

Social Actions Newsletter



Laudato Si' on today's environmental issues



Pope Francis published the encyclical "Laudato Si'" in the summer of 2015. Since then we have had several natural disasters and changing climates in many parts of the world. The major focus of the encyclical was how precious and fragile God's Creation is – and how the abuse and neglect of the environment falls on the backs of the poor and disenfranchised. There are 244 paragraphs. Here are a few excerpts:

"Praise be to you, my Lord". In the words of this beautiful canticle, Saint Francis of Assisi reminds us that our common home is like a sister with whom we share our life and a beautiful mother who opens her arms to embrace us. "Praise be to you, my Lord, through our Sister, Mother Earth, who sustains and governs us, and who produces various fruit with coloured flowers and herbs".

This sister now cries out to us because of the harm we have inflicted on her by our irresponsible use and abuse of the goods with which God has endowed her. We have come to see ourselves as her lords and masters, entitled to plunder her at will. The violence present in our hearts, wounded by sin, is also reflected in the symptoms of sickness evident in the soil, in the water, in the air and in all forms of life. This is why the earth herself, burdened and laid waste, is among the most abandoned and maltreated of our poor; she "groans in travail" (Rom 8:22). We have forgotten that we ourselves are dust of the earth (cf. Gen 2:7); our very bodies are made up of her elements, we breathe her air and we receive life and refreshment from her waters. (1-2)

I urgently appeal, then, 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. [...] The climate is a common good, belonging to all and meant for all. At the global level, it is a complex system linked to many of the essential conditions for human life. (23)

A very solid scientific consensus indicates that we are presently witnessing a disturbing warming of the climatic system. In recent decades this warming has been accompanied by a constant rise in the sea level and, it would appear, by an increase of extreme weather events, even if a scientifically determinable cause cannot be assigned to each particular phenomenon.

Humanity is called to recognize the need for changes of lifestyle, production and consumption, in order to combat this warming or at least the human causes which produce or aggravate it. It is true that there are other factors (such as volcanic activity, variations in the earth's orbit and axis, the solar cycle), yet a number of scientific studies indicate that most global warming in recent decades is due to the great concentration of greenhouse gases (carbon dioxide, methane, nitrogen oxides and others) released mainly as a result of human activity. (23)

Our insistence that each human being is an image of God should not make us overlook the fact that each creature has its own purpose. None is superfluous. The entire material universe speaks of God's love, his boundless affection for us. Soil, water, mountains: everything is, as it were, a caress of God. (84)

Thank You MHC!



With the recent onslaught of hurricanes, earthquakes and the tragic shooting in Las Vegas, we have all been stressed to the hilt with many calls for help. So many so, we do not know who to care for first. All are so sad and have suffered so much devastation and God expects us to do what we can to take care of as much and as many as we can.

With those thoughts in mind, we at FYI want to thank everyone who helped with the water drive at the beginning of September. We and our partners, Tecumseh Schools and the Fairborn Knights of Columbus raised over 5000 cases of water—which took up space in three semi trucks. There was enough to take to hurricane victims in both Texas and Florida. The Daughters of Isabella complimented the efforts by collecting items for Puerto Rico with UD students. These combined efforts have helped many. MHC has many amazing caring parishioners and I am proud to be one of them.

~Pat Banaszak



A Christmas Miracle?

Twas the week before Christmas and all through the house, not a present in sight and desperation swelled in their hearts.....

"Cindy's" sister died of a drug overdose and her husband has been laid off. Cindy has three children of her own, along with their four little cousins who expect Santa to come, but Cindy has no extra money for presents and only a little food to eat. Cindy read the article in the paper about the Christmas Project at the Senior Citizens Center and signed up with little hope that her large family would even qualify. Her family, however was assigned to the Daughters of Isabella for the Giving Tree at Mary, Help of Christians Church and Christmas was transformed into a time of love and sharing and "**believing in miracles**" for those 7 children.

For "Mary" and "John", an elderly couple who spend half of their money for rent then try to stretch the other \$400 each month to cover utilities, food, and transportation, etc., Christmas was going to be very quiet and sad. They remembered Christmas in the past when sounds of laughter and fun ran rampant through the house, but now, in their 80's, and crippled with arthritis there is very little laughter and fun, only pain and loneliness. Then the "Angels" of Mary, Help of Christians came to their aid with presents, food and love for these two people and their smiles became radiant as they spoke words of thanks to their **miracle workers**.

The "saints" of Mary, Help of Christians chose tags from the Giving Tree and bought a present or two to help make someone's Christmas special. Just reflect for a while on the paragraphs above and realize the difference MHC parishioners made in the lives of these two families.

This year the Daughters of Isabella will have twenty families on the tree listing the wishes and needs from each child and parent. Please take a tag or two and help make a **Christmas miracle happen!!!** The Giving Tree will be in its usual place in the MHC Church gathering space the first week of Advent.

The Daughters of Isabella



FYI (**Family & Youth Initiatives Parenting Network**) has been in Fairborn since 1990 and has helped hundreds of families learn how to be good parents, good community citizens and adults with good character. In 2014, FYI added in The Mentoring Project, which helps both adolescents and teens to understand their value and worth in life. In 2016, the group also expanded its Parenting Network to help fathers learn of their importance in the family unit. Today, FYI is looking for both men and women to volunteer a couple of hours a week and help us keep up with the expanding needs of our youth and clients. No experience is necessary, as all that is needed is an open heart and a desire to help families. Please call the Fairborn Parenting Network @ 879-3313 to learn more about this great mission.

Family & Youth Initiatives is more than the Parenting Network who works with moms and dads to help them be the best parents they can be. The Little Scholars promotes social-emotional health among the pre-school children and their parents. Real Life...Teen Choices is an in-school 5 day program teaching relationship curricula. The Mentoring Project, uses three methods of mentoring to help teens grow in character and community services, as they set long term goals. All these programs help us fulfill our mission statement: "**Empowering Families/ Providing Hope.**" Nikki Stefanow, Assistant Director of FYI, states, "We have been doing this work since the late '70's and we have seen significant changes in our clients and in our communities, but there are so many more to help. It seems like our work is never done."

A young man known to FYI will soon be 18. Due to his lack of self-confidence and self-control, he will very likely end up in adult court or prison. He has never experienced a male influence in his life and as a result, is lacking the skills necessary to become a man of character. This unfortunate young man is only one example of our teens today. The drug crisis is a major contributor, as well as bullying, which all lead to teen self-destruction. The youth of today have so many distractions, temptations and choices, thrust upon them. Teen brains are not mature enough to cope with all these choices unless they are guided by positive reinforcement

Throughout the month of November, FYI is seeking people who would like to volunteer as mentors for any of our programs. Pat Banaszak states, "Almost anyone can do this, you just have to be a **good listener**. We will train you and offer specific 'helps' to help you understand the kids, teens, and parents better. Call Pat @ 845-0403 for more information.