



THE GREEN PAGE

presenting Bellarmine Chapel's outreach to the environment.

February, 2009

Environment Committee? What Environment Committee?

This fall, a group of Bellarmine parishioners and staff formed a committee to explore how we as a parish might address our connection and responsibility to the environment. In our initial meetings we developed a focus around three key areas:

1. Promoting Education and Awareness. Where can parishioners get information about environmental concerns. What are practical ways that parishioners can be more environmentally responsible.
2. Parish Operations and Parish Life. How can our parish operations be more environmentally responsible.
3. Faith and Spirituality. How does our Catholic faith impact our responsibility to the planet. What faith formation experiences can the parish provide to explore this connection.

To this end, the committee has already distributed a survey, which we hope you completed and returned to us. We have some of the results below. Additionally, our Winter Retreat, held last month, had a focus of awakening to a spirituality that is more Earth-connected.

We look forward to hearing from you, the parish, and learning what you would like to see, to learn, to do, as we all learn how to live more harmoniously with our environment.



You Spoke. We Listened.

Thanks to all who completed the surveys at the end of last year. Here is some of what we heard:

- 83% of you feel a connection between your Catholic faith and care for the environment.
- 79% feel that environmental responsibility is an issue that Bellarmine should embrace.
- 79% would be interested in activities to explore the relationship between our Catholic faith and environmental responsibility.

Additionally, some suggestions or comments that were shared:

- Clothing exchange/exchange flea market on the mall with leftovers to go to St Vincent De Paul stores
- Form connections with local farmers and sponsor a parish CSA (Community Supported Agriculture)
- Facilitate people making connections to carpool to church

(check inside for more information)

No Excuse!

Here are some ways that you can start right now to be more environmentally responsible. It's not rocket science, and you probably already know some of these, but maybe you just need a little push.

- Replace paper napkins with cloth napkins.
- Avoid products that are packaged for single use (i.e., drinks, school lunches, candy, cat and dog food, salad mixings, etc.). Instead, buy in bulk and transfer the products to your own reusable containers.
- While shopping, if you only buy a few products skip the shopping bag. For larger purchases, bring your own. (Buy a Bellarmine tote bag, available from the parish office.)
- Carry a mug with you wherever you go for take out beverages.
- Use that recycle bin that Rumpke gave you.
- Install low-flow showerheads.
- Run full loads of laundry and dishes.

Look for more tips at www.globalstewards.org/ecotips.htm



Green Resources

Sierra Club, How Green is my...?

Take a simple quiz about your practices doing every day activities, and then find practical suggestions and information on making your laundry, bathroom, bike ride, computer, etc. all more earth-friendly. A new quiz is added each month or so. Keep checking back for more information that addresses your lifestyle, whatever it may be.

<http://www.sierraclub.org/howgreen/>



Read This! Watch This!

Each month the Green Page will recommend a book or video for you to consider. We suggest borrowing these from the library, or looking for used sources for purchase when possible.

With Speed and Violence: Why Scientists Fear Tipping Points in Climate Change by Fred Pearce, 257 pages (Beacon, 2007) Fred Pearce is the environment consultant for New Scientist magazine. A leading environmental journalist, Pearce is known for his healthy skepticism and ability to make complicated scientific issues accessible to non-scientists. In fact, America magazine describes *With Speed and Violence* as the best book on climate change for lay people.

Planet Earth - the complete DVD Series This astounding 11-part BBC series is basically the greatest nature/wildlife series ever made. Each 50-minute episode covers a specific geographical region and/or wildlife habitat until the entire planet has been magnificently represented by the most astonishing sights and sounds you'll ever experience. The filmmakers were so profoundly moved by their experience in creating this series that the final DVD is devoted to Planet Earth: The Future, with a discussion by some leading experts on issues of conservation and our options for living in balance with the earth.

Lessons from the Planet

With a belief that it is important to share our experiences, our passions, our faith, we are pleased to present reflections from parishioners that shed light on our connection to God's creation.

From Doug Klocke:

I believe in honeysuckle. I believe in cascading boughs of green, in deliriously fragrant blossoms, in tiny drops of sweet nectar.

I believe in this bush that every summer erupts in celebration of warm days and bright sun. It lures the monarch. It shelters the fawn. It is an anthem in praise of procreation.

And yet it vexes me.

It intrudes upon my yard, just as it intrudes upon highways, and parking lots. And I, like gardeners everywhere, hack it back. Mow it down. Chop it. Saw it. This smiling, dancing shrub must be controlled, broken... and pruned.

I stride across the yard, shears in hand. The honeysuckle waves at me in friendly greeting. It yields to me as I grab its branches, and does not fight as I fervently dismember it. When the carnage is over, and I am sweaty and sore, all that is left is a stubbly stump. The stump does not cry. It stands in place, stiff and unmoving. Behind me, a pile of faded, wilted green. Here are the tears, dropping from bones soon to bleach in the heat of a July day.

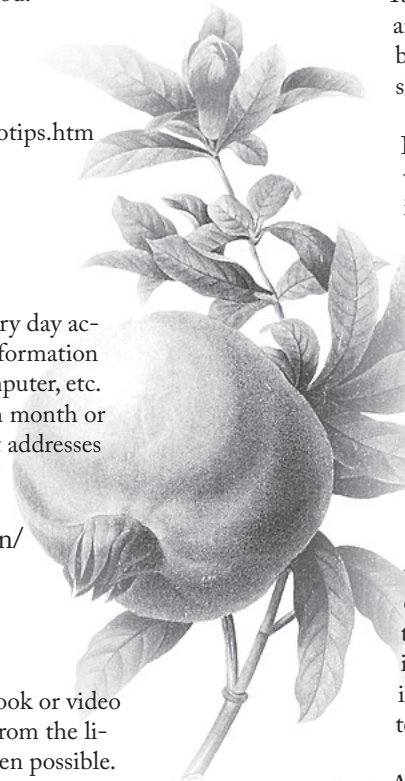
The next morning I survey my handiwork. Ahh, so much more open. So bright. I look down. Hmmm. I'll have to do something about that stump.

But I don't. Not that day, not the next. And then, not too long after the bloody day it is there - a new shoot. A chartreuse stem with leaves barely unfolded. The leaves turn to me with open eyes blinking in a fresh new world. But it isn't a fresh new world! This is my world, my yard, and there is not a place for a honeysuckle bush here. I reach down and tear it off.

And, of course, in another couple days there are more shoots. And more after that. Soon they stand a good two feet. They keep coming, with an excitement I cannot comprehend. Stiff and erect, they can't wait to grow another inch. Fortunately for them, I am lazy and busy. They keep growing. They can't help it. Inside them is a desire beyond fear, an enthusiasm beyond sanity.

I have tried to shape a honeysuckle bush, to manicure it into a presentable lawn ornament. The honeysuckle humors me. It giggles as I tickle it. It smiles at my resolve. It pats me on the back in indulgent patronage... It is no use. In days, things are popping out in all the wrong places.

So there is this bush. And me. We are not so different. That which courses through the honeysuckle, courses in me. It is Life, and we should honor it. When we sing or dance or laugh, we DO honor it. And when we are hacked, or mowed down, what are we to do but to go on, to stretch a fresh shoot into a new day? 🐣



Upcoming Events

Bike/PAC

February 10

6:30 to 8 p.m., Arnold's 216 East 8th Street (2nd floor)

Bike/PAC meets every month to month to discuss Bicycle and Pedestrian access issues. Bike/PAC helps the City apply for funding, prioritize the work and promote bicycling.



I Love Mountains Day

Frankfort, KY

February 17, 2009 10:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Hosted by KFTC - Kentuckians For The Commonwealth

<<http://events.powerpastcoal.org/powerpastcoal/events/host/8877>>

Event Description:

Join more than 800 KFTC members in Frankfort to participate in a symbolic march to the capitol from the Kentucky River, which is heavily polluted by coal mining waste. Each person will represent one of the more than 800 miles of streams buried by mountaintop removal mining. At 11 a.m. we march from the Kentucky River to the capitol steps, where we will rally starting about 12 noon. Good music and well-known and inspiring speakers. Stick around after the rally to meet with legislators, asking their support for House Bill 104, "the Stream Saver Bill," legislation to prevent the dumping of mining waste from mountaintop removal operations into streams.

Learn more and RSVP at www.KFTC.org/love or call 606-878-2161.



Cincinnati Regional Food Congress

March 14, 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

A day-long event to discuss a shared vision for community food systems in Southwest Ohio.

More information at: <http://localfoodsystems.org/cincinnati-regional-food-congress-march-2009>



There is but one ocean
though its coves have many names;
a single sea of atmosphere
with no coves at all;
the miracle of soil,
alive and giving life,
lying thin on the only earth,
for which there is no spare.

*David Brower
conservationist
1912-2000*