

St. Francis of Assisi by Cigoli (Wikimedia Commons/Public Domain)



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Editor's note: *Join EarthBeat on an exploration of Laudato Si' through a social, political and spiritual lens. Three times a week, we'll dive into a new section of the papal document, leading readers through an informal study of the call to care for our common home, five years on.*

At the bottom of each post, you'll find the corresponding section of Laudato Si' in PDF form. We encourage you to read the document along with these reflections.



St. Francis of Assisi by Cigoli (Wikimedia Commons/Public Domain)

Read

***Laudato Si'*, Introduction**

At the beginning of "*Laudato Si',* on Care for Our Common Home," Pope Francis explains why he chose St. Francis of Assisi's name when he was elected bishop of Rome: "I believe that Saint Francis is the example par excellence of care for the

vulnerable and of an integral ecology lived out joyfully and authentically. He is the patron saint of all who study and work in the area of ecology, and he is also much loved by non-Christians. He was particularly concerned for God's creation and for the poor and outcast." (10)

Then he describes the ways in which St. Francis' life serves as his guide and inspiration: "He loved, and was deeply loved for his joy, his generous self-giving, his open heartedness. He was a mystic and a pilgrim who lived in simplicity and in wonderful harmony with God, with others, with nature and with himself. He shows us just how inseparable the bond is between concern for nature, justice for the poor, commitment to society, and interior peace." (10)

Reflect

Consider how St. Francis lived his life and how much inspiration Pope Francis draws from him. In what ways can you incorporate a greater consciousness for nature, the poor, society and peace into your life? What can you do right now to make a positive difference in the lives of others?

Act

Enacting just policies for people and their environments is necessary now more than ever. People of color are not only disproportionately affected by the economic downturn caused by the pandemic, but their risk of infection increases if they live in communities with more pollution, poverty, or chronic illnesses.

Aside from voting for politicians who take environmental justice seriously, there are many organizations with local, national and global programs that individuals can support. In the United States, the Center on Race, Poverty & the Environment, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Native American Rights Fund and Sachamama are examples of organizations actively pursing environmental justice for people of color.

Source material:
Document
Laudato Si Introduction.pdf

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