**Sustainability and the Interplay Between Faith and Caring for Our Environment**

I was not sure what to expect from this experience. I clearly remember the invitation from Anderson Reeves at Manresa to explore Laudato Si’ to find belonging on campus with others who are also invested in the institution and sustainability.

Pope Francis’ encyclical Laudato Si’ calls on all of us to recognize our moral and ethical responsibility to care for our planet. This message resonates deeply with me as I navigate my role in a new institution, seeking meaningful ways to contribute and to feel a sense of belonging here. My background in educational leadership and my connection to a West Coast way of life have shaped my perspective on sustainability. I am focused on the need to reduce my carbon footprint. My mother, who often spoke about our responsibility to the planet, guided me toward a minimalistic lifestyle. She emphasized the importance of doing everything possible to ‘reduce our carbon footprint’ so that future generations, regardless of their socioeconomic status, may also leave their footprint in the sand. As I engage with this community, I see an opportunity to merge my lifelong passion for environmental stewardship with my professional growth and faith-based commitments.

Laudato Si’ reminds us that sustainability is not just about environmental responsibility; it is a call to social justice, ethical leadership, and collective care. Pope Francis highlights how ecological degradation disproportionately affects the most vulnerable, making sustainability a moral issue rather than merely a scientific or political one. This reinforces my belief that true environmental advocacy must be rooted in equity and an understanding of our interconnectedness and interdependence.

I have found that my faith plays a crucial role in fostering a culture of sustainability. It provides a framework and compass for recognizing the fragility and sacredness of creation and my responsibility to protect it. As I continue my immersion in this institution, I hope to encourage dialogue and action that align with the values of stewardship outlined in Laudato Si’. Whether through education, policy, or personal lifestyle changes, my goal is to help cultivate a community where care for the environment is not just an abstract principle but a lived reality.

Ultimately, my journey is about more than professional development; it is about finding purpose in service to others and stewardship of the planet. By embracing the principles of sustainability and faith, I am committed to fostering a future where environmental responsibility is inseparable from our shared moral obligation to leave this world better than we found it.

This journey has also led to meaningful relationships—both with people at Xavier and with the natural world. In particular, I have come to appreciate the intentionality of sustainability I have experienced on Xavier’s campus.