



Teacher's Notes: Fifth and Sixth Class

Background for Teachers

Laudato Si' is a letter sent by Pope Francis to the world. In *Laudato Si'*, which means 'Praise be to you', Pope Francis reminds us that the earth is a gift from God. This gift is for everyone; it is our common home. Pope Francis goes on to describe the terrible things that are happening to the earth. He reminds us that as Christians we are called to share God's love; a love that extends right throughout creation. During Catholic Schools Week 2017 we will celebrate God's gift of the earth. *Laudato Si'* deals with many environmental issues including pollution, climate change, drought, loss of biodiversity and the decline in the quality of human life. Pope Francis is asking us to work together to create a better world for future generations and to take care of, respect and value our common home.

Each day's lesson begins with a reflective quote from *Laudato Si'* (LS) to put our learning into context with the message of Pope Francis in his encyclical.

The entire document is available at: w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html

From the Curriculum: Level 4

Christian Faith

Mystery of God

- God is love
- God's love is constant, unconditional and everlasting (Is 54:8; Jer 31:3; CCC 220)
- God loved and valued us even before we were born. We are precious in God's eyes (Jer 1:5)

Creation

- God's Holy Spirit breathes life into the world (Ps 33:6, 104:30; Gn 1:2, 2:7; CCC 291, 703)
- Creation is a sign of God's love, glory, goodness, splendour and power (CCC 32, 293; Job 12:7–9; Ps 19).
- Man and woman have a unique and eternal relationship with God the creator because they are made in the image and likeness of God (Gn 1:27; CCC 343, 355)
- God put us in the world to know, to love, and to serve him, and so to come to heaven (GS 19; CCC 1, 27, 44 and 45, 55, 358, 1721: Person as religious being by nature and vocation)

Liturgy and Prayer

Additional Prayers

- Praying over moral decisions
- Prayer for human rights

Word of God

God's Loving Plan of Salvation

- First Creation Story (Gn 1–3)
- Second Creation Story (Gn 2:5–25)

Christian Morality

Social Teaching of the Church

- The goods of creation are destined for the entire human race and should be shared equally (GS 69: Universal Destination of Earthly Goods; CCC 353, 2452; CSDC 171)
- Our responsibility for the well-being of other species must also be taken into account as part of the universal destination of the goods of the earth (128 Religious Education Curriculum Level 4)
- All creatures have a value in their own right and are not there simply for human use (CCC 339)
- Creation is ongoing and we can cooperate with God's plans for creation (CCC 307, 323)
- The creation story reveals that human beings are called by God to counteract influences that damage or destroy the natural world (CCC 373, 2402; SRS 34: Stewardship)



Monday: Seeing the beauty of our common home

Reflective quote: *'When we can see God reflected in all that exists, our hearts are moved to praise the Lord for all his creatures and to worship him in union with them.'* (LS 87)

Consider

The focus of the lesson is the beautiful home that God has given us and the beauty of creation.

Discuss

Discuss the beautiful world in which we live, which God has given us. Begin this lesson by reading the Creation Story from Genesis 1–3 with pupils. (See the children's version below, or read the piece of scripture from your class Bible directly.)

In the beginning there was no earth or sky or sea or animals. And then God spoke in the darkness: 'Let there be light!' And right away there was light, scattering the darkness and showing the infinite space. 'That's good!' said God. 'From now on, when it's dark it will be "night" and when it's light, it will be "day".'

The evening came and the night passed and then the light returned. That was the first day.

On the second day, God made the earth and over it He carefully hung a vast blue sky. He stood back and admired His creation. 'That's good too!' said God and the second day was over.

The next morning God looked around and thought, 'The earth needs to be a bit more organised.' So, He put all the water in one place and all the dry land in another. When He had finished that, God made plants to cover the land. Dandelions and daffodils appeared. All sorts of trees and grasses began to grow. 'It's looking great,' said God and that was the end of the third day.

On the fourth day, God looked around and thought, 'The daylight still needs a bit more work and the night is just too dark.' So, He made the sun to light the sky during the day and the moon and stars to add a bit of sparkle to the night. He hung them in the sky and stepped back to look at his work. 'This is coming along very well,' said God.

The next day, God turned his attention to the water he had collected in the oceans. 'I want these waters teeming with life!' As soon as He said it, it was so. In no time, there were millions of small fish darting through the shallow water and huge fish swimming in the ocean. God made birds, too. He sent them soaring through the air. 'Ahh, that is good!' said God. The dusk fell over the water and the sky grew dark and that was the end of the fifth day.

On the sixth day, God added creatures to the land. He made lions and tigers and bears. He made rabbits and sheep and cows. He added everything from ants to zebras to the land. But He still felt something was missing. So God added mankind to enjoy and take care of all that He had created. God looked around and was happy with all He had made.

After six days, the whole universe was completed. On the seventh day God had a nice long rest and enjoyed looking at all He had made.

Activity Page

Question the pupils on the story and distribute a copy of the storyboard on Monday's Activity Page. Ask pupils to record the story by what God created/did each day. Pupils can do this by drawing and/or writing on each of the days.

Note: As Catholics, we believe that God created the world. This does not mean we are against the Theory of Evolution. Rather, as Catholics, we believe that God is an active agent in the process of evolution. Creation is an ongoing process and God, who created something from nothing, is ever-present in creation, even as it changes and evolves. Creation is a gift from God.



Monday: Seeing the beauty of our common home – Activity Page

The storyboard of God's Creation! Genesis 1-3

Day 1

Day 2

Day 3

Day 4

Day 5

Day 6

Day 7

'God saw all that He had made, and it was very good'



Tuesday: Caring for our common home

Reflective Quote: *'Nature cannot be regarded as something separate from ourselves or as a mere setting in which we live. We are part of nature, included in it and thus in constant interaction with it.'* (LS 139)

Consider

Today we are looking at what Pope Francis has to say about our common home in his letter to everyone on earth, called *Laudato Si'*. Pope Francis is asking us to look at the damage we have done to the earth and to care for it better.

Go to: cafod.org.uk/Education/Primary-schools/Laudato-Si-animation or
www.trocaire.org/sites/default/files/resources/edu/laudato-si-encyclical-primary.pdf

Here you will find an animation which explores *Laudato Si'* in a pupil-friendly manner. You will also find a script and further activities including a poster colouring page and further suggested activities. (Use as much or little as you like.)

The animation provides the basis for today's lesson.

Discuss

Play the animation in full then ask the children key questions:

- What is the Pope asking us to do in his letter?
- What do you think Pope Francis means by 'common home'?
- How does the Pope say we have treated the earth?
- What has happened to the earth because of this?

Play the animation for a second time, stopping to ask critical questions:

- Why do you think Pope Francis wrote this letter?
- Who is suffering because of our actions?
- How can we play our part to look after our 'common home'?
- What kind of world do we want to leave for future generations?

Activity Page

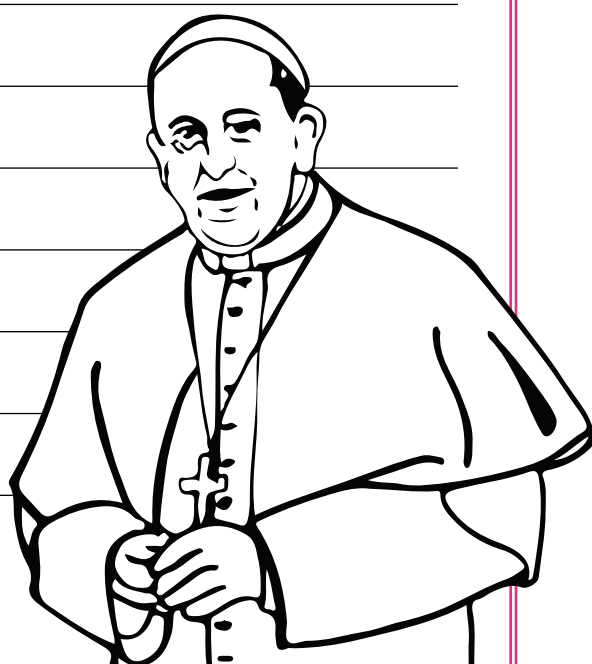
Ask pupils to complete a summary of Pope Francis' message to us in *Laudato Si'* on Tuesday's Activity Page.



Tuesday: Caring for our common home – Activity Page

What is the message Pope Francis gives us in Laudato Si'?

Write in your own words





Thursday: Protecting our common home

Reflective Quotes: *'I urgently appeal for a new dialogue about how we are sharing the future of our planet. We need a conversation which includes everyone, since the environmental challenge we are undergoing, and its human roots, concern and affect us all.'* (LS 14)

'The earth, our home, is beginning to look more and more like an immense pile of filth.' (LS 21)

The problems of pollution and waste are 'closely linked to a throwaway culture ...' (LS 22)

'Because of us, thousands of species will no longer give glory to God by their very existence, nor convey their message to us. We have no such right.' (LS 33)

Consider

Today we are focusing on ways we can protect our common home by the things we do every day.

It is important to remember that we are called by God and reminded by Pope Francis to protect our home and care for it as it is a gift from God and we are stewards of the earth during our time here. God wants us to cherish all of his creation and make it a better place to live.

In order to protect our home we are looking at how to cut down the amount of energy we use or possibly waste in our everyday lives. Our world provides us with valuable resources which we use for things we do each day. For example, we burn fossil fuels (coal, oil, gas) to heat our homes and run our cars. We often use the earth's resources in wasteful and careless ways.

As stewards (minders and protectors) of God's earth, we must remember that we should only use the resources we need and should protect our common home for all the future generations.

Activity Page

Answer the questions on Thursday's Activity Page in your classroom to establish if you are good stewards of God's earth.

If your school has, or is working towards, a Green Flag, it will help to remind pupils of the importance of saving and conserving energy.

The pupils could design a similar survey to see if they are being good stewards of God's world at home.





Thursday: Protecting our common home – Activity Page

Being good stewards of God’s world!

CARRY OUT A SURVEY OF YOUR CLASSROOM:

Class _____ Room No. _____ Teacher _____

Survey carried out by _____

LIGHTS

1. Are lights left on unnecessarily? _____
2. Is there someone in charge of turning off lights at break times and home time? ____ If yes, who? _____
Are energy efficient light bulbs used? _____

COMPUTERS AND ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

1. Is all unused electrical equipment and computers turned off when not in use and at the end of the day? _____
2. Is someone responsible for checking that equipment is turned off? ____ If yes, who? _____

WINDOWS AND DOORS

1. Are windows and doors left open when the heating is on? _____
2. Are windows double-glazed? _____
3. Are some windows and doors letting in draughts? _____

HEATING

1. Can you turn the heating up or down in this room only? _____
2. Are corridors as warm as classrooms? (They don’t need to be when people are moving around) _____
3. Is the heating turned off half an hour before the end of the school day? _____

RECYCLING

1. Is paper recycled? _____
2. Is recycled paper used in the school? _____
3. Is the front and back of paper regularly copied on? _____

How did you do?

Could do better	I am doing well	Good job!
		
I know what to do!	Keep going!	A great steward of God’s world.

Suggestions for improvements:



Friday: Sharing our common home

Reflective Quotes: *'Our insistence that each human being is an image of God should not make us overlook the fact that each creature has its own purpose. None is superfluous. The entire material universe speaks of God's love, his boundless affection for us. Soil, water, mountains: everything is, as it were, a caress of God.'* (LS 84)

'... we realise that the world is a gift which we have freely received and must share with others.' (LS 159)

'A great cultural, spiritual and educational challenge stands before us, and it will demand that we set out on the long path of renewal.' (LS 202)

Consider

On the last day of Catholic Schools Week we are focusing on sharing our common home with everyone who lives here on earth. Humans, particularly in the Northern Hemisphere, are causing climate change or global warming. Our home is a shared resource so everything we do here on earth has positive and negative results for those we share our home with! (See the Third and Fourth Class resource if the class have not explored the topic of global warming previously.)

Discuss

Discuss with the class any natural disasters they have heard about. (Images to stimulate a class discussion on global warming are available at: www.trocaire.ie)

For example, Hurricane Matthew in Haiti. Explore what this disaster means for the people of that country and how we can help in these situations. As result of many natural disasters across our common home there has been an increase in **climate refugees**.

Activity Page

Give each pupil a copy of Friday's Activity Page on climate refugees to find out what this means. Discuss the piece and, as a class, pray for all those people forced to leave their home because of climate change, war, famine or drought.

Pray

Finish the lesson by praying with the class for people who have experienced natural disasters as a result of global warming. (Prayer found on Friday's Activity Page.)

Note: For more information and further ideas on how to expand on the topic of global warming/ climate change with your class please see: www.trocaire.ie. Here you will find a huge amount of resources on the subject, in particular the Trócaire Lenten Campaign for 2017, **Climate Change, Climate Justice**, a continued exploration of climate change and why it's not just an environmental issue.



Friday: Sharing our common home – Activity Page

What are Climate Refugees?

Climate refugees are people who must leave their homes and communities because of the effects of climate change and global warming.

Climate change is caused by natural events, such as volcanic eruptions, as well as human activities. Climate change has happened many times since the earth was formed billions of years ago.

Global warming is the most recent period of climate change. Human activities, like burning fossil fuels and cutting down forests, contribute to global warming because they release greenhouse gases. Greenhouse gases trap heat in the atmosphere.

Rising temperatures associated with global warming cause glaciers and ice caps to melt. This can cause flooding and make sea levels rise.

Rising temperatures also lead to droughts and desertification, which is the transformation of farmland to desert.

Some of these effects, such as a rise in sea levels, can put land completely under water, making it uninhabitable. Others effects, such as drought, make it impossible for people in the region to support themselves.

Climate refugees belong to a larger group of immigrants known as environmental refugees. Environmental refugees include immigrants forced to flee because of natural disasters, such as tsunamis and volcanic activity. For more information and to learn more about refugees see: https://www.trocaire.org/sites/default/files/resources/edu/resource_refugee_crisis.pdf. As followers of Jesus we are called to act against climate change and help those who are climate refugees or environmental refugees.



WHAT IS A REFUGEE?

A refugee is a person who is forced to leave their own country because their life is in danger, and seek safety in another country. This might be because of violence, conflict, discrimination (religious, racial, social or political) or natural disasters.

Imagine!

Imagine what it is like to have to leave your home because of a natural disaster.

Write a story based on this or design a poster or guidebook for new people coming to your community who have had to leave their homes.

