

DAY FOR LIFE 2016

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‘Faced with the sacredness of life and of the human person, and before the marvels of the universe, **wonder** is the only appropriate attitude.’

Letter of St John Paul II to Artists, 1999



Everything is Connected

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Last year was the hottest on record. In a small village in the South East of India, a farmer called Jejabba braved the midday heat to take his cows to shelter by a mango grove. He arrived home dehydrated and died before he could reach a hospital. He was 63. Jejabba is not alone. Over 4,500 people in India and Pakistan died during last summer's heatwave. Rising temperatures are making droughts more severe and floods more intense. The poor always suffer most.

On 18 June 2015, Pope Francis published his environmental encyclical *Laudato Si'* (*Praise Be*), and in December of that year, the historic Paris Climate Change Agreement was signed. The pope reminded us powerfully that we are one human family sharing a common home, dependent upon one another and the whole of creation. It is our duty to 'pay special attention to the most vulnerable.' He said, 'Neglecting to monitor the harm done to nature and the environmental impact of our decisions is only the most striking sign of a disregard for the message contained in the structures of nature itself. When we fail to acknowledge as part of reality the worth of a poor person, a

Day for Life is celebrated yearly by the Catholic Church in Ireland, Scotland, England and Wales. It is a day dedicated to raising awareness about the meaning and value of human life at every stage and in every condition.



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human embryo, a person with disabilities – to offer just a few examples – it becomes difficult to hear the cry of nature itself; everything is connected.' (Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'* 117)

When we recognise and grow in wonder that we are all brothers and sisters living in one common home, it will not only affect how we care for the environment, but also how we care for one another and how we welcome and accept those with different needs and abilities, refugees, the elderly, the unborn, the forgotten and the abandoned.

Growing in wonder will help us to treasure more deeply the gift of human life.

A Prayer for Our Earth

All powerful God, you are present in the whole universe
and in the smallest of your creatures.
You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.
Pour out upon us the power of your love,
That we may protect life and beauty.
Fill us with peace, that we may live
as brothers and sisters, harming no one.

Laudato Si'

Photos (clockwise from top left): Pope Francis greets a pilgrim in St Peter's Square, November 2013 © Mazur/www.catholicnews.org.uk; A family harvest their crops in the South Hebron Hills © Eoghan Rice/Trócaire; Statue of St Francis of Assisi © Mazur/www.catholicnews.org.uk; A family takes a break before heading onwards at Presevo Refugee Centre, Serbia, October 2015 © Maebh Smith/Trócaire; Pupils of Millstreet Community School, Cork sleep out to launch Trocaire's Lenten Campaign, 2014 © Claire Keogh/Trócaire; Trócaire's Turkana Greenhouse Project, East Africa, January 2016 © Catherine M. Waking/Trócaire; Mary Robinson and Trócaire's Éamonn Meehan at the Trócaire project in Adigrat in north Ethiopia, July 2016 © Eoghan Rice /Trócaire; 'Stop Climate Chaos' March, Dublin, 29 November 2015 © Mark Stedman/Trócaire.