

**Sisters of St. Francis**  
*of Sylvania, Ohio*



# SUSTAINABILITY REPORT

- 2025 -



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Changing the world really does start at home. In 2025, we made bold strides—like investing in solar energy—and brought change in quieter ways, like planting sturdy native plants that will increase pollen and habitat for bees and butterflies. Each choice, big or small, adds up to meaningful change.

Building on prior years of planning and implementation, the Sisters continued to make steady progress on their seven-year Laudato Si' Action Plan, marking 2025 as year three.

Throughout the year, daily intentional choices made by people who actively care for creation and contribute to the well-being of the broader campus community made a profound difference and modeled faithful stewardship of God's gift of creation.

In this year's report, you'll see a detailed summary of our year in sustainability that includes education, outreach, accountability, and action. All of it, a remarkable demonstration of the values set forth by the Sisters of St. Francis of Sylvania, Ohio.




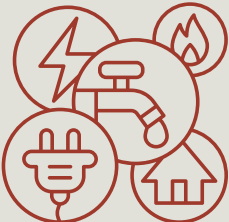
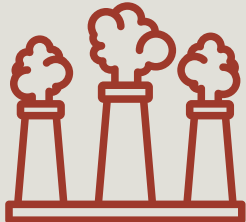
## Our Commitment to Laudato Si'

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As we enter the fourth year of our seven-year Laudato Si' Action Plan, the committee is shifting its focus to the theme of **adopting sustainable lifestyles**. This year's efforts will center on practical, community-driven changes that empower our campus to make lasting, positive impacts on the environment.

# CARBON FOOTPRINT

A greenhouse gas audit was conducted to measure the historic campus's carbon footprint, including Lourdes University and Rosary Care Center. The tool differentiates between direct and indirect emissions categorizing them as Scope 1, Scope 2, and Scope 3 emissions. The data that was included for each scope is outlined below. Carbon offsets, such as compost, are also incorporated in the final carbon footprint calculation.

		
<h3>Scope 1</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Natural Gas</li><li>• Transport fuels</li><li>• Fertilizers</li><li>• Refrigerants and chemicals</li></ul>	<h3>Scope 2</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Utility consumption (heating, cooling, electricity)</li></ul>	<h3>Scope 3</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Purchased goods and services</li><li>• Purchased fuel</li><li>• Solid landfill waste</li></ul>

## Net Carbon Footprint:

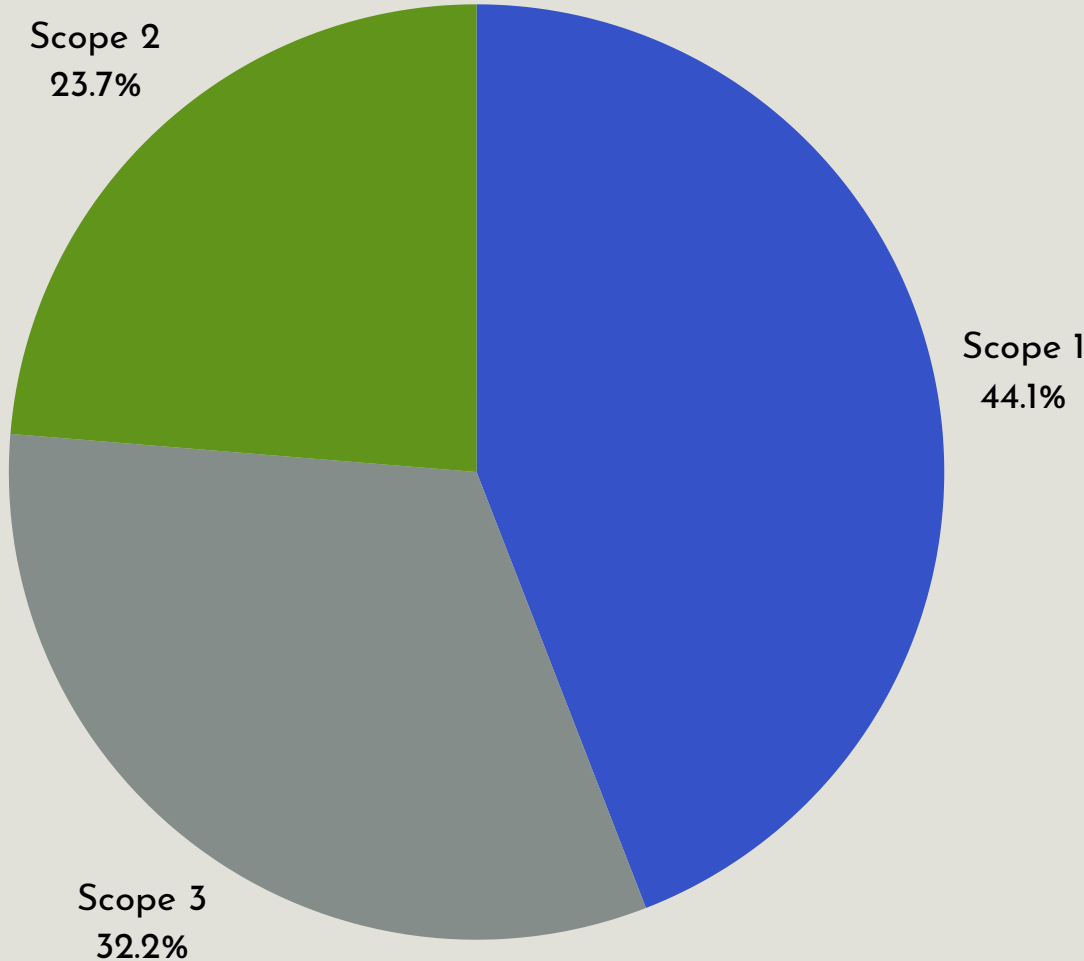
# 5,576.30

## Metric Tons Carbon Dioxide Equivalent

Our carbon footprint is the equivalent of CO<sub>2</sub> used to power **749** homes for one year.

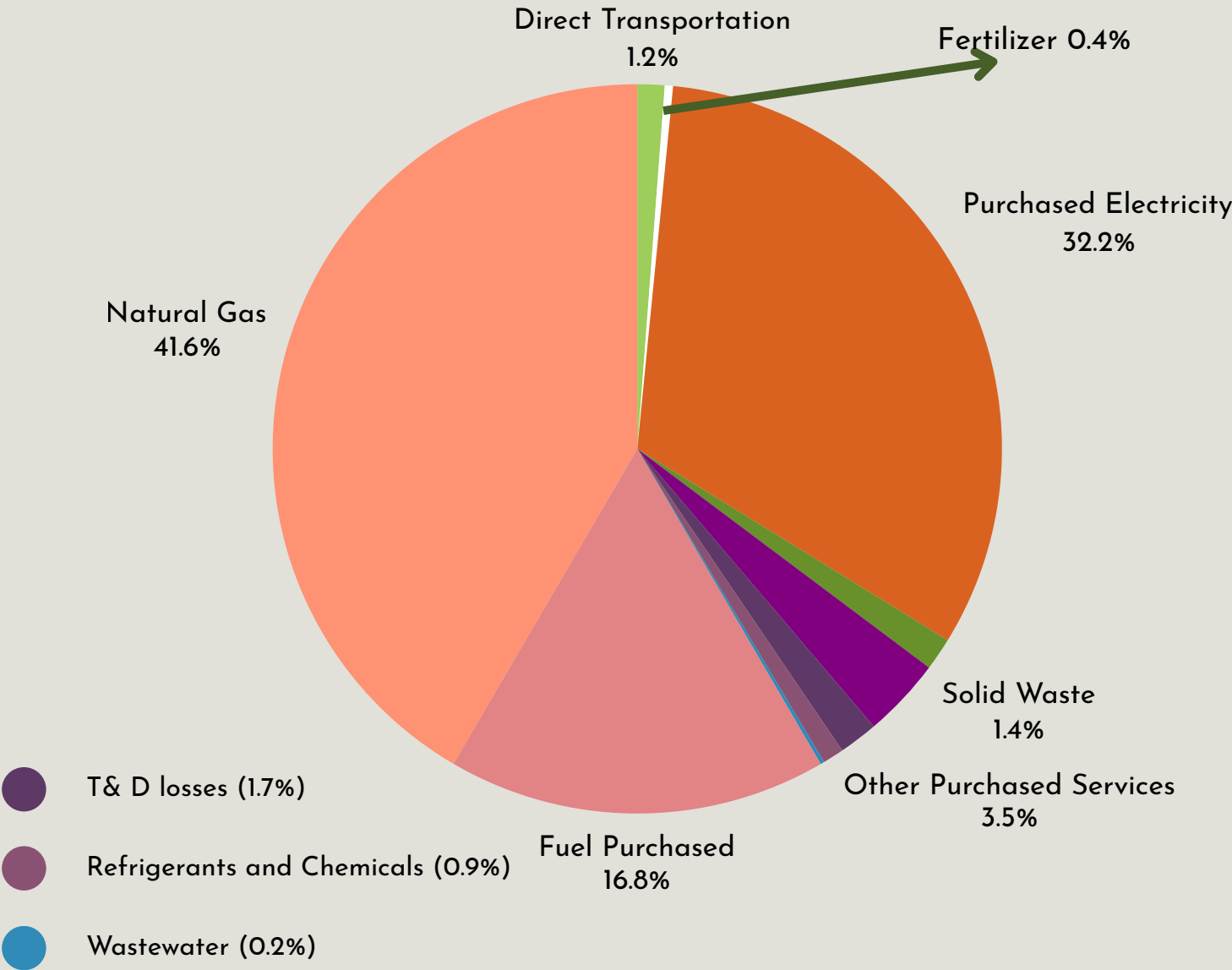
Each year, we will track our carbon footprint with the intention of reducing it over time.

# CARBON FOOTPRINT BY SCOPE



<b>Scope 1</b>	<b>Scope 2</b>	<b>Scope 3</b>
Direct emissions from sources an organization owns or controls	Indirect emissions from the generation of purchased energy the organization uses	All other indirect emissions across the value chain, both upstream and downstream

# CARBON FOOTPRINT BY CATEGORY



\*T&D losses accounts for the the amount of electricity lost during the transmission and distribution process

# Outdoor Stewardship

Accomplishments 2025



## Compost Program

# 7,323LBS

of organic waste was diverted from the landfill through composting—reducing methane emissions and lowering our carbon footprint. This is the equivalent to offsetting the carbon emitted from powering two homes' energy for one year just with our compost program!

## Native Nursery



# 250

Native plants

This past year, native plants transformed a once unused piece of land into a pollinator haven. Thanks to the help of Love of Creation and Laudato Si' committee members, and the Grounds team, our Native Nursery will soon be vibrant with color and life!



All 250 plants were grown from seed right here on campus. The seeds were donated by the University of Toledo's GUTS (Greening UT Through Students) program.

# Outdoor Stewardship

Accomplishments 2025



## Grateful Harvest Community Garden

**236.8 LBS**

of food was donated back to the Sisters, Sisters' ministries, and Food for Thought, a local mobile food pantry.

**97**

### Volunteer person hours

dedicated to sustaining the Grateful Harvest Community Garden. This is a 90% increase in engagement from last year's season!



### Did You Know?

This year two electric golf carts were purchased as another way of divesting from fossil fuels on campus. Going electric mitigates air pollution and direct carbon emissions into the atmosphere. An added bonus is electric golf carts are more energy efficient!

# Honeybee

## Accomplishments 2025



### Found a new home

The bees were relocated this spring into a cozy corner of campus surrounded by buildings. Not only are they protected from strong gusts of winds in this new location, we all have front row seats to their daily buzzing around. It has become an area where everyone can observe the activity of the bees at a comfortable distance.



### Troubleshooting

Our hives, Tulip and Leona, both presented their own set of challenges through the season. In particular, Tulip lost her Queen midseason, leaving the beekeepers puzzled as to why. A new Queen was replaced with the hopes of the colony accepting her.

We learned that they did and Tulip was able to rebuild her population before going into the winter.

# Recycling

Accomplishments 2025

## Specialty Recycling Collections

5

pairs of glasses were recycled

of candy wrappers were recycled through Keep Toledo/Lucas County Beautiful

0.4 LBS

112 LBS

of batteries were diverted from the landfill and recycled

## Plastic Film

126 LBS

of plastic film was responsibly recycled and kept from the landfill



We reduced the use of plastic water bottles by

21,038

thanks to the refillable water bottle stations.

# Waste Reduction

Accomplishments 2025



17

Hand dryers  
were installed

Last year's waste characterization revealed that 30% of SOSF buildings' waste stream consisted of paper towels. Hand dryers were installed as a strategy to reduce our contribution to the landfill. It is estimated that 4,856 lbs of waste was reduced this year just by switching one simple habit!

16

## Reclining chairs

Through the SOAR grant, 16 reclining chairs were replaced for Sisters in Our Lady of Grace Hall. The original chairs were offered to lay SOSF employees and diverted from the landfill!



# Waste Reduction

## Accomplishments 2025



Landfill Waste



Recycled or Diverted Waste

16,185 LBS

17,410 LBS

### Estimated Waste Diversion Data Inputs

Recycled paper/cardboard	4,940 lbs
Recycled comingled containers	4,446 lbs
Avoided water bottles (lbs)	463 lbs
Plastic film	126 lbs
Batteries	112 lbs
Compost	7,323 lbs

Waste diversion rate is the percentage of total waste kept out of landfills or incinerators through recycling, composting, reuse, or reduction. It is calculated by dividing diverted materials by total waste generated. As the diversion rate approaches 100%, less waste is sent to landfills, meaning a smaller environmental impact and progress toward zero waste.

52%

SOSF Diversion rate

of our waste stream was diverted from the landfill by recycling, composting, and avoiding waste

# S.A.V.E.

## Accomplishments 2025

### S.A.V.E. Lectures

2025

January	Ocean Conservancy: International Coastal Cleanup (ICC)
March	Spirituality of the Cosmos: What Stars Teach Us About Hope
June	Laugh, Learn, Live Fully: Embracing Environmental Stewardship
September	The Green Ribbon Initiative (GRI) and the Oak Openings
November	The James Webb Space Telescope: A New Frontier in Understanding the Formation of Galaxies

### S.A.V.E. 2025

### Scholarship Winners:

#### Paulina Babula

Graduated from Southview High School and will attend Ohio State University. She plans to study Animal Science.

#### Serenity Snelling

Graduated from Southview High School and will attend Butler University. She plans to study Environmental Science.

**Congratulations!**



# Events

## Accomplishments 2025



### Oak Openings

Joined by local native plant expert, and as a representative from Wild Ones, we learned all the benefits to native plants!

### Honey Tasting

We celebrated St. Valentine's feast day by tasting honey from our 2023 and 2024 hives.



### Native Nursery Planting

We transformed a once unused space into growing prairie that will mature in the coming years into a pollinator sanctuary.

# Events

## Accomplishments 2025



### Solar Panel

Our solar panel team had an informational lunch and learn for anyone to ask questions and learn details about the solar panel project.

### Clean Your Streams

A group of SOSF and Lourdes students and Faculty/Staff participated in the annual Clean Your Streams community event. We prevented hundreds of pounds of debris from making their way into our local waterways!



### Wreath Workshop

Creativity was unleashed using the elements of nature that surrounds us to create beautiful, natural wreaths.

# Events

## Accomplishments 2025



### Conservation Conversations

We were joined by members from the Zoo who shared all the conservation efforts they participate in both locally and internationally.

### 13th Annual Zero Waste Luncheon

This year we celebrated our 13<sup>th</sup> annual Zero Waste Luncheon that highlighted solar renewable energy with a special message from Tom Guyton—a local solar panel enthusiast.



This year was filled with educational events, from an informational gathering on solar panels to a creative wreath-making workshop. Thank you to everyone who participated and helped make these events so enjoyable!

# Education

Accomplishments 2025

## SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS



The continuation of a monthly blog was an integral educational piece in 2025.

For the year 2026, the blog will be taking on a new look. You will be able to find short write-ups on our website.

Social media posts will continue to accompany sustainability topics, so stay tuned for those!

## Topics:

[Environmental Justice](#)

[Headed to the Beach?](#)

[The Good, Bad, and Ugly of Algae](#)

[Renewed Future with Renewables](#)

[Climate Without Borders](#)

[Power in Numbers](#)

[Rethinking Urban Infrastructure](#)

[Ecological Goldmine](#)

[Canticle of Creatures](#)

[Rejuvenating Resilience](#)

[Holiday Gifting](#)

# Solar Panels

## Accomplishments 2025

In 2025, we broke ground on our solar panel project to power a portion of the motherhouse with solar renewable energy. The solar panels will sit atop a carport providing solar energy, shade, and snow protection. We are grateful to our partners, Elevated Energy, who have kept us on track during construction. The solar panels are expected to be completed early in 2026, powering our campus!



**Solar Panel  
Construction**



Our solar array powers the equivalent of energy used by 44 homes in a year or roughly the energy expended from the Franciscan Center for a year.





# Laudato Si' Goals



## **GOAL 1: CRY OF THE EARTH**

In our response to the cry of the earth, we aim to combat the climate crisis through concerted efforts aimed at safeguarding biodiversity, restoring natural ecosystems, and minimizing waste and pollution. We are committed to implementing measures to diminish our carbon footprint, enhance energy efficiency, optimize food recovery practices, and bolster ecological stewardship across our campus environment.

## **GOAL 2: CRY OF THE POOR**

We are compelled by the Cry of the Poor to undertake prompt and decisive action in the pursuit of universal justice.

Embracing diversity as a source of enrichment rather than division, we are dedicated to fostering inclusive communities. Through our refugee program, we are steadfast in providing compassionate support to those fleeing adversity. Bethany House stands as a sanctuary, offering refuge to survivors of domestic violence and their children. In furtherance of our mission, we remain resolute in our advocacy for social justice amidst contemporary challenges.

## **GOAL 3: ECOLOGICAL ECONOMICS**

In light of the accelerated pace of economic expansion, our focus is on cultivating creative approaches that integrate natural ecosystem services into the economic framework of our campus community. This initiative aims to foster consciousness regarding ecological economics. Through the practice of sensible resource utilization and the reassessment of material necessity, we strive to mitigate waste generation while limiting environmental exploitation. The goal is to produce goods and services in a manner that aligns with sustainability principles, thereby promoting environmental preservation and equitable labor practices.

## **GOAL 4: ADOPTION OF SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLES**

Our goal is to promote the adoption of sustainable lifestyles, encompassing both personal and community purchasing and lifestyle decisions. This entails a deep understanding of the interconnectedness between our choices and their effects on the environment. By recognizing the broader implications of our actions and embracing alternative pathways, we aim to inspire individuals to adopt simpler, more environmentally conscious lifestyles, ultimately enhancing the overall quality of life for all.

## **GOAL 5: ECOLOGICAL EDUCATION**

Our objective is to advance ecological education, instilling a deep understanding of nature's interconnectedness and promoting sustainability. Ecological education is the foundation to pursuing change in future generations and requires us to re-imagine sustainability in curricular and co-curricular activities. By aligning our goals to the action plans of Laudato Si', we aim to develop thematic frameworks relevant to our campus context, fostering a culture of ecological leadership within our community. Through widespread educational initiatives across campus, we strive to ensure that all members are equipped to contribute effectively to our shared commitment to Laudato Si'.

## **GOAL 6: ECOLOGICAL SPIRITUALITY**

We aim to cultivate ecological spirituality, rooted in a profound connection between humanity and God's creation. This spiritual perspective invites us to recognize the inherent beauty and interconnectedness of all elements of nature. Inspired by the mission of the Sisters of St. Francis and the example set by St. Francis himself, we are committed to embodying this spiritual bond with creation on our campus. Our aspiration is to establish a campus environment that serves as a model of harmony and peace, seamlessly merging spirituality and reverence for creation in all aspects of our community life.

## **GOAL 7: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATORY ACTION**

Our goal is to drive impactful community engagement through collaborative initiatives at every level. We are committed to expanding our outreach and actively participating in collaborative endeavors within our community. By fostering partnerships and embracing participatory action, we aim to make a tangible difference in our local area.

# Living Laudato Si'

## 2026 Goals--Year 4 of 7

### Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles



The Laudato Si' Implementation Team has identified key goals for 2026, along with the desired outcomes and strategic actions necessary to achieve them, which are outlined here.

Our goal is to promote the adoption of sustainable lifestyles, encompassing both personal and community purchasing and lifestyle decisions. This entails a deep understanding of the interconnectedness between our choices and their effects on the environment. By recognizing the broader implications of our actions and embracing alternative pathways, we aim to inspire individuals to adopt simpler, more environmentally conscious lifestyles, ultimately enhancing the overall quality of life for all.

#### Desired Outcome:

Encourage others to adopt sustainable alternatives

#### Strategic Actions:

- Correspond with local organizations to promote the adoption of more sustainable practices
- Design and implement an artfully curated bike rack
- Organize an educational lunch-and-learn session focused on promoting sustainable lifestyle practices
- Collaborate with Toledo Repair Café to host a community workshop focused on repairing broken items, thereby reducing waste and promoting repair over replacement

Cultivate habits that minimize environmental impact

- Offer quarterly mini-workshops designed to teach practical skills that support and encourage the adoption of sustainable alternatives
- Partner with All Good Things to develop and implement sustainability strategies that influence customer behavior and break the reliance on single use items
- Strengthen food recovery initiatives for on-campus events by implementing measures to prevent the waste of edible food





## 2025 REFLECTION

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As 2025 marked both the 800th anniversary of the Canticle of Creatures and the 10th anniversary of *Laudato Si'*, our campus manifested this milestone year with remarkable sustainable initiatives. These initiatives were not undertaken simply as projects, but as lived responses to the spiritual and ethical call found within these writings.

The solar panel project emerged as a tangible expression of this legacy—transforming reflection into action and grounding care for our common home in everyday campus life.

The bees stand as a quiet testament to hope as we wait for their return in the spring, reminding us that renewal often begins beneath the surface. The native flowers, too, offer a powerful symbol of resilience, settling into the cold of winter and enduring the intensity of summer heat.

Together, these efforts reflect shared steps in stewardship—a collective gesture of care and responsibility, and a gentle reminder to Sister Mother Earth that she is not forgotten.

Looking ahead to 2026, we anticipate the continuation of these initiatives, along with new and inspiring opportunities to deepen our alignment with the spirit and call of *Laudato Si'*.

Together, small choices can provide great impact. This Earth is not ours to inherit, but to protect for future generations.