

# Our Common Home



Marco Campagna/iStockphoto

## *A Laudato Si' Toolkit*



Presented by:  
The Environmental Justice Project  
Catholic Charities, Diocese of Stockton





**Please have a look at the starting questions in your workbook and discuss with those around you or in your group.**

# Hello and Welcome!

["Pope Francis Korea Haemi Castle 19 \(cropped\)"](#) by [Korea.net / Korean Culture and Information Service](#) (Photographer name). Licensed under [CC BY-SA 2.0](#) via [Commons](#)

# Opening Prayer

O Lord, grant us the grace to grow deeper in our respect of and care for your Creation.

*Lord, hear our prayer.*

O Lord, help us to recognize the sacredness all of your creatures as signs of your wondrous love.

*Lord, hear our prayer.*

O Lord, help us turn from the selfish consumption of resources meant for all and to see the impacts of our choices on the poor and vulnerable.

*Lord, hear our prayer.*

# Question Response

- What do you think an encyclical is, and do you think it is mandatory to accept it?
- What has been your understanding of Laudato Si'?
- Where have you seen harm inflicted on Sister Earth (Paragraph 2)?

Adapted from National Catholic Reporter (NCR), CatholicMom.com, and Catholic Climate Covenant (CCC)



## We Are Here:

- To learn about Pope Francis' encyclical Laudato Si' ("Praise Be to You) and it's importance.
- What the themes of Laudato Si' are and what Pope Francis says about them.
- To respond to Pope Francis' call to action.



# An Encyclical

## What is it?

- Formal letter from the pope
- Concerns teachings, moral, and disciplinary matters
- Not necessarily infallible
- Carries authority
- Can be addressed to all people of goodwill, not just Catholics

## Why is it important?

Helps to better understand application of teachings of Sacred Scripture and Catholic Tradition, especially in the light of a particular issue.

# Pope Francis' Encyclical, Laudato Si'

**Key Message:** Climate change is a moral issue for Catholics and all people of goodwill.

- ★ The poor suffer the most despite contributing the least to climate change.
- ★ Improper care of the earth has led to severe consequences.
- ★ It's time to take responsibility for our consumer-driven culture.

Adapted from VIS.



<http://phys.org/news/2013-06-urban-indians-pollution.html>



Dry Soil by Petr Kratochvil



Carrying a Heavy Shopping Bag by Vera Kratochvil

# Laudato Si': Proposal

- To start an honest dialogue at every level of social economic and political life.
- To create understandable decision-making progress.
- To remind that nothing will work if we don't have a formed and responsible conscience.

Adapted from  
VIS.



# Questions to Consider



- ★ What kind of world do we want to leave to those who come after us, to children who are now growing up?
- ★ What are we called to do in this world?
- ★ What can we do for the earth?

Adapted from  
VIS.



# The Nine Themes of Laudato Si'

- ❖ The intimate relationship between the poor and the fragility of the planet.



[Payatas-Dumpsite\\_Manila\\_Philippines02](#) by Ras67  
[AlfredPalmerSmokestacks](#) by Durova  
[FishingVillage\\_HaLongBay\\_Vietnam](#) by XtoF  
[Natural\\_disasters\\_caused\\_by\\_climate\\_change](#) by KVDP

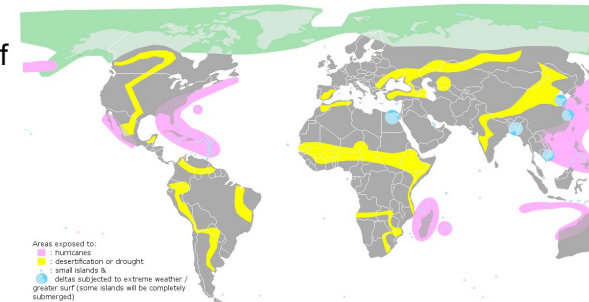
- [The poor] have no other financial activities or resources which can enable them to adapt to climate change or to face natural disasters, and their access to social services and protection is very limited.



- Many of the poor live in areas ...affected by phenomena related to warming
  - dependent on natural reserves like agriculture, fishing and forestry. (25)



- ...rise in the number of migrants ...flee[ing] from the growing poverty caused by environmental degradation. (25)



## Theme

- ❖ The conviction that everything in the world is connected.



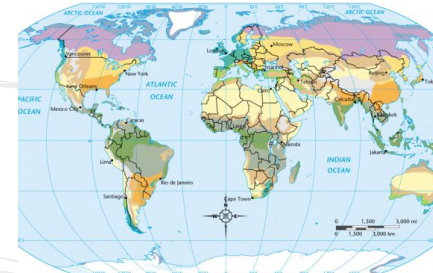
Hands4\_Overlaying by Ginge1420  
ClimateMap\_World  
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Recyclables by Streetwise Cycles

Adapted from  
USCCB and LS

## Pope Francis Says

- The climate is a common good, belonging to all and meant for all. (23)
- All of us are linked by unseen bonds and together form a kind of universal family. (89)
- Nature cannot be regarded as something separate from ourselves or as a mere setting in which we live. We are part of nature, included in it and thus in constant interaction with it. (139)
- Every violation of solidarity and civic friendship harms the environment. (142)



❖ The critique of technology's influence on society.



[Martin Evans Nobel Prize by Zureks "Martin Evans Nobel Prize" by Cardiff University - http://www.cardiff.ac.uk. Licensed under CC BY 3.0 via Commons - Umbilical-newborn" by Meutia Chaerani - Indradi Soemardjan - Own work Indrani. Licensed under CC BY 2.5 via Commons](#)

["N117, Hohenahr 7" by Andol - Own work. Licensed under CC BY-SA 3.0 via Commons Mobile Phone Evolution by Maximilian Schönherr](#)

Adapted from USCCB and LS.

- Technology...presented as the only way of solving these problems
  - ...proves incapable of seeing relations between things → sometimes solves one problem only to create others. (20)

- ...'contemporary man has not been trained to use power well',
  - not ...accompanied by a development in human responsibility, values and conscience. (105)

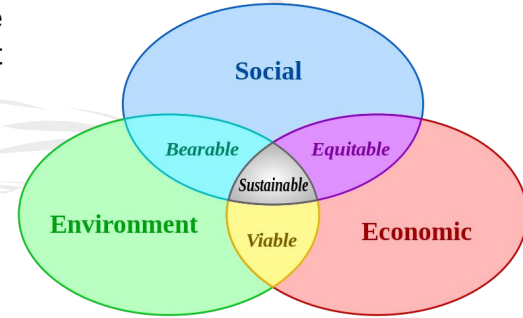
- ...we do need to slow down and look at reality in a different way,
  - also to recover the values and the great goals swept away by our unrestrained delusions of grandeur. (113-114)



❖ The call to seek other ways of understanding the economy and progress.



- Efforts to promote a sustainable use of natural resources are not a waste of money,
  - ...[it's] an investment capable of providing other economic benefits in the medium term. (191)

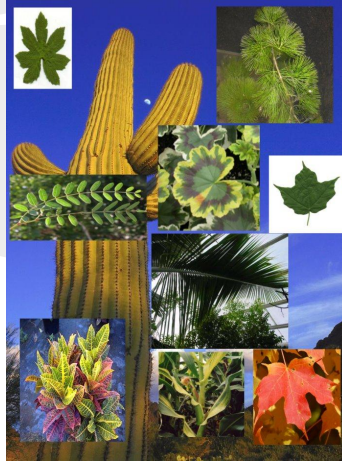


- ...unsustainable is the behaviour of those who constantly consume and destroy (193)
- ...others are not yet able to live in a way worthy of their human dignity. (193)

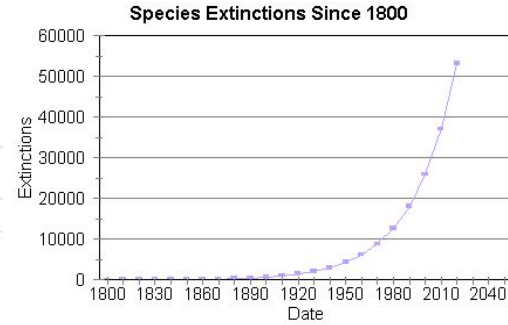


Adapted from  
USCCB and  
LS.

❖ The value given to each creature in proper proportion.



- [We can't] think of different species ... as potential "resources" to be exploited
  - ...they have value in themselves.
  - ...disappearance of thousands of plant and animal species [because of] reasons related to human activity. (33)
  
- ...human being[s as] an image of God should not make us overlook the fact that each creature has its own purpose. (84)
  
- 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. (84)

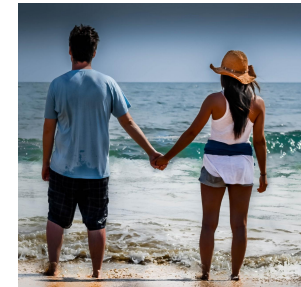


Adapted from  
USCCB and  
LS.

## ❖ The human meaning of ecology.



- ...true ecological approach always becomes a social approach;
  - integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, so as to hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor. (49)
- Strategies for a solution demand an integrated approach:
  - combating poverty
  - restoring dignity to the underprivileged
  - [while still] protecting nature. (139)
- Learning to accept our body, to care for it and to respect its fullest meaning, is an essential element of any genuine human ecology. (155)
- Also, valuing one's own body in its femininity or masculinity
  - we can joyfully accept the specific gifts of another man or woman, the work of God the Creator, and find mutual enrichment. (155)



Adapted from  
USCCB and  
LS.

"Jakarta slumhome 2" by Jonathan McIntosh - Own work. Licensed under CC BY 2.0 via Commons  
"Beijing smog comparison August 2005" by Bobak - Own work. Licensed under CC BY-SA 2.5 via Commons

Love by Irena Jackson  
The Earth Seen from Apollo 17 by Huntster



## Theme

### ❖ The need for forthright and honest dialogue.



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"Shimer College Classroom Upshot" by Shimer College - www.shimer.edu. Licensed under CC BY-SA 3.0 via Commons

Drought Forum by Yolanda Park

Adapted from USCCB and LS.

## Pope Francis Says

- ...new dialogue about how we are shaping the future of our planet. (14)
- We need a conversation that includes everyone since [everything is affected] (14)
- ...the Church does not presume to settle scientific questions or to replace politics. (188)
- ...honest and open debate so that particular interests or ideologies will not [take away from] the common good. (188)



## Theme

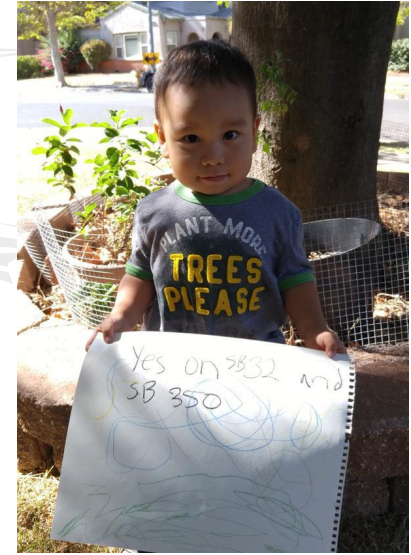
- ❖ The serious responsibility of international and local policies.



"United Nations Flags - cropped" by Tom Page - Flickr: IMG\_1965. Licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0 via Commons  
Yes on SB 30 and 350 by Yolanda Park  
Senator Kevin de Leon, Bishops Blaire and Soto, and CRS by EJStockton

## Pope Francis Says

- There is an urgent need to develop policies so that...the emission of carbon dioxide and other highly polluting gases can be drastically reduced...(26)
- To take up these responsibilities and the costs they entail, politicians will inevitably clash with the mindset of short-term gain and results which dominates present-day economics and politics.



Adapted from USCCB and LS.

Theme

❖ The throwaway culture and the proposal of a new lifestyle.



055Matteifactory by Daily Mail  
RECICLADO by Michelangelo-36  
Tournafortia\_argentea by Forest & Kim Starr  
First Sonogram by Yolanda Park

Adapted from USCCB and LS.

Pope Francis Says

- The earth, our home, is beginning to look more and more like an immense pile of filth. (21)
- When people become self-centered and self-enclosed, their greed increases.
- The emptier a person's heart is, the more he or she needs things to buy, own and consume.
- It becomes almost impossible to accept the limits imposed by reality. In this horizon, a genuine sense of the common good also disappears. (204)



- These problems are closely linked to a throwaway culture which affects the excluded just as it quickly reduces things to rubbish. (22)

# Questions to Consider

See Workbook



## **Pope Francis' Call to Action**

Our goal is not to amass information or to satisfy curiosity, but rather to become painfully aware, to dare to turn what is happening to the world into our own personal suffering and thus to discover what each of us can do about it. (19)

## The Call

## Our Turn...

## Our Response

- ❑ The emptier a person's heart is, the more he or she needs things to buy, own and consume. It becomes almost impossible to accept the limits imposed by reality. (204)
- ❑ A change in lifestyle could bring healthy pressure to bear on those who wield political, economic and social power. (206)
- ❑ We are faced with an educational challenge. (209)
- ❑ There is a nobility in the duty to care for creation through little daily actions (211)
- ❑ Isolated individuals can lose their ability and freedom to escape the utilitarian mindset, and end up prey to an unethical consumerism [with no] social or ecological awareness. Social problems must be addressed by community networks and not simply by the sum of individual good deeds. (219)
- ❑ It is a return to that simplicity which allows us to:... (222)

## **Remember!**

### **The Goals of Laudato Si' Are the Goals of Social Justice:**

- To get together to talk about the state of our environment and our relationship to it and to each other.
- To open our hearts to the crisis of both the environment and disadvantaged peoples.
- To take action together for the Common Good on all levels of society.

Adapted from VIS.

## Have Hope!

**Yet all is not lost.** Human beings, while capable of the worst, are also capable of rising above themselves, choosing again what is good, and making a new start, despite their mental and social conditioning.

**No system can completely suppress our openness to what is good, true and beautiful, or our God-given ability to respond to his grace at work deep in our hearts.**

**I appeal to everyone throughout the world not to forget this dignity which is ours.** No one has the right to take it from us.  
(205)

**We must not think that these efforts are not going to change the world.** They benefit society, often unbeknown to us, for they call forth a goodness which, albeit unseen, inevitably tends to spread. Furthermore, such actions can restore our sense of self-esteem; they can enable us to live more fully and to feel that life on earth is worthwhile. (212)



## Closing Prayer

### Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace,  
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;  
Where there is injury, pardon;  
Where there is discord, union;  
Where there is doubt, faith;  
Where there is despair, hope;  
Where there is darkness, light;  
Where there is sadness, joy.

Grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console;  
To be understood, as to understand;  
To be loved as to love.

For it is in the giving we receive;  
It is in the pardoning that we are pardoned;  
And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

# Thank You!

## Feel free to contact us:

Katelyn Roedner Sutter  
Environmental Justice Program Director  
Catholic Charities, Diocese of Stockton  
1106 N. El Dorado Street  
Stockton, CA 95202  
209.396.6921 (office)  
207.286.5041 (cell)

Edgar Garibay  
Environmental Justice - Stanislaus  
Program Coordinator  
Catholic Charities - Diocese of  
Stockton  
2351 Tenaya Dr. Ste. D, Modesto, Ca  
95354  
1106 N. El Dorado St. Stockton, Ca  
95202  
Direct line: (209) 373 7650  
Fax: (209) 529 6083

Yolanda Park  
Environmental Justice Program  
Assistant  
Catholic Charities, Diocese of Stockton  
1106 N. El Dorado Street  
Stockton, CA 95202  
209-396-6921

**Follow us!** Facebook: Environmental Justice Program  
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Website:

**Further Resources:** Catholic Climate Covenant  
<http://www.catholicclimatecovenant.org/>

Global Catholic Climate Movement  
<https://catholicclimatemovement.global/>

Catholic Ecology  
<http://catholicecology.net/>

**Further Resources: We can provide Advocacy Training, do book clubs, presentations, give resources, and more!**