



established 2005

FRANCISCAN SCHOOLS AUSTRALIA

enriching Franciscan spirituality within schools



charism support



resources



connection

2020 FSA Year of Conversion

2020 invites us to be jubilant as we connect more deeply and spiritually to our Franciscan spirituality, to all FSA school communities and to our common home – planet Mother earth.



IScreengrab of Pope Francis' video message announcing plans to mark the fifth anniversary of "Laudato Si', on Care for Our Common Home" (YouTube/ Global Catholic Climate Movement)



REFLECTION

There is now no escaping talk of COVID-19 in our society. However, this is our chance to share peace and hope. This reflection by Br Richard Hendrick OFM, an Irish priest of the Capuchin Franciscan Order is a call for us to pause and take stock of what is truly important in our lives. In light of our theme of 'conversion', we pray our hearts are open to transformation through what we can see, hear and feel all around us.

No pandemic is more powerful than prayer!

*Yes, there is fear.
Yes, there is isolation.
Yes, there is panic buying.
Yes, there is sickness.
Yes, there is even death.*

*But they say that in Wuhan after so many years of noise
you can hear the birds again.
They say that after just a few weeks of quiet
the sky is no longer thick with fumes
but blue and grey and clear.*

*They say that in the streets of Assisi
people are singing to each other
across the empty squares;
keeping their windows open
so that those who are alone
may hear the sounds of family around them.*

CONTINUED OVER

Laudato si' Week May 16-24, 2020

As Franciscan schools we trust your community will take up Pope Francis invitation to celebrate the [#LaudatoSi5](#) Anniversary! Join a week of celebration and action in May commemorating the fifth anniversary of his landmark encyclical "[Laudato Si', on Care for Our Common Home](#)."

In a [video message](#) March 3, Francis officially announced Laudato Si' Week, set to take place **May 16-24, 2020**. Throughout the nine days, the pope has asked the global Catholic community to undertake ambitious actions to address the mounting environmental perils facing the planet and its people — climate change; ecosystems in the Amazon, Australia and the Arctic [approaching tipping points](#); and the [unprecedented threat of biodiversity loss](#) facing 1 million plant and animal species.

HOW WILL YOUR SCHOOL RESPOND?



When you are a part of a Franciscan community, you've seen the paintings of St. Francis and Clare, and probably pass by a copy of the San Damiano crucifix and Tau every day. A pilgrimage to Assisi makes the icons come alive in ways you can't imagine. **REMEMBER THE FSA PILGRIMAGE IN 2021.**



REFLECTION

*They say that a hotel in the West of Ireland
Is offering free meals and delivery to the
housebound.*

*Today a young woman I know
is busy spreading fliers with her number
through the neighbourhood
so that the elders may have someone to call on.*

*Today Churches, Synagogues, Mosques and
Temples are preparing to welcome and shelter the
homeless, the sick, the weary.*

*All over the world people are slowing down and
reflecting.
All over the world people are looking at their
neighbours in a new way.
All over the world people are waking up to a new
reality.
To how big we really are.
To how little control we really have.
To what really matters. To Love.*

*So we pray and we remember that...
Yes there is fear,
but there does not have to be hate.
Yes there is isolation,
but there does not have to be loneliness.
Yes there is panic buying,
but there does not have to be meanness.
Yes there is sickness,
but there does not have to be disease of the soul
Yes there is even death,
but there can always be a rebirth of love.*

*Wake to the choices you make as to how to live
now.
Today, breathe.
Listen, behind the factory noises of your panic.
The birds are singing again.
The sky is clearing.
Spring is coming
and we are always encompassed by Love.*

*Open the windows of your soul
and though you may not be able
to touch across the empty square,
Sing.*



'Love one another as I have loved you.'

(John 15:12)

([Third Order Regular Rule Article 23](#))



St. Francis knew that everything in existence is intended for relationship and as Franciscans we are especially attuned to our relational nature. With almost everyone beginning to practice “social distancing” and self-quarantine for the foreseeable future in response to the coronavirus pandemic, here FSA offers some ways to continue to engage with each other, with our friends and neighbours. During times of crisis, our faith brings us together and we reach out to one another in solidarity and love. Consider:

- Prayers composed by everyday people like you and me are making their way around the [internet](#). [Do you have a prayer or an intercession to share?](#)
- A reflection on the pandemic by Sr. Judith Davies, OSF from the Diocese of Joliet, IL, invites us to think of this time as sacred. [Read more.](#)
- Capuchin Franciscan Poor Clare Sister Maria Elena Romero in Wilmington, DE [offers tips](#) on avoiding boredom as we have to remain at home for a prolonged period of time.
- Pope Francis calls for [prayer](#) amongst the turmoil.
- Baking [Cookies of Joy](#) for your neighbours and leaving them on their doorstep. These biscuits were first made over 900 years ago by the Christian saint, Hildegard of Bingen. She said that these spice biscuits should be taken at regular intervals to increase joy and positivity!
- Earthbeat's great eco-streaming [guide](#) while we are cooped up.

Let us live the universality of prayer, of compassion and of tenderness during this time of crisis. Stay well.

The FSA website is being updated and we are calling for community photographs from our member schools.



Please email high resolution jpeg files to Executive Officer Alison Stone.

alisonstone@optusnet.com.au