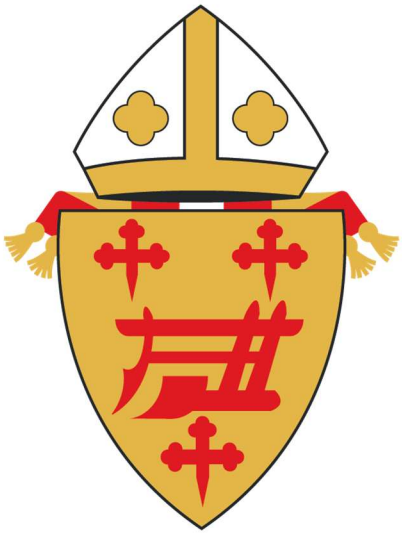


ARCHDIOCESE OF
CINCINNATI

Laudato Si' Action Plan 2026

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Table of Contents

Introduction 3

Our Faith, Our Mission, Our Call 4

In His Image and Likeness 4

Laudato Si' and *Laudate Deum* 4

A Christian prayer in union with creation (from *Laudato Si'*) 5

Profile and Background Information 6

The Archdiocese of Cincinnati 6

Current Activities and Resources 6

Ohio Policy on Resources and Energy 7

The Health of the Environment and Health of the Community 8

The Rural Landscape and Sustainability in Cincinnati and Dayton 8

Catholic Communities 9

The Goals of *Laudato Si'* 11

1. Response to the Cry of the Earth 11

2. Response to the Cry of the Poor 11

3. Ecological Economics 11

4. Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles 11

5. Ecological Education 12

6. Ecological Spirituality 12

7. Community Resilience and Empowerment 12

The Archdiocese of Cincinnati's Goals 13

Goal # 1: The Pastoral Center as a Model 13

AOC Action and LS Goals 13

Goal #2: Supporting Catholic Communities in Laudato Si' Growth 17

AOC Action and LS Goals 17

Final Thoughts 21

A prayer for our earth (from *Laudato Si'*) 21

Introduction

Caring for creation—the sum total of all the physical gifts God has given us—has its roots in the opening book of the bible, but it wasn't until the 20th century that the popes began to explicitly direct their energies towards its fulfillment. The greater focus given by Pope Saint John Paul II led the USCCB to officially make 'Care for Creation' the seventh principle of Catholic Social Teaching, and the work of Pope Francis catapulted it into the forefront of Catholicism. Since the release of *Laudato Si'*, dioceses around the world have faithfully and prayerfully sought to live into the call to honor integral human development and intentional care for the Earth—land, water, and air—and all the creatures that inhabit it.

In 2021, the Vatican launched the Laudato Si' Action Platform (LSAP), a global project designed to empower Catholic institutions, communities, and individuals to achieve sustainability. The Archdiocese of Cincinnati moved quickly to join, and it became a member within a year. Since then, the archdiocesan Care for Creation Task Force (CCTF) has renewed its efforts to support the wonderful ecologically-focused happenings across our 19 counties, hosting conferences, mobilizing green teams, and facilitating sector-based conversations.

At the end of 2025, the Archdiocese of Cincinnati (AOC) was one of nineteen dioceses in the United States accepted into a program by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) called the *Laudato Si' Leadership Cohort*. The purpose of the program is to accompany, guide, and instruct these dioceses in writing and publishing a Laudato Si' Action Plan (LS Action Plan) for the diocese on October 4th, the Feast of St. Francis.

Joining the LSAP meant commencing the work on developing an Action Plan to guide the care for creation work as it moves into the future. After many years of discernment and diligent work, that Action Plan returns with a new iteration. To be sure, the plan will continue to evolve and grow, but every good plan needs a foundation to anchor and direct its work, and this plan does just that.

The CCTF is humbled by the many elders and experts who contributed to the creation of this plan, and they pray that all of the archdiocese's families of parishes will (continue to) embrace the guidance contained and seek to live the ideas out as a critical part of their culture and mission.

Our Faith, Our Mission, Our Call

In His Image and Likeness

In Genesis 1, God created the world and He made it good. He created all things: day and night, waters, trees and plants, and animals of all kinds. Finally, God created humans in his own image and likeness. As His children, God loves humanity, showing His mercy when we go astray and continuously inviting us through His grace back into relationship with the Triune God. Everything God does is an invitation for us to grow closer to Him and share in the joys of the Kingdom of Heaven together. He is ever-loving and faithful to all and calls us to be close to Him.

For us to accept this relationship with God, to choose his love over all things, it is not simply a matter of saying "yes" to God, but by inviting that "yes" to transform our entire lives. By saying "yes", we accept we are made in God's image, we are called to be Christ-like, and we are to be obedient to His commends. And the most important command is to love. In Matthew 22:34-40, the greatest commandment is to love God and love our neighbors. To do that, Jesus told us what we must do in Matthew 25: feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the imprisoned, etc. These are all acts of mercy, and—by acting on any one of these—Jesus says we are serving Himself for He is one with the poor and vulnerable. And this mercy does not extend to just human beings, but to all of creation. God loves and cares for us so in turn we are called to love and care for the world and everything in it. Although God blessed us with dominion over creation in Genesis 1, God also gave us the responsibility "to till and keep it" as Genesis 2:25 reads.

Laudato Si' and *Laudate Deum*

In 2015, Pope Francis published his encyclical *Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home*. This was addressed to all people of planet Earth and was his plea to take better care of God's Creation. He followed up with *Laudato Deum* in 2023, in which he again pleaded for all people—especially Catholics—to heed "the cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor," asking us "to accompany this pilgrimage of reconciliation with the world that is our home and to help make it more beautiful, because that commitment has to do with our personal dignity and highest values." (*LS* 49, *LD* 69)

Pope Francis's encyclical is not the first time a pope has spoken on concern for the environment. His predecessor, Pope Benedict XVI, stated in 2007 in a letter to the ecumenical patriarch of Constantinople on the occasion of the seventh symposium of the religion, science, and environment movement that the "preservation of the environment, promotion of sustainable development and particular attention to climate change are matters of grave concern for the entire human family." Even Pope Saint John Paul II shared multiple comments on his concern for the environment in the 1990 message for the World Day of Peace, saying, "[f]aced with the widespread destruction of the environment, people everywhere are coming to understand that we cannot continue to use the goods of the earth as we have in the past… [A] new ecological awareness is beginning to emerge… The ecological crisis is a moral issue."

Caring for the environment is not a new concept; rather it is perhaps one of the oldest traditions of humankind. Indeed, we still till the earth for food, build our homes and businesses upon it, and mine it for resources and energy. Over the years we've seen technology and innovation increase, both with its harms and benefits. But like Pope Leo XIV said in his most recent encyclical *Magnifica Humanitas*, "care for our common home and our responsibility toward the poor and future generations require that the use of the goods of creation and the new possibilities offered by technology be regulated in such a way as to respect the environment, avoid waste and prevent new forms of exploitation," and that "[w]e can embrace the technological progress that alleviates suffering and unlocks new possibilities, provided that we do not abandon the very essence of our humanity, namely the capacity for relationship and love." (*MH* 67, 126)

Let us begin with a prayer from *Laudato Si'* as we seek greater knowledge of our relationship with the world around us.

A Christian prayer in union with creation (from *Laudato Si'*)

Father, we praise you with all your creatures.
They came forth from your all-powerful hand;
they are yours, filled with your presence and
your tender love.
Praise be to you!

Son of God, Jesus,
through you all things were made.
You were formed in the womb of Mary our
Mother,
you became part of this earth,
and you gazed upon this world with human
eyes.
Today you are alive in every creature
in your risen glory.
Praise be to you!

Holy Spirit, by your light
you guide this world towards the Father's love
and accompany creation as it groans in travail.
You also dwell in our hearts
and you inspire us to do what is good.
Praise be to you!

Triune Lord, wondrous community of infinite
love,
teach us to contemplate you
in the beauty of the universe,
for all things speak of you.
Awaken our praise and thankfulness
for every being that you have made.
Give us the grace to feel profoundly joined
to everything that is.

God of love, show us our place in this world
as channels of your love
for all the creatures of this earth,
for not one of them is forgotten in your sight.
Enlighten those who possess power and
money,
that they may avoid the sin of indifference,
that they may love the common good,
advance the weak,
and care for this world in which we live.

The poor and the earth are crying out.
O Lord, seize us with your power and light,
help us to protect all life,
to prepare for a better future,
for the coming of your Kingdom
of justice, peace, love and beauty.
Praise be to you!

Amen

Profile and Background Information

The Archdiocese of Cincinnati

The Archdiocese of Cincinnati (AOC) covers 19 counties in the west-southwest region of Ohio. The Pastoral Center is located in Cincinnati at the southernmost end with an additional office in Dayton in the center of the archdiocese. The AOC has 205 parishes arranged into 57 "Families of Parishes" with an estimation of more than 450,000 Catholics with an average Sunday Mass attendance of nearly 120,000. There are 8 Catholic universities, 22 Catholic high schools, and 82 Catholic elementary schools that total more than 40,000 students from pre-school through high school, according to the archdiocesan website.

The AOC has long supported the Catholic Social Action (CSA) office's efforts to promote Care for Creation, and more recently, *Laudato Si'*. In late 2022, the AOC joined the Laudato Si' Advocates Program and developed a Laudato Si' Action Plan that involved parishes, schools, and the wider community. The plan included year-by-year goals focused on creating awareness of the ecological crisis and the powerful message of Laudato Si', connecting our members with nature and others, and ultimately, encouraging action on a personal and community level. Recognizing the challenge of projecting seven years ahead, the document was regularly updated using the See-Judge-Act model of Catholic Social Doctrine to evaluate progress, identify successes and challenges, and guide future steps. This model also connected intimately with the goals to create awareness, connect, and act.

In 2026, through the USCCB's *Laudato Si' Leadership Cohort*, the LS Action Plan for the Archdiocese of Cincinnati is being re-examined and renewed. This document will detail the new plans and goals.

Current Activities and Resources

The CSA office leads the AOC's environmental efforts, primarily through the Care for Creation Task Force (CCTF). Composed of educators, parishioners, and religious members from across the AOC, the CCTF shares resources, supports parish initiatives, promotes sustainable practices, and secures funding for energy retrofits. It also publishes the quarterly *St. Francis Pledge* newsletter, featuring news, advocacy opportunities, prayers, and eco tips.

In 2018, the CCTF launched the *Laudato Si' Communities* program to support parishes and schools in caring for God's creation. Qualifying institutions earn the title "Laudato Si' Community," receive an eco-friendly banner, and are featured in Archdiocesan media. To qualify, they need to complete a facilities assessment, meet environmental stewardship targets, have 10% of households complete a household assessment, and host a Care for Creation program. As of the end of 2025, there are 33 Laudato Si' Communities in the archdiocese.

In March 2023, in partnership with the University of Dayton, the CCTF hosted a successful Laudato Si' Conference in Dayton, Ohio to introduce the LSAP and invite parishes, schools, and other communities to learn and engage. What emerged was key: confidence in the direction of the LSAP,

and the formation of the Laudato Si' Sector Groups (LS Sectors). These LS Sectors gather people from across sectors together to form a space where they can educate and inspire each other. Facilitated by CCTF members, these groups focus on universities, high schools, parishes, and religious communities. Even now, LS Sectors will continue to drive the AOC's participation in the LSAP in the coming years.

Ohio Policy on Resources and Energy

Ohio's natural resources policy is centered in the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, which states on its homepage that its mission is "to ensure a balance between the wise use and protection of our natural resources for the benefit of all." This framework covers state parks, forests, wildlife areas, waterways, water resources, geology, minerals, and oil and gas regulation. Ohio's energy policy is shaped primarily by utility regulation, siting decisions, and market oversight rather than by a single statewide climate framework. The Public Utilities Commission of Ohio regulates electric and natural gas utilities, while state siting rules affect the development of major generation facilities.

Solar development has expanded in Ohio, and state policy includes renewable energy requirements for investor-owned utilities, although those targets have changed over time and remain comparatively limited. State law from Ohio Senate Bill 52 (2021) gives county governments significant authority to restrict or block large-scale wind and solar development, creating a patchwork system that slows deployment. Renewable energy remains relevant through rooftop solar, energy purchasing decisions, building efficiency, and participation in local or regional clean energy efforts where feasible.

Hydraulic fracturing, often referred to as fracking, remains a significant part of Ohio's oil and gas sector, particularly through horizontal shale development regulated by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. Ohio regulations on drilling shale, oil, and gas wells provides a structured permitting and inspection framework for drilling, well construction, water sampling, waste handling, underground injection, and site restoration. At the same time, fracking continues to raise concerns among local organizations, such as Save Ohio Parks, related to water quality, air pollution, methane emissions, truck traffic, waste disposal, land use, and the cumulative burdens borne by nearby communities. This is relevant not only as a matter of environmental policy, but also as a question of prudence, health, stewardship, and solidarity with communities that may experience disproportionate risks.

The Ohio EPA has stated that, while it does not follow a standalone environmental justice policy, it considers environmental justice comments as part of its obligations under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and through public involvement processes. Environmental justice in Ohio often depends on procedural fairness, public notice, and opportunities for affected residents to participate, rather than on a separate statewide framework focused explicitly on cumulative burdens or vulnerable communities.

The Health of the Environment and Health of the Community

Much research has gone into the impacts of pollution and environmental degradation on communities. In Ohio, overall air quality had been improving as a result of the Clean Air Act, and since 2008, levels had reached healthy levels with the implementation of the state's renewable energy standards. However, air pollution has been increasing since the passage of Ohio House Bill 6 (2019), which gutted these standards. Since 2020, ozone and fine particulate matter concentrations have increased in the archdiocese and in other locations in Ohio. These pollutants are primarily generated by power plants and vehicles, showing how Ohio produces electricity and powers vehicles directly affect the health quality of Ohio air.

According to the American Lung Association in 2026, hundreds of thousands of vulnerable individuals live within the geographic area of the archdiocese. Especially vulnerable populations include children, pregnant women, seniors, people of color, people with underlying health conditions, and those who live in poverty. In Cincinnati and Dayton, the lower-income neighborhoods–with predominantly black and brown residents–have a significantly lower life expectancy and greater risks of major health concerns than those in predominately white neighborhoods.

Fine particulate matter (FPM) is an especially dangerous type of air pollution linked to asthma and autism, premature deaths due to cardiovascular and stroke events, and other health concerns, especially in the vulnerable populations mentioned above. For example, several studies have linked exposure to FPM during the second and third trimesters of pregnancy to an increased risk of premature and/or low birthrate babies. A local 2019 study, *Ambient ozone and fine particulate matter exposures and autism spectrum disorder in metropolitan Cincinnati, Ohio*, found that increased concentrations of FPM and ozone during a child's first and second years of life post-birth to be associated with an increased risk of autism and other neurodevelopmental disorders.

The good news is that robust research has also shown that reducing FPM air pollution results in profound increases in human health. As recently as August 2026, a New York City study of a cohort of thousands of toddlers, *Less air pollution previously related to clean air and climate policies is linked to improved cognitive scores over time in NYC children*, revealed a strong correlation between the city's large reduction of FPM to significant increases in the children's cognitive functions. These findings illustrate Pope Francis' wisdom in calling for the adoption of an "integral ecology" which recognizes the interconnectedness of caring for creation and cherishing human life.

The Rural Landscape and Sustainability in Cincinnati and Dayton

Much of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati's terrain is characterized as tillable lowlands and dominated by farmland. In the north, there are large-scale farming operations with a large Catholic population. East of Cincinnati finds poorer, small-scale farms in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains. Along with abundant farmland, major rivers include the Great Miami River, the Little Miami River, and Mad River along with the Ohio River. Many farmers and people living in rural communities are

facing a lot of stressors impacting their work and the environment. In the 2024 study from The Ohio State University called *Agricultural land lost to development in Ohio*, agricultural land has declined by nearly 270,000 acres, or 2.04%, with nearly half of that being for development, from 2001 to 2021 in Ohio. It is concentrated mainly in the Columbus area with the next largest losses being in Dayton and Toledo.

Cincinnati, one of the two major cities in the AOC, has an existing environmental plan, the 2023 Green Cincinnati Plan, with eight goals to advance the sustainability, equity, and resilience of the city. Cincinnati faces significant environmental justice issues and has reported them in the Climate Equity Indicators that came out of the City of Cincinnati's Office of Environment and Sustainability. There are many environmentally-focused organizations that operate across city neighborhoods, city-wide, and even the wider region. These organizations often work together well and that is a strength for Cincinnati.

The city of Dayton has declined economically due to decades of deindustrialization and the resulting loss of manufacturing jobs, as discussed in a case study in 2018 by the Mercatus Center at George Washington University called *How the Gem City Lost Its Luster and How It Can Get It Back*. Despite its economic challenges, the City of Dayton's 2020-2025 Sustainability Report notes that Dayton is the first Ohio city, and among few in the nation, to earn a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Platinum designation by the United States Green Building Council (USGBC). It is also one of only two Ohio cities to be designated Silver or higher as a Bike Friendly Community though it still faces a fair share of environmental justice issues. While the number of environmental organizations is fewer than in Cincinnati, the smaller size of Dayton and relatively contained urban sprawl allows those organizations to collaborate well to promote beneficial sustainable and environmental practices for its residents.

Catholic Communities

Much federal funding for environmental programs has been cut in the last couple of years, causing city governments and other organizations to scale down their operations. Despite this, there are many Catholic communities who continue to be passionate about eco-spirituality and are undeterred by the new barriers and restrictions. Religious congregations housed in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati are pioneers and leaders in these efforts. The Marianists, Sisters of Charity, and the Sisters of the Precious Blood, among others, have made huge strides in eco-friendly practices such as installing solar, restoring native plant communities, reducing the use of plastics, engaging in composting efforts, and celebrating creation through prayer and other spiritual practices.

A number of universities, high schools, and parishes are also taking up the cause. Establishing community gardens is common, which not only provides educational opportunities for students and adults alike but also provides fresh produce to local food pantries. Energy stewardship can reduce operating costs and improve resilience across facilities and ministries. Renewable energy can support long-term environmental and financial goals when pursued in ways that fit local conditions and Catholic institutional capacity. Recycling programs are being re-examined in several communities,

and there is a lot of passion for composting food waste and replacing single-use plastics with compostables or more easily recycled materials. Stewardship of natural resources can shape how parishes, schools, and ministries think about land, water, groundskeeping, biodiversity, and their broader relationship to local ecosystems.

Environmental justice provides an essential framework for ensuring that sustainability efforts do not focus only on buildings and technology, but also on people, especially those who are poor, vulnerable, or underrepresented in public decision-making. These concerns will inform practical facility management with formation, advocacy, and a commitment to the common good.

With the cultural and geographic diversity of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati comes a diversity of thought and action. Some communities lack the knowledge on what they need to do while others have passionate people doing the legwork. Some communities are more remote and don't have the same easy access to resources and services that make choosing environmentally sustainable choices easier. It is the duty of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati to walk and collaborate with all these communities so that together they can become better stewards of the world, caring for each other and the earth, and recognizing the holiness in all of God's creations.

The Goals of *Laudato Si'*

Within Pope Francis's *Laudato Si'* encyclical, there are seven identified goals guiding the faithful to urgent and immediate action to care for our common home. When forming the Laudato Si Action Plan, the goals in the plan should address one or multiple of the Laudato Si' goals, recognizing that they are interconnected and that one often influences others. Here are the goals and possible actions as stated from the Laudato Si' Action Platform:

1. 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 well-being of all living creatures 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."

2. 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 encouraging 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."

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, exploitative animal agriculture, and any activity harmful to the planet and all living creatures; supporting circular economies; prioritizing care labor and protecting the dignity of workers."

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 making judicious choices about meat and dairy consumption), becoming conscious of consumerist attitudes and habits, encouraging greater use of public transport and active mobility (walking, cycling), and avoiding single-use items (e.g., plastic)."

5. Ecological Education

"Ecological Education is about re-thinking and re-designing curricular and institutional reform in the spirit of integral ecology to foster ecological awareness and transformative action. Actions could include ensuring equitable access to education for all, promoting human rights and the well-being of the ecosystems, fostering Laudato Si' themes within the community, encouraging ecological leadership from both students and teachers, and ecological restoration activities."

6. Ecological Spirituality

"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. Actions to encourage a more ethical and compassionate relationship with all God's creation could include promoting creation-based liturgical celebrations, developing ecological catechesis, retreats, formation programs, [and more]."

7. Community Resilience and Empowerment

"Community resilience and empowerment envisage a synodal journey of community engagement and participatory action at various levels. Actions could include building awareness, promoting advocacy, and developing [grassroots] campaigns, and encouraging rootedness and a sense of belonging in local communities and neighborhood ecosystems."

Please visit the Laudato Si' Action Platform at https://laudatosiactionplatform.org/ to learn more about these goals!

The Archdiocese of Cincinnati's Goals

The Goals are written as SMART goals, meaning: specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound. In the table below, you will see in the first column the overall AOC action and the attributable Laudato Si' Goals it addresses. The second column details the goal further, what it means and who is included in this goal. The third column gives faith and practical reasons for the goal. Finally, the fourth column gives a timeline.

These goals grow and develop with time. Each year requires an evaluation to inspect what has been done well, what has not been done well, and what goals or new goals can be developed from the past year's knowledge.

Goal # 1: The Pastoral Center as a Model

The following goals are the responsibility of the staff of the Pastoral Center, led by the CSA office, to internally examine and make changes in their personal lives and office activities. From starting internally, the Pastoral Center can be a model for other Catholic Communities who don't know where to start.

AOC Action and LS Goals	Details	Reason	Timeline
1. **Form a Pastoral Center Laudato Si' Team** *Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles* *Ecological Education* *Ecological Spirituality*	The Pastoral Center Laudato Si' Team will form to initiate the processes and goals in the LS Action Plan as well as assess the progress of the plan and form new goals and programs. The Catholic Social Action (CSA) Office will chair the team and gather representatives of Pastoral Center departments to join the team. The Team will ultimately report to the Department Directors.	By forming a Laudato Si' Team, it shows that the Archdiocese of Cincinnati desires to commit to being stewards of God's Creation, which is a pillar of Catholic Social Teaching. In turn, this can inspire other Catholic Communities to engage further in their own circles and be good stewards of creation.	Summer 2026 – Form the Pastoral Center Laudato Si' Team. Fall 2026 – Establish a meeting cadence. Educate the team on Laudato Si' and Care for Creation and introduce examples of what this looks like. Winter 2026 and beyond – The team will work to achieve the goals of the LS Action Plan and evaluate each year.
2. **Educational Programming**	The CSA Office and partners will design and give presentations	Educational programming is important in the	2027 – Look for opportunities to present to

Ecological Education	during Pastoral Lunch and Learns and other department meetings (as invited) to form staff of the Pastoral Center on Care for Creation. These presentations may include the theology behind Care for Creation and also common practices to what it looks like practically. These presentations may also be used for other Catholic communities as well.	Catholic Church. By providing information and a faith foundation on the importance of Care for Creation, the Pastoral Center staff will be more motivated and better equipped to carefully and intentionally address present and future sustainability opportunities.	archdiocesan staff and aim to have at least one program a year.
3. Evaluate and Examine Pastoral Center Policies and Practices *Response to the Cry of the Earth* *Ecological Economics* *Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles*	The Laudato Si' Team and appropriate staff will execute relevant sustainability evaluations and examine archdiocesan policies and practices. They will discuss and enact strategies for sustainable activities and actions. Policies and practices that can be examined may include: renovations, energy and water conservation/efficiency, sustainable energy sourcing, event/retreat practices, waste reduction, reusable water bottles and other dishware usage, types of cleaning chemicals, etc.	By doing evaluations and examining policy, Care for Creation becomes a part of the culture and practice of the Pastoral Center.	Late 2027 and on – The Laudato Si' Team will decide on at least two topics of evaluation each year, complete them, and make recommendations for improvement. Some topics may require re-examination in the future.
4. Complete an Energy Audit *Response to the Cry of the Earth* *Ecological Economics*	The Laudato Si' Team and other advisors will help organize energy audits for Archdiocesan buildings. Working with an advising body, such as Catholic Energies, the AOC can identify basic and advanced strategies to improve building sustainability as well as	Energy audits often reduce expenses as well as harmful air pollution impacts on the health of vulnerable communities.	2026 and 2027 – A partner has reached out with an energy audit opportunity and this should be completed with suggestions reviewed in a short period of time.

Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles	establish a history of previous sustainable decisions and implementations.		
5. Develop AOC website page for Care for Creation *Ecological Education* *Ecological Spirituality*	On the AOC's website, Care for Creation will have a more prominent place on the AOC site. The CSA office already has several pages and resources dedicated to Care for Creation and Laudato Si'. Any front page links may re-direct visitors to the existing pages.	Care for Creation is an important teaching of the Catholic faith and currently has little visibility. With visibility on the AOC site, it tells everyone—Catholics and non-Catholics alike—that it is important.	2028 – Incorporate Care for Creation into one of the main AOC webpages.
6. Establish a Green Revolving Fund *Response to the Cry of the Earth* *Response to the Cry of the Poor* *Ecological Economics* *Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles*	The AOC Laudato Si' Team will investigate establishing a Green Revolving Fund for Catholic communities to invest in energy savings projects. This fund would be a starter fund that can be paid back/replenished by energy savings over the course of several years. Identify funding sources available to support this and other sustainability initiatives. There can be a specific fundraiser for it in the AOC.	Schools and churches are often looking for funding. Due to the initial expense of energy savings programs, a Green Revolving Fund can help finance initial projects and use savings to pay back the cost.	2028 – Discuss with partners for collaboration in the Cincinnati area. Establish a fund by 2030. • Run a pilot program. • Create an application and determine criteria that helps most underserved parishes and schools first.
7. Model for other diocesan buildings *Response to the Cry of the Earth* *Ecological Economics*	The Pastoral Center will become a sustainable building model for other diocesan buildings. The AOC can take inspiration from current sustainable buildings in Cincinnati and engage experts, advisors, and other city of	With the Pastoral Center building making strides to become more sustainable, it can serve as a model for other buildings in the Catholic community. Many do not know where to start	2028-2030 – Examine sustainable Cincinnati building practices and discern possibilities for the Pastoral Center and other AOC buildings. Ensure that there is a public report

Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles	Cincinnati resources. Projects and actions may include: • Forming a building commission through one of the archdiocesan offices for expertise on sustainable building projects and renovations • Limiting single use plastic items in the pastoral center • Establishing a green roof • Investigating the use of solar panels/ parking lot solar/ solar field/ "balcony" solar AC • Identifying present and forward-looking actions	and having a model to follow helps	or record of what's been done. Every other year, check in to see what changes have been or could be made, updates in technology, etc.

Goal #2: Supporting Catholic Communities in Laudato Si' Growth

This next goal addresses the wider archdiocese communities: parishes, schools, religious communities, etc. Everyone in these communities is responsible for advancing this goal, but structurally parish leaders, pastors, green teams, religious orders' leadership teams, principals, university presidents, educators, and members of the Care for Creation Task Force especially have the responsibility for carrying this forward. They will be supported by the Archdiocese CSA office.

AOC Action and LS Goals	Details	Reason	Timeline
1. Inventory existing Practices and Resources (people, initiatives, LS) for Care for Creation *Community Resilience and Empowerment*	Compile a list of what already has been done in the archdiocese (people, initiatives, etc.). Review available resources and determine their best organization and what is missing. Compile a list of leaders involved in this work. Use a SWOT analysis to capture the archdiocese's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in terms of responding to Laudato Si'.	An inventory will help identify experts, mentors, and needs of Catholic communities. This will also help re-energize existing groups and initiatives.	Beginning of 2027 – begin and complete an inventory. Beginning of each year – re-examine the inventory to identify what may be missing or needs to be updated. New resources and information can be added throughout the year.
2. Establish Green Team Mentors and Laudato Si' Green Coaching Teams *Ecological Education* *Community Resilience and Empowerment*	The CSA office will identify leaders and volunteers who can provide 'expert' support so individual parishes and institutions don't need to re-invent a green wheel. These Mentors and Coaching Teams may assist with completing actions for the Supporting Catholic Communities goal. Mentors and Teams may undergo the Laudato Si' Animators training.	Catholic communities may need support as they begin or continue to grow in Laudato Si'. Having a dedicated mentor to reach out to for advice not only connects them to a multitude of resources but also lessens the burden of a single person or office working with and keeping track of multiple communities.	2027-2028 – Identify leaders who would be interested from existing green teams and AOC Care for Creation Task Force. A basic orientation will be developed to orient them to the values of the archdiocese. This will be an ongoing process.

3. Education *Ecological Education* *Ecological Spirituality*	The CSA office will compile existing resources and provide educational presentations on Care for Creation. This can include conducting webinar series, future symposiums or conferences; and invitations to meetings for subgroups by function: facility managers, food managers, deanery meetings, office managers, parish life coordinators, grounds crews, etc. Large sessions may address overall LS goals and topics, while meetings with subgroups may contain practical information related to a specific domain.	To further expand the reach and understanding of how Care for Creation impacts all aspects of our communal life as Catholics and has implications for every person in the archdiocese.	2027 and beyond – Schedule at least two programs per year.
4. Promote the LS Action Platform and LS Action Plan, and form Green Teams *Response to the Cry of the Earth* *Response to the Cry of the Poor* *Ecological Economics* *Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles* *Ecological Education*	The CSA office and partners will (continue to) work with Catholic Communities to form green teams to promote Care for Creation and sustainability. Some communities may already have an Action Plan, though many do not. Mentors and Coaching Teams can aid with this.	Laudato Si Communities that are in existence need continued support to go further in their commitments, and we need to continue to offer this program to communities who have not begun this journey.	2027 – Reach out to existing LS Communities. Energize new communities.
5. Energy Resources *Response to the Cry of the Earth*	The CSA office and partners will provide resources for energy audits for Catholic communities through the Laudato Si' AOC	Change in energy usage and consumption is one of the best ways to reduce energy consumption and	End of 2028 – Collect resources on energy audits.

Response to the Cry of the Poor *Ecological Economics* *Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles* *Ecological Education* *Community Resilience and Empowerment*	webpages, presentations, and individual communications. These resources and information may include: • Providing information on energy auditing • Informing on alternative energy practices that reduce and conserve energy • Connecting local resources	the burning of fossil fuels and lower expenses.	2029 and on – Approach at least 2 Catholic communities per year and determine who has and has not done an audit. Determine feasibility to complete one within the next year. • Start with Laudato Si' Communities and go from there.
6. Resources on facility and grounds sustainable practices *Response to the Cry of the Earth* *Ecological Education* *Ecological Spirituality* *Community Resilience and Empowerment*	The CSA office and partners will provide resources on implementing sustainable practices for facilities and grounds for Catholic communities through the Laudato Si' AOC webpages, presentations, and individual communications. These resources and information may include: • Composting • Native plant landscaping • Water • Recycling	This will help communities think creatively about what they can practically do to mitigate climate change, giving them options based on their property features and needs. Reducing waste and lowering consumption not only saves money but reduces the stress on local resources.	End of 2028 – Have resources available online. 2029 and on – Through education and other opportunities, publicize these with the Laudato Si Communities and others to help people know they exist and how to use them.
7. Resources for spiritual practices *Ecological Education* *Ecological Spirituality*	The CSA office and partners will provide spiritual resources on Care for Creation for Catholic communities through the Laudato Si AOC webpages and presentations. These resources and information may include: • Mass for the Care of Creation setting	This will help communities with resources on how to integrate ecological education and spirituality into everyday practice, including liturgies, sacraments, bible studies, and more. This will help people see the interconnection of all	End of 2028 – Have resources available online. 2029 and on – Through education and other opportunities, publicize these resources with the Laudato Si Communities and others to help people know they exist and how to use them. Reach out to communities who aren't

	• Spiritual reading recommendations • Intentions • Devotion resources • Outdoor prayers • Mary Gardens (or other spiritual gardening examples)	creation and prevent the separation of humans from the rest of creation. It is also important to educate adults and children alike, elaborating on the fact that faith is not separate from caring for creation, but extremely important for practicing our faith.	Laudato Si communities and encourage them to use these resources for liturgical planning.
8. Grants *Response to the Cry of the Earth* *Response to the Cry of the Poor* *Ecological Economics* *Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles*	The CSA office and partners will search and make known available grants for Catholic communities on sustainability programs and projects.	Grants encourage engagement with LS priorities. They help offset some of the cost associated with some sustainable changes.	End of 2027 – develop a cadence to updating known and available grants and send them out through office communications and partners.

Final Thoughts

Through this document, the Archdiocese of Cincinnati indicates its desire to educate, inspire, and empower the communities they are entrusted to serve on Care for Creation and all it entails. Not only does it provide guidance, but it has also a variety of resources, educational opportunities and mentorships to discern the possibilities and passions of individual communities. Through these goals and actions, we are answering God's call to love Him, one another, and the world JHe designed. The name of the encyclical *Laudato Si'*, "Praise be to you", acclaims God's glory in all of creation. Through it, the faithful are urged to recognize how stewardship of creation is essential to giving praise to God.

Let us conclude with this prayer from *Laudato Si'*…

A prayer for our earth (from *Laudato Si'*)

All-powerful God, you are present in the
whole universe
and in the smallest of your creatures.
You embrace with your tenderness all that
exists.

Pour out upon us the power of your love,
that we may protect life and beauty.
Fill us with peace, that we may live
as brothers and sisters, harming no one.

O God of the poor,
help us to rescue the abandoned and
forgotten of this earth,
so precious in your eyes.

Bring healing to our lives,
that we may protect the world and not prey
on it,
that we may sow beauty, not pollution and
destruction.

Touch the hearts
of those who look only for gain
at the expense of the poor and the earth.

Teach us to discover the worth of each thing,
to be filled with awe and contemplation,
to recognize that we are profoundly united
with every creature
as we journey towards your infinite light.

We thank you for being with us each day.
Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle
for justice, love and peace.

Amen.