



Mary Ward JPIC Office

Freedom - Justice - Sincerity - Felicity



Mary Ward Family living
Laudato si'
ECOLOGICAL ECONOMICS

- **2023 EDITION** -

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CONTENTS

CONTENTS.....	3
INTRODUCTION.....	5
AUSTRALIA AND SOUTH EAST ASIA - IBVM.....	6
AMERINDIA - CJ.....	7
CANADA – IBVM.....	10
ENGLAND - IBVM.....	13
IBVM EASTERN AFRICA PROVINCE	19
SOUTH ASIA - IBVM & CJ Network.....	25
PATNA – CJ.....	28
LEP – Romania – CJ.....	29
LEP – Italy – CJ.....	30
SPAIN - IBVM.....	31
SPAIN - FUNDACION EDUCATIVA MARY WARD – IBVM/CJ.....	33
SPAIN - CJ	34
SOUTH AFRICA - IBVM.....	37
MAURITIUS - IBVM.....	41
USA - IBVM.....	44
DELHI - CJ	47
LIMA, PERU - IBVM.....	48
IRELAND - IBVM	50
ENGLAND - CJ	51
CONCLUSION.....	52

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INTRODUCTION

During the celebration of the Season of Creation in November 2022, Mary Ward JPIC office proposed that it was good to focus on one Laudato Si' goal at a time to enable the Mary Ward Family to engage in depth with the goal.

Consequently, the Laudato Si' Goal no. 4: Ecological Economics was launched. This focus brought together the Province JPIC coordinators for several meetings for formation on how they can support the provinces/regions.

At the Laudato Si' event in June 2023, the focus was on Fair Trade, with a special emphasis on the relationship between Fair Trade and mining. It is our hope that all our economic activities respect human rights and that our investments remain ethical.

This means that Ecological Economics remain a conscious focus alongside other goals! It is integral to our living and mission.

May our investing and interaction with finances serve to promote care for our Common Home.



AUSTRALIA AND SOUTH EAST ASIA - IBVM

As part of their initiative to care for the planet, the Loreto Sisters in Australia & South East Asia do not invest in anything that contributes to fossil fuels. We closely monitor investments to ensure that they do not invest in any project that may harm the environment or impact vulnerable communities. This practice is encouraged throughout the Loreto Australia & South East Asia network. The Loreto Justice Network also promotes practices within the Sisters' communities, and the broader Loreto family, that respond to the 'cry of the earth and the cry of the poor'. Sustainability initiatives and changes to daily practices are highlighted as we are all encouraged to do what we can to protect the planet for generations to come.

In Vietnam, the sisters encourage people to save recycling things like plastic bottles, tins, cartons, steel, old machines at their houses. Once a week, volunteer groups of young people or fathers will go around the parishes, collect these items for recycling and take them to gathering places where mothers can sort reusable items and recyclable items. With reusable items, they put them in a place where people can come and find what they need for their families. With recyclable items, they sell them to collecting recycling shops. The money earned is used to buy things to cook lunch to deliver to the poor, normally two days a week.

In Timor Leste, the Sisters studied and reflected on each of the Laudato Si' goals and made several commitments: These included:

1. Refraining from using plastic, and ensuring recycling of any plastic water bottles;
2. Growing their own vegetables and composting any not used;
3. Putting solar panels on the roof of a new house and ecology pictures on the walls;
4. Encouraging the local community to plant more trees and planting some in their garden.

Loreto schools in Australia and South East Asia aim to demonstrate a commitment to ecological economics by educating our students to become active global citizens, aware of their influence and power as informed consumers at all levels of the economy. Inspired by the Mary Ward Schools Compass, which has an integral role in our educational approach, our schools seek to form students who can be 'agents of change' and 'cultivate the values needed now' to engage with the principles of ecological economics in both their studies and in their own lives as members of families, communities and countries. Across the leadership and governance of our schools, we strive to make sustainable, just and ethical decisions about budgets, financial plans and investments, seeking always to place the dignity of each student, the common good of all people and the integrity of creation at the heart of our business practices.

Submitted by *Carolyn Young JPIC Coord*

AMERINDIA - CJ

Laudato si', mi' Signore" - "Praise be to you, my Lord", sang St. Francis of Assisi. In that beautiful canticle he reminded us that our common home is also like a sister, with whom we share our existence, and like a beautiful mother who welcomes us in her arms: "Praise be to you, my Lord, for our sister mother earth, who sustains us, and governs us and produces various fruits with colourful flowers and grass".

Encyclical Laudato Si

As JPIC Amerindia-Chile Team, when reflecting on the paradigm of the Ecological Economy, we are urged to understand the relevance it has today in terms of sustainable production, fair trade and ethical consumption. In a society characterised by immediacy and the disposable use of resources, the Mary Ward community finds itself in a place where we must feel called to be protagonists of change. This means becoming drivers and promoters of projects that grow out of the discernment we develop in our schools and communities.

In these fast-changing times, it is crucial that we examine and discern what transformations are needed. We must collaborate with others to engage in a broader perspective, both as Mary Ward schools and as engaged citizens. This involves understanding the importance of interconnectedness and the need to care for creation.

Just as the encyclical 'Laudato Si' calls us to action, it is equally essential that we look at the environment that surrounds us. Each one of us has the capacity to make an impact on a smaller scale and we should not be satisfied with public policies alone, but see how our daily actions can also contribute to the change we need. From there, we can motivate and inspire others to join this model of solidarity promoted by the Mary Ward community, being aware of interdependence and working with passion and compassion, inspired by the message of 'Laudato Si'.

We must continue to sow in every heart the seeds that will germinate as shoots of hope for future generations. As Mary Ward schools in Amerindia, Chile, we are committed to addressing the objectives of the JPIC plan to strengthen and foster concern for creation. Following Pope Francis' call to protect our common home, we unite as a human family in the pursuit of sustainable and integral development. From this position, we become the agents of change that our Earth needs.

In the educational institutions belonging to the Amerindian Province (located in Chile, Argentina and Brazil), various educational and apostolic initiatives designed to contribute to the achievement of the stated objectives can be observed. These initiatives include the implementation of sustainable kitchen gardens and the promotion of selective waste picking of materials such as paper, bottles and clothes, which are then handed over to companies or entities that are dedicated to reuse them. In addition, emphasis is placed on the importance of forming people able to generate significant changes, whether through the organisation of student leaders' meetings, Mary Ward Youth meetings or through participation in debates related to the 2030 Agenda.

These formative and apostolic experiences in the schools of the Amerindian Province are implemented with the purpose of creating a positive and coherent impact with the educational and apostolic objectives set out, to respond to the call to "Co-create our future rooted in our charism".

Submitted by *Paula Montano cj JPIC Coord*



“I believe the vision of an ecological economy calls us to contemplate **two core ideas**.

First, we need a practice of economics that is at the service of all life, not one where life is at the service of it. We should consider the economy as something that is itself embedded within the biosphere—our common home—rather than something that has power over it.

Much of modern and especially, neoclassical economics has taught us that the economy is a self-enclosed sphere, subject only to its own laws. But an ecological economy is an economy that is seen as but one part of human social life, itself intended to serve larger purposes.

What if we were to embrace the idea that **the highest purpose of our economic life is to fulfil all of creation?**



Second, an ecological economy is one that centers our interdependence with the rest of life. It points to the cultural narrative of interbeing, and thus invites us into a new way of being and relating to one another and the entire web of life.

We each have a distinct context, and an important role to play. But all of us are invited to contemplate the provocative questions that challenge our status quo economic system. **What is enough?** What do we actually need to responsibly sustain our community and our activities? Do we steward anything in excess of that?”

Elizabeth Garlow
Co-founder of the Francesco Collaborative
Intervention at the Mary Ward JPIC webinar on November 4th 2022

CANADA – IBVM

MINISTRY or FUNCTION NAME	LAUDATO SI GOAL #	MINISTRY GOAL	TIME FRAME (Milestones)	ANTICIPATED OUTCOME(S) / UPDATES
IBVM JPIC Committee	Ecological Economics (#3)	Host a webinar on the topic of Catholic Social Teaching and Economics (Speaker: Dr. Anthony M. Annett)	April 18, 2023	COMPLETED Webinar recording available here: https://youtu.be/ojDhqngd9oM Outcome: IBVM Sisters, Associates, Coworkers, Alumnae who participated in the webinar received input on the rich history of Catholic Social Teaching (especially the significance of papal encyclicals) and its implications for neoliberal economics. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were also discussed as a practical means for improving the common good.
IBVM JPIC Committee	Ecological Economics (#3)	Host a webinar on the topic of ecological economics (Speakers: Elizabeth Garlow, Sophia Sannitti - Francesco Collaborative)	June 5, 2023	Anticipated Outcome: Increase understanding of the concept of ecological economics and practical ways we can contribute to an economy directed toward integral human development. Explore individual and collective actions to be taken. Target audience: IBVM Canada Sisters, Associates, Coworkers, Alumnae
Finance Office	Ecological Economics (#3)	Consider adding Impact Investments to IBVM Foundation portfolio	On-going	Updates: We have revised our Investment Policy to include an impact investment portfolio focusing on any of six areas: poverty alleviation; empowering women and women's education; immigrants and refugees; climate change and the environment; affordable housing; and Indigenous issues.

				<p>To date:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50% has been invested in Public Market Funds (these are low risk and should generate a return similar to other public funds); • 3% in a social impact bond “Reduction in Youth Justice Involvement” that predominantly serves Indigenous Youth in custody by providing culturally appropriate programming; • 24% serves immigrants and refugees - “Windmill Microlending” focuses on immigrants and refugees needing loans to support accreditation and training processes and related costs • 23% undeployed. Inclusive housing proposals are) ii)). A couple of others related to housing are being considered. <p>Our Financial Consultant, Finance Advisory Committee, and SVX-Invest for Impact help us to educate, support, source, research and evaluate opportunities for impact investing as they arise.</p>
IBVM JPIC Committee	Ecological Economics (#3)	Develop an assessment document of the top 5 candidates for the upcoming Toronto mayoral election to aid discernment of voting.	June 15, 2023 Toronto Mayoral Election: June 26, 2023	Intent: Educate voters within IBVM network about candidates’ platforms and their alignment with the values of the Laudato Si Action Platform, especially ecological economics.

Submitted by Sarah Rudolph, IBVM Canada



ENGLAND - IBVM

The Principle: *sustainable production, Fair-trade, ethical consumption, ethical investments, divestment from fossil fuels and any economic activity harmful to the planet, and the people, investment in renewable energy.*

Brother Alberto Parise MCCJ reminds us of our responsibilities and how we might fulfil them:

‘Ecological Economics acknowledges that the economy is a sub-system of human society, which itself is embedded within the biosphere – our common home. Actions could include sustainable production and consumption, ethical investments, divestment from fossil fuels and any activity harmful to the planet and the people, supporting circular economies, and prioritizing care labour and protecting the dignity of workers.’

Ecological Economics: Good Practices for Religious Congregations

What follows is a synopsis of ways in which our schools, college and religious community are responding to the challenge of Ecological Economics following the guidelines of the Laudato Si Action Plan. One of the greatest challenges in implementing an action plan is to ensure that we do not become self-absorbed. Much of our action involves simple, personal decisions. It is important that we remember these personal actions are also affecting the wider community and, ultimately the Planet.

Small group discussion weekly focused on our responsibility for the environment and related responsibilities for people around the world. Students are organising a college wide petition to Transport for Greater Manchester off the back of this (their idea) re ‘green buses’.

- Visiting the Laudato Si Centre (Salford Diocese): Looking at ways to build links there and ways in which we might support the work of the Centre
- The success of our Sustainability Policy relies on the conscious participation of all members of the Loreto Community, from Staff and Students, to Parents, Carers and Alumni, and to our Local Communities. Together, through the values of our founder Mary Ward, we can prevent further damage to the environment, support urban biodiversity and save our planet for many future generations to come. I encourage therefore all members of our community to play their part, to be conscious about the impact of their decisions, and engage with us, to help us all take a collective leap forward.
- The Governors and schools recognise the challenge facing the world community in ensuring our environment is preserved and protected for future generations. The school aims to comply with all its legal, regulatory and moral obligations to contribute to the effective overall management of sustainability and decarbonisation in accordance with government legislation, the teachings of Pope Francis and The Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
- We continually strive to do more and there are many new and ongoing initiatives in school. This half term includes work on the following:

- *Our application for “Eco-Schools” accreditation*
 - *Waste recycling – extending our paper recycling to plastic bottles, cans and empty food containers.*
 - *Gradual removal of single use plastics in the dining room - we remind students and staff to place their water cups and fruit pots into the yellow bin to be cleaned and re-used.*
 - *Energy management – encouraging fellow students and colleagues to turn off lights and appliances when not in use.*
- The science department and planet protectors took the opportunity to use Science Week to launch a climate emergency declaration.
 - Following assemblies about the climate emergency, students were given the opportunity to vote to declare a climate emergency and commit to bringing about changes no matter how small.
 - Every form has created a list of ideas of small achievable ways to help and each form has then made a specific pledge for their main focus. These will be collated by planet protectors and the science dept and we will choose some main foci for the school - look out for upcoming news. We look forward to continuing on our journey in caring for “Creation” and welcoming new members to our group.

Community Collaboration

Below is a summary of some of the ways our Sisters show respect for the earth:

- Recycling and upcycling in all areas where this is possible.
- Supporting Fair Trade/using local produce and sustainably produced goods.
- Using water economically.
- Nurturing plant life in small spaces.
- Encouraging each other to persevere with small changes in our personal lives.
- Lobbying local Members of Parliament to address issues, including pollution of our rivers and litter on our streets.
- Involvement in National meetings: Sister Anne Stafford CJ and Sister Kathryn IBVM will be attending the National JPIC Conference later this month.
- Regular prayer, together and individually, for the care of our earth.
- Honouring our Province Sustainability Policy:

English Province Loreto Leadership team (2022) from our Sustainability Statement:

- Currently we have minimum investment in Fossil Fuels and have a policy of withdrawal from those investments when appropriate.
- These areas included investment in companies involved in mining and fossil fuels. We also included companies whose activities in various parts of the world had reportedly caused and continue to cause environmental damage.

FINALLY

From one individual community member who is in her 90's and lives alone:

“Maybe initially the first move was the awakening of conscious reality and personal responsibility.

Then conversation, one to one and in the public domain. In my immediate environment many discussions take place. At the moment we are about to change our expensive full lighting on the common areas which burn for 24 hours daily so it will be dimmed during the night. Discussion is in process re waste food. There are 81 flats here and previously when I raised the issue with the Council, I was informed that our bins are too near the building. Now the issue has been raised again. Residents, after many reminders, are disposing of waste much more carefully to avoid an influx of vermin. On a personal level I shower alternate days rather than daily. I separate disposal ‘plastic’ bags and take them to Waitrose. I reduce heating and lighting in my flat and try not to waste water.

Recycling, minimising and cutting down on waste, play a big part in daily life. I constantly look for ideas and hints. Every little effort makes a difference.”

Mary Ward Day Double Session – Sustainability at Loreto

A session to explore Pope Francis’ encyclical “Laudato Si” meaning “Praise be to you”, the response of the Loreto Sisters and our own response, as Loreto women of Mary Ward, to sustainability and climate change.

Key outcomes of the session:

- To know what Laudato Si’ is and how it fits into the teachings of the Catholic Church
- To learn about the Mary Ward Family 7-year journey
- To put the call from Pope Francis into practical action

Resources:

Room grouped into 7 distinct tables/chairs

Blank paper and pens

Each group to have – Prayer, specific Goal details, Mary Ward and CAFOD literature, Loreto student “environmental review”, essay by Thea etc

Print out the goals from [Mary Ward Family living Laudato Si 7-Year Action Plan - YouTube](#)

Activity 1: 10 minutes (finish at 9.15am)

- Watch the video of Pope Francis [Pope Francis invites you to the Laudato Si' Action Platform - YouTube](#) (6 minutes)
- Short discussion – what is an encyclical; what is being asked of us; why is Pope Francis writing about this; is the Church saying anything new; what has the environment got to do with people and religion?

Activity 2: 15 minutes (finish at 9.30 am)

- Describe the response of the Loreto Sisters – Mary Ward Family launches 7 years Laudato Si Action Plan to address the 7 goals of Laudato Si’:
 - Goal 1 - Response to the cry of the earth/The Cry of the Earth
 - Goal 2 – Response to the cry of the poor/The Cry of the Poor
 - Goal 3 - Ecological Economics
 - Goal 4 - Adoption of simple lifestyles
 - Goal 5 - Ecological Education
 - Goal 6 – Ecological Spirituality
 - Goal 7 – Emphasis on community involvement
- The room is already split into 7 groups, each representing 1 of the goals
- Ask the groups to work together to review the Mary Ward reflections and list actions undertaken already at Loreto for sustainability?
- Share the findings and add any missed.
- What can we do further? Hold that thought...

**** Split the class in half and take the 3 largest groups outside for Activity 3****

Activity 3: Outside – 20 minutes (Group 1: 9.30 to 9.55 am and Group 2: 9.55 am to 10.20 am)

- You will need – coats if it is raining, garden equipment
- Take the students to see the “sustainability” area in the far corner behind the tennis courts - this is our project for next year: To develop this with the help of the site team
- On the way, note the planet protectors’ area, the bird feeders, bug hotels and the plastic bottle top whale
- If time, go to see the hedge saplings from the Woodland Trust planted on the Gorse Lane side of the sports field
- Return to the classroom after 20 minutes

Activity 4: 20 minutes - Classroom Based (Group 2 undertake before going outside from 9.55 am to 10.20 am; Group 1 undertake when they return to the classroom from 9.55am to 10.20am)

- You will need: each group to have read their “Goal” including a detailed explanation and ideas for action
- The group to read aloud the explanation, discuss and propose actions
- Create a “pledge”
- Leaders to collate action plans and pledges

Activity 5: Prayer and Reflection – 10.30 am

- Each group to read a section of the prayer

Activity 6: Close

- Outcome – our pledges and actions

- We will send a copy of our pledge, as Loreto Women of Mary Ward, to the Greater Manchester Climate Change Partnership and to the Loreto Sisters.

Mary Ward Day – Tuesday 11 July 2023 Loreto Grammar School Sustainability Pledge

During a special day off timetable to celebrate, reflect and learn from the values of our founder, Mary Ward, a small group of staff and students explored Pope Francis' encyclical "Laudato Si'" (Praise be to you), the response of the Loreto Sisters and our own response, as Loreto women of Mary Ward, to sustainability and climate change.

We were inspired in this by both the Mary Ward Family Living Laudato Si' seven-year action plan (2021-2028) on "Care for our Common Home" and a visit, in April 2023, by the Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham and Religious Leaders from our region, led by Bishop John Arnold of Salford, to meet the Pope and pledge a commitment to tackle climate change.

This is our pledge to the Loreto Sisters who lead our Mary Ward family and the Greater Manchester Climate Change Partnership:

At Loreto Grammar School, we pledge to consider our actions and carry out more sustainable options that will benefit our community. We will actively take ownership for the environment and help our community become more ecofriendly so we can make sure our environment is not suffering; we will not litter but will look after our home for future generations. We will try our best to help the economy by using and spreading the word about fair trade products, turn off lights when we leave the room and not overuse energy. We will recycle things that we don't need any more, use recycled plastic wherever we can, donate more to charities and help vulnerable people.

We look forward to 2023-24 with renewed hope and commitment.

*"May the cry of the poor and that of the earth move us to greater creativity on how each one of us can respond. We have no other planet"
(Pauline Macharia IBVM, Rome)*

Submitted by *Kathryn Keigher ibvm*

Religious Communities are called to **respond prophetically**, which means, on the one hand, to denounce structural injustice and on the other to usher in a life-giving alternative.

Discerning a response to the ecological crisis is a profound act of care.

At this *Kairos* moment, action is needed.

The *Laudato Si' Goals* guide our actions.

They redefine and rebuild our relationship with each other and our common home.

Their holistic approach acknowledges the planetary limits of all socio-economic systems and the human roots of the ecological crisis.

They call for a spiritual and cultural revolution to realise integral ecology.

Bro. Alberto Parise MCCJ **On Ecological Economics:**

Good Practices for Religious Communities

A Presentation to IBVM and CJ Sisters - 3rd March 2023



IBVM EASTERN AFRICA PROVINCE

Hope for the Earth and Humanity

We are living in a time where hope seems to be fading away due to so many depressing events and activities that are being experienced in the lives of humanity and ‘Mother Earth.’

In our response to the continued call to care for the Planet Earth, while executing our living the Laudato Si’ 7 Year Action Plan, we have allowed ourselves to be guided by the Principles of Environmental Education - that is, to bring ourselves to the level of awareness, knowledge, attitude, skills, and participation in creation, and appreciated peace and tranquillity that we find in nature.

In the light of this awareness, different communities continue to consciously take care of our “Common Home” in many different ways. Some of those that have actively participated to bring life to our planet Earth are highlighted below:

Loreto Eastleigh, Loreto Neema, and St. Teresa’s

This year marks the 8th anniversary of Pope Francis’ encyclical on Care for Creation. In his call to ecological conversion, Pope Francis reminds us that, “we must learn to live so that everyone will have enough, and so that the earth may be able to replenish its renewable resources.”

At community level, we watched the film, “*The letter.*” The movie made us aware of the reality of the lives of many people living in poverty. It is an informative story about the crisis facing Mother Earth. We were challenged to allow ourselves to be in touch with the reality of what is happening in our world today and recognize the presence of God in creation. In the spirit of Laudato Si’ and call to action, we engaged in various activities at community and school level.

One member represented us at the AOSK Nairobi Unit Environmental day on 3rd June 2023. Others visited Teresa Nuzzo home in Dagoretti and participated in talks on the environment, and in some activities such as cleaning, and tree-planting. We also gave a donation in support of their actions. On the same day, some sisters participated in the ‘Mater Heart run’ in solidarity with ‘Mater Hospital Cause’ for helping needy children with heart problems. For our Lenten sacrifice, the community identified two elderly needy women from our parish whom we planned to visit, as an outreach.

Finally, St. Teresa’s Pre-primary and Loreto Neema fraternity participated in a tree planting exercise in the school compound to mark the Environmental Week 2023. We are aware that any small contribution that we make in our ministries, is a gesture of generosity to the poor people around us, in solidarity with the Church as we ensure that their cries do not go unheard.

Thus, by becoming conscious of our lifestyle and consumption, we are able to sacrifice even that which we need most, to ease the suffering of creation. We indeed find new hope for Mother Earth in this spirit of interconnectedness

Submitted by *Pauline Waithaka*

Kiambu Community

1. In our little farm we use compost (from the kitchen dustbin) plus animal dropping as manure rather than fertilizer from the Agrovet shops.
2. Trained the neighbourhood on the effects of littering, hence collecting and burning.
3. Using water sparingly in the community.
4. We use bottle irrigation on our flower bed instead of watering daily.

By Sr. Domitilla Akama

Karinde community

- ◆ We had four (4) dogs. We fed them in high diet dog food plus supplementing it with boiled cow bones. We called a veterinary doctor for them whenever they were sick. We washed them monthly.
- ◆ In the community garden we use compost manure, to plant various vegetables and medicinal trees to help boost our health.
- ◆ We treated our employees fairly: for example, taking a watchman to hospital, and waited on him, brought him back and gave him sick leave.

By Sr. Jane Frances Mulongo

Kangemi Community

In school we have planted trees, and each class has a flower bed that learners take care of.

- ✧ We also put emphasis on keeping the compound clean through usage of dustbins.
- ✧ To solve the problem of water, we harvest rain water and we have over ten sim tanks and we are still planning to buy others to cater for the remaining areas.
- ✧ Besides that, we have used the school farm for the production of foods that we use in the school kitchen and we also use organic manure.

By Sr. Mary Muiruri



Msongari Novitiate

In Msongari Novitiate we implemented the Laudato Si' 7 Year Action Plan, based on how human beings relate with the environment and everything that is in it.

Being part of The Mary Ward family, Laudato Si' has inspired us to be more practical in actualizing the action plan goals as follows;

- We have had the opportunity to reach out to the poor by responding to their cry for food.
- Learning to make Rosaries that have been so much used during the month of the Rosary, which is practising Ecological Education/ Spirituality.
- Making table mats using beads.
- Generating flowers from single old leaves, instead of cutting and throwing them away; as well as being innovative by using ash on seedlings instead of the use of pesticides to eradicate pests.
- All these activities have shown us that every person has a role to play, no matter how small the activity, so as to bring forth the best for the benefit of ‘Mother Earth.’

In Living in Joyful hope, we transmit the same to Mother Earth.

By Sr. Peris Mbugua

Loreto Matunda

The program of planting trees is ongoing, and it is one of the ways of thanking and appreciating the environment. We feel obliged to bring back what has been lost. On one side, the community has cared for the environment by planting some trees, vegetables and flowers in the garden which have kept the environment so green and at the same time has given us an opportunity to connect with creation. Similarly, the school has been planting some trees around the compound. For example, His Lordship, Bishop Dominic Kimengich, the bishop of Eldoret Diocese, visited the school for our form IV's Prayer Day. After the Holy Mass and prayers, he marked the day by planting trees in our school compound. During the exercise of tree-planting he was accompanied by our Province leader, Sr. Lucy Nderi and her council as they were on visitation to Matunda community. We believe that planting trees will bring life to our area, and improve the quality of life. This will, in turn, help to combat the consequences of climate change.

By Sr. Tigist Bayene

The Aesthetic Value of Flowers in Making the ‘Mother Earth Shine.’

“The earth laughs in flowers and the scent of rose is like a kiss from God...”

Ralph Waldo and Elizabeth Barreth.

Flowers enchant and inspire, uplift and refresh the soul. They are a simple beauty all around us and a reminder of the grace and majesty of God's creation. Flowers have such a positive vibe or energy that gives and that restores life. Once we start paying attention to them, we most likely get addicted to them. Their energy and beauty are so infectious that one can't resist them. It starts by just having one plant and then caring and tending to it, like watering and some sunshine, and before you realize it, the whole surroundings are full of different plants. Everywhere you go, the beauty of flowers will be the first thing you notice when you fall in love with them. Plucking a few whenever you see them; and random buying becomes the new unapologetic reality, leave alone giving them out as gifts.

Plants can train us to be patient as they require time to reach maturity; and that patience breeds “trust in the process” that they will finally grow and blossom. This is also very key in life, knowing and trusting that our little or big efforts will finally bear fruit. As we know, most things that take much of our time and effort will be worthy of it and valuable and precious in due time.

Developing or undoing some characters or habits may take time, effort or even pain, but it's worth the effort and fulfilling once achieved and makes us better. Trusting the process makes us optimistic in life too, a worthy attitude that one can develop. Since all these being the byproduct of caring for plants, let us all learn the 'art of love' by developing 'caring conversations' with plants. "Plants always make people better, happier, and more helpful.

They're a sunshine, food, and medicine for the soul..." *Luther Burbank.*

People see and admire the beauty of plants and praise the creator for such magnificent creations and that is prayer. Though their varieties in species, colors, design, sizes, and life span can be incomprehensible, their different personalities and attitudes are amazing.

Some are very warm and easy to grow and care for, whereas others are particular and require specific things, and they don't compromise, otherwise they'll either die or take too long to reach maturity. Some are so independent and need no extra attention, some can be so exclusive and rarely fit into the usual environment as they might not give the beauty, warmth or grow the right shape as expected. But just like love, some wild flowers grow in the most unlikely places. Those being just a few characters, they unfortunately do not do well with an ill-intent caretaker. Flowers are like friends; they bring color to our world. All said and done "our minds are like a garden, which will, if neglected, yield only weeds and thistles, but if cultivated will produce the most beautiful and most delicious fruits." *Dorothea.*

By Sr. Angeline Wanzagi

Loreto, Nyakato

An effort to protect our environment is a norm of the day. This has been implemented by:

- i. Creating awareness among the students through dramas, displays on notice boards, and syllabus content inclusion.
- ii. By sensitizing the community on the need to practice refuse sorting - that is separate non-biodegradable and biodegradables.
- iii. The school environmental club students have also demonstrated care of Mother Earth by engaging in community cleaning (collection of plastics bottles for recycling, litter, polythene papers) and tree planting. That has contributed significantly to creating awareness and sensitizing the community around on making the planet green.
- iv. We are also using plastic bottles in creating beauty and beautiful flowers.
- v. By use of art skills, we re-use old cloths for making flower vases.

By Mr. Dominick Korir.

Conclusion

It is impressive to note the attempts that various communities and schools have made towards the nurture of the earth. Nevertheless, it has been noted that some measures of caring for the earth create more damage than remedy. Hence there is a need to correct some of the ways which communities and schools are using to take care of the earth because of their negative effect. For example, burning on one side may help to reduce the accumulation of litter in the surroundings, but on the other hand, it releases carbon dioxide in the environment. This byproduct contributes a great deal to the destruction of the Ozone layer as well as air pollution, thus endangering the life of other creatures. Another suggestion is to apply the 3Rs, i.e. Reduce, Re-use, and Recycle; and where necessary apply burying.



Eastern Africa - Ghana

Communities

As part of our response to taking care of the Earth, most of the communities in Loreto, Eastern Africa use their small farms to grow various foods such as vegetables, herbs, and medicinal trees that help boost health. This is done with the use of organic manure rather than fertilizers. We use ash on seedlings instead of pesticides to eradicate pests (Ecology of Economics).

Since water shortage is a huge problem in many of our ministry locations, the idea of harvesting rainwater has become a norm that has helped a great deal to reduce water costs. Similarly, other communities use bottles for drip irrigation to curb the problem of water scarcity. This process has sustained crops during the dry season.

Another community stated that they had treated their employees fairly. That included taking them to the hospital and handling their bills as a way of answering responding to the cries of the poor. Others participated in charitable activities like “Heart Run” in solidarity with funders, to help raise medical funds for needy children with heart problems.

While one community trained their neighbors on the effects of littering and encouraged the collection of waste, other communities have played the role of sensitizing them on the need to practise refuse sorting i.e. non-biodegradable and biodegradable. About 50% of this concept is successful.

Moreover, others have had the opportunity to reach out to the poor by responding to their cry for food, instructing them on how to make rosaries, and selling them to get money, as well as encouraging people to pray rosaries. Thus, responding to Ecological Education/Spirituality.

At the Province level, we are encouraged to be accountable in our various ministries. This includes being just to our workers and students and when making decisions about the community budgets, financial plans, and investments. We are also always encouraged to seek the common good of every person and the integrity of creation at the heart of our practices.

Schools

To demonstrate commitment to the ecological economy, one of the schools has made efforts to sensitize students on the protection of the environment by creating awareness among them. This is done through:

- (a) Drama
- (b) Displays on notice boards.
- (c) Syllabus content integration
- (d) Collection of plastic bottles for recycling.

This sensitization programme is a continuous process and is slowly gaining momentum. Students and Staff seem to be gradually grasping the need for URGENCY in counteracting climate change. However, we believe that noticeable changes will be realized.

In other schools, the process of planting trees is intermittent and each class has a flower bed that encourages each learner to take care of it. They are also expected to keep the compound clean through the use of dustbins.

Rainwater harvesting is also practiced in some schools as a means to reduce cost. Other schools utilize their farms to produce food and use organic manure to increase food production while cutting the cost of living and safeguarding the environment. Our schools aim at forming students who can be the agents of change by cultivating values that are required to engage in ecological economics both in their studies and lives.

When we become conscious of our lifestyle and consumption, we are able to sacrifice even that which we need most, to ease the suffering of creation. We indeed find new hope for Mother Earth in this spirit of interconnectedness. Hence, “Let Justice and peace flow like a river.”

Submitted by *Maria Macha ibvm*



SOUTH ASIA - IBVM & CJ NETWORK

BLUE ECONOMY

Ecological Economics is a field of study embedded within a social system. It addresses the relationships between ecosystems and economic systems in the broadest sense. The three interrelated goals of Ecological Economics are sustainable scale, fair distribution and efficient allocation of all the resources. Along with the establishment of sustainable societies it also deals with the local and global issues such as deforestation, water conservation, species extinction etc.

JPIC South Asia looks at Ecological Economics with specifically address the Blue Economy. Water scarcity and water supply are among the major concerns that countries worldwide have been struggling to address during the last decades. The need to rely on natural fresh water basins or on underground water is further fostered by the effect of climate change.

ACTION PLAN: IBVM/CJ JPIC SOUTH ASIA declares **WATER MANAGEMENT** as our main goal for two years with the following action plan:

- **Water Harvesting**
- **Ground Water Recharging**
- **Water Treatment Plant (Reusing Ground water and Grey Water)**
- **Looking after Local Water Bodies**

As Ecological economics recognizes local to global environmental limits, it ranges from research for short-term policy and local challenges through to long-term visions of sustainable societies. Nowadays, the world is suffering from a severe water scarcity issue in different areas. In many cities of the world, water supply networks are under stress. Many water organizations and river basin authorities are taking initiatives to manage water demand and searching for alternative water sources like Grey water and wastewater reuse, desalination, and rainwater harvesting. Among these many schools in South Asia are looking at alternatives; rainwater harvesting has got notable attention. Conserving water saves energy and is needed to filter, heat and pump water to your homes. It reduces your water consumption which also reduces the Carbon Foot print.

Rain water is the first and ultimate source of water in the hydrological cycle which feeds to the secondary sources such as rivers, lakes and ground water. Urbanization and industrialization have hugely affected the natural ways of living. People have to bear huge costs in buying water for living. Similarly, the presence of arsenic in water and contamination of drinking water, particularly in industrial areas, have become a big concern. Numerous modelling tools and methods have been used in our schools to evaluate and design Rain water Harvesting.

Schools are educating children about the benefits of conservation of our natural resources. They save money by not wasting water, and help to encourage an environmentally responsible attitude in the next generation. With low energy pumps and controls, there are no negatives to using a rainwater system in a school. Grey water sewage Plant, sizes of tanks, types of filters, and pumps used, depend on the design and size of the schools. Demand normally comes in surges at lunch and break times, so to cut back on pump starts, a header tank or break tank is used where the design of the building permits.

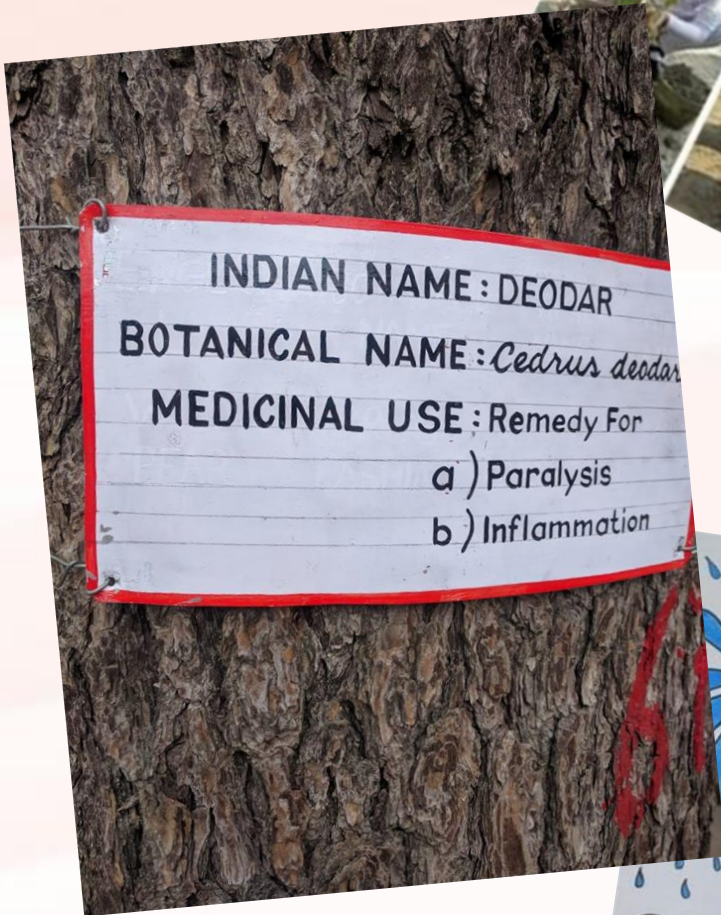
Now the financial feasibility of rainwater harvesting systems depends on the charge for groundwater and on the size of Blue Economy which is then related to our goal again i.e. water recharging, efficient, reliable and easy to maintain. The majority of the population, living in many other coastal communities, has been facing severe freshwater poverty which, in turn, makes them economically poorer. It also argues that the promotion of a Rainwater Harvesting System (RHS) alongside a strong governmental financial and technical assistance can reduce water and economic poverty which is again related to our goal i.e. treatment of water bodies

In pursuance of the JPIC South Asia Action Goal “Water Management”, the schools of the Himalayan team are undertaking projects like rain water harvesting, recharging of natural springs and conservation of local water bodies. Since most of the schools in this zone are situated in the hills they face acute water shortage, hence the schools have set up systems for harvesting rain water. Apart from this some schools have also collaborated with the local community to recharge the existing natural water springs. The students did a survey on the quality of water in these springs and found out that the quality of water is not only depleting but contaminated too due to various reasons such as garbage disposal, sewage and unplanned construction. With the help of experts, the students have started to work on recharging these water bodies. This project was inaugurated on the occasion of World Water Day with an awareness program conducted for the local community and neighboring schools. The scarcity of water in this zone is so severe that people have to buy water. Activities like orientations and excursions to water reservoir sites are being undertaken to make the students conscious about conserving water. Efforts are also being made to treat and use water from the school kitchen in watering the school garden.

Therefore, Blue Economy and Conservation is an essential step towards ensuring a sustainable future. It fulfils a major goal of Ecological Economics as it caters for the present needs without compromising the well-being of future generations. Along with preserving the natural resources it also minimizes environmental pollution. It develops a concern among people about remaining within the scientific limit by using and reusing water resources wisely which is required for sustainable development.

Submitted by *Sr. Prabina Rudum IBVM*

Mrs Sanchayita Dey and Mrs. Arvind Kaur



PATNA – CJ

Way back in 1988, three members of the Patna Province of the Congregation of Jesus ventured out to live the religious life in a radical way by: “Live in experience” in the village Bagahi in the Buxar District of Bihar state, Sr. Sudha, Sr. Kiran and myself (Sr. Poonam), Thus began the Social action ministry in the Province and gave the name “CHIRAG” which means “undying light” for this new initiative. We started living among the most vulnerable groups – Dalits and Maha Dalits, who opened their homes for us to stay, thus completely immersed in the culture and life style of the people. This in turn not only transformed the life of the common people, but the major change happened in us – making our religious life more meaningful and challenging.

Now having lived very close to the people for the last 35 years, we now share the life and challenges of the marginalized and accompany them along the path of their integral human development. The members of the Self-Help-Group (SHG) which we formed among the women right from the beginning, help to protect family savings and facilitate access to credit; each group make small investments that would otherwise not be possible for them. We have now two strong Women’s Banks.

In Shahpur Social Centre, where I am now, the group members are mostly mothers of the 150 school children, whom we are supporting in their education. They are also asked to provide a share of support for their children’s education. We see that through the process of this saving habit of the SHG, these mothers, who normally remain excluded from normal economic circuit, are able to respond to the needs of their children and we have seen the social impact of these activities and it testifies to the effectiveness of our initiative. “This habit of savings” through which we started this initiative, has now income generating and job creation projects and now it is a fully pledge social ministry.

Now speaking of Ecological Economics, the Income Generating Programme (IGP) of the SHS members like Grocery shop, vegetable vending, goat, cow, buffalo rearing, piggery, poultry, farming, cultivation, purchase of Auto, tailoring machines, tent and sound system to rent on functions, decorative items, dry fruit shop, Photo (Snack) shop are indeed actions which lead to sustainable production and consumption, ethical investment, supporting circular economics and prioritizing care labour and protecting the dignity of workers. Kitchen garden, group cultivation etc. provide vegetables, fruits and so on free of heavy and harmful pesticides leading to healthy living. A few of our communities use bio-gas as the kitchen fuel and solar panels for generating electricity and heating water.

We are dreaming of community supported agriculture and of getting solidarity purchase group. Thus, the growers and consumers provide mutual support and share the risks and benefits of food production. We also encourage, among the parents and students, the habit of repair of things and re-use of things rather than throwing them away and re-placing them with new ones. We have taken the decision of making learning materials like note books and stationary items like bags by repair and re-use of the items.

We are also on the road to gift economy - by promoting local volunteering and involving people with different talents in our programmes, like artists for street theatre

etc. celebration of workers day, ecological action days, and will be a platform for better involvement and evaluation leading to further actions.

Question for reflection:

How have I adapted myself for simple life style? Is there room in me to reform my needs?

Submitted by *Poonam CJ Patna*

LEP – ROMANIA – CJ

In our kindergartens and schools, especially in the "Green Week" in this spring, various activities were carried out with pupils, seeking to help protect the environment: cleaning up playgrounds; planting flowers and trees; collecting waste and reusing it for other purposes; making objects out of recyclable materials; raising awareness about the need to reuse damaged objects, during visits to different museums or other settings.

Also, at the beginning of Laudato Si' week, the faithful participating at the Mass, were reminded of the content of the Encyclical Laudato Si', while at the same time trying to sensitise those present by urging them to participate, through concrete actions, in protecting the environment. On this occasion the material proposed for meditation for that week was translated and made available to both sisters and lay people through the Internet digital platform.

There was the possibility of watching the film The Letter, which illustrates so profoundly the shared concern of Pope Francis and many other people to save and protect our planet.

Submitted by *Lavinia Șerban, CJ LEP*



LEP – ITALY – CJ

What I try to do to raise awareness about environmental protection, both in the community and with school children, is prayer, and in the moments of meeting with them, in a more in-depth way, I try to raise awareness and help them to make choices to grow in respect for creation which also passes through good relationships between us: to be careful not to waste water, to use as little plastic as possible, not to waste food, not to damage trees, etc.

In the intense times of Advent and Lent, I try to help children to have a greater commitment and attention to these themes of collective interest.

With the sisters who are older, in addition to being careful not to waste, we commit to praying for all who are working on the front lines for the good of all.

These aren't big things, but in everyday life, every day we can help people and children be more mindful of how they live.

Submitted by *Palmina Morbin CJ*



SPAIN - IBVM

In addition to the activities mentioned in the previous report we would like to highlight the following points:

Province

The province contributed funding to small projects which address aspects of Laudato Si': **The Cry of the Earth**, and **The Cry of the Poor**, the cry of disadvantaged people, by contributing to reforestation, a housing project, Somali women addressing FGM in Madrid, Investigative journalism aimed at speaking truth to power, and Women Theologians.

Lifestyle

Some communities and individuals have increased their awareness of their use of energy, water and transport. Others feel we need to improve. These efforts are ongoing. We are challenged to review our use of air-conditioning in summer and heating in winter, aware that many people around us are limited because of financial restraints, follow up and repetition of tree-planting initiative, carried out in 2021.

Spirituality

We cultivate a worldview and spirituality from the perspective of God in All and All in God. At the same time deepen our understanding and integration of the interrelatedness and interdependence of all; thanks to the concept of the "Oneness of All" from CG'22 arising from the merger of the two congregations and central to the awareness of Laudato Si Objectives.

Ministries

Members contribute with their prayer and joyful acceptance of the ageing process.

Committed to engagement of the local Parish in care for people living in poverty, elderly and sick members; care of the natural environment; inclusion of natural resources in the parish environment; awareness raising of Laudato Si'; commitment to immigrant persons in local Detention Centre.

Education sessions were given to international and national groups on Human Trafficking from the perspectives of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); the climate crisis and situations of armed conflict. One community planted trees.

Action Plan for 2023 – 2024

We commit ourselves to the following:

Goal 1. Response to the Cry of the Earth.

- Increase our awareness of the efforts to restore the beauty of earth (CG22).
- Advocate and support issues on climate change, drought and desertification in Spain, destruction of environment and other urgent issues.
- Use COP 28 on Climate Change and the Conference on Water (SDG 13, 14, 15).

Goal 2: Response to the Cry of the Poor.

- Engage in actions, including symbolic actions, advocacy, and financial support of people living in poverty and suffering discrimination.
- Contribute to awareness raising of Human Trafficking in the country.

Goal 3: Ecological Economics

- Increase our knowledge and understanding of Ecological Economy and will monitor our actions.
- Provide awareness raising activities on sustainable production and responsible consumption and other aspects of economic ecology.

Goal 4. Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles

- Advance on installation of alternative energy where possible.
- Study the possibility of an audit on energy, water and waste.

Goal 5: Ecological Education

- Do a survey of members of the province on the ways in which we are each expanding our knowledge of the issue.

Goal 6: Ecological Spirituality

- Come together to discuss ways in which we are developing ecological spirituality, what helps us and the challenges.

Goal 7: Community Resilience and Empowerment

- Increase awareness of the role of the Communications Office in publicizing our efforts.
- Participate in network of organizations that can create synergies.
- Promote activities as a Global community.
- Encourage members to use social media to raise awareness and advocacy.

Submitted by *Cecilia O' Dwyer IBVM, Spain*



SPAIN - FUNDACION EDUCATIVA MARY WARD – IBVM/CJ

We work on JPIC activities throughout the year within a larger program called Pastoral. The following JPIC days are integrated into one of the pillars, **Care of our Common Home**.

There are several days in which we do reflection activities in addition to morning prayer and publications in our social media network such as:

- International Day of the Girl Child
- International Women's Day
- Earth/Water Day

On the International Day for Peace, we celebrate with special prayer for all the students in the school playground.

There are other days that are worked on through morning prayer and we make specific publications on the schools' social networks:

- International Day for the Eradication of Poverty.
- International Day for Tolerance
- Human Rights Day
- Saint Bakhita Day
- International Day of Women and Girls in Science
- World Day for Social Justice
- World Water Day
- World Day Against Child Labour

On the other hand, we work with the Youth Representative through online meetings in which students, representing the 8 schools, participate.

The FEMW school year agenda is personalized which means that all the JPIC days are marked in the weekly organization.

Submitted by Clara García Sanz
DIRECCIÓN PASTORAL Y CARISMA
COLEGIOS DE LA FUNDACIÓN EDUCATIVA MARY WARD

SPAIN - CJ

John Paul II told us that "Any attempt to care for and improve the world" implies changes in lifestyles: CHANGE FOR IMPROVEMENT. We will try to capture the actions and projects that we carry out.

PROJECTS

1. "Caring for our Common Home. We are light to shine"

This is a project in which all the staff of the school, families and religious are involved. Among other actions, we can highlight some of them: Renewal of the lighting (LED lights with less consumption). Installation of movement sensors. Appointment of people responsible for switching lights on and off. Promoting the use of ecological bottles or glass instead of plastic. Reduction of electricity consumption etc. etc.

2. "MARY WARD'S REPLASTIC"

This project has to do with a lesson of the English class "Think Green" and its aim is to bring students closer to the reality of our oceans and to think how we can contribute to change by reusing plastic, reducing its use, giving it new and creative ways of use. For example: Creating a recycling machine.

3. "A Planet with a Future"

This is a project in which plastic on beaches and sea, green advertising, sustainable development, analysis of advertisements, research and the creation of a sustainable classroom will be the most important aspects.

4. "Young people Creating a Sustainable Future."

The aim is to bring the students of our schools closer to the SDGs, raise their awareness of the SDGs and provide the voice of youth. Very positive experience.

5. "Solidarity Market", "Guardiola solidaria", "Lazos solidarios"...

Small projects, all in progress. Creation of handicrafts with recycled material to sell for solidarity purposes and the collection of money for people in need or emergencies that arise. Use all the resources available to us to help the most vulnerable.

6. Intergenerational Project "intercanviarem somriures". Pupils exchange handicrafts and play time with people from the Domènech i Montaner residence.

ACTIONS

Commitment to collect food, clothes, toys, crockery, shoes... for people in social exclusion or living on the street. Reuse and help.

- Commitment to Energy Saving: turn on lights only when necessary; always turn them off; make the most of natural light; programme the responsible use of heating; turn off computers, digital blackboards... and any appliance when we are not using it; use low-consumption devices; take care in the use of

electrical appliances, thermostats and any appliance when we are not using it; use of low consumption devices; care in the use of electrical appliances, programmable thermostats... Gradually move towards the transition to renewable energies. Promote the installation of solar panels and make a viable plan for self-consumption.

- Breakfasts in company: This is a commitment, carried out in Barcelona by volunteers (including a CJ nun). Some 90 people benefit daily. The volunteers collect, from different shops, everything that is generously given to them in order to be able to serve everyone. In Donostia we also provide breakfast for migrants mainly from Morocco and Algeria.
- Stimulating Ecological Conversions through liturgies, conferences, exhibitions...
- Continue "R" practices
- We try to reduce waste generation to a minimum; everything that is generated is sorted and recycled: oil, paper and cardboard, glass, plastics, organic (compost), medicines, batteries... Use of biodegradable bags or reuse of bags.
- Reuse of products, either for community use or to feed families in need.
- Repairing appliances whenever possible. Put them to new use.
- Water is a scarce commodity, so we should be aware of the need to use it correctly at a general level and make the most of what we have left over to water gardens and plants. Do not leave taps running, use push-button taps, load washing machines... Print only what is necessary and make the most of paper. We reuse photocopy paper as a draft. We have digitalised newsletters, letters, digital units... to reduce the use of paper. We make and advise the use of public transport, school transport, car sharing, even walking when possible.
- Participation in competitions (organised by the school or other entities) of stories, poems, drawings... about the environment, plastic collection and cleaning of the beaches, the school garden...
- At the moment we are participating in a handicraft competition with recycled materials.
- "Give life to recycling". Impressive works were presented.
- Collection of mobiles, electrical appliances, waste ink, cartridges, toner... for recycling in agreement with an external company "Bioservice".
- We collaborate with PROCLADE to ensure that our staff are kept up to date with the theoretical and practical knowledge necessary to promote sustainable development.
- Visit and collaboration with the EKOREK plastic recycling plant.
- Raising awareness of ecological risks or social injustice arising from excessive consumption through interactive talks with Jon Kareaga (BASK company) to raise awareness of the textile market and its impact on the environment.
- Support for Fair Trade products, local products in canteens, intercultural meals... and putting them into practice.
- "Zero waste" workshop. Visits to companies, organisations... that have reuse and recycling programmes in place... to raise awareness every day. Our

school parties: Dance and music and spring festival... revolve around ecological awareness with the representation of elements of the ecosystem: flowers, bees (including a project for their protection and care), recycling, water...; all these elements will help us to continue to become aware of their care.

- "La jornada dels Solidaris" (Solidarity Day) to raise money for the TV3 campaign. Stopping classes for 1 day: The pupils go through different stalls with different games, before this, they have had to buy several tickets.
- "Litter campaign" Collect, clean, reuse and recycle.
- "LS School Event": It is about sharing on the 11th of October: activities, projects... that are carried out in our schools in Canada, South Africa, India, Nepal, Nairobi and Donostia (Spain), to promote the care of our Common Home. This event is part of the preparation of next year's school event.
- Participation in the Time of Creation: online events, shared prayers and liturgies prepared in community.

ETHICAL FINANCE

In some communities, small amounts are invested in both Banca Etica and Santander Bank. In both cases the ethical codes are taken into account.

PROTECTING THE DIGNITY OF WORKERS

Respect for their rights, including involving them in decision-making for the smooth running of our missions.

Submitted by *Anselma de la Pisa CJ Spain*



SOUTH AFRICA - IBVM

Loreto schools in South Africa have always promoted Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation. In addition to our usual JPIC efforts, in 2023 we have also focused on living the Laudate Si' goal of Ecological Economics. In our context, this has been a daunting task. Our country has an energy crisis and, because of this, it is not always easy to make the best choices for the environment due to financial constraints and practical limitations, especially at school level. However, this has not deterred our staff and learners from accomplishing amazing things.

Post Covid, there has been a concerted effort for our three schools to liaise and collaborate more. Management of all three schools recently met to discuss how to strengthen the bond between schools and share ideas. Wonderful initiatives have come out of this meeting. While each school has a unique identity, the Loreto ethos is the same throughout the schools and we continue to work together for justice, peace and integrity of creation for our common home.

Awareness and advocacy for the Cry of the Earth and the Cry of the Poor is constant in Loreto schools. Linking these to Ecological Economics at primary and high school level means creating awareness in our young people so that they can make sustainable decisions in the future. This is done through assemblies, intentional classwork objectives and campaigns on special days like Earth Day, but there are many other projects and ways in which we strive to promote Laudate Si' goals.

Some examples are:

Making our carbon footprints smaller and saving money by:

- Students travelling together to save money on petrol and lower carbon emissions.
- Collection of second-hand clothing for outreach projects and for resale which reinforces the concept of recycling and benefits for the buyers' pockets too.
- Using water collection tanks to water sports fields.
- Conducting water and electricity audits to find ways to lower these utility bills.
- Switching off all hot water boilers, to minimize electricity consumption.
- Installation of a water filtration system to curb the use of single-use plastic water bottles. Learners are encouraged to bring a bottle and fill it up throughout the day.
- Comparing costs between obtaining a generator or installing solar power. Whilst the solar power option may be better for the environment, the costs have proved prohibitive. However, steps are being taken to gradually get to a more sustainable long-term solution.

Creating awareness:

- Learning about sustainable clothing brands and ethically sourced products. Awareness regarding the textile industry's use of water (How many litres are used to make one pair of jeans) was emphasized during Arbor Week.
- Exploring what products can be repurposed or created out of recycling for money and using money gained to create jobs.

- Leave Your Footprint Campaign: Children came to school wearing Funky Footwear on Friday, 22 September. Each child donated R5 to assist the Catholic Institute of Education with the raising of funds to replace pit toilets in rural schools.
- ‘Let Justice and Peace Flow’: A Mighty River was created by the children during their art classes. The values of our Foundress, Mary Ward – Justice, Peace, Joy, Integrity and Sincerity – were added to our Mighty River.
- International Day of Peace was celebrated on 21 September. The YouTube video ‘One Thousand Cranes’ was shared with the teaching staff. The Grade 3 children made and distributed peace cranes around the school. They were also given the opportunity of writing a peace poem. (See attached poems below.)



Hands on experiences:

- Grade 10 students visited Pico- Gro which is renowned for its cultivation and export of a wide variety of edible flowers, microgreens, and micro herbs. This excursion provided a remarkable opportunity to delve into the world of plants. It heightened awareness of the natural beauty that surrounds us, allowing learners to appreciate the diverse shapes, colours, textures, and flavours that nature offers.
- Vegetable gardens at all our schools, that are tended by the students, provide valuable learning opportunities and learners get to feel the joy of being able to contribute. The produce from school gardens is donated to the parishes where it is either distributed directly to those in need or used for the soup kitchen. At one school, learners even help to prepare the soup, by chopping the vegetables. Charles Dudley Warner said, "The man who has planted a garden feels that he has done something for the good of the world."
- Teaching learners to knit and using the squares to create blankets. These are gifted to those in need or sold and the proceeds donated to charity.

Outreach – responding to The Cry of the Poor:

- Collecting bottle tops and bread tags which can be exchanged for wheelchairs for the underprivileged.
- Nelson Mandela Day Drive, where learners were asked to bring packets of non-perishables that can be prepared by simply adding hot water. Teachers made

sandwiches and then all food was taken to the informal settlement in the inner city where about 100 adults and 20 children are living in very concerning conditions. The food was really appreciated by all.

- Various other collection drives and opportunities to help those less fortunate.
- Visits to animal sanctuaries to care for the animals and make donations.

Caring for our Earth:

- Litter-runs on the beach, in schools and in the cities to give students practical knowledge about the detrimental impact of waste on the environment and inspire them to keep their own environments clean. Getting learners involved in recycling helps learners to see that trash does not “magically” disappear. They then gain awareness of the problem and are empowered to be part of the solution, not the pollution.
- Green Monitors have been appointed from Grade 3 to assist with a litter free play area. The monitors walk around during break time in the areas used by the Foundation Phase children.
- Raising awareness about litter and recycling through the “Trashion show”. This annual event has become an opportunity for learners to really showcase not only their talents, but how we can save natural resources. It really does allow for their creativity to shine. It is good for the environment, and it shows them how upcycling can reduce waste in the environment.
- Spring Day and Arbor Day are celebrated on 1 September – on the day the Season of Creation begins. Children from Grade 1 to 7 took part in a Spring Hat Competition. After proudly modelling their creative and fun hats, the winners from each class were announced.
- The planting of the Sagewood, South Africa’s tree of the year, marked Arbor Day. The Sagewood is a water wise plant which rewards with beautiful, sweetly fragrant white or purple flowers. Our Sagewood was planted in the garden of our grotto. To mark the occasion our Junior Choir sang “All things bright and beautiful” and the prayers from the Season of Creation 2023 were read. Tree planting in our schools raises awareness not only of the value of trees in our immediate environments but also of tropical rainforests around the world and the link to air quality, especially in big cities.

The learning opportunities offered to our learners by the abovementioned events and experiences are aimed at helping our learners to make better choices for the future. As school children, the seemingly small changes they make may not seem hugely impactful, but by making these small changes now, the future can be transformed. By promoting a culture of sustainability and by emphasising our interconnectivity with the earth and all its people, we strive to align our choices with our Gospel values and contribute to the goals of Laudate Si’ for the greater glory of God and for the betterment of the world.

Submitted by *Adrienne Blignaut - JPIC coord.*

Peace

Peace feels like my best friend, Drishti comforting me.

Peace smells like leather shoes being freshly polished.

Peace sounds like kids joyfully playing outside.

Peace tastes like the delicious oozy caramel inside chocolate.

Peace looks like calm people just reading a book or writing like me!

Peace

Peace feels like my best friend hugging me.

Peace smells like the flowers in Spring on an amazing day.

Peace sounds like two friends laughing.

Peace looks like someone reading a book.

Peace tastes like ice-cream in Summer.

Peace

Peace feels like when your mom gives you a goodbye hug.

Peace smells like a scrumptious pizza coming from a hot oven.

Peace sounds like a bird chirping.

Peace tastes like chocolate fudge drooling.

Peace looks like a small puppy.

Poems written by three of our Grade 3, 9-year-old children



MAURITIUS - IBVM

Rethinking Economics in a circular way in the light of “Laudato Si”.

In our society, “the take-make-dispose” is a common practice in linear economic model where we are constantly depleting our natural resources without thinking of the future generation. The message of humanity contained in Pope Francis’ encyclical Laudato Si, helps us to understand the ethical foundations of circular economy and how each human being can act for the common good.

Circular economy optimises materials and waste so that they can be reused, retransformed and upcycled into useful products, hence giving them a second life. By changing our habits and way of life, we are all taking part in making “Our Common Home” a better place to live.

At Loreto College, Curepipe, Mauritius, our young girls of the LCC GO Green team, as well as mentors, have embarked on a project to reduce the amount of whiteboard markers at school which eventually end up in landfills.



1. Biodiversity Conservation:

This portion of land in the school yard serves as a microcosm of natural ecosystems. Students, together with their teachers, actively participate in maintaining this habitat, learning about the importance of different species and their roles in the ecosystem. They plant native trees, medicinal plants, fruit trees, shrubs, and flowers thus providing habitat for insects and small wildlife. LCBV contribute to preserving biodiversity. Trees play a vital role in combating climate change and supporting life on land.

2. Education and Awareness

Educating the younger generation of LCBV about the significance of SDG 15 is crucial for its long-term success. The portion of land in the school yard can become an outdoor classroom where students can learn about ecosystems, sustainability and the importance of preserving life on land. Hands-on activities are organized to raise awareness and instil a sense of responsibility among students.

3. Sustainable Land Management

The agriculture teacher implements eco-friendly gardening techniques such as composting and organic gardening. This not only benefits the land itself but also educates students of LCBV about the importance of sustainable practices in agriculture and land use. This teacher is looking forward to implementing a rain water harvesting system.

4. It can be a focal point for **community engagement**: for example, hosting community gardening events.

Upcoming Projects

A group of students and teachers are planning to construct:

A green-shed on a roof-top with a fruit creeper plant, under which students can have fun, lunch and at the same time a Zen environment where they can study. Wooden pallets will be upcycled and designed into large benches and tables.

2. A fish pond after which the water will be used for irrigation purposes and again help to create a relaxing environment (i.e. the sound of water is a great way to improve our mental health and well-being – for example: towards ADHD students)

CONCLUSION

At Loreto College, Bambous, Virieux, it is firmly believed that this small piece of land can be a powerful symbol of the collective effort needed to achieve Sustainable Development

Prepared by
Josée Pontre ibum

Mr James MAMOUN, Mr Jean Yan TARBY and Mr Yann RAMDHONY



*„In the last few years many Fair Trade social enterprises,
fair trade networks and advocacy groups
have celebrated milestone anniversaries
marking their relevance in the current reality.*

*However, the task ahead is to grow the movement.
Our collaborations with like-minded networks and organisations
need to be deeper and more meaningful
our voices louder and our narrative stronger.*

*It is time for elders with their wisdom and experience
to join forces with the youth with its passion, energy, commitment
and agility to bring fresh ideas and strengthen the movement.
For fair trade policies practices and processes
to become the norm for all businesses.
Therein lies the future of fair trade.”*

Roopa Mehta

President and foundress of Sasha World

On Ecological Economics:

Fair trade

A Presentation to IBVM and CJ Sisters – June 21st 2023

USA - IBVM

The IBVM US Region and its JPIC Circle are committed to carrying forward in our actions the implementation of the seven goals put forward in Laudato Si'. This year the goal emphasized by the Mary Ward JPIC was Ecological Economics. We looked at the definition below taken from the Laudato Si' Action Platform and tried to incorporate its essence in many of our activities, missions, projects and the end results of partners we cooperated with.

Ecological Economics acknowledges that the economy is a sub-system of human society, which itself is embedded within the biosphere—our common home. Actions could include sustainable production and consumption, ethical investments, divestment from fossil fuels and any activity harmful to the planet and the people, supporting circular economies, and prioritizing care labour and protecting the dignity of workers.

This has been a busy year regarding the US Region Mary Ward Action Plan. The promotion of Ecological Economics has been a central theme to many of our actions. We share with you a partial calendar of our activities which represent the efforts of Sisters, Companions of Mary Ward, friends of the US IBVM Region and new and old partners.

You'll see our ongoing commitment to education through the Mary Ward Center in the immigrant community to attain language and computer skills thus allowing them to gain meaningful employment.

Our efforts, in cooperation with other religious, to leverage our impact in the world around us be it at the Joliet Franciscan's Bluestem Earth Festival, meeting on environmental issues with other orders that participate in the Leadership Conference of Women's Religious or the multiple women's religious orders we partner with in the fight against human trafficking.

Sister Christa Parra, IBVM, supported by both the US IBVM Region and the Wheaton Franciscans, continues to carry on at the border mission.

Throughout the year, we have promoted the ideas of recycle, reuse and substitute products we may be accustomed to for more environmentally friendly products. On October 1, 2023, on the last Sunday of the Season of Creation, we hosted, at the Wheaton Franciscans, a presentation after Mass on Environmental Sustainability. It has started a whole new conversation and way of thinking amongst many.

One's commitment to changing our ways that impact the environment starts with small actions at home and slowly build into a committed way of living. Encourage those you meet on the journey to walk slowly with you and do not give up.

Read the full report here and find out more on the upcoming events

<https://www.marywardjpic.org/2023/10/26/us-mary-ward-action-plan-on-ecological-economics/>

Submitted by Mr. *Andy Wells* JPIC coord.

J P I C US Region



SPRED Collectors and Teachers



RECYCLING...
BEYOND THE BASICS!



Bethany House



SCARCE Presentation



Trafficking Conference



Mary Ward Center tutoring



Presentation table, one of many events



One of many knitters—scarves and hats for Mary Ward Center and Hased House.



Silver and gold have I none, but what I have I give to you



California Companions repurposing items for immigrants and the homeless.



Prayer Shawl ministry, Northlake



Community Sustainability Day in DuPage County

DELHI - CJ

“All of us can cooperate as instruments of God for the care of creation according to his or her own culture, experience, involvements and talents” Laudato Si

Our religious communities and schools respond to the challenges of ecological economics by following the Laudato Si action plan. We make conscious efforts to protect and preserve our environment for the present and future generation. Caring for Mother Earth and Caring for the Poor have been the main aim of our mission. Our sisters work to ensure the dignity of the poor and support them to earn their livelihood. Sr. Lucy, who is closely associated with social work in our province, talks about the work done for the less privileged in various places.

In Jeolikote, in Uttarakhand, we had a sponsorship program which was funded by then CCF- Christian Childrens’ Fund which is now known as Child Fund India. It is a welfare program for children and their families. When the NGO shifted its aim from welfare mode to developmental mode, we were asked to form Self Help Groups - SHG for various activities. One of its activities was ‘Savings’ to make families financially self-sufficient. The people of the area are engaged in animal husbandry. The needy families were supported with milch animals which were given on grant in the initial period and later switched over to loaning. At this juncture we formed an SHG Federation and got it registered. Now the repayment amount is pooled to Federation account. The members take loans from the Federation for income generating activities like animal husbandry, small shops, beauty parlours etc. and the education of their children. This opportunity brought our women out from the four walls of their homes. It also enabled them to gain functional literacy, specially to manage Bank related works. The villagers have now a better life style. The effect of our work is seen in the villages.

In Mauranipur, a village in Uttar Pradesh, youth and women are helped to find jobs. We run skill development programmes which have enabled the youth to obtain jobs like computer operator, education, beautician, General Duty Assistant and tailoring. Our sisters have helped women to form self-help groups which enable these women to know more about building a good family, earn their livelihood and become more self-dependent, fostering their own economic empowerment. As most of the sisters of Delhi province work in various schools educating the young people, students are reminded each time to preserve resources and use them more efficiently to create a more just and sustainable world. We educate our students about conserving natural resources and caring for our common home. Some areas in which we have worked on to bring about ecological economics are:-

- Encouraging planting of saplings.
- Saying no to single use plastic
- Using Solar energy / Conserving water
- Motivating our staff and students to reach out to the less privileged.
- Giving dignity to our co-workers

Caring for God’ creation opens everyone to beauty, wonder and healing. It increases energy efficiency and better living.

Submitted by *Deepti Thyparambil CJ*

LIMA, PERU - IBVM

We are present in three áreas of Lima, in the communities of Baca Flor in the city, in Jicamarca and Huaycan which are poorly resourced human settlements on the outskirts of Lima.

In the Baca Flor Community and Associates' group there has been a great deal of awareness raising among the members. They continue to avail of many courses in JPIC and human trafficking provided by the conference of Religious of Peru, currently attending a virtual 10 consecutive Saturdays' seminar on Integral Ecology. This will conclude with the development of a plan for a small ecological project for their area.

Advocacy. This group has also taken part in public activities and protests on behalf of the rights of indigenous peoples and of the environment.

i) They attended a March for Peace on 19 July, 2023, held to mark public anger at the treatment of indigenous peoples during peaceful protests. ii) They presented signed petitions to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in favour of the signing of the Treaty of Escazu which would protect the rights and lives of the defenders of the Amazon basin and which the Congress refused to sign.

They have advanced from the simpler activities such as collecting and recycling litter to developing a wider awareness of the care of the earth, our common home.



The Baca Flor community and associates with their banner "Peace comes from Justice."

One of Laudato Si trees planted around the chapel in Jicamarca.





In the IBVM community of Huaycan, in the Project Warmi Wasi, nutrition projects and health campaigns are directed to the most vulnerable families, particularly to women and children in an area of some of the greatest poverty and social problems in Lima.

Living simply, care of water and care of animals and of all living creatures are part of the life of each of our communities and ministries along with efforts to enhance the environment, which can be a struggle in the desert we live in.

In the Garden Project, sponsored by the Irish Loreto Province, in Fe y Alegría Mary Ward College, Jicamarca, Lima, Peru, the teachers and children practise organic gardening, showcasing the organic production of vegetables, corn and potatoes along with herbs, flowers and some indigenous trees.

Everything is sourced locally and the products, such as potatoes, beetroot, radishes and lettuce are shared with families or sold to them.

The learnings from the Project are being taken up by some of the children and replicated in their own patios wherever there is space to do so.



On the left above we have a section of beetroot, **in the centre** lettuce and herbs and **on the right** a crop of Papaya. Also, in the photograph with the papaya we see the teaching unit for classes.

Below on left we have a section of corn, **in the centre** the wormery where compost is made by worms to be packaged and sold in the school community and beyond. **On right** a storage unit.



Submitted by *Mary Elisabeth Kirke ibvm*

IRELAND - IBVM

“Nature cannot be regarded as something separate from us, or as a mere setting in which we live. We are part of nature, included in it and thus in constant interaction with it.” [LS 139]

Pope Francis also reminds us that:

“Humanity is called to recognise the need for changes of lifestyle, production and consumption, in order to combat this warming or at least the human causes which produce or aggravate it.” [LS 23]

Sustainability initiatives and changes to daily practices are highlighted as we are all encouraged to do what we can to protect the planet for generations to come.

During this the year of Ecological Economics, the Irish Province continued actions grounded in Laudato Si’.

- Parish groups set up for monthly discussion and sharing on Laudato Si’, followed by action e.g Providing Christmas Hampers, setting up of pollinator groups
- Local radio interviews given on Laudato Si’
- Talks given at Ecumenical services
- Complete the Tree Project-planting of 10,000 saplings
- Keep up to date with environmental issues through the Laudato Si’ movement as well as keeping in mind the GC Call 3 of the Cry of the Poor
- Schools involved in biodiversity competition [Loreto Improves Biodiversity](#)

We are very conscious that ecology is never in isolation; it effects all aspects on this planet. Pope Francis reminded us of this:

“Today, however, we have to realise 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.” [LS]

Submitted by *Fionnuala Lynch ibvm*

ENGLAND - CJ

Both our provinces CJ/IBVM are well aware of the need for Ecological Economics. Recently we have had several boilers installed and due consideration has been made that they are as ecologically viable as possible, using less fuel and more user friendly.

Great care is taken with our investments. We have divested from all funds invested in oil and gas and all our investments are ecologically sound.

We support CAFOD very generously as a province and have sent a generous amount of money to the workings of our Zimbabwe Region.

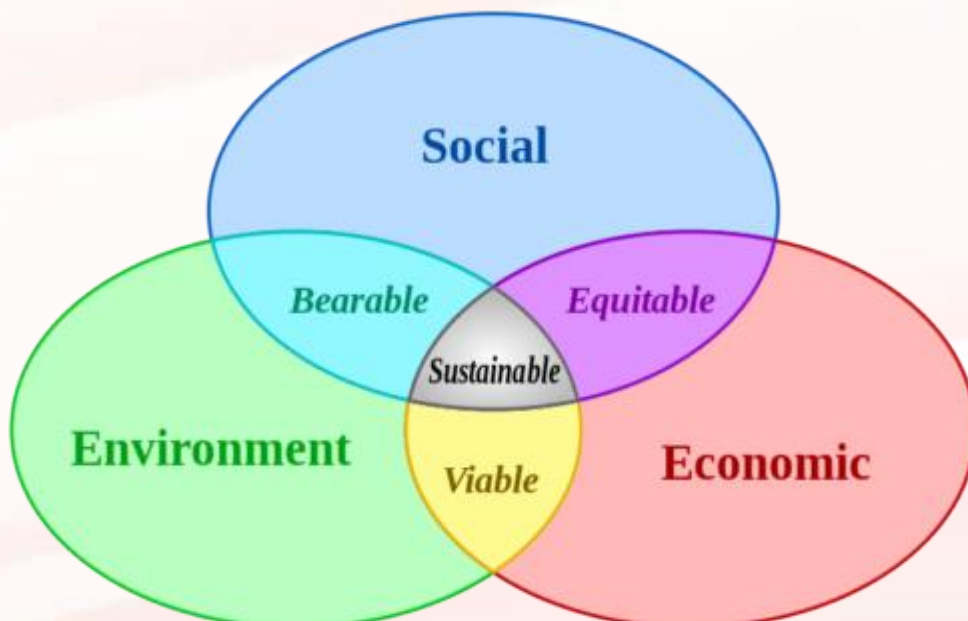
All the sisters are very good about recycling. Twice a month, the local council collect our papers, cans, bottles and plastics.

We are very fortunate in our garden where we have a compost area to recycle any organic waste.

Both the Bar Convent and St. Bedes pastoral centre have done some major alterations to the buildings. Due consideration has been given to make these changes more ecologically friendly as improving damp exclusion and increasing insulation in the roofing.

I hope this gives you some idea of our working towards caring for our earth. We are a small province who have handed over our schools but do what we can in our small ways with prayer and awareness in our need to look after God's beautiful creation.

Submitted by *Ann Stafford cj*



CONCLUSION

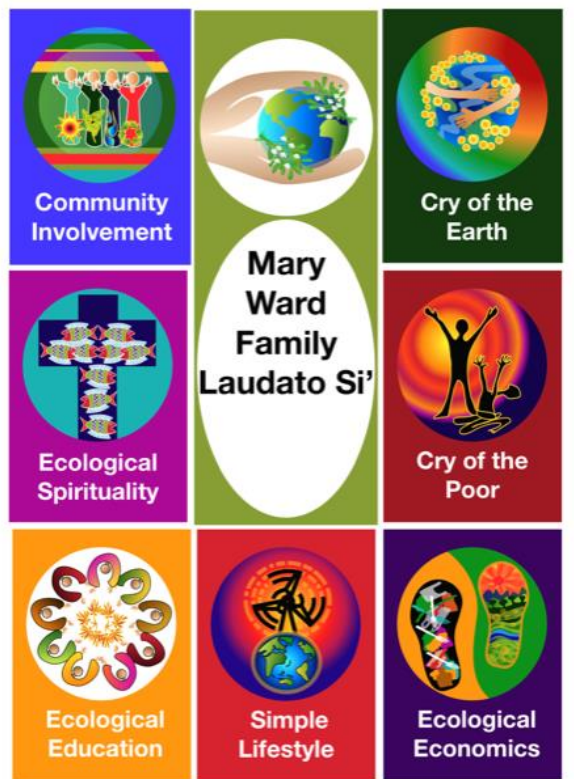
We are eternally grateful to the Mary Ward Family for the generosity in sharing their experiences and activities, offering the much-needed synergy.

There is a lot to learn from each other, and everyone has something to offer in taking care of the Planet and using our finances and investments to promote the care of Our Common Home.

A special thank you to the Province JPIC Coordinators for their contributions throughout the year, they brought so much energy into the conversations and creativity on how to best engage with Ecological Economics.

We look forward to the next goal, Ecological Education but remain connected to Ecological Economics.

Let us continue to walk on the Laudato Si' journey together with hope and faith!



Rome, November 3rd, 2023

**Pauline Macharia IBVM and
Adina Bălan CJ**

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