



LAUDATO SI' WEEK

Nature-based activities for the whole family to enjoy.

During Laudato Si' week, we come together as one people around the world to prayerfully discern the lessons of this moment. While the world experiences a history-defining crisis, we reflect and prepare to build a better world. From the Laudato Si' Week website. Read more [here](#).

This collection of nature-based activities for the whole family seeks to encourage a shared sense of awe and contemplation about nature, leading to a renewed sense of commitment and action towards the protection of the planet and its people. These activities take into consideration the current pandemic circumstances, including restricted movements from the home, burdens of home learning and working from home responsibilities. It is our hope that these activities are a gentle way in which families can take some time to connect with nature and each other.

Australian Curriculum Links

Geography
Science
HASS
Religious Education
The Arts

Cross-Curricular Priorities

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Histories and Cultures
Sustainability

General Capabilities

Numeracy
Critical and Creative Thinking
Ethical Understanding
Intercultural Understanding

Photo credits left to right: Timor-Leste, photo by Richard Wainwright. Photo by [Paweł Fijałkowski from Pexels](#). Photo by [Dmitry Grigoriev on Unsplash](#)

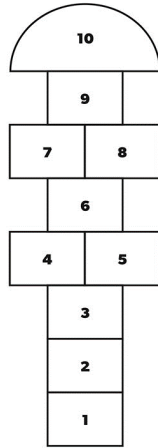
FAMILY FOOTPATH GAMES

These games are designed for families to play outside during Laudato Si' week and beyond. Enjoy spending time outside with your families and being aware of the gift of creation.

Picture Hopscotch

On a standard ten square hopscotch board, instead of numbers draw things that we can see and do to care for our environment. It can become a piece of artwork as well! Suggestions include:

- Tree
- Flower
- Birds
- Butterflies
- Putting rubbish in bin
- Solar panels
- Windmills
- Creek/river
- Animals
- People working together
- The earth
- People holding hands



Rainbow Hopscotch

Draw an eight square hopscotch board – give each square a colour of the rainbow – red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet and in the eight square draw a rainbow.

Each time you begin a turn, name one or two things that you see that are that colour in nature. In the eighth square, you can choose your favourite colour from the rainbow to name something.

Challenge: Try not to repeat anything someone else has said.

Laudato Si' Hopscotch

Draw a ten square hopscotch board. Give each square a different letter of Laudato Si' and in the tenth square draw a picture that shows us caring for creation. As you throw your stone in each square, you could:

Name an action for that letter, e.g. 'Look after plants' for L.

Name something in nature that you can see for that letter.

Name something that doesn't show care for our common home, then, on the last square, share what can be done.

Hopscotch Rules

Step 1 Draw a hopscotch grid on the ground. The squares need to be big enough to fit one foot in.

Step 2 Throw your stone into square one. The stone needs to land in the square without touching the border or bouncing out. If, when you throw it, it doesn't land in the square, lose your turn. If it does, go onto Step 3.

Step 3 Hop through the squares jumping or hopping over the one you have your stone in. Only one foot can go in each square and keeping your feet inside the appropriate square(s), if you step on a line, hop on the wrong square, or step out of the square, you lose your turn.

Step 4 When you get to the last number, turn around and hop and jump your way back in reverse order. While you're on the square **before** the one with your stone on it, lean over and pick it up then skip over that square. You can't jump or hop in a square from which you have just picked up your stone.

Step 5 If you completed your turn with the stone on square one, you then continue by throwing your stone onto square two on your next turn. The goal is to complete the course with your stone travelling through each square, the first person to do this wins the game.

Rules adapted from :

http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/scotland/makeyourmove/hopscotch_rules_of_play.pdf

OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES



Create a Nature Mandala

A mandala is a design, drawing or painting held within a circle. They are very popular today, especially in colouring books. You can make one in your own backyard, on a family walk or draw one in chalk on the footpath. Traditionally, a mandala begins in the centre of the circle and is designed outwards like the spokes on a wheel.

As a family, create a nature mandala from sticks, leaves, rocks, bark, etc. that you gather on a walk. It's a good idea to set out with the idea in mind to collect certain items. For example, collect:

- 5 sticks
- 4 green leaves
- 3 brown leaves
- 2 rocks
- 1 colourful item.

It could be used as a creative activity or you could use it as a prayer experience. To make it a prayer experience, you might like to pray for different things as you place different items down in the design. For example: when you place heavier items like rocks down, pray about the struggles you are facing; green leaves could be prayers for the things that give you life; flowers might be for the things that bring you joy; brown leaves might be for some of the people in your life; and sticks might be for the things you are working towards. Each person might add to the mandala or create their own.

Nature Collage

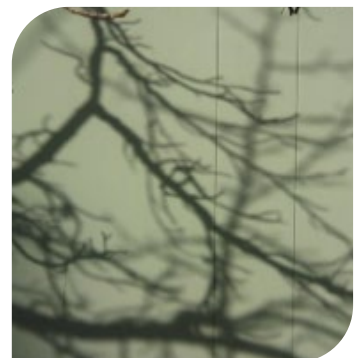
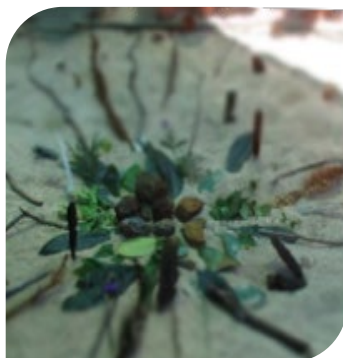
Collect different coloured and shaped leaves, sticks, rocks, etc. that you see in your garden or on your walking path. Create pictures using these items. The pictures could be glued to paper or they can be created on the ground. It's always fun to take photographs of your artwork; that way you have a memory and you don't have to keep a piece of paper. (You can compost or recycle it instead!)

Nature Naughts and Crosses

In the dirt or sand, draw up a naughts and crosses grid. Collect 4 stones each (2 different types or colours would work well) and play as you normally would on paper.

Alternatives:

- If playing on grass set sticks as the grid.
- Use recyclable materials to create the counters and/or grid.
- Paint rocks to use as your counters.



OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES



Burguu Matya

This is a game attributed to Australian Aboriginal culture. It is similar to naughts and crosses, however it develops patience and lateral thinking as well.

Equipment:

- 3 x 3 grid (the same as naughts and crosses)
- 2 x 3 sets of stones/counters, each with different designs

Rules:

1. The aim of the game is to get three stones or counters in a row, vertically, horizontally or diagonally.
2. Players take their turns placing their stones on the grid.
3. If when players have finished using all their stones no one has made a line of three, they continue taking turns moving one stone at a time either horizontally, vertically or diagonally until a line of three is made.
4. Players cannot jump squares; they can only move to an empty space.

For further instructions please visit: <https://burguu-matya.herokuapp.com/>

Rules adapted from: <https://www.usq.edu.au/news/2019/04/burguu-matya>

Postcards from...

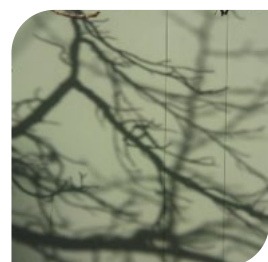
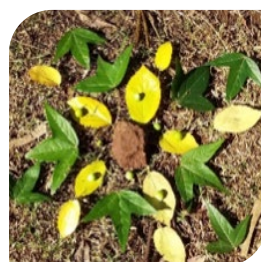
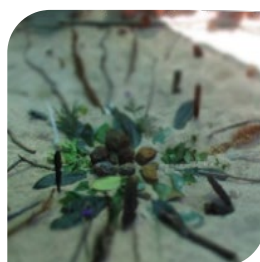
After or as you are out and about in nature, take a photo or series of photos to create a postcard. Keep in touch with family who don't live with you by sending it to them. It could be created and/or sent electronically using online platforms such as Canva, Crello or Visme or printed out and sent via Australia Post.

Soundscapes

Using a recording device like an iPhone, iPad, iPod or tablet, set out to record as many different natural sounds as you can. Listen carefully for sounds such as different bird calls, other animals, wind in the trees, footsteps, leaves blowing along the ground or running water.

Options:

- When you return from your walk, play the soundscape back and count how many different sounds you can identify.
- Make a list of sounds you think you might hear outside and see if you can record each one.
- Organise your family into teams and see how many different sounds your team can find.
- As you go to bed each night, you could play your sounds back and settle into rest surrounded by nature.
- Challenge yourselves not to record your own voices, making your collecting time silent or an activity in different forms of communication.



OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES



Slow Motion or Time Lapse Video

Choose an aspect of nature to film, some examples could include, birds flying, the clouds in the sky or wind in the trees. Create a time lapse or a slow-motion film of your chosen subject. Perhaps you could even add a soundscape, poem or voice recording over the top.

Shadow Drawing

- Collect a number of interesting shaped leaves, grasses or flowers. Carefully stand them or tape them to a window on the sunny side of the house. Place some paper on a table or floor beside the window. Trace around the shadows as they fall on the paper. Try waiting an hour or half an hour and then go back and trace them again. Compare the two pictures.
- Take some paper outside and place under the shadows, trace around them. Collect as many different shadows as you can.
- Perhaps you could colour in your shadows.

Shadow Tag

Played in the same way as traditional tag, however instead of tagging the person you must tag their shadow.

Shadow Scavenger Hunt

Use the list below or create a list of shadows you can find outside. When you find the shadow, cross them off the list, trace them or photograph them.

Suggested list:

- Long skinny leaf
- Round leaf
- Heart-shaped leaf
- Grass
- Cross-shaped shadow
- Flower/s
- Long shadow
- Short shadow
- Twig
- Something that has five points
- A star shape

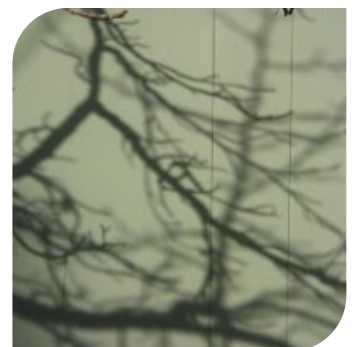
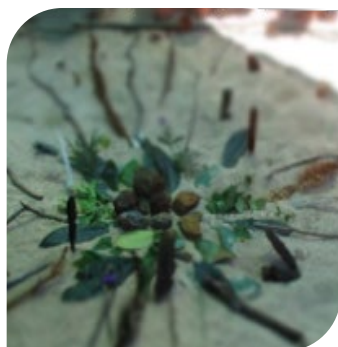


Photo credit: Flickr – [Naughts and Crosses Shadows](#)

FAMILY WALKS



Scavenger Hunt

When you are out searching your neighbourhood for teddy bears, see if you can find any of these things as well:

- Solar panels
- "Rainwater/greywater tank in use" signs
- People walking
- A compost bin
- Recycled material in a garden bed e.g. an old piece of machinery or timber that has been reused.
- A native tree
- Native birds <https://birdlife.org.au/all-about-birds/australias-birds/find-a-bird>
- Native animals
- Hear a kookaburra laughing
- Hear running water
- Hear birds calling back and forth
- Smell 3 different types of flowers.

Where's Teddy?

Perhaps you could hide Teddy in a photo where these things are present. Alternatively, you could have Teddy doing or sitting beside some of these things:

- Solar panels
- "Rainwater/greywater tank in use" signs
- People walking
- Watering plants
- People caring for each other
- A reusable water bottle
- A Reusable food container
- Picking up litter in the local area
- Planting a tree
- Visit a compost bin
- Sit by a veggie patch
- Putting rubbish in the recycling bin
- Turning off lights
- Watering a garden early in the morning or late in the day, not when it's hottest.

ABC Hike

As you walk around the neighbourhood, try to find something that begins with each letter of the alphabet. Perhaps you could categorise them into natural and manmade lists or looking after the environment or not looking after the environment. Alternatively, you might be able to do the same thing in your yard or house.

Rainbow Walk

As you go for a walk as a family or an individual, try and find something that is each colour in the rainbow. If you've forgotten, you're looking for; red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet.

Night Walk

Instead of taking a walk during the day, go for a walk at night. You might need to take a torch or, depending on your neighbourhood, you might be well guided by streetlights. You could pay particular attention to sounds that you hear at night. See if you can identify the source of the sound. What are the natural sounds? You might be able to see different things at night. You might keep your eyes out for nocturnal animals such as bats, possums and owls.

Senses Walk

As you walk pay particular attention to your different senses.

- What can you see?
- What can you touch? (carefully!)
- What can you smell?
- What can you hear?
- What can you taste?



Photo Credit: [Flickr](#)

FAMILY WALKS

Laudato Si' Bingo

Go for a walk outside with one or more members of your household and race to see who can locate the sustainable items first.

As you find them, cross them off and shout out "LAUDATO SI'!" once you have located them all.

Note: You may want draw up the table for each person playing so that they can cross off each item as they find them. Happy hunting!

| | | |
|--|---------------------------------|------------------|
| Solar Panels | People walking or riding a bike | Compost Bin |
| A veggie garden | Teddy Bear | A recycled piece |
| Rainwater tank (Or rainwater tank in use sign) | Someone watering their garden | Recycling Bin |

Eye Spy

As you walk along as a family, play a traditional game of Eye Spy. *I spy with my little eye, something beginning with...*

Alternatively, if you are playing with young children, you could play using colours instead of letters.

Prove It

As a family, when you walk, take turns saying, "From where I am, I can see..." and name something that you can see. Each person takes a turn, recalling the thing that each player before them has seen. If anyone doubts the previous statement, they say "Prove it!". The previous speaker must then be able to defend what they have said by pointing it out. Continue playing, adding to the list each time, seeing how many things you can remember and being able to prove them.

Monogram Walk

On your walk, find three or more natural objects beginning with your initials.

Stealth Walk

Learn to walk as quietly as possible. Which surface can you create the least noise on? How long can you walk on it for before someone hears you?

Silent Walk

The aim of today's walk is to not speak, to simply listen to the world around you. Can your family do it? When you get home, spend some time talking about it. How it made you feel, what you enjoyed or didn't enjoy about it.



Photo by [PNW Production from Pexels](#)

FOR A RAINY DAY



Interview

Interview your parents or grandparents to find out how the environment/climate has changed from when they were growing up.

You can ask the following questions:

- How has the weather changed from when you were younger? (e.g. Are the days in winter colder, or hotter in summer? Are there more or less periods of rain or drought? etc.)
- Do you still see the same birds?
- What have you noticed about the amount of bushland? Is there still the same amount?
- What have you noticed about the number of cars on the road?
- What have you noticed about the number of new buildings (e.g. commercial and residential) that are being built?
- What has changed about the ways in which households sort out their garbage? Did they have bins for different types of garbage when you were growing up?
- What changes have you noticed to any to nearby rivers or lakes? (e.g. water levels, pollution, animals, etc.)
- Do you think that 'caring for the environment' has always been a priority in society?
- What are the ways in which you try to care for the environment?

Cook a plant-based meal

Cook a meal made entirely out of plant-based items. Alternatively, try cooking this traditional Malawian dish or this Australian Wattle Seed Damper.

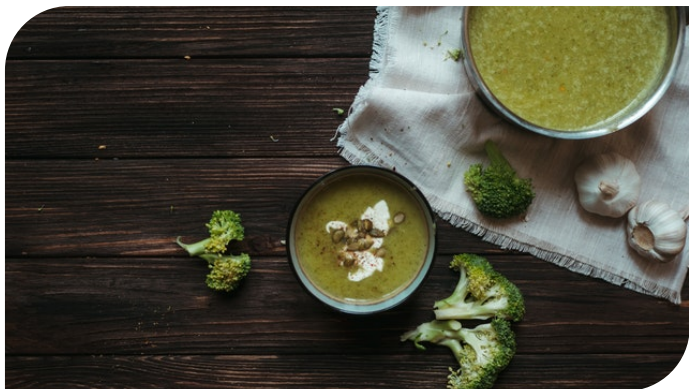


Photo by [Polina Kovaleva from Pexels](#)

Ndiwo

Ingredients

- 3 cups of chopped greens: Traditional green vegetable leaves include cassava leaves, sweet potato leaves, bean leaves or pumpkin leaves. Common greens you can also use include cabbage, kale, spinach.
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 2 small tomatoes, chopped
- 1 tablespoon oil
- 1 cup water
- salt, to taste

Method

1. Sauté onions in oil until tender.
2. Add the remaining ingredients, cover and simmer over medium heat for 5 minutes or until greens are tender and begin to wilt.
3. Serve with rice.

Wattle Seed Damper

Ingredients

- 3 cups of self-raising flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 60g butter
- 30g ground wattle seed
- 1 cup of milk

Method

1. Preheat oven to 200C
2. Heat wattle seed in a dry pan to release the flavour. Be careful not to burn. Allow to cool.
3. Sift flour and rub in butter.
4. Add salt and wattle seed.
5. Make a well in the centre and pour in the milk. Stir until combined.
6. Knead for a few minutes and mould into a flat ball.
7. Cut two slits in the top, brush with a little milk and bake for 30 minutes. This can also be made like scones and rolled out to a thickness of about 3cm (more or less) and then cut into squares or shapes, or made as one whole loaf.