

CREATION CARE TIPS

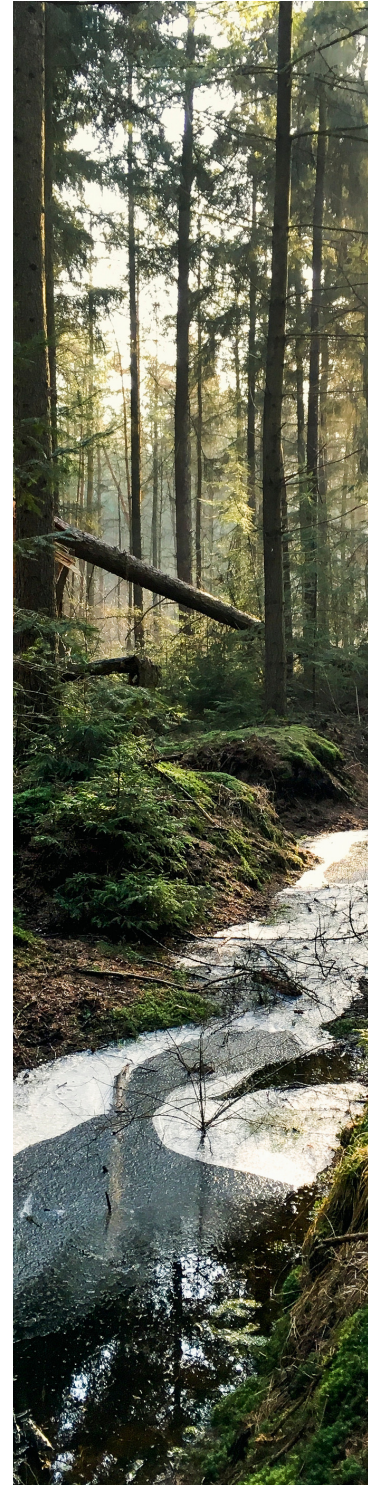
CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF COLUMBUS

On Thursday, June 18, 2015, Pope Francis released his encyclical *Laudato Si'*, or "Praised Be to You," from the words of St. Francis of Assisi's Canticle of the Sun. In his encyclical, the Holy Father stated that "if the simple fact of being human moves people to care for the environment of which they are a part, Christians in their turn realize that their responsibility within creation, and their duty towards nature and the Creator, are an essential part of their faith." Pope Francis urges that "all of us can cooperate as instruments of God for the care of creation, each according to his or her own culture, experience, involvements and talents."

A PRAYER FOR OUR EARTH

from *Laudato Si'*

All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe
and in the smallest of your creatures.
You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.
Pour out upon us the power of your love,
that we may protect life and beauty.
Fill us with peace, that we may live
as brothers and sisters, harming no one.
O God of the poor,
help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this
earth, so precious in your eyes.
Bring healing to our lives,
that we may protect the world and not prey on it,
that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction.
Touch the hearts
of those who look only for gain
at the expense of the poor and the earth.
Teach us to discover the worth of each thing,
to be filled with awe and contemplation,
to recognize that we are profoundly united
with every creature
as we journey toward your infinite light.
We thank you for being with us each day.
Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle
for justice, love and peace.



FIRST STEP: READ LAUDATO SI'

It is important for Catholics to understand the faith and scriptural basis for creation care and integral ecology before taking additional steps. *Laudato Si'*, a letter that Pope Francis addressed to every human being on Earth, is a gift to understanding our faith better. You can read it online or purchase a print version. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops offers a study guide for *Laudato Si'* at no cost (<https://tinyurl.com/necacda>) as do several other organizations such as the Catholic Climate Covenant (<https://catholicclimatecovenant.org/>).

SECOND STEP: GET OUTDOORS

Encourage your children and grandchildren to join a local 4-H or scouting program. Many parishes host scouting troops and most counties offer a range of 4-H programs that allow youth to engage in outdoor activities, learn more about nature, raise plants and animals, and develop their leadership skills. If a child prefers to work independently, he or she can even complete a 4-H project book on a topic of interest with a family member. For more information, contact your county Extension office (<https://extension.osu.edu/lao>), scouting troop, or Catholic committee on scouting.

TAKE A STEP TOGETHER: HOST A SEASON OF CREATION EVENT

Celebrate the Season of Creation (September 1 to October 4) through homilies, school programs, and discussion groups. On the Feast of St. Francis, encourage students to bring their pets for the blessing of the animals, or discuss the life of St. Francis, his focus on simplicity, and his love for Earth's creatures. Offer a creation care focused evening program such as those provided by the Catholic Climate Covenant (<https://catholicclimatecovenant.org/>).

FURTHER STEPS: INCLUDE ENVIRONMENTAL OPPORTUNITIES IN TRIPS & RETREATS

There are many ways you can live your faith through outdoor environmental opportunities. Examples include Shepherd's Corner Ecological Center, our diocesan retreat centers, and parish and school specific sites. Likewise scouting, 4-H, and similar organizations have facilities that are available for programs and rental. Consider a day trip to a wetland or host an overnight program in the woods. Visiting these places allows people to connect with creation and learn how to protect it.



Learn more at <https://columbuscatholic.org/care-for-creation>