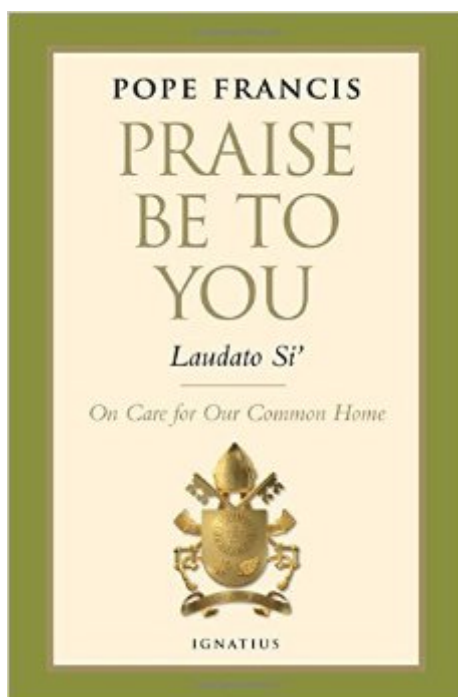


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# Praise Be To You - Laudato Si' (Encyclical Letter)



## 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.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The title *Laudato Si*™, means "Praise be unto you." The title is taken from the writings of St. Francis of Assisi, the namesake of the author of this book, Pope Francis. St. Francis of Assisi used this phrase to praise the earth and all its creatures and features as an expression of God. Just as St. Francis referred to all living creatures as our "brothers" and "sisters," the Pope issued this Encyclical to apply these sentiments to the modern day to address environmental degradation. This present book, *Laudato Si*™, is that Encyclical, a clear, passionate, devotional explanation for the modern world to realize the consequences of the degradation of the planet and a plea to cherish and rediscover the lost reverence and respect for the earth's natural environment. This book is a book on the environment like no other. Rather than recommending short-term technological or political solutions, Pope Francis states that before cleaning the environment the human race must first clean its own inner house and change its own attitude to itself and others. Disrespect for the environment is an act, and any act originates from a mental attitude. If polluting the environment is the result of a human mental attitude, it would be simple for *Laudato Si*™ to simply say, "Don't pollute." Pope Francis however goes further: What are the psychological impulses and motivations behind that attitude? Here is where *Laudato Si*™ gets interesting. Pope Francis digs deep into the human psyche to identify the psychological drives which support an attitude and act to disrespect the environment. What the Pope believes may surprise the reader.

It has been a little over three months since Pope Francis released his encyclical *Laudato si'*. People have read it and misread it; interpreted it and misinterpreted it, but it has been anything but ignored. A big reason for this is because of the "Francis effect," which is surprisingly still going fairly strong. The liberal media still are trying to convince us that he is going to "bring the Church into the 21st

Century" with women priests and accepting same-sex unions. To that I say, "Never going to happen!" We can also see their spin in their "reading" of this encyclical. They chose to focus only on the part about the environment, and completely ignored Pope Francis' message of human ecology, which includes respect for all of humanity the evils of abortion. The encyclical is not addressed to just bishops or the lay faithful (like most all encyclicals), but is instead addressed to all people. It is divided into six chapters:1. What is Happening to our Common Home2. The Gospel of Creation3. The Human Roots of the Ecological Crisis4. Integral Ecology5. Lines of Approach and Action6. Ecological Education and SpiritualityThere are many good points in this document that it is hard to pick your favorite passage. In one part, Pope Francis reminds us that the earth was here before us and has been given to us. He makes it known though that this doesn't give us the right to abuse the earth, but we must treat it as a gift from God, because that is what it is. Another part I particularly like was when he addresses our technological "progress." He goes on to list important inventions of the past two centuries and the good it has accomplished.

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