

# THIS SPRING'S ECOLOGY EFFORTS

[SISTERS OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD]

SPRING 2013

ISSUE 3

## SPRINGTIME ENDEAVORS



...realizing that every little bit helps

What ecological spring-time opportunities are available in the climate where you live? We invite you to read the contributions we received from both our Sisters and Friends and be inspired to do your own little

bit to make a difference in Creation. . . . . **hope is in the air**

....Mary Lou Schmersal (editor)

### “Sharings” from our Sisters and Friends

## WATER, OUR PRECIOUS RESOURCE

--submitted by Marie Kopin

Eastertide -- a time of seeing candidates and babies immersed in the Baptismal Waters, and of sprinkling rites. What a Precious time. Also, we have the Precious Blood and Water of Jesus mentioned in the Scriptures. All of this has me reflecting all the more on our most precious resource of water.

What would life be like if we had no good water available? I was privileged to attend two workshops with Dr. Bessheen Baker of our Naturopathic Institute here in Mt. Pleasant, MI. She spoke at length to us about preserving our water and keeping it pure enough to drink and use with our animals and crops, and of many dangers we face from those who seek profit, and not peaceful living. Toxins do accumulate, so the better the drinking water and the water put on crops, the less the build-up in our bodies. We also heard from representatives of our local Owens water company who supply various kinds of water filters depending upon testing results. It was an educational program that helped change my thinking about the necessity of good water and actions needed to keep it clean.

There is much information about chemicals and toxins more commonly found in our waters today, chemicals which can build up in a number of body organs know to have caused cancer and other disease. I myself have witnessed the spraying of Roundup on cornfields in our county in the Central Michigan area. Without notice to a friend who owns a big section of farmland, her farmer renters allowed fields of corn to be sprayed. The owner was not even notified about when this would be done. Later, upon studying the issue further, I found that Roundup and other glyphosate based

## THANKS TO EACH OF OUR CONTRIBUTORS FOR SHARING WHAT YOU ARE DOING

We look forward to hearing from you for our next issue. Please take time to write us about what you are doing to be a little more “green” or to protect the environment at home, at work, with others or alone.

Perhaps you have found a great resource you can share with us or you visited a wonderful site that was helpful in some way. We’d like to hear about it. We would like to feature your efforts in our next SUMMER edition bulletin.

Please you’re your contributions (along with a photo if possible) to Mary Lou at [cppsnews@bright.net](mailto:cppsnews@bright.net)  
Deadline for the **SUMMER** issue is **7/10/2013**.

herbicides, are chemicals used on GMO plants to supposedly prevent weeds from growing. I also saw a film from Argentina showing fields being sprayed the same way without warning. Roundup is a very toxic substance for humans according to several sources. One of the most comprehensive is by Dr. Mercola, <http://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2012/01/15/dr-don-huber-interview-part-2.aspx>. In the film, I also saw fetuses and infants deformed in many ways. Glyphosate lingers about 60 years, once in the soil, so it eventually gets into the water table. Around my friend's field I noted the native plants and weeds dying off. It does permeate the plants as well and can get into our systems through the food we eat.



DR. BESSHEEN BAKER & SISTER MARIE  
TAKEN AT HERBS, ETC. IN MOUNT PLEASANT.  
BESSHEEN DIRECTS A NATUROPATHIC INSTITUTE  
WHICH PRODUCES N.D.'S, NATUROPATHIC  
DOCTORS.

A related issue here in Isabella County is **'Fracking'**. We live on the biggest oil field in Michigan and the North-East section of our county has many oil wells. Already the rate of cancer is very high. If you wish to read more about how the town won, and more on

how fracking works go to <http://earthjustice.org/features/campaigns/the-story-of-dryden-the-town-that-fought-fracking-and-is-winning>. Some people are very fearful because so many kinds of undisclosed chemicals are washed deep into the earth with lots of water, and new compounds are being formed. How will the use of the water and toxic effects of the chemicals impact us? Some are even proposing that fracking can cause earthquakes:

<http://www.motherjones.com/environment/2013/03/does-fracking-cause-earthquakes-wastewater-dewatering>. For another source check out: <http://www.foodandwaterwatch.org/tools-and-resources/the-case-for-a-ban-on-gas-fracking/>.

So, what to do? As individuals we can keep abreast of groups such as Organic Consumers <http://www.organicconsumers.org/aboutus.cfm>. Letter writing takes time, but to create good laws and to stop hurtful legislation they are necessary; chemical and oil company lobbies are very big and wealthy. One email newsletter tells of a person in Ohio who sold her farm after a well just five miles away created an oily film on her water which made her too sick to keep up her horse farm.

Another route is to invest in a water purification system. I use an RO unit (Reverse Osmosis). These are available from a number of sources such as Nature's Sunshine. Some grocery stores also sell this kind of purified water in bulk from their own RO units in the store. I found that water from my RO unit had PPM's (Particles Per Million) within the safe range of 1 to 10 PPM's, and my tap water from our city had a PPM of 370. A friend had water from her Brita filter tested with a PPM of 200, so that did some good. There are numerous water companies who will help you out. The Owens Company has offices nationwide. Water testing is also available through your local health department and state departments



## Environmental Efforts during the Salem Heights Renovation Project

--submitted by Sr. Judy Kroeger

Among the many aspects of renovation, here is a listing of some that reflect our concern for the environment:

- Doors to bedrooms are being reused as doors to apartments
- Doors not used at SH are going to Habitat for Humanity

- Handrails on hall walls are going to Habitat for Humanity
- Cabinets, toilets, showers, light fixtures have been taken to use elsewhere
- Windows removed and repositioned are being used at SH
- Vinyl flooring in storage was used for stairway landing
- Extra beds, dressers, night stands not needed have gone to St. Vincent de Paul for others to use
- Items that we can re-use we have chosen to do so; e.g., signs outside apartment doors indicating number and resident

### Other Salem Heights items

- Sister Gladys Marie Lowe is Queen of Recycling – at the age of 98 she goes around the building collecting paper to be recycled and takes to the recycling room. She inspires others to recycle.
- Free Room – Sisters place whatever they no longer want to wear or use in the room and it becomes someone else's treasure. What is not able to be used in-house is sent to S. Margie Zureick.
- Computers and related items are taken to Access, a non-profit agency that educates and trains people who are challenged. They learn to refurbish, de-manufacture and recycle electronic equipment.
- Unused medications are taken to sites approved for disposal.
- Extra wheel chairs, walkers and other assistance items have been sent to Project Access (not same as one for computers).
- Furniture has been refinished in house rather than replacing the item.



In all of this, our motivation is care for our earth and the future of those coming after us.



### My current efforts

--submitted by Martha Bertke

*Lately, I try to make a concerted effort to use less electricity.*

*I strive to be grateful for water. While using water I often remind myself that there are some people in our world who have to walk a great distance to get a bucket of water.*

*My tulips, daffodils, miniature daffodils and lilies of the valley are coming up. I may have some daffodils on the south side of my apartment in bloom for Easter. When Spring and warmer weather arrives, I will plant geraniums and other plants.*

### Other Recent Activities:

*I serve on the Social Action Committee for Holy Trinity Parish in Coldwater. One evening during Lent our committee prayed together the Stations of the Cross. The title of this particular Way of the Cross that we prayed is "On The Path of Ecological Conversion". For the late Holy Father, Pope John Paul II, "the penitential season of Lent offers a profound lesson to respect the environment". Praying this Way of the Cross really touched my heart. It is available from Franciscan Action Network.*

*To celebrate Earth Day, I will plant at least one thing and use the Prayer Service you receive with this mailing.*



## Second Nature

--submitted by Mary Wendeln

When Tish Rawles and I moved to Silverton, Ohio two years ago, one of our goals was to compost. The area in which we live has adequate space outside for a compost bin and soon I became aware that composting is a long process with little return. So last summer while attending a composting workshop, the presenter pointed out the most important aspect of composting – the **reduction** of our landfills. That’s it, I thought. It is worth every bit of time spent on composting. Now I ask myself the question – can I compost this rather than disposing of it in the garbage? If I am unsure, I do a goggle search. There is so much on the web about composting for everyone no matter your age or location.

How can I not contribute to the reduction of waste by recycling and composting and giving back to Mother Earth? She is the only one we have.

## GREENER GREEN

--submitted by Judy and Bob Jogan

Besides regular recycling of all metal, plastic, glass, and paper, Bob and I let grass clippings fall and thus avoid fertilizer. We also put food scraps into garbage where it will eventually decompose, instead of using the disposal which just adds to the burden of water filtration. Small things, but we encourage each other.



## EVERY BIT HELPS

--submitted by Catherine Nader



I try to ....

....Recycle all my paper products and batteries.



....Conserve water when bathing, brushing teeth, washing dishes, watering plants



Use rain water when possible when Patio gardening

## TID-BITS from TISH...on spring

As we celebrate the Risen Lord, beautiful flowers are poking through surprising places. At Parky’s Farm we are doing farm days with the little children. They are learning to plant and care for Mother Earth. Our other ‘newest’ is Mooz the steer. The ponies, as well as the staff, are getting ready for the pony wheel.



BABY GOATS DUE IN EARLY MAY

In addition, various gardens are being nurtured: note here the unique vegetable garden setting.



ALMOST ANYTHING CAN  
TURN INTO A GARDEN

Recently I read an interesting article on the purifying qualities of house plants. I learned the benefits of having the following plants:

- **Bamboo Palm** —removes formaldehyde and is a natural humidifier
- **Snake Plant** – absorbs nitrogen oxide
- **Areca Palm** – air purifying
- **Spider Plant** – removes carbon monoxide
- **Peace Lily** – ‘cleans all’; removes mold spores
- **Gerbera Daisy** – removes benzene, improves sleep, absorbs carbon dioxide, gives off more oxygen

Who would have guessed all these benefits from plants? What are your plants doing for you?



## CONSCIOUS USE

--submitted by Barbara Ann Hoying

I try always to be conscious of using only what I need, to recycle, to relate to living things (people especially) and the earth with care and respect. HAPPY SPRING!

## EMMA HALL EFFORTS

--submitted by Jean Rene Hoying

We continue to recycle all paper, except papers with personal info & that is shredded & then recycled. Paper & cans & plastics that are recyclable go to Salem Heights almost daily. Even the Sisters on Emma 3 collect papers & newspapers wherever possible. Our weekly menu sheets are often collected by Sisters going to the MJC dining room. We are very conscientious about all paper products that can be recycled. Too bad # 5 plastics cannot be recycled. I checked various places & the closest is in Cincinnati. Any suggestions?

Recycling is easier at The Glen as Rempke Trash picks up all recyclables several times throughout the week. We recycle all paper products, cans, bottles etc. Whatever they pick up, we recycle.



**Don't forget Earth Day coming up April 22. What will you do?**

Every year on April 22, more than one billion people take part in Earth Day. Across the globe, individuals, communities, organizations, and governments acknowledge the amazing planet we call home and take action to protect it. This year's theme is: **The Face Of Climate Change**. Check out this site for more information <http://www.earthday.org/2013/about.html>

This Ecology Bulletin is an endeavor to keep the Environment foremost in  
our own awareness  
and also an effort to share ideas and experiences with other members of  
the Congregation and Friends.

We invite your comments, questions and contributions.

[Amy Junk](#), [Marie Kopin](#), [Tish Rawles](#), [Mary Lou Schmersal](#)