



Laudato Si'

Reading Laudato Si' Together

Chapter 6: Ecological
Education & Spirituality

trócaire

LAUDATO SI'

ON CARE FOR
OUR COMMON HOME



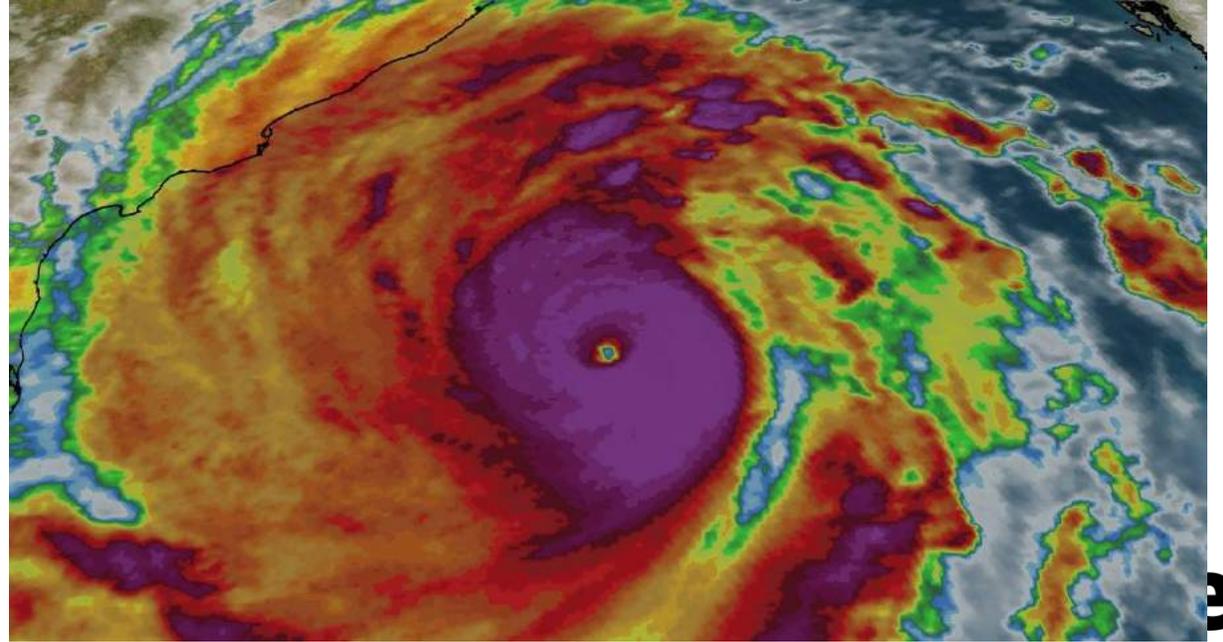
POPE FRANCIS



ENCYCLICAL LETTER

Overview of Laudato Si

- Chapter 1: “What is happening to our common home?”
- Chapter 2: “The Gospel of Creation”
- Chapter 3: “The Human Roots of the Ecological Crisis”
- Chapter 4: “Integral Ecology”
- Chapter 5: “Lines of Approach & Action”
- Chapter 6: “Ecological Education & Spirituality”



Chapter 6: Ecological Education & Spirituality

“A great cultural, spiritual and educational challenge stands before us and it demands that we set out on the long path of renewal.” (LS, 202)



Ecological Education & Spirituality

1. Towards a New Lifestyle
2. Educating for the Covenant between Humanity & the Environment
3. Ecological Conversion
4. Joy & Peace
5. Civic & Political Love
6. Sacramental Signs & the Celebration of Rest
7. The Trinity & the Relationship Between Creatures
8. Queen of all Creation
9. Beyond the Sun



1. Towards a New Lifestyle

“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... No system can completely suppress our openness to what is good, true, 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.”
(Laudato Si, 205)





2. Educating for the Covenant between Humanity and the Environment

- Our thinking must change.
- This pedagogy is a **spiritual** pedagogy: “Environmental education should facilitate making the leap towards the **transcendent** which gives ecological ethics its deepest meaning.” (LS, 201)
- Ecological citizenship needs to cultivate **virtues**, **convictions** and **attitudes** through little daily actions and changes in lifestyles.
- “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 tends to spread.” (LS ,212)

Get personal – do something to reduce your carbon footprint



Don't waste water



Get Walking



Recycle



Green Light



Share, borrow, lend



Get on your bike



Wash at 30



Compost



Eat less meat



Reduce food waste



Sustainable clothes



Drink tap water

3. Ecological Conversion

- Returns to the great example of St. Francis, as a model of what it means to experience a true eco-conversion.
- Communal, collective conversion, desire to change.
- **“Christian need an ecological conversion, whereby the effects of their encounter with Jesus Christ become evident in their relationship with the world around them. 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.” (LS, 217)**
- St. Francis shows us a way, a model, a clue to what it is like to have this experience.



“We read in the Gospel that Jesus says of the birds of the air that ‘not one of them is forgotten before God’ (Lk 12:6). How then can we possibly mistreat them or cause them harm?

I ask all Christians to recognise and to live fully this dimension of their conversion....In this way we will help nurture that sublime fraternity with all creation which St. Francis of Assisi so radiantly embodied.” (LS, 221)



4. Joy & Peace

- An ancient lesson – ‘less is more’
- Live Simply, live life to the full.
- Liberating, shed unsatisfying needs.
- Must find peace within ourselves,
as consumerism is driven by a lack of peace.
- Renew ourselves, deepen our relationship with God.
- Return to ‘grace before meals’ – simple act of gratitude, eating mindfully, attentive to the gifts which have been given to us, lives of plants and animals.

PRAYER BEFORE MEALS

Loving God, we ask you to bless this food which comes to us through the work of many people, from the sowing of seeds in the earth to our table here today. Help us to always care for Your beautiful creation.

Amen.



5. Civic & Political Love



- St. Therese of Lisieux invites us to practise the little way of love.... Small gestures. Integral ecology of daily gestures.
- Wherever we find ourselves, we serve God and creation, with acts of kindness, love and care.
- Not all people are called to the same civic engagement, e.g. politics, but each of us are called to some sort of action in the broad civic sphere.
- “these community actions, when they express self-giving love, can also become intense spiritual experiences.” (LS, 232)

6. Sacramental Signs & the Celebration of Rest

- St. John of the Cross: “Standing awestruck before a mountain, one cannot separate this experience from God....These mountains are what my Beloved is to me” (LS, 234).
- Eucharist – extends beyond our human family to a celebration of God’s love in all creation.
- Completion of creation comes with a day of rest, a sabbath.
- We must honour this day of contemplative rest where we can remember the work of God in creation and gaze upon it. This restores us, renews us in our web of relationships.
- Our busy, work-aholic way of life has put this aside.

That Christ instituted this celebration with material substantive realities, i.e. bread, wine, is a testament to the goodness and deep sacramentality of the created order.





“Indeed the Eucharist is itself an act of cosmic love: Yes, cosmic! Because even when it is celebrated on the humble altar of a country church, the Eucharist is always in some way celebrated on the altar of the world...joins heaven and earth; it embraces and penetrates all creation”. (LS, 236)

7. The Trinity & the Relationship Between Creatures

- St. Bonaventure – unique source of Trinitarian theology.
- All of creation is a reflection, a mirror of the Trinity.
- When we contemplate in nature we can see the Trinity in all of creation.
- All of creation is a footprint of God.
- We, in creation, are imbedded deeply in this web. Everything is interconnected.



8. Queen of all Creation

- Draws a connection on the way in which Mary mourned for her son on calvary and the suffering and loss of creation.
- “Just as her pierced heart mourned the death of Jesus, so no she grieves for the sufferings of the crucified poor and for the creatures of this world laid waste by human power.” (LS, 241)
- St. Joseph – provides us with a great example of a committed worker, we should seek his intercession in our commitment to care for creation.





"Behold, I make all things new."

—Rev 21:5

9. Beyond the Sun

At the end: "We will find ourselves face to face with the infinite beauty of God and be able to read with admiration and happiness the mystery of the universe." (LS, 243).

God does not abandon us "for he has united himself definitively to our earth, and his love constantly impels us to find new ways forward. Praise be to him!" (LS, 245)

Tröcaire



“Let us sing as we go.
May our struggles &
our concern for this
planet never take away
the joy of our hope.”

Laudato Si’, 244

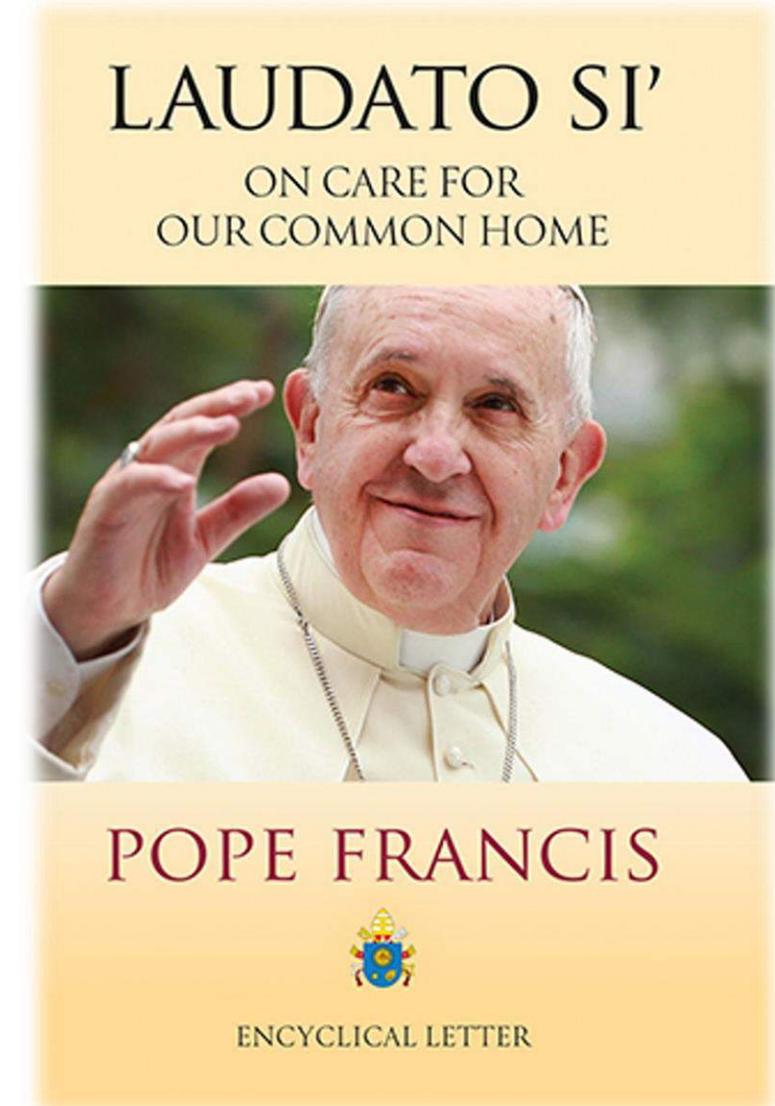
For reflection:

- What stood out for you in chapter 6?

Over the past 7 weeks we have explored Laudato Si from start to finish.

- What are your main insights/reflections from this time?
- What gives you hope?
- What are your next steps?
- As a group what could you do locally in your parish? Start small.

"Truly much can be done!" (LS, 180)



Suggestion for Closing reflection:

- Ask participants to choose their favourite quote from this chapter or a quote that really resonated with them.
- You may wish to ask them to do this prior to this session so that they have it ready.
- Invite participants to read their quote.
- Leave some silence between each quote.
- Finish with Glory be to the Father.....

