

# The NEWS FROM Inland See

December 31, 2016 - January 7, 2017

FOR THE DIOCESE OF BURLINGTON



## Diocese to observe 2017 as "Year of Creation"

Similar to the global Year of Mercy announced by Pope Francis last year which entertained a heightened focus on the role of mercy in the Catholic faith, the diocesan wide Year of Creation will entertain an intentional, heightened focus on ecological justice. Various events, initiatives and resources will be made available to parishes and Catholic schools to better educate on and encourage the embracing of Pope Francis' message in his 2015 encyclical, "Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home."

This is the second encyclical of Pope Francis. It is addressed to "every person living on this planet" for an inclusive dialogue about how people are shaping the future of the created world. He calls everyone to acknowledge the urgency of pursuing ecological justice and to join him in embarking on a new path based in integral ecology.

Burlington Bishop Christopher Coyne invites all Catholics to join with him in celebrating this "Year of Creation" in the diocese.

He noted the pope's emphasis that concern for the created world is not optional, but an integral part of Church teaching on social justice. "While it has been nearly two years since its publication, I think it is time for the Church here in Vermont to study, ponder and begin to implement much of what the pope calls for" in the document, the bishop said.

The diocese also has formed a partnership with Commons Energy that allows for low-cost energy efficiency audits and energy efficiency/renewable energy projects on many church-owned buildings throughout the state.

Additionally, one of the first steps the Diocese of Burlington has taken at 55 Joy Drive in South Burlington, the diocesan headquarters, to counteract a "throwaway culture" and set an example of ecologically responsible practices is to

adopt the practice of composting—a simple way to support circular models of production and consumption.

"Vermont's 118,000 Catholics can make a sustainable impact on the state of the created world and its creatures. Furthermore, if the Diocese of Burlington's Year of Creation is successful in raising awareness of and action toward ecological justice, it can serve as an encouraging example for other Catholic dioceses and communities of faith throughout the country and the globe. There are an estimated 1.2 billion Catholics on Earth—just think of what could be achieved if we committed to caring for the created world together," said Stephanie Clary,

mission outreach and communication coordinator.

A Year of Creation Committee comprised of scientists, activists and people of faith has been formed to assist with this initiative. Committee members include: Brian Tokar, lecturer in Environmental Studies at the University of Vermont, Director of the Institute for Social Ecology, and board

member at 350Vermont; David Mullin, executive director of Green Mountain Habitat for Humanity; Phil Lawson, Director of Evangelization and Catechesis for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Burlington; Ellen Kane, Director of Development and Communication for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Burlington; Fr. Thomas Houle, OFM, pastor of St. Peter's Church in Rutland (first parish in the diocese to adopt renewable energy); Betsy Hardy, coordinator of Vermont Interfaith Power and Light; James Ehlers, executive director of Lake Champlain International, Inc. and founder of Water Warriors; Stephanie Clary, Mission Outreach and Communication Coordinator for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Burlington; and Mary Quinn, RSM, resident of Mercy Farm and member of Mercy Ecology, Inc.

"Vermont's 118,000 Catholics can make a sustainable impact on the state of the created world and its creatures...."

— Stephanie Clary

# THE YEAR OF CREATION



## 01|01|2017 World Day of Peace

The theme for Pope Francis' annual World Day of Peace message for 2017 is:

"Non-Violence: a Style of Politics for Peace." In his 2017 Message for the World Day of Peace, Pope Francis urges us to practice active nonviolence and work to prevent conflict by addressing its causes, building relationships, and facilitating healing and restoration.

**FOR MORE INFO:** [goo.gl/jzJVmx](http://goo.gl/jzJVmx)



## 01|08-14 National Migration Week

The theme for the 2017 National Migration Week is "Creating a Culture of Encounter."

**FOR MORE INFO:** [goo.gl/wP0hU0](http://goo.gl/wP0hU0)



## MARCH Vermont Catholic Magazine

Vermont Catholic subscribers will receive the Year of Creation themed, 2017 Spring issue of Vermont Catholic Magazine.

To receive the magazine, donate \$24 to the Bishop's Fund Annual Appeal at [bishopsfund.org](http://bishopsfund.org).



## 03|01-04|13 Lent

Consider participating in the Global Catholic Climate Movement's Lenten Fast

for Climate Justice. Catholics from around the globe fast during each of Lent's 40 days, joining interfaith Fast for the Climate and the Green Anglicans' Carbon Fast. **FOR MORE INFO:** [catholicclimatemovement.global/fast-2](http://catholicclimatemovement.global/fast-2)



## 03|22 World Water Day



## 04|12 Care for our common home

Catholic Schools' statewide care for our common home service event.



## 04|22 Earth Day



## 04|22-23 Mercy2Earth Weekend

Global Catholic Climate Movement's Mercy2Earth Weekend. On the Occasion of Earth

Day and Mercy Sunday, GCCM will launch a major campaign to engage Catholic grassroots communities through a compelling program and video to reflect on Pope Francis' message "Show Mercy to our Common Home." GCCM will encourage communities around the globe to host events to mark this special weekend of offering mercy to our earth. **READ "SHOW MERCY TO OUR COMMON HOME" AT:** [goo.gl/anXr7D](http://goo.gl/anXr7D)



## 04|29 People's Climate March

A coalition of climate organizers have been planning a massive mobilization in Washington, D.C. within the first 100 days of the new administration.

They will urge the U.S. government to protect the climate and the poorest among us and future generations. The march will likely have an international dimension as well, given the implications of climate policies for all creation. **FOR MORE INFO:** [catholicclimatemovement.global/april-29](http://catholicclimatemovement.global/april-29)



## 05|05 Arbor Day



## 06|05 World Environment Day



## 06|18 Second Anniversary of the release of "Laudato Si'"

**READ IT AT:** [goo.gl/ZZna6k](http://goo.gl/ZZna6k)



## SEPTEMBER Ecological Justice Conference Day in Burlington



## 09|01 World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation



## 09|01-10|04 Season of Creation

**FOR MORE INFO:** [seasonofcreation.org](http://seasonofcreation.org)



## 10|16 World Food Day



## 11|06-17 COP23

The 23rd session of the U.N. climate negotiations (Conference of the Parties, or COP23)

will be presided by Fiji and hosted at the headquarters of the UNFCCC secretariat in Bonn, Germany. Possible webinar of event hosted by GCCM or Catholic Climate Covenant.



## 12|03-24 Advent

Utilize GCCM "LaudatoSi-fy your Advent". **RESOURCES FOUND AT:**

[catholicclimatemovement.global/advent](http://catholicclimatemovement.global/advent)



## 12|05 World Soil Day



## 12|31 New Year's Eve

Make some concrete new year's resolutions to pursue ecological justice even after the

Diocese of Burlington's Year of Creation ends! Follow Diocese of Burlington social media for ideas throughout the year.

## VISIT

[vermontcatholic.org/yearofcreation](http://vermontcatholic.org/yearofcreation) frequently for updates on events, liturgies, and initiatives.

## A PRAYER FOR OUR EARTH (Pope Francis, "Laudato Si'")

*All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe and in the smallest of your creatures.*

*You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.*

*Pour out upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and beauty.*

*Fill us with peace, that we may live as brothers and sisters, harming no one.*

*O God of the poor, help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this Earth, so precious in your eyes.*

*Bring healing to our lives, that we may protect the world and not prey on it, that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction.*

*Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain at the expense of the poor and the Earth.*

*Teach us to discover the worth of each thing, to be filled with awe and contemplation, to recognize that we are profoundly united with every creature as we journey towards your infinite light.*

*We thank you for being with us each day.*

*Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle for justice, love and peace.*

**AMEN.**