

## Creation Care Team at St Patrick's Church

Meeting: date: AUG 11, 2025

Location: Faith Formation room – Club Building

See minutes of previous meetings archived at <https://stpatrickbridge.org/creation-care/>

Contact us at [Creation.Care@stpatrickbridge.org](mailto:Creation.Care@stpatrickbridge.org)

Previous meeting of the full committee: JUN 8 2025 (we skipped July)

Next meetings of the full committee: Sep 8

TONIGHT:

facilitate: Judy Opalach

notes: Brian Stefan-Szittai

prayer: Denise Rowland

Creation Care: striving to be a parish where the culture is love and care for God's creation

### The Jubilee Prayer

Father in heaven,

may the ***faith*** you have given us

in your son, Jesus Christ, our brother,

and the flame of ***charity*** enkindled

in our hearts by the Holy Spirit,

reawaken in us the blessed ***hope***

for the coming of your Kin-dom.

May your grace transform us

into tireless cultivators of the seeds of the Gospel.

May those seeds transform from within both humanity and the whole cosmos

in the sure expectation

of a new heaven and a new earth,

when, with the powers of Evil vanquished,

your glory will shine eternally.

May the grace of the Jubilee

reawaken in us, ***Pilgrims of Hope***,

a yearning for the treasures of heaven.

May that same grace spread

the joy and peace of our Redeemer

throughout the earth.

To you our God, eternally blessed,

be glory and praise for ever.

Amen.

Attendance at tonight's meeting: Kate Campbell, Dick Weber, Paul Kapczuk (via phone), Judy Opalach, Denise Rowland, Mary Grace DeStefanis, Brian Stefan-Szittai, Jared Bartley

I. Prayer: Season of Creation prayer: Peace with Creation (Denise)

<https://seasonofcreation.org/resources/>

II. Pilgrimage of Hope

a. The Pilgrims of Hope for Creation Committee (Mary and Denise) looked at the toolkit.

<https://catholicpilgrimsofhope.org/resources-2/>

- b. Judy will follow up with Fr. Gurnick, whom she gave the link to about the St. Francis Banners; we hear that Fr. Gurnick wants to buy two banners for St. Patrick's and St. Malachi's Oratory
- c. October 5 after the 11am Mass: we organize a pilgrimage walk around the grounds of St Patrick, including litany of saints, short talk about St Kateri Tekakwitha, songs. (Denise will clear this date, to mark the Feast of St Francis, with Fr Gurnick)
- e. other Pilgrimages of Hope are being announced by the Diocesan Social Action Office, including one on Sep 20 organized by West Side Creation Care Team (Judy is our liaison for that event, which starts at St Malachi)

### III. Coffee and Donuts

- a. we had previously offered to Christy Bartley our willingness to do a Season of Creation themed fellowship some Sunday in September
- b. tonight we decided we do not have capacity
- c. Brian will inform Christy that we will not host Coffee and Donuts this fall

### IV. St Malachi parishioners' involvement with Creation Care

- a. Mary Grace has invited Judy Slivka and Kay Vine to our Creation Care monthly meetings but we have not heard back from Judy
- b. Kay Vine told Brian that she would come if someone could give her a ride from and back to her home in Rocky River; Brian suggested she seek a Creation Care-focused friend from St Malachi to accompany her (because all of us live near St Pat's or in other directions)

### V. Commissions

- a. We designated liaisons:

Hospitality and Events (Mary Grace)

Charity and Justice (Judy; Denise will introduce chair Henry Speier to Judy)

Grounds and Buildings (Jared)

Faith Formation (Kate)

Communications (Mary)

Worship (Denise)

- b. Denise will contact Henry Spier and invite him to a monthly Creation Care meeting; Brian suggested we move a monthly meeting to St Malachi to make it more convenient for him (since he volunteers at the Monday night meal at St Malachi)
- c. Parish Assembly: Brian will serve as liaison
- d. Parish Finance Council: Jared will serve as liaison

### VI. Season of Creation

- a. see guide of resources: <https://seasonofcreation.org/resources/>

b. Mass for the Care of Creation was announced July 3 by the Vatican and celebrated by Pope Leo outdoors on July 9. Brian will ask Fathers Hollis, Reim and Gurnick to consider using any of the prayers (e.g., the collect, prayer after communion) during any of the five Sundays of Season of Creation

c. In addition to the Mass prayers, there is a beautiful proclamation that Pope Leo released (June 30) announcing the theme of this year's Season of Creation: Seeds of Peace and Hope. Brian will excerpt sections to include in the weekly parish e-news. Brian will also ask Fathers

Hollis, Reim and Gurnick to consider integrating the themes from the pope's proclamation into their Sunday liturgies.

#### VII. Parish Picnic August 24

- a. Mary Grace serving as liaison with Cathy Graham, chair of the picnic event (and chair of Hospitality and Events)
- b. Brian told Cathy Graham that he will purchase cutlery, cups and plates from Dean Supply that are BPI-certified (Biodegradable Products Institute, a third party verification of ASTM Standards [American Society for Testing & Materials])
- c. Creation Care will run the Zero-Waste station on Aug 24
- d. Denise has tapped Olive Reitz to run a face-painting station
- e. Greg Zucca will organize non-competitive games, e.g. bocce ball

#### VIII. Kateri Garden

- a. can we set up a garden maintenance day? Can we do it before Aug 21 (see below)?
- b. how can we better utilize the garden for education on Catholic teaching around care for God's creation? For example, can we post a QR code that takes visitors to more info?
- c. Mary Grace offered to send invitations to local elementary schools to tour the garden
- d. Mary Grace and Judy offered to draft a presentation/curriculum that we could use for school tours
- e. Kate offered to speak with Faith Formation about integrating Catholic teaching around care for God's creation into PSR (Parish School of Religion)
- f. Brian put this together; maybe we can get it on our website:  
Saint Kateri Tekakwitha, whose feast day is July 14, is the matron saint of traditional ecology, Indigenous Peoples, and care for creation.

Saint Kateri was born in 1656 and almost died from smallpox as an infant. She grew up along the Mohawk River in what is now eastern New York state. (There is a [Saint Kateri National Shrine and Historic Site](#) in Fonda, New York.)

In 1675 Tekakwitha (her original name) was visited by a Jesuit priest who baptized her the following year. Her conversion brought upon her a veritable persecution, including death threats. The priest advised her to pray unremittingly and to flee to safety, which she did in 1677—traveling almost 200 miles to the Catholic mission of St. Francis Xavier at Sault Saint-Louis, near Montreal. On the Feast of the Annunciation in 1679, Kateri Tekakwitha ("Lily of the Mohawks") took a vow of perpetual chastity and expressed her interest to found a community of indigenous nuns. A year later, she became seriously ill. On Wednesday of Holy Week in 1680, a day after receiving final rites, at barely 24 years of age, she passed away while uttering the names of Jesus and Mary. Her last words were documented: "Jesus, I love You."

After her death, a priest noticed that Kateri's features, which had been marked by smallpox, had become remarkably beautiful. A strong devotion to her developed as believers experienced answers from their prayers of intercession. In 1688 the bishop of Quebec called her "the Geneviève of Canada." A century later, another priest wrote that she was "universally regarded as the Protectress of Canada." In the 20th century, the Vatican named Kateri Tekakwitha venerable (1943) and then blessed (1980), before canonized her on Oct. 21, 2012. Devotion to her has spread to Canada, the United States, and

throughout the world. Each year pilgrims travel to Auriesville and to the Saint-François-Xavier mission at Caughnawaga, where her relics are preserved. She has since become the subject of numerous biographies in several languages.

Saint Kateri and her Indigenous community (the Haudenosaunee, aka Algonkin Mohawk) have an extensive knowledge of the natural world, acquired over thousands of years of direct contact with nature. The Indigenous worldview of the Haudenosaunee—then and now—involves relationships built on reciprocity, respect, gratitude. Hunting, fishing, farming, and gathering, St. Kateri's people were keenly aware of the rhythms of nature inscribed by our Creator. Theirs is a worldview of responsibility, care, gratitude, and respect for the natural world of God's creation.

#### IX. Bottled Water

- a. some expressed concerns about the amount of single-use disposable plastic bottles being distributed on parish grounds.
- b. how can we talk to others (especially those in leadership, e.g. evening meals program) about our concerns?
- c. do we want to start an education campaign?

<https://www.multipure.com/all-posts/the-harmful-effects-of-plastic-water-bottles/>

<https://www.beyondplastics.org/fact-sheets/plastic-bottles>

#### X. Special event at St Pat's

THU, AUG 21, 6-7:30pm : Managing Native Landscapes. Free hands-on workshop to help you shape a native landscape in your yard. You'll receive some native plants, planting guide, and soil test kits. Organizers: Sacred Grounds (a project of National Wildlife Federation), Cuyahoga County Soil & Water Conservation District, Forest City Ecological Services. Host: St Patrick Church, 3602 Bridge Ave. Location: St Patrick Church. More info [here](#)

#### Next meetings

SEP 8

Facilitate: Kate

Prayer: Dick

Notes: Judy

OCT 13

Facilitate: Mary Grace

Prayer: Denise

Notes: Dick

NOV 10

Facilitate: Denise

Prayer: Mary Grace

Notes:

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