



Laudato Si, On Care for Our Common Home



EARTH DAY: Praising the Beauty of God's Creation

“Earth Day” is the largest worldwide civic observance which is celebrated annually on April 22. The day was established in 1970 to encourage care for the earth and all its inhabitants. In our country, significant progress has been made over the years. People think twice about throwing debris from a car, leaving on nonessential lights, and making unnecessary trips which consume fuel. Laws have been enacted to limit the disposal of hazardous materials. Automobiles get better gas mileage. Rivers and streams are protected. People challenge the misuse of the world’s natural resources and promote a just allocation of the goods.

For Catholics, everyday is “Earth Day”. Concern for creation is not new to Christianity. The Book of Genesis recounts that creation is the work of God and thus sacred. After each stage of creation, the sacred writer notes that God named it as “good”, except for humankind whose creation is seen as “very good”. God also entrusts humankind with an authority and stewardship of care over all the earth.

Pope Francis calls all people to see the world through the eyes of God, the Creator. He reminds us

that God has not abandoned us or His plan for creation. Rather, Pope Francis challenges us to hear God’s appeal to “work together in building our common home.” (#13)

How can you respond to Pope Francis’s challenge?

Check out these Catholic organizations for ideas.

- **The Pontifical Missions Society** supports the Church’s missionary work throughout the world by bringing the Gospel message of Jesus Christ to those in need. As Pope Francis has stated: “*By loving and helping the poor, we love and serve Christ.*” For more information and great resources, go to: www.phillymissions.org
- **Catholic Relief Services**, a worldwide organization, provides many educational materials, resources and opportunities to care for the earth, the poor of the world, and those suffering from the effects of natural disasters. www.crs.org
- **Catholic Climate Covenant** inspires and equips people and institutions to care for creation and care for the poor. Through our 14 national partners, we guide the U.S. Church's response to climate change by educating, giving public witness, and offering resources. For more information, go to: www.catholicclimatecovenant.org

April 2 Fifth Sunday of Lent	Psalm 1	<i>The Lord says if we walk in his ways, we will be joyful. Give an example from your own life.</i>
April 9 Passion Sunday	Matthew 26: 14-27	<i>What are the similarities between the Jewish feast of Passover and the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass?</i>
April 16 Easter Sunday	Matthew 28: 1-10	<i>How is your life an “alleluia” which witnesses to the Resurrection of Jesus Christ?</i>
April 23	John 20: 19-31	<i>Explain how you extend the peace of Christ to others in your life.</i>
April 30	Luke 24: 13-35	<i>Give examples on how Jesus walks with you each day.</i>



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BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS ABOUT THE RESOURCE

Additional Earth Day Ideas

- Use the **Earth Day Prayer Services for Students** posted at: www.phillyocf.org. Click the Resource link and scroll to the Monthly Resources. Find three prayer services: Grades 1-4; Grades 5-8; Grades 9-12. Weather permitting, plan to have the prayer service outdoors.
- **For younger students:** Make a bird feeder with pine cones covered with “Crisco” mixed in corn meal and dipped in bird seed. Do not use peanut butter as some may be allergic to nuts. Tie a ribbon around it to hang it from a tree or pole at home.
- **For middle grades students:** Create a “prayer booklet” on a 8”x10” piece of recycled paper. Students should:
 - ⇒ Fold the paper in quarters
 - ⇒ Choose a psalm, prayer or poem which praises God’s Creation. Older students can compose prayers or poems.
 - ⇒ Draw, download pictures or use magazine pictures which illustrate or reflect the psalm, prayer or poem on the cover.
 - ⇒ Write their selection on the inside pages.
- **For older students:** Have a campus clean up or a recycling project. Make posters that highlights ways tht your school can save water.

For additional information go to
www.sophiainstituteforteachers.com