



Department of Justice, Peace & Human Development

3211 FOURTH STREET NE • WASHINGTON DC 20017-1194 • 202-541-3100 • FAX 202-541-3166

Summary of Activities of the U.S. Church in Response to *Laudato Si'*

Background:

In the encyclical *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis observed that “the ecological crisis is also a summons to profound interior conversion,” where “living our vocation to be protectors of God’s handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or secondary aspect of our Christian experience” (no. 217). On occasion of the fifth anniversary of the encyclical, the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development has announced a year of celebrations to encourage the faithful to embrace its message on the care of our common. The Catholic Church throughout the United States has joyfully received and implemented the invitation of *Laudato Si'* in diverse and creative ways.

In commemoration of the fifth anniversary of the publication of *Laudato Si'*, we share this summary of activities undertaken by Catholic institutions affiliated with the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

We organize our summary into two categories:

- Activities undertaken by the USCCB;
- Activities undertaken by other affiliated national Catholic organizations.

I. Activities Undertaken by the USCCB

We begin by outlining activities undertaken by the Environmental Justice Program, the Office of Domestic Social Development, and the Office of International Justice and Peace of the Department of Justice, Peace and Human Development.

1. Advocacy and Policy

In the days leading up to *Laudato Si'*’s release, the USCCB held multiple briefings for Congress and political leaders. The Conference communicated with all U.S. Bishops in preparation for *Laudato Si'* to offer preaching and teaching resources and hosted a pre-release scholars’ conference on ecology and the expected themes of the encyclical at the University of St. Thomas from June 3-5, 2015 (<https://news.stthomas.edu/human-natural-ecology-seminar-exploring-pope-francis-encyclical-environment/>). A plenary presentation on *Laudato Si'* was held during the Bishops June General Assembly in 2015.

Upon the document's release, two national press conferences were held with bishops at the National Press Club. Staff provided four briefings with Congress and the White House, the first three of these taking place within 24 hours of the encyclical’s release.

With the support of the Conference, over 110 statements on the encyclical were issued by U.S. Bishops across the country. Multiple educational and theological conferences on *Laudato Si'* were held in partnership with other Catholic organizations and continue to this day. Educational resources such as discussion guides, video series, and homily helps were successfully distributed nationally. The full body of U.S. Bishops adopted an explicit strategic priority for the planning period of 2017-2020: "Teach and advocate about integral ecology, emphasizing environmental degradation and its impact on the lives of the most vulnerable." The Conference continues its outreach and meetings with key Congressional offices to share Pope Francis' encyclical message and the Bishops' policy priorities.

Since the encyclical's promulgation, several letters, statements, and testimonies in public hearings have been given by bishops to causes devoted to climate change and *Laudato Si'*. Numerous in-person meetings have been coordinated and attended by USCCB staff and member bishops with federal and state legislators and political representatives to promote integral ecology. For example, on June 1, 2017, the day President Trump announced U.S. withdrawal from the Paris Agreement, the U.S. Bishops published two statements and one op-ed on climate change. The resources referenced can be found on the USCCB Environmental Justice Program website: <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/environment/index.cfm>.

Below are all the statements addressed to the U.S Congress and Government Administration since the encyclical's publication:¹

- Written Testimony in Support of the American Innovation and Manufacturing Act
Archbishop Paul S. Coakley and Bishop David J. Malloy, April 8, 2020
(<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/environment/written-testimony-in-support-of-the-american-innovation-and-manufacturing-act-2020-04.cfm>)
- Comments Submitted to the Council on Environmental Quality Regarding an Update to the Regulations Implementing the Procedural Provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act
Office of the General Counsel, March 10, 2020
(<http://www.usccb.org/about/general-counsel/rulemaking/upload/NEPA-Comment-Final.pdf>)
- Letter in Support of the Bipartisan Senate Climate Solutions Caucus
Archbishop Paul S. Coakley and Bishop David J. Malloy, February 18, 2020
(<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/environment/letter-in-support-of-bipartisan-senate-climate-solutions-caucus-2020-02-18.cfm>)
- USCCB and CRS Letter to Secretary of State Pompeo Regarding the Paris Agreement
Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio, Bishop Frank J. Dewane, and Mr. Sean Callahan, November 14, 2019
(<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/environment/usccb-crs-letter-to-secretary-of-state-pompeo-on-paris-agreement-2019-11-14.cfm>)

¹ Prior to the publication of *Laudato Si'* the U.S. Bishops were active in the promotion of creation care education, advocacy and policy, following the guidelines of the 1991 USCCB pastoral statement "*Renewing the Earth*" (<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/environment/renewing-the-earth.cfm>) and the 2001 USCCB statement "*Global Climate Change: A Plea for Dialogue, Prudence, and the Common Good*" (<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/environment/global-climate-change-a-plea-for-dialogue-prudence-and-the-common-good.cfm>).

- Letter to the Senate Expressing Support for the Nonprofit Energy Efficiency Act
Bishop Frank J. Dewane, May 29, 2019
(<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/environment/letter-to-senate-onnonprofit-energy-efficiency-act-2019-05-29.cfm>)
- News Release: Concern Over New Mercury Rule Expressed by Chairmen of U.S. Bishops' Domestic Justice and Pro-Life Activities Committees; Bishops Call it "Troubling"
Bishop Frank J. Dewane and Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann, March 22, 2019
(<http://www.usccb.org/news/2019/19-058.cfm>)
- Comments Submitted to E.P.A. on Proposed Change to the Mercury and Air Toxics Standards Rule
Office of General Counsel, March 18, 2019
(<http://www.usccb.org/about/general-counsel/rulemaking/upload/DSD-MATS-CommentFinal.pdf>)
- News Release: U.S. Bishops' Domestic Chairman Reacts to Bipartisan Carbon Pricing Bill
Bishop Frank J. Dewane, January 25, 2019
(<http://www.usccb.org/news/2019/09-020.cfm>)
- Comments on Revising Light-Duty Vehicle Greenhouse Gas Emission Standards
Office of General Counsel, October 23, 2018
(<http://www.usccb.org/about/general-counsel/rulemaking/upload/NPRM-CAFE-Comment-Draft101118-AP-1.pdf>)
- Letter to the Senate Regarding FY 2019 Appropriations for Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
Bishop Frank J. Dewane, June 25, 2018
(<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/environment/letter-to-senate-onfy-2019-appropriations-for-interior-environment-related-agencies-2018-06-22.cfm>)
- Comments on Proposed EPA Rule on the Clean Power Plan
Office of General Counsel, April 25, 2018
(<http://www.usccb.org/about/general-counsel/rulemaking/upload/EPA-comment-FINAL-4-25-18.pdf>)
- Letter to Secretary of State Tillerson in Support of the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol
Bishop Frank J. Dewane and Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio, March 7, 2018
(<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/environment/joint-letter-tosecretary-of-state-on-kigali-amendment-2018-03-07.cfm>)
- Letter to Congress Urging Funding for the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
Bishop Oscar Cantú and Bishop Frank J. Dewane, November 10, 2017

<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/environment/letter-to-congresson-unfccc-2017-11-09.cfm>)

- News Release: U.S. Bishops' Chairman Opposes Repeal of Clean Power Plan
Bishop Frank J. Dewane, October 10, 2017
(<http://www.usccb.org/news/2017/17-182.cfm>)
- Oral Testimony at CPSC on Rulemaking to Protect Children from Chemicals in Consumer Products
Ricardo Simmonds on behalf of the USCCB, September 14, 2017
(<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/environment/oral-testimony-atcpsc-on-rulemaking-to-protect-children-from-chemicals-in-consumer-products-2017-09.cfm>)
- Bishops Welcome Bi-partisan Bill that Seeks Climate Solutions *Bishop Oscar Cantú and Bishop Frank J. Dewane, September 15, 2017*
(<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/environment/letter-to-congresson-climate-solutions-commission-act-2017-09-15.cfm>)
- Statement on Upcoming World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation
Bishop Frank J. Dewane and Bishop Oscar Cantú, August 31, 2017
(<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/environment/statement-onworld-day-of-prayer-for-care-of-creation.cfm>)
- Letter to Senate on Funding for Environmental Protection Agency
Bishop Frank J. Dewane, August 25, 2017
(<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/environment/letter-to-senateappropriations-on-epa-funding-2017-08-25.cfm>)
- The Paris Agreement and Global Solidarity
Bishop Oscar Cantú, National Catholic Reporter, June 1, 2017
(<https://www.ncronline.org/news/justice/paris-agreement-and-global-solidarity>)
- News Release: U.S. Bishops' Chairman Regrets the President's Withdrawal From the Paris Agreement
Bishop Oscar Cantú, June 1, 2017
(<http://www.usccb.org/news/2017/17-092.cfm>)
- News Release: U.S. Bishops' Chairman Urges the President to Honor the Paris Agreement
Bishop Oscar Cantú, June 1, 2017
(<http://www.usccb.org/news/2017/17-090.cfm>)
- Letters to National Security Advisor McMaster and Secretary of the Treasury Mnuchin Regarding Our Shared Obligation to Care for the Environment
Bishop Oscar Cantú, Bishop Frank J. Dewane, and Mr. Sean Callahan, May 5, 2017

<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/environment/usccb-crs-letter-to-nsa-mcmaster-on-environment-2017-05-05.cfm>) &
<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/environment/usccb-crs-letter-to-treasury-secretary-mnuchin-on-environment-2017-05-05.cfm>)

- News Release: U.S. Bishops Chairman Opposes Environmental Executive Order
Bishop Frank J. Dewane, March 29, 2017
<http://www.usccb.org/news/2017/17-056.cfm>)
- News Release: Bishops welcome constructive dialogue in Congress to protect creation and address climate change
Bishop Frank J. Dewane and Bishop Oscar Cantú, March 16, 2017
<http://www.usccb.org/news/2017/17-052.cfm>)
- Letter to Secretary of State Tillerson Regarding Care for Creation
Bishop Oscar Cantú, Bishop Frank J. Dewane, and Mr. Sean L. Callahan, February 17, 2017
<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/environment/usccb-crs-letter-to-secretary-tillerson-on-care-for-creation-2017-02-17.cfm>)
- Letter to Senate regarding Protecting Nonprofit Energy-Efficiency Program and a National Carbon Standard
Archbishop Thomas G. Wenski, February 3, 2016
<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/environment/wenski-letter-to-senate-carbon-standard-2016-2-3.cfm>)
- Oral Testimony at EPA Public Hearing on Implementation of Carbon Pollution Standards through the Proposed Federal Plan
Cecilia Calvo on behalf of Archbishop Thomas G. Wenski and Bishop Oscar Cantú, November 18, 2015
<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/environment/oral-testimonyepa-hearing-on-clean-power-plan-2015-11-18.cfm>)
- Letter to Congress on Green Climate Fund and Support of Agreement on Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions
Archbishop Thomas G. Wenski, Bishop Oscar Cantú, Sr. Donna Markham, and Dr. Carolyn Woo, October 28, 2015
<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/environment/letter-to-congresson-green-climate-fund-and-greenhouse-gas-emissions-2015-10-28.cfm>)
- Letter to U.S. Department of State Supporting Efforts to Secure Global Commitments to Reduce Carbon Emissions
Archbishop Thomas G. Wenski, Bishop Oscar Cantú, Sr. Donna Markham, and Dr. Carolyn Woo, October 28, 2015
<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/environment/joint-letter-to-statedepartment-supporting-reduction-of-carbon-emissions-10-28-2015.cfm>)

- Letter to Congress Regarding Protecting Creation and Carbon Pollution Standards
Archbishop Thomas G. Wenski, June 24, 2015
(<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/environment/letter-to-congresson-carbon-standards-2015-06-24.cfm>)

2. National Programs

Preaching and Teaching Program - In 2016 the USCCB and the Catholic Climate Covenant launched the “*Laudato Si’* in the Parish” program, which provides homiletic training, substantive information on care for creation, and resources to clergy. The program reached over 300 priests and deacons in 6 dioceses including San Diego, Atlanta, and Las Cruces. The resources remain available for local use.

Laudato Si’ Advocates Program – In 2019 the USCCB, in collaboration with and supported by the National Religious Partnership for the Environment, the Catholic Campaign for Human Development, and the Mary J. Donnelly Foundation, launched the “*Laudato Si’* Advocates” pilot program, which encourages, equips, and educates young people across the country to advocate for policies that promote integral ecology. The pilot program worked with young adults and university students in Colorado, Florida and North Carolina. The official program will launch in September, 2020 with 10 young adults across the country.

3. Coalitions and Convening

The Conference is a member of the Catholic Climate Covenant and encourages Catholics to take the [*St. Francis Pledge*](#) and reduce their carbon footprint. The Covenant works on grassroots efforts to mobilize the faithful to take action on climate change and care for creation. The USCCB also convenes Catholic leaders on environmental concerns. For example, in December 2016 the USCCB convened a meeting with several faith groups and federal government agencies to discuss environmental justice, and climate change was one of many issues discussed.

In celebration of the 5th anniversary of *Laudato Si’*, the USCCB is hosting two bishop roundtables on the encyclical. The dialogues will be conducted in English and Spanish, seeking to relate integral ecology to the life of the Church and apply the message of *Laudato Si’* to different aspects of daily life. The first roundtable took place virtually on May 20th, 2020, during *Laudato Si’ Week* and featured Archbishop Paul S. Coakley, Bishop Robert W. McElroy, and Bishop Robert E. Barron.
(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2wF4AnOn7OI&feature=emb_title)

A second roundtable will be conducted in Spanish on June 18th, 2020, featuring Bishop Oscar Cantú, Bishop Daniel E. Flores, Bishop Jorge Rodriguez and Bishop Joseph J. Tyson.

4. Support for the Synod on the Amazon

Several offices of the Department of Justice, Peace and Human Development supported the important work of the Synod on the Amazon. Upon the release of the Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Querida Amazonia*, the Office of Education and Outreach, in collaboration with the Environmental Justice Program, produced a [*Querida Amazonia study guide*](#). USCCB staff have actively collaborated with Red Eclesial PanAmazonica (REPAM) in recent years and participated in the Conference at Georgetown University in

preparation for the Synod entitled: “INTEGRAL ECOLOGY: A Synodal Response from the Amazon Region and Other Biomes / Essential Territories for the Care of Our Common Home”.

Other USCCB support for the Synod on the Amazon included assistance to participants in the Synod and related activities, as well as educational and outreach efforts to report on the outcomes of the Synod process.

5. Educational efforts to implement *Laudato Si'* in the U.S

- *Laudato Si'* Week Email Campaign: To commemorate the fifth anniversary, U.S. Catholics signed up to receive daily emails during the nine-day global campaign. The emails included daily reflections with opportunities to pray, learn, act and care for God's creation.
- *Laudato Si'* Fifth Anniversary Postcard (<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/environment/upload/laudato-si-postcard.pdf>) was created and is available in a variety of formats, including pdf, jpg, png, and poster size.
- *Laudato Si'*: Caring for Our Common Home Discussion Guide (<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/environment/upload/laudato-si-discussion-guide.pdf>) was created in order to help Catholics study, reflect and act. This was updated and re-issued for the 5th anniversary.
- *Laudato Si'*: Caring for Our Common Home Bulletin Insert (<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/environment/upload/Laudato-Si-Bulletin-Insert.pdf>) was created to help individuals and families respond. This was updated and re-issued for the 5th anniversary.
- Prayer to Care for Our Common Home (<http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/prayers-and-devotions/prayers/prayer-to-care-for-our-common-home.cfm>), which is based on *Laudato Si'*, was created.
- *Querida Amazonia* study guide (<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/environment/upload/la-querida-amazonia-study-guide.pdf>) highlighting interconnections with *Laudato Si'*.
- 27 reflections on *Laudato Si'* or care for our common home were created and posted. These are listed below.
- 11 stories were created and posted on the WeAreSaltAndLight.org website to highlight best practices by faith communities to care for our common home.
- A video and discussion guide were created on Care for Our Common Home as part of a new Catholic Social Teaching 101 series. The video and discussion guide are available at <https://www.wearesaltandlight.org/cst101>.

- Resource for Liturgy and Preaching on Caring for God’s Creation (<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/environment/upload/ecology-resource-all.pdf>) were created for use in parishes and liturgical settings.
- *Drop by Drop* and *Green Street Park* (<http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catholic-social-teaching/two-feet-storybooks.cfm>), two children’s story books on caring for God’s creation, were created.
- Presentations and workshops on caring for our common home were consistently presented at the annual Catholic Social Ministry Gathering (www.CatholicSocialMinistryGathering.org) during the last five years.
- Staff from multiple departments of USCCB participated in the planning and implementation of “*Laudato Si’* and the U.S. Catholic Church” conference at Creighton University in June of 2019. Future convenings of a similar nature are being planned, with the next convening planned for 2021.
- Several action alerts engaged our networks in advocating with elected officials on issues related to care for creation—including the Conservation Stewardship Program, the Paris Climate Agreement, energy efficiency, and a national carbon standard.
- A social media campaign, including a series of compelling memes, was created to share the message of *Laudato Si’*. An intensive social media campaign was implemented during *Laudato Si’* Week to celebrate the 5th anniversary.

6. Reflections on *Laudato Si’* and Care for Our Common Home on ToGoForth.org (blog of the USCCB Department of Justice, Peace and Human Development)

- Reconciling God, Creation and Humanity on Earth Day, Apr 22, 2019 (<https://www.wearesaltandlight.org/blog/2019/04/22/reconciling-god-creation-and-humanity-on-earth-day/>)
- Caring for Creation: A Vocation, Aug 31, 2018 (<https://www.wearesaltandlight.org/blog/2018/08/31/caring-for-creation-a-vocation/>)
- Living *Laudato Si’*, Three Years Later, Jul 11, 2018 (<https://www.wearesaltandlight.org/blog/2018/07/11/living-laudato-si-three-years-later/>)
- Earth Day and *Laudato Si’*: Catholics Rising to the Challenge, Apr 19, 2018 (<https://www.wearesaltandlight.org/blog/2018/04/19/earth-day-and-laudato-si-catholics-rising-to-the-challenge>)
- A Community Approach to Caring for Creation, Sep 28, 2017 (<https://www.wearesaltandlight.org/blog/2017/09/28/a-community-approach-to-caring-for-creation/>)

- 6 Ways You Can Celebrate the Season of Creation, Sep 1, 2017
(<https://www.wearesaltandlight.org/blog/2017/09/01/6-ways-you-can-celebrate-the-season-of-creation/>)
- A Prophetic Call to “Wake up the world”, Jul 26, 2017
(<https://www.wearesaltandlight.org/blog/2017/07/26/a-prophetic-call-to-wake-up-the-world/>)
- Encounter Dita, Apr 4, 2017
(<https://www.wearesaltandlight.org/blog/2017/04/04/encounter-dita/>)
- Prayers, Patrons and the Paris Agreement, Nov 3, 2016
(<https://www.wearesaltandlight.org/blog/2016/11/03/prayers-patrons-and-the-paris-agreement/>)
- 7 Ways to Be a Good Steward of the Harvest, Oct 12, 2016
(<https://www.wearesaltandlight.org/blog/2016/10/12/7-ways-to-be-a-good-steward-of-the-harvest/>)
- The Enchantment of Assisi, Oct 4, 2016
(<https://www.wearesaltandlight.org/blog/2016/10/04/the-enchantment-of-assisii/>)
- A Prayer for Creation, Sep 1, 2016
(<https://www.wearesaltandlight.org/blog/2016/09/01/a-prayer-for-creation/>)
- 10 Practical Ways You Can Care for Creation, Aug 30, 2016
(<https://www.wearesaltandlight.org/blog/2016/08/30/10-practical-ways-you-can-care-for-creation/>)
- New skills helped me engage my community on Laudato Si’, Jul 28, 2016
(<https://www.wearesaltandlight.org/blog/2016/07/28/new-skills-helped-me-engage-my-community-on-laudato-si/>)
- Laudato Si’ at Ascension: Promoting Care for Creation, Jun 16, 2016
(<https://www.wearesaltandlight.org/blog/2016/06/16/laudato-si-at-ascension-promoting-care-for-creation/>)
- 10 Ways You Can Celebrate Earth Day! Apr 14, 2016
(<https://www.wearesaltandlight.org/blog/2016/04/14/10-ways-you-can-celebrate-earth-day/>)
- How Can We Respond to Pope Francis’ Call to Care for Our Common Home? Feb 29, 2016
(<https://www.wearesaltandlight.org/blog/2016/02/29/how-can-we-respond-to-pope-francis-call-to-care-for-our-common-home/>)
- The Devastating Effect of Irresponsible Mining Practices, Oct 20, 2015
(<https://www.wearesaltandlight.org/blog/2015/10/20/irresponsible-mining-practices/>)

- The Blessings, Challenges, and Opportunities of Rural Ministry, Oct 6, 2015 (<https://www.wearesaltandlight.org/blog/2015/10/06/rural-ministry/>)
- Pope Francis: “Do unto Others” Has Global Implications, Sep 28, 2015 (<https://www.wearesaltandlight.org/blog/2015/09/28/pope-francis-do-unto-others-has-global-implications/>)
- Laudato Si’: Communities Respond, Aug 13, 2015 (<https://www.wearesaltandlight.org/blog/2015/08/13/laudato-si-communities-respond/>)
- Integral Ecology and Respect for Human Life, Jul 21, 2015 (<https://www.wearesaltandlight.org/blog/2015/07/21/integral-ecology-and-respect-for-human-life/>)
- Laudato Si’ and the Environmental Refugee, Jul 7, 2015 (<https://www.wearesaltandlight.org/blog/2015/07/07/laudato-si-and-the-environmental-refugee/>)
- Laudato Si’: An Invitation from a Franciscan Jesuit, Jun 29, 2015 (<https://www.wearesaltandlight.org/blog/2015/06/29/laudato-si-an-invitation-from-a-franciscan-jesuit/>)
- Pope Francis Hears Cries of the Poor, Earth, Jun 23, 2015 (<https://www.wearesaltandlight.org/blog/2015/06/23/pope-francis-hears-cries-of-poor-earth/>)
- Pope Francis’ New Encyclical, Jun 18, 2015 (<https://www.wearesaltandlight.org/blog/2015/06/18/pope-francis-new-encyclical/>)
- Anticipating Pope Francis’ Encyclical on the Environment, Feb 23, 2015 (<https://www.wearesaltandlight.org/blog/2015/02/23/anticipating-pope-francis-encyclical-on-the-environment/>)

7. Stories on Caring for God’s Creation: WeAreSaltAndLight.org

- Parish forms green team in response to *Laudato Si’* (Archdiocese of Chicago) (http://www.wearesaltandlight.org/success-stories-learn/#green_teams)
- Diocese celebrates year of creation (Diocese of Burlington) (http://www.wearesaltandlight.org/success-stories-act/#year_of_creation)
- Caring for God's creation, going solar (Diocese of Stockton) (<http://www.wearesaltandlight.org/success-stories-act/#solar>)
- Catholic school teaches care for God's creation (Archdiocese of Cincinnati) (<http://www.wearesaltandlight.org/success-stories-act/#teaches>)

- Students go green to care for God's creation (Diocese of Cleveland) (<http://www.wearesaltandlight.org/success-stories-act/#magnificat>)
- Sisters help others care for creation, live sustainably (Archdiocese of Indianapolis) (<http://www.wearesaltandlight.org/success-stories-act/#sustainably>)
- Seminarians visit farms, learn about rural challenges (Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis) (http://www.wearesaltandlight.org/success-stories-reach-out/#seminarians_rural)
- Students embrace global solidarity through the CRS programs (access to water) (Archdiocese of Milwaukee) (http://www.wearesaltandlight.org/success-stories-act/#crs_programs)
- Reaching Out to Protect Community Health and Care for Creation (Diocese of Syracuse) (http://www.wearesaltandlight.org/success-stories-reach-out#community_health)
- Practicing solidarity and sustainability through CRS Rice Bowl (Archdiocese of Seattle) (http://www.wearesaltandlight.org/success-stories-learn/#crs_rice)
- Teens educate parish, sell fair trade products (Diocese of Orlando) (<http://www.wearesaltandlight.org/success-stories-learn/#fair>)

8. ***Laudato Si'*** and Care for Creation Content at the annual Catholic Social Ministry Gathering (CSMG) www.CatholicSocialMinistryGathering.org

CSMG 2020 – Theme: *Bearing Witness: Life and Justice for All*

(<http://www.usccb.org/about/justice-peace-and-human-development/catholic-social-ministry-gathering/upload/csmg-2020-program-book.pdf>)

- *Laudato Si'* at 5: Where we've been and where we're going – community workshop
- Climate Change-Indigenous Populations-*Laudato Si'* – policy workshop

CSMG 2019 -- Theme: *Let Justice Flow* (cf. Am. 5:24) *A Call to Restore and Reconcile*

(<http://www.usccb.org/about/justice-peace-and-human-development/catholic-social-ministrygathering/upload/CSMG-2019-Program-Book-final.pdf>)

- “God’s People: Practical Strategies to Implement *Laudato Si'*” - community workshop
- “Climate and Just Energy Transition” - policy workshop

CSMG 2018 -- Theme: *Building Community: A Call to the Common Good*

(<http://www.usccb.org/about/justice-peace-and-human-development/catholic-social-ministrygathering/upload/csmg-2018-program-book.pdf>)

- “Indigenous Dialogue from Two Continents: Hopes, Dreams and Actions” - pre-meeting
- “Solidarity in Our Common Home” – plenary presentation with Red Ecclesial PanAmazónica (REPAM)
- “Solidarity in Our Common Home” - panel conversation with REPAM
- “Finding the Common Good in a Throw-Away Culture” - community workshop
- “Weaving a Green Thread into the Fabric of Catholic Life: Implementing the Common Home Project” - community workshop
- “Called to the Global Common Good: Community Strategies to Promote Global Solidarity” - community workshop
- “Common Ground on Climate Policy: How Congress is Answering the Call to Dialogue in *Laudato Si*” - policy workshop
- “Nuclear Threats to the Common Good: Disarmament, North Korea and Iran” - policy workshop

CSMG 2016 -- Theme: Called to Live Mercy in Our Common Home

(<http://www.usccb.org/about/justice-peace-and-human-development/catholic-social-ministrygathering/upload/csmg-2016-program-book.pdf>)

- “The Global Suffering of Women as an Ethical Imperative for the Church” – keynote
- “The Church Responding to Disasters in Our Common Home” - community workshop
- “*Laudato Si*’ in Action” - community workshop
- “Immigration: Root Causes and Welcome in our Common Home” - policy workshop
- “Climate Change: Protecting our Common Home” - policy workshop

9. Environmental Justice through CCHD funded groups

The Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD), as a ministry of the USCCB, funds a wide range of community organizations around the country with the goal of empowering low-income Americans to overcome the cycle of poverty. In the United States and throughout the world, poverty is often deeply intertwined with and worsened by environmental problems such as air or water pollution and lack of access to healthy food. The organizations funded by CCHD employ a variety of strategies to tackle many dimensions of the complex social and environmental crisis facing our world.

CCHD has invested \$6.6 million in 80 organizations led by low-income people who are working to address environmental issues in local communities across the United States in over 28 states and 42 dioceses. These efforts have intensified since the publication of *Laudato Si'*, where Pope Francis praises local groups that enrich society through promoting the common good and defending the environment in natural and urban landscapes (no. 232). CCHD responds to Pope Francis' invitation to create a sustainable, integral ecology by empowering grassroots organizations to address issues that range from air and water pollution, extractive industries and disaster relief to promoting sustainable agriculture, green jobs, access to healthy foods and community development projects. In 2019-2020 alone, CCHD is investing \$1.02 million in local organizations who care for our common home. Many of these efforts are related to protecting the health of communities. Below are some recent examples of CCHD funded groups that promote environmental stewardship:

- The *Louisiana Bucket Brigade (LABB)* is an environmental health and justice organization supporting communities by utilizing grassroots action to keep neighborhoods free from industrial pollution. They collaborate with communities adjacent to petrochemical plants in Louisiana, working to create an informed, healthy society that holds the petrochemical industry and government accountable for the true costs of pollution. LABB uses a range of community organizing, legal, and public health strategies to protect some of the most vulnerable populations in Louisiana.
- *Illinois People's Action (IPA)* is a statewide, faith-based community organization that empowers families and their congregations to collectively address justice and poverty issues in their communities. Recent campaigns include ensuring safe drinking water by preventing fracking in central Illinois and supporting the growth of renewable energy projects in poor neighborhoods, thereby creating jobs and promoting care for creation.
- The *New Mexico Acequia Association (NMAA)* works to protect water rights for all people, increase access to healthy food, and preserve cultural heritage. Throughout rural New Mexico there are hundreds of irrigated canals, or *acequias*, that have supplied water to families for centuries. The NMAA works to ensure the fair and just governance of these acequias by educating, organizing, and empowering citizens to defend this essential resource shared by all. The NMAA also trains the next generation of farmers and ranchers to help preserve traditions of sustainable agriculture in New Mexico.
- The *Idaho Organization of Resource Councils (IORC)* works to empower the people of Idaho to improve economic well-being of local communities and sustain an ecologically responsible way of life. IORC supports two local chapters that lead a range of campaigns focused on human and environmental health, which include promoting local food systems, protecting water quality and

ecosystem health, increasing renewable energy sources, and advocating against irresponsible oil and gas development projects.

- *SOCM (Statewide Organizing for Community eMpowerment)* is a member-run organization that encourages civic involvement and collective action toward social, economic, and environmental justice for the people of Tennessee. For over 40 years, SOCM has led campaigns that have halted proposed toxic waste incinerators, mountaintop removal coal mining operations, and other developments that would adversely impact the health and well-being of communities through pollution. In every aspect of its work, SOCM works to protect the land and defend the dignity of all Tennesseans
- The *North Bay Organizing Project (NBOP)* consists of 22 member institutions that work for social, economic, racial and environmental justice in north San Francisco Bay communities. NBOP trains leaders, creates leadership opportunities, engages people in democracy and works to change the structures that perpetuate poverty. Currently, one of NBOP's major projects entails responding to recent wildfires in the region that have devastated many households. NBOP's members are working to address the resulting housing crisis by seeking rent control and engaging in other efforts to support low-income and undocumented immigrants affected by this natural disaster.
- *People United for Sustainable Housing (PUSH Buffalo)* is a membership-based community organization in Buffalo, New York, striving to mobilize citizens to create neighborhoods with quality, affordable housing and increased employment opportunities. One of PUSH Buffalo's major initiatives is PUSH Green, which helps stimulate energy efficiency and solar energy projects for residents and businesses. Through this work, PUSH Buffalo advances community improvements that are economically viable and environmentally beneficial, and, above all, promote the comfort and well-being of local people affecting members, including labor rights, access to healthy food, and affordable housing. One of its major initiatives is a green jobs campaign that encourages energy efficiency projects for local contractors. Through this and similar programs, this organization responds to "both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor" (*Laudato Si'*, no. 49).
- *The United Workers Association (UWA)* is an organization of low-wage workers dedicated to addressing the root causes of poverty in the Baltimore area. One of UWA's most successful campaigns prevented the construction of the nation's largest trash incinerator less than a mile from two schools. Through community organizing, UWA helped indefinitely halt this project which would have contributed harmful amounts of air pollution affecting an already vulnerable community.
- *The Niibi Center* is an organization in Crookston, Minnesota, dedicated to preserving the cultural heritage of the Anishinaabe people. The Center is focused on defending key dimensions of Anishinaabe culture and knowledge, such as protecting water and wild rice, the cornerstones of their culture. Through educational and community programs, the Niibi Center upholds the dignity of the land and the people that inhabit it.

II. Activities Undertaken by Other National Catholic Organizations

1. Catholic Climate Covenant

Catholic Climate Covenant (CCC), an association of 19 Catholic member institutions including the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, sponsored a very successful conference at Creighton University to discuss the insights of *Laudato Si'* in 2019. The keynote address was delivered by Bishop Robert McElroy of the Diocese of San Diego and was attended by 225 people from 8 ministerial tracks. The Creighton Conference is the first of three "*Laudato Si'* and the U.S. Catholic Church" conferences designed to more fully integrate *Laudato Si'* into various ministries of the Catholic Church in our country. The conference was preceded and followed by related webinars on how parishes, schools, universities, others could integrate *Laudato Si'* into their communities. In May 2020, the Journal of Moral Theology published [Vol. 9, Special Issue 1, 2020: "Laudato Si' and the U.S. Catholic Church: A Conference Series on Our Common Home."](#) The publication, edited by Creighton University professor and Covenant consultant, Daniel DiLeo, is a collection of articles from the conference intended to continue educating the public about the church's social teachings.

Upon the release of *Laudato Si'* in 2015, the Covenant collaborated with USCCB in hosting press conferences at the National Press Club. The Covenant also hosted press events in Cincinnati and Des Moines, and in Sacramento in partnership with the California Catholic Conference. CCC also held a conference on *Laudato Si'* in collaboration with USCCB and the Catholic University of America that led to a book edited by Dan DiLeo, *All Creation Is Connected: Voices in Response to Pope Francis's Encyclical on Ecology*.

Laudato Si' featured prominently in developing other programs, including CCC's advocacy campaign, the Catholic Climate Declaration. In the fall of 2019, over 1,500 Catholic youth and young adults visited their Senators on Capitol Hill in support of the International Climate Accountability Act, handing their senators a petition signed by more than 58,000 people across the nation along with the Catholic Climate Declaration signed by more than 800 U.S. Catholic institutions calling for U.S. participation in international climate agreements. This effort was led by the Ignatian Solidarity Network and complemented by CCC, which initiated the declaration and petition as a collaborative effort during the Season of Creation.

The Covenant also now convenes more than 400 creation care teams across the country with 878 members and promotes the *St. Francis/Laudato Si' Pledge* to live the encyclical in prayer, action and advocacy. The Pledge has received more than 12,000 signatures to date.

CCC has been active in educational and advocacy efforts and has taken a leadership role in assisting Catholic institutions to lower their carbon footprint through the Catholic Energies program. By assisting Catholic building and land-owners (parishes, schools, retreat centers, etc.) with energy efficiency and renewable energy projects, Catholic institutions can live up to the challenges outlined in *Laudato Si'*, reduce utility expenses, share Catholic teaching on the environment, and be a witness to the wider community, including young people. These efforts have received very favorable consideration in the press and in other media reports.

The Catholic Energies program was created in response to *Laudato Si'* and began with a pilot program in 2016-17 with the Archdiocese of Cincinnati that focused on energy efficient products, primarily

lighting and light HVAC upgrades. CCC's Catholic Energies national program officially launched in late 2017, expanding to include renewable energy in 2018. In July 2019 the program installed 400 solar panels at Immaculate Conception Parish in Hampton, Virginia. In the fall of 2019 Catholic Energies worked with Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Washington to install a 2-megawatt solar project (over 5,000 solar panels) in Washington, DC, the largest solar project ever completed in the District and saving Catholic Charities hundreds of thousands of dollars on utility bills, money which goes into supporting their core ministry. In December 2019, Catholic Energies completed two solar installations with the Order of the Carmelites including a roof top installation in Illinois and a ground array installation in Washington, DC. In 2020 Catholic Energies is working on more than 40 projects in multiple states, including additional projects with the Diocese of Richmond and the first three parishes for the Diocese of Arlington.

On the educational and pastoral front, CCC and the Association of U.S. Catholic Priests developed homily helps that integrate the themes of *Laudato Si'* for every Sunday for all three liturgical cycles. The encyclical's themes are integrated into the Feast of St. Francis and Earth Day parish programs for many years. CCC's website has expanded to include all of the work of other Catholic organizations who have produced videos, lesson plans, stories and other materials related to *Laudato Si'*.

In 2020, the Covenant initiated the [Catholic Climate Project](#), an inter-generational effort by organizations and individuals across the U.S. Catholic community to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day and the 5th Anniversary of *Laudato Si'*, including *Laudato Si'* Week. The Project gathered and provided U.S. Catholic organizations resources on how to celebrate these moments through worship, education, service and advocacy. It invited Catholics to share their care for creation efforts with the community by submitting their [events](#) and creative pieces on the website. The Project also offered modest grants to help Catholic and interfaith organizations put together events and programs lifting up care for creation within their communities this fall and next spring.

During *Laudato Si'* Week, May 16-24, 2020, celebrating the fifth anniversary of *Laudato Si'*, CCC created a dedicated *Laudato Si'* Week web page to aggregate celebration events and resources from U.S. partners, and has expanded the evolving resource to continue throughout *Laudato Si'* Year. Partners used the website and CCC social media resources to share and amplify *Laudato Si'* events, resources and messaging. In addition, CCC created an Earth Day at 50/*Laudato Si'* at 5 program that was intended for in-person celebrations but was revised to be used for virtual celebrations when the pandemic arrived. The digital program was accompanied by a successful webinar on what actions Catholics can take to protect our common home, which echoed the digital program's pledge to action in 2020.

2. Catholic Relief Services

Since 1943, Catholic Relief Services (CRS) has been carrying out the commitment of the Catholic Bishops and the Catholic community of the United States to assist the poor and vulnerable overseas. The focus and priority of CRS's environmental stewardship has intensified since the publication of *Laudato Si'*. The recently published CRS [strategic vision for 2030](#) identifies Care for Creation as a key priority (as a result of the encyclical) and two of the four strategic goals are related to the environment.

Around the world, CRS continues to seek new and innovative ways to confront the issues that the changing climate brings to the poor. Agriculture is a central focus for CRS, and 5.4 million people have been served by its agriculture and livelihood programming in 2019, with 108 agriculture and livelihood projects in

46 countries. CRS helps millions of smallholder farmers worldwide recover from natural disasters and civil strife, build resilient farming systems, and grow them into agro-enterprises that engage successfully with markets. An integral part of its agricultural development programs is to help farmers organize into savings groups to buy seeds, equipment and other assets they need to build successful businesses. To date, savings groups organized by CRS have saved almost \$14 million annually through more than 187,000 groups in 59 countries, benefitting more than 20 million people worldwide. Moving forward, CRS is committed to working with local, national and international partners in several countries throughout the world to restore 3.9 million acres of degraded land by 2030 resulting in a 50% increase in yields and increased food security for farmers and communities.

Water security is another key CRS priority outlined in its **strategic vision for 2030**, asserting that water security is a **human right**, inalienably tied to our health, dignity and socio-economic development. As Pope Francis noted at the Pontifical Academy of Sciences in February 2018, “The right to water is essential for the survival of persons and decisive for the future of humanity.” CRS water and sanitation services in 2018 reached 8 million people in 30 countries through 52 health and sanitation projects.

CRS focuses on emergency response and recovery around the world, and many of these emergencies are caused by natural disasters. In May, Cyclone Amphan damaged 1.5 million homes in India and affected more than 18 million people. Recently, in Uganda torrential rains and flooding resulted in massive destruction and property loss, including health centers, schools, homes and agricultural lands and in Vietnam severe draught and saltwater intrusion left 685,558 people without water. In 2018 alone, 9.8 million people were reached through CRS emergency response in 196 different projects in 57 countries.

Since Pope Francis’ groundbreaking encyclical, *Laudato Si’*, CRS has taken a public stance on climate change and its effect on the most vulnerable around the world. Former CRS President and CEO, Dr. Carolyn Woo, spoke at the Vatican during the release of *Laudato Si’*. Following the release of the encyclical CRS launched the *Climate Change: I am the Cause I am the Solution* Campaign engaging students across 75 college campus’ in advocacy actions in support of CRS/USCCB policy positions related to climate change.

In January of 2016, CRS launched a 12 month multi-media campaign targeting Catholic media outlets in the US. *Climate Change it Changes Everything* featured stories highlighting the effects of climate change on vulnerable communities around the world and illustrated innovative community led adaptation approaches such as climate smart agriculture, natural resource management, and disaster risk reduction. More recently CRS launched the *Lead the Way on Hunger* Campaign featuring content designed to illustrate the complex causes of hunger and malnutrition and highlight innovative environmentally friendly approaches to reducing hunger and mal-nutrition. The *Laudato Si’* week of Prayer and Action was a key component of the Hunger Campaign launch activities.

3. Catholic Charities USA

In any given year, Catholic Charities agencies support hundreds of thousands of vulnerable individuals and families recovering from disasters, including raising homes, strengthening roofs and other mitigating actions. In recognition of this, Catholic Charities USA (CCUSA) has made it a priority to support its member agencies in adapting to this reality. In 2017, CCUSA hosted over 100 disaster practitioners for a full day of learning at The Collider, a nonprofit dedicated to helping the world prepare, adapt and become resilient in the face of intensifying climate change.

In 2018, CCUSA collaborated closely with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to build the capacity of agencies to advance their climate resilience activities. First, CCUSA facilitated a network-wide webinar exploring the U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit. This was followed by having the NOAA Chief Data Scientist address over 200 Catholic Charities disaster practitioners at CCUSA's annual disaster training conference (the Applied Institute for Disaster Excellence, or "AIDE") on understanding the drivers of climate change and the implications for the poor and vulnerable. At the AIDE conference in 2018, the executive director of the Catholic Climate Covenant delivered the plenary address, encouraging Catholic Charities to continue to learn and grow in its collective ability to "protect nature, defend the poor, and build networks of respect and fraternity."

In 2015, CCUSA joined with the White House, under the Obama administration, to help local communities prepare for and be resilient to natural disasters associated with climate change. Four years later, CCUSA signed the Catholic Climate Declaration to affirm the commitment of U.S. Catholic institutions to stand by the Paris Agreement and help meet its goals. Through Caritas Internationalis, CCUSA received a grant to work with Catholic Relief Services to implement the Farm Bill as it relates to domestic and foreign food security, with a special consideration for vulnerable populations as they relate to agriculture and climate change. CCUSA has also offered workshops on *Laudato Si'* for its staff and participants at its annual O'Grady Leadership Institutes, and has produced and distributed a prayer resource on the care of creation.

[The February 2020 issue of Charities USA, the magazine of Catholic Charities USA](#), was focused upon *Laudato Si'* and Care of Creation. Features included:

- A theological reflection of the See-Judge-Act methodology, historically embraced by Catholic Charities and a framework of *Laudato Si'*;
- CCUSA's embrace of a plastics-free work environment;
- A decision to increase digital publishing;
- A commitment to move the national office to 100% renewable energy in 2020;
- [Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Washington's dedication of the largest solar array in the District of Columbia](#);
- Catholic Charities Maine's Eco-Joy parish social ministry program, an electronic recycling social enterprise whose revenue is granted to parishes for environmental programs and catechesis;
- Catholic Charities Diocese of Gary's initiative to "rescue" food headed to landfills to stock pop-up and mobile pantries in "food deserts;"
- Catholic Charities USA's disaster services operations in response to increasing natural disasters, many resulting from climate change.

Catholic Charities USA (CCUSA) collaborates with the Catholic Climate Covenant (CCC) in a number of ways, including:

- The CCC was an exhibitor at the 2019 CCUSA Annual Gathering in Albuquerque and Dan Misleh, the CCC executive director, addressed Catholic Charities diocesan directors on energy efficiency and clean energy, including solar through the Catholic Energies project;
- CCUSA and the Catholic Energies program of the CCC hosted a webinar on solar and efficiency project development, funding, and management;

- Scott Hurd, CCUSA’s Vice President for Leadership Development and Catholic Identity, serves as board chair for the CCC; Jean Beil, CCUSA’s Senior Vice President for Programs and Services, represents CCUSA on the CCC’s steering committee of Covenant Partners;
- CCUSA has been a covenant partner of the CCC since its inception 14 years ago;
- Kim Burgo, VP for Disaster Services at CCUSA, co-presented with the CCC a workshop at the Catholic Social Ministry Gathering entitled “*Laudato Si’* at 5: Where We’ve Been and Where We’re Going.”

The CCUSA Communications Office centered its 2020 communications plan on the message of *Laudato Si’*. Efforts thus far include the publication of the aforementioned issue of Charities USA magazine and significant media content related to *Laudato Si’* Week in May. The communications plan is described as follows:

Next year is both the 5th Anniversary of *Laudato Si’* (May) and the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day (April). The Comms team will conduct outreach for CCUSA under the umbrella of this theme as it relates to two key themes of the Pope’s Encyclical: The intimate relationship between the poor and the fragility of the planet and the conviction that everything in the world is connected.

CCUSA has engaged a volunteer to explore how the vision of *Laudato Si’* is reflected in all of CCUSA’s present strategic priorities and foundational services and will create a tool for Catholic Charities diocesan directors on how to implement the vision of *Laudato Si’* in their agencies.

CCUSA is soon to introduce a new podcast series. The first seven podcasts focus on how the seven themes of Catholic social teaching, including Care for Creation/*Laudato Si’*, are manifested in the work of Catholic Charities.

4. Catholic Rural Life

For the last five years, Catholic Rural Life has been promoting a program entitled, The Vocation of the Agricultural Leader in which we highlight many of the points articulated in *Laudato Si’*. The document and presentations have been given to thousands of farmers in the US and internationally through collaborations with national farmer organizations and the World Farmers Organizations. In 2014 and in 2018, CRL hosted a national conference on the Vocation of the Agricultural Leader where 110 and 120 leaders respectively attended and discussed the role farmers and food leaders play in stewarding our natural resources while feeding a hungry world.

Over the past year, CRL introduced another program targeting pastors (priests) in rural communities entitled, *Thriving in Rural Ministry*. This 4-day retreat and follow-up program shares best practices for rural priests in their ministries. One of the key modules is on Integral Ecology, in which we introduce many pastors to the rich teaching of *Laudato Si’*. CRL has hosted two retreats so far. The program will continue for at least five years and reach hundreds of pastors in rural communities throughout the US.

Finally, over the past five years, CRL has presented to dioceses and parishes in rural communities on *Laudato Si’* and the Countryside, focusing on the responsibility of Catholics to both learn the rich teaching of *Laudato Si’*, but also how to apply in rural settings. CRL has presented on college campuses, at Cathedrals, seminaries, and in rural parishes.

5. Catholic Health Association

The Catholic health ministry serves our communities by healing the sick, serving the poor and vulnerable and leading by example. Inspired by our faith and values, the Catholic health ministry has formed a partnership with sponsors, systems, facilities and with experts in environmental responsibility to reduce the environmental burden of the health care we provide.

When, in 2015, Pope Francis shared his encyclical, *Laudato Si'* – teaching the world that care for the things of the earth is necessarily bound together with our care of one another, especially the poor, CHA produced several resources—videos, articles, reflection resources <https://www.chausa.org/environment/environment-encyclical>—to help Catholic health ministry consider our calling in light of the Holy Father’s message.

This year, in celebration of the fifth anniversary of *Laudato Si'* the Catholic Health Association of the United States joined other Catholic organizations and religious congregations to raise awareness of the encyclical and to demonstrate the solidarity of the Catholic community to its message. Our activities have included:

- A widely attended webinar, How to Talk About Climate Change: CHA's and invited listeners to endorse the policy action agenda presented by the speaker. We also developed a prayer card and video and featured the Covenant video on our website. See: <https://www.chausa.org/environment/earth-day/2020-earth-day-resources>
- For *Laudato Si'* week, CHA developed nine celebration resources:
 - [Laudato Si Week - Session 1](#)
 - [Laudato Si Week - Session 2](#)
 - [Laudato Si Week - Session 3](#)
 - [Laudato Si Week - Session 4](#)
 - [Laudato Si Week - Session 5](#)
 - [Laudato Si Week - Session 6](#)
 - [Laudato Si Week - Session 7](#)
 - [Laudato Si Week - Session 8](#)
 - [Laudato Si Week - Session 9](#)

CHA is working with several of our health care systems and Health Care Without Harm to encourage members to join HCWH’s Climate Challenge <https://noharm-uscanada.org/healthcareclimatechallenge> Going forward, CHA is joining the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities in asking each of our members recognize the fifth anniversary by holding celebrations that includes planting five trees in their communities. This initiative has been put on hold during the pandemic limit on public gatherings.

6. Society of St. Vincent de Paul USA

Across the country, St. Vincent de Paul Conferences and Councils operate 450 thrift stores that are committed to minimizing consumption by maximizing the reuse of clothing, furniture, and other goods. Communities with SVdP thrift stores divert thousands of materials from landfills, keeping them in productive use, which will only increase as they reopen and begin accepting donations.

Hundreds more Vincentian locations operate food pantries and dining programs which, in addition to fighting hunger and ensuring neighbors are well fed, help to redistribute unsold food from grocery stores that would otherwise be discarded. Additionally, many programs work with local farms and suppliers to use excess and ripe fresh produce that could otherwise go unconsumed and discarded.

Finally, in 2017, the National Council of the United States approved a first-of-its-kind joint Statement on Environmental Stewardship and Ecological Conversion in partnership with the national councils of the Society in Canada and Mexico. This was the first time these three councils worked together on a transcontinental commitment to an issue, underscoring that the world is ‘our common home’ and reflecting the importance of collaboration in addressing climate change.

III. Conclusion

The foregoing is but a summary of the areas of activity in which many in the Catholic Church throughout the United States of America have been moved to respond to the Holy Father’s message in this important encyclical. Numerous Catholic dioceses, parishes, institutions, religious orders, lay associations, communities and individuals not mentioned here have contributed through projects, programs and activities as well as by their prayers and daily actions, to lifting the message of *Laudato Si*’.