



CARE FOR CREATION

The Bible begins with a wonderful picture of abundance as God declares all creation good. Everything that follows is set in the context of the goodness of creation and our divine mandate to care for our common home. As we pay attention to the world around us, we can see the beauty and wonder of the intricate and interconnected web of creation.

Yet, we can also clearly see the environmental crisis that we face: climate change, pollution, deforestation, species extinction and biodiversity loss. People all over the planet are already experiencing the effects of the climate emergency, from more frequent and severe storms and floods to historic droughts and food crises. These changes are hitting hardest the communities that have contributed the least to causing the crisis.

In this Jubilee Year, we are invited to embrace God's vision of a world transformed, healed and restored, where all on the earth live in harmony with God and right relationship with each other. As Pope Francis writes, "A Jubilee is indeed a time of grace to remember creation's original vocation to exist and flourish as a community of love. We exist only in relationships: with God the Creator, with our brothers and sisters as members of a common family, and with all of God's creatures within our common home."

WITNESS: ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI

Centuries before environmental concerns became a pressing issue, St. Francis of Assisi championed nature as a path to God. The thirteenth century Italian friar, who founded the Franciscan order, is renowned for his radical love of God, for his commitment to a lifestyle of poverty and simplicity and for his love of the created world. Francis changed the Church and society of his time. He is Pope Francis' namesake and inspired the Holy Father's encyclical on care for the earth, Laudato Si', which takes its name from St Francis' great canticle of praise to God through creation.

We ask St Francis, patron saint of ecology, to pray for us as we seek to care for our common home.

Prayer God of blessings, the universe sings of your glory. Deepen our gratitude for all you have made and awaken in us a renewed commitment to care for the earth and each other. St Francis of Assisi, pray for us. Amen.