

# Our Reflections on Laudato Si' Goals 2026

Jeffie & Chris Hardin Family and  RIVENDELL FARMS  
OF THE CAROLINAS

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- **Which of these goals speaks to you the most, and how have they inspired changes for you or your community?** The Goal that speaks the most to us is Living and Sustainable Lifestyle. The reason is that Actions often speak louder than words.
- **Enrich your understanding of how ["everything is connected."](#) How has the socio-ecological crisis affected your community?** We are in Belmont, North Carolina, but regularly work with communities and farmers across North and South Carolina, and with Catholic Rural Life that has connections with farmers across the United States. We know and connect with farmers and church leaders in Uganda, Malawi, Haiti, Jamaica and parts of South America. Challenges with a lack of clean water, and/or drought, and shipping food long distances is causing confusion and sickness with people we know in many places. We attempt to buffer this by encouraging prayer for all people and communities and by showing people how to grow their own food.
- **What is your mission and/or your values?** Our Family Mission Is "To be a family that Remains in God's Love" John 15:1 – 7 We fulfill our Family Mission by serving each other, listening to the needs of the poor and God's Creation as an expression of our Love for our Savior Jesus Christ and His whole family. Gardening and Sustainable Farming and Living a Sustainable Lifestyle is an essential part of our Family Mission.
- **How do your unique mission and/or values and identity connect with the Laudato Si' Goals?** Jeffie and I focus on living what we call a Practical Sustainability lifestyle. We have reviewed the more spiritually oriented goals and linking this to the Cry of the Poor and we find that is best to focus on prayer, touching and caring for the earth and serving the poor.
- **Why do you feel called to join the Laudato Si' Action Platform in your journey to Integral Ecology?** The concept of Integral Ecology to us means that people, the earth, the Church, water, energy and food are all connected. We have joined the Laudato Si Action platform so our Catholic Christian Faith, our words and actions and lifestyle are "all connected". To remain consistent with Integral ecology and our Faith will require regular reflections and interacting with God's Creation and God's People in a Common Sense practical manner like gardeners and farmers.
- **Whether you have already been taking action on Laudato Si' for some time or are just beginning your journey, what are your existing initiatives or the efforts you have already started? Use any online calculators that are helpful to you, or use the table below. See the 70/70/70 Commitment to reduce energy use, reduce water consumption, recycle/reuse and raising or purchasing local food from local farmers.**

**Jeffie and Chris Hardin Family – Laudato Si Goals -- 2026**

| <b>Laudato Si Goals</b>                 | <b>Current Actions</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <b>What's working well</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <b>Areas for Improvement</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
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| <b>Response to the Cry of the Earth</b> | We raise most of our own food and/or purchase from local farmers 80% of our food, utilize solar panels for all our electric power, and recycle 80 percent of our waste.                                                                                                                                 | These are all going well since we have established habits from our family farm, continued study and planning ahead.                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Plan to recycle the majority of our remaining plastic waste and compost most of our vegetable waste from the kitchen.                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Response to the Cry of the Poor</b>  | We regularly serve at several church with immigrants and young families in NC and SC. We help by showing them how to plant gardens and live a simpler, more cost effective lifestyle. We contribute to missions in Uganda and the Berry Center in Kentucky to help less fortunate farmers and families. | In general, things are going well and there are opportunities to teach others -- mainly our actions and enough words when we teach gardening and practical sustainability courses. In the past we would bring families and young adults to our family farm Rivendell Farms. Plans are in process to buy farmland again soon. | We plan to go to the Borgo Laudato Si Farm later this year and to work with other middle class people to develop hands on course and work with our less fortunate friends. This is in response to an invitation from the Borgo Laudato Si team – Dr. Giorgio Nigri, Sister Alesandra, and Fr. Manuel Dorantes. |

## Jeffie and Chris Hardin Family – Laudato Si Goals -- 2026

| Laudato Si Goals                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Current Actions                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | What's working well                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Areas for Improvement                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
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| <p><b>Ecological Economics</b></p> <p>NOTE: Even though we under basics of Ecological Economics there is always more to learn. Especially with staying open to learning how the Ecological Economics can and will impact friends we know and people we work with in our church and local vulnerable communities. At the same time Jeffie and I know that we cannot help everyone with the pains being experienced by many friends and the poor people we know.</p> | <p>The main way we apply Ecological Economics as a family is to Adopt and Live a Sustainable Lifestyle. Its cost effective, peaceful and keeps us Grounded. There have been numerous attempts by large organization and the United Nations to initiate Carbon Offset banks as a way to apply Ecological Economics. All have Carbon Offset banks have failed because it is a difficult to measure carbon emissions accurately.</p> | <p>For Jeffie's and Chris Hardin's Ecological Economics our sustainable lifestyle is both Cost Effective and Sustainable. This allows us to be an example to others and provide resources and practical education that helps others reduce impacts to the local environment, the poor and family farmers that have tremendous financial pressure and risk.</p> | <p>We need to connect more with Catholic and Christian groups that do not understand the root causes of environmental impacts, and/or want to blame others and/or to expect government officials and Big business to solve or address the impact to the environment and people in needs. We are helping to "connect the pieces" between our friends in the Church, in academic institutions and business. This needs to continue.</p> <p>NOTE: Our plan is to do our best and then discern with our Priest and Spiritual Director about how best to serve.</p> |

## Jeffie and Chris Hardin Family – Laudato Si Goals -- 2026

| Laudato Si Goals                          | Current Actions                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | What's working well                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Areas for Improvement                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
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| <b>Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles</b> | Our current actions with a relatively small "environmental footprint", solar power, recycling are difficult at times, but also bring a sense of Peace and being Grounded.                                                          | The 90% Solar Power, 80% recycling/resuse and raising a large portion of our own food +/- 70% of our food is saving us money and allowing us an opportunity to train families and people we know from vulnerable communities. | We have been asked to organize and formalize our experience and approach into training courses that others can use and benefit from. This is part of the reason we are going to Borgo Laudato Si Farm this year.                                                       |
| <b>Ecological Education</b>               | Our focus with environmental education is in two main areas: a) Explaining the practical aspects of a Sustainable Lifestyle; b) helping friends and people who are struggling with growing their own food or obtaining local food. | This is going well, but are getting more requests from church friends and civic leaders to assist with environmental/ecological education. This is part of our part-time jobs and also a family "passion project"             | We have been asked to assist with developing more Practical Sustainability courses with other leaders in the Laudato Si and/or Creation Care initiatives in the Catholic Church and other faith communities. These will be new areas where we can assist in 2026/2027. |

## Jeffie and Chris Hardin Family – Laudato Si Goals -- 2026

| Laudato Si Goals                            | Current Actions                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | What's working well                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Areas for Improvement                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
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| <b>Ecological Spirituality</b>              | At this time we are offering more "hands on" gardening and practical family based sharing of the Catholic Faith and its focus on Creation Care outlined in Laudato Si. The Franciscan Sisters of the Eucharist has a farmed based approach for explaining Ecological Spirituality with Franciscan Spirituality. | Jeffie and I have experience with having people of all ages experience Ecological Spirituality on the farm and in the home. We use our methods with Small Groups through our Catholic Parish and other churches. We also use the <a href="#">FSE Sister Praise to You – Laudato Si</a> guidelines. These are working well. | We need to involve more organizations like the regional and parish groups in the Laudato Si Movement, various local parishes and even the Borgo Laudato Si Farm with developing Practical Sustainability and knowledge of Ecological Spirituality. |
| <b>Community Resilience and Empowerment</b> | Jeffie and Chris have helped create community resilience and empowerment in clarifying confusion about Climate Change with Practical Projects that are Fun.                                                                                                                                                     | We have lots of people calling us about a Sustainable Lifestyle and raising healthy food. We have experience with instructing about root causes ecological impacts.                                                                                                                                                        | Jeffie and Chris need to do a better job making connections with key people in the Laudato Si and Creation Care movement at the local national and regional level.                                                                                 |