

Our relationship with the environment can never be isolated from our relationship with others and with God. Pope Francis, Laudato Si', 199.

CARE FOR CREATION GREEN TEAM

Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation (JPIC)
Immaculate Conception Catholic Church

“Caring for our common home” remains integral to Catholic Social Teaching, our Tradition, Scripture, and our parish’s Franciscan Catholic Church’s identity and mission of being “called, gifted, and sent to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ.” We would love to have you join our JPIC Care for Creation Green team! Established in 2008, parishioners like you have helped our church pursue a God-centered response to countless environmental challenges. Come join in our shared efforts, as we work together to:

- Reduce the environmental footprint of the IC campus.
- Provide learning opportunities, educational resources, and other materials on caring for our planet.
- Support legislative action, advocacy, action alerts, petitions, pledges, and other initiatives to protect the environment and address climate change.

As a *Laudato Si'* parish, we know that the way we treat the Earth, our common home, reflects how we treat each other. We hope you will join our JPIC Care for Creation Green team, as we work together to respond to “the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.”

JPIC CARE FOR CREATION GREEN TEAM PROJECTS

EDUCATION

- An annual **Earth Day Fair** has been held in the Gathering Space for 15 years. At the fair, parish groups and ministries showcase their activities in support of Our Common Home.
- **Educational events** such as the recent parish-wide screening of the Pope’s documentary, “**The Letter**” on *Laudato Si'*, workshops on the Biblical meaning of Creation Care, Catholic Social Teachings, and the life of St. Francis. Seminars have been given on climate change, solar energy, water conservation and native plants.
- An annual **Valentine’s Day Fair Trade Chocolate Sale** which is held to promote environmentally friendly practices and workers’ rights.
- An annual **Advent Alternative Gift Fair** which last year offered the opportunity for parishioners to protect biodiversity in the Serere Reserve in the Bolivian Rainforest.
- A partnership with the **Half-Earth Project** through the **E.O. Wilson Foundation** to inform collective action to save the biosphere.

ADVOCACY

- During the Season of Creation, parishioners were offered the opportunity to address climate change by signing a petition for the **Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty**.
- More than 200 parishioners participated in **Greener Lent** to reduce our impact on climate change through a community fast from meat.
- Advocacy opportunities through **Letters to Congress** on renewable energy and clean water and air offered at the city, state, and national levels.

INTEGRATION

- A 100kW array of solar panels was installed on campus in 2022 using a Duke Energy rebate program. In one year, the panels will produce enough electricity to power 10 North Carolina homes. We hope to add additional panels in the near future.
- Virtually all lighting on campus was replaced by energy-saving LED bulbs saving more than \$3,000/month on electricity.
- A 1000-gallon water cistern system was placed by the entrance to the church to decrease fertilizer runoff and irrigate plants.
- Green Faith Certification was achieved under Fr. Charley. The program is based on the belief that protecting the earth is a religious value and that environmental stewardship is a moral responsibility.
- Through the Mass, we engage in seasonal prayers, special liturgies, and hymns to deepen and transform our engagement with God's creation.
- Immaculata School's strong focus on environmental stewardship is shared with students through prayer, academic study, and action. Recently, The Assisi Preserve was created as a nature-based playground renovation inspired by St. Francis and his love of nature. Recycling and composting initiatives are underway.
- The IC community garden provides homegrown food to those in need, builds community through gardening, and provides education on sustainable practices. Through the years, more than 5000 pounds of food have been harvested and distributed. In addition, IC is in partnership with several local churches to promote a local CSA (*community supported agriculture*) owned by black farmers.
- IC's Youth Ministry partnered with Trees, Durham for a tree planting day. IC's Catechesis of the Good Shepherd program for children has God's creation at the core of its religious formation.

We would love to hear from you!

To share your ideas, join the email list, or volunteer for events, please contact our JPIC Care for Creation Green Team volunteer parishioner leaders, [Kim Krzywy](mailto:Kim.Krzywy@nc.rr.com) [kkrzywy@nc.rr.com](mailto:kimkrzywy@nc.rr.com) and [Sue Concannon](mailto:Sue.Concannon@earthlink.net) susan.c@earthlink.net, or [Ken Chiha](mailto:Ken.Chiha@icdurham.org) chihak@icdurham.org, IC Director of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC).