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Pope Leo XIV celebrates Mass for the Care of Creation on the grounds of the Borgo Laudato Si’ ecology center in Castel Gandolfo, Italy, July 9, 2025. In his homily, the pope called for ecological conversion while drawing from the legacy of Pope Francis and his encyclical "*Laudato Si*', on Care for Our Common Home." (CNS/Cristian Gennari)



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CASTEL GANDOLFO, Italy — July 9, 2025
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"We must pray for the conversion of many people, inside and outside of the church, who still do not recognize the urgency of caring for our common home," Pope Leo XIV said while celebrating a new formulary of the Mass "for the care of creation."

Far from the pounding organ of St. Peter's Basilica or the throngs of faithful sprawled across St. Peter's Square, the pope celebrated Mass July 9 to the accompaniment of chirping birds in the gardens of the papal villa in Castel Gandolfo, the traditional summer residence of the popes some 15 miles southeast of Rome.

The Mass was attended by the staff of the Borgo Laudato Si' ecology project — a space for education and training in integral ecology hosted in the gardens — as well as Vatican officials and Holy Cross Fr. Daniel Groody, an expert on migration and associate provost for undergraduate education at the University of Notre Dame in Indiana.

Although Leo was scheduled to meet with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy later in the day, he was not present at the Mass.

Lamenting the natural disasters around the world that "are in part caused by the excesses of human beings, with their lifestyle," the pope urged the intimate gathering in his homily "to ask ourselves if we ourselves are living this conversion or

not: how greatly it is needed!"

The formulary of the Mass "for the care of creation" was added to the Roman Missal — the liturgical book that contains the texts for celebrating Mass in the Roman Rite of the Catholic Church — by the Dicastery for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments June 8.

The formulary, included among 17 other "civil needs" for which a priest can offer Mass, selects prayers and readings for the celebration of Mass that affirm the place of God's creation in worship.

While the pope's Mass was celebrated in Italian, parts of the Mass pertaining to the new formulary were read in Latin.

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"In a burning world, be it because of global warming or armed conflicts," people today find themselves filled with fear, just as the disciples were in the face of a storm that was calmed by Christ, Leo said in his homily. But, he added, "there is hope! We have found it in Jesus."

"The mission of safeguarding creation, of bringing peace and reconciliation" is "the mission which the Lord has entrusted to us," Leo said. "We listen to the cry of the earth, we listen to the cry of the poor, because this cry has reached the heart of God. Our indignation is his indignation; our work is his work."

The church, he added, must speak prophetically before the climate crisis "even when it requires the boldness to oppose the destructive power of the 'princes' of this world."

"The indestructible covenant between creator and creatures mobilizes our intellect and efforts, so that evil may be turned to good, injustice to justice, greed to communion."

Quoting at length from Pope Francis' 2015 encyclical "Laudato Si', on Care for Our Common Home," Leo recalled the harmony with creation that St. Francis of Assisi achieved in his lifetime to the point of calling created things "brother, sister, mother."

"Just one contemplative gaze can change our relationship with created things and bring us out of the ecological crisis that has, as its cause, the breakdown of relationships with God, neighbor, and the earth because of sin," he said.

Leo was scheduled to spend two weeks in July at the papal summer residence in Castel Gandolfo, reviving a custom skirted by Pope Francis. The pope moved there July 6 following his noontime recitation of the Angelus in St. Peter's Square.