

ST. THOMAS à BECKET CHURCH
Care for Our Common Home Ministry
November 7, 2019 Minutes

OPENING PRAYER: Prayer for the COP24 Climate Summit at Katowice, Poland, read by Carol Even

PRESENT: Lori Brady, Kitty Conlan, Helen Dickey, Carol Even, Patti Kaiser, Mary Ricotta, John and Beebe Stroik, Linn Mitchell, Gary Voegele, and Bob Reudiseli

EDUCATION – At the Diocesan Care for Creation (DCC) Network meeting recently, Carol learned of schools that might like help developing a curriculum like that which Kitty has made and Helen has illustrated. Carol will share Kitty's information with the Network for schools that want curriculum and ideas for Earth Day.

Carol reported that some members of the DCC Network called up parishes and asked if they had a CCH or Care for Creation group. Many did not know those names – CCH or Care for Creation, and some confused them with Pro-Life groups. Carol reminded those she called of Laudato si and the Pope's message.

This coming year, 2020, we will celebrate the 50th Earth Day and 5th year of Laudato si! This presents our Ministry with the special opportunity of raising awareness!

REVIEW OF SEASON OF CREATION CONCERT AND IDEAS FOR 2020:

Turnout for the concert was minimal, but those who attended were appreciative and enjoyed it. Carol would love to do a program annually, and next year do readings from the creation gospel of John, or collect sayings from all around, and readers could read these. Kitty suggested involving younger people more. Involve kids in activities, kids from Betsy's grades to have roles, and even younger kids. Then their parents will come to watch. Mary thought we might start with easy, first steps, like kids doing readings. SJN does photo contest with teens and it is posted online. Several parishes do a blessing of the animals. Maybe we could do a program about animals where the children bring their pets and we ask a priest to come and bless them.

We were reminded of the Season of Creation Mass at SJN. Apparently, the Bishop has given permission for pastors to use special readings at such a Mass.

We would love for our pastor to join with other pastors in paving the way for greater awareness of our responsibilities in the climate crisis, as Christians. We have noted that turnout is very low at events that are not announced from the pulpit, and we believe that a word from our pastor may be all that is needed to improve turnout.

OUTREACH:

Some green tips in the church bulletin are not getting the green logo that credits the CCH Ministry. We are fortunate that our use of that logo was grandfathered in, as it technically belongs to the Catholic Climate Covenant, and it helps to use it, no matter how small it might appear in our announcements. We need regular announcements about how to keep informed on relevant environmental issues.

Kitty suggested that the tips from SJN that Lori brought last month (amended to October minutes), would serve as an excellent informational handout. Lori will prepare an updated document based on the SJN tips, with our heading and the CCH logo. But first, Helen will research and clarify the information

about what to do about shredded paper. When the Parish Council gets its table, we hope to have fliers at the table for parishioners to take.

John Stroik asked when we are getting a bulletin board, as we have much information to share from this Ministry.

Carol will copy Father Bill with the minutes and other documents as they are developed. We are very appreciative of Father's support of our ministry. If someone from the office would like to attend the meetings as his representative, they would be most welcome.

DISCUSSION:

Because of the confusion at some parishes about the meaning of CCH, someone suggested changing the name of our ministry to better describe its purpose.

Carol suggested that we visit the Library on the way out and check out a book. She is presently reading the newest book by Jonathan Safran Foer, We Are the Weather: Saving the Planet Begins at Breakfast. Look for this book on the Library shelf when Carol has finished reading it. The issue of changing climate was recently described by Pope Francis as a "climate emergency", and the Vatican is making a strong push to respond to the crisis.

There was mention of an NPR program that described evangelicals as either caring for the right-to-life or for the environment, and one outspoken young evangelical has taken the stance that bridges that gap. She is Rachel Lamb

Rachel Lamb was interviewed on November 4th, 2019 when she explained that she never uses environmental language, but rather biblical quotes to support her stance for eco-theology. Also on that program was Richard Cizek, who was interviewed in 2008 by Terry Gross, and who wrote the first essay in our library book Love God, Heal Earth. He admits that even now "it is very hard for an evangelical leader to come out in support of climate action".

Teilhard deChardin was mentioned again as being a prophet of the environmental movement. Gary took a course from OLLI about him, and Carol tried to order a new book about him from England, but it could not be ordered yet. Meanwhile, Carol is reading a book by deChardin on creation.

The Parish Council start-up is proceeding well, and we are praying for Peggy Cowdrill, who has begun and facilitated this process so far. May her health improve and the Lord give her strength to continue this work. John Stroik noted that the Parish Council will need to have one member from CCH attending regularly.

RECYCLING:

Discussion about recycling revolved around the things we know. There is no problem with paper and cardboard recycling. There are new purple bins around the County for glass recycling. Single stream recycling is contaminated by glass. – perhaps the reason for our county requiring separate glass recycling. Also, there was a question about the recycling trucks mixing trash and recycling – is this common? If packaging is problematic – don't buy it!

IDEAS FOR THE COMING YEAR:

Start small to engage people – this information can be over-whelming!

Before Christmas – share ways to creatively wrap gifts, as in bags, with cloth, or newspaper sections – comics, sports pages, etc.

Do educational projects – fliers, bulletin inserts.

Learn about recycling industry regulations and local companies' and jurisdictions' requirements.
Plan a recycle informational event for a Sunday after Christmas – use colorful, large visual displays – like posters over recycle buckets showing what to recycle and what not to recycle.

Tour a recycling activity.

Revisit the idea of solar paneling for St. Thomas a Becket roof as the Catholic Climate Covenant is making great progress with the Catholic Energies program that subsidizes smart solar installations.

Do an interfaith shredding activity with the NVHC's Green Team and the Green Muslims – Gary will contact Shred-It.

Show the video, "The Pope in his own words" at Earth Day (Carol's video).

EVENTS:

Carol went to Repair Café at a fabulous old hardware store, Ace Twin Hardware in Fairfax. The old clock radio was too old to repair, but there were people to do knife sharpening, mending torn clothing, replacing wiring in old lamps, and more. Another Repair Café was held recently at Fairfax Main Library. For more information, search 'Repair café' online.

NEXT MEETING: Christmas meeting and potluck! Meeting at 10:00am and brunch at 11:00am.
Dec. 10th in Hall - Fr. Bill and staff are invited.

Carol read the closing poem, "The Future", from Given by Wendell Berry

Here's the deal..Maybe we could pass around the minutes early after each meeting, ask people to read them and to comment on items they think relate, or corrections, ..etc. We can compile those for discussion and/or addition to minutes next time. OR, we could send out the minutes and ask for a little time after the opening prayer to review the minutes

Our recycling team has a lot of work unless we all do something to help. It seems recycling is one issue that is most in front of people's minds about the environment. We ought to get a handle on the facts, and keep up with the changing information. Certainly, there are ecological issues about air, water, and soil pollution, and about safe and prudent food-production practices, individual ecology – home care and family nutrition, product safety, future transportation and energy needs, housing and other construction practices, - the list goes on. WE are only beginning with this group – we need to make it easy to follow and to continue learning....

{Earth Day 2020 is Wednesday, April 22! – we could have a special evening Mass????? Last yr it fell on a MOnday}

{Maybe we could do an antiphonal prayer.....}