



# Season of Creation 2019

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Program Report prepared by the Creation Care Commission



ARCHDIOCESE  
OF INDIANAPOLIS  
*The Church in Central and Southern Indiana*



ArchIndy  
Creation Care  
Commission



Season of Creation

November 25, 2019

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson  
Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Indianapolis  
Catholic Center  
1400 North Meridian Street  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46202

Re: **2019 Season of Creation Report**

Dear Archbishop Thompson:

Enclosed is one copy of our *2019 Season of Creation report* for your consideration. Based on the results of our efforts this year and your personal support, we believe the program carried out was successful and we hope to continue to expand our efforts next year.

If you have any questions or comments regarding the report, we would be interested in meeting with you whenever it is convenient to discuss our future efforts.

Sincerely in Christ,  
**Archdiocese of Indianapolis**  
**Creation Care Commission**

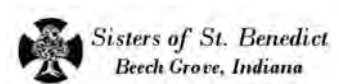
John Mundell and Rosemary Spalding, Our Lady of Lourdes  
Sharon Horvath and Andy Pike, St. Thomas Aquinas  
Sister Sheila Fitzpatrick, Sisters of St. Benedict, Beech Grove  
Joe Shierling, Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral  
Alicia Nygra, St. Malachy

/jam

cc: Deacon Mike Braun, Director of Pastoral Ministries

Visit us at [www.OurCommonHome.org](http://www.OurCommonHome.org)

Thanks to the Supporters of the 2019 Season of Creation



# ARCHDIOCESE OF INDIANAPOLIS CREATION CARE COMMISSION SEASON OF CREATION 2019

## FINAL REPORT

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Pope Francis has officially proclaimed September 1<sup>st</sup> to October 4<sup>th</sup> the Season of Creation for the Catholic Church. The Creation Care Commission (CCC) of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, with support from Mundell & Associates, spearheaded an effort to spread the message of prayer and action to protect creation. Education and action programs including advocacy activities were undertaken at the archdiocesan level as well as supporting individuals and parishes in their prayer services, school climate strikes, and tree plantings.

The CCC recommends continuing the program next year, with special focus on obtaining funding for tree planting and working further in advance with parishes to hold prayer services during the Season of Creation and/or hold a “Green Mass” for all those who support and work in the field of the environment.

### Highlights

Over the course of the 5 weeks, these were our highlights:

- Planting more than 200 trees in the archdiocese, with St. Gabriel making a small effort that turned into a big impact
- Involvement and excitement of students and faculty from St. Thomas Aquinas School for their Climate Strike
- Connecting with new parishes and individuals; continued participation of some of the Living Laudato Si’ pilot program participants
- People from outside the Archdiocese also participated and used resources for tree plantings and education.



## 2019 PROGRAM COMPONENTS

Efforts were made at both the archdiocesan level and by individual parishes. Although the Creation Care Commission did not plan individual parish events, they are worth noting as part of the Season of Creation programming.

### **At the Archdiocesan Level (and beyond!)**

#### **Education**

One of the major focuses of the CCC for this year's Season of Creation was to educate parishes and individuals about what the Season of Creation is and how to live it.

Activities included:

- Speaking at the Priest's Deanery meeting
- Drafting a column in the archdiocesan newspaper *The Criterion* at the start of the Season of Creation for Archbishop Thompson
- Placing an ad in *The Criterion* to encourage people to join in the prayer, action and tree planting; we also created a Spanish version of this flier for a Teens4Unity group in the El Paso diocese.
- Participating in an interview with the National Catholic Reporter for activities of the Archdiocese: <https://www.ncronline.org/news/environment/season-creation-spotlights-threats-biodiversity>
- Launching of the website [OurCommonHome.org](http://OurCommonHome.org) and adding resources for parishes to use specific to the Season of Creation: [OurCommonHome.org/tag/season-of-creation/](http://OurCommonHome.org/tag/season-of-creation/)
- Developing a 5-week, week-by-week guide with daily actions, reflection, and background science information on high impact areas (energy, water, transportation, recycling); downloaded 58 times
- Promoting themed weekdays (e.g., Meatless Mondays - Laudato Si' Sundays) with actionable items, background information, and further reading; downloaded 50 times
- Providing weekly bulletin paragraph inserts that went out to parishes
- Screening of the film "Bag It" at Our Lady of Lourdes (organized by the Eastside Creation Care Network)

See **Appendix A** for examples of these educational materials.

#### **Tree Planting**

A second big focus of the CCC efforts was inviting parishes to participate in an archdiocesan-wide tree planting on October 4<sup>th</sup>, the Feast of St. Francis and last day of the Season of Creation. Research was done to find qualified tree purchase locations for each county in the archdiocese to enable the purchase of trees at affordable costs.

More interest in the idea of planting trees was generated after an effort was made to centralize the purchase of trees from Woody Warehouse and offer 5 free trees to a set number of parishes. A total of 200 trees (Red Maple, Sycamore, and Tulip Poplar) were purchased ranging from \$10.50 - \$14 per tree (including delivery to 2 Indianapolis parish locations).



Tree Planting Locations and Photos

PARISH	Red Maple	Sycamore	Tulip Poplar	Other
St. Gabriel	75	20	50	
St. Mary	7		2	
Holy Spirit	8			
Christ the King	3	1	1	
Sisters of St. Benedict	5			
St. Paul	2	2	1	
St. Mark	2	2	1	
St. Thomas Aquinas				4
St. Malachy	5			
St. Michael	5			
Sacred Heart	5			
St. Anthony	3			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>4</b>



## Advocacy

The CCC participated in the September 20 Global Climate Strike in solidarity with young people all over the world. A prayer service was held at St. John the Evangelist in Indianapolis before heading to strike with other groups from around the city at the Indiana Statehouse. A small group attended the prayer service, with 3 generations represented. Members of the commission engaged in discussions with bystanders at the event who were interested in the signs we held.



## Social Media and Website

Much of the work to spread the word about the Season of Creation was done through the CCC Facebook group and Flocknote email subscribers who signed up on OurCommonHome.org website. Highlights included:

- The Facebook group more than doubled (from 19 to 43 people)
- 35 people (including people from around the archdiocese, the United States, and one participant from Argentina) put their points on the map at the OurCommonHome.org website.
- 35 people (same as above) received a weekly email in Flocknote with action items, background information, and inspirational links about areas of high impact.
- In response to increased activity on social media, the CCC created a Twitter account and new Facebook page at the handle @CommonHomeIndy. The current Facebook group will remain to allow group discussions of best practices.

## At the Parish Level

### Connecting with Parishes

In response to the educational and social media outreach efforts, many new connections were made with parishes during the Season of Creation. These include:

- Sacred Heart (members of the CCC spoke during three of their Masses and gave away 5 trees)
- St. Thomas the Apostle (interest in starting Creation Care Team)
- St. Mary of the Knobs (interest in starting creation care initiatives)
- Christ the King (interest in starting Creation Care Team)
- Bishop Chatard High School (reached out to make the faculty advisor aware of the tree planting event and CCC, she was happy to connect)

The CCC is discussing how best to follow up with these parishes.



### Prayer Services

Various prayer services took place across the archdiocese at the beginning of the Season of Creation and on October 4. These were planned by the parishes/schools, although members of the CCC attended some and assisted St. Gabriel in finding a prayer service in both English and Spanish.

- St. Thomas Aquinas (beginning)
- Holy Spirit Indianapolis (beginning)
- St. Gabriel (Oct 4)
- Christ the King (Oct 4)
- Sisters of St. Benedict (Oct 4)

### School Climate Strike

St. Thomas Aquinas School undertook a significant effort to hold a school-wide climate strike on September 27. The activities were organized within a week of one teacher being inspired with a nudge from parishioner and CCC member Sharon Horvath. Highlights of the day included a prayer service, a presentation by Earth Charter Indiana, door decorating, and students taking to the street with their banners made in Art and Science class. More information at: <https://ourcommonhome.org/st-thomas-aquinas-parish-and-school-celebrate-the-season-of-creation/>.



## **EVALUATION**

Being the first year of organizing activities for the Season of Creation, the CCC was overall pleased with the response and actions taken by individuals and parishes. There are several clear areas of improvement.

### **Improvements for Next Year**

**Reaching out to individual parishes/schools:** Time was spent this year creating and researching the education resources, emails, and tree purchasing information at the beginning and middle of the Season of Creation. Some activities were finalized within a week and did not have much time to be distributed. It is suggested to:

- Have all programs and tree planting information in place at least a month before the Season of Creation begins
- Reach out to participants in this year's programs a month in advance to encourage them to hold prayer services for the beginning of the Season of Creation and coordinate efforts to involve parishioners in tree plantings;
- Reach out to new parishes / schools at the beginning of the Season of Creation to encourage planting trees on the parish property. Start with parishes we know have Creation Care Teams or clubs.
- Create a School Climate Strike plan to distribute to schools based on the activities of St. Thomas Aquinas.

**Coordination of Tree Plantings:** At the beginning of the Season of Creation there was some back and forth about trees being free or groups having to purchase them on their own. 70% of the cost of the trees (about \$2,000 total) was sponsored by Mundell & Associates, with most groups signing on after free trees were offered. The distribution of the trees was not much of an issue this year; however, it could be improved on. Suggestions for next year include:

- Obtain sponsorship of \$2000 - \$5,000 to purchase trees from Woody Warehouse to give away to parishes
- Coordinating tree delivery to 2 far south locations (Woody Warehouse only delivers within 60 mile radius of Lizton, Indiana)
- Working further in advance with the parishes to hold a prayer service associated with the tree planting or make that a 'requirement' for receiving the free trees
- Encourage parishes who planted trees this year to reach out to at least one other parish and encourage them plant some trees
- Create a guide of how to engage parishioners based on the success of St. Gabriel

Alternatively, we could coordinate tree plantings in the spring, by ordering from the Vallonia State Nursery. These small seedlings are less than 50 cents each and are shipped at the beginning of March; however there is no guaranteed ship date which could create planning problems.

### **New Initiatives**

In addition to improvements mentioned, the following are additional programs that could be added:



**Hosting an archdiocesan-wide Green Mass and event:** Several parishes across the country host “Green Masses” on October 4<sup>th</sup> (the Feast Day of St. Francis) for all those interested in the care of creation, as well as those working in the environmental field. The CCC recommends:

- Holding a Green Mass on October 4<sup>th</sup>
- Including a tree planting by the Archbishop following the Mass

**Tapping into interactive eco-challenge programs:** Create parish level challenges that are spread and coordinated via social media. These could be based off some of our existing challenges in the 2019 5 week program. Example of a site that could be used: <https://ecochallenge.org/blog/peoples-ecochallenge-2019>

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The CCC was encouraged by the different activities and new contacts made during the first efforts to highlight the Season of Creation. With permanent placement in both the school and church calendar years, the Season of Creation has an opportunity to develop into a far reaching and key program of the CCC, and may act as a springboard for increased environmental awareness and engagement at the local parish level.

We hope to expand funding and coordination for next year’s activities starting in early 2020.

## **APPENDIX A**

### **EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS**

Season of Creation Flier  
Bilingual Season of Creation Flier (for El Paso)  
Sept 20 Climate Strike Demands  
Daily Theme Guide (Energy Awareness Tuesdays example)  
Weekly Program (Week 1 example)  
Fall Tree Sale Guide (page 1 of 5)  
Season of Creation website resources

# Season of Creation

SEPT 1  
through  
OCT 4

Join the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, Christians and other faith traditions from around the world in prayer and action to protect creation

**Many things have to change course, but it is we human beings above all who need to change**

(Laudato Si' #202)

## ACTION PROGRAMS

-  Meatless Mondays
-  Energy Awareness Tuesdays
-  Water Conservation Wednesdays
-  Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Thursdays
-  Walk, Bike, Share-a-ride to Work Fridays
-  Take-a-hike Saturdays
-  Laudato Si' Sundays

**Register Now**  
**St. Francis Feast Day**  
 **Tree Planting**  
**OCT 4**

Full action programs, best practices and registration for groups, parishes, schools, and individuals at

[www.OurCommonHome.org](http://www.OurCommonHome.org)



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# Season of Creation

## Tiempo de la Creación

Many things have to change course, but it is we human beings above all who need to change

Muchas cosas tienen que reorientar su rumbo, pero ante todo la humanidad necesita cambiar

(Laudato Si' #202)

### TAKE ACTION!

*¡Entra en Acción!*



**Meatless Mondays**  
*Lunes sin carne*



**Energy Awareness Tuesdays**  
*Martes de conciencia energética*



**Water Conservation Wednesdays**  
*Miércoles de conservación de agua*



**Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Thursdays**  
*Jueves de reducir, reusar y reciclar*



**Walk, Bike, Share-a-ride to Work Fridays**  
*Viernes de caminar, andar en bicicleta y compartir el viaje al trabajo*



**Take-a-hike Saturdays**  
*Sábados de escalar*



**Laudato Si' Sundays**  
*Domingos de Laudato Si'*

**Regístrate ahora**  
**Fiesta de San Francisco**



**Plantar árboles**

**OCT 4**

**On Facebook**

**@chicosx.launidad**



**OurCommonHome.org**

# Season of Creation



Archdiocese of  
Indianapolis  
Creation Care  
Commission

**Climate Strike**  
**Sept 20, 2019**

## Our Demands

*from the Laudato Si' Generation*

We call on political leaders and competent institutions to take seriously and urgently the main scientists' warnings, by:

- Achieving 100% renewable energy to “put an end to the fossil fuel era” in line with the Paris Agreement goal of limiting global warming to 1.5°C.
- Implementing the Global Compact for Migration, to deal with environmental refugees so that “nobody is left behind”.
- Protecting at least 30% of the planet’s ecosystems by 2030, with special attention to the indigenous communities living in those biodiverse regions, in application of the U.N. Convention on Biological Diversity
- Actively committing for a universal and fair access to drinking water by 2030, as foreseen in the SDGs goal 6 (Sustainable Development Goals of the UN 2030 Agenda)
- Adopting a “circular economy” model, to challenge the “modern myth of unlimited material progress” (LS 78) and the “unlimited growth” (LS 106) paradigm.

**[OurCommonHome.org/strike](http://OurCommonHome.org/strike)**



# Season of Creation



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## Energy Aware Tuesdays

In times like these where almost any activity needs electricity, we have to look for ways to save energy. Electricity production from fossil fuels is the biggest source of greenhouse gases and, in Indiana, we get 89% of our electricity from coal and natural gas.

Saving energy is not only good for the environment, but good for your wallet too! Small actions such as turning down the thermostat on your water heater, or bigger investments like purchasing ENERGY STAR appliances, start paying off right from the start!

*Lord - every breath we take is evidence of Your loving mercy. Help our gratitude and love for You to be evident not just in the words we speak, but also in our care for the environment, and with lifestyles that can be easily sustained by an earth we share with others.*

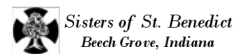
## Take Action!

- Read a book or pray instead of watching TV or using the computer
- Open the curtains facing the sun during the day and close the curtains at night
- Challenge yourself to go a whole day without turning on any lights
- Insulate the first 3 feet of pipe that enter/exit your water heater
- Wash clothes with cold water - today's laundry detergents work just as well in cold temperatures

[OurCommonHome.org](http://OurCommonHome.org)

From Sept to Oct each year, Christians around the world celebrate the Season of Creation by praying and acting together to protect our common home. Find resources and sign up for more tips to your inbox on the website!

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# Season of Creation



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## Energy Aware Tuesdays

## Resources

### More ways to save

- [31 Ways to Save Energy in Your Home \(with coloring page\)](#)
- [10 Simple Ways to Save Money on Your Energy Bill](#)

### Impacts of energy waste on the environment

- [darksky.org/light-pollution/energy-waste/](http://darksky.org/light-pollution/energy-waste/)

### Media and tools

- [Renewable energy, explained](#) (video)
- [EPA's Carbon Footprint Calculator](#)
- [Caring for God's Creation One Solar Panel at a Time](#) (Catholic Energies)
- [Encyclical Climate Action Kit](#) (Interfaith Power & Light/Catholic Climate Covenant)

### Articles

- [Top 11 Things You Didn't Know About Saving Energy at Home](#) (Energy.gov)
- [7 Easy Ways to Make Buildings Energy Efficient](#) (EcoWatch)
- [Getting off Fossil Fuels, One Conversation at a Time](#) (Catholic Climate Movement)

**OurCommonHome.org**

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Sisters of St. Benedict  
Beech Grove, Indiana



# Fall 2019 Tree Sales



ArchIndy  
Creation Care  
Commission

Many Soil and Water conservation districts (SWCD) hold native tree sales in the spring and fall and can help you choose what tree is best for the soils of your location. (See also [this guide to selecting a tree species](#)).

We've compiled a list of tree sales and for purchasing trees for an Oct 4 tree planting close to each of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis deaneries.

## Batesville Deanery

*Dearborn, Decatur, Franklin, Ohio, Ripley, and Shelby counties*

### Bartholomew County 2019 Native Tree Sale

Orders due September 6

\$26.75 per tree

Pickup at 1040 2nd Street, Columbus, IN 47201 on September 25

<http://www.bartholomewswcd.org/portfolio/2019-native-tree-sale/>

### OHIO - Hamilton County 2019 Native Tree Sale

Orders due September 14

\$29 per tree

Pickup at various locations on September 21

<https://www.greatparks.org/calendar/special-events/native-tree-shrub-sale>

## Bloomington Deanery

*Dearborn, Decatur, Franklin, Ohio, Ripley, and Shelby counties*

### Bartholomew County 2019 Native Tree Sale

Orders due September 6

\$26.75 per tree

Pickup at 1040 2nd Street, Columbus, IN 47201 on September 25

<http://www.bartholomewswcd.org/portfolio/2019-native-tree-sale/>

From Sept to Oct each year, Christians around the world celebrate the Season of Creation by praying and acting together to protect our common home. Find resources, view activities around the Archdiocese and sign up for more tips to your inbox on the website!

**OurCommonHome.org**



## OurCommonHome.org – Screenshot of Season of Creation Resources

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL <https://ourcommonhome.org/tag/season-of-creation/>. The website header features the Archdiocese of Indianapolis Creation Care Commission logo on the left, and navigation buttons for "Season of Creation" (highlighted in purple), "Living Laudato Si' Pilot" (highlighted in teal), "All Resources", and "Who We Are" on the right. A search icon is also present. Below the header is a dark navigation bar with links for "Catholic Social Teaching", "Prayer, Songs, and Liturgy", "Advocacy", "Climate Change Basics", "Sustainable Practices", and "NEWS". The main content area features a large banner image of a forested mountain range at sunrise, with a white box in the center containing the text "Season of Creation". Below the banner are three resource cards:

- Guía para organizar una plantación de árboles y servicio de oración**  
Prayer / Reflection  
Tu plantación de árboles comunitaria dejará un recuerdo vivo de tu compromiso de proteger los bosques y a quienes dependen de ellos. (Tree planting prayer service – Spanish) ...
- Message of Pope Francis for the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation (2019)**  
Homily Help  
Bulletin from Pope Francis on September 1, 2019. ...  
Category: Catholic Social Teaching  
Tag: Season of Creation
- Morning Prayer for Climate Action Day**  
Prayer / Reflection  
Prayer for an opening prayer of a high school assembly about climate change or standalone prayer. An action component is included, enabling students to participate in this day of action which Pope Francis endorsed. ...