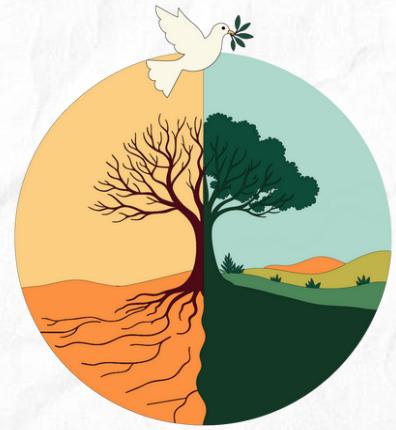


**<Start Sign  
Pilgrims of Hope for Creation  
Self-Guided Reflection  
Pilgrimage includes in the East Chapel Garden>**



# PEACE WITH CREATION

SEASON OF CREATION 2025

*Garden of Peace*  
Isaiah 32:14-18

*O Good and Gracious God, as I contemplate the wonder of Your creation and the current crisis of its existence, may I be filled with a renewed commitment to change, and to be open to a way of living that honors your creatures - humans, plants, animals, the water, the land. Amen*

As we celebrate the Jubilee of Hope, the 10th anniversary of Pope Francis' *Laudato Si'*, and the 800th anniversary of St. Francis of Assisi's Canticle of the Creatures, we hear a Spirit-filled call to renew our relationship with God, with one another, and with all of creation.

To mark this holy season, Catholic organizations across the United States are uniting as pilgrims of hope. We invite you to walk our campus pilgrimage against the backdrop of our beautiful gardens and reflect upon your own relationship with creation.

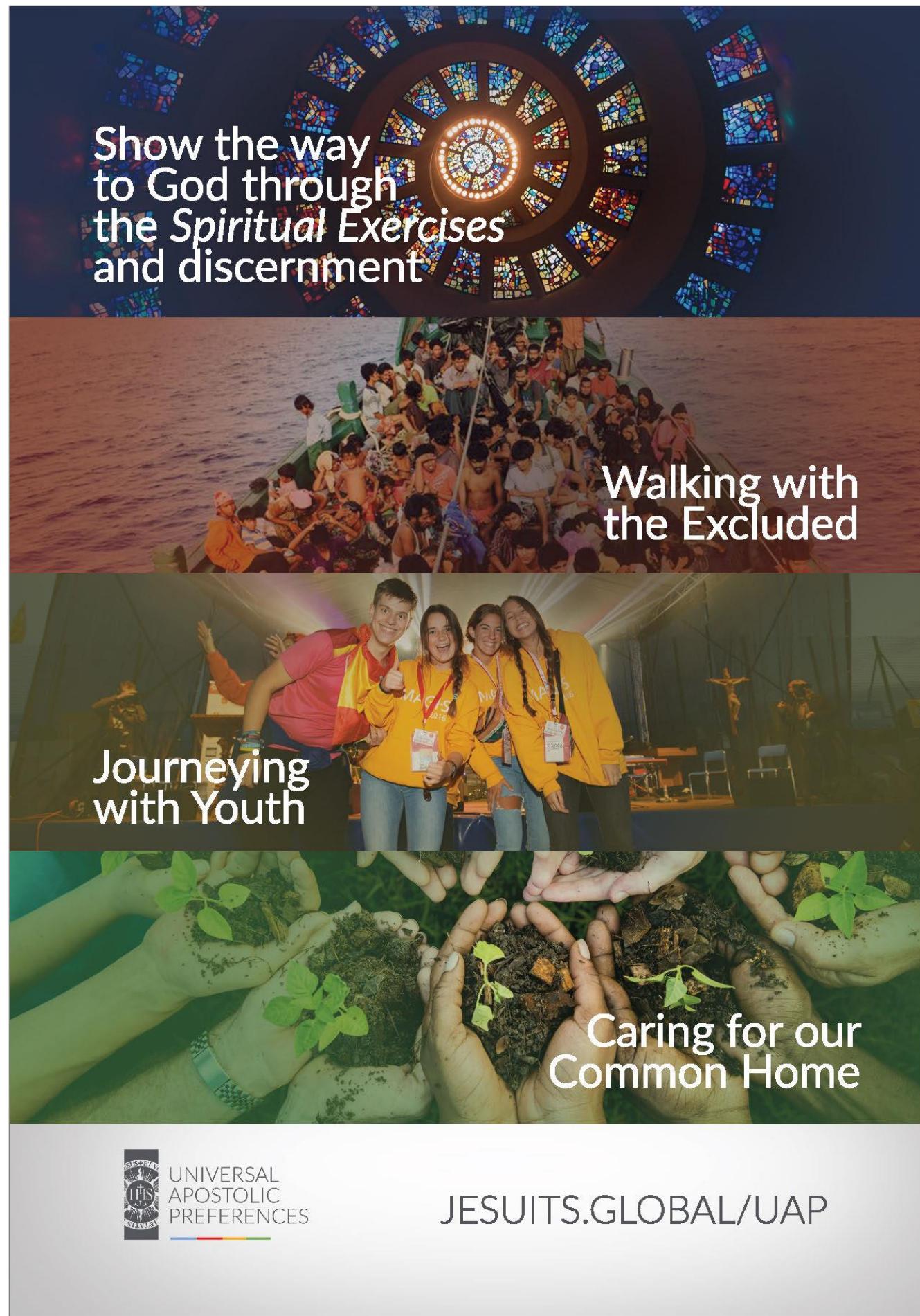
# What Need Does the Earth Have of Us?

*Leaving an inhabitable planet to future generations is up to us (Laudato Si', 160)*

Peace with Creation requires proactive steps. Jesus taught repentance and restorative justice. We must repair broken relationships: between humans and Earth, humans and other creatures, and humans and God.

Throughout history, many human activities have contributed to the destruction of Creation. Today, more than ever, some human activities take the form of war against Creation. Pollution, health crises, deforestation and mining worsen the situation. Human attitudes also contribute to this devastation.





# Universal Apostolic Preferences (UAPs)

The UAPs are the horizon the Jesuits look toward for guidance as we all strive to live out our shared mission. When woven together, all four UAPs are strengthened like individual strands in a rope, and addressing all of them is essential for our shared mission.

As Pope Francis reminded us in his encyclical letter *Laudato Si'*, creation today is crying out as never before. And today's environmental crisis has a disproportionate impact on the poor and vulnerable. Whole nations and peoples need an "ecological conversion" if we are to answer God's call to be stewards of this planet.

JESUITS.GLOBAL/UAP

The "*Laudato Si'*" goals, as outlined in Pope Francis's encyclical and the *Laudato Si'* Action Platform, are a set of seven commitments aimed at fostering global sustainability and spiritual conversion.



RESPOND TO THE  
CRY OF THE EARTH



RESPOND TO THE  
CRY OF THE POOR



ECOLOGICAL  
ECONOMICS



ADOPTION OF SUSTAINABLE  
LIFESTYLES



ECOLOGICAL  
EDUCATION



ECOLOGICAL  
SPIRITUALITY



COMMUNITY RESILIENCE  
AND EMPOWERMENT

# "God saw all that he had made, and behold, it was very good" (Genesis 1:31)

Some 14 billion years ago, the universe flared forth. A billion or two years later, galaxies, including our Milky Way, emerged.

Our planet has witnessed five major extinction events over its 4.5 billion year existence. Humans have a tendency to act as though the universe did not exist before them, and will not exist after them. In reality, human civilization only accounts for a minuscule amount of time in the grand scale of the universe.

***Stretch your imagination...pause to consider the immensity of the universe, the wonder of God's creation, and your place within in it.***

# WE PRAY

Creator God, God of the oceans,  
God of the land, all that is within it:

You created this work with the power of your word.

Your formed humankind with your own hands,  
And breathed your own breath into us.

You gave us these lands as a gift –  
A source of our identity and sustenance.

You empowered us to be the guardians of what you have made.

# Land Acknowledgment

We acknowledge that we are on the ancestral homelands of the Nacotchtank and Piscataway Conoy peoples. We recognize that descendants of these and other Native American tribes continue to live and work on this land today. We also acknowledge the enduring legacy of colonization, genocide and systemic oppression that continues to affect Native communities across this country.

Let this acknowledgment be not only a reflection but also a call to action- a reminder of our responsibility to honor truth, amplify historically marginalized voices, and work toward equity, solidarity and reconciliation.

*We pray: “God, have mercy on your creation and the communities living on sacred lands.”*

# We Pray

Loving God,

**We have failed you and abused the gift you have given us.**

**Forgive us for betraying your trust.**

**Forgive us for our greed and arrogance.**

**Forgive us what we have done to your Earth.**

**Forgive us for what we have done to your oceans.**

**Forgive us for what we have done to your creatures –**

**On the land, in the sky, and in the depths.**

**Hear, O God of Compassion:**

**The cries of the land – now a desert,**

**Laid barren through corrupt agricultural practices, pollution,  
mining and deforestation.**

**The cries of the islands – drowning in rising seas, oceans swelling  
with melting ice.**

**The cries of distress from Mother Earth – storm and drought.**



# Earth Overshoot Day

In 1970, the first attempts were made to measure human production and consumption against Earth's regenerative capacities. The efforts resulted in the birth of Earth Overshoot day, a calculation of the point at which as much of Earth's resources will have been used in a particular year as it can replenish in a full year.

In 1970, that was determined to be December 29.

**This year the overshoot day was July 24.  
This means that since then, we have been living on ecological debt,  
depleting natural resources faster than they can replenish.**

*We Pray: “God, have mercy on your creation and the communities impacted by pollution.”*

# Deforestation

We are living in probably the greatest period of human-caused deforestation on the planet.

In 2020, Virginia had 13.8 million acres of natural forest, extending over 54% of its land area. In 2024, it lost 80,000 acres of natural forest, equivalent to 13.6 million metric tons (Mt) of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

**Did you know that the shade from a tree's canopy can help lower the temperature by 10 degrees Fahrenheit? Plant a Tree for free everyday! [Download Treeapp](#) to plant trees across the world in just a few taps.**



*The United States loses 36 million trees every year in urban and rural cities.*

When I am among the trees,  
especially the willows and the honey locust, equally the beech, the oaks and the  
pines, they give off such hints of gladness,  
I would almost say that they save me,  
and daily.

I am so distant from the hope of myself, in which I have goodness, and discernment,  
and never hurry through the world but walk slowly, and bow often.  
Around me the trees stir in their leaves and call out, "Stay awhile."

The light flows from their branches. And they call again,  
"It's simple," they say, "and you too have come into the world to do this, to go easy,  
to be filled with light, and to shine."

*Mary Oliver, When I Am Among the Trees*

**This month be attentive to the trees, woodlands and forests around you.  
Take time to appreciate them and to ponder what they may be telling you.**

# Water Scarcity

Water covers about 71% of the Earth.

96.5% of all Earth's water is from the ocean.

Only 2.5% of all of our planet's water is drinkable fresh water.

About 2 billion people worldwide do not have access to safe drinking water.

**Reflect on the importance of water in your own life.**

**The next time you take your morning shower or when you drink a fresh glass of water, pause for a prayerful moment of thanksgiving that you live in an area with clean, accessible water for most people.**



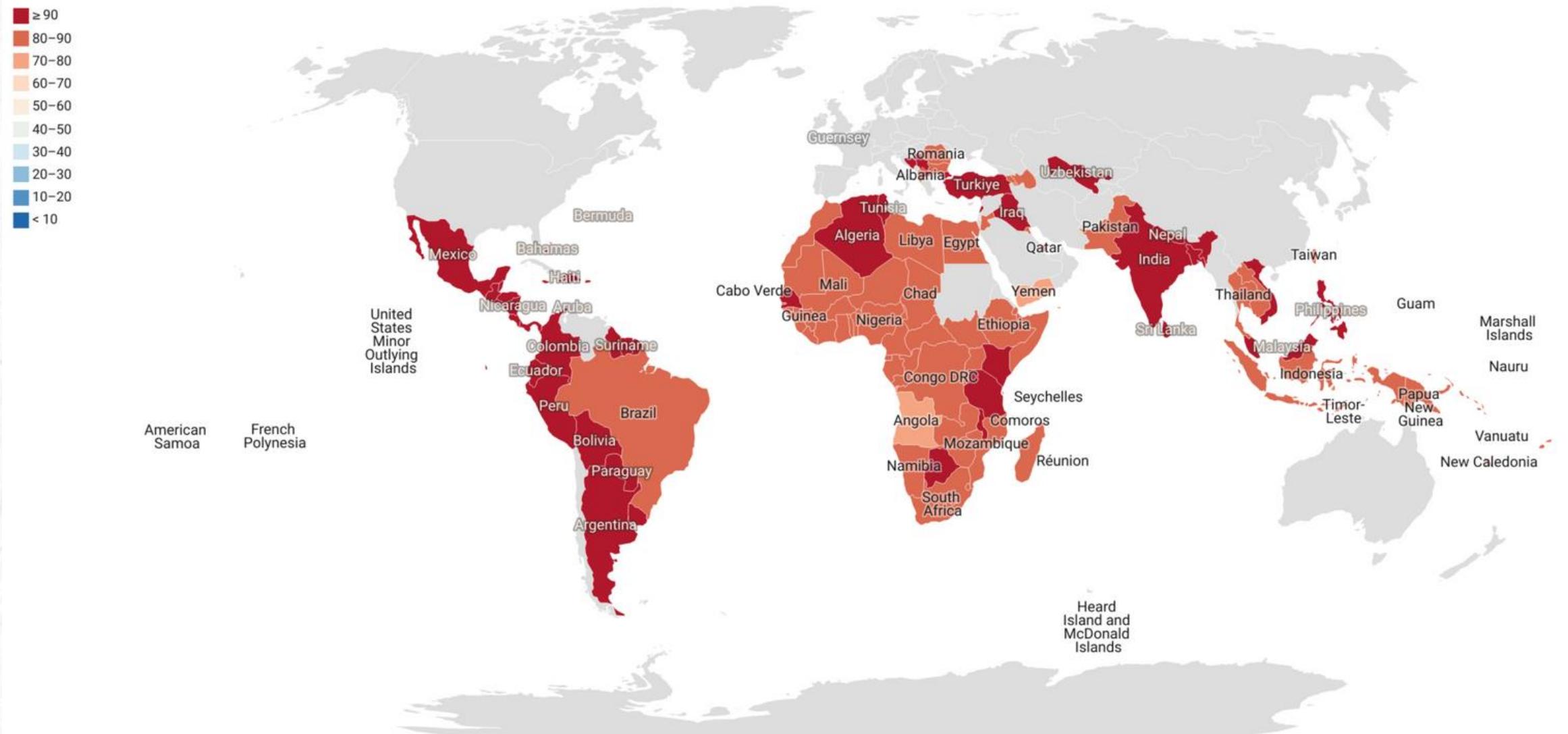
*Well at our sister parish in Haiti*

# Extreme Weather

Global temperatures are expected to remain at or near record levels in 2025, likely exceeding 2024 as the warmest year on record.

## Exposure to extreme weather

% who say they have experienced any extreme weather event (rising sea levels, flood, drought, long periods of unusually hot weather, wildfire, severe weather)

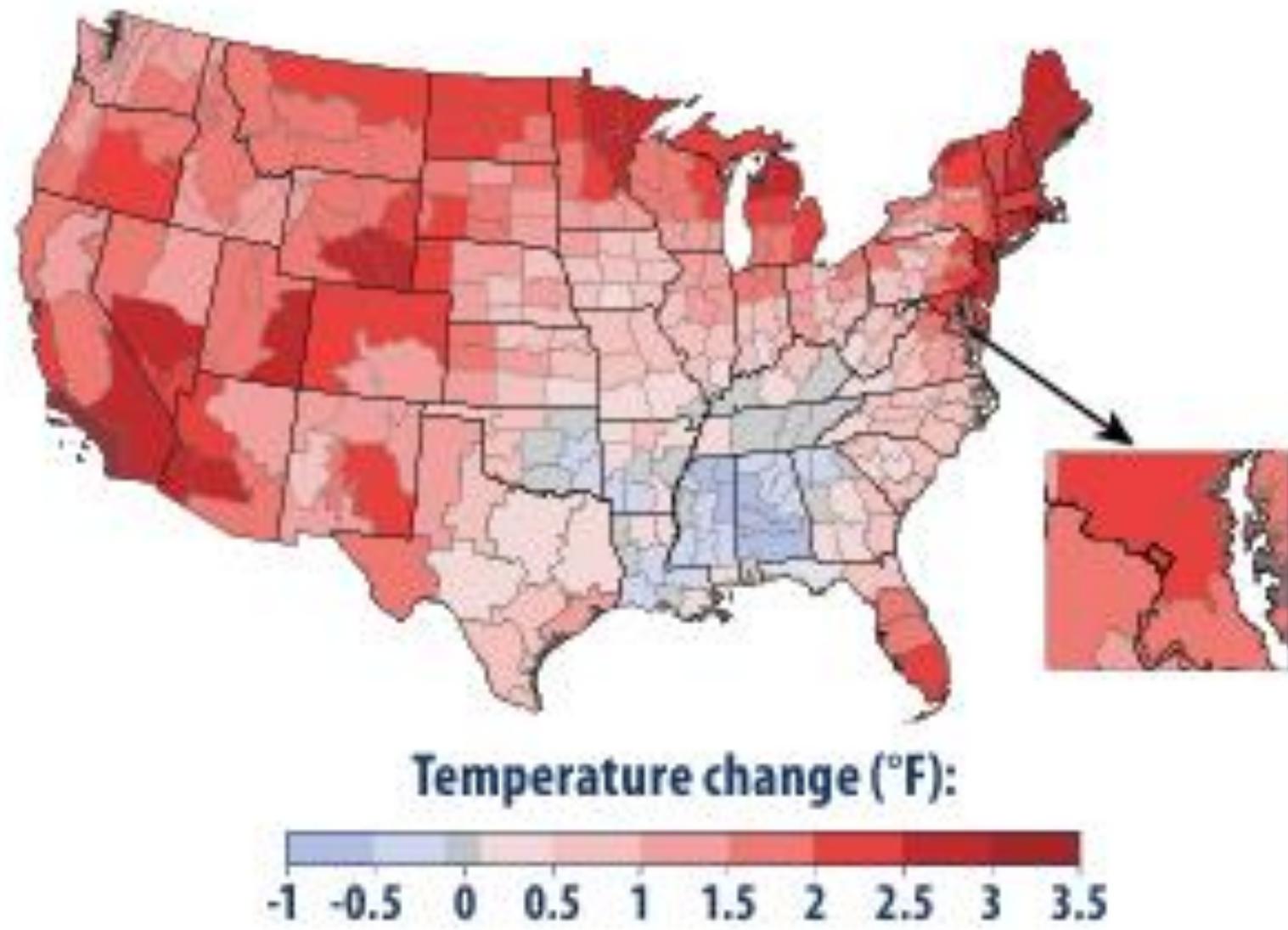


Source: Yale Program on Climate Change Communication / Data for Good at Meta / Rare's Center for Behavior & the Environment; 2023 • Created with Datawrapper



*Extreme weather is a constant reality for our sister parish in El Salvador*

# Extreme Weather



*Rising temperatures in the last century. The District of Columbia has warmed more than most of the nation. Source: EPA, Climate Change Indicators in the United States.*

Climate change has made extreme weather events such as floods and droughts more likely and more severe.

**The impacts of climate change are not distant threats.**

Washington, DC is experiencing warmer, more humid, and more prolonged summers than ever before.

We pray: “God, have mercy on your creation and the communities impacted by current and future climate disasters”

# Imitate St. Francis

St. Francis had a deep reverence for all of God's creation, including animals and the environment. First Nations people have the understanding that all beings are our relations. Of course, this is a Christian concept, too. We are all God's family.

Sit quietly in our Chapel Garden or take a walk in nature with the intention of greeting other beings with appreciation and gratitude. Take a moment to stand still, recognize that these are your relations, and see yourself as part of this family of beings.



We pray: God, have mercy on Your creatures, both great and small. We pray for the endangered species that are struggling to survive in this world.

# Climate Migration

**Jesus died after an earthly life that began as a refugee. Today refugees are dying daily from climate change induced floods, famines and war. Droughts, floods, fires, storms and other severe weather-related events are creating desperate poverty and deepening hunger. The poor suffer most from climate collapse.**

**How will you respond to those who lack the basic necessities of life?**

*The UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, predicts that by 2050, more than 200 million people will be forcibly displaced by extreme weather and environmental disasters*



Directional signage: Pilgrimage continues in the Chapel  
Garden accessible through the playground.

# Environmental Racism

In addition to the rescission of Inflation Reduction Act funds this summer, the following programs were defunded: the EPA's Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF); Environmental Justice Block Grants, and Climate Pollution Reduction Grants; DOE's State-Based Home Energy Efficiency Contractor Training Grants; and DOT's Neighborhood Access and Equity Program. These programs were essential to address the legacy of environmental racism across the country, while making it easier for communities to address pollution and transition to clean energy.

Examples in DC:

Ivy City. A neighborhood in Northeast D.C. is home to a chemical plant that has operated without proper air permits and has been accused of polluting the area with dangerous chemicals.

Brentwood. This neighborhood in Northeast D.C. has been overburdened with industrial uses, including a garbage facility and an asphalt plant, and the city even added a school bus terminal to the area.

*We pray: “God, have mercy on your creation and our country’s complicity in environmental racism*

**Integral ecological conversion calls us all to a spirituality of gratitude, global solidarity and simple, sustainable patterns of living.**

**The quality of relationships, commitment to the common good, and care for all Earth's inhabitants and habitats characterize authentic human development, the true "good life," in Catholic Social Tradition.**

**May we surrender our moral, economic and social decisions to the Father's guidance. For only in faith can we move beyond self interest to see the interdependence of all God's creation.**

We were present in the Creator's mind and heart, even before the ancient mountains and waters were formed. We are part of the Earth itself, yet we disregard these gifts that we think of as common, ordinary and plentiful. We throw away because there is always more. We burn, discard, and waste until the scarcity is before our eyes.

Reflect on how your choices harm this great Mother Earth.

Directional signage: Pilgrimage continues in the Chapel  
Garden accessible through the playground.

# Choose Life

“I used to think the top environmental problems were biodiversity loss, ecosystem collapse and climate change. I thought that with 30 years of good science we could address those problems. But I was wrong. **The top environmental problems are selfishness, greed and apathy...** and to deal with those we need a spiritual and cultural transformation...- Gus Speth, Co-Founder Natural Resources Defense Council

Our country faces a time of trial – the conflict between a culture that affirms, cherishes and celebrates the gift of life, and one that declares entire groups of beings to be outside the boundaries of protection. **To choose life** involves rejecting every form of violence – poverty, hunger, armed conflicts– and mindless damage to our environment.

# Solar Panels at Holy Trinity

A total of \_\_\_\_\_ panels were installed with a generating capacity of \_\_\_\_\_. While the electricity produced varies by the time of the year the expected output will cover up to \_\_\_\_\_% of our electricity usage per year.



We give thanks for the gift of the sun that shines brightly with its energy as well as the rains to refresh and nourish the earth.

# Holy Trinity Gardens

Gardening benefits the environment in numerous ways, including improving air and soil quality, reducing the carbon footprint, supporting wildlife, and conserving water. It also helps mitigate climate change by reducing greenhouse gases and preventing soil erosion.

*How many native plants and pollinators can you identify?*

We give thanks to the gardeners who nurture these grounds. Take a moment to ask God for the gift of recalling the significant landscapes of your life. What gifts did it give you?

# Composting

In DC, only 1% of the city's trash is composted, with 49% going to landfills and 43% being incinerated. Recent initiatives have significantly increased public access to composting. In May 2025, public food waste smart bins collected nearly 50,000 pounds of compostable food waste. These bins, installed in late February 2025, increased public composting locations from 12 to 43, giving D.C. the second-largest food waste smart bin program in the U.S..

In 2025, Holy Trinity's composting efforts have resulted in XXXXX.

We give thanks for the gift of food and the opportunity to return its nutrients to the earth. May we be mindful of the cycle of life and death, and may our composting practices reflect our commitment to caring for your creation.

# Eliminating Single Use Plastic

Single-use plastics are plastic products that are manufactured with the purpose of being discarded after one use. Examples include soda bottles, disposable cutlery, and shopping bags. About 8.3 billion metric tons of plastic have been produced since the 1950s, half of which was produced in the last 15 years. Unfortunately, 91% of plastics are not recycled. Instead, they are incinerated or end up in landfills or the environment.

Single-use plastics contribute significantly to litter in the DC metro area, polluting waterways like the Anacostia and Potomac Rivers.

Holy Trinity restricts the use of single use plastic and provides compostable materials for events on campus. You will also find refillable water stations throughout the campus.

# Campus Commitment to Sustainability

Holy Trinity is committed to sustainable practices including:

- contracting for a campus wide energy audit --the findings of which will inform our greening efforts going forward for many years to come;
- replacing the HVAC system on the Faber Room with a more efficient model;
- replacing the Faber Room roof with white reflecting shingles;
- replacing all the church, school, office and meeting room lights with LED lights.

We give thanks for all those who are moved, in their lives, to heal and protect the earth, in small ways and in large.

# What Seeds Will You Plant?

In his Message for the 10th World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, Pope Leo XIV quotes extensively from Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato si'*, denouncing environmental and social injustice and noting that God's creation is not intended to be a battleground for vital resources.

“For believers,” he writes, “the universe reflects the face of Jesus Christ, in whom all things were created and redeemed.” In this light, caring for the planet becomes not only an ecological necessity but also a profoundly spiritual and moral vocation.

**Encouraging concrete action, Pope Leo calls for perseverance and love in sowing “seeds of justice” that will, in time, bear the fruits of peace.**

**Thank you for making time to pray and reflect during this Season of Creation. We invite you to pause and to commit your intention to our Earth by tying a biodegradable ribbon on the trellis.**