

Living Resurrection: Resources for Jesuit Communities to Collaborate in the Care of our Common Home



In his 2017 Easter Monday address, Pope Francis called on Catholics to “be resurrection men and women, men and women of life.” Pope Francis reflected that “inspired and sustained by faith in the Risen Lord,” we can have an impact “well beyond our capacity.” Surely, this is part of our call in Universal Apostolic Preference 4: to collaborate in the care of our common home. Today’s environmental crisis impacts the poor and vulnerable in a particular way. Whole nations and peoples need an ecological conversion if we are to be honest custodians of God’s Creation.

In his April 2019 webinar, Arturo Sosa, SJ noted that the Covid-19 pandemic reminds us how humanity has exploited the planet. “Our call is to work with others to care for our common home,” Fr. Sosa said. “Each of us needs to cultivate a desire to work passionately and urgently with others to bring about change, to love and cherish our planet with the tenderness of the Creator.” We need to feel motivated and be energized to do something, to change structures and systems that abuse creation, and we can if we work together. Fr. Sosa challenges us that the Covid-19 pandemic, like the ecological crisis, is showing us that we need to “look after the Common Good and take seriously our own individual responsibility... starting by putting what we ourselves want in second place and accepting measures and sacrifices that allow us to contribute to the good of all.”

The Universal Apostolic Preferences require us to continually engage with them in prayer, spiritual conversation and communal discernment across every level of the Society of Jesus, including in local Jesuit communities. Framed in the Global Catholic Climate Movement’s (GCCM) theory of change model (heart dimension, lifestyle dimension and public sphere dimension), below are resources to support Jesuit communities to engage in the call of UAP 4. Please contact [Nick Napolitano](#), UEA Assistant for Social Ministries, for support and guidance to animate this UAP in your community.

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Heart Dimension- Personal Ecological Conversion

In his remarks at the Jesuit Social Justice and Ecology Secretariat’s Jubilee Congress in November 2019, Cardinal Michael Czerny, SJ stated that our approach to the ecological crisis needs to be far more radical, more than being green. Ecological conversion demands that we simultaneously hear the cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor. This work of the heart is intended to offer us the courage to work in the public sphere for institutional and structural change.

- Prayer- How can Jesuit communities integrate care for creation into regular prayer practices? The [Ecological Examen](#) is one resource. A regular prayer intention for creation in community masses would inspire action.
- Connect regularly with nature- Finding moments in nature, in ways small and large, can help us be more aware of the beauty and wonder of creation.
- Accompaniment and listening- We need to find ways to grow closer to the climate crisis. Are there groups in your local community that are particularly vulnerable to the climate crisis and organizations that are open to encounter and accompaniment? Could campus ministry and community-engaged learning offices at local high schools and higher education institutions be a resource (or local representatives from [CCHD](#))? Read [Ecojesuit](#) stories of Jesuits working directly with climate-impacted communities to strengthen connections between the global Society.
- Spiritual conversation and communal discernment- All of us should identify what steps we are called to take individually and communally. Some ideas to stimulate conversation include:
 - Posting daily ideas to live UAP 4 on bulletin boards and around the community.
 - [Easter with an Amazonian Face](#)- This 7-week Easter Season reflection series shares stories from participants of the Synod on the Amazon.
 - Read *Laudato Si’* as a community (perhaps using this [reflection guide](#) by Tom Reese, SJ) or create a GCCM [Laudato Si’ Circle](#) in your community.
 - Watch and discuss PBS Frontline’s [Plastic Wars](#)- How can we reduce individual and communal plastic use? How can we challenge companies to alter packaging and production practices?

Lifestyle Dimension- Taking small steps to shrink our own carbon footprint

The enormity of this crisis can paralyze us from answering the call to care for creation. These concrete suggestions offer actions individuals can take, but our response cannot end here. As Cardinal Czerny said during the SJES Congress, “An adequate response to the climate crisis requires fair, solidary and sustainable forms of development.”

- Include among the responsibilities of community consultors intentional steps to animate UAP 4.

- In 2010, at the request of Fr. General Adolfo Nicolas and the 35th General Congregation, a working group of Jesuit and lay leaders produced [Healing A Broken World](#). At the end of the document, the authors included concrete suggestions for Jesuit communities that remain relevant 10 years later.
- [Renewing the Earth: Living Laudato Si in the Year of Ignatius](#) – The Ignatian Solidarity Network and Jesuit Conference Office of Justice and Ecology invite you to explore themes from Laudato Si’ through the lens of Ignatian Spirituality.
- [Ecological Conversion: Called to Tend to a Flourishing Garden of Life](#). Catholic Climate Covenant’s program explores how you or your religious community can embark on the [Laudato Si’ Action Platform’s](#) 7-year sustainability journey.
- Conduct an [Energy Audit](#) in your community- Understanding the greatest drivers of energy and heat use, as well as low-cost simple solutions, in a building can significantly reduce consumption. State or local government energy or weatherization offices are the best resources to identify local energy auditors.
- Choose renewable energy- Some Jesuit communities have the autonomy to choose energy providers, and clean energy options (solar and wind are ideal) abound with prices comparable to fossil fuel sources. Again a simple summary from the Department of Energy is [here](#).
- Establish a weekly plant-based/meatless meal in the community- We can continue our Lenten practice of a weekly meatless meal, in a prayerful and conscience-raising way. The New York Times illustrates the climate impact of our dietary choices [here](#).
- Create a house garden and/or begin composting to offer opportunities to connect with Creation
- Reduce and change personal and communal consumption habits- UAP 4 calls on us to explore how alternative economic models (captured in the [Economy of Francesco](#) virtual gathering and including cooperative ownership; local sourcing; ecological awareness) could help realize Pope Francis’s plea for an integral ecology.
 - Local food sourcing through farmer’s markets and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), organic when feasible, reduces the carbon footprint of our diet and fosters relationships with farmers. [Local Harvest](#) maps 2 million family farmers nationwide.
 - In addition to the vast number of fair-trade certified coffee roasters, consider supporting worker-owned cooperatives like [Café Capeltic](#), connected to the Mexican Jesuit Province mission in Chiapas, Mexico.
 - Through partnerships with textile cooperatives in Western North Carolina, [the Collection](#) brand clothing offers locally sourced, sustainably produced, ethically made apparel items.

Public sphere dimension- Raising our voices for bold policies and promoting collaboration

Bringing this call into the public sphere requires that we draw on core elements of our Jesuit identity: intellectual depth, bridge building, advocacy and collaboration. We need intellectual depth to understand and choose actions that will address the climate crisis. Our accompaniment and service must be bolstered by prayer, systemic analysis and research to produce meaningful responses. Our faith calls on us to create “bridges between rich and poor and establishing advocacy links of mutual support between those who hold political power and those who find it difficult to voice their interests” (GC 35, D 3, No 28). Our response must include local and global advocacy processes that address systemic injustices. It will require collaboration across communities, apostolates, Provinces, Conferences and beyond the Jesuits.

- Incorporate the climate crisis into our preaching, writing, and research
- Learn from and engage in efforts at apostolic institution(s) linked to your community
 - Can Jesuit communities facilitate conversations on climate crisis issues, for example fossil fuel investments in personal or endowment portfolios?
 - Are there opportunities for community members to engage in government initiatives at local/regional level?
 - Can communities pursue [environmental justice advocacy](#) initiatives at the local, state and federal level? Learn about the [Environmental Justice Policy Priorities](#) of the Jesuit Conference Office of Justice and Ecology and Ignatian Solidarity Network.
- Take the [21-Day Catholic Environmental Justice Challenge](#) - walk with other Catholics as we learn, pray, and take action for environmental justice.
- Become active in a local chapter of GCCM or participate in a [Laudato Si’ Animator](#) training
- Organize conversations on the climate crisis with interfaith leaders in area
- For communities connected to pre-secondary and secondary education institutions, explore US Dept. of Education [Green Ribbon Schools](#) or other institutional sustainability designations
- For communities connected to higher education institutions, get involved in the [Ignatian Pedagogy for Sustainability](#)-AJCU interdisciplinary working group. Visit the IAJU [Laudato Si’ University Pathways](#) website.