



Photo by Michael Stulman/CRS

MATERIALS

- Paper and Pencils
- Cross
- Copies of *Excerpts From Laudato Si* and *Closing Prayer* handouts
- for each participant.

PROCESS

Invite participants into a prayerful mindset and distribute *Excerpts From Laudato Si* handout.

Leader: One of the principles of Catholic social teaching is Care for Creation. We show our respect for the Creator by our stewardship of creation. We are called to protect people and the planet, living our faith in relationship with all of God's creation. We are committed to actions of advocacy in our lives that fulfill this responsibility.

Prayer can make us more conscious of this call, and can form us to follow Jesus' example to respond freely out of love.

Instruct participants to read the *Excerpts From Laudato Si* and choose one excerpt or phrase that speaks to them. They should then compose a prayer for advocacy for our world and/or our global neighbors based on the excerpt. When participants have composed their prayers, instruct them to sit in a circle.

Hold up the cross for all to see.

Leader: We gather here in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

God, who gives us the gift of creation, we gather here as many, made one. We ask that you help us to hear Your call, so that we may discern how we can use the gifts You have given each and every one of us to be advocates for our earth and for those who live in poverty throughout the world today. Hear our prayers, fill our hearts, make us one in you.

Pass the cross around the room and allow each person to read his or her prayer while holding the cross aloft. The cross is passed around the circle until all prayers are prayed and the cross returns to the leader.

(Distribute Closing Prayer handout to participants)

Closing Prayer: Prayer of St. Francis with Pope Francis

Reader: "Let the cry for peace ring out in all the world." *(tweeted by Pope Francis 9/4/13)*

All: Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.

Reader: "Where we find hate and darkness, may we bring hope in order to give a human face to society." *(tweeted 9/30/13)*

All: Where there is hatred, let me sow love;

Reader: "God is so merciful toward us. We too should learn to be merciful, especially with those who suffer." *(tweeted 7/17/13)*

All: Where there is injury, pardon;

Reader: "Christians know how to face difficulties, trials and defeat with serenity and hope in the Lord." *(tweeted 10/31/13)*

All: Where there is doubt, faith;

Reader: "We ought to never lose hope. God overwhelms us with grace if we keep asking." *(tweeted 9/9/13)*

All: Where there is despair, hope;

Reader: "The light of faith illumines all our relationships and helps us to live them in union with the love of Christ, to live them like Christ." *(tweeted 8/5/13)*

All: Where there is darkness, light;

Reader: "If we wish to follow Christ closely, we cannot choose an easy, quiet life. It will be a demanding life, but full of joy." *(tweeted 7/10/13)*

All: And where there is sadness, joy.

Reader: "Let us allow Jesus into our lives and leave behind our selfishness, indifference and closed attitudes to others." *(tweeted 8/27/13)*

All: O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console;

Reader: "Let us ask the Lord to give us the gentleness to look upon the poor with understanding and love, devoid of human calculation and fear." *(tweeted 9/24/13)*

All: To be understood as to understand;

Reader: "God loves us. May we discover the beauty of loving and being loved." *(tweeted 11/11/13)*

All: To be loved as to love.

Reader: "Every time we give in to selfishness and say 'No' to God, we spoil his loving plan for us." *(tweeted 5/26/13)*

All: For it is in giving that we receive:

Reader: "We are all sinners, but we experience the joy of God's forgiveness and we walk forward truly in his mercy." *(tweeted 9/19/13)*

All: It is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

(Prayer adapted from a prayer developed by Mary Ann Otto, Stewardship and Special Projects Director, Diocese of Green Bay, and by Catholic Charities of St. Paul and Minneapolis)