



IMMACULATE HEART^{OF} MARY CATHOLIC CHURCH

A LETTER FROM THE PASTOR JUNE 2, 2019

Dear friends in the Risen Lord,

As you read this, I'll be on my way to a week of vacation followed by a week of study at Georgetown University. In between the two, I'll return for a few hours next Sunday to celebrate Pentecost with you and to enjoy our International Potluck Supper. I hope to see many of you there.

In the last hours before I departed, I saw a movie that I can't stop thinking and talking about: *The Biggest Little Farm*. It's a 90-minute documentary about the 8-year quest of filmmaker John Chester and his wife, Molly, a chef, as they decamp from their small Santa Monica apartment with their rescue mutt to 200 acres of barren farmland and a dream of farming in harmony with nature.

Based on that synopsis alone, I can imagine your eyes glazing over! But please trust me: This is a film you will want to see—for its breathtaking cinematography, engaging characters (human and other!) as well as its thoughtful themes. (Parental warning: although the film is rated PG and contains no human sex or violence, *it's all about* “the birds and the bees,” and nature's cycle of life, death and rebirth, in a way that could be distressing for young children.)

Although this is not a faith-based film, it is nonetheless a beautiful artistic elaboration on many of the themes of Pope Francis' 2015 encyclical letter, *Laudato Si': On the Care of our Common Home*. In fact, as the film progressed, these words from the encyclical came to mind:

If we approach nature and the environment without... openness to awe and wonder, if we no longer speak the language of fraternity and beauty in our relationship with the world, our attitude will be that of masters, consumers, ruthless exploiters, unable to set limits on their immediate needs. By contrast, if we feel intimately united with all that exists, then sobriety and care will well up spontaneously (#11).

(It made *The Biggest Little Farm* even better to learn that Molly Chester is a cousin once removed of IH-M's own Nikki VanDerGrinten, the founder of our *Laudato Si'* Action Team!)

Your brother in Christ's word and work,