

**CATHOLIC
ECOLOGY
CENTER**



2022 IMPACT REPORT



FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

What an incredible year!!! I continue to be humbled by all the amazing things God is doing through our ministry. Our impact in 2022 has been incredible, reaching over 6000 people! We are bursting at the seams and are thrilled to begin the CEC building addition in the Fall of 2023 (see pages 15-16). I am so very grateful to all the donors, members, volunteers and prayers that make the Catholic Ecology Center a beacon of hope to our world.

It has also been fun seeing the property come alive in different ways during all four seasons. In addition to our diverse and faith-filled programming, we love being able to keep the trails open everyday for those wanting to explore, relax and enjoy. So many people take advantage of the miles of trails for hiking, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing and even the rental canoes we have to explore the Rubicon River!

With a grateful heart and invigorated spirit, I look forward to a blessed 2023!

- Joe Meyer

CONNECTING TO CHRIST AND HIS CREATION



BY THE NUMBERS: OUR IMPACT IN 2022

Connecting with over **6000** youth, families and adults

Serving through **3120** volunteer hours of stewardship by
over **300** different volunteers

Educating through over **315** hours of educational programs and retreats;
working with over **75** parishes, schools and organizations



CATHOLIC
ECOLOGY
CENTER



MISSION

To restore humanity's connection to the natural world through education, stewardship and recreation. Deepening faith and fostering a stewardship ethic through hands-on connections with the natural world.

VISION

The Catholic Ecology Center seeks to provide unique encounters with God's handiwork in order to help people integrate their faith and everyday lives with a call to be stewards of creation. We work with people of all ages, with an emphasis on youth, families and underserved populations.

The Catholic Ecology Center is a ministry of Laudato Si' Project, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that began in 2016.



RETREATS



The CEC creates a place for youth and families to experience the quiet found in nature and learn about the beauty of creation and how to live more sustainably.

Archbishop Listeki



Our unique retreat programming integrates the truths of our faith with a love and care for our common home. We challenge people of all ages and backgrounds to live out their faith and grow deeper in their love for Christ, His Church and the world around them. We utilize the beautiful gifts of creation at the CEC as a conduit to draw people deeper into faith, prayer and a greater respect for the gifts God has given us. Within retreats, hands-on stewardship service projects are a way we live out our call to care for creation and deepen our commitment to a life of virtue. Team building, journaling and ecology are also interwoven into many retreats programs.

Our retreats serve people of all ages including youth groups, faculty/staff and all grade levels, taking place all four seasons of the year. Many groups utilize our beautiful overnight options that include bunk cabins and tent camping. We facilitated retreats for dozens of parishes and schools in 2022 and increased our adult retreat opportunities as well!



A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAPLAIN

God invites us to cooperate in His work of redemption in many ways. Significantly, we are called to be stewards of God's creation. That word - steward - is of particular importance; traced from the Old English it means to be a "part of a house". But what part? Shall we be the door or windows, inviting others into the truth and goodness of His kingdom, or perhaps the roof, protecting those within from harm? At the Catholic Ecology Center, one learns to become the foundation. Hands and hearts buried deep in the rich soil of God's life and His creation allows one to truly see the goodness of the Lord.

- Fr. John LoCoco



ECOLOGY PROGRAMS



Our ecology programming allows for engaging ways to interact with the amazing natural environment at the Catholic Ecology Center. With a pond, creek, river, boardwalk, wetlands, prairies and forests, there are countless opportunities to learn more about interconnectedness through hands-on field-science. In 2022, we also increased our summer camps and homeschool programs.

School science classes, scouting organizations and families all come to the Catholic Ecology Center to increase their wonder and knowledge of God's amazing ecology. All seasons of the year present varied opportunities to learn outdoors including plant science, wildlife tracking, water quality, birding, animal ecology and more! Having the organic farm on-site (Clare Gardens) allows for unique opportunities to learn about growing food, raising chickens, bees, composting and living sustainably. Our great partnership with Wana-kia Wildlife Rehabilitation enables us to have live animals at some of our ecology programs and see up-close the amazing creatures that live here.



FROM OUR PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Since joining the CEC team a year and half ago, I have been blessed to witness God's infinite care for our mission, seeking to deepen our wonder for creation and care for our common home. Utilizing the amazing ecology and natural wonders of the property, we are able to connect people of all ages with hands-on encounters with truth and beauty. The CEC is a witness to the fact that the faith is very much alive! It's very exciting to be a part of and I am so thankful for the support of so many good people.

-Theresa Liebert



My service project at the CEC made me recognize our need for God and our role as stewards for the next generation.

Megan, High School Student

STEWARDSHIP



SERVICE PROJECTS

Service projects are a fun and tangible way to live our faith that is called into service. These projects are also an avenue to involve adults and families. They remind us that we are called to care for creation everyday.

RESTORATION AND FAITH

Stewardship also calls us to better the ecological state of the CEC property we have been blessed with. We also strive to incorporate the richness of our faith through the property. In 2022, we accomplished this by creating the Karen & Ernie Meyer Children's Memorial Garden, Lasnoski Family Stations of the Cross, and JPIL Pollinator Gardens.

We also planted over 100 trees on the CEC land and seeded 15.5 acres of pollinator prairie for a neighboring property!

ECOLOGICAL MONITORING

Part of our role as stewards at the CEC is to monitor the wild species and health of the ecosystems on site. Beyond our bat and water quality monitoring, we also survey birds and insects. In 2022, we documented the first county record for the harvester butterfly (the only carnivorous caterpillar!)

CEC Property Lists:

- 6 of the 8 Wisconsin bat species
- 132 species of bird
- 38 species of butterfly

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

CEC Board Member, **Andy Schoofs**, has put in over 100 hours of service in 2022! Along with his legion of machines, Andy has helped with the JPIL parking lot expansion, Children's Memorial Garden, maple syruping, stations of the cross, team building area and Advent candle hike. We are so very thankful for the gift he is to the CEC!



Thank you to all of our volunteers!

50+ HOUR FRIENDS

Kevin Fraundorf	Joe & Andrea Meyer
Dave Fulcher	Ernie & Karen Meyer
Todd & Kim Kreimann	Andy Schoofs

VOLUNTEER CLERGY

Fr. Patrick Burns	Fr. John LoCoco
Fr. Mike Erwin	Fr. Justin Lopina
Fr. Chris Krall S.J.	Fr. Michael Malucha
Fr. Doug Leonhardt S.J.	Fr. Philip Schumaker
Joseph Glatczak (seminarian)	Fr. Andrew Linn

VOLUNTEER EDUCATORS

Jean Bosenbecker	Andrea Meyer
Dan Doyle	Janis Parker
Ryan Grusenski	Bonnie Schoofs
Denise Murre	

MORE GREAT VOLUNTEERS

Robert Kreuser - Bookkeeping
 Mic Lacrosse - Woodworking
 Andrea Meyer - Design and Marketing

WORKSHOPS



Throughout the year, we host workshops that are open to the public. These workshops build community and allow us to reach people beyond our work with schools and parishes.

Our workshops create great opportunities for youth, families and adults. Our 2022 offerings included: weaving, astronomy night, foraged ink, creating eco-friendly landscapes, cross country skiing, mushroom foraging, raising monarchs and Advent wreath making.

We have more great workshops planned in 2023! Stay up to date by following us on Facebook or visit our website:

CatholicEcologyCenter.org/events



We appreciate the team at CEC reminding us to take the time to listen to what God has created.

Michael, CEC Member

*But now ask the animals to teach you,
the birds of the air to tell you;
Or speak to the earth to instruct you,
and the fish of the sea to inform you.*

Job 12:7

EVENTS



Our events bring hundreds of people throughout the year to the CEC to enjoy faith, fellowship and God's amazing creation. We appreciate all of our great partnerships that make these events a success: Milwaukee Catholic Home, Archdiocese of Milwaukee, Tall Pines Conservancy, Wanakia Wildlife Rehabilitation and so many more.

Our 2022 events included: maple syrupin', May crowning, birding, candlelight hikes, CEC campout, monarch tagging, owl programs, Ride to the Barns and St. Francis feast day,

We have more great events planned in 2023! Stay up to date by following us on facebook or visit our website: CatholicEcologyCenter.org/events

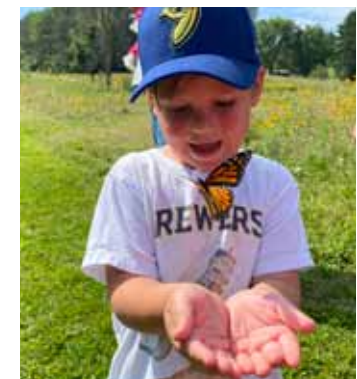


FROM OUR LEAD EDUCATOR

Being an educator at the CEC and part of this incredible mission has been a dream come true. The diversity of programs, workshops and events we offer is only rivaled by the diversity of ages and people we serve.

It has been so refreshing to be at the CEC where the riches of our faith are incorporated everyday, a wonder for God and creation is fostered and an ethic to be greater stewards of what we have been entrusted with is emphasized. I truly feel part of an amazing community of families and adults. I look forward to what God is doing with our ministry and appreciate everyone who helps make it possible.

-Barbara O'Brien





"We have a more holistic approach to how people interact with food and creation."

Anna Metscher, Farm Manager Clare Gardens

CLARE GARDENS



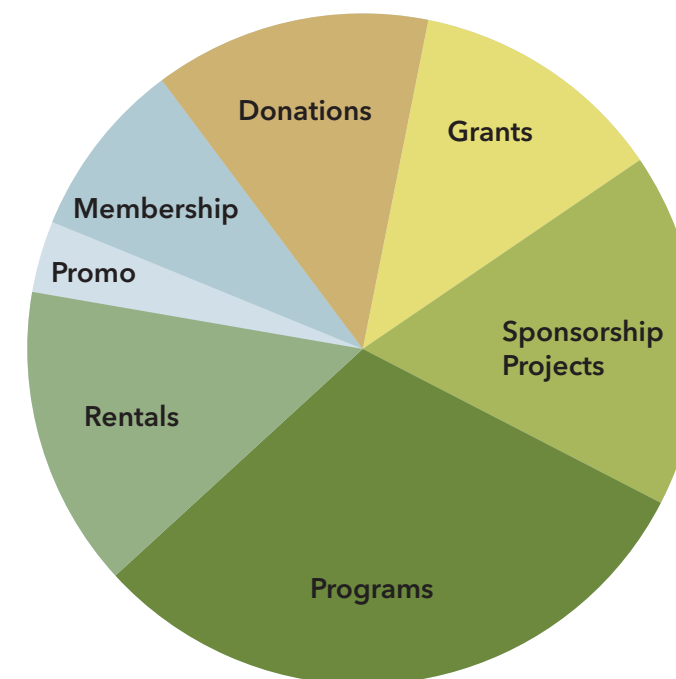
Clare Gardens, a ministry of Milwaukee Catholic Home, is an organic gardening and education ministry that has its home at the Catholic Ecology Center. They grow organic fruits and vegetables for retirement communities.

In 2022, Clare Gardens completed its first full growing season at the CEC with a bumper crop of 24,467 pounds of vegetable produce! The new hoop house and greenhouse even allows for greens being grown year round. Three dozen baby chickens joined the Holy Hen House flock this year and the bees continue to work hard making our Holy Honey!

The fall farmstand allowed for this amazing organic produce to be available to all of our visitors. In 2023, we are excited to offer more educational opportunities that teach us where our food comes from and how to live more sustainably.



CEC FINANCES



2022 REVENUES

Membership and Donations	\$35,289.88
'22 Building Addition Fund	\$317,363.06
Grants	\$20,079.00
Program Fees	\$49,998.57
Sponsorships Projects	\$27,845.00
Rentals	\$23,638.00
Promotional Items	\$5,484.78
Other	\$804.00
Total 2022 Revenues	\$480,502.29
Pledges for Addition '23+	(\$356,000.00)
Fund for Addition from '21	(\$416,560.00)

2022 EXPENSES

Programs	\$22,595.60
Operational and Administrative	\$101,431.79
Supplies and Office	\$2,103.20
Marketing and Advertising	\$4,543.75
Sponsorship Projects	\$13,929.53
Other	\$4,881.60
Total 2022 Expenses	\$135,555.94

MORE IMPACT THROUGH PROGRAM EXPANSION

With over 6,000 people taking part in programs in 2022, we are bursting at the seams! The additional spaces of a chapel, welcome area and breakout room will allow for a greater diversity of programs and allow our vital mission to meet the increasing need.

VISION 2023



THE WAYNE AND DONNA NEU BUILDING

We are thrilled to announce our building addition named for Wayne and Donna Neu, residents of Neosho with family ties to the CEC property. Donna's grandparents, Carl and Caroline Berghammer, moved into the farmhouse at the entrance to the CEC in 1913. Carl and his sons (one of whom was Donna's father, Walter) farmed the land.

Wayne first met Donna at catechism class at St. Matthews in Neosho. They married in '59 and have seven children. We are humbled by Wayne and Donna's generous gift to help make our building addition a reality.



PUTTING THE RICHES OF OUR FAITH FIRST

Our beautiful chapel in memory of Al & Gloria Batzner and Tom & Del Jurkiewicz will be a place of prayer during retreats and encounter with our Lord during Adoration and Mass. Stained glass reclaimed from churches in New York and Connecticut will point our senses toward heaven.

ENCOUNTERING GOD THROUGH BEAUTY

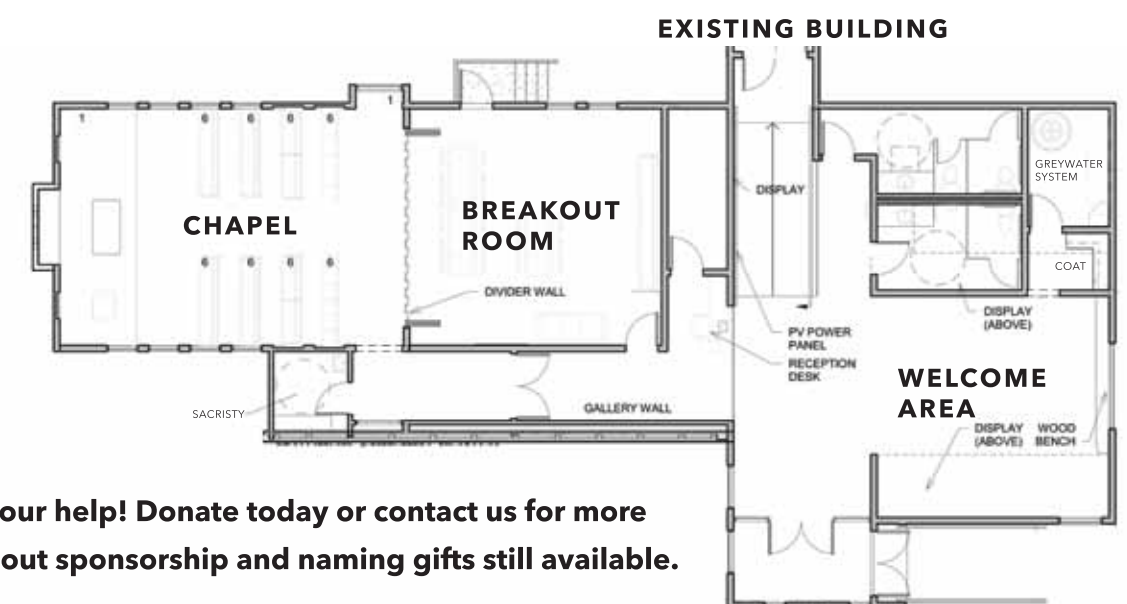
Whether it's educational displays, beautiful window views or utilizing outdoor spaces like our future viewing deck, we want the natural riches of the CEC land to permeate your visit.

ACCESSIBILITY FOR ALL

We want to ensure that all people can be part of the CEC regardless of their economic status or physical ability. Full handicap accessibility and grants for the underserved will ensure this is a reality!

SUSTAINABILITY - LIVING OUR CALL TO CARE FOR CREATION

We want to be a beacon of hope through our deep faith and commitment to caring for creation. Sustainable building products, renewable energy, green roof and water conservation will enable us to educate people first-hand on bringing sustainability into their lives.



We still need your help! Donate today or contact us for more information about sponsorship and naming gifts still available.

2022 SUPPORTERS

CORNERSTONES (\$10,000+)

Platinum

Jerry and Mary Batzner
Keith and Monica Everson
Wayne and Donna Neu

Gold

Milne Family Foundation

Silver

Budnik Family Foundation
Franciscan Sisters of Chicago

Bronze

Bradshaw-Knight Foundation
Ernest and Karen Meyer
School Sisters of Notre Dame

LIVING STONES (\$500 - \$9,999)

Friend of Francis

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St Matthew's Parish



Human Concerns
of Resurrection
Catholic Parish

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* Youngest CEC Donor age 8



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