

Saint Mary Catholic Community Acts
“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. Over the next few weeks we will link many of our parish ministries with each of the 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, composting and much more
- 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, focus on ways to abolish the death penalty
- 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 outreach organizations: Catholic Social Services, De La Salle Blackfeet School, Friendship Center, Family Promise, God’s Love, Good Samaritan Ministries, Habitat for Humanity, Helena Community Gardens, Helena Food Share 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).
- Bread Bakers purchase local wheat flour from Wheat Montana.

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
- Purchase of compostable drinking cups
- 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.
- Avoids single use items during gatherings. Utilizes glassware, china and silverware.
- Covid-19 protocol encouraged Zoom gatherings and thus reduced travel to and from meetings.
- St. Mary Community Garden – provides parishioners and community members with an opportunity to add fresh locally grown produce to their diet.

For wisdom, strength and love in our efforts to protect God's own home, for fire fighters, for relief workers and for all of those suffering due to the fires, the smoke, the floods and hurricanes we pray to the Lord.

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:

- Zoom night – “Journey with Creation”
- St. Francis Peace through Justice Ministry (SFPTJ) focuses on the importance of social justice through education and action: book studies, Zoom speakers and discussions, action projects etc.
- Laudato Si' book study
- Weekly bulletin articles focusing on Laudato Si', the science and social dimensions of the ecological crisis written and compiled by members of the parish
- Youth program shared pictures in bulletin entitled - Restore our Earth

- Providing information on the Laudato Si' Action Plan in the bulletin
- Covid-19 Parish drive through and blessing. Distributing gift bags from the various ministries.

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 . Religious symbols remind all of the connection between God and creation.
- Advent prayer service – reflection on Care for Creation
- Laudato Si Celebration – Each May we celebrate the anniversary of the Laudato Si’ Encyclical

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
- Lots more to do in this area