



PASSIONISTS OF HOLY CROSS PROVINCE



2024-25

LAUDATO SI' ACTION PLAN
1ST YEAR PLAN

Published August 16, 2024



Our Commitment

On September 28, 2021, the Passionist Congregation made a public commitment to join the worldwide Catholic community's response to Pope Francis' appeal to participate in a seven-year journey toward sustainability and integral ecology, by implementing the seven Laudato Si' Action Platform (LSAP) Goals.

Since 2021, we in Holy Cross Province have worked to implement all seven of the LSAP goals, with special emphasis on Ecological Education. Our particular focus for 2024-25 is implementing the LSAP goals in the institutions of the Province.

As we have strived to implement the LSAP Goals, we have valued the synodal process of listening and discerning with the Spirit, led by the Province's Laudato Si' Team (LST) which was formed after our Province's 2019 Chapter. We are grateful to have experienced the deepening of relationships and the sense of interconnectedness that is crucial to living our charism and the integral ecology of Laudato Si'.

For each of the LSAP goals, we will report on our Province's progress since 2021, and then give our plan for 2024-2025 for that goal.

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Solidarity is a contemporary expression of commitment for the common good but it demands from us a sense of sacrifice and a generosity in self-giving....we are all linked to one another and we must relate with one another in solidarity.

~Superior General's Report
to the XVI General Synod





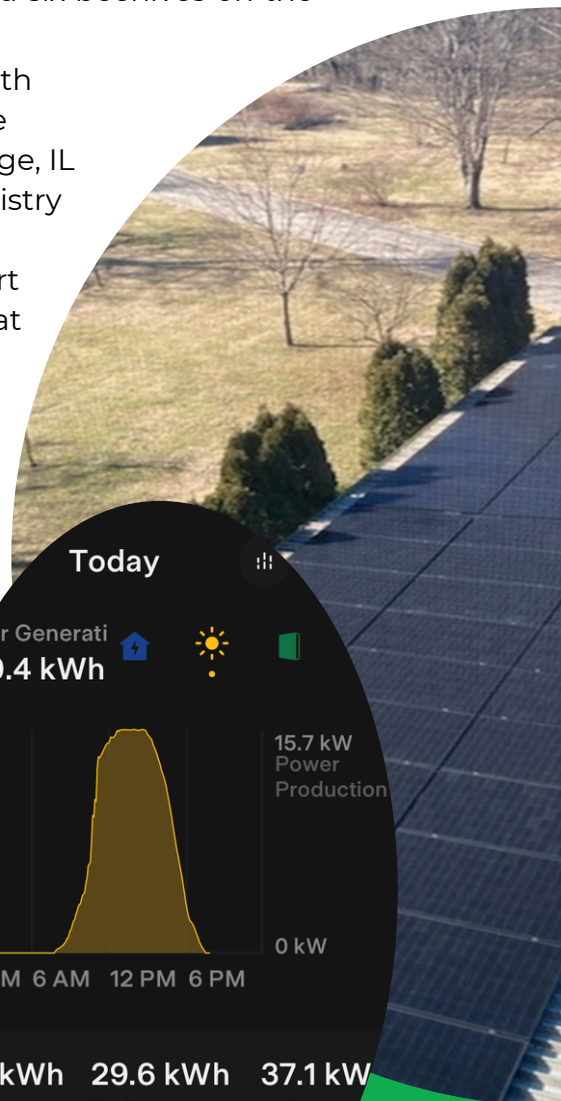
Cry of Earth

What we have done

- In February 2022, sixty solar panels were installed on a carport at Sacred Heart Monastery in Louisville, Kentucky, which power a section of the building. Also, Mater Dolorosa Passionist Retreat Center in Sierra Madre, CA will finish their installation of panels that will meet all their electricity needs in 2025.
- Several retreat centers and other communities have completed upgrades (e.g., LED lighting, insulated windows, water coolers). St. Paul of the Cross Passionist Retreat Center in Detroit is saving tens of thousands of gallons of water each year through installation of a new air conditioning system. They are also diverting groundwater from a nearby river, using a rain barrel, native plants, and rain gardens at the retreat center. The retreat center has also added six beehives on the back of the property.
- In October 2023, the Province began working with Catholic Energies, a program of Catholic Climate Covenant. The provincial office's roof in Park Ridge, IL is being prepared for solar panels and three ministry sites are also being considered for solar panels.
- Many lay members of the Passionist family report energy saving and water saving improvements at their homes.

Plans for 2024-25

- Continue the work begun with Catholic Energies and other contractors to install solar energy systems, and upgrade energy efficiency at Provincial properties.
- Mater Dolorosa Retreat Center in California will complete their solar installation.
- Increase sustainable building and land use practices by meeting with retreat center board members and Province administrators to celebrate what has been done already, and encourage more improvements.
- Celebrate and encourage more domestic energy and water savings.





Cry of the Poor



Community Investment

Each year the Province commits 1% of its financial resources to community investment projects.



Migration

The Province created a Migration Commission in 2023, which is working to support migrants and refugees in our local communities.

In our prayers and presentations, we uplift the plight of climate migrants who left their homes because of the consequences of global warming. Three retreat centers in the province have supported local organizations that serve migrants and refugees, including providing space for meetings and soliciting donations.



Hunger & Food Sovereignty

We address hunger by advocating for food sovereignty through the buying of local and organic foods and adopting a plant-based diet. And, since 2020, Mater Dolorosa Passionist Retreat Center in Sierra Madre, CA has provided over 100,000 nutritious meals to communities of vulnerable seniors, families, migrants, and those without a home.



Plans for 2024

Continue the work of the commissions and programs above.



Sr. Thea Bowman Society

St. Agnes Parish, Louisville, KY

Members of the Sr. Thea Bowman Society sell fair trade goods to raise money for the Society's racial solidarity work (left).

Advocacy on the Ground

Standing with front line communities

Fr. Alex Steinmiller, CP and members of the Passionist Family in Detroit advocated for stronger limits to particulate pollution in 2023 (right).





Ecological Economics

What we have done

- A Sustainable Purchasing Guide developed for the Province was presented at the Provincial Chapter in June 2023. The guide, available at passionist.org, provides rationale for purchasing considering the Passionist charism and best practices of sustainability, and explains the circular economy.
- Holy Cross Province has had a longstanding partnership with Christian Brothers Investment Services (CBIS) which invests 30% of the Province's financial assets in Socially Responsible Investing, including some impact investments. CBIS is intentional in implementing "Mensuram Bonam", Faith-Based Measures for Catholic Investors: A Starting Point and Call to Action, released by the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences.

Plans for 2024-25

- Educate across the Passionist Family on "Greening our Finances" through banking, investment and insurance choices.
- Meet with retreat center board members and Province administrators to encourage and celebrate sustainable purchasing practices in their ministries.
- Challenge members of the lay Passionist community, especially members of the Alumni Group, to align their banking, savings, and investments with Laudato Si' principles.

CBIS Shareholder Advocacy Wins

CBIS led investors in support of California's Garment Worker Protection Act, which improves working conditions for the state's

45,000
garment
workers.



The Geo Group conducted a human rights impact assessment of its prisons and detention centers with

102 secure facilities,
82,000 beds, and
18,000 employees.

The Southern Company committed to just energy transition principles impacting

their 27,000
employees serving
9 million
customers.





Simple Lifestyles

● Sustainable Purchasing Guide

The Sustainable Purchasing Guide released in June 2023 gives alternatives to purchases of plastic, styrofoam, etc. and encourages recycling and re-use. Some ministry sites and individuals have adopted sustainable purchasing.



● Composting

Encouraged composting throughout the Passionist Family. Lay members report composting in their homes and the St. Vincent Strambi Community in Chicago purchased an outdoor composter.



● Sustainable Meetings

We have opted for more meetings using Zoom in place of in-person meetings.



Plans for 2024-25

- Continue the above, encouraging expanded use of the Sustainable Purchasing Guide as a guide to simple lifestyles.
- Encourage more simple lifestyles by uplifting stories of Passionist family members who have found creative ways to live simply.



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*The present
is not a time for
desperation but for
hopeful activity.*”

~Fr. Thomas Berry, CP
The Great Work, p. 19



Ecological Education

What we have done

- At the initiative of the Passionist General, Fr. Joachim Rego, CP, *Passion of Earth, Wisdom of the Cross*, a series of six booklets has been developed, with significant contributions from members of Holy Cross Province, for the entire Passionist order (available at www.passiochristi.org). Each booklet explains a chapter of *Laudato Si'*, considering the Passionist charism. Each one also has a topic related to implementation of the LSAP Goals. A few ministry sites and communities in our Province have used the booklets for group discussions, and LST has conducted six online discussions for the first three of the booklets.
- The LST has led interactive presentations on *Laudato Si'* at the Provincial Assemblies in 2022 and 2024, and at pre-Chapter meetings and the Chapter in 2023.
- Since 2021, the LST has offered a Lenten program for the Province, as well as weekly reflections for Advent 2023.
- The Passionist Earth and Spirit Center in Louisville, KY (www.earthandspiritcenter.org) offers Earth literacy classes, and environmental justice education year-round, as well as ecological restoration projects on their 27-acre campus.
- Through newsletters, social media posts, the provincial assemblies, and articles in the monthly Provincial newsletter, the LST educates about the many ways to implement the LSAP Goals.
- Conducted a five-week Passionist Family Movie Club in 2024, using *Laudato Si'*-themed films.

Plans for 2024-25

- Continue to pray-study-act together with the *Passion of Earth, Wisdom of the Cross* booklets at ministry sites, local communities, and in online sharings.
- Continue to highlight voices of community members and LSAP stories in the Passionist family: to celebrate LSAP successes, to inspire more action, and to share resources, through vehicles mentioned above.
- Submit *Laudato Si'* and LSAP content for the Province's Lent and Advent programs.
- Continue other work above.





Ecological Spirituality

What we have done

- Holy Cross Province celebrated the Season of Creation in 2023 through daily online reflections. Two parishes in the province held special liturgies, one for the first time and another for the third year.
- In 2023, the Passionist Solidarity Network (the JPIC entity for Holy Cross and St. Paul of the Cross provinces jointly) purchased Brother Michael Moran, CP's painting "Passion of the Earth", inspired by Thomas Berry, CP. The painting portrays the environmental degradation created by the human community as an expression of the suffering of the Crucified One - the Crucified Earth (see page 8). It beautifully portrays the interconnectedness of Creation and the ecological challenges of our time and has stimulated conversations as to how we might respond. The painting was featured at the Holy Cross Provincial Chapter in June 2023 and Assembly in 2024 and is now on display and reflection at ministry and community sites.
- In all our activities, meetings, and presentations, we offer prayers and reflections that support ecological conversion. At the Provincial Chapter in June 2023, prayer times were outside as much as possible.



Plans for 2024-25

- Celebrate Season of Creation 2024 again as a Province and promote it in additional local ministries (retreat centers, parishes, and schools).
- Continue displaying "Passion of the Earth" with reflections in Provincial institutions.
- Increase outdoor prayer experiences and spaces.
- Develop and disseminate educational tools for Laudato Si-inspired prayer services and liturgies, including the Green Mass.





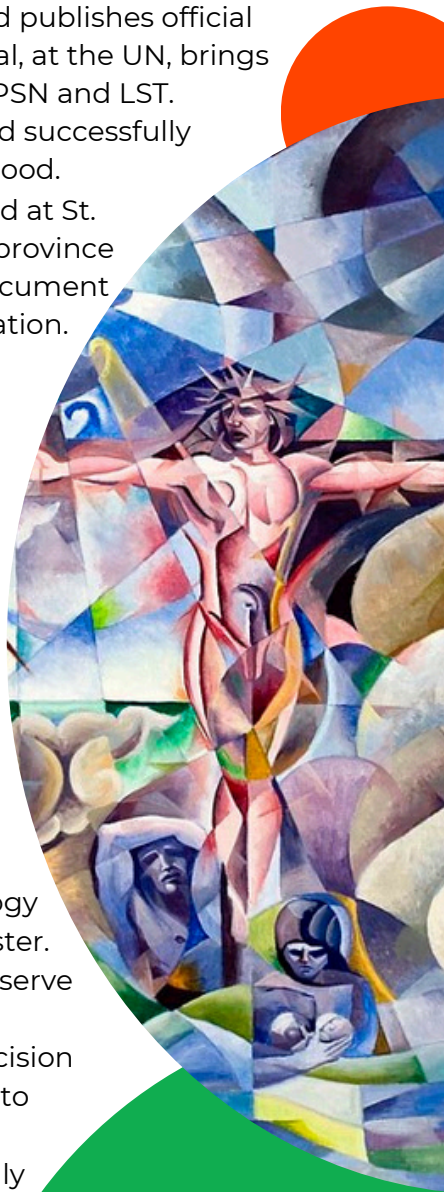
Community Resilience & Empowerment

What we have done

- The LST worked with *In Solidarity* (part of Catholic Climate Covenant) to facilitate our advocacy with the EPA in 2023. Members of the LST have served on committees with the Adrian Dominican Sisters, and also facilitated a Laudato Si' retreat for the Spiritan community in 2022.
- To advocate for safe air quality, we asked the EPA for stronger regulations in 2023. One vowed member gave live testimony to the EPA and another vowed member penned an op-ed and spoke at a press conference in Michigan. Press coverages were local and in the National Catholic Reporter.
- The Passionist Solidarity Network (JPIC) adds our Province to sign-on letters to policy/decision makers regarding integral ecology issues and publishes official Provincial responses to news events. Passionists International, at the UN, brings a global perspective and opportunities for engagement via PSN and LST.
- Members of the Passionist community in Houston advocated successfully against a cement crushing plant in a low-income neighborhood.
- The Sr. Thea Bowman Society for Racial Solidarity was formed at St. Agnes Passionist parish in Louisville, KY. in 2021. In 2022 the province created the Cultural and Racial Diversity Committee. The document produced by the committee is used for education and formation. Also, in June 2023, 85 attendees at the Provincial Chapter participated in 12 hours of training in diversity and inclusion.
- *Our Earth Now*, a youth leadership training group, is sponsored by the Passionist Earth and Spirit Center in Louisville, KY. They perform community service and advocacy projects in the greater Louisville area.
- In 2023, Holy Family and St. Mary's Passionist parishes in Birmingham, AL held an Earth Day advocacy event with a state legislator and the local watershed organization. The parishes have long been involved in The Village Creek Society, which works to protect and improve the Village Creek Watershed.

Plans for 2024-25

- Continue to collaborate with local partners on integral ecology issues affecting the communities in which we live and minister.
- Migration Committee representatives in local communities serve and advocate for migrants in their areas.
- Continue to add our Province to sign-on letters to policy/decision makers and make and disseminate statements responding to compelling issues.
- Find more opportunities for members of the Passionist family to witness at the local level to integral ecology (immigration, environmental justice, and equity).
- Encourage members of the Passionist family and those at our ministry sites to take the Laudate Deum Pledge at the Catholic Climate Covenant.



For more information, contact:

Patty Gillis,
pjgillis48@gmail.com
or Lissa Romell,
lissa@passionist.org