



A Journey of Care & Justice

Workshops to integrate
Laudato Si' into your life



Our Time is Now.

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Introduction | 3 |
| Laudato Si' Action Platform Goals | 4 |
| Responding to the Cry of the Earth | 5 |
| Responding to the Cry of the Poor | 6 |
| Ecological Economics | 7 |
| Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles | 8 |
| Ecological Education | 9 |
| Ecological Spirituality | 10 |
| Community Resilience and Empowerment | 11 |



Our Time is Now.

The Sisters of the Holy Cross have long recognized the interconnection and interdependence of living beings and the Earth they inhabit. As part of the wholeness of God's loving creation, we are inseparable from every part of it, just as we are inseparable from our creator.

This understanding permeates and guides the sisters' lives and relationships, partnerships and ministry. When Pope Francis released *Laudato Si'*, his encyclical on care for our common home, the themes and calls naturally resonated with the sisters. With eagerness, the Congregation committed to the *Laudato Si'* Action Platform, a global community of goodwill pursuing justice and care for the whole human family and the world.

As part of this initiative for sustainability, the Holy Cross sisters committed to promoting the seven platform goals within their communities, institutions and ministries. This booklet is one way to share these goals with your organization or congregation. Here, you can discover how each goal is defined, related passages in *Laudato Si'*, and questions to help you reflect on how they can take shape in your personal and community life.

The seven self-guided workshops in these pages are designed to be completed alone or with others, and you are encouraged to approach this material in your own unique way. As you spend time with the encyclical readings shared here, reflect, discuss, pray and act on what you have learned. And as you feel called, share your reflections and actions more broadly to promote understanding of integral ecology and humanity's role in it.

As you begin, take as your charge these words from Congregation President Sister M. Veronique (Wiedower), CSC: "All of us can cooperate as instruments of God for the care of creation."

Step by step, we are journeying toward a better future together.
Our time is now.

For more inspiration and additional resources, visit cscsisters.org/ourtimeisnow

What Are the Platform Goals?

The seven goals of the *Laudato Si'* Action Platform give individuals and groups a way to share a vision and shape action together. By aligning together with these goals, we can exchange resources and build momentum toward a sustainable future for our planet and all its inhabitants.



Response to Cry of the Earth is a call to protect our common home for the well-being of all, 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, protecting biodiversity, promoting sustainable agriculture, and guaranteeing access to clean water for all.



Response to 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.



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 and any activity harmful to the planet and the people, supporting circular economies, and prioritizing care labor and protecting the dignity of workers.



Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles is a practice 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 reducing meat consumption), greater use of public transport, active mobility (walking, cycling), and avoiding single-use items (e.g., disposable plastic).



Ecological Education involves rethinking and redesigning curricular and institutional reform in the spirit of integral ecology in order to foster ecological awareness and transformative action. Actions could include ensuring equitable access to education for all and promoting human rights, fostering *Laudato Si'* themes within the community, and encouraging ecological leadership (students, teachers) and ecological restoration activities.



Ecological Spirituality recovers a religious vision of God's creation and encourages greater contact with the natural world in a spirit of wonder, praise, joy and gratitude. Actions could include promoting creation-centered liturgical celebrations, developing ecological catechesis, retreats and formation programs, and praying in nature.



Community Involvement and Participatory Action encourage the development of cultures and policies that protect our common home and all who share it. Actions could include promoting advocacy and developing people's campaigns, engagement with decision-makers, and encouraging rootedness and a sense of belonging in local communities and neighborhood ecosystems.



Responding to the Cry of the Earth

Connect with your own experience and reflect on where you are being called to act. Begin with these readings from *Laudato Si'*.

- ▶ paragraphs 20-26, on pollution and climate change
- ▶ paragraphs 27-31, on water
- ▶ paragraphs 32-42, on loss of biodiversity

Reflection Questions

What about each reading stands out you?

How do your personal lifestyle and lifestyles in your community lead to the issues presented in the readings?

Conversation Starters

How are people who live in poverty adversely affected by climate change?

Why is the environmental crisis being met with a weak response?

What does using a biblical lens reveal about the environmental crisis?

What does using an ecclesial lens reveal about the environmental crisis?

Closing Charge

What can you do on personal and community levels to address the issues of pollution, climate change, water scarcity and loss of biodiversity?

Prayer for Response to the Cry of the Earth

Creator God, you brought us forth from Earth, and in your love for us, you entrusted to us the care and protection of all creation.

Grant us the wisdom to be awed and humbled by your gifts, O God, that we might never forget: Violence against creation is violence against us all.

Even as we celebrate the beauty and bounty that surrounds us, may we also acknowledge the suffering we have inflicted on creation, through our actions and through our failures to act.

The cry of the Earth is a wound we feel at the soul level. As we experience this pain, O God, convert our hearts, that we might transform our vision of what is possible through active hope

Amen.

Prayer provided by Holy Cross
International Justice Office:
www.holycrossjustice.org





Responding to the Cry of the Poor

“Today, however, 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’* 202

Connect with your own experience and reflect on where you are being called to act. Begin with these readings from *Laudato Si’*.

- ▶ paragraph 10: St. Francis, Caring for Creation and the Poor
- ▶ paragraph 25: Implications of Climate Change on the Poor
- ▶ paragraph 48: The Effect on the Most Vulnerable
- ▶ paragraph 49: Hear the Cry of the Earth & the Cry of the Poor
- ▶ paragraphs 93-95: The Common Destination of Goods Conversion

Reflection Questions

What about each reading stands out to you?
Where do you hear the “cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor”?

Conversation Starters

What daily choices do you make that could affect all communities of life, especially those that are most vulnerable?
How does seeing everything as connected change the way you see the world?

Closing Charge

How can you respond to the cry of the poor in your own life?

Prayer for Cry of the Poor

Creator God,
You taught us that the poor are blessed and that all lives are precious and have dignity. Remind us that we can see you and serve you in the faces of the poor, abandoned and deprived.

Help us to be your ears to listen to the cry of the poor. Inspire us to be your voice, delivering messages of acceptance and love. Encourage us to be your feet, walking with those in need. Awaken us to be your hands to alleviate the suffering and pain of your people and to care for all your creation on Earth.

Amen.





Ecological Economics

Caring for ecosystems demands farsightedness, since no one looking for quick and easy profit is truly interested in their preservation. But the cost of the damage caused by such selfish lack of concern is much greater than the economic benefits to be obtained.—*Laudato Si'* 36

Connect with your own experience and reflect on where you are being called to act. Begin with these readings from *Laudato Si'*.

- ▶ Danger of Deceptive Economic Interests, paragraph 38
- ▶ Influence of Economic Interests, paragraph 45
- ▶ Financial Gain Over Human Dignity, paragraph 56
- ▶ Need for an Economic Ecology, paragraph 141
- ▶ Rethinking Economic Benefits, paragraph 191
- ▶ Compulsive Consumerism, paragraph 203
- ▶ Purchasing as a Moral Act, paragraph 206

Pope Francis never actually uses the term “ecological economics” in his encyclical. However, he talks about integral ecology, which is a comprehensive framework made up of environmental, economic and social ecologies.

Reflection Questions:

What about each reading stands out to you?

In what ways might your lifestyle contribute to the issues in the readings?

Conversation Starters:

How are people who live in poverty adversely affected by some actions businesses take for financial gain?

What role does economic ecology play in integral ecology?

Closing Charge:

What can you do on a personal level to be a more socially responsible consumer?

Prayer for Prosperity

In your infinite love, O God, you have blessed us with the richness of creation, the gifts of which hold the promise of prosperity for every being—brothers and sisters all.

Yet in our blindness and greed, we have forgotten the true meaning of prosperity, that it is our relationship to you and to one another that gives us purpose.

In our apathy, we have allowed harmful systems to take root, systems that overpower people and planet for the privilege and greedy appetites of the few.

Grant us, Loving Creator, the wisdom and strength to right these wrongs, to give the economy its proper place in the service of people and planet, that we might fulfill our duty to care for our common home, ensuring that present and future generations might share in your bountiful love.

Amen.

Prayer provided by Holy Cross International Justice Office:
www.holycrossjustice.org



Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles

“The urgent challenge to protect our common home includes a concern to bring the whole human family together to seek a sustainable and integral development, for we know that things can change.”—*Laudato Si'* 13

Connect with your own experience and reflect on where you are being called to act. Begin with these readings from *Laudato Si'*.

- ▶ paragraph 22: The Throwaway Culture
- ▶ paragraphs 23-26: Climate as a Common Good
- ▶ paragraph 50: Population Growth vs. Extreme and Selective Consumerism
- ▶ paragraphs 51-52: Ecological Debt and Differentiated Responsibilities
- ▶ paragraphs 156-162: The Principle of the Common Good

Reflection Questions

What about each reading stands out to you?

In what ways might your lifestyle contribute to the throwaway culture?

Conversation Starters

Do we consider the protection of the natural world to be an essential aspect of what it means to be a person of good character?

How would you describe the impact of “ecological debt” on the promotion of the common good?

Closing Charge

What steps can you take to counteract the throwaway culture and influence the lowering of ecological debt?

Prayer for Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles

O God, invite us to live simply and in solidarity with our brothers and sisters around the globe.

As we strive to care for our common home, inspire us to make choices that recognize our impact on the environment and those impacted the most by environmental degradation—the poor and vulnerable.

Grant us the grace to adopt sustainable lifestyles by turning away from selfish consumption of goods and resources, to recognize the sacredness of your creatures, and to grow in our respect for all your creation.

Amen.





Ecological Education

“Many things have to change course, but it is we human beings above all who need to change. We lack an awareness of our common origin, of our mutual belonging, and of a future to be shared with everyone ... a great cultural, spiritual and educational challenge stands before us, and it will demand that we set out on the long path of renewal.”—*Laudato Si’* 202

Connect with your own experience and reflect on where you are being called to act. Begin with these readings from *Laudato Si’*.

- ▶ paragraphs 209-215: Ecological Education
- ▶ paragraphs 216-221: Ecological Conversion

Reflection Questions

What about each reading stands out to you?

What challenges would you need to overcome for your own ecological conversion?

Conversation Starters

How is your local church and/or family involved in ecological education?

How can governments/community organizations create better ecological citizens and motivate people to care for creation?

Closing Charge

Pope Francis asks us to “call to mind the figure of Saint Francis of Assisi” so we can “come to realize that a healthy relationship with creation is one dimension of overall personal conversion, which entails the recognition of our errors, sins, faults and failures, and leads to heartfelt repentance and desire to change” (*LS* 218). How can you begin leaning further into your ecological conversion? What does that look like when grocery shopping?

Prayer for Transformative Action

Creator God, you have called us to a new moment in time,

A time for cultivating hearts and minds and embracing new perspectives, that we might develop new ethics and habits for the restoration of ourselves and Mother Earth.

In your compassion, O God, inspire our generosity for one another and for all creation,

That we might rise to the challenge of our time and bring about a future of hope and mutual belonging.

Amen

Prayer provided by Holy Cross International Justice Office:
www.holycrossjustice.org





Ecological Spirituality

“A great cultural, spiritual and educational challenge stands before us, and it will demand that we set out on the long path of renewal.”—*Laudato Si'* 202

Connect with your own experience and reflect on where you are being called to act. Begin with these readings from *Laudato Si'*.

- ▶ paragraph 202: Ecological Spirituality
- ▶ paragraph 216-221: Ecological Conversion
- ▶ paragraph 222-227: Joy and Peace

Reflection Questions

- What about each reading stands out to you?
- Where did you feel God's presence in creation today?
- How does God's creation enliven your prayer life or bring you closer to God?

Conversation Starters

- How can you promote a spirit of wonder, awe, praise, thanksgiving and joy to care for our common home?
- How do you nurture your ecological spirituality and connection with environmental concerns?

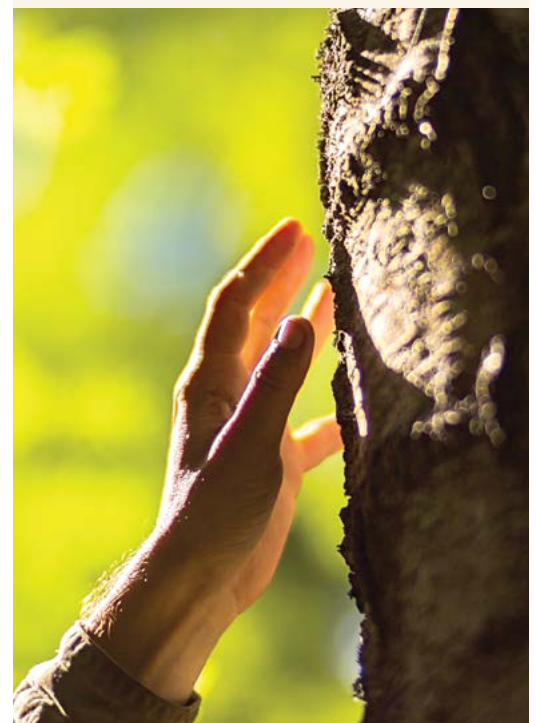
Closing Charge

- How can you incorporate ecological spirituality practices into your weekly prayer routine?

Prayer for Ecological Spirituality

Creator God,
You sent your son to live among us, under the same sun and stars, breathing the same air, amidst the same beautiful and holy creation you gifted us. Grant us the wisdom to care for this Earth, the strength to be protectors of our common home, and the responsibility to act for future generations. Help us to restore ourselves and our planet through an ecological spirituality grounded in your power and love.

Amen.





Community Resilience and Empowerment

“Social problems must be addressed by community networks and not simply by the sum of individual good deeds ... The ecological conversion needed to bring about lasting change is also a community conversion.”

—*Laudato Si'* 219

Connect with your own experience and reflect on where you are being called to act. Begin with these readings from *Laudato Si'*.

- ▶ paragraphs 13-16: Appeal from Pope Francis
- ▶ paragraph 145: Cultural Identity and Community
- ▶ paragraph 179: Individuals Can Make a Difference
- ▶ paragraphs 228-232: Civic and Political Love

Reflection questions

What about each reading stands out to you?

How are you engaged in advocacy at the local and national level?

Conversation Starters

What are the challenges/harsh realities people in your community face?

How can you encourage a sense of belonging in your local community?

Closing Charge

What ideas do you have to promote community resilience and empowerment in your faith community and beyond to your wider community?

Prayer for Community Resilience and Empowerment

O God, open our hearts and our eyes that we might recognize the struggles of our neighbors, even as we witness the sacredness of all life. Imbue us with courage and wisdom, that we might embrace the common good, boldly building resilient communities, where all have the opportunity to flourish and commune with creation and each other.

Amen.

Prayer provided by Holy Cross International Justice Office:
www.holycrossjustice.org





Our Time is Now.



cscsisters.org/ourtimeisnow