WELCOME. . .to our 2019 Calendar/Theme Party and to our table, “Care for Our Common Home.” Based on an important letter written in 2015 by Pope Francis, Laudato Si names the increasing damage being done to Planet Earth by climate change. We, the Ladies of Charity, have planned and prepared this party event to share information and challenge us to recognize ways we can correct the irresponsible use and abuse of God’s gifts.

We hope you will note the integration of décor, prizes, place settings, menu, and ambience as a means to emphasize the environmental, economic, social, and cultural ecologies. Please ask any of the hostesses if you wonder about the significance of something you’ve observed at this table.

Here are Ten Takeaways from Laudato Si, thanks to James Martin, SJ, of America magazine, for further reflection and action as the Holy Spirit leads us.

1. The spiritual perspective is now part of the discussion on the environment.
2. The poor are disproportionately affected by climate change.
3. Less is more.
4. Catholic social teaching now includes teaching on the environment.
5. Discussions about ecology can be grounded in the Bible and church tradition.
6. Everything is connected—including the economy.
7. Scientific research on the environment is to be praised and used.
8. Widespread indifference and selfishness worsen environmental problems.
9. Global dialogue and solidarity are needed.
10. A change of heart is required.

We have a small helpful book, 1,001 Ways to Save the Earth, to inspire anyone who wants to play an active part in caring for the environment. There’s something in planet care to make a difference and “ there are side benefits, including saving money, losing weight, or simply fostering a warm inner glow.” Let’s look at a few actions to live sustainably:

* Speak up if you see something you think that might be pollution
* Forget fancy cleaning products , use cheap and effective baking soda
* Newspaper is one of the easiest materials to recycle.
* Save energy by lowering your water heater thermometer to 140 degree F
* Use LED lights—they last 10 times as long as compact fluorescents and 130 times longer than incandescent lamps
* Replace plastic bags with cloth or canvas for shopping trips
* Just one dripping faucet can waste up to 8 gallons of water in a week.
* A washing machine uses up to 90 percent of its energy heating its water. Warm wash and cold rinse work just fine
* Dispose of disposables. . .wipe up spillages with dish towels and cloths.

“I urgently appeal for a new dialogue about how we are shaping the future of our planet. We need a conversation which includes everyone, since the environmental challenge we are undergoing, and its human roots, concern and affect us all.”

 - Pope Francis