



Minjerribah - North Stradbroke Island, Australia

LIVING IN LOVE WITH GOD, HUMANITY & THE WHOLENESS OF CREATION
6th Sunday of Easter ~ 17 May 2020

Welcome to the 6th Sunday of Easter and to [Laudato' Si Week](#).
We celebrate the *fifth anniversary* of the 2015 Papal Teaching of Pope Francis entitled *Laudato Si' – On Care for Our Common Home*.

A video at the beginning of Mass has prepared us for our celebration.
Thank you to [CAFOD](#) for granting our [parish Care for Creation Group](#) permission to use it.

Bernice, one of the First Peoples leaders in the Archdiocese of Brisbane has led the *Acknowledgement of Country*. Thank you, Bernice.

[WE ARE INVITED](#)

We are invited to drink from the depths of God's love.
We are asked to feel, hear, see, smell and touch a spirituality within others, within the Scriptures and within ourselves, a spirituality where we live an intimate relationship with God and God's creation. A spirituality where we love God deeply and care for each other and the earth – our common home.

We will listen today to insights from

- A Practical Example from [Assisi College](#)
- Pope Francis and how Saint Francis inspired him in his love for God and creation
- Deacon Boniface Perdjert
- Today's Scriptural Readings

[A PRACTICAL EXAMPLE FROM ASSISI COLLEGE](#)

Around fifteen years, a new college on the Gold Coast opened.
A local steering committee worked with Brisbane Catholic Education and the chosen architect towards a building master plan for the stages of development.

Key to the planning would be the **spirituality that would underpin this new College**.
The local Christian communities in the area provided insights over two years before the project began.

Communities prayed to Jesus for inspiration.

A Christian spirituality was discerned reflecting Peace, Justice, Creation and Community. The College would be inspired by the Christian lives of St Francis and St Clare eight centuries before.

The current Principal of Assisi Catholic College, Michael Laidler shares a current example of the link between spirituality and building improvement.

'At Assisi Catholic College we aim to constantly have our core Franciscan values and habits guide all that we do. Peace, justice and stewardship of creation are our core tenets.

A recent example is the introduction of air conditioning to the College.

Whilst it seen as necessary for us to provide suitable conditions for learning and teaching, it was also important that our students were aware of the impacts of increased energy use on our environment and generally the increasing problem of world-wide deterioration of our atmosphere, flora, fauna and waterways.

We have doubled the capacity of solar energy in the College and also converted our lighting to LED lighting.

One third of the A/C is geothermal, thus reducing energy use dramatically.

Our community, especially our students, are very aware of our strong desire to make sure that whilst we need to continue to progress and develop that there is a responsibility to make sure that this progress is tempered by a strong sense of protection and stewardship for our environment.'

In this Laudato Si' Week we examine Christian spirituality.

Why does Pope Francis begin this teaching with a quote from St Francis eight centuries ago? Why did our present Pope choose the name Francis in 2013?

St Francis lived in love with God, humanity and the wholeness of creation.

On this very special Sunday let us listen to Pope Francis in Laudato Si'.

(Paragraphs 1, 2, 10 and 11.)

POPE FRANCIS & LAUDATO SI'

"LAUDATO SI', mi' Signore" – "Praise be to you, my Lord".

In the words of this beautiful canticle, Saint Francis of Assisi reminds us 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. "Praise be to you, my Lord, through our Sister, Mother Earth, who sustains and governs us, and who produces various fruit with coloured flowers and herbs".

2. This sister now cries out to us because of the harm we have inflicted on her by our irresponsible use and abuse of the goods with which God has endowed her. We have come to see ourselves as her lords and masters, entitled to plunder her at will. The violence present in our hearts, wounded by sin, is also reflected in the symptoms of sickness evident in the soil, in the water, in the air and in all forms of life. This is why the earth herself, burdened and laid waste, is among the most abandoned and maltreated of our poor; she "groans in travail" (Rom 8:22). We have forgotten that

we ourselves are dust of the earth (cf. Gen 2:7); our very bodies are made up of her elements, we breathe her air and we receive life and refreshment from her waters.

10. I do not want to write this Encyclical without turning to that attractive and compelling figure, whose name I took as my guide and inspiration when I was elected Bishop of Rome. I believe that Saint Francis is the example par excellence of care for the vulnerable and of an integral ecology lived out joyfully and authentically. He is the patron saint of all who study and work in the area of ecology, and he is also much loved by non-Christians. He was particularly concerned for God's creation and for the poor and outcast. He loved, and was deeply loved for his joy, his generous self-giving, his openheartedness. He was a mystic and a pilgrim who lived in simplicity and in wonderful harmony with God, with others, with nature and with himself. He shows us just how inseparable the bond is between concern for nature, justice for the poor, commitment to society, and interior peace.

11. Francis helps us to see that an integral ecology calls for openness to categories which transcend the language of mathematics and biology and take us to the heart of what it is to be human. Just as happens when we fall in love with someone, whenever he would gaze at the sun, the moon or the smallest of animals, he burst into song, drawing all other creatures into his praise. He communed with all creation, even preaching to the flowers, inviting them "to praise the Lord, just as if they were endowed with reason". His response to the world around him was so much more than intellectual appreciation or economic calculus, for to him each and every creature was a sister united to him by bonds of affection. That is why he felt called to care for all that exists.'

Let us now pause.

Only when we feel the spirituality within the words above, do we continue.

[Pause for a moment or a few minutes or a few days]

FROM DEACON BONIFACE IN HIS SPIRITUAL REFLECTION 'THE CHURCH AND ABORIGINES'

Bernice will read from the insights of the late Murinthpatha Elder and Deacon, Boniface Perdjert.

Deacon Boniface was the first ordained Catholic Aboriginal Deacon in Australia.

He journeyed last year to meet God face to face in the dreaming.

As we listen, let us drink from his spirituality.

From the words of Deacon and Elder Boniface Perdjert.

*"My people existed here in Australia thousands of years before Abraham.
In all that time, God was with my people. He worked through their culture.
He was saving us despite human weakness.
He was preparing us for the day
when He would see the features of Aborigines in the Image of his Son.
So I must recognise, I must use the things of God that are in my culture.
I must use them in His service.
If I do not do this, my faith and my service are shallow.
They are a pretending. They belong to someone else, not to me.
God has asked us to love Him with whole mind, heart and soul.
So I must give myself to God as an Aboriginal.*

*This is what God wants or He would not have made me what I am.
Really it is the only way I can go about it.
When I read the Gospels, I read them as an Aboriginal.”*

*“Christ did not get worried about material things.
In fact He looked on them as things that get in the way
and make it hard to get to our true country.
He was born in the countryside in a cave, like many of us have been born.
He walked about like us and with nowhere to lay His head.
He died with nothing on a cross.
So many of our people die with nothing.
He had his own little group like us.
He was strong on sharing – “If someone wants your tunic, give him your cloak”.
We do a lot of things like that.
Of course He went a lot further:
In the Eucharist He shared Himself as nobody else could.
He liked the bush as we do. He loved nature.
He saw in the lilies of the field a glory greater than Solomon’s.
He loved the big things like the hills and open spaces.
He loved the little things like the mustard seed and the grain of wheat and the corn,
drops of cold water and the little sparrows.
We have similar things like seeds and berries and yams, small water holes,
and we like the quietness of the hills and the bush.
Like Him we have a deep sense of God in nature.”*

Let us now pause.

Only when we feel the spirituality within the words above, do we continue.

[Pause for a moment or a few minutes or a few days]

As we continue to reflect on this reverence for creation,
we drink from the antiphon and the first two verses of today’s psalm.

PSALM 65:1–7, 16, 20

Antiphon *“Let all the earth cry out to God with joy.”*

*“Cry out with joy to God all the earth,
O sing to the glory of his name.
O render him glorious praise.
Say to God: ‘How tremendous your deeds!*

*‘Before you all the earth shall bow;
shall sing to you, sing to your name!’
Come and see the works of God,
tremendous his deeds among men. “*

We cry with joy to God.

We praise God for creation.

In feeling at one with creation, we know that we respond as family.

Imagine ourselves today in the first reading today from the Acts of the Apostles.

Imagine ourselves welcoming Philip.

Imagine ourselves journeying with Peter and John.

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES 8:5–8, 14–17

Philip proclaimed the Good News to a Samaritan town.

“The people united in welcoming the message Philip preached, either because they had heard of the miracles he worked or because they saw them for themselves.”

As we ponder Laudato Si’ we ask ourselves

How do we tell the stories of the miracles of God in caring for creation?

How do we enable people to see for themselves?

The reading continues:

“When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, and they went down there, and prayed for the Samaritans to receive the Holy Spirit, for as yet he had not come down on any of them: they had only been baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.”

As we ponder Laudato Si’ we ask ourselves:

How do we support and follow through on our initial relationship with creation?

We are not alone. The story does not finish with us.

The story above didn’t finish with Philip.

The apostles commission Peter and John to visit and pray for them.

As we ponder Laudato Si’ we ask ourselves:

How do we see the Holy Spirit working through us?

How does the Holy Spirit work through our community?

FIRST LETTER OF ST PETER 3:15–18

The second reading today is from the first letter of Peter.

“Reverence the Lord Christ in your hearts, and always have your answer ready for people who ask you the reason for the hope that you all have. But give it with courtesy and respect and with a clear conscience.”

In a deep spirituality of caring for creation,

how do we share reverence for Jesus in our hearts, express our hope, respect others with courtesy, and act with a clear conscience?

In the Gospel today, Jesus teaches us about the Advocate, the Holy Spirit.

In a Christian spirituality of creation, we listen to and are guided by the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit shows us the way forward in Advocacy and Truth.

GOSPEL OF JOHN 14:15–21

In the beginning of today’s Gospel passage we hear:

Jesus said to his disciples:

‘If you love me you will keep my commandments.

I shall ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate to be with you forever, that Spirit of truth whom the world can never receive since it neither sees nor knows him; but you know him, because he is with you, he is in you.'

As our spirituality deepens, we recognize more deeply Jesus dwelling within us. The Gospel continues:

*I will not leave your orphans; I will come back to you.
In a short time the world will no longer see me;
but you will see me, because I live and you will live.
On that day you will understand that I am in my Father
and you in me and I in you.
Anybody who receives my commandments and keeps them will be one who loves me;
and anybody who loves me will be loved by my Father,
and I shall love him and show myself to him.*

LOVE

Our spirituality flows from the love of God. The Trinitarian love. A communion of love.

We respond to our call to care for the earth – our common home in gratitude and in love. Our daily choices, our lifestyle, our actions, our discernment are meant to reflect our love for God and our common home.

Our learning about creation considers many insights from the cultures of our world, from the many fields of science, from poetry, the Arts, education, psychology, language and other academic disciplines.

Our spirituality is,

'Living in love with God, humanity and the wholeness of creation'

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

Before we pray our petitions, we acknowledge their preparation.

During this past week [St Joseph's Primary School](#) and [St John Fisher College](#) have reflected on creation and Laudato Si'.

The Prep Year and Year One from St Joseph's Primary School have shared their thoughts and Year Six helped them to prepare.

Some members of Year Six will lead us.

These prayers have been pre-recorded at school.

Students at St John Fisher College have prepared their insights and Julie, a staff member has converted their thoughts and concerns into prayer for today. Julie will lead us in their petitions.

Beside the cross today are two crafted trees.

On your left is the tree prepared by the students of St John Fisher College.

On your right are the tree and paper flowers crafted by the Year Ones of St Joseph's School.

The trees invite us into understanding how children see the wonders of creation and how youth understand the enormous challenges we face today in caring for creation and in changing our lifestyles.

Thank you to the students in both schools for helping us to understand and pray today. Let us pray.

Fr Gerry

Readings: <https://universalis.com/Australia/20200517/mass.htm>



[Laudato Si' - On Care for Our Common Home, 24 May 2015](#)

[YouTube video of the Sixth Sunday of Easter, 17 May 2020](#)