# FIVE YEARS



LAUDATO SI' ACTION PLATFORM

2021–2026

*Stories, data and lessons from communities across the world*

5 YEARS
LAUDATO SI'
ACTION
PLATFORM

*"Five years ago, the Laudato Si' Action Platform began with a question: how could the Encyclical Laudato Si' leave the page and enter the everyday life of the Church?"*

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*Pope Leo XIV congratulates Sr. Alessandra Smerilli, F.M.A., on her appointment as Prefect of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development.*

VATICAN MEDIA

01 · LEADERSHIP MESSAGE

# A memory, and the possibility before us

SR. ALESSANDRA SMERILLI, F.M.A.,
PREFECT,
DICASTERY FOR PROMOTING INTEGRAL HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Not long ago, a visitor from the Diocese of Lexington in the United States placed a book in my hands. Inside were the plans its parishes had developed to put Laudato Si' into practice. What stayed with me was the concreteness of it. An encyclical written in Rome had become decisions being made in local communities: about buildings and resources, prayer and formation, habits and priorities.

This is one of the possibilities Laudato Si' opened for the Church. A teaching becomes most alive when it no longer belongs only to a document, but begins to take different forms in different places. No parish, family, school, religious congregation or diocese will respond in exactly the same way. Nor should they. Our task is not to prescribe a single expression of ecological conversion, but to help create the conditions in which communities can discern what fidelity asks of them where they are.

For five years, the Laudato Si' Action Platform has sought to accompany precisely this movement: from conviction to reflection, from reflection to planning, and from planning into the ordinary life of institutions and communities.

## From personal to ecclesial

I often return to this experience when I think about Laudato Si'. Pope Francis invited us not simply to recognize an environmental crisis, but to see reality differently: to understand that the condition of the Earth cannot be separated from the conditions in which people live. The cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor are heard together. The climate crisis, the loss of biodiversity, poverty, migration, work, consumption and the dignity of human life cannot be addressed as isolated questions.

But Laudato Si' also asks something more demanding of us. It asks whether we still believe that another way of living together is possible.

## From participation to learning

This is an important question for institutions. Institutions are necessary because they give continuity to ideas and commitments that might otherwise disappear. They preserve memory, organize action and allow what begins with a few people to endure beyond them.

The challenge is to ensure that the structure continues to serve the original intuition.

I believe the Laudato Si' Action Platform reaches its fifth anniversary at an important moment in this regard. Over these first years, the Platform has promoted ways for families, dioceses, religious communities, educational institutions and many others to move from reflection toward planning and action. It has helped give form and continuity to a desire already present throughout the Church: to respond concretely to the call of Laudato Si'.

Five years also gives us enough experience to begin asking different questions. Not only: How many people have participated? But also: What have these communities taught us? What has

helped their commitment endure? What can we now see that we could not see five years ago?

## *From the margins to what comes next*

These questions matter because the most important possibilities do not always emerge from the center. Through the Laudato Si' Action Platform, we have encountered communities whose experiences remind us that those living closest to social and ecological fragility often perceive realities that larger institutions may miss. A community protecting its land, young people questioning practices that previous generations took for granted, a religious congregation reconsidering how it uses its property and resources, or a family discovering a different relationship with consumption may each see something that the rest of us need to learn.

The poor and marginalized, therefore, cannot simply be beneficiaries of ecological conversion. They must help shape it. Those who most directly experience the limits of our economic, social, and environmental systems often possess knowledge indispensable to building something different.

As the Laudato Si' Action Platform begins its next five years, may it continue to create the conditions in which these possibilities can grow: listening more deeply, connecting more wisely, and helping communities throughout the Church bring what they are learning into relationship with one another.

The task before us is not to imagine the future from the center and ask others to follow. It is to recognize what the Spirit is already bringing to life in many places, and to help those possibilities become part of a shared response to the cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor.






Above: Participants plant over 2,000 trees in the Cerro Colorado of the Renca commune, Santiago de Chile.

# Why We Began



COURTESY OF THE LAURA VICUÑA SANCTUARY, LSAP PARTICIPANT

## *Before it became a Platform, it was an invitation.*

Two days before Laudato Si' was released to the world, Pope Francis sent a copy to a fellow bishop. The note was presented in a humble manner: on cream-colored paper, with a blue-colored papal coat of arms at the top, and a few lines in the then-Pope's sloping handwriting. He introduced the message with the place and date: Vatican, 16 June 2015. He addressed the recipient simply as "Caro fratello—dear brother." Then he explained what he was sending: his letter on the care of our common home. He ended with a familiar request: do not forget to pray for me.




**18 JUNE 2015**

Pope Francis on Twitter (now X), the day Laudato Si' was presented.

*There was no diagram of integral ecology. No list of goals. No institutional plan.*

*There was simply a letter being passed from one person to another.*

By then, however, the document had already traveled a considerable distance. The first public reports had appeared more than a year earlier. When the title finally became public in June 2015, it revealed something about the document Pope Francis had been writing.

Laudato Si' had its origins from a prayer written centuries earlier by Saint Francis of Assisi. In the Canticle of the Creatures, the sun is brother, water is sister, and the Earth is mother.

The encyclical was concerned with climate, pollution and biodiversity. But it was concerned with work and technology, cities and economics, poverty and politics, prayer and the way a person understands his or her place in the world.

At the Vatican press conference on June 18, even the people chosen to present it made that breadth visible. Beside Cardinal Peter Turkson sat an Orthodox theologian, a climate scientist, the president of Catholic Relief Services and a teacher who had spent years working on the outskirts of Rome. Cardinal Turkson explained that such a diverse group of presenters was deliberate. The encyclical itself had been prepared with contributions from many disciplines and from episcopal conferences across the world.

This was an unusual way to introduce an environmental document because Laudato Si' insisted that there was no such thing as an environmental problem that was solely environmental in origin or nature.

A river could not be separated from the people who depended on it. Consumption could not be separated from the economic system that encouraged it. Poverty, technology, biodiversity, work and human

dignity could not be siloed in different folders and solved one at a time.

The phrase used by Pope Francis was "integral ecology". And in that language he raised a question much larger than could be addressed solely by an environmental program: What kind of world do we want to leave to those who come after us?

# From teaching to practice

For the Church, this created a puzzling challenge. An encyclical can be read. It can be preached. It can be discussed at a conference, assigned in a classroom, quoted in a pastoral letter and placed on a bookshelf. But how does an encyclical become an affordable, clean-energy electricity bill? How does it change what a parish buys, what a school teaches, what land a religious congregation protects, what a family eats, or what a diocese decides to measure?

In the years after 2015, Catholic faithful, as well as many other people of faith and of good will, began seeking answers to such questions. Some planted trees or restored ecosystems. Some changed procurement or energy use. Some organized young people. Some focused their prayer and theological reflection. Some had already been doing this work long before Laudato Si' offered a common vocabulary.

The difficulty was not that action was absent, but that these efforts lacked a shared foundation for connection, continuity, and mutual learning.

A school in one country might spend years learning how to reduce waste while another school, somewhere else, was beginning from zero. A congregation might develop a sophisticated ecological plan that never traveled beyond its own network. A committed individual might transform a parish until that person moved away and the work quietly stopped.

The Church had an abundance of local responses, but no practical resource to understand them and hold them together. On May 24, 2020, Francis announced a special Laudato Si' Anniversary Year. During that year, another question emerged: How could ecological conversion be sustained over the long term?

*"But how does an encyclical become an affordable, clean-energy electricity bill?"*

# Listening before building

*"We were not pioneers."*

**MAUREEN VILLANUEVA**
Engagement Manager, Laudato Si'
Action Platform

By March 2021, the questions were being transformed into a practical resource. Seven working groups took shape around the communities this resource hoped to serve: families; parishes and dioceses; educational institutions; healthcare institutions; organizations and groups; economic entities; and religious communities. A letter from the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development invited partners from each sector to help develop what it called the "Laudato Si' Action Platform".

Maureen Villanueva, Engagement Manager for the Laudato Si' Action Platform, remembers joining one of her first working-group calls with curiosity—eager to begin and to understand where she might be useful. On the screen were people she would come to know over the years: Sr. Sheila Kinsey, then executive co-secretary of the Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Commission; Fr. Joshtrom Kureethadam, then coordinator of the Ecology and Creation sector at the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development; Loyola University Chicago theologian Michael Schuck; Alfonso Apicella of Caritas Internationalis; and younger voices such as María Virginia, co-founder of the Farm of Francesco. What Villanueva remembers most is the diversity of the conversation—some voices stronger than others—and a phrase that surfaced repeatedly: the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Those conversations also made something clear: this new tool was not starting from zero. "We were not pioneers," Villanueva says. "There was already work being done, there were already experiences, there were already many people who had begun their own journeys." The task was to learn from those realities and find a pathway that could serve many of them.

The challenge, then, was not to invent ecological action but to connect what was already happening without flattening its differences.

# One framework, many realities

Six years earlier, Pope Francis had written about Sister Water and Brother Sun. Now people had to decide what sort of structure could actually help a hospital, a family and a multinational religious congregation respond to the same teaching without pretending that their responsibilities were identical.

The March letter proposed resources, tools for building connection and forms of recognition. It spoke of solidarity, but also of subsidiarity. It described one global framework while insisting that local and sectoral initiatives should be encouraged as fully as possible.

This was the challenge built into the project from the beginning:

*How do you give thousands of communities a common direction without proposing that they all do the same things, in the same ways?*

Too little structure, and the tool could become little more than an inspirational website. Too much, and it could flatten the various differences in culture, geography, vocation and experience that Laudato Si' recognized as so important.

Villanueva encountered that challenge concretely as she listened to sector partners from around the world. "I know what the reality is like in Mexico," she remembers thinking, "but what we do here will not necessarily work in other places." The more she learned about how different institutions already worked, the clearer the question became: what could the Platform offer that would be useful across those differences?

At the same time, she remembers broad agreement about what they did not want to build. "We all had it on our radar not to offer something very complex," she says. "There are already many certifications, there are already many systems." The aim was something simpler: a pathway that connected spirituality with action and could support processes already underway.

The solution was not a universal action list. It was a common architecture. Seven Laudato Si' Goals could provide direction. Different sectors could interpret those goals according to their responsibilities. Reflection could lead to planning; planning to action; action to another period of reflection.

At the end of the Laudato Si' Anniversary Year, Pope Francis sat at a desk and made the project public. He began speaking about the ecological crisis and the pandemic. He spoke of future generations. A little more than three minutes into the message, he announced what he called a concrete action project: "the Laudato Si' Action Platform." After naming the sectors it would serve, he offered a much simpler invitation: "Let us work together."

RAISING HOPE CONFERENCE · 2025

*"It is encouraging to see the variety of organizations represented at this conference, as well as the many who have joined the Laudato Si' Movement and the Platform for Action. Pope Francis emphasized that the most effective solutions will not come from individual efforts alone, but above all, from major political decisions at national and international levels."*

POPE LEO XIV, 1 OCTOBER 2025

**1 OCTOBER 2025**

Four years after Pope Francis publicly launched the Laudato Si' Action Platform, Pope Leo XIV returned to its mission on October 1, 2025, during the Raising Hope for Climate Justice Conference marking the tenth anniversary of Laudato Si'. In his keynote remarks, he recognized the Laudato Si' Action Platform, alongside the Laudato Si' Movement, as a vital witness to ecological conversion in action.



CRISTIAN GENARI

# Built to keep changing

The platform needed a website and databases. It needed translations. Someone had to decide what a plan was, what counted as an action, how a participant moved from one step to another, what resources belonged where, which sectors needed different forms of accompaniment.

Partners brought theological, technical and sector expertise. Developers built. Communicators translated concepts into instructions. People tested what had been designed against lives that rarely behaved as neatly as a process diagram.

Those early decisions also accumulated inside the technology. Abel Guapulema, the developer now responsible for keeping the Platform running and evolving, meets them in its older parts. “Sometimes I feel like a digital archaeologist,” he says. “Every part of the code carries the thinking of someone who came before me, about how people were supposed to move through the journey.” He sees his role as continuing that work: “to understand what came before well enough to keep improving it for the people who use the Platform today.”

*“Sometimes I feel like a digital archaeologist.”*

**ABEL GUAPULEMA**
Developer, Laudato Si’ Action Platform

No single person built the Laudato Si’ Action Platform. In some ways, that was the point.

The encyclical itself had emerged from an unusually broad dialogue. The Platform inherited something of the same instinct: knowledge was already dispersed across the Church, and the task was not simply to gather it at the center but to create a structure in which different kinds of knowledge could shape the same undertaking. The early working-group letter described a framework intended to draw from experience “across and even beyond the universal Church.”

The Platform was therefore built around a somewhat counterintuitive proposition. Its success would depend on things it did not control.

The parish had to discern. The family had to choose. The school had to teach. The congregation had to decide what to do with its buildings, land or resources. The Platform could provide a pathway. It could make experiences visible. It could connect people to tools and, increasingly, to one another.

But it could not put ecological conversion into action on anyone’s behalf.




**25 MAY 2021**

Pope Francis announcing the Laudato Si' Action Platform in his official video message at the close of the anniversary year.

For Villanueva, that is why the Platform is evolving by design. "I always see the Platform as being in a process of continuous improvement," she says. "There will always be things we can improve." The work is to keep returning to participants' real experiences: "listening to what works for them, what doesn't work, what we can improve."

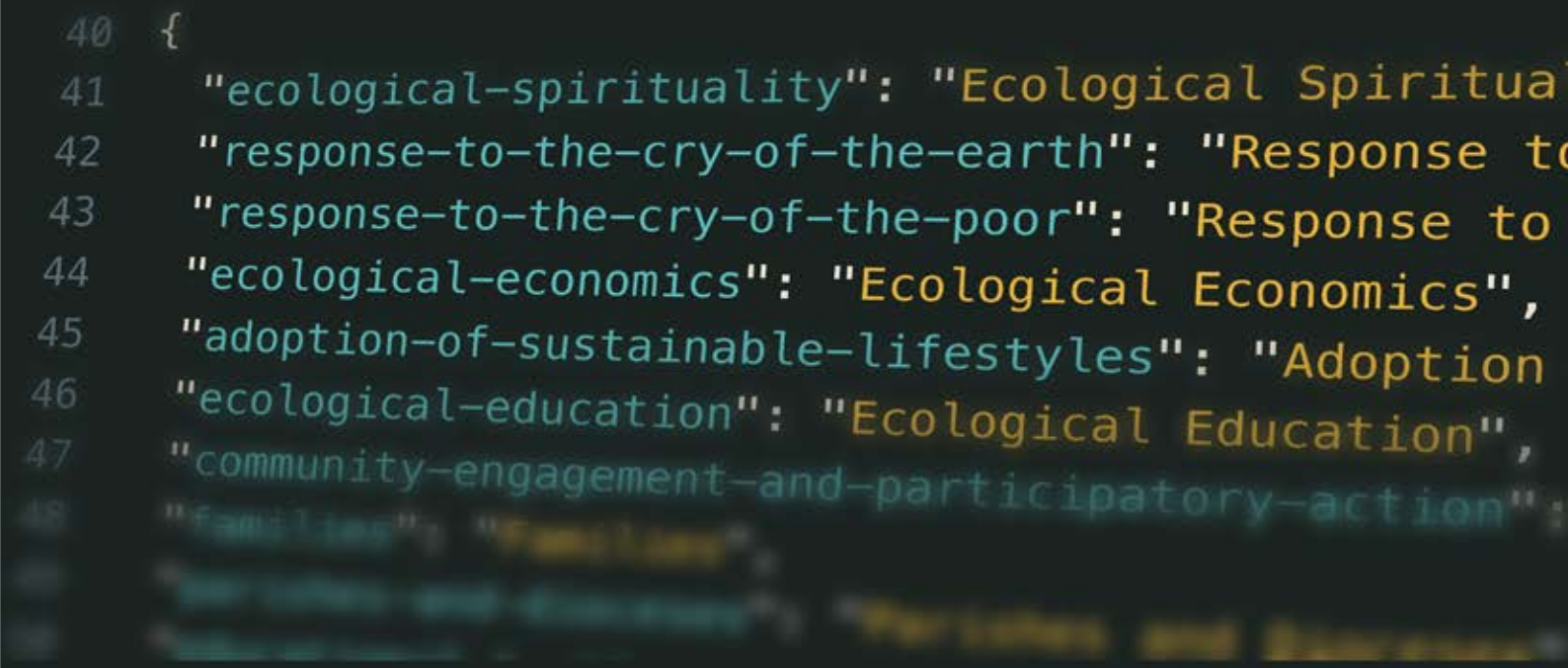
# *“Every part of the code carries the thinking*




Medieval illuminated manuscript, used here to evoke the world in which St. Francis lived and wrote.

*of someone who came before me...”*

ABEL GUAPULEMA · DEVELOPER, LAUDATO SI’ ACTION PLATFORM




The seven Laudato Si’ Goals, as written in the Platform’s website files.

# The beginning was not inevitable

Looking back five years later, it is tempting to make the beginning appear more orderly than it was. Organizations often tell their origin stories backwards. Once the website exists and the terminology has become familiar, every early decision can begin to look inevitable. It was not.

What existed in 2021 was a teaching, several years of experimentation and action across the Church, a network of partners, seven goals, seven sectors, an emerging digital structure and a conviction that something more durable might be built from those pieces.

The first version also left important questions unanswered. Would people return after enrolling? Would planning actually produce action? Could a single framework make sense to both a family and a diocese? Could local action become visible without becoming standardized? Could something designed at a global level remain useful in places with very different resources, languages and access to technology?

And perhaps the largest question of all:

*Could an institution help ecological conversion remain alive without trying to own it?*

*The Platform did not begin with an answer to all of these questions. It began with an invitation.*

What happened next depended on the people who welcomed it and accompanied its growth and development for the past five years.



03 · BY THE NUMBERS

# By the Numbers



## *A Window into the Church's Response*

Numbers cannot tell us what ecological conversion felt like, why a community persevered, or whether a relationship with creation was transformed. But they can reveal the shape of the response: when people entered the journey, where participation gathered, which actions took hold, and where important gaps remain.

These are not simply measures of growth. They are traces of how a global invitation was received.

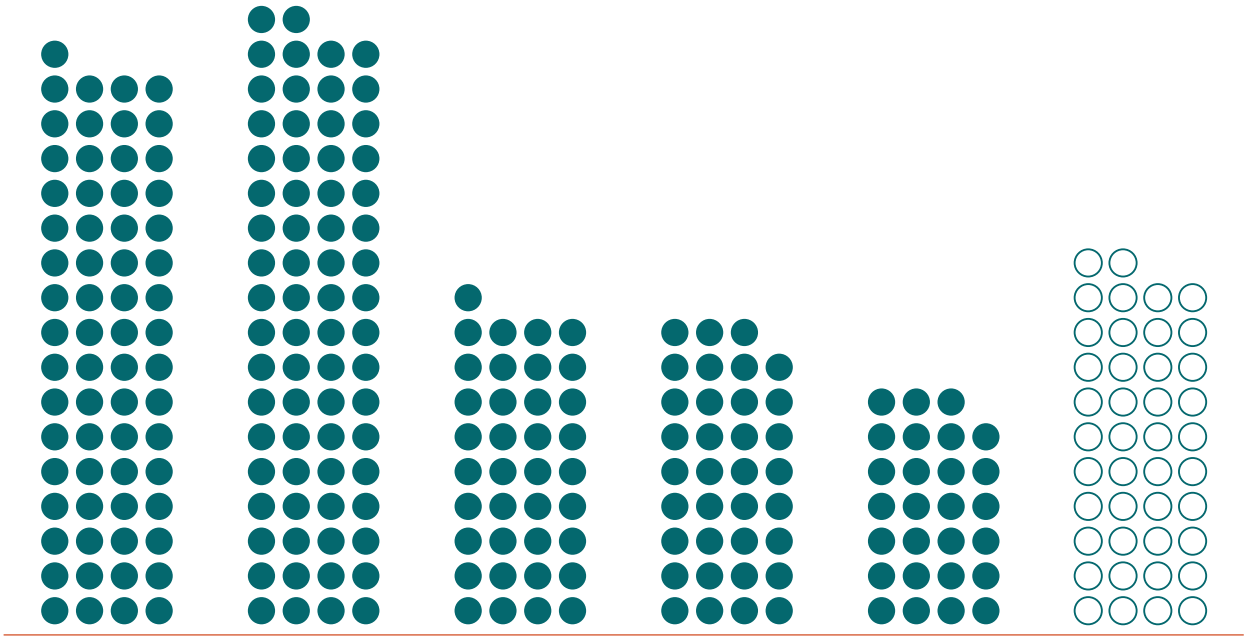
Stained-glass panels awaiting reinstallation after conservation at the Cathedral of Salford. The cathedral introduced extensive secondary glazing to protect its historic glass while improving the building's environmental performance.

ENROLLMENT · 2021–2026

# How the invitation was received.

FROM A PAPAL INVITATION TO A CONTINUING PATTERN OF PARTICIPATION

When the Laudato Si' Action Platform launched in November 2021, Pope Francis invited families, parishes, dioceses, schools, hospitals, religious communities and other institutions to begin a shared journey toward integral ecology. The response was immediate. Enrollment surged during the launch period and remained high through 2022 before declining over the next three years. From 2023 to 2025, annual registrations remained below 2,000, settling into a lower rhythm punctuated by increases around Laudato Si' Week and other moments of concentrated outreach.



| 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 | 2026 · Jan–Sep |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3,224 | 3,468 | 1,834 | 1,704 | 1,341 | 2,081 |

**6,238**

INSTITUTIONS

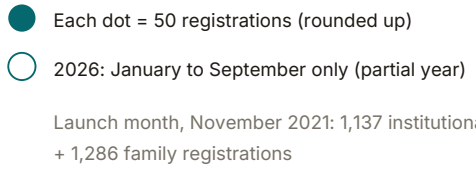
**7,414**

FAMILIES & INDIVIDUALS

In 2026, that pattern changed. By July, registrations had already surpassed the full-year totals of each of the previous three years. The renewed growth was driven especially by individuals and families, suggesting that the Platform's reach was widening again even as institutional participation grew more gradually.

# Why did enrollment level off—and then rise again?

The launch combined a direct papal invitation with strong existing Laudato Si' networks and concentrated promotion. Once that initial wave passed, enrollment settled into a lower baseline, rising again around major campaign moments. In 2026, that pattern became especially visible: by July, new registrations had already surpassed the annual totals recorded in each of the previous three years. That growth coincided with a more active cycle of engagement—including Laudato Si' Week, webinars, the Digital Missionaries Bootcamp, and improvements to the Platform's user experience—which gave participants more frequent entry points, practical tools, and reasons to return. The broader pattern suggests that invitation still matters: participation grows when communities are given a clear reason, moment, and pathway to act.




METHOD / READING

Source: LSAP registration register, extract to 30 September 2026. Each mark in the temporal field currently represents 50 registrations; partial marks are rounded up. Yearly totals include a small number of records dated before the November 2021 launch month. Registration records intent to plan, not verified implementation.

INSTITUTIONAL REPRESENTATION

# Where institutional depth emerged

A shared invitation has reached different parts of the Church at very different depths.

*In religious life, participation has begun to approach critical mass.*

**472**

WOMEN'S CONGREGATIONS

**131**

MEN'S CONGREGATIONS

Religious congregations and communities are where Platform participation has moved furthest from individual adoption toward broad sector presence. The current strategy estimates that approximately 53% of the world's religious congregations are represented on the Platform.

At that scale, participation can begin to reinforce itself. Congregations encounter peers making similar commitments; leadership networks can carry practices across provinces, houses, schools, health ministries and other apostolates; and lessons can travel through relationships that already exist rather than having to be built institution by institution.

Religious life is particularly significant in this respect. Congregations combine long institutional memory with extraordinary geographic reach, often connecting communities across countries and continents through a shared charism. Many also work precisely where the concerns of Laudato Si' meet: education, health, poverty, migration, spirituality, agriculture and justice.

This is what we mean here by critical mass: not that ecological conversion is complete, but that participation has become widespread enough within a sector for peer visibility, shared learning and further adoption to begin reinforcing one another.

Methodological note: Global totals are drawn from the 2025 Annuario Pontificio. LSAP figures are based on a preliminary classification of religious-congregation account names and have not yet been matched and de-duplicated against the Annuario institute list. A number of LSAP records cannot be reliably classified by gender from the institution name alone.

*Dioceses could connect action across entire local Churches, yet most are not yet represented on the Platform.*

# 357

**DIOCESE-LEVEL JURISDICTIONS ENROLLED**

Dioceses occupy a distinctive place in the life of the Church. They can connect parishes, schools, religious communities, social ministries and other institutions within a shared territory, while also linking local experience to episcopal leadership, pastoral planning and wider Church networks. A diocese does not simply add another institution to the count; it can create conditions for many communities to learn, coordinate and act in relationship with one another.

Yet diocesan representation on the Platform remains limited. This does not mean dioceses outside the Platform are inactive on ecology or Laudato Si'; many may already be leading substantial work through pastoral plans, commissions, schools, parishes, advocacy or other initiatives that are not reflected in Platform enrollment.

What the figure shows is narrower, but strategically important: most dioceses are not yet connected to the Platform as participants. For a tool designed to help make local action visible, share learning and support longer-term planning, that represents one of the clearest opportunities for deeper institutional reach. Closing that gap will be an important part of the Platform's next phase: strengthening relationships with dioceses, improving pathways for institutional participation, and making it easier for local Church communities to see how the Platform can support work they are already beginning or carrying forward.

Methodological note: Diocesan participation is reported as an absolute count. The 2025 Annuario Pontificio lists ecclesiastical circumscriptions across several canonical categories—including dioceses, metropolitan sees, eparchies and territorial prelatures—which do not map exactly onto the Platform's "Diocese" classification; a directly comparable global percentage is therefore not presented.

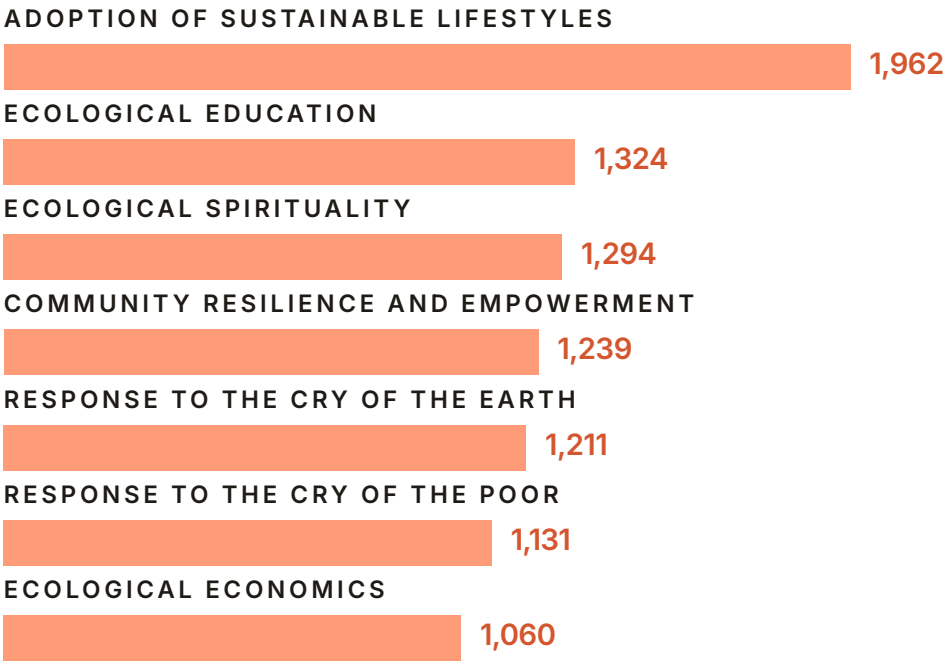
REPORTED ACTION · MAY 2025–SEPTEMBER 2026

# Where reported action concentrated

Across seven goals, reported action was broad—but not evenly distributed.

The Platform introduced the ability for participants to mark suggested actions as completed in May 2025, so this dataset begins there rather than at the Platform's 2021 launch. It captures the first 17 months of this reporting feature, through September 30, 2026, rather than the full five-year history of action across the Platform.

REPORTED ACTION COMPLETIONS BY LAUDATO SI' GOAL · MAY 2025–SEP 2026



# What these data can—and cannot—tell us.

The Platform records what participants choose to share with us. Throughout this section, "reported action completions" refers to actions participants themselves recorded as complete; these are not independently verified ecological outcomes.

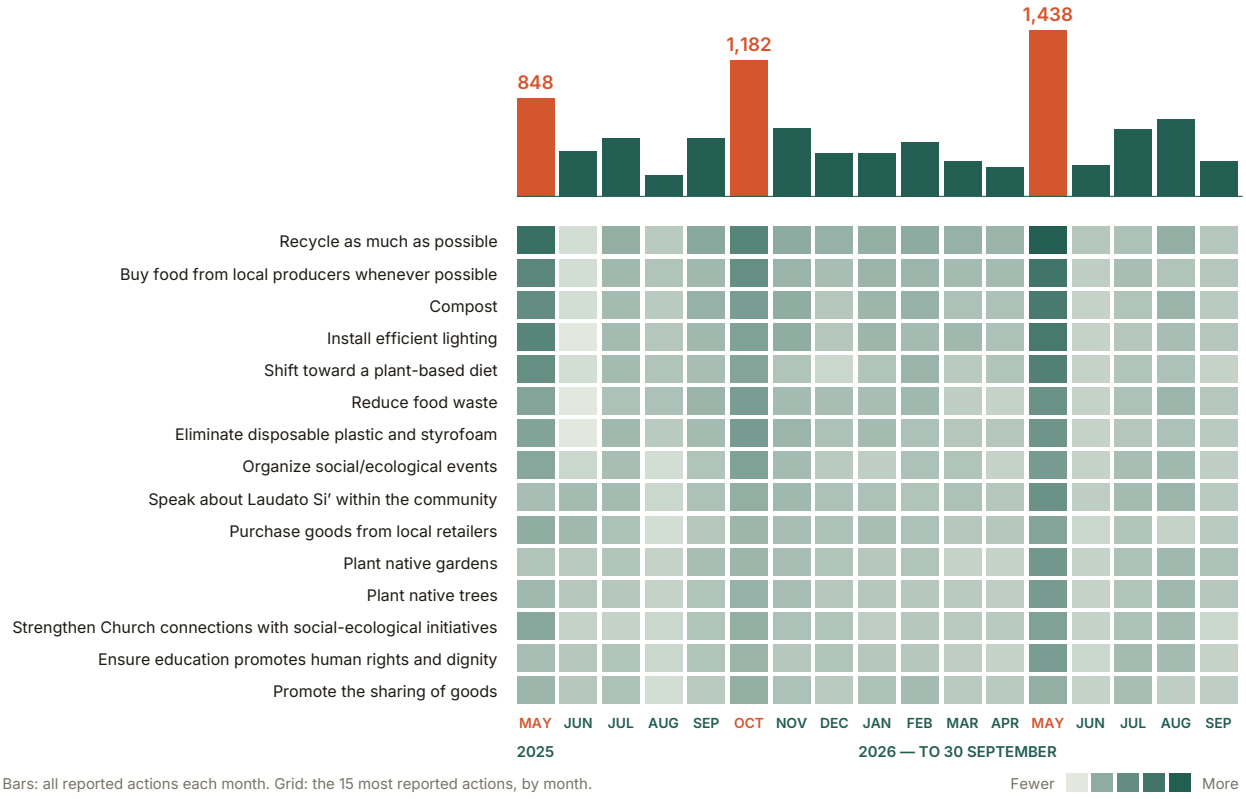
That distinction matters. The data are useful for seeing patterns of participation—what kinds of actions recur, when reporting increases, and where engagement is concentrated—but they cannot yet tell us the full effect of those actions on communities or ecosystems.

| | |
|---|---|
| PARTICIPANT-REPORTED | Plans, reflections and action completions are submitted by participants themselves. They show what communities report doing, not independently verified outcomes. |
| UNEVEN LANGUAGE COVERAGE | Reporting is stronger in some language communities than others. Francophone Africa, in particular, is likely underrepresented in the current dataset. |
| HOUSEHOLD PARTICIPATION | A family enrollment represents one Platform account. It does not tell us how many people participate within that household or what effects their actions have had. |
| CONTINUITY OVER TIME | Enrollment gives us a clear starting point, but we do not yet have a reliable way to distinguish a participant who has become inactive from one continuing ecological work without regularly reporting it. |
| FROM ACTION TO OUTCOME | We can count plans, reflections and actions marked as completed. We cannot yet consistently measure what changed environmentally, socially or institutionally because of them. |

ACTION COMPLETIONS · MAY 2025–SEPTEMBER 2026

# What people chose to do.

REPORTED ACTIONS EACH MONTH, AND THE 15 MOST REPORTED




Bars: all reported actions each month. Grid: the 15 most reported actions, by month.

# The volume changed. The choices changed much less.

The Platform introduced the ability for participants to mark suggested actions as completed in May 2025, so this dataset begins there rather than at the Platform's 2021 launch. Within that window, reporting rose sharply during moments of coordinated mobilization, especially around Laudato Si' Week. The peaks visible in the field should not be read as sudden changes in ecological behavior; they show periods when many more participants returned to the Platform and recorded actions as completed.

What is more striking is what remained stable underneath those peaks.

# 9 of the 10

Most frequently reported standardized actions appear in the top ten in both periods. Despite different campaign intensity and different reporting windows, the same practical actions repeatedly rose to the top. The consistency of those choices is the finding.

**THE EIGHT MOST PERSISTENT REPORTED ACTIONS**

| ACTION | 2025 | 2026 YTD | COMBINED REPORTS |
|---|---|---|---|
| Recycle as much as possible | 7.4% | 7.5% | 283 |
| Buy food from local producers whenever possible | 5.2% | 4.9% | 192 |
| Compost | 3.9% | 3.5% | 140 |
| Install efficient lighting | 5% | 5.3% | 194 |
| Shift toward a plant-based diet | 2.4% | 3.2% | 108 |
| Reduce food waste | 4.2% | 3.6% | 152 |
| Eliminate disposable plastic and styrofoam | 1.9% | 1.6% | 68 |
| Organize social/ecological events | 1.8% | 1.8% | 166 |

The most persistent individual choices tend to be concrete and familiar: recycling, buying food locally, composting, changing lighting, shifting diets, reducing food waste and eliminating disposable plastics. Most can begin through changes in everyday practice, without necessarily requiring a new policy, major budget commitment or institutional approval. The appearance of social and ecological events among the most frequently reported actions also points to a more communal dimension of participation.

These recurring choices do not capture the full range of activity on the Platform. Education and ecological spirituality account for substantial shares of reported action overall, but are distributed across a wider variety of individual actions rather than concentrated in a few recurring choices. Advocacy, policy and deeper institutional changes are also represented, though they are less prominent among the most frequently reported individual actions and may be harder to capture through a standardized checklist.

03 · BY THE NUMBERS

# The data show where action has initiated. It does not yet show the fullness of what changed.

Enrollments indicate willingness to begin. Plans and reflections document intention and discernment. Reported actions reveal participation and behavior. None of these measures, by themselves, confirms that an ecosystem recovered, an institution changed permanently, or a community's relationships were transformed.

*"How can an accessible first action become a pathway toward deeper institutional and structural change?"*

*The numbers help us identify patterns and questions. The stories that follow allow the people behind them to speak.*



Tree planting with the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria. Courtesy of Caritas Nigeria.



COURTESY OF CARLA BASTIDAS JURADO

TEAM TESTIMONY

# *"Numbers tell stories."*

"I spend a lot of my day looking at numbers, but I never really see them as just numbers. I think about the person or community behind each registration—the questions they had, the decisions they made, and the actions they took toward a Laudato Si' Goal. Numbers tell stories, and that is what motivates me to work with data: to understand what lies behind the figures and turn them into insights that help us make better decisions. Good data helps us see whether our work is bearing fruit, while reminding us that behind every number is a story, and behind every action are people working to make our common home a more beautiful and sustainable place for everyone."

**CARLA BASTIDAS JURADO**
Administrative Coordinator, Laudato Si' Action Platform



04 · VOICES FROM THE JOURNEY

# Voices from the Journey




38 What We Pass On
Samoa · Aotearoa New Zealand

46 The Same Bottle
Brazil · South Sudan · Ghana · the Netherlands

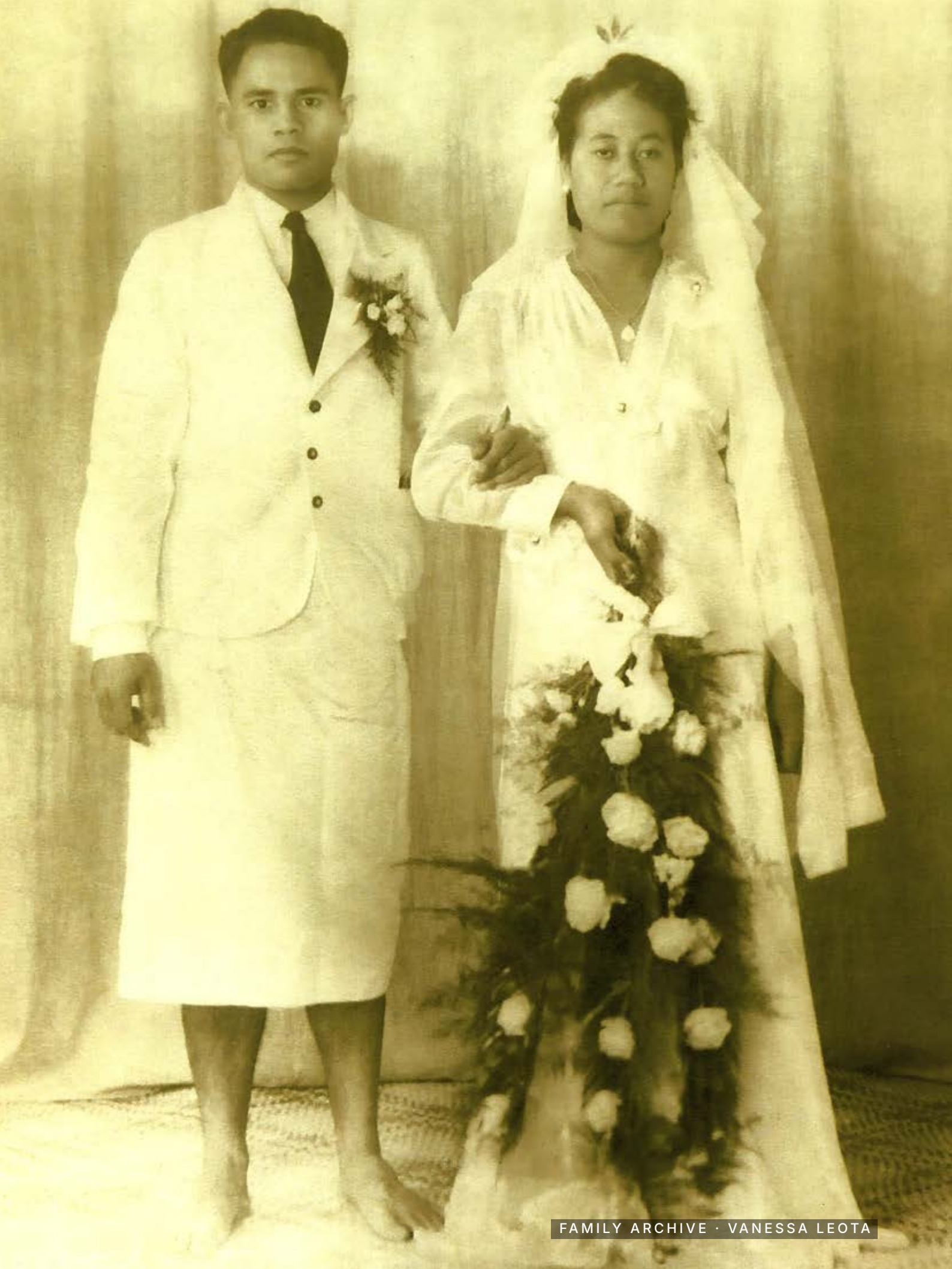
60 Rebuilding Our Churches
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Above: Sura Gaetbol, South Korea.



FAMILY ARCHIVE · VANESSA LEOTA

SAMOA · AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

# What We Pass On

For Vanessa Leota, care for creation was present long before she had language for integral ecology: in Sunday walks through banana trees in Samoa, clothes passed from one child to another, food prepared by familiar hands, prayer gathered around an altar, and the knowledge that what is received is meant to be cared for.

BY VANESSA LEOTA

**EDITORIAL NOTE**

Vanessa Leota is Digital Marketing Lead for Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand and a participant in the Laudato Si' Action Platform's Digital Missionaries Bootcamp. For the Platform's fifth anniversary, we asked her to look back not at a single environmental project, but at the ordinary practices and family life that shaped how she understands care for creation. Her answer begins in Samoa and continues in Aotearoa New Zealand, across grandparents, parents, sons, cousins, gardens and kitchens. What emerges is less a list of sustainable habits than a story about inheritance: the things a family receives, the ways it learns to value them, and what one generation quietly passes to the next.

Opposite: Etuale and Katalina on their wedding day.

## *Before integral ecology had a name*

Long before integral ecology had a name for me, it had a shape.

It was Sunday mornings in Samoa. We woke early, put on our best white and walked through a patch of banana trees, past the Catholic Theological College at Moamoa, to reach the Cathedral. All the children from the four families on our block would walk together. It was always an adventure. We might sing along the way or see who could reach the Cathedral first.

Everyday life was surrounded by things that grew: mango, guava, sugar cane, taro, coconut, pawpaw, breadfruit, yams. Looking back, we were blessed with so much abundance from the Lord's provision. But there were also shortages, particularly water. There were stretches when we had no running water, so the mums would do the washing together at the river while we played nearby. It never

felt like hardship to me. It just seemed like how things were, and as a child I loved whenever we went to the river.

My grandparents, Etuale and Katalina Mauga, were catechists. They had attended the Moamoa Theological College we passed every Sunday. When I stayed with them in one of the villages where they served, I remember dutifully ringing the village bell for the Angelus. I remember Grandma calling the chickens, scattering rice where she wanted them and making her "cooo cooo cooo" sound. Sometimes that call meant something slightly different depending on whether a special meal was coming.

I didn't know it then, but there was something rewarding and comforting in that simplicity. Faith, food, land, animals, family—they were not separate parts of life. They were simply life.



Grandpa Etuale, the musician.

## *Sharing what we already had*

Saturdays before we served at Sunday Mass often meant making leis if our family was responsible for the church decorations. We call them ula in Samoan. We would climb the frangipani trees to collect whichever flowers Mum or Grandma wanted: red, yellow or white. Neighbors sometimes came to take flowers from our trees when it was their turn to prepare the church.

In the evenings, Grandma and Grandpa would call everyone inside—all the cousins and whoever happened to be staying with them—to sit in a circle in front of their big altar. We prayed and sang together in island harmony.

And then there were the clothes. My mum regularly received batches of clothes and

shoes from her eldest sister, my Aunty Annie. As a teenager, I eagerly waited for them to become mine. I had no idea I would one day do exactly the same thing.

My eldest son, Harold's clothes passed through all four of my boys and then continued on to my brother's family. My nephew Miguel is not much of a talker, but you can see his gratitude in his smile when something that once belonged to his cousins becomes his. Those clothes have already kept someone else warm and dry. Now it is his turn.

What my boys have taught me is mostly something I have watched rather than something they set out to say. None of them grew up seeing a hand-me-down as the lesser option. As my eldest son put it: "The tradition of hand-me-downs was just a way of life for us, and we didn't mind growing up. It also taught us to be grateful for what we have."

By the time a jacket reached my youngest son, or passed from my boys to my nephew Miguel, it wasn't reluctant generosity. It was the much-awaited blessing of a loved item that a younger family member had been waiting to receive.

I knew that feeling myself, just as my mother had. I had once waited for my turn too.

## *Knowledge passed from hand to hand*

The same thing happens with food.

On a recent trip back to Samoa, I watched my brother teach my eldest son, Harold, how to prepare taro the way I was taught. His hands were learning the same motions my own family's hands had made before him, while someone nearby prepared coconut cream fresh from the tree.

There is something about watching your child learn a movement you remember from your own childhood. It makes you realize that what gets passed down is not always something you can put on a shelf. Sometimes it is a way of using your hands. A way of preparing food. A way of knowing what the land has given you and what to do with it.

Faith was never separate from those rhythms in our home growing up. There was Sunday Mass, the Angelus bell, evening prayer around Grandma and Grandpa's altar, and the joy of singing together. At one family reunion, my uncle, the late Monsignor Etuale Etuale, baptized one of my cousins in an inflatable paddling pool in the living room. The whole family stood gathered around in a circle—the same circle we used to make for evening prayer.

Today I live in another country. Aotearoa New Zealand is home now. The banana plantation is no longer on the walk to church, but the worship and thanksgiving remain.

SAMOA

*“It makes you realize that what gets passed down is not always something you can put on a shelf.”*

VANESSA LEOTA



Vanessa Leota with her brother Michael outside their grandparents’ home in Samoa.




COURTESY OF VANESSA LEOTA




Family reunion in Hawaii: the baptism of cousin James by Uncle Monsignor Etuale Etuale.

My boys have grown up, and one still lives at home. We continue the tradition of being with our elders when they reach the age when they need a helping hand. Our old Sunday Mass walking crew has become intergenerational. My parents continue their devotion as members of the Legion of Mary. Prayer remains constant for us: the Divine Mercy Chaplet, the Rosary, remembering whom to thank when we wake and before we sleep. Sometimes one of my sons who lives farther away will call me on WhatsApp and ask if we can pray together. I am grateful that they still remember the power of our Creator.

## *Teaching the next generation to care*

I want my children to understand that everyday life itself can become prayer.

That can happen in very small moments: putting a banana skin back into the compost, watering the thirsty peace lily sitting quietly in the corner, thinking

about whether something we buy can be recycled or was sustainably sourced. Sometimes I hear my boys asking questions about how something was produced, or whether child labor was involved. I am glad they think that way. I am glad they ask questions and care about justice. As my eldest son put it, caring for creation is simply part of our daily lives, and something we value a lot.

I don't think my grandparents would have used the words integral ecology. I certainly didn't grow up hearing them. But




Harold learns from his uncle Michael how to prepare taro for the umu.

when I look back now, I can see what they gave us.

They showed us a way of living in which creation provided for us and we understood that what we received deserved care. We had fruit from the trees, water when it was available, clothes that moved from one person to another, food prepared by hands that had learned from other hands, neighbors who could come and take flowers when it was their turn to decorate the church.

None of that felt like a program. It was just home.

If there is one thing I hope carries forward, it is that same recognition: everything we are given comes from the Creator, and we have a responsibility to care for it. What




Miguel with his sisters at the grotto where Venerable Suzanne Aubert lies at rest.

we have can be sufficient for our needs—and more—if we learn to receive it with gratitude, use it responsibly, and pass it on with love.


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BRAZIL · SOUTH SUDAN · GHANA · THE NETHERLANDS

# The Same Bottle

## What becomes visible when the same ordinary object passes through different hands

Opposite: Merijn Tinga preparing the rig, Ligurian coast, 2026.

*São Paulo, Brazil*

Flavio Nakaoka is talking about a moment most people would barely register: the few seconds it takes to throw something away.

At the Festival do Japão in São Paulo, Brazil, those seconds can become unexpectedly complicated. A visitor approaches a waste station carrying the remains of lunch—perhaps a plastic bottle, a tray, some broth, a napkin and a pair of chopsticks. Four receptacles wait in front of them: recyclables, rejects, liquids and sharps. Nearby, an environmental educator may be trying to help.

After several years of watching this happen, Flavio has started recognizing certain personalities. There is the person in a hurry, eager to get everything out of their hands. The distracted person, who never notices the instructions. The person who wants to cooperate but still chooses the wrong container. And then there is the meticulous visitor who reads every sign and might ask whether even a toothpick needs to go with the sharps.

What interests Flavio is the hesitation.

He calls it a *brecada*—a little brake in an otherwise automatic gesture. "The change in behavior happens when we can make the person stop for a few seconds and reflect on what they are doing with that waste," he says. "It is the instant when the waste stops being simply something we want to get rid of and begins to be recognized as a material that needs an appropriate destination."

*"For me, that is precisely the moment when true environmental education begins."*




Festival do Japão, São Paulo.

When the Laudato Si' Action Platform first documented Flavio's work in 2023, the experiment was relatively modest. At a Japanese-Brazilian festival receiving roughly 3,000 to 5,000 visitors a day, he placed five large recycling bins in the food courts and created separate containers for chopsticks, skewers and other waste. Three years later, the idea had expanded enormously. The 2026 Festival do Japão in São Paulo drew approximately 135,000 people over three days and used 96 selective-waste stations.

Success has made the problem more interesting, not less. Providing containers is relatively straightforward. Changing behavior is harder. Environmental educators standing beside the stations help enormously, but employing them is costly. Volunteers tend to prefer reception or event-production jobs. As Flavio puts it with some amusement, "nobody wants to be 'the garbage collector for a day.'" He is now experimenting with stronger visual signals and other inexpensive ways to create that moment of hesitation without requiring a person beside every bin.

For Flavio, then, an empty plastic bottle is partly a decision. Its next life depends on whether someone pauses long enough to recognize that there is a decision to make.

## *Juba, South Sudan*

Ugalla Andrew sees something else entirely. “For me, the real value of an eco-brick is that it connects environmental protection with human dignity.”

Ugalla lives in Juba, South Sudan, where plastic bottles accumulate for reasons that have little to do with the convenience of buying a drink at a festival. Access to safe water is difficult, so bottled water fills an essential need. His project materials estimate that more than a million bottles can be discarded in the city each day. At the same time, durable housing remains unaffordable for many families; some rely on traditional grass-thatched tukuls that may last only a few years before needing to be repaired or rebuilt.

For years, the Salesian community outside Juba and people working alongside it have been making those two problems meet.

Discarded bottles are collected and packed tightly with sand until they become firm enough to function as “eco-bricks.” Women and families can earn money preparing them. Young builders inspect them, transport them to construction sites and incorporate them into walls and foundations. Cement eventually covers the bottles. In a finished room, almost nothing announces what the wall contains.

When the Platform first shared the project in 2024, the clear story was the ingenuity of the material itself: a bottle had become a brick. Two years later, Ugalla speaks more about what happened around those bottles.

More than 12,000 were collected for Mama Sivila’s home. Other housing projects followed. A 16-square-meter bottle house model uses approximately 9,264 bottles, and Ugalla says an initial phase of ten houses used 92,640 bottles, provided homes for more than 100 people and generated income for 150 women. Young masons gained employment and practical experience through the construction.

Ugalla knows personally why practical skills matter. “Poverty affected my education,” he says. “There were times when I had to work on construction projects to help put food on the table.” His engineering studies ended after four terms, but the knowledge he acquired through working remained with him.

That history helps explain why he has little interest in environmental action that exists apart from people’s immediate lives.

“It is not enough simply to collect bottles,” he says. “We need to create livelihoods, train people, solve real problems and demonstrate that environmental protection can improve people’s lives.”

The work has not progressed as quickly as he once imagined. Ugalla is candid




Juba, South Sudan: a house built from sand-filled plastic bottles.

about that too. Financing is limited; equipment and operational resources remain difficult to secure. Ambitions for classrooms and other community infrastructure are still developing. But those constraints have become part of what the work has taught him. A recycled material alone does not make a project sustainable. People have to be able to build a life around the response.

## *Accra, Ghana*

Nearly 5,000 kilometers away, in Ghana, Sr. Comfort Arthur, CSC, has arrived at a related lesson from another direction. The Platform first encountered her work in May 2024, when she participated in the webinar Voices of Faith and Hope: Global Catholic Religious in the Heart of Climate Action. Two years later, her experience with Sisters Organizing and Advancing Recycling (SOAR) raises another question about sustainability: not only whether an environmental initiative can grow, but







SOAR, Accra: collection work and a SOAR Club collection day.

whether it can endure when the person most committed to it is no longer the one carrying it.

"Passion is important for beginning a ministry," she says, "but passion alone is not enough to sustain it."

Sr. Comfort is both a Sister of the Holy Cross and a public-health professional. Those two parts of her life have trained her to see a discarded bottle, or "plastic sachet", in more than one perspective. Waste is an environmental problem, but it is also a health problem. It affects sanitation and drainage. Someone has to collect and sort it. That work has economic value. Children learn habits around it. Communities inherit the consequences.

SOAR began in 2021 with a comparatively simple response: collect plastic. By August 2026, the ministry reported collecting more than 137 metric tons, including approximately 111 tons of sachet plastic and 26 tons of bottles.

But Sr. Comfort describes the five-year change differently.

*“Why was this bottle designed to become waste at all?”*

MERIJN TINGA




Merijn Tinga on the Ligurian coast.




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"We have moved from simply 'collecting waste' to seeing waste as an environmental, health, educational, and economic issue."

Women waste pickers now work with SOAR and receive wages for their labor. Schools have formed SOAR Clubs, involving teachers and students in ecological education. Young people volunteer and intern. Sisters and lay partners share the work. The recycling site itself has become a place for sorting, education, training and community relationships.

The evolution also forced a question that was barely visible at the beginning: what happens if the person who cares most leaves?

"People change, leaders move, priorities shift, resources can be limited, and enthusiasm naturally rises and falls," Sr. Comfort says. "If a ministry depends entirely on one person's energy, it becomes vulnerable."

SOAR began documenting responsibilities, developing policies and partnerships, involving other Sisters and lay collaborators, and creating spaces where students and teachers could become participants rather than simply recipients of environmental education.

"Most importantly," Sr. Comfort says, "I have learned that sustainability comes when people feel that the work belongs to them too."

Her reflection gives the bottle yet another meaning. A piece of waste may provoke someone to act, but eventually the more difficult question is whether that action can become shared enough to survive them.

The Platform encountered Flavio, Ugalla, and Sr. Comfort separately. Placed beside one another, however, their experiences begin to do something interesting.

Ugalla's insistence that environmental work must create practical opportunity makes the wages of SOAR's women waste pickers look less incidental. Flavio's years of watching people fail to use perfectly good bins complicate the belief that infrastructure alone changes anything. Sr. Comfort's experience raises the question of whether any of these responses can endure if responsibility remains concentrated in one unusually committed person.

They are not arriving at the same answer. They are making one another's questions easier to see.

## *The Netherlands · North Sea to Rome*

And then Merijn Tinga enters the story carrying a bottle in the opposite direction. His first thought, when he began noticing plastic pollution, was not especially sophisticated. “This shouldn’t be here.”

Merijn is a Dutch biologist and surfer. Roughly a decade ago, on holiday in Sweden, he found Dutch and English plastic bottles washed ashore on a remote island. What interested him was not only what was there, but what was missing. He saw comparatively few Scandinavian bottles. Norway, Sweden and neighboring countries already had deposit-return systems: when someone bought a bottle, they paid a small additional amount and received it back when the container was returned.

The material was the same. The system surrounding it was different.

“I realized that I didn’t want to spend the rest of my life picking up bottles,” Merijn says.

He returned to the Netherlands and launched a campaign for a deposit system there. To attract attention, he built a windsurf board from plastic collected on local beaches and attempted to break a world record. More than 60,000 people signed a petition. The Netherlands eventually introduced deposits on plastic bottles in 2021, and Merijn reports that littered bottles subsequently fell by around 80 percent.

His campaign kept traveling. In 2023 he windsurfed from Oslo to the United Kingdom, carrying an English bottle he had once found in Sweden back toward the country where it had originated. Later stages brought him through Paris and Nice and, finally, to Rome. In 2026, after hundreds of kilometers at sea, Merijn met Pope Leo XIV.

“What stood out most was the time he took to genuinely listen,” Merijn recalls. “It was not just a formal presentation; there was a real exchange.” Then the Holy Father told him something Merijn had not expected: as a child, he too had collected bottles and returned them for deposits.

Merijn proposed installing a deposit-return machine in the Vatican store. The conversation continued beyond the meeting. But when he was later invited to consider the other stories gathered for this anniversary report, his answer moved back toward the bottle itself.

“A bottle that becomes a building material, a garden tool or something else suddenly has value again,” he says. “It reminds us that ‘waste’ is not an inherent property of a material.”

He admires the ingenuity. He also is wary of what admiration can conceal.

Local reuse, Merijn argues, can create livelihoods and solve immediate problems.

But communities downstream should not be expected to invent increasingly creative uses for an endless supply of disposable material while nobody questions the decisions that produced it.

"A plastic bottle is an extraordinary piece of technology," he says. "We manufacture a complex, durable material, fill it with something, transport it across the world and then expect the packaging to become worthless after perhaps twenty minutes."

The question he now wants to ask is not only what can be done once the bottle has become waste.

"Why was this bottle designed to become waste at all?"

Merijn's question does not make the others naïve.

Ugalla's family still needs a house now. SOAR will receive more plastic tomorrow morning. A visitor at the Festival do Japão still has to decide where the bottle in their hand goes. The same object has traveled remarkably far without moving at all.

For Flavio, it is a decision. For Ugalla, a building material and a livelihood. For Sr. Comfort, a responsibility that must become shared if it is going to endure. For Merijn, evidence of a system that could have been designed differently.

Nor do these stories remain isolated.

Over the years, as experiences like these have been shared with the Laudato Si' Action Platform, something becomes possible simply by placing them within sight of one another. When the Platform first wrote about Flavio in 2023, the story was about bringing selective waste collection into a festival. Today he talks about attention, human behavior and the cost of creating new habits. When bottle construction appeared in 2024, the extraordinary building material caught one's eye; Ugalla now speaks just as urgently about employment, community ownership and the financial limits to scaling the work. SOAR began by collecting plastic and, five years later, Sr. Comfort is thinking about succession and institutional memory. Merijn began by picking something up from a beach and eventually found himself asking who wrote the rules that allowed it to end up there.

Years spent doing the work change what a person is able to see.

An empty plastic bottle makes such an unexpectedly useful object through which to view these communities. It is ordinary enough to disappear into the background of daily life. But held for a little longer—and seen through somebody else's eyes—it begins to reveal the relationships around it: consumption and labor, waste and health, dignity and participation, habit and education, local ingenuity and global systems.

No one person sees all of those relationships at once. Together, they see more.

*"No one person sees all of those relationships at once. Together, they see more."*




Merijn Tinga at the Vatican.

5

LAUDATO SI' INTERLUDE

*"Decisions which may seem purely instrumental are in reality decisions about the kind of society we want to build."*

*LAUDATO SI', 107*




KOMATSU
KOMATSU



COURTESY OF THE DIOCESE OF SALFORD

SALFORD · SAN CARLOS · HAZARD · KARACHI

# Rebuilding Our Churches

## What does it mean to rebuild a church?

Opposite: Salford Cathedral, England.

### *Salford, England*

The story goes that when St. Francis of Assisi heard Christ tell him to rebuild his Church, he looked first at the crumbling walls around him. So he began with stone. He gathered what he could and repaired the ruined chapel of San Damiano with his own hands. Only later would those words acquire the larger meaning for which they are remembered.

Yet there is something useful in the fact that St. Francis began so literally. A church is prayer and people, memory and mission, but it is also timber that weakens, glass that lets heat escape, stone that absorbs water, and roofs that eventually begin to leak. Caring for a sacred place has always required attention to the material.

At Salford Cathedral in northern England, this became impossible to ignore.

The cathedral was built in the 1840s, long before anyone designing a church would have been asked to calculate its carbon footprint. By the time a major restoration began, the building was suffering from water ingress, poor insulation, inefficient heating and lighting, high energy costs and inadequate facilities.

The Diocese of Salford had meanwhile committed itself to reaching net zero by 2038. The restoration therefore presented a question larger than how to preserve an important historic building. “Our original project ambition was to repair, conserve and sustain,” the cathedral team explains, “creating what we hoped would become one of the most sustainable cathedrals in the United Kingdom.”

The restoration touched almost every hidden system that makes a building habitable: the roof above worshippers, the floor beneath them, the glass between the sanctuary and the weather.




Salford Cathedral during the restoration.

Insulation was added where the historic structure allowed it; secondary glazing protected stained glass while reducing heat loss; rainwater and drainage were reconsidered; construction waste was closely managed. Much of the ecological work was designed, quite literally, to disappear into the building.

The restoration also did not go according to plan.

The cathedral had hoped to draw heat from the aquifer beneath Salford. On paper, the idea belonged neatly inside a net-zero future. In practice came boreholes, approvals, cost and the stubborn limitations of a nineteenth-century structure. Even the roof could not carry all the insulation the team would have preferred.

Sustainability, they discovered, was not the art of imposing the perfect solution. It was the slower work of asking what this particular building could bear and what could be prepared now for whoever comes next.

"Start with a clear vision and recognize that sustainability is a long-term journey

**SALFORD, IN THE FABRIC**

**98.6%**

construction waste recycled

**1.4 years**

estimated carbon payback for secondary glazing

Net-zero diocesan target: 2038

Ground-source heating: planned, not yet fully realized

rather than a single project," the team advises other faith communities. "Understand your building thoroughly and focus first on improving the fabric: keeping water out, improving insulation where possible, and reducing energy loss."

That advice is not only architectural. It is also pastoral.

The cathedral team found that people responded most when sustainability was not presented as an independent technical agenda, but connected to the building's purpose. The project was protecting a sacred place, conserving its history and making it viable for generations who had not yet entered it.

"Sustainability became part of a larger narrative about stewardship, responsibility and safeguarding a sacred place for future generations rather than just technical updates."

## *San Carlos, Philippines*

On the other side of the world, the Diocese of San Carlos in the Philippines was confronting a very different building problem.

There was no nineteenth-century Gothic roof to insulate. The immediate concerns were rising electricity consumption, rapidly increasing power costs and frequent interruptions to the electrical grid.

The Bishop's Home and St. John Mary Vianney Seminary had already been early adopters of renewable energy. Rooftop solar systems were installed in 2018, when Bishop Gerardo Alminaza was among the Philippine Church leaders publicly advocating a transition away from fossil fuels. Eight years later, however, the original systems had become too small for buildings whose electricity use had more than doubled.

So in 2026, the diocese rebuilt the systems.

At the Bishop's Home, 108 solar panels now cover substantial areas of the green roof, connected to hybrid inverters and battery storage. At St. John Mary Vianney Seminary, another 48 panels feed a separate hybrid system. The project presentation shows the contrast clearly: aerial photographs taken before installation show broad, uninterrupted roofs; afterward, those same surfaces have become part of the buildings' energy infrastructure.

For Daniel Del Rosario of WeGen Energy Philippines, however, the more revealing part of the project is not the panels.

It is how long they had to wait for them.

For more than two years, the proposal waited. Then a German development

partner helped connect the diocese with financing from the Archdiocese of Cologne. The arrangement contained an unusual idea: San Carlos would repay the money without interest, but those repayments would remain in the Philippines to help another Church institution make its own transition.

“One church helping another church in solidarity and synodality,” Daniel calls it. The hope is that one investment can become the financial beginning of another, and then another. The buildings remain local. The responsibility is shared.

This matters particularly in San Carlos because Bishop Alminaza’s ecological leadership had long been associated with public advocacy. Daniel recalls his opposition to proposed coal-fired power plants at a time when renewable energy was often dismissed as too expensive to provide a practical alternative.

Today, he argues, that calculation has changed. “The time has come that beyond advocacy for renewable energy and protest against fossil fuel—it is time for application, for action,” he says, “and let the rooftop panels do the talking.”



Right: the nave of Salford Cathedral.



COURTESY OF THE DIOCESE OF SALFORD







Bishop's Home, San Carlos, before and after the installation.

## *Hazard, Kentucky, USA*

Sometimes, the panels make a quieter argument.

In Hazard, Kentucky, that argument arrived in the form of an electricity bill. One of the last bills Mother of Good Counsel Catholic Church received before its new solar system came fully online was nearly $1,600.

The church itself dates to 1939 and was substantially remodeled in 2006. In 2025, the parish began seeking diocesan approval for another change to the building: 142 solar panels distributed across the church, office space and guest house. Lori Helfrich, the parish's Parish Life Director, remembers strong support from parishioners and from Bishop John Stowe as the project moved forward. But there was also an increasingly practical reason to act. Electricity rates had risen significantly several times in five years, making the cost of simply maintaining parish life harder to ignore.

The first bills made the difference unusually visible. With the system operating at only partial solar coverage, the parish's bill fell to around $400. Once the full system was online, Lori says the next two monthly bills were between $70 and $80. During those first months,

### SAN CARLOS · POWER AFTER THE SUN GOES DOWN

The new hybrid system at the Bishop's Home does more than generate electricity during daylight. Battery storage allows solar energy to keep serving the building when sunlight fades or the electrical grid becomes unreliable.

In the first days after activation:

**40%**

of electricity was supplied directly by solar panels

**31%**

came from stored solar energy in the batteries

**29%**

came from the electrical grid

Early operating data from the Bishop's Home following activation of the 2026 system. These figures represent an initial snapshot, not a long-term performance average.

the panels were producing roughly 30 to 40 percent more electricity than the parish was using. The figures are still an early snapshot rather than a long-term performance record, but for Lori, their meaning is already pastoral as well as financial.

"Installing the solar helps to make the parish more sustainable in the long term," she explains, because money no longer absorbed by electricity can help cover "other utilities, programs, and facility upkeep," while the parish also reduces its environmental impact.

For a parish, that distinction matters. An electricity bill competes with everything else a community is trying to sustain. Saving energy is therefore not separate from keeping programs running, maintaining buildings or making room in a limited budget for ministry. In Hazard, the roof has begun doing some of that work itself.

## *Karachi, Pakistan*

The same calculation takes on another dimension in Karachi, Pakistan, where the resources protected by lower energy costs help support work far beyond the walls of the building itself.

Caritas Pakistan Karachi works from its diocesan office while supporting community development, emergency relief and social-welfare programs. Keeping that work running requires electricity, and rising tariffs make the cost of simply operating an institution harder to separate from the cost of its mission.

In August 2026, Caritas installed solar panels at the office. Mansha Noor describes the decision in both economic and spiritual terms: reducing dependence on conventional electricity while bringing the institution's daily operations into closer alignment with Laudato Si'.

For him, the electricity bill is not merely an administrative expense. Money no longer absorbed by energy costs can remain available for the communities Caritas exists to serve. In that sense, the solar




Solar installation at the diocesan office, Karachi, August 2026.




Then · Mother of Good Counsel Catholic Church, Hazard, Kentucky.

panels do not sit beside the mission. They help protect the resources that make the mission possible.

The installation is still new, and its long-term financial effect will take time to measure. But people are already paying attention. Parish leaders and visitors have begun asking whether similar systems could work in their own institutions. That possibility matters because institutional change often spreads this way: one building makes a different choice, others see that it is possible, and a technical decision becomes something another community can imagine for itself.

As Mansha puts it, translating Laudato Si' into the physical life of an institution requires "strong institutional leadership, a clear long-term vision for cost-efficiency, and viewing sustainability not as an added expense, but as an investment in our shared mission."

In Salford, after the scaffolding comes down and the systems disappear back into the fabric of the cathedral, most people will not think about insulation, drainage or carbon payback. They will enter. They will pray beneath the roof. Light will fall again through the stained glass. The building will hold warmth a little better. Someone will come in carrying grief, another gratitude, another a child by the hand.




Now · Installing solar panels on the church roof.

The same is true, in different ways, in San Carlos, Hazard and Karachi. Electricity keeps a seminary functioning after dark. In Kentucky, an early monthly bill of nearly $1,600 has fallen below $100 during the first months of full solar coverage. In Karachi, lower energy costs can protect resources for relief and service. A roof can become part of the energy system that sustains the ministry happening beneath it. Keeping the lights on is both literal and pastoral.

Perhaps this is what St. Francis understood before he understood anything else. Rebuilding the Church began with what was already in front of him: stone that needed lifting, walls that needed repairing, a place where people could gather again.

The Church is more than its buildings. But buildings make room for much of what the Church does: prayer, formation, welcome, worship, shelter, service. Caring for them well means asking not only how long they can stand, but what kind of life they can sustain—and what we will leave to those who enter after us.

To rebuild a church may still begin with the walls. But perhaps the measure of the work is what those walls make possible: prayer beneath a roof, light for the work still to be done, and a community able to keep serving long after we are gone.



COURTESY OF THE EQUIPO ITINERANTE

PAN-AMAZON · SURA GAETBOL · TANZANIA

# What the Land Asks of Us

What happens when care for creation stops being an idea and becomes a place you have entered, a people you know, and a reality you can no longer look away from? In the Amazon, on a Korean tidal flat, and across Tanzanian soils, religious life becomes prophetic by staying close enough to creation to be changed by it.

Opposite: Fray Erick Marín Carballo, Equipo Itinerante, Pan-Amazon region.

## *River — Upper Rio Negro, Brazilian Amazon*

Some places ask more of us than admiration. For Fray Erick Marín Carballo, that demand begins with a sentence:

### *"The territory has changed, and I have changed."*

When Fray Erick first spoke with the Laudato Si' Action Platform in 2024, he resisted making the Amazonian story his own. "This story is not only my story," he told participants in a global webinar on religious life and climate action. He had joined the Equipo Itinerante, an intercongregational group of women and men religious and laypeople who move among communities in the Pan-Amazon region rather than working from one fixed place. He described their task as building relationships: listening to local struggles and connecting them with institutions and organizations capable of accompanying people in their territories.

"The Pan-Amazon region is alive, in constant movement, and always under threat," he says. "For those of us who are connected to this reality, it is always news, joy, and alarm. But it seems the world remains silent before life that is continually being violated."

Fray Erick is now based primarily in Costa Rica, but his ministry continues to pull him back toward the Amazon. Over the past two years, he returned for the international climate conference COP30 and, more recently, traveled into




Dusk in a riverside community, Brazilian Amazon.

the Upper Rio Negro in the Brazilian Amazon, where he spent time with the Yuhupdeh people.

What he encountered there resists a tidy environmental story.

“We encountered endless rivers of indescribable beauty,” he recalls, “but also older people with serious illnesses and no possibility of receiving dignified care.” He remembers a shared table—fish, cassava flour, hands offering what was available—and also “empty bowls, days without food, extinguished fires.” He remembers deep spirituality and human connection alongside garimpo, mining that he describes as contaminating rivers and “silencing dreams and futures.”

For Fray Erick, those realities belong to the same landscape. The river cannot be separated from the people whose lives unfold along it; ecological destruction cannot be separated from health, hunger, culture or displacement.

“The stories we gather speak of illegal mining,” he said in the 2024 webinar, “of trees that fall before the power of the powerful; of animals without habitat or food; and of many peoples displaced from their ancestral territories.” They spoke of “waters that now taste of mercury,” floods, droughts and migrants carrying

dreams despite having no home. But they also spoke of communities protecting turtles, defending rivers, experimenting with renewable energy and living "a deep spirituality connected with creatures and with their cycles."

Two years later, Fray Erick sounds less like someone describing a ministry and more like someone describing a conversion still underway.

When asked what his religious vocation demands in response, Fray Erick begins not with advocacy, strategy or expertise, but with a single word: fidelity.

"Fidelity to the Gospel of Jesus," he says, a fidelity that requires choosing where one stands. It requires leaving behind "the comfort of the person who visits but does not allow himself to be transformed" and crossing toward "other shores—not only geographical ones, but existential ones."

And sometimes that transformation is unsettling.



Hands weaving, Upper Rio Negro.

"All of this troubles me deeply," he admits. "Sometimes I feel overwhelmed by everything that is happening." He wonders whether his answers are even answers, or simply "a small piece of the many questions that resonate within me." What strengthens him is the resistance of the communities themselves, "how celebration and spirituality sustain them," and the knowledge that others are accompanying them too.

Prophecy, in this telling, has surprisingly little to do with certainty. It begins with staying close enough to a place to be changed by it.

## *Tide — Sura Gaetbol, South Korea*

Half a world away, the landscape is almost horizontal.

At Sura Gaetbol, sky and water seem to blur into one another. At low tide, people can walk out across mud that only hours earlier belonged to the sea. Migratory birds feed there. Marine life depends upon it. The ecosystem exists because water comes and goes.

Sura is what remains of a much larger tidal-flat landscape altered by the Saemangeum Development Project. Beginning in the 1990s, a 33-kilometer seawall cut enormous stretches of wetland off from the Yellow Sea. Shellfish beds, fish nurseries and feeding grounds



Low tide at Sura Gaetbol, South Korea.



COURTESY OF THE SISTERS OF NOTRE DAME




Sisters of Notre Dame and companions on pilgrimage at Sura.

for migratory birds were among the ecological systems disrupted as tidal exchange disappeared. Sura, still exposed to development pressures, became a place people were fighting to keep alive.

The Sisters of Notre Dame did not first encounter it in a meeting room.

They walked into it.

“We placed ‘hope’ in our footsteps,” Sr. Marie Carmel recalled of an early pilgrimage. The sisters moved slowly through the wetland, listening and watching. They approached bird habitats carefully, alert to their own presence inside another creature’s home.

The pilgrimage did not end there.

“The more people visited Sura, the more they listened to the diverse life forms there,” the sisters explained in their 2026 follow-up. As people encountered the tidal flat directly, the circle of concern widened beyond environmental organizations and longtime activists.

The sisters began bringing others with them.

They walked Sura with the Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation committee of Korean women religious. They stood alongside civic activists and encouraged other congregations to visit. They

screened a film about the tidal flat, then asked colleagues and collaborators what the story demanded of their own ministries. Schoolchildren sent postcards to the Ministry of Environment. Kindergarten families created songs and dances. Sisters from a welfare center brought coworkers onto the tidal flat itself "to listen to their cries."

For Sr. Marie Carmel, something else had changed too: the boundary between prayer and public action.

"Our Pilgrimage for Life and Peace was a journey that brought our prayers to life in a more concrete way," the sisters wrote. "Prayer, solidarity, community life, and the suffering of our Common Home are not separate." For the sisters, the connection eventually became explicit: "Our journey of solidarity for the suffering Earth is itself a prayer."

The consequences have lasted beyond the first visit.

Through schools, social ministries, screenings, petitions, cultural festivals and continued visits to Sura, the sisters say they are trying to move from what they call "a culture of death" toward "a culture of life." The changes are not fast. The sisters say government action has remained limited. But they also say more people now understand that protecting Sura is not simply about preserving beautiful scenery, but sustaining a relationship with the ecosystem itself.

Sr. Marie Carmel describes hope here less as optimism than persistence: acting, finding others doing the same, and discovering that solidarity can widen.

## *Soil — Tanzania*

For Br. John Cornel Sulle, OFMCap, the landscape presents another question: what happens when care for land immediately becomes a question about who depends upon it?

Br. John is a Capuchin Franciscan and Executive Director of the A'ray Justice and Peace Initiative, TAJPI, in Tanzania. TAJPI's work includes tree planting, ecological education, youth engagement, soil restoration and community participation. But he is wary of treating conservation as a category separate from everything around it.

"Conservation cannot be separated from justice," he writes.

Protecting "trees, land, biodiversity, water, and ecosystems," he argues, must also mean protecting people whose lives and livelihoods depend upon them. For TAJPI, that has drawn ecological work into questions of women's land rights, children's protection,




Birthday Tree Planting campaign, Kibaha, Pwani, Tanzania.

education, civic participation and community empowerment.

Even a tree can become more complicated once it is planted in real soil.

TAJPI's Birthday Tree Planting initiative began by connecting personal celebrations with responsibility for creation, particularly among young people. But the organization increasingly understood planting not as an isolated environmental gesture but as formation: a way to teach responsibility, build community participation and connect ecological care with everyday life.

Br. John is unusually candid about where this work becomes difficult. "Prophetic advocacy becomes most meaningful when it is tested by reality," he writes.

That reality can include environmental protection, land rights, poverty, governance, livelihoods and economic interests colliding with one another. Once that happens, the work becomes slower and less photogenic. It requires, in Br. John's words, "patience, dialogue, evidence, courage, and long-term accompaniment of communities."

TAJPI itself knows those limits. Br. John speaks candidly about insufficient financial and human resources and about ecological programs that cannot always be implemented at the scale the organization would want. Yet he draws a line between limitation and retreat.

"Difficulty should not become an excuse for silence."

Sometimes, he says, prophetic witness means accepting that progress will be gradual "while refusing to abandon the communities and ecological causes entrusted to our care."

That word—entrusted—changes the timeline. A tree-planting ceremony can take an afternoon. A campaign can produce a photograph. But soil restoration, land rights, ecological education and accountable governance belong to a different timescale. They ask whether institutions remain after the event, after the funding becomes difficult, after public attention moves elsewhere.

Br. John's definition of prophetic religious life reflects that longer horizon. It means allowing faith to become "a responsible presence among people and within creation." It means listening, accompanying and speaking when necessary, even without having every answer.

"The task," he concludes, "is not simply to celebrate five years of action, but to ask what the next five years demand of us."

For him, the answer is still to keep walking with people, "listening to the Earth and the poor, and turning faith into responsible action for our common home."

When we spoke again in 2026, Fray Erick returned to that same posture. He believes that the people accompanied by him are asking the Church for "a presence that embraces and defends, but that also allows them to continue being who they are."

"Perhaps," he says, "they are asking us to take off the shoes of our ideas, preconceptions, and false solutions." Then he offers an image that could belong equally on a riverbank, a tidal flat or a field:

"They ask us to inhabit their rivers, walk their paths and learn to listen to what seems not to speak." A tidal flat cannot submit a petition. A river cannot walk into a meeting. Soil cannot explain when it has been asked to carry too much.

But the people whose lives are bound up with these places can tell us what they are seeing. Scientists can document what is changing. Communities can defend what sustains their lives. And religious people can decide whether prayer will keep them at a safe distance—or bring them close enough to listen.

Perhaps that is where the prophetic dimension begins: getting close enough to a place that, once it speaks, we can no longer pretend we did not hear it.



COURTESY OF IGNATIUS JESUIT CENTRE

CHILE · NIGERIA · CANADA

# After Everyone Goes Home

Planting a tree can take minutes. Growing one asks for water, hands, institutions—and sometimes a horizon longer than a human life.

Opposite: The canopy of the Old-Growth Forest Project, Ignatius Jesuit Centre, Guelph, Canada.

## *Legacy — Santiago, Chile*

On a hillside in northern Santiago, Chile families once spread out across the pale grass carrying gloves, shovels and young trees, with football fields, roads and the roofs of Renca visible below them. It was 2024, and more than 2,000 native trees were being planted around the Laura Vicuña Sanctuary as part of the municipality's 130th anniversary. Among the participants was a little girl who turned to her mother and said, "I will never forget this day."

"We are planting seeds in the hearts of people."

Trinidad Donoso, then the sanctuary's Communications Manager, remembered the remark because it seemed to reveal something larger than the event itself. "This shows us that we are not just planting trees," she said. "We are planting seeds in the hearts of people." Sr. Marianela Sánchez spoke about the same day in terms of legacy. "We used to think of legacy as something material that we would pass on to our children," she said. "But today, it is for the planet. These small actions are for the children. We have no other choice."

There is a reason planting days can be so well recorded by photography. The beginning is visible: a shovel enters the ground, a sapling is lowered into place, and hands push the earth back around it. Across the Laudato Si' Action Platform, that gesture has become familiar. Since action tracking began in May 2025, Platform participants have marked "Plant native trees" as "complete" 126 times. But a reported completion can represent radically different scales of work, and the data tells us only that someone marked the action complete. It cannot tell us whether someone came back with




Tree planting around the Laura Vicuña Sanctuary, Santiago, Chile, 2024.

water in the dry season, whether the tree survived, or whether responsibility for it ever became part of the life of the community. The original Chilean story understood that risk already.

Asked what similar projects required, Donoso's answer was simple and direct: "Persistence, consistency, and teamwork."

## *Growing — Nigeria*

A recent photograph from Nigeria catches a church leader bending almost to the ground beside a young tree. His white cassock brushes close to the soil; another man leans over his shoulder while a third steadies a tool. The focal point of the photograph is not the bishop or cardinal at its center, but the fragile sapling beneath him. That image belongs to a national Catholic tree-growing campaign launched by the Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria in 2023, with dioceses encouraged to work toward planting 20,000 trees annually over five years.

Caritas Nigeria framed the campaign as a response to very different ecological pressures across the country, from desert

encroachment in the north to erosion and flooding elsewhere. Even when the Platform first told the participant story in 2024, Dr. Emmanuel Okechukwu insisted that the important word was not planting but growing. The mindset, he said, had to shift from viewing planting as "a one-off event" toward "planting, nursing, nurturing, watering, protecting, and growing the seedlings for at least three years."

Two years later, Dr. Pascal Onu describes a campaign that is still in process, but unevenly. "The campaign remains ongoing, although with fickle momentum," he says. The number of trees planted has continued to rise, but the original targets remain difficult to meet. The reasons are stubbornly practical: weather, water, manure, protection from damage, enough people to return after the first day. "The biggest challenge remains plant watering and manuring, especially at the early stages of growth," Onu explains. "There is also the issue of funding, because only areas with available volunteers undertake the responsibility of the tree-growing process. Other areas would require recruiting personnel to do the job."

For Onu, this has made the distinction between planting and growing much sharper. "There should be a paradigm shift from the phrase 'tree planting' to 'tree growing,'" he echoes, because survival depends on "not only a one-off planting but also watering, manuring, application of pesticides—preferably organic—and the protection of seedlings in cages against human attacks." What seemed at first




Church leaders planting a tree, Nigeria, 2024.

like an environmental activity becomes, very quickly, a question of community ownership. He says the dioceses that have done better are those that "were able to mobilise their parishioners and communities well enough to take ownership of the plants and process," following through after the event rather than leaving responsibility with the original organizers. Looking back, he now emphasizes "full community involvement and ownership," proper siting, and even the possibility of community tree-growing committees to monitor the work over time.

One diocese made that logic unusually clear. According to Onu, it refused to let the Caritas team plant at all unless there was first a credible plan for watering the trees until they had reached a greater degree of maturity.

The refusal sounds almost contrary to the spirit of a planting campaign, but in practice it may have expressed the campaign's deepest lesson: sometimes taking a tree seriously means deciding not to plant it yet. In Yola Diocese, by contrast, stronger community mobilization has



Tree-growing campaign, Nigeria.



COURTESY OF CARITAS NIGERIA




Planting a seedling, Nigeria.

helped produce a reported survival rate of approximately 53 percent among planted trees. That figure matters because it measures something less photogenic than a planting ceremony: what was still alive later. Onu is equally clear that the same response will not fit every place. "Terrain differences create some form of disparity across dioceses," he says, noting that tree growing may be particularly important in parts of northern Nigeria while communities in the south may identify other approaches better suited to their environmental pressures.

## *500 Years — Guelph, Canada*

The photographs from the Ignatius Jesuit Centre in Guelph feel almost like the answer to a planting-day image taken centuries too early. In one, the camera looks upward through dark trunks toward a canopy glowing orange in the late light. The trees are large enough that a person standing beneath them would disappear into the scale of the forest. The image makes visible what a newly planted sapling cannot: time.

The Old-Growth Forest Project began in 2006, when Ignatius Jesuit Centre and

community partners began considering how approximately 93 acres of former agricultural land, existing forest, wetland and waterways could be restored as a healthy forest ecosystem. Its horizon is 500 years. "The 500-year horizon grew from a simple recognition," Andrea Scapinello explains. "An old-growth forest cannot be created within a conventional project timeline. We can restore habitat, plant trees, remove invasive species, and create the conditions for a healthy forest, but the forest itself has to develop over generations." Instead of asking what could be completed in a few years, she says, the project began asking "what we can begin now that others will continue long after us."

This does not have abstract implications. Stewardship now means planting native trees and shrubs, restoring habitat, managing invasive species, monitoring ecological change and caring for waterways while former farmland moves slowly through succession toward meadow and forest. Much of that work is done with students, volunteers and community partners, and Scapinello treats their participation as part of the restoration itself. "We are not only growing a forest," she says. "We are also building the community knowledge and commitment that will be needed to care for it into the future. In that sense, cultivating future stewards is as important as cultivating trees."

The 500-year horizon also forces the institution to admit what it cannot control. "The people who began this project will not see its completion, nor will the people caring for it today," Scapinello says. "Staff will change, ecological conditions will change, and the needs of the forest will change. That means we cannot depend on individual enthusiasm alone. The commitment has to become institutional and communal." At Ignatius Jesuit Centre, that means a conservation easement protecting the land, along with restoration, ecological monitoring, documentation, education and community involvement designed to move knowledge and responsibility from one generation of stewards to the next. Even then, Scapinello resists the temptation to imagine the future too precisely. "We can establish a direction, but we cannot prescribe exactly what this landscape should look like centuries from now. Future generations will know things we do not, and the forest itself will continue to teach them."

One of the most important moments in the project's history involved no planting at all. In 2010, the Centre removed a dam that had altered Marden Creek for nearly 180 years. Once the obstruction was gone, the creek began flowing freely again and re-establishing its cold-water ecosystem; fish species that had not been documented there for decades returned. "There is something instructive in that act," Scapinello says. "Restoration is not always about adding something to the landscape. Sometimes stewardship means removing an obstacle and allowing natural processes to resume." The project can plant trees and restore habitat, she says, "but ultimately we are not




A young tree in the restoration area, Ignatius Jesuit Centre, Guelph.

creating an old-growth forest ourselves. We are creating conditions in which a forest can grow, change, and eventually become something that none of us can fully anticipate."

Put these landscapes beside one another, and they barely resemble each other: an open hillside above Santiago, a young tree beneath the hands of Church leaders in Nigeria, and an Ontario forest whose future is measured in centuries. Yet the same question runs through all three. The Chilean story understood planting as legacy. Nigeria asks whether the tree survives long enough for that legacy to mean anything. Guelph stretches the question still further, asking whether an institution can remain faithful to work whose fullest outcome it will never possess.

Scapinello puts that spiritual shift in one question. A project like this, she says, changes the measure from "What can I accomplish?" to "What can we set in motion and faithfully hand on?"

Back on the hillside in Santiago, the little girl may indeed remember the day she planted a tree. But the future of that tree

depends on all the less memorable days that come after it.



TRANSLATOR TESTIMONY

# *"The words return, but the story has moved."*

"By now, I've probably translated close to 300,000 words since the Platform began in 2021. And after so many years, something interesting happens: some of the stories come back. I remember translating the story about the sisters protecting the tidal flats in South Korea. I had to research tidal flats for quite a while before I found the right Spanish term, *llanuras de marea*. I also remember the story from Nigeria—the bishops planting trees, not leading from behind a desk, but there with their hands in the soil and those smiles of satisfaction. Now, years later, I encounter those communities again in this anniversary report, and their stories have continued.

"That has taught me something about translation too. Finding the correct word is only the beginning. The real challenge is to carry not just the meaning, but the same force that was present in the original: the thing that made someone care, act, or keep going. In a way, translation has allowed me to meet some of these communities more than once. The words return, but the story has moved. And every time it does, I learn something new too."

**MARÍA ISABEL GÓMEZ RIVERA**
Spanish–English Translator, Laudato Si' Action Platform



COURTESY OF MARÍA ISABEL GÓMEZ RIVERA



Environment day at St Joseph's School, Tezpur, India. Photo courtesy of Auxi Green Movement (AGM).

05 · WHAT THESE FIVE YEARS HAVE TAUGHT US

# What These Five Years Have Taught Us

THREE MOVEMENTS

I How a shared vision became local practice

II What we did not fully anticipate

III What remains unfinished

*Five lessons follow in three movements: how a shared vision became local practice, what we did not fully anticipate, and what remains unfinished. We will not soften the tensions or hide them in the footnotes; they belong at the center of what these five years have taught us.*



## *Change is easier to begin than to sustain.*

Five years ago, the Laudato Si' Action Platform began with a hopeful premise: when people and institutions are provided with a shared framework for reflection and action, commitment can be transformed into practice. Five years of experience have affirmed that conviction – but also have provided us with many valuable "lessons learned". They reminded us that ecological conversion is not something we can "engineer" on our own. It requires patience, humility, and trust that the Holy Spirit is at work in communities in ways we may not always be able to predict or measure.

We witnessed moments of extraordinary mobilization, as well as quieter periods when enthusiasm was harder to sustain. We saw the same action take very different forms in a family, a religious congregation, a school, or a diocese. And we learned that what is easiest to count is not always what matters most. The deeper changes are sometimes found in relationships: in how a community understands its place within creation, how it listens differently, or how the kinship St. Francis expressed in the Canticle of the Creatures begins to shape ordinary choices.

These lessons did not come from one evaluation or one conversation. They emerged gradually: through listening to participants and partners, reading plans and reflections, returning to stories years later, and examining the patterns – and gaps – in our data.

In many ways, this has been a process of discernment: paying attention not only to what worked, but to what the experience itself was asking of us, and remaining open to where the Spirit might be inviting us next.

MOVEMENT I

*How a shared vision became local practice*

# 01

# The more global the response became, the less uniform it looked.

**THE PATTERN** *A global framework did not produce a global template.*

The same seven Laudato Si' Goals have taken very different forms across the Platform: parishes replacing inefficient lighting, schools reducing food waste, religious communities composting and rethinking consumption, families choosing food from local producers, and institutions weaving care for creation into prayer, planning, and everyday decision-making. What these responses share is not a single activity, but a common way of asking what fidelity to Laudato Si' requires locally.

**THE TENSION**

The flexibility that allows Laudato Si' to take root locally also makes the global response harder to read. A solution developed in one diocese may remain invisible to another facing the same problem. A powerful local practice can appear in our data as just one more completed action. At scale, diversity can become fragmentation.

**WHAT THIS ASKS OF US**

The next challenge is to share these experiences more widely so that communities can recognize useful models, adapt them to local needs and contexts, and contribute what they have learned in return.

# 02

# The actions that endured were often rooted in something deeper than motivation.

**THE PATTERN** Across the Platform, prayer and ecological action usually have been approached jointly rather than as separate tracks. Communities have begun with reflection, returned to prayer regularly, and when facing challenges, connected purchasing and investment decisions to moral commitments, and engaged in liturgy, formation, and shared discernment to keep ecological choices from becoming one more temporary project.

But as faith seeks understanding, structures also are needed to put commitment into action. One pattern we noticed over these five years is that ecological commitment appears more likely to endure when a community links it with an institutional setting: a designated leader, a Laudato Si' team, an environmental ministry, a committee, or another structure with responsibility to keep the work moving.

**THE TENSION**

Without that structure, there is a risk that the deep conviction and initial action might diminish over the course of time. When that teacher leaves, the religious superior changes, a staff member "burns out", or another priority takes over, practices that once felt central can quickly become optional. A charism can inspire action; continuity requires that responsibility be shared.

**WHAT THIS ASKS OF US**

In addition to inspiring more committed individuals, communities also need to translate spiritual conviction into roles, rhythms, and structures that can outlast any one person – shaping how they pray, form leaders, set priorities, govern, spend, teach, and serve.

LAUDATO SI' INTERLUDE

*"These questions will not be dealt with once and for all, but reframed and enriched again and again."*

*LAUDATO SI', 16*



Dr. Cristina Alonso Alija teaches a session on sustainability at a Jesuit university in Spain, part of the UNIJES network working toward integral ecology: embedding care for our common home in curricula, campus operations, and governance rather than in a single project.


Dr. Cristin
• Ph.D. in Chemist
Spain
• Postdoc Universi
• 26 years at the m
as SVP, Head Susta
Environment for the
• First Human Righ
• Today, Director of
(CIR) UNIJES Enviro

MOVEMENT II

*What we did not fully anticipate*

# 03

# People need both guidance and solidarity during their journeys.

THE PATTERN Over five years, we have learned that people often need more than another guide or checklist. A parish can learn differently when it sees how another parish approached the same obstacle. A university can move faster when it can build on what another institution has already tested. A religious community can recognize its own possibilities more clearly when it encounters others asking similar questions.

Resources, webinars, stories, suggested actions, and shared plans became most valuable when they helped participants locate their own efforts within something larger: not a single global program, but a wider ecclesial response already taking shape in many places.




Scouts at Ascension and St. Edmund Parish in Oak Park, Illinois, United States. Courtesy of John Owens.

### THE TENSION

Much of that experience still remains difficult to find. A community may be solving a problem that another has already faced without knowing it. Participants can encounter the Platform as a website, a planning tool, or a resource library while the people, knowledge, and relationships behind those resources remain largely invisible.

### WHAT THIS ASKS OF US

A valuable next step for the Platform might be to present the Church's existing knowledge, experience, and relationships in response to ecological conversion in a way that they are easier to see, share and build upon – so that people know they do not "start from zero".

MOVEMENT III

*What remains unfinished*

# 04

# A risk that our global footprint may be hiding unequal participation.

THE PATTERN The Platform now reaches across countries, languages, and sectors of the Church. That breadth matters: it shows that the desire to respond to Laudato Si' is not confined to one region or type of institution. But a registration on a map does not tell us how far someone was able to go.

Over five years, we have seen the distance between being present and being able to participate deeply. Some communities move from enrollment into reflection, planning, action, and renewal. Others encounter the Platform once and do not return. Most dioceses have yet to engage, and the communities living closest to ecological and social pressures can also face the greatest obstacles: unreliable connectivity, limited staff capacity, language barriers, changing leadership, or simply too many urgent demands competing for attention.

### THE TENSION

Global reach can create the impression of equal access when the conditions for participation are anything but equal. Enrollment may express real commitment and hope, while telling us very little about whether that commitment had the time, support, relationships, or institutional space to become enduring practice.

### WHAT THIS ASKS OF US

A global Platform cannot assume that everyone participates under the same conditions. The next phase must reduce the distance between invitation and sustained participation: simpler pathways, stronger accompaniment, offline and low-bandwidth options, greater linguistic access, and more intentional work with dioceses and communities in the Global South. The measure of greater reach should not only be who can enter, but who is able to continue.

# 05 No single measure can tell the whole story of change.

**THE PATTERN** Registrations, plans, reflections, certificates, and reported actions give us a meaningful view of how people and institutions are responding to Laudato Si'. They show where participation is gathering, which actions recur, where communities continue through the journey, and where engagement remains thin. Over five years, these patterns have become an important way of understanding the shape of the response.

But some of the changes we care about most become visible differently. A reported action can tell us that a community planted trees; returning later may tell us whether they survived and who continued to care for them. A plan can show an institution's priorities; a conversation years later may reveal whether those priorities changed habits, relationships, or decisions. Data helps us see the pattern. Stories and continued listening help us understand what that pattern means.

**THE TENSION**

We need credible evidence without pretending that every dimension of ecological conversion can – or should – be reduced to the same kind of metric. At the same time, the complexity of transformation cannot become an excuse for avoiding accountability.

**WHAT THIS ASKS OF US**

We need to continuously bring different forms of evidence into conversation: quantitative patterns, participant experience, follow-up over time, and appropriate verification where it adds real value. The aim is to understand enough to learn, improve, and speak about the Platform's contribution with both confidence and care, rather than to measure everything.




Pope Leo XIV greets Alonso de Llanes, Programme Director of the Platform, at the Centro Mariapoli. Photo: Cristian Genari.

# *"I'm much more interested now in what lasts than in what starts."*

"One thing I understand differently now is that an action is not the same thing as change. Early on, I probably celebrated the visible moment too quickly: the plan was written, the trees were planted, the solar panels went up. But five years teaches you to ask what happened afterward. Who kept caring for it? Did it survive a change in leadership? Did it become part of how that community makes decisions? I think I'm much more interested now in what lasts than in what starts."

**ALONSO DE LLANES**
Programme Director, Laudato Si' Action Platform





# What We Must Build Together



PHOTO: DIEGO · COURTESY OF TAJPI

## *How can the Platform help ensure that no community has to begin—or continue—alone?*

Five years ago, the Laudato Si' Action Platform began with a question: how could the Encyclical *Laudato Si'* leave the page and enter the everyday life of the Church? That question remains, even as the world in which it must be answered is changing.

Pope Francis taught the Church to hear the cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor as one. Pope Leo XIV carries that social teaching into a moment increasingly shaped by technological change, asking how human dignity, freedom, work, truth and creation can be safeguarded as the conditions of human life themselves are transformed.

The vocation is continuous: to ensure that human progress serves life rather than domination, and that care for creation remains inseparable from care for people.

Five years of experience have also shown us that ecological conversion rarely begins in the same place. A parish may begin with its electricity bill. A religious congregation may begin with formation. A family may begin at the dinner table. A diocese may begin with a pastoral plan, while another community may already be defending a forest, a coastline or clean water.

The task ahead is not to make those responses uniform. It is to make it easier for communities to find a pathway forward, learn from one another, and remain connected long enough for an initial commitment to become part of institutional life.

These are the challenges to which the Laudato Si' Action Platform must respond during the next five years and beyond.

06 · FOUR MOVEMENTS

# Four movements for the road ahead.

*The next five years turn the question toward practice: clearer pathways in, a map that shows where the work is happening, sharper learning from what we gather, and people who carry it across borders.*

**A** Open more pathways

**B** Build the Atlas of Laudato Si'

**C** Learn from what we gather

**D** Form Digital Missionaries

Pope Francis taught the Church to hear the cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor as one. Pope Leo XIV carries that teaching into a moment shaped by technological change.

The vocation is continuous: to ensure that human progress serves life rather than domination, and that care for creation remains inseparable from care for people.

MOVEMENT A OF FOUR

# Open more pathways into the Platform

Though many Catholic dioceses are active on the Platform, many more are not yet represented. And participation remains especially uneven in places where connectivity, language, staffing or institutional processes make enrollment harder. The next five years will focus deliberately on those points of possibility.

We plan to work through Bishops' Conferences and local partners to develop an ambassador network with formation for bishops, priests, seminarians and other leaders who can accompany participation locally. At the same time, the Platform will simplify the journey from enrollment and verification to planning and action, expand its languages, and offer low-bandwidth and printable versions for communities that cannot depend on a conventional digital experience.

The aim is not simply to prevent communities from having to start from zero. It is to make the Platform useful to more of the Church—including communities already doing significant ecological work that is not yet visible here.



Archbishop Gustavo García-Siller enrolls the Archdiocese of San Antonio onto the Laudato Si' Action Platform. Courtesy of Archdiocese of San Antonio.

MOVEMENT B OF FOUR

# Build the Atlas of Laudato Si’

*Seeing place differently.*

For five years, the Platform has gathered plans, reflections, actions and stories. Until now, much of that experience has been difficult to see together—and harder to see in relation to place.

*The Church does not act on a blank map.*



Image: NASA Blue Marble, Earth from space (public domain).

## *The Atlas of Laudato Si' begins to change that.*

Previewed in November 2026, the Atlas will make participation geographically visible and, where permissions allow, reveal the plans and experiences communities choose to share.

Over time, selected biodiversity and environmental data will help communities ask: What is happening in this place? What forms of life are we responsible for? What might those realities ask of us?



MOVEMENT B OF FOUR

# Three layers of knowledge

1

**CHURCH**
Participating institutions, diocesan context and the relationships between Catholic communities.

2

**COMMUNITY**
Plans, reflections, and reported actions participants have chosen to share.

3

**PLACE**
Scientific biodiversity and environmental information that helps situate those communities within the landscapes and ecosystems they inhabit.

**The Atlas is most useful where those layers meet.** It can help move the question from *What action should everyone take?* toward *What does responsible action look like here?*

### BUILT WITH SCIENTIFIC RIGOR

The Atlas combines Platform data with carefully selected geographic, biodiversity, and environmental datasets from credible scientific sources. Institutional locations are shown in context; individual and family participation is aggregated, and participant-created material appears only where permissions allow.

An empty area on the map does not mean ecological action is absent. It means that activity is not yet visible through Platform data.

### FROM MAP TO DISCERNMENT

As the Atlas grows, richer scientific context, more languages and stronger participant data can make it increasingly useful for local discernment. The next challenge is turning what the Platform can see into knowledge communities can use.

**The aim is not to automate discernment, but to inform it with better evidence.**



COURTESY OF MOLLY BURHANS

# *"Everything happens somewhere."*

"When we connect a community's work to the land, water, biodiversity, and people around it, the map becomes more than a record of participation—it begins to show relationships, context, and possibility."

**MOLLY BURHANS**

GIS and Cartography Consultant, Atlas of Laudato Si'

MOVEMENT C OF FOUR

# Learn from what we gather

*A robust map also poses a deeper question: what can we learn from everything the Platform is beginning to connect?*



Interschool outdoor prayer service. Courtesy of Sisters of Notre Dame, Patna, India.

The next phase will strengthen the data systems behind them so that the Platform can move beyond counting activity toward understanding patterns, continuity and, where evidence allows, impact.

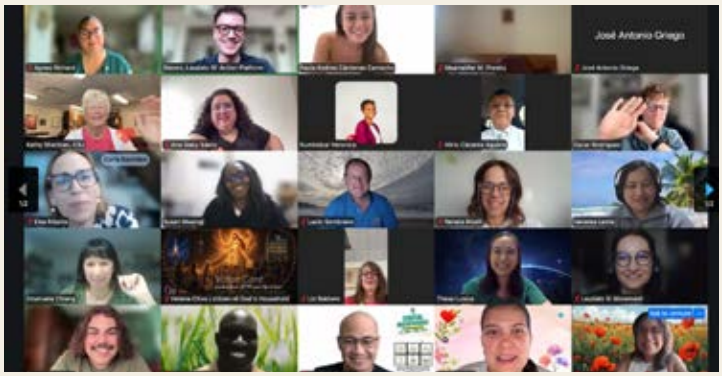
Artificial intelligence can help make that growing body of knowledge more useful. AI-assisted search and recommendation tools could help participants find resources and possible actions suited to their sector and context, while stronger data systems help the Platform identify patterns that are difficult to see today.

**But more powerful tools also require clearer judgment about what technology should—and should not—do.** In *Magnifica Humanitas*, Pope Leo XIV carries forward *Laudato Si'*'s critique of the technocratic paradigm into the age of artificial intelligence, insisting that technical innovation remain guided by human conscience, freedom and responsibility. He warns particularly against treating AI as neutral simply because it works through data.

For the Platform, that means using AI to support discernment, not replace it: helping people find connections and possibilities while keeping decisions, interpretation and responsibility with human communities. At the same time, we need better ways to understand what happens after a plan is written or an action is marked complete—in institutions, communities and ecosystems.

MOVEMENT D OF FOUR

# Form Digital Missionaries






The Church's most recent global Synod identified the digital environment as an emerging missionary field: not simply a set of tools, but a culture where people meet, search, listen and form relationships. From this has emerged the language of "Digital Missionary" — not simply an influencer or content creator, but someone who inhabits these spaces with a missionary spirit of listening, accompaniment and community-building.

For the Laudato Si' Action Platform, Digital Missionaries bring that vocation into the work of integral ecology. Through annual cohorts, communicators will be formed to recognize meaningful local action, help communities tell their own stories, and connect those experiences with people who may learn from them elsewhere.

*The goal is a human network around the digital one: people who can make ecological action visible, help communities find one another, and carry learning across borders and sectors.*

06 · THE ROAD TO 2031

# The fifth anniversary marks a beginning, not a conclusion.

*The goal is not simply more participation, but stronger circulation: of knowledge, stories, evidence and relationships. One path, climbing—and a crowd on it that keeps growing.*

TODAY · 2026

## Make the next chapter visible

Preview the first Atlas; connect Catholic action with ecological context; begin low-bandwidth and printable materials; create clearer pathways for dioceses and institutions.

NEXT · 2027–2029

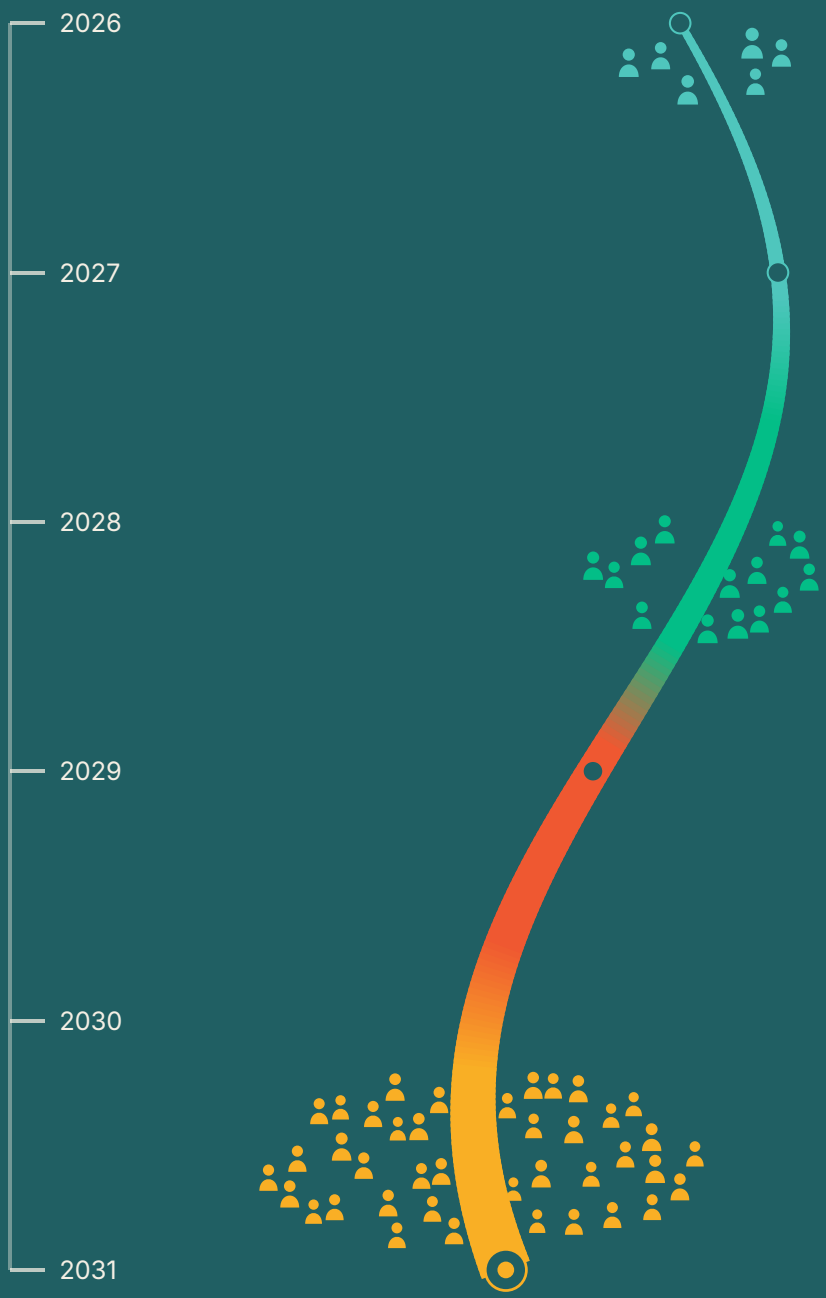
## Build the relationships behind the infrastructure

Expand the Atlas in languages, scientific context and participant knowledge. Form Digital Missionaries and strengthen data systems for useful recommendations and learning.

TOWARD · 2031

## A Church that can see and learn from its own response

Move from individual accounts toward shared infrastructure for ecological conversion—able to distinguish enrollment from engagement, reported action from verified outcome, and ambition from evidence.


2026
2027
2028
2029
2030
2031

06 · THE ROAD TO 2031

# Broader representation. A stronger human network.

06 · BY 2031, WE HOPE TO SEE

**50,000**
PARTICIPANTS

**20,000**
CATHOLIC INSTITUTIONS

**1,000**
DIOCESES REPRESENTED

**1,000+**
DIGITAL MISSIONARIES

## WHAT WE ARE TRYING TO MAKE POSSIBLE

A parish begins with examples that make sense in its reality.

A diocese recognizes who is acting and helps those efforts connect.

A congregation moves from one person's commitment toward shared practice.

A community with limited connectivity is not designed out.



TEAM TESTIMONY

# *"A Platform can help us find one another. But the work is carried by people."*

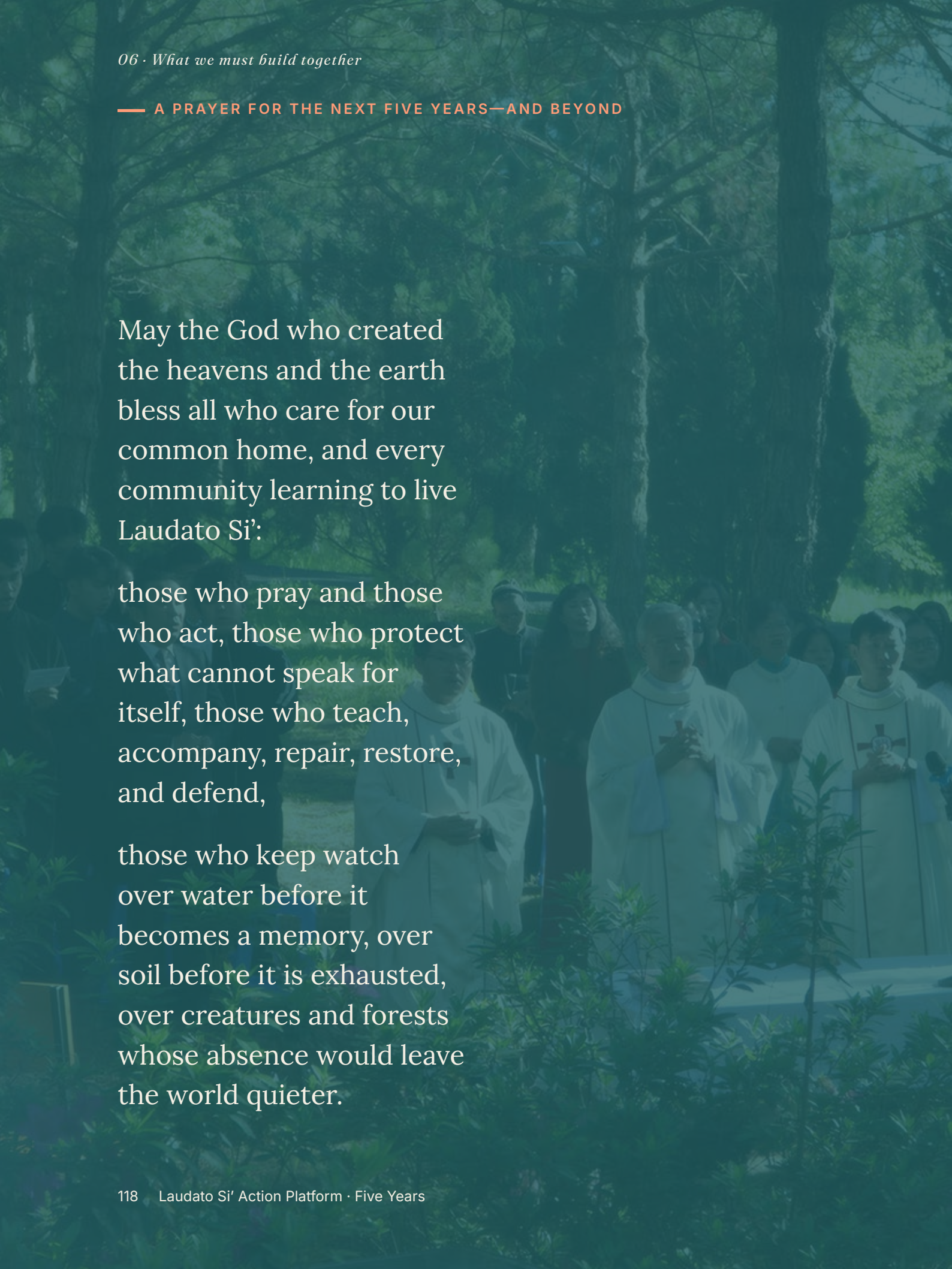
Bishops can open the way. Institutions can give the work roots. Partners can share what they know. Communities can keep hope alive.

The hope is simple: that care for our common home can grow, endure, and that no one has to walk alone.

**MSGR. ROBERT J. VITILLO**

Senior Advisor and Focal Point for the Laudato Si' Action Platform, Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development

## A PRAYER FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS—AND BEYOND



May the God who created the heavens and the earth bless all who care for our common home, and every community learning to live Laudato Si':

those who pray and those who act, those who protect what cannot speak for itself, those who teach, accompany, repair, restore, and defend,

those who keep watch over water before it becomes a memory, over soil before it is exhausted, over creatures and forests whose absence would leave the world quieter.

Bless those who stand
beside communities
whose lands and lives are
threatened, and those
whose smallest choices—a
meal, a journey, a light
switched off—become part
of something larger than
they can see.

Bless the families, parishes,
dioceses, schools, hospitals,
religious communities,
and institutions that are
learning to live differently.

Bless those who begin.
Bless those who keep

tending when enthusiasm has passed. Bless those who make the path easier for whoever comes next.

Give us wisdom enough to know that not everything valuable can be counted, and honesty enough to count carefully what can.

Give us courage when care becomes costly, humility when another community knows what we do not, and tenderness toward every life entrusted to our keeping.

May we never grow accustomed to the cry of the Earth or the cry of the poor.

May what we build serve life. May what we learn travel farther than we do. May what we receive not end with us.

And when the work feels larger than any one community can carry, may we find one another.

*May no one who cares for our common home have to walk alone.*

AMEN.



07 · THE WORK BEHIND THE WORK

# The Work Behind the Work

An acknowledgment of the people who carried the Platform, entrusted it with their stories, and gave its work a life beyond the screen.

07 · THE WORK BEHIND THE WORK

# The work behind the work.

Every plan shared, action recorded, story translated, participant accompanied, photograph entrusted, and technical problem resolved has depended on work that is not always visible.

Over five years, the Laudato Si' Action Platform has been shaped by people serving in very different ways: some entrusted with its stewardship, some carrying its daily work, some lending specialized skills, and many more allowing their own experience to become part of what others could learn.

An acknowledgments section cannot reconstruct every meeting, translation, introduction, late-night repair or act of generosity that made these years possible. What follows is therefore not a complete record, but an effort to name the people whose work has been especially woven into the Platform and into this report.

## LEADERSHIP AND GUIDANCE

The Laudato Si' Action Platform is an initiative of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, whose stewardship has carried the project from its beginnings into its next chapter.

We are grateful to **Sr. Alessandra Smerilli, F.M.A.**, Prefect, for her continuing guidance and commitment to the Platform; to **Cardinal Fabio Baggio, C.S.**, Pro-Prefect; and to **Msgr. Jozef Barlaš**, Secretary, who began their current roles in September 2026.

## WITH GRATITUDE FOR FOUNDATIONAL LEADERSHIP

The Laudato Si' Action Platform also carries the work of those who guided and shaped its earlier years.

We recognize **Cardinal Michael Czerny, S.J.**, Prefect of the Dicastery from 2022 to 2026, whose leadership accompanied much of the Platform's first five years, and **Cardinal Peter K. A. Turkson**, then Prefect of the Dicastery, who helped introduce the Laudato Si' Action Platform publicly in 2021 and articulated the urgency from which it emerged.

**Fr. Joshtrom Isaac Kureethadam** helped give shape to the Platform's theological vision and served as theological

consultant during its early development. We are also grateful to **Fr. Patricio Sarlat Flores**, Research and Reflection Advisor in Ecology, for his contribution to the Platform's ecological reflection and formation.

The Platform's early development was also carried forward by **John Mundell**, who served as Director through early 2025; **Tebaldo Vinciguerra**, technical adviser during the Platform's early years; and **Veronica Valente**, **Ginebra Ossola**, and **Pedro Weizenmann**, who supported the Platform as interns during its formative stages.

### SECTOR PARTNERS AND WORKING GROUPS

From the Platform's earliest development, working groups and sector partners helped ensure that one global framework could speak to very different realities—from families and schools to dioceses, universities, healthcare institutions, economic entities, and religious communities.

Their contributions helped shape not only the original design of the Platform, but also the way it has continued to evolve through use, feedback, and experience.

Over five years, this network has included many organizations and individuals across regions and sectors. Because that list is extensive—and because participation has changed over time—we offer our collective gratitude to the sector partners, working-group members, and other collaborators whose expertise, critique, relationships, and continued participation have helped make the Platform more grounded, useful, and responsive.

## The team across five years.

The current team includes **Msgr. Robert J. Vitillo**, Senior Advisor and Focal Point for the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development; **Alonso de Llanes**, Programme Director; **Maureen Villanueva**, Engagement Manager; **Steven Salido Fisher**, Communications Manager; **Carla Bastidas Jurado**, Administrative Coordinator; and **Regina Luján Armijo**, Content and Community Coordinator; with **Sara Ferrera Caceres**, **Sulman Hincapié**, **Sr. Cláudia Chesini**, and **Sr. Nathalie Kangaji** supporting the team. The Laudato Si' Action Platform is sponsored by the Dicastery, with operational support from the Laudato Si' Movement, led by Executive Director **Dr. Lorna Gold**.

## EARLIER COLLEAGUES AND COLLABORATORS

The Platform's history is larger than its current staff structure. Across its development and implementation, many colleagues and collaborators helped shape, support and carry the work at different stages. We gratefully recognize:

**Reba Elliott** · **Raquel Ortuño** · **Julio González de la Rubia** · **Carlos Solís** · **Karla Corsino** · **Matthew Saganski** · **Raquel Ribera** · **Sarah Mundell** · **Julie Reyes** · **Susana Refega** · **Tomás Insua**

## VOLUNTEERS, INTERNS AND PROJECT SUPPORT

The Platform has also benefited from people who contributed their time and skills through internships, volunteer service and specific projects. We are grateful to **Michael VanZandt Collins**, **Craig Dsouza**, **Alessia Mattei**, **Adrian Mourtsiadis**, **Rabbia Shaukat**, **Julieta Solari**, **Andrea Sordo** and **Ves Yraola**, among others who have supported the work along the way.

## CREATIVE, TECHNICAL AND SPECIALIST COLLABORATORS

Some of the people most responsible for what participants see—and for what works quietly behind it—have never appeared on an organizational chart. We are grateful to the developers, designers, translators, interpreters, researchers, consultants and other collaborators whose expertise has helped give the Platform form across languages, technologies and different contexts of participation.

Among them, we especially recognize **Abel Guapulema** and **Oscar Fernandez**, whose development work has helped maintain and improve the Platform's digital infrastructure; **Molly Burhans**, whose expertise in cartography and ecclesial geography is contributing to the Platform's emerging geospatial work; **John Paul de Quay**, Co-Founder of The Ecological Conversion Group, who helped lead the development of resources designed for communities with limited internet access; and **Noemí Marquez**, for her graphic design, with design support from **Marco Vargas**.

## ACROSS LANGUAGES

Over five years, translators and interpreters have also made the Platform's resources, stories and conversations accessible across languages. We are grateful to **Ana Couto**, **Marko Salinas-Monrocq**, **María Isabel Gómez Rivera**, **Cristiana Coimbra**, **Moema Becker**, **Karla Rosado**, **Pamela Vintimilla**, **Michela Venturi**, **Raoul Funtchue** and **Claire Tai Tai** for their contributions to this work.

07 · STORIES AND CREDITS

# Those who entrusted us with their stories.

This report depends on another kind of contribution. Participants invited us into homes, classrooms, parishes, religious communities and institutions. They returned to memories from years earlier, explained work that did not always fit neatly into a metric, answered follow-up questions, reviewed drafts and shared photographs of people and places they care about.

Their experiences belonged to them before they became part of this report. We are grateful to **Flavio Nakaoka**, **Ugalla Andrew**, **Sr. Comfort Arthur, CSC**, **Merijn Tinga**, **Fray Erick Marín Carballo**, **Sr. Marie Carmel**, **Lauren Crawford**, **Rachel McGee**, **Br. John Cornel Sulle, OFMCap**, **Andrea Scapinello**, **Dr. Pascal Onu**, **Mansha Noor**, **Daniel Del Rosario**, **Lori Helfrich**, and the many other participants, partners and colleagues who contributed interviews, testimony and experience to this five-year record. *What We Pass On* was written by **Vanessa Leota** in her own voice.

## REPORT CREDITS

### *Developed by the Laudato Si' Action Platform team*

Research, interviews, writing and editorial direction

**Steven Salido Fisher**

Institutional review and guidance

**Alonso de Llanes · Maureen Villanueva · Msgr. Robert J. Vitillo**

Design and visual development

**Noemí Marquez, with design support from Marco Vargas**

Data analysis and research support

**Carla Bastidas Jurado**

07 · IMAGES AND PARTNERSHIPS

# Images, institutions and partnerships.

## PHOTOGRAPHY AND IMAGE CONTRIBUTIONS

Photographs throughout this report were contributed by participants, institutions, photographers and collaborators. Where a photographer is known, individual credits are provided below; participant- and institution-contributed images are credited to their source.

**Cristian Genari** — photographs of Pope Leo XIV and of Alonso de Llanes and Msgr. Robert J. Vitillo

**Angela de Vlaming** — photograph of Merijn Tinga

**Cristina Alonso Alija** — photography

**Diocese of Salford** — photographs courtesy of the Diocese

**Participant-contributed photographs** — courtesy of the individuals and communities whose stories appear throughout the report

## INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT AND PARTNERSHIPS

The Platform has also benefited from an operational partnership with **Laudato Si' Movement**, alongside the many networks and sector partners that helped build and strengthen the initiative from its earliest stages.

The original development process itself drew on a far wider network—including Caritas Internationalis; the Union of Superiors General (USG); the International Union of Superiors General (UISG); CIDSE (International Cooperation for Development and Solidarity); regional ecclesial networks; youth organizations; and sector working groups representing families, dioceses and parishes, education, health, economic institutions, organizations and religious communities.

07 · SECTOR PARTNERS

# Sector partners.

"The Future of Work – Labour after Laudato si'" Project, an initiative hosted by International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC)

Africa-Europe Faith & Justice Network (AEFJN)

ANEC - Associação nacional de Educação Católica do Brasil (National Association of Catholic Education in Brazil)

Archdiocese of Bombay - Archdiocesan Office for Environment

Archdiocese of Cape Town

Archidiócesis de Madrid. Comisión Diocesana Ecología Integral

Arquidiócesis de Monterrey - Pastoral Verde

Ateneo de Naga University Institute for Environmental Conservation and Research (INECAR)

Australian Catholic Bishops Conference

Australian Catholic University

Bishops' Conference of Scotland: Scottish Catholic Education Service

California Catholic Conference Environmental Stewardship Committee

Caritas Australia - Catholic Earthcare

Caritas Internationalis

Catholic Archdiocese of Atlanta

Catholic Bishop's Conference of Bangladesh (CBCB)

Catholic Climate Covenant

Catholic Doctors Association Malaysia

Catholic Education Diocese of Wollongong

Catholic Health Alliance of Canada

Catholic Health Association of India - CHAI

Catholic Health Association of the United States

Catholic Health Care Asia

Catholic Health Care Association of Southern Africa

Catholic Health Sponsors of Ontario (CHSO)

Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria

Catholic Youth Network for Environmental Sustainability in Africa (CYNESA)

Christians for Animals (Poland)

Claret Ashram community

Comboni Missionaries

Comillas Pontifical University

Communication Foundation for Asia Multimedia Center, Inc

Confederación Latinoamericana de religiosos (CLAR)

Congregation of St. Joseph

Cooperation and Development Network

Creighton University

Daughters of Mary Help of Christians (Salesian Sisters)

Domus Omnia

Don Bosco Green Alliance

Ecology Work Group of the Archdiocese of Lagos- Nigeria

Eglise verte

Episcopal Commission on Health Care of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines

Federation of Catholic Family Associations in Europe (FAFCE)

FIHC Unum Omnes

Fraternité pour le Respect Animal

Future Economy Forum

Gonzaga University

Ignatianum University in Cracow

International Association of La Salle Universities (IALU)

International Catholic Conference of Scouting

International Education Network PILGRIM

IUS/ISHE International Salesian Higher Education

Jesuit Conference of Latin American Provincials - CPAL

Jesuit Research and Development Society

John Carroll University

JPIC Commission USG-UISG

Justice and Peace Commission of Filipino Bishops' Conference

Leadership Conference of Women Religious

Living Laudato Si' Philippines

Loyola University Chicago

Maharashtra Prabodhan Seva Mandal (MPSM)

MARFAM - Marriage and Family Renewal Ministry

Missionary Society of St. Columban

Movimiento Laudato Si´- Capítulo Colombia

Munich School of Philosophy

National Catholic Educational Association

New Families Movement

NOW Partners Foundation

Observatório Nacional de Justiça Socioambiental Luciano Mendes de Almeida (OLMA) e Cátedra Laudato Si' (UNICAP).

Pastoral da Ecologia Integral do Regional Sul 1 da CNBB

Pax Christi International

Plastic Bank

Programa Bandera Azul Ecológica categoría eclesial

Religious of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

Saint Kateri Conservation Center

Saint Louis University

Salesian Sisters Philippines

Samahan ng Lusog Baga Association Inc.

Scholas Chairs Program

School Sisters of Notre Dame - Latin American and Caribbean Province

Secretariado de Justicia Social y Ecología, Society of Jesus

SIGNIS Philippines

St Paul's University

St. Ann Church (Avon, Connecticut)

St. Gabriel School (Windsor, Connecticut)

St. Francis Xavier Parish Nyakaho

Tangaza University

Tertiary Sisters of St. Francis

The Ecological Conversion Group

The Economy of Francesco Foundation

The Farm of Francesco

The Focolare Movement

The Guardians of Creation Project/ St Mary's University, Twickenham, London

Trócaire

Universidad Católica de Chile

University of Dayton

University of Notre Dame (USA): Institute for Ethics and the Common Good

VIS - Volontariato Internazionale per lo Sviluppo

Woodwater Center for Healing of the Camillian fathers

World Union of Catholic Women's Organisations

Zambia Conference of Catholic Bishops

07 · A FINAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT

# What grew beyond our sight.

In the Gospel of Mark, Jesus tells of a person scattering seed on the ground. Days pass. The seed sprouts and grows, “he knows not how” (Mark 4:26–29). The image is striking because the sower participates in what happens without controlling it.

Much of the meaning of these five years has grown in that way.

It lives in the parish committee that kept meeting after the webinar ended; the teacher who changed a lesson; the family that began buying differently; the congregation that returned to a plan after leadership changed; the tree watered long after the photograph was taken; the question someone carried home and continued asking.

We can count registrations, plans, reflections and actions. We can build tools that make them easier to begin and sustain. But the Platform cannot see everything that follows from them, and it cannot claim that work as its own.

**So our final acknowledgment belongs to the people who made the Platform real by using it:** those who enrolled, reflected, planned, acted, began again, shared what they learned, or quietly changed something in the place entrusted to their care.

*The Platform offered a pathway. You gave it a life beyond the screen.*

# Thank you.

*The Platform offered a pathway.*
*You gave it a life beyond the screen.*

Five years of plans, actions, stories and questions from communities across the world. A record of what the Church has learned—and what the journey toward integral ecology is asking of us next.

LAUDATOSIACTIONPLATFORM.ORG

5 YEARS
LAUDATO SI'
ACTION
PLATFORM