LAUDATO SI' ACTION PLAN

Caring for our Common Home
October 2026

This plan sets the care-for-creation commitments of the Pastoral Ministry Center, the administrative offices serving Archbishop Gustavo García-Siller, MSpS, and the people of this local Church. The actions here apply directly to Archdiocesan offices. Many can also serve as invitations, models, and resources that parishes, missions, and schools may adapt according to their capacity, leadership, facilities, and local needs.



Art by Katherine Saucedo and Charles T. Ramirez

Archdiocese of San Antonio

MESSAGE FROM THE ARCHBISHOP

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,



In 2015, Pope Francis reminded us in *Laudato Si'* that "everything is connected" (*LS*, 91). Caring for creation is part of our Catholic faith and inseparable from our commitment to human dignity and our concern for families, workers, migrants, farmers, children, and communities harmed by environmental degradation. Pope Leo XIV carries this vision forward in *Magnifica Humanitas*, teaching that "we can say that social action reaches its fullness when it is directed toward this shared good, just as a person's moral action finds its fulfillment in the choice of the true good" (*Magnifica Humanitas*, 60). The well-being of people and the care of our common home belong together.

In 2024, the Archdiocese of San Antonio formally joined the Laudato Si' Action Platform, the Vatican's international effort to put *Laudato Si'* into practice. Through this commitment, we walk with the universal Church while responding to the particular gifts, needs, and vulnerabilities of our own archdiocese.

This Laudato Si' Action Plan offers a pastoral guide and a practical way forward. Its actions apply directly to the Archdiocesan offices at the Pastoral Ministry Center, while also offering ideas and resources that parishes, missions, and schools may adapt to their own capacity, leadership, facilities, and community needs.

We are grateful that many of our parishes, schools, ministries, and faithful are already caring for creation in meaningful ways. This plan is not meant to replace or duplicate those efforts. It is meant to help us recognize, share, and strengthen them. Sharing these stories encourages one another and shows future generations what faith in action looks like.

May this plan deepen our ecological conversion, strengthen the bonds among us, and open our hearts more fully to God, to creation, and especially to those who are most vulnerable. May it also help us bear witness to the Gospel through faithful care of our common home.

In Christ,

Most Reverend Gustavo García-Siller, MSpS
Archbishop of San Antonio

THE ARCHDIOCESE OF SAN ANTONIO AT A GLANCE

The Diocese of San Antonio was established in 1874 and elevated to a metropolitan archdiocese in 1926. On August 3, 2026, the Archdiocese celebrated its 100th anniversary. It serves communities across South Central Texas through parishes, missions, schools, hospitals, and Catholic Charities, and serves an area of 23,180 square miles.

The Archdiocese is led by Archbishop Gustavo García-Siller, MSpS, assisted by Auxiliary Bishops Gary W. Janak and Arturo Cepeda, who serve from the Pastoral Ministry Center (PMC) in San Antonio, Texas.

Measure	As of December 31, 2025
Total population served	2,775,515
Total Catholic population	1,154,495
Parishes	135
Missions	33
Pastoral centers	1
Total students under Catholic instruction	47,092
Total priests in the Archdiocese	366
Permanent deacons	459
Catholic hospitals	6
Area served	23,180 square miles across 19 counties

Source: Archdiocesan Statistics as of December 31, 2025 or Fiscal Year Ending.

The PMC serves 19 counties in South Central Texas: Bexar, Val Verde, Edwards, Real, Kerr, Gillespie, Kendall, Comal, Guadalupe, Gonzales, Uvalde, Kinney, Medina, Wilson, Karnes, Frio, Atascosa, and Bandera, together with the portion of McMullen County north of the Nueces River. These counties are organized into fourteen deaneries: eight urban deaneries serving the San Antonio metropolitan area and six rural deaneries serving communities across South Central Texas. The urban deaneries are Central Urban, North Urban, North Central Urban, Northeast Urban, Northwest Urban, Southeast Urban, Southwest Urban, and West Urban. The rural deaneries are Floresville Rural, Fredericksburg Rural, Hondo Rural, Pleasanton Rural, Seguin Rural, and Uvalde Rural.

URBAN AND RURAL DEANERY REALITIES

Urban deanery realities	Rural deanery realities	Implications for this plan
Urban heat island effects, limited tree canopy, impervious surfaces, air quality, transportation, high housing costs, homelessness, and unequal access to cooling.	Flash Flood Alley risk, drought, water scarcity, agriculture and ranching pressures, long travel distances, smaller parish staffs, aging infrastructure, and limited emergency-service access.	The PMC can model practices, while parishes, missions, and schools adapt actions according to capacity.
Many urban parishes and schools can focus on cooling, shade, water access, public transit and car-pooling, waste reduction, energy efficiency, and neighborhood outreach.	Many rural parishes and schools can focus on flood preparedness, water conservation, drought response, land stewardship, emergency communication, and accompaniment of farmers, ranchers, and outdoor workers.	Frame goals by context and setting, based on resources and needs.
Urban communities may have more institutional partners but face more complex infrastructure and poverty-related vulnerability.	Rural communities may have strong local networks but fewer staff, vendors, transportation options, and resilience resources.	Measure progress through participation, formation, and practical action.

Expanded pastoral issues by deanery setting

Urban deaneries are often on the front line of heat and public health. The City of San Antonio explains that urban heat islands occur when buildings, roads, and infrastructure absorb and release more heat than natural landscapes. Impacts can include health risks, higher energy costs, poorer air quality, and disproportionate harm to children, older adults, people with medical conditions, low-income residents, and outdoor workers. The National Weather Service recorded 75 days at or above 100 degrees in San Antonio in 2023, an all-time record, compared with 27 such days in 2024 and 20 in 2025. City and University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) heat mapping studies indicate that heat vulnerability is shaped by factors such as poverty, lack of air-conditioning, pre-existing conditions, outdoor work, and high concentrations of concrete and asphalt.

Rural deaneries face different but equally serious ecological and pastoral risks. Hill Country and South Texas communities are shaped by drought cycles, agriculture, ranching, water supply concerns, rural infrastructure, and the reality of flash flooding. The Hill Country's steep terrain and shallow soil can create rapid runoff and deadly river rises, while drought can harm crops, livestock, livelihoods, water systems, and the mental health of farming and ranching families.

Targeted recommendations for urban deaneries

- Prioritize heat resilience through shade, trees, cooling spaces, refillable water stations, wellness checks for elders, and heat-safety messaging for parish and school events.
- Encourage energy efficiency at parish and school facilities, including LED lighting, programmable thermostats, weatherization, and energy audits where feasible.
- Promote low-waste events, recycling education, reduced single-use plastics, green catering, and parish-level waste audits.
- Connect care for creation with dignity, poverty, homelessness, immigration, worker dignity, and public health ministries.
- Invite youth and Catholic school students to lead creation-care projects such as tree planting, garden care, recycling education, and neighborhood clean-ups.
- Integrate care for creation into parish formation and liturgical life through homily resources, faith-formation sessions, prayers, and outdoor Masses or prayer services during the Season of Creation.

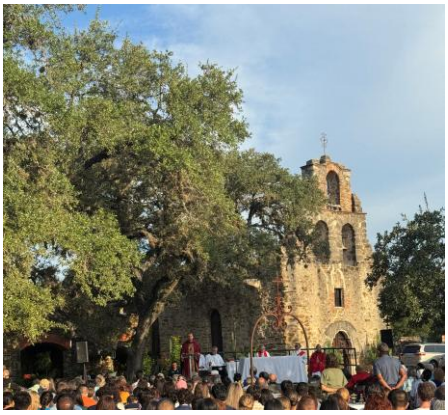
Targeted recommendations for rural deaneries

- Prioritize flood preparedness, including parish communication trees, emergency contact lists, evacuation awareness, and coordination with local emergency-management offices.
- Catholic Charities Archdiocese of San Antonio is a member of Texas Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) and is currently the state representative for all Catholic Charities in Texas. In addition, CCAOSA is a member of the San Antonio Area VOAD, and participates in monthly Emergency Management Coordination Information Sharing (EMCIS) at the Emergency Operations Center with the Office of Emergency Management.
- During declared federal or local disasters, CCAOSA is in communication with Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) State Voluntary Agency Liaison.
- CCAOSA currently has a partnership with Airbnb.org where temporary shelter can be provided to families during a disaster for up to 28-days at a local Airbnb.
- Promote water conservation, drought education, rainwater awareness, native landscaping, and care for aquifers, streams, rivers, and watersheds.
- Support farmers, ranchers, and outdoor workers through prayer, pastoral accompaniment, heat-safety education, and advocacy for worker dignity.
- Offer flexible participation options for smaller parishes with limited staff, including simple annual actions and shared deanery-level formation events.

- Encourage deanery collaboration in the Neighborhood Empowerment Team with Catholic Charities Archdiocese of San Antonio so rural parishes can share speakers, toolkits, bulletin materials, training, and reporting support.
- Build on rural communities' relationship with the land through formation, blessings, pilgrimages, outdoor Masses, and prayers for farmers, ranchers, outdoor workers, water, and the fruitfulness of the earth.

Goals 7.2 and 7.3 below carry several of these recommendations into dated, measurable commitments.

OUR HISTORY



The land now known as San Antonio and South Central Texas has long been home to Indigenous peoples, including the Payaya and the many other distinct South Texas peoples commonly grouped together under the term Coahuiltecan. Long before the arrival of Spanish colonizers, hundreds of Native communities lived, traveled, prayed, and cared for these lands for thousands of years. Today, many families throughout South Texas and northern Mexico trace their ancestry to these Indigenous peoples.

For thousands of years, the Indigenous peoples of what is now South Central Texas, including the Payaya, developed a deep understanding of the region's springs, rivers, native plants, wildlife, and seasonal cycles. In 1691, Fray Damián Massanet recorded the name Yanaguana for a Payaya settlement along the river the Spanish would name for Saint Anthony of Padua; the name is widely used today for the river and the wider region, and the Tāp Pīlam Coahuiltecan Nation renders it as "Land of the Spirit Waters." Communities lived in close relationship with these waterways, relying upon careful observation of ecological patterns to sustain hunting, gathering, trade, and community life. Their knowledge of native plants, water sources, and the rhythms of the land was passed from generation to generation and reflected an understanding of the interconnectedness of the natural world. While customs varied among different groups, many maintained relationships with the land rooted in reciprocity, respect, and responsibility, recognizing that the health of future generations depended upon the wise use and stewardship of local resources.

The San Antonio Missions were built and sustained by the labor of Indigenous families living within the mission communities, alongside Franciscan friars, soldiers, and settlers. That labor was often compelled rather than freely given, and mission life brought epidemic disease, high mortality, and the loss of language and custom, even as it also brought faith, refuge, and the beginnings of communities that endure today. Holding both truths is part of what it means to remember honestly.

This legacy of stewardship offers an important lens through which to understand our shared responsibility for creation today. Although the social, economic, and environmental realities of South Texas have changed dramatically over the centuries, the fundamental truth remains: human flourishing is inseparable from the health of the natural world. In many ways, this understanding echoes the vision articulated by Pope Francis in *Laudato Si'*, where he reminds us that care for creation is inseparable from care for one another, especially the poor and vulnerable.

As a result, the history of this region calls us to view care for creation as more than an environmental responsibility. It is also a matter of honoring memory, culture, justice, and human dignity. The Indigenous stewardship traditions that shaped this land, together with the Christian faith that took root here through the missionary era, challenge us to recognize creation as a gift entrusted to our care rather than a possession over which we exercise unchecked dominion. *Laudato Si'* cannot be separated from the history of this place. Rather, it invites the Church to remember with gratitude, acknowledge past wounds with humility, seek reconciliation where needed, and faithfully steward the gifts of creation for future generations.

A note on terminology: "Coahuiltecan" is a nineteenth-century scholarly grouping rather than a name these peoples used for themselves. It covers many distinct communities whose relationships to one another are not fully known. Where the historical record allows, this plan names the Payaya directly.

The present moment

This call to stewardship is not only historical. Climate-related challenges are already affecting the people and communities served by the Archdiocese of San Antonio. Increasingly frequent floods, prolonged drought, extreme heat, and growing water stress affect families, parishes, schools, farmers, ranchers, outdoor workers, migrants, children, older adults, and those with limited financial resources. These are not distant concerns but daily pastoral and human challenges that fall hardest on the most vulnerable among us. San Antonio itself experienced its deadliest flood year since 1998 in 2025, [Great Flood] when two fast-moving storms claimed 15 lives. The June 12 flooding showed how quickly local creeks can overwhelm roads and infrastructure, especially when intense rainfall occurs overnight.

Just weeks later, the Hill Country floods of July 2025 [Texas Severe Storms and Flooding DR-4871-TX] brought this reality into even sharper focus. At least 138 people died across Texas, including 119 in Kerr County. Among those who died in Kerr County were 39 children, including 25 campers at Camp Mystic; two teenage counselors also died at the camp. Beyond the loss of life, the disaster left lasting emotional, psychological, and spiritual wounds among families, schools, churches, and entire communities, and our ministries continue to accompany those affected through grief and recovery.

The following year, in July 2026, [July Severe Weather], renewed flash flooding again affected communities throughout the Hill Country, including Uvalde, Sabinal, Knippa, Borne, Ingram, Kerrville, Hunt, Comfort, and Fredericksburg. Rapid river rises, emergency evacuations, and water rescues were a sobering reminder of our region's vulnerability. That the loss of life in 2026 was far smaller, was owes much to daylight timing, warning systems installed after 2025, preparation, and the state of Texas deploying and staging lifesaving resources in advance; which is itself an argument for preparedness at the parish level. Understanding these events requires understanding the geography of South-Central Texas. Much of the Hill Country and I-35 corridor lies within what is commonly known as Flash Flood Alley, where steep terrain, shallow limestone soils, and intense rainfall can channel water into creeks and rivers with little warning. Protecting lives, strengthening community preparedness, and ensuring that vulnerable populations are not left behind have become essential dimensions of the Church's pastoral response. The same week saw an F1 Tornado touchdown near 1604 and I-10 in San Antonio.

Beyond flooding, drought and extreme heat present ongoing challenges to both human well-being and the integrity of creation. Texas A&M AgriLife reported in 2025 that drought conditions remained a concern across parts of South and Southwest Texas, affecting agriculture, water supplies, and rural livelihoods. As of August 2026, roughly 28 percent of Texas remained in drought even as parts of the Hill Country recorded July rainfall, a reminder that in our region flood and drought are not alternating problems but simultaneous ones. In addition, the Canyon Lake (reservoir), which holds back floodwaters from the upper Guadalupe River in Comal County is at 96% full as of October 2026, posing severe flooding risk if the reservoir were to overflow. At the same time, rising temperatures place outdoor workers, farm workers, construction workers, older adults, and those without reliable access to cooling at increased risk.

These realities underscore the importance of formation and education within the life of the Church. According to a national survey conducted in December 2023 and released in March 2024 by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA), 72 percent of U.S. Catholics believe environmental justice is a legitimate issue requiring urgent attention, and 62 percent are concerned that climate change will personally affect them. Yet only 33 percent had heard of *Laudato Si'*, only 11 percent said they knew the concept of environmental justice well, and only 44 percent believed that Catholics are morally responsible for the environment. These findings point to a clear need to help Catholics understand care for creation as part of their faith. Closing that gap is the work of Goal 5.

In responding to these challenges, the Archdiocese draws upon the wisdom of both faith and history. Inspired by the Gospel, Catholic Social Teaching, and the stewardship traditions that have shaped this region for generations, we are called to care for our common home, accompany those most affected by environmental challenges, and build resilient communities rooted in justice, solidarity, and hope.

LAUDATO SI' AND THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH

Pope Francis released *Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home* in 2015 as an urgent invitation to the Church and to all people of good will to enter into dialogue about the ecological and social crisis affecting our common home. The encyclical dated May 24, 2015, calls Catholics and all people of good will to recognize that environmental degradation, poverty, economic decisions, human dignity, and relationship with God are deeply connected.

To help Catholic communities translate that vision into concrete action, the Vatican launched the Laudato Si' Action Platform (LSAP) in November 2021. The LSAP provides a practical framework organized around seven interconnected goals that promote integral ecology and care for our common home.

Pope Leo XIV has continued and deepened this call. Opening Laudato Si' Week in 2026, he encouraged "the members of the Laudato Si' Movement and all who promote an integral ecology to renew their commitment" (*Regina Caeli*, May 17, 2026). In his address to the Raising Hope conference marking the tenth anniversary of the encyclical, he named the Laudato Si' Action Platform directly and taught that "we must shift from collecting data to caring; and from environmental discourse to an ecological conversion that transforms both personal and communal lifestyles" (October 1, 2025). In June 2025, the Church promulgated the new Mass "For the Care of Creation." In 2026, its English and Spanish texts were approved for use in the dioceses of the United States and designated for inclusion in future editions of the Roman Missal, giving parishes a new liturgical expression of the Church's commitment to care for creation.

The seven goals guide us all in integrating care for creation, concern for the poor, and ecological conversion into every aspect of Church life.

The Seven Laudato Si' Goals

1. **Response to the Cry of the Earth** — Protecting our common home through environmental stewardship, conservation, and climate action.
2. **Response to the Cry of the Poor** — Accompanying and supporting those most vulnerable to poverty, environmental degradation, and injustice.
3. **Ecological Economics** — Promoting economic practices that uphold human dignity, social equity, and care for creation.
4. **Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles** — Making daily choices that reduce waste, conserve resources, and foster responsible consumption.
5. **Ecological Education** — Forming individuals and communities in environmental awareness and Catholic teaching on creation.
6. **Ecological Spirituality** — Deepening our relationship with God through prayer, reflection, and appreciation of creation.
7. **Community Resilience and Empowerment** — Strengthening communities to work together for a more just, sustainable, and hopeful future.

ARCHDIOCESAN COMMITMENT TO THE LAUDATO SI' ACTION PLATFORM

In 2024, the Archdiocese formally joined the Laudato Si' Action Platform, committing to the Church's global effort to care for our common home. The next step is twofold. First, we must deepen engagement by supporting parishes already enrolled on the platform, so they become active participants. Second, we must continue inviting additional parishes, schools, and ministries to join this mission according to their capacity. This action plan provides a practical roadmap for implementation and leads by example through meaningful and measurable action.

Year	Archdiocesan step	Desired outcome
2024	Formal enrollment in the Vatican's Laudato Si' Action Platform.	Public commitment to the universal Church's call to integral ecology.
2025	Invitation to parishes and initial registration of approximately 60 parishes.	Broaden parish ownership and identify local leaders.
2026	Sustained Archdiocesan support to parishes, including training and resources, and publication of this plan with a measured PMC baseline.	Provide a blueprint, timeline, and tools for implementation.
2027	Annual Earth Day reporting, an orientation webinar for new parishes, and an Advocacy Day at the Texas State Capitol.	Shift from invitation to measurable engagement.
2028–2030	Sustained engagement, evaluation, and expansion to more parishes and schools, with a revised edition of this plan published in 2030.	Build an Archdiocesan culture of ecological conversion.

HOW TO READ THE GOALS THAT FOLLOW

Each of the seven goals opens with its pastoral purpose and a statement of scope. Every commitment beneath it carries four fields:

- **Commitment.** What we will do, by when.
- **Owner.** The office accountable for delivery. Where two offices appear, the first convenes.
- **Baseline.** The measured starting point against which progress is judged. Where a baseline does not yet exist, the field says so and names who will establish it. A percentage target without a baseline cannot be verified by anyone, ourselves included.
- **Metric.** How we will know the commitment was met.

GOAL 1: RESPONSE TO THE CRY OF THE EARTH

Pastoral purpose: To reduce environmental harm, improve stewardship of facilities, and mobilize parishes, schools, and ministries to care for creation.
Scope: Archdiocesan standards for PMC operations; model practices and invitations for parishes, missions, and schools.

1.1 Energy Stewardship

By December 31, 2026, the Archdiocese will complete an energy audit of the Pastoral Ministry Center to identify opportunities to reduce energy consumption, improve efficiency, and lower the facility's environmental impact, and will fund and implement at least two of the measures it identifies.
Owner: Laudato Si' Pastoral Ministry Center Team
Metric: Audit completed by December 31, 2026, and at least two low-cost efficiency measures funded and implemented by December 2027.

1.2 Mobilizing Parishes

By the Season of Creation each year, September 1 through October 4, beginning in 2026, Archbishop García-Siller will issue an annual invitation encouraging all parishes, missions, schools, and ministries to enroll in the Laudato Si' Action Platform and deepen their commitment to caring for our common home.
Owner: Office of the Archbishop, supported by the Office of Social Justice Ministries and the Department for Communications
Baseline: Approximately 60 parishes signed up with the Archdiocese in 2025; however, many have not yet created and submitted their goals through the Laudato Si' Action Platform.

Metric: At least 10 parishes, missions, or schools submit goals to the Laudato Si' Action Platform each year, with the total reported during the Season of Creation.

1.3 Waste Reduction Through Recycling

By December 31, 2026, the Pastoral Ministry Center will expand its recycling program to cover plastics, aluminum, and flattened dry cardboard.
Owner: Laudato Si' Pastoral Ministry Center Team
Baseline: Recycling bins are currently placed in communal areas, with plastic and cardboard-only bins near the mail room.
Metric: Recycling stations checked monthly to confirm that they are available, clearly labeled, and being used.

GOAL 2: RESPONSE TO THE CRY OF THE POOR

Pastoral purpose: To connect care for creation with care for people experiencing poverty, hunger, migration, displacement, disaster, and vulnerability.
Scope: Archdiocesan promotion and coordination; parish, school, and employee participation encouraged.

2.1 Support for Migrants and Vulnerable Populations

Beginning in 2026, the Archdiocese and Catholic Charities, together with community partners, will deploy Rapid Response Teams to areas affected by extreme weather events and environmental hardship.
Owner: Catholic Charities, with the Office of Social Justice Ministries
Baseline: 915 households served through disaster response and relief in 2025 (CCAOSA FY26), 1,406 households in 2026 (CCAOSA FY27 YTD) and an average response time within 24-hours (when safely able to deploy and arrive at or near the site of a disaster) from event to deployment.
Metric: Number of households served, number of team deployments, and average time from event notification to deployment, reported annually.

2.2 Hunger Relief

The Office of Social Justice Ministries will continue to promote 40 Cans for 40 Days during Lent and facilitate participation in CRS Rice Bowl through the Archdiocesan Employee Lenten Retreat, encouraging acts of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving that support local hunger relief and global food security.
Owner: Office of Social Justice Ministries, with Human Resources
Baseline: 125,860 pounds of food collected during 40 Cans for Lent and [dollar amount] CRS Rice Bowl funds raised in 2026
Metric: Pounds of food collected and CRS Rice Bowl funds raised annually against the baseline year.

2.3 Laudato Si' Mini-Grants

Beginning in 2026, the Archdiocese will establish an annual Laudato Si' Grant Program to support limited-resource parishes that have developed and submitted parish Laudato Si' goals.
Owner: Department for Pastoral Ministries, with Business Office and Department of Administration
Baseline: 14 parishes received grants in 2026.
Metric: Number of parishes funded and total awarded annually, based on available funding.

GOAL 3: ECOLOGICAL ECONOMICS

Pastoral purpose: To align purchasing, vendor selection, and resource use with Catholic values, environmental responsibility, stewardship, and respect for workers and communities.
Scope: PMC purchasing standards and model resources for parishes and schools.

3.1 Phasing Out Harmful and Wasteful Items

Beginning in October 2026, the Pastoral Ministry Center will phase out purchases of harmful or wasteful items, especially single-use plastics and Styrofoam.
Owner: Laudato Si' Pastoral Ministry Center Team
Baseline: The PMC has begun phasing out single-use plastics and Styrofoam. Existing surplus supplies will be used before more sustainable alternatives are purchased.
Metric: New purchases reviewed annually to confirm that sustainable alternatives are used whenever feasible.

GOAL 4: ADOPTION OF SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLES

Pastoral purpose: To promote daily habits that reflect ecological conversion, simplicity, gratitude, health, and responsible use of resources.
Scope: Archdiocesan example and voluntary practices for employees, parishes, schools, and families.

4.1 Everyday Sustainable Choices

Beginning on Earth Day 2027, the Archdiocese will encourage employees, parish staff, and volunteers to use refillable water bottles at meetings, retreats, conferences, and Archdiocesan-sponsored events.
Owner: Laudato Si' Pastoral Ministry Center Team
Baseline: No participation baseline has been established.
Metric: Refillable water bottle use promoted at Archdiocesan-sponsored events.

4.2 Laudato Si' at Home

Beginning in Spring 2027, the Pastoral Ministry Center will encourage employees to adopt sustainable practices at home by providing native plants, herb kits, seed packets, or pollinator garden kits on Earth Day.
Owner: Human Resources, with the PMC Laudato Si' Task Force
Baseline: Not previously offered at the PMC.
Metric: Kits distributed to at least 50 employees each Earth Day beginning in Spring 2027.

4.3 Virtual Meetings and Flexible Work

The Archdiocese will continue using Zoom and Microsoft Teams for meetings when appropriate and will explore a pilot hybrid work schedule as a practical way to reduce commuting while supporting operational and ministry needs.
Owner: Senior Staff, Human Resources and Business Office and Department of Administration
Baseline: Zoom and Microsoft Teams are already used for virtual meetings; a hybrid work schedule is under consideration.
Metric: Hybrid work pilot options reviewed by Senior Staff by December 2026, with virtual meetings continuing when appropriate.

GOAL 5: ECOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Pastoral purpose: To form consciences, deepen understanding of Catholic social teaching, and equip leaders to act on behalf of creation and vulnerable communities.
Scope: Archdiocesan formation resources and optional parish and school implementation.

5.1 Ongoing Environmental Education and Awareness

Beginning in 2026, the Office of Social Justice Ministries will provide Laudato Si' updates to parishes at least once every two months, with monthly updates when appropriate. The updates will promote ecological awareness, practical sustainability initiatives, Catholic Social Teaching, and opportunities to participate in local and Archdiocesan creation care efforts.
Owner: Office of Social Justice Ministries
Baseline: Laudato Si' updates were distributed monthly in 2026.
Metric: At least six updates distributed annually to parish Laudato Si' representatives, with additional monthly updates as appropriate.

5.2 Screening and Discussion of The Letter

Beginning in May 2027, the Office of Social Justice Ministries, with Human Resources, will host at least one annual screening and facilitated discussion of *The Letter* to foster ecological conversion, deepen awareness of Catholic teaching on care for creation, and encourage employees to integrate Laudato Si' principles into their personal and professional lives.
Owner: Laudato Si' Pastoral Ministry Center Team
Baseline: Not previously offered at the PMC.
Metric: At least one screening annually beginning in 2027, with participation from at least 50% of Archdiocesan employees.

5.3 Laudato Si' Themes in Employee Gatherings

Beginning in October 2027, Human Resources will incorporate a *Laudato Si'* theme into at least one employee gathering each year to promote ecological awareness and practical stewardship rooted in Catholic Social Teaching.
Owner: Laudato Si' Pastoral Ministry Center Team
Baseline: PMC employee social gatherings average 30–40 participants.
Metric: At least one employee gathering each year includes a *Laudato Si'* theme, with at least 30 employees participating.

5.4 Recognizing and Sharing Achievements

By the end of February 2027, and each February thereafter, participating parishes and missions will be invited to submit annual progress updates on their Laudato Si' goals to the Office of Social Justice Ministries. These updates will be highlighted through Archdiocesan communication platforms each Earth Day to celebrate accomplishments, share best practices, and encourage ongoing ecological stewardship.
Owner: Laudato Si' Pastoral Ministry Center Team
Baseline: Parish and mission progress reports are not currently tracked.
Metric: Number of progress reports received and success stories shared annually.

5.5 Annual Laudato Si' Formation and Engagement Webinar

Beginning in May 2028, during the anniversary month of the publication of *Laudato Si'*, the Office of Social Justice Ministries will host an annual orientation webinar to educate clergy, staff, parish leaders, and parishioners about ecological conversion, the Laudato Si' Action Platform, and Archdiocesan sustainability initiatives.
Owner: Laudato Si' Pastoral Ministry Center Team
Baseline: No such webinar has previously been offered.
Metric: At least 40 participants annually, with post-webinar evaluations indicating increased understanding of *Laudato Si'*.

5.6 Reporting to the Laudato Si' Action Platform

Beginning in 2027, the Office of Social Justice Ministries will complete the Archdiocese's annual self-assessment and updated plan on the Laudato Si' Action Platform, as enrolled institutions are asked to do, and will publish a short annual progress report for the Archdiocese each Feast of Saint Francis.
Owner: Office of Social Justice Ministries
Baseline: The Archdiocese enrolled in 2024 and has not yet filed an annual self-assessment.
Metric: Annual self-assessment submitted on the platform each year beginning in 2027, and a public progress report published by October 4 each year.

5.7 Formation in Our Catholic Schools

Beginning in the 2027–2028 school year, the Office of Social Justice Ministries, together with the Department for Catholic Schools, will offer every Archdiocesan school a Season of Creation classroom unit and will invite each school to complete one measurable creation care project annually.
Owner: Department for Catholic Schools, with the Office of Social Justice Ministries
Baseline: Creation-care formation may already take place in some Catholic schools, but it is not currently tracked Archdiocesan-wide.
Metric: Unit distributed to 100% of Archdiocesan schools by September 2027, with at least 10 schools reporting a completed project by May 2028.

GOAL 6: ECOLOGICAL SPIRITUALITY

Pastoral purpose: To help the faithful encounter God through creation, prayer, liturgy, pilgrimage, and ecological conversion.
Scope: Archdiocesan coordination and parish and school invitations.

6.1 Encountering God in Creation

The Archdiocese will continue to host an outdoor Mass and pilgrimage during the Season of Creation each year, fostering spiritual renewal, gratitude for God's creation, and a deeper commitment to ecological stewardship grounded in faith.
Owner: El Camino de San Antonio Missions
Baseline: The Care for Creation Mass and Pilgrimage has been held annually since 2025.
Metric: At least one outdoor Mass and one pilgrimage coordinated or promoted annually during the Season of Creation, with participation from at least 350 individuals each year, together with educational or spiritual resources connecting the events to the themes of *Laudato Si'*.

6.2 Liturgical Resources for the Season of Creation

Beginning with the Season of Creation 2027, the Office of Worship, in collaboration with the Office of Social Justice Ministries, will publish a bilingual Season of Creation liturgical packet for parishes drawing on the Mass "For the Care of Creation" approved by Pope Leo XIV in June 2025, including Prayers of the Faithful, homily helps, and music suggestions.
Owner: Laudato Si' Pastoral Ministry Center Team
Baseline: Season of Creation resources were shared with all parishes and schools, but a coordinated bilingual liturgical packet has not yet been produced.
Metric: One packet containing Prayers of the Faithful, homily helps, and music suggestions distributed in English and Spanish to all parishes and schools by August 1, 2027.

6.3 Outdoor Gathering and Reflection Spaces

By Spring 2027, the Pastoral Ministry Center will enhance its grounds by creating inviting outdoor gathering and reflection spaces that encourage employees to spend time in nature, build community, and deepen their appreciation for God's creation.
Owner: Laudato Si' Pastoral Ministry Center Team
Baseline: No dedicated outdoor gathering or reflection space currently exists on PMC grounds.
Metric: At least one shaded outdoor seating area installed by September 2027.

GOAL 7: COMMUNITY RESILIENCE AND EMPOWERMENT

Pastoral purpose: To build resilient communities through advocacy, civic engagement, prayer, preparedness, and solidarity with people affected by poverty, migration, environmental harm, and social injustice.
Scope: Archdiocesan advocacy coordination and parish and school invitation.

7.1 Faithful Citizenship and Public Advocacy

Every other year, during the Texas legislative session, the Office of Social Justice Ministries will provide information about the legislative process and priority bills supported by the Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops. The office will also coordinate participation in Advocacy Day at the Texas State Capitol and prepare delegates to meet with legislators or their staff.
Owner: Office of Social Justice Ministries
Baseline: In 2025, 90 to 100 people participated in Advocacy Day, including about 20 delegates trained to meet with legislators or their staff.
Metric: At least 150 people participate in Advocacy Day every other year.

7.2 Flood Preparedness in the Rural Deaneries

By September 2027, the Office of Social Justice Ministries, working through the six rural deaneries, will help every rural parish put in place a written emergency communication plan including a current contact tree and a named liaison to its county emergency management office.
Owner: Laudato Si' Pastoral Ministry Center Team
Baseline: No Archdiocesan record currently exists of which parishes have emergency communication plans.
Metric: Written plans on file from at least 30% of rural parishes by September 2027, reviewed and refreshed each year before flood season.

7.3 Accompaniment of Farmers, Ranchers, and Outdoor Workers

Beginning in Lent 2028, the Office of Social Justice Ministries will provide parishes serving farmworkers, ranchers, and outdoor workers with a bilingual pastoral accompaniment packet covering heat illness recognition, worker dignity, and Prayers of the Faithful for those who work the land.
Owner: Laudato Si' Pastoral Ministry Center Team
Baseline: No such packet currently exists.
Metric: Packet distributed to all parishes in the six rural deaneries by Lent 2028.

7.4 Cultivating a Greener Workplace

By Fall 2027, the Pastoral Ministry Center will increase greenery throughout the workplace by adding indoor plants to offices and common areas and engaging employees in their care, fostering a healthier environment, shared stewardship, and a greater appreciation for creation.
Owner: Laudato Si' Pastoral Ministry Center Team
Baseline: No coordinated indoor plant program currently exists at the PMC.
Metric: Indoor plants installed in common areas and shared workspaces by the Season of Creation 2027, with at least one volunteer Plant Steward recruited from at least 50% of PMC departments.

RECOMMENDED PRACTICES FOR THE PMC, PARISHES, MISSIONS, AND SCHOOLS

These practices carry no separate metric. They are habits we adopt because they are consistent with everything above.

- **Catering.** Give preference to environmentally responsible catering providers that offer zero-waste or low-waste service options for all gatherings where food is served.
- **Paper use.** Reduce or eliminate paper use whenever possible by using digital documents, forms, handouts, and communications.
- **Digital communications.** Replace printed invitations, programs, and liturgical materials with QR codes and digital links whenever appropriate.
- **Carpooling.** Encourage carpooling for travel to meetings, events, and sites within the Archdiocese whenever feasible.
- **Virtual meetings.** Use virtual meetings and video conferencing when feasible.
- **Cleaning products.** Use non-toxic, environmentally safe cleaning products whenever possible.
- **Ink and toner.** Purchase remanufactured or recycled-content ink and toner cartridges whenever available and cost-effective.
- **Interior paints.** Use low-VOC or no-VOC (volatile organic compound) interior paints to promote healthier indoor air quality and reduce environmental impacts.
- **Lighting.** Use energy-efficient LED lighting and ensure lights are turned off in unoccupied spaces.
- **Power strips.** Use programmable or smart power strips to reduce phantom energy consumption from electronic devices when not in use.

REPORTING

- **Office of Life and Social Justice Ministries:** Virginia Mata, Director of Life and Social Justice Ministries. Convenes the Task Force, maintains the baseline data, prepares the annual report, and files the Archdiocese's annual self-assessment on the Laudato Si' Action Platform.
- **Facilities and Operations Lead:** Joe Ramirez, Director of Construction and Facilities. Owns the energy audit, utility benchmarking, waste and recycling, grounds, and any capital measure arising from this plan, including the practice of considering efficiency at every scheduled system replacement rather than treating it as a separate program.
- **Business Office and Business Administration Lead:** Rueben Hinojosa, Chief Financial Officer and Director of Administration. Owns purchasing guidelines, vendor standards, print procurement, and coordination with the Archdiocesan Finance Council on any investment review arising from this plan.
- **Human Resources Lead:** Laura Y. Melghem, Director of Human Resources. Owns employee formation, the annual screening, employee gatherings, and workplace practices.
- **Communications Lead:** Jordan Mcmorrough, Communication Director. Owns the Archbishop's annual invitation, Earth Day storytelling, bilingual publication, and print-waste reduction.
- **Department of Pastoral Ministries:** Joan Martinez, Department Head, Department of Pastoral Ministries. Carries the plan to the Archbishop and the Executive Leadership Council and resolves questions of scope and authority.

CONCLUSION

This Laudato Si' Action Plan is both an invitation and a commitment. It recognizes the good work already taking place across the Archdiocese and calls us to deepen and sustain that work for generations to come. Care for creation is not an optional activity but an expression of our love for God and neighbor, especially the most vulnerable.

As Pope Francis reminds us, "everything is connected" (*Laudato Si'*, 91). The goals and recommendations in this plan are intended not only to guide action but to foster an ongoing ecological conversion that shapes how we pray, learn, make decisions, use resources, and live our faith.

No single parish, mission, school, ministry, family, or individual is expected to do everything at once. Rather, each is invited to build upon the good work already underway and take meaningful steps forward through prayer, education, collaboration, and responsible stewardship.

May this plan serve as the beginning of a living commitment that grows as we learn from one another, respond to the needs of our communities, and walk together in hope. In doing so, may the Archdiocese of San Antonio bear witness to the Gospel through care for one another, our common home, and future generations.

A note on sources

Archdiocesan figures are drawn from *Archdiocesan Statistics as of December 31, 2025 or Fiscal Year Ending*. Flood figures reflect the settled one-year counts for the July 2025 Hill Country floods. Survey figures are from the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate, fielded December 2023 and released March 2024. Papal citations are to *Laudato Si'* (2015), *Magnifica Humanitas* (2026), the *Regina Caeli* of May 17, 2026, and Pope Leo XIV's address to the Raising Hope conference of October 1, 2025.