

The homily below by our Holy Father was offered during the first *Mass for the Care of Creation* on July 9<sup>th</sup>.

Our parish will celebrate this special Mass on Labor Day.

## ***HOMILY OF POPE LEO XIV***

*Borgo Laudato si' (Castel Gandolfo)*

*Wednesday, 9 July 2025*

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On this beautiful day, I would begin by asking everyone, including myself, to take stock of what we are celebrating here amid the beauty of what might be called a “cathedral” of nature, with so many plants and elements of creation that have brought us together to celebrate the Eucharist, which means to give thanks to the Lord.

There are many reasons to thank the Lord in today’s Eucharist. This may well be the first celebration to use the new prayers of the Mass for the Care of Creation, which is the fruit of the work of several Dicasteries of the Holy See.

For my part, I express gratitude to all those people here who have had a part in producing these liturgical prayers. As you know, the liturgy represents life, and you are the life of this *Laudato Si'* Center. I would also like to thank you on this occasion for all that you are doing to bring to life this fine idea of Pope Francis, who donated this small plot of land, these gardens and these walks, in order to continue the important work of caring for creation and our common home. The need to persevere in this mission has become all the more apparent in the ten years that have passed since the publication of *Laudato Si'*.

This setting [before a pool of water] in some way resembles the ancient churches of the early centuries, where there was a baptismal font that one had to pass before entering the church. I am not sure I would want be baptized in the water here..., but the symbol of passing through water to be cleansed of all our sins and failings, and then to enter into the great mystery of the Church is something that still speaks to us today.

At the beginning of Mass, we prayed for conversion, our own conversion. I would like to add that we should pray for the conversion of the many people, inside and outside the Church, who do not yet recognize the urgent need to care for our common home.

The many natural disasters we see occurring almost daily in our world, in so many places and countries, are also in part a result of the excesses of human beings and our lifestyles. We need to ask whether we ourselves are undergoing that conversion. How much we need it!

Having said this, I also have a homily that I prepared and will share with you, so please bear with me. A couple of its points will help to carry forward our reflection this morning. We are enjoying this fraternal and peaceful moment in the midst of a world that is in flames, as a result of both global warming and armed conflicts. The message of Pope Francis in his Encyclicals *Laudato Si'* and *Fratelli Tutti* continues to be timely. We can imagine ourselves in the Gospel we have just heard, as we reflect on the fear of the disciples amid the tempest, a fear shared by a large part of humanity today. At the same time, in the heart of this Jubilee Year, we believe and say over and over again: there is hope! We have encountered that hope in Jesus. He calms the storm. His power does not break down, but builds up. It does not destroy, but calls into being and bestows new life. We too should be asking ourselves: "What sort of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?" (*Mt 8:27*).

The amazement expressed in this question is the first step towards freedom from fear. Jesus lived and prayed around the Sea of Galilee. That is where he called his first disciples in the setting of their daily lives and work. The parables with which he proclaimed the Kingdom of God reveal his deep connection with that land and those waters, with the rhythm of the seasons and with the life of creatures.

The evangelist Matthew describes the tempest as an upheaval of the earth (the Greek word he uses is *seismos*). Matthew uses the same term for the earthquake that took place at the moment of Jesus' death and at the dawn of his resurrection. Christ rises above this upheaval, his feet firmly planted. Already here, the Gospel enables us to catch a glimpse of the Risen Lord,

present in our confused history. Jesus' rebuke to the wind and the sea demonstrates his power to give life and salvation, a power greater than those forces that cause creatures to tremble.

So, we can ask ourselves once more: "What sort of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?" (*Mt* 8:27). The hymn from the Letter to the Colossians that we have heard seems to answer this very question: "He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation; for in him all things were created" (*Col* 1:15-16). Buffeted by the storm that day, his disciples were overcome with fear; they were not yet able to profess this knowledge about Jesus. Today, however, in accordance with the faith handed down to us, we can go further and say: "He is the head of the Body, the Church; he is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in everything he might be pre-eminent" (v. 18). Those words, in every age, make us and commit us to be a living Body: the Body of which Christ is the Head. Our mission to care for creation, to foster peace and reconciliation, is Jesus' own mission, the mission that the Lord entrusts to us. We hear the cry of the earth and we hear the cry of the poor, because this plea has reached the heart of God. Our indignation is his indignation; our work is his work.

In this regard, the psalmist's song inspires us: "The voice of the Lord is upon the waters; the God of glory thunders, the Lord, upon many waters. The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty" (*Ps* 29:3-4). That voice commits the Church to speak prophetically, even when it calls for the courage to oppose the destructive power of the princes of this world. The unbreakable covenant between Creator and his creatures inspires our minds and galvanizes our efforts to ensure that evil may turn into good, injustice into justice, and greed to sharing.

With infinite love, God has created all things and given them life. That is why Saint Francis of Assisi could call every creature his brother, his sister and his mother. Only a contemplative gaze can change our relationship with creation and bring us out of the ecological crisis brought on by the breakdown of our relationship with God, with our neighbors and with the earth that is the effect of sin (cf. *Laudato Si'*, 66).

Dear brothers and sisters, the *Borgo Laudato Si'*, where we now find ourselves, seeks to be, in line with the vision of Pope Francis, a kind of “laboratory” where we can experience that harmony with creation which brings healing and reconciliation, and to do so by developing new and effective ways of protecting the natural environment entrusted to our care. I want to assure all of you, who are working to realize this project, of my prayers and my encouragement.

The Eucharist we celebrate sustains and gives meaning to our work. As Pope Francis wrote, “it is in the Eucharist that all that has been created finds its greatest exaltation. Grace, which tends to manifest itself tangibly, found unsurpassable expression when God himself became man and gave himself as food for his creatures. The Lord, in the culmination of the mystery of the Incarnation, chose to reach our intimate depths through a fragment of matter. He comes not from above, but from within; he comes that we might find him in this world of ours” (*Laudato Si'*, 236). I would like to conclude these thoughts by leaving you with the words with which Saint Augustine, in the last pages of his *Confessions*, brought together creation and humanity in a cosmic hymn of praise: Lord, “your works praise you, that we may love you; may we love you, that your works may praise you” (XIII, 33, 48). May this be the harmony that we spread throughout the world.



[The Holy See](#)