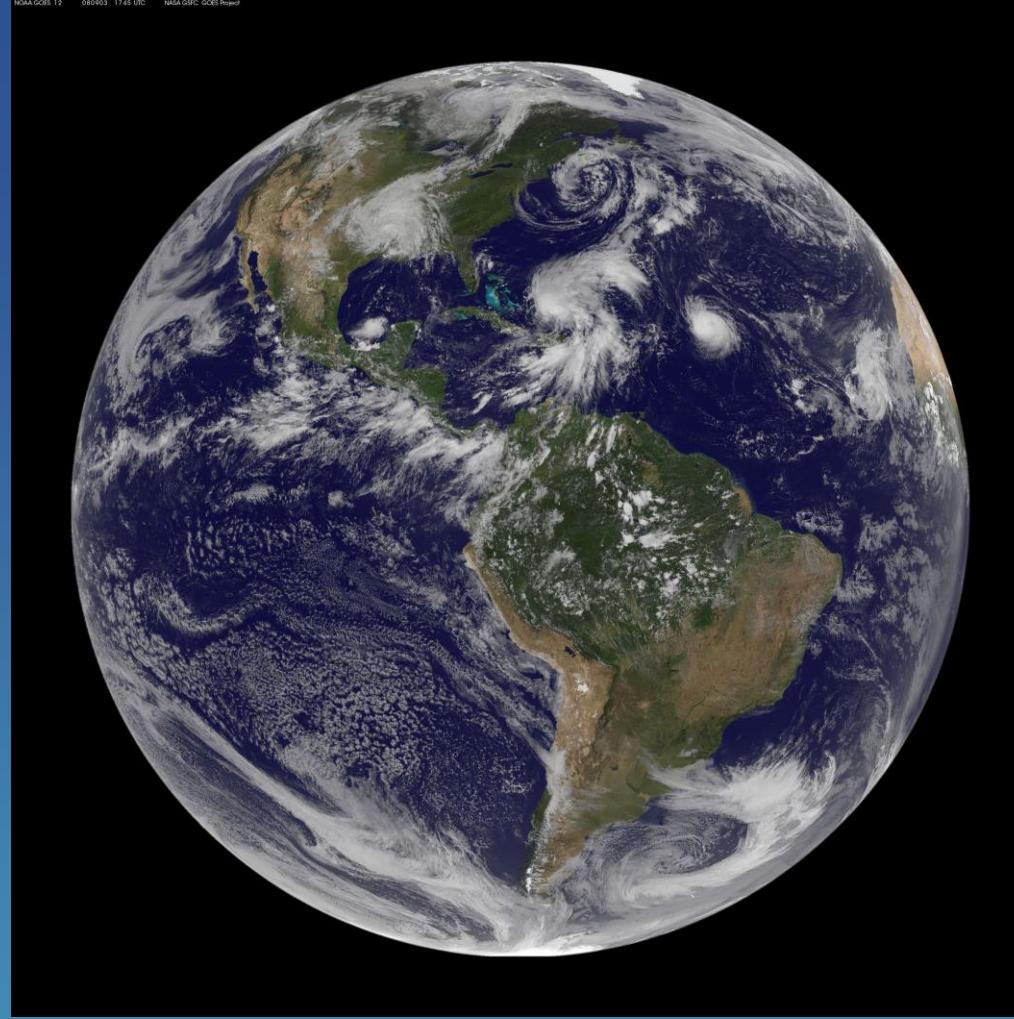


THE
LAY COMMUNITY
OF SAINT BENEDICT

LAUDATO SI

On Care for Our Common Home

A letter from Pope Francis
to all people of good will



“Praise be to you, my Lord, through our Sister, Mother Earth,
who sustains and governs us, and who produces various fruit
with coloured flowers and herbs”.

- ‘Due to an ill-considered exploitation of nature, humanity runs the risk of destroying it and in turn becoming a victim of this degradation.’ *Paul VI*
- ‘Every effort to protect and improve our world entails profound changes in lifestyles, models of production and consumption and the established structures of power which today govern societies.’ *JP II*
- ‘We need to replace consumption with sacrifice, greed with generosity, wastefulness with a spirit of sharing, an asceticism which entails learning to give and not simply to give up.’ *Patriarch Bartholomew*



‘St Francis shows us just how inseparable the bond is between concern for nature, justice for the poor, commitment to society and interior peace.’

‘The poverty and austerity of St Francis were no mere veneer of asceticism but something much more radical: a refusal to turn reality into an object simply to be used and controlled.’

LAUDATO SI'

ON CARE FOR
OUR COMMON HOME



POPE FRANCIS



ENCYCLICAL LETTER

‘The challenge to protect our common home includes a concern to bring together the whole human family together to seek a sustainable and integral development.’

‘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.



'Each year hundreds of millions of tons of waste are generated, much of it non- biodegradable, highly toxic and radioactive from homes and businesses from construction and demolition sites from clinical and industrial sources. The earth our home is beginning to look more and more like an immense pile of filth'.



‘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 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 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 the poor.’



‘Climate Change is a global problem with grave implications: environmental, social, economic, political and for the distribution of goods. Its worst impact will probably be felt by developing countries in the coming decade.’



‘There has been a tragic rise in the number of migrants seeking to flee from the growing poverty caused by environmental degradation... Sadly there is widespread indifference to such suffering.’

POWERful COUNTRIES



Many of those who possess more resources and economic and political power seem mostly concerned with masking the problems or concealing their symptoms.



‘ Because of us, thousands of species will no longer give glory to God by their very existence, nor convey their message to us. We have no such right.’



‘Who turned the wonderworld of the seas into underwater cemeteries bereft of colour and life. This phenomenon is due largely to pollution which reaches the sea as a result of deforestation, agricultural monocultures, industrial waste and destructive fishing methods... It is aggravated by the rise in temperature of the oceans.’

Integral Ecology and the Human Roots of the Crisis

‘We are not faced with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather one complex crisis, which is both social and environmental.’

‘A misguided anthropocentrism leads to a misguided lifestyle. When human beings place themselves at the centre they give absolute priority to immediate convenience and all else become relative.’

‘St Benedict of Nursia proposed that his monks live in community, combining prayer and spiritual reading with manual labour. Seeing manual labour as spiritually meaningful proved revolutionary. Personal growth and sanctification came to be sought in the interplay of recollection and work. This way of experiencing work makes us more protective and respectful of the environment.’

Towards a New Lifestyle

‘As never before in history, common destiny beckons us to seek a new beginning.... Let ours be a time for the awakening of a new reverence for life, the firm resolve to achieve sustainability, the quickening of the struggle for justice and peace, and the joyful celebration of life.’

Pope Francis