

# Laudato Si' Project

Newsletter



*Restoring Our Natural Connection*

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

Fall 2020



## Impact 2020

Although COVID has created many challenges for all of us this year, God has still continued to bless Laudato Si' Project's ministry. Our outdoor and retreat programs seem to be more important than ever and we were thrilled to still offer a variety of engaging and faith-filled programs. In 2020 we have:

- run **60 hours** of educational programs including presentations, ecology programs and retreats.
- tallied over **320 volunteer hours** in stewardship service projects
- led **25 hours** of recreational outings to experience and enjoy the beautiful world around us

These programs in 2020 have allowed us to serve over **1900 people** of all ages!

*-Joe Meyer, Executive Director*



Laudato Si' Project

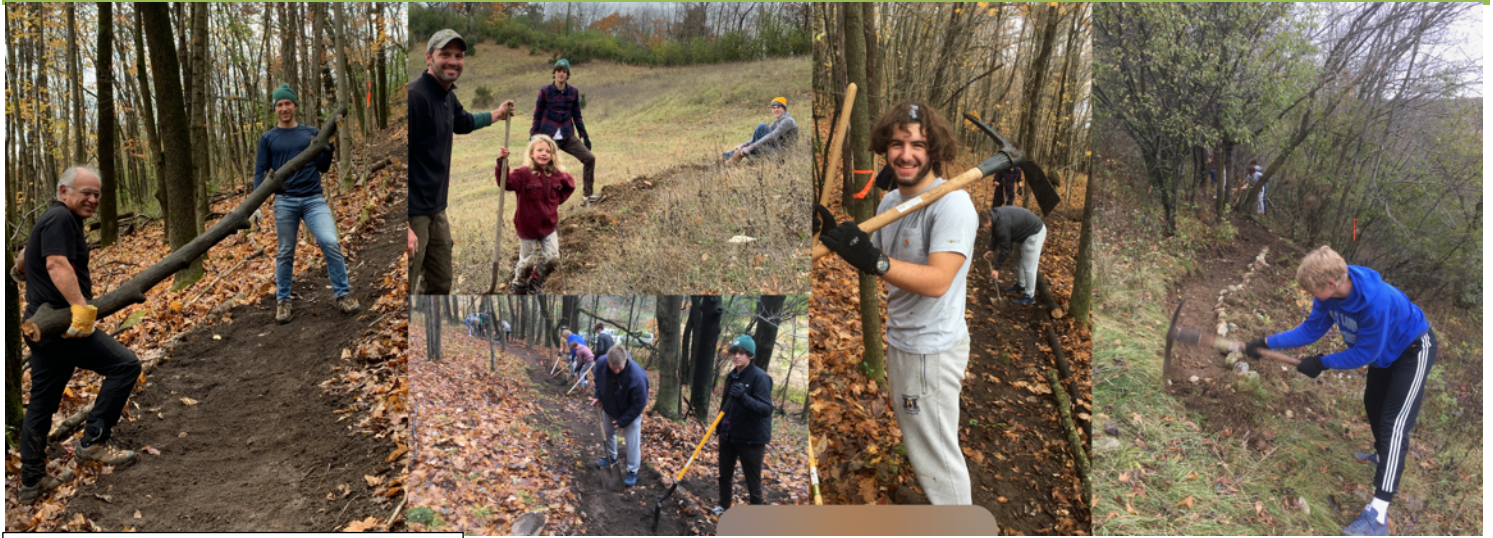
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# Stewardship: Trail Building



2020 LSP trail building volunteers

Thanks to all our amazing volunteers that came to help build the new trail at Oconomowoc River Conservancy Park. This trail is part of Tall Pines Conservancy's improvements in the park and connects the beautiful Ice Age Trail Monches segment with the Conservancy park. You can use the new trail to access the observation deck which sits at the 2nd highest point in Waukesha County!



In 2018 (*pictured below*), Laudato Si' Project volunteers began creating the new trail up to the lookout where the observation deck now stands. It is fulfilling to be able to complete that trail and allow for a connection loop to the Monches segment of the Ice Age Trail.



2018 LSP trail building volunteers



# Retreats and Speaking

Retreats and Presentations are two concrete ways that Laudato Si' Project spreads the integration of our faith and an ethic to care for creation. Joe Meyer had the opportunity to speak at St. Mary of the Hill Parish near Holy Hill and at 2 virtual retreats this fall. The first was an ecumenical retreat hosted by the Archdiocese of Milwaukee and the Waukesha County Creation Care Network. The second retreat was in the Diocese of Norwich, CT that brought in speakers from around the country to discuss issues of life, immigration and the environment. We are encouraged by the strong desire of parishes to help teach how our faith calls us to care for our common home.



Laudato Si' Project continues our great partnerships with St. Gabriel and St. John Vianney. Both at the parish and school level, we were able to run engaging, faith-filled retreats despite all the challenges COVID presented. These retreats included both middle school age and also Confirmation students.





# Service Projects

Thanks to the 4 young men who volunteered to create 2 new benches for the Schoofs Preserve. The Konecnys; Jack 16, Nicholas 12, of St. Leonard's in Muskego and The Fraschs; Bradley 16, and Nicklaus 12, of St. William's in Waukesha. These benches were built as service projects for religious education connecting our faith to care for our common home. Both Jack and Brad will be receiving Confirmation this coming Spring.



# Owl Release

This September, over 70 people came to learn about owls and witness the release of 4 rehabilitated owls; 3 screech and 1 barred owl. Thanks to Wanakia Wildlife Rehabilitation & Education Center and Ozaukee Washington Land Trust for co-sponsoring this event.





# Fall Food Foraging

Fall is the perfect time to collect wild grapes for making homemade jelly! They are found in nearly every woodland or brushy area and can be pretty aggressive. Wild grapes are dioecious which means some vines are only male, meaning no grapes and other vines are females which are the ones we get grapes from.

Have you seen that weird giant marshmallow thing in the woods? It's a giant puffball, one of the largest edible mushrooms in WI. While still white and fleshy, it can be cut up and sautéed in butter and garlic salt for a nice side to any dinner dish.



# Fall Monarch Tagging

In early September we held our second monarch butterfly tagging event. The weather was gorgeous and the butterflies and other critters were abundant. In the afternoon, we were also joined by students and families from MUHS to do some insect collecting.





# Hot off the Presses

## LSP Board of Directors

2020 was the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of *Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home*. As a result, the Interdicasterial Working Group of the Holy See on Integral Ecology released *Journeying Toward Care for Our Common Home; Five Years After Laudato Si'*.

Nathan Lasnoski *Chairman*

Ryan Grusenski *Secretary*

Andy Schoofs *Treasurer*

Matt Vogel

Tom Mlada



## By The Numbers: Fall Care for Our Common Home

### Education

Laudato Si' Project has conducted **24 hours** of presentations, educational programs and retreats.

### Stewardship

Laudato Si' Project has contributed **86 volunteer hours** in stewardship projects to better the ecological value of our world's outdoor places.

### Recreation

Laudato Si' Project has sponsored **7 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!