



## Partners in Learning

### Called to be 'Earth Warriors'

As Christians, we are called to live simple and responsible lives nurturing God's creation and caring for our earth.

Unless we are in denial, we know the Earth is in grave danger from the devastating effects of climate change. Scientific, economic and political wisdom have all weighed in on the topic, but what is often missing from this discussion is "the perspective of the spiritual", says Kerry Bird, Brisbane Catholic Education's Catholic Identity Education Officer.

"Pope Francis recognises and values the scientific debates about climate change but reminds us to question and think about our fundamental relationship to Earth, each other, and God as Creator."

Ms Bird reminds us that Pope Francis in his encyclical *Laudato Si' (Care for our Common Home)* draws on the words of Saint Francis of Assisi who uses the expression that 'our common home' is like a sister with whom we share our life and a beautiful mother who opens her arms to embrace us.

#### Reflection

1. What is my call to action today?
2. How might I cultivate a deeper ecological spirituality?
3. How can I cultivate a lifestyle that respects and cherishes Earth and all living creatures that call it 'home'?

"Think of a time when you have found yourself in awe of the beauty of nature and deeply connected to something bigger than yourself. Creation is a gift, and we have a Christian duty to live simple, responsible lives for our children, their children and the generations to follow," Ms Bird said.

The environment is central to Christian activity, and we are encouraged to model and teach our children at home that ecologically sustainable practices are every person's moral and social responsibility. Ms Bird says that Catholic Social Teaching has challenged us to have concern for the environment in order to respect human life and dignity, especially the poorest of the poor - our sisters and brothers.

"It requires us to remember our inherent connection with the earth and look at our place in it with 'new spiritual eyes'. It's what we call 'ecospirituality', which incorporates an intuitive and embodied awareness of all life," she added.

"It springs from a profound ecological conversion that helps us to "discover God in all things" - both in the beauty of creation and in the sighs of the sick and the groans of the afflicted, aware that the life of the spirit is not dissociated from worldly realities."

Ultimately, Ms Bird reminds us that we are called to place ecological conversion and spirituality at the core of lives and learn about God's universal love for each and every one of us and all of creation.

"You are co-creators of our future and the future of our children. Your unique gifts and wisdom are urgently needed in our shared efforts to realise full sustainability in the spirit of interdependent ecology."





**“You are the Lord, you alone. You have made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them; and you preserve all of them; and the host of heaven worships you.”** Nehemiah 9:6 ESV

## What can each of us do to build a better future together?

- Opt more for a plant-based diet and reduce meat consumption.
- Use public transport more, walk or cycle and avoid polluting modes of transportation.
- Build up the dishwasher and make sure it's full before it's turned on.
- Switch off the radio and lights when you leave a room.
- Plant the native wax flower 'Eriostemon' to soak up carbon dioxide and combat the greenhouse effect. A single tree can absorb one tonne of carbon during its lifetime and slow the impact of global warming.
- Avoid single use items like plastics.
- Trade in in ethical investments only and divest from fossil fuels and any activity harmful to the planet and the people.
- Practice solidarity, giving special attention vulnerable groups of people including migrants, refugees, children at risk and First Nations people.
- Re-use the rinse water in your washing machine in the garden.
- Save a lot more water by putting buckets in the shower.
- Keep curtains open all day to maximize the usage of natural light.
- Brush your teeth with the tap off.

## Prayer for Ecological Conversion

Father of all,  
Creator and ruler of  
the universe,  
You entrusted your  
world to us as a gift.

Help us to care for it and  
all people, that we may  
live in right relationship -

with You,  
with ourselves,  
with one another,  
and with creation.

Christ our Lord, both divine and human,  
You lived among us and died for our sins.

Help us to imitate your love for the human family  
by recognising that we are all connected -

to our brothers and sisters around the world,  
to those in poverty impacted by environmental  
devastation, and to future generations.

Holy Spirit, giver of wisdom and love,  
You breathe life in us and guide us.

Help us to live according to your vision,  
stirring to action the hearts of all—

individuals and families,  
communities of faith,  
and civil and political leaders.

Triune God, help us to hear the cry of those in poverty,  
and the cry of the earth, so that we may together care  
for our common home.

Amen.

Pope Francis 2015 Laudato Si



For further information:

**Watch:** [Why Care for the Environment](#)

**Get your kids inspired:**  
[Laudato Si': Animated clip for kids - YouTube](#)

**Make your pledge:**  
[laudatosiactionplatform.org](http://laudatosiactionplatform.org)