

# A message from the Archbishop of Brisbane

In 2015 Pope Francis gave us his Encyclical Letter, *Laudato Si'*, On Care for Our Common Home; and last year he published the closely related Apostolic Exhortation, *Laudate Deum*, claiming that too little had been done since the Encyclical Letter appeared.

In both documents, the Pope presents a sobering picture of the many ecological and social challenges we face. In recent years the truth of his words has been evident to all of us. Bushfires and floods have ravaged South-East Queensland and other parts of Australia. Torres Strait Islanders and the peoples across the Pacific are pleading for urgent action to save them from the impacts of climate change including the threat of their homes, gardens and cemeteries being inundated. Aboriginal people in different parts of this country are expressing concern and even outrage at the threat to their traditional lands and culture resulting from mining activity. Pacific island nations voice similar concerns about the effects of mining operations on their lands and in the sea itself. The situation is critical, and the Church has a unique role to play in turning things around. This *Laudato Si'* Action Plan, which is aligned to the Holy See's *Laudato Si'* Action Platform, seeks to identify what that means.

I encourage every family, parish, community, school, agency and institution in the Archdiocese to embrace this *Laudato Si'* Action Plan. Much is being done already, but we all need to go further in responding to the Holy Father's invitation to take the path of ecological conversion. This plan will help us all change the way we see the world around us and the way we act.

Conservationists, scientists, economists and politicians have a crucial role to play in addressing the ecological crisis. But we Christians offer a unique perspective, which is profoundly biblical. We have a word to speak which is beyond science, politics and economics. It is a word born of the faith which listens to the voice of the Creator; and it is a word which goes to the heart of the spiritual sickness at the heart of much of the distress afflicting the world today. It is a word which gives us eyes to see the world as sacramental; and that makes us all the more committed to nurturing all that is God's and all that reveals God.

May the Holy Spirit blow mightily through our darkness, emptiness and chaos, so that we may together take brave steps in responding to the prophetic call of Pope Francis. This action plan sets out those steps into a future where the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor will become a great song of praise to the Creator.



Mark Coleridge  
Archbishop of Brisbane