

SEASON of LENT

Laudato Si' Reflections

EDGEWOOD COLLEGE 2025



Dear Edgewood College Community,

It is our pleasure to continue the Edgewood College tradition of sharing this reflection booklet for the season of Lent.

The season of Lent is a time of spiritual preparation that remembers Jesus' forty days in the wilderness, where he fasted, prayed, and faced temptations before beginning his public ministry. Far from a comfortable experience, this time and space apart forced Jesus to come face-to-face with the temptations of worldly power and societal gains. This experience refined his understanding of his true spiritual call, which transcended the status quo.

This year, we want to invite you to engage with these themes of Lent by joining in Edgewood College's commitment to the Laudato Si' Action Platform. The Laudato Si' Action Platform facilitates a bold and active response to the ecological crisis, urgently illustrated in Pope Francis' encyclical, Laudato Si' (referred to as "LS" throughout this booklet with the corresponding paragraph number). Each week will focus on one of the seven platform goals. The prayers and descriptions featured here can be found at: <https://laudatosiactionplatform.org/>.

Our hope is that this Lenten Reflection booklet will invite you into your own time and space apart, of prayer and fasting, to better understand our collective spiritual call to "cooperate as instruments of God for the care of creation, each according to his or her own culture, experience, involvements and talents" (LS 14). Starting on Ash Wednesday, this booklet will guide you through this season by practicing the four pillars of Dominican life: Prayer, Study, Community, and Ministry.

PRAYER: Begin each week with an opening prayer to center our spirits and put ourselves in the presence of God.

STUDY: Learn from scripture as well as excerpts from Pope Francis' encyclical, Laudato Si'.

COMMUNITY: Dominicans are "happy to beg a little bit of illumination from everyone we meet on the road" (St. Thomas Aquinas, OP). Enjoy a reflection from our campus community to experience and learn from one another's "little bit of illumination."

MINISTRY: Build new habits for your own life as we commit to fasting from single-use plastics with prompts and actions from the Dominican Sisters of Sinsinawa Care of Creation Committee.

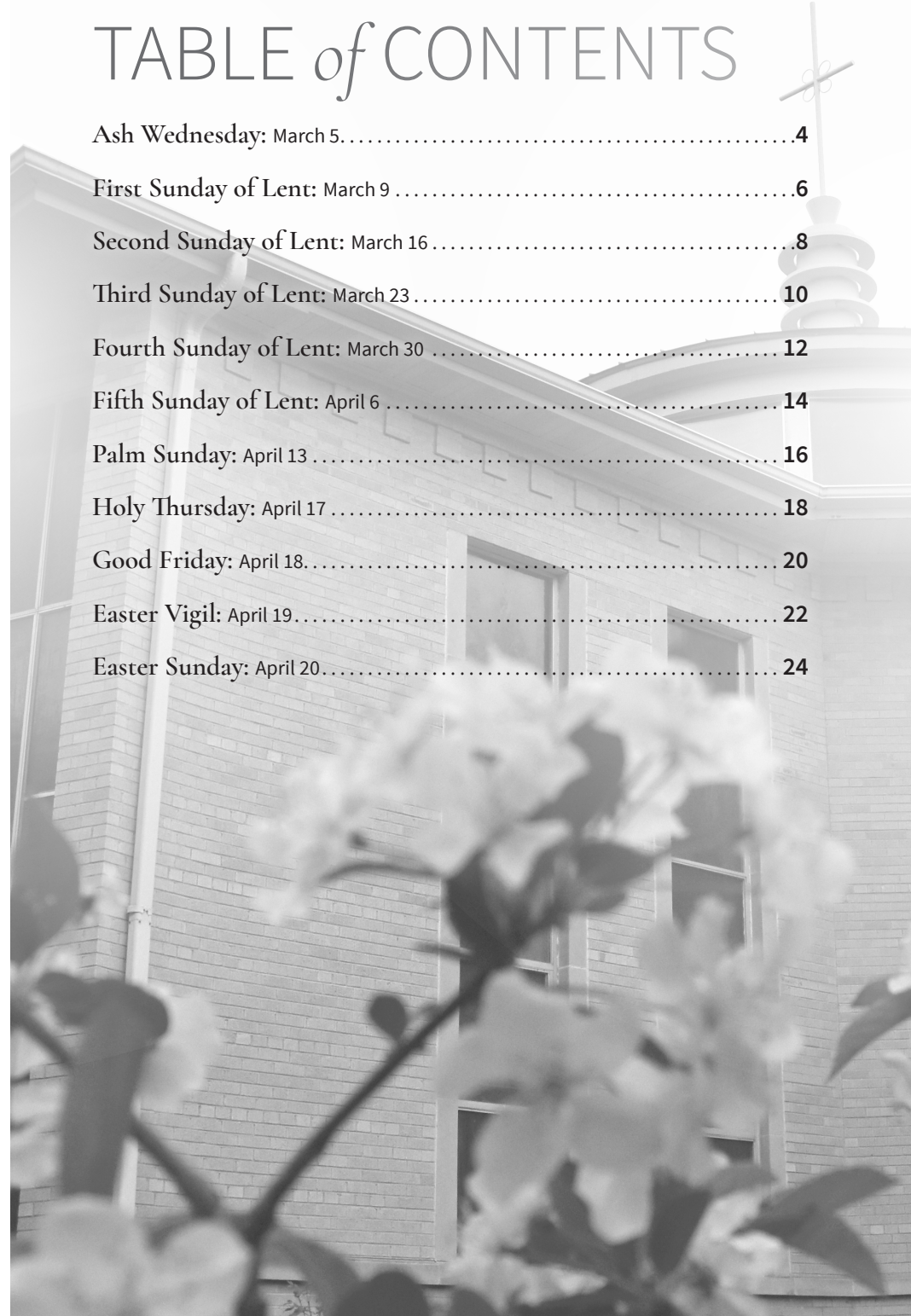
Blessings on your Lenten journey,

Laura Hermanns, MSP
Director of Campus Ministries

Gretchen Baumgardt, M.Div., Ph.D.
Vice President for Mission Integration

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Ash Wednesday

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 5

Jl 2:12-18/2 Cor 5:20-6:2/Mt 6:1-6, 16-18

PRAYER

O God, help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth,
so precious in your eyes.
Bring healing to our lives, that we may protect the world and not prey on it,
that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction.
Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain
at the expense of the poor and the earth.
Teach us to discover the worth of each thing,
to be filled with awe and contemplation,
to recognize that we are profoundly united
with every creature as we journey towards your infinite light.
We thank you for being with us each day.
Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle for justice, love and peace. (LS 246)

STUDY

Matthew 6:1-6

Jesus said to his disciples:
“Take care not to perform righteous deeds
in order that people may see them;
otherwise, you will have no recompense from your heavenly Father.
When you give alms,
do not blow a trumpet before you,
as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets
to win the praise of others.
Amen, I say to you,
they have received their reward.
But when you give alms,
do not let your left hand know what your right is doing,
so that your almsgiving may be secret.
And your Father who sees in secret will repay you.

Excerpt from Laudato Si'

Our common home is like a sister with whom we share our life and a beautiful mother who opens her arms to embrace us. “Praise be to you, my Lord, through our Sister, Mother Earth, who sustains and governs us, and who produces various fruit with coloured flowers and herbs” (LS 1). We have forgotten that we ourselves are dust of the earth (cf. Gen 2:7); our very bodies are made up of her elements, we breathe her air and we receive life and refreshment from her waters. (LS 2)

COMMUNITY

Today we begin our annual journey with Jesus into the desert to prepare our hearts for the Pascal mystery of his passion, death, and resurrection. His request for us on this journey: “Please, avoid virtue signaling.” Reading today’s scripture, notice that Jesus does not ask us to stop giving alms, to not pray, or to not fast. He’s asking us to do these things for the right reasons. Many of us traditionally give up something we enjoy as a Lenten sacrifice, like ice cream. The point of this small act is self-denial. We can show discipline as a small demonstration of our commitment to being good and living a holy life. It also helps remind us to be grateful for our many blessings, which we often take for granted. We all know people who announce with regularity and pride the things they are denying themselves for Lent. (And, if we’re being honest, we’ve probably done it ourselves on occasion.) In this case, we’re not making a sacrifice, we’re just substituting one form of gratification (social approval and admiration) for another (ice cream).

Jesus’ message about virtue signaling also reminds us that God knows when we’re doing the right thing, so we don’t have to tell anyone. This applies to everything from our Lenten resolutions to our commitment to caring for the Earth and loving our neighbors. God’s creation (including our brothers and sisters) is a precious gift, and we have a responsibility to care for it. We do this through a thousand mindful small acts that impact the Earth and our fellow inhabitants. This Lent, consider committing to doing something positive rather than (or perhaps in addition to) giving something up. Would doing an anonymous act of kindness every day be helpful in preparing our hearts to receive the gift of the Triduum?

Andrew P. Manion, Ph.D.

President

MINISTRY

What does the season of Lent mean to you?

Fasting from single-use plastics can seem overwhelming. Plastic is everywhere; in our clothes, our phones, our food, and in immense floating garbage patches in the oceans. Plastic does fully degrade, which leads to negative impacts on the environment, wildlife, and human health. For the rest of this week, pay attention to where you utilize plastic in your everyday and how you typically dispose of it. No judgment, only learning!

Readings For The Week

Continue the Lenten journey.

Thurs, March 6: Dt 30:15-20/Lk 9:22-25

Fri, March 7: Is 58:1-9a/Mt 9:14-15

Sat, March 8: Is 58:9b-14/Lk 5:27-32

First Sunday of Lent

SUNDAY, MARCH 9

Dt 26:4-10/Rom 10:8-13/Lk 4:1-13

Laudato Si' Action Platform Goal: Response to the Cry of the Poor

The Response to the Cry of the Poor is a call to promote eco-justice, aware that we are called to defend human life from conception to death, and all forms of life on Earth. Actions could include projects to promote solidarity, with special attention given to vulnerable groups such as indigenous communities, refugees, migrants, and children at risk, analysis and improvement of social systems, and social service programs.

PRAYER

Lover of the poor, we pray for all families that they may be the place in which life – the gift of God – can be properly welcomed and protected. May they be especially attentive to the Cry of the Poor and work toward the fullness of life for all, especially for the most vulnerable and neglected members of our human family.

STUDY

Matthew 25:34-40

(Gospel reading for Monday, March 10)

Then the king will say to those on his right,
'Come, you who are blessed by my Father.
Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.
For I was hungry and you gave me food,
I was thirsty and you gave me drink,
a stranger and you welcomed me,
naked and you clothed me,
ill and you cared for me,
in prison and you visited me.'
Then the righteous will answer him and say,
'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you,
or thirsty and give you drink?
When did we see you a stranger and welcome you,
or naked and clothe you?
When did we see you ill or in prison, and visit you?'
And the king will say to them in reply,
'Amen, I say to you, whatever you did
for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.'

Excerpt from Laudato Si'

The human environment and the natural environment deteriorate together; we cannot adequately combat environmental degradation unless we attend to causes related to human and social degradation. In fact, the deterioration of the environment and of

society affects the most vulnerable people on the planet: "Both everyday experience and scientific research show that the gravest effects of all attacks on the environment are suffered by the poorest." (LS 48)

COMMUNITY

At the heart of this reading is the intention for the Beloved Community and advocating for just relations amongst all in our eco-family. These verses emphasize the importance of consideration, thoughtfulness, and respect you must embody for those least benefiting from the systems of the world. As Jesus describes the Kingdom of God, he highlights our crucial role in fostering a just community. This not only encourages but empowers us to consider our own actions and how they can contribute to creating a more equitable society.

When I think about my passion or work in a world where the cries of the repressed and oppressed are hauntingly violent, where flames thirst after oxygen until deterioration and the powerful push us into further despair and lack through anti-human and anti-environmental regulations, I begin to lose sight of the importance of resistance when there seems to be no accountability.

However, I'm motivated to keep hope through teaching. I find the ability to tolerate our new normal in the laughter of my students roasting me for wearing SpongeBob socks. Or the joy I feel when I see them care about social issues impacting themselves, their teachers, families, and their classmates. In these moments, I'm reminded of the importance of contributing to a more equitable society, even in ways that feel small, but more importantly, through partnerships that are equally important for truth and justice. I would encourage us to stay informed and help pass on helpful information that is beneficial to the needs of others.

Shay Isabel Pollard '24

Graduate Student, Education

MINISTRY

What passions or partnerships give you hope for the world?

This week, consider the plastics you use in personal care products like shampoo, body wash, toothbrushes, and deodorant. Where can you swap out for non-plastic alternatives?

Readings For The Week

Continue the Lenten journey.

Mon, March 10: Lv 19:1-2, 11-18/Mt 25:31-46

Tues, March 11: Is 55:10-11/Mt 6:7-15

Wed, March 12: Jon 3:1-10/Lk 11:29-32

Thurs, March 13: Est C:12, 14-16, 23-25/Mt 7:7-12

Fri, March 14: Ez 18:21-28/Mt 5:20-26

Sat, March 15: Dt 26:16-19/Mt 5:43-48

Second Sunday of Lent

SUNDAY, MARCH 16

Gn 15:5-12, 17-18/Psalm 27:1, 7-8, 8-9, 13-14/Phil 3:17—4:1/Lk 9:28b-36

Laudato Si' Action Platform Goal: Response to the Cry of the Earth

The Response to the Cry of the Earth is a call to protect our common home for the wellbeing of all, as we equitably address the climate crisis, biodiversity loss, and ecological sustainability. Actions could include the adoption of renewable energies and energy sufficiency measures, achieving carbon neutrality, protecting biodiversity, promoting sustainable agriculture, and guaranteeing access to clean water for all.

PRAYER

God of Creation, we pray for our communities, that they may be attentive to the Cry of the Earth and promote clean energy, ensure clean air and water for all, protect your creation, and its biodiversity and climate, in particular. May we rediscover our original vocation as carers of our common home and of one another.

STUDY

Psalm 27:1, 7-8, 8-9, 13-14

The LORD is my light and my salvation;
whom should I fear?

The LORD is my life's refuge;
of whom should I be afraid?

Hear, O LORD, the sound of my call;
have pity on me, and answer me.

Of you my heart speaks; you my glance seeks.

Your presence, O LORD, I seek.

Hide not your face from me;
do not in anger repel your servant.

You are my helper: cast me not off.

I believe that I shall see the bounty of the LORD
in the land of the living.

Wait for the LORD with courage;

be stouthearted, and wait for the LORD.

Excerpts from Laudato Si'

The climate is a common good, belonging to all and meant for all. At the global level, it is a complex system linked to many of the essential conditions for human life. (LS 23)

Everything is related, and we human beings are united as brothers and sisters on a wonderful pilgrimage, woven together by the love God has for each of his creatures and which also unites us in fond affection with brother sun, sister moon, brother river, and mother earth. (LS 92)

COMMUNITY

“Everything is connected.” So simple, so profound, and so crucial to our ability to respond to the cry of the earth. We have to **feel** connected, not just understand that things are connected, to confront increasingly dire ecological emergencies.

Our failure to foster connections in favor of unsustainable models of endless growth is, for me, at the heart of what we are really facing when we think about climate change, ecological destruction, and the future of humanity on planet earth. Many of my courses require students to think critically and creatively about the future they want to see, and one common theme in conversations about those futures is a desire for community and connection that they find lacking. It's not that things are not connected; it's that their lived experience does not **feel** connected.

It is difficult to cultivate a sense of connection when one is constantly worried about being enough. One of my favorite books is a 2021 novella by Becky Chambers about a future in which robots have become self-aware and broken from humans to create their own robot cultures. In this book, “Splendid Speckled Moss-cap”, the robot who was named after the first thing it saw in the world, tells Dex, the human monk struggling to find purpose, “You keep asking why your work is not enough, and I don't know how to answer that, because it is enough to exist in the world and marvel at it” (A Psalm for the Wild-Built 139).

My greatest wish for each of my students, for everyone, really, is that they come to a sense of their own inherent worth, so that they may **feel** that worthiness in their bones, marvel at a world of which they are an integral part, and act in ways that honor their myriad connections.

Lauren J. Lacey, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of English

MINISTRY

Who in your life may be feeling disconnected? How might you reach out to them?

This week, pay attention to plastic waste when shopping for, preparing, and eating food. Where can you try non-plastic alternatives with your grocery bags, produce bags, bottled water, or packaged foods?

Readings For The Week

Continue the Lenten journey.

Mon, March 17: Dn 9:4b-10/Lk 6:36-38

Tues, March 18: Is 1:10, 16-20/Mt 23:1-12

Wed, March 19: 2 Sm 7:4-5a, 12-14a, 16/
Rom 4:13, 16-18, 22/Mt 1:16, 18-21, 24a or
Lk 2:41-51a

Thurs, March 20: Jer 17:5-10/Lk 16:19-31

Fri, March 21: Gn 37:3-4, 12-13a,
17b-28a/Mt 21:33-43, 45-46

Sat, March 22: Mi 7:14-15, 18-20/
Lk 15:1-3, 11-3

Third Sunday of Lent

SUNDAY, MARCH 23

Ex 3:1-8a, 13-15/1 Cor 10:1-6, 10-12/Lk 13:1-9

Laudato Si' Action Platform Goal: Ecological Education

Ecological Education is about re-thinking and re-designing curricular and institutional reform in the spirit of integral ecology in order to foster ecological awareness and transformative action. Actions could include ensuring equitable access to education for all and promoting human rights, fostering *Laudato Si'* themes within the community, encouraging ecological leadership (students, teachers), and ecological restoration activities.

PRAYER

God of Knowledge and Virtue, assist us to grow in solidarity, responsibility, and compassionate care. May our schools and universities, in particular, promote education that can help to restore harmony within ourselves, with others, with nature and other living creatures, and with God.

STUDY

Luke 13:6-9

And he told them this parable:
“There once was a person who had a fig tree planted in his orchard, and when he came in search of fruit on it but found none, he said to the gardener, ‘For three years now I have come in search of fruit on this fig tree but have found none. So cut it down. Why should it exhaust the soil?’ He said to him in reply, ‘Sir, leave it for this year also, and I shall cultivate the ground around it and fertilize it; it may bear fruit in the future. If not you can cut it down.’”

Excerpt from Laudato Si'

Environmental education should facilitate making the leap towards the transcendent, which gives ecological ethics its deepest meaning. It needs educators capable of developing an ethics of ecology, and helping people, through effective pedagogy, to grow in solidarity, responsibility and compassionate care. (LS 210)

COMMUNITY

When I was young, a family friend was doing work for my parents on our old farmhouse. I was “helping.” We removed some pieces of the original wooden siding and discovered underneath a large cocoon. I was quite curious about this brown ovoid thing, somehow shiny and fuzzy at once, clearly alive but without head or legs or any such familiar feature. Our friend explained this was an “in-between” insect, that my home had been its home, and that we just interrupted a long sleep used to change from a baby into an adult. I became very upset by our transgression. “Don’t worry, we can fix this,” he said. The cocoon was safely tucked into another nook in the wall, and my dreadful concern abated. It was one of the first times someone taught me—shared with me—about the empathy and stewardship required to keep our collective home stitched together.

This goal asks us to link ourselves to each other and justly place us all into the web of connections that is Creation. Our Sinsinawan heritage inherently primes us to approach education through the lens of integral ecology, and we do good work to model and share these perspectives. We need as much of that as we can muster. This scripture is partially about a tension between the grace of second chances and the finite number of chances we get...with dire consequences once those run out. Realizing an integral ecology that protects and nourishes our Earth system and in turn each of us is still possible, but “we can fix this” is not an option forever as it was for my cocoon. Thankfully, we know what to do, because in many ways it’s what we’ve always done by teaching, living, and sharing our knowledge and Sinsinawa values with others.

Jake Griffin, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of Environmental Science

MINISTRY

Who is the first person that helped you understand empathy or stewardship of Creation? With whom might you share these lessons?

This week, examine your plastic use in cleaning and laundry routines. What alternatives can you find to large plastic detergent bottles, plastic pods, and plastic-containing dryer sheets and wet wipes?

Readings For The Week

Continue the Lenten journey.

Mon, March 24: 2 Kgs 5:1-15b/Lk 4:24-30

Tues, March 25: Is 7:10-14; 8:10/

Heb 10:4-10/Lk 1:26-38

Wed, March 26: Dt 4:1, 5-9/Mt 5:17-19

Thurs, March 27: Jer 7:23-28/Lk 11:14-23

Fri, March 28: Hos 14:2-10/Mk 12:28-34

Sat, March 29: Hos 6:1-6/Lk 18:9-14

Fourth Sunday of Lent

SUNDAY, MARCH 30

Jos 5:9a, 10-12/2 Cor 5:17-21/Lk 15:1-3, 11-32

Laudato Si' Action Platform Goal: Ecological Economics

Ecological Economics acknowledges that the economy is a sub-system of human society, which itself is embedded within the biosphere—our common home. Actions could include sustainable production and consumption, ethical investments, divestment from fossil fuels and any activity harmful to the planet and the people, supporting circular economies, and prioritizing care labour and protecting the dignity of workers.

PRAYER

Provident God, help us bring together the different fields of knowledge, including economics, and promote new models of integral development. May we work towards a new economic paradigm at the service of common good, leaving no one behind.

STUDY

Luke 15:1-2, 11-14

Tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to listen to Jesus, but the Pharisees and scribes began to complain, saying, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

So to them Jesus addressed this parable:

“A man had two sons, and the younger son said to his father, ‘Father give me the share of your estate that should come to me.’

So the father divided the property between them.

After a few days, the younger son collected all his belongings and set off to a distant country

where he squandered his inheritance on a life of dissipation.

When he had freely spent everything,

a severe famine struck that country,

and he found himself in dire need.”

Excerpt from Laudato Si'

When nature is viewed solely as a source of profit and gain, this has serious consequences for society. This vision of “might is right” has engendered immense inequality, injustice, and acts of violence against the majority of humanity, since resources end up in the hands of the first comer or the most powerful: the winner takes all. Completely at odds with this model are the ideals of harmony, justice, fraternity and peace as proposed by Jesus. (LS 82)

COMMUNITY

This reading from Luke tells us that sometimes it takes reaching our lowest point to realize what we have long taken for granted: financial resources, food, or even climate comfort. In a society where our leadership often values wealth, it's easy to overlook those without, until you find yourself in that vulnerable position. Climate change is undeniably affecting our world and it is happening faster than anticipated. From the heating of our oceans to extreme storms, the impact is undeniable. Those most affected by these changes are our most vulnerable, our underserved, and under resourced communities, who are the least able to adapt and even potentially survive. Statistics show that often these communities include Black, Latino, and low-income populations who are the most likely to live in areas impacted by these changes and who bear the brunt of the consequences.

As we enter a new political environment, it will be important to pay attention to how environmental and social policies will potentially hurt these populations even more. Moving forward, I seek to consider all my “neighbors” in my decisions. My impacts such as recycling, limiting my food waste and water usage, choosing to buy used clothes vs. new, buying a hybrid vehicle, may be small, but they are thoughtful and deliberate. It will take the world to fight this crisis. In a time when it's easy to think only about ourselves, it is now, more than ever, that we must choose each other, no matter what. Together we can make an impact. As our friend, Peace & Justice Promoter Sister Reg McKillip, OP said, “We believe that we are called to protect the vitality, diversity, and uniqueness of Earth and the community of life sustained here.”

Amanda Berg

Vice President for Financial Affairs/Chief Financial Officer

MINISTRY

How do you consider your values and neighbors when making purchases or financial decisions?

This week, pay attention to the plastics in your clothing like rayon, nylon, polyester, mesh, and taffeta. What alternatives might you consider? This could include thrifting and shopping at resale stores or choosing natural fabrics like cotton, linen, and silk.

Readings For The Week

Continue the Lenten journey.

Mon, March 31: Is 65:17-21/Jn 4:43-54

Tues, April 1: Ez 47:1-9, 12/Jn 5:1-16

Wed, April 2: Is 49:8-15/Jn 5:17-30

Thurs, April 3: Ex 32:7-14/Jn 5:31-47

Fri, April 4: Wis 2:1a, 12-22/
Jn 7:1-2, 10, 25-30

Sat, April 5: Jer 11:18-20/Jn 7:40-53

Fifth Sunday of Lent

SUNDAY, APRIL 6

Is 43:16-21/Phil 3:8-14/Jn 8:1-1

Laudato Si' Action Platform Goal: Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles

The Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles is grounded in the idea of sufficiency, and promoting sobriety in the use of resources and energy. Actions could include reducing waste and recycling, adopting sustainable dietary habits (opting for a more plant-based diet and reducing meat consumption), greater use of public transport, active mobility (walking, cycling), and avoiding single use items (e.g. plastic, etc.).

PRAYER

Caring God, we pray that our institutions, especially our hospitals and health care centers, may grow in the capacity to care. May we all understand and value how concrete gestures and simple lifestyles make it possible for others to live and flourish.

STUDY

John 8:1-7

Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. But early in the morning he arrived again in the temple area, and all the people started coming to him, and he sat down and taught them. Then the scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery and made her stand in the middle. They said to him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. Now in the law, Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?"

They said this to test him, so that they could have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and began to write on the ground with his finger. But when they continued asking him, he straightened up and said to them, "Let the one among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her."

Excerpt from Laudato Si'

Human beings, while capable of the worst, are also capable of rising above themselves, choosing again what is good, and making a new start, despite their mental and social conditioning. We are able to take an honest look at ourselves, to acknowledge our deep dissatisfaction, and to embark on new paths to authentic freedom. No system can completely suppress our openness to what is good, true and beautiful, or our God-given ability to respond to his grace at work deep in our hearts. I appeal to everyone throughout the world not to forget this dignity which is ours. No one has the right to take it from us. (LS 205)

COMMUNITY

We, the human species, got problems. Ecological destabilization, pollution, climate change, abuse, violence, war, poverty, inequality, lack of food, housing education, health care; and all sorts of domination and oppression. If our current systems were capable of addressing these crises, they would not be threatening the future of complex human society. We will all survive this, or none of us will....

We can build that capacity through cultivating local ecological knowledge and fearless small-scale experimentation. Combine plants, water, and rubbish. That is all. Grow a flower in a soda bottle on a windowsill. A mangrove tree in a plastic bag in a puddle. Water the dandelion growing out the crack in the sidewalk with your spit. Find out what seeds germinated on wet cardboard. Try to grow rice on floating garbage, like I am. Play, play, play. It doesn't matter what you do, just dream it up, do it, document it, and talk and laugh about it with the neighbor. We will need to fail, and learn, and learn to fail, together to have any hope of accessing the creativity necessary to alter our fate. Perhaps the seed you germinate on cardboard will grow to help address erosion on another continent.

Maybe my ideas are rubbish, like this raft. Maybe yours are too. But perhaps if enough of us play with that rubbish, and laugh while playing, we might find a way to clean up this mess.

With love, rage, and tears, from my pile of rubbish to yours,

In Memoriam - Sr. Marie Stephen "Stevie" Reges, O.P.

*Dominican Sister of Sinsinawa
Professor Emerita*

MINISTRY

How might you creatively or playfully adopt one or more practices that promote a sustainable lifestyle?

This week, share about your Lenten fast from plastic with others. Talk to your friends, neighbors, and family members about what you've tried and what you've learned.

Readings for the Week

Continue the Lenten journey.

Mon, April 7: Dn 13:1-9, 15-17, 19-30, 33-62 or 13:41c-62/Jn 8:12-20

Tues, April 8: Nm 21:4-9/Jn 8:21-30

Wed, April 9: Dn 3:14-20, 91-92, 95/
Jn 8:31-42

Thurs, April 10: Gn 17:3-9/Jn 8:51-59

Fri, April 11: Gn 17:3-9/Jn 8:51-59

Sat, April 12: Ez 37:21-28/Jn 11:45-5

Palm Sunday

SUNDAY, APRIL 13

Lk 19:28-40/ Is 50:4-7/Phil 2:6-11/Lk 22:14—23:56

Laudato Si' Action Platform Goal: Community Resilience and Empowerment

Community resilience and empowerment envisage a synodal journey of community engagement and participatory action at various levels. Actions could include promoting advocacy and developing people's campaigns, encouraging rootedness, and a sense of belonging in local communities and neighborhood ecosystems.

PRAYER

God of communion, enable us to become communities of participatory action and advocacy, for the Earth and the poor. Enable our religious communities, in particular, to be prophetic servant leaders in the care of our common home and of the least among us.

STUDY

Luke 19: 36-40

As he rode along, the people were spreading their cloaks on the road; and now as he was approaching the slope of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of his disciples began to praise God aloud with joy for all the mighty deeds they had seen. They proclaimed: "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord. Peace in heaven and glory in the highest." Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples." He said in reply, "I tell you, if they keep silent, the stones will cry out!"

Excerpt from Laudato Si'

Social problems must be addressed by community networks and not simply by the sum of individual good deeds. This task will make such tremendous demands of people that they could never achieve it by individual initiative or even by the united effort of people bred in an individualistic way. The ecological conversion needed to bring about lasting change is also a community conversion. (LS 219)

COMMUNITY

The Laudato Si' concept of Community Resilience and Empowerment details the essential truth that we are inextricably linked in our responsibility to the world around us. The Gospel of Luke 19:28-40 reminds us that often, that responsibility can be disruptive, but the consequences to complacency with existing systems are far worse than the inconvenience of our disturbances.

I chose to pursue studies in a helping, values-based profession because, idealistically, I hoped that if I built enough skills to influence how I engaged with the world, I would personally lessen the gravity of dire need that I observed in the global community. If I only achieved peace within myself and my individual contributions to the world, I believed that the work might end there.

In learning the history of systems and social movements, I discovered quite the opposite. Every right which we are afforded in society has been achieved collectively through struggle. If we work only inwardly, tending only to those in our immediate social circles and obeying our personal discomfort in disturbing our modern-day "Pharisees," systems of oppression and perpetual harm continue around us.

As individuals involved in higher education, we have unique access to a variety of information about the past and present states of the world, which gives us an edge on preparing for the future. Often, we use this information for self-betterment, with the goal of improving our careers and life experiences. While self-work is critically important, our unique access also offers us the opportunity to share information, acquired skills, and innate talents more broadly with the world, contributing to generations of social change efforts.

Evidenced by our intensely polarized social climate, it can be easier to keep silent, allowing the inevitable harm which will occur on our current societal trajectory. However, if we boldly dedicate ourselves to action, finding communities of care and support, and shaping our thoughts outside of the individualistic social norms placed upon us, we can begin to be part of the solution.

Maren Phalen, MSW

Student Life Assistant Director for Student Transition and Leadership

MINISTRY

What are your communities of care, support, and action? Are there ways you might encourage one another to learn more about supporting the most vulnerable in our broader, local community?

This week, with impending Easter baskets on the mind, explore strategies for non-plastic gift-giving. Consider wooden and natural toys, gifting experiences or charitable donations, and finding ways to wrap without plastic.

Readings for the Week

Continue the Lenten journey.

Mon, April 14: Is 42:1-7/Jn 12:1-11

Tues, April 15: Is 49:1-6/

Jn 13:21-33, 36-38

Wed, April 16: Is 50:4-9a/Mt 26:14-2

Holy Thursday

THURSDAY, APRIL 17

Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper: Ex 12:1-8, 11-14/1 Cor 11:23-26/Jn 13:1-1

Laudato Si' Action Platform Goal: Ecological Spirituality

Ecological Spirituality springs from a profound ecological conversion and helps us to "discover God in all things," both in the beauty of creation and in the sighs of the sick and the groans of the afflicted, aware that the life of the spirit is not dissociated from worldly realities. Actions could include promoting creation-based liturgical celebrations, developing ecological catechesis, retreats and formation programs, etc.

PRAYER

Loving God, you are present in the whole universe and in the smallest of your creatures. You embrace with your tenderness all that exists. Pour out upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and beauty. Fill us with peace, that we may live as siblings, harming no one. (LS 246)

STUDY

Excerpt from John 13:1-15

So when he had washed their feet and put his garments back on and reclined at table again, he said to them, "Do you realize what I have done for you? You call me 'teacher' and 'master,' and rightly so, for indeed I am. If I, therefore, the master and teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash one another's feet. I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have done for you, you should also do."

Excerpt from Laudato Si'

The entire material universe speaks of God's love, his boundless affection for us. Soil, water, mountains: everything is, as it were, a caress of God. (LS 84)

COMMUNITY

This lesson comes as Jesus realizes he is about to be killed. He needs to make sure his disciples really understand the core of why he came to earth. The teaching he most desperately wants them to know is this: unless you learn how to give and receive love to and from all people, you will not know God fully.

It was customary for people to get their feet washed before dinner. It was usually someone who was from a lower class who did it. So, when Jesus told the disciples to meet him up in that room and there was no one there to wash their feet, we can imagine they were a bit confused. They needed to be clean to eat. Imagine their surprise when Jesus, their teacher, started to wash their feet! Jesus was the teacher (higher status than all of them) and here he was assuming the position of a lower-class person. Peter especially saw it as some kind of mistake.

I find that it's easier to give in a way where I feel comfortable. I tend to give time or money from afar. While that is still giving and it is important, Jesus challenges us to be aware of the importance of getting out of our comfort zone and giving of ourselves an experience of love to and from those who need our help, no matter what.

This passage also teaches the importance of receiving love from others. To receive love is to be vulnerable, which can be risky. Peter was uncomfortable receiving from Jesus because he didn't feel worthy. He thought Jesus was too holy to touch his feet. Jesus needed to prod Peter and tell him that unless he allowed Jesus to show him love, he could not know God.

What is it like to both give and receive love? What is holding us back? Do we feel worthy of receiving love from God? How do we show that worthiness? What equates to washing feet in our culture?

We like to think we know the way things are supposed to be done. It is then that God shows us another, more difficult perhaps, way to get something even bigger than we thought possible. Do we let God's ways happen?

Kasey DeWitt '90, MA '09

Student Success Advisor

MINISTRY

How might you move out of your comfort zone to love your neighbor this week?

Today, look up your local recycling guidelines and consider posting them in your home. Recycling plastics conserves natural resources, reduces pollution, and protects human health. Not all plastic is recyclable, though, and guidelines vary by city and state.

Good Friday

FRIDAY, APRIL 18

Is 52:13—53:12/Heb 4:14-16; 5:7-9/Jn 18:1—19:42

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PRAYER

God of Truth, you have entrusted us with the care of Creation and of one another. Give us courage to both preach and live the good news of your abundant love, trusting always in your grace and guidance.

STUDY

John 18: 33-37

So Pilate went back into the praetorium and summoned Jesus and said to him, “Are you the King of the Jews?”

Jesus answered,

“Do you say this on your own or have others told you about me?”

Pilate answered, “I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests handed you over to me. What have you done?”

Jesus answered, “My kingdom does not belong to this world. If my kingdom did belong to this world, my attendants would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not here.”

So Pilate said to him, “Then you are a king?”

Jesus answered, “You say I am a king. For this I was born and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice.”

Excerpt from Laudato Si'

We must regain the conviction that we need one another, that we have a shared responsibility for others and the world, and that being good and decent are worth it. We have had enough of immorality and the mockery of ethics, goodness, faith, and honesty. It is time to acknowledge that light-hearted superficiality has done us no good. When the foundations of social life are corroded, what ensues are battles over conflicting interests, new forms of violence and brutality, and obstacles to the growth of a genuine culture of care for the environment. (LS 229)

COMMUNITY

This is a pivotal moment in the Christian faith and Christian texts because it depicts the conversation that Jesus has with Pilate before He is sentenced to die by crucifixion. One of the darkest days in history yet one that leads to the source of our hope and Joy in Christ. This passage depicts the moment that the religious leaders turned Jesus over to the Romans in hopes of getting Him executed.

The religious teachers show their true desire to have Jesus killed as they refuse to try Him by themselves, ultimately because they can punish but not execute. This demonstrates the essence of religious hypocrisy when they desire to kill an innocent man but refuse to become ceremonially unclean by entering the palace.

What this passage truly helps us understand and reflect on, besides the fulfillment of prophecy (Zach. 9:9, Isaiah 53:7, etc.) is what does the Kingdom of God actually look like? In Luke 17 it is made clear that the Pharisees don't understand this. There is a stark contrast between the Kingdom of God and earthly kingdoms. Earthly kingdoms rely on and exalt their economic security and military conquest all while ruling through coercion and force. But the Kingdom of God is based on provision, sacrifice, and generosity. It rules through servitude, righteousness, and love, it draws allegiance by faith and not by power.

Jesus' Kingdom is not something of this world, it is spiritual and in these passages we see that Jesus' desire and His mission is to testify to the truth which is God's plan for salvation. If we fully understand Jesus' mission to testify to the truth even to the point of death why are we not willing to testify to the truth to the point of discomfort? I want you to know that the good news is the Kingdom of God arriving. You don't need to run to a temple, you don't need special sacrifices, and you don't need empty religious practices, instead you can turn to him right now and be in his presence. The Kingdom of God is within you and among you and YOU are the temple (2 Corinth. 6:16). You have the opportunity to bring the Kingdom of God here to a sinful world through your partnership with Jesus. This is good news.

The Kingdom of God is no longer something that's waiting for us in the future, it's something that we can experience here on earth everyday.

“Joy is made complete in sharing it with others” - Chris Carson

Ezekiel J. Brown '27

Undergraduate Student, Siena Scholar

MINISTRY

How might God be calling you to embrace discomfort and to speak truth?

Today, consider how you can use your voice to advocate for long-term solutions and systems change on the use of plastics and other climate-impacting policies. The Climate Action Now App makes it exceptionally easy to take meaningful climate action on your phone in just minutes.

Easter Vigil

SATURDAY, APRIL 19

Gn 1:1—2:2, 26-31a/Gn 22:1-18, 10-13, 15-18/ Ex 14:15—15:1/Is 54:5-14/
Is 55:1-11/Bar 3:9-15, 32—4:4/Ez 36:16-17a, 18-28/ Rom 6:3-11/Lk 24:1-12

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PRAYER

Celtic Blessing- Fiona McLeod

Deep peace, pure white of the moon to you;
Deep peace, pure green of the grass to you;
Deep peace, pure brown of the earth to you;
Deep peace, pure grey of the dew to you;
Deep peace, pure blue of the sky to you;
Deep peace of the running wave to you;
Deep peace of the flowing air to you;
Deep peace of the quiet earth to you;
Deep peace of the shining stars to you;
Deep peace of the Son of Peace to you.

STUDY

Luke 24:1-12

At daybreak on the first day of the week the women who had come from Galilee with Jesus took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb.

They found the stone rolled away from the tomb; but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While they were puzzling over this, behold, two men in dazzling garments appeared to them. They were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground. They said to them, “Why do you seek the living one among the dead?

He is not here, but he has been raised. Remember what he said to you while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners and be crucified, and rise on the third day.” And they remembered his words.

Then they returned from the tomb and announced all these things to the eleven and to all the others.

The women were Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and Mary the mother of James; the others who accompanied them also told this to the apostles, but their story seemed like nonsense and they did not believe them.

But Peter got up and ran to the tomb, bent down, and saw the burial cloths alone; then he went home amazed at what had happened.

Excerpt from Laudato Si'

In this universe, shaped by open and intercommunicating systems, we can discern countless forms of relationship and participation. This leads us to think of the whole as open to God's transcendence, within which it develops. Faith allows us to interpret the meaning and the mysterious beauty of what is unfolding. (LS 79)

COMMUNITY

For Christians around the world, Easter celebrates Jesus' resurrection and the culmination of the liturgical year. In some Christian denominations, including the Catholic tradition, the Easter Vigil recounts God's presence in salvation history through word, song, and sacrament. The liturgy engages one's senses through earthy elements like fire, water, perfumed oils, and beeswax candles, embodying the symbolism of darkness and light, death, and new life. As theologian Elizabeth A. Johnson, CSJ, explains, “the risen Christ awakens hope for transformation of the whole body-person, dust and breath together, into the glory of God. Ecological awareness pushes this reading beyond its human scope to include a future for the whole natural world” (“An Earthy Christology,” 2009). This expansive, redemptive hope and ecological awareness call for care of God's creation as a response, according to Johnson.

Similarly, Luke's resurrection narrative gives us insight into hope and awareness during bleak times. Three named women go to the tomb – likely in the face of anxiety, fear, and grief. Transformed by awareness of the “mysterious beauty” in their visceral experience and deep hope in Jesus' promise, they preach the Good News despite the unbelief of their fellow disciples. The fact that the Gospel writer found it necessary to include these details highlights the trust that God placed in these women. Likewise, God, who “so loved the world” and all the creatures in it, entrusts humanity to care for creation today. As I contemplate the joy of Easter and our Laudato Si' theme, this narrative is a reminder not to lose hope in the face of fear and disbelief, to be aware of the beauty around me, and to look for companions along the way to transform the world together.

Gretchen M. Baumgardt, M.Div., Ph.D.

Vice President for Mission Integration

MINISTRY

Today, reflect on your experience of fasting from single-use plastics. What has been the most challenging? What has been an easy switch?

What did you learn from this experience of fasting?

Easter Sunday

SUNDAY, APRIL 20

Acts 10:34a, 37-43/ 1 Cor 5:6b-8/

Jn 20:1-9 or at an afternoon or evening Mass, Lk 24:13-35

Laudato Si' Action Platform Goal: Ecological Spirituality

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PRAYER

Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.

O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

STUDY

Luke 24: 13-16, 28-35

Now that very day two of them were going to a village seven miles* from Jerusalem called Emmaus, and they were conversing about all the things that had occurred.

And it happened that while they were conversing and debating, Jesus himself drew near and walked with them, but their eyes were prevented from recognizing him.

As they approached the village to which they were going, he gave the impression that he was going on farther. But they urged him, “Stay with us, for it is nearly evening and the day is almost over.” So he went in to stay with them. And it happened that, while he was with them at table, he took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them.

With that their eyes were opened and they recognized him, but he vanished from their sight. Then they said to each other, “Were not our hearts burning [within us] while he spoke to us on the way and opened the scriptures to us?”

So they set out at once and returned to Jerusalem where they found gathered together the eleven and those with them who were saying, “The Lord has truly been raised and has appeared to Simon!”

Then the two recounted what had taken place on the way and how he was made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

Excerpts from Laudato Si'

God has written a precious book, “whose letters are the multitude of created things present in the universe”. The Canadian bishops rightly pointed out that no creature is excluded from this manifestation of God: “From panoramic vistas to the tiniest living form, nature is a constant source of wonder and awe. It is also a continuing revelation of the divine”. (LS 85)

God, who calls us to generous commitment and to give him our all, offers us the light and the strength needed to continue on our way. In the heart of this world, the Lord of life, who loves us so much, is always present. He does not abandon us, he does not leave us alone, for he has united himself definitively to our earth, and his love constantly impels us to find new ways forward. Praise be to him! (LS 245)

COMMUNITY

Growing up as the daughter of a biology-teacher-turned-pastor, maybe ecological spirituality is in my blood! But a childhood of family hikes, youth group trips to the Boundary Waters, and watching my mom lovingly tend her native plant garden are all experiences that cemented my connection to the Divine through the beauty and lessons of this “precious book of created things.”

The scripture readings and reflections for this season have shown us Jesus and his disciples’ experiences of transformational ministry, but also of temptation, sorrow, questioning, betrayal, and inexplicable change.

These very human experiences may feel familiar to your own life. But today, Easter Sunday, shows us that God is still present and working in the often painful and confusing experience of being human. Like the travelers on the road to Emmaus, our eyes are not always open to God’s presence in our lives. It can be hard to stay fully awake and present to those traveling the roads of life with us. And yet, the risen Jesus patiently accompanies us, bringing promises of light and resurrection to our darkest moments.

I see some of these same reminders in the natural world. In the transfiguration of a caterpillar into a butterfly, in the wilting of an apple blossom that makes way for the ripeness of fruit, in the breaking down of food waste into compost that then becomes fertilizer, in the cold and dark of winter shifting into spring (always at its own pace).

These everyday miracles remind me that God is in every part of the process. Even when it seems like death, darkness, or confusion has won, Jesus’ resurrection and Creation show us that beauty and magic are still possible. From the the darkness of the cocoon, the wilting of flowers, the breakdown of waste, the endless cold, and the silence of the tomb, comes new life. And often life in a form beyond our own initial imagination.

On this Easter Sunday, may we keep our eyes open to the grace that surrounds us, may we stay present to each other on the journey, and may God bless us with a holy imagination to bring forth something new in the world. I pray this in the name of Jesus, who knew the pain of temptation, sorrow, questioning, betrayal, and inexplicable change as well as the triumph of rebirth and resurrection.

Laura Hermanns, MSP

Director of Campus Ministries

MINISTRY

Which Laudato Si’ Action Platform goals resonated with you? Why?

Which habits and practices will you take with you from this fasting experience?

Thank you!

Thank you for sharing this Lenten journey with us

— to all who contributed reflections, and to you who have taken the time to pause, read, fast, and pray during this Season.

We are especially grateful to the Laudato Si’ Committee at Edgewood College, our Marketing and Strategic Communications team, and the Office for Institutional Advancement.

We welcome your feedback! Please email mvi@edgewood.edu.



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Daily readings can be found on the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' website: <https://bible.usccb.org>

*The full text of Pope Francis's encyclical, *Laudato Si'*, can be found on the Vatican website: [https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals.index.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/index.html)*