

St. Mary Catholic Community Acts - 2025
“LAUDATO SI” ACTION PLATFORM - Guided by the Seven Aims of Laudato Si’

We each are taking steps in our lives to live in a way that heals our earth. A small step may seem futile in addressing such a big problem but each action reminds us of our interconnection with all living things and the ecosystem in which we live. Each small step often encourages us to take another step in solidarity with the health of our planet. What you do is seen by your family, by your friends, by your neighbors, by strangers and encourages them to reflect on their actions and how what they do impacts mankind and our earth. St. Mary’s ministries and actions continue to call people to promote the kingdom of God today. The Laudato Si’ Action Platform focuses on the **seven aims of Laudato Si’**, which should guide our actions. Many of our parish actions fall within these seven aims.

1. The 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 wellbeing 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.” <https://laudatosiactionplatform.org>

St. Mary’s actions:

- Installation and use of solar panels for rectory and parish office
- Installation of LED lights in the church
- St. Mary Community Garden – protecting pollinators, planting trees, drip irrigation, mulching, and much more
- Parish office - conserve energy with smart thermometers, more efficient heating system, and a very efficient heat pump for cooling
- St. Francis Peace Through Justice (SFPTJ) adopt a highway.
- The Maintenance Ministry serves with a focus on the environment
- And more...

2. The 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.” <https://laudatosiactionplatform.org>

St. Mary’s actions:

- Family Promise – families experiencing homelessness are provided lodging at St. Mary and meals prepared by parishioners
- Basket Auction and Thanksgiving dinners provide meals for many
- Giving Tree – a Christmas outreach project
- Saint Francis Peace Through Justice Ministry outreach to God’s Love, the homeless, No One is Buried Alone, support refugees for resettlement and more.
- Catholic Relief Services – CRS Rice Bowl
- St. Mary Community Garden – Providing thousands of pounds of food to Helena Food Share and building community through garden activities.

- Our parish, also, supports the following organizations monthly: Catholic Social Services of MT, De La Salle Blackfeet School, The Friendship Center, God's Love, Good Samaritan Ministries, Helena Food Share, Diocese of Helena – Guatemala Mission and the Options Clinic
- And more...

3. 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 and any activity harmful to the planet and the people, supporting circular economies, and prioritizing care labor and protecting the dignity of workers.” <https://laudatosiactionplatform.org>

St. Mary's actions:

- Bulletin Online reduces paper and ink consumption
- Café Mam – coffee sold by our parish and grown by native Maya farmers. Supports the principles of Fair Trade (livable wages, improved work conditions and better living conditions).

4. The Adoption of a Simple Way of Life (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 reducing meat consumption), greater use of public transport, active mobility (walking, cycling), and avoiding single use items (e.g. plastic, etc.).” <https://laudatosiactionplatform.org>

St. Mary's actions:

- Recycling – office paper, liturgical sheets, and other waste
- Lenten soup and bread night encourage a plant-based community dinner
- CRS Rice Bowl – promotes a sustainable diet similar to many countries. Recipes are provided.
- Utilize glassware, china and silverware at funerals.
- St. Mary Community Garden – provides parishioners and community members with an opportunity to add fresh locally grown produce to their diet.
- And more...

5. Ecological Education

“Ecological Education is about re-thinking and re-designing 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, encouraging ecological leadership (students, teachers), and ecological restoration activities.” <https://laudatosiactionplatform.org>

St. Mary's actions:

- St. Francis Peace through Justice Ministry (SFPTj) focuses on the importance of social justice through education and action: book studies, speakers and discussions, action projects etc.
- Care for Creation book studies.
- Bulletin articles, focusing on Laudato Si’ and the science and social dimensions of the ecological crisis, written and compiled by members of the Care for Creation Ministry.
- Providing information on the Laudato Si’ Action Plan in the bulletin

6. Ecological Spirituality

“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.” <https://laudatosiactionplatform.org>

St. Mary’s actions:

- Intercessory Prayer
- Praying in Nature – beautiful St. Francis prayer walk around the garden. Within the parish community garden there is a garden of hope and remembrance. Religious symbols remind all of the connection between God and creation.
- Laudato Si Celebration – Each May we celebrate the anniversary of the Laudato Si’ Encyclical
- Season of Creation Celebration – this annual ecumenical celebration of prayer and action for our common home takes place in the fall.

7. Community Engagement and Participatory Action

“Community Engagement 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.”

<https://laudatosiactionplatform.org>

St. Mary’s actions:

- Information provided on actions taking place in Helena
- Members of Care for Creation team participate in Helena Interfaith Climate Advocates (HICA) which educates, advocates and prays for peace.
- Lots more to do in this area

Pope Francis invites you to participate in the Laudato Si’ Action Platform – a 7 year journey.

“This platform offers you tools and resources in the hopes that you will ***join us on the journey***. God has given you unique gifts, gifts that you alone can bring to our shared project of building a better future together... You are the expert on your needs and priorities, and while it is hoped that the suggestions in this guide will be useful to you, you are entirely free to use it in any way you wish.”

To remain committed as a Laudato Si’ family, ***only three things are requested***.

1. Complete an ***annual self-assessment*** to discern where you are on the road to integral ecology, so that we might travel together.
2. Upload a ***reflection*** on how your values are connected to the Laudato Si’ Goals, so that others might be inspired by it.
3. Upload an annual Laudato Si’ Plan that includes ***your target outcomes and the actions*** you will take this year, so that others might grow along with you.

Hope Jahren, a scientist and teacher, writes in The Story of More:

“Having hope requires courage...It is precisely because no single solution will save us that everything we do matters. Every meal we eat, every mile we travel, and every dollar we spend presents us with a choice between using more energy than we did last time or less. You have power. How will you use it?...

Out before us stretches a new century, and its story is still unwritten.”