

## Laudato Si

Laudato Si is the letter written by Pope Francis to us all, informing and encouraging us to protect our common home, the Earth. The Earth is God's gift of love and beauty given to us all. Today, many people take advantage, causing the Earth's gradual destruction. Due to our actions, pollution and lack of resources have taken a toll on the Earth. We must acknowledge and change how we have treated our Earth so that it can continue to support us and the future generations.

Americans without water is a great connection to the Catholic Social Teaching. Nearly 2 million Americans have no running water and basic indoor plumbing. The government is aware of this problem, yet they still have not done anything to address it. There is no sense of political urgency and therefore makes those 2 million feel that they are unworthy and unimportant. The Catholic Social Teaching clearly states that we all have rights and responsibilities to ensure that everyone has their dignity and their rights. Each and every person has basic rights to live with those required for human decency. This includes water, food, and shelter. In this case, 2 million have been deprived of their water. This affects their right to bathe, drink, and clean. This is why we all have this responsibility to help provide everyone with basic necessities and rights. Whether it is speaking out politically or just simply conserving water for others we can make a big difference and create a happier environment for all.

Pope Francis has asked us to care for and protect the Earth. He wrote, "It is not enough, however, to think of species merely as potential 'resources' to be exploited, while overlooking the fact that they have value in themselves." (LS 33) Pope Francis also wrote, "Human beings too are creatures of this world, enjoying a right to life and happiness, and endowed with unique dignity. So we cannot fail to consider the effects on people's lives of environmental deterioration, current models of development and the throwaway culture." Pope Francis is trying to convey to

us that every creature has importance and value in life. Every creature has the right to live a life of happiness. People should have the right to access clean water and don't deserve to be living in fear of what they drink. Pope Francis says, "Yet we are called to be instruments of God our Father, so that our planet might be what he desired when he created it and correspond with his plan for peace, beauty, and fullness." (LS 53) Pope Francis is telling us that we must think about how our actions can affect our Earth. That way we can thank God for all the gifts of creation he has blessed us with. Not just in this situation, but in daily life. We must think about how just using public transportation instead of using your own car can stop or lessen pollution and climate change.

Knowing all these problems in our world, we must do something to slow or prevent these tragedies. We can raise awareness by spreading the word about these disastrous events through social media or word of mouth. We can also perform simple tasks such as turning lights off, planting trees, recycling, picking up litter, and reducing water waste. All these simple and small steps are life changing and can make a huge difference in our common home.

#### Work Cited:

Pope Francis. (2015). [On Care for Our Common Home] [Encyclical letter]. Retrieved from: <https://www.usccb.org/offices/general-secretariat/laudato-si-care-our-common-home> .