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LAUDATO SI'

Stations of the Cross

SOLIDARITY WITH BROTHERS AND SISTERS
SOLIDARITY WITH EARTH AS OUR MOTHER
AND ALL SHE HOLDS AS OUR KIN

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Laudato Si' Stations of the Cross

SOLIDARITY WITH BROTHERS AND SISTERS SOLIDARITY WITH EARTH AS OUR MOTHER AND ALL SHE HOLDS AS OUR KIN By Fr Charles Rue SSC

INTRODUCTION



In 2015 Pope Francis wrote the Encyclical letter, [*Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home*](#). He wrote that he wanted not only to clarify Catholic Social Teaching on the environment but advance it. Looking to reality, he linked the suffering of marginalised people with the disruption of the life-support systems of Earth: the twin cry of poor people and Earth itself.

Pope Francis invited all believers and people of good will: to **SEE** the disruption of the support systems of planet Earth which underpin human and all species that call it home; to **JUDGE** that human self-absorbed lifestyles and the dictatorship of economic greed combine to cause the cries of pain rising up from the Earth and the poor; and to **ACT**-pray-listen leading us to change our minds and ways of living, to love every part of creation with passion.

The Stations of the Cross is a traditional Catholic devotion – the Way of the Cross accompanying Jesus. It shows us the self-giving of God's own self in love. The Stations move us to join with the mental trauma and physical suffering of Jesus on his way to Calvary, and to encounter Jesus in our lives and times. By his Cross and Resurrection Jesus made a New Creation.

As the Christ, Jesus transformed people in mind and heart, and gave them the power to be in solidarity with each other, to forgive and make things right. Jesus re-united humanity with the natural world claiming it as the common home of all people and all natural species. Peoples unite in finding God present in the cosmos and Earth as the first revelation of a spiritual world, and rejoice.

This Way of the Cross leads us to conversion. It is a medium of involvement. We are reconciled not only with our sisters and brothers but with Earth and all it holds. It helps us live with hope in our hearts.

INVITATION TO ADD LOCAL ADDITIONS

We join with the thoughts and feelings of Jesus as we journey together to Calvary. We make our own both the trauma of Jesus in the Way of the Cross and the power of new life brought by his Resurrection.

We are called to bring our day to day life to the Way of the Cross. We join our personal joys and hopes, our fear and anxiety to the person of Jesus. We bring our community experiences of work and study. Family and relationships are the context of our prayer. Our real lives connect with the reality of Jesus in the Stations of the Cross. They take on the smell of the sheep as Pope Francis says.

You are invited to add your reflections and capture images of the life of your town or suburb – mining or farming town, immigrant or settled suburb. Your reflections and images become applied theology.

Groups could workshop the Stations by creating 'art' for each Station.



OPENING PRAYER

God, Creative and Loving, Just but Compassionate, may we claim the Cross as our own. As we meditate on the Suffering, Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ in this Way of the Cross, may your promise of a New Creation become a reality in our lives and our world. Help us to be converted to solidarity with our Brothers and Sisters, with your Earth and all it upholds as our kin. Send your Spirit among us. May our words of care and love flow through to actions. May your glory better shine in our lives and the Cosmos.

HYMN

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

(repeat)

Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

[the hymn is repeated at each Station with a first line variation]

1) THE AGONY IN THE GARDEN

(All bow and say)

We adore you O Christ and we praise you, because by your Cross and Resurrection you have set us free.

You are the Saviour of the world.

[this proclamation is repeated at each Station]

READER

They came to a small estate called Gethsemane ... he said, my soul is sorrowful unto death. Wait and keep awake ... He threw himself on the ground praying, Father ... take this cup away from me, but let it be as you will ... He came back and found the disciples asleep ... Had you not the strength to stay awake one hour? Mk 14:32-37

LET US PRAY FOR PEOPLE AND THE EARTH

Lord Jesus, you feel sad unto death in your Brothers and Sisters burdened by the legacy of history and a changing world: alienated from a sense of belonging, not at home with themselves or each other in a changing social and economic order. Jesus, you are saddened when we waste your Father's gifts of Earth and without thinking burden it with the wastes of our lifestyle. Let us feel the pain of the marginalised in our society, the cheated and deceived. Let us feel with the groaning of this land Australia. Make this an hour of conversion for us.

HYMN

Were you there when he prayed all alone?

(Repeat as per Introduction)



2) JESUS BETRAYED AND ARRESTED

(All bow and say)

We adore you O Christ ...

READER

Judas, one of the twelve came with armed men ... he went straight up to Jesus saying, Rabbi, and kissed him. Others seized him ... Jesus said, "Am I a brigand that you set out to capture me with swords?" ... but this fulfils the Scriptures Mk 14:43, 45, 48-49

LET US PRAY FOR PEOPLE AND THE EARTH

Lord Jesus, you feel pain when good people in our day are betrayed – like those people who train to gain work skills but can find no job or who join a justice campaign which fails. We too betray you when we invest our money and cast our vote out of pure self-interest, unthinking in following a trend to



build walls of security around ourselves. Give us the courage to take responsibility within our society, and not sell our souls for thirty pieces of silver.

HYMN

Were you there when they seized the Man of Peace?
(Repeat as per Introduction)



3) JESUS IS CONDEMNED TO DEATH

(All bow and say)

We adore you O Christ ...

READER

They led Jesus off to the high priest ... the whole Sanhedrin were looking for evidence against Jesus in order to have him executed. But they could not find any ... The high priest put a second question to Jesus saying, Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One? I am, said Jesus ... You heard the blasphemy. What is your finding? Their verdict was unanimous: he deserved to die. Mk 14:53, 55-56, 61-62, 64

LET US PRAY FOR PEOPLE AND THE EARTH

Lord Jesus, our lies and unjust judgements enslave people. Our greed and extravagant plans exploit land and sea beyond its capacity to recover. We sacrifice both humanity and Earth's creatures in the name of 'progress'. Sadly, like the Sanhedrin, we can use religion to justify our actions. Help us to make just laws, protecting people and nature, giving them a chance to grow into the fullness you planned. Life! Lord, Life!

HYMN

Were you there when they sent Him to his death?
(Repeat as per Introduction)



4) PETER DENIES JESUS

(All bow and say)

We adore you O Christ ...

READER

As Peter was sitting by the fireplace a servant-girl saw him, peered at him, and said, This man was with him too. But he denied it. Woman, I do not know him ... At that instant, while he was still speaking, the cock crowed, and Jesus turned and looked straight at Peter, and he remembered the Lord's words ... Before the cock crows today, you will have disowned me three times. Peter went outside and wept bitterly. Lk 22: 56-57, 61-62

LET US PRAY FOR PEOPLE AND THE EARTH

Lord Jesus, just like Peter, we deny our Oneness with you when we deny that we are related to all peoples, and when we deny that we are kin to all species as part of your creation. Let us see the eyes of Jesus in all who turn to us – the migrant and homeless, the lonely and mentally sick. Let us see that God's glory is not dimmed in each species we send to extinction. Let us claim you Lord.

HYMN

Were you there when the Rock denied his friend?
(Repeat as per Introduction)





5] JESUS BEFORE PILATE

(All bow and say)

We adore you O Christ ...

READER

They had Jesus bound and took him away and handed him over to Pilate. He asked, Are you the king of the Jews? Jesus replied, It is you who say it. ... Pilate realised it was out of jealousy that the chief priests had handed Jesus over and asked ... what am I to do with the man you call king of the Jews? They shouted back, Crucify him! Crucify him! Mk 15:1-2, 10, 13

LET US PRAY FOR PEOPLE AND THE EARTH

Lord Jesus, we too shout for your death when we make kings of money and media images; when we sanction clear felling of forests or coral broken and scattered on the sea bed. May we not fear to defend people who have no voice in our society, or fear to speak for poor nations manipulated by international brokers. May we not fear to speak out against destroying the planet since it cannot speak for itself. Help us cry, No Crucifixion!

HYMN

Were you there when they cried crucify?

(Repeat as per Introduction)



6) JESUS WHIPPED AND CROWNED WITH THORNS

(All bow and say)

We adore you O Christ ...

READER

Pilate handed Jesus over to be crucified. The soldiers led him away ... They dressed him in purple,

twisted some thorns into a crown and put it on him. And they began saluting him, Hail, king of the Jews! They struck his head with a reed and spat on him; and they went down on their knees to do him homage. ... making fun of him. Mt 15:16-19

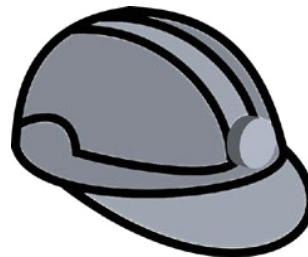
LET US PRAY FOR PEOPLE AND THE EARTH

Lord Jesus, we make fun of people and cultures different from ours - because of the way they dress, the colours they choose or the laws they value. We mock your creation as we drain water courses or scar hills with houses. Stop us putting the mark of Cain upon people we do not understand. Stop us putting the thorns of wrong development on our farms and coastal lands. Lord, may we not be unthinking followers of trends but bring you wisdom to dialogue – respect and awe. Come Holy Spirit.

HYMN

Were you there when they crowned his head with thorns?

(Repeat as per Introduction)



7) JESUS TAKES UP HIS CROSS, SIMON HELPS

(All bow and say)

We adore you O Christ ...

READER

The soldiers dressed Jesus in his own clothes. They led him out to crucify him. They enlisted a passer-by, Simon of Cyrene, father of Alexander and Rufus, who was coming in from the country, to carry his cross. Mk 15:20-21



LET US PRAY FOR PEOPLE AND THE EARTH

Lord Jesus, in un-monitored factories and restaurants, on farms and un-flagged ships we allow owners to exploit poor workers in poor nations. Abuse of land, forest and oceans become collateral damage. Just as Simon of Cyrene helped Jesus may our loving service of others soften impersonal institutions. May just laws break the 'dictatorship of economics'. Jesus, to help us carry your Cross, help us create alternative ways for people to earn a living where they can hold their head up and look others in the eye.

HYMN

Were you there when Simon shared his Cross?
(Repeat as per Introduction)



8) JESUS SPEAKS WITH THE WOMEN (All bow and say)

We adore you O Christ ...

READER

Large numbers of people followed him, and women who mourned and lamented for him. But Jesus turned to them and said, Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep rather for yourselves and for your children. For look, the days are surely coming ... when people will say to the mountains, Fall on us!; to the hills, Cover us!. Lk 23:27-28, 30

LET US PRAY FOR PEOPLE AND THE EARTH

Lord Jesus, single parents weep, worried for their children's health and schooling. May we seek gentle ways of caring for future generations: helping people to gladly bring children into this world; never driving our children to cynicism or despair. Ecologists tell us to weep over sterile soils and species lost, to respect and love the Earth so that it continues in due season

to bring soothing rain to make it bloom. Sustain us in Hope.

HYMN

Were you there when the women wept for Him?
(Repeat as per Introduction)



9) JESUS IS CRUCIFIED (All bow and say)

We adore you O Christ ...

READER

They brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha, which means the place of the skull. They offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he refused it. Then they crucified him, and shared out his clothing, casting lots to decide what each should get. It was the third hour when they crucified him. The inscription giving the charge against him read, The King of the Jews. Mk 15:22-26

LET US PRAY FOR PEOPLE AND THE EARTH

Lord Jesus, we strip and crucify you again when we strip people of opportunity and dignity, or when we take an unequal share of Earth's goods. We strip the Earth of soil, her life blood, or strip it of trees and animals, her breath and adornment. May we work with the Earth and not against it, so that every person can have at least enough for their basic human needs. May we become neither robbers nor beggars.

HYMN

Were you there when they nailed Him to the tree?
(Repeat as per Introduction)



10) JESUS HUNG BETWEEN TWO CRIMINALS

(All bow and say)

We adore you O Christ ...

READER

They crucified him and the two criminals, one on his right, the other on his left ... One of the criminals hanging there abused him: Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us as well. But the other spoke up ... we are paying for what we did. But this man has done nothing wrong. Then he said, Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom. Jesus answered, In truth I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.

Lk 23:33, 39, 41-43

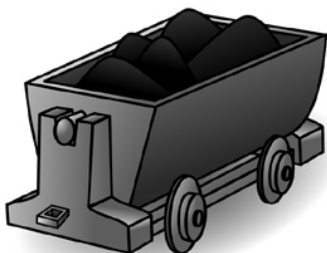
LET US PRAY FOR PEOPLE AND THE EARTH

Lord Jesus, we abuse you whenever we are jealous of others, blaming everyone but ourselves when our grandiose plans fail. Help us break cycles of ignorance and hate which lead to violence. Give us genuine hope that sees suffering as part of a new creation. May we humbly learn the calmness of wisdom that cares for ourselves, others and the Earth itself. Thy Kingdom come!

HYMN

Were you there when He hung between two thieves?

(Repeat as per Introduction)



11) MARY GIVEN AS OUR MOTHER IN JOHN

(All bow and say)

We adore you O Christ ...

READER

Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdala. Seeing his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing near her, Jesus said to his mother, Woman, this is your son. Then to the disciple he said, This is your mother. And from that hour the disciple took her into his home.

Jn 19:25-27

LET US PRAY FOR PEOPLE AND THE EARTH

Lord Jesus, we break up families, treating people like animals and production units to be migrated around the world. Daily we pollute the skies, the oceans and pour poisons on our common home, the Earth. Give us a mother's compassion towards all people we meet. Help us to love Earth as a nurturing Mother to this and future generations. May the motherly heart of Mary be in all of us.

HYMN

Were you there when he gave us His Mother?

(Repeat as per Introduction)





12) JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS

(All bow and say)

We adore you O Christ ...

READER

From noon onward, darkness came over the whole land ... And about three o'clock Jesus cried out in a loud voice, 'Eli, Eli, lema sabachthan', which means, My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? ... Jesus cried out again in a loud voice, and gave up his spirit. And behold, the veil of the sanctuary was torn in two from top to bottom. ... The centurion and the men with him who were keeping watch over Jesus feared greatly when they saw the Earthquake and all that was happening, and they said, Truly, this was the Son of God!
Mk 27:45-46, 51, 54

LET US PRAY FOR PEOPLE AND THE EARTH

Lord Jesus, like your own premature death, there are many early deaths in Australia from a history of original dispossession, family violence and preventable work accidents. Abuse of the gifts of nature has meant death to many species. Let us pace social change and time developments more in accord with natural rhythms. You are Lord of Life and Death. May we be Pro-Life in all ways.

HYMN

Were you there when He died for the love of us?
(Repeat as per Introduction)



13) THE SIDE OF JESUS IS PIERCED

(All bow and say)

We adore you O Christ ...

READER

It was the Day of Preparation, and to avoid the bodies' remaining on the cross during the Sabbath -- since that Sabbath was a day of special solemnity -- the Jews asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken away. ... When they came to Jesus, they saw he was already dead ... the soldiers pierced his side with a lance; and immediately there came out blood and water.

Jn 19:31-34

LET US PRAY FOR PEOPLE AND THE EARTH

Lord Jesus, the blood of native people and convicts, farmers and miners, nurses and soldiers, even innocent bystanders have soaked our land. The blood of Australian soil has flowed as the price of wealth for an expanding elite. May the Water of baptism flowing from your side wash away our sins. In Your Name, may the power of your Blood make us defenders of all life on Earth as one seamless garment.

HYMN

Were you there when his side flowed blood and water?

(Repeat as per Introduction)



14) JESUS IS PLACED IN THE TOMB

(All bow and say)

We adore you O Christ ...

READER

When it was evening, there came a rich man of Arimathaea, called Joseph, who had himself become a disciple of Jesus. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus ... Joseph took the



body, wrapped it in a clean shroud and put it in his own new tomb which he had hewn out of the rock. He then rolled a large stone across the entrance of the tomb and went away
Mt 27:57-60

LET US PRAY FOR PEOPLE AND THE EARTH

Lord Jesus, may we be inspired by the passion of nation builders and community leaders, educators and medical people, farmers and factory workers, young and old, women and men who have died for love of their brothers and sisters and for love of this land. They have kept hope alive. Let us not bury our talents in fear, or bury our nation in carping criticism. Give us your Spirit Lord.

HYMN

Were you there when they laid Him in the tomb?
 (Repeat as per Introduction)



15) JESUS RISES FROM TH DEAD
 (All bow and say)

We adore you O Christ ...

READER

After the Sabbath, and towards dawn on the first day of the week, Mary of Magdala and the other Mary went to visit the sepulchre. ... an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled away the stone. ... the angel spoke and he said to the women, There is no need for you to be afraid. I know you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here, for he has risen, as he said he would. Come and see the place where he lay, then go quickly and tell his disciples, He has risen from the dead Mt 28:1-2, 5-7

LET US PRAY FOR PEOPLE AND THE EARTH

Lord Jesus, all peoples and the Earth groan in pain to be set free. We believe you are the First Born of a New Creation. Today, in praying these Stations of the Cross you set before us a choice, life or death. We believe that as all creation moves towards its fulfilment it reveals you more clearly and reflects your glory. Your Power shows in us, our words and deeds as co-creators with you as human society and Earth evolve. Personally and with others, let us live in justice and compassion, in awe and hope. Let every nation praise you.

HYMN

*Were you there when He rose up from the dead?
 Were you there when He rose up from the dead?
 O, sometimes it causes me to sing Glory! Glory!
 Were you there when He rose up from the dead?*



FINAL BLESSING

May God bless you, Father, Son and Spirit descend on us and remain within us always. Let us go in peace to love and serve the Lord in all creation. Thanks be to God.

END



BACKGROUND AND RESOURCES

LAUDATO SI'

A homilist or speaker may wish to **connect the Stations of the Cross to the encyclical of Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*** about Earth as our common home. Care needs to be taken since commentary may become long and heavy in exploring issues raised by Pope Francis

Recently the National Catholic Reporter (NCR) suggested **some *Laudato Si'* themes**: "The environment is part of a logic of receptivity. **It is on loan to each generation**, which must then hand it on to the next." "Both everyday experience and scientific research show that the gravest effects of all attacks on the environment are **suffered by the poorest.**"

"Peace, justice and the preservation of creation are **three absolutely interconnected themes**, which cannot be separated and treated individually without once again falling into reductionism."

"The Spirit of **life dwells in every living creature** and calls us to enter into relationship with him. Discovering this presence leads us to cultivate the 'ecological virtues.'"

"To sense **each creature singing the hymn of its existence** is to live joyfully in God's love and hope." — from the encyclical *Laudato si'*

Gospel at the core of *Laudato Si'* Teaching - Extract from [Eucharist and Laudato Si'](#) p. 11, Charles Rue, Columban Mission, 2017

The distinction between care for creation as God's blessings and concern for ecological problems per se is clear in *Laudato Si'*.

- While Pope Francis recognises the major problems of pollution, climate change, water and loss of biodiversity (LS#17-42), he has an equally long section that puts these problems in the context of the declining quality of human life and breakdown of society, global inequality and weak social responses leading to divided opinions on what to do (LS #43-61).
- Having outlined several environmental problems, the Pope's emphasis is to reflect on them in the light of the Gospel of Creation, He wants to refute distorted ideas about human dominion as a mistaken interpretation of Scripture (LS #62-100).
- Then presenting a Christian anthropology, the Pope examines the human roots of the ecological crisis, particularly the arrogance associated with

human self centredness and mistaken ideas about progress based on the power of technology (LS #101-136).

- From a faith perspective the Pope then identifies a revolutionary new social reading of the environmental crisis under the banner of 'integral ecology' (LS #137-162).
- He decidedly puts Church communities into the field of dialogue, beginning with science, and calls for respectful dialogue with the international community to develop approaches to common action (LS #163-201).
- The Pope concludes his revolutionary new social teaching with a call for ecological education and ecological spirituality leading to 'ecological conversion', changed lifestyles and a new Covenant between humanity and the environment (LS #202-221).
- The fruit of this new Covenant is lives of joy and peace in a loving society, celebrating in prayer a new found relationship between the Trinity and creation (LS #222-246).

A hopeful vision of creation blessings is key to reading the Pope's encyclical. This leads to prayer-filled creation spirituality.

RESOURCE LINKS

- [Eucharist and LC 2017](#) Season of Creation section for September Sundays
- Prayer song 'Thank You' for earth utube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VJzoZuxxMlo>
- Love Earth <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZSnOXbaXzfM>
- <https://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/bigideas/radical-histories-for-uncanny-times/10559814> Tom Griffiths ANU - Tom Berry like theological history on Big Ideas
- [Climate Change and faith response – Let the Son Shine](#) update that pulls together many past documents and explores related issues
- Catholic Earthcare Australia Resources <http://catholicearthcare.org.au/resources>
- Rahamim Ecology Centre environmental education, spirituality and advocacy ministry of the Sisters of Mercy Bathurst <http://www.rahamim.org.au/>
- Wollongong Schools Office - *Laudato Si'* <https://www.dow.catholic.edu.au/catholic-education/wen/>

et alia

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