



Laudato Si' and Catholic Social Teaching

Catechists' Day November 2025

Mary and Peter Johnson

A person's hands are raised in a gesture of prayer or praise, palms facing each other. The background is a vibrant sunset or sunrise over a mountain range, with the sun low on the horizon, creating a warm, golden glow. The sky is filled with soft, orange and yellow clouds. The overall mood is spiritual and hopeful.

The role of a catechist for young people

Such a catechist is one who is called to *nurture a living, conscious and active faith* in the young people and children he/she teaches:

- to encourage them on a journey that will bring them closer to God
- to emphasise a law of love, a way to live that puts God and others first
- to guide them to make less selfish choices



A brief introduction



Laudato Si' and *Fratelli Tutti*

- interconnectedness
- prompts a **change of heart**
- encourages us to reevaluate what we do and its impact on our world and our brothers and sisters- we have choices to make
- need to listen to the 'cry of the Earth' and 'the cry of the poor' and respond – take action
- builds on Catholic Social Teaching, calling us to link the gospel message with our everyday lives

An illustration depicting the Parable of the Good Samaritan. A Samaritan, shown as a man with a beard and a blue turban, is riding a brown donkey. The donkey has a red saddle and a green blanket. The Samaritan is holding a rope that is tied around the neck of a man lying on the ground. The man on the ground has a visible wound on his forehead and appears to be in pain or unconscious. The background shows a rocky, hilly landscape with some green bushes.

Catholic Social Teaching

- modern Catholic Social Teaching originated in 1891 with the encyclical letter, *Rerum Novarum* (Pope Leo XIII)
- Pope Francis built on this with *Laudato Si'* (2015), *Fratelli Tutti* (2020), and *Let Us Dream* (2020); Pope Leo XIV is continuing his work
- it is a key part of the new religious education directory for Catholic schools
- it offers wisdom and insights on living the Gospel in today's world



What is Catholic Social Teaching?

- the dignity of each person
- solidarity
- the common good
- the preferential option for the poor
- peace
- care for creation and the environment
- the dignity of work and participation



Resources to support CST

Children's liturgy and FHC: CAFOD characters and rhymes

- <https://cafod.org.uk/education/primary-teaching-resources/cst-pack-for-children>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dLHvosRUfQc>

Confirmation

- <https://cafod.org.uk/education/secondary-and-youth-resources/cst-resources-young-people>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XNcBCPVbYDU>

A large crowd of young people, mostly teenagers and young adults, are gathered for a protest. They are holding various handmade signs. In the foreground, a large blue sign reads "Youth Strike". To the left, a sign says "CLEANUP OUR PLANET IT'S NOT A JOKE". Another sign in the background says "WHAT WE STAND FOR". A sign in the bottom right says "RISE UP BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE". The crowd is diverse in ethnicity and appearance, and many are looking towards the camera or slightly away. The background is slightly blurred, showing more people and signs.

Jesus was a rebel

in *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis is clear that 'young people demand change' LS13

Boring?

No!

If everyone put these ideas into action, the world would be transformed!

They are Radical...

Catholic Social Teaching encourages young people to think differently, question our consumer culture...

...and become the best version of themselves

‘See, judge, act’:
Laudato Si’, Fratelli Tutti,
and Catholic Social
Teaching

CAFOD videos for primary

<https://cafod.org.uk/education/primary-teaching-resources/laudato-si-for-children>

<https://cafod.org.uk/education/fratelli-tutti-for-schools>

CAFOD videos for secondary

<https://cafod.org.uk/education/secondary-and-youth-resources/secondary-school-assemblies/fratelli-tutti-secondary>

<https://cafod.org.uk/education/secondary-and-youth-resources/laudato-si-for-young-people>



*A single family living
in a common home.*



The cry of the Earth

- Pope Francis encouraged us all:
- to consider three things: spirituality, living simply, raising prophetic voice
- to 'take urgent action here and now' [LS 161]: to make changes in our lives to take care of, respect and value our 'common home'
- to work together to create a better world for future generations

Love, overflowing with small gestures of mutual care...makes itself felt in every action that seeks to build a better world' [LS 231]



Spirituality

- God has given us the earth as our home, a common home because we share it with everyone;
- we are a family, and like every family we need to work together to look after our home
- life is a gift from God
- life is wonderful and amazing
- open eyes and heart to see God's beauty
- go outside to pray as Jesus did or just spend time in God's presence
- look closely- awe and wonder
- *Do we treat it as though we have dominion over it or stewardship?*
- *How could you change?*

Gratitude and intercession

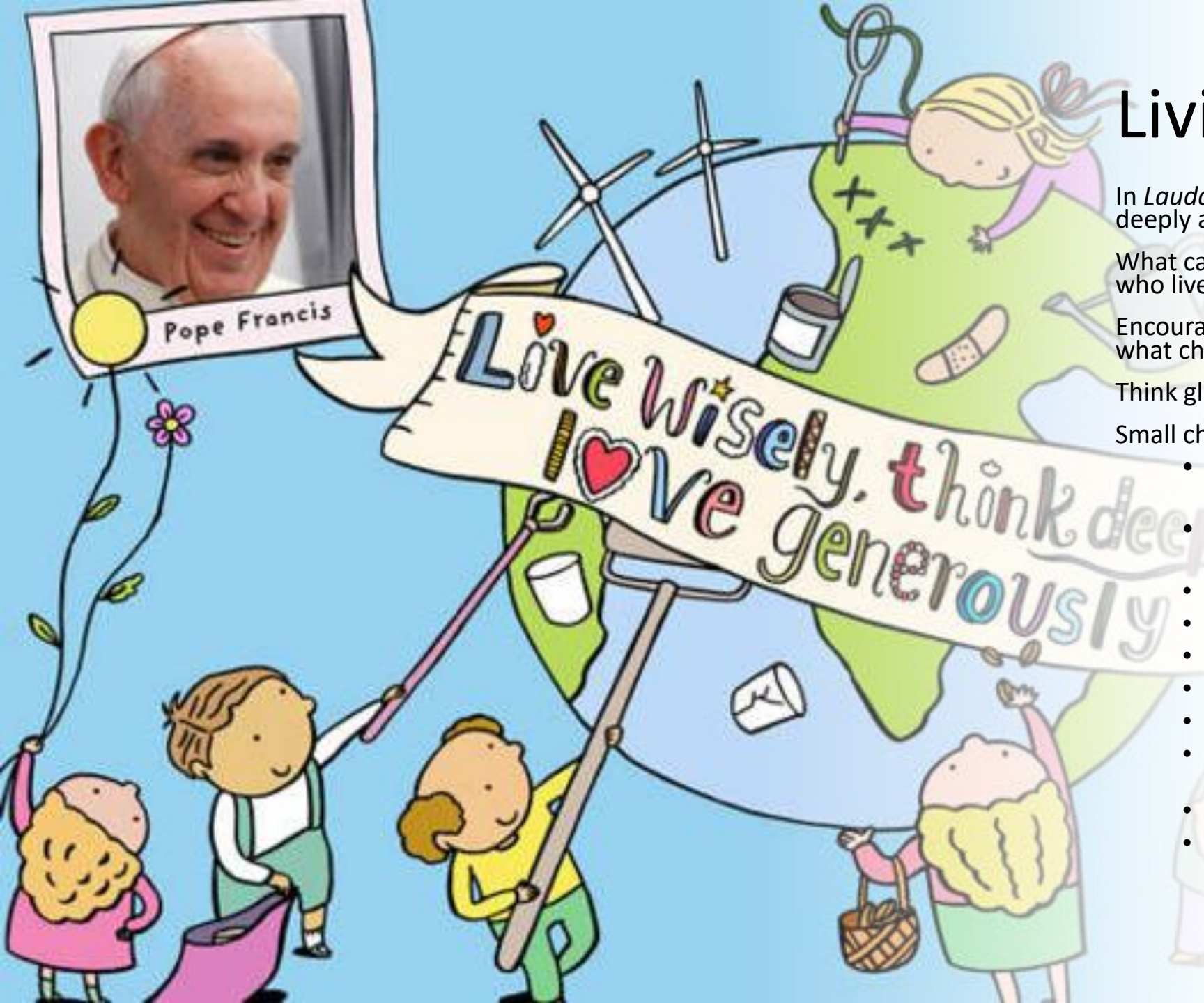
- Encourage the habit of saying 'thank you' to God when they see His creation

"Every creature is thus the object of the Father's tenderness, who gives it its place in the world" [LS 77]

- Encourage family to say grace at home
- Write their own prayers praising God or write prayers of intercession which include prayers for the environment and for poor, those on the margins, those who are different:

"The entire material universe speaks of God's love, his boundless affection for us"[LS 84]





Living simply

In *Laudato Si'* Pope Francis asks us to live wisely, think deeply and love generously.

What can they do to take good care of the Earth and all who live in it?

Encourage them to dream about sustainable world- what changes would they make

Think globally and respond locally

Small changes to life style can make a big difference

- Make eco-choices – 'LS champion handbook'
- CAFOD 'Be revolutionary' confirmation resource e.g. challenge cards
- buy less/ use less
- reduce waste
- reuse and recycle
- avoid single use plastic
- walk to school, church
- encourage tree/ bulb planting / wildflower seed bombs
- put up bug hotels /bird feeders
- CAFOD world gifts as presents to mark special occasions

The cry of the poor

- Pope Francis said that climate change affects us all, but it is the poorest communities who are suffering the most from climate change and pollution
- How can young people help those in need in their local community?
- Could they raise money to support refugees/ homeless?
- Could they arrange offertory collections that go to those in need e.g. the local food bank or relevant charities ?





Raise prophetic voice

- How can they campaign for social justice, here and elsewhere?
- write letters to MP about social issues that affect poor or environment
- invite MP/ councillors to school
- produce posters for church, school or home about issues



Resources

- <https://cafod.org.uk/pray/catholic-social-teaching>
- https://downloads.ctfassets.net/vy3axnuecuwj/B2Qpfm2kTUPeA9ytHXQaU/174970e1a29e57a1b0595993fd191a97/CAFO_D_CST_Teachers_Notes.pdf
- <https://cafod.org.uk/education/secondary-and-youth-resources/cst-resources-young-people>
- <https://cafod.org.uk/education/secondary-and-youth-resources/cst-cards-game>
- <https://cafod.org.uk/education/secondary-and-youth-resources/laudato-si-for-young-people>
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pwe_bd0TUjk Laudate Deum 2 min film
- <https://cafod.org.uk/education/laudato-si-for-schools>
- <https://cafod.org.uk/education/fratelli-tutti-for-schools>

Children's liturgy

<https://cafod.org.uk/education/children-s-liturgy?signup> for weekly resources-share



A photograph of sand dunes under a blue sky with wispy clouds. The dunes are golden-brown and have smooth, undulating shapes. The sky is a deep blue with soft, white clouds. The lighting suggests it might be late afternoon or early morning, with long shadows and warm tones.

Discussion

- What resources on CST, *Laudato Si'* or *Fratelli Tutti* do you use now in your formation group?
- Look at the suggested resources and consider how you might use them
- What will you take away?

Feedback

share resources

- https://cafod.org.uk/content/download/29670/338396/version/1/file/Laudato_Si_Colouring_In_Sheet.pdf
- **DOCAT:** Published by the YouCat Foundation, this is a version of the social doctrine of the Church for teens. It is a companion to the *YouCat* catechism and uses a question-and-answer format to apply CST to modern life.
- **CAFOD Confirmation Resources:** The Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD) offers "Be Revolutionary" Confirmation resources with videos, activities, and case studies inspired by Pope Francis. A related section, "Putting CST into practice," provides downloads with videos and activities on specific principles, such as human dignity and solidarity.
- **Chosen: Your Journey Toward Confirmation:** Available through the Diocese of Nottingham, this 22-session program includes video series, podcasts, and other materials. While not focused solely on CST, it can be supplemented with related resources.
- **Mission Together Resources:** This organization offers CST materials specifically for youth, including worksheets, prayers, and even a song called "The Wonderfully Made Mambo" to teach the principles in a joyful way.
- **Interactive and activity-based resources**
- **Simulation Exercises:** The magazine *Catechist* suggests activities to help teens empathize with marginalized people. Examples include being "evicted" from their locker for a day to simulate homelessness or using cotton balls and plastic wrap to understand sensory impairments.
- **Discussion Questions and Worksheets:** Ave Maria Press and The Religion Teacher offer downloadable discussion questions and worksheets related to Confirmation. These can be adapted to focus on CST themes, connecting the Gifts of the Holy Spirit to putting faith into action.
- **RE Resources from SDC:** These downloadable worksheets, session plans, and PowerPoints cover topics relevant to Confirmation. Catechists can integrate CST by including modules that explore the Church as a community of believers and saints as models of faith.
- **Youth Emmaus:** This program is broken into 13 sessions that can be used or adapted. The module "Living the Christian Life" is a natural place to incorporate the principles of Catholic Social Teaching.
- **Discussion starters and talking points**
- **The Vocation of Discipleship:** When reviewing the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, emphasize that Confirmation is connected to discipleship and mission. Discuss how the gifts empower candidates to live out CST and serve others.
- **Parents as Catechists:** For programs that involve families, resources can help parents talk with their teens about CST. St. Paul's Centre for Catholic Studies suggests that parents first develop their own faith to better discuss spiritual issues with their children.
- **Sacrament-Specific Reflection:** Use Confirmation preparation resources to discuss the candidates' role as "soldiers of Christ." This concept can be framed in the context of being a witness for Christ and spreading the Good News to others, which includes addressing social issues.
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Hope

- Jubilee year of hope
- *Laudato Si'*, in particular, deals with many environmental issues including pollution; climate change; water; loss of biodiversity and decline in the quality of human life.
- Young people can feel overwhelmed: encourage them with good news and the fact that God is with us
- We are an Easter people
- We can change and we can make a difference even with small changes if we all work together for the common good
- Prayer and work...