

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 anyone can use them. We'll send them monthly between September 2022 and March 2023. You can also download them here: <https://godsplanet.us/sector/families-and-individuals>. By completing all 7 worksheets, you'll create an Action Plan for implementation over seven years. Journey with us!

DECEMBER 2022: Goal #4 – Adoption of 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.)" (www.laudatosiactionplatform.org)

In this worksheet, we'll find ways to apply the concepts of sufficiency and moderation to food choices, along with joy and connection to celebrations. If we eat "lower on the food chain," and take advantage of what is seasonal and local, we can reduce the amount of water, land, energy, chemicals, transportation, refrigeration and packaging involved in our groceries. We can also reduce stress on livestock and its handlers. Similarly, if we keep our celebrations "highly joyful" and "lowly wasteful", we can keep our occasions festive without allowing consumerism and waste to take over. This will also reduce the burden on workers and the Earth. **Are you ready?**

FOCUS AREAS for Goal #4

- **Food.** Simplifying dietary habits, with a focus on environmental sustainability and solidarity with the poor.
- **Celebrations and Holidays.** Reducing the volume of "things" involved in celebrations and holidays. Focusing instead on gratitude and our relationships with others, with God and with all of His Creation.

SPECIFIC ACTIONS for Goal #4

Pray Pray and reflect on Amos, Chapter 8, and John, Chapter 10.

Act 2 short term, 2 longer term actions:

SHORT TERM ACTIONS

1. **Food:** Choose beans and plant-based proteins more, and animal or fish-based protein less. Choose fruits and vegetables that are in-season, organic, and locally grown, with simple or no packaging. Plan grocery purchases by making a list. Cook or order only reasonable portions, splitting orders at restaurants or taking left-overs home in a washable container, not throw-away Styrofoam or plastic. Enjoy left-overs (or freeze them). Compost scraps.
2. **Celebrations and Holidays:** Reduce purchases when planning celebrations and find joy instead by focusing on gratitude and relationships. Reduce gift purchases and items such as new seasonal outfits. Donate the saved money to a worthy cause. Avoid throw-away decorations, especially items like confetti, balloons, and fireworks. Use washable plates, cups, flatware, and tablecloths, borrow extra sets from family and friends for large gatherings, to avoid throw-away items.

LONGER TERM ACTIONS

1. **Food:** Take stock of what's in your pantry, your refrigerator and freezer, and look for ways to include sustainability in purchase decisions at the grocery store. Grow some food at home, join a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) or shop at a Farmers Market.
2. **Celebrations:** Look into the origin of holidays and celebrations you normally observe. Find ways to mark them without excessive consumerism. Avoid shopping and restaurants on holidays, if possible, to give their employees the time off to celebrate.

Advocate

1. Advocate for more environmentally sound, and less cruel, food systems. Choose a non-profit which advocates for farm workers, farmed animals, or sustainable land stewardship. Pray for their work, and consider making a donation.
2. Discuss birthdays, holidays and celebrations with family and friends. Find ways to reduce environmental impact, and increase meaning and joy, when you get together.
3. At holidays, thank your pastor and parish staff. Thank public servants, too.

My/our Plan for LS Goal #4 – Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles NAME: _____

- PRAY for Creation.** Read and reflect on Amos, Chapter 8 and the Gospel of John, Chapter 10.

MY/OUR REFLECTION (What do you notice in those Scripture passages?):

- ACT for Creation: SHORT TERM** (do these soon!)
- **FOOD:** Eat Simpler, and “Lower on the Food Chain,” incorporating local, organic foods into diet, and choosing items with simple or no packaging.
 - **Proteins:** Reduce overall meat consumption by abstaining from meat on Fridays year-round and/or instituting meatless Mondays. Choose beans and plant-based proteins more than meat or fish. Choose poultry over red meats. When purchasing dairy and meat, find humane, sustainable sources. Select fish and seafood which is sustainably farmed or caught.
 - **Produce:** Purchase local, in-season, and organic. Try a local Farmers Market or CSA.
 - **Pantry items:** Look for items with low amounts of packaging and chemicals, that didn’t travel far.
 - **Quantities:** cook or order reasonable portions. At restaurants, consider splitting a meal. Take your own, washable container to avoid throw-away boxes, especially Styrofoam or plastic.
 - **Scraps and left-overs:** Enjoy or freeze left-overs for later. Compost or recycle food that can’t be eaten. <https://www.epa.gov/recycle/composting-home>

READ https://www.sistersofmercy.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/2022-Mercy-Meatless-Mondays_compressed.pdf . Sustainable fish and seafood mobile app: <https://www.seafoodwatch.org/recommendations/add-seafood-watch-to-your-phone>, Sustainable fish and seafood guide (Spanish and English): <https://www.seafoodwatch.org/recommendations/download-consumer-guides>

MY/OUR ACTIONS (write in chosen activities):

- **CELEBRATIONS and HOLIDAYS:**
 - **Reduce purchases** when planning celebrations and find joy instead by focusing on gratitude and relationships. Reduce gift purchases and items such as new seasonal outfits. Donate the saved money to a worthy cause. Avoid throw-away decorations, especially items like confetti, balloons, and fireworks. Use washable plates, cups, flatware, and tablecloths, borrow extra sets from family and friends for large gatherings, to avoid throw-away items. <https://www.epa.gov/environmental-topics/greener-living>
 - Help everyone celebrate the holidays, including store clerks and hospitality workers, by avoiding shops and restaurants on those days.

MY/OUR ACTIONS (write in chosen activities):

□ **ACT for Creation: LONGER TERM:**

- **FOOD:** Set aside a few hours one day to look at everything in your pantry, your refrigerator and freezer. What do you notice about how far food traveled to get to you? Where and how was each item processed? How are they packaged? In the lists of ingredients, do you see a lot of chemicals? Do you see ingredients like palm oil, which often causes rain forests to be cleared, destroying habitat. Can you make changes to purchase items that come from local suppliers, are in-season, grown organically? Regarding meat and dairy, can you find humanely raised sources? Regarding fish, can you find sustainably farmed or fished sources?
- Set a reminder for yourself when you go to the grocery store, to include sustainability in your purchase decisions. Consider joining Community Supported Agriculture or find a Farmers Market.
- Consider growing some of your own food. You can start with just one tomato plant or lettuce in a pot.

MY/OUR ACTIONS (write in chosen activities):

- **CELEBRATIONS and HOLIDAYS:**
 - Consider the original intent of the celebrations and holidays you observe. Regarding celebrations that have religious origins, like Christmas and Easter, consider incorporating prayer and Mass (or worship) attendance into the day. If it's a commemorative event, like a birthday, Mothers Day and Fathers Day, or a patriotic celebration, consider learning about the day's person or event. Volunteer within your community. If the celebration seems to be more purely festive in our times, like Halloween and St Patrick's Day, consider finding out what its original intent was.

MY/OUR ACTIONS (write in chosen activities):

□ **ADVOCATE for Creation**

- Advocate for more environmentally sound, and less cruel, food systems. Find a non-profit that advocates for farm workers, farmed animals or sustainable land stewardship. Pray for their work and consider making a donation.
- Discuss birthdays, holidays and celebrations with family and friends. Find ways to reduce environmental impact, and increase meaning and joy, when you get together.
- At holidays, thank your pastor and parish staff for their service to the parish. Thank public servants and city or county workers, especially those who are working on a holiday.

MY/OUR ACTIONS (write in chosen activities):

*Congratulations! You're making a difference by simplifying your diet and celebrations!
Give yourself a big pat on the back.*

"I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly." Gospel of John, 10:10