

Laudato Si' Project

Newsletter

Restoring Our Natural Connection



Mission: To restore humanity's connection to the natural world through education, stewardship and recreation



Summer 2017

A Prairie Summer

Few Wisconsin ecosystems can rival the beauty, importance, and educational potential of a prairie. For over a decade, I have been immersed in learning, hiking, and restoring native prairies in WI.

This summer, prairies have been playing a big role in the life of Laudato Si' Project. This has included prairie presentations and guided hikes (pg 3), prairie plantings for schools, preserves and land-owners (pg 4), and migrating monarch butterfly tagging in prairies around southeast WI (page 6).

I invite you to walk slowly through a prairie, to hear God's whisper in the stillness and to appreciate this bounty of biodiversity.

Happy Hiking,

Joe Meyer, Executive Director



Laudato Si' Project

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School and Parish Programming



Disciples of Christ

Co-op



The Summer kicked off with a "Creatures of the Night" program with the Disciples of Christ homeschool co-op. Kids learned all about the adaptations of creatures that call the night their home and took an exploratory hike through a nature preserve.



Laudato Si' Project helped host Sustainability Weekend at St. Gabriel Parish in Hubertus. Thanks to a dedicated group of parishioners, an engaging educational experience was available to parish members to help them live *Laudato Si'*.

St. Leonard's School and Parish in Muskego asked Laudato Si' Project to teach their Vacation Bible School about Caring for Creation and our call as stewards.



Living *Laudato Si'* Highlights



Green Alliance Sustainability Fair



As part of the Green Alliance, Laudato Si' Project helped plan the Sustainability Fair at Lapham Peak that took place in late August. We were blessed with great weather and 500+ people were able to discover, connect, and engage with how to live more sustainably. Laudato Si' Project created a Nature Discovery Zone to engage visitors with the natural world, impart a sense of wonder, and encourage them to live lighter on the Earth. So many great conversations took place about connecting faith with Care for Creation. Laudato Si' Project also gave a presentation on "Planting Native Prairie" and our volunteers led two guided activities: "Beginning Birding" and "Prairie Bugs Kids Hike." Thanks to all our amazing volunteers for helping make this event such a success!



Our Newest Partner School: Chesterton Academy

We led a guided Ice Age Trail hike near Holy Hill for Chesterton Academy, our newest partner school. Students were on retreat at the Holy Hill Basilica and the hike was a way to bring together faith, ecology, and our call as Catholics to be stewards of the planet.



Sponsor a Prairie Project

Take a look at the many prairie projects happening this year

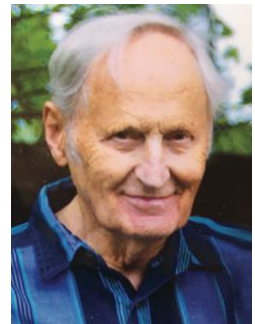
These prairie plantings are designed to maximize benefit for pollinators like butterflies, bloom from late spring into fall, and provide a hands-on educational experience for students and visitors: happening both this fall and next spring

Schoofs Preserve: Educational Butterfly Garden in Memory of Ralph Schoofs

Details: A bonanza of native flowers on 1300 sq. ft. of the Schoofs Preserve with educational signage of various plant species and their ecological importance.

Cost of Project: \$575

Sponsorship of \$50 or more will include your name on the butterfly garden sign.



Schoenstatt Retreat Center: Oak Opening “Prayer-e”

Details: 2 acres of classic southern WI oak opening that will become a wildlife hotspot after this restoration planting

Cost of Project: \$2500

Sponsorship of \$600 or more will include partial dedication of the planting to your family, loved one, or business.



St. Dominic School: Educational Butterfly Garden

Details: 80-300 sq. ft. depending on funding

Cost of Project: \$90-\$540

Sponsorship of \$90 or more will include your name or business on a sign.



Milwaukee Parkside School for the Arts: Educational Butterfly Garden

Details: A 950 sq. ft. space right on the playground of the school

Cost of Project: \$825

Sponsorship of \$400 or more will include your name or business on a butterfly garden sign.



Prairie Pollinators: Migrating Monarch Butterflies



The spectacle of Monarch butterflies flying over 2000 miles to overwinter in Mexico is unrivaled in the natural world. Laudato Si' Project uses citizen science research to engage people in learning about this amazing event while contributing important data to the understanding and monitoring of this species. Sticker tags with unique serial codes are placed on migrating butterflies in late summer with the hope that scientists will find these marked butterflies in their Mexican wintering grounds. Monarch populations have crashed over 90% in recent decades and these annual tagging efforts can help keep track of longer term trends. Educating the public about maintaining “wild areas” in their yards is an important way to help people see how individual choices can have large impacts.

By The Numbers: Summer Care for Our Common Home

Education

Laudato Si' Project has conducted **19 hours** of presentations, interpretive hikes, and educational tours.

Stewardship

Laudato Si' Project has contributed **126 volunteer hours** in stewardship projects to better the ecological value of our world's outdoor places.

Recreation

Laudato Si' Project has sponsored **5 hours** of recreational outings to visit, explore, and learn about our natural world.

Laudato Si' Project is a 501(c)3 tax deductible organization that depends on membership and donations to continue its vital mission. Thank You!