

In response to Pope Francis' call to environmental sustainability in the spirit of *Laudato Si'*, we're creating worksheets for each of the seven *Laudato Si'* Action Platform goals. These worksheets are written especially for households (individuals, couples and families) in north American settings, although we encourage anyone who might be interested to use them. We'll send them monthly, beginning in September 2022. Journey with us!

OCTOBER 2022: Goal #2 – Respond 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 programmes.” (www.laudatosiactionplatform.org)

In this worksheet, we'll look at how our use and management of water can be a concrete response to the cry of the poor, who often live in vulnerable communities in the front line of floods, droughts, and water contamination. We'll look for ways to hold local governments accountable for assuring clean water for all communities, and to support all forms of life where we live – in our own neighborhoods. We'll focus particularly on reducing pollution and increasing resiliency in local bodies of water. We'll also look at what it means to have an ecologically healthy neighborhood, and why acting locally on this matter helps people and life across the globe. **Are you ready?**

FOCUS AREAS for Goal #2

- **Local Water Source Defense:** Reduce pollution to local bodies of water by reducing chemical use indoors and outdoors, and by reducing water and debris that runs off into streets and storm sewers.
- **Water Conservation, Personal and Household:** Survey household water use and conserve wherever possible. Using less water decreases local water stress, and the energy and water required to treat and supply water to homes and businesses. Reduce unnecessary purchases, especially single-use items, to reduce the energy & water required to resource, manufacture, distribute, and dispose of consumer goods.
- **Yard and Landscape Decisions:** Increase land resilience by replacing turf lawns, ornamental trees and plants with native, habitat friendly spaces. Reduce impermeable surfaces, install rain barrels, rain gardens.

SPECIFIC ACTIONS for Goal #2

Pray Pray and reflect on Psalms 72 and 104.

Act 2 short term, 3 longer term actions:

SHORT TERM ACTIONS

1. “*Watch where the rainwater goes...*” walk around your yard and consider where rainwater naturally runs into the street. What can be done to help it soak into the lawn instead? Turn downspouts, add plants that soak up water, install a raingarden or swale, install rain barrels. Also, stop chemicals and trash entering waterways by reducing chemical use indoors and outdoors and picking up trash, including pet waste and cigarette butts. Wash cars at commercial facilities, where the resulting dirty water is treated, instead of at home.
2. Conserve water at home by fixing leaks, turning water off while washing hands, brushing teeth and showering. Use buckets or brooms instead of running water to clean items indoors and out. Run clothes and dishwashers only when full.

LONGER TERM ACTIONS

1. Replace appliances with WATER SENSE rated models, or with other water saving features.
2. Transition traditional green lawns and ornamental trees and plants to native species wherever possible. Replace sprinklers and spray irrigation with drip irrigation.
3. Make landscaping and pavement changes which help rain soak into the water table through the yard rather than running into the street.

Advocate

1. Investigate the state of water infrastructure in your city and state, especially in poorer areas. Petition local leaders for improvements, especially for historically overlooked neighborhoods.
2. Choose and learn about one non-profit org which provides clean water in poorer countries.
3. Ask your pastor & parish to include Creation Care tips regularly in the Sunday bulletin.

My/our Plan for LS Goal #2 – Responding to the Cry of the Poor

NAME: _____

- PRAY for Creation.** Read and reflect on Psalms 72 & 104 together. What do you notice?

MY/OUR ACTIONS (write in chosen activities):

- ACT for Creation: SHORT TERM** (commit to doing these soon!)

- Reduce water run-off into streets and sewer systems. Turn or disconnect downspouts, add native trees and plants that soak up water, install a raingarden or swale, install rain barrels. Reduce or eliminate chemical use indoors and outdoors, and pick up trash, including pet waste and cigarette butts. Wash cars at commercial facilities. See Chicago's GREEN NEIGHBOR GUIDE: https://mwrdd.org/sites/default/files/documents/Green_Guide_220311_web.pdf or this website: <https://www.thinkbluemassachusetts.org/for-residents>.

MY/OUR ACTIONS (write in chosen activities):

- Conserve water by fixing leaks (even small ones), turning water off while washing dishes, produce or brushing teeth and showering. Use buckets or bowls instead of running water to wash dishes and produce. Don't overwater landscape. Run clothing and dishwashers only when full. Track your monthly and daily household water use. What do you notice? See many more ideas and check out the EPA's guides at: <https://www.epa.gov/watersense> and https://www3.epa.gov/region1/eco/drinkwater/water_conservation_residents.html

MY/OUR ACTIONS (write in chosen activities):

☐ **ACT for Creation: LONGER TERM (Major landscaping and appliance changes):**

Done?	CONSIDER THESE ACTIONS	Planned date	Planned replacement
	Add native plants and trees		
	Install rain barrels, rain gardens		
	Transition turf lawn to more sustainable alternatives		
	Replace sprinklers and sprayers with drip irrigation		
	Reduce impervious pavements		
	Install low water use toilets, shower heads, faucets (consider aerators)		
	Dishwasher, washing machine (replace with WATER SENSE models)		

MY/OUR ACTIONS (write in other chosen activities):

☐ **ADVOCATE for Creation**

- Petition local political and community leaders for improved, resilient water infrastructure, especially in communities which have been historically overlooked. Consider joining or attending local planning committee meetings. Sign up for informational webinars.
- Consider supporting a non-profit org which provides clean water in poor countries.
- Ask your pastor & parish to include Creation Care Corner (or other environmental tips) in the Sunday bulletin. To get started, visit the Catholic Climate Covenant's parish resource page at: <https://catholicclimatecovenant.org/resource/creation-care-corner-bulletin> .

MY/OUR ACTIONS (write in chosen activities):

Congratulations! *You just helped improve the worldwide condition and availability of most precious water. That means more, cleaner water and resilient habitats for all forms of life, including our human brothers and sisters, now and in the future. Give yourself a big pat on the back.*

"Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Water, which is very useful and humble and precious and chaste."

St Francis of Assisi, the Canticle of the Creatures