



FAITH IN ACTION: TRACING A LEGACY OF LOVE

⁹ The human mind plans the way, but the Lord directs the steps. **Proverbs 16:9**

⁴ Show me Your ways, O Lord; Teach me Your paths. ⁵ Lead me in Your truth and teach me, For You are the God of my salvation; On You I wait all day long.

Psalm 25:4, 5

THE PASTOR'S PEN

April 27, 2025

HIGHLIGHTING THOSE WE HELP

SHERMAN PARK GREEN CONGREGATIONS INITIATIVE

POPE FRANCIS

On the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day (Wednesday, 22 April, 2020)

Dear Brothers and Sisters, Good Morning!

Today we celebrate the fiftieth Earth Day. This is an occasion for renewing our commitment to love and care for our common home and for the weaker members of our human family. As the tragic coronavirus pandemic has taught us, we can overcome global challenges only by showing solidarity with one another and embracing the most vulnerable in our midst. The Encyclical Letter [*Laudato Si'*](#) deals precisely with this "Care for our Common Home". Today, let us together reflect a little on that responsibility which characterizes "our earthly sojourn" ([*Laudato Si'*](#), 160). We must grow in awareness of caring for our common home.

We are fashioned from the earth, and fruit of the earth sustains our life. But, as the book of Genesis reminds us, we are not simply "earthly"; we also bear within us the *breath of life* that comes from God (cf. *Gen 2:4-7*). Thus we live in this common home as one human family in biodiversity with God's other creatures. As *imago Dei*, in God's image, we are called to have care and respect for all creatures, and to offer love and compassion to our brothers and sisters, especially the most vulnerable among us, in imitation of God's love for us, manifested in his Son Jesus, who became man in order to share our state with us and save us.

Because of our selfishness we have failed in our responsibility to be guardians and stewards of the earth. "We need only take a frank look at the facts to see that our common home is falling into serious disrepair" ([*ibid.*](#), 61). We have polluted it, we have despoiled it, endangering our very lives. For this reason, various international and local movements have sprung up in order to appeal to our consciences. I deeply appreciate these initiatives; still it will be necessary for our children to take to the streets to teach us the obvious: we have no future if we destroy the very environment that sustains us.

We have failed to care for the earth, our garden-home; we have failed to care for our brothers and sisters. We have sinned against the earth, against our neighbours, and ultimately against the Creator, the benevolent Father who provides for everyone, and desires us to live in communion and flourish together. And how does the earth react? There is a Spanish saying that is very clear about this. It goes: "God always forgives; we humans sometimes forgive, and sometimes not; the earth never forgives". The earth does not forgive: if we have despoiled the earth, its response will be very ugly.

How can we restore a harmonious relationship with the earth and with the rest of humanity? A harmonious relationship... We so often lose sight of harmony: harmony is a work of the Holy Spirit. In our common home too, on the earth, and in our relationships with people, with our neighbour, with the poorest, how can we restore this harmony? We need a new way of looking at our common home. For this is not a storehouse of resources for us to exploit. For us believers, the natural world is the "Gospel of Creation": it expresses God's creative power in fashioning human life and bringing the world and all it contains into existence, in order to sustain humanity. As the biblical account of creation concludes: "God saw all that he had made, and it was very good" (*Gen 1:31*). When we see these natural tragedies that are the earth's response to our mistreatment, I think: "If I ask the Lord now what he thinks about it, I do not believe he is saying it is a very good thing". It is we who have ruined the Lord's work!

In today's celebration of Earth Day, we are called to renew our sense of sacred respect for the earth, for it is not just our home but also God's home. This should make us all the more aware that *we stand on holy ground!*

PASTORAL TRANSITION

PASTORAL TRANSITION SCRIPTURES:

⁹ The human mind plans the way, but the Lord directs the steps.

Proverbs 16:9

⁴ Show me Your ways, O Lord; Teach me Your paths. ⁵ Lead me in Your truth and teach me, For You are the God of my salvation; On You I wait all day long.

Psalm 25:4, 5

PASTORAL TRANSITION PRAYER:

Dear God, In my mind, I make my plans, But I desire You, Lord, to direct my steps.

So, show me Your ways, O Lord; Teach me Your paths. Lead me in Your truth and teach me, For You are the God of my salvation; On You, I wait all day long.

As you show me, teach me and lead me, I will seek your will, I will trust your leading and I will follow your directing as I pray regarding our next pastor. In the name of Jesus, the Christ, Amen

PASTORAL TRANSITION TIMELINE



BIBLICAL SCRIPTURE REFERENCE

NUMBERS 27:19-20 ¹⁹ PRESENT HIM TO ELEAZAR THE PRIEST BEFORE THE WHOLE COMMUNITY, AND PUBLICLY COMMISSION HIM TO LEAD THE PEOPLE. ²⁰ TRANSFER SOME OF YOUR AUTHORITY TO HIM SO THE WHOLE COMMUNITY OF ISRAEL WILL OBEY HIM. (NLT)



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The Pilgrim Rest Oasis

Sharing the Faith · Securing the Future

Through faith God has given us the space to be an oasis in the middle of the city.

An oasis is a fertile spot in the desert where refuge, relief, and refreshment is found.

Be part of God's plan for Pilgrim Rest and this community.

Start contributing to the Oasis today!
Let's continue to make progress!



Thank you for your continued support of God's plan for us.

Beginning



Current



Your contribution can be dedicated to a specific activity or the Oasis, in general.

	Educational Enrichment	Technology Literacy	Athletics & Recreation	Performing Arts	Facility Innovation
\$500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15 Subject books for elementary (math, literature, history, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 iPad 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 basketballs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 art sets for aspiring artists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External security lighting to keep the street well-lit and safe
\$1,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100 Summer Bridge books to help students retain learning during breaks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100 "learn how to code" kits for elementary students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 tennis rackets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 beginner saxophones or 8 beginner violins 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Camera security system to keep everyone safe
\$2,500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9 students can be challenged to excel using interactive problem-solving programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 computer for graphic design and website creation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12 sets of golf clubs for children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 Play Scripts with performance/licensing fee and cast instructions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wireless PA system to easily communicate at the school
\$5,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 smartboard to help teachers engage students in learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 STEM lab cart of materials for a classroom with multiple activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3-day Speed and Agility workshop for 15 young aspiring track stars 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100 pairs of tap shoes for aspiring dancers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Battery operated floor scrubber to keep the building looking its best
\$10,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 trip for 15 students to visit 1 HBCU 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100 Robotic kits to reinforce studies in STEAM subjects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open gym for 20 young people 1 X a week throughout the winter in a safe place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 200 tickets to see Alvin Ailey Dance Company 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LED light fixtures throughout the school to promote learning and natural light