



## ST. FRANCIS PLEDGE NEWSLETTER

*A newsletter from the Care for Creation Task Force*

## A New Year with New Opportunities

It's the end of one year and the beginning of another. Looking back, this year passed by quickly for me. The end of this year had many Care for Creation events not just by us at the Catholic Social Action Office, but many of our partners as well. In May we celebrated 4 Laudato Si' Communities. June saw a special mass for Sister Dorothy Stang along with the many events from the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur. In the summer, there was an amazing Dorothy Stang Pilgrimage in Dayton, which was brought to Cincinnati in September as one of 4 pilgrimages through the Pilgrims of Hope for Creation initiative. And finally, October brought a successful Laudato Si' Conference.

But we are not satisfied with just that. 2025 was full of great events and collaboration, but we can do better, and we can do more. I have recently been accepted into a program through the USCCB that would help us complete writing the Archdiocese of Cincinnati's Laudato Si' Action Plan, a plan that we've written goals for to guide us, but one never formally published. With all of our wonderful volunteers, partners, and the new Archbishop, I'm looking forward to all the possibilities that are opening up to enact change and nurture action together.

Thank you to everyone for all the work that you do for the environment, through your individual actions or with your community. It's not an easy or event convenient to change your

lifestyle or a system, but there is hope. I am so inspired by the incredible work that has been done and am so blessed to continue this work with all of you.

Have a very joyful rest of your Christmas season and wishing you a very Happy New Year!

Pace e bene,

*Jill Foster and the Archdiocesan Care for Creation Task Force*



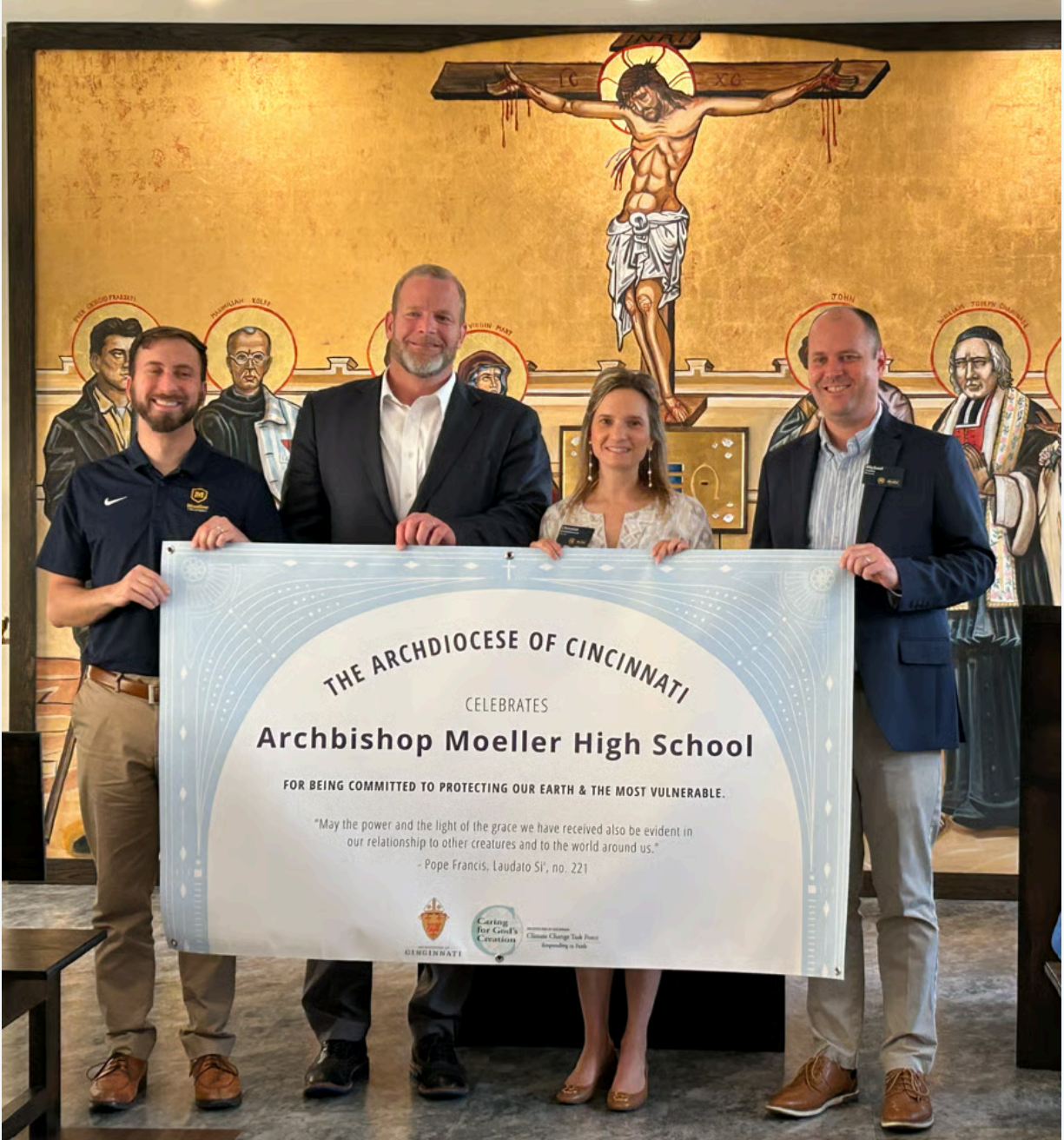
## Laudato Si' Sector Sessions

We are furthering our efforts to care for God's creation in our archdiocese. In its structure, the Laudato Si' Action Platform names seven sectors where unique opportunities for partnership might exist. We are currently supporting networking groups in these areas:

- **Families of parishes**
- **Religious communities**
- **Universities**
- **High Schools**

These sectors have begun meeting and if you are interested in exploring one (or more) of these groups, please contact Jillian Foster. All are welcome!





## Celebrating Laudato Si' Communities!

*On May 1st, 2025, the Archdiocese celebrated 4 new Laudato Si' Communities at Moeller High School!*

*For the next few issues, we will introduce them to you.*

**Moeller High School** took a two-pronged approach to incorporating Caring for God's Creation and the message of Laudato Si into the school culture. The approach emphasized both education and action. On the education side, Moeller incorporated lessons emphasizing Caring for God's Creation across the curriculum. This began with the entire school reading the novel *Dry* during the summer of 2023. Throughout the year, there were guest speakers, classroom activities, and ultimately a symposium featuring student research on the environment.

On the action side, Moeller moved to a zero-waste cafeteria. This involved moving to reusable dishes and silverware. Additionally, Moeller began composting all food waste. As a result, the Moeller cafeteria is sending near zero garbage to the landfill.



## ADVOCATE

### Farm Bill

The Farm Bill is a massive piece of legislation that supports farms, foreign aid, and food assistance. Every five years is up for reauthorization. When it was up for reauthorization last year, 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.

The American Relief Act has extended the current (and outdated) bill to September 20, 2025.

Please utilize our Farm Bill [web page](#) which has a number of resources to keep yourself informed. 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.



UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF  
CATHOLIC BISHOPS

Feel free to use the **Creation Mass** from Pope Leo XIV!

[Holy Mass for the Care of Creation](#)

[USCCB Article](#)

Keep an eye out for current USCCB [Action Alerts here!](#)

**Other Advocacy**

Keep an eye on these bills:

**HB 471** – Fix Our Forests Act – for wildfire prevention and supports environmental work in forests. BUT there is concern about possible permissions for loggers to be more active. It has bipartisan support, but environmental agencies are split. The Catholic Conference has not spoken on it.



LEARN

## COMMUNITY PARTNERS & EVENTS



Sisters of the  
**Precious Blood**

### Introducing the Precious Planet Award!

The Congregation of the Sisters of the Precious Blood is inviting all elementary schools in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati to participate in the Precious Planet Award, a special initiative as part of the school's science fair. Inspired by Pope Francis' *Laudato Si* and *Laudate Deum*, this award promotes environmental stewardship among students in grades 7-8. Winners in the 8th grade will receive a \$500 scholarship, and all participants will be awarded certificates and medals.

Don't miss this scholarship opportunity. Contact *Jen Morin-Williamson, Peace, Justice and Ecology Coordinator for the Sisters of the Precious Blood*. [Jmorin-williamson@cppsadmin.org](mailto:jmorin-williamson@cppsadmin.org) or 937-837-3302 x 116



## FAITH COMMUNITIES GO GREEN

You can [view past webinars here!](#)



## EMBRACING GOD'S CREATION

Find presentations and learn more about [Embracing God's Creation](#) at  
Bellarmine Chapel!





## [Marianist Environmental Education Center](#)

Check out their [Calendar of Events here!](#)

### Wild Church - January

Date: Saturday, January 24, 2026 - 10:00am to 12:00pm

*This is a collaboration between MEEC and Miami River Valley Wild Church. For information on the Wild Church movement, visit [wildchurchnetwork.com](http://wildchurchnetwork.com).*

Bring a reading or a poem about nature and creation to share, if you wish. We love to hear what speaks to your heart in this season. It is helpful if you can arrive a little before 10:00 so we can begin on time. If you have questions, [email Beth](#).

[Learn more and Register here!](#)

### Winter Wisdom Retreat

Date: Saturday, January 31, 2026 - 9:00am to 4:00pm

Join MEEC for a day-long experience of nature as spiritual practice with three extraordinarily talented and thoughtful members of the MEEC community - Dr. Vince Miller, the Gudorf Chair in Catholic Theology and Culture at the University of Dayton; Methodist Deaconess Beth Vanoli, facilitator of Miami Valley Wild Church, and Christine Middleton, a lay Marianist and nature artist.

[Learn more and Register here!](#)

### Getting Started With Native Plants: Creating a Thriving Habitat

Date: Saturday, February 28, 2026 - 8:30am to 4:00pm

Join MEEC for an informational, inspirational and FUN day about native plants and their role in creating healthy, functioning ecosystems.

[Learn more and Register here!](#)



# MORE PARTNERS & EVENTS

## [EarthConnection](#)

[Find information on events here.](#) View their catalogue of [past webinars](#).

[Embracing God's Creation](#) at Bellarmine Chapel

## [Faith Communities Go Green](#)

## [Marianist Environmental Education Center](#)

## [Partners for the Environment](#)

## [B-W Greenway Community Land Trust](#)

B-W Greenway is dedicated to the preservation and restoration of wetlands and woodlands in Dayton.



**ACT**

## Eco-Tips

*Shared by Susan Vogt*

### **January:** NEW YEARS

1. EASY: Remember at least one happy/joyful occasion from 2025. Share it.
2. CHALLENGING: Looking ahead to 2026, identify at least one improvement you want to make in your lifestyle – perhaps buying less, perhaps being kinder to those who have different opinions than you, perhaps...

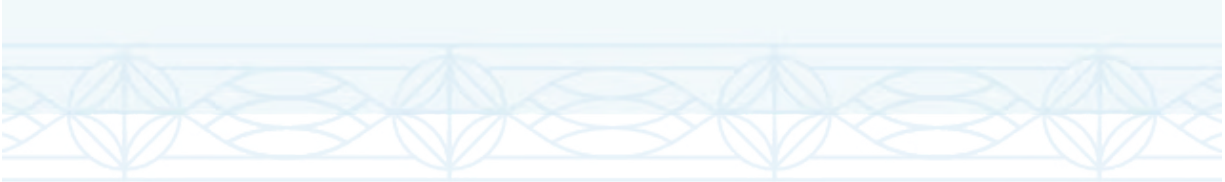
### **February:** FOOD

1. EASY: Research indicates that Americans throw out about 40% of their food. Don't be part of this statistic. Only buy what you need.

2. CHALLENGING: When possible, buy food without the packaging, especially plastic packaging.

**March: PLASTIC REDUCTION**

1. EASY: Avoid black plastic food containers. They are almost impossible to recycle because they may contain toxic chemicals.
2. CHALLENGING: Buy sauces, condiments, and oils in glass jars when possible. When empty, wash and reuse.



## 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.

**Take the Pledge**



# PRAY

## December

### Bulletin Prayer

We pray that we all will make courageous choices for a simple and environmentally sustainable lifestyle, rejoicing in our young people going back to school, who are resolutely committed to this. God of all creation, thank you for sending your Son to bring hope and light in days of darkness and fear. We ask for the courage to bring your light of justice, peace and hope in our day to all who live in the darkness of despair and fear, especially during this Advent Season.

### Intercession

For all who experience struggles brought on by economic, environmental and political decisions. May they find hope in the presence and works of those who strive for justice and peace for all, we pray...

### Papal Quote

“Dear sisters and brothers, we urge you not to stop living, to be part of the rebirth of utopias, to recover and defend the struggling dream of Appalachia itself. For it is the weak things of this world which seem like folly, that the Spirit takes up and makes its own. The dream of the mountains’ struggle, the dream of simplicity and of justice, like so many other visions is, we believe, the voice of God among us.”

Appalachian Catholic Bishop 1975  
*This Land is Home to Me*

## January

### Bulletin Prayer

God of all that is, as we enter a new year we ask you to be with us and guide us as we continue to work to protect and care for the life and beauty of all your created world.

### Intercession

For all who advocate for the dignity of each human person and the created world in the divisive social and political climate of our day. May they know the presence of the Spirit as they carry the Gospel of justice, peace and unity to all in need of its healing and challenging message, we pray...

### Papal Quote

“God who calls us to generous commitment and to give him our all, offers us the light and the strength needed to continue on our way. In the heart of this world, the Lord of life, who loves us so much, is always present. He does not abandon us, he does not leave us alone, for he has united himself definitely to our earth, and his love constantly impels us to find new ways forward. Praise be to him!

Pope Francis *Laudato Si* #245

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## February

### Bulletin Prayer

Generous God, you call us during this Lenten season to open our hearts to embrace the truth of your Son's life, death and promise of eternal life. Help us to follow him as faithful Christians obedient to his example of prayer, fasting and life-sustaining care for all that live on our Common Home

### Intercession

For a deeper understanding of the inseparable bond between care for nature, justice for the poor, commitment to society and interior peace. May each of us grow in these relationships- with God, with others, with nature and with ourselves, we pray...

Pope Leo XIV

### Papal Quote

"It is now more important than ever to return to the heart...The heart is the place where external reality has the greatest impact, where the deepest searching takes place, where the most authentic desires are discovered, where one's ultimate identity is found, where decisions are formed. It is only by returning to the heart that a true ecological conversion can take place. We must shift from collecting data to caring; and from environmental discourse to an ecological conversion that transforms both personal and communal lifestyles."

Pope Leo XIV  
Raising Hope Conference  
October 2025

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## 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 \(Pope Benedict XIII, #48-52\)](#)



— ARCHDIOCESE OF CINCINNATI —  
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