As a part of the Sister of Charity of Cincinnati commitment to the Laudato Si’ Action Platform, we have committed ourselves to the following:

“Because we Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati dwell in this house of love and encounter God, we commit ourselves to choose to live simply in a complex world committed to the healing of our global home.” (SC Vision Statement).

We hear the summons of Pope Francis in his encyclical Laudato Si’ “to profound interior conversion; a reexamining of our relationship with the Creator, with creation and with our brothers and sisters.” (LS217)

As a congregation, we embrace the Laudato Si’ Action Platform and commit ourselves to journey together towards ecological conversion. We recognize that we have entered a new age, one which thrusts us into a new relationship with God and with the community of all of creation. This new understanding, this new sense of communion with planet Earth, has entered our minds and hearts. Reading the signs of the times we see the intersectionality of the devastation of Earth, poverty, racism, migration and other social injustices.

We will enter into this process of ecological conversion through education, advocacy efforts, use of renewable energies, and the responsible use of our resources for the benefit of Earth and all creation. Imbued with a deep faith in the active presence of God, we will continually seek to integrate our spirituality and sustainability as we prayerfully commit to allowing the awareness of the sacredness of all creation to guide our actions.

The recent COP (Conference of the Parties) 26 was designed to have countries report on the progress they have made on their pledges under the 2015 Paris Agreement.

The following are the outcomes of COP 26:

- Countries agreed to “phase down” the use of coal. The original proposal was to “phase out” coal, but this was opposed by China and India.
- The agreement pledged to increase funding to enable poorer countries to deal with the effects of climate change as well as make the switch to clean energy.
- World leaders agreed to phase-out subsidies that artificially lower the price of fuels. Currently world governments spend more than $420 billion dollars annually subsidizing the fossil fuel industry.
- China and the US, the world’s two largest CO2 emitters, agreed to cooperate more over the next

Cont’d on p. 2
COP26 cont’d

decade in areas including methane emissions and the switch to clean energy.

- Leaders from more than 100 countries promised to stop deforestation by 2030. These 100 countries represent about 85% of the world’s forests.

- A proposal to cut 30% of methane emissions by 2030 was also agreed upon by more than 100 countries. However, China, Russia and India, among the biggest emitters did not sign on to this agreement.

- An initiative to involve private companies in meeting net zero targets was agreed to by financial organizations controlling $130 trillion. These financial organizations have agreed to back “clean technology” such as renewable energy and direct financing away from the fossil fuel industry.

There is no mechanism for holding countries accountable for the commitments made. Each is responsible for self-policing and will be asked to report back at the next summit.

The world’s top environmental scientists tell us that the commitments made here are not sufficient to meet the Paris Goal of 1.5-2.0 degrees C. They applaud the agreements made, but caution that much more is needed.

“Alok Sharma, COP26 President

“...The people who have done the least to cause the climate crisis are suffering the most. This is a searing injustice.”

Bender Mountain

Bender Mountain Preserve, located in Delhi Township, has a range of hiking options from easy to difficult. It includes more than three miles of hiking trails. Sister’s Hill, an abandoned stretch of Delhi Pike, and the Ridge trail have excellent views of the Ohio River.

The trails also include a heavily wooded, restored nature preserve that supports hundreds of plant and animal species. Delhi Township and the Western Wildlife Corridor jointly maintain the trails and work to eliminate invasive species.

Dr. Denis Conover, a University of Cincinnati botanist, describes the Preserve as the “best place in Hamilton County to observe native wildflowers.”

The trails are well maintained and clearly marked with signposts. There are also several benches along some of the trails to rest and enjoy the view.

Parking is available on the north side of the preserve along Bender Road which gives easy access to several trails. Another option is to park at the dead-end of Delhi Avenue.

A New Mindset

Changing light bulbs and recycling are important, but climate scientists are telling us that much more is needed than individual actions.

Sustainability scientist Dr. Kimberly Nichols states that our current climate “is warming, it’s us, we’re sure, it’s bad, we can fix it.” We cannot continue to destroy the homes of countless other species and poison those who remain without unraveling the web of life—a web which includes us.

Climate scientists are citing the need for a new mindset. Our current mindset is an exploitation mindset which holds that nature is an entity to be conquered and subdued under human control. What is needed, they tell us, is to move to a regenerative mindset which would enable humans to shape an equitable future in which all species can thrive.

Individual actions help, but a collective impact is needed to meet the needs of the future.
Girl Scout troops of all ages continue to visit EC. If weather permits, their visit usually starts with a nature scavenger hunt, followed by a tour of the garden with Sr. Winnie Brubach, our Master Gardener. They learn about the types of crops that are grown and how all of the produce is donated to the Good Samaritan Free Health Center in lower Price Hill. At the center the staff washes and bags the fresh produce to give to their clients.

The girls then listen to a talk on the EC facility where they learn about solar and geothermal energy as well as how the building was constructed and the abundant use of recycled materials throughout the building itself. This includes carpeting made from recycled pop bottles, a curved wall constructed out of aluminum cans, and tiles made from recycled glass. The girls also learn that most of the furniture throughout the building is also recycled.

They then do an art activity using recycled or natural materials. Recent troops created animals out of fall leaves, made colorful vases using recycled bottles, using tissue paper as well as a variety of flowers also made out of tissue paper. Another troop used Gelli plates to create environmental art using a variety of natural objects which they collected while on their scavenger hunt.
RESOURCES

A book of rituals inspired by Pope Francis’ encyclical, Laudato Si’, On Care for our Common Home.

Nicholas, Kimberly, Ph.D. Under the Sky We Make: How to Be Human in a Warming World. Putnam’s Sons, 2021.
“It’s warming. It’s us. We’re sure. It’s bad. We can fix it.”

“We are all indigenous to someplace. We are all from somewhere. We can all become rooted in the land that sustains us.”

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_aWppq44rc - This youtube video is a five-minute invitation by Pope Francis to participate in the Laudato Si’ Action Platform.

Upcoming Webinars - 2022

January 20th - ”Just One Earth”
Part I—This is a virtual program based on the in-person “Awakening the Dreamer” symposium by the Pachamama Alliance.

January 27th-”Just One Earth”
Part II
Presenters: Gail Miller and Sue Brungs

February 24th - “Visit An’ Talseach. An Organic Farm and Ecology Center in Ireland”
Presenter: Colette Kane, OP from Wicklow, Ireland

March 24th-”Gardening with Native Plants”
Presenter: Maureen Wild, SC / from Gabriola Island, British Columbia, Canada

April 21st-”Ecospirituality through the Eyes of an Artist”
Part I
Presenter: Kathy McDonald, Master Gardener

April 28th-”Ecospirituality through the Eyes of an Artist”
Part II
Presenter: Imogene Drummond, international filmmaker and renowned artist from New York

May 12th –”Explorations into the Life and Spirituality of Hildegard of Bingen” Part I
May 26th-”Explorations into the Life and Spirituality of Hildegard of Bingen” Part II

Due to the current rise in Covid, we are not hosting our “Movies That Matter” series or other on-site activities until further notice.