






# Integral Ecology Plan *of the* Diocese of St. Augustine

## Getting Started - Sign the St. Francis Pledge

### I/We Pledge to:

-  **PRAY** and reflect on the duty to care for God's Creation and protect the poor and vulnerable.
-  **LEARN** about and educate others on the causes and moral dimensions of climate change.
-  **ASSESS** how we-as individuals and in our families, parishes and other affiliations can contribute to climate change by our own energy use, consumption, waste, etc.

-  **ACT** to change our choices and behaviors to reduce the ways we contribute to climate change.
-  **ADVOCATE** for Catholic principles and priorities in climate change discussions and decisions, especially as they impact those who are poor and vulnerable.

\*Source:  
<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/environment/upload/ecology-resource-all.pdf>

GOAL →	FORMATION	REDUCING CONSUMPTION & WASTE	ADVOCACY
	<p>Engage in meaningful discussions about care for creation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>P</b> 1. Learn more about environmental issues and personal responsibility.</li> <li>2. Attend or listen to lectures, webinars and podcasts devoted to environmental care from a Christian perspective.</li> <li><b>G</b> Form a study group within your parish to read and discuss the papal encyclical <i>Laudato Si</i>.</li> <li><b>O</b> Each parish can form a <i>Laudato Si</i> committee to coordinate group activities and study groups.</li> </ul> <p>The Diocese of St. Augustine will actively promote formation on the topic of <i>Laudato Si</i>: Care for Our Common Home with annual messages from diocese to all parishes.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop and distribute homiletics for use in parishes.</li> <li>2. Sponsor webinars/study groups/speakers.</li> </ol>	<p>Commit to reducing single-use plastics, carbon emissions, and trash production in our daily lives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>P</b> Actively work to eliminate single-use items from your daily lives.               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Utilize no-waste cleaning products.</li> <li>2. Carry a reusable lunch box/cooler bag, and use reusable grocery bags instead of plastic or paper.</li> <li>3. Use cloth napkins in place of paper.</li> <li>4. Wash and reuse freezer and storage bags. When they are at the end of their useful life, replace with long-lasting or completely compostable alternatives.</li> <li>5. Support businesses that exhibit a commitment to reduced waste.</li> </ol> </li> <li><b>G</b> See personal above, plus:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Stop use of plastic plates, cups and utensils in homes, cafeteria, and break rooms.</li> <li>2. Purchase supplies in bulk to reduce packaging (typically plastic).</li> <li>3. Use wooden pencils; use pens with refills instead of disposables.</li> <li>4. Promote use of refillable metal or glass water bottles (silicone or padded fabric sleeves for safety).</li> <li>5. Use biodegradable trash bags (paper or biodegradable plastics).</li> </ol> </li> <li><b>O</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Encourage paperless communication (email, posting on websites); print materials double-sided.</li> <li>2. Use recycled materials whenever possible. This creates a larger market for recycled goods and enhances efforts of recycling.</li> <li>3. Report efforts and their effects to the organization. Point out money saved and reinvested in other needs.</li> </ol> </li> </ul>	<p>Care for vulnerable members of our communities, particularly those most affected by environmental degradation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>P</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Participate in activities that promote environmental awareness particularly issues that impact neighborhoods and areas with historic environmental problems.</li> <li>2. Write letters, opinion and comments to newspapers and social media outlets promoting a reasoned reverence for the environment and the people who live in impacted areas.</li> <li>3. Vote with a mind towards the care of the environment and concerns for health and safety related to environmental issues in NE Florida.</li> </ol> </li> <li><b>G</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Volunteer as a family to help at a soup kitchen or shelter, collect materials for donation.</li> <li>2. Regularly give as a family to food banks, St Vincent DePaul, or Catholic Charities.</li> <li>3. Participate in cleanups and local environmental activities particularly in disadvantaged areas.</li> <li>4. Create a friendly challenge to purchase produce locally and in-season while sharing the environmental benefits; participate in community gardening.</li> </ol> </li> <li><b>O</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Form Green Teams to Facilitate Collaboration</li> <li>2. Develop a Calendar of Environmental Events. Hold Environmental/Sustainable event to promote sustainable practices.</li> <li>3. Host Expert Speakers/Webinars</li> <li>4. Broaden school curricula in sciences and social sciences to include Sustainable Practices and Environmental Awareness/Stewardship.</li> </ol> </li> </ul>

### Chart Key

The committee established 6 primary goals, each broken down into 3 main sub-groups that identifies personal, group and organizational efforts to reduce environmental degradation through formation, reducing consumption and waste, and advocacy.

**P** = Personal    **G** = Group    **O** = Organizational

**GOAL** →**FORMATION**

Improve knowledge of *Laudato Si*, church teachings, and scripture of care for creation.

- P** 1. Acquire a copy of *Laudato Si*; read carefully and prayerfully. Determine what you think is the main point of the encyclical; journal about your thoughts and/or reactions to the content of *Laudato Si*.
- 2. Seek guidance from my parish DRE about the contents of *Laudato Si*.
- 3. Seek out and get involved in a parish *Laudato Si* study group.
- 4. Pray daily for discernment about how my personal actions affect the condition of the planet, and how I might make meaningful changes.
- 5. In a Catholic Study Bible: Read the book of Genesis, chapters 1-11; Gospel According to Mark noticing how Jesus and the other characters in the narrative relate to, talk about, work with the land and other creatures in the story; Paul's letter to the Romans with an eye to what Paul says about creation; Psalms 8 and 104.
- G** Expand individual actions to include family and friends.
- O** In addition to diocesan efforts, parishes can:
  1. Form *Laudato Si* study groups and committees.
  2. Incorporate study of *Laudato Si* and pertinent scriptural passages (noted above) in catechism classes in parish schools and CCD classes.

**REDUCING CONSUMPTION & WASTE**

Commit to lower consumption of fossil fuels and consumer goods.

- P** 1. Eat vegetarian meals 1-2 days per week (breakfast, lunch, and dinner).
- 2. Restrict red meat consumption to 1 day per week maximum. Fish, poultry, and eggs produce much less CO2 in production.
- 3. Work from home 1-2 days per week; carpool or take public transportation to reduce fuel consumption.
- 4. Buy locally produced products with less transportation to market.
- 5. Repair items rather than replacing.
- 6. Donate unused items to local charities rather than discarding as garbage.
- G** 1. Plant a vegetable and herb garden for use by the group.
- 2. Do not throw away uneaten food unless it is tainted or spoiled.
- 3. Use motion-sensing lights and high efficiency light bulbs.
- 4. Reduce single-person trips in the car - combine errands.
- 5. Install solar panels to replace some electricity generated by the burning of fossil fuels.
- O** 1. Adjust thermostats up a degree or two for summer AC, down a degree or two for cooler months.
- 2. Install low energy light bulbs (LED) or use natural lighting when possible.
- 3. Renovate with energy savings in mind- solar panels, increased insulation, reducing water consumption. Keep a record of energy use and post this for all personnel.
- 4. Encourage use of public transportation or carpooling. Post information to make this easier for personnel.

**ADVOCACY**

Engage in outreach at home, school, workplace, community, and place of worship - be a role model for the changes in the attitude and action at all scales.

- P** Advocacy by example, first learn, then act and advocate:
  1. Attend educational forums to learn more about threats and solutions.
  2. Participate in activities that promote environmental awareness.
  3. Participate in cleanups and local environmental activities.
  4. Engage local environmental groups or support a non-profit organization dedicated to environmental causes.
  5. Attend open forum meetings that discuss environmental issues.
  6. Write letters to the editor to your local newspaper and share social media posts promoting a reasoned reverence for the environment and need to heal our earth.
  7. Patronize businesses and organizations with a commitment to social justice and ecologically friendly practices.
  8. Encourage others to join the effort over coffee or lunch.
  9. Vote in local and national elections keeping the goals of this plan in mind.
- G** Expand individual actions to include family and friends.
- O** 1. Organize or Participate in Earth Day exhibitions, local cleanups, and local environmental activities.
- 2. Attend or organize open forum meetings that discuss environmental issues.
- 3. Publish parish-wide projects and goals (website).
- 4. Encourage parishioners to pledge and report efforts.



**DIOCESE OF**  
**St. Augustine**

\*This is not an exhaustive list but intended to get you thinking about ways to engage with the plan and make changes that will positively affect the environment locally and globally. If the individual, group or organization is already doing one or more of the suggested actions, attempt to add another action to further improve progress.

**Suggested Reading and Additional Resources**

Season of Creation Steering Committee, 2020. Jubilee for the Earth: 2020 Celebration Guide. <https://seasonofcreation.org/guide/>

World Council of Churches 2019. Roadmap for Congregations, Communities, and churches for an Economy of Life and Ecological Justice. <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-programmes/diakonia/economy-of-life/roadmap-for-congregations-communities-and-churches-for-an-economy-of-life-and-ecological-justice>

Print out the poster with your *Laudato Si* pledge, take a photo of you holding it and share on social media using the hashtags #CreationCare #MercyEarth and challenging your friends and colleagues to do the same. [https://www.sistersofmercy.org/files/images/Justice/Initiative/Laudato-Si-pledge\\_Social.pdf](https://www.sistersofmercy.org/files/images/Justice/Initiative/Laudato-Si-pledge_Social.pdf)