LAUDATO SI’

ACTION PLAN

THE DIOCESE *of* RALEIGH

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

DATE: 15 SEP. 2026

CATHOLIC
DIOCESE *of* RALEIGH

Office of The Bishop

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OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

In recent months, I have found myself returning often to a simple question: why is the Church asking us, here and now, to take up more intentionally the call to care for our common home? And more specifically, why are we, as a diocese, called to prepare a plan of action to guide our parishes in living the vision of Laudato Si?

The answer I keep returning to for these questions is found in who we are as human persons.

God's word continually reminds us that we are not accidental inhabitants of this world, but beloved sons and daughters of God, formed intentionally by His own hands and given His very breath. In the beginning, God placed humanity in the garden to cultivate and care for it. This is not a burden, but a gift. We are entrusted with something that ultimately belongs to Him. Our role is not one of domination in the worldly sense, but of stewardship—of humble, faithful care for what God has created and called good.

When we speak of "Our Common Home," it should call to mind not only our fellowship and community with one another, but also with our Creator. That is why when I speak of our own plans for caring for creation in our diocese, I am not speaking about policies or programs; I am speaking about this beautiful relationship.

When we begin to see the world in this way, something changes within us. We move from merely "using" natural resources to seeing them as a gift; from consuming to giving thanks. An "ecological conversion" in this way touches how we relate to God, to one another, and to the world around us. To live our vocation as protectors of God's handiwork is part of what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ.

We also cannot ignore that the earth's wounds are closely tied to the wounds of the human family. The poor in particular suffer most when God's creation is neglected or exploited. The cry of the earth and the cry of the poor often rise together. For us as Catholics, this is not an abstract idea. The poor are our brothers and sisters; indeed, they are the very face of Christ among us. One day, each of us will stand before the Lord, and we will be asked not only how we loved Him and our neighbor, but also how we cared for the common home He entrusted to us.
I also believe this moment is especially important for our young people. They carry within them a deep desire for a more just and hopeful world. The Church must not ignore that desire, but accompany and guide it, helping all of us to see that concern for creation is deeply connected to our faith and to our identity as disciples.

This is why, as a diocese, we are taking this step. The plan we are developing for our parishes is meant to be simple, practical, and rooted in our faith. It is not about adding burdens or creating checklists, but about helping us live more fully what we already know and believe. I am inviting our communities, as one family of the diocese and the Church, to pray, learn, and act in ways that reflect the beauty of God's creation and our responsibility within it.

Above all, I hope this effort will help us recover a sense of wonder about the world that God has created for us. The world of our Creator is not something ordinary; it is a priceless masterpiece. When we pause to see it with new eyes, we begin to love more deeply the One who made it. And in that love, we find renewed strength to care—for the earth, for one another, and for generations yet to come.

May the Lord guide us in this work, and may He bring to completion the good He has begun in us.
Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ Luis R Zarama

Bishop of Raleigh

THE SEVEN LAUDATO SI' GOALS

Discerning a response to the ecological crisis is a profound act of care. At this kairos moment, action is needed. The Laudato Si' Goals guide our actions. They redefine and rebuild our relationship with each other and our common home. Their holistic approach acknowledges the planetary limits of all socio-economic systems and the human roots of the ecological crisis. They call for a spiritual and cultural revolution to realize integral ecology.

1. ECOLOGICAL SPIRITUALITY

Ecological Spirituality springs from a profound ecological conversion and helps us to "discover God in all things", both in the beauty of creation and in the sighs of the sick and the groans of the afflicted, aware that the life of the spirit is not dissociated from worldly realities. Actions to encourage a more ethical and compassionate relationship with all God's creation could include promoting creation-based liturgical celebrations, developing ecological catechesis, retreats, formation programs, etc.

2. ECOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Ecological Education is about re-thinking and re-designing curricular and institutional reform in the spirit of integral ecology to foster ecological awareness and transformative action. Actions could include ensuring equitable access to education for all, promoting human rights and the well-being of the ecosystems, fostering Laudato Si' themes within the community, encouraging ecological leadership from both students and teachers, and ecological restoration activities.

3. RESPONSE TO THE CRY OF THE POOR

The Response to the Cry of the Poor is a call to promote eco-justice, aware that we are called to defend human life from conception to death, and all forms of life on Earth. Actions could include projects to promote solidarity, with special attention given to vulnerable groups such as indigenous communities, refugees, migrants, and children at risk, analysis and improvement of social systems, and social service programs.

4. RESPONSE TO THE CRY OF THE EARTH

The Response to the Cry of the Earth is a call to protect our common home for the well-being of all living creatures as we equitably address the climate crisis, biodiversity loss, and ecological sustainability. Actions could include the adoption of renewable energies and energy sufficiency measures, achieving carbon neutrality, guaranteeing access to clean water for all, and protecting biodiversity, promoting sustainable agriculture.

5. ADOPTION OF SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLES

The Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles is grounded in the idea of sufficiency and promoting sobriety in the use of resources and energy. Actions could include reducing waste and recycling, adopting sustainable dietary habits (opting for a more plant based diet and making judicious choices about meat and dairy consumption), becoming conscious of consumerist attitudes and habits, encouraging greater use of public transport and active mobility (walking, cycling), and avoiding single-use items (e.g., plastic).

6. ECOLOGICAL ECONOMICS

Ecological Economics acknowledges that the economy is a sub-system of human society, which itself is embedded within the biosphere – our common home. Actions could include sustainable production and consumption; ethical investments; divestment from fossil fuels, exploitative animal agriculture, and any activity harmful to the planet and all living creatures; supporting circular economies; prioritizing care labor and protecting the dignity of workers.

7. COMMUNITY RESILIENCE AND EMPOWERMENT

Community Resilience and Empowerment envisage a synodal journey of community engagement and participatory action at various levels. Actions could include building awareness, promoting advocacy and developing peoples campaigns, and encouraging rootedness and a sense of belonging in local communities and neighborhoods.

REFLECTION

In the Gospel reading of the loaves and fishes, the Lord instructs his disciples to "gather the leftovers, so that nothing may be wasted." This speaks powerfully to our modern world. We live in a culture shaped by convenience and excess, where food, water, and energy are often treated as disposable. Yet this simple command reminds us that creation is not ours to waste but to steward with care. If even Christ, who could provide abundantly, insisted that nothing be lost, then we are called to examine our own habits. Why do we take more than we need? Why do we discard what could still serve others? In a time marked by consumerism, this Gospel moment challenges us to rediscover gratitude, restraint, and responsibility.

This call becomes even more urgent when we remember this is not just an environmental issue, but a human one. There are still many in our world who search daily for food, who know the pain of scarcity and uncertainty. To waste what others lack is to forget our shared dignity and our responsibility to one another. Care for creation, then, is also care for our brothers and sisters—both those living today and those yet to come.

By choosing simplicity over excess and mindfulness over waste, we honor God's gifts and help ensure that future generations inherit a world sustained, not depleted, by our actions.

~ Fr. Kenneth Ujunwa Oguzie, C.S.Sp

ECOLOGICAL SPIRITUALITY

GOAL 1

> Contemplation of creation allows us to discover in each thing a teaching which God wishes to hand on to us…
> *Laudato Si', 85*

PURPOSE

Ecological spirituality invites the faithful to encounter God through creation, deepening a contemplative awareness that leads to gratitude, reverence, and responsible care. Rooted in prayer and sacramental life, it fosters a renewed relationship with God, others, and the natural world.

DIOCESAN-WIDE GOAL

Celebrate the Mass for the Care of Creation (Missa pro custodia creationis) in each of the eight deaneries of the Diocese of Raleigh.

On the 10th anniversary of Laudato Si', Pope Leo XIV promulgated the official decree establishing this Mass, to be promoted widely across the Church. As Pope Francis reminds us:

> *"The Eucharist joins heaven and earth; it embraces and penetrates all creation."*
> *(Laudato Si', 236)*

PARISH GOAL

Parishes are encouraged to deepen ecological spirituality through communal prayer and liturgical life.

ACTIONS:

- Regularly include intentions for care of our common home in the Prayers of the Faithful.
- Identify a local site of natural beauty or symbolic significance and host an annual communal prayer service for creation.

SUGGESTED RESOURCES:

Laudato Si' Movement Prayer Book and prayer resources

NORTH CAROLINA TEMPLATE FOR PARISH REFLECTION

Example: Holy Name of Jesus Cathedral hosts an annual "Gather at the Globe" prayer service at the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences in Raleigh, witnessing that care for creation is an essential part of Christian discipleship:

> *"…living our vocation to be protectors of God's handiwork… is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience."*
> *(Laudato Si', 217)*

All efforts to care for our common home begin with prayer.

INDIVIDUAL / FAMILY GOAL

Individuals and families are invited to cultivate a personal ecological spirituality through contemplation and daily practice.

SUGGESTED ACTIONS:

- Spend time in nature—such as in a garden or park—and meditate on the gift of creation.
- Reflect on the truth that "God has entrusted part of the world to me" (Laudato Si', 5), and consider how to respond with care and responsibility.
- Read and reflect on Finding God in a Leaf: The Mysticism of Laudato Si' by Brian Grogan, S.J.
- Adopt simple lifestyle changes as acts of solidarity with others and stewardship of creation.

ECOLOGICAL EDUCATION

GOAL 2

> "Environmental education has broadened its goals… It seeks also to restore the various levels of ecological equilibrium, establishing harmony within ourselves, with others, with nature and other living creatures, and with God." *Laudato Si', 210*

PURPOSE

Ecological education within the diocese seeks to form individuals and communities in a deeper understanding of creation as a gift from God. Moving beyond awareness alone, it encourages a transformation of mindset and lifestyle rooted in faith, fostering harmony with God, neighbor, and the natural world.

DIOCESAN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS GOAL

The Diocese of Raleigh Office of Education will partner with North Carolina Catholics Caring for Our Common Home (N4CH) to promote awareness of the Catholic Social Teaching theme Care for God's Creation. This collaboration will include diocesan-wide initiatives and professional development opportunities for educators.

ACTIONS:

- Invite a representative from N4CH to present at a Principals and Directors Meeting.
- Continue the Creation-themed diocesan Art Showcase.
- Develop a teacher study guide for Our Common Home: A Guide for Caring for Our Living Planet to support professional development.

PARISH GOAL

Each parish is encouraged to host at least one Creation Care or Laudato Si' educational event annually, utilizing available Church resources or locally developed initiatives.

SUGGESTED ACTIONS:

- Host an Earth Day program
- Organize a Feast of St. Francis Creation Care program.
- Implement a Creation Care Kids EarthKeepers VBS program.
- Host a screening of The Letter (a Pope Francis film) with discussion.
- Use resources from the Laudato Si' Movement, including summaries and Church teaching materials.
- Facilitate a study using the USCCB Laudato Si' Study Guide.
- Offer Spanish-language resources such as Laudato Si': Sobre el Cuidado de la Casa Común.

INDIVIDUAL / FAMILY GOAL

Individuals and families are invited to grow in awareness and practice of creation care through prayer, learning, and concrete action. Perhaps begin by exploring USCCB resources on Creation Care, including a brief overview of Scripture and Tradition and a short introductory video.

SUGGESTED ACTIONS:

- Pray the USCCB Prayer for Creation.
- Adopt one or more Catholic Social Teaching "Mustard Seed" commitments, such as:
  - Reducing single-use plastics
  - Using public transportation, carpooling, or biking
  - Planting a garden or supporting green spaces
- Read: Ten Key Moments When Pope Leo XIV Reaffirmed the Christian Vocation to Care for Our Common Home.
- Use the Laudato Si' Goals Dice activity to discern action steps.
- Choose an action from "10 Concrete Actions You Can Take."
- Reflect on *Integral Ecology in the Life of the Family*, especially the section on Ecology and Education (pp. 53–60).

These references provide a comprehensive set of resources for ecological education and Catholic social teaching on caring for creation, as outlined in the document.

REFLECTION

Franciscan lore recounts that St. Francis of Assisi had multiple spiritual encounters with wildlife while Pope Francis, in his encyclical, "Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home," states, **"It is our humble conviction that the divine and the human meet in the slightest detail in the seamless garment of God's creation, in the last speck of dust of our planet"** (9). God is hidden in everything, and we are to live "with the eyes of our hearts enlightened" (Ephesians 1:18).

Catholics who approach their faith from an ecological, spiritual perspective should consider how to collaborate with God the Creator, by caring for and finding wonder in His creation.

For me, the eyes of my heart were moved after visiting Father Emmanuel Katongole in Uganda in 2013. Many Ugandan families have no electricity, and their children walk at least one mile before breakfast and after dinner to obtain the water the family needs for cooking and washing. Now, back in Raleigh, I try to limit my use of water and electricity to express "solidarity" with my Ugandan sisters and brothers. God speaks to us in the ordinary; we just have to listen and act.

~Msgr. Michael Shugrue,
Spiritual Advisor of N4CH

RESPONSE TO THE CRY OF THE POOR

GOAL 3

> "We have to realize that a true ecological approach always becomes a social approach; it must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, so as to hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor." *Laudato Si', 49*

DIOCESAN GOAL:

St. Vincent de Paul was a tireless advocate for the poor. "Voice for the Poor," the advocacy arm of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, works to identify issues critical to those living in poverty and need, and helps to bring attention to them so communities and elected officials can help develop strategies to reduce or eliminate poverty.

The goal is for at least one parish in the diocese to establish a new St. Vincent de Paul Conference. The diocese will offer the parish organizational assistance in establishing the new ministry. By encountering those in need, volunteers perform corporal acts of mercy that includes prayer and faith formation.

Deacon Steve Andrews, St. Francis of Assisi Parish, promotes the mission of St. Vincent dePaul and assists parishes in establishing this ministry: "A major reason for a St. Vincent de Paul Conference is to provide parishioners a way to live the Gospel and experience transformation by offering help and hope to our brothers and sisters in need. Through the home visit encounters with our neighbors in need, parishioners are transformed with a deeper humility, compassion, justice and knowledge."

PARISH GOAL:

Form a committee of parishioners active in ministry to examine and evaluate the ministries currently operating in your parish that respond to the Cry of the Poor. What groups are served? What is the cost? What secular and interfaith groups are serving the poor in your community? Are the available services sufficient? How well are they working? Can opportunities for faith formation and encounter be incorporated in the existing ministries?

Consider these reflection questions from Bishop Luis and other bishops in this article: Bishops of Georgia and the Carolinas urge faithful to see Christ in all people.

How can the insights of Pope Leo XIV move the hearts of the faithful to further embrace the values of the Gospel by engaging those who feel distanced by the Church and excluded from society? How can we change ourselves and spur systemic change?

Write a report of your findings and share it with your pastor. Make changes as needed.

> *Living our vocation to be protectors of God's handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience… LS 217.*

INDIVIDUAL GOAL:

Read Dilexi Te, To All Christians on Love for the Poor, Pope Leo XIV's apostolic exhortation published October 9, 2025. Dilexi Te apostolic exhortation in english

Exhortación apostólica *Dilexi Te* en español

You may consider using these study guides, including an action, with your parish or ministry.

Dilexi Te Study -English Dilexi Te Study - Spanish

> "I think the theological analysis of our commitment to the poor [as presented in Dilexi Te] is very important. We sometimes… see the commitment to the poor as a CONSEQUENCE of our faith. Pope Leo teaches us here that our commitment to the poor, living with the poor, living like the poor, is the place where we receive Revelation, where we receive the Gospel. There is no other place to do that, other than through our encounter with the poor. Firstly, I care for the poor, then I receive Revelation. Only then do I come to know who the true God is… Do not be afraid of the poor. They can give you the true Gospel." *Frédéric-Marie le Méhauté, O.F.M., speaking to Vatican News about the publication of Dilexi Te.*

Pondering in your heart what you have read, commit to daily prayer for Church unity and inclusion of all in your parish community.

> *Everything is connected. Concern for the environment thus needs to be joined to a sincere love for our fellow human beings and an unwavering commitment to resolving the problems of society. (Laudato Si', 92)*

RESPONSE TO THE CRY OF THE EARTH

GOAL 4

> "We have to realize that a true ecological approach always becomes a social approach; it must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, so as to hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor." *Laudato Si', 49*

LONG-TERM DIOCESAN GOAL

The diocese commits to measurable actions that reduce the environmental impacts of its operations, strengthen resilience to a changing climate, and advance responsible stewardship of God's creation.

The Diocese of Raleigh completed a number of actions that speak to its leadership in modeling an ecological approach to our buildings and resources, including:

- **Lighting Conversion:** Replaced fluorescent lighting with LED fixtures and installed automatic occupancy sensors.
- **Programmable Thermostats:** Implemented centralized, programmable controls in place of manual thermostats.
- **Cool Roof:** Installed a light-colored roof membrane to reflect heat and reduce building temperature.
- **Landscaping:** Transitioned to native, low-maintenance landscaping and preserved mature trees for carbon storage.
- **Hybrid Work:** Adopted a hybrid work model to reduce transportation-related emissions.

The diocese remains committed to future actions focused on an increased commitment to stewardship of energy and care for creation, including:

- **Solar Power:** Evaluating rooftop solar panel installation at the Catholic Center.
- **Building Upgrades:** Considering resealing exterior glazing, installing low-flow plumbing fixtures, and using ENERGY STAR appliances.
- **Operations:** Exploring expanded recycling, eco-friendly cleaning practices, and sustainable kitchen supplies by 2030.
- **Ongoing Assessment:** Establishing a regular energy review process with potential expansion to broader sustainability and resilience measures.
- **Design & Planning:** Incorporating energy-efficient, resilient design in future construction and renovations.
- **Communication:** Sharing diocesan progress to promote energy efficiency, sustainability, and resilience across parish facilities

PARISH GOAL:

- Demonstrate capacity to mirror diocesean commitment
- Reflecting on the past and future actions of the diocese, parishes and schools will discern their commitment and ability to participate with the diocese by adopting practical and scalable actions such as:
  - Periodically evaluate the external environmental impacts of the parish through comparisons with utility usage to similar national facilities and acting to reduce their impacts.
  - Implementing improvements like LED lighting, motion sensors, and water conservation.
  - Plan moderate upgrades, including training, energy-efficient equipment replacement, sustainable landscaping using native plants, and storm water management.
  - Incorporating long-term improvements when feasible, such as high-efficiency HVAC systems, water efficiency retrofits, induction cooking, and evaluating renewable energy options.

> *"We need to move forward in a bold cultural revolution" (Laudato Si', 114)*

INDIVIDUAL/FAMILY GOAL:

Demonstrate a Lighter Earth Footprint

Parishioners' actions will extend this commitment into their daily lives by:

- Practicing energy conservation at home through efficient lighting, appliances, and basic weatherization.
- Monitoring and improving household energy use with available tools and incremental upgrades.
- Embracing long-term sustainable choices such as efficient heating and cooling systems, native landscaping, and renewable energy where possible.

Together, this unified action forms a shared path of discernment and stewardship, integrating care for creation into the life of the Church at every level.

REFLECTION

At the beating heart of the mission of the Church, which is to make disciples of all nations, there is justice, the primary and inseparable way of charity. Since all good things come from God, love cannot reside in us if we have the goods of the world and do not share them with those in need; we must go out in charity and work for justice. Since, “Many people today would claim that they owe nothing to anyone, except to themselves...concerned only with their rights and they often have great difficulty taking responsibility for their own and other people’s integral development,” Christians must have a prophetic presence and be involved in their community, beginning with their own homes and parishes.

The work of promoting policies that promote the integrity of family and the dignity of the human person begins in communities, and church leaders are obliged to recognize and honor the work of disciples who are visibly responding to the Social Doctrine of the Church and addressing the needs of people in a concrete manner.

Authentic efforts to cooperate with the will of God will be blessed by our heavenly Father, and so we must contribute to initiatives that build a more just world to promote the integral development of every human being.

~ Deacon Josh Klickman

ADOPTION OF SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLES

GOAL 5

> "Let ours be a time remembered for the awakening of a new reverence for life, the firm resolve to achieve sustainability… and the joyful celebration of life." *Laudato Si', 207*

DIOCESAN GOAL

Provide funding for an under-resourced parish to replace existing incandescent or fluorescent lighting with compatible LED bulbs.

This initiative will:

- Reduce energy consumption (LEDs use up to 80% less energy than incandescent bulbs)
- Lower greenhouse gas emissions
- Generate cost savings for the parish

The participating parish will submit an impact report detailing:

- Financial savings achieved
- Environmental benefits realized
- How the initiative helped educate parishioners on sustainability

PARISH GOAL

Parishes are encouraged to reflect and discern practical actions for sustainable living within parish life.

INTERDEPENDENCE

How can parishes engage and reflect together?

PERSONAL SOLIDARITY

What act of solidarity can parishes adopt together?

PRACTICAL STEWARDSHIP

What concrete steps will our parish take?

INDIVIDUAL / FAMILY GOAL

Individuals and families are invited to embrace the "7 Rs" of sustainability as a guide to daily living:

1. **Rethink** Pause before purchasing. Ask: Do I truly need this? Can I borrow, share, or go digital?
2. **Refuse** Say no to single-use plastics and Styrofoam. Choose reusable alternatives such as washable snack bags or containers.
3. **Reduce** Consume less overall. Support initiatives that promote waste-conscious living.
4. **Reuse** Find creative ways to repurpose items rather than discarding them.
5. **Repair** Fix what is broken instead of replacing it. Support community repair initiatives.
6. **Recycle** Learn local recycling guidelines and support companies using recycled materials. Participate in school or parish recycling programs.
7. **Regift** the Earth (Compost) Compost food waste to return nutrients to the soil and reduce landfill impact.

These practices help us see sustainability not as a burden, but as a joyful expression of gratitude and responsibility—caring for creation, protecting it for future generations, and serving the common good.

ECOLOGICAL ECONOMICS

GOAL 6

> "Human costs always include economic costs and economic dysfunctions always include human costs."
> *Laudato Si', 128*

In today's culture priority is often given to the short term, immediate actions without consideration for consequences to creation. "The economic model is linear: first, resources such as coal, oil, plants, and minerals are extracted from the soil, and then manufactured into goods, such as textiles, infrastructure, or equipment. Then the product is marketed to customers who use, then discard once no longer needed. Resources become pollution that end up in a landfill, the ocean" [or air]. Page 36 Integral Ecology in the Life of the Family (IELF). In Laudato Si', Pope Francis poses the question to all people of good will, Can't we do better?

> What is needed is an "economic ecology" *LS 141.* "Economic activity must contribute to the common good while protecting integral human dignity." *Page 37, from the Vatican document IELF.*

DIOCESCAN GOAL:

Provide information to parishes regarding diocesan ethical investments that promote the common good and care for creation, thus showing the power of ethical investing.

Resources include: bulletin posts, DOR website and NC Catholics magazine.

PARISH GOAL:

Provide a 4 part explanation about how Catholic Social Teaching speaks to ethical investing for use in bulletins, websites, social media.

- **Part 1,** looks at what Scripture and Tradition say about managing financial resources.
- **Part 2,** provides documents from the USCCB and Vatican for review on this topic.
- **Part 3 and 4**, share examples of how the DOR manages its financial resources to benefit the common good.

INDIVIDUAL/FAMILY GOAL:

Help parishioners become aware of ecological economic opportunities that recognize and support the human dignity of workers.

> The daily giving of ourselves to each other is how we learn a culture of encounter, inclusion, fraternity, and trust. Do we make room for cooperative initiatives with respect to banking, farming, and purchasing of materials? *Paraphrased from page 39 of IELF.*

EXAMPLES INCLUDE:

Fair Trade/Alternative Gifts: Consider supporting fledgling efforts of small businesses in NC, the U.S. and overseas. Ideally, parishes will vet for both fair labor and ecologically friendly business practices.

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA): supports the small local farmers by providing upfront payment for produce for a period of time thus limiting the farmers reliance on bank loans. A CSA example, St. Francis of Assisi has been in partnership with

ECOLOGICAL ECONOMICS

CONTINUED

RAFI-USA and Brown Family Farms in Henderson, NC. This partnership "challenges the root causes of food systems, supporting and advocating for economically, racially, and ecologically just farm communities." See this short video to learn about CSA. CSA/Brown Family Farm

Alternatives to Consumerism: As consumers we look for the best price. Consider alternatives that promote fair labor practices and care for our common home.

See YouTube "Clothed and Caffeinated," which discusses ethical purchasing in the garment and coffee industries.

Learn about CEPA, Catholic Ethical Purchasing Alliance, supported by the Ignatian Solidarity Network and EthixMerch. The alliance supports institution educational resources, networking and mentorship. Cardinal Gibbons is a customer for their school T-shirts.

Learn about Carolina Textile District, an enterprise committed to empowering workers and supporting local communities by providing secure, meaningful jobs, while aspiring to economic, environmental, and social sustainability

The Bishop's Annual Appeal, parish tithing/collections supporting peace & justice: these actions support "Response to the Cry of the Earth" and "Response to the Cry of the Poor" that thrive as a result of parishioner support.

COMMUNITY RESILIENCE AND EMPOWERMENT

GOAL 7

> "Along with the importance of little everyday gestures, social love moves us to devise larger strategies to halt environmental degradation and to encourage a 'culture of care' which permeates all of society." *Laudato Si', 20; 231*

PURPOSE

"A throwaway culture… affects the excluded just as it quickly reduces things to rubbish." *Laudato Si' 22*

DIOCESAN GOAL

Recognize parish community leaders and actions in integral ecology.

PARISH GOAL

Redress the "throwaway culture"

A significant portion of landfill waste is food waste and/or potentially compostable or recyclable -- all of which could have been diverted from the waste bin to a more appropriate place.

Parishes could audit waste material produced on the property and commit to any of the following:

- Reduce disposable or servingware waste for small events or for all events.
- Invest in and/or utilize dishes and silverware and find a willing dish crew who can be trained in hygienic standards.
- Designate a path for organic waste (food waste and paper products) to be separated from other waste and composted commercially or through local gardens.
- Conduct a food waste audit in your cafeteria or food event to bring awareness to the value of food.
- Offer clear and up-to-date signage near recycling bins with images of acceptable and non-acceptable materials, specific to the county.

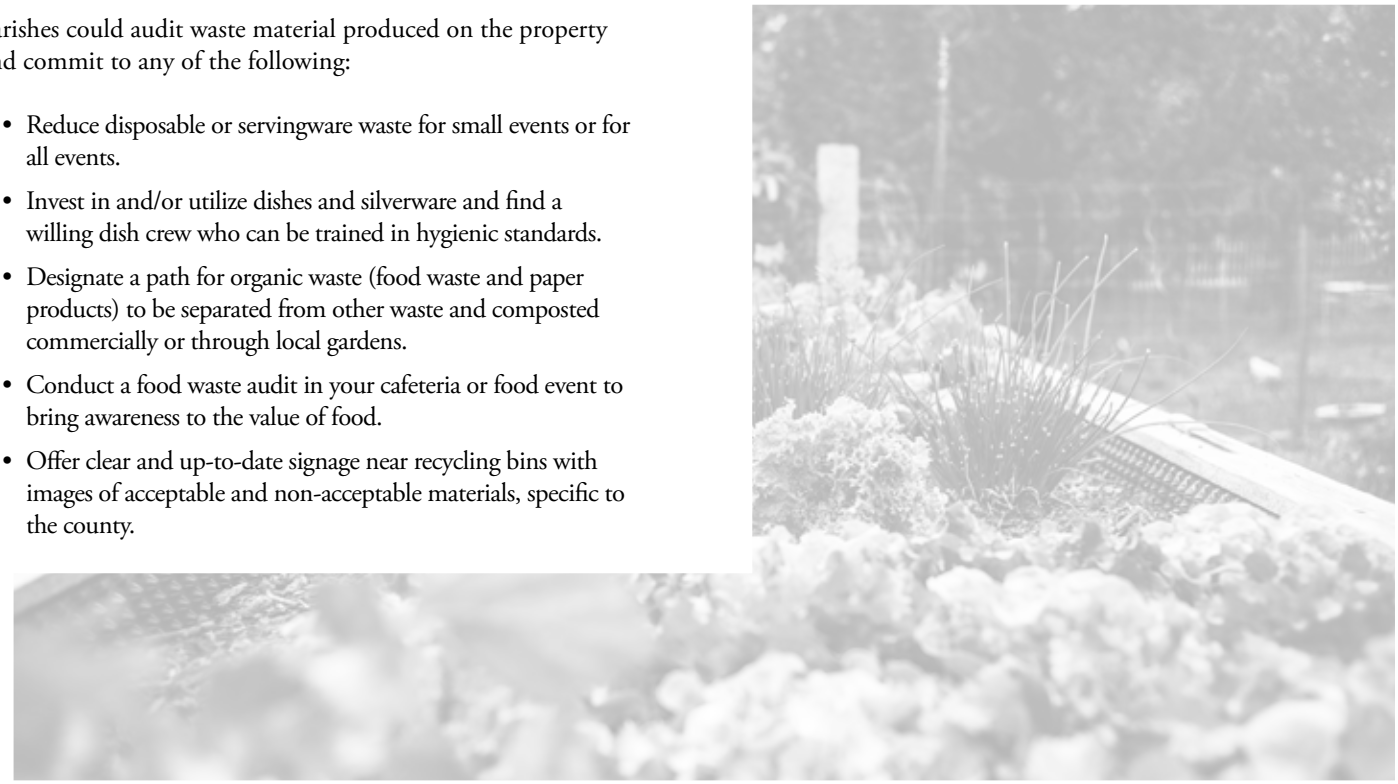
INDIVIDUAL/FAMILY:

Plant and eat in the community

The way in which we produce, transport, and preserve or waste food has a great impact on our common home.

Within your family or community, make a goal to spend more mealtimes together, sharing food, its preparation, and its origins more sacramentally, i.e. as a "host" for God's grace.

Additionally, choose ingredients which are local and responsibly grown or raised, or consider growing food-bearing plants on your land or on land that is available to you through community gardens or shared plots.



REFLECTION

“The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims his handiwork.” These words of Psalm 19 remind me that the glory of God is right before our eyes in the beauty of nature. When I look out at the vastness of the ocean or the night sky, I am reminded of my littleness and God’s greatness. That realization is profoundly comforting because the God who holds in his hands the heavens, the earth, and the whole cosmos also keeps his caring gaze on me.

Finding God in the beauty of creation also speaks to our role as stewards who have the care of the garden in which God has placed us (cf. Gen. 2:15). This stewardship is part of living in the image and likeness of God, who cares for all things and who lovingly holds creation in existence.

It is my prayer that the movement that our late Holy Father, Pope Francis, catalyzed by the publication of Laudato Si' may reawaken in us a sense of wonder and awe at God's creation and the privilege we have of caring for it and cultivating it in his name.

~ Very Rev. Michael Burbeck
Vicar General
Diocese of Raleigh

RESOURCES

GOAL 1: ECOLOGICAL SPIRITUALITY

Laudato Si'

Laudato Si' Movement Prayer Book — Laudato Si' Movement

Prayer Resources — Laudato Si' Movement

NC Template for Parish Reflection:
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1hdqzYYFzQtjbQqud_08v5QdlsM2vRWLW

Finding God in a Leaf: The Mysticism of Laudato Si': A Month of Reflections by Brian Grogan, SJ (Messenger, 2018)
https://www.amazon.com/Finding-God-Leaf-Mysticism-Laudato/dp/1788120043

Missa pro custodia creationis (Mass for the Care of Creation and Official Decree)
https://www.humandevelopment.va/content/dam/sviluppoumano/news/2025-news/07-luglio/missa-pro-custodia-creationis/3.-Formulario-Missa-Pro-Custodia-Creationis-IT-EN-SP-FR-PT-TED-trad-di-lavoro.pdf

https://www.humandevelopment.va/content/dam/sviluppoumano/news/2025-news/07-luglio/missa-pro-custodia-creationis/1.-Decreto-Pro-Custodia-Creationis-LT--IT--EN.pdf

"Gather at the Globe" prayer service at the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences in Raleigh
https://dioceseofraleigh.org/news/creation-close-my-heart

GOAL 2: ECOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Laudato Si'

Earth Day | Catholic Climate Covenant – Resources and programs for Earth Day and creation care:
Catholic Climate Covenant - Earth Day

Feast Of St. Francis Program | Catholic Climate Covenant – Annual program resources:
Catholic Climate Covenant - Feast of St. Francis

The Letter (Pope Francis Film) with discussion guide – Film resource:
The Letter Film

Laudato Si' Movement Resources

USCCB Laudato Si' Discussion Guide

Spanish version of the encyclical: Laudato Si' en Español

USCCB Overview of Scripture and Tradition – Brief overview and 3-minute video:
USCCB Care for Creation

CST 101: Care for Creation (Video) – 3-minute video: CST 101:

Cuidado de la Creación | USCCB (Spanish Video) –

RESOURCES

CONTINUED

USCCB Prayer for Creation

USCCB CST Mustard Seed Commitments

Ten Key Moments When Pope Leo XIV Reaffirmed the Christian Vocation to Care for Our Common Home –

Laudato Si' Goals Dice.pdf

10 Concrete Actions

Integral Ecology in the Life of the Family

GOAL 3: RESPONSE TO THE CRY OF THE POOR

Laudato Si'

Society of St. Vincent de Paul — parish-based charitable ministry and "Voice for the Poor" advocacy

"Voice for the Poor" Advocacy Program — Society of St. Vincent de Paul initiative

Dilexi Te: To All Christians on Love for the Poor (Apostolic Exhortation of Pope Leo XIV, Oct. 9, 2025)

Dilexi Te Study Guides (English & Spanish)

"Bishops of Georgia and the Carolinas urge faithful to see Christ in all people" (pastoral reflection article)

Secular Franciscan Order (regional fraternity information and formation resources)

https://www.bssfsfo.org

GOAL 4: RESPONSE TO THE CRY OF THE EARTH

Laudato Si'

Diocesan Energy Audit (2025) — guiding implementation of energy reduction improvements

Renewable Energy & Sustainability Planning Resources (e.g., solar evaluation, Energy Star appliances, efficiency standards)
Energy Sage
Energy Star
Building America Solution Center

U.S. Environmental and Energy Efficiency Practices (LED lighting, occupancy sensors, low-flow fixtures, hybrid work models)

Native Landscaping & Conservation Practices (carbon storage, stormwater management)
Leaf & Limb
NC Deptartment of Environmental Quality

Parish Sustainability Benchmarks (utility comparison tools and environmental impact assessments)

RESOURCES

CONTINUED

GOAL 5: ADOPTION OF SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLES

Laudato Si'

Reflection : Encyclicals inspire stewardship: Three local priests discuss care for the environment

Laudato Si' four-week study series with Fr. Scott McCue

Reduce

Reuse

Recycle

- Electronics and Computer Equipment
- Plastics
- For School Fundraising
- Foam

Repair

Regift / Composting

GOAL 6: ECOLOGICAL ECONOMICS

Laudato Si'

Integral Ecology in the Life of the Family (IELF)

4-part series on Ethical Investing -

- Part 1
- Part 2
- Part 3
- Part 4

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)

Socially Responsible Investment Guidelines 2021

Fair Trade/Alternative gift ideas

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)

Alternatives to consumerism (YouTube)

Clothed and Caffeinated (YouTube)

RESOURCES

CONTINUED

Catholic Ethical Purchasing Alliance

Carolina Textile District

Parish Tithe Example

Rejecting Throwaway Culture

Toward Zero Waste (SHARE and Compostable Tray Program for schools)

Feed America Donate to Feeding America

GOAL 7: COMMUNITY RESILIENCE AND EMPOWERMENT

Laudato Si'

Compostable Tray Program for schools

Local Organics Recycling Resources

NC Composting Council

Food Waste Audit

Local Harvest

12 sustainable eating habits

Orange County, NC Waste Composition Study

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Bishop Luis gratefully acknowledges Monica Kleimeyer, whose work was instrumental and invaluable in the development of the Diocese of Raleigh Laudato Si' Action Plan.

The U.S. Council of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), in partnership with the Vatican's Dicastery for promoting Integral Human Development, has provided various resources to assist bishops to formalize and improve the integration of ministry with practical tools that project our common home. These resources and tools collectively comprise the "Laudato Si' Action Platform" (LSAP) which equip Catholic institutions and individuals to journey towards sustainability in the spirit of Laudato Si'.

The LSAP outlines the first step in this journey as identifying a leader to review and consolidate work being done by other leaders in their diocese.

The Diocese of Raleigh is the only organization that identified a lay volunteer to lead their diocesan efforts in this area. Monica Kleimeyer, Coordinator of the "NC Catholics Caring for Our Common Home," has been working toward this vision for years and was uniquely positioned and qualified to lead this effort. Her commitment and inclusive leadership approach made her the obvious choice to assume this responsibility. The resulting Diocese of Raleigh Laudato Si' Action Plan is a testament to her abilities and a tribute to her work to inspire others to care for our common home.

The Diocese of Raleigh wishes to recognize and thank others who have been instrumental in this work to date and inspirational in our collective work going forward:

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NOTES

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