



President

Salzburg, April 22nd 2025

Dear Members of the European Academy of Sciences and Arts,

Easter 2025 was overshadowed yesterday by the death of Pope Francis. For believers, Easter is the belief in the resurrection of Christ which is related to an ancient human experience that transcends all religious boundaries, the belief in the rebirth of life as in the springtime of nature. This pope felt deeply connected to people and nature. The choice of his name after St Francis of Assisi was part of his programme. The Dean of our Class VII for World Religions has written a tribute to his pontificate, which can be read at <https://www.kath.ch/>.

In his last Easter message on Sunday, the Pope once again spoke out in favour of peace worldwide in moving words. Despite all the technical and economic progress, large parts of humanity are not only suffering from poverty, hunger and thirst, but are also tearing themselves apart in cruel wars, which were not even interrupted on all sides during the Easter period.

The European Academy feels deeply connected to the Pope's message of peace. As I have already reported several times, the European Academy, together with the World Academy of Sciences and Arts, has called for a joint „Vision for a Global Peace Offensive“ (see Academy's website). The founding of the World Academy goes back to Albert Einstein and thus emphasises the urgency of peace across all religious and political boundaries.

Another distinguished concern of the late Pope's pontificate is also directly linked to the vision and programme of the European Academy. St Francis of Assisi was known for his deep love and respect for nature. He regarded all creatures as brothers and sisters and praised creation as a gift from God in his 'Canticle of the Sun'. Francis saw nature as a universal family in which everyone is connected and should live in harmony.

The Pope's great encyclical 'Laudato si' from 2015, one of the most important texts on the eco-social change needed today, is based on this. The idea that our Earth and its biosphere are a unified and fragile organism that needs to be protected and preserved was later also pursued by the natural scientist James Lovelock (Gaia hypothesis). The European Union's (EU) goal of a Green Deal and the United Nations' (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) should be understood against this background.



The tenth anniversary of the encyclical 'Laudato si' will be taken as an opportunity to highlight these concerns of the encyclical in a major event of academies, universities and church institutions in Munich on 2 October 2025. Our EASA member Markus Vogt (Class VII) has taken on the initiative, coordination and planning together with our Academy. This event will not only support the dialogue between theology, science and cultures. In accordance with the 'Canticle of the Sun' by St Francis, a musical version of the encyclical is now also available. Art will therefore also be integrated into the event.

So please make a note of the date in Munich. The event will probably also be broadcast online with English subtitles. We will inform members of all preparations in time. Following the death of Pope Francis, it will also be a memorial event for this great Pope.

I wish you all a peaceful post-Easter time

Prof. Dr.Dr.h.c mult. Klaus Mainzer
President