

## **Statement by Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone on the Release of the Encyclical "Laudato Si"**

*June 18, 2015*

It is gratifying to us in the City of St. Francis that the opening words of the long-anticipated Encyclical of Pope Francis, "Laudato Si", are taken from the famous "Canticle of the Creatures" composed by our mutual patronal saint, the Little Poor Man of Assisi, who is such a model for all of us of care for all of God's creation.

Pope Francis' recurring use of the image of our "common home" weaves together the importance of responding to the environmental crisis in all of its complexities, from the economic inequities that create an ever-widening gulf between the rich and the poor to the underlying spiritual hunger felt by so many today. These issues are all interconnected, and solutions must be found by involving men and women of many perspectives and disciplines. This is highlighted by the fact that among the participants in the Press Conference held in conjunction with the release of the Encyclical there were a prominent Greek Orthodox bishop and theologian, a scientist, the president of Catholic Relief Services here in the United States, and a teacher who has devoted her life to serving the poor on the outskirts of Rome. If we are going to repair creation and safeguard the dignity of every human being living on "our Sister, Mother Earth", it will require cooperation, sacrifice, and good will from everyone.

Pope Francis voices an urgent plea for Christians to revere and cherish what God has entrusted to us, while at the same time urging us to work in concert with others of good will, regardless of their beliefs, to heal our planet and share more equitably the goods of this world. It is a call to all of us to be wise and responsible stewards of all the resources the Creator has entrusted to us, spiritual as well as material, so that we may put an end to waste and provide for the basic needs of all.

Pope Francis has offered us a challenging moral vision; it is now up to us, in great ways and small, to apply his teachings where we find ourselves living in "our common home."