THE ROMAN CATHOLIC
DIOCESE OF PHOENIX



2027 Laudato Si'
Action Plan

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Most Rev. John Dolan, Bishop of Phoenix Diocese Statement on Care for Creation

"The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, the world and those who dwell therein." (Psalm 24:1)



When Pope Francis published *Laudato Si'* in 2015, he offered the Church a renewed vision of our vocation as stewards of God's creation. He reminded us that our common home is not simply a resource to be used, but *a gift to be received with gratitude, protected with wisdom, and handed on with love*. Some of my most prayerful moments have been spent contemplating the beauty of God's creation here in Arizona—standing before the majesty of the Grand Canyon, walking among the pines of Flagstaff, marveling at the red rocks of Sedona, or watching the morning light illuminate the Sonoran Desert with its towering saguaro cacti and remarkable wildlife. These moments of wonder draw us closer to the Creator and remind us that creation is not separate from our faith, but *one of the ways God reveals His goodness and invites us into communion with Him*.

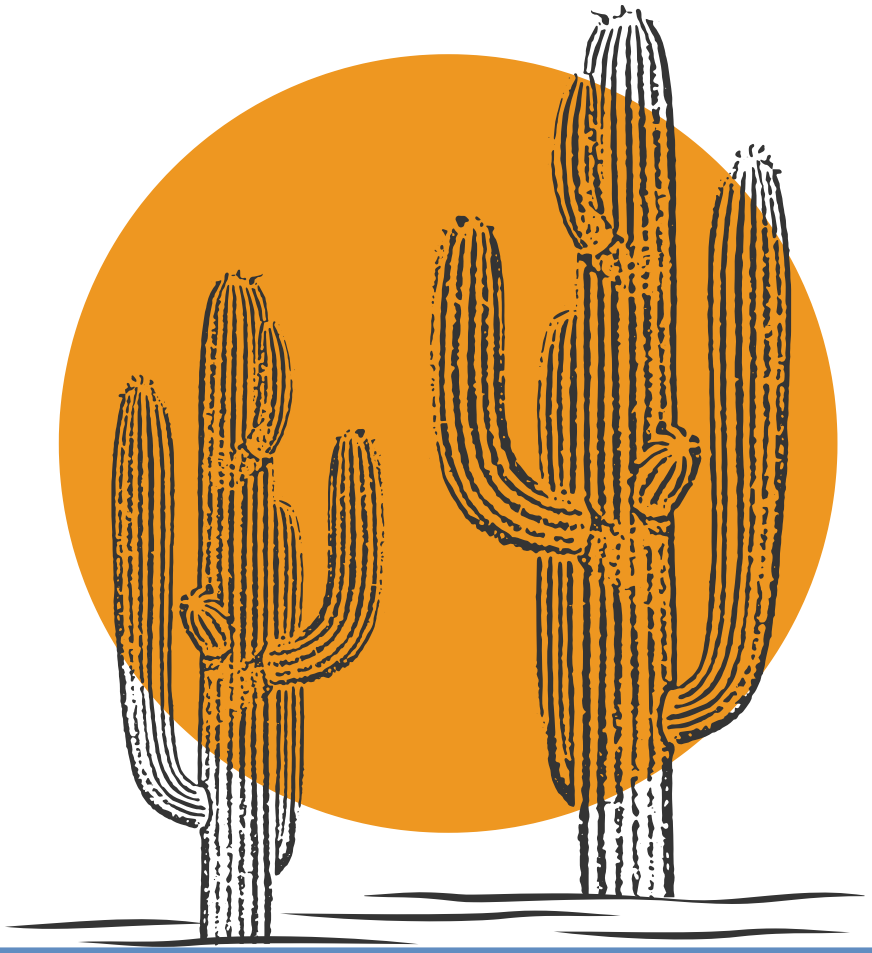
The **Diocese of Phoenix's Laudato Si' Action Plan** is an important expression of that vocation. Sacred Scripture teaches that humanity was placed in the garden "to cultivate and care for it" (Genesis 2:15), *reminding us that care for creation and care for one another are inseparable*. Our concern for the environment flows from our love for God and our respect for the dignity of every human person. Living in Arizona, we are blessed with

extraordinary natural gifts, even as we face the realities of drought, dust storms, flooding, wildfires, and air pollution. These challenges call us to exercise faithful stewardship with prudence, humility, and hope.

I encourage every parish, school, ministry, family, and individual throughout the Diocese of Phoenix to embrace this Laudato Si' Action Plan with generosity and confidence. Together, may we grow in gratitude for the gifts God has entrusted to us, care responsibly for our common home, and bear witness to the Creator whose wisdom and love are reflected in all that He has made. In doing so, we leave to future generations not only a healthier environment, but also a deeper appreciation for the God who declared creation "very good" (Genesis 1:31).

May God bless you and keep you,

+ John P. Dolan



Diocese of Phoenix Profile and Laudati Si' Action Plan Background

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Phoenix consists of 95 parishes, 24 missions, 29 elementary schools, 7 high schools, 4 universities, 1 seminary, with more than 2 million Catholics making this diverse, vibrant, and faith-filled diocese their home. Guided by Bishop John Dolan, the Diocese of Phoenix is one of the fastest growing dioceses in the United States with over a half a million new parishioners joining in just the last 10 years, making this the second largest diocese in the U.S. Founded on December 2, 1969, the Diocese of Phoenix is comprised of Mohave, Coconino (except Navajo Indian Reservation), Yavapai, and Maricopa Counties, and the Gila Indian Reservation in the State of Arizona for a total of nearly 44,000 square miles.

The Diocese of Phoenix joined the United State Conference of Catholic Bishops' Laudato Si' Leadership Cohort in January of 2026. Now, with the Laudato Si' Action Plan published, the Office of Mission Advancement, in collaboration with other diocesan offices and the faithful of the Diocese of Phoenix, will oversee the implementation of this plan over the next several years.







Goal 1: Response to the Cry of the Earth

Initiative: Transform Diocesan spaces into Laudato Si' habitat

> ***Saint Francis, faithful to Scripture, invites us to see nature as a magnificent book in which God speaks to us and grants us a glimpse of his infinite beauty and goodness. 'Through the greatness and the beauty of creatures one comes to know by analogy their maker.' (Wis 13:5); indeed, 'his eternal power and divinity have been made known through his works since the creation of the world' (Rom 1:20)... Rather than a problem to be solved, the world is a joyful mystery to be contemplated with gladness and praise. (Laudato Si', 12)***

In the Diocese of Phoenix, we recognize and give thanks to God for the diverse and beautiful creation of Arizona. With our offices located in the fifth largest city in the United States, we understand the gifts and challenges that urbanization can bring. We are grateful for the growth in our diocese, leading us to be the second largest diocese in the U.S. With this growth comes a heightened responsibility to the gifts God has called us to steward, including the environment.

To enhance our stewardship of creation in an urban environment, we are committing to a multiyear plan focused on evaluating the current state of the Diocesan Pastoral Center outdoor spaces. We have the privilege of understanding first hand that the desert is not a "problem to be solved" but a source of knowing God. Our initiative to transform Diocesan grounds into a Laudato Si' habitat ensures outdoor spaces are designed with native species that contribute to the Phoenix environment and incorporate spiritual elements. In the middle of bustling downtown Phoenix, our public and private spaces will serve as a spiritual oasis in an urban jungle.

Goal 2: Ecological Economics

Initiative: Facilitate a diocesan energy audit

> ***In Laudato Si', Francis provided the first significant systematic treatment of the environmental crisis in a social Encyclical, demonstrating that it is not an isolated issue, but rather the ecological aspect of the contemporary socio-economic crisis. (Magnifica Humanitas, 43)***

With a generous gift from Catholic Energies, an initiative of the Catholic Climate Covenant, the Diocese of Phoenix will perform an assessment on 5-10 buildings within the Diocese of Phoenix. This will include the Diocesan Pastoral Center, churches, schools, and seminary buildings.

This assessment will allow us to greater understand our environmental footprint, building systems, financial benefits, and more. Our understandings will guide updates made to our buildings as well as decisions made in the construction or renovation of future buildings.

Goal 3: Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles

Initiative: Enhance sustainability at diocesan offices

> ***He asks us to replace consumption with sacrifice, greed with generosity, wastefulness with a spirit of sharing, an asceticism which "entails learning to give, and not simply to give up. It is a way of loving, of moving gradually away from what I want to what God's world needs. It is liberation from fear, greed and compulsion. (Laudato Si', 9)***

The Diocese of Phoenix initiative to enhance sustainability practices at the Diocesan Pastoral Center will consist of five phases:

1. Evaluate the current recycling system.
2. Pastoral Center wide education on best recycling practices including why we should recycle, what can be recycled, and more.
3. Education that introduces composting to the diocesan offices through lunch and learning, posters, emails, and more.
4. Install a composting system in collaboration with a local composting service provider.
5. Continue education and initiatives in the Diocesan Pastoral Center around recycling, composting, and other sustainability practices.

Goal 4: Ecological Education

Initiative: Facilitate the Catholic Social Teaching Cohort

> ***We must be faithful to the truth, invest in education, cultivate relationships and love justice and peace. (Magnifica Humanitas, 236)***

The diocesan led Catholic Social Teaching Cohort invites two to three leaders from five parishes to engage in six courses based on the USCCB document *Communities of Salt and Light*. Parishes participating in the cohort will be eligible for a CST grant from the Diocese of Phoenix to help with their social ministry. The program has two primary goals:

1. Help parishes "build local communities of faith where our social teaching is central, not fringe; where social ministry is integral, not optional; where it is the work of every believer, not just the mission of a few committed people and committees." (*Communities of Salt and Light,* 7).
2. Equip parish leaders with the tools necessary to promote the mission of love, justice, freedom, and peace as a community. Within 6 months of completing the cohort, members will need to have revitalized or created a new program within the parish that supports making social ministry an integral part of parish life.

Goal 5: Ecological Spirituality

Initiative: Host a Pilgrimage for Creation

> ***The universe unfolds in God, who fills it completely. Hence, there is a mystical meaning to be found in a leaf, in a mountain trail, in a dewdrop, in a poor person's face. (Laudato Si', 233)***

Living in one of the most biodiverse states in the U.S, parishioners in the Diocese of Phoenix have a unique opportunity to experience the glory of God in this diversity. Through the Pilgrimage for Creation, participants will have the opportunity to ground themselves in creation and experience "*every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the seas, everything in the universe, cry out: 'To the one who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor, glory and might, forever and ever.'*" (Revelation 5:13).

This day long pilgrimage in will be rooted in hope for the future of creation and appreciation for the gifts God has given us in creation. It will also provide an opportunity for participants to grow a deeper connection with each other, remembering that we too are part of creation and are all interconnected.

Goal 6: Community Resilience and Empowerment

Initiative: Diocesan Care for Creation Committee

> ***In the meantime, we come together to take charge of this home which has been entrusted to us, knowing that all good which exists here will be taken up into the heavenly feast. (Laudato Si', 244)***

The Diocese of Phoenix Care for Creation Committee will assist in the implementation of the Laudato Si' Action Plan. To do so they will take both advisory and active roles. The Care for Creation Committee will consist of lay leaders, religious, and clergy from around the Diocese of Phoenix.

The committee will intentionally consist of people from diverse backgrounds, experiences, locations, and more. The goal of this diversity is to make sure that the Laudato Si' Action Plan meets the needs of the Diocese of Phoenix, not just the agenda of a few.

Goal 7: Response to the Cry of the Poor

Initiative: Pastoral Center Staff Day at St. Vincent de Paul

> ***Today, however, we have to realize that a true ecological approach always becomes a social approach; it must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, so as to hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor. (Laudato Si', 49)***

The Diocese of Phoenix is grateful for the work the Society of St. Vincent de Paul does throughout Arizona to support those facing poverty. Located just a few miles from St. Vincent de Paul's main campus, the Diocese of Phoenix staff hava a great opportunity to volunteer with one of the many services provided by St. Vincent de Paul.

In 2027, the Diocese of Phoenix will offer two staff volunteer days at St. Vincent de Paul's main campus. These volunteer days will provide the opportunity to help SVdP grow fresh food, assist those seeking heat relief, and more. This volunteer day will be based in spiritual exercises that emphasize the connection of the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.

Conclusion

> ***In the meantime, we come together to take charge of this home which has been entrusted to us, knowing that all the good which exists here will be taken up into the heavenly feast. In union with all creatures, we journey through this land seeking God, for "if the world has a beginning and if it has been created, we must enquire who gave it this beginning, and who was its Creator".[172] Let us sing as we go. May our struggles and our concern for this planet never take away the joy of our hope. (Laudato Si', 244)***

As we conclude the Diocese of Phoenix's first ever Laudato Si' Action Plan, we wish to echo Pope Francis' call to be stewards of our common home, seek God in all things, and continue always with joy and hope.

Here in the Diocese of Phoenix, our joy and hope is especially found in those who carry forth their call of stewardship. We are proud of everyone who calls the Diocese of Phoenix home as we see schools teaching gardening practices to students, parishes installing solar panels, communities finding opportunities to explore their spirituality in creation, and so much more that uplifts God's creation.

"Let us sing as we go" together in joy and hope, seeking God, and taking action to care for the beautiful gifts God has given us in Arizona.