



MEDIA RELEASE: Catholic Earthcare Celebrates 20 Years with Growing Network

25 May 2022

Sandhurst Diocese launched their commitment to Laudato Si' action on the banks of the Broken Creek in Nathalia this week as part of Laudato Si' Week.

This event provided the occasion for Catholic Earthcare Australia to celebrate 20 years of creating dialogue and inspiring action to care for our common home. St Mary's College Nathalia hosted lunch for 150 guests who then walked to the creek.

Sue Martin, Catholic Earthcare Coordinator, shared Earthcare's Journey over 20 years. Catholic Earthcare, now a program of Caritas Australia, was founded in 2002 in response to the Bishops' Social Justice statement, *A New Earth*, calling for ecological conversion. Its role has evolved into developing a response to Pope Francis' Encyclical, *Laudato Si'*, and the seven Laudato Si Goals which emerged, and were given real impetus by this year's Bishops' Statement *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor*.

Sue brought greetings from Bishop Long, Bishops' Committee for Justice, Ecology and Peace, whose own Diocese has taken a similar path to Sandhurst, with the Diocese joining the international platform and recommending parishes/schools partner with Catholic Earthcare.

Bishop Shane MacKinlay, Sandhurst Diocese, opened up Laudato Si' and the concept of integral ecology reiterating the Bishops' commitment, and launching the Diocesan response with more than half of schools and parishes already partnered with Earthcare. He then commissioned all Earthcare Parish/School Representatives who received a Laudato Si' Tree, Certificate and Badges.

"Catholic Earthcare has made it easy to address the goals and journey towards becoming living Laudato Si' communities," says Richard Landels, Caritas Australia's Advancement Director.

"The Earthcare Schools' program began earlier but since the launching of the Laudato Si' goals, it's gained momentum and the newly developed Parish program has mushroomed."

Fr Joe Taylor, Shepparton explains, "I'm really excited about becoming an Earthcare parish. We've wanted to do something, and this framework gives us a way to do it."

"Our Earthcare process is filling a need for communities across the nation who want to *do* something about the 'cry of the earth and the cry of the poor'," says Sue Martin, Earthcare Coordinator.

An Anniversary Cake was cut by Bishop Shane, on behalf of the Bishops, and Sue Martin, Catholic Earthcare Australia.

Watch the event at <https://vimeo.com/713248870>

Go to the website at catholicearthcare.org.au

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