



Invest time each week to expand your vocabulary and deepen your faith.

01 September 2024

WORD OF THE WEEK

Laudato Si' \lau-dät'-ō sē'\

Literally, "Praise be to you"; Pope Francis' 2015 Encyclical "On Care for Our Common Home." Describes in scientific and moral detail how irresponsible development and a throwaway culture threatens creation as a whole. Outlines action steps that all people can take to protect the Earth.

Pronunciation: <https://tinyurl.com/Take5-laudato-si>

CONTEXT

A prayerful re-engagement with *Laudato si'*, including an honest appraisal of our own resistance to it, is a spiritual exercise the church in the United States needs.
—Father Sam Sawyer, S.J., in America

[We] must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, so as to hear both the cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor.
—Pope Francis in *Laudato si'*

WHY IT MATTERS

As early as 1971, Pope Paul VI warned that "Due to an ill-considered exploitation of nature, humanity runs the risk of destroying it and becoming in turn a victim of this degradation." Scientists have warned for decades that rampant misuse of the environment is causing a level of climate change that will alter the conditions of life on Earth. As oceans rise and weather becomes more extreme and erratic, we have run out of time and excuses for inaction.

From *Laudato si'*: Now, faced as we are with global environmental deterioration, I wish to address every person living on this planet.... In this Encyclical, I would like to enter into dialogue with all people about our common home (3).

RELATED WORDS

Creation | Stewardship | Eco-spirituality

QUESTION OF THE WEEK

What do I need to know about Laudato si'?

Pope Francis' prophetic encyclical "On Care for Our Common Home" is a game-changer. This is no dry repetition of churchy ideas: God made the world, life is sacred, love your neighbor, please recycle. Instead, he presents a summons to the global conscience anchored in the language of science, economics, and social theory, cradled in scripture, prayer, and passionate moral appeal. The pope touches third-rail politics and tramples on toes, but who wants a pope who minces pieties or holds his tongue? As Saint Teresa of Ávila said: "The world is in flames! Let's not waste our prayer bothering God with trifles!"

The pope quotes voices seldom heard: fellow bishops from Canada, Japan, Paraguay, Bolivia, Portugal, New Zealand. He cites the Ecumenical Patriarch of the Orthodox Church along with the saints, quotes international conferences as well as examining sacramental realities. *Laudato si'* sounds the warning and points toward hope. If you're not stunned, breathless, and persuaded by this message, go back and read it again.

—Alice Camille, from *Questions Catholics Ask* https://www.vocationnetwork.org/en/blog/questions_catholics_ask/2017/08/what_do_i_need_to_know_about_laudato_si

REFLECTION OF THE WEEK

DAY OF PRAYER FOR CREATION (SEPTEMBER 1)

No time to waste

Following Pope Francis' 2015 encyclical *Laudato si'*, the Vatican developed an "Action Platform <https://laudatosi.actionplatform.org/>" with seven goals to provide guidance on urgent and immediate actions we can take to care of our common home: respond to the cry of the Earth, respond to the poor, practice ecological economics, adopt sustainable lifestyles, embrace ecological education, develop an ecological spirituality, and promote community resilience and empowerment.

READINGS: Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-8; James 1:17-18, 21b-22, 27; Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23 (125 <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/090124.cfm>). "Evils come from within and they defile."

FAITH IN ACTION

Take time to learn more about these goals and how you can achieve them in your own life for God's sake and the sake of all creation.