

## **Discernment Resources and Prayers**

The decision to embark on the Laudato Si' journey is a meaningful one. Prayerful reflection, a spirit of unity, and an awareness of our social-ecological crisis are important elements of your discernment. You are warmly invited to use these resources as part of your discernment process.

### Readings

The Laudato Si' encyclical is available [here](#).

Additional papal teachings include Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI's [If You Want to Cultivate Peace, Protect Creation](#) and St. John Paul II's [Peace With God The Creator, Peace With All Of Creation](#). You may also want to read Pope Francis' encyclical [Fratelli Tutti](#), which strengthens our sense of social friendship.

The [Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church](#), especially Chapter 4 Part II ("The Principle of the Common Good") and Chapter 10 ("Safeguarding the Environment") may be helpful.

Helpful scriptures include readings on creation (such as Psalms 24 and 104, Job 12:7-10, and Romans 8:20-23) and readings on justice and love (such as Micah 6:8, Isaiah 58:6-10, and John 13:34-35).

### Scientific resources

For a brief overview of the impacts of climate change and how the changes we make now will affect our future, you may want to watch [this video](#) from the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. For an overview of how climate change affects health, you may find [this information](#) from the World Health Organization useful.

### Additional prayers

Additional prayers that you may find helpful include this [Laudato Si' Rosary](#), a [prayer for our common home](#), and [Season of Creation](#). You are also warmly welcomed to develop your own prayers in communion with the Holy Spirit.

### Prayer Service

As you discern the path ahead, a prayer service may help illuminate God's will

for your institution, community, or family. A prayer service offers a time to reflect and connect with each other and the Holy Spirit. Your prayer service might bring together the leaders of your institution, a wider group of community leaders, or simply the members of your family.

If possible, either hold the prayer service outdoors or bring elements of nature (such as flowers) into an indoor space. Be sure to invite participants with plenty of advance notice and to decide on a time and location, either physical or virtual, that is convenient to everyone.

The following is a suggested agenda for a prayer service.

- *Welcome and overview of this prayer service*  
Today's prayer service will help us to reflect on Laudato Si' and to discern the next steps in our journey.
- *Song*  
*It is suggested that you choose a song that reflects on the goodness of God our creator.*
- *Overview of Laudato Si' and the social-environmental crisis*  
At this moment in history, we face a social-environmental crisis that threatens to upend our world. Climate change is changing rainfall patterns, driving heatwaves, and raising seas. The consequences are increased risks of hunger, sickness, conflict, and migration.

At the same time, forests are being knocked down, water is being polluted, and species are being driven to extinction. Not only does this profane the great good of God's creation; it also leads to even more hunger, conflict, and migration for the human family.

The risks are not evenly distributed. The poorest and most vulnerable of our brothers and sisters are bearing the worst of the consequences, despite the fact that they have contributed least to the problem. Tragically, the young and those who are yet unborn will inherit an even greater degree of dangerous uncertainty.

Laudato Si' teaches us that our environmental catastrophe is connected with our social and spiritual crisis. Not respecting our Creator and not

caring for the people with whom we share this Earth, our common home, has led us to the brink of destruction.

But we are a people of hope, and the Resurrection offers us the promise of new life. We do have the ability to make new choices, to set out on a new path, and to heal the wrongs of the past.

Today, we are discerning whether the Holy Spirit is calling us to commit to practical action in a holistic way, setting out on a journey towards responsible care of our common home, respect for our Creator, and loving kindness for our brothers and sisters. The Laudato Si' Plan offered by the Vatican's Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development is one way that we can take action.

- *Readings*  
Psalm 104 and John 13:34-35
- *Song*  
*It is suggested that you choose a song that reflects on our call to love our neighbors.*
- *Prayer for Laudato Si' in your community*  
You are invited to choose the prayer for your sector from the list [here](#).
- *Five minutes for silent prayer*  
You are invited to silently pray that we hear God's voice and discern God's will for our community.
- *Group sharing*  
You are invited to share a brief word about what you hear God calling us to.
- *Leader's response*  
The Holy Spirit has brought us here today, and it is through all of us that the Holy Spirit speaks. In the coming days, we will continue to reflect on what God is calling us to.
- *Final prayer*  
*Leader: We will now pray together "a prayer for our earth," from Laudato Si'.*  
*All:*  
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.  
Teach us to discover the worth of each thing,  
to be filled with awe and contemplation,  
to recognize that we are profoundly united  
with every creature  
as we journey towards your infinite light.  
We thank you for being with us each day.  
Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle  
for justice, love and peace.

*Amen*