

Mission Intention

SEPTEMBER

2020 - 2021

Country Focus: Republic of Kiribati

Education for
Community Life

Pope Francis' September Prayer Intention

We pray that Earth's resources will not be misused, but be shared equally and respectfully by all.



CENTER for MISSION

Society for the Propagation of the Faith / St. Paul and Minneapolis

Promoting Knowledge
of Faith

God's Word for Mission

"The Lord God then took the man and settled him in the Garden of Eden, to cultivate and care for it." (Genesis 2:15)

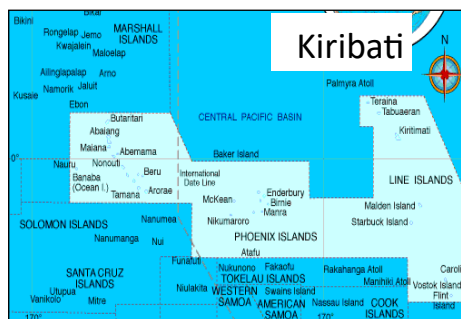
"The environment is God's gift to everyone, and in our use of it we have a responsibility towards the poor, towards future generations and towards humanity as a whole... Our duties towards the environment are linked to our duties towards the human person, considered in himself and in relation to others." (Pope Benedict XVI, Charity in Truth [Caritas in Veritate], nos. 48, 51).

What would you do if your home was at risk of disappearing due to rising sea levels?

For the people living in the Republic of Kiribati, a chain of 33 islands located in the Pacific Ocean between Hawaii and Australia, this question is one they have been thinking about for many years. Kiribati's islands are low-lying, and the country could lose much of its land if sea levels rise. One of the ways the Republic of Kiribati has tried to address this is by purchasing land in nearby Fiji to provide food security and a place of refuge in case its citizens, who number more than 100,000, are no longer able to live in their own country.

We can also make decisions in our daily lives that will help people in places like the Republic of Kiribati who are at risk due to the effects of

climate change. Simple changes like using refillable water bottles, reusable shopping bags, and reusable containers for lunches are ways to help the environment. Being familiar with the Church's teaching on care for creation can also help guide us in being good stewards of the environment. More information on care for creation can be found in this month's newsletter. Most importantly, we can join Pope Francis in prayer this month and pray for the just sharing of Earth's resources.



Pope Francis

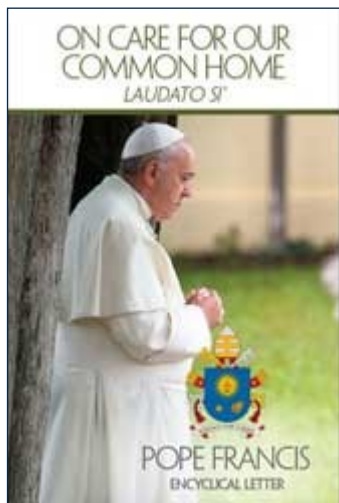


During his papacy, Pope Francis has taught about the importance of caring for our common home. In 2015, he wrote the encyclical "Laudato Si'" encouraging everyone to consider how their actions affect our shared planet. He even chose his papal name, "Francis," in honor of St. Francis of Assisi, partly because of St. Francis of Assisi's love for creation.

Pope Francis was born on December 17, 1936. His family had immigrated to Argentina from Italy, and his father was an accountant. He graduated as a chemical technician before discerning the priesthood. He was ordained a priest on December 13, 1969, and made his final profession with the Jesuits on April 22, 1973. He became the Archbishop of Buenos Aires on February 28, 1998, and then was elected Supreme Pontiff on March 13, 2013. He is the first Pope from the Americas. He is known for living a simple lifestyle in solidarity with the poor.

Pope Francis challenges all of us to be good stewards of God's creation. Being "protectors of God's handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience" (*Laudato Si'*, no. 217). He asks us to consider "What kind of world we want to leave to those who come after us, to children who are now growing up?" (*Laudato Si'*, no. 160). Let us follow the example and guidance of Pope Francis and reflect on "the impact of our every action and personal decision on the world around us" (*Laudato Si'*, no. 208). Doing so will help give us the hope that "we will truly be able to develop a different lifestyle and bring about significant changes in society" (*Laudato Si'*, no. 208).

Care for Creation



The Church teaches that all Catholics are called to care for creation. Caring for creation is how we show our gratitude to God for God's gift of creation, and also how we show our concern for our brothers and sisters around the world.

In his encyclical *Laudato Si'*, which celebrates its fifth anniversary this year, Pope Francis teaches us that caring for creation and caring for the poor are connected. When we consider how best to be good stewards of creation, we must do so in a way that allows us "to hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor" (*Laudato Si'*, no. 49). This is because when we fail to take care of creation, the poor can be the most affected: "For example, the depletion of fishing reserves especially hurts small fishing communities without the means to replace those resources; water pollution particularly affects the poor who cannot buy

bottled water; and rises in the sea level mainly affect impoverished coastal populations who have nowhere to go" (*Laudato Si'*, no. 48). This is why it is important that the Earth's resources are shared equally and respectfully by all, and why Pope Francis asks us to pray during the month of September that the Earth's resources not be misused. We have been asked by God to be the stewards of God's creation and make sure that all people, now and yet to come, have access to the resources they need to ensure their right to life and human dignity.

In this month's video, we will learn more about Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si'*. As you watch the video, consider how caring for creation and caring for the poor are connected, and think of steps you might take to help keep our planet healthy for current and future generations.

Care for our Common Home [Click Here >>](#)

1. Why does Pope Francis teach us that caring for creation and caring for the poor are connected?
2. Name two ways you can be a better steward of God's creation.
3. Why is it important to also think of future generations when we consider how we use Earth's resources?
4. Why are Catholics called to care for creation?



Mission Petitions

- ✚ Let us pray that all Earth's citizens act to protect God's gift of creation.
- ✚ Let us pray for an end to the suffering of the poor and the healing of all creation.
- ✚ Let us pray for the safety and well-being of those living in the Republic of Kiribati and other areas at risk due to climate change.
- ✚ Let us pray for the understanding that all of creation is connected, and the willingness to view God's gift with wonder.

Dear God,

Thank you for the gift of your creation, and the witness it gives to your great love. Allow us to see your creation as a gift for all generations, and help us create a world in which the Earth's resources are shared equally by all. Amen.