

A CELEBRATION OF

Laudato Si

At School

Reflect, Pray, Act

HOW CAN WE MAKE A
DIFFERENCE?

Often when we reflect on our world we can notice many problems: harm to the environment; disrespect for nature and for each other; poverty and violence.

Sometimes we can feel helpless, but Pope Francis calls us all to work together to make a difference even if only in small ways. Here are some suggested ideas for use at school to aid us in reflecting on our world, praying for our world and taking action to make our world a better place.

Reflect

GROUP DISCUSSION IDEAS

In this section we suggest playing a game of 'discussion jenga' to help children talk about God's creation and climate change in an engaging way.

We have provided a list of suggested quotes from Laudato Sí, and relevant discussion questions to go alongside them.

Discussion Jenga

A fun way to stimulate discussion is through the game Jenga. Questions about our world or about ourselves can be written on each block, and each time a block is pulled from the tower successfully, the child is encouraged to read the question and share their answers. Everyone else playing the game can also share their answers to the question.



 Click [here](#) to find Laudato Sí online

Laudato Sí quotes could also be used when playing discussion Jenga. Children can be asked what they think each quote means to them and for our world.

Children could also be given various chunks of the Laudato Sí text and could highlight their favourite quotes and come up with ideas on how to live out the various messages Pope Francis gives to us.

Laudato Si Useful Quotes

Climate change is a global problem with grave implications. (25)

All of us can cooperate as instruments of God for the care of creation, each according to his or her own culture, experience, involvements and talents. (14)

Young people demand change. They wonder how anyone can claim to be building a better future without thinking of the environmental crisis and the sufferings of the excluded. (13)

Because all creatures are connected, each must be cherished with love and respect, for all of us as living creatures are dependent on one another. (42)

The entire material universe speaks of God's love, his boundless affection for us. (84)

I urgently appeal, then, for a new dialogue about how we are shaping the future of our planet. We need a conversation which includes everyone, since the environmental challenge we are undergoing, and its human roots, concern and affect us all. (14)

Rest opens our eyes to the larger picture and gives us renewed sensitivity to the rights of others. (237)

We were not meant to be inundated by cement, asphalt, glass and metal, and deprived of physical contact with nature. (44)

The climate is a common good, belonging to all and meant for all. At the global level, it is a complex system linked to many of the essential conditions for human life. (23)

The earth, our home, is beginning to look more and more like an immense pile of filth. In many parts of the planet, the elderly lament that once beautiful landscapes are now covered with rubbish. (21)

The deterioration of the environment and of society affects the most vulnerable people on the planet. (48)

Once we start to think about the kind of world we are leaving to future generations, we look at things differently; we realize that the world is a gift which we have freely received and must share with others. (159)

We need to take up an ancient lesson, found in different religious traditions and also in the Bible. It is the conviction that "less is more"...it is a way of living life to the full. (222-223)

Reducing greenhouse gases requires honesty, courage and responsibility, above all on the part of those countries which are more powerful and pollute the most. (169)

Saint Therese of Lisieux invites us to practise the little way of love, not to miss out on a kind word, a smile or any small gesture which sows peace and friendship. (230)

Laudato Si Useful Questions

What do you think 'less is more' means? Why could it be important?

What do you think the difference is between a house and a home?

Why do you think Pope Francis thinks resting is so important?

Pope Francis talks about a 'throwaway culture'. What do you think this means?

What do you think the difference is between the words 'nature' and 'creation'?

Can you list different ways mistreating the planet can cause poverty?

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)' - How would you answer this question?

What do you think 'ecological conversion' means?

What do you like most about spending time in nature?

What do you think the term 'common good' means?

What do you think is the most important action to help stop climate change? Why?

What does Laudato Sí teach us about Science and Religion?

Pope Francis speaks about our world as 'our common home'. what do you think that means?

What are the good and bad aspects of social media and technology?

Pray

SPENDING TIME WITH GOD

In this section we offer some print-outs of the two suggested prayers that Pope Francis gives us in *Laudato Sí*, as well as St Francis' prayer: 'The Canticle of the Creatures'. The first, 'A prayer for our earth', was written by Pope Francis for anyone of any faith that believes in an all-powerful creator. The second prayer, 'A Christian prayer in union with creation' was written for the whole Christian community. These can be placed on a prayer table.

We offer a suggested prayer session using a map of the world, where children are encouraged to reflect on the effects of climate change and the experiences of people, in different countries.

We have also included some suggested ideas about how to make St Francis of Assisi's prayer, 'The Canticle of the Creatures' accessible to children.

Using a map can help us to visualise places during times of prayer. After reading some scripture, such as the suggested Psalm, play some gentle music and encourage children to place pebbles on an area of the world that needs our prayers, or even get them to write prayers on sticky notes for particular countries and problems our world faces.

Map Prayer

“ He loves
righteousness and
justice;
the earth is full
of the steadfast
love of the Lord.”
Psalm 33:5



Make Your Own Canticle of the Creatures

Our world is filled with so many beautiful places to thank God for:



Find a selection of images of different places in the world for the children to draw inspiration from.

Encourage them to write an expressive prayer that praises God for all the wonderful things they might find in the place they have chosen.



Perhaps your class has a learning focus on a particular environment or place such as the beach, the mountains or even space and planets?

A corner of the classroom could be transformed into that place and the children could make animals and plants or planets and stars as decorations.

Or perhaps children could write a poem in the style of St Francis' prayer but on the effects of pollution on God's creation using newspaper articles as inspiration?





Canticle of the Creatures

St Francis of Assisi

Most High, all powerful, good Lord,
Yours are the praises, the glory, the honour,
and all blessing.

To You alone, Most High, do they belong,
and no man is worthy to mention Your name.

Be praised, my Lord, through all your
creatures,
especially through my lord Brother Sun,
who brings the day; and you give light through
him.

And he is beautiful and radiant in all his
splendour!

Of you, Most High, he bears the likeness.

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

Praised be You, my Lord, through Brother
Wind,

and through the air, cloudy and serene,
and every kind of weather through which

You give sustenance to Your creatures.

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

Praised be You, my Lord, through Brother Fire,
through whom you light the night and he is
beautiful

and playful and robust and strong.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister
Mother Earth,

who sustains us and governs us and who
produces

varied fruits with coloured flowers and herbs.

Praised be You, my Lord,
through those who give pardon for Your love,
and bear infirmity and tribulation.

Blessed are those who endure in peace
for by You, Most High, they shall be crowned.

Praised be You, my Lord,
through our Sister Bodily Death,
from whom no living man can escape.

Woe to those who die in mortal sin.

Blessed are those whom death will
find in Your most holy will,
for the second death shall do them no harm.

Praise and bless my Lord,
and give Him thanks
and serve Him with great humility





A Prayer For Our Earth

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

You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.

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

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



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

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

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

as we journey towards your infinite light.
We thank you for being with us each day.

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





A Christian Prayer in Union With Creation

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

Praise be to you!

Son of God, Jesus,

through you all things were made.

You were formed in the womb of Mary our Mother,
you became part of this earth,
and you gazed upon this world with human eyes.

Today you are alive in every creature
in your risen glory.

Praise be to you!

Holy Spirit, by your light
you guide this world towards the Father's love
and accompany creation as it groans in travail.

You also dwell in our hearts
and you inspire us to do what is good.

Praise be to you!

Triune Lord, wondrous community of infinite love,
teach us to contemplate you
in the beauty of the universe,
for all things speak of you.

Awaken our praise and thankfulness
for every being that you have made.
Give us the grace to feel profoundly joined
to everything that is.

God of love, show us our place in this
world

as channels of your love
for all the creatures of this earth,
for not one of them is forgotten in your
sight.

Enlighten those who possess power and
money

that they may avoid the sin of indifference,
that they may love the common good,
advance the weak,
and care for this world in which we live.

The poor and the earth are crying out.
O Lord, seize us with your power and light,
help us to protect all life,
to prepare for a better future,
for the coming of your Kingdom
of justice, peace, love and beauty.

Praise be to you!

Amen.



Act

ECOLOGICAL FUN

There are many different ways to make a positive impact on our world: donating to charity; turning light switches off when we leave a room; not wasting food; and living simple kind lives. Let's explore these further in this section.

In Laudato Sí, Pope Francis says: 'We read in the Gospel that Jesus says of the birds of the air that "not one of them is forgotten before God" (Lk 12:6). How then can we possibly mistreat them or cause them harm?'. With many natural spaces being destroyed, birds can find it difficult to find food or shelter. In this section you will find a recipe to make your own bird feeders which can be hung up around the school building or taken home at the end of the day.

Birdsong is so beautiful, and can really help us to feel peaceful. By feeding the birds, we are also helping ourselves to spend peaceful moments with God when we hear the birds' joyful song.

Bird Feeders!



You will need:

A Pine Cone
Suet or Vegetable Fat
Wild Bird Seed
Twine

Method:

You will first need to find some pine cones – take a look in your local park or woodland. Once you have a pine cone, tie a string around the bottom of it with a loop at the other end.

Apply a thick layer of your suet or vegetable fat. Make sure you fill all the gaps in the pine cone. Then roll the ball in seeds until the whole pine cone is covered. Finally hang from a hook or tree and watch the birds come!



Make yourself aware of recycling and upcycling initiatives such as Teracycle.

Dedicate time to volunteer for charities close to your heart, or take part in CAFOD's gap year.

Change your search engine to one that helps the environment as you search.



How Else Can I Help?

Are your school devices kept on standby through the night? Make sure you turn them all off to save energy.

Are some of your packed lunch snacks in plastic packaging? See whether you can find snacks in recyclable or compostable wrappers.

Could you grow some of your own fruits and vegetables at school? They could be served at lunch time once they've grown.

*All of us can cooperate
as instruments of God
for the care of creation*

Laudato Sí, 14