

Acknowledgment of Land, Seas, Skies and Waterways

As we reflect this Social Justice Sunday, on all who are impacted by the Climate Crisis faced by our World, given so freely to us from God, we acknowledge the First Nations Peoples who have walked upon and cared for these lands, seas and waterways for many thousands of years. We acknowledge the continued deep spiritual attachment and relationship of First Nations Peoples to this place and commit ourselves to the ongoing journey of Reconciliation and openness to learning from First Nations Peoples in what it means to connect and care for Country.

Context: Cry of the Earth, the Cry of the Poor

The encyclical letter, [Laudato Si'](#), by Pope Francis in 2015, aims to address the truth of the very real threat that is present to our Earth and the responsibility that all people have in ensuring we acknowledge and act on the current climate crisis as a matter of urgency. During the Special Laudato Si' Anniversary Year, which concluded on 25 May 2021, the [Dicastery for the Promotion of Integral Human Development](#) announced a Laudato Si' Action Platform. This included seven goals, established to work towards achieving positive outcomes, thereby ensuring that Laudato Si becomes a way of being, not just a document to be read. Communities around the world are invited to commit to being sustainable in the spirit of the integral ecology of Laudato Si' by animating the seven goals:

1. Responding to the cry of the earth
2. Responding to the cry of the poor
3. Ecological economics
4. Adopting simple lifestyles
5. Ecological education
6. Ecological spirituality
7. Community involvement and participatory action.

This prayer is an invitation to consider how you and your family can respond to the Cry of the Earth, the Cry of the Poor.

Scripture A Reading from the Book of James

(1:17-18, 21-22, 27)

Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. In fulfillment of his own purpose he gave us birth by the word of truth, so that we would become a kind of first fruits of his creatures. Therefore, rid yourselves of all sordidness and rank growth of wickedness, and welcome with meekness the implanted word that has the power to save your souls. But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves.

Reflection - Adapted by Bec Burns from Liturgy notes on [Social Justice Sunday](#).

In the Second Reading of Social Justice Sunday, James does not mince his words. He starts by stating that through Goodness of God we, as humans, are a part of the creation, and our actions, both intentional and non-intentional, have great impact. To truly understand our impact on creation (including the way we behave towards each other, including marginalized peoples) we need to know our internal drivers. James calls people to listen to the God who dwells within them and not the outside influences of power, comfort, gain, notoriety, celebrity, image, or profit. Pope Francis also address this when in *Laouto Si* he states 'When people become self-centred and self-enclosed, their greed increases. In this horizon, a genuine sense of the common good also disappears. As these attitudes become more widespread, social norms are respected only to the extent that they do not clash with personal needs.' (#204) Locally, you only need to look at some of the behaviours of people across our country during lock downs to see that profit and comfort have at times come at the expense of the health and wellbeing of the greater community. James reminds us that God's goodness never changes, the word is not a forgotten piece of writing, it is the action and lives we live today. The hope starts with us and being 'Doers not Hearers'. Hard in our modern world, yet not impossible. Pope Francis puts it this way:



Figure 1 Image from <https://www.laudatosi.org/laudato-si/laudato-si-goals/>

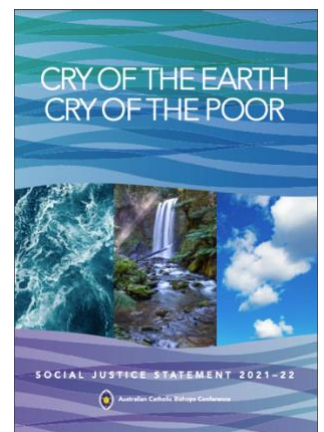


Figure 2 [Social Justice Statement](#)

Yet all is not lost. Human beings, while capable of the worst, are also capable of rising above themselves, choosing again what is good, and making a new start, despite their mental and social conditioning. We are able to take an honest look at ourselves, to acknowledge our deep dissatisfaction, and to embark on new paths to authentic freedom. No system can completely suppress our openness to what is good, true and beautiful, or our God-given ability to respond to his grace at work deep in our hearts. I appeal to everyone throughout the world not to forget this dignity which is ours. No one has the right to take it from us. (# 205)

God has created each with purpose and value. In order to listen to the God in our hearts and be doers rather than hearers, we need to acknowledge our connection to all of creation, including those on the margins. The Australian Catholic Bishops in their [Statement of Justice based on Cry of the Earth and Cry of the Poor](#), remind us that the safety, health, and livelihoods of those who are the poorest and most vulnerable in our communities are usually the most severely impacted by climate change. We are also reminded in the Statement to listen to First Nations people, who offer both wisdom in connection to society and a deep understanding of what it means to be marginalised and impacted by the loss of land and natural climate. This doing of listening, instead of just hearing and then getting caught back in the business of the modern world, is the beginning we can all make in doing our bit in reaching the fulfilment of the hope found during this Social Justice Sunday.

Prayer – from the [Creation Care Prayer Network](#)

CREATION CARE PRAYER NETWORK **GLOBAL CATHOLIC CLIMATE MOVEMENT**

Prayer for the Creation Care Network

Loving God and Creator.

We come before You with humble and grateful hearts for the gift of creation.

In the suffering of communities devastated by ecological destruction... Jesus, we feel your wounds.

In the silent cries of extinct and endangered species... Jesus, we feel your wounds.

In the tears of the most vulnerable among us... Jesus, we feel your wounds.

In the greed and indifference consuming our planet... Jesus, we feel your wounds.

In the interconnectedness of all creation... Jesus, we encounter your resurrected life.

In the glorious diversity of people and living creatures... Jesus, we encounter your resurrected life.

In the wisdom of indigenous communities and environmental defenders... Jesus, we encounter your resurrected life.

In the self-gift of those laboring for an integral ecology... Jesus, we encounter your resurrected life.

For the ecological conversion of the people of God... Jesus, inspire your people.

For burning hearts for climate and ecological justice... Jesus, inspire your people.

For the fruits of the initiatives of Catholic institutions... Jesus, inspire your people.

For bold action in governments and societies... Jesus, inspire your people.

Loving Creator, give us the grace to be faithful co-creators to care for our common home. Fill us with Your Spirit who renews the face of the earth. And inspire us that we may always sing as we go.

Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Call to Action

- Watch The Australian Catholics Bishops release of their [Justice Statement on Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor](#) as a family and discuss what this could look like in your home.
- Reflect with your family on one thing you give up and live without in order to live more moderately.
- Check out the [Laudato Si' Movement website](#).
- Pray the Office for Justice, Ecology and Peace's prayer for [Cry of the Earth, Cry of the World prayer](#).

