

Our Lady of the Assumption Cheltenham and St. Agnes' Highett Parishes
2017-2021
Group Development

- Formation of a Laudato Si' team who link in with Social Justice Parish activities group. Parish Priest (Fr. Peter Matheson) and Pastoral Associate (Frances North) supported the development of our group.
- Initial monthly meetings were spent familiarising ourselves with the encyclical; chapter reading, discussion, questions and actions.
- Supported Social Justice Projects: International Women's Day Events, 1 Million Stars Project, Indigenous Support and Celebration (Reconciliation Focus), Mercy Women's Domestic Violence, Parish Education program, Refugee Action & Support Education, etc.
- Planting of native trees at front of parish house across lawn strip. Other plantings might be possible subject to PP support.

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Some practical steps

- Parish meeting room kitchen adopts sustainability guidelines: no plastics, eco friendly product use, dishing washing reduce cycles and temperatures, etc.
- Monthly Parish Morning Tea developing awareness initiatives; Introducing the REDcycle Program, Council Recycle Resources, etc.
- Liturgical Initiatives
Celebration of Earth Day and Seasons of Creation, World Environment Day, inclusion of weekly prayer for our common home in petition prayers, inclusion of hymns highlighting creation e.g: “Sing Out, Earth and Skies” (M. Haugen), season of creation homily focus, etc.
- Publication of monthly LS Newsletter circulated to all parishioners introducing Laudato Si Encyclical, prayers and practical suggestions to care for our common home.
- Regular group meetings face to face and Zoom.

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Engagement with our Primary Schools

- Liaison with school staff re existence and purpose of group.
- Joint school /parish Environment Talks: Freya Vickery – City of Kingston and Pat Long guest speakers.
- Meetings with school principals: solar power installation, waste
- Formation of children's 'WOW' group: re curriculum activities and principles of learning across social learning and environmental studies.
- Helping to make the school fete more environmentally friendly.

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The Future

- Laudato Si' Action Platform - Our PP has agreed for our parishes to adopt the LSAP. What does this mean for our group and our parishes?
- Outreach activities to spread the LS message – Work with St Dom's on this Forum and another in 2022.
- Maybe an Expo in 2022?
- Liaise with other groups e.g. BCCAG and Port Phillip Eco Centre, Parish Fete Committee and other parish groups. Connect with other parishes.
- Assist our two parishes to become greener – carbon emissions, waste, gardens, etc.