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## for Laudato Si' Action Platform

CONGREGATION OF THE SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH OF BOSTON



From October 2021 through March 2022, we engaged in a reflection process in preparation for enrolling in the Laudato Si' Action Platform. The goal was to assess where we have been and where we are willing to go in addressing each of the seven goals of

*Laudato Si'*. **We see our mission of unifying love as deeply related to each of the goals.** Based on the data from the reflection process, we identified specific areas on which we might focus our LSAP project. Spirituality, respect for human dignity, and life-style have emerged as priorities; education, collaboration and advocacy are also key ingredients.

**WE SEE OUR MISSION OF UNIFYING LOVE AS DEEPLY RELATED TO EACH OF THE GOALS.**

**GOAL 1:** Our ways of addressing Goal 1 focused on life-style areas such as reducing/reusing/recycling, especially around energy, water, food and the use of plastics. Awareness was raised and opportunities for action were provided through celebrations such as Earth Day, the Season of Creation, prayer experiences, and advocacy on climate issues. Our Motherhouse was renovated in 2002-2004 as a green building, and energy-saving systems and appliances have been updated as needed. More recently we have installed solar panels at our Health Care facility. We noted that we need more education on reduction/divestment from fossils, carbon footprint, and zero waste.

**GOAL 2:** While we have served the poor in our various ministries throughout our 150 years in Boston, the recent pandemic revealed new and urgent needs, especially in our local area. Food, clothing, housing, money and advocacy were all in increased demand. Our ongoing membership in two state coalitions enables us to advocate for immigrants and those on cash assistance. The influx into the Boston area of Haitian, Afghan and Ukrainian refugees called for response, both national and local. We also noted in our reflection data that charity is important, but systemic change is also needed.

**GOAL 3: ECOLOGICAL ECONOMICS:** Deeper awareness of the effects on our planet of lifestyle choices, purchasing habits, limited resources, and lack of equity prompted individuals to try to reduce waste, recycle, buy local, save energy, and reduce consumerism. As a Congregation, we have a long record of responsible investments and use and care of property. Recent investment in solar panels and movement toward clean energy and electric cars will further address this goal. All agreed there is need for ongoing education.

**GOAL 4:** Aware of the effects of overconsumption, consumerism, and waste on the planet and on the poor, the practices of a simpler lifestyle mentioned in Goals 1, 2 and 3 were operative in addressing this goal. Opportunities to exercise these practices were provided through events such as Earth Day, the Season of Creation, and Lenten programs focused on living out Laudato Si'. It was noted that these practices were generally done individually or in small groups, and that Congregation-wide lifestyle changes were needed.

**GOAL 5: ECOLOGICAL EDUCATION:** This has taken place through reading, Earth Book Club discussions, webinars and online discussions, celebrations such as Earth Day and Season of Creation; Congregation Gatherings, and action requests from the Justice Promoter. Results included adoption of the life-style "practices" listed in earlier goals; in awareness of the intersection of climate with migration and racism; feeling responsible to educate others; and frequent advocacy on climate-related issues. There is a need to integrate climate awareness into Congregation planning; to continue to support legislation related to climate; and to collaborate with others on ecological issues. Further ongoing education is needed.

**GOAL 6: ECOLOGICAL SPIRITUALITY:** Through reading, art, meditation, conversation, programs, retreats, and speakers, we have deepened our capacity for contemplation. We have engaged in a contemplative mode for our Congregational gatherings. This has made possible a more contemplative lifestyle, a simpler approach to prayer, and a sense of the interconnectedness of all creation. It can be reinforced in a simpler lifestyle, including less use of the earth's resources and care of properties. Ecological Spirituality supports the realization that there is a spiritual factor to all issues related to conservation, environmentalism, and earth stewardship. There is need for further education and practice.

**Goal 7: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATORY ACTION:** We have done this through responses to requests from the Justice Promoter, local events, Congregation programs, and contacts with state and federal legislators. Specific collaborations exist around Anti-Human Trafficking, with LCWR, the CSSJ Federation, ICCR, and two state coalitions. Moving forward, we plan to seek other collaborations, continue education; and have reflection days on our Charism and Mission as sources for change and transformation.