



April 19, 2023

Dear Friends,

Pope Francis' 2015 encyclical letter "Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home" has inspired a call to institutions across the world, both Catholic and non-Catholic, to put those words into action by partaking in a seven-year journey towards "integral ecology."

The University of Scranton has answered this call and has joined a network of colleges across the globe to begin the process this academic year of becoming a Laudato Si' University. Through the seven-year period, the University will reflect, imagine and implement a plan to address the seven goals put forth by Pope Francis, which are: responding to the cries of the Earth and of the poor; applying ecological economics; adopting sustainable lifestyles; implementing ecological education programs; developing ecological spirituality efforts and community resilience and empowerment programs.

The University community has always shown great care for one another, and inspired our students to become "men and women for and with others." For decades, we have called for and implemented sustainable practices throughout our community, from green chemistry classes, to a "Responsibility, Sustainability and Justice" cornerstone course in our MBA program, to building LEED certified facilities, to hosting dozens of Earth Day events annually, and much, much more. The first year of our journey assesses our current sustainability efforts, and asks us to imagine improvements and additional ways to further our care for the planet and each other.

I am grateful to Michelle Maldonado, Ph.D., provost and senior vice president for academic affairs, and Daniel Cosacchi, Ph.D., vice president for mission and ministry, for leading our effort, and for the members of our Laudato Si' working group: Ed Steinmetz, senior vice president for finance and administration; Rob Farrell, J.D., general counsel; Don Bergmann, chief of University Police; Lori Walton, Ph.D., professor of physical therapy; Joan Grossman, Ph.D., associate professor of health and human performance; Sheli Pratt-McHugh, associate professor and chair, Weinberg Memorial Library; Jessica Nolan, Ph.D., professor of psychology; Ovidiu Cocieru, Ph.D., assistant professor of marketing, management and entrepreneurship; Nicholas Sizemore, Ph.D., associate professor of chemistry; and University students Clara Downey and Karla Shaffer.

Becoming a Laudato Si' University allows us to enhance and extend the graces for which Scranton has been so richly blessed to the greater care of others and of the earth. As Pope Francis has called on universities, we call on you to join our efforts to better "Care for Our Common Home."

Yours faithfully,

Joseph G. Marina, S.J.
President