



Archdiocese of Hartford Laudato Si' Challenge 2018-2019

"Laudato Si' is an urgent reminder that care for our 'common home' is a profound moral responsibility shared by us all." - Archbishop Leonard P. Blair

Guidelines



The [Office for Catholic Social Justice Ministry](#) and the [Office of Education, Evangelization, & Catechesis](#) are promoting the **Laudato Si' Challenge** as a way for our Catholic schools to join the efforts of the Archdiocese of Hartford and pray, learn, and act upon the encyclical by Pope Francis, **Laudato Si'**.

Catholic Schools that accept the *Laudato Si' Challenge*:

- Strengthen Catholic identity in a concrete and visible way
- Realize the common concern of students, teachers and families for the care of our earth
- Build community relationships through working together toward a common goal
- Receive local and regional recognition for their projects
- Discover new ways to collaborate with community resources & archdiocesan agencies
- Serve as a public witness to the call of Pope Francis to care for our common home

Here's how to start: Appoint a **SCHOOL** Team Captain and pledge to participate in the **Laudato Si' Challenge**. The **SCHOOL** Team Captain may be an administrator, teacher or committed volunteer who will be your primary school contact. Fill out the **SCHOOL** Team Commitment form which can be found at the Office for Education, Evangelization, and Catechesis [website](#). A template for the final report will also be found on this webpage.

Review the following challenges and decide which challenge(s) your school would like to partake in and help protect **Mother Earth**! Participating schools that complete a final report will receive recognition.

Participating schools are asked to participate in one or more of four suggested challenges. School-wide participation is encouraged with age appropriate classroom activities. Activity suggestions are strictly suggestions; schools are encouraged to be creative. Activities can be new or built off existing projects. Incorporation of *Laudato Si'* educational resources is required and can be available on the [Office for Catholic Social Justice Ministry](#) and [Office of Education, Evangelization & Catechesis](#) websites.

Challenges

Challenge # 1: Daily Actions to Care for Our Common Home

In *Laudato Si'* (LS), Pope Francis gives us various suggestions on how to care for Mother Earth, "...[Such] as avoiding the use of plastic and paper, reducing water consumption, separating refuse, cooking only what can reasonably be consumed, showing care for other living beings, using public transport or car-pooling, planting trees, turning off unnecessary lights, or any number of other practices. All of these reflect a generous and worthy creativity which brings out the best in human beings," (LS 211).

How can your school community initiate some of these ideas?

Suggested Activities:

- Improve your school recycling efforts
- [Break the Bottled Water Habit](#) at school events
- Plant a butterfly, windowsill, rain, or vegetable garden
- Start cafeteria-based composting
- Conduct a [Classroom Energy Audit](#)



Challenge # 2: Cultivate Creation and Sense the Spark of Awe

According to *Laudato Si'*, "'Tilling' refers to cultivating, ploughing or working, while 'keeping' means caring, protecting, overseeing and preserving. This implies a relationship of mutual responsibility between human beings and nature. Each community can take from the bounty of the earth whatever it needs for subsistence, but it also has the duty to protect the earth and to ensure its fruitfulness for coming generations." (LS 67).

How can your school community become one with God and nature?

Suggested Activities:

- Coordinate a school wide prayer service
- Eucharistic Adoration
- Build an outdoor classroom
- Provide a brief reflection during morning or afternoon school announcements
- Create prayer cards for students and faculty

**Office for Catholic Social Justice Ministry
Office of Education, Evangelization & Catechesis
Archdiocese of Hartford**



Challenge # 3: Be a Part of the Whole Human Family

Laudato Si' reminds us that we are all connected: "The urgent challenge to protect our common home includes a concern to bring the whole human family together to seek a sustainable and integral development, for we know that things can change," (LS 13).



How can your school community contribute to the global community?

Suggested Activities:

- Participate in Catholic Relief Services Rice Bowl <http://www.csricebowl.org/>
- Educate yourself about the Catholic Relief Services Fair Trade program – buy, serve, and fundraise Fair Trade Chocolate, Coffee, or Crafts
- Participate in [Catholics Confront Global Poverty](#) by studying an issue and advocating through letter writing and legislative visits
- Support the Diocese of Norwich's [Outreach to Haiti Ministry](#) by learning about Haiti, sponsoring a student, or providing medical and dental supplies
- Incorporate Catholic Relief Services resources and videos into a school-wide International Day, school liturgy, or service day (*See additional resources)



Challenge #4: Communicating Beauty in God's Creation

Laudato Si' invites us "to be attentive to the beauty that there is in the world because [the Lord] himself was in constant touch with nature, lending it an attention full of fondness and wonder. As he made his way throughout the land, he often stopped to contemplate the beauty sown by his Father, and invited his disciples to perceive a divine message in things: 'Lift up your eyes, and see how the fields are already white for harvest' (Jn 4:35)," (LS 97).

How can your school community experience the beauty of God's creation?

Suggested Activities:

- Create a movie about the environment to show to classmates or faculty
- Work with the art teacher to create art projects (i.e. sketch, paint)
- Illustrate Care for God's creation through a play
- Take a class field trip to an arboretum, state park, or farm

Important Dates

- **Challenge Applications Due:** Thurs. Oct. 4, 2018 (Feast of St. Francis of Assisi)
- **School Captain Training Session:** To be set in conjunction with School Team Captains
- **Final Reports Due:** Wed. May 15, 2019 (Feast of St. Isidore)

Archdiocese of Hartford Laudato Si' Challenge 2018-2019

Resources

Archdiocese of Hartford, Office of Education, Evangelization & Catechesis, [website page](#) dedicated to Laudato Si' resources for schools.

Archdiocese of Hartford, Office of Catholic Social Justice Ministry, [website page](#) dedicated to Laudato Si'.

Promotion guide on how to promote the Laudato Si' Challenge at your school

Read about last year's Laudato Si' challenge in this [article](#) by the Catholic Transcript

[Watch](#) a Laudato Si' themed prayer service put on by the students at Notre Dame High School in West Haven

The University of St. Thomas (MN) offers an excellent *Laudato Si'* resource for school-wide and classroom based prayer and educational resources addressing water usage, "throw-away" culture, and more available at the [OCSJM Laudato Si' Webpage](#).

Visit the USCCB's website at: www.usccb.org for successful stories of parish and school efforts at: [We are Salt and Light](#).

"Helping Youth Understand Solidarity & Sustainability" can be uploaded from the [USCCB](#)

["Top Ten Takeaways from Laudato Si,"](#) a great article in *America* by Fr. James Martin, SJ

The [Green Leaf Schools](#) program offers classroom based lesson plans with common core standards on a variety of topics such as rain gardens and composting.

**High Schools wishing to receive separate recognition from Catholic Relief Services Global High Schools program should additionally sign up here: [CRS Global Schools](#) .

For Guidance, Questions, Consultation, please contact:

Patrick Laorden at Patrick.Laorden@aohct.org, *Office for Catholic Social Justice Ministry*

Lisa Orchen at Lisa.Orchen@aohct.org, *Office for Education, Evangelization and Catechesis*