



La Vista Ecological Learning Center

A ministry of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate
April 1, 2018
E-News

April Programs and Eco-Spirituality Calendar

April 1: Easter Sunday and Our Deeper Memory



In this wonderful book *Christ of the Celts*, John Philip Newell tells us that Christ is the memory of what we have forgotten. As we celebrate resurrection, we know that "He comes to wake us up, to call us back to ourselves and to the relationship that is deep within all things...Christ discloses to us the sacred root of our being and of all being." The Celtic cross reminds us of this as well as the interconnectedness of all life, a marvelous Easter and ecological message.

On Easter when Earth releases its deep memory in flower, green blades, and springtime we are called to this deeper memory, and we celebrate that "we are all walking around shining like the sun." Blessed Feastday to you and yours!!

April 1st: Fossil Fuels Day

This internationally commemorated day is named by combining April Fool's Day with our growing awareness of the foolishness of relying on fossil fuels. It is celebrated with demonstrations around the world. Bill McKibben's 350.org movement calls us to "Leave it in the ground!" meaning that we should rely on renewable energy that is above ground, like air and sunshine, and leave the coal, oil and gas buried in the ground.

In *Laudato Si'* Pope Francis joins the sentiments of this movement when he writes in paragraph 165: *We know that technology based on the use of highly polluting fossil fuels - especially coal, but also oil and, to a lesser degree, gas - needs to be progressively replaced without delay.*

You probably won't be thinking about renewable energy on Easter Sunday, but any time is a good time to remember who we really are - people shining like the sun who desire a clean renewable energy future. Let's treasure that memory every day and act on it.

**Our Deeper Memory Retreat:
Exploring our Evolving Universe,
Earth and Spirituality
July 24 - July 30
Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat,
Wheatland Iowa**

Participants will be guided in contemplating the beauty of our deepest identity as blessed human

beings in an ancient universe on our sacred Mother Earth. This prayerful reflection is intended to lead to action on behalf of the whole Earth community.

Presentations will explore the deep memory of the universe, Earth, and ourselves; feminist, indigenous and Celtic spiritualities; Jewish and Christian traditions; and our local bioregions. This silent retreat includes morning rituals and presentations, time to commune with nature in this pristine habitat, supportive videos and an optional sharing each day. Retreat concludes with a hermit day outdoors.

Cost: \$500 which includes \$50 nonrefundable deposit sent with registration. Balance of \$450 due upon arrival. Registration deadline is June 9, 2018. Retreat is limited to ten participants.

For more information or to receive a detailed brochure, email info@lavistaelc.org and make your request.



**April 21: Our Sacred Earth, Our Common Home:
Reflection & Action on Laudato Si'**

Saturday, April 21, 9:00 am - 12:30 pm

**Note: Held at the National Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows,
Belleville, Illinois**

Dr. Mary Evelyn Tucker, who collaborated for many years with eco-theologian and Earth scholar Fr. Thomas Berry, will deliver the keynote address at this event devoted to the study and implementation of Pope Francis' landmark encyclical on ecology, *Laudato Si'*. Participants will then take part in a series of "hands-on" break-out sessions. The morning will conclude with a feedback and takeaway session. This event is intended for individuals and parish groups looking for inspiration as well as practical ways to care for our common home, our sacred Earth.

Breakout Sessions:

"The Challenge of Technology and Simple Lifestyle" - Cheryl Kemner, OSF & Nicole Heerlein

"Backyard Revolution" - Maxine Pohlman, SSND

"Care for the Earth, Care for the Poor" - Connie Probst,

"What Can My Parish and Family Do?" - Jamie Hasemeier

There will be a special breakout session for women religious with Dr. Tucker.

Mary Evelyn Tucker, Ph.D. is a Senior Lecturer and Research Scholar at the School of Forestry and Environmental Studies at Yale Divinity School. Working with Brian Swimme, they created a multi-media project called *Journey of the Universe*.

Cost: \$25 adults, \$15 for students (For those who are able, we suggest a payment of \$40 to cover the fee of a student who cannot afford to pay.)

Registration: Call the Shrine at 618-394-6270 or register through the Shrine online at

<https://snows.org/events-2/our-sacred-earth-our-common-home/>

April 22: Celebrate Earth Day

This Earth Day thank an oak tree. Why? Doug Tallamy explains in his book [Bringing Nature Home](#): *Acoms feed deer, raccoons, turkeys, mice, black bear, squirrels, and even wood ducks. Cavities of oaks supply vital nesting sites for dozens of species of birds. Oaks are the quintessential wildlife plants: no other plant genus supports more species of Lepidoptera (moths and butterflies), thus providing more types of bird food than the mighty oak.*

As can be expected, oaks are in trouble. Non-native trees, shrubs and invasives species dominate woodland, outcompeting oak seedlings. Oaks need full sun to reproduce and grow. Most of our oaks are old, making them vulnerable to drought and disease.

What can you do? This Earth Day plan on clearing out weedy trees and plants to let the sun shine on the forest floor. Remove non-native invasive plant species. Plant oak trees in sunny areas on your land. Get informed and befriend the amazing oak.

La Vista CSA Farm Now Taking Memberships!

There are many reasons to join La Vista's CSA Farm and share in the harvest: enjoying delicious fresh vegetables, a personal connection to our farm and farmer, supporting our local food system, eating more healthfully. We hope you can find a reason to join our farm family. You can download membership forms from the web site: www.lavistacsa.org.

