OCT 2026

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION FOR *Peace* AND SUSTAINABLE *Development*



LAUDATO YOUTH INITIATIVE

UNITED FOR CLIMATE ACTION

info@laudato-youthinitiative.org

Laudato Si' Voices

MAGAZINE

14 the Edition

The Laudato Youth Initiative

The Laudato Youth Initiative (LYI) mobilizes young people and communities to take practical climate action and build sustainable solutions



We emntor ***Laudato Si Clubs in schools, Universities, Parishes, Dioceses and Communities*** inspired by the Enyclical Laudato Si and St. Adolf Mukasa Ludigho.

Key Milestones:

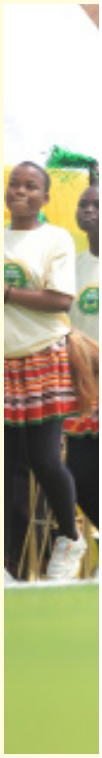
- Started: **October 3, 2020,** as an online initiative and launched the "**Laudato Si Voices Magazine"**
- 2022, started in-person Programs with the **Launch of "Laudato Si Clubs" in institutions and Communities**
- 2023 LYI **Launched the "Laudato Si Green Festival program"**
- 2025 LYI Launched of the ambicious "**one million Tree Planting Drive"** as a restoration activity for all its Laudato Si Clubs.
- 2026 LYI Launched **"www.empiisaenungi.com"** to promote good manners and resposnibile use of Social Media and Technology .

LYI envisions forming a generation of environmentally responsible citizens grounded in integral ecology, faith, and practical action for ecological transformation.





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UNITED FOR CLIMATE ACTION

1 RESTORATION

One Million Tree Planting Drive, Nature walks, Climate resilience activities, Importance of Water for life and Community-driven conservation and Clean energy initiatives.

2 CLIMATE EDUCATION

Laudato Si' Green Festival Eco Knowledge Booth, STEM innovation projects, media campaigns, and mental health awareness initiatives.

3 STORYTELLING

Community Climate Reporting, Art, and visual narratives, and youth and grassroots stories to promote environmental conservation and guard against pollution of all forms

4 FAITH & ACTION

Laudato Si' Green Festival, Care for Creation Masses, Season of Creation and Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, Listening to the cry of the earth & cry of the poor.

5 BEHAVIOR CHANGE

Community engagement, LSiC activities, and media outreach to encourage communities to shift away from climate-unfriendly practices such as poaching, deforestation, and wetland degradation. We also promote sustainability in all activities. National Cleaning Days and campaigns to reduce plastic use.



www.laudato-youthinitiative.org

LYI EDITORIAL

EDITOR IN CHIEF



Welcome to the 14th Edition of our Laudato Voices Magazine.

In this edition, discover how Catholic youth are sparking change through hands-on environmental restoration, creative climate education, inventive STEM projects, and powerful digital storytelling for integral ecology. Dive into inspiring updates on El Ni□o, fresh approaches to mental health, and practical advice on coming together for climate action while harnessing technology and AI responsibly for the greater good.



This edition highlights the Laudato Si' Green Festival in Jinja, the Nature Walk in Fort Portal, the Laudato Si' Seminar in Mbarara, and our tree-planting initiatives throughout Uganda.

The Martyr Ecology Relationship

It also features the Uganda Martyrs Day celebrations in Rome, the 800th anniversary of St. Francis of Assisi, and King Oyo's ecological legacy. These events remind us that climate action thrives when we unite our talents and resources.

Stories from Laudato Si' Clubs in schools, universities, parishes, dioceses, and communities reveal how nurturing ecological communities rooted in faith, guided by the wisdom of elders, and enriched by local cultures effectively advances the message of Laudato Si' among young people in Uganda.

Visits by Laudato Youth leaders to various Laudato Si' Clubs were particularly inspiring, highlighting a growing commitment among young people to translate care for creation into tangible, enduring action within their institutions, churches, and communities.

As you engage with this edition, I encourage you to reflect on the words of Pope Francis: "everything is connected." The urgency of caring for our common home requires immediate action. It begins with each of us,

in how we perceive nature, support one another, and apply our unique abilities to foster positive change.

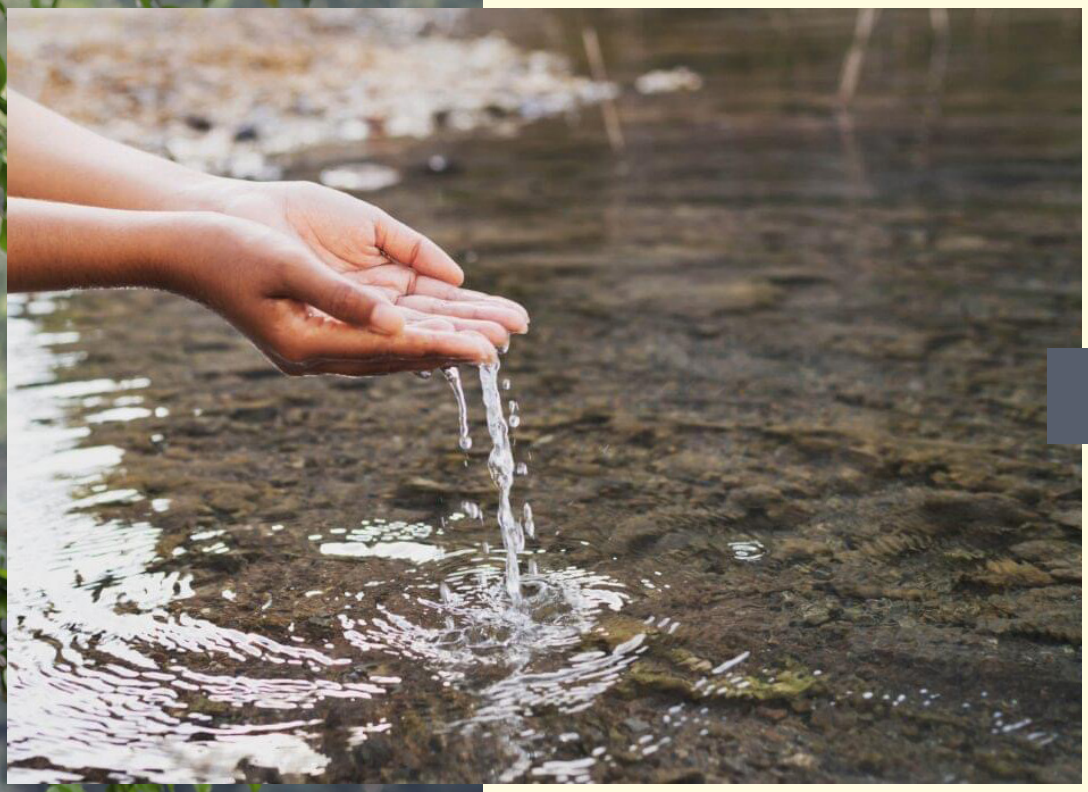
May this edition spark a deeper appreciation for the dedication of Laudato Youth and ignite your own passion to discover how you, too, can make a difference.

No matter your role, your actions matter. Join the Laudato Youth Initiative and stand together for climate action. Together, we can weave care for our common home into the fabric of daily life.

I hope you find inspiration and renewed commitment in the 14th Edition of Laudato Voices Magazine.

Immaculate

Kisembo - LYI



Living Water

Season of Creation 2026

Immersion in Living Water

EZEKIEL 47:9, 12

The Laudato Youth Initiative brings young people together through the Laudato Si' Club, a model that engages youth in schools, parishes, universities, dioceses, and communities to put Pope Francis' 2015 encyclical Laudato Si' ("Praise Be to You") into action.





Our Laudato Si' Club is founded on the belief that young people play a vital role in shaping a moral, peaceful, just, sustainable, and hopeful future. Exploring the effects of Climate Change on humanity and our well-being.

Inspired by Laudato Si and the patronage of St. Adolf Mukasa Ludigo, Patron Saint of Farmers and Herdsmen, we promote faith-based ecological solutions in institutions and communities through our Laudato Si Clubs, which engage youth in practical Action Activities.

Our Laudato Si' Clubs encourage tree planting, climate awareness, and youth leadership in integral ecology. They say NO to plastics and minimize their use in our institutions and churches, calling on all Ugandans to do the same. Stop using plastic bags in preparing food because they pose risks to human life. We also engage in community clean-up exercises to reinforce this message.

Climate change, poverty, and deforestation threaten food security and livelihoods. Tackling these issues requires a culture of care and responsible youth engagement.



We equip our youth with the knowledge, skills, and values needed to care for our common home inspired by Laudato Si and advance Innovations for sustainable development.

Executive

Director

Laudato Youth Initiative



Planting Seeds of Peace: Advancing Environmental Conservation and Sustainable Development through the work of the Laudato Youth Initiative

"When young people unite for climate action, environmental conservation becomes more than a campaign. It becomes a pathway to peace and sustainable development."

In Uganda, environmental conservation is closely linked to peace, livelihoods, and sustainable development. Climate change threatens food security, incomes, and community well-being. In response, the Laudato Youth Initiative (LYI) empowers young people to become active stewards of the environment and agents of positive change.

Inspired by Pope Francis' Laudato Si', LYI emphasizes that caring for the environment is inseparable from caring for people. Through Laudato Si' Clubs in schools, universities, parishes, and communities, young people engage in tree planting, environmental education, community clean-ups, sustainable agriculture, waste management, and digital climate advocacy.

From awareness to action

One of LYI's notable contributions is its One MilOne of LYI's key initiatives is the One Million Tree Planting Campaign, which mobilizes young people and communities to restore degraded landscapes and strengthen environmental resilience.

Tree planting supports biodiversity conservation, soil protection, food security, and climate change mitigation. Importantly, it provides young people with practical opportunities to take responsibility for their communities' future.

We recognize the important link between environmental conservation and peace. Competition over land, water, and other natural resources can lead to social tensions, especially when communities face climate-related challenges. By uniting young people around shared environmental goals, we foster dialogue, cooperation, and solidarity

Our annual Laudato Si' Green Festival exemplifies this approach.

The festival brings together young people, schools, religious leaders, government representatives, and environmental stakeholders through activities such as green Mass,

tree planting, community clean-ups, environmental exhibitions, dialogue, and drama.

This event attracts religious leaders, government representatives and environmental stakeholders through activities such as green Mass, tree planting, community clean-ups, environmental exhibitions, dialogue and drama.





These activities raise awareness and build relationships among participants from diverse backgrounds and age groups.The initiative also links conservation with sustainable agriculture, recognizing that Uganda's development relies on healthy ecosystems and productive land. Through education on agroforestry, climate-smart agriculture, and environmental innovation, young people learn approaches that improve food security while protecting natural resources.

Additionally, LYI creates opportunities for young people to express themselves through journalism, music, drama, art, and digital communication. These platforms enable youth to raise awareness about environmental challenges and motivate their peers and communities to take action.

The Laudato Youth Initiative demonstrates that environmental conservation is not only a scientific or governmental responsibility, but also a social, moral, and community obligation. By equipping young Ugandans with knowledge, leadership skills, and opportunities for action, LYI is nurturing a generation committed to environmental protection.

LYI
LAUDATO
Youth Initiative
United for Climate Action

Mr. Benard Kahwa

www.laudato-youthinitiative.org

Mental Health

Integral ecology teaches that we are part of the environment and share responsibility for caring for it.

It's a reality most of us face in daily life: while caring for the environment, we often overlook ourselves. The hidden truth is that both the man and his surroundings, as we were taught in our early stages, are part of God's Creation. That means caring for our common home also involves caring for ourselves and supporting our mental, emotional, and relational well-being.

Young people today face significant pressures, including academic demands, family expectations, financial challenges, social media, uncertainty about the future, and climate concerns. These feelings are valid, and acknowledging them demonstrates strength.



Mental Health Matters

Time to Smile

A healthy mind enables us to learn, create, serve, build relationships, and respond positively to challenges. Learning to manage our time when we are by ourselves. Taking time to rest, connect with others, meditate, and sit in silence to listen to what is happening in your life; spending time in nature; praying; creating something innovative; exercising; or pausing to breathe helps us recover and grow.

This makes the message of Laudato Si' even more relevant to our lives. Integral ecology teaches that everything is connected: the health of our environment, our communities, our families, and our own well-being. Pollution, broken relationships with friends and families, loneliness, and neglect all affect our quality of life and our mental health.

We need to be aware and talk to someone more mature than us, or a mentor, family member, counselor, or friend, to help us in our life journey. In our Laudato Si Clubs, we encourage young people to seek guidance from elders and receive cultural wisdom.



For Laudato Youth, caring for creation also means caring for one another. Simple actions such as having a conversation, listening without judgment, creating a safe space in a Laudato Si' Club, or encouraging someone who is struggling can make a significant difference.

We must recognize that asking for help is an act of courage.

When emotional challenges become difficult to manage, speaking with a trusted adult, counselor, health professional, faith leader, or another qualified person is an important step toward healing. Our families, schools, churches, and communities are places where young people feel seen, heard, valued, and supported.

Parents, though, need to apportion more time for their children to understand their mental health state, know their friends, their needs, and what they go through in daily life, and be their children's best friends. We cannot expect young people to care for the world while their well-being has been neglected.

As we continue our ecological efforts, let us remember that caring for our common home begins with caring for ourselves, our family, language, culture, faith, and social circles that give us a sense of belonging, like the Laudato Si Clubs, which emphasize community "United for Climate Action," which defines being by participation in the African context of community and unity.

All we need is to care for ourselves, care for others, and care for Mother Earth

A healthier world depends on healthier people. Sometimes, changing the world starts with something as simple as asking, **"How are you really doing?"**

Immaculate Kisembo
For Laudato Youth Initiative



Activities that Improve *Mental Health*



Innovative activities that require time and creative thinking to solve the problem or come up with an innovation.

And improve *the Eco System*



Tree *Planting*

Community cleanup activities reduce stress, support mental health, strengthen connections, and serve the common good.





Farming *Activities*

GREEN WALK

The Green Walk helps Laudato Youth to learn about current environmental issues and reduces climate anxiety caused by frequent warnings about climate change.



NATURE WALK FOR RESTORATION

Nature restoration and forest conservation involve more than planting trees. They require raising awareness, taking practical steps to restore degraded ecosystems, and engaging communities to ensure a healthier environment for future generations. Understanding these efforts begins with observing changes in our local environment.

HANDS ON RESEARCH SKILLS

Developing hands-on skills in water quality bio-monitoring to effectively monitor and protect our water resources.





CLIMATE EDUCATION



MUSIC, DANCE AND DRAMA



Club's President







Bethany Lands Institute (BLI) Family Day was celebrated under the theme: Mobilizing community for integral ecology". On a bright Sunday, we joined people in Lweero for a day of events, including the official opening of the information center, memorial tree planting, Holy Mass, Commissioning of caretakers, entertainment, speeches, and visits to exhibition stalls.

Responding to an invitation from our BLI partners, we (Sarah K - LYI Clubs President and Immaculate K - LYI Programs Manager) traveled to Luweero to attend the BLI Family Day. As the center marked five years of existence and success in transforming rural communities through promoting integral ecology.

BLI combats three crises facing Uganda: poverty, food insecurity, and ecological destruction. Inspired by Laudato Si' and Pope Francis's call for Integral Ecology, BLI combines environmental regeneration, economic empowerment, and education to enable local communities and the land to thrive.

The event welcomed different visitors, organizations, students, parents, and religious leaders. In a Mass led by His Lordship Rt. Rev. Lawrence Mukasa, Bishop of Kasana-Luweero Diocese, he thanked BLI for its commitment to promoting Integral Ecology and listening to the "Cry of the poor and the Cry of the Earth".



Reflecting on the readings of the day about Mary,Martha, Lazarus, and Jesus, who showed love for His friend Lazarus by raising him from the dead after Martha and Mary cried to Him and comforted them. The bishop challenged us to fill our hearts with the same love for Mother Earth to maintain Ecological Dignity for the good of the entire biodiversity system. He referred to the Lazarus forest, which BLI restored for the good of the community. Lazarus is now a habitat for wild animals that were lost when the forest was demolished before restoration, and it is now a jungle for tourism, attracting people to see different animal and bird species.

BLI
Bethany Land Institute

Growing Togther *How Agro Ecology is strengthening community participation*



As the event came to a close, BLI commissioned and equipped caretakers with tools such as hoes and trees to advance Integral Ecology through agro-community outreach, promoting sustainable agriculture and a shared vision for community transformation. We met briefly with Fr. Emmanuel Katongole and Ruth to continue our conversation about strengthening the presence of Laudato Si Clubs in Nandere Luweero. Since 2025, we have had over five Laudato Si Clubs in Nandere to put our cause for collaboration into action; through this initiative, we are strengthening the impact of one community and forming stewards of the future who will transform Nandere into a home for all.

The Laudato Youth Initiative will remain committed to partnering with BLI, particularly by engaging young people through our Laudato Si clubs in schools across Luwero and Uganda, with more clubs coming up to unite young people for climate action.



On September 26, 2026, the Laudato Youth Initiative (LYI) and Bethany Land Institute (BLI) celebrated the launch of a Laudato Si Club at St. Theresa Nandere Boys' Primary School in Nandere. This vibrant club will inspire pupils to embrace Laudato Si' values through hands-on eco-restoration activities like tree planting, creative waste management, reducing plastic use, and encouraging care for the environment.



During the lively opening ceremony, Programs Coordinator Ruth, representing LYI and BLI, inspired students to embrace their role as caretakers of God's creation. She presented the LYI Clubs' Emblem, symbolizing the Clubs' unity and shared heritage with our Laudato Si' Clubs across the nation. The Laudato Youth Initiative continues to nurture the next generation of environmental stewards, now mentoring a growing network of over 30 clubs countrywide.

The event culminated in a joyful tree-planting activity, where pupils eagerly put their hands in the soil, expressing their commitment to care for God's creation.

With BLI's innovative Agroforestry Model, our clubs in Luweero will discover how to heal the land, enrich soil health, boost biodiversity, and champion food security and sustainable livelihoods.

At Laudato Youth Initiative, we believe that mentoring young, ecologically conscious citizens is an investment in the future, cultivating responsible stewards committed to transforming our common home.and care for creation into practice.



VATICAN NEWS

Pope Leo XIV appoints Fr. Emmanuel Katongole as a consultor to the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development

On August 18, Pope Leo XIV appointed Fr. Emmanuel Katongole and 12 others as consultors to the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development.

Fr. Katongole, a native of Kampala and priest of the Kampala Archdiocese, is the founder and president of Bethany Land Institute (BLI). Together we engage young people in advancing the vision, spirituality, and practice of Laudato Si' in Uganda. He is also Director of the Ansari Institute for Global Engagement with Religion and a professor of Theology and Peace Studies at the University of Notre Dame.

Through his ecological vision, Fr. Katongole founded the Bethany Land Institute (BLI) in Uganda in 2012 (Bethany Land Institute, n.d.), equipping rural youth with skills in regenerative agriculture, conservation, entrepreneurship, and sustainability, all grounded in the principles of Laudato Si' (Laudato Si', 2015). Laudato Youth Initiative collaborates with Fr. Katongole through the Bethany Land Institute mentoring Laudato Si Clubs program to bring the message of Laudato Si to reality among the youth and institutions in Nandere.

Known for our tireless efforts in mentoring Laudato Si clubs in schools, universities, parishes, dioceses, and communities across Uganda, we identified a synergy with fr. Emmanuel to extend our Laudato Si Clubs model in Luweero.

At present, our five active clubs in Luweero contribute energy and creativity to environmental stewardship, joining the Laudato Youth Initiative's national effort to establish **Laudato Si' Clubs in schools, universities, parishes, dioceses, and communities.**

We currently operate over **thirty Laudato Si' Clubs across various regions in Uganda.** Their impact is highlighted at our regional **Laudato Si' Green Festivals, which are recognized as the only faith-inspired environmental festivals dedicated to Integral Ecology in Uganda.**

Through BLI's hands-on agroforestry programs, our goal is to train our Laudato Si Clubs in Luweero and their club patrons to advance our vision as we reimagine active youth involvement in Laudato Si', This effort has been achieved in other regions of Uganda whenre the Laudato Youth Initiative is mentoring Laudato Si Clubs.

Training these mentors to serve as club patrons, ensures that young participants receive effective guidance.

Our initiatives integrate faith, culture, and language to promote a more sustainable and peaceful future.

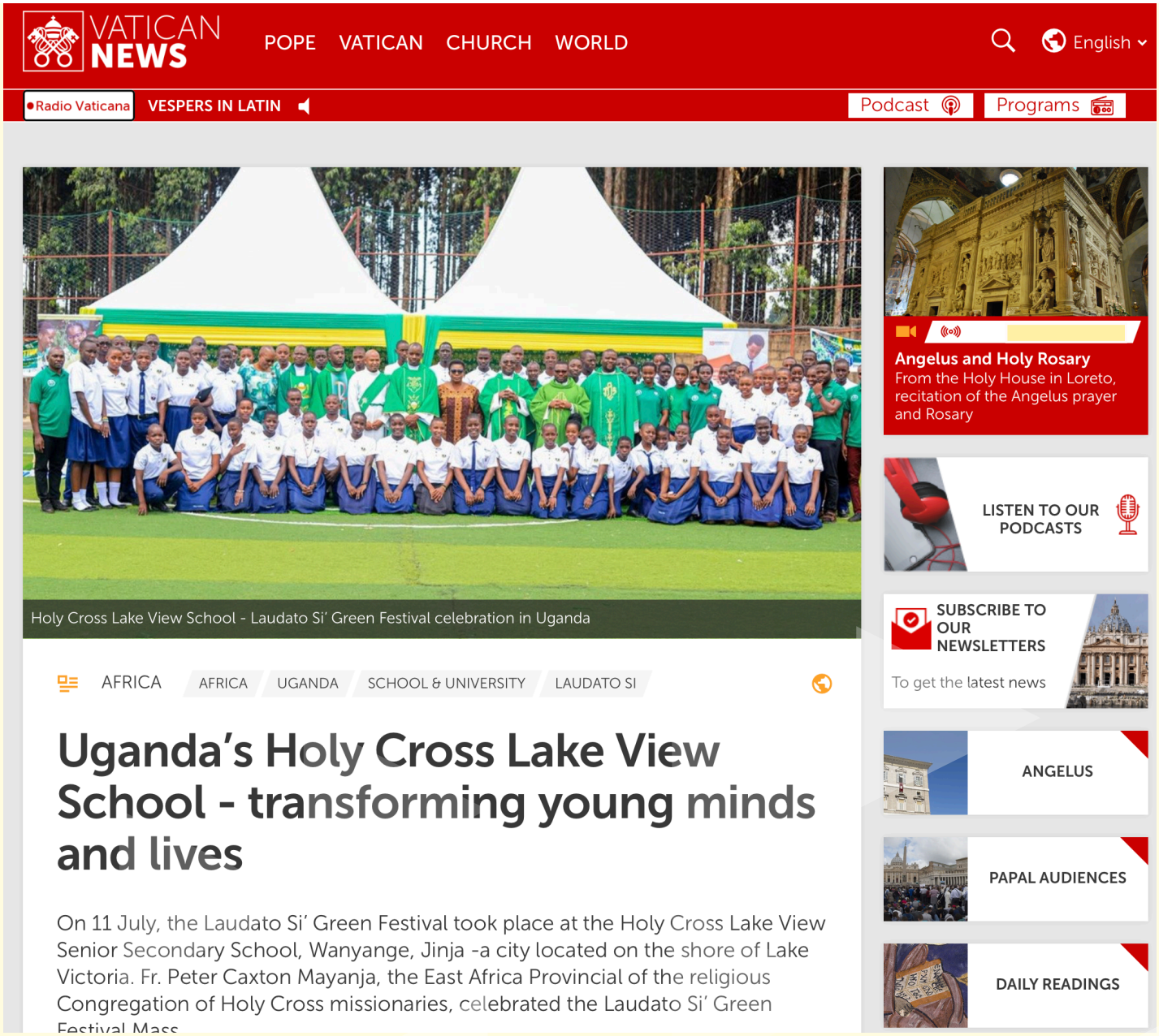
The Laudato Youth Initiative values its collaboration with Fr. Katongole at Bethany Land Institute (BLI) in efforts to advance the vision of Laudato Si' in Uganda. Our mission centers on forming stewards of the future. By prioritizing future generations, we ensure continuity and sustainability, which is the unique contribution we offer.

We have all witnessed rapid forest loss in Uganda, where 85% of the population depends on agriculture. The connection between the environment, sustainability, and harmony in families we believe our programs will continue to give hope and social transformation.

We congratulate Fr. Emmanuel for having been identified by the church "from among the faithful who are distinguished by their expertise, proven ability, and prudence," according to the Vatican's announcement.

"This appointment is an honor not only for Emmanuel, but for us at LYI and BLI in Uganda. We congratulate Fr. Emmanuel on their selection, and I am grateful for the Holy Father's recognition of his expertise and commitment to advancing integral ecology. In March this year, we were together at Castel Gandolfo for the Global Alliance for Laudato Si, where we renewed our commitment to advancing the care of creation in Uganda, said Br. Adolf. We look forward to the ways his leadership and wisdom will continue to advance the African understanding of Laudato Si and to guide the wider church in this important work of the dicastery and a mission we are all called to embrace."

Established by the late Pope Francis in 2016, the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development supports the Church's worldwide efforts in human dignity and human rights, economic justice, care for creation, migration and displacement, and peace, conflict, and humanitarian crises.



Celebrated under this year's theme of **"Environmental Conservation for Peace and Sustainable Development,"** the Green Festival was organised by the Laudato Si Club of Holy Cross Lake View Senior Secondary School, Wanyange, under the Laudato Youth Initiative. The Initiative is a youth-led climate and ecological action programme rooted in Catholic Social Teaching, inspired by Pope Francis' 2015 ecological encyclical: Laudato Si'.

Holy Cross Lake View Senior Secondary School is a mixed day and boarding O and A level school in Wanyange, Jinja. The school is owned by the Congregation of Holy Cross Province of East Africa and aims to provide holistic, value-based education.

A day packed with events

The lively Eucharistic celebration, celebrated by Fr Mayanja, was attended by several educational institutions headed by the Holy Cross missionaries, government schools and private institutions in the district. Local and national government leaders were also present. The guest speaker at the colourful festival was Uganda's Minister for ICT and National Guidance, Justine Kasule Lumumba.

In itself, the Eucharistic celebration was the culmination of a number of activities and events of that day. In all, the activities included a Green Walk; events promoting the good use of technology; tree planting and the distribution of tree cuttings. There was also space for eco exhibitions by students and storytelling as an important tool for Integral ecology.

In his homily, Fr. Peter Caxton Mayanja said failure to recognise Christ makes humans blind even to the responsibilities that the Creator has given them. Drawing on his personal experiences with storytelling and reading, Fr Mayanja spoke about the importance of storytelling for ecological awareness.

The legacy of Laudato Si' in Uganda

Fr. Peter said that the messages on the placards for the Green Walk caught his attention and moved him to reflect.

A **"Green Walk"** is a walk of Faith in which students, heads of schools, religious leaders, and community members of Wanyange march together to raise awareness about caring for creation.

The Laudato Si' Green Festival is one among many events and initiatives that the religious Congregation of Holy Cross, through its institution – the Holy Cross Lake View Senior Secondary School, Wanyange, is using to encourage learners and young people to take action and protect the environment. The school is not only a testament to Pope Francis' Laudato Si' legacy but also one that seeks to concretise its aims: To teach minds, touch hearts, and transform lives.



Vatican News

Story 15 July 2026



On July 11, 2025 Pope Leo XIV celebrated the first Mass for the Care of Creation," a new formulary of the Roman Missal.

The Mass took place at the Laudato Si' Village, an educational center located in the Papal summer residence near Rome

At the beginning of his homily, the Holy Father remarked that the Mass was being celebrated amid beauty in "a kind of 'natural' cathedral."

He observed that the layout of the Laudato Si' Village, with an altar at the front and a nearby water basin, recalls ancient Christian churches, where the baptismal font near the entrance symbolized cleansing from sin and weakness.





In His Message,

Pope Leo XIV said

"For ten years, the encyclical Laudato Si' has accompanied the Catholic Church and many people of goodwill : may it continue to inspire us, and may integral ecology increasingly be chosen and shared as the path to follow. In this way, the seeds of hope will multiply, to be 'guarded and cultivated' through the grace of our great and unfailing Hope, the Risen Christ."

FIRST CARE FOR CREATION MASS

Pope Leo XIV, July 9, 2025 Pope Leo said our mission as Christians to care for creation was entrusted to us by the Lord, so that we might bring peace and reconciliation to our troubled world. / Credit: Photo courtesy of Vatican News

Living Water
Season of Creation 2026

Immersion in Living Water
EZEKIEL 47:9, 12



On Sept 01, 2026 Pope Leo XIV celebrated his Second Mass for the Care of Creation," a new formulary

Pope Leo invited the faithful to unite spiritually with the "Little poor man of Assisi" and referenced the Canticle of the Creatures, in which Saint Francis praises God through the elements of nature.

"With Saint Francis," ... "let us renew our commitment to living and promoting that universal fraternity which is inseparably bound to the task of caring for creation." said Pope Leo XIV

Mass for the Care of Creation

Pope Appealed to the world at Mass for the care of Creation saying

"IT IS NOT YET TOO LATE' TO TURN DESTRUCTION INTO LIFE

Pope Leo XIV emphasized on Tuesday that "it is not yet too late" to change direction and use resources for life rather than destruction. He called on Christians to demonstrate ecological conversion and universal fraternity by caring for creation and the poor. On 1 September, Pope Leo celebrated Mass at the Laudato Si' Village in Castel Gandolfo to mark the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation and the beginning of the Season of Creation. He encouraged the faithful to reflect on nature's beauty and acknowledge the Creator.

He noted that the gardens of the Laudato Si' Village provide an ideal setting for contemplating creation. "It would be superficial to marvel at fire, wind, rushing waters or the stars of heaven, without allowing our gaze to rise to the Creator of such wonders," he said.

Listen to the 'melodious voice' of creation

The Pope encouraged the congregation to step back from daily distractions and rediscover their place in harmony with creation. "Let us place in 'silent mode' the many noises generated by human activity," Pope Leo said, "so that we may hear the melodious voice of creation, through which God, the Author of all things, speaks to us."

The Pope explained that contemplation extends beyond appreciating nature, as it initiates an encounter with God that can transform individuals.

It is the first step, he said, towards an "authentic ecological conversion", in which the effects of an encounter with Jesus Christ become visible in humanity's relationship with the world.

Contemplating creation is a shared responsibility that should unite us in action.

Pope Leo stated that contemplating creation and encountering its Creator fosters a deeper understanding of humanity's place in God's plan and the responsibilities it entails.

He emphasized that this responsibility is both personal and collective.

The Pope highlighted a central theme of this year's World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation: transforming instruments of destruction into tools that support life.

He referenced the biblical prophecy to "beat swords into ploughshares," which is also the theme of his message for the World Day, and called for efforts to "transform harm into life."

"It is not yet too late," Pope Leo insisted.

He stated, "What has been used for destruction can be redirected toward life, toward the care of the poor, the nourishment of the hungry, and the safeguarding of creation."

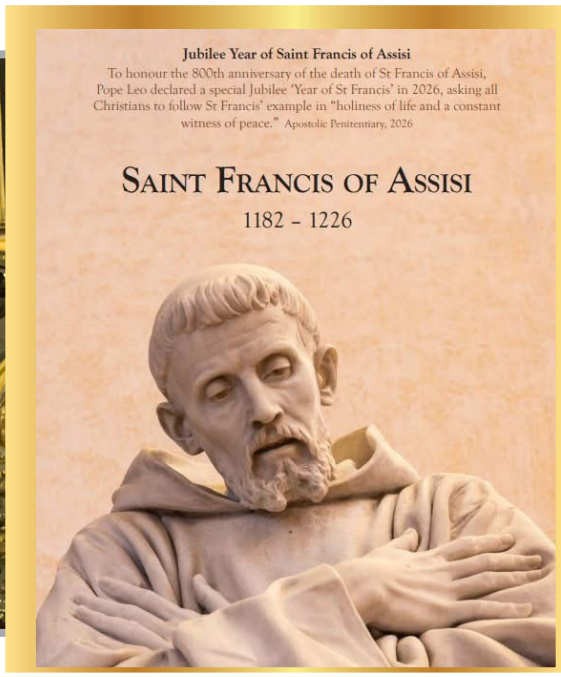
Following the example of Saint Francis

The Season of Creation will conclude on 4 October, when the Church commemorates the eighth centenary of the death of Saint Francis of Assisi.

Pope Leo noted that Pope Francis drew inspiration from Saint Francis when writing Laudato Si' and establishing the Laudato Si' Village, where the Mass was held.



Fr. Saju's humility.







800th Death *Anniversary* of St. Francis of Assisi

Integrating performing arts, music, natural sounds, church architecture, and hand gestures lets us explore creation more creatively and connect with God through action, dialogue, faith-inspired music, nature-based communication, and creative talent sustainability models. Laudato Si (Praise be God), approached from both cultural and religious perspectives, fosters activities that support youth talent development and mental health. This year, the mother church marks the 800th anniversary of Saint Francis of Assisi's death; in Uganda, we also honor St. Adolf Mukasa Ludigho, a Ugandan martyr celebrated as the St. Francis of Uganda for inspiring the work of our initiative as patron of farmers and hardesmen.

On Sunday, 7 May 2026, Prof. Dr. Saju George, SJ, organized a Laudato Si event at Chiesa Di Sant'Ignazio di Loyola in Rome, Italy, to commemorate the 800th anniversary of St. Francis of Assisi's death.

The event featured an Indian dance-drama by Prof. Saju George and his troupe, using music, dance, and drama to reflect on St. Francis' life and its enduring inspiration over eight centuries.

Reflecting on the performance, Br. Adolf noted he was moved by the integration of music, hand gestures, natural sounds, and church music to express the values of Laudato Si '. Rather than relying solely on words, the presentation used movement, rhythm, sound, and vibrant culture to



Expressive hand movements, traditional music, and energetic dance brought the message to life. Laudato Youth seeks to engage in encounters as such, which enhance attentiveness and wonder in music and creative dance.

Every creature can pray.

The birds can be seen lifting themselves to heaven and giving voice to what seems a prayer in the words of Tertullian.

The music of their song inspires humanity in many ways; all created things have sound and vibration, and if we listen well, we can develop amazing innovations and wonders.

Continuing his reflection, Br. Adolf said he was especially struck by the effectiveness of the performing arts as a means of communication. He noted that communication extends beyond words to include gestures, motions, sounds, and drumming.

For example, in African culture and in Uganda, a single drum stroke can gather people from a distance. He added that emphasizing natural sounds to convey nature's values is particularly impactful from a communications perspective.





I was especially struck by the performing arts as a means of communication, he said. He noted that communication extends beyond words to include gestures, motions, sounds, and drumming. Citing that "in African culture and in Uganda, a single drum stroke can gather people from a distance. He added that emphasizing natural sounds to convey nature's values is particularly impactful from a communications perspective."

Themes such as care for creation, respect for life, simplicity, and solidarity with the poor can be communicated creatively to keep the message uplifting.

Young people connect more effectively when messages are engaging and participatory. He believes that thoughtful communication transforms both mind and heart, and should be integrated into sharing the message of Laudato Si '. This approach blends innovation, creativity, gifts, talents, and faith, forming a strong foundation for integral ecology.

HONORING THE COURAGE AND FAITH OF THE UGANDA
MARTYRS





Uganda Martyrs Day 2026

Celebrated in Rome with Cardinal Peter Turkson

Cardinal Peter Kodwo Appiah Turkson urged Ugandans to draw inspiration from the Uganda Martyrs and remain steadfast in their beliefs and convictions despite challenges and adversity.

On 6 June 2026, Ugandans living in Italy gathered in Rome to celebrate Uganda Martyrs Day.

This year, the national celebration in Uganda, traditionally held on June 3rd, was postponed due to the Ebola outbreak. The Rome gathering, typically held during the same week, is organized by the Uganda Ecclesiastical Community in Rome and Uganda's Embassy to Italy. It offers Ugandans in Italy a chance to honor Martyrs' Day together.

This year's celebration was held at the Generalate of the Missionaries of Africa, a site closely connected to the heritage of the Uganda Martyrs. In his welcoming remarks, Father Stanley Lubungo, M.Afr., Superior General of the Missionaries of Africa, expressed joy and gratitude for hosting Ugandans

In his welcoming remarks, Father Stanley Lubungo, M.Afr., Superior General of the Missionaries of Africa, expressed joy and gratitude for hosting Ugandans at the Generalate. He stated, "It is a joy and a duty for us to welcome the Ugandan community in Rome, as this Generalate is where the real 'Bajajja (grandparents), referring to the martyrs, are here.



The Missionaries of Africa, also known as the White Fathers, were the pioneering Catholic missionaries who evangelized Uganda.

They are regarded as the spiritual fathers of the Uganda Martyrs, as their teachings led to the baptism and later martyrdom of the young converts. Father Stanley concluded by wishing the congregation a joyful celebration and unity.



Cardinal Peter Kodwo Appiah Turkson, Chancellor of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences and the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences, presided over the liturgy.

He urged the faithful to renew their commitment to the Gospel, drawing strength from the martyrs' courage and conviction. The Cardinal encouraged everyone to reaffirm their lives in Jesus Christ, inspired by the Uganda Martyrs' ultimate sacrifice for their faith.

He reflected on the story of the three brothers from the Book of Maccabees, highlighting their unwavering bravery and faith. In the Scripture reading, the brothers defied the king's demands and defended their identity and traditions, even unto death.

Cardinal Turkson noted,

"The Uganda Martyrs demonstrated extraordinary courage in defending their beliefs. Their example reminds us to remain faithful, resilient, and committed to serving God, regardless of the challenges we encounter."

A special and memorable aspect of the Mass was the presence of the relics of Saint Charles Lwanga, displayed before the altar throughout the liturgy. St. Charles Lwanga is venerated for his steadfast faith in the face of persecution.

Reflecting on the day, Brother Adolf shared that praying with the relics of St. Charles Lwanga and visiting the Chapel of the Uganda Martyrs at the Missionaries of Africa Generalate was profoundly moving. He noted that the martyrs' suffering reveals God's transformative power.



Relics of St. Charles Lwanga displayed during Mass

Ugandan Ambassador to Italy

Uganda's Ambassador to Italy, H.E. Elizabeth Paula Napeyok, emphasized the diaspora's vital role in Uganda's development. She commended their support through remittances, investment, tourism, and knowledge transfer, noting these contributions significantly advance Uganda's socio-economic progress.

Ambassador Napeyok encouraged Ugandans abroad to unite, support each other, and prioritize their country and families, especially in the agro-economy. She also advocated for transferring simple technologies, particularly in agriculture, to boost productivity.

For the Laudato Youth Initiative, the example of the Uganda Martyrs calls for deep faith and courageous action in today's society. Their fidelity inspires youth to stand for truth, justice, and the protection of creation amid modern challenges. As Pope Francis affirms in Laudato Si', caring for our world is inseparable from a life rooted in faith and moral duty.

Ambassador Napeyok encouraged Ugandans living abroad to unite, support one another, and prioritize their country and families, particularly in the agro-economy.



H.E. Elizabeth Paula Napeyok, Uganda's Ambassador to Italy, addressing the Congregation at the Uganda Martyrs Day in Rome /





St. Adolf Mukasa Ludigo

Patron Saint of Farmers and Herdsmen

Laudato Youth Initiative and the Uganda Martyrs

Among the martyrs, St. Adolf Mukasa Ludigo's legacy speaks profoundly to contemporary concerns for integral ecology. Born in western Uganda and martyred at Namugongo in 1886, St. Adolf is the patron of farmers, herdsmen, and hunters.

His life demonstrates a close bond with the land and environment that sustained communities long before today's ecological challenges.

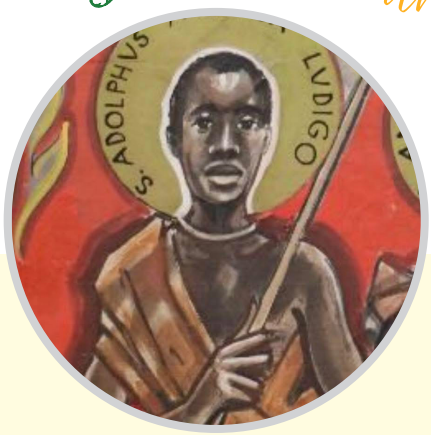
St. Adolf's ecological legacy is seen in his connection to rural livelihoods and care for creation. Farmers, herdsmen, and hunters, who make up much of Uganda's population, depend on healthy ecosystems. As we face climate change and biodiversity loss, St. Adolf's patronage reminds us to care for the poor and those whose lives depend on the land. His example also highlights the interdependence of environmental and human health. We are encouraged to emulate St. Adolf by valuing and working diligently in farming, as he did in his service as a page. St. Adolf Mukasa Ludigo served as a royal court page. Abducted as a youth from the Bunyoro region, he was entrusted with caring for Kabaka Mwanga II's gardens. Martyred on June 3, 1886, for refusing to renounce his Catholic faith, his life exemplifies humility, charity, courage, and ecological stewardship. Because of his close relationship with the land as caretaker of the King's gardens, he is venerated as the patron saint of farmers and herdsmen. St. Adolf models how to integrate faith with environmental sustainability and care for creation.



His legacy teaches us to remain steadfast in our beliefs, serve others humbly, and live with integrity, even in adversity. For young people engaged in environmental action, St. Adolf's example encourages responsible stewardship. His life challenges us to recognize the sacredness of creation and defend the dignity of communities whose livelihoods depend on the land. The courage that led him to remain faithful unto death can inspire a new generation to confront ecological injustice with determination and hope.



Prayer for Peace and National Unity



The commemoration concluded with prayers for peace, unity, and prosperity in Uganda and throughout the world. Participants reflected on the enduring legacy of the Uganda Martyrs, whose witness continues to inspire faith, integrity, courage, and service to humanity across generations.

Celebrating the Uganda Martyrs bridges faith, culture, and connection to the land, highlighting that their sacrifice is a source of hope for integral ecology.

Their witness calls us to honor St. Adolf's ecological legacy and reminds us that discipleship includes caring for both people and the planet. As the Laudato Youth Initiative mobilizes youth for ecological renewal, the martyrs, especially St. Adolf, model faith through service and care for creation.



INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE 2026

Theme: Invest in Peace – For Everyone, Everywhere, Every Day

The UN reminds us that peace is more than the absence of conflict; it is the foundation for addressing humanity's challenges together. We experience peace through safety, dignity, opportunity, and cooperation in daily life. The 2026 United Nations International Day of Peace, themed ***Invest in Peace: For Everyone, Everywhere, Every Day,*** honors the 'everyday architects of peace'—individuals leading local initiatives and building lasting stability in their communities. At the Laudato Youth Initiative (LYI), we believe true peace grows when we care for each other, our common home, and future generations. This approach, rooted in Integral Ecology as championed by Pope Francis in Laudato Si', connects environmental care with human, social, and economic justice.

UN Secretary-General António Guterres says we should all call on world leaders to invest in a peaceful future for all people.

"On this International Day of Peace, let us all be inspired by the courage of those who champion peace in neighbourhoods, classrooms and communities. And let's call on world leaders to invest in a peaceful future for all people." - UN Secretary-General António Guterres

During the Season of Creation, our clubs will continue to highlight peace through its Laudato Si Green festivals, and other club events themed "Environmental conservation for Peace and Sustainable Development,"

The Festival will unite youth, faith leaders, environmental enthusiasts, and the community to promote peace, sustainability, ***"For we know that things can change" (Laudato Si', 13).***





Pre Festival Events

GREEN ACTION

COMMUNITY CLEAN-UP

On July 9 and 10, 2026, ahead of the festival, students and staff of Holy Cross Lake View participated in a community clean-up in Musima Village, Wanyange. The initiative promoted community involvement and raised awareness of the risks of poor waste management and the need for proper sanitation at home and in the community.

The exercise highlighted the link between responsible waste management, environmental health, and community well-being. Participants were encouraged to dispose of waste properly to reduce pollution, prevent flooding, and protect Uganda's environment.











Uganda must move beyond its reliance on increasing plastic use. Change is urgent, and each of us should promote sustainable practices. We must reject disposable plastic bottles, hold institutions accountable for plastic waste management, and support responsible handling of hard plastics. Together, we can achieve a plastic-free Uganda.

Uganda recently announced a mandatory National Cleaning Day to be observed on the last Saturday of every month.

According to the Office of the Prime Minister, Hon Nabbanja, 75% of diseases in the country spread as a result of poor sanitation and hygiene. The cabinet, thus, during its sitting on 11th August 2025, approved a public day for general cleaning nationwide. She noted that diseases such as malaria, diarrhea, and typhoid are directly linked to poor sanitation and environmental hazards. In Kampala, for example, 2,000 to 25,000 tonnes of solid waste are generated daily, but only 50 to 60 percent is collected and disposed of. The remaining waste blocks drainage channels, pollutes the environment, and increases the risk of disease outbreaks. Last year, during the 10th anniversary of Laudato Si', we joined Catholic institutions and faith-based organizations in pledging to eliminate single-use plastics. **Our pre-festival event supports this commitment.**

Third Laudato Si Green Festival

JULY 11, 2026 JINJA

Laudato Si' Green Festival program Promoting Environmental Conservation for Peace and Sustainable Development in Uganda.

> This year our focus was on inspiring Young People in Faith, Environmental Conservation, Moral Values, and the Responsible Use of Technology to Care for God's Creation.





On July 11, 2026, Holy Cross Lake View Senior Secondary School hosted the third Laudato Si' Green Festival, celebrated under the theme: "Environmental Conservation for Peace and Sustainable Development."

The event was organized by the Laudato Si Club of Holy Cross Lake View Senior Secondary School, Wanyange, under the Laudato Youth Initiative, a youth-led climate and ecological action program rooted in Catholic Social Teaching and inspired by Pope Francis' 2015
Si ',

The festival brought together students, educators, and community leaders to promote environmental action and youth leadership mentorship, to pray, showcase innovations, and develop talent.



Green Match from Bugembe Parish to HCLV









The Festival

The festival opened with a Green March from Holy Cross Catholic Parish in Bugembe to the school campus. Led by Rev. Fr. Francis Mukasa, C.S.C., parish priest of Holy Cross Parish Bugembe.

Participants

The march united guests, students, teachers, and local residents in a public demonstration of commitment to peace-building and environmental conservation for sustainable livelihoods.

Impact

The Green Match raised awareness among students and the wider community about the need for environmental protection, proper waste management, good sanitation, and the collective responsibility to build a cleaner, healthier, and more sustainable environment emphaising the importance of unity for climate action.

Festival Activities



GUIDED BY THE THEME

Environmental Conservation for Peace and Sustainable Development





Arrival of the Green Match Group led by the Band



Laudato Si Club of Holy Cross Lake View Hosts of the Festival



Mass for the Care of Creation at Moreau Stadium

www.laudato-youthinitiative.org

Mass for the Care of Creation







The Care for Creation Mass was presided over by Rev. Fr. Peter Caxton Mayanja, C.S.C., Provincial Superior of the Congregation of Holy Cross, Province of East Africa. During his homily, Fr. Mayanja emphasized the importance of environmental stewardship in Christian life, urging participants to renew their commitment to caring for creation. Fr. Mayanja further emphasized that **failure to recognize Christ makes humans blind even to the responsibilities that the Creator has given them. Drawing on his personal experiences with storytelling, Fr Mayanja spoke about the importance of storytelling for ecological awareness.**







He referenced his readings and the new vision story warnings about the anticipated El Niño and recounted a childhood story of 'poor Kapere' to illustrate the dangers of environmental neglect, encouraging reflection on the beauty and value of c r e - ation.

He called on all the congregation to embrace responsible environmental practices and work collaboratively to ensure a better world for present and future generations.









www.laudato-youthinitiative.org

BISHOP CHARLES MARTIN WAMIKA

Memorial and Legacy Program Launch



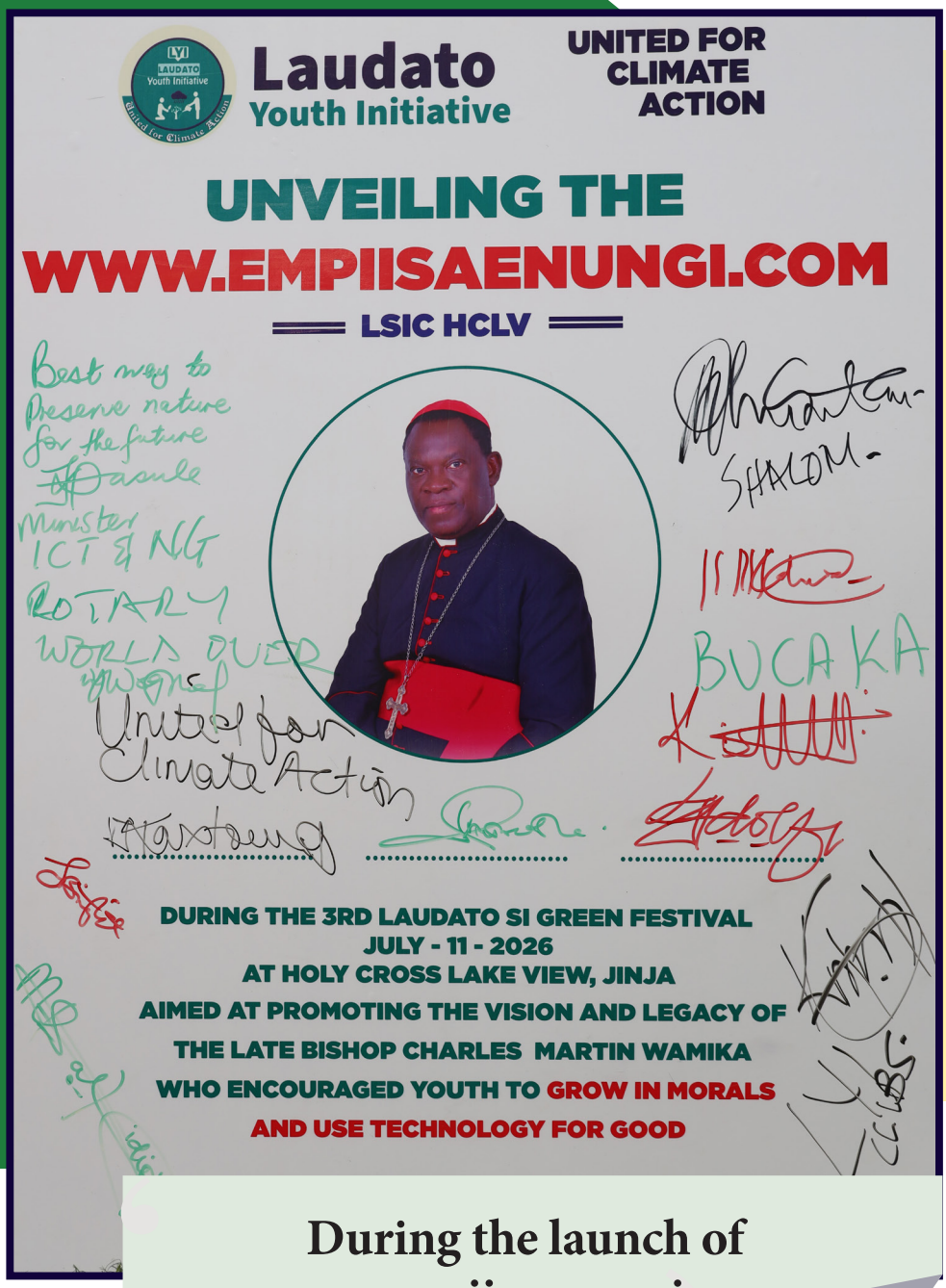
Br. Adolf Mugume, C.S.C., encouraged students to use their time in school to develop their talents and pursue their passions. He values, set clear goals, and Si Club for demonstrating commended the Laudato how integral ecology can be incorporated into campus life, academics, and spirituality.

He emphasized that education goes beyond academics and requires students to build unique skills, strong ethical values, and aspirations that benefit society. He advocated for structured guidance to promote responsible use of modern technologies, including artificial intelligence, through digital literacy and ethical decision-making in the classroom.

He encouraged students to set ambitious but achievable goals and pursue them with dedication. He also urged participation in community service, prayer groups, and daily acts of respect toward elders and peers to foster moral integrity and spiritual growth.

He highlighted the values of Holy Cross Education, which seek to educate minds, inspire hearts, and transform lives. He expressed appreciation for the institution's commitment to Pope Francis' Laudato Si', recognized as the Vatican's most comprehensive document on environmentalism, ethics, and Christian faith, and as a significant moral guide for today.





During the launch of www.empiisaenungi.com

He encouraged the audience to consider how technology, the internet, and artificial intelligence influence young people's lives, referencing the legacy of the late Bishop Martin Wamika, a proponent of integral ecology and Catholic Social Teaching.

He cited Bishop Wamika's 2023 Uganda Martyrs Day address to the youth, emphasizing the importance of good manners (Empiisa Enungi), honoring the Uganda Martyrs' legacy, and using technology and social media to communicate truth, uphold values, and serve the common good.

He reiterated these messages to the youth on 3 June 2023 during Uganda Martyrs Day, stating:

"The youth of today, you seem more affected by modern life: smartphones, internet; Empiisa Enungi (good manners) seem to have been thrown overboard. The majority of the Uganda Martyrs were youth like you. When you grow old, how about creating a website: www.empiisaenungi.com? Dear pilgrims, look around and take note. When you get back home, what is it that you will share about the Martyrs? May the Lord increase your faith so that you receive whatever you asked for today," inviting us to reflect on the impact of social media, ensuring that young people use it to communicate the truth, values, build professional brands, goodness, the beauty of creation, as does the Laudato Youth initiative, and usefulness for the common good.

He described the project as fulfilling this legacy and called it a beacon for young people in Jinja and around the world. He emphasized the Church's call to use technology responsibly, citing Pope Leo XIV's Encyclical Magnifica Humanitas, which urges us to protect human dignity in the age of artificial intelligence.

He reiterated that technology should always serve truth and the common good, and be used to promote human flourishing, spread the gospel, and enrich daily life.



Laudato Si Club of Holy Cross Lake View S.S.S

www.laudato-youthinitiative.org



Host of the Laudato Si Green Festival July 11, 2026

www.laudato-youthinitiative.org



Safeguarding young people in the digital age requires a moral stand and the efforts from all stakeholders to build a safer digital environment . Young people need to be guided on how to use Ai for the good refelcting Pope Leo's new enyclical 'Magnifica Humanitas'
- Br. Adolf, July 11 2026

Br. Adolf further emphasized that Our Faith and Culture need to be incorporated into Media Ethics

Br. Adolf Mugume, C.S.C., mentor of the Laudato Youth Initiative (LYI) and Director of Communications for the Congregation of Holy Cross in Rome, launched a new action program for the Laudato Si Clubs (LSiCs) in Uganda.

The action program aims to strengthen cultural and faith values, promote youth mentorship, and guide responsible media use to address the challenge of declining manners in society, as inspired by the words of the late Bishop Charles Martin Wamika. It also references Pope Leo's encyclical Magnifica Humanitas ("Magnificent Humanity"), released on May 25, 2026, which emphasizes safeguarding human dignity in the age of artificial intelligence.

Bishop Wamika observed that smartphones and the internet are transforming the lives of young people in Uganda by expanding access to information, communication, and global culture. However, he cautioned that these advancements also present significant moral and social challenges. He urged young people to draw inspiration from the courage and faith of the Uganda Martyrs and to be guided by the principles of Catholic Social Teaching. In doing so, they should use digital technology responsibly, safeguard human dignity, strengthen their faith, and promote the common good within the framework of African cultural and moral values.

Guest of Honor





The guest speaker at our colourful Laudato Si Green Festival was Uganda's Minister for ICT and National Guidance, Rt. Hon. Justine Kasule Lumumba,

She encouraged young people to love God, build social connections, and embrace innovation. She urged them to approach life with enthusiasm, seek knowledge, walk with God, and remain disciplined in the face of challenges. She also emphasized the value of appreciating their youth and respecting the educational institutions that support their growth.

Rt. Hon. Kasule Lumumba commended the organizers for uniting young people in support of environmental conservation. She stressed that environmental protection is a universal responsibility, as outlined in the Sustainable Development Goals, and expressed appreciation for the hope the event inspired in youth. She concluded by thanking the organizers for setting a positive example for the schools present but also for the nation.





Using the event's color scheme, she highlighted Green's connection to green space and vegetation; cream for sunlight; white for purity; and grey for soil, encouraging the preservation of all elements essential to a healthy ecosystem.

In her speech, the Minister of ICT and National Guidance, Hon. Justine Kasule Lumumba, called on students and religious leaders to actively protect the environment and use technology responsibly, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Addressing more than 2,000 youth, educators, and environmental organizations at the Laudato Si' Green Festival in Jinja, the Minister highlighted the link between natural resources and human well-being. She urged young people to protect green spaces, preserve soil health, and understand the environment's role in securing their future.

As Minister of ICT and National Guidance, Hon. Lumumba outlined the government's plans to implement Artificial Intelligence (AI) in agriculture. She noted that AI can help farmers monitor crops and livestock, enhance agricultural practices, and support food security.

She emphasized nature's essential role in sustaining Uganda's ecosystem, noting that wetlands and forests generate approximately 40% of the country's rainfall. She observed that plants "smile" when they receive natural rainfall, which is reflected in vibrant flowers and healthy, glossy leaves.

The Day's Color Scheme and the Laudato Youth Initiative Colors

She used the day's colors to illustrate her message: Green represents the natural spaces and plants we aim to protect. White signifies the light essential for plant growth. Cream or yellow symbolizes sunlight, the primary energy source that drives photosynthesis and supports solar power technology for sustainable living. Brown, reflected in her attire, represents the soil that nourishes and sustains the environment.

Using Technology for the Good

As the minister responsible for AI, Lumumba explained how technology can reduce human impact on the environment and offer practical solutions for agriculture. She highlighted several AI applications in farming:

Pest Detection: Farmers can use smartphones to photograph crops, enabling AI to identify threats such as the fall armyworm.

Precision Agriculture: AI can recommend the appropriate type and amount of treatment for each plant, as well as the correct application method, such as spraying leaves or treating the soil.

Livestock Health: AI can analyze animal photographs to identify potential internal health issues. It can also verify the quality of veterinary medicines, reducing the risk of counterfeit or ineffective products. She thanked the festival organizers for promoting faith-based environmental action and for developing a scalable initiative that educates and engages people of all ages, beginning with the youngest.

She challenged students to use modern technology purposefully, rather than as a distraction. She encouraged them to value their education and apply their knowledge and skills to address challenges in their communities and the country. She emphasized that building a safe and inclusive digital environment in Uganda requires collective effort.



She expressed appreciation for the eco innovations at the Laudato Si Green Festival, which many described as a launchpad for Uganda's next generation of environmental leaders.

www.EmpiisaEnungi.com

Speaking about the program launch, she thanked the organizers for promoting faith-inspired environmental action and creating a scalable event that engages all generations. She noted that the www.empiisaenungi.com program aligns with her work in national guidance and youth formation, particularly in strengthening moral values and faith-inspired ecological citizenship that integrates cultural values and celebrates the heroic values of the Late Pope Francis and the Late Bishop Charles Martin Wamika of Jinja Diocese. She concluded by urging young people to become responsible environmental stewards by embracing education, innovation, and technology to build a greener, more sustainable Uganda.

National Guidance and Social Impact

Beyond technology and agriculture, Lumumba shared about her responsibilities in National Guidance. She expressed concern that digital platforms such as TikTok can sometimes undermine cultural and religious values among young people. She encouraged students to use technology responsibly, for humanity's benefit, and to promote knowledge and positive social values.

She applauded the Laudato Si Green Festival as an exemplary educational program in Uganda, with practical benefits such as enhancing eco-restoration and promoting cultural and religious values. She noted that trees increase oxygen levels, support healthy brain function, and help students learn more effectively.









Eco- Exibitions at Laudato Si Green Festival



Eco-Innovation Exhibition Empowers Youth for Sustainable Development

The eco-innovation exhibition brought together students, educators, and partner organizations to advance youth-led sustainability initiatives. The Chief Guest, Hon. Kasule Lumumba, and other delegates visited the Knowledge booth, which showcased practical STEM innovations and community-based research projects, student talents in skits, poems, speeches, MDD, etc



The interactive booths and hands-on activities aimed to educate participants on environmental conservation and equip future leaders with the knowledge and skills needed to promote integral ecology and sustainable development.

The exhibition was structured around three main pillars:

1. Systematic Understanding:

Youth participants examined the root causes of ecological crises, strengthening their understanding of environmental challenges and the need for innovative solutions.

2. Community Action Projects:

Collaborative projects promoted practical, scalable sustainability solutions, allowing students to apply classroom learning to real-world challenges.

3. Corporate Social Responsibility:

Organizations and partners supported environmental conservation and peace-building, emphasizing the value of collective action.

Exhibition Highlights

Several notable organizations and initiatives were featured:

Laudato Youth Initiative
Featured student-led projects integrated technology with environmental awareness, demonstrating the potential for youth-driven solutions to address pressing ecological challenges.



Holy Cross Lake View: This group presented handcrafted items and green-energy innovations, including solar and efficient cookstove technologies.







They also highlighted climate-smart agricultural practices to support sustainable livelihoods and promote eco-friendly solutions within the community.





Jdiobe STEM Foundation: Led by Dr. Muwanika Jdiobe, an aerospace engineer and STEM educator, the foundation displayed real-world models of scientific and technological innovation. Their exhibition emphasized the connection between scientific advancement and ecological responsibility, encouraging youth engagement in research and environmental science.



Bethany Land Institute, Nandere: The institute demonstrated participatory agroforestry and sustainable land management practices, emphasizing community involvement and ecological restoration for long-term environmental health.



The Laudato Youth Initiative: presented models for integrating faith with innovation, supporting parents as primary educators, and addressing societal challenges related to responsible technology use, culture, and good manners through the www.empiisaenungi.com program.



Impact and Outcomes
The event offered a dynamic environment for youth to develop practical skills, strengthen scientific thinking, and receive leadership mentorship in sustainable development. By encouraging collaboration among schools, faith-based clubs, and partner organizations, the exhibition reinforced environmental stewardship and empowered participants to drive positive change in their communities.

Through initiatives like this, young leaders are inspired to champion integral ecology and sustainable development, ensuring a brighter, more resilient future for all.



A memorial tree-planting and distribution ceremony to enhance the Laudato youth Initiative One Million Tree planting Drive and community engagement in conservation efforts.



"Trees exhale for us so that we can inhale them to stay alive. Can we ever forget that? Let us love trees with every breath we take until we perish." - Said Hon Justine Kasule Lumumba



Memorial Tree Planting

Planting of a tree is an act of faith in the future. Said Hon Salamu Musumba

AWARDS of Honor



Rt. Hon Justine Kasule Lumumba, Ugandan Minister of ICT and National Guidance.





Fr. Peter Catxton Mayanja, C.S.C., Provincial, Congregation of Holy Cross, Province of East Africa, served as the main celebrant for the Mass for the Care of Creation at the LSiGF.



Fr. Prosper Atukwatse, C.S.C Head teacher Holy Cross Lake View S.S.S and Fr. Douglas Alinaitwe Chaplain (HCLV) recieve the school award



Communities across Uganda face growing pressure on ecosystems and natural resources essential to their livelihoods. Interconnected challenges include shifting rainfall patterns, declining soil fertility, biodiversity loss, water scarcity, crop pests and diseases, food insecurity, and economic vulnerability. Effective responses require collaboration and attentive listening to those directly affected.

The Laudato Youth Initiative's conservation model centers youth and grassroots communities in sustainability efforts. It encourages young people to engage with communities, observe, document local experiences, and learn from elders and knowledge holders who have long protected biodiversity and managed resources. This approach prompts youth to consider: What is changing in our common home, and how can we address the ecological crisis while advancing justice and peace?



Dr. Muwanika Jdiobe, Aerospace Engineer at The Boeing Company and PhD graduate from Oklahoma State University, participated in the festival's knowledge booth, sharing his personal story and science fair experiences.

The festival promotes a faith-inspired approach to sustainability, Unites Youth for action, brings together the Community and other stakeholders, and highlights mass, peace-building, and eco-innovations; it also features storytelling for integral ecology and encourages institutional and corporate social responsibility toward the environment.






HOLY CROSS
EDUCATION
FOR SERVICE
Laudato
Youth Initiative











Some of the Participatants















The festival brought together learners from more than 25 primary and secondary schools. Students participated in various events, engaged with speakers and the Guest of Honor, and showcased their talents through performances, speeches, poems, songs, skits, exhibitions, and storytelling. These activities promoted environmental awareness in line with the day's theme.



Different schools actively participated with a number of activities inspired by the theme of the day on

Environmental Conservation for Peace and Sustainable Development

PERFORMANCES



SPEECH

Hope Community School, Kiira College Butiki



POEM

Mwiri Primary School, St. Jude Primary School, St. Kizito Kalungami Primary School, Kiira College Butiki, Iganga Secondary School



DRAMA

Dayspring Elementary School



SONG

Holy Cross Primary School, St. Daniel Comboni Kasaala, St. John's Senior Secondary School, Nandere, St. Andrew Kaggwa Senior Secondary School, Bethany Land Institute Luweero

The festival brought together students from over 25 primary and secondary schools. Participants engaged in events with Guest of Honor Hon. Lumumba and shared their talents through performances, speeches, poems, songs, skits, exhibitions, and storytelling. These activities supported environmental awareness in line with the day's theme.

The 2026 Laudato Si' Green Festival was made possible

through the generous collaboration of several institutions and organizations, including Jdiobe STEM Foundation, John Paul Justice and Peace Center, Holy Cross Family Ministries, Bethany Land Institute Nandere, Holy Cross Catholic Parish Bugembe, Kakira Sugar Limited (trees), Wanyange Girls' Senior Secondary School (trees), Rotary Club of Jinja, Foresters Environmental Consultants, Avail Fruits of Faith Farm, Congregation of Holy Cross Province of East Africa, and Centenary Bank Jinja.



SKIT

Lubani Secondary School, Kakira High School

Growing Impact

The Laudato Si' Green Festival 2026 achieved its objectives by uniting young people with mentors and corporate partners in an intergenerational sustainability event involving over 25 schools. It also inspired similar festivals in other regions, as recommended in the previous festival report. On October 10, 2026, the western region will host its inaugural festival at Holy Cross Novitiate Lake Saaka in Fort-Portal.

Vatican News provided extensive coverage of the event, highlighting its impact within schools and its role in promoting Pope Francis' encyclical Laudato Si in Uganda through the Laudato Youth Initiative and Laudato Si Clubs in schools, universities, parishes, dioceses, and communities.

The eco exhibitions attracted participants from Rome and the USA, bringing Pope Francis' vision in Laudato Si' to life by promoting an "ecological conversion" that unites science, education, innovation, and moral responsibility. The Idiobe STEM Foundation described the festival as "a launchpad for the next generation of environmental leaders in Uganda." The festival upheld Pope Leo XIV's first encyclical, titled Magnifica Humanitas ("Magnificent Humanity"), which was published on May 15, 2026, focuses on safeguarding human dignity and the common good in the age of artificial intelligence, and encouraged the government of Uganda, through the Minister of ICT, to foster programs that educate youth on the good use of technology and morals built on respect for culture and the transfer of knowledge from the elders.

The Laudato Si Club of Holy Cross is one of many clubs under the Laudato Youth Initiative. The club continues to expand its impact, advancing environmental awareness, climate education, and collective action with neighboring schools. Last year, the festival hosted 1,500 students; this year, it welcomed over 2,000 students from more than 25 schools, along with local and international exhibitors.

Each year, the festival gives young people opportunities to learn, share ideas, explore innovations, and take environmental action in their communities and schools. Hon. Kasule Lumumba, Minister of ICT and National Guidance, served as chief guest and encouraged the youth to embrace technology, including AI, in environmental conservation and agriculture. She commended the initiative for its scalable approach, noting its potential to benefit families and future workplaces.

The innovative www.empii-saenungi.com program was launched in memory of the late Bishop Charles Martin Wamika, honoring his call for the responsible use of social media and the internet.

Participants left with trees and practical ideas for environmental conservation, especially in responsible plastic waste management. The community clean-up supported the broader National Cleaning Day initiatives.



LYI (ORGANISERS OF THE FESTIVAL)



FR. PROSPER & THE GUEST OF HONOR VISIT STUDENTS ECO INNOVATIONS AT THE EXIBITION



BR. ADOLF & GUEST OF HONOR



MR. BENARD, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR- LYI

Mr. Benard Kahwa, Executive Director of the Laudato Youth Initiative, stated that the Green Festival will continue to expand its scale and impact within schools, communities, and beyond. He noted that the festival will serve as a model for faith-based environmental education, driving innovations for sustainability, community transformation, and behavior change, while nurturing capable youth leaders and well-prepared stewards of the future.

He added that the new Empiisa Enungi program will help guide young people in the responsible use of media and digital technologies. The program will foster innovations for the common good and call on stakeholders to protect youth from risks associated with artificial intelligence and social media platforms.

Rather than viewing media and technology only as sources of risk, the program promotes a morally grounded approach, encouraging young people to use the internet and emerging technologies for positive innovation, learning, and community transformation. It is inspired by the late Bishop Charles Martin Wamika's Empiisa **(www.empiisaenungi.com)** program, which aims to create national impact and empower youth to build a greener, more peaceful, and sustainable future.
He concluded by thanking all participants, partners, and guests whose dedication and support made the festival a memorable and impactful occasion.



CHOIR ANIMATING THE LITURGY



FR. PROSPER & THE GUEST OF HONOR INTERACT WITH PAUL AT THE LYI - EXIBITION TABLE



PROCESSION OF GIFTS BY LSIC MEMBERS



MS. IMMACULATE CLUB PATRON



PROCESSION OF GIFT BY STAFF AT HCLV



MS. ROSE (ASSISTANT CLUB PATRON) & MR. OMODO

Festival Pictorial







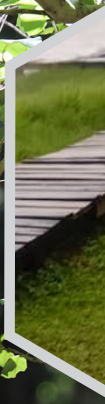


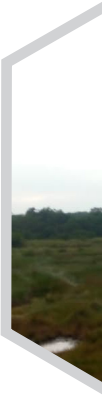



AiR is LiFE
Plant Trees
Grow Peace.

OUR LAUDATO SI CLUBS

In the forest we found healing and peace of mind to see the vegetation and trees





"everything is connected."

The experience was a journey that moved from observation to understanding, then to responsibility, and finally to practical action, which is essential for human existence.

As students returned home, they brought back more than memories of the Rift Valley, Sempaya Hot Springs, boiled eggs, or birds they observed. They returned with a renewed sense of stewardship and responsibility for our planet.

This journey reminded us that caring for creation is inseparable from caring for humanity. As Pope Francis eloquently states in Laudato Si', "everything is connected."

Although the walk ended, it left an enduring message, challenging us to become caretakers of our common home. This journey starts with awareness: learning to observe, reflect, and understand changes in our world. True change begins when we unite in personal and collective action, reflecting the spirit and vision of Laudato Si' Clubs for transformative environmental leadership.

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NATURE WALK





A Nature walk that helped Laudato Youth Discover the Connection Between Nature and Humanity

Laudato Youth from our Laudato Si Clubs: Nyakasura School, St. Maria Goretti Girls SS, and Divine Mercy SS together with their patrons held a memorable nature walk under the theme "Analyzing the Interconnection between Nature and Humanity." The journey took them to the Rift Valley Viewpoint along Bundibugyo Road and later to the amazing Sempaya Hot Springs in Semuliki National Park.

More than a nature walk, its provided them with an experiential hands-on and observational learning opportunity that guided groups of students and their mentors to gather and reflect on what they had observed in order to help them strengthen and renew their commitment to caring for our common home.





At the Rift Valley Viewpoint, the Laudato Youth were amazed by the beauty of the surrounding landscape, but they also noticed something concerning: the vegetation was visibly drying. This observation sparked reflection about the changing environment and the relationship between climate, vegetation, water and human wellbeing.

www.laudato-youthinitiative.org

Mr. Daniel Rusahura, one of the club patrons, noted that "the dry vegetation is a practical reminder that environmental changes are not distant problems; they can be seen around us and can directly affect communities, agriculture, biodiversity and water resources".



The journey continued to Semuliki National Park, known for its rich biodiversity and lowland tropical forest. The changing landscape allowed the Laudato Youth to appreciate the diverse ecosystems within the Albertine Rift. They were reminded that forests, rivers, wildlife, soil, and people are interdependent. Protecting one part of the ecosystem supports the wellbeing of the whole.



At Sempaya Hot Springs, the Laudato Youth experienced one of Uganda's most remarkable natural wonders. The area features two major hot springs, Bintente and Nyasimbi, with Nyasimbi's waters reaching about 103°C. Watching steam rise from the Earth provided a memorable geology lesson and showed how nature serves as a living classroom. The springs, surrounded by forest and biodiversity, demonstrated that geological processes, ecosystems, and human communities are interconnected.



The participation of Laudato Youth from four schools made the experience more meaningful. Although the students came from different communities, they recognized that the environment is a shared responsibility. Rivers, forests, air, and climate do not recognize school boundaries.

What affects one community can eventually affect another, making collaboration and collective action essential. This underscores the need for everyone to unite for climate action.

The Nature Walk

The nature walk reminded the Laudato Youth that environmental education should go beyond facts and inspire action. The drying vegetation, biodiversity, and wonders of Sempaya challenged them to consider how they can protect nature in their schools and communities. Planting and caring for trees, conserving water, reducing waste, and protecting biodiversity are simple actions that support a healthier environment.

For the Laudato Youth, the green action was therefore more than a walk.

Environment Sustain



Nyakasura School Named First Runners-up in the National Environment Sustainability Awards

Green School Award (Secondary School) 2026 for Advancing Environmental Sustainability

Management Authority (NEMA) on Friday, 19th June 2026, hosted the 3rd National Environment Sustainability Awards (NESA) 2026 at Serena Hotel, Kampala, under the theme, "Innovation for Climate Resilience."

The prestigious award recognizes and celebrates outstanding individuals, organizations, institutions, companies, and communities that are making significant contributions to environmental conservation, climate action, innovation, and sustainable development across Uganda.

Nyakasura School was awarded as first runners-up in the Green School Award (Secondary Schools) 2026 for advancing Environmental Sustainability.

Bringing together leaders from government, the private sector, academia, civil society, local governments, and the media, NESA 2026 highlighted the people, projects, and ideas shaping a cleaner, greener, and more climate-resilient future for our beloved country, Uganda.

NEMA congratulated all nominees, finalists, and winners for their remarkable efforts in protecting Uganda's environment and advancing sustainable development.

ability Awards



Bringing together leaders from government, the private sector, academia, civil society, local governments, and the media, NESA 2026 highlighted the people, projects, and ideas shaping a cleaner, greener, and more climate-resilient future for our beloved country, Uganda.

NEMA congratulated all nominees, finalists, and winners for their remarkable efforts in protecting Uganda's environment and advancing sustainable development.

The awards serve as a powerful reminder that collective action and innovative solutions are essential in addressing climate challenges and safeguarding the environment for future generations, a value upheld dear by the Laudato Youth Initiative.

Laudato Youth Initiative continues to promote environmental stewardship and climate action among young people in institutions through its Laudato Si Clubs Model. The Initiative participated in the celebrations as Uganda recognized outstanding achievements in environmental conservation and sustainability.

A notable highlight for us is the recognition of Nyakasura School's recognition as one of the country's schools advancing environmental sustainability. In March 2022, we were at Nyakasura school, opening the Laudato Si Club with the aim of walking with and mentoring youth at Uganda's celebrated tourism heritage school and sustainability

Laudato Si Club at Nyakasura School

This achievement reflects the dedication and impact of the school's Laudato Si' Club, whose environmental activities have played a significant role in fostering a culture of sustainability within the school community. Speaking on the recognition, the Patron of the Laudato Si' Club at Nyakasura School, Mr Daniel Rusahura, expressed gratitude for the achievement, saying.

"The Laudato Si' Club of Nyakasura School is grateful for this achievement, as the club's activities have contributed significantly to the school being nominated and recognized as the leading Green School in the country. To God be the glory," he said. This reflects our Integral Ecology approach of faith and action towards building a sustainable nation, beginning by empowering the young generation.

Environmental Sustainability underscores the growing role of schools and youth-led initiatives in promoting environmental responsibility and climate resilience across Uganda. Through tree planting, environmental awareness campaigns, waste management initiatives, and community engagement, young people are increasingly becoming key drivers of sustainable development, and our Laudato Si Clubs are well-positioned to promote these causes.

As Uganda continues to confront the challenges of climate change, initiatives such as NESA and our Laudato Si Green Festival provide an important platform for recognizing excellence, inspiring innovation, and encouraging broader participation in environmental conservation efforts.

Together, stakeholders across the country are building a sustainable Uganda, one innovation, one community, and one environmental champion at a time, guided by our motto, United for Climate Action.


NATIONAL ENVIRONMENT SUSTAINABILITY AWARDS
THIRD EDITION

NOMINATIONS

AWARD CATEGORY	NOMINEE(S)
Green School Award (Secondary School)	1. Nyakasura School 2. Nabisunsa Girls School

Proudly in Partnership with:
SERENA HOTEL, KLA
TIME: 4-9PM

Laudato Si Clubs' visists

IN FORT PORTAL







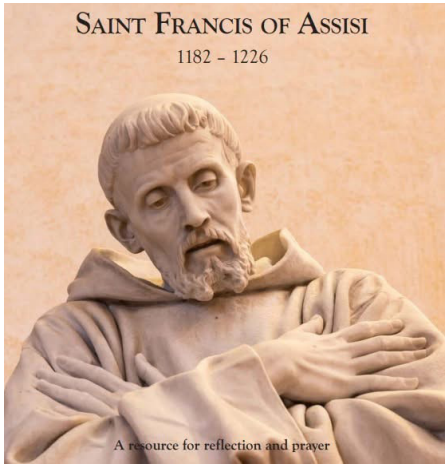
St. Maria Gorretti Girl's S.S and Nykasura School



Environmental Conservation

Caring for Our Common Home a Call Inspired by Laudato Si'

The environment is the foundation upon which all life depends. It provides us with air to breathe, water to drink, food to eat, land for agriculture and settlement, forests for resources, and habitats for countless forms of life. Yet, despite this dependence, humanity continues to place a lot of pressure on the natural world through deforestation, pollution, wetland destruction, irresponsible consumption, soil degradation and activities that contribute to climate change. The environmental crisis is therefore not simply a scientific or economic problem; it is a moral responsibility that concerns every human being.



This understanding is at the heart of Pope Francis's 2015 encyclical Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home. The document, addressed not only to Catholics but to all people of goodwill, presents the Earth as our common home and calls humanity to a renewed relationship with creation. Pope Francis draws inspiration from Saint Francis of Assisi,

POPE FRANCIS

Pope Francis draws inspiration from Saint Francis of Assisi, who praised God through the beauty of creation and understood the natural world as something worthy of love and protection.

LAUDATO SI MEANS

The words Laudato Si' mean "Praise be to you, my Lord." They remind us that nature should not be viewed merely as a collection of resources to exploit for economic benefit. The Earth is the home that we share with one another and with other living creatures.

Pope Francis warns that irresponsible use and abuse of the Earth's resources have damaged the soil, water, air and living organisms.



Environmental conservation requires a change from destructive exploitation to responsible stewardship.

"Afforestation and reforestation should be encouraged, while illegal logging and uncontrolled charcoal production should be addressed. Communities should be involved in forest management because people are more likely to protect natural resources when they understand their value and benefit from sustainable use.

This message challenges us to ask an important question: What kind of environment are we leaving behind for those who will come after us?

The Environmental Crisis and Human Responsibility

One of the greatest threats to the environment is deforestation. Trees are cut down for charcoal, firewood, timber, agriculture, settlement and construction. Although forests provide valuable resources, their destruction can result in soil erosion, loss of biodiversity, reduced water availability and increased atmospheric carbon dioxide. Forests also provide habitats for wildlife and contribute to the regulation of the climate.



Pollution presents another serious challenge. Plastics, untreated sewage, industrial chemicals, agricultural chemicals and poorly managed household waste can contaminate land and water. Air pollution from vehicles, industries and burning waste can affect human health and the atmosphere. Rivers, lakes and wetlands that should support life can become dumping grounds.

Laudato Si' encourages us to recognize that environmental problems are interconnected. The degradation of nature eventually affects human beings, particularly people who depend directly on natural resources for their livelihoods. Pope Francis emphasizes that the environmental crisis and social crisis cannot be treated as separate problems. His vision of integral ecology calls us to consider the relationships between environmental protection, human dignity, society and economic development.



Caring for the Poor and Vulnerable

Environmental conservation is also a question of justice. Poor communities often depend heavily on forests, rivers, wetlands, soils and other natural resources. When these resources are destroyed or degraded, vulnerable people may experience food insecurity, water shortages, displacement and loss of livelihoods.



This is why environmental conservation should not be viewed as something reserved for wealthy countries or environmental organizations. Poor and Vulnerable

It is a responsibility shared by the whole human family. Development should improve people's lives without destroying the ecological systems upon which those lives depend.

Pope Francis calls attention to the connection between the cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor. Protecting forests, wetlands, water sources and agricultural land can therefore be understood as protecting human communities as well.

Pope Francis says

Environmental justice requires that development benefits people while respecting the limits of nature.

Laudato Si'
Seminar at Kitabi Seminary Speech

By Fr. Daniel Manzi on the theme "Console Our Sister & Mother, Earth"

The Rector, Priests, Religious, Distinguished Educators, Dear Students, Invited Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen. It is both a privilege and a profound joy to stand before you today at Kitabi Seminary as we gather for this important Laudato Si' Seminar under the inspiring theme: "Console Our Sister & Mother, Earth."

I extend my sincere appreciation to the Rector and the entire Seminary community for organizing this timely gathering. It reflects not only a commitment to academic excellence but also a deep concern for our common home and our shared responsibility to protect it.





Our theme today is deeply rooted in the vision of Pope Francis as expressed in his encyclical Laudato Si'. The Holy Father reminds us that the earth is not merely a resource to be exploited. She is our sister, sharing life with us, and our mother, who generously provides everything necessary for our survival. Like a loving mother, she nourishes us with fertile soil, clean water, fresh air, forests, rivers, mountains, and the beauty of creation that fills our hearts with wonder, gratitude, and praise to God. Yet today, this sister and mother is suffering.

Wonder, gratitude, and praise to God.



Yet to day mother Earth is Suffering



1. She suffers because her forests are disappearing.
2. She suffers because her rivers are polluted and her lakes are becoming acidified.
3. She suffers because countless species of wildlife are disappearing.
4. She suffers because the climate is changing, bringing floods, droughts—as many communities are experiencing even now—landslides, and rising temperatures.

She suffers because of the ever-growing burden of waste, especially plastic pollution.

These are not distant realities. In many parts of Uganda, including our own communities here in the western region, we are already witnessing their consequences. Farmers face increasingly unpredictable seasons. Soil fertility continues to decline. Natural habitats are disappearing before our eyes. These are not merely environmental problems; they are profoundly human problems. Whenever the earth suffers, humanity suffers as well.





These are not merely environmental problems; they are profoundly human problems. Whenever the earth suffers, humanity suffers as well.

The theme of today's seminar does more than invite us to recognize the suffering of Mother Earth. It challenges us to console her.

To console someone is to comfort them, to stand beside them, to heal their wounds, and to restore hope. Mother Earth will not be consoled by beautiful speeches alone or by inspiring slogans. She will be consoled by the choices we make and the actions we take every day.

We console Mother Earth every time we plant and nurture a tree—whether at school, at home, or wherever we find ourselves. We console her every time we protect a wetland.

We console her whenever we dispose of waste responsibly by separating organic matter from inorganic matter.

We console her whenever we conserve water and energy by avoiding unnecessary waste and switching off electricity when it is not needed.

We console her whenever we refuse unnecessary plastic. And we console her every time we inspire another person to love, respect, and care for God's creation.

The environmental crisis is also a spiritual crisis. Too often, humanity has forgotten that creation belongs to God. We have behaved as owners rather than as stewards.

The Book of Genesis tells us that humanity was placed in the garden "to cultivate and care for it." Dominion was never a licence to destroy. Authority was never permission to exploit. Rather, it is a sacred responsibility to exercise loving stewardship over God's creation.

Dear students,

You belong to the generation that will shape the future of our planet. Your education is preparing you not only for careers but also for responsible citizenship and faithful stewardship of creation. Never imagine that you are too young to make a difference.

One student can begin a tree-planting initiative. One class can eliminate plastic waste within a school. One committed young person can inspire hundreds of others. History repeatedly teaches us that great movements often begin with a small number of people who choose courage over indifference. We count on each one of you.

Dear educators,

Yours is a noble vocation. Education is far more than the transfer of knowledge; it is the formation of conscience.

Every lesson can cultivate respect for creation.

Every science class can deepen appreciation for biodiversity.

Every school can become a living laboratory of ecological conversion, where students do not merely study environmental conservation but practise it daily through their choices and actions.

As a seminary, Kitabi has an even greater mission.

The future priests formed here will one day preach the Gospel, celebrate the sacraments, accompany families, and guide communities in faith.

They are also called to become prophets of ecological justice, reminding the faithful that caring for creation is not an optional concern but an essential dimension of Christian discipleship. The Church has always defended the dignity of every human person.





Today, she also calls us to defend the dignity of our common home, because the two cannot be separated.

As Pope Francis reminds us, the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor are one and the same cry.

Dear friends,
Our world does not need more people who simply admire nature.

- *It needs people who protect it.*
- *It does not need more consumers.*
- *It needs more stewards.*
- *It does not need more exploitation.*
- *It needs more responsibility.*
- *It does not need more indifference.*
- *It needs compassion.*

As we participate in this seminar, may each one of us reflect sincerely:

How am I contributing to the healing of our common home?
What habits must I change?
What legacy will I leave for future generations?

When history judges our generation, will it say that we ignored the cries of Mother Earth, or will it say that we rose together to console her?

There is still reason for hope.

Nature possesses a remarkable capacity to recover whenever human beings choose wisdom instead of greed, cooperation instead of selfishness, and stewardship instead of exploitation. Every positive action, no matter how small, contributes to the healing of creation. May this seminar become more than a single event. May it mark the beginning of a renewed commitment to ecological conversion. May every participant leave this place as an ambassador of Laudato Si', carrying its message into our homes, schools, parishes, institutions, and communities.

Before I conclude, I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to Fr. Acleo Kihembo and to everyone who has contributed in one way or another to make this seminar a success. Your dedication and commitment are deeply appreciated. May God bless each one of you. May He bless our efforts to care for our common home. And may He grant us the wisdom, courage, and perseverance to console our sister and mother, Earth.

Thank you.
Fr. Daniel Manzi
Diocesan Laudato Si' Focal Person
Mbarara Archdiocese

Laudato Si Seminar *Pictorial*













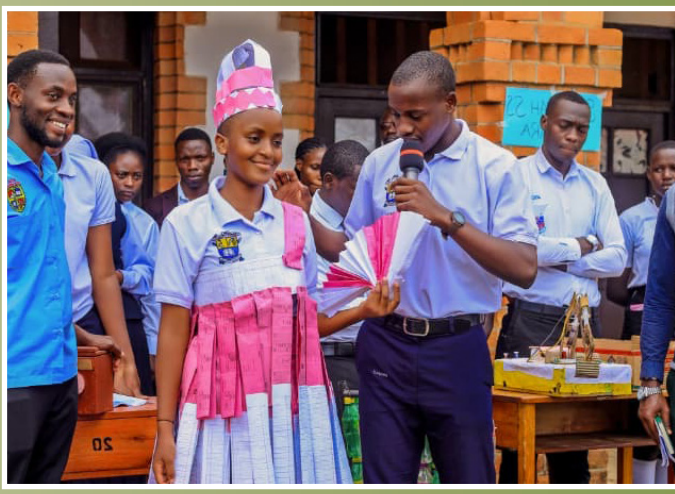




















THE ENVIRONMENT, MOTHER EARTH AND ITS CALL FOR CONSERVATION



By: Magdalene Daiy Nassali

The environment is everything that surrounds us: towering trees, lively animals, bustling buildings, and people. Protecting our environment and nature is vital, as they provide the forests, rivers, creatures, and land that sustain life.

Our environment, the heart of nature and Earth, faces threats that chip away at its beauty. These problems are not distant; they stem from our own actions, such as careless waste disposal, relentless tree cutting, and the release of untreated industrial waste.

When garbage is tossed carelessly, it poisons the soil and robs plants of the healthy ground they need to grow. Widespread tree cutting, or deforestation, dries up the land and steals the rain, leaving us with drought.

Untreated industrial waste is mainly released into water bodies, polluting the water for aquatic animals and humans.

We can change this story by throwing garbage in bins, recycling what we can, planting new trees in bare places, harvesting only mature trees, and ensuring industrial waste is treated before it reaches our rivers.

In the end, protecting the environment and Mother Earth is not just a duty but a call we must answer, for this planet is our only home.



We can Protect Mother earth by engaging in practical restoration activities

Laudato Si Club

Holy Cross Lake View S.S.S - Jinja

M

MY ENVIRONMENT MY PRIDE

The word environment might sound like it only means what is around us, but it is much more. When I speak of the environment, I mean not just our surroundings, but our forests too. The environment is both what we see and what we imagine; it blends visible and invisible elements, woven together to enrich our lives and emotions.

Amazing! The environment adorns itself more splendidly than any king with gold and jewels. At dawn, it breathes out fresh air, brings forth lovely flowers, gifts us gentle weather, and above all, sustains life for everyone. I am truly proud of my environment. Think of the Sahara—just imagining life there overwhelms me. Endless sand dunes, barely any shrubs, scorching sun, and scarce water—what hardship! Meanwhile, I am embraced by tropical forests, surrounded by countless water bodies, standing on fertile soil, and breathing clean air. How could I not be proud?



INNOCENT PASKA AKELLO
ŁSiC - HCLV

Surprisingly, few of us realize that protecting our environment is a responsibility, not just a pastime. We trouble nature, let it suffer, and destroy its well-being—innocent forests felled in sadness, land choked with plastic, and air tainted with poisonous fumes.

Nature weeps from morning until night, yet few listen to its sorrowful voice. Eventually, it reveals its anger. We mourn, but we caused it.

Thankfully, there is still hope to restore what has been lost.

The environment will accept our tears of reconciliation if we remain faithful.

We can show our repentance by planting and replanting as many trees as we can, allowing nature to regain its lost beauty. By gathering every piece of non-biodegradable waste from the land, we help nature reclaim its golden ornaments. Embracing alternatives like solar energy, electricity, biogas, and recycling lets nature experience the peace it once knew.



Nations! Nations!

Let us place our environment above all titles and ranks, for it matters not if you are a president, doctor, soldier, pastor, or any other profession. We are all its dependents, now and always.

BEYOND WHAT WE SEE



Our love and our pride is the environment.
Is it just the trees, the grass on the ground beyond our sight? The environment, like a newborn baby, blossoms, filled with life and joy, with a future still bright but unknown.

As seasons come and go, it keeps maturing,
Its fruits are of splendor and unimaginable beauty

But little does it know, the further it matures, the further it calls for destruction. Its killers, with greed, shatter it down; in agony it weeps,

In silence it cries



Not even a sound is heard, but within it is felt,
Its future and benefits, once bright, now darken, but because of ignorance, we never stop. We keep destroying and destroying, even the life left.

But today, a new baby is born; hope rises to fight all the ills taking place and save the once-bright future, making it even brighter. Our environment is beyond what we see.

So let's protect and conserve this treasure now. Entrusted to our care



ULRIKA ADOCH
LSiC - HCLV

ENVIRONMENTAL Conservation



The environment is the ultimate foundation for all life on earth. It ought to be conserved because it's our mother earth- it's the true base of nature. We can conserve it by Planting Trees. These trees play a very vital role in our daily life. They act as wind-breaks. They help form rainfall, and much more. Follow the 5Rs: recycle, reuse, refuse, reduce, and also avoid open burning of rubbish, which will reduce the rapid increase in airborne diseases. It's not hard to do because this is our mother, our future, and she needs protection for a better, greener future.

UNITED FOR CLIMATE ACTION.

Nshiko Rebecah
- LSiC - HCLV

OUR GREENER FUTURE



When we protect the air and land Peace and progress walk hand in hand. Together we can plant and care for every creature everywhere keeping nature safe each day,

We all light tomorrow's brighter way creating fantastic views for all to see corners of the earth and peace will bloom and dreams extend with hope and wisdom we shall strive to keep our greener world Alive!

The forests whisper, gentle and green, a priceless gift, forever seen. With every tree we choose to save, we build a future strong and brave, seen across all the continents. When one comes, the cold is amazed. Clear rivers flow with life and grace. Clear rivers flow with life and grace, and sing their melodies.

AKUMU AUDREY BIBIANA,ZABALUNGI SHUNA,NYUMA JOY AGNES

LSiC - HCLV

WHY DAMAGE GOD'S CREATION?



Creation is a source of our happiness, created by God, and it makes everyone stress-free. The body naturally responds to the situation at hand, most especially if it is frightening, but why? It is all caused by the damage to creation. But do we, as pilgrims of green hope, have the power to control the damage to our creation?

The encyclical was written by Pope Francis with the title Laudato Si which means " praise be to God," as a way to guide us to care for God's creation as a way of praising him, my fellow pilgrims of green hope why, why do we damage the creation that at times helps us to be stress free, we should raise together, to guard the gifts that God has granted to us.

For all Ugandans, it is important to care for our creation by eliminating the causes of its damage, whether internal or external.

Common causes of damage to our creation include deforestation, bush burning, poor disposal of rubbish like plastics, poor disposal of human waste, and many others that we must address within ourselves and in our actions.

Our responsibility as pilgrims of green hope is to care for our creation by eliminating all matters that contribute to its damage. It is important to know that we can instinctively take care of our creation effectively.

We therefore have to address the activities that damage our creation by doing things that help care for it, like planting trees, properly disposing of rubbish, and many others, so that people live healthy lives.

All in all, it is very important to take care of our creation because at times, it is our source of happiness and also enables us to live a healthy life.

LAKER MARIA PAULINE

LAUDATO SI CLUB PRESIDENT

HOLY CROSS LAKE VIEW SSS

LAUDATO MY



Each of us is concerned about the environment, and we need to take responsibility for every part of it. Though we may be students, we still share responsibility for caring for our environment, and we do this through the LAUDATO SI Club of Holy Cross Lake View; our hearts are inwardly compassionate, loving, and concerned about our environment.

At Holy Cross Lake View, we do our best to keep our environment clean and safe. Through our unity as a club, we work together as we plant trees and sensitize people around our school through our green march every year during the Laudato Si Green Festival.

Our school Laudato Si Club is a faith club because, luckily and proudly, it is inspired by one of the letters written by the late Pope Francis, Laudato Si, which calls for action: Laudate Deum. He wrote the encyclical to show how all hands, hearts, minds, and souls partake in environmental conservation. He still shows it clearly in the letter he names

Laudato Si' means **"Praise be to you, my Lord"** in an old Italian dialect, coming from the famous canticle by Saint Francis of Assisi

"Praise Be To God," for this is because he gave us green wonders and the waters which satisfy and resolve our hearts to live on the earth quite peacefully, colorfully, and as a home for every creature.

Let's join our efforts and keep the earth the same green, peaceful home where we all live together in health. This will make God happy and delighted because we conserve nature entrusted to our hands, and that is one of the greatest praises we can offer God. Every hand contributes to pollution, yet also to conservation and restoration.

United For Climate Action

NAMIIRO RESTY KEREN
NABAKAZI GORRET
MUKISA PROSPER





IS IT CHANGE?



Is it the earth that once existed
Is it my home where I once dwelt
Is it the same land and rain
That gave rise to new flora
And are they the forests
That once harbored fauna

Every day, flora and fauna become extinct
My home once cool and peaceful
Now hotter than ever before
Now rain to raise the green
No forest to house the fauna

Silence filled my home
Deep in my heart
Are imaginations and memories
Of the once-existing earth
With melodious tunes from birds
And cool breeze from lakes and forests
That once filled my home.

Nabakazi Gorret
LSiC - HCLV


LYI MOTTO
United For Climate Action
www.laudato-youthinitiative.org

The World of Nature

One of our Greatest Gifts



Nature is one of our greatest gifts. It includes everything that exists naturally: huge oceans and tall mountains, forests, animals, plants, and even the air we breathe. Many of us see nature every day, but we often don't realize how important it is or how much we depend on it.

The Importance of Nature

Trees and plants produce the oxygen we breathe. Water, like rivers, rain, and lakes, provides fresh water for drinking, cleaning, and growing food. Many medicines are from plants found in forests and jungles. Nature is also home to millions of different animals and plants, and each one has its own role in the ecosystem. For example, bees help to pollinate plants so they can grow, birds eat fruits and spread seeds, and even the tiniest creatures, like ants and worms, help keep the soil healthy.

Human Activities Are Harming Nature

Sadly, human activities are harming nature, and pollution, deforestation, and bush burning are destroying some parts of it and contributing to climate change. Animals are losing their homes, and some are even going extinct. Air pollution destroys the ozone layer and affects the oxygen that we breathe, which is causing people to die of cancer.

Protecting Nature

But we can help protect nature by recycling and reducing waste, using less plastic, planting trees, and saving water and electricity.

Nature Refreshes the Mind and Body

Nature is powerful, peaceful, and full of life. Spending time in nature, walking in a park, watching birds, or just looking at the sky can help you feel calm and happy because nature has the power to refresh your mind and body.

The Power of Young People

As young people, we can make a positive change by learning about nature, respecting it, and helping protect it for future generations.

Let Us Take Care of Nature

So, take a moment every day to notice the beauty around you. Remember, nature takes care of us, so let's take care of it too.

Ainomugisha Katrina Phiona
Laudato Si Club of Immaculate Heart Girls' School- Nyakibale

Nyakibale – (LSiC IMMAC)

As a youth, I could be so excited over such petty things, but suddenly, "kaboosh," something so mysterious and uncertain comes about. But living with the knowledge that your life is a mystery is another puzzle to ponder.

The Load on Everyone's Back

No one knows the load on your back until they get into your shoes. Everyone feels like they have the worst situation until they travel to the more or less privileged.

The Cycle Continues

The rich cry that they need more money for extra properties; the middle class sees the rich as their next step; the lower class sees no ray of hope in their lives; the sick count the days until they end; the lame and the crippled cry for a chance to live normally;

and the dead always hoped their memories would live on for good. So, the cycle continues.

Good in Every Situation

Where we are is enough because there is good in every situation. Try to smile for a bright little star that twinkles in darkness, because space can never be white, but stars shine to their capacity.

Peace and Contentment

Like humans, we can never be content in life because even the richest people still work hard for more, which is even useless. Live today to the fullest. It all starts with a little peace and contentment within you.

Smiling Through the Darkest Days

Nobody can ever know if a perfect 100% exists, but you can still keep smiling even on the darkest days.

Admiring Another Person's Life

Your life can appear perfect and admirable to someone else, yet you are also admiring another person's life.

Different but Ordinary

We are different, but we tend to make it look ordinary; yet it can also be super ordinary to all.

A Better Place to Live

The world is a better place to live in if, at all, we were all contented and confident in our hills and valleys.

Laudato Si Clubs Pictorial



LSiC-HCLV



LSiC-AVEX



LSiC-DWSS


LSiC - MUAK


LSiCs - Luwero


LSiC - St. Adolf

LAUDATO SI' IN THE PEARL OF AFRICA



"The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it."
Genesis 2:15_

When Pope Francis gave us Laudato Si', he did not write it for Rome alone. He wrote it for Fort Portal, for the banks of River Mpanga, for the slopes of Rwenzori, and for every Ugandan who opens a tap provided by the National Water and Sewerage Corporation. In that encyclical, the Holy Father reminds us that our common home is like a sister with whom we share our life, crying out, "Laudato Si', mi' Signore – Praise be to you, my Lord."

Uganda is truly blessed. Churchill was right to call us the Pearl of Africa. Our soils are fertile, our hills are green, our lakes are full. Yet Pope Francis warns us in Laudato Si' 34 that "many of those who possess more resources seem mostly to be concerned with masking the problems or concealing their symptoms." Are we not doing the same? We boast of our beauty while our hands destroy it.

Our water is crying, and NWSC cannot save it alone. The National Water and Sewerage Corporation works day and night, from Gaba to Katosi, from Fort Portal to Mbarara, purifying water for our homes, schools and hospitals. But what kind of water do we give them to purify? We dump kaveera and plastic bottles in trenches, we pour used oil into drains, we throw garbage into Nakivubo Channel and into River Mpanga, we encroach on wetlands which are God's own natural filters. Then we complain that water is dirty and bills are high. As Scripture teaches us, "But ask the animals, and they will teach you, or the birds in the sky, and they will tell you; or speak to the earth, and it will teach you, or let the fish in the sea inform you" – Job 12:7-8. If we poison the wetland, we poison our own cup. NWSC can treat water, but it cannot create water. Protecting our catchment areas and respecting wetlands is the true practice of Laudato Si'.

Our land also is groaning, and we must now hear NEMA's voice. The National Environment Management Authority is not our enemy; it is the watchman God has placed at the gate. When NEMA tells us not to cut trees on the hills, not to burn charcoal recklessly, not to use kaveera, and not to mine sand in Lwera without restraint, it is only echoing the Word of God: "The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it" – Psalm 24:1. Today we see deforestation in Kyenjojo, charcoal scars in Northern Uganda, and the wounds of our hills left bare by greed. Pope Francis says in Laudato Si' 23 that "the climate is a common good, belonging to all and meant for all." When we cut one tree without planting two, we steal from our children and mortgage their future.

This is why Uganda's once-a-month cleaning exercise, Bulungi Bwansi, must be taken as sacred. It should not be seen as a punishment, a loss of business hours, or a mere government program. It is an act of worship, a monthly confession to Mother Earth.

SEMINARY



For "we know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time" – Romans 8:22. Our creation groans under polythene in Lake Victoria, under rubbish along Kasese roads, under plastics choking Katonga. Bulungi Bwansi is our chance to say sorry and to make things right.

Laudato Si' therefore calls for a true ecological conversion, as Pope Francis writes in article 217. Our faith must move from the pulpit to the pit. A Christian who litters just after Sunday Mass has not understood the Eucharist, which is thanksgiving for creation. A citizen who wastes NWSC water while praying for rain contradicts his own prayer.

What must we do? We must respect water by not wasting it, by reporting leakages, by protecting River Mpanga and all our local water sources. We must respect the law and guidance of NEMA by refusing to build in wetlands, by carrying reusable bags, and by planting a tree every month at our homes, schools, seminaries and parishes. And we must honour Bulungi Bwansi, making every last Saturday holy. Let priests lead with brooms, let local leaders mobilize, let students march to clean trenches, because a clean village is itself evangelization.

Uganda can still be saved. Uganda must remain the Pearl. But pearls only shine when they are cleaned. Pope Francis reminds us that "there is a nobility in the duty to care for creation through little daily actions."

Let NWSC bring us water, let NEMA guard our nature, but let you and I be the keepers. As Jesus says, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away" – Matthew 24:35. Let us not let our earth pass away before our very eyes.

Together, let us care for our common home.

Sem. Bob Robert Bigabwarugaba | St Paul's National Seminary – Kinyamasika



CLIMATE CHANGE
AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT





Climate change has made environmental conservation more urgent. Fossil fuel use, deforestation, and other human activities drive greenhouse gas emissions and global warming, which disrupt rainfall, agriculture, water resources, biodiversity, and human settlements.

Laudato Si' calls for sustainable, holistic development and collective action. Pope Francis urges humanity to rethink lifestyles and production and consumption patterns that strain the planet.

He highlights renewable energy, efficient resource use, sustainable agriculture, and improved management of forests and natural resources as essential to a global response.

Sustainable development means meeting current needs without compromising future generations. Economic growth should be measured not only by output or income, but also by quality of life, ecosystem health, and the state of natural resources.

The Role of Individuals and Communities

Environmental conservation starts with daily choices. Individuals can contribute by planting trees, minimizing waste, conserving water, reducing single-use plastics, protecting water sources, using energy responsibly, and keeping surroundings clean.

Communities can organize clean-up campaigns, protect wetlands and forests, establish tree-planting programs, and educate members on sustainable resource use. Farmers can conserve soil through terracing, contour farming, mulching, agroforestry, and crop rotation to reduce erosion and support productivity.

Schools play a significant role. Environmental education should extend beyond textbooks. Students can plant trees, garden, separate waste, join environmental clubs, and support community conservation, fostering responsible attitudes toward nature.

A Change of Heart: Ecological Conversion

A central message of Laudato Si' is that environmental conservation requires more than laws and technology; it demands a change in mindset and lifestyle.

If people view nature solely as a resource, environmental destruction will persist. Recognizing our connection to creation and to others fosters a deeper sense of responsibility.

This shift is known as ecological conversion: a transformation in attitudes, values, and behavior that leads to caring for creation. It involves moving from excess to responsibility, from waste to moderation, and from selfishness to solidarity.

Saint Francis of Assisi exemplifies this attitude, with his appreciation of creation rooted in humility and gratitude. Laudato Si' encourages society to rediscover this sense of wonder and responsibility. Nature is not an obstacle to development, but a gift to value and protect.



What Can We Do?

The challenge may seem daunting, but change starts with simple actions. Governments must enforce environmental laws and promote sustainability. Businesses should reduce pollution and adopt responsible production methods. Religious institutions can integrate environmental responsibility into moral and spiritual formation. Schools can teach young people to be environmental stewards. Communities can protect local ecosystems, and individuals can make responsible daily choices.

Most importantly, these efforts must be coordinated. Pope Francis emphasizes that addressing ecological challenges requires collective action and a shared pursuit of sustainable development. Since the world is interconnected, environmental problems often cannot be solved by individual countries alone.

Environmental conservation is about protecting our shared home. Forests, rivers, lakes, wetlands, soils, animals, and the atmosphere are not just resources for immediate use; they are vital to the life-support system for current and future generations.

Laudato Si' frames environmental conservation as a profound moral issue. Its message is clear: caring for the Earth is inseparable from caring for humanity. We cannot claim to love our neighbors while harming the natural systems that sustain them, nor speak of development while depleting resources future generations will need.



The task ahead is both challenging and hopeful. As Pope Francis reminds us, change is possible, and protecting our common home requires everyone's participation.

Let us move from words to action: plant trees where forests have vanished, protect wetlands, keep communities clean, conserve water, reduce pollution, and use resources responsibly. Let us teach children to understand, love, and protect nature.



The Earth is our common home, and its future depends on us. If each person accepts responsibility for caring for creation, our collective actions can build a cleaner, healthier, and more sustainable world. In the spirit of Laudato Si', may we once again say, through our actions and words: Praise be to you, my Lord, through our common home.



International Youth Day 2026

"Different Context, Common Aspirations"



August, the Laudato Youth Initiative joined young people around the world in celebrating International Youth Day under the theme **"Different Contexts, Common Aspirations."** The theme reminds us that although young people grow up in different communities, cultures and circumstances, we share many hopes: a healthy environment, meaningful opportunities, dignity, peace and a sustainable future.

For the young environmentalists of the Laudato Si' Clubs in Uganda, these aspirations are deeply connected to the care of our common home.

In Uganda, environmental conservation is not simply a global conversation. It is a local responsibility that touches our farms, forests, wetlands, lakes, communities and livelihoods. Climate change and environmental degradation can affect food production, water availability, biodiversity and the well-being of families. This is why young people have an important role to play—not only as future environmental leaders, but as leaders of conservation today.

As the Laudato Youth Initiative emphasizes, young people are encouraged to move from concern to action through tree planting, climate education, sustainable agriculture, ecological restoration, advocacy and community engagement. Through Laudato Si' Clubs in schools, universities, parishes, dioceses and communities, young people are turning environmental awareness into practical stewardship. (Laudato Youth)

> ***"We plant trees whose shade we will never sit beneath. We tend the soil that others will harvest. We clean the waters, trusting they will flow clear again."***

This powerful prayer, recited by Laudato Si' Clubs President Sarah Kirikumwino, captures the spirit of youth environmental action: serving beyond ourselves and protecting resources for generations yet to come. (Laudato Youth)

Different Contexts, One Shared Home

The young environmentalist in Kampala may face different challenges from a student in rural Uganda, a farmer in Eastern Uganda or a young conservationist working near a forest or wetland. Yet the aspiration is common: to live in communities where nature is protected and people can thrive.

The United Nations notes that young people across different contexts share aspirations for opportunity, participation and a better future. The 2026 International Youth Day theme places this shared human experience at the centre of the celebration. (DESA Publications)

For Uganda's young people, this shared aspiration can become a powerful force for environmental conservation.

A tree planted at a school is more than a tree. It can become shade for a future student, habitat for biodiversity and a symbol of responsibility.

A restored wetland is more than a protected ecosystem. It is part of the natural infrastructure that supports water systems, biodiversity and communities.

A youth climate dialogue is more than a conversation. It can inspire young people to understand environmental challenges, influence decisions and become ambassadors for sustainable living.

reflects the spirit of Laudato Si', Pope Francis' call to recognize the interconnectedness of people, society and creation.

"The climate is a common good, belonging to all and meant for all." Pope Francis, Laudato Si'

For Ugandan youth, caring for this common good means taking responsibility for the places where we live. It means choosing conservation over destruction, restoration over neglect, and cooperation over division.

Conservation Is Everyone's Responsibility

Environmental conservation cannot be left to governments, scientists or environmental organizations alone. Every young person can contribute.

The work may begin with something small: planting and caring for a tree, protecting a school garden, reducing waste, keeping a community clean, learning about biodiversity, promoting sustainable agriculture or encouraging others to respect nature.

The impact becomes greater when individual actions are united.

That call is particularly meaningful on International Youth Day. The future we desire will not be created by words alone. It will be shaped by the choices we make and the actions we take together. Young People Are Agents of Hope. Uganda's young environmentalists demonstrate that youth participation is not merely about preparing for tomorrow. Young people are already contributing to environmental solutions today. Through the Laudato Si' Clubs, youth are learning to connect faith, science, culture, innovation and environmental stewardship. This creates an understanding of conservation that is both practical and deeply rooted in responsibility for our communities and future generations. (Laudato Youth)

The United Nations has similarly emphasized that young people bring creativity, innovation and community connections that are essential for turning sustainable development goals into local action. (United Nations)

El Niño WARNING

In a public alert issued on August 14, 2026, the OPM warned that above-normal rainfall could increase the risk of floods, landslides, infrastructure damage, disease outbreaks, and loss of livelihoods.

The warning comes as El Niño strengthens across the tropical Pacific Ocean. The Office of the Prime Minister has warned of possible El Niño-driven heavy rains from September to December 2026, with flood and landslide risks rising as the climate pattern strengthens across the Pacific, with the wet conditions potentially extending into 2027. The US Climate Prediction Center said this week there is more than a 90 percent chance that the event will become very strong during the Northern Hemisphere autumn and winter of 2026-27.

El Niño

El Niño is a natural climate pattern caused by unusual warming of surface waters in the central and eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean. The warming changes winds and rainfall patterns across large parts of the world. The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) reported a rapid development toward a strong El Niño, with forecasts indicating continued intensification. For Uganda, El Niño matters because unusual rainfall can increase the risk of floods, landslides, crop damage, and disease outbreaks (Nations, n.d.). New Vision reported in July 2026 that Ugandan authorities were preparing for possible El Niño rains and were shifting from simply responding to disasters toward anticipating and preventing them (New Vision, 2026; https://www.newvision.co.ug/articledetails/uganda-shifts-disaster-prevention).

So how can we as Ugandans prepare for it ?

Prepare your home

Before heavy rains begin, repair leaking roofs and strengthen weak parts of your house. Clear drainage channels and remove rubbish that could block water. People living near rivers, wetlands or steep slopes should pay special attention to official warnings and evacuation instructions. (Flood alert issued for Kasese and Bundibugyo, 2026)

Protect water and health

Flooding can contaminate drinking-water sources. (Wamyil et al., 2023) Keep water containers covered and follow health authorities' advice on treating drinking water. Families should also remove stagnant water where possible and sleep under mosquito nets because heavy rains can create mosquito-breeding areas. (Twinomuhangi et al., 2026)

Most of us are from Farming Communities, so we should prepare early

Farmers should follow reliable weather and agricultural advisories from reliable sources; the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries has often shared Weather Advisory information. Let's share it on our social media so others can access it too.

WE also need to protect seeds, livestock, farm equipment, and harvested food from excessive rain. (El Niño, 2026) (FAO & WFP, 2026) The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) stresses the importance of anticipatory action, taking steps before a climate shock causes major losses (Food and Agriculture Organization [FAO], 2026).

Follow official warnings

Not every heavy rainfall event is caused by El Niño, and its effects vary by location. WMO advises governments and communities to combine global El Niño information with regional and local forecasts (WMO, 2026c). As Ugandans, we should therefore follow updates from the Uganda National Meteorological Authority, government authorities, and recognized disaster-management agencies.

Why early preparation matters

El Niño does not automatically mean disaster. The real danger comes when extreme weather affects communities that are not prepared. (Ndejjo et al., 2026) The government has called for anticipatory action to protect people from potential El Niño-related losses in food, business, and livelihoods. We all know what flash floods have been causing in our local cities recently. New Vision has also reported that Uganda is strengthening its approach to early warning and anticipatory action so that communities can act before floods, landslides, and other hazards become humanitarian crises (New Vision, 2026; https://www.newvision.co.ug/articledetails/uganda-shifts-disaster-prevention).



We need to take this warning seriously. Protect children and accompany them to school in areas like Kasese River and Nyamwamba, where floods can happen at any time of day, and many children cross the river on their way to and from school (Doe & Smith, 2025, pp. 45-67). So this season, parents should not send children to the well on their own or send them to school without an elder accompanying them. With good preparation, communities can reduce damage from extreme weather and protect lives, livelihoods, and property.

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King Oyo Revered His Creator and Embraced Integral Ecology



"All of us can cooperate as instruments of God for the care of creation, each according to his or her own culture, experience, involvements and talents" (Laudato Si', 14)





His legacy extends beyond his role as a cultural leader. He represented a generation of leaders who understood the connection between culture, people, conservation, and the future of Uganda's tourism heritage.

His expedition to the Mountains of the Moon stands as a witness to his dedication to our motherland and an ecological legacy that should be upheld.

By reaching the summit of the Rwenzori, he exemplified extraordinary courage and leadership, taking decisive action that brought international attention to the beauty of Uganda as the pearl of Africa and awareness of the pressing impact of climate change on one of Uganda's most treasured natural and tourism assets—the glaciers at the peak of the Rwenzori Mountains.

His journey reminds us that conservation transcends protecting landscapes; it is about safeguarding the narratives, communities, cultures, and livelihoods intricately woven into them.

As Uganda's tourism industry mourns, and as the Tooro Kingdom and its youth mourn, we are called to reflect on our collective responsibility to advance the causes he so passionately championed.

To mention youth empowerment, healthcare (specifically HIV/AIDS prevention), environmental conservation, tourism, and modern agriculture.

May his legacy of courage continue to inspire us all to protect Uganda's natural and cultural heritage for generations to come.

Rest in peace, Your Majesty

"Amata Gatikire"



KING OYO A DYNAMIC CULTURAL LEADER

He will be remembered by many as a Youth Environmental Champion and Africa's Premier Tourism Icon, leaving a legacy that will inspire future generations.





In 2022, Pope Francis sparked a wave of global environmental activism with the documentary The Letter: A Message for Our Earth, which premiered on October 4 at the Vatican. Today, as we mark the Feast of Creation, we honor King Oyo, a devoted youth leader whose love for nature inspired him to scale the Rwenzori Mountains. Driven by a childhood dream to discover the source of life for his people, he faced the stark realities of climate change and emerged as a passionate champion for environmental conservation and eco-tourism.

"Rwenzori: The Source of Life" featuring King Oyo

On November 17, 2023, the documentary "Rwenzori: The Source of Life" was released. It features His Majesty King Oyo Nyimba Kabamba Iguru Rukidi IV and a team of mountaineers as they summit Margherita Peak, Uganda's highest point. This short film, a collaboration between the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Uganda Tourism Board (UTB), and the Tooro Kingdom, advocates for climate action, inclusive growth, and sustainable tourism in the Rwenzori Mountains. It underscores the urgent need to restore and conserve these fragile ecosystems, which are vital to Uganda and Africa's prosperity. UNDP and UTB produced and directed the film, with UNDP funding.

Following King Oyo's passing, we began documenting his ecological contributions. This film highlights his leadership in cultural environmental activism and his dedication to caring for his land and people. (UNDP Uganda, 2023)

In "Rwenzori: The Source of Life," King Oyo is the central figure, and his advocacy for nature is clearly highlighted. For us, this film represents the legacy of a cultural leader who became a youth environmental advocate. The Laudato Youth Initiative, through its Laudato Si Voices, found expression in this film, drawing inspiration from Pope Francis' documentary The Letter. The film presents three key exhibits for readers and leaders to reflect on King Oyo's ecological legacy.

He saw the breathtaking beauty of the Mountains of the Moon and understood how vital it was to protect them. He called on local communities to come together for climate action, echoing the spirit of Laudato Si' that inspires our Laudato Si Clubs.

He acknowledged that those who call this land their own to unite for climate action. As Laudato Si' states, "Young people wonder how anyone can claim to be building a better future without thinking of the environmental crisis." — Laudato Si', 13. His life stands as a testament, leaving bold footprints that we share through these three exhibits.

Legacy Exhibit One – Rwenzori: The Source of Life. King Oyo's journey to the summit of Uganda's highest peak, captured in a powerful documentary, marked him as the first king of our era to seek out the source of life for his people.

Legacy Exhibit Two – 10 Million Tree Planting Drive.

Legacy Exhibit Three – Lived Experience: As the world's youngest reigning monarch, King Oyo championed innovative approaches in the fight against HIV/AIDS. In Laudato Si, we advocate for both people and creation.

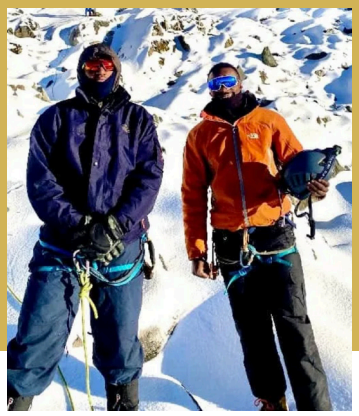
Legacy Exhibit Four – The passing of King Oyo Nyimba Kabamba Iguru Rukidi IV prompted the people of Tooro, Uganda, and the world to mourn one of their most iconic leaders and the world's youngest reigning monarch.

For more than thirty years, King Oyo Nyimba Kabamba Iguru Rukidi IV shaped the story of modern Tooro. Taking the throne at just three years old as the world's youngest reigning monarch, he grew into a cultural leader celebrated for championing health, empowering youth, protecting the environment, and breathing new life into the kingdom.

His Majesty Oyo Nyimba Kabamba Iguru Rukidi IV

On August 3, 2022, His Majesty Oyo Nyimba Kabamba Iguru Rukidi IV, King of the Toro Kingdom, fulfilled his lifelong dream by reaching the summit of Margherita Peak. This triumph became a rallying cry for climate awareness and protecting the Rwenzori Mountains. King Oyo's journey was a true display of leadership and a living example of the cultural duty to care for our shared home.





"The climate is a common good, belonging to all and meant for all." — Laudato Si', 23.

King Oyo's climb to Margherita Peak echoed worldwide as a powerful message. He stepped away from royal comforts to join mountaineers on this demanding quest. His ascent was a purposeful act of stewardship, urging us all to safeguard the future of his people and the planet.

This extraordinary expedition inspired the documentary Rwenzori: The Source of Life, a creative partnership between the United Nations Development Program, Uganda Tourism Board, and the Toro Kingdom. The film spotlights climate action and reveals the delicate beauty and vulnerability of the Rwenzori ecosystem.

The documentary features host Mordecai Muriisa contemplating King Oyo's personal commitment: ***"He is a doer, not just a talker." In the film, King Oyo is the protagonist who warns that the Margherita Glacier is melting at an alarming rate, risking total disappearance by 2050 and, with it, the Nile River's primary source.***

King Oyo's journey was not solely an adventure; it also aimed to draw global attention to the environmental crisis. The documentary artfully distinguishes between the host's commentary and King Oyo's own poetic narration, as well as his candid conversations with mountain guides during the hazardous night ascent. The hike was historic because he was the first king of our time to climb the mountain's peak

King Oyo's Leadership was about action and setting an example.







The film's central message is clear: ***leadership is about action.***King Oyo's willingness to face the elements alongside his people introduced a new standard for cultural and spiritual leadership. His climb tangibly demonstrated that real change requires commitment and courage.

"Young people demandchange. They wonder how anyone can claim to be building a better future without thinking of the environmental crisis." — Laudato Si', 13 King Oyo's advocacy regarding environmental conservation was not limited to words. He championed domestic tourism and worked with Uganda's political leadership to promote the nation's natural beauty and traditional heritage, countering negative stereotypes and inspiring pride in Uganda's treasures while promoting Uganda's tourism to a global market. Rwenzori as "the source of life" for his people King Oyo described the Rwenzori as "the source of life" for his people. As he walked through the mist-veiled wildflowers of the Mountains of the Moon, he reminded us that, ***"if we don't protect it, one day our home could be silent, empty, and lifeless."***



His words mirrored Pope Francis' call to ecological conversion and environment. "All of us can cooperate as instruments of God for the care of creation, each according to his or her own culture, experience, involvements and talents." — Laudato Si', 14
The Climb: Trials, Teamwork, and Trust The documentary reveals the climb's realities: unsettled

slippery rocks, and physical exhaustion. King Oyo's humility shines as he seeks guidance from his mountain team and acknowledges the combined effort required to succeed. "This is a challenge that no one can face alone," he narrates, stressing unity and steadfastness.

He reflects on changing weather patterns: ***"In the past, my people could predict the weather, but now the rules of nature have been rewritten, and I can feel deeply how this mountain is suffering."***

Reaching Margherita Peak: A Caution and a Hope

As day broke, King Oyo's team reached the summit. He gazed upon the melting glacier, a ***"true giant lamenting the loss of its glaciers,"*** and urged all to ***"protect nature; the rivers and other natural resources around us."***

His triumphant words were both a jubilation and a call to arms:

"Permit me to reach its life source to show all our people whereon our lives depend, and how our actions must unfold. To show them the beauty of our land, a treasure that we must all protect before it's lost forever."
Documentary A Legacy of King Oyo's Use of Media for Community Transformation

The documentary King Oyo Climbed Uganda's Highest Peak — This Is the Impact He Leaves Behind, produced by Mordecai Muriisa Live, chronicles the King's distinguished journey. It demonstrates youth leadership, faith-rooted environmentalism, and the power of action over rhetoric.

The Power of Action over Rhetoric is King Oyo's Legacy for the Next Generation

King Oyo's legacy remains one of confidence, purpose, and stewardship, echoing the very heart of Laudato Si'. His life challenges every young God-fearing person to be not just talkers but doers; not just witnesses but stewards of the future of God's creation. This involves taking care of ourselves as youth, and parents protecting their children, values, peace, and the environment God created for us to live in peacefully.

"Let us sing as we go. May our struggles and our concern for this planet never take away the joy of our hope." — Laudato Si', 244

Cultural and Spiritual Leadership

King Oyo served as the cultural and spiritual leader for over two million Batoro people. He was highly revered for his ability to seamlessly blend ancient pre-colonial customs with progressive, modern governance. He leveraged his moral authority and traditional platform to serve as a global ambassador, pioneering the creation of the World Monarch Summit to redefine the role of traditional leadership in modern, interconnected societies

Protect us in hope and faith, the Martyrs of Uganda and St. Adolf Mukasa Ludigho, Patron Saint of the Laudato Youth Initiative. As a king whose monarchy was guided by fear of God, King Oyo's commitment to preserving creation makes him a protagonist of cultural youth-led conservation activism, a lover of peace, and a promoter of regional and national tourism.

Ogoroobe Enkuuba Etutire, His Majesty King Oyo Nyimba Kabamba Iguru, is a model youth conservation protagonist.
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Video Title: Rwenzori: The Source of Life Channel: UNDP Uganda

Main Subjects: King Oyo (King of Toro Kingdom), Rwenzori Mountains (Margherita Peak), Climate Change, and Environmental Conservation.

Documentary Featured: "Rwenzori: The Source of Life" (A joint initiative of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Uganda Tourism Board (UTB), and the Toro Kingdom).

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When a great leader dies
a seed of hope is sown

12 /Sept/ 2026





OUR MOTHERLAND IS SILENT THE LION OF TOORO HAS BEEN LAID TO REST

When a great leader dies, a seed of hope is sown. King Oyo lived with faith and worked hard to ensure his people could thrive. On 12 th September, 2026, the Lion of Tooro was laid to rest, and our motherland went silent. Though he entered eternal rest, his legacy endures in the lives he touched and the mountains he walked; he will continue inspiring his people as his soul ascends to the Father in heaven.

Tooro, our motherland, went silent. The Lion of Tooro has been laid to rest. Sep 12, 2026, Karuzika Hill seemed to hold its breath. In Karambi, the earth received his body, while the winds of Tooro carried the sorrow of the people. But a great tree does not truly die.

As long as its roots remain in the soil. Its shadow lives in the memory of the land, its seeds wait patiently for another season, and its branches continue to speak through the forests it once sheltered.
From this sacred silence, Laudato Youth rise with hope. In Planting Trees, we remember a King of our generation. who did not remain behind palace walls? But climbed where the mountains themselves touch the heavens.

He journeyed to Margherita Peak, 5,109 meters above sea level, Uganda's highest summit, which he called the source of life for his people. He crossed rivers and melting glaciers in the Rwenzori, the legendary Mountains of the Moon that define Tooro's beauty.

There, above the clouds, he saw a mountain in distress: a glacier shrinking due to climate change, a giant losing its ancient crown of ice. He called the Rwenzori Mountains ***"the source of life" for his people.***

His ascent was more than an adventure or a climb.

It was a pilgrimage of witness and legacy, offering hope for his motherland's future. As king, he walked the wounded earth so the world might hear its cry,

appreciate its beauty, and recognize the need to preserve it for the Pearl of Africa's future. His journey became Rwenzori: The Source of Life, a story carried beyond the mountains,



linking Tooro's heritage with Uganda's tourism, climate action, and the urgent call to protect fragile ecosystems, as expressed by Laudato Youth.

He taught us that leadership is not measured by the height of a throne, but by the courage to engage with the realities of our people; not by words alone, but by the footprints we leave behind.

Now, as his footprints fade from the paths of Tooro, the path itself remains. Laudato Youth rise to walk it.

We rise with rivers like the Mpanga that flow from the mountains, with forests that sustain future generations, and with birds that carry songs across the valleys, and with young people who refuse to inherit a silent, wounded Earth.

We rise for peace that heals, unity that binds, sustainability, and an ecology that gives life.

We rise to turn mourning into a legacy of hope, to transform memory into action, and grief into renewed hope.

For the Lion may have entered the silence, but his roar remains in the mountains.

It echoes in the melting ice. It trembles through the forests. It travels with the rivers. It lives in the hearts of the young. Yes, Cancer is an enemy of our generation. It takes away our legacy builders and moral teachers.

Chemicals, radiation, pollution, and other cancer-causing factors remain in our environment, threatening more lives. Prevention is better than cure; he always reminded us that, just as with HIV/AIDS, we must openly discuss cancer and its causes to protect our people and future generations.

His love for sports encouraged us to stay healthy. His reverence for God and nature affirmed the importance of integral ecology. His respect for people and elders emphasized the value of empiisa emungi. Those using social media should focus on building his legacy.

May the Lion rest among his ancestors. May Tooro hold his memory as a sacred seed, growing into a forest of hope rooted in peace, nourished by unity, and reaching toward a future where the Rwenzori continues to give life.

His reign has ended. His witness has not. The Lion rests, but his call to protect our common home must continue to be heard. The Laudato Youth Initiative will unite for prayer and climate action at the Laudato Si Green Festival in Saaka, the Pearl of Fortal, and will pay a special ecological tribute to our revered King Oyo Nyimba Iguuru Rukidi IV, led by the late Bishop Charles Martin Wamika Adyeeri.

WWW.EMPIISAENUNGI.COM – LEGACY

King Oyo drew the world's attention to the melting glacier and the vulnerability of the Rwenzori ecosystem; he championed youth, tourism, peace, and unity; and he described the Rwenzori as "the source of life" for his people. This legacy was unlike any other. He commended his people to God the Creator and encouraged them to put him at the forefront of their life's work. Let's meet at the Laudato Si Green Festival,

Our motherland is silent. The Lion of Tooro has been laid to rest. May he Rest in Peace





Laudato Youth Initiative to Launch its First Laudato Si' Green Festival in Fort Portal Diocese

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FORT PORTAL, UGANDA – The Laudato Youth Initiative (LYI), in collaboration with the Youth Apostolate of Fort Portal Diocese, proudly announces the inaugural Western Region Laudato Si' Green Festival. The event will take place on 10 October 2026 at the Holy Cross Novitiate, Lake Saaka, and will be themed "Environmental Conservation for Peace and Sustainable Development."

Bringing together youth, faith leaders, and environmental advocates, the festival aims to inspire climate action and ecological stewardship across Uganda's Western Region. Over 15 Laudato Si' Clubs from schools, parishes, and universities will unite in a shared call for sustainable development.

Mr. Benard Kahwa, Executive Director of LYI, states, "Environmental conservation is inseparable from peace and sustainable development. By empowering youth, we foster a new generation of environmental stewards and positive change-makers."

Inspired by Pope Francis' Laudato Si', the festival will feature prayer, creative arts, community clean-up campaigns, and mentorship in faith and ecological values. The event will also honor the ecological legacy of the Uganda Martyrs and the jubilee year of Saint Francis of Assisi.

"Our goal is to nurture environmentally conscious citizens and unite people of goodwill for collective climate action," said Rev. Fr. Paul Mugabyomu, Diocesan Youth Chaplain. Activities of the festival include

1. Pre-festival restoration activities in Fort Portal City.

2. Mass of the Care for Creation at HC Novitiate Lake Saaka led by Rt. Rev. Bishop Robert Muhiirwa Akiiki,

3. Guest of Honor to inspire young people on eco-culture and eco-tourism for Peace and sustainability;

4. Eco-exhibitions; (STEM Innovations)

There will also be a memorial tree-planting exercise aimed at combating the effects of climate change and reforestation in memory of the fallen King of Tooro, Oyo Nyimba Kamba Iguru IV and much more

For media inquiries, please contact: Mr. Benard Kahwa, Executive Director, LYI: 0702163596/0781996608 laudatoyouthinitiative@gmail.com | info@laudato-youthinitiative.org



About the Laudato Si Green Festival

Since 2023, the Laudato Youth Initiative has organized impactful and scalable Laudato Si Green Festivals. Read about our previous festivals in the Eastern Region. As Pope Francis reminds us in Laudato Si, "Hope would have us recognize that there is always a way out, that we can always redirect our steps, that we can always do something to solve our problems" (LS 61).

Students Rally for Environmental Action at Laudato Si Green Festival in Jinja (Nile Post) – July 2025
"Catholic Church-led event draws hundreds of learners to promote eco-awareness, sustainable living, and climate responsibility"
Uganda's Holy Cross Lake View School – transforming young minds and lives at Laudato Si Green Festival (Vatican News) – July 2026

"The Initiative is a youth-led climate and ecological action program rooted in Catholic Social Teaching, inspired by Pope Francis' 2015 ecological encyclical: Laudato Si'".







Institutions are invited to participate in the Laudato Si' Green Festival by partnering with the organizing committee and contributing resources, expertise, or support. The festival encourages schools, churches, organizations, and businesses to promote environmental stewardship and implement practical solutions for a sustainable future. Highlights will include performances from St. Maria Gorreti Girls School with the choir leading the Care for Creation Mass and other schools, speeches from key leaders, student presentations on ecology, creative arts, eco-exhibitions, and opportunities for networking and knowledge sharing.



MENTAL HEALTH

Helping Students Find Balance in a Digital Age

As students return to school from holidays, schools and parents face a growing challenge: **helping young people move from unrestricted screen time to healthy, purposeful use of technology.**

For many students, holidays come with long hours on smartphones—watching videos, gaming, scrolling through social media and chatting with friends. Returning to the structured environment of school can therefore be difficult. Some students struggle with concentration, sleep routines, face-to-face interaction and the discipline required for academic work.

This is sometimes described as "home technology syndrome." While it is not a medical diagnosis, it captures an increasingly important concern: how excessive or unbalanced technology use can affect students' wellbeing and learning.

The solution is not to demonise technology. Uganda is investing in digital education, and young people need digital skills to participate effectively in an increasingly digital economy (UNICEF Uganda, 2026). The priority should instead be digital balance.

Mental Health Must Be Part of the Conversation

Schools can help students make this transition through mental-health and digital-wellbeing programmes. Phone-free study periods, sports, reading, music, creative activities, counselling and meaningful peer interaction can help students reconnect with themselves and others.

Such programmes should teach students that taking a break from a screen is not a punishment—it is part of maintaining a healthy and productive life.

Parents also have an important role. Healthy technology habits should begin at home, particularly during school holidays, with reasonable limits on recreational screen time and encouragement to participate in physical, social and creative activities.

Using AI to Build, Not Replace, Young Minds

Artificial intelligence presents another opportunity—and another responsibility. Regulated use of AI can help Ugandan students strengthen their mental capabilities and creative skills.

AI can help students brainstorm ideas, understand difficult concepts, explore different perspectives and improve their work. However, when students allow AI to do all the thinking and writing for them, they risk weakening the very skills education seeks to develop.

Students should therefore be encouraged to think first, use AI second, and verify always. The goal is to develop AI-assisted learners, not AI-dependent learners.

Uganda's young population represents one of the country's greatest assets. But preparing young people for the future requires more than digital access. They need strong mental health, critical thinking, creativity, discipline and the ability to use technology responsibly.

Technology should serve the student—not control the student. And AI should expand the human mind, not replace it.

Building Resilience among the Youth and the Community

Strong resilience begins with listening to the people affected by the disaster, to communities, and to the knowledge held by generations who have lived closely with nature.

Across Uganda, communities are experiencing increasing pressure on the ecosystems and natural resources that sustain their livelihoods. Changes in rainfall patterns, declining soil fertility, loss of biodiversity, water stress, crop pests and diseases, food insecurity, and economic vulnerability are interconnected challenges. Responding effectively requires more than scientific expertise alone. It requires listening to the people who observe these changes every day.

The Laudato Youth Initiative's sustainable conservation model places youth and grassroots communities at the centre of this process. It encourages young people to engage directly with communities, learn through observation, document local experiences, and listen to elders and other local knowledge holders who have protected biodiversity and managed natural resources over many years.

This approach helps young people ask an important question: What is changing in our common home, and what are we doing differently that may be contributing to the ecological crisis? Learning from communities

Indigenous and local knowledge can provide valuable insights into changes that may not immediately be captured by conventional research. Farmers, pastoralists, fishers, elders, community leaders and other local knowledge holders often have detailed observations about seasonal changes, soil conditions, water availability, crop performance, livestock health, wildlife and biodiversity.

For example, a farmer in eastern Uganda may notice that a particular indigenous bean variety continues to perform reasonably well during shorter or less predictable rainy seasons, while another variety increasingly struggles. Such observations can become a starting point for further research into climate resilience, seed diversity and food security.

Similarly, communities may know which indigenous trees traditionally provide food for people, shelter for livestock, or fruits and seeds that attract birds and other wildlife. Documenting this knowledge can help identify species that could play an important role in restoring degraded landscapes and strengthening biodiversity.

In pastoral communities, local knowledge can also help explain changes in grazing patterns, pasture availability, livestock diseases and water sources. Young researchers who spend time listening to livestock keepers can learn how communities recognize early signs of animal disease or changes in pasture and water conditions.

Giving young people a role as community researchers

The Initiative is challenging young people to move beyond being passive recipients of environmental information and become observers, learners, documenters and community researchers.

This can be done through simple but meaningful activities.

A youth team, for instance, could work with farmers in a Ugandan community to document:

- Indigenous crop and seed varieties still being cultivated.-
- Trees that provide food, medicine, shade or habitat for birds and other wildlife.
- Traditional methods of maintaining soil fertility and conserving water.
- Local indicators used to anticipate changes in rainfall or seasons.
- Common crop pests and diseases and how farmers identify them.
- Livestock diseases and the signs communities use to recognize them.

PRAYER

This prayer was first recited during the gathering of the 'Canticle of Peace' at Borgo Laudato Si', in the Pontifical Gardens of Castel Gandolfo, together with Andrea Bocelli and the ABF Voices choir, made up of children's voices from Uganda, the Holy Land and Italy.



"Father, we are children. We ask only to be able to play. That is why You created for us a beautiful garden where we could live happily, surrounded by Your love and in harmony with every creature whom ***St Francis taught us to call brother and sister***. We have failed to care for the garden, and the joy of living in it has turned into fear of You, so we hid ourselves.

But Your love found us, just as in a game of hide-and-seek. Through Jesus' sacrifice on the Cross, You reconciled us to Yourself, restored communion with You, with one another and with all creation. ***We ask You to help us care for the garden so that we may live in true happiness***."






BE A HERO
Go Green, Live Clean
Protect Our Common Home.
PROTECT NATURE
Protect lives
CERTIFICATE
Appreciation

WORLD YOUTH DAY 2027

OFFICIAL THEME SONG (Classic Ver.)

When St. John Paul II inaugurated the first World Youth Day in 1986, he envisioned much more than a large international gathering. He believed that young people were not simply the future of the Church but an active force in its present mission. In his message for the first World Youth Day, he encouraged young people with these words:

"Always be prepared to make a defense to anyone who calls you to account for the hope that is in you" (1 Peter 3:15).

This biblical theme reflected his conviction that young people are called to be joyful witnesses of Christ in every sphere of life. World Youth Day was established to give young people the confidence to live their faith publicly, to discover the universality of the Church, and to become protagonists of evangelization and social transformation.

More than four decades later, that vision remains as relevant as ever. The challenges facing today's generation, including fear due to climate change, conflicts and wars, faith concerns in some communities, social inequality, unemployment etc require the same courage and hope that inspired the first World Youth Day. The theme of World Youth Day Seoul 2027, "Take courage! I have overcome the world" (John 16:33),

echoes this original vision, inviting young people to place their trust in Christ while responding creatively and generously to the needs of the world.

The Laudato Youth Initiative continues to reflect on this continuing mission which helping us in translate faith into concrete action by embracing integral ecology and an ecological spirituality that enhances caring for our common home. Inspired by Faith, Culture, good use of Science and technology, and the impact of SDGs, through our Laudato Si clubs to prepare leaders and change makers in communities with hands on skills on how to build a sustainable future in which every person, community, and the whole of creation can flourish through care for the natural environment and people by proclaiming the Gospel that includes protecting creation, standing with those most affected by environmental degradation, and fostering communities rooted in justice, peace, and hope."Take courage!I have overcome the world,"

As the Church prepares for World Youth Day 2027, the journey is about more than reaching Seoul. It is about forming a generation of missionary disciples who have the courage to witness to Christ through both their words and their actions. The Laudato Youth Initiative contributes to this vision by equipping young people to become leaders of ecological conversion, showing that care for creation is an integral part of Christian discipleship and a powerful expression of hope for the future.

WORLD YOUTH DAY 2027

WATCH: The official theme song for World Youth Day Seoul 2027 has been released. #WYDSeoul2027

Titled Confidite, Ego Vici Mundum ("Take Courage! I Have Overcome the World"), the hymn was chosen from 434 submissions and composed by Korean musician Francis Jiyoon Kim. Inspired by John 16:33, the song echoes the official theme of World Youth Day Seoul 2027: "Take courage! I have overcome the world."

The release marks the official one-year countdown to World Youth Day, which will gather young Catholics from around the world in Seoul, South Korea, from Aug. 3–8, 2027.

World Youth Day 2027: Youth Courage for Ecological Restoration

As the Church prepares for World Youth Day (WYD) 2027 in Seoul, the Laudato Youth Initiative is inviting young people to turn faith into concrete action for our common home.

WYD 2027 will be celebrated in Seoul, South Korea, from August 3–8, 2027, under the theme: "Take courage! I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). The theme is a call to young people to face today's challenges with courage, hope, and faith in Christ (WYD Seoul 2027, n.d.).

For Laudato Youth, this courage can become a powerful force for ecological restoration.

Planting Hope, Restoring Creation

"A million begins with one." - Laudato Youth Initiative.

World Youth Day 2027 is an opportunity to enhance our restorative One Million Tree-Planting Drive.

Through this initiative, young people are encouraged to restore degraded and polluted spaces, clear landfills around their communities, and transform neglected areas into places of life. By planting indigenous and fruit trees, communities can contribute to biodiversity, food security, ecosystem restoration, and climate action through our Laudato Si Clubs.

Planting Hope, Restoring Creation

The tree-planting drive is part of the Youth Legacy in Faith and Ecological Restoration Initiative. It expresses a faith that does not remain passive, but responds to the cry of the Earth and the cry of people experiencing poverty through practical action.

From Faith to Action

The purpose of World Youth Day is not simply to gather young people, but to deepen their encounter with Christ, strengthen their faith and send them back to their communities as witnesses of hope and courageous disciples. The official WYD Seoul theme connects this mission with the courage needed to confront the challenges facing young people and the world today.

For Laudato Youth, one way of living this courage is by caring for creation.

From Saturday, October 24, 2026, we will unite all our young people, and communities are to participate in World Youth Day Tree-Planting Projects as part of the journey toward Seoul 2027.

Every tree planted can become a living symbol of hope, a reminder that ecological restoration is possible when young people unite in faith, action, and responsibility. Let us take courage. Let us plant hope. Let us restore creation.

About World Youth Day

World Youth Day (WYD) is a global gathering for young Catholics initiated by Pope John Paul II in 1985. Celebrated each year locally, an international multi-day festival and pilgrimage takes place every two to four years in a major host city with the Pope

Official Prayer for World Youth Day Seoul 2027

Loving Lord of all young people,
we thank you for inviting us into your infinite love and mercy.

Our Father, we entrust ourselves to you. May young people everywhere be comforted in the embrace of your Church, and come to share deeply in the joy of communion and unity.

Lord Jesus Christ, you overcome the world, both now and forever. May all people discover the hope that lies in your call to take courage, realizing that the cross of love and forgiveness is the true victory over the world.

O Holy Spirit, Flame of Love, by your wondrous hand you have sown the seeds of faith in Korea. Kindle the flame of the Korean martyrs' faith in our hearts, making us into disciples who live out the gospel of peace, love, and truth.

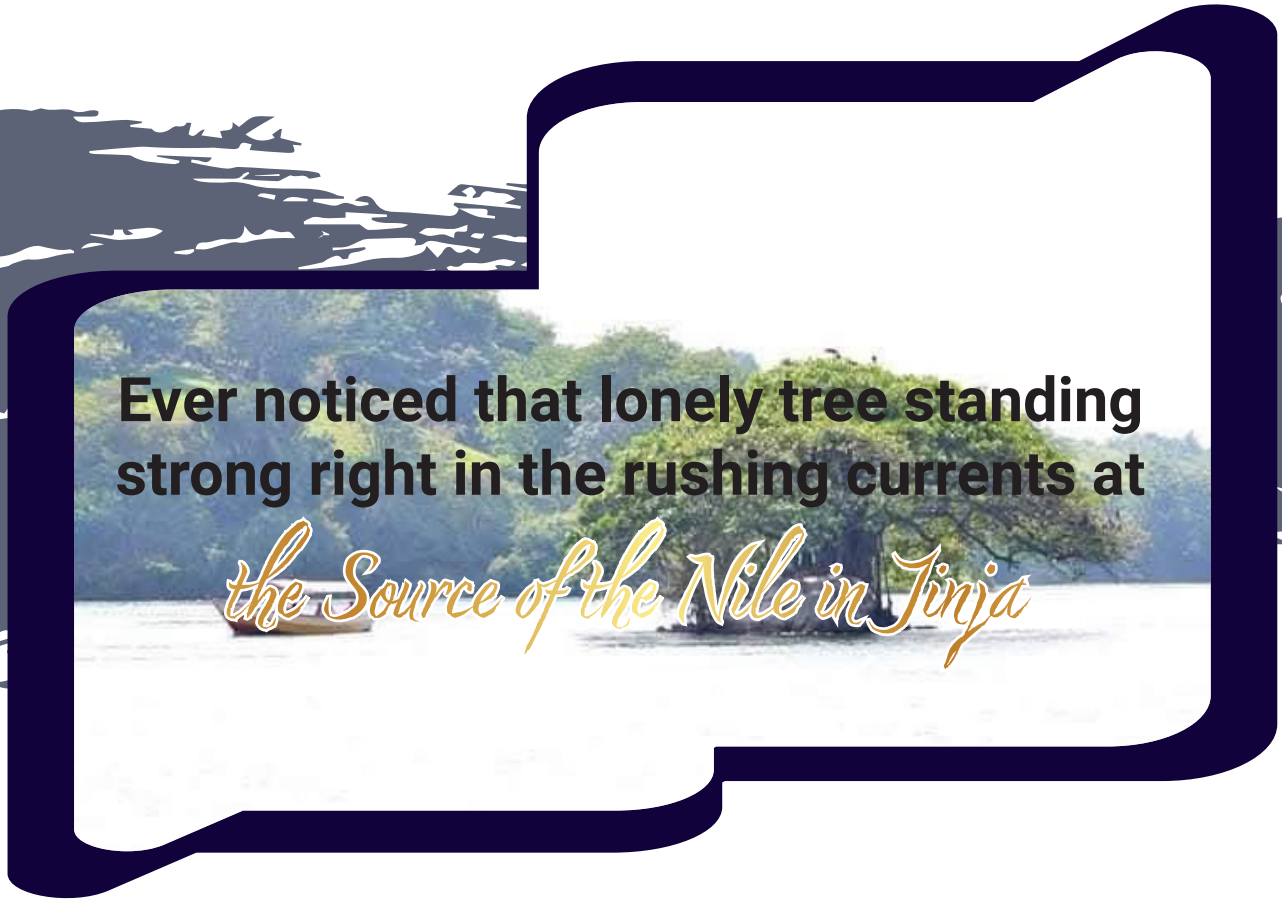
Lord, we pray that through this pilgrim journey of World Youth Day we may listen to each other, discern your will, and become a synodal Church, walking together with all of God's people. Amen.

Our Lady of Mercy and Peace, pray for us. Holy patrons of World Youth Day Seoul 2027, pray for all young people.

Reference

Laudato Youth Initiative. (n.d.). One million tree planting. https://laudato-youthinitiative.org/plant-a-million-trees/

WYD Seoul 2027. (n.d.). Theme: Take courage! I have overcome the world. https://wydseoul.org/enWith good preparation, communities can reduce damage from extreme weather and protect lives, livelihoods, and property.



Ever noticed that lonely tree standing strong right in the rushing currents at the Source of the Nile in Jinja

It's a Sycamore Fig (Ficus sycomorus)

This species is famous for its hyper-aggressive, ultra-strong root system. It has literally woven itself deep into the underwater rock crevices to fight off the heavy river currents.



Older than you think: Experts estimate this resilient tree has been standing its ground for roughly 150 to 200 years!

Waterproof design

While most trees would rot, the Sycamore Fig can handle prolonged water saturation and immense pressure, shielded perfectly by the natural rocks around its base.

A bird paradise

Next time you take a boat ride, look up! Its sprawling branches serve as a massive ecological hub, usually covered in local waterbirds like cormorants. It is the ultimate symbol of standing firm through life's wildest storms.



Facts Obtained from city updates

Foresters Environmental Consultants Ltd collaborates with LYI in the development of climate education materials aimed at promoting environmental health and well-being, ensuring that young people can grow up free from environmental harm, pollution, and related hazards.

Natural Resource conservation

In forestry management, environmental assessments, ecological monitoring, and natural resource conservation

Safety Management

Site induction, contractor briefings, environmental and safety management system establishment.

Air and Water Quality

Specializes in land-use mapping and planning, ecological assessments, and air and water quality monitoring

FEC A FIRM IN UGANDA WITH THE AIM OF PROVIDING ENVIRONMENTAL AND HEALTH SAFETY CONSULTANCY SERVICES


Laudato
Youth Initiative
LYI
LAUDATO
Youth Initiative
United for Climate Action



OUR PROGRAMS

- INTEGRAL ECOLOGY IN ACTION
- RESTORATIVE ACTIVITIES
- YOUTH AGRIPRENEURSHIP
- STEM INNOVATIONS
- DIGITAL ADVOCACY
- ACTION RESEARCH
- LAUDATO SI GREEN FESTIVALS

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OUR TEAM



Executive Director


Programs
Manager
Clubs
President

JDIOBESTEM FOUNDATION

OUR PARTNER IN

Research and
STEM Innovation



Bridging the Gap

From Grassroots Ingenuity to Global Aerospace at the Laudato Si' Green Festival

STEM INNOVATIONS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

The 3rd Laudato Si Green Festival in Jinja was an incredible experience. Jdiobe STEM Foundation participated as a STEM partner, engaging with over 2,000 passionate young people eager to learn, ask questions, and envision their futures through STEM. The conversations, curiosity, and enthusiasm witnessed at the festival underscored the importance of investing in the next generation.

Beyond the exhibitions, the festival created a dynamic platform for learning, collaboration, and leadership development. Students exchanged ideas, engaged in dialogue with experts and innovators, and strengthened practical STEM skills to solve environmental problems. They also enhanced their communication, branding, and digital advocacy abilities.

Dr. Muwanika Jdiobe (Aerospace Engineer at The Boeing Company & PhD from Oklahoma State University) also joined the festival knowledge booth, sharing his story and experiential science fair journey He shared demonstrations and practical innovations designed to inspire students to solve environmental challenges through applied research and engineering. When asked about his work, he said, **"We believe that talent is universal, but opportunity is not".**

avail

Innovating through agriculture

INNOVATION THROUGH AGRICULTURE AND REAL PARTNERS

Avail Fruits of Faith Farm offers agricultural training, guided tours, camping, and fresh produce sales to support local farmers, entrepreneurs, and young people



Together we teach students Home Farming and sustainable Agriculture



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Laudato Si in Action

The World is our Common home and its our Responsibility to care for it, protect it and preserve the environment for present and future generations.

We need to Plant and Protect Trees

Trees purify the air, prevent soil erosion, conserve water, and support biodiversity. Planting and caring for trees is an essential environmental action.

We should Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle

Avoid wasting resources. Reduce consumption, reuse materials whenever possible, and recycle waste to minimize environmental pollution.

We should Use Water Responsibly

Water is a precious gift. Avoid wasting water and protect rivers, lakes, and other water sources from pollution.

We should Keep Our Environment Clean

Properly dispose of waste, avoid littering, and participate in community clean-up activities to create healthier and safer communities.

We should Respect and Preserve All Living Creatures

Every creature has value in God's creation. Protect plants, animals, and ecosystems that sustain life on Earth.

We Should Promote Sustainable Lifestyles

Choose environmentally friendly habits such as saving energy, reducing plastic use, and consuming responsibly.

Join youth Groups for action Like Our Laudato Si Clubs that Unite Youth for Climate Action

Share environmental knowledge with family, friends, and communities. Inspire others to take action in caring for creation.

We are interconnected Recognize the Link Between People and Nature

Human wellbeing depends on a healthy environment. Protecting nature also protects human health, livelihoods, and future development.

Put into Action what we learn and share

Environmental protection requires more than words. Take practical actions every day to care for our common home and contribute to a sustainable future.

Pope Francis, in Laudato Si' says

"Living our vocation to be protectors of God's handiwork is essential to a life of virtue."



Are Transforming Faith into Action
And *Forming Stewards of the Future*



"All of us can cooperate as instruments of God for the care of creation, each according to his or her own culture, experience, involvements and talents."
(Laudato Si', 14)

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PROTECTING

NATURE

Should never mean erasing the views of the people who lived with it for generations but to pass on their wisdom to the young generations.

Laudato Youth Initiative (LYI) Mentors
Laudato Si Clubs (LSiCs) in Schools, Universities
Parishes, Dioceses, and Grassroots
Communities in Uganda

UNITED FOR CLIMATE ACTION

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