



**LAUDATO SI'
WEEK 2024**

**Seeds
of Hope**

*Parish resources to celebrate Laudato Si'
Week 2024*

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About Laudato Si' Week

Laudato Si' Week is a celebration held annually in May to mark the anniversary of Pope Francis' landmark encyclical on caring for creation. Sponsored by the Vatican's Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, this global celebration unites Catholics to listen and respond together to the cry of creation, rejoice in the progress we have made in bringing *Laudato Si'* to life, and intensify our efforts through the Laudato Si' Action Platform as well as other opportunities for education and action.

In Laudato Si' Week 2024, let us gather in community to contemplate the wonder of creation and nurture seeds of hope for our "suffering planet" (LD 2).

Laudate Deum is a reminder about the urgency of the *Laudato Si'* message and the need for both personal and cultural transformation amidst our ecological and climate crises.

This year's Laudato Si' Week theme is inspired by the symbol for Season of Creation 2024, "firstfruits."

Let us be seeds of hope in our lives and our world, rooted in faith and love.

Learn more at LaudatoSiWeek.org.

PRAYER

God of all creation,
Thank you for the gift of our lives
and for the world in which we live.
We thank you for the warmth of the sun in winter,
and a cool breeze in summer.
We thank you for the great diversity of life,
which fills us with wonder and reminds us that we too are creatures.
We pray that we will grow in respect for all life,
and for the Earth itself.
That we will use your gifts with gentleness and wisdom,
not with greed and selfishness.
We pray that our minds and hearts will lead us to an active hope,
as we respond to the cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor in our time.
May our hope transform humanity,
to take bold action to protect our world.
At this time of Pentecost
may we call on the Holy Spirit to kindle in us the fire of God's love
and renew the face of the Earth.
May we all be part of that renewal.
We ask this in Jesus' name.
Amen.



CHIQUITO'S STORY

Timor-Leste

Watch Chiquito's story

Or

Read Chiquito's story
on the next page.





While Timor-Leste has made considerable progress in development, it still suffers from high levels of poverty. Climate change threatens to exacerbate vulnerability and inequality, particularly in food security. The rural poor and other marginalized groups are most vulnerable.

- Asia Development Bank

Chiquito is 35 years old and lives in Timor-Leste with his wife, two young children and his extended family. When his father died, he had the additional responsibility of looking after his mother, two sisters and their children and making sure there is enough food to feed the whole family.

"Our lives were simple, however we faced challenges when we did not have enough funds to respond to urgent needs, such as urgent medical bills or whenever there were traditional ceremonies," Chiquito said.

Timor-Leste is one of Australia's closest geographical neighbours, located just an hour's flight from Darwin, but the standard of living between the two countries could not be more different.

With high levels of poverty and a reliance on subsistence farming, many families like Chiquito's are extremely vulnerable to the effects of climate change.

"We consume what we grew from our vegetable gardens. We had very limited cash, so buying food was not an option for us," explained Chiquito.

Climate change is set to alter rainfall patterns, with Timor-Leste's food production likely to be one of the most affected by changes in rainfall in Southeast Asia. In combination with increased growing season temperatures, agricultural production may see reduced yields. - [Asia Development Bank](#)

Chiquito's Story

Seeds of Hope:
Responding to 'the Cry of the Earth and the Cry of the Poor'



Chiquito explains, "This year the impact of climate change is felt more compared to previous years. The previous year had its challenges, however we were able to get good results."

"The changing rain patterns make it difficult to decide when to plant our crops, if we make the wrong decision to plant and the rains do not come, we lose the whole crop for the year. This creates lean months for the whole community," Chiquito said.

Chiquito heard about a program run by one of Caritas Australia's partner in Timor-Leste, Caritas Diocesana Maliana. The 'Sustainable Livelihoods/Disaster Risk Reduction' program aims to build the resilience of vulnerable communities like Chiquito's through strengthening agriculture techniques and improving families' food security.

"The challenge for farmers in Timor-Leste, like Chiquito, is the lack of opportunity and support to learn new techniques and to increase their production and to be able to access markets. So programs such as this that gives that opportunity helps farmers to increase their potential and improve their livelihoods," said Fernando Pires, Caritas Australia's Timor-Leste Country Representative.

Through the program, Chiquito learnt skills in sustainable agriculture that enabled him to maximise the use of his land to grow a wide variety of crops. He also learnt business skills to better understand market demand and supply vegetables to supermarkets in the capital Dili to generate high income.

Chiquito's production has increased substantially, which means his family has enough income to meet their needs. They no longer have to worry about not having enough cash to buy food for his children or pay for basic medical expenses.

Chiquito's determination has made him a role model for other people in his community. He is using the funds from his successful harvest to invest back into the farm and also provide employment to two other people to work with him. He also volunteers to help at the farm of the orphanage just across the road, sharing his skills and knowledge with the nuns.

The new skills Chiquito has learnt through the program has increased his resilience to a changing climate, providing seeds of hope for the future.



Photos: Tim Lam/Caritas Australia

Chiquito's Story | Reflection (See – Judge – Act)



Photo: Tim Lam/Caritas Australia

Reflect on Chiquito's story following the Cardijn See–Judge–Act rhythm.

See

- What is the lived reality for Chiquito and his community?
- How is climate change impacting vulnerable communities in Timor-Leste?
- How is Caritas Australia helping?

Judge

- Are Gospel values being upheld or denied?
- What does the Church have to say about climate justice?
- Which Catholic Social Teaching principles are evident in Chiquito's story?

Act

- What can you do to care for our common home?
- What can you do to support communities like Chiquito's?
- How can you and your community work towards the Laudato Si' Goals?



RESPOND TO THE
CRY OF THE EARTH



RESPOND TO THE
CRY OF THE POOR



ECOLOGICAL
ECONOMICS



ADOPTION OF SUSTAINABLE
LIFESTYLES



ECOLOGICAL
EDUCATION



ECOLOGICAL
SPIRITUALITY



COMMUNITY RESILIENCE
AND EMPOWERMENT

LAUDATO SI' WEEK ACTIVITIES

About TOGETHER WE

Together We is Caritas Internationalis' global campaign. It is not only a call to action, but also a call to inner conversion and social change. It is a call to restore the broken relationships we have with ourselves, each other, and the natural world around us. It is a campaign to remind us that no one is an island, that we are all dependent on each other and the delicate eco-system of God's creation which sustains all life.

Planting seeds at your church

We encourage parishes to both advocate for change and be the change by planting seeds in gardens or to rejuvenate local green spaces.



Activity 1 – TOGETHER WE: Tree of Life



Activity 2. Planting seeds of hope



Photo: Tim Lam/Caritas Australia

Activity 1

TOGETHER WE: Tree of Life

In the spirit of a culture of encounter, we invite communities from around the world to take action with our Tree of Life campaign. Simply write a message to your Member of Parliament (MP) on how we can care for our common home together with them, in the language and spirit of cooperation.

Step 1. Watch the Together We Belong animation



Activity 1

About SAFER WORLD FOR ALL

We are a movement of Australian individuals, community groups and organisations, calling on our leaders to act now to build a safer world for all.

Step 2. Consider what you would like to be the focus of your message to MP.

- Local – is there a local social and ecological issue that you would like to focus on?
- Global – we suggest you support the [Safer World For All Campaign](#) – Ask 3

Safer World for All campaign

Ask 3: Contribute to a safer climate future

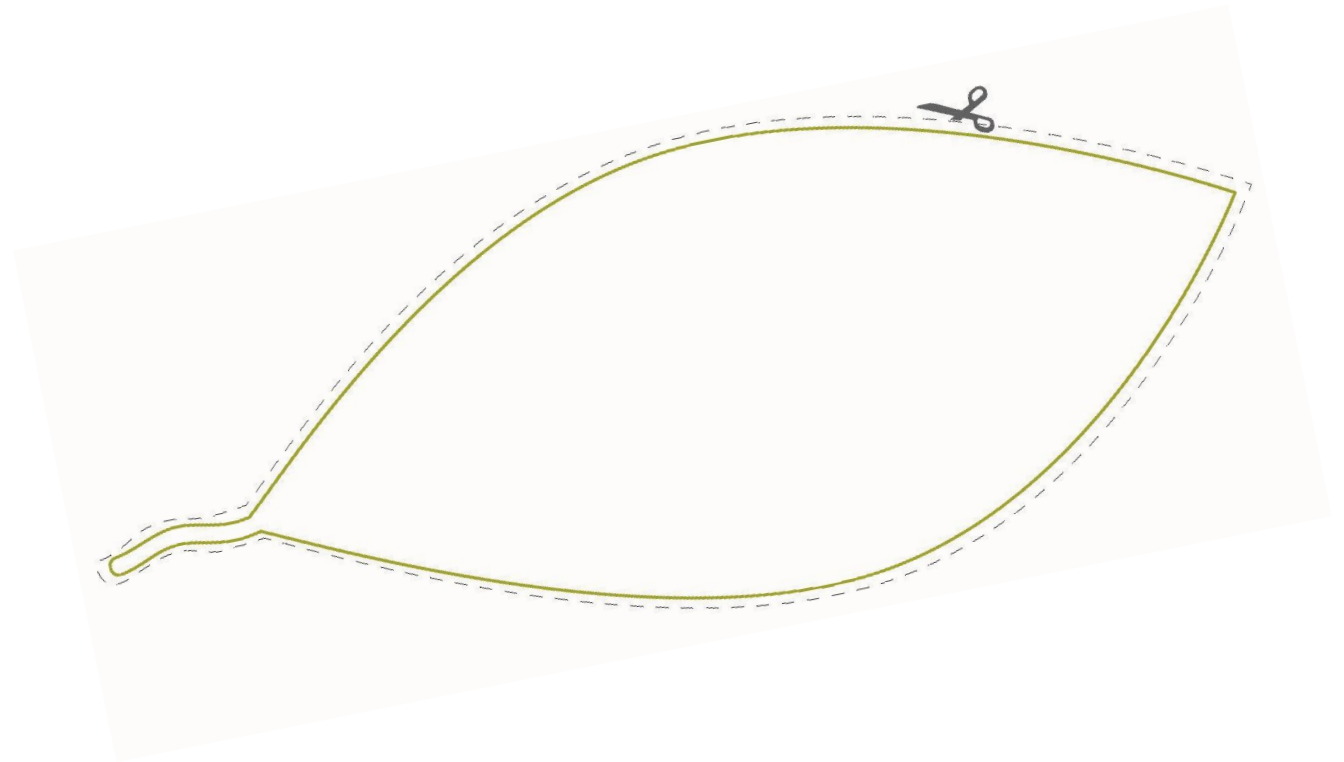
- Make an annual commitment of \$4 billion for climate finance to support communities in the Pacific and Asia to act on climate change
- Provide a \$100 million initial contribution to the Loss and Damage Fund to provide crucial support to vulnerable nations facing the brunt of climate-related challenges (forced migration, biodiversity loss, food insecurity, etc.)
- Advance a global, just, and equitable phase out of coal, oil and gas through endorsing the call for a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty

For more information about all of the Safe World for All campaign asks visit: saferworld.org.au

Activity 1

Step 3. Write a message to your Member of Parliament (MP) on how we can care for our common home together.

- Use the leaf template provided in the [Together We Campaign Pack](#)
- Rather than criticising leaders and decision-makers, we are looking to engage with them within the spirit of cooperation.
- Rather than thinking about 'I', think about 'We'. Think about the community you belong to, and how your voice is representing a real community need. This way your message will have more authenticity.
- Think less confrontationally, and more collaboratively. Explain the problem you are asking them to address, and how together we can work to bring about positive change.

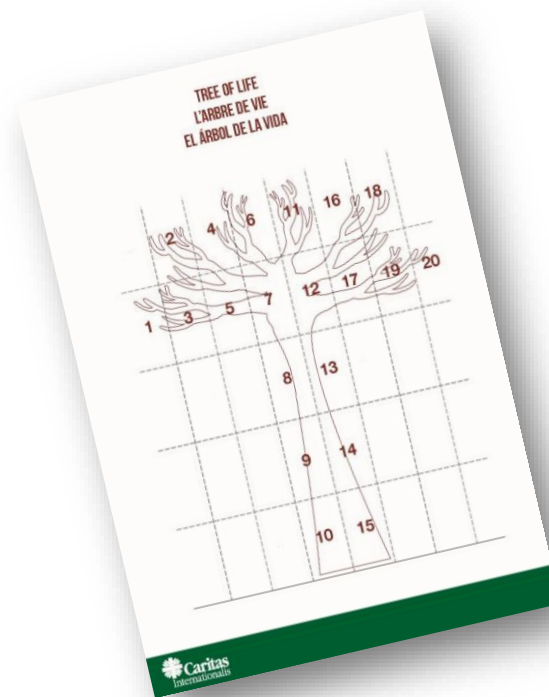


Activity 1

Step 4. Create your Tree of Life display and share it on social media

- Construct a tree (trunk and branches). You can use large branches that have fallen to the ground or create a paper tree with the Tree of Life template provided in the [Together We Campaign Pack](#).
- Stick the leaves (letters) to the tree and leave them there for others to read.
- When your display is complete, please take a photo and share your tree on social media using #TogetherWeBelong, and don't forget to tag Caritas Australia, your local MP, @catholicearthcareaustralia and @iamcaritas

Step 5. Arrange a visit to your MP to share your ideas



Planting seeds of hope

Step 1. Determine where you can plant seeds (or seedlings)

Some ideas:

- Rejuvenate an old garden bed or build a new one.
- Start a community herb garden.
- Create an indigenous garden and prayer space.
- Restore an unused green space.
- Restore sand dunes or riverbeds.
- Consider if you are planting for food or pollination.

Step 2. Harvest seeds from other plants or purchase new seeds (or seedlings)

Some ideas:

- Consider where you could collect seeds instead of buying seeds.
- Consider the time of year and your climate in addition to where you are planting when choosing your seeds.
- Are there native/indigenous (local to your areas) plant species you could plant?
- Are there any local programs that can assist you to purchase seeds or could you ask your parish community for donations?
- If planting for pollination, use the B&B Highway guides for your climate: [hot/arid](#), [warm/humid](#), [cool](#) or [temperate](#).

Activity 2

Step 3. Plant seeds of hope!

Tips:

- Ensure the soil is good quality or boost the soil quality first.
- Ensure you have all the equipment and seeds ready to go.
- Enjoy!

Step 4. Care for your seeds.

Tips:

- Learn how to care for the seeds and plants once established.
- Have a roster to help water the plants.
- Share with others, the beauty (or produce) your plants provide.



Additional Resources

Join our Catholic Earthcare Community!

The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference invites you to develop a *Laudato Si'* Action Plan and upload it to the *Laudato Si'* Action Platform. Caritas Australia's Catholic Earthcare Team are here to support you!

Join the Catholic Earthcare community now as a parish, school, organisation or household and together we can learn how to better care for all creation.

When you join our Catholic Earthcare Community you will receive your free *Australian Guide to Laudato Si' Action Planning* as well as other supporting resources for your sector.

Join Catholic Earthcare



Set of 7 Laudato Si' Goals Reflection Cards



The Laudato Si' Goals – PPT

Caring for Creation - PPT

Laudato Si' Nature-based Activities

LAUDATO SI'
Nature-based activities for students and families to enjoy.

This collection of nature-based activities for the whole family seeks to encourage a shared sense of awe and contemplation about nature, leading to a renewed sense of commitment and action towards the protection of the planet and its people. It is our hope that these activities are gentle ways in which students and families can take some time to connect with nature and each other.

Australian Curriculum Links Geography Science WATC Religious Education The Arts	Cross-Curricular Priorities Geography and Terms Used: Interdisciplinary History and Cultures Sustainability	General Capabilities Literacy Critical and Creative Thinking Ethical Understanding Intercultural Understanding
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www.caritas.org.au/catholic-earthcare



**The Catholic Agency for
International Aid and Development**

Caritas Australia Level 2, Building 3,
189 O'Riordan Street, Mascot NSW 2020

-  questions@caritas.org.au
-  1800 024 413
-  facebook.com/CaritasAU
-  twitter.com/CaritasAust
-  youtube.com/CaritasAustralia
-  www.caritas.org.au

