



# Living Laudato Si

## At home

A guide for individuals and families

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## Contents

Preface .....	4
Introduction .....	6
Introduction to Laudato Si .....	7
Praise and Disassociation.....	9
Zero-waste thinking framework .....	9
Part 1.....	13
Laudato Si Chapter 1.....	14
Care and Harm .....	16
The big issues .....	16
Goal setting .....	19
Part 2.....	21
Laudato Si Chapter 2.....	22
Exploitation and Gratitude.....	25
Part 3.....	28
Laudato Si Chapter 3.....	29
Arrogance and humility.....	31
Changing mindset .....	32
Part 4.....	34
Laudato Si Chapter 4.....	35
Lectio of nature .....	38
Inequality and justice.....	39
Part 5.....	41
Laudato Si Chapter 5.....	42
Greed and Sobriety .....	43
10 action plan.....	44
Part 6.....	45
Prayer .....	45
Work and waste .....	45
Laudato Si Chapter 6.....	46
Moving forward .....	49
Reference list .....	50



### Watch video 1:

**From the Author:** In 2018, I underwent an ecological conversion during Lent. At that time, I changed 40 things in my life to go zero-waste. 40 things turned into 100, and the words of Laudato Si consumed my life. It now informs how I think, how I behave, how I buy, and the choices that I make. It was the most challenging thing I had ever done. Lent has not ended for me. I have made some sacrifices, but I have gained so much. I am not just zero-waste. I shop fair trade, I eat a plant-rich diet, I buy package-free, I use solar electricity at home, I conserve water and I am an amateur gardener. I also donate to places that support those in poverty and the disadvantaged as I have done for many years.

**The objective of this guide is to help individuals and families on their ecological conversion journey.** This guide I have created is to help you and your family begin your journey to an ecological conversion together. I would recommend taking the guide with you for over 7 weeks. But you may feel you need longer at different stages, so do not feel that you have a 7-week deadline. Each part may take more than an hour to complete, and it is a good idea to set aside the time for this reflection. Also, in some places, some tasks may take longer. For example, in Part 1, I recommend some literature to immerse yourself in, and this might take a few hours or a few days to get through. There are 7 parts to this guide. If you are not ready to move to the next part, you can stay with the one you are on for as long as you need it.

We can only do this through small, manageable steps. Tackling the climate crisis is not something we can do in one night. And having a prayerful way of discerning the appropriate course of action can help us draw nearer to the Creator.

A good friend of mine Libby Blom and her husband Paul, my wonderful SOR teacher, mentor, and friend have gone on an ecological journey with their family inspired by Laudato Si. My sincere thanks go to the Blom's and their guidance, their support, and their love. Every day I aspire to be as wonderful and faith-filled as they are. This document is inspired by them and how they have educated their 5 beautiful children.

I also need to give thanks to my wonderful husband James. "I thought you were going through a phase"...

## Housekeeping

Welcome to Living Laudato Si at home – a guide for individuals and families. I very much look forward to supporting you on your ecological journey. A few housekeeping items before we get started.

1. You may have chosen to book your individual consultations sessions and may have already selected some times to do this. If you need to change those times, or would like to book more, please email [alice.carwardine@gmail.com](mailto:alice.carwardine@gmail.com) with your request. Your first booking is \$30, afterwards they are \$20 each.
2. Your login is with you forever. There is no time limit on your account.
3. I kindly ask that you do not share the materials or login. For another family to go through the experience, it is best if they create their own login so that they can book their own consultations.

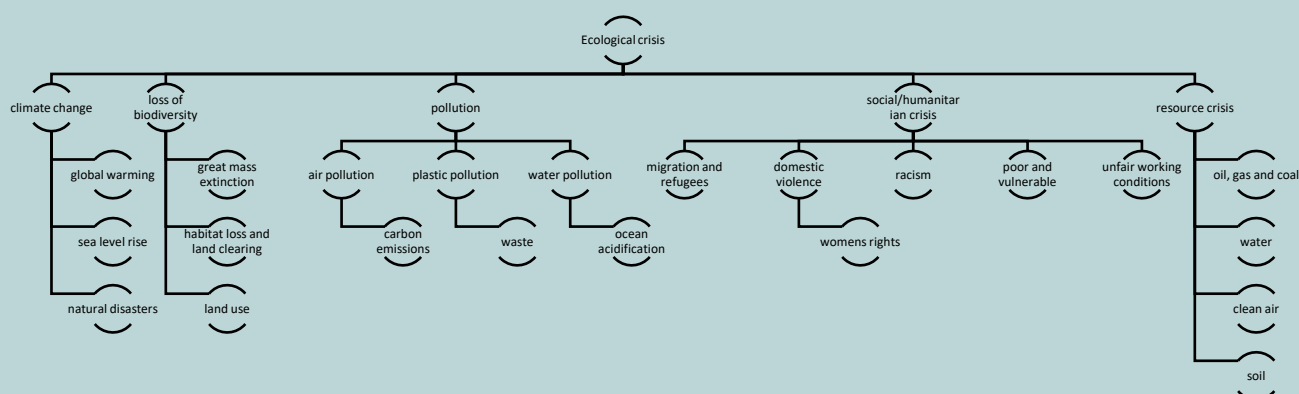
If you have any questions at any point, please feel free to email!

## Preface

### Preface video

Before we begin on this journey, I suppose there are two things that we need to be clear about in relation to their definition before we begin. Firstly, what is the ecological crisis? And what is an ecological conversion.

Under the banner of **ecological crisis**, there are a lot of sub sections. All of these issues are connected as part of the ecological crisis. I am sure there are many more issues that occur as a result. For example, I have not even included health! And many of these are interconnected, e.g. carbon emissions and oil, gas and coal.



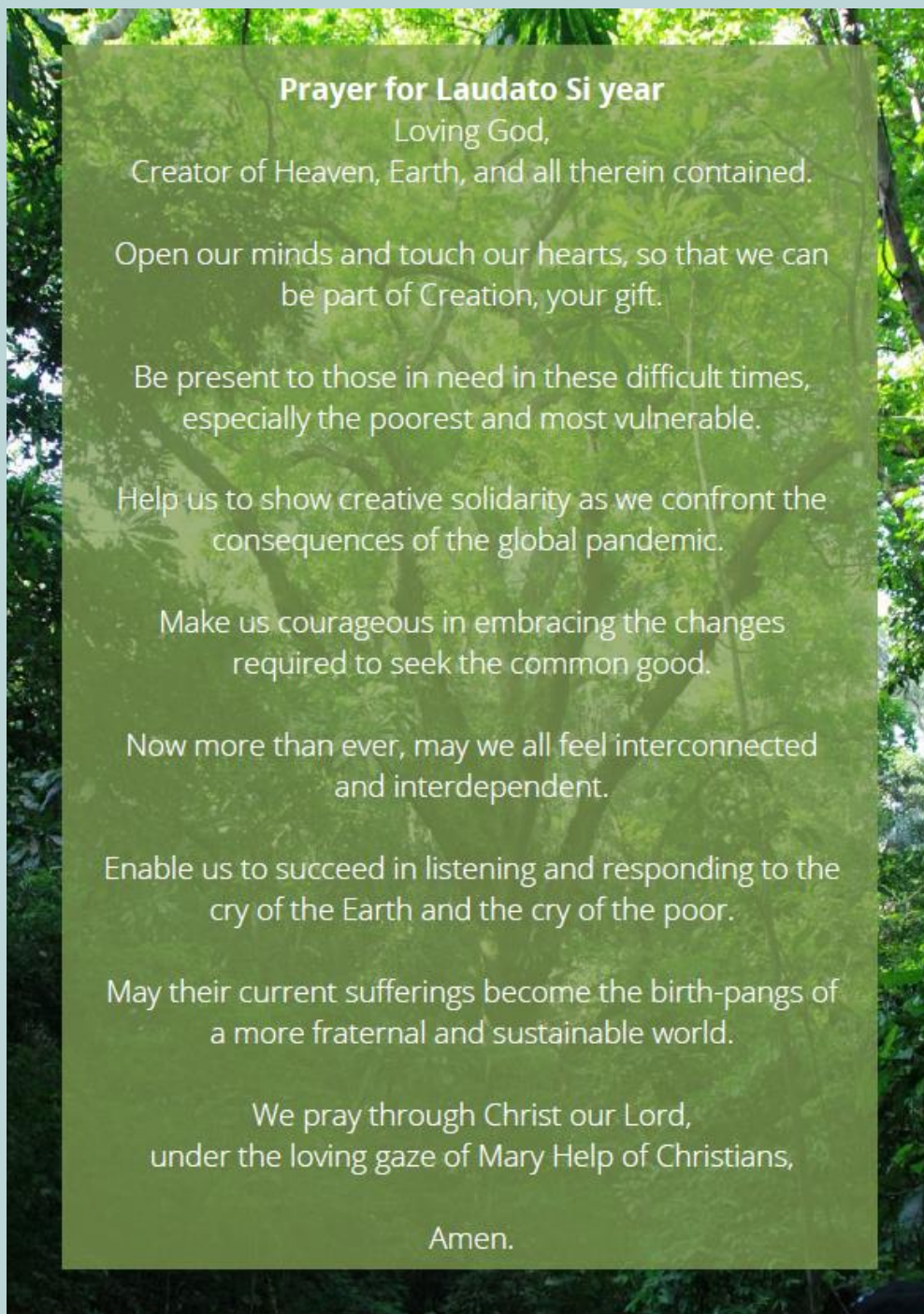
When I mention the entire ecological crisis, this is what I am referring to. You may also notice that climate change and global warming are only one part of this entire situation. Throughout this journey, I encourage you to research what you don't know. For example, when I mention the issue of palm oil later on, you may not be familiar with what the issue is there, and I encourage you to go and read up on that.

On **ecological conversion**, Pope Francis defines this as a process whereby the effects of our encounter with Jesus Christ become evident in our relationship with the world around us. 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). I hope that throughout this guide, you can see that an ecological conversion of the heart is necessary to make changes in our lives to benefit the environment and tread softly upon the earth. It is what Pope Francis calls us to do in response to the ecological crisis.



## Introduction

I feel it most fitting, to begin with a prayer. This prayer that I would like to start with is the official prayer for the Laudato Si year announced on the 24th of May 2020, 5 years after Laudato Si was released. If you are taking part in this guide as an individual, pray this prayer in your heart. If you are praying with your family, I suggest breaking the prayer into sections to read so that everyone has a turn. Begin in the name of the Father, and the Son and of the Holy Spirit...



## Introduction to Laudato Si

### Watch video 2:

In 2015 Pope Francis released the encyclical Laudato Si. An encyclical is a letter from the Pope to all peoples. The document aims to do a few things. Firstly, it provides the official response to the climate crisis from the Catholic Church. Secondly, it calls all people into action and an ecological conversion to combat the climate crisis. Pope Francis uses simple language in his encyclical, however, the document is very long. I would recommend reading the entire document. Which can be found here [http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco\\_20150524\\_enciclica-laudato-si.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html). However, this guide will highlight some of the important excerpts of the document that are useful on the path to an ecological conversion.

Before Chapter 1 in the encyclical, Pope Francis talks about his name. Pope Francis chose his name after St Francis of Assisi, who was known for his connection with nature and the Creator. Pope Francis tells his story and introduces the Canticle of Creation. The first words of the Canticle of Creation are 'Praise Be,' or in Latin, Laudato Si. Consider the following words of Laudato Si.

From the Prologue:

"Patriarch Bartholomew has spoken in particular of the need for each of us to repent of the ways we have harmed the planet, for "inasmuch as we all generate small ecological damage", we are called to acknowledge "our contribution, smaller or greater, to the disfigurement and destruction of creation". He has repeatedly stated this firmly and persuasively, challenging us to acknowledge our sins against creation: "For human beings.... To destroy the biological diversity of God's creation; for human beings to degrade the integrity of the earth by causing changes in its climate, by stripping the earth of its natural forests or destroying its wetlands; for human beings to contaminate the earth's waters, its land, its air and its life – these are sins". For "to commit a crime against the natural world is a sin against ourselves and a sin against God." LS 8

"I will point to the intimate relationship between the poor and the fragility of the planet, the conviction that everything in the world is connected, the critique of new paradigms and forms of power derived from technology, the call to seek other ways of understanding the economy and progress, the value proper to each creature, the human meaning of ecology, the need for forthright and honest debate, the serious responsibility of international and local policy, the throwaway culture and the proposal of a new lifestyle. These questions will not be dealt with once and for all but reframed and enriched again and again." LS 16



**Activity 1: Write one thing that you took away from these passages. Discuss if you are working as a family.**

One thing that I/we took away from these passages was:

**Watch video 3:**

Fr Joshtrom Kureethadam wrote an academic piece about Laudato Si identifying 7 ecological virtues.



Praise	Disassociation
Gratitude	Exploitation
Care	Harm
Justice	Inequality
Work	Waste
Sobriety	Greed
Humility	Arrogance

Here I have proposed 7 ecological sins to accompany these virtues. In each part, we will consider these virtues and sins. Ecological virtues are essentially the dispositions that a person needs to have to enter into an integral ecology, to undergo an ecological conversion and to help the environment. Ecological sins are the opposite. They are the dispositions that we have that foster anthropocentrism, exploitation of the Earth's resources, and harm to the environment. These issues we will discuss along the journey. To follow on from the words 'Praise Be' I would like to introduce the first virtue, which is Praise.



## Praise and Disassociation

### Praise

They also invite other creatures to join us in this praise: 'Praise him, sun and moon, praise him, all you shining stars! Praise him, you highest heavens, and you waters above the heavens! Let them praise the name of the Lord, for he commanded and they were created LS 72

### Disassociation

Obstructionist attitudes, even on the part of believers, can range from denial of the problem of indifference, nonchalant resignation or blind confidence in technical solutions LS 14

Take the time this week to Praise God and Praise Creation. In Laudato Si, Pope Francis talks about St Francis' belief that all creatures were made perfect by God. By virtue of their creation, they praise God. In the Friary garden, St Francis allowed the wildflowers to grow in their own special section, not to be disturbed by human cultivation, to allow them to praise God by virtue of their being.

We need to be like the wildflowers in the friary garden, raising our hearts and minds to God. And we need to allow other beings to do the same.

**Activity 2: This week, how can you praise God and allow nature to praise God? If you are with your family, discuss how you may do this together.**

This week I/we will praise God by:

By connecting with nature, we praise God. When we disassociate from creation by ignoring its cries, we fail to praise God.

## Zero-waste thinking framework

### Watch video 4:

During Lent, I was able to reflect on how I disassociate from the world through my actions. I noticed, that when I make choices without thinking of the implications, I disassociate myself from the rest of creation. While becoming zero-waste, I came across these two thinking frameworks that helped me to change this way of thinking. They help me to make decisions with any object that I interact with. I try to see all objects for the worth that God would place on them, not for the worth I would. So, I consider:

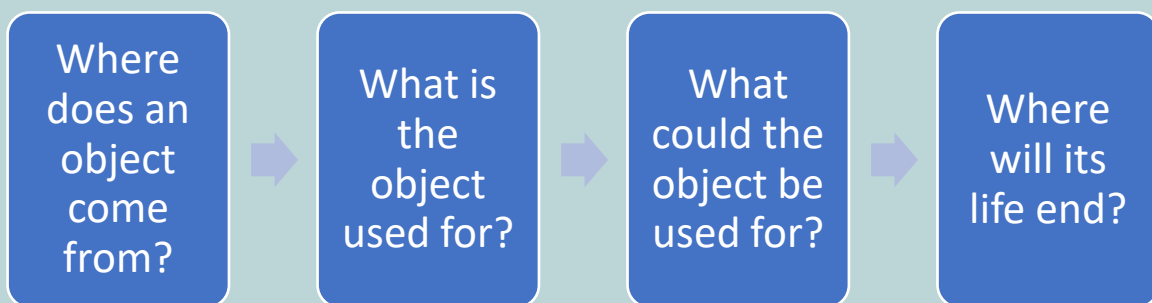
Where did the object come from?

What is the object being used for?

What could the object be used for?

Where will the object's life end?

If I don't like the circumstances from where the object came from, for example, a fast-fashion item, I will not buy it. If the item is used for something that I don't like, then I will not use it. For example, alcohol. If the object could be used for something in the future, I will repurpose it. For example, orange peels can be soaked in vinegar to create citrus cleaning products. And If I don't like where the object's life will end, I will try to change this. For example, I will put food scraps in the compost, not in landfill.



The other framework that I use is an extended version of the good old "reduce, reuse, recycle" framework:



**Activity 3a: Think of one object in your house that you would like to make more sustainable. As a family, I suggest each capable person, to complete this activity individually, then come together and discuss. Consider the first 4 questions. (Example in brackets: single-use coffee cup)**

Where did it come from? (Made of plastic, which is made from oil in the ground, then sold by the coffee shop).

What is it being used for? (to drink coffee)

What could it be used for? (the cup could be used later for storage if cleaned)

Where will its life end? (in landfill)

**Activity 3b: Consider the extended version of 'reduce, reuse, recycle' and determine one thing that you could do instead this week to improve the answer to one of the questions.**

One thing that I/we could do instead is: (bring a refillable cup)

This will help because: (it will mean that the cup doesn't go to landfill, and less single-use cups are made).

**Goals for this week:**

1. Praise God (from activity 2)
2. DO the one thing that you said you would like to do (activity 3)

## Part 1

The prayer we begin within this part comes from the last pages of Laudato Si. We begin again in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit...

### 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.

Amen



## Laudato Si Chapter 1

Before we leap into chapter 1, consider the goals from last week. How did you go? Discuss if you are with your family.

What was challenging?

What went well?

What are you going to try next?

### **Watch video 5:**

In the first chapter of Laudato Si, we see a thorough examination of the science around the ecological crisis. It covers pollution, waste, climate change, the throwaway culture, water, loss of biodiversity, decline of the quality of life and breakdown of society, and global inequality. The document names and describes these issues. It specifically points out how the human race harms our Mother Earth. It also draws links between ecological and social injustice.

One of the parts that spoke to me very clearly is the part about the throwaway culture. The idea that we pull something out of the Earth, turn it into something we use, we use it, then we discard it. This linear pattern is not sustainable, and we need to break this line and turn it into a circle instead. Some people call it a circular economy.

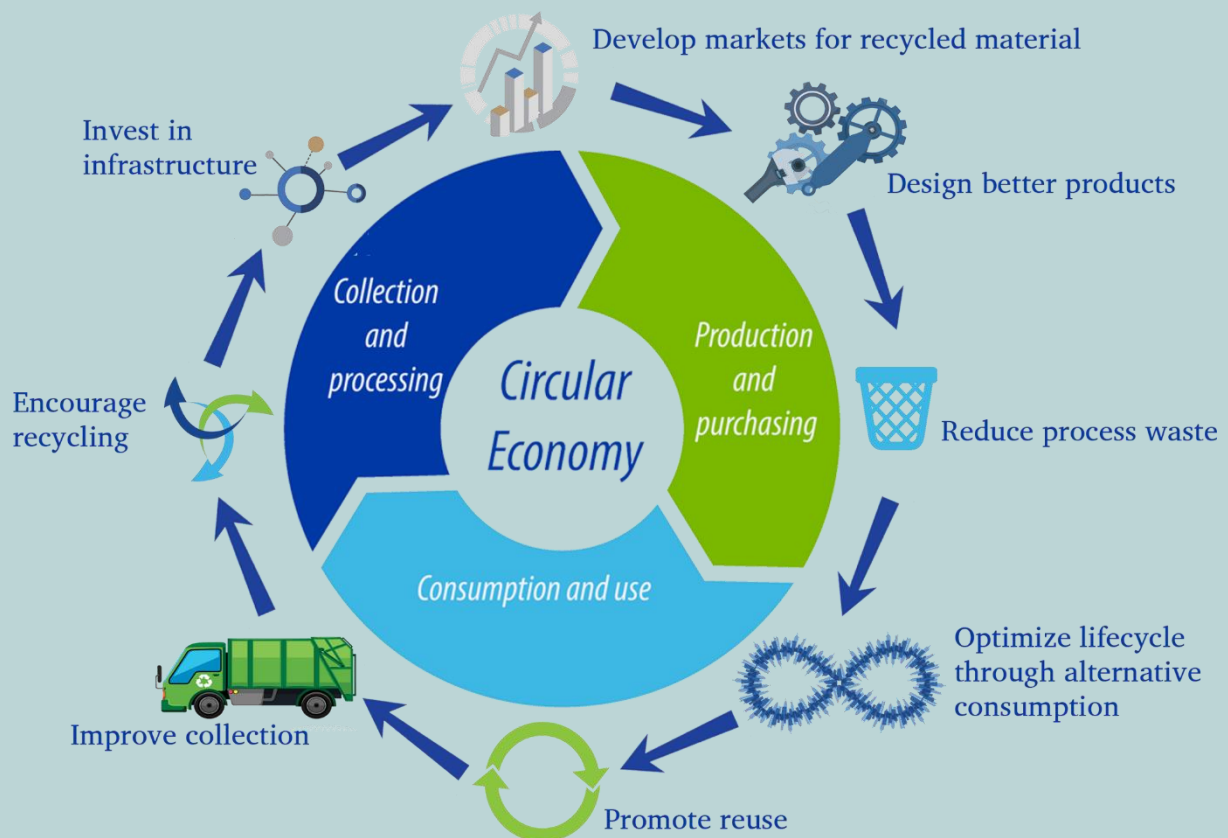


Image: Sustainable Global Resources Ltd.  
Recycling Council of Ontario

From: <https://rco.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/RCO-Circular-Economy.png>

We also need to have this same approach to humans as well. When I was a teenager, my grandmother was quite ill and lonely. She had lost her husband and although she still had friends, she missed her family. We visited when we could, but only for a short time. She lives on the Gold Coast of Australia and when we would visit her as a family, my parents would want to use that time to also go and do other things, see other attractions, go shopping at some of the factory outlets. But all I wanted to do was sit, listen, and play games with my nan. When I was old enough, I began to make the time to visit her myself so that we could just spend time together. I enjoy my time walking slowly next to her when going out, listening to her over cups of tea and sharing meals with her.

Another example of how the throwaway culture relates to our human interactions is how we interact with retail workers. When we go into the shopping centres, we barely interact with the workers who spend so much of their time trying to make our experience worthwhile. When I learnt about the throwaway culture, my mindset changed. For example, I started shopping at my local bulk food store up at Hervey Bay, and I would spend the time talking to the ladies at the shop. We would share recipes, discuss ideas, talk about our lives, and made a true connection. This interaction I will never forget.

It may not be obvious at first, but this throwaway culture and other beliefs about the need to expand, grow, gain, and progress as humanity, that inform our current attitudes towards the environment, are harmful to our planet. In Chapter 1 Pope Francis explains:

"The continued acceleration of changes affecting humanity and the planet is coupled today with a more intensified pace of life and work which might be called "rapidification". Although change is part of the working of complex systems, the speed with which human activity has developed contrasts with the naturally slow pace of biological evolution. Moreover, the goals of this rapid and constant change are not necessarily geared to the common good or to integral and sustainable human development. Change is something desirable, yet it becomes a source of anxiety when it causes harm to the world and to the quality of life of much of humanity." LS 18

Pope Francis even uses some very visceral language about pollution and the throwaway culture:

"The earth, our home, is beginning to look more and more like an immense pile of filth" LS 21.

Pope Francis pointedly names this global crisis:

"Climate change is a global problem with grave implications: environmental, social, economic, political and for the distribution of goods. It represents one of the principal challenges facing humanity in our day" LS 25.

He truly brings together the fact that the climate crisis is also a humanitarian crisis.

### Care and Harm

Care	Harm
We are called... 'to cooperate as instruments of God for the care of creation, each according to his or her own culture, experience, involvements and talents' LS 14	This sister now cries out to us because of the harm we have inflicted on her by our irresponsible use and abuse of goods with which God has endowed her LS 2

In this part of *Laudato Si*, it is clear that Pope Francis talks about how we sin and harm the environment. Fr Joshtrom would say that we then need to think about ways in which we can care for creation. It is a virtue to be caring for creation. In the next section, we will be considering how the environment has been harmed, and how then we can care for it instead.

Of course, we already know a lot of this information from our own experiences.

### The big issues

Before moving on, I would like you to write down all of the big issues that you know about that come under the umbrella of the ecological crisis. That is all the ways that humans have harmed the environment.

**Activity 1: Name all of the problems that you know we face as part of the ecological crisis.**

Problems that we face as part of the ecological crisis

You might find that you would like to know more about other issues before continuing with this journey. Here is some literature I recommend. Some of these books, documentaries, and articles are challenging for little ones to watch. I've listed a few kids movies that might help cater to little ones.

**Books:**

Drawdown by Project Drawdown– Book and website that names the top 80 solutions to sequestering carbon dioxide back into the earth. <https://www.drawdown.org/>

The Uninhabitable Earth by David Wallace-Wells – book that is incredibly scary about what our Earth will be like if we don't make changes now

On Eating Meat by Matthew Evans– a book about meat ethics

Blow out by Rachel Maddow– a book about the corruption in the fossil fuel industry

**Movies and TV series:**

2040 – a movie that explores what the year 2040 might look like if we make the changes now that we can (great for families).

Plastic Ocean – Netflix series that discusses plastic pollution

Rotten - Netflix series that discusses food origins and fair trade

The Inconvenient Truth and the Inconvenient Sequel – Documentary about the climate crisis

**Theology books and articles:**

Becker, W. H. (1992). Ecological sin. *Theology Today*, 49(2), 152.

Deane-Drummond, C. (2008). *Eco-theology*. Retrieved from <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com>

Johnson E. A. (2018). *Creation and the Cross*. Maryknoll NY: Orbis Books

Johnson, E. A. (2014). The Community of Creation. In E. A. Johnson, *Ask the Beasts: Darwin and the God of Love*, (pp. 260-286). Bloomsbury Publishing Place, London.

Kureethadam, J. I. (2016). Ecological virtues in Laudato Si. *Ethics in Progress*, 7(1). Pp. 44-66.  
Doi:10.14746/eip.2016.1.4

Pope Francis. (2015). *Encyclical Letter Laudato Si of the Holy Father Francis on Care for Our Common Home*. Retrieved from [http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco\\_20150524\\_enciclica-laudato-si.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html)

Shore-Goss, R. E. (2016). *God is green: An eco-spirituality of incarnate compassion*. Retrieved from <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com>

#### **Kids:**

The Bee Movie – talks about how important bees are to our ecosystem.

Wall-e – a dystopian style movie about what would happen if we continue to pollute our planet.

Fern Gulley – a movie about deforestation.

The Lorax – about environment and profit

Happy Feet – about plastic pollution and humans

**Activity 2: Choose one of the above recommendations to interact with. If you don't want to read the whole book or watch the whole movie, find some spark notes. What have you learnt from the literature?**

The literature I interacted with was:

What I learnt from the literature was:

From the literature, I have learnt that we harm the environment when we:

From the literature, I have learnt that we can care or creation when we:

After interacting with literature and considering all of these massive issues. How does this make us feel? Know that your emotions are completely valid.



### Activity 3: Noting our emotions towards the climate crisis

When I think about the climate crisis I feel:

### Goal setting

#### Watch video 6:

After interacting with any of those pieces of literature or media, I tend to find myself angry, upset, helpless, or frustrated. But sometimes, I can find myself hopeful. What actions are you already taking to care for creation? Do you have solar panels? Do you have green power? Are you vegan or vegetarian? Do you have a worm farm? Are you recycling properly? Have you switched your lights to more energy-efficient lights?

#### Activity 4: What are you already doing to help care for the environment?

I/we are already:

To be able to work through this journey, it is a good idea to set some goals. For example, one of my long term goals is to build a house that is made of recyclable materials, is on a block of land that hasn't been cleared for an estate, has a sophisticated water recycling system, runs completely on solar energy, has a water tank and a composting toilet system, is energy efficient in design with insulation and double glazed windows and where I can grow all of my food. As well as being close to where I work so that I can cycle. I know that this goal is not achievable for me right now, but it is still

my long-term goal. For some people, your goals might be to just be healthy or to raise your kids to think critically, or maybe you want to attend rallies or become an environmental engineer. It might be small things like you want to reduce your dairy intake, or try and make your own cosmetics. Whatever your goals are, I want you to list them here:

**Activity 5: What are some of your goals? Hint: name a time limit next to the goal to help you plan.**

In the future I would like to reduce how my actions harm the environment by:

We certainly are not going to be able to achieve these goals in one day. This process will take time and it will take effort. If you can, I would like you to choose one to focus on and start between now and when you begin the next part of this guide. Say, for example, you want to switch over to solar power for your home, maybe research some quotes. Or if you want to go vegetarian, find one recipe to try.

**Activity 6: What action will you start with?**

The one action that I would like to start this week is:

## Part 2

### Watch video 7

The prayer I would like to begin with for this part is a reading from Mark's Gospel. This reading spoke to me when I was going through Lent in 2018. I had issues with my compost the night before, I was tired of trying to change so much in such a short time. But I went to work, we did a Lenten program, and the reading was when Jesus went into the temple and overturned the tables. At that moment, it was like God revealed to me that, that was what he was doing in my life. He was throwing over the tables in my life, he was changing my culture just as he changed the culture of the 1st century Palestinians. And I knew that was what he also wanted me to do. We begin in the name of the Father, and the Son and of the Holy Spirit...

#### **Mark 11:12-19**

The next day as they were leaving Bethany, Jesus was hungry. Seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to find out if it had any fruit. When he reached it, he found nothing but leaves, because it was not the season for figs. Then he said to the tree, "May no one ever eat fruit from you again." And his disciples heard him say it. On reaching Jerusalem, Jesus entered the temple courts and began driving out those who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves, and would not allow anyone to carry merchandise through the temple courts. And as he taught them, he said, "Is it not written: 'My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations'? But you have made it a den of robbers"

The chief priests and the teachers of the law heard this and began looking for a way to kill him, for they feared him, because the whole crowd was amazed by his teaching. When evening came, Jesus and his disciples went out of the city.

## Laudato Si Chapter 2

Before we begin chapter 2, How did you go with taking a small step towards making small changes that you said you would do in part 1?

What was challenging?

What went well?

What are you going to try next?

### Watch video 8:

In chapter 2 of Laudato Si, we see Pope Francis looking directly at scripture and providing information on key biblical passages regarding creation. In this part, we will look at a few of these passages.

There is one incredibly large mistake that we have made as a Church in the past that Pope Francis wants to rectify, and that is the understanding that we are entitled to exploit the Earth as we see fit. Pope Francis believes that this comes from our reading of Genesis 1. Let us begin by reading this passage.

Genesis 1:26-30.

Then God said, "let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them, male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground". Then God said, "I give every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds in the sky and all the creatures that move along the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it – I give every green plant for food." And it was so.





Figure 1: Creation mosaic San Marcos Basilica Venice retrieved from <https://crashmacduff.files.wordpress.com/2013/10/6narth2w1.jpg>

"May rule over" or "may have dominion over" depending on the interpretation of the language is one of the reasons why we have been taught that we can exploit the earth's resources. Even down to when the European's settled on the continent of Australia and stole the land from its owners claiming 'Terra Nullius,' is an example of where this one line in biblical accounts has been so badly interpreted. In Laudato Si Pope Francis says:

The creation accounts in the book of Genesis contain, in their own symbolic and narrative language, profound teachings about human existence and its historical reality. They suggest that human life is grounded in three fundamental and closely intertwined relationships: with God, with our neighbour and with the earth itself. According to the Bible, these three vital relationships have been broken, both outwardly and within us. This rupture is sin. The harmony between the Creator, humanity and creation as a whole was disrupted by our presuming to take the place of God and refusing to acknowledge



our creaturely limitations. This in turn distorted our mandate to "have dominion" over the earth (Gen 1:28), to "Till and keep it" (Gen 2:15). As a result, the originally harmonious relationship between human beings and nature became conflictual (Gen 3:17-19). It is significant that the harmony which St Francis of Assisi experienced with all creatures was seen as a healing of that rupture. Saint Bonaventure held that, through universal reconciliation with every creature, Saint Francis in some way returned to the state of original innocence. This is a far cry from our situation today, where sin is manifest in all its destructive power in wars, the various forms of violence and abuse, the abandonment of the most vulnerable and the attacks on nature.

We are not God. The earth was here before us and it has been given to us. This allows us to respond to the charge that Judeo-Christian thinking, on the basis of the Genesis account which grants man 'dominion' over the earth has encouraged the unbridled exploitation of nature by painting him as domineering and destructive by nature. This is not a correct interpretation of the Bible as understood by the Church. Although it is true that we Christians have at times incorrectly interpreted the Scriptures, nowadays we must forcefully reject the notion that our being created in God's image and given dominion over the earth justifies absolute domination over other creatures. The biblical texts are to be read in their context, with an appropriate hermeneutic, recognizing that they tell us to 'till and keep' the garden of the world. 'Tilling refers to cultivating, ploughing or working, while 'keeping' means caring, protecting, overseeing and preserving. This implies a relationship of mutual responsibility between human beings and nature. Each community can take from the bounty of the earth whatever it needs to subsistence, but it also has a duty to protect the earth and to ensure its fruitfulness for coming generations. "The earth is the Lord's" to him belongs" the earth with all that is within it" Thus God rejects every claim to absolute ownership: "The land shall not be sold in perpetuity, for the land is mine; for you are strangers and sojourners with me." (LS 66-67).

This passage has a lot in it. Let us break it down.

1. The concept of original sin appears here. Original sin was when the relationship between humans and God was broken. According to some theologians, this occurs when we exploit and harm creation. We break the paternal relationship between us and the Father. When we do this, we sin.
2. The reason why we do this is because of our 'Anthropocentrism.' That is the belief that we are at the centre creation because we are 'made in the image of God' we can behave like God on Earth. We are told to 'have dominion' over the earth as we so wish, which leads us to exploit the earth for our own needs.
3. Some theologians believe that the original sin IS anthropocentrism and the belief that we are at the centre of creation.
4. It is only through trying to be as St Francis was with nature that we can begin to repair this relationship.
5. In the ways of St Francis, we need to instead Till and Keep the Earth.
6. We also need to change our mindset about land 'ownership.' We do not own the land, it is simply on loan to us. We then pass it on to future generations. It is God's land.

**Activity 1: Having read the passage from Genesis and from Laudato Si about anthropocentrism. What was something that you found interesting?**

It was interesting that:

### Exploitation and Gratitude

## Gratitude

One expression of [gratitude] is when we stop and give thanks to God before and after meals... [it] reminds us of our dependence on God for life; it strengthens our feeling of gratitude for the gifts of creation; it acknowledges those who by their labours provide us with these goods; and it reaffirms our solidarity with those in greatest need  
LS 227

## Exploitation

Since the world has been given to us, we can no longer view reality in a purely utilitarian way, in which efficiency and productivity are entirely geared to our individual benefit LS 159

**Watch video 9 here:**

We need to become painfully aware of the actions and decisions that we make that lead to the exploitation of the earth that come from our own anthropocentrism. Some examples of when we exploit Earth's resources for our own progress and gain include digging up fossil fuels, cutting down ancient forests to plant soy, wheat or palm trees, or diverting natural waterways to maximize water use for farming. When we use fossil fuels, buy products with palm oil in them, or buy products from farms that deplete natural water sources we contribute to the exploitation and harm of the environment. Sometimes it makes us sad to think that our actions have this impact, but we need to feel this pain to be able to make small changes to improve the situation.

**Activity 2: Name some of the actions and decisions that you make that exploit earth's resources.**

In the past, I/we have:

To combat our disposition towards exploitation, we need to truly be grateful for the earth and all that it does for us. We can be grateful for its gifts, for keeping us safe, for feeding us, for giving us water.

**Activity 3: Consider the ways in which we have exploited the earth and consider what you are grateful for. Name what you are grateful for.**

I/we are grateful for:

**Activity 4: Having considered what you are grateful for and the ways in which your actions lead to the exploitation of the Earth's resources, what is one more thing that you are going to try and do before you start the next part? An example that marries well with exploitation might be to investigate products that you use that contain palm oil.**

This week I/we will try to:

## Part 3

We begin part 3 we pray another prayer from Laudato Si. In the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit...

### **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.



## Laudato Si Chapter 3

Before we begin chapter 3, how did you go with the small changes you decided you would make from the last part?

What was challenging?

What went well?

What are you going to try next?

### Watch video 10:

In chapter 3 some big concepts are discussed.

1. Anthropocentrism: In the last part we discussed briefly the concept of anthropocentrism. In Chapter 3 of Laudato Si, Pope Francis expands on this idea and analyses the human roots of the ecological crisis. He names globalization as a major cause of the climate crisis.
2. Globalization: is essentially the idea that all parts of the world are connected in some way economically and socially.
3. Techno-economic/technocratic paradigm: We have also seen the rise of the techno-economic/technocratic paradigm. This is the belief the technology needs to continue to advance, and that we need to continue to research and adopt new technologies for progress.
4. Circular economy: Pope Francis also hints towards the need for a circular economy. According to the scientists who worked on Drawdown and also in 2040, we need to move away from a linear economy and we need to develop a circular economy. That is, instead of having a market that relies on exploiting the earth, making products from those items, using them and then throwing them away (linear economy), we need to consider ways to reduce, reuse, recycle and upcycle.

The technocratic paradigm also tends to dominate economic and political life. The economy accepts every advance in technology with a view to profit, without concern for its potentially negative impact on human beings. Finance overwhelms the real economy. The lessons of the global financial crisis have not been assimilated, and we are learning all too slowly the lessons of environmental deterioration. Some circles maintain that current economics and technology will solve all environmental problems, and argue, in popular and non-technical terms, that the problems of global

hunger and poverty will be resolved simply by market growth. They are less concerned with certain economic theories which today scarcely anybody dares defend, than with their actual operation in the functioning of the economy. They may not affirm such theories with words, but nonetheless support them with their deeds by showing no interest in more balanced levels of production, a better distribution of wealth, concern for the environment and the rights of future generations. Their behaviour shows that for them maximising profits is enough. Yet by itself the market cannot guarantee integral human development and social inclusion. At the same time, we have 'a sort of "superdevelopment" of a wasteful and consumerist kind which forms an unacceptable contrast with the ongoing situations of dehumanizing deprivation', while we are all too slow in developing economic institutions and social initiatives which can give the poor regular access to basic resources. We fail to see the deepest roots of our present failures, which have to do with the direction, goals, meaning and social implications of technological and economic growth. LS 109

Modernity has been marked by an excessive anthropocentrism which today, under another guise, continues to stand in the way of shared understanding and of any effort to strengthen social bonds. The time has come to pay renewed attention to reality and the limits it imposes; this in turn is the condition for a more sound and fruitful development of individuals and society. An inadequate presentation of Christian anthropology gave rise to a wrong understanding of the relationship between human beings and the world. Often, what was handed on was a Promethean vision of master over the world, which gave the impression that the protection of nature was something that only the faint-hearted cared about. Instead, our "dominion" over the universe should be understood more properly in the sense of responsible stewardship. LS 116

Neglecting to monitor the harm done to nature and the environmental impact of our decisions is only the most striking sign of a disregard for the message contained in the structures of nature itself. When we fail to acknowledge as part of reality the worth of a poor person, a human embryo, a person with disabilities – to offer just a few examples – it becomes difficult to hear the cry of nature itself; everything is connected. Once the human being declares independence from reality and behaves with absolute dominion, the very foundations of our life begin to crumble, for "instead of carrying out his role as a co-operator with God in the work of creation, man sets himself up in place of God and thus ends up provoking a rebellion on the part of nature." LS 117

**Activity 1: Read through the following passages of Laudato Si and dot point 3 ways in which these concepts have informed our attitudes. As an example, even now I still struggle with my own obsession with technology and want to have the newest and most efficient computer, but I need to remind myself that I don't need one because my current computer is still working fine. If you are completing this as a family, consider some of the 'big words' and discuss what they mean.**

3 ways in which these concepts have informed our attitudes

- 
- 
- 

These dot-points are examples of our human roots of the ecological crisis in our own hearts. Just like any conversion or transformation, it is important to acknowledge these issues.

### Arrogance and humility

## Humility

Once we lose our humility, and become enthralled with the possibility of limitless mastery over everything, we inevitably end our harming society and the environment LS 224

## Arrogance

The misuse of creation begins when we no longer recognise any higher instance than ourselves, when we see nothing else by ourselves LS 6

### Watch video 11:

Considering these issues and how they permeate our own lives, we should again consider the virtues and sins. All of these issues come from, in some form, an arrogance that humans are above all of creation. To combat this belief system in our minds, we need to humble ourselves and develop the virtue of humility. To be able to make small changes in our lives, we need to acknowledge when we are thinking that we are above creation and then change our mindset to consider the needs of the environment and the needs of the poor.

In this next activity, I would like you to consider how you can change your thinking to be more environmentally centred instead of anthropocentric/materialistic/technocratic. Choose something that you catch yourself saying, and transform it into something else. For example, I sometimes say "I think I need a new computer because I've had it for 3 years." Instead, I should be thinking "I am grateful that I have a computer and glad that it is still working."

**Activity 2: Write down as many of your own examples of phrases that you use with yourself and how you are going to change them.**

Phrases that I/we use:

How I/we will change them:

### Changing mindset

Between now and when you start the next part, it would be good to take a break from trying to make lots of small 'action' changes. Instead, this time, focus on your mindset. Catch yourself when you are thinking about these things and change your thinking. Record below how and when you did this.

### Activity 3: Changing mindset

What I originally thought was:

What I changed my thinking to was:



## Part 4

The prayer that we begin with this time is a famous prayer by St Francis. Note the words that are 'familiar' or that relate to the family. We begin in the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit...

### **Canticle of creation**

Most high, all-powerful, all-good Lord,  
All praise is Yours, all glory,  
All honour and all blessings. To you alone, Most High, do they belong,  
And no mortal lips are worth to pronounce Your Name.  
Praised be You, my Lord, with all Your creatures,  
Especially Sir Brother Sun, Who is the day  
Through whom You give us light. And he is  
Beautiful and radiant with great splendour,  
Of You Most High, he bears the likeness. Praised be You, my Lord,  
through Sister Moon  
And the stars, in the heavens you have made  
Them bright, precious and fair.  
Praised be You, my Lord, through Brothers Wind  
And Air, and fair and stormy, all weather's moods, by which You  
cherish all that You have made. Praised be You, my Lord, through  
Sister Water,  
So useful, humble, precious and pure. Praised be You, my Lord,  
through Brother Fire,  
Through whom You light the night and he is  
Beautiful and playful and robust and strong. Praised be You, my Lord,  
through our Sister  
Mother Earth who sustains and governs us,  
Producing varied fruits with coloured flowers  
And herbs. Praised be You, my Lord, through those who grant  
Pardon for love of You and hear sickness and trial.  
Blessed are those who endure in peace,  
By You Most High, they will be crowned. Praised be You, my Lord,  
through Sister Death,  
From who no one living can escape.  
Woe to those who die in mortal sin!  
Blessed are they She finds doing Your Will,  
No second death can do them harm. Praised and bless my Lord and  
give Him thanks,  
And serve Him with great humility.

## Laudato Si Chapter 4

Before we begin chapter 4, how did last week go changing your mindset?

What was challenging?

What went well?

What are you going to try next?

### Watch video 12:

Pope Francis, also known as the 'Green Pope' in his famous encyclical *Laudato Si: On Care for Our Common Home*, speaks about entering into an 'Integral Ecology.' In the past, many have noted that Saint John Paul II and Benedict the XVI spoke of 'Human Ecology' and 'Ecology of Man' respectively. In *Laudato Si*, Pope Francis states that

Human ecology also implies another profound reality: the relationship between human life and the oral law, which is inscribed in our nature and is necessary for the creation of a more dignified environment. Pope Benedict spoke of an 'ecology of man', based on the fact that "man too has a nature that he must respect and that he cannot manipulate at will." It is enough to recognize that our body itself establishes us in a direct relationship with the environment and with other living beings. The acceptance of our bodies as God's gift is vital for welcoming and accepting the entire world as a gift from the Father and our common home, whereas thinking that we enjoy absolute power over our own bodies turns, often subtly, into thinking that we enjoy absolute power over creation. LS 155

Pope Francis takes the next step and speaks about an 'Integral Ecology' that positions humans in a familiar relationship with God, the environment, and each other. Familiar meaning 'part of the family of creation.' When we think about the word 'integral' we think of something necessary for something else to be complete. Pope Francis used this term specifically because we often see ourselves as 'other' or 'separate' to creation, when in fact we are the most necessary, the most impactful and most important part of creation that the world needs for it to be complete. We need to realise the responsibility that this position places on us as we interact with the world.

In his encyclical, Pope Francis speaks in the first Chapter about St. Francis, from whom he took his name. His decision to do this was no co-incidence. Pope Francis believes that St Francis is an 'example par excellence' of how to live an integral ecology.

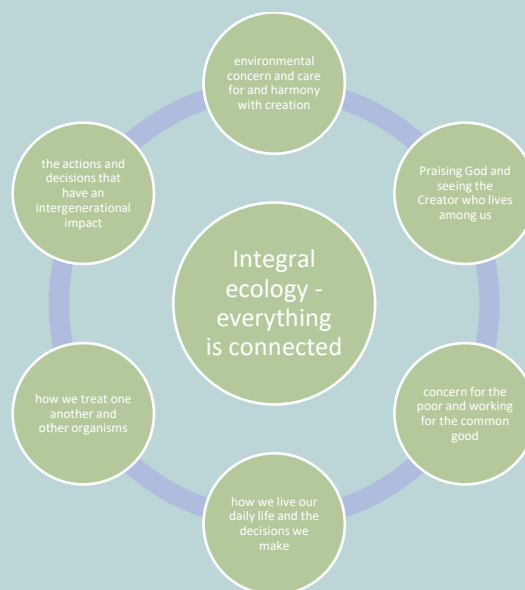
How did St Francis of Assisi enter into an integral ecology?

- He was joyful, generous and self-giving
- Lived in harmony with God, others and nature
- Cared for creation
- Cared for the poor and outcast

Pope Francis uses the example of how St Francis treated the weeds and the wildflowers to demonstrate his interconnectedness with the world. St Francis, while living in the friary, allowed a special place for the weeds and wildflowers to grow without interruption from gardening. He believed that every organism, in the eyes of God had its own unique value, not the value that humans place on them. Every organism, in its very nature, praises God just by being. Who are we to stop that praise by exploiting those organisms?

We also see St Francis' example of integral ecology in his canticle of creation, where he uses familiar language to describe nature. For example Brother Sun, Sister Moon, Mother Earth. Humans are part of the entire earthly family. We are not above the natural world. We are not separate. We are connected, interrelated, and integral to the entire ecosystem. St Francis saw this and he lived with this idea in his heart. In Chapter 4 of Laudato Si, Pope Francis explains, that like St Francis, we need to enter into an integral ecology.

What is integral ecology?



What does Pope Francis say about these things in Laudato Si (excerpts taken from all chapters)?

Environmental concern and care for harmony with creation	Praising God and seeing the creator who lives among us	The actions and decisions that have an intergenerational impact	How we treat one another and other organisms	Concern for the poor and working for the common good	How we live our daily life and the decisions we make
“An integral ecology includes taking time to recover a serene harmony with creation” LS225	“An integral ecology includes.... Contemplating the creator who lives among us” LS225 “[St Francis] communed with all creation, even preaching to the flowers, inviting them ‘to praise the Lord, just as if they were endowed with reason’” LS11	“We can no longer speak of sustainable development apart from intergenerational solidarity.... [the environment] is on loan to each generation, which must then hand it on to the next. An integral ecology is marked by this broader vision” LS159	St Bonaventure “from a reflection on the primary source of all things... he would call creatures, no matter how small, by the name of ‘brother’ or ‘sister.’” LS11	St Francis “was particularly concerned for God’s creation and for the poor and outcast... He shows us just how inseparable the bond is between concern for nature, justice for the poor, commitment to society and interior peace” LS10	“An integral ecology is also made up of simple daily gestures which break with the logic of violence, exploitation and selfishness. In the end, a world of exacerbated consumption is at the same time a world which mistreats life in all its forms.” LS230

Entering into an integral ecology involves consciously making daily gestures that demonstrate compassion towards the environment and the poor. The decisions made should also consider how they would affect the future for the sake of future generations. This will allow us to enter into a familiar relationship with all of creation, to praise the Lord, and allow other organisms to praise God and allowing all creatures to live in serene harmony with one another God.

Pope Francis makes clear the relationship between helping the environment and helping the poor. By choosing to do one, we automatically do the other. The poor will be the first to be impacted by severe changes in the weather as a result of climate change. By reducing environmental degradation and reducing the impacts of climate change, the chance of displacement of those in affected areas becomes reduced. Another example of how helping the poor and the environment are inextricably linked are for example the work done by such groups as OzHarvest. They reduce food waste, a large polluter, and they feed the hungry. Furthermore, buying from fair-trade sources, the poor can continue to grow economically, women and children can gain an education to help bring them out of poverty, which allows them to be educated about how to live sustainably in their own lives, including through family planning. According to Drawdown, improving education for young girls and family planning can help reduce climate change.

Pope Francis calls us to enter into this integral ecology, but it sounds like a big ask. So,



How can I enter into an integral ecology?

My faith	My life	With other people
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Praise God</li> <li>• Invite nature to praise God through prayer</li> <li>• Contemplate the creator</li> <li>• Contemplate nature</li> <li>• Know in your heart that you are part of the family of creation</li> <li>• Read and reflect on St Francis</li> <li>• Participate in a Lectio of Nature (see activity 2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take small steps to become more environmentally friendly (consider trying to become zero-waste, vegetarian or vegan, buying local or fair-trade)</li> <li>• Teach someone from another generation how to do this (especially our children)</li> <li>• Reduce your consumption of things that you do not need</li> <li>• Treat all life-forms with respect</li> <li>• Spend time admiring Gods creation and interacting with Gods creation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Care for the poor and vulnerable (donate, share, spend time)</li> <li>• Make time for those around you so that they know they are part of the family of creation as well</li> <li>• Show others how to enter into integral ecology</li> <li>• Work together for the benefit of the future</li> <li>• Discuss the impacts of actions on the environment with others</li> <li>• Uphold human dignity</li> </ul>

**Activity 1: How are you going to enter into an integral ecology? Choose one or more things from the list that you are going to do or would like to strive for.**

This week I/we would like to try and:

## Lectio of nature

If you are interested in partaking in a spiritual experience designed to bring you closer to nature, I recommend the lectio of nature. There are four steps to completing the lectio of nature.

### 1. Lectio



Go into creation. Be attentive to your surroundings in the natural environment. Be with nature. Observe colours, animals, plants, water, and rocks. Come with an attitude of awe and wonder.

1. Meditatio

Consider what you have seen and allow God to speak through these elements. Meditate on the idea that this is God's creation.

1. Oration

Praise God. And invite nature to praise with you in your heart. Talk to God, allow Him to fill you with hope, discuss your fears with him.

1. Contemplatio

Love God and be joyful in his presence.

**Activity 2 (optional): Reflect on your lectio of nature experience. What did you enjoy?**

During the Lectio of nature experience I/we enjoyed:

Inequality and justice

## Justice

Every ecological approach needs to incorporate a social perspective which takes into account the fundamental rights of the poor and underprivileged  
LS 93

## Inequality

This vision of 'might is right' has endangered immense inequality, injustice and acts of violence against the majority of humanity LS 82

**Watch video 13**

It is clear that when we are not part of an integral ecology, we see an abundance of inequality occurring as a result. This inequality occurs specifically towards the poor, the vulnerable, minority

groups, the indigenous population, and our future generations. As we enter into an integral ecology, we need to do so from an environmental and social justice perspective. This does not always mean that we need to be on the streets protesting for the environment. But we need to make choices that allow for justice to occur.

As well as focusing on how you are going to enter into an integral ecology between now and the beginning of the next part. Also, plan and consider one action that you will take that is an act of justice. For example, swapping a food that doesn't have palm oil in it is an act of justice, or buying fair trade is an act of justice, or buying local is an act of justice.

### **Activity 3: Your justice action**

The action that I/we will take this week is:

### **Goals for this week:**

1. Begin to enter into an integral ecology (activity 1)
2. Do a 'justice action' (activity 3)

## Part 5

In this next section, we will be beginning to plan further into the future. This prayer has been of great help along my journey and I hope that it will help you with yours. In the name of the Father, and of the Son and the Holy Spirit...

### **Serenity prayer**

God grant me the serenity  
To accept the things I cannot change  
Courage to change the things I can  
And the wisdom to know the  
difference

Living one day at a time  
Enjoying one moment at a time  
Accepting hardship as the pathway to  
peace

Taking as He did this sinful world  
As it is, not as I would have it  
Trusting that He will make all things  
right

If I surrender to His will  
That I may be reasonably happy in this  
life

And supremely happy with Him  
Forever in the next

## Laudato Si Chapter 5

Before we begin chapter 5, how did you go with the justice action and your integral ecology action from the last part?

What was challenging?

What went well?

What are you going to try next?

### Watch video 14

In the last 2 chapters of Laudato Si, we begin to see Pope Francis explicitly recommend actions and changes within large organisations and in our own lives. Some of the large-scale organisations and country-level recommendations appear in Chapter 5. But some of the lessons for large scale organisations and countries can apply in our own lives. For example, Pope Francis says:

“There are no uniform recipes, because each country or region has its own problems and limitations.” LS 180

Some of the actions that he calls for at these large scale levels include:

- Conserving energy
- Diminished use of raw materials (using recycled materials)
- Removing from the market products with less energy efficiency
- Improving transport systems
- Encouraging repair
- Developing a recycling economy
- Protecting species
- Diversify agriculture
- Rotate crops LS 180

One of the things that we can do at an individual level is research and invest in companies that encourage these changes. For example, buying items made of recycled materials, choosing to take public transport, repairing our items. When we do this, our choices send a message to those who are selling and those within the market that our preferences are for more sustainable options.

Pope Francis says that we need to focus first on environmental protection before considering the financial costs. The terms "people before profit" or "the environment before profit" come to mind here.

“Is it realistic to hope that those who are obsessed with maximising profits will stop to reflect on the environmental damage which they will leave behind for future generations?” LS 190

Here again, we can consider how this impacts on our own decision making. It is well-known that often market products that are fair trade cost more money to purchase, however, is it a worth the sacrifice to spend a few extra dollars to send a message that we value fair trade items over fast fashion items? This is just one example. Pope Francis even says:

“Efforts to promote a sustainable use of natural resources are not a waste of money, but rather an investment capable of providing other economic benefits in the medium term.” LS 191

Lastly, Pope Francis quote Pope Benedict XVI who says that:

"Technologically advanced societies must be prepared to encourage more sober lifestyles, while reducing their energy consumption and improving its efficiency" LS 193

### Greed and Sobriety

Sobriety	Greed
Sobriety ... is the ability to renounce what is superfluous and to resist the dominant consumerist mentality. Sobriety is prudence, simplicity, straightforwardness, balance, and temperance. Sobriety is seeing the world through God's eyes and from the side of the poor, sobriety is a style of life, which points to the primacy of others as a hierarchical principle and is shown in a life of concern and service towards others. The sober person is consistent and straightforward in all things because he or she can reduce, recover, recycle, repair and live a life of moderation (Pope Francis, 2015b as cited in Kureethadam, 2016 p. 50).	We fail to see that some are mired in desperate and degrading poverty, with no way out, while others have not the faintest idea of what to do with their possessions, vainly showing them off, their supposed superiority and leaving behind them so much waste which, if it were the case everywhere, would destroy the planet. LS 90

This brings us to a discussion on greed and sobriety. We know that greed is a sin. It is also one of the cardinal sins. We need to empty ourselves of greed. One of the ways in which we can do this, as per Pope Benedict XVI's quote, is to become more sober. That is to minimise our consumption and our use of goods. That is, not to overconsume.

Pope Francis says that:

“Such sobriety, when lived freely and consciously, is liberating. It is not a lesser life or one lived with less intensity. On the contrary, it is a way of living life to the full. In reality those who enjoy more and live better each moment are those who have given up dipping here and there, always on the look-out for what they do not have. They experience what it means to appreciate each person and each thing, learning familiarity with the simplest things and how to enjoy them. So they are able to shed unsatisfied needs, reducing their obsessiveness and weariness. Even living on little, they can live a lot, above all when they cultivate other pleasures and find satisfaction in fraternal encounters, in service, in developing their gifts, in music and art, in contact with nature, in prayer. Happiness means knowing how to limit some needs which only diminish us, and being open to the many different possibilities which life can offer.” LS 223



## 10 action plan

On the information from chapter 5, and what you have learnt about greed and sobriety, list 10 changes that you would like to make to become more sober, to invest something where you are putting people before profit or saving, or that you aren't going to buy or do because you don't need it. These 10 small sacrifices you can do over 10 days, 10 weeks, or 10 months. It is important though to start with one only and finish that before beginning part 6 of the journey. Some examples could include changing your bank to one that only invests in fossil fuels, buying a fair-trade item as a present, giving up a social media channel. You may wish to line this up with your goals from part 1, where you can.

**Activity 1: List 10 changes to from your action plan. Hint: put time frames next to each one to help plan. If working as a family, consider balancing some that can be done individually, and some that can be done together.**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

## Part 6

### Prayer

#### Watch video 15

“Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me”

This is the prayer for the last part of our journey. I first learnt about this way of praying in a book called “The way of the pilgrim” by Walter J Ciszek. When you breathe in you say in your mind "Lord Jesus Christ" and when you breathe out you say in your head "have mercy on me." It is sort of like a mantra. When I am doing some gardening, or when I am at the markets looking around or cleaning using my zero-waste products, I use this prayer. In this way, every action that I do becomes part of a prayer to God. I hope that this prayer can go with you as you continue on your journey.

I would like you to reflect on one action that you have completed from Part 5.

What was challenging?

What went well?

What are you going to try next?

### Work and waste

#### Work

Developing the created world in a prudent way is the best way of caring for it, as this means that we ourselves become the instrument used by God to bring out the potential which he himself inscribed in things LS 124

#### Waste

The earth, our home, is beginning to look more and more like an immense pile of filth... These problems are closely linked to a throwaway culture LS 21-22

#### Watch video 16

The last sin and virtue that there is to discuss is work and waste. When we are working, we are being virtuous because we are contributing to others and society. When we are being wasteful, we are contributing to the degradation of the environment. In this next section, we will consider some of the ways in which our work and our actions have been beneficial. In the work that we do that benefits the environment, we are consistently taking actions that bring us close to God. As we reflect on the journey and plan for the future, we want to consider how we can continue to work for God and for creation, as well as how to reduce resource waste.

## Laudato Si Chapter 6

In the last chapter of Laudato Si, Pope Francis speaks a lot about ecological conversion and about changing to a new lifestyle. Through this journey, I hope that you have, in some ways been able to do this. According to Pope Francis:

“A change in lifestyle could bring healthy pressure to bear on those who wield political, economic and social power. This is what consumer movements accomplish by boycotting certain products. They prove successful in changing the way businesses operate, forcing them to consider their environmental footprint and their patterns of production. When social pressure affects their earnings, businesses clearly have to find ways to produce differently. This shows us the great need for a sense of social responsibility on the part of consumers. “Purchasing is always a more and not simply economic act.” Today, in a word, “the issue of environmental degradation challenges us to examine our lifestyle.” LS 206.

“[Ecological] conversion calls for a number of attitudes which foster a spirit of generous care, full of tenderness. First, it entails gratitude and gratuitousness, a recognition that the world is God’s loving gift, and that we are called quietly to imitate his generosity in self-sacrifice and good works: “Do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing... and your Father who sees in secret will reward you” Mt6:3-4. It also entails a loving awareness that we are not disconnected from the rest of creatures, but joined in a splendid universal communion. As believers, we do not look at the world from without but from within, conscious of the bonds with which the Father has linked us to all beings. By developing our individual, God-given capacities, an ecological conversion can inspire us to greater creativity and enthusiasm in resolving the world’s problems and in offering ourselves to God “as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable” Rom 12:1. We do not understand our superiority as a reason for personal glory or irresponsible dominion, but rather as a different capacity which, in its turn, entails a serious responsibility stemming from our faith.” LS 220

### Activity 1: How are you feeling?

Considering these words, throughout this journey have you acted in a particular way that has challenged someone else to change the way that they behave or think?

How are you feeling about your own ecological conversion and connection to creation and God?

Have you felt liberated by the process?

How do you feel about your materialism or individualism (you may wish to refer back to information about sobriety and greed on this)?

For families: As a family, has this changed the way you interact with one another?

### Watch video 17

Next, we should reflect on how our journey has changed our interaction with others.

“We are always capable of going out of ourselves towards the other. Unless we do this, other creatures will not be recognized for their true worth; we are unconcerned about caring for things for the sake of others; we fail to set limits on ourselves in order to avoid the suffering of others or the deterioration of our surroundings. Disinterested concern for others, and the rejection of every form of self-centredness and self-absorption, are essential if we truly wish to care for our brothers and sisters and for the natural environment. These attitudes also attune us to the moral imperative of assessing the impact of our every action and personal decision on the world around us. If we can overcome individualism, we will truly be able to develop a different lifestyle and bring about significant changes in society.” LS 208.

## **Activity 2: How have you had an impact?**

Reflect now on how you have changed in terms of your own individualism, your thoughts, feelings and behaviours towards others. How have your everyday actions and decisions changed the world around you?

## **Watch video 18**

When Jesus overturned the tables of the moneychangers, all he did was cause people to think differently about their actions. Once you begin to change your way of thinking and your actions, you will influence others. Do not try and change the hearts and minds of every person. This is certainly not what Jesus did. He only changed the hearts and minds of about 14 people. His parents and his apostles. Each apostle then went out and changed the hearts and minds of maybe a small group of others. And so on. If you can cause one person to think differently and behave differently you have become a disciple of God. But you always must start with yourself.



## Moving forward

### Activity 3: Final reflection

What are you/your family going to do from here?

What actions or changes will you continue with?

What will you change?

When will you make these changes?

Are your goals from the first part the same or different?

What have you enjoyed about the process?

What have you not enjoyed?

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