V. USING THE LAUDATO SI ACTION PLATFORM

Draft 2 – BA

2nd January, 2022

The Laudato Si Action Platform is now live, launched appropriately on World Day for the Poor, November 14th 2021. What the site provides is a resource and a method for us, either as an individual, a family, or organisation, to take the next step in the ongoing ecological conversion that Pope Francis asks for, to care for our common home. It is highly recommended for anyone who wants to engage with Laudato Si’. This little article is to help you use the platform, but please remember that this is still new and small changes can be expected.

CAFOD recently ran an online talk (30th November) on ‘[The Laudato Si Action Platform and Livesimply](https://www.bigmarker.com/cafod/Livesimply)’, which can still be viewed at <https://www.bigmarker.com/cafod/Livesimply> which you might find useful, but you don’t need to view all of it; the following may be of interest:

2:55-8:45 mins (5:55 mins) Pope Francis on the Action Platform (recommended)

23:15–30:00 (6:45 mins) Sophia White – a tour of the Laudato Si Action Platform website

Here’s the link: [laudatosiactionplatform.org](https://laudatosiactionplatform.org/). Our first impression is that the site is a very professional site and demands our attention, but a little bit of help in using it goes a long way, so what follows is a short guide that might help you navigate it, especially in finding the **Laudato Si’ Full Planning Guide,** explained later.

First. Though, you need to enrol, although it might seem strange being asked to commit to something before you know what it is you are committing to! But unless you do you so, you do not have access to the whole site. You use the ENROLL tab to create an account. We suggest, to start with, you enrol as a ‘family or individual’.

You are committing to four things:

1. Complete a Self-assessment

2. Submit a Reflection

3. Produce a Laudato Si’ Action Plan

4. Each year, re-assess, reflect and revise your action plan

which follows the analyse-reflect-act-evaluate of the ‘pastoral cycle’ that some of us may be familiar with, rather like the ‘see-judge-act’ method.

Once you have enrolled and you are logged in, you have another set of additional tabs. To start, choose the DASHBOARD. To begin it might be useful to read their Planning Guide, but to find it you need to scroll down to the button: **[Read the Full Planning Guide]** at the very bottom of the page! However, it is provided in a zip folder and you may need some guidance, to read or print the file (9 A4 pages).

Now, in the Dashboard page, you can begin. You can complete your **Self-Assessment**, your **Reflection** and your **Action Plan**. These are easy to find and use on the Dashboard.

For the **Self-Assessment**, it says allow about half an hour, but it could take about an hour, and it is useful to find out your annual energy usage before you begin. Once completed, you will receive an email acknowledgement, with the promise “your results will be evaluated and shortly you will receive a report with the results of your overall environmental impact and carbon footprint.” At the time of writing we have yet to receive this to know exactly what form this takes. “Having an overall view of our current practices in integral ecology can be very helpful. Being able to see where we stand gives us a sense of direction, an understanding of how far we’ve come and where we might want to go from here.” [LS Planning Guide]

The next stage is your **Reflection**, which is very much free-style, so you can write what you wish in any style that you wish, or even produce a video, but ideally you might want to relate it to the Laudato Si’ Goals in some way. There are a few reflections of others that you can access to see what they have done.

Finally, you make your **Action Plan**. Again, what form this takes and what it contains is entirely up to you. There is no pro-forma or suggested layout. In the Suggested Actions page there are plenty of suggestions and you may even be overwhelmed. One simple approach might be as follows:

Go through the Suggested Actions for each of seven **Laudato Si’ Goals**, which you will find in the Suggested Actions tab (and you will already have seen them in the Self-Assessment section). For each Laudato Si’ Goal, **select the simplest and easiest action that you are able to do in the next year**. If there is any criticism to be made, it is that some of the actions are not easy to interpret or are beyond the scope of most people, but a little imagination goes a long way, since each one can be used liberally rather than literally. If you wish you can make a list of these, for example:

 Response to the Cry of the Earth:

Insulate buildings **- I could do this by draught-proofing my home as much as possible.**

Response to the Cry of the Poor:

Ensure members of the community have free access to clean water and sanitation - **I will contribute to a charity (like CAFOD) with a monthly standing order. I will be generous.**

Ecological Economics:

Purchase recycled and sustainable materials **- I will shop at a Charity Shop as a first port of all, as and when I need something.**

Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles:

Transition diet from meat-based to plant-based as much as possible **- I could try to go meat-free/plant-based for one day each week (in addition to Friday).**

Ecological Education:

Create opportunities for youth-led Laudato Si' initiatives **- I could offer support to our youth leader in doing something related to LS with them.**

Ecological Spirituality:

Regularly host outdoor prayer services - **I could take part in a reflective ‘walk in the park’ as and when it is organised.**

Community Resilience and Empowerment:

Organise social/ecological events - **I could take part in an activity organised by the LiveSimply Parish team or organise something myself.**

Then select the easiest, achievable goal. Make this your Action Plan for the next year. If you want to take on more than one, or schedule them for each month, you are free to do that. But it is suggested you make any activity SMART – simple, measurable, achievable, realistic and timed. This is your goal for the year.

Job done! And then, next year, you review your progress by carrying out a new self-assessment and repeat the process.

Wouldn’t it be wonderful if each of us, individually, undertook a LS action plan? Wouldn’t it be wonderful if every person in our parish undertook an action plan? Wouldn’t it be wonderful if every parish in every diocese took part? What can we do to make this happen?

Laudato Si Animators UK (contributed by Brian Austin)

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