



Passion of the Earth Wisdom of the Cross

Session Three

The Human Roots of the Ecological Crisis

Addressing Food, Farming and Hunger

A Six-Session Program of Formation and Action
for the Passionist Family
to Engage *Laudato Si'*

Caring for God's Creation
Embracing Gospel Justice
Renewing the Passionist Charism



"A certain way of understanding human life and activity has gone awry, to the serious detriment of the world around us. Should we not pause and consider this?"

*– Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'* (101)*

Keeping Alive the Memory of the Passion in the 21st Century

Introduction

Pope Francis calls for religious congregations to implement a Laudato Si' action plan.



How can you and your community respond?

Passionist Family Implementing a Laudato Si' Action Platform

In May 2020, Pope Francis put forth a call for religious congregations to embark on a seven year journey toward total sustainability in the spirit of Laudato Si' and create an action platform measured by:

1. Responding to the Cry of the Earth
2. Responding to the Cry of the Poor
3. Building Ecological Economies – ethical consumption and investments
4. Adopting Simple Lifestyles – sobriety in use of Earth's resources and energy
5. Creating Ecological Education – ongoing formation
6. Reawakening an Ecological Spirituality – recover a religious vision of God's creation
7. Promoting Community Action and Advocacy – systemic change

[Click here](#) to access the Vatican's Laudato Si' Action Platform website and learn more about the moral and spiritual compass laid out by Pope Francis to create a more caring, inclusive, and sustainable world.



Passion of the Earth, Wisdom of the Cross is a six-session program of formation and action for the Passionist family to engage Laudato Si' and create a Laudato Si' Action Platform. Each session includes five segments:

Part 1: Education – Embrace the Message

The six sessions of the program align with the six chapters of Laudato Si'. This segment provides information to help participants understand and gain insight into a central theme of the chapter. The focus of this session is on waking up and paying attention to what is happening to our common home.

Part 2: Motivation – Consider the Issues

Pope Francis wants us to “become painfully aware” (LS 19) of what is happening to our common home. Throughout the encyclical Pope Francis addresses some of the most urgent environmental and social issues we face as a global community. Each session of this program focuses on one of those issues, offering participants an opportunity to become familiar with and sensitized to the suffering of the Earth.

Part 3: Discussion – Engage in Dialogue

This section offers guidance for structuring a community discussion. Participants should read parts 1-4 prior to the group meeting. Ideally, schedule 90 minutes for a conversation – 60 minutes on content of the encyclical and 30 minutes on considering an action plan. Use the questions provided to guide the discussion. The facilitator should decide in advance which topics to consider. Allow each person to share their reflections for two to three minutes. Listening is an essential ingredient to dialogue. After everyone has shared, open the topic for conversation. Before moving to the next question, allow for a few moments of silence so people can recollect themselves. Ask someone to record the key aspects of the sharing. This will help your community respond to Pope Francis' call for religious orders to create and implement a Laudato Si' Action Platform leading to an integral ecology.

Part 4: Respond – Take Action

Pope Francis calls us to reflect on how our lifestyles can often be thoughtless and harmful. Listed in this section is a menu of practical and concrete options for taking action to live out the directives of Laudato Si'. Consider what changes you can make as an individual and as a community or ministry site to better protect God's creation and embrace Gospel justice. Ecological conversion requires people to let “the effects of their encounter with Jesus Christ become evident in their relationship with the world around them” (LS 217). After each session, submit a report on the elements of your entity's action plan. These will be compiled and posted online to form a public statement of the Passionist Laudato Si' Action Platform.

Part 5: Resources – Learn More

This section offers additional information to further your education, enhance community conversations, and provide links to online resources for taking responsible action in building a Laudato Si' Action Platform.



PART
1

Embrace the Message

Session 3
Goal

Reconsider Our Relationship to Natural World

Laudato Si' – Chapter 3 The Human Roots of the Ecological Crisis

1. “It would hardly be helpful to describe symptoms without acknowledging the human origins of the ecological crisis. A certain way of understanding human life and activity has gone awry, to the serious detriment of the world around us. Should we not pause and consider this? At this stage, I propose that we focus on the dominant technocratic paradigm and the place of human beings and of human action in the world.” (LS 101)
2. “Humanity has entered a new era in which our technical prowess has brought us to a crossroads. We are the beneficiaries of two centuries of enormous waves of change: steam engines, railways, the telegraph, electricity, automobiles, airplanes, chemical industries, modern medicine, information technology and, more recently, the digital revolution, robotics, biotechnologies and nanotechnologies. It is right to rejoice in these advances and to be excited by the immense possibilities which they continue to open up before us.... Never has humanity had such power over itself, yet nothing ensures that it will be used wisely, particularly when we consider how it is currently being used.” (LS 102, 104)
3. “Modern anthropocentrism has paradoxically ended up prizing technical thought over reality, since ‘the technological mind sees nature as an insensate order, as a cold body of facts, as a mere given, as an object of utility, as raw material to be hammered into useful shape; it views the cosmos similarly as a mere space into which objects can be thrown with complete indifference.’ The intrinsic dignity of the world is thus compromised. When human beings fail to find their true place in this world, they misunderstand themselves and end up acting against themselves.” (LS 115)

[Click here](#) to access a full copy of Laudato Si' available online.

“We have the freedom needed to limit and direct technology; we can put it at the service of another type of progress, one which is healthier, more human, more social, more integral.” (LS 112)

Pope Francis begins chapter three of Laudato Si' identifying a fundamental reason for the environmental crisis: “A certain way of understanding human life and activity has gone awry, to the serious detriment of the world around us” (LS 101). He links this distorted and impoverished understanding of ourselves – and the catastrophic consequences that flow from it – to the technocratic paradigm and anthropocentrism.

When the technocratic paradigm dominates how we think, see, act, and even feel, we envision ourselves standing above, and in opposition to, the natural world rather than in intimate relationship with it; indeed, we are called to master, possess, and even plunder creation because nature has no intrinsic meaning and value. The technocratic paradigm preaches that the good things of God's creation exist only to serve our ever expanding interests and needs. Moreover, because advances in technology will increasingly enable us to take everything Earth has to give us, there is no need to live with reverence or restraint. With anthropocentrism, human beings (not God) become the center of reality and the reference point for everything else. When we bask in the light of anthropocentrism, everything exists for our sake and we are answerable to no one.

Because “our immense technological development has not been accompanied by a development in human responsibility, values and conscience,” Pope Francis calls for a “bold cultural revolution” (LS 114) to liberate us from the deadly effects of anthro-

pocentrism and the technocratic paradigm. That revolution must be inspired and guided by a prophetic imagination. As members of a global Catholic community, we Passionists are called to contribute to this hopeful and absolutely crucial project. It begins with our own personal ecological conversion.





Consider the Issues

Eating is a Moral Act

In the Our Father we pray: “Give us today our daily bread.” The daily bread provided by God comes directly from Earth. The act of eating unites us to the soil, water, and animals of this planet like nothing else. We would have no food without these gifts of God’s creation.

Every purchase of food and every act of eating is a moral decision. When making food choices, we need to consider the manner in which crops are planted and fertilized, the method used to raise animals for eating, and the distance food must be shipped.

While modern agricultural systems can produce a lot of food, there are destructive downsides. Chemical fertilizers and pesticides from large industrial farms contaminate our soil. Animal waste from factory-farmed meat spoils our streams and rivers. Transporting food over long distances pollutes our air. Food choices have a huge impact on the whole of creation.

For many, food and agriculture have become distant, abstract, anonymous. Their food comes from a grocery store or fast food restaurant. We are left disconnected from the web of creation and how our food is produced. This disconnection leaves us dependent for our food on systems we cannot see and do not understand. To be ethical food consumers we must educate ourselves.

This session aims to develop greater sensitivity to how our food choices can respond to the cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor. Cardinal Peter Turkson, when president of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, said that we Christians must direct our attention to some important, underlying ethical questions regarding our food production and consumption:

- How can hunger be overcome?
- How can safe, affordable, nutritious, and sustainable food be ensured?
- How can farm workers and small farmers around the world live and work with dignity?
- How can rural communities survive and thrive?
- How can land, water, and other elements of God’s creation be preserved and protected in agricultural practices?
- How do we reduce the amount of fossil fuels used to produce and transport our food?

This session aims to develop greater sensitivity to how our food choices can honor, rather than exploit, the sacredness of creation and awaken us to the global food issues impacting the most vulnerable. Because food sustains life itself, it is not just another product. Providing sustainable food for all is a Gospel imperative.



What the Church is Saying

The Vatican Dicastery for Integral Human Development, together with the Vatican Covid-19 Commission, suggests the following pillars as drivers for the required shifts in the food system to protect our common home while fighting against hunger and malnutrition:

- 1. Develop resilient food systems – from production and distribution to consumption and waste management.** Reinforce local and international food supply chains; create infrastructure to connect small farmers with local and national markets to strengthen local communities; cut greenhouse gas emissions in all phases of the food system cycle; reduce food waste.
- 2. Ensure preferential option for the poor.** Put at the center of any solution the needs of the most vulnerable communities in the world. Small-scale farmers – who feed the greater part of the world’s peoples and among them many women – should have their expertise, their knowledge, and their bravery of striving every day for the right to food for all valued and lifted up.
- 3. Transform current food systems toward more sustainable pathways.** Promote a circular model of production and an efficient use of resources; enhance local knowledge and practices with the aim to ensure a better protection of biodiversity, in accordance with local food systems; promote sustainable use of lands and oceans.
- 4. Promote healthy diets.** Improve access to nutritious food and make healthy diets affordable for everyone to eradicate malnutrition; support a shift to a more sustainable consumption model, especially in the wealthier countries, to fight food waste and obesity and other nutrition-related non-communicable diseases; promote a more plant-based diet.
- 5. Secure adequate and just financial support to back this transformation of the food system,** particularly today in the context of the climate crisis.



Engage in Dialogue

Community Discussion

The purpose of dialogue is to help us as individuals and as a community to respond to the Passion of the Earth by better caring for God's creation, embracing Gospel justice, and renewing our commitment to the Passionist charism in the context of *Laudato Si'*. Plan to spend approximately 30% of the meeting time on # 9, discussing and discerning action steps suggested on pages 6-7.

1. Prayer

Begin with "A Prayer in Union with Creation" from *Laudato Si'* on page 10, followed by three minutes of silence, inviting the Spirit to bless the gathering. Conclude the session with the prayer on page 8.

*Chapter three of *Laudato Si'* focuses on the human roots of the ecological crisis*

2. Pope Francis clearly states the intent of chapter three in its first paragraph:

"It would hardly be helpful to describe symptoms without acknowledging the human origins of the ecological crisis. A certain way of understanding human life and activity has gone awry, to the serious detriment of the world around us. Should we not pause and consider this? At this stage, I propose that we focus on the dominant technocratic (efficiency, production, and wealth accumulation) paradigm and the place of human beings and of human action in the world." (#101)

- Do you have a sense, as Pope Francis does, that something has "gone awry" to the "detriment of the world around us?"
- How would you describe what has "gone awry"?

3. Technology: Creativity and Power (LS 102-105)

Pope Francis uses the phrase "the dominant technocratic paradigm" to describe the modern mind-set. He acknowledges that we have benefitted greatly from technological advances. "Technology has remedied countless evils which used to harm and limit human beings. How can we not feel gratitude and appreciation for this progress, especially in the fields of medicine, engineering and communications?" (102)

"Never has humanity had such power over itself, yet nothing ensures that it will be used wisely, particularly when we consider how it is currently being used" (104). He cites the use of nuclear bombs, cruel technologies used by totalitarian regimes, and the arsenal of weapons produced for modern warfare.

There can be a tendency to believe that an increase in power is an increase in progress. But, there is cause for great concern. "We cannot claim to have a sound ethics, a culture and spirituality genuinely capable of setting limits and teaching clear-minded self-restraint." (105)

- Do you ever worry that technology controls too much of our lives? How would you describe your concerns?
- How would you describe your relationship with technology and how it has changed over the years?

4. The Globalization of the Technocratic Paradigm (LS 106-114)



The technocratic paradigm "tends to dominate economic and political life" (109). Pope Francis believes we need a cultural revolution that will set humane and sustainable limits on our power over the natural world and our subjugation of human beings. He suggests there are signs of hope that this is changing: "We have the freedom needed to limit and direct technology; we can put it at the service of another type of progress, one which is healthier, more human, more social, more integral" (112).

"Nobody is suggesting a return to the Stone Age, but we do need to slow down and look at reality in a different way, to appropriate the positive and sustainable progress which has been made, but also to recover the values and the great goals swept away by our unrestrained delusions of grandeur" (114).

- When Pope Francis calls for a "bold cultural revolution," what comes to your mind?
- Do you agree that we need to set limits to human dominance over the natural world? What would you suggest?



5. The Crisis and Effects of Modern Anthropocentrism (LS 115-121)

The third concern is with a modern anthropocentrism which assumes humans are separate from and dominant over the natural world. This misunderstanding leads to great destruction as humans assume “dominion” over the world rather than “stewardship” of God’s creation. It also leaves humans with a sense of isolation and alienation from the world. “Once the human being declares independence from reality and behaves with absolute dominion, the very foundations of our life begin to crumble” (117).

Pope Francis promotes an integral ecology which honors the dignity of the natural world and the human person. “There can be no renewal of our relationship with nature without a renewal of humanity itself. There can be no ecology without an adequate anthropology” (118). “We cannot presume to heal our relationship with nature and the environment without healing all fundamental human relationships. Christian thought sees human beings as possessing a particular dignity above other creatures; it thus inculcates esteem for each person and respect for others” (119).

- Pope Francis expresses concern about an inadequate anthropology that misunderstands our human relationship with the natural world. What is the meaning of his statement: “there can be no ecology without an adequate anthropology”?
- Thomas Berry, C.P. (1914-2009), who has been called “one of the 20th century’s most prescient and profound thinkers,” claims that the fundamental cause of the ecological crisis is a “mode of consciousness that has established a radical discontinuity between the human and other modes of being and has bestowed all rights on the humans.” This, he claims, is a ‘cultural pathology.’ Where do you see this pathology?

We are encouraged to bring our rich Christian tradition into dialogue with three situations:

6. **Practical relativism (LS 122-123).** Relativism sees everything as irrelevant unless it serves one’s own immediate interests. “A misguided anthropocentrism leads to a misguided lifestyle.... When human beings place themselves at the centre, they give absolute priority to immediate convenience and all else becomes relative. (It is) the cult of unlimited human power...which sees everything as irrelevant unless it serves one’s own immediate interests” (LS 122). This attitude leads to a “use and throw away” logic that “generates so much waste, because of the disordered desire to consume more than what is really necessary” (123).

- Thomas Berry, C.P, asserts that the universe is a communion of subjects, not a collection of objects. He believes the devastation of the planet can be seen as a direct consequence of this attitude “which sees everything as irrelevant unless it serves one’s own immediate interests” (LS 122). How would life be different if we saw non-human species as ‘subjects’ rather than ‘objects’?
- How do you participate in a “throw away culture”? What simple steps can you take right now to move out of it?

7. **The need to protect employment (LS 124-129).** Pope Francis is not focusing simply on “jobs.” Work is a means to express our human dignity and participate in the ongoing creation of the world. “Work should be the setting for this rich personal growth, where many aspects of life enter into play: creativity, planning for the future, developing our talents, living out our values, relating to others, giving glory to God” (127). He goes on to say that creation of jobs is an essential service for the common good. “Civil authorities have the right and duty to adopt clear and firm measures in support of small producers and differentiated production.... the creation of jobs as an essential part of its service to the common good” (129).

- Pope Francis emphasizes that work is an opportunity for “rich personal growth.” In what ways has your work been an opportunity to participate in the ongoing creation of the world?

8. **Biological technologies (LS 130-136).** “The Catechism firmly states that human power has limits and that ‘it is contrary to human dignity to cause animals to suffer or die needlessly’” (130). When considering the genetic manipulation of plants and animals “we need constantly to rethink the goals, effects, overall context and ethical limits of this human activity” (131).

- Have you ever refused to buy a product because the development process was detrimental to the natural world or did not respect the employment of persons who produced the product?

9. Formation of an Action Plan to Address Food, Farming, and Hunger

In this session we consider how our food choices can contribute to a more just and sustainable world. Review the 10 Commandments of Food on page 6. Then consider the menu of options in Part 4 on pages 7-8. Ask someone to record the key aspects of the sharing and complete online the Action Report. Go to www.passiochristi.org to submit a report on the action plan of your entity for this session. These will be compiled and posted online to form our Passionist Laudato Si’ Action Platform.





Ethical eating refers to the moral consequences of our food choices – damage to the environment, use of chemicals and pesticides, treatment of farm workers, food shortages for others, and cruel treatment of animals. Pope Francis encourages the transformation of food systems “to increase resilience, strengthen local economies, improve nutrition, reduce food waste, provide healthy diets accessible to all, and be environmentally sustainable and respectful of local cultures.” (Pope Francis, address to UN Pre-Summit on Food Systems, July 2021)

10 Commandments of Food



I. Give thanks for the food you eat.

A major cause of environmental distress is that we often take Earth for granted. We assume it will always sustain us. However, reckless food consumption brings harm to the planet. Be grateful to the Creator, the Earth from which all food comes, and those who grow and prepare food for your table.



II. Eat food grown as close as possible to where you live.

Shopping locally at farmers markets and grocery stores supports local people and small businesses as well as lowering your carbon emissions. Plus, eating seasonal foods grown in your area – rather than out-of-season fruit and vegetables that have traveled far distances – means your food will be fresher, have fewer chemicals, and less carbon emissions due to transportation.



III. Shop thoughtfully.

When purchasing food, try to minimize packaging by buying loose and packaging-free where possible. Overall, packaging accounts for about 5 percent of food's carbon footprint. If you must buy packaged food, reuse the packaging whenever possible. Buying in bulk can help too. You can also swap plastic bags for reusable ones.



IV. Support fair wages for those who grow and prepare your food.

Farmers and food workers deserve fair wages. Choosing fair trade products is a way to support sustainable farming practices as well as ensure better working conditions and fairer prices for those who grow your food. Everything from bananas, sugar, and flowers to coffee, tea, and cotton can be classed as fair trade.



V. Support organic agriculture.

Reduce the environmental damage of land, water, and air from food-production and the food system. Whenever possible, choose to purchase organic food. This helps maintain the health of the planet. Organic agriculture emphasizes the use of renewable resources and the conservation of soil and water. Organic meat, poultry, eggs, and dairy products come from animals that are not given antibiotics or growth hormones. Organic food is produced without using harmful chemical fertilizers or pesticides.



VI. Do not waste food.

Avoid food waste. Eat your leftovers. Research has shown that greenhouse gas emissions from food production and waste breakdown are huge. So the less you throw out, the better it is for our planet. Setting up a composting system is an easy and responsible way to dispose of food scraps.



VII. Eat less meat or go vegetarian.

Meat production has a detrimental impact on the environment. It is responsible for more than 14% of greenhouse gas emissions. Also, meat consumption contributes to health problems such as heart disease and cancer. Giving it up even for just one day a week is healthier for you and the planet. If you want to minimize the suffering of animals, then go vegetarian or vegan. The meat industry is responsible for routine cruelty to countless pigs, sheep, cows, chicken, ducks, and geese.



VIII. Reduce environmental damage from food production.

Palm oil is an example. It is in many things, from food and drinks to cosmetics, household products, and biofuel. Vast areas of rainforest in Southeast Asia and increasingly Africa are destroyed to make room for palm oil plantations. These forests are important habitats for wildlife and huge carbon stores; they take carbon out of the atmosphere and store it in the peat. When forests are converted to palm oil plantations, all this carbon is released and turned into greenhouse gases which warm the planet disastrously.



IX. Protect biodiversity.

Farming practices that respect biodiversity are indispensable to food security and sustainable development. Biodiversity supplies many vital ecosystem services, such as creating and maintaining healthy soils, pollinating plants, controlling pests, and providing habitat for wildlife.



X. Strive to end world hunger.

Overcoming hunger is one of humanity's greatest challenges. While almost 9% of the world's population (700-800 million) goes to bed on an empty stomach and more than three billion people lack access to a nutritious diet, about two billion are overweight due to poor diets and a sedentary lifestyle.



Take Action

Food, Farming and Hunger

Eating is a moral act. If you eat, you participate in an agriculture system. The ethical dimensions of food production should be a concern. You “vote” three times a day. With every meal you can choose to bless or spoil God’s creation. This session offers suggestions on how food shopping, eating habits, and farming practices can make a difference.

What we eat is one of our most ingrained habits – and that makes it difficult to change. There are numerous ways to show respect for creation and opt for a more just world when eating. The most obvious is to begin with a prayer of gratitude and take practical steps to reduce your negative impact. It boils down to eating less meat and more food that is grown organically and locally (doesn’t have to be shipped very far). Realize that chemical fertilizers, transportation and packaging of food have a huge impact on the planet.

Consider the steps you and your community can take to care for God’s creation and bring forth a more just world by your food choices. Use these suggestions or come up with your own. Certain action steps may be more appropriate in some countries than in others. The action steps a community commits to undertaking should be shaped by its context – high income or low income countries, urban or rural settings.

If There’s Only One Thing You Can Do ...

✓ Cut back on your consumption of meat or abstain altogether. Raising and culling animals for food is far worse for the health of the planet than growing fruits and vegetables for people to eat. Livestock requires more water, land, and energy than grains and vegetables. Grain-fed beef production takes 100,000 liters of water for every kilogram of food. Raising broiler chickens takes 3,500 liters of water to make a kilogram of meat. In comparison, soybean production uses 2,000 liters for kilogram of food produced; rice, 1,912; wheat, 900; and potatoes, 500 liters. A single kilo of beef creates 70kg of greenhouse gas emissions leading to a more rapidly warming planet. Waste disposal from factory-farming of animals pollutes water supplies. Over 700 million people suffer from hunger or malnutrition while the majority of corn and soy grown in the world feeds cattle, pigs, and chickens for wealthy eaters. Eating lower on the food chain by consuming less meat and more vegetables is one of the most significant ways you can live more sustainably and lower your destructive impact on God’s creation.

The focus of this session is on producing, buying, and eating our food responsibly and caring for those who suffer from hunger, malnutrition, and food insecurity.

What and Where to Buy

- Purchase sustainable and organic food. It’s grown without pesticides, synthetic fertilizers or harmful additives. Organic includes meat, poultry, eggs, and dairy products from animals which are not fed antibiotics or growth hormones. Break the addiction to cheap food produced on industrial farms.
- If buying meat, eggs or dairy, choose products in which animals have not been treated cruelly or grown in Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations.
- Whenever possible, deal directly with local farmers. When you buy food that was grown and processed closer to your home and sold at local markets you reduce the carbon footprint of your diet. Transporting food over long distances, especially by airfreight, generates great quantities of carbon dioxide emissions causing the global climate crisis.
- Shop for foods that are in season. We waste lots of energy trying to grow food in the wrong place, at the wrong time of year. Discover what’s in season near you, and you’ll find perfectly delicious fruit and vegetables to eat that do not require massive investments in fuel to get food to your plate.
- Support small-scale food producers. Avoid purchasing food produced by the industrial agricultural system. A small handful of corporations control the world’s food industry from farm to fork. This means a few powerful companies dictate what farmers can grow, force fieldworkers to spray unnecessary toxic chemicals on their crops, sue small farms when patented GMO seeds accidentally blow into their fields, and produce massive amounts of stench and waste from factory farms. By purchasing from small-scale food producers, you are supporting the 1.5 billion people who live on small farms and encouraging sustainable farming practices.
- Eat real food. Hint: Shop the perimeter. Most foods in the middle aisles of large supermarkets are highly processed.





- Buy in bulk. To minimize landfill waste, support manufacturers who use minimal packaging.
- Like coffee or tea? Drink and eat fair trade. Commit to giving farmers a fair price for their product and work.
- [Click here](#) to calculate your food footprint and learn how much your food choices impact the planet.

Cooking and Eating

- Pause in prayer before eating to be grateful for the bounty of creation and the many hands that helped bring food to your table.
 - Do without fast food and highly processed food. If that's not possible, before biting into a piece of meat, choose food that is produced sustainably and ethically.
 - Cook smart. Try cooking with as little water as possible by using a flat-bottomed pan, covering your pan with a lid, and reducing the heat as soon as the water starts to boil – you'll save energy, water, and money!
- 
- Support clean cooking. Nearly one out of three people use polluting cooking fuels like charcoal, wood, and kerosene. Such 'dirty cooking' is a leading source of carbon emissions and kills some four million people each year, impacting women the most.
 - Select seafood that's good for you and the oceans. When you choose to buy sustainable seafood, you push suppliers to source more environmentally responsible products.
 - Save food. Approximately 30% of all food produced for human consumption is lost or wasted globally (LS 50). This amounts to a staggering 1.3 billion tons of food per year. The costs of this uncontrollable waste exceed 25 times what is needed to feed the entire world. By planning your meals and saving your leftovers, you'll reduce this waste and be responsible for fewer greenhouse gas emissions.
 - Purchase and set up a composting bin at your residence or ministry site. Send food waste back to the soil instead of to landfills. In nature there is no such thing as waste; it should all break down to become part of the soil.
 - Avoid disposables in food service. Using real dishes, flatware, and glasses/cups reduces consumption and waste.

Food Systems, Food Security, and Hunger

- Strive for those in need to have access to affordable and nutritious food. Consider ways to get involved in feeding the hungry. 700-800 million people on the planet now suffer from hunger or malnutrition – 8.9% of the global population – while the majority of corn and soy grown in the world feeds cattle, pigs, and chickens. Pope Francis decries this situation: "Hunger is criminal; food is an inalienable right'." (Fratelli Tutti, 189)
- Help build local food systems that are more equitable and sustainable such as supporting agroecological farming methods, building the local-regional food economy infrastructure, creating local policies and practices that foster local food sovereignty.
- Organize and advocate for the right to food, sustainable and non-extractive use of land, land reform, and other policies that move us closer to food sovereignty and allow small farmers to escape from the dominant, export-oriented, and corporate-driven food systems.
- Side-step the extractive capitalist system through support of producer and consumer cooperatives which build coalitions and alliances that can collaborate around common goals.
- Support Catholic Relief Services or another agency working with farmers to build food security.
- Get your hands dirty. Participate in food production to the extent you can. Connect with Earth and grow some of your own food. You will better appreciate your food, having known it all its life.



Prayer

Good and gracious God,
you provided manna in the desert for your chosen people.
May we recognize that our food comes from your bounty,
the generosity of our planet,
and the strenuous work of many human hands.
Teach us to reverence your creation which supplies our food.
Show us how to make room at the table for everyone.
Amen.





Learn More

Vatican Video: Food for All, A Moral Call

[Click here](#) to watch “Food for All, A Moral Call,” a video on food justice created by Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development and Vatican Covid-19 Commission.

Caritas International Addressing Food Problems

Learn about food problems being addressed by Caritas International, a Catholic organization which serves the poor and promotes charity and justice throughout the world. They address today's food problems by working on the root causes of hunger and food scarcity and by promoting investment in agricultural and rural development. [Click here](#). (English, Spanish, French)



Oxfam International: Ending Poverty

Oxfam is a global organization that fights inequality to end poverty and injustice. Working in 90+ countries, it offers lifesaving support in times of crisis and advocates for economic justice, gender equality, and climate action. [Click here](#). (multiple languages)

Learn About Food Security and Ending Hunger

[Click here](#) to learn about the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), an agency of the United Nations that leads international efforts to defeat hunger. Their goal is to achieve food security for all and make sure that people have regular access to enough high-quality food. (multiple languages)

Support Food Sovereignty

Pope Francis advocates for food sovereignty – (1) the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food (2) produced through sustainable methods (3) in a food system which allows the people who produce, distribute, and consume food to also control the mechanisms and policies of food production and distribution. [Click here](#) to learn more at the International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty website. (English, Spanish, and French)

Attend to the Cry of the Poor

CARE works in over 100 countries to implement long-term programs to fight poverty, respond to humanitarian emergencies, and advocate for policy change to improve the lives of the poorest people. [Click here](#) to learn about their work to overcome food insecurity. (English, French, Portuguese, Spanish)

Help Alleviate World Hunger

The World Food Programme offers food assistance to people recovering from conflict, disasters, and the impact of climate change. In a world of plenty, where enough food is produced to feed everyone on the planet, hunger should be a thing of the past. However, conflict, climate change, disasters, inequality and – most recently – the COVID-19 pandemic mean one in nine people globally is still going to bed hungry and famine looms for millions. [Click here](#) to learn more. (multiple languages)

Slow Food Movement

Slow Food is a global, grassroots organization working to prevent the disappearance of local food cultures and traditions, to counteract the rise of fast life and combat people's dwindling interest in the food they eat, where it comes from and how our food choices affect the world around us. [Click here](#), then go to the bottom of the page and click on the map to access your country's Slow Food website. (multiple languages)

Fairtrade Products

Guided by a global strategy to ensure that all farmers earn a living income, and agricultural workers earn a living wage, Fairtrade strives to change the way international trade works through better prices, decent working conditions, and a fairer deal for farmers and workers in developing countries. The main products promoted under the Fairtrade label are coffee, cocoa, banana, flowers, tea, rice, spices, nuts, cotton, and sugar. They address issues related to food production such as child labour, gender equality, decent livelihoods, climate change, and human rights. [Click here](#). (multiple languages)

Agroecology: A Path to Sustainable Agriculture

[Click here](#) to learn why Pope Francis supports agroecology, a path for building a sustainable world by redesigning the way we produce, distribute, transport, and consume our food. Agroecology applies ecological principles to the design and management of sustainable food systems. It centers on food and agricultural production that makes the best use of nature's resources, including human beings. It supports good nutrition, fair market, biodiversity, healthy ecosystems, and traditional knowledge and customs. (English, Spanish, French)



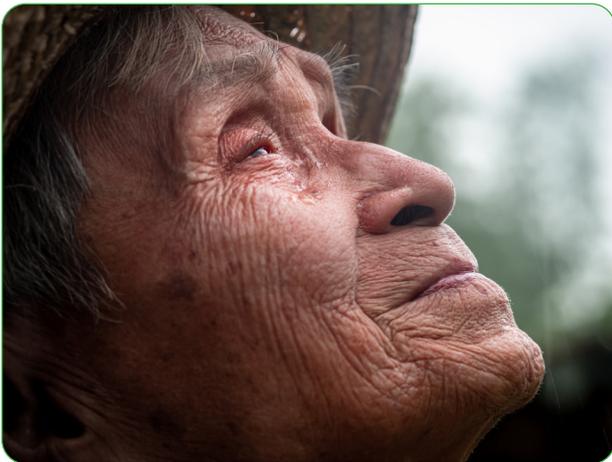
Prayer

from Laudato Si'

A Prayer in Union with Creation

Father, we praise you with all your creatures.
They came forth from your all-powerful hand;
they are yours, filled with your presence
and your tender love.
Praise be to you!

Son of God, Jesus,
through you all things were made.
You were formed in the womb of Mary our Mother,
you became part of this Earth,
and you gazed upon this world with human eyes.
Today you are alive in every creature
in your risen glory.
Praise be to you!



Holy Spirit, by your light
you guide this world towards the Father's love
and accompany creation as it groans in travail.
You also dwell in our hearts
and you inspire us to do what is good.
Praise be to you!

Triune Lord, wondrous community of infinite love,
teach us to contemplate you
in the beauty of the universe,
for all things speak of you.
Awaken our praise and thankfulness
for every being that you have made.
Give us the grace to feel profoundly joined
to everything that is.

God of love, show us our place in this world
as channels of your love
for all the creatures of this earth,
for not one of them is forgotten in your sight.
Enlighten those who possess power and money
that they may avoid the sin of indifference,
that they may love the common good, advance the weak,
and care for this world in which we live.
The poor and the earth are crying out.
O Lord, seize us with your power and light,
help us to protect all life,
to prepare for a better future,
for the coming of your Kingdom
of justice, peace, love and beauty.
Praise be to you!
Amen.

*“From the moment you put a piece of bread in your mouth
you are part of the world. Who grew the wheat? Who made the
bread? Where did it come from? You are in relationship with all
who brought it to the table. We are least separate and most in
common when we eat and drink.”*

— Thomas Merton, Trappist Monk

