ST. CLARE REGIONAL COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES/PROJECTS TO HELP RESTORE OUR COMMON HOME

This document includes activities/projects completed by Wheaton Franciscans categorized by the LSAP Goals. It represents a part of our historical legacy as we continue to respond to God’s call to create something new as we journey together with the “whole human family” toward a flourishing future.

What is ours to do now?
1991—Planting of native Illinois prairie in the south acreage and in 1995 in the front acreage of the Motherhouse property

2007—Planting of the pine grove on the northeast corner of the Motherhouse land.

2010—Planting native Illinois grasses after tearing down the old novitiate building, thus restoring the green space where this building had stood.

2017—Planting of the Butterfly Garden after tearing down Maura Hall, thereby restoring the green space on which this building once stood.

2018—Installation of the vegetable gardens at the Motherhouse, providing fresh vegetables for the sisters during the summer months.

2019—Release of Green Lace Wings, Lady Bugs, and Preying Mantis into the butterfly garden. These native Illinois insects help to maintain the health of the garden.

2019—Release of Monarch Butterflies into the flower and vegetable garden in the courtyard across from the Motherhouse dining room.

2020—Introduction of beehives at the Motherhouse gardens to assist with pollination and to help restore the threatened bee populations in the area.

1995—Creation of the Peace Path around the native Illinois prairie—paved so that sisters and patients and visitors from Marianjoy Rehab Hospital (on the Motherhouse grounds) could have access to “walk” the peace path and enjoy nature.

April 9, 2011; February 11, 2012; March 9, 2013; February 15, 2014—Awakening the Dreamer, Changing the Dream Symposium—a profound inquiry into a bold vision: to bring forth environmental sustainability, social justice, and spiritual fulfillment, three facets
of a new dream for humanity and planet Earth, and the opportunity we have to shape and impact the direction of our world—featured video clips from some of the world's most respected thinkers, along with inspiring short films, leading edge information, and dynamic group interactions.

October 22, 2009—Fair Trade Coffee & Chocolate Event: Fair Trade is a movement whose stated goal is to help producers in developing countries achieve better trading conditions and to promote sustainability. Members of the movement advocate the payment of higher prices to exporters, as well as higher social and environmental standards. Purchasing Fair Trade products such as coffee or chocolate ensures fair treatment and pay of small farmers and farm workers, and care for the environment.

Since the early 1980s have had a Socially Responsible Investment Policy and have been involved in shareholder resolutions around care of creation.

2002—Began transforming our province cars to hybrid vehicles: i.e., with the Prius vehicles, it is possible to average 65-70 miles per gallon.

2010-2011—Setup motion sensors and occupancy sensors in hallways and other areas of the WF Motherhouse to regulate fluorescent lighting

2017—Made a formal commitment to divest from all fossil fuel companies. Our investment income has not changed significantly due to this action.

2019—Installation of solar panels on the roof of the Motherhouse during the season of creation to help reduce our carbon footprint

From 2018 to present—Motherhouse has been changing all lighting to LED. In most areas we have changed bulbs. In most areas we have changed to LED bulbs and in many areas LED fixtures are installed, with 80-90% of the inside work completed. All outdoor streetlights and buildings lights are LED. These efforts have resulted in great energy savings.
August 2011—DuPage County Green Fest, an event dedicated to ecological and environmental issues, using educational and artistic programs, activities, and products that aim to enhance the culture of living in accordance with “green” values.

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October 4, 2013—Melting Ice, Mending Creation: A Catholic Approach to Climate Change: Wheaton Franciscans and friends joined with hundreds of Catholic parishes, schools and colleges around the US in participating in this program to highlight the Pontifical Academy of Science’s Working Group (PAS) statement Fate of Mountain Glaciers in the Anthropocene. This was combined with viewing a “TED” talk by James Balog, the science photographer behind the documentary film Chasing Ice, who documented some of the most vivid evidence yet of climate change followed by facilitated discussion and steps one can take to respond to the unfolding climate crisis based on authentic Catholic teaching.

2018—Installation of the Cosmic Walk Path around the butterfly garden, which shows in simple artwork, the billions of years of evolution of our galaxy and planet.
October 4, 2014—Celebration of St. Francis, Patron of Ecology—a special day to pray for social, economic, and environmental awareness, and to discover together effective ways to promote responsibility to one another, to the greater community of life, to future generations, and to our planet—included multi-media presentations, panelists, and group discussions.

January to November 2015—Just Matters: Eco Discussion Group, based on *Faith Encounters the Ecological Crisis*. The program helped participants identify elements of a spirituality for living through the ecological crisis, with emphasis on Catholic social teaching

September 1- October 4— Annual Celebrations of the Season of Creation beginning in 2015

Annual Earth Day Celebrations since 1980

2008—Participated in the Global Earth Summit by organizing an event at the Wheaton Motherhouse, attended by about 200 people. Ours was one of 100 participating sites around the world, and featured speakers and exhibits focused on clean water, environmental pollution of the air, and restorative green living endeavors already underway in DuPage County and surrounding areas

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