



# Laudato Si' Year Comes to a Close... and A New Beginning!

As May 24th nears, the year of celebrating Laudato Si' draws to a close.

This does not mean the work of Laudato Si' is finished! This past year's droughts, flooding, wild fires, freezing temperatures in Texas, and more unpredictable weather patterns are again directing our attention to the changes of the earth. These changes create devastating challenges for farmers who grow the food we eat, drive families from their homes and homelands due to uninhabitable conditions, and create poor health conditions for those living in areas where pollution is greatest.

**Who:** Pope Francis has called upon the whole Catholic Church (this means you!) to transition to Integral Ecology by 2030.

**What:** "Everything is connected. Concern for the environment thus needs to be joined to a sincere love for our fellow human beings and an unwavering commitment to resolving the problems of society." (LS 91)

"We are faced not with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather with one complex crisis which is both social and environmental. Strategies for a solution demand an integrated approach to combating poverty, restoring dignity to the excluded, and at the same time protecting nature." (LS 139)

**Where:** Everywhere! In every religious order, family, diocese, school, university or college, hospital or health care center, business, and farm.

**When:** The 7 year plan will officially kick off in October of 2021.  
We are beginning to form teams now to make plans as a province.

**How:** More information to come beginning the end of May  
Right now you can email [jpica@sndusa.org](mailto:jpica@sndusa.org) to become a part of a Creation Team.  
And everyone can pray!

Join the Global Catholic Climate Movement's Creation Care Prayer Network of communities committed to the healing of our common home through prayer and Eucharistic adoration.

This network will pray for and accompany those most affected by climate and ecological injustice. You will receive monthly emails and participating congregations will be featured on a worldwide online map!

[To register for the prayer network, click here!!](#)

[For the full list of Laudato Si' Week, May 17-24 events click here!](#)



Following the verdict in the Derek Chauvin trial, many congregations responded with this message that now is the time to work for "real and sustained systemic change in the struggle to end institutional racism in every aspect of our society." [Click here to read the Global Sisters Report full article.](#)

## Spotlight on...

# Responding to the Crisis at the Border



**Sr. Joyce Marie Bates**

When the request came from Catholic Charities through the Leadership Conference of Women Religious for assistance at the U.S.-Mexico border, Sr. Joyce Marie Bates, SND, of Toledo and Sr. Roseanna Mellert, SND of Chardon stepped forward to help bring hope and comfort to immigrants and asylum seekers.

On our first day at the Humanitarian Respite Center run by Catholic Charities, Laredo, Texas, we went right to work on making breakfast, followed by bean taco lunch, assembling hygiene kits, and washing piles of laundry! We were working in a facility that had only been opened for one month, so every plan was still being worked out and routines were being established. By day two, we were working the "night shift" 2 pm until 10 pm or as late as 12:30 am, while the Sisters of Saint Joseph worked the early mornings until 2 pm.

Each day brought new challenges and new opportunities for God to work in unexpected, beautiful ways. One day when we really had little food in the pantry to feed all of these hungry people, we prayed morning prayer together and Sr. Roseanna added "We need bread, Lord." Sure enough, in the afternoon, a van pulled up with a large donation of all the food we needed! "*Radiant Rain God, you come to us unexpectedly like a sudden April rainfall. You refresh our tired desire to give ourselves fully to you.*" Each day we were testing everyone for COVID as soon as they arrived, so that we could keep people separated and prevent spreading the virus. Some nights, so many people stayed overnight that they were sleeping in the hallways, wherever there was space.

The day Bishop James Tamayo visited, we were so afraid we were going to run out of food for supper. I was sure we had run out, and when I went back to the cart, we had another whole pan full of chicken! A miracle of the multiplication of the chicken!

Our morning prayer the next morning,

*"The Patient One: You patiently wait for me to return when I am endlessly absorbed in useless fretting."*

God knew my fretting about not enough food, and as always, God provided!

Every day there were more people, and we worried about having to turn them away, but we always found room and food for everyone.

As we prepared to return home, I couldn't help but reflect on how much hope there is here at the border, and yet there is still so much left for these families to face in their journey. Many will have to appear before a judge. They face the chance of deportation. So many will work in servitude to pay back the person who sponsored them, not to mention the mixed welcomes they will receive daily. Through it all God will remain by their side. My ongoing prayer is that they find a better life here.



**Sr. Roseanna Mellert, SND**