



Spring is here (more or less)

Greetings all. We hope this newsletter finds you well. We are fully into our Lenten journey, and we pray that this time of reflection, penance, and sacrifice is bringing you closer to God - and all of God's creation.

I'm starting to see green peaking out of the ground, and the trees are preparing to bud. Just yesterday I visited a farm with my 9 year-old daughter's class, and we got to see so many two-week lambs. The love and power of God is all around us.

For those of you not on the Care for Creation Task Force (CCTF) or not receiving the CCTF emails, we've got an update for you: after staffing the CCTF for the last five years, Jill Foster - our new Regional Director for CSA - has taken over staffing the CCTF. This means that she will be taking over compiling and editing this newsletter (still with Tammie's great help). Thanks for your past and ongoing engagement, and look forward to an even better newsletter starting with our summer issue.

From last month - a reminder

Hopefully you've had a chance to read Pope Francis' new apostolic exhortation, *Laudato Deum*. It builds very well on *Laudato Si'* and makes an even stronger plea for us all to hear the cries of the earth and the poor, take responsibility for our actions, and work together to heal and

protect the Earth and everything on it. You can read it [here](#).

We wish you all a wonderful rest of Lent, a blessed Triduum, and a joyous Easter season (which includes Earth Day!).

Pace e bene,

Archdiocesan Care for Creation Task Force



Laudato Si' Lenten Request

Lent - a time for reflection, self-examination, repentance, and spiritual renewal - is the PERFECT season for people, families of parishes, and schools to write their own Laudato Si' Reflections. It's a time to align that spiritual mindset and the broader intention of search for healing, detoxification, and the common good.

We're asking everyone - whether it's on your own, with your family, or with your community - to write up a simple Laudato Si' reflection during Lent and send it to us. We'll then compile the reflections and utilize them for a prayer service for Earth Day.

Please submit your reflections to [Liliana](#) (our Laudato Si' intern), and feel free to reach out to her as well with any questions. Thanks in advance for participating!!



Laudato Si' Action Plan Sector Sessions

Since our successful LSAP conference in the spring of '23, we've been working on ways to build on the energy gathered and further our efforts to care for God's creation in our archdiocese. In its structure, the [LSAP names seven sectors](#) where unique opportunities for partnership might exist, and we'd like to support the formation of networking groups in a few of these areas:

families of parishes, religious communities, and education (secondary and higher education).

We've gathered folks from each of these sectors and begun planning for these groups. If you are interested in exploring one (or more) of these groups, please contact [Liliana Sierra](#). All are welcome!



ADVOCATE

Farm Bill

Every five years, the Farm Bill - massive legislation that supports farms, foreign aid, and food assistance - is reauthorized. It was up for reauthorization again this year, and - due to the continued troubles our Congress is having - they decided to pass a temporary extension of the current funding levels for an extra year. So, theoretically, they will take this up again in the fall of '24.

In the meantime, we encourage people to utilize our Farm Bill [web page](#) which has a number of resources. You can watch a recording of a presentation we did this spring, download advocacy letters for representatives and senators, and more. Please keep reminding our members of Congress how important this bill is and encourage them to work for increased support for our farmers, our sisters and brothers around the world, and those who are struggling with food insecurity here in our country.





ADVOCATE TO HELP COMMUNITIES IMPACTED BY CLIMATE CHANGE

Urge Congress to support the Green Climate Fund and
Development Assistance.

[Click here to submit your message](#)



LEARN

LENTEN RESOURCES

Hopefully you've had a meaningful Lenten experience, including a connection to our care for creation. If you've been a little slow in starting your Lenten practices or are just looking to add a bit more, here are some great resources to check out.

[LSi Lenten calendar](#) and [Ecological way of the cross](#)
from the Laudato Si Movement

Catholic Climate Covenant's [Lenten resources](#), including [daily Photo Reflections](#)



Community Partners

EarthConnection

Thursday, 3/21, Sparks of the Universe (Session 2) webinar w/ Jennifer Callahan

Enjoy the Seasons by Honoring the Invitations of the Equinox and the Solstice - Saturdays 3/16, 6/15, 9/21, & 12/21 - w/ Jenny Straw. \$40 per session. [Register here.](#)

Thursday, 4/11, Creating Cosmogenesis Through Art w/ Imogene Drummond (1:00pm, repeated at 7:00pm)

Click here to view their catalogue of [past webinars](#).

Marianist Environmental Education Center

Thursday, 12/21, 6:30am - [Winter Solstice Sunrise Celebration](#)

Faith Communities Go Green


Tuesday, 1/30/24, 7:00pm - Living with Plastics: Myths & Facts ([register here](#))



Embracing God's Creation Planting Native

On **Monday, March 11, 7 pm** Bellarmine Chapel hosts the next presentation in their ongoing series! Dr. Tim Kloppenborg, Emeritus Professor, and Karen McCabe, Xavier University Horticulturalist, will lead us through the spiritual, ecological and even health benefits of planting native to the very concrete questions of which trees and shrubs work best in which locations! This event is the kickoff of our annual Native Tree and Shrub Giveaway, and attendees will have early access to the order form!. So come with your questions! This project is co-sponsored by the Cincinnati Jesuit Works, including Bellarmine Chapel and Xavier University.

[RSVP here today!](#) [Flyer here.](#)





Local Foods Seminar

On February 4, 2024, 50 people gathered at St George Parish, Georgetown, Ohio for the 15th Annual Local Foods Seminar. The purpose of the gathering was to bring local producers and potential businesses and consumers together to advance local food production in the five county primarily Appalachian area that includes Adams, Brown, Clermont, Clinton, and Highland counties.



ACT

HELPFUL HINTS - Spring Cleaning

If you are going to be doing some spring cleaning soon, take a look around your house and garage for items that present environmental hazards when they are improperly disposed of. Leftover household products that contain corrosive, toxic, ignitable, or reactive ingredients are considered to be "household hazardous waste" or "HHW." Products, such as paints, cleaners, oils, batteries, and pesticides, that contain potentially hazardous ingredients require special care when you dispose of them. Check with your county's department of environmental services to find out where you can safely dispose of these. There will likely be a fee. The big plus is that they are kept out of the landfill.



Eco-Tips

Shared by Susan Vogt

March: Reduce the environmental impact of your driving by driving no more than the speed limit, making easy stops and starts, not idling (and take it one step further: burn less gas by keeping your car tuned up, change the oil/air filters regularly, when using the AC use the recirculating mode).

April: To reduce greenhouse gas emissions that result from the production of meat, try eating less meat. You can build off your meatless Fridays during Lent and do Meatless Mondays for a month.

May: Install a power strip for appliances to avoid drawing ghost electricity (and take it one step further: set your refrigerator at 36F to 42F, your freezer at -5F to +6F, and your water heater at 120F).



Laudato Si' Week

brought to you by the Laudato Si' Movement

Seeds of Hope | May 19-26

This Laudato Si' Week and Pentecost, let us gather in community to contemplate and nurture seeds of hope for our "suffering planet" (LD 2). Laudate Deum is a reminder about the urgency of the Laudato Si' message and the need for both personal and cultural transformation amidst our ecological and climate crises.

This year's Laudato Si' Week theme is inspired by the symbol for Season of Creation 2024, "first fruits." Let us be seeds of hope in our lives and our world, rooted in faith and love.

[Sign up here](#)



Laudate Deum Action Pledge

In honor of the Pope's new exhortation, the [Catholic Climate Covenant](#) has created a new way to pledge action and commitment.

In *Laudate Deum*, Pope Francis calls "all people of good will" to take action on the climate crisis and "*move beyond the mentality of appearing to be concerned but not having the courage needed to produce substantial changes.*" (LD 56) He particularly calls on us in the United States to make personal changes to our consumerist lifestyles, reduce our fossil fuel use, and to also advocate for systemic actions to address the climate crisis.

Together we can courageously commit to specific actions that will produce a much needed culture shift and produce a better future for our common home.



PRAY

MARCH

Bulletin Prayer

God of all creation, give us the desire and strength during this Lenten season to examine our own lifestyles and convictions. Let us be open to the personal changes that we need to make to be faithful followers of Jesus whose whole life was one of love towards all. Help us to ask ourselves daily the question: "Will what I do and say today bring more love into the world?"

Papal Quote

"There are no lasting changes without cultural changes, without a maturing of lifestyles and convictions within societies, and there are no cultural changes without personal changes." (LD 70)

Pope Francis, Laudate Deum #70, 2023

Intercession

That our words and actions today will reflect love and compassion for all creation, especially those who are most in need at this time.

APRIL

Bulletin Prayer

God of the Universe, you who have created all things with love, give us the will to work towards building your kingdom on Earth. Help us to take the time for prayer and silence that we may discover you within ourselves and share that discovery by continuing to build bonds with other members of our universal family. Give us the strength to challenge ourselves to reach out to those with whom we disagree, not with anger and hatred, but with love and compassion.

Papal Quote

"All of us are linked by unseen bonds and together form a kind of universal family, a sublime communion which fills us with a sacred, affectionate and humble respect." (*quoting Laudato Si'*)

Pope Francis, Laudate Deum #67, 2023

Intercession

That we may let go of the thoughts, opinions, and negative actions that separate us from one another and seek to find ways that together we may be faithful disciples of the Risen Lord and together work towards building God's Kingdom on Earth.

MAY

Bulletin Prayer

We are at a crossroads today, Lord, where we are being called to make a choice between continuing to buy into every new technology without thought of the consequences of the power it yields and your invitation to build a more peace-filled world where each member of creation has what it needs to thrive. Give us the strength to make the choices that will continue to build your kingdom on Earth.

Intercession

As we see the beauty of spring all around us, Lord, help us to make the world a more beautiful and just place for all – plants, animals, rivers, mountains and your beloved people of every nation by the choices we make. Give us the strength to say “No” to all that diminishes us as caretakers of your creation.

Papal Quote

Not every increase in power represents progress for humanity. We need only think of the “admirable” technologies that were employed to decimate populations, drop atomic bombs and annihilate ethnic groups. There were historical moments where our admiration at progress blinded us to the horror of its consequences... It is not strange that so great a power in such hands is capable of destroying life, while the mentality proper to the technocratic paradigm blinds us and does not permit us to see this extremely grave problem of present-day humanity.

Pope Francis, Laudate Deum #24, 2023



ASSESS

Resources

[Laudato Si & Laudate Deum](#)

[Laudato Si' Action Platform](#)

[U.S. LSAP website - God's Planet](#)

[Catholic Climate Covenant](#)

[USCCB on Care for Creation](#)

[CRS on Climate Change](#)

[Caritas et Veritate \(Pope Benedict XIII, #48-52\)](#)



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