

Speaking about Laudato Si' with your community's leaders

Speaking to the leaders of your community (Parish, Diocese, organization, institute, school, etc.) about Laudato Si' is an important step in discerning how your community can take action. This brief guide offers some suggestions that may be helpful.

Develop a small team and ask to speak with your leader

Identifying a group of people who have a common interest in Laudato Si' issues can help spark new ideas and allow space for the Holy Spirit to move. Identify the leader or leaders in your community who have responsibility for social and ecological issues. Depending on your context, this might be a Bishop or Parish priest, the leader of a ministry, or the head of an office, team, or department.

Approach these leader(s) as a group, asking for a time to discuss the community's initiatives on integral ecology.

Begin with appreciation and prayer

Before meeting, research ways your leader(s) have already taken action to protect the community. These might include supporting educational initiatives, offering service to the poor and vulnerable, or organizing community events. Begin the meeting by recognizing this leadership.

Consider saying a prayer to invite God's presence to the conversation. Choose a prayer that is meaningful to your community, such as one that was written by a patron saint, the founder of a religious order, by staff at a partner organization, etc.

Share why integral ecology is important

Share your perspective on integral ecology with the leader(s). It may be helpful to keep these points in mind:

- Our Creator called the human family to be the steward of creation, but we have neglected that call. Our hotter, dirtier, deader planet is driving up the risk of suffering. For many, the risk of respiratory disease, intestinal disease, thirst, hunger, loss of homes and livelihood, and forced migration are rising. The most vulnerable suffer above all.
- This issue connects with core Catholic teaching on caring for our brothers and sisters, honoring our Creator, and embracing a consistent ethic of life.
- You may wish to investigate how the ecological crisis is already affecting people in your region, and how its impacts are likely to change over the coming years. Credible research from organizations such as the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the World Health Organization is widely available online.
- Pope Francis's Laudato Si' puts the ancient teachings of our faith in a new light for today's ecological crisis, responding to the signs of the times. It stands on a long history of Catholic teachings on the environment, including teachings from Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, St. John Paul II, and others.

Request action

Request that the leader(s) take a specific action. This might include enrolling the community in the Laudato Si' Action Platform, sponsoring the creation of a dedicated small group, hosting an event, or similar. Be clear in your request. Offer to provide specific volunteer help from dedicated individuals in order to make acting on the request more feasible.

Listen and conclude the meeting

Listen to the response from your leader(s). Strive to understand his or her perspective, including any questions he or she might have. Agree on next steps to be taken, including a timeline and identifying the responsible people. Conclude the meeting with prayer.

Follow up

Follow up on the conversation by taking next steps as appropriate.