

## Introduction

This questionnaire is a resource that is intended to cover topics of high impact which are crucial to the sustainability of parishes, schools, and religious communities in response to our call as Christians to care for all of God's creation.

As facilities differ greatly, not all of the questions may apply to you, and there may be more questions which need to be asked.

If you would like to review your assessments with us outside of the formal Living Laudato Si' Sustainability Program, please contact us at [mail@ourcommonhome.org](mailto:mail@ourcommonhome.org). We also welcome your feedback on new and improved questions!

## AREAS OF ASSESSMENT

We have found most success when parishes engage the right people (whether one or many) who have extensive knowledge on the operations of each area.

During this assessment you will review the following areas:

- **Energy Usage**
- **Waste and Recycling**
- **Landscaping and Outdoor Space**
- **Transportation**

**REMINDER:** More detail = better action items!

## Background

In his 2015 encyclical letter *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis conveyed to the world an urgent call to action to address the causes of global warming and prepare for the inevitable impacts of climate change, especially those impacts to the poor and most vulnerable. Pope Francis made clear that caring for creation is a moral imperative as it relates to respecting the inherent dignity of all life.

With the blessing of then-Archbishop Joseph Tobin, the ArchIndy Creation Care Commission came together to respond to Pope Francis' call to action. The development of a program to lower the carbon footprint of the parishes, schools, and religious communities and integrate sustainable practices became reality in 2019. The Living Laudato Si' Sustainability Program serves as an important first step towards this goal in all operations of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

# SUSTAINABILITY SELF-ASSESSMENT



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## Energy

Date:

Parish/School:

### LIGHTING

Are lights turned off when daylight is bright enough?	
Has there been an effort to use energy-efficient light bulbs when incandescent bulbs burn out?	
Are lights/lamps/fixtures clean?	
Are blinds/curtains used to shade the building(s)? Are they closed at night?	
Are external lights kept on in the daytime?	
Are the lights turned off at night?	
Are gym lights turned off when not in use?	
How do you adjust classroom/hallway/kitchen spaces for breaks/holidays?	
Is there signage reminding staff to turn off lights when not in use?	

Additional comments:

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## HEATING/COOLING

Provide a brief description of your HVAC system.	
Do off-hour activities extend operating hours for energy-using systems?	
Is natural cooling (outside air) utilized?	
Are there any guidelines on indoor temperature use? How do you handle the thermostats on a day-to-day basis? Where are they located? Are they vulnerable to occupant adjustment? What are the settings for heating and cooling season? Is it adjusted for unoccupied periods?	
What's the maintenance schedule for the HVAC systems?	
Is heating/AC used in unoccupied spaces?	
Are radiators blocked by furniture or other things which can restrict circulation?	
Are electric space heaters used anywhere?	
Is the exhaust system operation programmed?	
Is there any sort of maintenance routine for checking leaks/cracks in pipes?	
Are boilers maintained on a scheduled basis?	
Is there insulation on the roof space?	
Are there any cracked windows?	
Is there evidence of issues with double glazing in windows (moisture between panes)?	
Do the windows/doors stay closed when heat/AC is on?	
Could the building reduce heat by closing blinds or using reflective film in windows?	
Is AC run at the same time as heating?	
Does the chiller operate during cold weather to provide AC?	
Do multiple AC compressors start simultaneously?	
Do multiple boilers/heaters fire simultaneously?	

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Additional comments about heating and cooling:

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## WATER

Are there evident water leaks/drips?	
Are water temperatures reduced during unoccupied periods?	
What is the hot water temperature set at?	
Are water fountains on a timer?	
Are there devices in place to conserve heated water?	

Additional comments:

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## EQUIPMENT

Is equipment kept on "energy saving" mode during the day?	
Can computers be switched off during the day?	
Are the computer, fax machines, photocopiers, etc turned off at night?	
Can a 7-day timer be put on some of the equipment (water coolers, vending machines, photocopiers)?	
Do vending machines remain energized during unoccupied periods?	
Are fridges placed next to heat sources?	
Is the fridge thermostat working properly and set to the right temp?	
Are icemakers turned off?	
Are microwaves, coffee machines, etc. unplugged after use?	
Are any of the appliances upgraded to energy-efficient models?	
Is there signage informing staff of these energy-saving strategies?	

Additional comments:

# SUSTAINABILITY SELF-ASSESSMENT



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## Waste

Date:

Parish/School:

### GENERAL QUESTIONS

<p>Check major waste generating activities.</p> <p>Make a star next to the ones that generate the most waste.</p>	<p>___ Office supplies</p> <p>___ Kitchen wastes (school lunches, Sunday mass, special events)</p> <p>___ Landscaping (yard clippings)</p> <p>___ Shipping containers (cardboard)</p> <p>___ Others (please explain):</p>
<p>How many times does waste get collected each week?</p>	
<p>How much waste do you generate each week that is placed in a dumpster? (How many dumpsters are full?)</p>	
<p>Have you mapped where bins and dumpsters are located?</p>	
<p>What is the current waste handling cost?</p>	
<p>How is waste handled that's generated by the rectory?</p>	
<p>What do employees typically do for lunch?</p>	
<p>Are there vending/soda machines anywhere? How many?</p>	
<p>Is e-mail encouraged (rather than printing out paper)?</p>	
<p>Do printers have double-sided capabilities? If so, do you encourage double-sided copies?</p>	
<p>Do you buy paper/office supplies made from recycled content?</p>	
<p>What's the process for determining the need for office supplies?</p>	
<p>How much of the waste generated in a week would you estimate is compostable? How much is actually composted?</p>	
<p>Does leftover food get donated to charities?</p>	
<p>Do you have composting capability on-site?</p>	

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Do you reuse or repurpose anything? Explain.	
Are there any unused items (furniture, equipment, etc) being stored in the building that could be reused?	
How much recycled material do you estimate is generated each week? How much is actually recycled?	
Is there a recycling program in place? If yes, how often does recycling get collected?	
How many recycling bins are there? Where are they located?	
Please provide details of any waste reduction/recycling efforts (including special events, festivals, sporting events, etc).	
What percentage of your parishioners (or students, faculty, staff) do you estimate recycles their waste at home?	
Are there dedicated recycling bins for batteries and toner cartridges?	
Is there standardized bin signage for recycling/trash bins?	
Are there posters/other materials reminding users of good recycling practices?	
What materials would you prioritize if a recycling program was in place?	

Additional comments:

# SUSTAINABILITY SELF-ASSESSMENT



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## FESTIVALS AND EVENTS

*Please list any major festivals or other events that your parish/school hosts. For each of these events, please describe: major activities at the event; what is purchased or consumed at the event; and how waste is handled at the event, including any recycling efforts.*

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## RECYCLING AUDIT

Recyclable items	Is this in your trash?	What Percentage?
Paper (e.g., office paper, mail, magazines, shredded paper, file folders, packing paper)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Paper boxes (e.g. cereal, cookie and cracker boxes, supplies and electronics boxes)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Cardboard	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Plastic bottles, jugs, cups, food containers (clean), packaging	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Metal cans and pans (rinsed) from food and beverages	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Cartons (milk and broth cartons, juice boxes)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Glass bottles and jars from food and beverages	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Organic material (food scraps, napkins)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

Additional comments:



## Landscaping/Outdoor Space

Date:

Parish/School:

### GENERAL QUESTIONS

How many acres does the parish own?	
Estimate the percentage of that land that is non-hard surface (no parking lots or buildings).	
Describe the landscaping on the property.	
How many trees are planted on the property? What types of trees are they?	
Are there flowers planted on the property?	
Are there any ponds, lakes, or natural springs on the property?	
How often is grass typically mowed?	
How are grass clippings handled?	
How is other outdoor waste (leaves, sticks, etc) handled?	
Is the lawn treated? How often and with what kind of materials?	
Are pesticides/fertilizers used anywhere?  If yes, please explain the kind of chemical used and how it is used on the property.	
Are there any native plants on the property?  If so, describe the type of plant and where they are located.	
Is the lawn watered? If so, how often?	
Are the athletic fields watered? How often?	
What is the source of water used for irrigation?	
Is rainwater harvested and used for irrigation?	
How is roof water directed?	

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How is runoff handled from the property? (drainage to storm sewers, retention/detention ponds, raingardens, etc)	
Are there sump pumps from the basements to discharge water, keeping the basement dry?	
What time of day is the property watered?	
Is there a sprinkler system in place? If so, is there a timer of or quick shut-off valves on the system?	
Is there a vegetable garden on the property?	
Is mulch used on the property? How much is purchased and how often is it purchased? What is the source of the mulch?	
Are the athletic fields grass or turf?	

Additional comments:



## Transportation

Date:

Parish/School:

### PARISH

How many families attend your parish?	
What percentage of parishioners do you estimate drive to Mass and other church events?	
How many do you estimate carpool?	
What percentage of parishioners do you estimate walk/bike to Mass and other church events?	
Are there public bus stations near your parish? How many?	
Are there bike racks around the church building? How many?	
What's the farthest distance anyone has to travel to church?	
Is there a vehicle for the parish priest?	
Are any of the church vehicles hybrid/electric?	
How many miles do priest/church vehicles drive in a week? In a year?	

Additional comments:

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## SCHOOL

How many employees and students drive to work/school on a daily basis?	
What's the longest distance a student/family drives to school?	
What percentage of students get picked-up/dropped-off at school by their parents?	
What time is pick-up for students? How long do parents typically wait in line to pick up their kids?	
What percentage of students walk/ride their bike to school?	
Do you have school buses? How many? What percentage of students are eligible for bus services?	
What percentage of students take the bus to school?	
How many days in a week are the school buses used? How many days in a year?	
Are there bike racks on your property? How many?	
How many students drive to school?	
Do students carpool? Is there an incentive to carpool?	
Do students pay for parking passes?	
Are there any other vehicles owned by the parish/school? Please list them and explain what their use(s) is/are.	

Additional comments: