

Faith at the Table: Practical Skills for Living Laudato Si' and Laudate Deum Through the Food We Serve

May 18, 2026

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University of San Diego
COLLEGE OF ARTS
AND SCIENCES
Center for Food Systems Transformation

Laudate Deum Prayer Network
for Climate Healing

Better Food
FOUNDATION

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Laudate Deum Through the Food We Serve

May 18th, 6:00 PM PST
90-minute online webinar

Register today at:
<https://signup.com/go/gpAfeGZ>



This free event is presented by
the USD Center for Food
Systems Transformation, the
Laudate Deum Prayer Network
for Climate Healing, and the
Better Food Foundation.
All are welcome!

On October 5, 2023 the Vatican invited four public figures to launch *Laudate Deum* and meet privately with Pope Francis:

- **Jonathan Safran Foer**, novelist and grandson of Holocaust survivors
- **Vandana Shiva**, an Indian scientist and environmental activist
- **Giorgio Parisi**, Nobel Prize winner in physics in 2021
- **Luisa-Marie Neubauer**, leader of “Fridays for Future” in Germany

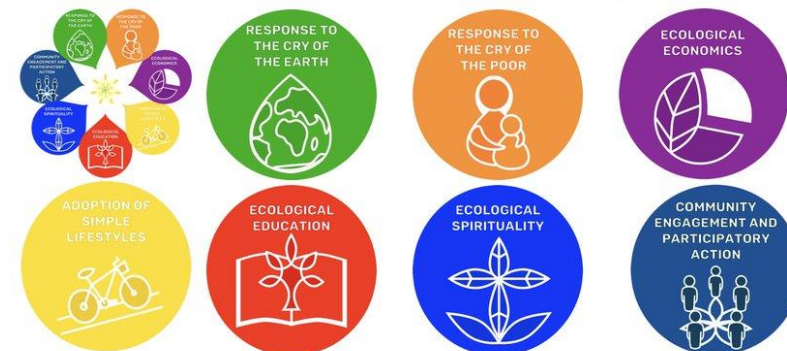
All 4 have been active addressing the link between food and climate change—3 of the 4 are prominent advocates of plant-based diets.







LAUDATO SI' GOALS



In the spirit of integral ecology, hope for the Earth and the Poor.

LAUDATO SI' GOALS



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LAUDATO SI' GOALS



LAUDATO SI' GOAL



LAUDATO SI' GOAL



Food Systems Transformation
as a response





1. *“LAUDATO SI’, mi’ Signore” – “Praise be to you, my Lord”*. In the words of this beautiful canticle, Saint Francis of Assisi reminds us that our common home is like a sister with whom we share our life and a beautiful mother who opens her arms to embrace us. “Praise be to you, my Lord, through our Sister, Mother Earth, who sustains and governs us, and who produces various fruit with coloured flowers and herbs”.[\[1\]](#)



The HOLY SEE

FRANCIS |ENCYCLICALS



2. This sister now cries out to us because of the harm we have inflicted on her by our irresponsible use and abuse of the goods with which God has endowed her. **We have come to see ourselves as her lords and masters, entitled to plunder her at will. The violence present in our hearts, wounded by sin, is also reflected in the symptoms of sickness evident in the soil, in the water, in the air and in all forms of life. This is why the earth herself, burdened and laid waste, is among the most abandoned and maltreated of our poor; she “groans in travail” (*Rom 8:22*). We have forgotten that we ourselves are dust of the earth (cf. *Gen 2:7*); our very bodies are made up of her elements, we breathe her air and we receive life and refreshment from her waters.**



The HOLY SEE

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11. Francis helps . . . take us to the heart of what it is to be human. Just as happens when we fall in love with someone, whenever he would gaze at the sun, the moon or the smallest of animals, he burst into song, drawing all other creatures into his praise. . . . His response to the world around him was so much more than intellectual appreciation or economic calculus, for to him each and every creature was a **sister** united to him by bonds of affection. . .

Such a conviction cannot be written off as naive romanticism, for it affects the choices which determine our behaviour.



The HOLY SEE

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The HOLY SEE

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11. . . . If we approach nature and the environment without this openness to awe and wonder, if we no longer speak the language of fraternity and beauty in our relationship with the world, our attitude will be that of masters, consumers, ruthless exploiters, unable to set limits on their immediate needs. By contrast, if we feel intimately united with all that exists, then sobriety and care will well up spontaneously.

The HOLY SEE

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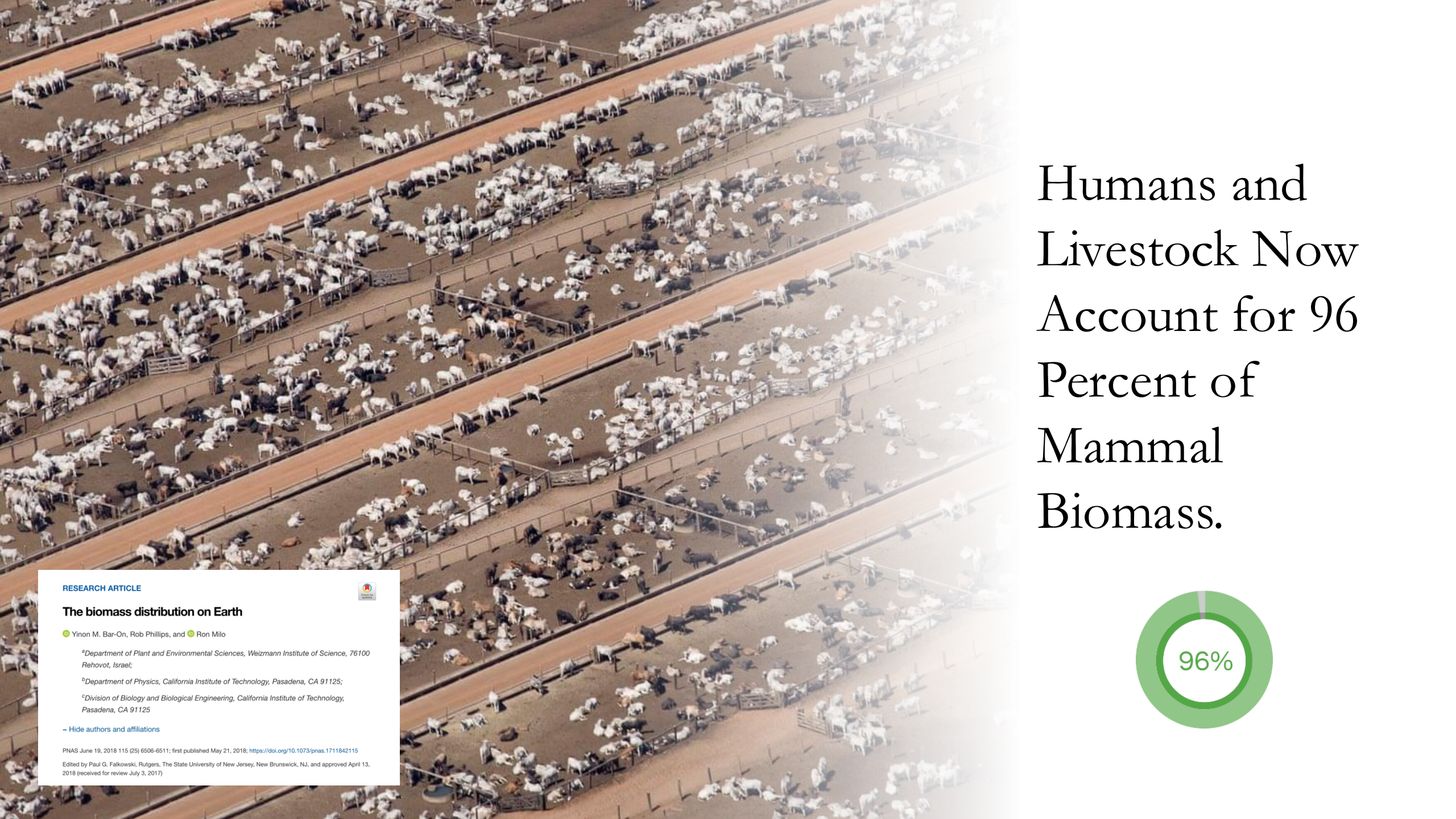


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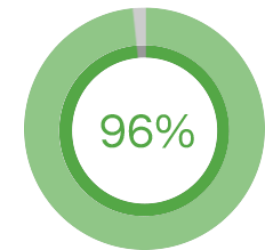
A pair of brass scales is shown, with two globes of the Earth as weights. The globe on the left is slightly higher than the one on the right, indicating it is lighter. The scales are set against a light, hazy background. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

“masters, consumers,
ruthless exploiters, unable
to set limits on their
immediate needs”

“speak the language of
fraternity and beauty in our
relationship with the world”



Humans and
Livestock Now
Account for 96
Percent of
Mammal
Biomass.



RESEARCH ARTICLE



The biomass distribution on Earth

Yinon M. Bar-On, Rob Phillips, and Ron Milo

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The Global Significance of Contemporary Animal Agriculture

1. Occupies 1/3 of the land on the planet
2. Causing a decline in ocean ecosystems globally
3. The top one to two contributor to climate change
4. A major source of new pandemics
5. Unprecedented animal suffering
6. Major contributor to global inequality and racialized social divisions

Land

Water

Climate

Microbiome

Animals

Humanity

Laudato Si' on Human-Animal Relationship

“68. . . . The laws found in the Bible dwell on relationships, not only among individuals but also with other living beings.

‘You shall not see your brother’s donkey. . . .’ Along these same lines, rest on the seventh day is meant not only for human beings, but also so ‘that your ox and your donkey may have rest’ (Ex 23:12). . . .”



“Clearly, the Bible has no place for a tyrannical anthropocentrism unconcerned for other creatures.”

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Contact me at aarongross@sandiego.edu

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