

# For the Beauty of the Earth

## Our Commitment to Environmental Action



DIOCESE OF  SALFORD

## For the beauty of the earth

### Opening note from Bishop John

This introductory document helpfully presents our plan, in the Diocese of Salford, to put our Christian faith into action in protecting the environment. It will help us on our journey as we respond to the climate crisis and begin to renew the beauty of the environment, safeguarding it for future generations. It guides us as individuals, in groups and in communities.

We have set ourselves a challenge but one that is realistic and built on Christian Hope. We now have the scientific knowledge to know how the damage has occurred and how we can be guardians of creation, protecting our common home with all the complex wonder of plant and wildlife.

I welcome this document and commend it to you.



### Introduction

This document, '**For the Beauty of the Earth**' is a diocesan year-one programme, that has been developed to provide support as we put our faith in action to heal and care for our common home, as an expression of our commitment to love God through loving and caring for creation and one another. It has been informed by the good work already happening across the Diocese and several engagement activities carried out during 2021. Throughout 2021/2022 there will be further engagement and opportunities to respond and feed into the September 2022 '**For the Beauty of the Earth**' update, which will include a 2030 vision supported by a three-year action plan:

Jan. 2021 - Aug. 2021	Sept. 2021	Sept. 21-Sept. 2022	Sept. 2022
Diocesan-wide survey, focus groups, meetings and work related to the Guardians of Creation Project.	'For the Beauty of the Earth' and Laudato Si' Centre website launched	Listen, review, reflect and respond	Update

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### Our Faith in Action

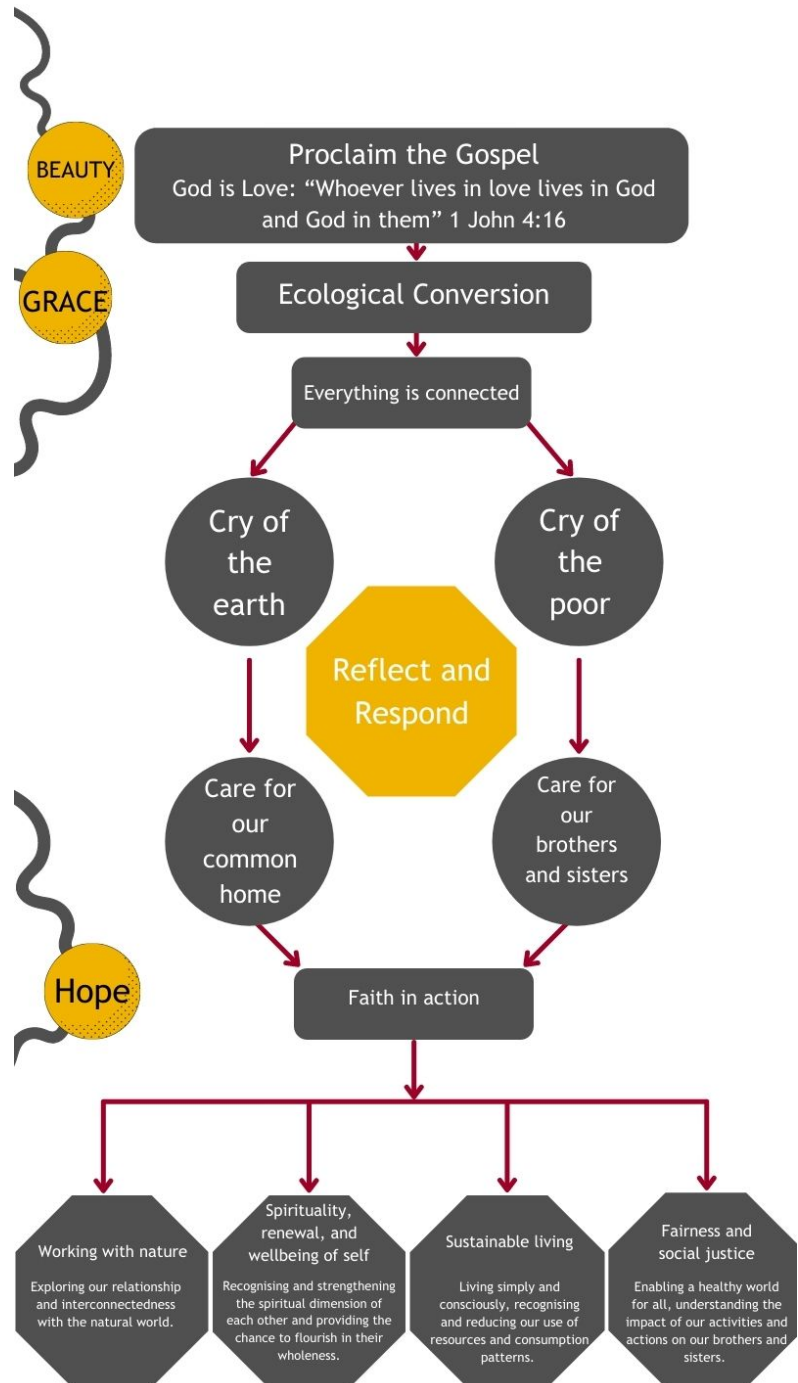
The mission of the Diocese is to proclaim the Gospel in all we do. In proclaiming the Gospel, we proclaim that God is love, and through God's love for us we see the beauty and gift of creation. But we have been destroying this beauty, this gift.

Pope Francis, awakening us to the damage that our way of life and choices have caused, leads us on a path of conversion, and we see this locally with the work and words of Bishop John. Pope Francis and Bishop John help us on our journey of conversion as we see that everything is connected. This all amounts to an encounter with grace.

Our response, the response of the people of God, flows from our encounter with grace and leads to hope through cooperating with the creator as we put our faith into action.

Our actions will be through four themes, all of which are included in our document 'For the Beauty of the Earth':

1. Working with nature;
2. Spirituality, renewal and wellbeing of self;
3. Sustainable living; and,
4. Fairness and social justice.



The word '*Grace*' is intended to refer to the "hand of God", the prompting of the Holy Spirit. For a Christian that which leads to a growth in love and charity, such as caring more effectively for our world and one another, is an encounter with grace because God is love (1 John 4:16).

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The environment crisis is the most serious challenge facing the world today. By working together, we can show the commitment and determination we need to build a better world.

### Diocesan Response

The Diocese of Salford was founded in 1852 as one of the first post-Reformation Catholic dioceses in Great Britain. The Diocese spans Greater Manchester north of the Mersey and Lancashire round Accrington, Blackburn, Burnley and Longridge.

Diocesan life is varied and vibrant, there are many faithful priests, religious, parishioners, teachers and members of staff who serve the Diocese of Salford in countless ways. The Catholic population across the Diocese is approximately

269,000. In 2019 the weekly mass attendance was over 36,500. The diocese is home to 208 Catholic schools with over 65,500 pupils.

Within the Diocese there are several departments that form part of the diocesan curia and the professional support services of the diocese. **‘For the Beauty of the Earth’** is for everyone across the Diocese of Salford.

The story of the Diocese of Salford is one of rising industrialisation, immigration, and universal education. The Diocese, by harnessing the same ingenuity, is perfectly placed to play a part in tackling the environment crisis.

### Delivery

There is a real sense of urgency for the work we need to build on and deliver. A new Environment Committee has been convened that will oversee **‘For the Beauty of the Earth’**. The committee will be chaired by a diocesan trustee. Members of the committee include the Bishop of Salford, Chief Operating Officer, Head of Environment, Heads of Department, Episcopal Vicar, Caritas, a parishioner, and youth member. The Environment Committee will report to the Trustees.

There is strength in working together. We will share understanding and use our voice to influence through Diocese-wide activities and communications, curial policies, activities at the Laudato Si’ Centre, parishes and schools, and through the work of the [Guardians of Creation Project](#).

We will work with Caritas and CAFOD to align programmes and activities to extend our reach and impact and will work with others to build a better world. This includes the wider Catholic Church, our environment focused interfaith work, Local Authorities, Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Lancashire County Council, Greater Manchester Citizens and Universities.

We will align our work to the Laudato Si’ Goals and work of the Laudato Si’ Action Platform as set out by the Vatican’s [Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development](#).

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### ‘For the Beauty of the Earth’ year-one programme, September 2021 - September 2022

Activities	Working with nature	Spirituality, renewal & wellbeing of self	Sustainable living	Fairness & social justice
<b>Season of creation:</b> Engagement activities and sharing ideas to celebrate the Season of Creation across the Diocese.				
<b>Engaging the Diocese:</b> Focus groups with communities across the Diocese on care for creation and faith in action to gather an integrated diocesan response.				
<b>Connecting our faith:</b> Talks, writings, workshops and prayers on ecological spirituality; connecting care for creation and our faith.				
<b>Nature-based community renewal:</b> A series of horticulture and arts and crafts activities based at the Laudato Si’ Centre to support mental health/wellbeing, trauma and skills development, linking caring for ourselves and others with caring for our local and wider natural environment. For all faiths and none.				
<b>Educate for care:</b> Activities across the Diocese to support a switch to sustainable simple ways of living; the programme will demonstrate the systemic changes we need to see alongside individual action.				
<b>Laudato Si’ school communities:</b> Activities that include recruiting and training pupils so they can lead and advise on practical action within their schools to create more sustainable institutions; environmental education and social action activities for schools; and, school days at the Laudato Si’ Centre with a focus on wellbeing, science and nature, art and craft, and curriculum.				
<b>Events and exhibitions:</b> To include a climate walk, choral concert, nature photography and environmental exhibitions.				
<b>Zero carbon:</b> Working alongside the ‘Guardians of Creation Project’, activities that include an educational campaign to explain what our carbon baseline and carbon target for zero carbon means, what actions to take and the implications of failing to reduce carbon emissions. At the same time, work will commence auditing buildings across the Diocese to develop a decarbonisation pathway.				
<b>Responsible procurement:</b> A review of our working practices and supply chain, and a review of the top five procurement categories (by spend) with actions that align with caring for creation.				
<b>Tree planting:</b> Tree planting across schools, parishes and land across the Diocese, which will be accompanied with a tree guide and reflections to support creation walks.				
<b>Wildlife programme:</b> Activities and awareness that creates space for nature, wildlife and that regenerates and repairs the spaces within our influence.				

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### The Laudato Si' Centre

In March 2019, Bishop John wrote to everyone in the Diocese calling on them to play their part in responding to climate change and to 'think global, act local'. To lead by example, Bishop John announced his plans to transform his home at Wardley Hall into an ambitious flagship project, the Laudato Si' Centre where we have welcomed school children and parishioners. The centre continues to develop.

The Laudato Si' Centre is a statement of hope, rooted in the belief that we can make a difference through the actions we take, and is for all faiths and none. The Laudato Si' Centre will:

- Provoke an ecological conversion in others and across communities.
- Demonstrate ways of living that better care for creation, are practical, and can be replicated through Laudato Si' networks and spaces, parishes, homes and schools, leaving no one behind.
- Be a centre of learning and research so that our way of life can be increasingly more sensitive to the damaging effects our choices may have on the world around us and our brothers and sisters.
- Provide a space to heal and flourish.



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### What is a Laudato Si' network and space?

Parishes and schools across the Diocese have responded to Pope Francis' encyclical Laudato Si' through a variety of projects and activities. We call these 'Laudato Si' networks and spaces'. By connecting schools and communities across the Diocese with existing Laudato Si' networks and spaces, ideas, learning, opportunities and best practice can be shared that will help others to develop their own response to Laudato Si'. The Laudato Si' Centre will help to coordinate this and will support others on their journey.

**Ecological conversion:** St. John Paul II first used 'ecological conversion' in 2001, highlighting how "humanity has disappointed God's expectations" by the destruction of the Earth's habitat. In Laudato Si', Pope Francis identified the environmental crisis as a "summons to profound interior conversion", calling for an "ecological conversion," whereby the effects of their encounter with Jesus Christ become evident in their relationship with the world around them" (LS 217).



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