

## What does it mean to be a member of a Laudato Si' Congregation?

and to

“Live more simply, responsibly and sustainably.”



**It means commitment.** When the SSND congregation composed the [SSND Laudato Si Public Statement](#) in May, 2021, it was a call to each of us to take concrete steps to contribute to the healing of Earth, and the restoration of dignity and rights of persons made poor by exploitation and the ecological crisis. The statement asks all of us to incorporate

into our lives and lifestyles, the values and actions embedded within it. Reading the statement and filing it away will not allow any of us to become what the statement intends, namely, a person who commits to “*living more simply, responsibly and sustainably.*” The commitment we consciously make to these three values has to be mindfully embraced each day. The SSND Laudato Si' Public Statement is a commitment that will unfold in us and take up more and more space in our lives through the moment-by-moment decisions we make.

**(Living Simply):** What can I do reduce the consumer patterns that I have adopted over the course of my life? What do I really *need* to have? How much is *enough* for me? What is causing *stress* in my life and *how can I reduce it*? How can I integrate balance more intentionally in my day-to-day lifestyle so that the time I give to *contributing* is balanced by the time I give to *receiving*? These questions can help us assess what we are currently doing and not doing to embrace a more simple way of life and lifestyle.

**(Living Responsibly):** How aware am I of the concerns which shape my community, and the world today, and how am I responding to these concerns? So often we hear one another lament, “I am so overwhelmed, I just can’t do another thing?” Given the multiple and unexpected realities such as COVID, that have challenged our sense of security and wellbeing over the past two years, feeling overwhelmed is understandable. Nevertheless, there are always ways that we can contribute to justice-making, and care for others and for our planet. There are always ways to reduce the responsibilities of others by doing our part. To live responsibly requires an attitude of attentiveness to what is going on around me, not just what is going on within me.

**(Living Sustainably):** One of the simplest and comprehensive definitions of sustainability tells us that sustainable living is a commitment to “live in a way that meets our need for food, water and shelter, without harming our environment or compromising the availability of essential resources for future generations.” Behaviors we can integrate into our lives that will support the sustainability of our planet include: 1) Avoiding single use plastics, 2) Purchasing gently-used clothes and other items, 3) Driving less, carpooling, using public transportation 4) Contributing to or developing healthy habitats for pollinators such as birds, bees, and butterflies 5) Reducing or eliminating red meat consumption 6) Growing a vegetable garden or purchasing local produce 7) Eliminating bottled water use and using less water 6) Voting for candidates who support the environment.

Conversion is at the heart of the season of Lent. Ecological conversion is at the heart of our becoming a Laudato Si' Congregation. Take time, this lent to reflect on the [SSND Laudato Si Public Statement](#). Allow your consciousness to be stretched and challenged by the challenges it holds—particularly the challenges to live simply, responsibly, and sustainably.