

POPE FRANCIS WRITES,

“THE EARTH HERSELF,  
BURDENED AND LAID WASTE, IS  
AMONG THE MOST  
ABANDONED AND MALTREATED  
OF OUR POOR”

*LAUDATO SI'.*

# 'What if we were the generation that ended extreme poverty? '

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KOgF2Kgel6k>



The spirit of the Lord is on me, for he has anointed me to bring the good news to the afflicted. He has sent me... to let the oppressed go free. -Luke 4:18

What does Luke mean? What does afflicted me? What does oppressed me?

The option for the poor reminds us of God's preferential love for the poorest and most vulnerable people. God's love is universal; he does not side with oppressors, but loves the humble.

Today's prayer and worship will about how we can help those living in poverty by making changes to our life styles.

*"A great deal of difference can be made through a number of small actions in our personal lives." — Bishop John.*



# Opening prayer.

Lord,  
Creator of Heaven, Earth, and all therein contained. Open our minds and touch our hearts, so that we can be part of Creation, your gift. Be present to those in need in these difficult times, especially the poorest and most vulnerable. Help us to show creative solidarity as we confront the consequences of the global pandemic. Make us courageous in embracing the changes required to seek the common good. Now more than ever, may we all feel interconnected and interdependent. Enable us to succeed in listening and responding to the cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor. May their current sufferings become the birth-pangs of a more fraternal and sustainable world. We pray through Christ our Lord, under the loving gaze of Mary Help of Christians, Amen.



In this reflection, we focus on the cry of the poor remembering and praying for our brothers and sisters who are struggling to find food and shelter. In his letter for the World Day of Poor for this year, Pope Francis reminds us that the poor are not people “outside” our communities, but brothers and sisters whose sufferings we should share, in an effort to alleviate their difficulties and marginalization, restore their lost dignity and ensure their necessary social inclusion. In everything, Jesus teaches that poverty is not the result of fate, but a concrete sign pointing to his presence among us. We do not find him when and where we want, but see him in the lives of the poor, in their sufferings and needs, in the often inhuman conditions in which they are forced to live.

As I never tire of repeating, the poor are true evangelizers, for they were the first to be evangelized and called to share in the Lord's joy and his kingdom (cf. Mt 5:3). The poor, always and everywhere, evangelize us, because they enable us to discover in new ways the true face of the Father. “They have much to teach us.



*“Let us be protectors of creation, protectors of God’s plan inscribed in nature, protectors of one another and the environment.”*

Pope Francis.



“By making choices to live sustainably and simply, we act as responsible stewards of creation”

- Father Martin Boland, Dean of St Mary and St Helen's parish.

- How do your choices affect the lives of other people?
- Are you concerned about the poor who live nearby? The poor who live far away?
- What are you willing to change in your life to make a difference to the lives of others?
- What can you do to help others?

# What other small things could we do that make a big difference to others?

- Food bank Friday.
- Take clothes/toys/books to your local charity shops instead of throwing them away?
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When we look around us today, we see more and more how people are becoming indifferent to each other's needs. It is not fair that some should have everything, and others should have nothing.

Pope Francis calls us to break down the walls of indifference, and renew our understanding of the bonds that unite us. The livesimply programme is a wonderful example of what can be achieved when communities come together to care for creation.

As Father Martin Boland, Dean of St Mary and St Helen's parish, says, "By making choices to live sustainably and simply, we shift attitudes, make change possible and act as responsible stewards of creation. In this way, the smallest action releases a ripple of hope whose energy can be harnessed for the common good."



# Prayers.

- O God of the poor, help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth, so precious in your eyes. Bring healing to our lives, that we may protect the earth and not prey on it, that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction.

Amen

- Living God, have mercy on us, for the times we forget that we belong to each other. You call us to be still, to hear the whisper of our Sister Wind, to feel the radiance of our Brother Sun, to be nourished by our Mother Earth. Renew us in your healing love. Inspire us to water the earth, and nurture one another, so all may flourish. Together, as one family, may we always sing your praise. Through Christ our Lord,

Amen.



Design a poster  
informing people  
how they can help  
people living in  
poverty.

**Did you know?**

Greenpeace, Amnesty International and The British Red Cross are just some of the charities which are concerned with getting rid of world poverty and helping people affected by disasters.



*A single family living  
in a common home.*