



Seeds of Hope

May 19-26, 2024

A Contemplative Guide to Laudato Si' Week 2024

The 2023 Apostolic Exhortation *Laudate Deum* amplified the urgent call of *Laudato Si'* to ecological conversion, to a “pilgrimage of reconciliation with the world that is our home .” The theme of Laudato Si' Week 2024, *Seeds of Hope*, calls to mind the words of Meister Eckhart, “What we plant in the soil of contemplation, we shall reap in the harvest of action.” We invite you to a daily period of contemplative prayer during Laudato Si' Week 2024, to a daily planting of the seeds of hope in the soil of contemplation. If you can, pray outside. Begin your prayer by becoming aware of your place in the communion of Creation. Press your feet into the ground. Become conscious of your breathing. Feel the sun or breeze on your skin. Listen for the voices of other creatures. When you feel centered, read the day’s quotes from *Laudato Si'* or *Laudate Deum* and from the other authors. How do they relate to each other? Pick a word or phrase that calls to you. Let that word draw you into silence. Let the seed of hope sink into the soil of contemplation. What are you called to reap in the harvest of action?

**Office of Peace, Justice and the Integrity of Creation, Sisters of Charity of New York
Office of Peace, Justice, and Ecological Integrity, Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth**

Pentecost Sunday, May 19

“Hence, “the creatures of this world no longer appear to us under merely natural guise because the risen One is mysteriously holding them to himself and directing them towards fullness as their end. The very flowers of the field and the birds which his human eyes contemplated and admired are now imbued with his radiant presence”. If “the universe unfolds in God, who fills it completely... there is a mystical meaning to be found in a leaf, in a mountain trail, in a dewdrop, in a poor person’s face”. The world sings of an infinite Love: how can we fail to care for it?” LD 65

“God is God as Spirit-Sophia, the mobile, pure, people-loving Spirit who pervades every wretched corner, wailing at the waste, releasing power that enables fresh starts. Her energy quickens the earth to life, her beauty shines in the stars, her strength breaks forth in every fragment of shalom and renewal.... From generation to generation she enters into holy souls, and not so holy ones, to make them friends of God and prophets, thereby making human beings allies of God’s redeeming purpose. What we can say is this: Sophia-God dwells in the world at its center and at its edges, an active vitality crying out in labor, birthing the new creation. Fire, wind, water, and the color purple are her signs.” Elizabeth Johnson, CSJ

Monday, May 20

“The universe did not emerge as the result of arbitrary omnipotence, a show of force or a desire for self-assertion. Creation is of the order of love. God’s love is the fundamental moving force in all created things...Every creature is thus the object of the Father’s tenderness, who gives it its place in the world. Even the fleeting life of the least of beings is the object of his love, and in its few seconds of existence, God enfolds it with his affection.” LS, 77.

“Get a life where you see the real, the within-ness of everything, where you take risks, make mistakes — in fact make interesting mistakes. A life where you are always like a bride married to amazement, or a bridegroom taking the world into your arms each day. Yes, feel the life force within you, and within the full moon, the butterfly, the raging river, your newborn. Check out the fuzz on her ear. Marvel at his tiny fingernails. Yes, get to see and meet the within-ness of everything — your lover, yourself, your wisdom sources, the holy books, the pain, the suffering, the lethal absence of hope, the wars, the poverty — really see and touch the within-ness of everything.” Peggy O’Neill, SC

Tuesday, May 21

The Earth Charter asked us to leave behind a period of self-destruction and make a new start, but we have not as yet developed a universal awareness needed to achieve this. Here, I would echo that courageous challenge: “As never before in history, common destiny beckons us to seek a new beginning... Let ours be a time remembered for the awakening of a new reverence for life, the firm resolve to achieve sustainability, the quickening of the struggle for justice and peace, and the joyful celebration of life”. LS 207

“Celebration is the key to the future. It’s the key to human energies. You can’t have energies if you don’t celebrate. “ Thomas Berry

Wednesday, May 22

“Praise God for all his creatures”. This was the message that Saint Francis of Assisi proclaimed by his life, his canticles and all his actions. In this way, he accepted the invitation of the biblical Psalms and reflected the sensitivity of Jesus before the creatures of his Father...How can we not admire this tenderness of Jesus for all the beings that accompany us along the way! LD 1

"The idea is we're all going to be together. The fundamental notion is that God creates and loves all creatures, and finds the Earth and all the cosmos good. This God is not a throwaway God. When you love something, you cherish it and want it to flourish." Elizabeth Johnson, CSJ

Thursday, May 23

Such sobriety, when lived freely and consciously, is liberating. It is not a lesser life or one lived with less intensity. On the contrary, it is a way of living life to the full...Happiness means knowing how to limit some needs which only diminish us, and being open to the many different possibilities which life can offer. LS 223

“First of all people have to wake up and face the facts. It is our lifestyle that is causing climate change. Lower your carbon dioxide production. We don't have to use coal, oil and gas. ... A lifestyle change is what we're looking for. Every day: How much electricity do you use? How much water? Do you use cloth napkins or paper napkins? Our planet is in serious trouble. But I don't want people to despair. I believe in the creativity of people and that people will wake up.”
Paula Gonzalez, SC

Friday, May 24

“Human beings, while capable of the worst, are also capable of rising above themselves, choosing again what is good, and making a new start, despite their mental and social conditioning...I appeal to everyone throughout the world not to forget this dignity which is ours. No one has the right to take it from us.”LS 205

“The universe—throughout its vast extent in space, and its long sequence of transformations in time—is a single, multiform, celebratory event. You, as a human, are that being in whom the universe reflects on and celebrates itself.” Thomas Berry

Saturday, May 25

“Son of God, Jesus, through you all things were made. You were formed in the womb of Mary our Mother, you became part of this earth, and you gazed upon this world with human eyes. Today you are alive in every creature in your risen glory.” LS A Christian Prayer in Union with Creation

“Mary as Virgin is aligned with *soil*, the complex biological material that sustains and nurtures life. Mary as Mother is aligned with *the garden*, the diverse and relational site that is an intimate living community. Mary as Queen is aligned with *our world*, our global commons that is a web of systems empowering the well-being of all life.” Peter Healy SM

Trinity Sunday, May 26

Triune Lord, wondrous community of infinite love, teach us to contemplate you in the beauty of the universe, for all things speak of you.

Awaken our praise and thankfulness for every being that you have made.

Give us the grace to feel profoundly joined to everything that is.

LS, A Christian Prayer in Union with Creation

“It is communion that makes things ‘be’; nothing exists without it, not even God.” John Zizioulas