



Franciscan Action Network

Transforming the World in the Spirit of St. Francis and St. Clare

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ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI CHURCH - RALEIGH, NC

I. Care for Creation Ministry

Submitted by Christine Miesowicz, Director of Lifelong & Middle School Faith Formation

The community-wide “Care for Creation” ministry is part of the service ministries of the Franciscan Coalition. Care for Creation has hosted several family/adult information tables during weekends at St. Francis, including info on:

- vermi-composting
- standard composting: how to build, how to troubleshoot, how to obtain containers from local government
- art/poetry contest for “Care of Creation” at The Franciscan School
- compact fluorescent: how to choose, style of bulb, quality of light
- NCIPL survey for carbon footprint.

“Care of Creation” also sponsored a vermi-composting workshop for families.

Parish-wide clean-up days are open to families and youth.

Youth ministry grade 8 mini-course choice *Science and Your Faith* included a section on global warming. Catechist found that most understood this well from a science standpoint but not from a CST standpoint.

II. The Franciscan School

Submitted by Mary Margaret Wyman and Lisa Gianturco

Where grade level is not indicated, activity is school-wide.

- Reducing and recycling our school’s waste. Our campus recycling program collects cardboard, chipboard, plastic bottles, aluminum/steel cans, newspaper, white paper, and assorted paper. Students and staff are encouraged to reduce their waste by drinking out of reusable bottles, packing waste free lunches, and using electronic media to communicate information versus paper. Classrooms and public areas have recycling bins to collect all recyclable items. Each Friday a team of 8th graders collects and sorts the recyclable items into designated bins.
- Recycling milk cartons through city recycling program. Parent volunteers rinse and recycle about 200 milk cartons and juice boxes everyday. Then twice a week a parent volunteer drops them off at the city recycling drop-off site.
- Collecting juice pouches for reuse. Juice pouches are collected and sent to a company called Terracycle, Inc. that turns the pouches into fun colorful backpacks, pencil pouches, and shopping bags.

- Composting lunch scraps and coffee grounds. The lunchroom and faculty room each have a compost bin to collect fruit and vegetable waste that can be fed to our worms. The 8th graders manage a vermi-compost bin that creates nutrient rich compost to feed our gardens. Last year we had enough compost to make compost “tea bags” to share with the school and church community.
- Maintaining a butterfly garden for science lessons and as a place to peacefully connect with creation.
- Building a schoolyard garden. This is still a new project, but we built two small (4’ x 4’) gardens for flowers and two larger (4’ x 8’) for vegetables. Hopefully this growing season will provide us with our first harvest that can be shared with those in need.
- Hosting and celebrating the feast of St. Francis with a Blessing of the Animals service on Oct. 4th each year.
- Integrating environmental science lessons throughout the curriculum so that each student can become a better informed environmental steward.
 - Students grow plants, hatch butterflies, test water, study energy, learn about animal habitats, study the local and global affects of humans on the environment, and so much more.
- Recognizing World Water Day, March 22nd. Students participate in a number of activities and discussions as they learn about the nearly 1.1 billion people in our world who still depend on unsafe drinking water.
- Celebrating Earth Week, an annual celebration around Earth Day, April 22nd. (2010 will be our 5th Earth Week Celebration)
 - 2009 Theme was “Be the Change – that makes a difference”
 - School sponsored a “Gently used Shoe Drive to benefit Catholic Parish Outreach & Soles4Souls”. Over 500 pairs of shoes were donated to Soles4Souls and 300 children’s shoes were donated to Catholic Parish Outreach.
 - At Morning Prayer the students offered intentions and prayers for God’s Creation and for those in need.
 - Students decorated 100% recycled brown paper bags with Earth Day messages to encourage everyone to care for the environment. These bags were based out at our local Harris Teeter store on Earth Day.
 - Students and teachers pledged to make one change in their life to care for God’s creation. They wrote this pledge on a leaf that was attached to a giant paper bag tree, the Tree of Hope, in the lunch room.
 - 2010 theme is “*’Tis a gift to be simple – ‘tis a gift to be green.*”
- In June the 4th and 5th Grade classes host a Social Justice Fair. Each of the seven Catholic Social Teachings is represented by a ministry or an activity to highlight the teachings of the church. Last year students learned about how the SPCA works towards our church’s mission to Care for Creation.