



## Encyclical Letter from Pope Francis

### **Laudato Si - On the care of our common home.**

On 18 June 2015 Pope Francis wrote a letter to all people around the world, asking that we take better care of the environment which is not only home for people but for all living creatures.

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?” (paragraph 160).

The letter is known as an ‘encyclical letter’ because it circles around the whole world so that it can be read by as many people as possible. The word Encyclical comes from the Greek word for ‘circle’ or ‘circular’.

It is called ‘Laudato Si’, which means, “Praise be to you”, from a song written by the great St Francis after whom the pope is named.

#### **What are some of the important messages from Pope Francis?**

- 1.** Everything in the world is connected. As humans we share the earth with all plants and creatures and each one of us has a responsibility to help care for it in any small way we can.  
**“We must ask ‘what kind of world do we want to leave to the children who are now growing up?’”**  
(Pope Francis, Paragraph 160).
  - 2.** We all have a responsibility for creating a better world and need to do what we can in our own community. We also need to encourage our governments to represent us on the environment responsibly.
  - 3.** Each creature on our planet deserves to be cared about and not hunted or used to extinction. Currently thousands of plant and animal species become extinct each year.
  - 4.** New forms of technology have changed the way we live in the world. It is important that we are responsible when we discover new ways of doing things. Pope Francis warns us of: **‘our throwaway culture and the purpose of a new lifestyle.’** (paragraph 16)
  - 5.** Access to safe, drinkable water is a basic human right and wasting or polluting water is a growing risk to world peace and wellbeing.
  - 6.** Climate change is a serious problem. It affects poor people and poor nations most seriously. We need to find ways of reducing the harm caused by:  
**The fuels we burn**  
**The forests we cut down**  
**The rivers we pollute**
  - 7.** We need to discuss and debate our problems about the environment honestly and bravely if we are to make positive change.
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### What can you do to help save the planet?

The pope says the work is urgent and even the smallest things we do will make a difference.

1. Don't leave the tap running when you brush your teeth
2. Have shorter showers
3. Turn the light off when you leave the room
4. Plant a tree
5. Make sure you recycle paper, glass, aluminium and plastic
6. Use a refillable drink bottle
7. Pick up your rubbish and put it in the bin

### Did you know?

Recycling one soft drink can will save enough energy to run a 60 watt light bulb for 20 hours, a computer for 3 hours, or a TV for 2 hours.

### St Francis



It's from St Francis, the patron or protector of the environment, that we have learned to call the sun and wind our brothers, the moon and water our sisters; St Francis is remembered too for his great love of animals and plants; we often bless our pets on his feast day, as a way of celebrating the joy we find in being friends with other species.

'**Laudato Si**' are the opening words of the letter and a prayer that acknowledges that Earth is God's gift to every living creature, a home that nurtures and sustains us, and one that deserves our love and care.