***St. Vincent’s Liturgy for Children May 21st 2023***

**Laudato Si Week and Living Simply.**

Laudato Si' means 'Praise be to you' and the words come from an old Italian prayer called 'Laudato Si' mi Signore' which means ‘Praise be to you my God’.

Pope Francis has written a letter called Laudato Si to *everyone* in the world. He is thanking God for everything on this earth - for the sun, the moon and stars, water and fire, all the things that make it our home.

And not just a home for people, but for all the animals and birds, for trees and flowers, for everyone and everything that God has made.

We mustn't spoil it because it is a great present from God. We mustn't fight about it, we mustn't throw rubbish all over it and we must share all the things in it that God has made to help us live.

But we haven't been taking care of the earth properly. Often this is because we take more than our fair share of things. We buy more food and we use more water than we need when other people on the earth don't have enough. We buy more clothes than we can wear. We buy more toys (for grownups as well as children) than we can play with. And then we throw the things we don't need away and make more rubbish and mess on the earth.

Pope Francis says we must think hard about this and about the mess we are making. And that one of the best ways of making things better is to Live Simply.

So here at St. Vincent's a group of grownups - with children helping them - are trying to make our church a Live Simply church and treat the earth properly.

We are making a promise every month to live in a way that is kind to other people and to the earth.

For example this month, we want to do more cooking with vegetables and fruit that has grown in the ground, instead of eating dinners and puddings that have been made in factories. And we want to try to stop buying things we don't need.

And we are trying to let things grow in the garden that are good for bees and butterflies and the creepy crawlies that live in the soil.

Because soil is *really* important. Sometimes we think it is just dirt but it isn't. It's where plants and trees grow and give us air to breathe. It's where we grow our plants to make our food. And the creepy crawlies that sometimes scare us or we think are ugly are all doing jobs in the soil to make it good.

So today you can start growing something. You can bury a seed in some soil in a pot, and give it a little water to drink every so often – and then wait and watch for the first leaves to appear. When we grow things, we learn to take care, and we learn to wait and be patient and trust in God.