Sustainability and the Mission

Final reflections

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This has been a wonderful experience from the beginning. Like life itself, it started in a garden. Each week was enlightening and enjoyable.

Like so many others, the field trips were a high point for me. The visit to Our Lady of Peace Chapel took me back to a story I did with Father Michael Graham when the chapel was about to open. I thought I knew all there was to know about the little space but had no idea of the depths of its beauty. The visit to the power plant is revisited in my mind every time I feel a little heat coming out of a register in the library or Alter Hall. I think about the green roof every time I walk by it or under it in the cafeteria. These visits opened my eyes to all the sustainability initiatives underway at Xavier. It has inspired me to step up my personal composting regimen, evaluate water usage and car travel. The lessons of Laudato Si remind me that my part may be small but the example it sets is much bigger. The concept of integral ecology is no longer a mystery to me.

The study of Laudato Si awakened some things in me. It reminded me that life is an ongoing creation. If I am indeed made in the image of the Creator, I should recognize my role as creator and not destroyer. Laudato Si opened my eyes to the spiritual aspect of the climate crisis and how believers must clean up their acts.

Paragraph 47 of Laudato Si says little about ecology but it resonated in a special way with me. I have incorporated it into my Writing for the Media curriculum. It is powerful, elegant, and, in 2014, prescient.

*Furthermore, when media and the digital world become omnipresent, their influence can stop people from learning how to live wisely, to think deeply and to love generously. In this context, the great sages of the past run the risk of going unheard amid the noise and distractions of information overload.*

Wow. Thank you for introducing me to this document.

One of the greatest gifts of this session has been meeting so many new people. This was a great group of men and women. Xavier is a rich, deep, caring community. I hope to stay in contact with them.

Moving forward, I will reflect on this experience and discern what God has called me to do with what I’ve learned. When it gets a little warmer, much of that reflection will start in my garden.