

Saint Pius X Catholic Church Creation Care Team 2017 Year in Review

Summary:

The Creation Care Team, in its second full year in existence, made strides toward creating an active, mission-driven ministry. The team organized two signature events, focused on educating parishioners about reducing their carbon footprint, and met with policy makers from the State of Indiana to discuss Catholic teachings and the environment.

Creation Care Team mission:

As members of the Catholic Church, we see all over the world the devastation caused by the misuse of God's creation. The Creation Care Team at St. Pius X aims to educate the parish community on how living our Catholic faith through protecting our common home is caring for the poor, as detailed by Pope Francis in *Laudato Si*. Our goal is to commit the St. Pius X community to positive, concrete actions within our homes and our parish to become more sustainable. We strive to answer Pope Francis's call to protect all of God's creation, including future generations and the most vulnerable who are affected by climate change.

The Creation Care Team is part of a network of parish groups organized by the Catholic Climate Covenant (CCC), a nonprofit that was created in 2006 by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops to address growing ecological awareness and the need to implement Catholic social teaching on ecology within the U.S. Church.

Meetings:

Meetings are held the second and fourth Thursday evening each month, from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. in the PEC library or one of the second floor classrooms.

2017 Key Activities:

Earth Day Event: The CCT organized an activity-filled event for Earth Day celebrations on Sunday, April 22. Guest speaker, Dave Warkentien spoke in the PEC Library, sharing information regarding his transition to a carbon neutral home. An Earth Day celebration then took place in the gym after the evening mass. Parishioners were invited to check out a Tesla and to see carbon emissions of various cars; locally made popsicles were available for all to enjoy and children were invited to color on an Earth Day poster. A tour was also given by the architect of the new church, to highlight the green-friendly aspects of the building. Two SPX students guided visitors in making solargraphs to track the annual path of the sun between the solstices (<https://www.nightwise.org/single-post/2017/04/08/Showing-Some-Faith-On-Earth-Day>).

Approximately 50 attendees took part.

Feast of St. Francis Event: For the Feast Day of the patron saint of ecology, the CCT handed out tulip bulbs and copies of Laudato Si at the monthly pancake breakfast after the 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. masses.

Meetings with Policy Makers: In 2017, the CCT met with an aide for Jackie Walorski, U.S. House Representative for Indiana's 2nd congressional district. The team members shared their belief in Catholic teachings on the importance of protecting the environment.

The team also met with U.S. Senator Joe Donnelly. Again, the team was able to share its belief in Catholic environmental teachings and hope that elected leaders would share their concern for the environment.

Communications: During the year, the CCT regularly has space in the weekly bulletin, sharing tips for reducing one's carbon footprint, and advertising the team's big events and upcoming meetings. The team also worked with the Diocese to have an article in Today's Catholic discussing what Creation Care Teams do in parishes. Here is a link to the article: <https://todayscatholic.org/st-pius-creation-care-team-lives-out-laudato-si/>.

Working Toward A Greener St. Pius X: The team has worked with parish staff to find new ways to reduce the carbon footprint of the parish. While no projects were completed in 2017, the team has been speaking with local solar panel installers to help provide quotes to the parish..

Moving Forward:

In 2018, the CCT hopes to build upon its successes in 2017, by continuing its work surrounding Earth Day, the Feast of St. Francis and speaking with local Indiana policy makers. The CCT will also look to take on new initiatives. The team is planning to partner with other ministries in order to further educate parishioners on care for our common home. The team is seeking to have a presence and be involved in the parish picnic planning, in order to reduce the amount of waste created at that signature event. We will also continue to solicit estimates from solar panel installers to better understand the options available to the parish.

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