

Catholics mark anniversary of Pope's encyclical on our environment

To celebrate the end of the *Laudato Si'* Special Anniversary Year, Pope Francis invites the world's 1.3 billion Catholics to joyfully participate in Laudato Si' Week 2021, to be held 16-24 May.

The Vatican-sponsored celebration will bring Catholics together to rejoice in the great progress they've made in bringing *Laudato Si'* to life and to plan ambitious action ahead of the United Nations Biodiversity Conference, the 26th UN Climate Change Conference and the decade ahead.

More information can be found at laudatosiweek.org.

The theme for the weeklong celebration is, "for we know that things can change" (*Laudato Si'* 13).

The event coincides with the sixth anniversary (May 24) of when Pope Francis finished writing the encyclical. *Laudato Si'* has enlivened Catholic communities across the globe to work against the ecological crisis and climate emergency.

But, as evident in the rapid pace of species extinction and climate change, more urgent action is needed to create a more just and sustainable future.

As Pope Francis said on Earth Day, "When this destruction of nature is triggered, it is very difficult to stop it. But we are still in time. And we will be more resilient if we work together instead of doing it alone."

During Laudato Si' Week, Catholics will come together and present to the world a living testimony of *Laudato Si'* transformations.

The week will feature presentations from world-renowned leaders that will showcase how they've transformed their communities and invite Catholics to take similar action regionally and locally.

The dialogues will carry a special focus on advocacy efforts aimed at raising the Catholic voice ahead of COP15 and COP26.

At the grassroots level, local leaders will spearhead similar opportunities, including sustainability initiatives, educational events, and prayer gatherings, that will seek to inspire concrete action for our common home.

Laudato Si' Week also will feature a missionary-like sendoff that will encourage the faithful to go and announce the Gospel of Creation in every corner of the globe.

The week will finish with a preview of the tool that will help the global Church realize more progress in the decade ahead: the Laudato Si' Action Platform. The Vatican-led effort will empower Catholic institutions, communities, and families to implement Laudato Si'.

Catholics will be uniting at a crucial time in 2021. In November, at COP26, countries must announce their plans to meet the goals of the Paris agreement. At COP15, scheduled for October in China, the world will have the opportunity to set meaningful and robust targets to protect creation.

The Laudato Si' Special Anniversary Year was launched by the Vatican last May, at the end of the 2020 Laudato Si' Week, which commemorated the fifth anniversary of the encyclical.

Laudato Si' Week 2021 is sponsored by the Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development and facilitated by the Global Catholic Climate Movement in collaboration with RENOVA+, Caritas Internationalis, CIDSE, International Union Superiors General, Union of Superiors General, Society of Jesus, the General office for justice, peace and integrity of creation from the Order from the Franciscan Friars, and in partnership with dozens of Catholic partners.

All official program events will focus on three key elements of *celebration – action – testimony*, and will be simultaneously translated into English, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, Polish, and French.