



# **DIOCESE OF PLYMOUTH**

## **CARE FOR CREATION CASE STUDY**

### **LAUDATO SI' WEEK 2025**

“The work of the Church seeks not only to remind everyone of the duty to care for nature, but at the same time she must above all protect mankind from self-destruction”

Laudato Si' 79

# Objective

Caritas Plymouth was given additional resources to deliver an event in Laudato Si' week 2025. The project, led by Tanya Trevena, explored ways in which art can inspire conversation and spiritual reflection about Care for Creation. The aim was to prompt people to explore Gospel teaching and what it tells us about stewardship; to reflect on their own lives and consider actions and choices to lessen their own impact. The end result was a Laudato Si' exhibition and series of events at Plymouth Cathedral.



Canon Paul Cummins wrote to all parishes before Laudato Si' week inviting them to reflect on Care for Creation and share his message with parishioners. He noted that 2025 is a significant year for creation, with the Tenth anniversary of Laudato Si' in May and a global Jubilee. Care for Creation is one of the six social action themes chosen by Pope Francis as an area for prayer and reflection during this Jubilee Year. Pope Leo XIV is believed to share Pope Francis' stance on environmental issues. He encouraged parishes to consider ways in which they can take action to act as stewards of creation.

Caritas Diocese of Plymouth collected and shared photographs of our diocese by parishioners on the theme of Care for Creation. The pictures were of people and places in the Diocese of Plymouth.

We explored three themes that call to mind the reflected glory of the Lord in the beautiful world we are asked to care for. The themes were Beauty, Good Choices and Humanity. We wanted to hear and see the positive actions that people are taking to care for creation as well as the challenges we face.

- Beauty – What about God's creation, inspires you, brings you joy, and makes you draw deeper in relationship with him?
- Good Choices – How do we change direction and look after the earth and all that is in it? What are the good choices we can put into our everyday living?
- Humanity – Where do you see God's love in action played out around you?



Caritas created a display in the foyer of St Boniface House to remind visitors of the importance of caring for creation.

The following quotes are from people who visited the exhibition:

Good view and spiritual lifting. Thanks for renewing our spirit life. We are grateful to God for our sight.'

*'Beautiful images with inspiring thoughts on many. It would be lovely to see more from around the diocese with each parish contributing from events in them. Blessings to all who contributed and may everyone enjoy our part of the world with joy, respect and a love for creation.'*

*'Thank you, a beautiful display, and so good to see children interested and appreciating God's creation.'*

*'I have enjoyed the lovely photos and the Laudato Si' excerpts are excellent, but I would have liked to have seen a focus on communities. I had expected to see the church in all the distant places. I would have also liked to see pictures of people.'*

We also posted articles on the Diocesan Website and Facebook about Laudato Si' week and one of our articles was carried by Catholic South West, reaching parishioners in Clifton and Portsmouth Dioceses as well as parishes throughout our diocese. The article shared reflections from students at Notre Dame in Plymouth who had created a triptych reflecting on care for creation from our previous Laudato Si' exhibition in 2024.



Beautiful images, which capture the awe-inspiring beauty of our diocese.'

*'Very spiritual pictures, pity the exhibition is only on for a few days.'*

*'inspiring exhibition'*

*'It would be great if the display could be 'toured' round the parishes of the diocese so that the message and experience can be shared.'*

*'A lovely inspiring exhibition which serves as an encouragement for us to remember and set a Laudato Si' with urgency.'*

*'I know of Caritas through Tanya. I came to see the exhibition today and felt connected to the words written and photos taken. Thank you for putting this together, it's beautiful, aren't we lucky to have this, we'd be fools to not look after it better. One World.'*

# Engagement and Participation

## Direct Engagement



29 people submitted photographs that explored each of the 3 themes.



500 people visited the Cathedral during Laudato Si' week, and would have had the opportunity to visit the display.



34 images were printed and used in a display at Plymouth Cathedral.



12030 views on Social media related to the Laudato Si project, 6303 people reached and 210 interactions with 20 posts.



25 people attended the launch of the exhibition.



10 visitors to the exhibition left feedback

## Indirect Engagement



13 parishes included a note about Laudato Si' week in their parish bulletins.



1 of our articles was carried by Catholic South West which has a 2500 audience distribution.

Tanya Trevena also engaged with a number of individuals and groups during the run up to Laudato Si' week. The following are just a few examples of the great work underway:

- Cornwall Climate Change have offered free workshops to our schools and now offer them opportunities to take part in research projects and their annual program of free school resource days for Cornwall and Plymouth.
- Caritas have interviewed pupils and parishioners about their thoughts and work on care for creation and shared the information.
- Keyham Barton invited Tanya to attend their Environment focus day which was led by the Art and Energy group. Images from this day were used as the title poster for the exhibition.
- One parishioner is using her Called and Gifted exploration to produce a new project to highlight and respond to COP30.
- Tanya was invited by a parishioner from Saltash to come and see the developing of their rewilding space.
- Tanya connected Live simply groups together and spoke with gardeners in Launceston, sharing their new church produce with the local community.

## Impact

This project has prompted many conversations. Having a dedicated resource to engage people in conversations about care for creation has highlighted some good practice.

Two churches in Cornwall have gardens and wild spaces that they use to develop the biodiversity of their sites, encouraging wildlife into the space and growing fruit and vegetables in a bid to produce food that can be grown and used by the community.

A parish in Dorset has been growing food for the local food bank and enticing new flora and fauna to enter the site to bring that balance of good soil.

In Exeter there are gardens in both churches that provide an opportunity to escape the business of the city and find a space of peace.

In Tiverton the Laudato Si group are looking forward to the opening of their new sustainable church building and developing the space around this church to enhance its sustainability.

Our schools are also developing wild spaces and focusing on the important messages of looking after our environment.

One parishioner in Exeter is setting up a Care of Creation reflection day, hoping to ignite a new environmental group from the University and both parishes.

One parishioner in Sidmouth is setting up a creative exhibition of their own to highlight COP30.

### **What we learned.**

What started initially as a project to collect photographs from around our diocese to create our own stock of local images that could be used for our communications, has turned into an encounter, inspiring people to talk and think about how we look after this amazing world. A creative approach helps people to think differently. We live in an image driven society and the high level of engagement on social media shows that we can utilise images to tell a story and prompt action and reflection. Sharing stories can inspire others to do the same or at least ask, "What does that look like if we did that here?"

We still have a way to go to encourage more engagement in this topic and hopefully the seeds of thought planted will continue to bear fruit in the future. By sharing the outcomes of some of the projects above, we hope to see even more people being inspired to look after this precious and beautiful gift that God has given us.

"I ask everyone to accompany this pilgrimage of reconciliation with the world that is our home and to help make it more beautiful, because that commitment has to do with our personal dignity and highest values. " Laudate Deum

“LAUDATO SI’, mi’ Signore” – “Praise be to you, my Lord”. In the words of this beautiful canticle, Saint Francis of Assisi reminds us that our common home is like a sister with whom we share our life and a beautiful mother who opens her arms to embrace us. “Praise be to you, my Lord, through our Sister, Mother Earth, who sustains and governs us, and who produces various fruit with coloured flowers and herbs”

Laudato Si’ #1

