate, constructed phone trees to check on neighbours, and parishioners, gathered across international boundaries in virtual spaces to pray together, support one another, and to advocate for change.

We have been learning about resilience and what can be achieved by communities. We have also been learning that at times communities need support and coordination.

Laudato Si' calls us to be communities of action at the local, regional, national, and international levels. Everyone's participation is needed if we are to care effectively for our common home. Pope Francis encourages us over and over, reassuring us that 'local individuals and groups can make a real difference' (LS 179). We are on a journey together.

Community building is one of the pillars of the *Laudato Si' Action Platform* together with resource sharing, and guides to assist in making a seven-year *Laudato Si' Action Plan*. The *Platform* will create opportunities to connect directly with communities around the world. It will also provide resources to build community locally.

If our community involvement and participatory action are animated by a sense of synodality, or journeying together as the pilgrim people of God, then our struggle for justice, ecology and peace will surely bear fruit.

Prayer

Triune God,
you take delight in your people,
you draw us into a web of relationships.

Bless our families,
bless our educational institutions,
bless our parishes and dioceses,
bless our hospitals and health centres,
bless our business and farming enterprises,
bless members of our religious orders
and communities.

Invite us to develop a spirituality of global solidarity which flows from the mystery of the Trinity (LS n 240).

We make this prayer in the name of Jesus,
our risen Lord,
through the power of the Holy Spirit,
now and for ever. Amen

Action



Head Investigate principles and practices of discernment in common to ensure that all voices are heard in planning processes.



Heart Pray with the daily readings in the approach to Pentecost, asking the Holy Spirit to guide our communal discernment and planning through the *Laudato Si' Action Platform*.



Hands Connect with other people and local groups to support one another in moving towards the *Laudato Si' Goals* using the *Laudato Si' Action Platform*. Advocate where you can to respond to the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.



CELEBRATE LAUDATO SI' WEEK 2022

Tuesday 24 May: Laudato Si' Week ends, but the Challenge Continues!

From the Encyclical

"God, who calls us to generous commitment and to give him our all, offers us the light and strength needed to continue on our way ... (God's) love constantly impels us to find new ways forward."
Laudato Si' n. 245

For Reflection

Our church, cultural and civic calendars signpost many days and weeks of significance that contribute to a rich fabric of remembrance, recognition, and renewal. *Laudato Si' Week* has been a time of invitation and challenge for all people of good will, however continuing to move forward will take creativity and commitment.

Laudato Si' was gifted to the world by Pope Francis on this day seven years ago. We are now invited to engage in a seven-year journey towards seven *Laudato Si' Goals* derived from the encyclical. The *Laudato Si' Action Platform* is a space for institutions, communities, and families to learn and grow together as we journey towards full sustainability in the holistic spirit of integral ecology. It provides tools for community building, resource sharing, and the discernment of *Laudato Si' Action Plans*.

Our Bishops' Conference has already enrolled in the *Laudato Si' Action Platform* and we hope to see broad engagement with the *Platform* among parishes, dioceses, religious orders, schools, businesses, farming communities, and organisations. We know that there is more than enough leadership, commitment, and imagination in the church in Australia to realise the vision of the *Platform*.

Let us continue to walk together on a seven-year journey to towards greater love for our Creator, each other, and the home that we share.

Prayer

On this, the Solemnity of Our Lady Help of Christians, patron of our land, we pray:

God of new life,
in Mary, you enable us to look at this world with eyes of wisdom (LS n. 241).
We give thanks for the blessings of *Laudato Si' Week*:
delight and discomfort, questions, and concerns.
We give thanks for the Easter challenge to engage with our world beyond the tomb of death and despair.

With St Francis and his namesake,
may we be instruments of peace in our fragile world.
With the promise of the Holy Spirit,
may we find space in our busy lives to discern, dialogue and dream;
may we take up the commitment to creation set before us by the Gospel of Jesus (LS n. 246).

We make this prayer in the name of Jesus,
our risen Lord,
through the power of the Holy Spirit,
now and for ever. Amen

Our Lady, Help of Christians pray for us.
St Mary of the Cross MacKillop pray for us.
Laudato Si' mi Signore!

Action



Head Familiarise yourself with the *Laudato Si' Action Platform*



Heart Meditate on each phrase of the final prayer in the encyclical, *A Christian prayer in union with creation* (LS n 246).



Hands Introduce the *Laudato Si' Action Platform* in your context. Use a collaborative process to develop a plan with realistic goals. Network with others to share and celebrate your achievements across the seven *Laudato Si' Goals*.

