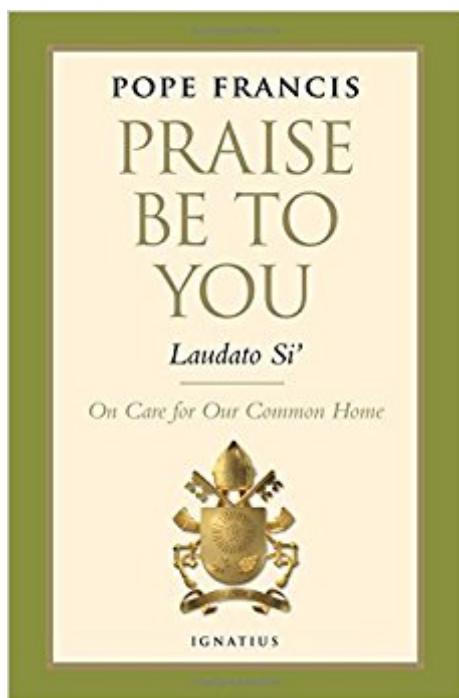


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Praise Be To You - Laudato Si' (Encyclical Letter)



Synopsis

A gift from God and the common home of humanity, the earth is threatened by man's abuse of his freedom. In his encyclical *Praise Be to You (Laudato Si')*, Pope Francis challenges all people to praise and thank God for his glorious creation and to work together to safeguard her. Popes Benedict XVI, John Paul II, and Paul VI addressed key themes regarding stewardship of God's creation, but Francis is the first to devote an entire encyclical to the subject. The encyclical takes its name from Saint Francis of Assisi's *Canticle of the Creatures*, which depicts creation as "a sister with whom we share our life and a beautiful mother who opens her arms to embrace us". Pope Francis declares, "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." Francis calls for an "integral ecology" based on what Pope Saint John Paul II called an "ecological conversion" — a moral transformation linking the proper response to God for the gift of his creation to concern for justice, especially for the poor. He challenges people to understand ecology in terms of the right ordering of the fundamental relationships of the human person: with God, oneself, other people, and the rest of creation. Francis examines such ecological concerns as pollution, waste, and what he calls "the throwaway culture". Climate, he insists, is a common good to be protected. He explores notions such as sustainability from a Judeo-Christian perspective. The loss of biodiversity and the unequal distribution of resources, largely caused by the consumerism and excessive individualism of the wealthier nations, threaten the good order of creation, he writes. While valuing technology, he rejects efforts to repudiate the natural order, including the moral law inscribed in human nature. He cautions against an overreliance on science to solve ecological problems and emphasizes the need for openness to God. Expounding the biblical tradition regarding creation and redemption in Christ, Francis stresses man's subordination to God's plan. He insists on the primacy of the human person in creation and rejects treating it as if it were "divine", yet he traces the roots of the ecological crisis to man's self-centeredness and the rise of practical relativism. Without rejecting political changes, he implores people to change their hearts and their ways of life.

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Customer Reviews

Pope Francis (Jorge Mario Bergoglio), is the first Jesuit and the first Latin American to be elected to the chair of Peter. A native of Buenos Aires, Argentina, he was ordained as a priest in 1969. He served as head of the Society of Jesus in Argentina from 1973 to 1979. In 1998 he became the archbishop of Buenos Aires and, in 2001, a cardinal. Following the resignation of his predecessor, Pope Benedict XVI, on February 28, 2013, the conclave elected Bergoglio, who chose the papal name Francis in honor of Saint Francis of Assisi.

Even though I believe Pope Francis is a liberal in the post-Vatican II Roman Catholic Church, a council which left this ex-Catholic confused, but not scarred, I was really moved by this encyclical. We have not been good stewards of the Earth that God created for us to live out our physical lives upon. Whether one is a Traditionalist Roman Catholic, a conservative Post-Vatican II Roman Catholic, a Liberal Catholic, an ex-Catholic, or a non-Catholic, many or all of the topics in *Laudato Si'* are relevant to the us who live on this world. Why would God, who is perfect in every way, create this world for his creatures, only to have them seem ways to slowly destroy this world? We've polluted the air, land and sea. We've tested and used nuclear weapons here. We've even deliberately given unhealthy water and food to citizens of our country. Why would anyone be willing to destroy their world this way, putting all living creatures at risk in the process? Whether or not one agrees with everything Pope Francis has to say in this encyclical, the document is worth a read by Catholics and non-Catholics everywhere.

Whatever team the Pope got together to do the homework on this document, did an awesome job. They understand that the profit-driven economy and feelings of greed are the driving forces in the

destruction of the "environment" and in climate change. The only place where it gets a little muddy in its reasoning is where he/they try to fit their point of view into classic Christianity and the Church's sometimes rigid teachings. It's a big document, a lot to digest all at once, but if it gets used consistently to get people thinking and acting, it could make a huge change for the better in the direction our society is going.

A must read. While you may not agree with everything that is said, this encyclical does contain many sobering thoughts.

This small pamphlet is an excellent resource both for an individual seeking to understand and act on the Encyclical and a guide for others working with groups of adults desiring to grow in understanding that leads to action. "A Group Reading Guide" is a very accurate description. As a person with considerable experience in adult faith formation, I will be happy to use this resource. I also believe it offers valuable guidance for group leaders without much experience.

A moving and brilliant Encyclical. Pope Francis enunciated the Church's teaching on environmental issues in the larger context of the Church's social teaching. Francis makes an urgent plea for immediate action on issues of climate change, pollution, access to clean water, and biodiversity among others. He goes beyond this issues, however, to argue that ecological conversion is necessary based on particular compassion for the poor, the interconnectedness of all of God's creation, and respect for all life.

Thanks to Pope Francis for articulating the moral importance of action on the climate crisis. This book pulls no punches and calls out for those responsible for environmental pollution to take urgent action in consideration of future generations, of the poor and innocent who cannot act, and of animals and all other species of life affected.

I found the author to be clear, readable, interesting, informative, and organized. The subject matter was complex, but the author was able to present his views in simple format of six chapters, each delving into the heart of the subject and making his views clear. Wonderful writing.

This is a very broad thoughtful work. Any one, believer or not, will benefit from reading it.

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