



Laudato Si On Care for Our Common Home



The Beauty of God’s Creation

In June, 2015, Pope Francis gave the world the first encyclical ever written on the environment. He titled his work, *The Laudato Si, On Care for Our Common Home*.

Laudato Si is a Latin term which means, *Praise be to you, my Lord* and was taken from a canticle written by St. Francis of Assisi, the Holy Father’s patron saint. During this school year, the monthly resources will focus on *Laudato Si* and practical ways to live out this most important message of Pope Francis.

Who is Pope Francis?

Jorge Mario Bergoglio was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, on December 17, 1936, to Italian immigrants. As a young man, due to serious infection, he had a part of one of his lungs removed. He graduated from a technical school as a chemical technician before beginning training at the Diocesan Seminary. He is a member of a religious community of men called Jesuits. When Jorge Mario Bergoglio was a bishop, prior to his election as Pope in 2013, he loved to ride the bus and to be among the people in his Archdiocese of Buenos Aires, Argentina, South America. In 2013 he was named the 266th pope of the Roman Catholic Church. Bergoglio, the first pope from the Americas, took his papal title from Saint Francis of Assisi of Italy. He is the first citizen from the Americas, the first non-European and first Jesuit priest to be named pope. A primary reason that he chose his patron saint was Saint Francis’ love for those who are poor, vulnerable and oppressed. He also wanted to follow Saint Francis’ example of

care for creation and his closeness to all living creatures. St. Francis was born in 1141 in Assisi, Italy into a wealthy family. St. Francis abandoned a life of luxury after hearing God’s voice to “rebuild his Church” and live in poverty. He devoted his life to the poor, vulnerable and all creatures of the world. Pope Benedict XVI named him the patron saint for ecologists.

Pope Francis is an excellent modern day example as one who shows that our personal peace is connected to the care and concern of God’s creation and all who live in this world. He is admired throughout the world as a great and holy man who lives without special privilege. When elected Pope, he chose a simple place to live and a simple car to drive. He chose to walk outside among the people and continue to take care of those who are poor. This dedication earned him the title of Person of the Year by *Time* magazine In December 2013.

Pope Francis gives us hope for the future of this world as he tells us that through the grace of God we have the ability to take care of our common home and all its inhabitants.

Guided Meditation

- 1) Close your eyes. Imagine a beautiful place.
- 2) Imagine Jesus coming to sit with you there.
- 3) For what do you want to thank Him? Allow 1 minute of silence.
- 4) Close with Glory Be.

October 2 Twenty-Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time	Hab. 1: 2-3; 2: 2-4	<i>What is my vision for a better world in harmony with God, others and myself? Create a poem to express your vision.</i>
October 9 Twenty-Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time	Luke 17: 11-19	<i>How do I thank God for the gifts of creation? Compose a grace for before meals to pray as a family.</i>
October 16 Twenty-Ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time	Ps 12 : 1—8	<i>Make up your own psalm response similar to this Sunday’s responsorial psalm.</i>
October 23 Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time	2 Tim. 4: 6-8, -18	<i>How are you doing all that you can to care for God’s creation in your own home? What more could you do?</i>
October 30 Thirty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time	Luke 19: 1-10	<i>In what ways have you turned toward Jesus and answered his invitation to be closer to you?</i>



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BACKGROUND AND RESOURCES FOR THE TEACHER

Saint Francis of Assisi: Feast day is October 4.

The picture on the left of this newsletter is of Saint Francis of Assisi.

After reviewing the resource, you may want to ask the students:

⇒ Why do some people put a statue of or bird bath with Saint Francis on their front lawn?

⇒ Why would Pope Benedict name Saint Francis as the patron saint of ecology/ecologists?

(He treated all of creation with special care and used words like “brother” and “sister” for the moon, sun, wind, fire and water.)

Pope Francis:

The picture on the right of this newsletter is Pope Francis.

After reviewing the resource, you may want to ask the students:

⇒ How many of you saw Pope Francis when he visited Philadelphia in 2015? How would you describe him?

⇒ What are some reasons Pope Francis chose as his patron saint Saint Francis of Assisi?

What is an encyclical?

An encyclical is a letter usually written by a Pope to a particular audience of Bishops. Pope Francis said this encyclical was not only written to the bishops of the world and not even just to Catholics but to all people of the world. He said the issue of care for creation is too important to write to only some people when all people are needed to do something about caring for creation today.

What does “Laudato Si” mean in English?

Laudato Si are the first two words of the Canticle of Creation, a prayer written by Saint Francis of Assisi. The literal translation from the original Umbrian language is “praise be.” Umbrian is an ancient Italian dialect. In relationship to the encyclical, the official Vatican translation is ‘praise be to you, my Lord.’

For a complete copy of the encyclical go to: http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html

For additional lesson plans and parent/youth newsletters go to: www.sophiainstituteforteachers.org
Click “FREE RESOURCES,” then “Curriculum Exchange.” Type *Laudato Si* in the search field.