



# LAUDATO SI' REFLECTIONS

**Study Guide and Stations of the Cross**



## Introduction

Trócaire was established in 1973 as the overseas development agency of the Catholic Church in Ireland.

The organisation was created in response to the widening gap between rich and poor and our collective duty to reduce it. In the words of Trócaire's founding document, in which the bishops of Ireland gave the organisation a strong and clear mandate, 'These duties are no longer a matter of charity, but of simple justice.'

We invite you with your parish community to pray these Stations of the Cross and also to reflected on the Pope's messages in *Laudato Si'* while we together strive to care for our common home.

# WAY OF THE CROSS

## Introduction

This Way of the Cross considers the concept of pilgrimage. The Way of the Cross itself is a pilgrimage; a journey that follows Christ's path of suffering and death. Pope Francis encourages us to set out on a pilgrimage of conversion to become kinder, more generous people.

This Way of the Cross focuses on the suffering caused by climate change. Humanity, along with all of creation, is on a critical journey as we are challenged by climate change. Will we set out on a path of mercy, adjusting our patterns of consumption to lessen our carbon footprint and give Mother Earth a chance to heal? Will this journey become a pilgrimage towards sustainability, and ultimately resurrection?

## 1st Station: Jesus is condemned to death

**Leader:** We praise you, O Christ, and we bless you.

**All:** Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

**Scripture:** 'So after they had gathered, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release for you, Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Messiah?"' (Matthew 27)

**Reflection:** Jesus was an innocent person condemned to death. He was abandoned and faced his death sentence alone. Our common home earth is also being condemned to death. Because of our patterns of overconsumption, global temperatures are rising, and plant and animal species are dying off. Whole populations of humanity feel abandoned and left to face the perils of climate change, even death, on their own.

**Laudato Si':** 'This sister [earth] now cries out to us because of the harm we have inflicted on her by our irresponsible use and abuse of the goods with which God has endowed her ... This is why the



Earth herself, burdened and laid waste, is the most abandoned and mistreated among the poor.' (2)

Let us pray.

**Leader:** Let us pray. (*A few moments of silent reflection.*)

**All:** Heavenly Creator, open our eyes to our complicity in loss of life. Once acknowledging our failures to care for creation, renew our spirits to live mindfully and to work diligently for a better world.

## 2nd Station: Jesus takes up his cross

**Leader:** We praise you, O Christ, and we bless you.

**All:** Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

**Scripture:** 'And carrying the cross by himself, Jesus went out to what is called The Place of the Skull.' (John 19:17)

**Reflection:** Jesus was forced to carry his cross, the very instrument of his death, to his crucifixion. There are particular populations of humanity who, like Jesus, are innocent and must carry the burdens of others' sins. Ethiopia has one of the lowest carbon footprints of any other country in the world, yet suffers severe drought caused by a warming climate.

**Laudato Si':** 'The warming caused by huge consumption on the part of some rich countries has repercussions on the poorest areas of the world, where a rise in temperature, together with drought, has proved devastating for farming.' (51)

Let us pray.

**Leader:** Let us pray. (*A few moments of silent reflection.*)

**All:** Jesus, may we make real sacrifices to lessen our carbon footprint so that others can live. Bring to mind



those who suffer the most from climate change so that our resolve is strengthened and we find joy and purpose in what we give up.

### 3rd Station: Jesus falls for the first time

**Leader:** We praise you, O Christ, and we bless you.

**All:** Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

**Scripture:** 'Surely he has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases.' (Isaiah 53:4)

**Reflection:** Jesus falls three times in the Way of the Cross. With each successive fall, he is weaker and struggles more to get back on his feet. People who suffer most from climate change disasters are those who are poor already and have little recourse to defend themselves or to get back on their feet. Often their home is the first to fall. Humble housing can't withstand the powerful winds and waters.

**Laudato Si':** 'The pace of consumption, waste and environmental change has so stretched the planet's capacity that our contemporary lifestyle, unsustainable as it is, can only precipitate catastrophes, such as those which even now periodically occur in different areas of the world.' (161)

Let us pray.

**Leader:** Let us pray. *(A few moments of silent reflection.)*

**All:** Gracious Spirit, when we fall into the temptation of overconsumption, remind us of those who suffer for it. When we learn of a catastrophe, help us contemplate the loss of people's homes and so be moved to lessen our consumption and to share our resources.

### 4th Station: Jesus meets his mother

**Leader:** We praise you, O Christ, and we bless you.



**All:** Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

**Scripture:** 'A sword will pierce your own soul too.' (Luke 2:35)

**Reflection:** What utter pain Mary must have felt for her son. She had no recourse to soothe, heal and save her child. Mothers around the world grieve in helplessness as they see their children suffer and die. Over 3 million children die every year from malnourishment, while others die due to sudden disasters, to long and perilous journeys, and disease.

**Laudato Si':** 'Mary, the Mother who cared for Jesus, now cares with maternal affection and pain for this wounded world. Just as her pierced heart mourned the death of Jesus, so now she grieves for the sufferings of the crucified poor and for the creatures of this world laid waste by human power.' (241)

Let us pray.

**Leader:** Let us pray. *(A few moments of silent reflection.)*

**All:** Help us to 'turn what is happening to the world into our own personal suffering'. *(Laudato Si', 19)*

'May the sweetness of [Mary's] countenance watch over us in this Holy Year, so that all of us may rediscover the joy of God's tenderness.' *(Misericordiae Vultus, 24)*

### 5th Station: Simon helps carry his cross

**Leader:** We praise you, O Christ, and we bless you.

**All:** Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

**Scripture:** 'As they went out, they came upon a man from Cyrene named Simon; they compelled this man to carry his cross.' (Matthew 27:32)

**Reflection:** Simon had come into the city on the day of Jesus' death. He found himself in the crowds along Jesus' pathway to Golgotha, and was picked out by



the soldiers to carry Jesus' cross. Who carries the cross in times of climate crisis? The poor are always the first responders in times of disaster. While help from wealthy countries can take days and weeks, it is immediate neighbours who rush in to save, shelter and support as much as possible.

**Misericordiae Vultus:** 'Let us open our eyes and see the misery of the world, the wounds of our brothers and sisters who are denied their dignity, and let us recognize that we are compelled to heed their cry for help! May we reach out to them and support them so they can feel the warmth of our presence, our friendship, and our fraternity! May their cry become our own, and together may we break down the barriers of indifference that too often reign supreme and mask our hypocrisy and egoism!' (15)

Let us pray.

**Leader:** Let us pray. (*A few moments of silent reflection.*)

**All:** In humility we give thanks to you, Oh God, for the generous poor in the world. Like them and like Simon, may we shoulder the cross that Christ carries in the world today.

### **6th Station: Veronica wipes the face of Jesus**

**Leader:** We praise you, O Christ, and we bless you.

**All:** Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

**Scripture:** 'Many women were also there, looking on from a distance; they had followed Jesus from Galilee and had provided for him.' (Matthew 27:55)

**Reflection:** Veronica's compassion for Jesus overcame any fear that she might have had in stepping out from the anonymity of the crowds to wipe Jesus' face in front of the soldiers. She didn't count the possible cost, but stepped forward and responded in love. Lebanon has taken in 1.4 million refugees. What compassion and generosity!

**Misericordiae Vultus:** 'Let us rediscover these



corporal works of mercy: to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, welcome the stranger, heal the sick, visit the imprisoned, and bury the dead. And let us not forget the spiritual works of mercy: to counsel the doubtful, instruct the ignorant, admonish sinners, comfort the afflicted, forgive offences, bear patiently those who do us ill, and pray for the living and the dead.' (15)

Let us pray.

**Leader:** Let us pray. (*A few moments of silent reflection.*)

**All:** Holy Spirit, like Veronica, help us to forget ourselves and to step forward in a merciful and loving response to the pain that we see around us. Wipe away our fear to act, so that the suffering face of Christ that is present today can find consolation in our touch.

### **7th Station: Jesus falls for the second time**

**Leader:** We praise you, O Christ, and we bless you.

**All:** Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

**Scripture:** 'But he was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities.' (Isaiah 53:5)

**Reflection:** A second fall and Jesus' struggle to rise up again is that much harder. Climate disasters not only destroy homes, but also sources of livelihood. Fisherfolk lose their boats; farmers lose their crops, small enterprises are washed away. How to rise up again? In Honduras, extreme weather and the rising sea leaves are devastating coastal communities. The floods come quickly and cause devastation of homes and land. Salt is left on the land so crops can not be grown for families to eat.

**Laudato Si':** 'We were created with a vocation to work ... Work is a necessity, part of the meaning of life on this earth, a path to growth, human development and personal fulfilment. Helping the poor financially must always be a provisional solution in the



face of pressing needs. The broader objective should always be to allow them a dignified life through work.' (128)

Let us pray.

**Leader:** Let us pray. *(A few moments of silent reflection.)*

**All:** Enkindle within us a sense of shared responsibility in times of climate disaster. Move us, dear Jesus, to share the wealth from our employment so that others can regain their livelihoods, their 'path to growth, human development and personal fulfilment'.

### **8th Station: Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem**



**Leader:** We praise you, O Christ, and we bless you.

**All:** Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

**Scripture:** 'But Jesus turned to them and said: Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep rather for yourselves and for your children.' (Luke 23:28)

**Reflection:** There is mutual empathy in this encounter between the women of Jerusalem and Jesus. There is shared pain. Women and children are disproportionately affected by climate change. While women themselves suffer, they share the pain of their children's suffering as well. It is future generations who will bear the brunt of climate change, especially those from the most vulnerable countries such as Honduras and Ethiopia.

**Laudato Si':** 'Our goal is ... 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)

Let us pray.

**Leader:** Let us pray. *(A few moments of silent reflection.)*

**All:** Creator God, deepen our sense of suffering within our global family and move us into action. Help us 'to

discover what each of us can do about it'. May we step out of our relatively comfortable lifestyle and have the courage to change our way of living to one of simplicity and contemplation.

### **9th Station: Jesus falls for the third time**



**Leader:** We praise you, O Christ, and we bless you.

**All:** Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

**Scripture:** 'Upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed.' (Isaiah 53:5)

**Reflection:** How can Jesus recover from a third fall? How can farmers suffering a prolonged drought rise up year after year and carry on? Every year, life gets more difficult for Matthew Sibanda. This 66-year-old farmer has lived all his life in the Matobo region of southern Zimbabwe, but he says he has never experienced a climate as difficult as in recent years. 'As far as I remember, I have never experienced such hot temperatures,' he says. 'For a long time, my piece of land was considered a fertile wetland which always gave me good yield to feed my family but this is now history.' (By Nelly Maonde, Zimbabwe Livelihoods & Humanitarian Programme Officer)

**Laudato Si':** 'Many of the poor live in areas particularly affected by phenomena related to warming, and their means of subsistence are largely dependent on natural reserves and ecosystemic services such as agriculture, fishing and forestry ... There has been a tragic rise in the number of migrants seeking to flee from the growing poverty caused by environmental degradation.' (25)

Let us pray.

**Leader:** Let us pray. *(A few moments of silent reflection.)*

**All:** Loving God, 'renew the face of the earth' (Psalms 104:30). May this ecological crisis be a 'summons to profound interior conversion' so that we live

'our vocation to be protectors of [your] handiwork'  
(*Laudato Si'*, 217).

### 10th Station: Jesus is stripped of his garments

**Leader:** We praise you, O Christ, and we bless you.

**All:** Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

**Scripture:** 'They divide my clothes among themselves, and for my clothing they cast lots.' (Psalms 22:18)

**Reflection:** Jesus suffered the added indignity of being stripped of his garments before the world. The ongoing war in Syria – a war whose root causes are tied to prolonged drought – has created 3 million refugees. After losing home, livelihood and land, they are forced to pick up and leave everything. They sometimes suffer the added indignity of being met with hostility and mistrust when they try to find a new country of refuge.

**Laudato Si':** 'Sadly, there is widespread indifference to such suffering, which is even now taking place throughout our world. Our lack of response to these tragedies involving our brothers and sisters points to the loss of that sense of responsibility for our fellow men and women upon which all civil society is founded.' (25)

Let us pray.

**Leader:** Let us pray. (*A few moments of silent reflection.*)

**All:** Divine Mercy, may those who have lost everything find shelter in our welcome. May our own life's pilgrimage intertwine with those whose journey has taken them far from their homes and familiar customs.



### 11th Station: Jesus is nailed to the cross

**Leader:** We praise you, O Christ, and we bless you.

**All:** Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

**Scripture:** 'When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus.' (Luke 23:33)

**Reflection:** So utterly wasted through whipping and bearing the heavy cross, Jesus must still endure the searing pain of being nailed to the cross. What are the physical pains that people endure today that are due to climate change? Around the world there have been many deaths due to extreme heat. The elderly, very young and the sick are those who suffer most. It is estimated that climate change will contribute to two hundred and fifty thousand additional deaths per year.

**Misericordiae Vultus:** 'His flesh becomes visible in the flesh of the tortured, the crushed, the scourged, the malnourished, and the exiled ... to be acknowledged, touched, and cared for by us. Let us not forget the words of Saint John of the Cross: "as we prepare to leave this life, we will be judged on the basis of love."' (15)

Let us pray.

**Leader:** Let us pray. (*A few moments of silent reflection.*)

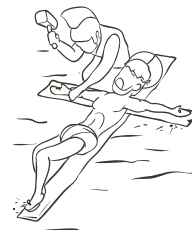
**All:** Infinite Love, seize us with your power and light, help us to protect all life, to prepare for a better future. May we yearn for the coming of your reign of justice, peace, love and beauty.

### 12th Station: Jesus dies on the cross

**Leader:** We praise you, O Christ, and we bless you.

**All:** Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

**Scripture:** 'Then Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last.' (Mark 15:37)



**Reflection:** We contemplate the starkness of Jesus' death. He was condemned to death; he was tortured and hung on the cross. He breathed his last and died. Unless, the human family changes course, can we expect anything less than death for those condemned to suffer the consequences of climate change? Untimely death is inevitable if we chose not to change.

**Laudato Si':** 'What [does] the commandment "Thou shall not kill" [mean] when "twenty percent of the world's population consumes resources at a rate that robs the poor nations and future generations of what they need to survive" .' (95)

Let us pray.

**Leader:** Let us pray. *(A few moments of silent reflection.)*

**All:** Jesus, we commit to examining our lives and changing course onto a healthier path. 'You dwell in our hearts and you inspire us to do what is good. Praise be to you!' ('A Christian prayer in union with creation', *Laudato Si'*)

### **13th Station: Jesus is taken down from the cross**

**Leader:** We praise you, O Christ, and we bless you.

**All:** Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

**Scripture:** 'Pilate gave him permission; so he came and removed his body.' (John 19:38)

**Reflection:** There is still not rest in death. The hour of Passover is approaching and Jesus' body must be quickly removed. So too is there haste in the care of bodies when the number of deaths is overwhelming in disasters. There is haste when fleeing on boats where some die on the dangerous journey. There is no time for a proper burial or a proper goodbye.

**Laudato Si':** 'Many things have to change course, but it is we human beings above all who need to change ... A great cultural, spiritual and educational challenge stands before us, and it will demand that

we set out on the long path of renewal.' (202)

Let us pray.

**Leader:** Let us pray. *(A few moments of silent reflection.)*

**All:** Hasten our spirits to a life of conversion, love and generosity. Quicken our steps along this path of renewal for the sake of the most vulnerable, for our own descendants, for the earth, our common home.

### **14th Station: Jesus is placed in the tomb**

**Leader:** We praise you, O Christ, and we bless you.

**All:** Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

**Scripture:** 'So Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock.' (Matthew 27:59-60)

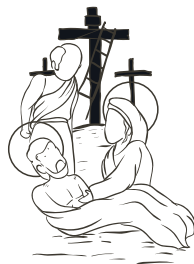
**Reflection:** Jesus had a dignified burial. Joseph of Arimathea had taken care to honour his body. Who are the Josephs of today? It is harsh and sometimes dangerous work for those who must bury the dead from disasters. The images of the countless people who do this noble work are on the evening news. They are unknown faces who provide dignity and decorum in times of sorrow and destruction. We feel gratitude toward them.

**Laudato Si':** 'We must regain the conviction that we need one another, that we have a shared responsibility for others and the world, and that being good and decent are worth it.' (229)

Let us pray.

**Leader:** Let us pray. *(A few moments of silent reflection.)*

**All:** Give strength, Oh Loving God, to those who toil in times of disaster. So too, bless those around us who work to educate our communities; who encourage and inspire their neighbours to take action for the common good.





## 15th Station: Jesus rises from the dead

**Leader:** We praise you, O Christ, and we bless you.

**All:** Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

**Scripture:** 'Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said.' (Matthew 28:6)

**Reflection:** What amazement Mary Magdalene and the other Mary must have experienced. Jesus' death was so real and seemed so final. Yet, why did Jesus die on the cross if not to give us new life and new hope? We are on a critical pilgrimage in this time in history and Jesus' resurrection inspires us to live in a different way. We can choose to take the path of mercy, a new journey of living simply and sustainably so that the earth heals and all of humanity and creation rise again.

**Laudato Si':** 'When we ask ourselves what kind of world we want to leave behind, we think in the first place of its general direction, its meaning and its values. Unless we struggle with these deeper issues, I do not believe that our concern for ecology will produce significant results. But if these issues



are courageously faced, we are led inexorably to ask other pointed questions: what is the purpose of our life in this world? Why are we here? What is the goal of our work and all our efforts? What need does the earth have of us? ... Leaving an inhabitable planet to future generations is, first and foremost, up to us. The issue is one which dramatically affects us, for it has to do with the ultimate meaning of our earthly sojourn.' (160)

Let us pray.

**Leader:** Let us pray. (*A few moments of silent reflection.*)

**All:** Divine Love, we chose the path of mercy, a new journey of living simply and sustainably so that the earth heals and all of humanity and creation rise again. We 'entrust the life of the Church, all humanity, and the entire cosmos' to you. 'Pour out Your mercy upon us like the morning dew, so that everyone may work together to build a brighter future' (*Misericordiae Vultus*, 5).

Amen.

**Credit:** Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace

**Credit:** Trócaire



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# LAUDATO SI' STUDY GUIDE

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## Introduction

This study guide is inspired by Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si': On Care for our Common Home*.

The papal encyclical offers us an opportunity to reflect on the world around us and to respond to the signs of the times. We are all called to reject the contemporary 'throwaway' culture and to open our eyes to see how God is present throughout creation.

We bear witness to the reality facing many of our sisters and brothers across the world, who are being pushed deeper into poverty due to the changing climates.

*Laudato Si'* is a profound invitation to everyone on the planet, and its influence will be felt for many years to come.

Trócaire is the overseas development agency of the Catholic Church in Ireland. We work with partners in over twenty countries in the developing world to empower communities to improve their lives, meet their basic needs and ensure their human dignity. In Ireland, we raise awareness about the root causes of poverty and injustice and advocate for change.

Trócaire wishes to thank CAFOD and SCIAF for sharing their resources with us in the development of this document.

## Session One

### Creation is a Caress of God

#### Passages from *Laudato Si'*

- 1 Saint Francis of Assisi reminds us that our common home is like a sister with whom we share our life and a beautiful mother who opens her arms to embrace us.
- 12 What is more, Saint Francis, faithful to Scripture, invites us to see nature as a magnificent book in which God speaks to us and grants us a glimpse of his infinite beauty and goodness.
- 11 If we approach to nature and the environment without this openness to awe and wonder, if we no longer speak the language of fraternity and beauty in our relationship with the world, our attitude will be that of masters, consumers, ruthless exploiters, unable to set limits on their immediate needs. By contrast, if we feel intimately united with all that exists, then sobriety and care will well up spontaneously.

82 [I]t would be mistaken to view other living beings as mere objects subjected to arbitrary human domination ... Completely at odds with this model are the ideals of harmony, justice, fraternity and peace as proposed by Jesus.

146 [I]t is essential to show special care for indigenous communities and their cultural traditions. They are not merely one minority among others but should be the principal dialogue partners, especially when large projects affecting their land are proposed. For them, the land is not a commodity but rather a gift from God and from their ancestors who rest there, a sacred space with which they need to interact if they are to maintain their identity and values. When they remain on their land, they themselves care for it best.

### Reflection

'God saw all he had made, and indeed it was very good.'

*Genesis 1:31*

We believe each and every human person is valued and loved by God, especially those who are living in poverty. Indeed, all of creation reflects God's goodness. Pope Francis calls us to see people, creatures, the soil, water, mountains, 'everything ... as a caress of God' (84). The Lord's abundant love shines throughout the world, bringing all of creation into this embrace. We are called to be open to the wonders of creation, and to lift our hearts and minds to praise the Lord, together as one family. This requires us to be still, to listen to our neighbours and our sister earth, and hear what God is saying to us.

### Discuss

- Saint Francis invites us to see 'nature as a magnificent book in which God speaks to us' (11). How can we listen to what God is saying to us today through the environment and our neighbours living in poverty?

- In what ways has the world become a place where harm is inflicted on the earth and people living in poverty?

### Act

- Go out into a nearby park or garden and bring back a symbol which speaks to you. Reflect on what this means with your neighbour. If you are unable to go outside during the session, set aside time to do this during the week.

### Pray

I believe in God and in nature as an inheritance which humanity has in common.

I enjoy the smell of the earth and the caress of the sun, the wind and the rain.

I enjoy the song of the birds and the murmur of the breeze that rustles the trees.

I like contemplating the crops, listening to the sigh of the corn fields, seeing the surge of the rice fields and waiting for the smell of ripe fruit.

I believe in all God's creatures, large and small.

*'A Creed for Creation' by Erasmo Valiente, Jesuit Development Service, El Salvador*

## Session Two

### The Climate is a Common Good

#### Passages from *Laudato Si'*

- 2 This sister [the earth] now cries out to us because of the harm we have inflicted on her by our irresponsible use and abuse of the goods with which God has endowed her. We have come to see ourselves as her lords and masters, entitled to plunder her at will. The violence present in our hearts, wounded by sin, is also reflected in the symptoms of sickness evident in the soil, in the water, in the air and in all forms of life. This is why the earth herself, burdened and

laid waste, is among the most abandoned and maltreated of our poor.

- 21 The earth, our home, is beginning to look more and more like an immense pile of filth.
- 23 The climate is a common good, belonging to all and meant for all.
- 25 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.
- 138 Ecology studies the relationship between living organisms and the environment in which they develop. This necessarily entails reflection and debate about the conditions required for the life and survival of society, and the honesty needed to question certain models of development, production and consumption. It cannot be emphasised enough how everything is interconnected.
- 158 In the present condition of global society, where injustices abound and growing numbers of people are deprived of basic human rights and considered expendable, the principle of the common good immediately becomes, logically and inevitably, a summons to solidarity and a preferential option for the poorest of our brothers and sisters.

### Reflection

Climate change is making disasters more frequent and more intense. It is the most vulnerable communities who are hit hardest. The hand of greed has plundered the earth's resources for profit, having forgotten that God is the Lord of all. Many of our global neighbours who are living in poverty bear witness to this injustice on a daily basis.

We recognise the times we have turned away from protecting creation. We are called to change our lives, and to lead all creatures back to reflect God's glory.

### Examination of Conscience

We invite you to undertake an examination of conscience, and reflect on ways you may have turned away from loving God, our neighbour and the earth.

- How do my actions show that I love my neighbour, especially those who are living in poverty?
- Do I strive to cherish and protect creation, remembering that God is the creator of all? In what ways do I do this?
- What are my dreams and ambitions? How do these reflect the Christian conviction that 'less is more'? (222)

### Act

Watch the documentary *The Burning Question* on: [vimeo.com/trocaire](https://vimeo.com/trocaire)

### Pray

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 earth and not  
prey on it,  
that we may sow beauty,  
not pollution and destruction.

*Extract from 'A prayer for our earth', Laudato Si'*

## Session Three

### A Universal Family

#### Passages from *Laudato Si'*

- 9 As Christians, we are called 'to accept the world as a sacrament of communion, as a way of sharing with God and our neighbours on a global scale'.
- 47 When media and the digital world become omnipresent, their influence can stop people from learning how to live wisely, to think deeply and to love generously.

- 52 We need to strengthen the conviction that we are one single human family. There are no frontiers or barriers, political or social, behind which we can hide, still less is their room for the globalisation of indifference.
- 92 When our hearts are authentically open to universal communion, this sense of fraternity excludes nothing and no one.
- 92 Everything is related, and we human beings are united as brothers and sisters on a wonderful pilgrimage, woven together by the love God has for each of his creatures and which also unites us in fond affection with brother sun, sister moon, brother river and mother earth.
- 232 Around community actions, relationships develop or are recovered and a new social fabric emerges. Thus, a community can break out of the indifference induced by consumerism. These actions cultivate a shared identity, with a story which can be remembered and handed on. In this way, the world, and the quality of life of the poorest are cared for, with a sense of solidarity which is at the same time aware that we live in a common home which God has entrusted to us. These community actions, when they express self-giving love, can also become intense spiritual experiences.

### Reflection

When we look around us today, we see more and more how people are becoming indifferent to each other's needs. It is not fair that some should have everything, and others should have nothing. Pope Francis calls us to break down the walls of indifference and renew our understanding of the bonds that unite us. Living simply is a wonderful example of what can be achieved when communities come together to care for creation.

### Discuss

- Pope Francis says, 'We are united as brothers and sisters on a wonderful pilgrimage' (92). What do you think this means?

- What do you think it means to flourish in a relationship with God, our neighbour, ourselves and the earth?

### Act

Log onto Trócaire's 100 ways to implement *Laudato Si'* in your home, parish and everyday life. Pick at least one thing you can do.

[trocaire.org/sites/trocaire/files/pdfs/parishes/100-ways-to-implement-laudato-si.pdf](http://trocaire.org/sites/trocaire/files/pdfs/parishes/100-ways-to-implement-laudato-si.pdf)

### Pray

Living God,  
 have mercy on us,  
 for the times we forget  
 that we belong to each other.  
 You call us to be still,  
 to hear the whisper of our Sister Wind,  
 to feel the radiance of our Brother Sun,  
 to be nourished by our Mother Earth.  
 Renew us in your healing love.  
 Inspire us to water the earth,  
 and nurture one another,  
 so all may flourish.

*Rachel McCarthy/CAFOD*

## Session Four

### We were Made for Love

#### Passages from *Laudato Si'*

- 58 For all our limitations, gestures of generosity, solidarity and care cannot but well up within us, since we were made for love.
- 160 What kind of world do we want to leave to those who come after us, to children who are now growing up? The issue is one which dramatically affects us, for it has to do with the ultimate meaning of our earthly sojourn.
- 217 What [Christians] need is an 'ecological conversion', whereby the effects of their encounter with Jesus Christ become evident in their relationship with the world around them.

- 226 We are speaking of an attitude of the heart, one which approaches life with serene attentiveness, which is capable of being fully present to someone without thinking of what comes next, which accepts each moment as a gift from God to be lived to the full.
- 227 One expression of this attitude is when we stop and give thanks to God before and after meals. I ask all believers to return to this beautiful and meaningful custom.
- 231 Love, overflowing with small gestures of mutual care, is also civic and political, and it makes itself felt in every action that seeks to build a better world.
- 236 It is in the Eucharist that all that has been created finds its greatest exaltation. Joined to the incarnate Son, present in the Eucharist, the whole cosmos gives thanks to God. The Eucharist is also a source of light and motivation for our concerns for the environment, directing us to be stewards of all creation.

### Reflection

'Love makes itself felt in every action that seeks to build a better world.' (*Laudato Si'*, 231)

We are reminded that we were made for love, and this gives us hope. We are all called to a change of heart, 'to live wisely, think deeply and love generously' (47).

All of us are called to a deep conversion, to see how Christ is present throughout creation. This change affects us, both individually and as a community, and it moves us to treat the world and each other with tenderness and care.

This requires a deep commitment to caring for our common home, by acting in solidarity with our sisters and brothers in the present and in the future.

One way of expressing our commitment is to speak out for justice, and hold our leaders to account for their actions. As Pope Francis tells us, 'love makes itself felt in every action that seeks to build a better world' (231).

May we live out our vocation with joy, giving thanks and praise to God.

### Discuss

- Pope Francis asks us, 'What kind of world do we want to leave to those who come after us, to children who are now growing up?' (160) What is your answer to this question?
- The Eucharist is 'an act of cosmic love' (236). In what ways can we respond to God's love through our actions?

### Act

- Speak out in solidarity with our sisters and brothers across the world who are affected by the changing climate. Find out how you can take action at [trocaire.org/getinvolved/climate-justice](http://trocaire.org/getinvolved/climate-justice)

### Pray

Say this grace before sharing food together.

Generous God,  
 you embrace all of creation,  
 and bless us with gifts of life.  
 As we break this bread,  
 we praise you for your goodness,  
 we give thanks to those who  
 grew our food,  
 and we remember those who are hungry.  
 May we be moved by the Holy Spirit  
 to share these gifts as one family,  
 and so catch a glimpse of your Kingdom,  
 of justice, peace and love.  
 Amen.

*Rachel McCarthy/CAFOD*

## What next?

We hope that using this guide has been fruitful in your process of reflecting and responding to *Laudato Si'*. Below are some opportunities for further action, bearing in mind the words of Pope Francis: 'Local individuals and groups can make a real difference.' (179)

- **Pray:**

Join us in praying for our earth and our global family: [trocaire.org/resources/parishes](https://trocaire.org/resources/parishes)

- **Reflect:**

Further reflect on our relationship with creation through our Glas resource: [trocaire.org/resources/parishes](https://trocaire.org/resources/parishes)

- **Campaign with us:**

Add your voice to The Burning Question campaign. Visit: [trocaire.org/getinvolved/climate-justice](https://trocaire.org/getinvolved/climate-justice) (Follow links for both Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland.)

- **Live simply and sustainably:**

We have 100 ways for parishes to implement *Laudato Si'* here: [trocaire.org/resources/parishes/climate-resources](https://trocaire.org/resources/parishes/climate-resources)

- **Children and young people:**

Find resources on the environment and climate change: [trocaire.org/getinvolved/education/resources](https://trocaire.org/getinvolved/education/resources)

- **Keep in touch:**

Get in touch with your local contact:

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Find out about the latest campaign news, events and resources by signing up to our newsletter: [trocaire.org](https://trocaire.org)

**Credit:** CAFOD is the Caritas England and Wales

**Credit:** Trócaire

## Evaluation Sheet

Did your parish use this year's Lenten Parish Resource?

Yes  No

If yes, which parts of the resource did you use?

- Children's Sacred Space
- Blessing of the Land
- Stations of the Cross
- *Laudato Si'* Study Guide

What was the best part of the resource for 2017?

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How have you been inspired to join the fight for justice?

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Is there any part of the resource you feel could be improved?

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Comments:

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Please return your completed evaluation sheet to [colm.hogan@trocaire.org](mailto:colm.hogan@trocaire.org)

# Trocaire

Working for a just world.

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