



## STEWARDS OF OUR EARTH *All of God's Creation*

Social Justice Committee, Holy Cross Parish, Mt. Airy, April 16, 2023

### Celebrate Earth Day 2023

“Twenty million people poured into the streets for the **first Earth Day in 1970**, generating a tidal wave of environmental progress that led to the Clean Water Act, the Clean Air Act, and the establishment of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). *Earthjustice* was born in the midst of this movement, created to represent the environmental interests of our communities and planet in court. Since our founding, Earthjustice has won more than 1,000 cases to protect the Earth and frontline communities.” (Abigail Dillen, *Earthjustice*, 4/8/23)

Unfortunately, 53 years later, this tidal wave of environmental progress has slowed to a trickle in many places on our earth. At a recent meeting in March, the **United Nation's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)** released a major new climate report “synthesizing the findings from thousands of pages of IPCC reports released over the past five years. They **highlight the realities of the climate crisis today**, the dangers of global warming exceeding 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, **and the solutions available** to limit climate change and its harms....

Dr. Kristina Dahl, principal climate scientist at the Union for Concerned Scientists noted that “Limiting warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius or less will, at this point, be exceedingly difficult. But now is not the time—nor will it ever be the time—to throw in the towel. There is simply too much at stake. While there will be changes that we can't prevent, such as the loss of a certain amount of land to sea level rise, there are many impacts we can and must still limit by quickly and steeply reducing emissions. To secure the livable future that children around the world deserve, **we must double down, clear-eyed about the challenges ahead**, ratchet up pressure on governments, and break the power of the fossil fuel industry.” (*Union of Concerned Scientists*, 3/24/23)

“By now you've probably heard that climate laws like the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and Bipartisan Infrastructure Law have made billions of dollars in incentives available for individuals, families, businesses, and communities to embrace clean energy and other practical climate solutions in our homes, workplaces, and more” (*Climate Reality Project*, 3/20/23). We must **work together to make sure these laws are enforced**, especially since our most vulnerable communities – many who have contributed the least to this crisis – will be hit the hardest.

The Holy Father and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops recognize **climate change as a moral issue** that threatens creation, places added burdens on poor people, and compromises the common good of all (*Catholic Climate Covenant*).

**April 22 is the official Earth Day**, but this month you can take advantage of these **Earth Day Activities for the Whole Family**. “Now through the end of April, our friends and partners that do work to protect the waterways and land that feed into the Delaware River are inviting you to attend their Earth Day celebrations.

These events - many of which are free of charge - include festivals, hiking tours, and cleanups, which connect us to the waterways we depend on!” You can [check out the full list of Earth Day events here](#) — there's something happening every weekend now through the end of April. (Solstice Leed, Digital Communications Coordinator, *Conservation Voters of PA*)