



PARTICIPANT PROGRAM

# FEAST OF ST. FRANCIS

**We Are All Connected:  
Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor**

# FEAST OF ST. FRANCIS

## OPENING PRAYER (2 MINUTES)

### The Earth is the Lord's

*L: "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof."  
Creation reminds us, O God, of your love.*

*All: By grace we are learning, as year leads to year,  
We're called to be stewards, your caretakers here.*

*L: Your rainforests nurture the world that we share.  
Your wetlands give animals shelter and care.*

*All: Your coral reefs cradle the life of the sea.  
You've shown us, in love, what your good world can be.*

*L: Too often, O God, we abuse your good earth.  
We fail to remember its beauty and worth.*

*All: We take from creation much more than we need,  
We threaten your world through indifference and greed.*

*L: May we be good stewards of all that you give,  
Protecting creation wherever we live.*

*All: May we be a church that renews and restores  
And lovingly cares for this earth that is yours.*

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## READINGS (10 MINUTES)

### Reading #1: We Are One Body in Christ

"For as in one body we have many parts, and all the parts do not have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ—and individually parts of one another." ~Romans 12: 4-5

### Reading #2: Everything is Connected

"[W]hen our hearts are authentically open to universal communion, [a] sense of fraternity excludes nothing and no one. It follows that our indifference or cruelty towards fellow creatures of this world sooner or later affects the treatment we mete out to other human beings. We have only one heart, and the same wretchedness which leads us to mistreat an animal will not be long in showing itself in our relationships with other people. Every act of cruelty towards any creature is 'contrary to human dignity'. We can hardly consider ourselves to be fully loving if we disregard any aspect of reality: 'Peace, justice and the preservation of creation are three absolutely interconnected themes, which cannot be separated and treated individually without once again falling into reductionism'. Everything is related, and we human beings are united as brothers and sisters on a wonderful pilgrimage, woven together by the love God has for each of his creatures and which also unites us in fond affection with brother sun, sister moon, brother river and mother earth." ~Laudato Si' 92



### Reading #3: Recognition and Respect for All

"The human environment and the natural environment are deteriorating together, and this deterioration of the planet weighs upon the most vulnerable of its people. The impact of climate change affects, first and foremost, those who live in poverty in every corner of the globe. Our obligation to use the earth's goods responsibly implies the recognition of and respect for all people and all living creatures. The urgent call and challenge to care for creation are an invitation for all of humanity to work towards sustainable and integral development." ~*Joint Message of Pope Francis and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew on the World Day of Prayer for Creation, Sept. 1, 2017*

### Reading #4: Listening and Interpreting Nature and God's Messages

The history of the universe and nature is being told to us by the stars, by the Earth, by the uprising and elevation of the mountains, by the animals, the woods and jungles, and by the rivers. Our task is to know how to listen and interpret the messages that are sent to us. The original peoples knew how to read every movement of the clouds, the meaning of the winds, and they knew when violent downpours were coming... We have forgotten all that. ~*Fr. Leonardo Boff*

### Reading #5: The Art of Living Well

Indigenous peoples are a living appeal for hope. They remind us that human beings have a shared responsibility in the care of the "common home." And if certain decisions taken thus far have ruined it, it is never too late to learn the lesson and adopt a new lifestyle. It is about adopting a way to move forward which, leaving behind superficial approaches and harmful or exploitative habits, overcomes atrocious individualism, convulsive consumerism and cold selfishness. The earth suffers and the native peoples are familiar with the dialogue with the earth; they know what it means to listen to the earth, to see the earth, to touch the earth. They know the art of living well, in harmony with the earth. ~*Address of His Holiness Pope Francis to Participants at the IV Meeting of the Indigenous Peoples' Forum, February, 14, 2019*

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (15 MINUTES)

*At the heart of Laudato Si' is the idea that everything is connected, and at the heart of the concept of inter-connection is St. Francis of Assisi. He saw everything and everyone, from humans to animals, from trees to rocks, from the sun and the moon to the lepers and most destitute as his brother or sister.*

- 1) What most impacted you from the above readings?
- 2) Where do you see/experience the interconnection with God, with humanity, and with creation? Can you think of specific examples? **Name these interconnections.**  
Are there examples in your life of where connections are broken? **Name the broken connections.**
- 3) Both Pope Francis and Fr. Leonardo Boff speak about listening to indigenous communities and their wisdom. Are you aware and/or connected with the first inhabitants of the land you live in? What message do they share about the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor? How can you and your faith community strengthen the connections with indigenous communities?

## VIDEO (20 MINUTES)

[PLAY VIDEO](#)



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (15 MINUTES)

- 1) What most impacted you from the video?
- 2) In the first segment of the video, we learn about “integral ecology” which is the understanding that everything is connected. Can you think of examples of problems in your local community where an “integral ecology” approach might help find solutions to persistent problems?
- 3) Earlier we discussed how everything is interconnected. How do you see your life interconnected with the lives of the indigenous people highlighted in the video? How would St. Francis of Assisi respond to the plight of these communities? How should we respond?

## ACTIVITIES (20 MINUTES)

Your facilitator has chosen the activity (or activities) you will participate in today. Please follow their instructions.

### 1. Advocacy:

To take the advocacy action in support of Sen. Jeanne Shaheen’s International Climate Accountability Act (S.1743), a bipartisan bill co-sponsored by 46 Senators, which prohibits the use of federal funding to advance the withdrawal of the United States from the Paris Agreement and calls upon the President to develop and submit a plan for the United States to meet its nationally determined contribution under the Agreement go here: <https://catholicclimatecovenant.salsalabs.org/ShahenBillSupport>

### 2. Tree planting:

- Trees help lessen the impact of climate change. They absorb carbon dioxide from our atmosphere. In fact, an acre of mature trees absorbs annually the same amount of carbon dioxide produced by driving the average car 26,000 miles.
- Trees help us breathe clean air. Trees absorb pollutant gases (nitrogen oxides, ammonia, sulfur dioxide and ozone) and filter particulates out of the air by trapping them on their leaves and bark.
- Trees help communities. Trees help communities achieve long-term economic and environmental sustainability and provide food, energy and income. This is especially beneficial for poor and vulnerable communities.
- A new study (<https://science.sciencemag.org/content/365/6448/76>) found that adding 2.2 billion acres of tree cover would capture two-thirds of man-made carbon emissions. The Catholic community can have a dramatic impact if we all step-up and plant trees.

**NOTE:** If you wish to donate to have trees planted, go here: <https://www.growcleanair.com/catholic-climate-covenant-and-tist>

If you plant or donate a tree(s), let us know here: <https://catholicclimatecovenant.salsalabs.org/FOSF2019TreePlantingReportback>

We will compile the number of trees planted by the US Catholic community!

**3) For Creation Care Team information go here: [www.catholicclimatecovenant.org/cct](http://www.catholicclimatecovenant.org/cct)**



## CONCLUSION AND CLOSING PRAYER (5 MINUTES)

### Closing Prayer

**Leader:** God is before us.

**People:** God is behind us.

**Leader:** God is above us.

**People:** God is below us.

**Leader:** Gods words shall come from our mouths.

**People:** For we are all God's essence, a sign of God's love.

**Leader:** All is finished in beauty.

**All:** All is finished in beauty.

- Rev. Tweedy Sombrero Navarrete, Dine (Used by permission)

# THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING IN THE 2019 FEAST OF ST. FRANCIS PROGRAM.

For more information visit [catholicclimatecovenant.org](http://catholicclimatecovenant.org).

