



HOLY SPIRIT PARISH, GUNGAHLIN

ON THE LAND OF THE
NGUNNAWAL AND NGAMBRI PEOPLE

LAUDATO SI' ACTION PLAN

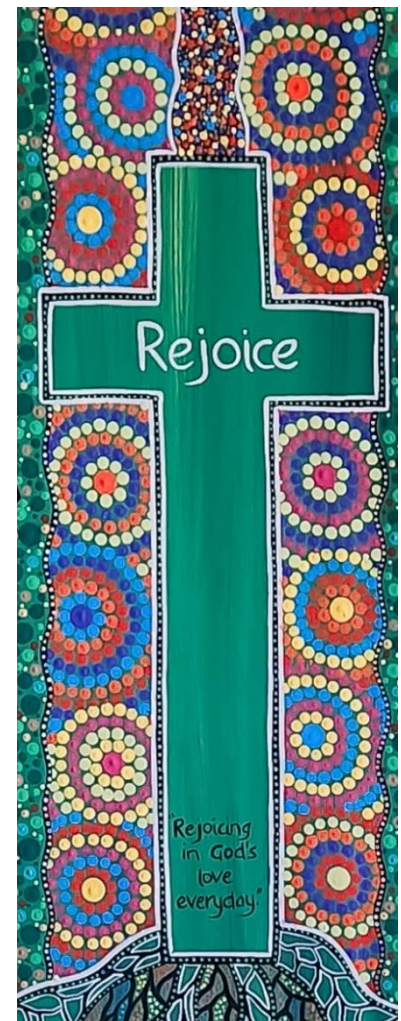
INTRODUCTION

The Holy Spirit Parish in Gungahlin is part of the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn, which includes Canberra, the national capital of Australia. The parish covers 18 suburbs of Canberra with a population of over 80,000; nearly 16,000 of whom identify as Catholic. It also serves three primary schools and one high school.

In 2015, Pope Francis issued his encyclical *Laudato Si'; On Care for Our Common Home*, in which he condemned the way we had treated the Earth and all God's creatures. He explained why it is central to our faith to care for and nurture all of God's creation, especially the poor and the vulnerable. In 2021 he issued the *Laudato Si'* Action Platform and invited all catholic communities and people to commit to achieving the seven *Laudato Si'* goals in seven years.

This *Laudato Si'* Action Plan is based on wide consultation by the Holy Spirit Social Justice Group. A primary source of local parish and community input was the Caring for Creation Conference hosted by the parish in September 2022, which involved many of its own parishioners and participants from across the Archdiocese.

This Action Plan is based on the outcomes of that conference and builds on the background and principles outlined in Canberra and Goulburn Archdiocese's *Laudato Si'* Reflection, a descriptive document with which the Archdiocese signed onto the *Laudato Si'* Action Platform in 2022.



VISION

As far back as the Rio Summit of 1992, the Church started asking the hard questions about our environment; about God's creation. It was Pope John Paul II who first called for "ecological conversion" – a radical shift in the way we see ourselves - and the rest of God's creation.

Pope Francis' Encyclical of 2015, *Laudato Si'*, is essential to our mission of bringing people to know God's saving power in the world today. This is by understanding the goodness of God's creation, by caring for our common home and by nurturing all of God's creation and bringing abundant life to the most vulnerable.

In the words of Pope Francis, 'there is an inseparable bond between concern for nature, justice for the poor, commitment to society, and interior peace' (*Laudato Si'* paragraph 10). *Laudato Si'* connects God, the Earth and Humanity as One – all on the same, shared journey.

To put it simply: The Cry of the Earth IS the Cry of the Poor. We can even say: The Earth has become one of the poor.

BACKGROUND

In our country, Australia, we have experienced years of natural calamities - which science tells us are clear signs of global warming – drought, heat waves, dust storms, ferocious and destructive bushfires, hailstorms and record breaking floods. Scientific links between a stressed natural environment and the global pandemic are also emerging.

In February 2023, the Catholic Bishops Conference of Oceania agreed that:

“the unique face of Oceania has called us together for deeper ecological conversion and to respond from the heart. Embracing the teaching of *Laudato Si'* and the challenge of integral ecology, we recognise that our economic systems need to be in balance with the pulse of life”.



Australian church leadership called us to action in 2022 through Decree 8 of the Plenary Council by:

- a. recognising the sacred duty to care for and protect the Earth as a common home for all God's creatures, including the generations to come;
- b. encouraging all Catholic people, families, parishes, dioceses,to accept Pope Francis' invitation to join the *Laudato Si'* Action Platform and either develop *Laudato Si'* Action Plans, or participate in existing *Laudato Si'* Action Plans, as a vehicle for their ecological conversion; and
- c. promoting initiatives in Church and society which promote and defend human life from conception to natural death, especially those who are most vulnerable.

The Decree also identifies the essential elements of a *Laudato Si'* Action Plan: including a public commitment; a governance model, processes and procedures; a mechanism for listening to the ecological wisdom of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, and regular reporting on progress towards, and accountability for, defined goals and objectives.

Inspired by *Laudato Si'*, our parish seeks to engage others and work towards effective, practical responses to the ecological crisis by caring for our common home.

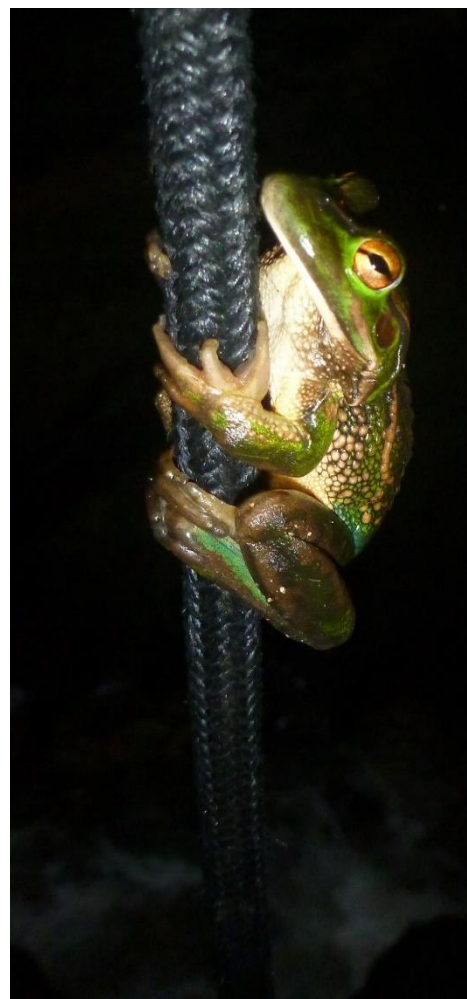
COMMITMENT

The 2022 Caring for Creation Conference identified three fundamental factors necessary to respond to the seven goals of *Laudato Si'* in a positive and effective way. These are:

Education: firstly, to understand the meaning of Integral Ecology; to get the big picture of God's wondrous creation and how everything is connected. Secondly, to learn how to live modest and sustainable lives.

Leadership: especially by our church leaders, to implement those practices which will benefit the Earth and the poor.

Good communication: using homilies, reflections, liturgies, music and teaching opportunities to introduce and explain why integral ecology is so important to our faith and what steps we can take as individuals and as a parish community to respond to the cry of the Earth.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In the spirit of *Laudato Si'*, the guiding principles behind this action plan are:

- Respect for all of God's creation, including the generations to come.
- Synodality, listening deeply and respectfully to one another and to the Earth.
- Walking together, while also seeking the wisdom and advice of our First Nations sisters and brothers, our multicultural communities and our young people.
- Positive action leading to measurable change.

AREAS OF FOCUS

The first *Laudato Si'* Action Plan of the Holy Spirit Parish will focus on three key areas:

Ecological Education

Ecological Spirituality

Ecological Economics and Sustainable, Intentional Lifestyles

These focus areas will encourage immediate action across all Parish entities, and our schools, emphasising:

1. "Reduce, Recycle and Reuse" strategies;
2. a greater understanding of integral ecology; and
3. what it means for each of us in faith and life.

These three goals can significantly impact on all seven *Laudato Si'* goals and help set the baseline for more effective actions in the future. The extended goals of *Laudato Si'*, for example, ethical investment strategies, may be better handled at Diocesan level.

To genuinely fulfil the requirements of Plenary Council Decree 8, (Article 1 (c), in reference to partnership with our first nations sisters and brothers, one of our first steps must include deep and respectful listening to their voices and perspectives. We also seek a synodal relationship with our multicultural communities to develop our parish wisdom together.





HOLY SPIRIT GOALS

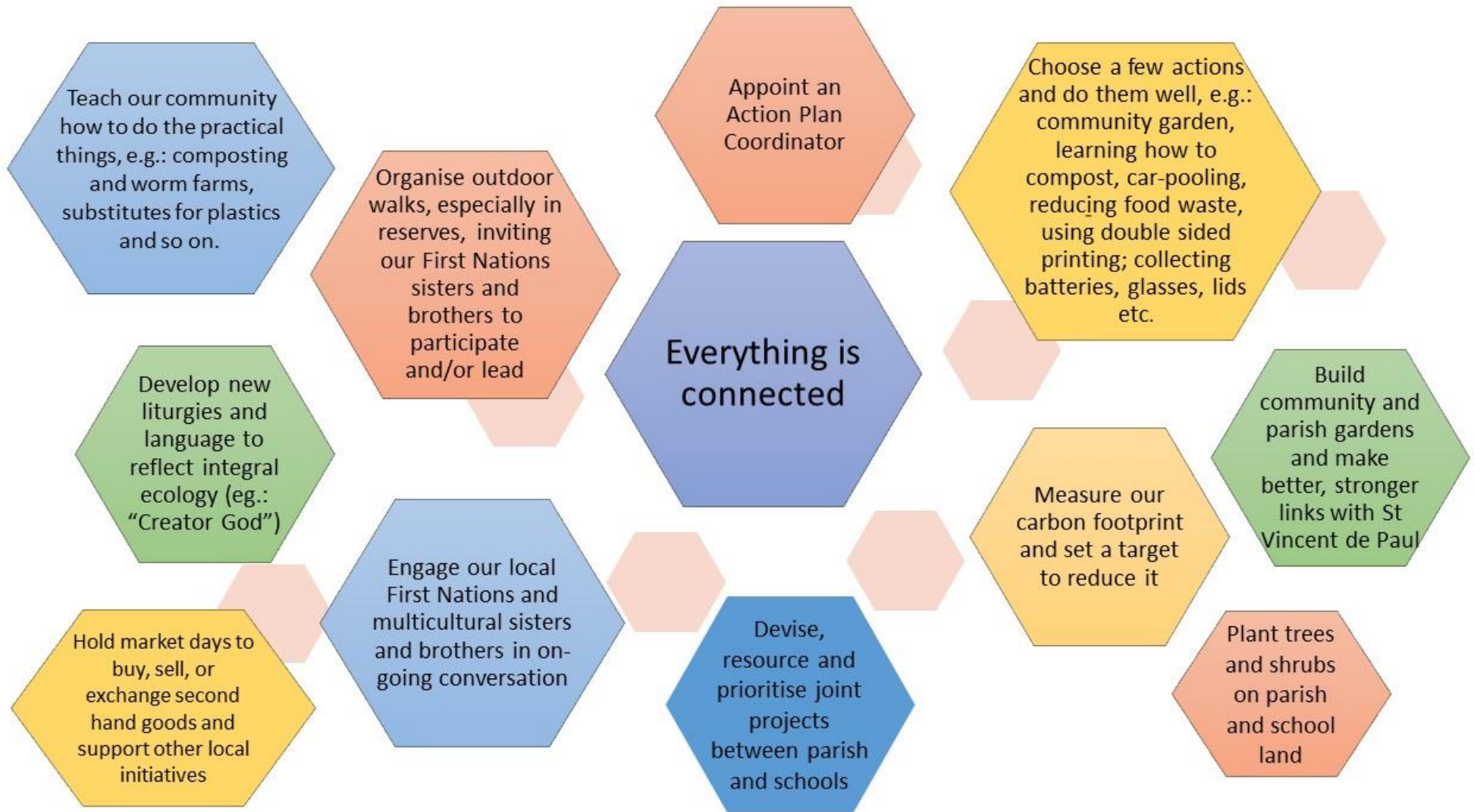
Specific objectives that are measurable and achievable for the Parish, as advised by the Caring for Creation Conference 2022 include:

1. Achieve a net-zero carbon footprint by 2030 and go net-positive by 2035.
2. Embed integral ecology thinking and action in our Parish and school culture.
3. Walk together with our First Nations peoples, respecting and learning from their spirituality and deep attachment to the land. Support and promote their right to a Voice in Parliament, the parish and the Archdiocese.
4. Create and walk a synodal path with each other, our ecumenical and multicultural communities and First Nations peoples to care for God's creation, including all God's creatures, each other, (especially the most vulnerable) and the Earth itself.



EVERYTHING IS CONNECTED

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT ACTION PLAN:



Laudato Si' Goal	PARISH GOAL	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7
Sustainable Lifestyles	By 2030 or sooner: Achieve carbon neutrality in our parish operations.	Using the Diocesan tool, measure carbon footprint of parish entities.	Prepare, consult, and publish strategies on how to reduce carbon footprints. Work synodally with St Vincent de Paul	Contribute to developing the circular economy in parish entities; <u>act to Reduce, Recycle, Reuse</u>	Collect & publish mid-term report; Review progress to determine next steps			
Sustainable Lifestyles	By 2028: In solidarity, identify & invite one or more parishes hard hit by global warming and climate change to twin with HSP	Invite our schools to join us in making connections these parishes.						
Sustainable Lifestyles	By 2026: Establish sustainable gardening principles across the parish By 2027: Provide EV charging ports within parish car park By 2030: Convert parish cars to EVs with charging infrastructure	Develop and share the principles of sustainable gardening. Devise business plan to install EV charging ports.	Circulate information on sustainable living, promoting models already operating.	Unite with local & ecumenical communities on shared projects, e.g.: book clubs, sustainability markets, info days, seminars, conferences and video nights.				

Laudato Si' Goal	Parish Goal	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7
Ecological Education	By 2025: At least two homilies or Reflections on Laudato Si' and Integral Ecology each year	Identify or develop a range of materials and activities to promote and continue to engage our community	Support clergy by researching notes for homilies and reflections.	Support our REC and Children's Liturgy teachers in their development of integral ecology materials for schools, teachers and students.	Collect & publish mid-term report; Review progress to determine next steps			

Ecological Spirituality	Extend the Season of Creation (Sept) to become a month of action and celebration. Deepen relationship with first Nations sisters and brothers. Conduct at least one Aboriginal Mass in parish each year.	Invite parishioners who identify as Aboriginal to meet with parish leadership. Develop joint projects with our schools to demonstrate that "everything is connected"	Share liturgy materials with parish and schools Develop joint projects with Youth Council and Youth Ministers to celebrate Season of Creation	Develop C4C walks on local country accompanied by FN elders if agreeable. Examine opportunities to combine above with a LS retreat.	Collect & publish mid-term report; Review progress to determine next steps			
--------------------------------	--	---	--	--	--	--	--	--

DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO IN THE ACTION PLAN

Pope Francis, 2015, *Encyclical Letter Laudato Si' of the Holy Father, Francis, on Care for our Common Home*, St Pauls, Strathfield, NSW. Also available online at <https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html>

The Catholic Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn Care for Creation movement, 2021, *Reflection on Laudato Si' goals*, Laudato Si' ACT website, <<https://www.care4creation.org/>>

Dicastery for Promoting Human Development, 2021, *Laudato si Action Platform*, <<https://laudatosiactionplatform.org/>>

Dicastery for Promoting Human Development, 2021, *Seven goals of Laudato Si'*, Laudato Si' Action Platform website, <<https://www.laudatosi.org/laudato-si/laudato-si-goals/>>

Federation of Catholic Bishops' Conferences of Oceania (FCBCO), 2023 *The oceans of the world are interwoven with the future hopes of all people*, CathNews, <<https://cathnews.com/~documents/media-releases/media-releases-2023/230210-fcbco-bishops-will-carry-shared-mission-home-from-oceania-assembly/?layout=default>>

Hindmarsh, Trish, 2022, *Ecological spirituality: caring for our common home*, Garratt, Mulgrave, Vic.

Laudato Si' Movement, 2023, *Laudato si Movement website*, <<https://laudatosimovement.org/>>

Office of Justice Ecology and Peace, 2021 *Social Justice Statement, 2021-22: Cry of the earth, Cry of the Poor*, Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, <<https://socialjustice.catholic.org.au/2021/09/24/social-justice-statement-2021-22/>>

Plenary Council, 2022, *The second general assembly of the fifth council of Australia: Plenary Council Decrees*, Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference, <<https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/>>