

## Caring for God's Creation

# New York Companies Captivate Kindness



by Emmerson  
Raimundi &  
Angelina Aviles  
Grade 7

### New York Companies Work to Protect God's Creation Through Goodwill and Service

At first glance, New York may seem like a city full of fast-paced and unattentive people out for themselves. However, if you take a closer look, you will find it is a city full of people, specifically companies, who care and want to make a difference. By exemplifying the preservation of the Earth and being good stewards of creation, these companies have improved our city's condition and countless people's lives.

Clean water is a necessity for public health. Riverkeeper, a New York organization, actively works to ensure this privilege. Founded in 1966, Riverkeeper aims to clean the Hudson River and prevent illegal contamination. Riverkeeper also prioritizes clean drinking water and finds innovative ways to improve the state of New York. By aiding habitats and discovering different approaches toward sustainable energy, this organization helps our infrastructure and keeps New Yorkers healthy. Their website states, "Riverkeeper protects and restores the Hudson River from source to sea and safeguards drinking water supplies."

Known for its annual coat drive, New York Cares is an organization that promotes volunteer work and assists the less fortunate. Not only does this organization help people, but they aid our environ-



Bianca Barros, Grade 6

ment by reducing waste left behind by leftovers. No matter the issue, whether it be environmental problems, homelessness, or educational discrimination, New York Cares gives hope to people everywhere and inspires many other organizations to address important matters.

For those too ill to shop or prepare their meals, God's Love We Deliver, a business in New York, distributes wholesome, medically prepared meals directly to their homes. God's Love We Deliver embodies the spirit of caring for others. They are kind to the earth using local, organic ingredients and minimizing food waste. The non-sectarian group helps children of those ailing individuals and their carers without charge, but more importantly, with affection.

ACE New York advocates for "the use of clean, renewable electricity technologies and energy efficiency in New York State," as their website states. ACE supports the use of wind and solar power. They concentrate on creating and implementing natural resource technologies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and overcome climate change. Their

mission highlights the importance of protecting and preserving the world God has created for us.

To be good stewards and show respect for God's creations, we can find ways to care for others, help the environment, and promote renewable energy. Genesis 2:15 says, "The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it." The Earth may not be ours to keep for infinity, but it is ours to maintain and promote kindness, one act of service at a time.



This edition of *The Tablet Jr.* was created with the contributions of student journalists from Good Shepherd Catholic Academy, Brooklyn.





# Toxic Trainwreck



by **Anne Martin**  
& **Reya Cruz**  
Grade 7

## Ohio on the Edge as a Result of Train Dilemmas in East Palestine, Ohio

Imagine chemicals floating around in your surroundings, polluting the water and air you drink. After a recent train derailment released hazardous chemicals into the air, water, and soil in East Palestine, Ohio, the citizens there have repeatedly complained of feeling very sick. Plus, they are dealing with a huge environmental disaster and a

massive cleanup.

When the train crashed, chemicals such as vinyl chloride, ethylene glycol, isobutylene, and ethyl acrylate were exposed. Scientists don't fully understand the short and long-term health effects. They can also suffer from headaches, dizziness, drowsiness, nausea, and tingling in their arms and legs.

Alongside the health effects, East Palestine, Ohio's citizens must worry about their local water resources. Many people get water by using water bottles or moving out of town to escape that water. This puts parents in a challenging position, not knowing what is best for their kids. Some are experiencing depression, anxiety, and confusion about how to react. This accident has physically and men-

tally hurt all of God's creation, the world, and the people in it.

Besides sending aid to help clean up the pollution, we can also work to ensure this type of accident doesn't happen again. Fifty-three percent of Americans said stronger safety regulations would have prevented the Norfolk Southern train derailment. People can write to their representatives to ask for laws to protect the environment from dangerous practices.

Psalms 65:9, "You care for the land and water it; you enrich it abundantly. The streams of God are filled with water to provide the people with grain, for so you have ordained it." By polluting our world, we are only hurting ourselves and the future. We must start "enriching it abundantly" and take deeper care and precautions. This tragic accident has wounded people, the water, and the air in East Palestine, Ohio. We are small parts of this big, beautiful Earth, but we can make a difference together. Now ask yourself, how can I help the world return from the issues we face?



JILLIAN JACOBS  
Grade 6

JANE BEGGAN  
Grade 6



KAILEY DWYER  
Grade 6



SHANE PIGNALOSA  
Grade 7

MADISON DOHERTY  
Grade 6

Art on  
the Walls





## ASK Sister Elizabeth



### Why do you believe people pollute the environment?

*Dariya Akhramovich, 6th grade*

Dariya, thank you for showing such concern. I believe most people don't deliberately set out to pollute the environment. I sometimes think people are lazy and don't go out of their way to pick up after themselves, and they just don't stop and realize that although they are just one person, they are adding to the bigger picture. Children can be taught in school their role in helping the larger problem. Starting small, person by person, can make a difference. Be aware and make others mindful of understanding their responsibilities. Remember, God created the Earth and all that's in it. Everything God creates is good, so we want to keep it beautiful and welcoming.

### What do you think is the role of the Church in protecting the environment?

*Arielle Williams, 7th grade*

Arielle, your question is very insightful. In the Book of Genesis 1:26, God said, "Let us make human beings in our image, after our likeness. Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, the tame animals, all the wild animals, and all the creatures that crawl on the Earth." This commissioned man to rule over creation in ways that sustain, protect, and enhance His work. As church leaders, bishops and priests can use any chance they can to preach about our responsibility to protect and preserve what God created. The burden is ours from God to make sure we do everything possible to care for all He created. We can't ignore anything that could harm or destroy our Earth and all that God created on it. The fact that you are concerned shows you will help make this happen.

### What can regular people do to protect the environment?

*Francesca Smergulineo, 8th grade*

Thank you, Francesca, for your question. Since God created each of us to conserve and preserve the environment, we must practice an environmentally friendly lifestyle. Think about our impact on the environment. Start simply by recycling, reducing waste, and conserving energy. Turn off lights and computers. Have your parents install energy-saving devices. Recycle by separating paper, plastic, metal, and glass. Keep the water off while brushing your teeth; take shorter showers; volunteer for cleanups in your neighborhood. Mahatma Gandhi said, "The Earth provides enough for every man's need but not for every man's greed." We must never forget that we must share the Earth's resources and not waste them. Keep in mind and always remember, "Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle." You can help and spread the word.

## Planting a Greener Future



by **Eva Rubano**  
Grade 7

### The Importance of Community Gardens

Genesis 2:15 says, "The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it." In reality, how many of us truly take care of the Earth? The people of the Floyd Bennett Garden Association take the initiative to fight the world's central issue of using harmful chemicals in our fruits and vegetables by creating a safe space for plants and animals to thrive while supporting sustainable agriculture.

It started small. It was a community garden started in 1970 on what was originally New York's first municipal

airport. Later, the FBGA was formed as a non-profit organization to grow healthy fruits and vegetables. I am lucky to be a part of this.

This association and many others reduce environmental harm by promoting sustainable agriculture. To accomplish this mission, they have heavy restrictions on what will be used on the soil and the plants themselves, such as being unable to use pesticides and being encouraged to use natural compost supplied by the organization. Also, members are told to put their unwanted remaining plants, flowers, fruits, and vegetables in a specific area to be composted.

Not only does the garden care for plants, but it also supports butterflies, bees, and birds of all kinds and insects. Members grow milkweed that lays eggs, and butterflies start their



Jane Beggan, Grade 6

life on. Bees help the garden by pollinating plants which helps them grow.

While the concepts of community gardens and the goal of sustainable agriculture seem insignificant compared to pollution and global warming, it is one of the most pressing matters. With a significant increase

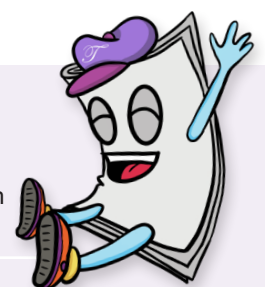
in the Earth's population, we must meet the need for good fruits and vegetables that lack chemicals. Plus, obtaining your produce locally has the added benefit of reducing harmful air pollution created by shipping of food to supermarkets from far away. This brings us to the importance of commu-

nity gardens because they support a healthy and more natural lifestyle. While there are over 550 community gardens in New York City alone, this one is special to me because I witness the changes they make firsthand.

### TEACHER GUIDES

Instructional Resource Guides are available for each issue of the Tablet Jr. You can find the supplemental lessons on **CTNBQ.ORG/TABLETJR**

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## Diocesan History Corner

by Joseph Coen

### Care of the Earth

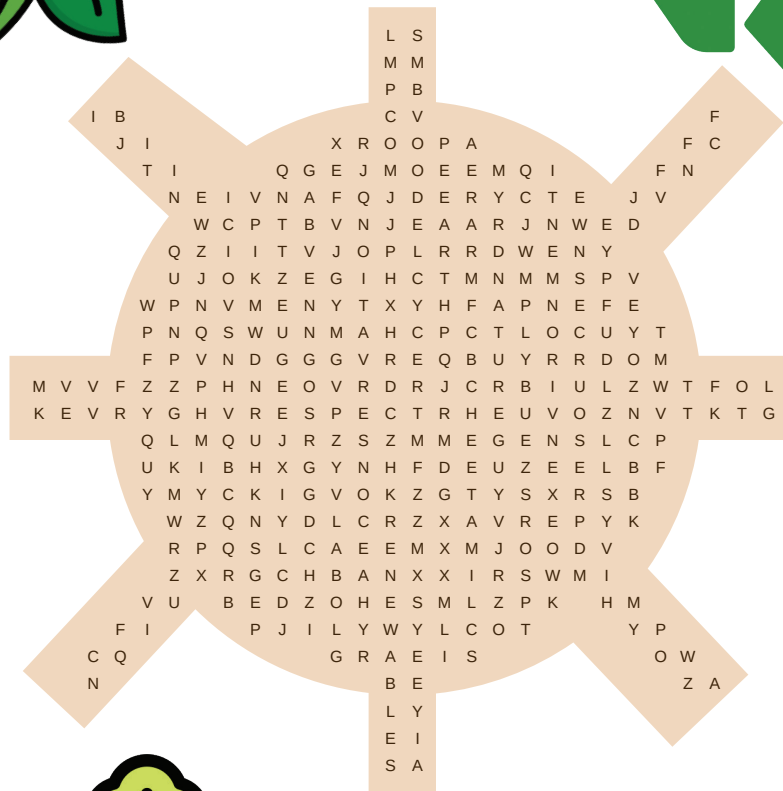
Care for the Earth, our common home, is the theme of Pope Francis' letter to the world named "Laudato Si'." Recalling St. Francis' care for animals and nature, Pope Francis reminds us that care for the Earth is a part of our call as people entrusted by God with care for our planet. An example of how that call is being lived out in our diocese is happening at the Thomas Berry Place in Jamaica, Queens, and with Reconnect at Thomas Berry Place, a program located there. The Reconnect program started about 12 years ago in Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn, as a way to help young people make positive changes in their lives.

The Passionists retreat center, founded in 1924 in Jamaica, was fixed up a couple of years ago. Now called the Thomas Berry Place, it has a focus on the teachings in the pope's "Laudato Si'" letter and on the work of Thomas Berry, a Passionist who was a well-known expert on the need to care for our environment and the

Earth. Rather than just teach about what Thomas Berry said, the Place and the Reconnect program aim to live the Passionist's focus on the crucified of the Earth and the crucified of the poor in a concrete way.

As part of the job training programs of Reconnect, young people tend an organic garden of 35 planting boxes in the backyard and use the food grown there as part of their culinary training program. The Center also put up solar panels in the parking lot, which provide a renewable source of energy. Through simple steps such as reducing the use of plastic water bottles, the Center aims to teach simple actions that can be taken to better care for our common home.

*Joseph Coen, C.A., is the archivist of the Diocese of Brooklyn.*



### FIND THE WORDS

CLIMATE  
CONSERVATION  
CREATION

EARTH  
ENVIRONMENT  
GLOBAL

NATURE  
RECYCLE  
RENEWABLE

RESOURCES  
RESPECT  
REUSE

## Fun Activities for You from Sadlier

[www.sadlier.com](http://www.sadlier.com)



### How Can I Be Responsible for the Care of God's Creation?

Care for God's creation is an essential element of our faith and one of the seven themes of Catholic Social Teaching. Even the Commandments and the Beatitudes give us guidelines on how we should respect other people and other things. Our actions show God, our Creator, that we respect all life and have concern for all people. Responding to this call means becoming stewards of God's creation, respecting,

and protecting the environment for future generations.

Read the story of creation from the Book of Genesis. God made everything. God's wonderful creation helps us to survive and grow, like light and water. God's creation brings us joy. If you see a beautiful sunrise or take a walk in the park, be aware of how your different senses contribute to your appreciation of God's wonders.

St. Isidore is recognized as one of the patron

saints of the care of creation because of his farming skill. Use the QR code below to read about St. Isidore's love and knowledge of soil and complete the intermediate-level activity.

**With your family,** discuss the responsibility of taking care of God's creation and make a pledge to be a family that cares. Together, say a prayer of thanks to God for the gift of creation.

**SEE DIRECTIONS ONLINE:**

