

Laudato Si' Newsletter June 2020  
Justice and Peace Commission  
Archdiocese of Cape Town

Five years on since Pope Francis signed the watershed encyclical Laudato Si', its relevance is more important now in 2020. The condition of the planet has deteriorated even further in these past five years with [melting ice caps](#) and raging wildfires in the Amazon and Australia, the polluted, acidified and rising oceans and extreme weather conditions related to Climate Change. Now the Coronavirus Pandemic which is believed to have developed out of the unprecedented levels of loss of biodiversity is affecting humanity on an extremely dangerous level. The social pandemics of hunger, war, injustice, and inequality are exponential at this time. Pope Francis through the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development is making the year from 24 May 2020 to 24 May 2021 a [Laudato Si' Special Anniversary Year](#).  
<https://bit.ly/2XQGuLK>



Numerous events are planned by the Vatican's Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development ([DPIHD](#)) partnered with many organisations including the Global Catholic Climate Movement [GCCM](#), [Cynesa](#) Catholic Youth Network for Environment Sustainability and [the Ecumenical Season of Creation 2020](#) Steering Committee through the year which started with Laudato Si Week. [Laudato Si' Week](#) consisted of week long [programme of webinars](#) showcasing the action and impact of Global programmes and global activities. Laudato Si' Week 2020 was meant to encourage Catholic Communities to take bolder actions for creation during the week-long initiative. The Justice and Peace Commission of the Catholic Archdiocese of Cape Town held an [Eco-Spirituality Webinar](#) presented by Brother Terry Dowling of the Christian Brothers Centre - an Eco Spirituality retreats, camps, conference and workshops centre with the vision that

*There will be Peace on Earth when we are at Peace with the Earth.*

The Christian Brothers Eco-Spirituality in time of the COVID-19 Pandemic presentation was an African contribution to the [Laudato Si' Week 2020 Resources](#).

The Common Prayer for the Earth and Humanity that was held at midday 24 May 2020 launched the Anniversary year. [This link](#) leads to the programme for the year. On 18 June 2020, there is a Laudato Si' Assessment and Future Journey Webinar and then the Season of Creation from 1 September to 4 October. [The Ecumenical Season of Creation 2020](#) steering committee held the webinar entitled [Jubilee for the Earth](#) "New Rhythms, New Hope" on Monday 8 June 2020  
[https://youtu.be/K7c\\_1NZr8xg](https://youtu.be/K7c_1NZr8xg).

The Season of Creation is a time to acknowledge that tipping points are being reached, threatening the lives of the most vulnerable and putting the lives of future generations in jeopardy. As people of faith, we are being called to stand up against climate injustice in prophetic ways. It is an Ecumenical Liturgical season to pray, act symbolically and campaign. It is time to give thanks for creation and to

renew our shared human vocation to Care for our Common Home. It is time to nurture the moral imagination and to restore right, just, and sustainable relationships with the earth and between all created species.

The Season of Creation 2020 is an important moment for the whole Christian family to raise a united voice for rapid, radical, and ambitious action ahead of the [26<sup>th</sup> annual United Nations Conference of the Parties \(COP 26\)](#) to address the climate crisis.

The following quotes emerged from the Season of Creation launch: ‘The wheel is turning in the right direction but not fast enough’. Laudato Si’ calls us to help speed up the pace of the turning wheel (Kopp, 2020). ‘A circle where we face one another other together’ is required (Kureethadam, 2020). No one must be left behind, so over-consumers will need to lower their carbon footprint and open themselves to embrace this equality, as there are not enough recourses for the current way of life of the rich. ‘In order to ensure governance embraces sustainable objectives, the voice of those at grassroots level needs to be heard, loud and clear’ (Padilla deBorst, 2020).

The novel coronavirus has touched our shared human nature and exposes the interconnectivity of our economies, political structures, health care systems, food production chains, energy and transportation systems in devastating ways. The [World Council of Churches](#) sees that

*The pandemic also demonstrated that the entire web is rooted in the earth and limited by the earth’s capacity to sustain our economic and ecological demands. The unjust effects of climate change are a consequence of our inability to find a sustainable balance of this web (World Council of Churches 2020).*

We cannot wait any longer, we need to unite with each other, and join forces with those already active in caring for creation. Let us learn together, let us teach each other, let us listen to each other, so that we can stand up against human and climate injustice in prophetic ways. If you are involved or know of work, through your parish, of any kind that strives to positively impact the poor, the youth, the marginalised, the unemployed, the sick, those whose education is lacking or similar issues relating to humanity, lets link all the efforts under one banner to show the existing levels of sustainably. Likewise, if you are involved or know of work of any kind that strives to impact positively on pollution, biodiversity, water usage and management, waste management, renewable energy, domestic and wild animal welfare, conservation, preservation, or similar. Please send the relevant contact information to Berni at [bcb.laudatosi@gmail.com](mailto:bcb.laudatosi@gmail.com) or 0828555582 so that we can begin to show our strength through our solidarity. During the Season of Creation, 1 September to 4 October, as our contribution to the [Laudato Si’ Special Anniversary Year](#), we will be able to show the incredible work already happening here in our Archdiocese of Cape Town.

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# COMMON PRAYER

for the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of

## Laudato Si'

Loving God,

Creator of heaven and earth and all that is in them,  
You created us in your own image and made us  
stewards of all your creation.

You blessed us with the sun, water and bountiful land  
so that all might be nourished.

Open our minds and touch our hearts,  
so that we may attend to your gift of creation.

Help us to be conscious that our common home  
belongs not only to us, but to all of your creatures and to  
all future generations, and that it is our responsibility to  
preserve it.

May we help each person secure the food and  
resources that they need.

Be present to those in need in these trying times,  
especially the poorest and those most at risk of being  
left behind.

Transform our fear and feelings of isolation into hope  
and fraternity so that we may experience a true  
conversion of the heart.

Help us to show creative solidarity in addressing the  
consequences of this global pandemic,  
Make us courageous to embrace the changes that are  
needed in search of the common good,  
Now more than ever may we feel that we are all  
interconnected and interdependent,  
Enable us to listen and respond to the cry of the earth  
and the cry of the poor.

May the present sufferings be the birth pangs of a more  
fraternal and sustainable world.

Under the loving gaze of Mary Help of Christians, we  
make this prayer through Christ our Lord.

Amen



**LAUDATO SI'  
WEEK 2020**



DICASTERO PER IL SERVIZIO  
DELLO SVILUPPO UMANO INTEGRALE