



Restoring Our Common Home



*Reflections and Prayers
Season of Creation 2021*

The Diocese of Down and Connor established a Laudato Si' group in July 2021. The group's first task was to promote the Season of Creation for 2021 '*Restoring Our Common Home*.'

This booklet contains the articles, video scripts and prayers that were prepared.

We hope that this booklet might be used not only for the Season of Creation but for World Day of the Poor, Earth Day, and at any time during the course of the Liturgical Year as we continue to pray for Our Common Home.



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Will a cry wake you from your sleep?

When we have something important to go to the next day we set our alarm clocks so that we won't miss that flight or an important appointment for which we simply can't afford to sleep in.

I have to admit that as a mother the most effective thing to get me out of bed is the cry of one of my children. It doesn't matter what the time is – I will be sitting upright listening for the type of cry and readying myself for action. You might see this in a playground how even with dozens of children a mother will hear a cry, know when it is her child, and bolt across the playground with the first aid kit of cuddles and plasters to tend to any hurts.

A cry simply cannot be ignored.

But do we ignore cries?

Are we ignoring 'the cry of the earth'?

Are we ignoring 'the cry of the poor'?

Do we roll over and put a pillow over our heads?

We can't pretend that we haven't heard the cry – it fills every newspaper, we've watched the documentaries, our phones ping with breaking news of humanitarian crisis after crisis. The alarm clock on the climate crisis has already sounded and the clock is ticking.



So what to do? The first step is always to acknowledge what is happening and our responsibility in being part of the solution. We are all equipped with a first aid kit to heal the earth and to tend to the needs of the poor.

What's in the first aid kit? Our decisions.

Everything we do is interconnected.

Each small choice has influence.

Cut the grass or let the bees enjoy the clover?

Cheap food easily wasted or fair trade food valued?

Scrolling, retweeting, liking posts, or taking the time

for genuine advocacy and writing to our MLAs and MPs ensuring that the cry of the earth and the poor don't fall off the political agenda?



Let us set aside time in the Season of Creation for us to marvel at the beauty of the earth that we live in and commit ourselves to restore this common home that we all share. Let us set aside time to be in awe of each human life that God has created and to pray and commit to the possibility of every person living in dignity.

May we be attentive to 'the cry of the earth' and 'the cry of the poor' and may we respond with the love, compassion, and healing that a cry deserves.

Prophets over Profit Margins.

Young people look to the future with hope. And in doing so, they demand change. “They wonder how anyone can claim to be building a better future without thinking of the environmental crisis and the sufferings of the excluded.” (LS, 13)

In my experience of working with young people, one topic they are always passionate about is the environment, and the release of Pope Francis’ *Laudato Si'* gave them even more reason and confidence to stand up for what they believe in protecting the earth, our common home. I see this in all our young people today across the diocese and beyond.

Young people today are shouting at the top of their voices to protect our world. “Young people have a new ecological sensitivity and a generous spirit, and some of them are making admirable efforts to protect the environment.” (LS, 209) They are doing their own individual bits even though the influences around them are pulling them in a completely different direction. The prevailing culture is telling them to buy often and buy cheap, to dispose of easily without thinking, to consume, consume, consume. Of course, it is not just young people who are caught up in this culture. These organisations are concerned about their profit margins, whereas our young people are concerned about the future for their generation and the generations to come.

Why we all might ask ourselves, are we listening to the global marketing organisations over the voices of our young people who are working so hard to combat the climate crisis? Are these young people not the prophets we should be watching, listening to, and learning from?

Why don’t we look to our young people for guidance in caring for our common home? They are more aware of how they travel; using more sustainable transport options, cutting down on unnecessary travel, consciously thinking about their use of air travel, and often choosing to holiday at home. They are aware of ensuring our vegetation and wildlife are protected and made sustainable. They are choosing to love the environment and to work hard to protect it. We see how this influences how they consume also; shopping local, purchasing organic foods, and reducing meat consumption. These are the messages that young people are bringing to our world, and we are starting to see these influences on our high street, allowing us all to make better decisions.

Our common home is calling us to be better. So let’s look to our young people as our prophets, our role models in how we move forward and act decisively.



Wonder and Awe captured in Laudato Si'

"St. Francis of Assisi reminds us that our common home is like a sister with whom we share our life and a beautiful mother who opens her arms to embrace us" (LS, 1).

"From panoramic vistas to the tiniest living form, nature is a constant source of wonder and awe" (LS, 85).

"It is also a continuing revelation of the divine" (LS, 85).

"The entire material universe speaks of God's love, his boundless affection for us. Soil, water, mountains: everything is, as it were, a caress of God" (LS, 84).

"God has created a precious book whose letters are the multitude of things present in the Universe" (LS, 85).

"Each year sees the disappearance of thousands of plant and animal species which we will never know, which our children will never see" (LS, 33).

"To sense each creature singing the hymn of its existence is to live joyfully in God's love and hope" (LS, 85).

"What kind of world do we want to leave to those who come behind us, to children who now are growing up?" (LS, 160).

"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." (LS, 233).

"There is a divine manifestation in the blaze of the sun and the fall of night" (LS, 85).

"If we approach nature and the environment without this openness to Awe and Wonder, if we no longer speak the language of Fraternity and Beauty in our relationship with the world, our attitude will be that of masters, consumers, ruthless exploiters (LS, 11)

Everything is related, and we human beings are united as brothers and sisters on a wonderful pilgrimage, woven together by the love God has for each of his creatures and which also unites us in fond affection with brother sun, sister moon, brother river, and mother earth. (LS, 92)

Let us sing as we go. May our struggles and our concern for this planet never take away the joy of our hope. (LS, 244)

"For we know that things can change" (LS, 13)



Our Common Home - not to be taken for granted by its children.

"When I was a child I spoke like a child, I thought like a child and I acted like a child."

Not my words but those of St Paul to the fledgling church in Corinth (1 Corinthians, 13) who was trying his best to encourage his readers and listeners to be adult about their interaction with others and with the world.

As a child I remember my parents, God rest them, they would encourage me to say "please and thank you" when I asked for something. As a child, I was used to getting what I wanted...well, at least, for a few years, like all children, until I began to learn that I was not the centre of the universe. It took time for me to realise that I was but a small thread in a much greater tapestry of life. A small thread but, not unimportant.

"Please" and "Thank you"...initially, as a child, I learned that these were magic words that would get me what I wanted. Later in life, I realised they were not magic words but respectful and meaningful words. If we're honest, we take a lot for granted. We take the world we live in for granted. "It will always be there to provide for our needs." How short-sighted is that!



St Francis was a revolutionary in his day when he spoke about brother Sun and sister Moon. He acknowledged that without them we could not survive. He gave thanks to God for them.

In our sophisticated modern world, we cannot afford to take the beauty of God's creation for granted and think, like a child, that each of us is at the center of the Universe to use it and abuse it for our personal ends. How selfish is that! In this 2021 Season of Creation, let's be thankful and grateful for the beauty of the world around us and be aware of its fragility and do what we can to nurture and protect it, not just for our generation but for generations to come.

Laudato Si' – Uair na Cinniúna

Samhlaigh go raibh tú ag taisteal ar bhóthar contúirteach. Bheadh comharthaí rabhaidh le feiceáil, mar shampla, 'Geill Slí', 'Ná Scoitear', 'Go Mall' agus in amanna 'STAD'.



De réir na tuairisce is déanaí eisithe ag na Náisiúin Aontaithe, tá an cine daonna ar bhóthar contúirteach. Is é an téamh domhanda agus an t-athrú aeraide, údar na dtrioblóidí atá os cionn an chine daonna. De réir na saineolaithe atá ag saothrú ar an reimse, is í seo uair na cinniúna don phláinead.

Ta an fhianaise soiléir, ta sí le feiceáil thart timpeall orainn gan amhras ar bith. Mar shampla, damáiste ar fud an domhain ar flóra agus fána, laghdú bithéagsúlacht de gach cineál, méadú sna astaíochtaí ceaptha teasa, dé-ocsaid charbóin agus meatán, agus truailliú domhanda de gach sórt. Ach sé an rud is measa ar fad, ná go bhfuil an cine daonna taobh thiar de seo uilig. Mar sin de, baineann saineolaithe úsáid as an fhocal 'antrapaigineach' le cuir sios ar seo. Deir roinnt geolaithe go bhfuil fianasise anois faighte acu a chruthann gur treimhse gheolaíochta úr atá ann ar a dtugann siad an t-anthropocene.

Cad é tá le deanamh? I 'Laudato Si' tugann an Pápa Proinsias léiriú gléineach ar an ábhar fíorchasta seo. Tá an cine daonna i gcás éigeandála, tá réiteach de dhith agus molann an Pápa Proinsias eiceolaíocht chuimsitheach mar bhealach chun tosaigh. Aithníonn eiceolaíocht chuimsitheach go bhfuil sé riachtanach aird a thabhairt ar an chaidreamh atá againn le Dia, le daoine eile le cruthú an domhain agus muid fein. Tá na fadhbanna seo uilig fite fuaite le chéile. Níl réiteach iomlán le fáil i dteiceolaíocht. Tá caidreamh idir cosaint na timpeallachta, cóir shóisialta agus forbairt domhanda. De réir 'laudato Si' agus eiceolaíochta chuimsitheach caithfidh muid 'caoineadh na mbochtáin' agus 'caoineadh an domhain' a chur le chéile.

Tá an pláinéad i mbaol. Seo seoid s'againne sa chruinne, ar mbronntanas ó Dhia. Is mithid duinne lena chosaint. Tá an domhan seo céasta le cathú ó teiceolaíoch agus ón gheilleagar domhanda, mar sin, caithfidh muid ar gcaidreamh leis an domhan agus le daoine eile a leigheas. Tá bealach úr de dhith, bealach nach bhfuil contúirteach, ach bealach ina feidir linn aitheantas a thabhairt do áilleacht an domhain agus do dhaoine eile atá ar an turas céanna linn. Mar sin, biodh Laudato Si mar stiúir againn ar an turas seo go dtí ar mbaile commonta sábhailte.

Ni Neart go cur le chéile.

Laudato Si' : A Time of Destiny

Imagine you are travelling on a dangerous road. There would be warning signs to see, for example, 'Give way', 'No overtaking', 'Slow' and at times, 'STOP'.

According to the most recent report issued by the United Nations, the human race is on a dangerous road. Global warming and climate change are the source of troubles facing the human race. According to experts in this field, this is a time of destiny for the planet.



The evidence is clear, it can be seen round about us. For example, damage to both flora and fauna, a decrease in bio-diversity of every type, and an increase in hothouse gas emissions, carbon dioxide, methane, and pollution of every type. However, the worst thing about all of this is that human activity is the cause. Accordingly, experts use the word 'anthropogenic' to describe this. Indeed some geologists say that they have evidence of a new geological period which they call the 'Anthropocene'.

What can be done? In *Laudato Si'* Pope Francis gives a clear exposition of this complicated subject. The human race is in an emergency situation, a solution is required and Pope Francis identifies that integral ecology is the way forward. Integral ecology means attention to the necessary interaction and wholeness of relationships with God, with other people, with creation, and with ourselves. The problems facing humanity are all interwoven. A complete solution cannot be found through technology. There is a relationship between the protection of the environment, social justice, and global development. Accordingly through 'integral ecology' we have to see the 'cry of the poor' and the 'cry of the earth' together.

The planet is in danger. It is our jewel in the universe - our gift from God. It's time we protected it. In a world plagued by technological and economic temptation, we need to heal our relationship with the earth and all humanity. A new road is needed. Not a dangerous one but one where we marvel at the beauty of creation and acknowledge all people on our journey. Let integral ecology navigate us as we seek our destination - our common home restored.

Unity is Strength.

Local initiatives make a global impact

Pope Francis challenges us all to have: "a vision capable of taking into account every aspect of the global crisis". In our Parish of Drumbo and Carryduff we have established an environment group and our vision is to become a Green Parish through taking local actions that care for our common home and each other". What does that look like?

Here in the Parish of Drumbo and Carryduff we are transforming our church grounds to become a place of reflection in the trees or 'machnamh sna crainn'. Tree planting, one means of transforming our hearts and motivating our actions, helps heal damage already done to the environment and brings awareness to everyone involved. We have seen already how the power of this has engaged our parishioners.

In November 2019 some 200 enthusiastic volunteers turned up to plant 500 trees in our parish grounds. The benefits for the parish were clear - we helped mitigate the effects of climate change; we strengthened our community network as families and friends enjoyed spending time together in nature. This was a landmark in parishioners' lives and created a legacy for our children and grandchildren. *We planted trees under whose shade we do not expect to sit.* We now want to build on that and join with Catholic communities to influence governments around the world.

Laudato Si' tells us that human beings and material objects no longer extend a friendly hand to one another - the relationship has become confrontational. This has made it easy to accept the idea of infinite or unlimited growth, which proves so attractive to economists, financiers and experts in technology. It is based on the lie that there is an infinite supply of the earth's goods and this leads to the planet being squeezed dry beyond limit.

Through Laudato Si' we hear Pope Francis tell us to take even more action. In this year 2021 - we have two opportunities like no other year. At the UN Biodiversity Conference (COP15) in October, world leaders can set meaningful targets to protect creation. In November, at the 26th UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) in Glasgow, countries will announce their plans to meet the goals of the Paris agreement. Ahead of those meetings, we have an opportunity as Catholics to lift up the voices of the most vulnerable and advocate on their behalf. We must act now.

We invite you to make an action today. A simple yet effective action that you can take immediately is to sign the petition at: thecatholicpetition.org

Transformed hearts that are motivated to action will 'Restore our Common Home' and it is the work of our local parish in solidarity with our brothers and sisters across the world.

Everyone can join in and as Pope Francis has said: to change everything we need everyone.



Time to heal the world.

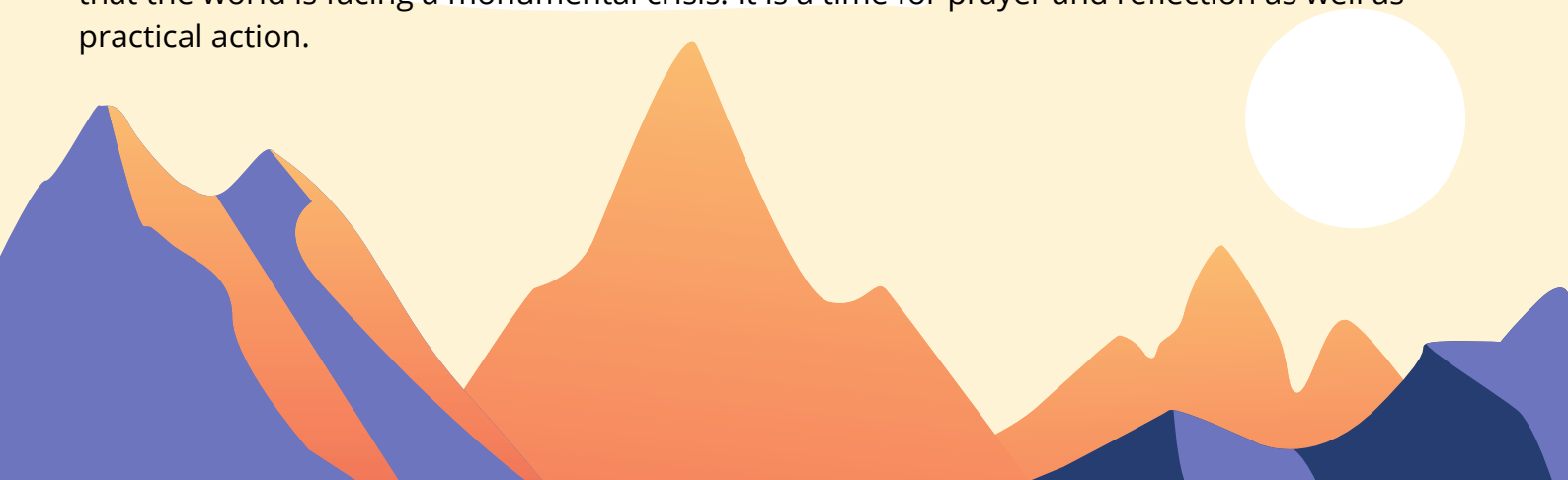
In May 2015 Pope Francis published his Encyclical *Laudato Si'* for the 1.2 billion Catholics around the world. Yet six years later only a small percentage of us have read it or indeed know anything at all about it.

The first part of the encyclical explains how and why our earth and the majority of its population are suffering. Pope Francis outlines how as a result of the “globalisation of indifference” whole species are disappearing forever, never to be seen by our grandchildren. He states that this is due to our consumerism which has made us a ‘throwaway society’ where even the “cry of the earth and the cry of the poor” fall on deaf ears. We must ask ourselves what kind of world we want to leave for those who follow us.

The encyclical is not just about climate change, it is much broader. But it explains climate change as a largely human-made symptom of what is wrong in the world today, including economic and social injustice. The key, as stated by Pope Francis, is “integral ecology” i.e. that people and the planet are part of one family where the earth is our common home. Pope Francis calls for an “ecological conversion” whereby we connect our relationship with God and the world around us.

It was no accident that Pope Francis chose his papal name in honour of St. Francis of Assisi. The title *Laudato Si'*, or Praised be you, is a reference to St. Francis of Assisi's 13th century *Canticle of the Creatures* poem. St. Francis reminds us that our common home is like a sister with whom we share a common life and a beautiful mother who opens her arms to embrace us. Our earth is “a caress from God” and in the encyclical, we are urged to view the world and its beauty with ‘awe and wonder’. Who among us at some time or other has not stopped to marvel at the beauty of a rose in full bloom or the majesty of a waterfall cascading down a mountainside. But we have taken our beautiful earth for granted. It is our most precious gift yet in the words of Pope Francis “it is looking more and more like an immense pile of filth”. (LS, 21)

It follows then that if we value and appreciate something we will care for it and cherish it. To this end, the Season of Creation is an annual celebration of prayer and action for our common home. Together the ecumenical family around the world unites to pray for and protect God's creation. This celebration takes place from September 1st, the World Day of Prayer for Creation until October 4th, the feast of St. Francis of Assisi. The theme this year is “Restoring our Common Home”. The season of Creation is our chance to make a difference as individuals and communities. We cannot turn our backs on our earth and pretend any longer that the world is facing a monumental crisis. It is a time for prayer and reflection as well as practical action.



The Pope doesn't mince his words. He states that "rampant individualism" and the "self-centred culture of instant gratification" are destroying our planet. In *Laudato Si'* he asks us what is the purpose of our life in this world? Why are we here? What is the goal of our work and all our efforts? What need does the earth have of us? He states that it isn't enough to pay lip service to our concern about future generations. "Leaving an inhabitable planet to future generations is, first and foremost, up to us now". If we do nothing he continues that "we may well be leaving to coming generations debris, desolation and filth. The present pace of consumption, waste and environmental change has so stretched the planet that our present lifestyle will only precipitate catastrophes".

We see this happening already. In the month of July we have seen globally the effected of climate change. We have witnessed devastating wild fires in the USA, Canada and most recently in Greece and Turkey. Added to that we have seen the truly awful devastation of floods in China and India. Our "not in my back yard" attitude is coming home to bite here locally too. In July 2021 we had the highest temperatures ever recorded followed swiftly by localised flooding. We cannot ignore what is happening all around us.

Our planet is in crisis. The pandemic has highlighted that we are all affected by what happens to our earth and its people. However, for a few brief months the earth was able to breathe again when factories stopped billowing out toxic pollution into the atmosphere. The air became cleaner and clearer. People could breathe and slow down and look around them and see the beauty of creation. We didn't use our cars. We became resourceful and grew things and cared about the wonders of nature. Sadly it hasn't lasted long.

In November world leaders come together for the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP 26). It is hoped that Pope Francis himself will attend. He will, no doubt, have hard-hitting words for our world leaders. But it is not just down to them. Each and every one of us has a personal responsibility for our own part of the environment. For many of us, consumerism is "the spice of life".



Our earth is groaning under the weight of our indifference. Turning off lights, turning off taps and lowering our heating by one degree may seem little but with a global effort it can make a huge difference. In our parishes we can make better use of our green spaces and use them to plant trees or grow wild flowers. We can walk to church instead of driving. We can cut out meat once a week. These are all small, seemingly insignificant, changes. But change begins with small steps and many small steps make a marathon. It is time to change locally and think globally before it is too late. We have over-used and over-developed. It is time to protect and cherish our planet before we leave "a wasteland of desolation, debris and filth". We need to restore our common home.



The Pope and the Planet.



St Francis of Assisi is the patron saint of animals and ecology. The twelfth Century mystic and stigmatist died while listening to a reading of Psalm 142, one of the lines of which reads "Listen to my groaning, for I am in deep despair."

Pope Francis who assumed his papal name in honour of St Francis might be said to have applied the lines of the psalm to the cry of Planet Earth. In response, his second papal encyclical, *Laudato Si'* (Praise be to you), released in 2015 implored us to "care for our common home."

The Pope's prophetic exhortations have now, six years later, been brought into sharp focus by the recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC, August 2021) which concludes that a climate crisis of an unprecedented nature has been caused by human activities. Wildfires in Greece, Turkey and California; floods in Germany and China and heatwaves in Canada and Siberia are the manifestations of this phenomenon during the summer of 2021.

The U.N. Secretary General in response to the report's findings stated that "If we combine forces now, we can avert climate catastrophe," echoing the Pontiff's call in *Laudato Si'* for "swift and unified global action."

The COP (Conference of Parties) 26 summit in Glasgow from 1-12th November, jointly hosted by the U.K. and Italy, the country of which St. Francis is patron, will bring together the representatives of 197 nations to: "Shape the 21st Century economy in ways that are clean, green, healthy, just, safe and more resilient." (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Secretary Patricia Espinosa.) The term "just" in this list of aspirations is one emphasised in *Laudato Si'* as Pope Francis highlighted the disproportionate effect of climate change on the poor. Teaching on the environment is now an integral part of Catholic social teaching and the Pope will attend the COP26 summit. In preparation for his presence, the Vatican is hosting a gathering of scientists and world religious leaders on 4th October to formulate a common approach ahead of the Glasgow conference.


October 4th is also the Feast Day of St. Francis of Assisi and concludes the Season of Creation which commences on September 1st, 2021 and encourages the Christian community to pray and act together to protect our common home.

The Irish Catholic Bishops Conference has published guidance on how individuals, groups, clergy and parishes may contribute to "Restoring our Common Home," heavily influenced by the Pope's *Laudato Si'* encyclical. The bishops suggest actions to encourage everyone to engage in activities, both spiritual and practical that have positive outcomes for our immediate locality in particular and the planet in general. To quote a well-aided phrase "Every Little Helps." In this way, we may be able to achieve the main goals of *Laudato Si'* which are to care for God's creation, support life, and protect the poorer nations and people on this Earth. Take action now.

Praise Be to You!

Are we wreaking havoc on our common home?


Summer 2021 was a season with a difference, without doubt. We were both treated and challenged by our weather. Ballywatticock had unprecedented temperatures of 31.2 degrees. The people living in the Mourne's battled wildfires. At the same time the residents in Belleek and Garrison experienced floods. What extreme weather events in one corner of our tiny island! Further afield, fire caused the evacuation of hundreds of people from the Greek island of Evia. Germany and Belgium experienced unprecedented flooding. Palatinate a region in Germany, had more than a month's worth of rain in 24 hours. Our planet - our common home- has experienced fire and floods in a very short time frame and we humans have caused it!



**"The deterioration of the environment and of society affects the most vulnerable people on the planet."
(L.Si', 48)**


The recent evidence provided in the UN report on climate change (August 9th 2021) is irrefutable and challenges us to review how we live our lives on our beautiful earth. Pope Francis an outspoken advocate for the care of the planet says in his ground-breaking encyclical, *Laudato Si'*, "The deterioration of the environment and of society affects the most vulnerable people on the planet." (L.Si', 48) The upcoming Season of Creation with its theme 'Restoring our Common Home', taken from the Irish Catholic Bishops Conference – provides an excellent opportunity for us to start rectifying this outrage.

The season of Creation is now part of the Christian calendar. Creation Time, as it is sometimes called, starts on September 1st and concludes, most appropriately, on the feast day of St Francis of Assisi on October 4th. The timing of this season is apt as it coincides with the fruitfulness of harvest time and the leaves on the trees turning from green to red and brown-surely a time to celebrate the bounty, beauty and joy of creation! Becoming aware, and taking notice, of the grandeur of creation during this season calls us to act to restore our common home. In *Laudato Si'*, with its subtitle 'on care for our common home' Pope Francis says, "The entire material universe speaks of God's love, his boundless affection for us. Soil, water, mountains: everything is, as it were, a caress of God." (L.Si', 84) By celebrating the Season of Creation and using *Laudato Si'* to guide us, we can, without doubt, travel a path towards a heightened awareness and appreciation of God's greatest gift to us. After all we are unlikely to want to damage something we hold precious.



**"The entire material universe speaks of God's love, his boundless affection for us. Soil, water, mountains: everything is, as it were, a caress of God."
(L.Si', 84)**


During Creation Time, the global Christian family is called to awaken to the urgent need to heal our relationships with creation and with each other, and to encourage our parish communities to do the same, “for we know that things can change!” (L.Si’,13). Pope Francis is acutely aware that the fate of the poor and the earth are intertwined. For example, when a catastrophic climatic event occurs, it is the poor who suffer most; yet they have done little to cause it.



**“ The greatest threat to our planet is the belief that someone else will save it.”
(Robert Swan)**

During this wonderful season of hope for Christians across the world it must be remembered that, like so many other things, for change to happen, it must begin with ‘me’. As explorer and activist Robert Swan says, ‘The greatest threat to our planet is the belief that someone else will save it.’ The stark and troubling findings of the UN report on climate change reinforce the need for us to act for the common good and to restore our common home during this season of creation.

Major change is needed but we can all make a difference. For example, we can act now to make our voices heard by signing the ‘Healthy Planet Healthy People Petition’ (thecatholicpetition.org). As the American activist Dorothy Day said, “No-one has a right to sit down and feel hopeless. There is too much work to do.” .



**“No-one has a right to sit down and feel hopeless. There is too much work to do.”
(Dorothy Day)**



The hymn of Saint Francis of Assisi

Praised be you, my Lord, with all your creatures,
especially Sir Brother Sun,
who is the day and through whom you give us light.
And he is beautiful and radiant with great splendour;
and bears a likeness of you, Most High.

Praised be you, my Lord, through Sister Moon and the stars,
in heaven, you formed them clear and precious and beautiful.

Praised be you, my Lord, through Brother Wind,
and through the air, cloudy and serene, and every kind of weather
through whom you give sustenance to your creatures.

Praised be you, my Lord, through Sister Water,
who is very useful and humble and precious and chaste.

Praised be you, my Lord, through Brother Fire,
through whom you light the night,
and he is beautiful and playful and robust and strong.

A prayer for our earth

All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe
and in the smallest of your creatures.

You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.

Pour out upon us the power of your love,
that we may protect life and beauty.

Fill us with peace, that we may live
as brothers and sisters, harming no one.

O God of the poor,
help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth,
so precious in your eyes.

Bring healing to our lives,
that we may protect the world and not prey on it,
that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction.

Touch the hearts
of those who look only for gain
at the expense of the poor and the earth.
Teach us to discover the worth of each thing,
to be filled with awe and contemplation,
to recognize that we are profoundly united
with every creature

as we journey towards your infinite light.

We thank you for being with us each day.

Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle
for justice, love and peace.

A Christian prayer in union with creation

Father, we praise you with all your creatures.
They came forth from your all-powerful hand;
they are yours, filled with your presence and your tender love.

Praise be to you!
Son of God, Jesus,
through you all things were made.
You were formed in the womb of Mary our Mother,
you became part of this earth,
and you gazed upon this world with human eyes.
Today you are alive in every creature
in your risen glory.
Praise be to you!

Holy Spirit, by your light
you guide this world towards the Father's love
and accompany creation as it groans in travail.
You also dwell in our hearts
and you inspire us to do what is good.
Praise be to you!

Triune Lord, wondrous community of infinite love,
teach us to contemplate you
in the beauty of the universe,
for all things speak of you.
Awaken our praise and thankfulness
for every being that you have made.
Give us the grace to feel profoundly joined
to everything that is.
God of love, show us our place in this world
as channels of your love
for all the creatures of this earth,
for not one of them is forgotten in your sight.
Enlighten those who possess power and money
that they may avoid the sin of indifference,
that they may love the common good, advance the weak,
and care for this world in which we live.
The poor and the earth are crying out.
O Lord, seize us with your power and light,
help us to protect all life,
to prepare for a better future,
for the coming of your Kingdom
of justice, peace, love and beauty.
Praise be to you!
Amen.

A Prayer to the Creator

Lord, Father of our human family,
you created all human beings equal in dignity:
pour forth into our hearts a fraternal spirit
and inspire in us a dream of renewed encounter,
dialogue, justice and peace.
Move us to create healthier societies
and a more dignified world,
a world without hunger, poverty, violence and war.
May our hearts be open
to all the peoples and nations of the earth.
May we recognize the goodness and beauty
that you have sown in each of us,
and thus forge bonds of unity, common projects,
and shared dreams. Amen.

An Ecumenical Christian Prayer

O God, Trinity of love,
from the profound communion of your divine life,
pour out upon us a torrent of fraternal love.
Grant us the love reflected in the actions of Jesus,
in his family of Nazareth,
and in the early Christian community.
Grant that we Christians may live the Gospel,
discovering Christ in each human being,
recognising him crucified
in the sufferings of the abandoned
and forgotten of our world,
and risen in each brother or sister
who makes a new start.
Come, Holy Spirit, show us your beauty,
reflected in all the peoples of the earth,
so that we may discover anew
that all are important and all are necessary,
different faces of the one humanity
that God so loves. Amen.

Prayer of the Faithful

O Creator God, as we celebrate the season of creation, teach us to see your footprints in the beauty of creation. Inspire us to care for the earth, to respect the rights of all people, and all living species to share in your gifts today, and to be always mindful of those who come after us. Lord, hear us. **Lord, graciously hear us.**

God of all life, we give thanks for the gift of the earth, our common home. At this time, many people, the oceans, and the ecosystems of the earth are struggling to survive. Help us to change our ways and guide us to live a life that is not centred exclusively on ourselves but on the needs of others and the worship of you as our ultimate concern. Lord, hear us. **Lord, graciously hear us.**

At this time in human history, we are mindful that the survival of our planet and the well-being of humanity are threatened. Let us pray that UN Agreements to reduce global warming and to care for the poor will be honoured by governments throughout the world. Give courage to world leaders as they meet in the coming months to make crucial decisions for our common home. Lord, hear us. **Lord, graciously hear us.**

Let us pray for each other at this time that we may live the vision and values of Pope Francis' encyclical on care for our Common Home. In particular, we pray for greater attention to social justice, climate justice, and intergenerational justice. Lord, hear us. **Lord, graciously hear us.**

Lord, we pray that we may gain a deeper appreciation of the beauty and diversity of all that you have created and of how we are interconnected with each other and with the natural world. Lord, hear us. **Lord, graciously hear us.**

Lord, in the spirit of the call of your Son, Jesus, to follow Him by renouncing ourselves, may we resolve to curb all selfish individual actions that conflict with our interrelationship with each other and with the natural world. Lord, hear us. **Lord, graciously hear us.**

Lord, on this Sunday – day of rest and recreation - we give thanks for the faith we celebrate in your Son, the Risen Jesus Christ, who has inspired us to gather in thanksgiving and praise. Lord, hear us. **Lord, graciously hear us.**

Lord, may we have the courage to give expression to our faith with practical actions for the betterment of each other and of your creation to ensure the rejuvenation of our common home. Lord, hear us. **Lord, graciously hear us.**