

## SETTING UP A GREEN TEAM IN YOUR PARISH

Pope Francis' messages in *Laudato Si'* have been clear in the need for us to protect our beautiful but fragile world. They ask us all, collectively and individually, to:

- consider the way we look at creation
- pray about this
- identify and stop practices that cause damage
- start new initiatives to improve our environment, and then
- reset our lifestyles

It can all seem a bit daunting but there are many ways for us to engage with Pope Francis' call. So how do we start? One of the best ways is to form a Green Team in your parish. The Green Team could look at aspects of our lives in the parish and at home and work. Such as:

- Energy - how much gas & electricity do we use? Some dioceses already arrange 'green' electricity and gas for the parish buildings.
- Agriculture - what food do we eat & where does it come from?
- Transport - how do we get to work & school?
- Rewilding - what flora & fauna live here?
- Commodities- what can we do without, which things are we reusing and recycling?
- Eco-friendly products - what environmentally harmful products should we stop using?

The next stage is to decide which one(s) to begin doing something about. Use the 5R principle – Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Renewable energy, and especially Refuse to buy. This helps to focus and identify benefits and savings. Savings are not only ££, they also include carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), a greenhouse gas that is making a huge contribution to the Climate Change crisis. AND remember sustainability means having the environmental, social and economic aspects in place, it's not one of these versus the others! Also several dioceses have adopted Environmental Policies. You can use these to help you compose your own parish environment policy.

Your Green Team can share your suggestions with the parish – always keep them up to date with what is happening, some may join in as well. Make some posters to display at your church giving details of what you are going to do. Include in your parish liturgy. You don't have to know all the answers at this stage, they can be different for each of us, but there are many that have common themes and lots of advice is available. You can do this for your parish buildings & grounds and/or for your own homes as well.

There are plenty of resources available, from [Laudato Si Movement](#), [Journey to 2030](#), [Laudato Si Animators](#), [the Laudato Si Centre](#), [the Ecological Conversion Group](#) and others.