

PRESS RELEASE
FROM: FABC CENTRAL SECRETARIAT AND THE ARCHDIOCESE OF BOMBAY
PRESS OFFICE

TO: THE FABC FAMILY
DATE: 18 JUNE 2015
SUBJECT: PUBLICATION OF POPE FRANCIS' ENCYCLICAL
"LAUDATO SII"
ON THE CARE OF OUR COMMON HOME

"*Laudato Sii*, On the Care of our Common Home" is the name of Pope Francis' much awaited Encyclical on Climate Change, which was released today, June 18th, 2015

Although Pope St John Paul II had spoken about the importance of the Care for Creation and Pope Benedict XVI had referred to it so often that he was called the Green Pope, Pope Francis is the first Pope to have devoted an encyclical entirely to this topic.

The Encyclical, comprising 6 Chapters with 246 Articles, expresses a sense of distress at the dangerous situation which is developing, stresses the importance and urgency of finding a solution and urges world leaders to take responsible decisions. It develops a spirituality for our times to respond to this crisis. Pope Francis seeks to bring ethics and morality into the discussion on climate change and a sense of responsibility towards future generations in our use of the riches of nature. It challenges world leaders to care particularly for the poor and not to let economics be the deciding factor for policies.

As Cardinal Turkson, the president of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace explains, "This encyclical letter explores the relationship between care for creation, integral human development and concern for the poor. The timing of the encyclical is significant: 2015 is a critical year for humanity. In July, nations will gather for the Third International Conference on Financing for Development in Addis Ababa. In September, the U.N. General Assembly should agree on a new set of sustainable development goals running until 2030. In December, the Climate Change Conference in Paris will receive the plans and commitments of each Government to slow or reduce global warming. The coming 10 months are crucial, then, for decisions about international development, human flourishing and care for the common home we call planet Earth."

The Encyclical will be studied at the FABC level through the newly established FABC Climate Change Desk and accompanying Committee. Presently four FABC Climate Change Regional Seminars for South, South East, East and Central Asia, have been organized to raise awareness of both the scientific and moral reasons for protecting God's Creation as outlined in the Encyclical and to promote the establishment of Climate Change Desks in each Episcopal Conference which can serve as a structure for the study of the Encyclical and create concrete plans of action for each country in the FABC territory.

On the eve of the release of the Encyclical, Pope Francis mentioned that tomorrow (June 18) the Encyclical on the care of creation, our “common home”, will be published. “Our home is being ruined and this damages everyone, especially the poorest. I therefore make an appeal for responsibility, on the basis of the task that God assigned to the human being in creation: 'to tend and to keep' the 'garden' in which He placed him. I invite everyone to welcome with an open heart this Document which is in line with the social doctrine of the Church”.

This Press Release was prepared by the Press Office of the Archdiocese of Bombay and the FABC Central Secretariat

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