

During [Laudato Si' Week](#) all are invited to commemorate the Anniversary of Pope Francis' first encyclical, *Laudato Si'*. The encyclical, on ecology and climate change, is an open appeal for dialogue and conversation about the future of our common home — a home we all share, regardless of faith or ideology. These *Laudato Si'* reflection sessions are an invitation for you to see and experience God in new ways while being attentive to your own context and lived experiences. As we gain new perspective to how our work and lifestyles fit within a much larger ecology, let us then consider what actions we can take to care for our common home.

## BOTH JOYFUL AND TROUBLING

As he ends his letter on our common home, Pope Francis characterizes the whole document as “both joyful and troubling.”

Let's take “troubling” first. Pope Francis mentions many issues that are troubling without sugarcoating anything because we don't have time to sugarcoat the troubling challenges we face, nor should we want to. The truth is, most of us barely have time to step back from our problems long enough to get any perspective. Yet that's what this letter has asked us to do: take a step back and reckon with the world we inhabit. Having done so, what do you feel?

Now let's look at joyful. Francis hopes his letter will help you feel joyful in response to this calling – the calling to make the world a more hospitable place. Perhaps you haven't felt joy. Perhaps you've felt guilt, paralysis, anxiety, etc. It's okay to feel this way, but it's not okay to stay in that space. Yes, the news is *troubling*, but let not your heart be *troubled*. Instead, allow yourself to stop and remember the joy of the calling you've been given. We don't need help feeling anxious or guilty or paralyzed. We need help holding fast to joy.

Amid all that is troubling about the world, there are glimmers of joy and the earth's renewal, especially as we transition to Spring and Summer. Take a moment to consider where joy comes from for you and ask yourself how you will tap into that resource. Allow the insights you've gained to continue to shape the way you care for our common home. Let us pray:

**Creator, Redeemer, Holy Spirit,  
Thank you for the gift of *Laudato Si'*, which teaches us that  
“The Creator does not abandon us;  
he never forsakes his loving plan or repents of having created us.  
Humanity still has the ability to work together in building our common home.”  
Creator, you give us life.  
Help us to honor you as we care for your precious creation.  
Redeemer, you give us hope.  
Help us see new ways of living as we turn from the path of destruction.  
Holy Spirit, you give us unity.  
Help us find strength in the love between us  
as we seek healing for the Earth. Amen.**