



Stations of the Cross in the Spirit of *Laudato Sí*

The Care of Our Common Home

Church of St. Francis Xavier
Friday, February 24, 2023, 6:30 p.m.

Presented by
The Women Who Stayed
Environmental Ministry
Catholic Lesbians

INTRODUCTION

presented by The Women Who Stayed

Today, as we walk the Stations of the Cross and accompany Jesus through his greatest trial, we are keenly aware that we have much to celebrate in our lives of faith, but we also have much to grieve.

The commemoration of Christ's Passion is our opportunity to reflect on and amend the many ways we have broken our covenant with God. How have we acted selfishly, seeking to secure our own power or material advantage at the expense of not only the well-being of others, but also at the expense of the whole of creation. This time of reflection is our opportunity to own all we have neglected as stewards, lovers, and nurturers of God's creation.

Pope Francis reminds us that "while human beings fail to find their true place in this world, they misunderstand themselves and end up acting against themselves" (Cf. LS 115).

While commemorating Jesus's journey to Crucifixion, through Pope Francis's reflections taken from *Laudato Si'*, each station will acknowledge a significant breaking of our covenant with the entire family of God's creation.

Enable the trees, the plants, the rocks, the soil, the water, the birds, and the wind to teach us about these broken relationships.

Each station offers prayer for healing the dreadful rifts in our covenant with God and all that God has made. May we find the courage and the power to become agents of healing and custodians of our common home. We are on this journey with our mother, Earth, in a divine space that embraces that special reality in each of us.

Praise be to you, my Redeemer, through our mother, Earth, who sustains and governs us and who produces various fruit with colored flowers and herbs (adapted LS 1).

(Let us walk in contemplation and sing as we move to the next station. "Let us listen to the wind, let us listen to the birds, let us listen to God's creation.")

First Station: JESUS IS CONDEMNED TO DEATH
presented by Environment Ministry



Very early in the morning, the chief priests, with the elders, the teachers of the law and the whole Sanhedrin, made their plans. So they bound Jesus, led him away and handed him over to Pilate. “Are you the king of the Jews?” asked Pilate. “You have said so,” Jesus replied. —Mark 15:1-2

(Pause)

WE REFLECT ON OPPRESSION AND ABUSE OF POWER

We are not God. Earth was here before us, and it has been given to us. This allows us to respond to the charge that Judeo-Christian thinking, on the basis of the Genesis account that grants humanity “dominion” over the earth (cf. Genesis 1:28), has encouraged the unbridled exploitation of nature by painting us as domineering and destructive by nature. This is not a correct interpretation of the Bible as understood by the Roman Catholic Church. Although it is true that we have at times incorrectly interpreted the Scriptures, nowadays we must forcefully reject the notion that our being created in God’s image and given dominion over the earth justifies absolute domination over other creatures (LS 67). A politics concerned with immediate results, supported by consumerist sectors of the population, is driven to produce short-term growth. In response to electoral interests, governments are reluctant to upset the public with measures that could affect the level of consumption or create risks for foreign investment. The myopia of power politics delays the

inclusion of a far-sighted environmental agenda within the overall agenda of governments. Thus, we forget that time is greater than space, that we are always more effective when we generate processes rather than holding on to positions of power (LS 178).

(Let us contemplate in silence for one minute.)

Leader: "The earth is the Holy One's and all that is in it." Pour out upon us the power of your love,

All: That we may protect life and beauty. Praise be to you!

(Let us walk in contemplation and sing as we move to the next station. "Let us listen to the wind, let us listen to the birds, let us listen to God's creation.")

Second Station: JESUS TAKES UP THE CROSS
presented by Catholic Lesbians



Pilate brought Jesus out and sat down on the judge's seat at a place known as the Stone Pavement. "Here is your king," Pilate said to the people. But they shouted, "Take him away! Take him away! Crucify him!" "Shall I crucify your king?" Pilate asked. "We have no king but Caesar," the chief priests answered. Finally, Pilate handed Jesus over to them to be crucified. Carrying his own cross, he went out to the place of the Skull. —John 19:13, 14, 15-17

(Pause)

WE PRAY ON THE EXTINCTION OF CREATURES

God of all Creation, change our hearts to make every effort to protect our world and its rich diversity. Give us the eyes to see glimpses of you in the great variety of creatures. We know this entails profound changes in our lifestyles, models of production and consumption, and the established structures of power that today govern societies. Change our hearts, and give us the motivation and courage to curb bad conduct and embrace good habits of "ecological citizenship." Assist us in our personal transformation to becoming more and more in your image and likeness. Give us the good power to cultivate sound virtues to make a selfless ecological commitment through little daily actions that can bring about real changes in lifestyle. May all we do reflect a generous and worthy creativity that brings out the best in us as an act of love for you and your creation. (Cf. LS 5, 21)

(Let us contemplate in silence for one minute.)

Leader: "The earth is the Holy One's and all that is in it." Pour out upon us the power of your love,

All: That we may protect life and beauty. Praise be to you!

(Let us walk in contemplation and sing as we move to the next station. "Let us listen to the wind, let us listen to the birds, let us listen to God's creation.")

Third Station: JESUS FALLS THE FIRST TIME
presented by The Women Who Stayed



Surely, you took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered you punished by God, stricken by God, and afflicted. But you were pierced for our transgressions, you were crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on you, and by your wounds we are healed. —Isaiah 53:4-5

(Pause)

WE REFLECT ON THE EXTINCTION OF BIODIVERSITY

It is not enough, however, to think of different species merely as potential “resources” to be exploited, while overlooking the fact that they have value in themselves. Each year sees the disappearance of thousands of plant and animal species that we will never know, that our children will never see, because they have been lost forever. The great majority become extinct for reasons related to human activity. Because of us, thousands of species will no longer give glory to God by their very existence, nor convey their message to us. We have no such right (LS 33). These situations have caused Mother Earth, along with all the abandoned of our world, to cry out, pleading that we take another course. Never have we so hurt and mistreated our common home as we have in the last two hundred years. Yet we are called to be instruments of God our Creator so that our planet might be what the Creator desired when God created it and correspond with God’s plan for peace, beauty, and fullness (LS 53).

(Let us contemplate in silence for one minute.)

Leader: "The earth is the Holy One's and all that is in it." Pour out upon us the power of your love,

All: That we may protect life and beauty. Praise be to you!

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Fourth Station: JESUS MEETS HIS MOTHER
presented by Environment Ministry



**Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by? Look around and see. Is any suffering like my suffering?
—Lamentations 1:12**

(Pause)

LET US PRAY ON THE CRY OF THE EARTH, THE CRY OF THE POOR

God of all Creation, bring us closer to our mother Mary. She, who cared for Jesus, now cares with maternal affection and pain for this wounded world. Just as her pierced heart mourned the death of your son Jesus, so now she grieves for the sufferings of the crucified poor and for the creatures of this world laid waste by human power. She treasures the entire life of Jesus in her heart (cf. Luke 2:19, 51) and now understands the meaning of all things. So we can ask her to enable us to look at this world with eyes of wisdom. Give us ears to hear the cry of the earth, the cry of the poor (cf. LS 49, 241).

(Let us contemplate in silence for one minute.)

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All: That we may protect life and beauty. Praise be to you!

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Fifth Station: SIMON OF CYRENE HELPS JESUS CARRY THE CROSS
presented by Catholic Lesbians



Simon from Cyrene, the father of Alexander and Rufus, was passing by on his way in from the country, and they forced him to carry the cross. —Mark 15:21

(Pause)

WE REFLECT ON OUR DISCONNECTION FROM THE WEB OF CREATION

The urgent challenge to protect our common home includes a concern to bring the whole human family together to seek a sustainable and integral development, for we know that things can change. The Creator does not abandon us; God never forsakes God's loving plan or repents of having created us. Humanity still has the ability to work together in building our common home (LS 13). We need to strengthen the conviction that we are one single human family. There are no frontiers or barriers, political or social, behind which we can hide, still less is there room for the globalization of indifference (LS 52).

(Let us contemplate in silence for one minute.)

Leader: "The earth is the Holy One's and all that is in it." Pour out upon us the power of your love,

All: That we may protect life and beauty. Praise be to you!

(Let us walk in contemplation and sing as we move to the next station. "Let us listen to the wind, let us listen to the birds, let us listen to God's creation.")

Sixth Station: VERONICA WIPES THE FACE OF JESUS
presented by The Women Who Stayed



**“Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these sisters and brothers of mine, you did for me.”
—Matthew 25:40**

(Pause)

LET US PRAY ON THE IMPORTANCE OF AWARENESS AND PERSONAL SUFFERING

God of all Creation, our goal is not to amass information or to satisfy curiosity, but rather to become painfully aware, to dare to turn what is happening to the world into our own personal suffering and thus to discover what each of us can do about it. For all our limitations, through your boundless love for us, gestures of generosity, solidarity and care cannot but well up within us, since we were made for love (cf. LS 19, 58).

(Let us contemplate in silence for one minute.)

Leader: “The earth is the Holy One’s and all that is in it.” Pour out upon us the power of your love,

All: That we may protect life and beauty. Praise be to you!

(Let us walk in contemplation and sing as we move to the next station. “Let us listen to the wind, let us listen to the birds, let us listen to God’s creation.”)

Seventh Station: JESUS FALLS THE SECOND TIME
presented by Environment Ministry



I am bowed down and brought very low; all day long I go about mourning. My back is filled with searing pain; there is no health in my body. I am feeble and utterly crushed; I groan in anguish of heart. My friends and companions avoid me because of my wounds; my neighbors stay far away. —Psalm 38:6-8, 11

(Pause)

WE REFLECT ON CLIMATE CHANGE

The climate is a common good, belonging to all and meant for all. At the global level, it is a complex system linked to many of the essential conditions for human life. A very solid scientific consensus indicates that we are presently witnessing a disturbing warming of the climatic system. In recent decades this warming has been accompanied by a constant rise in the sea level and, it would appear, by an increase of extreme weather events, even if a scientifically determinable cause cannot be assigned to each phenomenon. Humanity is called to recognize the need for changes of lifestyle, production, and consumption, to combat this warming or at least the human causes that produce or aggravate it (LS 23). Whatever is fragile, like the environment, is defenseless before the interests of a deified market, which become the only rule (LS 56). We were conceived in the heart of God, and for this reason each of us is the result of a thought of God. Each of us is willed, each of us is loved, each of us is necessary (LS 65).

(Let us contemplate in silence for one minute.)

Leader: "The earth is the Holy One's and all that is in it." Pour out upon us the power of your love,

All: That we may protect life and beauty. Praise be to you!

(Let us walk in contemplation and sing as we move to the next station. "Let us listen to the wind, let us listen to the birds, let us listen to God's creation.")

Eighth Station: JESUS CONSOLES THE WOMEN OF JERUSALEM

presented by Catholic Lesbians



A large number of people followed him, including women who mourned and wailed for him. Jesus turned and said to them, “Daughters of Jerusalem do not weep for me; weep for yourselves and for your children. For the time will come when you will say, ‘Blessed are the childless women, the wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed! Then they will say to the mountains, ‘Fall on us!’ and to the hills, ‘Cover us!’ For if people do these things when the tree is green, what will happen when it is dry?” —Luke 23:27-31

(Pause)

WE REFLECT ON CONFLICT AND WAR

The harmony between the Creator, humanity, and creation was disrupted by our presuming to take the place of God and refusing to acknowledge our creaturely limitations. This in turn distorted our mandate to “have dominion” over the earth (cf. Genesis 1:28), to “till it and keep it” (Genesis 2:15). As a result, the originally harmonious relationship between human beings and nature became conflict (cf. Genesis 3:17-19). It is significant that the harmony that Saint Francis of Assisi experienced with all creatures was seen as a healing of that rupture (LS 66). Moreover, when our hearts are authentically open to universal communion, this sense of community excludes nothing and no one. It follows that our indifference or cruelty toward other creatures of this world sooner or later affects the treatment we mete out to other human beings. We have only one heart, and the same wretchedness that leads us to mistreat an animal will not be long in showing itself

in our relationships with other people. Every act of cruelty toward any creature is contrary to human dignity. 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 (LS 92).

(Let us contemplate in silence for one minute.)

Leader: "The earth is the Holy One's and all that is in it." Pour out upon us the power of your love,

All: That we may protect life and beauty. Praise be to you!

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Ninth Station: JESUS FALLS THE THIRD TIME
presented by The Women Who Stayed



For we do not have a high priest who is unable to feel sympathy for our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way just as we are—yet did not sin. Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. —Hebrews 4:15-16

(Pause)

WE REFLECT ON POLLUTION AND WATER

The Psalms frequently exhort us to praise God the Creator, “who spread out the earth on the waters, for God’s steadfast love endures forever” (Psalm 136:6). They also invite other creatures to join us in this praise: “Praise God, sun and moon, praise God, all you shining stars! Praise God, you highest heavens, and you waters above the heavens! Let them praise the name of the Holy One, for God commanded and they were created” (Psalm 148:3-5). We do not only exist by God’s mighty power; we also live with God and beside God. This is why we adore God (LS 72). If we scan the regions of our planet, we immediately see that humanity has disappointed God’s expectations (LS 61). The patriarch Bartholomew has drawn attention to the ethical and spiritual roots of environmental problems, which require that we look for solutions not only in technology but also in a change of humanity; otherwise we would be dealing merely with symptoms. God asks us to replace consumption with sacrifice, greed with generosity, wastefulness with a spirit of sharing, an asceticism that entails learning to give and not simply to give up. It is a way of loving, of moving gradually away from what I want to what God’s world needs (LS 9).

(Let us contemplate in silence for one minute.)

Leader: "The earth is the Holy One's and all that is in it." Pour out upon us the power of your love,

All: That we may protect life and beauty. Praise be to you!

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Tenth Station: JESUS IS STRIPPED OF HIS GARMENTS
presented by Environment Ministry



When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took his clothes, dividing them into four shares, one for each of them, with the undergarment remaining. This garment was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom. “Let us not tear it,” they said to one another. “Let us decide by lot who will get it.” This happened that the scripture might be fulfilled that said, “They divided my clothes among them and cast lots for my garment.” So this is what the soldiers did. —John 19:23-24

(Pause)

LET US PRAY ON THE DEPLETION OF NATURAL RESOURCES

God of all Creation, give us a global vision to see the impact of our consumerism and economic structures. Then give us also a local vision to not overlook the complexities of local problems that demand the active participation of all members of the community. Help us respect local culture, local reality, and give us the ears to hear the wisdom of local, especially our indigenous, peoples. We stand naked and exposed in the face of our ever-increasing power, lacking the wherewithal to control it. We are stripping the earth of natural resources and ignoring the immediate reality of poverty with no thought of future generations or recognition of your boundless generosity. God, help us (cf. LS 27, 105, 144)!

(Let us contemplate in silence for one minute.)

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All: That we may protect life and beauty. Praise be to you!

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Eleventh Station: JESUS IS NAILED TO THE CROSS
presented by Catholic Lesbians



When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him there, along with the criminals—one on the right, the other on his left. Jesus said, “Abba, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.” And they divided up his clothes by casting lots. The people stood watching, and the rulers even sneered at him. They said, “He saved others; let him save himself if he is God’s Messiah, the Chosen One.” —Luke 23:33-35

(Pause)

LET US PRAY TO ERADICATE ABUSE AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING

God of all Creation, this mother, Earth, now cries out to us because of the harm we have inflicted on her by our irresponsible use and abuse of the goods with which you have endowed her. We have come to see ourselves as her overseers and masters, entitled to plunder her at will. The earth herself, burdened and laid waste, is among the most abandoned and maltreated of our poor; she “groans in travail” (Romans 8:22). Our disrespect of your creatures extends to a disrespect of each other. This is clearly seen in the trafficking of women, men, and children throughout the world. These situations have caused Mother Earth, along with all the abandoned of our world, to cry out, pleading that we take another course. Never have we so hurt and mistreated our common home as we have in the last two hundred years. Yet we are called to be your instruments, so that our planet might be what you desired when you created it and correspond with your plan for peace, beauty, and fullness (cf. LS 2, 53).

(Let us contemplate in silence for one minute.)

Leader: "The earth is the Holy One's and all that is in it." Pour out upon us the power of your love,

All: That we may protect life and beauty. Praise be to you!

(Let us walk in contemplation and sing as we move to the next station. "Let us listen to the wind, let us listen to the birds, let us listen to God's creation.")

Twelfth Station: JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS
presented by The Women Who Stayed



Knowing that everything had been finished, and so that Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, "I am thirsty." A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus's lips. When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit. —John 19:28-30

(Pause)

LET US PRAY ON THE DEATH OF THE EARTH

You who created the universe out of nothing can also intervene in this world and overcome every form of evil. Injustice is not invincible. All it takes is one good person to restore hope! Thank you, God of all Creation, for incarnating in the person of Jesus and being the defining good person who restores hope (cf. LS 71, 74)!

(Let us contemplate in silence for one minute.)

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Thirteenth Station: JESUS IS TAKEN DOWN FROM THE CROSS
presented by Environment Ministry



Later, Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for the body of Jesus. Now Joseph was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly because he feared the Temple leaders. With Pilate's permission, he came and took the body away.
—John 19:38

(Pause)

WE REFLECT ON CONFLICT AND ENVIRONMENTAL MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

Climate change is a global problem with grave implications: environmental, social, economic, political. Many of the poor live in areas particularly affected by phenomena related to warming, and their means of subsistence are largely dependent on natural reserves and ecosystemic services such as agriculture, fishing, and forestry. They have no other financial activities or resources that can enable them to adapt to climate change or to face natural disasters, and their access to social services and protection is very limited. There has been a tragic rise in the number of migrants seeking to flee from the growing poverty caused by environmental degradation. They are not recognized by international conventions as refugees; they bear the loss of the lives they have left behind, without enjoying any legal protection whatsoever. Sadly, there is widespread indifference to such suffering, which is even now taking place throughout our world. Our lack of response to these tragedies involving our sisters and brothers points to the loss of that sense of responsibility for our fellow women and men upon which all civil society is founded (LS 25).

(Let us contemplate in silence for one minute.)

Leader: "The earth is the Holy One's and all that is in it." Pour out upon us the power of your love,

All: That we may protect life and beauty. Praise be to you!

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Fourteenth Station: JESUS IS LAID IN THE TOMB
presented by Catholic Lesbians



Joseph bought some linen cloth, took down the body, wrapped it in the linen, and placed it in a tomb cut out of rock. Then he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb. —Mark 15:46

(Pause)

LET US PRAY ON FOOD AND HUNGER

God of all Creation, we forget that the ultimate destiny of the universe is in the fullness of you, which has already been attained by the risen Christ, the measure of the maturity of all things. We fail to see the deepest roots of our present failures, which have to do with the direction, goals, meaning, and social implications of technological and economic growth. We want to bury the thought that we believe the ultimate purpose of other creatures is to be found in us. Help us, in your mercy, to fully understand, rather, that all creatures are moving forward with us and through us toward a common point of arrival, which is you, in that transcendent fullness where the risen Christ embraces and illumines all things. Help us to recognize that whenever food is thrown out, it is as if it were stolen from the table of the poor. Enlighten us in recognizing the solutions to food scarcity and insecurity. Endowed with intelligence and love, and drawn by the fullness of Christ, call us out of the tomb of our own making to lead all creatures back to you, their Creator (cf. LS 50, 83).

(Let us contemplate in silence for one minute.)

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All: That we may protect life and beauty. Praise be to you!

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CONCLUDING PRAYER

presented by Catholic Lesbians



God of all Creation, at the end, we will find ourselves face to face with your infinite beauty and be able to read with admiration and happiness the mystery of the universe, which with us will share in unending plenitude. In the meantime, we come together to take charge of this home that you have entrusted to us, knowing that all the good that exists here will be taken up into the heavenly feast. In union with all creatures, we journey through this land, seeking you. May we sing as we go. May our struggles and our concern for this planet never take away the joy of our hope. Praise be to you (cf. LS 243,244)!

Excerpts from "An Environmental Stations of the Cross," a free resource published in Canada by Green Church, www.GreenChurch.ca. Original text from *Laudato Sí* prepared by Felix Mushobozi, CPPS, and Pat Dorobek, SND. This journey was developed for Pamphili Park by JPIC Promoters, which honors women in a special way. Some text changed for inclusivity for the Church of St. Francis Xavier.

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