

## **How to Organize a Laudato Si' Event**

Community events can offer special moments to draw us together, developing our relationships with our Creator, each other, and all of creation. Whether you choose to organize an in-person or virtual event, the following guide can help make your event a success.

### **Types of events**

Each event will have its own focus. It may help to consider general types of events that others have hosted, such as events focused on spiritual enrichment, lifestyle changes, and policy engagement.

#### *Spiritual Events*

For many, an event focused on spiritual enrichment can develop ties of community, as we transform our hearts and minds to embrace a greater love of God, each other and creation. Examples of spiritual events are an outdoor Mass or prayer service, creation walk or pilgrimage, reading a Laudato Si' Chaplet in nature, incorporating Laudato Si' in Homilies or Bible studies, holding Season of Creation celebrations, or blessing an outdoor space as a place of prayer and mediation.

#### *Action Events*

Many communities hold events with concrete activities that protect creation. Examples of lifestyle events are a tree planting, a community litter clean-up, the planting of a community garden, a swap of plants or clothes, a recycling drive, and a Laudato Si'-themed educational event.

#### *Policy Events*

Many communities hold events to explore public policies that support sustainable and equitable development. Examples of advocacy events include participating in public walks in support of issues, holding signature drives, meeting with local decision makers, and engaging with members of the local media on an issue of interest.

### **Steps to a successful event**

As you plan your event, it can be helpful to consider the following steps.

#### *Identify your objectives*

Having clear objectives for your event is important to achieving desired outcomes. Identify a need or issue in your community that needs to be addressed. For instance, you might identify a lack of awareness of Laudato Si', an opportunity to develop

stronger relationships, or plastic pollution. Work with others to identify how an event can help address these challenges.

#### *Develop a team and a plan*

A small team can share ideas and the effort of organizing an event. Be sure to include a wide variety of community members. Work together to identify a date, a place for the event, the people you wish to invite, the materials you need, and contingency plans in case of unexpected weather for an outdoor event. Be sure each person has a role and clearly defined responsibilities. If appropriate, work together to approach the leader of your Parish, school, organization, or similar to explain your idea and obtain permission.

#### *Develop an event program*

Develop your program in line with a theme and/or your outlined objectives. Your Laudato Si' event should include a prayer for creation or a reading from Laudato Si' to set the intention for the day. You can select readings from Laudato Si'

#### *Find a venue*

Laudato Si' events are best experienced outdoors in nature, e.g. parks, gardens, forests, for an emphasis on connection with creation. When choosing your venue, be sure to pick a location that is easy to get to for most people you'll invite. If your event is online, choose a tool that is widely accessible and easy to use. Depending on the local context, you may be required to gain a permit and event insurance coverage; be sure to comply with any local regulations.

#### *Invite people*

Start promoting your event two weeks to one month ahead of the date. Reach out to invitees in multiple ways, such as assigning each member of your small team a list of people to contact personally, promoting the event during regular meetings such as Mass or organizational meetings, publishing invitations on social media and in bulletins, and coordinating with missions/departments/ministries. In each form of outreach, include the time, date, and place of the event, information about how to register, and a brief overview of what will happen at the event. Be sure to do each form of outreach multiple times, as it often takes repeated invitations before an invitee makes a commitment.

#### *Follow up*

Thank all invitees. If possible, send them follow-up communications to share outcomes from the event and encourage them to take further action. If appropriate, share outcomes with the Parish priest or other leaders.