

When *Laudato si'* tells us that "We are not God", it is inviting us to find our proper place in creation. When we plunder the earth's resources and pollute her land, air and waters, we act as though we were all-powerful, separate from the rest of creation and unaffected by it. In a word, we behave like gods. *Laudato si'* invites us to give up behaving like destructive deities and rediscover ourselves as *creatures*, living alongside other creatures in an interdependent whole. "Everything is connected", and so everything we do has an effect in the broader web of relationships that God has created. We are not creators: we cannot dictate the way that different species, from the tiniest bacteria to the largest predators, work together to sustain life on earth. Even with the best of human wisdom, we cannot understand creation completely, and



we cannot engineer our way out of the climate crisis. Instead, we are called to recognise and respect the wisdom of natural systems, and to learn to live in harmony with them. So healing our relationship with earth and the other creatures of our common home, we are also finding our proper place in relation to God.

We are not God, we are creatures. To recognise this, and to renew our relationships with God, with one another and with the rest of creation, is what it means to enter into the "new creation" St Paul describes.

Mass text

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

The Lord is the strength of his people, a saving refuge for the one he has anointed. Save your people, Lord, and bless your heritage, and govern them for ever.

FIRST READING Job 38:1. 8-11

PSALM Psalm 106

RESPONSE **O give thanks to the Lord, for his love endures for ever.**

Or **Alleluia!**

1. Some sailed to the sea in ships to trade on the mighty waters. These men have seen the Lord's deeds, the wonders he does in the deep. **R.**
2. For he spoke; he summoned the gale, tossing the waves of the sea up to heaven and back into the deep; their soul melted away in their distress. **R.**
3. Then they cried to the Lord in their need and he rescued them from their distress. He stilled the storm to a whisper: all the waves of the sea were hushed. **R.**

4. They rejoiced because of the calm and he led them to the haven they desired. Let them thank the Lord for his love, the wonders he does for men. **R.**

SECOND READING 2 Corinthians 5:14-17

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia! A great prophet has appeared among us; God has visited his people. Alleluia!

GOSPEL Mark 4:35-41

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

I am the Good Shepherd, and I lay down my life for my sheep, says the Lord.

Next Sunday's Readings:
Wisdom 1:13-15; 2:23-24
2 Corinthians 8:7. 9. 13-15
Mark 5:21-43



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SUNDAY BULLETIN

NEW CREATION

Over the last few years, the seriousness of the climate crisis has become clearer to us than ever. All of the ten hottest years ever recorded on earth have taken place since 1998, and extreme weather events are becoming more frequent. We have become aware of the mass extinction being driven by human activities, and the destruction of ancient landscapes and crucial rainforests. And we know that, unless we take drastic action to limit the rising temperature of the earth, all of this is going to get a great deal worse – and that it will hit the poorest and most vulnerable peoples of earth the hardest. *Laudato si'*, Pope Francis' encyclical about the environment, puts it very starkly: "Doomsday predictions can no longer be met with irony or disdain. We may well be leaving to coming generations debris, desolation and filth" (161).

In light of this, what are we to make of the claim in today's second reading that "in Christ, there is a new creation; the old creation has gone, and now the new one is here"? What does belief in a new creation mean, as we struggle to protect the fragile and suffering creation that we inhabit?

The answer that *Laudato si'* offers ties in nicely with this Sunday's readings. The first reading and the Gospel both make the same point: as Pope Francis puts it very bluntly, "We are not God" (67). The book of Job tells the story of a good man tested by suffering, whose friends gather round to comfort him and explain why he is suffering. At the end of the book, God answers "from the heart of the tempest" with a beautiful hymn to divine power in creation, describing everything from God's power over the sea, to God's arrangement of the stars and knowledge of the ways of all creatures. God's wisdom and power is so much greater than human knowledge. The Gospel picks up the same theme. By demonstrating his effortless control over the raging sea, Jesus shows himself as having divine power. When the disciples ask, "Who can this be? Even the wind and the sea obey him," the reader is meant to answer, "God!"



Building a civilisation of love



Dr Theodora Hawksley, a theologian working at the London Jesuit Centre, reflects on the call to care for the earth, our common home.

20 JUNE 2021

12TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

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DIVINE OFFICE WEEK IV