

Laudato Si: Pope Francis' Encyclical on the Environment and Climate Change

St. Catherine of Siena
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Some Questions for Reflection:

Taken from *"Our Care for Our Common Home: Group Reading Guide"*
Twenty Third Publications

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- What is your personal view of the state of the natural environment? Are matters as serious as Pope Francis says they are?
- What is your view of the argument going on in Western society today about climate change? If fossil fuels are largely to blame for climate change, what can you personally do to help?
- How much water do you use each day? Think about everything from your morning routines to your final flush before bedtime. What do you hear about or know about the question Pope Francis raises on biodiversity? Is there anything you can do to improve the situation?
- How does global inequality affect care for the environment? How are the poor adversely affected by climate change, either in First World or Third World countries? Why is the response to known data about the environmental crisis being met with such a weak response?
- In #67 the pope is saying that humans do not have unilateral power to simply exploit and use up the resources of the world. What's your view of this, in light of the Scriptures?
- Share ways in which you meet God in nature. How is God revealed to you there?
- What does Jesus have to do with caring for our common home, the earth?
- Are we being enslaved by technology? What is the "technocratic paradigm"?
- Are humans in command of the earth or not? Are we the center of the universe?
- The pope is saying that business is a noble profession and that keeping jobs is essential. How can we take steps to preserve the environment while also having a robust economy?
- How much stuff do you "use and throw away" each week? Look over the past week.
- What are the elements of an integral ecology as Pope Francis defines it? What are the largest challenges in this area?
- What role do you or anyone have in maintaining the "common good"? What does the pope mean by the phrase "common good"?
- What actions would you like to see your own government take on the international level to help curb greenhouse gasses and preserve the natural environment?
- List the actions you can take on your local level, or on a personal level, to conserve energy and reduce consumption?
- What role can religion play in the movement for environmental preservation and restoration?
- How does "profit at any cost" contribute to the degradation of the environment?

- What is your own personal experience with consumption? What process do you (and members of your household) go through when deciding to spend money?
- Do we have to take the poor into account every time we buy groceries, cars, heater tickets, or meals in restaurants?
- What does Pope Francis mean by “a communal way of thinking”?
- Pope Francis makes the argument that the human community must bring itself into balance in order to preserve and restore the environment. What does he mean by what? What has to be balanced?
- What does the pope mean when he says that “less is more”?
- Is the world imbued with the presence of God? Is God in nature?
- Looking at the entire encyclical, what *were* its most striking points to you? What two or three key thoughts or insights do you take away with you?
- What actions are you considering to take in light of the encyclical?