

# OUR COMMON HOME

Climate Justice Action Kit for Secondary Schools



## In this guide

### About climate justice

	Page
About climate justice - why take action?	3
About <i>Laudato Si'</i>	6
The impacts of climate change	9
Voices from the frontlines of climate change	10
Prayer and reflection resources	12
More resources on <i>Laudato Si'</i>	13

### Take action

Get connected - upcoming opportunities	14
'Hearts 4 Climate' and writing letters	15
Meet your MP	16
Run a petition to Parliament	17
Spread the word with media and social media	18
Host a climate justice event	19
Practical actions for sustainability in daily life	20

### Appendix

Hearts for Climate toolkit	23
For teachers: classroom activities	26



# If we don't confront climate change, we won't end poverty.

**Climate change is one of the greatest injustices of our time. The people who have done the least to cause it are suffering the most. It is the single biggest challenge to reducing poverty and ensuring a sustainable future for all.**

In June 2015, Pope Francis released an Encyclical on human development and ecology, *Laudato Si'* ("Praise be to you") – On the Care of Our Common Home. It is the Church's most profound call yet for us all to be protectors of creation and the poor. The 'intimate relationship between the poor and the fragility of the planet' is a fundamental theme in the Encyclical. *Laudato Si'* calls on us to reflect and take action on these important issues.

This campaign kit helps you explore *Laudato Si'* from the perspective of these people and communities who are already bearing the

brunt of climate change. This kit offers practical suggestions for taking action and passing on Pope Francis' messages. Together we can make our world a better, fairer place for future generations.

*"Dear young people, the just use and stewardship of the earth's resources is an urgent task, and you have an important contribution to make."*

– Pope Francis, January 2014



## Why take action for climate justice?



We cannot tackle poverty without addressing the issue of climate change.

Caritas Australia works with communities in over 30 countries, many of whom are already experiencing the impacts of climate change. They have told us the farming seasons are becoming more unpredictable, the rising seas are taking away land, droughts are lasting longer, fresh water is becoming scarcer, and extreme weather events such as cyclones and storm surges are becoming more intense and damaging.

It is clear that climate change is a significant risk to the health, security and livelihoods of communities across the world but particularly in the poorest communities. “Both everyday experience and scientific research show that the gravest effects of all attacks on the environment are suffered by the poorest” [*Laudato Si'*, 48]. Climate change is exacerbating existing development challenges and is undoing decades of our work together to improve people’s lives.

Climate change is also one of the greatest injustices of our time. The people who have done the least to cause climate change are suffering the most.

The World Bank estimates that developing countries will bear some 75-80% of the cost of damage caused by climate change.

"On climate change, there is a clear, definitive and ineluctable ethical imperative to act."

Pope Francis

The 'intimate relationship between the poor and the fragility of the planet' is recognised many times in *Laudato Si'* and Pope Francis calls on us to ensure that the needs of the global poor sit at the heart of our collective response to climate change. He says:

"We are faced not with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather with one complex crisis which is both social and environmental. Strategies for a solution demand an integrated approach to combating poverty, restoring dignity to the excluded, and at the same time protecting nature." [139]

*Laudato Si'* is an appeal for us all to reflect on the world in which we live, join a new dialogue about how we can respond to the pressing needs we see, and importantly, to take action. Pope Francis has urged all of us to take action in our personal lives but also to call for strong political and community leadership on climate change. This kit offers a range of suggestions for learning, reflecting and taking action.

Pope Francis released *Laudato Si'* at a critical time for action on climate change and poverty.



In July 2015, governments gathered for important global negotiations on Financing for Development. In September 2015, the UN General Assembly agreed on a new set of Sustainable Development Goals, which provide a global structure for tackling poverty and promoting environmentally sustainable development (the Pope addressed the UN General Assembly at this meeting). In December 2015, world leaders will meet in Paris to negotiate a new post-2020 treaty to reduce global emissions and ensure developing countries have the support required to achieve sustainable, low emissions development and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

By working together, we can ensure that the momentum for climate action continues into 2016 and beyond. Together we can achieve climate justice for all.

"Rapid climate change as the result of human activity is now recognised by the global scientific community as a reality. ... People around the world are experiencing the impacts of increasing land temperatures, rising sea levels, and a change in the frequency of extreme climatic events." - Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, 2005.

## About *Laudato Si'* – on caring for Our Common Home and the poor

An Encyclical is a letter circulated by the Pope to Catholic churches worldwide. Encyclicals provide analysis on relevant issues for the faithful, in the light of the Gospel and of the Tradition of the Church.

In June 2015 Pope Francis released a new Encyclical on human development and ecology. Called *Laudato Si'*: On the Care of Our Common Home, it is addressed to every person on the planet.

The Catholic tradition has always included teachings on earth stewardship. *Laudato Si'*

is carrying this legacy forward to address the challenges we face in the 21st century.



*Laudato Si'* captures the interconnectedness of social, economic and environmental justice in building and protecting Our Common Home.



'All of us can cooperate as instruments of God for the care of creation, each according to his or her own culture, experience, involvements and talents.' –*Laudato Si'*, [14]

## The Pope highlights the 'intimate relationship between the poor and the fragility of the planet'.

Protecting the planet requires an integrated approach to combating poverty, restoring dignity to the excluded, and at the same time protecting nature.



♥ "A true ecological approach always becomes a social approach; it must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, so as to hear **both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor**" [49]

♥ The "fundamental rights of the poor and the underprivileged must be at the heart of any ecological approach" [93]

**Climate change is addressed as a human rights issue, and global inequality is a central theme.** The Encyclical highlights the fact that **the world's poorest are bearing the most severe consequences** of climatic disruption despite having done the least to cause it. Their voices are often excluded from international climate discussions, fostering a 'globalisation of indifference' [52].

♥ "Climate change is a global problem with grave implications: environmental, social, economic, political and for the distribution of goods.... its worst impact will probably be felt by developing countries in coming decades." [25]

♥ "The warming caused by huge consumption on the part of some rich countries has repercussions on the poorest areas of the world,

especially Africa, where a rise in temperature, together with drought, has proved devastating for farming." [51]

**The Encyclical accepts the scientific consensus that global warming and climate change are real, and that human activity is the root cause of this 'ecological crisis'** - and therefore the solution also lies with us. It recognises that we must transition away from fossil fuel dependence.

♥ "A very solid scientific consensus indicates that we are presently witnessing a disturbing warming of the climatic system. ... most global warming in recent decades is due to the great concentration of greenhouse gases ... released mainly as a result of human activity." [23]

♥ "The problem is aggravated by a model of development based on the intensive use of fossil fuels, which is at the heart of the worldwide energy system." [23]

♥ "We know that technology based on the use of highly polluting fossil fuels – especially coal, but also oil and, to a lesser degree, gas, needs to be progressively replaced without delay." [165]

**Pope Francis calls for a revolution of our hearts and minds,** for a transformation of our societies and individual lifestyles, to live in harmony with God's creation.

He challenges 'the modern myth of unlimited material progress'.

He asks us to redefine our notion of progress and rethink our current public values which put financial and economic growth before ecology and the needs of the most vulnerable.

♥ "Our goal is ... 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." [19]

"If we can overcome individualism, we will truly be able to develop a different lifestyle and bring about significant changes in society."

–Laudato Si', [208]

♥ *“The gravity of the ecological crisis demands that we all look to the common good.” [201]*

♥ *“These problems are closely linked to a throwaway culture which affects the excluded just as it quickly reduces things to rubbish.” [22]*

**Pope Francis calls for governments to take strong, united action on climate change** and other ecological issues for the global common good. He also calls for ‘enforceable international agreements’.

♥ *“Reducing greenhouse gases requires honesty, courage and responsibility, above all on the part of those countries which are more powerful and pollute the most.” [169]*

♥ *“There is an urgent need to develop policies so that, in the next few years, the emission of carbon dioxide and other highly polluting gases can be drastically reduced, for example, substituting for fossil fuels and developing sources of renewable energy.” [26]*

♥ *“As often occurs in periods of deep crisis which require bold decisions, we are tempted to think that what is happening is not entirely clear. .... Such evasiveness serves as a licence to carrying on with our present lifestyles and models of production and consumption.” [59]*

♥ *“The same mindset which stands in the way of making radical decisions to reverse the trend of global warming also stands in the way of achieving the goal of eliminating poverty.” [175]*

**Pope Francis is also clear about the need for citizen advocacy.**

♥ *“Society, through non-governmental organizations and intermediate groups, must put pressure on governments to develop more rigorous regulations, procedures and controls. Unless citizens control political power – national, regional and municipal – it will not be possible to control damage to the environment.” [179]*

♥ *“I want to recognize, encourage and thank all those striving in countless ways to guarantee the protection of the home which we share. Particular appreciation is owed to those who tirelessly seek to resolve the tragic effects of environmental degradation on the lives of the world’s poorest.” [13]*

**Laudato Si’ recognises the special importance of placing Indigenous communities at the heart of any approach to achieving environmental and social justice.** Pope Francis says “it is essential

to show special care for indigenous communities and their cultural traditions. They are not merely one minority among others, but should be the principal dialogue partners, especially when large projects affecting their land are proposed. For them, land is not a commodity but rather a gift from God and from their ancestors who rest there, a sacred space with which they need to interact if they are to maintain their identity and values. When they remain on their land, they themselves care for it best.” [146]



Traditional owners- Garry, standing, and Fitzroy, - rangers at the KALNRM Office

**Finally, Laudato Si’ has many messages of hope.** Here are just a few passages:

♥ *“Humanity still has the ability to work together in building our common home” [13].*

♥ *No system can completely suppress our openness to what is good, true and beautiful, or our God-given ability to respond to his grace at work deep in our hearts. 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.” [205]*

♥ *“Men and women are still capable of intervening positively. For all our limitations, gestures of generosity, solidarity and care cannot but well up within us, since we were made for love.” [57]*

♥ *“May our struggles and our concern for this planet never take away the joy of our hope.” [244]*



# The impacts of climate change

## How is climate change affecting different regions of the world?

### PACIFIC ISLANDS

- ♥ High rates of sea-level rise leading to land loss and threatening coastal settlements and livelihoods in many low-lying islands.
- ♥ Increased intensity of tropical cyclones.
- ♥ Economic downturn in key sectors, including fisheries and tourism, due to extreme weather events and ocean acidification.

### EAST AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

- ♥ Risks of harvest loss and decreasing crop productivity due to extreme weather events and changing rainfall and temperature patterns.
- ♥ Significant increases in rates of undernourishment and food insecurity.

### SOUTHEAST ASIA

- ♥ Risks of inundation and soil salinisation in critical food-producing agricultural regions.
- ♥ Poor urban communities are particularly vulnerable to food price shocks and physical risks in informal settlements, including as a result of flooding and disease outbreak.

### SOUTH ASIA

- ♥ Water shortages.
- ♥ Increased flood risk associated with extreme monsoonal rainfall and glacier melt.
- ♥ Increases in the region's already high rates of food insecurity.

### AUSTRALIA

- ♥ Increase in extreme fire weather, length of bushfire seasons and the duration, frequency and intensity of heatwaves.
- ♥ Annual-average rainfall to decrease in southern Australia, with an increase in droughts
- ♥ Frequency and intensity of extreme daily rainfall to increase for most regions
- ♥ Rising sea-levels will increase the frequency of extreme sea-level events.

### GLOBALLY

- ♥ The Earth has already warmed 0.8°C above pre-industrial levels
- ♥ Global mean sea level has risen by 225 mm
- ♥ Biodiversity loss due to ocean acidification
- ♥ Sea temperature rise causing reef degradation and species extinction
- ♥ Species migration causing ecosystem disruption

## Why are marginalised groups more vulnerable to climate change?

### WOMEN

- ♥ Women are often denied equal access to education, information, legal protection and other rights and resources, undermining their ability to cope with impacts of climate change.
- ♥ Globally, women are more likely to be dependent on natural resources, and female-headed households are more likely to be located in precarious locations.

### PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

- ♥ People with disabilities are often already disadvantaged, lacking access to health services, housing, education and full economic participation, leaving them vulnerable to climate-related economic shocks.
- ♥ People with disabilities are particularly affected by disasters because evacuation, response and recovery efforts are not always accessible, particularly when they are excluded from planning and preparedness initiatives.

### CHILDREN

- ♥ Inadequate nutrition or disrupted education due to climatic factors can have life-long consequences for children.
- ♥ Children and infants are more physically and psychologically vulnerable than adults to some climate change impacts such as extreme heat and cold, and water-borne or tropical diseases.

### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND ETHNIC MINORITIES

- ♥ Indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities are particularly vulnerable due to long-standing economic, political and social marginalisation.
- ♥ Indigenous peoples may disproportionately experience health impacts, loss of livelihoods, displacement, loss of traditional knowledge and other cultural and spiritual impacts as a result of climate change.

\*Credit: Most of the information on this page is taken from two tables in 'Tackling climate change and promoting sustainable development: An action plan for Australia's international engagement'. Australian Council for International Development, July 2015. Some additional information has been added. Information on climate change impacts in Australia, global climate change averages and global biodiversity impacts is taken from either 'State of the Climate 2014', Australian Bureau of Meteorology and CSIRO 2014, or IPCC, 2014: Climate Change 2014: Synthesis Report. Contribution of Working Groups I, II and III to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

# Voices from the frontlines of climate change

Stories of resilience, hope and transformation

## Voices from the Pacific

### Caritas State of the Environment Reports for Oceania

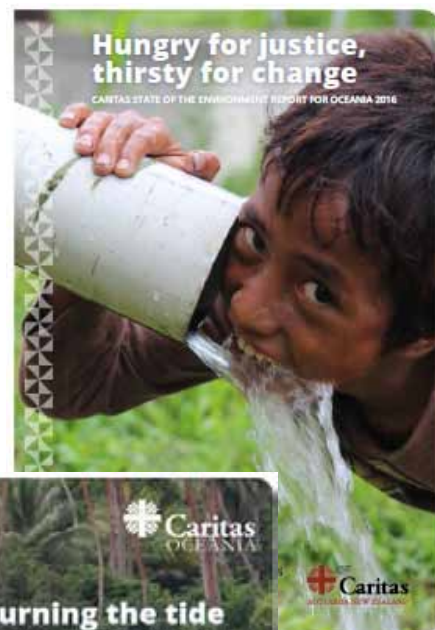
Caritas produces an annual State of the Environment report for Oceania in which we document the lived experience of Pacific communities in dealing with climate and environmental changes.

The impacts of climate change in the Pacific are more pervasive than ever. Most significantly, in recent years there have been widespread food and water shortages due to climate change, resulting in hardship, illness, malnutrition and even death in the most vulnerable communities.

Across the Pacific people showed us how land is being lost to rising seas. Water sources are becoming undrinkable and food crops are failing due to saltwater contamination and extreme weather events, intensified by climate change.

Pacific communities are fighting for their way of life with resourcefulness and courage - from planting mangroves and building sea walls to adopting world-leading renewable energy targets and advocating in global climate forums. But climate change is a global challenge and they need us to act in solidarity.

The reports, related factsheets, videos and classroom resources are available at [www.caritas.org.au/oceania](http://www.caritas.org.au/oceania)



## Voices from other parts of the world

For more stories on climate change from around the world, visit [www.caritas.org.au/stories-of-hope](http://www.caritas.org.au/stories-of-hope)

They are stories of hope and resilience, showing both the severe impact of climate change on our partner communities but also how they are working to adapt to the effects of climate change through innovation and creativity. You'll meet:

**Gusto** | Climate adaptive farming in Bangladesh

**Rowan** | Carbon farming in remote rural Australia

**Mugendi** | Sustainable farming in drought-ridden Kenya

**Gloria** | Building back better – renewal in the Philippines after Typhoon Haiyan

**Inocencio Oki** | Learning to conserve – in Timor Leste

**Martina** | Singing for safety – increasing resilience to disaster in the Solomon Islands

**Rusi** | Protecting coastlines in Fiji

## Video stories of climate change

Explore this range of short videos on climate change and climate justice including:

**Sweet Water** - explores the impact of climate change on communities living in the coastal regions of South-West Bangladesh.



**Climate Justice and Women in Kenya** - explores the difficulties that women face due to worsening climate conditions in Kenya and how it is important that women's voices are heard in climate negotiations in order to achieve climate justice.

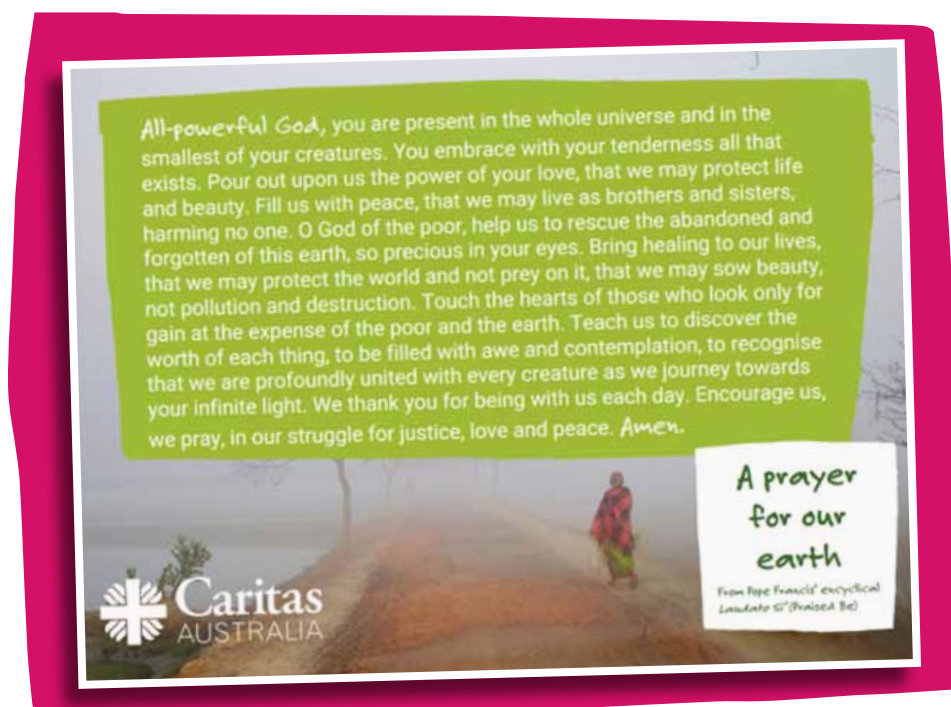
These videos can be found at [www.caritas.org.au/climate/videos](http://www.caritas.org.au/climate/videos)

## Prayer and reflection resources

- ♥ [A prayer and reflection PowerPoint presentation](#) using the prayer from *Laudato Si'*, 'A prayer for our earth'



- ♥ A [prayer card](#) to print and distribute (pictured at right)



# More resources on *Laudato Si'* and climate change

## ♥ **Reflection on Key Messages in *Laudato Si'*:**

This resource reflects on the key messages in the Encyclical with beautiful images on PowerPoint or PDF slides.

## ♥ **A presentation on *Laudato Si'* and the Caritas response**, including three stories of hope and resilience from Australia, Bangladesh and the Pacific; the call to action and what we can do. This presentation ends with a prayer and reflection inspired by the Saint Francis of Assisi "Canticle of Creation".

## ♥ **Videos about caring for creation:**

- By Pope Francis (1min 25)
  - By Caritas Internationalis' (1min 28)
- Available on our [Climate Videos page](#)

## ♥ **Catholic Social Teaching Toolkit:** an interactive, online Catholic Social Teaching toolkit, which offers a 'deep dive' into the principles of Preferential Option for the Poor, Dignity of the Human Person, Stewardship of Creation, Subsidiarity and Participation, the Common Good and Solidarity.

The Stewardship of Creation section of the toolkit explores the core elements of this principle, including its Scriptural underpinning and the call to "hear the cry of the earth and the poor." [*Laudato Si'* 49]

## ♥ **Food security** Climate change is, and will continue to have, a huge impact on food security throughout the world. [Learn more](#) about how food security and climate change are intimately linked.

## ♥ **Water** Water and climate change are intimately linked. Water is indispensable for all life. Water poverty affects many communities and is particularly widespread in Africa. Learn more about global water issues using our [Water and Sanitation Powerpoint](#) (with curriculum links), our [Water Case Studies](#) and a [Water Factsheet](#).

## ♥ **A library** of all Caritas environment-themed classroom resources, including lessons and activities on Climate Change, the Greenhouse Effect and Environmentally Displaced People.

## Environmental and social justice days

The following days may help you celebrate and draw attention to caring for our common home and the most vulnerable people and communities:

20 February - [World Social Justice Day](#)

22 March - [World Water Day](#)

22 April - [Earth Day](#)

5 June - [World Environment Day](#)

8 June - [World Oceans Day](#)

17 June - [World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought](#)

Late July - [Schools Tree Day](#)

1 September - [World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation](#)

1 September - 4 October - Season of Creation

1 October - World Vegetarian Day

4 October - St Francis of Assisi Day

16 October - [World Food Day](#)

16-22 October - Anti-Poverty Week

7-13 November - [National Recycling Week](#)

19 November - World Day of the Poor

10 December - Human Rights Day

Check our [Environment-themed classroom resources](#) to use for these International Days.

# Take action

## Take action and raise your voice for justice!

By taking action as individuals, as a group or as a whole school community, we can make a difference to the lives of the children, women and men most affected by climate change.

Here is a range of ways that you can take action.

## Ideas for taking action

- ♥ **Get connected** - join our campaigns list for the latest updates - page 14
- ♥ **Send a Hearts 4 Climate message or a letter to your MP** - page 15
- ♥ **Meet your MP** - page 16
- ♥ **Petition the House of Representatives** - page 17
- ♥ **Spread the word on social media and the media** - page 18
- ♥ **Host a climate justice event** - page 19
- ♥ **Practical actions for sustainability in our daily lives** - page 20

## Get connected

Opportunities for taking action can often arise and subside quickly - too fleeting to capture in this action kit.

The best way to keep informed and up-to-date is to **subscribe to our campaigns and teachers' e-newsletters**. We'll keep you up to date with upcoming actions, events and news.

Subscribe to our campaigns list at [www.caritas.org.au/climate/icc-subscribe](http://www.caritas.org.au/climate/icc-subscribe) for the latest advocacy actions.

**Note: During December 2017 we are updating our system - please email [act@caritas.org.au](mailto:act@caritas.org.au) instead and say you want to join our campaigns list.**

Teachers can subscribe to your state's Caritas Education Term newsletter - email [education@caritas.org.au](mailto:education@caritas.org.au) with your name and state



Hear about upcoming events via our campaigns list

## Send a 'Hearts 4 Climate message' to your MP

Speak up for climate justice, celebrate what you love about our common home, make your own personal pledge and send a message to your MP that, inspired by love and compassion, you want strong climate action.

This is a great action to do at your school at the same time as a petition signing or a climate justice event. Or run a 'Hearts 4 Climate' stall at lunchtime and invite other students to visit your stall and take action.

See page 25 for details of how to run a Caritas Hearts 4 Climate action.



In just a few months in 2015, over a thousand 'Hearts 4 Climate' letters were written by students and members of the public. A week before COP21 Paris talks began, students from Daramalan College in Canberra presented all the Hearts 4 Climate letters to the Prime Minister's office in Parliament House.

Watch a video of the day at

[www.caritas.org.au/climate/videos](http://www.caritas.org.au/climate/videos)

## ... or simply a letter

A hand-written letter to a politician is a simple but powerful action. The power of a handwritten letter is even greater now than in the days before mass emails and online actions. Any politician who receives a number of handwritten letters about climate justice will be more mindful of the support for climate action in their constituency.

Your letter doesn't have to be long - you just need to convey what you are writing about, why you care and what action you are asking the politician to take.

Your federal MP is a good target for your climate justice letter, as is the Prime Minister, the Foreign Minister and their Shadow counterparts.

For tips on writing to your MP, see our [Guide to Engaging Your MP](#).

## Meet your MP to talk about climate action

Your local MP is your link to Parliament. They influence decisions which affect the future of the world's poorest people.

A face-to-face discussion with your MP has a lot of power. It gives you the chance to debate the things you feel strongly about. It's also a real opportunity to get your MP to act on your concerns.

You can invite your MP to take part in another event or activity you are doing for climate justice, such as Caritas Hearts 4 Climate. Ask them to take part in your activity, such as adding their own heart to the giant group heart!

For tips on how to engage your MP, use Caritas Australia's [Engaging Your MP Guide](#). It includes tips on writing to your MP and what to do before, during and after the meeting.

As well as the information provided in the guide, here are some extra suggestions for preparing to meet your MP:

- ♥ **Research your MP's policy on climate change and renewable energy (often his/her Party's policy). Do you think the policies are strong enough? Discuss in class and explain the reasoning behind your answer. How could your MP support stronger climate change action?**

- ♥ **Use the information and resource links in this toolkit to help you understand the Australian and global contexts of climate change policy.**

Sample questions that you could ask your MP during the visit:

- ♥ **What kind of challenges do you think our generation will face in our adult life due to climate change?**
- ♥ **We have been learning about the stories of people deeply impacted by climate change in countries of the global South. What is your Party doing to ensure that these people – who have done the least to cause global warming – are helped to adapt to climate change?**
- ♥ **Many other countries are shifting their economies quickly away from fossil fuel dependence to renewable energy. How do you think Australia compares and will our industries be competitive in future?**

After your MP's visit, spread the word about your action – email a photo to [act@caritas.org.au](mailto:act@caritas.org.au) and share it on social media.

Tag us @CaritasAU (Facebook) or @CaritasAust (Twitter & Instagram) so we can help you spread the word.



# Run a petition to Parliament and get your MP on board

A petition is the most direct way in which you can ask our Parliament to take action.

Caritas is encouraging you to run your own electorate-level petition to be formally tabled in the House of Representatives. For the most impact, ask your federal MP to personally present your petition. This means that he or she will discuss it in the House, raising more awareness of the need for climate action. It's also a great way to engage your MP on climate justice.

A petition to the House of Representatives must follow specific guidelines, such as being on paper with hand-written signatures.

**We've provided all the tools to make this easy!** See our 'how to run your own petition' guide at [www.caritas.org.au/climate/take-action](http://www.caritas.org.au/climate/take-action)



## An example of a massive community action - the Community Climate Petition campaign

In 2017, hundreds of volunteers from faith-based schools, churches and communities all over Australia worked together to create a massive 'Community Climate Petition' campaign. Together we sent a strong message to our politicians that they could not ignore: that people of faith are calling for climate justice.

- ♥ Electorate-based climate petitions were run in **110 federal electorates**
- ♥ **30,000 people** signed our petitions
- ♥ Local volunteers held **meetings with 46 MPs** from all major parties
- ♥ **30 MPs agreed to make a speech** in Parliament about their petition

By working together we became a powerful force for change.

To hear about other coordinated, large-scale campaigns like this, subscribe to our campaigns e-newsletter by sending an email to [act@caritas.org.au](mailto:act@caritas.org.au)

The Community Climate Petition campaign was supported by Caritas Australia and other faith-based groups.





## Q & A with Fr Peter Addicoat, St Joseph's Parish Hobart

St Joseph's Parish created and submitted their own petition to the House of Representatives. They gathered 351 signatures and the petition was presented in parliament by Mr Andrew Wilkie MP.

### Why did you decide to petition parliament?

Our parish Social Justice and Peace group had the idea. They meet once a month to look at social justice issues facing the parish and the world. The shrinking Australian aid budget seemed something we should draw attention to.

### What was involved?

We had some advice on the format such a petition should take and after making sure the text complied with the petition rules, we presented it to our parishioners. It was surprisingly easy, though we did find out our first draft was too wordy for parliament.

### How did you collect signatures?

We provided opportunities to sign after Mass, we had a table at our parish fair and we invited other groups in our area to join us in signing and promoting it.

### What happened when you presented the petition to your MP?

Our local MP is Andrew Wilkie. He was very happy to receive the petition from us. He tabled it in parliament and spoke to it for a number of minutes. The parishioners were very happy to have their voices heard.



## Use the media and social media to spread the word

### Share your story on social media

Social media is so easy and flexible and can have a huge ripple effect! Share a simple tweet or post, or a photo or video of your parish in action.

Use the **#hearts4climate** hashtag and tag us (Facebook **@CaritasAU**, Twitter **@CaritasAust**), so that we can find and amplify your message.

### Engage the media

Publishing positive messages and stories in the media can be a very powerful way to influence change. It shows other people that you care enough to take action, and encourages them to do the same. If you are hosting a local event or engaging your local MP, media will be interested to hear about it!

For tools and tips on how to engage with media, visit [www.caritas.org.au/climate/resources](http://www.caritas.org.au/climate/resources) to download our Media Engagement kit.

This 12 second video at <http://bit.ly/1W7H7H0>, shows students from Clancy College (West Hoxton NSW) speaking up for climate justice. The video was recorded and shared by their teacher using just his phone.

#ACYF15 #pureofheart #caritas  
#hearts4climate #purcommonhome  
@CCCWestHoxton @CEO\_RE



## Pass on the message to your peers

The word 'encyclical' comes from the same Latin roots as 'circle' and 'bicycle'. The messages of an encyclical are meant to be passed on, in a circular way. Here are some ideas for how you can 'pass it on'.

## Host a climate justice event

Whether it's a lunchtime workshop or an after-school event, the aim is to raise awareness about the impacts of climate change, especially on the world's poorest people, and to inspire others to take action.

You might like to organise it for an 'international' day such as World Environment Day or World Day of Prayer for Creation. See our list of environmental dates on page 13.

### Event outline #1: Short films, stories and discussion

Here's a suggested outline for a 1 hour event, which you can tailor as much as you wish.

Activity and topic	Useful resources
<b>Introduction and welcome - 5 min</b>	
<b>About Laudato Si' – 15 min</b> Watch Pope Francis' short videoclip 'Care for Creation'. Then using the Powerpoint, go through and discuss the key messages of Laudato Si'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♥ Pope Francis' <a href="#">videoclip</a> (1min 25)</li> <li>♥ Laudato Si' Key Messages powerpoint presentation (see page 13)</li> </ul>
<b>Climate justice and the poor – 15 min</b> Ask each person (or in pairs) to read a 'story of hope' and then briefly share with the group Watch videoclip on 'climate justice and women'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♥ 'Stories of hope' - climate change case studies</li> <li>♥ 'Climate justice and women' videoclip (3min 41)</li> </ul>
<b>Group reflection on climate justice – 10 min</b>	
<b>Action planning – 15 min</b> What will your parish do to take action on climate justice?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♥ Climate petition – page 15</li> <li>♥ Hearts 4 Climate – page 16</li> <li>♥ Sample Mass and bulletin notices – page 19</li> <li>♥ Actions to reduce your climate impact – p 21</li> </ul>
<b>Prayer for our earth - 5 min</b>	Prayer for our earth Powerpoint - page 12

## Event outline #2: Host a film screening and discussion

Another option is to host a film screening at your school followed by a facilitated discussion. Click on the links below to find out more including how to stream, download or buy each film.

### **Suggested films on climate change and environmental issues, and what we can do about it::**

[There Once Was An Island](#) - follows three people in the remote Pacific Island community of Takuu as they face the first devastating effects of climate change.

[The Age of Consequences](#) - how climate change impacts resource scarcity, migration and conflict through the lens of US national security and global stability

[An Inconvenient Sequel: Truth to Power](#) - the 10-year anniversary sequel to Al Gore's seminal documentary An Inconvenient Truth.

[This Changes Everything](#) - the film based on Naomi Klein's bestselling book of the same name

[War on Waste](#) - takes a look at Australia's household, industrial and farming waste, our culture of consumption, and what we can do to reduce waste.

[GasLand](#) - Gasland and Gasland Part II explore the impacts of fracking.

### **Facilitating a discussion afterwards**

Depending on the size of your audience, you may wish to break into smaller discussion groups.

Below are some sample questions - you may wish to use some to prompt group discussion:

#### **Some reflective questions:**

- What stood out for you?
- What scenes do you remember most?
- What were you surprised about?

#### **Some interpretive questions:**

- What did you learn from this?
- What implications will this have?

#### **Some decisional questions:**

- What does this call for?
- What can we do about it?
- What is one thing you will do now?

## Take practical actions to be more sustainable in our daily lives

Here are some ideas for practical actions we can take both as individuals and as a school:

- ♥ **Use the car less** by switching to public transport, carpooling, walking or cycling where feasible. Consider taking part in [National Walk Safely to School Day](#) and [National Ride2School Day](#).
- ♥ **Reduce the amount of waste you produce, and Reuse and Recycle.** How does your school sort waste? Conduct an analysis and see where you can improve the system to reduce waste, reuse and recycle resources. For tips and advice on how to 'recycle right', visit [recyclingnearyou.com.au](http://recyclingnearyou.com.au) or call Planet Ark on 1300 733 712. Your local council may be another good source of information on recycling.
- ♥ Encourage your school to have a **waste-free lunch day, a no-plastic lunch day or a meat-free day each week.** Try the [Climatarian Challenge](#).
- ♥ **Set up a 'bag share' at your school** - a repository of reusable bags that students can borrow and return
- ♥ **Switch to low-energy light bulbs and appliances where possible,** and turn them off when not in use
- ♥ **Conduct a water audit of your school** – use our [Water Audit tool](#) to help. Have a look at our water resources (see page 13) to understand how your actions fit into the global water context.
- ♥ **Take charge of your energy:** Encourage your school to conduct an energy efficiency audit and take charge of their energy future. Support and resources are available from your State's sustainable schools program (see next page). For individuals, [the Green Electricity Guide](#) can help you choose a green energy provider.

(continued next page)

Photo credit: Santa Maria College Northcote



'We have been learning about the Genesis 1 and 2 and how humanity is called to treat the Environment with respect and dignity. Having this connection between what we have learnt in class and what we have done in our local community has helped us to better understand what scripture teaches about how we should treat our world.'

- Students Gillian Lane and Michaela Balkin

Photo: Sarah, Maggie and Michaela Year 9 students from Santa Maria College, Northcote worked in partnership with the Merri Creek Management Committee in a conservation and tree planting activity.

- ♥ Find out about your state's **sustainable schools programs or network**. Being part of programs like these can support your school to effectively implement a whole school approach to sustainability. Some may also offer grants for sustainability initiatives. Click on your state to visit the relevant website: [ACT](#) / [NSW](#) / [NT](#) / [QLD](#) / [SA](#) / [TAS](#) / [VIC](#) / [WA](#)
- ♥ **Make informed choices when shopping for food**, as your food choices can impact the environment and global food producers. For more information see **Caritas Australia's Food for All resources**.
- ♥ **Start a veggie garden** at home, and a school kitchen garden at school! Consider compost and worm farms to help your kitchen garden grow.
- ♥ **Join local conservation activities such as tree planting and bush regeneration**. You might like to take part in [Schools Tree Day](#).
- ♥ **Explore your options for divesting from fossil fuels** to make sure your money isn't supporting fossil fuel extraction.

"There is a nobility in the duty to care for creation through little daily actions."

- Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'* [211]

## St Louis de Montfort's sustainability journey

A walk around St Louis de Montfort's Catholic Primary school (VIC) reveals permaculture vegetable gardens, a bush tucker garden, an orchard, a grey water recycling system, an aquaponics system, observation ponds and small-animal enclosures. St Louis has a thriving Garden to Kitchen program, run 5 afternoons a week, in which 480 students each year have the opportunity to return to nature and experience hands-on learning in a real-life sustainable environment.

St Louis is a certified 5 Star ResourceSmart award winning school, in recognition of their significant environmental leadership including actively helping other schools to start their own sustainability journey.

Sustainability is embedded throughout the curriculum using the Inquiry approach, and the gardens provide a learning environment for subjects ranging from Biological Science to Mathematics.

Much of their success lies in their whole-of-school approach. St Louis has leaders who are committed to sustainability and has allocated resources towards sustainability initiatives. Teachers developed the school's environmental management plan and an environmental teacher group meets regularly. Parents can get involved through a parent garden group and the school has many partnerships with the wider community who have supported their sustainability initiatives.

[Read more about St Louis' sustainability journey.](#)



Photo credit: St Louis de Montfort's school

# Hearts 4 Climate for schools

Speak up for climate justice, celebrate what you love about our common home, make your own personal pledge and send a message to your MP that, inspired by love and compassion, you want strong climate action.

## The action

**Little heart** Write down something you'll do to better care for our common home and our global family. Keep this as a personal reminder.


**Big heart** Write down what you love and want to protect, and also a message urging your Member of Parliament (MP) to take action on climate. This heart goes to your MP.


## Host a school action

For each person, print off one little and one big heart using the template on page 3.

Everyone writes a personal commitment on the little heart and a message to their MP on the big heart.

Take a photo of your group with their hearts.

 Take an 'aerial' shot of all the students on the oval in a heart shape, holding up their hearts.


 Stick the big hearts into a giant heart shape on a piece of paper.

## Then share the love

This is a vital step to speak up for climate justice.

**With your MP** Invite your MP to meet your school group, receive the Hearts 4 Climate, discuss climate justice and share a photo opportunity. Ask them to add their own heart to the group effort!

**With media** Invite your local media along to the event too, or send them your group photo and a media release.

 Need tips on how to engage with your MP or the media? See our 'Engaging Your MP' and 'Engaging the Media' kits, available at [www.caritas.org.au/climate/resources](http://www.caritas.org.au/climate/resources)

**With Caritas Australia** Send a photo of your Hearts 4 Climate action to [act@caritas.org.au](mailto:act@caritas.org.au). We'd love to share it to encourage other schools to take part.

**On social media** Use #hearts4climate and tag us on Facebook @CaritasAU or Twitter @CaritasAust



## Why campaign on climate justice?

Climate change is the single biggest threat to reducing global poverty. While every person on the planet is affected by climate change, the impact is especially severe for women, men and children most vulnerable to extreme poverty – those who have done the least to contribute to global warming.

The communities we work with have told us of the increasing ferocity of cyclones and other extreme weather-related events, of rising sea levels, of the increasing unpredictability of farming seasons and food security, of water supplies contaminated with salinity, and of the negative impacts on community wellbeing and health.

We can achieve climate justice if we all work together in solidarity.

## Helpful resources

Visit [www.caritas.org.au/climate/resources](http://www.caritas.org.au/climate/resources) for these climate justice resources:

- ♥ Laudato Si' resources
- ♥ Stories from our partners
- ♥ Prayers and reflections

## Keep up to date with future actions

To hear about key climate justice moments, sign up to our campaigns e-newsletter at [www.caritas.org.au/climate/icc-subscribe](http://www.caritas.org.au/climate/icc-subscribe)

*"Love, overflowing with small gestures of mutual care, is also civic and political, and it makes itself felt in every action that seeks to build a better world."*

– Pope Francis, Laudato Si'

## WHY HEARTS?

'Caritas' means love and compassion in Latin. Love and compassion are two core values that impel us to care for our common home and each other, especially the children, women and men who are most vulnerable to and affected by climate change. Through love and compassion, together we will find the solutions.

Put your love and compassion in action by writing these 'love letters for climate justice' on hearts.



Children from an education program on the Thai-Burma border making a heart to represent 'Caritas' or love and compassion.

*"God's love is the fundamental moving force in all created things. Caritas is a manifestation of that love which translates "global warming" into a worldwide warming of our hearts to the poor."*

- Cardinal Luis Tagle, Caritas Internationalis President, July 2015

## TELL US ABOUT YOUR HEARTS 4 CLIMATE ACTION

This will help us record how many schools and people have taken part and how many MPs were reached. This information is really powerful when showing our politicians how much we care about climate justice.

You can either email us at [act@caritas.org.au](mailto:act@caritas.org.au) or pop this in the envelope and post to: **Hearts 4 Climate, Caritas Australia, 24-32 O'Riordan Street, Alexandria NSW 2015**

Name of school or group: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Post Code \_\_\_\_\_

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_ Your email address: \_\_\_\_\_

How many students & teachers took part in this activity? \_\_\_\_\_

Tick the box to receive email updates about our campaigns

Tick the box to receive our Teachers' e-news



Print them on one-sided scrap paper, or get creative with your group and make your own from reused cardboard or paper.



Name &  
school:

*Love & Compassion*

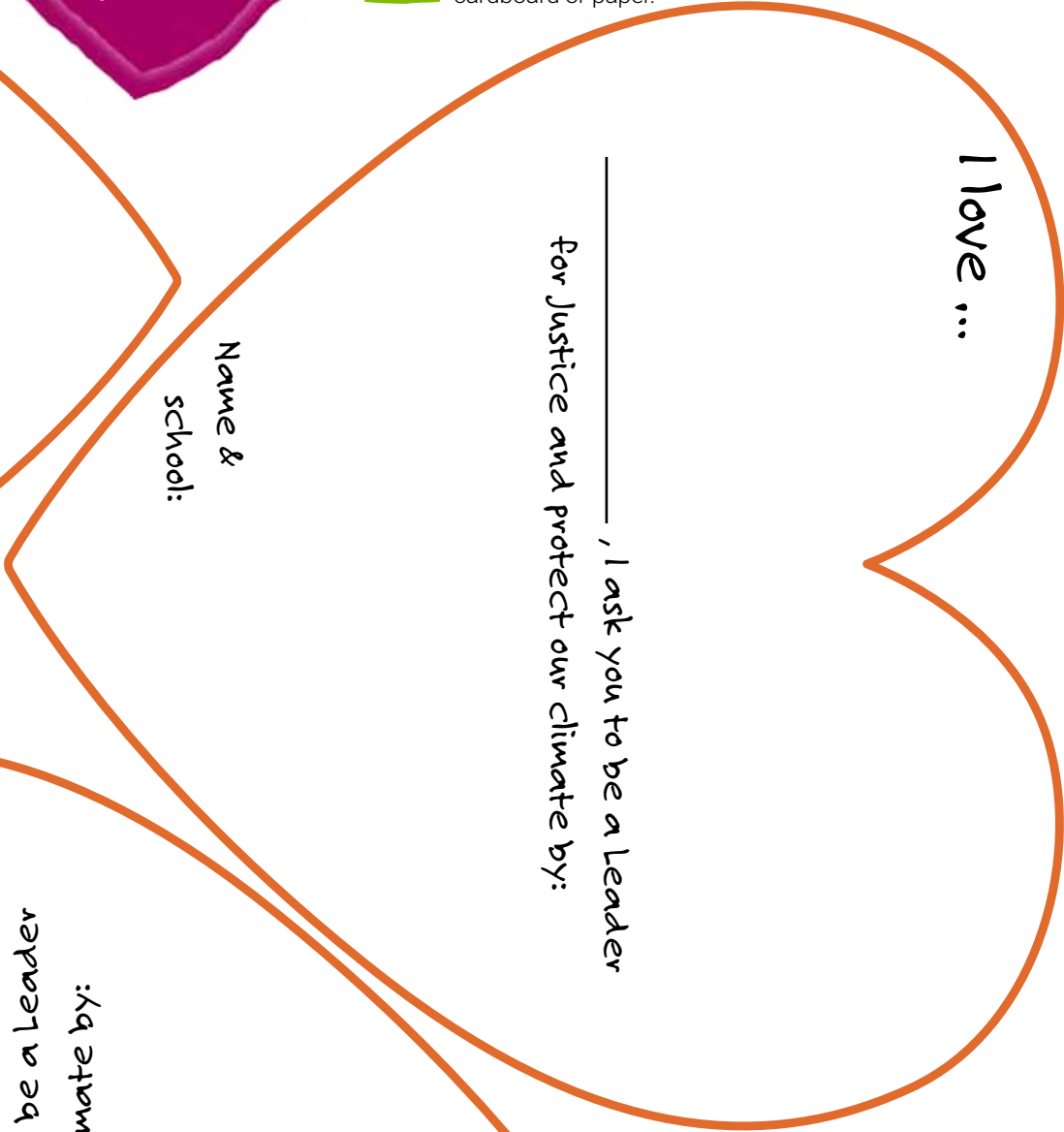
\_\_\_\_\_, I ask you to be a Leader  
for Justice and protect our climate by:

Name &  
school:



I love ...

*Love & Compassion*



I love ...

\_\_\_\_\_, I ask you to be a Leader  
for Justice and protect our climate by:



## Classroom activities for teachers

Here are two classroom activities on Laudato Si and climate justice: the Persuasive Text Challenge and the Four Week Ladder.

### Persuasive Text Challenge

Set students the challenge of creating a persuasive text on the theme of 'Our Common Home'. These texts can be used to 'pass on the message' by:

- ♥ Holding a class, year group or whole school debate on 'Why is it important to look after Our Common Home?', where students use their texts to present their arguments;
- ♥ Including the texts in your school newsletter and/or on the school website;
- ♥ Creating a display for students, parents and school visitors to see.

### Lower Secondary (Y7-9): Creating a persuasive text

Using the Caritas case studies and inspired by the key messages of the Encyclical, students create imaginative, informative and persuasive texts that present a point of view and advance or illustrate arguments on the theme of 'Our Common Home', including texts that integrate visual, print and/or audio features.

#### Students will:

- ♥ present arguments that advance opinions, justify positions, and make judgments in order to persuade others about climate justice and ecological conversion
- ♥ create informative and argumentative texts with explanations, details and evidence, for instance drawing on the Caritas case studies as the global human impact and face of climate change
- ♥ follow the structure of an argument which has a series of sequenced and linked paragraphs, beginning with an outline of the stance to be taken, a series of supported points that develop a line of argument, and a conclusion which summarises the main line of argument.

ACELY1736 | Content description | Year 8 | English | Literacy | Creating texts

ACELY1746 | Content description | Year 9 | English | Literacy | Creating texts

### Upper Secondary (Y10-12): Writing a persuasive text

Using the case studies on pages 10 and 11 and Laudato Si', students create a sustained text on the theme of 'Our Common Home', which can combine specific digital or media content.

The text must **inform** the audience about the key messages of the encyclical, the challenge of climate justice and ecological conversion, and the Caritas response. It must also **persuade** the audience of the need to act.

Students present a structured argument by providing a statement of the major perspectives or concerns relating to the issue of climate justice and ecological conversion; preview the structure of arguments; structure the text to provide a major point for each paragraph with succinct elaboration; and conclude with a summary of the main issues and recommendations for action.

ACELY1756 | Content description | Year 10 | English | Literacy | Creating texts

## Classroom activities for teachers (continued)

### The Four Week Ladder

Climate justice and our Catholic response is a subject area rich in opportunity for learning and discussion. One approach you may like is the 'four-week ladder'. In this example, students are being asked to write a letter (either a Hearts 4 Climate letter or a regular letter) to your MP.

**Week 1: Prepare** - Students research *Laudato Si'*, climate justice and actions they can ask your MP to take.

**Week 2: Discussion:** Students share and discuss what they have learnt

**Week 3: Individual framing:** Students work individually to frame their letter

**Week 4: Writing the letters:** Putting it all together to write the letter.

# OUR COMMON HOME



## A prayer for our earth

All powerful God,  
you are present in the universe  
and in the smallest of your creatures.  
You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.  
Pour out upon us the power of your love,  
that we may protect life and beauty.  
Fill us with your peace, that we may live  
as brothers and sisters, harming no one.  
O God of the poor,  
help us to rescue the abandoned  
and forgotten of this earth,  
so precious in your eyes.  
Bring healing to our lives,  
that we may protect the world and not prey on it,  
that we may sow beauty,  
not pollution and destruction.  
Touch the hearts  
of those who look only for gain  
at the expense of the poor and the earth.  
Teach us to discover the worth of each thing,  
to be filled with awe and contemplation,  
to recognize that we are profoundly united  
with every creature  
as we journey towards your infinite light.  
We thank you for being with us each day.  
Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle,  
for justice, love and peace.