

St. Francis of Assisi Pathways for Justice Ministry
Activities 2013 to 2023

Mission: We offer a program of information, reflection and discussion on current issues of Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation in concert with Catholic Social Teachings. We inform the parish community about social concerns and encourage acts of charity toward one another and the larger community. Our program topics are viewed through a Franciscan lens and our model is threefold: Prayer, Study and Action.

2013 to 2015

- Franciscan Pathways for Justice formed at request of pastor Ken Laverone, OFM in 2013.
- Pathways provided educational presentations and discussions with parishioners on principles of Catholic social teaching
 - Sacred the Water: Water Preservation (2013)
 - Sacred Each Other: Immigration Reform (2013)
 - Making Justice Flow Like Water: Water, Creation, Stewardship: One Human Family (2015)
 - Sacred All Life: Human Trafficking (two sessions in 2014)
 - Restorative Justice: A Path to Dignity (2014)
 - Lenten Journey for Racial Justice: Workshop and Mass; co-sponsored with Diocese of Sacramento Black Catholic Ministry (2015)
 - Sister Simone Campbell, SSS – Prosperity Not Austerity: Economic Justice and Federal Policy (2013)
 - Laudato Sí: On Care for our Common Home; three sessions by Brother Mark Schroeder, OFM, reflecting on Pope Francis’ encyclical (2015)
- Sponsored first Bike to Church Sunday and had the City install bike racks in front of the church (May 2015)
- Joined march from Loaves and Fishes to courthouse for hearing on homeless encampment (2015)
- Phone-banked for criminal justice reform through Proposition 47, the Safe Neighborhoods and Schools Act (2014)
- Conducted tabling after Mass to register volunteers for Reading Partners, a nationwide reading tutorial program for elementary school children reading below grade level (2015)

2016

- Conducted tabling after Masses for parishioners to sign Catholic Climate Covenant pledge cards to protect creation and the poor.
- Sponsored Brother Mark Schroeder’s “Face of Christ” series.
- Provided workshop on “Forming Faithful Consciences for Faithful Citizenship.”
- Organized the second Bike to Church Sunday.
- Hosted discussion for parishioners on concluding the “Year of Mercy” with comments provided by Brother Mark Schroeder and two Pathways representatives.
- Invited Reading Partners to table for new volunteers at Parish Picnic.

2017

- Conducted a water-wise improvement audit at the church, school, and friary.
- Organized Iftar Meal (breaking the fast at sundown during Ramadan) with members of the SALAM Center and Mosque and St. Francis of Assisi parishioners.
- Members represented St. Francis Pathways for Justice at the Capitol Iftar Meal in support of the Muslim community.
- Joined Sacramento Area Congregations Together (SacACT).
- Marched from St. Francis to City Hall in support of affordable housing with SacACT.
- Sponsored Catholic Climate Covenant workshop – “Dial Down the Heat: Cultivate the Common Good for Our Common Home.”
- Conducted Lenten series on Climate Action with Adult Ministry.

2018

- Organized second annual Iftar Meal with members of the SALAM Center and Mosque and St. Francis of Assisi parishioners.
- Coordinated parish groups to march in the annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Day parade.
- Participated in Sacramento Diocesan Project – “A Catholic Conversation about Restorative Justice in the Sacramento Unified School District.”
- Sponsored Brother Mark Schroeder’s three-part series on “The Lord’s Prayer” and his series on “Building with Living Stones.”
- Organized Ecological Conversion Stations of the Cross during Lent.
- Sponsored Catholic Climate Covenant workshop – “Befriend the Wolf: Blessing All God’s Creation.”
- Sponsored Brother Mark Schroeder’s series on Franciscan values.
- Participated in nationwide “Poor People’s Campaign” and represented St. Francis parish at State Capitol rally.
- Hosted Korean “Dreamers” overnight when they visited Sacramento on their bicycle trek down the length of the West Coast of the United States.
- Represented St. Francis parish on the California Catholic Bishops’ ad hoc committee to create environmental pastoral letter “God Calls Us All to Care for Our Common Home.”

2019

- Conducted letter-writing campaign after Masses for National Migration Week.
- Hosted showing of “From Paris to Pittsburgh,” National Geographic documentary on climate change and responses to it.
- Worked with St. Francis elementary school to designate school and parish grounds a St. Kateri Tekakwitha Habitat.
- Welcomed Honduran activist and Jesuit priest Father Ismael Moreno Coto (Padre Melo) to Sacramento and organized interfaith speaking engagements.
- Invited, assisted non-profits working on adoption and foster care programs at Parish Picnic.
- Organized third annual Iftar meal during Ramadan at the SALAM Center.
- Coordinated parish group to march in the annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Parade.

- Led Social Justice Stations of the Cross, in the Church during Lent.
- Became active members of the new Climate Justice committee of SacACT.
- Helped organize and lead listening sessions for “Open Wide Our Hearts,” part of the Sacramento Diocesan Project on Racism.

2020

In the wake of the COVID pandemic, many planned Pathways’ activities were suspended. However, we remained active through Zoom.

- Made financial contribution to support annual Iftar Meal at SALAM Center and Mosque.
- Made financial contributions to support SHARE Honduras.
- Continued to help organize Sacramento Diocese Committee on Racism listening sessions.
- Marched in the annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Parade.
- Organized four-parish series to discuss Pope Francis’ encyclical Laudato Sí.
- Worked with SacACT successfully to urge Sacramento County Board of Supervisors to declare a “climate emergency” in the County.
- Organized five-part series to reflect on and discuss U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ “Open Wide Our Hearts: A Pastoral Letter Against Racism.”
- Participated in Ministries of Care committee reviewing parish outreach and care ministries.
- Planted St. Kateri Tekakwitha Habitat garden on school and parish grounds; was recognized by the national Saint Kateri Conservation Center.
- Joined California Catholic Conference’s permanent Environmental Stewardship Committee.

2021

- Provided five-part “Open Wide Our Hearts” series to Racine Dominicans, a Community of Catholic Sisters and Lay Associates.
- Helped organize SacACT press conference with clergy and California State Senators to declare a climate emergency in California.
- Organized four-part series on Pope Francis’ encyclical “Fratelli Tutti: On Fraternity and Social Friendship.”
- Facilitated discussion of “God Calls Us All to Care for Our Common Home,” the California Catholic bishops’ pastoral letter and call to action.
- Made financial contribution again to support annual Iftar Meal at SALAM Center and Mosque.
- Contributed to “Vamos a la Milpa,” a project during COVID to promote food security in Honduras by bringing back small vegetable gardens in every home.
- Organized a gun violence prevention program featuring an emergency room physician as guest speaker (<https://youtu.be/vsTZ0HRicJg?si=S7VkJm32x8zLJjiR>).
- With the Racine Dominicans, provided 8-week series from JustFaith called “Sacred Land.”
- Organized formation of a group of lay ministers from seven parishes to send a letter to Bishop Soto to support implementation of his pastoral letter, “It Is Right and Just: Journeying from Racism to Communion in Christ.”

2022

- Participated as one of the parish pods in diocesan implementation of the Church Synod on Synodality.
- Distributed seedlings, compost bags, Care for Creation prayers and Earth-friendly information after all Masses on Earth Day weekend.
- Hosted “Border Experience,” a Zoom presentation about Casa Alitas, a humanitarian aid project that helps asylum-seekers released from Border Patrol detention in the Tucson, AZ area. Volunteers offer housing, food, clothing, toiletries, advocacy, and travel assistance.
- Three Pathways members then volunteered at Casa Alitas Migrant Welcoming Center in Tucson, AZ for 2 weeks, and recounted their experiences in a Zoom presentation to interested parishioners (<https://youtu.be/DGIxIASstk8?si=saxF73QOVfPRMMdk>).
- Distributed seedlings, compost bags, Care for Creation prayers and Earth-friendly information after all Masses on Earth Day weekend.
- Pathways representatives helped Sacramento Diocese organize its “Care for Creation” kickoff event in September and began work with the Office of Catholic Charities and Social Concerns to implement Pope Francis’ environmental encyclical throughout the Diocese.
- Organized and hosted a seminar in September on the principals of Catholic Social Teaching led by Brother Mark Schroeder, OFM, the first in a quarterly series on Catholic Social Teaching in Action (<https://youtu.be/F9fEvPNumpw?si=9DaoyPuF3KdZszkf>).
- Organized and hosted a seminar in December on the Catholic Social Teaching theme of Life and Dignity of the Human Person, with speakers from the Innocence Project and the Exodus Project (https://youtu.be/btcSkXGRDIY?si=FvIzuP6_1MfH-Pg0).

2023

- Organized and hosted a seminar in March on the Catholic Social Teaching theme of Care for God's Creation, with speakers from the Center for Land-Based Learning and St. Anthony Parish (https://youtu.be/MyoJ_4CHG0k?si=Z60uF5ZBCycS5IUH).
- Sponsored a Lenten soup supper in Brunsman Hall, followed by Stations of the Cross in the church using the words and prayers of St. Oscar Romero.
- Organized and hosted a seminar in June on the Catholic Social Teaching theme of Option for the Poor and Vulnerable, with speakers from Mercy Pedalers and Loaves and Fishes (<https://youtu.be/n3wzeCj3WeA?si=6WvSfWKDcIvVC65f>).
- Organized and served with fellow parishioners a fourth Iftar meal for breaking of a Ramadan daily fast, for about 250 Muslim brothers and sisters at the SALAM Center and Mosque.
- Screened “The Letter: A Message for Our Earth,” in Brunsman Hall after mass. This is a documentary film telling the story of Laudato Si and several environmental champions from around the world as they come to meet with Pope Francis at the Vatican.
- Sponsored a plant booth, “Seeds for Justice”, at the Parish FrancisFest.

- Worked alongside lay ministers focused on racial justice in other parishes to make presentations, at the request of Bishop Soto, to three diocesan councils to encourage broader implementation of his pastoral letter, “It Is Right and Just.”
- Organized and hosted a seminar in September on the Catholic Social Teaching theme of Solidarity, with speakers from SacACT and Norcal Resist, with an immigration attorney and an asylum applicant (<https://youtu.be/kpHL4p59uWg?si=uvT7p4XnawP3TSRR>).
- With lay ministers from six other parishes, formed the Parish Advocates for Racial Justice for ongoing work with the diocese and other Catholic churches.