



EcoJoy: Stewardship for God and Grandchildren

An Overview

Recognizing that Maine is blessed with some of the most beautiful natural resources in the world, Catholic Charities Maine's Parish Social Ministry program responds to Pope Francis's call to protect and nurture our treasured outdoors, especially as it relates to impacting those in need in our state. EcoJoy is a holistic approach integrating ecology, education, and spirituality in an effort of the Catholic Church to unify environmental efforts with our parishes.

EcoJoy is Based on Four Cornerstone Activities:

1. Spiritual integration
2. On-going learning
3. Community partnerships
4. Sharing information and practices

EcoJoy in Action

In *Laudato Si*, Pope Francis says, "The ecological conversion needed to bring about lasting change is also a community conversion" (#219).

Working with parish leaders, EcoJoy develops tailored workshops to help formulate initiatives to energize or re-invigorate local activities in support of each parish's pastoral plan for addressing the needs of its own community and families. These suggestions are offered to all parishes with an emphasis on serving the poor, persons with a disability, sick or lonely. Such initiatives might include:

- Parish-based workshops and trainings
- Increasing environmental stewardship, evangelization and spiritual development
- Direct service activities that can engage families and parishes
- Forming local community partnerships
- Determining best practices
- Planning liturgy or outings highlighting the sacramentality of God's Creation
- Developing curriculum and family- or home-centered activities for children, youth, and young adults

"The urgent challenge to protect our common home includes a concern to bring the whole human family together to seek a sustainable and integral development...All of us can cooperate as instruments of God for the care of creation, each according to his or her own culture, experience, involvements, and talents" (*Laudato Si'*, 13,14). Guided by the light of the Holy Spirit, we can care for our beautiful region and preserve the gifts of creation which, as signs of God's love, can lead us back to our Creator.

For more information on bringing EcoJoy to your parish, please call (207) 781-8550 or via email at psm@ccmaine.org