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The launch of *Laudato Si'* and the U.S. Catholic Church: A Conference Series on Our Common Home was very successful. Hosted by Creighton University in Omaha, June 27-30, and organized by Catholic Climate Covenant, the gathering was attended by more than 200 Catholics from around the country. These Catholics were specifically invited because of their passion for *Laudato Si'* (Pope Francis' encyclical on the environment) and their interest in seeing it come alive across Catholic life in America.

Those who gathered were distributed across eight different tracks: Adult Faith Formation; Advocacy; Creation Care Teams; Energy Management; Higher Education; Liturgy; School Education; and Young Adult Ministry. There were several inspiring speakers at the conference, but most of the work done was in these eight tracks.

The Carmelite NGO, because of our *Laudato Si'* curriculum project, contributed to the School Education track. Dennis Kalob, the NGO's Chief Administrative Officer, was the track's co-leader (along with Peggy Riehl from the Toledo Diocese). Kate McGarey-Vasey from Salpointe Catholic High School in Tucson—a Carmelite school—was one of the presenters. She described the creation and implementation of the *Laudato Si'* curriculum at Salpointe and how it has inspired their students and transformed the culture of their school. Fr. Nepi Willemsen, O.Carm., who teaches at another Carmelite school, Joliet Catholic Academy, also participated in the track.



Kate McGarey-Vasey

The members of each track listened to presentations, shared their experiences, discussed challenges and opportunities, and brainstormed ideas for action. Though folks have headed home, the work continues. The Catholic Climate Covenant staff and the track leaders will continue to bring what has been learned in Omaha into further focus and will share it widely. We hope to spread the knowledge and inspire the action needed to heal and care for our common home.

The conference this year will be followed by another conference in 2021 and a third gathering in 2023, but the work will be continuous. We hope you will join in this vital work that we have been called to do by the Holy Father.

If you would like to know more about the curriculum developed by the Carmelite NGO and the faculty at Salpointe High School, or if you would like information about our adult study guide on *Laudato Si'*, you can go to the project's website: www.laudato-si-for-all.com.

If you are interested in implementing the curriculum in your school, but feel that you need more training or advice, please let us know and we can help make that happen. Send enquires to Dennis Kalob at DLKCarmeliteNGO@gmail.com

A video of a presentation that Kate gave last fall on the curriculum can be found at YouTube here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6XZyJ8UMryk&t=44s>

Finally, we invite you to examine the website of the Catholic Climate Covenant (CCC). It is full of helpful information and resources: www.catholicclimatecovenant.org.

