



REFLECTING ON THE LAUDATO SI MOVEMENT

- Which of these goals speaks to you the most, and how have they inspired changes for you or your community?

The goal that speaks most strongly to us is “Response to the Cry of the Poor.” In Fifth Ward and Northeast Houston, communities have lived for generations beside creosote contamination, illegal dumping, chronic flooding, extreme heat, and unequal access to healthy housing. These realities make the cry of the poor and the cry of the earth impossible to separate. Laudato Si’ has inspired us to build programs that combine environmental healing with human dignity, including:

- tree-planting and heat mitigation,
- community-led air monitoring,
- CHW (Community Health Worker) environmental justice training,
- gully restoration and green infrastructure advocacy,
- and developing resilience hubs for seniors, families, and people experiencing homelessness.

This goal reminds us that caring for creation is also caring for our neighbors whose bodies carry the burdens of pollution and climate injustice.

- Enrich your understanding of how “everything is connected”. How has the socio-ecological crisis affected your community?

In our community, “everything is connected” is not just an idea—it is reality.

Environmental degradation is intertwined with poverty, historical racial injustice, disinvestment, and health disparities.

The socio-ecological crisis affects Fifth Ward and nearby neighborhoods in profound ways:

- Cancer clusters linked to creosote contamination
- Heat islands from tree loss and industrial land use
- Repetitive flooding from inadequate drainage and gully maintenance
- Respiratory illness linked to air pollution
- Food insecurity tied to lack of grocery access
- Homelessness aggravated by climate vulnerability

These challenges reveal the deep truth in Laudato Si’: the ecological crisis is inseparable from the social crisis. Healing one requires healing both.

- What is your mission and/or your values?

Our mission is to advance environmental and climate justice, restore the dignity of historically marginalized communities, and build resilience through education, advocacy, and sustainable development.

Our core values include:

- Human dignity and preferential option for the poor
- Environmental stewardship rooted in faith
- Community empowerment and co-creation
- Transparency, equity, and justice
- Intergenerational learning and leadership
- Care for the whole person—physical, spiritual, emotional, and communal



We seek to uplift voices that have long been ignored and to support communities as they lead their own transformation.

- How do your unique mission and/or values identify and connect with the Laudato Si' goals?

Our mission aligns naturally with every Laudato Si' Goal:

- **Response to the Cry of the Earth:**
Tree planting, gully restoration, solar readiness, air monitoring, and nature-based solutions.
- **Response to the Cry of the Poor:**
Senior support, housing advocacy, climate resilience training, and disaster recovery.
- **Ecological Economics:**
Plans for green jobs, cooperative grocery development, community-owned energy systems, and circular economy practices.
- **Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles:**
Workshops on composting, energy conservation, sustainable diets, and zero-waste practices where and when we can.
- **Ecological Education:**
Environmental literacy curricula, CHW training, youth engagement, and citizen science models.
- **Ecological Spirituality:**
Integrating creation care into worship, reflection, and community rituals.
- **Community Resilience & Empowerment:**
Operation GreenShield, neighborhood watch, leadership development, and advocacy for equitable infrastructure.

Our values call us to treat the earth and our community as sacred, interconnected, and deserving of justice.

- What do you feel called to join the Laudato Si' Action Platform in your journey to integral ecology?

We feel called because Fifth Ward, Kashmere Gardens, Pleasantville, and other neighborhoods we serve embody the very intersection that Laudato Si' describes: areas where environmental degradation, economic marginalization, and human suffering converge.

Joining the Platform gives us a faith-rooted framework to deepen:

- our commitment to justice,
- our spiritual grounding,
- our accountability to the communities we serve,
- and our alignment with a global movement of care for creation.

Integral ecology invites us not only to fix environmental problems, but to heal relationships—between people, between communities, and between humanity and God's creation.



- 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.

We have already launched or supported:

Environmental & Climate Justice Initiatives

Air quality monitoring networks
Illegal dumping prevention & Operation GreenShield
Tree planting (1,125 trees) for heat mitigation
Gully restoration advocacy and flood resilience planning

Community Resilience

Senior wellness and cooling strategies
Disaster preparedness workshops
Solar readiness and passive cooling education
Support for unhoused residents during extreme weather

Education & Formation

Environmental Justice CHW training
TEKS-aligned youth environmental literacy curriculum
Faith-based climate education for parishes and lay leaders

Sustainable Development

Fifth Ward Co-op Grocery feasibility and green economic planning
Circular economy & repair culture promotion
Exploration of community solar and resilience hub models

Spiritual & Cultural Integration

Creation-themed liturgies
Laudato Si' discussions in church settings
Community rituals around restoration and remembrance

These initiatives demonstrate our commitment to care for creation and to protect the most vulnerable in our community.



	Current Actions	What's Working Well	Areas for Improvement
Response to the Cry of the Earth	<p>Tree-planting and heat-mitigation projects (e.g., Operation GreenShield).</p> <p>Air-quality monitoring using community sensors (IQAir, PurpleAir).</p> <p>Gully restoration advocacy for Ingraham Gully and flood-reduction planning.</p> <p>Community clean-ups, anti-dumping surveillance, and enforcement education.</p> <p>Promotion of solar-powered emergency tools and household energy efficiency.</p> <p>Native landscaping, rain gardens, and stormwater best practices education.</p>	<p>Tree-planting and heat-mitigation projects (e.g., Operation GreenShield).</p> <p>Air-quality monitoring using community sensors (IQAir, PurpleAir).</p> <p>Gully restoration advocacy for Ingraham Gully and flood-reduction planning.</p> <p>Community clean-ups, anti-dumping surveillance, and enforcement education.</p> <p>Promotion of solar-powered emergency tools and household energy efficiency.</p> <p>Native landscaping, rain gardens, and stormwater best practices education.</p>	<p>Expand long-term maintenance plans for trees, rain gardens, and green infrastructure.</p> <p>Increase access to rooftop/community solar, including financing for low-income households.</p>
Response to the Cry of the Poor	<p>Senior wellness checks, cooling assistance, and emergency weather navigation.</p> <p>Housing coordination for vulnerable and unhoused residents.</p> <p>Disaster preparedness and recovery support for low-income families.</p> <p>Community fridges, food</p>	<p>Senior wellness checks, cooling assistance, and emergency weather navigation.</p> <p>Housing coordination for vulnerable and unhoused residents.</p> <p>Disaster preparedness and recovery support for low-income families.</p> <p>Community fridges, food</p>	<p>Strengthen permanent funding streams for senior support, cooling, and housing navigation.</p> <p>Improve coordination with city and county agencies to accelerate environmental remediation.</p>



	<p>distribution, and early planning for a local food co-op.</p> <p>Advocating for equitable environmental remediation (creosote, flood infrastructure).</p> <p>Providing CHW-led environmental health outreach and resource navigation.</p>	<p>distribution, and early planning for a local food co-op.</p> <p>Advocating for equitable environmental remediation (creosote, flood infrastructure).</p> <p>Providing CHW-led environmental health outreach and resource navigation.</p>	
Ecological Economics	<p>Developing the Fifth Ward Co-op Grocery and sustainable food hub.</p> <p>Promoting green workforce development (tree care, air monitoring, solar basics).</p> <p>Supporting local hiring and minority-owned CDC capacity building.</p> <p>Encouraging reuse, repair, recycling practices, and circular-economy habits.</p> <p>Exploring community solar and democratized energy ownership models.</p> <p>Connecting environmental justice goals to local economic empowerment.</p>	<p>Developing the Fifth Ward Co-op Grocery and sustainable food hub.</p> <p>Promoting green workforce development (tree care, air monitoring, solar basics).</p> <p>Supporting local hiring and minority-owned CDC capacity building.</p> <p>Encouraging reuse, repair, recycling practices, and circular-economy habits.</p> <p>Exploring community solar and democratized energy ownership models.</p> <p>Connecting environmental justice goals to local economic empowerment.</p>	<p>Develop sustainable financing models (CDFIs, carbon credits, community investment funds).</p> <p>Expand job pathways and certifications for green workforce careers (solar, arborist, NBS).</p>
Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles	<p>Education on reducing single-use plastics and household waste.</p>	<p>Education on reducing single-use plastics and household waste.</p>	<p>Increase community participation in recycling, composting, and zero-waste practices.</p>



	<p>Promotion of composting, recycling, and responsible consumption.</p> <p>Encouraging energy conservation and water-saving behaviors.</p> <p>Teaching plant-forward, locally sourced food habits where feasible.</p> <p>Supporting home gardening and sustainable cooking practices.</p> <p>Encouraging active transportation (walking, biking) where safe.</p>	<p>Promotion of composting, recycling, and responsible consumption.</p> <p>Encouraging energy conservation and water-saving behaviors.</p> <p>Teaching plant-forward, locally sourced food habits where feasible.</p> <p>Supporting home gardening and sustainable cooking practices.</p> <p>Encouraging active transportation (walking, biking) where safe.</p>	<p>Provide safer infrastructure and incentives to support walking, biking, and reduced car use.</p>
Ecological Education	<p>Environmental Justice CHW Training Program.</p> <p>Youth environmental literacy aligned with Texas TEKS.</p> <p>Workshops on flooding, extreme heat, and climate resilience.</p> <p>Community science projects: air monitoring, water sampling, tree mapping.</p> <p>Public health education linking environmental exposures to health outcomes.</p> <p>Presentation development for churches, schools, and civic groups.</p>	<p>Environmental Justice CHW Training Program.</p> <p>Youth environmental literacy aligned with Texas TEKS.</p> <p>Workshops on flooding, extreme heat, and climate resilience.</p> <p>Community science projects: air monitoring, water sampling, tree mapping.</p> <p>Public health education linking environmental exposures to health outcomes.</p> <p>Presentation development for churches, schools, and civic groups.</p>	<p>Create a standardized curriculum and train-the-trainer model for consistent delivery.</p> <p>Expand bilingual (English/Spanish) materials for broader community access.</p>
Ecological Spirituality	Integrating creation care	Integrating creation care	Integrate creation care



	<p>into parish/community reflection and dialogue.</p> <p>Observing Earth Day, Season of Creation, and other creation-themed rituals.</p> <p>Faith-based discussions linking Scripture, justice, and environmental healing.</p> <p>Hosting contemplative walks, prayer circles, or vigils tied to environmental justice.</p> <p>Using Laudato Si' principles in preaching, teaching, and community storytelling.</p>	<p>into parish/community reflection and dialogue.</p> <p>Observing Earth Day, Season of Creation, and other creation-themed rituals.</p> <p>Faith-based discussions linking Scripture, justice, and environmental healing.</p> <p>Hosting contemplative walks, prayer circles, or vigils tied to environmental justice.</p> <p>Using Laudato Si' principles in preaching, teaching, and community storytelling.</p>	<p>into the full liturgical calendar, not just seasonal moments.</p> <p>Train more clergy and lay leaders to facilitate Laudato Si'–inspired reflection groups.</p>
Community Resilience and Empowerment	<p>Operation GreenShield: environmental vigilance + community oversight.</p> <p>Advocacy for infrastructure equity (flooding, drainage, gully repair).</p> <p>Emergency preparedness: cooling centers, solar tools, family planning guides.</p> <p>Building resilience hubs in churches and community centers.</p> <p>Leadership development through CDC academies and civic trainings.</p> <p>Neighborhood watch models expanded to include environmental hazards.</p>	<p>Operation GreenShield: environmental vigilance + community oversight.</p> <p>Advocacy for infrastructure equity (flooding, drainage, gully repair).</p> <p>Emergency preparedness: cooling centers, solar tools, family planning guides.</p> <p>Building resilience hubs in churches and community centers.</p> <p>Leadership development through CDC academies and civic trainings.</p> <p>Neighborhood watch models expanded to include environmental hazards.</p>	<p>Strengthen and scale resilience hubs with backup power, cooling, and emergency supplies.</p> <p>Formalize community leadership pipelines through mentorship, stipends, and civic training.</p>



	Engaging residents in public comment, planning processes, and policymaking.	Engaging residents in public comment, planning processes, and policymaking.	
--	---	---	--