



Diocese of San Diego

LAUDATO SI' ACTION PLATFORM: YEAR TWO REFLECTION, SEASON OF CREATION 2024-2025



If “the universe unfolds in God, who fills it completely... there is a mystical meaning to be found in a leaf, in a mountain trail, in a dewdrop, in a poor person’s face.” The world sings of an infinite Love: how can we fail to care for it? --Pope Francis, “Laudate Deum,” 65

Diocese of San Diego Laudato Si' Action Platform YEAR TWO Reflection

With exciting changes made to the Laudato Si' Action Platform this spring, our 2024-2025 reflection blends the new first-time assessment and reflection steps with the “every year” steps to take stock of our actions for this past cycle.

Enrollment & Publicity: The Diocese of San Diego **published an aspirational Creation Care Action Plan (CCAP) in 2021**, providing a tailored overview of all actions that could be taken in the diocese and offering a structure by which progress could be measured. At that time, Cardinal McElroy provided his statement of support shown here.



July 13, 2021

My Dear People of God:

In May, Pope Francis invited the whole of the world to take up with renewed vigor the challenge of rescuing and caring for the earth which is our common home. He cast this vital mission of the Gospel within the concept of integral human ecology, which simultaneously answers the cry of the earth in its suffering and the cry of the poor. And he called upon Catholic organizations to rise up and form an international coalition designed build communities of faith and action at all levels to care for the creation which is God's first gift to us.

This creation care action plan for the Diocese of San Diego is a direct response to this call of Pope Francis. It provides clear, effective initiatives for us to undertake in our homes, our parishes, our businesses and our society as a whole. We as the Catholic community of San Diego and Imperial Counties must adopt a radical new commitment to such goals if we as a planet are to survive meaningfully and hand on a life-giving existence to the coming generations.

In taking up this mission, we must constantly act upon the need to form coalitions with people and organizations of all faiths and no faith to change the trajectory of our world. We must work closely with science and recognize the immensely vital role that children and young people will have in transforming our mindsets and our choices that despoil the earth. And we must reject complacency, the greatest foe of all.

I want to thank Father Emmet Farrell and the whole of Creation Care Committee which has labored so arduously to design this plan. And I ask every parish community and every believer to see the call to save the earth as God speaking directly to us in the depths of our soul.

Sincerely yours in Christ

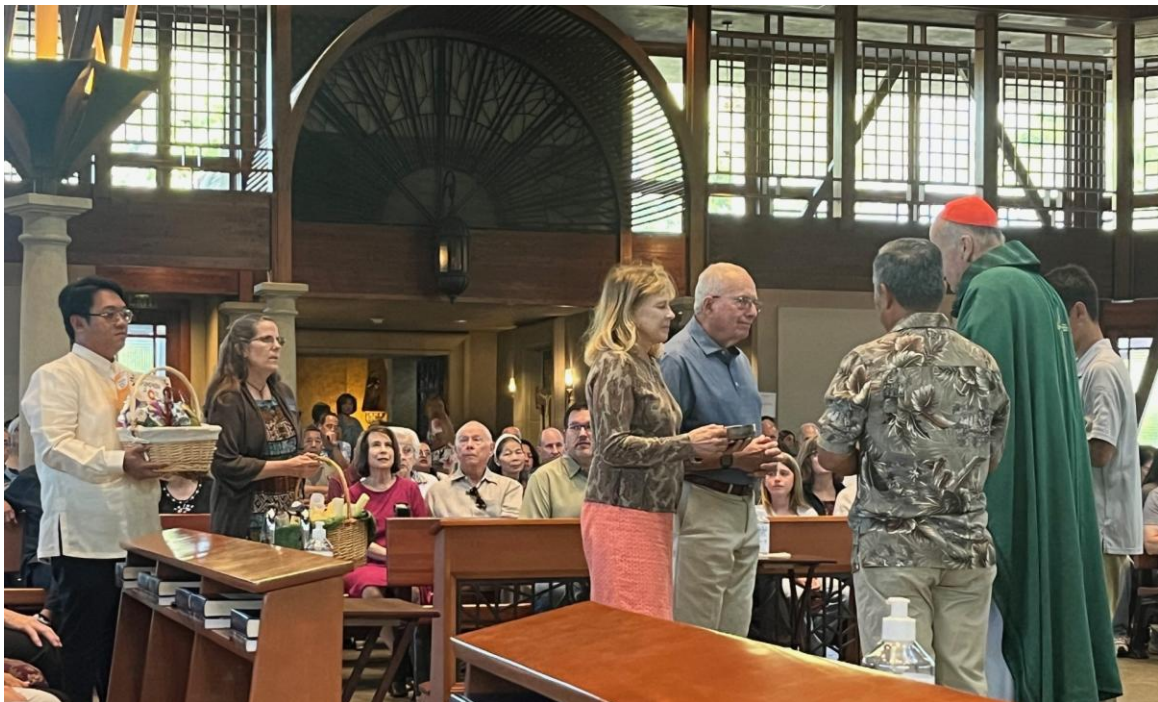
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. W. McElroy".

Most Reverend Robert W. McElroy

Bishop of San Diego

With the creation of the Laudato Si' Action Platform, **the diocese enrolled in the Laudato Si' Action Platform (LSAP) in the summer of 2022.** Again, we proclaimed our joy at being in solidarity with the global church in this effort to respond to the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor. Our participation in the LSAP is/has been:

- Highlighted in our social media and in *The Southern Cross* diocesan newspaper;
- The aim of our "[Pathway to Creation Care Action](#)" program for parishes and schools;
- Celebrated annually at our Season of Creation Mass, at which plans are presented at Offertory and a commissioning blessing is given to those who plan and execute them.



Values and Activities Reflection: In alignment with Laudato Si', the seven goals of the LSAP, and with the understanding that everything is connected, we recognize and proclaim...

Our mission is to spread Catholic teaching of creation care concerning our duty to be good stewards of our common home, to include the just use of our environmental resources and the protection of all life. We raise awareness to the "cry of the earth" and the "cry of the poor," encourage individual and community resilience and empowerment, and advocate for the adoption of sustainable lifestyles, all with the urgency the times require.

This mission statement not only incorporates all seven goals of the Action Platform but also professes our belief that action is an obligation of our faith. For this reason we feel called to join with the global Church in action, journeying toward integral ecology through our participation on the Laudato Si' Action Platform, and we promote the platform as our recommended strategy for caring for creation in the Diocese of San Diego. Additionally, we have synchronized our Laudato Si' action planning cycle to our liturgical calendar to connect this behavior with the ancient rhythms of the Church.

Laudato Si' Action Platform (LSAP)

CREATION CARE
DIOCESE OF SAN DIEGO

Lent: Reflect, Examen

Action Plan Implementation

Easter: New Life, New Plan

Laudato Si' Week

- Submit Reflection
- Upload New Plan

Action Plan Implementation

Season of Creation: Celebrate with Diocese of San Diego!

EVERYONE'S talents and involvement are needed! (Laudato Si' 14)

A journey towards full sustainability in the holistic spirit of integral ecology

GREEN ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT THE CREATION CARE TEAM OF **NAME** PARISH

has successfully completed action in the year community has sought to meet environmental goals, promoting and practicing the gift of creation, and creation care.

At the Pastoral Center of the Diocese of San Diego, CA

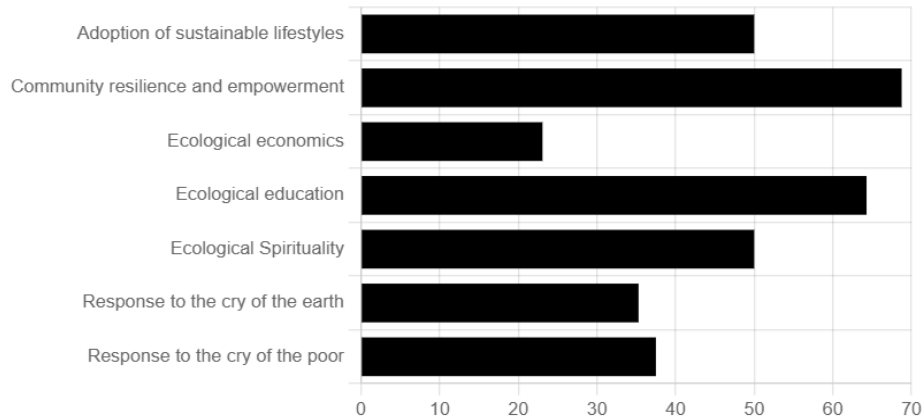
Dr. Richard Doerflinger, Bishop of San Diego

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(Pre)Existing Initiatives Review: Using the new “Actions that Make a Difference” calculator, we have reviewed our actions, some of which have been accomplished already and some that are actions of this most recent cycle.

- Adoption of sustainable lifestyles → 7/14 actions have been completed
- Community resilience and empowerment → 11/16 actions have been completed
- Ecological economics → 3/13 actions have been completed
- Ecological education → 9/14 actions have been completed
- Ecological Spirituality → 7/14 actions have been completed
- Response to the cry of the earth → 6/17 actions have been completed
- Response to the cry of the poor → 6/16 actions have been completed

Actions by Laudato Si' Goal



As shown in the above graphic, our diocese has performed well in the areas of Community Resilience & Empowerment as well as Ecological Education. In our region, the Interfaith Coalition for Earth Justice provides a helpful pathway to our participation in public witness and advocacy. As such events are typically regional in nature, promotion and coordination of Creation Care participants throughout the diocese is often most easily accomplished at our organizational level.

Ecological education is also an area in which we are performing well. As most parishes are just beginning to launch Creation Care ministries, providing catechesis at the diocese is a must and therefore a key focus area. We are blessed with many local expert volunteers, who are capable of offering highly knowledgeable presentations and guiding/facilitating action. Hosting them where all can come and learn is a valuable role for our diocesan Creation Care team to play.

Although the Diocese of San Diego has divested of fossil fuels already—a major step in the realm of Ecological Economics—we have room to grow in terms of this Laudato Si' goal. As we wrestle with a period of bankruptcy, we are somewhat constrained. Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles, however, has a good bit of overlap with Eco-economics, and we are doing well in that category, working diligently to eliminate single-use plastics and promote recycling and composting.

In addition to having a full-time employee dedicated to the direction of Creation Care, our Office of Life, Peace & Justice has a budgeted line item for this ministry. Through both personnel and resources, we are able to facilitate several parish, school, and family events and activities, in particular, our “Pathway to Creation Care Action” provides structured programming, beginning with a film screening of *The Letter*, then offering an introductory workshop, and concluding with a Laudato Si' Action Platform planning workshop to encourage our community members to enrollment. We also offer monthly zooms for Creation Care leaders to share and connect.

LSAP 2024-2025 Review

Since uploading our Laudato Si' action plan (LSAP) in July 2024, we have taken on the following actions, divided into the seven goals of Laudato Si'. Here we reflect on the outcomes of our actions—celebrating accomplishment, doubling down where there is still work to be done, and discerning a path forward from this past year's lessons learned.

LAUDATO SI' GOAL ONE: Responding to the Cry of the Earth

ACTION: SOLARIZATION - In collaboration with the Office of Construction Services, work toward getting the remaining ~45% of parishes solarized, effectively moving the diocese toward a net zero carbon footprint. (Creation Care Action Plan of San Diego Chapter 4, 'Purchasing and Producing Clean Energy,' p. 30; PSALM 84:12; *Laudato Si'* #23)

OUTCOME: Partial. The ministry presented to all deaneries—successfully engaging with every parish in the diocese and promoting solarization as a means of mitigating climate impact as well as cutting costs. Political and economic dynamics have constrained movement in the arena of solarization, frustrating our efforts. As a result, this work will be ongoing.

Two Areas of Continued Action from Last Year: ONGOING

1. **ELIMINATE PLASTIC WATER BOTTLES** - Ongoing
2. **TREE PLANTING PROGRAM:** Succeeding and continuing
 - a. 78 trees were given out for planting at our Feast of Saint Francis Trees, Peace & All Goodness Festival;
 - b. 6th grade camp planted ~300 new acorns.
 - c. Our Planting Hope program for victims of Church abuse planted 3-4 trees
 - d. We are currently working to maintain a "crop" of oak trees.

LAUDATO SI' GOAL TWO: Responding to the Cry of the Poor

ACTION: CREATION CARE AT FATHER JOE'S VILLAGE - Hold a creation care activity on site and/or with clients. (CCAP Chapter 1, 'The Need for Dialogue and Participation,' p. 10; ISAIAH 5:8-10; *LS* #14)

OUTCOME: INCOMPLETE. We began circling with a group at Father Joe's Village, discussing eco-spirituality, but we have not yet conducted an activity.

Two Areas of Continued Action—BOTH ACCOMPLISHED!

1. **DIOCESAN MAP OF ENVIRONMENTAL VULNERABILITY** - Produce a map depicting zones of insecurity - (CCAP Chapter 2, 'Catholic Teaching to Respond to the Cry of the Poor and the Cry of the Earth,' p. 17; PSALM 146: 6-10; *LS #48*) (**Report soon to be released.**)
2. **REUSABLE FOOD DISTRIBUTION BAGS** - Continue to provide sustainable bags to Misericordia food distribution efforts and conduct drives for reusable bags throughout the year. (CCAP Chapter 3, 'Buying and Sharing Food and Reducing Waste,' p. 25-26; JOHN 21: 15-17; *LS #49*)

LAUDATO SI' GOAL THREE: Developing Ecological Economics

ACTION: IMPACT INVESTMENT WORKSHOP - Hold a workshop discussing socially responsible business practices and introducing the concept of "Impact Investing?" (CCAP Chapter 4, 'Divest/reinvest,' p. 31; ISAIAH 5:8-10; *LS #192*)

OUTCOME: EXCHANGED AND ACCOMPLISHED. In the wake of the LA fires that devastated Southern California in January 2025, we exchanged this action for a Fire Preparedness Lecture by restoration botanist and landscape expert, Brother James Lockman, OFM. It was well received and recorded for future educational purposes.

ACTION: RESISTING THROWAWAY CULTURE CAMPAIGN – Initiate "A Cup a Day" Campaign to track usage in the staff breakroom and to promote bringing one's own wares, revealing the economic benefit of reusable wares and rejecting "throwaway culture." (CCAP Chapter 7, 'Live Simply,' p. 43; JOHN 6:12; *LS #22*)

OUTCOME: NOT PERFORMED

LAUDATO SI' GOAL FOUR: Adopting Sustainable Lifestyles

ACTION: EXPAND RECYCLING AND COMPOSTING - Place color-coded trash bins in all meeting spaces with signage directing what goes where and ensure proper disposal. (CCAP Chapter 7, 'Encourage Recycling,' p. 42; ECCLESIASTES 3:1; *LS #180*)

OUTCOME: IN PROGRESS

ACTION: SUSTAINABILITY VIDEO - Make a video of the practices put into use at the Pastoral Center and exemplary parishes/schools and share it with parishes. (CCAP Chapter 7, 'Implement Ecological Purchasing,' p. 41; REVELATION 21:2; *LS #214*)

OUTCOME: NOT PERFORMED

LAUDATO SI' GOAL FIVE: Promoting Ecological Education

ACTION: CREATION CARE DIOCESAN TRAINING DAY – Offer training to the diocesan Pastoral Center team to facilitate incorporation of Care for Creation into their ministry areas and operations. (CCAP Introduction, 'The Goals of this Creation Care Action Plan,' p. 9; GENESIS 2:15; LS #19)

OUTCOME: In progress. A new approach to Diocesan Training Days meant that this opportunity was no longer available, but we will be holding a "Lunch and Learn" event during this year's Season of Creation at which diocesan staff will have the opportunity to learn from Brother Keith Warner, OFM about Care for Creation.

ACTION: CREATION CARE TEENS YOUTH GATHERING - Hold a one-day Youth Retreat (CCAP Chapter 8 'Our Responsibility to Youth and the Future,' p.44; MATTHEW 18:6; LS #159)

OUTCOME: DONE – In lieu of a retreat, the Diocese of San Diego collaborated with the new California Chapter of the Laudato Si' Movement and Jesuits West to lead an advocacy Pilgrimage of Hope for Creation to Sacramento, where students held a public witness and engaged with law makers on potential legislation related to care for creation.

ACTION: COMMUNITY READS – ACCOMPLISHED

LAUDATO SI' GOAL SIX: Promoting Ecological Spirituality

ACTION: PLANTING HOPE – Provide trees and planting expertise to facilitate a diocesan outreach program for victims of clergy abuse. (CCAP Chapter 5, 'Increase Tree Canopy,' p. 37; PSALM 33: 20-22; LS #209) – **ACCOMPLISHED**

Two Areas of Continued Action: ACCOMPLISHED

3. **SEASON OF CREATION MASS & FEAST OF SAINT FRANCIS TREES, PEACE AND ALL GOODNESS FAIR** (PSALM 148: 1-5, LS #11)
4. **ANNUAL YOUTH ART CONTEST** – Hold our "For the Beauty of the Earth" youth art contest with a focus on the Voice of Biodiversity for grades 4-12 as part of our Season of Creation celebration. (CCAP Chapter 8, 'Our Responsibility to Youth and the Future,' p. 44; PSALM 19: 2; LS #215)

LAUDATO SI' GOAL SEVEN: Community Resilience & Empowerment

ACTION: LAUDATO SI GRANT PROGRAM – facilitating local action in parishes/schools/Catholic affiliated non-profits during Laudato Si' Week with \$5,000 in project funding (CCAP Introduction, 'The Goals of this Creation Care Action Plan,' p. 9; JAMES 2:14; LS #19) – **ACCOMPLISHED - \$6450 granted**

ACTION: IMPERIAL VALLEY/SALTON SEA PILGRIMAGE – plan October 2025 event to highlight the environmental catastrophe of the Salton Sea, the opportunity to extract lithium in support of renewable energy technology at this site, and the significant poverty and injustice that has historically characterized the Imperial Valley region. (CCAP Chapter 3, 'Caring for the Vulnerable, for the Excluded, and for Our Common Home,' p. 22; 1 CORINTHIANS 12:12-13; LS #36)

OUTCOME: ONGOING - SCHEDULED FOR NOVEMBER 14-16, 2025

Continued Action - Participate in community peaceful demonstrations supporting resource equity and environmental justice. (CCAP, Ch 3, 'Caring for the Vulnerable, for the Excluded, and for our Common Home,' p 21-25; MATTHEW 5: 6; LS #10) – **ACCOMPLISHED AND ONGOING**

