



'LAUDATO SI – On Care for Our Common Home'
ENCYCLICAL OF POPE FRANCIS, June 2015.



Module of Six Sessions Designed for Group Work ¹

**Prepared by Sr. Denise Boyle fmdm
MIA-Global Action**

¹ © Mercy Global Action for Mercy International Association. www.mercyworld.org

Suggestions for Facilitators

(These sessions were trialled with a parish group. A core group of participants attended the six evenings, whilst others were only able to come to some.)

- 1.** Each module or session is designed to last for approximately one hour.
- 2.** At the start of each session, participants could be invited to introduce themselves and to share briefly what they hope to gain from the discussion.
- 3.** Questions have been formulated so there is no 'right' or 'wrong' answer, to ensure that everyone is able to participate fully in the group.
- 4.** When participants have answered the questions, they could be invited to turn to the person on their right i.e. share in twos. Following this a short sharing within the whole group could be valuable.
- 5.** For the next group of questions participants were invited to turn to the person on their left, which was again followed by sharing within the larger group.
- 6.** 'Homework' is designed to encourage participants to read more of 'Laudato Si' but suggest it is not checked up on!
- 7.** Normally we finished off with a 'cuppa' which allows the discussion to continue....

'LAUDATO SI – On Care for Our Common Home' Session 1

'I will point to the intimate relationship between the poor and the fragility of the planet, the conviction that everything in the world is connected'

Amid great excitement Pope Francis' Encyclical: 'Laudato Si – On the Care of our Common Home' was launched in Rome, on Thursday 18th June. The immediate response was hugely positive. Pope Francis addressed his encyclical to 'All Peoples', because the *'Earth is our 'Common Home'*.

The Emphasis is on Climate Change because *'Climate is a common good, belonging to all'*. Scientists have proved that carbon emissions are the result of human activity, through the burning of fossil fuels i.e. coal and oil that are raising the global temperature to a life-threatening degree. Speaking out as a prophetic and courageous leader, Francis challenges the world to address 'Climate Change' now! One way he urges, is through the *'development of new sources of renewable energy'* as a priority for Governments. Francis highlights the unequal social effects of environmental problems e.g. hurricanes and droughts are experienced by the *'most vulnerable people on the planet'*.

Overview of the Encyclical

There is an Introduction that includes *'My Appeal'* where Pope Francis speaks from the heart: *'I urgently appeal then, for a new dialogue on how we are shaping the future of our planet'*.

This is followed by Six Chapters, underpinned by significant key themes:

1. Gospel of Creation and the Mystery of the Universe – all gift and beautiful!
2. The intimate relationship between the poor and the fragility of 'Mother Earth'
3. Humans and nature interconnected; 'Sister Moon, Brother Sun'- from St. Francis.
4. Loss of biodiversity – extinction of fauna and flora – an irreversible situation!
5. Pollution, waste, the 'throwaway culture'; urgency for us to live and to eat differently...
6. Human right to water and sanitation vv private sector use for bottled water / mining...
7. Decline in the quality of human life and the breakdown of society: war and modern slavery.
8. Economic justice: new paradigm i.e. person centred versus current profit model...
9. Urgency of informed debate about climate change: tipping point / temperature increase
10. International responsibility to take urgent action during UN COP21 meeting in Paris, in Dec. Governments must agree to global, legally binding climate treaty endorsing less than 2°Cel

Questions:

A. What key theme from the above evoked the strongest response in me?

B. What themes would I like to explore further?

C. Is there anything re the above themes that makes me feel uneasy?

D. Think of the energy each of us uses every day i.e. mobile phone, car, fridge, heating, laptop.... This is known as my 'carbon footprint' – could I reduce it in any way?

References: <http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals>; www.cruxnow.com/church/
www.mercyworld.org; www.associationofcatholicpriests.ie/; <https://thejesuitpost.org>

Homework! Read the Vatican summary of 'Laudato Si'. Pick out three or four key points to share next week.

'LAUDATO SI - On Care for Our Common Home' Session 2

The Cry of the Earth and the Poor...

'For us, climate change is a life issue; people are trying to cope with it day by day. For the rest of the world it is an economic issue'. Fr. McKenzie, Kiribati.

'Hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.'

'At the conclusion of this lengthy reflection, which has been both joyful and troubling, I propose that we offer two prayers. The first we can share with all who believe in a God who is the all-powerful Creator...'

Prayer for the Earth (Alternate sides)

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 towards your infinite light. **We** thank you for being with us each day. Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle for justice, love and peace.

Amen.

Laudato Si is a long letter comprising: Introduction: 1-12; 'My Appeal' 13-16 and Six Chapters:

Chapter 1: WHAT IS HAPPENING TO OUR COMMON HOME (Sections 17-61)

Chapter 2: THE GOSPEL OF CREATION (62-100)

Chapter 3: THE HUMAN ROOTS OF THE ECOLOGICAL CRISIS (101-136)

Chapter 4: INTEGRAL ECOLOGY (137-162)

Chapter 5: LINES OF APPROACH AND ACTION (163-201)

Chapter 6: ECOLOGICAL EDUCATION AND SPIRITUALITY (202-245)

Quotes from Laudato Si: (Read reflectively)

1. *'Saint Francis of Assisi reminds us that our common home is like a sister with whom we share our life and a beautiful mother who opens her arms to embrace us... A sense of deep communion with the rest of nature cannot be real if our hearts lack tenderness, compassion and concern for our fellow human beings.'*

2. *'Each year hundreds of millions of tons of waste are generated, much of it non-biodegradable, highly toxic and radioactive, from homes and businesses, from construction and demolition sites, from clinical, electronic and industrial sources. The earth, our home, is beginning to look more and more like an immense pile of filth'*LS 21.

3. *'This sister now cries out to us because of the harm we have inflicted on her by our irresponsible use and abuse of the goods with which God has endowed her. We have come to see ourselves as her lords and masters, entitled to plunder her at will.'* LS 2

4. *'It is our humble conviction that the divine and the human meet in the slightest detail in the seamless garment of God's creation, in the last speck of dust of our planet.'* LS 9

5. *'It is time attention is drawn to the ethical and spiritual roots of environmental problems, which require that we look for solutions not only in technology but in a change of humanity. Replace;*

I. *Consumption with sacrifice,*

- II. Greed with generosity,
- III. Wastefulness with a spirit of sharing
- IV. An asceticism which entails learning to give, and not simply to give up. LS 9

6. *In this universe, shaped by open and intercommunicating systems, we can discern countless forms of relationship and participation..... God is intimately present to each being..... Nature is nothing other than a certain kind of art, namely God's art, impressed upon things.'* LS 80

7. *'The times talk to us of so much poverty in the world, and this is a scandal. In a world where there is so much wealth, so many resources to feed everyone, it is unfathomable that there are so many hungry children that there are so many children without an education, so many poor persons.'*

8. *'As never before in history, common destiny beckons us to seek a new beginning... Let ours be a time remembered for the awakening of a new reverence for life, the firm resolve to achieve sustainability, the quickening of the struggle for justice and peace, and the joyful celebration of life.'* LS 207

Q1. Which quote(s) spoke most clearly to me or touched something deep within?

Q2. Which quotes made me want to learn more about the issues Pope Francis raised in his Encyclical?

Fr. Donal Dorr SPS in his article on 'Laudato Si' describes it as a: 'Comprehensive, controversial, disturbing, challenging, radical encyclical letter.... Pope Francis offers us a deeply personal and radically political spirituality, one which nourishes the spirit while being fully down-to-earth'...

Q3. Do I agree with Fr. Donal's comment above? Give an example to support my thinking.

Suggested reading: Some of the following websites provide good commentaries / statements on 'Laudato Si'.
www.mercyworld.org www.ncr.org; www.cruxnow.com; www.theguardian.com; www.cathnews.com;
www.caritas.org <http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals>;
www.associationofcatholicpriests.ie;

1



From reading through some commentaries on 'Laudato Si' what do you think are **the main justice issues** that Pope Francis highlights?

Which one or two, would you like to explore more?

'LAUDATO SI – On Care for Our Common Home' Session 3 ¹ Highlighting Key Justice Issues and Root Causes

At the heart of Pope Francis' encyclical is the question: "What kind of world do we want to leave to those who come after us...to children now growing up?"

An honest answer means that I have to change my lifestyle! Simultaneously it calls for profound changes to political, economic, cultural and social systems at national and international levels. Francis' encyclical is focused on the idea of '*integral ecology*' that connects care of the natural world with justice for the poorest and most vulnerable. *Adapted from a Zenit report, 2015 June 18th*

In chapter 1, Pope Francis names six serious challenges facing 'Our Common Home'

- **Pollution, waste and our throwaway mentality:** '*the earth, our home, is beginning to look more and more like an immense pile of filth.*'
- **Climate change:** '*one of the principal, critical challenges facing humanity in our day.* Science is the best tool by which we can listen to the cry of the earth, while dialogue and education can '*help us to escape the spiral of self-destruction which currently engulfs us.*'
- **Water:** '*Access to safe drinkable water is a basic and universal human right*' yet entire populations and especially children, get sick and die because of contaminated water.
- **Biodiversity:** '*Each year sees the disappearance of thousands of plant and animal species*' yet '*all of us, as living creatures, are dependent on one another*'. Economic interests often hamper or impede this protection.
- **Breakdown of society:** Current models of development negatively affect the quality of life of most of humanity, as can city-living. Often we are unaware of the loneliness of our next door neighbour, or the needs of the marginalised and vulnerable where we live...
- **Global inequality:** Environmental problems affect the most vulnerable people, which is most of the world's population. Pope Francis says the solution is not reducing the birth rate, but addressing the insidious issue of: '*an extreme and selective consumerism*'

Pause to think about the above issues and then answer the questions below:

Q.1 Which of the above am I most concerned about?

.....

Q.2. Is there anything I could do about this?

.....

Q.3. What two steps could I take to be more careful in my use of water?

.....

Francis then explores some of the root causes i.e. systemic injustice of these issues:

- ✓ **Technology:** While it can bring progress towards sustainable development, without '*a sound ethics base*' it makes '*an impressive dominance over the whole of humanity*'
- ✓ **The technocratic mentality:** '*the economy accepts every advance in technology with a view to profit.....it cannot guarantee integral human development and social inclusion*'
- ✓ **Anthropocentrism:** we fail to understand our place in the world and our relationship with nature. Interpersonal relations..... must be set above technical reasoning.

¹ © Mercy Global Action for Mercy International Association. www.mercyworld.org

- ✓ **Practical relativism:** environmental degradation and social decay is the result of seeing *'everything as irrelevant unless it serves one's own immediate interests'*
- ✓ **Employment:** Integral ecology needs to take account of the value of labour so everyone must be able to have work....challenges profit driven market that ignores people.
- ✓ **Biological technologies:** GMOs are a *'complex environmental issue'*, which have helped to resolve problems but bring difficulties such as concentrating land *'in the hands of a few owners'*, threatening small producers, biodiversity and ecosystems

Q.4. Do I believe that we are all inter-connected? Does this influence how I live and my sensitivity to others?

.....

Q.5. Am I living as simply as I could 'my footprint' or do I always want/need more? Is there an action I could commit to that would help me live more simply?

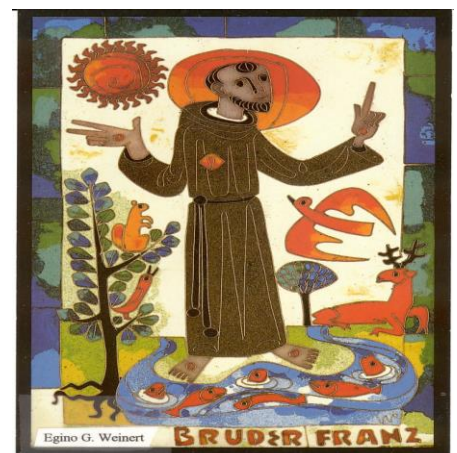
.....

Where do the solutions lie for Pope Francis?

1. **In "The Gospel of Creation":** Chapter 2 examines the Old and New Testaments to show how human life is grounded in our relationships with God, with our neighbours and with the created world. We must acknowledge our sins when we break these relationships and realize our *'tremendous responsibility'* towards all of God's creation
2. **In Integral Ecology.** Chapter 4 explores this new paradigm of justice which means *'the analysis of environmental problems cannot be separated from the analysis of human, family, work-related and urban contexts'*, while solutions must be based on *'a preferential option for the poorest of our brothers and sisters'*
3. **In Dialogue:** Chapter 5, entitled 'Lines of Approach and Action' stresses the need for *'honest and open debate, so that particular interests or ideologies will not prejudice the common good'*.
4. **In Education:** Chapter 6 urges schools, families, the media and the churches to help reshape habits and behavior. Overcoming individualism, while changing our lifestyles and consumer choices, can lead to significant changes in society.
5. **In Ecological Conversion:** Chapter 6 also highlights St Francis of Assisi as the model of *'a more passionate concern for the protection of our world,'* reflected in his spirit of gratitude and generosity, creativity and enthusiasm...
6. **In Spirituality.** The two concluding prayers show how faith in God can shape and inspire our care for the environment. Additionally in Chapter 6, Pope Francis shares that the Sacraments, the Trinity, the model of the Holy Family and our hope for eternal life can teach, motivate and strengthen us to protect the natural world that God has given us.

Only by reshaping our relationships with God, with our neighbours and with the natural world,

Francis says, can we hope to tackle the threats facing our planet today....



Useful websites: www.mercyworld.org www.ncr.org; www.cruxnow.com; www.theguardian.com; www.cathnews.com; www.caritas.org <http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals>;

'LAUDATO SI – On Care for Our Common Home' Session 4¹ A Call to ACTION...

Central to Pope Francis' [encyclical](#) is the idea of "**integral ecology**," connecting care of the natural world with justice for the poorest and most vulnerable. Only by radically reshaping our relationships with God, with our neighbours and with the natural world, can we hope to tackle the threats facing our planet today.

"Sister Earth cries out to us, because of the harm we have inflicted on her by our irresponsible use and abuse of the goods with which God has endowed her..." LS 2

Pope Francis declared Sept 1st 2015, the First World Day of Prayer for Creation saying: 'The ecological crisis **calls us to a profound spiritual and ecological conversion**, which reflects our personal encounter with Jesus Christ. This is evident in our relationship with the world around us' LS 217. The Pope's prayers at the end of 'Laudato Si' exemplify this beautifully. Here is one:

A Christian Prayer in Union with Creation – Pope Francis

Creator God, 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!

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

Question 1: Which sentence(s) struck me in the above prayer?

.....

Q2: Why is 'Sister Earth' crying out? Do I have an example of abuse to her?

.....

Q3: In the Introduction Pope Francis says the 'ecological crisis' calls us to a 'spiritual conversion'. Why?

.....

¹ © Mercy Global Action for Mercy International Association. www.mercyworld.org



The grandeur of God is all around us....

The human environment and the natural environment deteriorate together. *'We cannot combat environmental degradation unless we attend to causes related to human and social degradation.'* Francis says that we must acknowledge *"our contribution, smaller or greater, to the disfigurement and destruction of creation."*

We are doing this by:

- *Causing changes in its climate*
- *Stripping the earth of its natural forests*
- *Destroying its wetlands*
- *Contaminating the earth's waters, its land, its air, and its life... LS 48*

The deterioration of the environment and of society affects the most vulnerable people on the planet. Evidence and *'scientific research reveals that the gravest effects of all attacks on the environment are suffered by the poorest. For example the depletion of fishing reserves especially, hurts small fishing communities without the means to replace those resources; water pollution particularly affects the poor who cannot buy bottled water; and rises in the sea level mainly affect impoverished coastal populations who have nowhere else to go.'* LS 48

My response? Pope Francis consulted widely prior to writing Laudato Si. He quotes his friend Patriarch Bartholomew, who calls for a change in our / **MY behaviour** by replacing:

- A.** *Consumption with sacrifice*
- B.** *Greed with generosity*
- C.** *Wastefulness with a spirit of sharing....*

It is a way of loving, of moving gradually away from what I want, to what God's world needs! It's liberation from fear, greed and compulsion'. LS 9

Q4. Which of the three actions above, do I need to address first? Why?

.....

Q5. Have I experienced 'liberation' because of sharing, or living more simply?

.....

Q6. Am I ready to make one commitment to begin to 'change' (not for sharing)

.....

HOMEWORK! Read Sections 137-161 *'taking into account every aspect of the global crisis,'* www.catholicerald.co.uk/news/2015/06/18/full-text-laudato-si/

'May our struggles and concern for this planet never take away the joy of our hope' 244

'LAUDATO SI – On Care for Our Common Home' Session 5 The Concept of Integral Ecology....



At the heart of what the Encyclical proposes is '*integral ecology*'. It reflects a new paradigm of justice and ecology '*which respects our unique place as human beings in this world and our relationship to our surroundings*'. LS 15 According to Pope Francis, '*nature cannot be regarded as something separate from ourselves, or as a mere setting in which we live. We are not faced with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather one complex crisis, which is both social and environmental.*' LS 139

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/koreanet/14758513027/>

The integral perspective also brings the ecology of institutions into play: if everything is related, then the health of a society's institutions affects the environment and the quality of human life. '*Every violation of solidarity and civic friendship harms the environment*' LS 142

Litany of Repentance - Let us ask for forgiveness

Human beings have helped to destroy the biological diversity of God's creation

Kyrie eleison

Human beings have degraded the integrity of the earth by causing change in its climate.

Christie eleison

Human beings have stripped the earth of its natural forests or destroyed its wetlands.

Kyrie eleison

Human beings have contaminated the earth's waters, its land, its air and its life.

Christie eleison

With many concrete examples, Pope Francis confirm his thinking that 'the analysis of environmental problems cannot be separated from the analysis of human, family, work-related and urban contexts, and of how individuals relate to themselves.' LS 141

Q1. What would it mean to have an 'integrated approach' in dealing with poverty, or the current migrant crisis, whilst also protecting nature?

.....

In today's context, in which, '*injustices abound and growing numbers of people are deprived of basic human rights and considered expendable*' committing oneself to the common good means to make choices in solidarity based on 'a preferential option for the poorest of our brothers and sisters.' LS 158 This is also the best way to leave a sustainable world for future generations, not just by proclaiming, but by committing to care for the poor of today, as already emphasized by

Benedict XVI: 'In addition to a fairer sense of inter-generational solidarity there is also an urgent moral need for a renewed sense of intra-generational solidarity.' LS162

'Human ecology is inseparable from the notion of the common good' LS156, but is to be understood in a concrete way, as it involves everyday life.

The Encyclical gives specific attention to the urban environment, recognising that the human being has a great capacity for adaptation. Pope Francis notes *'an admirable creativity and generosity is shown by persons and groups who respond to environmental limitations by alleviating the adverse effects of their surroundings and learning to live productively amid disorder and uncertainty'* LS148. Nevertheless, authentic development presupposes an integral improvement in the quality of human life: public space, housing, transport and work environment. LS150-154

Q2. How does the environment of my home, workplace, and neighbourhood affect my quality of life?

.....

Q3. Am I able to adapt to a significant change in my environment creatively and generously? Give an example.

.....

Acceptance of our bodies as God's gift, is vital for welcoming and accepting the entire world as a gift from the Father. The danger is thinking that we enjoy absolute power over our own bodies, which in turn can lead us into thinking *'we enjoy absolute power over creation'* LS 155.

Pope Francis maintains this attitude influences global justice issues like:

Global inequality: Environmental problems affect the most vulnerable people, which in effect means the greater part of the world's population! Francis believes the solution is not reducing the birth rate but counteracting *'an extreme and selective consumerism....'*

Water: *'access to safe drinkable water, is a basic and universal human right'* yet entire populations and especially children get sick and die because of contaminated water..

Underpinning each justice issue is a 'root cause'? A couple of examples are:

Anthropocentrism: This is when we fail to understand our place in the world and our relationship with nature. Francis advocates that interpersonal relations and protection of human life must be put above technical reasoning i.e. overpopulation is related to overconsumption....

Practical relativism: Related to environmental degradation and social decay is the result of seeing *'everything as irrelevant unless it serves one's own immediate interests.'* There is a direct correlation between our personal level of selfishness and our sensitivity to the natural world.

Q4. In terms of myself, what drives me towards selfishness and a 'me myself' attitude?

.....

Q5. Is there any local justice issue that we could look into addressing together? How?

.....

Reflect during the week on: 'What kind of world do we want to leave to those who come after us, to children who are now growing up? LS 160 This questions the purpose of our life in this world... relates to the goal of all our efforts... and our relationship with Mother Earth. Francis says we have to struggle with these deeper issues – in order that our concern for the environment brings about results....LS 160.

Jesus said: I've come that you may have life and live it to the full! Jn. 10:10

Denise Boyle fmdm

September 10th, 2015

'LAUDATO SI – On Care For Our Common Home' Session 6¹ A Call to Personal, Ongoing Change...

Pope Francis believes certain mindsets influence our behaviour. Education can facilitate change of the person and their relationships with nature, the world around us and with each other, yet it has to engage the whole person! Ecological education that is only focussed on providing information, fails to foster a sense of wonder; the possibility of hope; and an '*ecological conversion*' related to feeling one with the environment. Francis says unless we "*feel the desertification of soil almost as a physical ailment*" LS 211, we will not be compelled to '*heal this wound of the earth.*' LS 89

Francis's Prayer for the Earth (Suggest saying slowly in alternate sides)

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 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 everything, to contemplate with amazement, to recognize that we are deeply united with all creatures, on our way to your s your infinite light. **We** thank you for being with us each day. Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle for justice, love and peace. **Amen**

In 'Laudato Si' Francis states that the world has reached a moment of profound crisis, brought on by the challenge of climate change. Like most scientists he believes this is the result of 'human behaviour!' He says NOW is the moment for world leaders to be courageous and take the necessary action to '*save Mother Earth*'. Francis is specifically looking towards the UN 'COP21' Climate Change Conference in Paris, December 2015. He is emphatic that this cannot be another 'talk shop' rather, it is the moment for World Leaders to agree to a global, legally binding climate treaty. Each nation **must commit** to implementing this treaty if we are to save 'our common home!' Francis also calls for bold policy changes at every level from the grassroots up, with each of us taking concrete action



Q1. How do we share a sense of wonder and awe that impels us to action? Example?

.....

Q2. What is my hope from the UN Summit on Climate Change? Is there any way we could influence Enda Kenny and Simon Coveney, who will be attending the Summit?

.....

¹ © Mercy Global Action for Mercy International Association. www.mercyworld.org

In section 212 Francis speaks about fostering good habits, as part of caring for the environment. Citing people who could spend and consume more, but who choose not to reflect an attitude that helps to protect the environment. Small actions, like showing care for other living beings, avoiding the use of plastic, reducing water consumption, separating refuse, cooking only what we need, using public transport or car-pooling and planting trees, are all very important. These small actions bring out the best in each of us, and can foster a spirit of community.

Pope Francis states that certain mindsets influence our behaviour. *'By learning to see and appreciate beauty, we learn to reject self-interested pragmatism. If someone has not learned to stop and admire what is beautiful, we should not be surprised if s/he treats everything as an object to be used and abused without scruple.'* If we want to bring about deep change, we need to understand this. *'Otherwise, the paradigm of consumerism will continue to advance, with the help of the media and the highly effective workings of the market.'* LS 215

Q3. What small action would help me become more caring of nature and our planet?

.....

Q4. Consumerism is an insidious thing. What decision / action would help me reject the clever advertising that keeps telling me I need to buy more.....

.....

Current migrant-refugee crisis: One of Francis' great concerns is that we are so immersed in a the system of production and consumption, we have lost the capacity **to feel both the agony of others and of the earth itself!** Our conscience has been dulled, so it needs to recover its sensitivity to what is real. Francis is appalled that hundreds of thousands of ordinary people have been forced to risk their lives to escape the horror of war and religious extremism. Images of food being thrown into a camp where migrant families were desperately waiting for it, was horrific as were the scenes of the tear-gassing and water hosing of refugees trying to pass through the Hungarian border.....

Q5. Do I feel the fear, loss and pain of the families who have had to flee their country and are then treated as less than human, instead of being welcomed?

.....

Q6. What am I taking away from these sessions we shared on Laudato Si? Actions?

.....

'Laudato Si' is underpinned by a sense of hope, because of Francis' conviction that people really can change! This change he believes will be the result of adopting habits that flow from contemplative and active aspects of our lives i.e. if we take time to 'be' and to appreciate everything around us, we will relate more easily with others and unite with those who want a better world...

Suggestion: Dip into 'Laudato Si' more. I encourage you to follow Pope Francis' journeys e.g. next week he travels to Cuba and the USA. When he addresses Congress in Washington and the UN Assembly in New York, Francis will speak about climate change and related issues.

Coming: During Advent we will take the theme of 'Prepare' using 'Laudato Si' and Scripture.