
Pope Francis: audience, “we have sinned against the earth” and “the earth never forgives”. “If we have despoiled it, its response will be very ugly”

“We have sinned against the earth, against our neighbours, and ultimately against the Creator, the benevolent Father who provides for everyone, and desires us to live in communion and flourish together”. This is the “*mea culpa*” delivered by Pope Francis during his General Audience, live streamed from the private library of the Apostolic Palace and dedicated to Earth Day, which is celebrated today. “And how does the earth react?”, the Pope continued off the cuff: “There is a Spanish saying that is very clear about this. It goes: ‘God always forgives; we humans sometimes forgive, and sometimes not; the earth never forgives’. The earth does not forgive: if we have despoiled the earth, its response will be very ugly”. “Because of our selfishness, we have failed in our responsibility to be guardians and stewards of the earth”, Pope Francis lamented, referring to the Book of Genesis. “We need only take a frank look at the facts to see that our common home is falling into serious disrepair”, he stated, citing the *Laudato si’*. “We have polluted it, we have despoiled it, endangering our very lives”. “For this reason, various international and local movements have sprung up in order to appeal to our consciences”, the Pope explained: “I deeply appreciate these initiatives; still it will be necessary for our children to take to the streets to teach us the obvious: we have no future if we destroy the very environment that sustains us. We have failed to care for the earth, our garden-home; we have failed to care for our brothers and sisters”.

Valentina Bombelli