

Prayer of Praise and Concern for Creation

Leader: Pope Francis has written a letter to the whole world titled *Laudato Si*, challenging all of us to join in care for the earth. Following the example of Saint Francis of Assisi, the Holy Father reminds us of the inseparable connection among concern for nature, justice for the poor, commitment to society, and interior peace. As Missionary Children, we join in prayer to thank God for the gift of His creation, and to ask for His help in guiding our choices for good.

Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God, our Creator. We begin

All: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Leader: *Psalm 24:10*
Who is this king of glory?
The LORD of hosts,
he is the king of glory.

Litany of Praise:

Leader:
For all the gifts of the earth
All: We praise You!

Leader:
For the land and the seas
All: We praise You!

Leader:
For insects, animals, birds and fish
All: We praise You!

Leader:
For summer, fall, winter and spring
All: We praise You!

Leader:
For our hearts, heads and hands
All: We praise You!

Reflection:

The earth's atmosphere encompasses all people, creatures and habitats. The melting of ice sheets and glaciers, the destruction of rain forests and the pollution of water in one place can have environmental impacts elsewhere. Responses to global climate change should reflect our interdependence and responsibility for the future of our planet. Individual nations must measure their own self interest against the common good and contribute equitably to global solutions. Heat waves, droughts and storms fall most heavily on the poor who do not have the resources to either adapt or ward off the expected impact of climate change.

Reflection from *Global Climate Change: A Plea for Dialogue, Prudence and the Common Good*, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

Leader:
Let us pray. God, our Creator, You called everything You made "good." Help us not to misuse our natural resources. Teach us to use all Your gifts wisely for the whole human family. Let us now join our

voices in prayer for all those who have yet to hear about Your only Son, Jesus and His great love for all of us.

All: Our Father...

Conclude with a song such as "Prayer of Saint Francis" by Sebastian Temple

**"There is a nobility in the duty to care for creation through little daily actions."
Pope Francis, *Laudato Si*, #211**

Go Green at Home!

- Walk or ride your bike instead of taking the car when possible
- Turn off the water when you brush your teeth
- Turn off lights and electrical appliances when not in use
- Replace a regular light bulb with an LED or compact fluorescent one
- Use both sides of a sheet of paper
- Plan meals so you don't waste food
- Pack reusable bottles instead of plastic ones; donate the cost savings to MCA
- Brainstorm with your class or family about other ways to care for God's gift of creation.

"The urgent challenge to protect our common home includes a concern to bring the whole human family together to seek a sustainable and integral development, for we know that things can change." #13

"Living our vocation to be protectors of God's handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience." #217

Pope Francis, *Laudato Si*



Learn about Church teaching and how climate change affects children in the Missions

Invite an MCA speaker to share stories and photos of the lives of children in Mission areas.

Agenzia Fides, the information service of the Pontifical Mission Societies, offers daily news from the Church around the world on the website <http://fides.org/en> and through a free email subscription. The Fides archives are searchable by country and by topic (e.g. water, environment), making this website a terrific resource for teachers and older students.

Watch *Laudato Si-Children's Animation*, a video explaining the encyclical to the young, at <https://vimeo.com/138512519>.

Pray in solidarity with our brothers and sisters around the world

Introduce children to the World Mission Rosary. Visit www.phillymissions.org for resources, including the World Mission Rosary prayer intentions, a PowerPoint with photos from around the world, and a brief introductory video.

Assign children to research and report on a different Mission country every week. Pray for the children and families who live there.

Read with students the beautiful prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi, *Canticle of the Creatures*, with which Pope Francis begins the encyclical *Laudato Si*. Find a children's version from Loyola Press at <http://www.loyolapress.com/canticle-of-the-sun-saint-francis-of-assisi.htm>.

- Encourage older students to reflect on the gifts of creation and write their own prayer of praise to God the Creator.
- Introduce young children to the prayer using the book *Brother Sun, Sister Moon* written by Katherine Paterson and illustrated by Pamela Dalton.

Act in solidarity

Organize a recycled toy contest. Children in the developing world make their own toys from cans, bottle caps, string, and other items our children discard. Set up a display of entries. Students can vote for their favorites with donations of coins.

Count the number of faucets in your home. Challenge your family to donate a quarter for each one to MCA to bring clean water to children in the missions.

Organize a Walk for the Missions around the parish campus or neighborhood. Children in Mission areas routinely walk miles to and from school every day.

Contact Maureen Rilling for additional ideas, or to share your students' response to *Laudato Si*, at 215-587-3945 or mrilling@archphila.org.

"We need to strengthen the conviction that we are one single human family. There are no frontiers or barriers, political or social, behind which we can hide, still less is there room for the globalization of indifference."

Pope Francis, *Laudato Si*, #52

"Living our vocation to be protectors of God's handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience."

Pope Francis, *Laudato Si*, #217



The Missionary Childhood Association, a Pontifical Mission Society, operates in every diocese of the world under a papal statute which directs the formation of all the faithful as missionary disciples and promotes prayerful and material support for the evangelization efforts of the Church in 1,111 Mission Dioceses. These dioceses, under the care of the Vatican Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, are located in Africa, Asia, the Pacific Islands, remote regions of South America, and formerly Communist countries in Europe, the parts of the world most significantly impacted by climate change. Donations to the Pontifical Mission Societies help local churches bringing the Gospel to those on the margins of human society respond to natural disasters and promote the dignity of poor people trying to build sustainable futures for their families.

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