



# Home Rituals

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St. Ignatius Loyola Parish

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## Introducing Rituals into your Home.

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## September 1<sup>st</sup>, Anniversary of Laudato Si'

Well, with all the wildfires, droughts and hurricanes, it might be time to consider once again the problem of Climate Change and the future for our children.

Many will consider legislation that will “force us” to fix the problem of the environment. However, what is called for is a conversion of heart and mind for ourselves and our society. That won’t come from legislation, that comes from within.

Last Sunday, in declaring all foods clean, Jesus places the problem of good and evil as something internal.

From within people, from their hearts, come evil thoughts, unchastity, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, licentiousness, envy, blasphemy, arrogance, folly.

(Mk 7: 21-22)

Note that it is not always intentional, sometimes evil things happen because of the folly of our ways.

One of the “new” features of Laudato Si' is the focus on the intrinsic value and rights of non-human creatures and ecosystems. Certainly families caring for pets are able to express this in their care and concern for their families' animals. Yet one can simply walk outside to see the display of systems (eco-systems) and how trees, plants, the ground itself, form home and habitat for so many creatures.

All the more Laudato Si' emphasizes the interrelatedness of the human with the rest of creation. It is easy to note for children how many critters live in the backyard but how few can be found in a parking lot. The same for just how hot it gets on a summer day crossing the parking lot and walking in the



shade. They may even experience this at school whether arriving and departing or playing on the playgrounds.

But more than our personal comfort, it is important to talk about those places, some within our city, that are concrete deserts without natural places to play, relax and experience



God's beauty. This might be the beginning of an awareness of how an environmental poverty can hurt others and deprive others of a view of God's goodness in creation.

As the season of harvest begins to wane, it might be a good time to take your children to a farm, orchard or farmer's market. Supermarkets just don't express the wonder and awe of nature's bounty nor the labor involved in our

stewardship of God's gift of food. You might even want to take a stroll through the City Floral greenhouses to see the variety of trees and plants and maybe even a chicken or two out back.

<https://cityfloralgreenhouse.com/> While the sights are wonderful, so are the smells and even textures. It is a great place to teach your children the beauty of plants.

Something more formal, check out the Botanic Gardens <https://www.botanicgardens.org/>

## Spirituality of Creation

CAFOD Catholic Agency for Overseas Development

### LAUDATO SI' for Children

<https://cafod.org.uk/Education/Primary-teaching-resources/Laudato-Si-for-children>

*It may have a British accent but it does have some wonderful animations of caring for our world. There's a coloring sheet and a song based on Laudato Si'.*

### Catholic Creation Care,

[www.catholiccreationcare.com](http://www.catholiccreationcare.com)

a ministry of the Pastoral Center,

<https://pastoral.center/on-care>

collects resources from many Catholic ministries on the environment as well as other faith-based organizations. They have a special section of Creation Care for Kids, <https://>

[www.catholiccreationcare.com/creation-care-kids.html](http://www.catholiccreationcare.com/creation-care-kids.html)

including a "Problem Solvers" Classroom resource. One of their resources is a list of "Creation Care Saints", those who have been important advocates and caregivers for creation. You may never have heard of Wangari Maathai, 1940-2011, winner of the Nobel Prize because of her efforts to plant trees. Even a list of martyrs for the cause.

Geared for the classroom and research, this part opens up a world of opportunities and imagination for children desiring a vocation caring for creation.

Don't miss Creation Care Kids Book List and Music List. While many links on the music list don't seem to connect, they propose an alternate list from Songs for Teaching, Earthday Songs: <https://www.songsforteaching.com/earthdaysongs/>

## National Catholic Reporter: Earthbeat

There are plenty of places to explore a Spirituality of Creation that are not so much "action steps" as inspiration for souls. One of those places is a section of National Catholic Reporter, Earthbeat, specifically dedicated to Spirituality.

<https://www.ncronline.org/earthbeat/spirituality>.

Much of it may be more for you than for your children, but you might be surprised. One story is about a composer who set Pope Francis' encyclical to music. A few samples recorded remotely during the pandemic are included in the article. Maybe you will be inspired to compose your own songs for creation for your children. After all, most of us still remember those little ditties from summer camp or even from jump rope.

You might also notice an article about God's plan for animals as a hot topic in theology. There are some theologians who are taking seriously Pope Francis' concern about the values and rights of non-human creatures. As the article suggests we tweet,

"Nearly all theologians now agree that the biblical dominion God has given human beings over creation is not a license to use and dominate, but rather a command to be caretakers and stewards."

Maybe one of the authors will open up for you a way to convey this to your family and friends. That and the issues of sustainability with current methods of farming.

<https://www.ncronline.org/news/earthbeat/gods-plan-animals-hot-topic-theology-we-can-all-understand>.

Sr. Mary Elizabeth Clark admits that some of this may be beyond the understanding of children, so she has written her own book entitled, Teaching Kids to Care for God's Creation. <https://pastoral.center/teaching-kids-to-care-for-gods-creation>. There may be a couple for new prayers for mealtime and/or bedtime that will help your children better appreciate God's creation.

Daniel Horan speaks about the problem of Global Climate Change as a Spiritual Crisis. <https://www.ncronline.org/news/opinion/faith-seeking-understanding/global-climate-change-also-spiritual-crisis>. Again this is probably a topic more for adults than children, yet as teachers of the faith, it might be your opportunity to put these ideas into simpler words to help our children, our future, find a way through this crisis.



## Legislation supported by the US Conference of Catholic Bishops

### Environmental Justice Advocacy

Writing letters may be new to your children. They are probably used to online video chats and phone calls. But the practice of writing letters, especially to members of Congress is a great way to express your own views and desires. While the children may be too young to vote, I'm sure letters they send can have as much of an impact as adults. A list of current legislation can be found here:

<https://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/environment/index.cfm#tab--latest-information>

A sample bill is the Trillion Tree and Natural Carbon Storage Act.

Representatives and sample text are provided at:

<https://www.usccb.org/resources/letter-congress-support-trillion-tree-and-natural-carbon-storage-act-april-12-2021>

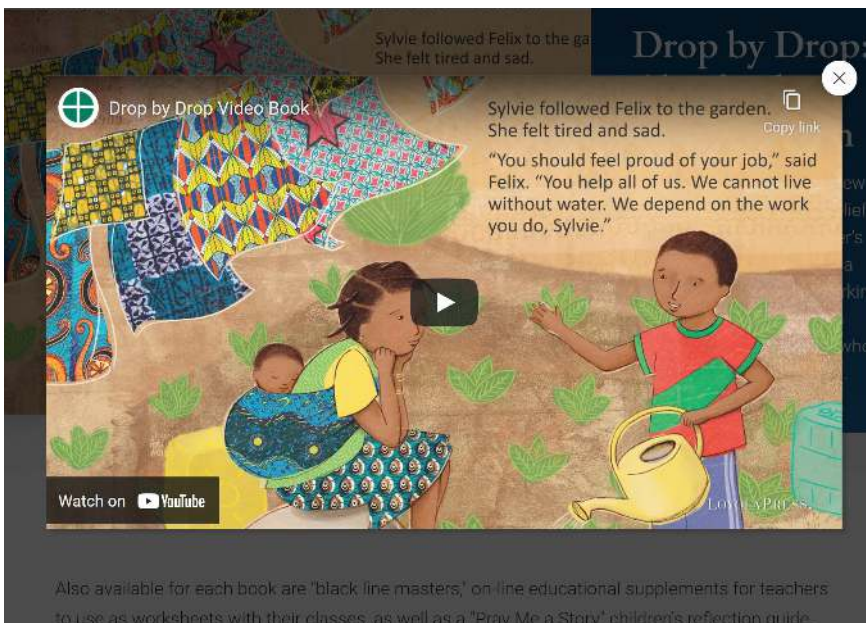
Writing on behalf of planting trees is certainly something your children can understand.

Video of Pope Francis' encyclical can be found at:

<https://www.usccb.org/resources/vatican-releases-video-popes-encyclical>

The video, with subtitles in different languages with individuals from throughout the world showcases this cause as something that impacts us all—the whole world.

May it become an opportunity to unify us, all peoples, as one community living in one home, our common home.



Also available for each book are 'black line masters,' on line educational supplements for teachers to use as worksheets with their classes, as well as a "Pray Me a Story" children's reflection guide.

## Two Feet of Love in Action Elementary School Storybooks

Moving from word to action is very hard. But the first step is imagination, to think and to believe that we can help to change the world.

The USCCB website lists a couple of books that may jumpstart that imagination. They are: **Everyone Belongs**, **Green Street Park**, and **Drop by Drop**. The last book has been made into a short video, very appropriate for understanding how much we take clean, fresh water for granted.

Books have often been the beginning of a new chapter in the lives of so many. Consider one of these or something like them as a way to open that chapter for your children today.

<https://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catholic-social-teaching/two-feet-storybooks>

The video of **Drop by Drop**  
<https://youtu.be/3QzkB23Fq0Q>

## St. Ignatius Loyola Parish

St. Ignatius Loyola Church  
2309 Gaylord St  
Denver, CO 80205

Phone: 303-322-8042  
Fax: 303-322-2927  
Email: parish@loyoladenver.org

**Finding God in All Things**

### QUERIDA AMAZONIA

Pope Francis' exhortation following the synod on the Amazon. If there is a part of creation that is threatened by humanity, it must be the Amazon. It is instructive to listen to Francis' dream for the region. (no. 7)

- I dream of an Amazon region that fights for the rights of the poor, the original peoples and the least of our brothers and sisters, where their voices can be heard and their dignity advanced.
- I dream of an Amazon region that can preserve its distinctive cultural riches, where the beauty of our humanity shines forth in so many varied ways.
- ***I dream of an Amazon region that can jealously preserve its overwhelming natural beauty and the superabundant life teeming in its rivers and forests.***
- I dream of Christian communities capable of generous commitment, incarnate in the Amazon region, and giving the Church new faces with Amazonian features.

[https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost\\_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco\\_esortazione-ap\\_20200202\\_querida-amazonia.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20200202_querida-amazonia.html)

## Scripture and Creation

Creation is often part of scripture, whether that's a miracle involved in turning water into wine, a healing of physical injury or Jesus commanding the seas to be calm. What stories, what connections do you recall in scripture? Genesis? Exodus? Revelation?



When speaking of Care for Creation, the US Bishops recommend Leviticus 25 where the land itself must be given a rest; Daniel 3 where creation proclaims the glory of God; 1Cor. 10 where all creation are inherently good because they are of the Lord. <https://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catholic-social-teaching/care-for-creation>.

But don't stop there. You'll find praise of creation in the Psalms, in the Wisdom literature and even in the command to preach the Gospel to all of creation, Mark 16.

You can spend time using a tool like [Biblegateway.com](http://Biblegateway.com) and search using words like "creation", "nature" or even "storms". You might find a snappy proverb, **"The Lord by wisdom founded the earth; by understanding he established the heavens; by his knowledge the deeps broke forth, and the clouds drop down the dew."** (Prov. 3:19-20) or come to find that Wisdom came before the beginning of the



earth (Prov. 8:22). What seems most productive is to simply search for "earth" and up pops almost a thousand different entries.

Care for Creation, recognition of God in creation, God's presence expressed in creation—it's all a part of our religious heritage, not all of which is the scary stuff we learned as children.

Search the scriptures and find the lovely lines that express God's goodness in creation, such as this verse from the Song of Solomon (2:12) **"The flowers appear on the earth, the time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land."**