

Looking Back on Year One: Goal Six of Laudato Si

Ecological Spirituality

HEARING THE VOICE OF CREATION

As this Season of Creation closes, we Daughters of Wisdom look back on Year One as a time of discovering Wisdom present in Creation; a spirit that penetrates all reality: both the cry of creation and the cry of those afflicted by the realities of our world.

We would like to share several actions in response to our Plan for Year One- Ecological Spirituality.

HONORING INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Our sponsored ministry, Wisdom House in Litchfield, Connecticut, conducts a Retreat and Conference Center. A practice we have and are continuing is called [Land Acknowledgement](#). It is a formal statement spoken at the beginning of a public event that is taking place on land originally inhabited by Indigenous Peoples. We have been on this land since 1949. At the beginning of each program, we say a simple introduction:

"We pause to acknowledge all local indigenous peoples but especially the Pootatuck tribal homelands located here in Litchfield. We embrace their continued connection to this region and thank them for allowing us to live, work, learn and collaborate on their traditional homeland. Let us now take a moment of silence to pay respect to their elders and to all persons, past and present."



LAND EASMENT PROJECT

Wisdom House has partnered with the Litchfield Land Trust-- holder of 1,416 acres and dedicated to helping protect our area's natural resources for present and future residents.

PROGRAMS

Labyrinth Walk and Talk



Once a month, there is a formal gathering around our [seven-circuit Labyrinth](#), a sacred walking path. The meeting includes time for conversation and meditation. Not only do we step on the land, but the land holds the blessing of all the footsteps that have come before us. The leader reminds the labyrinth walkers to consider what blessing they need to receive and what blessing they will leave to become part of all the blessings the Labyrinth holds

After each walk, the participants are invited back to reflect on their experience and to have lunch together in the Retreat dining room.

Journey of the Universe

Wisdom House strives to host [programs](#) that convey a sense of wonder and reverence ranging from the cosmos to the microcosm. One such program took place on September 24, 2022, *Journey of the Universe*, presented by John Grim, Ph.D., and Sam King. Twenty participants heard the epic story of the emergence of the universe and the community of life that came to be as they participated in the Cosmic Walk of 14 billion years. In the afternoon discussion, participants wrestled with a new vision for how we might bring forth a vibrant Earth community. Programs flowing from these themes will continue to be sponsored by Wisdom House.



WAYS OF MINIMIZING IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT

[Wisdom House is committed to serving guests](#) the highest quality plant-based meals creating a delightful and nourishing experience. Locally sourced ingredients are used whenever possible.



Over this past year, 14,511 meals were served. The kitchen staff has recently transitioned from serving buffet style to serving individually packaged meals to eliminate excess food waste. The packaging is biodegradable and recyclable.

Toxic pesticides are not used on the grounds, consisting of 14 acres of grasslands. Seven acres of wildlife for the nesting of native wildlife are registered with the

Department of Agriculture. Plants native to Northwest Connecticut are predominantly used, and an ongoing effort exists to remove invasive plants. Most plants are deer resistant to minimize the presence of Lyme Disease carrying ticks.

OTHER EFFORTS



In Islip, Long Island, we have a group of volunteers who partner in a Town program called Keep Islip Clean (KIC). The Town's program is a part of an international effort devoted to keeping coastal waters clean. The group's purpose is to keep the waters around the Marina clean of garbage, bottles, cans, cigarette butts, and plastic waste. They make a difference with their consistent follow-up and remind all of the necessity of keeping the environment clean.

The Daughters of Wisdom's Huntington Station, Long Island Community, converted their yard into a productive vegetable farm. They shared their harvest with the neighborhood and friends.



LISTEN TO THE CRY OF THE POOR

Through our [Wisdom Mission Grants](#), we have awarded grants to groups that:

- Train immigrant women in job readiness skills
- Welcome the undocumented and assist them in getting legal status, educate them on legal rights and assist in preparing applications for asylum
- Form a strong Justice climate in Southeast Virginia and empower these groups to network with Just Faith ministries and other Faith-based groups extending the reach to all

"With creative fidelity to the spiritual and apostolic experience of Montfort and Marie Louise, we give priority to wounded humanity. We discern the needs according to our context. We respond with active love and strive to address the causes of injustices."

DW Rule of Life #5-7 (2014)

By Sr. Ann Gray, DW