News
EarthBeat



Pope Francis walks in a procession at the start of the Synod of Bishops for the Amazon at the Vatican in this Oct. 7, 2019, file photo. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)



by Bill Mitchell

View Author Profile

bmitchell@ncronline.org
Follow on Twitter at @bmitch

Join the Conversation

Send your thoughts to *Letters to the Editor*. Learn more

May 22, 2020
Share on BlueskyShare on FacebookShare on TwitterEmail to a friendPrint

Some weeks, there's so much news that we just need to get to it. With Laudato Si' Week officially beginning May 16, this is one of those weeks.

We kicked things off Sunday with staff writer Brian Roewe's report about the Vatican's office of justice and peace inviting the global church to pursue "total sustainability" in the next decade, a path that would include carbon neutrality, simpler lifestyles and divestment from fossil fuels.

Also on Sunday, Vatican correspondent Joshua J. McElwee advanced the divestment story with information from a former official of the Vatican Bank that the institution had no fossil fuel investments when he worked there 2013-2015. He also provided reasons why he doubted the bank had any now. Before the week was out, Josh had confirmed with the bank's director general that it has no investments in the sector.

I hope you're enjoying the Digging Into Laudato Si' series that Samantha Panchèvre is writing for us. Today's edition: A true ecological approach always becomes a social approach.

Sunday is the actual anniversary of Pope Francis signing *Laudato Si'* in 2015. We'll mark the day with a special in-depth report on what's happened since by Brian Roewe. Brian knows what he's talking about. He's been on this beat since 2011.

Here's what else is new on EarthBeat this week:

- Brian reports on 42 faith groups in 14 countries announcing divestment plans.
- Leading off a special collection of commentary pegged to *Laudato Si'*'s fifth anniversary, writer and activist Bill McKibben suggests a tweet for @Pontifex.
- Gina McCarthy, who headed the Environmental Protection Agency under President Obama, says the anniversary is a chance to "speak up, stand up, act up."

- Allen Ottaro, a Nairobi-based member of the EarthBeat advisory panel, reports that Laudato Si is taking root in Africa but that much urgent work remains.
- In an editorial, NCR applauds what's been achieved since Pope Francis issued his encyclical, but concludes that it fails to measure up to his "urgent call to respond to the ecological crisis."

Multimedia can be an especially useful tool in telling the climate story. Here are three examples from this week:

- A graphic story by Beatrice Jin of Politico: How the pandemic has changed the natural world, illustrated.
- Thanks to the aforementioned Bill McKibben for the tip in his Climate Crisis newsletter to this video. It explains an interactive tool that equips you to pull the levers required to reduce global warming to safe levels.
- And here's the tool itself. You can save your results, for better or worse, via social media or email.

Upcoming event:

A week from tomorrow, on May 30, Stillpoint at Beckside Spirituality Center and the Multifaith Center for Climate Justice will present a 90-minute webinar exploring spiritual energy and resilience. You can register here.

For more events, check out Earth Beat's Event Calendar. One advantage of so many events moving online is their accessibility to a wider audience. If you'd like to expand the audience of your next virtual climate event, please post it here.

Closing beat:

If you're looking for up to the minute news in the nexus of faith and climate, please check out our Interfaith Climate Tracker. If you follow an account we don't but should, please alert me. You can view the accounts we follow here.

We hope you'll forward this week's newsletter to anyone you believe might want to subscribe. They can do so here. And if you'd like to support EarthBeat, please join NCR Forward for as little as five bucks a month.

Thanks for reading!

Bill Mitchell

NCR Climate Editor

bmitchell@ncronline.org

Advertisement

This story appears in the **Laudato Si' at Five** feature series. View the full series.