



SAVE OUR FUTURE

Beloved Earth Community of Riverside Church

In This Issue:
Special Commemoration Honoring
the Late Pope Francis.

*"His message- will live on :
humanity is community. And when
any one community is abandoned--
to poverty, starvation, climate
devastation, and injustice--all of
humanity is deeply diminished
materially and morally in equal
measure."*

*Simon Stiell,
United Nations top official on the
climate.*



**"Grace is not part of
consciousness; it is the
amount of light in our
souls, not knowledge
nor reason."
Pope Francis**

An Unflinching Champion for Climate Justice

Comments have been adapted from www.laudatosimovement.org
The late Pope Francis used his position to speak forcefully on the climate and the ever-worsening environmental crisis. He gathered the leaders of the fossil fuel companies at the Vatican and sought their accountability for fouling the Earth. In 2019 he declared a global climate emergency and even in his last months as pontif, he never wavered in his priorities. He held a conference on the economics of the common good. (Guardian), and in October 2023 issued the encyclical, *Laudate Deum*, starkly warning that "humanity was taking the Earth to a breaking point."

His first encyclical, in May 2015, *Laudato Si'*, subtitled "Care for Our Common Home," called on humanity to care for our natural communities and all people, as well as focusing on the relationship between God, humans, and the Earth.

Laudato Si' begins with the Italian words meaning, "Praise be to you," part of a quotation from St. Francis of Assisi's "Canticle of the Creatures," in which the saint praises God through his meditation on the goodness of sun, wind, Earth, water and other natural forces. In the publication's six chapters Pope Francis emphasizes the following areas:

- (1) The current threats to our common home as a result of pollution, climate change, water scarcity, loss of biodiversity, and global inequality.
- (2) The natural world is a gift and the Genesis stories entreat us to cultivate and protect nature, not grant humans absolute domination over other species.
- (3) The roots of our current ecological crisis are "unreliable use of technology, an impulse to manipulate and control nature, an assumption that humans are separate from the environment," a narrow focus on greed-enhancing economic theories, and "moral relativism."

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An Unflinching Champion for Climate Justice, (cont. from p. 1)

(4) “Internal ecology” that affirms humans are part of a broken world and calls for “comprehensive solutions which consider the interventions within natural systems themselves and within social systems.” (LS 139)

(5) A call for “international agreements to protect the environment and assist low-income countries including new national and local policies, inclusive and transparent decision making, and an economy ordered to the good of all.”

(6) Finally, the focus in our personal lives “less on consumerism and more on timeless, enduring values,” which use environmental education and embrace “joy from our surroundings, a civic love, reception of the sacraments,” and an “ecological conversion,” in which our encounter with Jesus leads to deeper communion with God, other people, and the world of Nature.”

It is easy to see why Bill McKibben called Pope Francis “perhaps the world’s greatest climate champion.” As Pope he significantly influenced global climate action through his presence at global climate conferences. He specifically issued *Laudato Si’* just prior to the climate summit COP 21 in Paris, and shared *Laudato Deum* just before COP 28 in Dubai in October 2023. Having seen the destruction of the Amazon and the plight of South America’s poorest communities, he advocated for marginalized and indigenous people, made sure their voices were heard in both Catholic social teachings and on the international stage, and supported their environmental defenders. Finally, he inspired activism globally, and via ecumenical conferences reached out to people in power--mayors, religious leaders, money managers, oil executives-- as well as to those less enfranchised to waken accountability and love for the earth and all fellow beings.



LISTEN TO THE CRY OF
THE EARTH, AND THE CRY
OF THE POOR, WHO
SUFFER MOST.
--POPE FRANCIS

LEAST WE FORGET...

In his exhortation, *Laudato Deum*, Pope Francis called out how US emissions per person were twice those of China, and 7 times those of the average in the world’s poorest countries. He sought a profound change in the “irresponsible lifestyle connected with the Western model.”

In his prayer intention for September 2024, he admonished: “The protection of creation, then, is not only an ethical issue but one that is eminently theological, for it is the point where the mystery of man and the mystery of God intersect...At stake is not only our earthly life in history but also, and above all, our future in eternity.”

Watch for Beloved Earth’s next edition of “Save Our Future” in September.

Beloved Earth Community

We call on Riversiders to protest the climate crisis and care for the Earth through educational programs, greening the church, changing our lifestyles, and courageous political actions. For more information, or to join, contact: Claudia Canasto <canastoclachi@gmail.com>,

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June Newsletter Contents: Frances Connell.
Logo Geofix by Jeremiah Drake.
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Photos from free sources.

- The next Beloved Earth Meeting: July 12, 2025 at 1:00 p.m. on Zoom. Watch for details.
- To view this S.O.F. online, visit www.trcnyc.org/belovedearthnewsletter

