



Is Your Community Having Fun With Laudato Si?

Pope Francis' encyclical, [*Laudato Si*](#) (*On Care for Our Common Home*) is challenging and daunting to read. It may not feel like fun to read through some 70+ pages of text (no graphics, no cartoons, no videos, and plenty of footnotes) so let me give you the Cliff Notes and a strategy to talk it through with those who care about "Our Common Home."

Short summary: Everything is connected.

A little longer summary:

1. Laudato Si is not just a Pope Francis thing. The Intro ties Pope Francis thinking to Pope St. John XXIII, Blessed Pope Paul VI, St. John Paul II, Pope Benedict XVI, Patriarch Bartholomew, St. Francis of Assisi.
2. Add to this the overwhelming scientific evidence that there are human roots to the current ecological crisis.
3. There is an intimate relationship between the poor and the fragility of the planet.
4. We need to be concerned about pollution, water issues, and the loss of biodiversity.
5. Care for Our Common Home is grounded in Scripture and faith. We must protect what God, creator of the universe and all life, has made good. These are moral issues.
6. Everything is connected. This is called "Integral Ecology" and means that our social, economic, and environmental relationships all impinge on one another.
7. It won't be easy.
8. Solutions – We need:
 - To implement fair international, national, and local policies.
 - To make political and business decisions that serve the common good not just the rich.
 - Religions to be in dialogue with science.
 - To educate humanity on how to be a partner for environmental survival
 - A spiritual conversion to gratitude and a contemplative, moderate lifestyle

Questions for reflection or group discussion:

Personal Level

1. Is there one more lifestyle change I can personally make to create less waste or pollution, and live in greater harmony with nature? Decide a way to hold yourself accountable.

Faith Community Level

2. How does our community gather and use resources? How do we travel to meetings? What steps can we take to avoid using disposables at our gatherings? (paper products, plastic water bottles, etc.) Can we educate ourselves about recycling, local foods, etc.?

Systemic Level

3. What would it take for a member(s) of our community to become knowledgeable enough about city, national, or international politics to be a resource to the rest of us on environmental sustainability issues? Contact [MEEC](#) or [MSJC](#) for ideas.

Spiritual Level

4. How can I and my faith community become more mindful of God's creation in our prayer?

Did I miss the FUN part?

- Get outside and take a group walk. A hike in the woods would be great, although a litter sweep in a park or along a river could make you feel good too. Enjoy creation!
- Not enough fun yet? Take a lesson from a [wombat](#). (It's a safe video.)

