

Laudato Si' Project

Newsletter



Restoring Our Natural Connection

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



Fall 2018

Fall Offers Countless Opportunities to Get Outdoors

Fall is such an amazing season in Wisconsin. It brings about several much anticipated events; bird migration, apple harvest and leaves changing colors. Fall also presents countless opportunities to connect people to their faith and these spectacular phenological events.

This year marks our second year of tagging monarch butterflies on their southward migration to Mexico (pg 3). Fall is also a perfect time to do stewardship, like invasive species removal, because the temperatures and mosquito populations are lower (pg 2). It is also helpful that invasive species like honeysuckle and buckthorn hold their leaves later than our native plants, making identification much easier.



Fall can also offer peace and quiet. A beautiful place to reflect on God and truly absorb the season's beauty. Laudato Si' Project took full advantage of this through our five retreats that took place this fall (pg 4). As we transition now into winter, I wish many blessings to you and your family!

-Joe Meyer, Executive Director

Laudato Si' Project

laudatosiproject@gmail.com

www.naturecatholic.org

5443 Shannon Road Hartford, WI 53027

262-308-6641

Stewardship

Nothing beats fall stewardship to care for our common home. Cooler temperatures, less mosquitos and invasive species aplenty. Our projects this fall were focused at 3 locations.

In September, we began our work at Woodside Elementary School in Sussex. With nearly 100 kindergarten students, we explored the importance of prairies and pollinators while planting an educational butterfly garden on the school grounds. This partnership will continue next year with the planting of an additional 1 acre pollinator prairie in the fall '19!

In early October, we organized a group of over 30 volunteers from Cristo Rey High School, Casa Romero Center and Marquette High School. We tackled invasive species on Ozaukee Washington Land Trust's Forest Beach Migratory Preserve. Also in partnership with OWLT, we have begun a 6.5 acre prairie planting and habitat improvement project on their Schoof's Preserve. This project will be completed in fall '19.



Michael Frome Education and Outreach Award

Joe Meyer, executive director of Laudato Si' Project, was honored by Ozaukee Washington Land Trust through the *Michael Frome Education and Outreach Award*.

Joe is pictured with OWLT's executive director, Tom Stolp, at their Annual *Fly-In and Awards Dinner*. Laudato Si' Project is proud of our great partnership with OWLT and how we it allows us to serve the people and special places in Southeast Wisconsin.



Monarchs to Mexico (and other cool insects)



Fall offers participation into one of nature's most amazing natural phenomenon, the migration of monarch butterflies to Mexico. Five generations of monarchs have passed before the journey begins the following year. This several thousand mile flight takes these winged-wonders nearly two months and exactly how they locate a single mountain range in Mexico they have never seen before is still a wonder of science.

Laudato Si' Project hosted a monarch tagging program on the Schoofs Preserve in early September. Six monarchs were captured, tagged, and released for the study conducted by Monarch Watch.

It's not only monarchs that are flying and hiding in the September prairies. We were able to catch eight other species of butterfly, four species of dragonfly, and countless other cool insects that call Wisconsin home.



Retreats: Our Faith in Action



One of Laudato Si' Project's most impactful programs are the retreats we facilitate for parishes and schools throughout Southeast Wisconsin. This fall we were privileged to work with nearly 300 students, deepening their faith and calling their love for God into action through stewardship of our common home.

Participants in retreats this fall included: St. John Vianney School 7th and 8th grade, St Eugene School 8th grade, St. John Vianney Parish Confirmation Program and Schoenstatt Family Retreat.

We are thankful for the opportunity to deepen faith and develop a stewardship ethic through hands on encounters with the natural world.



Education with Snapshot Wisconsin

Laudato Si' Project participates in the WI DNR's Snapshot Wisconsin program. We are given an encrypted game camera to photograph any and all wildlife that travel in a certain natural area. Students process and categorize all photos using the WI DNR database. All photos are then used to help better understand populations and distribution in the entire state. Our camera has currently documented over 12 different species in Washington County including deer, coyote, raccoon, opossum, turkey, fox squirrels and more. Here are some pics from this last year.



Wanakia Wildlife Animal Release



Laudato Si' Project has partnered with Wanakia Wildlife Rehabilitation in the past to offer educational programs to schools on care for creation.

This fall, Wanakia released several rehabilitated animals onto the Meyer property. These included a great horned owl, 2 opossums and 2 screech owls.

These animals needed help because either they or they mother caring for them was struck by a vehicle. Thanks to Wanakia wildlife for all their hard work caring for creatures of our common home! You can view the release video on our Facebook page.

Wishing You a Blessed Advent and Christmas

LSP Board of Directors

Nate Lasnoski *Chairman*

Ryan Grusenski *Secretary*

Andy Schoofs *Treasurer*

Matt Vogel

Quentin Maxwell

This time of year is often dominated by long-lines, stress and to-do lists. Our challenge is to take the time to reflect on this Advent season's true graces. By taking the time to think about the many blessings and talents we each possess, our attitude toward life and others becomes one of thanksgiving, joy and humility.

May you and your family experience the true beauty of both the Advent and Christmas Seasons. Thank you for all you do to make the mission of Laudato Si' Project possible.



Save the Date

February 2nd and 3rd

2019 Langlauf Winter Carnival

Join Tall Pines Conservancy, Heiliger Huegel Ski Club and Laudato Si' Project for a weekend of winter fun.

Location: Heiliger Huegel Ski Club on Hwy 167 near Holy Hill.

More details to come.

By The Numbers: Fall Care for Our Common Home

Education

Laudato Si' Project has conducted **29 hours** of presentations, retreats and educational hikes.

Stewardship

Laudato Si' Project has contributed **133 volunteer hours** in stewardship projects to better the ecological value of our world's outdoor places.

Recreation

Laudato Si' Project has sponsored **10 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!