

## Reflection: *Laudato Si* Action Platform

The Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, of Immaculata, PA committed themselves to joining the *Laudato Si* Action Platform during the 2021-2022 academic year in order to discern which of the seven goals would best align with the Congregation's charism and ministry to God's people. The IHM Administration gathered volunteers and formed the *Laudato Si* Action Platform Committee to oversee the community's efforts. Each month every member of the Congregation received two suggestions for reflection and/or communal sharing of methods to "reexamine our relationship with the Creator, with creation and with our sisters and brothers."

From October 2021 to April 2022, through contemplative sharing and personal research, the sisters considered various means/methods to "care for our common home" and submitted monthly reports to the Committee for collation and review. As the Community moved into the Spring of 2022, one aspect of the sisters' discoveries became abundantly clear: in order to move the Congregation forward towards the "profound interior conversion" to which *Laudato Si* is calling, much more ecological education is necessary both for the sisters and for those to whom and with whom they minister.

By an almost unanimous vote, the *Laudato Si* Action Platform Committee selected Ecological Education as the Congregation's first yearly goal. As they are, primarily, educators, the IHMs are uniquely positioned to influence many. Affording the sisters time and opportunities to learn more about ecological issues can foster greater ecological awareness, move the sisters toward transformative action and equip them to teach others to do the same. Therefore, their Action Plan is two-fold: Congregational Ecological Education which, hopefully, will lead to an outreach within each sister's sphere of influence.

The mission and ministry of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary flow from their Alphonsian charism of love, creative hope and fidelity through which the sisters "evangelize, catechize and teach" as "joyful bearers of Christ's Redeeming love" and as such, are called to reverence, protect and care for all Creation. Thus, the goal of Ecological Education seemed a fitting starting point. The Congregation will strive to unfold the implications of this goal and to commit to its embodiment in community life as the sisters embrace their obligation to steward, not dominate, "our common home" and to bring about a "vision of a new earth" where all creation is understood as sacred.