



ST. BERNADETTE CATHOLIC PARISH

St. Bernadette Lenten Study of Encyclical *Laudato Si*

Week One: March 2-4, 2020

Readings:

1. Genesis 2:7-9, #:1-7 (Creation and Sin)
Psalm: Be merciful, O Lord
2. Romans 5:12-19 (Where sin decreased, grace increased)
3. Matthew 4: 1-11 (Jesus is Tempted)

During Lent this year we will look at sin in our world and in our lives through the lens of Pope Francis' Encyclical called *Laudato Si* (Praise to You). This important letter looks at our responsibilities to our neighbors and to all creation.

When God finished creation, God looked and said "it is good." Sin entered the world through the fall. Like gods (the first sin) we have not cared for the earth, rather we have exploited it for our own consumption. Our temptation is to continue to do so or blame others (as Eve).

Paul tells us where sin decreases (as we take responsibility), grace increases. Grace is our hope for our planet, our children and all God's people (especially the poor).

On the first Sunday of Lent each year, we look at Temptation for Jesus and for ourselves. One temptation is to not take responsibility for the conditions among people and between people and creation. The first work of Lent is a change of heart, humbly admitting our need to change behaviors too.



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Read *Laudato Si*: Chapter 1

Opening Prayer: *"A Prayer for the Earth"*

Our Common Home

1. What was your emotional reaction after reading Chapter 1?
2. How has pollution affected you or your family personally?
3. The Pope says that access to safe drinkable water is a basic and universal human right, yet many poor people do not have access to it. (§27-31) Why is this? What can be done? What would you do if you found yourself and/or your family in this situation?
4. Why does the Pope believe "we cannot adequately combat environmental degradation unless we attend to causes related to human and social degradation"? (§48)
5. How do we as individuals and in our families, workplaces, communities and other affiliations contribute to environmental damage by our own energy use, consumption, waste, etc.? How are we part of the solution?
6. What other key points did you see in this chapter? Thoughts? Reactions?
7. Where have you seen examples of environmental improvements being made? What other possibilities come to mind for realizing more of these?



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Response / Activities

Parish Activity:

- 1.
- 2.

Suggestions for Individuals and Families:

Possible actions from list.

- Take the initiative to talk with others about revering creation as a gift from God and how we can reflect that in the way we live our lives.
- Research has shown that we make our biggest environmental impact through our transportation, food choices, and the energy we use to power our homes. With our diets, the amount of meat we eat creates the greatest negative impact on God's creation because meat production uses such enormous amounts of water and energy. Make a commitment to eat meat at one less meal per week in the coming month.
- Make a list of areas in your home where you could use less water.
- Join others associated with the Catholic Climate Covenant (<https://catholicclimatecovenant.org>) to take action on responding to Pope Francis' encyclical.

Closing Prayer: A Christian Prayer in Union with Creation