



Living
Laudato Si'
PHILIPPINES

Living, Leading, Synergizing: 5 Years of LLS Philippines

(2023 MILESTONE REPORT)



MESSAGE FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

“... the ecological conversion needed to bring about lasting change is also a community conversion.”

(Laudato Si’ par. 219)

It was the pilgrimage from Italy to France in 2015 that strengthened the resolve to take on the challenge of Pope Francis’ encyclical, *Laudato si’*: On Care for Our Common Home. The more than one-thousand-kilometre People’s Pilgrimage also became a rare opportunity to share stories of the global south, of island nations suffering the brunt of the climate crisis and colonial environmental abuses. In solidarity, the dialogue in European communities opened each others’ hearts to listen and act.

In 2018, understanding the role of the Church and her faithful, together with Br. Armin A. Luistro FSC, we responded to the calls of Pope Francis, especially in influencing the way we look at the economy and financial stewardship. Living Laudato Si’ Philippines (LLS) started as an interfaith initiative by Catholic lay people calling on Philippine financial institutions to divest from coal-related operations and other environmentally harmful activities.

LLS was formally launched on November 7, 2018, at the Manila Cathedral on the eve of the fifth anniversary of super typhoon Yolanda’s landfall in the Philippines. It aims to empower citizens to adopt lifestyles and attitudes that live up to the urgent need to care for our common home. It acts in promoting sustainable development, and addressing the climate crisis and environmental degradation through collective action among people from different sectors.

After five years, LLS continues to commit to serve and build a more compassionate and just Church as she continues to stand with the people in caring for our common home. Working with other faith communities in solidarity and dialogue, together, we shall make our country and the world a better place to live in where no one is left behind. And in today’s world, let Christianity in dialogue and solidarity with other faith communities serve as a beacon of light for hope, justice, and permanent, genuine peace.

To achieve full ecological conversion, we need to lead by example by becoming living witnesses, listening to and acting on the cries of the earth and the poor.

Live, lead, and synergize, so that no one is left behind.



Rodne Galicha
Executive Director



MESSAGE FROM BISHOP ADVOCATE

“All it takes is one good person to restore hope!”
(Laudato Si’ par. 71)

We are certainly more than one good person in Living Laudato Sí! And how much hope it has ignited!

As we celebrate the 5th anniversary of Living Laudato Sí, we are filled with gratitude for the opportunity to work alongside this incredible, God-given organization. Over the past few years, we have witnessed firsthand the tireless efforts and unwavering commitment of LLS towards promoting the teachings of the Church and embracing our moral duty to protect our integral ecology.

Laudato Sí, with its profound message of care and respect for our common home, has undoubtedly become a guiding light for environmental action. It reminds us of the interconnectedness of all beings and the urgent need to address the challenges we face in a holistic and sustainable manner.

Both on a personal and institutional level, as bishop of the Diocese of San Carlos and as someone entrusted with servant leadership in the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines [CBCP], particularly as President of National Laudato Sí Program [NLSP], we are greatly assisted and supported through our collaboration with LLS. We have seen the transformative power of collective action. Together, we have raised awareness, advocated for change, and implemented practical solutions that promote environmental stewardship and social justice. Each step we take brings us closer to creating a more just and sustainable world for future generations.

On this special occasion, we take this opportunity to express our sincerest appreciation and gratitude to LLS and our ever growing partnership guided by the principles laid out in Laudato Si’.

Inspired by the tenderness of Jesus towards all beings that accompany us along the way, we recommit ourselves together to make a difference and create a world where harmony between humanity and nature is restored and we leave no one behind!

Happy 5th anniversary, Living Laudato Sí!



Most Rev. Gerardo A. Alminaza

*Bishop, Diocese of San Carlos
Vice-Chairperson, CBCP Episcopal Commission
on Social Action, Justice and Peace*



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Embodying the interfaith nature of the work notwithstanding the Catholic foundation, the organization has members from different faiths.

MILESTONE REPORT

December 2023



**Living
Laudato Si'**
PHILIPPINES



CORE VALUES

Compassion

We recognize the responsibility of human beings as stewards of the Earth and all its resources and inhabitants, who have inherent dignity and value. We acknowledge and respect the uniqueness and diversity of backgrounds, perspectives, and capacities of all human beings and their individual rights. We regard compassion as an integral part of our communications and relationships with communities, organizations, and institutions, especially to the most vulnerable.

Sustainability

We commit to influencing governments, businesses, and societies to divest from environmentally destructive activities and invest in sustainable actions. We advocate for solutions that uphold social justice, planetary health, and intergenerational equity. We work to inspire and empower institutions and communities to actions aligned with ecological solidarity.

Integrity

We uphold the highest standards of professional, moral, and ethical behavior as a faith-based organization. We embed transparency, accountability, and honesty in our relationships and actions. We denounce false solutions and misinformation that would cause further loss and damage to communities and ecosystems.

Innovation

We explore beyond conventional ideas and methodologies as a response to the increasing complexities of the changing climate. We invest creativity and innovation in our programs, projects, and activities in pursuit of inspiring positive change. We demonstrate a forward-thinking approach without losing an appreciation of current contexts, in the spirit of the *Laudato Si'*.

CAMPAIGNS

• Divestment by banks:

Since its formation, LLS has been at the forefront of the divestment movement in the Philippines. It has delivered numerous interventions during the Annual Shareholders' Meetings of major banks like the Bank of the Philippine Islands (BPI), properly raising concerns about the consistency of the sustainability of these institutions and pressuring them to set concrete policies to divest from coal.

Starting in 2018, LLS has been a leading voice within the “Divest BPI” campaign, which originally focused on influencing said bank to enact divestment policies. Over time, the campaign evolved into the “Withdraw From Coal: End Fossil Fuels” (WFC) campaign, which consists of civil society and faith-based organizations calling for the withdrawal of finances from these industries.

LLS consistently provides technical guidance to the campaign, including an integration of just transition principles in the campaign's activities, applying lessons learned from the coal-centric campaigns of the past into shaping its narratives, and how to more accurately reflect the sustainability of banks vis-à-vis their divestment policies through the campaign's signature publication, the Coal Divestment Scorecard. It also assists the coalition in reaching out to key dioceses and Catholic officials in the Philippines and empowering them to communicate the divestment advocacy directly to the Board of Directors, managers, and other relevant officials of banks in which they have shares.





Through numerous engagements in the past four years, the WFC campaign successfully contributed to building public pressure, if not directly influencing several Philippine banks to publicly commit to coal divestment within the next decade. Among these banks include BPI, BDO Unibank, Security Bank, Rizal Commercial Banking Corporation, and Development Bank of the Philippines

With just transition poised to be an even more critical issue in addressing the climate crisis, energy security, and the pursuit of sustainable development, LLS remains in a strategic position within the WFC campaign and on its own accord to influence the divestment movement in the Philippines.

CAMPAIGNS

• Divestment executive course:

Beginning in 2020, LLS conceptualized a divestment executive course that would build the knowledge and capacities of Catholic dioceses, parishes, and other personnel on the principles of divestment. This course would not only enable these stakeholders to develop strategies to withdraw their finances from banks and other financial institutions supporting ecologically-destructive activities (i.e., coal, mining, deforestation), but also to reinvest these assets in more sustainable ventures, aligned with Catholic doctrines.

However, the development of the course faced difficulties largely due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, most notably on finding partners who would consistently participate in the course development and the right institution to host the course for regular implementation. After years of content development and network-building, LLS worked with Caritas Philippines and the Center for Energy, Ecology, and Development (CEED) to finalize the course.





The divestment executive course, titled “Principles of Catholic Investment and Divestment”, was finally launched on 25-28 September 2023 in the Caritas Philippines Academy in Tagaytay City, Cavite. A total of 40 representatives from 23 dioceses and congregations across the country participated in this course, which enhanced their knowledges and capacities in engaging and actively influencing the divest-invest process of their respective institutions and funding entities, aligned with the goals of the 2019 CBCP Pastoral Letter on Ecology and the 2022 CBCP Pastoral Letter on Climate Emergency. A baseline survey of the progress of represented Catholic groups in implementing the 13 ecological actions under the 2019 Pastoral Letter, including on divestment, was also successfully conducted.

During the course itself, Mr. Rodne Galicha and Mr. John Leo Algo of LLS served as lecturers, while the staff provided support through documentation, media coverage, and arranging the logistics related to the event.

With the success of the initial roll-out, LLS, Caritas Philippines, and CEED are currently planning to hold more roll-outs of the divestment executive course to empower more Catholic actors in the Philippines to not only divest from ecologically-harmful activities, but to be living embodiments of the Laudato Si’ and the two CBCP Pastoral Letters.



CAMPAIGNS

• Engagements with Net-Zero Carbon Alliance

LLS does not just partake in work to advance divestment from ecologically-destructive activities in the Philippines; it also engages with different stakeholders to promote more sustainable investments and operations, including through a just transition, aligned with the principles of the Laudato Si'.

Since 2022, LLS has been serving as a partner of the Net-Zero Carbon Alliance (NZCA), the Philippines's first private sector-led network on promoting carbon neutrality. Its staff has been providing technical advice to NZCA on how to achieve its goal of engaging in collaborative efforts with numerous companies and organizations, all dedicated to achieving net-zero or before the year 2050, aligned with the targets provided by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

With inputs from the network, LLS developed the network's conceptual framework, which would guide its members on scaling up carbon emissions reductions and tracking, providing better access to green financing, and sharing best practices on climate change mitigation and sustainable development, among many other capacity-building tools. This framework does not enable a linear process, but a cyclical approach to mitigation that enables an increase in ambition and solutions of members that build towards net-zero and, eventually, net-reductions of greenhouse gas emissions from NZCA.

With the emerging and evolving challenges brought by the climate crisis in the private sector, LLS aspires to continue this critical engagement with NZCA for the foreseeable future, as proof of a multisectoral partnership that can produce measurable changes for this sector to attain both climate resilience and genuine sustainability.



AKSYON



Since October 2020, LLS has been leading Aksyon Klima Pilipinas (AKP), the Philippines's largest civil society network for climate action, with its staff serving as National Convenor, National Coordinator, and the interim Secretariat. The network currently consists of over 40 civil society and people's organizations in the Philippines, with differing fields of expertise and scope of work united under the goal of a low-carbon, climate-resilient, sustainably-developed, and justice-grounded Philippines.

LLS led the network during a time of uncertainty, largely brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic and the lack of interest by some parts of the Philippine government in engaging with civil society groups. Despite these challenges, AKP was able to influence climate policymaking at multiple levels of governance, steered by its leadership.



2023 GENERAL ASSEMBLY

KLIMA



Among the network's main accomplishments for the past three years include the following:

- AKP significantly influenced the development of the Philippines's first Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC), which outlines the country's commitment for reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. It prevented a low GHG emissions reductions target that was initially intended for this document, which ended up being set at 75% between 2020 and 2030. Through strategic engagements with policymakers, it also successfully lobbied for the NDC to reflect the recognition of ecosystems integrity, the rights of indigenous peoples, and the importance of climate change education.
- AKP also influenced the formulation of the country's National Adaptation Plan, aligned with adaptation being the national anchor strategy against the climate crisis. Among its advocacies that were integrated into the final document include the following: emphasis on food self-sufficiency and organic agricultural practices; the addition of a social component of the Ecosystems & Biodiversity" adaptation outcome; the recognition of unique circumstances of indigenous peoples and their ties to ancestral lands; designing priority adaptation programs and projects that also yields co-benefits for mitigation, SDGs, and COVID-19 recovery; and the inclusion of loss and damage in integrating climate change in basic education curricula.





- AKP has also firmly entrenched itself in national and regional discussions on just energy transition (JET), an issue of critical significance to the Philippines's pursuit of sustainable development. It has established lines of communication and engagement with institutions such as the Asian Development Bank, the World Bank, Oxfam Pilipinas, and several government agencies and civil society groups across Southeast Asia, with opportunities to lobby for its advocacies to influence how JET would be implemented for years to come.
- AKP successfully pushed for the restoration of regular consultations with civil society groups by the Climate Change Commission (CCC), the country's lead advisory body on climate policy-making. Beginning in 2021, the CCC under its new set of Commissioners has organized six consultations with the network and other sectoral groups, presenting the latest updates in national climate policy and program implementation, and the government's broad position at the global climate negotiations.





- As of this writing, AKP is taking the lead, on behalf of the Philippine CSO sector, on drafting the country's coordination mechanism to legally institutionalize the process of said non-government stakeholders in national climate decision-making. This would build on the longstanding practices of the sector's engagements with different government agencies, which declined during the late 2010s due to the prevailing sociopolitical environment. This will ensure and strengthen the meaningful involvement of CSOs in climate governance, aligned with the "whole-of-society" approach needed to address the climate crisis.



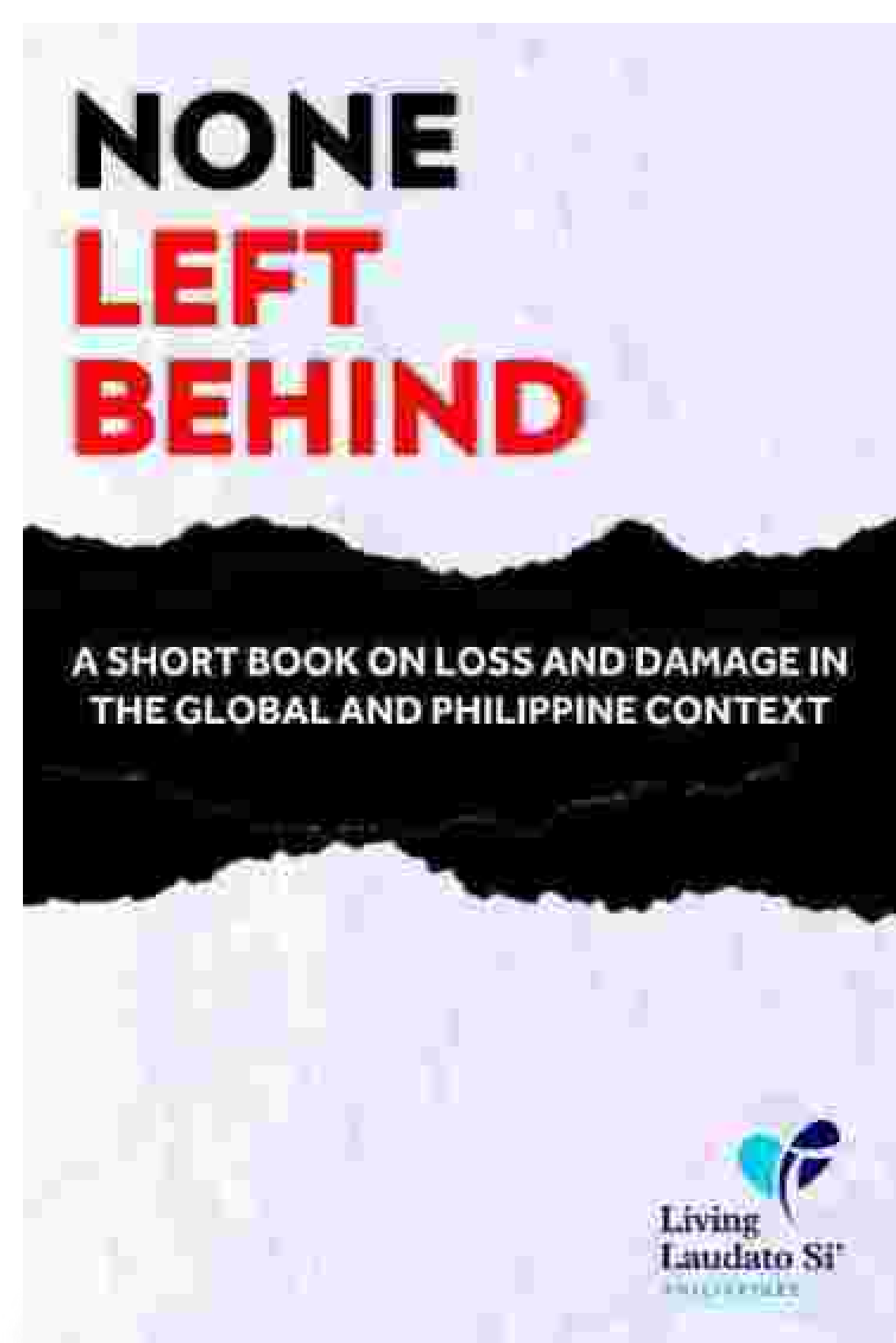
ADDRESSING LOSS AND DAMAGE

- **“None Left Behind”**

On 2022, LLS published “None Left Behind”, a short book exploring the issue of loss and damage (L&D) in the Philippine context, with a justice and faith-based perspective. It also uses the backdrop of how the L&D agenda has progressed within the UN climate negotiations. It is the first published book of its kind in the country, strategically targeted towards policymakers, researchers, and advocates, as a means of building capacities of those currently most capable of addressing the climate crisis given the urgency of accelerating solutions.

Prior to its official publication, copies of “None Left Behind” were first handed to representatives of the COP27 Philippine government delegation in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt. After an initial limited release, LLS published more copies of the book with support from Catholic Relief Services, in preparation for a wider distribution during COP28 in Dubai.

“None Left Behind” has been distributed as part of LLS’s major events and campaigns. Among these engagements include at COP28, the 3rd Interfaith Summit on Climate Emergency, with the National Library of the Philippines, the Filipinas Heritage Library under the Ayala Foundation, the Rizal Library of the Ateneo de Manila University, and during the Climate Justice Walk.



ADDRESSING LOSS AND DAMAGE

• Climate Justice Walk

In October 2023, LLS embarked on a significant journey in collaboration with advocates, climate activists, and environmental groups. The Climate Justice Walk commenced from kilometer zero in Manila and concluded at the ground zero of Super Typhoon Haiyan, also known as Super Typhoon Yolanda, in Tacloban. This walk was initiated to commemorate the countless lives lost and those who survived the devastating typhoon that struck the Philippines ten years ago.

The Climate Justice Walk aimed to amplify the call for climate justice, climate reparations for the loss and damages, and raise awareness about the climate crisis. The climate walkers conducted several talks and forums to the climate-impacted communities, and urged local and world leaders to take concrete actions. The province of Albay declared a climate emergency in solidarity with the climate walkers, followed by the Municipality of Catbalogan in Samar.





On November 7, 2023, the Climate Justice Walkers, accompanied by more than 500 Yolanda survivors, locals, and environmental organizations, crossed the San Juanico Bridge in Tacloban. This journey would not have been possible without the support and partnerships of local government units, local churches, communities, academe, youth sector, and civil society groups.

The Climate Justice Walk was a significant milestone in raising awareness about climate change and its impact on vulnerable communities. It served as a call to action for local and world leaders to take concrete steps towards climate change and ensuring climate justice for all. The walkers' efforts have inspired many to join the fight against the climate crisis and work towards a sustainable future.



ANTI-MINING CAMPAIGN

Sibuyan, one of the last ecological frontiers in the Philippines and dubbed as the "Galapagos of Asia" has an untouched ecosystem. Its isolation from the Philippine archipelago caused the flora and fauna to evolve differently from the species in other neighboring islands.

It has the world's densest forest covering 1,551 trees per hectare and home to flora and fauna that can be found nowhere else with, 700 species of vascular plants, 144 species of trees, and 120 species endemic in the Philippine archipelago.

Despite its breathtaking resume, the government has awarded Altai Philippines Mining Corporation (APMC) a Mineral Production Sharing Agreement (MPSA) for nickel exploration and extraction with an area of 1,580.80 hectares which will affect more than 20 tributaries and rivers in the island.

LLS has been assisting Sibuyan community since 2022, providing technical, legal, communication, and organizational development interventions.





Photo courtesy of Michelle Lapiz

Considering that the density of Sibuyan forest has 1,551 trees per hectare, there is an estimated 1 million trees to be felled if development activities and mineral extraction happen within 50% of APMC's 1,581 hectares claim.

Through a series of community-led protests, the people have successfully pushed for the suspension of mining companies' permits due to lack of social acceptability. Early this year, the local residents with support from the Living Laudato Si' and other organizations barricaded mining trucks containing nickel ore from Altai Philippines Mining Corporation.

Full-geared policemen defended the mining company. Two (2) people were reportedly hurt. After the incident, an official "notice of violation" was sent to APMC.

DENR declared a status quo last Feb. 04, 2023 until all permits are complied with by Altai Philippines. As of the current, the APMC has yet to continue their mining operation in the island.

PROGRAMS

Laudato Si' Schools Framework

The Laudato Si' Schools Framework (LSSF) is a Catholic-inspired approach to initiating a holistic sustainable transformation of Philippine schools, colleges, and universities, through educational contents, pedagogies, and environments that instill a culture of intergenerational ecological citizenship in words and actions.

The LSSF was developed over a series of consultations and meetings with partner organizations, networks, and individuals representing the education, civil society, and youth sectors in the Philippines, beginning in 2019. These engagements resulted in the formulation and refinement of the seven ecological actions that define the framework:

- Just transition to clean and sustainable energy;
- Responsible water utilization;
- Ecological solid waste management;
- Greening institutional management systems, divest-invest, and campus as a natural environment;
- Integrated ecological curriculum and environmental sustainability research;
- Integrated ecological spirituality and transformative lifestyle; and
- Policy advocacy, campaigns, and solidarity.





Nevertheless, in the same vein as the Laudato Si' itself, it is not exclusively applicable or intended for Catholic institutions; it may also provide guidance to the sustainability plans of non-Catholic, secular, and/or vocational schools, in recognition of the different modes and forms of ecological education, and the numerous actions that can be done to contribute to attaining sustainable development in the Philippines.

On 5 October 2023, San Beda University finalized its Laudato Si' Action Plan, which adopted the LSSF. It is the first academic institution in the Philippines to do so, while it is only the fifth academic institution in the Philippines to have submitted such a plan to the Laudato Si' Action Platform.

This is only the beginning of our engagements for schools, colleges, universities, and other relevant stakeholders in the faith and education sector towards adopting the LSSF for a more ecologically-sustainable educational environment in the country.



PROGRAMS

#LS211

Paragraph 211 of the Laudato Si' highlights the significance of daily actions towards developing and embodying an "ecological citizenship", which is necessary for addressing the ecological crisis. This can be imparted through a values-driven ecological educational approach that aims for a cultural and behavioral change, through habits and attitudes aligned with the duty of humankind as stewards of the environment and life within it.

Inspired by this, we launched its #LS211 campaign during the Season of Creation at the Marist School of Marikina last September 26, 2019. The campaign featured the promotion of the nine "Acts of Love for our Common Home":

- Avoiding the use of plastic and paper
- Reducing water consumption
- Separating refuse
- Cooking only what can reasonably be consumed
- Showing care for other living beings
- Using public transport or carpooling
- Planting trees
- Turning off unnecessary lights
- Reusing something

Since then, we have integrated the principles of this passage of the Pope Francis's encyclical in all workshops, lectures, forums, and other activities either organized by us or through collaborations with other organizations. These served both as a means of informing thousands of people about the urgency of dealing with the ecological crisis and inspiring them that they can also meaningfully contribute for protecting the common good.





With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, we adapted to the new environment brought about by the lockdowns, transitioning #LS211 into our digital and online platforms as integrated into webinars, videos, and social media posts. This allowed us to increase our reach to broader audiences while maintaining our advocacy for ecological education, especially through tackling numerous topics from the climate crisis and plastic pollution to mental health and youth empowerment.

Currently, #LS211 remains the foundational principles of our ecological educational activities, in-person or online. The “Acts of Love for our Common Home” has been reorganized into the following seven actions:

7 Acts of Love for our common home



The celebration of the 500th year of arrival of Christianity on our shores is concurrent with the ecological revolution we face today. In line with our missionary task to make “believers recognize the ecological commitments,” and that, their duty as Christians “towards nature and their Creator, are an essential part of their faith.” (LS No. 64) Living Laudato Si’ Philippines (LLS) is adopting 12 parishes across the Philippines to empower local Christian communities in reaffirming their faith that does ecological justice through establishing ecological desks, assisting in the care for creation programs and providing support to sustain this ministry by sharing its resources and materials.

To date, LLS has been engaging with the Archdiocese of Manila, Prelature of Infanta, Archdiocese of Capiz, and the Diocese of San Carlos. In the first quarter of 2024, plans are being finalized for the Diocese of San Jose de Antique and the Diocese of Tagbilaran.

The following are the pioneer parishes for the program:

- Parish of Sto. Niño (Danao, Cajidiocan) - Diocese of Romblon
- Parish of St. Thomas of Villanova (Alcantara) - Diocese of Romblon
- Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal Parish (Project 4) - Diocese of Cubao





Since the publication of Pope Francis' encyclical on the "Care for Our Common Home" – the Laudato Si – in 2015, environmental advocates and organizations in the country, including church-based groups, doubled their efforts in communicating the message of the document to the public.

However, Laudato Si and its central message remain unpopular, or unknown, especially at the grassroots level. The Catholic Church's environmental program could not penetrate the awareness of the basic masses considering that the country is predominantly Catholic.

During a dialogue between the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines – National Laudato Si Program (CNLSP) core group and the members of various Catholic media organizations on June 7, 2021, it was revealed that one of the main problems is the LACK OF CONTENT, apart from the messaging style and the failure to translate the language of the Church into the language of the basic masses.

It was also discussed that there is a failure to maximize and enhance the Church's existing media platforms, including those owned by several lay-lead environmental groups and independent Catholic news sites.

There are a lot of potential sources of environmental stories in the Philippines.

The country is known to be the melting pot for environmental activism. Every region has its own environmental/ecological issues and dedicated pro-environmental groups are working on these issues.

Catholic dioceses have established or are set to establish their own ECOLOGY DESK/MINISTRY that is mandated to advance the implementation of the National Laudato Si Program in the local communities.

Local communities especially those that are affected by various climate-induced calamities and/or development aggression have a lot of underreported or unreported issues.

In June 2021, the lay-lead organization, Living Laudato Si Philippines (LLS), established the Laudato Si Information and Media Resource Center (LSIMRC).

It is tasked to gather up-to-date and relevant data and information about various environmental issues and create journalistic content that can be syndicated on all mass media and social media platforms.

Under the LSIMRC is the online news site [OeconoMedia](#) which is dedicated only to producing environmental journalistic content in the context of Laudato Si and Catholic social teachings.

It is the ONLY faith-based online news site in the country dedicated to reporting environmental, climate, and ecological issues.

OeconoMedia publishes daily news stories, feature stories, long-form investigative reports, photo and video journalism, and multimedia production.

These contents focus on the present state of the environment, ecological issues and campaigns, the climate crisis, government policies on ecology, the indigenous people, women and children in areas with ecological concerns, and the peasantry, workers, and other vulnerable sectors affected by the climate emergency.

NEWS



Pro-environment group condemns alleged politically-motivated charges against anti-reclamation advocate in Cebu

The Philippines has consistently been identified as a hazardous country for land and environmental activists.

LICAS News | Dec 24, 2021

FEATURES



IN PHOTOS: Dying timberland contributes to temperature rise

The push for renewable energy should be people-centered and must protect the Rights of Nature and the wellbeing of the vulnerable communities

Daniel Ong | Dec 30, 2021

COMMENTARY



Pope Francis: Let us choose life! Let us choose the future!

The center point of the Christian faith is being totally convinced in mind and heart, that truth, goodness, action for justice, love of neighbor, and creation

Fr. Ray Orlino, SSC | Dec 28, 2021

Since its inception, OeconoMedia collaborated with other pro-environment groups, church organizations, and the civil society sector in content production.

It also receives, solicits, or commissions environmental stories from other pro-environment groups, church organizations, professional journalists, content providers, storytellers, and ordinary citizens.

Since June 2021, Oeconomediamedia has existing partnerships with Caritas Philippines, the social action arm of the Catholic Church in the country, and with LiCAS.news, a Catholic news service under the umbrella of the Archdiocese of Bangkok.

In the last quarter of 2021, Oeconomediamedia was instrumental in the publication of Caritas Philippines' investigative report on the Black Sand Mining in the northern Philippine province of Cagayan.

In the first half of 2022, Oeconomediamedia was also part of the team that produced a comprehensive report on the 'State of Ecological Campaigns of the Catholic Church in the Philippines' which was also published by Caritas Philippines.

With limited resources, Oeconomediamedia was able to purchase a four-year web hosting in January 2023, which allows the news site to avoid interruption and unwarranted loss of data. In the first half of 2022, Oeconomediamedia lost a significant number of published data and stories on the website due to the collapse of the hosting.

As of December 14, 2023, Oeconomediamedia published over 150 commentaries, nearly 80 feature stories, some 350 news items, and several podcast episodes.



THE HOLY SEE

In 2021, recognizing its significant contribution in advocating Pope Francis' encyclical, *Laudato Si'*, On Care for Our Common Home, LLS' work was featured in the Vatican News and *L'Osservatore Romano*. Through the invitation of the Holy See's Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, LLS joined the global steering board of *Laudato Si'* Action Platform (LSAP).

Since 2018, LLS has been engaging with the Holy See at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) conference of parties (COP) starting at COP24 in Poland, followed by COP25 in Spain, COP26 in Scotland, COP27 in Egypt, and recently at COP28 in United Arab Emirates.

Through its active and strategic participation, LLS now sits as a member of the global steering committee of COP Catholic Actors.



ASIA CLIMATE CHANGE CONSORTIUM (ACCC)

Since its inception, LLS has been a member of Asia Climate Change Consortium (ACCC), a regional climate advocacy and learning platform with members of local and national organizations and networks across Asia. It advocates and works towards a common agenda of limiting global warming to 1.5°C and upholding climate justice, through bringing the voices from the frontline communities to the regional and international platforms, aligned with what the organization calls for at various levels of governance.

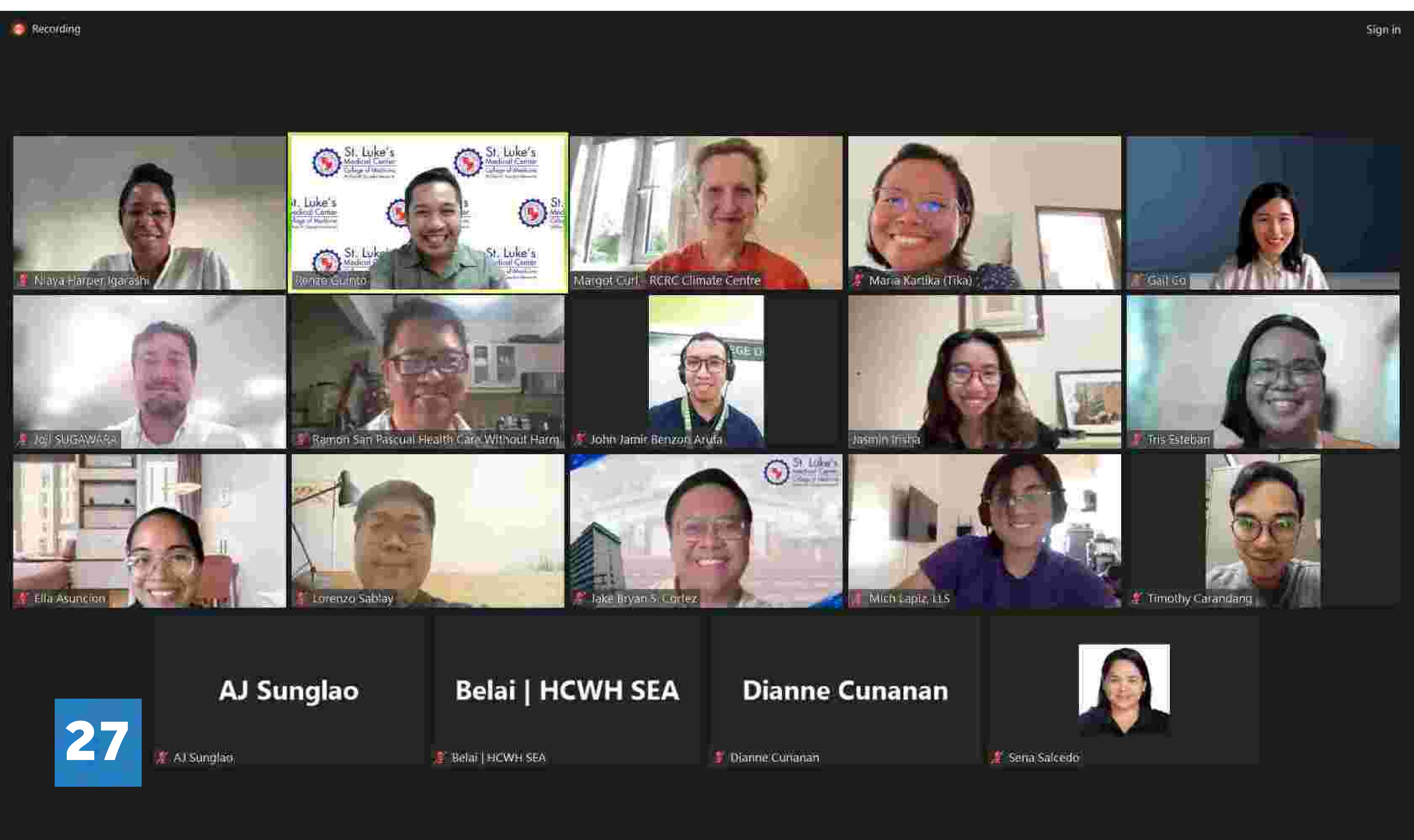
LLS has been active in mobilizing the network's members for numerous meetings, capacity-building sessions, and campaigns on enhancing climate work through the years. It is also responsible for developing most of ACCC's position papers on various topics, most notably on loss and damage, climate finance, and application of science into policy-making, which have influenced national and regional policymakers across Asia. The most notable of these engagements is how its position on loss and damage-related funding arrangements was integrated into the Philippine government's negotiating positions in the lead up to COP28 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.



PLANETARY HEALTH ALLIANCE

The Planetary Health Alliance (PHA) is a “growing consortium of over 400 universities, non-governmental organizations, research institutes, and government entities from 60+ countries around the world committed to understanding and addressing the impacts of global environmental change on human health and wellbeing. LLS has been a member of PHA since 2020”.

In 2023, LLS formally joined one of PHA’s initiatives, Connecting Climate Minds. This platform “aims to address the mental health impact of a changing planet. The goals are to build an inclusive and actionable research agenda and a connected, supported and engaged community of practice with the right tools to enact this agenda. The Planetary Health Alliance is leading the efforts in North America and Europe by building a regional community, shaping the agenda through dialogues, supporting capacity building in research and advocacy, generating new knowledge, and identifying opportunities to ensure the longer-term sustainability of the regional community.” LLS serves as advisory board member for the initiative, and as regional co-convenor for Eastern and South-Eastern Asia.



INTERFAITH SUMMIT ON CLIMATE EMERGENCY

As part of its advocacy to emphasize the role of faith in climate action, LLS organizes the “Interfaith Summit on Climate Emergency”, a high-level platform to gather leaders of different religious and faith denominations within the Philippines to share their knowledges, best practices, and perspectives regarding how to address the climate crisis within their respective communities. It also serves as a space for them to make calls to the national government and to policymakers participating in the annual UN climate negotiations on scaling up climate actions.

The Interfaith Summit is co-organized with the Climate Change Commission (CCC), as part of the annual Global Warming and Climate Change Consciousness Week that aims to showcase the country’s best initiatives on dealing with this issue.

The first Interfaith Summit was held in 2019 in Intramuros, Manila. More than 150 religious leaders attended this landmark dialogue, resulting in a “Philippine Interfaith Declaration on Addressing Climate Emergency”, a united call on policymakers to strengthen climate change mitigation and adaptation, update laws and policies related to climate and the environment, and improve the inclusivity of decision-making and implementation of solutions.

The second iteration was held in 2020 as an online summit, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Compared to the previous year, it focused more on exploring how religious doctrines and traditions and their perspectives on morality and spirituality are being translated into strategies and actions such as divestment from ecologically-destructive industries.

The third Interfaith Summit was recently conducted in 2023 in Ortigas, Quezon City, which shone the light on how religious and faith groups have dealt with the impacts of the climate crisis in the past few years. The event, attended by 100 representatives from different sectors, was also a renewal of commitment among the attendees for climate action and a strengthening of partnerships with the CCC, which are reflected in the produced Interfaith Manifesto on Climate Resilience.



CBCP ECO-CONVERGENCE

To promote the teachings of Pope Francis' encyclical on the environment, *Laudato Si'*, *On Care for Our Common Home*, the Church and civil society groups in the Philippines bond together to listen to and act on the cries of the earth and the poor. Hence the formation of Eco-Convergence.

Sustaining meaningful partnerships with the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) through its National *Laudato Si'* Program (NLSP), LLS (then a program under The Climate Reality Project Philippines in 2018) has been strategically engaging in various ecological programs and activities of the Philippine Church.

Aware of the need to catalyze the message of Pope Francis down to the grassroots, LLS together with Caritas Philippines started drafting a pastoral letter on ecology based on different statements and manifestos in the span of three years. To make the drafting inclusive, the document was shared with partners from faith-based and civil society organizations, and eventually presented to a number of bishops before the assembly commenced. The first CBCP pastoral letter initiated and drafted by the lay-people was then adopted: "An Urgent Call for Ecological Conversion, Hope in the Face of Climate Emergency". The pastoral letter called for an 'ecological conversion' in all dioceses, parishes, and ecclesial communities as a response to the need to take care of our common home.





Beginning in 2021, LLS has been regularly monitoring the presence of Catholic shareholders in six major Philippine corporations known to be engaged in either coal or mining operations, or both: BPI; DMCI Holdings, Inc.; San Miguel Corporation; MERALCO; Philex Mining Corporation; and PHINMA. This is part of holding Catholic dioceses, congregations, and other groups accountable, given their mandate to embody Catholic teachings in words and actions, including in their investments.

This report, now formally known as “The Status of Catholic Shareholders’ Divestment”, was instrumental in the lobbying efforts of LLS and other civil society and faith-based organizations to the CBCP to strengthen its commitment to divestment. As a result, the CBCP released in January 2022 its Pastoral Letter “A call for unity and action amid a climate emergency and planetary crisis” (or the Pastoral Letter on the Climate Emergency), in which it pledged to divest all of its assets from banks still financing fossil fuels by 2025.

Building on the gains from the 2019 Pastoral Letter on Ecology, the CBCP also committed to continue the creation of an Ecology Desk in every diocese and institutionalize the celebration of the Season of Creation and Laudato Si’ Week, which are also among LLS’s advocacies. The organization also successfully lobbied for the inclusion of the establishment of a Laudato Si’ Schools Framework, of which it recently finished developing, as a means of further empowering the Philippine Catholic community to live up to the principles inscribed in the Laudato Si’.

LOCAL ENGAGEMENTS

In the year 2019, LLS demonstrated its commitment to environmental advocacy by successfully organizing a regional caravan featuring the 'Our Power' documentary in collaboration with Probe Productions. This investigative film shed light on the detrimental impact of dirty energy on communities, and LLS forged partnerships with local communities, academic institutions, and churches to amplify its message.

Undeterred by the challenges of the global pandemic in 2020, LLS pivoted to a robust online engagement strategy. The organization hosted a series of 86 free webinars covering diverse topics such as sustainability, divestment, faith, climate, youth, indigenous issues, and conservation. This initiative not only aimed to educate advocates and the general public but also showcased LLS's adaptability in the face of unprecedented circumstances. The webinars garnered significant attention, reaching thousands of viewers through Zoom, Facebook, and onsite attendance. The associated Facebook community page, established in 2019, has grown to include 2,900 members, fostering a virtual community dedicated to environmental causes.

LLS's involvement in youth engagement has been noteworthy, marked by participation in the Climate Strike events of 2018 and 2019. The organization took a leadership role in co-organizing the Local Conference of Youth Pilipinas in 2021, empowering hundreds of youth leaders with insights into climate negotiations. Additionally, LLS contributed to environmental education by delivering talks and workshops in schools. A particularly impactful endeavor was the successful execution of the Laudato Si' National Service Training Program (NSTP) for Mint College multimedia arts students over three months wherein they produced LLS promotional videos, brochures, and conceptualized #LS211 campaigns and IEC materials.

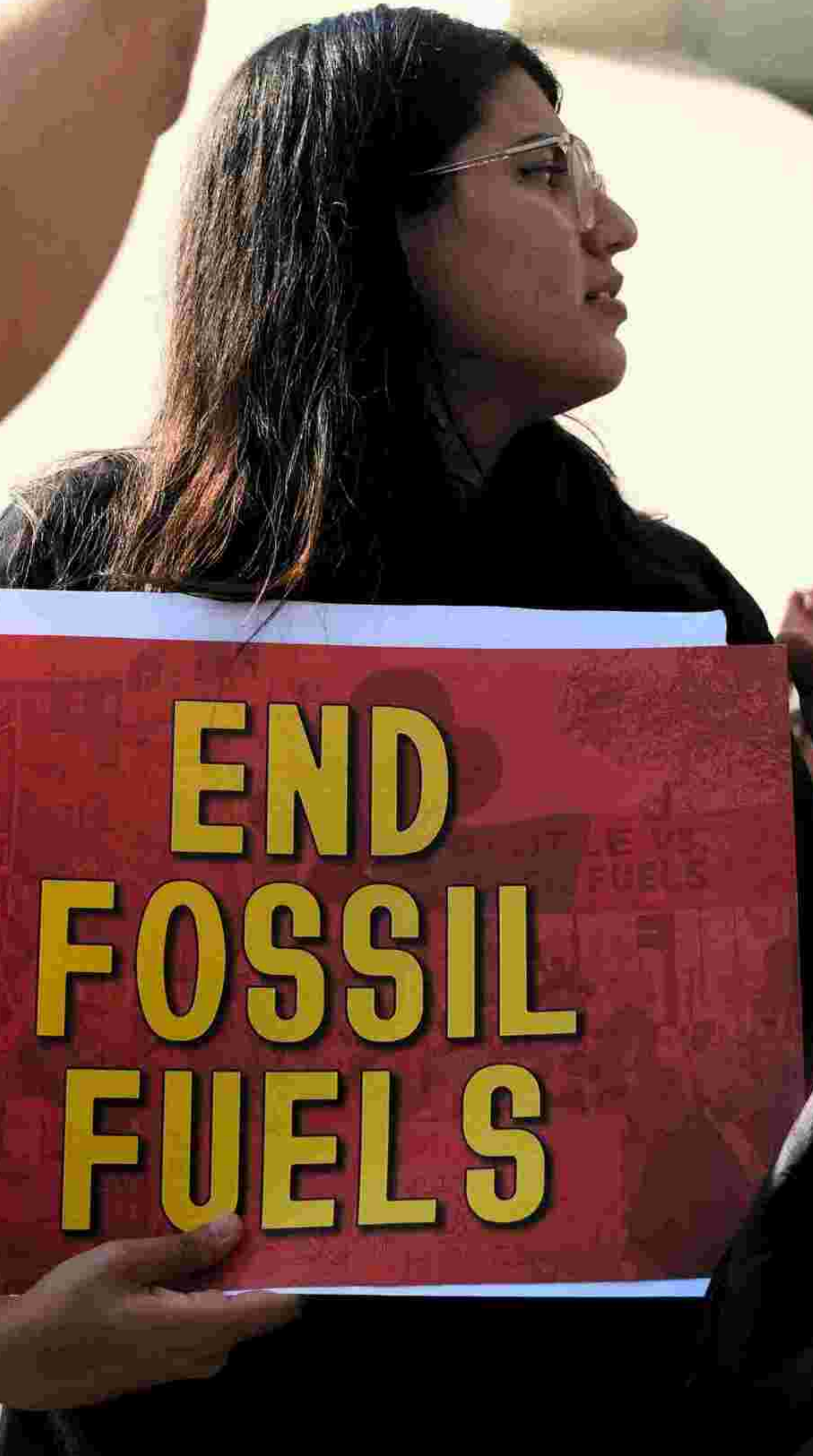




In February 2023, the Philippines experienced its worst-ever oil spill when the MT PRINCESS ship sank in the ocean, impacting Oriental Mindoro, particularly the island communities of Pinamalayan and Pola. The people, especially local fisherfolks, are in dire need of help from the government and accountability from the ship's owner, RDC Reield Marine Services. The LSS communication, in partnership with the Diocesan Social Action Center of Pola, and Local organizations visited the affected communities and gathered stories, documented their struggles, and amplified their calls for immediate action on various platforms. LLS reiterates the call for fossil fuel divestment and shares the stories of these communities.

As of the present, LLS is actively engaged in leading and supporting local movement campaigns. These initiatives include the Withdraw from Coal Campaign, the Sibuyan against-mining movement, and the Verde Island Passage Campaign, among others. The organization remains steadfast in its mission to advocate for sustainable practices, raise awareness about environmental issues, and actively participate in campaigns that contribute to the well-being of communities and the planet at large.





WHAT'S NEXT?

For the past five years, LLS has embodied the spirit of the Laudato Si' through words and actions. It has embarked on a journey of adapting its approach to effectively respond to the circumstances and challenges of the times, whether it is a global pandemic, an existential crisis, or any other. It has established itself as a key presence within the faith and civil society sectors, being influential in several campaigns and movements for accelerating the development of policies and implementing ecologically-sound solutions towards genuine sustainability. It has been at the forefront of game -

changing initiatives and actions from the global to the local levels that help drive an increased ambition for a sustainable future while being rooted in compassion and social justice.

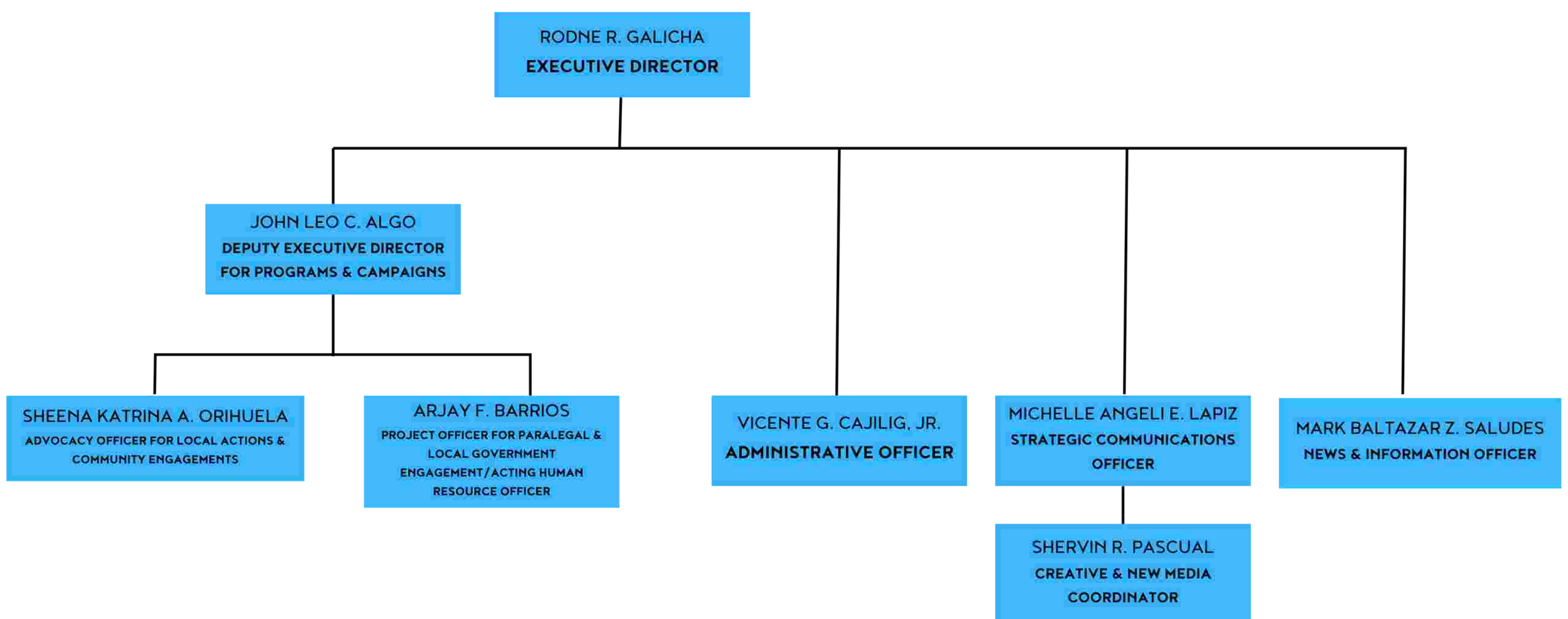
However, the work has only just begun. The Philippines and the rest of the world will continue to face significant challenges and threats to climate action, environmental protection, upholding justice, and the pursuit of sustainable development. Without proper interventions, the cries of the earth and the poor would only get louder, losses and damages would only grow larger, and the promise of a greener, brighter future would become nothing more than a distant memory.

LLS commits to building on the gains of its programs, campaigns, and initiatives and expand its reach towards new communities, fields, and frontiers. It foresees itself to remain a leading entity in the movements for divestment from ecologically-destructive activities, promoting Laudato Si'-aligned ecological education, and inspiring inclusive and impactful climate action, among many other fields. It will continue to adapt its strategies to address the challenges of the present, with the long-term goal of contributing to steering our nation and world to a future where no one is left behind.

Whether in the next five years or after that, LLS reaffirms its commitment to abide by its mantra: "Divest for Sustainability, Invest in Our Common Home".

Our Team

In 2021, in one of the annual organizational strategic workshops, the organizational structure was finalized to address LLS' early struggle of role redundancy and overlap. LLS has a current number of eight (8) staff members, four of whom are permanent, ranging from the highest rank of Executive Director to advocacy officers with tenureship as long as the organization's founding in 2018. LLS also had handled internships—both national and international.

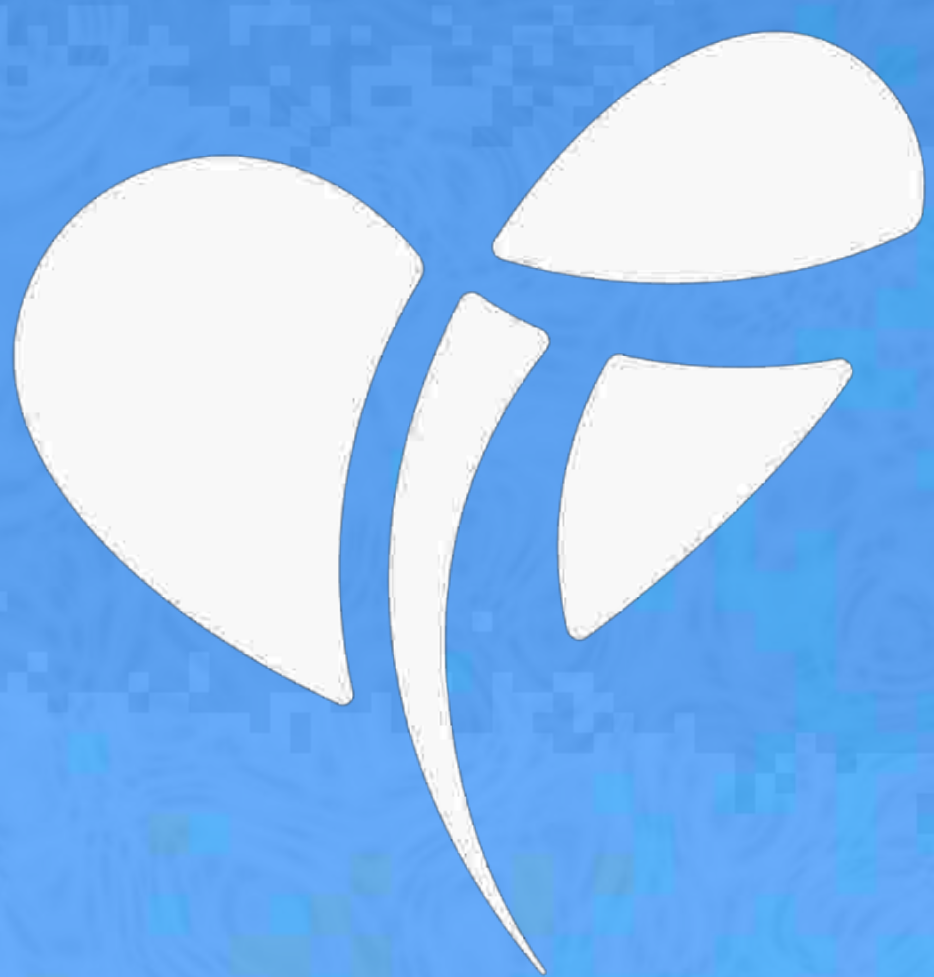




Working together

Embodying the interfaith nature of the work notwithstanding the Catholic foundation, the organization has members from different faiths.

Apart from the organizational structure that has been a compass for administrative and financial systematizations, two of the major milestones the department achieved are the establishment of the physical office and the organization's registration to the Securities and Exchange Commission, which took effect in early 2021.



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Living, Leading, Synergizing: 5 Years of LLS Philippines

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