



The Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes Laudato Si' Action Platform Year Three Plan – FINAL January 1 – December 31, 2024

The **Response to the Cry of Earth** is a call to protect our common home for the wellbeing of all, as we equitably address the climate crisis, biodiversity loss, and ecological sustainability.

Actions could include:

- *the adoption of renewable energies and energy sufficiency measures*
- *achieving carbon neutrality, protecting biodiversity*
- *promoting sustainable agriculture*
- *guaranteeing access to clean water for all*

The **Response to the Cry of the Poor** is a call to promote eco-justice, aware that we are called to defend human life from conception to death, and all forms of life on Earth.

Actions could include:

- *projects to promote solidarity, with special attention given to vulnerable groups such as indigenous communities, refugees, migrants, and children at risk*
- *analysis and improvement of social systems*
- *social service programs*

Ecological Economics acknowledges that the economy is a sub-system of human society, which itself is embedded within the biosphere—our common home.

Actions could include:

- *sustainable production and consumption*
- *ethical investments*
- *divestment from fossil fuels and any activity harmful to the planet and the people*
- *supporting circular economies*
- *prioritizing care labor and protecting the dignity of workers*

The **Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles** is grounded in the idea of sufficiency and promoting sobriety in the use of resources and energy.

Actions could include:

- *reducing waste and recycling*
- *adopting sustainable dietary habits (opting for a more plant-based diet and reducing meat consumption)*
- *greater use of public transport*
- *active mobility (walking, cycling)*
- *avoiding single use items (e.g. plastic, etc.).*

Ecological Education is about re-thinking and re-designing curricular and institutional reform in the spirit of integral ecology in order to foster ecological awareness and transformative action.

Actions could include:

- *ensuring equitable access to education for all and promoting human rights*
- *fostering Laudato Si' themes within the community*
- *encouraging ecological leadership (students, teachers)*
- *ecological restoration activities*

Ecological Spirituality springs from a profound ecological conversion and helps us to “discover God in all things”, both in the beauty of creation and in the sighs of the sick and the groans of the afflicted, aware that the life of the spirit is not dissociated from worldly realities.

Actions could include:

- *promoting creation-based liturgical celebrations*
- *developing ecological catechesis*
- *developing ecological retreats and formation programs, etc.*

Community resilience and empowerment envisage a synodal journey of community engagement and participatory action at various levels.

Actions could include:

- *promoting advocacy and developing people's campaigns*
- *encouraging rootedness and a sense of belonging in local communities and neighborhood ecosystems*

Last updated December 17, 2024

Goal 1

Initiate Community Composting or Bio-Digesting

What will we do?

Explore options for both composting and biodigesters in the Fond du Lac area for the Motherhouse with the intention to eventually get partners to buy into the service with us from area households and businesses.

This addresses portions of the following LSAP/CSA goals:

Response to the cry of the Earth; Adoption of sustainable lifestyles; Ecological education; Community resilience and empowerment

How & when will we do it?

1. Meet with Phil Collins, Senior National Account Executive for Denali Water, early in the year to understand what can be done for us in FDL
2. Follow up with people and ideas that arose in November 2023 meeting with City Manager, Joe Moore, to better understand what might be happening regarding bio-digesting and composting in the city.
3. Contact Sam Kaufman, County Executive, to see if there is an opportunity to partner with the County.
4. Contact Sustain Fond du Lac to see if there are any plans to do community composting.
5. Find a new contact at UW to see if any plans for bio-digesting are being planned.
6. Meet with area schools and businesses to assess their interests.

PROGRESS/RESULTS:

1. Peg and Tracy met with Phil via zoom on January 25. Phil reported back on March 12 that he would be able to service our location for \$175/week. They can only take clean waste and a list of acceptable items plus the totes used were provided. Ideally, they'd like to service weekly, but could possibly do every other. Eventually they will have a de-packager to allow both packaged and bulk food waste. It was thought this was not worth our money or their time and use of resources currently. Tracy contacted Phil again on June 19 to inquire if we could try to get other households, businesses, etc. to join and share the costs/have multiple pick-up points. There has been no response to date.
2. Joe Moore directed us to Cody Schoepke, Superintendent of FDL Wastewater Treatment Facility. Cody is very knowledgeable in relation to our ambitions. Cody provided a presentation at our Earth Day Fair in April.
3. Tracy emailed Sam Kaufman in June to explain our goals and to see if there was any chance we could bring to the county level. Sam replied, "This topic came up once before with the county Finance Committee...they indicated they have no interest in having the county participate in a bio-digester system."
4. Tracy reached out to SustainFDL. They do not have capacity for composting or landfill diversion and are currently evaluating continuation of their organization.
5. Tracy sent Amada Miller, FoodWise Coordinator for UW Extension, an email in May. She replied with much of the information we were already aware of but will let us know if she hears any news.
6. Peg and Tracy would like to schedule meetings with potential partners in late summer and early fall to see if they are interested in landfill diversion efforts too.
7. In October, we received approval to contract with Organix, d.b.a. Denali for every-other-week food waste pick-up services at the Motherhouse. Area sisters, associates and staff will be invited to bring their waste here. The first pick-up was November 11, 2024. The tote has been less than half full with pick-ups. In early December, Tracy sent a reminder to area sisters, associates and staff to please utilize these services or we may request a once monthly service instead of every other week.

Goal 2

Create & Implement Sustainability Guidelines

What will we do?

Create a list of possible measures Sisters, Associates, and Staff can take in their homes, work, and social spaces towards becoming more sustainable.

This addresses portions of the following LSAP goals:

Response to the cry of the Earth; Ecological economics; Adoption of sustainable lifestyles; Ecological education; Ecological spirituality; Community resilience and empowerment

How & when will we do it?

1. Collect resources and create a list with principles for sustainability in the areas of water management, food management, energy management, waste management, materials management, land management, events and education.
2. When the list is finalized, share with sisters, associates, staff, and partners in mission via website, JPIC newsletters and blog posts, community programs, and possibly Reflections and Connections.

PROGRESS/RESULTS:

1. Peg collected several resources and created an extensive list in December 2023.
2. These were shared with the team in January for review.
3. In April, Jeff was asked to review with Maintenance to see what might be possible or what needed to be removed from the list.
4. Sustainability Guidelines have been reviewed by maintenance and will now be taken to Suzanne Flood for review regarding technology purchasing.
5. Sustainability Guidelines have been approved and posted to the CSA site.

Goal 3

Strengthen and Increase Relationships with Sustainability Partners

What will we do?

Educate external audiences (i.e., civic organizations, educational institutions, and the general public) on Laudato Si' goals, share our achievements, and celebrate theirs.

This addresses portions of the following LSAP goals:

Response to the cry of the Earth; Response to the cry of the poor; Ecological economics; Adoption of sustainable lifestyles; Ecological education; Ecological spirituality; Community resilience and empowerment.

How & when will we do it?

This will be an ongoing process year after year and will also include: promoting more Laudato Si' animators, continuing writing letters acknowledging sustainability efforts in the region; and making presentations and sharing work with other communities.

PROGRESS/RESULTS:

1. Earth Day Fair brought in 18 exhibitors and 5 presentations on the subjects of Wastewater treatment, Native planting, the Niagara Escarpment, Winnebago Wild Rice Project, and Merlin/eBird use. Three groups toured the solar array and one group took a full tour of the easement.
2. SMSA and MPTC have both expressed interest in coming to the property for classroom projects.
3. Master Naturalists have been invited to use the property as a space to train future Master Naturalists.
4. Fond du Lac Bird City brought the public to the property during their city-wide event celebrating spring migration.
5. A couple from Milwaukee requested and took an easement tour after finding it on the website.
6. Chelsea created an LSAP poster for Jenny to take to ACWR Conference.
7. In July, Tracy will be meeting with JPIC Promoter from the Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother in Oshkosh regarding our plan and works.
8. Sisters will be presenting an interactive program for St. Mary Springs high school students in January 2025 that will include detailing our environmental goals and achievements.
9. One Master Naturalist visited the property in late spring/early summer.
10. CSA is now on the St. Kateri Conservation Center map at www.kateri.org.

Goal 4

Create Systems to Support Sustainable Lifestyles for CSA Employees

What will we do?

Provide ways to assist and encourage healthy and sustainable lifestyles among employees

This addresses portions of the following LSAP goals:

Response to the cry of the earth; Ecological economics; Adoption of sustainable lifestyles; and Ecological education.

How & when will we do it?

- Install bike racks
- Offer use of showers after exercise
- Provide resources in breakroom that discourage single-use plastics
 - Encourage “homemade” birthday treats versus store bought in plastic packaging
- Continue to promote use of countertop compost bin in breakroom

PROGRESS/RESULTS:

1. A bike rack was installed on May 16.
2. Staff were given permission to use the locker room and given access to towels.
3. Reusable plastic containers are in the staff breakroom to use for “extra food” from events

Goal 5

Create Eco-Spirituality Stations on Property

What will we do?

Provide resources to visitors to encourage eco-spirituality and an understanding of various parts of the land during self-guided tours.

This addresses portions of the following LSAP goals:

Response to the cry of the earth; Response to the cry of the poor; Ecological economics; Adoption of sustainable lifestyles; Ecological education; Ecological spirituality; Community resilience and empowerment

How & when will we do it?

- Provide online and printed guidance on praying the labyrinth
- Create temporary yard signs with QR codes to place around the land during public events.

PROGRESS/RESULTS:

1. A labyrinth brochure was created and is available in a brochure rack near the labyrinth and distributed at public events when CSA has a presence.
2. Web pages were developed with detailed information about various locations on the land. Yard signs were created with QR codes that take the user to the relevant information when scanned.

Goal 6

Finalize & Implement a Land Management Plan

What will we do?

Finalize and Implement a Land Management Plan.

This addresses portions of the following LSAP goals:

Response to the cry of the earth; Ecological economics

How & when will we do it?

- Partner with Green Fire LLC to develop the land management plan.

PROGRESS/RESULTS:

1. Miles Thompson, from Green Fire LLC, has indicated that the plan will be ready by the end of July. The plan will help maintenance determine priorities and timeline for land management for the next three years.
2. The land management plan was finalized. Jeff and Sister Lael presented it to the Laudato Si' Action Team at their October 30, 2024 meeting. It will be used to create year 4 goals.

Additional Year 3 Actions

- Sister Trish, LS Animator, writes stories for the RC and Associate blogs
- On December 19, 2024, members of the LSAT will offer a pizza party with year-end conversations on CSA's plan, personal actions, Laudato Si' goals, and brainstorm for 2025.
- We are aware of potentially two people interested in the animator training for 2025.
- Responsive to needs of local wildlife on property – ducks, geese, chickens, owl.
- Banded 5 kestrel chicks for monitoring with Cedar Grove Ornithological Research Center
- Installed new culvert for farmer access to fields
- Sisters and staff volunteers for Glacial Lakes Conservancy fundraiser for water conservation and education
- Two Adopt-a-Highway pick-up days.
- Motherhouse site for day-old bread purchase
- Season of Creation / St. Francis Day prayer service at Court and Center