

Sisters of
Mercy



Hermanas de la
Misericordia



**A Mercy
Guide
to
Living
*Laudato Si'***

Join Us on the Journey

The Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas has enrolled in the Vatican's [Laudato Si' Action Platform](#) as a religious congregation, embarking on a seven-year journey to living Pope Francis' signature encyclical more fully.

We invite you to join us.

This guide is meant to help you reflect on and take action around the initiative's seven goals:

- response to the cry of Earth;
- response to the cry of the poor;
- ecological economics;
- adoption of sustainable lifestyles;
- ecological education;
- ecological spirituality;
- community resilience and empowerment.

“The urgent call to Mercy and justice comes now not just with a social but also an ecological ring. They cannot be separated. Economic poverty coincides with ecological poverty.”
– Sister Anne Curtis, RSM,
presentation on why Mercy must engage with *Laudato Si'*

You may choose to enroll in the Platform yourself as an individual or family, as a local religious community, or as an educational institution or other ministry. If you do take this step, please let us know at laudatosi@sistersofmercy.org.

Some may choose not to formally enroll in the Platform, but still want to consider taking some actions related to one or more of the goals.

In either case, we hope that this guide provides inspiration and initial ideas. We will be offering more detailed resources to assist you on this journey at www.sistersofmercy.org/laudatosi. You also will find there the Institute's most recent self-assessment and annual plan for reaching these goals, and stories of Mercys around the world taking action.



If you have any questions, suggestions or concerns, please email laudatosi@sistersofmercy.org.

Goal One

Response to the Cry of Earth

We are called to protect our common home for the well-being of all, as we equitably address the climate crisis, biodiversity loss, and ecological sustainability.



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- Where do you hear the cry of Earth? Is there a special place you most want to protect for yourself or for others?
- How are you already responding to the cry of Earth?
- What other steps might you take to save energy, support biodiversity, promote clean water?

SUGGESTED ACTIONS

- Make a plan to reduce energy use. Consider conducting an energy audit through your utility company or using tools online.
- Protect local waterways by cleaning up trash and managing stormwater runoff.
- Promote biodiversity and reforestation by planting native trees.

RESOURCES

Visit the Sisters of Mercy’s “[Laudato Si’ Action Plan: Response to the Cry of Earth](#)” website page for resources to assist you with taking these and other actions.



Goal Two

Response to the Cry of the Poor

We are called to promote eco-justice, aware that we are called to defend human life from conception to death, and all forms of life on Earth.



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- Who in your community is most directly harmed by climate change and pollution? What environmental injustices are harming your neighbors and local ecosystem?
- What steps might you take to support these neighbors and address these issues?
- What do you need to learn about the intersections of Mercy's Critical Concerns and their [causes rooted in extractivism](#) as a development model that harms communities and ecosystems?

SUGGESTED ACTIONS

- Get involved with a local organization that is addressing environmental injustice or the needs of people who are poor.
- Build into your budget donations to organizations that are addressing environmental injustice or the needs of people who are poor.
- Advocate for socially and environmentally just policies.

RESOURCES

Visit the Sisters of Mercy's "[Laudato Si' Action Plan: Response to the Cry of the Poor](#)" website page for resources to assist you with taking these and other actions.



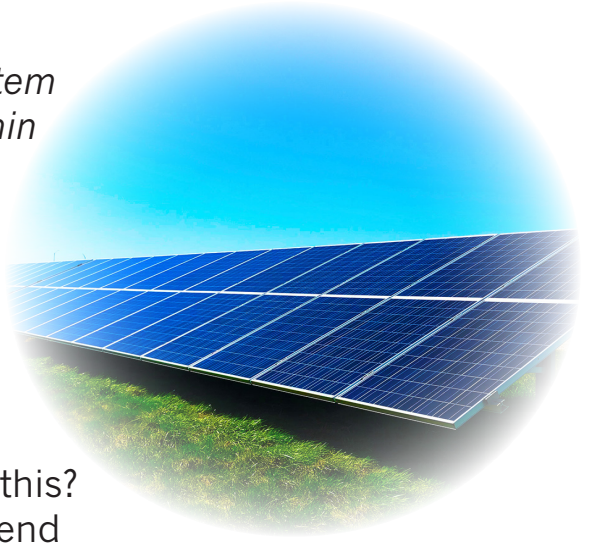
Goal Three

Ecological Economics

We acknowledge that the economy is a sub-system of human society, which itself is embedded within the biosphere—our common home.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- How do you mindfully purchase items that are produced in ways that provide a living wage to the people who make them and that are environmentally sustainable? How might you improve in this?
- How do the ways that you invest and spend money demonstrate your concern for the environment, a commitment to workers, and to people most vulnerable to the harms of climate change and environmental degradation?
- How can you support circular economies, which minimize waste by reusing and refurbishing materials and goods rather than throwing them away and buying brand-new?



SUGGESTED ACTIONS

- Purchase fair trade goods—such as coffee, tea and chocolate—that prioritize workers’ rights, safe working conditions and just pay.
- Support your local economy by buying from local stores and farmers.
- Look into the gift economy and sharing of goods and services.

RESOURCES

Visit the Sisters of Mercy’s “[Laudato Si’ Action Plan: Ecological Economics](#)” website page for resources to assist you with taking these and other actions.



Goal Four

Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles

This is grounded in the idea of sufficiency, and promoting sobriety in the use of resources and energy.



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- What does it mean to you to live simply, and to promote sobriety in the use of resources and energy?
- What lifestyle choices have you already made to live in harmony with Earth and with people who are poor?
- What next step might you take to reduce waste, eat more plant-based or locally sourced meals, reduce your car and airplane travel, or minimize the use of plastics?

SUGGESTED ACTIONS

- Make a commitment to reduce single-use plastics and start by identifying an alternative for one disposable product you use often.
- [Plan for eating mostly plant-based meals](#) at least one day a week, and gradually increase those meatless meals over the next year.
- Make a plan to drive less each week and fly less each year.

RESOURCES

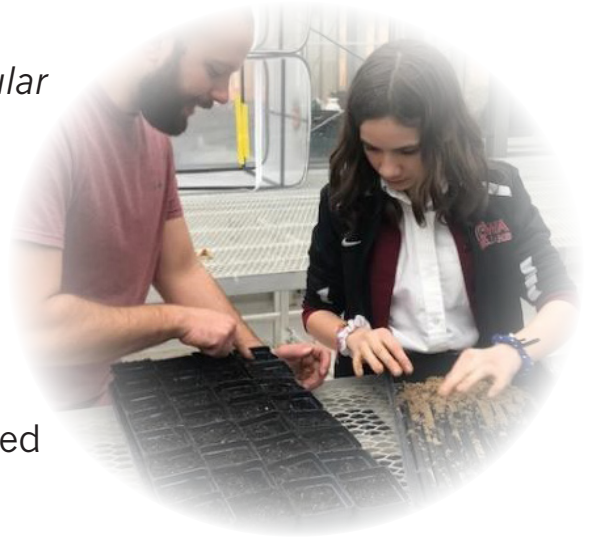
Visit the Sisters of Mercy's "[Laudato Si' Action Plan: Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles](#)" website page for resources to assist you with taking these and other actions.



Goal Five

Ecological Education

This is about rethinking and redesigning curricular and institutional reform in the spirit of integral ecology in order to foster ecological awareness and transformative action.



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- How are you educating yourself and others about environmental issues?
- How much have you explored and learned about your local ecosystem? Have you invited others into these explorations?
- What gaps do you have in your understanding of your local ecosystem, environmental injustices and the people who are most harmed by environmental degradation?

SUGGESTED ACTIONS

- Attend programming, outings or service projects organized by a local organization knowledgeable about your local ecosystem and environmental issues.
- Integrate ecological education into the life of your family, local religious community or ministry.
- Emphasize human rights and human dignity in conversations and programming about climate change and environmental injustice, to put a face on these issues and make clear who is most vulnerable to these harms.

RESOURCES

Visit the Sisters of Mercy’s “[Laudato Si’ Action Plan: Ecological Education](#)” website page for resources to assist you with taking these and other actions.



Goal Six

Ecological Spirituality

This 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.



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- How do you integrate ecological spirituality into your prayer life?
- How do you connect at a deep level to the cry of Earth and the cry of the poor?
- How might you celebrate the Season of Creation in a way that is meaningful for you, your family or your local community, or your ministry?

SUGGESTED ACTIONS

- Create a prayer journal, bulletin board or other way of recording and sharing prayers made in nature.
- Include *Laudato Si'* themes in community, family or ministry prayers.
- Develop a Season of Creation spiritual practice to observe every year.

RESOURCES

Visit the Sisters of Mercy's "[Laudato Si' Action Plan: Ecological Spirituality](#)" website page for resources to assist you with taking these and other actions.



Goal Seven

Community Resilience and Empowerment

This envisages a synodal journey of community engagement and participatory action at various levels.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- How am I or my local religious community, family or ministry joining with others to respond to social and ecological crises?
- Have we thought about how to make the community in which we live resilient to the impacts of climate change?
- Am I or my community, family or ministry ready to enroll in the Laudato Si' Action Platform to participate with the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas in this seven-year journey? What support do we need to do so?



SUGGESTED ACTIONS

- Partner with other local religious communities, families, parishes or ministries to organize educational events around social and ecological issues.
- Join with others to prepare for meeting emerging crises related to forced migration, the impacts of climate change, spread of illness, increased hunger and homelessness, and other issues.
- For those in the United States, [sign up](#) to receive emails from the Mercy Justice Team on urgent calls to action around our Critical Concerns. If you're already signed up, commit to responding to at least one call to action each week.



RESOURCES

Visit the Sisters of Mercy's "[Laudato Si' Action Plan: Community Resilience and Empowerment](#)" website page for resources to assist you with taking these and other actions.

Thank You!

Thank you for joining the Institute on this journey to living *Laudato Si'* more fully.

Please tell us what you are doing around the seven goals, and send us photos, to laudatosi@sistersofmercy.org. We also welcome your questions and requests for assistance with your participation in this initiative.

“This commitment marks our willingness as an Institute to take up the ‘urgent appeal’ of *Laudato Si'* to listen and respond to the cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor by making it a priority.”
– Institute commitment to the *Laudato Si'* Action Platform

