

July 2022



Dear Monsignor/Father/Parish Rep/Caritas Ambassador,

As you all know, in 2015, Pope Francis wrote his environmental encyclical *Laudato Si'* in which he implores us to protect our common home. To escalate the implementation of *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis established the *Laudato Si'* Action Platform with its 7 Goals.

Our [Australian Bishops Social Justice Statement 2021-22, 'Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor'](#) reinforces the call to care for all creation and invites us to join them in acting and committing to the *Laudato Si'* goals, as does the recent motion of the Plenary Council.

Catholic Earthcare has made it easy for parishes to take up the Bishops' invitation to journey towards these 7 goals and to becoming living *Laudato Si'* communities. Kerry Stone (DD Sandhurst Dioceses) and myself very much enjoyed updating the Council of Priest at their June meeting in Ballarat about how to become a Catholic Earthcare Parish. I invite you to join the growing number of Earthcare parishes across the nation who've begun this journey.

I encourage you to take a look at our Catholic Earthcare process for parishes via the green button at <https://catholicearthcare.org.au>.

Bishop Vincent Long, Chair, Bishops Commission for Social Justice, Mission & Service and Caritas Australia National Council member, has set a strong example by registering his Parramatta Diocese on the international *Laudato Si'* Platform and encouraging all Parramatta Parishes and Schools to register with Catholic Earthcare. You can watch the Launch Video at parracatholic.org/laudatosi. Sandhurst Diocese has done the same and Bishop Paul Bird is encouraging Ballarat Diocese to commit to a similar approach.

Catholic Earthcare was established in 2002 by the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference and mandated, through the activities of education, research and advocacy to give leadership in responding to Pope John Paul II's call to "stimulate and sustain the ecological conversion". This has evolved into leading an Australian Catholic response to *Laudato Si'*. Catholic Earthcare was incorporated into Caritas Australia in 2018 to create synergies between agencies that service the 'cry of the poor' and 'cry of the earth'.

Catholic Earthcare launched its Earthcare Parishes program in December 2021 and, since then, the network has grown to sixty parishes across 17 dioceses. I invite your parish to join the network and begin your own parish's journey towards the 7 *Laudato Si'* Goals and to becoming living *Laudato Si'* communities. I am very happy to have further discussions with you and your Parish Community to lend support on how to sign up.

Please contact me via email at caritas@ballarat.catholic.org.au

Yours sincerely

Jillian Hogbin
Caritas Australia Diocesan Director – Ballarat