



The Year of St. Francis: A Celebration of the Word

800 YEARS OF PEACE, DIGNITY, AND CREATION.

Secondary School Celebration

Pillars of Franciscan Spirituality



Creation

St. Francis loved nature and cared for the Earth.



Creatures

The patron saint of animals and birds.



The Way

He chose to follow Jesus' path of love and peace.



Incarnation

Created the first nativity to show Jesus' humanity.



Sacrifice

Sharing in the suffering of Christ.

An Invitation to Reflect

We gather to mark the Year of St. Francis, celebrating 800 years since the death of the Saint of Assisi. Pope Leo XIV has announced this year to invite the Church to reflect again on a message that remains deeply relevant: care, peace, dignity, and love for creation.



We also remember that Pope Francis chose his name after St. Francis, calling the Church today to care for the poor, protect our common home, and live with greater simplicity and responsibility.



Laudato Si'



[Praise Be to You]

The words 'Laudato Si' mean 'Praise be to you, O my Lord.' They originate from a prayer written by St. Francis praising God for all of creation.

insight

Today, these words remind us of Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si'*, which calls us to care for our "common home" and to stand with those most affected by environmental damage and injustice.

The Chorus of the Universe (Psalm 148)



Praise the Lord from the heavens;
praise him in the heights.
Praise him, sun and moon;
praise him, all shining stars...
Praise the Lord from the earth,
sea creatures and all depths...
Let them praise the name of the Lord,
for he commanded and they were created.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.



Creation as Family

This psalm reminds us that the whole universe praises God, not just people. St. Francis believed that everything God made was part of one family. He spoke of “Brother Sun” and “Sister Earth,” recognizing creation as a gift to be respected, not exploited.

Today, we reflect on what it means to care for creation in a world facing climate crisis and inequality.

A Life Transformed



St. Francis began life with comfort and security, but encounters with poverty and suffering changed him deeply. He made a radical choice to live simply, to stand with those who were poor or excluded, and to treat all people and all of creation with care and respect.

Peace in a Time of War



During the Crusades, amid violent conflict between Christians and Muslims, St. Francis traveled to meet the Sultan Malik al-Kamil. Instead of seeing him as an enemy, Francis approached him with humility. He listened, spoke peacefully, and recognized the Sultan's dignity as a fellow human being. This encounter showed that peace is built through dialogue, courage, and mutual respect—not fear, power, or violence.

Living the Principles of Faith

How is St. Francis' life reflected in Catholic Social Teaching?



Care for Creation

Protecting our common home.



Option for the Poor

Prioritizing those most affected by environmental harm.

Human Dignity

Recognizing the worth of every person.



Peace and the Common Good

Taking responsibility for one another.



Faith is lived through choices and actions.

A Moment of Reflection

- How do my daily choices affect other people and the environment?
- Where might I be called to live more simply or responsibly?
- What does it mean to be a peacemaker in today's world?
- How can I use my voice or actions to protect dignity and creation?





The Canticle of Creation

Praise be to you, God, for Brother Sun, source of light and life.
Teach us to care for your creation.

Praise be to you, God, for Sister Moon and the stars, signs of wonder and beauty.
Teach us to care for your creation.

Praise be to you, God, for Brother Wind, the air, the climate, and seasons.
Teach us to care for your creation.

Praise be to you, God, for Sister Water, precious and life-giving, and Sister Earth, our shared home.
Teach us to care for your creation.

A Prayer for Our Time

God of creation, help us live simply, act justly, and walk gently with one another and with the Earth. Through the example of St. Francis, help us become people of care, courage, and peace.
Amen.

Your Mission

Inspired by St. Francis, choose one action to commit to this week:



Reduce Harm

Make one change that reduces harm to the environment.



Be a Peacemaker

Act to resolve a situation of tension or conflict.



Stand in Solidarity

Support someone who feels excluded or unheard.



Change a Habit

Reflect on one personal habit that needs to change for the good of others.

Further Exploration



CAFOD: St. Francis / Canticle of Creation – A reflective prayer video.



St. Francis and the Wolf of Gubbio – A short animation on peace and reconciliation.



CAFOD Laudato Si' Animation – Exploring justice, creation, and dignity.



Go in Peace

As we go, may God guide our choices, strengthen our commitment to justice and peace, and inspire us to care for creation and one another.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Musical Reflection: Make me a channel of your peace.