

June 2019 SCNY PJIC Office Update – Climate, Youth and The Future!



Celebrating the 4th Anniversary of Laudato Si' – June 18th was the 4th Anniversary of the release of Laudato Si', Pope Francis' encyclical On Care for Our Common Home.

The Metro New York Catholic Climate Movement (MNYCCM), with other co-sponsoring groups, held two successful events in June with Lorna Gold, author of *Climate Generation: Awakening to the Future of Our*

Children, a highly personal account of her journey as a climate activist based in Ireland. First event was at St. Francis Xavier Church and second was near the UN with over 200 in attendance, many of them young people. Truly an inter-generational event, Lorna Gold and the panelists asked the older generation to listen to youth, to their concerns and grieving over the desecration and destruction of Earth and loss of biodiversity, ecosystems and species. The young see things differently and grieve differently, we were told, so how will we, adults, respond to their grieving, their loss, their sensitivity to the world around them and all that is in it? The challenge put before us: join with youth in an intergenerational response to climate change, and, to Care for Creation!

Fossil Fuel Divestment While Lorna was in NYC, MNYCCM also managed to have a meeting with NY State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli to discuss divestment from fossil fuels in the NYS pension fund. Dr. Erin Lothes, a theologian specializing on the ethics of energy and a member of MNYCCM Steering Committee, participated as well. MNYCCM pressed him on the urgency from a faith/moral point of view. He held to his responsibility to the pensioners and to the investment strategies contained in his recently-released Climate Action Report. <https://www.osc.state.ny.us/press/releases/june19/060619a.htm> DiNapoli noted that divestment is not the only strategy to address climate change, that agriculture and transportation need to be addressed too and asked what we were doing and if our parishes had divested. Last year worldwide 600 Catholic institutions had pledged to divest. A note on SCNY investing: the Sisters of Charity of New York do not invest directly in the fossil fuel industry.

Pope Francis declares we have a "climate emergency"! At a June 13-14 meeting in Rome, Pope Francis spoke with the CEOs of the major fossil fuel companies and urged them to reduce their carbon output, saying that a failure to act urgently to reduce greenhouse gases would be "a brutal act of injustice toward the poor and future generations." He also endorsed the 1.5C limit on temperature rise, referring to warnings from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change of "catastrophic" effects if we crossed such a threshold. Visit <https://cruxnow.com/vatican/2019/06/14/pope-to-oil-execs-we-dont-have-the-luxury-to-wait-to-fight-climate-change/> to learn more.

The Climate and Community Protection Act passes in New York State. Was it coincidence or divine providence or the many phone calls and rallies – or all of these! The day after the anniversary of Laudato Si', Albany legislators and the Governor came to an agreement to pass the Climate and Community Protection Act (CCPA)! Though weakened from its initial form, especially in the environmental justice provisions, CCPA is a major breakthrough. CCPA is the most far-reaching piece of legislation yet in the country to address climate change. THANK YOU to those who made phone calls, lobbied and kept advocating!

Upcoming Events and Initiatives

1. **Season of Creation Mass at College of Mount Saint Vincent**, tentative date and time, September 8th at 5 pm. Vigil following. If you can't come...
2. **Celebrate Season of Creation in your local community** (from September 1, Care for Creation Day through October 4, Feast of St. Francis of Assisi) with a prayer or vigil service. Invite friends, colleagues to participate. Resources at: <https://seasonofcreation.org/>
3. **#ClimateStrikes** – Learn about the climate strikes that students throughout the world are participating in. <https://www.climatestrike.net/> Next worldwide climate strike is September 20, 2019. The NYC Climate Strike will be in front of the United Nations. Meet two youth leaders calling on world leaders and adults to act now by viewing videos: Greta Thunberg from Sweden meeting Pope Francis <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cj-ErzvLfk> and, Alexandria Villasenor, NYC, founder of EarthUprising.org <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fhE6YAlqCuk>
4. **Laudato Si' Generation** – visit this website and sign on to the letter to older generation. Read the Manifesto and commit to at least one action to reduce your carbon footprint. <https://laudatosigeneration.org/>