

Laudato 'Si Action Platform - Reflection

RELIGIOUS OF THE SACRED HEART OF MARY, ZAMBIA.

We, the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary (RSHM) in Zambia recognize the huge challenges that are facing us in our broken world today. Our Institute motto is : 'That all may have Life' - this is our calling. Our General Chapter 2019 states: 'Aware of our interconnectedness with all of creation, we proclaim 'fullness of life for all....through the integrity of our lives, our relationships with one another, all peoples and our planet.'

Our Mission Statement encourages us to 'place ourselves and our resources at the service of those who are most in need of justice, especially women and children, enabling the powerless, the deprived, the marginalized, the voiceless to work effectively for their own development and liberation.'



Pope Francis's encyclical Laudato 'Si now calls us to a "new approach," 'which transforms our way of living in the world, our lifestyles, our relationships with the earth's resources, and, in general the way we look at people and live our life "to respond to the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor – to bring life to all.'

Again, Pope Francis states 'Our goal is.....' to become painfully aware, to dare to turn what is happening to the world into our own personal suffering and thus to discover what each of us can do about it.' L. 'Si 19

Goal 1 – The Cry of the Earth

- In response to the cry of the earth we are installing solar energy by degrees, hoping to improve on this in the coming years.
- Our garden provides us with fruit and vegetables in season, lessening the need to travel in order to purchase these items and lessening the accumulation of plastic and Styrofoam. And, for watering our garden we have a borehole.
- We have set up a small project 'RSHM Trees for Life' - each of our communities is encouraged to plant as many trees as possible and to care for them.
- We recycle, reuse and reduce where possible. Our students participate in 'Tidy Up Days' when the whole compound is cleaned.
- We provide Workshops in order to raise awareness of the destruction to our common home.

Goal 2 – The Cry of the Poor

Our General Chapter 2013 calls us 'to reveal the tenderness of God as we seek to respond to the cries of those on the margins and the Earth.'

- We care for orphans and vulnerable children in our Day Centres providing meals and education. Hunger is widespread due to Covid 19 and the loss of small jobs. Likewise, our Special Needs School provides education and care for these most vulnerable children.



- School fees are paid for several poor children in order to provide them with an education.
- We sign Petitions for those poor whose land is taken over by Corporations and others whose land is destroyed by Climate Change.
- Some of our Special Needs graduates will work on our Farm in the Southern Province, thereby providing them with employment.

Goal 3 – Ecological Economics

- Our Workshops on Care for Our Common Home alert participants to the ‘intimate relationship between the poor and the fragility of the planet’ L ‘Si 16
- We Recycle, Reduce, Reuse paper, plastic and glass where possible.
- We use our own compost on our garden...trees, flowers and vegetables.

Goal 4 – Adoption of a Sustainable Lifestyle

- We hope to live a simpler lifestyle by heightening our awareness as to our use of energy and water.
- Walking when possible instead of driving.
- Eating less meat.
- Our farms – one in the Southern Province will provide enough produce for the Special Needs School students and we hope to grow our own organic maize and groundnuts in the other farm outside Lusaka.

Goal 5 - Ecological Education

- Our monthly JPIC Calendar reminds us of the important solidarity days throughout the year.
- Our JPIC Bulletin provides information and raises awareness with regard to events such as COP27, as well as providing tips on caring for our common home etc.
- We also have a monthly newsletter from our RSHM NGO Representative at the United Nations, giving us a broader perspective on world issues such as Migration, Trafficking of Human Persons etc.
- Our Formation Programmes provide Workshops for our young sisters on Care for our Mother Earth.

Goal 6 – Ecological Spirituality

- Ecological Spirituality helps us as communities ‘to discover God in all things’ in the beauty of creation and in the most vulnerable of society.
- Some of our communities set aside Sunday prayer for creation.
- We have outdoor creative liturgies.
- We provide Prayer Services for Solidarity Days, eg. Earth Day.
- We participate in Earth Hour when electricity is turned off for one hour during that day.

- The Season of Creation is a 'special' time dedicated to our Mother Earth.
- We reflect on extracts from Laudato 'si, for our prayer.

Goal 7 – Community Commitment and Participation

- Our Child Protection Policy ensures that all children and pupils are safe in our environment.
- We sign petitions online for world issues.
- Prayer for Solidarity Days eg. Day of the African Child, Prayer for those who are trafficked.
- Some of our Sisters have participated in workshops on Human Trafficking, raising their awareness and, in turn, others on this issue.

