

Laudato Si' Planning Guide

Welcome to the Laudato Si' Action Platform journey! Thank you for your commitment to developing or strengthening a Laudato Si' Plan for your family. You give hope to all those who look for signs of change, as we build a better future together. Whether you are beginning your journey towards integral ecology or have been on it for some time, these next steps in your path are cause for celebration. *Laudato si'!*

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Summary

Together, we are walking the road to integral ecology, which is represented in the holistic Laudato Si' Goals. Integral ecology emphasizes the deep connections between our relationships with each other, our Creator, and all creation. These connections have frayed, which has given rise to an ever hotter and dirtier world, increasing the risk of hunger, thirst, sickness, conflict, and migration, a risk that the most vulnerable among us bear unjustly.

Laudato Si', Pope Francis's encyclical on our common home, gave voice to these concepts, putting the ancient teachings of our faith in new light for today's ecological crisis. The Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, in partnership with hundreds of Catholic organizations and subject-matter experts, has developed a common platform to help the universal Catholic Church act on this teaching.

The Laudato Si' Action Platform offers you tools and resources in the hopes that you will join us on this journey. God has given you unique gifts, gifts that you alone can bring to our shared project of building a better future together.

This guide, which was collaboratively developed, is one of the tools that has been offered in the spirit of helpfulness. 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.

- Complete an annual self-assessment to discern where you are on the road to integral ecology, so that we might travel together.
- Upload a reflection on how your values are connected to the Laudato Si' Goals, so that others might be inspired by it.
- 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.

“All of us can cooperate as instruments of God for the care of creation, each according to his or her own culture, experience, involvements and talents.” (LS 14) It is the sincere hope of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development that our Laudato Si' journeys will be rich in hope, in joy, and in the authentic relationships that nourish our spirits and all creation. *Laudato si'!*

The Context

About Laudato Si'

Laudato Si' is one of the three encyclical letters written by Pope Francis. It is available to read or download [here](#). The Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, which has primary responsibility for promoting this encyclical, has created a Laudato Si' website, available [here](#).

Exploring the ancient teachings of our faith in the light of today's ecological crisis, Laudato Si' teaches us that “everything is connected.” (LS 91) As our relationship with our divine Creator has been neglected, human relationships have faltered, and our world has grown hotter, less

stable, and more lifeless. As a result, we all suffer, and the poorest and most vulnerable suffer above all. We face a “complex crisis that is both social and environmental.” (LS 139)

While the earth and the poor cry out, urgently calling us to change, there is hope. Pope Francis calls us to develop a “loving awareness” of this home we share and to act on the values we hold dear. (LS 220)

Standing on the firm ground of “three fundamental and closely intertwined relationships: with God, with our neighbor, and with the Earth itself,” we commit to setting out “on the long path of renewal.” (LS 66, 202) We embrace our rightful place in the “order and dynamism” that our Creator ordained, and we urgently embark on new ways of living with “creativity and enthusiasm” (LS 221, 220).

About the Laudato Si’ Action Platform

The fruit of a unique collaboration between the Vatican, an international coalition of Catholic organizations, and “all men and women of good will,” the Laudato Si’ Action Platform creates a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts. (LS 13) It empowers “decisive action, here and now” as we adopt full sustainability in the spirit of integral ecology. (LS 161)

Action is urgently needed. The Laudato Si’ Action Platform, a program promoted by the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, includes a website, available [here](#), and an engagement program that is intended to accompany your family on its journey to integral ecology. **The Laudato Si’ Action Platform brings together the efforts of people and institutions around the world, building a global community that is committed to walking together, one human family dedicated to realizing our loving God’s call for a new dynamic relationship with our common home.**

Because you have registered your commitment to create a Laudato Si’ Plan, you know that the website includes a tracking tool to help you measure and celebrate your progress from year to year and a list of suggested actions that is tailored to your needs. Remember that the website also includes a library of resources from hundreds of partner organizations and ways to connect with Catholic communities all around the world. **Our faith calls us to develop authentic relationships with each other, and it is sincerely hoped that the Laudato Si’ Action Platform will help you do that.**

We are responding to the call for healing in our relationships with God, our neighbors, and the Earth itself as we build a better future. Through the Laudato Si’ Action Platform, we are walking the “path to renewal” together (LS 202).

About the Laudato Si’ Goals

The Laudato Si’ Goals, which were shaped by the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development through a richly consultative process, guide our actions. They serve as a common destination for our individual journeys to integral ecology, as “the urgent challenge to protect our common home includes a concern to bring the whole human family together.” (LS 13)

The Laudato Si' Goals redefine and rebuild our relationship with each other and our common home. Their holistic approach acknowledges the planetary limits of all socio-economic systems and the human roots of the ecological crisis. They call for a spiritual and cultural revolution to realize full sustainability in the holistic spirit of integral ecology.

The Laudato Si' Goals are as follows.

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.

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.

Ecological Economics acknowledges that the economy is a sub-system of human society, which itself is embedded within the biosphere – our common home.

The **Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles** is grounded in the idea of sufficiency, and promoting sobriety in the use of resources and energy.

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.

Ecological Spirituality springs from a profound ecological conversion and helps us to “discover God in all things,” both in the beauty of creation and in the sighs of the sick and the groans of the afflicted, aware that the life of the spirit is not dissociated from worldly realities.

Community Resilience and Empowerment envisage a synodal journey of community engagement and participatory action at various levels.

About the Laudato Si' Planning Guide

How This Guide Was Developed

As Pope Francis says in Laudato Si', “Interdependence obliges us to think of *one world with a common plan*.” (LS 164) Although our faith encompasses diverse regions and perspectives, the gifts of the Holy Spirit unite us as one, enabling us to see the ties that bind us together in the common home we share.

In keeping with this spirit of unity, this planning guide was developed through a cooperative process led by the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, in partnership with nearly 200 Catholic organizations and leaders from around the world. Over 100 benchmark programs were examined in-depth, dozens of subject matter experts were consulted, and on-the-ground volunteers in 20 countries contributed perspectives about the challenges and

strengths of their communities.

The precious wisdom contributed by these co-leaders has been fundamental to the development of this planning guide, and indeed to the development of the Laudato Si' Action Platform itself. This guide is not intended to be definitive or mandatory, but inspirational and informative. **This is a living document, open to new invitations from the Holy Spirit and new perspectives from the community of the faithful, both of which are essential to its usefulness.**

The Invitation to You

Your family is warmly invited to continue the collaborative process that has helped shape this planning guide. **You are a co-leader in this work, endowed by our Creator with unique gifts that you alone can bring to our shared project of protecting our common home and all who share it.**

You are invited to create your own Laudato Si' Plan by using this planning guide as it is helpful. This guide offers well informed suggestions in the spirit of humble collaboration. You are welcome to adapt these suggestions to your needs, to incorporate outside expertise and existing programs, and to use this guide and the Laudato Si' Action Platform itself in whatever way is best for you.

Only three actions are requested to continue your participation as a Laudato Si' family:

- uploading a reflection document or video so that others may learn from and be inspired by your commitment;
- uploading a document or video that outlines your Laudato Si' Plan, which will be shared so that others may learn from and be inspired by the unique ways that you act in community;
- completing the baseline evaluation and annual self-assessment each year.

You may find information about these things in your dashboard, available at LaudatoSiActionPlatform.org

Overview of Suggested Phases

Three general phases might be helpful as you think about your Laudato Si' Plan. **These phases resonate with the experiences and rhythms of many Catholic communities, but they are just suggestions. If your family finds another organizing model helpful, please feel free to use it.**

The suggested phases are to reflect, act, and evaluate. A brief description follows, with detailed information below.

Reflect

- Begin with a baseline evaluation to establish a starting point for your practices.
- Consider how your family's values are connected with the Laudato Si' Goals, and upload a reflection document or video to the Laudato Si' Action Platform.
- Consider the processes that you use to make decisions about your Laudato Si' Plan.
- Establish the objectives you would like to reach through your Laudato Si' Plan.

Act

- Review a suggested list of actions provided by the Laudato Si' Action Platform (or others, as you prefer).
- Create an annual Laudato Si' Plan and upload it to the Laudato Si' Action Platform.
- Implement the actions you have chosen.

Evaluate

- Complete an annual self-assessment to see how you have made progress.
- Based on the results of your annual self-assessment, reflect on your journey thus far.
- Attend an online recognition ceremony hosted by the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, and hold your own annual celebration, if you wish.
- Create a Laudato Si' Plan for the coming year.

It is anticipated that these phases will be cyclical, and that your family will undertake reflection, action, and evaluation each year. Remember that **these phases will resonate differently with the unique experiences and rhythms of different Catholic communities across the planet, so they are just suggestions. If your family finds another organizing model helpful, please feel free to use it!**

Although the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development will host a shared moment of celebration through an annual recognition ceremony, it is hoped that your family will weave celebration into every aspect of its Laudato Si' Plan. **Your commitment to realizing integral ecology and protecting our common home is cause for joy.** Your journey is embraced with the warmth and love with which our Creator embraces all creation, and we are called to embody the spirit of joyful celebration which led St. Francis to proclaim, "Laudato si'!"

Suggested Phase I: Reflect

About Reflection

Laudato Si' tells us that "an integral ecology includes taking time to recover a serene harmony with creation, reflecting on our lifestyle and our ideals, and contemplating the Creator who lives among us and surrounds us, whose presence 'must not be contrived but found, uncovered'." (LS, 225) It is suggested that you incorporate a profound period of reflection in your Laudato Si' Plans, deepening the "ecological conversion" to which St. John Paul II and Pope Francis call us.

The steps that are outlined below are suggestions, informed by the co-creators of this document. Please be aware that only three things are necessary for your continued

enrollment as a Laudato Si' family: completing an annual self-assessment, sharing a reflection document or video, and sharing an annual Laudato Si' Plan.

First Annual Self-Assessment

As a first step in your journey to integral ecology, you are invited to complete your first annual self-assessment. This first annual self-assessment offers a baseline evaluation from which you will be able to see progress every year. The form is available in your dashboard at LaudatoSiActionPlatform.org.

Having an overall view of our current practices in integral ecology can be very helpful. **Being able to see where we stand gives us a sense of direction, an understanding of how far we've come and where we might want to go from here.**

The annual self-assessment asks about your practices across the Laudato Si' Goals. Simply answering these questions might spark new ideas about ways your family can grow into its Laudato Si' calling. More importantly, the annual self-assessment provides a clear, comprehensive snapshot of where you stand this year. It establishes a baseline and enables you to celebrate your progress from year to year.

The annual self-assessment is tailored to the context of your region. To begin, you will see a few questions about what life is like in the area where you live. These questions help the tool adapt to your needs.

Then, you will see questions about your current practices. These questions address the holistic Laudato Si' Goals, so you can expect to consider everything from your electricity and water use to your educational and spiritual practices.

It will be helpful to have documentation on hand. Before sitting down to complete the self-assessment, you may want to gather information about:

- your use of electricity, water, heating fuel, and petrol/gas;
- your meals;
- whether you've planted trees;
- whether you've incorporated themes from Laudato Si' into your prayer and spiritual initiatives; and
- whether you've participated in any trainings to learn more about science and Catholic social teaching on ecology.

The self-assessment offers several ways to share this information, and is flexible to adapt to your needs.

The self-assessment will provide information to help you understand where you stand along the road to integral ecology: a carbon footprint, a report on your current practices that you may share with others if you wish, and information about how your practices compare with those of other families.

Once your information is gathered, the self-assessment will take 30-60 minutes to complete.

The annual self-assessment is available in your dashboard at LaudatoSiActionPlatform.org.

Reflecting on the Laudato Si' Goals

The Laudato Si' Goals encourage us to realize radical changes in our relationships and ways of living, moving away from the destructive technocratic paradigm and towards our loving God's embrace.

While the Laudato Si' Goals are relatively new, being published on the occasion of the Laudato Si' Special Anniversary Year in 2020, they express ancient concepts of our faith.

Similarly, your family is not new to these values. Wherever you are on the Laudato Si' journey, your presence demonstrates that you have an awareness of God's call for peace in creation. Walking this journey will take time, and like any journey it will have both its challenges and its joys. **Journeying towards the Laudato Si' Goals is not so much a change of direction as it is a deepening of purpose.**

Laudato Si' calls the family the "primary social group," and the importance of your family's commitment cannot be overstated. (LS 142) Your family's precious relationships and unique traditions will help build a better future for everyone. Sometimes, families are so consumed by the tasks of the day that it can be hard to take a step back and reflect. **You are invited to share a moment of reflection as a family.**

It is hoped that this reflection offers you joy and richness of spirit, rather than being an obligation that does not serve your needs. Please feel entirely free to pursue it in whatever way works best for you.

A Shared Reflection

You are invited to create a brief reflection document or video that explores how your values connect with the Laudato Si' Goals.

If you have not undertaken a reflection process, these suggested steps might be useful.

- Decide who will participate in your reflection. The list of "stakeholders" below may be helpful.
- Have the parents or senior members of the family make a list of the family's values and how you act on them in everyday life. For instance, perhaps one value of your family is that time together is important, and you act on that value by eating meals together. The list can be written down, recorded, or just memorized. If you have a difficult time identifying your values, it might be helpful to consider the ways we sometimes talk about them: through the stories of our family heritage or history, through our family "heroes" such as public figures or saints, through the values of our parents and

grandparents, and through the social teachings of the Church.

- Set aside time for shared reflection. Share the list of the family's values with children or more junior members of the family. Ask for their feedback and update the list in response.
- Review the Laudato Si' Goals. The goals reflect integral ecology, which connects our relationships with each other, our Creator, and all creation. Talk about how the values of the Laudato Si' Goals can help you understand family life in a new way. Key themes might include community service and intergenerational care; personal habits and responsible use of resources; time spent in nature and respect for creation; and prayer.
- Summarize your family's thinking about how the Laudato Si' Goals relate to family life.
- **Create a reflection document or video. Upload it to your dashboard at LaudatoSiActionPlatform.org, where it will be shared with others.**
- You may also wish to share your reflection with your Parish and any family networks to which you belong.

You may want to use another process of reflection, such as creating a family journal based on the Laudato Si' Goals, discussing Laudato Si' values over several shared meals, or reading and discussing the Laudato Si' Goals alongside the life of St. Francis. As a co-creator of this work, you are entirely welcome to pursue your reflection in the way that is most meaningful to you.

Practical Suggestions for Creating Your Reflection Document or Video

Your reflection will be shared publicly via the Laudato Si' Action Platform as a way to grow the connections and relationships that nourish us.

The hope is that the website of the Laudato Si' Action Platform will be a real source of inspiration, created by all and shared by all, a use of technology that is "put it at the service of another type of progress, one which is healthier, more human, more social, more integral." (LS 112).

Uploading a Laudato Si' Reflection is necessary to remain enrolled as a Laudato Si' family. A few practical details may be helpful:

- The reflection may be submitted in the form of either a document or a video. Please feel free to use the format that is most comfortable and natural for you.
- The reflection may be any length you wish. The hope is that you create whatever fits your needs. Please feel entirely free to craft something that is unique or creative, however you feel called.
- There is no required content for the video. Please include whatever themes seem most relevant, and act in the way that the Spirit leads you. The hope is simply that you will reflect and connect your values with the Laudato Si' Goals.
- Your reflection will be uploaded on your dashboard, available at LaudatoSiActionPlatform.org.
- If you choose to create a video, please upload it as a YouTube link. This will help comply with security requirements. If you do not have a YouTube account, one can be easily created by following the instructions that are widely available online.

- If you choose to upload a document, there is a wide choice of formats. Documents may be in the form of a Microsoft Word doc, a PDF, or even an Excel spreadsheet, if you prefer to reflect in that form.
- All reflections will pass through a minimal security review and will be made publicly available a few days after they are uploaded.

You may also wish to consider sharing your reflection with your Parish or any network to which you belong. **Reflecting on how the Laudato Si' Goals connect with the values of your family is a joyful step forward on your journey to integral ecology.** *Laudato si'!*

A Focus on Processes

Having an understanding of where you are in the journey is an important element in your reflection. To help inform where you go from here, you may find it useful to reflect on the processes that you use to make decisions.

Whether you are just beginning the journey to integral ecology or have been on it for some time, taking a moment to pause and consider *how* your walk on this journey might be helpful.

As Pope Francis says, “ecological culture cannot be reduced to a series of urgent and partial responses to the immediate problems.” (LS 111) Instead, we are called to embrace new ways of growing and acting together. Embedding this new culture in a concrete process can nourish it over the long term.

Process and structure can help develop new routines. A process can also help ensure that all members of the family help make decisions and take responsibility. A process can help make decisions, because “a fragile world, entrusted by God to human care, challenges us to devise intelligent ways of directing, developing and limiting our power.” (LS 78)

You are invited to develop the process that you use to take action on Laudato Si'.

Suggested Components of a Decision-Making Process

Whether you have already been taking action on Laudato Si' for some time or are just beginning your journey, reflecting on your decision-making process may seem like a big task.

In the spirit of providing helpful guidance, the co-creators of this guide offer the following components for your consideration. **A process like this may help you to either start drafting a Laudato Si' Plan or to make decisions from year to year.**

Identify decision-makers

- Determine who will help make decisions with the help of the suggested “stakeholders” below.
- Whoever ultimately participates, make sure they all have real decision-making power. Identify responsibilities for each of the family members.

Set objectives and choose actions

- The family should establish measurable objectives, as well as intermediate milestones, that it wishes to achieve through this project, such as reducing your greenhouse gas emissions by 20% or increasing your ecological spirituality to become a weekly practice.
- In order to decide how to take action, you may want to review a list of actions that has been collaboratively developed to help your family move towards the Laudato Si' Goals. This list is available in your dashboard at LaudatoSiActionPlatform.org. Complete information about actions is below.

Grow relationships

- The family may want to identify dedicated moments for prayer and spiritual reflection.
- The family may want to formalize a process for resolving conflicts.

Stakeholders

As a first step in developing your decision-making process, you may want to consider the people who make decisions. Integral ecology calls us to reimagine how we care for all those around us, and we are invited to develop plans with “the active participation of all members of the community.” (LS 44)

The co-creators of this guide encourage you to consider including the following people in your decision-making process.

- *Parents or senior members of the family:* With the benefit of their experience and their overall decision-making role in the family, parents or other senior members of the family may want to lead the process.
- *Children or junior members of the family:* The role of younger people is very important. They are the leaders of tomorrow, and they will inherit the consequences of any decisions we make today. They may have a role in shaping decisions, completing actions, and serving as ambassadors in their schools or youth groups.
- *Extended family such as grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins:* Depending on where they live, members of the extended family may want to shape plans, complete actions, and create their own Laudato Si' Plans.
- *Parish priest:* The Parish may be creating its own Laudato Si' Plan; additionally, the parish priest can support the organization of community events and eco-spirituality initiatives.
- *Schools:* If any children attend Catholic school or religious classes, the school may wish to sponsor events, include the family's activities in ecological education lessons, or promote eco-spirituality initiatives.
- *Catholic family networks:* It may be helpful to share ideas with Laudato Si' Families within any networks to which you belong (for example, you may consider connecting via social media, WhatsApp/telegram, email, or in-person).

The overall aim of the conversations is to continue reflecting on how the family's values connect with the Laudato Si' Goals, to discuss how current initiatives might tie into a Laudato Si' Plan, and to draft a list of suggested actions for the family to take in the coming year.

Overcoming Hurdles

"The Spirit of God has filled the universe with possibilities and therefore, from the very heart of things, something new can always emerge." (LS 80) With the development of any new project, challenges emerge, and honestly acknowledging and preparing for them can help prevent confusion.

The co-creators of this guide anticipate that your family may have difficulty in, for example, setting measurable objectives or staying motivated for the long term. Practices that other families have found helpful in overcoming these challenges have been establishing dialogue, maintaining flexibility, engaging with other families in your local area, and dedicating time to planning.

We are made for community, and finding a group of friends and neighbors who can offer mutual support and accountability for your journey may be very helpful. You might seek these relationships within your Parish by offering to hold a monthly chat with families who are creating Laudato Si' Plans, create online groups to connect with people who live far away from you, or attend events promoted through the Laudato Si' Action Platform.

Conclusion to Suggested Reflection Phase

Your family's growing culture of care for our sisters and brothers, our Creator, and all creation deepens the roots that you've already planted. This period of reflection brings you into communion with all the families and other Catholic communities around the world that are engaging in similar efforts. The conversations that you have in community contribute to the "joyful noise" that all on the Laudato Si' journey are making before our Creator. (Psalms 100:1)

This period of reflection allows us to embrace together "the spiritual treasures bestowed by God upon the Church, where the life of the spirit is not dissociated from the body or from nature or from worldly realities, but lived in and with them, in communion with all that surrounds us." (LS 216)

Suggested Phase II: Act

About Action

Laudato Si' tell us that "the effects of the present imbalance can only be reduced by our decisive action, here and now." (LS 161) As our spirits deepen, as we become attuned to the suffering of creation and to the movement of Catholics who are building a better future together, we are naturally called to take action.

It is hoped that the suggestions below will be useful, but you are entirely welcome to adapt them to suit your needs. Please be aware that only three things are necessary for your continued enrollment as a Laudato Si' family: completing an annual self-assessment, sharing a reflection document or video, and sharing an annual Laudato Si' Plan. wall

Choosing the Actions That Are Right for You

Your family is the “basic cell of society,” and the decision-making processes that you’ve developed are suited to the special way that your family functions. (LS 157) **Similarly, you will know which actions best suit your spiritual, social, and practical needs.**

Because the Laudato Si' Goals represent the wide breadth of a holistic approach to integral ecology, you might find that family members lack expertise in certain areas.

To help overcome this challenge, the Laudato Si' Action Platform provides a list of suggested actions. This list is available in your dashboard at LaudatoSiActionPlatform.org.

- This list of suggested actions is grounded in the wisdom of the co-creators of this guide and in the knowledge of subject-matter experts.
- Actions are organized by Laudato Si' Goal, so that you can easily explore areas that are of the greatest interest or need. The suggested actions are tailored to the context of your region.
- Starting in 2022, most actions will be paired with suggested resources from partner organizations, who are co-creators of this project. This will enable you to access practical, concrete information about how to complete each action.

The list of suggested actions has been collaboratively developed in order to provide a clear and effective path towards the Laudato Si' Goals. However, you may find that another set of actions better suits your needs. Perhaps you are already engaged in a Laudato Si' program, and you have a different list of actions that you plan to pursue. Or, perhaps there is a special need in your region, one that is specific to the context of your family, and you'd like to include that action in your plan. Again, perhaps a member of your family has an extraordinary idea to pursue, and you'd like to follow up on it.

You are a co-creator in our shared project of building a better future. You are entirely welcome to undertake any actions that seem appropriate to you. It is hoped that the well researched and collaboratively designed list of actions in your dashboard will be helpful; if you find other resources helpful, please do feel free to use them.

It is suggested that you create a list of actions that the family intends to complete this year. If they feel called to do so, you might also wish to create a set of actions that it might complete over the next three to five years. In this way, you can address both short-term and long-term planning.

Actions and Objectives

While the Laudato Si' Goals give us all a shared direction to aim for, your family may wish to set its own measurable objectives, giving even greater clarity of direction to your efforts.

Objectives are clear, specific, and measurable signs that your actions are making a difference. Having clear and specific objectives can help generate enthusiasm. Clear, specific objectives can also help prioritize and shape the actions you take. Setting objectives might also help organize your efforts from year to year.

For instance, perhaps you'd like to reduce your greenhouse gas emissions by 25% over the next three years. In that case, you might both select practical actions that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and organize a Season of Creation event in your parish that explores the causes and consequences of the climate crisis. The milestones of 10%, 15%, or 20% reductions that you achieve along the way to your objective might be the occasion for shared celebrations, helping all to see and embrace the tangible progress that is being made. (The Laudato Si' Action Platform will create a carbon footprint each year as a result of your self-assessment.)

As another example, perhaps you'd like to ensure that the adults in your family are trained in ecological science and Catholic social teaching before you pursue deeper actions. In that case, you might have a short-term objective of completing training within the next year. Over the coming three to five years, your objectives might focus on including eco-spirituality in your family prayer practices, educating your young people about ecology, and reducing your greenhouse gas emissions by 10%.

In order to set objectives, you may wish to review the Laudato Si' Goals and the list of suggested actions in depth. Information about methods that participants often use to set objectives will be available on the Laudato Si' Action Platform.

Additionally, you might seek to define objectives by speaking with others in your area, learning what other families hope to achieve (via the shared plans available on the Laudato Si' Action Platform), or simply brainstorming objectives that would represent meeting the Laudato Si' Goals for your family.

You are the expert on your needs and priorities, and defining your objectives is entirely up to you. You are invited to deeply reflect on the objectives that would both represent meaningful progress as we build a better future together, and be feasible for your family.

Completing Your Actions

As your outcomes are defined and your actions planned, you may see a need for practical know-how to bring your plans to fruition.

Starting in 2022, most of the suggested actions in your dashboard will be paired with specific resources from the partner organizations that are the co-creators of the Laudato Si' Action Platform. This will enable you to immediately access practical, concrete information about how to complete each action.

For now, practical, concrete guidance on how to complete actions is available from many sources.

- The Laudato Si' Action Platform's resource library has a wealth of information. This library contains resources from partner organizations, many of which are leaders and experts in your region. You may access the resource library at LaudatoSiActionPlatform.org.
- The co-creators of this guide include Catholic organizations that have deep experience in accompanying families in their Laudato Si' journeys. Contact information to reach these organizations is available in your dashboard. Look for the list of working group members.
- The Laudato Si' Action Platform shares news and stories about people and institutions that are taking action. Reviewing these stories might provide inspiration and ideas.
- NGO and/or government agencies in your area may provide information and guidance free of charge or at reduced cost. Developing strong relationships with these partners can be very helpful.
- Completing a simple search for information about how to complete an action in your region is often fruitful. You might find a detailed step-by-step guide, or you might find information about an organization that has done something similar, in which case you may find it useful to simply contact that organization for an informal conversation to learn more.

Practical Suggestions for Creating Your Plan

It is hoped that this planning guide will provide helpful guidance. Ultimately, however, you are the expert in your own context. **God has given your family unique gifts, which you alone can bring to our shared project of building a better future.**

Your Laudato Si' Plan will be shared publicly via the Laudato Si' Action Platform. By sharing our plans, we inspire each other, creating a mutually supportive community of practice.

You are invited to be authentically open about the process by which you arrived at your plans, what you hope for, and what inspires you. Sharing our plans in this open way helps to create "the kind of society we want to build," a society in which an "authentic humanity" is treasured. (LS 107, 112)

Uploading a Laudato Si' Plan is necessary to remain enrolled as a Laudato Si' family. A few practical details may be helpful:

- You will have already created a reflection, which focuses on your values. In contrast, your Laudato Si' Plan focuses on the practical steps in your journey.
- You are invited to include both the objectives that you hope to reach and the actions that you hope to take in the coming year.
- If you feel called to plan for the long term, please do feel entirely welcome to mention actions that you will take in the years beyond this one.
- **You know your needs and priorities, and you are entirely free to shape the content of your Laudato Si' Plan in the way that is best for you.**
- Your Laudato Si' Plan may take the form of either a document or a video. Please feel free to use the format that is most comfortable and natural for you.

- If your plan takes the form of a document and you feel so called, please do include a photo of your home, the adults in your family, or anything else that is meaningful to you. (To protect their privacy, we suggest that you *do not* upload photos of children.) These photos may help develop a sense of connection and community.
- Your Laudato Si' Plan will be uploaded to your dashboard, available at LaudatoSiActionPlatform.org.
- If you choose to create a video, please upload it as a YouTube link. This will help comply with security requirements. If you do not have a YouTube account, one can be easily created by following the instructions that are widely available online.
- If you choose to upload a document, there is a wide choice of formats. Documents may be in the form of a Microsoft Word doc, a PDF, or even an Excel spreadsheet, if you prefer to plan in that form.
- If you have been on this journey for some time and have already developed a Laudato Si' Plan, please feel entirely welcome to use it. You may want to briefly review your existing plan to see whether there is any opportunity to update it in response to this guide.
- All Laudato Si' Plans will pass through a minimal security review and will be made publicly available a few days after they are uploaded.

Developing a Laudato Si' Plan is a wonderful step in your journey towards integral ecology. It is a warmly welcomed sign that your family is joining the community of the faithful that is building a better future together.

You may wish to share your plan with your Parish or a community group. Additionally, you may wish to hold a celebration. Sharing the creation of a new plan in a family meal, an announcement in the parish bulletin, or on social media can be the occasion for joyfully embracing this major milestone in your journey towards integral ecology. *Laudato si'!*

Conclusion to Suggested Action Phase

It's important to recall *why* we act. In the midst of our ecological crisis, we are called to develop new ways of living and working together, striving to achieve an integral ecology that honours our Creator and protects all creation. These deep roots of our faith prevent "action from becoming empty activism." (LS 237)

At the same time, taking action does matter. Our actions are the way that we mount a practical response to the signs of the times, as our Christian love "makes itself felt in every action that seeks to build a better world." (LS 231)

Suggested Phase III: Evaluate

About Evaluation

As we develop greater "care for our brothers and sisters and for the natural environment," we begin to see "the moral imperative of assessing the impact of our every action and personal decision on the world around us." (LS 208) The Laudato Si' Action Platform includes tools to assess our impacts on the world around us.

These tools will help you see how far you have come on your own Laudato Si' journey and see the distance we are all traveling together. It is hoped that using these tools will develop a sense of collective hope and joy for our shared momentum, as we witness the true transformation of our world.

While the steps suggested here may be useful, you may find another process better suited to your needs. Please be aware that only three things are necessary for your continued enrollment as a Laudato Si' family: sharing a reflection document or video, completing an annual self-assessment, and sharing an annual Laudato Si' Plan.

Annual Self-Assessment

Just as you did at the start of your engagement as a Laudato Si' family, you are invited to complete a self-assessment in each following year.

Completing an annual self-assessment is a way to see where you stand on the road to integral ecology. **The annual self-assessment will be the same from year to year, allowing you to easily see progress along your Laudato Si' journey.**

You are encouraged to share your annual progress report with the stakeholders in your decision-making progress and more widely in the family if appropriate. The practical ways in which your family has embraced the Laudato Si' Goals are cause for celebration. Sharing them widely offers the light of inspiration to all.

The Laudato Si' Action Platform will share results about the shared progress that has been made across all Platform participants each year on 4 October, the Feast of St. Francis and the final day in the Season of Creation. Additionally, the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development will hold an online recognition ceremony and moment of celebration for all Laudato Si' Dioceses and all others who have remained committed to the Laudato Si' journey, recognizing the extraordinary efforts made by all as we strive to build a better future together.

Either during the Vatican celebration or after receiving your annual progress report, you are warmly welcomed to hold a local event to celebrate your co-leadership of this global movement. Organizing a small presentation after weekly Mass, breaking bread with your neighbors, encouraging any children to share the news with their schools — there are many ways to celebrate your progress and our unity on the road together. You are welcome to joyfully embrace the distance you've traveled on this journey each year.

Reflecting On Your Results

Completing the annual self-assessment can offer an opportunity for continued reflection on the connections between the Laudato Si' Goals and our values. You are invited to engage the stakeholders in your decision-making process in a structured moment of reflection each year.

This reflection can encourage a sense of motivation and commitment. **It can also be an opportunity for concerns, questions, and suggestions to arise, giving space for the**

Holy Spirit to speak through diverse voices.

You may already use a process to reflect on progress you have made. If not, a half-day or full-day conversation in which you discuss the following questions may be useful.

- How has working towards a Laudato Si' Plan strengthened the life of the family over the last year?
- How has working towards a Laudato Si' Plan enabled us to better serve our sisters and brothers, our God, and all creation?
- How have we contributed to the global movement of the Church towards integral ecology?
- What actions did we take? Which actions were particularly fulfilling? Which actions were less fulfilling?
- Where have we made progress towards our objectives? Where have we not made progress? Should we revise our objectives, either to make them more ambitious or to make them more feasible?
- What actions should we take in the coming year? In the coming three to five years?

By reflecting on these or similar questions each year, your family will stay rooted in the precious values of our faith, recalling why you began this journey, envisioning where we are traveling together, and deciding which steps you plan to take in the coming year.

Developing an Updated Annual Laudato Si' Plan

As part of reflecting on your annual self-assessment, you are invited to create a Laudato Si' Plan for the coming year.

As our relationships with each other, all creation, and our Creator are always evolving, so too you may wish to revisit the decision-making process that you used to develop your initial Laudato Si' Plan.

Ideally, each year you will have completed the actions that you planned to complete. If you find that you have not realized what you planned, you're invited to seize the opportunity for continued growth. **The Laudato Si' Action Platform embraces progress, not perfection.**

Keeping in mind your overall mission, the Laudato Si' Goals, your objectives, and your annual self-assessment, you are invited to share an updated Laudato Si' Plan each year. As was the case with a plan you originally created, this may take the form of either a document or a video. You are entirely free to shape your annual plan in the way that is best for you, defining objectives and a list of actions however you would like.

Your Calendar

Although we take this journey to a better future together, each of us walks in his or her own way. Your family has already established a cycle of activities for each year, and it is hoped that this work can be seamlessly integrated into it.

The pace of life in your family may be tied to many different things: the calendar year, the school year, or other things. You are welcome to take key Laudato Si' Plan decisions in line with any dates that are meaningful to you.

For example, perhaps you'd like to complete an annual self-assessment each year on 1 January and draft a new list of actions by 1 February, aligning with the calendar year. Or, perhaps you'd prefer to time your annual progress report and new Laudato Si' Plan to coincide with any school holidays.

You are completely free to plan around any dates that make sense for you. **Please be aware that to remain committed as a Laudato Si' family, your annual self-assessment and annual Laudato Si' Plan should be uploaded each year no later than 1 September.**

1 September is the first day of the Season of Creation. The Laudato Si' Action Platform will share results about the shared progress that has been made on 4 October, the Feast of St. Francis and the final day in the Season of Creation.

Conclusion to Suggested Evaluation Phase

Pope Benedict XVI encouraged us to realize that creation is harmed “where we ourselves have the final word.” (LS 6; Address to the Bundestag, Berlin) An honest evaluation of where we stand helps us to take a step back from our actions re-orienting ourselves on the road to integral ecology and re-committing to the next steps in our journey.

Wherever we stand today, we know that we are traveling together, and “our struggles and our concern for this planet never take away the joy of our hope.” (LS 244)