**Laudato Si’: Assembly Power Point Notes**

**Slide 1 –** Title Slide

**Slide 2 - Laudato Si’ mi Signore**

The encyclical from Pope Francis, was released in June 2015.

An *encyclical* or *teaching document*, is a letter that the Pope circulates to the Church. Laudato Si’ is a *social* encyclical – a Catholic Social Teaching letter.

A “social encyclical” applies the consistent, traditional moral teachings of the Church to the social and economic challenges of the current day.

The Encyclical takes its name from the invocation of St. Francis, “Praise be to you, my Lord”, in his Canticle of the Creatures. It reminds us that the earth, our common home “is like a sister with whom we share our life, and a beautiful mother who opens her arms to embrace us”. We have forgotten that “we ourselves are dust of the earth; our very bodies are made up of her elements, we breathe her air and we receive life and refreshment from her waters”. (Laudato Si’ 2)

**Slide 3 – Laudato Si’**

The Encyclical is addressed to everyone on the planet (not just Catholics) as we all share this common home, and in doing so we affect each other, and all life on the earth, in one way or another.

It is no accident that the subtitle for Pope Francis’ recent encyclical, “On Care for Our Common Home,” refers to the earth with an image that suggests family life. The main idea of the phrase is to remind us that all people on earth make up a single human family. It warns of the dangerous changes the earth’s climate and ecosystems are undergoing.

**Slide 4 – Laudato Si’ – to Everybody**

One of the themes of the encyclical is we are abusing God’s gift of the earth and we need to do something about it now before it is too late.

**Slide 5 – Laudato Si’ – the Planet**

Pic 1. ‘Blue Frogs at Sunset’, pic 2. A piwakawaka - a fantail - at sunset.

Among other things, Pope Francis expresses concern over the abuse and disregard for the resources on the planet. He points out that we are using too much of our planet’s resources and that we are not taking care of our beautiful world – its forests, rivers, seas and bush.

**Slide 6 – Laudato Si’ – Responsibility**

In the ‘stewardship model’ of the Creation story, Gen 2:15, humans have a duty ‘to till and keep the earth’. Humans came from ‘the breath of God’, from dust, made up of the same elements of every other living and inanimate thing in the universe. We are all from the same beginnings. The world is not for our dominion, but for us to take care of. We too are creatures from the Creator. Each community has the duty to protect the earth and ensure its fruitfulness for coming generations. (LS67)

**Slide 7 – What are we doing?**

What is pollution? Anything introduced into an environment that will cause it harm.

Teacher information - Chapter One (LS17-61) entitled ‘What is Happening to Our Common Home’ discusses the very worrying situation of climate change and the misuse of resources of the planet today.

The main headings are:

1. Pollution and Climate change (LS20-26);

2. The Issue of Water (LS27-31);

3. Loss of Biodiversity (LS32-42);

4. The Decline in the Quality of Human Life and the Breakdown of Society (LS43-47);

5. Global Inequality (LS48-52);

6. Weak Responses (LS53-59)

7. A Variety of Opinions (LS60-61).

The biggest problem in many countries in the world today is pollution. The next few slides consider the problem of pollution of the Earth.

**Slide 8 – Pollution**

Pollution of the planet – the air, the earth, the rivers, lakes and oceans.

**Slide 9 – Pollution of the air.**

Teacher information - Fossil fuels were formed over millions of years, from the remains of dead organisms. Coal was formed from dead plant material and crude oil and gas were formed from dead marine organisms. When fossil fuels are burned and used, the emissions from them often cause harm to the environment. They produce greenhouse gases, which may cause harm to the ozone layer.

Developing countries: have yet to set up air pollution monitoring systems; policies on developing the economy take priority over health; control regulations are weaker; technology is outdated; dirty fossil fuel is used.  Also, increased levels of certain gases and pollutants, such as carbon dioxide and CFC’s, causes what is commonly known as the ‘greenhouse effect’.

**Slide 10 – Air Pollution**

All living things on the planet are affected by pollution.

Pic 1 – different organs of the body are affected by the air we breathe.

Pic 2 – a wolf is rescued and resuscitated after being overcome by smoke in a forest fire in Canada.

Pic 3 – birds fly together to better navigate the smog.

Pic 4 – plants wither and die because of acid rain caused by polluted air.

Slide 11 - Pollution – the Earth

Pollution is not only to do with the air we breathe. Rubbish is also pollution.

**Slide 12 – Our Common Home**

Statements from Laudato Si’ regarding the planet as our ‘Common Home’.

Not only is the air polluted, but, ‘Each year hundreds of millions of tons of waste are generated, much of it non-biodegradable, highly toxic and radioactive from homes businesses, from construction and demolition sites, from clinical, electronic and industrial sources.’

Pope Francis refers to the ‘throwaway culture’ and then states that, ‘The earth, our home, is beginning to look more and more like an immense pile of filth.’ (LS21)

**Slide 13 – The Earth – our Common Home**

Pope Francis criticises the ‘throwaway culture’ of today. Many commentators have noted that the subject at the heart of Laudato Si’ is not so much climate change as the more fundamental problem of consumerism. Climate change, the Pope seems to tell us, is one perilous consequence of a “culture of consumerism” that dominates our society.

**Slide 14 – Sea Pollution**

Pollution of the Oceans – what do the children know?

**Slide 15 – Ocean Life**

The Pollution of the oceans is now at a critical stage. We don’t know all the types of marine life in the depths of the oceans, therefore it becomes more difficult as time goes by to know just how much damage pollution is doing and how it is affecting plants and fish.

**Slide 16- Pollution of the Oceans**

Teacher information - Pollution is anything that is present or introduced into an environment which causes harm. In the sea there are many kinds of pollution such as rubbish, oil, chemicals and sewage from our toilets. Ships and fishing boats also have contributed a great deal to ocean pollution.

Plastic diet - marine birds, turtles and fish are among the most affected by their plastic diets. But it’s not just a problem for small creatures.

Research estimates anywhere from [15 to 51 trillion particles of floating micro plastic](https://www.coastal.ca.gov/publiced/marinedebris.html) are in our oceans, weighing between 1-235 million kgs. This includes plastic microbeads (used as exfoliates in some personal care products) and synthetic fibres, both of which are too small to be filtered out by many waste water treatment plants.

Plastic debris can absorb [toxic chemicals](https://www.conserve-energy-future.com/top-10-worst-toxic-pollution-problems.php) from ocean pollution, therefore poisoning whatever eats it. [Plastic pollution](https://www.conserve-energy-future.com/causes-effects-solutions-of-plastic-pollution.php) is one of the most serious threats to the ocean. Plastic does not degrade; instead, in the same way the seas break rocks down to sand, plastic is broken down into progressively smaller pieces, but never disappears. The tiny pieces then attract more debris. This poses a significant health threat to the various sea creatures, and to the entire marine [ecosystem](https://www.conserve-energy-future.com/what-is-an-ecosystem.php). Overall, plastic is the number one [source of pollution](https://www.conserve-energy-future.com/PollutionTypes.php) in the ocean.

**Slide 17 – Pollution – how did it get there?**

How has this situation come about?

Ocean pollution occurs when potentially harmful or harmful sources of pollution reach the water. These sources of pollution can include residential waste, industrial waste, agricultural waste, chemicals, particles, and invasive organisms. Most of the sources of ocean pollution originate on land, from runoff, blowing debris, dust, and contamination from excessive nutrients, toxins such as pesticides and metals, and particles. Many of the most harmful ocean pollutants are not the ones we can see, but instead are the ones that leach into the marine ecosystem, causing diseases and mutations, not only in the marine life but in the humans and animals that consume them.

Teacher Information -

* Some of the ocean pollution that we can see includes floating plastic, oil spills, **and** rubbish.
* Plastic is one of the most common ocean pollutants. It does not break down rapidly and marine life often eats it after mistaking it for food.
* Each day thousands of tons of rubbish and waste are dumped into the oceans of the world.
* Ocean pollution kills more than one million sea birds each year.
* Discarded fishing nets kill approximately 300,000 dolphins and porpoises every year. The dolphins and porpoises get tangled in the nets and die.
* There is an ocean garbage site off the coast of California twice as large as the state of Texas. It is called the North Pacific Gyre and is the largest garbage site in the ocean in the world.
* Toxic metals reach the ocean and contribute to ocean pollution, destroying reproduction, behaviour, growth and the biochemistry of the ocean's marine life.
* The plastic debris that reaches the ocean is capable of absorbing the toxic chemicals polluting the water. The sea life that consumes the plastic is then poisoned. Because plastic never completely disappears and breaks down into smaller pieces, it is often seen as food to marine life.
* Radioactive waste and industrial waste such as acids and toxins often reach the ocean adding to the pollution and substantial loss of marine life.
* When little sea creatures consume toxins in their food, they absorb those chemicals. They are then consumed by larger marine animals. The amount of toxins is concentrated in the larger marine animals. This continues up the food chain until the largest sea creatures have such extreme contamination, often millions of times higher than the water itself.
* The ocean's oxygen content is depleted by the runoff of fertiliser that causes an increase of algae growth.
* There are dead zones in the oceans that have been created by pollution making life in those zones impossible for marine or plant life.
* It is estimated that every square mile of ocean has more than 45,000 pieces of plastic floating in it. (softschools.com)

**Slide 18 –**

Our air, Earth Oceans and us

How do we affect others? Are we having a positive or a negative effect on our environment? What can we change?

In Laudato Si’ the Pope refers to inanimate objects: air, water, land, mountains and seas, (‘Brother Sun, Sister Moon’ - Canticle of St Francis of Assisi) and stresses that all are important for the balance of living on earth. We all belong to God, the Creator. The task is for everyone to work together for the same goal of caring for the earth and all its living creatures, and our air, water, land, mountains and seas. We need to clean up our collective act.

**Slide 19 – What can we do?**

How can I re-use, recycle, reduce and refuse? If we all made small changes we can make a difference.

Slide 20 – What can You do?

Suggestions for change – what can we do?

Bottom row - Pic 2 – note that everything that flows down the drain goes into the sea.

**Slide 21 – What can I do?**

All it takes is for one good person to restore hope (LS71)

What can the individual do to make a little difference? If each of us became more aware of the effect our actions have on the environment, then each little change that we make can help the situation.

Spread the word. Talk to family and friends about why it is important to reduce plastic in our lives and the nasty impacts of plastic pollution. And step up and do something.

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NCRS 2018