

Parish

Roadmap Playbook



Embracing the Care for Creation (C4C) Framework: A Call to Stewardship



"Today, however, we have to realise that a true ecological approach always becomes a social approach; it must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, so as to hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor." (LS, 49)

In an inspiring move towards environmental stewardship, Caritas Singapore has been appointed by Cardinal William Goh to lead and support the Catholic Church in Singapore in caring for God's creation. This appointment highlights the Church's commitment to stewardship, a message emphasized by Archbishop William Goh during the first archdiocesan Laudato Si' mass at the Church of St. Bernadette on May 24. The archbishop urged the faithful to embrace their role as stewards of God's creation.

Since Pope Francis' call to care for our common home through his Laudato Si' encyclical, in 2015, and the more recent Laudate Deum exhortation, in 2023, parishes in Singapore have been striving to incorporate Laudato Si' principles into their communities and facilities. However, this journey has faced challenges, such as varying levels of engagement, limited awareness and understanding of the climate crisis, and a lack of guidance and unified direction. In some cases, these obstacles have hindered the progress and continuity of their programs and actions.

To address these challenges, the Care for Creation (C4C) Framework and the Parish Roadmap were developed by Caritas Singapore, to guide the archdiocese's efforts in implementing Laudato Si' at both the parish and archdiocesan levels. The framework's holistic approach integrates the physical, intellectual, and spiritual dimensions of environmental stewardship, supporting the community's efforts to promote Laudato Si' and care for our common home. The Parish Roadmap aims to help parishes integrate sustainability practices and inspire their communities to embrace the call to be stewards of God's creation in their everyday lives.

This playbook aims to share, promote, and explain how the C4C Framework works, encouraging its adoption by the Catholic community in various settings, including parishes, Catholic organizations, and schools. Additionally, it provides a practical tool for parishes looking to start, continue, or advance their efforts to incorporate care for creation through the Parish Roadmap. We hope this playbook helps parishes and individuals initiate conversations, plan, and take progressive actions that lead them to live the Laudato Si' principles in their communities.

“Living our vocation to be protectors of God’s handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience.” (LS, 217)

The Body, Mind and Heart of Care for Creation (C4C): Creating the framework for embracing the Laudato Si’ principles in the Catholic Community



The Care for Creation (C4C) Framework was developed as a practical guide for individuals and Catholic communities, including parishes, Catholic organizations, and schools, to help care for our common home in a unified and structured way. This approach combines the physical (green buildings), intellectual (awareness and understanding), and spiritual (ecological conversion) dimensions of environmental stewardship.

The Care for Creation (C4C) Framework was developed as a practical guide for individuals and Catholic communities, including parishes, Catholic organizations, and schools, to help care for our common home in a unified and structured way. This approach combines the physical (green buildings), intellectual (awareness and understanding), and spiritual (ecological conversion) dimensions of environmental stewardship. The C4C Framework inspires Catholics in Singapore to unite in caring for God's creation as one community and as a shared responsibility.

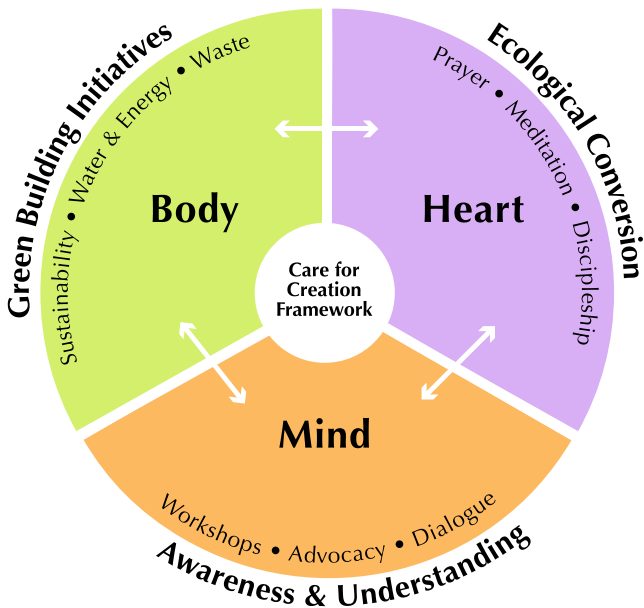


Figure 1. The Care for Creation (C4C) Framework, developed by Caritas Singapore, 2023

How does it work?

The C4C Framework consists of three interconnected components: Green Building Initiatives (Body), Awareness & Understanding (Mind), and Ecological Conversion (Heart). These elements support and enhance each other, creating a comprehensive approach.

While there might be a hierarchical order, each component is equally important in developing strategies and advancing efforts to incorporate Laudato Si' principles, whether at an individual or community level.

Key Advantages of using the C4C Framework:

1. **Interconnectedness:** The components of the C4C Framework—Body, Heart, and Mind—support and enhance each other. For example, conducting waste audits (Body) can raise awareness about waste generation and lead to recycling programs and workshops.
2. **Flexibility:** The framework adapts to various contexts and needs, whether at an individual or community level. For instance, parishes starting their Laudato Si' journey can focus on awareness through workshops (Mind), while more mature parishes might implement solar panels (Body) to reduce carbon emissions and energy costs.
3. **Promotion of Laudato Si' Principles:** By fostering environmental stewardship, awareness, and spiritual growth, the framework actively promotes Laudato Si' principles. For example, starting an edible garden (Body), celebrating the Season of Creation (Mind), and hosting faith dialogues on care for creation (Heart) all embody these principles.

From Vision to Action: The Parish Roadmap



The Parish Road Map Based on the C4C Framework and the Laudato Si' Goals is a comprehensive guide designed to help parishes enhance their sustainability efforts.

This roadmap is divided into three main groups, each focusing on different aspects of environmental and social responsibility, as outlined by the Care for Creation (C4C) Framework.

Each group contains three specific areas of focus, providing practical measures and actionable steps for parishes and individuals to implement in the short, mid, and long term.

This section will discuss the elements and their practical application in detail.

1. Green/Sustainable Buildings: Practical Measures for Parish Facilities

Efforts to create green and sustainable buildings within parish facilities focus on practical measures like waste management, energy efficiency, and sustainable practices. These actions can be adopted by the community at various levels.

Individuals can integrate simple habits at home or in different settings, while parishes or organizations can incorporate these practices into their programmes and facility operations.

By following these stages, parishes or individuals can create a plan to implement in the short, mid, and long term:

a. Establishing a Sustainable Foundation: Comprehensive Audits to Identify Green Opportunities

Conducting thorough audits in key areas such as energy consumption, water usage, waste generation, and overall facility practices is essential for identifying opportunities to implement green projects.

By evaluating current practices and consumption levels, these audits provide a clear understanding of where improvements can be made, paving the way for more sustainable and eco-friendly operations.

Parishes should create an action plan based on the outcomes of the audits and prioritize initiatives according to their short-, mid-, and long-term needs and available budget.

b. Catalyst Initiatives: Implementing Sustainable practices in the facilities for Environmental Stewardship

Parishes can implement a variety of initiatives, ranging from low-cost to mid-cost, to promote environmental stewardship while also saving on expenses. These initiatives cover a wide range of actions aimed at conserving energy, managing water resources efficiently, reducing waste, and enhancing climate resilience.

For example:

- Setting air conditioners to an optimal 25 degrees and ensuring they are turned off when not in use can significantly reduce energy consumption and utility costs.
- Water conservation efforts, such as installing low-flow fixtures and regularly maintaining water systems to prevent leaks, help save both water and money.

Tip: When selecting which initiatives to implement, parishes can prioritize based on audits conducted in different areas and the review of current practices and consumption levels. This approach ensures that the most impactful and cost-effective measures are adopted first.

c. Green Initiatives for Sustainable Parish Facilities: Improving Sustainability in Facilities with Energy Efficiency, Water Management, and Greenery Projects.

Parish facilities can adopt a range of green initiatives to enhance sustainability and environmental stewardship.

For example:

- Installing efficient appliances and solar panels can significantly reduce energy consumption and promote the use of renewable energy.
- Effective water management practices, such as managing water drainage and implementing conservative irrigation models, help conserve water resources.
- Composting practices and second-life projects like upcycling align with circular economy principles, extending the life of items and reducing waste.
- Insulating buildings and installing greenery, such as green islands to shade pavement and lower temperatures, contribute to energy efficiency and climate resilience.
- Greenery projects, including food gardens for fresh produce, regenerative agriculture, and protecting pollinators, ensure a holistic approach to sustainability.

1. GREEN/SUSTAINABLE BUILDINGS

Establishing a Sustainable Foundation: Comprehensive Audits to Identify Green Opportunities	Catalyst Initiatives: Implementing Sustainable practices for environmental stewardship.	Sustainable Parish Facilities: Enhancing Sustainability through Energy Efficiency, Water Management and Greenery Projects.
ENERGY EFFICIENCY		
Conduct an energy audit to understand current consumption levels and practices.	Implement energy-conserving cooling practices for Air Conditioners (simple practices like setting the temperature at 25 degrees, using less when needed, switching it off when not using the room, etc.).	Install efficient appliances.
	Install efficient lighting and practices (e.g. LED bulbs, sensors supported by switching off the lights after boards use, and campaign awareness).	Install solar panels as an option for renewable energy.
		Use renewable energy credits or certified renewable energy.
WATER EFFICIENCY		
Conduct a Water consumption audit.	Install low-flow fixtures.	Manage water drainage.
	Maintenance of current water systems to avoid water loss.	Institute conservative irrigation models.
WASTE MANAGEMENT INITIATIVES		
Conduct a Waste Audit (generation, segregation, classification).	Install bins for waste segregation in the parish/facility and keep track of waste generated by type (general, plastic, paper, electronics, etc.).	Implement Composting practices.
	Eliminate the use of disposable plastic and Styrofoam and replace them with reusables including BYOB initiatives for regular activities and events.	Promote/Implement second-life projects like upcycling or other initiatives in line with the circular economy principles, to extend the life of items.
	Institute regular litter-prevention and -removal campaigns.	
	Reduce food waste during events by under-catering for events.	

1. GREEN/SUSTAINABLE BUILDINGS

Establishing a Sustainable Foundation: Comprehensive Audits to Identify Green Opportunities	Catalyst Initiatives: Implementing Sustainable practices for environmental stewardship.	Sustainable Parish Facilities: Enhancing Sustainability through Energy Efficiency, Water Management and Greenery Projects.
SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES		
Facility Audit (identify project opportunities and areas to create green projects in the building).	Ensure buildings are prepared for changes in heat, storm intensity, and sea-level rise.	Insulate buildings. Install greenery.
	Start a garden on the Parish premises according to the Parish goals/intent: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Edible Garden - Ornamental-purpose Garden - Prayer Garden - Others 	Projects with Greenery like: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Green islands or small green spaces to shade pavement and lower temperatures. - Growing Food gardens to harvest fresh produce for canteen use or to give to those in need. - Practice regenerative agriculture. - Protect pollinators. - Ensure sensible/eco-friendly fertilized application.

2. Awareness & Understanding: Educating and Enlightening the Mind

Creating educational programmes inspired by Laudato Si'. These initiatives aim to teach sustainable practices and ethical interactions with nature and encourage individuals to adopt habits and participate in activities dedicated to caring for God's creation.

a. Environmental and Social Initiatives: Education, Planning, and Communication

Parishes can enhance sustainability by adopting the C4C Framework and encouraging community members to create Laudato Si' plans. This involves setting yearly themes on social or environmental policies, analysing climate change impacts, and identifying vulnerable groups.

Implementing a Laudato Si' Educational Plan ensures an understanding of the ecological crisis and promotes human rights within Catholic teachings.

Youth-led programmes and comprehensive communication plans further engage the community, highlighting Laudato Si' themes, advocacy issues, and educational events, promoting a sustainable and engaged parish community.

b. Building Networks for Sustainable Action

Parishes can enhance their sustainability efforts by developing community partnerships and collaborations to prepare for and respond to social crises and approach decision-makers collectively.

Co-hosting events like the Season of Creation with other communities, creating structures or groups to manage Laudato Si' initiatives, and engaging elders to promote awareness of effective collective practices are crucial steps.

Supporting programmes that address immediate needs, visiting other faith communities to discuss initiatives, and holding events to strengthen connections with the Catholic community and celebrate action days solidify these efforts.

c. Promoting Community Engagement and Collaboration

To enhance community and parishioner engagement, parishes can co-host a Season of Creation event with another community, engage elders to raise awareness of effective collective practices, and visit other faith communities to discuss social and ecological initiatives. These actions foster collaboration and strengthen bonds within and beyond the parish.

2. Awareness & Understanding		
Environmental and Social Initiatives: Education, Planning, and Communication	Building Networks for Sustainable Action	Promoting Community Engagement and Collaboration
Present the C4C Framework and Encourage community members to create their Laudato Si' plan using the LS' Questionnaire and the C4C Framework.	Develop a community coalition to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prepare for and respond to emergent social crises. - Approach decision-makers in a united way 	Co-host a Season of Creation event with another community.
Plan for the 'yearly theme" where the parish focuses on a social/environmental policy (waste reduction, green energy, etc.).	Create institutional structures to manage Laudato Si's initiatives.	Engage elders to promote awareness of collective practices that have helped to overcome community challenges.
Use the ROL exercise or another framework that can help the parish analyse the physical, social, and spiritual ways their community is likely to be affected by climate change and biodiversity loss; and plan on how to prepare for those changes. Identify challenges caused by failing social systems and who is likely to be most vulnerable.	Support programmes that address immediate, short-term needs.	Visit another faith community to discuss your social and ecological initiatives.

2. Awareness & Understanding

Environmental and Social Initiatives: Education, Planning, and Communication	Building Networks for Sustainable Action	Promoting Community Engagement and Collaboration
Develop and implement a Laudato Si' Educational plan ensuring that: - Members of the community are familiar with the science of the ecological crisis and its social dimensions. - Education includes the promotion of human rights and dignity, within the Catholic Social Teachings. - Laudato Si' is a topic discussed within the community.	Strengthen connections between the church and social-ecological initiatives.	
Develop a Youth-led program for Laudato Si': Short-term: involve the youth in the current programmes.	Hold events that help to: - Strengthen connections between parishes, organisations, and schools in the Catholic community. - Discuss social and ecological initiatives that the parishes have been working on. - Celebrate social or ecological action days.	
Develop a communications plan that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The promotion of integral ecology in public communications channels. - Regular highlights on Laudato Si' themes in internal communications channels. - Updates on the Laudato Si' initiatives taken. - Recognition of Youth-led programmes in turn of Laudato Si'. - Public statements about advocacy issues. - Promotion of initiatives that use existing resources to serve the wider public. 		
Develop educational events that include topics such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The defense of human life from conception to natural death. - Discussion about advocacy issues (public community events with officials). - General and specific topics related to Laudato Si'. 		

3. Ecological Conversion for the Heart

Encouraging an ecological conversion that aligns our relationship with creation with our relationship with God.

a. Deepening Spiritual Engagement through Creation-Focused Practices

To deepen spiritual engagement, parishes can develop and observe a Season of Creation spiritual practice plan annually. This plan should include Laudato Si' study and prayer guides, public prayers during the Season of Creation, and regular inclusion of Laudato Si' themes in shared prayers. Hosting outdoor prayer services, blessing natural spaces for reflection, and creating a prayer journal or bulletin board to share prayers made in nature are also recommended practices to foster a stronger connection between faith and environmental discipleship.

b. Integrating Laudato Si' into Faith

To integrate Laudato Si' into faith, parishes should regularly include Laudato Si' themes in homilies and participate in the Laudato Si' Mass yearly. Additionally, creating opportunities for educators to connect with nature and undergo ecological conversions is essential. Ensuring that community members are familiar with ecological virtues further strengthens the parish's commitment to environmental stewardship and spiritual growth.

c. Discipleship: Cultivating a Faith-Based Culture

To promote stewardship, parishes should establish a procurement process that reduces new consumer goods purchases, supports local businesses, and prioritizes ethical sustainable companies. This includes buying locally produced food, teaching gift economy values, and adopting a "total ownership" approach.

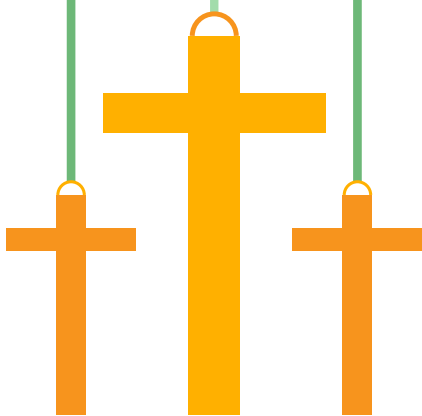
Budgeting should define what is “enough” for the community and allocate donations to equitable social projects. Additionally, community members should be familiar with the local ecosystem.

On an individual level, actions include supporting jobs with liveable wages, divesting from harmful activities, choosing ethical banking and insurance companies, and using low-emission vehicles.

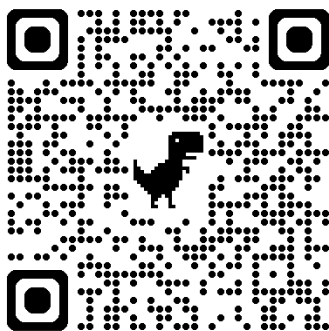
3. Ecological Conversion & Discipleship		
Prayer: Deepening Spiritual Engagement through Creation-Focused Practices	Meditation: Integrating Laudato Si’ into Faith	Discipleship: Cultivating a Faith-based culture
Develop a Season of Creation spiritual practice plan and observe it each year. Include: - Laudato Si' study and prayer guides available for your parish/community. - Publicly pray during the Season of Creation.	Regularly include Laudato Si' themes in homilies.	Define a Procurement process that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Purchase reduction of new consumer goods. - Support local businesses. - Purchasing from businesses with ethical wages and a commitment to sustainability whenever possible. - Buy food from local producers whenever possible. - Teaching and practicing gift economy values. - Taking a 'total ownership' approach to the procurement process
Regularly include Laudato Si' themes in shared prayers.	Participate in the Laudato Si' Mass.	As part of your budgeting process, define what is "enough" for your community and if possible, donate to projects that create equitable social systems.
Regularly host outdoor prayer services.	Create ways for educators to connect with nature and undergo ecological conversions.	Ensure members of the community are familiar with the local ecosystem.

3. Ecological Conversion & Discipleship

Prayer: Deepening Spiritual Engagement through Creation-Focused Practices	Meditation: Integrating Laudato Si' into Faith	Discipleship: Cultivating a Faith-based culture
Bless a natural space as a reflection or meditation area and regularly pray outdoors.	Ensure members of the community are familiar with ecological virtues.	Individual-level actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Support good jobs with liveable wages and benefits.- Divest from fossil fuels and any activity harmful to people and the planet or sign the pledge for no future investment.- Choose an ethical banking company. Choose an ethical insurance company.
Create a prayer journal, bulletin board, or other way of recording and sharing prayers made in nature.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Use low-emission vehicles.



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Contact us:
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