

On May 25, 2021 at St. Matthew's Cathedral, Washington Cardinal Gregory blessed boxes containing seeds that will be distributed to all parishes to plant on church property, as part of an upcoming archdiocesan action plan to respond to Pope Francis's *Laudato Si'* encyclical on caring for the environment.



Opening Letter from **WILTON CARDINAL GREGORY** *Archbishop of Washington*

I want to thank the members of the Archdiocesan Care for Creation Committee for their attentiveness and diligent work in preparing this Action Plan for *Laudato Si'* during this special 5th anniversary year of this great encyclical. I am so very pleased that the Archdiocese of Washington is launching this Action Plan at the conclusion of this anniversary year in honor of our Holy Father, Pope Francis.

This Action Plan is for all of us! We are all called to protect our common home according to our ability and means. This Action Plan contains small and big ways for us to exercise stewardship over God's creation. I invite each of you to study this Action Plan and be challenged to protect and restore our fragile Earth and our natural resources.

Pope Francis calls us to a "...new dialogue about how we are shaping the future of our planet. We need a conversation, which includes everyone, since the environmental challenge we are undergoing, and its human roots, concern and affect us all. We require a new and universal solidarity. 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" (LS 14). Join Pope Francis and me in a new dialogue on Care for Creation for future generations in our archdiocese so that they too can enjoy the natural beauty and splendor of the Chesapeake Bay, Cherry Blossoms and Potomac River.

I know this Action Plan will ensure that the Archdiocese of Washington will be a national leader in implementing *Laudato Si'*. I hope that each of you will find ways to implement *Laudato Si'* in your home, parish, school, and local community. Join me in renewing our commitment to our planet, our community and to each other by taking concrete steps found in this Action Plan to preserve and protect our common home!

St. Francis of Assisi, pray for us!



+Wilton Card. Gregory

