



La Vista

Ecological Learning Center

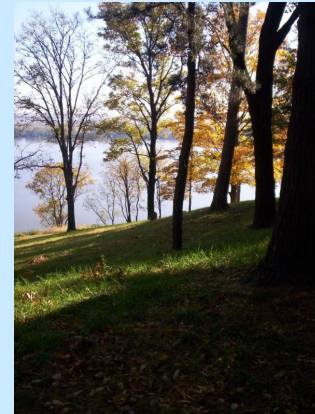
A ministry of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate

November 2015

E-Newsletter

During this month of gratitude, we invite you to ponder insights from two great integral ecologists, Pope Francis and Thomas Berry.

Then, we invite you to a day of reflection designed to hear their voices in dialogue...



Thanksgiving Thoughts from Thomas Berry

*"I think the Iroquois thanksgiving ceremony is one of the greatest of all religious festivals. The Iroquois remember and thank fifteen or more specialized powers, including the water, the rain, the wind, the earth, the trees. **This is cosmological thinking.**"*

Such an experience evokes a sense of wonder at the majesty of things. To participate in the sacred mystery in these moments is to know what it means to be human. We deny ourselves our deepest delight by not participating in the dawn, the dusk, the solstice, the springtime."

Thoughts on Gratitude from Pope Francis

This {ecological} conversion calls for a number of attitudes which together foster a spirit of generous care, full of tenderness. First, it entails *gratitude and gratuitousness*, a recognition that the world is God's loving gift, and that we are called quietly to imitate his generosity in self-sacrifice and good works: "Do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing... and your Father who sees in secret will reward you" (Mt 6:3-4). It also entails a loving awareness that we are not disconnected from the rest of creatures, but joined in a splendid universal communion. (Paragraph 220, *Laudato Si*)

Birthing the World that Is to Come: The Great Work of Advent



**A Day of Reflection on
Saturday, November 21,
10:00 am - 4:00 pm (Registration 9:30)**

In the light of "Laudato Si," Pope Francis' letter to every person on the planet, it is time to turn anew to the call of "The Ecozoic Age" awakened by Earth's visionary prophet Thomas Berry.

Join us for a contemplative inquiry through dialogue between two great voices calling for ecological conversion, practice, and mission.

Facilitator: Kathleen Deignan, PhD., is a sister of the Congregation of Notre Dame. She is the founding director of the Iona Spirituality Institute and she teaches Religious and Environmental Studies at Iona College. Kathleen is a student of Thomas Berry, a GreenFaith Fellow and a Convener of the Thomas Berry Forum for Ecological Dialogue.

Date: Saturday, November 21, 2015

Registration: 9:30 am **Program:** 10:00 am - 4:00 pm

Place: Maria Center 336 East Ripa Avenue St. Louis, MO 63125

Cost: \$35 or \$30-early registration by Nov. 5

Registration Options:

Mail your check made out to Rockhaven Center to

Rockhaven 7621 Rivermont Trail House Springs, MO 62060

OR visit Rockhaven's web site and register online: <http://www.rockhavencenter.org/register.html>

Lunch: Everyone is encouraged to bring along zero-waste pack lunch. Coffee and tea service will be provided.

Sponsors: This event is made possible through the collaborative work of La Vista Ecological Learning Center, the Provincial Council of the School Sisters of Notre Dame, and Rockhaven Ecozoic Center

This year take part in "Buy Nothing Day" November 27

This is an international day of protest against consumerism celebrated annually on the day after Thanksgiving, traditionally the busiest shopping day of the year. We need to challenge the entrenched view of capitalism that consumer wants must always be satisfied and that immediate gratification is imperative. This calls for personal transformation, for realizing the difference between needs and wants, for standing firm against the advertisers hounding you to buy.

"Obsession with a consumerist lifestyle, above all when few people are capable of maintaining it, can only lead to violence and mutual destruction." (Par. 204, Laudato Si)



Reflections on Exploring the Sacred Universe, Earth Literacy Program, 2015

From Wednesday, Oct. 21 through Sunday,
Oct. 25 participants gathered at La Vista for
a "new" Earth Literacy Program.

It was a FIRST in several ways: the Oblate Novices and priests were among the participants, the program was shortened from a week to a long weekend, Jack Lau, OMI, returned as our chef, and there were more men than women participating.

Comments from participants include:

"...the presentation of the content, in a logical progression, and the creative ways of presentation that encouraged participation were all perfect."

"The Earth Literacy program has helped me to understand the universe story in a much greater context. It also allowed me to connect with a spirituality I knew as a child, but had forgotten."

"In observing how the Earth creates, learns, heals and self-regulates I can become a conscious expression of and participant in that."

"I was challenged to be steadfast as I come to understand more of what I need to give up and ways to change."

