

Catholic Earthcare
CARITAS AUSTRALIA

Catholic Earthcare Season of Creation Gathering 2026

Program

An endorsed Caritas Australia initiative, with the support of the Bishops Commission for Social Justice, Mission and Service

CRA
Catholic Religious Australia



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We respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community. At Caritas Australia, we acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land upon which our offices are based. This land always was, and always will be, Aboriginal land.

Caritas Australia offices are located on the lands of the Gadigal People of the Eora Nation in Sydney and the Boon Wurrung People and Woiwurrung (Wurundjeri) Peoples of the Kulin Nation in Melbourne.

We pay our respects to Elders, past, present and future, for they hold the memories, traditions, culture and hopes of First Australians. We acknowledge the continued deep spiritual attachment and relations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to this country and we commit ourselves to the ongoing journey of reconciliation.

Program Overview

Day 1: 3rd September – Keynote Speakers

10 - 11am	**Listen, Reflect, Act: Welcome to the Season of Creation Gathering 2026** **Bishop Timothy Norton SVD** Bishop of Broome **Shirley Quaresimin** Nyikina Elder and Chair of the National Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council **Erica Bernard** Community Liaison Officer, Catholic Education Western Australia
11 - 11.50am	**Grounding Laudato Si' – From Aspiration to Implementation** **Julie Edwards** CEO, Jesuit Social Services
12 - 12.45pm	**Voices from the Pacific: Climate Justice, Ecological Conversion and Hope on the Frontline** **Archbishop Peter Loy Chong DD** Archbishop of Suva, Fiji
12.45 - 1.30pm	**Break**
1.30 - 2.15pm	**Ecology at the Heart of Faith: Exploring Grassroots Community Approaches** **Dr Anne Jennings** Perth Archdiocese Member of Committees and Catholic Earthcare Laudato Si' Advisory Committee
2.25 -3.10pm	**Understanding the Mass for the Care of Creation** **Rev Anthony J Doran** Executive Secretary for Liturgy, Australian Catholic Bishops Conference
3.20 - 4pm	**Laudato Si' and Our Synodal Conversion: Spotlights, Insights and Invitations** **Alwin Macalalad** Regional Coordinator Pacific-Asia & Oceania, Listening & Dialogue Section, Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development
4 - 4.15pm	**Closing Address** **Kirsten Sayers** CEO, Caritas Australia

Auslan interpretation will be provided for all keynote sessions on Day 1.

Program Overview

Day 2: 4th September – Workshops

10 - 11am | Workshop 1

Healing Land and People: Reclaiming Ancient Ways of Living Together
Evelyn Enid Parkin and **Dr Ann-Maree O'Beirne RSM**

11 - 12pm | Workshop 2

2.1 The Eucharist and Creation **- Michael McGirr**

2.2 Pope Leo XIV and Integral Ecology **- Pete Arndt**

2.3 Global Faith Petition Campaign for a Fossil Fuel Treaty: A Deep Dive **- Thea Ormerod**

2.4 Preparing for Extreme Heat: How to Help Your Community **- Alice Carwardine**

12 - 1pm | Workshop 3

3.1 The Rich Garden of Interfaith and Ecumenical Ecology **- Emma Beach**

3.2 Green Growth is Unsustainable: We Need Degrowth Now **- Dr Michael Walker**

3.3 Nurturing our Hearts in Creation: Using Ignatian Contemplation Practices **- Sue Martin**

3.4 Living Water: From Coast to Country, and Back Again **- Sabrina Stevens**

1 - 1.30pm | Break

1.30 - 2.30pm | Workshop 4

'EveryOne, EveryWhere, EveryWhen' Film screening **- Alice Carwardine**

2.30 -3.30pm | Workshop 5

5.1 Approaches to Integral Ecology within the Education Sector: Panel Discussion
Julian Kluge, Jeni Miller and Eveline Masco - facilitated by **Michael McGirr**

5.2 COP Explained: Understanding the World's Biggest Climate Conversation **- Tara Harvey**

5.3 Ecological Justice in Community Organisations: Lessons from Jesuit Social Services over 15-year Journey **- Michael Fendel**

3.30 - 4.30pm | Workshop 6

6.1 Living Laudato Si' as an Earthcare Parish/Diocese **- Kerry Stone**

6.2 From Sustainability to Integral Ecology: Developing a Laudato Si' Action Plan for Your School **- Dr Melina Ey**

6.3 Healing Through Nature **- Waminda Parker** and **Dr Miles Holmes**

Keynote Addresses

Day 1

Listen, Reflect, Act: Welcome to the Season of Creation Gathering 2026

- **Bishop Timothy Norton SVD – Bishop of Broome**
- **Shirley Quaresimin – Nyikina Elder and Chair of the National Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council**
- **Erica Bernard – Community Liaison Officer, Catholic Education Western Australia**

The Season of Creation Gathering 2026 begins with a Welcome to Country led by Shirley Quaresimin, followed by opening prayer and reflections from Bishop Timothy Norton. Together with Erica Bernard, they will share a yarn that considers First Nations perspectives on caring for Country, ecological justice, and our shared responsibility for creation. This conversation invites Gathering participants to listen deeply to the wisdom, lived experience, and spiritual connection Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples hold with Country.

Grounding Laudato Si' – From Aspiration to Implementation

- **Julie Edwards – CEO, Jesuit Social Services**

In the face of today's multiple social and environmental crises, what can a Catholic response inspired by Laudato Si' look like?

Ecological justice, expressing the interrelatedness of social and environmental factors, provides an expansive lens on issues such as climate change and ecological degradation, but also issues such as energy, housing, employment and food security.

For almost 50 years, Jesuit Social Services has been working with the most marginalised. Recognising that environmental challenges pose particular risks to the communities with whom we work, we have been striving to bring an ecological perspective to all our operations for over 15 years. The interconnection between environmental and social justice has influenced our practice, policy, and organisational identity. It has shaped our strategy to ensure we are equipped to address the urgent justice issues today and of the future.

Drawing on Jesuit Social Services' journey, Julie Edwards will address the call of Laudato Si' and what a holistic organisational response that encompasses practice and advocacy can look like.

Voices from the Pacific: Climate Justice, Ecological Conversion and Hope on the Frontline

- **Archbishop Peter Loy Chong DD – Archdiocese of Suva, Fiji**

Pacific Island communities are among the first and most profoundly affected by the climate crisis, despite contributing least to its causes. Drawing from the lived experiences of communities across Fiji and the wider Pacific, Archbishop Peter Loy Chong will reflect on the realities of rising seas, extreme weather and environmental degradation, while highlighting the resilience, faith and wisdom of Pacific peoples. Grounded in the vision of Laudato Si' and the call to ecological conversion, this session will explore climate justice as both a moral imperative and a pathway to solidarity. Participants will be invited to listen to the voices of those on the frontline, deepen their understanding of our interconnected world, and discern how faith-filled action can contribute to a more just and sustainable future.

Keynote Addresses

Day 1

Ecology at the Heart of Faith: Exploring Grassroots Community Approaches

- **Dr Anne Jennings - Perth Archdiocese Member of Committees and Catholic Earthcare Laudato Si' Advisory Committee**

  The encyclical Laudato Si' calls on all people - Christians, those of other faiths/belief systems and those of no faith - to work collectively to activate ecological conversion that leads to the vital transformation required within and across 'Our Common Home', planet Earth. The follow up Laudate Deum adds further urgencies for us to consider. Ecosystem crises including climate change and loss of biodiversity along with social and economic concerns relating to the deep connection between environmental degradation in the Global North and poverty, notably in the Global South.

  So how can we, individuals and communities, relate to, and act upon, these often overwhelming concerns?

  This presentation explores those areas as they apply to Denis Edwards's life and faith, including examining a grassroots community case study. This is designed to assist us to explore ideas within this Gathering's framework of Listen, Reflect and Act.

Understanding the Mass for the Care of Creation

- **Rev Anthony J Doran – Executive Secretary for Liturgy, Australian Catholic Bishops Conference**

  This session is designed to help participants understand the origins of the Mass for the Care of Creation and how it might be used in parishes, schools and other communities.

Laudato Si' and Our Synodal Conversion: Spotlights, Insights and Invitations

- **Alwin Macalalad – Regional Coordinator Pacific-Asia & Oceania, Listening & Dialogue Section, Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development**

  The Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development (DPIHD) is witnessing many hopeful paths emerging as the Church takes on the deep invitation to care for our common home amidst the complex realities framed by an integral ecology. The keynote will highlight some of the learnings of DPIHD's Listening & Dialogue Section as it accompanies local Churches in engaging with the challenges of Laudato Si'. It will also invite participants to reflect on questions regarding our ongoing synodal conversion - what it means for us in the various levels of our discernment and action.

Introducing our Keynote Speakers

Day 1



Bishop Timothy Norton SVD

Bishop of Broome

Bishop Tim grew up in Sydney and trained as a physiotherapist before joining the Society of the Divine Word (SVD) at age 25. After theological studies in Melbourne, he was ordained a priest in 1991 and served seven years in parish ministry in Mexico City. He later held leadership and formation roles in Australia, including Provincial of the SVD Australia Province (2005-2013), overseeing mission activities in Australia, New Zealand and Thailand. From 2014-2021, he directed international SVD sabbatical programs in Italy, focusing on interculturality. Ordained Auxiliary Bishop of Brisbane in 2022, he ministered across diverse communities before being installed as Bishop of Broome in December 2024. Bishop Tim finds great meaning in being with and learning from groups of culturally diverse people.

Shirley Quaresimin

Nyikina Elder, Chair of the National Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council

Shirley has dedicated much of her life to Catholic Education Western Australia, serving communities in both Perth and Broome. Although retired, she remains actively involved in Aboriginal Education and continues to advocate for Aboriginal faith formation and the place of Aboriginal people within the Catholic Church. Shirley has represented International First Nations Catholics in Washington, DC, and more recently in New Zealand. She and her late Italian husband raised six children, and she is a proud grandmother of ten. Having walked in two cultures, Shirley maintains a deep connection to her spirituality, culture, and Country.

Erica Bernard

Community Liaison Officer, Catholic Education Western Australia

Erica Bernard is a Yawuru, Gija woman from the Kimberley and lives on Yawuru Country in Broome, Western Australia. She is the Community Liaison Officer with Catholic Education Western Australia's Broome Regional Office, supporting 13 Kimberley Catholic schools and working closely with the Diocese of Broome. With more than 20 years in Catholic education, Erica works to build a bridge and a strong connection between the school, community/families, and the parish, sharing cultural knowledge, Aboriginal spirituality, and the history of the Catholic Church in the Kimberley. Being a member of the Plenary Council along with her fellow Kimberley colleagues they have set up a Kimberley Aboriginal Catholic Pastoral Ministry, with representatives from all Catholic parishes to represent their people and be a voice in the Kimberley church, their communities and families.

Introducing our Keynote Speakers

Day 1



Julie Edwards

CEO, Jesuit Social Services

Julie Edwards joined Jesuit Social Services in 2001 and was appointed CEO in 2004. A qualified social worker, family therapist, and grief and loss counsellor, she brings more than 40 years' experience working alongside marginalised people and families affected by breakdown, grief, loss and trauma. Julie holds a Master of Social Work, completed a PhD in organisational identity, and is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. Her leadership spans government, philanthropic and Jesuit networks focused on justice, community wellbeing, social ministry and ecology. She is committed to practical social justice and values-based leadership.



Archbishop Peter Loy Chong DD

Archbishop of Suva, Fiji

Archbishop Peter Loy Chong, Archbishop of Suva, Fiji, is a respected voice in the global Catholic Church on issues of ecology, climate justice, and integral human development.

Ordained in 1992 and appointed Archbishop in 2013, he has championed the protection of creation, particularly for vulnerable Pacific Island communities facing the impacts of climate change. He has served in leadership roles within regional bishops' conferences and actively contributed to dialogue on Laudato Si' and faith-based environmental action.

Known for his pastoral leadership he is committed to social and ecological justice, and regularly engages with international forums, amplifying the voices of communities most vulnerable to climate change.



Dr Anne Jennings

Perth Archdiocese Member of Committees and Catholic Earthcare Laudato Si' Advisory Committee.

Anne raised her family on a farm in Western Australia's South West and began tertiary studies when a university campus opened in the region as her children started school. This marked the beginning of a 35-year career in community development across regional and remote communities. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Human Services, a Master of Arts in Ecologically Sustainable Development, and a PhD exploring community development and ecological conversion in response to Laudato Si'. Anne is passionate about the connection between faith, integral ecology and community work, recognising the importance of ecological conversion across all sectors of society. Her faith, commitment to communities, family life and love of the natural environment continue to shape and inspire her work and outlook.

Introducing our Keynote Speakers

Day 1



Rev Anthony J Doran

Executive Secretary for Liturgy, Australian Catholic Bishops Conference

Anthony is a priest of the Archdiocese of Melbourne, ordained in 2003 after working as a secondary school teacher. He has served in both suburban and regional parishes and completed postgraduate studies in Liturgy in 2010. A respected liturgical scholar, Anthony is a former president of the Australian Academy of Liturgy and a member of Societas Liturgica, the international society for liturgical study and renewal. He has contributed to several Australian liturgical publications, including Pastoral Liturgy, Australian Journal of Liturgy, Liturgy News and The Summit. Appointed Executive Secretary in May 2025, he supports the Bishops Commission for Liturgy and its advisory councils for liturgical architecture and art, liturgy, and liturgical music.



Alwin Macalalad

Regional Coordinator Pacific-Asia & Oceania, Listening & Dialogue Section, Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development

Alwin Macalalad is Regional Coordinator for Pacific-Asia and Oceania within the Listening & Dialogue Section of the Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development. He has previously headed the World Secretariat of the Christian Life Community in Rome for 5 years together with his wife, Rojean. Prior to this role, he has served as consultant in the fields of Organizational Change and Capacity Development. Today, holding spaces for participatory change leadership continues to be his passion. Alwin is currently based in Rome with his family.

Workshops Selections

Day 2

10-11 am (AEST) — Workshop 1

1. Healing Land and People: Reclaiming Ancient Ways of Living Together

- **Evelyn Enid Parkin, Quandamooka Elder, MA (Theology)**
- **Dr Ann-Maree O'Beirne RSM, PhD Theology**

This workshop acknowledges the need for reconciliation between peoples, and between peoples and their Country. People, Land and Country have experienced trauma from colonisation, massacres, mining, deforestation, and other continuing human-induced degradation. The broken relationship between people and Mother Earth needs to be restored. In religious settings, the impetus for this initiative is the World Day of Prayer for Creation, the new Mass formulary for the Care of Creation, and the worldwide ecumenical movement to establish a liturgical Feast of Creation. This workshop explores the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples wisdom and lived experience and the history of the Christian Tradition's honouring God the Creator.

11-12 pm (AEST) — Workshop 2 (Concurrent sessions)

2.1 The Eucharist and Creation

- **Michael McGirr – Mission Facilitator, Caritas Australia**

As we prepare for the Eucharistic Congress in 2028, let's remember what we mean by 'the fruit of the earth and the work of human hands.' Our central celebration reminds us that we are earthlings, physical creatures, who are fed and are called to feed others. The Eucharist takes us beyond liturgy to embrace the whole of creation. This workshop will draw, among others, on the writings of Pope Francis and Pope Leo, all of whom were at pains to connect the Eucharist with our call to justice.

2.2 Pope Leo XIV and Integral Ecology

- **Pete Arndt – Director, Australian Catholic Social Justice Council**

This workshop will explore what Pope Leo XIV has said and done to continue the work of Pope Francis in promoting a commitment to integral ecology as an essential part of the Church's mission.

2.3 Global Faith Petition Campaign for a Fossil Fuel Treaty: A Deep Dive

- **Thea Ormerod – Committee member of ARRCC (Australian Religious Response to Climate Change)**

Thea will give a sketch of:

- What is the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty campaign
- How and why people in the Pacific started it
- How Catholic Social Teaching inspired the Vatican, Bishops of the Global South and the Laudato Si' Movement to support the Fossil Fuel Treaty
- Purpose and wording of the current faith-inspired global petition
- Some key Australian signatories
- How support for the petition will strategically fit in with plans to challenge the Australian Government to do better
- Practical ways you can help gather signatures and build support within your own community

2.4 Preparing for Extreme Heat: How to Help Your Community

- **Alice Carwardine – Care for Our Common Home Project Officer, Jesuits Australia**

  Extreme heat events are the most deadly natural disasters that the world currently suffers. Awareness raising and preparedness are key to increasing survivability. Every community across Australia can play a role in protecting our most vulnerable – including our Church communities. In this session learn about the facts, the strategies and the tools for supporting your community when things get hot.

12-1 pm (AEST) Workshop 3 (Concurrent sessions)

3.1 The Rich Garden of Interfaith and Ecumenical Ecology

- **Emma Beach – Archdiocese of Brisbane Justice, Ecology and Peace Project Officer, Executive Officer of the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission of the Archdiocese of Brisbane**

  The Catholic Justice and Peace Commission hosted an Interfaith Prayer Vigil for Care for Our Common in April this year. Through this powerful event we built upon and enriched our ability to work with many faiths for the shared goal of praying and acting together. This workshop is a time to explore our practical learnings around the purpose and promise of interfaith collaboration and discuss future actions for a variety of contexts.

3.2 Green Growth is Unsustainable: We Need Degrowth Now

- **Dr Michael Walker – Social Justice Facilitator, Justice and Peace Office, Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney**

  Iconic 'green' alternatives to fossil-fuel-based activities are not as green as we may have thought. Laudato Si' calls for a reduction in resource use. EVs require minerals from indigenous land and online or virtual activities involve ever-increasing amounts of electricity and water. Laudato Si's vision is not green growth but degrowth. The session will introduce the degrowth movement and related concepts of post-growth, wellbeing economics and doughnut economics. Moves are afoot to drop GDP growth from the UN's post-2030 sustainable goals, a change that should be supported by organisations with a Catholic ethos.

3.3 Nurturing our Hearts in Creation: Using Ignatian Contemplation Practices

- **Sue Martin – Ignatian Ecospirituality Ministry coordinator, Jesuit Ignatian Spirituality Australia (JISA)**

  An invitation to explore Ignatian contemplative practices that awaken the "green heart" discovering Earth as sacred ground (LS 6) and "Finding God in all things." Through being contemplative – the practice of Dadirri and ecological Examen, and Earth as our "original monastery," – using the practice of Lectio Divina with nature, we grow hearts that care for our common home. Laudato Si' calls us to ecological conversion—head, heart, and hands aligned. "Nature is calling for nurture," and we Bala ga lili, walking together as integral ecologists who love Earth and honour First Peoples' wisdom.

3.4 Living Water: From Coast to Country, and Back Again

- **Sabrina Stevens – First Nations Ministry Coordinator – Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton, Diocesan Director for Rockhampton – Caritas Australia**

What can water teach us about Country, connection and our relationship with creation?

From the freshwater, rainforest and coastal Countries of Far North Queensland to the inland plains and waterways of Central and Western Queensland, Sabrina shares her ecological conversion through personal reflections on water, place and pilgrimage.

Drawing on First Nations perspectives, Catholic spirituality and Laudato Si, this workshop follows water as a life-giving source flowing through Country, connecting communities and cultures. Through story, imagery and reflection, participants are invited to explore their own journey with creation, consider the places and waters that have shaped them and reflect on how relationship with creation and one another can lead us into deeper stewardship of our common home.

1.30-2.30pm (AEST) Workshop 4

'EveryOne, EveryWhere, EveryWhen' – Film screening

- **Alice Carwardine**

This film explores water justice, Indigenous knowledge, and the protection of three vital river systems: the Baaka (Lower Darling River) in New South Wales, the Roper River in the Northern Territory, and the Martuwarra (Fitzroy River) in Western Australia. It considers both the environmental damage we are causing, as well as the ways communities are responding with strength and hope in the face of immense challenges.

"Nothing can survive without water. It connects all that is alive. We [all humans] need to use the complementary strengths of dominant and Indigenous knowledge, working together, to create a collective future that delivers water for EveryOne, EveryWhere and EveryWhen... We [all humans] need to listen, reflect and then act if we are to move towards water justice."

(Grafton et al 2026, p.6)

2.30-3.30pm (AEST) Workshop 5 (Concurrent sessions)

5.1 Approaches to Integral Ecology within the Education Sector – Panel Discussion

- **Julian Kluge – Manager: Catholic Identity and Mission, Catholic Education South Australia**
- **Jeni Miller – Sydney Regional Coordinator for Marist Youth Ministry NSW/ACT, Chair of the Laudato Si' Committee for the Star of the Sea Province, Marists of Champagnat (voluntary position)**
- **Eveline Masco – Strategy and Sustainability Consultant, Catholic Education Western Australia**

How can Catholic schools and education systems bring Laudato Si' and integral ecology to life in meaningful and lasting ways? Join leaders from different Catholic education contexts as they share their experiences of integrating care for creation into teaching, learning, leadership, spirituality, and school culture. Through stories of both challenges and successes, panellists will explore practical approaches, emerging opportunities, and valuable lessons learned, offering inspiration and actionable insights for educators seeking to deepen their own commitment to care for our common home in school contents.

5.2 COP Explained: Understanding the World's Biggest Climate Conversation

- **Tara Harvey – Media Lead, Caritas Australia**

  Every year, world leaders, negotiators, scientists, advocates, faith groups and communities gather for the United Nations climate conference known as COP. But what exactly is COP, and why does it matter?

  This workshop will provide an accessible introduction to the climate negotiations, tracing their origins, key milestones and major achievements. Participants will gain a practical understanding of how COP works today, the challenges it faces, and the priorities shaping upcoming negotiations. We will also explore faith representation at COP, the unique perspectives of Pacific communities, and how Catholics can engage meaningfully with one of the most important global conversations of our time.

5.3 Ecological Justice in Community Organisations: Lessons from Jesuit Social Services over 15-year Journey

- **Michael Fendel – Ecological Justice Coordinator, Jesuit Social Services**

  Ecological justice is a strategic commitment of Jesuit Social Services. Recognising that environmental challenges pose particular risks to the diverse communities with whom we work, we have been working to bring an ecological perspective to all our operations for over 15 years. The interconnection between environmental and social justice has influenced our practice, policy business processes and organisational identity.

  This workshop will delve into Jesuit Social Services' journey and approach, provide practical examples from both our organisational development and outward-facing work and opportunities for you to reflect on how you and your organisation can further promote ecological justice.

3.30-4.30pm (AEST) Workshop 6 (Concurrent sessions)

6.1 Living Laudato Si' as an Earthcare Parish/Dioceses

- **Kerry Stone – Coordinator Sandhurst Diocese Caritas Australia/Social & Ecological Justice Coordinator**

  In 2022, the Australian Catholic Bishops encouraged all Catholic parishes to accept Pope Francis' invitation to develop a Laudato Si' Action Plan, as a vehicle for ecological conversion. This workshop will support parishioners, parish councils, parish priests to develop a Laudato Si' Action Plan, or strengthen existing environmental sustainability plans, by making explicit the connection to faith; integrating ecological action with Catholic identity, spirituality and mission. Participants will discover the Earthcare Program, an accompanied, Australianised journey towards ecological justice via the Laudato Si' Goals.

6.2 From Sustainability to Integral Ecology: Developing a Laudato Si' Action Plan for Your School

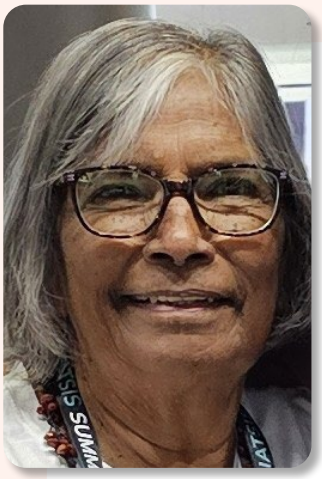
- **Dr Melina Ey – Catholic Earthcare Engagement Lead, Caritas Australia**

  In 2022, the Australian Catholic Bishops encouraged all Catholic schools to accept Pope Francis' invitation to either develop Laudato Si' Action Plans, or participate in existing Laudato Si' Action Plans, as a vehicle for their ecological conversion. This workshop will support school leaders and educators to develop a Laudato Si' Action Plan, or strengthen existing environmental sustainability or stewardship plans, by making explicit the connection to faith; integrating ecological action with Catholic identity, spirituality and mission.

6.3 Healing Through Nature

- **Waminda Parker – Director and Co-founder of NatureFix**
- **Dr Miles Holmes – Director and Co-founder of NatureFix**

This session will explore the latest research on the health and wellbeing benefits of nature and why nature connection is becoming central to the future of environmental restoration, green space design, healthcare and education. Participants will discover how short, carefully designed, evidence-based nature experiences can be matched to local landscapes to deliver measurable wellbeing outcomes. The session will demonstrate how nature can provide a practical, scalable model for embedding healing through nature into everyday systems and settings, supporting human flourishing while strengthening our connection to, and stewardship of, the natural world.



Workshop 1

Evelyn Enid Parkin

Quandamooka Elder, Co-convenor; "Healing Land and People Working Group"

Evelyn is an Australian Aboriginal Quandamooka Elder, born and raised at an Aboriginal Community, Minjerribah/Stradbroke Island, Qld. She has explored and contributed liturgical discussion on Aboriginal Spirituality and her Christianity theology to many groups. Evelyn is a member of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council (NATSICC), a Consultant for the National Liturgical Council.



Workshop 1

Dr Ann-Maree O'Beirne RSM

Co-convenor (Admin); "Healing Land and People Working Group;" Director of Faith Formation and Adult Education Programs and Lecturer in Ecological Theology at BBI-TAITE

Ann-Maree is a Sister of Mercy living in Bathurst NSW. She has a PhD in Theology from ACU specialising in theologies of Grace, Ecology and Spirituality. She is employed by BBI-TAITE as a lecturer and Director of Faith Formation and Professional Development and is engaged in casual lecturing at ACU. Ann-Maree is also an Ignatian Spiritual Director, involved in directing retreats in the Bathurst Diocese and beyond. In the past two years she has participated in the global promotion of the World Day of Prayer for Creation and the Ecumenical process of establishing a Feast of Creation in Christ.



Workshop 2.1

Michael McGirr

Mission Facilitator, Caritas Australia

Michael McGirr has written numerous books, essays, articles and stories. His new book, The Table of the World, on the Eucharist, peace and justice is in preparation and will be a significant help to groups and individuals preparing for the Eucharistic Congress in 2028. His books have sold over 200,000 copies in Australia and overseas. They include Bypass: the story of a road, Things You Get for Free and Books that Saved My Life. He has been the fiction editor of Meanjin, editor of Australian Catholics and publisher of Eureka Street. He has been chair of judges for the National Biography Award, NSW Premiers Literary Awards and The Age Book of the Year. He has reviewed over 1000 books for the Age, Sydney Morning Herald and Canberra Times.

Workshop Presenters

Day 2



Workshop 2.2

Pete Arndt

Director, Australian Catholic Social Justice Council

Pete Arndt has been the Director of the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council since 2022. Prior to that, they were the Executive Officer of the Catholic Justice & Peace Commission in Brisbane for 21 years. Pete is a member of the Board of the Queensland Conservation Council. Pete has been involved in environmental activism, particularly in climate justice for decades



Workshop 2.3

Thea Ormerod

Committee member of ARRCC
(Australian Religious Response to Climate Change)

Thea is a Catholic Christian, retired social worker, grandmother and passionate advocate for climate action. For more than 30 years, she has volunteered with organisations dedicated to social justice, peace and the integrity of Creation, with a particular focus on addressing economic systems that contribute to global poverty. Seventeen years ago, Thea became the founding president of the multi-faith climate action organisation, the Australian Religious Response to Climate Change (ARRCC). She stepped down as president in March 2026 but remains active on the management committee.



Workshop 2.4

Alice Carwardine

Care for Our Common Home Project Officer for the Jesuits Australia

Alice is a faith formation practitioner specialising in Integral Ecology. Her work with the Jesuits includes supporting their Laudato Si' action planning and reporting as well as carbon accounting. Alice holds a Masters in Theology with a focus on Eco Theology and is a regular writer for the Madonna Magazine. She has a background in education and supports the Young Mercy Links Brisbane group in building connections between people and the environment. Alice is a commissioner for the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission for the Brisbane Archdiocese and is currently studying Disaster Risk Reduction and Sustainability at ANU.

Workshop Presenters

Day 2

Workshop 3.1



Emma Beach

Archdiocese of Brisbane Justice, Ecology and Peace Project Officer, Executive Officer of the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission of the Archdiocese of Brisbane

Emma serves as Project Officer for Justice, Ecology and Peace for the Archdiocese of Brisbane and as Executive Officer of the Brisbane Catholic Justice and Peace Commission. Her work focuses on a range of social and ecological priorities, including implementing the Archdiocese's Laudato Si' Action Plan, fostering the welcome and inclusion of LGBTQIA+ people in Catholic communities, and supporting refugee and asylum seeker outreach through the Romero Centre. Passionate about Integral Ecology, Emma works to encourage formation, connection, reflection and practical action across the Archdiocese. She is committed to building communities that promote justice, inclusion and care for creation. Outside work, her children, parish community and running on Country provide renewal, inspiration and grounding.

Workshop 3.2



Dr Michael Walker

Social Justice Facilitator, Justice and Peace Office, Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney

Dr Michael Walker works in the Justice and Peace Office of the Archdiocese of Sydney and teaches Catholic Social Teaching at ACU. He previously worked as a union official and completed his PhD on worker voice in the gig economy.

Workshop 3.3

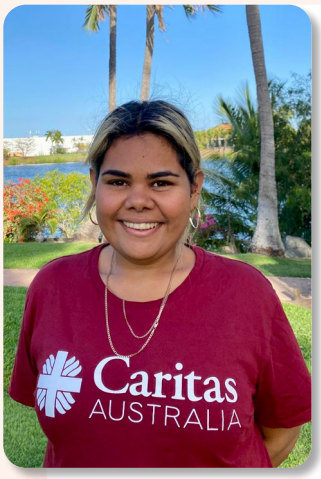


Sue Martin

Ignatian Ecospirituality Ministry coordinator, Jesuit Ignatian Spirituality Australia (JISA)

Sue is an agricultural scientist by training, currently working in the leadership team at Jesuit Ignatian Spirituality Australia (JISA), with deep connections to Catholic Earthcare. Sue has been passionate about connecting love of the environment with her faith, working to grow a green heart, we can all be integral ecologists. Sue lives and advocates for Country, in Parramatta Diocese, she is part of St Madeleine's parish Kenthurst and the Laudato Si' team for the diocese. Nature is calling for nurture, it is to Bala ga lili to walk together, caring for our common home.

Workshop 3.4



Sabrina Stevens

First Nations Ministry Coordinator – Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton. Diocesan Director for Rockhampton – Caritas Australia

Sabrina Stevens is a proud Kuku Yalanji and Yidinji Aboriginal Catholic woman and First Nations Ministry Coordinator for the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton. She also serves as Caritas Australia's Diocesan Director for Rockhampton. Sabrina has been actively involved in First Nations Catholic Ministry from a young age, with experience in advocacy and leadership across local, national and international spaces. Her work brings together culture, faith, story and encounter, with a strong commitment to creating spaces where First Nations and grassroots community voices and perspectives are heard. Through ministry, pilgrimage and community engagement, Sabrina continues to explore relationships between culture, Church, community and our care for our common home.

Workshop 5.1



Julian Kluge

Manager: Catholic Identity and Mission Catholic Education South Australia

Julian Kluge has spent most of his career in Catholic education, serving in leadership roles across wellbeing, curriculum, religious identity and mission, and school administration. In his work with the Catholic Education Office, he has contributed to the Religious Education and Catholic Identity teams, delivered the Graduate Certificate in Catholic Education for the University of South Australia, participated in the Enhancing Catholic Identity Project, and supported the formation, recruitment and review of religious leaders. A key focus of his work is developing programs and resources that foster the spiritual and religious formation of staff and leaders. Julian is passionate about helping educators connect their faith, identity and vocation. He lives in South Australia with his wife and two children, where he enjoys growing food, planting trees and cooking.

Workshop 5.1



Jeni Miller

Sydney Regional Coordinator for Marist Youth Ministry NSW/ACT, Chair of the Laudato Si' Committee for the Star of the Sea Province, Marists of Champagnat (voluntary position)

Jeni has been the Sydney Regional Coordinator for Marist Youth Ministry (MYM) for the last 11 years. She loves working with young people and has a great team of university Marist ex-students, that assist in delivering programs to Marist students. Jeni also have a passion for caring for creation. She is in her 4th year of Chair for the LSAC for the Marist Brothers and has almost completed a 2 year Mercy Integral Ecology Fellowship with the Mercy Sisters.

Workshop Presenters

Day 2



Workshop 5.1

Eveline Masco

Strategy and Sustainability Consultant, Catholic Education Western Australia (CEWA)

Eveline has a deep passion for sustainability and social justice, strongly linked to the faith-based moral obligation to care for our common home.

Supported by a working group within Catholic Education Western Australia, Eveline coordinated the development and implementation of the organisation's first Laudato Si' Sustainability Strategy. Eveline supports Catholic schools across Western Australia in living out Laudato Si' as a whole-school approach, from curriculum integration to school planning. She enjoys close collaboration with other agencies and organisations across Australia to drive the work on Integral Ecology and bringing Laudato Si' to life.



Workshop 5.2

Tara Harvey

Media Lead at, Caritas Australia

Tara Harvey is Media Lead at Caritas Australia, where she plays a key role in Caritas Australia's climate advocacy and communications work, supporting engagement around United Nations climate negotiations and ecological justice. She is a member of the Caritas Internationalis Climate Justice Working Group and works closely with Caritas partners across Oceania to amplify Pacific voices in global climate discussions.



Workshop 5.3

Michael Fendel

Ecological Justice Coordinator, Jesuit Social Services

Michael Fendel is the Ecological Justice Coordinator at Jesuit Social Services' Centre for Just Places. He has been working and volunteering in the community service sector and with various community groups such as the Degrowth Network Australia for many years.

Holding an M.A. in Transformation Studies from the University of Flensburg, Germany, Michael is passionate about social-ecological transformation and systems change.

Workshop Presenters

Day 2



Workshop 6.1

Kerry Stone

Catholic Earthcare Parish/Diocese Community Coordinator
Sandhurst Diocese Caritas Australia/Social & Ecological Justice Coordinator

As the Earthcare Parish/Diocese Community Coordinator, Kerry provides support and resources, convenes national ZOOM gatherings and produces newsletters, all of which contribute to accompanying each other on the journey to ecological justice via the 7 Laudato Si' Goals.

In the Sandhurst Diocese, Kerry convenes the Sandhurst Care for Creation Team. Her role also involves promotion, education, and campaigning on a broad range of justice issues supported by resources from Caritas Australia, including Catholic Earthcare, the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council, the Migrant & Refugee Office and Aboriginal Catholic Ministry.



Workshop 6.2

Dr Melina Ey

Catholic Earthcare Engagement Lead, Caritas Australia

Dr Melina Ey is the Catholic Earthcare Engagement Lead at Caritas Australia. As part of the Catholic Earthcare team, Melina accompanies and supports Catholic communities across Australia in caring for our common home, and in responding with faith, courage and hope to the ecological challenges of our time. Melina also lectures in human geography, sustainability and community development, and her research focuses on local and everyday practices of resistance, care, and repair in a climate-changing world.



Workshop 6.3

Waminda Parker

Director and Co-founder of NatureFix

Waminda brings over 25 years of expertise in ecological landscape restoration, urban planning, and research to drive innovative nature-based health solutions. Having successfully established a number of large-scale, long-term programs that champion holistic sustainability and community resilience.



Workshop 6.3

Dr Miles Holmes

Director and Co-founder of NatureFix

Miles has a background in cultural anthropology, outdoor education and research. Miles has been facilitating groups outdoors for over 25 years. He has been mentored in deep nature connection, bushcraft and meditation by leading experts in Australia and the USA and holds a PhD in anthropology completed in partnership with Warlpiri people from Central Australia.

Continuing the Journey

The Season of Creation Gathering may come to an end, but caring for our common home is a lifelong journey of faith, hope and action, and it's a journey best taken in community.

Together, let's continue beyond this gathering, supporting one another in faith-filled action and building a more just, sustainable and hope-filled future for all creation.

Journey with us!

Catholic Earthcare connects Catholics across Australia who are inspired by Laudato Si' and committed to responding to both the cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor.

By joining the Catholic Earthcare community, you become part of a growing movement of people working together to bring ecological conversion to life. Members receive resources, practical tools, invitations to events, opportunities to share ideas, and support from the Catholic Earthcare team.

Sign Up Today!

Joining is simple.

Visit: www.caritas.org.au/catholic-earthcare

Select 'Individual' or 'Household/Family' and follow the prompts!

Membership is free and includes access to Catholic Earthcare resources and support to help you take your next steps.

Let's Continue the Journey Together!

Join at **caritas.org.au/catholic-earthcare**



Journeying Together with Your Community

Sign up your school, parish or organisation to become living Laudato Si' communities.

Visit: www.caritas.org.au/catholic-earthcare

Select 'School', 'Parish' or 'Organisation / Diocese' and follow the prompts!

We will encourage you to build your team and support your community to plan and implement your own Laudato Si' Action Plan. You will receive support, networking opportunities and resources along the way.

Continuing the Journey

Stay Connected

Looking for more inspiration, ideas, and opportunities to take action?

Connect with Catholic Earthcare online to stay up to date with events, resources, and stories from across Australia and around the world.

Follow: facebook.com/CatholicEarthcare

Join: facebook.com/groupscatholicearthcareaustralia

We'd Love to Hear From You

Thank you for being part of the Catholic Earthcare Season of Creation Gathering 2026.

Together, we have listened, reflected and explored ways to act with hope and purpose for our common home. As we continue this journey, we invite you to share your experience with us.

Your feedback will help shape future opportunities for formation, connection and action across our Catholic community.

Please email: catholicearthcare@caritas.org.au

Acknowledgements

Caritas Australia gratefully acknowledges the support of the **Bishops Commission for Social Justice, Mission and Service** and thanks **Catholic Religious Australia** for its valued partnership in delivering the **Catholic Earthcare Season of Creation Gathering 2026**. Together, we are fostering opportunities for faith formation, reflection and action in care for our common home.

Thank you to our sponsors

We also extend our sincere thanks to our **Bronze Sponsors, the Catholic Development Fund(CDF) and Brisbane Catholic Education(BCE)**, for their generous support of this event.

Thank you for helping to make the Season of Creation Gathering 2026 possible.

Catholic Earthcare
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With thanks to our Bronze Sponsors

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teaching • challenging • transforming

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