

To begin, I feel a special connection with Laudato Si, as we share a birthday! That little bit of trivia simply reminds me that my life, like that of every other life on this planet, is sustained and blessed in relationship with God's creation.

With Pope Francis, my Native ancestors remind me: all things are connected. My Native grandmothers sing in my dna, their song resonating with the strands of life that sing in all living things, the suffering Body of Christ now threatened to a never before seen level of death and destruction. I have personally witnessed this; I am personally called.

The organization Water By Women (I'm a co-founder) draws upon themes taken from Catholic social teaching: solidarity, subsidiarity, the dignity and agency of every human being, the right to safe drinking water. Our work traces a through line between Gaudium Et Spes and Laudato Si, as we empower women to "rise to their destiny" in service to their communities; bringing the blessing of safe drinking water through a deeply human model of compassionate love of neighbor.

To the suffering Body of Christ, I pledge to continue to support the work of Water By Women, especially among the Native, displaced and dispossessed peoples who carry the greatest burden of climate change impact.

To the suffering Body of Christ, I pledge to live ever more conscious of the call to a sustainable lifestyle; limiting my personal consumption, accepting less material comfort in prayerful solidarity with those who suffer the consequences of our North American over consumption.

To the suffering Body of Christ, in my new life beyond WBW leadership, I pledge a new commitment to raising public awareness of the teachings of Laudato Si through contemplative prayer, communication, and organizing.

Amen

Lorraine Lauter OSU

5/24/2025