



# La Vista Ecological Learning Center

A ministry of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate

March 1, 2018

**E-News**

## March Eco-spiritual Calendar and Programs



One of my favorite Mary Oliver quotes is taken from her poem Terns:

"But nothing you ever understand  
will be sweeter, or more binding,  
than this deepest affinity  
between your eyes and the world."

I'm sure you have had that mystical experience of being entranced by a profound visual connection with nature. This time of year is perfect for nurturing that deepest affinity. La Vista provides stunning views across the river as the bottomlands begin to green this season.

As one looks into the Oblates Woods Preserve, the green shoots of a wide array of daffodils, jonquils and narcissus are spreading down the ravine beside the Lodge providing a fresh look for this new season of life. The Pollinator Garden is also greening up, getting ready to offer habitat and nectar for a variety of pollinators throughout the growing season. At La Vista CSA Farm, the greenhouse is already alive with sprouts for shares of early spring greens! Yum.

La Vista inspires us to experience our oneness with creation, feeling a deep connection with our "sister, mother earth" as Pope Francis calls her. Which aspect of springtime captures your eyesight, touching your heart as well, moving you to express gratitude?

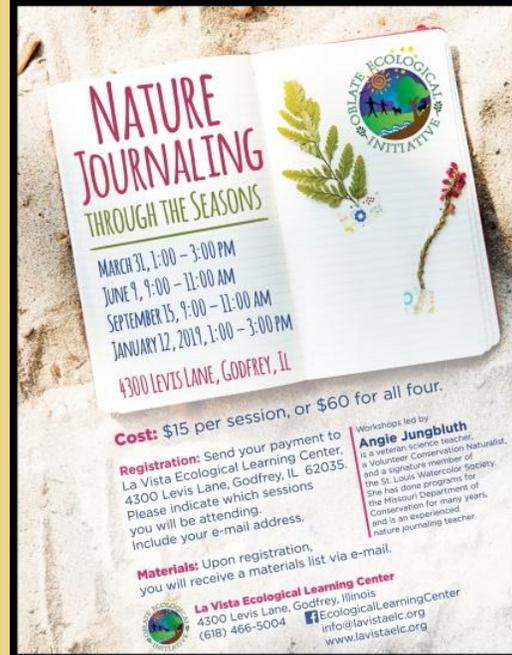
I invite you to join us for our newest adventure - Nature Journaling (Please see the description below). What a lovely way to live more intentionally in this world of beauty, rather than just living on it!

Watch our Facebook page where we will announce the coming of the daffodils and the Virginia bluebells - sights not to be missed! Even if there is no program, we invite you to come and enjoy the wildflowers.

**Nature Journaling  
through the Seasons**  
**Sat., March 31, 1:00 - 3:00 pm;**  
**June 9, 9:00 - 11:00 am;**  
**September 15, 9:00 - 11:00 pm;**  
**January 12, 1:00 - 3:00 pm**

How would you like to experience your outdoor time at

a deeper and richer level? If this piques your interest, then join us each season as we learn how to record our outdoor discoveries through Nature Journaling. We will start inside to get acquainted with techniques and strategies and then move outside to journal. Nature Journaling is an excellent way to document your discoveries, thoughts, questions, and more as you explore Mother Earth at La Vista! All skill levels are welcome, and artistic talent is not required.



Angie Jungbluth, is a veteran science teacher, has done programs for the Missouri Department of Conservation for many years, is a Volunteer Master Naturalist, and is a signature member of the St. Louis Watercolor Society. She is an experienced nature journaling teacher and considers it a favorite pastime.

Cost: \$15 per session, or \$60 for all four.

Registration: Send your payment and which sessions you want to attend to La Vista, 4300 Levis Lane, Godfrey, IL 62035.

Upon registration, you will be sent a materials list. Please include your e-mail address.

## Spring Equinox Celebration and Presentation on Bees Saturday, March 24, 2:00 - 4:00 pm

Celebrate the beginning of spring and enjoy Pat and Jerry Veicht's passion for bees and honey. Aware of the crisis among bee colonies, Pat and Jerry appreciate any opportunity to teach how we can aid all species of bees. Join us, visit the hives at La Vista, and enjoy camaraderie on the bluffs! Please bring a snack to share.

Cost: Donations to support our programming are always welcome.

Registration: Please call 618-466-5004 or e-mail us at [info@lavistaelc.org](mailto:info@lavistaelc.org) and let us know how many are coming.

## Don't miss this opportunity to hear Dr. Mary Evelyn Tucker!

### Our Sacred Earth, Our Common Home: A Morning of 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

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

## March Worldwide Ecological Days and Good Friday

### March 21 World Forestry Day: Why do we need it?

Scientists agree that forests everywhere are in serious trouble due to climate change and human demand for land and forest products. Our forests are vital to the whole Earth community, humans as well as other beings. Pope Francis reminds us that they have intrinsic value beyond their usefulness.

Use this special day to get informed, dialogue with others about the issue, and plan an action in your local area like planting an oak tree. In addition, get out there and enjoy their beauty. They are a sacred place to pray, and they are also known to stimulate mental health and well-being.

## **March 22 World Water Day (see March 30 Good Friday)**

### **March 24: Earth Hour**

This annual event is sponsored by the World Wildlife Fund, the leading organization in wildlife conservation and endangered species. Usually held on the last Saturday evening in March millions of people and thousands of business worldwide turn off lights and shut down appliances to raise awareness for our need to live sustainably and show support for strategies that will help solve the problem of climate change.

Use this opportunity to host an Earth Hour at your home. You could even make it a Holy Earth Hour, praying for our rare and precious planet and all those who draw life from it as you unplug!

### **March 30: Good Friday Reflection and Action on Water**

Today we ponder Jesus' words from the cross, "I thirst."

There is a sense in which water is being crucified as humanity pollutes it with chemicals from fracking, pesticides, herbicides, animal waste and toxic household cleaning agents. Oceans are filling with plastics and destroying ocean life. Flooding and drought are more common due to climate change.

Pope Francis emphasizes the importance of water in paragraph 30 of *Laudato Si'*:  
*Even as the quality of available water is constantly diminishing, in some places there is a growing tendency, despite its scarcity, to privatize this resource, turning it into a commodity subject to the laws of the market. Yet access to safe drinkable water is a basic and universal human right, since it is essential to human survival and, as such, is a condition for the exercise of other human rights. Our world has a grave social debt towards the poor who lack access to drinking water, because they are denied the right to a life consistent with their inalienable dignity.*

On this sacred day we pray for millions of people without available, safe water. Sometimes issues seem beyond our ability to help in a local way; however, refusing to drink bottled water is one way to act on this issue. Help your families and friends to participate in "fasting" from bottled water today and every day.

(Ideas for this reflection are taken from Eco-Preacher's Reflection for Good Friday.)

## **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](http://www.lavistacsa.org).

