

# Congregation of St. Joseph

## Laudato Si' Action Plan Toolkit



**“Praise be to you!”**

## **Laudato Si’ Calls Us to Care for Our Common Home**

Our shared COSJ commitment ‘that all may be one’ creates an urgency in us to answer the cry of Earth and the cry of the poor. This integral ecology of the universe and our connection to all creation calls us to think, act and pray with a fervor and energy that’s nurtures and moves us forward. Our growing awareness of the needs of the Dear Neighbors impels us to answer the cries of those who are poor and the cries of Earth.

Let us continually ask ourselves: *How does this action heal or harm, repair or replenish, create or destroy ?*

As we grow in our commitment to the dignity of all living things without distinction, we pray for the grace of a conversion of heart. May we hold ourselves accountable for rooting out systemic social evils, especially racism and environmental destruction. With trust that our small actions will help create a more just and loving future, we offer our resources for the healing and flourishing of the world.



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## Dear Sisters, Associates, Colleagues, and Community Partners,

We write to you in the beautiful in-between, as we evolve from Year One into Year Two of our congregational commitment to the Laudato Si' Action Plan. This past year we have acknowledged our ongoing efforts in caring for our common home, discerned even bolder action, and created the first iteration of our Congregation of St. Joseph Laudato Si' Action Plan. We thank everyone who was involved in this process, especially those who offered their time and talent through the Laudato Si' Planning Committee.

As we journey together from planning to implementation, it will take each and every one of us being informed and committed. Therefore, we offer this toolkit as a resource for our personal and communal discernment, prayers, and actions. May it sustain and empower us!

Please note that part of our commitment to the Laudato Si' Action Platform is evaluation and assessment. As we begin to actualize our congregational objectives and initiatives, be prepared for upcoming evaluation and assessment processes. This will be developed not only to measure our accomplishments, but to join in celebration with the global church community!

Together, we pray for the courage to be bold and creative, that we might achieve greater ecological conversion and more fully embody integral ecology. May these efforts move us ever closer to realizing Jesus' dream "that all may be one".

Finally, please contact the Steering Committee with any comments, questions, or ideas at [csjlaudatosi@csjoseph.org](mailto:csjlaudatosi@csjoseph.org)!

Sincerely,

**Laudato Si' Action Plan Steering Committee**



# CSJ Integral Ecology Examen

(Recommended for use in department & committee meetings, house community/living groups, RLCs, Conversation Circles, personal prayer, etc.)

**1.) I give thanks to God through whom, with whom and in whom all creation is wonderfully made.** *Where did I experience God's presence in creation today?*

**2.) I ask for the grace to experience creation as God does—in all its interconnection and union, its splendor and suffering.** *Where & how do I see the beauty of creation? Where and how do I see and hear the cries of Earth and all who are poor?*

**3.) I ask for the grace to look closely at how my life choices affect creation and all who are poor and vulnerable?** *What challenges or joys do I experience as I recall my care for creation? How can I turn away from a throwaway culture and instead stand in solidarity with creation and all who are poor?*

**4.) I ask for the grace of conversion of heart towards Integral Ecology embracing ecological justice and reconciliation.** *Where have I fallen short in caring for the whole of creation—the human community and all beings? What can I do to be open to conversion of heart?*

**5.) I ask for the grace to reconcile my relationship with God and all of creation and to stand in solidarity through my actions.** *How am I being called to repair my relationship with creation and make choices consistent with my desire to be one with the whole of creation?*

**6.) I offer a closing prayer for Earth and all who are vulnerable.**

**Generous Promise:** *Based on this examen, I/we promise be mindful of a particular Laudato Si' Action Platform goal in the upcoming weeks and examine my/our habits and actions accordingly. Through this awareness, may we more fully embody union with God and all of Creation.*

# Our CSJ Laudato Si' Action Plan

That all may be one... John 17:21



Circle of Life Summer, Sr. Mary Southard

“We are faced not with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather with one complex crisis which is both social and environmental. Strategies for a solution demand an integrated approach to combating poverty, restoring dignity to the excluded, and at the same time protecting nature.” Pope Francis Laudato Si' chapter 4, paragraph 139

# Goal: Cry of the Earth

(Adoption of renewable energies and energy sufficiency measures, achieving carbon neutrality, protecting biodiversity, promoting sustainable agriculture. and guaranteeing access to clean water for all)

**Objective:** Intentional commitment to educate ourselves, and take action to care for the land we hold in trust.

## Initiatives:

- Move forward existing land development plans and create additional ones.
- Create land development plans, to care for and protect the land CSJ holds in trust (acknowledging the history of the land and indigenous people) in our unique bio-regions (e.g. to create/nurture prairies, native tree planting, gardens, low water usage, expansion of renewable resources, explore use of land trust/conservancy, etc.).
- Provide education/information (for Sisters, Associates, Staff/Employees, Neighbors, etc.) on care of earth particularly (but not limited to) the land entrusted to our care (e.g. why it's crucial for the health of the planet; how to create, maintain and protect green space; recognize the legacy of our land including that of prior indigenous inhabitants and how it was used in the past. -bioregional bingo and watershed eucharist.
- Support and collaborate with local governments, and other groups engaged in green and/or climate crisis planning and with continued monitoring of the Mirabeau project.



# Goal: Cry of the Poor

(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.)

**Objective:** Identify current actions we are engaged with, assess their effectiveness and sustainability; identify potential new actions with which we could engage.

## Initiatives:

- Work with others to identify intersecting new areas/issues (unmet needs) with those areas and issues in which we have longstanding commitment.

**Objective:** Create a plan to engage in a focused planning process re. Cry of the Poor.

## Initiatives:

- Identifying ways to move more deeply into partnerships for advocacy and action to respond to the “cry of” those who are poor, marginalized, and most affected by climate change/eco-injustice in our local areas; with emphasis on supporting and collaborating with efforts underway in all our locations.
- Create a pollinator path across our geography for butterflies and bees (also a vulnerable form of life) to protect biodiversity. *Thank you Monarch Champions!*





# Goal: Ecological Economics

*(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 dignity of workers.)*

**Objective:** Invest in development and support of alternative sources of non-fossil fuels & energy.

## **Initiatives:**

- Increase the use of solar energy within our Congregation.
- Review criteria for investing, granting, and giving to include initiatives that support non-fossil fuel energy sources, as well as those that give priority to grant requests by our ministries and other organizations involved in this work.
- As we are able, budget for initiatives and have our congregational and personal budgets reflect work on these objectives and initiatives.



# Goal: Adoption of a Simple Lifestyle

(Reducing waste and recycling, adopting sustainable dietary habits, greater use of public transport, active mobility, and avoiding single use items such as plastics.)

**Objective:** Reduce carbon emissions and consumption through the reduction of carbon and waste.

## **Initiatives:**

- One meatless day per week to reduce the emission of carbon and methane into the atmosphere.
- Commit to composting within all of our Centers and homes.
- Develop personal plans for reducing carbon emissions by ride sharing; and rethink how we travel.
- When possible, buy food grown locally (e.g. from farm stands, CSA—Community Supported Agriculture, etc.).
- Examine purchasing practices and cooperate with others to reduce buying new and reduce consumerism.
- Consider one 'no spend' day per week.



# Goal: Ecological Education

(Ensuring equitable access to education for all and promoting human rights; fostering Laudato Si' themes within the community; encouraging ecological leadership, and ecological restoration activities.)

**Objective:** Create and implement education to deepen understanding of Integral Ecology, Laudato Si', Laudato Si' Action Platform goals.

## Initiatives:

- Prepare group of facilitators for the Congregation to meet and work with the different arenas in the life of the congregation, to deepen understanding of what is meant by Integral Ecology and how it impacts day to day life spiritually, professionally, personally, etc.
- Provide information on ecological spirituality/integral ecology to all our ministries.
- Have a quarterly “check in” about how our area of the congregation is embodying or working through the LSAP Goals & Integral Ecology.
- Encourage creation of materials by our sisters and associates (poems, prayers, songs) to share with congregation.



# Goal: Ecological Spirituality

(Promoting creation-based liturgical celebrations, developing ecological catechesis, retreats and formation programs.)

**Objective:** Heighten consciousness, articulation and connection between our mission and Charism, in light of all creation, to our Sacred Work, Generous Promises and Laudato Si' (Caring for Our Common Home).

## Initiatives:

- A prayer/song will be provided to be used by the entire congregation and prayed regularly in your group, meeting, house etc...
- Have conversation with people in your sphere of influence regular basis about how your particular area of the congregation is reflecting our commitment to God and to caring for our common home?
- Create a discipline or methodology of prayer using the Integral Ecology examen and add it to our daily prayer, sharing the state of the heart, etc.



# Goal: Community Resilience and Empowerment

(Promoting advocacy and developing people's campaigns, encouraging rootedness and a sense of belonging in local communities and neighborhood ecosystems.)

**Objective:** The congregation will learn and more fully understand how our partnerships contribute to Integral Ecology, transformative action and collective empowerment.

## **Initiatives:**

- Identify and assess our existing internal and external partnerships in light of community resilience and empowerment.
- Public recommitment to deepening and strengthening existing internal and external
- Partnerships, while identifying new partners who share our mission for the sake of community resilience and empowerment.



# Glossary:

**Laudato Si' Action Platform:** The Laudato Si' Action Platform is a unique collaboration between the Vatican, an international coalition of Catholic organizations, and “all [people] of good will.” (LS 3) Pope Francis has invited us on a world-changing journey that is both a gift and a call to action; a journey that unites us with one another in a holistic approach of embodying integral ecology. Through the Laudato Si' Action Platform, we are walking the “path to renewal” together (LS 202). Learn more at <https://laudatosiactionplatform.org/about/>.

**Laudato Si' Action Plan:** While the Laudato Si' Action Platform outlines seven goals for various groups and individuals to journey together, our Laudato Si' Action Plan contains distinctive and concrete objectives and initiatives for how we, the Congregation of St. Joseph, will participate. Our CSJ Laudato Si' Action Plan has been co-created by the Congregation at large, is unique to our mission and charism, and is ours to fulfill!

**Integral Ecology:** In short, integral ecology is the reminder that 'everything is connected'. In the context of Laudato Si', integral ecology proclaims that the cries of Earth and the cries of the poor are one voice. This means that our efforts towards a more just and loving world must be integrated and holistic. Through the lens of integral ecology, we are called to recognize the political, social, economic, and environmental realities that lead to harm and healing, lament and joy.





This resource was created by Kascha Sanor, Director of Social & Environmental Justice. If you have any feedback or would like to request a printer friendly version, please feel free to contact the CSJ Steering Committee via [csjlaudatosi@csjoseph.org](mailto:csjlaudatosi@csjoseph.org).