



We Mercies

Care for Creation

As we take the first step, let us remember the traditional custodians of the land

CARE FOR OUR COMMON HOME

Have you read *Laudato Si'* yet? It was the first anniversary of its proclamation on May 24th and inspired many positive commentaries. The care for our common home – which Pope Francis made the subject of his first fully authored encyclical – is one way in which we can address the joint issues of caring for the planet and helping to alleviate the plight of the poor.

[Catholic Earthcare Australia](#) has been inundated with invitations and requests for support, with hundreds of schools, parishes and Catholic organisations exploring ways to bring *Laudato Si'* into their lives. *Laudato Si'* has not just called Catholics to respond to the ecological crisis; it has been a call to every living person on the planet. Inspired by Pope Francis' leadership, people of other faith or no traditions have developed climate declarations from their own traditions, including the [Islamic Declaration on Climate Change](#) and the [Hindu Declaration on Climate Change](#).

These words are taken from a biography of the pope, *The Great Reformer The making of a radical pope*, by Austen Ivereigh.

His bold, excoriating...encyclical letter on the environment...may be Francis's greatest legacy. In linking the damage to the planet and the plight of the poor, in calling on the wealthy to drastically alter their lives to avoid impending disaster, he made climate change a primary moral issue. It was a very bergogliano mix of the spiritual and the political, wading fearlessly into the science, critiquing a model of economic growth underpinned by frenetic consumption, and challenging environmentalists to care about abortion as well as deforestation. ...bracing in its call for an "integral ecology" capable of restoring man's lost connectedness with God and the earth, the document's radicality, poetic beauty, and theological depth took the Church and the world by surprise. Laudato Si' was a landmark in Catholic social teaching, arguably the greatest since Leo XIII's Rerum Novarum in 1891.



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Ed. Anne McLay

WHAT MIGHT WE DO?

The Brisbane Times recently published an article titled

Eating to cool the planet – are you ready for a climatarian diet?

They cited a study from Oxford University saying that if we ate smaller amounts of meat and more veg we'd shrink food related greenhouse gas emissions by a third.

According to Monash University's Sustainability Institute the top of the list is to eat less red meat.

This is because, they say, cattle and sheep both generate so much greenhouse gas.

"To produce one kilo of protein from beef generates the greenhouse gas equivalent of 300 kilos of carbon dioxide....By comparison chicken and pork produce less – the greenhouse gas equivalent of below 100 kilos of carbon dioxide."

They also urge us to look at how the food is produced – the more processing, packaging and transport involved the more it contributes to greenhouse emissions.

"We need to be conscious of food miles and buy food that's in season and as close to home as possible."

When it comes to reducing greenhouse gases, legumes are a star. Producing a kilo of legumes emits the equivalent of just 0.5kg of carbon dioxide.

Save beef or lamb for special occasions, is the message of the **Less Meat Less Heat** campaign. www.lessmeatlessheat.org.

