
LAUDATO SI ACTION PLATFORM

Province of St. Louise Year 3 Plan

2024-2025

Daughters of Charity



Background

Laudato Si, published in 2015, was an invitation from Pope Francis for the whole world on every level to transform the way we live in order to protect the life of our planet and all creatures, especially those living in poverty. Those most vulnerable are the first to be threatened by the climate crisis. This invitation of Laudato Si resonates deeply with us as Daughters of Charity, striving to live our spirit of humility, simplicity and charity as servants of Christ in those living in poverty.

To guide the Church at all levels to this transformation of lifestyle, the Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development created in 2021 the Laudato Si Action Platform, a 7-year process toward sustainability and integral ecology.

In 2023 Pope Francis wrote the Apostolic Exhortation- Laudate Deum- which emphasized how imperative it is to change our lifestyle on every level of human existence in the face of the climate crisis. This document communicated very concretely how inadequate our societal response has been so far and impels us to further action. *“If we consider that emissions per individual in the United States are about two times greater than those of individuals living in China, and about seven times greater than the average of the poorest countries, we can state that a broad change in the irresponsible lifestyle connected with the Western model would have a significant long-term impact. As a result, along with indispensable political decisions, we would be making progress along the way to genuine care for one another.”* (Laudate Deum, 72)

Evaluation of Year 2 Laudato Si Action Plan

In Laudato Si’, Pope Francis invites us to “discover what each of us can do” as we build a better future together. (LS 19) Responding to the call of Laudato Si’ and Laudate Deum means embracing new ways of living, as our growing awareness of the connections between all things is translated to concrete action.

In reviewing our Year 2 Plan, we are grateful for all the ways our Province has engaged in the journey of integral ecology. (see attached evaluation with goals accomplished). On the Provincial level, we are embracing a more simple lifestyle by decreasing large scale printing quantities of directories, calendars, etc. and investigating solar energy development on the land in Emmitsburg and Evansville. The survey results have demonstrated much engagement in integral ecology by the local communities (see attached summary of survey results). We have observed that initiatives from individual or small groups of Sisters have been very successfully carried out, such as Farm to Table in Emmitsburg, beginning composting in kitchenettes in Emmitsburg, and recycling in the Sarah Community. When the Sisters have an idea, the staff carry it out.

Introduction to our Year 3-4 Laudato Si Action Plan

This year our Province is engaging in our Ephata Discernment Process and our local communities are in the process of developing our Local Community Plans. We are using the framework of our Provincial Plan to present our Laudato Si Action Plan as a way to facilitate concrete ways to live integral ecology, the understanding that everything is connected. We will seek to implement this plan over the next 2 years.

For this third phase of our plan, we are including the additional goal of Response to the Cry of the Poor, so that now our plan now includes all 7 Laudato Si Goals.

As our Provincial Plan 2021-27 states, “The realities of climate change and its disproportionate negative effects on persons living in poverty were the basis for our understanding of **Care for our “common home”** as a compelling mission for us. We desire to grow in our understanding of **integral ecology** so as to change our behaviors and to use our provincial resources more effectively to combat the deterioration of Earth – our common home.” (Context for the Provincial Plan) In this LSAP Plan, the text from our Provincial Plan is italicized, and the actions for our LSAP Plan are denoted by checkboxes.

A. SPIRITUALITY-THE FOUNDATION OF WHO WE ARE AND ALL WE DO

LSAP Goal: Ecological Spirituality

We commit to break through our false sense of independence to embrace our dependence on God through prayer, contemplation, and growing in awareness of all areas of our life of service and community.

3. Being aware of Jesus, suffering and risen, in the world around us through contemplation.

5. Contemplating and celebrating the gifts of God’s creation.

- Develop prayers and reflections which explicitly connect the Vincentian Charism and Care of Creation, as well as, reinforcing Pope Francis’ message that humans and nature are interdependent
- Contribute spiritual content to Social Justice link
- Provide Earth Day and Season of Creation Resources
- Provide a resource for the annual retreat prayer booklet for contemplative prayer in our common home

B. OPEN COMMUNICATION

LSAP Goal: Ecological Education

We commit to breaking through our vulnerabilities, to nurturing and trust and a spirituality of communion, through skill building, emphasizing gratitude, accepting differences, and having courageous conversations.

5. Strengthen our provincial communications...to better balance transparency and confidentiality while assuring sensitivity and engagement of the sisters.

- Newsletters and Videos to inform sisters what is happening around the province
- Ephata and Integral Ecology presentation at Provincial Meeting 2024
- Provide updated content for the Provincial website on a regular basis
- Regular meetings with Sr. Mary Bader
- Encouraging sisters to contact us with questions, etc.

C. DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

LSAP Goal: Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles

We commit to breaking through our independence and to caring for vulnerable and oppressed populations by acknowledging our interdependence and our responsibility to care for our “common home”.

We will do this by:

10. Developing and implementing a Laudato Si Action Plan which includes:

- a. Embracing formation and education on care for our “common home” and changing our behaviors to practice integral ecology.*
- b. Focusing our resources toward the care of our “common home”.*

11. Assuming personal responsibilities for “my” actions which impact the demise of our common home and negatively impacts those living in poverty.

12. Supporting a “culture of life” by protecting and promoting human rights for individuals and families from conception to natural death.

- Repeat LSAP Local Community Survey in 2025 and compare with findings from the 2023 survey
- Continue to provide education on natural burials for our sisters. Continue to work with Emmitsburg to incorporate an area of natural burial in the cemetery

- Continue to include LSAP values in the discernment process for Provincial decisions and actions

D. VINCENTIAN IDENTITY AND COLLABORATION

LSAP Goals: Response to Cry of the Earth, Response to Cry of the Poor

We commit to break through our silos and to collaborate with persons living in poverty, the Vincentian Family, young adults and those with a similar mission to serve in creative and inclusive ways.

2. Seeking partners who share similar values to collaborate in new and emerging ministry opportunities.

4. Seeking ways to learn from people living in poverty by including their voices in decision making.

- Implement the Land Management Plan in collaboration with MSMU and Emmitsburg grounds care team, with applications to local community settings
- Complete final stage of Entomology study with USI and recommendations for creating biodiversity on the land in Evansville
- Offer opportunities to Sisters at our Senior Care Campuses to engage in advocacy
- Participate in Land Justice Training to better address structural racism

E. ADMINISTRATION

We commit to breaking through to the current and emerging needs of those living in poverty by an objective assessment of our ministries and properties.

LSAP Goals: Ecological Economics, Community Engagement and Participation

- Assess the current utilization of our land resources given our call to be faithful stewards of God's creation
- Continue to make investments based on Justice and Care of Creation
- Transition our properties to sustainable/renewable energy
- Incorporate sustainable living criteria into the discernment process of houses to close/open in our Provincial Ephata Discernment process
- Plan development of pollinator habitat for solar fields: investigate funding, collaboration options with DNR, etc.

Path of Listening...

“None of our initiatives can do without this time of openness to God’s breath, attention to the realities of the world and moments of shared reflection... accepting to be transformed and even shaken up.”

Path of Missionary Boldness...

“We always have to renew ourselves, particularly, at times, in our ways of doing things. Some are still relevant; others, no. Boldness calls for discernment, clear-sightedness and the will to prioritize, for we cannot do everything.”

Path of Trust...

“Trust in God is an act of faith that needs to be nourished by meditation on the Word of God, prayerful silence, sharing of experiences and listening to what people who are poor say. Trust, in fact, also includes the trust we have in others.”



Draft Plan respectfully submitted on March 27, 2024 by Sr. Sharon Horace and Sr. Mary Jo Stein
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