

“Enlighten the darkness of my heart. Give me right faith, sure hope and perfect charity. Fill me with understanding and knowledge that I may fulfill your command.”

SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI

In this brief prayer, St. Francis asks to be filled with that which will allow him to fulfill God’s command to love with all of who we are. Even down to the smallest member of God’s blessed creation, we are called to love. Clean water gives nutrients to the trees, which cleans the air that fills our lungs. We use our lungs to advocate with and for the poor and vulnerable so that our love may be felt and all may flourish.



A REFLECTION

In *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis' letter on the environment, the teachings of St. Francis are foundational:

“Saint Francis is the example par excellence of care for the vulnerable and of an integral ecology lived out joyfully and authentically[1]. Indeed, through the legacy of St. Francis we are each invited to use our gifts and talents to build up a living ecosystem wherein each part is integrated to the good of the whole, and wherein we might create the social conditions necessary to realize human fulfillment and thriving.”

- ✦ What has God already given you that has helped you to love?
- ✦ What dark corners of your heart could use some light?
- ✦ How can such light and understanding help us to expand our love of neighbor to include all of God's blessed creation?



FROM LAUDATO SI'

“[Saint Francis's] response to the world around him was so much more than intellectual appreciation or economic calculus, for to him, each and every creature was a sister united to him by bonds of affection. [...] Such a conviction cannot be written off as naive romanticism, for it affects the choices which determine our behaviour. If we approach nature and the environment without this openness to awe and wonder, if we no longer speak the language of fraternity and beauty in our relationship with the world, our attitude will be that of masters, consumers, ruthless exploiters, unable to set limits on their immediate needs. By contrast, if we feel intimately united with all that exists, then sobriety and care will well up spontaneously.”