



Dear Parishioner,

Thank you for making St. Francis a more environmentally friendly church. Hopefully we have inspired you to make some changes in your own life, here are some updates of our own.

-The St. Francis Environmental Team

St. Francis Environmental Survey

Thank you to the many of you who filled out the survey in September. Several trends stood out:

- *Response to the Cry of the Earth:* -planting seedlings and attracting pollinators, adding gardens, participating in RARE's 1000 Garden project, getting speakers on environmental topics and holding workshops on recycling, water and energy improvement.
- *Response to the Cry of the Poor:* - making our garden produce available to the needy, particularly supporting St. Mary's Tiny Home Takeout.
- *Reconciliation:* - creating an edible garden that focuses on indigenous foods and traditional planting ideas.

PLEASE NOTE: - We are impacted by Covid 19 protocols which affect much of our planning for events and the implementation of parishioner ideas. We hope to be able to offer more of the in-person events recommended by parishioners in the future.



Growing Together:

Reflecting on the survey at our October Zoom meeting, it became obvious that the "major project" for 2022 was to expand the existing gardens at the back of the church, with parishioners uniting and connecting under the theme of "Growing Together." Our Building Manager, Gary Howell, is already utilizing the area for fruit and vegetables. The Team has plans to support his endeavors in 2022. We will be having planting workshops in the spring, asking for volunteers to help with weeding/watering in the summer and trying to connect the bounty of these gardens to people in the fall. Can you commit a little bit of time for this?

Notes from Gary:

- Seeds have been collected labeled and stored for next spring
- A new layer of straw mulch has been laid around all 3 apple trees
- 5 bags of chopped leaves have been turned into the veg gardens getting ready for next year
- Garlic has been planted for spring start
- Draft design begun for next year's layout.

Resurrection High School and St. Francis Are Registered Pollinator Gardens

[RARE's](#) focus is that pollinators are a critical part of our ecosystem, making plants healthier and able to produce a harvest. By creating and maintaining a pollinator garden you are contributing to overall conservation! Planting native species in gardens will support critical pollinators to provide their important ecosystem service. Your garden will then become part of the corridor showing conservation efforts from Waterloo Region to Toronto. Your one garden will become part of the larger overall goal of habitat creation and will join the mosaic of gardens helping to reverse pollinator declines and to support the local environment. Even if you have a small condominium garden you can still register.

Gary Howell has registered St. Francis, and below is a picture of the students from the landscaping class at Resurrection CSS which created a pollinator garden outside of the daycare located on the property. Butterfly bushes, goldenrod and hostas were planted. A bee hotel was also built and put in the garden. The garden was registered with Rare's *1000 Pollinator Gardens* project. Pictured are Shannan Zister (teacher) and James Bow from RARE.

You can help bees by signing the Preserve Our Bees Petition at: [you.leadnow.ca](https://www.leadnow.ca)

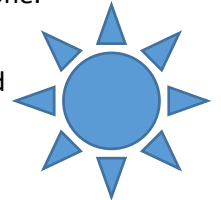


A Prayer for Our Earth

All -powerful God, you are present in the whole universe and in the smallest of your creatures. You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.

Pour out upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and beauty. Fill us with peace, that we may live as brothers and sisters, harming no one.

O God of the poor, help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth, so precious in your eyes. Bring healing to our lives, that we may protect the world and not prey on it, that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction.



Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain at the expense of the poor and the earth. Teach us to discover the worth of each thing, to be filled with awe and contemplation, to recognize that we are profoundly united with every creature as we journey towards your infinite light.

We thank you for being with us each day. Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle for justice, love and peace.

~ Pope Francis,
Laudato Si'

Upcoming Events

Wednesday, January 12, 2022

7:00 – 8:00 pm

- St. Francis Environmental Team Zoom Meeting (**Contact the church to join us – we'd love to hear your voice.**)

Saturday, February 5, 2022

1:30 – 2:30 pm

- Webinar on Pollinator Gardening with RARE: creating pollinator friendly gardens.