



*“Once we start to think about the world we are leaving behind to future generations, we look at things differently; we realize the world is a gift which we have freely received and must share with others.”
(Laudato Si, 159)*

In *Laudato Si*, Pope Francis shows us that all of creation is a gift, given to us by God, for his glory. All of his creation – including air, water, plants and food, animals and their habitats – are given not just to us, but to all of humanity. As human beings we are responsible for taking care of his creation and each other. When we think of the common good, in light of an integral ecology, we have to consider all generations that will come after us. “Intergenerational solidarity is not optional,” Pope Francis reminds us, “but rather a basic question of justice, since the world also belongs to those who will follow us (LS 237).”

When we find ourselves unable to think seriously about future generations, we also find it difficult to think beyond our present, individual, interests and about the needs and welfare of the excluded and marginalized. Our actions in the present affect all living beings, even in the future.

In order to ensure future generations can flourish, we need to develop an ecological education and spirituality suited to the task. We must seek to change our lifestyles and educate one another about the covenant between humanity and the environment. Most of all, Christians need an ongoing conversion, an “ecological conversion whereby the effects of their encounter with Jesus Christ become evident in their relationship with the world around them (LS 217).” For the conversion to affect future generations, it must be a communal conversion as well as individual.

Pray/Learn

In praying to the Holy Trinity, the infinite community of love, we can learn to see ourselves in communion with God and others. [Pray a Litany to the Trinity, the Creator.](#)

Pray with Genesis 1:24-30 and see what God may tell you in prayer about being a good steward of the resources that He has put in your possession or has given you access to.

Fast/Change

In *Laudato Si*, Pope Francis writes that “Sunday, like the Jewish Sabbath, is meant to be a day which heals our relationships with God, with ourselves, with others, and with the world.” Consider ways of making the sabbath a day of contemplative rest. Can you integrate more silence into the day? Abstain from buying things?

Consider whether there are ways you can help promote ecological education – in your family, parish, workplace, or community.

Give/Volunteer

Planting trees or donating to a reforestation project will benefit future generations. [One Tree Planted](#) is a nonprofit that plants trees all over the world.

Find out about actions and events related to *Laudato Si* happening around the world. [Laudato Si Week](#) is one of these.