



MOMENTS OF GRACE

March 2022



A PRAYER FOR OUR EARTH

All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe
and in the smallest of your creatures.

You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.

Pour out upon us the power of your love,
that we may protect life and beauty.

Fill us with peace, that we may live
as brothers and sisters, harming no one.

O God of the poor,
help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth,
so precious in your eyes.

Bring healing to our lives,
that we may protect the world and not prey on it,
that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction.

Touch the hearts
of those who look only for gain
at the expense of the poor and the earth.





MOMENTS OF GRACE - MARCH

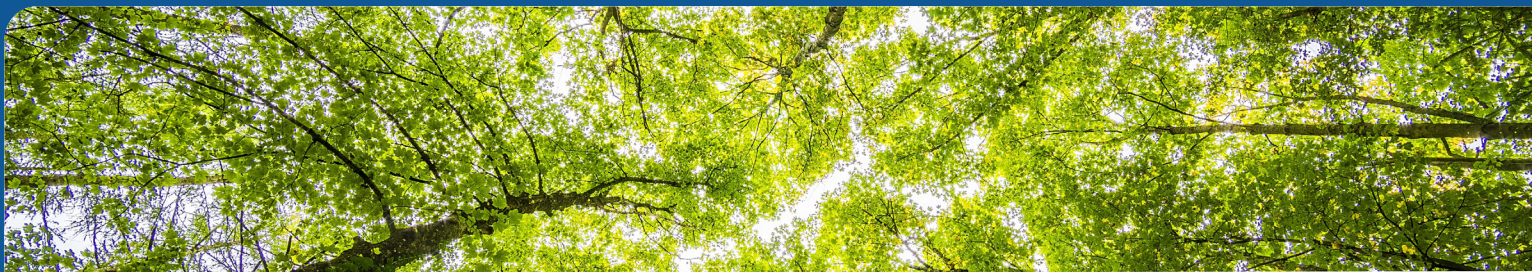
For this month's Moment of Grace, we are going to take a look at Laudato Si. While this document was released in 2015, it is just as relevant now as it was the day it was released. This month we will take you on a brief rundown of each chapter, plus a couple of videos to assist us in our personal reflection. This is an invitation to take up the challenge of making a difference for our common home. Consider how taking up the challenge can bring grace to your life, and to those of others.

Laudato Si is a Papal Encyclical written by Pope Francis in 2015. The document is the Catholic Church's official response to the climate crisis.

It is split into 6 chapters. The first two provide an analysis of the world today and examines the climate crisis from a biblical perspective. The second two chapters provide a judgement on what needs to happen for the world to survive the climate crisis

and enter into an integral ecology with creation. In the last two chapters, he discusses big actions on behalf of policy makers and large corporations, as well as the everyday actions of Catholics.





CHAPTER BREAKDOWN

CHAPTER

1

As an introductory before officially beginning Chapter One, Pope Francis discusses the origin of his name. He speaks about the life of St Francis of Assisi who spent his faithful life caring for creation and being one with creation. Pope Francis then calls the Church to take action to combat the climate crisis.

In chapter 1, he explicitly draws on scientific research to discuss the scope of the climate crisis. In this chapter, he also explores and demonstrates how the climate crisis is also a humanitarian crisis. That is, it is just as much about climate justice as it is about social justice.

In Chapter Two, Pope Francis draws on scripture to understand the crisis from a biblical perspective. He discusses the creation stories in the first 2 chapters of Genesis. These stories can be seen as being detrimental to human history. Now more than ever we need to reconsider how we understand the word 'Dominion.' Other important scripture includes many of the Psalms as well as St Paul's letter to the Romans Ch 8. This chapter is a time to deeply consider the word of God.

CHAPTER

2

CHAPTER

3

Chapter Three is where Pope Francis begins to point the finger towards humankind and tells them that they have, in fact, through progress caused the climate crisis. He discusses the impact of globalization, materialism, the throwaway culture, anthropocentrism, and the technocratic paradigm. Anthropocentrism is the arrogance that we must think that Humans are the centre of creation. To the point where we believe that we are so untouchable, so far out of reach with nature that we do not have a need to abide by the same rules. This belief had led us to exploit the earth's resources for personal gain without considering the consequences.

If you are interested in reading the full document of Laudato Si, you can find it here

https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html

Watch this short video to pause and reflect on how we can care for our common home.

<https://vimeo.com/463302693>

Chapter Four offers an alternative to anthropocentrism (human-centred) that was discussed in Chapter Three and asks us to enter into an Integral Ecology. An Integral Ecology is living and believing that we are not the centre of creation, but rather integral pieces that impact every other piece. Pope Francis speaks of the fact that an integral ecology also considers our impact on our fellow humans, as well as our impact on generations to come. In the past, Pope John Paul II spoke about a 'Human Ecology' and Pope Benedict XVI spoke about an 'Ecology of humanity.' Pope Francis is the first to speak of an 'Integral Ecology'.

CHAPTER

4

CHAPTER

5

In Chapter Five, Pope Francis speaks about the large-scale actions that need to occur for us to enter into an Integral Ecology. He mentions specifically the need for dialogue to occur at a leadership level. Although, one could be concerned that dialogue only ever gets us so far. It is important to talk, to talk to our Indigenous communities, with our young people, with other countries, with the poor and with scientists. But action needs to be a product of that discussion.

In this chapter, Pope Francis talks about the individual and small community actions that need to occur for us to enter into an Integral Ecology. He talks about the need to have an 'ecological conversion.' One way to consider an ecological conversion is to see every object, every person, every creation as God sees it for its worth, not human worth. This can lead us to enter into this new lifestyle that Pope Francis speaks of. An expression of solidarity and love for the environment and others is ultimately an expression of faith.

CHAPTER

6



REFLECTION TASKS

This is a lot. So, what can we do to begin this process of Ecological conversion?

Each of us are called to take concrete steps – from reducing consumption to working for political change – to better care for creation. Here are some ideas that you may be able to incorporate into your everyday life as you commit to making positive change and begin or deepen your own ecological conversion.

1. Become more aware of our connectedness.

Care for one another and creation includes understanding that “everything is connected” (LS 91) and that the economy, politics, community involvement, and technology all affect the future of the planet and humankind. How can we become more aware of our connectedness?

2. Changes to lifestyle and consumption habits can make a big difference.

For example, get a reusable water bottle, take shorter showers, walk, ride a bike or take public transportation instead of driving, find an electricity company who will source renewable power on your behalf, recycle, compost food waste, try reusable sanitation supplies and cloth nappies, consider sourcing sustainable cleaning products (such as Zero Co), purchasing toilet paper from ethically minded companies (like Who Gives a Crap) and buy energy-efficient appliances.

3. Make changes institutionally at your home, parish, school, or workplace.

For example, start recycling and composting, use washable dinnerware in cafeterias, share electronically instead of printing, do an energy audit, install solar panels if it's feasible.

4. Support local efforts to solve environmental problems.

Community groups around the country are working to make council, city, regional, and state-wide changes that can make a big difference. Find out what is going on in your local area and get involved.

As one final reflection task, watch this video to help us put things into perspective.

<https://youtu.be/gFXEqHhD-rk>



NOTES





*Sharing Moments of Grace
on the 15th each month.*
15 August 2021 - 15 August 2022



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